

BUSINESS connections



Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living feels at home with SkyLine/SkyBest

Pictured L to R: Michelle Scott, Sherry Starnes, Jesse Melton, Elizabeth Young, and Brent Keith



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It's the small details that make the biggest difference.

This is especially true if we're talking about customer service. Think how much it means to you when a company's employees give you a little extra time and attention.

At SkyLine/SkyBest, we're all about paying attention to the details. A case in point is the **Business Spotlight** article on **Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living** on pages 4 and 5. Deerfield Ridge decided to switch to SkyLine/SkyBest for their phone, broadband and TV services since their previous providers were falling short of expectations. We're delighted to now be giving this community the **attentive, detail-oriented service** it deserves.

This December issue of *Business Connections* also contains a discussion of **why fiber is so important** on page 3 and **helpful tips about online security** on page 6. Things take a festive turn on page 7 with a Christmas greeting from the **SkyLine/SkyBest Business Group** and the recipes for both success and a holiday treat.

All of us at SkyLine/SkyBest look forward to helping your business with its communications needs in 2014. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

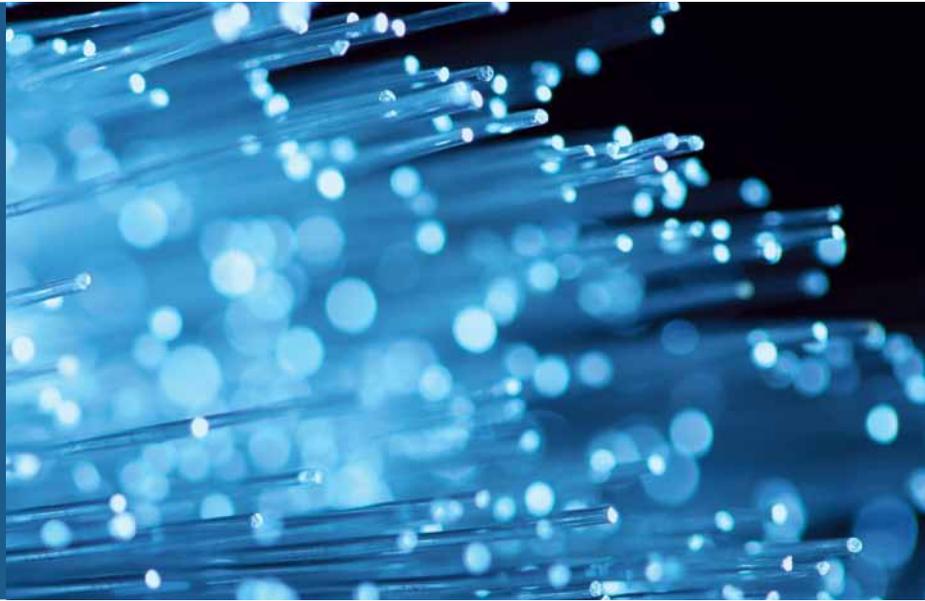
Jimmy C. Blevins
Chief Executive Officer



Cover photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

What's All the Fuss Over Fiber?

Only fiber networks can meet the ever-increasing demands for bandwidth



There's a lot of talk these days about fiber networks and for good reason. Optical fibers are flexible, hair-thin strands of glass that use light instead of electricity to carry a signal. They are unique in their ability to transport virtually unlimited bandwidth over long distances. Fiber to the Premise (FTTP) is the delivery of a communications signal over optical fiber from the operator's switching equipment all the way to a home or business, thereby replacing existing copper infrastructure such as telephone wires and coaxial cable.

"Future Proof" Technology

FTTP is the only technology that delivers enough bandwidth — reliably and at a low enough cost — to meet the ever-increasing demand for more robust Internet, video and voice service as well as other online applications. Compared to copper wire or coaxial cable, fiber also has a much longer lifespan and the capability of being 1,000 times faster than DSL and cable modems.

Current fiber-optic technology can provide two-way transmission speeds of up to 100 megabits per second. What's more, ongoing improvements in fiber-optic equipment are constantly increasing available bandwidth without having to change the fiber. That's why fiber networks are said to be "future proof."

More Applications Need More Bandwidth

Why do we need all this bandwidth? Here are a few reasons:

- More companies are offering feature-length movies for download and one high-definition movie takes up as much bandwidth as 35,000 webpages.

- Televisions and home appliances are now being connected to the Internet.
- Families and companies are increasingly using "software as service" — meaning they subscribe to "cloud computing" applications rather than install them on their own computers.
- There are currently 200 telemedicine networks in the U.S. connecting 2,000 institutions.
- Services such as distance learning and remote energy management are expected to grow considerably over the next several years.

These applications, plus the many other ones not even invented yet, are going to require much greater bandwidth than what is generally available today. Bandwidth demand is growing at an enormously high rate and is projected to grow for years to come. According to the Cisco® Visual Networking Index (VNI) Forecast (2011-2016), there are expected to be 3.4 billion Internet users by 2016 — about 45 percent of the world's projected population according to United Nations' estimates. In addition, the average fixed broadband speed is expected to increase nearly fourfold, from 9 Mbps in 2011 to 34 Mbps in 2016.

With fiber networks, users gain access to bandwidth of increased quality, quantity and capacity. Clearly, fiber is well worth making a fuss over. That's why SkyLine/SkyBest began its fiber build out in 2004 and we are pleased to announce that 64% of our region is served by fiber technology. To find out if your business is in a fiber-served area, call 1-800-759-2226.

Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living

A switch to SkyLine/SkyBest gave this community faster, more reliable Internet service and much more



Photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

Pictured above:
A resident enjoys SkyBest TV in her room.

Page 5, upper right:
Rebecca Tester, CNA, answers calls on the SkyLine/SkyBest phone lines.

Page 5, bottom right:
Derry Hendrix keeps busy in the Activities and Business Office.

Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living is part of Ridge Care, Inc., which operates 10 retirement and assisted living properties in North Carolina and West Virginia. Located in the picturesque hills of Boone, Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living is designed to give residents the relaxed feeling of mountain resort living as well as the practical convenience of close proximity to medical resources. The community is only two miles from Watauga Medical Center, Wellness Center and many primary physicians.

Its facilities, staff and services are getting high marks from residents and their families. Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living was voted “Best of the Best” in the 2013 *Watauga Democrat Best in Watauga County People’s Choice Awards*. An atmosphere of excellence is clearly a key component of what makes Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living popular. These high standards extend to the community’s goals for its communications services as well.

Looking for Expanded Services

Elizabeth Young, Executive Director, says, “At Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living, communication is at the center of all we do. We weren’t completely satisfied with our previous provider, so we started looking for a new way

to expand our broadband, phone and TV services and reduce our overall costs.”

Once the decision was made to make a change in communications services, SkyLine/SkyBest came to mind quickly. Says Young, “SkyLine/SkyBest had been maintaining our business phone equipment since 2010. That’s how we initially got to know them. We also had such a good rapport with SkyLine/SkyBest through Forest Ridge Assisted Living, our West Jefferson facility, that we decided to call them about providing the communications services at Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living. We switched to SkyLine/SkyBest at the end of August 2013 when the fiber installation was complete.”

At Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living, communication is at the center of all we do.”

— ELIZABETH YOUNG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DEERFIELD RIDGE ASSISTED LIVING

Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living now uses SkyLine/SkyBest broadband and phone lines for its business office and nurses’ stations, and SkyBest TV service in the residents’ rooms.

Internet Speeds up to 20 Mbps

Michelle Scott, Inside Sales Coordinator, is part of the SkyLine/SkyBest team that works with Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living. Says Scott, "We upgraded their Internet service to fiber broadband Ethernet and increased their speeds from 5 Mbps to 20 Mbps. We're pleased to be able to provide a complete telecommunications solution for Deerfield Ridge and give them the convenience of having all services on one SkyLine/SkyBest monthly statement."

Young notes, "With our SkyLine/SkyBest Internet services, speed and reliability have certainly increased. Our residents are all thrilled with their new TV services, channel selection and crisp picture quality too."

Brent Keith, Business Sales Executive, is also on the SkyLine/SkyBest team and Young appreciates his contributions. She says, "In Brent Keith, Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living has found an outstanding customer service representative that is not only attentive but is also a great problem solver. I know Brent is someone we can truly count on to help our business thrive with cost-efficient technology."

SkyLine/SkyBest is Local, Responsive, and Proactive

How did the switch to SkyLine/SkyBest go? Young replies, "When we first switched, there were a few transitional matters to work out. But SkyLine/SkyBest sent someone right out here whenever I called about a problem and we've had no issues since. The change to SkyBest TV in the rooms went very smoothly and the residents are loving it."

Young continues, "I'm glad we're working with SkyLine/SkyBest now. They give us excellent customer service and it's easy to speak with them. I also appreciate the fact that SkyLine/SkyBest is proactive."

Scott is happy to hear those words. She notes, "All of us in the SkyLine/SkyBest Business Sales Department take pride in providing personal attention and excellent service. Should issues arise, our customers will speak to a local, knowledgeable member of the SkyLine/SkyBest team. Since we're all local, a technician can be at their location the same day for any issues. It's what we do for Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living and what we'll do for your business."

So many resources add up to independent, worry-free living for residents and peace of mind for their families. To learn more about Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living, visit www.ridgecare.com/communities/deerfield-ridge-assisted-living.



Photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

Professional Care in a Friendly, Home-Like Setting

In addition to its beautiful indoor and outdoor living spaces, Deerfield Ridge Assisted Living offers these important services and amenities:

- 24-hour pharmacy service
- Geriatric physician service available on-site
- Home health services including physical, occupational and respiratory services
- Partnership with Hospice
- Podiatry service
- Beauty/Barber services
- Respite Care (short stay) program
- Pets are welcome (some restrictions may apply)
- Horizons memory care program for those with Alzheimer's or dementia
- 24-hour access to Certified Nursing Assistants and Personal Care Staff
- Customized care with Registered Nurse overview
- Emergency response system
- Medication management
- Security camera systems
- Three nutritional meals plus snacks served daily



Photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

SkyBest Internet Guardian Is Now Just 99¢ Per Month

Computer viruses and other online threats can do costly damage to your small business. Fortunately, you can get protection from them for just 99¢ per month with SkyBest Internet Guardian.

This service is the easy and affordable way to protect up to three computers from most viruses, spyware, worms, Trojan horses, phishing attacks, botnets and fake antivirus software. SkyBest Internet Guardian will also:

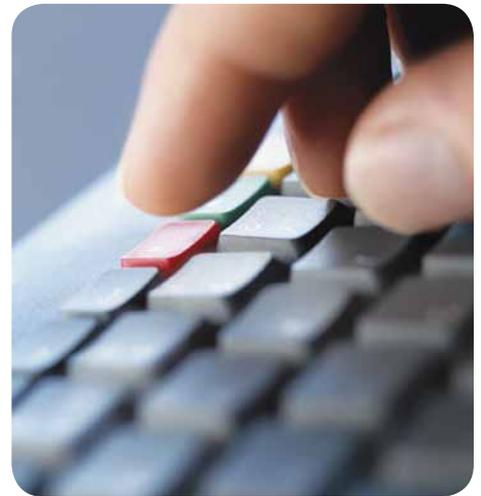
- Block unsafe websites
- Warn about dangerous sites before you click on them
- Find and block malicious links in emails or IMs
- Help keep spam out of your inbox
- Boost the Windows Firewall
- Validate WiFi networks and hotspots
- Indicate dangerous links on social media sites
- Improve PC performance by cleaning up temporary files, registries, browser history, cookies and the start-up manager using System Tuner
- Protect data from loss and theft

To sign up, visit www.skyline.org/internet_guardian and complete the application. SkyBest Internet Guardian includes a user-friendly Help Feature to assist with installation. If you need additional help, call our Technical Support staff at 1-866-759-7591.

SkyBest Internet Guardian
Powered by TrendMicro

Top Five ONLINE Security Tips

*Everyone at your business
has a hand in protecting
against threats*



Cybercriminals are a sneaky bunch and the consequences of their actions can range from poorly functioning computers to a devastating data loss. Fight back by having your staff consistently take the following precautions:

- 1. Be sure all computers and mobile devices are running the latest operating systems (OS).** Malware creators are always adapting, and so are OS developers. If a vulnerability is identified, developers will fix it in the next update, so you want to be sure you have it installed.
- 2. Use antivirus and antispyware software and keep it up to date.** New threats are discovered daily and keeping your software updated is one of the easiest ways to protect your business from an attack; simply set your computers to automatically update for you. Also, activate your firewall and regularly download the security protection updates (known as patches) that are released by most major software companies.
- 3. Educate your employees not to open email attachments from unknown sources.** Computer viruses are commonly spread through email attachments so it's vital to pay attention to the source before opening them. In addition, make sure your employees don't click on links within unsolicited email messages.
- 4. Use long, complex passwords that are unique to each account.** Each time an employee creates a new password, it should be long (preferably at least 14 characters) and contain uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and symbols. It's also important to not use the same password for multiple accounts and to change passwords regularly.
- 5. Only download software from reputable sites or stores.** Cybercriminals tuck malicious code into fake versions of the programs and apps that you want. The best way to avoid a phony is to stick to official company websites and app stores.

For more information about online security, visit www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

From the
SkyLine/SkyBest Business Group!

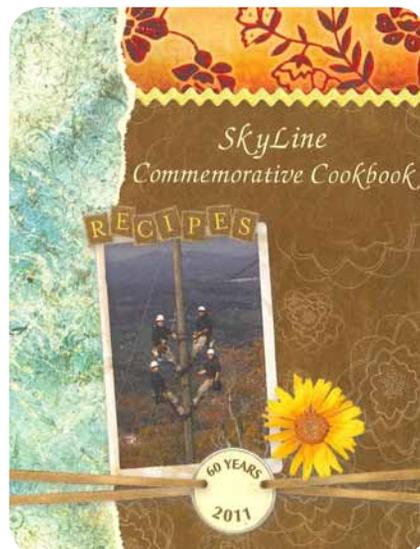
As 2013 comes to a close, we want to wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and thank you for choosing SkyLine/SkyBest as your communications provider.

Building the right mix of communications solutions for your business begins with building a strong working relationship with you. We make it a priority to get to know you in order to better understand how to save you time and money. Our goal is to help your business succeed.

Bernard M. Baruch (August 19, 1870 – June 20 1965), was an American financier and statesman who defined the recipe for success this way: “Be polite, prepare yourself for whatever you are asked to do, keep yourself tidy, be cheerful, don’t be envious, be honest with yourself so you will be honest with others, be helpful, interest yourself in your job, don’t pity yourself, be quick to praise, be loyal to your friends, avoid prejudices, be independent, interest yourself in politics, and read the newspapers.” That sounds to us like a recipe worth trying!

Speaking of recipes, we encourage you to consider giving the SkyLine Commemorative Cookbook to friends and colleagues as a Christmas gift. It’s a collection of more than 500 recipes from members, customers and employees across our five-county service area and it’s available for \$15.00 at all SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Service Centers. All proceeds from the sale of the SkyLine Commemorative Cookbook will be donated to local food banks/pantries.

Again, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a successful New Year! It’s a pleasure to work with you.



A Holiday Treat to Take to Work

There’s nothing like a home-baked dessert to win over even the grouchiest Grinch at your company this time of year. Check out this festive recipe from the SkyLine Commemorative Cookbook.

Yuletide Pound Cake

Submitted by Lois Haga

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup shortening
3 cups sugar
5 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon rum extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup sour cream

Glaze:

1 cup confectioners’ sugar
2-3 teaspoons milk

In a mixing bowl, cream the butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy (about 5 minutes). Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each one. Beat in extracts. Combine flour and baking powder and add to creamed mixture, then add sour cream and beat just until combined. Pour into greased and floured 10-inch fluted tube pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 45-50 minutes or until done. Cool for 10 minutes. Mix glaze and pour over top.

Shop Local for Christmas Gifts & Decorations



Petal Pusher Designs & Gifts offers a wide variety of gifts for your special someone which include:

Custom Silk Arrangements | Byers Choice Carolers
Home Decor | Soy Candles | Prints | Jewelry
Lifetime Oil Lamps

We at Petal Pusher Designs have always used SkyBest for our phone and computer needs. It is nice to do business with hometown folks that provide us with fast and friendly service.

-Phyllis Furches,
Owner of Petal Pusher Designs & Gifts



Contact your local SkyLine/SkyBest Sales Representative today to upgrade your service and ask about SkyBest TV local advertising.

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