

# CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES



## 2024 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Ronny Puckett**  
General Manager

**Mike Leerar.....President**  
Eckley Exchange, 359

**Shane Weaver...Vice-President**  
Joes Exchange, 358

**Sara Walkinshaw.....Secretary**  
Cope Exchange, 357

**Randy Gorton.....Treasurer**  
Seibert Exchange, 664

**Dwayne Bowers.....Director**  
Anton Exchange, 383

**Dayton Drullinger.....Director**  
Kirk Exchange, 362

**Chad Richards.....Director**  
Idalia Exchange, 354

This year's meeting of the Plains Cooperative Telephone Association, Inc. was held in the Joes & Kirk exchanges at the Liberty School on April 25. There were 70 members represented at the dinner and for the meeting, with an additional 74 absentee ballots received. The attendees enjoyed a delicious smoked & shredded beef meal prepared and served by the **Liberty FFA Chapter and their advisor, Tawni Combs**. Company employees were happy to see the subscribers who were able to attend the meeting. After the meal, the business meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. **Cope Community Church Pastor Daniel Sidebottom** gave the invocation. **Board President Shane Weaver** introduced the Board, **Company Attorney Ed Zorn** and the employees of the cooperative, as well as **past directors** who were present. **Garret Drullinger** was appointed to serve as **Parliamentarian** for the meeting. **Lora Liming** presented the Secretary's report. Treasurer **Linda Sackett** introduced **Ryan Hermann, representing the Company's auditing firm**, who was present at the meeting to report on the annual financial statements of the Cooperative and its subsidiary. Ryan indicated that the Cooperative had operating cash flow of \$513,797 in 2023 and currently has \$26.2 million invested in telephone, internet, plant and equipment which is an increase of about \$1.2 million.

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Plains has approximately \$1.5 million in cash, savings, and CDs. The Cooperative also paid down long-term debt of \$627,190 in 2023 and continues to hold about \$945,000 in the prepayment account for the long-term debt. In addition, the cooperative paid approximately \$150,000 in local property taxes in 2023, money that goes directly back into the counties and communities we serve, and also in 2023, the company returned \$199,000 in capital credits to our cooperative members for patronage in 2004. **General Manager Ronny Puckett** reported to the members that the majority of broadband subscribers, 75% are on the Managed Wifi through Plume with great results. The company has successfully completed the first two years of FCC-required speed testing which verifies that Plains is providing advertised speed offerings. Testing continues at new locations. The company continues to seek new opportunities for growth through proposed federal Broadband funding and through matching funds within the state of Colorado. Projects underway for 2024 include completing final construction in Burlington, Stratton, and Bethune to expand service in those areas. This completion of this project will create an additional 1500 locations Plains will be able to serve. The company is also upgrading hardware to increase current network capacity by five times. Director positions for Cope, Kirk, and Seibert exchanges were up for election with all three current directors retiring from the board. The candidates who had filed proper petitions to run for these offices were **Sara Walkinshaw, Cope exchange, Dayton Drullinger, Kirk exchange, Randy Gorton, Seibert exchange.** These three candidates were elected by a motion to cast a unanimous ballot and **Linda Sackett, Lora Liming and Jerry Guy received thanks for their fifteen years of service on the Plains board.** During the evening, attendees viewed a slide show from our "Celebrating Country Life" 2024 photo contest and numerous prize drawings were conducted. The progressive cash prize drawing for \$600 was drawn from the full membership list, with the prize to be awarded only if the member whose name was drawn was in attendance. Brian Ernst from the Cope area was drawn as the winning member and, as he was not in attendance, next year's progressive drawing will be for \$700 at the 2025 annual meeting to be held in Eckley.



The winner of our directory cover photo contest "Celebrating Country Life" is **Melanie Lingo of the Cope area** with this photo of an iconic scene from Plains Country.



## Find the kitten!

Find another picture of this kitten hiding somewhere in this newsletter, then call us at 970-358-4211 by June 18 to let us know you found it, and we'll put your name in a drawing for a \$20 bill credit!

Our office hours are  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 am to 4:30 pm  
The Wray office staff is at lunch  
from 12:00 to 12:30