

# CONNECTIONS

**70** Years  
Connecting Technology & Community: 1951-2021

MARCH 2021

Published monthly for customers of SkyLine Membership Corporation and SkyBest Communications

[www.SkyBest.com](http://www.SkyBest.com)



Pictured (l-r): SkyChange Committee member Myla Farmer with Teresa Fox and Karen Canter, representing the Upper East Tennessee Development Agency.

## SkyChange Presents Donations to Area Non-Profits

SkyLine recently presented donations to three area non-profits from the SkyChange program:

- W.A.M.Y. Community Action - \$500
- Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission - \$500
- UETHDA – Upper East Tennessee Development Agency - \$250

SkyChange was established in May 2020 as a 501(c)3 organization with official bylaws and a governing committee, and it invites customers of SkyLine/SkyBest to round up their monthly bill to the next whole-dollar amount. The money generated from the round-up is distributed to programs assisting those in need throughout our community. Customer bills will reflect a line item showing the monthly round-up donation.

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## Co-op Leadership Camp Is On This Year...Virtually!

The Cooperative Council of North Carolina is planning to conduct its annual Co-op Leadership Camp program virtually in 2021 due to the continuing challenges of conducting public events and programs with the Covid-19 pandemic. Later this month, SkyLine will be accepting applications for the five-day leadership development program scheduled from June 21st through 25th.

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## 988 Dialing Code Established for Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline System

SkyLine/SkyBest has completed efforts to support emergency mental health services by implementing the three-digit hotline 988. SkyLine/SkyBest voice customers who dial 988 from their landline phones will be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) and its network of crisis centers covering the U.S. The FCC voted unanimously in 2022 to create the NSPL hotline and gave carriers until July 2022 to put it into place.

## SkyLine/SkyBest Recognized with "Best of the Best" Awards

The *Watauga Democrat* and the *Ashe Post and Times* have announced their "Best of the Best" winners, and SkyLine/SkyBest was among the numerous categories of area businesses that received recognition.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the annual event, which features a banquet, guest speaker and awards presentation, could not be held, so the newspapers recognized many of the winners at their place of business. The *Watauga Democrat* recognized SkyLine/SkyBest with Best Internet Service, while the *Ashe Post and Times* gave top honors to the company in four categories: Internet, Security, Telephone and TV Company. Both awards programs included votes from community members in scores of categories ranging from best insurance agency and best bakery to best veterinarian and best restaurant. Publications staff presented the good news and awards to the winners on behalf of the two newspapers with congratulations and extended gratitude for the work that they do each day for the community.



SkyLine's Paige Phillips is pictured at the Boone Customer Center with the *Watauga Democrat's* "Best of the Best" award for Internet provider.



SkyLine staff pictured with the *Ashe Post and Times'* awards are Megan Carter and Chelsea Greer.

## Regional Telephone Directory Update

With the SkyLine-DexYP Regional Telephone Directory now on a 15-month publication schedule, the 2021 directory will publish in June of this year. As the authorized agent for directory advertising sales in this directory, DexYP has begun the sales campaign for the 2021-22 telephone directory, which continues through April 29. The regional directory will feature business listings, community pages and The Real Yellow Pages®, the Original Search Engine®. Due to the pandemic, sales representatives from DexYP will be utilizing phone and Zoom communications to connect primarily with customers and assist them with their advertising needs. For more information, call DexYP at 1-866-794-0889.

**SkyLine**  
**SkyBest**

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(10-DIGIT DIALING)

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JOHNSON  
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LENOIR  
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**WORTH NOTING:**  
FRS Scholarship Application Deadline:  
March 5

Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship Application Deadlines

Public Schools:  
March 15

Private/Home School:  
April 1

**STAFF:**

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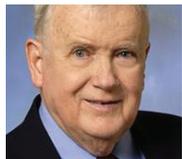
Karen P. Powell  
Public Relations Administrator  
& Editor



[www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest](https://www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest)

Rising high school sophomores, juniors or seniors whose parents subscribe to telephone or internet service through SkyLine or SkyBest can apply for the conference sponsorships. (Applicants must be at least 15 years old at the time of the Conference.) Up to 10 students will be selected to participate.

SkyLine will announce more details, including when applications will be available, via Facebook, its website ([skybest.com](http://skybest.com)) and through area high school guidance departments. For more information on any of these programs, please contact Karen Powell, SkyLine Public Relations Administrator, at 1-800-759-2226.



FOUNDATION FOR  
RURAL SERVICE

## New Scholarship for First-Year Law School Students Established

The Foundation for Rural Service has announced a new scholarship for students with an interest in rural communities entering their first year of law school. The scholarship honors James L. Bass and the first scholarship of at least \$5,000 will be awarded this spring.

With an active law career that spanned more than 70 years, James Bass helped secure funds for rural telephone systems to bring modern telephone service to rural areas. He was pivotal in the creation of NTCA, where he served as one of the organization's earliest presidents. Bass continued his leadership with service for more than 50 years as legal counsel. Recognizing Bass's impact to the industry and his passion for the legal profession, the NTCA Board of Directors established a scholarship for students with an interest in rural communities to attend law school.

"Jim was not only a founding member of NTCA, he was a guiding light for our association through much of his lifetime," said Shirley Bloomfield, chief executive officer of NTCA. "He spent his last years in service to the association as our general counsel where he helped guide our national board through growth and transformation."

"Once again, FRS, as the advocacy arm of NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, has introduced a program that invests in our young people and in the future of rural communities," said SkyLine CEO Kim Shepherd. "We are delighted to partner with the FRS in promoting this new scholarship program for our region and hope several will apply." The deadline to be considered for the spring 2021 James L. Bass Scholarship is April 16, 2021. Application materials and more information about the scholarship can be found at [www.frs.org](http://www.frs.org).

### DONATIONS TO AREA NON-PROFITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

If you participate in the SkyChange program by simply rounding up your bill to the next dollar, your total donations per year will not exceed \$11.88. In most cases, donations will be tax deductible.

We've been so pleased with the positive response of our members and customers to support this program. If you'd like to join us in this collective effort to take our 'change' to make a positive difference across our region, visit [www.skybest.com/skychange](http://www.skybest.com/skychange) or call your local SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Center at 118 or 1-800-759-2226.

## Frank James–SkyLine Scholarship

Ten scholarships with a total value of \$25,000 are scheduled to be awarded this spring to children of SkyLine and SkyBest telephone or internet service customers to assist them with the cost of a college education. Five \$1,000 scholarships, renewable up to four years, will be awarded to students who will attend a four-year college or university. Five \$500 scholarships, renewable up to two years, will be presented to students who will attend a two-year community/technical college.

The Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship was established by the Board of Directors in 1987 and is named in memory of Frank James, longtime SkyLine board member and former president, who was a strong advocate of education, having served as a teacher, principal and later superintendent of Ashe County Schools.

To qualify, applicants must be children of current SkyLine or SkyBest telephone or internet service customers (of at least one year), and be graduating high school seniors (including home-schooled students) in the co-op's five-county service area (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga and Johnson). The scholarships will be awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement, financial need, demonstrated leadership and community involvement. The application submission deadline for public school students to return their completed applications to their school's guidance department is Monday, March 15. The deadline for home-school or private school students to submit their completed applications to SkyLine is Thursday, April 1. Please visit our website ([www.skybest.com](http://www.skybest.com)) or contact Karen Powell at SkyLine for more information about the scholarship program.

### Recipe of the Month

## Zucchini Bake Casserole

### Ingredients:

4 medium-sized zucchini, sliced in ¼ inch slices  
1 pound of low-fat ground beef  
½ sweet onion  
8 oz. can of tomato sauce  
1 small can of diced tomatoes  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon oregano  
¼ teaspoon black pepper  
½ teaspoon sweet basil  
½ pound of (more or less to taste) shredded Mozzarella cheese

### Instructions:

Spray Pam in a 9" x 13" pan. Place the zucchini slices in the pan so they are touching, as you want to form a solid bottom layer of zucchini.

In a large pan, brown the ground beef with the onion, and pour off any remaining fat. Stir in the rest of the ingredients (not the cheese).

Once mixed, pour half over the zucchini slices. Top with Mozzarella and repeat with second layer. Once assembled, cover the top with the Mozzarella cheese.

Bake at 350° for 40 minutes. (Option: Can also bake at 250° for 1 1/2 hours if you want the zucchini slices to be firm rather than soft).

Recipe submitted by Edith Bishop of Ashe County



# SkyBest Security

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