

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

PLAINS

June 2025

2025 Annual Membership Meeting

This year's meeting of the Plains Cooperative Telephone Association was held in the Eckley exchange at the Eckley Community Center on April 24. There were 57 members represented at the dinner and for the meeting, with an additional 61 absentee ballots received. The attendees enjoyed a delicious chicken fried steak dinner prepared by the Eckley Community Center board. Company employees always enjoy visiting with some of the subscribers they speak with on the phone throughout the year. **Eckley Community Church Pastor Jon Shaw** gave the invocation to start the meeting. Board **President Mike Leerar** introduced the Board, Company **Attorney Ed Zorn** and the employees of the cooperative, as well as past directors who were present. **Alex Bailey of Eckley** was appointed to serve as **Parliamentarian** for the meeting. **Sara Walkinshaw** presented the Secretary's report. **Treasurer Randy Gorton** introduced **Ryan Hermann, representing the Company's auditing firm, Pinion Global**, 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 \$869,062 in 2024 and currently has \$27.5 million invested in telephone, internet, plant and equipment, which is an increase of \$2.4 million.

Plains Cooperative paid down long-term debt of \$558,879 in 2024 and continues to hold about \$945,000 in the prepayment account for long-term debt. In addition, the cooperative paid approximately \$140,000 in local property taxes in 2024, money that goes directly back into the counties and communities we serve, and also in 2024, the company returned \$189,000 in capital credits to our cooperative members for patronage in 2004 and 2005.



General Manager Ronny Puckett reported to the members that the cooperative launched service in Stratton and Bethune in October of 2024, offering service to a possible 372 new locations. Broadband pricing plans were restructured and prices on the higher speed tiers were lowered, some as much as 73%. The cooperative continues to strive to control expenses, as more subscribers are receiving managed wifi services which reduces truck rolls for service issues. The network capacity has been upgraded to 200 GB. As the newly constructed fiber network becomes active during mid-2025, service will be launched to all areas west of Highway 385 within the City of Burlington. Manager Puckett also gave a legislative update about the Universal Service Fund (USF) which helps to fund the services Plains provides and also helps to fund communication services for rural schools and hospitals. As the Supreme Court considers a case around the funding of the USF, members are encouraged to reach out to congressional representatives about its importance.



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2025 Annual Membership Meeting (continued)

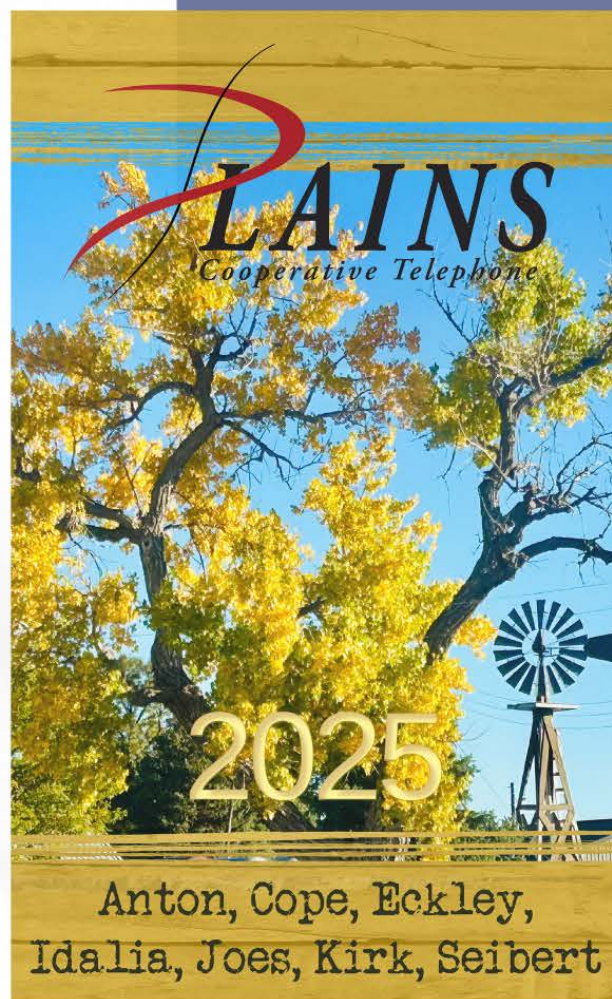
Director positions for Eckley and Joes exchanges were up for election with Mike Leerar of the Eckley exchange retiring from the board and Shane Weaver of the Joes exchange running for re-election. **Shane Weaver of Joes and Jay Owens of Eckley** had both filed proper petitions to run for these two positions. The two candidates were elected by a motion to cast a unanimous ballot. **Mike Leerar** received thanks for his fifteen years of service on the Plains board.

During the evening, attendees viewed some interesting aerial footage of the Plains area and numerous prize drawings were conducted throughout the meeting. The progressive cash prize drawing for \$700 was drawn from the full membership list, with the prize to be awarded only if the member whose name was drawn was in attendance. Clinton Norman 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 \$800 at the 2026 annual meeting to be held in the Anton exchange.

Attendees went home with a useful thermal shopping tote and some other fun handouts after an enjoyable evening.

Find the puppy!

Find another picture of this puppy hiding somewhere in this newsletter, then call us at 970-358-4211 or 970-592-2211 by June 17 to let us know that you located it, and we'll put your name in a drawing for a \$20 bill credit!



The winner of our directory photo cover contest "Rustic Charm on the Plains" is **Jackie Seyler of Kirk** with this photo of an old windmill in Plains Country. Congratulations, Jackie!

Our office hours are

Monday - Friday

8:00 am to 4:30 pm

**The Wray office staff is at
lunch from 12:00 - 12:30**

