



Director Elections, Introduction of New CEO and Expansion Efforts Highlight SkyLine Annual Meeting

The 62nd Annual Meeting of SkyLine Membership Corporation, held September 29 at Ashe County High School, was highlighted by the introduction of the cooperative's new CEO Kim Shepherd, recent company acquisitions and a continued strategic focus toward growth and expansion. The official business session featured attorney Ray Parker presiding with reports from board officers, and three board members were re-elected to three-year terms: Jim Shepherd of Alleghany County, Jerry Roten of Ashe County and Tommy Joe Ward of Watauga County.



James L. Shepherd



Jerry Roten



Tommy Joe Ward

President R.C. Mitchell opened his remarks with sharing a bit of background on Kim Shepherd, who assumed the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) July 1. "While Kim Shepherd is new to this role, she is no stranger to this area or to SkyLine," Mitchell said. "Kim is a familiar and trusted presence at this company. She rose through the ranks in the Customer Service Department, working most recently at the Executive Director level where she oversaw Customer Service and Field Service Operations." During her transition to CEO, she served as Chief Management Officer over the past year, assuming more of the day-to-day management operations and working more closely with the Board. "She will carry the leadership legacy of her predecessors forward during a dynamic time in our history and at a pivotal juncture as we moved into a period of growth," Mitchell said. Mitchell also referenced SkyLine's Annual Meeting Report and its theme of "Every Connection Matters," giving members a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

2017 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 2017 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 2017 margin represented approximately 10.46 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 SkyLine's services and network.

The 2017 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.



Deanna and Ron Sebastian of Ashe County won one of the top Annual Meeting prizes, an iPad Mini.



Fred Cox and Friends, featuring Aubreana Lovell, provided musical entertainment during lunch at this year's Annual Meeting.



The JROTC from Ashe County High School presented colors at this year's Annual Meeting.



SkyLine Attorney Ray Parker presides over the 62nd Annual Meeting, which was attended by nearly 350 people.



New CEO Kim Shepherd gave her first address to the membership including the company's current expansion activities and plans for future growth.



Area students were recognized for local and national scholarships as well as participation in SkyLine-sponsored leadership development programs.



SkyLine President R.C. Mitchell congratulated scholarship winners and youth leadership program participants, including Hannah Greer of Johnson County.



Karen Solon won a 49-inch LG Flat Screen TV.



Archie Dollar (at left) of Ashe County won another top prize, which was an original painting featuring a winter scene on Rich Hill Road by local artist Cynthia Dixon.

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WORTH NOTING:

Thursday, November 22
Thanksgiving Holiday
All SkyLine/SkyBest
Customer Centers will
Be Closed

STAFF:

Kim Shepherd
Chief Executive Officer

Brian Tester
Executive Director of
Customer Operations

Angie Poe
Customer Service Manager

Jamey Jenkins
Retail Sales Manager

Karen P. Powell
Public Relations Administrator
& Editor



complete, yet concise look at their cooperative and what key events, accomplishments and opportunities have occurred over the past year. He reminded members of the cooperative's fiber-to-the-home initiative, now completed and which provides fiber availability to 99 percent of the cooperative's service area. By comparison, only 25 percent of fiber coverage is available nationwide, and in North Carolina, only 22.3 percent of the population can access fiber. Mitchell also announced that SkyLine's financial position remains strong, allowing the Board to authorize approximately \$1.2 million capital credit and estate refunds to active and former members of the cooperative.

In her remarks, CEO Kim Shepherd shared with members that she got her start as a part-time summer employee while attending Appalachian State University, and when the opportunity presented itself for her to join SkyLine full-time, she didn't hesitate. Working in a dynamic, ever-changing industry, Shepherd explained that the challenges she has experienced thus far have been to juggle the many varied aspects of the position, knowing that every decision impacts the more than 35,000 customers and nearly 200 employees. Among the areas she is most proud of include providing gigabit broadband speeds across SkyLine's service area, getting positive customer ratings on services provided, making a positive difference in the community through SkyLine's scholarship program, its breakfast food drive that supports local food pantries and supporting important charities like the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, leading a phenomenal group of employees who have a genuine desire to take care of their customers and having the support and guidance from the co-op's board of directors.

She reported on the successful acquisitions of two family-owned telecom companies in upstate South Carolina and middle Tennessee. "The board had made the decision, through our strategic planning process and after much careful consideration, to pursue acquisitions as an active growth strategy. And both of these companies fit for us. Acquiring these two companies has already and will continue to present some additional opportunities for SkyLine, the parent company. Both of these locations have significant growth potential and will ultimately help us continue to do more of the same things we have been doing for years and years." She referenced the company's strong financial position, with over \$45.6 million in revenues and consolidated margin of almost \$8.4 million in 2017. Shepherd added that the company's solid financial position "will enable us to continue with our growth initiatives and give us opportunities to provide broadband service to some neighbors who live in underserved areas."

The business session also featured special recognition of area youth who received scholarships through SkyLine and the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS), as well as those who participated in leadership programs sponsored locally by SkyLine. Prior to the meeting, members learned more about the company's efforts through outside equipment displays highlighting the company's FTTP initiative and inside displays along with general information on services provided by SkyLine, SkyBest and Carolina West Wireless.

Numerous door prizes were awarded, and members enjoyed entertainment by Fred Cox and Friends (featuring Aubreana Lovell), during lunch, which was 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.

2018 Annual Meeting Door Prize Winners

John Marsh	Walt McMillan
Shirley Bauguess	Muriel Woodward
David Ball	Steven Hagaman
Dawn Houck	Ronald Atwood
Roscoe Millsaps	Tonya Trivette
Gyoengyi Jolsvay	Ralph Poe
Rita Huff	Shirley Hall
James Parker	Terry Chappell
Reba Potter	James Church
Sandy Witherspoon	Margaret Loggins
Carl Farmer	Wayne Patrick
Toy Wyatt	Christopher Laws
Sandra Prange	Clifford Smith
Gary Miller	Clifton Edwards
Ardene Testerman	Steve Woodie
Juanita Ramsey	Ray Farmer
Dean Blackburn	Brenda Oliver
Patricia Church	Judy Neaves
G. Manning Gambrell	Karen Solon
Beulah Johnson	Archie Dollar
Pop's Country Store	Ron Sebastian
Dayna's Beauty Shop	

Recipe of the Month

Chicken Pot Pie

Ingredients:

- 4 Chicken Breasts, cooked (save broth)
- 1 can Veg-All vegetables, drained
- 1 can Cream of Chicken Soup
- 1 can Cream of Celery Soup
- 1 can Chicken Broth
- 1 cup of Self-Rising Flour
- 1 cup of Milk
- 1 stick melted Butter

Instructions:

Mix both soups and chicken broth together. Mix flour, milk, and melted butter together. Cook and de-bone chicken and place in the bottom of a large baking dish. Scatter Veg-All vegetables over chicken. Pour soup mixture over this. Pour butter, milk, and flour mixture on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes, or until crust is brown and flaky.

Submitted by Jessica Bost of Ashe County.



Children enjoyed art activities led by art teacher Katherine Greene and ACHS National Art Honors Society students.



During Registration, members visited various exhibits and could even try their hand at putt-putt to win prizes.



SkyLine's Hollie Brown and Brent Keith serve hot chocolate and coffee to members prior to the business session.



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