

SkyLine Members 75 or Older May Apply for Early Retirement of Capital Credits



At the December 2020 meeting of the SkyLine Board of Directors, an amendment to **Article VIII, Sections 8.2 Patronage Capital in Connection with Furnishing Telecommunications Services and 8.3 Patronage Capital in Connection with**

Furnishing Other Services was approved. This amendment now permits an eligible member of the cooperative the ability to file a request of early retirement of his or her capital credit account at net present value.

Previously, the distribution of all unretired capital credits typically takes place as part of a member's estate when he or she passes. This amendment provides members 75 years or older to receive a refund of all unretired capital credits assigned to a single or joint account at net present value. Key considerations that also must be met include the following:

- No retirement may be made until all outstanding accounts due are cleared either by payment or deduction from the early retirement amount.
- Payments for early retirements will be processed quarterly for a one-time payout for active and inactive members who meet the age requirement of 75.
- If member requests exceed the board-approved amount for that year, the excess requests will be addressed the following year, based on the budgeted amount approved for payouts by the Board of Directors.
- Active members who request early retirement will continue to accrue capital credits for future years.

Cooperative members who are interested in applying for early retirement of capital credits may contact their local SkyLine office for further information. SkyLine's cooperative bylaws may be viewed on the company website, under the **About Us**, and **About SkyLine Membership Corporation** tabs.



SkyLine Awarded Broadband Partner Grant through ARC and Avery Chamber

SkyLine Membership Corporation has been awarded a \$97,000 partner grant through the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Avery Chamber of Commerce to extend broadband connectivity to identified unserved and underserved areas of Avery County.

The grant, which requires a \$100,000 match from SkyLine, mandated that the Chamber seek a qualified partner to provide the technical expertise and capacity to use the ARC funds awarded to the Chamber to make

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It's Scholarship Season

While we couldn't meet our 2021 Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship nominees for a pre-interview orientation and in-person interviews due to Covid-19, we did harness the power of technology to conduct virtual interviews with each of them, and we say a special thanks to their school guidance staff for helping coordinate their participation in this year's scholarship selection process.

During their interviews, each nominee was provided a brief introduction to SkyLine and an opportunity to converse directly with the committee, answer a few questions and share their college and future plans. We send our best wishes to all of the nominees as they transition to college life and will highlight our local scholarship winners in the July issue of this newsletter. Here, Mary Johnson of Avery County connects virtually with one of our two scholarship committees.

Area Student Receives National Foundation for Rural Service Scholarship

An Alleghany High School student is among the 32 recipients of the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship. In 2021 the FRS is awarding \$92,000 in scholarships to students of rural communities served by NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association.



Hannah Starling

Hannah Starling, daughter of Wesley and Jill Starling of Sparta, plans to study integrated health science and physical therapy at Western Carolina University. She has been awarded the \$2,500 FRS Scholarship, with \$500 of that amount as a match from SkyLine Membership Corporation as the program's local sponsor.

"For most of the years SkyLine has been affiliated with this national scholarship program, we have been delighted to get a phone call in early May from the FRS, announcing that we have one or more local winners," said SkyLine PR Administrator Karen Powell. "This is a highly competitive scholarship, and the FRS received 700 applications for the 32 scholarships available. We are delighted to recognize our local youth who receive this prestigious recognition and to contribute financially through this rural-focused scholarship program."

The FRS Scholarship Program was launched in 2005 and SkyLine has been an active local sponsor since 2006. To date, 19 local students have been able to benefit from

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WORTH NOTING:

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STAFF:

Kim Shepherd
Chief Executive Officer

Brian Tester
Chief Operations Officer

Angie Poe
Customer Service Manager

Jamey Jenkins
Retail Sales Manager

Karen P. Powell
Public Relations Administrator
& Editor



www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest

Ashe County Heart Association Events Announced



The Ashe County Heart Association is planning two fund-raising events in June to support the work of the American Heart Association. The first is a Bake Sale on Saturday, June 5, at the Jefferstone in downtown West Jefferson. A Virtual Live Auction will be held via Facebook on Wednesday evening from the West Jefferson Town Hall and led by local auctioneer Russell Killen. For more information, contact Lynn Graham at 336-877-4220.

About the American Heart Association (AHA)

From humble beginnings, the AHA has grown into the nation's oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. A shared focus on cardiovascular health unites our more than 40 million volunteers and supporters as well as our more than 2,800 employees.

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer worldwide, and stroke ranks second globally. Even when those conditions don't result in death, they cause disability and diminish quality of life. The AHA's wants to see a world free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke, and the organization has invested more than \$4.5 billion in research, more than any U.S. nonprofit organization.

Coming This Month!

The new 2021-22 Regional Telephone Directory will be delivered to SkyLine/SkyBest customers.

FRS SCHOLARSHIP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

receiving FRS-related scholarships, including Luke Smith of Watauga County, who was awarded \$1,000 in 2020. SkyLine is pleased and honored to be able to have the opportunity to give back to the communities it serves by supporting local scholarships and national scholarships through the FRS.

About the FRS

The FRS, in cooperation with NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association and its members, seeks to sustain and enhance the quality of life in America by advancing an understanding of rural issues. Similarly, FRS is committed to educational achievement in rural communities, recognizing that tomorrow's economic and civic development depends on the involvement and success of today's students.

About NTCA

NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association is the premier association representing more than 800 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovation in rural and small-town America. NTCA advocates on behalf of its members in the legislative and regulatory arenas, and it provides training and development; publications and industry events; and an array of employee benefit programs. In an era of exploding technology, deregulation and marketplace competition, NTCA's members are leading the IP evolution for rural consumers, delivering technologies that make rural communities vibrant places in which to live and do business. Because of their efforts, rural America is fertile ground for innovation in economic development and commerce, education, health care, government services, security and smart energy use.

SKYLINE AWARDED GRANT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

available high-speed internet services to as much of the identified areas as possible. The grant opportunity stemmed from a 2015 survey from Avery residents who reported inadequate broadband access in areas of southern Avery County. The project's goal is to provide affordable, adequate internet access to as many unserved and underserved residents and businesses as possible.

SkyLine will bring fiber-to-the-premise (FTTP) connectivity to residents and businesses in the Riverside area of the county, with services provided by the cooperative's wholly-owned subsidiary, SkyBest Communications. With the most advanced fiber network in northwest North Carolina, SkyLine and SkyBest provide a triple-play of services including voice, video and Gig-capable broadband connections. SkyLine's fiber-based broadband uniquely offers symmetrical broadband or equal download and upload speeds of up to 1 Gig.

"We recognize the pressing need of our neighbors in Avery County located outside SkyLine's service footprint who have not been able to access adequate broadband service," said SkyLine Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Kim Shepherd. "It has been our goal to extend our fiber network to contiguous communities that are desperate for internet service, but it can only happen when we can marry our own company resources with additional grant funding through public and private resources. We are grateful to the ARC and the Avery Chamber for choosing us to leverage the strengths of our robust network and our company's record of fiber deployment for this important project."

The extension of broadband access to more areas of Avery County is critically important according to Ann Winkelman, Executive Director of the Avery Chamber of Commerce. "The past year has proven to us how vitally important broadband is to our community – our children had to shift to online learning, our businesses had to adjust in how it served their customers, and our healthcare providers had to pivot to virtual appointments to continue patient care," she said. "We appreciate this grant opportunity through the ARC and value SkyLine as the local partner to see this project to completion."

Recipe of the Month

BBQ Pork

Ingredients:

2-3 lbs. of pork tenderloins, quartered
2 cups of white vinegar
2 tablespoons of molasses
1 tablespoon of salt
Your favorite barbecue sauce (I use Sweet Baby Ray's)

Instructions:

Sear pork quarters on both sides. Place all ingredients in crock pot for six hours or until tender. Chop or tear apart with a fork. Mix with your choice of barbecue sauce. Heat at 250° for about 30 minutes or until the flavors have had time to blend.

Recipe by and in memory of Joann Underwood of Ashe County



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