

# RawHide Gazette

"Without question, the RawHide Gazette is by far the best and most informative and comprehensive Guild publications of all of them! You are to be commended for your very fine and professional efforts. Keep up the good work. With admiration"  
/signed/  
Al & Ann Stohman, December 1997

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Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op

January 2013

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## A WORD TO OUR READERS.

Over the last 18 or so months there has been a drop in the number of issues that have been produced since Bob Stelmack retired.

Roger Kaiser valiantly took on the job, but, due to family and work commitments it was very difficult for him, willing though he was to do the job. Roger had the skills, but, unfortunately not the time. We now have a new editor of the RawHide Gazette, David Lyman. Over the past few months he has been doing a lot of learning and researching and has now stepped up to do the job.

Without a doubt the RawHide Gazette will have small changes as each person puts their own stamp on the work they do and reflects their personality and creativity.

This first issue of David's will be a somewhat shorter RawHide Gazette than we are used to. I feel sure that in a month or two it will be its usual length again.

On behalf of all the Directors of PSLAC, I welcome David as our new Editor.

Paula Marquis  
Director

**Next Meeting on  
Sunday February 10th  
at 1:00 PM**

General meeting starts at 1:00 followed by the Demo (see schedule on page 7 for details)

Meet at The Cedar Grange Hall No. 534 at Maple Valley

(See last page for map & directions)

## Sharpening On The Cheap

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Many people have trouble getting a sharp edge on their tools. There are many ways to get this “scary” sharp edge on the tools. Some of these involve the expenditure of quite a sum of money for the purchase of the necessary equipment. This can involve the purchase of power equipment or stones. These are nice, and I have quite an assortment, but not necessary for our needs. They are much more useful on woodworking tools, which need much more frequent sharpening. Unless you are very familiar with the use of power equipment for sharpening, stay away from it. Friction generates heat, and with grinders or sanders, that heat can be instantaneous, and if the steel is darkened by the heat it has lost temper and will have to be reshaped. Buffers are used quite often to put the final edge and polish on the blade. Again, unless you are very familiar with this tool, stay away from it. It is very dangerous. That buffing wheel is turning at either 1800 or 3600 rpm, the loose fibers can very easily grab the piece and a flying sharp object is very dangerous. Not only that, being thrown against the floor, wall, or other piece of equipment can destroy it. Also, the loose fibers, flipping over the edge whip around and will round the edge over.

With all that out of the way, all you need is a few pieces of sandpaper, a piece of plate glass, water, a piece of thin veg tan leather, rouge stick, and a

small piece of lumber or plywood.

First, make up a strop by using the lumber/plywood and leather. Make it large, 2 ½ by 12 is a good size. Glue the piece of leather onto the wood. Grain or flesh side up is personal preference. Personally I like flesh side up much better. It holds the rouge better. I use Yellowstone, which is a trade name, available at wood carving supply places. The other option is red rouge, which is locally available everywhere in hardware and woodworking stores.

A piece of plate glass approximately a foot square is sufficient. Mine is a piece of broken china cabinet shelf that I sanded the broken edge with a belt sander to smooth the sharp edge. This should be between ¼ and ½ inch in thickness. Glass is used as the process is messy. You don't want to use your granite or marble slab as the residue left will ultimately wind up on a piece of leather. I keep the sharpening well away from the leather working area (the garage).

For sandpaper use only wet and dry. If the tools are rough or rusty you may want to start with 400 grit. If not start with 600 grit. This is readily available at hardware stores. The finer grits, 1500, 2000, and 2500 can be found at auto paint stores. I have found 2000 and 2500 at Napa auto stores. One of the local hardware stores also stocks 1500. In sandpapers the

higher the number the finer the grit. If you can't find all of them, 600 and either 1500 or 2000 will suffice. Do the shaping and sharpening with the coarser grits (400/600) and then each of the finer grits in succession. Use each of the finer grits just to remove the scratches left by the previous grit. By the time 2000 or 2500 is reached the metal should be smooth and shiny, with no scratches showing.

Before going into the sharpening process angles will be addressed. The normal angle that a swivel knife blade is ground to is 60 degrees. One half of this is 30 degrees. That is the angle that the blade will be held at while sharpening and honing. For beginners, or those uncomfortable with holding the swivel knife when doing the sharpening, get the edge sharpener guide from Tandy. This will hold the blade for you. Put the knife blade in it and place it on a flat surface and adjust the angle so that the edge to be sharpened is perfectly flat. You can feel this, as the blade will drag either when it is too high or too low. When it is flat the blade will glide over the surface with no friction.

The other knives that are used have angles from perfectly flat (0 degrees) up to about 17 degrees. Again, when the correct angle is found the tool will glide across the surface. Here, it gets into personal preference. Remember, a knife is a cutting/slicing tool, not a

*Continued on next page*

chopping one. That is what axes, hatchets, and cleavers are for. A little aside here, how many of you have watched a Chinese butcher work. They use a cleaver for all their work. Many years ago an old Chinese butcher showed me how to sharpen a cleaver to do this. The back part (1/3) of the blade is sharpened with a blunt edge for chopping small bones and cartilage and then the front is tapered to a very fine edge for cutting. When using it, you chop with an underhanded motion so that only the rear part of the blade is being used, and when cutting, you just draw the cleaver through the meat.

Now, for the actual process, which is going to take time, start by spraying some water on the glass. Put a piece (1/2 of 1/4 sheet) of the coarsest grit of sandpaper on it. The water will semi glue the sandpaper to the glass. Spray some more water on the paper, just to make it moist. Put the blade on the paper in the proper angle. When you find this angle, lock your wrist in that position and pull the blade across the paper. Pick the blade up and move it in box fashion to the other side of the paper, put it back down and pull it across. Count the number of times you do this. Say, 5 or 10 pulls. Then turn the blade over and do the same amount of pulls on the other side. The exception to this will be a blade with the angle only on one side, such as a skiving knife. Then, the

sharpening will only occur on the angled side, and only do the flat side to polish and/or remove the burr.

Hold the blade up and look down the edge with a light shining on it. A dull blade will reflect back a shiny surface, whereas a sharp blade will only show a black line, as there is no surface to reflect the light. Keep working on it until all you see is that little black line. As the blade is sharpened, a very fine burr will happen right at the edge. This will fall off with further sharpening and the final polishing. Switch to a finer grit of paper and repeat the process until all the scratches are removed. Then repeat the process and work your way through the grits.

When the blade is sharp, all the scratches removed it is time to polish it on a strop. Again, place the blade at the end of the strop, find the proper angle, lock your wrist and pull the tool the length of the strop. In box fashion, repeat this several times, again counting the times. Turn the tool over and repeat this.

Remember on both the sandpaper and strop take long pulls, pick the tool straight up, and put it straight down. Any rocking up at the end of a stroke will round over the edge. Short strokes just magnify this problem. Thin leather is used on the strop to lessen any compression as the tool is pulled across, as compression will also round over the edge. Many,

instead of using leather because of the compression, use very thin cardboard, such as pieces of the boxes that cereal come in or business pages of business card stock to make their strops.

It will take time, both to learn the technique and get all your tools in shape. Something, like a head knife may take months until you are satisfied. Do this in short sessions. When you start getting tired, you can get sloppy and accidents happen. Patience!

Keep a strop at your bench and use it frequently. A proper strop will be made of very hard and stable wood or MDF. Soft woods, woods with a pronounced grain such as pine and fir, plywood, particle board all are unsatisfactory. Hard maple is a good wood that is readily available. Sandpaper comes in 9x11 inch sheets (some will be found in 1/2 sheets 5 1/2 x 9). 2 1/2 x 16 inches is a nice size, with a 5 inch handle it leaves room for a strip on sandpaper on one side and leather on the other. Every few minutes, one or two strokes on both sides of the swivel knife will keep it in fine shape. The rest of the tools less often.

This article addresses only flat blades. Round blades will be addressed in another article.

Good sharpening.  
Norm Lynds

## The Squeeze On Harstine Island

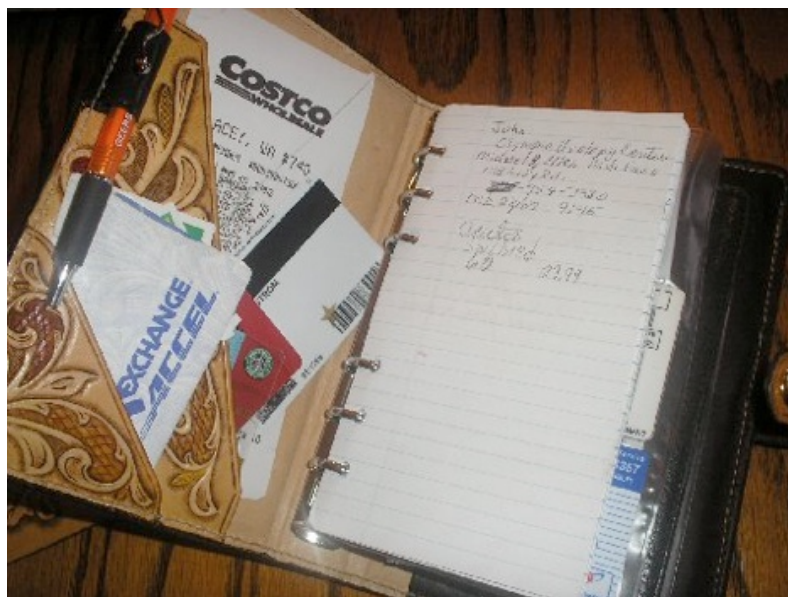


On Harstine Island they have a Autumn festival called The Squeeze. Along with all the events they ask people on the Island to show off their hobbies. This is what Fred Nachbar and Dave Puls were doing on 10/13/2012. Here is a picture of "The Boys" showing off their hobbies. Fred is doing Leather Burning and Dave is tooling leather. This picture captures them just right. Fred is talking and Dave seems to be listening.

## John Wickstrom's Clutch Purse/Day Planner



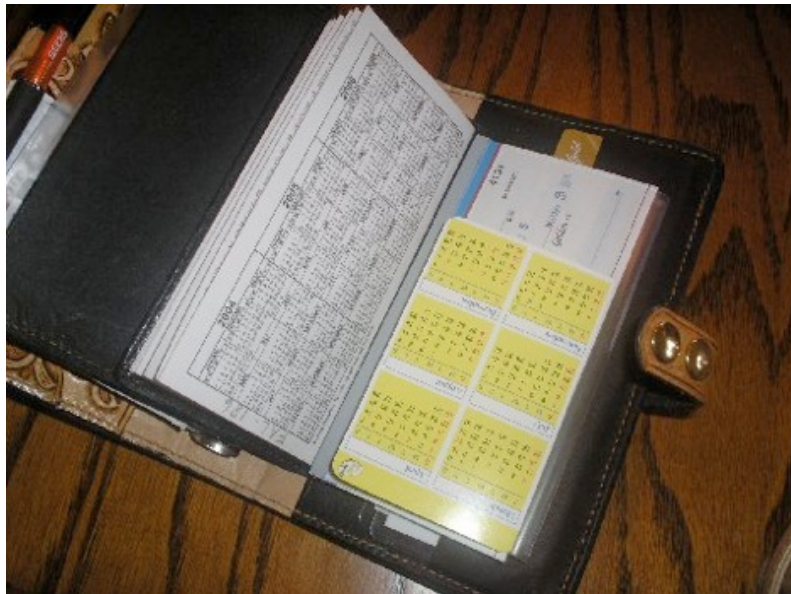
[1] Tool your pattern on to the 2/3 oz tooling leather set snap and 2 snap strap



[2] Make the handy pockets carve them if you wish. Put a 6 ring binder notepad



[3] Put a zipper pocket in the 6 ring binder.



[4] Insert the checks above the pockets and long slat.



[5] Smaller pockets on the back cover.

## Western Washington (Seattle/Tacoma/Everett) PSLAC CURRENT SCHEDULE FOR 2013

General Member's meetings are on the 2nd Sunday of each Month unless specified below. 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM approx.

• Meetings held at Cedar Grange Hall No. 534 at Maple Valley General meetings start at 1:00 PM followed by the mini-demos

### Breakfast informal get-together locations:

North Breakfast >>> Last Friday of the month at 10:00 AM. Lake Forest Park Town Centre. 17917 Bothell Everett Hwy, Bothell, WA 98012 Bothell Way N, bordered by 170th N. & Ballinger Way N. Meet in the Third Place Books eating area

South Breakfast >>> 3rd Saturday of the month at 8:30 AM. Homestead. 7837 S Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA 98409 (253) 476-9000

### All Day Workshops:

Dates: TBD (watch this space)

Time: TBD (watch this space)

### Mini-Workshop Schedule for 2013: Start about 1:30 after the general meeting at 1:00

The December meeting was held in our new meeting place, the Cedar Grange Hall No. 534 at Maple Valley. The new facility is quite adequate and has good kitchen facilities and a large room with plenty of tables and chairs. It is also adequate for spreading out tools and materials for workshops.

To start the new year, Ken will continue with his glasses case and everybody bring what they have done so far and we will continue that.

I will be bringing supplies for purchase for making the link belt that we talked of making last year.

The February meeting will be at MacPhersons again. More on that at the January meeting.

March meeting we will have George Senn doing a sheath for a folding knife that will open the knife as it is pulled out of the sheath. List of tools and materials needed for that will be in the February Gazette.

At the December meeting John Wickstrom brought an interesting leather weight that he had made for show and tell. In April John will do a workshop on making the weight. List of materials and tools to bring will be listed as the times gets closer.

The May meeting will be held on the first Sunday of May due to Mother's Day falling on the second Sunday. We will sew and assemble the leather weight at this meeting.

June is the month for the Picnic and there is still talk of what we can have for a workshop prior to the June meeting.

July and August are 'vacation' months and we will have UFO meetings which will probably be at my house, more on that later.

September there will be a Peter Main workshop in Spokane and for anybody interested in that should contact Ken Bush for details. Also the Puyallup Fair will be a busy month for members doing demonstrations at the Fair and of course the months leading up to the Fair for making entries. We need to keep the cupboard filled and would like all our members to submit entries. More information and updates as events happen, see you all at the January meeting.

Len Madison, Workshop Co-Ordinator.

## Western Washington (continued)

### Yearly General Meeting Schedule for 2013: Cedar Grange Hall No. 534 at Maple Valley

January 13 1:00—4:00 PM Cedar Grange General meeting followed by the Mini-Workshop— Ken Erickson will continue the glasses case project.

February 10 1:00—4:00 PM Cedar Grange General meeting followed by the Mini-Workshop— We are planning our customary February meeting at MacPherson's Leather.

March 10 1:00—4:00 PM Cedar Grange General meeting followed by the Mini-Workshop— George Senn will do a workshop on a folding knife sheath that will open the knife as it is pulled out. Tools and materials will be in the February Gazette..

April 14 1:00—4:00 PM Cedar Grange General meeting followed by the Mini-Workshop— John Wickstrom will do a workshop on making a leather weight.

May 5 1:00—4:00 PM (*Note date change to 1st Sunday*) Cedar Grange General meeting followed by the Mini-Workshop— Sew and assemble the leather weight.

June 9 1:00—4:00 PM Cedar Grange General meeting followed by the club picnic.

July and August are "vacation" months and we will have UFO meetings which will probably be at Len's house, more on that later.

## Eastern Washington (Tri -Cities) Desert LeatherCraft Group (DLG) PSLAC CURRENT SCHEDULE FOR 2013

Tri-Cities Desert LeatherCraft Group Member's meetings are on the 3rd Saturday of each month unless specified below:

- Informal meetings held at Spokane Tandy Leather Factory Store, 1702 North Monroe Street, Spokane, WA 99205 (Call (509) 328-9939 for directions).

## Eastern Washington (Spokane) PSLAC East PSLAC CURRENT SCHEDULE FOR 2013

PSLAC East Member's meetings are on the 1st Saturday of each Month unless specified below. 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM approx.

- Informal meetings held at Spokane Tandy Leather Factory Store, 1702 North Monroe Street, Spokane, WA 99205 Contact Ken Bush for time, date (normally the 1st Saturday) & details.

Ken Bush

White Rose Leather 11923 E. Fairview Ave.

Spokane Valley, WA 99206

whiterosex@aol.com (509) 926-2087



## [PSLAC East \(continued\)](#)

We are members of PSLAC-East (Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-op). The East is because we are East of the Cascade Mountains. We offer classes in leathercraft at the Spokane Tandy Leather Factory store. These classes are free and open to the public. An informational newsletter is sent out prior to each class with a short description of the class, whom the instructor will be and what tools will be needed. We also schedule ad-hoc classes which are announced in the newsletter. In the spring and summer months, we schedule nationally recognized leather artisans such as Chan Geer, Peter Main or Bob Beard, to teach fee paid classes in their areas of expertise. These are full day classes, up to 4 days in length, at the Lions club in Rathdrum, Idaho. Fees can run \$300 to \$400 per person. To be on our mailing list for class notifications, please send an email (including your full name) to [whiterosex@aol.com](mailto:whiterosex@aol.com) requesting to be on the PSLAC-East mailing list.

### [All Day-Workshop Schedule for 2013:](#)

#### [PSLAC East:](#)

Dates: TBD (watch this space)

Time: TBD (watch this space)

Location: TBD (watch this space)

## [Free Classes at your local Tandy Leathercraft Stores:](#)

**Spokane Store**The PSLAC-East leather classes at the Spokane Tandy store will be on the 1st Saturday from 10 AM to 12:30 PM. As always there will be patterns for beginners.

Bring tools if you have them. We have a few loaners and Cheryl will be more than happy to help you when checking out what the store has to offer.

## [PSLAC South Breakfast Now at Homestead](#)

The breakfast for November was going smoothly, that is until 8:00 AM. The phone rang and I heard Rich say something about we will figure out something I'll be right there. Dave Jensen was the one on the phone and Oscars Restaurant was closed and everyone was on their way to have our monthly breakfast get together with the PSLAC members. Rich dropped me off at the Homestead. Then he went over to Oscars to find the members and tell them where we were going to gather. In the mean time I asked if they could handle 10 to 15 people ... They were shocked that we wanted to have breakfast for 10 - 15 NOW. It turned out we had 17 and they were hungry. All went well considering the short time we had for planning. Many thanks to Homestead. We liked the service and the place was nice and clean. The food was very good.



[A well attended breakfast at Homestead!](#)

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# RawHide Gazette

**Editor/Publisher :** David Lyman

**Co-Founders:** Bill Churchill & General Seymour

**Treasurer/Secretary:** Barbara Lourdes

**Directors:** General Seymour, Ken Erickson, Len Madison, Roger Kaiser & Paula Marquis

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PSLAC Membership:

“a” - Internet access to **RawHide Gazette** including Member only area & meeting attendance \$10/year. (1 Person)

“b” - US Postal Mail **RawHide Gazette** including new Member articles & meeting attendance \$24/year. (1 Person)

“c” - Internet access to **RawHide Gazette** including Member only area & meeting attendance \$15 per year. (Family)

All submissions are subject to editing for clarity and length.

All articles submitted must be accompanied by name, address and permission of writer

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The **RawHide Gazette** offers advertising space to interested parties. Ad spaces are as follows:

1/4 Page or Business Card .....\$60 USD

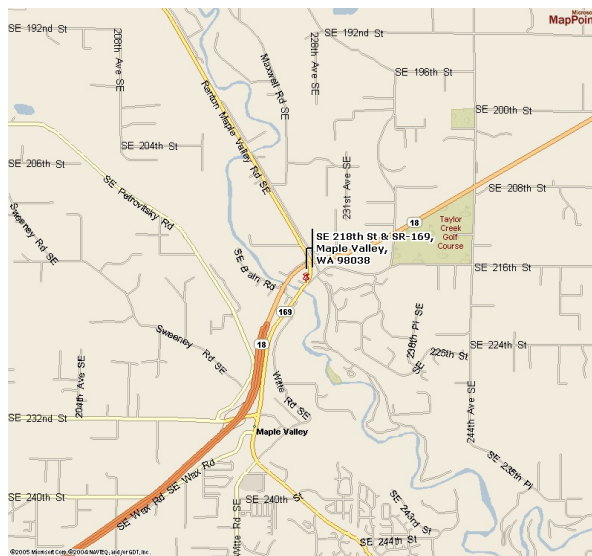
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The Puget Sound Leather Artisans Co-Op can be found at:

<http://www.pslac.org>



## Directions to Cedar Grange #534:

**From I-405** take the SR169 exit and proceed toward Maple Valley on the Maple Valley Highway. In about 10 Miles you will reach the SE 216th/SE 218th Street intersection. Turn Right onto SE 218th (the down-sloping hill on the left next to the Maple Valley Market parking lot) towards the big white/gray building next to the bridge (the Cedar Grange). The parking lot is on the first left.

**From Highway 18** take the SE 231st, Junction 169, Maple Valley exit. Proceed to the Highway 169 (Maple Valley Highway) junction. Turn North (toward Renton) on Highway 169 and go about ¾ mile until you reach the SE 216th/SE 218th Street intersection. Turn left onto SE 218th (the down-sloping hill on the left next to the Maple Valley Market parking lot) towards the big white/gray building next to the bridge (the Cedar Grange). The parking lot is on the first left.

**From Issaquah** take Front Street toward Hobart and Highway 18. In about 10 miles get on Highway 18 West heading toward Maple Valley and Auburn. Follow the Highway 18 instructions.

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