

>> about 80 years, flowers only once and then it dies,” but not before it produces many thousands of seeds.

MBC is home to 13 of the 20 such palms left on the planet. “The ones we have are only about 18 years old ... and they really need our help in order to survive.”

To that end, MBC plays host to scientists from around the world who research the center’s collections and detailed records. The center also has some 20 volunteers and a staff of 25—15 of whom work on the grounds and, incidentally, use a Massey Ferguson® 2650 to cut the 45 acres of grass growing under and around the center’s valuable and often delicate inhabitants.

The tractor, which is also seen in the photo on the previous page, is not only precise in steering and handling, it has also provided MBC a “great efficiency gain,” says Griffith. “It’s an awesome machine.”

The use of a tractor isn’t the only thing Griffith and crew have in common with farmers and homesteaders. “We have a lot of permitting from the agriculture departments,” he notes, only half-jokingly.

“And you may say that, at that fundamental and personal level, what we do also requires a very sensitive and productive relationship with the land. We’re growing plants, and the basic cultivation techniques are absolutely the same as you’d see at an orchard.”



Lyle Yost Remembered

FARMER, PILOT, INVENTOR, ENTREPRENEUR, PHILANTHROPIST: Lyle Yost wore many hats in his 99 years of life, but his mission was simple: to improve the life of the farmer.

Knowing that a farmer’s livelihood depends on getting grain harvested and stored while the sun shines, Yost grew impatient with the harvesting time lost in manually unloading stopped combines. To save the day, he invented an unloading auger, and in 1947 started a factory in his hometown of Hesston, Kan., to manufacture the new product. In 1955, Yost oversaw the development of the first self-propelled swathers, identifying Hesston, his company—and the city itself—with hay handling equipment.

Yost became the founding president, CEO and chair of the board of Hesston Manufacturing, the predecessor of what is now AGCO Corporation’s Hesston, Kan., facility. He was an innovator who refused to concede that something he dreamed of couldn’t be done. He surrounded himself with people who could implement his ideas, and consulted with farmers constantly to forecast and fine-tune their equipment needs.

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As his factory prospered, Yost promoted the city as well. “Dad insisted that all the streets be paved, curbed and guttered,” Susan Yost said. Her father’s legacy of leadership and philanthropy also impacted Hesston College where Yost Center, an athletic and physical education facility, attests to its namesake’s desire to give.

“Lyle really did a lot to shape the community,” says city manager John Carder.

A new facility built to help young people learn the sport Yost loved is being dedicated this spring at Hesston Golf Park. The Dean Adkisson Learning Center—completed entirely with donated money and services—honors Hesston’s first golf pro, Adkisson, and founders Yost, Roy Mullet and LeRoy King, whose philanthropy made the municipal course possible.

As we go to press, Hesston Mayor David Kauffman had proclaimed March 5, 2013—Yost’s 100th birthday—as Lyle Yost Day, a time for the town to remember a man who did so much for their community and farmers everywhere. —Susan Miller



PHOTO: ENIDIA WITCHER

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For more information about MBC and to see videos of the gardens there, visit myFarmLife.com/landofthelost.