

XIT Connections

XXII, Number 1, Winter 2020



XIT Selects 2020 Directory Cover Picture

XIT's 2020 directory cover picture "Eroded Canyon" was taken in the Palo Duro State Park, near Canyon, Texas, by photographer Richard Douglass of Open Skies Photography. The Amarillo, Texas based landscape photographer is known for capturing the unique skies and landscapes of the Texas Panhandle and beyond. When Richard was asked how he came about the name, Open Skies Photography, he said the name was inspired from the David Crowder Band song, "Open Skies", which he heard while shooting a sunrise ... "Praise Him Under Open Skies".

The "Eroded Canyon" picture was taken in October of 2018. It was a day that Richard decided to go mountain biking on the Capitol Peak Trail in Palo Duro Canyon. It had rained two days prior, and he soon discovered it was a little too muddy to ride the bike. So, he parked the bike off the trail and decided to hike one of the many creek beds that eventually connects to the main creek ... the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River. This particular creek bed is not too far from Capitol Peak, which is the first eroded formation just to the left of the Lighthouse Trail. Fortunately, he had also packed his Canon EOS Rebel T6i. He proceeded up the sandy creek bed that still had some beautiful pools of water from the previous rain. He came to this spot ... a bend in the creek that had layered red sandstone and gypsum. He was awestruck of the weathered landscape in front of him. In the picture, Capitol Peak is the sandstone formation seen in the distance.

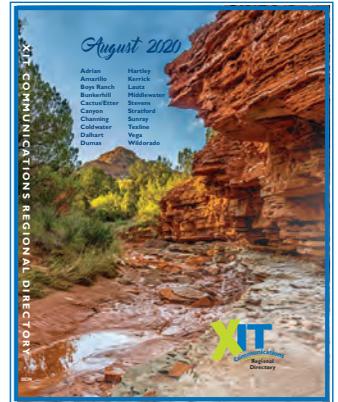
Richard explained that after a skiing accident, he took up mountain biking because it is much easier on his knees. And, the Canyon offers some of the best trails in the country. Mountain biking gives him the opportunity to get some great exercise while providing him with some really photogenic areas of the Canyon.

Richard said that he got into photography quite by accident. As he travels throughout the Texas Panhandle with his job, he began to see the unique beauty of the area. Coming from a family of photographers, he started to photograph the beautiful skies and landscapes on his daily journeys. This hobby started in 2013 and has grown ever since. He particularly loves the Palo Duro Canyon State Park, where some of the most beautiful spots on the Canyon are in the creek beds and side canyons. He did caution visitors that these isolated areas can be dangerous, especially with the extreme heat during the hot summer months, or during unexpected flash floods when rain is forecasted.

Richard has been a resident in the Amarillo area since he was 5 years old. He is married to Jeanette Deardorff Douglass, who is the daughter of Dale and Kay Deardorff, formerly of Dalhart, Texas. The Deardorffs were members of the XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative's rural Coldwater Exchange for many years. Richard and Janette have raised five children, and they have seven granddaughters. They have also hosted four foreign exchange students. Jeanette loves real estate and has been an agent for 10 years at Keller Williams in Amarillo.

Thank you, Richard, for allowing us to grace the cover of our 2020 directory with your beautiful picture!

If you want to see more of Richard's photography, please check out his Facebook page: Open Skies Photography – Richard Douglass, or visit <https://openskiesphoto.smugmug.com>



2020 XIT Regional Telephone Directory



Kathy Duggan



Billy Carter

XIT Directors' & Employees Christmas and Service Awards Luncheon Held

XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. held their annual Directors' and Employees Christmas and Service Awards Luncheon after the monthly board of directors' meeting on December 18, 2019 at XIT's Headquarters Office.

Everyone in attendance enjoyed peel-and-eat shrimp and salad, and a delicious beef tenderloin meal with all the trimmings. Wonderful desserts finished off the meal. The meal was catered by the Ten in Texas Woodfire Grill of Dalhart, Texas.

After the meal, Allen Hyer, XIT General Manager,

presented service award plaques to 8 XIT employees. Janie Sneller, Tiffani Helms and Billy Carter all received 5-year awards; Kristen Hembree received a 20-year award; Charlotte Burkhalter and Joe Lang both received

25-year awards; Pat

Gilliam received a 30-year

award; and Kathy Duggan received a 40-year award. That adds up to 155 years of experience and dedication from only 8 of XIT's 37 employees!



Janie Sneller



Charlotte Burkhalter



Joe Lang



Kristen Hembree



Tiffani Helms

XIT General Manager, Allen Hyer, presented the awards to everyone!



Pat Gilliam

Christmas Open Houses Successful!



XIT had quite a crowd join us for the Dalhart Open House in our downtown office recently. XIT employees shown serving are (left to right) Brian McCoy, Adrian Ruiz, Kathy Duggan and Trena Howell.

The Dalhart Customer Care Center had 141 people register for prizes and served 177 plates of food. Winners of the door prizes were Turner Pollard and Becky Amyx, who won hams; Frank Montoya won a \$50 QVC gift card, and Bobby Gordon won a crock pot.

Our headquarters office registered 42 people for door prizes and served more than 70 plates of food. Winners of the door prizes included Steven Walker and Larry Lucas, who won hams; Carl French won a \$50 QVC gift card, and Gary Schmidt won a crock pot.



Just a few of the many sweet customers who joined us for our Open House in Stratford. The ladies in the picture are (left to right) Kay Payne, Mary Lou Cotney, Joan Palmer and Karen Perrin.



XIT employees, (left to right) Evelyn Guerrero, Louisita Dyck and Jessica Sanchez, are shown serving lunch to several of our customers at our headquarters office during our Christmas Open House recently.

The following Friday, we held our Christmas Open House at the Stratford store. Again, the weather cooperated with us so folks could come out and enjoy lunch with us! We had 102 customers from Stratford register for door prizes, and we served more than 125 plates of food. Winners of the door prizes in Stratford were Larry Parsons and Leslie Reagan who won hams; George Harding won a \$50 QVC gift card, and Martha Duncan won the crock pot.

We, at XIT, look forward to these luncheons every year! We enjoy getting to visit and catch up with many of our

loyal customers. We hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and are blessed with health and happiness in the New Year!



XIT Communications participated in Vega's Christmas on the Square on Monday evening, December 2, 2019. Kathy Duggan, Trena Howell and Mary Brazell from XIT served Vega residents approximately 170 cups of hot chocolate garnished with marshmallows and candy canes. This is the third year for XIT to attend the event, and it's one that we look forward to every year!

5th Annual Rise & Shine Breakfast Food Drive Concludes

The 5th Annual Rise & Shine Breakfast Food Drive was a big success again this year! Over 60 bags of food were donated to the area food banks and pantries. The counts were down a little from past years,



Belinda Waide of Texline is shown with the bags of food that were donated to the Texline Food Pantry.

but every piece of food donated was needed and very much welcomed! XIT employees and directors want to thank everyone who participated again in this year's drive! We could not do it without our customers and members of the communities who are so generous every year!



Frances Kirkland, Pastor Linda Wimberley, Cynthia Artho, Mary Brorman, Janie Axe, Marty Cook, Brenda DeWees, and Linda Wagner are shown here with the bags of food in Vega.

The breakfast drive kicked off in October and ran through December of 2019. Each person who donated items for this year's drive was given an XIT reusable tote bag as our way of saying 'Thank You'! XIT will always accept food donations during the whole year, but we do a food drive every year around this time to kick off National Coop Month, which is held each October.

All of the food collected was distributed to the local pantries and food banks. Those participating in the drive were: The Pantry of Stratford; Texline Food Pantry; The Food Pantry at Lincoln Street Baptist Church; and the Vega Food Pantry/UMC.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's drive! Without help from such caring people, we could not have collected all the food that was delivered. We are all so proud to work and live in such caring communities! Thank You!



Celle Hancock of the Lincoln Street Baptist Church Food Pantry is shown with the food bags donated to the pantry.



Audra Meidinger, representing the Pantry of Stratford, is shown with the food collected at the XIT Stratford Office during the breakfast food drive.



XIT Communications donated a one-of-a-kind gift basket for St. Anthony's Oktoberfest for their silent auction this fall. Ashley Thomas is shown picking up the basket at the XIT headquarters office for the church.

XIT Supports Our Local Businesses

XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and XIT Communications are proud supporters of the local businesses in our coverage area who are XIT customers. We are pleased to spotlight The Dust Bowl Bar & Grill at 811 W. 7th Street in Dalhart, Texas, in this edition of the XIT Connections Newsletter.

The Dust Bowl Bar & Grill opened its doors for business on Saturday, October 26, 2019 to give Dalhart



The Dust Bowl Bar & Grill owner, Dean Graham, is shown here in front of the new bowling lanes.

and other area residents an exciting, entertainment establishment like no other in Dalhart! It offers a wide variety of services under one roof: a great restaurant with a newly expanded full menu; an attractive bar that serves beer and wine; a full video arcade; and to top it off, a 12-lane bowling center.

Owners Dean & Gay Graham of Dalhart, Texas, opened the bowling center simply, as Dean put it, “the community needed something like it.” Dean and Gay purchased the old Dalhart



The Dust Bowl Bar & Grill General Manager, Synthia Howell, and Manager, Casey Ferguson, are showing off the beautiful bar area.

Bowl from Phillip Ondracek, after he closed it down. There has been a bowling alley in Dalhart dating all the way back to 1959, when Ed Ondracek, Phillip’s grandfather, opened the first one. “The pinsetters we just replaced were the original 1959 ones,” said Dean. The unique Dust Bowl name was creatively thought up by one of Dean and Gay’s family members.

Dean moved to Dalhart from northwest Iowa when he was 18-years-old and has been a resident ever since. He became fond of Dalhart after coming here in the summers during his teenage years to stay with family. His wife, Gay, has lived in Dalhart all of her life. The couple have 3 grown children who are married and also reside in Dalhart: Chansee, their oldest daughter; son, Chase; and their youngest daughter, Chanessa. The couple are also blessed with 11 grandchildren.

When asked how much of the building was original, Dean said “we only used the existing concrete and the red iron from the Dalhart Bowl.” The old bowling alley was 10,000 square feet in size, but Dean added an additional 8,500 square feet to it in order to create the perfect-sized bowling center. “We used local contractors as much as we could,” he continued. “We are staunch supporters of Dalhart, and we support the local businesses here as much as we possibly can,” he added.

The Dust Bowl currently employs about 42 employees. Synthia Howell is the establishment’s General Manager, and is assisted by Manager, Casey Ferguson. The bowling center currently has 3 nightly bowling leagues during the week and 1 daytime league. Open bowling for the public is available on Friday, Saturday and Sundays.



Kids love the large selection of arcade games at the Dust Bowl Bar & Grill.

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Office Clings on the Downtown Office Windows

Last year, XIT announced its conversion from copper to fiber optics for the town of Dalhart, Texas. Last summer, window clings were installed on the front windows and door at the Dalhart Customer Care Center, located at 1624 Tennessee Ave.

The window clings are see-thru from the inside of the building, but not the outside. XIT wants to reassure our customers that the XIT downtown office is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., however, this office is closed from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the lunch hour. If the office is closed due to holiday hours or a special occasion, there will be a closing notice posted on the outside of the main door and at the drive-up window informing customers of the closing.

If you do not see a sign outside the main door, please assume we are open for business and come inside! We are ready and waiting to assist you, our customers, with anything you may need!



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What's Cookin' at XIT

Texas Caviar by Ann Hull

- 2 (14 oz.) cans black-eyed peas, drained
- 1 (15.5 oz.) can white hominy, drained
- ½ c. parsley, chopped
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 1 (8 oz.) bottle of Italian dressing
- 1 jalapeno pepper, cored, seeded and finely chopped

- ½ c. onion, chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 green onions, finely chopped



Combine all ingredients, except salad dressing, and mix well. Pour salad dressing over the mixture. Cover and refrigerate to marinate for at least 2 hours. Drain. Serve with tortilla chips.

Find even more great recipes in the XIT Country Cookin' Cookbooks (2 editions available) for sale at any of our XIT locations for just \$14.95 + tax. They make great birthday, wedding and anniversary gifts!

2020 XIT Regional Directory Advertising Kicks Off

As the New Year begins, now is the time to start thinking of getting directory advertising in the 2020 XIT Communications' Regional Telephone Directory! Directory sales are kicking off and you won't want to be left out! XIT's directory is the perfect size with easy-to-read print, extensive city and county government sections, International calling codes and domestic area codes, white and yellow pages advertising and even Amarillo and Canyon listings in the back of the book.

Advertising rates are economical and designed to fit every budget and every business. If you are interested in advertising where your customers reside, here is your chance! Call the XIT Marketing Department at 384-3311 to set up a time to discuss your advertising needs. Our directory is the one directory that has it all!

The new directory will be published and distributed this summer. Copies of last year's directory are still available at any XIT office location or at the *Dalhart Chamber of Commerce Office*. You can pick up extra copies to use anywhere you need a directory handy.

Also, if you want to publish a phone number that is not an XIT Communications or XIT Rural Telephone number, you can do that too! Contact the Marketing Department at the number above, and we can get your number published quickly and easily. The cost is only \$4.95 per month with a one-year commitment.

So, if you want to grow your business and need an easy way of customers finding you, give us a call! We have packages to fit every budget.



Location Transfers

Please make sure to provide XIT Communications with at least a 2-week notice when moving to a new home and transferring service to a new location within XIT's service area. By providing us prior notice, XIT can get the location transfer on the installation schedule so we can get your services hooked up at the new location in a timely manner.

No credit will be issued for loss of service due to no-prior-move notification by the customer. Please make a special note of this! *We appreciate your cooperation!*



XIT Reconnection Rules Reminder

Any XIT customer who is disconnected for non-payment will be required to pay the reconnect fee and all amounts due on the account with cash, debit or credit card if they want to have their services restored immediately.

XIT customers who choose to pay with a check, e-check or online bill pay will not be reconnected from non-payment status for 7 days after XIT receives the check. This is to allow time for the check to clear the bank before reconnection of the account is completed.

Remember, cash or a debit/credit card are the best ways to pay for immediate reconnection of your XIT services!



Annahi Ruiz, a senior at Stratford High School, is shown picking up a fun and unique gift basket for the Senior Class Fall Festival that was held back in October. XIT Communications supports our local schools.

XIT Connections

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and **XIT Communications**
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XIT Supports Our Local

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The establishment's hours of operation are: Tuesday through Thursday, 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to midnight; and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The bowling center also offers a variety of birthday party packages for both children and adults. They can do catered parties too. The facility has a banquet room that accommodates up to 90 people, which is perfect for any kind of gatherings or get-togethers. The room also features Power Point and a speaker system, which makes it a great place for corporate meetings and other business events. Just give the Dust Bowl a call at 806-244-2260 to schedule your next party or event.

If you haven't been in the Dust Bowl Bar & Grill yet, you are missing out on something special! It is wonderful to have such a beautiful and all-inclusive bowling center and restaurant/bar in Dalhart, Texas! Come in soon and check it out! You will be glad you did!



Showing off the bowling shoe selection and arcade prizes is Dust Bowl employee, Erica DeLeon.

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 <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/ad-3027-usda-program-discrimination-complaint-form>, 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 USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.