

# Business & Ag

## Miners welcome special agent

BY GINA K. SWARTZ  
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Last Friday night, The Eastern Oregon Mining Association hosted a seminar featuring guest speaker Jon Matye, a special agent for the U.S. Forest service. Matye has an impressive career that includes experiences in criminal and arson investigations and he has been a member of a drug enforcement task force.

Matye worked in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and is familiar with Eastern Oregon, living in Baker City for about five years. He now works out of Pendleton.

Matye takes a low key yet direct approach to his duties. “Believe it or not some people have said we don’t have the authority to do what we do,” Matye said. “Throughout history there are a few examples that have gone to the Supreme Court, every time it’s been said we can do what we do on National Forests.”

He also explained differences over the years in crimes making things fit into different brackets if on Federal land with steeper penalties. With the introduction of 18 U.S. Code § 3559 A1G making a Federal Misdemeanor 6 months imprisonment and a fine of \$5,000. As Matye explains “In the Federal System it’s called a petty offense and you just go in front of a magistrate Judge and they

have the authority to set the fines so a fine may be different in California than it is Eastern Oregon. Same law though.”

Matye said in his 14 years of doing this job he has never seen a fine increased and said, “If you call, it (a violation) will probably be cut in half. It costs a lot to drive to Court, which is held in Pendleton. They respect your time and gas money—it’s a ways from Baker City or John Day. If you show up to court the U.S. Attorney’s office will negotiate with you right there.”

He also spoke of private property rights on Federal land and Right of Ways that were in existence before Federal lands were created saying those are non-federal interests within the national forest lands, however some require forest service authorization.

The Forest Service’s primary concern is the natural resources, he said. If a person versus person crime occurs on Federal lands it is the responsibility of local law enforcement to address the crime. The Forest service might assist but that is it. “Unless there is serious bodily harm occurring we won’t take action. It’s not our jurisdiction. Hence, Cooperative Law Enforcement, which allows us to take action if we need to.” Co-op agreements are memorandums of understanding with other agencies that also allow action

if necessary. Co-op agreements are also a way the Forest Service can utilize local resources and support for large events such as fires where a guard may be needed to watch over equipment or otherwise support the Forest Service. With Co-op agreements, the Forest Service can tap into local resources and not charge the people of the County for what’s going on in the National Forest. Having a Co-op agreement allows a mechanism to pay for those services a county may not be able to afford to deal with a situation.

A co-op agreement is mutually beneficially to the parties, the idea is to work cooperatively together to investigate and take care of issues that arise, for example a marijuana grow on Forest Service land. Matye indicates he would not simply walk into OSP and say, “I’m in charge,” because of a courtesy clause. “We work cooperatively together to try and figure out how to best take care of the issue.”

Matye said in the past, people he has encountered in the Forest have been reluctant to talk with him. He says he always wears a uniform identifying himself and drives a Forest Service Vehicle. As stated before he tries to be casual when contacting anyone. He may ask questions to make certain a person on the mining claim is supposed to be there and is not interfering with a claim.



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

Special Agent Jon Matye was the special guest at this last EOMA meeting.

Occasionally, those he contacts react adversely to his questions and he said at that point he will become a lot more direct and says he does have the authority to investigate deeper if he feels it necessary, and not just on mining claims but anywhere he is concerned about activities that are occurring or did occur in Forest Service land.

Matye says he does encounter people camping that don’t realize they are on a mining claim, although they are well marked. As long as no disturbance to the claim is made there is no reason they can’t be there.

There are certain steps that must be made to have a legal, legitimate mining claim—one is to file a notice of intent. Matye was not sure of the specifics in order to remain on the claim for any length of time a plan of occupancy must also be in place that requires a certain amount of work on the claim.

## Economic Development: Smith’s contract renewed with \$96K salary

BY TODD ARRIOLA  
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The Baker County Economic Development Committee (EDC) met on Friday to discuss a variety of topics, including a grant request from the Baker High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA).

Present from the EDC were Chair Craig Ward, Baker County Commission Chair Bill Harvey, Baker County Economic Development Director Greg Smith, Smith’s assistant Julee Hicks, Baker City Manager Mike Kee, and Baker City Councilman Richard Langrell.

Guests included former Blue Mountain Community College Small Business Development Center (BMCC SBDC) Advisor Bob Savage, Smith’s assistant Sherri Smith, and FBLA members Ashlie Chastain, Hollis Robb, Josie Bryan, Koby Hansen, and Caroline Dudley.

Ward called the meeting to order, and introductions of the EDC members and guests were made shortly after that. Each of the FBLA members introduced themselves, including some details about their school activities/experience.

Kee addressed the FBLA group, speaking about the FBLA National Conference in Chicago, Illinois, June 26-July 3, the attendance of which is the purpose for requesting funds from the EDC. He said, “From my point of view, if we do contribute anything to this project, then, we’re going to ask for a couple of things back from you,

as far as a report, you know, how our money was spent.”

Hansen, a junior, responded with a short presentation, describing the purpose for the FBLA. He said, “The mission of the FBLA is to bring business and education together in a positive working environment, through individual leadership, and professional consulting.”

Robb, also a junior, spoke about the positive experience involved with attending conferences, and about the connections and networking opportunities. She discussed the State conference, and said, “It’s really life-changing. All of us got the opportunity to meet people from across the state.”

Bryan, a sophomore, said, about her learning experience at the State conference, “We want to take those skills we learned, and bring them back to our local communities and schools.”

Chastain, a freshman, discussed the short time-frame, April to mid-May, in which to raise funds for the trip, and she said about \$899 is required for registration.

Harvey asked how many members are in the group, and Dudley, who graduates this year, responded that in the local FBLA Chapter, there are 52, 33 having attended the State Conference. Dudley said that six from the local Chapter are planning to attend the National Conference.

Ward told the group that there are some discretionary funds available, but more details would be needed in order to disperse

those funds. Kee reiterated that the EDC needs to be careful about the investment, because the public expects a return on that.

Robb said, “It’s an opportunity that not many of us get, and we’ll be the ones running the town in the future, and businesses, because we have a passion for it, so, sending us to Nationals is not going to further our education, but it will give us unbelievable business opportunities and experience. I strongly believe that, what we will bring home will better the community, if not now, in the future.”

Harvey explained that this is a fairly new type of request, and since the EDC normally is associated with investing in businesses, so the full amount requested, about \$1,800 per individual, is difficult to justify, but he suggested \$1,500 granted to the group to assist with the funding for the trip, which works at to be \$250 per person. Smith moved to grant the \$1,500 in total, and Kee seconded, and the motion carried.

Ward said that part of the stipulation for the granted funds is a full report on what was learned, what experiences the group had, etc., after attending the conference.

The minutes from the Friday, April 24, 2015 EDC meeting were approved, with a motion from Kee, and a second from Smith.

Harvey gave a Commission update, including unexpected budget expenditures and major maintenance issues with buildings in the County. He also mentioned desiring

more Forest Service timber sales, and developing smaller industries.

Ward began a discussion regarding Smith’s employment contract, which expires June 30, including accomplishments and future goals. Smith gave some examples of potential new business opportunities currently being pursued, and explained the process, and also the difficulties with attracting new businesses to the area.

Ward shared documentation with the committee about what all is expected of Smith, who earns \$96,000 a year as a private contractor, in his position as Economic Development Director. Langrell moved to renew Smith’s contract for another two years, with the option to extend it, and Kee seconded. The motion carried.

Smith discussed the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market, held in Salt Lake City, Utah, August 5-6, 2015, an event he wishes to attend. He’s been to the show three times in the past, he said, and it’s an opportunity to reach out to potential manufacturers in order to showcase the benefits of bringing their business to the local community. Smith said that the cost of registration for the show and gas funds are requested, as hotel accommodations would be covered.

The committee discussed the trip, and Harvey emphasized a heavy focus on promoting the need for a local timber industry. Kee moved to grant the funds requested, and Langrell seconded. The motion carried.

## — WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, June 5, 2015 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to the same quality last week. Trade activity and demand picked up a little this week. Most producers are sold out for the season.

No new confirmed sales this week.  
USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

## — GRAIN REPORT —

Friday, June 5, 2015

Bids in Portland for 11.5 percent protein US 1 Hard Red Winter Wheat for June delivery were 3.75 cents per bushel higher compared to Monday’s noon bids for June delivery. Bids for US 2 Yellow Corn delivered full coast in 110 car shuttle trains trended 0.25 of a cent per bushel lower compared to Monday’s noon bids.

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

## — CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 380

### Steer Calves

300-400# Bulk 267.00 - 289.00 Top 310.00  
400-500# Bulk 258.00 - 302.00 Top 317.00  
500-600# Bulk 239.00 - 266.00 Top 270.00

### Heifer Calves

300-400# Bulk 249.00 - 266.00 Top 277.00  
400-500# Bulk 231.00 - 247.00 Top 251.00  
500-600# Bulk 226.00 - 244.00 Top 247.00

### Yearling Steers

600-700# Bulk 214.00 - 228.00 Top 230.00  
700-800# Bulk 208.00 - 218.00 Top 223.00  
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
900-1,000# Bulk 179.00 - 187.00 Top 190.00

### Yearling Heifers

600-700# Bulk 209.00 - 236.00 Top 240.00  
700-800# Bulk 189.00 - 214.00 Top 216.00  
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Thin Shelly Cows 82.00 - 96.00

Butcher Cows 97.00 - 112.00

Butcher Bulls 117.00 - 137.00

Pairs BM N/A

Younger Hfrts. 1121.00 - 147.00

Young Pairs - N/A

ProducersLivestock.com  
541-473-3136

## — LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Doug Fir is \$415.00/mbf

White fir is \$365.00/mbf

Ponderosa Pine is brought sold on diameter splits

6 to 11 inch dib \$300 to \$310/MBF

12 to 17 inch dib \$350 to \$375/MBF

18 to 23 inch dib \$400 to \$430/MBF

24 inch plus dib \$450 to \$500/MBF

DIB is diameter inside bark at small end of log.

MBF is thousand board feet lumber, net scale.

People interested in selling logs should call and get specific quotes from saw mills.

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,  
Andersen Forestry Consulting

## — PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1176.20

Silver: \$15.91

Platinum: \$1,109.28

Palladium: \$742.75

Bloomberg.com

## — AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$365.00/bu/USD

Wheat: \$532.25/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$943.55/bu/USD

Oats: \$257.00 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$9.98/cwt/USD

Canola: \$489.90 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$152.88/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$224.23/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$79.98/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com