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- Motor: 1 HP, 110V/220V
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- · Includes fence and miter gauge

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W1706 14" Bandsaw



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W1812 Planer Moulder with Stand

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W1819 10" Table Saw

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W1712 6" x 12" HD Combination Sander

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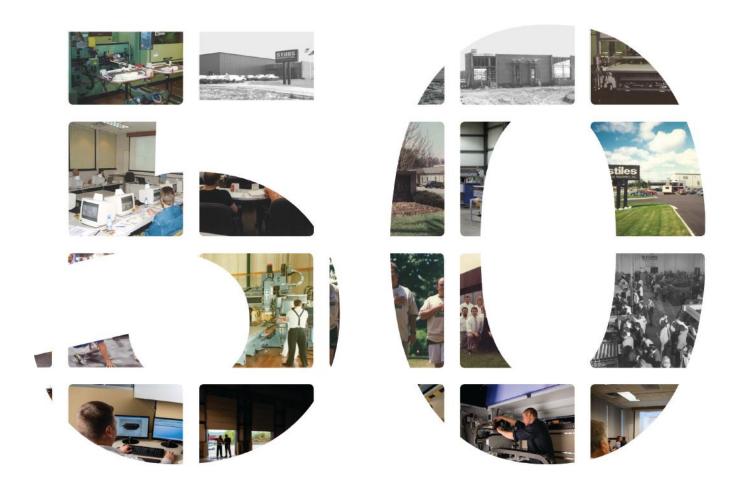


W1830 Hanging Air Filter

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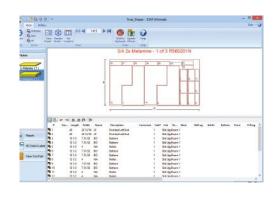
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Over the Workbench Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler



This Business about Woodworking Share an opinion with David DeCristoforo but don't expect to be right

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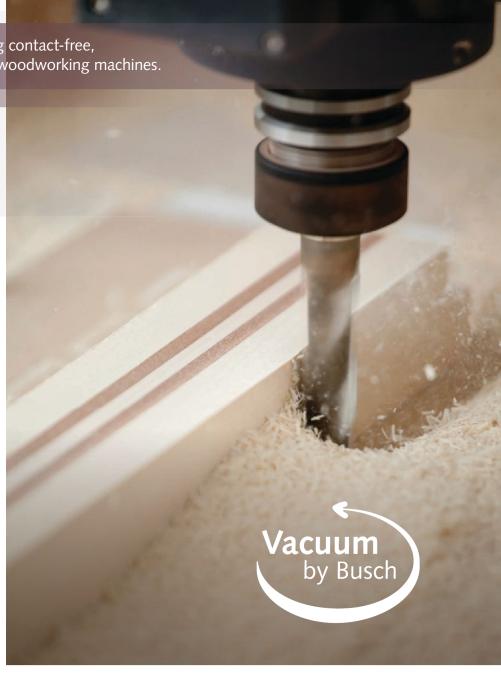
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## **TAKING STOCK**

with TOD RIGGIO

## Stiles plans to give back on its 50th anniversary

tiles Machinery is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a new video contest, which seeks to answer the question, "What will your teacher do for a free woodworking machine?"

Students are encouraged to create a short video with their woodworking teacher, demonstrating whatever crazy and creative (but safe) stunt they are willing to do to for a free machinery upgrade. Participation is open to all secondary and post-secondary woodworking schools and educational institutions, according to the company.

"As we celebrate our anniversary this year and honor our past 50 years, we also look ahead to our next 50 and the next generation of our industry. Investing in the future of our industry has always been a mission of Stiles and, because of this, we're looking to give some aspiring woodworking students the chance to win a new machine for their school's shop," Stiles marketing manager Chris Dolbow says.

Video submissions are due by May 31. A panel of judges will choose up to three winners depending on the number of submissions received. The grand prize includes the choice of an Ironwood FX750 spindle shaper, JT300 jointer, CUT18 cutoff saw or BR23 boring machine.

For information, visit www.stilesmachinery.com/50th-video-contest.

### **WEEKE N.A. EXPANDS**

Stiles also announced the expansion of Weeke North America. A new 100,000-sq.-ft. facility will be built near Stiles headquarters in Grand Rapids, Mich., "to meet an overwhelming demand for products," according to the company.

Weeke North America produces the Vantech line of nested-base CNC routers and ABD CNC drilling and dowel machines for customers in a variety of industries such as store fixtures, cabinets, closets, office furniture and architectural millwork. It was established more than five years ago as a joint venture between the Homag Group, Stiles and Weeke Maschinenbau.

Groundbreaking was scheduled to begin in April.

### **HARDWARE SHOW**

The past will be celebrated May 5-7 at the 70th annual National Hardware Show in Las Vegas with memorabilia collected from long-time exhibitors and attendees.

"As we celebrate 70 years of the National Hardware Show, we continue to look ahead to the future of the home improvement industry," National Hardware Show vice president Richard Russo says. "However, we'd also like to take some time to look back and reflect on the memories of years past and see how far we've come and how much things have changed."

The show started in New York City and had a long run in Chicago. Attendees are mostly buyers for home improvement retail channels and the product categories include building products, plumbing, electrical, tools and, of course, hardware. The show runs concurrently with the Lancaster Buying Show, which serves the paint sundry industry.

Visit www.nationalhardwareshow.com.

### FORMALDEHYDE-FREE GUARANTEE

State Industries, a manufacturer of hardwood plywood and specialty panel products, offers a new Elemental label to assure customers that its products are made with 100 percent soy-based, formaldehyde-free resins.

States introduced Elemental in 2008, the first soy-bonded hardwood panels with no urea formaldehyde, according to the company.

For information, visit www.statesind.com.

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.



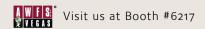


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## NEWS DESK

## **Big turnout expected for AWFS 2015**

By Jennifer Hicks

strong turnout and plenty of business activity is expected at the 2015 AWFS fair, the year's biggest industry trade show held in the U.S, which is scheduled for July 22-25 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

AWFS executive director Angelo Gangone said an improved economy and early exhibitor commitments point to improved attendance from the 2013 fair.

"We exceeded our exhibitor space [requests] quite a few months back. Normally, when you see your exhibit space expand, it's a pretty good indicator that attendance will follow," Gangone says.

"We want to keep expanding our show and that is happening, which is really good because it means our exhibitors are not only gaining confidence in the overall market but they're also going to be bringing new technology, possibly different equipment that they didn't bring last time."

This year's show will feature continuous CAD/CAM software presentations in the AWFS theater.

"The theater is a new feature for 2015 and



this is really something we're looking forward to because there is going to be a much greater emphasis on software. That doesn't necessarily mean there will be more software companies there, but the software companies that are in will be able to address the needs of the attendees who are just curious about the manufacturing process," Gangone says.

Changes have been made to the floor plan, highlighted by moving registration to a more accessible area just inside the convention center's main entrance. An expansive new products display will be located near the entrance of the Central Hall exhibitor area. There will be gallery displays of finalists in the Fresh Wood student design competition and the new American Association of Woodturning's student competition.

The fair will also have more than 50 seminars and classes as part of College of Woodworking Knowledge educational program.

For information, visit www.awfsfair.org.

## Furniture Society lightens its approach

By Jennifer Hicks

he Furniture Society is gearing up for its annual conference, which this year will be referred to as a symposium with a program designed to give attendees a more relaxed and lighter agenda.

The 2015 symposium is scheduled for June 25-27 at the American Tobacco Historic District in Durham, N.C. The district has gained national attention for starting a large revitalization of a city that had suffered since the decline of its tobacco industry. Durham is also the studio furniture group's national headquarters.

Conference committee chairman Cory Robinson says the symposium will feature artist presentations, rather than the panel discussions and lectures held in the past, in an effort to promote more audience participation.

"Like other years, our focus is to try to serve as wide an audience as possible. We keep getting fewer and fewer members with large-scale production shops, but we still have and active membership of small shops," Robinson says. "The content we will be presented in a less nuts-and-bolts [fashion], but attendees will really benefit from broadening their scope about what furniture making can be for their career and how it's a unique livelihood and creative endeavor.

"The main reason people attend is to rub elbows with like-minded individuals in the world. With the lighter programming scheduled for this year, there will be more availability for small groups to migrate and spend time together and still participate in seminars and skill-training workshops."

The society's mission is to promote the

art of furniture making and it sponsors a variety of programs that contribute to the education and enrichment of its members and the public. Robinson adds that he expects a large turnout, especially because the location is easy to drive to for many members. Non-members are always welcome to participate.

ShopBot Tools, a manufacturer of CNC machinery in Durham, is the lead sponsor and will be hosting a presentation and social gathering at its facility. Company president Ted Hall will be speaking about studio furniture and the engagement of digital fabrication technologies.

The symposium will also feature a juried exhibition of members' work, according to Robinson.

For information, visit www.furnituresociety.org. W



## INDUSTRIAL HEPA FILTER CYCLONE DUST COLLECTORS

## **EXCLUSIVE DUAL-FILTRATION**

## **3 HP DUAL-FILTRATION HEPA** CYCLONE DUST COLLECTOR

Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase, 22A, TEFC Class "F"

- · Switch: Remote-controlled mag switch
- Intake hole size: 8"
- Bag material: Plastic
- Impeller: 151/2" steel, radial fan
- Airflow capacity: 1654 CFM @ 2" SP
- Max. static pressure (inches of water): 14.2"
- Filter: primary at 99.9% efficiency captures 0.2-2 micron dust particles
- Secondary HEPA at 99.97% efficiency captures 0.3 micron dust particles
- Filter surface area: 113 sq. ft.
- Collection drum: Steel, 55 gallons
- Sound rating: 79-80 dB
- Base construction: Pre-formed steel
- Overall dimensions: 60¾" W x 33" D x 107½" H
- Approx. shipping weight: 578 lbs.





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ONLY \$215000 = shipping



## **5 HP DUAL-FILTRATION HEPA** CYCLONE DUST COLLECTOR

Motor: 5HP, 220V, single-phase, 3450 RPM, 60 Hz, 22.4A, TEFC Class "F"

Switch: Remote controlled magnetic

- Intake hole size: 10"
- Bag material: Plastic
- Impeller: 16" steel radial fin
- Suction capacity: 2184 CFM @ 1.9" SP
- Max. static pressure (inches of water): 14"
- Filter: primary at 99.9% efficiency captures 0.2-2 micron dust particles
- Secondary HEPA at 99.97% efficiency captures 0.3 micron dust particles
- Filter surface area: 226 sq. ft.
- Collection drum: Steel. 55 gallons
- Sound rating: 79-81 dB
- Overall dimensions: 801/2" W x 51" D x 1111/4" H
- Approx. shipping weight: 826 lbs.



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## **71/2 HP 3-PHASE DUAL-FILTRATION HEPA CYCLONE DUST COLLECTOR**

- Motor: 7½ HP, 220V/440V\*, 3-phase, 25A/12.5A, TEFC Class "F"
- Intake hole size: 10"
- Filter surface area: 261 sq. ft.
- Impeller: 18" steel radial fin
- Airflow capacity: 3468 CFM @ 4.3" SP
- Maximum static pressure (inches of water): 14.7"
- Sound level: 78-80 dB
- Filter: primary at 99.9% efficiency captures 0.2-2 micron dust particles
- Secondary HEPA at 99.97% efficiency captures 0.3 micron dust particles
- Collection drums: Steel 55 gallon x 2
- Overall dimensions: 961/4" W x 521/2" D x 1391/2" H
- Stand: 13-gauge steel
- Cyclone body: 16-gauge steel
- Blower housing: 11-gauge steel Approx. shipping weight:
- 1123 lbs.

**G0637HEP** ONLY \$495000 =



## 10 HP 3-PHASE DUAL-FILTRATION HEPA CYCLONE DUST COLLECTOR

Motor: 10 HP, 220V/440V\*, 3-phase, 30A/15A, TEFC Class "F"

Intake hole size: 12"

**G0442HEP** 

- Filter surface area: 398 sq. ft
- Impeller: 181/2" steel radial fin
- Air suction capacity: 4029 CFM @43" SP
- Maximum static pressure (inches of water): 16.8"
- Sound level: 82-85 dB
- Filter: primary at 99.9% efficiency captures 0.2-2 micron dust particles
- Secondary HEPA at 99.97% efficiency captures 0.3 micron dust particles
- Collection drums: Steel, 55 gallon x 2
- Overall dimensions: 961/4" W x 521/2" D x 1391/2" H
- Stand: 13-gauge steel
- Cyclone body: 16-gauge steel
- Blower housing: 11-gauge steel

Approx. shipping weight: 1240 lbs.

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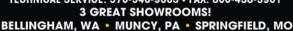












## Washington school honors former board chairwoman

## By Jennifer Hicks

he Port Townsend School of Woodworking in Port Townsend, Wash., honored Shelley Rust French with its annual Founders' Award.

The school is based in Fort Worden State Park and offers classes in cabinetmaking, furniture making, historic preservation and more. It was founded by woodworkers Tim Lawson, John Marckworth and Jim Toplin in 2007 and opened in 2008.

The founders created the award in 2012 to honor an individual who has contributed significantly to the school's growth and development. French was the first chairwoman of the school's board of directors.

"The significance of the award is a really a deep acknowledgement of the community that holds and fosters the school. We're in a community that has a deep crafts tradition and a deep passion for craft. And we've awarded it to people who've influenced and helped the school significantly in a variety of ways," Lawson says.

He says French was selected because she played a major role in developing the school's business structure and its transition from a small business to a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation in 2011.

Though not a woodworker herself, French was inspired by her father who was a woodworker, engineer and inventor who taught her the appreciation for craftsmanship. Her time spent with other woodworkers as gifted and talented as he was brings back memories for her.

"She had grown to love woodworking as a child it was one of the points of connection with her father. It was that passion for woodworking, that passion for helping people that led her to want to help us. She was organized in helping us go through the transition into a nonprofit. Being a non-profit allows us to reach out and provide scholarships and also to provide a much greater array of services to this community in the future," says Lawson.

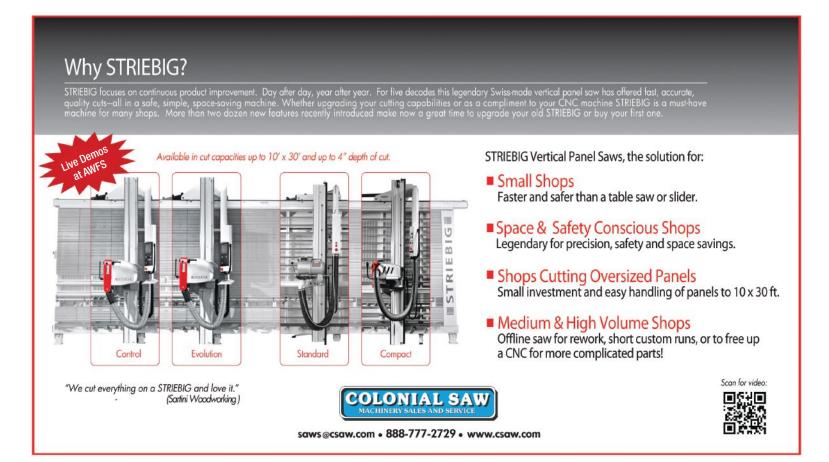
French says she felt honored and privileged

when she was told about the award, but humbled as well. She says it was the first time in a long time she's been recognized like that and truly appreciates it. She described her initial goals with the non-profit foundation and what was most important to move it forward.

"I think the most important part of this was stopping to take a moment to figure out where the school really wanted to go. On the board of directors, we would talk about the structure of the organization and the strategic planning, really basic stuff. What we found to be really important was looking at a plan for the next five years and what kind of people we need to have with skills and the expertise and the passion for getting the work done. We put together a really good board that would be able to think of programs the school could offer programs for everyone," says French.

Prior recipients include Kate Burke, Charlie Moore, Kiwi Ferris and Steve Habersetzer. Burke is the manager of Fort Warden State Park and helped get the school established there. Moore and Ferris are owners and founders of Edensaw, a hardwood supplier in Port Townsend. Habersetzer helped develop the school and is an instructor.

Contact: Port Townsend School of Woodworking. Tel: 360-344-4455. www.ptwoodschool.org.



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## WOODMARKETS

## Cherry sales stay on a steady course

## By Jennifer Hicks

ales of cherry are described as steady and stable, according to lumber dealers interviewed by Woodshop News. Translation: Demand hasn't increased or decreased, prices are about the same and there's plenty for anybody who needs it.

"Cherry used to be a predominant choice with customers and that's going back many, many moons, but for the last year or so it's been stable at a certain pace and that really has not changed. And it's not like China's going crazy over it or anything like that," says Jim Reader of Downes and Reader, a retailer and wholesaler in Stoughton, Mass.

"It's being used for cabinetry, flooring and millwork. It's easy to work with and takes stain well. The only thing is that it's subject to ultraviolet rays so it will darken over time when exposed to sunlight."

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

Rick Hearne, owner of Hearne Hardwoods in Oxford, Pa., says furniture makers continue to be regular customers for cherry. But he's also heard about fluctuating sales from other dealers who sell to broader markets.



"In our particular end of the business, cherry never really dropped off the board the way it did in the main industry because furniture makers have been building with cherry all along and are still looking for premium pieces of wide and long cherry," Hearne says.

"But cherry has been really soft in the big industry the past four years and has started to improve. The full upper grades are definitely improving and the lower common grades are still a little soft."

Additionally, Hearne says that in speaking with other dealers, there's not a big market for cherry logs in Europe. This creates a win-win for end users in the U.S. because a busy export market tends to reduce quality and raise prices of lumber.

"Quality has been much improved because the demand was soft. When the demand was strong you can sell anything with sap, gum or whatever because of the market. But when the market is soft people are more selective about what to buy because there's more to choose from. As a result, now mills are trimming more sapwood out of the wood."

Cherry (4/4, FAS) retails for about \$5.40/bf and wholesales for about \$2.90/bf, according to averaged quotes from lumber dealers. W











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## TOOLS VIECHNIQUES

## Bosch unveils breakthrough with flesh-detecting saw

By Jennifer Hicks

he rumor began to swirl last summer. A manufacturer was close to bringing a saw to market with flesh-detecting technology to rival SawStop. And they were true as Bosch introduced the Reaxx jobsite table saw, model GTS1041A, in March. The saw will be available this fall and demonstrated July 22-25 at the AWFS fair in Las Vegas.

The saw offers two levels of protection, according to product manager Craig Wilson. It features a modular blade guard system, Smart Guard, which serves as a physical barrier to the blade and prevents kickback. The second is through Bosch's Active Response Technology, a system that retracts the blade after the user makes physical contact with the blade.

"The way our system works, there's an outer rim to the blade inside the machine that's processing for different input. The input is programmed to allow cutting material like wood, but not for cutting material like fingers," Wilson says. "So if there is any human touch it will be able to recognize that. We use an activation cartridge that forces the blade to drop down and away from the user at a really high speed."

The activation cartridge, Wilson explains, is prompted by the same technology featured in an automobile airbag, which creates a charge that fires a piston that immediately drops the blade down into the saw. The system can be reset in less than 60 seconds after activation. The cartridge can be activated twice before replacement is needed.

"Another huge benefit of this system is that it doesn't damage the blade, which also allows the tangible user benefit of a quick reset time. When we did our research behind designing this, we learned from workers that after a cut



or a very close call, at the end of the day they still had to finish the job. So being able to get back to work and complete the job is really a huge benefit to the end user."

The Reaxx has features similar to the Bosch model 4100 job-site saw, including a 4-hp motor and cast-aluminum table. It comes with an outfeed table, sold as an accessory with model 4100.

The saw also has a dashboard control panel, featuring LED lights to indicate whether the saw is ready to use (green), the Active Response system is in bypass mode (yellow), there's a problem for the user to correct (red)

and professional service is required (blue).

"Even though the system prevents user injury, we don't want it to be too complex or complicated that the user will shy away from it. It's intuitive, easy to use and understandable to our users," Wilson says.

Wilson says user feedback will help determine additional applications for the safety technology. The same sensors and electronics are used in Bosch's Brute Tough hammer drill/drivers, introduced previously, according to Wilson.

The Reaxx will retail for \$1,499.

For information, visit www.boschtools.com.



## Vectric updates its Aspire software

By Jennifer Hicks

ectric, a U.K.-based software provider, released an updated version of its flagship design and CNC-machining software program, Aspire. Version 8 includes significant enhancements and new features for the program's drawing tools, 3-D modeling functions and toolpath creation, according to the company.

Product manager James Booth says that while the new release is wide-ranging in how it will benefit existing users, so far the most significant enhancements reported by customers have been the texture creation, working with 3-D objects directly in 3-D view, enhancements to control finish on some key toolpath types and 64-bit support.

"Generally speaking, all of these provide customers with the potential to get a better quality finished part straight off the machine," Booth says.

"The texture option makes the design of architectural panels much simpler, but also makes the creation of faster cutting grain pattern backgrounds possible for signage. Working directly in 3-D view gives the user instant feedback on changes to the model, making it quicker and easier to develop and edit your 3-D layout. The toolpath enhancements have allowed more control over the last pass, cutting depths and entry points for different strategies."

Booth says the 64-bit support means users can take advantage of more RAM on a PC and that means speed-increases and the potential to import and work with complex 3-D datasets.

The program has had an additional 150 3-D models added to its clipart library, bringing the total to more than 1,400 files.

New drawing tool options have also been added, according to Booth. "By further enhancing the snapping and guidelines in the software, accurate drawing and editing has become even more streamlined than it was before," he says.

The new release is compatible with SketchUp 2015. Booth says this was important as many existing customer use SketchUp as their main design tool for furniture and other assembled 3-D parts.

For information, visit www.vectric.com.

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## SCM adds Accord 25

By Jennifer Hicks

CM Group says its latest machining center, the Accord 25 FX, was designed with the needs of small- and medium-sized woodworking companies in mind.

Product manager Karl Frey says the five-axis machining center is versatile for making cabinet doors, windows, stairs, tabletops and most applications involving wood-panel processing. It is available with a bars table, multifunction table and 32 or 42 tool changer.

"The most recent development with this machine is it has an automatic table and, with the position of the bars, it clamps automatically. Automation of the table is huge and that automation of a moving a part is much more affordable today. As a result of that automation technology being more affordable it can be used more by custom woodworkers and furniture makers," Frey says.

The Accord 25 FX has features, parts and accessories from other SCM machines that customers reported useful, according to Frey.

Programming on the machine is done through several program offerings in the Xilog Maestro software suite, developed by SCM. The Maestro 3-D module allows for the programming and five-axis machining of 3-D surfaces. The Maestro WD was developed for the production of door and window frames. The Maestro Pro View simulator provides clients with considerable advantages by previewing the actual machining to be carried out in the machine on the office PC to calculate production times and costs. The Maestro MSL Connector module allows the machine to interface with external management software, according to the company.

The machine is available several configurations to meet a customer's needs, Frey adds. It has a base price of about \$150,000.

Contact: SCM Group North America. Tel: 770-813-8818. www.scmgroupna.com ₩

## **Baldor has new website**

Baldor Electric Co. launched a new website featuring increased search and download capabilities.

"The new site not only showcases our broad product offering and our strong product brands, but it does so in a much easier and faster way than ever before," Tracy Long, the company's vice president of marketing, said in a statement. For information, visit www.baldor.com.

## TigerStop offering TigerRip as an add-on accessory

By Jennifer Hicks

igerStop is now offering its TigerRip 1000 as an accessory that can be added to an existing straight-line rip saw for greater productivity and efficiency.

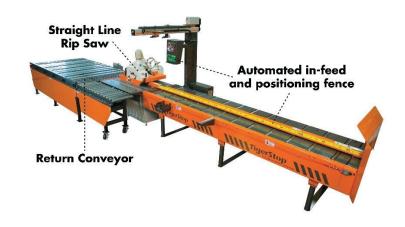
Previously only available as an entire straight-line rip saw system, the accessory includes an infeed table and automated fence, plus an optional saw and return conveyor.

"The new offering is for new or existing straight-line saws and will basically fit with any major brand," product manager Mike Anderson says. "The TigerRip 1000 produces some of the highest yields of ripcut optimizing and crosscut optimizing because of its unique ability to combine random width panel and fixed width strips, in addition to being able to do multiple orders of the same."

The TigerStop 1000 uses Dynamic Optimization software to find the best use of material and keep track of all the material ripped, letting the user build to order rather than keeping a buffer inventory, according to the company.

"If you look at the labor that's involved in ripping material for cabinetry, a big portion of that labor is in logistics. Most cabinet shops don't want to rip their inventory; they want to rip their components to the exact needs that they have because it's all custom," Anderson says.

For information, visit www.tigerstop.com.





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## Ironwood rolls out new wide belt sander line

By Jennifer Hicks

ronwood, a brand of woodworking machinery available exclusively from Stiles Machinery, added a new wide belt sander line with four models. The Ironwood brand features heavy-duty production-machinery designs to help shops save labor and work more efficiently, according to product manger Aaron Brink.

The brand also offers drilling and dowel insertion machines, planers, chop saws, jointers, shapers and straight-line rip saws.

"There are 22 other machines in the Ironwood line to serve the solid wood customer," Brink says. "We've always have sold sanders, but these are geared a little more towards the entry-level or mid-sized customer."

The line includes two single-head machines, models S113K and S114K, with working widths of 36" and 42". Model S124RK has two sanding heads, while model S134RRK has three and both have working widths of 42".

All of the sanders offer variable speeds and programmable controllers. Other features include easy-to-use controls, fast and precise thickness adjustments and they're affordable, according to Brink.

"These are more geared towards the solid-wood customer so they don't have all of the fancy bells and whistles you find on a \$200,000 machine," Brink says.

They sell for about \$14,000 to \$40,000. They will be exhibited in July at the AWFS fair.

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







## Vacuum presses: Commercial and shop-built solutions

By John English

he concept of a vacuum press is pretty simple: it's a device that applies an equal amount of clamping pressure over a large area by using an electric or pneumatic pump to suck the air out of a big plastic bag.

The most common use for vacuum presses in the woodshop is to adhere wood veneers or laminates to a substrate, usually plywood. Rather than building a complex mechanical clamp that uses curved cauls to apply pressure to the center of a glue-up, a vacuum press just requires that the assembly be inserted in the bag. The pump is turned on and an incredible amount of pressure is exerted across the entire surface. Once the initial job of air removal is completed, the pump can relax as it only has to deal with a small amount of air leakage for an hour or two while the adhesive cures.

A woodshop owner or manager who is thinking about investing in a vacuum press has a couple of options. If there is a regular demand for laminated panels, you can buy a turnkey commercial unit and get to work today. But if the shop only does occasional small jobs, a woodworker can assemble a press using widely available components and it's not too complicated.

## **SYSTEM CHOICES**

There are both small and large commercial units available. For example, Woodcraft Sup-

ply (www.woodcraft.com) offers a basic small system that includes a pump and a 36" x 54" vacuum bag (item No. 147849) for \$395.

Most over-the-counter systems include an electric pump with a pressure gauge attached, a length of hose, sometimes a proprietary connector that allows the operator to attach the hose to the bag and the bag itself. These small pumps are usually continuous duty (on some, you need to shut them off when the right pressure is reached). Woodcraft's model produces up to 25" Hg, which is 1,774 lbs/ft2 (pounds per square foot) of pressure. The 'Hg' (sometimes written as 'inHg') is a unit of measurement that is widely used in the refrigeration industry and it refers to inches of mercury.

That might sound familiar to older woodworkers because, long before smartphones had weather apps, many of America's homes had a barometer in the front parlor that was used to predict the weather. It would measure atmospheric pressure by the level to which a circular column of mercury would rise in a glass tube. (The chemical notation for mercury is Hg.) High pressure usually means dry air and lots of sunshine, while low pressure is related to storms and rain. Older barometers usually list inches of mercury at 60 F, while newer ones also add a dial for hectoPascals (hPa), a unit of measurement based on the work of Blaise Pascal, a 17th century French mathematician and inventor who helped define the fields of pressure and vacuum.



The Excel 5 Vacuum Press System, available from VeneerSupplies.com.



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## **TOOLS** & TECHNIQUES

For shops that do veneer work fairly regularly, Highland Woodworking in Atlanta (www.highlandwoodworking.com) offers a heavy-duty, 6 CFM vacuum pump with a 1/3-hp, 110-volt power supply for \$840. The maximum vacuum is 27" HG and the controls include an automatic shutoff at 25" HG (this is called auto-cycling). It also comes with a dual power switch for both vacuum pressing and vacuum clamping. At just 9-1/2" wide and 22" long, this 50-lb. unit doesn't take up much bench or floor space. Highland offers 61" x 121", 49" x 49" and 49" x 97" bags.

Most of the bags available for small vacuum press systems are either 20 or 30 mil thickness and they are usually clear. Being seethrough, a woodworker can often see and catch a problem before the glue starts curing. In general, the bags have thermo-welded seams along three sides and some kind of mechanical fastener (often a zipper-type) for the fourth, where the hose is inserted. In some systems, both ends of the bag can be opened and this is designed to facilitate gluing up odd-shaped forms.

For very small projects, take a look at Thin Air Presses from Roarockit Skateboard Co. in Toronto (*roarockit.com*). These are a couple of very affordable kits (under \$60) that are based on the company's own experience building

curved platforms for skateboards. Thin Air Press vacuum pump systems use a manual vacuum pump and the included instructions provide how-to information on using foam as a mold for bending wood.

### **LARGER UNITS**

The Highland Woodworking unit's big brother, the Hi-Flo Industrial from Vacuum Pressing Systems in Brunswick, Maine (www.vacupress.com), is a 10 CFM, 3/4-hp, oil- and maintenance-free rotary vane pump. This unit is faster and more powerful than anything mentioned above and this combination of features is extremely valuable when dealing with larger curved work or multi-bag operations.

Because of the volume of air it can remove, the Hi-Flo VacuPress can accommodate up to three bags with the addition of the company's manifold adapter, which means that several parts can be assembled, glued and cured at the same time. New, high-end digital controls are easy to read and adjust. The digital switch allows a woodworker to set the pump's shutoff and turn-on points independently from each other, which means that you can program different vacuum settings for each bag. That can be extremely helpful in woodshops that are at high elevations or for curved work and even for different glue types.

Larger pumps also allow the woodshop to stack several laminations on top of each other and process a number of panels simultaneously.

A number of companies such as VacuPress and Quality VAKuum Products (www.qualityvak.com) offer frame presses, which are essentially flat tables with "doors" on the top. Designed to accommodate large parts, frame presses are also easy and quick to load, so they are ideally suited to a larger vacuum pump.

Bagpress (www.bagpress.com) is a British company that offers three different sizes of venturi with varying vacuum flow rates and air supply requirements. The company also has one entry-level, five professional-grade and three high-vacuum oil-lubricated presses in its electric vacuum press range. The latter, the HiPro systems, are only built to special order, whereas all the others are held in stock for next-day delivery."

Large-scale veneer presses usually run on venturi systems that use an air compressor instead of an electric motor. One disadvantage there is that, if the press is activated late in the day, the compressor needs to run unattended at night and this has caused a lot of accidents through the years. Most compressor manufacturers recommend shutting off power to the unit at the end of the workday because if





there's a leak the pump could overheat trying to keep up with demand, and cause a fire.

### **DO-IT-YOURSELF**

For woodworkers who want to build their own vacuum press, there is a wealth of information on two related websites operated by woodworker Joe Gorleski of Forest Hill, Md. — www.joewoodworker.com and www.veneersupplies.com. On the former site, Gorleski has included a comprehensive and very easy-to-use introduction to building and using a vacuum press, along with several free plans for various setups.

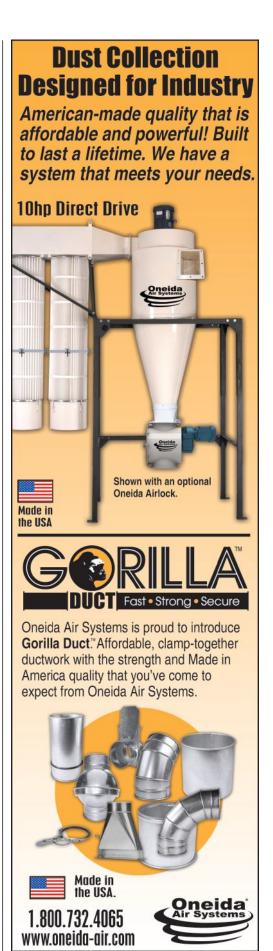
"Vacuum," he says, "can be achieved either through the use of an electric vacuum pump (diaphragm, piston, rotary vane, etc.), or with a pneumatic device called a venturi." This uses compressed air from the shop's existing compressor to create a vacuum.

"Both systems work nearly identically," Gorleski says, "but there are some details that might swing your vote in one direction or the other. Venturi systems are easier to build, cost less and have fewer moving parts. Addition-

ally, you'll find that a 3 CFM venturi can draw a full vacuum faster than a 3 CFM electric vacuum pump."

Gorleski goes into great detail on this and several other aspects of the veneering art such as platens, meshes and substrates. In fact, anybody who is unfamiliar with veneering techniques will discover the answers to virtually all of their questions on one or the other of his sites or in a special frequently-asked-questions section that he has created. The Veneer Supplies site offers a huge array of exotic veneers and supplies (more than 4,000, each with a photo) and also sells everything that a shop owner would need to actually construct a vacuum press in-house. Spend a few hours with Gorleski online and you might just discover a whole new hobby.

Woodworker Bob Brokaw of the Gwinnet Woodworkers' Association did just that. Brokaw is a past president of the Gwinnett County (Ga.) group. He took Gorleski's basic small system and used it to create a large-scale vacuum veneering press. Check out the video on You Tube.





## **PRO SHOP**

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## Are you open to new ideas?

There are many things that occur in our lives that can't always be explained — and might even hold the key to future success

ynchronicity is defined as "the simultaneous occurrence of events that appear significantly related, but have no discernible causal connection." We have all had this type of experience at some point in our lives. I think most people shrug it off as simply an interesting or unusual coincidence. But is that all it really is?

The term synchronicity was coined by psychiatrist Carl Jung. The concept was inspired by a patient's case. One night, that patient dreamt of a golden scarab (the cetonia aurata

beetle). During the next day's session, a real insect hit against Jung's cabinet window. Jung caught it and discovered surprisingly that it was a rare golden scarab.

The idea of synchronicity is all about coincidence; in this case, between the scarab dreamed of by the patient and its appearance in reality. This is certainly not an isolated event. No one really understands the phenomenon, but its daily occurrence in people lives throughout the world is undeniable.

So what can we learn from it? How is synchronicity relevant in our daily lives?



Because we like to live in a world where everything can be explained by the physical dimension, it's difficult to accept things that have a supernatural or unexplained condition. However, regardless of our likes or dislikes, the fact is there are a great many things that occur in our daily lives that can't always be explained by our knowledge of physics.

How does this affect our daily grind, especially as it pertains to running a business or building a product? Things that can't be explained should never be ignored simply because we don't understand them. Consider the era of time when man believed the Earth was flat or that the planets revolved around the Earth and not the sun. In that world they believed a lie. It wasn't that they wanted to believe a lie, it was just a simple matter of not having enough knowledge and information to correctly assess how the universe was created.

In like manner, we might have dreams, visions or a sense of dejà vu that are really trying to tell us something. Just because we don't understand it does not eliminate its legitimacy. We must learn to examine everything that comes across our plate — every time and every day. If you can't explain something, set it aside for another time. The unknown phenomenon you encounter could actually provide key information you need to

make a decision or be that missing link to a life-changing experience.

Remember, don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

### COINCIDENCE

Whenever an event of synchronicity occurs, our first instinct is probably going to be to consider it a coincidence. It's the most logical way to process information that can't be explained. But is it really a coincidence? I've had dozens of dreams through the years that manifested themselves into reality. I'm not necessarily talking about a dream that gave me an idea to pursue (even though these, too, can be considered an event of synchronicity), but rather an inexplicable and random event that meant nothing at the time, but later manifested itself into my life experience.

Given the nature of the vast number of dreams and instances of dejà vu we have, it's probably safe to assume that not all of them have a significant meaning in our life's journey. However, because some of them could hold secrets to the unknown, it makes sense to catalog them into the recesses of our mind for a later date.

My point, as mentioned above, is not to throw every random thought into the trash, but learn how to learn from them. Once you decide to expand your knowledge, you always find a way to help that process occur. Because all of us are unique and have different ways to acquire information, it's important to realize there is no formula for deciphering the language of synchronicity. It's up to you to figure it out.

There are three things you must do to begin this learning process:

- Have an open mind: Nobody ever gains knowledge and wisdom with a closed one. If you have preconceived ideas that filter out new concepts or different ways of looking at the same thing, you'll never grow in understanding. And you'll certainly shut the door on getting anything out of the concept of synchronicity.
- Learn to recognize when synchronicity is laying the groundwork: This really isn't as hard as you might think. "Red flags" and "gut feelings" pretty much describe how it starts. You just need to train yourself to pay attention to the signs.
- Keep track of synchronicity events as they
  occur: Whether you keep a logbook or simply make a mental note, looking for common traits is critical to determining if and
  when the process is happening.

## FITTING THE PUZZLE PIECES

Chances are, we might never be able to understand how synchronicity works. In fact,



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Jung might have opened our eyes, but could very well be leading us in the wrong direction on what is really happening. Nonetheless, something we can't understand is happening and that something could be beneficial to you.

Because the term we're talking about is a conceptual theory and not a proven law, there are currently no rules to govern its exploration. It could almost be compared to working a jigsaw puzzle with the pieces turned upside down. Without any colors or shapes to help put the pieces together, the task would be so insurmountable you most likely would not even bother with the attempt — regardless of the benefits in assembly. However, there are some clues given that will help decipher the puzzle if you're willing to learn.

Even a casual study of Jung's observations will reveal a wealth of information of documented events that prove synchronicity is not an isolated occurrence. In addition, even your own gut feelings — which we all have by the way — give credence to this unexplained phenomenon.

In summary, I'd like to emphasize once again that synchronicity is indeed only a theory. The reason I want to remind you of this is twofold. First, theories are usually based on facts, but not always provable. This leads to many abstract definitions that might or might

not be in line with the original premise. Secondly, until proven otherwise, you're the only one that can make sense of, benefit from and put into practice the fruit that synchronicity seems to offer.

The bottom line is how open are you to growth? Exploring the things we don't understand in addition to those we do, all lead to a more complete life experience. I would never endorse putting all your energies into a concept that does not yet have a benchmark of practice. Instead, crafting your business on time-proven principles is the safe bet for success. Nevertheless, making a small investment in a phenomenon that we all encounter, yet no one understands, could prove to be beneficial to you in ways you can't even imagine.

## Keystone granted three-year SHARP certificate renewal

Keystone Wood Specialties, a wholesale wood products manufacturer in Lancaster, Pa., has received re-certification from OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program. Approval was increased from two to a three-year term through March 2018.

Keystone has been certified since 2003. Certified companies are exempt from scheduled OSHA inspections for the certification period. However, interim reports are an ongoing requirement, according to the company.

The SHARP program is available to American companies with less than 250

employees and is focused on the safety status of the physical plant; a thorough program of employee safety training; maintaining a below industry injury recordable status, and a comprehensive, written safety plan that includes maintaining a certified safety committee of participating employees.

Previously, Keystone has been recognized as one of America's safest companies by Occupational Hazards Magazine and received the Governor's Award for Safety Excellence from the State of Pennsylvania.

For information, visit http://keystone-wood.com.





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The following are some random tips to speed and improve your finishing. They are arranged roughly in the order of the steps.

## **SOFTEN SHARP EDGES**

Machining wood leaves edges sharp. Always soften them with several light passes of medium-grit sandpaper before applying a finish. Film-building finishes will peel away from sharp edges if they aren't rounded over

a little and sharp edges damage easier than softened edges.

## **APPLYING STAIN**

The most efficient methods of applying stain are by wiping or spraying. Brushing is very slow — often too slow with lacquer and water-based stains that dry rapidly.

When you have thoroughly wetted a surface with the stain, quickly wipe off the excess. With fast-drying stains, try dividing large projects into smaller sections to give yourself enough time or get someone else to apply or wipe off.

### **BURY RAISED GRAIN**

Water-based stains and finishes raise wood fibers and lock them in place, making the surface feel rough. You can pre-raise the grain by wetting the wood and sanding it smooth after it has dried. But it's much more efficient to "bury" the raised grain with another coat of finish. Then sand it smooth after it has dried.

## **COLOR CONFIRMATION**

Stains lighten as they dry, then return to their damp color when a finish is applied. So the quick method of seeing the color you'll get with the finish applied is to look at the stain while it is still damp.

If you're using a satin or flat finish, however, you need to factor in the impact of the flatting agent. It will dull the brightness of the color a little.

## **AVOIDING RUNS AND SAGS**

You should never have runs or sags in your dried finish. The way to achieve this level of perfection is to watch the surface you're brushing or spraying in a reflected light.



You might need to arrange some lights or move your body and your head often to see what's happening.

With a reflection, you can see easily when a finish begins sagging or running. Then it's a simple matter of using a brush (even if you're spraying) to remove the problem. Lift the excess finish off the surface with the brush and spread it to another part, drag it over the lip of a jar or can or wipe it on a clean cloth.

### **BEST BAR-TOP FINISH**

The best finish to use for bar tops, restaurant tables or kitchen tables depends largely on how you intend to apply it.

For a pour-on finish, epoxy resin is best. Just like epoxy adhesive, it comes in two parts, which you mix before pouring onto the surface and spreading evenly using a plastic spreader.

If you're using a spray gun, the best finish is catalyzed ("conversion") varnish, which also comes in two parts for you to mix before spraying. Close behind in durability are one-and two-part catalyzed lacquers.

If you're brushing the finish, oil-based polyurethane is best. It is significantly more durable than water-based polyurethane because alcohol spills and the chemicals used for cleaning will soften water-based polyurethane over time.

## AVOID ROUGH SURFACES IN CONFINED SPACES

When spraying in enclosed areas, such as the insides of cabinets or drawers, with a fast-drying finish, it's common to get a rough-feeling finish. The bounce-back and turbulence created by the force of the spray — even HVLP spray — keeps the finish particles in the air long enough to dry. Then they settle and stick to the surface.

To prevent this from happening, slow the drying of the finish with a retarder. In some situations, you can remove the back of the cabinet or the drawer bottom so the bounceback can be exhausted.

## LACQUER OVER STAIN OR GLAZE

As long as you are using a spray gun for application and solvent lacquer for your finish, you don't have to let an oil-based stain or glaze dry overnight before applying the finish.

The trick is to mist (or "dust") some lacquer onto the stain or glaze after the thinner has evaporated (the stain or glaze dulls) but before the oil binder begins oxidizing and becomes tacky. Unless the stain or glaze is thick, in which case this trick might not work, the lacquer incorporates the uncured stain or glaze and bonds to the wood or finish coat underneath.

After the mist coat dries, continue with your finish coats. It would be a good idea to practice on scrap wood first to be sure you have the timing right. If the timing is wrong, the finish could wrinkle or turn white.

### MATCHING COLORS

Matching colors is one of the most difficult tasks in wood finishing. It's rare that a stain alone accomplishes a match. The best procedure is to get the color close, but a little on the light side with a stain. Then tweak the color by applying a glaze or spraying a toner.

To get a preview of what the glaze or toner will do, apply some to a clean glass plate and place it on the stained wood to which you have applied a coat of finish to show the true color. You'll know right away if you have a match or what you need to do to get closer.

## **REMOVING DUST NIBS**

There's almost always a little dust that settles onto the last coat of finish before it dries, even with fast-drying lacquer. As long as the dust isn't excessive or the particles large, you can make the surface feel smooth by rubbing with a folded brown paper bag after the finish has fully dried.

Smoothness is important because people like to touch the finish. Smoothness says quality.

## USE A PLASTIC SPREADER WHEN RUBBING A FINISH

When leveling a finish with sandpaper and a lubricant, you can get a quick view of where you are in the process by using a plastic spreader to remove the sludge from an area. As long as the finish you applied has a gloss sheen, dips and pores where you haven't sanded enough show up well.

The plastic-spreader trick is a lot quicker than washing off all the sludge with a rag and solvent — or a rag and water — and you don't have to let the solvent or water dry to see what's happening. The shiny areas show up immediately.

## ROUGH UP SURFACE BEFORE STRIPPING

High-performance coatings are often difficult to strip because they are designed to resist damage from solvents. To give your solvent stripper a better chance of working, rough up the surface with coarse sandpaper first. This radically increases the surface area for the stripping solvent to attack.

Then give the stripper a longer time to work, if necessary, by keeping it wet on the surface. W

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





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- Overall size: 36" W x 76" H x 32" D
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- Table height: 353/8"
- Footprint: 21" L x 191/2" W
- Arbor: 5/8" Arbor speed: 3450 RPM
- Capacity: 31/4" @ 90°, 21/4" @ 45°
- Rip capacity: 30" right, 15" left
- Overall size: 571/4" W x 353/4" H x 371/2" D
- Approx. shipping weight: 348 lbs.

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## 10" SLIDING TABLE SAWS

- Motor: 5 HP, 230V, single-phase, 19A or 7½ HP, 220V/440V\*, 3-phase, 20A/10A
- Main table size: 143/8" x 27" Sliding table size: 121/4" x 63"
- Main blade arbor: 5/8" Main blade arbor speed: 4000 RPM
- Scoring blade size: 31/8"
- Scoring blade arbor: 22mm
- Depth of cut: 31/8" @ 90°, 21/4" @ 45°
- Max. rip capacity: 33"
- Approx. shipping weight: 688 lbs.

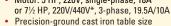
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## 12" EXTREME TABLE SAWS Motor: 5 HP, 220V, single-phase, 18A



with extension: 691/2" x 783/4"

- Arbor: 1" Arbor speed: 3600 RPM
- Max. dado width: 3/4"
- Max. rip capacity: 52" Max. depth of cut: 4" @ 90°, 2¾" @ 45°
- Approx. shipping weight: 854 lbs.

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## 14" SLIDING TABLE SAW

- Main motor: 10 HP, 220V/440V\*, 3-phase, 25A/12.5A
- Sliding table size: 15" x 126"
- Main blade arbor: 1" Main blade speed: 3000, 4000, 5000, 6000 RPM
- Scoring blade motor: 1 HP, 3A/1.5A
- Scoring blade size: 43/4" Scoring blade arbor: 22mm
- Scoring blade speed: 8000 RPM
- Scoring blade tilt: 0-45° Depth of cut: 4" @ 90°, 23/4" @ 45°
- Max. rip capacity: 521/21
- Max. sheet capacity: 126" x 126" Approx. shipping weight: 2932 lbs.

G0772 INTRO PRICE \$10,95000



## **AUTOMATIC EDGEBANDER**

- Required power supply: 30A, 220V, single-phase, 60 Hz
- Feed motor: 3/4 HP Glue and edge motor: 1/4 HP
- End trim motor: 1/4 HP Flush trim motor: 3/4 HP
- Buffing motor: 1/4 HP
- Heating element: 1455W (6.6A)
- Table size: 101/2" W x 783/4" L
- Min. panel dimensions: 4¾" W x 9½" L Compressed air required: 86 PSI
- Glue pot capacity: 34 oz
- Roller width: 25/16" Roller diameter: 13/16"
- Edgebanding coil capacity: 311/2" Approx. shipping weight: 875 lbs.

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## 12" JOINTER/PLANER with SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD

- Motor: 5 HP, 220V, single-phase, 25A
- Jointer table size: 14" x 591/2"
- Cutterhead dia.: 31/81
- Cutterhead speed: 5034 RPM
- Max. jointer depth of cut: 1/8"
- Max. width of cut: 12'
- Planer feed rate: 22 FPM
- Max. planer depth of cut: 1/8"
- Max. planer cutting height: 8'
- Planer table size: 121/4" x 231/8"
- Approx. shipping weight: 704 lbs.

G0634XP \$239500 SALE \$229500



## **8" JOINTERS**

- Motor: 3 HP, 220V, single-phase, TEFC, 15A
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 9" x 721/6"
- Max. depth of cut: 1/8"
- Max. rabbeting depth: 1/21
- Cutterhead dia.: 3"
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM Cuts per minute: 20,000 (G0656P), 21,400 (G0656PX)
- Approx. shipping weight: 500 lbs.

**4 KNIFE CUTTERHEAD** 

G0656P \$82500 SALE \$79500 SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD

G0656PX \$125000 SALE \$119500





**(P** 

## 15" PLANERS

- Motor: 3 HP, 240V, single-phase, 15A
- Precision-ground cast iron table size: 15" x 20"
- Min. stock thickness: 3/16
- Min. stock length: 8"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/8"
- Feed rate: 16 & 30 FPM
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM
- Approx. shipping weight: 675 lbs.

**3 KNIFE CUTTERHEAD** 

G0453P \$115000 SALE \$112500

SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD

G0453PX \$179500 SALE \$175000



150

## 20" PLANER with SPIRAL CUTTERHEAD

- Motor: 5 HP, 240V, single-phase, 19A
- Max. cutting width: 20"
- Min. stock length: 8"
- Max. cutting depth: 1/81
- Feed rate: 16 FPM & 20 FPM
- Cutterhead diameter: 31/8"
- Cutterhead speed: 4800 RPM Number of cutter spirals: 4
- Table size: 20" x 253/4"
- Table size with extension: 20" x 551/2"
- Overall dimensions: 55%" L x 39" W x 45%" H
- Approx. shipping weight: 932 lbs.

G0454Z \$257500 SALE \$249500



179

## 2 HP SHAPER

- Motor: 2 HP, 120V/240V, single-phase, prewired 240V, 18A/9A
- Table size: 24" x 21'
- Spindle travel: 3"
- Spindle sizes: 1/2" and 3/4" (included)
- Spindle speeds: 7000 and 10,000 RPM
- Miter gauge slot: T-slotted
- Stand: cabinet style, powder-coated finish
- Cord length: 10' x 14 Gauge
- Maximum cutter diameter: 5
- Approx. shipping weight: 290 lbs.

W1674 \$102500 SALE \$97500



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TABLES



## PROFESSIONAL SPINDER SHAPERS

- Motor size: 5 HP, 220V, single-phase, 25A or 71/2 HP, 220V/440V\*, 3-phase, 20A/10A
- Table size: 351/2" x 28"
- Spindle travel: 31/4"
- Spindle sizes: 3/4", 1", and 11/4"
- Spindle speeds: 3600, 5100, 8000, and 10,000 RPM
- Max. cutter diameter: 51/8"
- · Approx. shipping weight: 613 lbs.

5 HP, Single-Phase

71/2 HP. 3-Phase

G5912Z \$262500 SALE \$255000

G7214Z \$262500 SALE \$255000



### 18" OPEN END DRUM SANDER

- Sanding motor: 11/2 HP, 110V, single-phase, 15A
- Drum surface speed: 4000 FPM
- Conveyor feed rate: variable, 2-12 FPM
- Max. stock dimensions: 36" W x 41/2" thick Min. board length: 6"
- Min. board thickness: 1/8"
- Sanding drum size: 4" Dust collection port: 21/2"
- Overall size: 35" W x 50" H x 24" D
- Approx. shipping weight: 300 lbs.

**EASY ACCESS** FOR SANDPAPER

SAFETY SWITCH WITH REMOVABLE KEY

**BUILT-IN DUST COLLECTION WITH DUST BAG!** 





- 1725 RPM, 30A Conveyor motor: 1/4 HP, 220V, single-phase, 1.8A
- Air requirement: 57-75 PSI, 2 CFM
- Sanding belt size: 16" x 48" Surface speed of sanding belt: 2050 FPM
- Max. board width: 15" single pass
- Max. board thickness: 51/2"
- Min. board length: 12"
- Conveyor speed: 13.1 & 16.4 FPM
- Overall size: 321/2" W x 613/4" H x 35" D
- Approx. shipping weight: 908 lbs.











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DISC









home-storage solutions By Jennifer Hicks



# BESIDS Of both WORLDS

uckeye Custom Cabinets and Closets and its sister company, Organized Home Remodeling, share two owners and one shop in Columbus, Ohio. It's a one-stop shopping concept, providing customers with custom cabinetry and home storage solutions from a single source.

"It's wonderful to be able to offer a customer the skills of a design/build remodeling company partnered with having a custom cabinet shop allowing a specialty design made for their individual tastes and needs. We find it opens our ability to transform an area into a truly functional space with the beauty of a custom design," co-owner Kathy Morgan says.

## FROM THE CORPORATE WORLD

Morgan and business partner Jeff Reasinger got into the remodeling and woodworking industry when times were tough and opportunity knocked.

Morgan was employed in the finance industry for 22 years, which brought her to Columbus in the late 1980s. In the mid-1990s, the







Catlina Labra installs drawer slides.

division of her company she was working for moved to Denver. Her husband was terminally ill and she had young children at home, so it wasn't feasible to relocate. Instead, she went to work for a local corporation as an executive vice president. Her husband died six months later and the corporate job was eliminated.

"So being home with the kids and knowing another corporate job would lead to things like travel, I was interested in finding a job that would provide for my family, but not require me to have the time away that previous jobs took. I've always been the one who was out working 60 to 70 hours a week and my husband was the one who was home full time," says Morgan, whose children were ages 9 and 14 when their father died.

Four months later, in August 1999, after having gone through all of her savings and putting her house up for sale, a friend put her in touch with the owner of a national closet manufacturing business with a franchise in Columbus. She took the sales job out of necessity.

"I knew I would be doing in-home sales, sitting and talking to people and designing things when I had absolutely no artistic ability. It was just so incredibly different than anything I've ever done. But when you're coming down to the end of the tunnel and there's no light, you really start to open up your op-

tions," Morgan says. "There's no incentive in the world [like] knowing you have children asleep in their beds, expecting to have their meals the next day and live in the house they've grown up in."

She made \$65,000 in the first year and was responsible for two-thirds of the company's sales six years later. She eventually left for a more challenging job, but her former customers kept calling with orders, which Morgan fulfilled through third-party shops.

With the help of her new husband, Dave, Morgan opened Space Transitions, a design and fabrication company providing homestorage solutions. She hired an installer and continued to outsource with other shops before purchasing a fully equipped shop.

Morgan and Reasinger became partners in 2012. Reasinger is another corporate refugee who grew tired of international travel and had opened a remodeling business in Columbus called Red's Remodeling and Repair in 2003 and was later renamed Organized Home Remodeling. The partners formed Buckeye Custom Cabinets and Closets in 2013.

## ATTRACTING BUSINESS

Morgan and Reasinger each brought customers to their new companies. Referrals, local trade shows and the company's website have

John Miller works on a fireplace mantel.





PHOTO: MICHAEL A. FOLEY/REDUX PLUS

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brought in more. The client base is about 90 percent residential.

"We like to be unique in that we give the best of both worlds to our clients," Morgan says. "For example, we did a custom 12' tall fireplace mantle and a custom bar for one client. We built her a buffet for her kitchen and replicated her cabinets. We also made particle-board storage shelving while we were remodeling for her basement. We offer everything."

There's plenty of work in the immediate vicinity of Columbus, according to Morgan. In fact, most of the jobs are within 20 miles of the shop.

The shop features a 2,000-sq.-ft showroom and design center, where customers can view samples of the many style options and learn about the manufacturing process.

"Don't be afraid to invite customers into the shop to see how the product is being made. People love that," Morgan says.

Style preferences range from traditional to contemporary, she says.

"In the Midwest, most people with single-family homes tend to stay with traditional looks or they do Mission and Shaker styles. But when you get into condos and there's been a modest uptick of them in the downtown area, most of them are very contemporary."

Cherry is a popular material choice, while finishes lean toward paint and stain. "I've noticed that women have a tendency to like painted cabinets while men prefer stained wood," Morgan says.

What if there's a tie between a husband and wife?

"I might offer that wood is affected by humidity, which can cause paint to crack while stain is more forgiving," she says.

## **BEHIND THE SCENES**

In February, both companies relocated to a new building just a few blocks away from their previous location in Columbus.

The shop has a full-time kitchen and bath designer and a design administrator. Morgan and Reasinger's primary roles are sales, estimating, accounting and employee management.

"It's sometimes hard to find people who work to the quality standards and have the ethics we require. But right now, I'd say we have the best group that we've had in the company since Day One," Morgan says.

"Our turnover is generally not because people quit; they're let go. We operate with a 90-day probation period. There are some companies who hire people who follow what they're told to do. We are a company that likes to hire people that think. I expect them know their goals and contribute some ideas to the table.

"To be successful, you have to have huge attention to detail," Morgan continues. "The people in your shop have to understand how

important it is to make sure you do what a customer has hired you to do and make sure the customer has a thorough understanding of what they're buying and how it will function."

The shop is fully equipped to handle any request, but not especially high-tech.

"We do have one CNC machine and it's an older model for line boring. We use our big double-bladed sliding table saw for a lot of what we do," Morgan says. "Most of our products are hand-finished and built from scratch."

## **BUSINESS IN COLUMBUS**

Currently, there are no plans to expand, except for possibly making a designated line of storage cabinets in the future. The owners are focused on improving the bottom line and continuing to build a strong reputation.

Neither business has a big backlog of work, but activity usually picks up in the spring. Morgan says her biggest challenge is explaining to customers why so much time is required to complete jobs.

"Cabinetry is not necessarily a product that can be done right away and we are often explaining that skills required to do the work are learned skills passed on by trade and the jobs cannot be rushed."

"Now that I've been in this business and I really have worked for myself for the last 16 years, I have such a huge appreciation for what cabinet shops do, which I didn't when I first started. Handcrafted cabinetmaking is a talent and art form unto itself."

Contact: Buckeye Custom Cabinets and Closets, 2045 Builders Place, Columbus, OH 43204. Tel: 614-754-8234. www.bccandc.com



## CLOSING THE DEAL takes a take to be a take t

One of the first things learned at business school is that there's a difference between marketing and selling. In the simplest terms, marketing means getting the word out and sales is getting cash in your hand. For custom woodshops, the relationship between the two is often a little muddy. Some of the processes could belong in either camp. When a shop goes through the process of bidding a job, which is that? Theoretically, it would be sales, as you are now in contact with the potential client and discussing specifics. Getting a customer to make the initial call that led to the bid — that's a job for the marketing department. Once the fish bites, it's up to the sales

hat does a custom woodshop really sell — a craft

Marketing has become a little more complex through the years and now includes everything from design to delivery. When the big-box stores began advertising CAD design services (a marketing master stroke), the initial feeling among cabinetmakers was that this was going to lead to some serious competition. Now the stores weren't just offering inferior factory cabinets: they were also providing design and planning services.

Initially, CAD in retail environments offered standardized box sizes with a lot of small fillers to help them fit the space. It was a long way from custom design. Through the years, our customers came to understand that the addition of computer-aided design didn't mean that the quality of the woodworking had improved. Many of the cabinets were stapled together and had particleboard drawer sides and basic flat panel doors.

Then, outsourcing happened. Shops that had been custom builders began looking at the possibility of specializing — building in large quantities and supplying smaller shops with high-quality components. It didn't take long for the big-box stores to jump aboard and begin offering better boxes at bargain prices. The old 3-inch increment standard went by the wayside and they could now offer casework that just needed scribing — no fillers. Software evolved to the point that a customer could walk through a 3-D kitchen and watch drawers slide and appliances change color. The arrays of door designs and finish options exploded, as did the level of joinery. Dovetails and mortises were no longer unusual. Construction techniques and materials had caught up with CAD.

How on Earth was a custom shop supposed to compete with all that?

## LISTEN AND LEARN

team to land it.

The bottom line is that woodshops can provide a more comprehensive, attentive service than the big-box stores and therein is our salvation. The product might even be similar, but service makes all the difference.

Think about the customer rather than the product and lights begin

to go on. A customer who is only interested in price will inevitably choose a factory kitchen or bathroom from a chain retailer. This is often somebody who understands that they will sell the property in a few years, so they don't have an emotional investment: it's a house, not a home. Or they might be constrained by a set budget and simply don't have the option to customize. Perhaps they don't have the artistic bent to see the potential of the room or they have an attitude that good enough is, well, good enough. If it works for everyone else, why do we need something different?

The stark reality is that a custom designer doesn't really want to work with these folks. If a customer doesn't share the vision, the designer will have to push and pull, rather than guide the process.

The word "custom" suggests that a design will be individual, non-repetitive and distinct. A good designer doesn't create in a vacuum. If every job coming out of the shop looks similar, then the designer is imposing his or her own precepts upon projects. The process is not including many of the customer's ideas and is relying on outsourced components to "sell" the design.

There are two sides to the design paradigm. The client will bring something to the table — perhaps a broad view that includes period prejudice, such as Arts & Crafts or French provincial, or a specific function such as the ability to accommodate two cooks or a unique culinary style. Perhaps they bake more than boil or season at the stove rather than the prep counter. Maybe they inherited heirloom dishes that can become display items rather than just another storage challenge.

The designer, above all else, must bring this: the ability to listen.

Rather than bow to the constraints of a catalog, he or she needs to begin with the customer's needs rather than the available casework. Aesthetics such as door style and species are secondary to the way in which specific clients will 'live' in their new spaces. It's tempting to begin the process by drawing the dimensions of the room and locating windows and doors, but that needs to be the second step. A conversation must begin with the customer speaking and evolve into the designer offering options and solutions.

A designer also needs to keep in mind the manner in which the woodshop can serve the vision in ways that a big-box store can't. For example, a shop can borrow a design element from an existing piece of furniture or an architectural element in the client's home and incorporate it in the kitchen concept. This might be anything from a turned pedestal that can be replicated to a specific arc that can be used in window valances or door top rails or perhaps glazing or color choices that complement the family's décor. Often, this is a component custom made in the shop that is married to standard outsourced parts in a seamless, yet ingenious manner.

If at all possible, a draftsman should visit the home before drawing anything. Walking through the space gives the custom designer a huge advantage over somebody who is sitting at a computer in a

home store and working with a dimensioned drawing that was supplied by a contractor. And it's not just about the space. Meeting the kids and even the family dog can build a bridge between designer and client that will nuance the conversation and perhaps open up some opportunities for discussions that lead to fresh insights and imaginative solutions. Even if the designer only sees a single, small opportunity to improve the kitchen (adding toddler locks, perhaps, or a spot for Fido's bed), this is a personal gesture that will improve the shop's chances of closing a deal.

It's very tempting to open up a laptop and start showing 3-D images to clients right away, but having the patience to first establish a relationship and discover what they really want can pay big dividends down the road. Launching a design and then having to scrap it because it has little to do with the customer's vision is disheartening and it also leaves a hint of unprofessionalism in the air. Why did you take us down this road if you didn't know where it went?

#### **CUSTOM PLANNING**

While pure design is about aesthetics, planning (as in layout) is often about ergonomics. Once design elements such as door style, color, hardware, countertops and so on have been selected, the next step in the process is creating a workable environment. Will a standard countertop height work? Who is the primary cook — the diminutive wife or the husband who can dunk a basketball? Do handles or knobs work better with the customer's arthritis? Which door do the groceries come in and is there some place to set them down? Do the kids like to cook? Can a nine-year-old reach dishes when he's asked to set the table?

These are the kinds of questions that set a custom plan apart from

a big-box solution. Planning isn't just about placing major appliances conveniently. It's also about discovering patterns and accommodating them. For example, in an open kitchen with a dining area, will Grandpa always have to move his chair a few inches when one of the kids wants to go get seconds? If somebody reaches for a plate, will the corner of the door on the upper cabinet clock the cook?

Planning can cross the line into design at times, especially when one needs to tackle subtle attributes. For example, how does one take full advantage of available light (both natural and artificial)? Perhaps the most facile solution is to change the depth of casework or eliminate a valance — or even a cabinet. Maybe there's an option to frame a view of the garden, rather than sandwiching the window between two full-depth wall cabinets on either side of the sink.

There's another aspect to planning, too. Running a successful business requires both sales and efficient cost management. Planning how the job is going to travel through the shop can have a big impact on cost, so its path needs to be established before an estimate can be developed. For example, how much of the kitchen needs to be built and how much of it can be outsourced? That ratio can determine everything from inventory to overtime and can have a huge effect on a bid.

#### **ESTIMATING**

CAD design has come a long way in recent years. Almost every project design package includes optimization and estimating programs. Many of these will work with specific component suppliers' catalogs, so a shop can design a kitchen and simply drop in product codes that relate to specific parts. Getting a list of boxes, doors and hardware makes quick work of the arithmetic and helps eliminate mistakes, too.





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Even if nothing is being outsourced, the amount of work a shop owner needs to do to arrive at a materials estimate is not overwhelming. This is, after all, a finite number. We need so many of those at this price. But it takes hands-on experience to come up with solid numbers for labor and overhead.

Not everybody works at the same pace or delivers an identical quality of work. Sometimes, things need to be redone or the pace is slower because somebody is being trained. Perhaps the fastest worker will be on vacation the week the job being estimated is running through the shop.

The traditional solution has been to average things out. If a shop has this many employees and they can produce so many linear feet of base cabinetry/drawers/doors, etc., in this amount of time, then the average for the shop can be determined. That's a pretty reliable way to assess capability in a traditional environment where virtually everything is being produced in-house. The larger the volume (the more work being performed), the more accurate the average will be.

With changes in the business model, such assumptions are no longer quite as reliable. When a shop buys in large numbers of components, the emphasis switches from construction to assembly/installation. These are a different set of skills and the potential for delay also changes. Outsourcing generally results in a shop being able to take on more and/or larger jobs, but it also opens up the possibility of outside factors influencing the timetable.

For a start, the parts supplier might hit a bump and not deliver components when promised. Or something can arrive damaged and need to be replaced and, because it wasn't built in the woodshop, the installer needs to wait until the factory sends a replacement. However, these types of problems are rare when dealing with a reputable supplier.

Far more likely is an issue that has become a little more obvious during the last few years as more and more shops switch to outsourcing. Not having to build everything in-house means that the pace for completing jobs has picked up quite a bit, especially in large-scale jobs such as apartments and institutional work. In fact, the rate at which rentable real estate is being built has picked up quite a bit during the last five years in many major metropolitan markets and there has been a corresponding slowdown in the construction of privately owned homes.

The point here is shops that outsource can complete more casework in a shorter time, but the rest of the construction industry hasn't changed pace accordingly. So the plumbers, carpenters and electricians are not always keeping up with cabinet shops. And because of the switch from single homes to multiple-unit residences, the nature of casework has changed a little. Producing 50 identical kitchens takes less time than building 50 unique ones, for example.

#### **CLOSING THE DEAL**

Delays are a big part of estimating and they're also a big part of customer satisfaction — or the lack thereof. If word gets out that a woodshop doesn't deliver on time or as promised, getting people to sign on the dotted line can be quite challenging. That's especially true in smaller markets where word-of-mouth is a significant factor in marketing.

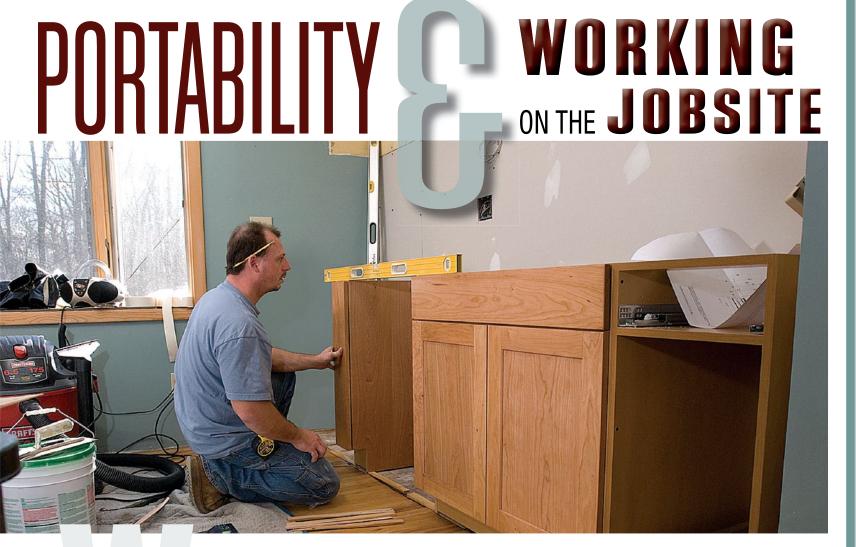
When it comes to closing the deal, it's important to know what exactly the custom woodshop is selling. Is it the craft or the service? Is it the quality of the cabinetry or the amount of faith a customer feels he or she can place in the salesperson and the business as a whole?

The nature of the industry is evolving and, as it does, the emphasis is perhaps a little less on craft and more on service. That's because with outsourced components, construction quality is becoming a more level playing field.

The fact that the cost of a decent kitchen is now akin to the cost of a decent automobile also plays a role: as a percentage of the entire cost of constructing a new home, our customers are investing more than they ever have in casework. That means we not only need to deliver a terrific product, but be seen to do so.

Part of that perception from a customer's point of view is the salesperson's ability to point out the merits of the casework and hardware, but it also means that we need to make the entire experience more pleasurable and enticing that it has been in the past. Great software and innovative component suppliers go a long way toward making this possible. We must use the tools they give us in ways that ease the customer's fears and open up their personal creativity. The more that clients see themselves being involved in design decisions, the more they will feel the project is truly custom. And the more they own the project, the more likely they are to trust you, commit to it and close the deal.

One final thought: there's a fine line between getting personal and getting too personal. This is, after all, a business relationship. There's nothing wrong with building a personal friendship on a foundation that began as a business acquaintanceship. But if you're going to book a golf date or invite them over for dinner, just wait until after the check has cleared. W



Complied by BHSW Inc.

With summer almost upon us, it's a relief to get out of the shop and do some work on site. That sense of being closed in and limited all winter evaporates in sunshine and fresh air. And that's exactly the feeling one gets with the new Handibot. It lets a woodworker bring an entire CNC system to the jobsite. Small enough to carry, it can mill jobs that are as big as a whole sheet of plywood. Best of all, it's incredibly precise, and now Handibot comes with some accessories designed to make it even easier to operate.

Accuracy is the watchword for TigerStop's solution for miter saws, too. The company has changed the way we use compound miter saws – no more measuring, marking, moving the workpiece back and forth, making a cut – and then having to repeat the whole process. By offering woodshops a rugged, programmable stop with a memory, TigerStop lets you upgrade your saw to a complete jobsite system.

With the parts cut and trimmed to length, they need to be assembled and installed. Senco will be presenting a whole set of professional-grade fastening solutions for jobsite and workshops in a few weeks at the big woodworking show in Las Vegas (AWFS), but woodworkers can see all the latest tools online right now at senco.com.

Roll up your sleeves – sunshine's on its way!



SENCO.com......38





tigerstop.com.....39

handibot.com......40

#### **SENCO Makes Hard Work Easier**

SENCO will be showcasing its latest professional-grade fastening solutions that increase production speed and make work safer and easier to perform at AWFS Fair Las Vegas 2015. A one-of-a-kind finish nailer, two new pneumatic mirco pinners, an expanded line of 200 PSI compressors, the Company's revolutionary Fusion pneumatic cordless technology will be the focus in Senco's booth.

Senco's unique, new 21-gauge pneumatic finish nailer, the FinishPro 21LXP, is the perfect tool for finer detail work without compromising 18-gauge performance. The 21LXP is a

slight/medium head pinner that delivers the holding power of a brad nail while leaving a much smaller indent that requires little to no

Weighing in at only 2.7 lbs, and less than 9" in height and 8" in length, this ultra-lightweight and compact tool can easily fit into tight spaces. The ergonomic and angled pistol grip ensures a comfortable user experience, even over prolonged periods of time. With its ultra-narrow nose and non-marring pad, the 21LXP also delivers clean and exacting fastener placement.

Two new 23-gauge pneumatic micro



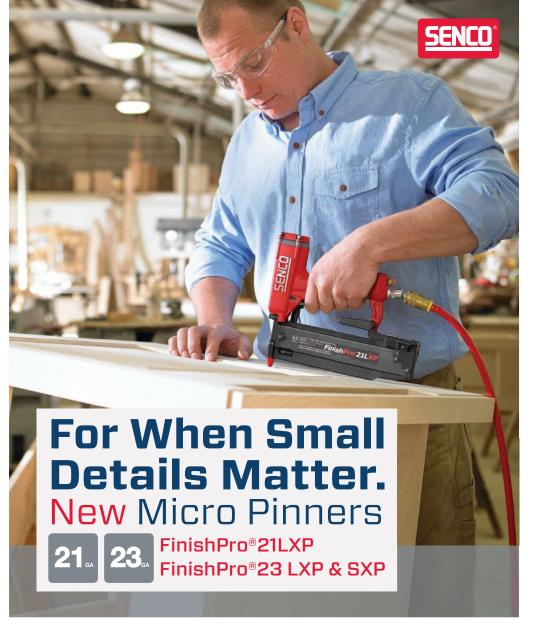
pinners, the FinishPRO®23SXP and the FinishPRO®23LXP, have numerous features that contribute to flawless performance and reliable control. The tools' ultra-narrow nosepieces provide convenient access into corners and tight spaces. A 4-point alignment guide is integrated into the rubber tip no-mar pad, which tapers down to the contact point, providing a clear line of sight for precision pin placement.

Complete drives into hard woods like oak and red maple are no problem for the Finish-PROs' industrial strength motors. Both tools deliver 70 – 120 PSI of force, with no worry over splitting or touch-ups.

SENCO will be displaying its new series of 200 PSI oil-free portable air compressors. The new line includes two 4.5 gallon units, offered in either a twin-stack configuration or as a rollaway, and a high capacity 15 gallon vertical tank model.

All three units deliver up to 4.9 SCFM at 90 PSI, providing plenty of air flow and tank storage for multiple applications, including finish and trim carpentry.

For those who want true pneumatic performance without the cord, the SENCO Fusion line will be highlighted in the booth, delivering faster firing than flywheel tools and without the need for costly fuel and fumes. With the 15-gauge, 16-gauge and 18-gauge units, Fusion is a complete fastening solution. See us at AWFS Booth # 6403





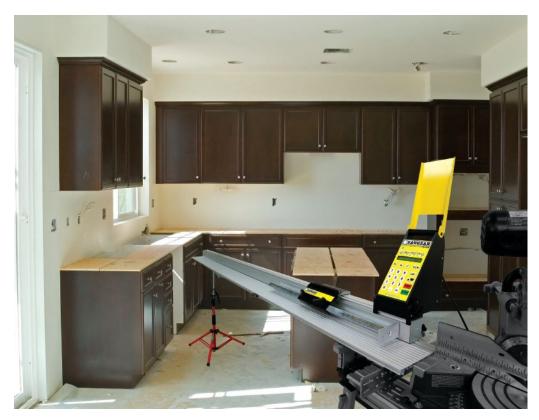




SENCO Products, Inc.

Phone: 800-543-4596 website: www.SENCO.COM

#### Don't Measure, Don't Mark. Just Cut!



Miter saws have changed the way we install casework. They allow a woodworker or finish carpenter to set up a portable workstation on the jobsite. This makes it much easier to install crown moldings, baseboard, door and window casings or other moldings that are required to complete a cabinet job. Compound sliding miter saws also make quick work of little emergency onsite framing jobs, trimming shelves, or doing countless other small tasks on an install.

Let's talk about the traditional trim process, when using a miter saw for a minute. It begins with looking for a tape measure, a square, a pencil... and probably a sec-

ond warm body to hold one end of the molding. Then there's measuring each and every stud or piece of molding, where the end of the tape is several feet away and keeps slipping off the end of the workpiece. Or perhaps a long length of thin trim

decides to bend because it doesn't have a flat bed to lie on, and that means the measurement will never be true. After that, one has to slide the workpiece from side to side under the blade, lining up a pencil mark that may or may not be quite accurate enough, even with a laser. That part of the process is a real joy when the part being installed is near a ceiling and every trial and error adjustment means trips up and down a ladder. If the part is too long, it obviously means another trimming cut is needed. But if it's too short, it means a whole new length of molding.

TigerStop literally cuts through all of that by offering woodshops a rugged, program-

mable stop with a memory, Saw-Gear. So, while miter saws may have changed the way we work, TigerStop<sup>TM</sup> has changed the way we use miter saws.

SawGear lets you upgrade your saw to a complete jobsite system that is simple and precise. Add SawGear<sup>TM</sup> to a miter saw and it becomes an on-site production machine with built-in repeatability and incredible accuracy. It's a programmable stop system that eliminates tape measures and pencils – and all the time it takes to fumble for them, and use them.

SawGear is amazingly simple to use (even for the grumpiest old woodworker who hates computers) and it's second nature to new employees who have grown up with smartphones and other intuitive technology. Just dial in a measurement and the stop moves there. Dial in several dimensions and the system remembers them and changes at the touch of a button. It will handle straight cuts and miters, and it's accurate to 1/128". The stop system is available in 8, 12 and 16-foot working lengths, so it can handle virtually any kitchen installation (no more droopy moldings!). It also fits left or right of the blade, so you can duplicate the set-up that you are used to in the shop.

TigerStop's included Crown+MiterPro™ software allows SawGear to instantly calculate stop positions for angled or mitered parts. That takes the confusion and the possibility of error out of crown cuts, and there's even a special foot available to hold the molding at the correct angle against the fence

Leave your sawhorses and tape measures at home. Take SawGear to the jobsite.





PLAY VIDEO



#### TigerStop LLC

Phone: 360-254-0661 E-mail: sales@tigerstop.com

Web: http://www.tigerstop.com/

Products/SawGear.aspx Video: http://www.sawgear.com/

Products/SawGearTables.aspx

#### Robot power in the woodshop... and it's portable!

The revolutionary Handibot® Smart Power Tool allows a woodworker to bring CNC technology to the work, rather than moving parts to the machine. It performs intricate, very precise machining onsite and in the shop - everything from cutting stair treads to extremely accurate inlays

and relief carving. Cabinetmakers and furniture builders are discovering that Handibot is an affordable, precise and versatile path to creativity, both at the workbench and during installs. Small enough to be portable, it's rugged enough to handle sizeable tasks. For example, woodworker Brandon Zei mills deep stopped mortises in fenceposts using a Handibot (see photo).

Since its inception, Handibot has evolved into a comprehensive system that meets a host of woodshop challenges. This innovative, hand-held CNC tool comes with user-friendly,



powerful CAD/CAM software included.

Recent upgrades (and these can be retrofitted to earlier versions) have focused on ease of use. Among them is a new laser accessory that simplifies positioning the tool just mark a dot on the workpiece and physi-

cally place the Handibot so the laser crosshairs meet there.

Another nice innovation is an improved front end that offers greater visibility during operation. It also provides improved access, which makes for quicker bit changes. The front end is now held in place magnetically, so it's easy to remove and replace.

Improved alignment plates and better limit switches also make the Handibot easier than ever to use. And a new hood drops over the exo-frame and snaps firmly in place where it helps reduce both sawdust and noise. There's also an indexing jig that allows the machine to repeat a pattern as it moves across a long workpiece - you can cut or carve up to 8 feet. And one of the most exciting new accessories is the Handibot rotary indexer, which allows a woodworker to mill in the round. Pairing it with an accessory base lets the Handibot do 3D carving, and a video on the company's website shows this, where a candlestick is being milled (see the link below).







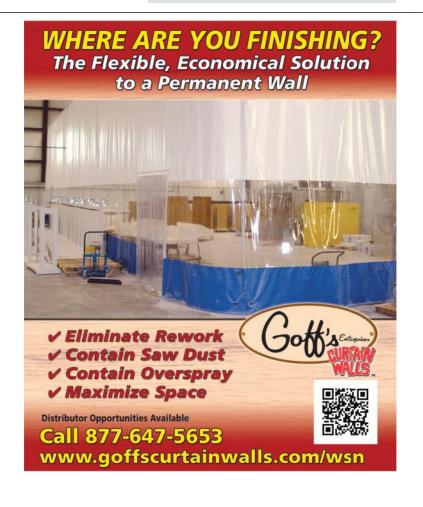
#### Shopbot Tools, Inc.

Phone: 919-680-4800 or 888-680-4466

Web: handibot.com

E-mail: handibot.com.contact\_us.php Video: www.handibot.com/videos.php





# HERE(or there) TOSTAY

The days of the one-man shop doing it all are fading as outsourcing creates efficiencies and better profits for small businesses

By John English

uring World War II, the United States built ships in Denver. Well, OK, they built components there. The actual assembly was done 1,300 miles away at Navy yards just north of San Francisco.

Why Denver? That's where the equipment, skills and raw materials were located. America was in a hurry to replace both commercial and military tonnage that was being sunk in both oceans and there was no time to build new foundries and mills on the West Coast. So entire ships were loaded on trains in the Rockies in segments and transported halfway across the continent to an army of welders at the dry docks.

This was outsourcing at its finest. It's not a new concept. Heck, half the parts on your American-made pickup truck came from outsourced suppliers in China, Mexico or Korea. That's probably true for some of the machines on the shop floor, too.

#### RENTING AUTOMATION

Outsourcing cabinet components is almost exactly the same process as the one shipbuilders used 70 years ago. It gives a small shop the benefits of large-scale production, while still controlling the process (or at least most of it: there are a few limitations).

Outsourcing has become a reality because, during the last decade or two, woodworking has grown very automated. As a result, many small shops simply can't afford the new machinery — especially large-scale CNC capabilities — they need to stay competitive. And it's not just the monthly payment: there's the cost of hiring or training somebody to operate both the software and the machine and even the cost of train-

ing a replacement or the shop will shut down whenever the lead man is unavailable. And there's downtime: that payment still needs to be made when the orders are slow or the machine sits idle half the week.

The only way many small or medium-sized shops can stay at the top of the game is to automate through outsourcing — in effect, they are renting space, people and machines in a big shop that is already equipped with state-of-the-art machinery and software.

That's not all bad. Outsourcing opens up a lot of new options. There are more door and design choices, but it's far more empowering than that. Now a small shop anywhere in North America can offer high quality, ready-to-assemble, prefinished casework on a schedule that's fast enough to double or triple their output. Shop owners can have a kitchen, bath or closet delivered to the woodshop or even have it go directly to the jobsite with RTA (ready to assemble) cabinets. And with solid modeling programs, a potential customer can walk through a 3-D rendering that is keyed into several of the component suppliers' catalogs and see exactly what all those new door styles will look like in their own, personal space. Potentially, being able to carry the supplier's catalog in a laptop means that a woodshop doesn't even need to build a showroom.

Outsourcing has come so far that a woodshop can now order in every single aspect of a job and perform nothing more than the sales and installation functions. That's exactly where a lot of small shops are going and it makes sense from a business point of view. More volume means higher cash flow and better profits and ordering from a catalog simplifies everything from bidding to scheduling.



If time is money, why wait for the paint to dry? Finishing is one of many outsourcing options.

Of course, if you're in this industry because you like working with wood, the revolution might be passing you by. Outsourcing doesn't always work for people whose favorite aspect of the business is actually building things. In the foreseeable future, a lot of smaller shops will probably change their in-house focus from cabinets to custom furniture because of that. A time is coming when custom boxes just won't be able to compete with component suppliers whose costs are dropping

as their quality continues to improve. In many markets, the role of the custom cabinet shop is going to be sales, design, project management, procurement (ordering parts), tear-out and installation. And a lot of cabinetmakers will soon be supplying entire kitchens they didn't build and perhaps using the time they save to provide new services such as countertops, appliances, light fixtures, laminate flooring, door/drawer hardware, tile and even painting.

#### **NEW MARKETING OPTIONS**

While most homeowners' cabinet choices are loosely based on price, but in large part depend on aesthetic and emotional factors, a contractor's litmus tests are going to be quality and reliability. That's because a home builder who orders two or three kitchens a month needs to know that the woodshop won't be slowing everyone else down. The ability to order and process several kitchens at a time, rather than having to build them in-house, eliminates a number of potential delays.

If, for example, a wholesaler runs out of 5/8" birch multiply or catalyzed lacquer, it's no longer a problem. The woodshop manager also doesn't have to worry so much about a crewmember catching the

flu or taking vacations or even quitting. It takes a lot less time to train a new worker to assemble an RTA box and pop on the doors than it does to safely operate table saws and finishing equipment.

The bottom line is that construction companies almost universally view a shop switching to outsourcing as a marketing strength. Contractors aren't really in the business of managing subs. What they do is manage large amounts of money — and time is money. So when a



woodshop reduces the turnaround time for an average kitchen from two months to two weeks, that's music to the builder's ears.

Beyond giving a cabinetmaker the option to market a much wider variety of door styles, some outsourcing suppliers already offer plywood in several thicknesses, grades, species or finishes. This gives the woodshop the option to market a variety of price points that are based on quality. By taking a long look at the supplier's catalog, a shop can rearrange the offerings for their particular geographic location and cater to specific demographics by offering a couple of very different budget bundles to homeowners, and a separate category to institutional customers. Repackaging the supplier's catalog and combining it with in-house capabilities (perhaps one of the crew knows a lot about bending or turning wood) or with outsourced products from other suppliers such as moldings or hardware can allow a shop to develop its own custom marketing plan.

#### **BECOME AN OUTSOURCING SUPPLIER**

Not all woodshops are buying outsourced parts. Some are selling, too. And they're not always talking about just cabinet parts.

"Our business started as a one-man shop back in 1977," says Peter Lazar of Country Mouldings (www.countrymouldings.com) in Newbury, Ohio. "Today, building on the skills of local Amish workers, the company offers more than 800 molding profiles and a catalog of specialty items such as butcher-block countertops, solid wood flooring and stair treads. We ship to customers all over the country."

Using locally sourced Appalachian hardwoods, Country Mouldings has developed a niche business. The company supplies products that many cabinet shops aren't readily setup to build. The business has been successful in large part because of high quality and a stellar reputation. But part of its success is also due to the owners having the vision to see a particular need and fill it.

Country Mouldings has also evolved with the times and offers a

comprehensive online price calculator. Customers can browse through products, choose a species and finish and even calculate a shipping estimate 24 hours a day.

It can be hard to find the courage to reshape a business so that it fits better in a changing industry. If a shop owner grew up building cabinets, it might even feel like betrayal to consider buying in parts of what he/she is selling as handcrafted excellence. But the reality is that life moves on and the economy becomes more automated and efficient every year. While some shops will always thrive on custom handmade artistry, many others need to move with the times.

And that isn't always a bad thing, either. For example, a small woodshop that is set up to cut and mill parts but considers it a chore to apply finishes might be well served by approaching larger shops in the area and becoming an unfinished parts supplier. Or, turning that scenario around, perhaps the small shop has a level of expertise in finishing that would allow it to apply coatings and eliminate the saws and routers (and the dust).

#### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

If a customer questions the ethics or practice of outsourcing components of their kitchen, a woodshop owner can point out that he/she has developed a strong, custom-based relationship with suppliers. Instead of the cabinetmaker's crew building parts in the local shop, his "other" crew is building them at a better price and some of those savings (especially in terms of time) are being passed along to the customer.

When times are slow, shops that outsource aren't sitting on thousands of dollars worth of sheet goods, hardwoods and other inventory. Outsourcing is, in effect, a way to practice lean manufacturing. You only buy what you sell and it's done on a very timely basis. There is virtually no waste.

Oh, and one other big advantage to outsourcing is this: the woodshop is a whole lot easier to clean up after every job. W



#### THE CUTTING EDGE

with R.W. LEE

# Post-processor software provides the final kick

Getting it to work properly when problems arise could make a CNC router perform safer and faster

hen starting in the digital fabrication world, there are many pieces — both hardware and software — that are obvious. Eventually you'll discover other sophisticated technology that affects performance.

This includes the post-processor software that kicks in after the CAD/CAM operations. The post-processor acts as a sort of translator, interpreting what is generally a standard or neutral G-code into instructions for a specific CNC router.

Recall that G-code is step-and-direction instructions for moving the spindle and tooling around the material to be cut, as well as providing other important information such as tool changes and spindle RPM. The post-processor doesn't have much to do with X-Y-Z movement, but more with the various commands that control the vast number of configuration codes and files that it takes to have a CNC machine operate in a safe, predictable and efficient manner.

The post-processor is provided by the CNC

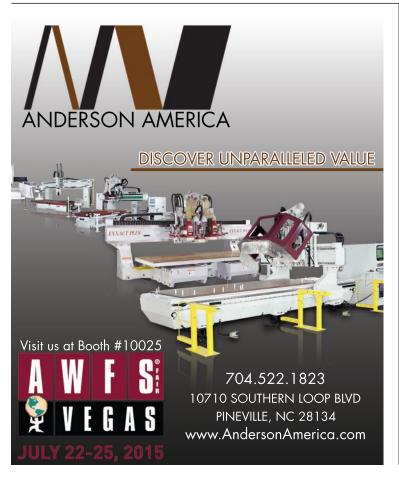
router builder, usually in conjunction with the supplier of the CAD and CAM software packages. It's not something you'll ordinarily have to fiddle with, but it might be the culprit if your router begins to behave oddly and the job-specific CAD and CAM output is fine.

#### **COMMON PROBLEMS**

There are two general situations where a postprocessor can become contaminated and not function properly. The first is when the CNC router and controller are in startup mode. A line of the commands and interpreters in the post-processor might inadvertently get skipped so the whole program loads incorrectly or does not load at all. The fix is usually to power down, wait 15 seconds and restart.

The second is when there is a spike or drop in the electrical power, causing the controller to crash and restart. The solution is the same as above, but if this is a common occurrence, installing an uninterrupted power supply (UPS) is recommended.

There are several types of modern UPS systems, but the most common is an online system. Most use a double conversion method of accepting AC current input and converting that to DC current for passing through a rechargeable battery (or groups of batteries), then converting the DC current back to a





#### REMANUFACTURED

SandingmasterWideBelt Sander Model 2075–C 37" x 75" Belt. This machine also has Veneer sanding capabilities. Combination Head allows for light thicknessing as well as fine sanding.

## Professional Quality At The Right Price

Remember the line of Sandingmaster Wide Belt Sanders we sold from the mid 80's to the mid 90's? We now sell them remanufactured to new specifications (subject to availability), along with many fine, accurate woodworking machines new and remanufactured. Call us for parts, service, and advise on your woodworking needs.



P.O. Box 70, Rutland, Vermont 05701 (802) 773-3240 www.woodshopspecialties.org necessary AC voltage for powering the protected equipment. While a UPS for a computer and such other such equipment can be safely purchased from an office or computer supply store, a UPS system for a CNC controller needs to be sized and configured by an electrical engineer or knowledgeable industrial electrician. Usually this should be done when the router or other CNC equipment is first purchased and installed. A UPS system is inexpensive insurance to protect any type of electronic equipment and from a resulting loss in production.

#### REPROGRAMMING

Post-processors can be fine-tuned by changing the operating parameters of the CNC router relative to the G-code. There are several reasons for doing this, including to expand the capabilities of the CNC router based on a particular use; using the same G-code to produce higher quality parts; or to speed up certain machining operations.

One common area where a rewritten postprocessor can help is where there might be certain G-code-driven machine operations that cause the CNC router to make a number of unproductive movements. For instance, needlessly moving to the home position.

Before starting any modifications it is best

to remember one of the few absolutes in the digital fabrication world: Back up everything, including the operating systems, software and post-processor. Also consider backing up the post-processor to an external location rather than on the computer from which it is run.

#### **DOCUMENTATION**

When changing a post-processor, keep notes. Start with a description of how an operation is performed before any changes have been made. This should include a CAD drawing of the parts that could be made better or faster; the G-code generated from the CAD drawing; and written notes from the operator on the current set of conditions.

Then, as best as is possible, explain or sketch what you would like the machine to do differently. Details matter. This exercise could take weeks or months and the fix could take even longer, so patience is required.

You should start exploring modifications through the online forums hosted by CNC manufacturers and software providers. There are many creative people posting to these forums and no doubt someone will have experience with an identical or similar idea as yours. It would also be prudent to contact the technical representatives of your hardware and software providers.

The process of modifying a post-processor takes time to learn and implement, but the results could make a CNC router perform safer and faster.

#### Hermance to host demo event

Hermance Machine Co. has scheduled its machine exposition, featuring demonstrations and educational seminars, June 3-4 in Williamsport, Pa.

End users are encouraged to bring along samples of their manufacturing dilemmas for industry experts to evaluate, according to the company.

"We will be running machines that cover a wide variety of industries and materials such as wood, plastics, metals, and composites. Traditional as well as high-tech CNC machinery and software will be demonstrated showing the latest in manufacturing technology. Over \$1,000 worth of door prizes will be given away," according to a company statement.

For information, call 866-326-8131 or visit www.hermance.com.





# Contemporary seating exhibit set for Philadelphia

#### By Jennifer Hicks

he Center for Art in Wood in Philadelphia is partnering with The Furniture Society to organize an exhibition that show-cases contemporary seating. The jurors will consider chairs, stools and benches of all kinds such as functional, sculptural and conceptual pieces. Work submitted for consideration should be produced since 2000 and have a basis in wood either in actual practice or theory. All media will be considered.

"Artists are encouraged to imagine, dream and experiment," the call for entries reads. "Collaborations are welcome, as are videos, installations and performances. The concept of seating should be pondered and dissected with an eye toward the needs and the nature of the 21st century."

The exhibition is scheduled for May 1 to July 23, 2016, at the Center for Art in Wood, concurrent with the Furniture Society's annual conference in Philadelphia. Selected works will be included in an accompanying full-color publication and must be available for the length of the show. All makers will be notified in advance if a national tour can be organized.

#### **SEEN IN NEW YORK CITY**

Brian Boggs, owner of Brian Boggs Chairmakers in Asheville, N.C., exhibited at the Architectural Digest Home Design Show, held March



Furniture by Maine's Geffory Warner (above) and David Talley (next page) will be featured at the Paradise City show, May 23-25 in Northampton, Mass.







#### 19-22 at Piers 92 and 94 in New York City.

The annual show features fine home furniture brands, designers and dealers who present their latest innovations. There were thousands of offerings from more than 400 exhibiting companies.

Boggs' booth featured his new Sunniva outdoor collection.

#### Contact

Center for Art in Wood, 141 N. 3rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19106. Tel: 215-923-8300. www.centerforartinwood.org

#### Student hangs with the flooring pros

Vermont Natural Coatings had its first student complete the company's Sand & Finish seminar for professional flooring contractors. Hunter Russell, a junior at Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, in Hyde Park, Vt., is the first graduate, according to the company.

"Hunter did an amazing job and seemed right at home among the professionals from Vermont and throughout the northeastern U.S. and Canada that made up the class," Andrew B. Meyer, founder and president of Vermont Natural Coatings, said in a statement. "He was exposed the very latest technology used in sanding and finishing floors and made connections that very well could result in a summer apprenticeship program."

Attendees earned National Wood Flooring Association credits for proper sanding techniques for various wood species; select finishing techniques that will yield top-quality results and the correct use, maintenance and repair of professional application equipment. For information, visit www.vermontnaturalcoatings.com

#### Anderson holds grand opening event

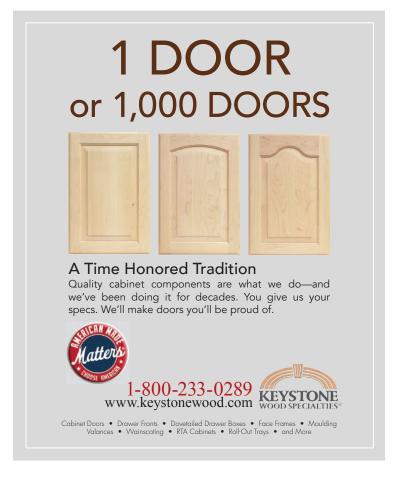
Anderson America Corp. says it had a successful turnout at the grand opening of its west coast showroom in Henderson, Nev.

Representatives from Microvellum, Cabinet Vision, Alphacam, LMT-Onsrud Cutter, Better Vacuum Cups, Fanuc, Becker and Vision Financial Group were in attendance.

The showroom has three machines – the Anderson Exxact, Anderson Stratos Pro and the Selexx PAL - under power and ready to run demos by request.

For information, visit www.andersonamerica.com





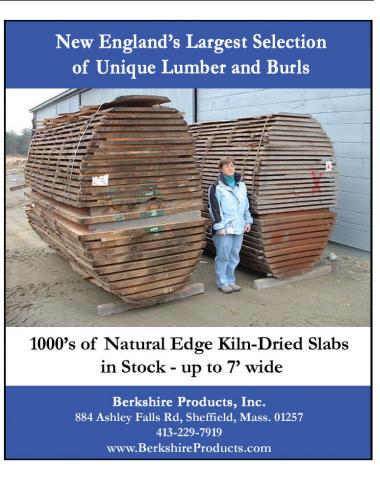
## NEW PRODUCTS





NORTHERN TOOL & EQUIPMENT has expanded its exclusive NorthStar product line to include two new electric air compressors. The 3- and 5-hp models feature a cast iron, oil-lubricated, single-stage pump that runs quietly and prevents heat transfer between cylinders, according to the company. The 3-hp model delivers 11.3 CFM at 90 PSI, while the 5-hp produces 15.5 CFM at 90 PSI. For information, visit www.northerntool.com.







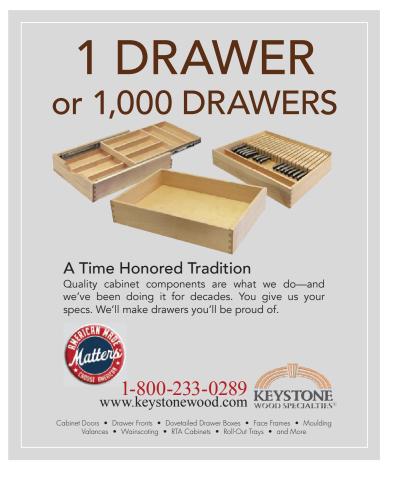
manufacturer, offers the AirPro Dust Nut, featuring a turbine action that creates an updraft at the cutting tool tip, evacuating dust and chips directly into the router's collection hood before they have a chance to settle on the working surface. According to the company, dust is captured and forced up into the dust-containment hood immediately as it is being produced. For information, visit www.napgladu.com.

ROCKLER WOODWORKING AND HARDWARE introduces the Bandy Clamp, which clamps edging to plywood, MDF and other sheet materials without damaging the piece or the edge profile, according to the retailer. Bandy Clamp applies even pressure all the way around virtually any edge, including very ornate or decorative designs as well as oddly shaped or asymmetrical profiles. The clamp features a built-in flexible rubber band that stretches to conform to the shape of the item being clamped. The clamps sell for \$19.99 per pair. For information, visit www.rockler.com.



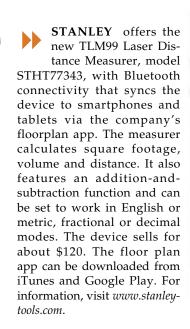


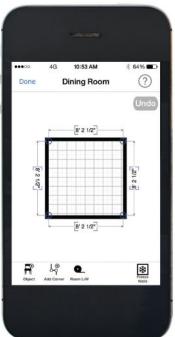




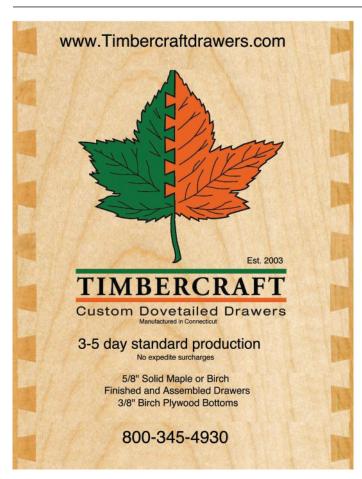
#### **NEW PRODUCTS**

GENERAL INTERNATIONAL offers a new 12" band saw, model 90-040M1, featuring a 2/3-hp motor 12" inboard rip cut capacity and a 6 1/2" depth of cut, according to the company. The saw has a 21-1/2" x 15-3/4" cast-iron table that tilts right up to 45 degrees, European-style blade guide bearings, blade tension knob, safety lockout switch with removable key and multi-size dust port for fitting 4", 3", or 2" hose. The saw also comes with a miter guide, aluminum crosscut fence and dual-position rip fence system. It retails for \$560. For information, visit www.general.ca.













NILFISK offers the Eliminator Pro II wet/dry vacuum cleaner, designed to collect dust, debris and liquid in general cleaning applications and rugged environments such as building and construction sites. The vacuum delivers 130 CFM of air flow, uses 8.5 amps and has a 12-gallon collection, according to the company. Standard equipment includes a multi-stage filtration system, new tilting motor head and attachment kit. The Eliminator Pro II wet/dry vacuum is a redesigned model, replacing the now-discontinued Eliminator II vacuum. For information, visit www.nilfiskindustrialvacuums.com.



**WOODCRAFT** added the complete line of turning tools and accessories from Easy Wood Tools. Products include turning, hollowing and parting tools; tools for beginners; replacement carbide cutters; chucks and accessories; faceplates and chip deflectors. For information, visit www.easywoodtools.com and www.woodcraft.com.

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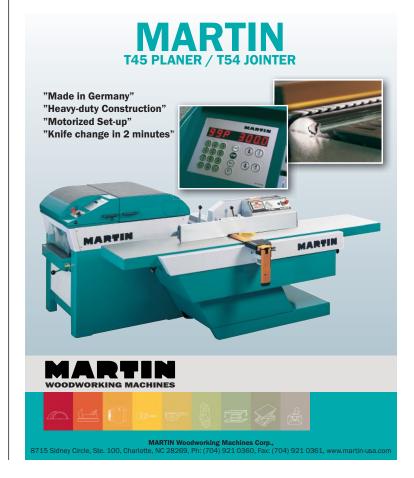
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#### **CALENDAR**

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.

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

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

#### **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. For information, call 727-298-3322 or e-mail *education@dfac.org*.

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

#### **MASSACHUSETTS**

May 23-25 — Paradise City Spring Show. Fair of fine and functional art to be held Memorial Day Weekend at the Three County Fair grounds in Northampton. For information, visit www.paradisecityarts.com.

#### **NEVADA**

**July 22-25** — AWFS biennial trade show to be held at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas. Featuring exhibitors offering new tools and products, educational seminars and networking opportunities. For information, visit www.awfsfair.org.

#### **NEW YORK**

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

**Monthly** — Northeast Woodworkers Association meetings held on second Thursday of the month at various locations in Albany area. www.woodworker.org

#### **RHODE ISLAND**

**Nov. 6-8** — The Providence Fine Furnishings Show. Annual show featuring handcrafted furniture and accessories. Location: Paw-

tucket Armory Arts Center, Pawtucket. www. finefurnishingsshows.com

#### **SOUTH DAKOTA**

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

#### **WISCONSIN**

May 14 — Solid Wood Processing seminar at Madison Area Technical College in Madison. For information, contact Patrick Molzahn at pmolzahn@madisoncollege.edu.

**Sept. 18-20** — Milwaukee Fine Furnishings Show. Annual show featuring handcrafted furniture and accessories will be held in a new venue this year at the Muellner Building at Hart Park in Wauwatosa. www.finefurnishingsshows.com

#### **WYOMING**

**Sept. 11-13** — Western Design Conference. Brings together artists, scholars, collectors, designers and more with a passion for the West. Handcrafted work includes home accents, furniture, leather, metal, mixed media and fashion. Location: Snow King Resort, Jackson Hole. www.westerndesignconference.com

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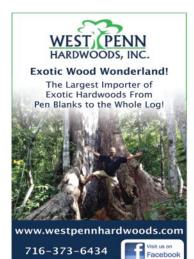
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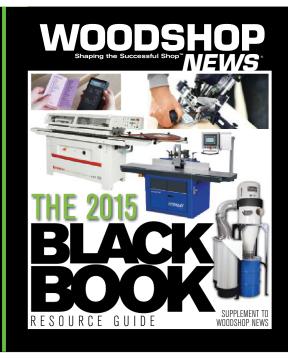
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#### **OUT OF THE WOODWORK**

## Reeling in a big fish

Last year, woodworker Al Swanson of Helena, Mont., decided to build a prototype of a wooden fly box, pairing fine woods with precise craftsmanship. Once he and an employee figured they had the perfect box, he shipped it to Orvis, the largest fly angling retailer in the world.

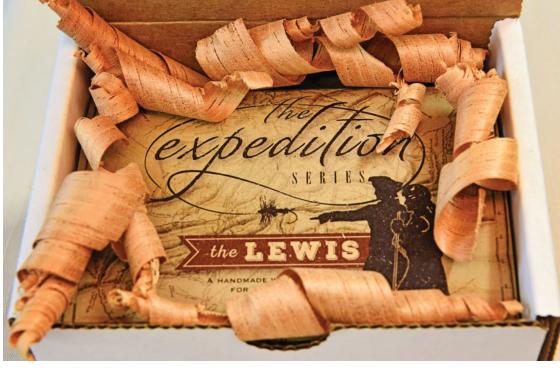
After a wait, Swanson got the reply he was hoping for: Orvis loved the boxes and wanted them in its catalogs.

Swanson has been a professional wood-worker for more than 20 years and trained in Maine. He runs A.L. Swanson Craftsman Studios in downtown Helena, near some of the country's most popular trout waters. He has a retail showroom and created the fly boxes to have something available for sale at a much lower price point than a dining room table, for example.

"I am a fisherman so I really know what I'm looking for in the quality and functionality of a box, not just the aesthetic," Swanson says. "So it was fun to take a very utilitarian plastic container and turn it into functional



Al Swanson and his wooden fly boxes.



art. We started prototyping and came up with the perfect sizes, the perfect weight and even a tie-off post in the corner so you don't drop it and have it float away. We really thought of everything functionality wise."

His idea to name the boxes after Montana rivers, including Blackfoot and Madison, hooked Orvis.

"They loved the fact that it was Montana, Montana, Montana," Swanson says. "I sent them off and just prayed. They go through a rigorous testing process to check them out and they came back with a thumbs up. They wanted to feature them in their fall catalogue last year and I was completely taken back. Now we're in the position where we went with the biggest company in the industry and they bit and now they want us to produce a pretty large number of them and that has just

changed the scope of our business."

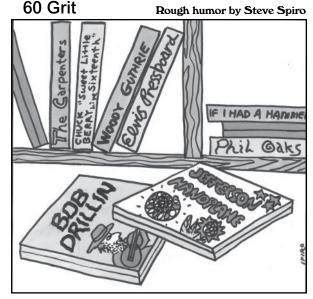
Swanson and his two employees have since made more than 1,000 boxes, which are selling fast. They feature inlays of flies on the front and different interiors to meet specific needs.

"Fly fishing requires varying types of lures where you try to mimic different types of flies and those are what the fish actually eat. So as a fisherman you're going to have dozens and dozens of types of flies to attract the fish in the body of water you're fishing in," Swanson says.

Now Orvis wants Swanson to prototype a fly fishing net. He's never made one but another big order would be a nice catch.

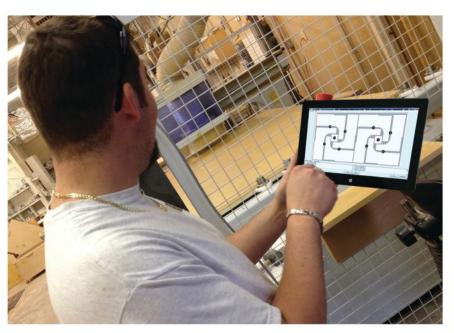
Contact: Al Swanson Craftsman Studio, 863 Great Northern Blvd. Helena, MT 59601. Tel: 406-443-3342. www.alswanson.com.





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