

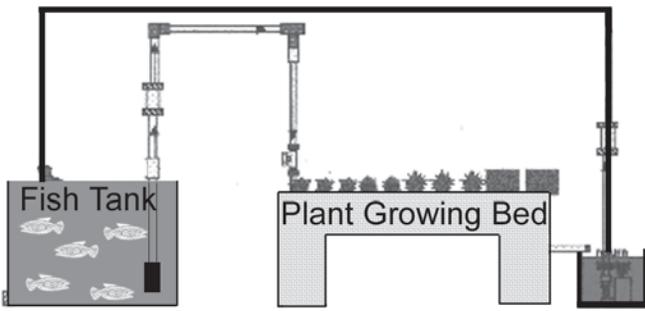
*A quarterly letter to friends of the Breaking New Ground Outreach Program*

## Entrepreneurs looking to alternative ag enterprises

Something fishy may soon be happening at a BNG consumer's southern Indiana home—at least he hopes so. He is one of a growing number of individuals who are looking to nontraditional sources for agriculture-related employment.

The individual's interest is in aquaponics, which is, according to [aquaponics.com](http://aquaponics.com), "the combination of intensive aquaculture (fish farming) and hydroponics (growing plants without soil). In an aquaponic system, the fish consume food and excrete waste. Beneficial bacteria convert the waste to nitrate which the plants use in the growth process." In return, the plants and their growing media clean the water, which

### Simplified Aquaponics System



*Graphic based on image by S&S Aqua Farm, West Plains, MO, found at [www.townsq.com/snsaqua/](http://www.townsq.com/snsaqua/). Used by permission.*

is eventually pumped back into the fish tank.

The consumer is hoping to raise tilapia—a high-quality, fast-growing fish—for sale to nearby stores and restaurants. In addition, he's hoping to produce herbs and other vegetables for sale to local markets and at a roadside stand.

BNG consumer consultant Randy

Martin is also planning to begin a different type of alternative enterprise—growing produce in greenhouses and berry patches. Other BNG consumers are looking at employment options in such areas as landscaping, Web site development, and home inspecting.

Randy and other BNG consumers have been learning valuable tips in the BNG/Arthritis Foundation-hosted **Self-Employment for People with Disabilities** workshops. The second of these sessions was conducted on July 29, and the third and final session is scheduled for September 16. For more information about self-employment or to register for the final workshop, contact Steve Swain at 800-825-4264.

## Bridging Horizons gives awards, receives award

Breaking New Ground and FFA again collaborated to make a positive impact in the lives of people with disabilities. BNG's fourth annual Bridging Horizons FFA Contest—which encourages chapters to complete service projects for people with disabilities in



*A West Washington FFA member constructs a wheelchair-accessible ramp*

their communities—culminated with an awards ceremony at the State FFA Convention in June.

For the second time in three years, **West Washington FFA** of Campbellsburg took home the grand prize of \$500. The chapter constructed a new deck and wheelchair ramp to help a commu-

nity member achieve greater independence, built a wheelchair accessible bridge to allow better access to the school's baseball field, and continued the previous year's project of building and distributing wheelchair accessible picnic tables to schools, individuals and parks.

The **Brownstown Central FFA** chapter in Brownstown (last year's fourth place finisher) took second place and \$250 for their wheelchair obstacle course, which is to be used at the county fair. The course educates the general public about challenges that wheelchair users face on a daily basis.

The **McCutcheon FFA** chapter of Lafayette received third and \$100 for helping a person with a disability move around outside his home more safely. Chapter members poured a concrete sidewalk between the individual's home and garage.

BNG was also awarded a blue ribbon award in the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) 2003 educational aids competition for the

Bridging Horizons FFA Contest. The award was presented in the Extension Methods category at the ASAE annual convention. The Bridging Horizons Contest has also been adopted by AgrAbility for Pennsylvanians, and other states, such as Delaware and Texas, have also expressed interest in beginning their own versions of the contest.

If your FFA chapter would like to complete a Bridging Horizons project, or if you are a person with a disability who would like to request a project, contact Steve Swain at 800-825-4264.



*Brownstown Central FFA members build their wheelchair obstacle course*

BNG Project Leader: Bill Field

Program Manager: Paul Jones

Rural Rehab Specialist: Steve Swain

## Rancher develops low-cost ATV pasture access idea

Chester, MT, rancher Pat Harmon's **Fold-Up Pasture-Access Ramps** allow him to drive his four-wheeler



Ramps allow ATV to enter and exit pasture

through the fences that separate his three cattle pastures without having to continually open/close gates. Harmon made the gate-replacing ramps out of long lengths of old grader blades, using combine rasp bars as cross pieces, short lengths of heavy-walled steel pipe as hinges, and heavy angle iron for the center frames and legs. Ramp height at the fence line is 16 inches.

For more information, call Pat at 406-759-5828 or email him at pmharmon@men.net



Ramps fold to keep animals in the pasture

## Resource Center wins APEX Award

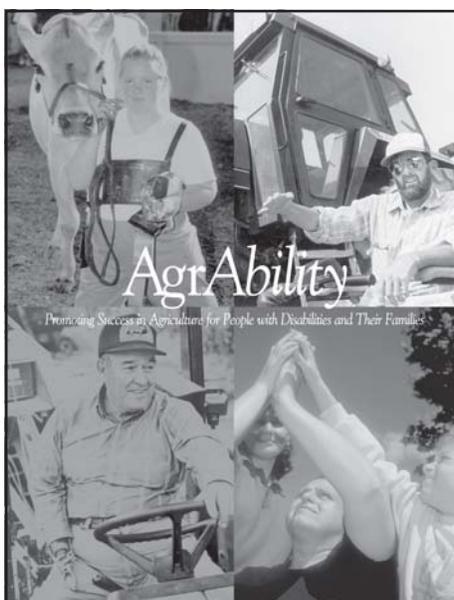
The Breaking New Ground Resource Center recently received a Grand Award in 2003 APEX Awards for Publication Excellence competition. APEX recognized BNG for the *AgrAbility 10-Year Summary* in the brochures, manuals, and reports category.



Only 100 Grand Awards were given out of 4,928 entries.

Other organizations submitting APEX entries included Toyota, IBM, and Verizon.

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For a copy of BNG's *AgrAbility 10-Year Summary* call 800-825-4264

## Two important agricultural events coming

If you're going to the Indiana State Fair or the National Farm Progress Show, be sure to visit the Breaking New Ground displays. The dates for the event are:

• **Indiana State Fair: August 6-17**  
BNG will have a display on the north end of the FFA Pavilion. Also visit the Purdue Agricultural Safety and Health exhibit in the Farm Bureau Building.

• **National Farm Progress Show: September 23-25, Henning IL** (20 miles north of Decatur). BNG is slated to have exhibits in both the Purdue/University of Illinois combined tent and the safety and health tent.

## Lifts for sale

A soon-to- retire Illinois farmer is selling three platform lifts for the following pieces of machinery:

- John Deere 4440 tractor
- John Deere 4560 tractor
- John Deere 6620 combine

He is asking \$500 for each lift, and they will be available until the date of his farm sale, August 21. Due to liability issues, no winches are included with the lifts. They could reportedly be easily modified for other types of tractors. For more information, contact Mike Brokaw, Illinois AgrAbility Unlimited, 800-500-7325.

## 2nd annual "Wheelin' in the Fish"

September 20  
10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Patoka Lake-Osborne Ramp

A recreational experience for people with disabilities and their families sponsored by Breaking New Ground partner SICIL (Southern Indiana Center for Independent Living.) Please bring lawn chairs.

For more information, contact Peggy Tapscott at 812-865-4654.

