

MARCH/APRIL 2018

CONNECTION

BIG LEAGUE TALENT

Rachel (Strobel)
Haselhorst keeps Twins
fans connected

SALE OF THE YEAR

Wulf Cattle modernizes
auction traditions

MORSELS OF MORRIS

Julie Evink's inspirations for
the dinner table



BY SHIRLEY BLOOMFIELD, CEO
NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Rural youth are the future

At NTCA and the Foundation for Rural Service, we believe an investment in our rural youth is an investment in the future of rural America.

That's why we are committed to making those kinds of investments. Each year, our partners at FRS award \$100,000 worth of scholarships to assist rural students in attending college or technical school. FRS also coordinates a trip each year for rural youth to visit Washington, D.C., and learn about the way our government works.

I am thrilled about the launch of the FRS Rural Youth App Challenge and excited to see the bright ideas that come from the minds of our rural youth.

I believe deeply in the importance of these programs, but for NTCA members like your local provider, support for our rural youth goes much deeper.

Your broadband provider works hard to bring a reliable internet connection to students' homes — and often their schools — to get the education they need. They make sure teachers can connect to the resources and research needed to provide quality instruction. And once these young men and women graduate, it will be your broadband provider whose service enables them to apply for jobs, start a business or work remotely.

I'm proud of the investments NTCA, FRS and our member telcos have made and will continue to make in the future of rural America. ☑



Apps play a big role in making life easier. They are often the fastest and easiest way to access social media, check the weather forecast, pay bills, listen to music, shop and access just about anything imaginable on the internet.

That's why the Foundation for Rural Service created the FRS Rural Youth App Challenge. Students will develop a concept for a mobile app that addresses a problem or improves a process in their rural community, or anywhere in rural America, says Jessica Golden, executive director of the Foundation for Rural Service. "Youth engagement is a huge part of what we do," she says.

The FRS is the charitable arm of NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association and has been involved in scholarships, youth tours in Washington, D.C., and many other programs geared toward engaging the youth of America, Golden says.

It's all part of the emphasis on the importance of broadband, which is becoming a vital thread in the American fabric. "We want all our youth to see themselves as a gamechanger and a voice of the rural communities," she says. "We want them to think outside the box."

The App Challenge will judge students based on how well-researched and well-presented the app is. While the idea can be similar to an existing app, it must be an original idea.

The program launched Jan. 23, and the deadline for submissions for the contest is April 20. Students in grades 7-12 are eligible.

Either a single student or groups with as many as five participants may enter. A parent of at least one student in the group must be a member of a cooperative that is an NTCA member.

Winners will be announced in mid-to-late May. The winning team will receive \$1,000 in gift cards and Codecademy scholarships. The first 10 student applicants with complete applications will also receive a subscription to Codecademy-PRO, worth about \$84. ☑



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Go to frs.org, send an email inquiry to foundation@frs.org, or call 703-351-2026.



**HEY
TELEMARKETERS:**

DO NOT CALL!

The Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission established a National Do Not Call Registry. Joining this registry can drastically reduce the number of telemarketing calls you receive.

JUST THE FACTS ABOUT DO NOT CALL:

- Once you've registered, telemarketers have 31 days to stop calling your number.
- Register as many as three non-business telephone numbers. You can also register cellphone numbers — there is not a separate registry for cellphones.
- Your number will remain on the list permanently unless you disconnect the number or you choose to remove it.
- Some businesses are exempt from the Do Not Call Registry and may still be able to call your number. These include

political organizations, charities, telephone surveyors and businesses with whom you have an existing relationship.

Strict Federal Trade Commission rules make it illegal for telemarketers to do any of the following, regardless of whether or not your number is listed on the National Do Not Call Registry:

- Call before 8 a.m.
- Call after 9 p.m.
- Misrepresent what is being offered
- Threaten, intimidate or harass you
- Call again after you've asked them not to



IT'S EASY!

Add your number to the
Do Not Call Registry

Register online at
www.donotcall.gov
or call 888-382-1222.
For TTY, call 866-290-4236.

You must call from the telephone number you wish to register.

**ATTENTION LOCAL
BUSINESS OWNERS:**

**Make sure you follow
the Do Not Call rules**

No matter if you're a one-person shop or a beloved company, local business owners should remember that National Do Not Call Registry rules and regulations apply to you. After all, you don't want to upset a loyal customer, or frustrate potential new customers, with unwanted phone calls.

If you are a company, individual or organization that places telemarketing calls, it is very important that you familiarize yourself with the operations of the National Do Not Call Registry. Unless you fall under one of the established exceptions, such as telemarketing by charitable organizations or for prior business relationships, you may not make telemarketing calls to numbers included in the National Do Not Call Registry.

For information regarding National Do Not Call regulations, visit the National Do Not Call Registry at www.telemarketing.donotcall.gov. You can find the Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission rules governing telemarketing and telephone solicitation at 47 C.F.R. § 64.1200 and 16 C.F.R. Part 310, respectively.

OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION:

The Do Not Call initiative, regulated by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), requires telephone service providers to notify customers of the National Do Not Call rules and regulations. ☎

Keeping our part of the 'net' neutral

It's very rare that telecommunications policy grabs headlines, dominates social media feeds, and leads the news broadcasts. But that's exactly what we saw after the FCC's decision on net neutrality.



KEVIN BEYER
Chief Executive Officer

It's encouraging to see people around the country take stock, realize how important their broadband service is to their daily lives, and take action to protect it. Concerns over net neutrality have caused some of our members to email, call or message us on social media. I'm proud that our members are tuned in to the issues and willing to communicate with us about the future of their service.

The term "net neutrality" refers to policy that would prevent internet providers from interfering with selective forms of internet traffic through blocking or slowing down certain services or websites.

There's a lot of conflicting information about how the regulations and the FCC changes to the rules will affect broadband, but I wanted to set the record straight for Acira customers. Our No. 1 concern has been and will always be delivering to you the best online experience possible. We do not throttle, prioritize or block any legal internet traffic and have no plans to do so in the future. Essentially, we are keeping our members' connections net neutral.

I understand that many people have concerns about this ruling — I do, too. Please know that Acira has no intention of making changes to our service based on the FCC's decision.

I can't speak for what other profit-driven corporate telecommunications providers may do, but we have been net neutral and will stay that way because it's the right thing to do for our members.

While I don't consider myself in the camp of those sounding major alarms that this decision will "ruin the internet as we know it," I do have some concerns. With the regulations removed, I can foresee a future where web-based subscription services for streaming video or music could begin charging providers like Farmers and Federated to carry their service. Could streaming services one day extort broadband providers the way TV networks black out their channels for satellite or cable companies that do not meet their exorbitant financial demands? That's a dark online future to imagine — and one that certainly doesn't serve our members' interests.

It's going to be fascinating to watch how the giant corporate broadband providers and streaming services navigate this new landscape. But here at Acira, we're going to keep your internet service open and free as you enjoy it today — and will work hard to make it even better tomorrow. ☞

PLEDGE: Acira does not throttle, prioritize or block any legal internet traffic, and we have no plans to do so in the future.

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POWERED BY FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY
AND FEDERATED TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE

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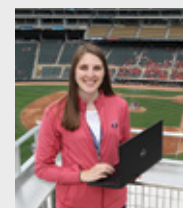
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WORDSOUTH

A CONTENT MARKETING COMPANY

On the Cover:



Rachel (Strobel) Haselhorst updates social media from anywhere at Target Field, and she designs the website for the Minnesota Twins. See story Page 12.

Capital credit refunds and income tax forms

Customers who received a capital credit refund check from Farmers Mutual Telephone Company or Federated Telephone Cooperative in 2017 may be wondering if they will need to include it when completing their federal income tax forms.

In all cases, please consult a tax accountant for your specific requirements.

For general refunds of capital credits, you do not need to report the income you received from your capital credit refund check if you use your telephone only for nonbusiness purposes. The refund is subject to taxation if all or a portion of your telephone bill was deducted as a business expense the year the credit was allocated. The amount reported would be proportionate to the amount that was previously deducted as a business expense for the corresponding year.

For estate refunds of capital credits, please consult with a tax accountant for your specific requirements.

Farmers Mutual Telephone Company and Federated Telephone Cooperative are required to provide 1099 forms based on Internal Revenue Service regulations.



Congratulations on 20 years!



Congratulations to Kevin Beyer, general manager/CEO of Farmers Mutual Telephone Company and Federated Telephone Cooperative for 20 years of service. Thank you for your vision and commitment to both cooperatives as well as the communities we serve.

FARMERS MUTUAL IPTV AVAILABLE!

In 2017, the Farmers Mutual Telephone Company board approved the replacement and upgrade of the central office electronics to provide all members of Farmers Mutual the ability to subscribe to an enhanced television offering – IPTV – that takes advantage of the cooperative's all-fiber network.

Effective March 12, 2018, customers in the exchanges of Bellingham, Cerro Gordo and Marietta will have access to IPTV for the first time.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

The Acira family continues to grow to fit the needs of our service area. Please help us welcome three new employees: MacKenzie Wildung, a CSR in the Bellingham office; Kayla Hawkinson, a CSR in the Chokio office; and Travis Nash, our new outside plant technician.

MacKenzie Wildung grew up in Nassau, Minnesota, and attended Lake Area Tech for financial services before joining the Acira team. She and her fiancé, Devin, will be married this fall. They have a baby boy named Thomas.

Kayla Hawkinson lives in Chokio with her husband, Ronnie, and golden retriever named Ted. Her previous experience is with nonprofit organizations and a call center in Chokio. She is thrilled to join Acira and serve rural communities.

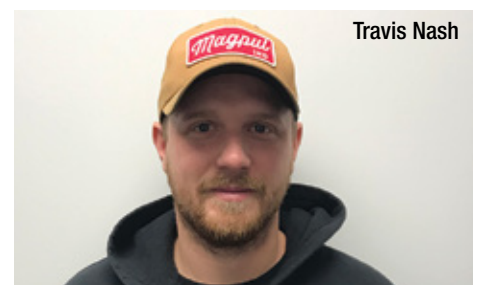
Travis Nash moved to Alberta in 2016 and has worked in underground utility construction for five years. His wife, Brandi, is a nurse at Stevens County Medical Center, and they have a 1-year-old son named Talon.



MacKenzie Wildung



Kayla Hawkinson



Travis Nash



Midwest made

FACTORY TOURS OFFER A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCES

Photo courtesy of Redhead Creamery.

Many of the factories you may pass daily are the home base for some of the Midwest's best-known products. From farming equipment to cheese, there's something to pique everyone's interest. And while the weather is still a little too cool for many outdoor activities, take a factory tour and discover what's made in your backyard.

Redhead Creamery

31535 463rd Ave., Brooten, Minnesota

A tour of Redhead gets you up close and personal with calves, mothers-in-waiting and milking cows responsible for the milk needed to produce all the delicious cheeses made at the creamery. Tours, which also include a walk through the milking parlor and the milk-holding room, begin and end in the cheese plant. You can take in the entire experience by viewing the process through floor-to-ceiling windows. It's an interesting tour for adults and a wonderful learning trip for children.

- ▶ **Days and hours:** Fridays and Saturdays, 12:30 p.m.
- ▶ **Requirements:** Wear comfortable shoes. The tour requires a good deal of walking but is handicapped accessible.
- ▶ **To schedule a tour for large groups:** Call 320-346-2246. Small groups do not need reservations.
- ▶ **Tour cost:** \$5 per person.

Case Farm Equipment

3401 1st Ave., Fargo, North Dakota

The company was founded by the Steiger Brothers in the 1960s, and the Fargo manufacturing plant produces Case IH Steiger four-wheel drive tractors and wheel loaders. Both can be seen on a factory tour. You'll walk down the aisles of two assembly lines, one making the tractors and the other making the wheel loaders. Watch the process from the beginning as raw steel is cut and transformed into a fully assembled piece of machinery. Tour organizer Troy Freeberg says farmers and others in the

agriculture business appreciate seeing the finished tractors, while construction-minded folks enjoy watching the assembly of the giant wheel loaders used in large-scale projects.

The free tour takes about 90 minutes. Call at least one week before your visit to ensure tour guides are available.

- ▶ **Days and hours:** Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- ▶ **Requirements:** Must be at least 14 years old to tour. Cameras and mobile phones are not permitted. Long pants and closed-toe, low-heeled shoes are required.
- ▶ **To schedule a tour:** Call 701-293-4666.
- ▶ **Tour cost:** Free.



Photo courtesy of Polaris.

Polaris

205 Fifth Ave. SW, Roseau, Minnesota

Snowmobiles and ATVs are a primary means of transportation in Minnesota and other Midwestern states, and one of the top brands of snowmobiles is made in the Canadian border town of Roseau, home to the 5,600-square-foot Polaris Experience Center. Visit for a self-guided tour, a "ride" through the history of the 60-year-old factory. It begins with the second snowmobile ever made — the first is credited to Wisconsin native Carl Eliason in the 1920s — and on to later vehicles, including Polaris ATVs, side-by-sides and motorcycles. Lifelike exhibits, enlarged photographs and a short film telling the company story are all part of the experience. After touring the center, take a plant tour through the welding, metal paint and tube fabrication departments before seeing production in action on three lines: one for ATVs,

another for RZR's used by the military, and a third for snowmobiles.

- ▶ **Days and hours:** Monday-Friday at 2 p.m.
- ▶ **Requirements:** Must be at least 6 years old to tour. Cameras and cellphones are not permitted. Long pants and closed-toe, low-heeled shoes are required.
- ▶ **To schedule a tour:** Call 218-463-4999, press 5. Call ahead to find out if factory is in production. Advance reservations required for groups of 10 or more.
- ▶ **Tour cost:** Free.



Photo courtesy of Red Wing Stoneware.

Red Wing Stoneware

4909 Moundview Drive, Red Wing, Minnesota

Red Wing, on the banks of the Mississippi River, is the ideal home for Red Wing Stoneware, which began in 1861. More than 150 years later, sales are strong. The factory produces everything from coffee cups to cheese crocks, all made by hand and shipped worldwide. Take a tour, see the artists in action, and learn about the process that goes into making the stoneware. It will give you a new appreciation for what "made by hand" means. Tours take about 30 minutes.

- ▶ **Days and hours:** The factory is open Monday-Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., from now until April 15. From April 16 to Dec. 31, it is open Monday-Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tours are at 1 p.m. daily.
- ▶ **Tour cost:** Adults, \$3; ages 12-17, \$2;

children under 12, free. Each admission comes with a \$5-off coupon for a purchase of \$25 or more in the factory store.

- ▶ **To schedule a tour:** Reservations are not required. However, large groups may want to schedule. Call 651-388-4610.

The Jelly Belly Visitor Center

10100 Jelly Belly Lane, Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin

A tour through the Jelly Belly Visitor Center near Kenosha, Wisconsin, is the stuff of which dreams are made. It's like a trip through Willy Wonka's factory with Mr. Jelly Belly flying overhead to greet you as you walk in. Hop on the train for a ride down "Candy Alley." The half-hour ride stops at several stations where large-screen video monitors show how the 100-year-old company makes its famous jelly beans, gummies and other sweet treats.

"The Jelly Belly Center is a very popular stop for visitors of all ages," says Meridith Jumisko, public relations manager for the Kenosha Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. "The entire candy company experience is fun. The informative train tour is free, as are the free samples in the large store. Adults get just as excited as the kids do."

- ▶ **Days and hours:** Daily, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- ▶ **Requirements:** None.
- ▶ **To schedule a tour:** No reservations are needed except for groups of 50 or more. Call 866-868-7522.
- ▶ **Tour cost:** Free. 🚌



Photo courtesy of The Jelly Belly Visitor Center.

Building a smarter home, one gadget at a time

Millions of Americans wake up to the sound of their digital assistant, such as an Amazon Echo or Google Home. For many, having one of these assistants is the first step in transforming a normal house into a smart home — a place where everything between your front door and your backyard can be automated or controlled remotely.

For many, having one of these assistants is the first step in transforming a normal house into a smart home — a place where everything between your front door and your backyard can be automated or controlled remotely.

Here's a quick look at some of the smart technology available and how it can make your life easier, especially if you're armed with a high-speed broadband connection.

HUBS: While most of the smart gadgets can be individually controlled through apps on your smartphone, you should have a central hub to really take advantage of them. There is a futuristic feel to controlling your home via voice commands — through an Echo or Google Home — but there are also hubs, such as the Samsung SmartThings Hub or Wink Hub 2, that unify access to your devices in a single, easy-to-use app.

One thing to watch out for is a series of competing communication standards, including Bluetooth LE, Lutron ClearConnect, Wi-Fi, Z-Wave and ZigBee. While most hubs support several standards, make sure whatever smart devices you buy are compatible with your hub.

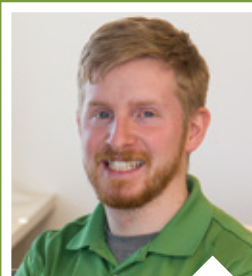
THERMOSTATS: Heating and cooling accounts for about half of monthly energy bills,

so a smart thermostat can help you save money. The popular Nest learns your preferences in

about a week and programs itself around them. If you have hot or cold spots in your home, the Ecobee 4 can use sensors — it includes one, others sold separately — to more accurately determine temperature throughout the house.

LIGHTS: There are a wide variety of options for lighting your home. You can choose to start small, maybe with a lamp connected to a smart outlet, like the Belkin WeMo Mini. Go with a smart light switch, like the Lutron Caseta, which not only automatically dims your lights but can also randomly turn them on and off while you're on vacation. You can even buy smart light bulbs, like the Philips Hue, which let you control both the intensity of the light and its color.

LOCKS: A smart lock can be as simple as one that communicates with a phone app through a Bluetooth connection. Or, options like the August Smart Lock can respond to voice commands and be linked to other smart devices. For example, the lock could activate your lights or a smart camera when the door opens, or the door might unlock when your smart smoke detector goes off. ☑



HI, I'M JOHN WEEDING!

In this column, in each issue, 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

Nest Protect smoke and CO detector

When the Nest Protect smoke and CO



detector identifies a problem, it can alert you by phone, including identifying the room causing the alert. It knows the difference between steam and smoke — or when it's the toast that's burning. It also connects with other smart devices and detects carbon monoxide. The suggested retail price is \$119, with discounts on multipack purchases.



The iconic red barn where Leonard Wulf started the family farm is the site for the annual auction.

Cattle call

How Wulf Cattle sells livestock in the digital age

BY DREW WOOLLEY

Wulf Cattle in Morris has been in the business of feeding and breeding premium Limousin cattle for more than 50 years, but it wasn't until 1989 that the company began auctioning off some of its best bulls and cows.

Today, the crowds at those events are shrinking, not because Wulf Cattle's product isn't still in demand, but because many bidders prefer to participate in the auctions digitally.

"We started broadcasting the cattle auctions online more than 10 years ago. Now, it's evolved to where we don't run the animals through the ring anymore," says Wulf Cattle President Jerry Wulf.

BEEF ONLINE

Known as opportunity sales, the auctions provide others in the beef industry a chance to take advantage of the genetics

Wulf Cattle has meticulously selected over decades. Once, that type of sale meant parading animals in front of bidders. Now though, the company can show the same professionally shot video of the animals to prospective buyers in person and online thanks to high-speed internet service from Federated Telephone.

"You can access it from anywhere in the world. It gave us a lot more exposure, and it made it a lot more convenient for our customers to buy," says Wulf.

Many of Wulf's customers still prefer to look an auctioneer in the eye when making a bid, but he estimates 40 percent of bidders enjoy the convenience of the online option.

Wulf Cattle also sends a printed catalog containing the pedigree and other useful information about each animal for sale to prospective buyers a month before each auction. Between that data and the company's quality guarantee, many customers don't need to see the cattle before making a purchase.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Looking ahead, Wulf says he can even

imagine a future where the opportunity sales are entirely online. "I'm sure it's similar to online shopping. There's still plenty of people who want to go to Main Street or Walmart to buy their product, but a new generation is fine with ordering things on Amazon," he says. "It's going to be a work in progress. We just want what our customer wants."

In recent years, Wulf Cattle has continued to explore new avenues for its business. These approaches include branching out into the dairy industry by helping farmers raise premium beef calves out of their dairy cows and selling more livestock through one-on-one transactions called private treaty sales.

Those private sales now make up a significant portion of Wulf Cattle's business each year. As those sales grow, so will the importance of reliable internet service in regard to the organization's interactions with its customers.

"All our information is on the website, so they can log on, look at that data and tell us they want to buy these 10 animals," says Wulf. "That's probably where our new growth will be." 📱



Mobile phones turn 45

Cellphone popularity not possible without wireline technology

BY PATRICK SMITH

While you've likely heard of Steve Jobs, the influential entrepreneur and one-time leader of Apple, you probably don't know of Martin Cooper, a Motorola employee who made the first cellular phone call on April 3, 1973. Jobs' achievements with the iPhone, along with much of Apple's recent success with the device, wouldn't be possible without Cooper.

When Cooper stood in midtown Manhattan and placed a call 45 years ago, he forever changed how we communicate. Known as the father of modern cellphones, Cooper successfully connected to Bell Labs headquarters in New Jersey, calling on what would become the world's first commercial cellphone.

Much like Jobs' success was dependent on Cooper, today's cellular technology is dependent on a wired copper

and fiber optic backbone to connect wireless communications.

Wireless technology needs a hardwired foundation to operate. Without wireline technology, cellphones would neither be able to make calls nor use internet data.

THE WIRELINE BACKBONE

When it comes to cellphones and the wireline technology they need to operate, think of the concept like the wireless router in your home. A wired connection runs from the wall to your router so it can broadcast and receive a signal. The same principle applies to the fact that cellular phones need a wired connection to operate.

Copper and fiber lines running overhead and underground play a crucial role in carrying signals between more than 300,000 cell sites across the country. When you use your cellphone to make

a call or access the internet, your connection spends part of its journey on the same network that makes landline calls and internet connections possible.

RURAL TELCOS PLAY A VITAL ROLE

Telecommunications companies provide an essential service by keeping cellular callers connected in rural areas. Many rural telco providers supply wireline copper or fiber service to large cellular towers. These lines keep people connected when they are making cellular calls in rural regions, whether they're traveling through the area or residing there.

3G SPEEDS AND BEYOND

As fiber optic connections become more common, they also help to lay the groundwork for faster cellular speeds. The blazing-fast speed of fiber not only means faster upload

and download speeds for area homes and businesses, but it also means faster cellular data speeds.

Mobile data service — 3G, 4G and 4G LTE — relies on fast connections from telecommunications providers to cell towers, so users can have dependable mobile access to the internet.

While a release date has not been set, developers are working to create a new 5G technology, which could offer data speeds as fast as 10 Gbps. Peak 4G LTE speeds top out at about 50 Mbps today, making 5G potentially about 200 times faster.

And while it's impossible to predict the future and the developments that newer, faster cellular technology will bring, it's clear that progress isn't possible without a strong base of copper and fiber wireline technology to connect our calls and provide high-speed mobile data. ☞

Gadgets for the golden years

Los Angeles Times Publisher Ross Levinsohn once said, “The speed at which technology evolves affects everyone; we repeatedly hear that constant innovation is overwhelming for consumers, who struggle to keep pace.”

I couldn’t agree more with that statement. It seems like as soon as I learn a new piece of software, or how to use the latest technology gadget, it becomes outdated and replaced with a newer version.

If it gets overwhelming for me — a professional who works with technology daily — I can just imagine how overwhelming it is for someone who considers themselves non-techie.

I want to take a bit of the guesswork out of researching technology and point out a few gadgets that I think are good starter items for those adopters in their golden years.

Tablet: Amazon Fire

The Amazon Fire is a great starter tablet for a couple of reasons. It is reasonably priced, coming in under \$100. It’s great for watching movies or TV shows, checking email, playing games and, of course, reading books. The Fire even has a blue light filter that makes reading on the tablet less strenuous on



your eyes. If you have trouble reading small print, you can make the font larger so that it is easier to read, even without your reading glasses.

Gadget for a Non-Techie: Pix-Star Wi-Fi Picture Frame

If you are looking for a great gift for a parent or a grandparent, this is a good one. The picture frame is connected to Wi-Fi and has an email address. The system makes it very easy to add updated photos to the frame. Family and friends can simply email photos directly to the frame.

Medical Tech Gadget: MedMinder Pill Dispenser

Never worry about remembering to take your medicine at the right time each day. MedMinder can help you remember your meds by calling, texting or emailing you. Multiple features and differing models ensure the right style for different needs.

Voice Control Gadget: Amazon Echo Show

Once the Amazon Echo Show is set up, you can get the information you want easier. Ask the built-in helper, Alexa, for the temperature, score of the game, or a fact you can’t

remember. My favorite feature of this device is the ability to “drop in” on loved ones to see how they are doing. Just by answering a call with your voice, you can see and hear the people you care about the most.

The best way to learn how to use the latest in tech gadgets is to give them a try. You never know; you may find you enjoy using them! 📱



CARISSA SWENSON
IS A TRAINING
AND EDUCATION
CONSULTANT
FOR CONSORTIA
CONSULTING.



To learn more about the gadgets mentioned in the article, visit the following websites:

- ▶ www.amazon.com/fire
- ▶ www.pix-star.com
- ▶ www.amazon.com/echo-show
- ▶ www.medminder.com

A FIELD OF HER OWN

From Chokio to the Major Leagues

As the game begins, Rachel shares a live feed of the Twins taking the field onto a social media platform.

BY JOHN CLAYTON

Rachel (Strobel) Haselhorst worked her way to the Major Leagues like just about everybody else who makes “The Show.” There were days and nights in the bus leagues, toil and trials away from the television cameras, learning her craft for little or no pay.

Haselhorst arrived at Target Field, the home of the Minnesota Twins, as an intern and is now a digital-content specialist and graphic designer. She manages all of the Twins’ social media accounts and handles the team’s graphic design needs.

“I get to work for my favorite sports team growing up, and now I get to share the passion I had growing up with all the Twins fans through social media,” says Haselhorst, who spent a chunk of the 2017-18 offseason on maternity leave after the birth of her daughter, Riley.

Haselhorst, daughter of Mark & Diane Strobel, grew up in tiny Chokio, Minnesota, rooting for the Twins. The Twins were the first major professional sports team identi-

fied with its state, rather than its city, when the former Washington Senators moved to the Twin Cities in 1961.

A LOVE OF THE TEAM

Haselhorst’s favorite player, Torii Hunter, was in center field, and the Twins were a big deal to a three-sport athlete in Chokio. “We say Twins territory because we’re not the Minneapolis or St. Paul Twins; we’re the Minnesota Twins,” she says. “I think it’s really cool that we include the whole state into our team. Growing up in west-central Minnesota, Chokio, population 300, had just as much a right to call the Twins their team as the ones who grew up in Minneapolis.”


Then and now, the Twins organization markets the team across the state, as well as to fans in the Dakotas, Iowa and parts of Wisconsin, putting together the annual Twins Winter Caravan for fans across the region.

Haselhorst found herself heavily involved with the Caravan this past year, using her graphic design skills to create a vinyl wrap for the roving bus carrying players and staff from one destination to another. It was a first for the Twins, and the wrap represented all the areas visited by the Caravan — and one special place in the heart of its designer.

“It included the names of every town in Minnesota and highlighted towns the Caravan was visiting,” Haselhorst says. “I got to highlight my hometown of Chokio, and I got to put it right by the door so everybody could see it.”

CREATING A CAREER

Haselhorst arrived with the Twins as an intern in 2014 after internships with the

A photograph of Rachel Haselhorst, a digital-content specialist and graphic designer for the Minnesota Twins, standing in front of a stadium backdrop. The backdrop features the "StayCalm" logo and the "Carrier" logo. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.

"I get to work for my favorite sports team growing up, and now I get to share the passion I had growing up with all the Twins fans through social media."

— Rachel Haselhorst,
digital-content specialist
and graphic designer with
the Minnesota Twins



Haselhorst interviewed her childhood hero, Torii Hunter, during the press conference when he announced his retirement in November 2015.

Tampa Bay Rays and the independent St. Paul Saints. Her career in sports marketing began with an internship at North Dakota State University.

A college class that introduced freshmen to professionals who worked in the students' fields of interest handed Haselhorst her first experience in sports marketing. She graduated with degrees in public relations and advertising and new media/web design.

"I interviewed the director of marketing for NDSU athletics, and he helped me get an internship with NDSU athletics," she recalls. "And I never really looked back after that."

The "internship train" included summers with the Saints and finally opportunities in Tampa and with the Twins.

A HELPING HAND

Haselhorst says family trips to watch the Twins in Minneapolis were annual events and introduced her to big-league baseball.

An opportunity through the Foundation for Rural Service and Federated Telephone

Cooperative in Chokio provided Haselhorst with a chance to travel beyond Minneapolis after her junior year of high school with the annual FRS Youth Tour.

The Youth Tour, which began as an annual event in 1995, invites high school students from rural areas across the U.S. to visit Washington, D.C., where they learn about rural telecommunications. There, teens also meet representatives from the legislature and federal government.

For Haselhorst, it was the first of many introductions to the communications industry, which continues to grow and evolve with technology across rural and urban landscapes.


"My job title with the Twins has changed a bunch of times," Haselhorst says. "But my department has changed every year, and so my title has, too. That shows you what the industry is like. Digital marketing is always evolving, and with that, too, I guess the Twins are trying to evolve with it."

Though the avenues have changed, the desire of sports teams to reach their fans

has remained unchanged since the days of Harmon Killebrew and Rod Carew, and Haselhorst says developing a community of Twins fans is among her favorite aspects of the job.

"Sometimes it's as simple as someone tweeting to us, asking for a mention on Twitter," she says. "We may say something as simple as 'Happy birthday!' and they're so excited. They don't think about it coming from somebody like me; it's coming from the team, and they'll tweet back that we made their day or made their kid's day."

The 2018 season will be the rookie season for her infant daughter, Riley. Haselhorst and her husband, Tom, will juggle parenthood and baseball for the first time as the Twins open the season in Baltimore on March 29.

"I hope it's not difficult," she says. "Hopefully, Riley will become a Twins fan with love as she grows up. I know there will be some late nights at the ballpark, and I hope she'll grow up cheering on the Twins there with me." 

Creating a stir

A love of food and family inspired one of the most popular food blogs

Once, good cooks shared their recipes by laboriously writing them down by hand on recipe cards, tucking them in a plastic sheath for safekeeping, and giving them to neighbors and friends.



Follow Julie Evink's blog

Julie Evink uses Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to promote her food blog, which is growing in popularity. If you'd like to add to her total and see recipes and stories she posts several times a week, you can find her on your favorite social media site, or log on to www.julieseatsandtreats.com.

Now, with the internet at their fingertips, great cooks share recipes worldwide with the click of a mouse. Really good cooks create blogs, and some receive a little more attention than others.

Julie Evink lives in Morris, Minnesota, where she once worked in the communications industry. She quit her job to focus on her food blog, and Julie's Eats and Treats now receives more than 800,000 page views each month.

She and her husband, Jason, are parents of three young children — two daughters and a son. But she manages to spend about 25 hours every week editing her food photos, writing blog posts, answering her followers' questions on social media, and developing recipes.

"I can't follow a recipe to save my life because I'm always adding my twist to it. I use recipes as inspiration, and then I throw my spin on them," she says, adding that she's committed to testing every recipe she posts.

Evink started her blog eight years ago and now posts new recipes at least three times a

week. A search through her online file of recipes makes it obvious which dishes she likes most.

"I love making desserts," she says. "They don't necessarily have to be fancy or involved, taking forever to make. I just like seeing people's eyes light up when I share treats with them."

Evink grew up in a family that appreciated gathering round the family dinner table. "That was the center of our family time," she says. "We always ate together, and as I grew up, I spent more time in the kitchen with my mom chatting and bonding. That's what inspired me to cook for my own family. And in my blog, I want to inspire other people to make easy dinners that will allow them to spend time with their families, too."



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



FUDGY MARSHMALLOW BROWNIES

- 1 (18.3-ounce) package Betty Crocker Fudge Brownie Mix
- 2 cups marshmallows
- 6 tablespoons milk
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips

Prepare brownie mix according to package directions. Cover prepared brownies with marshmallows immediately after baking and set in hot oven that's been turned off. When the marshmallows puff up, remove brownies from oven. In a medium-size saucepan bring milk, butter and sugar to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Stir in chocolate chips, stirring until chips are melted and the mixture is smooth. Spread over brownies. Makes about 20 bars.



Banana Peanut Butter Icebox Cake

◀ BANANA PEANUT BUTTER ICEBOX CAKE

- 1 3/4 cups plus 2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream, divided
- 2 cups powdered sugar, divided
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
- 20 ounces (about 1 1/2 packages) peanut butter cookies
- 1/2 cup milk (in a small bowl)
- 5 medium bananas

Topping:

- 2/3 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon creamy peanut butter

Prepare the first batch of whipped cream by placing the mixing bowl and the whisk attachment in the freezer for 5 to 10 minutes to chill. Pour 1 3/4 cups of heavy whipping cream into the chilled bowl and use an electric mixer to beat the heavy cream on medium-high speed until the cream gets bubbly. Slowly add 1 cup powdered sugar and continue beating on high speed until stiff peaks form. Set aside. Beat the cream cheese on medium-high speed for 2 to 3 minutes until it's light and fluffy, scraping down the sides of the bowl. Add the peanut butter and remaining 2 tablespoons of heavy whipping cream; continue beating until the mixture is completely smooth, scraping down the bowl occasionally. Slowly add the last cup of powdered sugar and beat into the mixture until all of the ingredients are well combined. Fold the prepared whipped cream into the peanut butter mousse and blend with a spatula until well mixed. Divide the mousse in half. To assemble the dessert, line the bottom of a 9-inch square dish at least 2 1/2 inches deep with parchment paper. Start by dipping both sides of the peanut butter cookies into the bowl of milk. This helps soften them. Line the bottom of the dish with 1 layer of cookies, cutting to fit if necessary. Spread half of the peanut butter mousse evenly over the bottom layer of cookies. Peel and thinly slice the bananas, placing a single layer over the peanut butter mousse. Repeat the cookie layer, dipping the cookies in milk first. Then add the remaining peanut butter mousse and another layer of sliced bananas.

For the topping: Place the mixing bowl and the whisk attachment in the freezer for 5 to 10 minutes to chill. Pour 2/3 cup of heavy whipping cream into the chilled bowl and use an electric mixer to beat the heavy cream on medium-high speed until the cream gets bubbly. Slowly add 1/2 cup powdered sugar and continue beating on high speed until stiff peaks form. Spread the whipped cream over the bananas. Melt 1 tablespoon of peanut butter in microwave. Heat for 10 seconds, and then stir. If not melted, microwave for additional 5 seconds or until melted. Drizzle it over the top of the whipped cream. Cover the dessert and refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours to allow the mousse to set. 📺

HAMBURGER STROGANOFF

- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 (8-ounce) can sliced mushrooms (optional)
- 1 can cream of chicken or cream of mushroom soup
- 1 cup sour cream
- Egg noodles, or rice, prepared according to package directions
- Parsley, to garnish



Saute onion and garlic in butter. Stir in meat and brown. Stir in flour, salt, pepper and mushrooms. Cook five minutes, drain off grease. Stir in soup and simmer, uncovered, 10 minutes. Stir in sour cream and garnish with parsley. Serve over noodles or rice. Makes 4 servings.



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