

# Woodworkers Club of Houston

**This Month's  
Special Presenter:  
Luthier Fred Sandoval**

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Matt Adams  
Paul Bynum  
Pat Bynum  
Roslyn Hager  
Joseph Stassi  
Jeff Teter

## Woodworking Show Highlights

So, how much coin did you drop at the show last month? Did you simply window-shop, or did you find that one electro-gizmo-thingy-dobber that you can't live without? You know, the one that is guaranteed to make your next project look like the cover of Fine Woodworking magazine?

Thousands of woodworkers of all ages, genders, races, and levels of expertise (isn't it great to be a part of a group where everyone is accepted?) descended upon Reliant Convention Center April 4-6. Exhibitions of tools and demonstrations of techniques gave us all a little more to dream about for future projects.

Members of our own WWCH were on hand to greet the public and meet potential new members.



The WWCH booth featured some of the more recent show 'n tell items, including those from the box contest. There was also an ample supply of the toys that the group makes for Houston charities every year.

This writer didn't come away unscathed from the financial carnage at the "tool 'n drool" either. I had determined that this year's outlay of cash would be about safety. While laying down some

cash for a Magnaswitch featherboard, I kept eyeing a dust collector. After weighing the options (paying for my daughter's car insurance vs. the long-term effects of wood-particle inhalation), I decided to retire my shop-vac and go for the dust collector.

Just be prepared—if you spent a fair amount of money at the show and haven't told your wife, make sure you run by Academy to purchase one of those camping mattresses. It will make your night's sleep on your table saw much more comfortable!



**Jim Heavey of Wood Magazine gave several presentations.**

# The Elves of Edloe Street

*The following was written by a lifelong friend of Hugh Parker and dedicated to the memory of his parents, Hugh and Mary Parker of Tyler.*

It's Tuesday morning, and inside a small, non-assuming structure on Edloe Street in Houston, the air is thick with wood dust and alive with the sounds of a dozen or more woodworking tools. The mission of the workers in the building is to help and serve – especially needy children.

“We just passed the six thousand mark,” says Hugh Parker with a pleasant smile, “and it is only August.” He is sought out by a man carrying a slab of rich red wood. “Can we put this in our stock?” he asks. The man is 84. “Sure enough,” says Hugh, 65, one of the youngest in the group of woodworkers. He is also the founder and leader of the volunteer effort swirling about him. “We build a variety of things and do a lot of home repairs for church members.”

The main focus of the group of busy, silver haired workers are small wooden toys cut from two inch thick wood in a wide variety of shapes that are sized to fit into a child's hand. Various pieces of wood are planed smooth and ripped into rectangular blanks. Outlines of



*“Many of our people live for Tuesdays.”*

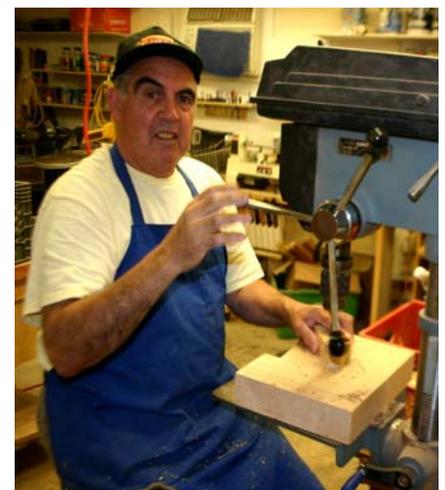
ducks, dogs, and dinosaurs; horses, elephants, and snakes; cars, pickup trucks, and eighteen wheelers are traced onto the blanks. Then, the profiles are cut on band saws, sanded, and drilled. Some parts are glued or braded together. The staccato rapping of hammers heard in the woodshop ensures that all the toys have wooden wheels. They beg to be picked up -- and feel good and warm in your hands when they are. They are simple toys, but they invoke a feeling of comfort and stir the imaginations of all who see, touch, or play with them.

“My father was a cabinet maker, and I have worked with wood all my life,” says Hugh, a retired geophysicist with Shell Oil. “I’ve been working with Habitat for Humanity since ’95. In 1997 my church, St Luke’s United Methodist Church, asked me to clean out this junk space,” says Hugh, “and I thought that a woodshop might be a good thing for some of our retired men to use. We got into making a few toys, and it just grew to meet the need. We honor any requests from any church or other charity.”

The word also got out within St Luke’s, and soon a regular cadre of men appeared every Tuesday morning and worked steadily for five to six hours. After a while, the women found out about it, said that the men were having too much fun, and are now are working too. “Many of our people live for Tuesdays,” says Hugh. They become specialists in a particular job, and that’s what they want to do.”

Among the workers are three World War II veterans, a survivor of the battle of Chosin Reservoir in Korea, an engineering professor, and a veteran ER nurse from Herman Hospital. One member suffered a serious stroke, but is now back drilling the holes for the wooden animals’ eyes. In 2007, a total of 12,000 toys were delivered through a variety of worthy charities into the hands of appreciative, deserving children.

In February, a much needed improvement was completed to the woodshop on Edloe Street in the form of an enlarged second room and an outside porch. The new room and porch were dedicated and named the *Hugh D Parker Annex* by the appreciative woodshop elves. The following Tuesday morning, the sounds and the sawdust clouds continued... and so does the mission to serve needy children in the Greater Houston area.



# APRIL SHOW 'N TELL



Bob Roeder has no excuse to be late with his watch!



Bill Byrne with inspirational intarsia made from poplar, oak, mahogany, padauk, aromatic cedar, and basswood.



Need more power? VP Mike Turner shows us how with his electrical outlet. For plans on how to make your own, go to <http://www.wvch.org/Plans/ElecOutletBoard.htm>



Ridg Gilmer's miter saw bench—wow!



Jeff Marks bowled us over with four segmented bowls, including the one below from African mahogany.



Don't let these guys have all the fun—share one of your recent projects with us!



10-4 good buddy, Joe Jenkins' tractor rig is mostly pine and a lot of attention to detail.



Cliff Ober displayed some rasps and files he made with compression nut handles constructed with cocobolo and kingwood. The cutting gauge to the right is a beautiful example. In addition, he showed slides of his remodeled bathroom.



## CAN WE TALK?

Hugh Poland

We didn't receive any responses to last month's question, "How did you get involved in woodworking?" I did, however, have the chance to speak to one of our members, Charles Volek, and found that his story was interesting and inspirational, to say the least.

Charles once crewed on the Elissa, the 1877 tall-masted ship moored in Galveston. At one point in his life, the dreaded "C" word struck. Undaunted, Charles took up woodworking, specifically in-

*Which of your tools  
would you miss  
the most?*

tarsia, because he found it to be so therapeutic. The good news is, Charles is now in remission, so the cancer is gone, but the love of woodworking is with him to stay.

Here's a question for next month's issue, and I'd really like to hear from you:

If something (or someone) took your tools away, (see Ridg Gilmer's article on p. 7) which one would you miss the most? It may not be the "workhorse" of your shop, but

## SCOUTING YOUNG WOODWORKERS

Andy Anderson



On Friday April 11 Nick Darden, Jerry Harmsen & Andy Anderson conducted a mini workshop for 2 Girl Scout and 1 boy scout troop at Jersey Village Church of Christ Church. Approximately 30 scouts along with parents attended. Each scout was given a bird house kit made from recycled fencing. In appreciation each club member received four boxes of Girl Scout cookies.



**Eager Scouts with cookie-loving carpenters!**

rather something of sentimental value. Tell me about it through email [hpoland@earthlink.net](mailto:hpoland@earthlink.net) or phone (281-360-0673) and we might be able to tell your story next month.

# HAND PLANE SPLINTER GROUP

**Mark Bollinger**

We had a particularly interesting meeting of the Hand Plane Splinter Group in March. As coordinator of the group, I'm aware that other club members (those not in the splinter group) fall into two camps:

1.) those who have no idea how we could possibly spend so many Thursday evenings discussing hand planes, and

2.) those who think we sit around discussing:

- the merits of Bedrock vs Bailey plane designs
- how many planes does one really need
- the best way to construct and use a shooting board (no, it's not a target)
- which of the five common sharpening methods is best
- the art of fettling (you have to be initiated before I can divulge further details)
- the best combination planes
- rabet planes (also not the object of target practice, nor an ingredient in a stew)
- the shoulder plane (not connected to the elbow plane or the neck plane)

Sadly, those in the second group are right. At our March meeting, we conducted a well-controlled highly scientific experiment in our desire to push back the frontiers of hand plane science. The objective was to test the effect of sharpening angle on plane performance. We used a common Stanley #5 jack plane (type 19, 1948-1961 vintage) and the Stanley blade that came with it. For a test bed, we used a rigid piece of soft maple approximately 1.5" wide, freshly jointed on the table saw to be flat and square. All sharpening was done with typical Japanese waterstones (common King variety), progressing from 800 to 1200 to 6000 grit.

The experiment started with the plane blade at 20 degrees on the primary bevel. Then a secondary



bevel was honed at 25, 30, 35, and 45 degrees. One person (me) reassembled the plane each time, under the close attention of another member (Hugh Parker). This helped to assure that the plane setup was identical for each test. We then took turns generating shavings on the maple test bed.

*"We were surprised  
by the results."*

We were surprised by the results. The 20 degree angle wasn't very good, but that's probably associated with the difficulty of producing a sharp edge on such a wide expanse of metal. As far as we could tell, sharpening angles from 25 to 45 degrees made very little difference. In fact, the 45 degree angle produced a shaving that was the length of the maple board (5 ft) and nicely thin. It seemed that the plane was less prone to chatter at this angle. We all agreed that it was slightly harder to push the plane at higher angles, but not so hard as to discourage use of a high angle.

Our conclusion: consider using the highest angle you can, moderated by the amount of pushing that you want to do.

In the future, we'll still be discussing hand plane trivia. However, we have decided to expand into other areas of hand tool arcana as well. Our May or June meeting will be devoted to sharpening handsaws.

# CLUB NEWS AND VIEWS

## Shop Crawl Date Announced

The date of the annual WWCH shop crawl has been set for Saturday, June 14, and we're still looking for volunteers who would allow us to get a peek into their shop. We need to finalize the list at the May meeting, so if you're willing for your shop to be featured, please contact Mark Bolinger at [marksmithb@windstream.net](mailto:marksmithb@windstream.net).

There will be 2 themes this year. One is to provide a fun forum for WWCH members to learn how other members set up their shops.

The second is that we'd like for volunteers to present some topic of interest to beginning woodworkers, however volunteers should note that this isn't mandatory.

## Library News

The WWCH Library continues to grow under the leadership of John Gay. But if you're looking for a particular title, email John at [gay-rock@earthlink.net](mailto:gay-rock@earthlink.net) to make sure the title you want is available, and he will bring it to the next meeting. And thanks for bringing your books and videos back on time!

*We're on the web!*  
[www.wwch.org](http://www.wwch.org)

**And don't forget these other great websites when you're surfing around . . .**

[www.billpentz.com](http://www.billpentz.com) Think you know it all on dust collection?

[www.levins.com/esherrick.html](http://www.levins.com/esherrick.html) Site devoted to the "Dean of American Craftsmen"

[www.wbgu.org/americanwoodshop/](http://www.wbgu.org/americanwoodshop/) Scott Phillips' popular TV show is back!

# Trading Post

## WANT TO BUY

1998 or newer Honda Gold Wing Black or silver preferred. I need it to haul small woodworking tools and meeting information to and from the meeting every month. CONTACT: Saul Harris at [sharris@sawdustcreek.com](mailto:sharris@sawdustcreek.com) or 713-299-3785

## FOR SALE

Delta Unisaw—220v single phase, no table, normally \$3000, I have 3 of them available at \$1000 each. CONTACT: Saul Harris at [sharris@sawdustcreek.com](mailto:sharris@sawdustcreek.com) or 713-299-3785.

Craftsman Thickness Planer—works great, \$100. CONTACT Monte Richard at 281-556-6644 or [charles-richard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:charles-richard@sbcglobal.net)

## HELP WANTED

I need someone to make a base for a glass dining table. I would like a quality wood base only, I can produce pictures and scaled drawings. Contact Jim West at [jcwest1@earthlink.net](mailto:jcwest1@earthlink.net)

## DISCOVERY BOX PROJECT

The Houston Arboretum & Nature Center requests help from WWCH members with a "Discovery Box" project.

Each box is designed to be a lesson about the natural world. The wooden boxes measure approximately 6x16X18 and have compartments housing elements of the lesson. Each box has a lid with a piano hinge and a stop open chain for the lid.

The Arboretum will provide materials. For more information, contact Lucien Bouffard at 713-366-0377.

Help wanted to clean and restore the stock on guns. Contact Rich Thomas at 713-666-9073.

Trading Post ads are always free, but subject to available space. To place or remove an ad in the newsletter, contact Hugh Poland at 281-360-0673 or email [hpoland@earthlink.net](mailto:hpoland@earthlink.net).

Ads will run one month at a time. If your item hasn't sold, contact Hugh to let him know you want the ad to run again the following month.

All ads must be placed 14 days before the 2nd Saturday monthly meeting. Of course, we invite you to post your WTB or FOR SALE items on the board in the meeting room.

# IT'S NINE O'CLOCK ... DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR TOOLS ARE?

**RIDG GILMER**

Several years ago, I hired some workmen to do some remodeling on my prior home and patio. One morning, they came to work and asked "Where's the tools?" Someone - probably a disgruntled competitor - had used a detector to raise my garage door and lifted the tools while I slept inside. I called my homeowners insurance, but they offered no coverage for the workmen's tools - only my own. With that unpleasant memory in mind, I recently checked into coverage for my increasingly valuable collection of woodworking tools. Fellow member and mentor, Jack Hutchison, put me onto The Easy Shop Tool Journal (C:\Easyshop

\tooljournal.com) and I signed up for the unregistered shareware version 1.2. This program is reasonably intuitive - I am no whiz at com-

*Do you know the value  
of your tools?*

puters - and it does a great job of cataloging tools. The Tool Inventory is divided into categories of Bench, Fixed, Hand and Power Tools. You can list the manufacturer, tool's name, Model No., Serial No., Warranty, Purchased From, Date and Price in as much detail as desired or available. It

gives you the number of tools/category, the cost/category and the grand total. I was surprised at my total.

I've been with State Farm Insurance Companies since moving to TX in 1971, so that's where I went for information. Yes - my tools are covered under my regular Homeowners Policy, but subject to the \$5000 deduction I have elected for fire and burglary coverage, so that's not much help. I can purchase a rider, providing first dollar coverage for tool theft at \$5.50/\$1000. I can choose how much coverage to buy and no - it is not tied directly to the inventory list.

Other insurance companies may vary, but just keep in mind that those of us with open garage shops are quite susceptible to would-be burglars cruising by and having a look at our tools. Garage doors are notoriously subject to scanners that can decode and open them with no forced entry. You won't even hear them. Check out the neat Tool Inventory, even if you decide not to insure.

## THE LAST LAUGH ...

A little boy wanted \$100.00 very badly and prayed for weeks, but nothing happened. Then he decided to write God a letter requesting the \$100.00.

When the postal authorities received the letter to God, they decided to send it to the President. The president was so amused that he instructed his secretary to send

the little boy a \$5.00 bill. The president thought this would appear to be a lot of money to a little boy.

The little boy was delighted with the \$5.00 bill and sat down to write this thank-you note:

Dear God: Thank you very much for sending the money. However, I noticed that for some reason you sent it through Washington, D.C., and the government deducted \$95 in taxes.

## WWCH Purpose

The Woodworkers Club of Houston is a group of men and women of all ages and skill levels who promote, educate, and share the craft of woodworking. The club meets the second Saturday of every month from 9-11:30 at Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet at Hillcroft. Guests are always welcome at no charge. Membership dues are \$24 a year, or about the price you'd pay for one good clamp!

## WWCH Contacts

President	Saul Harris	713-299-3785
Vice President	Mike Turner	281-346-1544
Secretary	Ed Zinni	832-778-7830
Treasurer	Bill Cole	713-772-6697
Publications	Bill White	713-524-8768
Mentor	Rich Thomas	713-666-9073
Mentor	Lon Kelley	713-467-9011
Mentor	Mark Bollinger	281-544-6867
Newsletter	Hugh Poland	281-360-0673

# Woodworkers Club *of Houston*

PO Box 815  
Sugar Land, TX 77487-0815

## Coming Events

Friday, May 2

Southwest Houston Splinter Group

Saturday, May 10

Monthly Meeting at Bayland Comm. Center

Saturday, June 14

Shop Crawl after Monthly Meeting

To be sure your woodworking-related event is listed in this space, please contact Hugh Poland at 281-360-0673 or hpoland@earthlink.net.

## The Cutting Edge offers only the finest woodworking tools and supplies.

Come visit and see our new and expanded store. We've kept all the best lines of supplies and equipment and added lumber and a few other surprises. We're still committed to providing the best sales and service in the Houston area. You won't be disappointed.

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