



PRESS RELEASE  
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**BALSAMWEST FIBERNET EXPERIENCES CONTINUED SUCCESS UNDER  
THE LEADERSHIP OF LOCAL VISIONARIES**

Sylva, NC, May 15, 2009 – Two local visionaries lead BalsamWest FiberNet’s expansion in the enterprise market with the announcement of plans to offer converged services over its Fiber Optic Network. “These services will provide affordable alternatives for business that are not available today” says Chief Executive Officer, David Hubbs.

Hubbs said, “This summer we will release a suite of services for business which include a robust, feature rich phone product combined with high speed Internet service, all at very competitive prices. The businesses in our region need affordable alternatives and deserve to have access to a variety of converged services that are normally only available in urban markets. The towns of Franklin and Sylva will be the first to be offered the new services and we will extend these options to other areas of the region in the future.”

“Our philosophy is simple”, said Hubbs. “We provide state of the art communications to Western North Carolina which allows our region to compete with any area of the United States. We want to help grow and attract 21<sup>st</sup> century business to our communities. Communications infrastructure is a critical element in attracting industry and jobs, and BalsamWest is committed to being a part of making Western North Carolina ready for knowledge based companies.”

In 2003 Hubbs served as the founding Chairman of the BalsamWest Board of Directors. He joined the staff of BalsamWest as CEO in August 2007 and since that time, monthly recurring revenues have more than doubled for the Sylva based company.

**Jim Campbell, Chief Technology Officer and Vice President of Network Operations, comes to BalsamWest with an extensive technical and leadership background.** Jim was the former Vice President of Information Technology and Telecommunications at Southwestern Community College in Sylva, North Carolina where he was responsible for the planning, development, and management of the college’s technology and network infrastructure. Jim has over 30 years of experience in the telecommunications industry. He has a master’s degree from Clemson University where he focused his training on digital electronics and microprocessor applications.

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Jim's chief responsibility is the development of Balsam West's network infrastructure. Jim states, "We are very proud of the network performance, which uses SONET technology, over the fiber. SONET is a standard for carrier class networks giving them unprecedented reliability up to 99.99%. I am currently evaluating the best technology available to build into the fiber optic network that will give our community the phone services they want along with data, HDTV, security, and Internet service over a single connection to their businesses."

"We do not have a legacy network to bog us down; everything is state of the art. I was born here and have lived here almost all of my life. I never thought we would be on the leading edge of communications, but we are," says Campbell. A recent marketing study shows that BalsamWest's network gives the region access to technology that is comparable or better than the top 50 cities in the United States.

*BalsamWest FiberNet is a fiber optic-based, wholesale and enterprise telecommunications carrier and is jointly owned by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and Drake enterprises, Ltd. The mission of BalsamWest is to bring 21<sup>st</sup> century communications to Western North Carolina that previously have not been available in rural areas.*

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