

# Stress Becomes More Troubling As Farmers Age

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

Last week a young farm wife asked me how to help her husband who she said is unfairly overworked by his parents in their family farm operation. Earlier, two women requested assistance for their farming husbands who are struggling with stresses they could manage satisfactorily when they were younger.

A 69 year old farm man called this week to say he doesn't know how he will take care of his 120 head cow/calf operation and farm 400 acres next year. He could handle his farm with little additional assistance previously but now finds himself overwhelmed and increasingly unhappy.

There is a common denominator among these situations: an aging farmer who can't handle stressful work as well as when younger.

It comes as no surprise that as we age we usually become less able to handle stress. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health researchers, John Myers, Larry Layne and Suzanne Marsh, reported that both fatal injuries and the severity of nonfatal injuries increase among farmers as they age.

Their report was presented at the 2007 Conference on the Aging Farm Community, held in Indianapolis, and is available in the March 2009 issue of the American Journal of Industrial Medicine. I also gave a report at that conference indicating that behavioral health problems increase among aging farmers.

The National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2012, released on August 22 this year, indicates that although fatal work injuries are down among farmers since 2011, the rate of fatal injuries is higher among farmers than among any other occupational group. Stress has a lot to do with their fatalities and injuries.

Many farmers have more difficulty handling highly technical farm jobs as they age. As my father approached his early 70s he asked his sons who farmed to take over planting and harvesting, jobs which involve remaining attentive for hours on end. Dad said the monitors on the planter equipment and the combine made him nervous.

Dad died at age 72 from a coronary blockage. I still needed his advice at that point.

I didn't fully grasp my father's assessment of his mounting difficulties until I reached my mid 60s. I can't as easily endure jobs that require sustained attention as long or as easily as I did formerly.

The young wife mentioned above thanked me for my perspective. I had suggested that her husband was being urged to take over tasks his parents couldn't handle anymore, for the same reasons my father couldn't handle them.

She said problems will continue but she doesn't

want to cause a rift by bringing up concerns to her husband or his parents. Her husband is overworking and becoming stressed. Is this right?

Taking on more than one can comfortably handle is not necessarily the solution, even if the younger persons in the operation decide that addressing what they feel are unfair expectations by the older generation is not something they want to pursue.

Bottling up mounting resentments will likely make the young wife and her husband unhappier, which she acknowledged. Their children will likely copy their parents' example when they assume positions of responsibility, whether engaged in farming or other careers. They will probably overwork as adults.

The issue needs to be addressed in open business-like discussion among those involved when one or more persons in a joint operation are overworking. The two farm women, mentioned at the outset whose husbands can't handle as much stress as when younger, initiated family discussions with an external consultant.

Already, these two families are feeling better about getting their concerns into the open and they are committed to resolving their farm stress dilemmas through periodic business meetings. Both sets of parents are scaling back their workloads as their children and their respective families take on essential responsibilities which they feel they can handle.

The parents know their children want to modify the farming operation; they are willing to give them opportunities to explore new methods of farming. The parents are willing to offer advice and financial investment, but the next generation must take over the planning and implementation of the operation.

The farmer with the cow/calf operation and 400 acres of cropland is turning over his operation to his son and granddaughter. Although they have some wrinkles to work out, their approach is reasonable and will give direction and opportunity to the parents and the children taking over.

Not all farmers handle stress the same and some aging farmers actually manage better with a lot of responsibilities than when younger. They rely on the wisdom they have gained through experience.

Dr. Arthur Benton, a great contributor to the field of neuropsychology, said at age 94 in his keynote address at a meeting I attended years ago, "Getting old sucks. But there is one benefit about aging; we become more adept as we age at determining what is important." Good observation!

*Dr. Rosmann is a Harlan, IA farmer and psychologist, available at: www.agbehavioralhealth.com.*

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Dr. Mike  
**ROSMANN**

## Visiting Hours

# Assisted Living Gives Seniors Opportunity To Be More Active

BY CHRIS CALLAGHAN AND LINDA FOLKERS

Avera Sacred Heart Majestic Bluffs

Many seniors are experiencing some challenges in their activities of daily living. Making a decision to move to an assisted living apartment certainly isn't an easy decision to make. However, with the help of family, friends and your primary health care provider, those decisions can become doable.

Assisted living provides an opportunity to meet new supportive neighbors who understand the challenge of making lifestyle changes. Informal resident support groups evolve on senior campuses providing listening and socialization.

Everyone arrives with their own unique set of circumstances. Diversity is a key ingredient at the Bluffs. We have welcomed residents from the surrounding area and from throughout the United States. Many residents choose the Bluffs to be closer to their children living in this area, or return to their Yankton roots. Included in our population are retired educators, farmers, business owners, homemakers, the medical profession, accountants and more... each brings to the table their experiences and knowledge.

The advantages to assisted living are:

- \* Personalized, 'round the clock health care
- \* Balanced meals
- \* Personal assistance with bathing, grooming, dressing and medications
- \* Peace of mind knowing if the need to transition from independent living to assisted living level of care is needed, the resident is given the opportunity to age in place. Aging in place allows the resident to remain in their current apartment provided the level of care needed can be met.
- \* Social interaction with others, recreational activities
- \* Housekeeping, laundry
- \* Transportation to health care appointments
- \* Beauty shop
- \* Wellness center
- \* Coffee shop
- \* Outpatient therapies such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy can be provided without leaving the facility.

It's also important to remember that if you choose the assisted living apartment alternative, you remain independent. You have an enhanced apartment with your own safe bathroom, kitchen, fridge, freezer, microwave, bedroom and living room. If a

person is experiencing increased memory loss, a specialized memory unit provides privacy, dignity and individual attention with the same amenities as mentioned earlier.

What "fun" things occur at the Bluffs assisted living?

- \* Learning and Community Circles
- \* Fishing/picnicking outings
- \* Tea parties
- \* Happy hour
- \* Wii game
- \* Senior exercise program including weights, stretch bands, chair and standing range of motion and cognitive exercises
- \* Card groups
- \* Sing-along's/music entertainment
- \* Residents as volunteers
- \* Bingo with monthly themed bingo
- \* Scheduled shopping trips
- \* Bible study and Bible Sharing
- \* Daily coffee time
- \* Nail Care
- \* Social gatherings with families and residents
- \* The possibilities are endless.

For more information about Avera Majestic Bluffs Assisted Living, call (605) 668-8928. We will answer your questions, send you an informational packet and give you a personal tour.

# Nadenicek Posthumously Awarded Bachelor's Degree

Born in 1918 in Youngstown Ohio where he completed his high school education, Paul and his siblings were brought to Yankton in 1936 by their mother, Mary Louise (Homolka) Nadenicek upon the death of his father. Paul, who was a self-taught guitarist and who had achieved great success on that instrument, found himself at home on the Yankton College campus, where he met other musicians interested in the music of that era and soon became a member of the campus MusCats. His propensity for keeping his own company gave him plenty of time to perfect his playing, and he did. Opportunities to perform became to come for the group but all was interrupted by WWII and Paul picked up his guitar and joined the Army Air Corps. Once again, the guitar was his ticket to more adventure; he traveled with the Army Air Corps Band for his period of time in the service, making many contacts in the music world.

Those contacts led to Paul's traveling all over the United States, playing what was then called Big Band Music with the likes of Ray Noble, Don Ellis, Woody Herman and even into the 60's with Peter, Paul and Mary. It was an exciting all-encompassing life, and eventually Paul left it and moved back to Yankton where he once again tried to pick up the pieces of his education at



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The family of Paul Joseph Nadenicek and members of the Yankton First United Methodist Church gathered recently at the Yankton College offices to participate in a ceremony through which Paul was posthumously awarded an honorary Bachelor's Degree.

Yankton College. He fell slightly short of semester hours and didn't quite achieve his Bachelor's diploma.

He didn't desert his music, however; for all of the years between his returning to Yankton and his death on July 3, 2013 at the age of 95, Paul participated in the music program of the First United Methodist Church. When he had to leave his home and receive more care, he was singing and playing

with the Praise Team and the Chancel Choir every Sunday for two services. Paul's guitar-playing was known to generations of Methodists.

In acknowledgement of Paul's service to his Lord and his living the spirit of Yankton College and its Mission Statement, the Board of Trustees saw fit to bestow upon him an Honorary Bachelor's Degree posthumously on August 27, 2013. It was a good thing!

## Lions Club Golf Outing Sept. 21

Play golf with the Yankton Lions on Saturday, Sept. 21, at the Fox Run Golf Course in the third annual Yankton Lions end-of-season golf outing.

Shoot for a new golf cart and a huge (\$5,000) money hole. More importantly, shoot for Yankton Senior Center activities and the Wounded Warrior Project.

This is a two-person scramble with many prizes and a ton of fun. High school students and younger play for free, while all others pay a \$10 entry fee.

Call Fox Run at 668-5205 for a tee time.

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**AM 1450**  
**MORNING COFFEE**  
**WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY**  
**Wednesday, September 11**  
7:40 am YC Observer  
(Kathy Church, Kristy Wyland)  
8:20 am Hy-Vee Foods  
(Chef Staci)  
**Thursday, September 12**  
7:40 am Yankton Conv/Vis Bureau (Lisa Scheve)  
8:20 am Yankton Chamber  
(Carmen Schramm)

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**Wholesale Art Fair!**  
**Benedictine Center**  
Located on the Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Campus  
**Wednesday, September 11**  
7 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
**Thursday, September 12**  
7 a.m. - 3 p.m.

- **30% to 60% Off!**
- Glassless Options
- Many frames & matte options
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**605-668-8310**

Partial proceeds will benefit the Avera Sacred Heart Foundation.

**Larry's**  
**HEATING & COOLING**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary**  
**CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAYS**

**Friday, Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> thru Sunday, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**31% Off slumberland Merchandise**  
\*Some restrictions apply. See store for complete details.

**Register To Win Prizes!**  
**Please Come Help Us Celebrate!**  
*Larry & Peggy*

**Sat., Sept. 14th from 4-6pm in the Park**

- Enjoy a FREE Walt's Pork Loin Sandwich or Hot Dog, Chips and a Pop!
- Come Have Fun in the 70' Inflatable!
- Listen To The Band "Nostalgic Vibes" in the Parking Lot!

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