



# BENCH TALK

The Monthly Newsletter of the  
Northeastern Wisconsin Woodworkers Guild

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● NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP ● HOLIDAY PARTY ● SPRING SHOW

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## HEY, GANG! IT'S A FIELD TRIP! Let's Go to Arcways! Friday, Nov 16 at 7:00 PM

by Steve Lockhart

The November NEWWG regular Friday night program will be a field trip to Arcways manufacturing in Neenah. The Guild toured Arcways a few years ago and due to popular demand we're going to do it again! Guild member, Bob Wellhouse, an employee a Arcways, has been good enough to "get us in" (again). Bob says there will be lots of new developments to see.

Arcways is a manufacturer of custom made curved and spiral staircases. If you have access to the web, go to [www.arcways.com](http://www.arcways.com) and you will see many examples of the type of work they do.

To give you an idea of the complexity of their work, they manufacture more than six stairways a week, with an average cost of \$25,000 to \$35,000 each. A few times a year, they have a job that's over \$100,000. The staircases are often made of exotic woods and are made to impeccable quality standards.

Arcways got its start in 1965, when Don Stilp, then a homebuilder, created a custom-built curved stairway for John Boehme's new home on Lake Winnebago. In the process, Stilp and Boehme discovered that there were few companies capable of producing curved and spiral stairs, so they formed Arcways and began marketing their custom stairs nationally. The current owners, Tom Stilp and Sharon Stilp-Kressin grew up with the business and worked in it with their father until he retired and sold them the business in 1993.

Arcways has had a quality reputation in the stair-making industry, so its primary challenge has been to discover ways to translate that reputation into continued growth. Their most recent discovery is the mega-yacht industry, dominated by companies like Racine's Palmer Johnson Yachts and Manitowoc's Burger Boats. Arcways has already created several staircases for Burger Boats (including one for NBA star Scottie Pippen) and recently completed one for Palmer Johnson. The luxury yacht market being what it is, Arcways' exposure there will likely lead to more sales there. See "Marketplace Magazine" March 25, 2003.

The Arcways plant is located at 1076 Ehlers Road in Neenah. Take Highway 41 to Winchester Road. It is also called 11. Drive east to the first traffic light (Green Bay Road) and then left (north) to Ehlers. Turn right (east) on Ehlers and proceed about a half mile to Arcways. See the enclosed map.

***Guild members are requested not to take photos in the Arcways facility***

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## DAVID MARKS: VERY LIKELY PRESENTING TO THE GUILD!

by Dan Alesch

David Marks is the woodworking television star of the DIY channel whose show can be seen several times each week. The Board and Chris and Mary at Woodcraft in Appleton have been working to bring nationally-known woodworking TV personality David Marks here this coming March 7, 8, and 9. He would present a program to the Guild on Friday and hold several classes over the weekend in Appleton with very special rates for Guild members. No contract has been signed yet, but we expect it to happen in the next week or two. We'll keep you posted. In the meantime, watch his show on DYI. It's good.

## THE HOLIDAY PARTY

Guess what. It's that time of year again. Already! The Guild's Annual Holiday Party will be, once again, held at Jane and Dan's house. This year, there is a twist. Instead of gathering on Saturday, we'll get together on **Sunday, December 16**. And, instead of gathering in the early evening, we'll gather in the late afternoon. The Packers play an away game at noon, so no excuses. **The party will begin about 4:30**. It always takes Dan and Jane a long time to get ready for this, so, if you come much before 4:30, you will have to wait to get in until they are finished showering.

If you haven't participated before, here's how it works. Everyone brings "a dish to pass." It might be *hors d'oeuvres*, salad, a main dish, or a dessert. The Guild provides hot sandwiches on tasty rolls, soft drinks, coffee, and hot cranberry beverages, pickles, olives, etc. We never specify who is to bring what, except that some folks know everyone hopes they will bring that special dish or dessert. Only once have we run short of food. There are chairs and tables all over the house, lots of decorations, and lots of affable noise. We'll start nibbling right away when you get there and eat around 5 or 5:30, depending.

Parking is kind of scarce because the Alesch's live on a *cul de sac*. Carpooling would be a good idea.

Did I mention door prizes? Well, we'll

have those, too. Steve Lockhart has a door prize budget and will be visiting Merl and Char at Woodworkers Depot and Chris and Mary at Woodcraft, and maybe some other places, too, to find some great woodworking door prizes.

Dan and Jane live at **909 Forest Hill Drive** on Green Bay's far northeast corner near the University. See [www.Mapquest.com](http://www.Mapquest.com), your GPS unit, or the attached map to find them. If that fails, call them at 468-0132 if you have questions or want more information.

## BRING THOSE OVERDUE LIBRARY BOOKS TO THE HOLIDAY PARTY

Librarian Pete Schuh is trying hard to make sure that our library holdings actually matches our library inventory. To do that, we must know who actually has what. Bring the books you've had for a while to the Holiday party. The Library won't be available in November because of the field trip, but we will collect books you want to turn in.

## JERRY FOURNIER, FOUNDING MEMBER DIES. TOOLS FOR SALE

Jerry Fournier, a founding member of the Guild recently died of cancer. His sister, Moira Duchateau is liquidating his tools: planer, saws, lathes, vacuum, books, patterns, etc., but not much wood. Jerry was also into stained glass, so there is quite a bit of that, too. Her intent is to offer them to Guild members for a brief time, less than a month, and then to put them up at auction. She would prefer to meet with several Guild members at a time, rather than working with one or two at a time, so "group up" if you go to see her.

Contact Moira at 497-0871 or at at Jerry's House at 433-0674. She spends some time there each day taking care of the dogs. The house is at 304 S. Irwin in Green Bay. You can also send an e-mail to here at [Mcduchat@new.rr.com](mailto:Mcduchat@new.rr.com). She doesn't know the value of the various tools, so please make a fair offer. Remember, ***Guildies Don't Gouge***.

## **SPRING SHOW NEWS**

The Spring Show is getting pinned down. Given the early Easter next Spring and the fact that we're planning to have David Marks here in early March, we're planning the Spring Show for April. April 12 and 13 with set-up on Friday night (early Saturday morning for those of you coming from a great distance.)

Jane and her Board member associates have been working hard to pin down a place that won't cost us anything, that people can find easily, and that provides security overnight for our stuff. We will be back somewhere in the East Town Mall.

## **THE OCTOBER MEETING**

*by Ron Dauplaise*

Leon Stephenson, retired Preble H.S. industrial arts/tech ed. teacher, presented the program at the November 19 Guild meeting. He described how he planned and constructed an Advent wreath for his church. Church members had requested it. This incredibly complex project took several months to construct. He did not work on it continuously, of course, but we all could understand that this project was vastly more time-consuming than one might first imagine!

The wreath itself was a large—24" or so in diameter—of white ash mounted on a hexagonal post about 6 feet tall. Since this wreath was designed to be displayed in the front of the church for all to see, Leon explained, this much height was needed. Some parts of this project were made of plywood that was edged with solid ash. The plywood was indistinguishable from the solid ash.

The candleholders could have been turned, but Leon decided the visual impact would be more consistent if all candleholder surfaces had the grain running in the same direction. Therefore, he used quarter-sawn wood and assembled them by using several vertical pieces edge-glued together. He achieved his visual goal. Attaching the wreath to the post was a MAJOR challenge! He set the wreath at an angle so all the candles could be seen easily by all in church. This meant that the front and back braces under the large circular wreath were of different dimensions. The two side braces were the same but different from the other two.

The base of the stand was broad, but not heavy enough to counterbalance the 40 pound weight of the wreath on top. Therefore, Leon inserted a large steel disk inside the base to achieve the required balance. This was an extremely well planned and constructed project.

Since an Advent wreath is only displayed about four weeks each year, Leon designed and built two storage boxes—one for the wreath and one for the candles and supplies. The boxes were themselves big projects. They were executed with the same attention to detail as the wreath and stand. The candle box holds all 5 candles, oil, gloves, and igniters. The oil-burning candles had been donated by a church member and cost several hundred dollars. Leon devised an ingenious system to give the illusion that these candles were actually getting shorter each week. Hidden supports were placed below three of the candles. After one week of "burning," one support was removed from the first candle to make it appear shorter than the others. After the second week, another support was removed from the first candle and one removed from the second candle, and so on. A great illusion!

Many jigs were needed to build this challenging project. Since Leon owns a metal turning lathe, he was able to turn many special items, including washers, and fabricate a bewildering variety of specialty items and jigs.

All in attendance sincerely hope that Leon's fellow church members are greatly appreciative of what they now own and of the skills and creativity of Leon Stephenson. We are sure they will treasure this Advent wreath each time it is used.

## **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

*By Fred Juengst*

As of November 1, 2007, we have 174 individuals, two are complementary. I made a mistake with the membership list last month and many who had already paid their dues had their dues appear to be unpaid. I am sorry and believe all the mistakes were corrected this time. If you paid your dues in the last two months and think I screwed up your account, please give me a call.

For those who get a mail version of *Bench Talk*, please look at your label to see if it is correct.

Five are up for renewal in November. Please check your mail label to see if the renewal date is marked with a magic marker. Seven memberships were due a month ago. Decide today to pay your dues and continue your support for your Guild.

We have two members whose dues are more than two months. Thanks to those who already paid your dues. We hope you still find the Guild a benefit to you. Please consider remaining a member of the Guild and pay your dues today.

If your dues are more than three months overdue, a postcard is attached as a reminder to pay your dues as soon as possible. If you choose not to renew, please sign the card and mail it to me so we know you do not intend to renew. Please keep your nametag in case you change your mind later. If you don't respond, I'll drop your name from our active roster, but you will be hounded for any outstanding library books you might have.

If you get a postcard but want to renew, just slip the UNMARKED postcard in an envelope with your membership dues and mail it to me at 846 Cornelius Dr., Green Bay, WI 54311 or bring it to the next meeting.

If you think I may have made a mistake with your membership due date or dues, give me a call (920-469-1919) or send me an e-mail (mdjuengst@aol.com).

## **CARVERS NOTES**

### ***by The Olde Carver From Beyond the Hills***

The good old carvers will meet at Dan and Jane's Wednesday November 14; Tuesday, November 20; Tuesday, November 27; and Thursday, December 6. It's complicated, but you can handle it if you mark your calendar right now.

What long-time brunette Guild member, active in the real estate business, cut herself while intent on her carving an intricate piece on Thursday last? The Shadow knows!

## **FYI:**

***by Dan Alesch***

- Don't forget to give Dale Kozicki a hand with his toys for special tots. It's worth doing.

- The next Board meeting will be at Lyle Marten's home on Monday, November 19 at 7 P.M. See you there

## **● THIS IS IMPORTANT, SO PAY ATTENTION!**

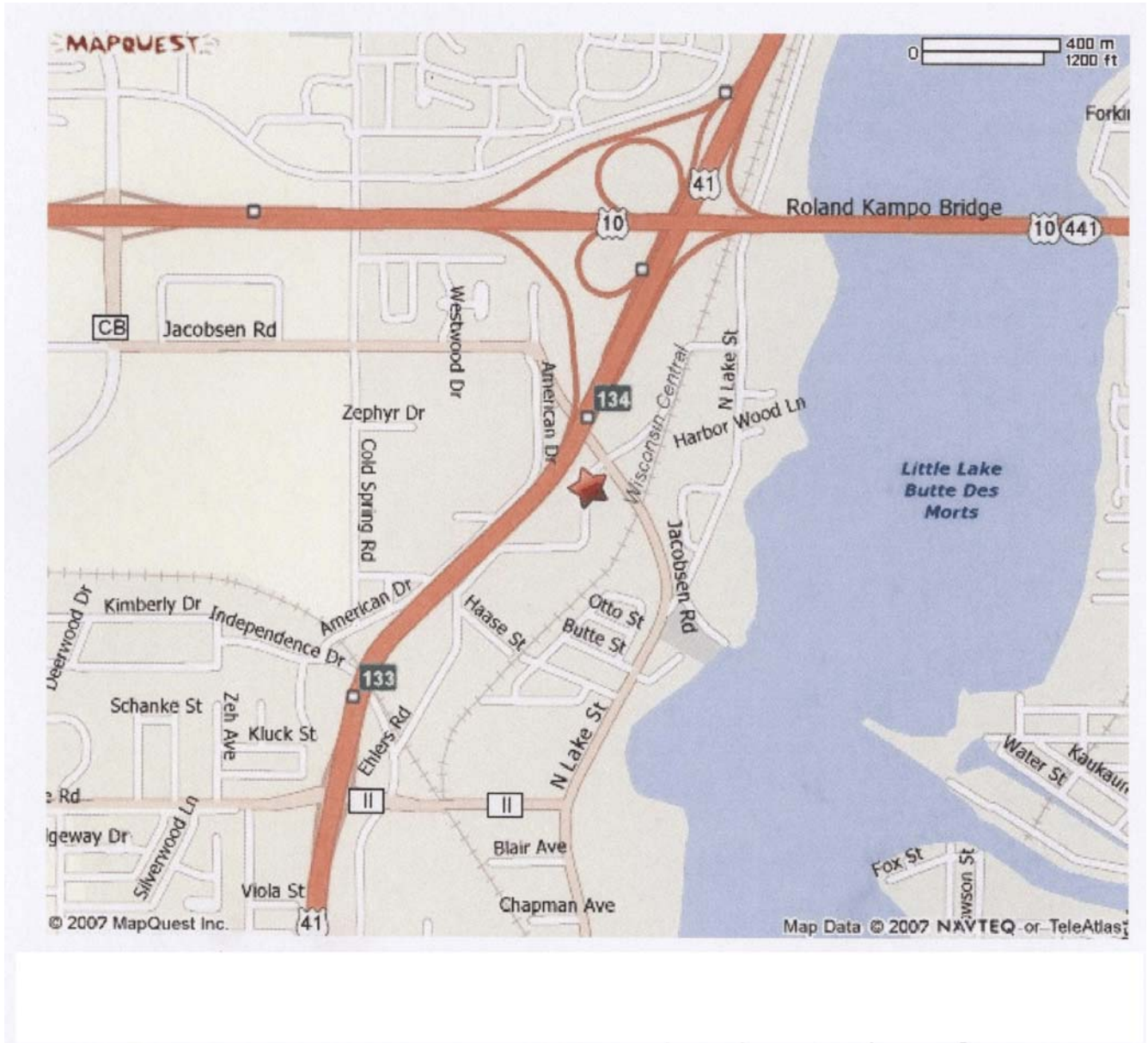
We won't be meeting again in MAC Hall on campus until January. The Arcways tour is this coming Friday and the Holiday Party follows that.

Thus, there is no way for Jane to get a count of who's coming and not coming to the Holiday Party. She has to have enough chairs, meat, buns, and soda. so **PLEASE** fill out the enclosed RSVP and mail it to her.

Or, pick up the phone and call her at 920-468-0132 to tell her who and how many will be attending (names of everyone coming).

Or e-mail her at and tell her who and how many will be attending. [jalesch@new.rr.com](mailto:jalesch@new.rr.com)

Here's the map to Arcways.



**SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE RSVP TO THE HOLIDAY PARTY!!!**

Jane and Dan,

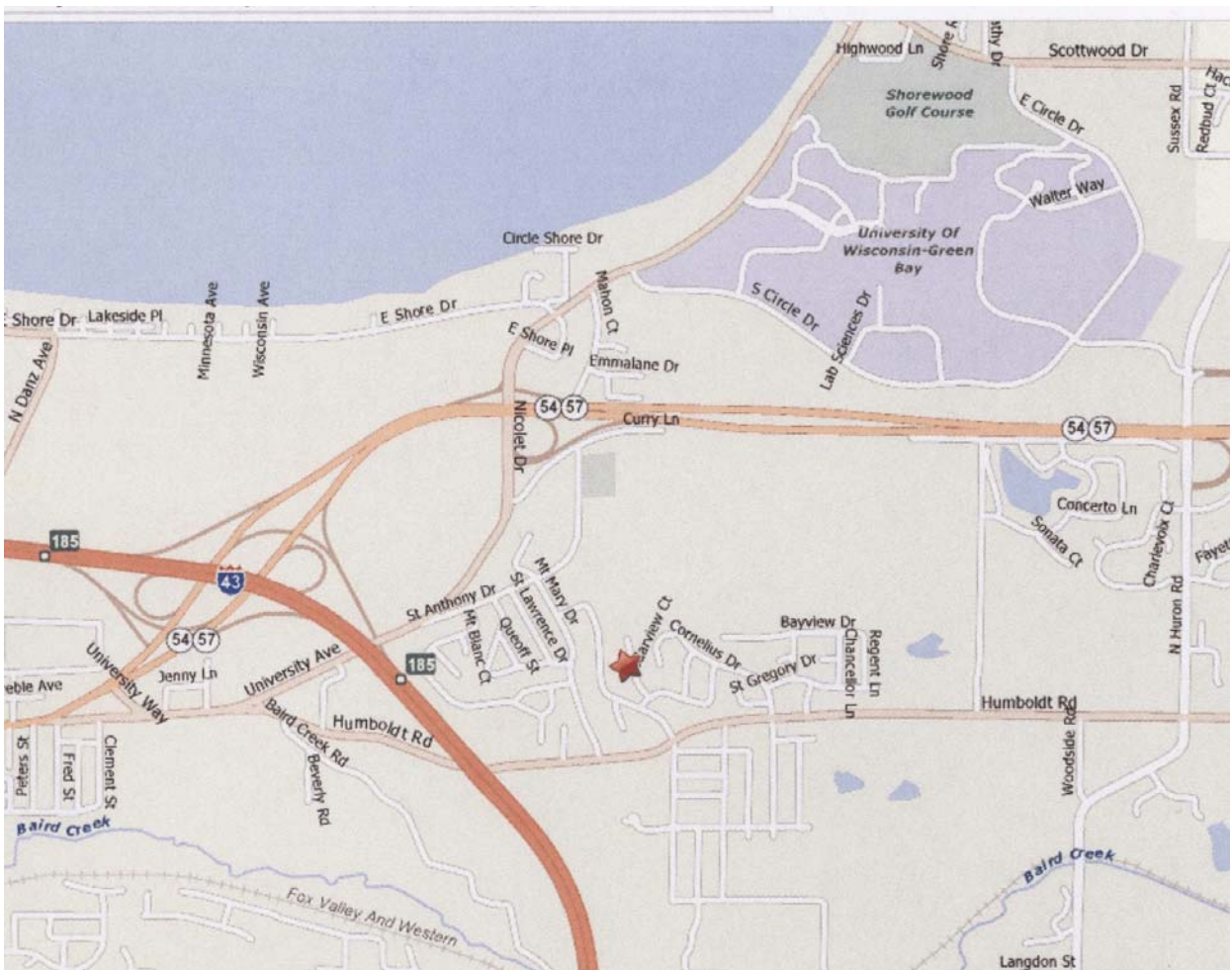
We will \_\_\_\_\_ will not \_\_\_\_\_ be coming to the Holiday Party on Sunday, December 16, starting at 4:30 P.M. There will be \_\_\_\_\_ of us.

Names ( everyone coming with you)

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*While we love children, they are not invited to the Guild Holiday Party because there is not enough room. The Guild serves nonalcoholic beverages.*  
**Please cut off and mail to Dan and Jane at 909 Forest Hill Drive, Green Bay, Wisconsin 54311.**



Map to Dan and Jane's House. 920-468-0132