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NEWS®

Working with a net

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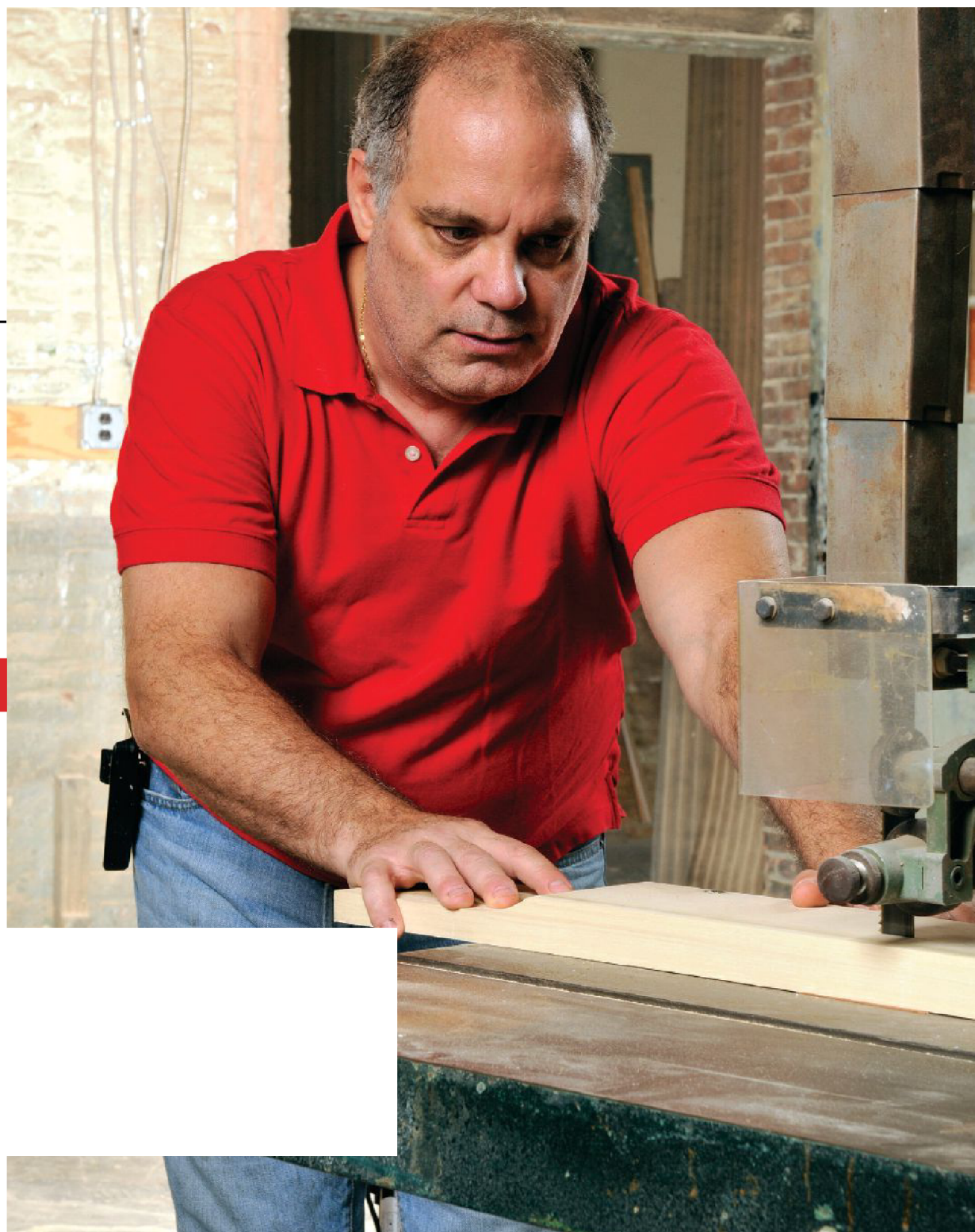
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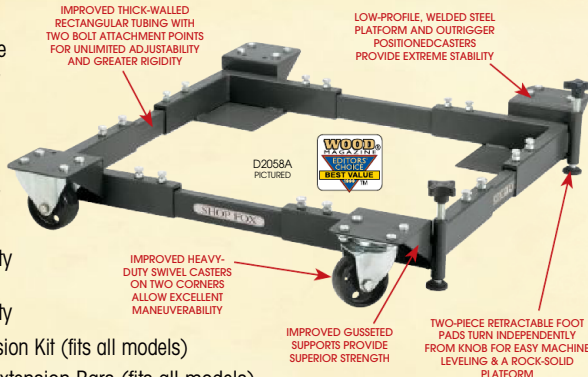
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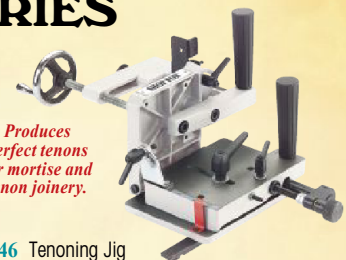
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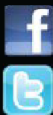
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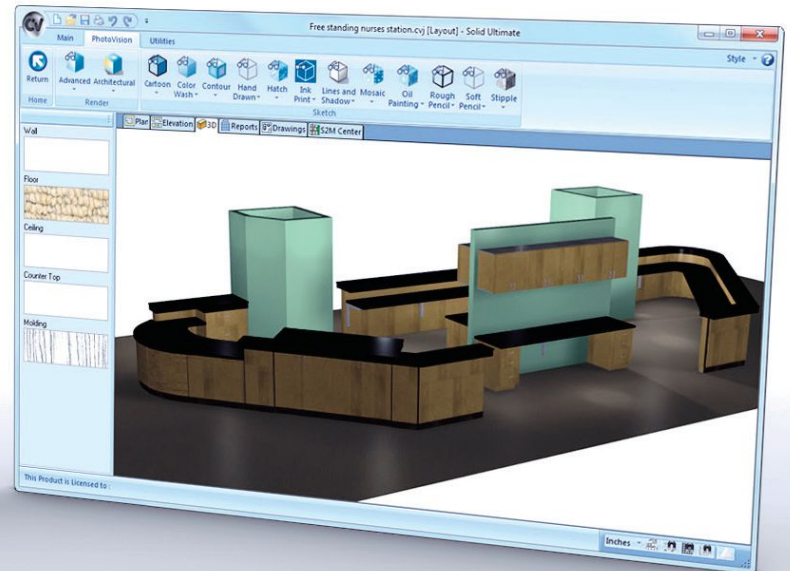
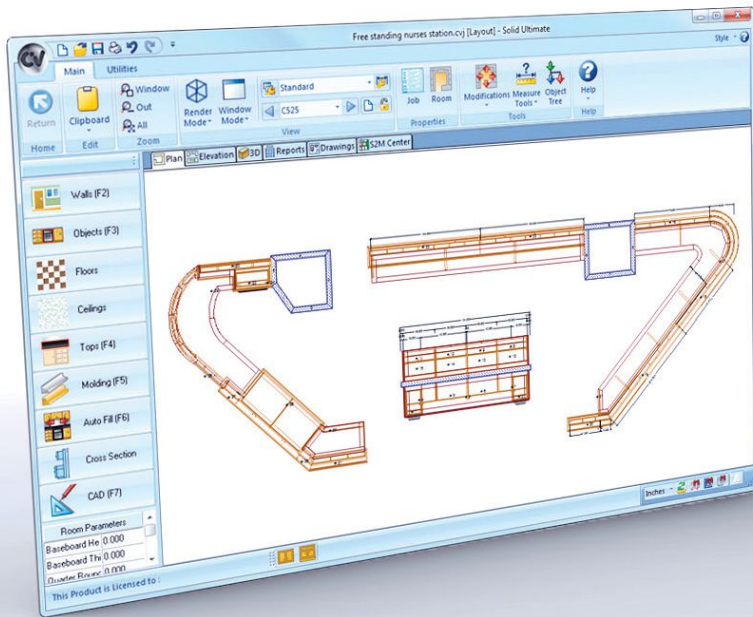
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Blogs



Over the Workbench

Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler



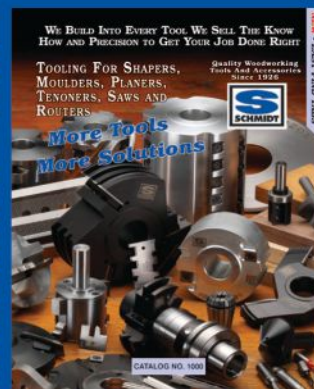
This Business about Woodworking

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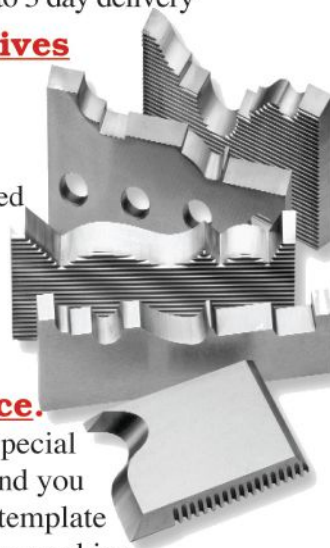
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TAKING STOCK

with TOD RIGGIO

Your talent can open doors to new revenue streams

This month's cover story is about Carmana Designs, a Philadelphia cabinet shop that, according to co-owner Carmen Vona, has kept its doors open through the recession by having a second income from rental properties.

"In today's climate, most shops need to find out how to make alternate income. I started doing that when I was 20 years old with the rental properties, but it's never too late to start that," says Carmen. "You can't always rely on income that's coming in from the jobs. You don't know what's going to happen. Who expected the whole economy to collapse? I would have been one of the casualties. We would have shut down without that income."

Vona goes so far as to say he could be more profitable by shuttering his business and renting his huge 23,000-sq.-ft. shop, but his passion for woodworking is too great.

Obviously, not everyone has the means to make a land grab. And I can tell you from personal experience that being a landlord involves way more than just cashing checks from tenants. Well done if you've got a second income. For those who don't, there are ways to supplement your primary shop income.

Let me explain. First, consider all of the talents already in your possession as manager or owner of a woodworking business. Chances are you're also a marketer, designer, salesman, estimator and problem solver. This can lead to part-time gigs as a consultant to other businesses, a writer or a teacher. Your knowledge and experience is valued by others and can net a good hourly fee.

Take a look at all of that machinery in your shop. Maybe you've got something — a CNC router, molder or spray booth — that other nearby shops lack. Putting the competition's money

in your pocket qualifies as another source of income and can also feel really good.

I've met woodworkers who are professional-quality photographers, incredibly proficient with design software and are machinery experts. They could quit their day job. They won't, of course, because they share Vona's passion for woodworking. But they have other options.

Something else Vona said, which didn't make the story, caught my attention.

Consider all of the talents already in your possession as manager or owner of a business.

"My advice for woodworking business owners is to stay organized. Organization is the key to success. You have to be organized with accounts receivable, accounts payable, with clients, vendors. And you need to have a database and know what all of your supplies are and where they are."

As it happens, Pro Shop columnist John English covers shop organization on Page 16, followed by Bob Flexner's seven suggestions for getting a richer and darker finish on Page 20. Howard Grivna, in the seventh of a series of wide belt sander articles, explains sanding head variations on Page 24.

We also look at how laser technology is changing the woodworking business, new tools for the job site (New Products, Page 22), walnut's continued popularity (Wood Markets, Page 26), and efforts to turn Gustav Stickley's upstate New York home into a museum (Page 8).

Working with tools and wood is inherently dangerous. We try to give our readers tips that will enhance their understanding of woodworking. But our best advice is to make safety your first priority. Always read your owner's manuals, work with properly maintained equipment and use safety devices such as blade guards, push sticks and eye protection. Don't do things you're not sure you can do safely, including the techniques described in this publication or in others. Seek proper training if you have questions about woodworking techniques or the functions of power machinery.

WOODSHOP NEWS

Shaping the Successful Shop™

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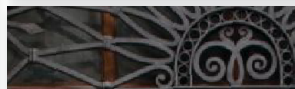
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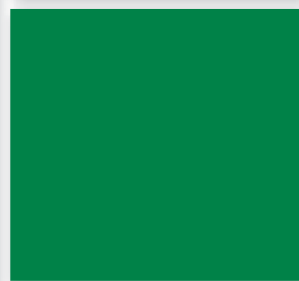
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NEWS DESK

Stickley's home brought to life

Funding is sought for a \$2 million museum for admirers of the Arts & Crafts legend in New York

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

It's been done with Frank Lloyd Wright, Mark Twain and other historical figures. Now the former home of Gustav Stickley, located in a residential area on Columbus Avenue in Syracuse, N.Y., will likely be turned into a public museum sometime in the future if adequate funding can be secured.

Dave Rudd, a specialist on Gustav Stickley and owner of Dalton's American Decorative Arts, a Syracuse antique gallery, confirmed that efforts are under way to convert the now-abandoned home. During the summer, architects and urban planners got started on a feasibility study, which is the first step in assessing the building's potential.

Rudd once owned the home before selling it to the Stickley-Audi Co., of Fayetteville, N.Y., in the mid-1990s. Stickley-Audi Co. operates as a museum featuring the work of the famous Stickley brothers. Rudd says that although he is not privy to all of the dealings between those involved, he is aware that Stickley-Audi is currently collaborating with the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse on the museum proposal.

Built in the late 1890s, the Queen Anne-style building is essentially Gustav Stickley's first attempt at creating a building with an Arts & Crafts-style interior. In December 1901, after Stickley had bought it and moved in, a fire destroyed the interior. Stickley then took it upon himself to design and have someone remodel the home in his desired fashion, focusing on craftsmanship and the use of natural materials.

"The whole structure is significant to me because it really tells the story of the beginning of the Craftsman style and the beginning of Arts & Crafts as we know it because you walk up to the front of this Queen Anne house and the first thing you notice is a doorway that has been



In 1902, Arts & Crafts legend Gustav Stickley gutted the interior of this Queen Anne home in Syracuse, N.Y. and remodeled the interior with Arts & Crafts style touches. Local museums are now seeking funding to preserve the building's historical significance and turn it into a museum.



changed to a Craftsman-style door and you're fully emerged into one of the most fantastic interiors Gustav Stickley produced," says Rudd.

Rudd believes the structure is worth turning into a museum for the enjoyment of future generations. He says that nothing was done with it for a long time because of the transitional urban neighborhood in which it is located.

"This is probably one of the most important 20th century interiors in the country. When we first bought it, my partner had ideas of getting the city and state involved and creating some sort of Williamsburg, Virginia-type Arts & Crafts colony there. That never took off. We agreed to sell the house

and that's when the Audis stepped up and purchased the house from us."

The two museums have applied for various funding and are hoping for good news before the end of the year. As stated in various news reports, the renovations are expected to be in the \$2 million range and could take several years.

"That's the number they are throwing around. I think that's accurate. I don't think the house is in that much of disrepair. It's just that if you're going to turn a historic structure like that into a museum-quality structure, you have to go way beyond creating a home to live in." **W**

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Annual AWI conference focuses on growth

While the economic forecasts have been mediocre, members gathered to find ways to increase their market share

Members attending business seminars at the AWI's annual conference.



By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

The last few years have been difficult for woodworking businesses as the U.S. and world economies struggle to recover. With that mind, a theme of rejuvenation was stressed at the Architectural Woodwork Institute's recent annual convention in Phoenix.

For three days, attendees heard economic forecasts, participated in roundtable discussions and networked with their peers. But mostly they were encouraged to leave their day-to-day struggles behind and focus on new opportunities.

"One of the best things about coming to the convention is that business owners get to step away from the immediate things they have to do and have the chance to think of their business as a whole," AWI senior director of operations Teresa McCain says. "They also meet with members from across the country who are really willing to share information and some end up partnering work with each other."

The AWI offers year-round networking and educational opportunities, such as the Best Practice Group, which typically involves eight to 10 non-competing members who share their challenges and offer support.

In August, 20 companies joined the AWI, making it the best month since the recession.

AWI membership is generally comprised of top management from architectural millwork companies. Membership currently stands at 1,290 companies, including 1,070 involved in manufacturing and 220 on the supply side, according to McCain.

"Our membership is staying steady now," she says. "Our all-time high was in 2009 when we had 1,227 manufacturing companies alone. I think we're really very steady for the construction industry as far as associations go, but we are down."

In August, 20 companies joined the AWI, making it the organization's best month since the recession. McCain attributes it to soliciting memberships at IWF 2012 in Atlanta.

"I think this shows that the economy is getting better, even though everyone is still very cautious about how they spend their money."

Contact: AWI. Tel: 571-323-3636. www.awi.net.org

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New woodworking school opens in Illinois

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Outfitted with an impressive collection of professional-grade machinery, the new CU Woodshop School of Woodworking in Champaign, Ill., held its grand opening in September. School founder Dennis Coleman says classes are running smoothly and he's already working on next year's schedule.

The school is part of CU Woodshop Supply, a business Coleman started in 2009. It's comprised of a retail store and what's known as the Dream Shop, a woodshop used by the owners of the store.

In 2010, Coleman started offering classes in the Dream Shop to store patrons and students at nearby Parkland Community College. "Those classes were very successful and there was generally a waiting list, but we found that we really couldn't meet the need because it became a conflict with use of the shop by the owners. The owners couldn't turn a planer on right next to where someone was trying to lecture students. So we really had to restrict our classes to times when

See School, Page 27



The new CU Woodshop School of Woodworking in Champaign, Ill. is aimed at hobbyists, but also offers advanced technical classes for pros.

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TOOLS & TECHNIQUES



Biesse debuts two new CNC machines

Rover J and Klever models for under \$60K

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Biesse America introduced two CNC machines at IWF 2012: the Rover J for smaller shops and Klever 1224G for production shops.

"The Rover J is ideal for smaller custom woodworkers because it is a machine that has a lot of advanced technology and the price is very affordable," says sales manager Cesare Magnani.

With a base price of \$52,000, the entry-level machine offers features to cover a broad range of nesting applications such as making cabinet components and doors. The price point was achieved by providing a hand-held DSP numerical controller instead of a built-in controller, according to Magnani.

"The controller is very user-friendly that makes it easy to do a lot of operations like tooling setup, launching programs and so forth."

Available with table sizes of 4' x 8' and 5' x 10', the machine also features a seven-position tool changer and 15-hp electro-spindle that ranges from 3,000 to 24,000 rpm.

The Klever CNC router is ideal for panel processing and cabinet and furniture component manufacturing. It moves much faster for higher production shops and features a built-in controller for pro-

See Biesse, Page 27

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Jet table saw includes cast-iron surface

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

Jet introduced the new 12" Xacta table saw at IWF 2012, model JTAS-12-DX, with the brand's first extension table made of commercial-grade cast iron.

"This saw features a massive 80" precision ground cast-iron table with a beveled front edge. It's not wood, it's not laminate. It's a full cast iron surface from end to end. Once leveled, it's going to give you a very solid and true surface to work on that is very heavy and won't move," says product manager Joan Duvall.

"It's not wood, it's not laminate. It's a full cast iron surface from end to end."

The saw has a 31-1/2" x 80" footprint and weighs 630 lbs. It's powered by a 5-hp, single-phase motor, providing up to 4,300 rpm. A poly V-belt design provides a constant transfer of power, reducing slippage and minimizing vibration, according to Jet.

The saw comes with a 40-1/2" Xacta commercial-grade fence that glides along the rails until locked in place and a magnifying rail guide allowing users to pinpoint the desired stop.

The left-tilt saw supports sheet goods and other dimensional lumber within its 50" maximum rip capacity to the right of the blade and 14" to the left. The saw also accommodates 8" dados with a 13/16" width. A dado insert is included with the saw.

The saw also features a riving knife design to help reduce kickback and a see-through blade guard.

"As part of any safety feature with a saw, having a riving knife is one of the first designs you can do in order to prevent kickback. With the release of this saw, all of our Jet table saws will have riving-knife technology," says Duvall.

The saw, priced around \$4,000, also has an enclosed base and dust collection components.

Contact: Jet. Tel: 800-274-6848. www.jettools.com 



Jet's 12" Xacta table saw, model JTAS-12-DX.

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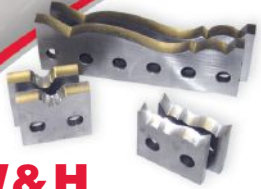


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BUILT TO GO THE DISTANCE

Hoffmann planer is noted for its precision

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

Hoffmann Machine Co. exhibited the latest version of the Adler BH-556 Edge Lipping Planer at IWF 2012. Developed in Switzerland in 1970 and given regular updates through the years, the hand-held power planer is designed specifically for flush-trimming solid wood edges, as well as laminate, veneer and plastic edgebanding.

The tool has earned a place in shops of all sizes because of its ease of use, precise adjustment and safety features, according to Hoffmann USA general manager Markus Hueber.

"You can use this any time your edgebander can't handle extra wide banding or where a panel is very large and it's easier to leave the panel stationary and walk around with the machine," says Hueber. "It also works well on curved edges, half round or free-form designs. With an edgebander, you're mostly limited to straight edges."

Weighing about 11 lbs., the planer has a 120-volt motor that reaches up to 16,000 rpm. It has a planning width of 2-1/4" and uses double-sided knives. Panel edges wider than 2-1/4" can be planed in multiple passes.

Cutter depth adjustments are made in 4/1000" increments with a turn of a knob. The setting remains in place until it's changed by the operator, eliminating inadvertent damage to the workpiece, according to Hueber.

Another safety feature is a spring-loaded cutterhead guard, which closes when the planer is lifted from a work surface.

The cast-aluminum base plate has a powder coat finish to slide easily and prevent surface marring.

The Adler Edge Lipping Planer, model BH-556, sells for \$1,174. Contact: Hoffmann Machine Co. Tel: 866-248-0100. www.hoffmann-usa.com

The Adler BH-556 Edge Lipping Planer, available from Hoffmann Machine Co.



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Laguna debuts its new 4-axis CNC turner

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Among the new and affordable CNC offerings at IWF 2012 in Atlanta was the 4-axis multifunction turning machine from Laguna Tools.

Geared for professional turners and furniture makers, the machine shares features with Laguna's larger CNCs but has a small 36" x 80" footprint, while offering 13" of Z travel at 10" diameter on the A (rotating) axis.

Laguna sales manager Steve Alvarez says the fourth axis allows woodworkers to create anything they envision.

"There are a lot of applications away from a standard 3-axis machine that furniture manufacturers can do like make a furniture leg and then a mortise-and-tenon joint. There's also a huge demand from the gunstock market that needs a 4-axis type application where you're machining a piece of material that's turned, but you still need to come in and do pocketing for all of the firing mechanisms and internal chambering. Those are all 4-axis type moves."

Flat stock can also be processed by simply removing the turning attachment.

The machine features Laguna's CNC Touch Controller from B&R Automation and a dust-

proof and waterproof touchscreen and non-Windows-based operating system.

"Our customers love it because it means trouble-free operation with no security nightmares," says Laguna president Torben Helshoj. "You can also easily run remote

"There are a lot of applications away from a standard 3-axis machine that furniture manufacturers can do."

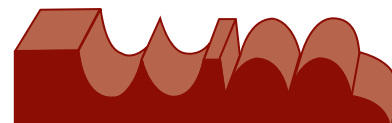
diagnostics via the Internet or PC. In fact, these machines can actually be operated with a mounted touchscreen or through a VNC-linked laptop, Netbook, smart phone or your iPad."

The machine sells for about \$17,000 and is also available in a "two-up" version with two spindles and two rotary axes for even higher turning productivity.

Contact: Laguna Tools. Tel: 800-234-1976. www.lagunatools.com 

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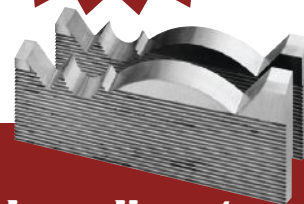


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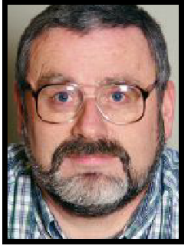
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PRO SHOP

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Go with the flow and organize your shop

Putting all of your supplies, tools and lumber in the right place can speed up your work rate and improve safety

One of the best things about woodshops is that no two are alike. And one of the worst things about woodshops is that no two are alike. It's a lot of fun to wander through several shops and see the huge variety of things we make — furniture, cabinets, turnings, carvings, moldings, millwork and so on. But trying to come up with a set of

guidelines for managing shops that share one thing (wood) in so many different ways can be a real challenge. Most businesses like grocery stores or restaurants or car lots have a certain flow and logic to them. Our world is a mix of one-man shops and large production facilities, artists and artisans, sheet goods and natural edges.

But one thing we all have in common is

that things flow through our shops. Managing that flow can be either chaotic or controlled. And how well it is managed is often the key to how well a business is doing. If the shop is organized well, then the odds are that marketing, production and sales are all in tune, too.

The logical way to organize is to divide the flow of materials and product into three zones: raw, in process and complete. That sounds remarkably simple, but most shops don't do it. For example, does your shop have more than one plywood pile? While most of it is in a main rack, are the cutoffs stored across the shop under the stairs and are there several sheets in a back corner somewhere — or perhaps up on a balcony? Moving materials and product efficiently around the shop is inextricably tied to storage.

A place for everything

In the decades before the Civil War, a Yale graduate named Charles Goodrich became a Congregational minister in Worcester, Mass. He also became a widely read author. In 1827, when he was still in his 30s, he published an article on neatness in the Ohio Repository, a Canton newspaper that's still published today. In that article, Goodrich forever became part of Americana when he ad-



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opted the catchphrase “a place for everything and everything in its place.”

Almost two centuries later, that’s still the key to moving stuff around in the shop. By first organizing storage, things tend to get moved just twice — when they’re added to inventory and when they’re used.

Big shops generally have the space to store things efficiently. One- and two-man shops are almost always cramped for space, so while storage is more challenging it’s also more important. With no spare square feet, moveable storage is an often-overlooked option. For example, cutoffs and single boards of rarely used species can be stored in a lumber cart rather than a lumber rack, so it can be moved out of the way when needed, and even moved to a workstation or the table saw when several small pieces are required. The same is true of clamps: storing them on a wall behind each workstation makes sense in a large shop with enough clamps to go around, but storing them on a mobile cart is a lot more logical in a small shop with limited resources.

Having parts (door stiles, drawer sides, etc.) on carts also makes a lot of sense. Instead of stacking them on a stationary workbench and then walking a few feet from there to the machine with each part, it



Clamps on a mobile cart.

makes a whole lot more sense to move the inventory to the machine.

And having cutoffs, clamps and inventory all on carts also makes it a whole lot easier to create a highway system. It’s not the Eisenhower

Interstate Highway System, but a simple system of established walkways through the shop makes life a whole lot easier. Marking these with yellow painted stripes engenders a feeling of sacrosanctity: people are less likely to block the aisles when they see where the aisles are.

Those walkways need to be wide enough for the method being used to move stuff around the shop. In many cases, that’s a pallet jack. Pallets are fairly inexpensive and the jacks are widely available both used and new. Storing everything possible on pallets — from full sheets of plywood to ready-made parts and even completed cabinets — can really help the flow of materials through the shop. One cabinetmaker I knew in South Dakota years ago even went so far as to use a pallet (often with a half sheet of MDF screwed to the top) as his workbench and he would jack it up in the air when assembling cabinets, to save his back a little. Then he’d lower the pallet and leave it right there with the clamped-up assembly drying, while he moved to the next cabinet on the next pallet. There was no downtime clearing the workbench between assemblies and he never needed a second pair of hands to move a large sink-base or pantry.

If a pallet jack isn’t an option and the shop is too small for a forklift, the options are two-wheel carts, freight carts (also called warehouse

See Pro Shop, next page

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PRO SHOP *from previous page*

carts: www.easyrack.org offers several options) and large biceps. Freight carts have been around almost as long as the wheel, but they are perhaps most familiar to modern Americans as the lumber carts at the big-box stores. By adding a platform to a warehouse cart and raising the bed to perhaps two feet off the floor, they make excellent parts carts for woodworking tasks.

Lifting right

Learning how to lift properly by using the legs rather than the back is something that should be reviewed every now and then with employees. Too many back injuries happen because a shop manager didn't take 15 minutes a year to go over this basic technique.

Here are some lifting tips:

- Wear gloves if splinters, nails, metal straps or sharp edges are involved and steel-toed boots if frequent lifting is part of your job description.
- Suck in your gut: doing so actually adds some support to the lower back.
- Make sure the weight is distributed evenly and, if not, be aware of where it is heaviest and lightest so you're not surprised.
- Can the object be tilted or carried sideways in a safer manner?

- Remove any obstacles from the intended path before you pick up something heavy.
- Get solid footing and sweep the floor first if there's a chance it could be slippery (as in sawdust on a hardwood floor).
- When bending down and raising up, use the knees rather than the spine. Your back should be as vertical as possible and your body should be centered over your boots.
- Avoid twisting your spine while toting heavy objects. Move your entire body (including feet) to the right or left and not just your torso.
- Don't be a hero: ask for help if the job is too big for one spine.
- Get a good grip.
- Shoulder straps, such as those used by appliance movers, are quite inexpensive and they transfer the weight to the strongest part of your body.
- Don't be lazy and reach over your head: go get the ladder.

Other methods

Two-wheeled handcarts are great for moving vertical stuff around the shop, but not so great for items with a wide footprint such as base cabinets. There is an unusual option that woodshops can borrow from mechanics: the engine hoist. They're remarkably inex-

pensive and can handle very heavy loads. For example, The Home Depot offers a 2-ton foldable engine hoist for about \$400. It could conceivably be used to move a strapped pallet of hardwoods or plywood.

If the space is available, it really helps to have a staging area close to the main freight door in the shop. As materials come in and completed pieces leave, it's very handy to have enough room to be able to move them past each other, especially when the same door is used for both. Erecting walls, even clear plastic ones, around this staging area obviates a number of minor problems. By separating the shop from the great outdoors, there are fewer air exchanges during expensive heating and cooling seasons. That thermal trap also cuts down on changes in humidity that are introduced when moving stuff in and out of the shop and it reduces the number of cottonwood seeds and other contaminants that migrate to the finishing room. One final note: if you're a one-man (or woman) shop, stop by the library on the way home and check out "Working Alone" by John Carroll (Taunton Press, 1999). It's written for carpenters, but there's a whole lot in there about lifting large and/or cumbersome items without straining your back — or your patience. **W**



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FINISHING

with BOB FLEXNER

Seven ways to a richer and darker finish

Many shops use oil stains to get the color they want on projects. Oil stains are widely available at paint stores, home centers and distributors and they are very easy to use because they provide a long working time.

The problem is that they often don't add a lot of color to the wood, especially dense woods such as maple and birch. When you wipe off the excess stain, which is the best practice for getting an even coloring, you might not achieve the intensity of color that you're after.

How do you get darker colors on dense

wood? Or any wood for that matter? Here are seven suggestions:

1. Sand the wood to a coarser grit: The coarser the grit, the larger the sanding scratches and the more room for pigment to lodge. You just have to sand fine enough so the scratches don't show. You might be able to get away with 150 grit, or even 120 grit, as long as the sanding scratches are running in the direction of the grain.

For example, you could do the initial sanding with a random-orbit sander and finish up by hand-sanding with the grain.

2. Increase the ratio of pigment to vehicle in the stain: The vehicle is the combination of binder and thinner — that is, all the liquid. The higher the ratio, the darker the coloring on the wood. There are several ways to do this:

- Add more pigment to the stain. It's best to use oil-based pigment with oil-based stains, but there are pigments available for all types of stains. Keep good records so you can duplicate what you have done if you need to.
- Leave the stain on the wood longer before wiping it off. This allows some of the thinner to evaporate and that increases the ratio of pigment to vehicle. (It's a myth that the stain penetrates deeper.) This trick works best with fast-drying stains such as lacquer stains because you don't have to wait as long to get a noticeable result.
- Apply a second coat of stain after the first has dried fully. This will usually produce a darker coloring, but it adds a step to the process and slows production.
- Substitute a glaze or gel stain for the liquid stain. Glazes and gel stains usually contain a higher ratio of pigment.

3. Do a "dirty wipe": That is, don't wipe off all the excess stain. Leave a dampness of stain on the wood that dries to a darker coloring.



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(From left) A dirty wipe (right half) produces a darker coloring; toning (bottom half) is always done with a spray gun.

This will take practice to get the coloring even, especially on large and multiple surfaces. Just as with leaving the stain on longer, this technique is easiest to do with a fast-drying stain such as lacquer stain.

There are two downsides to doing a dirty wipe. One is that it will muddy the wood more than if you wipe off all the excess. The other is that it could cause a poor bond to the wood if left too thick. The finish needs to be able to penetrate the stain and establish a bond to the wood. If it can't do this, the finish could separate at the stain layer if it gets knocked or scratched.

Nevertheless, a dirty wipe is such an effective and often-used method that it has its own name.

4. Wet the wood with water before applying the stain to raise the grain and leave a rougher surface for more pigment to lodge. This adds an extra step because you have to let the wood dry for this trick to work.

You could shorten the procedure to one step by using a water-based stain. It will raise the grain and the coloring will be darker when you wipe off the excess.

Don't try to sand the stain smooth or you will most likely sand through in places. Instead, "bury" the raised grain with the first coat of finish. Then sand it smooth after this coat has dried.

5. Use dye instead of an oil stain: Dyes are available in liquid form, usually called non-grain-raising and in powders that you dissolve in a liquid. You can get dense woods as dark as you want either by using a higher concentration of dye to liquid or by applying multiple coats. There's no risk of separation at the stain level because there's no build.

If you spray the dye and leave it without wiping, you won't get good grain definition. To improve the grain definition, apply an oil



stain after the dye has dried — or over the sealer coat — and wipe off the excess.

6. After applying a stain using any of the above methods, spray a toner between coats of finish, usually after the sealer coat. A toner is pigment or dye added to your finish and it is always sprayed on the wood. Pigment will muddy the coloring. Dye will darken the color without muddying. So most toning is done with dye.

In addition to darkening the coloring, you can also tweak it if you haven't gotten it exactly right with the stain. For example, add some red or orange dye to the finish to warm the coloring or "kill" too much red by adding a little green dye. Toning is very useful for matching colors when doing refinishing.

Non-grain-raising dyes are the most useful for toning. They can be added to all typically sprayed finishes, so far as I know.

7. After applying a stain and sealer, apply a glaze: This is a thickened oil- or water-based stain. It's thickened so it's easier to control and doesn't run on vertical surfaces. Leave a little of the glaze on the surface to darken it.

The easiest method of applying glaze evenly is to brush or spray it on the wood and thin it out with a brush. It will take practice to do this effectively without leaving noticeable brush marks. Glazes are always pigmented, so they can't help but muddy the wood a little.

Because of the difficulty of getting a glaze brushed out evenly, toning is usually the better method of darkening or tweaking a color. But glazing is useful if you don't spray.

Glazing is more effective for highlighting. For example, leave some of the coloring in recesses to darken them or wipe them off in selected areas to create figure patterns. **W**

Bob Flexner is author of "Understanding Wood Finishing" and "Flexner on Finishing."

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◀ **LIGNOMAT** offers thermo-hygrometers for use with its hand-held moisture meters. Measuring both the wood moisture and the relative humidity on site and comparing the measured value to an EMC chart will tell the installer if furniture, floor planks or panels will shrink, warp or cup, according to the company. For information, visit www.wood-moisture.com or www.lignomat.com.



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◀ **SENCO** expanded its line of pneumatic construction staplers with the introduction of its SNS200XP for driving 16- and 17-gauge, 7/16" crown, 1" to 2" staples. The tool features an all-metal magazine that holds 160 staples, dual-action trigger, tool-free adjustable depth of drive, a long, narrow nose for access to tight corners, rotating belt hook; and a soft comfort grip. It has a suggested retail price of \$239. For information, visit www.senco.com.



▶ **FESTOOL** offers the CMS Routing System, allowing craftsmen to be as precise on the job site as they are in their own shop, according to the company. The complete set includes a portable router table, router plate module and fence, auxiliary dust hood with starting pin, miter gauge, sliding table, table extension, and dust extraction hose set, which sells for about \$1,600. The base model, which includes the table extension, plate, fence and dust hood, sells for about \$1,000. Other sets are available. For information, visit www.festoolusa.com.



▲ **ZIPWALL** introduced its ZipRail Dual Seal accessory to create a dust-tight seal along the floor and ceiling without tape. Based on ZipWall's patented spring-loaded telescopic pole and Foam Rail crossbar, it resembles an I-beam when assembled. The ZipRail Dual Seal is placed on the plastic at the floor and then raised and twist-locked into position. The pole's internal spring loading pushes the crossbars against the plastic at the floor and the ceiling at the same time. The ZipRail accessory is used with the ZipWall barrier system for the highest level of dust containment, according to the company. Each ZipRail Dual Seal includes a 10' telescopic spring-loaded pole and two 4' foam rail crossbars. The product is available in single and triple packs. Suggested contractor pricing is \$85.95 for the single pack and \$149.95 for the triple pack. For information, visit www.zipwall.com.

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Sanding head variations have their roles

From a contract drum head to a hybrid, there are several characteristics to look out for with these different methods

There are four basic types of sanding heads and one major hybrid variation that can be applicable to any sanding head type that incorporates a polishing platen.

Contract drum head

Contact drum heads are generally incorporated in most widebelt sanders as the sanding head "type of choice." They come in a range of diameters (4" to 18") and a wide

range of hardness (30 to 95 durometer in rubber, or even steel).

They are used for cut down and dimensioning, using 24- through 50-grit belts; intermediate sanding, using 50- through 80-grit belts; and in some applications, finish sanding, using 100- through 400-grit belts. They are one of the most critical components in a widebelt sander, but have a tendency to produce chatter marks if not properly constructed and maintained. They interface

with the part being sanded with a line contact, exerting a high unit pressure.

Combination drum and platen head

Combination type sanding heads employ both a contact drum and a polishing platen within the same abrasive belt. They normally have adjustments so that sanding can be accomplished with the drum only, platen only, or with both drum and platen. A disadvantage to these types of sanding heads is that the distance between pinch rolls or hold-down shoes becomes extended so that minimum part lengths are longer. A second disadvantage to any platen-type sanding head is their greater tendency to create streaking. When using the platen, they interface with the part being sanded with a flat surface, exerting low unit pressure.

Platen head

Platen heads (smoothing bars) were developed to deal with the chatter marks and belt splice marks often produced by contact drum-type sanding heads. Polishing platens perform the exact function that their name implies. They impart a polishing-type finish that refines the scratch pattern or grit marks introduced by previous sanding heads. When an abrasive belt is run on a platen-type sanding head, its cutting and finishing

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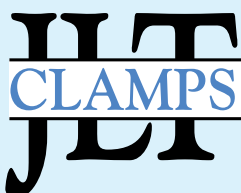
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characteristics are dramatically changed. This happens because instead of a line contact (obtained on contact drums), platens interface with the part being sanded with a large flat surface, keeping the abrasive in contact with the product for a period of time. This fact results in:

- A longer scratch line because of greater dwell time.
- A smoother finish from any given grit belt because of the fact that as sanding dust is created, it is progressively trapped between the abrasive belt and the product and therefore the abrasive mineral is not able to penetrate as deep.
- No tendency to create chatter marks because the abrasive backup device [the platen] is non-rotating and also cushioned, it has no tendency to impart a chatter mark.
- Fewer tendencies to create belt splice marks because the abrasive belt entry and exit to the platen is relatively flat and it will not impart a mark from a stiff or out-of-specification belt splice. Its cushioned construction, low-unit-pressure sanding force due to the large surface area of the platen and long scratch line all help to eliminate the possibility of belt splice marks.
- However, platen type heads have a greater tendency to create streaking because dust does become trapped between the abrasive belt and the product and the tendency for streaking is increased, particularly if excessive pressures are applied. Also, the graphite pad cover and the pad itself are susceptible to buildup or grooving that then imparts its own streaking pattern.

Contact drum heads are generally incorporated in most widebelt sanders as the sanding head "type of choice". They come in a range of diameters and a wide range of hardness.

Crossbelt platen head

Crossbelt platen heads employ a relatively narrow (6" to 12" wide) abrasive belt running transversely (at a right angle) across a piece part. Originally, these were one-piece solid platens, but in today's modern machines they are always segmented platens. Crossbelt heads will cut more aggressively with any given grit belt than a conventional widebelt platen head — because cutting is at right angles to the grain — and are normally used for tape removal on veneered parts. They are also required if you're sanding long parts with the grain running at right angles to the parts length, such as on desk front panels.

Segmented platen sanding head variation

Segmented platens can be provided on any of the above sanding head types that employ a platen. Approximately 30 years ago, the concept of a yielding segmented platen sanding head was developed. With this concept, yield is achieved within the sanding head so it can accommodate not only panel thickness variations, but also variations within the face being sanded. This type sanding head is ideally suited for seal sanding, lacquer sanding and veneers. It can also be used when sanding solid wood parts. It is an undesirable characteristic if thickness dimensioning is required.

For help with sanding problems, contact: Howard Grivna, Sanding Systems Consulting Inc. Tel: 218-678-2929. www.sandingsystemsinc.com 



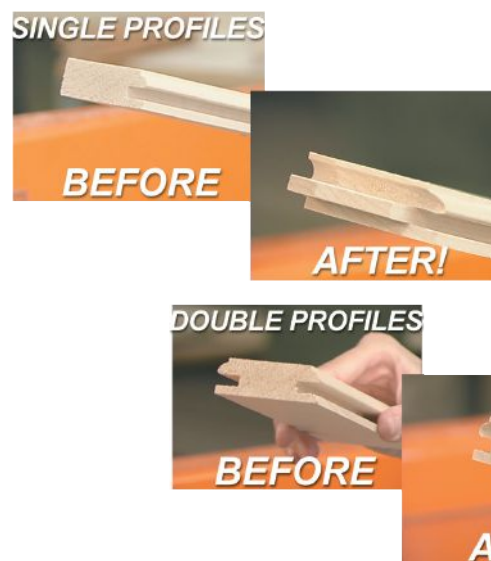
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Black walnut sales are holding steady

Suppliers find the wood being used more for commercial projects and those that prefer the darker hues

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Consumer interest in American black walnut (*juglans nigra*) is holding steady as lumber suppliers interviewed by Woodshop News have either experienced an increase in sales during the last year or have seen no change at all. But all tend to agree that the unique growing patterns of the species

makes its availability unpredictable and, in turn, make it difficult to gauge just how popular it really is.

Walnut sales are active at Yoder Lumber in Millersburg, Ohio, for instance. Company president Melvin Yoder says this reflects current consumer preferences for darker wood hues and woodworkers' appreciation of the wood's working properties.

"It's a softer wood than oak. It machines

really well. A lot of people like it for that. The dark color, once it is finished, has a high-quality look that people want in their homes," says Yoder.

Availability hasn't been too much of a problem for him, but he does notice the species is not as readily available as other prominent hardwoods.

"Walnut typically grows in the Eastern Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions of the country. It requires more moisture than other species, so it grows more in the lower-lying areas. A lot of it can be found in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa."

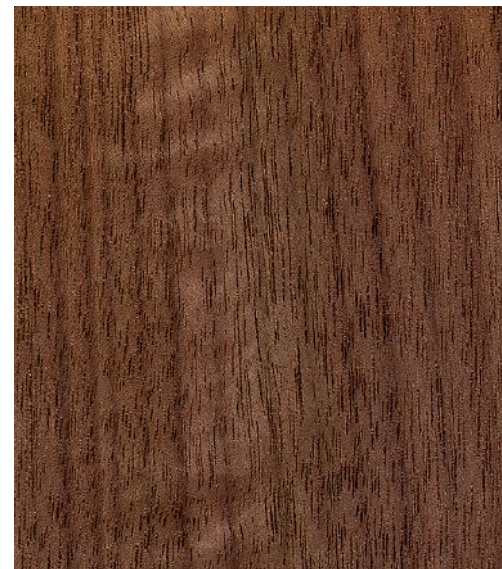
Peter Sieling, of Garreson Lumber Co. in Bath, N.Y., says walnut sells out shortly after he gets a supply. He believes he would sell more if he could get more.

"Walnut doesn't grow in big stands, so it's harder to get large quantities of it. So mills that are dealing with large quantities a lot of times don't work with walnut other than when it accidentally shows up," says Sieling.

"But I feel like people are using it more now than they were in the past because it is a pretty wood. It's just hard to get because it doesn't grow like a whole forest of maple does. Usually walnut grows in people's yards or stream beds where there's real deep soil."

Chris Calvert, owner of Yukon Lumber Co. in Norfolk, Va., says walnut is being specified more for commercial projects.

"Right now we're seeing a lot of it used for lots of restaurants. Some wanted rustic walnut so we took the sappy and the knotty out of the uppers. We've seen it pick up as an accent piece for countertops and tables and that kind of thing, but as far as flooring goes, not a whole lot. I think the trend goes in spurts. I think the TV media has a lot to do with it when people watch home-and-garden channels." **W**



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7.8	8.6	9.4	10.2	11.1	
7.7	8.5	9.2	10.1	11.0	
7.6	8.3	9.1	9.9	10.8	
7.5	8.1	8.9	9.7	10.6	
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BIESSE from Page 12

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The Klever 1224G CNC, available from Biesse America.

SCHOOL from Page 11

the shop was not being used by the owners, which meant mostly evenings," says Coleman.

About a year ago, a building across the street became available. Coleman acquired it for the school and installed an 8,000-sq.-ft. shop. Class sizes are limited to eight students, who have a work area that features a 4' x 8' assembly table, bench, clamps and hand tools. Students share the machinery.

The school's website at www.cuwschool.com lists its current course offerings.

Coleman is excited about the school's future despite the current economic conditions. "We started CU Woodshop Supply when the economy was right at its bottom and we are still holding in there three years later. So our hope is that if we can just keep ourselves going until the economy turns around, we'll then be in a position to expand."

Contact: CU Woodshop School of Woodworking, 1302 Parkland Court, Champaign, IL 61820. Tel: 217-355-1244. **W**

AWFS renames new product awards

The Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers, producer of the biennial woodworking industry fair in Las Vegas, is changing the name of its Sequoia new product awards to the AWFS Visionary Awards.

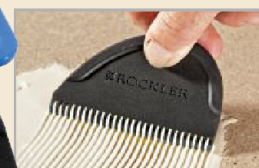
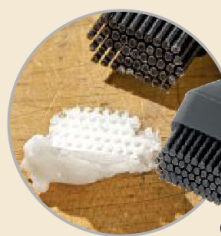
AWFS will also be modifying how the awards will be judged, selecting finalists prior to the show by a volunteer panel of woodworking manufacturing professionals.



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shipping



CYCLONE DUST COLLECTOR

- Motor: 1 1/2 HP, 110V, single-phase, TEFC, 3450 RPM
- Air suction capacity: 775 CFM
- Static pressure at rated CFM: 1.08"
- Intake port: 6" with included 5" optional port
- Impeller: 13 1/2"
- Height: 65 1/2"
- Built-in remote control switch
- Approx. shipping weight: 210 lbs.

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CASTERS



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8" JOINTERS

- Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase, TEFC
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 9" x 72 1/2"
- Max. depth of cut: 1/8"
- Max. rabbeting depth: 1/2"
- Cutterhead dia.: 3"
- Cutterhead speed: 5000 RPM
- Cuts per minute: 20,000
- Approx. shipping weight: 500 lbs.

FREE
SAFETY
PUSH
BLOCKS

BUILT-IN
MOBILE BASE



CHOOSE EITHER 4 HSS KNIVES OR
SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD MODEL

4 KNIFE CUTTERHEAD

G0656P \$795⁰⁰

SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD

G0656PX \$1195⁰⁰

SALE \$715⁵⁰

SALE \$1075⁵⁰

\$150
shipping

12" x 60" SHORT BED JOINTER with Spiral Cutterhead

- Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase, TEFC
- Precision ground cast iron table size: 13" x 60"
- Fence: 5 3/8" x 31 1/4"
- Cutterhead dia.: 3 3/4"
- Cutterhead speed: 4950 RPM
- Bevel jointing: 45°, 90°, 135°
- Max. depth of cut: 3/8"
- Approx. shipping weight: 832 lbs.

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15" PLANERS

- Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 15" x 20"
- Min. stock thickness: 3/16"
- Min. stock length: 8"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/8"
- Feed rate: 16 & 30 FPM
- Cutterhead speed: 5000 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 660 lbs.

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SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD MODEL

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WITH SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD

G0453PX \$1650⁰⁰

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- Sanding motor: 1 1/2 HP, 110V, single-phase, 15A
- Drum surface speed: 4000 FPM
- Conveyor feed rate: Variable, 2-12 FPM
- Max. stock dimensions: 36" W x 4 1/2"
- Min. board length: 6"
- Min. board thickness: 1/8"
- Sanding drum size: 4"
- 2 1/2" dust collection port
- Overall size: 35" W x 50" H x 24" D
- Approx. shipping weight: 328 lbs.



\$99
shipping

G0458 \$925⁰⁰ SALE \$895⁰⁰

15" DISC SANDER with Stand

- Motor: 1 1/2 HP, 220V, single-phase, 1720 RPM
- Cast iron sanding disc size: 15"
- Cast iron table size: 12" x 20"
- Table tilt: +15° to -45°
- Floor to table height: 37 5/8"
- Dust port: 2 1/2"
- Approx. shipping weight: 232 lbs.

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WITH SHELF



G0719

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- Motor: 1 HP, 120V/240V, single-phase
- Amps: 7/3.5
- Intake size: 4"
- Bag size (dia. x depth): 13 1/2" x 24"
- Balanced steel, radial fin impeller
- Air suction capacity: 537 CFM
- Max. static pressure: 7.2"
- Approx. shipping weight: 51 lbs.

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G0710

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**CARMEN AND
ANNA MARIA VONA**



OWNERS OF: Carmana Designs

LOCATION: Philadelphia

SHOP SIZE: 23,000 sq. ft.

EMPLOYEES: 2

ABOUT: The shop combines creativity and commitment to produce quality custom cabinetry, kitchens and interior furnishings for its diverse clientele located throughout metropolitan Philadelphia.



Co-owner Carmen Vona (left) goes under the hood of the shop's Weinig mold with employee Craig Cody.

PHOTOS: JIM MCWILLIAMS/REDUX PLUS

Husband-and-wife shop in Philadelphia has survived tough economic times with the use of CNC and rental income

BY JENNIFER HICKS /
STAFF WRITER

Located in the heart of the south end of Philadelphia, Carmana Designs was founded in 1981 by the husband-and-wife team of Carmen and Anna Maria Vona. The shop is a turnkey operation that designs, fabricates, finishes and installs custom cabinetry for residential and commercial clients.

Carmen is both a versatile designer and cabinetmaker who has won several national awards for high-end custom kitchens. Anna Maria is also an interior designer and puts the finishing touches on Carmen's work. Talents aside, the key to their long run is having another source of income.

"In today's climate, most shops need to find out how to make alternate income. I started doing that when I was 20 years old with the rental properties, but it's never too late to start that," says Carmen.

"You can't always rely on income that's coming in from the jobs. You don't know what's going to happen. Who expected the whole economy to collapse? I would have been one of the casualties. We would have shut down without that income."

With Luigi's help

It all began in 1979 with Carmen when he was 21, shortly after losing both his mother and father to illnesses. He was devastated and quickly became disillusioned with religion and school.

It was time for him to move in a different direction. Anna Maria's godfa-



The shop's current work is split between residential and commercial.

ther, Luigi Sammarone, an Italian cabinetmaker and well-known in Philadelphia design circles, was calling around to his friends and family asking them if they knew of someone interested in learning the cabinetmaking trade. Carmen joined Luigi and the two formed a bond as the master craftsman taught the novice all he needed to know.

continued on next page

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After four years, Carmen was sure that he'd mastered every aspect of cabinetmaking and left to start his own shop. It wasn't far from Luigi's shop and this didn't please the teacher, though they eventually mended their friendship.

Carmen gave the business his all, working seven days a week. But his youth was a hindrance. "My first clients did not trust or believe I had the talent of an Old World craftsman. They did not take me seriously," he says.

After a frustratingly slow start in the early 1980s, the company began to grow and prosper during the next decade until it gained national exposure.

"We got a couple of jobs. They were all based on word of mouth. It was all residential and 90 percent was for custom cabinets. And every now and then we built a freestanding piece like a conference table. It took about five years to really build up. We just dumped money into the building we were in. By the early '90s, the phone was ringing off the hook."

The shop's primary market is greater Philadelphia, which includes Montgomery, Philadelphia, Bucks, Delaware and Chester counties and beyond. "We've done work all across the world for major retailers," says Carmen. "We shipped a bar to Nigeria in 2009."

Repeat business and referrals generate most of the work, which is about a 50-50 split between residential and commercial. "Before the recession, 80 percent of our work was residential," says Carmen. "We'd like to do more residential, but you need a mix of both. With residential, we can make more money, but



there is less work. With commercial, you have to do a lot to keep the shop busy.

"Right now we really don't have a choice but to do both. Before the recession we were able to divorce people we didn't like. We were able not to take the jobs, we were able to be picky. Now you don't have that advantage."

A spacious shop

By the late 1990s, the Vonas had a 9,000-sq.-ft. shop filled with production machinery and eight employees. They moved to a bigger shop in 2000 at the former Abbotts Alderney Dairies complex.

The 23,000-sq.-ft. space is filled with more than \$2 million worth of machinery, including a SCMI panel saw, wide belt sander and gang rip saw; QuickWood Pro sander; Ritter clamp table; Sand Pro (SandMan Products) sanding table; Mikron Multi-Moulder; Scheer veneer saw; Hoffmann door machine; Gannomat drilling machine; Brandt edgebander; Ferguson cold press; Weinig planer; Donaldson Torit dust hopper and Techno-Isel CNC router.

It also features a double downdraft paint booth. The shop mixes custom stains and sprays high-gloss polyester and polyurethane finishes.

The shop currently has two cabinetmakers, Michael Farrauto and Justin Shomo, down from a high of 14 in 2008 when commercial work disappeared. "Our machinery helped us get through the recession," says Carmen. "We don't need a lot of employees because of the machines. They don't need holidays or sick days and they're faster. I'm not saying I couldn't do certain jobs without a CNC, but I couldn't do them with the efficiency that that machine allows me to do."

continued on Page 39

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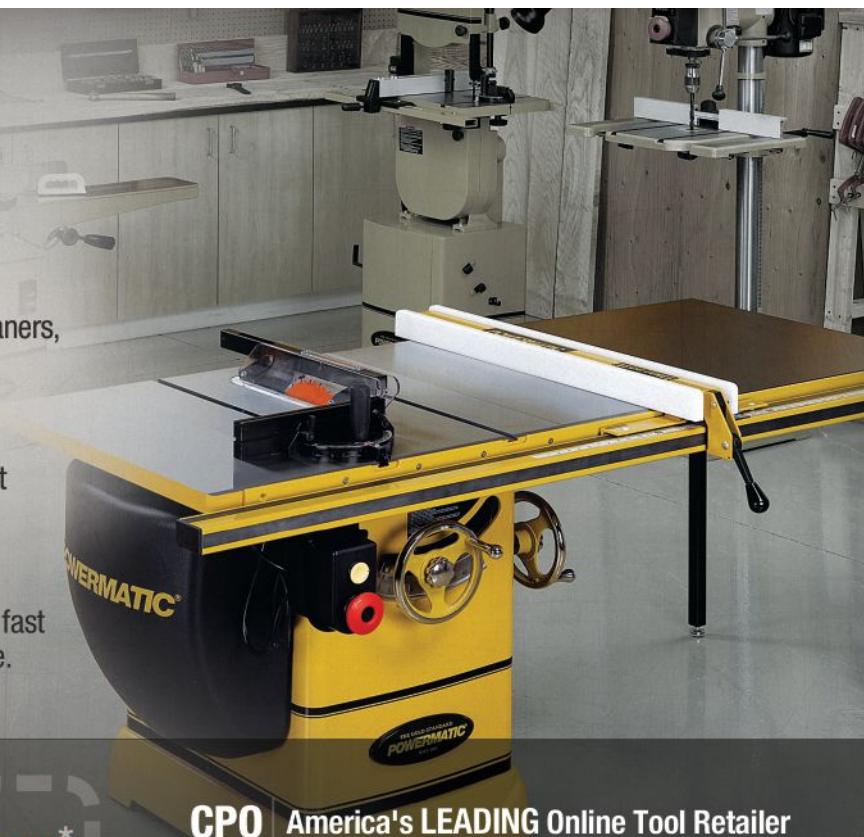
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RETOOLING

FOR 2013

Gearing up for next year

According to a report on Marketwire in October, new home construction in 2012 has increased about 30% over last year. In a September article in Builder magazine, economist Jonathon Smoke said: "Our initial forecasts for 2013 call for greater than 20 percent growth in both starts and new-home sales." With numerous other indications of recovery (the national unemployment rate finally fell below 8% in October), it looks increasingly probable that 2013 will be a busy year for woodshops.

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As Business Grows, Cover Your Assets

As the woodshop market recovers over the next few years, one of the fundamental rules of growth will be to protect assets as they expand. Insurance is vital, but it also is not guaranteed. John Smith, President and CEO of Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company recently wrote in the company's newsletter that: "applications being submitted to PLM for consideration and quotation are up by over 20% thorough the first six months of the year. Unfortunately, we are declining many of these."

The problem is loss control. Actually, it's the lack



of control that some shops show in regard to loss prevention. Keeping your shop, inventory and most importantly, your employees safe is not just common sense, it also makes your business more insurable at better rates. Mr. Smith points to several areas where woodshop owners and managers need to focus. Shops that do some of their own electrical work should have it inspected by a licensed electrician or local inspector. In addition, "extension cords should be prohibited in woodshops, as they're a major cause of loss. Open and unprotected junction boxes need to be properly

covered and secured. Frayed cords need to be replaced. And sawdust build-up around electrical boxes and motors needs to be controlled."

Poor housekeeping (as in excess sawdust, no clear aisles etc.) can cause an insurer to decline a shop. And businesses that weld (or have a subcontractor on site who welds) need to have a written Hot Work Permit program.

When choosing an insurance partner for the good times ahead, woodshops might benefit from taking a look at Mr. Smith's employer, an organization that was actually founded by lumbermen for lumbermen. They've been around for 117 years, are rock solid financially thanks to very conservative financial management - and they are already working with more than 5,000 customers in this field, so they're more familiar with our unique challenges than anyone else in the insurance industry. The company writes all wood-related types of business, including policies for woodworkers.



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Creating Cash-flow For Small Shops

Even though 2013 looks to be a healthy year for the woodworking industry, economic recoveries can stutter and there will still be some slow days. 1-800-BUNKBED was designed for precisely that. The New Hampshire-based company has a program that offers small (mostly one and two-man) shops a way to use their existing equipment and know-how to create a reliable flow of cash, and eliminate slow days.

Jim Rees, president and founder of the company, says that "hundreds of shops have taken up the opportunity to run their own territory, with business locations in most U.S. states and all through Canada".

The idea started in the early '90s when Rees was searching for bunk beds for his children. What he found were either poorly made, or just too expensive. So, being a woodworker, he built the beds himself. When his family and friends saw the results, they all wanted in.

"I started getting phone calls," says Rees, who at the time ran a general contracting business in Gloucester, Massachusetts. "Lots of calls. In fact, I had so many orders that I started

1-800-BUNKBED as a manufacturing company, selling directly to the public and also to wholesale furniture stores."

From the beginning, Rees decided against of-

fering franchises.

"We don't ask for a percentage of the sale," he says. "A shop's profit is their profit." And while the business gives participants the benefits of a franchise (such as protected territories, instant brand name recognition, and ongoing support), it does not require huge up-front fees and micromanagement. The program he offers, which is described on the company website, requires just a \$95 setup fee and a small monthly licensing fee. Each 1-800-BUNKBED independent owner gets a manual with materials and parts lists, a formula to determine pricing for all products, building and assembly directions, and marketing suggestions. In addition, they receive the 1-800-BUNKBED phone number routed to their designated phone, a website and email address.

With two decades of success, 1-800-BUNKBED is a member of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, New Hampshire Business and Industry Association, and also the Better Business Bureau.

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Shop For Tools 24/7

With better days ahead for the housing industry, we're all going to be a lot busier. And that means we'll need the right tools for the job. As shops became leaner and more efficient during the recession, they also became more competitive. Being able to keep up with that competition – delivering superior work on schedule and on budget – has a lot to do with how well the crew is equipped to handle the task. Who wants to see production

grind to a halt because everyone has to wait for the foreman to get back from the big box store with a few Sawzall® blades or the right drill bit?

This is the time to gear up for next year.

Fortunately, the Internet has made shopping

for professional tools pretty easy, because it gives woodshops all across the country complete access to Burns Power Tools. The family-owned Fall River, Massachusetts store makes more than 37,000 of our favorite brand tools

and accessories available twenty-four seven, and their inventory is instantly searchable online. Whether you're working early or late, their online store is always open, no matter what time zone you're in.

For over seventy-five years, the Burns family has been supporting carpenters, cabinetmakers, furniture builders and woodworkers, and nobody understands our industry like they do. They stock everything from industrial power

tools to heavy-duty machinery, and offer full-service sharpening, repairs and related accessories. They even offer pick-up and delivery. But best of all, the folks at the customer service desk at Burns actually understand what we're doing and can offer advice, technical knowledge and a whole lot of common sense. Try getting some of that from the big box store!

Burns also offers expert service repairs and parts for most major brands of power tools, including DeWalt, Porter Cable, Milwaukee, Hitachi, Makita, Bosch, Delta, SawStop, Powermatic and JET, and they stock thousands of parts for the brands that they sell. Their expert sharpening service is renowned country-wide as being the best in the industry. Loyal customers from as far away as Alaska regularly send in saw blades to be sharpened by the experts at Burns.



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Complete Cabinet Package Now Just \$99 a Month!

For woodshops, the recovering housing market is spotlighting a trend. The recession trimmed a lot of excess, and shops that now want to be part of the recovery will need to meet higher customer expectations and new efficiency goals. Buyers now expect to see professionally rendered drawings – not just a set of shop drawings – before they place an order. And with all the newly lean competition out there, a woodshop also needs to be able to deliver finished product, either manually or on CNC, in a precise and timesaving manner.

The kind of software that can design a project, optimize materials, provide DXF files for CAM, tack and manage a project, and even deliver rendered images used to cost about as much as a new company truck. To help shops gear up for the emerging recovery, AMSNA (the publishers of CabMaster) have come up with an innovative and very timely way to make the whole package affordable. Very affordable... just \$99 a month!

CabMaster is always near the top of every shop's wish list. So, making it affordable for every shop, from one man to a hundred employees, simply makes sense. Think about what most shops pay for cellphones or even Internet service, and \$99 suddenly

seems like an extremely affordable way to enjoy the absolutely latest version of the absolutely best complete software package on the market. There isn't even a

contract. It's just month-to-month rental. All of the shop's information stays on their own PC: all that AMSNA controls is the key that allows the software to run. The woodshop can even stop for a month, and then pick it right back up where they left off.

And they'll always have the most current version and libraries.

For shops that don't want a substantial initial investment but still want access to the very latest technology, this \$99 program is on the leading edge of the way the woodworking industry is changing. AMSNA is making it easy to gear up for next year.



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With low interest rates and predictions of growth in the 20% range in new housing starts, both remodeling and new construction are expected to boom in 2013. That means a lot of new wood parquet and laminate flooring will be installed, and Bessey Tools North America have the perfect solution for shops gearing up to meet that demand. The AV2 Flooring Spacer is brilliantly simple. It holds flooring away from the walls at precisely the distance recommended for various materials. Expansion joints (gaps between the wall and floor) are crucial, and the AV2 gives an in-



staller complete control over the process. The days of using shims and scraps of wood or other imprecise methods are over.

Using AV2s is as easy as laying the first piece of laminate on the subfloor and then slipping a Spacer between one end of the laminate and the wall. Then dial up the flooring manufacturer's recommended spacing (it can be anywhere between 5mm and 20 mm - that's a little under 1/4" to a hair over 3/4"), and then place a couple more AV2s between the long edge of the laminate and the wall.

Continue dropping in Spacers in this fashion until enough of the floor is laid for it to be stable (they're quite inexpensive - a set of four runs about \$10), and then remove them. That's just a matter of reducing the pressure by dialing each of the Spacers to their smallest dimension and just lifting them out. There's no chance of the edge boards being lifted, as happens sometimes with wedges.

The spacers are infinitely adjustable within their range (5 to 20mm), so they can be used to compensate for crooked walls. And the wide contact and support area avoids pressure points on both the flooring and the wall.

AV2s are lightweight, small, inexpensive, and your installer will very quickly let you know that they are also indispensable!



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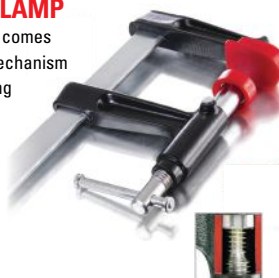
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AV2 Video



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Toggle Video



On customers and trends

Carmen strives to communicate effectively with clients when coordinating projects, keeping them fully informed through design and final installation.

Requests often start out with a simple kitchen and then expand to include entertainment centers, bars, home offices and libraries. The shop partners with other companies to include stair and millwork packages. If a client chooses another shop, Carmen charges \$1,500 for the use of his designs.

Style preferences have changed from traditional to contemporary, Carmen says. "Green construction is much more contemporary and we see a lot of that. Some people still want traditional. We do whatever anyone wants.

"One of my signatures is that I twist things. I turn things on angles to make spaces bigger. I just finished an entertainment center and the client wanted to know how I widened their house. I built it on an angle that protrudes into a space. But some people resist that. They like squares and rectangles. They don't always want change."

Keeping the doors open

During the last three years, the shop's backlog has dwindled from 18 to about six months.

Before the recession, the shop completed about 150 jobs a year and now averages about 36.

"If it weren't for the real estate income, we'd have been bankrupt," says Carmen. "I see other shops closing down and I can see why. They're paying the mortgages and other expenses with no other income than from their shop."



Justin Shomu in the shop's paint room.

Carmen refuses to take a job that won't turn a profit. That's just good business sense, he says. The truth is, Carmen could close the shop tomorrow and live comfortably, but he enjoys woodworking too much.

"It's not about the money anymore. I can stop now and rent the [shop] for more than I'm making, but I wouldn't have a place to

go to every day."

Carmen especially enjoys teaching young people who wouldn't otherwise have a chance to learn trade skills. He believes he can show them a career path just as Luigi did for him. He is bothered that many bright young men come to his shop with a technical degree, but can't even read a tape measure.

"They don't really learn anything. The schools just take their money. These kids all think they're going to go work as a carpenter for \$20 an hour and they can't even add fractions. Throughout the years I've taught about seven or eight guys to be just as good as me."

He says he will probably sell the business when he's ready to retire. Otherwise, he will shut down the operation and rent the space. Right now, he would prefer to expand operations, if possible.

"I would love to go back to more employees, but what comes first? The chicken or the egg? Do you hire more employees in anticipation of getting more work and then strap yourself of all of your available cash to pay guys while you're trying to bring in more work or try to bring in the work first.

"With the machinery here, we're trying to bring the work in first." **W**

Contact: Carmana Designs, 1715-19 McKean St. at Colorado Court, Philadelphia, PA 19145. Tel: 215-952-0133 www.carmanadesigns.com.

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ACTING vs. reacting

Bill Lensi's shop in Pennsylvania has built a steady business despite some bumpy economic conditions



BY JENNIFER HICKS /
STAFF WRITER

Bill Lensi, owner of MasterCraft Building & Millwork in Phoenixville, Pa., found his custom woodworking niche in the high-end residential remodeling sector shortly after establishing his company in 1987. He chose to solicit clients directly after getting burned by commercial builders.

"It's more work to work for the end user, actually less work for commercial people, but it just seems like they're the ones getting the custom work done. The contractors are always trying to cut corners here and there to get it done as cheaply as possible. Our niche is high quality and you just don't see the real high-quality stuff in commercial projects," says Lensi.

From pests to wood

Lensi first tried his hands as a business

PHOTO: JENNIFER HICKS



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The advertisement features a large image of a hand holding a yellow and black Mirka Ceros sander. Below the main text, there is a collection of items including a yellow toolbox, a power cord, a sanding disc, a box of Autonet, a box of Abranet, a sanding disc, and a black baseball cap with a logo.

owner in the pest-control industry in 1983 in a partnership with his brother. After several years, he decided he'd had enough and wanted to get into something he liked. Shortly thereafter, MasterCraft was born. The first shop was located in Kimberton, Pa., in a basement of an antique shop owned by his parents. He brought a partner in and got the business off the ground, but when the economy went south in the late 1980s, the partnership dissolved and Lensi continued on his own.

"[My partner] went in another direction because we had been burned by three different builders who were hit with the recession in '87. We got burned for \$25,000 and couldn't pay our bills. I told him I'd absorb everything and I acquired all of the equipment — everything."

After paying his debts, he decided to turn down any further work orders from builders and cater strictly to clients who contacted him directly for residential work and smaller commercial jobs. Formal training wasn't required

because a number of unique custom requests forced him to learn on his own. He began hiring employees as his workload grew.

"I tried to get the most skilled people I could. I taught them what I knew and through other people made a lot of contacts in the business and moved from there."

Early projects for builders included general casework, frameless cabinets and laminate tops. But in deciding not to rely on those

continued on next page

BILL LENS I

Owner of: MasterCraft Building & Millwork

Location: Phoenixville, Pa.

Shop size: 3,800 sq. ft.

About: Two-man shop has been serving high-end clients within an hour's drive for more than 20 years. Projects range from kitchens and baths to custom libraries and bars.

Annual gross: \$400,000



Lensi favors residential work.

PHOTO: JENNIFER HICKS (LEFT)



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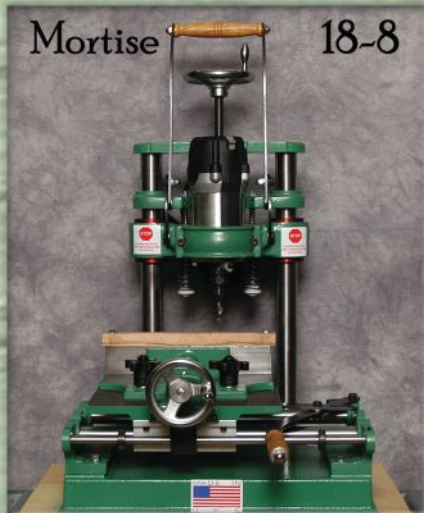
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ACTING from previous page

sources any longer, he had to take what he could get. It took a lot of legwork, but he slowly built a clientele.

"I did everything from knocking door to door to advertising in the Yellow Pages to making contacts in different areas and getting referrals. Almost everything from then on has been referral work."

By 1996, the company had reached its peak in size with six employees and the following year Lensi rented his current 3,800-sq.-ft. shop. By 2000, he realized it was time to scale back.

"I figured out things really worked the best with four employees. We did more business with four than with six. Six was too much for



me here and it just didn't work out. You were constantly chasing your tail, fixing this or that. Whether it's my management style or what, I couldn't keep things how I wanted them. I'm real fussy how things are done. Our most comfortable level was four when we did \$750,000."

Lensi first felt the effects of the economic downturn in 2008, but did well until last year when he had to lay off several employees because business slowed considerably. He held on to his one long-term employee, David Furlong, who's been with him for 18 years and whom he describes as one of the most competent cabinetmakers he knows. Despite the small crew, the company is looking at a year-end gross of about \$400,000.

Local clients, high-end jobs

About 80 percent of clients are within 50 miles of the shop, residing in Montgomery and Chester counties. The remaining 20 percent are within 150 miles. He's had lucrative jobs in Princeton and Avalon, N.J. There was another in New York that he'd rather purge from his memory.

"I had a job in New York City once. It cost so much to get the job into the building. It was a nightmare; it was nuts. I didn't know the ins and outs of the city, like getting the truck parked."

While the majority of work is in the high-end residential sector and he is still reserved about commercial work from that bad experience in the 1980s, Lensi will bend every now and then.

"We do some commercial work for a few customers and we usually bail them out when other people screw stuff up. These are usually banks and restaurants, when their millwork company can't make it on time."

Shop and services

The scope of services is broad given the size of the operation. The fact that his clients are wealthy spurs elaborate project requests. They include custom doorways and entryways, raised-panel wainscot libraries, coffered ceilings, mantle surrounds, entertainment centers, theaters and many home bars.

Lensi does all of his drafting by hand. His clients favor traditional designs, so almost every cabinet project features beaded inset frames. Finishing preferences are a 50-50 split between painted and glazed-over stain. He sees color contrasting in rooms becoming a more prevalent trend, usually something like a very light maple-stained kitchen with a dark-painted or stained island.

"We do a lot of work in cherry and maple. Maple has been at a good price point for a long time."

The company occasionally out-sources finishing, but it is mostly done in-house.

Shop equipment includes a Casolin sliding panel saw; General table saw; Bridgewood jointer, wide belt sander, shaper and edge sander; Grizzly planer; Ingersol Rand air compressor, Morso miter machine for beaded face frames; Kreg pocket hole machine; Agazzini band saw; Delta Unisaw and radial arm saw; Detel M-13 line borer; Shop Fox mold-er, and three Hitachi sliding miter saws.

Handling the economy

Like other woodworkers trying to make a decent living, Lensi is appalled by the under-bidding going on by his desperate competitors. He calls it a prescription for disaster.

"Other shops are so behind they'll do anything for cash flow. Which means instead of folding up now, they will fold up down the road. My opinion of this economic slowdown is that it's weeded out a lot of the wildcard smaller guys that used to undercut and put in subpar projects."

Poor business decisions by of other shop owners have actually helped Lensi succeed. He stayed lean and mean while others gave in to their clients' low-budget demands just to get the job. He sticks to his guns on pricing. Customers have tried to talk him down and, after unsuccessfully calling his bluff, returned to accept the initial price. He also declines offers for trades, which he gets quite frequently. Once, in lieu of the balance on a project, he accepted a client's promise for several thousand dollars in advertising that he never received.

Since 2008, Lensi's backlog has remained at four to six weeks, but every now and then drops off.

"One thing about this economy is that it's taken all the consistency out of anything and that's why we handle things the way we handle things. We just blitz through stuff when we get it so we're prepared for the next thing."

When business was at its worst about a year ago, he reduced his employee count to one to remain in the game. He also tolerates working in a dated building with an unstable floor because the rent is cheap. Above all, he works to exhaustion when given the opportunity.

"I just got done working 40 straight days and I'd bet 35 of them were 12-hour days to get that project done as fast as possible. We took a couple days off after that."

"We will prevail. When things turn around, we're in a great position. Everything's paid for — the truck, the trailer, the equipment. I don't owe anybody any money and that's how we're going to make it. We haven't buried ourselves in debt."

While other cabinet shops are doing well in the area, Lensi does not consider them to be threats because they offer different services.

Lensi says his recipe for getting through the tough times will be to seek out the right customers and give them exceptional work, while screening out the problem customers.



David Furlong and Lensi

"There are still some healthy customers out there. One of my clients in Princeton who just spent \$50,000 on his basement works on Wall Street. Hopefully his boss or co-workers will want some of my work so they can brag to each other. I want my millionaire to be happier than someone else's."

Down the road

Lensi has big plans to build a new shop in a nearby location when the timing is right. He currently shares a showroom with other artists in Worcester, Pa., and wants to put a showroom in his new building. He will also build an inventory of stock cabinets to keep his prices low. If he hires anyone at all, it will be a marketing professional.

Woodworking education is important to Lensi and he is considering starting a school after getting his new shop where he can teach the basics such as hand tool use and joinery techniques. Right now, he donates time every other month at the local Cat Pickering School of Art and shares his business experiences with instructors to help them steer their students in the right direction.

"I go over all of their projects and they ask me what I think of the curriculum and what I would recommend for them to teach in the future to better prepare these kids when they go out to find a job and what equipment I would recommend for the future. They're just looking for advice. They want a professional to look at procedures. That's been a real rewarding thing for me to do."

In the big picture, Lensi just wants to be financially comfortable. He will hang in there as long as it takes because he enjoys the satisfaction of a job done well and simply making customers happy.

"When you see a project start on a piece of paper and then it goes into the house perfectly, it's amazing."

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A CUT ABOVE



When speed and precision are needed for your projects, laser technology can keep you on the cutting edge



By John English

When I began learning how to build cabinets 30-plus years ago, we still worked off hand-drawn blueprints and the only way to show a client what a job might look like was to jump in the car and visit a previous job. Now, technology can create a 3-D walkthrough of a kitchen that doesn't even exist yet and the cabinetmaker can rotate shop drawings through three axes on a screen, just to get a better understanding of the joinery before he makes a cut.

Commercially viable lasers have been with us even longer than design software, although they are not as universally present in woodshops. The perception once was that they were an expensive investment that wouldn't attract enough work to justify the price tag. But subtle changes in both attitudes and cost have gradually taken place during the last couple of decades. Lasers have withstood the test of time and, as with most technology, they have become more complicated internally, but at the same time easier to use.

An outsourced option

Perhaps the most significant change is that the investment no longer has to be made in-house. Small businesses all across the coun-

try (many of them originally woodshops themselves) now specialize in cutting parts and engraving designs in wood by using lasers. Being able to outsource these tasks has created a new opportunity for woodshops. They can offer the added value of engraved panels, intricately cut fretwork and decorative moldings without having to invest in a laser and the time to train an operator.

One such resource is **Laser Tech** in Buford, Ga. (www.lasertechatlanta.com). "We can

"One big advantage to having us make parts is that they come with a high-quality edge, so you don't have to sand. We can also handle very intricate details and we can also nest your parts (cutting several at a time) to save you material.

"Our laser cutting is also extremely accurate", Nowak adds. "Parts are delivered with tolerances to plus-or-minus .001" and we can set up a test cut on critical parts and produce a prototype before making the run."

Laser Tech operates four laser systems from 25 watts to a massive 2,200 watts (capable of cutting steel) and tables that can handle work up to 4' x 8'. There are thousands of other shops across the U.S., most of them offering fewer options than this, but still capable of meeting almost any woodshop request. For small woodshops or smaller jobs, outsourcing is an obvious option and this aspect of the laser industry is most definitely changing some practices of the woodshop industry.



cut parts in most wood species up to about an inch-and-a-half in thickness," says owner Chris Nowak. "The process starts with something as simple as a print, a drawing, DXF or DWG file, or several other formats. We work in solid wood, plywood, MDF and lots of other composites.

Taking it in-house

For companies considering bringing a laser in-house, the two biggest variables when choosing a model are table size and wattage. It's not so much a question of which machine has the most power, but rather of being able to match the size of the laser to the task at hand. For example, **Universal Laser Systems** in Scottsdale, Ariz., markets 12 different models on its website (www.ulsinc.com).

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF LASER TECH (CLOCK), EPILOG LASER

These range from a 16" x 12" table that supports one of three lasers beginning at 10 watts (model VLS2.30), to a 48" x 24" unit that can be equipped with up to 150 watts of laser power (ILS12.75). When one considers the size of most kitchen door panels, that latter platform is far more than most shops will ever need.

Epilog Laser (www.epiloglaser.com) in Golden, Colo., also offers several distinct lines of lasers. The Zing Starter Series is ideal for shops just exploring their options because it doesn't require a huge investment, but it still offers the ability to engrave and cut a wide variety of material, including wood. Their Legend Elite Series can engrave with exceptional detail (up to 1,200 dpi) and offers more power (and thus more speed) than the entry-level models. And their FiberMark Industrial Series can even add bar codes to parts, work on material up to 5" thick by 12" wide and 24" long and do so at remarkable speeds.

Even the smallest model can change a woodworking business because it allows the shop to offer more choices to customers. But the larger units can change not just what the woodshop offers, but also how it manufactures.

Instead of buying in fretwork moldings and accents such as thin corbels or shelf brackets, these parts can be made in your shop.

A versatile tool

There are several reasons why lasers have

stayed with us and are gradually becoming a larger part of what we do. They can cut, mill, engrave and shape thin parts without the shop having to sharpen steel or carbide cutters, periodically replace bits and knives, train a cabinetmaker to sharpen in-house or pay for a sharpening service to do the job. Their repeatability is an enormously valuable tool, allowing shops to create themed décor, such as wildlife depictions through the rooms at a fishing resort or placing a company logo on the door of every office in a building.

Milling small parts that are precisely the same dimensions is a boon to woodshop customers as diverse as advertising specialties suppliers (who often provide small hand-out gifts at conferences, trade shows, etc.) to the makers of wooden automotive accents and even knockdown furniture. Anywhere that wood parts need to fit precisely with other materials, laser cutting is now an option. A shop can also offer a client the option of decorating the part that's being cut with an image, which is another way to create added value, strengthen the bottom line and expand the woodworking business.

continued on next page



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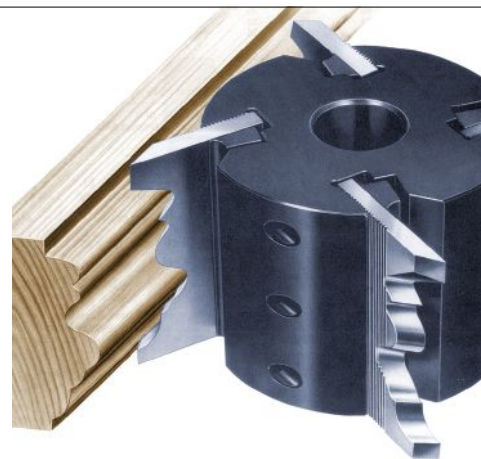
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There are some things a laser can do that traditional tooling just can't handle.

"A CNC machine with even the smallest cutter installed will leave a slight radius on a corner," says Steve Cortesy of **Cutting Edge Systems** (www.cuttingedgesystems.com) in Costa Mesa, Calif. "A laser can cut a square corner. That kind of versatility is essential in many specialty woodworking operations such as model airplane and railroad manufacturing or shops that build scale models of buildings for architects."

Cutting Edge Systems distributes and supports Epilog laser systems. Some of their cabinet-shop clients are now using lasers to engrave a company logo inside drawers and doors as a mark of craftsmanship. The idea is based on the paper tags that furniture builders used to paste on the backs of bedroom sets or the bottoms of dining room tables a century ago.

"Another application," says Cortesy, "is to use a laser to cut a very precise version of a part in acrylic and then this can be used as a template to route multiple copies of parts in wood, using a bearing-guided bit. A shop can use this technique to create a huge variety of templates to mark and cut various radii or to make matching parts such as chair rockers or to rout designs on veneered MDF panels, for example.



"Our woodworking clients have also used lasers to create acrylic templates to accurately match historic moldings for restoration projects. One of these masters can then be used to create sets of molding knives and, as the original template is not subject to wear, it can be used down the road to re-create the knives when, for example, a building is expanded and the same moldings are being used to continue a theme."

There's no limit

About five miles northwest of the Strip in Las Vegas, Ken Nelson has created an unusu-

al woodworking business that combines his love of turning with the artistic use of lasers. **Kallenshaan Woods** (www.kallenshaanwoods.com) provides laser-cut wood inlay kits for pen makers. They offer kits that allow pen turners to include images of just about everything from shamrocks to dog breeds to winemaking themes on the barrels of writing instruments. The company also makes key chains, plaques, business-card holders, pen cases and other items. But the idea of offering highly accurate and detailed engraving services to turners has, well, turned a lot of heads. Nelson is typical of people who combine the craft of woodworking with the art that can be created with a laser.

"I'm a woodworker by trade," he says, "and I try to stay within the wood arena while using the laser. But I keep coming up with new and interesting things to do with the system."

Nelson used his laser to make a jig that allowed him to equally space a design around a pen so he could use an indexing system to engrave the entire 360 degrees in increments (usually about 14) and have the ends match up perfectly. That kind of ingenuity allowed him to use the laser to change the very nature of his business — and he's not alone. Lasers are changing not only how woodworkers work, but also how they think. And they're certainly taking us a long way from hand-drawn blueprints. **W**

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Maruyama exhibit focuses on internment

The Society of Arts and Crafts hosted the national exhibit, "Wendy Maruyama: Executive Order 9066," from Sept. 8 to Nov. 3 at its exhibition gallery in Boston.

The exhibit featured distinct work that is based on the historically significant date of Feb. 19, 1942, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the internment of 120,000 American citizens and resident aliens in Japan. They were told to pack what they could carry and were forcibly relocated to one of 10 camps set up by the government in states throughout the country.

Maruyama, a third generation Japanese-American, was deeply affected by this history and has created a body of work that reflects on this period.

The exhibition is composed of three integrated elements: a series of wall-mounted sculptural cabinets, 10 sculptures created from replicas of the paper ID tags that internees were made to wear — one of which will be exhibited at SAC — and a selection of objects that were used or made by people interned in the camps.



Maruyama's cabinet, "ID", is made of pine and features replicas of the paper tags that internees wore during World War II; "Watchtower" features pine, sitka spruce, fir, ink, painted wood bowls and glass.

PHOTOS: NICK WU; KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI (FROM LEFT)

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The exhibit will travel to Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock, Ar.; Arizona State University Art Museum in Tempe, Ariz.; San Jose Institute of

Contemporary Art in San Jose, Calif., and Museum of Craft and Design in San Francisco, Calif.

Granite State happenings

The New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association hosted an afternoon with the masters Aug. 12 at Castle in the Clouds in Moultonborough, N.H. The event featured presentations from seven of the group's furniture masters and two guest artists. Guests were invited to chat with the masters and examine their works more closely.

Presenting masters included Aurelio Bolognesi, Jeffrey Cooper, Tom McLaughlin, Terry Moore, Richard Oedel, Jeff Roberts, and Brian Sargent. The guest artists were Matt Wadja and Bruce Eaton.

The association also held the exhibit "Unique Furniture with Style" Aug. 22-Sept. 19 at the New Hampshire Historical Society's library in Concord, N.H. It featured recent work by 14 select members, one guest artist, three emerging artists and two participants in the guild's prison outreach program.

Contacts

New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association. www.furnituremasters.org

Society of Arts & Crafts, 175 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116. Tel: 617-266-1810. www.societyofcrafts.org [W](#)



John Cameron's "Crane Chairs" made of white oak were featured in August at the New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association's Castle in the Clouds event.

PHOTO: BILL TRUSLOW

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The complete national calendar of events is updated monthly at www.woodshopnews.com.

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

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Feb. 1-3, 2013 — The Woodworking Show at the Merchandise Mart in Denver. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

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Ongoing — The Dunedin Fine Art Center is offering six-week woodturning classes at its Cottage Campus taught by AAW professional member Tony Marsh for beginners and intermediate-level participants. Full day classes are held on Thursdays. Call 727-298-3322 or e-mail education@dfac.org for information.

IDAHO

Feb. 23-24, 2013 — The 2013 Idaho Artistry in Wood Show invites competitors from all skill levels to submit their wood carving, turning, scroll

work and fine wood working for display and judging. Demonstrations, vendors, raffles, auction and the opportunity for artists to sell their work. Location: Boise Hotel and Conference Center in Boise. Contact: www.idahoartistryinwood.org

INDIANA

Jan. 18-20, 2013 — The Woodworking Show at the Indiana State Fairgrounds in Indianapolis. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

KANSAS

Jan. 25-27, 2013 — The Woodworking Show at the International Trade Center in Overland Park. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

MARYLAND

Jan. 4-6, 2013 — The Woodworking Show at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

MASSACHUSETTS

Nov. 16-18 — Five-Day Intermediate Wood Carving Classes with David Calvo. David Calvo Studio, 186 East Main St., Gloucester, MA 01930. Tel: 978-283-0231. www.calvostudio.com

Nov. 16-18 — Paradise City Marlborough. Furniture and accessories from 175 craft designers and artists will be exhibited for sale. Location: Royal Plaza Trade Center, Marlborough. www.paradisecityarts.com

Jan. 11-13, 2013 — The Woodworking Show at the Eastern States Exposition in West Springfield. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

RHODE ISLAND

Nov. 2-4 — Providence Fine Furnishings & Fine Craft Show. Pawtucket Armory Arts Center, Pawtucket. www.finefurnishingshows.com

Nov. 29-Dec. 2, Dec. 7-9 — Foundry Artists Holiday Show. Join 65 talented artists showcasing their work at this 30th annual fine art and craft show. Location: Pawtucket Armory Arts Center, Pawtucket. www.foundryshow.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Nov. 17 — One-Day Bowl Turning Class. Offered three days this fall, participants will work in kiln-dried maple or cherry. Location: Arts & Learning Center, Belle Fourche. www.clccommed.org

TEXAS

Nov. 8-Dec. 8 — 13th annual Texas Furniture Makers Show at the Kerr Arts and Cultural Center in Kerrville, Texas. This juried exhibition is a statewide competition featuring handcrafted pieces by the best custom furniture makers in Texas and is co-sponsored by Woodcraft retail chain. Admission is free. For information, call 830-895-2911 or visit www.texasfurnituremakersshow.com 



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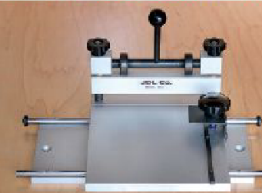
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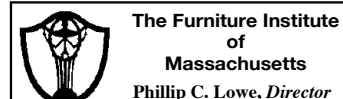
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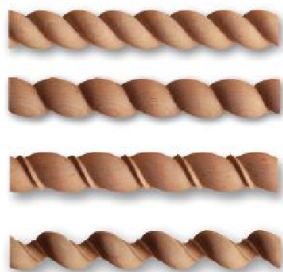


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Crafting for a cause

In the eyes of many retirees at the Ahwatukee Retirement Village in Phoenix, woodworking is more than just a way to pass the time.

The village has about 1,600 homes with about 3,000 residents. As part of its recreational programming, it offers a woodworking club that currently has about 100 regular members. Many of these individuals are part of the group's Sunshine Club, which focuses on creating projects for numerous charitable organizations throughout the city's metropolitan area.

Program coordinator Tom Rosenthal makes sure that one day per week is dedicated to charitable efforts.

"A lot of the people here enjoy woodworking. We have a woodshop to die for. We're open during the regular year and guys come in and build all kinds of projects, from turnings to furniture. It's quite a diverse group that we have. But on Thursday mornings you can't work on your own projects. You can only work on what we call our Sunshine Projects and we do projects for local charities," says Rosenthal.

Sunshine Projects include toys, bookcases, keepsake frames and more for churches, schools, hospitals and other entities and groups. Each year, for example, his group makes hundreds of frames for the water safety program at Phoenix



Members of the Sunshine Club spend their Thursdays making projects for local charities.

Children's Hospital that awards certificates to its participants. The members also spend lots of time making toys for children at the hospital and it's one of their favorite projects.

"Right now I think the biggest charity that we're working for would be the Phoenix Children's Hospital. What we do is we make all kinds of toys from cribs for girls to planes for boys to puzzles for whoever wants them. You name it, we make it. We sand them, but we don't paint them. As part of their recuperation, these kids get to paint the toys and then take them home."

Rosenthal networks with charitable organizations throughout the week to make sure

participants have enough work when members walk in on Thursdays. He says if there is not enough work, the enthusiastic volunteers get discouraged.

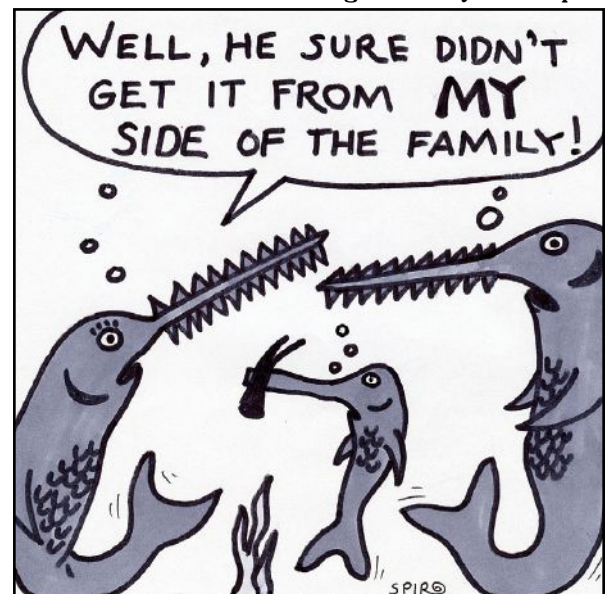
"Thursday morning is when we really get the largest group of members coming out. It's the busiest morning of the week. It's almost like a production factory with every band saw, scroll saw and table saw in use. Some guys get going on projects and they work all week long on them. I've got one guy here who gets going on projects and doesn't stop. He comes in every day and continues to make the toys."

—Jennifer Hicks



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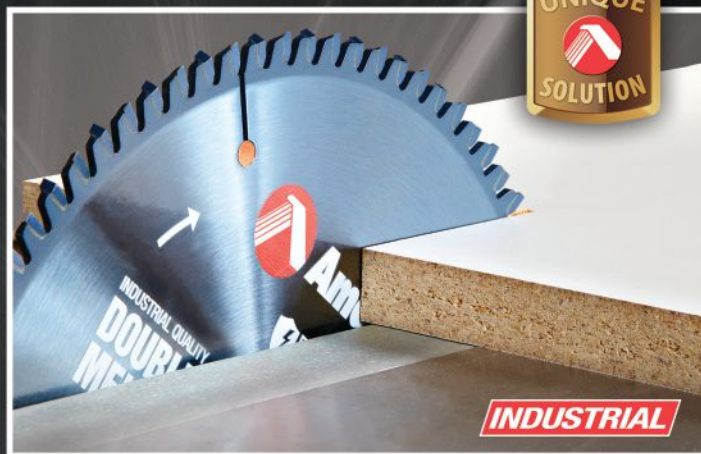
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