

# Business & Ag

## Haggen hosts community meeting

BY GINA K. SWARTZ  
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Haggen is a hometown company that was started in 1933 by Ben and Dorothy Haggen in Bellingham, Washington. The company stayed small, a northwest regional grocery chain until recently jumping from 18 stores to 164, spreading across Oregon, Washington, California, Nevada and Arizona.

In January of this year the company, which had put in a bid to acquire the additional stores that were part of the divestment process brought about by the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) review of the Albertson's LLC and Safeway merger, learned they had won the bid and had to begin converting stores by March.

It all happened fast for the company.

"We have conducted rolling closures of each new store location to make upgrades, changes but on a corporate level we are running behind so you will continue to see more changes take place slowly," said Todd McGiverin, Haggen Director of Marketing Tuesday evening at a Baker City community meeting to discuss the transition, vendor opportunities for community members and local nonprofit donations.

The Federal Trade Commission rules say one company can't dominate and have a monopoly in one area so they required areas that have both stores in close proximity to one another to sell one of those



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

At left, Haggen Marketing Director Todd McGiverin talks with local store manager Marc Ruberti while the crowd gathers.

stores. In this case they chose to sell the Albertsons store but in other markets they chose to sell the Safeway store.

"At any rate they bundled together stores and we successfully bought them. We quickly put together a plan and tried to staff up as quickly as we could but the number of stores we were talking about, Haggen a regional grocery that started out with 18 stores at the beginning of this year, went to 164 within four months. The timing was mandated by the FTC, we had to take possession of all 146 stores and turn them into a Haggen within a three-month time period. One question many have had is we haven't seen a lot of change in the store. When you close a store for 40 hours and you've got 145 other stores to go (with limited time) there is not a whole lot of work

that can be done to make them different, we did as much as we can in 40 hours. Improvements will continue to be made over the next month, years but for right now, the ghost of Albertsons is still alive and well in the stores and you can see that but over time that will change," said McGiverin. "We've jumped to eight times more stores, our employee count jumped significantly also. We opened offices in Seattle and will be opening in Portland too. They are just satellite offices. It's been a sprint, like a sprinting marathon and it's amazing what can be done in the 40 hour closings but there is a lot left to do. It is an important thing, to keep the employees too. We took ownership of the day Albertsons closed an as of that day those employees didn't have a job, we did offer them all jobs with the

all the same benefits the same compensation and for the most part we had 100% come with us. It was important to us to keep the store associates and at the same level. You don't want to start off with an employee morale problem by cutting benefits. It is nice for you (the consumer) because the first stores were a little bit more bumpy (in the transition) but by the time we got to the end we got really good at converting stores. It's been a little bit if an adjustment but we learned, we learned quickly."

The purpose of Tuesday's community meeting was to give a "Handshake to the community so to speak, introduce ourselves and tell you what we are about. Talk about our past, present and future," he said.

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## Water supply

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Between 20 and 30 people attended the meeting, held at 7 p.m., including BCLA President Jake Bingham, Vice President Drew Martin, Wendy Bingham, Dotti Miles, Martin Arritola, Curtis and Cheryl Martin, Tom and Fawn Kerns, Ralph and Myrna Morgan, and Baker County Commissioner Tim Kerns.

Jake Bingham called the meeting to order and said, "I'd like to welcome everyone here. This is good attendance. I appreciate everyone coming."

Wendy Bingham read the minutes from the last BCLA meeting, held on Thursday, May 21, 2015, at 7 p.m., also at the Best Western Sunridge Inn. Mentioning one of the topics from that meeting, she said, "The U.S. Fish and Wildlife (Service) recognized the efforts of California and Nevada toward (Greater) Sage Grouse preservation, by not listing them as endangered in their states." The minutes were approved, with a motion from Arritola, and a second from Ralph Morgan.

The group discussed its ATV raffle, the tickets for which would be sold during the Haines Stampede 4th of July Rodeo, at \$20 each.

Collins was introduced, and she gave the attendees a Rock Creek Watershed presentation, including displaying graphics on a

projector screen. She said, "We (the SWCD) were asked, through the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), which is how we're funded, three years ago, to select a focus area within our County. So, we have two in Baker County. One is the Burnt River, and the other is Rock Creek." She said that the Baker Valley, Keating and Eagle Valley SWCD Boards agreed on the Rock Creek Watershed as a focus area, because of the presence of livestock, and the lack of alternate watering solutions in that area.

The overall focus area covers approximately 120,600 acres in Baker County, 88,000 of which (the largest in the state) are privately owned, she said. For stock water and irrigation purposes, she said, there are eight ditches that are fed by the Rock Creek system: Millers, Coles, Brown-Huntstock, Waterbury, Anderson-Morris, Hayhurst, Fish Creek and Cartmill.

She said, "In this system, there is no separation. Your stock water right is with your irrigation water right. When they shut your irrigation water off, your stock water goes with it."

She displayed a map showing the Rock Creek area, and the areas where the majority of livestock have access to water, and then mentioned details about the focus area, where landowners and the SWCD can focus on conservation efforts in a concentrated area.

Major efforts include spring developments, off-stream watering systems, and pipelines. She said several solar-powered

pumps, for stock water, have been installed in that area.

She said, "In April of this year, the Governor declared a drought in Baker County, and it's had quite the impact on the Rock Creek stock water users and irrigators. A lot of landowners in the area called our office for help, trying to find a solution for the lack of water.

"In the past, senior water rights users on the Rock Creek system have allocated a percentage of their right to livestock use. Within the last three years, however, regulations have been put into place on Rock Creek, and livestock water has been shut off completely, along with the irrigation water, in early spring or summer."

Several major negative points were made: 1. Since 2013, livestock water access on Rock Creek has been shut off earlier each year (Collins noted in 2013, water was shut off in August, in 2014, water was shut off in July, and this year, starting in March). 2. This, combined with declared drought conditions in Baker County, leave cattle without necessary water in the hot summer months. 3. Lack of water does not allow for ranchers to fulfill their grazing rotations.

As one short-term solution, she said that in June, the Baker Valley SWCD Board of Directors submitted a request for "temporary livestock preference," to the Oregon Water Resources Commission, in Salem.

She recited the Oregon Revised Statutes Division 19 Rules for Drought, 690-

019-0070, "The Commission may grant preference of use for human consumption and/or livestock use. Temporary preference may be given over other water uses regardless of priority date."

"We're going to have to come up with something on a long-term basis," Collins said. "I don't see this getting any better."

She said that landowners are encouraged to contact and work with conservation agencies in order to develop long-term solutions.

These include federal drought assistance programs through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), for livestock shallow wells, livestock ponds, and spring developments, and Oregon Water Enhancement Board (OWEB) small grants through the SWCDs, for livestock ponds, spring developments, pipelines, off-stream watering troughs and systems.

She concluded the presentation with a before-and-after example of a completed OWEB small grant project, Kitchen Creek Livestock Watering and Pond.

The group had a lengthy discussion about the issues facing landowners and livestock producers affected by the Rock Creek system, a discussion which is expected to continue at future BCLA and other meetings.

Whitney said the SWCD is looking for guidance from landowners regarding long-term, alternative livestock watering, and the local contact number is 541-523-7121.

## — WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, June 26, 2015 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to the same quality last week. Trade activity decreased a little this week, however many producers were still busy in the field with the new crop. Most producers have not yet begun selling new crop hay.

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

## — GRAIN REPORT —

Tuesday, June 30, 2015

In early trading July wheat futures trended mixed from five cents lower to 1.75 cents per bushel higher compared to Monday's closes. September wheat futures trended 0.50 of a cent to 5.25 cents per bushel lower in early trading. Bids for US 2 Yellow Corn delivered full coast in 110 car shuttle trains trended steady to higher compared to Monday's noon bids.

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

## — CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 349

### Steer Calves

300-400# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
400-500# Bulk 273.00 - 309.00 Top 313.00  
500-600# Bulk 251.00 - 271.00 Top 278.00

### Heifer Calves

300-400# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
400-500# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
500-600# Bulk 226.00 - 243.00 Top 247.50

### Yearling Steers

600-700# Bulk 236.00 - 249.00 Top 250.50  
700-800# Bulk 215.00 - 224.00 Top 228.00  
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

### Yearling Heifers

600-700# Bulk 217.00 - 226.00 Top 228.00  
700-800# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A  
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Thin Shelly Cows 76.00 - 93.00  
Butcher Cows 97.00 - 108.00  
Butcher Bulls 112.00 - 128.00  
Pairs BM N/A  
Younger Hfrts. 112.00 - 130.00  
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: \$1172.90

Silver: \$15.68

Platinum: \$1,078.65

Palladium: \$674.60

Bloomberg.com

## — AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$422.00/bu/USD

Wheat: \$615.50/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$1037.75/bu/USD

Oats: \$277.75 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$10.46/cwt/USD

Canola: \$536.10 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$148.10/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$214.58/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$74.20/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com