New Corporate Mission, Network Advancements & Director Elections Highlight Annual Meeting

With board attorney Ray Parker presiding, the 59th Annual Meeting of SkyLine Membership Corporation was held on September 26, at Ashe County High School. SkyLine President R.C. Mitchell and Chief Executive Officer Jimmy Blevins delivered their reports to the members during the business session, and three board members were re-elected to three-year terms: James L. Shepherd of Alleghany County; Jerry Roten of Ashe County, and Tommy Joe Ward of Watauga County.

In the President’s Report, Mr. Mitchell referenced the 2015 Annual Meeting Report, which features the cooperative’s new mission statement, which was a direct result of recent strategic planning initiatives involving the board and senior management. SkyLine’s mission is to provide state-of-the-art telecommunications and technology solutions enabled by a culture of excellence in customer service. “The mission statement is straightforward, and it continues to reflect SkyLine’s legacy of being keenly focused on the future,” Mitchell said. “No matter where you are—urban or rural, technology advances at a furious pace.” Mitchell also highlighted SkyLine’s status as a “Certified GIG-Capable Provider” by NTCA—the Broadband Association, following the cooperative’s rollout of Gig services earlier this year. Gig service is equal to 1,000 megabits, which is 100 times faster than what’s currently available in many U.S. households.

He further acknowledged employee efforts, which included being recognized with the N.C. Department of Labor 2014 Safety Award by Secretary of Labor Cherie Berry, and for receiving a national award for its 2014 customer service.

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2014 Capital Credits Allocated

Capital credits are one of the many benefits of being served by a telephone cooperative. SkyLine Membership Corporation has allocated the net margins from 2014 to the capital credit accounts of its members. Capital credits for cooperative members result from a surplus of funds remaining from doing business. If the revenues paid in to the cooperative during the financial year exceed the expenses, the remainder is known as the “margin.” The margin is then allocated to SkyLine’s member-owners. Allocations are based on end user revenue including members’ recurring monthly charges such as local service, calling features and Internet services, as well as monthly long-distance charges.

The 2014 margin represented approximately 18.86 percent of SkyLine’s total revenues, and this percentage has been assigned to members’ capital credit accounts. Members’ individual allocations are based on their share of the margin, and are determined by their usage of Sky-Line’s services and network.

The 2014 allocated capital credits will be retired to members at a future date, as approved by SkyLine’s Board of Directors. In the meantime, members’ unretired capital credits are used by the co-op to maintain a solid financial base, to build equity and to provide quality, affordable service. Individual notices of allocated capital credits are not mailed to members; however, if you have questions about your capital credit account, please call your local SkyLine Customer Service Center at 1-800-759-2226.

Don’t forget to start dialing 10 digits for local calls. Permissive Dialing Period for New 743 Area Code has begun.

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December newsletter.

list of door prize winners will be announced in the

by breakfast items that day (and since the drive began)

want to say a special thanks to everyone who brought

Breakfast Food Drive to benefit area food pantries. We

register for door prizes and enjoy breakfast-themed

members and customers dropped by that day to

of its five customer service locations, and many of our

won door prizes at SkyLine’s Annual Meeting:

(Annual Meeting Door Prize Winners)

Congratulations to the following members who

Onis & Judy Neaves
Danny & Ella Mae Finney
Charles & Nancy Lewis
Patricia Richardson
Richard & Melissa Eller
Dennis & Debbie Davis
Thomas Fisher
Linda & John Tibbs
Larry Wayne Jones
Larry & Barbara Ruppard
Lonnie & Jennie Miller
Dayna’s Beauty Shop
Mary Reed
Felix & Sara Alvarez
Manning & Martha Gambrell
James Lloyd Moretz
Ricky Dixon
Donald & Barbara Conrad
Fred & Donna Cox
Roy & Marion Kreges
Thomas & Wilma Mullis
Bennie Sheets
Johnny & Rachel Farmer

Recipe of the Month

Dot Weaver’s Broccoli Casserole

Ingredients:

2 packages frozen chopped broccoli, slightly cooked and drained
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 egg beaten
1 small grated onion
1 cup grated cheese (sharp)
1 1/4 cups Pepperidge Farm stuffing
1/4 cup + 2 tablespoons melted butter

Instructions:

Place broccoli in bottom of casserole dish. Mix all other ingredients together and pour over broccoli. Mix melted butter with stuffing and top casserole with the stuffing crumb mixture. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

Recipe submitted by SkyLine’s Karin Nichols of Alleghany County.

Annual Meeting Report from NTCA—the Broadband Association earlier this year. “The Annual Report chronicles the life of the cooperative as it unfolds, and reflects the efforts of all of our employees in serving you, our members, and the community.”

In his remarks, CEO Jimmy Blevins referenced the new world of communication, including the Internet of Things, Machine to Machine language, Big Data and the Cloud, and stated that with the investments made in SkyLine’s network, the cooperative will be a player in this new world. “In 2014, we invested over $8 million in our business, and in 2015, we are investing over $13 million in our business.” Pointing to SkyLine’s launch of gigabit services earlier this year, Blevins said, “20 percent of American households have fiber-to-the-premise available to them, but here in the High Country, we have over 90 percent of our membership fiber-ready.” He also referenced the company’s Network Operations Center, which allows SkyLine to be more proactive and more efficient with monitoring, upgrades and troubleshooting.

Financially, SkyLine’s revenues grew by $900,000 over the previous year and finished 2014 with a consolidated net income of approximately $8.9 million. He also alluded to the board’s approval of more than $1.2 million in capital credit refunds to members and estates, with approximately $700,000 mailed recently to active and former members.

Blevins cited growth in SkyBest TV by 21 percent, Internet broadband by seven percent and Security services by 23 percent in 2014. “Our affiliate, Carolina West Wireless, has begun a 4G LTE network deployment that will continue over the next couple of years, and the company also has the current Apple devices available including the newly-announced iPhone 6s models. SkyLine’s subsidiary, SkyBest Communications, continues to bring local content to SkyZhone Channels 1 and 1001, and SkyBest launched SkyBest TV Now, an over-the-top product, which allows viewers to watch over 20 channels through their Internet connection at just $20 per month.”

The business session also featured special recognition of area youth who received scholarships through SkyLine, as well as those who participated in leadership programs sponsored locally by SkyLine, including the Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., Co-op Leadership Camp and the National Institute on Cooperative Education.

Numerous door prizes were awarded, and members enjoyed entertainment by the Ashe County Bluegrass Band and lunch catered by Smoky Mountain Barbecue. Children’s activities were led by Ashe County High School Art Department teacher Katherine Greene and National Art Honor Society students.

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During registration, the commons area featured several informational displays and demonstrations, and here, Ralph Poe of Ashe County was one of several members to try the new putt-putt challenge for a chance to win a prize.