

October is National Co-op Month

Celebrated by more than 40,000 cooperatives nationwide during the month of October, National Co-op Month is an annual opportunity to raise awareness of a trusted, proven way to do business and build communities. Under the theme "Co-ops Build Economic Power," this year's Co-op Month is also a chance to lift up the cooperative business model as the best way to build an economy that empowers everyone.

Recognizing the important role that cooperatives like SkyLine play as a rural telecom leader, contributor to the regional economy and the investments they make to strengthen rural communities, this year's theme closely aligns with the work SkyLine does. Having achieved a Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) deployment across the co-op's service area in 2016, SkyLine continues to expand fiber connectivity to unserved and underserved areas through SkyBest, its wholly-owned subsidiary. This advanced infrastructure was critical not only during a pandemic where virtual access was essential for business, education and healthcare, but it's also making a generational impact, ensuring greater prosperity for rural areas well into the future.

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State of Tennessee Names SkyBest and Loretto Among 36 Grantees to Receive Significant Grants for Broadband Expansion

SkyLine's two subsidiary companies – SkyBest Communications, Inc. and Loretto Telecom – were recently named recipients of \$13.09 million in total grant awards through the Tennessee Emergency Broadband Fund – American Rescue Plan for fiber deployment projects in Johnson, Carter and Lawrence counties. With matching funds provided by SkyBest and Loretto, the \$18 million project will include 356 miles of fiber construction with the potential to serve more than 4,050 homes and businesses.

Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) Commissioner Stuart McWhorter announced on September 12 that the state will award \$446,770,282 in grants for the expansion of internet access across the state of Tennessee.

In total, the broadband infrastructure grants will provide broadband access to more than 150,000 unserved homes and businesses across 58 counties.

When You Need to Spread the Word, SkyLine's CallTree Service Can Deliver Your Message

CallTree is an automated messaging service that can deliver phone calls, emails and even text messages. Ideal for schools, churches, small businesses, restaurants and other organizations, it allows you to transform your phone and broadband into a dynamic messaging service. What makes CallTree so valuable is that it allows the user to deliver a timely, consistent message to groups large and small alike, plus it can be set to make multiple call attempts to reach individuals on your calling list. Contact everyone on your entire list with a single message from your mobile app or your computer and phone. There's also a CallTree app available and can be downloaded on the App Store® and on Google Play™ and is called ManageMyNotify.

Just a few of the possible applications for this convenient automated messaging service include:

- Meeting reminders
- Weather cancellations
- Service changes and outages
- Appointment reminders
- Non-pay reminders
- Marketing & promotions

CallTree App

The new CallTree app is available and can be downloaded on the App Store® and on Google Play™ and is called ManageMyNotify.



Help Us "Rise & Shine" to Fight Hunger!

Recognizing the need to support local initiatives to minimize food insecurity is greater than ever, SkyLine will continue its annual breakfast food drive for area food pantries. Now in its ninth year, and now through October, our "Rise & Shine" food drive will accept donations of non-perishable breakfast items at each of our five Customer Center locations.

While supplies last, all SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Service Centers will have shopping totes available for pick-up. 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 Food Pantry, the Hunger and Health Coalition, Reaching Avery Ministry and the Shady Valley Baptist Church Food Pantry in early November.

SkyLine is grateful to join the community in 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!



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:

SkyLine Annual Meeting
Tuesday, October 4
SkyLine Annex Building
1056 Highway 194
North, West Jefferson

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



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GRANTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“People are moving to Tennessee from across the nation in record numbers, and we have an obligation to prepare our state for continued growth,” said Governor Bill Lee. “Our strategic investments in broadband infrastructure will ensure our rural communities are connected and have every opportunity to thrive, and I thank the Financial Stimulus Accountability Group for managing dollars effectively to serve Tennesseans.”

According to the 2020 Broadband Deployment Report published by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), one in six rural Tennesseans lacks access to broadband. Since 2018, TNECD has awarded nearly \$120 million in broadband grants through state and federal funding to serve more than 140,000 Tennessee households.

“To achieve economic growth and prosperity, it’s imperative that Tennessee’s communities have the proper infrastructure in place,” McWhorter said. “Thanks to the \$447 million awarded in funding, broadband access will be available to 36 grantees with 75 projects across 58 Tennessee counties, and we look forward to seeing how these grants spur further success among each community.”

These grantees are a range of internet service providers, including electrical and telephone cooperatives, local municipalities, private providers and cable companies. These grant recipients were chosen through a rigorous criterion, which included the need of the grant area, the ability to complete the project and strong community support.

“We are absolutely delighted to be named a grant recipient by the State of Tennessee to bring essential fiber connectivity to our neighbors in east and middle Tennessee through this funding initiative,” said SkyLine Chief Executive Officer Kim Shepherd. “Reaching our fiber deployment goal early across SkyLine’s service area positioned us to turn to those unserved and underserved communities nearby, and this significant funding will accelerate our efforts to get these communities connected and further bridge the digital divide that still exists in many communities.”

The grant funds earmarked for Johnson and Carter counties in east Tennessee total \$5.69 million with a total project cost of \$8.5 million with matching funds provided by SkyBest. This project will encompass 256 miles of fiber construction with a potential to serve more than 2,250 homes and businesses.

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What are Cooperatives?

Cooperatives are owned and governed by their members – the same people who use the co-op’s goods or services. Profits are distributed to the members – not stakeholders – or reinvested in the co-op or the community, often meeting needs that might otherwise go unmet. Studies show that consumers want to do business with companies that share their values, making today’s environment ideal for cooperatives and their commitment to the communities in which their members live and work.

This year, SkyLine is organizing its ninth-annual “Rise and Shine” Breakfast Food Drive to help re-stock area food pantry shelves with non-perishable breakfast food items, which are often in short supply. We invite you, our members, to be a part of this region-wide effort that will benefit five area food pantries across our service area. See related article elsewhere in this newsletter for more details.



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 Food Pantry
- Hunger and Health Coalition
- Reaching Avery Ministry
- Shady Valley Baptist Church Food Pantry

Recipe of the Month

Apple Crunch

Ingredients:

- 6 large apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon or nutmeg
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter

Instructions:

Pre-heat oven to 325°. Grease an eight-inch square pan. Spread apples in pan. Top with granulated sugar and sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg. Mix together flour and brown sugar. Cut in butter using pastry cutter or your fingers until mixture resembles coarse meal. Spread over apples. Bake 1 hour; best served with ice cream or whipped cream.

NOTE: I put 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg in mine.

Recipe submitted by Gloria Mahaffey of Ashe County.

Commemorative Cookbook

The recipes we feature in our monthly newsletter come from SkyLine’s commemorative cookbook. At just \$15 each, they make great gifts, and all proceeds will support area food banks.

Visit www.skybest.com or call SkyLine at 118 to order yours.



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