

around the county

Nursery industry

Wholesalers dominate locally

by SHANNON KELLEY
Post Correspondent

A lot of rain, moderate temperatures, fertile soil and dedicated workers are a nurseryman's dream. The Sandy-Boring area has got it all.

That may be why the area is teeming with nurseries. Dozens of wholesale nurseries cover the area, including one of the biggest in the nation, J. Frank Schmidt and Son, located in Boring.

J. Frank Schmidt Jr. began the business in 1946 and has since expanded to own nine parcels of land and lease two more. The total area involved is more than 1,400 acres. The company deals with many kinds of plants, including shade and flowering trees. More than 200 people are employed at Schmidt's.

Just down the road is another nursery, not quite as big and not quite as famous, but important in its own right.

Skipper's Nursery began seven years ago when Bob Skipper decided to start a family project and got his whole family involved—wife Ilona, son Ted and daughter Teresa. But the weekend project has since grown into a business and Skipper hires several other contractors.

He has 10 acres in one area and another seven by his Boring home, used primarily for evergreens and deciduous trees. But it took four years before he could begin selling

his evergreens and two to three years for the deciduous trees.

"It works in rotation," Skipper explained. "Every year you take 25 percent of the crop off the field." The next year Skipper must replant the same 25 percent so that he will have something coming off each year, a staggering of crops.

Anticipating the demand and costs two or three years in advance is important. The recession has caused prices on holding stock to go up, Skipper said. Interest rates are also higher.

"Most nurseries haven't been hurt too bad by interest rates," Skipper noted. "But people are staying home more. The big part about nurseries is we bring in a lot of income. We pay a lot of taxes which is good for the area and it gives employment to people in the area."

Starting a nursery was not easy for Skipper, who had to talk to a few people before he began his business. And the hard work has carried over to his children, who also learned the hard way.

Phil VanHise owns a three-acre container nursery on 302nd Lane in Boring. During the week VanHise acts as a construction worker, but on weekends he becomes a "gopher", working in his nursery with five other employees, including his wife Diane. VanHise began his project five years ago in Troutdale, but moved to Boring because, "the East wind made it possible for things to

grow." He chose the Boring area because of the rain, long growing season and tempered climate.

VanHise recently began propagating on his nursery.

"One fall I put in a small greenhouse and began propagating pyramidalis. I did 1,000 for that year and continued from there," VanHise said. "Potted plants seemed to be in demand." VanHise now raises pyramidalis, petunias, potentilla and other types of potted plants.

He also works on a different type of schedule than most nurseries. VanHise begins potting in the spring, digs in the fall and sells all year. "The advantage of container grown nurseries is that you can sell all year," he explained. Many other nurseries only have one selling period.

Most of VanHise's stock goes to local retail outlets in Sandy, Gresham, eastern Oregon and Washington. "Being small, I need the local markets," he added. "They work well for me." VanHise also does his own propagating, which is an advantage because he gets better quality and you can follow the early stages of growth.

Hard work is what the nursery business is all about, and it is worth it, although the profits are not great," VanHise noted. "Self-satisfaction is all you get from it, plus a little of whatever you get (financially). I've learned a hell of a

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Alberta Hunt works in the greenhouse of the VanHise nursery.

Photo by Shannon Kelley

Hoodland happenings

Welches School to hold science fair

Thursday, April 30

A tour of Portland's Japanese Gardens is being sponsored by Welches Community School. Group leader Carol Smith will meet interested persons at the Hoodland Women's Club at 8:30 a.m. for carpooling. A retired senior volunteer at the gardens will accompany the tour and act as a guide.

A senior citizens lunch, sponsored by Loaves and Fishes, will be held at the Welches School library beginning at 11:30 a.m. Call 622-3331 for further information or transportation.

Welches Community School will sponsor the following classes at the school: Diet and Exercise, 6 p.m. in the library; Recreational Basketball, 6 p.m. in the gym; Competitive Volleyball, 7:30 p.m. in the gym; and Parenting, 7:30 p.m. in room 20. The Mountain Players will rehearse at 7:30 p.m. at the Wemme Lions Club.

Saturday, May 2

A benefit auction will be held at the Hoodland Women's Club beginning at noon. Tom Cox of Zigzag will conduct the auction with proceeds going to the Mt. Hood Pre-School Co-Op. Among the items to be auctioned are a stained glass window, a rafting trip for two, lodging at Kahneeta Resort for two and many restaurant passes.

Monday, May 4

A senior citizens lunch, sponsored by Loaves and

Fishes, will be held at the Welches School library; beginning at 11:30 a.m. Transportation and further information is available by calling 622-3331.

Welches Community School's Aerobic Dance Class will be held at 5:30 p.m. in the Welches School gym.

The Hoodland Women's Club will hold its monthly meeting at the club building on Salmon River Road at 8 p.m. The nominating committee will present a slate of new officers for member approval.

Tuesday, May 5

A spring hike will be sponsored today by the Welches Community School. Meet at the Hoodland Women's Club at 9:30 a.m. for carpooling. Participants should wear good boots and bring a lunch and beverage. Moms with babies in packs or carriers are welcome.

The Hoodland Chamber of Commerce will hold its monthly board meeting at 11:30 a.m. at the Red Lion Inn at Bowman's.

A special class, sponsored by Welches Community School, will be held at 7 p.m. to discuss the Sandy River Flood Plain Ecology. Call Reva Cox at 622-3397 to register.

The following classes will be held tonight at Welches Community School: Regulation Basketball, 6 p.m. in the gym; Diet and Exercise, 6 p.m. in the library; Boat Building, 7 p.m. at a

member's home; Beginning Typing and Shorthand, 7 p.m. in room 20; and Regulation Volleyball, 7:30 p.m. in the gym. Call 622-3397 for further information.

The Mountain Players will hold a rehearsal at 7:30 p.m. at the Wemme Lions Club.

Wednesday, May 6

Welches Community School Tiny-Tots group will meet from 10 a.m. to noon. The group is designed for mothers with babies or toddlers and allows them to spend a morning with their neighbors while their children develop play skills. Call Louise Hoyt, 622-3752, for information and meeting location.

Welches School, along with Cedar Ridge and Orient, will hold a track meet at Barlow High School at 3:30 p.m.

The Clackamas County Bookmobile will be at the Hoodland Plaza shopping center parking lot from 4 to 7 p.m.

Welches Community School's Aerobic Dance class will be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the Welches School gym.

There will be a general meeting of the Mountain Players at 8 p.m. in the Wemme Lions Club on U.S. Highway 26.

Thursday, May 7

A senior citizens lunch, sponsored by Loaves and Fishes, will be held at the Welches School library beginning at 11:30 a.m. Call 622-3331 for further informa-

tion and transportation.

Welches Community School will sponsor the following classes at the school: Diet and Exercise, 6 p.m. in the library; Recreational Basketball, 6 p.m. in the gym; Competitive Volleyball, 7:30 p.m. in the gym; and Parenting, 7:30 p.m. in room 20.

Welches School will hold its annual Science Fair from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Science projects from all grades will be on display and several demonstrations are planned.

The Mountain Players will rehearse at 7:30 p.m. at the Wemme Lions Club. Performances have been scheduled for May 22-23, June 6 and June 20. Tickets are available now at the Barlow Trail Inn, Hoodland Thriftway and Ted's Brightwood Store.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Gresham Podiatry Clinic
E. Kruszewski DPM
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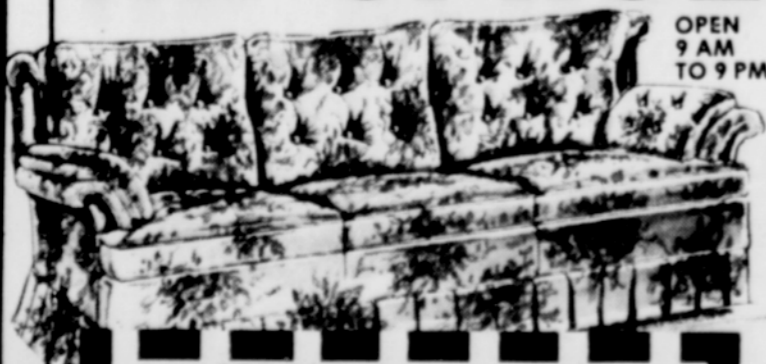
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