



# AGRABILITY CHIT CHAT

February 2005

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## ANOTHER NEW YEAR SURPRISE!

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Last month we received a \$500 donation from a family member of a former AgrAbility consumer. This month we received a \$300 donation, from another consumer's family. Both donations have been placed in a special account until we can determine how best to use the money to benefit the AgrAbility Program. This generosity is amazing!

### DO YOU KNOW . . .

#### **Kathy Kruger**

Although the list is long, Kathy manages to do it all while appearing relaxed and confident (at least she did when I saw her). Kathy has experienced multiple sclerosis (MS) for the last 23 years yet she still lives and works on the farm with her husband Dennis, her dog Maggie (a rescue from the Des Moines Animal Hospital), and assorted outside cats. Kathy and Dennis run the farm with the assistance of their son Justin who lives on the sixth generation Kruger farm nearby. The farm produces corn, soybeans, hay, and pigs. Kathy does chores and walks the dog using her golf cart for both activities. She also likes to garden, planting and caring for vegetables and flowers. Kathy mows the lawn on a riding mower, with her only assistive device being the cool cloth on her neck in the summer. She also does the farm bookkeeping. Kathy says, "I do a lot of things sitting down."

Kathy has a fulltime job off the farm. She serves as Media Center Supervisor, and High School Study Hall Monitor at North Central Community School in Manly. Kathy has a lift for her Chevrolet Blazer so she can take her scooter when she would otherwise have to try to walk long distances and hand controls to make it easier for her to drive to and from her job. She uses a Rollator walker to move throughout the school. Kathy also must wear a full leg brace to help her walk as her right knee hyperextends.

Kathy is a community volunteer. She participates in Bible studies, the church Women's Circle (she's the president), Christian education (chairperson), and summer Bible school. Formerly, she also taught Bible and Sunday school. She is also active in the local MS Support Group and annual MS Walk using her scooter. Last year she raised the most money of all the walkers.

Kathy always enjoyed camping with her family when the children were growing up. The exciting news is that there will be two weddings this year. Jennifer is getting married in Las Vegas this spring and Justin will be getting married in July. There is one anticipated birth (daughter Erin is giving birth to the second grandchild in July).

Kathy is an involved farm wife, a school employee, a community volunteer, and an

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active mother. She credits Dennis with being supportive and helping her when she needs it. He helps Kathy with her stretching exercises. "I feel so blessed to have such a supportive and loving husband," says Kathy.

Kathy has been working with the Iowa AgrAbility Project for assessment and evaluation of her needs, and the Iowa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVRS) for assistive technology. To date, DVRS has purchased a Bruno lift for the Chevrolet Blazer to transport her scooter, golf cart, chair lift for the stairs, hand controls for her vehicle, and is in the process of purchasing 36-inch doors to replace her 32-inch doors.

I am so glad they were willing to do that" added Kathy. It is easy to see that Kathy took back her life after the MS diagnosis.

Kathy and her husband Dennis can be reached at [kruger@jumpgate.net](mailto:kruger@jumpgate.net) or 641-454-2953 if you would like to visit with them.

### DID YOU KNOW . . .

MS is a chronic, unpredictable neurological disease that affects the central nervous system.

MS is not contagious and is not directly inherited.

MS is not considered a fatal disease.

The majority of people with MS do not become severely disabled.

There is no cure for MS yet, but drugs can help slow the course and/or symptoms in some patients.

These facts are courtesy of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and can be found in their brochure. [Just the Facts: 2004-2005](#). More: [www.nationalmssociety.org](http://www.nationalmssociety.org)

### SHERRY SAYS: WINTER ON THE FARM II

In the last newsletter, I said "Just once I would like Punxsutawney Phil to see only clouds, not his shadow on February 2." Obviously, that groundhog was not listening to me. I checked the Punxsutawney Phil website and this is his response:

It's time for me to prognosticate.  
As I study the sun  
It's all about fun.  
But I'm sorry to say  
I see my shadow today.  
When my shadow I see,  
Six more weeks of winter there will be!



### FREEWHEELER'S MEETING INFORMATION

The meetings will take place at 1:00 p.m. in the public library at 150 West Bremer Avenue in Waverly. (Yes, there will be food.) Dates are April 2, June 4, August 6, and October 1. Enjoy!

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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:

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