

## Flexible Roles Can Help Farm Families Cope

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

On a late afternoon during harvest last fall I was in my garden enjoying the opportunity to unwind after a busy day by meditating while picking beans, pulling a few weeds and appreciating the outdoors.

My farm tenant, Larry, drove his grain cart next to the auger leading to the corn bin, while his helper, Gary, parked the John Deere combine in my farmyard. They were "calling it a day."

Gary started the auger while Larry opened the grain vent of the self-unloading cart to allow corn to flow into the auger. Usually it takes 15 minutes to unload the cart, so the fellows had some time on their hands.

I hoped the guys wouldn't notice me. But they spied me even though I was trying to hide behind the trellised green beans. I use old cattle panels attached to steel posts for the beans to climb.

When they meandered over to my garden I figured it was more than to say hello. They wanted to give me a little guff. (Actually I was thinking of another word that starts with "s" instead of guff.)

"Hey Mike, what are you doing in the garden," Larry said. "This is women's work, you know."

"Beats helping you guys," I replied. "Besides I enjoy it."

Noticing my pepper plants with skinny red pods drooping, Gary ventured, "You don't eat these things, do you?"

"Of course," I replied. "I like hot foods."

"Ugh, I can't eat anything hot," Gary observed.

"I suppose you cook stuff I wouldn't eat either," Larry surmised. "Vicki makes the decisions about what I'm supposed to eat," he added, hinting that cooking is women's work also.

"Yeah, I do most of the cooking when Marilyn is working," I responded. "To me it's relaxing and it gives Marilyn one less thing to have to do."

Kidding aside, the incident brought to mind the question: What enables farm and ranch families to cope successfully when they are stressed?

Sociological studies indicate production agriculture is one of the most stressful occupations. This is not surprising, given that farming (I am including ranching here) is one of the most dangerous occupations and farmers have little control over many of the factors that determine their success or failure, such as the weather and market demand.

Colorado State University Professor, Dr. Bob Fetsch, recently wrote (www.wdmc.org/proceed.htm; click on 2011) that along with their unique stressors, hardy farm and ranch married partners work together to solve problems.

Fetsch cites studies that report resilient farm and ranch couples believe they are in control of their responses to stressful life events and have a conviction that changes and events can be both challenging and growth-producing. Couples that are able to exchange roles in response to their partners' needs are more likely to endure

troubled times than those who cling adamantly to traditional gender expectations.

Thus, when Larry's wife, Vicki, took on full-time employment outside their home, Vicki said Larry took over some of the cooking and laundry responsibilities in their household. Their flexible sharing of roles has contributed to their 55 years of marriage.

Gary also said he helps out around his house as necessary. He and his wife have been married for nearly 50 years.

Unlike many farm couples in previous generations, the most happily married farm couples I



Dr. Mike  
**ROSMANN**

know today share traditional masculine and feminine roles, such as child care, house cleaning and farm chores. They "fill in" for each other as necessary, and help their neighbors as well.

Besides giving me a "hard time" every so often, Larry, Gary and Larry's son, Lynn, have also pitched in to help Marilyn and me in times of need. Just a

couple weeks ago Lynn plowed out our driveway with his tractor when I was hobbling from a knee injury. They regularly and generously help keep our premises maintained.

Dr. Fetsch offers additional suggestions about how resilient families build healthy family relations. I added a few of my own recommendations as well. Family members should:

- Be aware of each others' strengths, skills and weaknesses
- Focus on family strengths rather than problem areas
- Openly exchange communications about needs and feelings
- Reduce blame and accept responsibilities
- Use democratic or consensus decision-making rather than autocratic decision-making
- Hold family meetings to solve problems
- Adjust family roles in response to needs for the entire group
- Share together in sacrifices when needed
- Encourage spirituality and humor
- Don't be afraid to ask for help from others outside the family
- Recognize acts of kindness by showing appreciation to the giver of the kindness

How does your family cope during stressful times? Feel free to share your thoughts and ideas with me.

I especially thank Larry, Vicki and Gary for reviewing and approving this article.

The author lives near Harlan, Iowa. Contact him at the website:

www.agbehavioralhealth.com.  
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### Visiting Hours

BY MARK DOOHEN, MD

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Emergency Room Physician

With the cold weather we've been experiencing, it's important to realize that if proper precautions aren't taken, frostbite can occur anytime the temperature hits 32 degrees Fahrenheit or less.

Frostbite is a medical condition that can happen to anyone. Frostbite occurs when the skin or tissues under the skin freeze and cell damage is caused. Most commonly, frostbite will strike first in the extremities such as fingers, toes, ears, face and nose. These parts of the body typically have the poorest circulation and are most susceptible to frostbite. However, any part of the body exposed to freezing temperatures can experience frostbite.

As a natural reaction to cold temperatures, the blood vessels, especially in the extremities, constrict to prevent body heat loss. When these parts of the body lose that warming blood flow, the fluid inside the cells and tissues can freeze into ice crystals. As with any liquid, this fluid takes up more space in a frozen state than a liquid state and can cause the cells to rupture, sometimes causing permanent damage.

#### COLD SKIN INJURIES:

- Frostnip — Localized tingling and burning with re-warming, not damaging
- Chilblain — Skin injury from exposure to cold (above freezing); red or purple, swollen
- Frostbite — Kills cells by freezing tissue, goes through different levels of tissue damage (similar

to burns)

The good news about frostbite is that it is preventable with just a minimum amount of effort. Factors such as wind chill, alcohol consumption, length of exposure and being wet or damp can all contribute to frostbite. It's important to remember that the temperature to which the skin is exposed needs only to be 32 degrees for frostbite to occur. Although extreme cold is an obvious cause of frostbite cases, prolonged exposure to temperatures below 32 degrees can have the same effect. Wet, cold socks while hiking in the winter-time can cause frostbite in the toes. Wearing clothes that are too heavy causing a person to perspire can also be a dangerous factor in frostbite — dampness and moisture are the enemy in cold temperatures. It's much better to wear several layers of clothes that can be removed or added as necessary.

#### THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW MORE TIPS TO AVOID FROSTBITE:

- If temperatures and wind-chills are extreme, stay inside.
- Protect the most vulnerable parts of your body. Wear mittens (much better than gloves) for your hands and fingers. Wear a stocking hat (or ski mask) for your head, face and ears. Wear a scarf to protect your neck and throat area.
- Proper footwear is especially important. Shoes and boots should be waterproof and not too tight. Boots with Gortex (or similar products) allow moisture vapor to exit while preventing liquid water from entering. With these boots, choice of socks is not as important, but if your footwear is waterproof but can't "breathe," use wool socks

only.

• Thermal underwear is recommended.

• Avoid alcohol and tobacco use (Both, especially alcohol, seriously hamper the body's circulatory ability and change the perception of threat by frostbite)

• Be active to promote better circulation. Walk, stomp or jump around to keep blood flowing throughout entire body.

• Simply be aware of the conditions that can cause frostbite — extreme cold, wet clothes, high winds and poor circulation. Poor circulation can be caused or made worse by tight clothing or boots, cramped positions, fatigue, certain medications, smoking, alcohol use, or diseases that affect the blood vessels such as diabetes.

If you or someone you're with experiences frostbite, take the following actions:

- Shelter the victim from the cold and move the victim to a warmer place
- Remove any constricting jewelry and wet clothing
- Immerse the affected areas in warm (NOT HOT) water — or apply warm cloths to the affected areas for 20 to 30 minutes. Keep circulating the water to aid the warming process. Burning pain, swelling and color changes may occur during warming. Warming is complete when the skin is soft and sensation returns, even if it is painful sensation
- Apply dry, sterile dressing to the frostbitten areas. Put dressings between frostbitten fingers or toes
- Move thawed areas as little as possible
- Prevent refreezing by wrapping the warmed areas
- If the frostbite is extensive,

give warm drinks to the victim in order to replace lost fluids

• Seek medical treatment immediately if frostbite is anything more than superficial

#### DO NOT:

- DO NOT thaw out a frostbitten area if it cannot be kept thawed. Refreezing may make tissue damage even worse
- DO NOT use direct heat (such as radiator, campfire, heating pad or hair dryer applied directly to the frostbitten area). Direct heat can burn the tissues that are already damaged
- DO NOT rub or massage the affected area
- DO NOT disturb blisters on frostbitten skin
- DO NOT smoke or drink alcoholic beverages during recovery as both can interfere with blood circulation

Call immediately for emergency medical assistance if:

- There has been severe frostbite and feeling and color does not return after home treatment.
- Frostbite has occurred recently and new symptoms develop, such as fever, malaise, discoloration or drainage from the affected body part.
- Frostbite has occurred and symptoms of hypothermia are present.

Remember that if you have any doubt whatsoever, it's best to seek medical treatment from a trained health care professional. Better yet, avoid situations that can result in frostbite. Enjoy the winter season, but enjoy it in moderation and using all possible precautions for safety.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

#### LEWIS & CLARK HOMEBUILDER'S ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

The Lewis & Clark Homebuilder's Association has established a \$500 scholarship to assist a graduating high school senior with expenses in pursuing a degree in a construction related field. This can include, but is not limited to Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning/Refrigeration, Landscaping Design, Building Trades Technology, Civil Engineering, Architectural Drafting, Construction Engineering Technology, Carpentry or Plumbing.

If you are a student (or know of one) that may be interested in a building trades related field, go to [www.lewisandclarkhomebuilders.com](http://www.lewisandclarkhomebuilders.com) and download an application. The deadline for submitting scholarship applications is April 12.

If there are any questions, direct them to Lewis & Clark Homebuilders Association, PO Box 582, Yankton, SD 57078. Attention Joe Morrow phone (605) 661-4527, or E-mail [jmorrow@cityofyankton.org](mailto:jmorrow@cityofyankton.org).

#### STUDENT OF INTEGRITY AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS

OMAHA, Neb. — The Better Business Bureau (BBB) Foundation invites high school seniors throughout South Dakota to apply for its annual "Scott Mecham Student of Integrity Awards". In 2013,

eight students will each be granted \$2,000 college scholarships: two from South Dakota, two from metro Lincoln and greater Nebraska, two from metro Omaha and southwest Iowa and two from the Kansas Plains area.

The Student of Integrity Award Scholarships were created in 2007 to recognize and nurture future ethical business leaders and to honor the memory of Mr. Mecham, who served as BBB president from 1991 until January, 2006. The Winners will be selected by four panels of independent judges representing the academic and business communities in Sioux Falls, Lincoln, Omaha, and Wichita. They consider each student's character,

leadership, academics and the content of their essays. The students who are granted the scholarships will be those who best demonstrate their commitment to honesty and accountability both inside and outside the classroom.

The award Winners will be announced in April 2013 and recognized at a BBB Integrity Awards Luncheon in the fall. "It is always a very difficult task for the judges to choose the Winners because of the fine quality of the applications. But now, more than ever, it is important to reward our students, our future leaders, for their integrity. Given the large number of applications received each year, it gives us great hope to know that high moral character

and the understanding of ethics are alive and well in students throughout our BBB's service area," said BBB President and CEO Jim Hegarty.

The application guide with full details and required forms can be downloaded at <http://southdakota/studentaward/>. For more information, please contact BBB Communications Director Margo Riekes at 402-898-8526, 800-649-6814 #8526 or [mrieke@bbbnebraska.org](mailto:mrieke@bbbnebraska.org). The BBB and its Foundation look forward to rewarding eight well-deserving students for upholding high ethical standards. Application deadline is Friday March 8, 2013.



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PRESS & DAKOTAN

2013 Beautiful Baby Contest

Chance To Win Prizes!

We will be featuring our annual "Beautiful Baby Contest" in print and online on **Wednesday, February 27, 2013**. If you or someone you know has a child we would love to include them in our feature!

To enter, simply submit your photo and entry form with a \$10 submission fee by **Monday, February 18**.

First place winners in the following categories will receive a framed winners print and prizes from the following sponsors: Photography by Jerry, LilyCrest and JCPenney.

- 1) 0-12 Months
- 2) 13-24 Months
- 3) 25 Months-3 Years
- 4) 4-7 Years
- 5) Multiple Births

#### Beautiful Baby Contest 2013

Category # \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Name \_\_\_\_\_


Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Winners will be selected by the staff of Yankton Media Inc. Employees and family members of Yankton Media Inc. are ineligible to win. \*Submission of this form authorizes the publication of child's photo in this contest in print and online at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net). Submission fee (\$10) must accompany entry form to be valid.

Submit Entry To:  
Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan  
319 Walnut Street  
Yankton, SD 57078

**Entry Deadline:**  
**Mon., Feb. 18, 2013**



## Woman of Distinction Luncheon


Women Community Leaders Committee invite you to join us in recognizing past nominees and celebrating this year's award winners for their outstanding contributions to our community.

### Monday, February 18

Roncalli Center Dining Room • Mount Marty College  
1105 W. 8th St. • Yankton, SD

**Tickets: \$20/each or \$160 for a table of 8**

Doors open at 11:00 a.m. • Dinner and presentation 11:30 a.m.



**Kristie VerMuhl**

The luncheon will include a presentation entitled "Life Lessons from a Roll of Sod" by featured speaker Kristie VerMuhl. Kristie has been anchoring the evening newscasts at KTIV in Sioux City since 1996. She has earned numerous journalism awards from the Radio and Television News Directors Association and the Iowa Broadcast News Association including honors for Overall Excellence in Anchoring, Spot News Coverage, Best Newscast and In Depth series.

Call the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce at (605)665-3636 to order tickets by February 8th.  
803 E. 4th St., Yankton, SD  
[www.yanktonsd.com/distinctionluncheon](http://www.yanktonsd.com/distinctionluncheon)

