

# Report to the Community 2024



# Connecting You!

*Answering the Call. For 70 Years*

# A Rich History Lays Out Our Path Forward



Thomas E. Preston  
Chief Executive Officer

From plugging in through a copper wire switchboard to transmitting across hundreds

*For 70 Years*



People Who Care About Our Communities

of strands of fiber optic cable, DUO Broadband has been connecting local communities for 70 years.

*For 70 Years*



Smart Investments in Technology that Works

Why? Our commitment to local service reflects the reason DUO Broadband was established in 1954. Back then, a group of local individuals formed the original two-county

*For 70 Years*



Dedication to the Best Service Possible

cooperative to provide telephone service where big, outside companies would not venture. Seventy years later we now serve businesses and residents in six rural Kentucky counties.

And, we are still 100 percent owned and operated by people who live, work, and play in the same communities where you live, work, and play. So, while we pause to reflect on our first 70 years, we want to say thank you to all of our cooperative members and customers and to invite you to join us in focusing on the next 70 years.

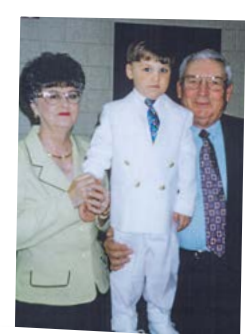


*Contractors for DUO hanging new fiber lines in Tabez in 2023*

## Rabon Smith and his Family Have Depended on DUO's New Technologies for 60 Years

Of our current members, Rabon Smith of Russell Springs was one of the very first to sign up for service, doing so in 1960 with his wife Sue. Sue, who passed away in 2019, was a 33-year employee of the co-op. Rabon's perspective on the company, though, has been that of a customer. "I had one of the earliest cell phones," he said. In addition to being a local businessman, Rabon farmed. He says with the cell phone "if I got hung up on the farm or had a breakdown I could call someone to come and get me." Like Rabon, his grandson Logan Smith and his family also depend on a DUO service. When they moved back here in 2020, they signed up for the highest speed internet connection available. Logan's wife, Hunter, works remotely for a Louisville engineering firm and needs a lot of bandwidth. It was important that they get connected, and they say DUO went the extra mile to make it happen when the location of their new residence complicated the normal install process. Rabon, too, has liked what he has seen from his co-op, saying, "I think that DUO may have been one of the best run companies I have ever known anything about. They haven't just been good for me, they have been good for Russell County."

*Rabon with Sue and young Logan, right; and below, with Logan, Logan's wife, Hunter, and son, Parker.*



*Co-op Member Rabon Smith*

## These Days DUO is Focused On Conquering Our Newest Communication Divide

**When Duo-County Telephone Cooperative was formed there was a desperate need to build a telephone network to insure that our area wouldn't be left behind. Telephone communications had been revolutionizing all aspects of life — quickly setting a new pace for business and becoming an essential tool. But, high-quality telephone service at reasonable rates was not coming naturally to rural areas. Now, just like at that time, special attention is needed. And, DUO Broadband is working to build out fiber optics and broadband infrastructure that will improve the quality of life for our region.**

### The Need Lives and Livelihoods Depend on Connections Being Made

Communities without reliable high-speed internet face barriers in accessing critical services such as telemedicine, online education, and remote work opportunities. This impacts both individual well-being and economic sustainability. Bridging the digital divide is essential for ensuring equal access to opportunities, empowering residents to thrive in the modern digital landscape and creating vibrant, resilient communities.

### The Partners Co-ops are Investing Along with Federal, State and Local Governments

While DUO Broadband is leading the high-speed internet expansion push locally, they are not working alone. Multiple U.S. agencies, state government offices, non-governmental organizations and non-profits are working to expand access to underserved areas. DUO's efforts are bolstered by a combination of investments, grants, initiatives and key partnerships with a number of these entities.

### The Goal Leveling the Playing Field and Spurring Growth for Rural Areas

The Louisville Courier Journal says, correctly, that "Broadband access is a fundamental requirement for businesses to compete, students to learn, and families to thrive." The goal of any push to expand rural access is equally divided between economic and social benefits. Spurring growth, prosperity and community development benefits everyone from business and industry to employees and patrons.

### The Method Broadband is Built Out to Rural Communities With Room to Grow

Like the initial Co-op effort to deliver phone service 70 years ago, a massive effort to deploy entirely new cable throughout the service area is required. Fiber optic cable may be buried or strung overhead, depending on factors like geography, local regulations or long-term maintenance needs. Every effort is made to future-proof the new infrastructure so updates in the coming decades can be made using the framework being built today.

### The Result A New World of Services, and Opportunities are Flowing to Fiber Lines

DUO is still building out the network, but as areas of fiber service come online customers are enjoying a range of new ways to enhance their productivity, communications and entertainment. For business, this means smoother video conferencing, cloud computing and e-commerce, streamlining operations and reaching broader markets. At home, customers enjoy streaming high-definition content or action gaming, and working or going to school remotely.

#### PROGRESS REPORT

### Progress Highlighted by Kentucky Rural Technology Leader

"Kentucky has dedicated more than \$300 million over the last two years to expand broadband access to rural Kentuckians," says

Tyler Campbell, Executive

Director of the *Campbell* Kentucky Rural Broadband Association. Rural, community-based providers are using those funds to great effect, he says, and he's impressed with DUO's work. "They continue to aggressively pursue federal and state broadband grant programs. Within the last few years, DUO Broadband has received two federal ReConnect grants from the USDA and has been awarded two state broadband grants. This work will expand fiber broadband to thousands in the DUO service area over the next 3 to 4 years." Campbell says there's more to do, but he thinks the future looks bright. "Kentucky's community-based broadband providers continue to step up and provide world class broadband to rural Kentuckians."



GigaSpire BLAST Router

YouDUO Smartphone App

For Home or Office, Max WiFi Creates a Seamless High-Speed Experience

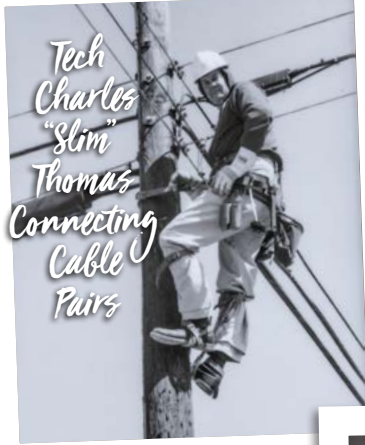


Fiber optics have made the Internet exponentially faster — and customers are finding so many ways to get the most from it. Max WiFi is DUO's ultimate solution with the pieces you need to take full advantage of your new high speed internet pipeline.

- **GigaSpire BLAST Router** - Creates and manages your network to connect all your devices, improve performance and security, and seamlessly manage updates.
- **YouDUO Smartphone App** - This network command center can set up parental controls, time limits, guest networks and more. It's easy.
- **GigaMesh Satellite Units** - These deliver signal to hard-to-reach areas. They're faster and easier to set up and use than WiFi extenders.

Maximize the experience with DUO Broadband's Max WiFi.

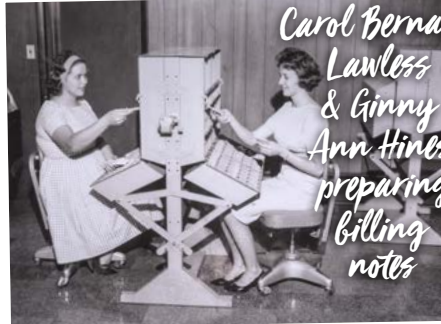
# Snapshots From Our 70 Years



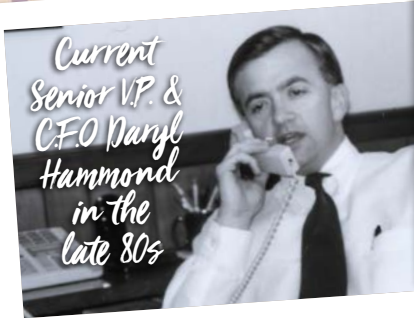
Tech Charles "Slim" Thomas Connecting Cable Pairs



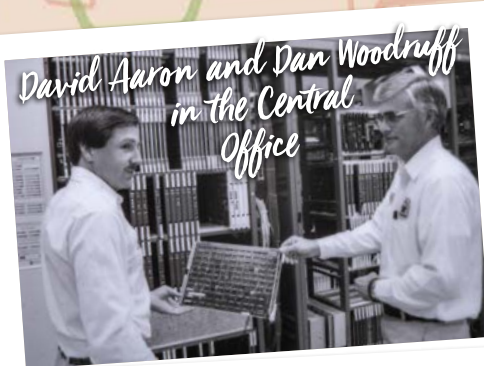
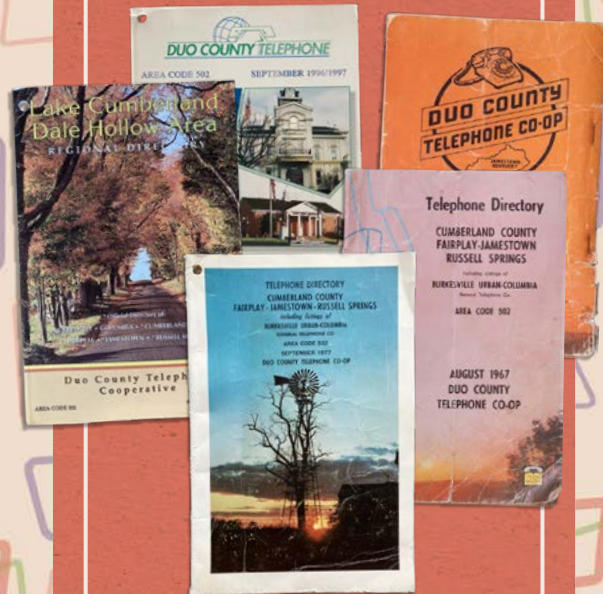
Penny Stephens in Accounting in 1994



Carol Bernard Lawless & Ginny Ann Hines preparing Billing notes



Current Senior VP. & CEO Naryl Hammond in the late 80s



David Aaron and Dan Woodruff in the Central Office



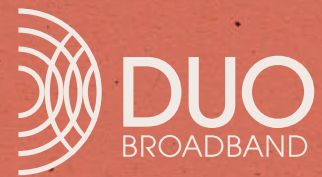
Nathan Skaggs hooking up service for Jamestown Member Nila Wilson Antle



Tech Erbie Rush gets into his climbing gear



Duo County's Headquarters in Jamestown 1960-1999



Russell  
270-343-3131

Adair  
270-378-4141

Cumberland  
270-433-2121



[DUOBroadband.com](http://DUOBroadband.com)