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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT ABRASIVES

Because of the demands of the market, woodworking shops might now be called upon to work with steel, copper, marble, or a number of other materials.

When necessity calls for sanding or grinding this wide array of materials it pays to have abrasives on hand to handle the demands of each specific material.

Here is a quick reference list for sanding various materials:

- **Hardwood**-Closed coat Aluminum Oxide abrasives (Closed coat = 100% grain coverage on the backing)
- **Softwood**-Open coat Aluminum Oxide abrasives (Open coat = 50% grain coverage on the backing)
- **Stone** (granite, marble, ceramic, etc.)- Silicon Carbide abrasives
- **Non-Ferrous metals Steels**-Aluminum Oxide or Alumina Zirconia abrasives (open coat or closed coat with a built-in lubricant for heat control).



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BLOGS



Over the Workbench

Talkin' shop with former editor A.J. Hamler

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WCA offers new discount program for member schools

By Tod Riggio

FEBRUARY 2025

WOODSHOPNEWS

The Woodwork Career Alliance of North America (WCA) has announced a new program that offers discounts on industry products to its member schools. This initiative aims to help schools upgrade their woodworking shops with professional-quality equipment, enhancing student learning experiences and preparing the next generation of skilled woodworkers.

The first sponsors include Kreg Tool, PantoRouter, Castle USA, and Air Handling Systems.

6 The WCA is looking for more sponsors and plans to share an updated list of discounts with member schools in the first quarter of 2025.

"By offering these product discounts, the WCA is helping school woodshops maximize their budgets and create exceptional learning environments for students," said Mark Smith, chairman of the WCA Education Committee. "This latest membership benefit reinforces our commitment to fostering the future of woodworking by providing direct support to schools across North America."

"We extend our sincere gratitude to our incredible sponsors for making this new membership benefit program possible and look forward to expanding it in 2025," said Scott Nelson, president of the WCA. "Their generous support will equip school woodshops with essential tools and materials, inspiring the next generation of woodworkers."

Learn more about becoming a member school or sponsor at woodworkcareer.org.

AkzoNobel Wood Coatings is launching a new campaign, It All Adds Up, to raise awareness of the many opportunities and innovative ways that producers of wood products in North America can reduce waste, save energy, and reduce their carbon footprint while improving operational efficiency in the process.

"It All Adds Up aims to promote that every action counts when it comes to addressing the challenge of improving sustainability in the value chain. From small adjustments in processes to the use of renewable materials, to coatings that help to reduce waste, manufacturers can make changes that are of critical importance across the value chain," the company said in a statement.

The campaign also underscores the benefits of incorporating sustainability into decision-making and coating specifications, which can lead to cost savings and operational efficiencies for businesses producing wood products such as cabinetry, furniture, flooring and building products.

"This educational approach not only benefits businesses in the industry on their sustainability journeys but also aims to foster a broader cultural shift. AkzoNobel Wood Coatings will be using the campaign as a platform to drive the conversation about sustainability, with the aim of shaping and inspiring change, and helping manufacturers understand the vital role sustainability plays in ensuring a resilient, future-proof value chain."

Learn more at akzonobel-industrial-woodcoatings.com. **W**

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Michael Hurwitz (top) and John Kelsey.

Furniture Society heads to Syracuse in June

By Jennifer Hicks

The **Furniture Society** has scheduled its 2025 conference, "You are Here: Makers, Place & Impact", for June 26-28 at Syracuse University in Syracuse, N.Y. It will feature presentations, workshops, networking opportunities, tours, and more.

"We've been spending this past year focusing on where the next in-person conference will be, which will be at Syracuse University. Our local host is our board member and treasurer, Zeke Leonard, a professor of design at Syracuse, and they have more than opened their doors and welcomed us. When we did our sight visit, we were blown away by their generosity and their spirit of acceptance. It's a wonderful facility," says Monica Hampton, the society's executive director.

"We'll be taking over the Nancy Cantor Warehouse, a former industrial space, and will have access to all

floors and all the making studios. So, we're really hoping with that we'll be able to bring back a lot more of the hands-on demos and workshops and making portions of the conference, which is really exciting and what people want."

Hampton says this event's theme explores the intersection of individuals, their creative endeavors, and the places that shape them.

"It touches on the symbiotic relationship between human and place. Sometimes the place is what drove people to settle in a place to make. Maybe it's the resources, maybe it's the tax incentives, maybe it's the physical buildings that lent themselves to large-scale furniture equipment, like former industrial spaces. And sometimes it's traditionally been an area that's strong in the furniture field. For example, Syracuse has a rich

tradition with Stickley furniture, having been there since the 1800s, and it's still kicking and thriving there."

Opening day will include a tour of the Stickley factory and museum, which explores Gustav Stickley's impact on the Arts and Crafts movement. Content days will follow, full of artist talks, demos, and main stage presentations exploring connections between place and maker, as well as the creative process and its lasting impact on individuals in communities. Gallery tours are scheduled for Friday evening into Saturday afternoon, when activities will move to the Everson Museum of Art.

The conference will close with the Award of Distinction celebration for the 2024-25 recipients, Michael Hurwitz and John Kelsey, both of Philadelphia.

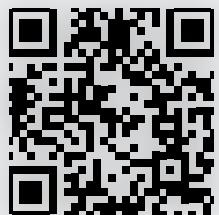
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Furniture Society partners with Syracuse nonprofit

By Jennifer Hicks

As the **Furniture Society** prepares for its upcoming conference at Syracuse University in June, it's also working with a local non-profit organization, A Tiny Home for Good, to further its Craft for Greater Good (CGG) initiative.

"A Tiny Home for Good is a Syracuse-based organization that seeks to address the homeless population there by building tiny homes that they insert into pre-existing communities, and then they have a program that helps to get people off the streets and into permanent housing," says

Monica Hampton, the Society's executive director.

"The program gets community members to house build and one of the things they want to start adding is furniture builds. So, we would help them to design a kit of parts that meet their specs and their needs, for things to be able to be built and assembled easily, that are lightweight, transportable, easy to break down and move. We are working with Syracuse University and national programs around the country to design starter home furniture kits that can be templated and then

made over and over again."

The Furniture Society launched CGG in 2019 to make a difference in the communities where its conferences are held. At its last conference in New Orleans, in 2023, it partnered with MakeGood, a nonprofit devoted to helping people and children with special needs, disabilities and chronic conditions, as well as a local youth art center, YAYA.

Hampton says the CGG initiative is unique because it helps members with the furniture making aspect of their careers.

"We're not just focusing on marketplace with this program, which is what we do with 90 percent of all the other programs we offer. We really want to focus on how you, as a maker, can make a difference," she says.

"The Syracuse tiny home program has its own challenges as it integrates people into pre-existing communities, and one of their focuses is on making sure that the houses stay a certain caliber of beauty and maintenance, so there are no complaints received from neighbors as they work to get these people integrated back into communities to live with dignity." **W**



YAYA students making story telling chairs at the 2023 CGG project in New Orleans.

TRES ROSS IS THE NEW CEO OF WOODCRAFT

Woodcraft announces that Samuel "Tres" Ross III has stepped into the role of Chief Executive Officer. As co-owner and board member of the woodworking retailer, Ross will leverage his business acumen and deep passion for the company to guide it to even greater success, the company said in a statement.

The son of Sam Ross, who purchased the company in 1987, Tres Ross has been involved in the inner workings of the business since his youth.

For the past 18 years, he has focused his efforts as Executive Director of the Ross Foundation, a private charitable organization that supports community development and educational initiatives in Wood, Ritchie, Pleasants, and

Jackson counties in West Virginia.

In 2022, following his father's passing, Tres Ross assumed co-ownership of Woodcraft alongside his brother, Spencer Ross.

"I have wanted to get more engaged with the business and decided the most effective way to do that is as CEO," said Ross. "I can give Woodcraft the passion and vision we've always had in my family."



PINNACLE AWARDS®

Innovation+ Design competition merging with Pinnacle Awards

By Jennifer Hicks

The **International Society of Furniture Designers (ISFD)** is incorporating its annual Innovation+Design competition, traditionally held at the Spring Market in High Point, N.C., with the Pinnacle Awards at the Fall Market. The goal of the merger is to give more exposure to professional and student designer/makers at High Point, according to David Blair, the Society's executive director.

The ISFD started its competition five years ago for pros who design and make their products, as well as students anticipating a career in the custom woodworking or home furnishings industry.

"Our Innovation+Design competition was heartily embraced by the designer/maker and artisan furniture making community," Blair said in a statement. "The number and quality of entries from professional and student designers grew each year. Given this success, we felt that it would benefit the professional designer/makers, the students, ISFD members, and other members of the furniture industry in High Point to raise the profile of the Innovation+Design and allow more artisans and students to present their work to, and network with, the large High Point Market audience by incorporating this competition into the Pinnacle Awards."

The Pinnacle Awards are the furniture industry's highest design honor. They will be expanded to include at least six new subcategories, including occasional tables and storage, seating, dining, bedroom, lighting, and entertainment.

The call for entries for the 2025 Pinnacle Awards will begin on April 1. Learn more at isfd.org.

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Soft maple soldiers on

By Jennifer Hicks

Sales of soft maple are about the same or better, despite some higher prices, according to suppliers interviewed by Woodshop News.

Doug White says sales are up slightly at Doug White Hardwoods, a family-owned establishment in Marissa, Ill., that opened in 1869.

"We don't sell a lot of it, but there's a couple cabinet shops that use that instead of popular because it's a little denser," says White. "We don't have any problems getting it."

Paul Koffron of Koffron Hardwoods in Tiffin, Iowa, says soft maple has gone up about a dollar per board foot in the past year, but that hasn't affected demand.

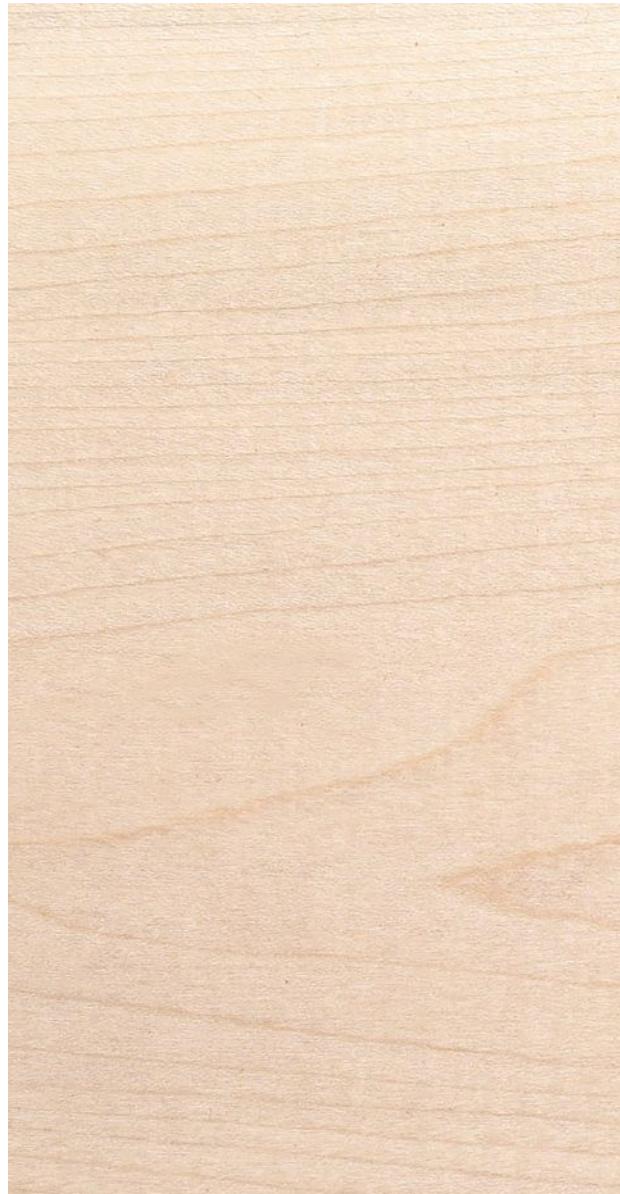
"I think that since the pricing in hard maple has gone up, that has pushed the soft maple price up because more people are using soft instead of hard maple. The two are very similar in color. It's a little volatile because it's availability changes. It's a regional thing, I think," says Koffron.

The term "soft maple" does not refer to any specific species of maple, but rather, it's a broad term which includes several different species of maple. Hard maple tends to be of a lighter, more uniform color, while soft maple tends to be a bit darker, with red, brown, or gray streaks, according to The Wood Database.

"It's popular for painted woodwork, cabinets, drawer sides, things like that. It works up easy and nice, and you can stain it and make it look like walnut," adds Koffron.

"It's always been one of our top five or so selling woods," says Clint Dillon of Steve Wall Lumber in Mayodan, N.C. "I wouldn't say that I've seen more demand for it. It's just most of the time when we sell it, it's just going for painted cabinets. That's just how it is on our end."

"As far as price goes, it seems it's gone up in the past two to three years, but right now it's holding pretty steady on this end. Availability and supply have been fine. I haven't run into any issues on that." **W**



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Oliver debuts a new benchtop edge sander

By Jennifer Hicks

Oliver Machinery introduces the model 6301 6" x 48" edge sander. The latest edition to manufacturer's expanding lineup of benchtop models, the sander features the qualities found in floor models, according to the company.

"We're trying to give the consumer high-end, high-quality, smaller-sized machinery. With the edge sander, you might have a need to sand on edges but no room for a big floor machine, so we're trying to take a big package and shrink it down," says Mike Doremus, vice president of sales and general manager at Oliver.

"The other nice thing about this sander is it uses a 6" x 48" belt, which is a standard belt found in probably every hardware store, and it's got a cast-iron table, which gives you the flatness that people want. And it's heavy. The heavier the machine, the better in our world, because it absorbs the vibrations or any movements the machine may have."

The edge sander comes with a 115-volt motor rated at 3/4 hp, 2-1/2" dust port, and miter gauge.

The table and belt can be configured to work in horizon-



tal or vertical positions, or at any angle in between. Belt tracking and tension are easily adjustable, and the belt can be quickly replaced, according to the company.

The Oliver 6" x 48" edge sander, model 6301, is selling for \$899.99.

Learn more at olivermachinery.net. **W**

FEBRUARY 2025

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WOODSHOPNEWS

PaintLine adds SprayTwirlyHD rotating spray table

By Jennifer Hicks

Paintline introduces the SprayTwirlyHD (SPTYHD), a new foot-operated, height-adjustable spray table with multiple configurations.

The rotating spray table is designed for painting cabinet doors and other parts with stability, precision, and ease, according to the company.

"The new SPTYHD is ideal for a wide variety of applications," says Kyle Robinson, PaintLine's founder and CEO. "Now professionals can use one spray table to finish or paint everything from large cabinet doors and small panels to narrow drawer fronts and other small parts. They can rotate it using the foot-operated, turntable base, or by hand with the extendable arms."

The SprayTwirlyHD offers 360-degree table rotation and an adjustable table height from 32" to 38".

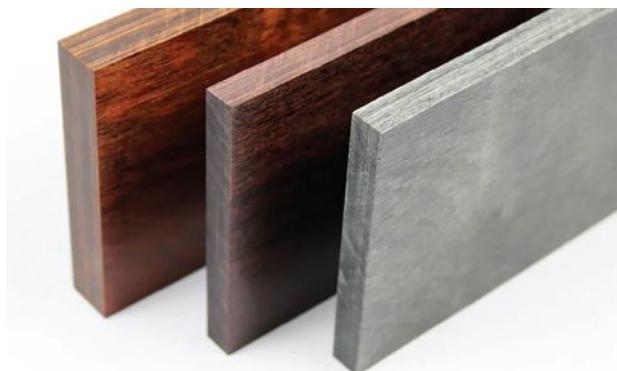
The foot-operated turntable allows for hands-free convenience and increased efficiency. Retractable arms and adjustable magnetic spikes make it suitable for painting a wide range of cabinet door sizes, drawer fronts, and other parts, according to the company.

The SprayTwirlyHD assembles without tools and is made from powder-coated steel. It sells for \$425.

Learn more at paintline.com. **W**



Courtesy of Oliver, PaintLine



Liberty Wood hits the market

By Jennifer Hicks

Current Composites presents Liberty Wood, a durable wood laminate made with birch veneers and a phenolic resin system.

"This is an engineered laminate that's new to us and new to the industry," says product manager Steven Prinz Jr.

"It comes in a lot of exotic colors, like cocobolo, rosewood, and purple heart, [plus] pinks, blues, greens and anything you can think of. It's also very durable. It's similar in characteristics to brass but has a beautiful warm natural feeling of wood."

Liberty Wood is resistant to water and humidity change, works well with woodworking machinery, and is resistant to chipping, the company says.

The product is sold in 17" x 34" sheets in various thicknesses. Orders can be customized with cut-to-size options, color combinations, finishing options, and more. Prefabricated pulls and knobs are also available.

Liberty Wood received a Challenger's Award for innovation at the 2024 International Woodworking Fair in Atlanta.

Learn more at currentcomposites.com. **W**

Courtesy of Liberty Wood

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New women's jobsite apparel from Milwaukee

By Jennifer Hicks

Milwaukee is introducing women's jobsite apparel to its GridIron, FreeFlex and WorkSkin workwear collections.

The first offerings include three shirts, a sweatshirt, and two pairs of pants.

The sizes are true women's sizes, not just small versions of menswear, with the cuts made to accommodate women's bodies while working – lifting, bending, kneeling, using tools and the like, according to the company.

"Despite seeing significant increases of tradeswomen across industries in recent years, their options for sufficient jobsite apparel have remained stagnant," Nadia Sinner, commercial product manager for Milwaukee Tool, said in a statement.



"Through working directly with tradeswomen to uncover their frustrations with current jobsite apparel, Milwaukee is delivering solutions specifically tailored for women on the job. Our design process consists of extensive jobsite research, product seeding and rigorous product testing to ensure durable apparel that is fitted and designed specifically for tradeswomen by tradeswomen."

The new shirts include the Short Sleeve Pocket Tee, Short Sleeve Logo Tee, and Short Sleeve Hybrid Tee.

"The Short Sleeve Hybrid Tee is built for movement. Engineered for mobility and easy layering, this hybrid tee

provides natural stretch and a forward shoulder design, without sacrificing durability," the company said.

The other new offerings include the Midweight Pullover Hoodie, Double-

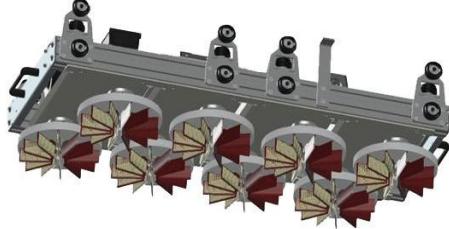
Knee Jogger Pants, and Work Pants.

"The new Women's Work Pants are built from a tear-and-abrasion-resistant fabric that provides broken-in comfort right off the shelf. With a high rise straight fit and integrated stretch, this work pant allows tradeswomen to stay productive without stiffness," the company said.

Learn more at milwaukeetool.com.

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The domino effect of colder temps

By Diane Shattuck

With colder temperatures upon us, finishers will start noticing that their coatings are acting differently. We will see issues that we haven't seen in quite a while and may not understand the cause.

The good news is that you are probably not the cause of the issues. The bad news is that Mother Nature is putting a pause on your timeline and messing with your results. Coatings do not have a brain, so they don't decide when they want to mess with you. Coating actions are influenced and based on chemical reactions, which are affected by time and temperature.

For starters, dry time will double for every 11 degrees of temperature drop. For example, the coating that was normally drying in 30 minutes at 77 degrees F per manufacturer's specs will now take one hour to dry at 66 degrees. Change the temperature to 55 degrees and you are looking at a minimum of two hours of dry time. Any attempt to finish anything in temperatures below 55 degrees could jeopardize the complete curing process.

It will eventually dry, say after four to eight hours, but the proper chemical reaction has been compromised.

Humidity will also play a role in dry time and the appearance of a coating. Humidity is the amount of measurable water vapor in the air. When that is saturated higher than around 85 percent with water, the solvents in our coatings will evaporate more slowly, causing the coating to dry more slowly. The appearance of our coating can be affected by trapped moisture under the film that causes a blushing or uneven sheen, and, in some cases, humidity can cause wrinkling if coatings are not cured properly between coats.

Moisture content in our substrate will increase as the humidity increases. This will cause the wood to expand. When humidity decreases, the wood will shrink. It is important to be mindful of this as moisture in the wood can cause blistering or peeling in the finish. When sanding, the moisture content can affect our sanding profile for color and adhesion. Re-

member that cell structure changes with temperature and humidity which will directly affect the penetration and adhesion of coating. The ideal moisture content is 6 to 8 percent. However, normal moisture content is around 7 to 19 percent.

The temperature of the surface being coated also affects our results. If the surface temperature is too hot, the coating dries too quickly, resulting in poor flow, pinholes, blistering, and bubbles in the surface. There is also the risk of uneven drying, which causes bumps and a rough texture. If the surface temperature is too cold, the coating will take longer to dry. That increases the risk of contamination or an incomplete cure. A cool surface also slows evaporation, which can raise the grain since the wood is wet longer.

When it comes to spraying, temperature impacts the actual flow and spray pattern. If the coating is too cold, it can spit, spatter, orange peel, and won't level properly. If the coating is too hot, the coating comes out

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WOODSHOPNEWS

WEIMA AMERICA TURNS 25

WEIMA America Inc. marked a significant milestone, celebrating its 25th anniversary in the North American market with a two-day event at its headquarters in Fort Mill, S.C. The occasion was attended by team members, partners, and esteemed guests, including Peter Rössler, founder of WEIMA, and Managing Partner, Martin Friz.

Founded in 1999 in Fort Mill, WEIMA America was the vision of Peter Rössler, who saw immense potential in the North American market. Rössler, having established WEIMA Maschinen-

bau, GmbH in Germany nearly two decades earlier, recognized Fort Mill's strategic location near East Coast ports and major interstates as ideal for importing and distributing large machinery, according to the company.

Since then, WEIMA has grown to serve a broad range of industries, providing shredders for plastics, paper, waste-to-energy, metals, and more. With the addition of briquette and drainage presses, WEIMA has solidified its global leadership in size reduction technology.

The event commenced with a day of live demonstrations at the North Amer-

ican headquarters, attracting vendors, dealers, OEMs, business partners, and prospective clients. Ten live demonstrations showcased WEIMA's versatile machinery, including applications such as aluminum can compression, wood dust briquetting, and bathtub shredding.

"We are so proud of the accomplishments we have achieved in the first 25 years of our existence in North America. With the solid team we have in place, the future is unlimited and exciting," said Madison Burt, CEO of WEIMA America.

Learn more at weima.com/us.

too misty. The ideal temperature for the coating and substrate is 70 to 75 degrees F.

Temperature also plays a significant role in the coating's viscosity, which in turn will affect how well the coating levels and flows out on the surface. When the temperature is hot the viscosity tends to decrease flowing evenly, whereas when the temperature is cold the viscosity will thicken and not flow well at all.

You can adjust the viscosity of the coating by warming it up or by reducing the material with a solvent. Warming the coating is a better way to get better flow results without changing the properties of the coating. I like to use the analogy of pouring syrup over a stack of pancakes. If the syrup is stored in the refrigerator, it will just lay on the top of the pancakes. Warmed syrup will flow evenly over the top and soak into the pancakes. Adding water to the syrup will get it to flow better

but will change the flavor.

The temperature of the substrate will affect our finish's viscosity almost immediately after it is applied, so watch that you keep the coating and substrate temperature within 11 to 12 degrees of each other to avoid or minimize condensation that will cause a blush or haze trapped under the coating film.

Be sure to maintain a minimum temperature in your shop of 65 degrees F degrees for the first six to eight hours after you have applied your finish to ensure the proper cure.

Remember, "shift can happen" when finishing and temperature can be a big part of that. **W**

Diane Shattuck is a finisher, consultant, guest speaker, writer and teacher. She can be contacted at dianeshattuck@msn.com. Questions, suggestions and comments are always welcome.

THERMWOOD PROMOTES MIKE IUBELT

Thermwood Corp. announces the appointment of Mike Iubelt to the Vice President of Sales position. In his new role, Mike will lead the Machining Products Division, overseeing sales and operations to drive growth and innovation within the organization.

"Mike brings a wealth of experience to the position, having dedicated over 22 years to Thermwood in various sales and service capacities. His deep understanding of the industry and proven leadership make him uniquely suited to this key role," the company said in a statement.

"Mike lives with his wife and family in Southern Indiana. We wish Mike much success in his new position at Thermwood!"

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Outwater's woven wire is a popular design option as it partially conceals contents while offering an open, welcoming space.



In response to a popular trend, Osborne offers a series of new brackets for bars and islands.

Adding design and detail

Software and accessories for cabinet shops looking to distinguish their work from the competition

By John English

Just as there's a fundamental difference between building a house and creating a home, there's a corresponding relationship between building boxes and creating cabinetry. Designers at the big box stores essentially fit cubes and rectangles together to fill a specific void. Custom cabinet shops, on the other hand, can design and build unique solutions that often resemble furniture more than casework. Moldings, curves, profiles, contrasting species, ingenious hardware and imaginative geometry are just some of the elements that can transform a bunch of boxes into a custom kitchen. But it's more than that. A perfectly conceived and crafted room underscores the old adage that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. The perfect job combines function, form, technology, style, taste, and materials in a way that doesn't just delight, but also comforts.

CREATIVE CAD

Whether a shop already uses one of the leading CAD programs, or is

shopping for one, the ability to incorporate design details from vendor libraries is something worth considering. Being able to select items from an online catalog and just drop them into a drawing has made it a lot easier to add visual or functional embellishment to a project. Hardware and accent libraries are available for most CAD programs and are constantly updated, so the choices keep expanding.

Libraries are a cooperative effort between the publishers of the design software and the manufacturers of the physical hardware. For example, **KCD Software** (kcdsoftware.com) has integrated a library of products from TAG Hardware, which distributes through Häfele America. TAG is a source for high quality closet hardware, organizers, and other accessories that are based on European trends. It's both a designer and product developer, in addition to being a manufacturer. So, the hardware products are thematic. That is, the hardware and accessories come in six coordinated metal finishes, two fabric accents, and three faux-leather tones. A woodworker using

KCD software can use these products in designs and then share 3D drawings with their clients. When the job is ready to be built, the software lets the woodshop produce a shopping list of products for the job, complete with item numbers. This saves time, ensures that no item is missed, and also lets designers stay on top of design trends. KCD offers this kind of integration with powder-coated doors from Integra, moldings and carvings from White River, casework from Cabinotch, and more.

Microvellum offers a pre-loaded library of hardware from Blum, Hettich, Kesseböhmer, Accuride, Richeieu, Peka, Grass, and Häfele. Because you're using the manufacturer's drawings, there's compatibility from the design phase all the way through to final production, reducing the risk of errors and the need for reworking. The libraries don't just include decorative hardware (pulls and knobs), but also functional hardware and all kinds of accents. For example, Microvellum provides a comprehensive look at joinery options and connectors on

its website, microvellum.com, where a woodworker can see screenshots of various construction methods. What's particularly helpful is that these images of hidden hardware are intended more for woodworkers than clients, so they really clarify how things go together. The drawer and door options let a shop adjust details such as reveals, gaps, insets, or overlays – but they also show design details for elements such as grain direction or glass inserts. Those might include the required depths and widths of channels or muntin rails to match various glass thicknesses, or illustrations showing how different grain directions would look on elements such as drawer stacks. That can be quite handy when the shop has purchased a series of sheet stock in a single flitch that gives it the option to go horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. Seeing results before they happen can help us make more informed design and detail decisions.

CAD programs are constantly updating to accommodate new design options, which is especially true for the spate of LED choices that has arrived over the past few years. For example, the construction options in the latest release of **CabBuilder** (cabbuildersoftware.com) allow for additional processing on a CNC for dadoes or grooves on the top or bottom of shelves for the inclusion of LED strip lights. It's a simple notion, but oh so handy, and most programs now offer clever ways to add LEDs.

Mozaik's pre-loaded Product Libraries (mozaiksoftware.com) contain all the essential cabinets one needs

to start designing, but once the basic plan is in place the cabinetmaker can then customize these libraries to add, modify, or remove products or assemblies as needed. Mozaik's libraries also include extensive collections of appliances, cabinet accessories, graphic items, plumbing and electrical fixtures, windows, doors and more. And all of these design details can be shown to a client in the program's 3D Viewer. Mozaik also comes pre-loaded with industry-leading drawer guides and metal drawer box systems, hinges, pulls, accessories and more. The suite's Pricing Module can automatically generate accurate bids based on the hardware, drawers, cabinets, and other materials that the shop has imported. It can track multiple markup options to separate costs from marked-up retail prices, and input other numbers such as labor estimates, machining time, and even lineal or area calculations. And it will figure out things such as sales tax or balances due.

Cabinet Pro (cabinetpro.com) also offers CNC design software, but for woodshops that don't own a CNC it has room design and door-making packages that let the woodworker create unique in-house libraries. The



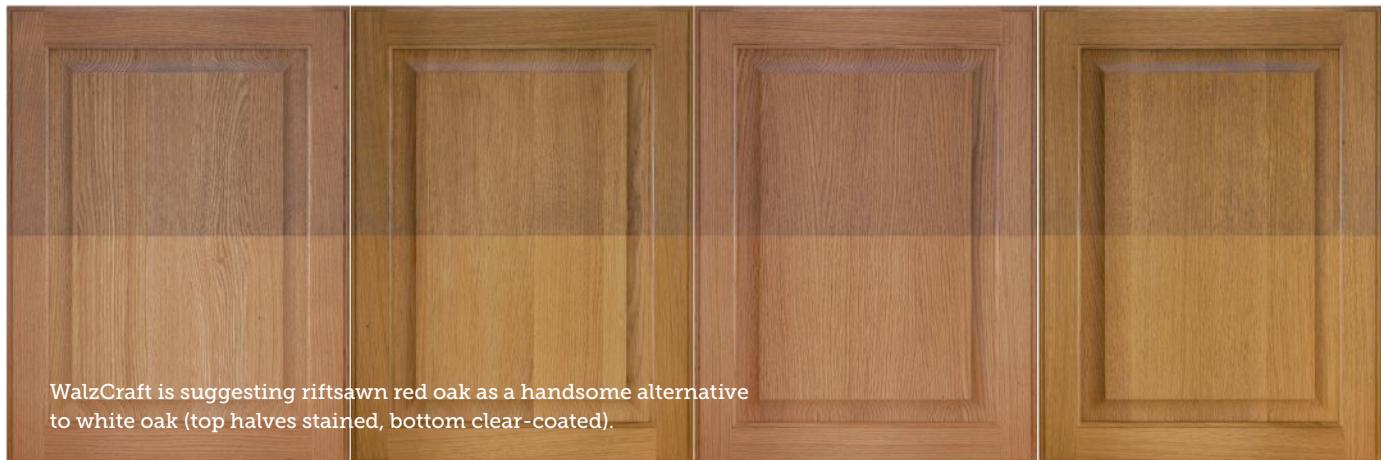
New tall pantry organizers from Century Components.

basic software will customize cut lists and support all kinds of drawer boxes, including horseshoe shapes and other options. It lets a traditional woodworker create frameless and face frame cabinets within the same job, and even change all the doors to another style by just clicking a few keys. And it includes the ability to create 3D images for clients.

Whatever software a shop is using for CAD, it's worth visiting the publisher's website and searching for libraries that can be imported. And many of the larger outsourcing suppliers who provide doors, cabinets, molding and accessories will also be able to supply graphic files for their products or incorporate them in drawings and photo-realistic renderings that a woodshop can then use to close a sale.

WHAT CAN BE ADDED

So, what's in all of these third-party





Designs of Distinction by Brown Wood Inc. has introduced four new solid wood tambour panels with bead, square and cove profiles.

libraries? How does a woodworker access them, and do you have to have CAD?

One of the surprises here is that soon woodshops might not need in-house CAD to integrate **Blum** (blum.com) products. Blum will introduce its new Cabinet Configurator this year, designed to let woodworkers plan entire cabinets – complete with Blum hardware – right in a web browser. Blum already offers an interactive tool called the Product Configurator, which helps a woodshop find the right hardware for cabinet designs on a PC, tablet, or smartphone without the installation of any extra software or updates. A designer can currently find the parts lists, CAD data and planning information for any configuration, and then manage several jobs in "My projects". They can then use the "My library" feature to create templates. The existing Product Configurator includes several ways to add design upgrades and details to a job, including hinges, slides, motion technologies, and complete drawer systems. And the upcoming Cabinet Configurator promises a lot more.

For shops that do use CAD, hardware files are usually downloadable as either DWG or STEP files that the CAD program can open. Finding files to use and even manipulate is relatively easy. The **Grass** website (grassusa.com) is typical. A woodworker can go to the site, click on a folder for Nova Pro Scala drawers, and then open folders for different drawer dimensions. Within those are various finish choices (Stone, Ice, Silver, etc.), and when one of those folders is clicked it contains importable files in STEP and DWG formats. Once downloaded, these can be manipulated in 2D or 3D in almost any CAD program.

Adding complete drawer systems, with their clean looks and hidden hardware, can enhance and modernize a kitchen design. It can also speed throughput in a woodshop because buying parts and assembling a pre-manufactured drawer system mechanically can be a whole lot faster than machining wooden dovetail drawer parts, assembling them in-house with glue and clamps, and then sanding and coating the boxes.

Some suppliers offer a huge range of design and detail upgrades that don't always appear in CAD-friendly drawings but can still elevate a job beyond the ordinary. The catalog from **Häfele America** (hafele.com) is a good example. It includes thousands of parts including decorative hardware, closet fittings, media and



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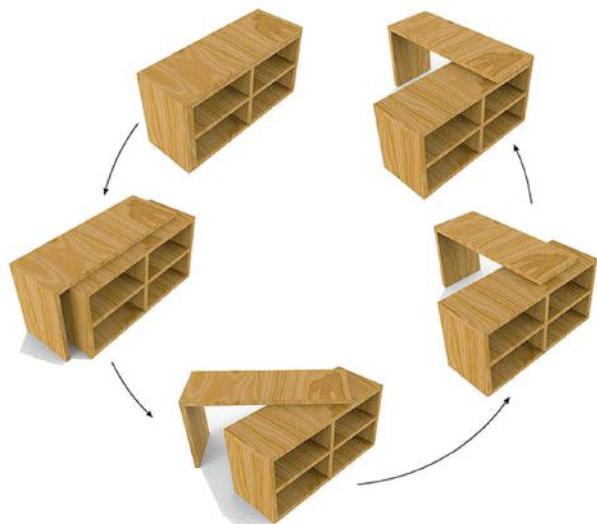
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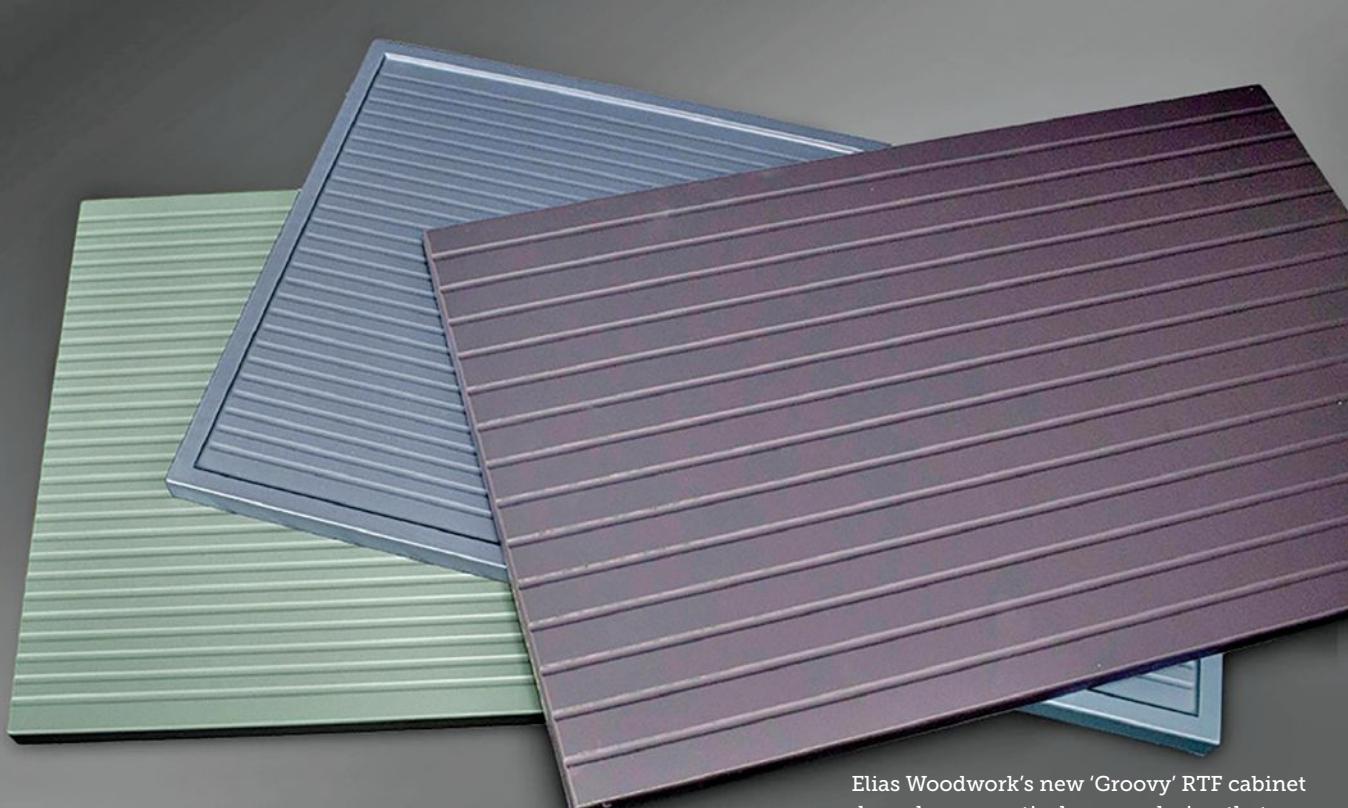
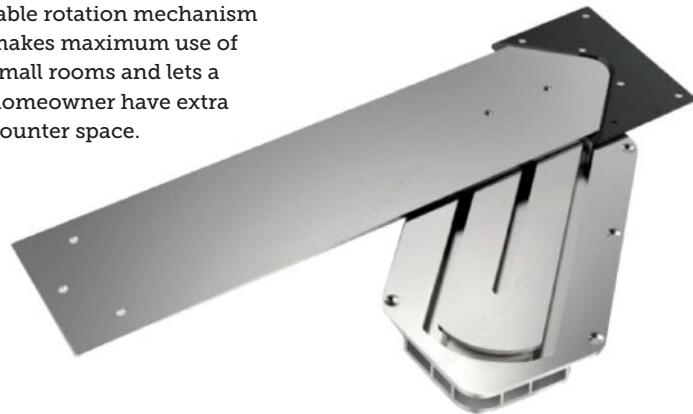
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Richelieu's new Eclipse table rotation mechanism makes maximum use of small rooms and lets a homeowner have extra counter space.



Elias Woodwork's new 'Groovy' RTF cabinet doors have a vertical groove design that can make cabinets seem taller and slimmer.



The Oceanix Plastic Pull from Doug Mockett is made from recycled marine plastics.

storage systems, office hardware, furniture parts and more. There's everything from legs and casters to drawer systems, slides, locks, and connectors. Some of the design elements are both functional and decorative: among Häfele's newest kitchen solutions is

a Kesseböhmer waste bin pull-out that has two bins and is bottom mounted (the slides are below the bins). It comes with champagne, chrome or silver hardware, and champagne, white or gray bins, and an optional nudge opening system. Other new additions to the catalog include a new pull-out paper roll dispenser that lets a customer hide paper towels behind a cabinet door, and several new Loox5 strips of LED lights.

Design begins with casework and doors, and outsourcing suppliers are always updating there, too. The Catalina design from **Hardware Resources** (hardwareresources.com) is a full-overlay Shaker door style with a five-piece drawer front.

The newest finish being offered is a water-based Sandstone stain with a UV-coated natural birch interior. As with all of the NorthPoint Cabinetry in the Hardware Resources catalog, it's solid wood construction with a simple dovetail assembly method.

ACCENTS AND ACCESSORIES

One of the easiest ways to add design details is to fill empty spaces with useful or intelligent add-ons. It's a simple idea, but the new Valet Rods from **Rev-A-Shelf** (rev-a-shelf.com) can be really handy when a customer is dressing. They slide out 6" and hold clothes on hangers to avoid having to rummage for the right garment, and then they just pop back in so the closet door can be closed. Included is a chrome rod and the mounting hardware, and the removable knob can be replaced if a designer has a theme going.

Designs of Distinction by **Brown**

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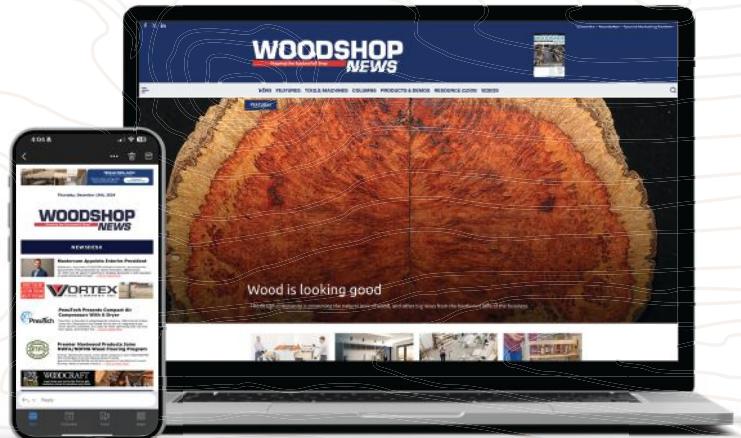
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Rev-A-Shelf's new Valet Rod has a rod within a sleeve that slides out to hold hangers while a client makes garment selections.

Wood Inc. (brownwoodinc.com/dod) has a new take on tambour – inflexible panels. The solid boards come in 24" widths in four styles: 1/2" square (#304), 1/4" bead (#100), 3/8" bead (#107), and 5/8" cove (#403). DOD also offers flexible tambour for applications such as curved cabinet doors and roll-top desks.

A new series of vertically fluted, grooved RTF (rigid thermofoil, which is a vinyl surface bonded to a MDF core) doors from **Elias Woodwork & Mfg.** (eliaswoodwork.com) combines minimalism with texture in a thoughtful way. The company says that the doors have "a sleek, modern aesthetic and subtle texture", and that "the vertical grooves add a sophisticated, upscale touch without looking overly traditional."

New from **Osborne Wood Products** (osbornewood.com) is a collection of solid wood bar brackets in varying heights from 8" to 12" and in a variety of species such as soft maple, red oak, knotty pine and cherry, but also in premium species including alder, black walnut, hard maple, hickory, mahogany and white oak. Osborne offers CAD drawings for many of its products, including these brackets.

A clever piece of hardware from **Richelieu** (richelieu.com) can open up small spaces for big activities. It's called the Eclipse table rotation mechanism (item 65407010), and it allows a temporary bench top or workspace to rotate horizontally to create more counter space while being supported by a single leg. When you're done, simply rotate it back and it's stowed away.

The core design quality in natural wood casework is the door species. Given the current shortage of white oak for quartersawn panels, **Walz-Craft** (walzcraft.com) has come up with an innovative alternative – riftsawn red oak. It promotes sustainable logging by optimizing the use of available resources.

A new family of tall pantry organizers from **Century Components**

(centurymade.com) offers simple installation with two sets of Blum Movento slides. Features include maple blocking for the upper slides, more than 4" of additional storage over center mounted slide models, and a choice of either solid maple or plywood veneer.

Doug Mockett & Co. (mockett.com) has added an eco-friendly alternative to stainless steel hardware called the

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Wiping Stain

Elite

Elite



Keystone says its new Elite staining process avoids blotchiness and uneven tones on woods such as maple.

Oceanix Plastic Pull. These bar-style pulls are made entirely of Oceanix, a material that's composed of post-use and obsolete plastics collected from the maritime industry, such as fishing nets, ropes, and trawls.

Keystone Wood Specialties (keystonewood.com) recently launched its new Elite staining process for maple components. The exclusive two-step process greatly reduces blotchy, uneven tones that can often occur when staining tight grain wood species like maple, especially when using darker colors. The new process delivers a smooth, more even tone on each cabinetry component and a consistent color appearance across an entire maple order.

Woven wire grills are a wonderful way to deliver the feel of open shelves with the protection of doors. There's a very informative article on their use in the **Outwater Plastics Industries**' blog (outwater.net), titled "Ten Woven Wire Grilles to Inspire Your Next Cabinet Project".

The key to great design is to listen to clients, offer them options that reflect their taste, pepper that with suggestions harvested from an awareness of current trends, and then listen some more to their opinions. The magic of custom casework is that a woodshop can cater to individual preferences in ways that big box stores can't. Cabinetmakers can provide personal design details such as maybe using lumber harvested from a family farm or lowering counters a couple of inches to accommodate a client's height or disability. That kind of customization covers lighting too, as this is becoming increasingly important in lived-in spaces. New smart controls and LEDs are making it more and more affordable to deliver the perfect mix of task and ambient light, and to have lights turn on and off in ways that save energy but still fully serve the homeowner or office worker. So, this may be a good time to culture a relationship with a lighting consultant, as the technology is moving very quickly. **W**

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LIVING THE DREAM

Rob Bird bought a cabinet shop to escape the corporate world

By Jennifer Hicks

As the owner of Core Cabinet Production in Richland, Wash., Rob Bird (left) has made great strides since purchasing the company in 2022. A former operations manager in a corporate setting, Bird seized a monumental career change when the small custom cabinetry business went up for sale. With a vision to grow, he has added employees, is moving to new a shop with double the space, and expanded the client base with whole home cabinetry and closet options.

"My goal all along was to grow the business because there's a demand for it here," says Bird. "The Tri-Cities area is growing. When Covid hit, a lot of people were moving out of Seattle because they wanted the nicer weather over here. Here it's sunny most of the time, and over there is lots of rain and overcast."

Bird credits his wife Jeana, co-owner and bookkeeper, for encouraging him to take the plunge. Getting going the first year was no easy feat. He worked day and night, learning the ropes from the previous owner.

IN NEED OF CHANGE

Bird grew up in Hillsboro, Ore., just outside of Portland, and previously only thought of woodworking as a hobby to pur-

sue later in life.

"My experience with woodworking is that I took it in shop class and loved it, and always had this dream that when I retire, I would have a big, detached garage with a bunch of woodworking equipment, and build furniture. I used to watch the Yankee Workshop on Saturday mornings."

He attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where he met Jeana, and the couple lived in Utah for about 17 years before moving to Richland in 2019 to be closer to family. Bird had worked in business management for over a decade for a national composite materials company managing their distribution, but the stress took a toll and got particularly worse during Covid.

"I was ready to get out from behind the desk and I was just frustrated with my career position. It didn't feel like I was going to advance at all. I've always had the entrepreneurial spirit and wanted to do something, but there was a risk in taking that jump and having small kids at the time. I had corporate insurance, paid time off and all of that," says Bird, who has five children with Jeana spanning ages eight through 18.

"But I was unhappy, working a lot of hours, and during Covid work got busier because I worked in the supply chain



where all these issues of pricing were happening. There would be days where I didn't even go outside because I was working."

In 2021, the couple sought custom cabinets and visited a local shop. The experience got Bird thinking, and months later, his father mentioned a woodworking shop for sale.

"It was such a coincidence that we had visited a shop and then this became available. The previous owner had started the business around 2004. He was getting out of the cabinet business because he was getting a little older, and I thought this would be great.

"I went to work for him for a couple of days to see what it's actually like, and I had to convince the bank that was going to loan us the money that I can run a cabinet shop having no prior experience except for helping my dad fix up homes we lived in when we were younger."

Financing eventually fell into place, and the closing took place May 6, 2022. The purchase included the machines and client list, and the owner agreed to stay on for the first six months. Bird changed the company name from Core Cabinet to Core Cabinet Production.

SOURCING WORK

To expand upon the former owner's offerings, Bird started with the list of builders the company previously worked with and developed those relationships.

"When I came on, I met the largest of the multi-family



The team and shop, before the move,
at Core Cabinet Production.

home builders in the area, and they're some of my biggest clients right now, as far as volume. They're really good to work with."

The shop serves the residential market and provides cabinetry for an entire home, rather than just kitchens as the previous owner had. The market covers the Tri-Cities area, which includes Richland, Kennewick and Pasco. Most jobs are through builders. Homeowners are a distant second at about 20 percent.

"I like that ratio," says Bird. "Working with individual customers, there's a lot more handling that has to happen because they don't necessarily know all the options and they want to be educated and involved."

"We specialize and focus on frameless cabinets, full overlay. We might do a framed portion on a bookcase or something, but overall, we don't do framed cabinets. We're just not set up for it. Frameless was how I've been trained."

Bird has four full-time employees and two part-timers. He's had success recruiting new employees through the local schools with wood programs. He'd like to add an in-house designer.

"Design work requires a lot of time, and that's time that I don't necessarily have since I run the shop," says Bird.

"Business has been steady. Last spring we hit our first bit of a lull when a project ended, and we didn't have jobs ramped up in time. We have a bunch



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The shop's Front Range CNC.

ahead, so it's a matter of managing production on my end. We're working through that. But we've been very fortunate and blessed to have a lot of work."

THE NEW SHOP

The new 12,000-sq.-ft. shop is just down the road, and Bird is eager to add new equipment and have space for larger projects.

"About a year ago, we were wondering if we should buy this building and add onto it or build a new building. We decided to buy some land and build our own building, because then we could lay out the shop how we wanted to, with opportunities for expansion."

Bird feels good about the decision as his company's offerings are unique to the area.

"I know of three other custom shops here in town, and there are several other design centers where they use manufactured cabinets. I haven't met any of them personally, but there's enough business where I don't feel like I'm trying to fight for the work, which is good, because I don't want to step on any toes. I want to grow my business and try to meet as much demand as I can."

Recently, Bird started offering closet options based on recommendations from fellow members of the Cabinet Makers Association.

"I joined the CMA and talked to others about how to grow this business. They said if I'm not doing closets, I'm passing up opportunity. For me, my builders like that I can offer closets too. All the equipment you need to build closets, you already have so why not use it?"

Bird invested in a new CNC at the start of 2024, a Front Range model that replaces an outdated machine.

"The equipment that we purchased was at the end of its life, but we knew that going into it. The Front Range brand is

WHAT'S IN THE SHOP

SawStop table saw • Front Range 5'x10" CNC with loading/off-loading tables • Biesse Rover B 4.40 FTK CNC • Biesse Elix dowel inserter • Fravol Fast edge bander • Ritter and two Uhling (HP2000 & HP3000) case clamps • Kremlin Airmix 15c25 air sprayers

not a big name, but they have a great technician based out of Denver who services it and it's running smoothly."

SO FAR, SO GOOD

Bird is focused on his staff as much as he is his clients and wants to make sure he retains the help he has.

"When you have a business where you're accountable for everything at the end of the day, and when you hire an employee, you're responsible for providing them with work and giving them the pay that they deserve."

"So right now, the stress on me is if we're between jobs. I don't want to send them home. They've got bills to pay. If I hire them and I don't take care of them, they might end up leaving and I'd have to retrain someone else."

On the flip side, he's glad to be out of the corporate world.

"We really felt there was a divine power here and everything worked together for us. It's been really hard, there are a lot of challenges, and a lot of hours, but I've loved it. I still work about the same amount of hours, but this is much more satisfying and fulfilling. And the goal is, once we get to a certain point, I can pare back, with the end-all of having a decent work/life balance," Bird says.

Learn more at corecabinetproduction.com. **W**



Sanding helpers

New abrasives, pads, discs and accessories for a more satisfying sanding experience

By John English

Changing sandpaper isn't just a frequent and slightly annoying task. It also describes how grits and backings are constantly evolving as technology rumbles along. While much of the innovation begins with the automotive industry, woodworkers also benefit when new abrasive products help us work faster, safer, and better.

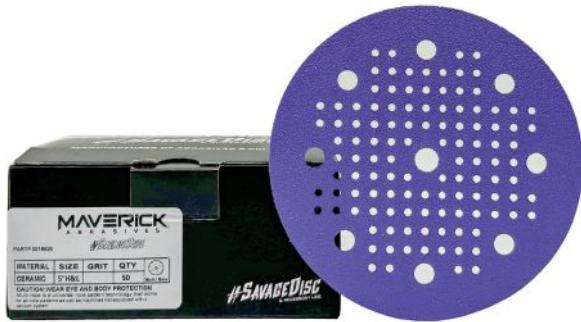
Here's a quick look at some of the new or updated products that make our lives easier while improving the quality of our work.

LIVE LONG AND PROSPER

Mirka USA's new Ultimax Ligno is specifically tailored for wood sanding. The manufacturer (mirka.com) notes that it "combines a fast cut with long life" and says that it is especially resistant to clogging when sanding substrates. The instantly recognizable 'bowtie' grain pattern has a

segmented surface that increases sanding pressure on each abrasive grain, and it also directs dust into the channels between the bowties. Its resistance to clogging minimizes swirl marks, and a special latex impregnated paper prevents edgewear and tearing. Each segment of grain has four sharp corners and two angled surfaces, which creates additional cutting edges during sanding. And this product also has Mirka's Multifit hole pattern, which lets air circulate under the abrasive to reduce heat during sanding. Ultimax Ligno comes in 5" and 6" diameter discs in PSA and hook-and-loop, and it's also available in 3" x 4" and 3" x 5" sheets, plus 4-1/2" x 5" sheets in a roll of 150 that come with soft backing.

Festool USA (festoolusa.com) notes that its new Granat Net abrasive "is the perfect solution for sanding materials that produce a large amount of dust. The open net struc-



The new SavageDisc from Maverick Abrasives combines a premium ceramic abrasive grain with a Mylar film backing.



Red Label Abrasives has added 14 PSA discs, along with 6 Indasa Rhynostick discs in a roll of 100.



Klingspor's Fusion Foam, available in discs and other formats, lend themselves to sanding curves and profiles.



A new line of 4" and 6" wide ceramic belts made by Sparky Abrasives are available in lengths up to 11'.



Wurth's new Silver5 Velcro abrasive disc is designed for sanding sealers and lacquer coatings, plus fine-grained wood.

ture enables dust extraction across the entire surface for working cleanly, a high material removal capacity, and long service life of the abrasive." It's available in a wide variety of shapes (discs, rectangles, etc.) and in all the popular grits.

The 2025 **Klingspor Abrasives'** catalog (*klingspor.com*) features several products with silicon carbide grain that's resin-bonded to a new, tough polyester/cotton blended backing that the company says has "high flexibility and extra durability." And many of the discs that Klingspor makes for a grinder have a paper flap system that now uses a new ceramic grain. The catalog also includes new 10mm thick Fusion Foam, which has the capability to scuff and sand both flat and contoured surfaces without leaving deep scratches. That makes it handy for final sanding on curved and sloped surfaces, cabinet door profiles, raised panels and turned workpieces.

The new SurfPrep ProFoam pads from **Total Finishing Supplies** (*totalfinishingsupplies.com*) are 3" x 4" and 10mm (2/5") thick. These hook-and-loop pads deliver consistent, even cutting, and flat sanding. That makes them especially handy when sanding inside corners such as drawer boxes where discs sanders won't go. And the oversized version also conforms to profiles.

Woodworkers who have been using Black & Decker's 'mouse' shaped sander to get into cabinet and drawer corners will like the ZipDetail sanding kit from **Ali Industries** (*gatorfinishing.com*). It's a foam pad shaped like a computer mouse that uses the same paper as the B&D sander, but this is just a manual support pad. It has hook-and-loop for quick changes and the paper is available in Zirconium oxide in 50, 80 and 120 grits.

FILM STARS

Among the new product listings from **Global Abrasive Products** (*globalabrasiveproducts.com*) in Lockport, N.Y., are Filmbac aluminum oxide discs in both PSA and hook-and-loop formats.



The SandStand from Woodpeckers holds just about any palm sander at the desired angle for sanding small parts safely.

The backing is a tear-resistant film that is ideal for random orbit or low-speed DA sanders. The film is more durable than paper, and the discs are stearate-coated to resist loading.

Empire Abrasives (empireabrasives.com) has introduced a new line of Green Film hook-and-loop and PSA discs that come in 5" and 6" diameters. Sold in packs of 50, they can be used wet or dry and are coated with treated aluminum oxide and a unique stearate coating. The backer is tear-resistant polyester film, and the coat is semi-open. Notable is the fact that they come in grits all the way from 60 to 2000. Empire recommends them for hardwood, softwood, composites, and plastics such as acrylic, polycarbonate, ABS and PVC.

New from **Wurth** (wurthwoodgroup.com) is the 5" hook-and-loop 'Silver' silicon carbide disc that comes in grits from 80 to 400. This is a no-hole disc designed for sealer and lacquer sanding, and fine grain woods. It has a weighted, latex-impregnated paper that ensures flexibility and water resistance, and an open coat for long-lasting resistance to clogging.

Red Hill Corp. in historic Gettysburg, Pa., purchases large volumes of high-quality close-outs from abrasive manufacturers and then sells them under the Supergrit private label. There's always something new to check out on the website, supergrit.com.

The new #SavageDisc from **Maverick Abrasives** (maverickabrasives.com) is a ceramic abrasive grain on a film backing that pretty much can't be ripped. The manufacturer uses "a brand-new ceramic abrasive grain technology" that is perfect for sanding both softwood and hardwood. Maverick also says that these ceramic discs have three times the life of paper discs and twice the life of other film discs, and the mylar backing can't be torn. The discs come in both Festool and universal hole patterns that can be used for five- and eight-hole sanders.

Sparky Abrasives (sparkyabrasives.com) in Willmar, Minn., offers a comprehensive range of abrasive products



2Sand.com has added an interesting article, "Sanding epoxy resin", by Rebecca Henderson, to its website blog.



SurfPrep ProFoam pads, new from Total Finishing Supplies, are ideal for knocking down sealer on profiled surfaces.



Norton has upgraded its hardwood floor sanding belts with the option of a Y-weight polyester backing.



The Gator Zip detail hand sanding kit uses the same refill sandpaper as Black & Decker's Mouse.



The new Granat Net line from Festool USA reduces dust and increases lifespan with its open net surface.



Grizzly's new G1071Z oscillating spindle sander features a tilting cast-iron table.



The new Green Film polyester-backed aluminum oxide discs from Empire Abrasives can be used wet or dry.

including new 4" and 6"-wide ceramic belts in lengths from 21" to 132" and grits from 36 to 120. They have bi-directional tear and break resistant joints, and all of Sparky's ceramic belts have a polyester backing.

Red Label Abrasives (redlabelabrasives.com) in Belding, Mich., carries a large inventory of abrasive products. Among the latest additions are 14" discs with sticky backs, and the company also carries 18", 24" and 30" discs. Red Label has just added 6" Indasa Whiteline Rhynostick discs too, and these come in a roll of 100. They have a closed coating with a D weight backer and an anti-static treatment that reduces airborne fine dust.

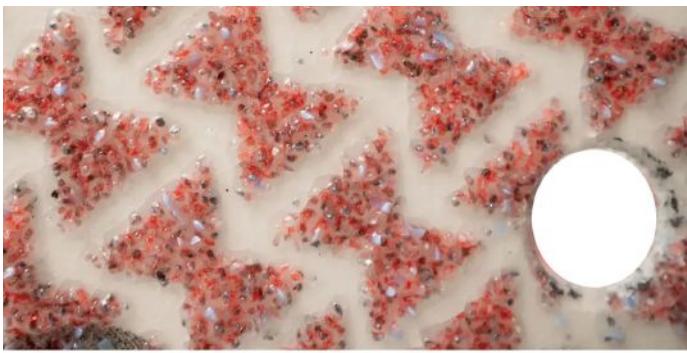
And while it's not new, it's worth mentioning that Cubitron from **3M** (3m.com), has just celebrated its 10th anniversary. This sanding disc has a net backing that allows

virtually dust-free sanding, as there's almost no structure to resist airflow.

FOR FLOORS AND MORE

For shops installing solid hardwood flooring, **Norton Abrasives** (nortonabrasives.com) now offers an alternative to its standard X-weight poly-cotton backing. The new and thicker Y-weight polyester backing improves both the strength and toughness of its belts. And a new grain weight upgrade on Norton's Red Heat 36- and 40-grit rolls and belts offers longer life. The belts all look the same, but the product numbers have changed, so keep that in mind when ordering.

A new variable-speed oscillating spindle sander from **Grizzly Industrial** (grizzly.com), model G1071Z, has a cast-



Mirka's Ultimax Ligno has a very distinctive grain pattern that looks like tiny bow ties and runs cool without clogging.

iron table, a 1-hp motor, digital readout for speed adjustments, and a tilting table. The variable speed range is 900 to 1,800 rpm, which can allow a woodworker to avoid burn on sensitive species and end-grain. The impressive stroke (1-1/2") moves up and down 72 times a minute, and the sander takes sleeves from 1/4" to 4" in diameter.

From river tables to turning, epoxy resins are playing an increasingly popular role in woodworking. That's in part because they can be worked with many standard tools and machines such as routers and saws. But when it comes to sanding epoxy resin, old skills don't always transfer. That's why **2Sand** (2sand.com) recently uploaded an article by Rebecca Henderson titled "How to sand epoxy resin". Woodshops who are entering this field, or seeking to improve techniques when working with resin, might want to check it out. They will learn about amine blush, when to use wet sanding, what grits to choose, and even which coatings work best for fast or fine sanding.

A new collection of sanding blocks from **Rockler** (rockler.com) let sticky-back paper reach into curves and corners. These are strong, lightweight, EVA foam that will release PSA adhesive-backed sandpaper. There's a 6"-long block with a curved bottom (item 77373), plus 8" and 16"long blocks that can help preserve a straight edge or a flat surface. Beyond their foam feel, the idea here is that the blocks do away with the need to wrap and hold loose sandpaper around a wooden scrap, or fuss with clips on some other sanding blocks. And the

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A new series of foam sanding pads from Rockler uses PSA paper and lets a woodworker get into corners and curves.

angled ends let the abrasive work right up to an edge.

Cordless belt sanders can make life a lot easier, especially on the jobsite. Last year, DeWalt introduced its first 3x21 version and Milwaukee, Craftsman, Makita, Ridgid, Ryobi, Wen, Kobalt and Porter-Cable are among a long list of manufacturers that have now introduced models. Most of them have variable speed and brushless motors. High power consumption tools such as vacuums, routers and belt sanders took a while to become cordless, but new

motor and battery technology has overcome the torque challenge. So, expect larger cordless sanders soon.

Finally, there's another ingenious solution from the folks at **Woodpeckers** (woodpeck.com). The SandStand is a metal base that holds just about any palm sander, and it can be tilted at any angle between horizontal and vertical. It's an ideal way to accurately sand because it's easier and less aggressive to hold a small part against an upturned orbital than a stationary belt sander. **W**

Courtesy of manufacturers

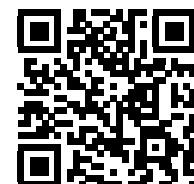
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Harness the power of air

Pneumatic tools offer several advantages to a woodworking shop

By John English

With the avalanche of cordless battery-powered tools over the past few years, air-powered options are often overlooked. These old reliables have several things going for them that the trendy newcomers don't. They never need recharging, so they can operate continuously all day long in a busy woodshop. They can be lighter to hold, too, because there's no battery or motor. And their high output means they can deliver quite a punch all day long – think impact wrenches for installing hardware or guns that set the heads of large nails. In most cases, air tools can deliver more torque and higher revolutions per minute than an electric or battery powered tool.

Pneumatic tool construction is simple with few moving parts, so maintenance and repair are easier. And air tools are quite affordable both to buy and run.

Their metal bodies are usually a whole lot tougher than their plastic counterparts, and while hoses are often cited as a disadvantage, they can easily be hung from the ceiling to keep them organized. A hose can make it easier to find a tool on a busy bench: just follow it with your eye and it leads right to the tool. An old carpenter's trick is to spray paint a short area on each hose with a different color (or use different colored tapes), and that makes it easy to grab the right pinner, stapler, or nail-gun every time. You can't do that with a battery.

What kind of pneumatic tools make the most sense in a woodshop? Intermittent use pinners, finish nailers and crown staplers will all run off a small portable compressor, but you'll need a larger stationary compressor for sanding and spray coating. Some woodworkers use a com-



Bostitch makes a line of pinners and finish nailers with the very thin Smart Point nose for accessing tight spots.

pressor for a vacuum system that can operate veneering bags, clamps, or pads that hold work while it's being machined. Simple blow guns are very popular in woodshops, but it's better to vacuum up dust than to use compressed air to relocate it. Pneumatic rachets and impact drivers can help with larger hardware tasks and long screws, and some of the discs for grinders can be quite handy in the woodshop for tasks such as cutting piano hinges to length or working with marble and stone countertops.

So, while they're still king in the spray booth, air-powered tools have also earned some respect on the workbench – especially when it comes to fastening. And as with any tool, they're still evolving.

NEW AND IMPROVED

The **Grex** (online at grexusa.com)

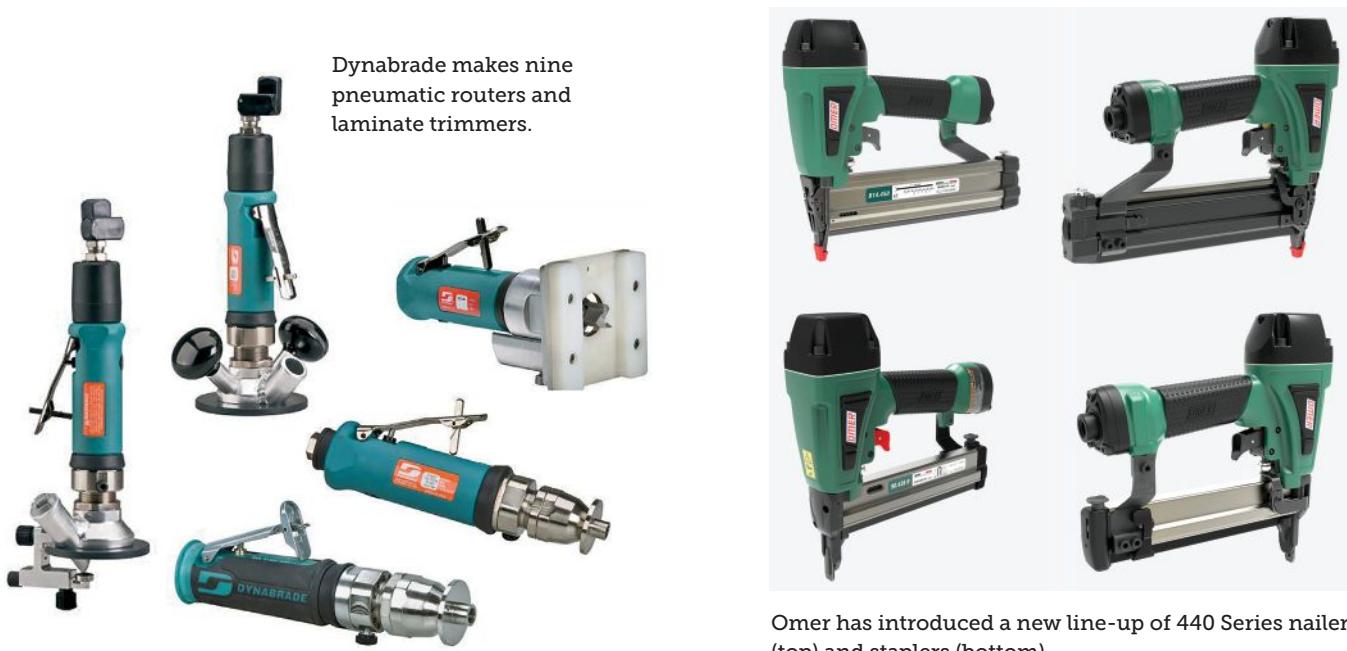
P635 has been a staple in cabinet shops for two decades. Grex recently updated it to the new P635L, which is a great example of how pneumatic tools are changing over time. The 23-gauge headless pinner has an auto-lockout feature so when it gets down to about seven nails, the sequential trigger stops working and there's a manual override for driving one pin at a time. It has an optional edge guide that stores on board, and this can be popped into place when needed. This is a little fence that runs against the wood face and lines up shots perfectly. Other upgrades include a belt hook that has a thinner, lower profile and a rotating hose connector.

About a year ago, **Kyocera Senco Industrial Tools** (senco.com) unveiled a whole new generation of finish and trim tools that are now available in stores. The five new models

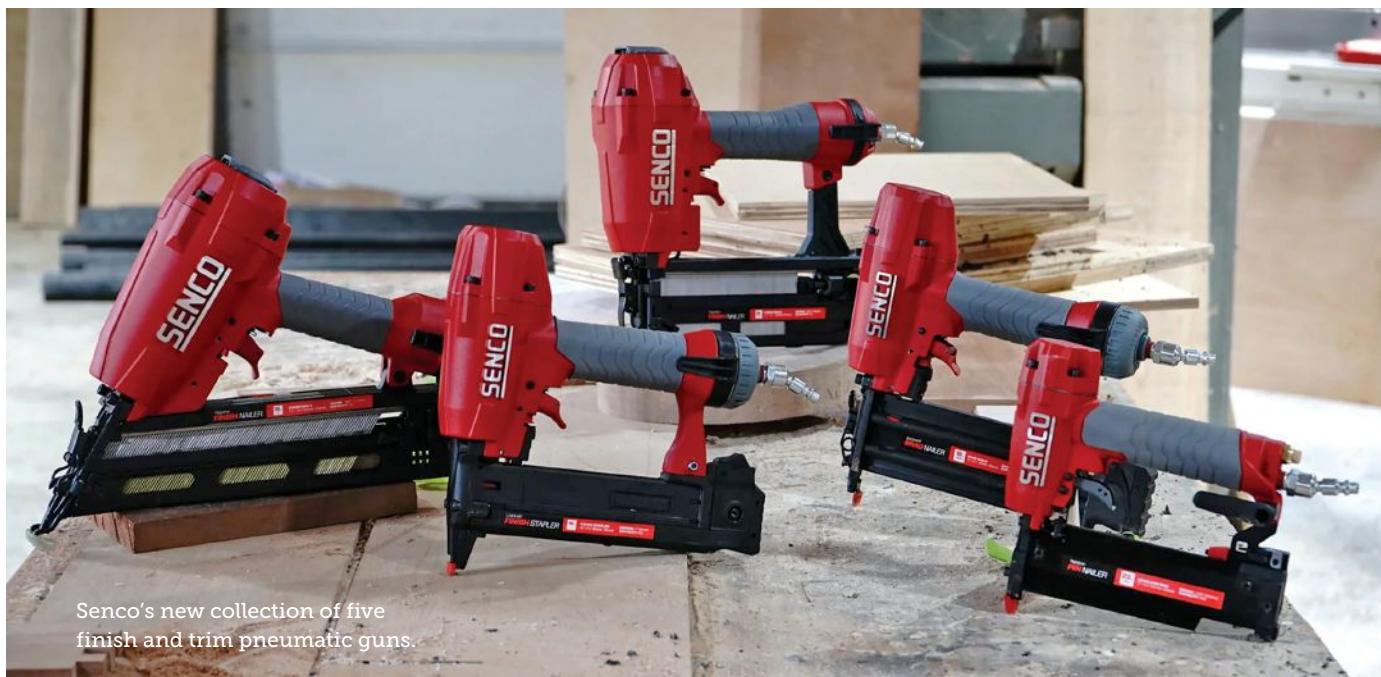
are the BN31M1P 18-gauge brad nailer; LS61H1P 18-gauge finish stapler; TN11G1P 23-gauge pin nailer; TN41P1P 16-gauge finish nailer; and TN51P1P 15-gauge angled finish nailer. These are lightweight, oil-free guns that come with a five-year limited warranty. Features include dry-fire lockout, rotating hose connectors, nomar pads and reversible belt hooks.

Max USA (maxusacorp.com) is part of a Japanese corporation that manufactures in ISO9001 and ISO14001 certified factories, which meet or exceed stringent quality goals set by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Max features the PowerLite system that runs on 500 psi of compressed air to easily drive fasteners into LVLs and similar new building materials.

The new 440 series from **Omer USA** (omertools.com) are Italian-



Omer has introduced a new line-up of 440 Series nailers (top) and staplers (bottom).



Senco's new collection of five finish and trim pneumatic guns.

made pneumatic guns that build on the company's 50-year history in this field. The new range includes finish nailers and staplers with rear air exhausts; very thin noses for tight quarters; magazines that can be removed for maintenance without disassembly, a button trigger to slide the magazine for loading (instead of the traditional heavy spring design), and more.

Grizzly Industrial (grizzly.com) makes the FasTak H7664 Pro Series nailer/stapler that shoots 5/8" to 2" long 18-gauge brads and 5/8" to 1-5/8" long staples with a 1/4" crown.

It has a viewing window that lets a woodworker see when to reload, and a 100-shot magazine.

Makita (makitatools.com) has four staplers and eight nailers in its latest lineup. **Hikoki** (hikoki-powertools.com) carries three finish nailers, three staplers, and several coil nailers. **Bostitch** (bostitch.com) offers the new Smart Point, a narrow finish nailer that can reach into tight spaces.

MORE CHOICES

Pneumatic tools aren't just limited to nailers and staplers. Full-line manu-

facturers such as **DeWalt** (dewalt.com) also offer air-powered sanders, ratchets, impact wrenches and other tools that often find their way onto a cabinetmaker's workbench.

The **Campbell Hausfeld** catalog (campbellhausfeld.com) includes nail guns and staplers, impact wrenches and ratchets, caulk guns, finish spray-ers, sanders and even a keyless reversible drill.

Wurth (wurthusa.com) also provides an impressive range of pneumatic tools including several that are intended for automotive finishing but

The HS130-1 is one of a family of high pressure (up to 500 psi) guns from Max USA designed for LVLs and other new materials.



Campbell Hausfeld's 3/8" keyless reversible drill, model XT401000.

The updated Grex P635L has an adjustable edge guide (bottom) that can line up pins perfectly along the edge of a panel.





Viking Industries in Ohio makes a wide range of pneumatic tools, including the 1/2" reversible V343K drill.

could also find a home in a woodshop. The collection includes drills, several 6" orbital sanders under the Dynabrade label, grinders, sanding files, ratchets and impact guns.

Dynabrade (dynabrade.com) also makes a complete range of nine pneumatic routers and trim routers with speeds up to 30,000 rpm. They come with 1/4" collets or 3/8" spindle threads and bases up to 4" in diameter.

Viking Industries is part of the S&H Group (shindustries.com) in Cleveland and manufactures and distributes a complete line of pneumatic tools and related accessories. The menu includes impact wrenches, sanders, polishers, two dozen different drills, several air-powered screwdrivers, and a variety of cutting tools.

Another resource known to mechanics but not so much among woodworkers is **Proto Industrial** (protoindustrial.com). This Connecticut toolmaker is part of the Black & Decker empire, and makes air-powered impact drivers, wrenches, and grinders.

Florida-based **Universal Tool** (universaltoolusa.com) also has manufacturing facilities in Pennsylvania and Asia. The company makes sanders, grinders, impact wrenches, drills, and specialty tools for the aircraft industry.

The decision to invest in air tools has a lot to do with the volume of work that flows through a woodshop. Pneumatic tools are usually less expensive to buy than cordless tools, especially when one compares the

cost of a small compressor to a bank of high Amp-hour batteries. But they do have their limits and they're best suited to shops that are equipped with large compressors.

On the other hand, pneumatic tools can benefit from a business concept known as marginal return. The more of them that are used daily in the shop, the less expensive it is to run each of them. One big motor on a

compressor is replacing dozens of corded tools and battery powered motors, and it runs in cycles and stores energy quite well in the form of compressed air trapped in the tank. Unless there are leaks in the hoses or pipe connections, there is very little wasted energy. And there are no charged batteries sitting on shelves for weeks at a time, slowly losing their power. **W**

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 2. WS-A3775 37"x75" \$20,990.00
 3. WS-DA3760 37"x60" (Two Heads) \$25,990.00

Feed Through End Match SFJ-300A

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BR-2132 21 Bits Vertical-Horizontal Boring \$5,990.00

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Brandon Wong's Hop Scotch Boxes, winner of the high school division at Hawaii's Woodshow.

HFIA hosts 32nd annual Hawaii's Woodshow

By Jennifer Hicks

The Hawaii Forest Industry Association (HFIA) hosted Hawaii's Woodshow, Nov. 17-23, at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center in Honolulu. The exhibition features a juried woodworking competition, student work, demonstrations, and artist conversations.

The Woodshow promotes the positive role forests play in Hawaii's economy and ecology.

"The show calls for the use of wood from Hawaiian-grown tree species, especially those that have been planted and brought to maturity here in Hawai'i. It serves as a reference point for the planting of native and non-native high value hardwoods for future generations," according to the HFIA.

Top awards went to Winter Anderson (Best of Show), Robert Butts (Award of Excellence), Joel Bright (Award of Distinction), and Alan Wilkinson (Award of Merit).

Jurors were Tai Lake, master furniture designer and maker; Travis Idol, professional forester and professor of Tropical Forestry and Agroforestry at the University of Hawaii, and Ginger Lunt, principal interior designer and founder of Tantalus Studios.

Learn more at woodshow.hawaiiforest.org.

STUDENT EXHIBITION

The Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) in Lakewood, Colo., hosted its fall 2024 Fine Woodworking Program exhibition on Dec. 14 at the school's studios.

Held at the end of each spring and fall semester to cel-



Other winners at Hawaii's Woodshow included Nicole Keola Gomes for a spindle table (top left) and student Andrew Penny for an outrigger canoe (bottom). An award-winning electric guitar (top right) by Jackson Mahew at the RRCC show.



brate craftsmanship, creativity and innovation, the exhibition featured a diverse collection of projects created by students across 21 specialized woodworking classes. Projects ranged from intricate furniture pieces to one-of-a-kind wooden carvings.

The school's Fine Woodworking Program offers degrees and certificates in the fields of furniture and cabinet making, CNC operation, wood finishing, and more. Learn more at rrcc.edu. **W**

**WOODPECKERS**

presents a new Flush Trim Base for palm and mid-sized routers. It features a 6" x 15" phenolic plate, pre-drilled to fit most trim routers. It also fits 1.5-hp routers with the standard Porter-Cable three-screw base plate. It sells for an introductory price of \$99.99. Learn more at woodpeck.com.

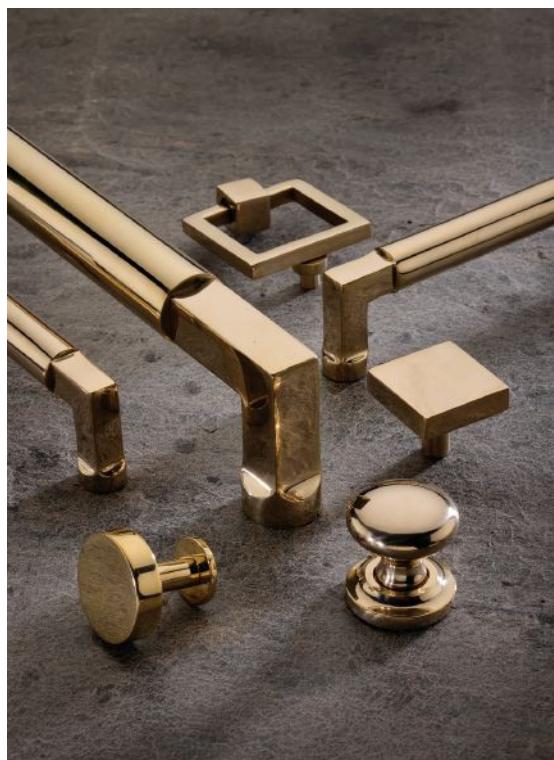
**METABO HPT**

has added two new cordless tools, a 23-gauge pin nailer and track saw, to its MultiVolt battery lineup. The 18-volt pin nailer, model NP1835DA, can drive fasteners up to 1-3/8" in length and features a fixed nose design and a double trigger for safety. It sells for \$199 with a 2.0Ah battery, charger, no mar nose caps and safety glasses. The 6-1/2" track saw, model C3606DPA, features a brushless motor, soft start, and electric break. It sells for \$499 with a 4.0Ah battery, charger, and stackable hard case.

Learn more at metabo-hpt.com.

**OSBORNE WOOD PRODUCTS**

introduces a new Bamboo Leg collection, created to resemble natural bamboo poles with round profiles and carved nodes delicately placed along each piece. A top square block is included in the designs for ease of attachment to table aprons and tabletops, according to the company. Learn more at osbornewood.com.



ASHLEY NORTON

introduces unlacquered brass to its array of finishes available for its solid brass architectural hardware collection. The unlacquered brass finish is available in all Ashley Norton solid brass hardware, cabinet hardware and accessories. It joins the company's array of luxurious finish options including satin nickel, dark oil rubbed, polished chrome, satin brass, polished brass, burnished brass, and polished nickel. Learn more at ashleynorton.com.



ONEFINITY

has partnered with RapidChange ATC to bring the Onefinity Easy ATC to market. "The Onefinity Easy ATC is the only automatic tool changer on the market that allows you to use your existing collet spindle to easily change tools automatically. In addition, the Easy ATC features load and unload sensors to help ensure your tool gets loaded properly. If a tool gets loaded incorrectly, the sensors will trigger an alarm and stop the CNC until the issue is corrected," the company explained. Learn more at onefinitycnc.com.

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a provider of compressed air solutions, offers the RK Rotary Screw Air Compressor Fixed Speed Series with an integrated dryer, which delivers consistent, dry, clean air while optimizing both cost and floor space, according to the company. Models, ranging from 5-50 hp, come with a digital dewpoint indicator and an electronic dryer controller. Learn more at pneutech.com.

CALENDAR

Organizations sponsoring meetings, classes or shows of interest to professional or hobbyist woodworkers are invited to submit items to 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 at least 60 days before the event.

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

— Compiled by Jennifer Hicks

ARIZONA

April 29-May 1 — Woodworking Industry Conference, presented by the Wood Industry Association, featuring networking opportunities, presentations and more. Location: Fairmont Scottsdale Princess in Scottsdale. woodindustry.org

CALIFORNIA

Monthly — San Fernando Valley Woodworkers meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Highland Hall Waldorf

School's woodshop in Northridge. sfvw.org

Monthly — Society of Wood Manufacturing, a chapter of AWFS consisting of educators, manufacturers, hardware and industrial suppliers, and machinery dealers, meets during the second week of each month. For location and dates, visit awfs.org.

Monthly — San Joaquin Fine Woodworkers Association meetings are open to all experience levels at members' shops. For locations and dates, visit sjfwa.com.

FLORIDA

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

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

April 10-12 — Stairbuilders & Manufacturers Association's annual conference featuring educational presentations, networking, awards, and more. Location: Hilton Pensacola Beach, Pensacola. stairways.org

GERMANY

May 26-30 — LIGNA, an international trade fair for woodworking

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IDAHO

March 29-30 — 15th annual Idaho Artistry in Wood and Gourds Show featuring work by local artisans, demos, vendors, and more. Location: JUMP creative center in Boise. idahoartistryinwood.org

LOUISIANA

March 26-28 — 69th annual World of Wood Convention in New Orleans, hosted by the International Wood Products Association, featuring vendors, educational presentations, and networking events. iwpawood.org

MAINE

Ongoing — The Center for Furniture Craftsmanship offers year-round classes in woodworking to the highest degree of craftsmanship. One- and two-week workshops from June through October; 12-week Furniture Intensives; a nine-month Comprehensive; eight-week Turning Intensives, and Fellowships. woodschool.org

MARYLAND

Monthly — The Howard County Woodworkers Guild meets the first Saturdays of the month at the Bain Senior Center at 5470 Ruth Keeton Way in Columbia from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Contact: Manny Flecker at aaron0641@hotmail.com.

MINNESOTA

Monthly — The Minnesota Woodworkers Guild meets on the second Tuesday of each month at various locations. mnwwg.org

June 28-29 — American Craft Fest, hosted by the American Craft Council, featuring handmade objects by emerging makers from across the region. Location: Union Depot in St. Paul. craftcouncil.org

NEVADA

Feb. 25-27 — Kitchen & Bath Industry Show and International Builders' Show at the Las Vegas Convention Center. designandconstructionweek.com

July 22-25 — AWFS Fair, featuring over 500 exhibitors, educational seminars, networking opportunities, and more. Location: Las Vegas Convention Center. awfsfair.org

NEW JERSEY

Monthly — The North Jersey Woodworkers Association meets the third Monday of every month. njawoodworkers.org

Monthly — The Professional Woodworkers Guild of Upper New Jersey meets the third Wednesday of every month. njwoodguild.com

NEW YORK

Monthly — The Woodworkers of Central New York holds meetings on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Belgium Cold Springs Fire Department in Baldwinsville. woodcny.org

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

Monthly — The Long Island Woodworkers meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Frank Brush Barn of the Smithtown Historical Society in Smithtown. liwoodworkers.org

April 5-6 — Wood Finishing Fundamentals weekend workshop with Mike Mascelli. Fee: \$375, plus \$50 materials. Location: Wendell Castle Workshop in Scottsville. wendell-castle.org

April 26 — Getting the Most from your Band Saw with Michael Fortune, a one-day workshop. Fee: \$200. Location: Wendell Castle Workshop in Scottsville. wendell-castle.org

April 28 — May 4 — Advanced Woodworking: Tables and Benches with Michael Fortune. Fee: \$1,400. Location: Wendell Castle Workshop in Scottsville. wendellcastle.org

May 18-20 — International Contemporary Furniture Fair at the Javits Convention Center. icff.com

May 26-30 — Northeastern Woodworkers Association Woodworkers Showcase, featuring work by amateur and professional woodworkers.

Location: Saratoga Springs City Center in Saratoga. woodworker.org

June 26-28 — Furniture Society Conference, "You Are Here: Makers, Place, & Impact", featuring workshops, artist talks, panel discussions, demos, and more. Location: Syracuse University. furnsoc.org

NORTH CAROLINA

Monthly — Triangle Woodworkers Association meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Klingspor's Woodworking Shop. Location: MacGregor Village in Cary. trianglewoodworkers.com

Monthly — Charlotte Woodworkers Association meets the third Tuesday of each month, except December, at 6:15 p.m. Location: 8801 Park Road in Charlotte. charlottewoodworkers.org

April 15-17 — National Wood Flooring Association's Expo, a trade show dedicated exclusively to wood flooring. Location: Charlotte Convention Center. nwfaexpo.org

April 26-30 — Spring High Point Furniture Market. The furniture industry trade show features showroom tours, vendors, speakers, educational seminars, and networking events.

highpointmarket.org

OHIO

Ongoing — Cincinnati Woodworking Club meets the second Saturday in the months of Jan., March, May, Sept. and Nov. from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the E.B. Mueller in Reading. cincinnatewoodworkingclub.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Monthly — Lehigh Valley Woodworkers Guild meets at 6:30 p.m. every third Tuesday of the month at the Woodcraft in Allentown. Various craftspeople provide presentations on their woodworking techniques. lwwg.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. Learn more at sdwoodworker.org. **W**

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WOODSHOPNEWS



SawStop donates

SawStop recently donated over \$10,000 worth of table saws and accessories to six disabled woodworkers. Working with the Katz-Moses Woodworkers with Disabilities Fund, a non-profit charity based in California, SawStop stepped in to help these individuals overcome their physical and mental disabilities to create and build with wood, and to ensure their hands are protected by the company's finger-saving technology.

"We want to encourage people from all walks of life and all levels of skill and ability to take up woodworking," SawStop CEO Matt Howard said in a statement. "We want to help these six to feel better and enjoy working with wood. And above all, we want them to be safe while using a table saw. That's why we're thrilled to provide them with SawStop table saws and related products to ensure they can cut wood safely and with confidence. And that confidence and peace of mind will shine through in the work they create."

There were over 100 submissions from nonprofit organizations and individuals. Katz-Moses was selected primarily because of its mission to help as many people as possible, according to SawStop.

"Safety saws are far and away the number one most requested tool by our disabled applicants," says Chris Giffrow, executive director of Katz-Moses. "SawStop getting these tools in their hands demonstrates their commitment to shop safety and the disabled woodworking community."

The six recipients include John Philip "JP" Barmer of Spring Hill, Tenn.; Ken Daliege of Eastpointe, Mich.; Cullen Kyser of Salem, Ohio; Brandon Nance of West Richland, Wash.; Pasquale "Pat" Russo of Las Vegas, and Kendrick "Kenny" Teis of Rockford, Mich. **W**

60 Grit

Rough humor by Steve Spiro



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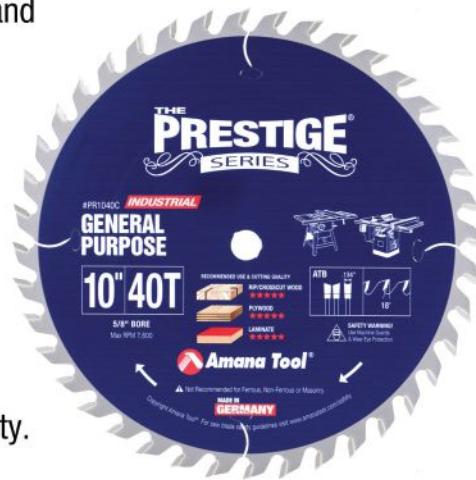
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