

## Moisture puts harvest on hold

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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With rain over the weekend, leaving fields muddy, harvest came to a halt by Sunday pretty much all over the county.

On Monday, the ground was still wet and trucks didn't seem to be running, as the fields were too damp for combines.

In Norcat, Clint Johnson, general manager of Norcat Grain, said the area received about .10 of an inch over the weekend. That was enough rain to slow down harvest for a day or two, he said.

The elevator, said Mr. Johnson, has re-

ceived 300,000 bushels of corn. Storage is pretty tight, he said, so they are putting milo on the ground.

He said he isn't sure when it will be dry enough for harvest to start back up, adding that he thought they were probably 40 to 50 percent done cutting in his area.

At the Hansen Mueller elevator in Oberlin, Janice O'Hare said she isn't sure how many farmers would get back into the field on Monday.

Oberlin received .15 of an inch of rain over the weekend.

The moisture will definitely slow things

down, especially for the milo, she said.

So far, Mrs. O'Hare said, they have had very little milo brought into the elevator, but they have taken in about 420,000 bushels of corn.

Mrs. O'Hare said they are storing the corn at the new bunker at the Hansen Mueller location north of U.S. 36. Once the bunker is full, she said, they will cover it with plastic and use fans to ventilate the grain.

In the Traer area, Dan Grafel, co-owner of D&S Grain, said they received .30 to half an inch of rain over the weekend. That slowed harvest down for two days, he said,

but really helped the wheat planted earlier get started growing.

Mr. Grafel said they hoped to be able to cut some grain Monday afternoon, although they might have to wait until Tuesday, when the sun was supposed to come out.

Around half of the corn has been picked, said Mr. Grafel, but the milo in his area isn't that far along. The Decatur Co-op had brought in over 1.8 million bushels at all of its six locations so far, said interim Manager John Juenemann, with both corn and milo going on the ground already.

He said the elevators still have a lot of

wheat and are having trouble getting rail cars to ship it out. It's rare to get a good wheat crop and a good fall crop in the same year, he said, but this year has been the exception.

It's a problem, he said, but a good one. The only risk now is storing the grain on the ground, where it can be damaged by weather, insects and animals.

At the elevators in Jennings, Oberlin, Danbury, Herndon and Ludell, the manager said, grain is going on the ground. It's mostly milo, said Mr. Juenemann, but in (See RAIN on Page 5A)

## County OKs purchasing two vehicles

The Decatur County commissioners approved purchase of a new first-response vehicle for the ambulance department and one for the emergency management department, pending approval of spending money from a Homeland Security grant, at their meeting last Tuesday.

Ambulance Director Linda Manning talked with the commissioners two weeks ago about buying a new vehicle, since the current one doesn't have four-wheel drive. Ms. Manning said it was hard to get around in the snow and ice last year with two-wheel drive.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy wrote up a specification sheet for the vehicle at the meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 2, that was sent out to dealerships in the areas.

At the meeting last Tuesday, the commissioners opened the bids for the vehicles. The bids were from:

- Finley Motor of Goodland for a 2005 Envoy for \$14,672 and for a 2005 Tahoe for \$20,975.
- Tubbs and Sons of Colby for a 2006 Explorer for \$18,850 and a 2004 TrailBlazer for \$15,995.
- Bob Mayberry of North Platte for a 2007 TrailBlazer for \$23,960.

### County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Decided to buy a new first-response vehicle for the ambulance department and one for the emergency management department, pending approval to use Homeland Security grant money. Story at left.
- Talked with the emergency management director about the need for hazardous material and weather plans for the county. Story on Page 3A.

- Ralph Baird Motors of Larned for a 2007 Expedition for \$24,100, a 2007 Expedition for \$34,675, a 2007 Mountaineer for \$21,625 and a 2006 Explorer for \$20,325.
- Shep Chevrolet of Haven for a 2007 TrailBlazer for \$18,700. (See COUNTY on Page 5A)

## County agency promotes health with vaccines, clinic

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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The Decatur County Health Department promotes public health by selling and giving vaccines, working with children and adults, and holding a health fair everyone other year for the entire county.

With cooler weather here, said Health Administration Marilyn Gamblin, it's time for flu season again, and the department will start selling flu vaccine today.

Ms. Gamblin said the shots are available for \$25 apiece by calling the office at 475-8118 to make an appointment.

Ms. Gamblin said flu shots are important because they not only protect the person who receives one from getting the flu, but those around them. People who take the vaccine can still contract the flu, she added, but it won't be as serious.

The department has 850 doses of the vaccine available, the administrator said, and she hopes people will come by the office in Oberlin or when she visits the smaller towns in the county to get a shot.

Ms. Gamblin said she will be at the city building in Norcat from 10 a.m. to noon on Monday, Oct. 22, to give flu vaccinations.

Both Medicare and Medicaid pay for the flu shots, she said, but the department doesn't bill private insurance.

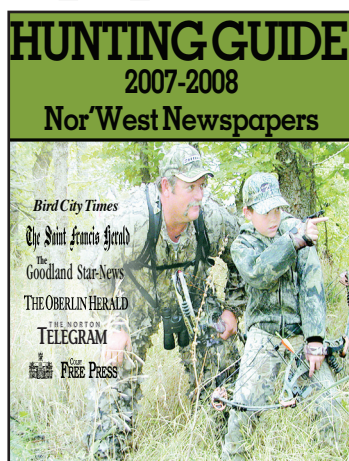
Anyone 65 or over should receive the shot, said Ms. Gamblin. So should people with asthma or a compromised immune system. Children from six to 36 months old, she said, should also receive the shot.

Besides receiving the vaccine, said Ms. Gamblin, people should wash their hands and use tissue (See VACCINES on Page 5A)

## 2007 hunting section inside today's paper

Nor'West Newspapers' annual fall hunting section is included in today's copy of *The Oberlin Herald*.

The section includes articles on the outlook for hunting pheasants, deer, turkey and waterfowl in this area. It also has information and maps on where hunters can go for walk-in access to state-leased land in northwest Kansas.



AT THE PUMPKIN PATCH in McCook last Friday, Skyler Brown (above) leaned over onto a large orange pumpkin while she explored with her kindergarten class.

Bethany Mason (below) sat in the wagon as she waited to head out to the patch.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

## Students wander in vines

Kids climbed onto a wagon lined with hay bales covered in black plastic to keep them from getting wet, and the tractor pulled away from the gravel parking lot, out onto a long, straight road and headed west.

On the left and right were corn fields, but the kids knew they were headed for pumpkins.

The 14 kindergartners of in the class of Diana Steinmetz laughed and chatted as the wagon bounced along the road. Meanwhile, near the barn, the 11 kindergartners of Tim Thornton's class walked through a corn maze.

The two classes were at Common Scents, south of McCook, making the annual pilgrimage to the pumpkin patch and playing in the maze and a hay jump. The classes split up for the fun.

Although it was chilly and misty on Friday, the kids didn't seem to mind.

The "Pumpkin Express" trailer was parked at the patch next to two large spiders made of giant round hay bales with long black tubes for legs. Before they went to explore the patch, a worker



read the students a book called "Pumpkin Time," by Zoe Hall.

The book tells the story of two kids who take pumpkin seeds, plant them, watch the seeds grow into vines with flowers and then pumpkins, pick them and carve the pumpkins into jack-o-lanterns.

In a single file, the students left the wagon and walked through the pumpkin patch. They found big and little pumpkins. When they saw one they wanted to show off, the students hollered at Mrs. Steinmetz or called out for a teacher.

When they saw pumpkins that

were rotting or had been smashed, the students giggled.

Before the kids, teachers and parent sponsors went to the pumpkin patch, they had sack lunches at Barnett Park, near the Republican River, and played on the playground.

## Cold weather puts furnaces to the test

Furnaces across the county kicked on this weekend for the first time since spring, as temperatures dropped to 39 degrees with the first real cool snap of fall.

With the highs predicted to stay at 71 or colder, and lows in the 30s for the rest of the week, people who haven't yet turned on their furnaces may be thinking of doing so.

Bob Helm, manager of corporate

communications with Midwest Energy in Hays, said there are some steps people should take before using their furnace for the first time each year. Midwest supplies natural gas to Oberlin homes and businesses.

It doesn't hurt to call a qualified heating person to come in and give the furnace a once-over before turning it on, he said. People should

make sure that nothing has plugged up the heater or its vents.

Mr. Helm said the gas flame should be blue, not yellow. One of the big things is that with the yellow flame that means the furnace isn't burning clean.

People need to be careful to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. This clear, odorless gas, produced by incomplete combustion of gas or other

fuels, can kill without warning.

When it looks like everything is working right, the flame is blue and nothing in the heater is plugged, said Mr. Helm, the filter still needs to be changed.

Changing the filter, he said, will help keep the furnace running as efficiently as possible.

He said to set the thermostat (See FURNACES on Page 5A)