



AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

July 2003

Vol. 5, No. 4

FARM SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

CONTENTS:

- CARM'S COMMENTS: Carmen Schacht
- MAV AND MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY: Tara Nielsen
- FARM SAFETY IN THE SUMMER SUN
- IOWA STATE FAIR – AUGUST 7-17, 2003
- CONGRATULATIONS MARCY!
- UPCOMING EVENTS

CARM'S COMMENTS: Carmen Schacht

The theme for July is farm safety for children. We all know that children are fascinated by anything with wheels; whether it be a car, 3-wheeler, tractor, pickup or any number of things. When we first had our son, Everett was insistent that he wasn't going to be allowed on the tractors until Everett felt he was old enough to understand how dangerous they were. Of course, when people came to visit they always wanted their kids to ride the tractors. Most of our tractors at that time did not have cabs, so it was more dangerous.

A lot of farm safety is common sense, but sometimes in our hurry to get things done we don't always think about it. I never like to see kids riding on the fender of a tractor or in an open pickup box. It even bothers

me to see young children driving the all-terrain vehicles; it is so dangerous.

The grain bins, augers, and power take offs also need to be taken seriously. Loose clothing can become a particular hazard when working with these machines.

I have a lot of respect for two people I know who have lost children in farm accidents. They have gone on to make other people more aware of the dangers on farms in an effort to save children's lives. Marilyn Adams does seminars across the state called Farm Safety 4 Just Kids and Jeris Petersen has the Shaun Organization that helps families who have had farm accidents.

To any of you parents: just use a lot of common sense and supervision so that we can keep the deaths of farm children down. (CS)

MAV AND MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY: Tara Nielsen

In 1995, when Marshall Maverick "Mav" Reller was age seven, his mother knew that something was seriously wrong with her child. A biopsy was done and it was later confirmed that Mav had muscular dystrophy. Mav's mother, Maralee, said her biggest problem was that she read too much; finding out too many of the negatives of the disease.

AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

Immediately Maralee thought their family would need a new house to accommodate Mav. One of their major struggles was getting Mav in and out of the bathroom. This is when Chuck Larson, representing AgrAbility through the Easter Seals' Rural Solutions program, stepped in. Chuck helped design a new bathroom, deck, and back door for their home. The door is special because it's a panic door, so when Mav bumps it with his wheelchair it will automatically open. Easter Seals has also loaned special equipment and helped Mav get a lift chair, which he loves! All of these modifications have made life for Mav and his family much more accessible.

The deck and ramp make it easy for Mav to get out and cruise around the neighborhood and to the library. The town of Bancroft is fairly flat which allows Mav to conveniently get outside for an afternoon. He has a pet Chihuahua named Chi Chi that enjoys hopping up on his lap and going for a ride.

Mav likes to spend his time reading, using the computer, watching movies and using his Playstation. His mom mentioned that he is also quite an artist. He does some drawing which Maralee says is good therapy for his hands.

Summer plans for Mav and his family may include a trip to the Mall of America and a family reunion in Kansas. Next year, Maralee plans to send him to MDA camp. She tries to encourage him to be active and enjoy life.

Throughout all of Mav's challenges, he still manages to appreciate what life has to offer. Maralee says that everyone that meets her son just loves him. Mav is an excellent model of strength and a positive attitude. (TN)

FARM SAFETY IN THE SUMMER SUN

Farms are a great place to raise children – if parents are aware of how to keep their children safe. Chuck Schwab, Iowa State University Extension Safety Specialist, suggests several resources that will help you make your farm safer for kids:

- “Creating Safe Play Areas on Farms.” Get a free copy of this 32 page publication from the web at: <http://research.marshfieldclinic.org/children/safeplay.pdf> or by calling 800-662-6900.
- “Helping young children understand farm hazards: What would you do?” This is an illustrated parent-child discussion guide that is designed to help families talk about the dangers of living on a farm. Pick up a copy of Pm-1840 for \$6.75 from any ISU Extension county office, or order direct from ISU Extension Distribution, using the form on the web: www.abe.iastate.edu/Safety/PDF/AE3109.pdf
- Farm Safety Day Camps are also a good way to teach children about the dangers of farm life. To find a camp near you, check out: www.abe.iastate.edu/Safety/Safety/2003daycamps.htm or www.jimmyjays.com/PF/pf_visitor_page.htm.
- Apply for a \$250 grant to make safety improvements on your own farm from Farm Safety 4 Just Kids, an Iowa-based organization. See details at: www.fs4jk.org
- Subscribe to Safe Farm E-News. This is a free newsletter from Chuck Schwab, ISU Extension Safety

AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

Specialist. Call 515-294-4131 or email: svschwab@iastate.edu to subscribe.

Have a safe and fun summer!

IOWA STATE FAIR – AUGUST 7-17, 2003

It's almost that time of year again! The time when all of Iowa comes together to celebrate our state. Watch for "Fairfield," the Iowa State Fair mascot. He is a six-foot tall blue ribbon.

Iowa State University Extension will have an active role at the fair. Look under the Grandstand to see an interactive display on "Today's portions (of food) are out of proportion," featuring hands-on activities, quizzes and prizes. You can also help ISU celebrate 100 years of Extension.

The 4-H building will have many exhibits and activities for youth throughout the fair, including the USDA Food Safety Mobile On August 16 (Saturday) and 17 (Sunday). You will learn how safe food handling practices and proper hand-washing can prevent food-borne illnesses.

Easter Seals will also have an exhibit at Building Bridges Day on August 15th from 9am to 5pm at the state fair. It can be found on the Grand Concourse.

For those concerned about accessibility, the fair board has strived to make the fairgrounds a fun and accessible place for all Iowans. Ramps, curb cuts, and street-level entrances have been created for easy-entry into buildings and facilities. The Grandstand and Pavilion also have special seating for individuals with accessibility concerns. Persons with a disability can request accommodations by contacting the manager's office at (515)262- 3111, ext. 213, at least 24 hours in advance. Wheelchairs and scooters are available to rent.

For more information about the 2003 Iowa State Fair call (800)545-FAIR or log on to www.iowastatefair.com.

CONGRATULATIONS MARCY!

Marcy Thomas, AgrAbility Program Specialist, and her husband Kent became the parents of a 10 lb. 5 oz. baby boy. Brayden Charles was born on Saturday, July 12th.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

August 2: FREEWHEELERS Meeting, New Hampton Senior Center - 1:00

October 4: SE Region FREEWHEELERS Meeting, Tipton Pizza Hut - 1:00
- More details later

AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

IOWA AGRABILITY - A joint effort of ISU Extension and the Rural Solutions 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:

Marcy Thomas, AgrAbility Program Specialist

96 LeBaron Hall, Ames, IA 50011

E-mail: mbrat@iastate.edu

Phone: ISU Answerline at 1-800-262-3804

TDD: 1-800-854-1658.

Web site: www.extension.iastate.edu/agrability/

... and justice for all. The Iowa Cooperative Extension Service's programs and policies are consistent with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on nondiscrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, and disability.

Iowa AgrAbility Project

Iowa State University
96 LeBaron Hall
Ames, IA 50011