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NEWS®

On the home stretch

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is poised to prosper

*Give waterborne
a second look*

*How to keep
current customers*

*CNC tooling
gets an upgrade*

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SPECIFICATIONS:

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- Amps: 11 at 110V, 5.5 at 220V
- Cutting capacity/throat: 13 1/2"
- Max. cutting height: 6"
- Footprint: 23 1/2" x 16 1/2"
- Table height above floor: 43"
- Table tilt: 45° right, 10° left
- Frame construction: cast iron
- Precision-ground cast iron table
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- Amps: 20A at 110V, 10A at 220V
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- Floor to table height: 37 1/2"
- Max. cutting height: 12 1/8"
- Blade size: 131 1/2" long
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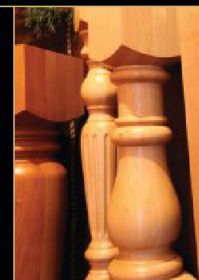
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Quotes taken from FDM Magazine article "Saw blade cuts downtime".

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BLOGS



Over the Workbench

Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler



This Business about Woodworking

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TAKING STOCK

with TOD RIGGIO

A longshot pays off and a new shop rises

It's been a good day. Not my best, mind you, ranking far behind the day I met my wife, the day my son was born, the 15 days I went to Jimmy Buffett concerts, and the day I watched college basketball at the ESPN studios and met Dick Vitale in the men's room but still a pretty darn good day.

Here's why: We finally got a building permit to construct my new shop.

OK, 'new' is a bit of a stretch. My previous shops, if you can call them that, have consisted of two milk crates and a circular saw, two sawhorses and a miter saw, a one-car garage without power (it took two extension cords to reach the nearest outlet), and the back of my Jeep. I've got tools and machines spread over two counties, in basements and closets, some still in their original boxes. A real shop has been on the bucket list for some time but the stars have never aligned, until now.

Here's the quick background story that may interest only me: The reality of turning our standalone garage, one that's too small to actually fit the cars we drive, into a shop started when my wife asked for a potting shed — perhaps a lean-to off the garage with a dry sink. I seized the opportunity.

What if, I boldly suggested, we build a proper shed off the back of the garage to store our trove of lawn mowers, weed whackers and rakes — tools I'm constantly rearranging to reach the garbage

and recycling bins. To my surprise, the idea had merit, so I started sketching and ended up with a bigger garage and an attached shed in the back that won't be seen from the street.

Before long, we're shopping for a builder and going through the permit process, which required a variance due to a wetland issue. What I thought was a longshot was relatively easy to achieve. Go figure.

By the time you read this, the shop and shed will have been built. Construction will commence the week I'm at the AWFS fair in Las Vegas, so I'll miss most of the fun of seeing my dream become reality. It will be a modest shop — roughly 16' x 16' — with plenty of electrical outlets, a couple of windows, lots of lights and a large door. It will be insulated and eventually heated for year-round use. It will have proper dust collection and an electrical lockout to prevent unauthorized use. The layout is to be determined, but I've got lots of ideas from visiting hundreds of shops and a stack of magazines saved over the years.

It won't be a professional shop, just a place to enjoy woodworking. I'd like to build cabinets, make some furniture and get into turning. I'm quite sure the demands of being a father, husband, magazine editor and golfer will keep me out of the shop for long stretches, but it will exist, and for now that's enough.

Even better days lie ahead. **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.

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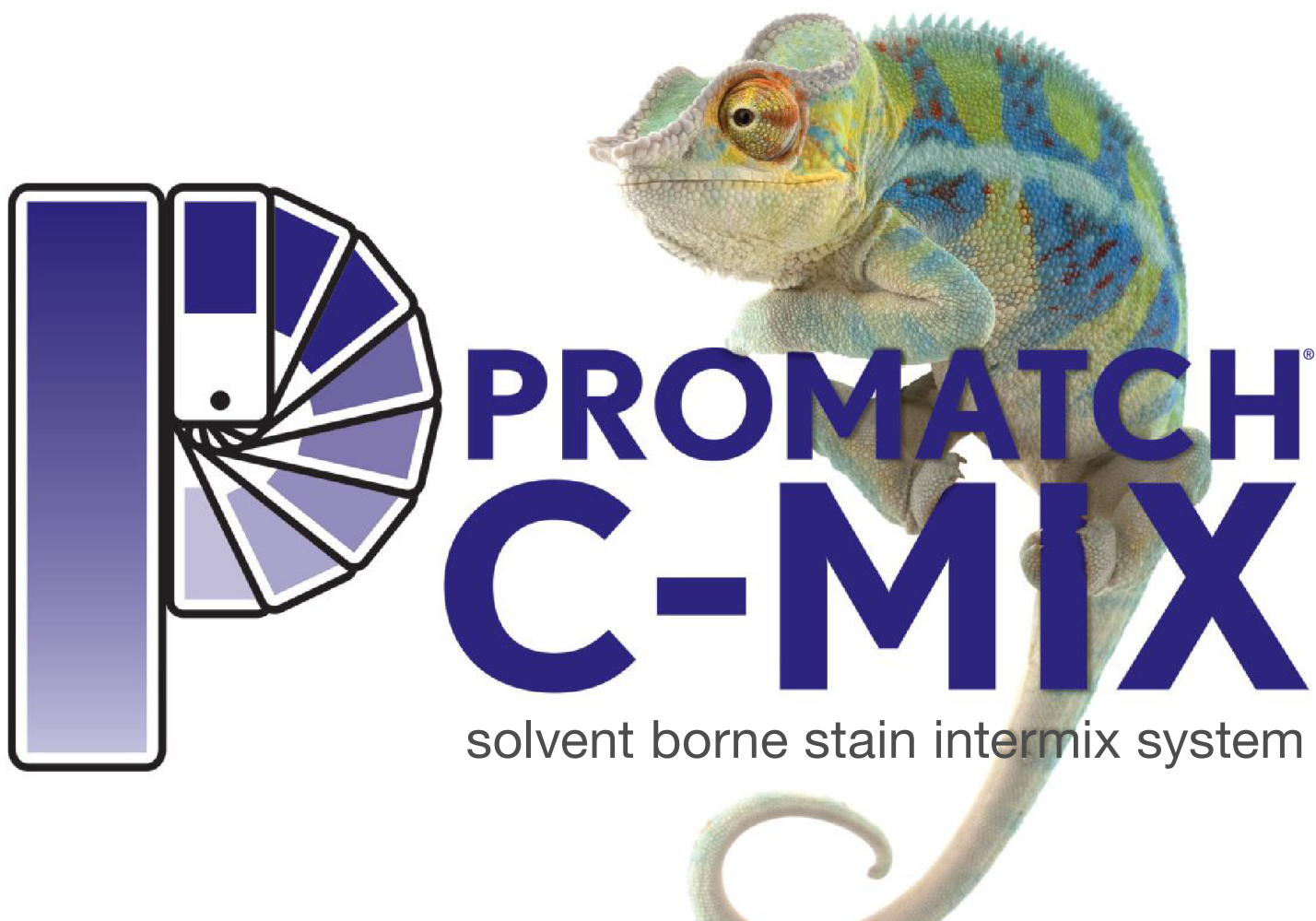


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NEWS DESK



DCI president Henry Kober (right) and Scott Nelson of the Woodwork Career Alliance discuss a new credentialing program for woodworkers.

N.H. group debuts credentialing program

By Jennifer Hicks

For the last couple of years, the Woodwork Career Alliance has worked closely with industry professionals across the nation to develop skill standards for machines and tools used in wood manufacturing. This has resulted in a credentialing program that allows woodworkers' skills to be recognized in a "Woodwork Passport" that serves as a portable, permanent record that can be used for career advancement.

Now, the Northern Forest Center of Concord, N.H., has developed a credentialing and training program that is being offered to manufacturers in northern New England for the first time. Referred to as the Skilled Workforce Initiative, the WCA is partnering with the center and will supply the standards and credentialing system.

"Working with the Northern Forest Center is a critical step in moving our program forward. We'll be able to demonstrate the

practical value of the credentialing system for companies, employees, educational institutions and students," WCA president Scott Nelson says.

To maximize the potential of the project, the center is using the networking resources of the Regional Wood Products Consortium which involves wood manufacturers from Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and northern New York. This has allowed the organization to initiate discussions with community colleges, private woodworking schools and technical colleges, as well as specialized schools at the high school level, about implementing specialized skills training and WCA's credentialing system as part of their curricula.

Overall, the goal is to have the woodworking industry valued as a profession, rather than a mere factory job.

"Across the region, the value-added wood products manufacturing sector employs thousands of workers, and small- and mid-size wood products companies represent a large

employment base in rural communities," says Collin Miller, director of wood products initiatives for the Northern Forest Center.

"This program provides a professional pathway we've needed in this industry for a long time. We believe the program will lead to a higher rate of job placement and job satisfaction, and it will build and help sustain a skilled workforce in the region so that wood products manufacturing can be a vibrant part of the forest-based economy here."

Manufacturers in all three states have signed up for the initial stage of the program, which provides a detailed profile of each company's credentialing and training needs for current and future employees.

Miller adds that the initiative will help small businesses become safer and more profitable by operating more efficiently.

"Right now, you have folks coming to the workplace who can tell you they worked for 20 years or so and ran certain machines. But as an employer, you have to evaluate on your own whether a person is competent or has operated a lot of machines, this shows proficiency and skill level by an independent evaluator which will increase comfort for business owners who can offer higher wages based on the program."

In addition to the WCA, other key partners include the Vermont Wood Manufacturers Association, Maine Wood Products Association, Architectural Woodwork Institute, White Mountains Community College, and the Vermont Woodworking School. Also, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration provided some initial funding for the program through the Rural Jobs Accelerator Challenge, a national initiative that supports rural partnerships that help small businesses.

Contact: Northern Forest Center, P.O. Box 210, Concord, NH 03302. Tel: 603-229-0679. www.northernforest.org 

FSC set to certify tall-ship project

Build will cost \$5 million and will be built with Douglas fir harvested from FSC-certified forests

By Jennifer Hicks

The Forest Stewardship Council is currently in the process of certifying a historic tall ship project being built in Sausalito, Calif., assuring the vessel is built with 100 percent certified lumber from northern California and Oregon.

The Educational Tall Ship for San Francisco Bay, the non-profit group behind the project, selected SCS Global Services of Emeryville, Calif., a leading FSC certifier, to conduct the independent assessment proving that only FSC-certified lumber is used in the hull, decks and cabins. FSC certification ensures that forest management practices protect old-growth trees, rivers and terrestrial ecosystems, while avoiding overlogging.

"The positive environmental story behind their selection of wood to be used in the ship is that it is associated with responsible forestry as confirmed by FSC certification. That means that the forests, which are based in Medoncino County, north of Sausalito in Northern California, there's a 50,000-acre forest operation that is owned by an organization called the conservation fund," SCS Global Services executive vice president Robert Hrubes says.

"They have been certified by the FSC and we've been their certifier for many years. We are going out there with checklists to make sure that their practices are meeting our requirements."

The 132-foot vessel will be the largest wooden ship constructed in the San Francisco area in nearly 100 years, with construction costs estimat-



The wood awaits for the project to begin.

ed around \$5 million. It will be built with Douglas fir harvested from FSC-certified forests in Mendocino County that was donated by the Conservation Fund, also audited by SCS. FSC-certified Oregon white oak supplied by Sustainable Northwest will be used for rigging parts, hatches, furniture and the rudder.

Alan Olson, founder of the Educational Tall Ship nonprofit, says his organization wants to teach children to be stewards of the planet.

"Teaching them about our responsibly harvested FSC certified wood is a great way we can help them connect with the local environment," says Olson.

During construction, the Educational Tall Ship will invite visitors to learn how wooden ships are built. Once launched, she will act as a living laboratory for students to learn to sail a tall ship while studying marine science and ecology. The ship will set sail in San Francisco Bay and beyond.

For information, visit www.educationaltallship.org. [W](#)

SCM Group offers product-demo events

By Jennifer Hicks

SCM Group North America is hosting a series of product-demonstration events to offer woodworkers the chance to ask about various CNC machining products that can help boost their productivity. The company is partnering with software manufacturer Cabinet Vision and machinery maker Wurth Louis and Co.

SCM Group marketing manager Max Salmi says the ultimate goal in hosting the events is to create a friendly, easygoing atmosphere for customers, in contrast to the chaos of large trade shows.

"We are trying to ease the process of these sales. Usually what happens, especially when you go to trade shows, is that you have a lot of different salesmen trying to push for the sales. Instead, we are trying to educate our customers. We are promoting education as a very strong tool to their business development, using our equipment in our showrooms," says Salmi.



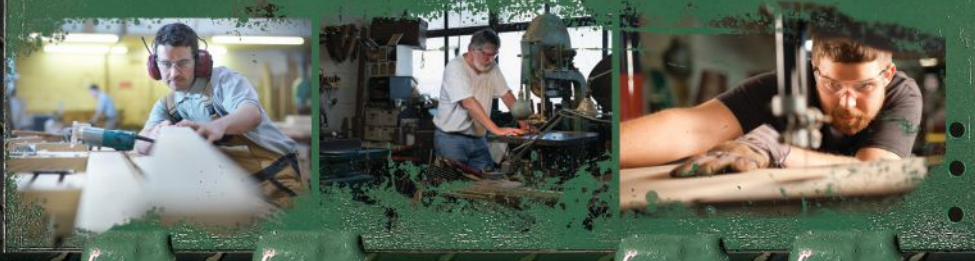
The first series of events were held throughout June at SCM showrooms in West Jordan, Utah; Houston, and Duluth, Ga. Describing the turnout as excellent, Salmi says there were at least 16 attendees at each

event, representing small- to mid-sized operations with up to 20 employees. The featured machines ranged in price from \$45,000 to \$150,000 and included SCM brand CNC routers, edgebanders, and dowel insertion and drilling machines.

"Lots of the customers who attended have since decided to purchase our products. Usually, the people that attend are not just the owners of the companies, but the machine operators, shop foremen, project managers and other people who want to understand and improve their businesses.

"People are asking for more of these events and more education. So, for the remainder of the year we are trying to change the topic at each event to offer training in specific applications like cutting, edgebanding and material handling," says Salmi.

The company will offer 15 more seminars in various locations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico through December. For information, visit www.scmgroup-usa.com. [W](#)



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TOOLS & TECHNIQUES



Bosch rolls out brushless oscillating tool

By Jennifer Hicks

Bosch Power Tools has introduced a new 18-volt oscillating tool, model MXH180, with a brushless motor design. Weighing just 4.35 lbs. and powered by a 4.0 amp-hour Fat Pack battery, Bosch says the tool delivers on its promise of high efficiency in a compact size.

Product manager Jim Stevenson says the benefit of an oscillating tool, cordless or corded, is that it can do lots of specialty tasks such as sanding, cutting and scraping faster than any other tool. He adds that this model offers up to three times longer life, 30 percent more power, 65 percent longer runtime and integrated electronics for superior control and motor life than competing models.

"Thanks to the tool's EC brushless motor, the MXH180 boasts best-in-class runtime. Users can also benefit from lighter weight, reduced vibration, minimal maintenance and extended motor life," says Stevenson.

The variable-speed motor has a soft start feature, as well as a constant response circuitry

feature to maintain speed under a heavy load.

The MXH180 is compatible with all generations of Bosch lithium-ion Fat and Slim Pack 18-volt batteries, and users can expect even more runtime with new BAT612 2.0 amp-hour and BAT620 4.0 amp-hour batteries, according to the company.

The tool also features a toolless accessory change lever. "Unlike some competitor toolless accessory-change systems, the Bosch system does not require that any parts be removed and reattached in the process. With the right accessory, users can get to work without worrying about misplacing or keeping track of small parts.

"For enhanced user comfort and better productivity, the tool features reinforced gear housing helps cut down on tool vibration, as well as soft grip areas and small grip circumference," says Stevenson.

The tool sells for \$99 in a starter kit, which includes a charger and 4.0 amp-hour lithium-ion battery.

Contact: Bosch Tool Corp. Tel: 877-267-2499. www.bosch.us **W**

General offers small-shop dust collector

By Jennifer Hicks

General International offers a new 1-hp portable dust collector, model 10-030CF, with a 1-micron canister filter.

"Mounted on a steel base with one swivel caster and two 7" wheels for smooth rolling around the shop, the new 10-030CF is an affordable dust collection solution ideally suited for small shops where portability and only single machine hookups are required," General marketing and communications manager Norman Frampton says.

Sporting an all-steel frame construction, the collector is equipped with a 1-hp motor and a 10" spin-balanced impeller for smooth and quiet operation. It also comes with a 4" main hose inlet, a heavy-duty transparent reusable plastic collection bag and a 1-micron canister filter with a total surface area of 20-1/3 sq. ft., according to General.

A crank handle on the top of the filter activates an internal agitator, allowing the user to clean the filter from the inside without having to remove it and a safety switch with removable key that prevents unauthorized use of the machine with the key removed.

The portable collector weighs 67 lbs. and sells for \$399.99.

Contact: General International U.S.A. Tel: 888-949-1161. www.general.ca **W**





My name is Jory Brigham and I count on Festool for my biggest challenges.

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Visit www.tracksaw.com to learn how Jory uses the new **TS 55 REQ** to tackle his toughest demands.



Value is goal of new SCM Group edgebander

By Jennifer Hicks

SCM Group recently introduced the Olympic k560 compact edgebander for high production shops. Marketing operations manager Max Salmi says the machine is designed for small- to medium-sized shops, including those that run thin tape, 3mm and strip material.

"The most significant feature is the overall value for the money. It is a very heavy machine, with a large 1-1/4" feed chain and large infeed section, large glue pot and is extremely fast for the price point. It is by far the heaviest and most productive machine in its price range," says Salmi.



SCM's new Olympic k560 is designed for customers that are looking for a reasonably priced machine that can run many different types of material at a fast pace.

A perfect glue joint line can be obtained with the glue roller that ensures uniform application on all materials. Changeover between thin, thick and solid wood edges is a snap because of the three-position trimming unit equipped with combo tools, according to the company.

The edgebander also features the Orion One Plus control with a 4" display.

Pricing for the Olympic k560 starts at about \$37,000 and will vary depending on the machine's configuration.

Contact: SCM Group North America. Tel: 800-292-1850. www.scmgroup-usa.com

Zapkut debuts new router-head option

By Jennifer Hicks

British manufacturer Zapkut Ltd. offers a new floating router-head option for its ZM moving-column vertical panel saw series.

The router head is ideal for the grooving or edging of tim-

ber, sheet goods and sign-making materials. Switching between saw and router heads is quick and easy, allowing a single operator to swiftly size and rout without repositioning the workpiece, according to the company.

The depth of groove is set with a twist dial, while the router head's floating design ensures a consistent depth of cut even on flimsier materials that might bow and bend. In conjunction with the precision engineering in the ZM frame, this makes accurate grooving rapid and straightforward.

"For decades, vertical panel saws have largely been the sheet-cutting tool of choice for larger businesses with significant cutting loads and workshops and budgets to match. The ZM range is designed specifically for the smaller operator in that it's compact and simple to set up and operate," product manager Keith Bunker says.

"The floating router head makes the already versatile ZM range even more capable. It allows users to smooth, streamline and accelerate workflow without compromising on quality. That adds up to happier customers and a healthier bottom line."

The ZM series includes three models: the ZM12 for sheet goods up to 2.5m x 1.25m; ZM16 (3.1m x 1.6m), and ZM21 (3.1m x 2.1m). Common features allow for plunge and bevel (to 45 degrees) cutting, easy switching between cross- and rip-cutting and a quick power head release mechanism, according to the company.

Saws in the ZM series start at about \$3,800.

For information, visit www.zapkut.co.uk.





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- Blade speeds: 1500 & 3200 FPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 205 lbs.



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- Motor: 2 HP, 110V/220V, single-phase, TEFC
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- RPM: 1725
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 17" x 17" x 1 1/2" thick
- Table tilt: 10° left, 45° right
- Floor to table height: 37 1/2"
- Cutting capacity/throat: 16 1/4" L
- Maximum cutting height: 12 1/8"
- Blade size: 131 1/2" long
- Approx. shipping weight: 342 lbs.



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G0513ANV

~~\$895⁰⁰~~ SALE **\$795⁰⁰**



3 HP DUST COLLECTOR

- Motor: 3 HP, 240V, single-phase, 3450 RPM, 12A
- Air suction capacity: 2300 CFM
- Maximum static pressure: 16.7"
- Impeller: 12 3/4" balanced steel, radial fin
- 7" Inlet with removable "Y" fitting w/ three 4" openings
- Portable base size: 21 1/2" x 49 1/2"
- Bag volume: 11.4 cubic ft.
- Height (with bags inflated): 78"
- Standard bag filtration: 2.5 Micron
- Approximate shipping weight: 170 lbs.

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FULLY MOBILE WITH BUILT-IN CASTERS



G1030Z2P

~~\$438²⁵~~ SALE **\$395⁰⁰**



6" JOINTER

- Motor: 1 HP, 110V, single-phase
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 7 1/2" x 46"
- Cutterhead diameter: 2 1/2"
- Cutterhead knives: 3
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 260 lbs.



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FREE PAIR OF SAFETY PUSH BLOCKS

G0452P ~~\$525⁰⁰~~ SALE **\$495⁰⁰**



1 1/2 HP SHAPER

- Motor: 1 1/2 HP, 110V/220V, single-phase
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 20 1/4" x 18"
- Spindle travel: 3"
- 2 Interchangeable spindles: 1/2" & 3/4"
- Spindle speeds: 7000 & 10,000 RPM
- Max. cutter dia.: 5"
- Approx. shipping weight: 240 lbs.



MADE IN TAIWAN

G1035P ONLY **\$560⁰⁰**



8" x 76" JOINTERS

- Motor: 3 HP, 240V, single-phase, TEFC, 3450 RPM
- Maximum depth of cut: 1/8"
- Maximum rabbeting capacity: 1/2"
- Total table size: 8" x 76 3/8"
- Cutterhead diameter: 3 3/16" (G0490), 3 3/8" (G0490X)
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approximate shipping weight: 560 lbs.

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G0490 ~~\$975⁰⁰~~ SALE **\$925⁰⁰**



WITH SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD
G0490X ~~\$1295⁰⁰~~ SALE **\$1250⁰⁰**

15" PLANERS with Built-in Mobile Base

- Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 15" x 20"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/8"
- Feed rate: 16 & 30 FPM
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 660 lbs.



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G0453PX ONLY **\$1695⁰⁰**



10" HEAVY-DUTY CABINET TABLE SAW with Riving Knife

- Motor: 5 HP, 220V/440V*, 12A/6A, 3-phase
- Precision-ground cast iron table with extension measures: 27" x 75 3/4" • Table height: 34 3/8"
- Arbor: 5/8" • Arbor speed: 4000 RPM
- Max. dado width: 3/4"
- Capacity@ 90°: 3 3/16", @ 45°: 2 3/16"
- Max. rip capacity: 52"
- Approx. shipping weight: 711 lbs.



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24" WIDE-BELT SANDER

- Sanding belt motor: 10 HP, 230V, 3-phase
- Feed motor: 1 HP
- Table elevation motor: 1/4 HP
- Sanding belt: 25" x 60"
- Drum speed: 2500 FPM
- Conveyor speed: Variable 15-49 FPM
- Maximum board dimensions: 24 3/8" W x 6" H
- Minimum board dimensions: 14" L x 1/8" H
- Approximate shipping weight: 1573 lbs.



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G0582 ~~\$8195⁰⁰~~ SALE **\$7795⁰⁰**



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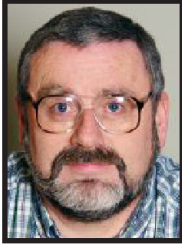
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THE CUTTING EDGE

with JOHN ENGLISH

CNC tooling manufacturers plan for a boom

Companies have released new lines aimed at an increase in projects for the recovering housing industry

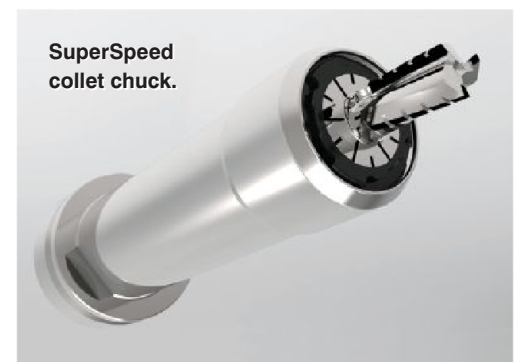
With housing starts strengthening, manufacturers of CNC tooling are planning for a period of sustained growth in the woodworking world. So far, the major emphasis seems to be at the lighter end of the tooling scale and often on sets of cutters.

For example, in June, Amana Tool released two new CNC tooling product lines. The first is their collection of polycrystalline diamond

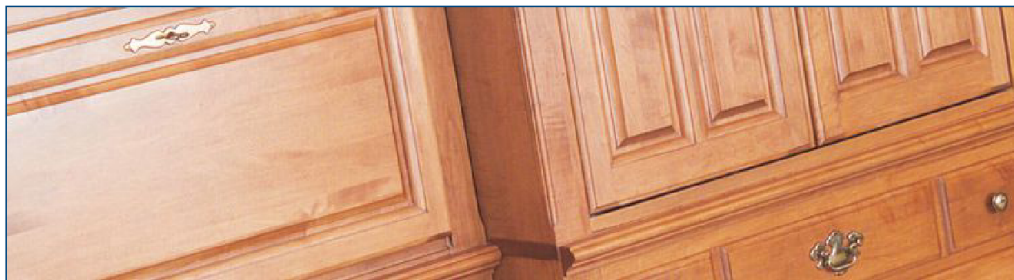
(PCD) router bits that were specially designed for particleboard, MDF, veneer, hardwood, plywood and melamine. The bits are ideal for cutting, jointing and rabbeting in these materials. According to the company, the "high-grade PCD helps ensure the cutting edge lasts up to 100 times longer than standard carbide, making the bits an economical choice for industrial projects." What's especially appealing about PCD is that it can be sharpened without sacri-

ficing profile dimensions. And the new bits feature up-down shear action for cutting double-sided material, as well as a solid carbide plunge point. They start at about \$140 for the smallest cutter, DRB-200, which is a 1/2" straight bit with 1" depth of cut and 1-3/8" shaft. Also available in 1/2" are a 1" depth by 1-3/4" long shaft and a 1-3/8" depth by 1-3/4" shaft. The line includes 5/8" diameter bits, too, in both 1" and 1-5/8" depths, and two 3/4" diameter cutters in 1" and 1-3/8" depths.

The other Amana innovation this summer is AMS-130, an eight-piece carbide sign-making router bit set. Specially designed for creating decorative work, the cutters work in wood, plastic, acrylic, aluminum, composites and solid-surface materials.



"Amana created this premier router bit set to enable sign-makers to quickly and easily build a basic collection of popular CNC sign-making router bit profiles," Amana Tool technical director Frank Misiti says. "The set comes in a reusable hardwood storage case with a clear lid. Users can add on to the initial set with any of the In-Groove line's 30 available knife profiles, such as V-shaped tips that can also be used to engrave aluminum, brass and copper. The kit



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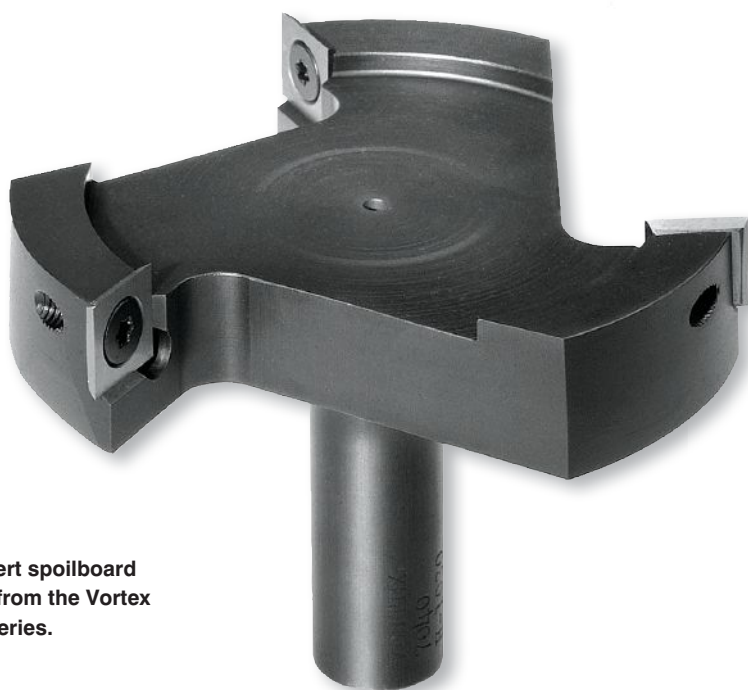
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Polycrystalline diamond router bits (opposite page) and sign-making set from Amana Tools.



An insert spoilboard cutter from the Vortex 7000 series.

comes with a tool body and a 30-degree knife; a solid carbide upcut spiral-ball nose (designed to eliminate tool marks in plastic and solid surface materials); and plastic and aluminum "O" flutes (designed for use in acrylic materials such as Plexiglas, lucite, nylon, ABS, PE, acetal, PET, HDPE, UHMW, polycarbonates and polypropylene, plus wood and solid surface materials). The aluminum-cutting "O" flutes provide superior cutting results in aluminum, brass, copper and other non-ferrous metals. Both the plastic cutting and aluminum router bits are specially designed with a right-hand Helix to eject chips upward, helping to eliminate chip weld in plastic materials.

"Also in the kit are a carbide-tipped V-groove bit that can be used with an edge guide

to chamfer and bevel edges and a carving/engraving bit that's ideal for fine-line engraving in wood and composite materials. And there's an insert V-groove tool that uses a high-grade carbide knife that lets a shop rotate the insert for a brand-new cutting edge when the first side shows wear."

The eight-piece sells for about \$250. For information, visit www.amanatool.com.

Multiple component cutters

Last fall, Techno Inc., based in New Hyde Park, N.Y., introduced a new nested-based tooling kit that is perfect for cabinetry applications. These multiple component cutters are designed to create the interlocking shapes needed for cabinet and drawer making, or to surface

continued on next page

Bunk Bed Company Creates Cash Flow for Small Shops



1800BunkBed is a nationally recognized woodworking business with a 19-year proven track record. It offers a turnkey woodworking business, geared toward one-to-four-man shops. By using existing equipment and know-how, shop owners are able to create a reliable cash flow and eliminate slow times.

What started as a small backyard operation is now the nation's fastest growing woodworking business and the country's largest producer of custom bunk beds and loft beds.

Joining 1800BunkBed is quite affordable. Pricing is minimal and determined by population (currently averaging just \$285 per/month per territory) and a 1-time setup fee of only \$95.

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The Vortex spoilboard cutter with an integrated tool design (8000 series).

THE CUTTING EDGE *from previous page*

spoilboards for faster table planing and also to rout through layered materials for larger surface removal. The kit has a 2-1/2" surface cutter with replaceable inserts, a couple of 3/8" compression bits, two 1/4" downcut spirals, a 1/4" compression bit and 5mm boring bits. It's designed for use in soft and hard plastics, solid hardwood, composites, MDF and laminates.

"One of our main selling points with this nested-based tooling kit," sales manager Ray Jakes says, "is that you only have to purchase one kit to meet your cutting needs. Our kit provides a complete compilation of cutters that can help make any shop more productive." For information, call 800-819-3366 or e-mail tooling@technocnc.com.

After many years of selling product directly from Germany, T-Tool USA was established in August 2008 and operates out of a warehouse and office facility in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. It is a distributor for all products manufactured in Germany by T-Tool Precision GmbH, and Zollmann GmbH. T-Tool's latest innovation is the SuperSpeed collet chuck. With extended lengths available (in models HSK-63F and HSK-63E) the new chuck offers flexibility for 3-4-5 axes CNC machining of aluminum, composites, plastic and, of course, wood. For information, visit www.t-toolusa.com.

Chuck Hicks of Southeast Tool in Conover, N.C., just added new carbide-tipped flat bottom cutters. The three-wing cutters answer the annoying problem of having a nut below the body of the tool by recessing a hex head locking screw into the body so it's flush. The flat bottom tools are available in 1/4" and 1/2" diameter shanks with longer length arbors if needed. For information, visit www.southeasttool.com.

Listening to its customers

LMT Onsrud LP operates out of a 64,000-sq.-ft. facility in Wauke-

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gan, Ill. The company began producing router bits in 1946 and has recently introduced four new upcut ballnose bits in 3-, 6-, 10- and 12mm widths. Prices range from about \$35 to \$95. Onsrud also has a new 1/4" solid carbide two-flute downcut bit that features its Marathon coating (\$42), a new 1.720" Hogger (item 32-200, which retails for about \$450) and a 1/8" solid carbide two-flute upcut with a coating that's designed for glass-reinforced plastics (\$69). While woodshops serving the boatbuilding industry might find that cutter useful, traditional cabinet shops should be pleased to hear that the company has also released a 3/8" solid carbide two-flute compression tool with the Marathon coating – one that is designed specially for double-sided laminated and/or veneered wood composites.

Last year, Onsrud introduced balanced single-flute spiral-cutting tools to run at extremely high speeds, because shops using CNC routers for sign-making have turned so much to high-speed spindles. The advantage, of course, is an increase in feed rates. Traditionally, multiple flute tools have been naturally balanced by design. But single flute spiral tools are naturally unbalanced because of the location and amount of carbide that is removed during the grinding process.

"The market is demanding a balanced single-flute spiral cutting tool," marketing manager Jennifer Neubauer says. "We listened to our customers and now are offering balanced tools up to 60,000 rpm."

If you're not in the market for new cutters right now and just need a source for repairing existing tools, General Cutting Tools in Chicago (www.cuttingtoolschicago.com) might be the answer. Founded in 1978, it has been supporting CNC operators for more than 30 years. The founder was born and raised in Gdansk, Poland, and his education was deeply influenced by both German and Polish tool and machine makers. He was taught traditional, high-precision, high-quality methods of tool design and manufacture and, when he moved to Chicago in the 1970s, his desire was to marry the quality and craftsmanship of European cutting tools with American know-how. The concept was to supply affordable, yet world-class, tooling. Unlike most tooling distributors, the company still has a fully staffed and equipped tool shop, so late last year they issued a press release that said:

"Broken or damaged tooling repair is far, far less expensive than purchasing new. Send us your broken or damaged tools and we can save you up to 85 percent over purchasing a new tool holder." The company repairs boring bars, end mills, drills, cutters, ball nose and helical end mills, cartridges, face and slab mills, Mueller reamers, counterbores, spade drills, V-flange tooling, double feed indexable porting tools, lathe and groove tools, and step drills.

Across the pond

Sometimes it pays to look at what our neighbors are doing, too. Cutter Shop Ltd., based in Hampshire, England, can be found online at www.cutter-shop.com. The site features spoilboard cutters, made by the Vortex Tool Co., used for surfacing MDF, particleboard and balsa core. The straight-face design provides a fast and clean cut. The body has been designed so the insert remains in place and doesn't pivot on the cutter. These tools are available in two- or three-wing geometries and 1/2" or 3/4" shank diameters. The company also offers Vortex spoilboard cutters with a newly developed integrated tool design. This series is a solid one-piece unit with a taper built into the tool, a design that is intended to reduce wear and tear on the machine spindle. This version, the 8000 series, has either a 3" or 4" diameter cutter and both come with 3/4" shanks and three wings.

Let's hope the manufacturers are right and that this projected housing boom extends well into the future. Tooling is expensive and it would be nice to have our cutters wear out from use long before the cost of the machine is fully depreciated. **W**

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Customers know loyalty is a two-way street

Each one of them thinks their business should be more important to you than anyone else's — and they're right

Ever wonder why so many otherwise well-managed businesses expend so much effort and advertising dollars to attract new customers, but then seemingly go out of their way to alienate those they already have? They develop grandiose schemes to figure out what turns customers on, yet devote so little time and effort to determine what turns them off.

Once a customer has made that first purchase from your shop, the sales effort becomes one of providing service. Selling does not stop once the delivery truck has unloaded the product at the customer's door.

Customer's expectations have never been higher. They expect quality merchandise, competitive prices, prompt delivery, follow-up service and product performance and the supplier honoring the warranty. Each one of them, no matter how small, thinks their business should be more important to you than anyone else's. And they're right.

To maintain your woodworking business in a growth-and-profit mode, it must be bulletproof. That is, doing everything for existing customers that you would for new ones. You must say to each, "No matter how busy I am, I am never too busy for you," and mean it.

How the customer is treated after the sale is made determines who that person will buy from next time. It is advisable to remember that your competitors are calling on your customers where they are, perhaps offering better prices, better quality of product, speedier delivery and better aftersales service. Your customers are only given to them with your consent.

Fess up and fix up

If your customers tell you or others that your merchandise is shoddy, your staff is rude and/or your service is terrible, it is time to take a hard look into your operation and get to

the source of the problems.

Seek out those areas where problems are occurring and where they could occur. Change the old adage from, if it ain't broke, don't fix it to fix it before it breaks. Accept where the customer has been shortchanged, fess up to it and get about the task of making corrections.

Innumerable studies have been conducted on what it costs to obtain each new customer. To recite statistics would be meaningless as undoubtedly you would spend less to obtain a small one than a volume purchaser. Still, advertising and promotion is a multibillion-dollar industry, all of which is to serve one purpose and one purpose only. That is to get a potential customer to pick up the telephone and make an inquiry. Once this occurs, advertising has done its job.

To buttress advertising, many larger shops and wood product manufacturers have sales staffs whose sole purpose is to find new customers and make sales. All of this causes one to ask, "If you go to all this bother and expense to obtain a new customer, should you not expend at least an equal amount of effort to retain one that you already have?" Of course you should. Still, so many businesses go through all of this to obtain new customers and forget all about taking care of those they already have.

No matter how you go about, it is a given that finding new customers can be expensive. It is also a given that retaining those already "logged on" is far cheaper and more productive. The existing customer is a known quantity. Loyal customers buy more than new ones, they argue price less and are more accommodating with mistakes such as late deliveries. As individual customer purchases increase, cost per delivered unit decreases proportionally.

A proactive approach

Some tips to ensure high customer retention:

Sell needs, not products: Solve problems. Ensure that what you sell has a definite value to the customer, not just a procedure for you to get their money into your bank.

Have a clearly defined aftersales service policy: Ensure that every person on your staff, including the newest one hired, knows, understands and carries it out. In survey after survey, aftersales service and failure to respond to problems was the No. 1 complaint and the main reason why customers went elsewhere. If a customer phones to complain, how long does it take you to respond? The cornerstone of bringing them back is your adaptability to the changing needs and wants of the customer, flexibility, responsiveness to their problems and not passing the buck.

Have a clearly defined procedure to identify, clarify and rectify problems areas, one that fesses up and fixes up. You cannot adopt the position that if you ignore a problem long enough, it will just go away. Yes, in time it will and so will the customer. Zero defects is an unattainable goal. Having products that occasionally fail and making the odd mistake is inevitable. They happen. What counts is how you respond and the preventive action taken to ensure that it does not happen again. While one negative experience, unattended to or glossed over, can nullify years of good relationships, going out of your way to resolve the problems cements those relationships.

Design and implement a sales and aftersales service policy that is, at the minimum, as good as your competitors. Try to be better, but don't give away the farm to obtain or retain customers. Be active. Make yourself aware of your competitor's products, pricing, aftersales service policies, etc. Compete on the basis of quality, service, filling needs, satisfying wants, doing the job, meeting expectations and, of course, price.

Educate your customers and staff. No business can be run on the basis of a five-alarm fire. You must format customer expectations into the scope of your product line, capabilities and expertise. Teach them that the difficult tasks can be done immediately, the impossible takes a little longer. You will find fewer unreasonable demands when your customers know your limitations and constraints. Still, be consistent. As you do for one, do for all.

Monitor your own operation, not from the perspective of what you perceive to be there, to justify its shortcomings or tell yourself that everything is just fine, but to determine what it actually is. Consider your shop and business from the perspective of the customer. Would you patronize were the tables turned? If you have your doubts, it is time to make changes.

Have clearly defined credit and collection policy: Good customers expect to pay their bills. The better ones do and, within a given time frame, if they know what that time frame

and your policies are. Never be embarrassed about asking for money. You have provided the goods and services. It is now their turn.

Continually test your products, programs and policies against general market inferences, customer expectations and the influence of your competitors. Their needs and wants change. Your products and services must keep pace.

Finally, keep in mind that the greatest difficulty is not building a business, it is sustaining it. There is an older economic theory that states: Where capital goes and capital is earned, competitive capital will follow. Otherwise stated: success breeds competition and if you don't have any now, that will soon change. As the number of products of the market increases and the number of competitors to sell them is increasing faster than the market's absorption capability, the competition will constantly solicit your customers and offer incentives of all sorts. Since you were there first and you have them, they can only be taken by a competitor with your consent.

Make your woodworking shop bulletproof. Listen to your customers and act to ensure satisfaction. Then they will remain with you. **W**

Lloyd R. Manning is a semi-retired commercial real estate and business appraiser, financial analyst, and author. He can be reached at lloydmann@shaw.ca.

WMIA donates iPads to Oregon school

The Woodworking Machinery Industry Association donated six iPads to North Salem High School, the association's 2013 Educator of the Year. The tablets will be used in the school's cabinet manufacturing program to support some new initiatives within the school.

CMA elects new officers

New officers and directors were elected to the Cabinet Makers Associations board of directors at its meeting earlier this month.

Tracy Yarborough of Maple River Woodworks will continue in his role as president for the 2013-14 year, and will be joined by Keith Kreppein of Olde Saratoga Millwork (NY) as vice president. Joe Knobbe of Exclusive Woodworking will continue as secretary and Scott Comstock of Woodperfect Custom Cabinetry will become the CMA's new treasurer.

Also elected to the board as directors at large were David Buchsbaum of Bea-

con Custom Woodwork, and Matt Krig of Northland Woodworks. Charles Kurak of C. Kurak Custom Woodworking Inc. will continue to serve for the 2013-14 term.

Completing his term is Brian Dirks of Cabinet Designs LLC who most recently served as CMA treasurer.

Accessa offers free customer guide

Accessa Coatings Solutions' new 19-page guide, "Lessons Learned to Keep Coating Customers Growing: Mistakes to Avoid and Opportunities to Recognize for Businesses that Rely on Coatings," offers insights gained from more than three decades of experience in the coatings industry.

"We have helped hundreds of businesses make smart choices to keep their businesses growing," said Vince Todd, Jr., principal at Accessa Coatings Solutions, in a company release. "We've also learned a lot. Working with customers and coating manufacturers affords us the opportunity to learn business and technical lessons from a variety of perspectives."



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Cherry sales struggle to stay on top

By Jennifer Hicks

While retail suppliers say they don't foresee a drop in cherry sales in the near future, they have mixed reaction about sales

fluctuating during the last several years. But all tend to agree that the bright and vibrantly hued hardwood is still a prevailing seller compared to other domestic species where those qualities are influencing current trends.

Mike Greeley of Northwest Lumber in In-

dianapolis believes sales have increased in the last year, particularly with furniture makers, because of design trends shifting towards warmer tones.

"It's a beautiful wood that is very nice wood to work with. It takes finish well, but you sometimes have to sand it down before you apply anything," Greeley says.

On the other hand, Louis Irion, of Irion Lumber in Wellsboro, Pa., says sales aren't so great, blaming the economic downturn for pushing sales overseas in 2008, leaving the U.S. with the picked-over selections that woodworkers turn down.

"[Sales] are not great. Cherry has definitely slowed down for us. We're selling more of specialty stock, heavy and wide doing well, but overall it's still pretty slow. But there are signs it's coming back. When you look the market and you see walnut and mahogany are getting harder to get, the pendulum is about to swing in favor of cherry," says Irion.

"That's just my opinion, but it's based on the fact that price has come down because the best logs have been shipped overseas since 2008. The European market had changed from wanting walnut and white oak to wanting cherry. What was left of domestic has been of such very poor quality, some people couldn't even use it. So it's gone from a sellers' to a buyers' market."

Rocky Mehta, of West Penn Hardwoods in Olean, N.Y., says sales are about the same as they were last year.

"It's been a pretty steady seller. It's an attractive wood to work with because it takes a variety of stains well, from light to dark. Cherry is probably one of the most popular woods in its price range. It's widely available where we are, but the sawmills have not been cutting it as much, so that probably has had some effect on the market that doesn't necessarily reflect a drop consumer demand," says Mehta.

On average, FAS 4/4 cherry currently sells between \$5 and 5.98/bf, and higher for wider, more figured boards. **W**

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FINISHING

with GREG WILLIAMS

Whole new world for waterborne finishing

Coatings manufacturers are constantly working on improvements in finishing products – and you're better off for it

When I was first introduced to waterborne wood finishing products, other than latex paint, in the late 1970s, there were only a handful of companies that had any

clear coats available to the small finisher. The complex regulations associated with the acronyms OSHA, EPA, SCAMD, VOC, HAPS, NESHAP were not a factor.

With the passage of several state regulations

in the 1960s and 1970s as well as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977, users of industrial coatings began to be regulated in the U.S. Some limits on the VOC content of coatings and the methods of application were implemented and have proliferated since.

In addition, we have some positive incentives from Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Green Guard, Green Seal and other certifications that might offer a competitive advantage in securing contracts for finishers, builders and manufacturers of finished wood products.

Forward-thinking coatings manufacturers are constantly working on improvements in the range, performance and cost effectiveness of its finishing products, not only with sealers and topcoats, but with dye and pigment stains, glazes, colorants, grain fillers, aerosols and other touchup products.

Many of the early-generation products imposed too high a barrier to the user. A significant learning curve to make the transition discouraged finishers who were not compelled

continued on next page





FINISHING *from previous page*

to switch to waterborne products, while the lack of ancillary products such as stains and fillers required users to use both solvent and waterborne products in the same finishing schedule and there was little readily available training for new users of the waterborne products.

It's time to revisit waterborne finishing systems. Restrictions on solvents and improvements in waterborne coating materials as well as the availability of information and training to assist in the transition make it worth considering.

Basic requirements

While most any of the available spray guns will spray waterborne coatings, guns specifically designed for that purpose might be advisable. Whenever possible, spray equipment used for waterborne coatings should be dedicated and not used for solvent-based products. If you are buying new guns, consider upgrading at the same time to more efficient models such as HVLP or air-assisted airless, which can save you additional money in material use.

All fluid-handling components must be corrosion-resistant, usually stainless steel or plastic.

Because the primary drying mechanism in waterborne coatings is usually evaporation of the water component, the speed of that evaporation controls the dry time. Factors influencing that evaporation are temperature, humidity and air movement. Humidity has the greatest effect — in high-humidity conditions, there is nowhere for the water to go. Increasing the ambient air temperature will lower relative humidity as well as increasing the activity of the water molecules, allowing faster evaporation.

As the water vapor increases the humidity of the air envelope around

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the coated item, evaporation slows down so rapid air movement is necessary to change out the saturated air. Some manufacturers recommend increasing the speed of the air passing over the surface to 200 feet per minute or more, either by using blowers or special variable speed makeup and exhaust systems.

Temperatures should not drop below 65 degrees during application and drying and 75 degrees or higher is recommended. Many of the manufacturer's instructions give drying times at 77 degrees and 50 percent relative humidity. Users running a continuous finishing line often install ovens in line to speed the drying between operations. Moisture in the air lines should be 10 percent relative humidity or less.

In low humidity areas, such as Phoenix or Albuquerque, N.M., no environmental adjustments are necessary. Normal temperature and air movement should be sufficient. However, excessive temperatures or very high air movement can dry some products too fast, causing some defects in the coating.

In spite of the common belief that waterborne coatings are non-toxic, a respirator and adequate ventilation is necessary. Airborne liquid particulate can be aspirated and is more problematic to the operator than dry airborne particulate from solvent-based coatings. There are solvents other than water in these coatings.

While, in general, equipment used to apply waterborne coatings can be cleaned with warm and soapy water, some manufacturers recommend their own blend of cleaning solution, formulated specifically for their product.

Read the manufacturer's instructions. There are significant differences between waterborne coatings of a different type (i.e. acrylic, urethane or blends, precatalyzed, conversion varnish) and between coatings from different manufacturers. And never allow the products to freeze.

Waterborne coatings and stains have a tendency to raise the grain of the wood, especially on certain low-density woods such as cottonwood and poplar. There are several ways to minimize the effect of grain raise. Perhaps the most popular is to wet the wood prior to application of any waterborne finishing product, allow the wood to dry thoroughly and then sand off the raised whiskers. Sanding too much can remove not only the raised grain, but expose unwetted wood that will then exhibit grain raise when wetted with the waterborne stain or coating. There are some patented treatments available to reduce the grain-raising effect from water-based coatings.

I've heard from several manufacturers of
continued on next page

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FINISHING *from previous page*

these products as well as professional trainers that it is easier to teach someone who has little or no experience with spraying solvent-based coatings to properly spray the waterborne coatings than it is to retrain an experienced sprayer. One manager expressed it this way: "The new guy will read the instructions. The old timer thinks he already knows how to do it."

Even someone who has experience with older generations of waterborne products might have some difficulty adjusting if he doesn't pay attention to changes that have occurred in the last few years. For instance, one precatalyzed topcoat will gradually lose the potency of the catalyst, thus lowering the performance of the product.

Preparation

The wood should be clean, dry and sanded to 180-220 grit. The moisture content of the wood should be 6 to 8 percent. Prior to application of stain, wet, dry and sand the surface to remove grain raise whiskers.

Apply the stain according to manufacturer's instructions and allow it to dry. If using a solvent-based stain, allow much more time for a full dry before applying a water-based coating.

The sealers and topcoats should be stirred, not shaken. Due to a number of factors, it is easier to generate persistent small bubbles in waterborne coatings than in solvent-based coatings. Even stirring at too high a speed can introduce air into the coating. Stains can generally be shaken without a problem but, again, read and adhere to the manufacturer's recommendations. Don't make hasty assumptions or too many generalizations. Product performance varies between manufacturers. As with solvent-borne coatings, straining or filtering is advisable.

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Virtually all of these coatings are supplied at a ready-to-spray viscosity. Be aware that the viscosity is affected by temperature. Don't spray the material at lower-than-recommended temperatures. Most manufacturers recommend thinning with water only if necessary and then by a very small addition of water, typically 5 percent or less. Adding 5 percent water could easily have the same effect on the viscosity of waterborne coating that a 25 percent addition of lacquer thinner would have on a solvent-borne lacquer. Some manufacturers recommend various other thinners, retarders, bubble breakers and flow enhancers for their products.

Most waterborne topcoats can be applied as self-sealing, but a sanding sealer could help in leveling. Some sealers might have a bit of amber tint for a warmer look. The majority of water-based sealers and topcoats are water-clear when dry and lack the warmth of shellac, varnish and nitrocellulose lacquer. They can, however, be tinted with compatible coloring products.

Stains, both dye and pigmented, are available as are dye and pigment concentrates that can be used to color sealers, topcoats, glazes and fillers. This allows the finisher to create shading lacquers for adjusting color and glazes for special effects. Crackle and other specialty coatings might be available from different manufacturers.

Application

When applying the coatings, be aware that these are generally of higher solids content than their solvent borne counterparts. They should be sprayed on in thin coats. Since the primary solvent used is water, the film will not flash-dry in the way that a solvent-borne lacquer does, but will take longer to transition from liquid to solid. This allows good leveling, but can cause runs or curtaining if sprayed too heavily.

Complaints about a hazy, cloudy or unclear coating can often be attributed to excessively thick coats. Over dark wood or stains, excessive film thickness might exhibit a green or bluish tint. Three to four wet mils is generally considered excessive for a coat. Four mils dry is a good practical maximum for most coatings. Because of the slower drying of the waterborne coating, it's not uncommon to collect more dust on the film while it is drying. Scuff sanding with 220- to 320-grit steamed sandpaper and wiping or blowing off all dust is recommended between coats. A damp cloth or tack cloth made for waterborne finishes should be used for wiping.

Use the lowest air and fluid pressures that allow good atomization. If you are converting a gun that you've been using for solvent-based products, you might need to try different tip and nozzle sets to optimize your operation.

While it is not uncommon to see a gun and spray setup used for nitrocellulose lacquers put away at the end of the day by simply hanging the gun on a hook, this can be trouble with a water-based system. Spray that accumulates on the face of the air cap and around the nozzle is not easily cleaned off and waterborne material that dries inside fluid passages could be impossible to completely clear.

Waterborne coatings are available in versions that can be catalyzed or crosslinked to improve their performance properties. Precatalyzed waterborne lacquer and conversion varnish are often used in the kitchen cabinet and architectural industry segments. Careful attention to manufacturer's application instructions is critical.

Once the coating has thoroughly dried — up to a week in many cases — the finish can be rubbed or polished to the desired sheen.

While there is a learning curve involved in adapting to waterborne products, more and more finishers and manufacturers are finding that the payoff in terms of health and safety issues, environmental compliance, material costs and reduced property insurance is worth the investment. Certainly it is time to revisit this greatly improved technology to see how it fits into your long-term plans. **W**

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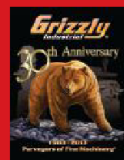
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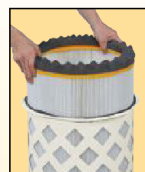
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On the HOME STRETCH

Carter's Cabinetry weathered the recession with ingenuity and came back strong in the Daytona Beach, Fla., area

BY JENNIFER HICKS

Established in 1987, Carter's Cabinetry is a custom shop operating out of 13,000-sq.-ft. in Ormond Beach, Fla., that serves the residential and commercial markets throughout the Sunshine State. It's staffed by 14 employees, a friendly group that includes a professional design staff, production and assembly team, and sales and office personnel.

The company also offers semicustom cabinets from brands such as Kemper and HomeCrest, as well laminate, solid-surface and other types of countertops. Every day presents challenges, but the crew keeps working to produce quality products.

"Business is tough and the industry's getting tougher price-wise," says owner Fred Carter. "Some of the commercial work we bid on is very competitive, but we're a really well-known shop around here. Our reputation is pretty good if you ask anyone."

Young and motivated

From the get-go, Carter had the desire to create a successful cabinet shop. He started wood-working at a New Hampshire high school and continued it as a hobby when he moved to Ormond Beach with his family after graduating.

He worked with his father at a body shop and then refined his woodworking skills as an employee at a cabinet shop until he was ready to open Carter's Cabinetry with a partner. The partnership lasted for 15 years while the business grew to its current size.

"Business just got busier and busier," Carter recalls. "We just built our reputation and kept on getting work. Advertising is one thing we have not done over the years. We never really did a whole lot of marketing. It's all just word of mouth."

For the most part, early projects were in the residential sector with just Carter and his partner.

continued on next page



Fred Carter

Owner of:
Carter's
Cabinetry

Location: Ormond Beach, Fla.

2012 gross: \$1.5 million

Employees: 14

Shop size: 13,000 sq. ft.

About: Located several miles north of Daytona Beach, discerning Floridians turn to this turnkey business for all of their residential and commercial cabinetry needs.

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Sophisticated machinery and skilled craftsman enable this company to produce high quality custom cabinetry products, such as this kitchen.

CARTER'S CABINETRY *from previous page*

Working out of an 800-sq.-ft. bay in Ormond Beach, they added an average of one employee per year until they had to expand into a second bay.

"When I bought out my partner in 2005, I purchased our current shop. It wasn't working out anymore between the two of us, but I kept the existing crew and have added a few others," says Carter.

Commercial focus

Today, Carter's Cabinetry works primarily with commercial clients and always approaches every job with the same care and attention to detail. Its extensive portfolio is posted on the company's website, which not only serves as a marketing tool but helps clients bring their ideas to fruition.

Commercial clients include several auto dealerships, including

custom renovations for the Daytona International Auto Mall, as well as WiseGuys bar, Harley Davidson, Florida Hospital and boutique shops such as the Marriott Surf Shop. These jobs are secured through the shop's large network of contractors.

Carter says he prefers commercial work because there's currently more going on and it's helped him float through the rough economic times with long-term projects.

"We didn't really plan to take on that much commercial work. All of a sudden we got a reputation for doing a little bit of commercial work, then it just became more and more, and that's how we got into the bigger stuff, the hospitals and the car dealerships," says Carter.

Residential clients generally prefer to have their home renovations done in contemporary European styles, he adds.

The shop has about \$500,000 worth of tools and machinery, including

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The pendulum has swung from residential (above) to commercial work at Carter's Cabinetry.

a Weeke CNC machine, which enables it to take on just about any project. Some finishing work is subcontracted out, but most is done in house.

Navigating the recession

Carter's Cabinetry wasn't immune to the recession. Carter had to make some difficult decisions, including pay and benefit cuts. While he hopes to restore those cuts soon, he was able to give his crew a week's paid vacation around the Fourth of July.

"Five years ago everything was great. Then it started dipping in 2008 and we faced some pretty tough times," says Carter. "Things are starting to look better now. We never had to lay anybody off. But we all got together during the slow times and I talked to employees about how I wanted them to help me decide whether I should lay some people off or we could all work fewer hours. Everyone agreed to work fewer

hours so we didn't have to lay anybody off.

"If it wasn't for commercial work to keep us going, we wouldn't have survived. There really hasn't been any new development, so as far as new homes we have not done any of those for four years. Last year was a good year for us and this year is showing a good turnaround."

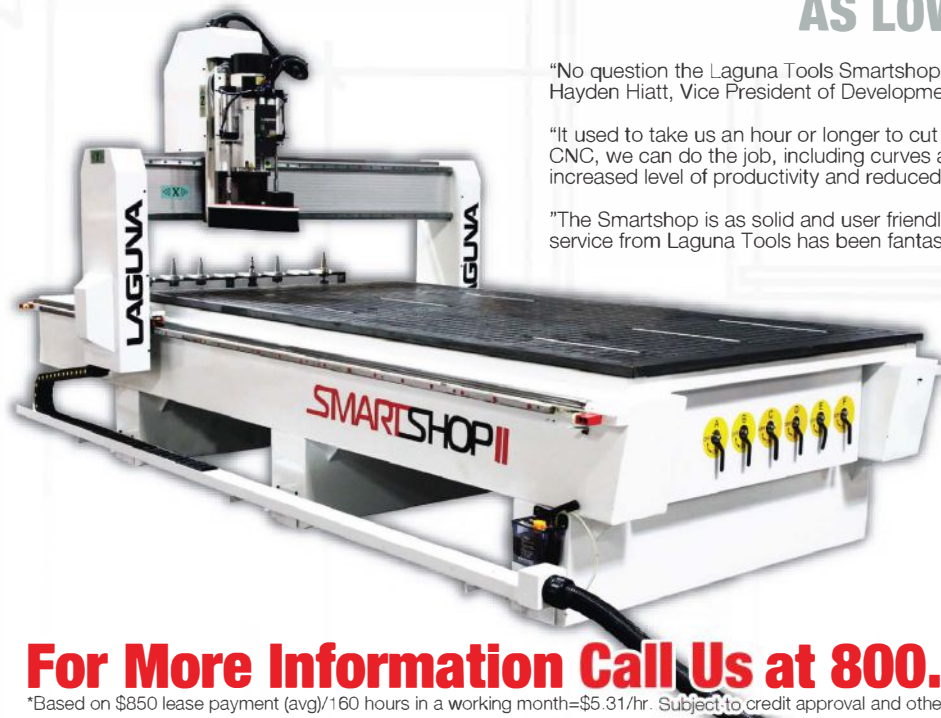
Down the road, Carter says he plans to maintain the shop's commitment to high-quality custom workmanship while striving to refine the manufacturing process with state-of-the-art computerized machinery.

"I'd like to keep it right where it is right now. I don't want to get any bigger. I don't have a marketing plan. This is it right here. I want things to stay the same so I can retire about five years from now."

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A MONUMENT TO CARVING EXCELLENCE

Dale Schaffer runs the National Museum of Woodcarving, a shrine that has some interesting origins in the Old West

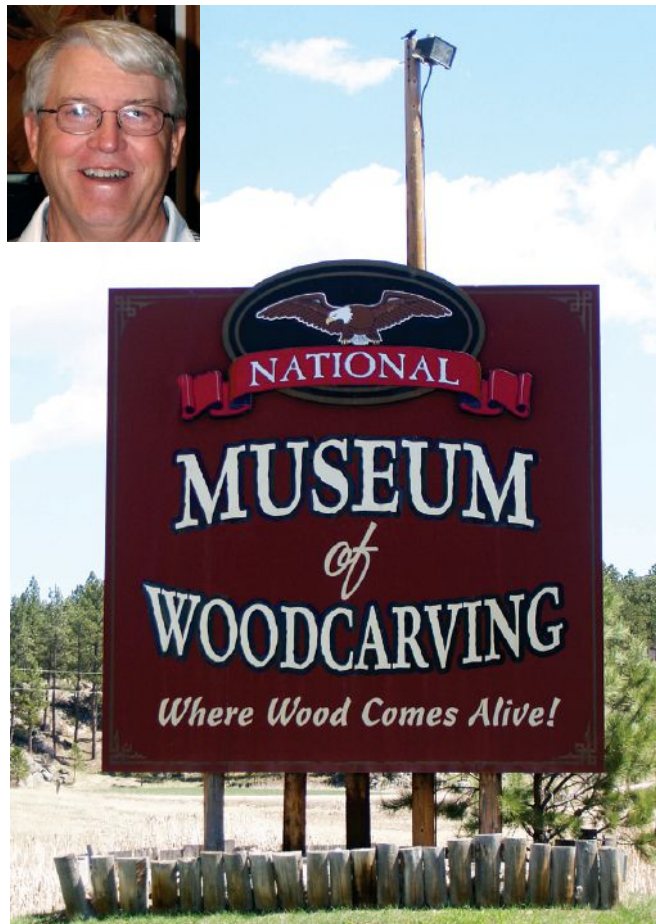
By John English

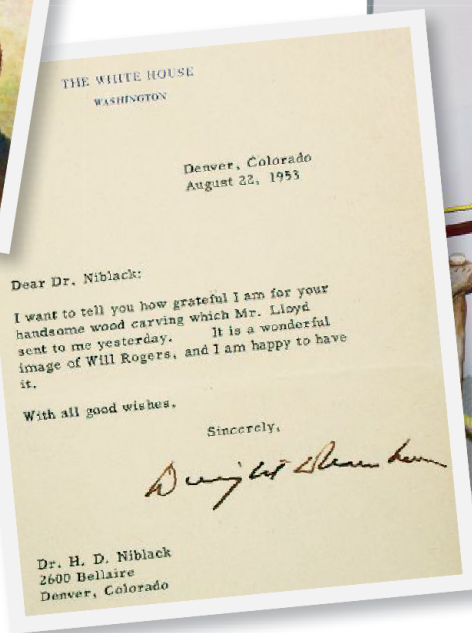
It's not native, but there's a whole lot of basswood in Custer, S.D. *Tilia americana* is a favorite of carvers because of its low density and lack of defined grain. Dale Schaffer knows a thing or two about it — and about carvers, too. His business, the National Museum of Woodcarving, owes its existence to two carvers. The first was a retired chiropractor from Denver and the

second was his dad. The chiropractor, Dr. Harley Niblack (1894-1966), created most of the original work in the museum and Dale's dad then saved that collection intact and built the facility to house it.

About the time that Europe was disintegrating into World War I, Niblack started work as a pharmaceutical salesman in Denver. He was always interested in medical devices and processes, so it was no surprise when he traded in his sample suitcase to become a chiropractor. But the man was a tinkerer, and during the years between the wars he invented a machine to use electricity to reduce arthritic pain. Then he patented a weight-reducing machine, made his fortune and retired at 42. Sometime around then, he was on a train with a bag of peaches and started whittling faces in the pits. Having a compulsive nature and a genius for invention, he was soon spending long days creating 3-D wooden sculptures, most of which were Western caricatures. But with a twist: he incorporated his carvings into sophisticated animations, using motors and pulleys to bring wood to life.

Niblack became so adroit at both carving and animation that he eventually partnered up with The Walt Disney Studios and worked closely with Walt





Disney himself on several projects. His work was so innovative that three of his pieces have made it to the Smithsonian. He even received a personal note from President Eisenhower thanking him for a carving of Will Rogers.

Finding a home in Custer

In 1966, at the age of 72, Dr. Niblack died in his Denver home. His widow was left with a huge body of work, which she dearly wanted to keep together. Enter Dale's dad, who offered to buy the entire collection and build a home for it somewhere out West, where the good doctor always felt so much at home.

Among the pieces were some 30 major dioramas with motorized animation — each of which was built using cogs, pulleys and switches that the doc created on his metal lathe. As testament to the quality of his work, they are all still running perfectly. Some of them are up to 75 years old and Dale says that aside from occasional tweaking, they all still perform with vigor on a daily basis through the summer.

Also in the original collection were hundreds of carved figures, not all of which were Western caricatures. Niblack also created realistic sculptures and some stylized pieces such as a stunning 1949 sculpture of a female swimmer (photo on Page 34). Plus, he built furniture — hand-carved and coated in seven layers of rubbed paint to simulate an antler finish.

After some searching, Dale's dad settled on a site for the collection just three miles west of the picturesque and historic town of Custer. There's a tradition of sculpture in the area, including some well-known works such as Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse memorial. The region is replete with chainsaw artists creating everything from eagles to bears, native artists who whittle delicate dream-catch-

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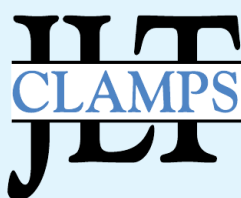
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From busts to dioramas, the museum features work by over 50 carvers.



MUSEUM OF WOODCARVING *from previous page*

ers and a whole subculture based on the pine forests and front porches — where summertime chip carvers have been recreating the West in miniature ever since, well, it happened. The Black Hills are home to a lot of legends, some of whom (Wild Bill Hickock and Calamity Jane, to mention a couple) are buried in the old cemetery at Mount Mariah in nearby Deadwood. Custer itself celebrates the exploratory campaign of its namesake, General George Armstrong Custer, who found gold in these hills in 1874. There is a life-size statue of the general in the National Museum of Woodworking, carved by Dale's dad in native pine, and it weighs almost exactly what its subject did the day he graduated from West Point.



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Custer was promoted from captain to brigadier general just three days prior to the Battle of Gettysburg at the ripe old age of 23. He met his end a couple of hours drive northwest of the Black Hills on the Little Bighorn River in the summer of 1876. That was just 18 years before Harvey Niblack was born.

Custer isn't the only history addressed by the museum. Several of the dioramas describe the years of crisis through which the doctor lived during the 1930s. There are scenes of ranch homes for sale, each showing signs of neglect in the lean years when repairs took a back seat to the scramble for food. The Dust Bowl blew through South Dakota about the time Niblack was retiring from the chiropractic trade, and taking up carving full-time. In his remaining years, he spent some 70,000 hours at his workbench, often working 24-hour days. He would become completely immersed in his carvings, which are now treasured as one of the most important folk art collections in America. He brought humor and elegance to a harsh period in our national experience.



The museum's gift shop features original artwork.

A museum and more

The museum is also home to work by more than 50 other renowned woodcarvers. Those displays cover the gamut from 3-D to relief, covering methods that include handwork, power tools and even lasers. There is a carving studio on site, where resident woodcarver Keith Morrill and a slate of guest teachers take students through the basics and also offer some more advanced classes in 3-D work. For example,

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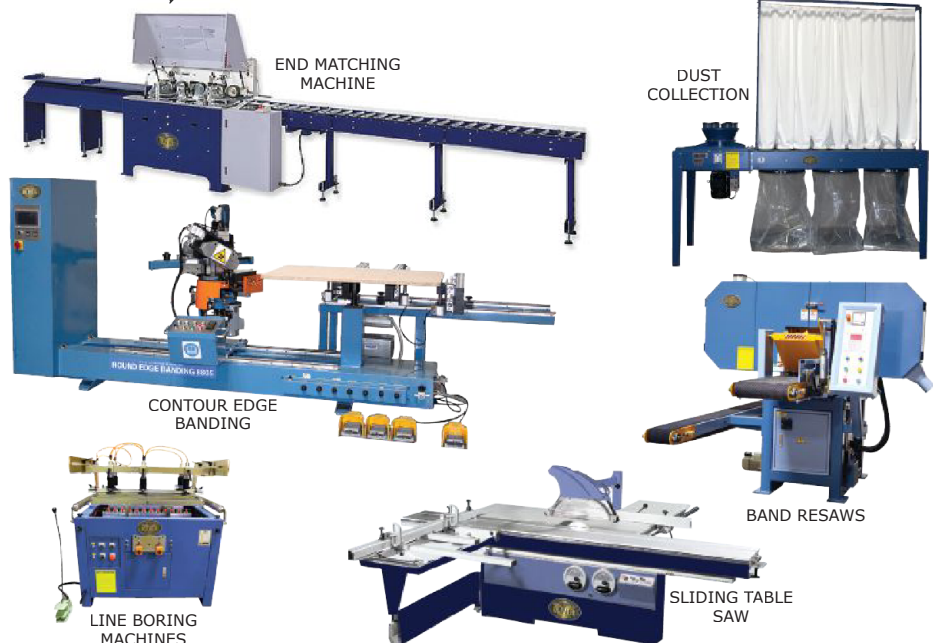
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Resident carver Keith Morrill and more of Niblack's work.

MUSEUM OF WOODCARVING *from previous page*

in June Marlen Downing will be leading a class on a 13" tall blue heron in habitat project, while in July Kirt Curtis will take students through a realistic buffalo bust carving.

Arizona-based Downing (www.marlendowningsculpture.com) is best known for his nature carvings, most notably birds of prey carved in basswood and hand-painted. Outstanding composition and realistic poses, coupled with his texturing techniques, have made his sculpture easily recognized by collectors nationwide. His bronze and wood sculptures have been displayed in galleries and fine art shows from coast to coast.

Kirt Curtis (www.curtiscarvings.com) lives in Iowa and both he and his wife, Linda Langenberg are well-known in the world of carving. They specialize in carving North American mammals in



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the round, in either basswood or butternut. Each fall before the holiday season they carve Santa Claus and snowmen figures in cottonwood bark. Kirt earned his degree in fine arts at Rochester, N.Y., and became a fulltime woodcarver and carving instructor in the late 1980s. He has traveled the United States and Canada teaching woodcarving seminars. Linda began teaching in 1999 and, now retired, she has joined Kirt to teach, as well as teaching individual classes.

When they're not teaching, these experts are busy creating works of art and museum visitors who are not in class can join them and watch as animals, chessboards and other subjects emerge from blocks of wood.

The basswood used at the museum grows in a wide range across the U.S., especially in the Eastern and Central states. It often has two, three or even more trunks and is sometimes known as the bee tree because its nectar-filled flowers are very attractive to bees. According to *hobbywoods.com*, it "has been considered one of the world's foremost carving woods for centuries because it cuts easily across and with the grain, and can be shaped to remarkably fine detail. Native Americans used the fibrous inner bark to make rope, mats, and thongs. Some of the Iroquois carved masks in the sapwood of the living tree, and then split

it off from the trunk, and hollowed it out from behind. Basswood is a soft, lightweight hardwood that is nontoxic and has a mild, clean smell when freshly cut. Its heartwood ranges from a creamy white to a creamy brown. Its sapwood is nearly white, and the wood has a fine and uniform texture. Though it dulls cutting edges slightly, it is easy to work. Because basswood is not durable, it should not be used outdoors. The tree grows very quickly, and the wood is readily available."

Surprisingly, one of the most impressive rooms at the museum is the gift shop. Unlike neighboring tourist traps (this area hosts about five million visitors every year), the store doesn't offer plastic castings made in China. The shelves are dripping with original artwork, some of which is quite collectable.

Within a morning's drive of the museum are a host of attractions including Mount Rushmore, Devil's Tower, the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, Wind Cave National Park, and Jewel Cave National Monument. Finding the National Museum of Woodcarving is fairly easy. From downtown Custer, simply drive west about three miles with one eye on the left-hand side of the road. To check on carving classes, hours or other questions, visit the museum online at www.blackhills.com/woodcarving or call 605-673-4404. **W**



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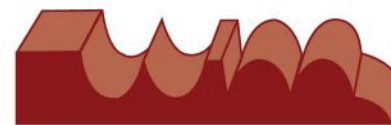
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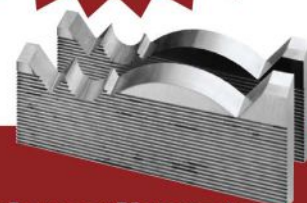


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SHARING IN THE SUCCESS



An inlaid cabinet by co-op member Alex Krutsky.

Fort Point Cabinetmakers thrives as a co-op that produces quality furniture and retains its loyal clients

By Lori Ferguson

The phone is ringing as I walk through the door of the Fort Point Cabinetmakers studio on a recent weekday morning. Co-op member Alex Krutsky is closest to the portable handset, so he fields the call. At the other end of the line: a homeowner in search of a fine furniture maker who can create built-ins for a recently renovated kitchen. Krutsky gathers a few additional details from the caller, along with his contact information, then hangs up and walks over to discuss the inquiry with fellow co-op member Richard Oedel. Both specialize in creating one-of-a-kind pieces and quickly agree that the job is not a good fit for either of them. They discuss which group members might be interested in the commission, decide where to send the lead and then get back to work.

Such is the beauty of having eight extraordinary furniture makers under one roof – there's likely an artist working in whatever style fancied with the technical acumen to create an exquisite piece.

A staple in the Boston woodworking community, Fort Point Cabinetmakers first came into being more than three decades ago. The cooperative's initial public face was as Kirkwood Artisans in Wood, a group that coalesced in 1979, the vision of five young graduates from the cabinet- and furniture-making program of Boston's famed North Bennet Street School. The men (including Lance Patterson, who remains a member of the group to this day) pooled their resources to rent space at 355 Congress St., in the heart of the city's waterfront district. When founding member Rick Loske departed in 1980, the group renamed itself Fort Point Cabinetmakers (a nod to the neighborhood that housed their studio) and continued on its way.

In 1983, the members seized an opportunity to move to a larger environment – with amenities like sealed windows, steady heat and a freight elevator – at 368 Congress St.. Change came again in 2006, when they moved into their present location at 23 Drydock Ave., an expansive, 5,000-sq.-ft., third-floor aerie in a converted Navy annex, in the same building that houses the Boston Design Center.

Here seven men and one woman, whose unofficial motto is "All Types of Woodworking Done Here," design and build an assortment of high-end furniture, cabinetry and other custom woodwork. Whatever the project, there is always a strong component of architectural, historical or design interest. Fort Point Cabinetmakers is not the studio for those seeking "run of the mill" cabinetry. The mem-

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Richard Oedel's
Federal hall table.

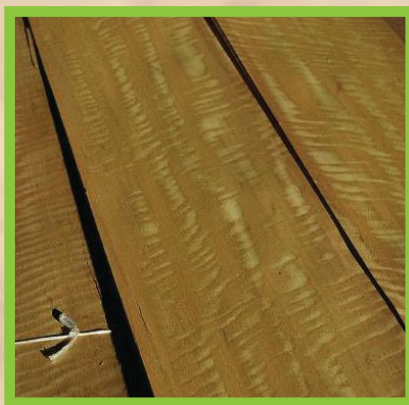
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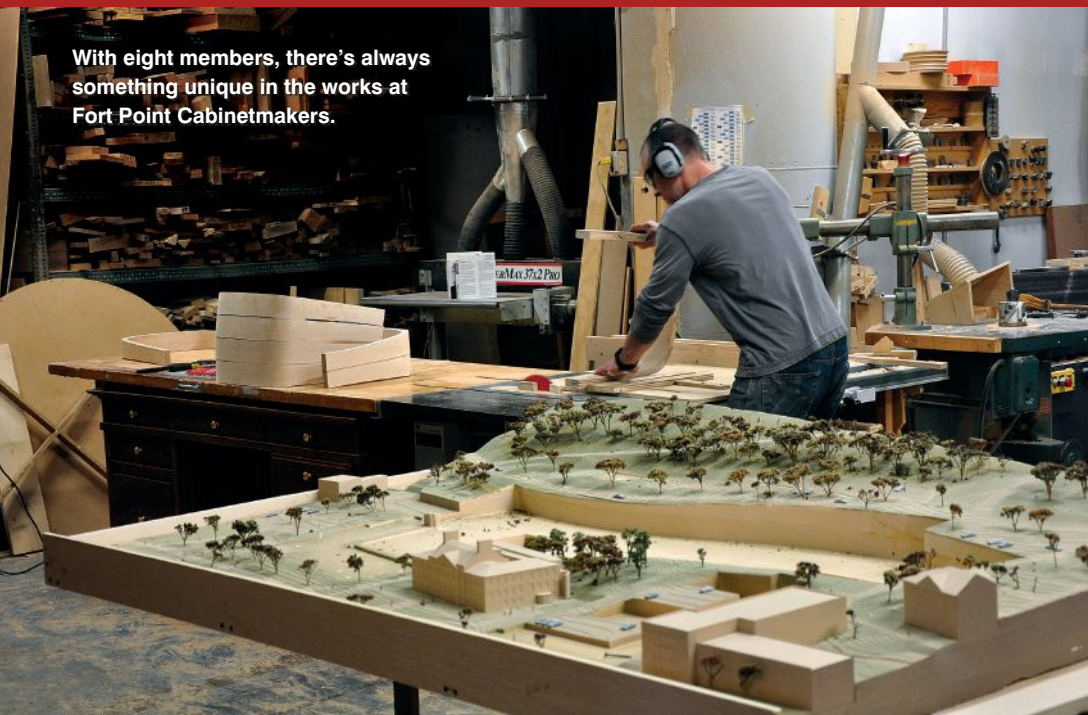


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With eight members, there's always something unique in the works at Fort Point Cabinetmakers.



FORT POINT *from previous page*

bers' creations vary widely in style as well, from 18th and 19th century classics to modern studio furniture, though managing partner Richard Oedel does admit that the shop is best

known for 18th and 19th century American and European traditional furniture.

A well-oiled machine

"Virtually all of the members are graduates of North Bennet Street School," Oedel says,

"and a good number of us teach there." This fact, coupled with Boston's auspicious history in the profession – some of the finest furniture makers of the 17th and 18th centuries lived and worked in this area – contributes to the studio's proclivity for traditional leitmotifs.

Despite encompassing eight individual makers, studio operations hum along like the many well-oiled machines that populate its spaces. The group is organized as a limited-liability partnership, a managerial change that Oedel introduced when he joined the group in 2006. A former executive (in his first professional iteration, Oedel ran a highly successful, family-owned manufacturing business), the 2004 North Bennet Street graduate quickly realized that Fort Point members needed more formalized governance, both to protect themselves from liability concerns and to appease nervous landlords and insurance carriers. Oedel brought his corporate experience to bear, creating very specific bylaws and operating rules that leveled the playing field for all involved. He also agreed to serve as one of the studio's two managing partners (maker Dwayne Bailey is the second).

"Although Dwayne and I are the managing partners, everyone is a shareholder and we try to do things by consensus," Oedel notes. "It works out well for everyone." Indeed, the partnership has proved so successful that the

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group's incorporation documents have been made available on WoodWeb (www.woodweb.com) so that other cooperatives can benefit.

The cooperative has profited from Oedel's corporate background in other ways as well. Many years in the manufacturing sector have made the former executive an expert in lean manufacturing, a production practice based on the concept of preserving value with the least amount of work. These lean practices, which proved so effective in Oedel's injection-molded plastics business, have been implemented with equal success at Fort Point Cabinetmakers.

"As fine furniture makers, we're in a specialized business, making one-off pieces that we must sell in order to profit," Oedel explains. "If
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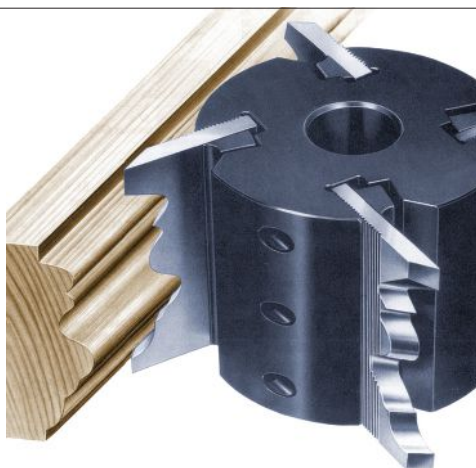
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Hall table by member
Ellen Kaspern.

FORT POINT from previous page

we're to succeed, we can't waste time, money or effort. We need to come up with a solid plan, then execute it quickly and well."

Diversity of work

And succeed they have. Fort Point's artisans turn out a steady stream of individual works and unique built-ins, while simultaneously maintaining a steady schedule of commitments teaching, lecturing and exhibiting. Although projects come to the studio from an array of sources, the lion's share evolves as a result of the studio's many affiliations with North Bennet Street School. Co-op members are frequently retained to create works for former classmates and colleagues, the school's trustees and members of the public who are familiar with the institution's august reputation for training extraordinary artisans.

"Technically speaking, graduates of North Bennet Street School are incredibly adept," Oedel says. "A North Bennet Street grad can build anything a client is looking for." And, as it turns out, what clients are looking for can vary widely.

Projects at Fort Point Cabinetmakers encompass a broad spectrum in both size and complexity. Many are single-person jobs executed by individual makers who are chosen by the client for their particular design aesthetic or reputation, while others are large-scale endeavors that require a concerted effort by a number of the co-op's members. Fort Point Cabinetmakers typically field such large-scale projects three to four times a year, although some years have yielded as many as a dozen multimember projects, while others have yielded none. Those projects requiring all hands on deck might be extremely complex and production-related, such as a run of 20 chairs, or time-sensitive, like the set of Chinese étagères the group completed, whose short lead time required that the job be split among the members. Whatever the

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number of artists involved, however, there's always a single maker who's the client contact and serves as the liaison throughout the project.

In addition to keeping the art of fine-furniture making alive through the creative output of its members, the studio is also deeply committed to educating the next generation of artisans. All of the members teach and nearly every summer the studio hosts an intern, usually a student from the North Bennet. These apprentices work at Fort Point Cabinetmakers three days a week, typically partnering with one or two co-op members on a large project while also performing smaller, random tasks around the shop. It's an invaluable experience for the students, Oedel asserts, because they get practical, hands-on experience in so many different aspects of the profession.

"Our interns invariably have a high skill level and a real passion for the work," Oedel says, "and we do our best to mentor them and help them take their abilities to the next level." By all accounts, the initiative is working. A case in point: North Bennet Street graduate Greg Brown, a recent intern, is now an emerging artist with the New Hampshire Furniture Masters. "Greg was quite good at hand carving," Oedel recalls, "so we worked to enhance his skills by providing him with a lot of semi-production carving experience."

Teachers, writers and more

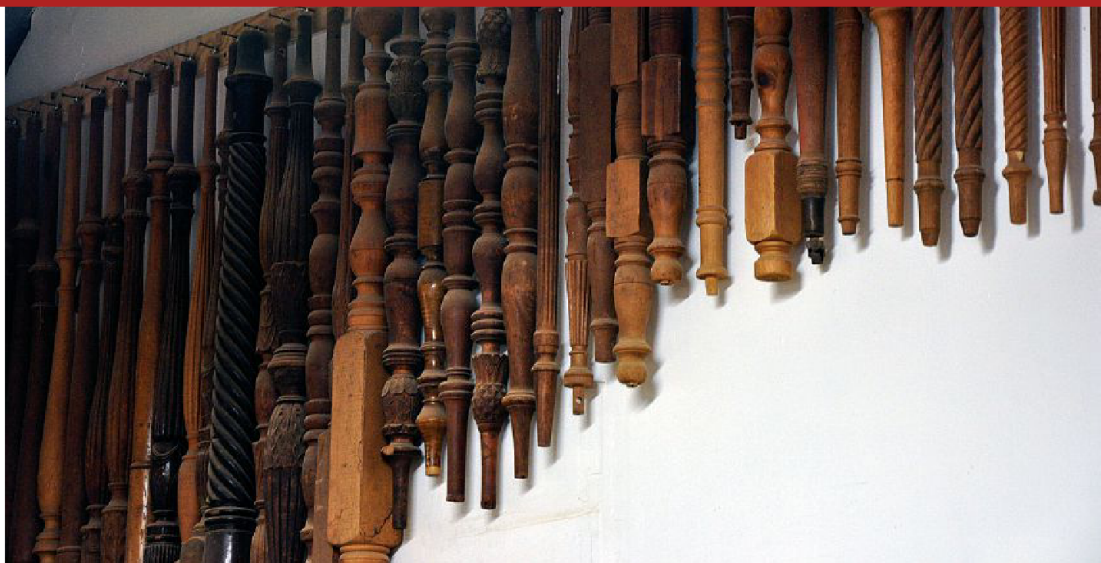
Oedel and other co-op members share their knowledge with the larger woodworking community in other ways as well. Oedel currently serves as chair of the New Hampshire Furniture Masters and, in 2010 chaired The Furniture Society's conference at MIT. In addition to active teaching schedules, many co-op members are contributors to an assortment of industry publications.

As I gather my things and prepare to depart the Fort Point Cabinetmakers studio, I am struck by the sense of quiet industry that pervades the space. Co-op members Dwayne Bailey and Alex Krutsky chat softly in one area of the shop, while assistant Marty Mackenzie shapes chair backs on a band saw in an adjoining room. An elegant, contemporary rosewood table by Richard Oedel sits near the door, ready to depart for an upcoming exhibition in Portsmouth, N.H. Next to it rests a dining room set, swaddled in blankets and awaiting shipment to a client in Chicago.

"Commissions come from all over the place and you never know where your next job may surface," Oedel says.

"But if a client uses us once, they tend to use us again," he concludes with a smile.

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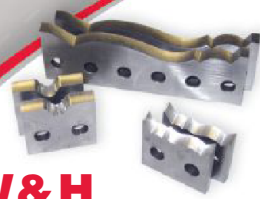
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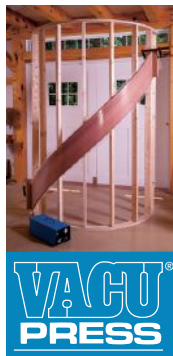


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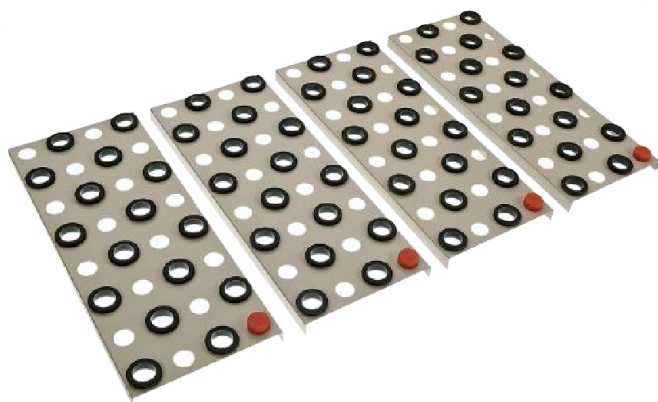


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Entries must be received by the 15th of the month, three months prior to the event.

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Fax to: Calendar, 860-767-0642

E-mail: j.hicks@woodshopnews.com

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

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

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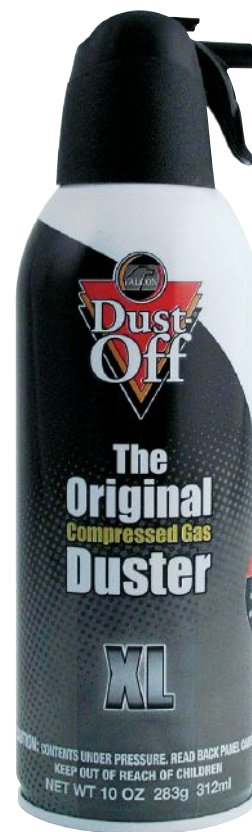
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Guild exhibit set for the Pacific Northwest

By Jennifer Hicks

The Whidbey Island Woodworkers Guild will present its 10th annual "Art+Wood+Woodpalooza@WICA" exhibition Aug. 31 to Sept. 2 at the Whidbey Center for the Arts in Whidbey Island, Wash. The show will feature work by at least 20 of the group's members.

Formed in 2001, the guild seeks to support professional woodworkers as well as inspire and educate the budding amateur and provide awareness to the general public of the skills available locally from its members.

Members of the New Hampshire Furniture Masters recently had their creations showcased at the Gallery at Somes Sound in Somesville, Maine, on Mount Desert Island. The June 30-July 28 exhibit featured work by Jon Brooks, John Cameron, Jeff Cooper, David Leach and Brian Sargent.

Contacts:

New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association, P.O. Box 5733, Manchester, NH 03108. Tel: 603-898-0242. www.furnituremasters.org

Whidbey Island Center for the Arts, Zech Hall, 565 Camano Ave., Langley, WA 98260. Tel: 360-221-8268. www.wicaonline.com 

Jeffrey Cooper's screen, titled "Three Quotes from Ovid," at the New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association's exhibit in Somesville, Maine.

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CALENDAR

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

Include name, dates, location, description of event and a contact address or telephone number. Calendar items, which should be typed or printed clearly, must be received a minimum of 60 days before the event.

Please note that fees, as listed, might not include materials or shop fees. Check with a specific class for further details.

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

*Refers to contact list at end of calendar.

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

CALIFORNIA

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

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

MAINE

Sept. 9-20 — Intermediate Furniture Making with Peter Shepard. Participants hone their joinery skills by designing and building small tables. Fee: \$1,280. www.woodschooll.org

Sept. 23-Oct. 4 — Chair Design and Construction with Jeff Miller. Instruction covers a wide range of chairmaking techniques, including angled mortise-and-tenon joinery, joinery on curves, laminated and tapered curves, carved seats and options for upholstering. Fee: \$1,280. www.woodschooll.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Aug. 12-16, Oct. 16-20 — Five-Day Bare

Bones of Wood Carving Classes with David Calvo in Gloucester. www.davidcalvo.com

Sept. 15 — Furniture Made in Massachusetts: 1620 to the Present. Lecture by Fuller Craft Museum director Jonathan Fairbanks. Location: Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

Sept. 25-29 — Traditional Timber Framing with Jack Sobon and Dave Carlon. Fee \$480. Location: Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield, Mass. Contact: Jack Sobon at 413-684-3223, jacksobon@verizon.net.

Oct. 6 — Marquetry: Does an Old European craft have any relevance for 21st century American furniture? Lecture by furniture maker Silas Kopf. Location: Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

Nov. 3 — The Cabinetmaker and the Carver: Boston Furniture from Private Collections. Lecture by curator Gerald Ward of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Location: Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

Nov. 20 — Bus tour to Mass Historical Society and Fort Point Cabinetmakers. Location: Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

Dec. 1 — The Best Workman in the Shop: William Munroe and Concord Federal Furniture. Lecture by curator David Wood, Fuller Craft Museum. Location: Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

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Dec. 1 — The Best Workman in the Shop: William Munroe and Concord Federal Furniture. Lecture by curator David Wood, Concord (Mass.) Museum. Location: Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton. www.fullercraft.org

NEW JERSEY

Sept. 21-22 — 30th annual Fine Art and Crafts at Anderson Park in Upper Montclair. www.rosesquared.com

Oct. 19-20 — 14th annual Fall Fine Art and Crafts at Brookdale Park in Montclair. www.rosesquared.com

Nov. 9-10 — Fourth annual Fine Art and Crafts at the Westfield Armory in Westfield. 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

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

Oct. 19-24 — Fall High Point Market. One

of the largest furniture industry trade shows in the world, bringing more than 70,000 people to High Point every six months. The market includes 2,500 exhibitors spread out across 1.2 million sq. ft. of show space in 120 buildings. Location: High Point. www.highpointmarket.org

OREGON

Sept. 16-20 — Masterworks: The Rogowski Stool with Gary Rogowski at the Northwest Woodworking School in Portland. Fee: \$893 plus materials. www.northwestwoodworking.com

Sept. 23-27 — Finishes and Finishing with Roland Johnson at the Northwest Woodworking School in Portland. Fee: \$893 plus materials. www.northwestwoodworking.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

VERMONT

Sept. 28-29 — 10th annual Vermont Fine Furniture, Woodworking & Forest Festival. Browse unique items from fine furniture to hand turned bowls. Location: Union Arena in Woodstock. www.vermont-woodfestival.org

WASHINGTON

Aug. 31-Sept. 2 — 10th annual Whidbey Island Woodworkers Guild presents the "Art+Wood=Woodpalooza@WICA" Exhibition, featuring custom designs from more than 20 guild members. Location: Whidbey Island Center for the Arts. www.wicaonline.com

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

WYOMING

Sept. 5-8 — Western Design Conference. Annual exhibit and sale show featuring the finest western-influenced works by artists and designers from across the country. Location: Snow King Resort in Jackson Hole. www.westerndesignconference.com

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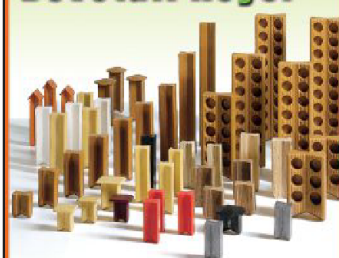
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Instructors Dylan Fuller (left) and Brian Reid; the prisoners taking the first class.

A captive audience

New Hampshire furniture artisan Brian Reid of Rockland, Maine, recently launched a new fine-woodworking program at the state prison in Warren, Maine.

The program currently includes 10 students and teaches all aspects of fine woodworking, such as the intricate details of hand-cut dovetails, mortise-and-tenon joinery, and sanding and finishing techniques. The students meet every Sunday and are learning to build cabinets, tables and chairs. Reid modeled the cur-

riculum on the program he teaches at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Rockport, where he's been a longtime instructor.

"I wanted to create a self-sustaining program wherein the current prisoner students would learn skills that they could then pass on to the next group of prisoner students," Reid says.

Reid says his desire to create the program grew after hearing from his New Hampshire Furniture Masters Association colleagues about the rewards of teaching in the New Hampshire prison system through a program sponsored by the New Hampshire Institute of Furniture Making.

After several meetings with Robert Walden, director of Maine Correctional Industries, and Ken Lindsey, manager of Warren Prison Industries, Reid's program was approved by Joseph Ponte, commissioner of the Maine Department of Corrections. The Maine Prison program started in August 2012. Lie-Nielsen Toolworks donated the majority of the hand tools that the program needed to begin instruction and many fine-furniture makers donated tools, including a high-quality German table saw.

Current instructors in the program, in addition to Reid, include Dylan Fuller of Thomaston, Maine, Howard Hatch of Augusta, Maine, and Jeremy S. Gallant of Portsmouth, N.H. To date, the students have made a small bench, a small mirror (at left) and a Shaker-style table. Tyra Hanson, owner of The

Gallery at Somes Sound in Somesville, is a program sponsor and has begun selling the students' work in her gallery. The prisoners' work will also be displayed in a special section at the Maine Prison Store in Thomaston. Proceeds from the sale will be used to buy additional tools and materials.

Currently, Reid is raising funds to pay instructors who donate eight-plus hours per month of teaching time.

Contact: Brian Reid, 40 Warren St., Rockland, ME 04841. Tel: 207-319-3621. www.brianreidfurniture.com

— Jennifer Hicks



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Rough humor by Steve Spiro



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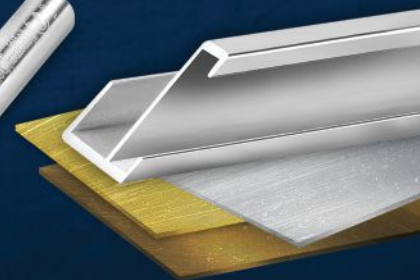


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