

# Rawhide gazette

Volume 2, Issue 5

Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op

July 1996

## Announcing the Next PSLAC Meeting

The Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op will meet, after the Summer Break, as usual the last Sunday of the month, September 29th, at 2:00pm at the Foster Greens Apartment, Information Center (Recreation Center), 13865 - Interurban Ave, Tukwila, WA.

## PSLAC's Buying Power Increases

The **MacPherson Leather Company**, located in Seattle, has extended to the Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op the offer to accept our PSLAC membership card and offer the Co-Op a 5% off retail price. The manager, Terry Durbin, has offered to beat any Tandy price for leather. *And will give additional discounts for quantity orders.* For example — an additional 5% off for 5 hides -or- an additional 10% off for 10 hides. **MacPherson's** is asking for a \$30.00 minimum order to qualify for the discount price. Please present valid PSLAC Membership Card before purchase.

You must see **MacPherson Leather Company's** quality - it must be seen to be appreciated. Recent remodeling has made the store more open, more accessible, and more products out for selection.

**MacPherson Leather Company** has on-site over 600 hides and over 3000 cow & pig suede's. A full selection of tooling leather (Herman Oak), chrome

tanned calf, snake, lizard, elk, deer, lace, and the list goes on. Our June meeting will have store catalogs for any who would like to take one. Additional catalogs are available at the store.

A complete line of leather hardware, tools, and my favorite — the scrap bins where leather goes by the pound.

Here is a partial list of items that can be found at **MacPherson's**:

### Accessories:

Antler buttons, anvils, awls, beads, belting (round), belt supplies, books, buckles, cement, chains, chisels, clasps, clawtools, cleaners, clips, compasses, key rings, kits, knives (extension, head, oldtimers), coin purses, creasers, cutters, lace, blades (rotary, strap), dividers, drawgauge, dyes, edgers, embossing (carriage, wheel), finishes, folder (bone), gauge, grommets (dies), groovers, hammers, handles, hooks (boot, sling), jewelers rouge, punches (arch, bag, end, sets), tacks (upholstery), tanning kits, thimble, threads, tooling stamps, tooling racks, tracing film, wallet kits, wax (bees), and zippers

### Leather:

Herman Oak (strap sides, 2/3 - 10/11 oz grades A & B), Herman Oak (bellies), Herman Oak (belt shoulders), rawhide (cow, deer, elk), garment (lamb, cow, horse), pig suede, top grain cow, chap split, upholstery (\*special orders\*), skins (python, cobra), deer splits, chamois, deer, elk, moose, buffalo, hair on (cow, calf), rabbit, sheepskin, kid skins, harness leather, strap sides, latigo, wool skins, oil tanned chap, and scraps of the above.....

The shop is located at:

### MacPherson Leather Company

Leather, Shoe Finding and Saddlery  
519 - 12th Ave. S. (Just a little north and west of the I-5 & I-90 junction)  
Seattle, WA 98144  
Phone: (206)328-0855  
FAX: (206)328-0859  
Outside Washington: 1-800-343-9949  
Manager: Terry Lee Durbin

### The MacPherson Leather Company

has three other stores in Portland (Oregon Leather), Eugene (Oregon Leather), and Billings (Montana Leather) and have been in operation since 1936. They are currently a 5th generation owned business.

### The MacPherson Leather Company are

authorized distributors for: Herman Leather, Osborne Tools, Fiebling's, Barge, Lexol, Schrade Cutlery, Imperial Knife, Oldtimer, and Midas Stamping Tools.

Stop by and check them out.

## Uncle Bill's Corner

This month will be short as I happen to know that I stirred up the pot and I now have help in the newsletter. I really appreciate this — thanks a lot.

The last meeting for the summer was small but good. I really enjoyed **Bob Stelmack's** presentation of the Rawhide Gazette on the Internet. Makes you feel important.

As you know, the next meeting will be the last Sunday in September. The first people through the door will receive

<http://www.nwlink.com/~stelmack/pslac.htm>

(FREE) a back copy of the now extinct "Make It With Leather".

Since the newsletter is mainly about EVERYONE in the Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op putting in at least one entry in the Puyallup Fair, I won't PUT IN A "TWO LAZY A" Christmas Card at this time. But Ann Stohlman has had some serious medical problems in the last month - so please join me and wish her the best of health. Al — you take care too.

The **PUYALLUP FAIR PROJECTS** are due in August!!! As I did last year, I will pick up the entries at all Tandy stores and take them to the Fair. And as before, I will do my best to take good care of them. Those of you in the position to help — help the youngsters get in some entries.

As an added incentive, **Larry Riekens** of the Tacoma Tandy Store, is donating Tandy Gift Certificates for the professional division:

1. Pictures
2. Large Tooled Items
3. Small Tooled Items (Clutch Purse & Smaller)
4. Leather with Other Medium
5. Wearing Apparel
6. Untooled / Other

If you want to drop your entry off at the Tandy Store, of your choice, for either General Seymour or me (Bill Churchill) to pick up and enter at the fair for you — you have to fill out the form stating if you are a professional or not. Included in this newsletter is that form.

Have a nice Summer and I will think of you in TENINO.

**Bill Churchill**  
Federal Way, WA

## Opportunities

Did you know that the Country Village, on the Bothell-Everett Highway, has covered stage, gazebo, and large (20' x 30') canopies at no charge for groups to

offer their wares for sale. How about PSLAC? To contact the Country Village call: 483-2250 (Mon-Fri). The Country Village offers, also at no cost, the use of their reader board, press release labels, and exposure in the Country Village Calendar of events.

Country Village  
23730 Bothell-Everett Hwy, #K Bothell,  
WA 98021  
Phone: (206)483-2250  
FAX: (206)489-2556

## Writer's Guidelines

The "Leather Crafters & Saddlers Journal" publishers Dot and Bill Reis, offer the following advice for successful leather working articles with following "triple Four" guidelines:

1. Text
  - a. Short autobiography about yourself in leatherwork.
  - b. List of materials.
  - c. List of tools.
  - d. A step-by-step description of what methods work best for you in completing this project.
2. Patterns (camera ready)
  - a. The overall pattern(s).
  - b. A photo of carve design patterns.
  - c. Alternate design pattern.
  - d. Show sequence of tooling (coloring).
3. Photos
  - a. Submit good contrast photos (no slides).
  - b. Photos of pieces.
  - c. During-construction photos (or illustrations).
  - d. Photos of completed project.

Dot & Bill Reis offered the above guidelines to help budding leathercrafters to prepare manuscripts for consideration in the "Leather Crafters & Saddlers Journal". They said: "We want only articles that include hands-on, how-to, step-by-step information of a project oriented nature. These pay \$20 to \$200 ... depending on how 'camera ready' the article is prepared. We buy first North American

serial rights". The "Leather Crafters & Saddlers Journal" can be reached at: 331 Annette Ct., Rhinelander, WI 54501, phone 715-362-5393

We here at PSLAC are not so demanding - call, write, or scribble on the back of an old lunch bag and the PSLAC Newsletter will attempt to pass the information along to our readers. But that 20-200 dollars is looking pretty good between paydays. Maybe I'll write an article on the different ways to skin a cat.

**Bob Stelmack**  
Seattle, WA

## Door Prize for PSLAC Meeting in September

**Bill Churchill** has donated 14 old (just like Bill) "Make It with Leather" magazines circa 1979. Our PSLAC meetings will take a break during the Summer and begin in September.

## PSLAC June Meeting Minutes 1996 - Tukwila

**Bob Stelmack** gave a brief demonstration of "surfing the Web" for leather information. By using the simple "search engines" there were over 80,000 articles and information regarding leather and leathercraft. We looked briefly at three sites one in Italy, one in Australia and one right here at home. The PSLAC Rawhide Gazette is now on the Internet. To view the web site use the following URL (Unit Resource Locator):

<http://www.nwlink.com/~stelmack/pslac.htm>

It is planned that past, present and future PSLAC newsletters, articles, and hints will be posted along with other information as it is created. Both text and pictures will be published. Best of all its free! If you would like something published just sent the email to:

stelmack@nmlink.com

or send it via "snail mail" to:

PSLAC c/o Bob Stelmack  
13820 - 56th Ave S, #301  
Seattle, WA 98168-4779

**Bill Churchill** gave yet-another-great-demo. He showed his latest "finds" from the swap shops. An x-acto set in a wooden case over 40 years old for \$15, a newer x-acto set in a plastic case, and several skiving knives for \$1 each. For a man just back from surgery he certainly has an attraction for sharp instruments. Perhaps he will pick up surgery the way he picked up leathercrafting - by trial and error.

Bill also showed some pear shapes that were cut off and placed in swivel knife handles. The pear shapes were ground down to aid in beveling and shaping figure carvings.

If we heard it once - we have heard it three times - "When you pick up a "Tandy Doodle Sheet" pick up three: one to cut up, one to trade, and one to hold on to". Now Bill tells us that we should actually read the sheet. An example was the Ram Head that showed the technique to produce hair texture using a glovers needle. Bill went to Boeing Surplus (open 10am-5pm, Tue-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat at 20651 - 84th S. Kent — that is at S. 208th on the East Valley Road, right hand side going south - phone 206-393-4060) and picked up plastic tool handles (make sure the set screws still operate) to hold the glovers needle. The needle was used to produce the fine hair texture and used either on wet or dry leather depending on the final effect and dye penetration desired.

## Tip-Tip-Tip

Those sharp tools will stay sharp and less likely to stick you if they are covered with flexible rubber/vinyl tubing found at the auto parts stores. The different sizes can be found to fit each tool you have with very little cost.

## Correction

Bill has informed us that the magnifying glasses mentioned in last month's newsletter can be found at Western Optical. And Bill says that they are less costly (around \$20).

## Making A Custom Head Knife

Bill has thrown down the gauntlet with regard to articles for the PLSAC newsletter. So here goes my version as to how I made a head knife. This is very much a metal working project and takes quite a bit of time, so if you don't have 6-10 hours to spend, it might not be for you. First of all you need a pattern. I asked Deb Ludadio if she would provide me with a copy of her, which she graciously did.

Next, I checked the length of the handle which, I am told, is very important in the proper use of the headknife (I am very much a novice in this regard). Deb's pattern fit my hand just fine as to length, so this was a break for me. I used an old 9" blade and because Deb's pattern is a relatively unusual shape, I was able to fit it on the blade around the hole without interference, marking the pattern with a magic marker. I also chose to use a full tang in the handle for strength (sawblade steel running the full length of the handle). For a more conventional shaped knife, a larger sawblade or a shorter tang may be in order.

The next trick is to cut it out to a rough shape. Luckily, I have a friend who has an oxy-acetylene torch. To preserve the temper and hardness of the blade, I had him cut around the pattern with at least 1/4" clearance. Cutting with a hand-held torch is much like doing filigree carving with an axe so the clearance really serves two purposes. The rough cut was smoothed down to the final blade outline with a bench grinder and files. Be sure to keep the metal cool with

water so as not to destroy the temper and burn the metal when using the grinder.

The next and longest job is to shape the blade bevel. My bevel begins 1/2 to 3/4" back from the blade edge and is beveled equally on both sides. Head knives have relatively thin edges and the bevel is wide, so a lot of metal is removed in this process. I used a 4 1/2" high-speed handgrinder for this process, which helps a lot. Files can be used, but will take a lot of time as sawblade steel is quite hard. Edge beveling is very much an eyeball job to ensure uniformity so that the bevel is equal on each side of the saw blade thickness. Here again, if a grinder is used, ensure that the blade edges are not overheated and burned. If they are, you might as well start over! Also, as the edge becomes sharper, the knife increases in lethality. Leather gloves, safety glasses, and a clamp to firmly hold the blade when filing or grinding are vital to your safety.

The final edge shape is just like sharpening any other knife, using progressively finer files, stones, and hones to achieve the required sharpness. Stohlman's "Leathercraft Tools" book gives a fine explanation on head knife sharpening.

My handle was merely two 3/8" thick blocks of hardwood epoxied to each side of the tang and shaped with a router, files, and sandpaper to achieve the desired shape. Here again, if you put the handle on after the blade is sharp — protect yourself from the blade using anything you can. Frankly, a head knife is the scariest tool that I have ever used!! Even duct tape helps to protect yourself from the edge during assembly. A sheath for this knife is an individual choice. I made mine too snug and am now having to deal with cut stitching. Good luck!!!

**W.K. (Bill) Gayloard**  
Port Orchard, WA

## POW WOW!

The **United Indians of all Tribes Foundation** will hold its 11th Annual Seafair Indian Days Pow Wow July 26-28, 1996 at Discovery Park in Magnolia. The Pow Wow begins at 7 pm, Friday, July 26th with the Grand Entry, an opening celebration including a parade of dancers in the arena, and continues through out the weekend. Admission is \$4.

In addition to the dancers, more than 60 vendors will be on hand selling a wide array of authentic Native American arts and crafts. Handmade jewelry, artwork, carvings, beadwork, costumes, and much more. A salmon bake lunch is available for \$8 starting at noon.

For further information please contact Lisa Williams at 206-285-4425

## Serious Realism

Here is a little something for those of you who want to add serious realism to your carvings. It is called Duncan Granite Stone and it is a textured acrylic finish that can be used to simulate stone surfaces on leather. This wonderful substance comes in five base colors: lava, serpentine, quartz, shale and granite. However, you can blend in your own acrylic paints to achieve different shades. It also can be painted on after the substance has dried. To apply, I recommend using a stiff artist brush and by layering, you can create depth (useful for rock ledges and coral scenes).

It is currently available for around \$4.99 in a 4 oz jar at Joann Fabrics and the Import Outlet Store in Tacoma

**Richard Wortman**  
Eatonville  
846-2595

## Hint-Hint-Hint

Being the clumsy type, when rubber cementing a Tandy kit piece to a piece

of cardboard for carving, I have always been able to manage to squeeze some cement up through the lace holes onto the project surface. My solution to this dilemma was to use some 3/4" masking tape cut in half lengthwise (to 3/8") and applied to the underside of the precut holes on the project. This leaves the majority of the under surface for cementing to the cardboard while preventing the rubber cement from popping up through the holes. The only thing you then have to watch is the edges.

**Please send articles, comments, ideas, or anything you like to pass along to the fellow members of PSLAC to:**

**PSLAC**  
c/o Bob Stelmack  
13820 - 56th Ave S, #301  
Seattle, WA 98168-4779

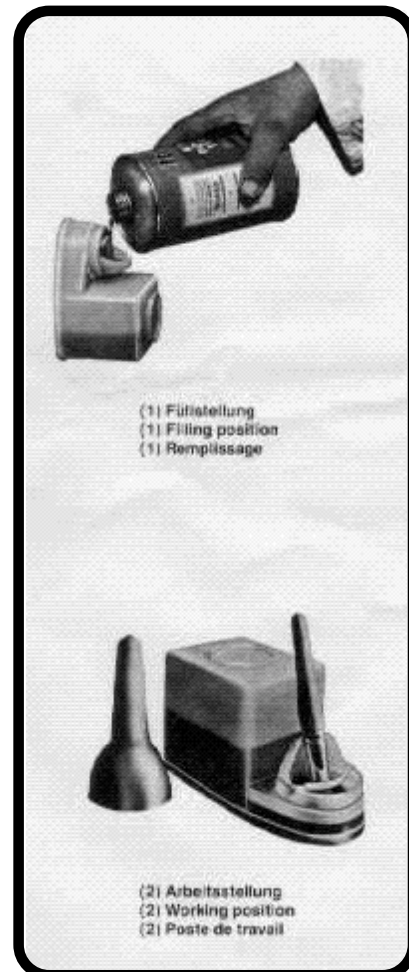
**W.K. (Bill) Gaylord**  
Port Orchard, WA  
Bill Churchill

## Handy Dandy New Gizmo

Tired of fighting with that container of glue. Does it dry out on you? spill? tip over? Then take a look at this 8oz, 16oz or 24oz combination storage and dispenser. Dave Wallen, Thunder Mountain Saddles, ran across this and purchased through:

O. Baltor & Sones  
265 E. Harris  
So. San Francisco, CA 94080  
Phone (800) 622-5867, FAX  
(415) 589-7932

**Dave Wallen**



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