



AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

November 2002

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A SEASON OF THANKSGIVING

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CARM'S COMMENTS: Carmen Schacht

Thanksgiving is coming fast! To me, this is a time for reflection on the past year and to be thankful for the many little things we take for granted so often - family, friends, good health, and being able to live in a free country. Usually, the crops have all been harvested and this year it seems like the crops have yielded well, which will mean a little more income for most. Thanks for that!

To those of you who are dealing with a new disability, things do get better. I remember how depressing a disability can be, but each little bitty improvement is a big hurdle that you have overcome. There is light at the end of the tunnel. Don't try to look at the big picture, take each day, hour, and minute and be thankful for the little things. Enjoy

the company of your spouse, children, neighbors, and friends, and if they want to help out in any way, let them.

Many of us try to do too much all the time. Maybe this would be a good year to make just one change in what we think is so vital, as part of our holiday, and make things easier for ourselves so that we can enjoy being together rather than wearing ourselves out and making everything JUST SO!

Have a Happy Thanksgiving. (CS)

FARMER OF THE YEAR Marcy Thomas

On October 16, 2002 Easter Seals Rural Solutions announced Daun Koke of Woodbine, as their pick for the Farmer of the Year award! Daun was born in 1971 and was diagnosed with cerebral palsy in 1973. Although the cause was unknown, the diagnosis left Daun with limitations in her lower extremities and her right arm and hand. It was always Daun's goal to be a vital part of farming, but the disability made certain aspects of farming difficult, so she turned to Rural Solutions and AgrAbility for help.

In addition to raising five children, Daun and Gary farm 800 acres of row crops and manage 100 head of beef cattle. Daun was always a big part of the farming operation,

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taking care of the day –to- day management and record keeping, but she wanted to be a more vital part of farming in a physical sense. This is where AgrAbility entered. Several modifications were made so that Daun could run their tractor. With funding through Vocational Rehabilitation, a platform lift was installed, extra grab bars and handholds were added, and the control lever for the transmission was repositioned. In addition, grain bin sensory equipment, such as level indicators, were also added, which proved to be a terrific investment for both Gary and Daun. Another terrific “helper” was a radio system so that the two could communicate without having to get up and down out of a vehicle.

AgrAbility became involved a couple of years ago and Daun was excited to receive some assistance. No changes have been made to the house or daily living, but the assistive devices for the farming operation have made such a difference in Daun’s life and have allowed her to fulfill her goal of being involved in farming. Daun has proven to be a strong self-advocate by sticking with her goals to be a vital part of her family’s farming operation and finding the vocational resources to do so. Congratulations on your award Daun and best of luck in the future!

THANKSGIVING TRIVIA

Marcy Thomas

See how well you know turkeys, pilgrims, and the holiday we celebrate every year!

1. In what year did the Pilgrims come to North America?
2. When was Thanksgiving Day named as a 'real' holiday?
3. How big was the biggest turkey?

4. Who was the Greek goddess of corn?

(Look for the answers at the end of the newsletter)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lighten up Iowa is a cooperative effort between Iowa State University Extension, Iowa Department of Public Health, and The Iowa Games. The purpose is to encourage teams of 2-5 or 6-10 members in each county to “Go the distance.” The challenge begins with people increasing their physical activity and eating five daily servings of fruits and vegetables to lose a combined state total of 200,000 pounds. So gather up a team and contact your local county Extension office or sign up through the website at www.lightenupiowa.org to participate.

Iowa State University Extension is asking for your input on how ISU Extension can better serve Iowans through educational programs and services. Public forums will be held in five locations, New Hampton, Prairie City, Lewis, Iowa City, and Cherokee. Participants’ opinions will be used to guide long term plans for change. For dates and times please contact Dianna Rampy at (515) 309-0140 or email her at drampy@enterprisemidamerica.com

Now that winter has already shown its face on several occasions, a chance for continuous warmth and beauty has arrived. The new Reiman Gardens Conservatory and Christina Reiman Butterfly Wing opened November 5, 2002. The 5, 000 sq. ft. conservatory will display more than 500 tropical plants and butterflies. Several holiday shows are planned. For more information visit www.reimangardens.iastate.edu

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AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES:

Beginning October 1, 2002 Iowa State University Extension is offering a farm bill analyzer and other publications relating to the farm bill. The bulletin, "Commodity Programs for Crops," describes three types of crop payments and how acres and yields will affect the payments. A worksheet is available for comparing options and can be found at your local county extension office or go to

www.extension.iastate.edu/feci/FSRIA

Sowing the Seeds of Hope provides mental health services for farm family members who are experiencing stress associated with agricultural difficulties. Families who do not have mental health insurance coverage may be eligible for up to five one-hour free sessions per year. Contact the Iowa Concern Hotline to obtain a free voucher at (800) 447-1985.

REQUESTS:

In an attempt to provide more user-friendly newsletters, we are asking anyone wanting the newsletter in larger print, different font, etc. to please contact Marcy Thomas at (515) 294-8522 or email her mbrat@iastate.edu We will be more than happy to accommodate any special needs you have so that you can enjoy the newsletter and be able to access the valuable information given.

Can you believe the holidays are already here? Just think a little over a month is all that remains of the shopping season. AgrAbility Chit Chat is once again asking for your help with the December edition of the newsletter. Please email or mail Marcy with the funniest, scariest, weirdest holiday gift you have ever received. For those of you who want to contribute, but were lucky enough to have relatives who gave good gifts, send your favorite family recipe or

celebration idea. Let's make the last newsletter of the year entertaining and refreshing as we say goodbye to another year!

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

Chuck Larson, Rural Rehabilitation Specialist with Easter Seals Rural Solutions and Iowa AgrAbility, was recently honored with the first annual Rolfe B. Karlsson Staff Excellence Award. The award was presented to Chuck at the Easter Seals annual conference, held on October 16, 2002. Nominated by several individuals from Easter Seals, the award was given to Chuck because of his dedication to helping farmers continue their way of life. Congratulations Chuck!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"We are all pilgrims on the same journey - but some pilgrims have better road maps." – Nelson DeMille

Answers to THANKSGIVING TRIVIA!

1. The pilgrims arrived in North America in December 1620.
2. George Washington proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, but President Lincoln made it official by proclaiming the last Thursday in November as a national day of "Thanksgiving."
3. The Guinness Book of Records states that the largest dressed weight (cooked, with dressing) recorded for a turkey is 39.09 kg (86 lb.) on December 12, 1989.
4. The goddess of corn (actually all grains) was Demeter who was honored at the festival of Thesmophoria held each autumn.

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IOWA AGRABILITY - A joint effort of ISU Extension and the Farm Family Rehabilitation Management (FaRM) Program of Easter Seals Iowa. The program can help farm family members with a disability stay in farming.

This newsletter from the Iowa AgrAbility Project will be sent monthly to AgrAbility families and other interested individuals. Please send comments and suggestions to:

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Iowa AgrAbility Project

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