



# Cedar Mill News

Volume 2, Issue 2

February 2004

## History in the News

### Cedar Mill General Store

by Nancy Olson, co-author, Cedar Mill History

Mary Hall arrived in Cedar Mill with her family in 1852. George Reeves arrived here in 1865 and they married that same year. In 1882, they established the Cedar Mill General Store on land belonging to Mary's family. It immediately began serving as a focal point for the community. It housed the post office after Cedar Mill's first postmaster JQA Young retired, and provided a meeting place to exchange ideas, in addition to supplying merchandise and groceries to residents of the area. Located at the intersection of Cornell and Barnes Roads, it was an important landmark for over 75 years.

It was a typical country store providing feed, baling wire, block salt, cloth-



Erastus Scott May and family outside the Cedar Mill General Store soon after purchase from Burton Reeves, 1913. (Courtesy Clyde May)

ing and food. Stocked items included Fithian Barker shoes, Bear Brand hosiery, Tillamook cheeses, large bolts of calico, ribbons, big Hoffler Chocolate candies for a nickel, and White King Soap. Local produce included cheese made by Swiss families in the area, eggs, butter, and big slabs of bacon. Sugar, coffee, salt and flour were sold in bulk. A punch board awarded prizes to lucky shoppers and soda pop was offered in a large iced tub.

The store was lit by gas lanterns until electricity arrived. A large potbelly stove with a brass spittoon nearby provided a male nightly gathering place where many social and political issues were discussed.

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**Join the CMBA—see page 3**

## Next Meeting

### Cedar Mill Business Association

Tuesday, February 17, 2004. 12 noon

Place: Cedar Mill Community Library

Topic: Washington County Update

Speaker: John Leeper, Washington County Commissioner

Join us for lunch to discuss current county issues that might affect Cedar Mill

FREE lunch courtesy of "TBA" (bring your own beverage)

## Featured Business

### Cedar Mill's Hidden Treasure

#### Hobitt Café has something for everyone

Dabra Shields had worked at the Hobitt Café as a waitress for 12 years. She'd dreamed of owning the place, but didn't have the money. When the owner, Wong Chong Lee, decided to sell the restaurant last summer, she figured, "I guess I'll just go home and do my artwork. The next thing I knew I owned a restaurant!" Shields marvels.

Word about the impending sale had gotten around and some former customers, Jan and Richie Faulbert who had moved out of the area, found out about the sale. They called Lee and said, "Don't give it to a realtor, we're going to buy it for Dabra Shields."

"I almost fell off the stool when they told me!" Shields remembers. She's paying the Faulberts back and they may become partners at some point.

Hidden away in the heart of the Mill-towner shopping center, at the northeast corner of Saltzman and Cornell, the Hobitt Café is one of Cedar Mill's best-kept secrets. Open from 7 am to 2 pm seven days a week, the Hobitt provides hearty breakfast and lunch offerings along with the kind of small-town friendliness and community that's hard to find these days.

Some of the regulars have been coming in since the shopping center opened in the early sixties. Originally called "Nelson's," the café has changed hands nine or ten times, and acquired its present name in the late sixties during the first big Tolkien craze. (It was deliberately misspelled, but no one can remember why!) Bales market



was next door in the present pharmacy location so the café was quite busy. Waitress Susan Salmonsén has been working here for 26 years, and she's now seeing the children she served in the beginning bringing their own kids in.

The community support didn't end with the purchase of the restaurant. Customers and people from neighboring businesses came in and helped her fix up the place – since June Shields has transformed a rather dingy hole-in-the-wall

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### The Nature of Cedar Mill

## The Nutria that ate my yard!

By Kyle Spinks, THPRD Natural Resources Technician

With so many streams, small ponds, and wetlands in Cedar Mill, it's not surprising that our water-loving wildlife neighbors do so well. One of the most successful of these is the nutria, an exotic rodent from South America. Adults weigh in at 15-20 pounds and look like a very large rat, with brown fur, a hairless tail, and large, orange front teeth. Nutria have a light patch of fur directly in front of the ears, distinguishing them from beavers, which are all brown and usually larger.

Nutria are typically nocturnal. They share habitat with muskrats and beaver, both of which are nocturnal, so they may adjust their behavior to a daytime regimen to fit in the niche better and avoid conflicts and competition for resources.

Nutria were introduced back in the 1930s and actively promoted by entrepreneurs to fur farming operations through the 1950s and 60s. Many animals escaped or were released and successfully colonized the Willamette Valley, taking advantage of the surplus of food and the mild winters. Farmers soon recognized these animals as a nuisance: crops were eaten by these voracious vegetarians, and the banks of irrigation canals and ponds began collapsing as the extensive tunnel systems became saturated.

These problems have continued through the present day, but have moved into suburbia as well. People who live next to wetlands see their lawns and garden plants eaten and the streambanks next to their yards becoming honeycombed. Wetland restoration sites are impacted too, and Clean Water Services estimates \$1-2

extra cost per plant to protect their native plantings in Washington County.

If you find them in your yard, try scaring them away with loud noises, but don't try to touch or pick them up and make sure to keep small pets clear of them. Nutria can be quite aggressive and there are reports of people and animals being bitten or scratched, especially when a mother is protecting her young.

To protect your garden, try screening individual plants and/or adding a low fence across the yard to keep the nutria out. The use of dogs to scare them off has proven effective but this method is legal only on private property, otherwise it's considered wildlife harassment and a dog owner could get in trouble. Trapping is sometimes used to handle the problem, but new animals typically move into the site soon afterwards. The best method of reducing the problems is by making the habitat uninviting... a gentle 'suggestion' to them that your yard isn't the best place to live.

Nutria will eat most herbal vegetation that's near water, including lawns, rushes, and the tender new shoots of some shrubs. They will also chew off a woody shrub branch to reach the tender shoots. They won't chew down a tree, like a beaver will, so if you see such evidence, you've got beavers, not nutria, in the area.



## Health Fair at St. Pius X

St. Pius X Parish is hosting a Health Fair on Sunday, February 22 from 8:30 am-2:30 pm. It is open to all Cedar Mill community members. They will have Providence Medical Group booths, massage, foot care, nutrition, dental and alternative medicine information. Many local businesses will also be involved with their own booths as well as contributing door prizes. If you have any questions call Katie at (503)887-4210.

## Cedar Mill Park Summer Concert

The planning committee held their first meeting last month to organize a free community concert. It will take place on Tuesday, August 10 with food booths opening at 6:30 and music from 7-8:30 pm. Cedar Mill Park is located adjacent to Cedar Mill School on Cornell.

The committee is seeking sponsorship to pay for expenses, and we're looking for suggestions for music and food. Contact Terri O'Brien, Volunteer & Special Activities Coordinator, THPRD at 503-645-6433 X 298 or [tobrien@thprd.org](mailto:tobrien@thprd.org)

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*The Hobitt Cafe, Continued from page 1*  
 into a cheerful and cozy meeting place. She's been painting vines and flowers on the wall, and a wizard has recently been installed over the kitchen pass-through.

Another thing Shields has changed is the quality of the food. "We make everything from scratch. We peel 700 pounds of potatoes every week. We fry in a vegetable extract that has zero cholesterol. We quit getting processed meats and mixes," she says. "I come in usually around 4 am. There's a lot of prep involved in serving homemade food. That's why we're not making a profit yet – so much labor is involved in preparing everything fresh."

Their homemade soups are really wonderful – customer favorites include cream of tomato and turkey noodle. Burgers are thick and juicy – the customer favorite is the bacon cheeseburger. "We have a lot of things on the menu that are great for people doing the "Atkins" diet because there's plenty of meat and cheese," Shields points out.

"Some of the recipes have been passed down from the original owners. The sourdough pancakes use a 25-year-old starter," says Shields. "My favorite is the Hobitt Scramble," she says. This is a delicious mixture of scrambled eggs, olives,

chiles and cheese over their new potatoes, topped with homemade ranchero salsa. Portions are hearty – the ham steak nearly covers the plate when you order ham and eggs.

"The first couple of months after I took over were pretty crazy. There was so much work to be done, and a lot of stuff I didn't know," she recalls. One hectic morning, Salmonsens looked around to see one of the customers straightening chairs and sweeping the floor. "She went ahead and left a \$5 tip. I felt bad, but she said she knew how it was when things get busy," Salmonsens says.

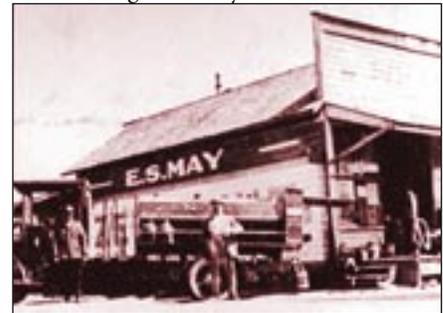
And they still get busy in the morning, especially on weekends. "But now we really have it down," says Shields. "I can go through a busy morning cooking without getting grumpy," she laughs. She works seven days a week except for an occasional day off, when Fran Sittel, a cook and waitress who has been there for 11 years, takes over for her.

Stop in for breakfast or lunch, or call in a takeout order at 503-646-3831. The Hobitt is located just west of Hi-School Pharmacy in the Milltown Shopping Center at Cornell and Saltzman, behind Mike's Auto Parts.

*General Store, Continued from page 1*

During economic hard times, the storekeeper generously extended credit to his needy neighbors. Produce was frequently delivered by horse drawn wagon. Later, a 1921 Ford Model T touring car was used to haul stock from Portland wholesale grocery outlets and soda pop from Blitz-Weinhard.

Several owners followed. In 1931 the Beaverton Enterprise newspaper reported: "RR Haskell, Cedar Mill store keeper, was ordered Tuesday night about 10 o'clock by a customer to "stick 'em up." The till and Mr. Haskell's pockets were emptied of small change amounting to about \$20.00." Later owners Edgar and Nellie Hoak's daughter Betty Hoak told us she



E.S. May and his delivery truck, c. 1915

remembered selling penny candy – lemon drops and peppermint sticks – to children in the community around 1937. Other owners included the Reeves son, Burton who later sold it to Erastus Scott May. May's sons Clyde and Howard contributed many photos and lots of information to the Cedar Mill History book.

The historic building was dismantled in 1959 and the site is currently occupied by Xpresso Lube and Cascadia Car Wash.

Find out more in Cedar Mill History ([cedarmill.org/history](http://cedarmill.org/history)).

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- Contact me about creating a web page linked from the Cedar Mill Website Business Directory.

Class One Voting Members: a person, firm, or corporation who owns business property or operates a business within the Cedar Mill area. Number of full time equivalent owners and employees in your business:

1-3 persons:	\$60.00
4-10 persons:	\$85.00
11+ persons:	\$110.00

Class Two Non-Voting Members: a person, or organization having a demonstrated interest in the Cedar Mill Business Association area and whose membership the Board of Directors approves by majority vote.

Regular Associate members:	\$60.00
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## Naturescaping workshop set for Cedar Mill

Love gardening but hate using poisons, weeding, and watering? On Saturday, May 22, a free Basic Naturescaping Workshop will be offered at the Leedy Grange in Cedar Mill, hosted by Rock Creek Watershed Partners ([cedarmill.org/RCWP](http://cedarmill.org/RCWP)) and sponsored by Tualatin River Watershed Council ([trwc.org](http://trwc.org)).

You can create beautiful landscapes, protect the environment and attract wildlife to your yard with these practices. Naturescaping is landscaping with native plants using environmentally friendly gardening methods. Native plants are resistant to native pests and diseases and require less water and less, if any, chemical application. Using native groundcover suited to the climate, in combination with planting trees and shrubs, can reduce or eliminate weeding.



Naturescaping can also address pollution problems by helping to control erosion, and reduce polluted runoff.

At the **FREE** four-hour Basic workshop, you'll view before and after Naturescaping examples, learn about some useful native plants, get advice on landscape design and native gardening, receive a workbook and a free native plant, network with neighbors, and take a field trip to a nearby project.

Registration is required for the workshop which can accommodate up to 35 people, and it is likely to fill up fast. The workshop is free and open to the public. To register, phone (503)797-1842 or email [naturescaping@yahoo.com](mailto:naturescaping@yahoo.com).



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Saturday February 7 - Tuesday February 17  
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Friday February 20 - Saturday February 21  
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