

**BUSINESS**

# connections



**Refreshingly Unique  
Taste Since the 1930s**



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**Additional Issues**

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

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# BUSINESS connections

**We'll get through this together.** The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all of us to support the efforts of our communities to reduce the spread of infection. SkyLine/SkyBest is honored to provide internet service and other communications solutions to keep you connected while staying apart. Please visit [www.SkyBest.com](http://www.SkyBest.com) and our social media accounts for updates.

The importance of community is the theme of this *Business Connections* issue. It begins on page 3 with **The Buy Local Loop**, a reminder of why it's a win-win strategy to keep our dollars close to home whenever possible.

On pages 4 and 5, you'll find the **Business Spotlight on Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson**. This family-owned business is unique in the industry, offering soft drinks made with pure cane sugar instead of high-fructose syrup. It's also a leader in providing generous community support.

We encourage your business to **Pay It Forward by Giving Back**, and we share ideas on ways to do this on page 6, along with an introduction to our new **SkyChange** donation program to benefit local crisis centers. Then on page 7, **SkyLine/SkyBest in the Community** features a few of our recent outreach activities.

I've been inspired by how residents and businesses have responded so far to these unprecedented times. Keep up the good work, and let us know how we can help.



Sincerely,

Kim Shepherd  
Chief Executive Officer

# The Buy Local Loop

*Now more than ever, we need to support small local businesses*

Measures to stay at home and practice social distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19 have dramatically changed buying habits. This presents major challenges to our local business community, particularly to small retail stores, restaurants and service businesses.

While you may not be able to visit some of these establishments as you normally would due to temporary closures, you can still support them. This continues the powerful and positive chain reaction of keeping your dollars local.

Here's how it works:

- 1. You buy local.** Sure, the convenience of online shopping is compelling, and sometimes it even costs less. But consider seeking out the same products from a local business, perhaps by having them delivered or using curbside pickup if the store is not currently open for walk-in customers.
- 2. More business creates more jobs.** When you support those local businesses, you're also supporting neighbors, friends and relatives who can find jobs within them. Small businesses provide over half of all jobs in the U.S., but they can only do it if they keep their doors open. By spending locally, your business does its part to make sure that happens.
- 3. More jobs create more spending power.** With more jobs come more residents who can stay in the local area, ensuring vitality and diversity. These citizens can also afford to spend money locally—supporting the economy, enlarging the tax base and creating a better community with enhanced schools, roads and parks.



- 4. Successful businesses mean support for nonprofits.** Non-profit organizations receive twice as much support from small businesses as from larger ones. So, when you support the local economy, you're also supporting needed services for groups like children, veterans and the elderly.
- 5. Local individuals and businesses support you back.** With a "buy local" mentality in your community, you'll get the benefit, too. If your business provides products or services to consumers, more of them will have the spending power to purchase them. If your company is business-to-business, other companies that need your products or services will seek them out.
- 6. You see the benefit and continue to buy local.** As your business benefits from the positive "buy local loop," you have all the more reason to start the cycle again.

In addition to these benefits, shopping locally reduces environmental impact, ensures a wider variety of shopping options and contributes to community health and diversity. Plus, it's the right thing to do as we all work together to face the challenges before us.

# Dr Pepper Bottling Company

## of West Jefferson

*Pure cane sugar is part of this company's formula for sweet success*



As a brand, Dr Pepper has long been known for being unique. Its advertising slogan in the 1970s was “The Most Original Soft Drink Ever.” Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson also celebrates uniqueness. It’s one of the last remaining facilities that produce national and regional brand soft drinks using pure cane sugar.

### Quality in Every Sip

CEO/Owner Michael Vannoy said, “Several years ago, our competitors discontinued using sugar and moved to processed high-fructose syrup as it was more economical. We chose to only use the highest quality ingredients in all our glass bottle products, so we continued with pure cane sugar. Our customers prefer it due to better taste and fewer allergens.”

The labels on those glass bottle products — filled with Mt. Dew, Dr Pepper, Cheerwine, A&W Rootbeer, 7Up, Sunkist, Canada Dry and RC—feature the unique benefit of being made with pure cane sugar. In all, Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson currently sells 400 SKUs (Stock Keeping Units) including soft drinks, energy drinks, teas, coffees, waters and juice.

“We attribute our continued growth to the quality, premium brands offered through the company. Our niche—pure cane sugar and glass bottles—has expanded our distribution across the country. While Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson

is best known for its Dr Pepper distribution, it’s also unique in the fact that we added the Mountain Dew brand to our franchise in 1965, making us one of only two non-Pepsi franchises bottling in the United States,” explained Vannoy.

He added, “Our success also is due to great, loyal customers!”

### Dedicated People and Powerful Technology

The mission of Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson begins with the phrase, “Performance through people.” Those people include four generations of the Vannoy family (see page 5 for details) and today’s 94 employees.

SkyLine/SkyBest began serving Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson in 2000 by maintaining its phone system. Phone lines and fiber-fed broadband connections were added in 2007, and now SkyLine/SkyBest provides all communications services for the local bottling plant, corporate offices, warehouse and distribution center.

How does Vannoy describe the experience of being a SkyLine/SkyBest business customer? He replied, “We have been blessed to have a great relationship with SkyLine/SkyBest over the years. The high-quality customer service we receive allows our business to be more efficient, and the high-speed broadband enables us to serve our customers in a timely manner. I’d like to express a special thanks to Craig Poe, our service tech, who is always courteous and goes above and beyond to take care of any issues.”

### Helping the Community

No article about Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson would be complete without mentioning its ongoing commitment to giving back. These activities include:

- Product donations to youth and community-based organizations
- Support for the purchase of scoreboards in Ashe County and surrounding school systems
- Sponsorship of youth and adult leagues, hospital fundraisers and other local programs
- Yearly monetary donations to area school systems
- Sponsorship of Christmas in July, Stomp & Brew, Ashe County Bluegrass & Old Time Fiddlers Convention, MerleFest and other events

Let’s all raise a glass — say of Dr Pepper — and toast this uniquely valuable member of our community!



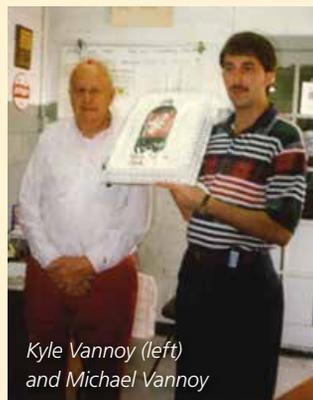
**Center:** Founder H.R. Vannoy

**Bottom (L to R):** Michael’s sons Davis and Noah Vannoy, Michael Vannoy and wife Rita Prevette, Teresa Vannoy Richardson and husband Bill



## Guided by Four Generations of the Vannoy Family

H.R. Vannoy, founder of Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson, got his start in the business in 1931 by working for Coca-Cola Bottling of North Wilkesboro, owned by the family of his wife Ruth McNeil. Ruth passed away at an early age, and H.R. sold his shares of the company back to Ruth’s family. He remarried and relocated with his new wife and two children to Ashe County.



*Kyle Vannoy (left) and Michael Vannoy*

Once in Ashe County, H.R. started several businesses, one being a sub-distributor for Coca-Cola Bottling of Boone. Within a year, a Dr Pepper franchise became available, allowing H.R. to become a

franchisee rather than a sub-distributor. He decided to take a chance on this new endeavor, and it became a profitable business.

In the mid-1940s, H.R.’s daughter Sue and husband Carl Colvard, Sr. took over the daily operations of Dr Pepper Bottling. In 1960, Carl passed away and H.R.’s son, Kyle Vannoy, came on board to help Sue run the family business. In the early 1970s, Sue semi-retired and allowed her son, Frank Colvard, to take over her interest in the business. After the deaths of H.R. and Sue, Frank sold his shares in the business to Kyle. In 1980, Kyle’s son Michael Vannoy became a full-time employee.

Michael is now the CEO/Owner of Dr Pepper Bottling Company of West Jefferson. His son Noah Vannoy joined the company in 2019, making this the fourth generation of the Vannoy family to operate the business. Today, Michael’s sister Teresa Richardson, her husband Bill Richardson and Michael’s nephew Blake Lewis work alongside Michael and Noah.

## Your Spare Change Can Change Lives

SkyLine/SkyBest is excited to announce the creation of SkyChange—a new opportunity for our customers to help neighbors in need by rounding up their monthly bill to the next whole dollar amount. Funds collected through SkyChange will be distributed to crisis centers across our SkyLine/SkyBest service area, but not to individuals directly. SkyLine's employee-led and employee-funded Project Teamwork program addresses crisis relief for individuals across our service area.

Customer donations to SkyChange will not exceed \$11.88 per year. While that's a small amount per person, when it's multiplied by a large number of participating customers those dollars will be able to do big things. The monthly round-up amount will appear on your SkyLine/SkyBest bill as a line item, and in most cases, donations will be tax deductible.

We'll keep everyone informed about the progress of SkyChange via monthly bill messages, social media, customer newsletters and employee communication. Visit [www.skybest.com/SkyChange](http://www.skybest.com/SkyChange) to sign up today.

Thanks in advance for your support of SkyChange!



## Pay It Forward by Giving Back

Giving back is something many businesses already do as part of their mission. It's a way to thank local residents for their support and help make the community a better place to live, work and raise families.

**If your business is looking to change or expand its charitable programs, consider these approaches:**

- 1. Donate and/or match employee donations.** Organizations that help those in need are always looking for donations. Your company can contribute directly, provide a match when your employees make a donation or do something fun like throw a party for employees if a certain dollar amount is reached.
- 2. Volunteer and/or help employees to volunteer.** Discuss with organizations you want to support how your employees could put in hours as a group to help. For example, perhaps your team could spend an afternoon working on a Habitat for Humanity house or cleaning up a local park. Another option is to give your employees a set amount of paid time off per year to volunteer for the nonprofit organizations of their choice.
- 3. Offer your products/services.** Your business could provide products/services for free or at a reduced rate to local nonprofit organizations either for their ongoing use or as raffle items for fundraising events.
- 4. Serve as a "middle man."** You could make your business a drop-off location for donated items during a community food drive or collection of school supplies or holiday gifts. You could also encourage donations to these causes from your employees and customers.
- 5. Use your social media accounts to spread the word.** Your business can help promote local fundraising events and encourage donations by using your Facebook, Twitter and other social media accounts.

**To find organizations that might be a good fit for your company to help, contact our local Chamber of Commerce or check out websites such as [volunteermatch.org](http://volunteermatch.org) and [allforgood.org](http://allforgood.org). We also encourage you to follow SkyLine/SkyBest on Facebook to explore how you can participate in our community programs such as food drives.**

# SkyLine/SkyBest in the Community

## Host Site for American Red Cross Bloodmobile

In coordination with the Winston-Salem office of the American Red Cross, SkyLine's corporate campus served as the host site for a blood drive on February 19. A record 41 units were collected during the event, primarily from SkyLine employees.

Having the American Red Cross Bloodmobile at SkyLine makes it convenient for our employees to donate blood and increases participation in this vital process. Community members can also participate, and we'll keep you informed of any future blood drives scheduled to be hosted on our corporate campus.

SkyLine is glad to support the American Red Cross by being a bloodmobile host site for our employees and the community.



Like many of his peers, SkyLine Cable Splicer Brandon Miller appreciates the convenience of being able to donate blood at SkyLine's corporate campus.

## Career Day at Avery High School

Corporate recruiter Peggy Winebarger represented SkyLine as one of 25 area employers to participate in Avery High School's Career Day on March 12. Approximately 150 students from grades 9 through 12 visited the employer exhibits. Winebarger told the students about the wide range of career opportunities at SkyLine, and she found the students to be engaging and articulate. They expressed interest in careers including computer science, landscaping, archeology, engineering and health care.



Peggy Winebarger

## SkyLine/SkyBest Awarded in Four "Best of the Best" Categories

The *Ashe Post & Times* hosted its sixth annual "Best of the Best" awards luncheon on January 27, and SkyLine/SkyBest was among the local businesses recognized in Hensley Hall at the West Jefferson United Methodist Church.



Retail Sales Manager Jamey Jenkins and Retail Sales Consultant Chelsea Greer accepted the awards for SkyLine/SkyBest at the *Ashe Post & Times* "Best of the Best" awards luncheon.

### SkyLine/SkyBest received top honors in these categories:

- Best Internet Service
- Best Telephone Service
- Best Home Security Service
- Best Cable Service

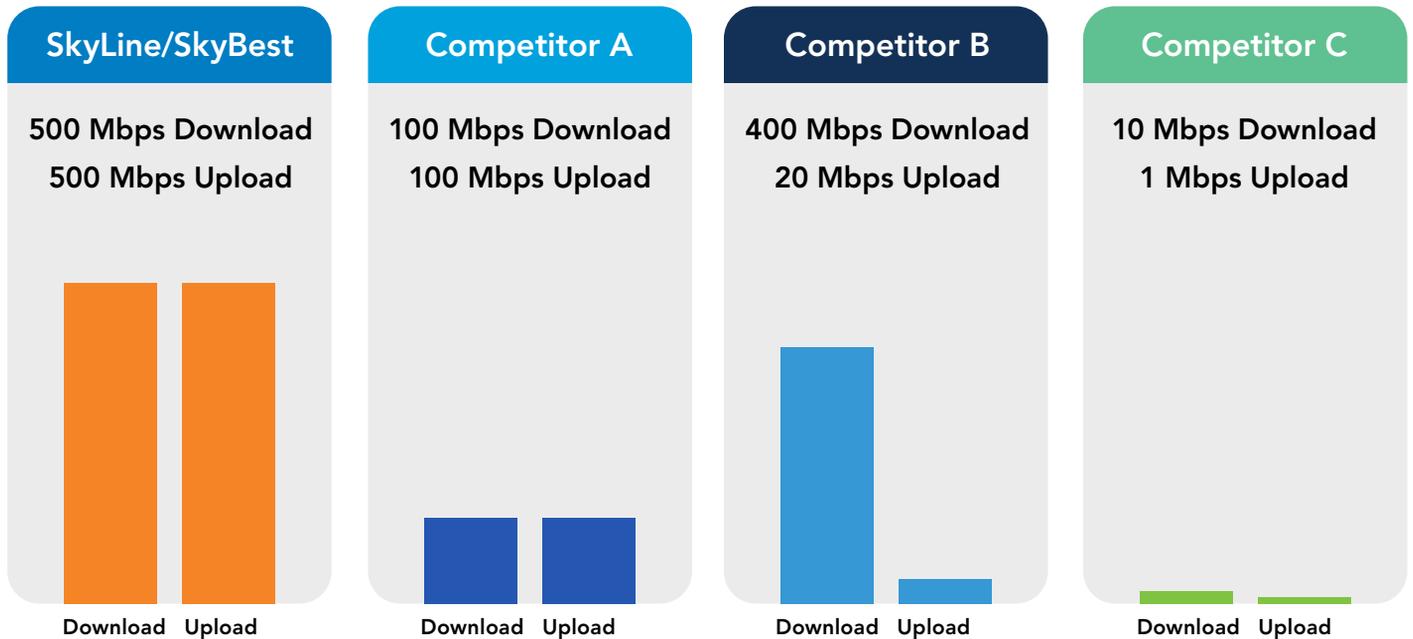
You can rest assured that SkyLine/SkyBest will continue to do our best to bring the best communications services to our customers.

## Westwood Elementary Family Night

SkyLine joined many local businesses at the Westwood Elementary Family Night held on March 5. At the event, SkyLine Public Relations Administrator Karen Powell shared kid-friendly goodies with students and reminded the families of youth program opportunities that will be available when these students move on to high school. Powell also had the chance to visit with 2017 SkyLine Scholarship recipient and Campbell University junior Jennifer Salazar-Sanchez, who was home for spring break. She went to Westwood Elementary Family Night with her mom and younger brother Santiago, who attends the school.



2017 SkyLine Scholarship recipient Jennifer Salazar-Sanchez reconnects with SkyLine Public Relations Administrator Karen Powell at Westwood Family Night.



# Only SkyLine/SkyBest offers 500 Mbps symmetrical speeds

With SkyBest symmetrical speeds, you'll have the upload speed to support applications including:

- Hard drive backups
- In-house web hosting
- Cloud applications such as Google Docs, Dropbox and iCloud
- Voice over IP (VoIP) telephone service
- Video conferencing
- Medical billing



To learn about our fiber internet offers, call 1-844-SKYBEST  
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