



STAFF PHOTOS BY E.J. HARRIS

A parted-out Ford chassis sits in the yard with engine and other mechanical information written on the windshield.

Umatilla business is truck reincarnation

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The property at Hagerman, Inc. looks like a vehicle graveyard, but it sees every step of the truck life cycle.

“This is where they come to die and be reborn,” said Brad Hagerman. “We seem to do everything from cradle to grave.”

Along with his father-in-law Allan Chase, Hagerman owns the truck salvaging business. On the 40-plus acre property tucked behind Amazon at the Port of Umatilla, rows of truck cabs, hoods and tires sit outside, ready for reuse. Buildings and trailers are filled with more parts, all waiting to be given a second life.

When a truck comes into Hagerman, Inc., the first thing employees have to do is drain it of fluids — before they figure out what they can salvage.

Hagerman points out a truck waiting outside the bay for a mechanic’s review.

“That truck has a bad transmission, but it’s a good truck,” he said. “We have to decide — is it worth more in parts, or is it worth it to fix it?”

With a full-service mechanic and tire shop, Hagerman, Inc. takes out and rebuilds transmissions, rear-drive axles and, occasionally, engines. But they also sell individual parts, most of which are salvaged from wrecked trucks.

Customers can also buy “take-outs” for a lower price. A “take-out” refers to the original part that has been removed from a wrecked truck and is still in usable condition, as opposed to one that’s been rebuilt.

“We’ve got a lot of farmers that don’t make a living with their truck, but use it as a tool,” Hagerman said. “Whereas a guy going down the highway may want to pay a little more to get a good transmission with a rear end.”

Though the business has existed since the 1980s, Hagerman, Inc. was initially in trucking operation. Both Hagerman and Chase have had long careers in the industry. Drivers used to haul wood chips for Boise Cascade, from the Port of Umatilla to Wallula.

About a decade ago, they decided to focus their attention on salvaging truck parts.

“We kind of morphed into a semi truck wrecking yard,” Hagerman said. “We were buying a lot of used parts from dealerships, and thought that’s something we might do.”

He said other people began coming to them, looking for parts they needed for their own trucks.

“It got to be pretty lucrative,” he said. They still run a trucking operation, but Hagerman said it’s mostly hauling their own inventory to Portland where they have a parts shop.

Hagerman, a La Grande native, started driving



Brad Hagerman, co-owner of Hagerman Inc., uses a forklift to move a load of truck bumpers in the parts warehouse at Hagerman Inc. recently in Umatilla.



An old Western Star tractor sits with its cab up in the parts yard at Hagerman Inc. recently in Umatilla. Hagerman Inc. has more than 300 chassis of semi-tractors that it has parted out in their yard.

trucks in 1982, and did so for more than 30 years. Chase was in the trucking business for five decades, and owned Freightliner dealerships in eastern Oregon and Washington.

“I love trucking,” Hagerman said. “I wanted to do it in grade school, and that’s what I ended up doing.”

“This is where they come to die and be reborn.”

Brad Hagerman, Salvage owner

He praised his staff, many of whom have been with the company for years.

“I just basically have my name on the building,” he said. “It’s really (the employees) who make this thing run.”

Hagerman said many people are surprised to find out the business exists, as it’s in a location with little public traffic. But it allows them to do things their competitors in bigger cities can’t.

“A lot of our competition in Portland or Seattle can’t afford to have 40 acres,” he said. “They take some parts out, and then throw the rest away. Whereas we can keep them — say a tachometer or a speedometer, something someone may use but they don’t have room for all the small stuff.”

In the past few years they have started selling parts online, which has expanded their customer base — they recently sold truck parts to someone in Guam, and regularly sell in Canada and around the U.S.

Warehouses on the property are full of every part, from transmissions and engines to headlights and mirrors. In the yard, work-

ers weave through long rows of colorful truck hoods and cabs, separated by manufacturer. There are about seven or eight major companies, including Peterbilt, Kenworth and Freightliner.

At the back end of the property is a scrap metal yard, with piles of flattened cars stacked up.

“Once the truck is all used up, we bring it out here, smash the cab, tear the hoods up,” Hagerman said. They sell the scraps to steel companies, including one in Pasco.

As automated and electric vehicles become more popular, Hagerman said it wouldn’t take much to make aspects of the business obsolete.

“I know everyone is now working on an electric truck,” he said. “That’s going to change a lot of things.”

Still, he said, it will be a long time before diesel engines disappear — and the price means some people still gravitate toward old trucks.

“It used to be, a muffler on a semi was \$80,” he said. “Now with new technology, a muffler can be anywhere from \$3,000 to \$20,000.”

Throughout the industry, he said, people are struggling to find mechanics.

“When I was a kid, I loved semis,” he said. “We used to have kids come down all the time, and want to sweep floors and learn about trucks. But nobody seems to want to be around them anymore.”

But as of now, he’s not worried. They recently purchased some property adjacent to their current land, where they will expand the business.

And he’s still doing what he wanted to do as a kid — working with trucks.

“I don’t care if you’ve been here 30 years,” he said. “You learn something.”

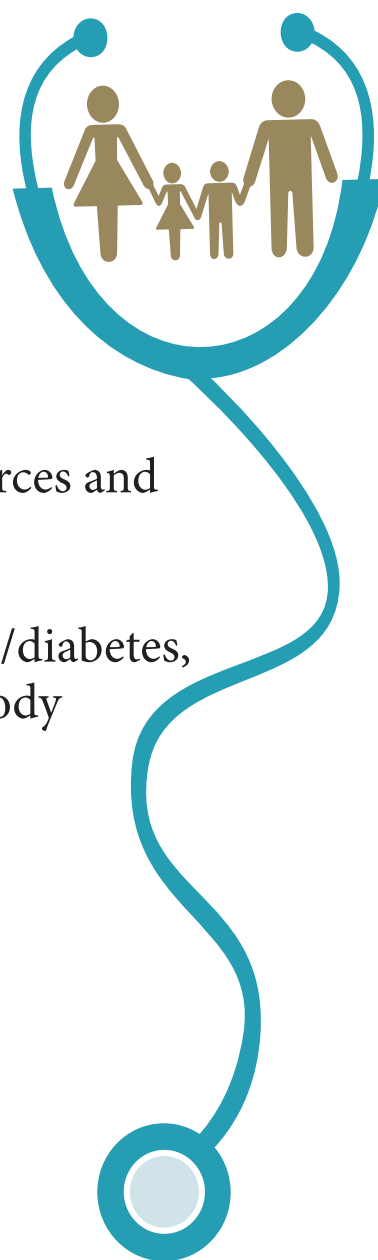
Family Health & Fitness Day



Saturday, September 22, 2018
9am-2pm at Hermiston High School

FREE Health & Wellness Event for All Ages

- Teddy Bear Clinic
- Cooking Classes
- Dental Screens and Onsite Treatment for Uninsured
- On-site Mammograms
- Yoga and Zumba sessions
- SHIBA
- Early childhood Activities
- Community Health Resources and Programs
- Screenings:
 - Blood pressures, lipid, A1c/diabetes, hearing, vision, balance, body composition, respiratory health and more!!
- Helmet Fittings
- Giant Inflatable Colon
- Door Prizes
- Health Snacks
- And SO Much More for Children, Seniors and Everyone in Between!



Questions? Contact angie.treadwell@oregonstate.edu