

BUSINESS PEOPLE



Caplan Haas

STANLEY CAPLAN, CLU and **DONALD RAY HAAS, CLU** of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills respectively, have been certified as qualifying members of the Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) for 1976. MDRT is an international association of more than 12,000 top life underwriters, representing over 35 countries and 600 life insurance companies. Membership is granted only on a year-to-year basis, with members placing in force a minimum of \$125,000 of insurance each year. Both Caplan and Haas attended the 49th annual MDRT meeting held in Boston.

ISABEL MULLIGAN of Franklin has been promoted to public relations officer in the National Bank of Detroit's civic affairs and marketing division. Mrs. Mulligan had been editor of the Housing and Urban Development Association's newsletter in Toronto.

ROBERT F. VAN NORTWICK of Lathrup Village has been appointed office manager of New York Life Insurance Co.'s Detroit office. Van Nortwick is a 1967 business administration graduate of the University of Cincinnati.

ERNEST L. GROVE JR. of Troy has been elected a director of Detroit Edison Co. Grove is senior executive vice-president for finance with Detroit Edison.

THOMAS D. CHIRGWIN of West Bloomfield has been promoted to assistant banking officer in the National Bank of Detroit's Metro North regional banking division. Chirgwin has been an NBD employee for six years.



Young France

DONALD E. YOU of Bloomfield Hills has been elected senior vice president of Burroughs Corp. You became vice president for corporate communications in 1968.

A. FINLEY FRANCE of Birmingham was elected vice president for procurement with the Burroughs Corp. He had been director of corporate procurement and contracts.

RONALD J. FITZPATRICK of Bloomfield Hills has been named director of employee and industrial relations with Burroughs Corp.'s terminal systems group. He joined the company in 1961.

MALCOLM PARROTT of West Bloomfield has been named controller of the terminal systems group of the Burroughs Corp. Parrott began working for Burroughs in 1963 at the Pasadena plant.

JACK B. ALLEN of Birmingham has been appointed station manager of WWJ-TV. Allen joined WWJ from WXYZ-TV.

JOHN E. SWEENEY of West Bloomfield has been promoted to director of sales at Design Origins Inc., Madison Heights. Before joining Design Origins, Sweeney worked with Chrysler Corp. in the areas of sales and design.



Ms. Goldman Buchanan

PATRICIA WHEELLESS GOLDMAN of Birmingham has been elected a vice-president in the Bloomfield Hills office of D'Arcy MacManus & MacManus advertising. Ms. Goldman joined the Bloomfield Hills office in 1969 as an account executive.

ROBERT E. BUCHANAN of Troy has been promoted to branch officer at Manufacturers National Bank. Buchanan is currently assigned to the Eight Mile Schaefer office.



Tyler takes a breather.

By ERIC PETERS



Rototilling aerates the soil.

He engineered a tract of sand into tillable soil

DeWitt Clinton Tyler began farming as hobby, but like many, when he retired, his hobby became a vocation—a labor of sweat and love. What makes a man work at something he'll never get rich at? What makes him till and plow and coddle five acres of valuable Oakland County real estate? . . . Ask DeWitt Clinton Tyler.

After a long career which took him around the world, DeWitt Clinton Tyler of Southfield responded to his original roots and went back to farming.

Tyler, whose father was a farmer-carrier agent, spent his working life as a refining and steam engineer. Working for the U.S. government in two world wars, he was sent to 36 countries to install refining equipment.

From Panama to Korea from South America to Pearl Harbor, Tyler made the rounds as a civilian engineer working with the Fifth Air Force. When the wars were done, he worked for Tuna Pines Dairy, Detroit Creamery, and operated his own refrigeration repair service.

Tyler, 73, began his farming hobby 30 years ago on five acres he bought south of Nine Mile between Telegraph and Beech roads. "I love to work in the garden every year," he said, and the mark of the soil is upon him more than all his world travels. "I would drive up after work and farm for several hours from sundown to dark. I enjoyed it. It wasn't work," he said with unrelenting enthusiasm. He now lives in a retirement home on the land with his wife and devotes most of his time to the tiny farm.

TYLER'S WIFE Grace remembered that when they first started DeWitt had only a horse and plow and for years specialized in strawberries. When her husband went overseas, Mrs. Tyler went to the farm every day to pick the berries with the aid of neighbor children and her sister. They sold the fruit from crates along the roadside.

Now Tyler plows and does the soil with a tractor and breaks it up with a rototiller. The range of crops has been expanded quite a bit, and he has his technique of farming.

Plants are begun from seed in a greenhouse attached to the house. In spring, time, crops are planted in the center of long strips of black plastic. This method is used for several reasons.

When the sun shines on sandy soil, Tyler explained, the ultraviolet rays are deflected and the plants cannot benefit. Black plastic permits the rays to pass through and hold them in the soil, giving the vegetables more flavor, he claimed. Plastic also controls weeds and holds moisture in the soil.

Tyler specializes in sweet onions, which are his biggest seller. They're so sweet you can eat 'em like apples," he said, "no tears in your eyes no odor on your breath."

He has developed a method of growing the onions which he said is unknown by anyone else. "People are always trying to find out how I do it, but I won't tell."

IN ADDITION to two varieties of onion (sweet and sweeter), Tyler grows early tomatoes, cabbage, egg plant, squash, pep-

pers, green string beans, Irish and sweet potatoes, and cantaloupes—sweet as honey. He also grows Italian tomatoes for the tomato sauce trade.

For over 30 years, Tyler has been building the land up from its original condition of blowing sand. An experimental General Mills farm on Northwestern sold him all its mature when it closed operation some years ago. Tyler worked all the mature into the sand and made it excellent for truck scale farming.

A well had to be dug, 40 by 80 by 16 feet deep. It is a reservoir sufficient to irrigate all his land. A network of pipes and sprinklers as used in nurseries is hooked up after each plowing and planting and removed before each harvesting.

The baculic hobby is not without its difficulties. In five years, Tyler has seen the price of a rototiller go from \$450 to \$1,050. Sprays and pesticides have more than tripled in price since tough environmental restrictions have limited or abolished the use of certain chemicals.

THE PRICE of enough blight powder to do his crops was \$20 a few years ago. Now, the same chemical is only available in liquid form, said Tyler, at \$110 for the same dosage. Chlorodane, for example, is used on the soil to control weeds, though not during growing season. Patency of the chemical for farming has recently dropped from 50 to eight per cent, while there is unlimited use of it in swimming pools, Tyler complained.

Actually, Tyler does a minimum of spraying to control pests. Many common pests simply do not bother his vegetables, he does not know why. He is not plagued by the white onion worms, nor by white butterflies that lay larvae on cabbages. "Every farmer in America has to spray for them," he said. Yet, he does not.

Tyler's simple way to keep tomato worms down is to burn the vines at the end of each summer. (Tuna tops are plowed back into the soil for humus, but if the same were done with tomatoes, worm

larvae would be re introduced into the soil. "We only see one or two worms a season now, but would have to spray constantly if we didn't burn the vines," he explained.

Now that the couple is in retirement, vegetable sales supplement their Social Security, but they could not live on farming alone. Grace Tyler noted that everything on the farm was for sale, including beautiful Blue Spruce trees as tall as 25 feet. The Tylers grow more plants than they need and sell the remainder to regular customers, who put them in their own gardens.

"QUITE A FEW come all the time. They know we have good stuff and know they can depend on us," said Mrs. Tyler. "Friends come over and pick peas and beans on shares, they keep a third of what they pick," she added.

About her husband's consuming hobby, she said, "I've had to go right along with him. It's very enjoyable, though it's nice to see anything grow."

In spring, his sister, Elsie, brings over stuffed animals, she makes and I sell them," said Mrs. Tyler. Granddaughter Donna comes to the farm in summer. She does some picking and lends a hand inside the house, using the money she earns to buy her school clothes.

How long will the couple go on with the farming? "DeWitt, who had a stroke last year, claimed he had plans to sell the land or quit working on it. Despite its greatly increased value, he has turned down all real estate offers and intends to continue doing so."

One reason for his feeling involves the memory of his father. "He was a great one to help young fellows get started. If you needed money, were just married and getting a start, or needed a horse for a trip, he would help out. He would lend the money." DeWitt Tyler has followed that example as best he could, a rare soul amidst a modern, rapidly expanding city which has few links to its past or even a generation ago.

"I love to work in the garden every year . . . I would drive up after work and farm for several hours from sundown to dark. I enjoyed it, it wasn't work."

—DeWitt Tyler



Tyler discs a tract of his truck garden. (Staff photos by Craig Newman)