

Hardy Wins National Awards For Newsletter, Website

Hardy Telecommunications won two national awards May 2 when its newsletter and website were honored at a conference in Las Vegas. It was the fifth straight year that the newsletter has been honored at the national level, and the second consecutive win for the website.



Hardy Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr accepted the awards at the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association's annual marketing/public relations conference. NTCA represents about 600 telecommunications companies across the United States, and each year the organization honors its members' marketing and public relations accomplishments with the TeleChoice Awards. Derek writes and designs the Hardy newsletter.

Hardy's newsletter, The Communicator, won its category for Customer Newsletter for the fifth consecutive year. For the past two years, a panel of industry experts not affiliated with NTCA did the TeleChoice award judging. The first three wins came from peers, as

Hardy Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr accepts NTCA awards for newsletter and website.

other marketers at the NTCA conference voted anonymously. The Communicator was entered in the category for newsletters designed in-house for companies with up to 5,000 access lines.

"I'm very honored that Hardy's newsletter was recognized by NTCA," Derek said. "I'm always inspired by the quality of the entries across the country, so to receive this award ... I just don't know what to say."

The judges, who are not identified, complimented the Communicator's focus on its involvement in the community and the quality of the writing.

"Nice length and great articles," one judge wrote. Other judges commented that the newsletter "focuses on the community and the telco well," has a "nice balance of text and graphics" and that the copy is "well done."

"Loved this newsletter," another judge stated.

Hardy's website, which can be seen at www.hardynet.com, was awarded First Place in the Website "Outsourced" category for companies with up to 5,000 access lines. The website was redesigned in late 2009 by JCI Media in Winchester, Va. Derek since has kept the site updated.

The judges praised the website's "great use of colors and navigation buttons" and "wonderful use of graphics and photos" and said the site's "text is nice and clean and isn't distracting from the information." One judge specifically cited the website's "About" page: "Wonderful page with clear copy and header stating your telco's mission, vision and history."

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Communicator

A Quarterly Newsletter for Cooperative Customers



Attendees at Hardy's 2010 Annual Meeting of Members packed the gymnasium at East Hardy High School.

What's Inside

- Local Students Meet U.S. Senators During D.C. Trip
- HardyNet Helps To Boost Internet Speeds At Schools
- EHHS Student Wins College Scholarship Through Hardy
- Youth Board Learns Tips For Smartphone Security

Calendar

Aug. 16	Deadline: Resumes To Nominating Committee
Sept. 5	Labor Day: Hardy Offices Closed
Sept. 29	Deadline: Responses For Annual Meeting
Oct. 4	Deadline: Proxies For Annual Meeting
Oct. 7	Annual Meeting Of Members At East Hardy High School

Hardy Annual Meeting Set For October 7 At East Hardy

Hardy Telecommunications, Inc., would like to invite all of our members to attend the Annual Meeting of Members on Friday, October 7, 2011, at the East Hardy High School gymnasium. The agenda includes the election of two members to fill seats on the Board of Directors.



Loring Barr



Victoria Dyer

Two seats on the Board of Directors have terms that expire this year. Present directors may be nominated and elected to succeed themselves. The positions expiring this year are Lost River serving area 3, currently held by Victoria O. Dyer of Wardensville; and South Fork serving area 1, currently held by Loring E. Barr of Moorefield.

Any member interested in serving on the Board of Directors may submit a resume that defines the

member's interest and qualifications for the position. The deadline for resumes is August 16, 2011. The resumes should be delivered to the Nominations Committee, Hardy Telecommunications, Inc., 2255 Kimseys Run Road, Lost River, WV 26810.

Doors will open for registration at 5 p.m. October 7 with dinner to follow immediately upon registration. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. Meals are free for each member and one guest (up to two free meals per member), with additional

meals costing \$10 each. Drawings for door prizes will be held throughout the event.

Hardy Telecommunications members will receive a mailing that includes a reservation card and proxy for the annual meeting. If you plan to attend, please return the completed reservation card in the provided postage-paid envelope by Thursday, September 29, 2011.

If a member wishes to vote by proxy, please keep in

Story continued inside

Youth Board Urged To Protect Smartphone Data

Establishing security for your smartphone is now as important as protecting your personal computer, Hardy Telecommunications Youth Advisory Board learned April 25 at its final meeting of the year.



From left: Youth Board members Stephen Hott, Garrett Keller and Tyler Bradfield learn about the features of smartphones from Hardy Retail Sales Manager Becky Kimble.

Hardy Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr and Retail Sales Manager Becky Kimble gave the students tips on how to keep their information safe from damaging software like malware and spyware. With smartphones now outselling personal computers, and consumers using smartphones for online banking and other applications involving valuable data, criminals more and more are targeting the devices. A smartphone is a mobile phone with the

ability to perform tasks beyond simply making phone calls or texting, like surfing the Internet.

Hardy Telecommunications is an authorized retailer of Sprint wireless, and Becky demonstrated the capabilities of smartphones to the board. Derek, citing a recent New

York Times article detailing the increased frequency of malicious attacks on smartphones, said consumers can't assume a smartphone is secure.

"The most practical rule for protecting yourself is to start thinking of the smartphone as a PC," the article stated.

Derek said phones can be stolen or misplaced more easily than a typical personal computer.

"How many times have you seen on Facebook where people write that they've lost their phones and need their friends' numbers again?" he asked the students. "Who knows who has found that phone and has that information now? You need to protect that data."

Derek and Becky suggested some free security tools for smartphones, such as Lookout. Such tools can scan any applications you download for viruses and other malware. Lookout also allows you to back up your phone's data to a secure external site.

Annual Meeting Set For October 7

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mind that only the official proxy included in your mailing will be accepted.

This proxy will include the member's name, address and account number. Your proxy must contain both your signature and the signature

of a witness in order to be accepted.

Only proxies that are received by Tuesday, October 4, 2011, will be accepted. No proxies will be accepted at the meeting.

If you would like more information about our

election process, please see our bylaws, which begin on page 36 of the 2011 Hardy Telecommunications directory.

Our bylaws also can be reviewed by visiting the Hardy Telecommunications website at www.hardynet.com.

HardyNet Helps To Boost School Internet Speeds

HardyNet has helped to boost Internet speeds at Hardy County schools, opening a range of learning and teaching tools for students and faculty.

HardyNet participated in a recently completed project to increase the Internet bandwidth among Hardy County schools and out to the world. The school network connects to the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) 8 system in Morgantown, which oversees school Internet usage in West Virginia. Hardy County schools receive Internet service through a state network, but HardyNet transports the schools' data.

With the upgrade, each Hardy County school and the Board of Education office now have 10 MB connection speeds, with a pipe out of the area of 100 MB, capable of being expanded to 1 GB. Before the upgrade, the schools had a bandwidth speed of 1.5 MB.

For comparison, downloading a typical video with a file size of 1 GB at a speed of 1.5 MB would take about 90 minutes. A 10 MB connection can download that same 1 GB video in only 13 minutes.

"The assistance that Hardy Telecommunications has given Hardy County schools to increase bandwidth in our schools has been extremely helpful to both students and staff," Hardy County Superintendent of Schools Barbara Whitecotton said. "Our teachers now have the capability to use instructional strategies to increase student engagement in classes that we believe will lead to higher student achievement."



Above left photo: East Hardy High Senior Chelsea Wilson (left) and Moorefield High Senior Tori Burdette (right) pose with U.S. Senator John D. Rockefeller IV, D-W.Va. Above right photo: The students meet U.S. Senator Joe Manchin, D-W.Va. Chelsea and Tori are the daughters of Rodney and Connie Wilson of Baker and Mark and Amy Burdette of Old Fields, respectively.

Local Students Meet Senators During Youth Tour In D.C.

Two Hardy County high school seniors met West Virginia's two U.S. senators and lobbied for rural telecommunications issues during a recent trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by Hardy Telecommunications.

East Hardy High's Chelsea Wilson and Moorefield High's Tori Burdette traveled to our nation's capital for a four-day trip in early June. They joined 106 other students from around the country in the Foundation for Rural Service Youth Tour. Hardy Telecommunications paid all expenses for Chelsea and Tori.

In addition to seeing the historical sites, the two students met with Democratic Senators John D. Rockefeller IV and Joe Manchin of West Virginia. They told the senators about the different ways they use broadband high-speed internet and the valuable community service provided by rural telecommunications companies like Hardy Telecommunications.

Both Chelsea and Tori have been members of Hardy's Youth Advisory Board.



Moorefield High Senior Tori Burdette (left) and East Hardy High Senior Chelsea Wilson visit the U.S. Capitol.

Students on the board are taught about online and smartphone safety and security, how the wireless industry relies on a wireless backbone network and other telecommunications issues.

The FRS group also visited the offices of the Federal Communications Commission, where three of the four current commissioners addressed the

students about such issues as broadband availability and adoption in rural areas, media ownership and balancing standards of decency with the right to free speech.

The students learned about the unique challenges involved in bringing modern, affordable telecommunications to sparsely populated rural areas where many big companies are not interested in providing service. That led to Chelsea and Tori meeting with Senators Rockefeller and Manchin, during which they urged the senators to promote federal programs that will support rural telecommunications and not leave rural students behind in favor of urban students.

Tori said in thanking Hardy Telecommunications that the opportunity was one she'll never forget.

"Using one word to describe my experience at D.C. would be 'amazement,'" she said.

Chelsea agreed.

"The friendships made will last a lifetime," she said.

Engineering Firm Opens Moorefield Office To Support Fiber-To-The-Home Project

Byers Engineering, a consulting firm contracted by Hardy Telecommunications to oversee and support Hardy's construction of a fiber-to-the-home network in Hardy County, has set up shop in a Moorefield office at 500 Spring Avenue.

Hardy Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr said Byers employees, which include out-of-state consultants as well as some local residents, will be visible throughout the county.

"The public will be seeing vehicles that have both Hardy Telecommunications and Byers signs," Derek said. "We already have had some

people ask about them, so we're letting everyone know that they're working with us."

Derek said Byers employees also will have identification badges with both the Hardy Telecommunications and Byers logos. They will be traversing the county, scouting territory and talking to some residents about right-of-way agreements, he said.

The Hardy OneNet fiber-to-the-home project, which will enable Hardy to offer high-definition digital television with local channels, faster Internet speeds and digital voice, is nearing the point where bids will be solicited for contracts. Derek said the

federal agencies overseeing Hardy's loan-grant combination have approved the release of funding so the project is moving forward.

The entire project is expected to take three years to complete. Many out-of-state Byers employees have rented homes in the area and will be working locally on the project for the entire three-year span, Derek said.

The fiber-optic cable network is being built with the help of loans and grants awarded to Hardy by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Hardy Telecommunications

members will bear no extra cost for the construction. Customers will pay only for the fiber-related services that they choose to receive.

The goal is to build OneNet to the entire county. However, some residents will have the service sooner than others because of the time required. Hardy plans to provide updates on the project on its website, www.hardynet.com, once construction has begun.

Fiber-optic technology is the most modern technology in the telecommunications field. Other available technologies, such as wireless, cannot offer the quality and range of services that fiber offers.

Hardy Upgrading Billing System

Over the next few months Hardy Telecommunications will be upgrading to a new billing system.

In addition to providing needed support for Hardy's upcoming OneNet fiber-to-the-home offering of high-definition digital television, faster Internet speeds and digital voice, the new system will have the capability to offer members exciting new features, such as the ability to view your bill online.

Hardy will provide more details about these enhanced billing options as we approach the release date for the new billing system.

We are proud to offer these new billing features as we strive to give you the best customer service possible!

Hardy Donates To Community Foundation To Help Establish Scholarship Fund

Hardy Telecommunications has donated \$250 to the Hardy County Community Foundation to go toward the endowment fund started by George Hott for a scholarship to benefit area graduating seniors.

Hardy Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr presented Hardy County Community Foundation President Pat Ford with a \$250 check on May 13 at the Hardy County Planner's Office in the Hardy County Courthouse. The money will be added to the "Oscar H. Bean, Bill Clark, Clarence "Hink" Fisher and Tom Hawse II Scholarship Fund," which is a \$5,000 endowment fund set up by Mr. Hott, the foundation's 2011 Spirit of Hardy County.



Hardy County Community Foundation President Pat Ford (left) accepts a \$250 donation from Hardy Telecommunications Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr.

As the Spirit of Hardy County honoree, Mr. Hott was given the privilege of

determining the purpose and naming the \$5,000 endowment fund.

2011 EHHS Grad Wins Scholarship Through Hardy

2011 East Hardy High graduate Jesse Cook has been awarded a \$2,500 college scholarship from Hardy Telecommunications and the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association's Foundation for Rural Service.

The FRS scholarship program awards \$75,000 in scholarships to rural youth across the United States each year. Thirty-one scholarships were awarded nationwide this year out of almost 1,300 applications. The goal of the scholarship program is to help further higher education opportunities among rural high school students.

Scholarship recipients were selected by an independent

team of reviewers from the education field. Hardy Telecommunications had no input into the selection process. To be eligible, recipients must be sponsored by an NTCA member company and must indicate a desire to return to their rural communities once their collegiate studies have been completed.

"Hardy Telecommunications is thrilled to offer the FRS scholarship program, and I couldn't be happier for Jesse," said Derek Barr, Hardy's marketing/human resource director. "I've had the privilege of working with him on Hardy's Youth Advisory Board and taking him last year on the FRS Youth Tour to D.C. He's an exceptional student

and person, and the entire community should be proud of his accomplishments."

Derek said Hardy has had winners in the past, but Jesse is the first area student to be selected for the FRS scholarship in several years.

Jesse, the son of Glen and Sandra Cook of Lost River, said he was honored to receive the scholarship.

"I would like to thank the Foundation for Rural Service and Hardy Telecommunications for the opportunity to achieve this scholarship," he said. "In order to receive this scholarship, I had to write an essay describing how rural living shaped me for the better. I am very fortunate



Jesse Cook

and blessed to have been raised in this small rural community, which has given me core values that I will hold dear to my heart all my life."

Derek said the \$2,500 scholarship will be formally presented to Jesse in late July.



Hardy Technology Director Bill Schmidt (left) and Hardy Customer Services Director Tracey Ratliff chat with Bob the Builder.

Hardy Sponsors 2011 Home Show

Hardy Telecommunications was a main sponsor and participated in the Potomac Highlands Home Builders Association's 2011 Home Show on May 7 at Moorefield Middle School.

Vendors from Hardy and several surrounding counties displayed their products and services in a festive atmosphere complete with music, food, and even Bob the Builder for the kids.



East Hardy High's Class of 2011 dances the "Cha Cha Slide" at Hardy's After-Graduation Party.

Hardy Hosts East Hardy Graduation Party

Hardy Telecommunications hosted East Hardy High School's Class of 2011 with a party after their May 27 graduation ceremony.

Hardy Telecom, a business partner with EHHS, has sponsored the party at South Branch Potomac Lanes for the past several years. The goal of the event is to provide

students, faculty, and guests with a safe, alcohol-free environment in which to celebrate their achievements.

The students enjoyed cosmic bowling, billiards, karaoke, and food. Students also were eligible to win numerous door prizes donated by local businesses, organizations and individuals, including a

television, Blu-Ray DVD player and laptop computer.

"The students had a great time, and we thank everyone who contributed to the party," said Hardy Marketing/Human Resource Director Derek Barr. "We couldn't do the party alone, and the community shows tremendous support every year. We appreciate it."