



P.O. Box 68343  
Nashville, Tennessee 37206

## OCTOBER 2010 NEWSLETTER

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## *The Cumberland Furniture Guild's Fall Meeting*

will be on Saturday, October 16th, 2010 from 2 p.m. until 5 p.m. at  
Berry & Patrick and Bob's Saw Shop in Nashville, Tennessee.

This meeting is our annual "bring your portfolio" members' meeting, and will also  
include a *Parking Lot Tailgate Toolswap*, as well as the infamous

# SLIDE WARS

←—————→

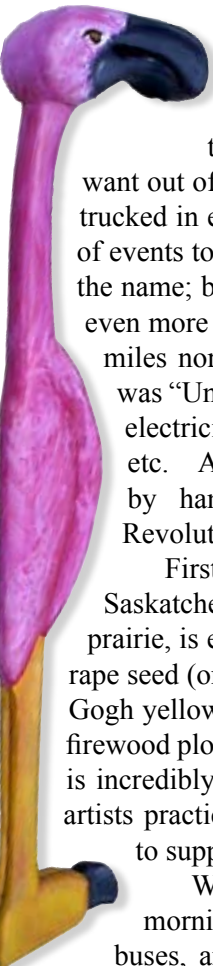
**Directions to the meeting:** *The October Meeting is in the shop of Dianne Patrick, Martha Berry, and Bob Corrigan at 607 Bass Street in Nashville. The phone number to the shop is 255-6809. From 8th Avenue South headed into town, turn Right on Chestnut Street, then Left on Fort Negley Blvd., past the Adventure Science Center, going toward downtown. Look for a sign on the right that says "Bob's Sharpening" just before the bridge that crosses over to Sixth Avenue. The building is off the road a little bit and their shop is at the very end of the building.*

The CFG Newsletter is published quarterly by The Cumberland Furniture Guild, P.O. Box 68343, Nashville, Tennessee 37206  
Editor - Worth Squire - worths@united.net; Contributing Editors - Scott Thompson, Matthew Teague, and Dale McLoud;  
Layout & Design - Worth Squire. We are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit organization. [www.cumberlandfurnitureguild.org](http://www.cumberlandfurnitureguild.org)  
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# Letter From The President

By Alf Sharp

I'd like to tell you about my recent experience at the celebrated Emma Collaborative, in Northern Saskatchewan, Canada. So you won't think I'm just bragging (which is probably a legitimate accusation), I'm going to state the moral of this story (which I know you've come to anticipate) right up front: The privilege of going to this extraordinary event is a direct result of attending the Furniture Society conferences, and making contacts there. I've often preached about the value of investing your time and money in attending these events, and this is a great example.



Anyway, the Emma Collaborative is a biennial occasion where the organizers invite 100 craft artists from all over the world to spend a week in the boreal forest making whatever they want out of tons of raw materials and found objects trucked in especially for the week. The first couple of events took place at the Emma Lake camp, hence the name; but since then the venue has moved to an even more remote camp on Ness Creek, about 200 miles north of Saskatoon. This year the theme was "Unplugged", that is, no power ... nada. No electricity, compressed air, hydraulics, etc. All work to be done by hand in pre-Industrial Revolution mode. What fun!

First impressions: the Canadian province of Saskatchewan, despite being as flat as the American prairie, is ever so much prettier, with huge fields of rape seed (or canola in these PC days) blooming Van Gogh yellow, and lots of trees left in fence rows and firewood plots. Also, the craft scene in Saskatchewan is incredibly vibrant, with a great many world-class artists practicing there, and lots of generous patrons to support them.

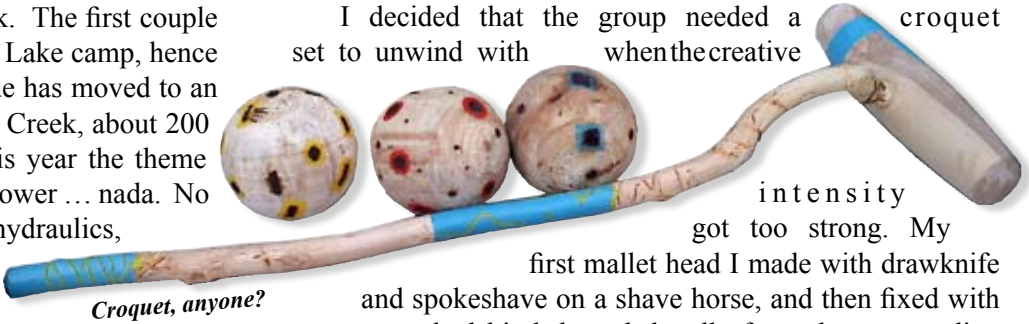
We were bussed up to Ness camp Monday morning. Juiced craftspeople poured off the buses, and immediately set in to erecting tents and setting up work areas, and in scrabbling thru all the materials provided for us to work with. Before the day was out, the woodworkers had set up a spring-pole lathe, and a bicycle-powered band-saw (which never did prove itself as quick and effective as a properly sharpened bow saw).

Woodworkers present besides yours truly included Brian Boggs, Paul Sasso, Tai Lake, Jamie Russell, Brian Gladwell, and Katie Hudnal, as well as others. Also there were two Mauri totem carvers from New Zealand, and a master chip-carver from Romania. Among the other artists were two master blacksmiths from England, fiber and mixed-media artists from France, one of the world's finest coppersmiths from Canada, two free-spirit jewelers from

Australia, leather workers, wizard-wonder-worker Michael Hosaluk, and painters, puppeteers, and potters. There were also eight musicians who wandered about serenading us as we worked, and played in the backwoods cantina at night. One young Spanish lady had such a voice! Around 2:00 PM each day, a wagon offering beer and wine began circulating. (Being unplugged, this posed no great danger.) The only rule was "There are no rules". This was all very much like Never-Never-land organized by Willie Wonka and Wavy Gravy (those of you who are younger than 45 see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wavy\\_Gravy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wavy_Gravy)).

For the woodworkers there were quite a few timbers of yellow cedar from the Alaskan rain forest. This magic wood has immediately become one of my favorites. The grain is tight and fairly dense, as heavy as cherry for example, but straight and clear of knots. It splits like white oak and carves much better than basswood. If this weren't enough, it also has a wonderful musty smell, and a quite comely Dijon mustard color. Many cunning and creative pieces were fashioned of this wood during the week.

I decided that the group needed a croquet set to unwind with when the creative



*Croquet, anyone?*

intensity got too strong. My first mallet head I made with drawknife and spokeshave on a shave horse, and then fixed with a very crooked birch branch handle from the surrounding forest. A young painter, who, it turns out, will be moving from Vermont to Cookeville, Tennessee this fall, added some cool tribal markings to the mallet, and I was off to my second effort. I really wanted to spend some time in the blacksmith shop, so I decided the next mallet needed to be all wrought steel. Adrian Birchell, from Northumberlandshire in England was a great instructor, guiding me through each step with rowdy good English humor and patience. The resulting mallet was amazingly light and tight, and more pleasant to use than was imaginable. The last mallet I joined, carved and painted like a flamingo (Alice in Wonderland, get it?) This in fact turned out to be the best playing mallet. Several of us turned sections, some off center, of one of the goal spikes. Off-center turning on a spring-pole lathe has to be one of the weirdest things done that week. Another blacksmith, who in an earlier life had been a Canadian NASCAR hero, made the other appropriately wiggly goal stick. All this was finished by Thursday afternoon, so that the game could be enjoyed through Saturday evening. There was no truly flat area to place the court, so yet another unusual element was added to the challenge. I spent the remainder of my time there helping with several projects other artisans had begun.

Brian Boggs and Jamie Russell had started a very ambitious "Rocking love bench" (ahem), using a large piece of yellow cedar with large swooping wrought iron rockers. It was brilliant. They carved on it until the last minute. Tai Lake and Adrian



Birchell (the blacksmith), made a beautiful contemporary large yard sculpture, again using yellow cedar and wrought iron, but also including an amazing heavy copper repoussé sun mask Adrian crafted when not helping so many other folks. Another group made a wonderful tall stick tower that had all manner of little whirly-gigs all over it that were powered by a Rube Goldberg mechanism made up of Erector-set pulleys, shafts, and taut string. I made a wall hanging with a sweet piece of split yellow cedar and a section of old grain auger that was patinated with heavy rust punctuating the original chrome surface. Altogether, there were nearly three hundred pieces of world-class art gathered on Saturday evening.

On Sunday we had a really great brunch (in fact the food all week had been astounding and plentiful, served alfresco) and then began the auction of all the pieces made, with proceeds going to keeping the Emma Collaboration going. There were a couple of busses of collectors brought in who helped push the price of stuff to pretty respectable levels – one piece sold for over \$9000 – but many of the items were bought by the artisans who had watched them being formed all week.

Michael Hosuluk said “What a great business model. We’ll invite a bunch of craftsmen who don’t have much money anyhow, to pay their own way to the north woods, have them make brilliant stuff all week, then confiscate all their work and sell it back to them at the end of the week!” Sounds unlikely, true, but I couldn’t agree more, and so do several hundred avid artisans who can’t wait to be invited back. -Alf ♦

## Member News

**Guild Members Graham Campbell, Dale Lewis, Craig Nutt and Kim Winkle** are all in a furniture exhibition at the Tennessee Valley Art Museum in Tusculum, Alabama titled “Finding Form”. The show opened on September 28 and will close on November 12.

**Kim Winkle** is also a winner of a 2010 Tennessee Arts Commission Individual Artist Fellowship in the Craft Category. Two of these awards are given out statewide each year. She also recently taught a workshop at the Center for Furniture Craftsmanship in Rockport, Maine and is teaching a workshop at Arrowmont in Gatlinburg Sept. 26-Oct. 1. ♦



“Rocking Love Bench” by Brian Boggs and Jamie Russell

## Swap & Shop

**For Sale: Lie-Nielsen scrub plane**- good shape, with light oxidation in a few places and some shallow scratches, works perfectly. \$125

**Knight Toolworks custom made wooden jointer plane.** Very lightly used, in excellent condition, Ash with a Padauk sole, 26” long, ¼” thick blade. \$150

**Veritas Scraper Burnisher and Jointer/Edger** – both new in packaging. Burnisher is \$25 and jointer is \$15. For pictures or questions, email [wmitchroberon@gmail.com](mailto:wmitchroberon@gmail.com).

**For Sale: 1890’s (best that I can find)**



*This is all one machine!*

**Workmaster** from the Tranier Mfg. Co. in Pittsburg, PA. An emblem on it says “The Sidney Machinery Co., Sidney, OH” with the word “FAMOUS” in the middle. It is a 12” jointer, a 27” band saw, and a 14” table saw. The three machines are pulled by a flat belt hit or miss engine or by a tractor with a side pulley. Approximate weight of the machine is 1,700 pounds. Price: \$1,800.00. Contact Roger Brown, Greeneville, TN 423-638-3679 [woodstuff@earthlink.net](mailto:woodstuff@earthlink.net). *Editor’s Note: Somebody’s gotta love restoring this. Fix it up and drive it to work!* - ♦

## Adult Ed Instructor Needed

The Nashville Adult Education Program has an opening for a woodworking instructor at their Cohn location in Sylvan Park. This is a PAID POSITION and would require a one or two evening a week commitment. Please contact Jim Polk at 615-298-8050 or [jim.polk@mnp.org](mailto:jim.polk@mnp.org), or Lovette Curry at 294-7894 or [Lovette.Curry@nashville.gov](mailto:Lovette.Curry@nashville.gov) for more information. See [http://www.nashville.gov/community\\_education/](http://www.nashville.gov/community_education/) for more info. ♦





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like those used in metal turning. He demonstrated the use of these tools as well as his technique for sharpening of the inserts. With the hollowing complete, he turned a temporary friction chuck, reversed the vessel and turned the bottom (again between centers). He pointed out that he prefers to do the final finishing of the bottom by hand with carving tools.

Throughout the demonstration John showed finished projects that he had brought along to emphasize design features and surface treatments. With the freshly turned vessel's lathe work completed, he took a few more minutes to discuss several of these carving and surfacing



techniques. It is through these steps that a simple turned shape becomes a rare work of art. He showed how he uses freehand sketching to layout his carving and then uses manual, electric, and air carving tools to do the shaping. John pointed out how he likes to use a variety of wire brushes to achieve some of his textures. Lastly, he touched on his coloring and finishing choices. John pointed out a service that we may all be interested in – a saw and file sharpening service – Boggs File and Saw Sharpening Company. He said their file and burr sharpening is quick and cost effective – check them out at [www.boggstool.com](http://www.boggstool.com).

The guild was very fortunate to have a craftsman of John's caliber willing to devote most of a full day providing this enjoyable and informative program. Take

a look at examples of John's work and tools he has for sale on his web site at [www.johnjordanwoodturning.com](http://www.johnjordanwoodturning.com).

A special thanks to Graham Campbell for arranging our meeting at the Craft Center and all those who assisted in making this an extremely successful guild event.

## **Rob "Your Hand Tool Coach" Cosman at the Kaplan's**

One idea that surfaced at the winter meeting "brainstorming session" was the desire to have more frequent guild meetings. When this item was explored, as the board met to develop our Key Strategic Initiatives, we discussed encouraging members to sponsor ad hoc or spontaneous meetings. In other words – you as a guild member have a technique to demonstrate, a shop to tour, an event to attend – and you invite your fellow members to participate through a Guild email blast.

The September 11<sup>th</sup> get-together hosted by Mike & Rita Kaplan is exactly the type of meeting we had in mind. Having met Rob Cosman previously and hearing that he would be in town to conduct classes at the Franklin Woodcraft, Mike & Rita invited him to their home for this very enjoyable and informative evening.

Through his DVD series and hands-on sessions, Rob has been teaching hand tool techniques for many years. Based in New Brunswick, Canada, Rob was trained by Tage Frid and Alan Peters, among others.

The Kaplans were gracious hosts – opening their beautiful home to us and providing a delicious dinner to start the meeting. It was the perfect night to dine under the stars on their patio, allowing time to converse with fellow guild members and get to know Rob a bit. And, as an added treat, we were able to see several nice furniture pieces Rita and Mike have built for their home.

After dinner the group moved down to the basement workshop where Rob spent an hour or two reviewing some of his techniques. He showed his quick technique for cutting through-dovetails, demonstrating his new dovetail saw line (variable tooth pitch, well-balanced, and aggressive cut!). Rob reviewed several chisel modifications he has adopted to refine the manual dovetail process. He also showed an example of his signature line of handplane blade upgrades available through Woodcraft as well as his sharpening technique. Rob stressed the importance



of developing the eye-hand coordination to enable tool sharpening and straight/square sawing without relying on jigs and fixtures.

The guild is grateful to David Sapp of Woodcraft for accompanying Rob and sharing him with us for this fun event. And, of course, thanks so much to Mike and Rita for being gracious hosts and enthusiastic guild members. We encourage all members to host meetings in the future. Let's continue to be motivated by this trend. *-Dale ♦*

## Cool Tool Review

### SketchUp for 3D Design

By Scott Thompson

Whether you make furniture professionally or out of personal interest, whether you collect furniture or commission it, design is an essential element to a successful piece of furniture. Design is how function and form are integrated into a unified whole. Often design is how a piece of furniture is made personal and unique. I have seen fantastic designs drawn on napkins and others meticulously laid out full-scale on a sheet of plywood. Most of the time, I wager, creating the design is a "process" and therefore takes time. The computer has not completely changed this. However, it has added to the ability to look at what the designer envisions and to efficiently and quickly make changes and edits to the design. Furthermore, both the maker and the collector are able to utilize this technology.

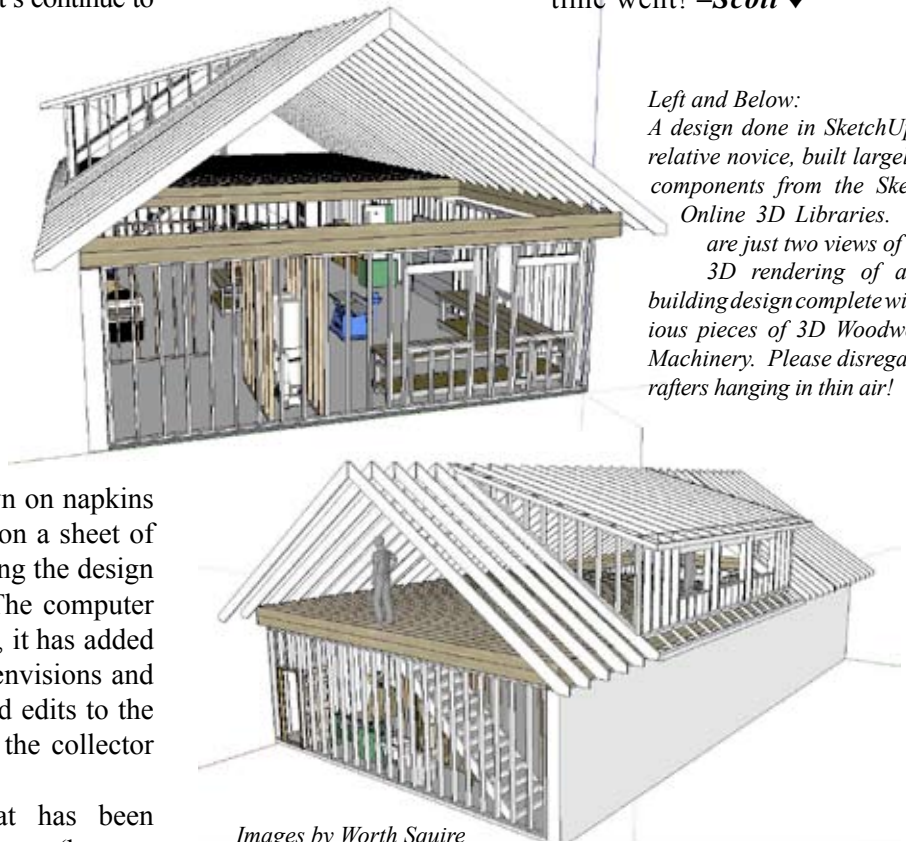
One of the computer programs that has been developed to design both furniture and structures (houses, barns, etc.), is called SketchUp. It is a diverse three-dimensional modeling program with a short learning curve and powerful results. This cool tool is available from Google as a free download (or a pro-version is available at a considerable cost) in both Windows and Mac versions. The creators of SketchUp have done a fantastic job of allowing the designer to begin drawing in three dimensions quickly and then to be able to add different drawing tools to the screen once confidence and understanding has been gained. If you have always wanted to design a house, barn, cabinet or piece of furniture, SketchUp could be an intriguing and productive tool toward that end. If you are a professional maker or designer, it could be a tool that allows you to better edit your designs and quickly look at many refinements before building them. If you are working with the same basic layout on a piece of furniture but changing the details, then it could also be a helpful tool.

The best design programs cannot replace the basics of design - a knowledge and understanding of proportion and of the materials used to execute the idea. (Please see Alf Sharp's "Letter from the President" in the February, 2010 issue of the CFG Newsletter.)

I must admit that I am unlikely ever to give up my board

drafting tools completely - they often add to the creative process of design. At the same time, I do not want to miss out on a tool that can allow me to explore ideas rapidly.

There is a huge library of tutorials online to teach yourself how to use SketchUp. Just be careful. This cool tool is a lot of fun to use, and you may find yourself surfacing hours later wondering where the time went! *-Scott ♦*



*Left and Below:  
A design done in SketchUp by a relative novice, built largely with components from the SketchUp Online 3D Libraries. These are just two views of a fully 3D rendering of a shop building design complete with various pieces of 3D Woodworking Machinery. Please disregard any rafters hanging in thin air!*

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