

# Thompson Pump & Irrigation: Growing from ag roots

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**  
For the Capital Press

Andy High, owner of Thompson Pump & Irrigation in Bend and Madras, Ore., knows firsthand the perils of farming and ranching where water is scarce.

His grandfather, Taylor High, 97, lives on the remaining 300 acres of the Klamath Falls ranch his family settled in the 1860s, which at one point was nearly 5,000 acres.

As Andy came of age, his father and grandfather told him the water wars weren't likely to end anytime soon and urged him to go to college.

High earned a degree in public policy and spent the next 15 years working for legislators, including

state Sen. Tim Knopp and U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith.

"In 2016 I decided I didn't necessarily want to farm full-time but to get back in and give back to that community," High said. "Coming in with Thompson Pumps was a golden opportunity, just a really great company, strong staff and strong community ties in Bend, where my wife Jennifer grew up."

Ranch life for the High family revolved around hard work, 4-H and socializing at the Midland Grange Hall. Vacations were 4-H Fair Week and the State Grange Convention. His grandfather is one of the oldest living Grange members in the country, with his 85-year pin.

"It's tough; with all the social

media now and so many demands on people's time there's not a lot of that kind of community gathering happening anymore," High said. "... Our ag roots are very important to our family."

Giving farmers more time is a big motivator for High, who says being able to monitor and control irrigation pivots with a phone is a step in the right direction.

"That's where our focus is and that's what excites me about the industry, just the technology helping people," High said. "We're a Valley pivot dealer and do a lot of center pivots in Central Oregon. The AgSense products we'll have on display at the show allow you full access to what's going on with your

machine, wherever you are."

Soil moisture monitoring provides farmers with a daily report showing where more coverage is needed. The farmer can choose where to slow down or speed up the pivot to equalize water absorption remotely.

"Our goal is to give our farmers and ranchers more time," High said. "If I can give you another hour in the day that you can go to the football game and not have to run out to a crop, to me that's a huge victory."

"Within the next year we'll have a fair amount of drone technology coming to center pivots," High said. "They'll be able to fly over your crop daily and within two years you'll be getting down to which plants are

struggling and be able to inject fertilizer from the center point to that section and then shut it off and continue going over other sections.

"Technology in farming is coming," he said. "There are 7 billion people to feed and a small group that's doing it."

Such technology will allow farmers in Jefferson County, who must order water when they need it, to track the areas that still have water at the top level and plan how to stretch what they have.

"They may be able put off ordering water for another 6-7 days which, if you compound that over a season, can mean getting a second, third or fourth cutting, in some cases," High said.

# Ed Staub & Sons Petroleum: A 'one-stop shop' for farmers and ranchers

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**  
For the Capital Press

Ed Staub & Sons Petroleum is sponsoring the Early

Day Gas Engine & Antique Tractor Display at the inaugural Central Oregon Agricultural Show on March 26-27.

It's a great fit for a com-

pany that has been meeting the energy needs of its residential and commercial customers for more than 60 years. Ed Staub is a family busi-

ness that started in Northern California in 1959 with the purchase of a Chevron bulk plant in Alturas, Calif. Since that time, Ed Staub & Sons has expanded to 17 locations across Oregon, California and Idaho.

Ed Staub & Sons Petroleum Services prides itself on being a "one-stop shop" for its residential and commercial customers, supplying every type of fuel for all situations. They carry propane, heating oil and all the fuel types along with lubricants and other items such as propane appliances.

Services include bulk delivery, packaged products, inventory management and oil analysis.

"As the company has grown through acquisition and growth opportunities, we have, for the most part, been able to stay within the rural communities," said Wendy deGroot, Ed Staub & Sons enterprise marketing director. "The company is very family-oriented and treats team members like family and builds very good relationships with customers and always gets involved in the communities where we do business."



**A fuel truck prepares to head out to a customer of Ed Staub & Sons Petroleum Services. The family business is sponsoring the Early Day Gas Engine & Antique Tractor Display at the first-ever Central Oregon Ag Show.**

Near and dear causes to the company include agriculture, veterans and education.

"Providing opportunities for youth in the small towns we serve is one of our core competencies, and it is always great to partner with our local communities any way we can," deGroot said.

Locations in rural communities, often in the middle of agriculture country, Staub & Sons has been able to partner with farmers, ranchers, and other ag-related entities, often supplying everything such an operation requires in the way of energy and related products.

"Agriculture is an important piece of our business, and

we are able to serve our ag customers holistically with their fueling and lubricant needs," deGroot said. "We try to be that value-added resource to our customers; we feel that if we're doing our job right it should be seamless from their end."

"It's pretty neat because over time, as our drivers are out on their residential or commercial routes, they get to know their customers and are available when someone has a question as it relates to safety or things of that nature," she said. "We just want everybody to be safe and help give people that peace of mind — that's what it's all about."

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