

# Cultivate

Newsletter of the National Farm Medicine Center

Summer 2010

## Our Mission

"To conduct high quality research addressing human health and safety associated with rural and agricultural work, life and environments."

## Save the date: Auction Sept. 23

The National Farm Medicine Center's largest annual fundraiser, the Auction of Champions, is scheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2010, at Clearwaters Hotel & Convention Center in Marshfield. More than \$2 million has been raised for agricultural health and safety since the first Auction in 1982. Half of last year's proceeds were dedicated to the Dr. Dean T. Stueland Endowment, established in 2000 to foster and promote research and outreach/educational programs in emergency medicine, agricultural medicine and/or alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) medicine. Tom Tasse of Hewitt Meat Processing, Marshfield, is the 2010-11 Auction Chair. For more information, contact Jill Kurszewski, 715-389-5146, or visit <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/giving>

 National Farm Medicine Center



Marshfield Clinic<sup>®</sup>  
Research Foundation

## Physician-scientist hired to fill Emanuel endowed chair

Dr. Keifer to focus on Wisconsin dairy workers

**M**atthew Keifer, M.D., M.P.H., an internist and occupational/environmental medicine specialist, has been hired to fill the position of Dean Emanuel Endowed Chair and Senior Research Scientist for the National Farm Medicine Center (NFMC).

Dr. Keifer will lead the new Wisconsin Dairy Workers Safety and Health Initiative, which aims to address major disease and injury concerns impacting the well-being of workers. Key activities will include research into the ergonomics of dairy tasks and training for language-limited workers, on-farm injury prevention consultation services, and education and training in the use of personal protective equipment. The initiative will partner NFMC with the University of Wisconsin-College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, UW Agricultural Research Stations, U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service, the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin and other organizations.

Dr. Keifer is transitioning from his position as the associate director of the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center at the University of Washington. He will start at NFMC August 30, and will hire additional staff for the dairy workers initiative.

"The more I met and conversed with Matt, the more convinced I became that he was our man," said Dean Emanuel, M.D., who



*Matthew Keifer, M.D., M.P.H., has earned the respect of agricultural workers and employers through his work at the Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center.*

served on the selection committee with dairy producers, medical and safety specialists, and scientists.

"Not only is he a clinician and researcher, but he has a lot of experience in worker-employer relationships and is bilingual, which is important given the Wisconsin dairy industry's rapidly-expanding Spanish-speaking workforce."

The Dean Emanuel Endowed Chair has benefited greatly from Auction of Champions funds, in addition to generous donations from Dr. Emanuel, his wife Lorrie, and others.

Dr. Keifer's wife, Susan Kline, R.N., D.N.P., will be joining Marshfield Clinic as Assistant Director, Care Coordination, Department of Quality Improvement and Care Management.



## Safe Play goes interactive



An interactive version of Safe Play Areas on Farms is undergoing usability testing by farm parents and will be available in September at [www.marshfieldclinic.org/safeplay](http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/safeplay). Based on the original 2003 Creating Safe Play Areas on Farms guidelines, interactive tools will enable parents to move around a virtual play area and click on key elements for more information. Research Program Associate Tammy Ellis is leading the initiative.

## Childhood agricultural injury prevention

Youth operators of tractors typically had diminished fields of vision compared to the average adult operator, according to a recently published study co-authored by Research Scientist Barbara Marlenga, Ph.D. The degree of visual limitation is greatest for objects at close distances and when objects are straight in front of the operator/tractor. This has implications in terms of risks for runovers, rollovers and collisions. Study findings may help illuminate the development of policies and guidelines in tractor-related jobs for children.

The Childhood Agricultural Safety Network is trying to reduce child farm injuries by changing social norms. CASN, facilitated by Agricultural Youth Safety Specialist Regina Fisher, M.S., and Center Director Barbara Lee, Ph.D., is working with Canadian colleagues to develop public awareness campaign materials to keep young children off of ATVs. The rate of childhood injuries and fatalities continues to escalate, in contrast to the downward trend of most agriculture-related incidents. Campaign materials can be downloaded at [www.childsafety.org](http://www.childsafety.org).

It's the season for farm tours, u-pick produce, hay rides, petting zoos, festivals, and bed-and-breakfast stays. The National Children's Center's popular agritourism safety and health resources have been developed for use by agritourism owners and managers, and farmers who host children and groups. Go to <http://www.marshfieldclinic.org/agritourism>.

## New pastures

Mark Borchardt, Ph.D., is transitioning to his new position of research microbiologist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service facility in Hewitt. Dr. Borchardt, who headed the NFMCC's Public Health Microbiology Laboratory, first began work at Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation in 1994 on a part-time basis. He built a successful research program addressing environmental transmission of human pathogens related to water. Joined in the move to USDA-ARS by support scientist Susan Spencer, Dr. Borchardt is now directing a research laboratory with a focus on agricultural zoonotic pathogens. The NFMCC looks forward to continued collaboration with Dr. Borchardt.

## Outreach

Regina Fisher, M.S., has been named NFMCC's Manager of Education and Outreach Service. Fisher will oversee involvement in activities such as Farm Technology Days, professional training, health fairs and the Web site.

The NFMCC staffed a booth at the Marshfield Farm Show in February, distributing earplugs and sunscreen along with educational materials. In addition, the Center sponsored radio ads on WDLB during National FFA Week and Dairy Month.

Medical school residents and faculty from across Wisconsin met in Marshfield on April 28 for Pediatrics Advocacy Day. The agenda included presentations by National Children's Center staff, and a field trip to the farm of Doug and Mary Urban in Milladore.

Auction of Champions funds are instrumental in NFMCC editorship of the peer-reviewed Journal of Agromedicine, which focuses on research of interest to rural health care providers and public health practitioners. The current issue summarizes panel presentations from the conference, "Be Safe, Be Profitable: Protecting Workers in Agriculture," held earlier this year.

## Visitors from Uruguay



*Four veterinarians from Uruguay visited the NFMCC this past spring, discussing life and agriculture in their country. Their trip was part of a Rotary Club exchange. The veterinarians: Maria Carolina Marino Ponce, Carolina Matto Romero, Virginia Artergortia and Marcela Noel Preliasco Arin. They were accompanied by group leader Maria Perez, an English teacher from Uruguay.*