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2016 MACC Member Anniversary Highlights

MACC would like to highlight our members who have had anniversaries in 2016, and who have been operating as a cooperative 50 to 100 years. Below, we have showcased three of our MACC members, who fit in that category.



MBG Marketing- MBG Marketing (MBG) celebrated 80-years of agricultural cooperative leadership in the blueberry industry on November 2, 2016. MBG, formed in southwest Michigan in 1936 as Michigan Blueberry Growers Association, has successfully grown to include grower-owners from the great states of Michigan, Indiana, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Washington, Oregon, New Jersey and British Columbia, Canada. Back in 1943, John R. Spelman, one of the original 13-members of MBG, made the following predictions for the blueberry industry: "I predict that South Haven will become known as the center of the industry that southwestern Michigan will become the greatest grower

of hybrid blueberries in the United States . . . that this frosty, sour, acid, swampy land in southwestern Michigan, now considered almost worthless, will be valuable land someday. I further predict that the most difficult things ahead are to get enough people to pick the berries, to get enough people to buy the berries after they are picked, to keep the growers in one marketing association and to keep our grades of berries up to standard. Many things may have changed since then, but so many have stayed the same! And just as the ten men present at the preliminary organizational meeting 80-years ago took a leap of faith to form this association, our current 250+ members continue to have faith in their cooperative organization to find the best buyers for their berries, as they continue to strive to find enough labor to pick their berries, while maintaining the highest quality standards. MBG Marketing proudly celebrates 80-years of sweet success!



Michigan Milk Producers Association - The Michigan Milk Producers Association (MPPA) recognized its 100th Anniversary at the Justin Morrill Hall of Agriculture at Michigan State University (MSU), on May 23, 2016. The cooperative was founded in that same building 100 years prior on May 23, 1916. In celebration of the event, MPPA announced the contribution of \$100,000 toward animal agriculture research programs at MSU. The contribution was designed to work in conjunction with the efforts of the Michigan Alliance for Animal Agriculture. The funding will support research for the advancement of the animal agriculture industry, in priority areas such as bovine tuberculosis, sustainability and workforce development. "With great pride MPPA marks this occasion and we celebrate the day when the innovative dairy leaders of 1916 began our cooperative," said *Ken Nobis, MPPA president and dairy farmer*. Michigan Milk Producers Association, established in 1916, is a member-owned and controlled milk marketing cooperative serving approximately 2,000 dairy farmers in Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin and Ohio. MPPA is a long-standing member of the Mid America Cooperative Council.



United Hospital Services - "We are proud to celebrate 50 years of providing customers with one of their most important supplies—clean linen and uniforms—every day, rain or shine," said *UHS President and CEO Edward McCauley*. "I attribute our success to the strong support of the business community, our hard-working employees and great relationships with suppliers." UHS says the laundry cooperative is the largest in Indiana and one of the largest in the country. The facility currently provides clean linen and uniforms for 55 hospitals and 700-plus clinics in the region. That translates to almost 42 million pounds of laundry each year. *MACC Executive Director, Rod Kelsay*, who attended the anniversary celebration said "This celebration is a wonderful example of a successful cooperative business. The founders were the community and business leaders in Indianapolis, during the middle part of the 20th century. The vision of working together for mutual benefit resulted in a world class health care service cooperative. We wish our MACC member continued success in the years to come."

Meet New MACC Director Rob Zeldenrust



Rob Zeldenrust was raised on a Dairy Farm in Fremont, Mi. and worked at the Fremont Cooperative Produce Company for twenty-two years, eighteen as the General Manager. Fremont Co-op and North Central Cooperatives merged in 2010, after which Rob served as the Sr. Business Manager in Michigan.

During this time, he managed the start-up operations of the Fremont Community Digester, an Anaerobic Bio-digester located in Fremont, MI; serving as Vice President of Business Operations for NOVI Energy, the developing partner of FCD. Rob returned to NCC as the Sr. Agronomy Manager on July 1, 2013, serving farmers in north central Indiana, south central, and western Michigan.

Rob has been active in local, civic and trade organizations including Trustee of the Fremont Area Community Foundation, serving as the Board Chair. Rob served on the initial MACC board of directors, including the recruitment and hiring of the current *Executive Director, Rod Kelsay*.

Rob has consulted on International Cooperative Development projects in Croatia and Africa through ACDI/VOCA and the U.S. State Department. Rob is a graduate of Fremont High School, and Michigan State University. Rob is married with 2 grown children, and 1 granddaughter.

Rob will join the MACC Board in 2017.

2017 MAC-ED PROGRAM CALENDAR

Michigan Directors' and Board Members' Conference

January 24-25	Lansing, MI	Henry Center/MSU
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Cooperative Leadership Forum

February 22-23	Oxford, OH	Miami University
March 7-8	Oxford, OH	Miami University

Co-ops101 Classes

February 21	Louisville, KY	Farm Credit Mid-America
May 16	Louisville, KY	Farm Credit Mid-America
June 27	Tiffin, OH	Ag Credit
August 15	Louisville, KY	Farm Credit Mid-America
December 14	Louisville, KY	Farm Credit Mid-America

(please check our website at <http://macc.coop/> for future updates)

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Rod's Thoughts



As we end 2016 and begin 2017, MACC is taking this time to showcase some of our members who are celebrating significant anniversaries. **Michigan Milk Producers Association** is celebrating their centennial anniversary, while **MBG Marketing** is one score short of their centennial anniversary.

Both of these Michigan based cooperatives were formed during difficult times. Their founding fathers were farmers who produced a perishable food product that is very nutritious, but can spoil without an immediate market. Without coolers and refrigeration that was still being developed, their industry needed stable market agreements. The success of their farmer members/owners depended on the success of these cooperatives.

United Hospital Services celebrated a half century, and continues to show how independent health care institutions can successfully serve their mutual laundry needs through their cooperative. Their coop's success has been based on meeting each member's unique needs at the lowest cost of service. Over time, United Hospital Services strives for world class levels of cost efficiency, while also delivering outstanding quality of service for each member. Their founding fathers were the leaders of the city of Indianapolis who desired a world class health care institution for their growing community. These leaders believed that the success of Indianapolis was, partially, dependent upon achieving this goal.

The legacy of each cooperative's founding fathers is the long-term operations of these successful cooperatives. I think these founders would be very proud of the sustained success of these cooperatives and how they still meet the needs of each member. In order to achieve this level of success, each of these cooperatives have been managed like a business that is striving for being profitable in meeting their customers' and member/owners' needs. Their investment in people, knowledge, and equipment has paid off for their members and customers.

As leaders of your cooperatives, you have inherited this spirit of urgency for efficiency while always focusing on your quality of product and services. You have also set the vision for your cooperative that focuses on great people, who are trained in both excellence of business application as well as the knowledge of their cooperative culture. These individuals work together to operate your cooperative and serve your member/owners' changing needs. Your legacy is the sustained success of your cooperative.

What will be the legacy of our emerging leaders, the sons and daughters of our co-op members? Will the priorities we set today continue to embellish the success of our future cooperatives? Are we committing some of our profits to investments in the next generation of leaders? We know we will need to be ever more ready to participate in a world based economy.

The legacy of our future leaders is being developed, today. Let us remind them of the vision our founding fathers had for our cooperative's success, and teach them the principals in achieving that success. Our future legacy is dependent on striving to be the best and sharing the culture of our past.