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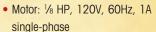
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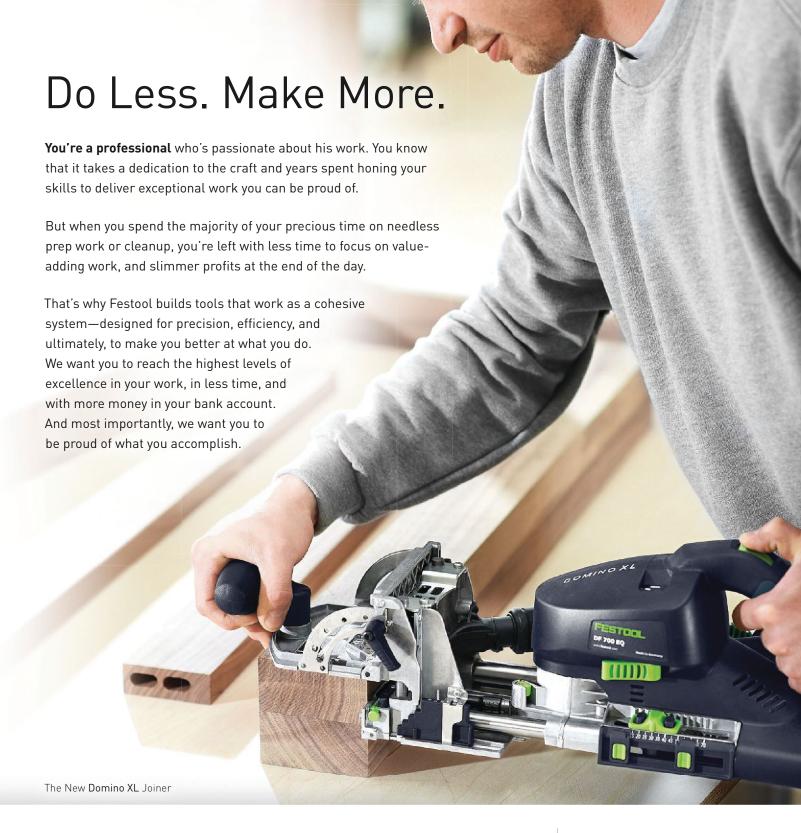
The housing market is starting to grow again, which means that woodworking and cabinet making will follow. It's going to be a new economy for woodworkers — built around new business and manufacturing technologies. ShopBot is the go-to resource for integrating digital processes into your shop — here's why:

- We were the first. In 1996, we introduced the world to agile CNC tools that are affordable for every shop. Thanks to ShopBot's award-winning tools, there's no need for you to invest in expensive, big-iron tools to go digital.
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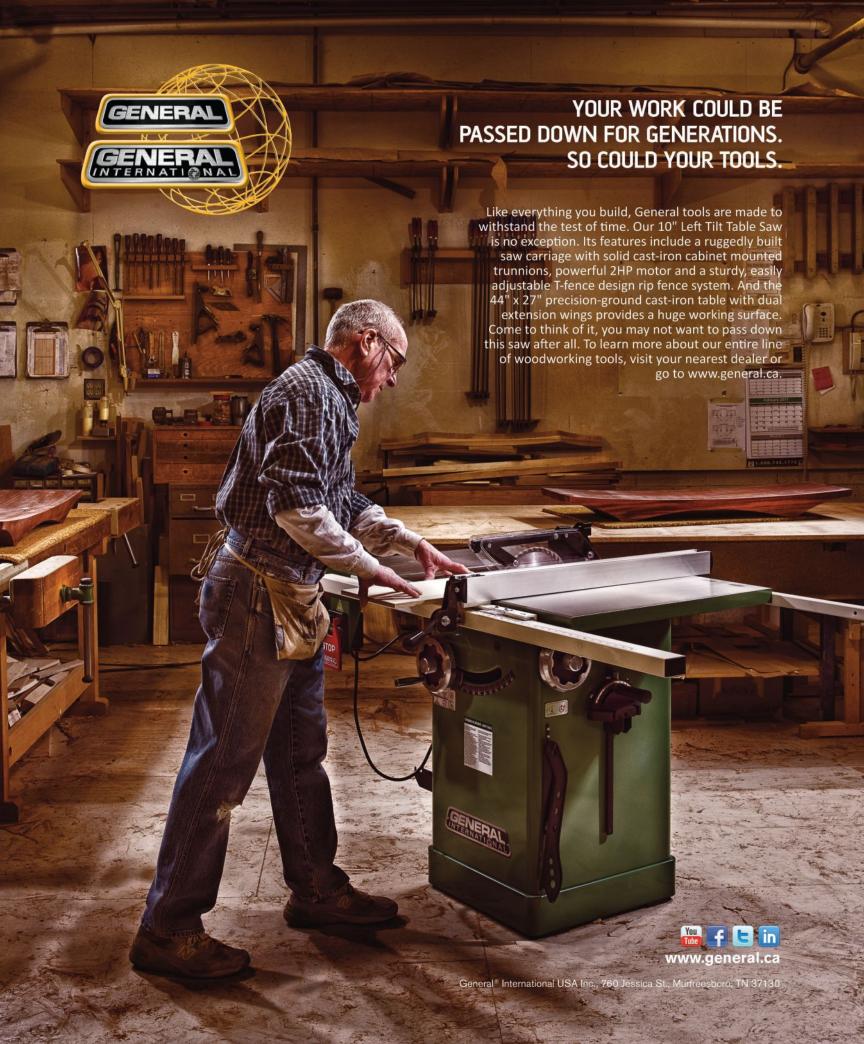


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Blogs



Over the Workbench Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler



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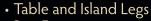
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Creating Cash-flow For Small Shops

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 twoman) 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-BUNK-BED 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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TAKING STOCK

with TOD RIGGIO

CMA study gives a glimpse at how shops are evolving

e used to ask our profile subjects, as a matter of practice, about their most indispensable tool. The answers ranged from a card scraper or router to a CNC machine and Woodshop News (shameless plug, I know, but I really like my paycheck). My other favorite answer was involvement with a guild or association. Of course, membership isn't a physical tool used in the shop, but the benefits of networking with your peers, educational opportunities and the band of brotherhood shouldn't be overlooked.

There are several outstanding organizations that cater to the needs of smaller shops, such as The Furniture Society. On Page 14, you can learn about the group's upcoming symposium in Los Angeles, which I'll endorse as certainly worth your while to attend. But while that group exists mostly for studio furniture makers, the Cabinet Makers Association targets the sweet spot of the Woodshop News audience — small- to medium-sized custom and production furniture, cabinet and architectural millwork shops.

The CMA holds regional chapter events and educational seminars at the major trade shows, produces a quarterly print publication, Profiles, and a monthly e-newsletter. It has recently developed a professional certification program to acknowledge the skill, integrity and business acumen of its most deserving members.

Another example of CMA's benefits is the Benchmark Study, an annual survey of members and non-members that documents industry practices and provides a better understanding of what is and isn't driving business growth among professional woodworkers.

The CMA has provided a summary of its 2013 study (the full report was scheduled for release in February, after deadline).

Here's what I found most interesting:

- Survey participants were predominantly from smaller shops, with two-thirds (67.9 percent) representing shops with revenues of less than \$1 million; and nearly half (46.8 percent) working out of 5,000 sq. ft. or less of space. Most (66.8 percent) employed fewer than eight workers.
- Most (76.6 percent) shops have no dedicated marketing budget, instead relying on referrals from customers and business associates such as contractors and designers as their top source of qualified leads, mentioned by 95.3 percent of respondents.
- Only one in four respondents (24.9 percent) reported having a full- or part-time resource dedicated to sales. The bigger shops tend to employ dedicated sales staffs, while those with revenues below \$1 million tend to use part-timers or outside reps.
- Four out of five shops (81 percent) billing more than \$1 million report having CNC equipment, compared to only one third (34.5 percent) of smaller shops.
- Smaller shops those under \$1 million
 — were twice as likely to report sales declines in 2012 compared to their larger colleagues, with 13.2 percent of smaller shops reporting lower sales last year and 7.9 percent among larger shops. The good news is that both groups had a better year last year than the year before.
- Shops with showrooms outperformed their counterparts slightly, with 58 percent of showroom shops indicating sales increases vs. 51.3 percent of non-showroom operations. Those with showrooms usually host them in the same location as their shops (90.7 percent) rather than in remote locations.

For more information, visit www.cabinet makers.org. W

NEWS DESK

Cleveland community shop takes off

Custom furniture maker offers his equipment and expertise to the public for monthly or pay-as-you-go fees

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

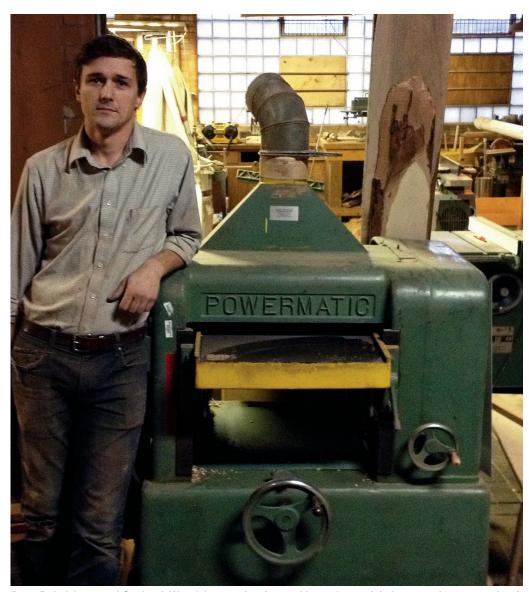
fter making the career change from lawyer to professional furniture maker, Peter Debelak decided to test his entrepreneurial skills as well. Last July, he opened the doors to Soulcraft Woodshop in Cleveland, a community woodworking shop that allows locals to rent shop space and equipment to suit their individual project needs.

A former labor law attorney, Debelak says his career in the legal world was so frustrating it forced him to focus on his true passion.

"I guess you could say I'm a recovering lawyer. I've been working with wood for the last 15 years and as a moneymaking hobbyist for about five years. Two years ago I started making furniture full-time. Then a colleague of mine, Jim McNaughton, and I both independently had the idea to set up a community woodshop where the public can access the equipment. It's kind of like a fitness club where you get a monthly membership and can use all the equipment and take classes," says Debelak.

With the help of McNaughton as a co-owner, Debelak rented out a space already used by a host of other artists in a 300,000-sq.-ft. converted meat factory in the outskirts of the city. The two started acquiring tools and work tables, purchasing some of them new while others were donated by local high school shops and retiring woodworkers.

A monthly membership pass sells for \$120, while a pay-as-you-go pass to complete an individual project starts at \$50. The shop currently has six fulltime members and has had about 30 patrons through its doors in varying capacities. Debelak enjoys being able to continue to run his business as a custom furniture



Peter Debelak opened Soulcraft Woodshop to give those without shops of their own a chance to unleash their creativity.

maker, while tending to those in the shop who rely on his expertise.

"I still make and sell my own furniture out of this shop. The community shop covers all the bills here and it's created a great environment. I love being in a space where there's constantly creative energy with people trying to bring their ideas to fruition. It's not purely about just tool access. I walk around the shop a lot and help people move to the next stage of their projects."

The owners offer various classes and tutorials when they get enough interest from their

members, and in the process of scheduling regular furniture making and other miscellaneous woodworking classes. He adds that he and McNaughton see the venture as lucrative and promising, as there's not much in the way of competition.

"There are a couple of places around that teach classes, but nothing major. No other place allows people access to work on their own projects."

Contact: Soulcraft Woodshop, 3619 Walton Ave., Cleveland, OH 44113. Tel: 216-644-0955. http://soulcraftwoodshop.com w



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Arbor speed: 3850 RPM

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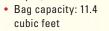


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3 GREAT SHOWROOMS! BELLINGHAM, WA · MUNCY, PA · SPRINGFIELD, MO

ShopBot hires new director of education

Randy Johnson was recently hired by ShopBot Tools to be involved with project-oriented education in U.S. schools

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

hopBot Tools hired Randy Johnson, former editor-in-chief of American Woodworker magazine, as its director of education.

A newly created position, Johnson's role will be to provide educators with practical advice and information to the communities of ShopBot's 100kGarages.com and 100kSchools.org.

100kGarages.com is an online community where people with ideas for custom products connect with digital fabricators. 100kSchools.org is a new educational initiative that was launched in January and will serve a similar function by connecting teachers with resources. Johnson says he's looking forward to working with CNC and digital fabrication issues as applied to schools.

"I will be working with schools and small businesses to help them adapt digital technologies and develop CNC-based projects and



develop curriculums to help them adapt the technologies in their classrooms. I'll be traveling quite extensively to meet with teachers and educational leaders around the country," Johnson says.

ShopBot CEO Ted Hall says the CNC manufacturer picked Johnson because of his enthusiasm for digital fabrication and inter-

est in using it to enhance woodworking education.

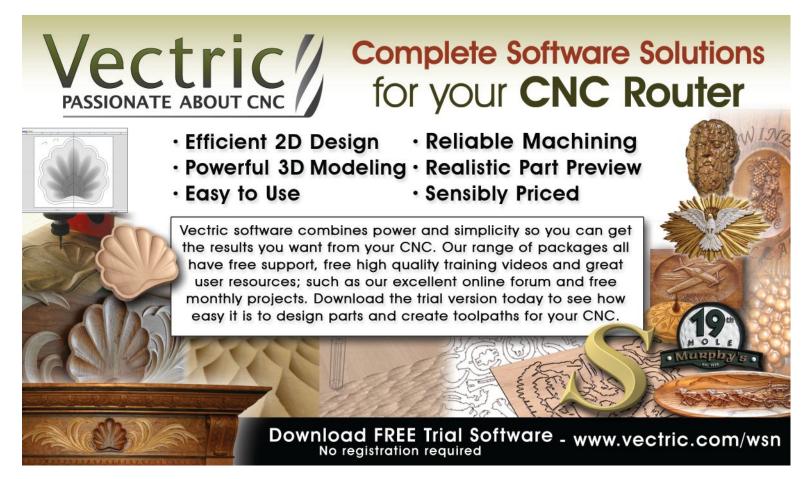
"Randy has been creating industry-leading articles on CNC and digital fabrication, his background and interests are in education and he's always made an effort to reach out to schools so he's kind of a natural for us," says Hall.

Hall adds that Johnson has also been involved with organizing and contributing content to the new 100kSchools.org program so that it reaches beyond existing ShopBot customers.

"We've had educational supports on our website for a long time. We've offered training and we've worked with schools,

but it's all been exclusively ShopBot-oriented and we felt like we could make a contribution to the community by essentially creating a 100kschools.org website that offers digital fabrication resources to teachers and educators."

Contact: ShopBot Tools Inc., 3333 Industrial Dr., Durham, NC 27704. Tel: 888-680-4466. www.shopbottools.com





Furniture Society seminars head to L.A.

Three-day event in June will focus on the city's design culture and include factory and studio tours



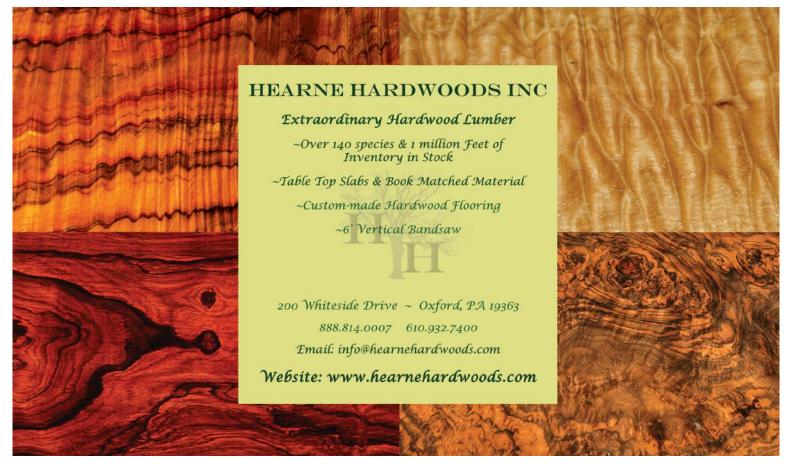
By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITEF

his year, the leaders of The Furniture Society have decided to deviate from their traditional conference format and instead hold a smaller seminar-style program. The FS2013: Los Angeles Symposium will be held June 20-23 at the L.A. Mart Design Center in Los Angeles. The three-day event unites leading furniture makers, design thinkers and curators from across the country for an ambitious roster of lectures, factory and studio tours and exhibitions.

Society vice president Steffanie Dotson says the focus of the conference will be to harness the energy of L.A.'s design culture to explore critical issues such as mass production, sustainability, innovation and creative business practices. The turnout is currently expected to be around 300 individuals, including both society members and non-members. She emphasizes that attending will be worth everyone's time.

"It's always good to see what's coming on the horizon. There are lots of changes going on in



the furniture world with all of the new technology with CNC and sharing about how people are streamlining their businesses, so it's informational and always inspirational," she says.

While typical conferences offer a host of hands on workshops and technique demonstrations, this year's will be limited to panel-type demonstrations because of space constraints at the chosen venue.

"We don't have access to any equipped woodshop spaces there, so we thought we'd go more of the design route. The symposium is going to focus heavily on design, talking about manufacturing and limited production marketing and public relations. We're also taking a look at very interesting business models that makers and designers have, and come up with clever ways that they've been able to make it through the economy and make their businesses successful."

In addition to the programming scheduled for registrants, the symposium is offering a number of programs to the public, including a series of exhibitions exploring the intersection of furniture design and contemporary life; Up-Cycle, a design challenge giving furniture makers a day to transform a pile of scrap and surplus material into a table, a chair and a household item; a curated exhibition highlighting student work, as well a series of tours to culturally significant locations in the L.A. vicinity.

The society is a non-profit, educational organization with the mission to advance the art of furniture making by inspiring creativity, promoting excellence and fostering an understanding of this art and its place in society.

Contact: The Furniture Society, 111 Grovewood Road, Asheville, NC 28804. Tel: 828-255-1949. www.furnituresociety.org

Turn-a-thon generates 10,000-plus pens

Woodcraft's ninth annual Turn for Troops turn-a-thon, held on Veterans Day weekend, produced 10,678 wooden pens for American service personnel on active duty and in rehabilitation facilities.

The turn-a-thon began in 2004. The volunteer effort, held at Woodcraft stores across the country, has produced a total of nearly 100,000 pens, according to the company.

For information, visit www.woodcraft.com.

Dates set for 2013 Fine Furnishings Shows

The schedule for the 2013 Fine Furnishings Shows, produced by KL Communications, in Maryland, Milwaukee and Pawtucket, R.I., has been announced.

The fifth annual mid-Atlantic region show will be held May 3-5 at the Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium, Md.

The eighth annual Midwest region show will be held Oct. 4-6 at The Garage at the Harley-Davidson Museum in Milwaukee.

The 18th annual New England region show will be held Nov. 1-3 at the Pawtucket Armory Arts Center in Pawtucket.

The Fine Furnishings Shows bring a talented mix of furniture makers and artists from across North America to each show location. The shows offer attendees the opportunity to buy, order, or commission handcrafted furniture, accessories, fine art, and craft in a variety of styles from a wide range of exhibitors.

For information, visit www.finefurnishings shows.com.



JOOLS VIECHNIQUES

DeWalt miter saw focuses on accuracy

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

eWalt's new 12" sliding compound miter saw, model DWS780, is loaded with features designed for improved accuracy, durability and portability, according to the company.

Ideal for cabinetmakers, trim carpenters, framers, installers and professional contractors, this multipurpose saw steers clear of the trendy bells and whistles in favor of the attributes that professionals demand for day-in, day-out job-site use.

"This is a high-end product for someone doing lots of different applications. That's a unique thing about a sliding miter saw. It gives you a great deal of crosscut capacity, while also giving you the ability to do a wide range of crown moldings and base moldings, so it's really a diverse saw," product manager Michael Boie says.

The saw features LED lighting and a cut alignment system that casts a laser-like shadow on the work surface, showing users where the blade will come in contact with material. Since it does not require recalibration over time or when changing blades, the alignment system can be more accurate and durable than traditional laser guides, according to Boie.

"The challenge with lasers in the past has been, as these saws get carried around from job to job or they get a kickback, that they will be knocked out of accuracy. This light system will always give you a shadow line every time and you don't have to worry about this light getting out of alignment," Boie says.

The saw also features a dual bevel system that includes the ability to bevel right and left from 0 to 49 degrees with positive stops at 0, 22.5, 33.9, 45 and 49 degrees in both directions, as well as a high-visibility bevel scale. The saw also miters 60 degrees to the right and 50 degrees to the left and features a miter detent plate with 10 positive stops, allowing for fast and easy adjustments. A cam lock miter button allows users to lock angles between detents for versatility on the job site.

The saw's 15-amp motor delivers 3,800 rpm. It offers a 6-3/4" vertical capacity, 7-1/2" nested crown capacity, 13-7/8" horizontal capacity and exclusive back fence design that cuts up to a 2x16 at a 90-degree angle and 2x12 at a 45-degree angle. The built-in dust collection system collects more than 75 percent of dust generated in the included bag, according to DeWalt.

The saw weighs 56 lbs., folds to a compact size and retails for \$599. Several stands are also available.

Contact: DeWalt. Tel: 800-433-9258. www. dewalt.com



DeWalt's 12" sliding compound miter saw, model DWS780 and rolling stand, model DWX726, that folds up for easy transport.



Makita sander has one-touch switch control

Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

akita introduced its new 18-volt LXT lithium-ion 5" random orbit sander, model LXOB01, to expand its lineup of more than 50 compact cordless tools. The tool's run time, versatility and superior economics make it ideal for carpenters, cabinetmakers, furniture builders, refinishers, boatbuilders and more, says the company.

The tool features three speed settings (7,000, 9,500, and 11,000 opm) that are easily changed with a one-touch electronic control switch. The sander will run up to 40 minutes at the low speed setting and up to 20 minutes on high speed on a single battery charge, says product manager Joe Soto.

"With three speed settings, superior ergonomics and up to 40 minutes of run time on a single charge, the new LXOB01 delivers increased efficiency and mobility to woodworkers," says Soto.

The 1/8" random orbit action is engineered for efficient sanding, fast material removal, and a swirl-free finish. A pad brake reduces free spin for improved overall finish and a control system regulates pad speed at startup, according to the company.

Additional features include an ergonomically-designed body and grip, a through-the-pad dust collection system and dust-sealed switch. The tool is 6-7/8" long and

weighs only 3.6 pounds. The sander uses quick-change 5" hook-and-loop abrasive paper.

The sander is available in a kit with two 18-volt LXT lithium-ion batteries, charger, dust bag and tool bag, and it retails for \$560.

Contact: Makita. Tel: 800-462-5482. www.makitausa.com W





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Panasonic's new 1/2' drill/driver, model EY74A1X.

Panasonic drill offers switchable battery packs

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

anasonic recently introduced its Tough IP line of lithium-ion cordless tools featuring Dual Voltage Technology, which gives the user the option of using different battery packs with different voltages. So instead of juggling two drill/drivers on the job site — a 14.4 volt for overhead work and an 18-volt to drive a bolt, for example — only one is needed.

The line currently includes a 1/2" drill/driver kit, 1/4" impact driver kit, 1/2" impact wrench and reciprocating saw.

Panasonic's John Olson says the key to the new dual voltage tools is a proprietary motor technology that the company developed to keep performance at its best. While it's possible for batteries of different voltages to be switched on competitor's tools without Panasonic's technology, doing so could cause severe damage.

"You could take an 18-volt tool and put a 14.4-volt battery on it and it will work. But it will run a lot slower to the point of being unacceptable. You could probably put an 18-volt battery on a 14.4-volt tool if you wanted to, but it would run too fast and burn out the motor. Our dual voltage technology allows you to switch between the battery packs without doing any damage to the tool. So you can put an 18 on there and it performs just beautifully or put a 14.4 on and get the same type of performance," says Olson.

"Our dual voltage technology allows you to switch between the battery packs without doing any damage to the tool."

Panasonic's current lithium-ion batteries have Solid Solution technology, another proprietary process for dissolving and hardening cobalt and nickel and other key battery components, and a special heat-resistant ceramic coating layer that separates the cells and protects them from heat buildup, according to the company.

The 1/2" drill/driver offers a variable-speed motor, two-speed transmission, LED worklight and 18-stage clutch. The tool weighs 4.3 lbs. with the battery and is 8" long, according to the company.

The drill/driver, model EY74A1X, sells for about \$180. It's also available as a kit, model EY7450LS2S, for about \$465 that includes a charger, two 4.2Ah LS lithium-ion battery packs and a carrying case.

For information and prices on the other tools, visit *www.panasonic.com* or call 800-338-0552. **W**



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Powermatic revamps 18-inch drill press

Designed as a shop workhorse, features 1-hp motor and variable speed control with digital readout

By Jennifer Hicks STAFF WRITER

fter a well-received introduction at IWF 2012, Powermatic has brought its PM2800B 18" drill press to market. Designed for any type of drilling operation required by cabinet and furniture makers, the redesign incorporates a host of timesaving features, according to the company.

"What we've tried to do is make things very intuitive with this drill press, which is a bit of a workhorse in the shop. The most important feature is its variable speed because you never

have to touch the belt; you just basically turn the hand wheel to get to the desired speed and that speed comes out on the digital readout on the front of the machine," says product manager Joan Duvall.

The drill press has a 1-hp, single-phase, 15amp motor prewired for 115 volts, providing a spindle speed range of 250 to 3,000 rpm. The spindle has a 6" range of travel with a maximum distance of 25-1/2" to the table.

"We made sure to have six inches of quill travel with a single revolution of the hand wheel. This makes it much easier to do a project with one hand and still get the hole you desire," says Duvall.

There are two LED lights to illuminate the work area, while twin lasers mark the drill bit's location.

The cast-iron table measures 20" x 14" and tilts to 90 degrees. The supplied fence features two cam locks and an adjustable stop.

The drill press weighs 246 lbs. and stands 71" tall. It retails for about \$1,400.

For information, visit www.powermatic.com. W



The updated Powermatic 18" drill press, model PM2800B, features 6" of guill travel with one full turn of the hand wheel.





FINISHING

with GREG WILLIAMS

Don't be gun-shy about learning to spray coatings

Take a little bit of a risk, step outside your comfort zone and realize the benefits of spraying modern fast-drying finishing products

here's a certain amount of resistance among amateur finishers — or woodworkers who don't do large volumes of finished work — to use spray application equipment. As an outside salesman who traveled large parts of the country selling to both large factories and one-man shops, it was to my customer's advantage and to my own to be able to help them become more efficient and produce higher quality goods.

The smaller shops provided me with lots

of reasons for doing things the way they did, from "this is how my daddy did it," to "it lasts longer if you rub it on," or "my customers like it this way." This last one was from a finisher that used one pigmented stain for everything he did, regardless of wood or style, new wood, old wood, refinishing or antique restoration because "it's the best color ever made." Seldom would they admit that it had anything to do with the perceived cost of equipment or material,

and even more seldom that they simply did not know how to do any better.

The bottom line was that finishers tended to stick to what worked for them and, to justify their resistance to change, by averring that "I've never had a complaint," ignoring the possibility of doing more, better and faster just by learning and risking a little.

A number of factors have changed that picture through the years, including the Internet, woodworking groups who share knowledge more freely, books, tapes, DVDs, woodworking shows and finishing classes given by suppliers.

There are plenty of woodworkers, both amateur and professional, who are becoming more sophisticated and knowledgeable about finishing and many more who would like to become better, but are intimidated by the continued perceptions that:

- You need expensive and difficult-to-maintain equipment
- You need a dedicated area in which to spray coatings
- It is difficult to learn the techniques to spray effectively
- The materials are more dangerous (flammable, poisonous, injurious to the environment)

I'm not going to tell you here how to do it; you will find many other articles on how to



perform common (and not-so-common) procedures in these pages and in several very good books readily available. What I'd like you to do is to consider with an open mind whether spray finishing is something that you can have fun with, improve the quality of your work or add value to your work.

I'm assuming you know the purpose of finishing wood. Essentially, it is to protect it and enhance its appearance. Whether you use wax, oil, varnish, shellac, lacquer or any of the more modern coating products, your goal is to create and/or preserve a look, feel and utility of a wooden item. A secondary goal in selecting a finishing product and procedure is to achieve that primary goal with the least work, the greatest pleasure or some combination of those.

We've got several choices about how we move a liquid coating from the can to the wood — from pouring, wiping, brushing, rubbing and even holding a wetted cloth against a piece turning on a lathe. After the coating is dry, most of these can be made to look and feel very similar with a bit more work, such as sanding, rubbing out or polishing. However, for the small lot finisher, a hand-spray application can move the liquid from the can to the wood faster, more evenly and, in many cases, more efficiently than the other methods.

With more sophisticated, multistep finishing schedules, the advantages of spray application are even more compelling. When spraying modern fast-dry coatings, recoat intervals are greatly reduced, as is the dry time necessary to prevent airborne dust and debris from sticking to the film, the time that vapors remain present in the area, the time that a piece must dry before being handled, moved or stacked and, ultimately, the total time spent finishing.

The equipment

If you are attracted to the idea of spraying some of your finishes, you will have to look at spray application equipment. Fortunately, not only are there advancements in technology that can make this easier, more efficient and safer, but less expensive equipment that will do a good job is readily available from commonplace suppliers.

HVLP (high volume, low pressure) sprayers have become the standard for the small shop or individual craftsman for several good reasons. If you do not already have a high-capacity compressor, you can get a small self-contained unit that consists of the spray gun itself and what is essentially a vacuum cleaner motor driving a turbine to provide a lot of air at low pressure, to atomize and propel the coating droplets at a lower velocity from the gun to the wood, thus greatly lessening the amount of overspray compared to a conven-

tional spray gun. Less overspray means more efficiency, less cleanup and eliminating the cloud of airborne coating particles that has scared away many would-be spray operators in a home environment.

If you do have an adequate compressor, there are conversion guns that take the higher pressure air from the compressor and convert it to the higher volume and lower pressure (less than 10 psi at the air cap) for the conversion gun. Gravity-feed guns are popular and are easier to clean than more complicated setups.

The spray area

While a well-designed spray booth is a must for a good full-time finishing operation, simply placing a fan facing the open garage door can provide a safe and efficient fair-weather spray booth. Even in inclement weather, for spraying smaller items, you can warm up the work, the material and the air in the garage, then open the door, turn on the fan, spray the item, turn off the fan when the dust clears, close the door and go in for supper. Very fast-drying coating materials make it easier to spray outside, as the coating can dry free of dust in minutes.

Training

The basics of spray application are pretty simple and you can get a number of good books and DVDs to help. Woodworking clubs and the specialty woodworking retailers are providing more training, which can be a great way to spend a Saturday morning, and an opportunity to meet people with a common interest in finishing, enhancing the learning experience well beyond the classroom.

Safety and environment

Waterborne versions of many of the solvent-based lacquers are becoming better and more popular, reducing much of the fear of flammability, safety and environmental concerns and solvent-borne products in lower VOC versions are more available. Simple spray enclosures can be built at home by enterprising craftsmen who will take the time to understand the requirements. (Blow the spray away from your face, have the air movement from the rear, protect your respiration, wear gloves and goggles as appropriate.)

There are many good reasons to learn spray coatings. It is fast, versatile and fun. The time you spend learning the basics will pay off quickly in quality of the final result.

Greg Williams, formerly senior touchup and finishing instructor for Mohawk Finishing Products, is now a freelance instructor and consultant for finishing and touchup. He can be reached at gregalwil@yahoo.com.





PRO SHOP

with JOHN ENGLISH

Joinery juxtaposition

Recent innovations have come along that are quicker, stronger and are changing the way woodworkers do business

ortise-and-tenon, dowel and dovetail joints have been tested through the centuries and have proved their worth. In the mid-1950s, joinery departed from the traditional when Swiss woodworker Hermann Steiner invented Lamello biscuit joinery, and in 1986 it took another big step when Craig Sommerfeld came up with the Kreg pocket-hole jig. Since then we've seen a series of attempts at improving the way that we stick two pieces of wood together.

Some have captured our imaginations, a few have captured our billfolds and many have fizzled away to obscurity. But in the last few years, some rather impressive innovations have come along that offer a new alternative that is either quicker, stronger or both. Invented by woodworkers and often refined by engineers, these new joinery options could fundamentally change the way that we work.

The Dowelmax

Adding a new twist to an old theme, the Canadian manufacturer of Dowelmax (www. dowelmax.com) claims that its jig will deliver a joint that is three times stronger than biscuits and takes 90 percent less time to construct

than a traditional mortise-and-tenon joint. For shops that don't own a dedicated horizontal boring machine, the jig is relatively inexpensive and simple to use. It allows the woodworker to drill from one to five dowel holes that are equally spaced and close together for a very strong joint.

My reason for mentioning the Dowelmax up front is that the manufacturer has an interesting chart on its website. The company ran a strength test on various joinery methods and published results that indicate a No. 20 biscuit would support 285 lbs. per square inch of pressure (the test shows sideways pressure on a 90-degree joint). A pocket-hole joint with five screws came in at 420 psi, the double Domino was at 560 psi, a routed mortise and tenon posted an impressive 640 psi and its product, the multiple dowel, took home the prize at 890 psi.

While other manufacturers will challenge the test results on the basis of materials, glue, stock sizes and so on, the bottom line is that many alternative joinery methods are extremely functional and strong. And while strength isn't always the primary issue (think face frames, for example), it is nevertheless an important criteria in most joinery. Hot on its heels is speed, especially in a production environment, so most of the new joinery options on the market are designed around both construction time and ease of use.



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The makers of the Dowelmax jig (top) published results from shear tests that found their doweled joints are stronger than biscuits and even traditional mortise-and-tenon joints; Hoffmann offers handheld, benchtop and floor model machines that cut dovetail-shaped grooves. The corresponding keys come in plastic, hardwood, metal and rubber.

Hoffmann keys

The Hoffmann dovetail joining system is a great example of this (www.hoffmann-usa.com). Based on classic dovetail joinery, Hoffmann uses molded keys to create perfectly aligned and tight joints. The company offers handheld, benchtop and even floor model machines that cut dovetail-shaped grooves. Corresponding keys come in plastic, hardwood, metal and rubber varieties in four different thicknesses and in lengths ranging from 1/4" to 4" long. The keys are a double dovetail (an end view looks like the shape of a bow tie).

The concept is simple: a tapered cut is made in each piece of wood and the key is then tapped into place. Because of the taper, the joint is pulled tight as the key is driven home with a hammer.

A demo video on the company's website shows an angled joint being made where the plywood side of a cabinet meets the face frame at 45 degrees, and it takes barely a minute to line up and make the long glue joint. The joinery can be completely hidden, so it's ideal for assembling face frames and cabinet carcasses. Or the key can be exposed when using the hardwood option, adding an attractive accent.

One thing worth noting is that most examples show the plastic dovetail keys drawing a joint together that ultimately relies on glue for strength. The keys act as a clamp while the glue sets — and the strength is in the glue.

Leigh jigs

While Hoffmann offers a quick and relatively easy way to join

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parts based on an historic concept (dovetails), another foreign company has taken the traditional mortise and tenon to new heights. Most woodworkers are familiar with dovetail jigs from Leigh Industries Ltd. in Canada (www.leighjigs.com). The company also offers two mortise-and-tenon jigs, the professional FMT Pro model and the



Leigh Industries Ltd. offers two mortise-and-tenon jigs, the professional FMT Pro model (shown) and the Super FMT, which was designed for home workshops.

Super FMT. The latter was designed for home workshops. Both devices will mill joints with single, double, triple or even quadruple floating tenons and they are ideal for furniture applications such as doors, tables, chairs, benches, built-in dining booths and other furniture that sees heavy use. The FMT Pro includes optional on-board dust collection and is of considerably heavier construction.

While at first glance they look quite complicated, the FMT jigs are actually simple to operate. They mill both halves of the joint (the mortise and the tenon) and do so using just one guide, one router bit and one jig setup. A plunge router is required. Shops that build furniture more than casework will find this system for creating true mortise-and-tenon joinery is fairly quick, easily learned and very accurate.

Festool's Domino

Those attributes can also be attributed to the exquisite Domino from Festool (www. festooldomino.com). This machine cuts two mortises and a separate, floating tenon is then used to complete the joint. These relatively lightweight, portable tools replace stationary machines like hollow chisel mortisers and slot mortisers.

Two models are available: the original DF





The Domino from Festool cuts two mortises and a separate, floating tenon is used to complete the joint. The machine comes in two sizes for regular (above) and large work.



Two models are available: the original DF 500 (weighing in at 7 lbs.) and the new XL (11.4 lbs.), which is designed for larger projects. The DF 500 mills mortises from 5/8" to 1-9/16" deep and the XL extends that range by handling depths from 19/32" to 2-3/4".

Domino tenons are available in 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10mm thicknesses for the DF 500 and 8, 10, 12 and 14mm thicknesses for the Domino XL. The 4mm tenons are perfect for materials as thin as 1/2", while the largest tenons (about 5-1/2" long) are great for large-scale joinery like doors, gates, timber frame joints and creating large natural-edged or thick slabs for counters and table tops.

Lamello connectors

A smaller concept for regular joinery is the Lamello Clamex P-15 (www.csaw.com). This is a biscuit-shaped knockdown connector that comes from the original inventors of biscuit joinery. Its huge advantage is that it can be disassembled. The Clamex P-15 joins any mitered angle without glue or screws to create nearly invisible ready-to-assemble connections.

To complete the joint, a woodworker slides the connectors into pre-cut slots and then locks a cam lever in place by turning a hex key that just pulls the parts together (yup, you have to drill a hole for the hex key). This allows the shop to build a cabinet or piece of furniture, break it down to ship (or to get through a narrow doorway) and then reassemble it at the site in a few minutes.

The P-15 connector and a new smaller version called the P-10 share a design element that sets them apart. Along the outside arc of each, there is a raised edge that slips into a T-shaped slot. This creates a mechanical joint (no glue or screws required, although woodworkers can add screws if they want).

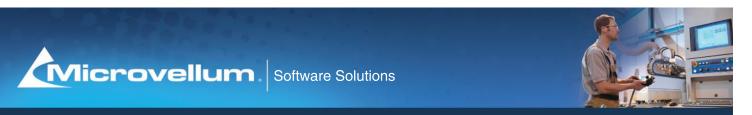
Another Clamex connector, the Medius, shares this feature and adds another: part of the back edge of the Medius is missing, so it isn't quite as deep. This allows a woodshop to, for example, fasten a shelf halfway up a center dividing panel because the slot is less than 3/4" deep. And the last member of the family, the Clamex S, doesn't have the raised edge: it requires screws, but it can be installed with any Lamello biscuit joiner as it doesn't call for a special blade.

Other options

Somewhere between dowels and Dominos is the Beadlock system from Rockler Cos. (www.beadlock.com). This uses a simple drill and guide jig to bore several overlapping holes before the company's loose tenon molding fits into the cavities. One advantage of this continued on next page



Lamello's Clamex line includes the P-10 and P-15 that have a raised rim that locks in the slot; the narrower Medius for panel applications and the standard S that is held in place with screws.



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The Joint-Genie
Jobber is a
simple steel bar
with guide holes
drilled in it and
a fan of steel
leaves that allow
the user to center
the jig. Inexpensive and small,
it's an ideal
job-site jig.



PRO SHOP from previous page

The Joint-Genie (www.joint-genie.com) follows much of the same logic. This is a simple steel bar with guide holes drilled in it, but it has a fan of steel leaves on the side that allow the user to center the jig on the edge of a board up to about 1-7/8" thick and it will also work on stock of unlimited thickness (not necessarily centered). The Joint-Genie also has a positive stop on the end of the jig that allows one to line up and clamp it in place for drilling mirror images of a set of holes. Inexpensive and small, this is an ideal job-site jig. It can be screwed to the work, too, so it can be located pretty much anywhere on the workpiece (the screw holes disappear.) One can also use a dowel as an indexing pin, so the short jig can drill an essentially unending row of equally spaced holes in a straight line.

There are numerous machines that will mill more than one type of traditional joint, such as the JDS Multi Router that handles mortise and tenon, box (finger) and dovetail joinery (http://jdstools.com), and a plethora of other small jigs that deliver dowel joints.

There are numerous companies making ver-

sions of the Kreg pocket-hole jig and Woodsmith makes an exceptional box joint jig (www. woodsmithstore.com).

But no matter what new inventions come along to make life in the shop a little easier, none will ever be quite as much fun as laying out and hand-cutting a perfect mortise and tenon. **W**



Other joinery jigs include this aluminum box joint jig from Woodsmith for the table saw and dado head that can be used to make accurate drawer joints.

WOOD MARKETS

Cherry remains a craftsman's 'standard'

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

ith cherry sales continuing to hold steady year after year, lumber suppliers interviewed by Woodshop News agree that the species is still one of the most reliable sellers in the hardwood market. But its popularity seems to speak more to the tradition of using it to craft fine furniture because buyers tend to select it more for their individual projects rather than for cabinetry or architectural millwork.

"The cherry market for fine furniture makers is a constant, but it's not so popular with designers and architects commissioning cabinetry projects," says Rick Hearne, owner of Hearne Hardwoods in Oxford, Pa. "So to put that in perspective, cherry is nowhere near as hot as it was five or 10 years ago compared to what we used to sell for completing interiors of churches or stock brokerage firms for

the architectural millwork customers, but it is still strong for the one-up furniture makers."

Cherry (*Prunus serotina*) is also known as black cherry, grows from Canada south to central Florida and portions of Mexico and Guatemala. Its highest concentration is in Pennsylvania, which supplies about 70 percent of the country's cherry, although it only represents 3 to 4 percent of the Appalachian forests.

Cherry trees reach heights between 80' and 100' with diameters of 2'-3'. The heartwood is pinkish-brown to reddish-brown with a distinctive golden luster. The sapwood is narrow and is a white-to-reddish-brown color. Woodworkers are particularly drawn to the wood's tight grain, adds Hearne.

"It doesn't need any sort of filler. It's a closed grain that will take oil finishes beautifully. It is rich in color and will oxidize darker and darker as it ages."

"People still like their cherry," says Mark Wagner of Hill Hardwood Supply in Iowa City, Iowa. "We've sold about as much cherry this year as we did last year. People are into dark woods and cherry remains a favorite wood, I would say. It's popular because of its beauty and workability."

"The Pennsylvania cherry sells the best and it's right up there with maple and walnut," says Merrill Morrison of Alva Hardwoods in La-Belle, Fla. "Sales compared to this time last year are down about 20 percent, but in general it's pretty popular.

"It's the standard of American craftsmen, especially with the 50-andover crowd. It has a lot of positive characteristics, which are machinability, ability to hold screws and durability to hold finish. You can finish it with just about anything. It gets darker, richer and more lustrous. It's one of the best finishing woods."

Retail prices for 4/4 FAS cherry were quoted at \$5 to \$7.30/bf. w







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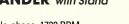
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ENJOY the JOURNEY

Owner of Interwest Cabinet in Idaho knows that a new day always brings new challenges in a small shop

BY JENNIFER HICKS / STAFF WRITER

hough Interwest Cabinet recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, co-owner Clint Galbrath knows he can't rest on his laurels. Experience has set him straight.

"I always thought if you start your own business that you'll automatically get to a point where you're just successful and everything runs smoothly, but I found that it never gets to that point. There are always challenges and you have to keep moving ahead. When we first started, we were working toward that day when we were going to relax and kick our feet up. Things don't work like that so it's important to enjoy the journey," he says.

The journey has been shared with his wife, Janeene, co-owner and office manager, and their six children. The Rexburg native grew up on a dairy farm, but left for greener pastures, so to speak.

"I really only took one high school shop class, then served a mission for a church in Australia. When I came home, I started looking for some type of work other than dairy, so I worked at several different jobs — one at a convenience store in town, another selling trees and shrubs at a nursery, then my brother-in-law got a job here at this shop, which was Madison Millwork in 1973.

"My brother-in-law only worked here for a continued on next page



JANEENE AND CLINT GALBRAITH

Co-owners of: Interwest Cabinet

Location: Rexburg, Idaho **Shop size:** 21,000 sq. ft.

Employees: 14

About: A family-run cabinet shop in eastern Idaho offering a full range of custom cabinetry design and fabrication services for residential and commercial clients in the area's surrounding vacation resort regions.



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Employees Daniel Virgen (left) and Joe Kidd at work in Interwest Cabinet's 21,000-sq.-ft. shop. A custom vanity project (opposite page).

INTERWEST CABINET from previous page

couple of weeks, but encouraged me to apply when he left. I had never done any woodworking before and started assembling cabinets."

Starting from scratch

Madison Millworks was humming along until the Teton Dam collapsed in 1976. Eventually, Galbraith had to take another job with

a renovation company that worked all over the country. He lasted five years before being without his kids became too much.

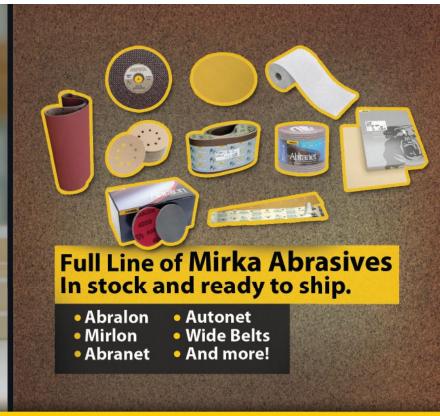
"In 1986, I decided I wanted to start doing something on my own," Galbraith says. "Madison Millwork closed its doors one night and I opened it up the next day, taking over the building's rent. But the equipment and employees were gone."

Today, the shop has expanded from 14,000

to 21,000 sq. ft., and features a Diehl straightline rip saw; Altendorf slider; Routech CNC machining center; Schmalz ceiling mount vacuum lift; two SawStop table saws; Murphy Rogers dust collection system; SCMI edgebander, wide belt sander and thickness planer; Whirlwind upcut saw; Blum door hinge machine and Ritter shaper.

Galbraith relies heavily on the company's word-of-mouth reputation and its website to





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attract customers. The shop completes about 100 jobs per year, which include kitchen cabinetry packages, entertainment centers, fire-place surrounds, wall units, home offices and some millwork applications. The vast majority of work now comes from homeowners. Galbraith would prefer more commercial work, but says that's beyond his control.

"The commercial market has just gotten so competitive over the last few years. At one "One thing that's helped us is the diversity of our demographic service area. Going to different areas has helped us out a lot. We didn't limit ourselves to what was just going on in our local area. We always kept our connections with contractors in other cities and towns. One contractor in Salt Lake City brought us a lot of work over in Park City."

Rexburg is also home to Brigham Young University-Idaho, which recently expanded

from a two-year college to a four-year university and Interwest has benefited from the need for more student housing. But even with a larger client base, competition remains fierce, particularly for commercial work.

"As things have slowed down, finding work in churches and schools like we used to has gotten more competitive. People are trying to survive and just bid the jobs so low that they're going out of business. They are operating so inexpensively they just disappear."

Interwest's customers prefer rustic designs featuring distressed knotty alder. Dark

and natural finishes also take preference. Occasionally, there's some demand for something sleeker.

"A big job we're doing in Montana right now is very modern," says Galbraith. "It has wenge wood with a dark stain. I think it's an influence of the national magazines and what's going on in other areas. It seems like now in the magazines everything is modernlooking and I think it's pushing the consumers to want that. They like what they see. We're continued on next page



Brad Nicbaur takes a panel to the shop's Routech CNC maching center.

time we were just doing cabinets in businesses and schools, but the competition was so bad we just started to focus on residential. Generally, I think we've been doing about 75 percent of our work in the residential sector, mostly for middle-class individuals to superhigh-end millionaires."

Finding new markets

While Galbraith started with local work, the market has expanded to the resort areas of Jackson Hole and Star Valley, Wyo., and Big Sky, Mont.





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INTERWEST CABINET from previous page

very custom-oriented, so we'll do whatever the customer wants."

Maintaining integrity

Galbraith is interested in growing the business and adding more employees after he makes the necessary contacts to make that happen. But for now, he enjoys having a manageable workforce.

"I found that in all of my years in business, one of the greater challenges is managing employees. Some of my workers in the past acted just like little kids and I got tired of babysitting. One advantage of the economic downturn is we did not change one employee for five years."

Equally important to him is maintaining the shop's integrity by continuing to offer products of the highest quality. The trick is to educate the clients on what they're getting so they don't settle for a cheap alternative from a competitor or commercial manufacturer. Lately, using computer drawings has proven to be the most effective way of communicating ideas effectively.

"We're in the business of selling something

you can't see. Yes, you can show them a sample of a cabinet door, but we're trying to sell them on what they're going to have and how it fits their house, but they can't see it like they can with a car they drive off the lot. How do I commit with everything that they are thinking they want. Sometimes they haven't really expressed it or I didn't understand it. Say I ask you to just picture a tree. Well, we'll both think of a different tree. It's the same thing."

At the end of each day, Galbraith still knows his investment in his business is worth the time and effort. He knows he can look back and see beautiful work completed in a home. He is still amazed by how many people went out of business doing what he does and is thankful for his crew and family to keep their faith in the company.

"It just seems like there are always challenges, but there are always good things, too. I've been in business for 25 years and have a great reputation. I feel as if we are one of the most resilient shops around."

W

Contact: Interwest Cabinet, 64 South 3rd West, Rexburg, ID 83440. Tel: 208-356-9188. www. interwestcabinet.com



By John English

ast summer, Woodshop News reported that Rockler had introduced two models of the Click-N-Carve, a compact CNC routing machine that turns digital input into detailed carvings. That product line has expanded now to include three models of the CNC Shark. And what's significant here is that these machines bring CNC technology to the home workshop or



small professional shop for about the price of a decent hobbyist table saw.

There are several ways to compare small CNC devices, from the speed of travel in each of the three axes to the power of the motor or the size cutter shaft that they can accept. But as some come with a built-in spindle and others require a separate router, perhaps the most useful way to initially distinguish them is to list the largest capacity workpiece that each can handle. Once a shop knows that certain models can handle the size panels they need to mill, they can then visit the manufacturers' websites (which we list here) and begin comparing all the other relevant attributes.

With that in mind, let's note that the Rockler (*www.rockler.com*) entry-level CNC machines mentioned above have maximum capacities that run from 12.8" x 5.9" to 28.5" x 36".

Rockler is by no means the first to tackle this market segment. Small woodshops — and larger companies that wish to experiment on a small scale — now have an arsenal of CNC technology available to them. For example, Biesse (*www.biesseamerica.com*) currently offers the Klever and Rover J routers that are billed as "the answer to increased production for growing shops." These are full function industrial machines that cost about the same as a woodworker's annual salary and their work capacity is considerably larger than the Rockler models (available sizes are 4' x 8' and 5' x 10').

While the smaller machines are designed to add an occasional accent to something like a sign or a cabinet door (the Click-N-Carve can translate digital photographs into extremely intricate carvings in just minutes), the two machines from Biesse can potentially revolutionize a production shop's bottom line. The Klever is ideal for both panel processing and cabinet/furniture component manufacturing. It moves fast enough for high production and features a built-in controller for programming at the machine. Biesse's Rover model is slightly less expensive and is ideal for small-continued on next page







CNC from previous page

er custom woodshops because it can cover a broad range of nesting applications such as making components and doors. It has a hand-held controller instead of a built-in one, a factor that helped shave a few dollars off the price.

Scanning the landscape

California's Laguna Tools (www.lagunatools.com) offers the easy-to-use IQ, an entry-level CNC model that is referred to as a heavy-duty "desktop" machine. Assembled in the U.S., it's designed for small shops entering the market and also for medium-sized shops that need a smaller format for light production, or perhaps to use as a prototyping machine. The IQ has a one-piece welded steel frame, 2-hp liquid-cooled spindle and "features the networking, connectivity and online troubleshooting typically found in Windows environments without the Windows baggage." The IQ runs industry standard G-Code that can be created from any CAM software package.

Laguna also offers a complete line of small-to-large CNC upgrades that include the Swift, D, Smartshop and Puma models. Between them, they offer tables that range from $24'' \times 36''$ to $60'' \times 120''$.

Similar to the Shark machines from Rockler are two desktop models from Redford, Mich.-based Romaxx Systems (http://romaxxcncrouters.com). The HS-1 has a 24" x 14" X-Y capacity. With its easily identifiable gold-colored gantry, the HS-1 is a cost-efficient option with a balance of precision, power and speed. The ways are adjustable and the drive system uses a high-tensile cogged belt that is commonly found in larger industrial CNC machines. Romaxx's more expensive WD-1 desktop model is open-ended, so it can handle work that is any length by up to 25" wide.

Industrial CNC's Renegade XR ($48" \times 96"$) is a 3-axis, ball screw drive machine that was "specifically designed for the budget-conscious sign maker, woodworker and cabinetmaker." It delivers full 3-D carvings and flat cutouts in plastics, wood, Romark, MDF, aluminum and sign foam. And Probotix (www.probotix.com) is a Peoria, Ill.-based stepper motor provider that offers a line of entry-level CNC machines called the Fireball line. It includes the X90 ($18" \times 18"$), the V90 ($12" \times 18"$), the Meteor ($25" \times 50"$) and the Comet ($25" \times 25"$), which the company says is the most affordable and complete CNC router in the world.





Zenbot (www.zenbotcnc.com), founded in 2006 by Shaun Morris, is a small company in Tulare, Calif., that has "a passion for creating affordable CNC machines." Starting at \$499, Morris's product line certainly seems to be meeting that goal. The Zenbot Mini has a 9.575" x 13.5" table and travels just 6" in the X-axis and 8" in the Y-axis. His largest entry-level CNC is the Zenbot 4848 (with a 56-5/8" square table) with a drive system that features 3/8" wide Kevlar-reinforced urethane timing belts on all three axes. The package includes a router body (eight choices are offered), an optional control box and an optional \$149 software package.

More sources

Other manufacturers worth investigating include SCM (*www.scmgroupna.com*), whose product line leans more to high-end production and also a line of four machines from Vision (*www.visionengravers.com*) that runs the gamut from the desktop 1624R (16" x 24") to the VR48, a floor model that handles work up to 48" x 96".

Familiar to most woodworkers, ShopBot (www.shopbottools.com) has been a leader in this market segment for a long time. The North Carolina company was founded in 1996 and almost 6,000 ShopBots are currently at work in small shops and larger production facilities across the U.S. and around the world. Its ShopBot Desktop can be ordered with either a Porter-Cable 2-1/4-hp router or an industrial spindle and handles workpieces up to 24" x 18". The line runs all the way up to 144" x 60", and each ShopBot includes PartWorks and PartWorks3D software. PartWorks allows you to design and create 2-D and 2.5-D parts, while Part-

Works3D creates tool paths from the 3-D design software of your choice. Both programs simulate the cutting of parts, so you can verify that they will be created just as you intend.

Before settling on an entry-level CNC, one should visit the websites of Epik (www.rap torcnc.com), the 36" square Shop Sabre (www.

shopsabre.com), the EG series from Eagle Eye (www.eagleeyecnc.com) and the Stinger 1 from CAMaster (www.camaster.com). While some of these are a bit more expensive than the basic desktop models mentioned elsewhere, most offer industrial strength in a small package.

continued on next page

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Other machines to research include the LC Series from Techno (www.technocnc.com); Camtech and Pacer Series from AXYZ (www.axyz.com); the 5-axis S- Series from C.R. On-

srud (www.cronsrud.com); the iCarver from General (www.generalcnc.ca); the NXT Series 3-axis router from Hendrick Mfg. (www.hendrickmanufacturing.com); the Classic Series from MultiCam (www.multicam.com); a collection of five carving models from the vener-

ShopBot's
Desktop and
the Laguna IQ.

able Oliver Machinery (www.olivermachinery. net); new and used high-end models from Omnitech (www.omnitech-systems.com); a complete line of automated wood carving systems from one of the oldest names in the industry, Thermwood (www.thermwood.com) and the extensive offerings from distributor Stiles Machinery (www.stilesmachinery.com).

As CNC technology has been around for a while, buying a used machine is a viable option. Shopping on government surplus websites or through used machinery dealers such as K.D. Capital Equipment (www.kdcapital.com) might allow a woodshop to acquire a sheet-goods-capable entry-level CNC setup for the same investment as a small new desktop carving machine.

Questions to ask

Perhaps the most important thing to bring up with your salesperson when searching for an entry-level CNC machine is the software compatibility. Will the machine accommodate high-quality aftermarket programs from companies like ArtCam, Cabinet Pro, CABmaster, Microvellum, Planit, Enroute and Vectric?

Ask, too, about the power source (some

The Woodshop News' Resource Guide will help you find what you're looking for.

To gain an overview of some of the many vendors supplying CNC equipment, visit http://tinyurl.com/ba9vdbu. To review CNC software suppliers, visit http://tinyurl.com/ammq34s.

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are 3-phase), the table size, feed rates, cutting speeds, dust control, the tooling diameters, whether a tool changer is available and what the amount of travel is in each of the three axes (the machinable area is generally quite a bit smaller than the actual table dimensions). If you build arched raised panel cabinet doors, be aware that some machines break arcs into small straight increments, rather than describing a true, smooth curve and the panels could then require extra sanding.

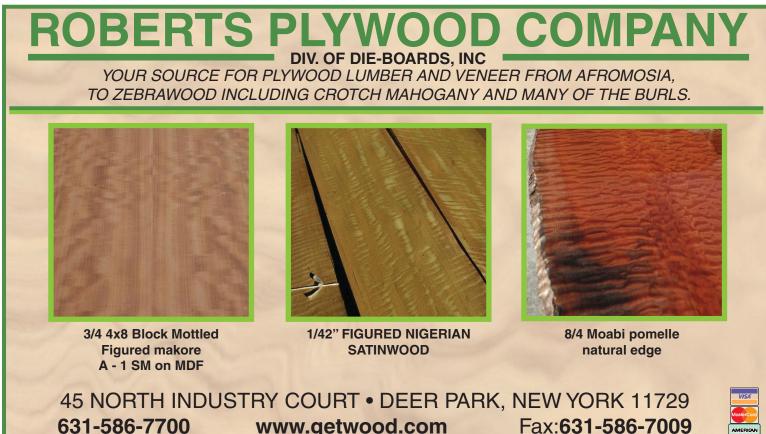
Speed might or might not be an issue. Think about how the machine will be used. If it will be making components all day long every day, you'll need a lot more machine than a shop that will only use it only occasionally to create, say, decorative panels. The former might spend the same amount of money on a big, used machine that the latter spends on a high-tech, brand-new little machine that is designed to carve more than cut.

Before buying, check out the manufacturer's reputation for support, customer service and even parts availability. The easiest way to do this is to search for online chat rooms and forums. Some machines even have user groups that post billboards online. Keep in mind that the supplier needs to get you up and running, but it's also your responsibility

to learn how to operate the system — and that takes time. Ask the supplier if it has a customer within driving distance of your shop who operates one of its machines. If so, most woodshop owners will be quite helpful and chatty and might even offer a demo. Some manufacturers reward customers for this type of contact, so ask if the company has a program in place.

One final thought: If your investment will be more than a few thousand dollars, you might want to consider going to one of the big woodworking shows in Las Vegas or Atlanta and seeing all of the manufacturers together in one venue. For the price of an airline ticket and a couple of nights in a hotel, you can enjoy a hands-on and personal tour of all the options. \mathbf{W}





Everything kitchen sink

Dan Booterbaugh has built his business with support from his family, long hours of toil and a variety of options for consumers

By Thomas G. Dolan

ogs, barn boarding and other cast-off or recycled woods are the materials Dan Booterbaugh uses to build his high-end rustic furniture. Booterbaugh, president of North Idaho Log Furniture Co. in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, grew up in Southern California, started building furniture when he was 16 and achieved recognition for his work while he was still in high school.

"My woodshop teacher was Dave Garringer and I won a couple of first-place Rotary awards," Booterbaugh recalls. "One was for a kitchen island I made for my mom and the other was a canopy bed frame for myself."

Booterbaugh then went on to work in different positions in a number of wood cabinet shops before being hired by a small lumber yard in



El Segundo, Calif., where he was involved in everything from milling to operating a fork lift to driving a truck. During this time, he began his own business on the side, taking on assorted cabinet jobs and building them in his garage.

In 1996, when he was 35, Booterbaugh moved to Coeur d'Alene in northern Idaho with his

wife, Kelli, and their two small children. "My neighbor was an older gentleman who built log furniture," says Booterbaugh. "I went to work for him, peeling logs with a draw knife. We'd go out in the woods and cut our own logs, which I still do to this day. We get our logs whole."

Booterbaugh and his neighbor formed a





streetside. After about six months, the neighbor moved away, the partnership dissolved and Booterbaugh continued on his own. In 1997 he moved to an older house next door, adding a showroom to the shop area. In 1998 he moved again to his present location, with a 1,200-sq.-ft. shop and matching size showroom, and since adding another 1,200 sq. ft. for log storage.

"We build furniture for the living room, dining room, bedrooms, kitchen cabinets, sink vanities, mirrors, lamps, anything and everything for the home," Booterbaugh says. There are standard designs, but also customized. He sells about 50 percent of both. "We have a number of unique designs," he adds, "one-of-a-kind pieces such as a roll-out futon, log sleigh bed and beam trestle table."

Prices might range from a basic queen-sized bed selling for \$500 to a customized version up to \$3,000. Although the customized pieces might have a higher price tag than standard versions, that's because the former might be more elaborate. But Booterbaugh doesn't necessarily upcharge for simple modifications to his basic designs.

Built by hand

Booterbaugh might master his material, but his material has a say in the design. "No tree is the same, so everything we make has a distinctive look, incorporating all of the wood's knobs and burls," he says. Booterbaugh works primarily with lodge pole and ponderosa pines, assorted hardwoods and, more recently, barn beams and other reclaimed woods that each provide a distinctive look.

"Everything we make is built by hand," says Booterbaugh. "We use a lot of hand tools, drill motors with tenon cutters attached. Our biggest machine is a 24-inch Woodmaster planer. A large band saw is a useful tool."

Booterbaugh sells to upscale home owners and condominiums and has carved out a special market for the many summer homes on the many lakes in the area, as well as the cabins owned or used by skiing enthusiasts. He also does a lot of contractor work for things like long hand rails, stairwells, and fire place and other mantels. "We have a few wholesale accounts around the country and these accounts seem to be picking up," he adds.

Booterbaugh has sold his furniture in every state except Hawaii, as well as in Canada, Scotland and Japan. The shop builds custom pallets for everything it ships, and generally uses common carrier.

Marketing approach

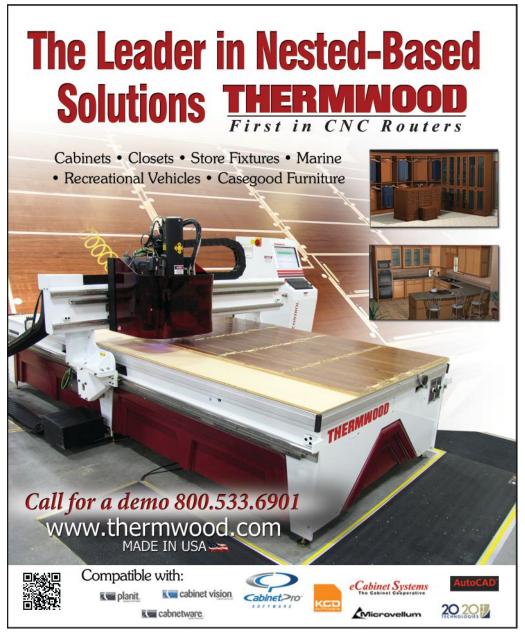
A key reason Booterbaugh is able to sell his furniture to customers so far from home is his website, which he, Kelli, and others began working on from the start of their present business in 1997. They are now into their third update and continually work to improve the site through clearer photos and stronger content. "The key phrase is 'log furniture'," he says. "This puts us up high in the search engines so we have a better chance of being noticed."

The website also helps with sales closer to home, as does a certain amount of conventional media and telephone directory advertising. "We get a lot of repeat customers and word of mouth is also very good for us," he adds.

Especially effective in this regard is the showroom in which Booterbaugh tries to display an example of everything he makes. "It's a fun place to visit for there are two big windows between the showroom and the shop. People like

continued on next page





BOOTERBAUGH from previous page

place to visit for there are two big windows between the showroom and the shop. People like to see the work being built," he says. "We build what we sell and sell what we build."

Booterbaugh now makes a comfortable living and has one full-time and two part-time employees. But it was a struggle getting started. "I was working 12 hours a day, seven days a week," he recalls. He credits Kelli for standing by his side and helping make the venture a success. "Kelli would actually peel the logs," he recalls. "She was our first log peeler. Our kids helped out. It really was a family business."

Although Kelli no longer peels logs, she still plays a vital role in the company's success by handling the office work. "Kelli is helpful in things like paying bills, collecting receivables, advertising and the other things you have to deal with as a small business, things like workers' compensation. It's amazing how time-consuming these things can be. Without Kelli's help I'd be drowning in paperwork and would have to spend too much time out of the shop. And that would not be good, for I'm a hands-on owner and oversee every piece of furniture that comes out of the shop. So Kelli and I represent a good partnership."

When asked if he's made any mistakes along the way, Booterbaugh replies, "One of the things you have to learn about log furniture, and what I initially learned the hard way, is you have to thoroughly dry your logs or lumber. Otherwise the joints won't stay tight and the lumber tends to twist. This is a real challenge in northern Idaho, for with all of the rain and snow and freezing weather, there's very little real dry time. We have an indoor facility for our logs, use a moisture heater and keep them standing for a year before we use them."

Riding the rollercoaster

Having both distant customers through his website and those closer to home and his showroom has its advantages, Booterbaugh says. If one segment goes down, the other tends to go up, so there is a balance.

When not spending time with his family, Booterbaugh enjoys fishing and hunting, from waterfowl to big game, as well at skeet and trap shooting at a local range.

The North Idaho Log Furniture Co. was recently on "Manufacturing Monday," aired on a local ABC station because the company had its manufacturing and retail showroom in the same building. He was granted the national award for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves, since three of his employees through the years were in the National Guard and/or active duty and were hired back after they served. He had been honored by the Marine Corps League for donations of furniture to various projects. And his sales to Japan were to the U.S. Air Force base in Masawa.

The economy in Idaho has been hit hard by the recession, as in so many other states. It once had a big timber industry, which has suffered, as well as mining, which is still pretty big. There is a lot of agriculture and much of the state, especially Coeur d'Alene, has transitioned into tourist destinations. All segments have been affected adversely to varying degrees.

"The last few years have been a rollercoaster for us," Booterbaugh says. "We've been very busy at times, only to have it suddenly drop off. This summer we've been lucky to be very busy, so I'm optimistic about the future."

When asked about what advice he would give others in the wood industry who are thinking about going independent, Booterbaugh, 51, replies, "I've done about everything in terms of working in high-production cabinetry, the punch press process, and I got burned out. I fell into log work and loved it. Here's it's not so much precision as a sense of design. It can be developed, to an extent, but I think you must already have the creativity inside of you.

"As far as starting a business, you have to be prepared to put in long hours at the start, be self-motivated and determined. At the same time you have to balance the creative with dealing with retail sales. You have to be able to understand your customers and see their vision of what they want to have built.

"But it's not about building boxes. Every piece is different so at the end of the day, when you look back and see what you've created, there's a lot of satisfaction. There's no better way to earn a living than doing what you love."

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THE CUTTING EDGE

with JOHN ENGLISH

The versatility of veneer

Handles curves and provides access to dramatic grains and colors

hether repairing antiques, building one-of-a-kind furniture or laminating curves on cabinets, most woodworkers eventually discover veneer. One's first instinct is to think of it as simply a way to get the most out of rare cuts or species. But veneer serves many functions beyond thrift. It makes life easier when dealing with curves, gives a woodworker access to some very dramatic grains and colors and can be applied to a stable substrate to create wide panels or complex patterns.

Veneer cuts

There are essentially three ways that mills create veneer. A log can be flat-sliced, quarter-sliced or rotary-sliced. A fourth technique, rift slicing, is generally reserved for a few specific species, most notably white oak.

Flat slicing is similar to the way that logs are traditionally plainsawn into boards. The log is ripped down the middle and one half is milled at a time. The flat face of the half being milled rides against a fence while the blade cuts slices off parallel to the fence.

Quarter slicing begins with splitting the log into four quarters and the machine slices these at 45 degrees. This is the preferred method with species that have dominant medullary rays (like the ribbons in quartersawn oak). The strips are narrower than plain-sliced veneer, but show a lot more character. This method can be a little wasteful, as it's difficult to use some of the smaller cuts.

Rotary slicing is done by mounting the log on a lathe and rotating it into a knife. This produces very wide sheets of veneer, suitable as skins for substrates such as plywood.

For information on veneer suppliers, please visit the Woodshop News online resource guide at http://resourceguide.woodshopnews.com/listing/guide/veneers-and-edge-banding.

Veneer taping

When panels are required, narrow strips of plain- or quarter-sliced veneer can be

edge-matched to create wider sheets for mounting to substrates. Tape can also be used to create geometric patterns or segmented circles that look like an orange that has been sliced across the middle. It holds banding (very thin strips of contrasting or patterned veneer) in place, too.

In the woodshop (as opposed to mass production in the veneer mill), the normal practice when creating panels that are wider than one piece of veneer is to stack two layers and use a veneer saw to cut the edges simultaneously, so that they match perfectly. The wood is then taped together, edge-to-edge, before it is attached to a substrate.

Veneer tape comes in various sizes, with or without holes (perforations). The tape without holes is used on thicker veneers that are not continued on next page



behaving well (such as crotches or highly figured cuts), but most veneers can be joined using perforated tape. It shrinks a little as the glue dries, so it pulls the edges closer together. Tape is almost always applied to the top face of veneer, rather than the glue side (there are a few exceptions). The main advantage of the holes is that one can be a little more precise in placing because the sawed edges are visible through the tape.

As veneer is so thin, there is rarely a good side (one that is better than the other) and this helps when matching because orientation can be a little more flexible. The veneer can be flipped. Every now and then, a piece of stock that is highly figured (usually from a burl) can have one face that is a little cleaner than the other, but that's rare.

Luthiers and other craftsmen who work with veneer a lot tend to use chalk to mark the back of each slice of veneer and, if there is no tape involved, that's a good idea. The presence of tape indicates that the good face is showing. Chalk can also be used to mark matching edges. When a bundle of veneer slices (a flitch) is being used, it's easy to lose track of which piece belongs where because the grain and color patterns are very similar.

Initially, short lengths of tape are applied

across, rather than along, a joint. This leaves more of the joint visible for inspection. Activate the tape by dampening its shiny face with water (a squeezed-out sponge works well), like one does to a postage stamp. Getting it too wet can actually leave marks on the veneer and these can be difficult to remove, so moderation is key. A J-roller that will be used later on to press the veneer onto a glued substrate can also be used here to ensure that the tape adheres properly to the veneer.

Every now and then it's necessary to lay tape all along an edge that simply won't lie flat. That technique is also used when all of the short pieces are in place across the joint. The final piece runs along the joint and a rag or paper towel is pressed along the joints to help absorb some of the water.

As the tape dries, it's a good idea to place a flat board with some weight on it over the joints to prevent crinkling. And wavy veneers need to be soaked and flattened as they dry before being taped or glued to a substrate.

Glue choices

The glue for veneer has traditionally been hide (which required hammering the veneer to press the wood down to the substrate), but nowadays we have lots of other choices. For example, Titebond's Cold Press glue is specifically formulated for laminating wood to solid woods, particleboard, MDF, plywood and other porous materials. Better Bond Veneer Glue comes in various colors and there's also a Heat-Lock version for iron-on veneering of irregularly shaped projects.

Other cold press glues come either premixed or as powders that require water to work. The powder version is said to be more resistant to heat and water when dried.

These veneer-specific glues are more viscous, so they offer more control, more void-filling ability and less bleed-through. They are often colored to match the wood species, which helps to disguise glue lines. And unlike standard yellow (aliphatic resin) glues, they allow less cold creep once cured.

For small areas of repair, it's possible to use epoxy, but if the furniture is a valuable antique, check with a dealer first as there is no going back with epoxy as there is with hide glue.

Personally, I don't like using polyurethane-based glue for veneering because of its foaming and also the lack of "spreadability." And I also shy away from contact cement because of its unforgiving nature.

Glue is usually applied to both the veneer and the substrate. Choose a finish that won't react with the glue (rare, but it can happen).

Substrates

This is the base to which the veneer is being glued. And the more stable it is, the better. Relatively immobile sheet goods such as MDF and micro-ply (Baltic birch) are excellent substrates. Through the decades, furniture builders used myriad common species as backers for expensive veneers, including everything from pine to gumwood, maple and poplar. The problem with using solid wood is that it moves — and not just across its grain. It also warps, twists and bows and, if the glue and veneer don't follow suit, delamination and splitting can occur. If you must use solid wood, orient the wood and veneer grains in the same direction. On plywood, go across the top layer.

For my money, the best substrate is MDF. It's strong, flat, absorbs glue well, doesn't shrink or expand, is fairly inexpensive and is void-free. It's not the greatest material in damp environments, but then who wants to leave any veneered project in such a place?

Always balance the substrate. That is, apply an equal amount of veneer (it can be of lesser quality) to the bottom of the substrate, especially on plywood and solid wood cores, or the substrate might warp.

Veneer presses

There are several ways to apply even pressure over veneer when it is being glued to



a substrate. The traditional method for flat panels is a press with several clamps (called screws) that distribute the pressure from the center toward the edges. The panel is a multilayered sandwich consisting of plywood, paper, the backer veneer, glue, substrate, glue, face veneer, paper and another piece of plywood on the top. Sometimes, cauls are used to help distribute the pressure. These have a very slightly bowed bottom, so that when the ends are clamped, the center makes good contact.

Most small projects nowadays are veneered with vacuum presses, which is a whole other discussion. Before investing in one, it's advisable to go online and look at the options.

When your panel or project comes out of the press, the tape must be removed. It can usually be lightly moistened with a paper towel and then peeled off. If there is any residue from the tape adhesive, a light rubdown with denatured alcohol should take care of it. Scraping with a card scraper also works well because the scraper offers a lot more control than an electric sander. Taped areas can be sanded using a hand block for curved surfaces and if a power sander is used it should have random orbital action, especially for projects where various grain directions meet.

Knape & Vogt grows with two acquisition

Knape & Vogt, a furniture hardware manufacturer based in Grand Rapids, Mich., has acquired Diamond Storage Concepts LLC and the Furniture Components Operations of CompX International Inc. in two separate deals.

Diamond Storage Concepts in Las Vegas sells the Hyloft brand of ceiling-mounted overhead storage, wall-mounted shelving and tire-storage products.

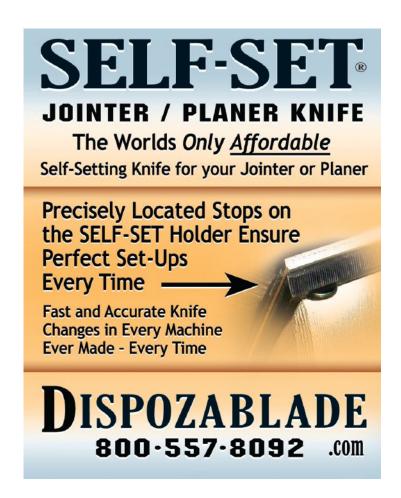
"The acquisition of Diamond Storage Concepts and the Hyloft brand of products adds exciting new products to KV's line of garage and utility storage products business," Knape & Vogt President and CEO Peter Martin said in a statement. "Garage storage is one of the fastest growing categories in home storage and organization. The addition of Hyloft products and the Diamond Storage team to our company will provide opportunity to further penetrate this important category."

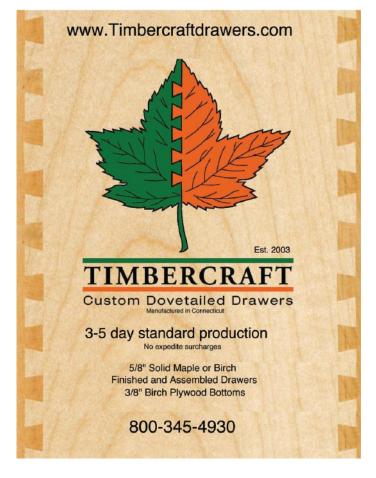
The CompX deal includes Waterloo Furniture Components in Kitchener, Ontario, and the Dynaslide division in Taipei, Taiwain.

Both manufacturers produce precision ball bearing slide products to the OEM market.

"The acquisition of Waterloo Furniture Components and Dynaslide will provide Knape & Vogt with access to new customers and markets and an expanded presence in our office OEM and distribution channels" Martin said in a separate statement. "The combined resources of KV and these two companies provide an enhanced slide product line, a full array of ergonomic accessory products and an exciting new growth opportunity through the addition of wall mounted workstation products for hospitals, medical clinics, and other health care providers. Our rapidly growing international business will be enhanced by combining Dynaslide's wide range of slide products with [KV's] GSlide's existing product line allowing for business expansion within both companies' current customers and through new customers around the world."

Knape & Vogt and Active Interest Media, publisher of Woodshop News, are owned by the same private equity firm, Wind Point Partners in Chicago.





NEW PRODUCTS

ANVER CORP. offers an electric-powered vacuum lifter-tilter and 360-degree rotator for handling 12′ x 6′ glass and architectural building panels weighing up to 1,000 lbs. It features a heavy-duty electric actuator for tilting and a worm gear drive that powers the 360-degree rotation. Suction cups can be made from various materials including foam for textured surfaces. A remote control keeps the operator safely away from the load. The lifter has a base price of \$12,900. For information, call 800-654-3500 or visit www.anver.com.

WOODSTOCK INTERNATIONAL offers the new Shop Fox pocket-hole machine, model W1833, featuring a 1/2-hp, 120-volt, universal motor that drives 6" long bits at 2,500 rpm, according to the company. It also features a patented "no adjust" hold-down

clamp, allowing the user to insert any workpiece from 1/2" to 1-1/2" thick and start drilling pocket holes immediately. The machine lists for \$810, weighs 56 lbs. and is covered by a two-year warranty. For information, call 360-734-3482 or visit www. woodstockinternational.com.











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PORTER-CABLE introduced the 20-volt Max lithium-ion drill driver, model PCCK600LB, and impact driver, model PCCK640LB. The drill/driver features a two-speed gear transmission, weighs 3.7 lbs. and is less than 8" in length. Other standard features include a 1'2" ratcheting chuck, battery gauge, LED worklight and belt clip that can be fastened to fit either right- or left-handed users. The variable-speed impact driver has a 1/4" hex quick-change chuck, two-bit storage feature, LED worklight, battery gauge and belt clip. Both products retail for \$169. For information, visit www.portercable.com/20volt.

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Messler Gallery showcases design finalists



By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

he Messler Gallery of the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Rockport, Maine, opened its "Designing Benches: Farnsworth Competition Finalists" exhibit to the public on Jan. 25.

The exhibit showcases the top 15 entries in a design competition co-sponsored by the Farnsworth Museum of Art, also in Rockland. The challenge was to design new gallery benches for the Farnsworth. A call for entries went out last July to all Maine artists and artisans.

"We are delighted with the creativity and craftsmanship of the entries," Farnsworth Museum chief curator Michael Komanecky said in a statement. "We are thrilled to make an acquisition of handsome Maine-made benches from the show."

A total of 44 entrants submitted 73 designs. The finalists, juried by the Farnsworth, are Nick Barboza of Bangor; Eben Blaney of Edgecomb; Judy Bonzi of Rockport; Gregory W. Crispell of Garland; Chris Gray of Blue Hill; Terry Kelly of Mapleton; Gregg 🔓 Lipton of Cumberland; Mason McBrien of

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Union; Richard Ong of Arrowsic; Stephen Porter of Searsmont; James Provenzano of Farmington; Kevin Rodel of Brunswick; Libby Schrum of Camden; David Stetson of Sheepscot, and Andrew White of Union.

Messler Gallery visitors were able to try out the benches while viewing a concurrent exhibition of seating-themed Maine paintings. Participating artists include Barbara Sullivan, represented by Caldbeck Gallery; Ted Keller, represented by Carver Hill Gallery; Harold Garde; represented by Harbor Square Gallery; and Stephen Hoedecker, Connie Hayes, David Vickery and other artists represented by Dowling Walsh Gallery.

The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship is a non-profit, yearround school that offers courses in furniture making and related arts such as carving and woodturning.

Contact: Messler Gallery, 25 Mill St., Rockport, Maine 04856. Tel: 207-594-5611. www.wood school.org





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CALENDAR

Organizations sponsoring meetings, classes or shows of interest to professional or hobbyist woodworkers are invited to submit items to: Calendar, Woodshop News, 10 Bokum Road, Essex, CT 06426; editorial@woodshopnews.com.

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

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

CALIFORNIA

Monthly — San Fernando Valley Woodworkers meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Balboa Park Sports Complex, Gym Building, at 17015 Burbank Boulevard in Encino. www.sfvw.org

June 20-22 — FS13: L.A. Symposium. Hosted by The Furniture Society, this three-day event will feature panel discussions, studio tours, and exhibitions. Location: L.A. Mart in Los Angeles. Contact: www.furnituresociety.org

CONNECTICUT

April 13-14 — Antique Furniture Restoration workshop hosted by conservationists Tad Fallon and Randy Wilkinson. Designed for collectors, restorers, homeowners and dealers alike, this weekend workshop will cover topics such as loss compensation techniques, reconditioning of existing finishes, preparation of shellacs, and much more. Location: Fallon & Wilkinson Conservation Studio in Baltic. Fee: \$325. Contact: www.fallon wilkinson.com

FLORIDA

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.

Monthly — Woodcrafters Club of Tampa meets every third Thursday evening at 3809 W. Broad St. in Tampa. For information, visit www.tampawoodcrafters.org.

March 15-17— The Woodworking Show at the Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa. *www.thewoodworkingshows.com*

GEORGIA

March 22-24 — The Woodworking Show at the North Atlanta Trade Center in Norcross. www.thewoodworkingshows.com

MAINE

Feb. 11-May 3 — Twelve-week intensive program at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Rockport. Course provides a hands-on woodworking experience in a fully equipped shop with daily personal instruction. Fee: \$6,950. www.woodschool.org

MARYLAND

May 3-5 — Fine Furnishings Show for exhibitors of handcrafted furniture and accessories. Location: Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium. www.finefurnishings shows.com

NEVADA

July 24-27 — AWFS fair at the Las Vegas Convention Center. *www.afwsfair.org*

NEW JERSEY

Feb. 27-March 1— Cabinets & Closets Conference & Expo at the New Jersey Convention & Exposition Center in Edison.

April 13-14 — Second annual Spring Fine Art and Crafts at the Westfield Armory in Westfield. *www.rosesquared.com*

NEW HAMPSHIRE

May 18-19 — 26th annual Fine Art and Crafts at Verona Park in Verona. www.rose squared.com

NEW YORK

Monthly — Sawdust and Woodchips Woodworking Association meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Canton Woods Center in Baldwinsville. www. sawdustwoodchips.org

May 18-21— 25th annual International Contemporary Furniture Fair at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City. *www.icff.com*

NORTH CAROLINA

July 29- Aug. 3 — Ladderback chair class with Drew Langser. Students will make a bentback, double slat, post-and-rung chair in this six-day summer workshop. Fee: \$975. www.countryworkshops.org

OHIO

March 1-3 — The Woodworking Show at the Ohio Expo Center in Columbus. www.the woodworkingshows.com

PENNSYLVANIA

April 5-7 — Philadelphia Invitational Furniture Show at the 23rd Street Armory in Philadelphia. www.philaifs.com

RHODE ISLAND

Nov. 1-3 — Fine Furnishings Show for exhibitors handcrafted furniture and accessories. Location: Pawtucket Armory Arts Center. *www.finefurnishingsshows.com*

SOUTH DAKOTA

Monthly — The South Dakota Woodworkers Guild meets the last Thursday of every month (except August). The club has hand tool and woodturning groups. *www.sdwoodworker.org*

WISCONSIN

Oct. 4-6 — Fine Furnishings Show for exhibitors of handcrafted furniture and accessories. Location: The Garage at the Harley-Davidson Museum in Milwaukee. www.finefurnishingsshows.com



List your Events in our Calendar

Woodshop News welcomes event notices.

Entries must be received by the15th of the month, three months prior to the event.

Mail to: Calendar, Woodshop News, 10 Bokum Road, Essex, CT 06426 Fax to: Calendar, 860-767-0642 E-mail: j.hicks@woodshopnews.com Subject: Calendar Item

The events are also listed at no charge on the Internet: www.woodshopnews.com

Be sure to include: event name, date, location, sponsor, contact name and telephone number, and Web site URL if applicable.

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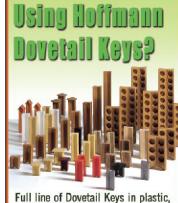
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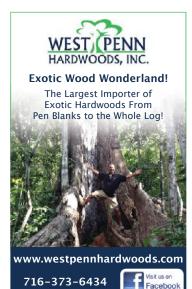
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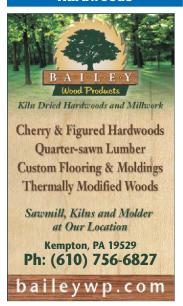






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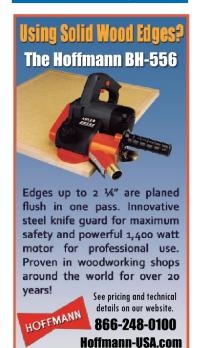
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Water ski furniture

What started as a hobby several years ago has grown into a small business for Brian Amaral, owner of Water Ski Adirondack Chairs in Kingston, R.I. As its name implies, the company offers customizable Adirondack-style seating designs crafted from vintage water skis. With business picking up, Amaral has added various ottomans, tables, bookcases, wine racks and shelves to his product line.

Amaral's furniture creations put a twist on the idea of ski furniture, as ski-inspired Adirondack chairs have long been popular at mountain resorts and vacation spots. He grew up on Johnson's Pond in Coventry, R.I., where he developed an affinity for the water and all things related to it, which explains the root of his design ideas. He later attended the University of Rhode Island, graduating with a master's degree in ocean engineering, and is currently pursuing a second master's degree there in oceanography.

While in college in 2008, he made his first water-ski chair as a Christmas gift, which led to more chair requests from family and friends. Two years later, he decided to start his business, building several pieces from scratch and exhibiting them at local craft shows such as Providence's One Way Gallery and the Providence Fine Furnishings Show.

"Even though it's a business, it's more like a hobby because I don't generate much income. I'm still a full-time college student. It's a way to pay for my materials. But I think there's potential for this to grow in the future. I want to finish my schooling in oceanography right now," says Amaral.





Adirondack Chairs, in Kingston, R.I.

In addition to the craft shows, Amaral has gained publicity from local news media and his website. He has received calls from across the U.S. and has sold one item to a client in Scotland. Many of his inquiries come from water-ski enthusiasts who even prefer to ship him their own water skis for custom projects. The pieces are built with oak, hardware and high-gloss finishes. They range from \$600 to several thousand dollars each depending on the design and whether the material has been furnished by the customer.

"I think there's a market for my product. The price point for the Adirondack chairs is pretty high because it's a costly item to build. So by expanding that product line into benches and other items, I can offer more affordable pieces," he says, adding that he's currently redesigning his existing chair line with folding backs to make them easier to transport.

Contact: Water Ski Adirondack Chairs, P.O. Box 2003, Kingston, RI 02881. Tel: 401-285-1572. www.waterski adirondackchairs.com

— Jennifer Hicks



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