

Woodworkers Club of Houston

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Craftsmanship vs. toolmanship

By Ridg Gilmer

Recently a group of our members gathered at Jack Hutchison's garage shop to view his masterpiece antique reproduction corner cabinets. Some marveled at how he could function so well in such limited space, given that he was simultaneously working on four base and four separate upper cabinets. Certainly his shop is well set up and organized, but neither excessively equipped nor exorbitantly expensive. Anyone with comparable space and a moderate investment could easily duplicate or exceed the physical specifications there. In fact, an editor from Popular Woodworking recently visited and worked alongside Norm Abrams in The New Yankee Workshop. The writer mentioned in a recent issue that he had visited hobbyist-owned shops that easily matched or exceeded Norm's fabled facility.

Having known and observed Jack's craftsmanship over the past couple of years, it's become quite evident, as I remarked to my friend and mentor, "It ain't the shop!" True, the proper tools, well maintained and tuned to perfection and accuracy are a huge help. But the pieces that speak so eloquently for the craftsman are the direct result of gifted talent, long experience and above all, incredible self-discipline. He's at it from 5:30 or 6:00 am daily and goes right through to lunch around noon or later, then he's often back at it again. Bit by bit and piece-by-piece he fashions wood into incredibly complex shapes and detailed pieces.

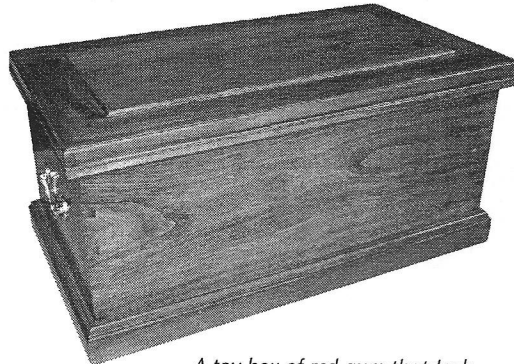
We who enjoy woodworking do so with varying

expertise and over years of experience our performance may improve. Perhaps those who begin early in life will attain higher goals than those who have come later, as a retirement hobby. But at some point we shall all peak at some level, beyond which we may not greatly improve. I know, from decades and dollars devoted to golf lessons, practice and equipment changes that I'll never be more than a mediocre golfer. Tiger Woods' clubs would be useless in my hands, yet he could play shots with my set that doubtless would match those with his own. How many times do we respond to the enticement of the latest, greatest, most up-to-date woodworking

tool on the market?

Those who so cleverly pitch these implements have us believing that if we just had one of those, we could build this better.

None of us should become discouraged to realize that we might never attain the level of craftsmanship that we desire. After all, we do this for our own pleasure and satisfaction. We shall enjoy the process, regardless of the outcome, even if the result is to discard and begin again. And if we do something surprisingly well, we may reward ourselves by purchasing another tool!



A toy box of red gum that Jack built for his grandson. It is patterned after an 18th century jointer tool box.

Date set for WWCH annual picnic: October 15. Get your tickets early.

By Dottie Forbes

Planning began in earnest for the 2005 Houston

Woodworker's picnic at a dinner meeting hosted by the picnic chairman, **Dottie Forbes**. With input from **Ken and Vicki Kooser, Jim and Charlotte Robertson, Walter and Jeannie Mason, Blaine and Esther Stokes, Eddie and Jessica Arnold, John Jackson and Jamie Powers**, the various committees needed to pull this year's event together were identified and partially staffed as noted below.

Barbeque: Jamie Powers*, Blain Stokes, John Jackson (volunteers needed)

Belt sander races: Jim Robertson* (volunteers needed)

Desserts: Dottie Forbes (volunteers needed)

Kids' activities: Jim Robertson* ((volunteers needed)

Ladies' events: (volunteers needed)

Tool raffle: Eddie Arnold*, Dottie Forbes (volunteers needed)

Tool auction: Alan Bachrach (auctioneer), Dottie Forbes, Eddie Arnold (volunteers needed)



Last year's event was a huge success because everyone who came had fun, brought home a tool or two or ate way too much barbeque. But the people

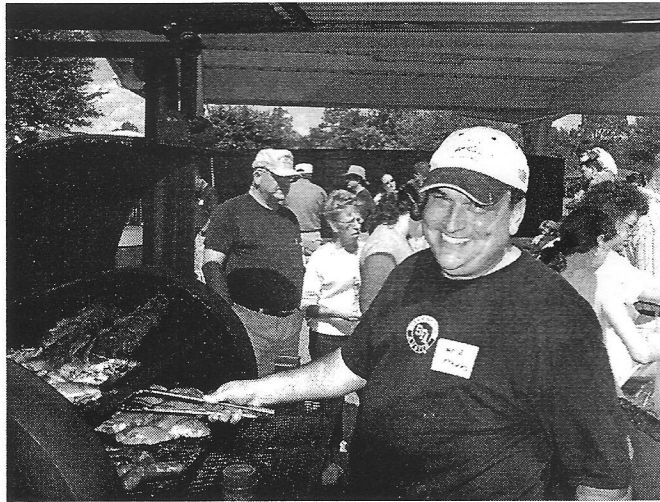
that had the most fun were the volunteers that helped put the party together. Now it's your turn to have fun.

As you can see we need volunteers, as well as member input, for this event to be a success once again. To offer suggestions for the picnic you are welcome to attend the board meeting immediately following the August club meeting (August 13). To offer your assistance please feel free to approach any of the

committee chairs or contact the picnic chairman, Dottie Forbes (713-862-2815).

The Bayland Community Pavilion will be our venue once again (6400 Bissonett). There will be fun, games, prizes, tool auction, raffle & swap meet, barbeque and, this year, a dessert contest. We'll kick things off about 11:00 and try to finish up about 3:00. The cost will be \$9.00 per person and \$16.00 if you buy two tickets for a couple. This is our big party of the year folks so plan to attend. And if you're the kind of person that likes too much fun volunteer for something.

*committee chair



Rules of Thumb

By Ken Kooser

Reading through a copy of **Fine Woodworking** from several years back makes one realize what a wonderful asset this publication is. Did you know that rules of thumb got its start when Brew masters used their thumb to sense the temperature of the brew? Another theory is that the segment of the thumb, which is about an inch in the average adult male, was used as a measure. Here is a collection of **Rules of Thumb** relating to woodworking:

- If you don't have time to sand it before you paint it, you'll have to make the time afterward.
- You can never find warped board when you're building a curved structure.
- Old tools never die, they accumulate.
- Building furniture from blueprints is only for sissies, perfectionists and those who do it for a living.
- Anything cut to length is too short.
- If a married couple is spending in excess of \$5,000 on a constriction or renovation project, recommend a marriage counselor
- The distance between hindsight and perfection is measured in firewood, sawdust and frustration.
- There are two times when a woodworker hurries: just before he makes a mistake and just after.
- To avoid hitting your thumb while nailing, be sure to hold the hammer with both hands.
- The shortest pencil is worth more than the longest memory.



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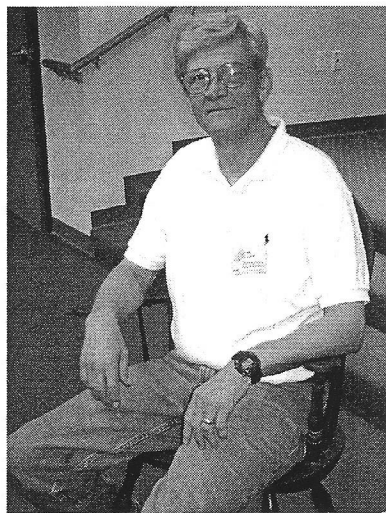
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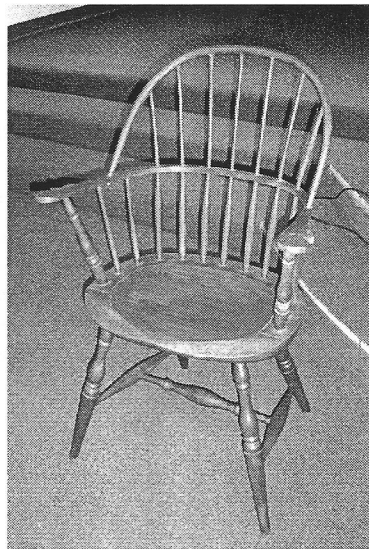
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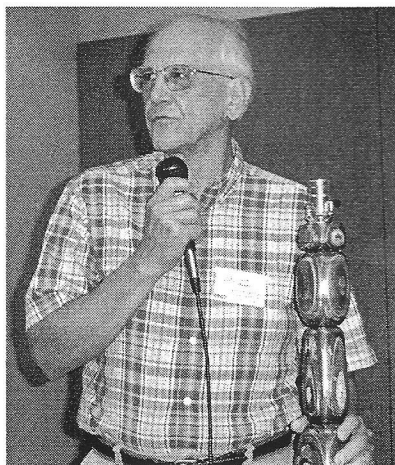
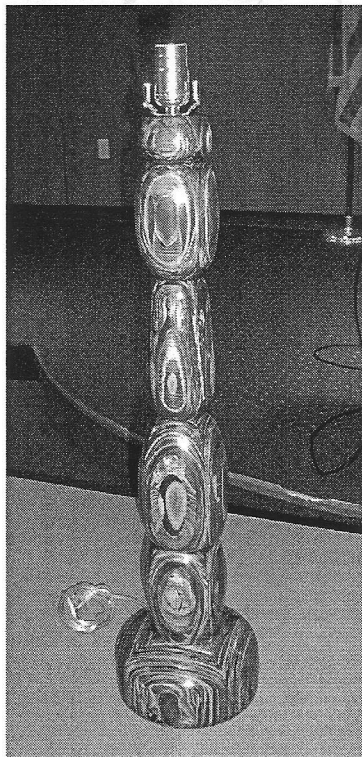
July projects



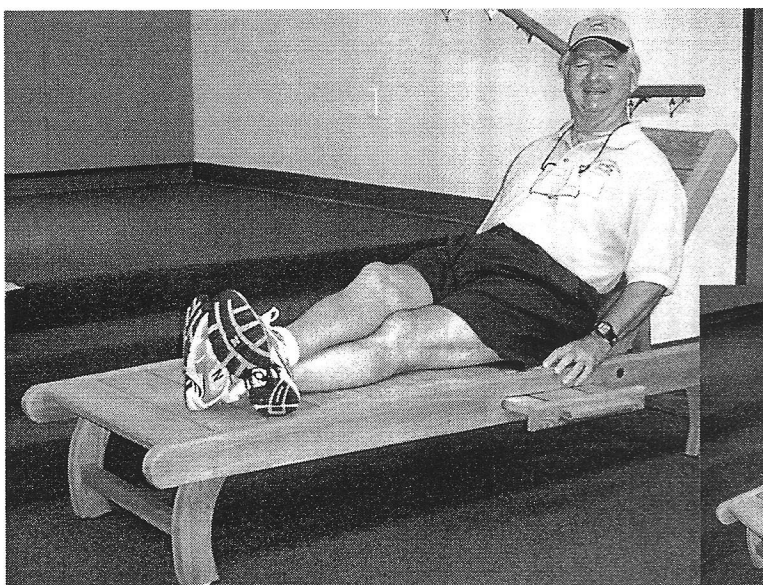
Irv Doty takes a breather in his Windsor chair that he made in the traditional way, by hand. Irv used three different woods; northern pine for the seat, green red oak for upper pieces and hard maple for the spindles. It is finished with milk paint and topped with linseed oil. The traditional color is green but he chose blue.



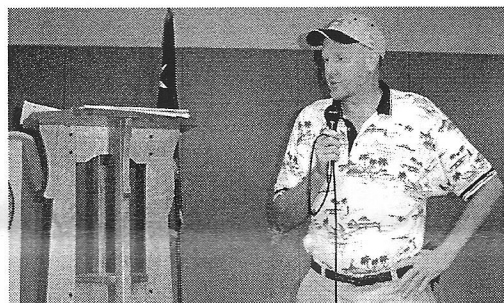
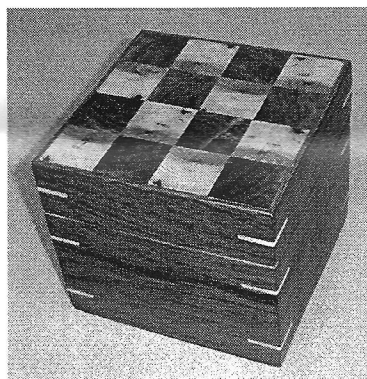
This intarsia balloon of purple heart, osage, padouk, walnut, western red cedar and oak is proudly showed off by **Steve Wavro**. When Steve sanded the purple heart it turned brown. He then placed the wood in the sunlight for two hours which returned the color to purple—neat trick.



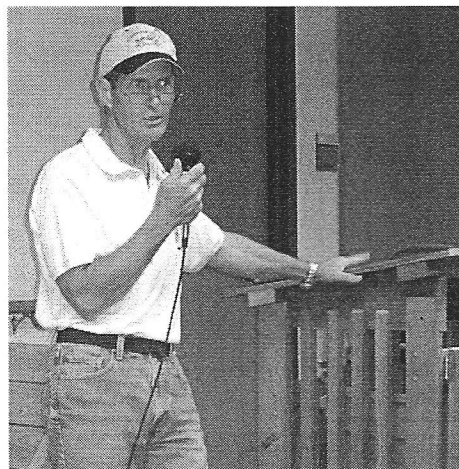
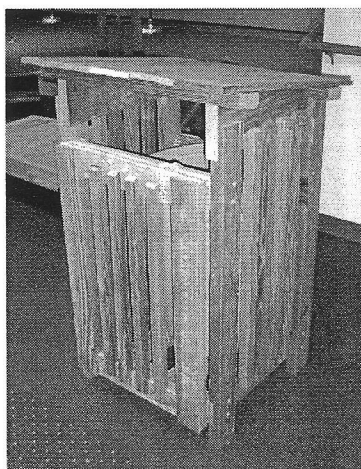
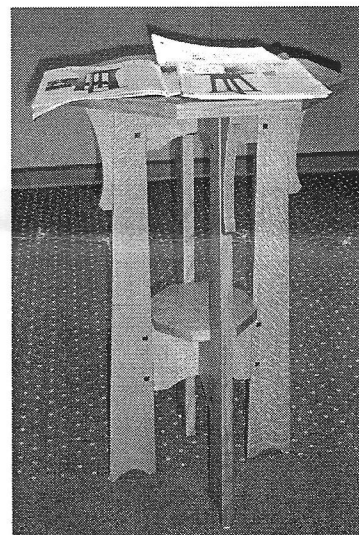
This lamp, as explained by **Lon Kelley**, is made of glued up plywood then turned. Lon says that plywood doesn't turn very well. He stained it dark followed by tung oil and wax.



Ridg Gilmer demonstrates how to relax on his chaise lounge of cypress. Ridg used a router to smooth the edges then finished with Thompson's Water Seal....mint julep anyone?



Rich Thomas talks about his Stickley style plant stand that he crafted mostly from one quartersawn white oak board. He also showed another Quarto game cube set of teak, the top of which is walnut and hickory.



This trash receptacle of pressure treated pine was constructed by **Dennis Serig** as a prototype for others in his neighborhood. Six more will soon be on the assembly line.

August Program by Guy Pike from Houston Hardwoods

The Woodworkers Club of Houston is in for a real treat in August. **Guy Pike** of **Houston Hardwoods** will begin with a brief overview of his business and the various goods and services that it provides. The remainder of the program will be in a question and answer format. We've primed the pump with questions collected from a few members, but as we all know, the more you learn about wood, its processing, its distribution, and its selection the better woodworker you will become. Bring your questions and join us in what promises to be a most interesting session.

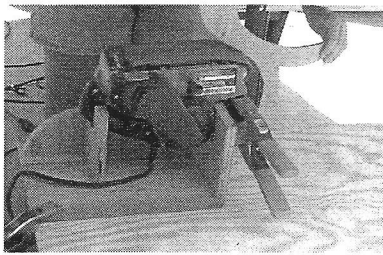
WWCH Membership Books

Membership books have been mailed to those members who have not collected their books at the club meeting. If you joined after the February meeting or paid your dues after that date but did not receive a book please see **Gary Rowen**.

FYI: Local Woodworking Resources

It has come to my attention that **Third Coast Hardwoods** is no longer in business. The phone number in the membership book now directs you to a private individual not associated with Third Coast. Please delete Third Coast Hardwoods from your membership book. The link to them in the website has also been removed.

Inverted Belt Sander Jig



Inverting a belt sander is a great way to get a little extra use from this already versatile shop tool. The trick is to build a jig that will hold your belt sander securely in

an inverted position. In this position the belt sander can be locked on and used to smooth and shape irregular pieces, round over boards, and perform many other operations. The top picture to the right shows a Grizzly combo belt/disc benchtop sander. The picture below it is our sander mounted in the inverted jig.

Because each brand and model of belt sander are different you will need to custom build the inverted stand for your specific sander. The belt sander shown in the picture to the right is a Porter Cable. The dust collector has been removed to allow it to sit down into

the jig. This jig was built in about 20 minutes with scrap wood. The belt sander is held in place with a pinch clamp.

Scrolling Safety

Scroll saws are actually one of the safest woodworking power tools, but lack of proper equipment or attention can still cause injury!

1. Safety glasses are still a necessity against broken blades and flying chips.
2. A good dust mask or ventilation system will protect your lungs from the fine dust.
3. The safety or workpiece guard will protect your fingers, but it must be adjusted properly. It should hold the wood firmly to the table, while allowing it to move freely for cutting.
4. Some saws have a spring system that is supposed to prevent broken blade halves from driving into your hand or your project. Even if your saw has such a setup, be wary.
5. I have found that an often overlooked danger with scroll saws is the vibrating arm! It can easily bruise a misplaced hand and even dislocate or break a finger!

Sanding Tips

Begin sanding with a starting grit of 80 to 100 for most woods.

- It's generally not necessary to sand finer than 180 grit.
- Don't switch to a finer grit until the sanding scratches of the prior grit are uniform.
- Use a low-angle "raking" light to evaluate the uniformity of the sanding scratches.
- Remember to sand with the grain of the wood.
- Don't try to sand off glue or pencil marks when hand sanding.
- "Break" or lightly sand edges to prevent splintering.
- Change sandpaper as soon as it becomes dull to save yourself lots of time.
- Don't use a belt sander on veneer !
- Sand between finishes with a grit no coarser than 200.
- A hand scraper is more effective at removing mill marks than sandpaper

Just Joking

One day, while a woodcutter was cutting a branch of a tree above a river, his ax fell into the river. When he cried out, the Lord appeared and asked, "Why are you crying?"

The woodcutter replied that his ax had fallen into the water, and he needed the ax to make his living.

The Lord went down into the water and reappeared with a golden ax.

"Is this your ax?" the Lord asked.

The woodcutter replied, "No."

The Lord again went down and came up with a silver ax. "Is this your ax?" the Lord asked.

Again, the woodcutter replied, "No."

The Lord went down again and came up with an iron ax. "Is this your ax?" the Lord asked.

The woodcutter replied, "Yes."

The Lord was pleased with the man's honesty and gave him all three axes to keep, and the woodcutter went home happy.

Some time later the woodcutter was walking with his wife along the riverbank, and his wife fell into the river.

When he cried out, the Lord again appeared and asked him, "Why are you crying?"

"Oh Lord, my wife has fallen into the river!"

The Lord went down into the water and came up

with Jennifer Lopez.

"Is this your wife?" the Lord asked.

"Yes," cried the woodcutter.

The Lord was furious. "You lied! That is an untruth!"

The woodcutter replied, "Oh, forgive me, my Lord. It is a misunderstanding. You see, if I had said 'no' to Jennifer Lopez, You would have come up with Catherine Zeta-Jones. Then if I also said 'no' to her, You would have come up with my wife. Had I then said 'yes,' you would have given all three to me. Lord, I am a poor man, and am not able to take care of all three wives, so THAT'S why I said yes to Jennifer Lopez."

The moral of this story is: Whenever a man lies, it is for a good and honorable reason, and for the benefit of others.

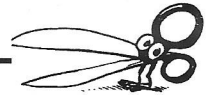
That's our story, and we're sticking to it.

Due to inherit a furniture factory when his sickly, widower father died, Clyde decided he needed a woman to enjoy it with.

Going to a singles' bar, he spotted a woman whose beauty took his breath away.

"I'm only an ordinary man," he said, walking up to her, "But in just a week or two, my father will die and I'll inherit a 20 million dollar business."

The woman went home with Clyde, and the next day she became his stepmother.



WWCH Monthly Meeting

Second Saturday of every month

We open the doors at 8:30am, program starts at 9:00 and winds up by 11:30am.

Bayland Community Center
6400 Bissonnet
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Woodworkers Club of Houston Membership Application

A WWCH Membership is a chance to learn about woodworking, visit with other woodworkers and see some fabulous projects. Your membership includes a monthly newsletter, access to our video and book library, invitation to field trips and occasionally we collectively buy tools at discounted prices. Considering the cost it's a genuine bargain. So, cut out this application, include a check for \$24.00 yearly membership and mail it to the address below. And join us once a month for a good time.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS:



Monthly Meeting:
August 13

Program: Guy Pike from
Houston Hardwoods

Next Meeting:
September 10

[Redacted Address]

Rule of Thumb: The piece that you have just put the glue on will always fall glue side down into the sawdust when you drop it. (More inside)

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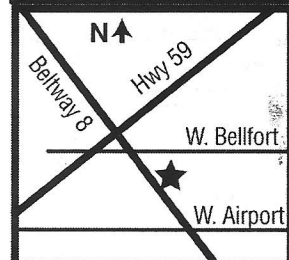
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