



# SHAUN

Sharing Help Awareness United Network

## National Farm Safety and Health Week 2004

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**Corning, Iowa---** National Farm Safety and Health Week once again highlights the importance of safety and health in agriculture. The significance of prevention cannot be stressed enough. Unfortunately many farm families have already experienced an incident that has forever changed their lives, their family, and their friends. A split second can have lifetime ramifications.

Jeris Petersen founded SHAUN in 1998 in response to her own long journey through grief. In 1989 Jeris and Otto Petersen's son Shaun was killed in a farm incident that left the entire family in shock and disbelief. Their recovery has been a long and difficult one at best. SHAUN is a non-profit organization that helps farm families recover from their losses. SHAUN provides individual support and advocacy as well as support in group venues. The board of directors includes various health and safety advocates and individuals who have experienced a death or disability in their own families.

SHAUN has trained over 20 outreach workers who are dispersed throughout Iowa to serve as survivor advocates and make services available to farm families. They have been trained to help families cope with financial, emotional, health, spiritual, grief, and natural disaster issues. The mental health issues facing rural communities have a foundation including issues relating to economic and social stress. While SHAUN's main focus is on families experiencing a loss, mental health services and the care of SHAUN staff and outreach workers are available to all people in farming communities. SHAUN collaborates with many state and national groups for outreach, education, stress management, life planning, and other programs that serve farm communities in their entirety. Educational materials and public speakers are available.

SHAUN is involved with Workplace Safety, Rural Advocacy 2004, the Iowa Disaster Resource Network, and Farm Aid. Jeris Petersen has participated in two of Farm Aid's national advocacy trainings. She serves on the Board of Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health and chairs the Producer Committee.

For more information or to contact an outreach worker in your area, contact SHAUN at 2672 Mulberry Ave. Corning, IA 50841-8042.

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