

LAKE PLACID NEWS

ROTARY CLUB NEWS: Maple syrup was a calling for Quayles after retirement



Randy and Sibyl Quayle outside the Red Fox Maple pump shed (Photo provided)

What comes to mind when you think of retirement? Playing golf, enjoying the grandkids, and generally looking for ways to enjoy the easy life. Not the case for Randy and Sibyl Quayle.

Instead of opting for a laid-back retirement, they decided to take 15 acres of family-owned land and turn it into a sugar maple farm called Red Fox Maple.

More than 75 years ago, Sibyl's grandfather bought the land, which is situated on a hillside above the west shore of Lake Placid, to prevent it from being commercially developed.

Eight years ago, in the Fall of 2010 the couple decided to try their hand at maple syrup production. As with any start-up operation, they had their challenges from leaking vacuum lines to various mechanical problems. But with the help and guidance from Mike Farrell, former director of the Cornell/Uihlein Maple Sugar Station on Bear Cub Road, they managed to produce 450 gallons of syrup from 800 taps in their first year in operation.

According to Randy, "One of the main reasons Sibyl and I started this ambitious, and some might think crazy, project was to benefit the Shipman Youth Center. This project is near and dear to our hearts. It was very satisfying to donate \$2,000 from the profits of our first year of newly produced maple syrup. We now have about 1,000 taps in our sugarbush and each year the Shipman Youth Center sells over \$10,000 of our donated maple syrup."

Special thanks needs to go to the Cornell/Uihlein Maple Sugar Station – now under the director, Joe Orefice – which processes the Quayles's sap to make that sweet maple syrup each year. Of course, they couldn't have achieved this level of success without the generous help from many dedicated volunteers who helped set up taps, check for vacuum leaks, and manage many other tasks related to running a maple sugar operation.

A great volunteer success story involved one of the students from the Shipman Youth Center, Anthony Kordziel. He used the Quayles's property to research the maple industry for his senior project. As a result of his

fieldwork, he discovered a passion for the industry and decided to pursue his interest at the college level.

March and April are sugaring months with cold nights and warmer daytime temperatures. This coaxes the sap inside the trees to flow through the taps. The sap is usually crystal-clear with about 2 to 3 percent sugar content. It takes approximately 40 gallons of boiled sap to make one gallon of maple syrup. But before you can enjoy it on your Sunday morning pancakes, it still needs to be filtered, adjusted for density and graded for flavor and color.

“Although the business is extremely time consuming, it’s incredibly rewarding,” Randy said. “Sibyl and I enjoy the many walks with snowshoes through the woods while working in our sugarbush.”

Both Randy and Sibyl are involved in multiple community activities. For over 30 years, Randy worked as a psychologist for the Lake Placid Central School District and Sibyl worked as an early childhood educator. Randy’s current volunteer positions include serving as a board member of the Lake Placid Rotary Club, as well as a board member at the Adirondack Health hospital organization. In retirement, Sibyl organizes outreach programs at St. Eustace Episcopal Church and is on the board of the Educational Opportunity Fund.

The Rotary Club of Lake Placid is part of a global network of 1.2 million people who come together to make positive, lasting changes in communities locally, nationally and internationally.

The club meets every Thursday at 7:20 a.m. at the Marriott Courtyard. For more information, go to rotarylakeplacid.org.
