

Woodworkers Club

OF HOUSTON

VOL 10, No. 10

OCTOBER, 1994

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SEPTEMBER MEETING

Harvin Moore, President of Frontera Furniture spoke to us on his business theory and creating your own niche in the furniture and retail market.

Founded in 1992 by Harvin Moore and six local investors, the company has grown from and initial capital of \$45,000 to a company that now sells over \$400,000 per year. The company has developed wholesale accounts in other cities--now sold in over 67 stores.

The strategy was to produce a line of Texas Pioneer-Style Reproduction furniture at reasonable prices. They opened a retail showroom in Houston to test new products and control development of the product image in the consumer's mind.

Frontera Furniture does not make all of its own furniture that it sells through its retail store, at furniture markets and through its catalog, instead it seeks out craftspeople that offer quality and price.

Frontera Furniture Co. set out to make furniture the way it was made in the 1800's by the pioneers of early Texas. In those days, times were tough, but the furniture was tougher. Joinery techniques like tongue-and-groove and mortise-and-tenon were not the exception but the rule. The chairs were not made with glue but with what is called "the green oak technique:" letting wet wood contract around dry wood, creating a very strong joint.

Frontera designs are all reproduced or adapted from actual vintage pieces crafted in Texas in the early to mid 1800s. Usually these craftspersons were of German descent, but, like in Pennsylvania and other 1800s-era furniture meccas, others were from other parts of Europe. They specifically draw their pieces from Shaker-styles of that period (although there are certain differences between Frontera styles and Shaker). Frontera pieces have relatively simple lines, meaning both that it is

easier to control their labor costs, and also that these are styles that readily adapt to changing times (being considered either "modern," "classic" or "antique," but never "outdated."

Harvin said that they will grow as long as they can maintain the integrity of the designs and construction they have pledged to provide. They seek high-end home furnishings stores in major national markets, historical sites with an important furniture tradition, and broader distribution in Texas. They plan to develop further relationships with museums to produce licensed reproductions from their collections. Frontera has one such exclusive license, and they are working currently on two more.

Some of the items that they sell are the Brazos River Rockers, these are made in various sizes from the standard to the King size and a double rocker so you can rock with a friend. They sell dining room tables and chairs, side tables, coffee tables and hall tables. Pencil post beds, desks, swings, garden benches, steel lamps, Lone Star Bottle Bags, pet beds and lots of accessories.

If you would like a catalog just call them at 527-8196 or better yet, visit their store at 2110 Richmond Ave. just west of Shepherd.

We would all like to Thank Harvin Moore for sharing with us his thoughts on the Furniture business.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Sharon Buckley

The Big December Dinner and Show and Tell is set for Friday December 9th, 1994 at the Rice Faculty Club at Rice University. The festivities begin a 7:00P.M. till 8:00P.M. for Socializing and Cocktails, 8:00 till 9:00 Dinner and 9:00 till 10:00 Show and Tell and presentation of Ribbons.

Enclosed in this newsletter is the form that must be attached to your check if you wish to

So whats on the menu? We will begin with a

Caesar Salad

Romaine lettuce with seasoned crutons freshly grated Parmesan and creamy caesar dressing.

Roast Inside Round of Beef with Red Wine, Black Peppercorn Sauce.

Whole Green Beans with Shallot Butter

Oven Roasted Potatoes Parmesan

Cherry Cobbler

Coffee and/ or Ice Tea

Because of deposits and guarantees the DEADLINE for Turning in your money is November 1st, 1994.

The Rice Faculty Club is a very nice place to have a Dinner, we will have the entire place to ourselves ----no loud band playing in the next room.

We are lucky that one of our members Jim Sims sponsors us or we would not be able to use this very nice facility.

I hope that many of the members will attend, its one of the few times that we can shoot the bull with the members and their spouses and or guests.

FIELD TRIP UPDATE--Since the first of the year we have been trying to get a field trip to a Rocking Chair maker in Tomball--after the meeting I was talking to Harvin Moore and found out that Frontera Furniture now owns the Rocking Chair Company in Tomball and he said they would love to have us visit. Art is arranging a visit in November just as soon as they can fit us in. Persistence does pay off.

FEATURE PROJECT--FOOD SERVICE ITEMS

Dooley George made a cutting board with storage for knives, put together with the new Gorilla Glue. Plans from Woodworkers Journal Sept/Oct 1994.

Bill Baker made some salad tong fingers finished with salad oil.

Don Sloan made simillar salad tong fingers, tray with diagonal design, a cutting board with groove for catching those juices, made on a pin router.

Chuck Maxwell made a holder for hot casserole dishes and a receipe box with a plexiglass top.

Steve Walker made a spice rack to fit the pantry door made from 1/4" thick wood,

rabbetted and dadoed together.

Jimmie Harp made a bowl out of long leaf yellow pine.

Lewis Vallette turned a vessel of mystery wood finished with a couple coats of 3M and clear acrylic.

FEATURE PROJECT FOR OCTOBER--Anything that you sit or climb upon--Stools, stepstools, chairs, ladders, etc.

SHOW AND TELL

John Bender made a table with a tilt-top to accomodate a very large dictionary.

Steve Procter and his daughter Amanda demonstrated a 1911 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost touring car, made by Amanda's Grandfather. Steve had photos of the Carriage house that he made to house the car.

Another member (I apoligize but I forgot to make note of that members name---Saturday was a bad day) made a very nice Adirondack adult size and child size chair. Plans from New Yankee Workshop.

SEPTEMBER RAFFLE

I would like to Thank Brad Hartman Manager of the Woodcraft Store for Donating the main prize at the September Raffle a Starrett Digitape--this is a 25 foot electronic tape measure that reads in inch, feet/inch and Metric, calculates inside, outside and differential measurements and stores measurements in memory. Thanks again for your donation to the club.

The monthly raffle benefits all the members--the profits from the raffle do not go into the general funds but is ear marked for video tapes and books. There will be new tapes and books available to be checked out at the October meeting. Three new tapes announced at the September meeting and we have also purchased another tape--Making Shaker Oval Boxes with John Williams. We have yet to receive the companion tapes from Fine Woodworking but hope that they will be available at the next meeting.

So far we have purchased 3 new books, 9 full length video tapes and 8 companion tapes, all monies coming from the raffle.

OCTOBER MEETING

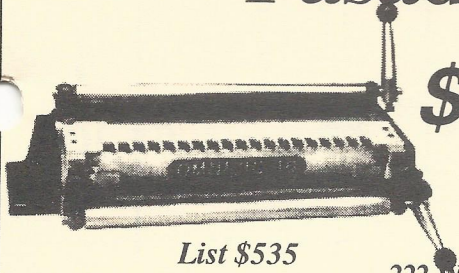
WHEN: OCTOBER 8, 1994

WHERE: BAYLAND COMMUNITY CENTER
ON BISSONET AT HILLCROFT

PROGRAM: Lawrence Cude of Finishers Supply will present a program on everything you ever wanted to know on finishing.

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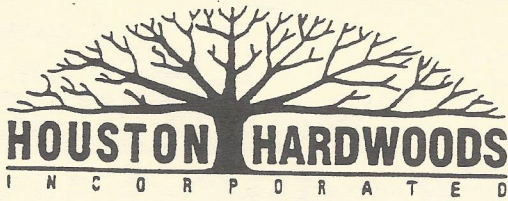


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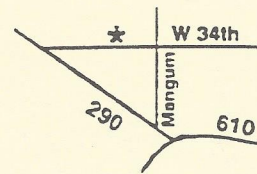
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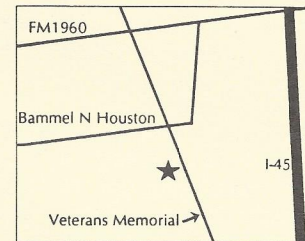
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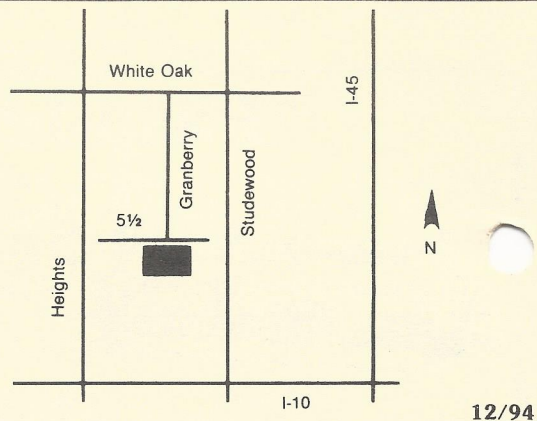
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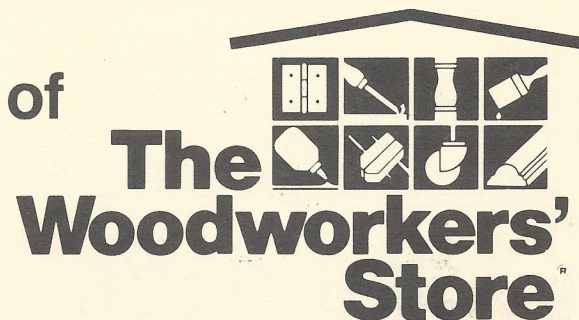
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