

## SkyBest Brings Fiber-Optic Technology to Downtown Blowing Rock



Local, state and federal elected officials join the Blowing Rock Chamber and business community in welcoming SkyBest as a new telecom provider to the town.



SkyLine's Edward Hinson said that as local, community-based provider, SkyLine/SkyBest is able to serve areas that the larger companies cannot because they are beholden first and foremost to their shareholders.

SkyBest Communications, the wholly-owned subsidiary of SkyLine Membership Corporation, celebrated its arrival in Blowing Rock with a ribbon-cutting hosted by the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce in front of Memorial Park. With several civic, government and business leaders in attendance – including N.C. State House Representative and U.S. Congresswoman Virginia Foxx – the ceremony provided an official introduction of SkyBest and its parent company's legacy of bringing state-of-the-art technology to the region.

During opening remarks at the ribbon-cutting event, SkyLine PR Administrator Karen Powell alluded to SkyLine's nearly 70-year history that was organized by local residents and brought critical telephone

connections to areas of five rural counties in northwest NC and east Tennessee where existing telephone companies refused to serve, and how SkyLine/SkyBest's current efforts to bring fiber to Blowing Rock and other communities mirror the cooperative's original mission. "Our work to get fiber to more and more communities is as critical now as bringing telephone service to the region was decades ago," she said. "While technology is our first priority, our cooperative is also strongly engaged with and supportive of the communities we serve. We hope our founders would be proud of these efforts."

SkyLine Chief Marketing and Sales Officer Edward Hinson, added, "Blowing Rock is a natural fit for us. Even with a bustling downtown, the deficiencies in broadband communication services really stood out. Working with the community, we were able to make a business case for bringing fiber here. We aren't investing in yesterday's technology. Bringing just 10-15-20 Mbps service to a customer doesn't cut it anymore. We're bringing symmetrical Gig-level speeds – both ways (uploading and downloading). That's taking us into the future, meeting the demands that have been created by advances in technology."

Both Hinson and Powell referenced what a fiber-based telecommunications infrastructure means for the region now, where work-from-home and learn-from-home options have become a necessity during COVID-19, and the economic impact it will have in the future. Even before COVID-19, SkyLine has participated in regional efforts to further develop a telework economy by

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## Featuring Contact-free Pick-up and Drop-off Help Us "Rise & Shine" to Fight Hunger!

Recognizing that the need to support local initiatives to minimize food insecurity is greater than ever with the added stresses of COVID-19, SkyLine has created a way to continue its annual breakfast food drive for area food pantries. Now in its seventh year, and beginning this month through October, our "Rise & Shine" food drive will accept donations of non-perishable breakfast items at our five Customer Center locations, and we're providing a contact-free way with a new "Rise & Shine" display area for customers to pick up their complimentary shopping tote and later drop off the items they purchase.



Beginning this month and while supplies last, all SkyLine/SkyBest customer service centers will have totes available for pick-up inside the entryways to our facilities in Boone, Sparta and the West Jefferson Call Center. At our Banner Elk and West Jefferson Smart Home locations, the totes will be available just inside each building's front entrance. Food items also will be received in those same locations – just place the grocery items in the special bin provided. We welcome all sizes of packaged breakfast food, including individually-sealed cereals, oatmeal and fruit items that can be included in area backpack initiatives for children. See related list of suggested non-perishable items. As our thank-you, please keep the tote for future use, and SkyLine will make delivery of these items to area food pantries, including the Solid Rock Food Closet, Ashe County Sharing Center Pantries, the Hunger and Health Coalition, Reaching Avery Ministry and the Northeast Tennessee Mobile Food Pantry in early November.

Just one food pantry announced recently that there's been more than 100-percent increase in food needs in that county alone, so help through this drive could not come at a better time. SkyLine is both humbled and grateful to be among the cadre of support, including numerous individuals, churches and local organizations like those listed that are trying to help fill the hunger gaps that continue to exist across the region. We hope you will join us in this critical effort. As a local cooperative, we are reminded that the seventh cooperative principle is "concern for community." For more information about the food drive, please call your local SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Service Center at 118. Thank you!

### Directory Omissions

<b>Ashe Animal Clinic</b>	605 East Main Street, Jefferson	336-246-2341
<b>Ashe High Country Realty</b>	7 S Jefferson Ave., West Jefferson	336-246-6348

## 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, September 7  
SkyLine Offices will be closed for the Labor Day Holiday

#### 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



SkyLine's Karen Powell shares the company's legacy of bringing state-of-the-art technology to rural northwest NC and east Tennessee.

leveraging the fiber assets now in place. SkyLine was among the first rural based telecommunications providers to attain Gig-capable status as early as 2015 and being recognized as a Smart Rural Community National Award Winner in 2016 by NTCA – the Rural Broadband Association.

SkyLine/SkyBest worked with the Town of Blowing Rock for more than two years in putting together the partnership to bring fiber technology here.

"SkyLine/SkyBest's willingness to put a hub here in Blowing Rock," "which they worked with the Town to locate over by Fire Station 1, was a tremendous investment on their behalf," said Blowing Rock Town Manager Shane Fox. "It shows that they plan to be here for quite some time. The end goal, for the citizens, businesses and visitors is the very best of broadband services that are provided right now. That is very significant for a town of Blowing Rock's size. It is a great partnership, locally, in providing these broadband services."

While SkyLine/SkyBest's new broadband services are currently available on Main Street and up Sunset Drive, plans are to eventually offer the fiber-optic based broadband capability to all areas of Blowing Rock.

## SkyLine Recognized with Marketing Excellence Award

NTCA—The Rural Broadband Association awarded seven member companies, including SkyLine, with Marketing eXcellence Awards 3 during the 2020 NTCA Marketing + Sales Virtual Conference in June.

The annual awards program honors excellence in member telco marketing, sales and public relations. Entries in seven categories – marketing campaign, PR campaign, website redesign, sales strategy, publications, branding project and broadcast advertising – were judged on innovative strategies, design, writing, creativity and other elements specific to each category. The award winners were highlighted in the virtual "Solutions eXchange" exhibit hall throughout the conference, and a video depicting their work was shared on the NTCA website, social media and digital newsletters. The winning entries reflect campaigns that took place in 2019.

SkyLine received recognition in the "Sales Strategy" category for connecting with its customer base on a personal level through a holiday-themed campaign with recognizable tag lines from "The Grinch" movie to introduce internet speed offerings and upsell TV in its fiber-optic areas.

"I would like to congratulate all of the 2019 Marketing eXcellence Award winners for their incredible work," said NTCA Chief Executive Officer Shirley Bloomfield. "The marketing efforts of NTCA member companies play a critical role in educating consumers and raising awareness of communications technologies, services, initiatives and issues that impact the vitality of rural communities – all of which are extraordinarily important right now. Their work is truly impressive."

Winning entries include campaigns that encourage the adoption of cloud-based services, public safety awareness messaging on the dangers of texting while driving and creative video and radio ads to name a few.



*Deliver non-perishable items to SkyLine between September 1 - October 31*

### SUGGESTED ITEMS

Oatmeal  
Whole-grain Cereals  
Hot Cereals  
Cream of Wheat  
Grits  
Gravy Mixes  
Pancake Mixes  
Muffin Mixes  
Granola Bars  
Syrup  
Fruit Juice Packs  
Canned or Dried Fruits  
Jam  
Powdered Milk  
Coffee  
Hot Chocolate  
Pop-Tarts

### Items will benefit:

Solid Rock Food Closet  
Ashe Outreach Ministries  
Hunger and Health Coalition  
Reaching Avery Ministry  
Second Harvest Food Bank of  
Northeast Tennessee Mobile Food Pantry

### Recipe of the Month

## Hot Dog Chili, West Virginia Style

### Ingredients:

1 pint water  
1 pound hamburger  
1 cup ketchup  
1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder  
1 teaspoon garlic powder  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1/2 to 1 teaspoon mustard  
1 teaspoon salt

### Instructions:

Mix water and hamburger. Bring to boil. Cook until thick or hamburger is done. Add rest of ingredients. Cook until thick, about a half hour more.

Recipe submitted by James Bingham of Alleghany Co. He credits the recipe to Linda Louk Mahoney, Cutright Family Cookbook.



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skybest.com

\*Certain restrictions may apply. Expires 10/31/2020. 24-month service agreement and an early termination fee applies for each service ordered. New internet and/or TV customers only. Available in fiber-served communities only. Advertised price is for residential customers. Call for business rates.