

BUSINESS connections



No Loafing Around at Stick Boy Bread Company



Management

Kim Shepherd
Chief Executive Officer

Business Sales Department Contact Information

1-844-SKYBEST
businessolutions@skyline.org

Robin Miller

Inside Sales Coordinator
Ashe, Alleghany & Avery
Counties; Mountain City, TN
robin.miller@skyline.org

Hollie Brown

Inside Sales Coordinator
Lenoir, NC & Watauga County
hollie.brown@skyline.org

Corporate Office

1200 NC Hwy 194 N,
West Jefferson, NC 28694

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, electronic, photocopying, recording, mechanical or otherwise without the prior written permission of SkyLine/SkyBest. All rights are reserved. Copyright ©2023 by SkyLine Membership Corp. and SkyBest Communications, Inc. and Cornerstone Publishing Group, Inc.

Trademarks

All brand names and product names used in this publication are trade names, service marks, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Additional Issues

Extra issues are available to business customers on a limited basis while supplies last. Contact Robin Miller at 1-844-SKYBEST.

Postmaster Send Changes To

Allyson Hart
Marketing Specialist
SkyLine/SkyBest
PO Box 759
West Jefferson, NC 28694



BUSINESS connections

What's on your plate this spring? In other words, what projects are on your to-do list? If your plate is overflowing, remember that SkyLine/SkyBest offers communications tools that can help you and your team work more efficiently.

For example, does your list include reducing the amount of time you need to spend on Wi-Fi issues? Don't miss **6 Reasons to Have Us Manage Your Wi-Fi** on page 6. Perhaps this is one item we can take off your plate.

The plate theme for this *Business Connections* issue was inspired by the **Business Spotlight on Stick Boy Bread Company** on pages 4 and 5. Fair warning—after reading about this company's delectable menu of baked goods, you'll probably want to put some of them on your plate soon. The SkyLine/SkyBest team enjoys its share of the pastries and also enjoys providing Stick Boy Bread Company with internet and phone services.

I hope you've left room on your plate for learning. On page 3, you'll discover why **It's High Time to Celebrate High Country Tourism**, and on page 7, why **Fiber Connectivity Increases Commercial Property Values**.

As always, please contact SkyLine/SkyBest whenever you have questions or need help.



Sincerely,

Kim Shepherd
Chief Executive Officer

ON THE COVER:

The Stick Boy and SkyLine/SkyBest teams pose in Stick Boy's Bakery location. From left to right: Stick Boy Production Manager and Pastry Chef, Brandon Kop; Stick Boy Bakery General Manager, Michelle Bollman; Stick Boy Bread Company Owners, Mindy Coatney and Carson Coatney; Stick Boy Kitchen General Manager, Lisa Pearce; Stick Boy Bread Company Manager, Abby Willis; SkyLine/SkyBest Inside Sales Coordinator, Hollie Brown; SkyLine/SkyBest Business Sales Executives Haleigh Hogg and Zara Worley.

It's High Time to Celebrate High Country Tourism



PHOTOGRAPHY CREDIT: TODD BUSH

In 2023, National Travel and Tourism Week is celebrated May 7-13. It's a time to recognize the U.S. travel community and travel's essential role in stimulating economic growth, cultivating vibrant communities, creating quality job opportunities, inspiring new businesses and elevating the quality of life for Americans.

North Carolina ranks No. 5 in domestic visitation, and our state's tourism industry is bouncing back well from pandemic-stricken 2020. Since the High Country offers so much for tourists — and it's part of the SkyLine/SkyBest service area — we wanted to take this opportunity to promote some of its towns and attractions.

HighCountryHost.com provided these fast facts and accolades:

Blue Ridge Parkway includes more than 120 miles in the High Country and features the most photographed and visited spots of this national park.

Banner Elk is home of the Woolly Worm Festival, named one of the top American Festivals by *National Geographic*.

Beech Mountain is the highest town in Eastern America, with an elevation of 5,506 feet. Its temperatures rarely exceed 72 degrees. Travelchannel.com gave its Best Year Round Recreation title to Beech Mountain for its biking and skiing.

Blowing Rock was voted "One of America's Prettiest Winter Towns" by *Travel & Leisure*. Charity Horse Show was designated

a heritage competition by the US Equestrian Federation. Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival was named a Southeast Tourism Society Top 20 Event.

Boone has a county population of over 50,000 and ranked fourth on *Forbes* list of "America's Fastest Growing Towns." Rocky Knob Park has over 8 miles of biking trails and made the VeloNews list of Ultimate Ride Hotspots.

Linville is home of Grandfather Mountain, an international biosphere reserve, featuring over 73 rare or endangered species. The Orchard at Altapass located along the Blue Ridge Parkway can trace its history back to the Cherokee tribes.

West Jefferson won the NC Small Town Main Street Award for its efforts in making the town an attractive destination for tourists. Ashe County Cheese Factory, the Carolina's oldest cheese plant, is located in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

If you know someone looking for outdoor adventure and cultural heritage, invite them to the High Country!



Stick Boy baker places fresh Irish soda bread on cooling racks in Stick Boy's new production facility.

Stick Boy Bread Company

This local company knows the recipe for success

While yeast gives rise to bread dough, the growth of Stick Boy Bread Company also required other ingredients—a couple's idea to start a bakery, a passion to develop better products and a remarkable team of creative and hard-working employees.

More than 20 Years of Growth

Owners Mindy Coatney and Carson Coatney established Stick Boy Bread Company in Boone in 2001. He said, "Mindy and I started with two employees: her sister, Abby Willis, and one of the groomsmen in our wedding, Brandon Kop. We initially worked in one-third of the building we currently occupy on Hardin Street across from campus, with a laundromat in the rest of the building. In the beginning, we only sold breakfast pastries, bread and drip coffee. Now we have hundreds of different bakery items, a restaurant, a wholesale program and full-service event catering. And Stick Boy Bread Company grew from two employees to 120."

The location at 345 Hardin Street is the company's to-go bakery setting, where you can purchase bread, bagels, muffins, scones, croissants, danish, coffee cakes, biscuits, cookies and desserts. Special occasion cakes can be ordered online. For customers wanting a sit-down restaurant, Stick Boy Kitchen at 211 Boone Heights Drive offers a menu including made-to-order soups, salads and sandwiches.

Cookies, Coffee and Connections

Stick Boy Bread Company and SkyLine/SkyBest have a neighborly and mutually beneficial relationship. Stick Boy Bread Company gets its business internet and phone services from us, and we buy pastries and coffee for local events from them.

How would Coatney describe the services and support from SkyLine/SkyBest? He replied, "We've been extremely happy with SkyLine/SkyBest's internet and phone. We've had way fewer outages than we used to with cable internet, and our speeds are faster with a lower overall bill. It's great knowing that we're working with a local company. When we need something, we can call SkyLine/SkyBest and talk to someone who knows us and really wants to help."

Giving Back, Moving Forward

Speaking of helping, Stick Boy Bread Company has always given back to the community. A recent Facebook post mentioned a \$1,000 donation to the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in Greensboro.

“We’ve been blessed by our community so much over the last 20 plus years that it just feels natural to want to come alongside organizations working hard to bring about positive change. In addition to donating products and gift cards to fundraisers and community events, Stick Boy Bread Company has developed really strong partnerships with several organizations during our history,” said Coatney.

He continued, “For example, Blue Ridge Conservancy is doing amazing work protecting land and expanding trail and river access, and we’ve been proud to be the naming sponsor of the Blue Ridge Conservancy 5K every September for the last 15 plus years. We started a Stick Boy Scholarship Fund at Appalachian State University, which we continue to fund for growth. Every semester, this scholarship helps a student from traditionally underrepresented groups or a first-generation student. To increase awareness and bring our customers and staff into the conversation, Stick Boy Bread Company also has a week during September each year when we allow customers and employees to pick local organizations to receive donations from us. In the last few years, this list has included a variety of organizations such as Western Youth Network, Farm Cafe, Oasis, and Hope Pregnancy Resource Center.”

Clearly, Stick Boy Bread Company’s team works with warm hearts as well as hot ovens.



SkyLine/SkyBest's Haleigh Hogg poses with Stick Boy Owners Mindy Coatney and Carson Coatney at the bakery location.

Want a \$10 Stick Boy Bread Company Gift Card?

It's easy to earn this “dough” for bread and more at Stick Boy Bread Company. Simply contact Haleigh at haleigh.hogg@skyline.org or Zara at zara.worley@skyline.org by June 30, 2023 to request a bill audit. We'll review your current services and ensure your business is operating as efficiently as possible.



You Need It All From Your Internet Connection

Every business must have a fast and reliable internet connection to function effectively, since essential activities—including online research, emails, video conferences, and POS systems—depend on it. If your internet isn't working well, neither are you!

Fortunately, SkyBest Business Class Internet provides everything you need and more:

Fastest Speeds in the Area

Due to our fiber-optic network, we offer internet speeds up to 2 Gig, equivalent to 2,000 Mbps. Are you ready for a speed upgrade?

Maximum Reliability

Better uptime means a better bottom line. With SkyBest Business Class Internet, you'll have a dedicated connection, not shared with other subscribers, for maximum reliability and NO peak hour slowdowns.

Symmetrical Internet Speeds

With all of our internet plans, your upload speed will be as fast as your download. So your employees will have the speed they need, no matter which direction the data is flowing.

Knowledgeable Local Support

Our team takes your success personally and is always ready to help.

To learn more about SkyBest Business Class Internet, visit www.skybest.com/business.

1
2
3
4
5
6



6 Reasons to Have Us Manage Your Wi-Fi

Your business needs to have a Wi-Fi network. So the real question becomes this: Should you handle Wi-Fi as a do-it-yourself project or should you go with a managed Wi-Fi service?

We offer SkyBest Managed Wi-Fi, and here are good reasons to choose it:

1. Specifically designed for a business environment. We use powerful Wi-Fi 6 technology and commercial-grade access points, which provide stronger and more secure signals than the consumer-grade variety. In addition, the access points in a managed system are linked, ensuring that you always have the best possible connection with edge-to-edge coverage.

2. Offers low, predictable costs. We maintain and enhance the Wi-Fi service for you, so there are no surprise maintenance, upgrade or replacement fees.

3. Eliminates the hassles of trying to do your own installation, maintenance and troubleshooting. As a business owner or manager, you have enough on your plate. Your time is much better spent focusing on your core business activities rather than trying to be your own “tech support” whenever someone has a Wi-Fi issue. When you choose SkyBest Managed Wi-Fi, you get 24x7 technical support from a local company you know and trust.

4. Easily accommodates your growing needs. The flexible infrastructure can grow as your business grows. Need additional coverage? No problem! We can easily add additional access points for a low monthly fee. We can also add a guest network to keep your business and customer traffic separate and highly secure.

5. Features cloud-based management. We manage everything via our cloud-based solution, which provides simplified configuration, ongoing control and automatic coordination of network equipment. The system marries the best of the centralized controller model with state-of-the-art advances in radio frequency (RF) engineering such as beam steering, RF management and interference avoidance delivered via “Smart Wi-Fi” antenna technology.

6. Gives you peace of mind. You won’t have to worry about security, since you’ll know your wireless connection is professionally installed with all appropriate security measures in place.

To discuss how SkyBest Managed Wi-Fi can benefit your business, call 1-844-SKYBEST.

Fiber Connectivity Increases Commercial Property Values

Tenants want access to fast and reliable broadband

Conventional wisdom says the three most important factors in real estate are “location, location, location.” While location still matters in choosing a commercial property, fiber connectivity may soon make its way onto that famous list due to its impact on tenant demand and valuation.

Did you know some buildings are now rated based on their WiredScore? That’s the digital connectivity rating system for real estate used by leading landlords in 12 countries, and the WiredScore score can impact the value of the property. In fact, fiber connectivity has been found to increase the value of physical real estate by a few percentage points.

Connectivity to be Competitive

The importance of fiber connectivity has increased substantially as high-speed internet went from being a “nice to have” item to being an “I can’t live without it” essential for prospective residents and commercial tenants. From now on, most commercial property will need to offer fiber connectivity to be competitive in the marketplace. After all, people are working with many times more data on more devices than they did several years ago, so bandwidth is a major concern.

Tenants now expect fast and reliable broadband as much as they expect adequate power, heating, air conditioning and parking. For commercial properties, the availability of fiber connectivity can even make or break a rental agreement. This isn’t surprising, since fiber connectivity enables employees and work-from-home residents to confidently perform critical work and stay connected.

Businesses can operate much more efficiently in buildings with access to next-generation Gig internet—with its symmetrical download and upload speeds and 99.9% reliability.

Benefits Beyond the Tenants

It’s not only the tenants in a commercial property who benefit from fiber connectivity. Developers and commercial property owners benefit as well. In addition to the positive impact on tenant demand and valuation, fiber connectivity can help them improve building security since fiber cables are far less vulnerable to cyberattacks. Fiber also enables the expanded use of smart thermostats and lighting as well as other Internet of Things (IoT) technologies to increase building efficiency and reduce costs.

What’s more, the community at large reaps rewards when commercial properties within it offer fiber connectivity. It aids in economic growth by helping to attract new businesses and residents and support the growth of existing businesses.

SkyLine/SkyBest offers a range of business fiber-optic plans with speeds up to 2 Gigs. To learn more, visit www.skybest.com/business.



Meet Our Team

Front L to R: Zara Worley & Haleigh Hogg
Back L to R: Hollie Brown, Brent Keith & Robin Miller

We're thankful for the opportunity to serve you.

Gigabit Broadband | Managed Wi-Fi
Hosted Business Phone Systems | TV



1-844-SKYBEST