Hello to all

     The weather has been beautiful this week and my garden is looking great.  I have started harvesting kale, mustard greens and Swiss chard.  I have been selling some of these at the Monroe Street Coop, but not much else is ready.  Everything is up and growing, however.  I worried in a recent e-mail about whether the first planting of carrots had a good stand.  It turns out that they germinated great and they have now been weeded and thinned and are looking great.  The second planting is up now, although so tiny that they still look like tiny newly sprout grass.  I will plant the third planting today.  I also plan to plant a third planting of green beans, beets and sweet corn.  Hopefully I can plant Brussels sprouts and one planting of edamame this weekend.

     I had a great time at the South Bend 150th party 2 weekends ago.  It reminded me of a big 150th celebration in my hometown, Rushville, IL.  This happened in 1974 or so.  Rushville is so much older (and more culturally advanced) than South Bend.  Anyway they made a rule that all of the men in town and even all the farmers in the county had to grow a beard for the sesquicentennial or pay a $5 shaving fee for the right to be clean shaven.  That was the greatest thing about the entire celebration.  I often think of all the men in Rushville as burly, bearded men, but that wasn't the case when I was young.  In 1974 the young men wore beards, but the middle-aged men were WW II and Korean war vets and they were almost all clean shaven.  But that summer they grew all kinds of beards.  Some grew just regular unkempt bushy beards like the young guys, but others grew fantatstic facial hair like Civil war generals.

     Another great thing about that summer was that we had a great calf catching contest at the fair.  They turned loose a bunch of 500 lbs weaned calves without halters and a bunch of kids with halters.  The idea was that you had to get the halter on a calf and then drag him across the finish line with the halter and the calf was yours, with the only stipulation being that you had to train him to walk on a halter and bring him back to the fair the next year and show him.   Anyway at 13 I was about 90 lbs and this big black and white faced calf (who I named Oscar) was 500 lbs and had never had a rope or halter on him, but I managed to catch him and  drag him across the line and he was mine.  It was a great day.

     These beautiful summer days are great ones to be working in the garden.  There is still time to become a member for this season.  The membership is a bit down this year as several long time mebers have chosen not to join this year.  I would love to have new members.  I am selling vegetables to Rocky River farm to table restaurant and the Monroe Street Co-op and perhaps at the purple porch this year.  Brett