

Child killed in McPherson County farming accident

By Deedee Sun |

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MCPHERSON, Kan (KWCH) The McPherson County Sheriff's Office says an 8-year-old boy was killed in a farming accident Saturday afternoon.

Sgt. Dean Scott says the boy was riding in a tractor with his grandpa, when a piece of equipment broke off and flew into the cab of the tractor, hitting the boy.

A friend of the family who also farms says the John Deere tractor was older piece of equipment, but he's never heard of anything like this happening.

Family members say eight-year-old Rylan Decker and his grandfather were out farming Saturday, on Dakota Road south of Galva.

"They were working field, and the little boy was having the delight of his life. Just riding with grandpa, and was thoroughly enjoying the farm work," said Roger Unruh, a family friend and pastor at Lone Tree Mennonite church.

Pastor Unruh says the tractor went over a terrace - uneven ground that helps prevent erosion - and that's when the accident happened.

"It is a tremendous tragedy. A very freak accident. I've never heard of it happening before," he said.

He says a spring on the crust buster disk came loose and an adjusting handle flew into the cab.

"Suddenly there was this terrible loud crash," Unruh said. "It shot forward like a projectile coming through the back windshield, hitting the little boy and then also coming out the front of the windshield," he said.

Unruh says knowing that Rylan didn't suffer, brings the family peace.

"Immediately the little boy he slumped forward," Unruh said. "He made no whimper no cry, just instantly gone."

Unruh says Rylan, his two younger brothers, and his parents were all here from Louisiana, visiting grandparents for Thanksgiving.

"The granddaddy, his first response when he met his daughter was, 'It should've been me.' But his daughter said, 'No Daddy, it wasn't to be you. It was rather to be my son.' She was just telling her dad that mom needs you here," Unruh said.

He says the family is leaning on their faith, and each other, to get through this time.

"There was really no way to prevent it. There was nothing that could've been done to avoid it. It just looked like it was planned for the little boy to be taken to his reward, to heaven," Unruh said.

Rylan's father tells Eyewitness News he was a very curious and happy little boy, someone who knew no strangers. He says their family is grieving but has made peace with what happened.

The funeral service will be in Louisiana, where the family lives.