

Pineland PROUD NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020

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68TH ANNUAL MEETING

A CELEBRATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

With Significant Changes Implemented, Pineland Telephone Cooperative Members Meet for 68th Annual Meeting

A change in the season, no entertainment, drive through registration, lots of masks, and no handshakes. These were just a few of the changes noticed at this year's meeting of the members of Pineland Telephone Cooperative, Inc, which was held on Wednesday, October 7, 2020. Serving its membership since 1951, "this year has truly been a challenge for all of us, and its impact on your cooperative is no exception," began General Manager, Dustin Durden, when addressing those in attendance.

Durden shared some of the challenges Pineland has faced during the pandemic. By late March, the decision was made to close the main offices in Metter and Swainsboro, shift all personnel that could work from home to that format, and shift all field technicians to working remotely as much as possible, picking up supplies as needed only. The demand for internet was growing rapidly and these connections were in Pineland's traditional service territory. Over a period of eight months, the team at Pineland installed high speed broadband to 1,075 new locations compared to 752 for the same timeframe in 2019. Upgrades in speed were coming daily so that people could work from home and students could find some bit of continuity in their classwork. During uncertain times, the staff of Pineland Telephone produced unprecedented results.

Cooperative President, Mark Bland led his discussion with praise for the employees of Pineland Telephone. President Bland likened the team with a Helen Keller quote, 'character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved'. Bland also thanked those in attendance for taking the time and making the effort to be at the annual meeting in spite of these most trying times.

Based on the current Bylaws of the Cooperative, an annual meeting was required to be held in person. An amendment passed during this meeting, and already in place at most electric cooperatives in Georgia, now allows the board of directors to make amendments to the Bylaws by majority vote.

Three directors were re-elected, unopposed, to serve Pineland Telephone Cooperative, Inc. another term at this meeting. Mr. Wiley C. Evans, III (Bartow and Davisboro) will represent District 2, Mr. Ralph D. Clifton (Southwest Metter

and Southwest Cobbtown) will represent District 7, and Mr. Mark Bland (Northwest Metter) will represent District 8 until 2023.

“Having worked for a cooperative my entire career, cooperatives get the job done,” says Durden. “Serving you, our members, is first and foremost, our mission.” Concluding his speech, Durden introduced the ten employees with service anniversaries celebrated this year, congratulating the group on a combined 140 years of service.

Pineland Telephone employees celebrate years of service milestone



Top row, from left, Beau Youngblood (15), Arthur Allen (5), Gerald Powell (15), Chad Kingery (5). Middle row, from left, Steven McComas (5), Jeffery Hilderbrandt (20), Timmy Monroe (5), Greg Williams (30). Bottom row, Amanda Vernon (5). Not pictured, William Gay (25).

THE PINELAND FAMILY'S Employee Military Veterans



Toby Tobin
Army National Guard, 10 years



Jeffery Griff
Army, 6 years



Jinks Durden
Air Force, 3 years



Danny Wynn
Navy, 24 years



Bret Callaway
Army National Guard, 14 years



George Killgo
Army Security Agency, 3.5 years



John Olsen
Navy, 5 years

PUMPKINS GALORE

We are happy to report that our first ever Pineland Pumpkin Patch was a success! One hundred beautifully decorated pumpkins were received, and currently adorn the Pineland Metter office's front windows. Markers, crayons, feathers, googly eyes, and tissue paper were just some of the tools used to create these unique pumpkins.

We extend a very big thank you to all the children that participated, and congratulations to the three winners of our drawings – Gabriel Gonzalez age 4, Chandler White age 9, and Miracle Byrd age 10!

If you are in the area, be sure to drive by and check out our pumpkin patch. We hope this event has been as enjoyable for all the children as it has been for us!



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Holiday Closings

Our offices will be closed on the following days. Payments can be made through our dropboxes or online at pineland.net.

Thanksgiving:

Nov. 26-27, 2020

Christmas:

Dec. 24-25, 2020

New Years Day:

Jan. 1, 2021



P.O. Box 678
Metter, GA 30439

Fiber Focus Trivia

Mail or bring your completed answers to Pineland Telephone Cooperative for your chance to win a \$5 credit on your bill. Fifteen total customers will win! Mail to:
Pineland Telephone Cooperative, Inc.; Pineland Proud Trivia; P.O. Box 678; Metter, GA 30439

Name: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

Email: _____

1. How many current Pineland Telephone employees served in the United States military?
2. How many broadband installs has Pineland Telephone completed during the pandemic?
3. Pineland Telephone recognized 10 employees who celebrated milestone work anniversaries. What is their combined years of service?
4. Name one of the three Pineland Telephone directors who was re-elected for another term.
5. Name one of the three Pumpkin Patch winners?

Please print your name and phone number clearly. Not eligible for credit two editions in a row.

Write one of the questions and correct answer on Pineland's Facebook page for an additional chance to win a **\$5 credit** on your bill! Five fans will win!

By listing your email address, you will be signed up to receive monthly email correspondence.



Anne Hostilo
Lisa Wilcher
Patricia Beck
Betty Kulick
Oscar Lee Smith
Lott Foskey
Carolyn Wilson
Cheryl Hardiman
Iris Leonard
David Adams
Annie Jean Williams
Shelba Bailey
Molline Thompson
Marlo Smith
Jimmy Johnson

Congratulations!
You are the winners of
Pineland Proud Trivia from
our previous newsletter!