

Focus on A Farmer: Jerry Bailes

When Stigler resident Jerry Bailes' dad told him about the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project, he did not hesitate to call.

Bailes works a 450-head beef cattle operation while farming several thousand bales of hay with his father. This has become more difficult over time with stress fractures of the first, second and third metatarsals on his right foot, which limits his mobility and ability to co-manage the property. He also has a diagnosis of Charcot foot, that requires him to wear custom shoes.

With swelling at the right lower leg, ankle and foot area, Bailes reported having impaired balance, not being able to put weight on his right leg and having little to no feeling in that area. These factors contributed to difficulties climbing into and out of the cab of his tractor, lifting heavy objects, hitching implements, and climbing the stairs to the front and back doors of his home.

After an on-site farm assessment, Oklahoma AgrAbility made several recommendations to reduce barriers around the farm that interfered with his continued employment. These included suggestions to increase mobility and safety in accessing his machinery, operating farm equipment and accessing his home independently.

Some of the assistive technology and modifications identified were a seated lift for transfers to the cab of the tractor, a quick-hitch system for implements pulled by his tractor and a ramp from the house to his large workshop. A shower bench and handheld showerhead assisted with reducing daily living obstacles, as well as, various items to assist with work in the shop.



Jerry utilizes a seated lift to access the cab and a quick-hitch system to ease lifting physical demands.

Photos by Sandra Stevenson



Through a collaborative effort with Bailes and the Oklahoma AgrAbility Project, the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services was identified as an appropriate funding source for the needed accommodations and assistive technology devices. Bailes reported the generator, plug-in lamp, battery-powered lamp and battery recharger as very helpful in the shop, and the ramp to the shop allows for a smooth and easy path.

A ramp installed with railing provides access from Jerry's home to shop.

With these accommodations, Bailes continues his farming business with fewer obstacles and barriers as he completes tasks on the farm and in his home.

- Sean Hubbard and Sandra Stevenson

About Oklahoma AgrAbility

Oklahoma AgrAbility educates and connects agricultural families who are living with a disability with resources to secure assistive technologies for continued independence and success in their operation and daily life activities.



Solutions 2011 Smoke Alarm Project

Providing Free Smoke Alarms to Hearing Impaired

Will you wake up in the middle of the night if your smoke alarm goes off after you have removed your hearing aids? If you live in one of these counties, we have a solution for you: Canadian, Kingfisher, Logan, Oklahoma, Lincoln, Cleveland, Pottawatomie, Payne, Creek, Okmulgee, Wagoner, Tulsa, Pawnee, Osage, Rogers, & Washington.

Thanks to a grant from the U. S. Dept. of Homeland Security & Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation (OkAT) has partnered with Oklahoma ABLE Tech & Fire Protection Publications at Oklahoma State University to implement “The “Solutions 2011 Smoke Alarm Project.” People of all ages with a documented hearing impairment (deaf or hard-of-hearing) who live in the counties listed above are eligible to apply for a free smoke alarm and alert equipment to be installed in their home.

“Solutions 2011” will accept & approve applications from people who are deaf or hard of hearing; install free smoke alarms, which meet the unique needs of these individuals; plan a home fire drill specific to each home, & assist with a home safety survey to prevent fires, burns, falls, & other common home injuries. Grant funding is limited, so act now.

For an application for a free smoke alarm & alert equipment from the “Solutions 2011 Smoke Alarm Project,” go to www.ok.gov/abletech/Fire_Safety/index.html, or call Oklahoma ABLE Tech at (405) 744-9748 or call 1-888-885-5588.

- Milissa Gofourth, Oklahoma ABLE Tech

Arthritis Exercise is OK:

“Taking Control” with exercise recently became 16 times more accessible. Oklahoma AgrAbility sponsored 16 Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service Family & Consumer Sciences Educators in becoming nationally certified Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program Instructors. Now, 34 instructors provide programs in communities across the state. For more information on a program near you, call 1-888-885-5588.

Spotlight on Assistive Technology:

Removable Hand Brake Lever with Clamping-Style Base

Properly functioning brakes are essential for safe operation of agricultural machinery, even if equipped with a hydrostatic transmission. While most new tractors (even small ones) come with hydraulically assisted brakes, many older ones are not so equipped and thus may require considerable leg effort to activate. In most cases, however, foot-operated brake pedals can be easily modified for hand use.



Credits: National AgrAbility Project, Breaking New Ground Resource Center, Purdue University

Partner Corner: Matt Ward

Matt Ward grew up on a cow-calf operation in Rogers County in Oklahoma. He served active duty for four years in the Marine Corps after high school, attaining the rank of Sergeant and spending one year overseas. Upon returning home, Matt earned a bachelor's degree in Plant and Soil Sciences from Oklahoma State University in 2000. He currently works for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a Resource Specialist for Farm Bill Programs in NE Oklahoma, serving 20 counties.



Photo Submitted

Matt enjoys Indian flat bowl-making, hunting, fishing and raising cattle with two “darling daughters and a very patient wife of 17 years.” He joined the Oklahoma AgrAbility Advisory Council in 2010 to complement his work as the Special Emphasis Program Manager for Disabled and Veteran employees in Oklahoma. “AgrAbility was a natural addition to these duties, and I have enjoyed being a small part of this organization and what it does for Ag producers with a disability.”

- Julie York



Resource for Hearing Impaired:

Oklahoma Relay

If you are having trouble communicating or hearing on your cell or home phone, a solution is available. Oklahoma Relay provides a free public service for communication between standard (voice) users & persons with progressive hearing loss, deafness, or who are speech-impaired. Several options are available to increase conversational ability.



During a text-telephone (TTY) conversation, a person who is deaf or who is speech-disabled uses a TTY to type their conversation to a Relay Operator who reads the typed conversation out loud to a hearing person. The Relay Operator relays the hearing person's spoken words by typing it back to the TTY user.

Another option is a CapTel®, or Captioned Telephone. This is similar to closed-captioning on a television, but the text is seen on the screen on a telephone. It is designed for those having trouble understanding callers on a telephone. With CapTel®, users make calls as if using a traditional phone, but a CapTel® phone uses voice recognition technology to display words of the conversation on the screen. This allows users to read everything spoken. This service is offered free 24-hours-a-day for local calls. Users are responsible for any long distance charges. CapTel® is also available on the internet or on Android Phones such as Sprint EPIC II or HTC EVO. For more information, visit www.sprint800.com.

The newest addition to serve "Speech to Speech" individuals with a speech disability is STS calls, where a specially trained Relay Operator listens to a call and serves as the STS user's voice and repeats his/her responses to the called party as needed. There may be instances where the STS user will be asked to repeat his/her message to ensure it is conveyed correctly. The STS user hears the called party's voice. For more information about Oklahoma Relay, please visit www.oklahomarelay.com

- Glenna Cooper, Oklahoma Relay

Resource Spotlight:

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is all about helping people help the land. NRCS has a variety of conservation programs and the agency works in partnership with farmers, ranchers and many others to improve, restore, and protect the nation's and Oklahoma's natural resources. All programs available through NRCS also are available to new and beginning farmers and ranchers. Often these programs provide technical assistance and cost-sharing to producers for implementation of conservation practices.

These programs include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) which promotes agricultural production, forest management and environmental quality. The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) improves wildlife habitat on private, agricultural, forest and tribal lands. The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) restores wetlands and wetland habitat on marginal agricultural land, while the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) restores and protects grassland, rangeland and pastureland. The GRP also helps maintain viable ranching operations. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) encourages long-term, comprehensive conservation by maintaining and improving existing conservation measures. Other assistance may be available depending on producer needs and conservation goals.



In Oklahoma, producers in each county have direct access to assistance through the District Conservationists soil and range specialists located in USDA Service Centers in each county. More information can be found on the Oklahoma NRCS website at: <http://www.ok.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.

Tom M. Lucas, Public Affairs Specialist, NRCS





On the Horizon: 2012 AgrAbility Events

July 8-10	State OHCE Meeting, OKC
July 25	Oklahoma State 4-H RoundUp
July 25-26	Langston PT Student Clinical
July 26-28	OK Cattlemen's Assoc. Convention, Midwest City
August 2-3	OK Career Tech 2012 Summer In-service
August 9-10	Oklahoma Women in Ag Conference, Moore
	For more information: call 605-210-0191 or visit: www.okwomeninagandsmallbusiness.com
Sept. 19-21	Joint Fall Conference, Rural Health Assoc., Norman

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Save the Date: 2012 Oklahoma AgrAbility Fall Conference - Nov. 2-3
Watch for more information to register for our annual conference, "Rehabilitating Oklahoma Farmers and Ranchers," or contact us at 1-888-885-5588.

Scan this QR code to access our website
with any free smart phone app.



GOING GREEN! The Oklahoma AgrAbility Project supports initiatives for a healthier tomorrow. Let us know if you would be interested in receiving our newsletter electronically by emailing ability@okstate.edu with the subject line "Email Newsletter." We will then discontinue mailing you a hard copy.



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