

XIT Connections

XIX, Number 1, Winter 2017



Winning Photo Selected

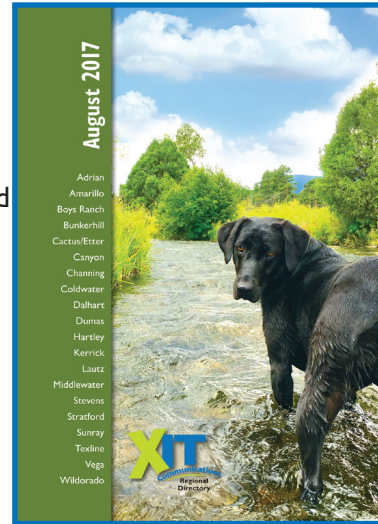
Features Takoda: The Life Saving Dog

The winner of the 2017 XIT Regional Telephone Directory Photo Contest has been selected, and we are pleased to announce the winner is Chris Northcutt of Amarillo! As the winner of our directory photo contest, Chris has won \$100, and his photo will be on the cover of 10,000 directories to be distributed all around XIT's coverage area! The directory will be published in July. The winning photograph features Takoda, a 4 year-old British Labrador, as he enjoys a walk down the river bed on the Philmont Boy Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico, last summer. Takoda is owned by Rod Brashears of Amarillo.

But, there is much more to the story of Takoda and his owner, Rod! Takoda, which is a Sioux word meaning 'friend to all', is actually a diabetic service alert dog who has been trained to alert Rod, who has Type 1 Diabetes, when his blood sugar levels become dangerously low or high. Rod has a medical condition that results in a rapid loss of blood sugar, and if not acted on quickly, can throw him into an unconscious life-threatening state. Insulin pumps have not worked for him, since the sensors take too much time to respond when Rod's levels drop so quickly. So, Takoda is his main lifeline! Rod has had Takoda since he was 8 months old. His close friends held fundraisers to raise the \$15,000 needed to buy the dog for him. As Rod put it, "he has kept me alive the past 3 ½ years. In 2012 alone, I collapsed and woke up in the hospital some 13 times. Since I got Takoda, I have been in the hospital only once. He is pretty much on his game all the time. I can't thank my friends enough for all they've done." Takoda wears an alert vest in public and can accompany Rod wherever he goes, including work.

Takoda will alert Rod many times during the day when his blood sugar levels are too low or too high. The dog has been trained since birth to detect the scent when Rod's blood sugar level drops to 80, or when it rises above 180. Takoda alerts him by putting one paw on his leg, or his hand if he is sitting down. Rod will then check his blood sugar levels with a meter, and depending what the levels are, will either eat or drink something with sugar or take his insulin. The dog will also wake Rod up at night if his levels drop too low or rise too high. He's pretty spot on with his detection.

Takoda is also a wonderful fishing dog, which is great because fishing is Rod's favorite hobby. Rod and his good friend, Kyle McAdams, founded a Chapter of Project Healing Waters in Amarillo about 6 years ago. Their organization goes by the name of The Amarillo Fly Guys. Rod is the president of the chapter. They created the organization to support Veterans in the healing process and to provide a strong support



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Christmas on the Square in Vega

Christmas on the Square in Vega was a perfect evening of music, food and fellowship! Several XIT employees attended the event and handed out hot chocolate with marshmallows and candy canes to the residents as they visited and strolled around the square. It was a picture-perfect night for hot chocolate and for all of the fun festivities!

The evening kicked off with Stephanie Boydston and her "Little Pickers" guitar students entertaining the crowd with a selection of Christmas carols. The courthouse was open and filled with folks enjoying wonderful food. There was a fire pit for s'more making. Santa Claus made his appearance at the City Hall. Several businesses were handing out different treats and beverages, and the Thomas Train was running for all the little ones to have a ride around the square. It was a wonderful evening to be in Vega!

Nothing beats a small town gathering to bring out the Christmas joy in people! The employees from XIT enjoyed the time visiting with our customers and the other Vega residents. We are looking forward to participating in the event next year!



Easy Pay Options

XIT Communications offers several convenient ways to pay your bill.



Pay In Person – Come by any XIT office and make your payment. We enjoy getting to see and visit with our customers! We are open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Mail It In – You can always mail in your payment using the envelope provided with your monthly statement. Please remember to write your account number on your check.



Drop Box – You can always drop your payment in one of our payment drop boxes at each office location. This can be done any time of day or night.



Auto Bank Draft – You can have your payment automatically drafted each month right from your bank account. You choose a payment date of either the 10th or 18th of the month to make it convenient for you!



Pay Over The Phone – You can always call in and one of our representatives can take your payment right over the phone.



Online Bill Pay – Sign up for online bill pay on our website at www.xit.net.

Whichever way you choose to pay, we just want to say 'Thank You' for your business! If we can help you with any other questions or issues you may have, please give us a call!

Dalhart 384-3311 or 244-3355
Stratford 366-3355

Vega 967-3355
Boys Ranch 533-3355

New Changes to the Lifeline Program

Lifeline is a government assistance program, available from XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and XIT Communications, that provides a monthly discount on basic telephone service to qualified, low-income customers. As of December 2, 2016, several changes have been made to Lifeline of which we would like to make you aware:

- Customers can now apply the monthly Lifeline discount towards either Internet service or basic telephone service. With XIT, you must subscribe to a 12/2 or higher Internet package to be eligible for the discount. Remember, there is only one discount allowed per household for either telephone or Internet, but not both.
- In order to receive Lifeline assistance, you or someone in your household must participate in at least one of the following programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA), Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Program, or your annual household income must be at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.
- The National School Lunch Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) no longer qualify for the federal Lifeline Program as of December 2, 2016.
- As of December 2, 2016, customers signing up or receiving a Lifeline discount will be subject to a 60-day port freeze for telephone service, or a 12-month port freeze for broadband Internet service. This means that once a customer signs up for telephone or Internet service with a provider, they must fulfill the port freeze for the selected service BEFORE they can change their service to another provider. If they do not fulfill the port freeze requirement, they will lose their Lifeline discount for the remainder of the freeze timeframe. Once the port freeze time requirement has been fulfilled, then the customer is free to change service providers. There are some exceptions to this rule including one for customers who move their residential address.
- Subscribers' eligibility recertification has been changed to a rolling process based on the subscriber's service initiation date. Subscribers will need to recertify once a year.
- For more information, or to sign up for the program, either contact the Texas Low Income Administrator (LIDA) at 1-866-454-8387 or go online to www.puc.state.tx.us/consumer/lowincome/assistance.aspx.

Stingray Music on IPTV

Do you love music? Do you enjoy listening to music from all the popular music genres? Then, check out XIT's Stingray Music Channels on IPTV! Each channel offers clear, digital-quality sound to give you exceptional music anytime! Check out Channels 900-949 on XIT's IPTV to choose your favorite Stingray Music Channels!

And even better ... now you can take your Stingray Music on the go! As an XIT IPTV customer, you have access to the FREE Stingray Music App for your wireless phone or other devices, so you can listen to Stingray and over 2,000 new Vibes Channels all day long! There is even a web-based player for laptops and computers so you can listen at work or wherever you may go during the day. Downloading and using the app is easy:

- Go into the App Store on your phone or tablet and search for 'Stingray Music' to bring up the app. Click and download the app.
- You will need to accept the terms.
- Connect by either signing up for an account or use your Facebook login to register.
- If you choose to sign up, enter your email address and a password.
- Click "Yes" when it asks if your TV provider gives you access to Stingray Music.
- Select XIT Telecommunication & Technology from the list of providers at the bottom of the screen.

If you are by your television when you are signing up, you can select "Authenticate with your TV" on the device screen. If you are not by your TV, you can click on

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XIT Christmas Open Houses Are A Success

Everyone here at XIT would like to extend a great big THANK YOU to all our wonderful customers who attended our 2016 Christmas Open Houses and helped us kick off a great holiday season! The open houses were a huge success and enjoyed by all who attended. We always enjoy getting to visit with our great customers!

Our guests enjoyed tasty BBQ sandwiches with chips and veggies, with delicious cookies for dessert. Door prizes consisting of smoked hams from Texline



Meat Processing, QVC Gift Cards and Silverstone cookware were given away at each of our office locations.

The Stratford Christmas Open House was held on Friday, December 2nd, at our Stratford office. We had 131 guests register for door prizes. Winners of the door prizes in Strat-



ford were: Sonja Ragsdale and Jack Swain, smoked hams; Emily Farnsworth, Silverstone Au Gratin Baker; and Pat Wright, \$50 QVC Gift Card.

Both of our Dalhart Open Houses were held the following Friday, December 9th. We had 41 guests register for prizes at our headquarters office, and 173 customers register at our downtown store. Those winning prizes at the headquarters office were Linda Bell and DeWayne Clark, smoked hams; Sylvia Schmidt, Silverstone Cake Pan; and Sandra Dixon, \$50 QVC Gift Card.

Winners at our Dalhart downtown location included Betty Chalker and Nelda Askey, smoked hams; Barry Walker, Silverstone Casserole Dish; and Juana Ortiz, \$50 QVC Gift Card. Congratulations to all the lucky prize winners!

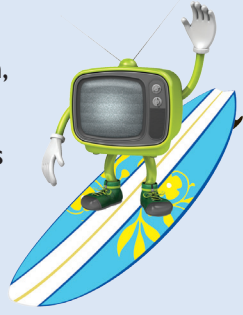


We hope all of our customers had a very Merry Christmas! We are so grateful for your patronage over the years, and we are looking forward to serving you in 2017!



SMART SURFING...

APB premieres on Fox, Channel 14/514 in HD on Monday, February 6th, at 8:00 p.m. APB is a new police drama starring Justin Kirk, as Gideon Reeves. Reeves is a tech billionaire who, after his best friend is killed in an attempted robbery, wants to see justice done for his friend. When his friend's murder is not solved in a timely manner due to corruption and budget cuts within the department, Reeves puts up millions of dollars of his own money to purchase and take control of the troubled 13th Police District. His mission is to turn the department into a private police force with new, high-tech, cutting-edge technology to catch the criminals and solve crimes faster than ever before. This looks to be a winner of a drama series. Check it out!



Taken is a new action series that premieres on Monday, February 27th, at 9:00 p.m. on NBC, Channel 4, 504 in HD. The show is based off of the Taken Movie Trilogy. Clive Standen plays a younger version of Bryan Mills (who was played by Liam Neeson in the original movies), as he is recruited into the CIA after saving a train full of innocent people from a team of deadly gunmen. There is one casualty during the crime though, a woman who is very special to him. This gives Bryan all the motivation he needs to dedicate his life to perfecting a special set of skills so he can rescue people for the CIA and defeat the bad guys. Luc Besson, who wrote the original film and produced all three movies, is an executive producer on the show. If you liked the Taken movies, you might check out this new series.

Winning Photo...

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environment through recreational activities. It's a wonderful program of which Rod is extremely proud.

"We meet every 2nd Tuesday of the month at the VFW in Amarillo at 7:00 p.m. where we teach Veterans from all over the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandle areas how to tie flies for fly fishing. Then, several times a year, we take usually around 17-20 Veterans on fishing trips to New Mexico or Shamrock, Texas, where we teach them to fly fish. We have several volunteers that accompany us pretty regularly, along with many others who assist when they can. Nate Ferguson and Joel Brooks are our cooks on most trips. Gary Wilcox, Trey Britton and Paul Douglass are some of our regular fishing guides that come with us to help with fly fishing instruction. We do our best to make sure everyone catches a fish and has a great time," Rod explains. "All the money donated to the Amarillo Fly Guys gets used for our local Veterans. They don't have to pay for anything on these trips - gas, food, fishing supplies, etc. It's totally free," he adds. "When people donate to our chapter, 100% of the donation is used for the Veterans. There are no fees or anything taken out of the donations," he explains.

If anyone would like to make a donation to the Amarillo Fly Guys, you can do so online. Just go to their website at www.amarilloflyguys.com and click on the Sponsor Tab. The donate button is at the bottom of the sponsor page. Thank you Fly Guys for taking care of our Veterans!

Keep The Photos Coming ...

'Thank You' to everyone who took the time to send in their photos and participated in this year's directory photo contest! Remember, photos for the contest can be submitted to XIT all year long! To submit your pictures online, email them to xitcom@xit.net. Make sure to include your name, address, contact number and a description of the photo with each entry. There is no limit to the number of entries you can submit! Photos for the directory need to be bright, vibrant and colorful. Please take photos in the highest resolution available, and we ask that all photos be color, no black and white. Send them in all at once, or email them all during the year, it is your choice!

Even if your photograph does not win the directory contest, we may use it on one of our quarterly newsletter covers, so keep sending photos in! Seasonal pictures are also appreciated and welcome for this very reason! So make sure to enter, and submit your photos often! You could very easily be our next directory contest winner!

Other Options Available, and choose to authenticate later. You will have 5 days then to authenticate the service by syncing the device with one of your TV's (one of the Stingray Music Channels must be playing on the TV when this is done). When you want to authenticate, log into your Stingray Account and go to **Settings>Manage Account>Authenticate** and follow the easy instructions. Once you have authenticated your account, you can use the app for 180 days before you will have to re-authenticate. You can use the app as long as you are an XIT IPTV customer!

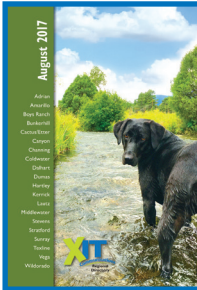


Stingray Music also offers the new Stingray Web Player. You must have a Stingray account already active to use the web player. To use the player, go to **webplayer.stingray.com/play** on your computer and select "Log In". Launch the Stingray Music Mobile App on your mobile phone. Tap "Settings" on the phone and select "Web Player Access" from the menu. Follow the instructions to scan the code displayed on the computer screen with your mobile phone to start using the service immediately. Then, it's ready to use!

You can also access Stingray Music on XIT's Watch TV Everywhere Platform for FREE! Just register for Watch TV Everywhere on our XIT website link at www.XIT.net. You will need your XIT account number and the exact name on your account to get started! If all that was a little too much knowledge to absorb, please contact one of our offices, and we will gladly walk you through it.

XIT Regional Directory Advertising

It's that time of year again! The XIT Communications' Regional Telephone Directory advertising sales have kicked off for the 2017 directory! The directory, with it's convenient size, yellow and white page listings, city and county government pages, area code and international calling codes, customer calling features guide and the Amarillo/Canyon telephone listings in the back, gives you all the information you need right at your fingertips! Keep one in your home, one at your office and one in your vehicle.



Sales are now underway! You can reach local customers in the areas where they live, work and play! Our directory is a smart investment choice for your advertising dollars so you get the most bang for your bucks! We have ad sizes available for every business budget!

If you are thinking about where to spend your advertising dollars, in 2017, or just want to see what the XIT Directory can do for your business, give our Marketing Department a call at 806-384-3311. We will set up a time to come and discuss all the advertising options we have available!

Foreign listings are also available in the XIT Directory if your current landline phone number is not with XIT, or if you want to list your wireless cell number. The cost for a foreign listing is \$4.95 per month with a 1-year contract commitment. Give us a call at **806-384-3311** to get your foreign listing added!

Extra directories are available at any XIT office location during regular business hours. Come by and pick some up!

What's Cookin' at XIT

Easy Chicken Tortilla Soup By M'Lea Allison

- 1 pkg. frozen chicken breasts
- 1 pkg. taco seasoning
- 8 oz. can chicken broth or stock
- 8 oz. can cream of mushroom soup
- 8 oz. can cream of chicken soup
- 8 oz. can mild Ro-Tel tomatoes

- 8 oz. can Ro-Tel Mexican style tomatoes with cilantro & lime
- 8 oz. pkg. Velveeta cheese, cubed
- ½ pint whipping cream
- Tortilla chips



Place frozen chicken breasts in crock pot. Sprinkle taco seasoning over the chicken and let it slow cook all day (no water needed). 30-45 minutes before serving, add remaining ingredients and heat through. Serve over tortilla chips.

Find more great recipes in the XIT Country Cookin' Cookbooks for sale at any of our XIT locations for just \$14.95 + tax. They make great gifts for any occasion!

Second Annual Rise & Shine Food Drive Conducted

XIT Communications’ Second Annual Rise & Shine Breakfast Food Drive was a big success again this year, thanks to all the wonderful customers and residents in our coverage areas that joined us in helping to fight hunger. XIT collected over 113 tote bags of breakfast food items for the local food banks and pantries in our communities. We are truly grateful for each and every item that was donated!

XIT management and employees kicked off the breakfast food drive in October, which is National Coop



Some of the food collected in Vega for the Vega Food Pantry/UMC.

free XIT reusable grocery tote as our “Thank You” for your donation!

All of the food that was collected for this year’s drive has now been delivered to the local food banks and pantries for distribution to those in need. The local pantries that received the donations include:



Shown here with the food donated at our Stratford office is Audra Meidinger, Stratford Food Pantry Coordinator.

The Pantry of Stratford, Tex- line Food Pantry, The Food Pantry at Lincoln Street Baptist Church, Dalhart Church of the Nazarene Food Bank and the Vega Food Pantry/UMC.

All of us at XIT would like to thank each and every person who participated in this year’s XIT Rise & Shine Breakfast Food Drive! Without the help from caring people, like yourselves, we could not have collected all the food that was delivered! We are proud to live and work in such compassionate and caring communities! We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts!!!



Food collected at the XIT headquarters.

It is XIT’s way of helping to insure all families in our coverage areas can put food on their tables this winter. Of course, there are families in need during the whole year, so anyone wishing to participate in the food drive can always come by any XIT office at any time to donate food! XIT will accept food donations all during the year and get the donations to the food

pantries for you. We will even give you a



This photo shows the food collected at the XIT downtown office.



The Dalhart High School CNA class, instructed by teacher Becky Day (far right), recently donated food to the XIT Rise & Shine Breakfast Food Drive. We appreciate their participation in the XIT Food Drive this year and for helping their fellow citizens.



is a quarterly publication for
**XIT Rural Telephone
Cooperative, Inc.** Members
and **XIT Communications**
Customers.

Direct correspondence to:
XIT Connections
Attn: Marketing Department
P.O. Box 711
Dalhart, TX 79022

or e-mail to xitcom@xit.net

www.xit.net



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Get Ready ... Get Set ... Watch TV Everywhere!

As an XIT Communications' TV customer, you now have the ability to take your TV service with you wherever you go with XIT's Watch TV Everywhere (WTVE) service! If you have a computer, tablet, smart phone or other device with Wi-Fi access (if Wi-Fi access is not available, make sure to check with your wireless carrier **BEFORE** using the service since WTVE consumes a lot of data) you can watch TV without having to be by a television. Best of all it's **FREE** to XIT TV customers!

TV customers can watch any program that is currently available on WTVE, as long as it is one of the channels that you subscribe to in your XIT cable TV package. For example, you must have the ESPN Channel in your XIT TV package lineup, in order to watch the channel on Watch TV Everywhere. Not all networks have WTVE capabilities, but the list continues to grow!

If you haven't tried WTVE yet, just go to www.xit.net and click on the Watch TV Everywhere Link on our home page to get started! You will need to have your XIT account number and the exact name as it appears on your bill, along with a valid email address. Follow the instructions for setup. You will receive a verification link to complete your registration. Once you click on the authentication link in the email, you are ready to start watching WTVE!

We hope you will enjoy WTVE from XIT Communications! If you encounter any problems or questions when registering for the service, just give us a call at 806-384-3311.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complain_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.