



# From The Shop



## The newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Woodworker's Guild

- UPCOMING MEETING INFORMATION ..... 1
- OLD BUSINESS..... 1
- FEATURED SPEAKER: BOB ORTIZ..... 2
- DRAG AND BRAG..... 5
- AND THE WINNER IS: ..... 6
- UPCOMING PRESENTATION PREVIEW ..... 6
- MEMBER'S MART..... 7
- WOOD SPECIALS ..... 7
- STEERING COMMITTEE NOTES - INFO..... 7
- LEHIGH VALLEY WOODWORKER'S GUILD CONTACTS. 8
- 2006 MEETING CALENDAR: ..... 10

### UPCOMING MEETING INFORMATION

**Next Meeting: May 16, 2006 (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday!)**  
**Location:** Lehigh Co. Senior Center  
 1633 Elm Street  
 Allentown, PA  
**Speaker: Ken Burton:**  
**Topic: Table Saw as an all in one tool: Tips, Techniques**  
**See Next Speaker section!!**  
**Old Business**

Andy Anderson kicked off the evening by issuing an open request to ALL members and guests to remember that we need a constant flow of speakers to keep the spark in our meetings and keep the programs interesting and refreshing. We have been blessed over the years with the versatility of some of our existing members and, notably, the American Woodworker Magazine alumni (you know who you are – except maybe for Bill Hylton, who may not be sure at any given moment), who have bailed us out all too often. Topics can be tangential to woodworking and need not be confined to the good old tools, furniture, and case work topics. Call ANY steering committee member if you have an idea for a speaker.

Art Silva provided a re-cap of the Taunton Press offers, featuring about 50% off selected titles and great breaks on shipping rates. Art noted that Sandor Nagyszalanczy has a new book available and it will retail for about \$40, our cost about \$20. Paul Anthony noted that he worked on the book and did the editing, but the book is good none the less. Humble Paul. If you can spell Sandor's last name, you are doing a

good job already. Art can provide any book sale details you may need.

On the topic of Art Silva, I handed the newsletter duties over to him and a team of helpers. At the time, I was fluent in MS word and computers in general, and Art was pretty much just getting away from WEBTV. Art, assisted back then by a team with Helen Patterson and Angelo Triandafilou, managed to carry on the newsletter duties. While Art cannot match me on computer skills, I cannot match Art in shop skills. He managed to learn more about computers and refine his



**Harold "Andy" Anderson entertained the crowd with a few Sinatra tunes. Well, he kicked off the meeting and kept the agenda moving well.**

skills to increase his abilities in publishing this document monthly. I, however, still have woodworking skills inadequate for constructing even pallets. Art got a well deserved round of applause for his work, and I'd like to acknowledge his efforts as well.

Andy introduced me to the guild. Some of you may remember me from the "old days", and some newer folks may not know me. You newer folks may be better off. My technique for newsletters is – lots of typos, bad humor, jabs at almost anyone in the spirit of good natured "chop busting". Chop busting is a popular pastime among intellectuals, and even with people I know. If anything I write here offends anyone, I probably did not mean it. Well, usually. This is my first issue in almost 5 years, so I hope to shake off the writer's rust.

## **Featured Speaker: Bob Ortiz.**

**Program: The Sofia and Daniel Lines of his furniture – Origin, evolution, process.**

Bob Ortiz of Chestertown, Maryland gave a very interesting presentation on his products and his thought process over his 19 years in business for himself. This is his second appearance at the guild, after his studio was “discovered” by Bill and Sandy Clerval. He has been published in Fine Woodworking Magazine. He also received the 2002 Philadelphia Furniture Show and Fine Woodworking Magazine award for Best New Artist, and a number of other accolades.



**Bob Ortiz, woodworker, designer, manufacturer, author, and businessman shared his motivations and methodologies with guild members. Here he poses with a piece he calls an Entry table. The top is made of one piece of wood with natural edges.**

Bob started by a quick overview of his shop and the tools he uses. He has a WW2 vintage Unisaw with a 1.5 hp motor, a 16” jointer, a planer, 32” belt sander, a Bridgewood Shaper, an old Grizzley horizontal sander and a radial drill press, and does his pattern cutting on a 16” Laguna band saw. He is sort of a self professed “clean freak” and has what he describes as vast overkill dust collection. As he put it, the work we do can create a dangerous environment, you cannot surround

yourself with crap and still do fine work, and the cleanup process is something he does during his inter-process walk around time. Bill Clerval attested to the cleanliness of his shop. It also shows his respect for his shop, which he calls his most important tool. Included in his shop tour is mention of Connie Robinson who does the sanding and fine woodworking, and who happens to be an Episcopal minister who can bless the furniture at no extra charge. Connie was not



**A photo of Bob’s entry table with the top removed. Note the small dowel at this end that keeps the drop on table top from shifting. The joinery is hopefully apparent in this photo. The tapering at the top of the leg gives the top a “floating” appearance.**

“allowed” to take woodshop when she went to school. Brenda Foehrkolb does finishing and Bob advised that he uses mostly “Tried and True” products.

Bob used computer media very effectively and showed a number of slides illustrating the various stages of construction and design evolution of the SOFIA and DANIEL lines and of his design approach. Bob mentioned the cardinal rule of woodworking – all stock



**Bob at work in his shop in Chestertown, MD.**

starts out SQUARE – and how he uses a chalk marking system on sides of wood to keep track of surfaces that have been jointed / planed. Bob interestingly described that he will use the 16” jointer to flatten even wide stock. He described that, when working with pieces such as 24” wide stock, he will joint the first 16” flat, then flip the piece and joint the remaining 8” to “pretty darn close”. He then flattens the flip side on his 32” sander.

Bob advised that his process involves heavy use of patterns and he uses one pattern for many of the legs of his tables, as example. He will clamp the pattern to the stock, trace the line, cut the stock on the band saw about 1/8” proud of the line, and then re-attach the template to the stock, using a shaper with a bottom bearing to finish the shape. He prefers the shaper to the router because the shaper bit can be reversed and motor direction reversed to minimize tearout.

Bob uses cheap disposable break off razor knives as scribes. He also makes heavy use of high intensity type lighting directly on pieces he is cutting to increase visibility of lines and scribes. He credits this as one way to increase and maintain accuracy. His scribe lines on the backs of his cuts help to keep chipout a minimum when using the table saw. When making wide mortises with non-square sides, he cuts the



Bob is a very animated speaker and his enthusiasm for his work is evident in his high energy manner of speaking. Kept the presentation moving at a good pace and was an interesting and entertaining speaker.

square portion on the table saw, and then cuts the angled portion using a fine Japanese tenon type saw. Folks who were in the meeting may recall this visual. He had an interesting photo where he clamps a piece of thick wood to the piece to act as a guide fence for the saw to keep it true.

Bob took a break from discussion of tools and techniques to talk about himself and how he arrived at his current destination in life. Some of the following biographical information was lifted from Bob’s web site with his permission ([www.ortizutdios.com](http://www.ortizutdios.com)) Bob describes himself as a self taught woodworker and designer. His mother and father were born on the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, and came to New York in 1934. He grew up in Greenwich Village where he studied classical piano beginning at age five. The process and discipline of making furniture is not unlike that of making music. Measure upon measure, one builds a piece, one note, one joint at a time. With patience and dedication, the goal is to achieve a well arranged and orchestrated piece, perhaps even a work



An example of a coffee table in Bob’s Sofia line. Note the separate pieces on the shelf under the table. Bob prefers this look to solid stock.



Bob was searching for a new look, and incorporated a small box as part of the lower shelf filled with black “worry stones”. The texture and color of the stones do create a different dimension without impacting his basic design. Note his trademark gingko leaf design. (Why do I think Gecko? Too many TV commercials?)

of art. Both crafts demand honor and dedication, attention to detail and nuance, and a respect for the creative process. In 1984, while attending a conference in Chicago, he came across George Nakashima's "The Soul of a Tree", displayed in a bookstore window. Thus began his desire to dedicate myself to making, simple, beautiful and well-made furniture.

Bob's pre-woodworking career was as a high school Spanish and Theology teacher and as a performing musician on the college coffee house circuit. He also worked with emotionally troubled adolescents prior getting into woodworking and design.

Bob had a pretty effective way of putting thoughts into word. He expressed that it took his brain 8 years to catch up to his hands in his woodworking, to the point where the proportions and grace he wanted in his line worked for him. The glass topped coffee table above was sort of a foundation for his work and the rest of the line evolved from that. He related that he looked at that table and could picture sideboards, beds, chairs, tables, and other furniture that were different yet the same.



**If you look VERY closely, you can see that the heads of these Robertson drive screws are ALL at right angles to the board edges, a detail noticed by Paul Anthony that may have been lost on a less trained eye. Attention to detail.**

The SOFIA Line is the result of that journey begun in Chicago. Named for his daughter, Sofia Marta, the furniture incorporates the two major influences that most inform his woodworking. As Bob says on his web site, his major influences are diverse. "The first is the aesthetic and temple carpentry of the Japanese masters that he was introduced to in Mr. Nakashima's book. Their work celebrates simple forms, detailed and exposed joinery and a quiet elegance. The second is the furniture of the Shaker communities of the 19th century. Their furniture is rooted in the New World, unpretentious, exquisitely proportioned and built with native woods. The Sofia Line attempts to marry these two styles in a contemporary interpretation that will endure for generations and feel at home in any setting.

Thanks to the encouragement and requests of clients, the SOFIA Line has grown to encompass furniture for the home and office, seating, casework, beds and tables." I think in looking at his work, he has done an outstanding job of morphing these two styles.

An interesting anecdote related by Bob was a commission he got to build an "altar table" for a Jewish Synagogue. Bob prides himself on the lightness look of his work, but the specifications requested a 3' deep x 8' long x 42" high table. Bob's dilemma was how he could make a piece of this mass while maintaining the light look which is his signature. Well, he managed it and built the classic shelf of slats lower than usual, adding strength lower on the work, and curving the shelf up as in a bridge. He got his inspiration because this is essentially a piece used in a religious environment that links the here and the hereafter. Pretty profound concept. Bob even incorporated the low stools used as seats in some of his work as stepping stools for children to use when reading from the Torah during bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah ceremonies.



**This altar table, called a lang bemah, has the classic Ortiz lines, the size needed for an altar table, the lightness of the style, and the bridge between here and the afterlife.**

On pieces Bob makes with drawers, he likes to make drawers and the surrounding frames out of the same piece of wood. Essentially, ripping top and bottom supports, then crosscutting off the side pieces and gluing the top and side pieces together. He points out that you can barely see the glue lines of the assembled face piece, and when the drawer is added, the eye is usually drawn to a distinctive drawer pull he likes to use. On his sideboards, he has taken to building hidden drawers in the sides.

One of his pieces he got reluctantly commissioned for was a teahouse. This is an interesting piece that was inspired from a post bed that is part of his furniture line. In building this bed, he observed to his family that he could now envision how this basic plan and design would translate into plans for a teahouse. Well, word apparently got out the Bob was building a teahouse for



Another view of this table shows the leg style and the Japanese influence. This leg style was evolved from one that was wider at the bottom.

a well known Japanese person who was going to do a public Japanese Tea ceremony. Bob was a bit taken aback as he said he COULD build one and not that he was GOING to! He was also worried that his unexpected client would be concerned about how a transplanted Puerto Rican woodworker would pollute the spirit of a Japanese Tea house.



Bob's Tea House, here in use for a tea ceremony, again reflecting his style while maintaining a look befitting the traditional teahouse look.

To summarize, Bob's presentation was entertaining, showed us some design and construction data that may tickle our own project direction, and, of greater interest, showed the evolution of Bob's thoughts, business, and design. A well done presentation by an enthusiastic and talented speaker and woodworker.

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 Chestertown, MD 21620  
 Phone: (410) 810-1400  
 e-mail: [ORTIZ@ORTIZSTUDIOS.COM](mailto:ORTIZ@ORTIZSTUDIOS.COM)  
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### Drag and Brag



Paul Anthony poses with a magnificent blanket chest. The panels are made of what Paul called Ambrosia maple he got at Fleetwood Lumber. Paul described this as a relatively simple project. The results, in this case, show Paul's typical attention to detail. The project may be simple, but the accuracy and attention to fine points separate the hackers from the woodworkers.



A closer look at the panel on the above. Beautiful.

Paul Anthony had a very nice set of step by step plans for this. I photographed them but then thought better of

it. Paul was willing to let me publish them, but this blanket chest will be featured in an upcoming magazine article, so Paul should not let these sketches loose as they are sort of proprietary. He will let us know when the article is available. I think it will be in Maxim. (or maybe not).



**Andy Bukovsky with an interesting approach to a country mailbox. Made of materials harvested from an old barn, some cedar shakes, and a body part donated by a deer, this is a pretty interesting mailbox and perfect for a rural setting. This may not work in my old neighborhood in Newark, NJ, but I'll bet it will get many admirers where Andy will be putting it! The copper nails and old hardware used enhance the rustic theme of this very large mailbox!**

Andy's mailbox is a perfect example of how a mixed bag of neat stuff can be assembled into a work is unique and will likely get a lot of compliments (and curiosity questions). Hope there are no members of PETA in the neighborhood.

**And the winner is:**



**Dave Bivans is the winner of the \$30 gift certificate from Woodcraft! Congratulations!**

## Upcoming Presentation Preview



**Ken Burton at it again. Clean lines, precision, great design. This piece will be featured in an upcoming book that features furniture built almost entirely on a table saw.**

Members who attended the April meeting know that Ken Burton will be our next presenter. These photos would normally be in Drag and Brag, but since I like to do a little preview to let you know what you would be missing, the photos are here.

Ken will be speaking at next month's meeting about some "mostly table saw built" furniture that will be featured in an upcoming book of his. The table saw sort of anchors most of our workshops, and is likely a power tool we are most comfortable working with, so I am sure many of us are anxious to see what techniques went into this great looking piece.

Now Ken says he makes half blind finger joints on the table saw. Rumor has it from a certain router biased member of our guild that there ain't no way to do this. So, Ken has a large order to fill.

Ken is not just another pretty face – but we know that. He has been working with wood professionally for the past 22 years. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Arts Education from Millersville University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the School for American Crafts at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He has written several books going back to 1992. You should all know that he also teaches several woodworking classes that are quite highly regarded. More information about Ken and his books and classes can be obtained from his web site: <http://www.wrwoodworks.com/>

Ken's comes to us from new Tripoli, but nobody is perfect.



Here is a closer look at the half blind finger joints and some nicely tapered legs on this piece. Nice selection of woods as well, as usual!

### **Member's Mart**

Grizzly Model G1140 Heavy Duty Edge Sander, including a Shop Fox D2057 Heavy Duty Mobile Base. All in, "like new", condition.

**Description:** The Edge Sander weighs, 250 lb.; The belt size is 6" by 80" (Still the original); The motor is 1 1/2 h.p. , either 110 or 220 voltage; Sanding surfaces tilt vertical to horizontal (60-0-60 degrees) and are also, heavy duty; Belt Speed 1800 rpm; Table size: 22" x 10 1/2"; Platen size: 6 3/4" x 29 3/4" **Asking price: \$325.00**

See or contact, Larry Beers (at Woodcraft Store) or by phone at: 610-533-2999 or, at the Guild meeting.

### **Wood Specials**

#### **SHADY LANE TREE FARM**

Louise & Mike Peters  
5220 Shimerville Road  
Emmaus, PA  
610 965-5612 Please call

#### **FLEETWOOD LUMBER & FLOORING**

BILL BURKERT  
27 Rapp Rd.  
Fleetwood, PA  
610 944-8364 Please call  
**Member discount 5%**

#### **Bailey Wood Products, Inc.**

441 Mountain Rd.  
RD#2 Box 38  
Kempton, PA  
610 756-6827

#### **Woodcraft**

Pkwy Shopping Ctr.  
1534 Lehigh St.  
Allentown, Pa.,18103

### **Steering Committee Notes - Info**

The steering committee met on Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Present were: Dan Manturi, Russ Reinhard, Ron Wiley, Lou Supina, Allen Powell, Gerry Chiusano and Andy Anderson.

#### • **Meeting information:**

Guild meetings are ALWAYS on the third TUESDAY of the month at the Lehigh County Senior Center unless there is some conflict (holiday, etc). Also, meetings START at 7:30 P.M. That does not mean you arrive at 7:30 – you should allow time to park, walk in, find a seat, and help us to get the room of members ready to START at 7:30. Having people walking in and shuffling about does not help us to start on time. Please help us to start at 7:30.

#### • **Everybody knows somebody sometime...**

The following is a presentation wish list obtained from guild members. If you can do a presentation on any of the following topics, please step up. If you know someone who would be willing to do a presentation on these topics, PLEASE get their name and number to ANY Steering committee member so we can contact them. If all guild members step up to just getting us a name and number, we can keep the agenda full.

- Marquetry
- Resawing
- Pricing work
- Hand Cut Dovetails
- Steam Bending Wood
- Restoring Hand Planes
- Windsor Chairs
- Hand Tools (General Discussion)
- Dust Collection
- Small Boats
- Rough Cut Lumber
- Wood Burning
- Pen Making
- Process of a Piece of Furniture (layout, patterns, etc.)
- Hinges and Locks
- Use of Glue and Epoxy ( where and when)
- Curved Front Drawers

- **CHECK THE WEB!**

We will be making increased use of our web site to disseminate information. Items will be migrating from meeting conversation and newsletter text to the web. If you do not have a computer, you probably have a buddy or family member who does. Members Mart, Wood Deals, and Upcoming Events will be posted on the web as soon as Lou Supina completes updates.

- **Guild Sales – policy**

From time to time, the guild offers books or other items for sale. At times as well, members who have been coordinating these things have allowed an IOU policy to exist. This current policy is simple – we will make every effort to ensure that guild members are aware of sales and due dates for orders. Anyone who wants to buy stuff should contact the coordinator for that items and ensure that they get paid. Bottom line – no payment, no order for you. I am sure you can all understand that it should not be the responsibility of the coordinator to shell out their own money and then need to chase folks down. This is not meant to imply that folks are not paying eventually – it is just the right way to manage this. Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

- **Taunton Books – FYI**

Speaking of items for sale...Gerry Chiusano will be our new contact for Taunton Books. He presented his plan for placing books orders. Guild members will be advised that an order for books will be placed in two months. Payment is required when the book is ordered. Fifty cents (\$.50) will be added to the cost of each book to pay for shipping. Gerry will take the orders, collect the money and give it to Andy who will issue a check payable to Taunton Books (or whatever the official company name). This plan may be tweaked as needed, but this is where it is now an changes will be communicated as they occur.

- **Newsletter ads**

There have been requests for us to place ads in the newsletter. It was basically agreed that any ads will be placed solely for members (like Member's Mart) or Guild benefactors.

- **Guild Scholarship? VOTE!**

We discussed establishing a scholarship for members. A \$300 scholarship would be for a member to attend training which would further his/her woodworking skills. Half of the scholarship would be awarded before the training. The balance will be awarded after the member has completed the training and made a presentation at a Guild meeting. It is possible that more than one scholarship might be awarded depending on our financial situation. If more than one member applies for a scholarship, a drawing will be held. We will ask the members to vote on a scholarship program at the next meeting. Just a little advance notice so you can listen to this suggestion with a little prior info.

- **Woodworking contest – October meeting?**

Allen suggested we have a contest at the October meeting. This might be one way to get more participation for our Drag 'n Brag. There could be several categories set up. Certain "Professional" Guild members would not be eligible to participate – these members would be asked to be the judges at the contest. Members will be asked to vote on a contest at the next meeting.

- **Hurricane Katrina – Victims need furniture**

Allen also suggested that the membership be queried as to whether or not anyone would like to make furniture for a less fortunate person.

- **Bill Hylton – Museum Trip**

Bill Hylton contacted me about a possible field trip to the Wharton Esherick Museum. At the Philly Furniture Show last weekend, Bill saw many photos of stuff in the museum, and now he wants to go and thought it would be a decent field trip event for guild members. Even better, if he has people with him, his chances of being turned away are less likely (Sorry, Bill, could not resist..). Bill was thoughtful enough to consider that other Guild members would also be interested in visiting this museum and will say a few words about this at the meeting opening.

<b><u>Lehigh Valley Woodworker's Guild</u></b>	
<b><u>Contacts</u></b>	
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<b>Book / Purchase Coordinator</b> Jerry Chiusano	
<b>Guild Contact Person – E-mail</b> Russ Reinhard	



**OPEN HOUSE**

June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006

1:00 - 5:00 P.M.

Joe & Barb Tetz

7531 Bausch Road

New Tripoli, PA 18066

(610) 298-3017

[www.horsedrawnfunerals.com](http://www.horsedrawnfunerals.com)

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- Grain Grinding
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- Antique Cars

\*\*\*Free Carriage Rides\*\*\*

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Food Available (New Tripoli Fire Company)

\*\*We are a non-profit organization\*\*

\*Events subject to change without notice

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<b><u>2006 Meeting Calendar:</u></b>
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<b>Month</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
<b>May 16th</b>	Table Saw Made projects	Ken Burton
<b>June 20th</b>	Laminate Techniques	Bruce Gregory
<b>July 18th</b>		
<b>August 15th</b>		
<b>September 19th</b>		
<b>October 17th</b>	Woodworking contest – proposed.	
<b>November 21st</b>		
<b>December 19th</b>	Holiday Party	

**NEXT MEETING – Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> Starting at 7:30. Allow time to arrive and be seated before start time.**

**Location: Lehigh Co. Senior Center**

Lehigh Valley Woodworkers' Guild  
C/O Dan Manturi  
3801 Spear St  
Bethlehem, PA 18020