

## 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:

Thursday, November 23  
Thanksgiving Holiday  
All SkyLine/SkyBest  
Customer Centers Will  
Be Closed

### STAFF:

Kim Shepherd  
Chief Executive Officer  
Brian Tester  
Chief Operations Officer  
Angie Poe  
Customer Service Manager  
Jamey Jenkins  
Retail Sales Manager  
Edward Hinson  
Chief Marketing & Sales Officer  
Hallie Grubb  
Public Relations Administrator



www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest

## Economic Development in Watauga County



"I am proud that so many people in Watauga know who we are and want our service," Chief Technology Officer, Robbie Farmer, states. "It's a good feeling to know that the work we do helps people."

Helping others remained a common theme as Farmer described the joint effort between SkyLine/SkyBest and Blue Ridge Energy to provide 160 miles of fiber to unserved and underserved areas in Watauga County. Neither company was willing to pass up an opportunity to better the lives of people in these rural communities.

Farmer played a key role in making the dream of reliable internet service a reality for many Watauga County residents. Not only did he work to help secure monies from the Watauga American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to fund the project, he also helped assure Watauga County commissioners that going with SkyLine was the correct decision.

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## Working Together The Importance of Community

SkyLine Telephone Membership Corporation began with a group of community members and a need for technology. Seventy-two years later those same elements continue to be the foundation of and driving force behind SkyLine Membership Corporation and SkyBest Communications.

As a member-owned co-op, SkyLine aligns itself with the Seven Cooperative Principles, a group of principles and values adopted by the Cooperative Alliance in 1995. The seventh of these principles is "Concern for Community." SkyLine honors this principle in numerous ways, from providing need-based scholarships and youth leadership opportunities to entities that improve and sustain the quality of life of our communities.

Perhaps some of our favorite ways that we honor this principle is through events and fundraisers that would not be possible without the involvement of you and our community. It is through this partnership and trust that we, both directly and indirectly, can witness the full impact of a community working together.

### Here are some ways that you have helped us give back:

#### 1. SkyChange

Established in 2020, SkyChange is a customer round-up program. Customers who sign up will have their monthly bill rounded to the nearest dollar. Each quarter, funds from this program are donated to a local nonprofit organization. Through this partnership, SkyLine has made

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## SkyLine Sponsors Ashe Chamber's "Outrageously Good" Customer Service Awards

The Ashe Chamber of Commerce presented its annual "Outrageously Good" Customer Service Awards event, held at West Jefferson United Methodist Church's Hensley Hall on October 11. SkyLine's own Teresa Penagar was one of 18 individuals, three departments and one local business recognized at this event, which celebrates the very best in customer service.

SkyLine/SkyBest has been the presenting sponsor of this annual recognition event since the program started in 2009. We applaud all winners and are delighted to recognize each and every one! It's part of SkyLine's mission to 'enable a culture of excellence in customer service' and our team of dedicated employees aspire to honor that mission on a daily basis.

Please congratulate these individuals and businesses when you see them throughout our local business community.



Teresa Sexton,  
Ashe Memorial  
Hospital

Whitney Owens,  
Ashe Memorial  
Hospital

Dustin Absher,  
Ashe Memorial  
Hospital

Jennifer Walters,  
Blue Ridge Energy



John Dean,  
Ramblin' Poppy

Maggi Birdsell,  
Elevation Health

Catie Howell,  
Molley Chomper

Conrad Tlacker,  
Carolina Country  
Wines



Crystal Ham,  
Rhodies Parkway  
Restaurant

Tori Rash and Heather Edwards,  
Ashe Family Healthcare

Amy Welch and Cathy Finley,  
First Citizens Bank



Izzy Phipps,  
The Dough Shed

Department Winner:  
Ashe County Volunteer Initiative

Department Winner,  
Ashe Memorial Hospital Café



Natalie Lea,  
Ashe Chamber of  
Commerce

Department Winner,  
Mountain Hearts Wellness

Business Winner, River Girl Fishing  
Co. Not Pictured: Madison Weaver  
of Madi's and Tracie Elliott of Ashe  
Family Healthcare

"My role was really to help pitch the case that we were the right team," Farmer declares. "If they'd get us the ball, we'd score."

Score may be an understatement. Farmer conveyed pride in his team as he recalled SkyLine/SkyBest receiving the green light to begin building fiber-optic facilities. The efficient work of the crews allowed for the construction of around 85 miles of fiber in less than a year and a half.

Farmer feels confident that this project will further economic growth in the region. While acknowledging that it is still early in the process, he believes having a viable broadband option will be pivotal for businesses in the upcoming years.

"We were hearing it all the time. It was more difficult for realtors and landowners to sell their property because there was not an adequate broadband story," Farmer attests. "Now that we're building fiber to this area, there is going to be a very good broadband story to tell."

Farmer is convinced that "Fiber-to-the-Premise" will be a solution to this issue, as access to trustworthy internet makes properties preferable and more attractive. Furthermore, he believes the fiber build will give small, run-from-home businesses a new advantage.

"They won't be playing second fiddle to someone who has a better internet connection. They're going to have a world-class internet connection that can help them facilitate their business," Farmer proclaims.

There is an obvious push for economic development in this area, and Farmer felt honored that Watauga County trusted SkyLine/SkyBest and Blue Ridge Energy to help meet that need.

"The commissioners were 100 percent unanimous when they voted to give us the ARPA monies," Farmer reports. "Just their confidence in us to be able to pull this off really makes you feel good."

WORKING TOGETHER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a donation to homeless shelters, food banks, crisis pregnancy centers, heating assistance programs and so much more. If you are interested in joining our effort to help those in our community, or simply learning more, see [www.skybest.com/skychange2023](http://www.skybest.com/skychange2023).

2. "Rise & Shine" Food Drive

Sadly, food insecurity is a major area of concern for many communities across our service area. Consulting with area food pantries, SkyLine learned of the pressing need for breakfast food items, particularly since they cost more. Each October, customers have the opportunity to pick up a reusable grocery bag from their local SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Center and fill it with breakfast food items. Customers can then return their filled bags to the Customer Center, and SkyLine will distribute to the local food pantry. To learn more about the organizations we donate to, see [www.skybest.com/local](http://www.skybest.com/local).

3. Various Local Fundraisers

As a local organization, SkyLine employees see fundraisers, both big and small, happening throughout the community. Because you share with a friend or post on social media, we are able to take part in a number of fundraisers that we might not have had the opportunity to. Whether that be a BBQ lunch plate fundraiser or any kind of raffle ticket, it is often thanks to you and other members of our tight-knit community that these

give-back opportunities are presented to us in the first place.

For us, community is a big deal. While it is a factor that we implement in everything we do, there are a number of community outreach opportunities that are only possible because of you. You have been a partner to us since 1951. For that, we want to say thank you. To read more about our other community initiatives, visit our website at [skybest.com](http://skybest.com).



What is the benefit of having a medical alert service for parents?

When aging parents or loved ones are ready for Medical Alert Service, they are often unable to manage the process of paying a new bill or are living on a fixed income. SkyLine/SkyBest understands and has created the ParentProtect Program to make it easy for adult children to ensure that their parent or loved one receives the Medical Alert Service.

With ParentProtect, your parent or loved one's medical alert service will be billed on your monthly SkyLine/SkyBest bill. There is no additional cost to set up this convenient option. Simply talk with a customer service representative when you sign up for Medical Alert Service.

Recipe of the Month

Pecan Pie

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1 stick margarine
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 unbaked pie shell

Instructions:

Combine all ingredients and pour into pie shell.

Bake at 350° for 30 to 35 minutes.

Recipe submitted by Shirley Holman



"Outrageously Good" Customer Service Awards

SkyLine Customer Service Representative Teresa Penegar, pictured with SkyLine PR Administrator Hallie Grubb and Chamber Member Services Committee Chair Rita Schafer, was among several local individuals recognized at the Ashe Chamber's "Outrageously Good" Customer Service Awards event in October.



**SkyBest Medical Alert**

**\$24.95/mo.**

*No Contract. No Upfront Costs.*

**SKYBEST.COM 1-800-759-2226**

\*Some restrictions apply.