

# XIT Connections



Volume XI Number 4 Fall 2009



Gracie Vermedahl, daughter of Dr. Nathan and Lysl Vermedahl of Dalhart, Texas, is the cutest pumpkin in the patch in this photo by Jennifer Van Beek, owner of The 3 Js design + studio.

## Small Town, Big Heart

*Dalhart, Texas residents pay their respects to fallen soldier*

There is no place like a small town when it comes time to come together and help each other. Often, it is one person that gets the ball rolling, but it always takes “a village” to get things done when you live in a small community. The people of Dalhart recently came together to show their respect, concern and patriotism when a local soldier was killed in Afghanistan. It all started with a parent’s thought ... “What would I want to see if it were my son or daughter coming home?” The answer was an American flag. That’s how the planning process began to line the street from the airport to the funeral home with American flags to show our respects. Here at XIT, Billy Sisco is our number one patriot, and his effort, combined with many other people in Dalhart, helped us all come together to show our support for the family of Sgt. David Davis.



Patriotism is very real and heartfelt in many towns across this nation, but in Dalhart it became very personal when the news came that one of our own had fallen while serving our country in Afghanistan. Friday, September 25, 2009, in Dalhart, Texas, is a day that will live on in our minds forever. With overcast skies and a brisk wind, it would not be like any other Friday. It would not be a day full of anticipation for the weekend or the Friday night game. It would be very different and a day that many will not soon forget. Around 9 a.m., the people of Dalhart quietly began to gather along Seventh Street and Highway 54 West to honor and pay respects to Sgt. David Davis. Davis, 28, died Saturday, September 19, 2009 at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. He was assigned to the 32nd Transportation Company, 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 43rd Sustainment Brigade for the 4th Infantry Division stationed in Fort Carson, Colorado.

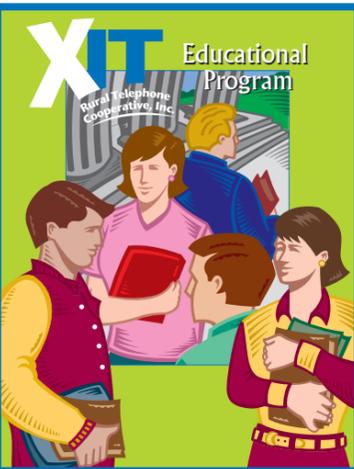
Men, women and children lined both sides of the street and roadway. With hundreds of large and small American flags flying in the breeze, and as the crisp wind brought the flags to attention, the feeling of patriotism was mixed with sadness for this young family who had sacrificed so much. People spoke quietly to one another and waited patiently for the procession. Then, as the skies began to clear, and the sun started to shine, the

*continued on page 8*

## Scholarship Opportunities for XIT Rural Members' 2010 High School Seniors



XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. will once again be awarding scholarships to deserving graduating seniors on March 10, 2010 at our Cooperative's Annual Meeting. Five or more \$2,000.00 scholarships will be awarded to graduating seniors whose parents or guardians are members of XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc.



The honored recipients will be selected based on academic achievement, involvement in extra-curricular activities, and financial need. A selection committee will review all applications, and the recipients will be determined by a majority vote of the committee without regard to race, color, religion, sex or national origin. If you are a qualified applicant – don't miss this opportunity to help further your education!

Application packets will be available in December through eligible schools (check with your school counselor) and at any of XIT's Customer Care Centers. The completed applications must be returned to XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 5, 2010.

If you have a LANDLINE phone with one of the following pre-fixes then you are qualified to make application for this scholarship: 343 (Middlewater), 362 (Texline), 377 (Bunkerhill), 384 (Coldwater), 727 (Kerrick), 753 (Stevens, Landline only), and 769 (Lautz).

If you have questions regarding the scholarship application process or where to get an application, please contact the XIT Marketing Department at 806-384-3311, or call toll free 1-800-232-3312 for additional information.

## SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH FOR OVER 11 YEARS



2010 will be the 11th year that XIT Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc. has been providing scholarships to graduating seniors of their rural members. The XIT Rural Telephone Educational Program has had the privilege to award over \$60,000.00 dollars to deserving young people through this community outreach program!

## XIT RURAL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE HAS AWARDED OVER \$60,000



# Thank You!

Voted **Best Choice for Wireless Service** in the Hereford Brand's **Reader's Choice Survey**.....

## Hereford votes XIT Wireless their "Best Choice"

Over 7,000 votes were cast in The Hereford Brand's Second Annual "Reader's Choice" survey. And, once again the readers of the Hereford Brand selected **XIT WIRELESS** as the **BEST Wireless Service Provider** in Hereford, Texas. Winners were selected in 105 categories (even the 'best hamburger') in a survey completed October 9th.

XIT Wireless opened its doors in Hereford on December 16, 1991 with our store on Park Avenue. With one tower at Milo Center, located 6 miles north of Hereford on Hwy 385, XIT Wireless was up and running with our cellular phone service. In January of 1992, we hired our first local employee, Sharon Ruland, Customer Service Supervisor. Sharon continues today to provide outstanding customer service to the people of Hereford. She has 17 years of experience in the wireless industry and has seen many changes in the technology, type of handsets and functionality of the wireless phone. We moved to our current location at 809 South 25 Mile Avenue in November of 1997. Shortly afterwards, another long-time employee, Kevin Foster, Sr. Installation and Repair Technician, was hired. XIT now maintains 6 tri-sectorized wireless towers in Deaf Smith County. This is just a part of the over 40 tri-sectorized towers in our 7500 square mile home coverage area that provide the best wireless service around.

So, **THANK YOU** to our Hereford customers for the great "thumbs up"! We strive to be the best, and we're glad you think so! XIT Wireless will continue to bring to Hereford and all of our service areas the latest in wireless service technology, phones and wireless data services. We offer a variety of rate plans for the Regional, Nationwide, Family and Corporate subscriber. And, XIT has a great new \$19.95 GET IT ALL Unlimited Text, Picture, and Internet plan and JUST TEXT plans for our wireless customers. You can stay connected to all your family, friends and business via email and the Internet with one our great smartphones, touch screen or slide-out keyboard phones.

## TEXT and MMS Messaging

*Send a TEXT or MMS message from your computer*

Use the convenience of your home or business computer to send TEXT or MMS messages to any XIT Wireless phone number. It's just like regular email. All you need to know is the 10-digit XIT Wireless phone number that you want to send a message to.

For sending a TEXT message (also called SMS or Short Message Service) via your computer email use the following address: 806XXXXXXXX@sms.xit.net. If you want to send an MMS message (Multi Media Message = Picture message) via your computer email use: 806XXXXXXXX@mms.xit.net.

Every wireless carrier has its own messaging domain names for sending email to a phone via SMS or MMS. The sms.xit.net and mms.xit.net are just for XIT Wireless phone numbers. If you have additional questions about how to text from your computer to an XIT Wireless phone number, please stop by your local XIT Wireless retail location.

## 2010 XIT Regional Directory Photo Contest

XIT Communications is looking for an exceptional photograph to be used in designing our 2010 XIT Communications Regional Directory Cover. We are looking for a picture that tells the story of the people, places, history, industry, or nature of this great area we live in. It can be a scenic view, beautiful landscape, or simply a unique photo of your favorite subject. The winning photographer will receive a check for \$100.00.

Remember, all photos must be received by XIT no later than Friday, December 11, 2009. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the XIT Marketing Department at 806-384-3311.

### Photo Contest Rules and Guidelines

1. There is no limit on the number of entries per person. Include your name, address, and contact number on the back of each entry, along with a brief description of where the photo was taken and any other information describing the people or setting in the photo.
2. Preferably, the photo should be taken in portrait layout. Photos must be at least 5 x 7, if taken with 35 mm camera, or an 8 x 10, if taken with a digital camera.
3. Winner agrees to allow XIT to use the picture for advertising purposes in addition to having it featured on the cover of the directory.
4. All photos become the property of XIT.
5. Photos must be received by XIT no later than Friday, December 11, 2009.
6. If it is determined that there is not an entry suitable for the directory cover, XIT reserves the right to obtain a picture from other sources.

## CPNI and YOU

*Customer Proprietary Network Information*

XIT and the Federal Government (FCC) continue to take very seriously the protection of your telecommunications account information. Customer Proprietary Network Information, or CPNI, is the information in your XIT account that includes your calling charges, the optional services you subscribe to, and your usage data and calling patterns. In short, it is your private information about **your telephone service**. In order to protect your account from unauthorized access, a CPNI password should be set up on your account. Over the past year and half, XIT has worked diligently with our customers to get passwords set up on all of our accounts.

Updating your account information is an ongoing process. If you do not currently have a CPNI password established, or there has been a change in your contact information or mailing address, please contact your nearest XIT retail location. Our customer service personnel can assist you with your CPNI password set up and review your account to verify all information is correct. We appreciate your business and thank you for assisting us with our effort to maintain current and accurate information on your account record.



### Mail entries to:

XIT Communications  
Attn: Photo Contest  
P.O. Box 711  
Dalhart, TX 79022

Email digital photos to [marketing@xitcomm.net](mailto:marketing@xitcomm.net). Be sure to include your name and all the information from Item Number 1 in the body of the email.



## XIT Annual Service Awards Banquet

On Friday, September 18, 2009, XIT employees gathered for the annual XIT Employee Service Awards Banquet. General Manager, Darrell Dennis, Assistant General Manager, Kathy Duggan, and XIT Board of Director, Kenneth Stanley, had the opportunity to recognize and congratulate several employees for their dedicated years of service to XIT.

Employees receiving awards at this year's banquet were: Kathy Duggan, 30 years; Billy Sisco, 20 years; Joe Lang and Shawn Blanton, 15 years; Kristen Hembree, 10 Years, and Paul Gray, Duchess Bowen, and Benny Moore, 5 years.

On behalf of the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association, NTCA, Kathy Duggan was honored for her loyal and dedicated 30 years of service to the Telecommunications Industry.



## LOOK WHAT'S ON YOUR DECK NOW!

Say what? **Look What's on Your Deck NOW** – will be a new feature of XIT's quarterly newsletter, and we're not talking baseball. We're talking about what is known in the wireless industry as your WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) Deck, which is XIT's available data content. What? You know...

ringtones, games, wallpaper and now video clips, fun things to download to your wireless phone – all available from XIT. To check out what's on your XIT deck, go to [www.xit.net](http://www.xit.net), and then click on the "Shop Online" tab, and then select Ringtones. At the top of the screen, you'll see "change phone". This allows you to select your particular phone model before downloading a ringtone or other type of content. Now, you know where to find all the latest in ringtones, games, wallpaper and videos. So, what's new? More than 7,000 new Warner Music Group titles have been added to our ringtones, and we have added a new content category called "NFL" with True Tones of theme songs from your favorite NFL pre-game show and team wallpapers. Our Top Ten ringtone category has all the latest hits in your favorite genre and is updated weekly, based on the Billboard chart topping hits. There are more than 90 new games, and we recently added Video Clips...a new content category with more than 400 to choose from, in 8 different sub-categories. So, look no further than your own XIT deck for all the latest in wireless data content.



**Download ringtones from CMA and Latin Grammy nominees and performers NOW from XIT!**



## XIT Christmas Open House

The holiday season is nearly upon us and that means it will soon be time for XIT's annual Christmas Open House. This year, we have decided it was time for a menu change. We will be serving delicious cookies and punch from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. So, please, mark your calendar and plan to join your friends at XIT Communications, XIT Wireless and XIT Rural Telephone for our annual Christmas Open House. We'll have great door prizes, scrumptious treats and great specials on wireless phones and accessories. Please join us for a relaxing afternoon! Look for your bright green postcard invitation in the mail.

**Dalhart & Dumas** – Friday, December 4th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
**Hereford & Stratford** – Friday, December 11th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Your Piece of the Puzzle

October 12, 2009 was slated as a holiday for most businesses, but for XIT Employees it was a day dedicated to in-house training and staff development. Our training, this year, was held at Talon Point Conference Center, and our guest presenter was Bob Ash of Life Lessons Seminars. Bob brings a multitude of experience to his presentations, and in particular, his belief that we all need a good dose of laughter to get us through any day! His presentation "Your Piece of the Puzzle" was enjoyed by all. It was a great day dedicated to positive business practices, leadership, and possibilities. Bob is an outstanding communicator, and his topics of discussion made us all think about the way we act and interact in the workplace with each other and with our customers. Bob Ash will make you laugh, and more than likely, he will make you cry, but he will most certainly make you THINK. Think about what matters most: being proactive, being of good character, being real, providing great service and keeping the old attitude in check. Our thanks to Bob for his great stories, terrific sense of humor, wonderful quotes and thought provoking presentation.

It is not often that all of XIT's Employees get together at one place and time. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to have our meeting at Talon Point (formerly the New Beginnings Christian Retreat Center west of Dumas). Tex and Herba Reeves manage the property and they are very personable, friendly and want you to have a great experience at their facility. Tex and Herba are originally from South Texas but recently moved to the Dumas area from Louisiana. Tex loves to cook, and you'll find some Cajun flair to some of his menu items. We enjoyed a delicious soup and sandwich lunch buffet. Our thanks, to Tex and Herba for taking the time to make it a great day for our employees and for making sure everything was in order for our speaker and his presentation.



## Hackers Are People, Too

Most of you have heard the term, "hacker." But, what is it? Or, more importantly, "who" is it? Hollywood leads you to believe this person is a misguided teenage, punk rocker, with too much time on their hands, involved in illegal deeds using their computer.

First, let's get things straight. The words "hacker" and "criminal" are not synonymous. I have quite a few friends that are hackers. I even fancy myself a bit of a hacker, but not on caliber with some of the net-gods that exist. A hacker is simply someone that enjoys "learning how things work." One online source defines a hacker as: "[Originally, someone who makes furniture with an axe]"

1. A person who enjoys exploring the details of programmable systems and how to stretch their capabilities, as opposed to most users, who prefer to learn only the minimum necessary.
2. One who programs enthusiastically (even obsessively) or who enjoys programming rather than just theorizing about programming.
3. A person capable of appreciating hack value.
4. A person who is good at programming quickly.
5. An expert at a particular program, or one who frequently does work using it or on it; as in 'a Unix hacker'. (Definitions 1 through 5 are correlated, and people who fit them congregate.)
6. An expert or enthusiast of any kind. One might be an astronomy hacker, for example.
7. One who enjoys the intellectual challenge of creatively overcoming or circumventing limitations."

Notice, that nowhere in that definition, did you see anything illegal. To use a Star Wars analogy, though, it is possible for a hacker to turn "to the dark side." We call criminal hackers, "Crackers." A person that breaks into computers or networks with the purpose of changing, deleting, or stealing information is a cracker.

Here's a scenario involving both types of people: One day, Joe Hacker is on the Internet, looking at various sites, when he finds an "address" he hasn't seen before. Upon entering this mysterious address, he finds himself at the heart of NORAD's missile defense system. A large hyperlink labeled, "Launch" sits squarely on his screen.

A "hacker" would contact NORAD and tell them about the "hole" in their security so it could be fixed. A "cracker" would push the button (or, more likely, sell the information to the highest bidder).

Using these definitions, we can actually label some of our greatest inventors as hackers. If Thomas Edison were alive today, he would probably wear the label proudly. Throw in Benjamin Franklin, Albert Einstein, etc. Heck, if you have a kid that takes apart the vacuum cleaner to see how it works, well, you have a hacker.

*Eric Spellmann is the Owner and President of Spellmann & Associates, a technology company offering employee training, website design, PC repair, and network maintenance. He is a featured speaker at a number of state and national technology conferences and writes a syndicated column in fourteen newspapers. In addition, he produces a weekly television segment for his local ABC affiliate. To contact him, visit his website, <http://www.EricSpellmann.com>*

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

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[www.xit.net](http://www.xit.net)



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## Small Town, Big Heart...

*Continued from page 1*

unmistakable sound of a helicopter could be heard overhead. And, there it was, an Osprey helicopter circling the sky at the airport. The helicopter maintained a low altitude and circled the airport while the family was there. Then, it slowly led the procession down Airport Road onto Highway 54 and Seventh Street. Following closely behind were the Patriot Guard Motorcyclists; the local fire-rescue vehicles; the hearse; the family, and the military honor guard. As the procession neared Denver Avenue, the sounds from a lone bagpipe filled the air. The XIT Rangers proudly displayed their patriotism and respect by carrying the American flag gallantly on horseback. As the procession ended at the funeral home, a hush fell over the crowd as each and everyone reflected on the day's events. It was an experience that will never be forgotten. And, in some small way, we all were a part of something that many of us know very little about ... military tradition and ceremony. The flag-draped casket, the honor guard, and the military escort are all traditions that honor and show respect for a fallen comrade.

Later, it was learned that several unexpected events brought the Osprey to Ingram Airfield in Dalhart that day. And for those of us that may not know the rest of the story, a Sgt. Kohlmeier was onboard that morning, and he stood at attention in the open doorway throughout the flyover and saluted in honor of Sgt. Davis. The entire day's event brings home the reality that our "Freedom" as an American is not FREE. It is paid for with the lives of our service men and women as they serve our country in very difficult places and under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Take a moment to remember them in your thoughts and prayers, and be sure to always respect the American flag and hold it dear.

The Employees and Board of Directors of XIT Rural Telephone wish to extend our sincere sympathies to the family of Sgt. David Davis.



Kyle Willard, son of Jay and Kelly Willard of Dalhart, Texas, shows his patriotism at the tribute procession for Sgt. Davis.