



The Appleknocker

Sebastopol Rotary Club's Weekly Bulletin

DeBunking of Keller McDonald



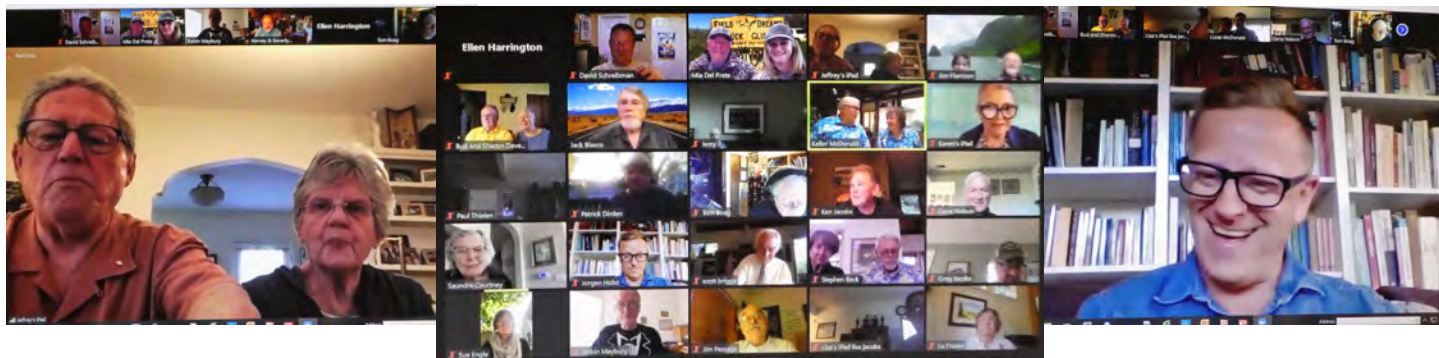
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Scribe: Patrick Dirden
Photog: David Schreibman, Robin Maybury
Editors: P. Dirden, D. Still, J. Holst, T. Boag, HH
President 2019/2020: Keller McDonald



"All the News that Fits We Print"



BEFORE THE BELL



Believe it or not, another Rotary year has ended, and what a wild year it's been. When the Rotary year began one year ago, little did we know that we would go through the threat of wildfire which had the potential to engulf half the county; endure a global pandemic that would change the fabric of our community and world; and become learned in the field of bird watching. Throughout this bumpy, unpredictable year, our steady, stalwart leader, **President Keller "Big Mac" McDonald**, led the Roto-flock through the good and the bad times. On this Saturday evening, we all gathered by our laptops to honor **Keller** for his leadership during such a trying year, and finally understand his obsession with birds. It's time to debunk **Keller McDonald**!

The Roto-flock came out in force for the de-bunking. People were still enjoying the special take out dinners prepared by **Mario Ramos** and the fine people at Mexico Lindo. The typical back and forth banter was stronger than ever. People were quite excited to see what **Ellen Harrington** and her debunking crew cooked up, and eager to hear the real story about **Keller**....the good, the bad, and the ugly. It was now time to show **Keller** the door in true Rotary style, and induct our new victim...err **Incoming President, Dan Rasmus**.



AT THE BELL



At 6:30 PM sharp, our emcee for the night, ex Ringling Bros carnival barker and weight guesser, **Jack Blasco**, brought the debunking to a start. **Jack** first explained that four mysterious packages were left on **Keller's** doorstep. The stink bomb was not from us! Throughout the night, he would be instructed when to open each package. With the housekeeping out of the way, **Jack** immediately spotlighted our virtual bartender and mixologist, **Mia Del Prete**, who instructed **Keller** to open box number one. Inside were all of the ingredients to make an old fashioned: leftover bourbon from the crab feed (watch for the crab shells), bitters, and two glasses. Hopefully **Keller** made it a strong one, he'd need it!

🍎 Future Programs 🍎

DARK – No Meeting
July 3

Jeff Davidson
Camino de Santiago
July 10

Bill Braga
Sebastopol Fire Chief
July 17

Dee Schweitzer
Sonoma County Grand Jury
July 24

Alex Padilla
Election Integrity in California
August 7

🍎 Miscellany 🍎

MAKEUP NOTIFICATIONS--scottbriggs50@yahoo.com

On-line Make-Ups:

www.RotaryEClubOne.org

Domestic Violence Hotline:
707-546-1234

sebastopolrotary.com



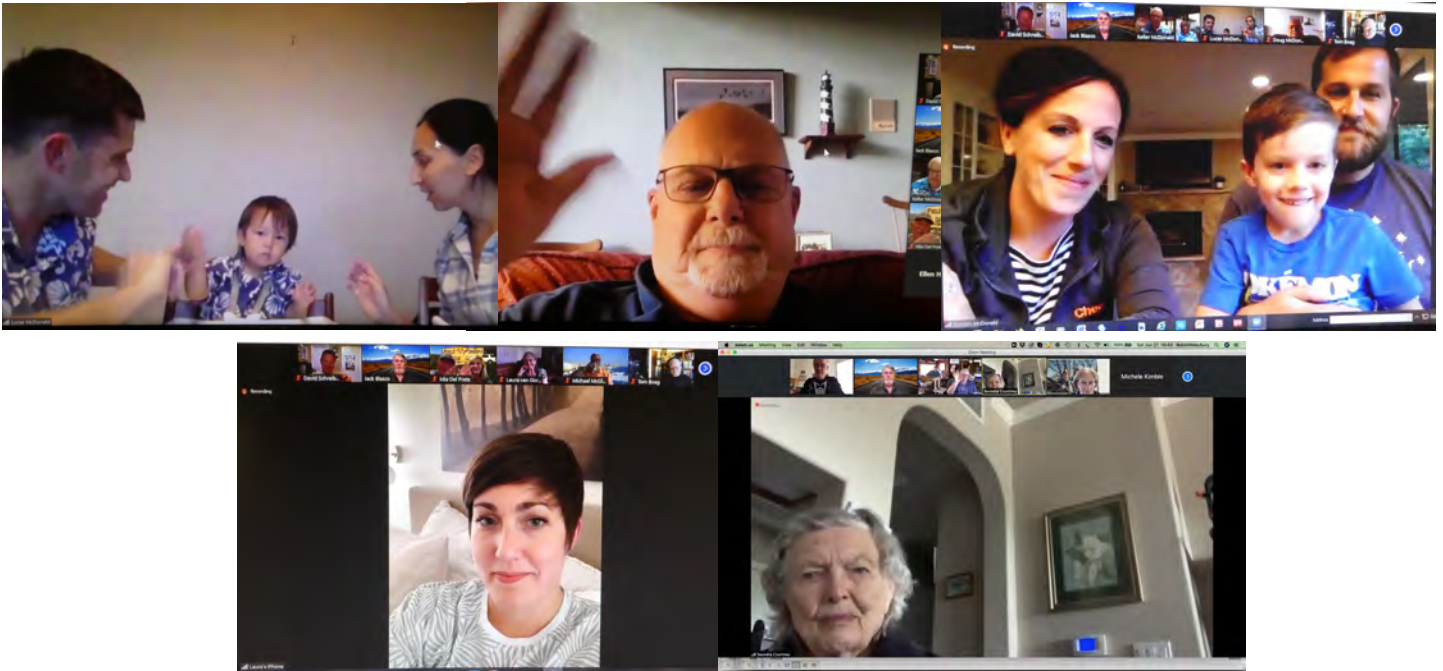
Past President and District Governor, **Bob Rogers**, gave us a beautiful thought for the day rest of **Keller's** life.

"Namaste is a Sanskrit word that means: *the divine spark in me bows to the divine spark in you*. In other words, it is saying, on some days, you or I may be tired, ill-behaved, or deeply flawed; but today, in this moment, we connect, I seek to offer you the best in me, and I strive to draw out the best in you. What better way to pursue this goal than to start and close every interaction by pressing palm against palm to gently affirm the untapped heroic potential that lies within everyone you engage with? Because, as Gandhi once said, *the difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems.*"

🍎 VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS 🍎

Everybody came out of the back woods to see **Keller** roasted over an open fire! The McDonald family was well represented. His brother, past president of the Rotary Club of Penn Valley, and past District 5190 Governor, Doug McDonald, was in the zoom house. Also joining in the tomfoolery was Keller's children. From San Diego, his son Luke, wife Vicky, and grandson Stevie. From Santa Rosa, his son Gordon, wife Laura, and grandson, "Pokémon Man" Graham. His daughter Laura also made an appearance in the zoom house. **Keller's** mom, Shirley, also zoomed in to see the fun. Last, but certainly not least, **Keller's** partner in crime, and partner in life, first lady **Marsha**. You can't pick your family, but you can pick your friends, so you have our condolences

We also had several visiting Rotarians in the zoom house, including District Governor Nominee Joseph Hatfield; current District Governor Kathy Flamson; past District Governor, and DG chauffer, Jim Flamson; Linda Sinkay from Sebastopol



Sunrise; “Tamale Man” Michael McGlothlin from Sebastopol Sunrise; Blaine from Sparks, NV; and Audrey and Clint Stevenson. Dan Bornstein was called away for an emergency triple root canal.

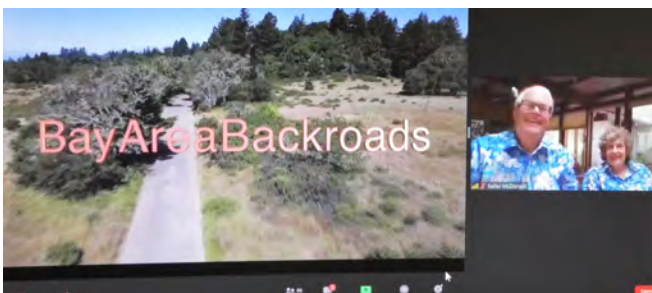


THE DEBUNKING OF KELLER



Jack offered the understatement of the Rotary year: “It’s been a year like none other.” Just as the Rotary year was in full swing, Mother Nature threw an obstacle in our way, the massive Kincade Fire. As **Keller** and fellow Rotarians were busy getting the Santa Rosa Golf & Country Club decked out for our annual fundraiser, Tropical Escape, the lights went out, and the smoke and flames moved in. From challenge, **Keller** saw opportunity. Four months later, we had a successful Tropical Escape fundraiser, and a record paddle raise, benefiting the North Bay Construction Corps. We worked side by side with Sebastopol Sunrise to craft and sell oodles and oodles of tamales to raise money for a new Super Playground. The COVID 19 pandemic almost brought our club to a halt. But, thanks to zoom,

we nimbly and successfully moved our meetings online. We also quickly re-focused our charity giving to give grants to local businesses, help local non-profits in our community, give gift certificates to front line workers, and give a generous gratuity to our caterer, Trends Catering. In the face of adversity, we adapted, persisted, and overcame our own obstacles.



It was time for **Keller** to open box number two. Rather than carefully opening the paper, he tore right through it! Inside was a beautiful glass plaque, the Rotary Club Meritorious Service Award, made out to **Keller McDonald**. It was now time for the show! The DeBunking committee spared no expense, and brought famous traveling reporter, Doug McConnell, out of retirement, to resurrect a famous show known to most Bay Area natives, “Bay Area Backroads.” So, hop in, sit down, buckle up, and hold on. Geez, Doug McConnell looks a lot like **Dan Rasmus**. Who knew!

Doug promised to take us down a road like none other. We weren’t visiting a museum, a landmark, or hanging with a celebrity. We were going to learn about a normal person, a duck hunting, bird loving, Rotary President named **Keller McDonald**. In order to get the whole story, we were all bound for Petaluma, Leslie County, KY, Middletown, Willits, and Sebastopol. Before we started, we learned that **Keller** was once a school administrator, and a past Rotary Board president in both Willits and Middletown. Was his third time as a Rotary President a charm, or was it three strikes you’re out?

The journey started in the childhood home of **Keller’s** in Petaluma, home of butter, eggs, and arm wrestling, all of which took place in the McDonald breakfast table. **Keller’s** brother, Doug, gave us the dope on **Keller’s** childhood. We learned



that **Keller** was an all-American boy. The Boy Scouts played a big role in his life, growing up to being an Eagle Scout and Fine Feather. His first scout leader opened **Keller's** eyes to joining a service club (not Kiwanis), become a school administrator, and to love, and shoot birds. When **Keller** moved to UC Davis, he majored in Aviary Science, and excelled in his tractor driving class. **Keller** then joined the first co-ed class at Dominican University, earning his teaching credential, and becoming a life-long Dominican Penguin. After marrying **Marsha**, they moved onto a houseboat in Novato, where **Keller** could fish, watch and shoot birds from each window. Soon, **Keller** and **Marsha** found it was time to spread their wings, reach for the stars, and move to.....Leslie County, KY?????

The journey continued across the country, deep into Appalachia, to the tiny backwater town of Hyden, KY. **Marsha** got her first job as a Nurse Practitioner, and **Keller** got his first teaching job teaching history, coaching football, and driving the school bus. It was the longest three years of his life, especially since Leslie County was dry! **Doug** tracked down **Bobby Bobby Joe**, one of **Keller's** former students. He had **Keller** for all three years of eighth-grade. **Bobby Bobby** said **Keller** had a hard time learning people's names, even though everyone had the same last name. The local squirrels and possums laughed at **Keller's** fancy duck hunting shotgun. If it wasn't for roadkill, **Keller** and **Marsha** wouldn't have survived. **Bobby Bobby** also said that **Keller** attempted to get the football players to wear helmets. They all frowned on it, until they learned it was a great way to store moonshine! We also learned that **Old Lady Jones** put a hex on Keller, because he cheated his grandson out of a championship game. Her grandson couldn't kick the ball! As **Keller** and **Marsha** left the holler, **Old Lady Jones** wished fire, flood, plague, and pestilence would follow them. Just an old wives' tale!



Back to California we go, where **Keller** traded moonshine, for sunshine. Onto Middletown, where it felt like the holler, except for the moonshine. **Keller** took a job as a teacher and a coach. His former co-worker, **Richard**, spilled the inside dope on **Keller's** time there. We learned that **Keller** was a rotten football coach, and was a horrid duck cook. We also learned that **Keller** harbored a secret fantasy....cross dressing! **Richard** told us that

during a dinner with the football team, he forced **Richard** to change into a dress, so the two of them could resemble waitresses, and serve the team dinner. **Richard** met **Keller** when he came into a local bank to get a loan, because he was facing a lawsuit from a large restaurant chain, due to **Keller's** nickname, "Big Mac." **Richard** shared one of his most dreaded moments, being invited to **Keller's** for a duck dinner! The duck was so tough, it was only suitable for his dog, which got plenty of table scraps! Well, after dozens of doors were closed in **Doug's** face, he could only assume destiny beckoned **Keller's** move to the thriving metropolis of Willits.

Willits, gateway to the redwoods, home of the Skunk Train, and **Keller's** next job, Principal/Administrator of Willits High School. His former coworker, **Steve Jorgensen**, spilled the beans on **Keller**. **Steve's** first impression of **Keller** was quite blunt: "what a horse's a**!" **Keller** looked like he was drowning, desperately trying to learn people's last names. Only having to learn two last names in the holler, and two additional last names in Middletown, it was a tough climb! **Steve** told us that **Keller** moved from Kentucky to California, because **Marsha** did not want her child being a second language learner. The unique language of the holler got the best of **Keller**, especially when he was caught driving in the HOV lane. We also learned that **Keller's** idea of a nice dinner and a good time was a Hot Dog dinner at the local John Deere dealer! Plotting his next move, **Keller** visited the Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools, to attempt to woo them into a new job. He made a big impression, despite his fly being open! **Keller** was one not to stand still, the job couldn't keep him, or was it he couldn't keep the job?

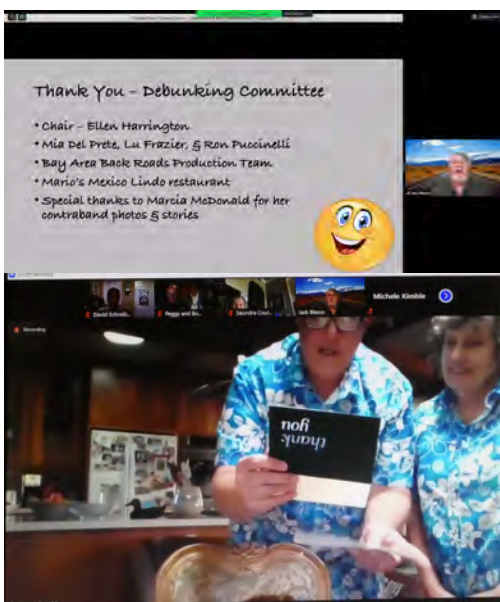


Our final stop was in Sebastopol, famous for things that are no longer there, and for being a Nuclear Free Zone. **Keller** became Superintendent of the West Sonoma County High School District. After another Round of doors slamming in **Doug's**



face, he managed to convince, or bribe, one of the McDonald family's longest friend's, Marty Webb, to share the real story! Turns out Marty was on Keller's interview committee. Rumors of **Keller's** gig being an inside job were crushed by Marty. He had to disclose to personnel that he unfortunately knew **Keller**. **Keller** turned out to be a creative chap, especially when a student tried to smoke medicinal marijuana on campus. Marty shared a little secret about **Keller**, he was declared a Colonel back in the holler, and had the plaque to prove it, or was it a bucket that smelt of dead birds?

Despite another round of doors slamming in Doug's face (anyone else notice a pattern here), he managed to find a cache of old home movies featuring **Keller**. Hopefully these movies would finally answer a question plaguing everyone: why would a bird lover shoot ducks? Call it revenge. After a rogue duck dropped a calling card on **Keller's** jacket, he repaid the favor with a calling card full of lead. After this, **Keller** invested in military grade hunting equipment. The flame thrower might be too much, **Keller**.



Well, all crazy things must come to an end! Doug shared thanks to the family and friends of **Keller** for all the stories, and for being a damn good scout! As the show came to an end, the traditional, folksy closing music of "Bay Area Backroads", was replaced with a beautiful, custom made version of "Take a load off Annie," and re-titled "Take a load off Keller", featuring the Roto-Band. There were few dry eyes in the zoom house.

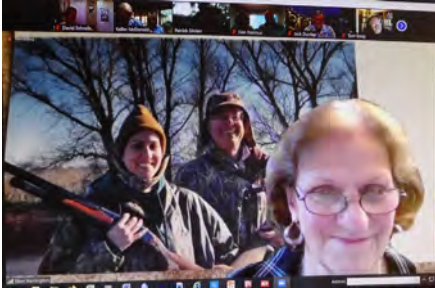
Keller gave his thanks to the Debunking Committee and all of the talented actors and actresses who participated in Rotary's version of "Bay Area Backroads", and the lovely song. **Keller** also thanked **Mario Ramos** for organizing an amazing take out dinner for Debunking. Our emcee, **Jack**, instructed Keller to open box number three. Inside the box was a nice thank you card, a Northern Flicker Bird Box (perfect for owls and woodpeckers), 2021 season tickets for Transcendence Theater and Broadway Under the Stars, and a gift certificate to Tips Roadhouse.



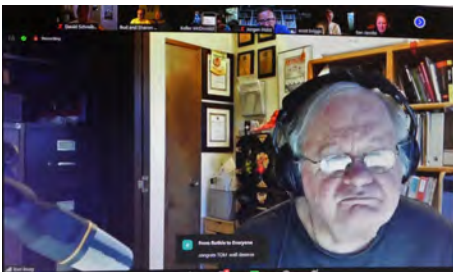
RECOGNITIONS



Keller gave a heart-felt thanks to his "dream team" board of directors. He started with past president **Larry Ford**, thanking him for providing great continuity, wisdom, and for being a shoulder to cry on. **Keller** then moved to **Incoming President Dan Rasmus**, thanking him for his positive energy, common sense, and for the energy he devoted to launching the North Bay Construction Corps. **Keller** then moved on to outgoing club secretary **Jack Dunlap**. He thanking Jack for his four years of work, solid dedication, and for being the wind beneath our club's wings. **Keller** then moved onto our stalwart club treasurer, **Ken Jacobs**. He thanked **Ken** for juggling the AV Board and two sets of books, all at the same time. He also thanked **Ken** for being the AAA tow truck driver, towing the club out of the fiscal ditch. He then moved to Club Services Director **Patrick Dirden**, thanking him for his work on the AppleKnocker and the Crab Feed. He then moved to Club Activities Director **Ellen Harrington**. He thanked **Ellen** for all of the great parties she helped organize, and for her hard work arranging sponsorships and the Tropical Escape silent auction. He then moved on to Community Service Director **Scott Briggs**. He thanked **Scott** for his hard work on the Crab Feed, community projects, and SRJC Scholarships. He

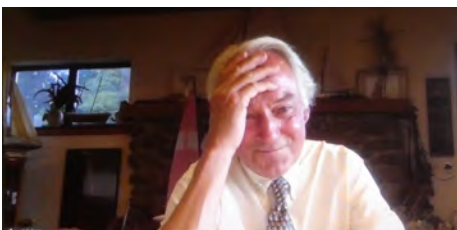


also thanked **Scott** for his flexibility and leadership in re-directing community grants to our COVID 19 response. He then moved to Youth and Vocational Services Director, **Jorgen Holst**. He thanked **Jorgen** for all of his work ensuring a successful year for our Interact Clubs, Youth Exchange program, and Overcoming Obstacles. He also thanked **Jorgen** for his two years as program chair. Last, but certainly not least, was International Services Director **Bud Daviero**. **Keller** thanked **Bud** for being a rock and a treasure to our club. His leadership helped our club become number one in giving in District 5130. **Keller** presented each board member with a Laser Cut wooden ornament, and a hummingbird feeder.



Keller's next to last duty was to present the 2019 – 2020 club awards. The first award, the Zoom Techie Award went to our own tech master extraordinaire, **Tom Boag**. **Tom** helped our club immediately go virtual, and was there to assist with any tech issue.

The second award, the Rookie of the Year, went to **Mete Senocak**. Joining the club in January, **Mete** quickly jumped on board many committees, and has been a great addition to our club.



The third, and final award, the Rotarian of the Year, went to **Scott Briggs**. He helped lead our Crab Feed to great success, and helped guide our community fundraising response to COVID 19. Many congratulations to our winners!



THE TRANSFER OF PINS



Since we were meeting virtually, the traditional transfer of pins took place virtually, under a sanitary process Dr Anthony Fauci would approve of. Wearing masks and holding long plastic tongs, **Keller** passed the President's Pin to **Dan Rasmus**. **Larry Ford** passed the Past President's pin to **Keller**. **Dan** passed the Incoming President's pin to **Ellen Harrington**. **Keller** was now a free man! The sanitary condition of the pins could not be assured. Same with the Roto Bell, which was now in the hands of **Dan Rasmus**. Oh dear!



Keller's final box, box number four was opened. Inside was a beautiful plaque containing **Keller's** gavel.



Dan took the opportunity to thank **Keller** for a wonderful, success filled year. He then introduced his incoming board: Past President **Keller McDonald**, Incoming President **Ellen Harrington**, Treasurer **Ken Jacobs**, Secretary **Scott Briggs**, Club Services Director **Bob Boyd**, Club Activities Director **John Blount**, Community Services Director **Cindy Carter-Flamm**, Youth and Vocational Services Director **Robin Maybury**, and International Services Director **Steve Prandini**.



THE FINAL BELL



After a de-bunking like no other, our new **President, Dan Rasmus**, brought the debunking of **Keller McDonald** to an end.

On behalf of the AppleKnocker crew, we would like to thank **Keller McDonald** for a successful Rotary year, and for his leadership and dedication. We would also like to wish **President Dan Rasmus** the best of luck in the coming Rotary Year.

Look for the second edition of the AppleKnocker for more fun photos from Saturday's DeBunking!

If you missed Saturday's DeBunking, fear not! You can watch it here: <https://vimeo.com/434925344>



COMING ATTRACTIONS



July 10, 2020 Jeff Davidson – Camino de Santiago

The Camino de Santiago is a 500 mile pilgrimage beginning in southern France, crossing the Pyrenees Mountains and the width of northern Spain, culminating at the Cathedral in Santiago de Compostela. For over 1,000 years pilgrims from around the world have walked this ancient path. Jeff Davidson will be sharing his experience walking the Camino in June of 2015.

Jeff, a fifth generation Marin County resident and was a firefighter for 38 years, who retired in 2014 as the Fire Chief of the Mill Valley Fire Department. Currently, Jeff is Program Manager for the Santa Rosa Junior College Fire Technology Program and is an active member of the North Bay Incident Management Team.

Jeff will offer stunning visuals as he walks through some of Europe's most beautiful country side. He tells a great story about the people he meets along the way and will give us a fascinating glimpse at the logistics and equipment utilized to make this 500 mile journey. This is a program not to miss.