



EFFINGHAM 'PINION

(OPINIONS OF THE TIMES)TM



Reach Within to Embrace Humanity

EFFINGHAM ROTARY CLUB
CLUB No. 3265
DISTRICT 6490
ORGANIZED 1920

Philip R. Coats, Editor

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Old Fashioned Fun – Rock Solid Foundation (E-I-E-I-O)

25 January 2012

Couldn't help but harking back to the Old MacDonald song we all learned sometime or other. No song today, cucurbits just don't make noise like a pig, a cow or a chicken. Our guest today (at right), **Mac Condill**, is a fifth generation farmer on the probably original Illinois *old* McDonald farm. His girls, Charley and MacKenzie and his son Coewn will be the sixth generation to derive life and a living from the land in the heart of Illinois' largest Amish settlement. The McDonald's came from Scotland through West Virginia arriving to settle in central Illinois in 1859. The roots of



that first generation were deeply planted before the first handful of Amish settlers begun to plough and cultivate the dark, rich Flanagan type soil in 1865 though.



The website, <http://the200acres.com>, unfolds a marvelous story but hearing it firsthand, from "the horse's mouth", is much better. Mac is passionate and committed. One of our Rotarian farmers inquired after the meeting if they were making any money or was it just an expensive hobby. They are having fun and making a living growing numerous grains and livestock but the real fun began in 1977 when Mac's parents, Bruce and



Mary Beth (McDonald) Condill decided to add some pumpkin seeds to their children's garden. These children, Kit, Mac and Buck, have taken the cucurbit business to a full sixty-three acres of pumpkins, squash and gourds. On these 63 acres, a goodly portion of the 200 acres, now called The Great Pumpkin Patch, are four hundred varieties of cucurbits; more variety than other place on the planet. Mac noted that cucurbits are the third most consumed

nutritional plant food product after grasses (maize, wheat, rice) and legumes (beans, peas, lentils). Tomatoes and other nightshades are in fourth place. In some parts of this world, cucurbits are the complete diet.



Each fall since 1985, they have opened the farm to the public, especially school children. This past year in the span of mid September to Halloween 50,000 people came to see the marvelous displays including the straw bale maze, farm animals, one room schoolhouse, or pick a pumpkin for carving or eating, take a ride to the field, or visit the children's



garden.

Mac brought some along, an adult version of show-and-tell. Some very strange looking items popped out of his bag including the Yugoslavian finger fruit squash. Some of the more unusual ones have warts or curls.

February 1

John Collier is Program Chair; Our exchange student Maricruz Martinez from Veracruz, Mexico will share information about herself and her experiences.

But on this farm it is not all about growing pumpkins, gourds and squash. Their Amish inspired and staffed Homestead Bakery opened in 2005 offers all sorts of warm-from-the-oven breads, rolls, cookies and cakes. In their travels to festivals or shows off site they have served their scrumptious cookies and home baked from scratch bread to up to 10,000 people. He only brought gourds and squash for this show and tell so one will have to visit the bakery beginning the first of May through almost Christmas.

Mac and his cucurbits have appeared on the *Martha Stewart* show in 2005, 2010 and again in 2011. The Patch has also received coverage on the DIY-Network and in magazines such as *Martha Stewart Living*, *Country Living* and *Modern Traveler*. Some of his annual decorating commitments include the Chicago Botanic Gardens, the Museum of Science and Industry, *Country Living* fairs in Columbus and Atlanta. In the

fall of 2010, they packed up 1,200 pieces consisting of 250 varieties of cucurbits in a U-Haul and headed for the White House trick or treat event. They arrived at 730 am and had just the day to set-up the display on the lawn adjacent to the Presidential home. All those strange looking gourds, vegetables and pumpkins were packed in straw and he thought for sure they would have to unpack each one, singularly, for inspection. But the dogs came and sniffed the contents and that day over 2,000 school kids came to the house. By nightfall, the folks from the Patch were packing up and heading out. He thinks they will return to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW in the fall 2012.

Back home in Illinois during Pumpkin Patch days the folks on the farm make preparations year-round to make the experience memorable including Noah's Ark (the pumpkins march two by two up the gang-plank to greet old Noah. Of the 400 varieties grown on the farm or at specially selected remote isolation farms, every continent except Antarctica is represented from about three dozen countries. To grow his cucurbits the requirements are simple: water, heat and sun. Central Illinois has it covered.



Another element in the equation is Homestead Seeds, a collection of heirloom cucurbit seeds accumulated over two decades. His brother Kit began selling the seeds many years ago and now with the mostly web-based retail outlet, Homestead Seeds are collected from their travels around the globe, e.g., Italy, Kenya, and South Africa. Seeds are also obtained from the federal depository at Ft. Collins, CO. Anyone can now grow and consume or use historic cucurbits. They are not prepared in a



laboratory but sometimes at isolation farms scattered over fifteen states. Growers cultivate the seeds not within a half-mile of another to protect the integrity of the product. Many of these have historical or cultural significance and are naturally resistant. Squash products

POLIO ERIDACATION

1. We reached and succeed the \$200 million Challenge from the Gates Foundation five and one-half months early!
2. In honor of that, the Gates Foundation awarded us an additional \$50 million, not as a matching grant, but an outright contribution!
3. We celebrated one year without a reported case of polio in India!

We are more that "almost there!" We are on the brink!!! But, please remember, it will be three years after the last reported case of polio before the world is declared polio free. We still have three endemic countries - Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria. So, we have not fully completed our mission and fulfilled our promise. There is still work to be done!

Thank you so very much for your concern and commitment to all the world as well as to your district!

Barbara Finley
Zone 31 \$200 Million Challenge Coordinator, 111
Pine Forest Lane,
Fordyce, AR 71742

The first attachment/spreadsheet of Zone 31 Polio Plus Donations by District
Attachment two is information RI Foundation resources and activities around the globe.

(Paste in your browser or highlight & click)

<http://www.crsadmin.com/gen/Accounts/50033/Eml/1b9370a9-e774-44da-8d7a-71c7e68bod3c.xls>

<http://www.crsadmin.com/gen/Accounts/50033/Eml/c52b91fd-6fe6-4b09-b395-75e117e9d9ee.pdf>

Old McDonald Farm, aka The Great Pumpkin Patch, could just be what we all need to get us and our country back on track.

can last without climatic protection for months or years. These are different than the tasteless or tasting like-a-crayon *frankenfood* products created in a laboratory to survive shipping from coast to coast.

Homestead Seeds also supports a Kenyan charity – The Sumerian Foundation. Mac spent three months in 1999 in South Africa interning at the Kirstenbosch Botanical gardens at Cape Town and then traveled 5,000 miles around the country.

Ten years ago in 2002 he traveled on a Rotary Group Study Exchange tour to India with other folks from Urbana, Champaign, Bloomington and Normal. He was keenly interested in today's announcement regarding Rotary International's polio eradication efforts and news from India because he had the opportunity to administer vaccine while on this trip.

A few questions/answers were offered: the original pumpkin is native to the northeast of United States of America.

The Seminole Squash (at right - picture provided by the editor) is endemic and grows only in the Everglades for over 500 years. Gourds in



their mature, dry, hardened state offer nothing nutritious but when they are immature they can be fried – “Everything tastes good fried”, Mac countered.

Next fall, he promises to send some visitor passes for The Great Pumpkin Patch. If you haven't been there in a while, maybe it is time to re-connect to the land. Just a few generations ago 85% of us had a direct connection to the farm; today, it is only 2%. A visit to this



Mac, pumpkins at the White House, our student guest Mitchell and program chair Phil Coats

Our Student Guest from Saint Anthony High School

Mitchell Wortman, the son of Rob & Teri Wortman was welcomed by Charlie Brumleve, plans to attend the University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign to major in computer science. While at St. Anthony he is the president of the National Honor Society, an Illinois State Scholar and has competed in the Scholar Bowl all



tournament team with the National Trails Council. Mitchell also runs cross country and is on the wrestling team. He qualified for the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 2008 and is a member of the band, the Spanish club, the book club and WYSE.

MEET A GERMAN!

The German Group Study Exchange (GSE) Team from Rotary District 1800 will be in Effingham the first of April. Our actual first contact will be on Saturday, March 31 when we take them on a trip to Indianapolis. They will then be in Effingham Monday, April 2 through Wednesday, April 4. They'll only be staying two nights.

The team consists of four men and two women. The professional mix is a pharmacist, a textile retailer, a physicist, a banker, and two metallurgists.

We will need six host families, tour guides, a party coordinator, and an Indy Trip facilitator.

Please contact Jeff Bloemker if you can assist with this international effort. jbloemker@heartlandhs.org or 347-7179 ext 1016

District 1800 has seventy-two clubs and approximately 3,500 Rotarians in the state of Saxony-Anhalt and half of Lower Saxony state. Hannover is the biggest city and the area is also home to the Pied Piper of Hamelin.



Jeff (I could be German, too) Bloemker speaking about the GSE team coming to District 6490



STUFF YOU MIGHT WANT TO KNOW



❖ Our Rotary Club board continues the offer to become a Sustaining Member in the Rotary Foundation Annual Program. Our club has accumulated over \$15,000 in credits that may be used on a first come-first granted basis.

✓ If you wish to become a Sustaining member up to \$500 in the form of a matching grant is available towards the total \$1,000 Paul Harris Fellow award.

- ✓ The \$100 offer (revised from \$50) still stands if you wish to stretch the amount over ten years at \$100 per annum.
- ✓ *If you are a Sustaining Member and just need a few more dollars to see you to the end, you, too, can take advantage of this offer.*

See Rotary Foundation chair Dave Ring, club secretary Tonya Siner or Club president Norma Lansing for more details and information. *Hurry while supplies last. Only available to the first 103 (our membership) callers.*
Call soon before this new sustaining member discount expires!



❖ President-elect Rosie Gibbons brought a motion from the board of directors to the floor for the club to the vote. Kerry Hirtzel (contemplating his decision) has been nominated to serve as president of our club for 2013-2014. He was unanimously elected. The board also seeking two new board members – consult the directory and contact any officer of the board if you are interested or know someone who should “volunteer”.



❖ The Sunrise club **St. Valentine's Day Sweetheart Brunch** will be held on Lincoln's 203rd Birthday, 12 February at the Effingham Country Club. Serving begins at 9 am and continues until 1 pm. Tickets are available from Sunrise club members or at the door.



❖ Rotary Youth Exchange Student Maricruz Martinez from Orizaba, Veracruz, Mexico is now staying with the Mark and Kathy Daughtery family. They will be her host family until early April.

❖ We will welcome another student in the fall and have received a pledge from Jennifer Whitt's family to host this new student for part of their stay.



❖ Effingham Printing Company donated \$20.75 to the club because club members took 56 big and little calendars January 11 & 18.



❖ Bob Fergus was recognized as MEALS on WHEELS coordinator, a service activity sponsored by our club for the past dozen plus years. A few years ago the committee was delisted from the directory but still functions. Presently, Mike Schmidt, Don Dawkins, Libby Moeller, Eric Zeller and former member Art Strom and

his wife work along with Bob monthly. On the fourth Tuesday of each month each volunteer delivers 8-12 meals from the Hendelmeyer Park building. When there is a 5th Tuesday or Friday they also deliver meals from St. Anthony Memorial Hospital. The commitment requires about one hour each day. If you are interested, please contact Bob at 342-3314 or advantagepestman@consolidated.net



❖ RYLA – April 13-15

[http://www.rotary.org/en/studentsandyouth/youthprograms/rotaryyouthleadershipawards\(ryla\)/pages/ridefault.aspx](http://www.rotary.org/en/studentsandyouth/youthprograms/rotaryyouthleadershipawards(ryla)/pages/ridefault.aspx)

Hi, I am Tiffany DeSpain and I am serving as chair of RYLA. I am a member of the Rotary Club of Savoy and am happy to say we have a committee of Rotarians from several clubs working in collaboration to put together a fantastic three-year curriculum for the RYLA participants. Some of the topics this year will be interviewing (learn skills to interview first), resume building, finance and budgets, diversity and inclusion programs, organization and time management, public speaking, conflict resolution and more. We will be needing volunteers from the different clubs that weekend; some to help facilitate the activities with the committee, and we will also need speakers on some of the above topics. If anyone is interested in helping, please contact me at tiffany@savoyrecreationcenter.com The activities that will take place will be related to the topics the speakers present about.



Last year there were sixty-nine RYLA participants and would love to see that number closer to ONE HUNDRED this year. District 6490 is made up of over 50 clubs in our district and I would really like to see more clubs participate that have not sent someone in the past. The fee is \$165 per student; this is well worth your club's money as this is an experience that they will not forget. If your club has sponsored students in previous years, we hope that you will honor the commitment for that student for all three years of the curriculum.

Have you seen the RYLA video that came out this year? Did your club receive one? If not, let me know so we can work on getting a copy to your club. Speak to your local high schools about RYLA and don't forget to ask your Interact students if they want to participate! This is a fantastic weekend of learning and preparing these great kids for some valuable life skills.

Tiffany DeSpain, District 6490 - Phone: 217-359-3550

E-Mail: tiffany@savoyrecreationcenter.com - Website: www.savoyrecreationcenter.com

- ❖ Rotarian Arthur Frederick Sheldon offered the recurring slogan at the top of our newsletter, "They profit most who serve best." Wouldn't you like to do business with those who have the same commitment to the Four-Way Test as yourself? Include your own business listing in the 2012 District 6490 Rotarian Phone directory. Everyone attending the annual district meeting will receive a copy. Contact Kevin Yonce, Director of Services and Activities ~ (217) 328-5749 or Amy George at the Champaign News-Gazette ~ (217) 373-7453 for more information. Amy's e-mail is ageorge@news-gazette.com
Download and view a copy of application at:
<http://www.crsadmin.com/gen/Accounts/50033/Eml/b5faae7f-db3d-4e06-8585-3052efb6278a.pdf>



- ❖ Interested in learning more than you know about Rotary? Future officers and presidents are especially encouraged to attend the Rotary Leadership Institute held next in Decatur on February 18. See President Norma, she knows all about it or examine the form below. RLI will increase your knowledge of Rotary, enhance your leadership skills, and it is fun too! Please register as soon as possible.



February 10th is the deadline for registration so packets can be prepared and notify the caterer of a head count.

If there are members that would like to attend at the last minute, we can accommodate that, as well. Rotarians may go to www.hoa-rli.com/rli-submission and fill out the registration form and submit. *More information is available here:* HOARLIBrochure JAN 2012.pub If you cannot open the above link, copy and paste the following address into your browser:

<http://www.crsadmin.com/gen/Accounts/50033/Eml/d46658ec-2e2f-416e-b6fa-oced8d6a6oof.pub>



- ❖ The Scholarship committee chaired by Jim Eder has disseminated information to both Effingham High School and Saint Anthony High School guidance counselors in advance of receiving and awarding our annual \$1,000.00 scholarships each to two deserving students from these city schools.

- ❖ **THE** new International Food Fair planned by both our club and the Sunrise Club is Sunday, April 29 at the Sacred Heart gymnasium and serving foods from around Effingham from 11 am to 2 pm. Proceeds will benefit the Keta Keti project in Nepal and our ongoing work in Quetzaltenango district of Guatemala.

MAKE-UPS



None reported but if you cannot make it here Wednesday or to another club you can always do your Rotary membership duty on line.

<http://www.rotaryclubone.org>



Scholarship Drawing

Larry Ensign won today.
The pot is growing.

HI TECH PRESENTATION FOR YOUR PROGRAM?



Computer/laptop projector and Wi-Fi are available at First Baptist Church – please make arrangements BEFORE your program.

You may need a special connector or adaptor from your unit, i.e., your computer, to the projector...talk to President Norma Lansing and arrive early to set-up, please

**NOT ALL COMPUTERS OR PROJECTORS ARE CREATED EQUAL
DO NOT ASSUME ANYTHING!**

REASONS TO CELEBRATE (NEXT 10 DAYS)

Ted Keller	January 31
Don Sandschafer	January 31
Mike Sehy	February 1
Dave Faller	February 1
Todd Martin	February 3

