

# THE WOODWORKERS CLUB OF HOUSTON

Volume 19, Number 12

December, 2003

www.wwch.org

## LIBRARY REPORT

By John Gay

I have just three books to tell you about. The first is Roy Underhill's second book, which is a companion to his PBS television series. So if you want to do things the real old fashion way, from going into the forest to get timber to turning with a pedal lathe, this book is a must. However it is also a nice read and it is good to know of different methods of woodworking. So if are away this season and want something interesting to read this may be it.

Another addition is *The Fine Art of Cabinetmaking* by James Krenov. This book is all about using hand tools to make some nice work.

The last of the donations is the 2003 - 2004 Tool Review by Fine Woodworking. There are over 255 tools so there is bound to be something in there that you may need. This publication will be in the reference section so you will not be able to check it out but you can look at it during our meetings. So if you want to find that special Christmas gift for yourself, you can compare your choice with the reviews.

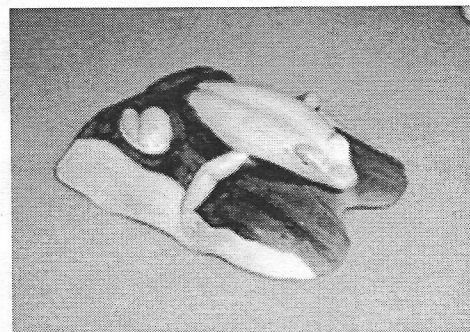
One of the special features that our library has may have been overlooked. In a special green binder, we have some of the plans that **Lon Kelley** has provided to the club on making many of the great band saw boxes and turnings that he has shown at *Show and Tell*. I would like to remind you that when you do a really nice project to take some photos of it and make some drawings of it and we could have it in our library for our members. Also, there are special yearly issues of some magazine that are filled with plans and techniques and very little advertising.

On our bookcases, we still have two blank canvases (41" w X 38" t) that could use some letters, fine scrollwork, intarsia, or types of woodworking to display the club's talent.

## CURRENT SLATE OF 2004 WWCH OFFICERS

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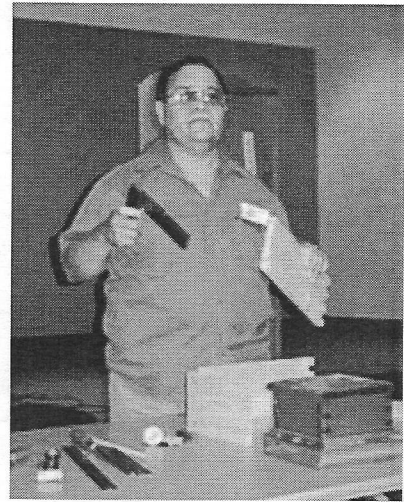
**Hank Merry** and his wife visited Bali and brought back this carved frog made by a Balinese craftsman. It is made from crocodile wood and wood from a hibiscus tree.

## NOVEMBER PROGRAM

# FRED SANDOVAL

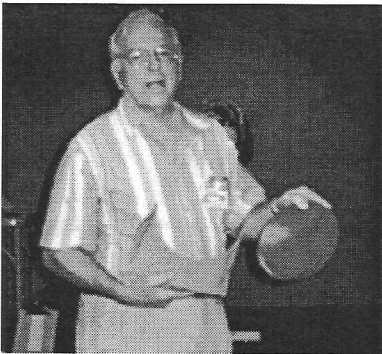
Fred Sandoval demonstrated to the members how he hand cuts dovetail joints. Here are some pointers to help refresh your memory:

1. Square up your stock,
2. Orient your pieces – north or south or A, B, C, D and mark the edges with arrows to indicate the outward side, and
3. Use a jointer to get the edges flat.



Pins are only on the front and back pieces. Use a roller scribe and set it to the thickness of the stock. Using a pin scribe tears the wood.

Use that pointy tool (divider) to mark the location of the pins. Fred first chisels out the pins. He then uses an 18-tooth backsaw to finish the angled edge. Clean out the bottoms of the pins by chiseling up to the edge but not through. Turn the board around and come back in the other direction to finish cleaning the pin. Lay front/back boards on their sides and mark the tails. 'X' out the waste. Cut as you would the pins.



Charlie Sylvester showed this bowl that he made from a discarded chunk of mesquite he had

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

We've got a real treat for this December's meeting! A representative from Bosch Tools will be showing off and demonstrating some of their tools. Bosch has also agreed to donate an item to the raffle, as well as possibly a couple of other door prizes. Be sure to attend – you might get an early gift!

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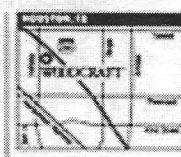
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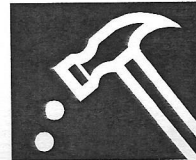
## REMINDER!!

Dues are \$24 per year.

Dues are prorated for new members only.

Renewing members in December are \$24.

New members in December are \$2.



## BRANDLE'S SAWMILL

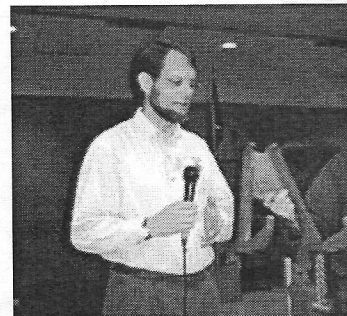
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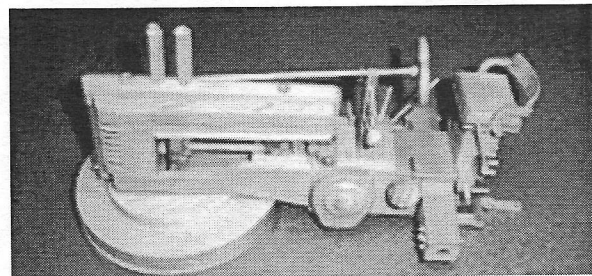
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**Rob Brayton** talks about his birch guitar stand. He cut the shape with a hand-held router and finished the stand with M.L. Campbell stain and varnish.

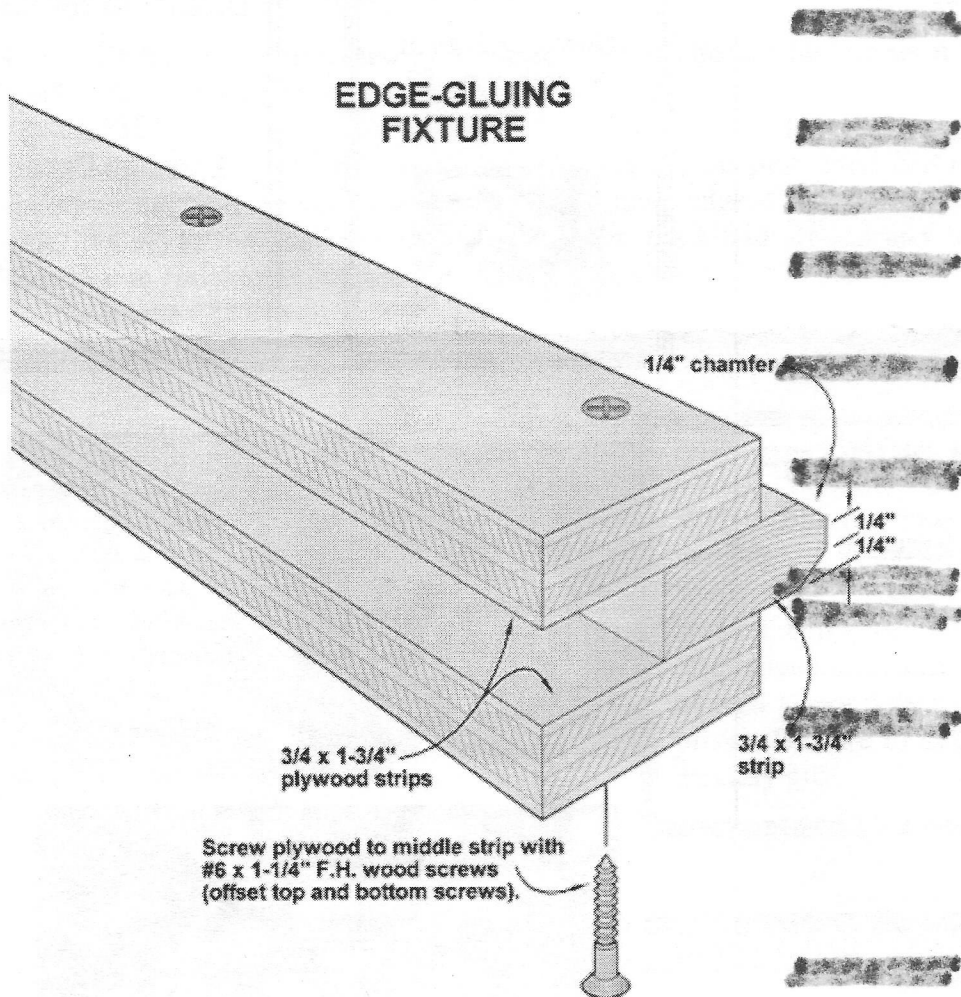
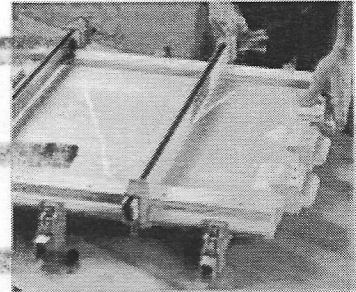


**Denis Muras** displayed the ongoing progress of crafting his John Deere tractor made of hard maple. Denis does not plan to paint it as green-painted maple looks similar to green plastic.

## PROJECT OF THE MONTH

# EDGE-GLUING FIXTURE

To help clamping go smoothly when edge-joining boards, we devised an edge-gluing fixture (shown below) that directs clamping pressure to the center of the workpieces. If the clamping pressure is not centered, it can result in "overpull" or "underpull", which cups the panel. You'll need two of these handy fixtures, one for each clamp-bearing edge. As an additional advantage, this fixture elevates the clamps off the panel surface, making it easier to clean up glue squeeze-out. We also made some 3" lengths of the fixture to align the individual boards. You'll need two of these for each joint.



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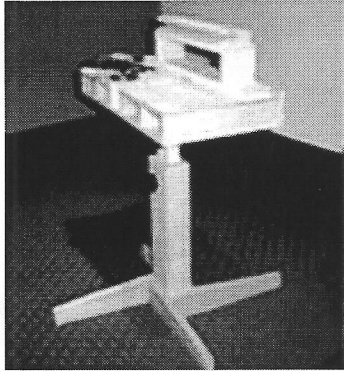
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◀ **Walter Mason** uses this portable workbench in order to make crosscuts with a circular saw. The add-on piece at the top acts as an outfeed extension for his table saw.

**Woodworker of the Year Nominations**

**Lon Kelley**  
**Gene Volentine**  
**Denis Muras**  
**Glen Edwards**

**Golden Hammer Award Nominations**

**Saul Harris**  
**Jack Hutchison**  
**Ken Kooser**

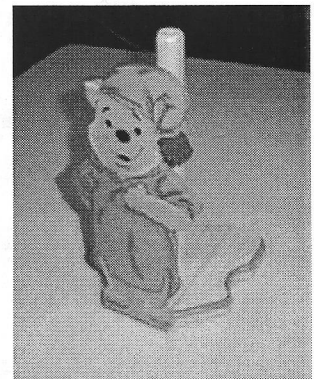
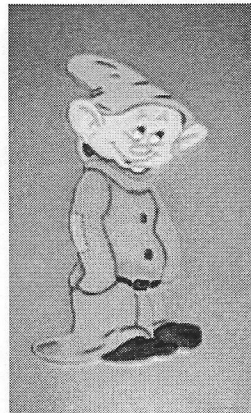
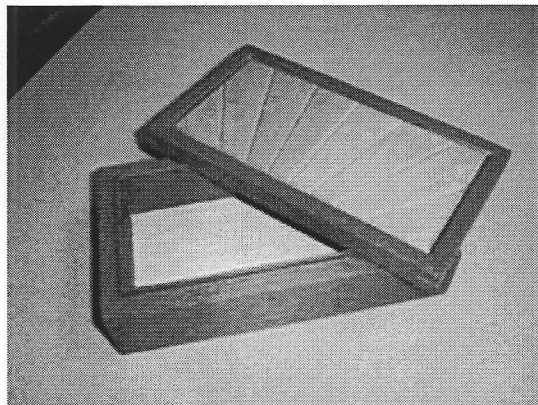


▲ **Gene Volentine** crafted this Pembroke-style drop leaf table of walnut. The legs are dressed with a stop cove. Gene used about a dozen coats of Minwax wipe-on polyurethane. Excellent job, Gene!



◀ **Rich Thomas** talked about how he built this plywood-backed bookcase using simple techniques, including the templates shown for placing the shelves.

**Eddy Arnold** crafted this fine box of maple and lacewood with an interior of mesquite. Eddy used 100% tung oil with four topcoats of Minwax. ▼

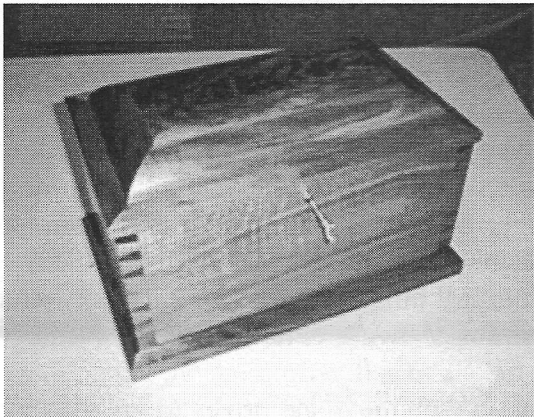


◀ These two cute Disney ▲ characters were cut by **Joe Edlen**. The Pooh bear is a paper towel holder and Dopey the Dwarf has a hook for hanging.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

By Gary Rowen, Secretary

Membership renewals are coming up and with it the year 2004 membership book. The board handed over membership book responsibilities to me, your club secretary, and with that an agreement that the membership list I keep will be considered the master. To keep this master up to date and accurate it is imperative that every member reviews his or her information in this list. It will be circulated during the meeting in a white loose-leaf binder book. Please do so at either the December or the January meeting. I will be asking the board to authorize publishing a membership list as early as the February meeting so your prompt review will be appreciated. If you are unable to attend these meetings, you may email me at [row1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:row1@sbcglobal.net) with the data that you want in the membership list or phone me.



◀ This gorgeous walnut chest was crafted by **Carl Matthews**. The entire chest was done without a router! Carl used five coats of hand-rubbed varnish for the finish.

This beautiful table, built by **Bill Hochmuth**, was inadvertently left out of the November issue. Bill does not know what kind of wood it is made of but it has six coats of polyurethane on it. Good job, Bill!! ▶



## CEDAR REVISITED

By Ken Kooser, President

There seems to be some confusion concerning the cedar lumber that has occupied my garage most of October and to now. This cedar is not Ken Kooser's. This lumber belongs to the Woodworkers Club of Houston. I hauled it from the sawmill to my place because it had to be removed from the mill. I loaded it, unloaded it, sorted it and took your orders because I was the responsible club officer. I delivered some to the picnic and some to the November meeting. I did this because I'm a volunteer leader of the club. Priced at \$1.50 and less per board-foot, this is a dollar below the usual retail price. It is all of good quality and, once milled, will make fine chests, etc. Thanks to everyone who purchased some. The difference in what we paid the sawmill and what we sold it for will help to keep your dues low.



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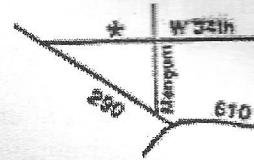
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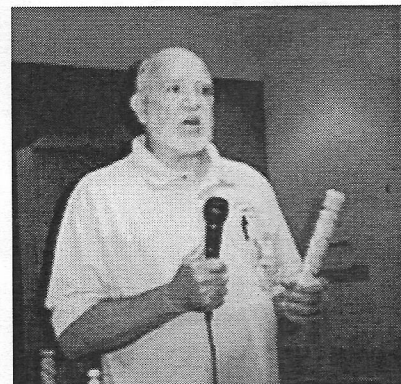
By Ken Kooser

Best wishes to all for a happy holiday season. This will be my last column as your club President. I guess it's the school board next and then on to Congress should I choose the political path. Don't think I'm going to do that. I just plan on spending more free time in the shop. As I look back on the past three years, I'm pleased yet disappointed in what all we have accomplished. Our mission statement adopted last year declares that we are an educational organization. Not said is the fact that we are also a social group. The club's been around since 1983 and is very stable. We have seen change, and in my opinion it has been positive. Financially, we are healthy and have the resources to continue. We have not had the field trips the past two years that I would have liked. After our last bulk purchase (for clamps) we have not utilized this club benefit. I'm hoping for a very strong showing with our charity event; I'm less than pleased with the number of people who took tickets to sell. Although we did not have much input in the planning, we overcame that by coming up with the grand prize. Many of you bought tickets, and that is fine, but what we need is for members to take responsibility and sell the tickets. We have until December 20<sup>th</sup>.

Our splinter group process is lagging; Todd Burch heads up our most successful splinter group. All it takes is for you and your neighbors to set a time and get started. At one time we had 3 or 4 strong splinter groups meeting. How formal or loose you want your group to be is up to you. I'd suggest that members interested in competition shoot for a larger, stronger, bigger group than Todd's.

I'm very pleased with the performance of our board and the other volunteers who make the club run like a fine watch. I'm not going to name them all, you see them at every meeting so tell them thanks. It has been a great pleasure and privilege to be your club President and I thank you for allowing me to serve. The good Lord certainly has blessed me; I have more worldly goods than I could have ever expected. I'm supported by a loving wife and family and believe me when I say, "Life is good!"

**Blaine Stokes** shows some fluted dowels he cut using his Legacy machine. Blaine bought the machine at the Woodworking Show.





# PRIMARY MATERIALS

By Ridg Gilmer

A short article in the November 2003 *Reader's Digest* has inspired me to pay more attention to primary materials. We woodworkers may become so enthused about tools and technology that we shortchange the contributions made by the materials we use.

The article describes an amateur violinmaker who devoted his retirement years to building and repairing violins and cellos. An old friend, who had fought in Italy during WW II, had saved a piece of spruce that he had collected from below the monastery at Monte Cassino, first constructed in 529 AD. The violin made from this ancient wood had a sound that compared favorably with those of a Stradivarius. The amateur turned professional violinmaker discounted his own craftsmanship and the formula of his varnish finish, saying that modern technology could easily reproduce those aspects of a Stradivarius. He attributed the remarkable sound to the wood itself.

We need not minimize the hard work we put in to achieve whatever skill level we attain as woodworkers and neither should we ignore the high tech help we get from today's fine tools. Both are essential to our hobby or profession at whatever stage we are – beginner or experienced perfectionist. But do we give sufficient time and thought to the materials we use? As I learned recently, this may well begin with choosing hardwood over plywood, despite the ease of construction offered by the latter. This may lead to niceties of construction, like mortise and tenon as opposed to biscuit joinery. We glue and screw, rather than hammer and nail. We distinguish cabinetry from carpentry.

Most good lumberyards afford the opportunity to pick and choose the individual piece of wood we need for our next project. This may entail crawling up a crude ladder and handling large pieces of rough-cut lumber, choosing pieces with nice grain and color and the fewest defects. Or it may mean going out to our friends at Third Coast Hardwoods and sorting through hunks of trees with the bark still on. Whatever the task, we may need to spend more time planning and visualizing our finished product and selecting materials to affect the outcome.

When we think about it, the concept of primary materials is almost universal. My spouse is a true gourmet chef, but no matter how well prepared, if her ingredients are not fresh and of first quality, she is not satisfied with the resulting dish. One only needs to taste truly fresh swordfish once, to forever distinguish it from the frozen cardboard served in most restaurants.

The wine industry, both French and American (even Texan) knows the value of the land or terroir and of the weather for a given year. Fine white Burgundies often reflect the mineral content of the sandy loam in which Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc grapes grow. The big red wines are more complex and last longer when a dry season prevails and concentrates the sugar content of the Cabernet, Pinot Noir or Petit Sirah grapes they use. Certainly, both the long revered art, as well as the modern vintner's technology are essential to making excellent wine, but it all begins with the vine. Old rootstocks may sample layers of earth and minerals 20-25' below the surface. The same is true of old growth trees.

It becomes self-evident that the person involved is the most essential primary ingredient for success in any endeavor and woodworking is no exception. Only the dedicated, and talented or gifted individual can combine the best materials, tools, skills and good taste to complete an outstanding project. I have had the pleasure of knowing one such master craftsman through our woodworking club, but I know there are others who have the same desire as well as competence to achieve similar results. One key to success may be to emphasize our choice of materials to the same extent that we evaluate our tools and practice excellent construction techniques.

ADDENDUM: After composing the above, I opened my copy of the December 2003 issue of *Wood* magazine. Therein are excellent articles on wood and selection choices.

**WOODWORKERS CLUB OF HOUSTON  
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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Sunday, 12/7/03 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**

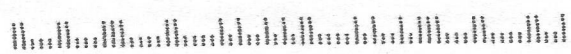
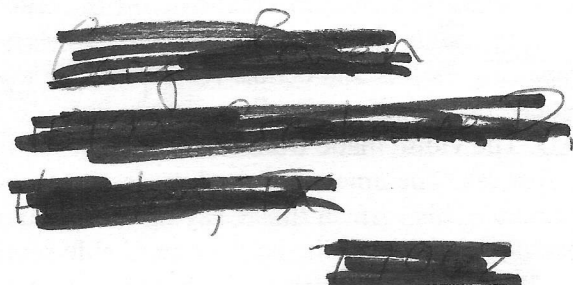
**Saturday, 12/13/03 – Meeting at the Bayland Park Community Center – 9:00 AM**

**Friday, 12/19/03 – First night of Hanukkah**

**Thursday, 12/25/03 – Christmas Day**

**Thursday, 1/1/04 – New Years Day**

**Saturday, 1/10/04 – Meeting at the Bayland Park Community Center – 9:00 AM**

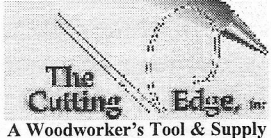


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