

JANUARY 2020



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FRS Scholarship Program Announces New Online Application for 2020

If you have a son or daughter graduating from high school this spring, he or she may be eligible for the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship sponsored locally by SkyLine Membership Corporation.

In 2020, the FRS will award one-year scholarships in each geographic region of the NTCA membership to graduating high school seniors whose families are served by NTCA member organizations. For each FRS general scholarship, FRS provides \$2,000 and the sponsoring NTCA member company provides \$500.

In addition to the FRS general scholarships, FRS has the following named scholarships*

- Staurulakis Family Scholarships
- TMS Scholarships
- Everett Kneece Scholarship
- Roger Alan Cox Memorial Scholarships
- Good Neighbor Scholarship
- Herbert and Isabel Bitz Memorial Scholarship

*Submitting one application is sufficient for eligibility of all available scholarships.

According to the FRS, more than two-thirds of rural Americans with postsecondary degrees never return to their rural communities, so this program gives particular emphasis to those students who plan to return to their community following college. Eligibility requirements

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Making Christmas a Little Brighter

During the Christmas holidays, SkyLine employees joined with many others in the community by reaching out to those in need. Through their generosity and participation as sponsors of the Ashe County Interagency Children's Christmas Project, which collectively provided presents for more than 850 children, some of our employees provided presents for 10 local children ranging from toddlers to teenagers.

This same expression of giving helped brighten the holidays for 20 senior citizens through employees' support of Project Star through Appalachian Senior Programs. This program benefited over 200 individuals in Ashe County this Christmas.

Our employees based in Alleghany and Avery counties supported families facing health issues. Our Watauga employees provided Christmas to a family who recently suffered the loss of a parent.

While our staff regularly give generously of their time and resources to our employee-funded crisis relief program, Project Teamwork, and other area charities, it is always meaningful to show our support to local families during the Christmas season. We also thank you, our members, for your support of our efforts for local charities and for all you do for other charitable organizations throughout the year.

"Rise & Shine" Boosts Breakfast Collections for Area Food Pantries

Thanks to your involvement, our sixth annual "Rise and Shine" Breakfast Drive, held in September and October, collected more than 1,850 non-perishable breakfast foods this year to share with area food pantries.

Sadly, more than one in seven adults and one in five children are considered food insecure across our region. "Rise & Shine" brings immediate relief to area families and helps to restock area pantry shelves and replenish backpack initiatives, and we remain grateful for your support.



Hunger & Health Coalition



Solid Rock Food Closet



Ashe County Sharing Center



Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee



Reaching Avery Ministry



SkyLine's aerial crews are installing fiber-optic lines in new areas beyond the co-op's traditional service area, including plans to provide fiber connectivity to businesses in Blowing Rock.

With the 2016 construction phase completion of the cooperative's Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) initiative, SkyLine officials wasted no time pursuing ways to extend fiber connectivity to communities outside of its traditional footprint, including areas that were either underserved or unserved.

Over the past few years and through SkyLine's wholly-owned subsidiary, SkyBest Communications, Inc., fiber services have been extended to the Lenoir business community downtown and along Highway 321 and to more of the Boone business commu-

nity along Business 321, including the medical district, on Highway 105 and to several multiple dwelling unit (MDU) properties for student housing across Boone. The town of Mountain City is now connected to fiber through SkyBest,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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WORTH NOTING:

FRS Scholarship Applications Available Now Online

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include the following:

- Applicants must be children of SkyLine members or SkyBest customers who subscribe to either company's facilities-based services.
- Applicants must be graduating high school seniors and reside full-time with their parent(s) in the companies' service area.
- Applicants must have at least a C grade-point-average (GPA). FRS scholarships will be awarded to deserving students whose academic credentials fall within an average to above-average range.
- Applicants must be accepted to an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school.
- Applicants must express an interest to return to a rural community following graduation.
- Applications must be sponsored by SkyLine, an NTCA-member company.

Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligible for this scholarship.

Visit www.FRS.org/student for full instructions on how to create an account and for all necessary materials required.

If you have additional questions about the FRS Scholarship, please contact Karen Powell at SkyLine's corporate offices at 1-800-759-2226.

Directory Publisher Extends Directory to 15-Month Schedule

The directory publisher for SkyLine's regional telephone directory, Thryv (formerly known as DexYP), has extended the current directory to a 15-month schedule. This change means that the new 2020 regional directory will be published in March 2020 and run through May 2021.

As we learn more details about the 2020 Directory Sales campaign, we'll pass that information on to you. With the directory delivery schedule moved to spring 2020, the annual Directory Collection Drive will commence after the new directory is published.

MAKING FIBER A REALITY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

including local government, businesses in and around the downtown area and to residents close to downtown.

There are still many communities in and around the High Country region that lack basic broadband connectivity, and SkyLine has made it a priority to address this concern by researching and applying for grant funding to construct fiber in those areas. "As the funding mechanisms for broadband expansion initiatives vary by cycle, we continue to pursue such opportunities on the state and federal level to serve broad, yet remote, areas where there is a profound lack of broadband availability to businesses and residents," said Chief Marketing and Sales Officer Edward Hinson. "SkyLine also is committing additional resources to move organically and incrementally into neighboring communities within our five-county area but outside of SkyLine's cooperative footprint to help bridge the fiber gap."

In 2019, SkyLine constructed fiber facilities along Highway 105 in the Linville community of Avery County and further into SkyBest's CLEC footprint in Ashe County. Communities now served by SkyBest include the Helen Blevins Road area of West Jefferson, the Jefferson business district along Highway 88 and near the Ashe/Watauga county line in Deep Gap. Additional construction is now underway along Highway 163 in West Jefferson and in the downtown area of Blowing Rock.

SkyLine Telephone Membership Corporation Statement of Nondiscrimination

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Recipe of the Month

Pesto Pizza

Ingredients:

1/2 cup pesto
1 12" Italian bread shell (Boboli)
3 medium tomatoes, thinly sliced
1 2 1/4 ounce can sliced pitted ripe olives, well drained
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

Instructions:

Place bread shell on large pizza pan. Spread pesto evenly over bread shell. Top with tomato slices. Sprinkle with olives and pepper. Top with cheese. Bake at 425° for 10-15 minutes until cheese is bubbly. Cut into wedges.

Submitted by Marsha Walters of Ashe Co.



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Our employees based in Alleghany, Watauga and Avery counties provided Christmas funds for individual families facing health crises.



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*Some restrictions apply. SkyBest internet subscribers will pay only \$14.95 per month.