

Farm Rescue to the rescue

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Delores and Quentin Georgeson from New Rockford bring lunch out to the field for Carol and Levy Wheeling and their boys, Lincoln, 2 almost 3, and Justus, 11 months.

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This isn't the 2014 harvest season 75-year old Quentin Georgeson expected.

The New Rockford farmer was badly injured on June 13 - Friday the 13th - while working in the field.

"I was run over by a Concord Air Drill out in the middle of the field," he explains.

"It went right across my body and dragged me a ways before my son realized what had happened."

He was driving the tractor pulling the drill.

"My left leg was really messed up, in all I had 12 broken bones," Georgeson adds.

Recovering at home, now, after 12 surgeries to repair the damage done to his body he walks carefully and slowly with a walker and considerable assistance from wife Delores. More surgery is in the future for Quentin, just as soon as his strength is built up and his doctors think he can handle it. That would make 13 surgeries in all.

The Georgeson's have been married for 54 years, almost as long as the 57 years Quentin's been farming land located approximately 12 miles west and north of New Rockford, 10 miles west and south of Sheyenne. This year all 900 acres are in soybeans.

"At first it didn't occur to me that we would need help harvesting the crop this fall," Delores admits.

"We were so focused on Quentin and his recovery, it surprised me when my sister-in-law brought in the application for assistance from Farm Rescue," she said.

"But they've been a lifesaver," she added.

Delores brings a homemade, hearty lunch out to the field for the Wheelings every day, so they can get as much done while the weather holds. Monday it was tater tot hot dish, fresh veggies and fruit with homemade buns, fruit juice, and dessert. Quentin normally stays at home, but on Monday he rode along to see how the harvest is coming. He brought Three Musketeers candy bars for a treat for the little boys.

Last week rains held them up one day and this week looks like they might finish up the remaining field Georgeson owns that surrounds the picturesque country church a few miles down the road.

Carol and Levy Wheeling are originally from Sioux City, Iowa. They are a young couple who have chosen to give their time on various mission trips through the years. "We enjoy living this way, giving of our time and helping others," Carol explained.

In the past they would volunteer and try to get in a little farming on the side somewhere while volunteering until they discovered Farm Rescue, an organization that brought both their passions together - volunteering to help others AND farming.

The young couple travel with their two boys, Lincoln, who is two years old, almost three, and Justus, who is 11 months. They are mom and dad's helpers.

Carol does double duty acting as part time program coordinator for the Farm Rescue organization.

Farm Rescue is a non-profit organization that helps farm families who experience illnesses, injuries or natural disasters that keep them from planting, haying or harvesting their crops in a timely manner. It was founded by North Dakota native Bill Gross who grew up on the family farm near Cleveland, ND, not far from Jamestown.

He always dreamed of flying so Gross eventually enrolled in the UND Aerospace program.

After graduating from UND's John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences, Gross started flying professionally in Seattle. Although he was a successful commercial pilot he never forgot his North Dakota roots. In 2005, Gross came up with the idea to help farmers who suffered unexpected illnesses, injuries or natural disasters that prevented them from earning a living. He formed Farm Rescue, a nationwide nonprofit organization to assist farmers in need.

Thanks to generosity of organizations like RDO, that supplies the heavy equipment plus organizations like the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust and the Otto Bremer Foundation supplying the working capital Farm Rescue is nearing its 300th farmer helped since it was formed.

They have expanded from North Dakota to helping farmers from South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa and eastern Montana.

For more information about Farm Rescue, or to apply for their assistance with spring planting or fall harvesting - they do both - all with volunteers - go to <http://farmrescue.org>.