

# Myths Of Masculinity Get In Way Of Safe Farming

BY VAL FARMER



VAL FARMER

Farming is a very dangerous occupation. Why?

In farming, the home and business location are the same. Children are in work areas. Hazards abound because of weather problems, machinery, livestock, moving vehicles, chemicals, etc. One mistake in judgment can create a serious accident.

**The economic factor.** Farmers are independent entrepreneurs. Other industries pass investments in safety and related costs onto their customers. For farmers, safety costs come out of their profits. Safety doesn't have a high payoff for return on investment - unless the devastating losses surrounding farm fatalities and injuries are added up. Like other entrepreneurs, they put in long hours for the sake of the business.

Most farms don't have accidents. They are low probability events. Farmers will spend money on low ticket safety items to keep their wives happy, but balk at adding expensive safety features.

Other industries face regula-

tions and fines for safety violations. A farm is the only workplace where children can work without restriction. This is sacrosanct to the value of teaching children the work ethic,

responsibility, and working together toward common family goals on a farm.

Farmers push themselves hard and take chances to gain time. Most accidents take place in the spring or fall when farmers are rushing to beat the weather and get their crops in or out. The more acres or longer hours a farmer works directly contributes to a higher accident rate. Saturdays and Sundays are also high risk days. Rushing encourages repairing equipment with the engine running, not putting on shields and other mistakes in judgment.

The last half hour before mealtime or quitting for the night are high risk times. Many farm accidents occur when the

"end" is in sight - doing the last row or last pass when the adrenaline rush is over. Farmers relax and aren't as vigilant. They don't take enough fluid or exercise breaks.

Accidents with unsupervised children are related to the expense and inconvenience of finding and paying for childcare. Fathers and mothers have difficulty dividing their attention between the task at hand and child activities. Children are taken into hazardous areas - barns, farm workshops and on the tractor - so dad or mom can work. Corners are cut for small jobs that don't take much time.

Both young and old can get injured on farms. Farming is a young man's game but old men are doing it too. Many older farmers of retirement age push themselves beyond their capabilities.

Farming keeps them feeling young but puts them at risk when they misjudge their declining abilities.

**The farming tradition.** Farmers work the way they always have. Nothing terrible happened to their parents or to themselves. How can you argue

for safety against a lifetime of experience around hazards and the belief they are safer than they really are? They learned dangerous practices from their father or grandfather.

Farmers put the work ethic ahead of safety. They want to see their children learn to take responsibility and contribute to the farm. They overestimate their children's developmental levels and allow them to handle machinery and other chores before youthful judgment is sound.

Children 10 to 15 may be physically equipped to do certain jobs, but they are high risks for machinery accidents because of limited attention spans, limited experience and poor judgment.

**The masculine view.** Why don't men adopt some simple changes like donning protective goggles, ear plugs, steel tipped boots, gloves, respirators, etc.?

"Real men aren't afraid." "Real men don't look like wimps or sissies." Apparently real men are scared to death that their neighbors will laugh or make fun of them.

"Real farmers are tough and fit." They tackle physically demanding jobs without enough manpower and end up with lower back injuries.

"Real farmers don't cry." They ignore injuries, resist going to the doctor and refuse medical care for their cuts, sprains, and fractures.

"Real farmers don't need help." Real farmers are supposed to know and do everything. They are "supposed" to weld, repair machinery, do electrical work, be carpenters, etc.

How much do they really know? They jump into skills and tasks they haven't done in a while.

Men think they know it all and think they are safe. By 16 or 17 they have formed their basic ideas about safety and resist new information. The best years to teach safety is to boys eight to 13 - before they become set in their ways.

Hard work and long hours are not only management practices but a prestige factor in farming circles. A community reputation of being a hard worker is an honor. Farmers try to prove something to their neighbors by

pushing themselves hard - unrealistically hard.

**The illusion of being in control.** There so many hazards around a farm that to think of them all, a farmer could be paralyzed with fear. Farmers need a certain illusion of control to do their work. "Invincible me" is a part of a positive, optimistic approach to life.

Farmers are risk takers in a risk taking profession. It is also a profession where farmers succeed by reducing their risks - by being careful, detailed oriented people who figure safety into their management practices.

How about a new slogan? "Real farmers are safe farmers."

For more information on farm family creativity, visit Val Farmer's website at www.val-farmer.com.

Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist specializing in family business consultation and mediation with farm families. He lives in Wildwood, Missouri and can be contacted through his website. 2010 The Preston Connection Feature Service

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## VISITING HOURS:

# Avera Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat Celebrates 2010 World Voice Day

BY JEFFREY LIUDAHL, MD  
Avera Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat



Liudahl

We use our voices every day, all day—at work, with family and friends, to share our emotions and feelings. We rely on our voices to communicate and connect with everyone around us, but how often do we show our voices how much we love and appreciate all they do? In honor of World Voice Day, April 16, 2010, Avera Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat would like to remind people to use three little words "I love you" and protect your voice by proactively keeping it healthy.

The theme for the 2010 celebration of World Voice Day, "Love Your Voice," reminds us of the emotional power of the human voice and the many feelings it can elicit. It also should remind us that our own voice requires care to keep it healthy.

"World Voice Day creates the opportunity for people around the world to say 'thank you,' 'I love you,' and 'I care for you' to our voices, which are so vital to our daily existence," says Jeffrey Liudahl, M.D. "It is like Valentine's Day for our voice!"

According to a 2009 survey by the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS), many Americans already know some key steps to keeping their voices healthy. More than 90 percent of people polled ranked the following steps as important to vocal health: not smoking, paying attention to hoarseness in your voice, breathing appropriately and drinking plenty of water. But translating knowing how to take care of your voice to actually doing it, often takes a loving reminder.

World Voice Day gives vocal health experts an opportunity to bring renewed awareness about vocal health to the general public and to professionals who have built careers around their voices.

As Avera Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat celebrates the eighth year of the World Voice Day obser-

vance, we offer the community a Top 10 List for ways to love your voice:

1. Embrace hydration—Moisture is good for your voice, and drinking plenty of water throughout the day is the best way to stay hydrated.

2. Kiss but don't yell—Yelling or screaming is always bad for the voice, as it puts a lot of stress on the delicate lining of your vocal cords.

3. Hug a microphone when speaking in public—When you are called upon for public speaking, particularly in a large room or outdoors, use a microphone. The amplification allows you to speak at conversational volume, yet reach the entire audience.

4. Warm up your voice by saying a few sweet nothings—Warming up the voice is not just for singers, it helps the speaking voice, too. Doing simple things like lip or tongue trills or gliding up and down your range on different vowels will help warm up your voice.

5. Always clear the air, but don't clear your throat—Clearing your throat is like slapping or slamming the vocal cords together. Instead of clearing your throat, take a small sip of water or swallow to quench the urge.

6. Go ahead and look hot, but never smoke—Likely the single worst thing you can do for your voice is to smoke. It causes permanent damage to the vocal cord tissues and is the number one risk factor for cancer of the larynx (voice box).

7. Know what you're feeling—When you are in a place with loud background noise, you don't realize how loudly you may be talking. Pay attention to how your throat feels in these situations, because it will often feel raw or irritated before you notice the vocal strain you are causing.

8. Think good breath support, not just heavy breathing—Breath flow is the power source for voice. Don't let your breath support run down before refilling your lungs and refueling your voice.

9. Be a good listener—If you hear your voice becoming hoarse when you are sick, be sure to rest it as much as possible. Pushing the voice when you have laryngitis can lead to more serious vocal problems.

10. Check it out—If your voice is persistently hoarse, be sure to seek evaluation by an otolaryngologist.

To learn more about World Voice Day, vocal health and other ear, nose and throat related topics, visit [www.AveraYanktonENT.org](http://www.AveraYanktonENT.org) or [www.entnet.org/worldvoiceday](http://www.entnet.org/worldvoiceday).

### ABOUT WORLD VOICE DAY

Every year on April 16, otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeons and other voice health professionals worldwide join together to recognize World Voice Day. World Voice Day encourages men and women, young and old, to assess their vocal health and take action to improve or maintain good voice habits. The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery has sponsored the U.S. observance of World Voice Day since its inception in 2002. Avera Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat would like to encourage everyone to take good care of your voice.

This weekly column is produced by the public relations office at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital to promote healthy lifestyles and provide useful medical information to our community.

## COUNTY

From Page 1

budget-neutral.

"There's no question that there's a value to the software," Commissioner Allen Sinclair said. "I just want to make very sure that, when we get into budget issues this year and start getting into zero-budget growth, you're going to be able to stay in that parameter."

Later in the evening, the commission directed County Auditor Paula Jones to inform all department heads to not plan for any budget growth in 2011.

Despite the trepidation of such a big investment during a time of fiscal uncertainty, commissioners decided the benefits of the software were great enough that it should be purchased.

"It should save us money in the long term," Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen said. Commissioner Donna Freng added, "I think they're committed to it, and they're going to make it work."

The motion to give the Department of Equalization permission to enter a contract with the company was approved unanimously. Commissioner Bill

Tamisia was absent from Tuesday's meeting.

In other business Tuesday, the commission:

- continued discussion of a Gayville drainage issue that has been a regular agenda item in recent months. It was agreed that a new cost estimate for the project needs to be done and a proper funding channel needs to be found;

- held an unplanned discussion about whether county vehicles should not be taken to certain establishments. The issue was raised after it was revealed that a county ambulance was scratched while the drivers were getting a meal at a fast-food restaurant. Sinclair didn't want to put a blanket denial on employees working long shifts in county vehicles from stopping to get food anywhere, but he said it still makes him nervous to think about the perception it conveys when county vehicles are at fast-food restaurants. He said discretion should be used;

- agreed to place magnesium chloride on a more than half-mile stretch of road below Chalkstone Hill in order to alleviate dust problems; and

- announced after an executive session that it would offer the position of Yankton County 4-H coordinator to Aaron Weston.

## FIRE

From Page 1

"That was a good thing," Struck agreed.

The SUV did sustain some damage in the fire.

"We have damage to two seats and some contents of the vehicle also burned," Nickles said. "The car is drivable. It was cleaned up and they drove it home."

No charges were filed in connection with the incident.

According to statistics from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, children of all ages set more than 35,000 fires annually. Approximately 8,000 of these are set in homes.

Additionally, children make up 15-20 percent of all fire deaths.

Nickles encouraged parents to go through their homes and vehicles to remove any lighters or matches that might fall into the hands of children.

"Teach your kids not to touch them, and that they should get an adult when they find them," he said. "A lot of common sense goes into play there. We're here to help, too, if we need to."

**Mount Marty College**  
presents the  
*Spring*  
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Directed by  
**Dean Retzedal**

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**Marion Auditorium**

The public is invited free of charge

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*With*  
**Fondest Memories**

We remember those who have passed away and are especially dear to us.

On Saturday, May 29th we will publish in print and online at Yankton.net a Memorial Day section devoted to those who are gone but not forgotten.

Select one of the verses below to accompany your tribute.

1. We hold you in our thoughts and memories forever.
2. May God cradle you in his arms, now and forever.
3. Forever missed, never forgotten. May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
4. Thank you for the wonderful days we shared together. My prayers will be with you until we meet again.
5. The days we shared were sweet. I long to see you again in Gods heavenly glory.
6. Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.
7. Though out of sight, you'll forever be in my heart and mind.
8. May the light of peace shine on your face for eternity.
9. May God's angels guide you and protect you throughout time.
10. You were a light in our life that burns forever in our hearts.
11. May God's graces shine over you for all time.
12. You are in our thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
13. We send this message with a loving kiss for eternal rest and happiness.
14. May the Lord bless you with His graces and warm, loving heart.
15. I have written my own message and it is included.

**Aneta Burrows**  
Dec. 30, 1960-Nov. 8, 2002  
Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.  
**Dan, Ann & Sarab**

To remember your loved one in this special way, send \$10.00 per listing. Fill out the form below and mail to:  
Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan/With Fondest Memories  
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Name of deceased \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of passing \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of selected verse \_\_\_\_\_ OR Personal message \_\_\_\_\_  
Print your name here \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Address/City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_