Kelly Savoie (00:00):

Hello, Clear Skies Ahead listeners. This is Kelly Savoie, and I'm hoping you can take a moment of your time to rate and review our show wherever you listen to podcasts. We have produced over 100 episodes and you can help us reach even more individuals that will benefit from the diverse experiences shared by our guests. Thanks so much for listening, and I hope you enjoy this new episode. Welcome to the American Meteorological Society's podcast series, Clear Skies Ahead: Conversations About Careers in Meteorology and Beyond. I'm Kelly Savoie, and I'm here with Emma Collins, and we'll be your hosts. We're excited to give you the opportunity to step into the shoes of an expert working in weather, water, and climate sciences.

Emma Collins (00:53):

We're happy to introduce today's guest, Vytas Reid, morning meteorologist at CBS News in Detroit, Michigan. Welcome, Vytas. Thanks so much for joining us today.

Vytas Reid (01:02):

I'm so happy to be here.

Kelly Savoie (01:04):

Vytas, could you tell us a little bit about what sparked your interest in science and how it influenced your educational path?

Vytas Reid (01:10):

Well, I think it had something to do with that lake effect snow that I have coming down out there today. Piling up, I had to brush my car off. And so I think really what sparked it is just really the interest with understanding how things work. And I think it's because of my dad. So my dad was always very introspective of how things happen, like why does this happen? He's always reading the book, always got the newspaper, and he'd explained to me, "Oh, and this is why this occurs." Whether we took a bike ride and we're looking at ... When I was a kid, he's telling me about this field, these trees or sky. And he's really into astronomy. He loves astronomy. So he's always sending me, even to this day, he sends me things on how something in the solar system's working or this nebulus or nebuli or looking at the stars in the sun.

(02:05):

But all of that, I think, kind of gave me a groundwork of just understanding how things work or trying to understand how things work. And I love that. I love that. So I think that kind of got my mind clicking to saying, "Hmm, I like to know why things happen. Why is it hot? Why is it cold? Why is it freezing and ice forming? What's that rainbow forming and why? How does snow form? And why is it dry in this part of the world, but yet monsoon in this part of the world?" So I've always had that in my mind, but I did not know I wanted to be a meteorologist as a kid. Had no clue, didn't know that was my path yet. I thought I was going to be a truck driver like my Uncle Rufus. For real, I'm telling you, that's what I thought I was going to do.

Kelly Savoie (02:51):

So then what changed your mind? And then where did you end up going to school and majoring in?

Vytas Reid (02:58):

So getting into the business. Since I loved music a lot back in high school, I was into a lot of music. And by doing so, I thought I'd work in radio actually. So I was going to Indiana University for broadcast communications. And so I went down to Indianapolis and I was going to school there and became friends with some of the radio DJs down there. And so I was thinking, oh, I really want to do radio. But at the same time, I got my foot in the door doing production behind the scenes at RTV6, or not RT, I'm sorry, WTHR. RTV was my next job. But WTHR, I was a floor director and I was doing lighting and I was running the audio for the morning show and I really loved it, but I did it for about two and a half, three years. I graduated from IU.

(03:50):

I'm working in part-time. Then I got the full-time job there, but I became good friends with the weather guys there. And one of them really took me under their wings, a couple of them actually, but a couple of them really ... Chuck Lofton may ring a bell. So Chuck Lofton, who had just retired, he'd been there forever. He really taught me about the weather and how it worked. I was ripping DIFAX charts in the weather department. I was seeing what the cold front and warm fronts were, learning high pressure, low pressure, wind direction, learning how to do a little how to figure out thicknesses to get temperatures and work out little problems to get those understood. But it's interesting. So Chuck Lofton kind of led

me into that. And then another guy named Rob Guarino, he used to be a Chief in Philly, but he was doing weekends in Indianapolis at the time.

(04:43):

He let me stand in front of the weather wall and he said, "Hey, why don't you try this out and see what it's like? " I got out there all nervous, but I kind of did it and I loved it. And he said, "You should think about going back to school." And I said, "Oh, I do not want to go back to school. I graduated. I don't want to go back to college." But I ended up going back. He suggested Mississippi State University. So I went back into their program and actually started that program and continued my education for the Certificate of Broadcast Meteorology and loved it. And that's what I did while I was at the station working until I got my first on- air job.

Emma Collins (05:18):

So what was your first job in the field then and what other positions paved your way to your recent role in Detroit?

Vytas Reid (05:24):

So I've had a few bumps around. I've been here and there a little bit, but my first job, and it's funny because I was still in my internship finishing up there at Channel 13 in Indianapolis. And there was a guy, Greg Shoup, he was the chief actually in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was down interviewing for a position that was open at Channel 13, and we were just shooting the breeze, talking in the weather office there. And he was asking me about me and I asked about, "Oh, so tell me about your station in Fort Wayne." He said, "Oh yeah, we have a nice little station. You know we have an opening." And I was like, "Oh, really? " And he said, "Well, do you have a weather reel?" I didn't have one yet. And I said, "I'll have one by this weekend." And so I put one together literally and the guy who was weekends, bless his heart, love him, Bill Meck, he was the weekend guy at the time.

(06:16):

I think he's in Lexington now as chief. I think he's still there. But anyway, he helped me put my reel together and we got it together within a day, day and a half. I mailed that up there and Bob Rockstroh, news director, gave me a call two weeks later, said, "Hey, would you like to come up and interview for this morning/noon job?" And I went up there. I was so excited and I got the job. That was my first job - I interviewed, he offered it to me that day and I was trained on a Kavouras Tritonite seven old school system that you probably had a crank on and had to

start it like a lawnmower and get that thing going like literally, that was my first weather system. But an angel helped train me. She was weekends and I really hold a lot to her. Betsy Kling, if that name rings a bell.

Emma Collins (07:06):

Oh yeah.

Vytas Reid (07:07):

Yeah. Oh yeah. Good old Betsy. I love Betsy. So Betsy Kling was the one who trained me on that Kavouras *chugga chugga chugga* system. And that's how I first got on air. That was my first on air job in Fort Wayne.

Kelly Savoie (07:21):

Wow. And I'm sure just your experience, your production experience and your experience broadcasting, even radio really, really set the stage for you to have this great experience to just move into that role. So how many other ... I mean, I know lots of broadcast meteorologists change stations often, but were you at one station for an extended period of time before you moved to Detroit?

Vytas Reid (07:51):

So yeah, being in Fort Wayne, it was just for three years at that NBC station. Then I took the weekend position down at WRTV6. It was the ABC station in Indianapolis. So I went there for two years and then I left that station and took a chief job in Baltimore. And I was working at the Sinclair headquarters for three years at a news central operation. They were doing a centralized forecast there. And I was kind of managing about eight meteorologists. We were doing several markets across the country. So I was actually forecasting for Flint, my three markets out of our 15 markets. I did Flint, Michigan, Buffalo, New York, and Baltimore. I picked up Baltimore later.

Kelly Savoie (08:30):

Wow.

Vytas Reid (08:30):

It was a lot of work, forecasting for different areas and learning all these different things. But that was where I stayed the longest was Baltimore because that went away after about three years and I went back to just doing my thing at Baltimore.

So I went right down to WBFF Fox 45. So that is pretty much the place I stayed for 18 years.

Kelly Savoie (08:54):

Wow, that's a significant amount of time. I mean, wow.

Vytas Reid (08:58):

Yeah, so that was the longest. Then I went down within company, and if you hear a little dinging in the back, it's my chief meteorologist now because we have the snow going on. He's giving totals off, so you're going to hear ding, ding, ding. We're all excited because we nailed the forecast today. It's a blowout.

Kelly Savoie (09:13):

Nice.

Vytas Reid (09:14):

Anyway, so what happened was there was an opening intercompany down in Florida at our CBS station for a chief job. And I was like, Florida? Yeah. Yeah. I'm going to Florida. So I ended up going there for five years and did that for five. And then when my contract was up, the opportunity opened up at CBS Paramount in Detroit, back home. I'm from Michigan. I'm super happy. Lions, man. Nice. Come on, come on, come on. I'm going home. Mom and dad were so happy. So now I'm back home and I love Detroit. I love being home in Michigan. I love the season. Florida's allright, but I missed my seasons. I missed my leavechanging. I missed spring. There's something about it being around the Great Lakes that just gives you something.

Kelly Savoie (10:00):

Yeah. I mean, we're from New England, so we understand that. We love the seasons.

Vytas Reid (10:05):

Yeah.

Kelly Savoie (10:07):

So you touched on this a little bit when you were talking about technology and the equipment that you were working on when you started. So what are some of

the biggest changes you've seen in the broadcast meteorology industry since the start of your career? I'm sure there's been some positive developments and not so positive developments. Could you share some of that with us?

Vytas Reid (10:28):

Well, I'm not trying to age myself. Been around the block a little bit. You know what I'm saying? Not too much gray in this Afro, but let me tell you. Let me tell you, let's just say the first live truck or weather truck was a wagon drawn by horse, and now we see spaceships going down the street. But I mean, really, actually, I would say what I've seen is really in the forecasting aspect, much more accuracy. Really, we're seeing with much more of the satellite imagery with more high rapid model runs, things like that. It's getting a little more accurate. So you can get more down to the, pretty much, zip code. You're right down to looking at street by street forecasting what people will get versus what they can get. Now you can't get perfect, of course. But for severe weather, you have outlooks that could be longer, you know what's going to be happening in communities to give them heads up earlier.

(11:21):

But technology with our systems, the weather systems, the graphics have become much more sharper, quicker, better. Just with social media, of course, that's thrown everything in a loop for everybody, even television. I mean, that's really changing everything. So for reporters, anchors, all of the above, but we're competing, the on- air people are competing with these phones. And that is a big challenge for us to keep the viewership. A lot of our viewerships only had three stations, and if you got a good rabbit ears, you got PBS to watch Sesame Street too. But nowadays, you can pick up everything and download it and you're subscribing to things. And so that is what we're battling with. So I think that is the biggest change that we're all dealing with, but we have to become one with it. You can't fight it. You got to embrace it, give it a hug and say, "Welcome to the family." Even though you that cousin we don't like to have at the backyard barbecue, but you can still get a plate.

(12:21):

So that's kind of where we're at with that. But I think that's what I've seen. It's really the social media, I think, aspect that's really propelled in the last three to five years. But other than that, before that, it was probably the systems leading up to engaging with that.

Kelly Savoie (12:38):

Are you finding that the workload is more because now you're being asked to do social media in addition to your regular forecast job and web content and blogs and all those other things?

Vytas Reid (12:53):

It depends, station by station, company, by company. So like my previous company, they were really hard-hitting on, so they went to social media constantly, constantly, constantly because they want to compete in that realm. Some other companies, not as much. So it's not horrible, but it is one of those things where it does keep you more busy work. I mean, back in the day, it was like, okay, we're going to post for the newspaper, write an article for your newspaper. We're going to call the radio station. “Here's your look at your forecast for today. I'm Chief Meteorologist..”. That thing, you do your little vocab. And I don't always talk like that. That's the radio voice. But it's one of those things where you see it adding more on there with this. It's become much more of that, that it keeps you more busy with your phones.

(13:37):

And Facebook, X, Instagram. Now it's YouTube. A lot of them want to have YouTube channels and push that at stations. So we're seeing that be very busy as well, 100%.

Emma Collins (13:48):

Have you guys had to contend with AI at all, with this whole artificial intelligence boom happening? Has that impacted the industry?

Vytas Reid (13:56):

AI is playing a role. I mean, well, there's the AI models. I mean, we're starting to see that with ... And some of it's in the ... Because I was in a tropical climate before, yes, there were actually lizards falling out of this palm trees. What's going on? Maybe that's why I moved back to Michigan. I was afraid of that. I'd never seen an advisory iguana watch. We actually had that down there.

Kelly Savoie (14:22):

Oh my. Seriously?

Vytas Reid (14:24):

I'm serious. And if you remember the recent, we had the cold air going down. It was snowing in Florida. Let me tell you, they wanted to call in the National Guard. It was the end of the world. You're talking about snow in Florida. When you get that, it's super rare, but

(14:36):

You have those iguana watches. It's quite interesting. But back to your question. Yeah, I mean, AI is going to be playing a role in our future, but I mean, it can forecast only so good because it's looking at more actual what's happening right this minute and past. It doesn't..it can't really.. mean, and then it tries to extrapolate for the future. So it will take all that other stuff too, and it does it more rapidly. So can it be fruitful? Potentially. Is it perfect? No. And does it have an accountability? No, because we do. We're the ones on air and we have accountability. So if we go with the wrong forecast, even without AI, if you don't get it right, "Oh, you're that guy get 50% right or wrong and still get a paycheck." We've heard that so many times. If I could have a dollar, I'd be retired right now.

(15:30):

But it's one of those things, AI still plays a part of that too, right? So 100%, but it's one of those extra things we're adding to the pot that we have to work with and use in our box, our potpourri of tools to give the best forecast and be most accurate for the viewer. And it all comes down to the viewer because we're trying to protect people. So really, that's what it is.

Kelly Savoie (15:55):

Yeah. And I think it's important. I think it's important to have a real person. I think people can relate and trust them more. I mean, hey, I just watched the movie The Terminator. We can't trust those machines.

Vytas Reid (16:08):

No. Okay. I'm not trying to take it down, but will you get a Waymo? Will you get in a Waymo and let it drive for you with nobody at that steering wheel going…? Yeah. I'm not there yet. I'm not there yet. I still want somebody holding onto that wheel. Okay? If it's not them, me.

Emma Collins (16:27):

That's a brave new world, especially for the generations coming in. And speaking of, do you have any advice for students who are looking to land that first job at a station or what are some things they should and should not be doing?

Vytas Reid (16:39):

Go into dentistry school. No, just kidding. Well, no, no. I think you're always going to have teeth. You always can shine them up. But I mean, as far as for students, I've always told them this. I said, if this is something you are trying to get into, and there's a lot of people coming out here, the companies are getting a little more streamlined, like everything is getting much more streamlined. And the other thing is that the availability of people out there, because the business is changing, they might be able to do a lot more with a lot less. And they're looking at cost cutting. There's a lot of things with companies doing that, which I can understand. But if you want to be in the field, be the best you can be and don't be anybody else. Be yourself. And I always tell young folks, when I watch their reels, if I'm at a conference or something, I would critique reels.

(17:31):

I've critiqued so many reels, which is great. I see them on air now. And as a few people in my market now or in different markets, I've seen them now two, three, four, 10 years. I'm like, "How long have you been on air? Oh my gosh. What? You have kids now? Oh my gosh." So it's one of those things I always told them, "Stay humble." Stay humble. It's a job. Don't say, "Oh, I'm smiley. I'm the big stuff on TV." No, no, no. Stay humble. It's a job. And this is a title, but don't let it be who you are. Let you be who you are and don't try to be anybody else. I never wanted to be Alan Sealls. Love him. Love Alan. That's my man! I mean, I love him. I never wanted to be anybody, but it's one of those things where everybody has their own flavor and be your own flavor so people can enjoy watching your personality and who you are.

Kelly Savoie (18:21):

And you said you've looked at lots of reels. Does anything stand out to you that students or people who are just starting out in their careers do, that they shouldn't do? Or what is something that sticks out where you're like, oh, this person's doing a really good job?

Vytas Reid (18:38):

Well, I think there's room for everyone. So I can't say, "Oh, they did that wrong," because what I say is it's subjective. I mean, when you look at what people do ... Now, there's certain things when you watch reels, of course, usually you're younger, you're nervous. My reel, if I pulled that up right now, I'd be like, "Eh, you don't get a job. Go back and practice a little longer." I mean, really, you look at it and it's like, oh my God, that was horrible. But with time you get better and you get used to talking, you get comfortable talking and you'll make a mistake on air, those things. But I try to tell, be yourself. But most of them are really good. But I tell them now, make sure in your montage, put some social media, like you're on Facebook live or you're doing a live on TikTok or something because companies want to see you active in social media.

(19:30):

They want to see, how are you engaging with that many people. More people are on social media than traditional TV. The traditional TV people are kind of getting to that, "I can't see the screen" unfortunately. And it's one of those things where it's going to be more social media. So that's very important.

Kelly Savoie (19:49):

So working in the industry for so many years, I'm sure you've seen your share of extreme weather events. So besides lizards falling from the sky, what is the most memorable to you?

Vytas Reid (20:01):

That's not extreme enough? I mean, when I moved to Florida, when you really look at that Florida welcome sign, it is Jurassic Park. It should say welcome to Jurassic Park. But I would have to say I had a couple of things. I mean, we had in Baltimore, the Derecho that went through the East Coast and rocked it. I'll never forget that back in the late, what was that, mid 2000s. And it knocked everything out from DC up through Baltimore. I mean, so many trees down power outages. That was one of the most intent. And it was in the middle, hot, hot, hot sun. We had sweltering heat and it just fired off that front and it crossed the country and just blew through and it knocked out so much power for over a week. It was hot too. So I remember that. That was something.

(20:45):

Isabel, coming into Baltimore Harbor when I was in Baltimore, Hurricane Isabel, that was pretty impressive with the flooding in the inner harbor. I learned much

more about the slosh factor versus just the storm surge, which you got to account for on top of that. It was quite interesting. And I remember talking to guys down in the hurricane center learning about that at a hurricane conference. Then also, I would say there was some tornadoes that touched down on the Eastern Shore in Maryland that did some pretty good damage. I remember that. But then I think the busiest time, most busy I've ever had, even more than the winter storm kind of things, because that's long term. It's a big deal, but shuts everything down and everybody's just off and having a good time. With 26 inches, you're just at home and you're playing games, whatever. But Milton rocked South Florida.

(21:34):

Hurricane Milton came across South Florida and when that storm, the eye was still off the coast, we had hundreds of tornado warnings and confirmed, there was so many confirmed, confirmation. We get EF0s or EF1, a quick touchdown with a thunderstorm, but that many tornadoes that we were trapped, we were on for nine hours straight doing tornado coverage. And it was EF2, EF3 wedge tornadoes. And at one time we're tracking 12 tornadoes, nine to 12, all with high impact tornado. We're like, "Oh my gosh, we got to go to this one. We got to go to this one. Now go to this one. This was in a high populated area. Go to that one. We got a new one that just finished." It was such a busy day. I had never experienced anything like that before. So Milton, I would have to give the top prize to, as far as the most busy and most insane and intense weather that I've seen from a hurricane.

(22:32):

And I even didn't make ... It hadn't even crossed the West Coast yet. This was one band, couple of bands that went through. It was crazy.

Kelly Savoie (22:42):

So I was going to say, Emma, I wonder if you are going to ask the same question. I want to know what the slosh factor is.

Emma Collins (22:49):

It's exactly what I was going to ask. It's the first time I've heard that. Yeah, me too.

Vytas Reid (22:54):

So slosh factors, so basically you have your models and showing that if you think of the Chesapeake Bay and you think of the Chesapeake Bay and it's a bowl and

you got the eye of the storm. So Isabelle moved in off the Carolinas and went up through Virginia and then went west. The eye went west of Baltimore. So you got all that front pull into the Chesapeake Bay. Everything's getting backed up. So you already have the storm surge. We knew that it was going to be storm surge. I think it was like eight to 12 foot or eight to 10 foot storm surge in the inner harbor, which is going to take it over the walls and into those low lying areas. But then the eye was all the way up into New York State and the sun is out, but the eye still had a pull on top of the storm surge, you get the slosh factor.

(23:42):

It's what is on top of that still being pulled in.

Kelly Savoie (23:45):

Oh my gosh

Vytas Reid (23:45):
It's the water sloshing and coming in on top. So the models weren't doing that. They weren't reading any of that. So they got an additional two to four feet of storm,s of slosh of water. So that's what we're talking about. That was quite interesting.

Kelly Savoie (24:00):

Yeah, I've learned something today.

Vytas Reid (24:02):

Yeah. Now I'm almost sure I'm right on that. Now, if every meteorologist says, "That's not the word they used." That's what they told me. That's what I thought I heard.

Emma Collins (24:11):

They're going to have to come onto our podcast and correct that for us then.

Vytas Reid (24:16):

100. I'm staying with Slosh.

Emma Collins (24:19):

So you are a member of Weather Climate Task Force for the National Association of Black Journalists. Could you tell us a bit about the task force's mission and how you became part of it?

Vytas Reid (24:29):

So if you're familiar with NABJ, it's the National Association of Black Journalists, and it's been around for a long time. And I went to a few conferences back in the day, but what was interesting about it is that there wasn't any weather classes there or any sessions. It was like how to write a better story, reporting on this or this and that, politics in the media, these kind of things, radio, but there was no weather. And so I never felt like I fit in the conference. A lot of us didn't. And so it was interesting, about six or seven of us, about it's almost four and a half, I think five years ago now, we got together. I said, I remember we're just kind of kicking ideas. Me and a few other guys, Andrew Humphrey and Nikondra Norwood. I mean, a few of these people you may know, but we got together.

(25:20):

It was like the minutes we got together. All of us just were talking. We were like, why don't we offer a task force? We could have a weather..we should have a weather representation. So we came together, met, talked, talked, got it together, and we pitched the idea to the NABJ. They looked it over, they went through it, they checked everything. We went back and forth to get everything we needed, and they officially did it. And it was right at the end of COVID. So the first one was online, I think. But then the next one was, I think in Vegas and we actually met, but it was a hit. I mean, we had great sessions. We talked about AI. One of my sessions was AI and weather. And so we have great panel discussions. We have people from the National Hurricane Center, from the National Weather Service.

(26:07):

NOAA comes and talks on our panels. We have good dialogue. So it's now become an actual thing at the NABJ. So we're so happy that this has been established and it will last forever now. So that's been an ongoing thing in that realm, which I'm really excited about. So that's what the Weather Climate Task Force has focused on bringing that aspect of broadcast journalism, the weather side of it into that organization. And it's now there and it will stay. And I love it.

Kelly Savoie (26:39):

Yeah, that was a great idea to get that started. Vytas, you're very involved in weather education through outreach in the community. How do you go about communicating scientific concepts to non-technical audiences in your presentations? How do you prepare for that?

Vytas Reid (27:01):

To talk to folks who don't really know?

Kelly Savoie (27:03):

Yeah. Yeah.

Vytas Reid (27:04):

Have you ever seen that meme that says, "It going rain." That's how simple you make it. “It's going to rain”. So you tell them how it is, it's going to happen. I say this, you only got so much ... Well, on air, you only got so much time to explain it. So you can't be getting too scientific. Nobody can be Tom Skilling and get 10 minutes. Back in the day, he was showing isotherms and people loved it because he had that shtick there in Chicago. But generally you keep it basic. Just people want to know what's going to affect them in the next 12 hours, the next day, and then your weekend ahead. That's kind of what it is. And if it's severe weather, you want to just tell people what to do, how they're supposed to react, and how to protect their family. So it doesn't have to be all this pretty ... We got a lot of eye candy and really, throw that out the window.

(27:55):

It comes down to, you guys got to take shelter immediately. I need you to do this. I care for your family. Take this, or it's here. Look at the map. It's coming here. So what I need you to do, so those are the things that it really comes down to it, just speaking direct language to folks, and they'll generally listen if you are direct. But if I go out to schools or I-

Kelly Savoie (28:15):

Yeah, say younger kids, how would you go about that?

Vytas Reid (28:19):

So if I'm going out to school and kids, I always tailor my presentation based on the age group. So if it's elementary school, kids are, eh, we have fun with it. I have

them repeating things or singing a little song. And I used to do a lot of chalk drawings. So I love drawing it out and explaining so the kids can follow along. And I always pick a kid out of the audience and say, "And this is little Tommy, what's your name?" And here they laugh and I draw a little picture, like a little stick figure of them and, "Oh, it's a sunny day, but look at that. The sun is heating up the atmosphere, creating these what? Clouds. What is it? Clouds." So it's one of those things where interaction, we have fun. Middle school kids, maybe it's not as cool to go, "Cloud!" So I start showing them maybe some YouTube clips of severe weather, how it happens, what goes on, appropriate for the age.

(29:05):

College student, I'm talking a little more about it. So it's always tailored to the age. And I've done that for years, so you could stick me in any group and it could be a retirement center. Same thing. So get to the retirement, it's back to the clouds. Clouds, they do it too. I have fun with them. So it's all good. But as long as they leave with understanding and feel comfortable and not being afraid, "I'm afraid of thunder." Well, don't be. Just understand what it is.

Kelly Savoie (29:32):

Yeah, I think it's a good idea to do visuals because a lot of people are visual learners and it's probably a lot easier to explain things.

Vytas Reid (29:40):

A hundred percent. I need to see it.

Emma Collins (29:43):

Well, Vytas, we're so grateful for everything you've told us about your career. However, before you go, we always ask our guests one last fun question at the end of the show, and I think I know what your answer is going to be, but what is your favorite hobby?

Vytas Reid (29:55):

Oh, the cat's out the bag. So for the folks who don't see that this is actually, there is some video that could be shown, but we aren't showing the video, but I'm actually doing this in front of my DJ board. So I have DJed since I ... And when I say DJ, I do that stuff. But I've done this since high school. I used to have, back in the day, the harder stuff, I had two turntables and a mic. I used to have the turntables

and records and crates. And I used to go to parties and we'd DJ and it would be fun. I DJed at some clubs and now I kind of just chill and do it on TikTok. I play two, three times a week on TikTok, old school R&B, old school hip hop on Fridays, house music, popular favorites. I do a lot of variety because I like all types of music.

(30:40):

But that's my hobby. I've loved music all my life. And I just like when people feel good, they hear a song, they're like, "Oh, I love that song." And they feel great and they're like, "I remember that. " So I play a lot of old school. I love old school music. You catch me playing Hall and Oats.

Kelly Savoie (30:56):

Oh, I love Hall and Oats.

Vytas Reid (30:57):

Oh yeah. And you're ready to dance.

Kelly Savoie (30:59):

I saw them in concert.

Vytas Reid (31:01):

See,I'm jealous. See, she's ready to get up and boogie. I mean, Sunshine.. and KC and The Sunshine Band. I mean, BeeGee's, I'll play a lot of that stuff. I mean, I love all that music. And then we get R&B stuff, Parliament, Funkadelic, all that. I mean, so I have a wealth of music, but that's my hobby. I've loved it for a long time. And I will be doing this if I am ever. I'll have a walker on this thing standing here and I'll do it.

Kelly Savoie (31:23):

So how did you learn how to use the DJ equipment and what sparked that interest?

Vytas Reid (31:31):

If you had to work with a Triton I7, that first weather system, you can learn this DJ board quite interesting.

Kelly Savoie (31:37):

Okay.

Vytas Reid (31:38):

That thing was like a popcorn machine doing the forecast. But I tell you, I just learned through a friend. There was a guy in Grand Rapids. I'm from Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was on the AM radio station, Frank Le Cadena. And he did a little radio show and I saw him out at an event and we start talking and his son was my age. So I was a roadie for him. I'd help him carry the equipment. And so I started learning how he played his music and mixing the music. And he taught me how to beatmix and all that. And I got my own, soon my own equipment. And then I started doing my own little things. And it stuck with me ever since. And it's just a fun hobby. It's just great. So now that I'm in Detroit, I'm trying to connect with the house music scene here with the warms up and everything falls out.

(32:19):

I mean, right now I could play *Fire* by the Ohio players to warm things up. But I'm telling, it's one of those things I'm trying to tap into, maybe a rooftop, play a little brunchy, loungey thing. It's fun doing that stuff.

Kelly Savoie (32:33):

It's fun. And it's a nice little part-time job. So DJs, they get paid pretty well. They get paid pretty well.

Vytas Reid (32:41):

Yeah. For a wedding reception. I used to do wedding receptions and things like that. So for those listeners out there, free commercial! You need someone to play for your music? ...no but yeah, yeah. AMS. Next one. Y'all got to have a party. They can’t be all just, the geeks can dance too.

Kelly Savoie (32:58):

Oh, we definitely can. Yeah.

Vytas Reid (33:00):

It might not be on beat, but you going to dance.

Kelly Savoie (33:03):

Yeah. The weather and climate folks, weather water and climate folks can party. Yeah.

Vytas Reid (33:09):

There's some rhythm. Remember, math is rhythm.

Kelly Savoie (33:12):

Right.

Vytas Reid (33:13):

And it comes in different forms. That's what I'm saying.

Kelly Savoie (33:16):

Well, thanks so much for joining us, Vytas, and sharing your work experiences with us.

Vytas Reid (33:21):

A hundred percent. That was great. I really appreciate it. This has been fun. And you guys rock. I appreciate the AMS. I appreciate all you're doing for science and knowledge and keep it going. I mean, this is what it's about. We're trying to educate the world and just show that it's a place we live and a place we got to take care of and understand and just protect and just know we live on one world, one family, one people, one beat. That's what I say at the end of every one of my DJ things. It's like one world, one family, one people, one beat, and that's what it is. And I think AMS shines with that.

Emma Collins (33:49):

I love that. Well, that's our show for today. Please join us next time, Rain or Shine.

Kelly Savoie (33:55):

Clear Skies Ahead. Conversations about Careers in Meteorology and Beyond is a podcast by the American Meteorological Society. Our show is edited by Johnny Lay. Technical Direction is provided by Peter Killelea. Our theme music is composed and performed by Steve Savoie, and the show is hosted by Emma Collins and Kelly Savoie. You can learn more about the show online at www.ametsoc.org/clearskies, and you can contact us at skypodcast@ametsoc.org. If you have any feedback, or would like to become a future guest.