

XIT Connections

Volume XVI, Number 1 Winter 2014



Cover photo was taken by Cassidy Horn of Dalhart. The photo was taken back in 2010 at their family home. The photo features two of their horses playing in the snow together.

2014 Directory Photo Contest Winner Announced

Congratulations to Laura Rogers of Stratford who is the winner of our 2014 XIT Regional Telephone Directory Photo Contest held recently. The winning photograph features Laura's daughter, Kennedy, walking down the Beaver Highway out of Stratford. We, at XIT, like to think of the photo as a little girl walking towards the future. The photograph was taken last year. The photograph will grace the cover of our 2014 directory, in addition to being on the cover of the financial report for the XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative Annual Meeting, which is held in March each year.

Laura is married to Jason Rogers, who is a Texas DPS Patrol Officer in Dumas. Laura works at the Sherman County Clerk's office, in addition to being a paramedic for the Stratford EMS. Laura told us "Kennedy was safe at all times while we took the photo. We made sure of it." She also said when they first saw the picture they wondered about using it since it looked like their little girl was just walking down the middle of the road all by herself. That was not the case at all though and it turned out to be a beautiful picture.

The photos we received for the contest this year were exceptional! We want to thank each and every one of you who took the time and effort to enter photos into the contest. You help to make our directory the best in the area and to add local flavor to the cover!





XIT employees Kathy Duggan, Trena Howell and Mary Brazell are shown serving lunch to a hungry crowd in Dalhart.



Many of the smiling faces who braved the season and enjoyed the meal.



Janice Daniels of Stratford is shown accepting a \$50 QVC gift card from Lupe Duarte, XIT Customer Service Clerk.



Holiday Open House

Our 2013 Holiday Open Houses were a tasty BBQ meal with all the trimmings, approximately 200 folks in Dalhart joined us for the celebrations. A special thank you to the time to come in and help us celebrate. It was great to see our loyal customers and to look forward to seeing you again.



Doug Brown of Dalhart is shown receiving his Amazon Kindle from Jessica Sanchez, XIT Customer Service Clerk.



Shown receiving her Amazon Kindle from Lupe Duarte, XIT Customer Service Clerk, is Kristin Gutierrez of Stratford.



Jessica Sanchez, XIT Customer Service Clerk is awarding Leslie Gregory of Dalhart a Hamilton Beach Ice Cream Maker.



Rex Sladek of Stratford won a Hamilton Beach Ice Cream Maker.



It was so cold to help XIT celebrate the holiday season with us!



More friendly faces from Dalhart who enjoyed lunch at XIT's annual Christmas Open House.

Events Held Recently



Events were fun-filled with wonderful people, prizes, and great door prizes. We had customers from Dalhart and Stratford brave the weather and come to XIT thanks to all the customers who took the time to celebrate the Christmas season. It is always a pleasure to meet our new customers as well. We look forward to seeing you all next year!



Verlin Koehn of Dalhart accepts a QVC \$50 gift card from Sherry Steffen, XIT Office Clerk.



Cristie Childress of Dalhart accepts a Cuisinart Stick Blender from XIT Office Clerk, Sherry Steffen.



Mrs. Gonzalo Reyes of Stratford won a Cuisinart Stick Blender.



Tim Stockman of Dalhart accepts a Keurig Coffee Maker from Jessica Sanchez, XIT Customer Service Clerk.



Jack Vincent of Stratford is shown accepting a Keurig Coffee Maker from Lupe Duarte, XIT Customer Service Clerk.

Music Choice Channel Changes



Music Choice recently made several changes to their channel lineup, including adding 5 new channels. The new channels include:

- **Teen MC – Channel 922:** Take a break from your homework and let us supply you with your favorite tracks. One Direction, Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift and more!
- **Pop Rhythmic – Channel 901:** Featuring the hottest tracks in pop and hip-hop today! Flo Rida, Chris Brown, and Rihanna are just a few.
- **Pop Country – Channel 930:** Are you a little bit country and a little bit pop? Then, you are in luck because you can listen to all your favorite country and pop hits right here. Choices like Bruno Mars, Florida Georgia Line, Hunter Hayes and many more.
- **Love Songs – Channel 919:** From the couch to the bedroom, this channel is setting the mood for all couples out there. Fall in love again with monster ballads and mid-tempo tunes from yesterday and today. Bruno Mars, Maroon 5, Justin Timberlake and Adele are some great examples!

Three channels had name changes:

- **Retro Rock changed to Rock Hits – Channel 916:** Bringing you songs and artists that helped shape modern rock including Nirvana, Guns N Roses, Aerosmith and more.
- **True Country is now Country Hits – Channel 932:** Reminisce with non-stop ballads and upbeat hits from your favorite pioneers and current stars of country music. Kenny Chesney, Martina McBride, Blake Shelton and Carrie Underwood and more.
- **Dance/Electronica has changed to Dance/EDM – Channel 902:** Catch the hottest original tracks and remixes in dance and EDM right here. Avicii, Chemical Brothers, Nervo and many more.

One channel was removed. Classic Alternative is now part of Rock Hits and is no longer a separate channel. Check out all the Music Choice channels on XIT's IPTV channels 900-949! We have something for every music lover – no matter what your style!

Microsoft To Kill Windows XP

Let the countdown begin ... Microsoft has announced that as of April 8, 2014, there will no longer be any new security updates, non-security hot fixes, free and paid assisted support options, or online technical content updates for Windows XP or Windows Office 2003. This means running these Windows programs after April 8, 2014, could cause not only security issues, but also app compatibility problems as some software solutions may not support the old operating system.



Microsoft strongly recommends you get current with Windows and Office and upgrade your PC before the end-of-support date. If Windows XP is still being used and you feel the migration will not be complete by April 8, 2014, or you haven't begun migration yet, Microsoft is eager to help customers get the process done.

For complete details including instructions for moving to Windows 7 or Windows 8, visit www.microsoft.com.

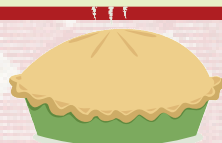
What's Cookin' at XIT

Pecan Pie By Ruby V. Smith

½ C butter or margarine
1 ½ C chopped pecans
¾ C dark corn syrup

1 tsp. vanilla
3 eggs, slightly beaten
Whole pecan meats

1 C sugar
Unbaked 9" pie shell
¼ tsp. salt



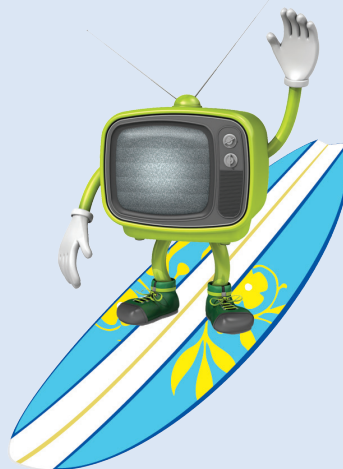
Cream butter. Add sugar gradually and continue beating until light and fluffy. Add next five ingredients and mix well. Pour into pie shell. Decorate edge of pie with whole pecans. Bake at 375 degrees for 40-45 minutes. Serve with whipped cream, if desired.

This recipe is featured from our 2012 Country Cookin' Cookbook now available for sale at any of our XIT offices for only \$14.95 each. The new cookbook is made up of 709 of the tastiest recipes from the finest cooks in our area! Come by and get yours today!

SMART SURFING...

The XXII Olympic Winter Games begin on Thursday, February 6, 2014 on NBC, Channel 4, (XIT IPTV HD Channel 504), with the opening ceremonies. The games will also be broadcast on CNBC, Channel 24/524 and MSNBC, Channel 28/528, with more extensive airing schedules and footage. This will be the first time that the Russian Federation will host the Winter Games. The Soviet Union hosted the 1980 Summer Games in Moscow. The host city, Sochi, has a population of 400,000 people and is situated in Krasnodar, which is the third largest region in Russia.

During the games, events will be held in two distinct areas: the mountain cluster, which will host the Alpine and sliding events, and the coastal cluster, which will stage the ice-based events, as well as the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. This compact setup means that, for the first time in the history of the Winter Games, all ice venues will be within walking distance of each other, enabling fans to attend multiple events in the same day. Make sure to tune into the Olympic Games!



The Bachelor: Sean & Catherine's Wedding is set to be televised live on Sunday, January 26, 2014, on Channel 7 (XIT IPTV HD Channel 507) at 7 P.M. Sean Lowe proposed to Catherine Giudici in Thailand on the season finale of his season of "The Bachelor", which aired back in March. The two currently live separately in Dallas, and plan to move in together after they wed. "I just want it to be fun and show our love", Catherine said of their winter nuptials. The wedding should be something to see!

The Moaning of Life Series will begin on Saturday, January 18, 2014, on the Science Channel, XIT IPTV Channel 51 (551 on HD). The new docuseries stars the lovable baf-foen, Karl Pilkington, as he sets off across the world to experience how other cultures deal with the issues of middle age. Though Karl has turned 40, he admits that he is still not quite as clued up about life as he would have hoped. The show will give him a chance to reflect on his life and explore many personal issues. It should be very refreshing and eye opening to watch. Give it a view.

The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon is set to premiere on Monday, February 24, 2014 on NBC, Channel 4 (XIT IPTV HD Channel 504). Josh Lieb, who is currently producer of Fallon's Late Night show, will move with Fallon when he takes over The Tonight Show from Jay Leno. He will work under executive producer, Lorne Michaels. The change in host and producer should give the show a fresh new start with lots of laughs and great guests. We think this show will deserve a second look!

TTAF Scholarships Available

The Texas Telephone Association Foundation (TTAF), a non-profit, philanthropic organization founded to help further the understanding of telephony and advance telecommunications as a career choice, has announced they will be awarding six Texas students with four-year college scholarships. The scholarships will be in the amount of \$1500.00 per year to students entering college for the 2014-2015 school year.

The TTAF Scholarship Committee will review the applications and give special consideration to students who will be pursuing a college degree in fields of study which are of particular interest in telecommunications (such as math, business, education, technology, engineering and computer science). The completed scholarship applications must be postmarked no later than March 28, 2014.

Any student applying for the scholarship must be a U.S. citizen, graduating from a Texas high school no later than June 2014, have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher, and planning to begin college by the Fall of 2014.

To apply for this scholarship opportunity, contact your local school counselor or go to www.tta.org and click on the TTA Foundation Scholarship Link for application and more information.

TV Programming Rates: Your Questions Answered

XIT strives to keep our prices as low as possible for all of our services, but one area that is difficult for us to control is cable television service. XIT works hard not only to provide the best channel lineups to our customers, but to do it at the lowest rates possible. However, the rising costs of retransmission and programming fees from the channel owners, do come into play when figuring our TV rates. Smaller, independent cable operators like us pay 35% more on average for national programming than the larger cable companies and satellite providers. We'd like to take this opportunity to answer some common questions and to lay to rest any misconceptions that customers may have about your TV service and pricing.

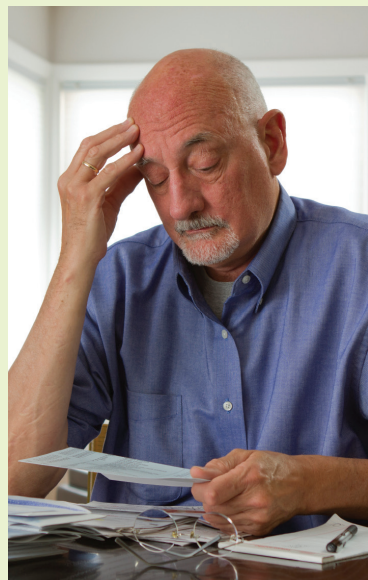
First question ... If you are trying to keep costs low, why does my bill seem to go up almost every year? While XIT does our best to keep our prices as low as we can for our customers, the rising costs of TV programming, retransmission fees and other factors play a big part in the cost for TV service. We are required by the channel network owners to pay monthly charges, per subscriber, for each channel that we carry on our service. The rates vary according to the agreement between the channel owners and the cable company, including XIT. As contracts expire, negotiations then take place to establish new contracts to continue carriage of the channels. During these negotiations, channel owners always ask for annual price increases. These increases can range from 6 percent, to as much as 50 percent or more. This drives up the cost of TV service yearly for the cable companies. And, cable TV companies have to pay these higher costs, even though the network owners broadcast these channels on the Internet for almost nothing.

Why do I have to pay for channels I don't want or watch? First thing to remember is XIT has to pay the channel owners a set fee, per subscriber, to carry each of their stations. These fees are charged and paid for, even if a customer never watches a portion of the channels. We are required in the contracts with the channel owners to carry the most-popular channels, but also the not-so-favorite channels too. They can even dictate where the channel placement has to be within our channel lineup. We cannot pick and choose the channels we want to subscribe to ... they are a package deal from the channel owners. We are required to carry the channels the owners command AND to pay a fee for each subscriber we have for each of those channels.

If my rate goes up, why shouldn't I just change cable companies? There is a very good chance that if you did switch cable providers, you would probably find yourself in the same situation down the road with the new provider. As their contracts expire with the channel owners and their programming rates increase with the new contracts, you would most likely see an increase on your bill at this point. Cable companies just can't afford to absorb all the astronomical programming cost hikes, along with their normal operating costs, and stay in business. This goes for the satellite companies as well. These programming increases are in addition to normal equipment update costs, scheduled maintenance costs and other normal operating expenses.

Why is it that some channels may go "off-the-air" when a cable company is negotiating a deal with a certain network? When negotiating one-on-one with channel owners, cable companies will request to keep the channels operating while they negotiate. If a channel is pulled from a lineup, it is because the channel network owners choose to pull the channel as a way of "pressuring" the cable provider to submit to their programming demands and costs. Cable providers do not feel this is right, but unfortunately we do not have any control over this. XIT has been fortunate to have this happen only once or twice in our past history.

We hope by making the facts known, it helps you, our customers, to understand why XIT takes the steps it does to keep our service top notch and our pricing as economical as possible. All of us at XIT appreciate your continued support and look forward to serving all of your future telecommunications needs! If you have any questions, please give us a call at 806-384-3311.





Director, J.W. McClellan, Jr., 30 years



Trena Howell, 25 years

XIT Board of Directors & Service Awards Luncheon

The 3rd Annual Board of Directors Christmas and Employee Service Awards Luncheon was held on Wednesday, December 18, 2013, at the XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative headquarters office.

Darrell Dennis, XIT General Manager, recognized five employees and one board member who have a combined total of 140 years of service to XIT Rural Telephone! A delicious prime rib lunch with all the trimmings was served to all who attended.

XIT employees and board members who received service awards included: Gary Hall, 35 years (not pictured); Trena Howell, 25 years; Cathy Taylor, 20 years; Shawna Bucher and Charlotte Burkhalter, 15 years; and XIT Board of Director, J.W. McClellan, Jr., 30 years.

XIT Board of Directors and management would like to extend a "Thank You" for all the hard work and dedication given all year long by the employees of the Cooperative. If you add up the years of service from all of the current XIT employees and management, there is a combined total of over 575 years of service to XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc!



Cathy Taylor, 20 years



Shawna Bucher, 15 years



Charlotte Burkhalter, 15 years

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and **XIT Communications**
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2014 Directory Advertising

Sales are currently underway for yellow and white page advertising in our 2014 XIT Communications' Regional Telephone Directory. If you are interested in advertising in the directory that targets the areas where your customers do business, call the XIT Marketing Department at 384-3311 or 1-800-232-3312. You can set up a time to meet with our Sales and Customer Relations Representative, Trena Howell, to discuss all your advertising options.

XIT's Regional Directory features:

- Very convenient size with large print
- Extensive city and county government sections
- Amarillo/Canyon listings
- International area & calling codes
- White and yellow page advertising

Also, please keep in mind that XIT obtains listings from other companies for a portion of our directory. Based on the agreement between XIT and the other telephone providers, XIT cannot make ANY corrections to these other listings. If you have a listing that is incorrect from another company, please get with that company as soon as possible to have the listing corrected so it will appear correct in our next directory. XIT strives to make sure our directory is the most accurate and up-to-date directory for our area.

It's the one directory that has it all! Make sure to pick up one for your home, vehicle and office! The new directory is published and delivered in July 2014. Extra copies of the current 2013 directory are available at any XIT office location for pickup. We want to be your directory of choice!

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