CONNECTIONS

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www.SkyBest.com

SkyLine Annual Meeting

The 70th Annual Meeting of SkyLine Membership Corporation was held on October 6, at the cooperative's Annex location just above the corporate campus on Highway 194 North in West Jefferson. The cooperative conducted early registration the week prior at SkyLine Customer Centers and in the Shady Valley community. This enables members to participate in the Annual Meeting process by registering in advance of the meeting, voting for directors and receiving materials, including the 2026 Annual Meeting Report.

In the business session, Board Secretary, Jim Shepherd, announced the establishment of a quorum with 577 members registered for the meeting through early registration for the meeting through early registration and in-person registration on the day of the meeting. SkyLine Attorney, Ray Parker, presided over the official business session, and the three incumbent board members were re-elected to three-year terms: Sharon Kasel of Ashe County; Bill Burleson of Avery County; and Tim Hodges of Watauga County.

SkyLine announced five $100 cash prizes and the grand prize: an Apple Watch Series 11 [GPS 46mm] Smartwatch, Apple - AirPods Pro 3, Energizer 3-in-1 Wireless Fast Charger. The $100 cash prize winners were James and Cindy Stonesifer, Guy and Mary Ellis, Charles and Nancy Lewis, Robert and Audrey Townsend, and Forrest Blevins. The grand prize was won by Betty Ann Burkett.

2025 Capital Credits Allocated

Capital Credits are one of the many benefits of being served by a telephone cooperative. SkyLine Membership Corporation had allocated the net margins from 2025 to the capital credit accounts of its members.

Capital Credits for our cooperative result from a surplus of funds remaining from doing business. If the revenues paid into 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 services, as well as monthly long-distance charges.

The 2025 margin represented approximately 39 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 2025 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 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.

FRS Scholarship Program Continues Online Application in 2027

Foundation for Rural Service

If you have a son or daughter graduating in the spring of 2027, he or she may be eligible for the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship sponsored locally by SkyLine Membership Corporation.

In 2027, the FRS will award one-year scholarships in each geographic region of the NTCA membership (including the service area of SkyLine/SkyBest) to graduating member organizations. For each FRS general scholarship, FRS provides $2,000 and the sponsoring NTCA member company provides $500. The FRS has awarded over $2 million in scholarships since its inception, empowering rural students throughout the country to advance their communities with invaluable skill sets and experiences.

In addition to the FRS general scholarships, FRS has the following named scholarships:*

- Common Ground Scholarship
- Everett Kneece Scholarship
- Herbert and Isabel Bitz Memorial Scholarship
- JSI Scholarship
- Sarah Tyree Good Neighbor Scholarship
- Nontraditional Student Scholarship
- Tim Owns-Ron Launder Scholarship
- Diana Jo Dreyer Memorial Scholarship
- TMS Scholarship
- Roger Cox Scholarship

*Submitting one application is sufficient for eligibility of all available scholarships.

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Annual Report Video

This year, SkyLine Membership Corporation's Annual Meeting Report was titled, "Driven by Purpose." We decided, for the third year, a video is the best way to highlight our year in review. We hope, as our members, you'll feel appreciated and supported as you watch because we could not be all we are today without you.

The stories featured in our 2026 video report showcases 75 years of technological innovation and the adaptability that have enabled SkyLine/SkyBest to evolve alongside the communities we serve. This year's video highlights the inner workings of SkyLine/SkyBest, and what it takes to be your cooperative. The report also allows a unique glimpse of our year in review, capturing moments and stories that cannot be fully conveyed on the printed page.

Simply Scan the QR Code to watch our 2026 Annual Meeting Report video.

SkyLine SkyBest

NEED TO CONTACT US?

CUSTOMER SERVICE
LOCAL
118
TOLL-FREE
1-800-759-2226

REPAIR SERVICE, 24/7
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611
TOLL-FREE
1-877-475-9546

Additional Local Repair Service Numbers:

ALLEGHANY
336-372-4444
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

ASHE
336-982-3111
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

AVERY
898-9250

WATAUGA
297-4811

JOHNSON
423-739-4500
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

LENOIR
929-2872

INTERNET TECH SUPPORT, 24/7
TOLL-FREE
1-866-759-7591

STAFF:

Kim Shepherd
Chief Executive Officer

Brian Tester
Chief Operations Officer

Angie Poe
Customer Service Manager

Jamey Jenkins
Retail Sales Manager

Edward Hinson
Chief Marketing & Sales Officer

Haleigh Seamon
Public Relations Administrator

www.facebook.com/SkyLineSkyBest

Show Some Love for Local Businesses



Yes, we may be biased, but we believe that the High Country has some of the best small business shopping available. From restaurants and coffee shops to boutiques and general stores, our corner of the state offers a wide variety of high quality, locally owned businesses. Besides the actual goods and services provided, there are a number of reasons to shop small and support local, most of which will have a lasting, positive impact on your community and even yourself.

Here are four reasons to buy local:

Support the local economy

When you shop small, your money often has a "snowball" effect. Local businesses employ local individuals (your neighbors, family and friends!) and often buy and sell locally made merchandise. They are also more likely to collaborate with and shop from other small businesses in the community. The money you spend stays in and supports your town. You can see and feel the impacts of your dollars, unlike when you shop in a national chain.

Support future growth

The more support for a local economy, the more potential there is for growth. Just one successful small business paves the way for others to join, and creates a significant opportunity for development. Additionally, a thriving town is typically a place people want to live and/or visit, opening the door to welcome in more tourists and community members who will spend their money in local businesses. The effects of shopping small are not only felt in the present, but they will continue to be felt in the future.

Better service

Local business owners started their business because they are passionate about what they do. With this enthusiasm comes greater knowledge and understanding about a product, as well as an increased willingness to help meet a customer's needs. Through their experience, they have become experts at their particular field, and they want to use this expertise to engage with members of the community and create loyal customers.

One-of-a-kind

In addition to any locally crafted goods, you will oftentimes find unique and varied inventory in a local shop as opposed to the mass-produced goods sold at a national retailer. Furthermore, as the key clientele, products and services tend to be catered to the local demographic. Small businesses can easily adjust inventory to directly meet the wants and needs of their customers – in fact, their business relies on it.

We love our community and all the businesses in it. With so many to choose from, we encourage prioritizing our community by shopping small throughout the year. It will help support our community, and therefore your neighbors, family and friends, in more ways than one.

To learn more about SkyLine/SkyBest, your local, award winning high-speed internet provider, give us a call at 1-800-759-2226.

FRS *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

According to the FRS, more than two-thirds of rural Americans with postsecondary degrees never return to their rural communities, so this program gives particular emphasis to those students who plan to return to their community following college. Eligibility requirements include the following:

- Applicants must be children of SkyLine members or SkyBest customers who subscribe to either company's facility-based services.
- Applicants must be graduating high school seniors and reside full-time with their parent(s) in the companies' service area.
- Applicants must be a United States citizen.
- Applicants must complete the online application.
- Applicants must express an interest to return to a rural community following graduation.
- Applications must be sponsored by SkyLine, an NTCA-member company.

*Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligable for this scholarship.

The FRS, in cooperation with NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, seeks to sustain and enhance the quality of life in America by advancing an understanding of rural issues. Through its various programs and initiatives, FRS strongly supports the continuing education of rural youth. If any SkyLine-sponsored students are named winners, they will be announced in May, in conjunction with area high school awards day programs.

Visit www.skybest.com/scholarships for full instructions on how to create an account and for all necessary materials required. If you have additional questions about the FRS Scholarship, please contact Haleigh Seamon.

Recipe of the Month

Pecan Pie

Ingredients:

3 eggs, well beaten
1 cup of dark Karo syrup
1/2 cup of sugar
2 tablespoons of butter-melted
1 teaspoon of vanilla
1/4 teaspoon of salt
1 cup of chopped pecans

Instructions:

Combine all ingredients and place in an unbaked pastry shell. Bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees.

Recipe submitted by Jackie Seats



