

OUR TOWNS

Gayville
Mission Hill
Volin

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The Waiting Game

Mission Hill Elevator Running Slow With Late Harvest

BY TRAVIS GULBRANDSON
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MISSION HILL — What should be a busy time at the Farmers Elevator Co. of Mission Hill has turned to a slow, wet waiting period.

"We're basically about three weeks behind in the harvest," said elevator manager Jay Cutts. "The beans are still out in the field. I'm guessing most of my customers have about 20 percent of their beans out."

Cutts said that at this time, the soybean harvest would be over, and the corn harvest will have begun.

Things are different this year.

"We're a small elevator, so I suppose we have 30 to 35 customers," Cutts said. "As far as beans, we've probably seen five (customers)."

Neither Cutts or Steve Sutera, Bon Homme County Extension agronomy educator, can remember the last time conditions were similar to this year's.

"We'd have to go back quite a ways before we'd run into issues that are as bad as this one," Cutts said. "Before, we might have had our beans out, and we might have had issues with corn. This year, we haven't even gotten our beans out. So I would say this year's probably the worst as far as the bean harvest is concerned."

"It's been a long time since we've been at this point this time of year," Sutera said. "We've got crops that are still in the upper 20s and maybe even 30 percent moisture yet. For corn, that's pretty unusual."

According to Sutera, "October is usually the month that we get that final dry-down, and we just have had so few days this month where that's happening. In fact, it's probably taken on some moisture."

"A rain and thunderstorm-type thing is one thing, but when it's this constant rainy, drizzly stuff over two or three days, that's when the crop actually tends to take moisture on again," he said.

Area elevators are seeing these effects.

Sutera said the continuing precipitation is doing two things. The first has to do with field conditions.

"Some places, farmers are still able to get out in the fields, and some places field conditions are too wet," he said.

The second issue is even bigger, he said. "The continuous rain is making the crop not dry down very quick," he said. "In fact, corn drying has been a real challenge."

Cutts agreed. "Right now, we're seeing a lot wetter corn than we used to," he said. "It's even too wet to go into the field for."

For this issue to be resolved, the area is going to need to see a change in weather conditions, Cutts said.

"If we get the correct weather, everybody will be able to get out in the field and start harvesting again," he said. "But unless we start getting sunshine and enough drying weather to be able to make the fields fit to go in again, we won't be seeing any harvest for a while."

Sutera said wind would be helpful, too.

"We don't want real excessive wind, but these 15- to 20-mile-an-hour winds are what is ideal for helping dry both field conditions and the crop," he said. "If we could see some temperatures crawl into that 60-degree range, or even more, that would certainly help. But when it stays as cool as it does, the drying effect is minimal either way."

Farmers do have several options, Sutera said.

"On the soybeans, we have to try to get



Jay Cutts, manager of the Farmers Elevator Co. of Mission Hill, said this year's harvest is three weeks behind schedule due to the above-normal precipitation the area has seen in October.

those out if at all possible before we would have any snow issues to deal with," he said. "You just can't harvest soybeans when there's snow on the ground. That just does not work. The corn, if we get snow on the ground, we can deal with that."

"The challenge will be if you get snow on top of this wet ground, it's just mud and everything underneath, and it would have to freeze really hard. And maybe that's how some of the guys will get some of the corn out," he said.

But the issue of the corn's moisture level still remains.

"It's not dry enough to just put in a bin and not worry about," Sutera said. "They're either going to have to turn their aeration systems on to keep the corn in condition and get it cold, at least through the winter months."

While he added that heating and drying systems can dry some of the crops, "it's such a big crop, their drying bins and dryers just can't keep up with the good crop that's out there."

And some farmers don't have those capabilities, regardless of their effectiveness.

"If they do store (the corn), they're going to want to have the aeration system on and get that corn as cold as they can get it, down to the freezing temperature so it will store over the winter months," Sutera said. "But then they've got to do something with it before it starts warming up in spring." Aeration systems generally only have corn that's under 22 percent moisture, he said.

"I think there's a lot of corn that's at that point, but I know there's a lot of corn that's wetter than that," he said.

But Sutera remains optimistic.

"I saw a lot of combines out (Monday)," he said. "Guys were out harvesting corn. I did not see a lot of soybeans, but I would anticipate (Tuesday), there were a lot of guys trying to get beans out again. We had some wind overnight, and that helped because we didn't get all that frost on the plants."

Twins' Grant Helps Gayville Give Facelift To Baseball Field

BY JUSTIN RUST
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GAYVILLE — The baseball field in Gayville received a major facelift thanks to the Minnesota Twins.

This past June, the Gayville-Volin School District learned it would receive a \$5,000 grant from the team on behalf of the Twins Community Fund Board of Directors in order to help renovate the baseball field in Gayville. Gayville-Volin Superintendent Jason Selchert said the school originally applied for a \$10,000 grant, but because the Twins Community Fund Board decided to give grants to more applicants this year than usual, they gave \$5,000 to every project they approved.

Many improvements were needed for the Gayville baseball field.

The field didn't have an outfield fence, the lights for the field were inside the fences and the backstop fences needed to be changed.

Even though the grant wasn't able to cover the cost of everything the school district wanted to get done, Selchert said the project wouldn't have been able to really start without the grant.

"The grant helped a lot. When we got word that we got the money, it assured everything would get done," Selchert said. "The field is vastly improved. It now suits the needs of our community for a long time. It looks like a whole new field."

Selchert said the field will now be able to host many more events.

"We did try and host some things, but it's been difficult," Selchert said. "We have had Little League games there for years, but now we can do a lot more things."

The fences were set at 300 feet and the bases are at 60 feet during the renovation and Selchert said the field can accommodate tee-ball, Little League, baseball up to



GAYVILLE-VOLIN'S Larry Buffington, with his daughter Maren, were at the Metrodome last month to represent the Gayville-Volin School District at a presentation prior to a Minnesota Twins game. The district received a \$5,000 grant from the Twins Community Fund to renovate the baseball field in Gayville.

age 13 and all levels of softball.

Selchert said the school has plans to build a bigger field for the older age group and the land is set aside for that project.

Selchert said the only thing left to improve on the field is the dugouts, and he said those should get done soon.

"We thought they would get done this fall, but the weather turned quickly on us and it's been too cold and rainy to work on it," Selchert said. "If it doesn't warm up, then the dugouts will be finished in the spring and everything will be completed."

Selchert said he hopes the community enjoys the new field.

"We thank the Minnesota Twins for making the grant available and giving the money to the school district," Selchert said. "I hope everyone in the district and the surrounding communities enjoy the fields."

Reception For Artist At Gayville Hall

GAYVILLE — An exhibition of watercolor paintings by Sharon Gray of Vermillion, on exhibit at the gallery at Gayville Hall in Gayville this summer and fall, continues through Nov. 7.

A reception for the artist will be held from 6-7:30 p.m. Nov. 7 at the gallery, prior to the Abbey Road Band's 8 p.m. "Celebration of the Beatles" concert at Gayville Hall.

Admission to the exhibit and to the reception are free.

Gray's works are mostly inspired by local rural landscapes, particularly the Missouri River and its environs, including the farms of the bottomlands, the bluffs, and other familiar scenes which

she captures with both magic and nearly photorealistic detail.

The Gayville Hall Gallery is located at 502 Washington Street and is open from 5-7:30 p.m. on Saturdays or by appointment. Call 605-267-2859.

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Songs of the Road Saturday at Gayville

Gayville Hall presents "Planes, Trains & Automobiles: Songs of Travel and the Road," starring John and Susan McNeill, Nick Schwabach, and Owen DeJong, at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 31, in Gayville.

John McNeill, of Springfield, who is the emcee at Gayville Hall, has put together a list of great country and pop songs about the road and travel for the show. His wife Susan will accompany him on bass and backup vocals.

Schwabach, who will play lead and steel guitars, and DeJong, on fiddle, have performed in other musical theme shows and tributes at Gayville

Hall with the McNeills. They lead the Poker Alice and Public Domain bands and are from rural Wakonda.

Gayville Hall is located at 502 Washington Street in Gayville. Tickets are \$12.50 at the door or \$15 for a reserved seat. Call (605)-267-2859.



John McNeill is pictured performing at Gayville Hall.

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