



3RD STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

The Associated Press

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March 13, 1998, Friday, PM cycle

SECTION: Business News

LENGTH: 508 words

HEADLINE: Engineering job, life long ago merged into one for oldest known worker

BYLINE: By LAWRENCE L. KNUTSON, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

Engineer Milton Garland could have left the workplace 37 years ago. He did not even think about it. Now he is 102 and the nation's oldest known worker.

Garland says he does not worry, believes every problem has a solution, thinks common sense will handle most difficulties, eats almost anything but cannot stand sauerkraut.

He also could not dally in Washington after a whirlwind day that included a banquet honoring older American workers and a meeting with first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. He had to teach an engineering class in the morning.

Garland has worked for the same Pennsylvania engineering firm since 1920, so long that he thinks life and work are about the same thing.

"I don't think age has anything to do with your desire to work," Garland told a news conference at the National Press Club on Thursday. He said he was in charge when his company installed the building's refrigeration equipment in the late 1920s.

Question: "Where would you be if you had retired 37 years ago at age 65?"

Answer: "I'd be in my grave."

At 102, Garland is not only not in his grave, he is the new symbol of older working adults across the country. He was chosen for the role by an organization called Green Thumb, which champions older workers. The qualifications were simple. Work at least 20 hours a week and have the earliest birth date Green Thumb could find.

"I love the work I am doing," Garland said, leaning forward in his vested, dark pinstripe suit. "My advice is to go into something and stay with it until you like it. You can't like it until you obtain expertise in that work. Once you are an expert, it's a pleasure. And once you like what you do, you don't like to quit doing it."

The Associated Press, March 13, 1998

Garland is an expert in what he does, although he now works about 20 hours a week. He holds 40 patents, mostly involving innovations in refrigeration technology. He helped perfect the production of synthetic rubber during World War II.

At the news conference, Garland had no problem fielding questions.

Does he have a special diet?

"I eat anything but sauerkraut," he replied, a definite edge in his deliberately raised voice.

He stays away from most desserts, has made doing things "correctly" a golden rule and never loses sleep from worry.

"I don't worry about anything," Garland said. "Worry never solved any problem. If the problem is there, you'll find the answer. You just have to keep working on it."

Milton W. Garland was born in Harrisburg, Pa., on Aug. 23, 1895. He graduated from high school in 1915, interrupted his education to serve in the Navy in World War I, and joined the Frick Co. of Waynesboro, Pa., in 1920, rising to vice president for education.

Garland has worked for Frick for 78 years. His current duties are coordinating international patents and giving training classes.

But even for Garland there is more to life than work. He was accompanied to the news conference by his wife, Alice. Sponsors said he has two children, seven grandchildren, seven great grandchildren and one great, great grandson.

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