

# BAY AREA WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

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WHAT WOULD THE WALLS OF LOUIS' SHOP SAY, IF YOU ASKED THEM?  
by Anne Glynn

## OCTOBER MEETING Shop Tour

### WHERE

Thursday 15, 1992

### WHERE

Louis Kern's Shop  
1777 Yosemite Avenue  
San Francisco

### SCHEDULE

7:00 - 7:30 P.M.  
Sign-In &  
Social Time  
7:30 - 10 P.M.  
Program

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 19, 1992

Guest Speaker:  
Mr. Stivison

Tool Swap,  
Jigs & Fixtures  
Mainliner Club

Dec. 17, 1992

Potluck Dinner  
Mainliner Club

Would the walls tell you this is a family operation - Louis, and his wife Susan work at the business?

Or Susan who started working doing apprentice work, such as sanding, stock preparation, and now does carving too. Or perhaps they would tell you the type of work which is done in the shop, for items people come to have built because they can't obtain them elsewhere. In a nutshell, it is the odd and unusual items this

designs - building spiral staircases, or replacing damaged columns on buildings.

But whatever is done in the shop, two things that always ring true - quality is always utmost in their minds, and give the customer not only what he/she wants, but give them something extra!

Of the several jobs that they have done, two of them really take hold of your imagination and exhibit their expertise.



1777 YOSEMITE AVENUE

shop does best.

Another thing the walls would tell you about is how they bring a little bit of nature into the shop by having a small potted tree in the shop, showing that we all are a part of nature's plan.

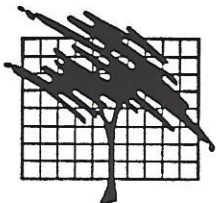
"What do they actually do?" you ask.

They do the architectural style

(continued on page 2)

### What's inside...

WHEN LAST WE MET	3
FOR SALE	5
OUTREACH PROGRAM NEWS	5
SHOW AND TELL	5
SHOP TIPS	6
TRIVA FROM ELSEWHERE	7



(continued from page 1)

The first, is eight-foot solid, mahogany, carved columns they did for the California Historical Society building in Pacific Heights on Jackson Street. These columns are in keeping with the Greek tradition of optical illusion, straight if one is standing in front of them and then when viewed from the side, the columns come out slightly then turn in slightly at the bottom. See the columns before the meeting and see what you see.

The second, is the spiral, mostly cherry staircase which is 131 inches

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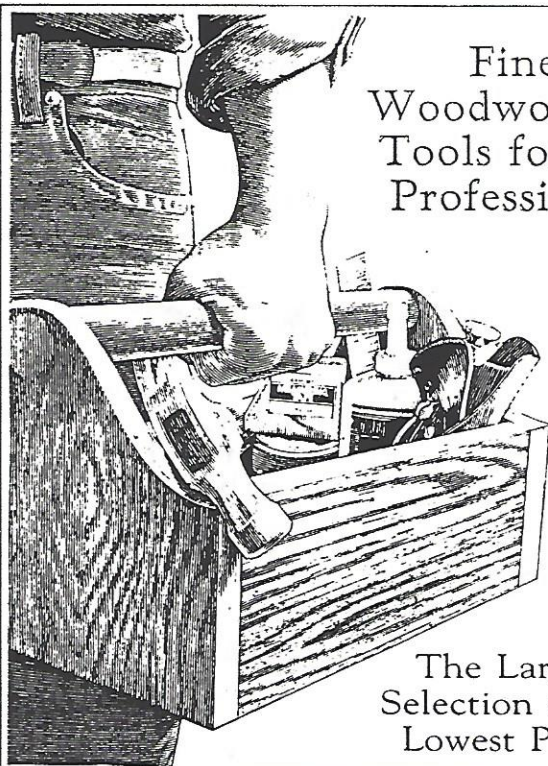
tall with sixteen treads, center post, and balusters. There are two things that show this magnificent spiral staircase to us. They are a picture which is at the shop and the prototype of the staircase. One thing that makes this staircase stand apart from someone else's is there isn't a screw or nail in the entire unit. This staircase is held together in a unique way with special dovetail joints, wedges and glue. That is something for all of us to think about in our future work.

The prototype staircase is on display in the shop and they have an unofficial contest going on for others to guess how they made the spiral post. Come and see this staircase and perhaps you might know how it was done?

You might have pondered what happens with all that sawdust that they produce as a by-product. They give it to a nursery which uses it for soilbuilding. There is an old saying: give back to the earth a little something which you have taken away.

Come to the meeting and hear Louis and Susan discuss in detail how these things were made and more. It's a meeting you won't want to miss.

They are located at 1777 Yosemite Avenue, San Francisco. It's the big grey building on the left, near the end of the street.



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# When Last We Met

written by John Weidner

We met at DEAN SANTNER DESIGN, a shop in Emeryville. It is the sort of shop that reminds you why you are a woodworker. At once orderly and whimsical, with machines painted in rich colors, and lots of interesting work to see, from sophisticated furniture to lighthearted toys. There were interesting jiggs and fixtures, including a box in which drawers could be clamped up, using wedges. There were many wooden-threaded



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devices for clamping and holding. They have brought the making of wooden threads and screws to a high level.

The shop was very clean, but Dean said that he hadn't cleaned up just for us. They clean the shop every night and it takes one person 10 minutes. Mysteriously, with two people it also takes ten minutes. He said he used to leave things messy until he realized that valuable what-nots like router bits were turning up in the sawdust—after he had purchased replacements!

Among old friends attending the meeting were former newsletter editor Norma Brooks, and Tom Keller, who hosted another

memorable meeting at his Redwood City shop last year.

Stan introduced our host, Dean Santner, who started as a teacher. He has been in his present location for 23 years. He has done everything from production to one-of-a-kind. Dean said, "I've made a ton of mistakes. I'd like to share them with you." He started a slide show, with shots of several lines of crafts pieces that he has done over the years. There were cutting boards, and various boxes in exotic woods, the "egg box," the "shell box," the "rock box," he said they had made hundreds of thousands over the years. Some are now in museums.

He also showed slides of his work with a neighboring auto craftsman to rebuild the Ash frames of Morgan Sports Cars. The English are very strange, and building cars with complex frameworks of wood is one of their notable oddities. Eventually the frames decay, and, since the cars are much prized, a person who could replace the frames would be into a good business. Their dreams of reproducing their first painfully created car body (6 months of work) (continued on page 4)

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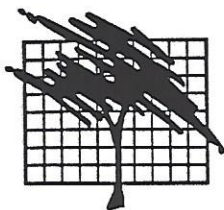
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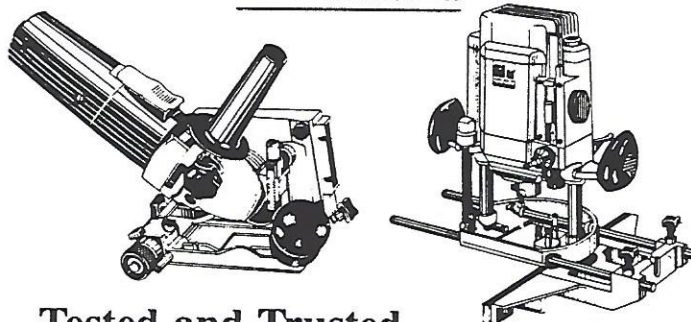
(continued from page 3)  
were shipwrecked when they discovered that no two of those cars are alike! The perfidious English built each frame by hand and then bent the metal on to it.

But Santner's real interest is Ergonomics. The money he has earned from crafts and toys has been plowed into furniture design. Ergonomics is the science of fitting an environment to people: a fork to a hand, a spaceship to an astronaut. Dean has passionately studied Ergonomics for the last 15 years. He has created some complex furniture systems, intensely modular, with thousands of possible

components that can be mixed and adjusted to fit a particular person or job. Fascinating stuff, with a certain drawback in needing a lot of personal selling and installing by Santner. He is working now with a medium-sized furniture company to create a system that could be much more widely distributed.

Ergonomics' time may be coming. There are laws pending in 12 states requiring ergonomically designed furniture for workers. To roughly quote Dean Santner, "That's what this shop is all about. I don't know where the science of ergonomics is taking us. Any system must stay fresh. Technology is changing constantly and furniture must be agile. I feel like I've been in training my entire career to be in this spot."

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## OUTREACH PROGRAM NEWS

written by John Wiedner

Arnold gave us an update on our Christmas toys project. We've had donated 600 feet of rod stock that needs to be turned down just a touch to 3/8". These will make the rods for our "Woody's Tinker Toys." We are trying to end up with 5000

pieces, which will be enough for 10-15 big boxes to be donated to the Recreation Center for the Handicapped in San Francisco.

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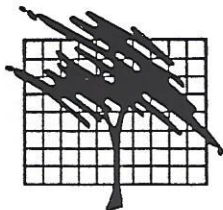
## SHOW and TELL

written by John Wiedner

Anne Glynn Brought in a jig she had made to hold blocks for drilling for our "Tinker-Toy" Christmas project.

Bob Berryman showed us another of his windsor chairs, this one a child's fanback high-chair, painted with the traditional milk paint.

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# SHOP TIPS

## Tip on a Tip:

I recently read somewhere that one can clean pitch and gunk off a sawblade by soaking it overnight in water with a bit of baking soda. I can now inform you that it works! The crud just comes off with a light touch. Much more pleasant than spraying blades with oven cleaner. The hardest part was finding a vessel into which a circular sawblade would fit.-- John Wiedner

\*\*\*\*\*

## Tricks and Myths on Sanding

Brush or blow all dust off your work every time you change to a finer grit. If you don't, loose pieces of grit from the grade you just used can roll around under your finer paper and mar your work.

For a really fine oil finish, sand your work with 400 waterproof paper, while the work is wet with oil. Then wipe off the excess.

This fills the pores with a slurry of wood dust and produces an exceptionally smooth natural finish.

If you are going to stain your work, use a finer grade on the end grain than you do on the rest of the project. This helps keep the end grain from staining too dark. Otherwise, sand all parts of the project identically or you may get color variations when you stain and varnish.

Use fresh sandpaper for your final sanding. If you use worn paper you can burnish rather than sand your work and stains may penetrate the wood unevenly.

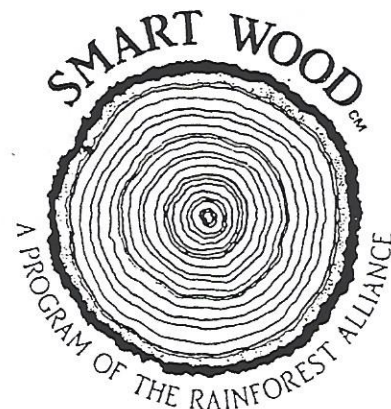
Forget the old trick about rubbing two sheets of sandpaper face to face to wear them both down to a finer grit. This only produces dull sandpaper.

Source - Handynman: November 1984  
"Using Tools" by A. J. Hand.



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# TRIVIA FROM ELSEWHERE

**LOUIS KERN** had an article in Fine Woodworking Oct. 1992 (96), "Power Feeders: Unsung Heroes. He will also have in a future issue of Fine Homebuilding an article dealing with Box Newel Posts.

\*\*\*\*\*

## COUNT ON A CORD

One cord of wood equals a pile measuring 4x4x8', and most people count on it to produce BTU's. But a cord can do so much more!

Less the air space in the stack, a cord represents 80 cubic feet of solid wood. That's approximately 500 board feet. According to **The American Tree Farmer**; some of the things that could be made from that amount of wood include:

- o 7.5 million toothpicks, or
- o 460,000 personal checks, or
- o 250 copies of the **Sunday New York Times**, or
- o 1,200 copies of the **National Geographic**, or
- o 30 Boston rockers, or
- o 12 Large dining room tables.

Wood by-products also become a vast range of products, such as vitamins, explosives, photographic film, toothpaste, and pharmaceuticals. (article obtained from WOOD oct. 1987 (19))

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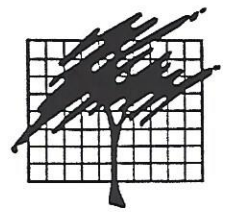
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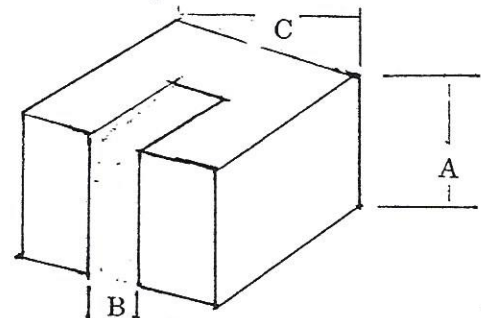
## A FOOLPROOF MEASURING DEVICE FOR DIABETICS

by Ed Campagna, Quincy, MA

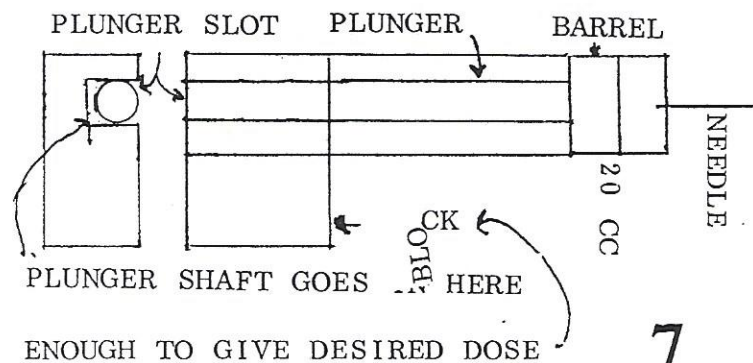
As he writes it is foolproof, his own design, and of the medical doctors who have seen it have given its' approval and it has been in use for over a year without a problem.

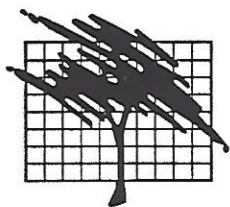
The device eliminates all problems associated with poor eyesight, so prevalent in many of the folks cursed with that disease.

Dimensions: A, whatever distance produces the desired dose; B, Slot wide enough to accept shaft of plunger; C, any convenient width (whatever scrap that's in the shop)



To use, determine prescribed dose using scale on barrel of the hypodermic, if dose is 20cc or mg. whatever, push plunger down til the piston is exactly on 20 cc or mg or whatever, cut off piece of wood, I used oak, but any hardwood will do so that when inserted between finger saddle on plunger and barrel it allows the exact dosage. The slot in the block is wide enough to accept the shaft of the plunger. I found the thickness of the table saw blade cut produced enough clearance.





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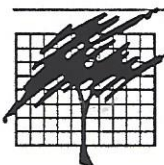
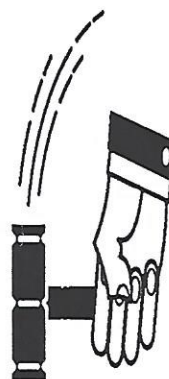
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