

# XIT Connections

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Volume XIII Number 2 Summer 2011



It looks like a gorgeous day at the White House. This beautiful photo was provided to XIT by Jake Nordby of Boys Ranch, TX. XIT Rural Telephone sponsored Jake's participation in the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Youth Tour of Washington, D.C. that was held this past June. Seeing the White House was just one of the many highlights of Jake's trip.

## Rural Broadband: Essential to Prosperity. Vital to America

High-speed broadband Internet access has become today's essential service, but new government rules being proposed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) could impact your access to broadband Internet service. You can help by lending your voice to the debate.

At the onset of telephone service back in the 1950s, the federal government created a universal service policy to ensure that all Americans—including those in rural areas—have access to affordable communications services. The government decided these were essential services that required financial support to build and maintain. As a result, it created something called the Universal Service Fund (USF).

Like many rural companies, XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. has been the recipient of USF and invested millions of dollars to build advanced networks to meet the needs of customers. We've done this with the understanding that the government would continue to support our efforts through USF. Without receiving support from the federal government, it would be impossible for us to maintain our existing infrastructure as well as expand our capabilities to meet our customer needs in the future. As with our national highway system, the information highway costs money to sustain.

Federal support has made it possible for our company to deliver the network that spurs economic opportunity, supports educational options and increases our ability to attract new businesses to our area. Now the government is thinking about changing the fund. But if this federal support gets cut, our town and outlying areas could get stuck on the wrong side of the digital divide.

The FCC wants to do away with USF and other financing methods that support rural, high-cost telephone and broadband services. It wants to create something called the Connect America Fund. While this is a good idea to help facilitate the transition to support for increased broadband services in rural communities, FCC officials need to ensure that they don't destroy the funding that now delivers telecommunications services to the rural areas of America.

All rural consumers need to get educated about the proposed policies and communicate to members of Congress and the White House about the negative impact this could have on our community. The current FCC proposal would penalize rural broad-

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band providers such as our company, and put existing affordable, high-quality broadband service for rural areas in serious jeopardy. Also, it would undermine our ability to upgrade that service in the future. The current USF structure has been a great success story for our country. It has enabled our country to stay connected. It has allowed our company to deliver on the promise of affordable, advanced communications services for rural consumers and business. But the job isn't done.

As consumers, you can make a difference in this debate. Your contact with policy-makers will ensure that the FCC makes the right changes to USF so that rural communities remain connected to the global world and may reap the rewards of an accessible, affordable and sustainable broadband network.

To support this effort, send a letter to your members of congress and the White House by visiting [www.saveruralbroadband.org](http://www.saveruralbroadband.org). XIT supports the efforts of Save Rural Broadband and their letter campaign. You may also go to our website [www.xit.net](http://www.xit.net) for more information and links to the Save Rural Broadband website.

## Contact Your Congressman

SEND THE LETTER

If you would like to quickly send a letter to Washington in support of the Save Rural Broadband campaign, go to [www.saveruralbroadband.org](http://www.saveruralbroadband.org). Scroll down on the homepage until you see "SEND A LETTER TO OUR LEADERS IN WASHINGTON". Click on the SEND THE LETTER button. Complete your Name, Address, City, State, Zip and Email address and click the SEND THE LETTER button. This will automatically send the letter to your elected officials based on the address submitted. You can also share this information with other friends and family by clicking on the SHARE VIA EMAIL button.

Save Rural Broadband was created by the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association (NTCA), Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies (OPASTCO), and the Western Telecommunications Alliance to educate Americans about Federal Communications Commission (FCC) proposals that could profoundly affect rural America. Our goal is to show Congress and the Obama administration how the FCC proposals are detrimental to efforts to upgrade broadband Internet networks in many rural communities – and how it would result in loss of jobs and decreased economic development in regions of America that need them most. To that end, we've joined together to create this website to educate you about the consequences that would result should the FCC's proposed rule be adopted.

## NTCA Members Participate in FLY-IN

More than 100 NTCA members representing 19 states participated in the association's special July 13 fly-in to Washington, D.C. The group converged on Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress, as well as FCC officials, about the Universal Service Fund (USF) and inter-carrier compensation (ICC) reform proposals being considered by the commission.

Meetings centered around the continued importance of USF for the future of sustainable broadband in rural America and the industry's concern that commission reform should ensure universal, affordable broadband access for all Americans regardless of where they live. NTCA members stressed that the commission's proposals place at risk small, community-based carriers' ability to continue delivering high-quality, affordable broadband to the benefit of rural consumers and businesses.

They cited the rural industry's thoughtful, proactive proposals that achieve the commission's key reform objectives [Washington Report, May 26, 2011]. The proposals are fiscally responsible yet promote the sustainability and extensions of rural broadband, and they ensure that billions of dollars of private and public-sector investment financing are not put at risk, the members noted in their discussions.

Finally, the fly-in participants urged members of Congress to contact the commission and let the agency know that pending reform proposals will harm consumers, businesses and communities. The commission should embrace more reasonable approaches like the ones proposed by the rural sector, the group noted.

This week's fly-in coincides with recent reports that House Republicans are considering using USF to help pay down the budget deficit. Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) recently circulated a slide presentation that contained proposed cuts and savings, including between \$20 billion and \$25 billion in "spectrum/USF" savings. All but \$1 billion of the money would come from spectrum auctions.

NTCA is monitoring this situation and will keep members informed of any new developments. Members are strongly encouraged to contact their members of Congress and ask them to take action to preclude the raiding of this dedicated non-Treasury fund to pay down the federal debt.





Three of the twelve residents are pictured here in the living room of Johnson home with Bill and Charlotte Shrum. From L to R: Brandon, Bill, Charlotte, Miguel and Legend.

## Boys Ranch Johnson Home Produces Youth Tour Winner

Bill and Charlotte Shrum are house parents for the Johnson Home at Boys Ranch, Texas. XIT met them when one of the residents of their home, Jacob (Jake as he likes to be called) Nordby, was selected to represent XIT Communications this past June on the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Youth Tour of Washington D.C. The FRS Youth Tour is an awesome all-expense-paid trip to Washington D.C. One hundred students who have completed their junior year in high school converge on D.C. for this tour to learn about legislation that impacts the telecommunications industry; visit the FCC, and see all the history, museums, and monuments our nation's capital has to offer.

In preparation for the trip to Washington, Jake and house parent, Bill Shrum, were invited to XIT's headquarters office for a tour of our facilities, including the business office, various departments, plant, central office and head end. The tour gives the student some insight into what it takes to make a telephone call, provide Internet and get TV channels into your living room. This was our first opportunity to visit with Bill Shrum. He is laid back, easy to talk with. He was very accommodating when we asked to come to Boys Ranch to interview him and his wife Charlotte.

When you arrive at Boys Ranch, the first thing you see is the beautiful chapel, and as I arrived, the church bells were chiming on the hour. It was a pleasant reminder that Christianity is a very important part of everyone's experience at Boys Ranch, Texas. Bill, and another Johnson Home resident, Legend, met me at the visitor information center. We then headed up to Johnson Home. As we arrived, Charlotte was just coming home from grocery shopping and a couple of the boys were helping her bring in the groceries and unload. As I watched them carry in and carry in, it seemed very typical of any home. The only difference is Charlotte cooks for 12 boys! The residents do eat breakfast and lunch in the dining hall, but the evening meals, snacks and all meals on the weekend are prepared in the home. Charlotte does the cooking, and the kids said that Bill does the warming up. That sounds familiar.

As we sat in the living room of Johnson Home, it was very apparent that Bill and Charlotte feel that the rewards of working as house parents at Boys Ranch far outweigh the challenges of parenting the twelve young men (ages 14-17) that live with them. They were both very proud of Jake...just as any parent would be. They were proud, first of all, that he had earned the privilege to apply for the trip. But, most importantly that he had been selected. "He's a good kid," Bill remarked quietly.

Keeping everyone busy and in a routine is the key to managing such a large household for Bill and Charlotte. There are lots of schedules to keep up with for all the young men in the home. School activities, sports activities and practices, homework, part-time jobs, summer programs, life skills programs, chores and more. There is some free time for the kids...but not much. Ten of the twelve residents of Johnson Home have part-time jobs on the Ranch to go along with their other activities. Household chores are managed daily. There are twelve set daily chores, and each resident is assigned a chore on a rotating basis. Deep cleaning of the home is done on Saturday. The residents all do their own personal laundry. There are two washers and two dryers to handle that.

Privileges are earned through a system that encourages responsibility and discipline. An important part of the process relates to earning and retaining privileges. It works. Bill and Charlotte realize things are going to happen and kids are going to make mistakes. But, with a clear set of rules in place, it makes it easier to manage any problems that come up. For Bill, the most important rule is respect...respect for each other and respect for everyone's property.

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# An Amazing Trip to Washington, D.C.

By Jake Nordby

This summer XIT sent me on a trip to Washington, D.C. for the essay I wrote. The trip was a great experience for me. As well as being fun, the trip was also a great learning experience. We had several meetings with people from places such as the FCC and the FRS so they could tell us about the new legislation being passed in D.C. relating to us and to the companies that sent us on the trip.

We also saw many things on the trip to D.C. We had opportunities to go to places such as the Aerospace Museum, the Natural History Museum, The Holocaust Museum, the National Cemetery, and many others. All of these places were great to visit and some of them eye opening. I would have to thank XIT and FRS for this great opportunity to visit Washington, D.C. My favorite part of the trip was the night tour. All those monuments were amazing at night, especially the Washington monument with all the lights and the fountain. On the night tour, we went all around D.C. and saw many of the monuments.

On the trip, there were also many social events where I had a chance to meet many interesting people from across the United States. One of these events was a dance on the last night, which was my favorite of all the social events. They hired a good DJ who played great music the whole time. Another one of the social events was a dinner the first night when teams were chosen for the week, after which we played games as a team, and as a group. There was also a breakfast in the "Windows over Washington" room. At the breakfast we ate, and enjoyed an amazing view of the city to start our day.

We also learned about the legislation that is being passed in Washington D.C. relating to rural phone companies. We learned that the new policy would be harmful to service in rural areas by allowing a sub-par standard for Internet speed in the rural areas of America. This law would do this by decreasing the minimum standard for Internet speed to be considered broadband Internet.



Billy Sisco, XIT Switching Technician, and Jake Nordby tour the XIT head end facility. They are pictured here next to the CALIX electronic equipment. Billy explained to Jake how the new CALIX equipment delivers multimedia IPTV services to our customers.



from guest columnist **Eric Spellmann**



## My Favorite (and FREE) Antivirus Programs

It seems not a day goes by that I don't get a question from a customer about what antivirus program to use. This can be a tricky question because every tech-guy you run into will have a different opinion. Here's mine:

The necessity to "buy" an antivirus program is slowly going away. Large companies are now adding them in to their software offerings at little or no charge. Sometimes, when you buy a new computer, you will get a "free for a limited time" installation of some program, but eventually they will start hounding you for money.

(Author's Note: Some of the web addresses you are about to see were quite long, so I used a "shortener" so you don't have to type that much!)

As of this week, my favorite antivirus program is Microsoft Security Essentials (<http://goo.gl/Ac64b>). For my Mac friends, check out iAntivirus (<http://goo.gl/P2VF>). They run unobtrusively in the background and have been very good at finding these nasty digital creatures.

However, I typically don't rely on just ONE solution. Sometimes you get a varmint that is truly slippery, so every once and a while I will check my entire system with Malware Bytes (<http://goo.gl/3TMNJ>) and SuperAntiSpyware (<http://goo.gl/kMr9>). These two programs don't need to run all the time. I just fire them up once a month or so, update them, and let them run (one at a time), while I go to lunch.

Remember, to install these programs BEFORE you get a virus. Many viruses will attempt to infect any programs you install AFTER they have taken root! If you truly get a bad virus, though, give your local computer guy a call IMMEDIATELY!

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The XITv channel program guide is now available on [www.zap2it.com](http://www.zap2it.com). For TV Listings and Movie Times go to FIND IT FAST located in the purple box in the upper right-hand side of the Zap2it homepage. Enter your zip code. Then, choose your provider: XIT Communications – IPTV – Digital (Dalhart) for ALL our customers on our new IPTV service or XIT Communications – Digital (Dalhart) for customers still on our Next Level service.

The Zap2it TV Listings channel guide is full of information for the TV viewing customer. The TV Listings guide will indicate if a program is being broadcast LIVE or if the program is NEW (not a re-run). To view additional programming and episode information, just click on the program name. You can also display or hide an additional description of the programs listed on the TV Listings guide.

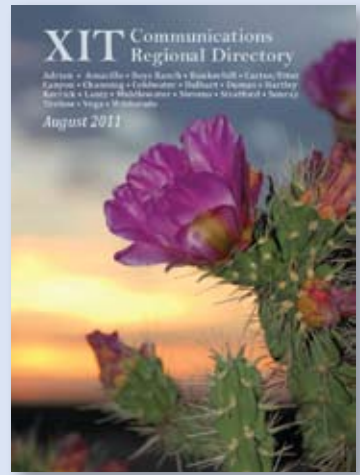
Registering on the Zap2it website enables you to personalize your settings to include your local TV listings and set your favorite channels to display at the top of the TV Listings guide grid. And, there are additional settings that allow you to view a six hour grid of programming or display only your favorite channels in the channel guide grid. Once you have registered, then you can log in from any computer and view your personalized TV Listings channel guide. To register, first enter your zip code in the FIND IT FAST box, then on the TV Listings page you will have the option to: Register, Login, Set Preferences, Display or Hide Description.

Zap2it is a website you will want to bookmark as a favorite with information on Show Recaps, TV Ratings, TV Reviews, Movie Times, TV Photos, News and Blogs, Forums and much more. And, Zap2it has all the latest information about your favorite TV shows and celebrities.

# 2011 XIT Communications Regional Directory

The 13th edition of the XIT Regional Directory has arrived! Each year we are amazed by the awesome pictures that are submitted to our annual directory cover photo contest and this year's cover is especially unique and beautiful. A very special thank you goes out to Beth Bowles of Adrian, Texas for her gorgeous picture of a Cholla cactus in full bloom.

The 2011 directory is filled with the information you need. Yellow pages for one-stop shopping, numerical phone number listings, city and county government pages and Amarillo and Canyon listings. Our informational pages will assist you with emergency numbers, international calling, area code lists, state government offices 800 and local office phone numbers and special help programs information. XIT subscribers will receive a directory in the mail. Additional directories for your home or vehicle will be available in all of our offices.



## How Your Name & Number Gets in the XIT Directory

Each year, XIT strives to make our directory the most accurate directory in the area. We carefully proof each XIT local phone subscriber's listing to ensure it is correct and listed properly in the directory. During the proofing process, if an error is noticed, it is corrected before publication. Wireless phone numbers are non-published. They will not be published in our directory unless specifically requested by the customer. If you would like to have your wireless phone number published in next year's directory, please stop by your local XIT office to authorize the publication of your wireless phone number in our directory.

The XIT Communications Regional Directory does include directory listings that are not subscribers of XIT's local phone service. XIT obtains these listings from other telephone providers in the area. Based on the agreement between XIT and the other provider, XIT cannot make any corrections to these listings. If there is an error in your directory listing, and you are not a subscriber of XIT Communications, you must call your provider to have them correct your directory listing.



**50%  
off**

## Wireless Accessories

Wireless accessories are now **50% off** at your local XIT retail store location in Dalhart and Stratford. Come by, check it out!

# Music CHOICE®

The popular Music Choice channels are now available to all our XITv customers! XIT is pleased to announce that Music Choice is back for our IPTV customers. From hip-hop to classical and everything in-between, Music Choice offers a wide variety of music for all listeners. Tune in for blues, classic rock, country, Christian, easy listening, jazz, Latino, music from your favorite decade (70s, 80s, and 90s), pop hits, and much more. Our IPTV customers will find Music Choice on channels 900-945 and our Next Level customers will need to turn to channels 137-182 for the very best choice in music, Music Choice.

The Music Choice **ShowOff™** channels are: Hit List, Hip-Hop and R & B, Rock, MC MixTape, Musica Urbana, and Today's Country. If you happened to be watching these music channels Monday thru Friday from 3-10 pm ET you will see them listed as **ShowOff™** on the TV screen and also on Zap2it.com TV Listings guide. When these channels appear as **ShowOff™** the viewing public can text or email Music Choice a picture or message to be displayed on screen. If you would like to send in a text or picture, just follow the on-screen instructions.



Life on the ranch includes weekly Bible study lessons on Wednesday night, which are led by former house parents, George and Terri Owen. On Sunday morning, everyone goes to Chapel, and they all sit together as a family. Fun is important too, and they know what all the young men enjoy doing for fun. Whether it is basketball, movies, video games, fishing or trips to town, they manage to make time for it all. And, Johnson Home family outings also include short trips to Colorado and New Mexico.

Bill and Charlotte first came to Boys Ranch in 2001 to visit Bill's parents, Jerry and Darla Shrum, who were house parents at the time. They liked what they saw, and in 2005 they came to live and work on the Ranch as "alternate" house parents for the Carter and Johnson Homes. The job of the alternate house parent is to provide supervision while the primary house parents have three days off. However, after a year as alternate house parents, the Shrums decided it was best for their own children to move back to Midland, Texas, to finish school and be close to family. They have two children of their own: 23-year-old, Sarah Pablo, and 18-year-old, Raind. Sarah is a Lab Scientist for the Coffee Memorial Blood Center in Amarillo, and Raind just graduated from Bandera High School this year. He will be attending Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas, in the fall.

Bill and Charlotte returned to Boys Ranch in 2010 as primary house parents at Johnson Home. Bill spent many years working in the West Texas oil fields and is also a certified teacher, having taught junior high science for four years prior to their return to Boys Ranch. Charlotte worked for several years as a teacher's aide. They both enjoy working with young people. Being house parents is different from being in the teaching profession where you deal with large numbers of students on a daily basis. As house parents, you get to have so much more interaction with each resident. You get to know them all better and see the positive changes that they make as they grow and mature. It is a busy full-time job working as a house parent at Boys Ranch. Bill and Charlotte know it "takes a village" to see that all the residents have the activities, the services and guidance that they need to develop into productive young adults. They are quick to point out that they are just one part of a team of caring professionals that make life at Boys Ranch a positive experience for the young people that live there.

It was a pleasure meeting Bill and Charlotte, visiting Johnson Home and meeting their son Raind. And, it was also great to meet Legend, Brandon and Miguel of Johnson Home. Due to summer-time trips to visit family and part-time jobs, I missed seeing Jake and meeting Danny, Jourdon, Quentin, Tyler P., Dylan, Tyler G., Tomas, and Nate. XIT sends a heart-felt thanks to Bill and Charlotte for their compassion, guidance and support, which they provide to the young men of Johnson Home.



The Chapel at Boys Ranch, Texas is one of the first things you see when you arrive on the Ranch. Sunday services at this non-denominational chapel is an integral part of the experience of living at Boys Ranch.

## IPTV System Upgrades

Launching new electronics, new services and integrating a new system into the homes of all our customers is an exciting and challenging endeavor. As we have rolled out our new IPTV and High Speed Internet service, it has been, at times, necessary to do upgrades to our system. As a result of these upgrades, your set top boxes may need to be rebooted. To reboot your set top box, simply unplug the box and plug it back in.

If, at any time, the XIT Welcome screen appears on your TV, the logon password needs to be entered. Using your remote keypad enter the XIT default password **1234**, then press the **OK** button on your remote. This will log you back onto XIT's system. This screen may appear after a system upgrade or if the customer has selected "logout" from the IPTV Menu. If you inadvertently enter the wrong password, the screen will display a message along the bottom of the screen in yellow stating that the wrong password was entered. Just enter the default password **1234** again followed by **OK** to logon to the system. **The customer does have the option to change the 1234 default password, however, it is not recommended.**

We appreciate all of our customers' patience as we have dealt with the issues that come up with any new technology and new service delivery system. Please let us know if you have any issues with any of your XIT services. We want to get them taken care quickly, so you can experience the top-quality service XIT strives to provide.

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

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One of the quickest ways to find a specific movie is to use the advanced search from the **XIT VOD Menu**. You will only need to know one word or portion of a word in the title to do a search. Helpful hints: The pink eraser icon will clear the last letter, the space bar icon creates a space in the title name and the green check mark saves what has been typed into the title name. Using your remote control, use the **▼▲** keys to scroll or move from option to option. Use the **OK** button to select.

### **How to use the VOD Search:**

Menu > VOD > Search > Advanced Search > OK > ABC > OK > using the remote control keypad **▼▲** and OK to select letters from the on-screen keyboard. Select the green check-mark **✓** to save the title. SEARCH will now be highlighted. Press OK to begin the search. Click on the movie title to RENT, read the PLOT or view TRAILER (preview).

If you have questions on how to set up a purchase pin for renting a movie or how to use the menu or search feature, please contact the XIT Communications office near you.

**RELAX THE SAME MOVIES ARE RIGHT HERE AT HOME ON DEMAND**