

NEW VISION

Volume 19, Issue 5 • www.newvision.coop • November 2017

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Manager's Report

By Frank McDowell, CEO

The 2016-2017 year-end financial results did not generate local earnings. The reduction in local income was attributable to poor crop production economics and expenses incurred from the Cargill acquisition. This is not the outcome we budgeted or expected but is one of the scenarios you have to accept when you're involved in agriculture. We also get to hit the "reset button" at the beginning of each fiscal year and start with a clean slate. Crop production economics haven't changed much but yields are better, so I expect agronomy volume to increase in the coming year. Product margins historically reflect the agriculture economy so they are expected to remain under pressure in 2018. The timing of the Cargill purchase resulted in more expense than income last year. These elevators will be in-service for the entire 2017-18 fiscal year and will have a positive impact on customer service and earnings. There will be no cash patronage or equity retirement this year. After the auditors finish up, a DPAD deduction will be allocated to you for grain sold during the 2016-2017 fiscal year, ending August 31, 2017. You will receive a 1099 with your DPAD allocation in January 2018. New Vision's 2017-18 budget results show another challenging year. You will be kept informed as the year develops.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 11 and will be held at the Worthington Event Center. The Annual Meeting Notice is included in this newsletter. At the conclusion of the Annual Meeting a reception will be held for six New Vision Coop retirees providing you the opportunity to thank them for their contributions to your cooperative. Please note the venue change and plan to attend the annual meeting and reception.

This newsletter shares the background and comments of six New Vision Coop retirees. As you're reading their stories, consider what they mean to you as an owner of New Vision Coop. I would suggest you stop reading this article and proceed directly to the retirees' articles. When you've finished reading their stories return to my article and I will share some additional comments regarding the retirees.

So as an owner of New Vision Coop, why should these stories mean anything to you? While you think about your answer, I will share mine. What struck me during the interview and writing process was the common experience they shared growing up on a farm, seeing their mom and dad working together, siblings sharing chores and how each one mentioned customers as something they would miss upon retirement. Today, we call that work ethic, teamwork and customer service. The experience they gained growing up on the farm, their affection and

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appreciation they have for farm work and their understanding of the challenges involved in production agriculture set the foundation for their attitude and job success. These folks recognized there was a job to do and they did it by working together and getting their hands dirty. Everyone pitched in until the job was done. I think this carried over during their employment at New Vision. Their contributions to New Vision's success are significant and are difficult to find in today's job applicants. Don't misinterpret this observation. This is not any judgment on the younger generations. In fact, New Vision has hired many new employees that contribute to our success each day in a very positive manner. The problem is there are simply less farm families so there are fewer farm kids that have experienced growing up on a farm.

So why should these stories matter to you, as a New Vision owner? I believe every New Vision owner needs to recognize the value these retirees provided to New Vision, how difficult replacement will be and that businesses have to change to adapt to the changing rural age demographics in order to attract new employees. On the one hand, it's great to see the retirees reach the stage in their life where they can appreciate their achievement and enjoy the freedom. On the other hand, it's difficult to lose the example they set and watch all that experience leave. The good news is, it's an opportunity for the next generation to step up and meet the challenge of the future which I am sure they will. I just wished there were more of them! Please join us after the Annual Meeting and share your appreciation for a job well done by these retirees!

On behalf of your employees, thank you for your support and plan on joining us at the Annual Meeting.



Agronomy News

By Dennis Weber, Agronomy Department Manager

What a terrific corn crop! Here's a short list of lessons learned from the 2017 growing season:

We had excessive rain through mid-May, a cool, dry period through July and rain from mid-August through early October. Crops responded by struggling to emerge from cold, wet soil, accessed moisture stored in our heavy soil types to maintain limited growth and then surged ahead late summer as moderate temperatures continued, rains arrived and November frost allowed our crops to finish well. The early rain and cooler temperatures are credited with minimal insect pressure.

Beans: White mold in our western territory was a problem. White mold is caused by excess moisture/humidity from rain and fog. Minimizing yield loss due to white mold is the best you can do as there is no way to eliminate it entirely. Planting white mold resistant soybean seed and applying fungicide in late July or early August are the best management options today.

Corn: The fields I scouted all had good stands and good pollination with a 1/2" or so of tip back. We were short GDUs which resulted in a wetter crop but helped kernel quality and test weight.

What Worked: This list hasn't changed in many years: 1. Tile 2. Variable rate lime 3. Maintain soil fertility (don't forget micros) 4. Starter fertilizer 5. Pre-plant herbicide 6. Seed selection 7. Fungicide.

Lime application lasts four to five years and will free up nutrients already in your soil. It's like buying fertilizer but lower cost and longer lasting. For owned or land under a long term lease, it is a very good investment.

I attribute the local advance in soybean yields to fall fertilizer application on corn stalks. I think fall application on stalks allows the fertilizer time to break down into forms the soybean plant can process. I would not recommend spring corn stalk application for this reason. I know this is a difficult decision with crop production economics so tight, but if 2017 taught us anything, it would be the simple logic that the crop will give you what you put into it. Folks that shorted fertilizer to cut costs lost out this year.

Pre-plant herbicide always seems to pay. If for no other reason, the peace of mind it provides in the event weather impairs planting like this spring. There is a direct correlation between weed pressure and yields. Pre-plant herbicide through dry fertilizer impregnation or a 32% application provides great coverage and gives the crop a head start on weeds. If you're applying pre-plant herbicide in the fall, the soil temp must remain < 55 degrees after application, so do not rush fall application.

We deployed our drone to identify trouble spots in fields so we could go directly to those areas. It could be called an assistant crop scout for the time it saves our agronomy sales staff.

Crop damage from Dicamba drift has been in the news. Dicamba has proven to be effective weed control and has resulted in very little if any, yield loss in 2017. This is probably due to good stewardship, luck and reasonable producers.

Precision ag. Interest continues to grow. The best bang for your buck is taking either 2.2 or 2.5 acre grids and applying variable rate lime to correct ph. This will allow nutrients already present in the soil, but “tied-up” by low ph, to become available. Lime is effective for four to five years and actually works as a very low cost fertilizer by releasing nutrients you have already paid for. We only apply lime in the fall because it is best to work it in and spring custom fertilizer application requires the agronomy department to have all hands on deck to operate liquid and dry applicators and tenders.

We hired additional soil sampling help this fall and provided either same day or next day custom application service. It takes a mixture of dedicated part-time employees and experienced full-time employees working as a team to provide this level of service. They have done a fantastic job as usual!

The Hills agronomy plant was placed in-service on October 23rd. It took the employees time to speed up their thought process to get in sync with a plant that mixes 15 times faster than the old plant. The plant workmanship is good and we are looking forward to what it will mean to every customer in the western area.

We heard of some phosphate and potash supply shortages elsewhere during the fall season although we did not experience any problems. I expect fertilizer inventories to be replenished and supplies of all fertilizer products to be adequate for spring season.

It isn't too soon to select seed and plan your fertilizer and crop protection program for spring. On behalf of the agronomy department, thank you for your support! We're looking forward to another successful spring season!



Grain News

By Keith Newman

Harvest has gone well as evidenced by the approximately 5 million bushels of corn on outside piles at six New Vision locations. We have sales on the books and plan to have all the pile corn picked up by January 1st.

Corn yield and moisture level created some challenges as LP supplies were allocated and natural gas curtailed at some locations.

The Cargill locations have performed extremely well. Miloma was an additional bean transfer destination for Reading, Dundee and Worthington and received Alpha corn transfer deliveries. Alpha customer support has been outstanding and deliveries of beans & corn far exceeded harvest expectations. Marna has also performed very well. Thank you to the former Cargill employees and customers for supporting the New Vision Board's decision to acquire these elevators. They are great addition to our elevator system and will benefit New Vision's members for years to come. Our top post-harvest priority is adding dryer capacity at Miloma.

While your harvest and field work are almost concluded, New Vision's grain and agronomy employees will begin the task of retrieving pile grain. This requires coordinating employees, equipment, drying and transportation to achieve our January 1st completion goal. Your patience during this time will expedite retrieval and is appreciated by everyone involved in this joint effort.

The Grain Department is losing some great employees at the end of the year to retirement. Marlis Einkopf, Brewster office, Nelva Behr, Hills, Jim Westerman, Heron Lake, Roger Polzin, Jeffers, Sue Nau, Brewster office and Jean Hoffman, Lismore, have approximately 150 years of combined experience. These employees have been an important part of the Grain Department's success and customer service standard. Please join me and share your appreciation for their contribution at the Retirement Recognition Event after the Annual Meeting on December 11.

On behalf of the Grain Department employees, thank you for your support!



Feed Department

By Grant Prins

The feed department has been very fortunate. We finished 2017 with another year over year increase in volume and the momentum has continued into 2018. I cannot emphasize the value every feed employee places on our customers, customer service and commitment the New Vision Board of Directors has made to insure that your feed department remains the leader in the area.

Evidence of additional board support was the action taken during their September board meeting to improve quality control and production efficiency in Magnolia and Worthington by upgrading some process equipment. Windom is also getting a minor exterior facelift when some spouts and leg structures are replaced before winter weather arrives.

The Board also made the truck drivers happy by approving a soon to be completed garage in Magnolia that will house the entire feed delivery fleet and will be in service by December 1st.

As you read this Darren Ponto, Feed Quality Assurance Manager, will be assisting HACCP inspectors on their annual inspection of New Vision's three feed mills. Our mills scored 99% on the 2016 audit and we expect all you will be proud of the 2017 examination results as well.

I started by saying the feed department has been very fortunate. This doesn't happen without committed employees, excellent facilities and equipment and supportive customers. From all of us, thank you to all of you! We are building a great future!



Board Room News

By Kelly Dunkelberger

Hello New Vision Patrons! Every fall has its memorable moments and 2017 was no different. Harvest was delayed when the New Vision trade territory received 8-12 inches of rain in early October and temperatures remained unseasonably cool. Fields finally dried out and harvest got underway two weeks later than normal. The rain delay and wetter corn stretched out the conclusion of harvest to mid-November. Based on comments from New Vision's elevator employees and other farmers, most producers are happy with yields. I am always amazed on how fast the growing season comes and goes. From the first field prep pass in the spring, to the final round in the combine and last field is tilled in the fall, the season just flies by.

I would like to recognize this year's retirees for their years of service. These employees have worked through many changes to help shape New Vision into the company we are today. I would like to thank them for their many years of service and wish them all the best in their retirement.

I would also like to thank Jim Eigenberg and Gene Mentz for their service as New Vision Directors. They have decided to retire from the Board this year. These two guys were instrumental in the successful outcome of the Wilmont - Adrian Coop merger and carried that support through to New Vision. I will miss their perspectives and input on the issues, projects and tasks the Board evaluates each year. Their counsel will be missed. On behalf of the Board of Directors and New Vision members I wish them all the best and thank them for their contributions.

The Board decided to replace the two board seats vacated by Jim and Gene with one At-Large seat. The objective was to provide an opportunity for representation throughout the territory, including Alpha and Marna without the burden of managing a district nomination. Through the nomination process, Brian Penning has been approved to run unopposed for this At-Large seat. Brian has served on the Wilmont - Adrian Coop Board and New Vision's Advisory Board.

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I hope to see you all at the meeting.



Get to know your At-Large Director Brian Penning

Tell us about your family.

Angela and I have been married eighteen years and have three daughters, 17, 14 and 11 and two sons 9 and 5.

Describe your farm operation.

I've farmed in the Wilmont area with my brother, Russ since 2000. We raise corn, beans, alfalfa, finish hogs, cattle and have a bottle calf operation. I work with the bottle calf operation, do our equipment maintenance and help with the crop farming but I like the variety and am willing to help anywhere I'm needed. My kids have chores and Angela helps out when she has time or when needed. We also have a couple full-time employees and some part-time help during peak season. I also work with my dad and two uncles as part of Penning Brothers Family Farm started by my grandfather, Clarence Penning. At the end of the day, my brother, dad, uncles and I rely on each other to communicate and work together. We understand that we get more accomplished working together than any one of us can alone.

Describe your education.

I graduated from Worthington High School and earned a two year, diesel mechanic degree from Minnesota West, Canby.

Describe your employment and business experience that would be beneficial to serving on the New Vision Coop Board of Directors.

I really enjoyed my FFA experience during high school and student government at Minnesota West, Canby. I held leadership positions in these organizations and was the Minnesota West, Canby campus representative to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. After graduating from Minnesota West, I worked for two years doing John Deere combine repair then I returned to our family farming operation. I served on the Adrian - Wilmont Coop Board as Secretary. I have been a member of the New Vision Coop Advisory Board since 2011 and currently serve as its Chairman. I have completed half of the Iowa Institute's Director Training Program.

Throughout my cooperative membership, board participation and farming, I have attended sessions on leadership development, cooperative governance, operations and financial analysis. It is also been a great opportunity to meet people, learn about teamwork, understand how cooperatives work and understand farmers' different needs and perspectives.

What are the issues that concern you most about agriculture today?

It's funny. I responded to this question a few years ago and I think the answer remains the same! The grain price correction that was coming has arrived so we need to evaluate input costs. This is affecting younger farmers while they're raising families and managing household expenses, which creates its own challenges.

What do you expect from your cooperative?

I expect them to provide cost effective, crop production solutions. These solutions should include the old, tried and true choices as well as new technology and products.

How should New Vision Coop prepare for the future?

I think New Vision needs to continue to build on its brand. They have done a good job by updating critical facilities, expanding feed milling, agronomy and grain handling capacities and buying the Cargill elevators. They also need to continue to provide new technology and opportunities for all members. New Vision cannot sit still. We need to remain on the leading edge of technology and recruiting and retaining good employees.

Any last comments for the New Vision membership?

I plan on farming with my family the rest of my life. I want to be part of building the future and need the Cooperative to be here for us. I am confident that my past experience, dedication and commitment will help position New Vision Coop for a successful future. I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to New Vision members' success as a Director.



OFFICIAL ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The nineteenth annual membership meeting of New Vision Co-op will be held at the Worthington Event Center, 1447 Prairie Drive, Worthington, Minnesota on Monday, December 11, 2017 at 1:30 PM. The order of business will be:

- (1) Proof of notice of meeting.
- (2) Reading and approval of minutes.
- (3) Election of Directors.
- (4) Annual reports of officers and committees.
- (5) Other business.
- (6) Adjournment.

All Annual Meeting attendees are invited to attend a retirement recognition event for six New Vision Coop employees at the conclusion of the Annual meeting.

A certificate redeemable for a ham at W 2 Meats will be given to members and equity holders that attend the Annual Meeting.

Sincerely,

Chad Wieneke, New Vision Coop Secretary-Treasurer



RETIREMENT RECOGNITION

New Vision members and friends are invited to attend the retirement recognition held in honor of Marlis Einkopf, Nelva Behr, Sue Nau, Jean Hoffman, Jim Westerman and Roger Polzin. The event will begin at the conclusion of the 2017 New Vision Coop Annual Meeting (approximately 3 PM) and will be held at the Worthington Event Center located just north of I 90 on US 59 (next door to the Comfort Inn).

Refreshments will be served.

Please plan to attend!



Jim Westerman Retirement

Jim Westerman grew up on the family farm five miles northeast of Storden that raised crops and stock cows with a sister and two brothers. There was plenty to do so everyone pitched in to pick rock, walk beans and do livestock chores. “Mom worked outside with us quite a bit,” he said, “and all of us worked together no matter the job. I really liked the farm work and would have pursued it but land was difficult to find.”

After graduating from Jeffers High School, Jim earned a two year degree in Ag Business from Ridgewater College in Willmar. Jim returned home after graduation and worked at Okabena Farm Supply for a short time until joining the agronomy department at Farmers Grain Company, Storden as a custom applicator where he worked for ten years. Shortly after Farmers Grain, Storden merged with Meadowland, Jim was asked by Mike Geertsma, General Manager at Jeffers Coop, to operate the Heron Lake feed mill. Jim was the Heron Lake feed mill operator from 1986 – 1991 but would operate custom application equipment in the spring while someone else would operate the feed mill. In 1991, Jim was asked to replace a grain accounting employee that quit so he moved from the feed mill to the Heron Lake elevator office. In 1998 he moved from the elevator office to the new office. Jim has been the Heron Lake supervisor and managed the office and grain scale and grading responsibilities.

When asked about the challenging or stressful situations he’s encountered over his career, Jim said, “Mergers in general create challenges for most employees. But after

the first one, I didn’t worry much about the second, third and fourth one. You realize that business will go on and things will work out eventually.”

During his career, Jim was involved in the Farmers Grain Company merger with Meadowland, the Jeffers-Heron Lake merger with Windom-Mountain Lake that formed Prairieland and the Prairieland merger that formed New Vision and the Hills - Beaver Creek Coop and Wilmont - Adrian Coop mergers into New Vision.

When asked about the bright spots Jim said, “It doesn’t get any better for me than when harvest weather is good, prices are decent, yields are good, things are clicking on the scale and the elevator and New Vision’s customers are happy. I really enjoyed the opportunity to talk to the farmers and truckers when they are on the scale waiting for a grade or ticket. When they’re in a good mood this is a great job!”

Jim and his wife Mary have three adult children and six grandchildren that live within three hours of Storden. Jim’s retirement plans include fishing, tending the garden, canning vegetables and some travel.

“Throughout my career, I always liked what I was doing and felt I had great rapport with customers,” he said, “ I am looking forward to not having to work for someone else and the freedom to set my own schedule. It’s also great to hear customer compliments but I am certain the Heron Lake site will get the job done after I’m gone. I would like to thank all the customers that I’ve worked with over the years. It has been great to be part of their success.”



Jean Hoffman Retirement

Jean grew up on the family farm south of Wilmont with three sisters and three brothers. Like most area farms, they raised hogs, milked cows and had some chickens. “I helped with the chickens and would stack bales on the rack or hay mow, but I liked helping in the kitchen the best” Jean said, adding “My dad, mom, brothers and sisters provided plenty of outside help so I helped in the kitchen. Today, I enjoy sharing kitchen activities with my grandchildren.”

Jean started working for Hoffman Farm Service in Wilmont as a Bookkeeper/Secretary in 1978 and continued her career with Wilmont Farmers Elevator in 1987, New Vision in 2011 at “The Farm Store” and New Vision’s Lismore location since 2013.

Jean said the favorite part of her job has been working with the customers and her co-workers. She said she loved getting to know the customers and their families and has enjoyed all her co-workers.

The biggest changes throughout her career have been the development and application of technology and the size of farm equipment. When she started, journal entries, ledgers, and invoices were done by hand. Now, they are done with a click of a button.

Jean’s advice for someone just starting out in their career is: “Really listen to your customers. Learn from them. It is important to provide them with what they want.”

After retirement, Jean’s plans include traveling on short trips with her husband, George, and spending more time with her children and grandchildren that live in the area. When asked what Jean will miss the most about working here, she quickly responded with “The customers and guys I work with.” What she won’t miss is to have to wake up so early in the morning to get to work.

Jean’s smile and cheerful attitude will be missed on a daily basis at New Vision but maybe we’ll get to see it once in a while during the busy seasons. We wish the best for Jean on her retirement!



Roger Polzin Retirement

Roger Polzin grew up on the family farm just east of Jeffers with three brothers and a sister. “We had a small herd of dairy cattle, raised calves, hogs, a few chickens and grain and baled alfalfa for the livestock. Mom milked 10 cows and dad 15 cows every day for over 40 years, along with help from us kids”.

Roger moved to Jeffers in 1972 and worked for Schepman Construction burying telephone lines for three years. “I settled down, got married and wanted to quit travelling so I took a job with Toro in Windom for nine years doing assembly and welding. I worked the Toro night shift and would go home to help mom farm because dad was having health problems. I didn’t have to worry about finding something to do! I didn’t mind the work but Toro would go through layoff and call back cycles and that’s a problem when you’re raising a family. My neighbor in Jeffers happened to be the Jeffers Coop general manager and he asked me if I would consider working part-time at the coop so I started part-time maintenance work in 1981. I started full-time and continued to work maintenance and working in the feed mill. I was always willing to do whatever needed doing so when I was asked to drive a truck I said, sure! I have been in a truck ever since.”

Roger continues, “My first truck was an IH tandem that hauled fertilizer and grain. Trucks kept getting

bigger and soon I was driving a tandem with a pup trailer. A typical day would be a load of beans to Sheldon, disconnect the pup and load bag feed in the tandem, re-hook the pup and load it with bulk soybean meal and return to Jeffers and reverse the process. Hooking up that pup took as much luck as it did skill. The pup brakes locked as soon as it was disconnected so you had to have the tandem in perfect alignment with the pup hitch. It frustrated me more than once. My next truck was a cab-over with an enormous steering wheel and no power steering. It was a real challenge to maneuver this truck but it got my arms and shoulders in great shape.”

Roger and his wife Donna have three children and seven grandchildren all within a day’s drive.

“The best part of my job is picking up grain on the farm and being outside,” he said and added, “I have no complaints. New Vision is a good place to work. If I didn’t like it I wouldn’t be here.”

When asked if retirement was a difficult decision, Roger said, “My wife and I discussed it. It’s a big change when you work all your life to provide for your family, you like what you do, get accustomed to the work routine and paycheck, but I am looking forward to doing outdoor activities and Donna and I may go south for a winter visit in our camper. The Jeffers guys tell me I have to help them during the fall and spring season and that sounds good to me right now so I think there will be plenty to do.”



Nelva Behr Retirement

When Nelva Behr started her cooperative career forty seven years ago at the Hills Coop her name was Nelva Wassenaar. Nelva's career in agriculture started on the family dairy farm located three quarters of a mile east of the Hills terminal. Nelva accepted a job in 1971 to be Assistant Bookkeeper at the Hills Coop. The office was in the feed mill where Douwina Scholten taught Nelva how to do cooperative bookkeeping. Back in the day, adding machines were state of the art. They worked great for adding and subtracting but multiplying required repeated entries of the same number to be added up in order to get the answer! Fertilizer analysis was figured by consulting a fertility chart that showed how much N, P or K to apply based on the farmer's yield.

In the late 1970s, computers were introduced to cooperative bookkeeping. These machines read a tape that contained holes coded to perform bookkeeping functions.

Nelva met Ron Behr, her husband, at the Luverne bowling alley and marriage followed in 1973. Bowling has been part of the family's recreation through 2016 when kids' and grandkids' schedules got too busy for bowling and Nelva and Ron decided to focus on grandchildren sporting events.

Nelva's retirement decision was partially influenced by the passing of her brother and sister in 2014 (life can be short), partially by centralized bookkeeping duties that occurred due to cooperative mergers and computerization and the obligation to staff the Hills terminal office.

When asked about cooperative mergers, Nelva said, "Cooperative members have two options. They can go

on as they are or join in with others to invest in better facilities that help the Coop keep up with farmers. The downside of the merger is the Coop's culture has to change with a merger to deliver efficiency."

"I look back on my years in the Hills Coop and now New Vision, and I always liked the bookkeeping work. I also recognize how bashful I was in the early days and how much fun it was to have the one-on-one customer conversations and get to know them and their families on a personal basis. It was one of the best parts of the job."

"The best advice I can give new employees is: don't be afraid to ask questions! I was very fortunate to have Douwina teach me the ropes in a very supportive manner. The other advice I would offer is be prepared for some tough times. It's not always rosy in agriculture. There's a cycle to it that you have to be prepared to work through."

"If I had one regret, it doesn't apply to work. I wish my son and daughter could have had the experience I had growing up on a family farm. It was a great experience for me to be involved in livestock and have responsibility for the young stock. I really enjoyed it. I know it's a different world today, but the kids that are able to grow up in the country are very fortunate in my opinion. It's a great life experience."

New Vision Coop's employees wish Nelva all the best in her retirement. New Vision's customers may see Nelva in the future as a part-time employee during harvest or spring season.

A retirement recognition event is being planned after harvest with details to follow. New Vision members are encouraged to attend to share their appreciation.



Marlis Einkopf Retirement

Marlis was born on a farm near Reading and the family moved shortly after to a farm east of Magnolia along with an older brother and her twin brother. Two sisters would join the family later. Her mom and dad raised beef cows, dairy cows, hogs and chickens. Her dad's theory was if one wasn't good the others would help out. Both mom and dad helped on the farm and her brothers helped with milking. Marlis worked with the chickens, helped with a large garden and liked driving the tractor baling hay but wasn't allowed to stack hay bales. Marlis was put on the hay rack when her twin brother had an unexpected appendicitis attack and it worked out great. "I loved working on the farm with my parents and brothers," Marlis said. "I remember returning from Worthington Community College around 10 PM during harvest and dad met us as we came in. He told us snow was in the forecast and we needed to finish harvesting the corn. We didn't think twice. We put on our work clothes and went to the corn crib where we plugged the corners with ear corn to keep the snow and rain out of the crib. The snow came so we were glad we finished."

Marlis earned a two year accounting degree from Worthington Community College and went to work for the Consolidated Coop Feed Department in Worthington where she worked with Elaine Hay for a short time. Within the first few months in Worthington, the head bookkeeper retired and the assistant left to have a baby so Marlis was "it". In addition to the shortage of help. In 1968 Marlis married Don Einkopf and shortly after, Don was notified that he was being transferred to Gordy's Super Value in Windom. "One day in Worthington, Harris Knauss, Cooperative Elevator Company, Windom, General Manager, met me at work in Worthington and asked me to come to work with him in Windom. I have been with the Coop ever since."

Cooperative Elevator Company's computer system was hosted off-site and all the business transactions for the first six months had to be reconstructed. "Looking back, I didn't realize that computer system would be a relative term," Marlis added, "Back then we manually calculated weights, grades, shrink, discounts, issued grain checks and maintained the Daily Position Record. Our "computer system" consisted of hand entering these tickets. Today, all of the calculation work and ticket entry is done through our software. Technology has come a long way."

Cooperative Elevator Company, Windom, purchased the

Mountain Lake elevator from Harvest States (now CHS Inc.) in the 1980s. Years later Cooperative Elevator Company, Windom – Mountain Lake merged with Jeffers – Heron Lake to form Prairieland Coop. Marlis observed, "These changes worked very well. It increased our trade territory, Mountain Lake added grain volume and Jeffers – Heron Lake added agronomy."

"After all these years I know I am going to miss all the customers. It's easy to enjoy handing out grain checks to customers! I am also going to miss my co-workers. We depend on each other every day and I like contributing to get the daily tasks completed. I like what I do and I like to keep busy, even if it's doing the windows!" She said.

When asked about her job she said, "The Brewster office is both my favorite and least favorite part of my job. On the plus side, our grain group provides enough job coverage so I have the freedom to take time off without feeling guilty or falling way behind. Brewster is also a nice, new office and work environment. The only thing I don't care for is the commute when roads are difficult but I think combining the grain marketing, origination and settlement is more efficient and provides better customer service and more customer choices."

"I am concerned about how my co-workers will adjust to the workload," Marlis added, "I will always want what's best for New Vision's employees and customers so I hope the customer service standards are maintained. I think being larger has provided additional trade territory, some labor efficiencies and software has allowed us to grow. We couldn't do what we do today by hand. It would be impossible. As vital as our computer system is, it's also a problem because we rely on many employees to enter data accurately. When transactions are concluded with data errors, it's difficult to reverse and start over. I also miss the family culture of the smaller cooperatives. I know it can't be helped but I wished it wasn't so"

Marlis offered this advice to the younger employees, "I know working hard and learning everything you can about our business and the locations helped me. I think it's still good advice today."

"It took some time to come to grips with retirement, but I am looking forward to it today," She said, "I have church projects to work on and Don and I will spend more time with our daughter Susan, her husband and their eleven and nine year old daughters. Our granddaughters are involved in music like their mom, dance and are also beginning sports. They are fun to be around and we are so proud of them!"



Sue Nau Retirement

Sue Nau grew up in Worthington and Brewster. Her first exposure to farm life was the mid 70s when she and Lenny, her husband, moved to a farmstead near Okabena. “Lenny worked for a local farmer and I was managing a household with four daughters,” Sue said, “We raised hogs, cattle and quarter horses. We all enjoyed working with the horses and eventually developed a stud service and boarding business. It wasn’t difficult to get our daughters to help out with the horses but the hog and cattle chores were another story! My favorite part of country living was working as a family and the big vegetable and flower garden. My town flower garden is smaller but I still enjoy it.”

The family left the farm in the 80s and Sue worked at the Okabena Bank, an agronomy retail business, Sathers and Cargill before accepting the New Vision grain accounting job in 1999. “I was a computer operator at Sathers,” Sue said, “The computer was massive. There were no personal computers at the time, so part of my job was to program, run and distribute reports. I also did data back up on reel to reel tape and eventually, on cassettes. Sathers was a good employer, but I was on the swing shift so working days attracted me to Cargill”.

“I am fortunate to work with good co-workers and I have enjoyed getting to know our customers,” Sue said, “In

my job, it really helps to build solid customer relationships. We do our best but, just like everyone else, we make mistakes and it seems like it’s easier to work through these issues when everyone understands we’re all in this together. I also liked hedging grain purchases and sales. It can be overwhelming at times, but I like the fast pace.”

“Something I haven’t cared for is New Vision’s growth,” Sue said, “It makes it impossible to get to know all the customers because there just isn’t enough time. Sometimes we have to go through location employees to communicate or resolve customer questions. It was nicer to work for a smaller company.”

“I am looking forward to retirement. Our daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren all live in Minnesota so we’ll have more time for them. Flower gardening, painting, reading and some travel should keep me busy. I also plan to help out as a part-time para in the Worthington school district. I am looking forward to the freedom,” Sue said.

“I would suggest new employees get to know our customers,” She said, “Getting connected with them helps everything go smoother. I will miss my co-workers and the customers that I have worked with over the last eighteen years. I am sure I will see them around!”

Current open positions at New Vision:

- Agronomy Site Supervisor – Jeffers
- Custom Applicators – Brewster, Jeffers & Lismore
- Feed Accounting & Customer Service Specialist – Brewster
- Feed Production Technician –Worthington (night shift)
- Feed Sales – Brewster
- Lead Feed Maintenance Technician – Worthington
- Truck Drivers – Heron Lake, Magnolia & Worthington

For an application, go to: www.newvision.coop. You can also contact Katie Meyer in Human Resources at 507-842-2021 or kmeyer@newvision.coop.

Adrian (507) 483-2110 Alpha 507-847-4162 Beaver Creek (507) 673-2388 Brewster (507) 842-5944 Dundee (507) 468-2416 Ellsworth (507) 967-2565 Heron Lake (888) 792-2301 Hills (507) 962-3221 Hills Terminal (507) 962-3243 Jeffers (800) 882-9772 Lismore (507) 472-8233 Marna 507-943-3345 Miloma 507-793-2328 Mt. Lake (888) 427-2423 Reading (507) 926-5185 Wilmont (507) 926-5141 Windom (888) 294-6366 Worthington (800) 657-3200

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NEW VISION COOP GRAIN MARKETING MEETINGS DEC 1ST - 7TH , 2017



<u>DATE</u>		<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
12/01/17	FRI	9:00 AM	GRAND PRAIRIE EVENT CENTER, LUVERNE
12/01/17	FRI	1:30 PM	WILMONT COMMUNITY CENTER, WILMONT
12/04/17	MON	9:00 AM	NEW VISION CO-OP, BREWSTER OFFICE
12/04/17	MON	1:30 PM	NEW VISION CO-OP, BREWSTER OFFICE
12/05/17	TUE	9:00 AM	COTTONWOOD CO. HISTORICAL SOCIETY, WINDOM
12/05/17	TUE	1:30 PM	NEW VISION CO-OP, BREWSTER OFFICE
12/06/17	WED	9:00 AM	AMERICAN LEGION, GARRETSON, SD
12/07/17	THUR	9:00 AM	ALPHA (AMERICAN LEGION, JACKSON, MN)
12/07/17	THUR	1:30 PM	MARNA (NEW VISION CO-OP, MARNA OFFICE)

Please RSVP for the meeting of your choice to:
Jim - 507-842-2018 John - 507-842-2017 Nathaniel - 507-842-2011

Thank You