

# IN THE BEGINNING...


A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. So was the beginning of Sawdust Days.

The year is 1979, probably sometime in August. Louie and Pat Dupuis, were then the owners of the Hemlock Hardware. As we get the story, the hardware, the previous year had a chain saw promotion and demonstration. The country was riding out a recession and burning wood to heat your home was very popular. People came out to watch, maybe buy, but spent a couple of hours visiting with others and enjoying the fall day. Pat and Louie observed this and decided to do it again. In '79 they again made arrangements for a

chain saw demonstration along with a log splitter to be tested. Remembering how people came to town the previous year to see just one thing, maybe it would be possible to get some other businesses involved and bring more people to town on a special day. As they talked to others, some thought they were dreaming, others a little crazy, since nothing like this had been done that they could remember. Pat and Louie did convince Edwina Frost of the restaurant next door to have a 99¢ Lumberjack Breakfast and Greg Hynes, who at that time owned the meat market to run some specials for that day. Louie went to Hayes

Speciality and bought some strings of colored flags and strung them in the back lot. This "thing" had to have a name, since the date had been set for Sept. 22. Apples was the first thing that came to mind. There already was an apple festival and other harvest fairs. "Heck, why not call it Sawdust Day, after all that's what we'll be making," Louie said. And so it was named. Some ads and announcements were run off and distributed around. John Gross happened to be in the hardware one day while this was being discussed and told them he would furnish the wood to cut. Evidently at this time neither Pat nor Louie knew John that





well, and they didn't ask any questions.


The day of Sept. 22, 1979 arrived, a crisp, cool but sunny day. The activities would take place in the parking lot behind the hardware. Later in the morning, the wood to cut was delivered, an oak stump about 3 feet in diameter and with 9 big old knots. It was so hard they sawed on it all day.

People did come into town to enjoy a pancake breakfast, visited over coffee and later went out to watch the chain saws do their work. They stood and watched, joked about

the stump and just seemed to be having a good time. People watched in amazement as the chainsaws carved a mushroom stool and chairs. The three businesses were satisfied and surprised at the amount of people that came. It turned out to be a family day. That's the way it started.

The following year Pat asked people to demonstrate, on the street, arts and crafts. Other businesses were convinced to run specials and promote business in the area. In the next few years the Hemlock Business

Association was formed. One day has expanded into two, but it is still on Saturday to acquaint people with the businesses in town. Thanks to Louie and Pat Dupuis and their determination to try something, we now have an annual festival. It has grown beyond what they expected back in 1979. The name has stuck, maybe because at one time Hemlock was a thick stand of trees. Sawdust, saws and sawmills were a part of our early heritage. Now you know the whole story.



## DO YOU HAVE A DIRECTORY?

In April of 1990 the Hemlock Business Association printed for the first time a booklet, "Discover the Hemlock Community" serving the

Hemlock School District. It lists all the Businesses and Services available in the area. You will be surprised how many things are in our own

community. If you haven't gotten a copy be sure and pick one up from a local business on Sawdust Days.



## HEMLOCK SAWDUST DAYS

*Come & Celebrate - Sept. 22 & 23, 1990*

**Eric P. Bash, D.D.S.**

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