



HOT POTATO

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Rotary Club of Wayland, New York, D7120

Patrice Lysell, president

Thomas Quinlan, secretary

Bear Population Increases In Our Area

A dozen Rotarians and three guests attended last week's meeting, which boasted beautiful weather for the third week in a row, I think.

President Pat introduced all guests herself this evening. Marty DeLong and his daughter Sarah would present the program later this evening, and Kerrigan was invited by her mother Janine Miceli to hear about the bears.

The meal started with coleslaw, which led to speculations about fish. This proved to be wrong. Kelly started bringing in Prime Rib with mashed potato, au jus and green beans! Good stuff! After this, a little lighter fare was in order for dessert in the form of red Jello with whipped cream on top.

Jim Burns started the confessions. He had added a big screened in porch to the house, and he generously didn't think a five dollar fine was too bad.

Sharon Vogt had reason to be happy with her daughter's exceptional 4.0 GPA, leading up to her business degree, and tossed in a happy buck for that.

Art Traphagen was sorry he missed the roadside cleaning, but he had attended the funeral of PDG Charles Clemens' father in Bath the same day. He did have some things to be happy about, however, the twin grandsons had their First Communion the next day, and I think there was a

Confirmation in there too. He added a couple of bucks to the pan.

Tom Quinlan couldn't clean the road either because he had attended a wedding in the Catskills. Three bucks suggested Pat.

President Pat put in five happy ones for something I didn't catch. I'm glad she is happy.

Bob Radell had traveled to New Jersey over the weekend to visit with son and daughter-in-law. The visit had involved a lot of yard work, of course. (Wayland Rotarians seem to be in great demand for various services when they travel.) I think Pat fined him three bucks.

Bears in the Allegany

Marty DeLong visited us several years ago to talk about the tracking techniques the DEC use for bears. He brought some of the equipment that time, which was of particular interest to a HAM radio operator like myself. This time, he brought a slide projector instead, ably operated by his daughter Sarah. She had just come home from college in Plattsburgh, where she studies biology.

When I mention Allegany, it is the name of our district, or reserve for bear purposes, which includes Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Allegany, Steuben and Livingston counties. Maybe Ontario was mentioned as well. In this

area, the bear population is estimated to be between 800 to 1000 animals. One of Marty's duties as a technician at the Avon DEC office is to tag and track bears, so that we may gain better insight into these animals' habits. He does many other things, but bears interest him the most on a personal level.

The slideshow started with a neat photo of two bear paw-prints, one within the other. A cub must have stepped neatly right into its mother's step. Another slide showed a close up of a bear paw from the bottom. It looked quite similar to a human one.

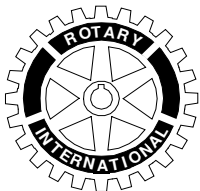
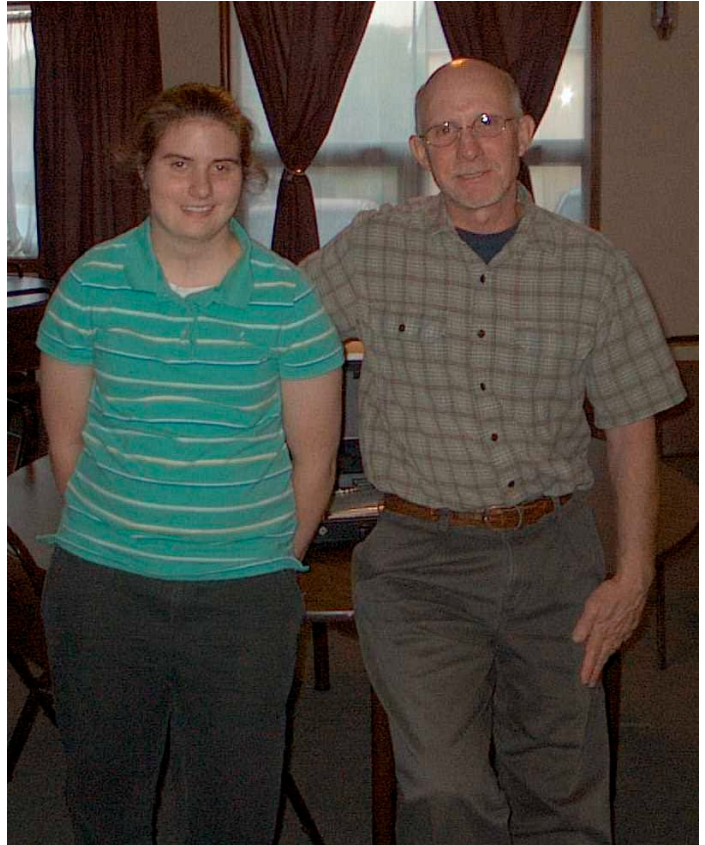
Other signs of bear were photos of dung with undigested pits. This verifies what their main diet is, - fruit and berries. They won't say no to honey, however, and one slide showed the completely demolished side of a house. The reason was that a bear had sniffed out a bees nest in the wall of an old house, and proceeded to tear off the clap boards to win the prize!

The bear is omnivorous, and Marty had an example slide of a goat carcass. They were sure that a bear was responsible because the goat was found in the woods, where it had been moved, complete with the 50lb concrete block it was chained to. He did not think that meat constituted more than 20% of their diet, if that much.

The tracking equipment and method has changed since we last met Marty. They no longer have to lug a VHF Yagi antenna in the woods. Instead, the collars now have a GPS receiver, which uses a microwave transmitter

to send its position to a satellite at regular intervals, where it is stored or relayed to the DEC. The DEC can then study the positions from all the bears at their convenience. The collars are very expensive (\$3,000), but so reliable that they haven't lost one yet.

Marty pleaded with us, not to feed bears. It is risky for one thing, not only for us, but also for the bears. As the population increases, we will have more instances of bear collisions with cars and trains, for example.



Wayland Rotary Club
C/o Bo Lysell, editor
4535 Rt 21
Atlanta, NY 14808