

# Woodworkers Club of Houston

May 2005 • Volume 21, No. 5 • [www.wwch.org](http://www.wwch.org)

## San Francisco Tales

by Steve Proctor

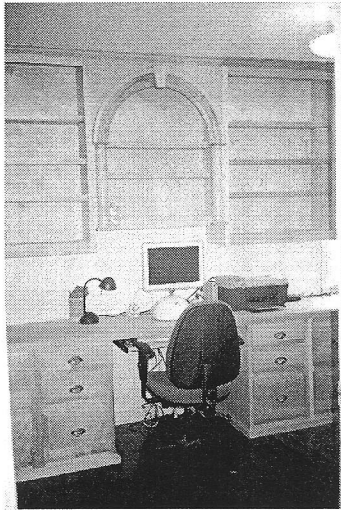
(Content edited to fit space available)

**O**n Sunday January 2nd, my wife Glenda and I were finishing a quick trip to lovely San Francisco to visit my sister Shelley and her husband Jerry. Despite dreary weather, we planned to do a little more sight seeing before our departure. Instead, I ended up making a New Year's resolution I'll never forget.

My sister and brother in law live in a small post WWII bungalow with less than 1000 sq feet of space, primarily on a second floor. The rooms are small, and generally plain. This is no Victorian charmer- it was cheap housing for the returning vets. Long time readers will remember that a few years ago I flew out for a week and built them three pieces of furniture in a borrowed one car garage shop. We learned that large furnishings actually make the place feel bigger, as it unclutters the rooms and uses the ceiling height to full advantage. This particular day my sister was bemoaning the sad state of her little back room study, which was jammed full of cheap pressboard bookcases, a tiny pine computer desk, some pressboard sewing cabinets and a hideous four drawer file cabinet. While surveying this dismal enclave, I noticed the carpet was missing under a table.

Much to my wife's dismay, I instantly volunteered to tear up the carpet to reveal the secret. This involved removing all the furniture from the room, and turned into quite an operation. While Glenda saw her chance at

shopping slip away, I gleefully discovered a floor in relatively good condition, complete with mahogany border. It didn't require sanding, just a light refinishing. Then I was inspired to design some appropriate furniture fit for such a floor, a rid my sister of the pressboard blues



forever. So I sketched a simple layout consisting of twelve lineal feet of desk cabinets, including six file drawers, four slender desk drawers, a keyboard tray and a two door cabinet. Above this was three book cases totaling nine feet, with crown molding transitioning to the ceiling. For brother Jerry, I sketched a roughly seven foot wide by seven foot tall entertainment center, to replace a rickety contraption that was holding up a 200 pound TV. I postulated that all these simple (remember that word) boxes could be built, knocked down, truck shipped and re-assembled by Easter. I estimated a total cost between

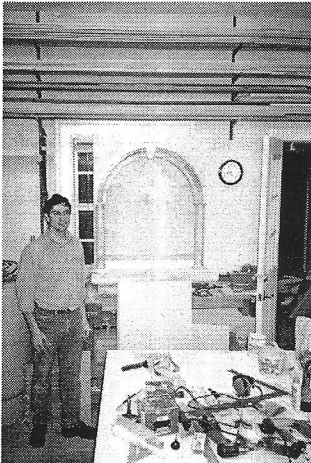
\$2000 and \$2500, including my returning airfare. With such an outlandish bargain, and armed with the knowledge that I had done something similarly foolish in the past, my sister agreed to subsidize my folly.

I arrived home, and worked out a cut list and obtained a truckload of materials on January 13th. Then began the adventure. With help from friend Michael Brown, I cut all the sheet stock to dimension, and began rabbeting and dadoing the pieces so they would fit together predictably. By Sunday the 16th the basic

boxes had been finished on their interiors and assembled. My shop was rapidly filling with bulky cabinets.

By January 30th, the face frames were on all of the cabinets except the upper part of the entertainment center, which I was still mulling in my mind how to construct. The cabinetry was coming along swell, so I decided to add some flourishes. I changed to solid wood raised panel doors from simple (there's that word again) plywood, and added drawers behind the entertainment center doors for DVDs and CDs. I had always planned to make one of my signature arches the focal point of the study, but I wanted to venture into previously uncharted territory by turning half columns to support it. To do the heavy moldings and turnings I used maple, which was available in 8/4, as the birch Shelley had specified was not.

By February 13th things were really taking shape. The entertainment center was nearly done, and the table tops for the study were sitting on sawhorses blocking more of my garage. The drawers were done a week later and I was homing in on my schedule to ship



by Monday, March 7th, which would give me almost three weeks of shipping time. My plane ticket was already bought, so come Good Friday, I was going to be in San Francisco. Hopefully my cabinet parts will be there too.

The schedule was getting a bit tight. I had to raise all those doors and drawer fronts, mill the stiles and rails, and make my arched moldings. Then there

was the column turning, which I had never done, just seen on TV. (All together now, say "I can do that.") I glued a sheet of newspaper between two slabs, knocked the corners off on the table saw and chucked it in the lathe. A bunch of trial and error—mostly error later, I had a round object with a passing resemblance to a Greek column. No self-respecting Greek would agree, but, hey, I am entitled to my opinion. I gingerly tapped a chisel into the paper seam, and behold! Two half columns.

More last minute additions include baseboards routed to complement the table tops. This necessitated another trip to Hardwood Products. I was coming down to the wire. I enlisted (it was more like draft) the aid of friend Rick Goodheart (longtime member—he was Vice

## May Program: MiniMax Reps Demo Band Saws

Sam Blasco has been a cabinetmaker for over 20 years. During that time he gained a great deal of experience in a high-end commercial cabinet shop. For the last eight years Sam has run his own shop. His favorite tool is the bandsaw and he most enjoys taking jobs that others would turn away.

At our May 2005 meeting Sam will run the Mini Max USA model MM16 through its paces. If you've been following the reviews in woodworking journals or discussions on the Internet, you know that this is a highly regarded machine offered by a highly regarded company from right here in Texas. You also know that there is a cost associated with the superior qualities and capabilities of machines in this class. With that in mind, Mini Max has promised a really good package deal on the machine, blades, and accessories used in Sam's demonstration. Mini Max has also promised that club members ordering at the meeting will receive show prices for a package including a machine, 4 blades including one with carbide teeth, a mobility kit, and a miter gauge.

Come see a good demonstration of a top rated machine. And, if you're in the market, take advantage of a good deal.

President of the Wood Workers Club way back in 1986.) On Sunday March 6th we feverishly assembled doors and drawers. The extra coats of finish required to give that satin feel were taking time. I still had to assemble everything, then DISASSEMBLE everything, and make crates to boot. I was not meeting my deadline.

At the end of Monday March 7th, (most) everything was in pieces. The case work is held together with pocket screws, everything was made to come apart. I made a decision to leave the lower cabinets together, and have glued the drawers and fitted them on their slides. I will have to make bigger crates, but I can store shelves and other loose items inside the cases to minimize crate needs.

Wednesday morning I called in to work to say that I'd be late. I can't lift crates that must be over 200 pounds by myself. It was Spring break for FBISD. On a chance, I knocked on my neighbor's door. Mercifully he was awake, and willing to help despite being kept up by constant hammering and sawing until the wee hours. He also has a trailer! My first leg of the transportation journey was solved. I hauled all of this over to the Cutting Edge as my trans-shipment point. Steve LeGrue had graciously, if imprudently offered to let me ship the crates from his store, rather than hauling them all across town to a freight terminal. Now I am about to enter the twilight zone of "less than truckload" shipping. First, the whole freight class thing had me spooked. The idea is that heavy bulky things are cheaper to ship than fragile,

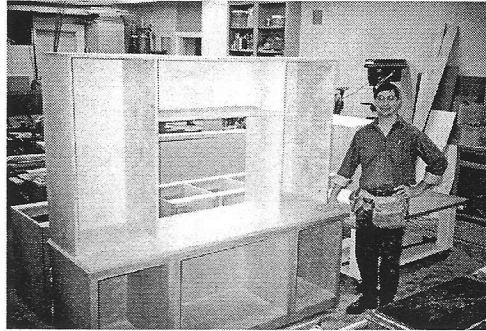
delicate stuff. But there is a secret code that only truck lines know. Basically, they will charge you to handle your precious cargo with care, although in reality they will drop it off the end of a bobtail to see how high it bounces. I ended up gaming the system by classifying it as radio and TV cabinet parts, which they sort of are, rather than the much more expensive kitchen cabinets they resemble. Steve's experienced sons decided the 6 crates weighed more like 1000 pounds.

Lo and behold the carrier tired of rolling these overgrown child's blocks around in their trucks, and reluctantly agreed to send some poor schmuck to unload them. He had a pallet jack, a worthless dolly and approximately the same stature as my sister. Together they man and woman handled these monstrosities into her one car garage Tuesday, March 22nd.

Final weight: 1415 pounds. Whoops!

I arrived Thursday night, with Glenda along to supervise. Friday morning we got at it at 7:30 AM. Glenda, Shelley and a neighbor (Jerry had to work despite begging

for the day off) unloaded the crates and hauled all of the cabinets, parts and pieces up the stairs. I had brought along a rolling tool chest, checked as baggage. I ended up with the chest and a gym bag full of tools as well. All the cabinets were assembled and installed by 4:30 that afternoon. Jerry came home to a transformed home.



I spent a few hours drilling holes for power strips and installing some window moldings the next day. Long-suffering Glenda was rewarded with shopping excursions both Saturday and Sunday, and all was right with the world. Almost. I delayed telling my sister the bad budget news until it was pried out of me. Final tally: \$3525. Shelley gamely wrote me a check, conferred with God, and ordered up a rain storm to soggy my spirits. Airport security got in the final punishment by breaking in to my locked tool chest and removing the apparently contraband yellow glue bottle and leaving me little love notes in my luggage and security tape pathetically wrapped around my new tool chest. No good deed goes unpunished!



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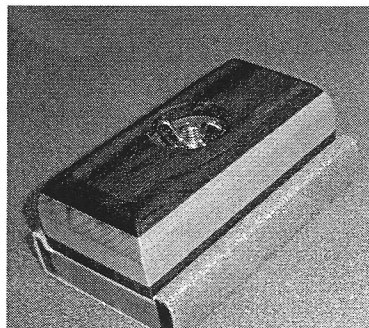
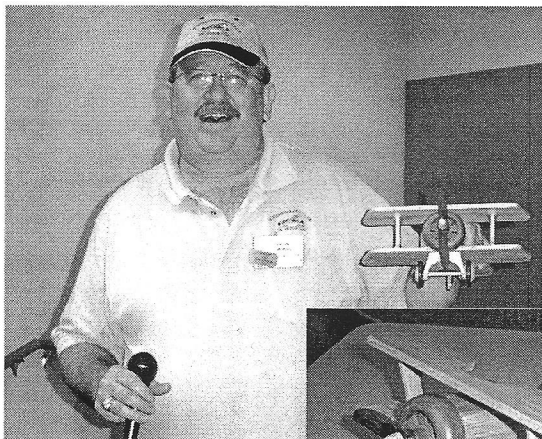
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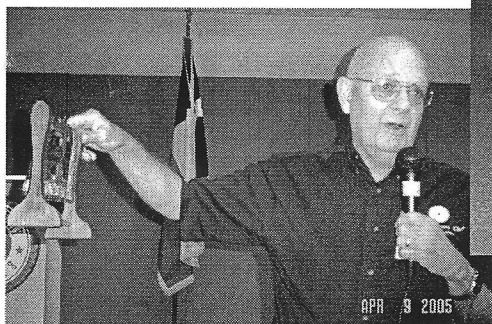
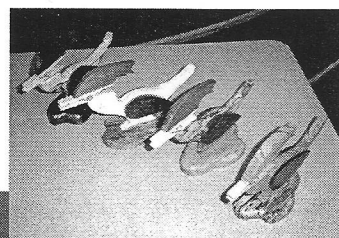
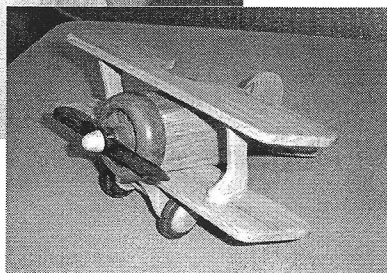
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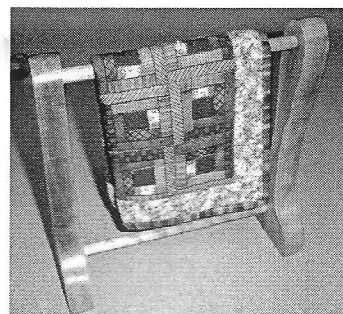
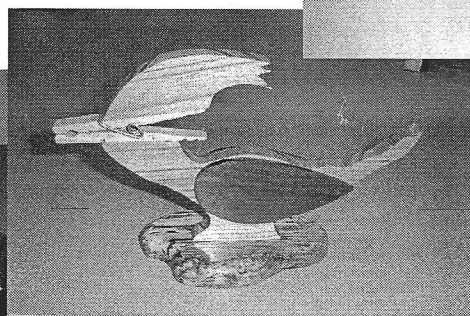
# April projects



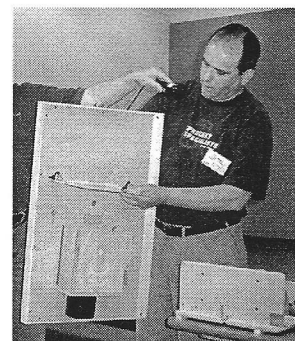
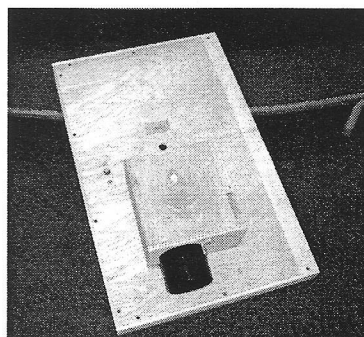
**Dennis Muras** shows how to fly his airplane of oak and black walnut. Maybe the sanding blocks are used as wheel chocks?



A miniature quilt rack stands beside road runner recipe card holders crafted by **John Murray**—beep beep—is Wile E. Coyote next?

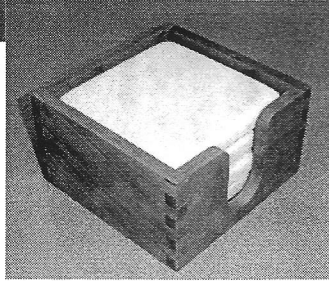
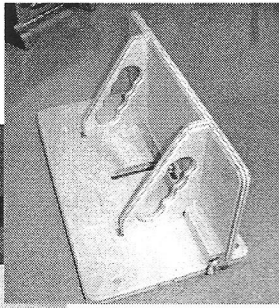


**Mark Bolinger** shows club members how his horizontal router mortise maker clamps onto a table saw.





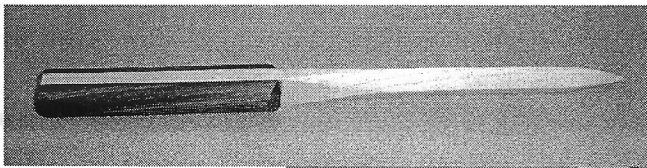
**Joseph Rice** explains how he made and used his finger joint jig to create this finger jointed coaster holder.



**Arthur Thompson** solved a couple of unique problems for musicians. The



standing items are designed to hang on sheet music stands and hold the musician's pencil. The long holder clamps onto a music stand and holds a viol bow (you can't see the springs in these photos). Arthur used purple heart and even ebony from a grand piano.



**Dennis Serig** holds his letter opener of maple and walnut. Expecting mail?



**Steve Wavro** explains how the different hues of aromatic cedar create color combinations in his intarsia hummingbirds. Walnut cherry, oak and some scrap add to the artistic effect.

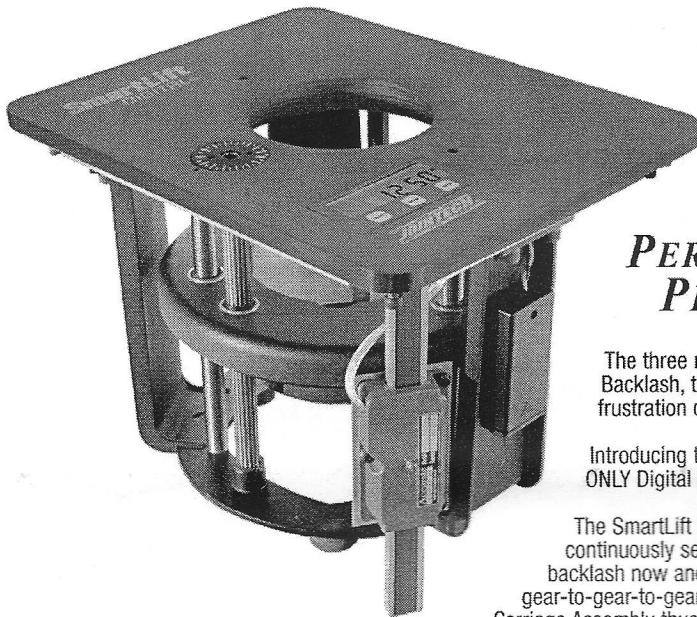


**Rich Thomas** talked to club members about various CAD programs available for woodworkers and designers. Rich prefaced his talk with some photos of macho picku... uh.. machu picchu.. and pointed out the tight joints in huge blocks of stone. (Note: They were ... um ... built by aliens from outer space.)



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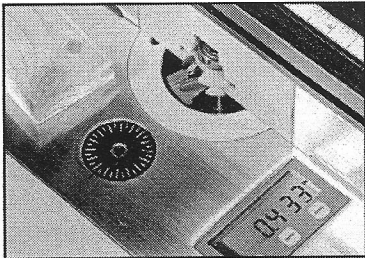
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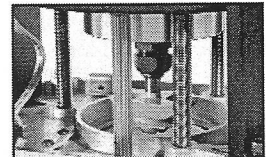
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## WWCH Monthly Meeting

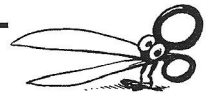
Second Saturday of every month

We open the doors at 8:30am, program starts at 9:00 and winds up by 11:30am.

Bayland Community Center  
6400 Bissonnet  
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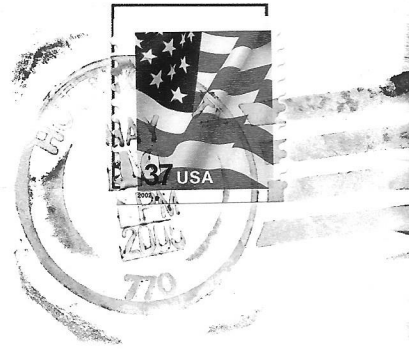
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# Woodworkers Club *of Houston*

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS:



**Monthly Meeting:**  
May 14

**Program:**  
MiniMax Band Saws:  
Reps bearing deals

**Next Monthly Meeting:**  
June 11

~~Gary Rowan~~  
~~2100 Cranbourne Dr~~  
~~Houston, TX 77062~~

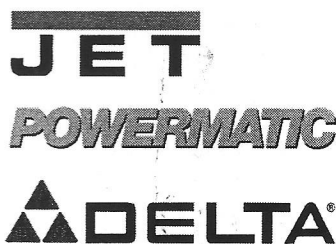
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