

# CONNECTIONS

**70** Years  
Connecting Technology & Community: 1951-2021

APRIL 2021

Published monthly for customers of SkyLine Membership Corporation and SkyBest Communications

[www.SkyBest.com](http://www.SkyBest.com)



## SkyLine/SkyBest & NC Broadband Co-ops Partner with UNC Health Foundation to Support Rural Children's Health Programs

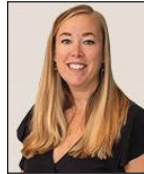
SkyLine/SkyBest, a member of CarolinaLink, the North Carolina's Broadband Cooperative Coalition, announced a \$500,000 commitment and 10-year partnership with UNC Children's Hospital to support rural virtual health programs across the state. The gift from CarolinaLink will allow UNC Children's to develop a telemedicine program that will connect children in rural areas across North Carolina with specialty providers at UNC Children's Hospital in Chapel Hill.

SkyLine CEO Kim Shepherd commented on the gift stating, "We are proud to be partnering with our CarolinaLink members to make this gift to UNC Children's Hospital. North Carolina's communications cooperatives have always worked to serve the underserved areas of our state by providing critical communications services. This new telehealth program is a perfect opportunity to utilize the broadband services we provide to connect families living in rural areas to world-class health services from UNC Children's Hospital."

UNC Children's Hospital has begun forging partnerships with other health systems and pediatric offices in communities across the state to launch the telehealth programs. Locations will be selected in areas where it is more difficult to travel to the Triangle for pediatric specialty services.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Focus on Our Future Series Highlights Tourism



Amy Allison



Wit Tuttle

The Boone Area Chamber welcomed Wit Tuttle, Executive Director with Visit NC and Amy Allison from the EDPNC's (Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina) Office of Outdoor Industry Recreation as opening speakers at the third installment of this five-part series co-sponsored by SkyLine/SkyBest and Carolina West Wireless. The virtual event was broadcast live from SkyLine/SkyBest's Boone Customer Center on Wilson Drive on Monday, March 1, and also featured regional tourism industry practitioners including Chetola Resort's Kent Tarbutton, Beech Mountain Resort's Talia Freeman

and David Leonetti, Business Services and Re-development Manager with the City of Hickory. From the most recent metrics on tourism activity across the state and expectations for the next several months to discussions on regional collaboration to attract guests for recreation



David Jackson moderates a discussion on tourism with guests Kent Tarbutton, Talia Freeman and David Leonetti via Zoom from SkyLine/SkyBest's Boone Customer Center.

opportunities beyond county lines, host and Boone Chamber President and CEO David Jackson moderated an interesting and insightful discussion on creating a regional tourism framework.

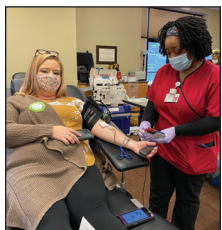
The next in the series will focus on Public Lands: Strategies from Conservation to Access and is scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, from 1 to 3 p.m. For more information, visit [www.BooneChamber.com/events](http://www.BooneChamber.com/events).

## Co-op Leadership Camp Goes Virtual in 2021!

The Cooperative Council of North Carolina will facilitate a robust, fun and interactive at-home camp experience for rising sophomores, juniors and seniors sponsored by cooperatives from throughout the state this summer.

Scheduled from June 21 through 25, this year's camp will include Zoom meet-ups, at-home challenges, small group meet-ups and social activities. Teens will have a chance to win prizes, showcase talents and be part of a virtual start-up cooperative. Cooperative Leadership Camp attendees are also eligible to apply for the \$1,000 Jim Graham college scholarship during their senior year of high school.

As a local sponsor of this camping program, SkyLine will select up to 10 area students to participate. For eligibility and application information, visit [www.skybest.com](http://www.skybest.com) or contact SkyLine PR Administrator Karen Powell at 1-800-759-2226.



Kristie Hoke was among 26 donors at the February 2021 blood drive.



Company-sponsored blood drives make it convenient for CO Technician Justin Lambert and his peers to participate.

## SkyLine Employees Give the Gift of Life

With the pressing need for blood donations for the American Red Cross, SkyLine continued its schedule of hosting a blood drive for employees in February, and we look forward to when we can make this open for community members to also participate when it is safe to do so. Special thanks to the 26 individuals were able to give the gift of life on this day. Our next employee blood drive will take place in August.

With it being a company-wide event, Sparta Retail Sales Representatives Kristi Hoke and Suzanna Limon also made the trek to West Jefferson to donate blood, and we were delighted to see them! Our donors were treated to a \$5

Amazon gift card from the American Red Cross, tasty snacks and an assortment of waters, juices and soft drinks for replenishment.



## NEED TO CONTACT US?

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

LOCAL  
118

TOLL-FREE  
1-800-759-2226

### REPAIR SERVICE, 24/7

LOCAL  
611

TOLL-FREE  
1-877-475-9546

Additional Local Repair Service Numbers:

ALLEGHANY  
336-372-4444  
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

ASHE  
336-982-3111  
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

AVERY  
898-9250

WATAUGA  
297-4811

JOHNSON  
739-4500

LENOIR  
929-2872

### INTERNET TECH SUPPORT, 24/7

TOLL-FREE  
1-866-759-7591

### WORTH NOTING:

Monday, April 5  
SkyLine Offices Close for Easter Holiday

Wednesday, April 14  
FRS James Bass Scholarship Deadline

### STAFF:

Kim Shepherd  
Chief Executive Officer

Brian Tester  
Chief Operations Officer

Angie Poe  
Customer Service Manager

Jamey Jenkins  
Retail Sales Manager

Karen P. Powell  
Public Relations Administrator & Editor



[www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest](https://www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest)

"By partnering with rural pediatric clinics and other rural care providers, we'll be able to bring specialty care closer to home for these children and their families," said Michael Steiner, MD, MPH, Pediatrician in Chief at UNC Children's Hospital. "We are grateful for the commitment and support from CarolinaLink, and we are excited to launch this new telehealth program."

The Chancellor at UNC-Chapel Hill, Dr. Kevin Guskiewicz, also thanked CarolinaLink stating, "The ability to provide the best care to more families will have such a positive impact on the health and wellness of children in North Carolina. I look forward to seeing the great things that come of this new program."

CarolinaLink comprises North Carolina's seven broadband membership cooperatives who provide advanced technology services to many of the state's most rural areas. The seven members include ATMC, Randolph Communications, RiverStreet Networks, SkyLine/SkyBest, Star Communications, Surry Communications and Yadtel.

For more information about the UNC Children's Outreach Initiative Fund, visit [www.unchealthfoundation.org](http://www.unchealthfoundation.org). To learn more about CarolinaLink and their members, visit [www.carolinalink.org](http://www.carolinalink.org).



FOUNDATION FOR RURAL SERVICE

## New Scholarship for First-Year Law School Students Established

The Foundation for Rural Service has announced a new scholarship for students with an interest in rural communities entering their first year of law school. The scholarship honors James L. Bass and the first scholarship of at least \$5,000 will be awarded this spring.

With an active law career that spanned more than 70 years, James Bass helped secure funds for rural telephone systems to bring modern telephone service to rural areas. He was pivotal in the creation of NTCA, where he served as one of the organization's earliest presidents. Bass continued his leadership with service for more than 50 years as legal counsel. Recognizing Bass's impact to the industry and his passion for the legal profession, the NTCA Board of Directors established a scholarship for students with an interest in rural communities to attend law school.

"Jim was not only a founding member of NTCA, he was a guiding light for our association through much of his lifetime," said Shirley Bloomfield, chief executive officer of NTCA. "He spent his last years in service to the association as our general counsel where he helped guide our national board through growth and transformation."

"Once again, FRS, as the advocacy arm of NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, has introduced a program that invests in our young people and in the future of rural communities," said SkyLine CEO Kim Shepherd. "We are delighted to partner with the FRS in promoting this new scholarship program for our region and hope several will apply." The deadline to be considered for the spring 2021 James L. Bass Scholarship is April 16, 2021. Application materials and more information about the scholarship can be found at [www.frs.org](http://www.frs.org).

## How Can I Protect Myself from Caller ID Spoofing?

Caller ID Spoofing occurs when a caller intentionally disguises his or her identity by altering their name and/or phone number that is displayed on your telephone.

One tactic commonly used by scammers, called Robocallers, is neighbor spoofing. Robocallers will alter their number to appear as a local number that could be similar to your own, to increase the likelihood that you will answer the phone call. Unfortunately, these scam artists have the ability to frequently change the number transmitted to your caller ID to any number of their choosing at any time. Any telephone number is at risk of being used by Robocallers.

To minimize your risk of falling victim to spoofing scams, pay attention to the incoming calls you accept. Do not answer any calls from unfamiliar numbers. Do not provide any information or follow any instructions if prompted by an unknown caller.

SkyLine/SkyBest provides multiple features that may help reduce the threat of Robocallers connecting to your home telephone line.

Anonymous Call Rejection allows you to block any caller who is blocking their name and number. Unknown callers who are attempting to call your home phone will receive a message that you do not accept blocked calls, and will advise them to unblock their number before trying again. Any calls that are not blocked will come through normally.

Selective Call Rejection allows you to block a list of specific telephone numbers of your choosing. Up to 16 numbers can be blocked at a time. You have the option to easily add or remove numbers from your rejection list directly from your home phone.

Smart Call Manager provides many comprehensive call screening options. Telemarketer screening will screen all long distance calls and prompt the caller to press "1" to connect. Telemarketing calls will be unable to connect to your home phone. If you receive calls frequently from specific long distance numbers, you may add them directly to your known callers list to prevent them from hearing the telemarketer announcement. This feature also includes Selective Call Rejection that will allow you to block up to thirty specific numbers from connecting with you. Call us at 1-800-759-2226 to learn more.

### Recipe of the Month

## Sweet Potato Apple Salad

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups cubed cooked sweet potatoes
- 1 can (20 oz.) pineapple chunks, drained
- 1 package (10 1/2 oz.) miniature marshmallows
- 4 red delicious apples, chopped
- 1/2 cup flaked coconut
- 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 carton (12 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise

### Instructions:

In a large bowl, gently toss first six ingredients. Combine whipped topping and mayonnaise; fold into fruit mixture. Cover and chill at least one hour.

*Recipe submitted by Barbara Jennings of Alleghany County*



Stream

TV

Now with more channel options! Ask us today about **SkyBest TV NOW** Max & Ultra line-ups!

70 Years  
Connecting Technology & Community: 1951-2021

[www.skybest.com/now](http://www.skybest.com/now)

\*Restrictions apply. SkyBest Internet 12 Mbps or faster speed is required. Visit website for more details.