

## Buses make Jack's Meats in Trenton a family affair

Written by By Betsy Blevins, Managing Editor

Thursday, 16 June 2011 13:45 - Last Updated Thursday, 08 September 2011 14:18

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June 9, 2011 - Recently, a long-time Trenton business re-opened their doors under new ownership, but the faces behind the counter are anything but "fresh meat" to the area. The Buses family - Lou and his wife, Mary, and two of their four children, Hannah and Ben - purchased Jack's Wholesale Meats on April 29. The food industry is home for the Buses siblings, who have worked in all facets of the business, and have over 25 years of combined experience. That experience, combined with their parents help on the business end of things, created the perfect recipe for taking over the Trenton business.



Hannah Buses has a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science and her Master of Science degree in Food Technology from Texas Tech, and is coming off of a decade-long tenure with Wal-Mart's food department, where she worked in food safety and in their meat department. She is experienced on the ins and outs of ensuring meat products are quality and clean, and received personal instruction from world-renown animal welfare expert and autism advocate, Temple Grandin. Hannah's first passion at work is making sure the customers receive safe, quality meat products, and the second is to treat the animals that are harvested with gentleness and respect, something Grandin preaches about seriously. Hannah is a 1998 graduate of Leonard High School.

Older brother Ben's background is in the restaurant industry, where he has worked every position there is, including management, and has a love for customer service. He describes himself as a "foodie and a meat connoisseur" and enjoys the presentation side of food and fusing flavors together. He is a 1996 graduate of Leonard High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communications from Texas A & M University-Commerce in 2002.

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While both love the food industry and the work involved, their previous jobs had them living out of state - Hannah in Bentonville, Ark., and Ben in Venice, Fla. - and both were recently looking for a change.

"The process actually began about three years ago," said Hannah. "Mom called one day and asked if I knew that Jack's was for sale, but at that time, I wasn't ready for something like that. But by January of this year, some things had changed, and I came down to look at it."

Former owners Rick and Donna Glasscock had closed the doors on Jack's in June of 2010, to retire. The business was originally opened in 1963 by Donna's father and business namesake, J.A. "Jack" Vaden.

The Buses decided they were interested in the company and made an offer. The facility had to go through an inspection by the Meat Safety Assurance Unit of the Texas Department of State Health Services, where the inspectors requested some changes. But, the completion of those changes allowed them to receive the Grant of Custom Exemption required for the services they offer. Opening day was May 18, with Ben running the saw, Hannah running administration and cleaning processes, and dad, Lou, handling the financial end and running errands.

The Buses are excited about the opportunity to run a business that was a landmark in Trenton for many years. They are striving to maintain the superior service and products that previous customers were accustomed to, and came back for year after year.

"We are kind of unique in this area," Hannah said. "The nearest plants that are comparative to what we do are in Sulphur Springs and Muenster."

There are some other processors in the area, but they can't or don't do what the Buses do at Jack's in Trenton.

Their location isn't the only unique thing about them - their overall aging processes are also something that sets them apart.

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"Our beef ages for seven days, which makes it more tender and flavorful," stated Hannah. "Most that you get from the store is only aged for 48 hours. Our hams are cured for three weeks and our bacon for ten days, and some you get from the store has only been cured overnight."

The Buses also plan to add some new things that will help promote the business and streamline some processes.

"We already have our new website up - it's [www.jackswholesalemeat.com](http://www.jackswholesalemeat.com)," Hannah stated. "A friend of ours designed this for us and it is new to the company."

The website offers several business-related pages, including a price sheet and the various services offered, as well as History, Meet Your Butchers, Frequently Asked Questions and Blog pages. The blog is a neat feature where the siblings provide tips and hints related to meat. Another new thing they hope to initiate is creating a computerized record-keeping system.

Jack's processes beef, pork, lamb, goat and wild game - they do not do poultry. They have customized packages for all types of meat, with a long list of options to choose from, and can offer suggestions for any part of the animal that the buyer is unsure about. Their "Quality Products and Services" page on their website lists the fees and pricing for each type of service they offer. Within a month or so, they hope to have a supply of fresh meat to sell.

Hannah reported last week that they are seeing a lot of returning customers, and that they are notifying the previous customers that they are back in business. The Glasscocks are also offering assistance in getting the word out, and also with ensuring the Buses family knows everything there is to know about the business. Not only does the business provide a needed service for local residents again, but it is also providing jobs. They currently have two positions open - a person to wrap meat after it's been cut and cleaned, and a butcher. For more information about the positions or the business in general, they can be reached at 903-989-2293.