

# Raw Hide Gazette

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Volume 2, Issue 7

Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op

September 1996

## Executive Communication!!!

It is September again. Leather Craft now gets serious. Everyone is working hard to get those Christmas Presents done. And the first meeting after all those summer vacations. We just know that all our members are going to show up and each and everyone will bring a new recruit.

The Co-Op is growing stagnant. Hopefully it is just the summer blahs, but we need some input from the members. *What do you want from the Co-Op?* You have said you want demonstrations, but you don't come to the meetings to see the fabulous demonstrations that have been put on. We have talent galore just sitting there waiting to show you how to!

Our membership has fallen a little so lets get in there and RECRUIT (especially the youngsters).

We are in the planning process of starting several competitions which will be monthly events. All I can say now is that the grand prize will be a beautiful \$80 swivel knife. It has already been bought by the Co-Op. These competitions will not be just on your ability to carve and construct because we know that not all are the gifted. There will be something that all can do to add points for the wonderful swivel knife.

"The Executive Committee"

## Uncle Bill's Corner

I personally want to thank each and everyone of you that entered a project (or a bunch of projects) in the Puyallup Fair. You are wonderful people. We have some new people that entered the fair and they are good. Naturally we are trying to get them to join the Co-Op. As of the first day of the entries - not one entry by a youngster. Starting next year, if every member could get a youngster to enter one project into the fair - look how wonderful that would be!

See you all at the meeting on September 29th, 2:00pm, at the Foster Greens Apartment, Information Center (Recreation Center), 13865 - Interurban Ave, Tukwila.

Classes are starting at all three Tandy stores this month. Some classes have already started - so hurry up and sign up.

Bill Churchill  
Federal Way

## Meetings To Resume in September

Mark your calendar! September 29th is the next PSLAC meeting with those "door prizes". All members and sponsors are invited...

## Home Grown Clicker

**Definition - Clicker:** (a press) either vacuum, mechanical, hydraulic, or manual.

Almost all leather manufacturers use a clicker. Mostly they use it for cutting

out their items. They have a cutting die made to the specifications of the item they are making. They place this on the material (leather I hope) and engage the clicker and it presses the cutting die through the material and the part is cut exactly (including rivet and snap holes, if they are needed).

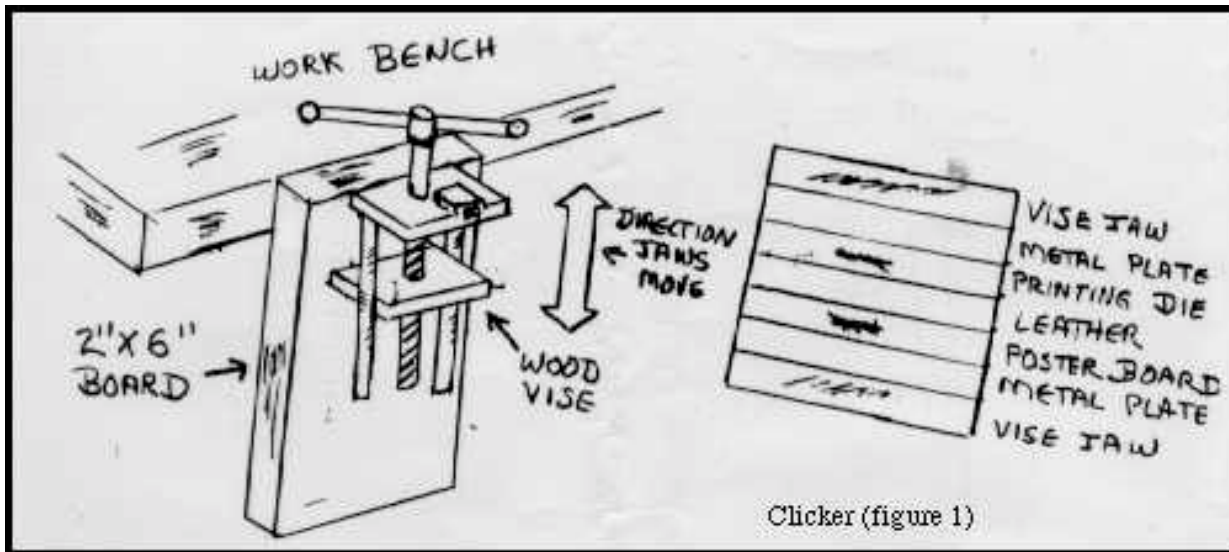
Another use would be to have a printing die made. For instance: You have a favorite billfold design that you make a lot of. You sell a lot of these billfolds, but they take quite a while to hand carve and you have a show or a street fair coming up so you have a design made up and using the clicker, you "stamp" the number of billfolds that you need. All that is left is to dye and construct the billfolds.

A note on the printing die. Generally you can have those made by a printer and engravers company. Almost every town has one. You draw a picture with black ink on white paper and that is exactly what you get. The printing company will explain how it all works. At the end of this article I will give a few tips on drawing the design even if you are not an artist.

Now you can run and buy a clicker. I am sure that you will find at least one advertisement in any leather specialty magazine for clickers of one kind or another. A fairly good used mechanical clicker is going to start at about \$700 and up. A good new clicker can easily get to 5 figures. But there are other ways. Manual clickers. There are several types of "manual" clickers:

An old book press - the type the

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



Clicker (figure 1)



Billfold (Figure 2)

Sample use of the homemade clicker using a Northwest Indian designed belt buckle. The hardware used to attach the buckle to the leather belt was cut off and ground down to make a flat surface on the back.

Billfold design by:  
 Bill Churchill  
 Federal Way, WA



Billfold (Figure 1)

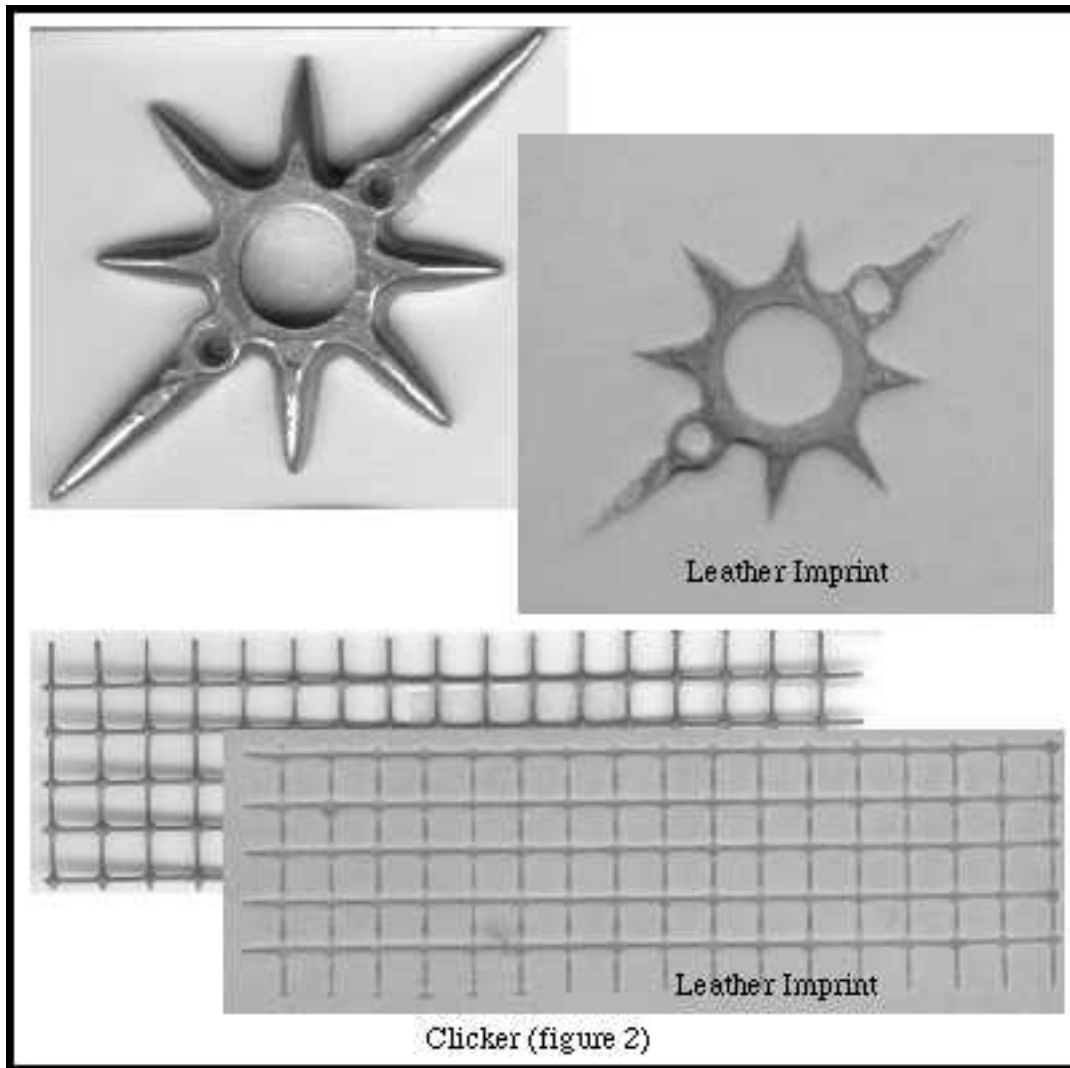
bookmakers used to hold their books together while the glue is drying. Usually the top plates rises and lowers with the turn of a big wheel (like a "C" clamp). Then you can go to a machine shop and have a press made. One that you can close "C" clamp style or even one with a hydraulic car jack for pressure.

Another one that you can usually purchase at your local hardware store is a "wood vise". This is perfect for putting designs on billfolds. A wood vise is usually mounted on the side of a workbench and the jaw that moves comes toward the workbench. Now let us say that you mounted the wood vise to a 2" x 6" board and mounted the board (with the vise on it) to the side of the work bench so that the vise would work vertical. The jaw of the vise would come down (see Clicker - figure 1).

No two companies make their products the same so the plate (jaws) of the wood vise might not work "as is". Some have slots or holes in them for the insertion of accessories. If this is the case you would have to use two flat metal plates or two hardwood boards in the jaws of the vise to insure completely smooth jaws.

Now you have a manual clicker - home brewed!

**Printing dies:** As I have said before, you can have one made to your exact



that goes around the button on a door bell! On the next example (see Clicker - figure 3) there are two Northwest Indian designs from belt buckles. Billfold leather (see Clicker - figure 4) is probably the most interesting. The design is made from the backing from a drawer pull on a cheat of drawers. You can put your LOGO inside, as I have done, or just place an initial. The other side you can leave blank, background, or place a carving. Billfold (see Clicker - figure 5) has three "stamped" designs. These were made with plastic plates that you buy at your local Hobby Store to "stain glass paint" and hang in the window to "catch-the-light". Anything that has dimension can be stamped into leather, a leaf, or even a piece of lace (again can be used as a background). As I

specifications or you can use other objects as printing dies. Belt buckles, jewelry, plastic figures (like those craft aids you paint and hang on windows to catch the light) — actually any flat object that has a design etched into it. Even carve your own (such as linoleum carving you were taught in the elementary school). Oddly enough the decorative backs for drawer pulls usually make beautiful designs for items such as belt buckles or belts - if you repeat and/or stagger the design.

Pictured here (see Billfold - figure 1 & 2) you see a finished billfold. The billfold was "stamped" with a belt buckle. After I "stamped" the billfold I carved a frame and did some basket stamping inside. I dyed the Thunderbird with a ball-point pens and white Cova dye. The frame was dyed with black Pro Dye and the basket stamping was dyed with

Highlighter. The outer edges of the billfold was dyed with an airbrush using a British Tan and the dark brown feathered on the edge of the billfold. After the dye was completely dry, I sprayed Super Sheen on and then Backstitched around the Thunderbird an the frame around the basket stamping.

**Returning to the stamping process** - I have found the best way to insure that the embossing is clear and deep is to always lay the dampened leather on 1/16" thick mat board (poster board). To show you how versatile this process can be — notice the billfold size leather (see Clicker - figure 2) that has been "stamped" with a piece of screen wire. This could be used as a background design or part of the main design. To the left you see an imprint similar to a star. That design is from a brass object

have always said, "your only limits are the limits of your imagination".

**To Make an Drawing** - even though you are "not an artist": An aid to help you draw a pattern to have your printer make you a custom stamp. White paper, black ink. Draw your design. Have the design copied on a copier and using liquid typewriter correction fluid, "erase" your mistakes and redo with black ink. Repeat this process until you get the final drawing that you are after. This technique also works good on tracing that you want to change a little or even a lot. You can combine several designs and each time you add or take away a new part of the design, have it copied and then work from your copy. When you get your final design have your printers and engravers make your stamp (plate). The largest "stamp" I have had made was 12" x 12". The size



## International Internet Leathercrafter's Guild

The International Internet Leathercrafter's Guild (IILC) has launched its information on the WEB. If you read the last The Leather Crafters and Saddlers Journal then you may have seen a new Guild entry in the Guild listings. I took look at the information and was quite impressed. The site is located at <http://www.peak.org/~lilg/> and is quite extensive. Our Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op located at <http://www.nwlink.com/~stelmack/pslac.htm> pales by comparison. The IILC has sections such as:

- Members Only area that is password protected for our members.
- Events Listing of leathercraft related happenings.

- Member Web Pages. Dues paying members can have their own page.
- Mailing List Info. Subscribe to our mailing list dedicated to leathercraft.
- Helpful hints and handy tips from members of the Guild.
- Question and Answer area containing summaries of discussions from the mailing list.
- Classified Ads. If you're looking for something, be sure to check here, just in case!
- Gallery of Guild Member's work in leather. (numerous images)
- Web Sources for leather and tools.
- Sources for leather and tools (non-web)
- Member Benefits. Why be a member?
- Member Application form to

of your clicker is your only limitation of your design.

The place to have your printing dies made:

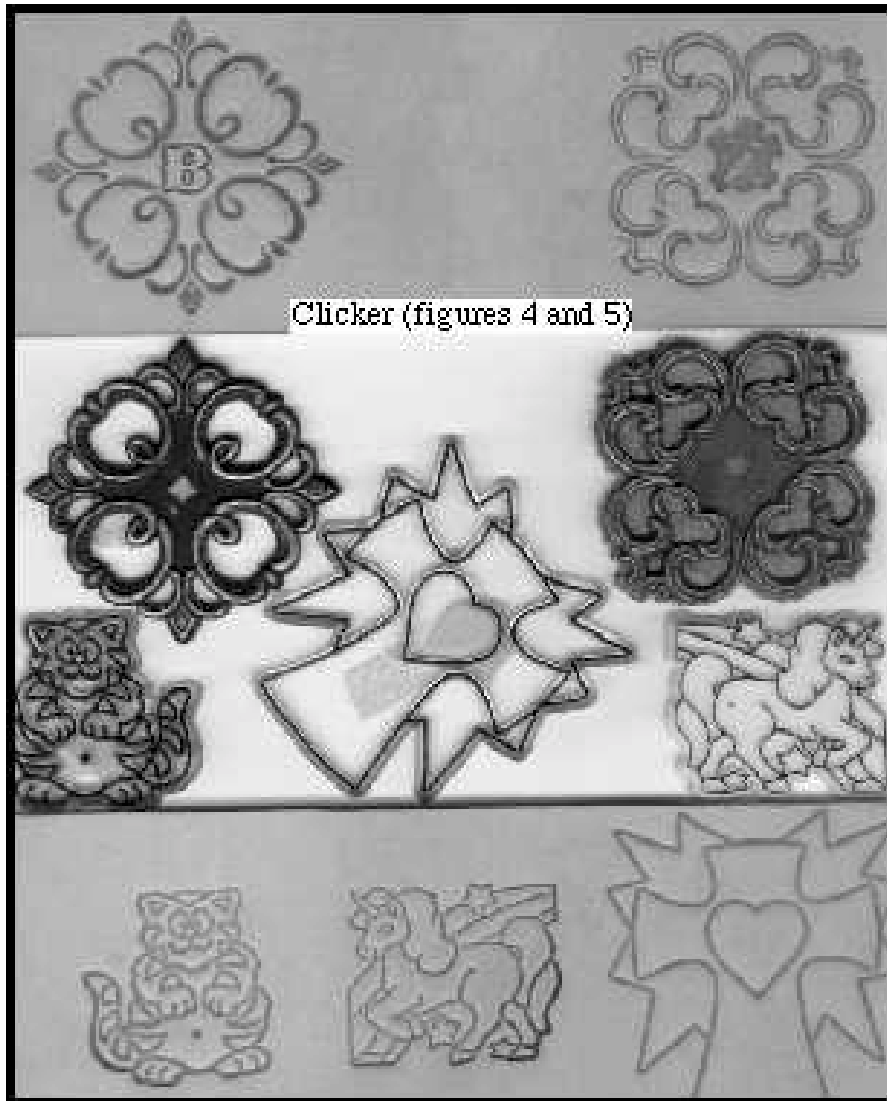
Evergreen Engravers  
 1819 S. Central, Bay #26  
 Kent, WA 98032 (206) 852-6766

Evergreen usually give 24 to 48 hour service and for the quality plate you get the price is right. Be sure to tell them you are using the stamp for leather.

Bill Churchill

## Waterproof Leather?

Hans Sheen, an ex-soccer player, has just patented a chemical process that adds a lubricant during the leather tanning process that makes the finished garment product softer and **WATER-PROOF!** The process, as reported on the NW News Channel, even makes the leather so that it can be washed and dried in the home washer and dryer. The process, called "the Sheen Process" even keeps liquids such as: coffee, soda, and milk from staining the leather. This product would make leather attire much more practical - here in the soggy Northwest. No announcement yet for availability of the product. Nike has shown interest for its footwear.



Clicker (figures 4 and 5)

become a full Member of The ILG

- Associate Application form to become a Guild Associate.
- Associate Listing of those that have filled out the application
- Contact information for our Guild Officers
- By-Laws of our Guild.

I was quite surprised that **The Leather Crafters and Saddlers Journal** is also working on a web page. I guess in this day and age of electronic communication the old craft of Leathercraft has found a way to inform and teach others.

I was really impressed. Here was a sample Question and Answer page from the International Internet Leathercrafter's Guild:

*"What is the best way to fill an*

*embossed or "pro-petaled" area in a leather project? -asked by: David Torix*

*The best to use is leather dust. Mix leather dust & a fine saw dust 50/50 and mix with rubber cement until like putty. In your case, use a small spatula or similar tool to fill cavity. Let dry. (12 hours) This will always stay pliable, so if you use it to fill a embossed cavity, you can tool the piece after filling. I'll emboss, fill cavity let dry, then do any finishing tool work. You can dye this also because it is leather. The weight to use depends on what your making. There is no such one weight does all. - Don Berglund*

*Answered by: Don Berglund"*

What I find really interesting is that our own Co-Op founders and long time

members have other methods that have been demonstrated and have different advantages. Looks like we all could add or benefit from this type of information.

This Guild asks a \$10 yearly membership, for which I will send in for our Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op to get our information out to a wider audience and to pick up what they have to offer.

REMEMBER our Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op Web Site is open and free to all!

Bill - you should see how they said you should "case" your leather!

Bob Stelmack  
Tukwila

## Newsletter Editor Errors

I have noticed some glaring grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors in the past newsletters and even this one. To help correct this problem I've included some spare punctuation and vowels for you to sprinkle throughout the newsletter. Use them where you think they need to go:

.,?u!)&e"i";&a#o,.?u!()#o@-,-.e"i";&a)&e"i";#o@-:'./.

## What Do You Think?

Some ideas that might make the Co-Op a more attractive resource:

- The Co-Op author a "How-To" book for the 90's
- The Co-Op to produce short articles similar to Tandy's Doodle Sheet (for distribution, for sale)
- Video tape the demonstrations (for reference, for sale, for archives)
- Go "On-line" (similar to the "International Internet Leathercrafter's Guild" in the last issue of "The Leather Crafters and Saddlers Journal") *see a related article in this newsletter.*



# Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op Expertise Survey

This is a survey to assist our Leather Distributor Sponsors for work on projects for their customers.

The following information will be made available to Tandy, The Leather Factory, & MacPhersons Customers. Fill in only that information you wish the customer to see. CHECK the items you would like Tandy, The Leather Factory, and MacPhersons to recommend to their customers.

- Lacing
- Hand Sewing
- Belts
- Belt Finishing
- Special Order
- Billfolds (Kits Only)
- Billfolds Repair
- Billfolds Tooled
- Clothing (Making)
- Clothing (Repair)
- Chap (Making)
- Chap (Repair)
- Saddle Repair
- Moccasins
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

(Hours to call): \_\_\_\_\_

***Return the completed form to:***  
**Bill Churchill**  
**1471 - South 302nd St.**  
**Federal Way, WA 98003**

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