

CONNECTED

BACK IN THE SADDLE

Erskine riders,
ropers enter
collegiate arena



UNLOCK OPPORTUNITY

Online tools powerup your
job search

KEEP THE RHYTHM

Broadband connects
musical creators

NTCA THE RURAL BROADBAND ASSOCIATION®

RURAL CONNECTIONS

By SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

To expand broadband access, we must protect our supply chains

We at NTCA are encouraged to see rural broadband take center stage as people talk about how to improve our nation's infrastructure. While grappling with a pandemic, more people than ever — especially in Washington, D.C., and in the policy arena — are realizing that robust and reliable broadband is essential for people to work and learn from home and for our country to move forward. It has been encouraging to see federal and state resources being put toward addressing gaps in broadband coverage.

However, the job is only beginning when the funds start to flow. While NTCA member companies are eager to keep building broadband networks, lead times for fulfillment of orders of telecom supplies are approaching deeply concerning levels. One member recently received a quote that projected an eight-month delay for fiber, and another was told it would take one year for fulfillment of a fiber order. We're hearing stories of delays of several weeks or months for routers and other gear.

These supply chain delays could have real implications on American consumers — and they could present real problems when it comes to provider compliance with things like buildout deadlines and performance testing obligations.

It's terrific that resources are being made available to ensure every American has access to sufficient broadband. But it's going to be equally important that policy-makers pay attention to whether the supply chain can keep up and consider what steps must be taken to ensure that happens. 🗨️

BROADBAND: Connecting your life



Telehealth

Broadband connects you with doctors and health care services



Work From Home

Broadband connects you with servers and applications to work remotely



Remote Learning

Broadband connects your children with their teachers and study resources



Shopping

Broadband connects you with grocery stores, restaurants and retailers for pickup and home delivery



Family & Community

Broadband connects you with your people over video calls and social media



Small Business

Broadband connects your business with customers and suppliers



How did your broadband connection help you through 2020? How will it support you in the new year? Share your story with the hashtag **#MyBroadbandStory**.



Don't ZOOM into trouble

Do learn the secrets to a great virtual meeting

There are some gaffes co-workers never forget. And with the likes of Zoom, GoToMeeting and FaceTime bringing business gatherings into many homes, the potential for memorable pitfalls only increases.

“Don’t take your phone with you to the bathroom during a video call” should most likely be the first rule to remember for any team shifting to virtual gatherings. A quick search on YouTube will show you the wisdom of that policy.

While there’s potential for unintentional blunders during video calls, the tools also offer an indispensable resource for teams. In many cases, productivity would grind to a halt without the ability to connect virtually through broadband.

So, here are a few “Dos” and some “Don’ts” to consider before your next virtual meeting:

DO dress fully. A work shirt on top and running shorts or pajamas on the bottom can prove embarrassing if you forget to turn off the camera before standing up. It happens, often.

DO take a few minutes before the meeting to confirm you know how to turn the microphone and camera on and (likely more importantly) off in the software you’re using. It’s also a good policy to stay muted unless speaking.

DON’T leave your notifications turned on when screen sharing during a meeting. Otherwise, everyone attending might see the message from your hungry spouse regarding the takeout lunch you promised to deliver.

DO have a clear, detailed agenda and stick to it. The attention of participants can wander, and a well-paced plan can keep everyone focused.

DON’T ignore the background. People will judge you on the contents of your bookshelves. Also, if there’s a forgotten not-safe-for-work bit of kitsch visible on a shelf or wall, don’t expect your co-workers to spare you embarrassment. They may just enjoy the humor.

DO consider lighting. Everyone looks better with good lighting, and a great presentation can not only set the tone for how others perceive you but also boost your self-confidence.

DON’T forget to take the time before the meeting to get a glass of water or cup of coffee.



DO jot down any notes about points you wish to cover, and keep a pen and paper handy. Know the steps you need to take to help you be more present during the meeting, and repeat the formula every time.

DO remember to inform other household members you’re joining a video call. More than one relative or friend has taken an unintended star turn during a serious discussion.

DON’T leave the cats and dogs free to wander. Disembodied voices may draw their attention, usually at the most inopportune time. While a stray tail or untimely howl might add levity to a meeting, know your audience and prepare accordingly.

DO remember that the most important thing of all is to laugh. Isolation and, often, stress can counterbalance the freedom of remote work. Every meeting, take a moment to appreciate your co-workers, share a joke, smile and laugh. Enjoy the virtual time together. 🗨️

That’s a formula for a great, productive meeting.

Resolve to master streaming TV in 2021

Each year at this time, I usually find myself looking ahead at all of the promises of the new year. Many of us will consider resolutions we can make to improve ourselves as the calendar turns to 2021.



JEFF WILSON

Chief Executive Officer

After the year we've all been through, I think we could use that fresh sense of optimism. But as admirable as it is that we will resolve to lose a little weight or get organized this year, it's also unfortunately predictable that many of us will drop those diets, exercise regimes or organizational systems by spring.

That's why I have a suggested resolution for many of our members that can be accomplished from the couch.

If you're one of the roughly 1 in 4 Americans who hasn't tried streaming video service through platforms like Netflix, Hulu or Amazon Prime, I'd urge you to consider resolving to give it a try in 2021.


According to the researchers at Nielsen, many older TV watchers did just that in 2020. Spurred on in a hunt for programming while staying home during the pandemic, older viewers now account for 26% of all streaming minutes viewed, up from 19% a year ago, according to the Nielsen data.

While there is a little bit of a learning curve on the new platforms, the amount of news, sports, shows and movies to watch at your command is astounding.

While Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Hulu are the dominant providers, new streaming services like Disney+, Peacock and HBO Max have debuted in the last 18 months. Paramount+, due out this year, promises to offer an immense catalog of shows from CBS and other Viacom networks, as well as decades' worth of hit movies produced in the Paramount Studios. The summer Olympics alone are expected to provide hundreds of hours of programming for NBC's Peacock.

And thanks to our work building and maintaining the WCTEL broadband network, this vast world of programming is available right in your living room.

Here are my suggestions for how to give it a try:

- 1. Start small.** Let us be your guide. Visit wctel.streamingtvgenius.com to see a comparison of different streaming platforms to inform your decisions.
- 2. Pick the right box.** Your TV may already have some streaming capabilities built in to get you started. If not, you'll need a Roku device, Amazon's Fire TV Stick, or other streaming device connected to your WiFi to get you started.
- 3. Ask for help.** Whether it's a friend, family member or one of our friendly staff, don't hesitate to reach out and ask for advice on navigating this exciting new world of streaming video. 



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West Carolina Telephone
233 Highway 28 Bypass
Abbeville, SC 29620
Telephone: 864-446-2111
www.WCTEL.com

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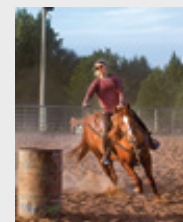
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On the Cover:



Antreville native Alex Taylor practices with the Erskine Flying Fleet rodeo team, currently in its second year of competition. See story Page 8.

Teaming up for streaming with WCTEL broadband

In 2021, more streaming options will be available than ever. Last year, big additions entering the fray of streaming platforms included Peacock, Apple TV and Disney+, and more major players are expected over the course of this year.

During 2020, an estimated 6.6 million people "cut the cord," opting for streaming over more traditional forms of home entertainment.

So, you've decided to make the leap into streaming without the security blanket of cable or satellite television. Now what?

WCTEL is ready to answer that and other questions with a comprehensive breakdown of streaming services such as Hulu Live, Sling, YouTube TV and others. Just go to WCTEL.com and follow the "Streaming Options" link to the "Streaming TV Genius" page.

After picking out a streaming device, such as market leaders Roku or Amazon Fire TV Stick, navigating the new and diverse streaming universe can be challenging. Options range from the aforementioned Hulu Live, Sling and YouTube TV to Vidgo and fuboTV.

But the "Streaming TV Genius" page does more than simply outline streaming services for newcomers. The page allows visitors to pick out their wants and needs for home entertainment.

For instance, sports fanatics can choose

sports channels or packages to suit them, and cinephiles can pick out their favorite movie channels. If local channels are important, just pick them out on the page.

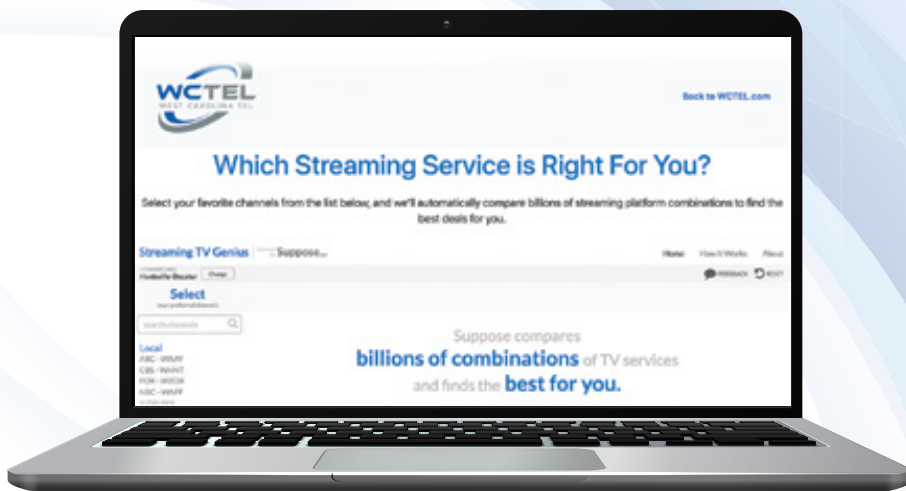
"Streaming TV Genius" will put all your choices together to come up with the best streaming options and break down the cost. The page also indicates whether free trials are available for streaming services. In many cases, new customers can take a chosen streaming service for a short test drive to see if it fits.

While new arrivals are expected for 2021, streaming giant Netflix with its 182.8 million paid global subscribers in early 2020 is still the kingpin, offering original programming, popular movies and television shows. Amazon Prime also represents one of the older streaming services with

acclaimed programming. But these were joined in 2020 by a new-generation Apple TV, HBO Max and Peacock, which is an NBC launch. And the newly merged CBS and Viacom worked to build the subscription base for CBS All Access, being rebranded this year as Paramount+, to more than 16 million subscribers by the end of last year.

The options for streaming are both exciting and seemingly limitless.

But it all starts with broadband internet connections that offer speeds to handle all of your digital needs. WCTEL broadband offers symmetrical internet speeds up to 1 Gigabit (1,000 Mbps) to ensure you maximize your streaming experience. For information on streaming and internet services through WCTEL, call 864-446-2111.



BLUES & BBQ

Riyen Roots of the blues duo Roots & Dore performs during October's seventh annual Hogs and Hens BBQ Festival in downtown Abbeville.

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge

An avian sanctuary

Story by ANNE P. BRALY

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in North Alabama is a rich, diverse wildlife habitat.

As winter's chill sets in across North Alabama, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge undergoes a feathery transformation. Birds that normally call the northern reaches of the continent home fly south, finding the relative warmth of the 35,000-acre property along the banks of the Tennessee River far more to their liking.

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge came to be in 1938 as a protected area for migratory birds and other wildlife who call the refuge home year-round — snakes, deer, small mammals, amphibians and other animal species. It was the first-ever wildlife area to occupy a hydroelectric impoundment, which is part of a larger hydroelectric system that uses a dam to store river water in a reservoir — in this case, Wheeler Dam. It was an experiment that has become a tremendous success over ensuing decades.

Although designated as a waterfowl refuge, Wheeler provides for a wide spectrum of wildlife with its deep river channels, creeks, tupelo swamps and other areas. There is shelter and food for wintering birds, such as the critically endangered whooping crane, and year-round residents like the endangered gray bat.

The refuge is also home to 115 species of fish, 74 species of reptiles and amphibians, 47 species of mammals, 38 species of freshwater mussels and 26 species of freshwater snails.

Teresa Adams, supervisory park ranger at Wheeler, says the refuge's appeal to sandhill and whooping cranes is due to management practices in place since Wheeler's inception. Those practices reflect a partnership between the refuge and farmers in the region.

"Farmers plant food crops — corn, soybeans and winter wheat — and leave around 18% of the crop in the field for the wintering waterfowl, cranes, and migratory and native birds," Adams says.

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, which serves as the gateway to the North Alabama Birding Trail, has a visitor center that hosts a series of interpretive exhibits. These displays have information about the refuge's numerous animals, as well as the early human residents of the Tennessee River Valley.

At any time, you might witness one of more than 300 species that have been recorded on the refuge. Year-round residents include great blue herons, great egrets, mourning doves, downy woodpeckers, Northern flickers and many more. It's not hard to recognize the brilliant hue of a blue jay or an Eastern bluebird or hear the caw of a crow or the screech of an owl.

Among the most common waterfowl that choose to winter at the refuge are wood and ring-necked ducks. Occasionally, you may spot a Ross's goose or greater white-fronted goose. 📷



Eastern screech owl.

Ready, set, shoot!

Tom Ress, a resident of Athens, Alabama, is an avid bird-watcher. His passion for photography has taken him far and wide with a camera in hand and a bird in the viewfinder. With his Canon 7D Mark II camera and Canon 100-400mm II zoom lens, he's zeroed in on the elusive blue-winged teal at Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge only once every two to three years, but he spots the tufted titmouse flitting from limb to limb more often.

Ress points out a number of important things to consider when photographing birds.

- For starters, you need to learn about their habitats and what foods and activities they enjoy. Do they hunt for rodents by soaring over open fields? Do they search through dead leaves for bugs, or do they prey on flying insects?
- Find a good vantage point and wait. Patience is one of the main things to bring with you when you plan on getting the perfect shot.
- Invest in a small, portable blind so that you're as well-hidden as possible. Such blinds are sold at big-box stores such as Dick's Sporting Goods, Walmart and Academy Sports + Outdoors.
- Tripods are a good idea, allowing you to capture a longer exposure by using a slower shutter speed. They're also useful if you don't have a steady hand. The use of a tripod is good for shooting baby birds in their nests or birds roosting in tree holes, on ledges and in other secure places. Tripods are not good, though, if you plan on shooting birds in action, Ress says. They are also rather cumbersome to carry if your hike is a long one.
- You will find more birds by learning their calls and songs. The Cornell University-funded website allaboutbirds.org is a good resource that includes more than 600 bird sounds and songs.
- Morning and evening are the best times for photography, offering the best lighting. Avoid midday when the sunlight is at its harshest.
- You don't need an expensive camera, but you don't want the cheapest, either. Make sure whatever camera you purchase has a good zoom lens.

Top-five birding apps:

1. **eBird** offers a paperless way to log your bird sightings (Android and iPhone).
2. **Merlin Bird ID** will assist you with identifying birds in seconds (Android and iPhone).
3. **Audubon Bird Guide** is a complete guide to more than 800 species of birds found in North America (Android and iPhone).
4. **BirdsEye** helps ID birds around you and find the birds you want to see (iPhones only).
5. **Larkwire** turns learning bird sounds into a game to help you and the kids identify birds by their calls (iPhones only).

Bird-watching essentials

Whether it's in your own backyard or out in the wild, there are a few things to ensure your bird-watching experience is a success. Having spent countless hours in the field, Tom Ress is well-versed in the essentials, including:

- **BINOCULARS**
- **A FIELD GUIDE**, such as "A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies" by Roger Tory Peterson and "The Sibley Guide to Birds" by David Sibley are good ones.
- **A BIRDING APP**, such as Audubon's Bird Guide: North America or eBird, to have bird-watching tips and other info at your fingertips.
- **RAIN GEAR** — Always be prepared.
- **PATIENCE** — You can never have enough.

Indigo bunting.



Prothonotary warbler.



Pectoral sandpiper.



A whooping crane, left, and a sandhill crane.



Freshman Alex Taylor
and Gator.



Freshman Tori Gillis aboard Sandman.



Freshman Kaiden Smith on Pilot.



Freshman Kenley Wells
and Holmes.

‘Spurs and Latigo’

Erskine rodeo team breaking new ground in state

Story and Photography by JOHN CLAYTON

Sandman is a freshman on the Erskine rodeo team, and so is his owner, Tori Gillis, who was sitting astride the 4-year-old palomino at Roan Creek Farm during a fall practice, a short horse ride from the college campus.

“It’s been a lot of fun,” Gillis says of the duo’s freshman year together at Erskine College. “It’s been a really great learning experience for both of us.” The pair arrived in Due West together and joined the rodeo team, which formed and competed for the first time during the 2019-20 academic year.

Gillis and Sandman compete in breakaway roping and goat tying, but the endgame for Gillis is veterinary school and equine medicine after graduating. “I’ve always loved horses, and I love to ride,” says Gillis, who got her first experience as a rodeo competitor during the team’s fall season. “I had a chance to come and tour the college and to find out about the program, and I fell in love with it. I got excited to come out here and be a part of the team and ride and compete.”

The establishment of the rodeo team coincided with an increased emphasis on athletics the school began several years ago. Erskine also reintroduced football for the first time since 1951.

The co-ed rodeo team participates in fall and spring seasons as part of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association. The NCAA does not sanction rodeo events, but the NIRA has been around since 1949 and consists of several regions around the country. The Flying Fleet competes in the Ozark Region, traveling to rodeos in Missouri, Mississippi and Arkansas, making for long weekend road trips with animals and equipment in tow.

While several South Carolina universities — including Lander, University of South Carolina and Converse — have equestrian teams, Erskine fields the only rodeo team in the state and one of

the few in the Southeast. The nearest schools with rodeo programs are Tennessee-Martin, West Alabama and Murray State in Kentucky.

“There are no close collegiate rodeo teams,” says Erskine head coach Kelly McAlhaney. “We have junior rodeo in the state, and we have some associations, but no college rodeo. So, we just talked about it and decided that rodeo would be something that Erskine would like to add to athletics.”

McAlhaney was an accounting manager in the Erskine business office at the time, but animals and rodeo are among her passions. Her three children competed through the junior rodeo ranks. She and her husband, Gene, own and operate Roan Creek Farm, where the team practices, and she has long been involved in junior rodeo programs in the state.

GOING DUE WEST

Erskine has a reputation as an academically challenging school with top-notch science programs, which is one of the things that attracted Gillis and some of her teammates looking for careers in veterinary medicine. That’s a selling point for McAlhaney, but she says she understands that some competitors may prefer schools with larger rodeo programs, such as Mississippi State or Texas A&M.

“It’s a conversation we have,” she says. “We’re definitely a small team and a small school with a small-town atmosphere with all of our sports. Some of the kids want to go to bigger schools or go out West, and we’re definitely not West. Erskine is a pretty tough school academically, too, so we have a conversation and try to prepare them for what Erskine has to offer and the changes they would face.”



Junior Grace Miller on Cola.



Freshman Gillian Ray and Sweets.



Freshman Kacie Owen on Jay.



Freshman Blair Quarles and Ellie Mae.

BUILDING A TEAM

The team roster has grown from seven members in 2019-20 to 11 this year. While the team is coed, it is only nominally so this year. Mason McCoy, a freshman steer wrestler from nearby Easley, is the only male competitor on the team. “We’re hoping to add some guys for next year,” McAlhaney says. “But it’s tough because it’s a female-dominated sport when it comes to barrel racing and breakaway roping.”

The team gives former junior rodeo competitors, such as McCoy, a chance to compete at the collegiate level without traveling far from home. Of the team’s 11 members, eight are from South Carolina, and all of those are from within 100 miles of campus. Freshman Alex Taylor is from Antreville, and sophomore Shelby Slatton is from Donalds. Both of them went to high school down the road at Dixie before coming to Erskine.

“There’s a lot of interest after high school rodeo by the students in this area,” McAlhaney says. “But most of them had to leave to go to Tennessee-Martin or to Mississippi — and most go farther than that. So, I do feel like we’re keeping some of our athletes at home instead of sending them out of state.”

McAlhaney would like to grow the Flying Fleet rodeo roster to as many as 20 competitors in the near future. “I think 15-20 would be a great size, so hopefully we’ll get there in the next couple of years,” she says. ☺



The Erskine College rodeo team makes a pit stop while on the road during its fall season.

Erskine Rodeo

SPRING NIRA OZARK REGION SCHEDULE

- TBA — East Mississippi Community College, Meridian, Mississippi
- TBA — Arkansas-Monticello, Monticello, Arkansas
- March 25-27 — Pearl River Community College, Poplarville, Mississippi
- April 15-17 — Tennessee-Martin, Martin, Tennessee
- April 22-24 — Northwest Mississippi Community College, Senatobia, Mississippi

FLYING FLEET RODEO ROSTER

Barrel Racing

- Shelby Slatton, sophomore, Donalds, South Carolina
- Kacie Owen, freshman, Balsam Grove, North Carolina
- Blair Quarles, freshman, Laurens, South Carolina
- Gillian Ray, freshman, Madison, Georgia
- Kaiden Smith, freshman, Pickens, South Carolina
- Alex Taylor, freshman, Antreville, South Carolina

Goat Tying/Breakaway Roping

- Grace Miller, junior, Simpsonville, South Carolina
- Victoria Gillis, freshman, Lexington, South Carolina
- Kenley Wells, freshman, Elkin, North Carolina

Steer Wrestling

- Mason McCoy, freshman, Easley, South Carolina



Come together

Story by DREW WOOLLEY

Broadband brings together musicians across the world

As the pandemic stretched on last year, drummer Mike Kosacek and other members of the band Cosmic Singularity started kicking around the idea of recording a second album. With most music venues shut down and more time to write, it was a familiar story for bands and musicians across the world. But there was one key exception: Kosacek has never actually met any of his bandmates in person.

"Without high-speed internet, we just couldn't do this," he says. "I live in Round Rock, Texas. The keyboard player lives in Florida. The bass player is in Utah, and at the time, our singer and guitar player was living in Scotland."

The globe-spanning collaboration would have been impossible just a decade ago. The songwriting process is a sort of musical relay. One member of the band will share a demo of a song he created, and the others will add their parts one by one.

"We'll start stripping off the individual parts, and everyone will add in their own instruments to build up the song," Kosacek says. "Once we've got all those parts, they'll send it to me, and I'll do the mixing in my studio."

A NOD TO THE DRUMMER

Kosacek built his home studio, DoubleDog Recording, in 2009. He had been recording in his bedroom for several years, but the situation wasn't ideal.

"In terms of sound, that wasn't optimal. Plus, I have a family, so the noise wasn't optimal for them, either," he says. "When I decided I really wanted to make money off of my music, it had to be better."

The stand-alone, 475-square-foot recording space gives him room to play without driving his family from the premises and provides Kosacek the option of recording bands live. Normally, he estimates, about a fifth of his business would come from mixing and mastering recordings for live bands. The rest is his Studio Drum Tracks business, where he records drum parts for Texas-based groups and artists like Black Dirt Tango, ThemThatKnow and Mike Hamilton, as well as others from across the globe.



Broadband technology underpins drummer Mike Kosacek's business.

“At least half of it is mind reading,” Kosacek says. “But for me, I find that a lot of it is just experience playing and listening to a lot of music. So, when someone sends me a song that needs drums, I have some idea of where to go with it. A lot of times, it’s right the first time, and people are wowed at the difference, which is, of course, my goal.”

These days, with bands unable to record in person, all of Kosacek’s work comes from the drum tracks business. But internet connections have come a long way since he started, making the transition an easy one.

“I actually saw an uptick in business, because people were stuck at home writing songs that needed drums,” he says. “Ten years ago we would have to mail CDs, DVDs, even hard drives back and forth, because sometimes it was faster and more reliable than internet transfers. Being able to do this digitally and share files online — that’s what makes it happen.” 📱

Remote mastery

From his earliest memories, Serge Espitia was in love with music and how it comes together. He eventually moved to New York, where he had the chance to work as a producer with artists including James Iha of Smashing Pumpkins and Adam Schlesinger of Fountains of Wayne, as well as producers for artists like David Bowie, Beyonce and John Legend.



But in 2016, Espitia and his wife were tired of the city, so they moved to New Jersey. There, he set up his own home studio for mastering — the art of touching up songs to achieve professional sound quality.

“There’s a lot of fear of the mastering process, but it’s really about your personal taste and appreciation for music,” Espitia says.

His mastering business is completely online, and that’s the way Espitia likes it. Operating remotely allows him to work faster compared to in-person sessions with artists that can take hours longer. The key, he says, is making a human connection with artists to better understand what they want.

“A lot of people I work with are very sensitive, so they have a good understanding of their musical influences and what they want to draw from,” Espitia says. “So, that part of the business really hasn’t changed.”

Home schooling

- ▶ **Education** — Books, magazines, online tutorials and more are available to help developing artists learn their trade. Online collaboration groups can also provide a supportive community and opportunities to hone your craft.
- ▶ **Know what you want** — Understand what kinds of sounds you want to create for yourself or others. These preferences will guide the type of recording environment you need and the equipment you use.
- ▶ **Learn your tools** — Having the best gear isn’t the be-all and end-all. Whether you’re using GarageBand or Pro Tools, knowing how to use what is at your disposal effectively and efficiently is crucial.
- ▶ **Listen** — Spend a lot of time listening to music. The more you can develop a critical ear, the better you’ll be at identifying the sounds you want to create and others want to achieve.

Thinking of building your own home studio? Take some advice from the pros.

gear list 🎙️

- **Microphone** — Beginners can get by recording on a smartphone, but serious musicians will want to invest in a quality mic.
- **Headphones** — Always opt for wired over wireless to prevent delays and unexpected interruptions to your connection.
- **Studio monitors** — These speakers play back unenhanced sound so you can be confident how your mix will sound on different systems.
- **Audio interface** — This converts the sound from your mic to digital sound on your computer.
- **Software** — There are many programs available to mix and export your music. GarageBand is free and a good starting place for beginners.
- **Soundproofing** — Keeping your sound in will make the neighbors happy. Keeping their noises out will make you happy.



HI! I'M AMANDA CLARK

In this column, you'll learn about technology and read simple tips to get the most out of your electronics. For more tips or help with your devices, be sure to read this column in future publications. I'm always happy to help!

DEVICE OF THE MONTH



Leopold FC900R

Take the leap to a mechanical keyboard such as the Leopold FC900R. Available in a wide selection of colors — including the retro, two-tone white — and a variety of styles, the full-size keyboard is solidly built and works on both Windows and Mac. There are more expensive mechanical keyboards that come with additional bells and whistles, but the Leopold offers a top-rated experience at a reasonable price. MSRP \$99-\$129.

Taking a shortcut

Master your keyboard

Scientist George Washington Carver famously said, “There is no shortcut to achievement.” However, if you’re tired of using your mouse to hunt through menus looking for basic computer commands or you simply want to get your work done more efficiently, then keyboard shortcuts are, well, key.

Let’s start by looking at some essentials, move on to advanced shortcuts and then consider the much-forgotten keyboard itself.

For simplicity, let’s assume you’re using a Windows machine. That means you have a Win key, which is the key with the Windows logo on the left side of your spacebar. There is an Alt key. And you have a control key, which is labeled Ctrl on your keyboard.

Note that Macs also have a Ctrl key. But when using the following shortcuts, substitute the Mac Command key.

THE BASICS

Specialized applications may have their own shortcuts, but the basics work the same not only for text editing but also across most programs. They are usually intuitive.

Hit Ctrl+B to make your text bold, Ctrl+U to underline or Ctrl+I for italics. Ctrl+C will copy any text selected, while Ctrl+X will cut it. You can select text with your mouse, of course, but you can also hold down the Shift key and then select text with the arrow keys. If you need to

select a large block of text, you can use Ctrl+A to select all, and then Ctrl+V will paste the selected text.

If you’re wondering why “V” for paste and not Ctrl+P, which lets you print, it’s because the letter is similar to the proofreading mark for “insert.” Another useful shortcut is Ctrl+Z, which undoes whatever you did last, from typing the wrong word to accidentally erasing your entire document — just make sure you didn’t hit Ctrl+W and close your window before you saved with Ctrl+S.

Another shortcut that comes in handy is Alt+Tab, which cycles through open applications — Command+Tab on Mac. Ctrl+N opens a new window. Win+left arrow or Win+right arrow snaps windows to the side of your screen, which is great for quickly having two windows open side by side without fiddling with sizing them to fit your monitor.

NEXT STEPS

Once you’ve mastered the essentials, show off some of these less-common Windows shortcuts to get your work done faster:

- » Ctrl+F will let you find words in a text or browser window.
- » Alt+F4 will shut down any application.
- » Win+D will minimize all open windows and show you a clean desktop. ☒

Job hunting in the modern age

From submitting your resume to interviewing, it's an online world

Technology has changed the way we look for a job. Even the first round of interviewing is often held online through videoconferencing.

It is a new experience for today's job hunters, so here is a guide to help you find and land that dream job.

JOB BOARDS

These days, most job opportunities are found through online sources, such as job boards where employers post openings and describe the position, job duties and type of candidate they are seeking.

Some of the most popular job boards include Indeed, Monster, CareerBuilder and Glassdoor. These sites will allow you to post your resume for employers to review. They also let you search for openings based on location, career field or keyword.

While they may have some differences, most job boards have the same basic features. They allow you to search for jobs you may qualify for, and they often let you apply directly from their site. Others may link you to the employer's site to submit your resume and fill out an application.

RESUME

Your resume is your calling card. It is the first thing a potential employer will see



when determining if you are a good candidate for the opening.

A resume should be simple and easy to read. It should be concise and only contain relevant information. It should summarize your accomplishments and highlight relevant skills. Here are some tips to help you create a winning resume.

- **Keywords** — Look for keywords in a job posting that describe what the employer is looking for, and use those words in your resume.
- **Font** — Always use a basic, clean font like Arial or Times New Roman. Keep your font size between 10 and 12 points.
- **Information** — Keep your resume as brief as possible, without leaving out key

information. Only include relevant information that highlights your qualifications for the position.

- **Design** — Make sure your resume is clear and easy to read, with defined sections and appropriate margins.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Networking is the new king of modern job hunting. That's why some social media sites like LinkedIn have become go-to sources for employers and job seekers alike.

According to The Muse, an online source for job seekers, 92% of employers are using social media to fill their ranks.

LinkedIn is probably the most popular social media site for job hunters. It is an excellent source to find job

postings as well as to network with others within your field. But LinkedIn isn't the only social media site companies are using. According to The Muse, 93% of employers use LinkedIn to find candidates. About 66% use Facebook, and 54% use Twitter.

The Muse also warns candidates to review and clean up their social media sites, because the majority of employers review a candidate's social media posts for questionable content.

Remember, it is a two-way street. Just like employers are evaluating you to determine if you are a good fit for their team, you should be evaluating whether the job would be a good fit for you. ☑



TUSCAN WHITE BEAN SKILLET

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 8 ounces brown mushrooms, sliced
- 1 1/2 cups diced yellow onion (about 1 large onion)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2/3 cup drained and chopped oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans fire-roasted diced tomatoes
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans drained and rinsed cannellini beans
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans quartered artichoke hearts, drained
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Parsley for garnish

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil until shimmering in a 10-inch, cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add the mushrooms to the pan in a single layer. Brown for 1 to 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a bowl and repeat with remaining mushrooms.

Add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the pan. Add the onions and saute until lightly browned, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and sun-dried tomatoes and cook until fragrant and softened, another 2 minutes.

Add the diced tomatoes to the pan, along with the beans, artichoke hearts, salt, pepper, oregano, thyme and sugar. Cover the pan and turn the heat down to medium. Let cook for about 10 minutes, until hot. Return the mushrooms to the pan and cook for another 1 to 2 minutes to warm them up.

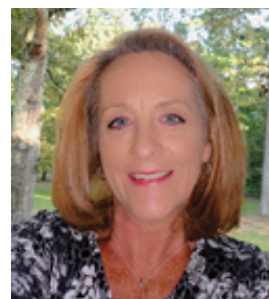
Healthy & hearty

Beans are perfect for cold days

With the holiday season behind us and winter in full swing, it's time for a bit of comfort. And there's perhaps no better way to create a feeling of warmth than with a steaming bowl of bean soup, or chili with beans, or, for that matter, any type of bean dish.

Beans can also pull double duty, offering wonderful taste and texture while being a delicious meat substitute.

Whether they are black, red, white or brown, beans are a great source of fiber, protein, iron, B vitamins, potassium, magnesium and many other beneficial nutrients. And if you choose dried beans over canned, you'll save money as well as reduce your sodium intake. If you do use canned beans, be sure to rinse them to reduce excess salt.



FOOD EDITOR
ANNE P. BRALY
IS A NATIVE OF
CHATTANOOGA,
TENNESSEE.

To serve: Spoon the bean mixture into bowls and garnish with chopped parsley, if desired. Be sure to serve with plenty of crusty bread for sopping up the tasty juices.

BLACK BEAN ENCHILADAS

- 2 large portobello mushroom caps
- 1/2 medium red onion
- 1 orange bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1/2 cup vegetable broth or water
- 3 cups red enchilada sauce, store-bought or homemade
- 1 1/2 cups guacamole, store-bought or homemade
- 12 (8-inch) corn tortillas

For the garnish: 1 cup thinly sliced romaine lettuce; 1 to 2 radishes, julienned; 2 tablespoons minced red onion; and torn cilantro or parsley

Sour cream or Greek yogurt, optional

Preheat the oven to 400 F.

Remove the stems from the mushroom caps and thinly slice the caps. Thinly slice the red onion. Thinly slice the bell pepper.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium high heat. Saute the sliced veggies for 6 to 7 minutes until tender. Add the drained and rinsed black beans, garlic powder, cumin, onion powder, paprika, kosher salt, lime juice, and vegetable broth or water. Cook for 2 minutes until the liquid is thickened into a sauce.

Spread 1 cup of the enchilada sauce in the bottom of a large baking dish.

Brush both sides of each tortilla lightly with olive oil. Heat a large griddle to medium-high heat. Cook the tortillas in batches for 15 seconds per side until lightly browned.



Fill each tortilla with 1/4 cup of the vegetable filling and about 2 tablespoons guacamole, running in a line down the center. Roll it up and place it in the baking dish, seam side down. Once all of the tortillas are in the dish, pour the remaining 2 cups of enchilada sauce over the top.

Bake for 5 minutes until warmed through. Top with garnishes and serve.

NUTTY WHITE BEAN, WILD RICE SOUP

- 1/2 cup cashews
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 2 celery stalks
- 3 medium carrots
- 8 ounces baby bella mushrooms
- 6 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 8 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup wild rice (not a wild rice blend)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 (15-ounce) cans white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup water
- 2 teaspoons dried sage
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce, tamari or liquid aminos

Place the cashews in a bowl and cover them with water. Leave them to soak while you make the recipe.

Dice the onion. Thinly slice the celery. Cut the carrot into rounds. Slice the mushrooms. Mince the garlic. In a Dutch oven, heat the olive oil and saute the onion, celery and carrots, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Add the mushrooms and saute for 2 more minutes. Add the garlic, thyme and oregano and stir for another 2 minutes.

Add the broth, wild rice, 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt and black pepper. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Add the drained and rinsed beans and continue to simmer, uncovered, for 30-35 minutes more, or until the rice breaks open.

Using a liquid measuring cup, carefully remove 2 cups of the hot soup, including broth, veggies and rice, and put it in a blender, along with 1 cup of water. Drain the cashews, then add them and the dried sage to the blender. Blend on high for about 1 minute, until creamy. Pour the creamy mixture back into the soup. Add the soy sauce. Taste and, if needed, add the remaining 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt. Adjust seasonings as desired. Garnish with freshly ground pepper. 🥄



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