

SkyLine Issues \$900,000 in Capital Credit Refunds

This year, SkyLine Membership Corporation is issuing approximately \$900,000 in capital credit refund checks to active and inactive members of the cooperative who had service in 1996.

Capital credits represent each member's ownership of this cooperative and come from the margins allocated to our members' capital credit accounts based on their use of SkyLine's services. As a not-for-profit business, SkyLine assigns any monies remaining after expenses to the capital credit accounts of its members. Allocated capital credits are used over time as working capital for SkyLine to invest in the latest technology and maintain a robust telecom infrastructure to meet the technology needs of its members. Active members who had service during these years and have not received a refund check by early October should call their local SkyLine Customer Center at 1-800-759-2226.

Along with assigning an annual allocation to members' capital credit accounts, our Board of Directors determines if a retirement (refund) is in order based on the cooperative's sound financial condition. The 2022 general retirement is based on a percentage of current and former members' allocation, specifically 35 percent of the unretired balance for 1996. The refund is distributed to active and inactive SkyLine members who had service during those years.

SkyLine will issue refunds through a bill credit to active members if their individual refund falls below a designated dollar value threshold. We plan to continue regular refunds, so please advise us of any change of address.

October is National Co-op Month

Celebrated by more than 40,000 cooperatives nationwide during the month of October, National Co-op Month is an annual opportunity to raise awareness of a trusted, proven way to do business and build communities. Under the theme "Co-ops Build Economic Power," this year's Co-op Month is also a chance to lift up the cooperative business model as the best way to build an economy that empowers everyone.

Recognizing the important role that cooperatives like SkyLine play as a rural telecom leader, contributor to the regional economy and the investments they make to strengthen rural communities, this year's theme closely aligns with the work SkyLine does. Having achieved a Fiber-to-the-Premise (FTTP) deployment across the co-op's service area in 2016, SkyLine continues to expand fiber connectivity to unserved and underserved areas through SkyBest, its wholly-owned subsidiary. This advanced infrastructure was critical not only during a pandemic where virtual access was essential for business, education and healthcare, but it's also making a generational impact, ensuring greater prosperity for rural areas well into the future.

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State of Tennessee Names SkyBest and Loretto Among 36 Grantees to Receive Significant Grants for Broadband Expansion

SkyLine's two subsidiary companies – SkyBest Communications, Inc. and Loretto Telecom – were recently named recipients of \$13.09 million in total grant awards through the Tennessee Emergency Broadband Fund – American Rescue Plan for fiber deployment projects in Johnson, Carter and Lawrence counties. With matching funds provided by SkyBest and Loretto, the \$18 million project will include 356 miles of fiber construction with the potential to serve more than 4,050 homes and businesses.

Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) Commissioner Stuart McWhorter announced on September 12 that the state will award \$446,770,282 in grants for the expansion of internet access across the state of Tennessee.

In total, the broadband infrastructure grants will provide broadband access to more than 150,000 unserved homes and businesses across 58 counties.

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Help Us "Rise & Shine" to Fight Hunger!

Recognizing the need to support local initiatives to minimize food insecurity is greater than ever, SkyLine will continue its annual breakfast food drive for area food pantries. Now in its ninth year, and now through October, our "Rise & Shine" food drive will accept donations of non-perishable breakfast items at each of our five Customer Center locations.

While supplies last, all SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Service Centers will have shopping totes available for pick-up. We welcome all sizes of packaged breakfast food, including individually-sealed cereals, oatmeal and fruit items that can be included in area backpack initiatives for children. See related list of suggested non-perishable items. As our thank-you, please keep the tote for future use, and SkyLine will make delivery of these items to area food pantries, including the Solid Rock Food Closet, Ashe County Food Pantry, the Hunger and Health Coalition, Reaching Avery Ministry and the Shady Valley Baptist Church Food Pantry in early November.

SkyLine is grateful to join the community in support, including numerous individuals, churches and local organizations like those listed that are trying to help fill the hunger gaps that continue to exist across the region. We hope you will join us in this critical effort. As a local cooperative, we are reminded that the seventh cooperative principle is "concern for community." For more information about the food drive, please call your local SkyLine/SkyBest Customer Service Center at 118. Thank you!

NEED TO CONTACT US?

CUSTOMER SERVICE

LOCAL
118

TOLL-FREE

1-800-759-2226

REPAIR SERVICE, 24/7

LOCAL
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

739-4500

LENOIR

929-2872

INTERNET TECH SUPPORT, 24/7

TOLL-FREE

1-866-759-7591

WORTH NOTING:

SkyLine Annual Meeting
Tuesday, October 4
SkyLine Annex Building
1056 Highway 194
North, West Jefferson

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



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"People are moving to Tennessee from across the nation in record numbers, and we have an obligation to prepare our state for continued growth," said Governor Bill Lee. "Our strategic investments in broadband infrastructure will ensure our rural communities are connected and have every opportunity to thrive, and I thank the Financial Stimulus Accountability Group for managing dollars effectively to serve Tennesseans."

According to the 2020 Broadband Deployment Report published by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), one in six rural Tennesseans lacks access to broadband. Since 2018, TNECD has awarded nearly \$120 million in broadband grants through state and federal funding to serve more than 140,000 Tennessee households.

"To achieve economic growth and prosperity, it's imperative that Tennessee's communities have the proper infrastructure in place," McWhorter said. "Thanks to the \$447 million awarded in funding, broadband access will be available to 36 grantees with 75 projects across 58 Tennessee counties, and we look forward to seeing how these grants spur further success among each community."

These grantees are a range of internet service providers, including electrical and telephone cooperatives, local municipalities, private providers and cable companies. These grant recipients were chosen through a rigorous criterion, which included the need of the grant area, the ability to complete the project and strong community support.

"We are absolutely delighted to be named a grant recipient by the State of Tennessee to bring essential fiber connectivity to our neighbors in east and middle Tennessee through this funding initiative," said SkyLine Chief Executive Officer Kim Shepherd. "Reaching our fiber deployment goal early across SkyLine's service area positioned us to turn to those unserved and underserved communities nearby, and this significant funding will accelerate our efforts to get these communities connected and further bridge the digital divide that still exists in many communities."

The grant funds earmarked for Johnson and Carter counties in east Tennessee total \$5.69 million with a total project cost of \$8.5 million with matching funds provided by SkyBest. This project will encompass 256 miles of fiber construction with a potential to serve more than 2,250 homes and businesses.

NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What are Cooperatives?

Cooperatives are owned and governed by their members – the same people who use the co-op's goods or services. Profits are distributed to the members – not stakeholders – or reinvested in the co-op or the community, often meeting needs that might otherwise go unmet. Studies show that consumers want to do business with companies that share their values, making today's environment ideal for cooperatives and their commitment to the communities in which their members live and work.

This year, SkyLine is organizing its ninth-annual "Rise and Shine" Breakfast Food Drive to help re-stock area food pantry shelves with non-perishable breakfast food items, which are often in short supply. We invite you, our members, to be a part of this region-wide effort that will benefit five area food pantries across our service area. See related article elsewhere in this newsletter for more details.



Deliver non-perishable items to SkyLine between September 1 - October 31

SUGGESTED ITEMS

Oatmeal
Whole-grain Cereals
Hot Cereals
Cream of Wheat
Grits
Gravy Mixes
Pancake Mixes
Muffin Mixes
Granola Bars
Syrup
Fruit Juice Packs
Canned or Dried Fruits
Jam
Powdered Milk
Coffee
Hot Chocolate
Pop-Tarts

Items will benefit:

Solid Rock Food Closet
Ashe Food Pantry
Hunger and Health Coalition
Reaching Avery Ministry
Shady Valley Baptist Church Food Pantry

Recipe of the Month

Apple Crunch

Ingredients:

6 large apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon or nutmeg
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter

Instructions:

Pre-heat oven to 325°. Grease an eight-inch square pan. Spread apples in pan. Top with granulated sugar and sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg. Mix together flour and brown sugar. Cut in butter using pastry cutter or your fingers until mixture resembles coarse meal. Spread over apples. Bake 1 hour; best served with ice cream or whipped cream.

NOTE: I put 1 teaspoon cinnamon and 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg in mine.

Recipe submitted by Gloria Mahaffey of Ashe County.

Commemorative Cookbook

The recipes we feature in our monthly newsletter come from SkyLine's commemorative cookbook. At just \$15 each, they make great gifts, and all proceeds will support area food banks.

Visit www.skybest.com or call SkyLine at 118 to order yours.



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SkyLine  SkyBest

www.skybest.com/now

*Restrictions apply. SkyBest Internet 12 Mbps or faster speed is required. Visit website for more details.