

# Farm families ALIVE & WELL



News from The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health

## Coalition to Address Grain Safety

Vol. 17, Issue 2 - April 2011

In a three week period in the summer of 2010, seven people died in grain bin engulfments in the Midwest. This tragic loss of life led to the formation of the Grain Handling Safety Coalition (GHSC), a consortium of public and private organizations who hope to work together to reduce or prevent grain bin fatalities through education and outreach. "I was contacted by a number of different organizations when two young men from Mt. Carroll died in a grain engulfment in late July," said Robert Aherin, a professor and Extension agricultural safety specialist at the University of Illinois. In addition, Catherine Rylatt, the aunt of one of the young men killed in the incident called Aherin. She felt the need to educate others about grain bin safety.

Aherin and Rylatt are now two members of a coalition that includes representatives

from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); the Grain Feed Association of Illinois, (GFA); the Illinois Farm Bureau; the University of Illinois Extension and Fire Service Institute; the University of Iowa; Purdue University; Illinois FFA; Carle Hospital's Center for Rural Health and Farm Safety; Illinois Farm Service Agency; the Illinois Department of Agriculture; and the University of Wisconsin.

"Our initial intent was to get to know one another and learn what each group was doing in the area of grain safety," said Aherin, "then try to consolidate our resources to address areas of weakness." An example of that cooperation came late last year, when OSHA and the

GFA worked together to train OSHA inspectors in grain handling systems.

Aherin said the Coalition  
(continued on page 2)



## Great Plains Center to Increase Funding for Pilot/Feasibility Projects

by Fred Gerr, MD

As many of you know, the staff and faculty of the Great Plains Center have spent much of the past year planning for the next five year cycle of Center activity. As part of that process, major changes were made to the Center's Pilot/Feasibility grant program that we think will enhance its impact on health and safety in the Midwest. Previously, the Center had only one pilot grant program, regardless of the proposed pilot project scope, applicant organization mission, and project goals. In doing so, we mixed a wide range of proposed projects into a single group. A big problem was the simultaneous review of applications for scientific research submitted by academic faculty and graduate students, and applications for education, outreach, and intervention submitted by community-based agricultural health organizations. Center faculty and staff had considerable difficulty comparing these applications, given their differences in goals, objectives, and methods.

To remedy this problem, we have introduced an important innovation that we believe will enhance the overall impact of our pilot grant program. For the upcoming five year funding cycle of the Center, two separate pilot project "tracks" are proposed: one for basic and applied scientific research projects from academic institutions, and the other for community-based education/translation projects from agricultural health organizations. Each pilot project program will have its own dedicated funding stream so that funding will always be available to quality projects, regardless of origin (academic or community-based).

In this manner, basic and applied scientific research projects will be judged for scientific merit and compared only to other basic and applied scientific research projects.



Fred Gerr, MD

(continued on page 2)



The *Agricultural Medicine: Occupational and Environmental Health for Rural Health Professionals* core course will be held **June 13-17, 2011** in Iowa City, Iowa. Nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, veterinarians, and other health or safety professionals are invited to participate. The training provides information and skills to enable the health care professional to function in the anticipation, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of occupational illnesses and injuries in the farm community. College and continuing credit hours are available. Contact Kay Mohling at 319/335-4219 or [kay-mohling@uiowa.edu](mailto:kay-mohling@uiowa.edu) for more information.



Farm Safety 4 Just Kids has hired **Outreach Coordinators for 2011** in nine states, including Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and South Dakota. These part-time college students travel the state conducting farm safety presentations for youth and their families. The current outreach coordinator program started four years ago with four coordinators. The program has seen tremendous growth since then thanks to the support of program sponsors: ADM, Cargill, and Monsanto. Keep Farm Safety 4 Just Kids outreach coordinators in mind if you're planning a farm safety day or presentation. They are available at no cost in their respective states. Call Farm Safety 4 Just Kids at 800/423-5437 for more information.

**Director's Message continued from page 1**

Community-based education and translation projects will be judged for feasibility and potential agricultural health and safety impact, and compared to other community-based education and translation projects. We believe that splitting the pilot grant program in this way will better serve both our academic partners and our community partners, and will maximize the Center's impact on agricultural safety and health in the nine-state Great Plains Center region. Critical to the successful implementation of this program will be input from Internal Advisory Committee, External Advisory Committee, and Regional Advisory Committee members regarding scientific merit, community relevance, integration across disciplines, stakeholder involvement, and overall potential for contribution to agricultural health and safety.

Descriptions of the pilot project programs can be found on page 3 and at <http://cph.uiowa.edu/gpcab/small-grants/index.html>. Contact Fred Gerr at [fred-gerr@uiowa.edu](mailto:fred-gerr@uiowa.edu) or Pat Ramstad at [patricia-ramstad@uiowa.edu](mailto:patricia-ramstad@uiowa.edu) for additional information. As always, we look forward to hearing from you.

*Dr. Fred Gerr directs the GPCAH, housed in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health of the College of Public Health. He can be reached at 319/335-4212 ([fred-gerr@uiowa.edu](mailto:fred-gerr@uiowa.edu)).*

**Coalition continued from page 1**

hopes to reach the areas of population that have the greatest need - farmers, small elevators, and the people they employ. "Older youth and seasonal workers employed during the busy time of year need to understand the risk that is inherent in working in grain bins."

With assistance from the University of Iowa the Coalition is developing a website on grain safety that will give the agricultural community access to training resources, publications and links to the different organizations involved in the Coalition.

Aherin is a member of the USDA's North Central Education/Extension Research Activity 197 committee that has been assessing the safety and health education and research issues associated with agricultural confined spaces including grain storage. The committee is discussing with various groups the possibility of collaborating to hold a national conference on agricultural confined spaces late this year or early in 2012. The concept is to bring researchers, educators and policy makers together who have expertise and interest in taking a deeper look at how to more effectively address the complex issues associated with agricultural confined space safety.

"We've been working on issues of grain safety for a long time and we've reached a lot of people, but we need to reach more and there is a need to improve the safety design of grain bins," Aherin concluded. "The procedures we are trying to teach take a little longer, but with such significant risk involved, you have to take the time to do it right. From a safety standpoint, you really have no other choice."

*For more information on the GHSC contact: Catherine Rylatt, MPA at [catrylatt@gmail.com](mailto:catrylatt@gmail.com) or Jeffrey Adkisson, Executive VP, CAEIL Grain and Feed Association at [jeffa@gfai.org](mailto:jeffa@gfai.org).*

*Bob Aherin, PhD, CSP, Professor of Agricultural Safety and Health at the University of Illinois, can be reached at 217/333-9417 ([raberin@illinois.edu](mailto:raberin@illinois.edu)).*



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## Proposals Sought for Agricultural Health and Safety Grant Programs

The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) at the University of Iowa is seeking research proposals for two grant programs that address safety and health of farmers and others in the agricultural community. **The deadline for applications is May 2.**

The Basic and Applied Research Small Grants Program seeks proposals that address agricultural safety and health priority issues, needs, and gaps. The objective of this grant program is to serve as an incubator for new agricultural health and safety research, prevention, intervention, evaluation, and translation projects that have high likelihood of leading to more comprehensive research studies. Special consideration will be given to proposals that are interdisciplinary and which promote collaboration among researchers in the GPCAH region.

The Community Partners Small Grants Program seeks proposals from community-based organizations and entities that engage in outreach, education and translation of evidence-based methods for preventing agricultural injury and illness among agricultural workers. The objective of this grant program is to support community-based organizations in proven, effective research-to-practice, translation, education, outreach, and prevention-intervention activities. Special consideration will be given to proposals that are inter-disciplinary and which promote collaboration among appropriate organizations and individuals.

Project funds will be awarded on a competitive basis, and the maximum amount of funding is \$20,000 per project with the goal of funding multiple projects per program. Awards will be announced in June with funding to begin no earlier than October 2011.

The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health is a National

Institute for Occupational Safety and Health center dedicated to protecting the health and safety of farmers, ranchers, farm workers, their families, and agricultural communities in the center's nine-state region (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois) and beyond. The goals of the Center are achieved through basic and applied research, education and training, outreach, and translation of research findings into effective interventions for the prevention of agricultural injury and illness.

For more information, visit [www.public-health.uiowa.edu/GPCAH/small-grants/application.html](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/GPCAH/small-grants/application.html) or contact Pat Ramstad, GPCAH Program Manager at [patricia-ramstad@uiowa.edu](mailto:patricia-ramstad@uiowa.edu).



## calendar

May 3-7

### **34th NRHA Annual Rural Health Conference**

Austin, TX

[www.ruralhealthweb.org/annual](http://www.ruralhealthweb.org/annual)

May 11-13

### **Arthritis, Agriculture, and Rural Life Conference**

West Lafayette, IN

[www.arthritis-ag.org/arthritis-conference/arthritis-conference.aspx](http://www.arthritis-ag.org/arthritis-conference/arthritis-conference.aspx)

June 13-17

### **Agricultural Medicine Training**

Iowa City, IA

[www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash](http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash)

June 26-30

### **National Symposium of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Health & Safety**

Boise, ID

[www.nifsagsafety.org](http://www.nifsagsafety.org)

July 11-15

### **Agricultural Medicine Training**

Omaha, NE

[www.unmc.edu/cce](http://www.unmc.edu/cce)

August 30-September 1

### **Farm Progress Show**

Decatur, IL

[www.farmprogressshow.com](http://www.farmprogressshow.com)

October 5-7

### **Bi-Annual International Rural Nursing & Rural Health Conference**

Binghamton, NY

[www2.binghamton.edu/continuing-education/non-credit-programs/rural-health.html](http://www2.binghamton.edu/continuing-education/non-credit-programs/rural-health.html)

November 10-12

### **21st Annual Midwest Stream Farmworker Health Forum**

Albuquerque, NM

[www.ncfh.org](http://www.ncfh.org)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

+++++It All Adds Up

Farm and Agricultural <u>EVENTS</u> in Press Clippings <i>GPCAH 9-state Region (IA, IL, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD, WI)</i>	Calendar Year 2010	
	Fatal (184)	Nonfatal (179)
<b>Mobile Machinery</b> (including "ATV-like" machines at work)	<b>65.2%</b>	<b>68.2%</b>
Overturn	39.2	24.6
Runover	17.5	7.4
Crushed / Struck by	15.8	8.2
Collision	11.7	38.4
Entanglement	5.8	14.8
Other	10.2	6.6
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
<b>Grain Storage and Handling (including entanglements)</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>
<b>Livestock Handling</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>21.2%</b>	<b>19.5%</b>