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NEWS®

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March 2013

Home on the range

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*Flexner: Solving
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*Organizing a shop
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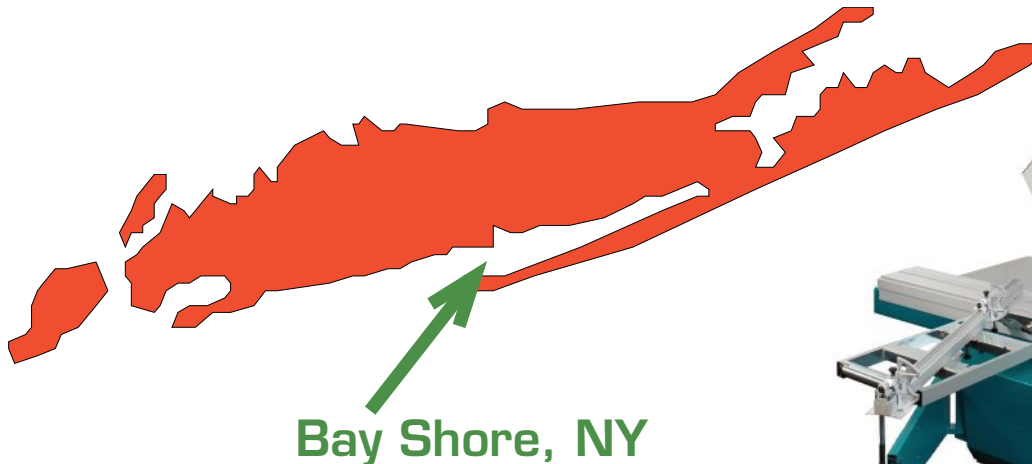
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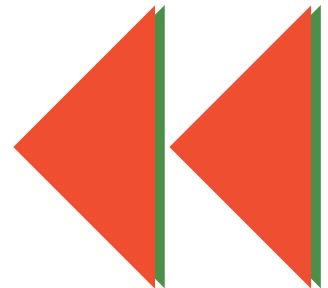


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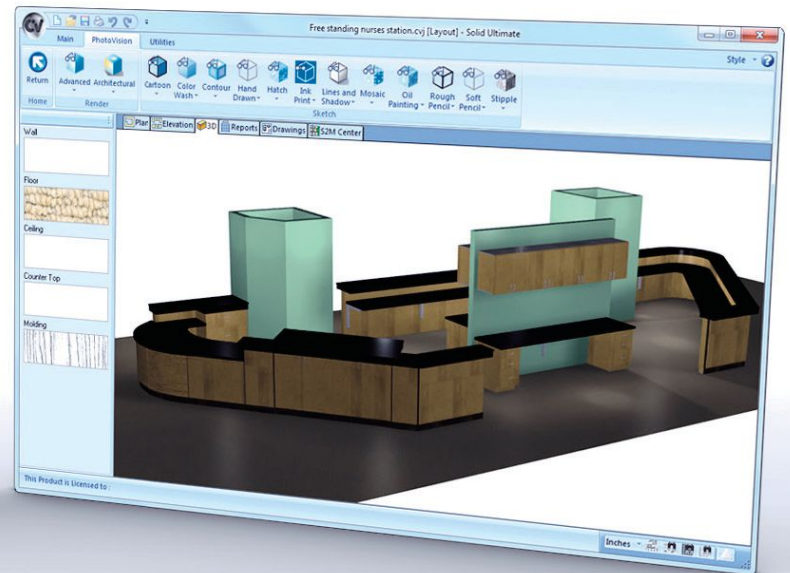
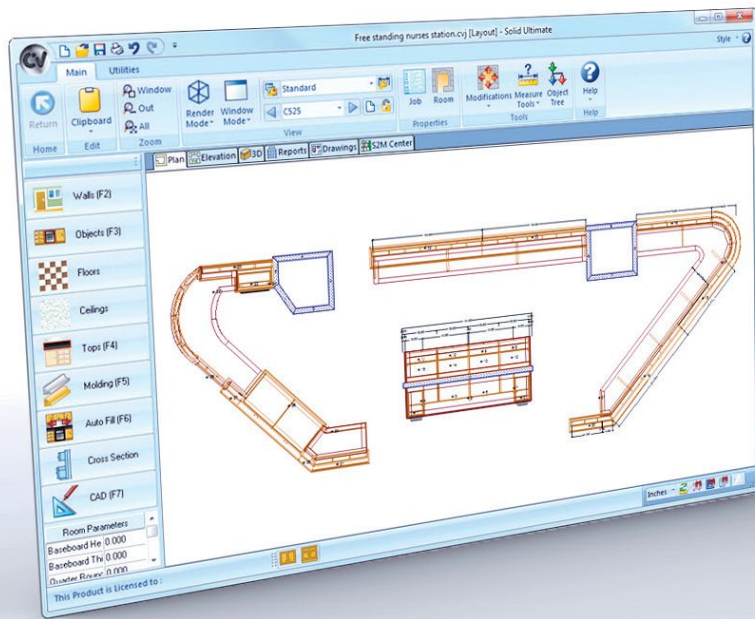


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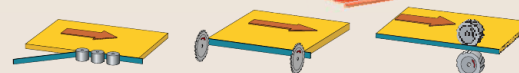
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BLOGS



Over the Workbench

Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler



This Business about Woodworking

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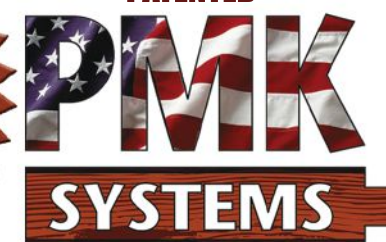
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TAKING STOCK

with TOD RIGGIO

Mergers, commitments and a hope for new growth

A couple of news items to share as you begin your journey through this month's issue: WoodLINKS USA is merging with the Woodwork Career Alliance (Page 10) and the 2013 AWFS has hooked the big fish (Page 57).

The merger furthers the 2010 partnership between the two industry-supported education efforts. It's hardly surprising since the two groups seem to be on the same path.

"The Woodwork Career Alliance's credentialing program was established in 2011, and is rapidly being adapted by the industry as the standard for training and evaluating personnel in the wood industry," the groups said in a statement. "An educational arm of the WCA is being established to develop new recruits for our industry primarily at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Merging these two organizations will provide a stronger network to train and evaluate current and future woodworkers."

"WoodLINKS USA has received significant industry support and developed a strong network of schools since it was first established in the U.S. in 1999. WoodLINKS USA members are active in 16 states around the country and work with thousands of students each day. Under the proposed merger, all current school members of WoodLINKS USA will become education members of the merged organization and will be provided with the same benefits afforded them under their membership terms with WoodLINKS USA."

Here's hoping the WoodLINKS leaders — board president Patrick Molzahn, national director Rick Hill and national education coordinator Mark Smith, to name a few — will also have prominent roles with the alliance.

The staff at AWFS must be doing cartwheels now that its largest exhibitors — Weinig, Stiles Machinery and SCM Group North America — are officially in the fold. After skipping the event in 2009, the big machinery suppliers returned in 2011 to give the Las Vegas show some extra life.

The AWFS says it expects to fill its new floor plan to capacity. The machinery and supply hall have been combined into an expanded Central Hall at the Las Vegas Convention Center for the July 24-27 show.

Judges for the Fresh Wood exhibition, a student competition held during AWFS, were introduced as:

- Janis Colella, owner at Culin & Colella, a custom woodworking company in Mamaroneck, N.Y.
- Paul Epp, industrial design department chair at Ontario College of Art & Design
- Furniture maker Darrell Peart of Seattle
- Hanes Fabrics Co. regional manager Gene Valcke
- Rob Zoehfeld, product line manager at Datesweiser, a custom office and corporate furniture manufacturer in Buffalo, N.Y.

It's also worth noting that, for the first time in five years, kitchen cabinet manufacturers have logged 12 consecutive months of growth. According to the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturer's trend of business survey, sales increased 7.3 percent in 2012.

"The outlook for 2013 continues to improve," the KCMA said in a statement. "Housing seems to have turned a corner in its path to recovery and kitchen repair and remodeling activity is increasing. The cabinet manufacturing industry is poised to benefit from improving market conditions." **W**

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

WOODSHOP NEWS

Shaping the Successful Shop™

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NEWS DESK



WoodLINKS USA members gather at an annual teacher in-service day to discuss educational concerns in the woodworking industry.

Merger has a goal of work force preparation

Under the umbrella of the Woodwork Career Alliance, WoodLINKS USA will also alleviate its funding challenges

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

In name only, WoodLINKS USA will be no more. The industry-supported educational organization is merging with the Woodwork Career Alliance, which basically has the same goal of preparing the next generation of woodworkers to join the work force.

"We licensed the name out of Canada and we decided that we are going to end that agreement as of June 30 of this year. We will now come under the umbrella of the Woodwork Career Alliance," WoodLINKS USA president Patrick Molzahn says.

The February announcement follows months of discussions, according to Molzahn. The agreement allows WoodLINKS USA to use the WCA's credentialing system created in 2010.

"We believe that one organization having one goal with one mission will work best to accomplish our goals," says Molzahn. "So really, it's about building synergy and the momentum that everybody's doing in different areas. The WCA has a great credentialing system and

we've been using that with WoodLINKS and it's just kind of been a natural evolution."

The next step is to form a committee that will serve as an educational arm of the WCA, according to Molzahn. This will help the WCA do what WoodLINKS USA has done best: market its skill evaluation program to students and teachers at high schools and colleges across the country. Both groups have been trying to establish a curriculum to prepare students to meet industry skill standards, of which some are still in development.

The merger is also about consolidating financial resources.

"The nice thing with the WCA is that there is a revenue stream through the sales of evaluation credits and printed media, so the WCA has a business plan and a better revenue source. Hopefully that will alleviate some of the funding challenges we've had in the past. We also won't be sending [any more] site fees to Canada," says Molzahn.

Visit www.woodworkcareer.org. 

KBIS heads to New Orleans

By Jennifer Hicks

STAFF WRITER

The 49th annual Kitchen and Bath Industry Show, a showcase for new products and design trends sponsored by the National Kitchen and Bath Association, is scheduled for April 19-21 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

This year's show will feature educational opportunities specifically tailored to small-business owners in the kitchen and bath trades, according to NKBA president John Morgan.

"I think woodworkers will be interested in our education sessions because they won't be just about design," Morgan says. "A lot of them will take a 360[-degree] view of our businesses, talking about management practices, operating in today's economy and what the latest trends are."

Morgan says emerging trends include more use of glass in countertops and tiles, consumers favoring French door refrigerators and steam ovens in their custom kitchens, and cabinet manufacturers offering more transitional styles, described as a mix between contemporary and traditional.

From a finish perspective, "I can tell you off-white paint is still king, while a medium-to-dark stain is still highlighted," says Morgan. "And the use of walnut is growing at an incredible amount within the industry."

From 2014 to 2016, the show will be held in conjunction with the International Builders Show in Las Vegas. Together, the shows will create Design and Construction Week.

"This new format allows exhibitors to reach a full range of design and construction professionals who buy, specify and influence the products that go into American homes," National Association of Home Builders chairman Barry Rutenberg said in a statement. "For attendees, it means access to two expansive trade show floors and hundreds of additional suppliers to meet."

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Stiles symposium sees boost in attendance

Stiles Machinery hosted its manufacturing symposium in late January at its newly expanded facility in High Point, N.C., and saw record attendance for the two-day event. Attendance at the symposium grew from an expected 150 attendees to approximately 300 by the end of the day on Friday.

The event displayed and demonstrated a wide range of manufacturing products, from sanding and finishing to nested-based machining cells.

Serving as the backdrop to the entire event was its newly renovated and enlarged facility. Stiles merged its Gastonia, N.C., facility, which showcased the Holzma line of solutions, into its High Point location.

Stiles' full lineup now incorporates everything from panel processing and material management, to sanding and finishing and even digital printing.

The new High Point show floor features roughly 40,000 sq. ft. of space, as well as a permanent training room for education.

"We combined our facilities to better serve our customers. Now they can come to one location and see everything under one roof,"

Stiles senior marketing manager Erich Schroeder says. "The idea is to make it easier for the customer to learn about and experience the

latest technology available so they can make the decisions that work best for them. There is no other facility like this in the country." **W**



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Woodworkers Club expands in D.C. area

The club hosts more than 100 members.



By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

The Woodworkers Club of Rockville, Md., has experienced a recent membership increase, prompting its owners to open a new facility and create several educational offerings through its Center for Creative Woodworking.

The studio, located just outside of Washington, D.C., is open year-round and serves as a membership studio for hobbyist woodworkers and as a classroom for aspiring professionals.

"The Woodworkers Club is essentially a gym for woodworkers. We're here to provide them with the expertise and the equipment for them to make whatever projects they see fit, from a cutting board all the way up to a chest of drawers or a restoration piece," says educational director Matt Nauman.

The club hosts more than 100 members and up to 800 students per year.

Nauman explains that the business goes back to the early 1990s and was one of the first to embrace the community shop concept. It has since offered franchise opportunities and consulting services to other co-op shops throughout the country.

"It originally merged with Woodcraft in the late '80s, early '90s. Most who attempted to run the franchise were unsuccessful because they saw it as more of a business aspect, wanting to make tons of money. But it isn't about that. Most of our income comes from the retail end of things," he says.

The business changed ownership in 2011 and is moving from its current 3,200-sq.-ft. space to an 11,000-sq.-ft. facility.

Nauman says a visiting artist program has been a big draw, giving members access to instruction from nationally respected professional woodworkers. This year's scheduled artists include Mary May, Mark Sfirri, Christopher Schwarz, Gregory Paolini and Michael Puryear.

"This program shows that we are dedicated and that we have an understanding there are people out there much more ahead of the curve than any of us or anybody locally might be. And it really just shows that we're trying to make a prestigious program. I think it's difficult to do, of course, but by bringing in that caliber and showcasing it, they're coming to this area. [Members] don't have to travel and spend thousands of dollars to see these individuals elsewhere."

Contact: The Woodworkers Club, 4950 Wyconda Road, Rockville, MD 20852. Tel: 301-984-9033. www.woodworkersclub.com **W**

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Casadei Busellato plans open house

Casadei Busellato scheduled an open house March 7-8 at its newly renovated showroom in Concord, N.C.

The manufacturer will present its latest technology in its Busellato work center, including its Jet Optima Machining Center and the new Easy Jet 4' x 8' nesting router.

Software partner Planit Solutions will be demonstrating the latest in software solutions and quick connectivity with Casadei Busellato's nesting machining center.

Demonstrations will also be provided for production edgebanders in the Casadei Flexa series, Libra wide belt sander and a range of other Casadei classical woodworking equipment.

All machinery will have special event pricing.

For more information, visit www.casadei-busellato.com.

Emerson debuts Workshop brand

Emerson Commercial & Residential Solutions, a business of Emerson, is launching 14

new wet/dry vacuum products plus related filters and accessories under the Workshop brand.

Workshop products feature several design innovations, including the patented Qwik Lock filter fastening system to make filter changes easy and completely tool-free, the Dual-Flex locking hose that maintains 180-degree flexibility at both hose ends and the Roll Tight locking sleeve, which makes loose accessory connections a thing of the past, according to the company.

Workshop brand products will be available at select retailers and hardware stores, commercial distributors and on the company's website.

For information, visit www.workshopvacs.com.

Decore-ative Specialties plans new website

Decore-ative Specialties, a manufacturer of custom cabinet components for the kitchen, bath, closet, garage, office, and refacing industries in Monrovia, Calif., unveiled its new website on Feb. 25.

The new site features multiple options for viewing and ordering custom cabinet doors, drawers, components, moldings, hardware,

accessories, and finishing products, marketing director Joel Boyles said in a statement.

"Our easy-to-use design offers enhanced imagery, improved search, and detailed information about all of our products. We've also increased the functionality of our Anytime online account manager to provide customers with a more exciting, intuitive, ordering experience."

Visit www.decore.com.

OSHA recognizes States Industries

States Industries, a western Oregon producer of hardwood plywood, components and specialty panels, was recognized by the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration for completion of its five-year Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program.

The program was developed to provide an incentive for Oregon employers to work with their employees to identify and correct safety hazards or potentially unsafe work practices and to also work on continuous improvement programs.

The recognition was earned by States' components division in Eugene. **W**



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TOOLS & TECHNIQUES

Ironwood rip saw puts focus on safety

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

The new Ironwood SLR 330 straight-line rip saw provides constant ripping ability to shops with low-to-moderate production volumes. Classified as an entry-level machine, the saw is geared for cabinet and furniture manufacturers wanting to rip any type of lumber, panels or plywood to width while offering a high degree of glue-line accuracy.

"The benefit of the straight-line rip saw is that they offer wider rip capacity so they can rip panels or plywood board whereas gang rip saws and multi rip saws have more of a limited ripping capacity. These machines can pro-

vide a very high cutting tolerance at a lower price," says Stiles Machinery product manager Chris Dolbow. Stiles Machinery is the exclusive U.S. distributor of Ironwood.

The saw has a 15-hp motor and features eight pressure rollers for glue-line accuracy up to 13' long. It has an 18" ripping capacity for applications that require wide boards. Ground connector pins with diamond-cut, heat-treated chain blocks allow straight-line feeding for glue-joint rip capabilities, according to Stiles.

Dolbow says the saw incorporates improved safety measures, such as three extended rows of anti-kickback fences and longer side guards.

"Straight-line rip saws have a pretty



Ironwood SLR 330 straight line rip saw.

nasty history of accidents because of the potential for kickbacks. So what we first and foremost focus on with this machine is making it heavier than most machines and giving it more safety features to protect the operators. We've extended the side guards, covering many exposed areas from the cutting area."

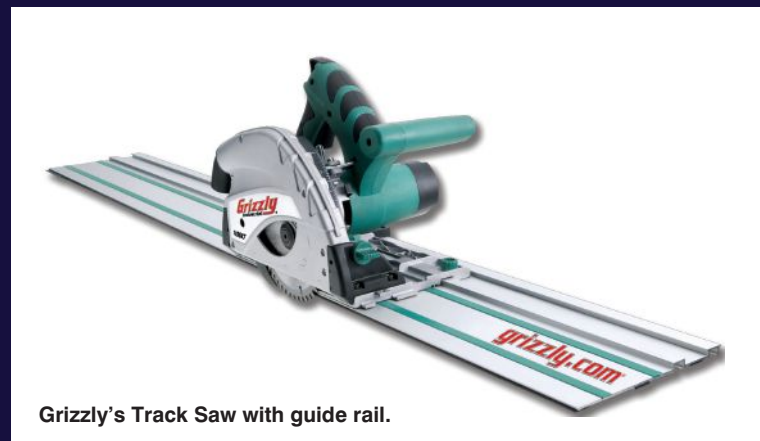
Additionally, he says the rip fence system was redesigned to improve the accuracy and setup. The new rip fence glides along THK linear guideways and locks in place by a single movement, ensuring absolute parallel positioning and a more accurate setup and fast movement.

The Ironwood SLR 330 sells for \$20,490.

Contact: Stiles Machinery. Tel: 616-698-7500. www.stilesmachinery.com 

Grizzly cuts the cost of a circular track saw

Grizzly recently introduced the Track Saw, a plunge-cut circular saw that, when used with the optional guide rail, makes straight



Grizzly's Track Saw with guide rail.

cuts for panel processing. While the concept is not new to the industry, Grizzly's version is more affordable than others in the market.

"This is a new product for us but it's something that's been on the market for a while. Typically, these kinds of saws are quite expensive to purchase, more than what ours sells for. We created this not as a replacement for somebody that wants to buy a \$1,000 track saw, but for someone who could never buy one, but instead can buy ours for \$179," Grizzly quality control manager Bill Crofutt says.

"It's very portable, so you can take it to the job site and rip panels exactly to size perfectly straight. It's much less expensive than a panel saw, which is far less portable and much more expensive."

The Track Saw features a riving knife for anti-kickback protection, cutting depth of up to 2-5/32", and an anti-tilt bar that provides a secure grip on the guide rail for miter cutting, according to Grizzly.

The model T10687 Track Saw sells for \$179 with a blade. The guide rail, model T24872, sells separately for \$49.95.

Contact: Grizzly Industrial. Tel: 800-523-4777. www.grizzly.com

— By Jennifer Hicks

Steel City rolls out hybrid table-saw series

Features cabinet-mounted trunnion with granite or cast-iron table tops

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Steel City Tool Works has a new series of 10" table saws, sold with a 30" or 50" fence and rail packages and granite or cast-iron table tops.

The new saws — models 35950 and 35955 — are called hybrids, sort of a cross between a contractor and cabinet saw. Their main feature is a cast-iron trunnion mounted to the cabinet, rather than the table top.

"We took the original contractor saw, modified the trunnion assembly by a few pounds of cast iron and made it into a cabinet saw with a built-in mobile base for total portability," company spokesman Terry Ross says.

The saws also feature a 1-3/4-hp motor, new quick release and adjustable riving knife, magnetic table insert and seamless table top.

"For additional support, there's

a 10" or 32" table extension to the right side of the saw, depending on the model," says Ross. "And the included fence does not touch the table unless you make the adjustments to do so; it glides on the front and

rear rails using nylon studs."

Model 35950, with a 30" fence and rail package, sells for about \$1,000.

Contact: Steel City Tool Works. Tel: 877-724-8665. www.steelcitytoolworks.com **W**



The Steel City model 35950C 10" table saw with cast-iron top.

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Casadei Busellato unveils two entry-level machines

Edgebander and sliding panel saw aimed at small production shops

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Casadei Busellato introduced the new ALA 20 S edgebander, a versatile entry-level machine designed to meet the needs of the small shop and custom manufacturer.

"The compact footprint, 1-phase electrical, quality of application and affordable price tag make the ALA 20 S a great entry-level edgebander for manufacturers who need to upgrade from hot air or hand edgebanding," Casadei product and distribution manager Thomas Tuck says.

The machine comes standard with a Teflon-coated glue pot, PLC control system and top

and bottom trim system. It can apply tape, .5mm to 2mm PVC and wood or laminate strips. It sells for \$13,000.

The machinery supplier also unveiled a redesigned Xenia 60 sliding panel saw. "This can be used by woodworkers at their primary cutting source for most cross-cutting and ripping applications. It's a very industrial machine that will tolerate a full day's work," says Tuck.

The saw offers has a full 10-1/2' stroke and 59" rip capacity, 15-hp main motor, digital readouts for positioning and overhead guard with dust extraction. The Xenia 60 sells for \$18,950.

Contact: Casadei Busellato. Tel: 336-854-1211. www.casadei-busellato.com 



The Xenia 60 sliding panel saw (above) and Casadei ALA 20 S edgebander.



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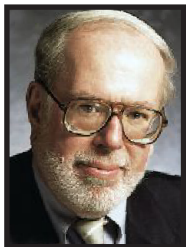
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What do the new tax laws mean for you?

With the recent passage of the 'fiscal cliff' tax package, some changes are in store that could save you – or cost you – money

The so-called "fiscal cliff" tax package recently signed into law renewed more than 50 temporary tax breaks through 2013, saving individuals and businesses an estimated \$76 billion. On the downside, employees are already finding less in their paychecks because the American Taxpayer Relief Act did not extend the payroll tax holiday that had reduced Social Security payroll deductions from 6.2 percent to 4.2 percent on earned

income up to the Social Security wage base (\$113,700 for 2013). It is a similar story for the self-employed worker.

For the owners and operators of small- and medium-sized woodworking shops and businesses, there is good news and bad news contained in the fiscal cliff tax laws. First, the good news: Greater certainty in taxes. Woodworking professionals have grown used to many longstanding tax breaks, but they also have had to get used to the uncertainty of

whether those breaks will be renewed each year. While many tax breaks expired at the end of 2011, the new tax law renews them retroactively allowing professional woodworkers to claim them on both their 2012 and 2013 tax returns.

Equipment write-offs

The American Taxpayer Relief Act extended through 2013 Section 179 of the tax code, which includes the first-year expensing write-off. Now, the higher expensing limits in effect in 2011 have been reinstated for 2012 and extended for expenditures made before Dec. 31, 2013. Thus, a woodworking shop can expense or immediately deduct up to \$500,000 of equipment expenditures in 2012 and 2013, subject to a phaseout if total capital expenditures exceed \$2,000,000. The maximum amount that can be expensed in years beginning after 2013 will, without amendment, drop to \$25,000.

The election to expense and write off the off-the-shelf computer software used by so many woodworking professionals under Section 179 is also extended and applies to expenditures made before Dec. 31, 2013.

The tax break that allows profitable woodworking shops and businesses to write off large capital expenditures immediately —

continued on next page

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rather than over time — has long been used as an economic stimulus. While 100 percent “bonus” depreciation expired at the end of 2011, today the new law allows 50 percent bonus depreciation for property placed in service through 2013. Some transportation and longer-lived property are even eligible for bonus depreciation through 2014.

To be eligible for bonus depreciation, property must be depreciable under the standard Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System and have a recovery period of less than 20 years. Section 179 first-year expensing remains a viable alternative especially for small businesses. Property qualifying for the Section 179 write-off can be either used or new in contrast to the bonus depreciation requirement that the taxpayer be the “first to use.”

More, more and more

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit, a tax credit that rewards employers that hire individuals from targeted groups, was extended to Dec. 31, 2013, and applies to individuals who begin work for the employer after Dec. 31, 2011. Under the revised tax credit, woodworking businesses hiring an individual from within a targeted group are eligible for a credit generally equal to 40 percent of first-year wages up to \$6,000.

Although an S corporation is a pass-through entity and not usually subject to income taxes, it is liable for the tax imposed on so-called “built-in” and capital gains. The tax on built-in gains is a corporate level tax on S corporations that dispose of assets that appreciated in value during the years when the operation was a regular C corporation.

The new law extends a relaxed version of the provision that limits the “recognition period” to five years, but only for “built-in gains” recognized in 2012 and 2013. Thus, if a wood-working business elected S corporation status beginning Jan. 1, 2007, it will be able to sell appreciated assets it held on that date without being subject to a hefty tax bill. Anyone in this situation might want to take advantage of this provision, but are advised to consult with a tax professional.

Taxing it alone

Thanks to the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act that became law in 2010, beginning in 2013, many individuals discovered they are subject to a 3.8 percent net investment income tax and a 0.9 percent additional Medicare tax. The new taxes apply to single taxpayers with a modified adjusted gross income in excess of \$200,000 and married taxpayers with a modified adjusted gross income in excess of \$250,000 if filing a joint

return or \$125,000 if filing a separate return.

More recently, single individuals with incomes above the \$400,000 level and married couples with income higher than \$450,000 will pay more in taxes in 2013 because of a higher 39.6 percent income tax rate and a 20 percent maximum capital gains tax. For others individuals, the alternative minimum tax has finally been indexed for inflation.

Ironically, the AMT was created to ensure that wealthy individuals would pay some kind of income tax, not middle-income households. The new law increases the 2012 exemption amounts to \$50,600 for unmarried individuals and \$78,750 for jointly-filing couples. For 2013, the AMT exemption amounts are predicted to be \$80,750 for married couples filing jointly and \$51,900 for single individuals.

Estate taxes never die

Always of significant interest to family-owned businesses, the estate tax has long been a bit of a mixed bag. The \$5 million per person exemption was kept in place and indexed for inflation. The top rate was, however, increased to 40 percent (effective date Jan. 1, 2013). This change to 40 percent is expected to increase government revenues from 2012 levels by \$19 billion. Other good news for estate planning — portability is



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kept in place and estate and gift taxes remain unified — i.e., the \$5 million stays in place for gift tax purposes as well as estates. And it is all permanent.

Planning opportunities abound

The majority of woodworking businesses operate as pass-through entities, such as partnerships and S corporations. Profits are passed through to their individual owners and therefore are taxed at individual income tax rates. Some business owners might be considering switching to a regular C corporation with its top rate of 35 percent rather than doing business through an S corporation, LLC, etc., and

be subjected to a top rate of 39.6 percent on the pass-through income.

It should also be kept in mind that if a switch is made from an S corporation or a regular C corporation, a switch back to an S corporation can't be made for five years unless permission is received from the IRS. If an LLC or partnership is incorporated, there can be expenses and potential tax consequences.

Although it is not the grand bargain as envisioned by lawmakers, many popular but temporary business-related tax provisions were included in the American Taxpayer Relief Act. Remember though, despite the Section 179 small business expensing, bonus

depreciation and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, the new law is effectively a stop-gap measure. Congress must still address spending cuts and might even tackle tax reform.

The time is now — hopefully before filing the woodworking operation's 2012 tax returns — for every woodworking professional to consult with their accountants and/or tax professionals to focus on the potential savings offered by these newly revised, extended and expanded business credits, deductions and tax write-offs. **W**

Mark E. Battersby is a freelance tax and financial writer based in Ardmore, Pa.

Franklin starts new blog

Franklin Adhesives & Polymers, a division of Franklin International, wants to get customers reading and talking about all things adhesive on its new weekly blog called "Sticky Stuff."

The division, which produces adhesives and polymers for industrial wood, filter media and assembly, and pressure sensitive markets, launched the blog at year's end to share information with customers and to spark conversation with them, according to the company.

The weekly blog includes insights on domestic and global topics, trends and events from members of the division's management team as well as gluing and coating tips. To acquaint readers with the people behind the brand, it also features a monthly question and answer session with a different department or individual at Franklin.

Several guest bloggers from industry publications as well as other industry experts also will post original material on "Sticky

Stuff." Subscribers to the blog will be notified when these and all other posts are made and will receive regular summaries of activity on the blog.

"'Sticky Stuff' offers us a way to share information and thoughts in a casual environment," spokeswoman Abbe Raabe said in a statement. "At the same time, it's a social medium and we want those people who want to comment to do so — to enter the conversation with us and each other."



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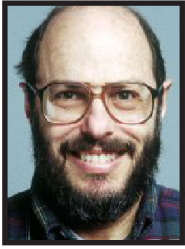
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When finishes frustrate you by not drying quickly enough, you can fix the problem in several different ways

Years ago, I was teaching a class in someone else's shop. We were spraying a table with lacquer on a humid day and the lacquer was blushing. So I reached for a can of lacquer retarder and added about the same amount I typically did in my shop.

Hours later, the lacquer was still not dry. In fact, it was quite sticky. What had happened? The shop was warm. We had used the same

lacquer the previous day without any problems. Could the retarder have been different?

I read the label and saw that it was straight butyl cellosolve, the slowest lacquer solvent commonly available to us, not the blend of a half-a-dozen solvents I was used to. That had to be the cause. So we washed off the lacquer and started over, adding very little of the retarder. The lacquer dried normally.

Since that time lacquer retarders containing

only environmentally friendly butyl cellosolve have become much more widespread (they used to be common only on the Gulf Coast). Now they are often the only retarder sold in areas with strict VOC laws and they are even common in my home state of Oklahoma, which is one of the dryer areas of the country.

So you might well have experienced this slow-drying problem when you switched brands without paying much attention to the label.

Adding a slow-evaporating thinner to your finish is one of the main causes of finishes drying too slowly. You have to be aware of what you are getting every time you change thinners.

But slow solvents aren't the only cause of slow drying. In fact, they aren't even the main cause. The main cause is cold temperature, which causes all finishes to dry slower. Other causes include using a shellac that is too old, applying finish to a very oily wood and not wiping off excess oil finish well enough.

Temperature

Finishing in a cold shop is the most common cause of finishes drying slower. It doesn't even have to be that cold to make a noticeable difference. Slow drying can result in increased dust nibs and the tendency of "printing" when items are stacked. That is, the items leave press-marks on each other or stick to each other.

The obvious solution is to warm up the shop.

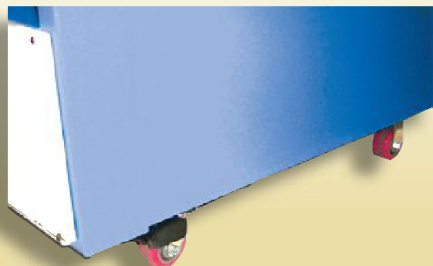
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But doing this is sometimes difficult, so here are two other solutions that might work for you.

If the finish is a lacquer type that thins normally with lacquer thinner, you can add a little acetone to the finish. Acetone is the fastest-evaporating solvent commonly available to us and is now widely available because it has been "delisted" as a VOC. Just as with adding retarder, you'll need to experiment a little to get the right amount in different temperature conditions.



When finishes dry slower than expected, press marks, like the one shown here with a fingerprint, are often the result.

Instead of adding acetone, you could switch to a finish that has been formulated with acetone. Because this solvent isn't considered a VOC, it's being used in large percentages in lacquers to make them compliant. If you live in an area with strict VOC laws, the lacquer you buy is probably already one of these types. Otherwise, check with your supplier.

Cold temperatures also cause catalyzed finishes to not dry properly. The temperature should be kept above 65 degrees for at least six hours after application — and sometimes longer. This usually means keeping the shop warm overnight.

Shellac

Shellac deteriorates much more rapidly than other finishes. The deterioration leads to slower drying and reduced water resistance and it occurs faster if the shellac is stored in hot temperatures. It's best to use the shellac within a year of the flakes having been dissolved in alcohol.

Unfortunately, the lone remaining supplier of already-dissolved shellac, Zinsser Bulls Eye, stopped dating their cans. Now they just stamp them with a lot number. This is a unwelcome change.

I guess you could call the company and try to find out when that lot number was made. Otherwise, you're just going to have to try the shellac to check that it dries normally, because you don't know how long the can might have sat on a supplier's shelf.

Other finishes also deteriorate, but the deterioration doesn't lead to significantly slower dry-

ing. Precatalyzed lacquer loses some of its durability after a few years (the time varies with different manufacturers) and water-based finishes sometimes curdle after a number of years. I've never seen varnish or lacquer deteriorate as long as lids are kept tight, no matter how old it is.

Oily woods

Shops are using more and more exotic woods as customers look for something different. These woods often contain resins that feel and act like oil and retard the drying of all oil and varnish products, including oil stains.

This is counterintuitive, so much so that it's common to see instructions in woodworking magazines calling specifically for the use of oil or varnish on oily woods because these are "compatible." The opposite is the case. Oils and varnishes are the only finishes that don't dry well.

The explanation is this: The non-drying oily resins on the wood's surface mix into the wet oil or varnish finish and keep the finish molecules apart so they don't bump into each other and crosslink. The resins act like a paint thinner that doesn't evaporate.

Once you have applied an oil or varnish to an oily wood and discovered the finish isn't drying, there are only two good fixes: apply heat to the surface to excite the molecules so they are more likely to bump into each other and crosslink or strip the finish and start over. It's usually easy to strip (actually just wash off) an oil or varnish that hasn't dried using naphtha, acetone or lacquer thinner. Otherwise use a paint stripper.

To prevent a drying problem before it happens, remove the oil from the surface of the wood by wiping with a fast solvent, such as naphtha, acetone or lacquer thinner, and apply the finish soon after the solvent evaporates. Or seal the wood with shellac, which bonds well to oily woods.

Oil finish

The common instruction for applying oil and oil/varnish-blend finishes is to wet the surface well and then wipe off the excess after the finish has had a few minutes to soak in. This instruction is vague because different interpretations can be given to "wipe off the excess."

What is meant is all of the excess. The surface should not be left damp to the touch. Oil doesn't dry well, so leaving even the slightest dampness will result in a sticky surface for a long time.

If you have a situation where you didn't remove enough of the oil and it's now too sticky to remove with a dry cloth, follow the instructions above for dealing with an oil or varnish that won't dry on an oily wood. **W**

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

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THE CUTTING EDGE

with JOHN ENGLISH

A look at the past, present and future of cordless tools

An evolution in lithium-ion batteries and solar power on the horizon could mean many benefits for your shop

That's a big question. Manufacturers are constantly introducing new tools, but most of the time it's just design and packaging updates rather than technological breakthroughs. And while the evolution of design constantly improves the way tools feel and fit our hands and job sites, what we're really after is performance. That begins with the power source. And batteries can be confusing.

The sealed lead/acid batteries that started the whole cordless revolution are pretty much a thing of the past now. That's because they're so bulky and they run out of power so quickly. You can't run them all the way down too often or they won't take a charge as well as they should. And they are a significant groundwater and soil pollution risk.

The most common power tool batteries are still nickel-cadmium. These are tough, relatively impact-resistant, not too bothered by cold if they're left in the truck overnight - and they're fairly inexpensive. Many tool manufacturers are still sticking with nickel-cadmium because they have a long shelf life (they'll accept a lot of recharging) and they deliver a lot of power. But they're heavy (ask anyone hanging sheetrock on ceilings) and that burst of power doesn't last too long. Plus, most tool manufacturers have rules about when and how long to charge them. And if you ignore those warnings the number of recharges can drop significantly. They're also not terribly healthy. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, cadmium overexposure can be detrimental to our kidneys and bones.

Nickel/metal/hydride power packs deliver power for longer than nickel-cadmium between charges (as long as they're being used and not just sitting around). They also weigh less, but we pay for that as their cost

is significantly higher. Nickel/metal/hydride batteries aren't as harmful to the environment when they go to the dump. That's good, because a lot of them end up there as they fail quickly in subzero weather, lose their charge quickly if they're not used often and have issues with deep discharges.

The game-changer

The new kids on the block are lithium-ion batteries and they are also the most expensive. They are very lightweight, which makes them a great choice for power tools that are used all day. They can also be left on the shelf for long periods of time and still deliver the goods when called upon. They're cleaner, less vulnerable to deep discharge/recharge cycles and they can be physically shaped to fit the tool (most other batteries have constraints on shape, which is why they all seem to look alike). That last facet is important because the next generation of power tools will have almost invisible battery packs: lightweight and malleable, their shape will be able to flow through the tool, distributing weight and bulk in a way that makes drills and other tools feel lighter because they are far more balanced. Unfortunately, lithium-ion batteries do have a couple of shortfalls. They won't accept as many recharges as most of the other types of power source. And they don't handle heat very well. This has been a huge issue recently for the airline industry.

Advances in most other aspects of cordless power tools (beyond the actual battery) will be almost inextricably related to lithium-ion technology. As automobile industry engineers switch their focus from fossil fuels to electric propulsion, on-board power storage is the biggest challenge facing them. The drive in large industrial nations such as the

U.S., Japan and Germany to become self-sufficient in energy production is perhaps based more on security issues rather than pure environmental ones. But emerging giants such as India and China are deeply concerned with pollution because it has already become a security issue for those governments. In recent months, there have been violent protests in Shifang and Qidong (a city just north of Shanghai) over environmental issues. The Internet has arrived in rural China and the sins of industrialization are becoming harder to hide.

New possibilities

A worldwide trend toward cleaner power has zoned in on the potential lithium-ion technology. And as these batteries become more stable and less vulnerable to heat buildup and other issues, woodshop workers everywhere are going to reap the rewards. Already we are seeing power tool manufacturers' ads concentrate on their tools' light weight or increased torque, better ergonomics and environmental benefits.

Perhaps the biggest shift we'll see in the immediate future in the cordless tool culture is an expansion of the concept of power

"It would be nice to be able to borrow a battery from your nearest neighbor and know it'll fit every tool in your station."

sharing. Most manufacturers already offer packages that include three or four tools that share the same battery packs. The trend seems to be fewer battery sizes with more tools to fit them, which definitely benefits woodworkers. Having several different types of tools all using the same interchangeable battery means that the transition from fabrication at the shop to installation at a job site will become easier. Charging tools will perhaps become as ubiquitous as charging our phones. Who knows? Maybe our electric pickup trucks will have universal tool chargers on board.

Having just one type of battery would positively affect the way we set up workstations in the woodshop. Centralized battery banks (instead of the current trend of having half a dozen different chargers cluttering up the bench outlets) could be time and space savers. Plus, it would be nice to be able to borrow a battery from your nearest neighbor and know it'll fit every tool in your station.

One trend that woodworkers in advanced nations might soon borrow from people in

emerging ones is the habit of plugging into small solar chargers. While it's currently more comfortable for us to plug everything, including cordless chargers, into our vast and reliable power grid, non-governmental organizations around the Third World are daily discovering the wonder of bringing small solar cells to remote villages. These simple devices transform lives by delivering so much more than the miracle of having indoor light after dusk. Solar cells are making it possible for the most remote populations to share information and knowledge through satellite cellphones and the Internet. Without an electric grid, craftsmen in these areas have been limited to traditional hand tools. Now, they can charge lithium-ion batteries using donated active solar panels and enjoy an industrial revolution that is every bit as important as the information one.

That same technology is available here in the U.S. through the RV industry. Recreational vehicle factories and aftermarket customizing businesses sell small solar trickle chargers that pick up the slack if campers use their vehicle's batteries to power computers and cellphone chargers when the rig isn't running. Adding a small solar panel to the roof of a woodshop's installation vehicle and then hooking up a lithium-ion charger for cordless tool batteries is already a viable option.

One trend that is bound to continue in the cordless power tool world is diversity. Visit the big-box websites and do a search for the word "cordless". In addition to grid-free lawn mowers, trimmers, tillers and leaf blowers, you'll find cordless screw guns, nail guns, reciprocating saws, impact drivers, circular saws, chainsaws, hammer drills, jigsaws, worklights, grinders, staplers, shears and more. Virtually anything you ever bought with a cord on it is now available without one.

Global manufacturing (that is, the availability of an inexpensive workforce) will probably ensure that cordless power tools continue to be affordable. Global markets (the continually increasing number of buyers) should theoretically contribute to economies of scale and this, too, might keep prices in check. As we move away from burning fossil fuels, the oil that is used to make plastics will hopefully become more abundant and help keep a lid on component prices, too.

Another constant trend in cordless tools is minimalizing. Everything is getting smaller, lighter and easier to carry around. You kids under 50 won't remember this, but woodworkers used to haul huge radial-arm saws to kitchen installations 30 years ago. (Don't laugh: we were very proud of the giant-wheeled stands that we built for them.) Now one can buy a cordless miter saw. With the

versatility of shape that comes with lithium-ion, and constant increases in power, there is no doubt that cordless tools will continue to diminish in size while they grow in both function and efficiency. **W**

Entries sought for Fresh Wood competition

The AWFS Fair in Las Vegas is accepting entries for its Fresh Wood student competition that celebrates outstanding construction and design achievements by students from high school and post-secondary woodworking programs in North America.

Full-time students in an accredited high school or post-secondary school woodworking or related industry program in North America and part-time students who are transitioning into a career in woodworking or design are eligible. Post-secondary schools include colleges and universities as well as trade, art, and union apprenticeship schools. There is no entry fee.

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For complete contest rules and eligibility, visit www.awfsfair.org.

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GETTING your ducks IN A ROW

Organizing a woodshop can be time-consuming and frustrating, but it can pay off in several big ways

BY JOHN ENGLISH

“ORGANIZING,” SAID THE POET A.A. MILNE, “IS WHAT YOU DO BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING, SO THAT WHEN YOU DO IT, IT IS NOT ALL MIXED UP.”

Organizing a woodshop can be challenging. The objective is to create an environment that produces the highest quality work in the most efficient manner. That requires a good layout, well-designed traffic routes, superior lighting and, of course, ways to manage both materials handling and storage. Plus, a good shop caters to its inhabitants, both human and arboreal, by addressing heat, cooling and humidity levels.

Layout comes down to lining up the production process in an orderly fashion. A custom shop by its very nature cannot conform to production line tenets because we rarely build exactly the same thing more than once. Even kitchen builders experience this: al-

though the boxes might be standard sizes, the door styles, finishes and species all change on every job. We don't repeat products, but we do repeat processes (ripping, crosscutting, sanding, shaping) and that's the key to a good layout. If the shop is long and skinny, the raw material (sheet goods and solid stock) might begin the journey at one end of the space and culminate in the detail work (finishing and hardware) at the other end. In a square shop, the workstations might perhaps be arranged in a logical sequence to start just right of the door, follow the walls around and then end just left of the door.

That's a good theory, but the problem in established shops is the cattle path concept.

continued on Page 28



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Organizing is what you do before you do something.

ORGANIZING from Page 26

In medieval Europe, towns grew up around markets and the streets eventually conformed to the natural paths that animals would follow rather than to the Roman notion of cities laid out upon a grid. This happened in America, too. The earliest settlements in New England have lots of winding roads, while streets and avenues in the Midwest tend to follow lines of longitude and latitude. Most woodshops began

small, with the owner and maybe just one or two hired hands on board. As machines and people were added through the years, they were squeezed into available space and quite often the infrastructure (dust collection, wiring, lighting etc.) was forced to conform. Now, things are so set in place that ripping everything apart and setting it up in the most logical, sequential way would be as daunting a task as straightening the streets of Boston.

The answer lies in compromise. If, indeed,

an answer is even needed: many custom shops thrive in their cattle path warrens, running like well-oiled machines. But for most of us in this new, post-recession market, when years of austerity have melted the fat from our bottom lines, woodshops need to be efficient to survive. Margins are smaller now than they have been in a long time and saving steps can mean the difference between just making it and thriving.

One way to introduce some efficiency is by establishing traffic routes. There

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should be clear arteries running through the shop, marked with tape or paint on the floor, where absolutely nothing is allowed to block the road. The swift and easy flow of materials is crucial to improving the pace of production. Investing in a few more shop carts can facilitate productivity by bringing work as close as possible to the machine. Opening roads through the shop is also a gentle way to encourage people to do maintenance: if the main thoroughfares are organized well, individual workstations will soon follow. It's human nature to complete tasks and, when most of the shop looks professional, it's difficult to stand in a small mess and ignore what's happening around you. Established roads are also conducive to a fire-escape plan, which a woodshop must have.

Let there be lots of light

Lighting also helps to keep things organized. One can't hide things in dark corners if there aren't any. Every woodworker knows that the quality of his/her work is directly related to the amount of light being shone upon it, especially during sanding and finishing. But the same is true in a more general sense of the entire workshop environment. The brighter it is, the more people will want to keep it clean and well-organized.

There are no universal solutions when it comes to choosing light fixtures. A good place to start is to have a lighting expert visit the woodshop and walk through options such as fluorescent, high-pressure sodium, LED and metal halide.

Color is important, and more so in finishing areas than in machining or assembly stations. The color of visible light is measured in terms of temperature on the Kelvin scale (which was named after an Irish engineer who lived in Victorian Glasgow). In theory, the closer one can come to white daylight (about 5,500K), the less effect an artificial light will have on how we perceive color (such as stains, dyes and

unfinished heartwood. That range is probably a good goal for task lighting. The lower (warmer) that one goes on the Kelvin scale, the more yellow and red the light becomes. The higher one goes, the more blue/white.

Unfortunately, we live in a diverse world. The location where a job will finish up is a factor. The same cabinet will look a

continued on next page



Proper lighting and tool storage adds to a shop's professionalism.

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ORGANIZING *from previous page*

a bit different if it is moved from a residential kitchen with tan walls and a mix of incandescent and halogen lighting to a bank lobby

with mahogany paneled walls and fluorescent fixtures or a retail space with white walls and high-mounted sodium lights. That can sometimes create a small challenge when matching stains and topcoats to existing finishes. One

solution is to have one of each type of light available in the finishing room. Speaking of that, a portable light is essential in sanding and finishing, because it can be moved to rake – that is, shine across the surface to create tiny shadows where imperfections lie.

The bottom line is that a lighting expert can walk through the shop, suggest which fixtures are adequate and educate us on options for improving the quality and quantity of lighting at every stage of the production process. Investing in better lighting is one of those rare improvements that doesn't have to cost a lot, but can dramatically improve the quality of work.

A place for everything

Organizing is what you do before you do something. And nowhere in the woodshop is that more true than in handling and storing materials. Having hardwoods and sheet goods sorted by species, cut, substrate and thickness makes them more easily accessible, avoids waste, improves the ordering and inventory processes and can even have an effect on sales: if you've got three bunks of hickory gathering dust, perhaps it's time to sell hickory kitchens.

There is a lot of common sense in the old adage: keep like things together. But what exactly makes things alike? Do we put all of

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the oak plywood – full and partial sheets – together? Or do we stack all the full sheets in one place and the partials in another? Do we keep all of the birch ply in one bin and the walnut in another? Or do we keep all the 1/2" stock together, regardless of species? As every shop is different, the answer is probably to canvass the people handling these materials, elicit their opinions and make an informed decision based on consensus. The bigger challenge is to ensure that everyone sticks to the same policy or pretty soon the storage area will look like a library where the patrons are asked to return books to the shelves themselves.

One small investment that a shop might consider is a barcode inventory system. This is simply a database on the office computer and a handheld wand that reads code from stickers and adjusts the records accordingly. Such a system can keep track of all the materials - and even the supplies - in the shop, from gallons of lacquer to drawer slides to sandpaper. It's accurate (although still subject to the "garbage in, garbage out" rule),

Now, things are so set in place that ripping everything apart and setting it up in the most logical, sequential way would be as daunting a task as straightening the streets of Boston.

provides the shop manager with instant on-hand quantities and can physically find everything in the shop as long as items have been assigned a shelf, cabinet or bin location. Most of the products we use already come with barcode stickers attached and printing the rest in house for individual items (such as sheets in a flitch or boards in a bunk) is relatively simple. Such systems can be quite inexpensive (under \$1,000) and they begin to pay for themselves on Day One. Just remember to train two people to use it, so that the place doesn't grind to a halt if one guy gets the flu.

We began with a quote from the English poet and playwright A.A. Milne. It seems appropriate to end with one from an American. Laura Ingalls Wilder reminds us what's important about all of this:

"The trouble with organizing a thing," she said, "is that pretty soon folks get to paying more attention to the organization than to what they're organized for." **W**



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- Cutting capacity/throat: 13 1/2"
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- Max. cutting height: 6"
- Blade size: 92 1/2"-93 1/2" L (1 1/8"-3/4" W)
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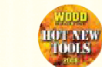
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- Motor: 5 HP, 220V, single-phase
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- Precision ground cast iron table size: 13" x 60"
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- Cutterhead dia.: 3 3/4"
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- Approx. shipping weight: 328 lbs.



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- Canister filter size (dia. x depth): 19 1/8" x 23 1/8" (2)
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- Overall dimensions: 57 1/2" long x 32" wide x 71" high
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STEVE ESTES

Owner of: Estes Woodworks

Location: Cody, Wyo. • **Shop size:** 3,200 sq. ft. • **Employees:** 3

About: More than 40 years of experience as a master craftsman, specializing in custom furniture and cabinetry for residential clients throughout his home state and throughout the country.



Steve Estes is living life and marketing his business in the great wide open and he's loving every minute of it

BY JENNIFER HICKS / STAFF WRITER

Steve Estes knows he has it made. The dedicated craftsman is living his dream as a professional woodworker and residing in his destination of choice. Situated in the small, rural town of Cody, Wyo., Estes designs and fabricates custom cabinetry for residential homes, as well as unique furniture pieces in a range of styles, from Mission, Victorian, contemporary, Shaker and traditional styles.

Cody is a small and rural Western town where everyone knows the locals. It's also a popular tourist spot where people from all around the country have second homes. But the rule of business success is the same here as it is in any location: keeping the customer happy.

"My goal is to not have anybody dislike anything I do. I'm going to make you happy one way or another. Even if it costs a little extra and even if you don't want to, keep your customers happy and you'll always be busy," says Estes.

continued on next page

PHOTO: RICKI SWEET (ESTES)



ESTES from previous page

Realizing his talent

Estes was born in southern Missouri, but also lived in Iowa and Nebraska while growing up. He was introduced to woodworking by his hobbyist father.

"The first things I built were when I had a house built for me. I designed and built an entertainment center, storage cabinet and a bookcase for it and also finished the basement. The guy that built my house also owned a cabinet shop and hired me to work with him in the fall of 1974."

That shop, named Millard Cabinets after a suburb of Omaha, Neb., was relocated to Arkansas in 1979. Estes also relocated and accepted the owner's offer to purchase half of the company. In 1981, he bought his business partner out completely and became sole owner. Estes relocated to Cody in 1999 because he had always wanted to live in a scenic mountain region with lots of open space and it was time for change.

"One of the things I enjoy about this area is the clean air and lack of people. I'm not a big population person. I lived in Omaha before. I have a brother in Kansas City, another in St. Louis and another in Los Angeles. You couldn't drag me to any of those places. It's awesome here. No street lights, no horns honking, none of that, but yet there's enough people to support a business. They're scattered. You don't see them when you open the window every morning, but they're there. That's what I like."

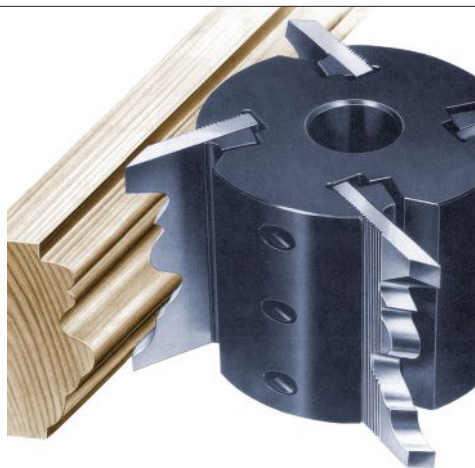
He changed the name to Estes Woodworks and ran the business out of a garage until 2003, when he moved to his current location, a log home on a spacious ranch property. He built a 3,200-sq.-ft. shop out back and, little by little,

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Estes particularly enjoys the challenge of building furniture.

he began to add employees. He now has three full-time workers, which is enough for him.

"The challenging part is staying ahead of the scheduling and especially making sure the employees don't have any downtime. You need to keep a flow. You need to keep busy on one job while you're starting another or you're losing money."

With an easygoing nature, Estes simply purchased the equipment he needed through the years. The list includes a Timesaver wide belt sander; SawStop table saw; Powermatic line boring machine; Doucet clamping table; Kreg face frame table; and several brands of plan-

ers, shapers and sanders.

Clients near and far

Estes primarily works within a 50-mile radius, but regularly ships custom work across the country. The cabinetry portion of his business is comprised of approximately 70 percent new homes and 30 percent remodel work.

"There's lots of new development here. It hasn't really slowed down here like it has in the rest of the country and of all of that, probably 80 to 85 percent of my business, is kitchen

continued on Page 39



Estes enjoys the "clean air and lack of people" in Cody.

PHOTO: RICKI SWEET

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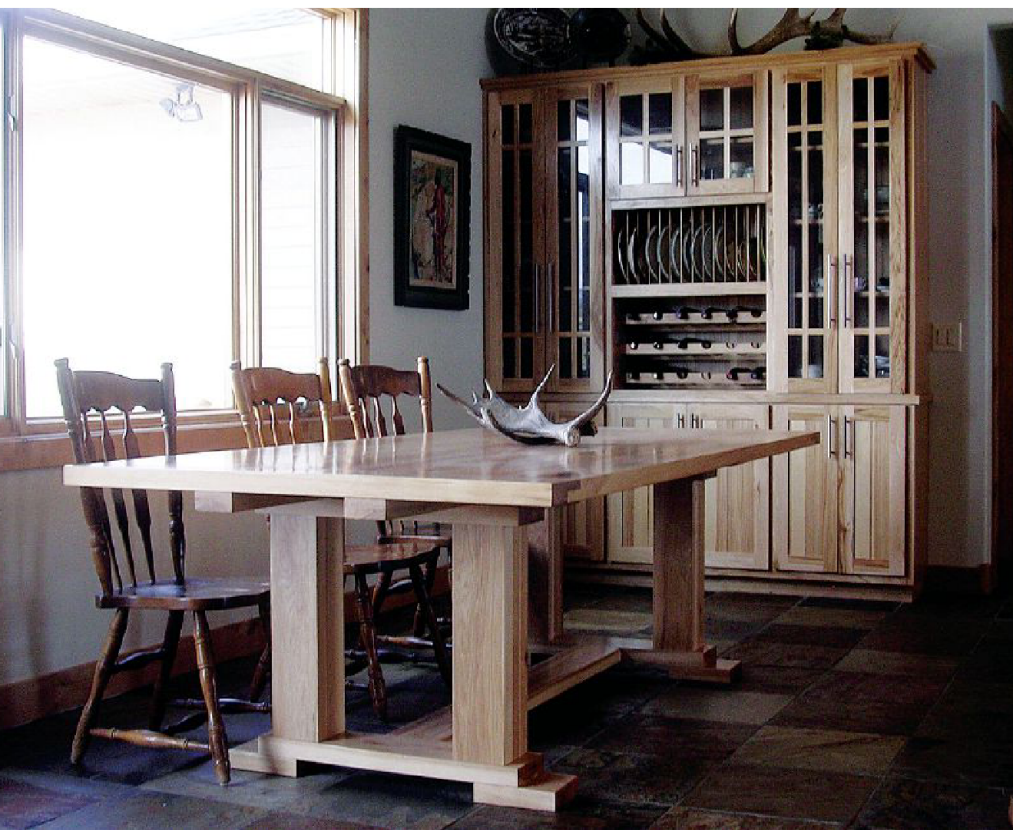


PHOTO: RICKI SWEET (RIGHT)

A hickory table and hutch for a repeat customer; Estes with employee Marvin Krzoska.

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ESTES from Page 37

and household cabinets and bathrooms, laundry rooms, that sort of thing. The remaining 15 percent or so is furniture."

Business is primarily obtained through word of mouth and his website. He advertises in the local phone book and has occasionally placed ads in niche magazines such as True West and Cowboys & Indians. He's also tried his luck at craft shows both in Wyoming and beyond, his favorite local ones being the Western Design Conference and Cody High Style.

"These shows bring a lot of publicity. There are people who come in here from all over the country with a lot of different interests. We've generated a lot of work from the shows. Some of the people that come through may be interested in a coffee table or end table, or maybe they're just seeing what kind of work is available for kitchen cabinets in their homes."

He typically shies away from commercial work, but has agreed to several commissions for local establishments, such as a gun shop that needed display cases for firearms.

Business fluctuation

Often, business volume depends on the season, rather than the economy alone. New-home builders like to start construction in the fall so that homes are ready for cabinets and other interior woodwork around the beginning of March. Estes says the economic downturn wasn't terribly hard on him and his company was busier than ever through last September, when Woodshop News visited him.

On average, the four-man crew completes and installs about two to three jobs per month. These often include, for example, whole home packages, kitchen remodels, kitchen islands and bathroom vanities.

As far as styles are concerned, he feels customers rely on him for guidance.

"In the cabinetry end of things, the styles generally

take a Shaker or contemporary style. The way things change is by door style. Whether it's a raised panel, flat panel or recess panel, that's going to dictate the style."

Furniture style preferences tend to be in the traditional, Mission-style category. Contrary to what might be assumed, the rustic Western look is not in high demand. Estes says clients wanting more primitive aesthetics in their work are usually having it done for a second or vacation home. Regardless of style, building furniture is the most enjoyable part of his business.

"Kitchen cabinets get old. The only thing that changes is the door style. What I really enjoy doing is the furniture. Every piece is different. Every person has a different personality and it shows up in the kind of furniture that they like so it's a challenge and it's fun to meet that challenge, to make something that's an heirloom for someone to hand down to someone special. That's the fun part.

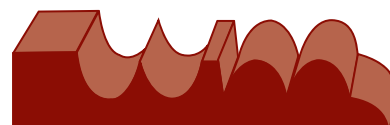
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Estes has had good luck at craft shows, including the Western Design Conference and Cody High Style.

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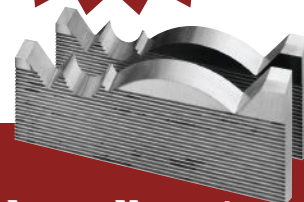


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ESTES from previous page

"I like to work with cherry. It's nice to work with. The kitchen cabinet craze is now and has been for a couple of years, rustic hickory, rustic alder, and then secondly, cherry, that's about it. We do some pine, we do some oak and we do some maple occasionally."

Estes believes his biggest challenge is keeping enough work in the shop to take time off. Nowadays, he enjoys sharing stories with other members of the Cody Western Artisans organization to which he belongs and also spending time pursuing his other recreational interests. With a bit of a chuckle, he says he will retire eventually.

"I really do like it here. I'm 66 and, lately, I've been thinking about fishing more and working less."

Contact: Estes Woodworks, 17 Miller Dr., Cody, WY 82414. Tel: 877-587-8890. www.esteswoodworks.com 



A home bar project; Estes with employee Tim Lozier.

PHOTO: RICKI SWEET (RIGHT)

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MAKING THE BEST CABINETS AND FURNITURE

Another construction season is upon us and the recovering housing market is bringing with it a more sophisticated, more budget-wise homebuyer. Keeping up with changes in taste often means partnering with a company that is keyed into the market – one that deals with enough shops to see trends coming.

Keystone Wood Specialties is one such company. They have ramped up their basic, exquisitely made dovetail drawer to accommodate customers who want cutlery trays, spice rack inserts, knife block inserts, waste bin pullouts, rollout tray systems, even custom shapes and other innovations. And as shops look at the components they make in-house, more and more of them are contacting Northwest Hardwoods and taking a long, hard look at certified alder. Budget conscious buyers are delighted with how this sustainable and abundant hardwood can be stained to resemble more expensive species such as maple and cherry.

Drawer Box Specialties, recently acquired by States Industries, offers woodshops a huge choice of custom drawer boxes in a wide variety of substrates from melamine to exotic hardwoods, and corner constructions that include English and French dovetails, plus doweled and nailed boxes.

Gustav Stickley, the Greene brothers and Frank Lloyd Wright all designed custom furniture that matched the décor of the homes they built. Osborne Wood Products now offers two table kit packages that can dramatically add to a shop's offerings by allowing customers to add dining, coffee and end tables stained to match their kitchen's finish.

And speaking of designers, ShopBot Tools launched a Website a year ago that is designed to provide a forum for designers and fabricators – a way to build bridges that lead to collaboration and more efficient manufacturing. Read on to learn about that, and all the other ways that companies are providing support to woodshops in this new and exciting housing market.



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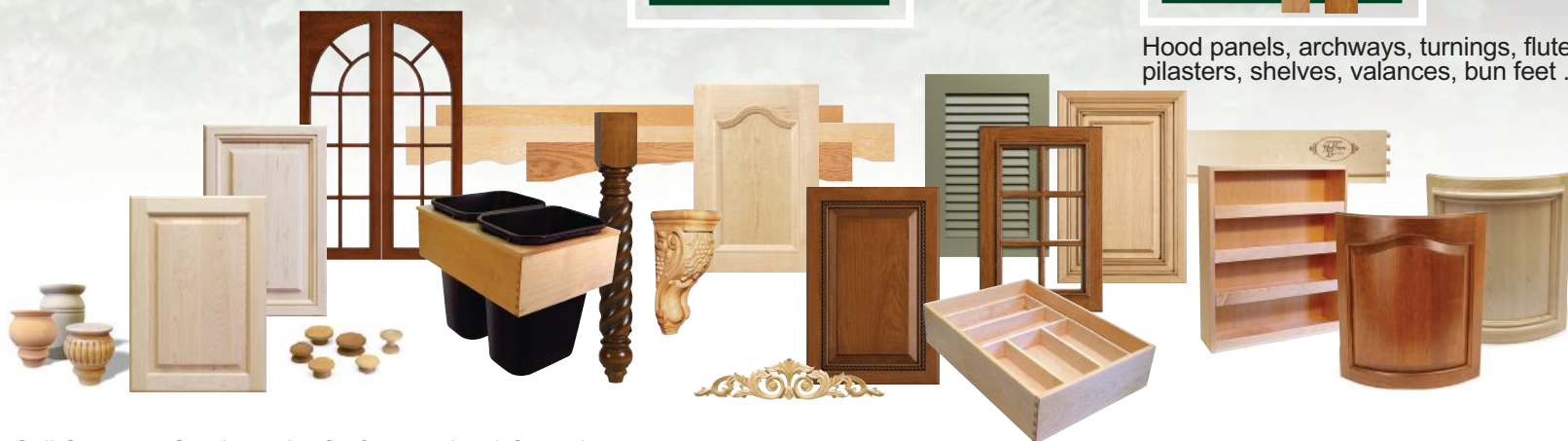
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Drawer Boxes: Not Just Boxes Any More

As our culture becomes more sophisticated, so do the things we use. For example, a fishing pole was once no more than a stick, a string and a hook. Today, there is a whole industry offering sophisticated choices for what we still call a fishing pole.

The same is true of drawer boxes. There was a time when a drawer box was just that—four sides and a bottom. And indeed manufacturing is still focused on creating strong, dependably square and attractive boxes that function well and last a lifetime. However, our new design culture now demands endless variations that can be custom tailored to meet the needs and desires of individual customers in what has become a creatively sophisticated climate.

Keystone Wood Specialties in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, has been a manufacturer of quality custom cabinet components for forty years. Along with their product lines of high-end cabinet doors, drawer fronts, face frames and molding, they have also been a leading manufacturer of upscale, custom, dovetail drawer boxes for decades.

"The mainstay of the drawer box part of our business is, and always will be, the basic dovetailed drawer box," says Keystone's marketing director, Rolph Kullander. "Our customers depend on a well-made, beautiful box that brings refinement and unquestioned quality to their cabinets."



Kullander stresses that the company takes pains to use solid wood stock that is selected for appropriate color and quality. Gluing scrap cut-offs together is not an acceptable option. The box needs to have an appearance that supports and under-



scores the beauty of the cabinetry. What's more, Keystone doesn't impose minimum or maximum quantity constraints on ordering. One drawer or a thousand earns the same individual respect and attention from their staff of customer service professionals.

Keystone also recognizes that the basic drawer box by itself is no longer sufficient to meet all the needs of the modern market. Today's consumers expect convenience that makes their life more organized, and thus more efficient.

"Cutlery trays, spice rack inserts, knife block inserts, waste bin pullouts, rollout tray systems, even custom shapes and other innovations are all designed to meet 21st century needs," Kullander says. "And while soft maple may still be the most popular species choice for drawer boxes, more and more people are looking at a wider variety of wood species."

Space-saving devices are also popular, especially in remodeling or re-facing projects. For example, replacing an existing deep drawer box with a double-tiered sliding tray within a box can make the space far more usable, and desirable. These kinds of innovative options are so appealing that they not only solve storage problems, but also help cabinetmakers sell kitchens.

The cabinetmakers themselves want choices, too. Partners like Keystone allow a shop to build faster, bet-

ter, more efficiently and more creatively, especially when that partner addresses almost every aspect of production. In addition to the wide variety of design options, the company's drawer boxes can be ordered prefinished or unfinished, assembled or knock-down, and they can be custom ordered to their customers' specific requirements for side thickness and size.

Cabinetmakers also appreciate the option of having their own logo laser engraved in an appropriate place on the inside of the box. Because in the end, while the drawer box has certainly evolved, it is still the time-honored tradition of craftsmanship that turns a beautiful dovetail drawer into an enduring symbol of quality.

At Keystone, they are proud to say that all of their products are made in America.



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Look What Osborne is Bringing to the Table!

The best furniture and cabinets begin with the best components and when it comes to tables, Osborne Wood Products, Inc. of Toccoa, Georgia is definitely leading the field. Now in their thirty-fourth year of supporting woodshops by supplying furniture parts in small quantities, Osborne has just introduced a new line of Full Table Kits. Beginning with beautifully crafted tabletops, woodshop designers can now choose from various styles and profiles for a table that is perfect for any room. Osborne is offering various sizes of dining tables, coffee tables, and even end tables in over twenty styles, and in a wide choice of wood species. Kits include the impeccable quality of Osborne table legs, table apron kits, all the hardware needed for assembly, and the

forementioned wooden tabletops. Styles such as farm, ornate, mission, classic and more are offered.

Each Full Table Kit is manufactured with 100% solid wood and comes unfinished, allowing a woodshop to match stains and top-coats in-house. Species include soft maple, red oak, knotty pine, alder, cherry, hard maple and black walnut. The mortise and tenon joinery is of the highest quality, and the assembly process is uncomplicated. All necessary parts are included.

For customers who already have tabletops available, or who want to build them in-house to match a client's décor or cabinetry, Osborne also now offers Table Base Kits. These custom kits include quality turned legs (lots of choices) that are already mor-

tised and pre-mounted with threaded hanger bolts to accept the company's carefully crafted table aprons. The aprons are predrilled to receive supplied screws that are used to secure the mortise and tenon joints. These aprons are always milled to 1" x 4" finished dimensions and include the option of a beaded, rounded or squared bottom profile.

Browse the complete selection of Full Table Kits and Table Base Kits, and conveniently order online, at the URL listed below.



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PEFC is the world's largest forest certification standard, promoting sustainable forest management through independent third-party certification. PEFC works throughout the entire forest supply chain to ensure good forest practices and wood sourcing. Northwest Hardwoods' PEFC Chain-of-

Custody (CoC) certified alder is sourced from forests that are certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), the American Tree Farm (ATF) system, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), and PEFC.

Beyond reliable supply, alder is everything else that a woodshop wants and needs in a hardwood. Its honey brown color and fine grain give it a distinctive look among hardwoods. Because there is virtually no discernible difference between heartwood and sapwood, it has a pleasing uniform appearance. It's a medium density hardwood that has low

bending strength, superior shock resistance and stiffness, and it's also excellent for both turning and polishing. It machines well, and can be stained to resemble more expensive species such as maple and cherry.

Northwest Hardwoods' alder manufacturing practices and grading systems are known for delivering more of what customers need and less of what they don't. Less waste means more margin. This is the foundation of their "Graded for Yield®" assurance, and it's just one more reason why so many cabinet shops and furniture makers prefer Northwest Hardwoods brand alder.

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It's Kind of a privilege...

...when you step back and take a look at all you can do for the hardworking craftsmen, designers and fabricators in this industry. That was likely the reward that States Industries saw when they began business in 1966, and it's probably even truer today. Their recent acquisition of California-based Drawer Box Specialties has really rounded out their commitment to innovation, and to the specialty value that they aspire to provide to the marketplace.

States' Industries president Mike Taylor called the addition of DBS a strategic extension of State's existing value-added components business.

"DBS has a great brand franchise that we think will be a perfect complement to our business," he says. "By recapitalizing the company and providing better access to the entire North American market through our network of distributors, we see significant upside."

DBS, located in Orange, California and founded in 1987, manufactures custom drawer boxes in a wide variety



of substrates from melamine to exotic hardwoods. Options include FSC and NAUF certified materials, and corner constructions that include English and French dovetails, plus doweled and nailed boxes.

States' components plant manager, Donnie Graves, says that "the investments we've made here at our Oregon facility, in addition to the DBS acquisition in California, allow us to really excel at being a complete components supplier." The company's 200,000 square foot hardwood plywood plant in Eugene, Oregon, (the home of Apple-Ply®) includes a full components division, custom color lab for finish matching, and one of the largest UV pre-finish lines in North America.



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Want to Meet CNC Designers and Fabricators?

A Website created by ShopBot Tools that was designed to support custom digital fabrication has really taken off over the past year. The site, 100kGarages, was created to help making collaboration easier between people in both the DIY and custom fabrication communities.

Not long ago, the site's blog featured a story on two 100kGarages and how they connected via the site. Jens Dyvik, a designer based in Norway, linked up with U.S.-based designer/fabber Lee Bernard and they are now in business fabbing Dyvik's designs for distribution in America. To read about their collaboration,



visit 100kGarages.com, and click on Blog under the Connect category.

What's interesting is that one doesn't need to own a ShopBot brand tool to be a listed Fabber on 100kGarages. Established businesses that use CNC routers, laser cutters or 3D printers are all welcome to participate, and community garages such as TechShops, maker spaces and hacker-spaces are all invited to register, too.

Ultimately, the goal is to help people find each other and then learn and work together to make their dreams come true. For example, Brian McKenzie of North Carolina recently

launched his small fabrication business, McKenzie Digital Fab (mckenzie digitalfab.com). He's just beginning to share a journal of his start-up at the 100kGarages site. And ShopBot is also committed to helping woodworkers who have not yet embraced digital fabrication technology. Visit woodworkersgodigital.com for more information.

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Upcoming 2013 topics:

March issue Making the best cabinets & furniture	 FEB 1 ST
May issue Portability - working the job site	 MAR 30 TH
September issue The finishing touch	 JUL 29 TH
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BY JENNIFER HICKS / STAFF WRITER

Determination & dependability



Josh Lewis has a lot of competition in his corner of Utah, but he says pride and productivity win out every time

Even though he faces fierce competition from larger woodworking businesses, Josh Lewis, owner of Lewis Custom Woodwork of Centerville, Utah, sets himself apart by making his customers a priority at all times. Specializing in high-end residential and commercial interior custom woodwork, he takes great pride in his work.

JOSH LEWIS

Owner of: Lewis Custom Woodwork

Location: Centerville, Utah

Shop size: 2,500 sq. ft.

Employees: 1

About: Two-man shop designs and fabricates custom cabinetry for both residential and commercial clients in northern Utah.

Quotable: "Whether it's a \$40,000 kitchen or a \$6,000 kitchen, I leave that job with the same integrity and quality of cabinets as if I had worked on my own house. I don't cut corners. I refuse to cut corners."



"I'm very personable. I work with customers from start to finish and my business name is my last name and my business name. I take great pride in quality and craftsmanship. Those are all things that are high on my list. I believe they help because when I go onto a job, regardless of whether it's a \$40,000 kitchen or a \$6,000 kitchen, I leave that job with the same integrity and quality of cabinets as if I had worked on my own house. I don't cut corners. I refuse to cut corners," says Lewis.

Lewis operates out of a 2,500-sq.-ft. shop in a quiet light-industrial area just north of Salt Lake City. With the help of one employee, he remains focused on his career while balancing it with other the other things most important to him, dedicating time to his family and his faith.

Starting with the basics

Born in Utah, Lewis got involved with woodworking and carpentry at a young age by helping his father around the house and by taking career-oriented trade programs in high school. Upon his graduation, he served a mission for a church in Toronto for two years.

"When I came back, I didn't know what I wanted to do. I knew I had an interest in



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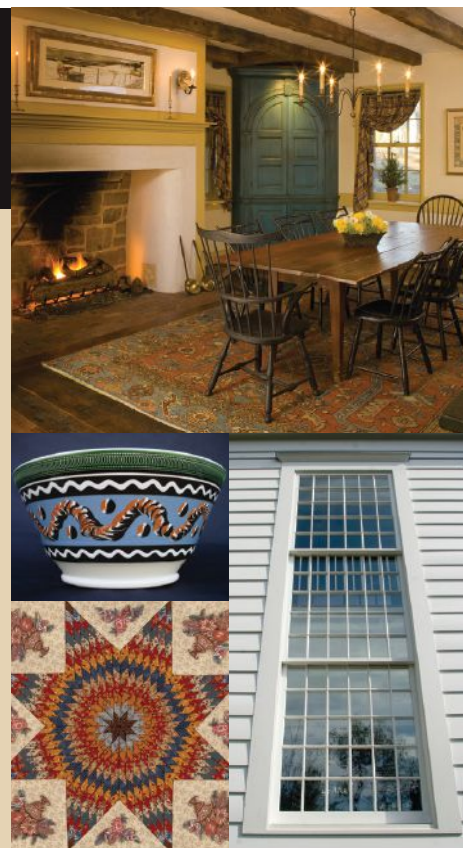
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LEWIS from previous page

woodwork, but I decided to take some computer classes at a community college for a semester. In the meantime, I kept doing woodworking on the side and eventually just stopped going to class and went to work at a friend's shop."

He continued to work himself up the ladder and eventually entered into a 50-50 partnership with the owner. That arrangement only lasted a year, but nevertheless advanced his career agenda.

"It was a great place to work. I did a wide range of applications there. I started with the basics, did installs and worked my way up to shop foreman and became a part-owner. When I saw there was no more room for advancement, I opened my own shop. That was in 2007."

Positive outlook

Building a clientele in the ear-

lier years was perhaps the most difficult challenge he faced, admits Lewis, but his strong ambition carried him through the tough times. The partnership dissolved at one of the worst possible times, when the economy started to collapse in 2007.

"My responsibility had been to run the shop and my partner managed the business end of things. So when we split, I had a few leads here and there, but for the most part I was on my own, which was frightening. I knew how to build cabinets and how to do that fairly well at that point, but the scariest thing was finding clients and figuring out what I was going to do for work."

It was a turning point for Lewis, who had the perfect opportunity to get out of woodworking and do something completely different.

"I decided to continue woodworking. It was my dream to do woodwork, so I guess that's why I stuck with it even though I didn't have a huge clientele or anything. I was going to make it work. Otherwise, I didn't know what I would do."

He remained in a small shop that had only about 1,000 sq. ft. of floor space, located several units down from his current location, and began networking the best he could. He acquired work by putting his name in the local phone book, by word-of-mouth referrals and through relationships with several building contractors.

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As the workload increased, he added equipment. For the size of his operation, Lewis has an impressive equipment list, which includes a SawStop table saw; Kremin Xcite spray system; Grizzly table saw, shaper, dust collector, planer and drill press; Powermatic bandsaw; General edge sander; Timesaver wide belt sander; Williams & Hussey molder; DeVilbiss compressor; Binks spray pump system and various Festool products.

Scope of work

On average, Lewis completes about one kitchen per month and has a backlog of about two months. His primary focus is on residential work for homeowners who contact him directly. Commercial work accounts for about 10-15 percent of his clients and is generally done for contractors he's previously worked for whose clients now want custom reception desks, counters and the like.

"I work with customers from start to finish and my business name is my last name and my business name. I take great pride in quality and craftsmanship. Those are all things that are high on my list."

His service area includes all of Utah, but most work is done in Salt Lake City and its suburbs. He offers all types of kitchen and living room cabinetry and casework, as well as custom mantles and furniture.

"My niche in the market is definitely someone wanting a higher-end cabinet. When building cabinets, my box is always the same, but I will give them different options for drawer fronts and what-not."

Style preferences range depending on the client. Lewis works directly with homeowners in creating a design, but is given design specs from the designers and contractors he works with.

"Whenever I do work for designers, it seems like the modern designs seem to be the trend. They want things like white-painted kitchens. When I get hired by a homeowner, I meet with them and try to go through them what they want. I take suggestions. A lot of people tell me what they don't want.

"I try to push the rustic look a lot. When a general contractor comes in or whenever I walk through a spec home, they almost always want knotty alder. Whenever I start a new job with

continued on next page



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LEWIS from previous page

designers, they are usually sick of knotty alder, so I try to push the rustic cherry because the pricing is excellent."

By the numbers

Lewis says 2012 was a fairly good year for him, having one employee and grossing just over \$200,000. Lately, business has been slower than usual. He says he's comfortable with the current size of his operation, but would like to grow a little. He has a decent amount of work, but can't afford to hire more help at this point, which means he's extremely busy meeting with clients, doing estimates, designing, building and installing.

Competition, on the other hand, is the one thing that negatively affects him and also something he has no control over. He constantly faces situations where prospective customers will be lured by the lower prices of other shops, not

knowing that they're not getting the quality product he offers.

"Many of the shops I feel I'm competing with are the fly-by-night guys that get their cabinets from Chinese import cabinet manufacturers and resell them with several color options. Those are the guys that I try to bid against sometimes. When I do a job, people are usually looking for four or five estimates. I can determine right off the bat whether someone is going to hire me if they come to my shop. If they're going to come down here and listen to my sales pitch for 20 minutes, then I know I have a good chance at gaining them as a customer."

Patience does pay off. Lewis says the most gratifying moment is when his customers express to him that they are 100 percent satisfied.

"That's apparent when they show my work off to their neighbors or friends or give me a referral saying I will do a really good job and that I'm honest. Sometimes after a job's all said and done and they're happy, I ask them with all of the other shops in the area, why they decided to go with me. They realize I'm not just some guy out of the back of his truck, who's not licensed, not insured, here today, gone tomorrow. They know they can depend on me." **W**

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Take me down to the Paradise City festival

That has quickly become the chorus for Northeast furniture makers as the Massachusetts show has grown in recent years

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

The Paradise City Arts Festival is hosting a spring show March 22-24 at the Royal Plaza Trade Center in Marlborough, Mass.

The 16th annual show draws about 8,000 at-

tendees, according to director Linda Post. That number has increased through the years as visitors have been coming from a wider geographical radius, which she attributes to the show's central location.

"When we first started this show in Marlborough, it was a tighter region that people were coming from. They were mostly from Boston, suburban Boston, the Providence area, and southern New Hampshire. But what we've been finding is that more and more people have been coming to this show from further away. So we're getting more people from Connecticut and New York," says Post.

The total exhibitor count is expected to be close to 175, as it has in previous years. Post says there are more furniture makers than usual, including Peter Handler of Philadelphia; Mark Del



Guidice of Concord, Mass.; Michael Hoy of Solon, Maine; Michael Gloor of Exeter, R.I., and David Morrison of Concord, N.H.

"Our Northampton show, which is a bigger show, has always been very strong in furniture. But the Marlborough show, over the course of time, has been building up in the number of furniture makers that find that it's a good market for what they do. We have a nice variety of work in the show, too. It's not all the same kind of work. We have painted furniture, upholstered furniture, wooden furniture, metal furniture, and combinations of all of the above."

Applications are now being accepted for the fall shows in Northampton (Oct. 12-14) and Marlborough (Nov. 22-24).

Contact: Paradise City Arts Festivals, 30 Industrial Dr. East, Northampton, MA 01060. Tel: 800-511-9725. www.paradise-cityarts.com 

Furniture makers exhibiting at this spring's Paradise City Arts Festival in Marlborough, Mass., include Michael Hoy (table and chairs), Michael Gloor ("Window" chair), and David Morrison (jewelry box).



NEW PRODUCTS

►► **DADO JIG**, from Rockler, is a sliding sled that works to cut tailor-fit dados for virtually any thickness of lumber. The jig works with a router and the separate Rockler Straight Edge Clamp System to cut precise dados, according to the company. Grooves on either edge of the Dado Jig fit into a corresponding groove in the Straight Edge Clamp System, meaning the jig won't drift away from the fence and ruin the workpiece. Using a 1/2" router bit, users rout the first shoulder of the dado as usual, then flip the jig around. The offset for the second shoulder of the dado is infinitely adjustable to achieve a final width of 1/2" to 1" wide to perfectly match plywood thickness. The jig is predrilled to accept routers with a standard PC 690 3-hole pattern. Comprised of low-friction ABS, it is also simple to drill custom holes for non-standard routers. It retails for \$44.99 at www.rockler.com. Tel: 877-762-5537.

►► **DIAFOLD DIAMOND SHARPENERS**, from DMT, have received new eco-friendly packaging and redesigned handles. The new packaging is smaller, lighter and uses 93 percent less plastic, while the new see-through handles allow for instant tool identification, according to the company. The Diafold line includes tools for single-sided, single-sided with fishhook groove, double-sided, flat file, serrated, and chain saw sharpening. For information, visit www.dmtsharp.com.



►► **SHELF-PIN JIG**, from Kreg, features hardened steel drill guides, a dual-position adjustable fence for custom hole placement, a locating pin for accuracy, a jig extender to connect multiple Shelf-Pin Jigs, and a 1/4" or 5mm brad-point bit with depth collar which can be stored on the bottom of the jig when not in use. The jig sells for about \$35. For information, call 800-447-8638 or visit www.kregtool.com.

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▶▶ **MAGFENCE II**, from Carter Products, is the simpler and faster way to attach a fence to most popular band saws, table saws, or any other device with a ferrous-metal table, according to the company. As the name suggests, magnets – controlled by rotational switches on each end of the fence – hold it firmly in place. It has four magnet mounting positions, making it compatible with even the smallest tables. Carter notes the Magswitch magnets also work with all 30mm Magswitch jigs, allowing use with pre-made and home-made accessories like feather boards. The MagFence II sells for \$99.95 at www.carterproducts.com. Tel: 888-622-7837.



▶▶ **VERITAS SET-UP BLOCKS** are accurate to within 0.002", according to the company. The 2"-long anodized aluminum blocks are available in a primary set of five, as well as two expansion sets. The set of five includes 1/16", 1/8", 1/4", 1/2" and 3/4" blocks, plus a steel 1" x 2" x 3" block. Combined, they stack from 1/16" to 4-11/16" in 1/16" increments. The primary set sells for \$39.50 at www.leevalley.com



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Disease can't squash butternut's popularity

Tone, pattern and look are highly sought after in the design industry

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

Butternut's warm tones and unique grain pattern make it an appealing choice for remodeling high-end homes and commercial properties, according to lumber retailers interviewed by Woodshop News. The rare wood is a tough find, not only because of its limited growth locations, but also because of the devastating canker disease that has plagued the species and caused irreversible loss in prime growth locations throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Lou Irion of Irion Lumber Co., in Wellsboro, Pa., says butternut sales have been very strong recently.

"We've had difficulty keeping it in stock and part of the problem is that it's a very minor species so there's not a lot of it around and another problem is there's a butternut canker disease (*Sirococcus clavignenti-juglandacearum*) that's killing it. So that's going to limit the availability of it. But the biggest problem we have is getting a hold of good quality saw logs and mostly we're buying logs and sawing them ourselves," says Irion.

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Irion prefers to purchase logs from brokers that have trees with early signs of the disease. Most of his butternut is sold to architectural millwork manufacturers.

"There's a butternut canker disease that's killing it ... that's going to limit the availability ... we're buying logs and sawing them ourselves."

"It's the architectural millwork that's driving the market for butternut. Most people don't use it in furniture because it's a little bit soft. We're carrying a lot of matching sets where all of the grain matches, rather than just random boards for someone trying to do a library or a kitchen and they want all of the panels to match from the same tree. By keeping them together that just gives you a better product than just having to glue up a bunch of small boards."

Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*) is a member of the walnut family and often referred to as white walnut. Primarily a northern hard-

wood, it grows in the eastern United States, through Wisconsin and into Canada. It can also be found in the Appalachian region and further south. In rough form, it displays a fairly light tan color that darkens with finish.

"It's a very pretty wood that doesn't have a lot of drama, but it has a lot of warmth," says Irion. "People like it because of the warmth and the quiet beauty of it, as opposed to highly figured walnut. It also fits in between the light and dark woods."

Parker Nichols of Vermont Wildwoods in Marshfield, Vt., specializes in butternut sales from diseased and dead trees. "I would say that sales of butternut are typically fairly steady just because of the unique nature of it. It's definitely not a commodity. It never really was because there's not that much butternut available," he says.

"It's has a rustic, elegant look with the grain pattern of black walnut. It's a very sought-after look in the design industry.

Butternut (4/4, FAS) retails for \$4 to \$8/bf. [W](#)

For more information on wood properties and species information, visit the U.S. Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory's Web site: www2.fpl.fs.fed.us.

'Big guys' will exhibit at AWFS

Weinig, Holz-Her, Stiles Machinery and SCM Group North America have said they will exhibit at the 2013 AWFS fair, July 24-27, in Las Vegas.

The companies are some of the larger exhibitors at AWFS, along with C.R. Onsrud and Biesse America.

"There were many positive indications in 2012 that point to our industry being on a modest and sustainable path to recovery, and the 2013 AWFS fair will be another important catalyst to this favorable momentum," said Weinig and Holz-Her U.S. president Jason Howel in a statement.

SCM's president John Gangone offered, "The AWFS show has always been very positive for our company over the years. In 2012 we have seen a great increase of machinery activity due to the financial downturn finally coming to an end, and the signs in the marketplace are pointing to a stronger 2013 for the industry,"

For information about the AWFS fair, visit <http://awfsfair.org>.

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Bosch partners with Dodge Ram

Robert Bosch Tool Corp. and the Dodge Ram truck brand announced a partnership at the 39th annual World of Concrete trade show naming Dodge Ram the official truck of Bosch Power Tools and Accessories.

Together, the two companies will jointly pursue sales and marketing opportunities in the automotive and tool markets, according to a statement.

"At Bosch, we're committed to developing power tools and accessories that deliver uncompromising quality and reliability to our customers," Bosch North America president and CEO Terry Horan said in a statement. "The Bosch team is truly excited to be working with a partner the caliber of Ram truck. One thing that we've learned through the planning process is that our companies align well and complement one another."

The partnership also will include cross-promotional sweepstakes and co-branded customer affinity programming at local, regional and national events. In addition, the two companies will investigate joint product development opportunities in the future.

"A partnership with Bosch helps us further align with our customers' businesses and livelihoods. This partnership leverages the natural fit

between the two brands to help us drive value for the customer," said Fred Diaz, president and CEO of the Ram truck brand and Chrysler de Mexico, part of Chrysler Group LLC.

ISFA, IWF announce expanded partnership

The International Surface Fabricators Association and the International Woodworking Fair announced the formation of a partnership geared toward increasing the focus on the countertop industry for the 2014 IWF show.

The partnership includes an agreement in which the ISFA will work with the IWF to develop a full countertop educational track for the show and a "Countertop Pavilion," which will be co-sponsored by the ISFA, according to the IWF.

The educational track will include six educational sessions geared toward the countertop industry, as well as continuing the full day Countertop Symposium that the ISFA has put on for the last two IWF expos.

"With so many laminate and solid surface fabricators already attending the International Woodworking Fair it makes sense to expand upon that and open the show up to fabricators of all countertop materials," IWF 2014 chairman Rick Hannigan said in a statement. "The new educational track will include sessions

geared toward laminate, solid surface, quartz surfacing, natural stone, concrete and other countertop materials."

The new Countertop Pavilion is designed to bring new suppliers of materials, tooling, machinery, equipment and other products and services together in one area of the show for the convenience of those in the countertop industry. As part of the new focus, ISFA associate members who have not previously exhibited at the show will be afforded an exhibitor discount if they exhibit in the pavilion and all ISFA members will get discount admission to the show.

Additionally, the ISFA will have its 2014 annual member meeting at IWF and will also host a networking event for those in the surfacing industry.

"We have worked closely with IWF for the past two shows and expanding upon our established relationship will provide additional benefits for our membership and for the entire surfacing industry," ISFA president Mike Langenderfer said in a statement. "Educational and networking events are a big part of what ISFA offers and solidifying IWF as an outlet for increasing those programs is another opportunity to bring together the industry and improve the quality of the products fabricators offer."

IWF 2014 will be held Aug. 20-23 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. **W**

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02WHAT

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 monthly calendar of events is updated monthly at www.woodshopnews.com.

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

ARIZONA

April 23-27 — Woodworking Industry Conference, "Connecting the Industry for Over 30 Years." Sponsored by the WMMA, the event will feature meetings, forums and guest speakers that address industry concerns. Location: Marriott Phoenix at the Buttes in Tempe. www.wmma.org

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 10-14 & 17-21 — Stage I: Boulle and Stage II: Classic method (piece by piece) classes at the American School of French Marquetry in San Diego with W. Patrick Edwards and Patrice Lejeune. Tuition: \$750 (for each stage), including materials. www.americanschooloffrenchmarquetry.com

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.fallonwilkinson.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.

IOWA

Aug. 23-25 — Woodfest, sponsored by

Amana Arts Guild. Location: Amana Colonies RV Park in Amana. www.amanaartsguild.com

MARYLAND

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

NEVADA

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

NEW JERSEY

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.rosesquared.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. www.icff.com

NORTH CAROLINA

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

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) at various members' shops. 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 

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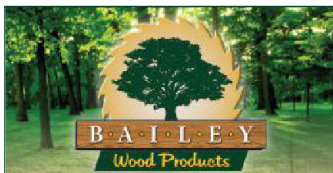
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(From left) Hamsley Forestry LLC in Hawkinsville, Ga., won the manual sawmill category; the Cook Woods' operation in Klamath Falls, Ore.

Pick six

Six sawmill companies were recently recognized in the 2012 biannual contest for Wood-Mizer owners across the United States and Canada. Each winning business was awarded prizes, received a plaque and was featured in "The Wood-Mizer Way," the company's customer magazine for the portable and industrial sawmilling industry with a circulation of about 40,000.

Contest coordinator Jacob Mooney says about 50 customers entered the contest this year. The participating customers were encouraged to send in photos and any informa-

tion about their business websites, how they market their business, what their revenues are and how the sawmills themselves have been integral to their business success.

"The contestants are all special in their own way, for sure, but we are trying to find businesses that are doing everything right, by the way they do their marketing to the way they take care of their customers to the quality of their products and the layouts of their buildings," Mooney says. "We look at a little bit of everything to determine who we select as winners."

There were two award winners per category, as follows:

- Category 1 (industrial sawmills): First place: Cook Woods in Klamath Falls, Ore.; Second place: DMRay Sawmill Inc. in Hardinsburg, Ind.
- Category 2 (hydraulic sawmills): First place: Northern Log & Timber in Kelowna, B.C.; Second place: Derek Morrell in Battle Ground, Wash.
- Category 3 (manual sawmills): First place: Hamsley Forestry LLC in Hawkinsville, Ga.; Second place: Knotthead Custom Sawing in Ceres, Calif.

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—Jennifer Hicks

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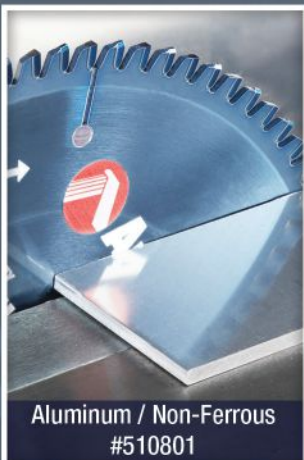


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