

Fall 2020

# RiversWest News

We inspire people to build and use low-impact boats

2020 has been a rough year for many of us. The coronavirus has turned everyone's life upside down. We're washing our hands, wearing our masks and all too often, distancing ourselves from those we like and love.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9NMt42il4Q>

With the mass hysteria, RiversWest has been a sea of relative calm and progress. Quite a few good things have happened in RiversWest's 2020!

Our shop has stayed open to members throughout the pandemic. Early on we adopted the guidelines from the Oregon Health Authority and the CDC so we didn't have to shut it all down. The guidance evolved over the months and we changed with them. Our shop manager, John Ost has worked diligently to keep us current, open and safe. Please say 'Thank You' the next time you see him.

Something terrific happened at RiversWest this summer: we started having "Splash-Ins". Our first was on July 30 and then every couple of weeks since, with a pause for the smoke and occasionally the weather. If you haven't been to one, here's how it works: An email blast goes out with a date, time and place. Then, just show up with (or without) your boat and get it wet. It's a great way to be physically distanced and socially engaged with other boat people! Many thanks to Charlie Ehm for the idea and Bruce Goodrich for making that first one happen. Now it's taken on a life of its own and our Splash-Ins are a wonderful addition to RiversWest life. See the photos in this issue to get a sense of it, then join us next year!

Just before writing this column, I got a wonderful email from member Janine Harris. Janine, her sister and their children built two Salt Bay Skiffs at the Family Boat Build. Now, John Ost is helping them convert those boats to sail. Some of what Janine included in her email is below:

"John has been guiding my sister and I through the process of turning our Salt Bay skiffs into sailboats. Throughout the process he has been



fantastic to work with. He has kept the process moving along and has taught us, and our kids, so much about woodworking and proper tool use. He has kept it fun and interesting, typically with a quip or story that nudges us along."

"We can't thank him enough for all of the time and energy he has invested."

"Thank you, also to Riverswest for such an amazing organization and facility. You foster much learning, growth and community."

Even in COVID, RiversWest continues to empower boat builders, encourage teamwork and build community. The strength of RiversWest lies in you, the members.

Our membership is hovering at just over sixty and we are in the best financial condition in the history of the club. As this is written, our capital campaign has a balance of \$51,942 and our general account is \$26,934. We carry no debt.

The entire Board has agreed to continue to serve through 2021. Your board, as elected at the Annual Meeting is: Bob Mehan, Bruce Goodrich, Chuck Stuckey, John Bouwsma, John Ost, John

Whitehouse, Mitch West, Russ Smith & Steve Najaar. Art Wilson and Michael Simmons serve as Emeritus Board Members. Craig Bryant is Treasurer and I am President.

John Bouwsma has been the Secretary but wishes to relinquish that position - so we are looking for several volunteers. If you have ever wanted to be more involved with RW, this would be a great time to step up. A list of volunteer opportunities is in this newsletter. Take a look to see if there are tasks that you can do to promote the future of RiversWest.

Remember, we're an all-volunteer organization. We can only accomplish what YOU make happen! Thanks for all that you do!

Stay safe,

Mark

Mark Ramsby, President

RiversWest Small Craft Center



## Annual Membership Meeting

The RiversWest Annual Membership Meeting was held virtually using ZOOM, on Saturday, October 17, at the beginning of our regularly scheduled Virtual Open House. We had 17 attendees.

The meeting was opened by President Mark Ramsby with a discussion of some of the positives for RiversWest in the past year. These include the following. For more detail see the President's Message on page 1:

- We kept the shop open to members within the OHA and CDC guidelines
- Kudos to John Ost for maintaining a high standard of shop safety, and for the maintaining the shop equipment
- Kudos also for John Ost from Janine Harris for his assistance helping her and her sister convert their Salt Bay Skiffs into sailboats.

### Officers:

Mark Ramsby, President

Craig Bryant, Treasurer

John Bouwsma, Secretary

### Members at Large:

Steve Najjar

Bob Meehan

John Ost

John Whitehouse

Bruce Goodrich

Russ Smith

Mitch West

Chuck Stuckey

### Emeritus Members:

Art Wilson

Mike Simmons

The next item on the agenda was a request from Secretary John Bouwsma for help with his tasks. He has been the Secretary of RiversWest for 13 years, and has also taken on sending out mail to update members on events, responding to incoming mail, and editing the newsletter. He is looking at a move in the second half of the year, and will need to relinquish these tasks. We have found volunteers to help with the newsletter and to respond to incoming e-mail, but here are some positions that still need to be filled. These task can be broken up any way you want:

- Take minutes at Board Meetings and maintain records including board minutes
- Managing volunteer lists for events like the Family boat Build and the Portland Boat Show. This has become pretty easy, John sends out an e-blast and waits for people to fill in the slots on the spreadsheet.
- Send out mass e-mail to mailing list to keep them informed of events and other news (approx. 1-2/week)
- Arranging Demos for Open House and Virtual Open House: Not difficult, people have been stepping up nicely.



## Ongoing Activities at RiversWest During the COVID Pandemic

### 2020 Annual Membership Meeting

This year's Annual Membership Meeting was held on October 17, at the beginning of a regularly scheduled Virtual Open House meeting. The results of that meeting are on the previous page.

### Virtual Open House Meetings

We have had to replace our usual bi-monthly open House events with Virtual Open House using Zoom. These will occur, as with the REAL Open House meetings, on the First and Third Saturdays of each month, and will start at 10:00. We will send out a link a few days before the meeting. All you have to do is click on the link and follow the instruction on the screen. It helps to have a video camera on your computer, phone, or tablet but that isn't absolutely necessary. You will need to have speaker though, and of course they have to be turned on. Everyone is welcome, you do not need to be a member.

### Boat Shop

The Boat Shop is open for use, with some restrictions. Our policy on Boat Shop use is posted on our web site <https://www.riverswest.org/> and is also posted in the shop.

### Library

The library is open, however there are limitations on returning books. There is a box on the table by the library with instructions. Please put any returned books in the box with a sticky note giving the date of the return. We will return the books to the shelf after 10 days.

### Board Meetings

Our board meetings are also being held virtually. If you would like to attend, they are generally held after one of our Virtual open House meetings, using the same link. All members are welcome.

### Rental Bays

The rental bays are open for use, but again we ask that anyone using them follow the rules laid out for the Boat Shop.

### Demos

We have been able to hold several Demos during our Virtual Open House meetings, virtual demos naturally. We have watched Mark Ramsby do lamination with fiberglass between layers of wood, and Craig Bryant demonstrating a fixture for using a planer to flatten a warped board. Lacking a demo we have been watching videos from Off Center harbor, who have graciously allowed us to show their videos during these meetings.

### Membership

We are offering free 2021 memberships to any 2019 and 2020 members who have been financially affected by the COVID crisis. Contact John Whitehouse for more details at



## Splash-In!

**John Bouwsma**

In this time of COVID we have been wracking our brains thinking of ways to get together in a safe way. Aside from having all our meetings virtual, members Charlie Ehm and Bruce Goodrich suggested and organized a series of “Splash-In” events. This is essentially the same thing as a Messabout, which we have held in the past, only this summer we have held five of them, all well-attended, at various locations around the Portland Area. We meet outside at a boat ramp, and all are wearing masks and maintain social distancing, so we consider this a very safe activity. We do not bring food to share, so there is no danger of passing the virus that way. We discuss where and when the next Splash-In will be held at our Virtual Open House meetings. Here are some photos from several of these events.

### July 30 at Willamette Park in Tualatin:



Charlie Ehm demonstrating cartopping from his wheelchair



Craig and Anne Bryant paddling their ultralight canoe



Russ Smith rowing his Ian Oughtred Swampscott Dory



Peter Shapiro with his folding trimaran. Unfortunately there was no wind but it was fascinating see him assemble it!



John Whitehouse in his strip canoe



### August 13 at Willamette Park in Portland:



Bruce Goodrich and Charlie Ehm rowing their boats, both featured in the Spring, 2020 issue



John Whitehouse in his \$100 boat (see Spring 2020 issue for details)



Russ Smith sailing his Swampscott Dory



Craig Bryant sailing his Scamp



Mark Ramsby in his strip canoe



Art Wilson in his rowing shell



## Splash-In Sept 30, Cathedral Park



Craig in his folding kayak



Charlie Ehm in one of his many rowboats



Bruce Goodrich with his sailboat



# Splash-In October 22, Milwaukee Boat Ramp



Mitch West on the maiden voyage of his brand new “Teeny Tiny Tender.”



Chuck Stuckey in his new Nutshell Pram  
Chuck’s first launch with RW members  
See his article about building it on page 21



Mark Ramsby’s Mojo at the dock



Above: Bruce Goodrich rigging his boat, Chuck’s Nutshell Pram in the foreground

Below: Bruce sailing off into the sunset



## Boom Vang Sheeting

Stu Whitcomb

Most marconi rigged mainsails have a boom and a sheet attached to it. When you change your course from tacking to reaching or running, the boom begins to rise resulting in spilling wind out over the leech of the sail and increasing the boat's weather helm.

Some smart guy invented the Boom Vang to prevent all of this from happening. The vang attaches near to the base of the mast, at one end, and attaches to the boom at the other end. By tightening the boom vang, the boom can be hauled down, thus flattening the sail and the boat becomes far better behaved.

Now, another smart sailor found a very simple way to avoid the Boom Vang all together, by re-reeving the fall of the sheet through a block where the old vang used to attach to the mast, thus saving complexity and expense.



## Update on OSMB Willamette River Pass-Through and Buffer Zones

Mark Ramsby

The Marine Board approved the Pass-Through Zones\*, as well as Buffer Zones\*\* for the rest of the Lower Willamette. They also approved an amendment to include the area west of Ross Island as a Pass-Through Zone, which will need to be voted on at the January Board meeting. Please see the map below.

If passed at the January meeting this will create a zone between the Hawthorne Bridge and Waverly Marina where towed water sports are not allowed. Jet Skis (PWC) are not allowed to operate above 5 mph except for pass-through and are prohibited from wave jumping, flips, etc.

It also creates a zone from Waverly Marina to Willamette Falls that incorporates the buffer zones from the Newberg Pool regulation. The buffer zones are defined below.\*\*

-----

### \* PASS THROUGH DEFINITION (Pass Through Zone Regulation: OAR 250-020-0280)

- (a) No person shall operate a motorboat pulling a water skier or towed device in this zone.
- (b) No person shall operate a personal watercraft (jet ski), as defined in OAR 250-021-0020, in continuous operation above 5 MPH in this area, except to transit directly through this zone.





### Update on OSMB Willamette River Pass-Through and Buffer Zones Cont'd from previous page

#### \*\* BUFFER ZONES

Required Distances from private docks, boathouses, floating homes or moorages:

- 0-100' - All boats, slow no-wake.
- 100-200' - No Wake Sports or inflatable devices. Waterskiing allowed.
- 200-300' - No Wake Surfing. Wakeboarding, tubing, waterskiing allowed.
- 300' or more - All Wake Sports allowed.

#### Next Steps:

The next OSMB Quarterly Meeting is on January 27th. The Board plans to vote on the Pass-Through and Buffer Zones. RiversWest will support the extension of the Pass Through along Ross Island and adoption of the October 21, 2020 proposal shown on the map above for that meeting. If the regulations are passed, the Board said they will be able to adopt and implement the rules for the 2021 boating season, and we can look forward to a calmer and safer summer on the river for small boats!

July 23, 2020



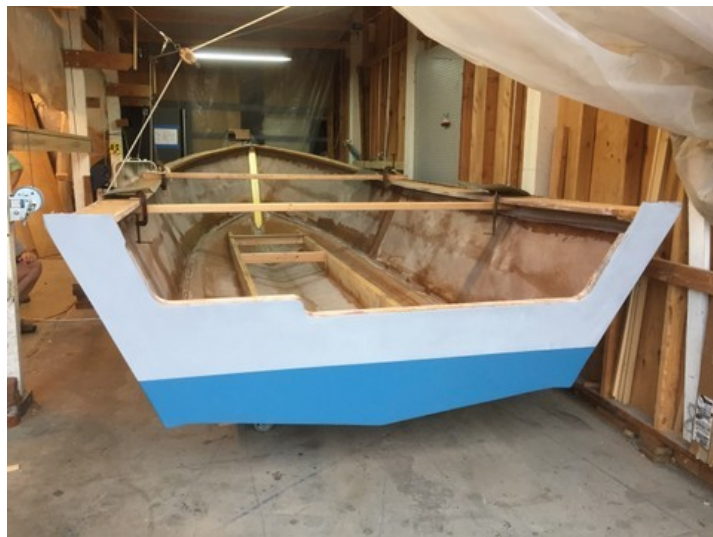
October 21, 2020



## Building the Tolman Skiff

Randy Torgerson

A few years ago I decided to build a 21 foot Tolman Widebody Skiff as my next boat building project. I wanted a boat that would be good for fishing, have a cabin in case the weather turned bad and allow extended trips into Canada. Renn Tolman (<https://www.tolmanskiffs.com>) designed three skiffs for use in Alaska and has a large following and active builders'



community at <https://www.fishyfish.com/boards/>. For the last year and a half, in the last bay at Rivers West boat shop, the Tolman build has been slowly taking shape. Working one to two days a week it has taken me a little more than a year to finish the hull and get it ready for turning. I have been having fun the entire time.



Since turning over the hull in late June I have taken the adjacent bay so I have room to work as the Tolman Widebody is 7-1/2 feet wide and the bays are about 9 feet wide. I have a 4' x 16' work table that allows me to easily work on parts that are longer than 8 feet. The Tolman skiff is built using a modified stitch and glue construction. The longitudinal stringers are made from Linear Veneer Lumber (LVL) encapsulated in fiberglass and epoxy as is the hull. There are two shelves that make up the side deck that are also made from LVL. Because of the difficulty sourcing long clear lumber many Tolman builders are using LVL because of the strength and uniformity that the engineered product provides.



## Building the Tolman Skiff (cont'd from previous page)

Randy Torgerson

Recently I have been building the forward flotation chamber, chain locker, the anchor deck and extending the side decks. Next is building the cuddy cabin and pilot house. As with any boat build there are lots of little fiddly bits and decisions that need to be made and remade. As the Tolman's are usually home built, each one is customized by the building for their use. I am thinking about how I am going to arrange the cuddy cabin, the pilot house and the cockpit. The roofs for the cuddy cabin and pilot house are curved so I built a jig for the initial assembly and the roofs will be finished when they have been lifted in place. Pre-Covid days, many people would drop by and help or just see the progress. Now the best way to be involved is to join by blog on Groups IO by sending an email to: [TolmanBoatBuilding+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:TolmanBoatBuilding+subscribe@groups.io) I will be done in June; I just don't know which year.



## Mitch West's Teeny Tiny Tender

Mitch West

My mini tender is done. 6' 8". If this won't fit your "yacht", you can probably just moor the yacht at the dinghy dock. Target weight was 45 lb. I have not weighed it yet, but I guess 50 with the rope fender and oak framing.

This is Ian Oughtred's "Feather Pram," glued lapstrake, 6'8" LOA X 45" beam. 4mm Okume plywood on white oak. Transoms, floorboards and thwarts of Ss\apele.

See photos of the first launch at the October 22 Splash-In at the Milwaukee Boat Ramp on Page 7



## Fund Raising Opportunities

### Capital Campaign

Since the plan for the new Bridge across the Columbia River is out, with a deadline for acquiring land of October, 2024, we have a more more specific goal for raising money to find a new location. Our Capital campaign is more important than ever. See below for several ways you can contribute

**Craig Bryant**

<b>Corporate Donations:</b>	<b>\$10,001</b>
<b>Member Donations:</b>	<b>13,017</b>
<b>NonMember Donations:</b>	<b>4,582</b>
<b>Trusts :</b>	<b>23,500</b>
<b>Total Capital fund:</b>	<b>\$51,100</b>

### Amazon Prime

As an Amazon Prime member you can request a matching donation of 0.5% of each purchase from Amazon to go to the non-profit of your choice. This will cost you nothing, the entire cost is borne by Amazon.

1. Sign in to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) on your desktop or mobile phone browser.
2. From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to add a charity.
3. Type in RiversWest Small Craft Center.

### Fred Meyer

Fred Meyer has a program similar to Smile.Amazon.com. All you have to do is sign up; the entire cost is borne by Fred Meyer. You must have a Fred Meyer Rewards account to set this up.

Need to sign up for a Fred Meyer Rewards account?

<https://www.fredmeyer.com/account/create??redirectUrl=/account/communityrewards/>

Once you have a Fred Meyer Rewards account, you can link your account to RiversWest. At the end of each quarter, RiversWest will get a donation from Fred Meyer based upon your purchases.

To set up the matching donation,, follow this link:

<https://www.fredmeyer.com/signin?redirectUrl=/account/communityrewards/> Sign in and select RiversWest as your designated non-profit. It's that simple. Do you have questions?

<https://www.fredmeyer.com/topic/community-rewards-frequently-asked-questions>.

**This does not affect your rewards, but is on top of it.** It is a charitable donation to qualifying non-profits from Fred Meyer.



## Direct Donations

Direct donations may be in cash or in goods. Over the years we have had many members downsize prior to moving to retirement homes or smaller houses and apartments. We have often been the beneficiaries as they have thinned out their tools, boats, and materials. While we welcome these donations we have had to be careful about



what we accept. We had our annual garage sale in August, and following that we have been selling some things on Craig's List, some to members, and items we haven't been able to sell we have made available to members.



## Membership Renewals:

The day-to-day costs of maintaining the RiversWest shop are supported by membership fees and bay rentals to work on boats. It's time to renew your membership for 2021. Each year we change the door combination to protect our wood shop: tools, boats, and supplies. So keep current! As a member you get:

- Discount at Crosscut Hardwoods
- 24-hour access to our woodworking shop
- Ability to rent a bay in the shop
- Access to a fantastic library of boat building reference works and boat plans

Since we are a non-profit, your membership fees are tax-deductible. And of course we welcome donations! Fees are \$75, or \$50 for youth under 18 or college students with an ID.

You can join RiversWest or renew with a credit card or PayPal account at

<http://www.riverswest.org/join-us/>

Thanks!

## Participate in RiversWest Activities

We would be delighted to have you participate in any of our activities:

- Semi-monthly open house, 9:00AM-Noon, First and Third Saturdays now done on Zoom
- Frequent demonstrations of boat building and woodworking skills on first and third Saturdays
- Family Boat Build and Portland Wooden Boat Show (except this year. . .)
- Visit our booth at the Portland Boat Show, Jan 8-12 at the Expo Center assuming it is held this year
- On-the-water Splash-Ins (messabouts), as announced by e-mail
- Work on a boat
- Periodic tours of member's shops



## What to do in a Pandemic: Build a Boat

Chuck Stuckey

While confined to my house and garage and fairly bored I decided to build another boat. I didn't need a boat, just needed to stay busy, so I ordered a set of plans from Wooden Boat. Perhaps Joel White's most popular small boat design is the Nutshell Pram. He drew it in two sizes, a nine foot and a 7'7" model. Some of you may remember a high school student, Sadie Brown, built the bigger version a few years ago. I opted for the smaller one.

If anyone is thinking of a small boat build from plans, I highly recommend the designs of Joel White. I built a Shellback 15 years ago, still going strong. Our president Mark Ramsby built one also a few years back. The plans are easy to follow, no lofting, and it all fits. My only complaint with the design is the absence of flotation. He designs his boats to look more traditional with thwart. Looks good but I've always worried about swamping. And since I hope to pass this little boat on



to my new grandson in a few years I need it to be as safe as possible.

So I made a few modifications

from the plans. As the photo shows I built flotation chambers in each end. Filled them with some foam, empty plastic bottles, and a portion of my 35 year collection of wine corks. The plans called for a laminated mid frame, but I'm positive its not needed so I just made a temporary station mold at that point. She is plenty strong and stable without it. He doesn't call for glassing any of the hull but I know from

experience that dragging a dinghy up on a rocky beach {which is every beach in the northwest} without some epoxy and glass will quickly ruin the bottom. A metal rub strip on the keel and skeg is also a must. Experience has also taught that padded gunwale guard is a must as well.

I opted to do the inside bright, not sure how long it will last, but I wanted to try it. A coat of epoxy and three coats of a satin varnish with an additional coat of gloss on the mahogany pieces. Came out pretty good I thought. This will not be a show piece, she will get used hard over the years. I did not undertake the sail rig at this point, but who knows what the future holds. The grandson may need to learn to sail at some point.



She will go up to our cabin and be the everyday dinghy to our sailboat for the next few years. And I'll use the Shellback with her newly built sail rig as just another boat. After all, there's no such thing as too many boats.



## Chuck Stewart's Geolite Westport Dinghy

John Ost

After finishing his canoe, built with help from John Ost and featured in the Spring 2020 Issue, Chuck wanted to build a dinghy that would fit in the back of his van and in which he would go out for a row with his wife. He decided that the Geolite Westport Dinghy plans and kit Charlie Ehm had given John Ost would be just the boat. In the month before his departure for Yuma, he and John got the boat built except for the skeg and outer keel. The Dacron covered boat was waterproofed with 2 part polyurethane. When he got back in May, we finished the boat and took it out on the rising Columbia on a windy day. The outing with his wife is waiting for another day. Note the laminated spruce oars.



## Repairing a Cane Canoe Seat

Craig Bryant

Rip!

This wasn't a sound I expected when I settled into the aft seat of our Wenonah canoe at a RiversWest splash-in this summer. The good news was that I didn't feel an extra draft down below, but the seat definitely did not support my weight anymore. So, the bad news was that the decades-old cane seat was toast, and I would be kneeling for the entire paddle that day. However, I *was* casting about for a next pandemic project, having just completed one, so add one on the plus column.

Now, I had never caned seats, but I was game to try. The original seats were made from a pre-woven mat that is forced into a channel in the seat, much like a screen in a screen door. In theory, one can remove the damaged mat and replace it. I found it quite difficult (and extremely boring) to dig the spline and mat out of the channel without damaging the channel and surrounding seat. I tend to enjoy new construction compared to repair, so I decided to build new seats and do the weaving myself. The goal was not to minimize time, but rather to maximize learning, fun, and yes - maybe time.

I had some maple left over from skegs for my SCAMP, so that became the seat material. I used the old seats as a pattern, and used mortise and tenon joints. Now starts the re-



petitive tasks, which best describes the caning process. I drilled holes evenly spaced around the perimeter of the seat opening, for the cane. I purchased a chair caning kit that included 2.5mm cane, the wider binder cane for the perimeter of the seat, and 4 wood pegs to be used during the weaving process. Though the 2.5mm cane is the same size as the old seat, if I were to do it over, I think I might use 3mm, to make a slightly more robust seat.



Individual cane pieces are soaked in cold water for at least 15 minutes before start, in order to make them flexible enough for the weaving process. The first three steps are pretty easy - first run vertical rows between holes - down through a hole, up through the adjacent hole, and so on. It is important to be meticulous about not twisting the cane, either on top or below. Pegs are used to hold the cane in a hole temporarily. Next step is horizontal rows on top of the first step vertical rows. Then add another set of vertical rows offset slightly from the first - make these first steps snug, but not too tight, otherwise later weaving steps will be more difficult. Now it gets more time consuming, because I had to weave over and under. If the cane starts



## Repairing a Cane Canoe Seat (cont'd from previous page)

Craig Bryant

When finished with this step, tighten the space between adjacent vertical rows. Fifth step is diagonal weaves, under a horizontal row and over a vertical row. The diagonal weaves take a very long piece of cane, so you may be better off using shorter pieces and terminating in a hole, and starting another piece. I estimated the length of cane needed for each step, and cut a piece that was several inches longer - not having to pull un-needed extra length at each weave was definitely worth it. Sixth step is another diagonal, orthogonal to the previous, and this time over the horizontal and under the vertical. During any of these weaving steps, you may come up short on the pieces of cane you are using, or the cane may break, so you need to just end it in a hole, and start a new piece in the adjacent hole - be sure to leave 4" sticking out of the back side.

The weaving steps can be quite time consuming, but after a little practice, I developed a rhythm, and time just flew. If you don't finish all the weaving in one and the work already done has dried, you can spray it with water, and it helps make subsequent weaving easier.

I am almost done with the 2nd seat, and have yet to install the seats and test them. Hopefully, this will be a supportive and silent event.

There are some details I haven't mentioned above - I found a YouTube video about canoe seat caning by "A Guy Doing Stuff" to be very helpful.



go

Next to last step is the binder cane. Place around the perimeter of the seat, one side at a time, and weave normal size cane up through a hole, over this cane, and back down through the same hole, then over to the next hole, and repeat. I found it difficult to put two more pieces of cane through some holes, as they were already very full. I used a small nail set to open the hole a bit, and once I got the cane through the hole from the back side, I could use it to help the cane through from the front side by holding them together on the front side and pulling through from the back side.

And lastly, you tie off all the cane pieces sticking out on the back side, and you are almost done. I say almost, because I will probably coat at least the top side with tung oil.



## My Life With Boats

**Steve Najjar**

I've always loved being in boats. In my youth, my dad would occasionally rent a skiff in City Island, part of the Bronx. When I was a teenager, my parents bought a summer home in East Quogue, NY. I bought an 'SS' class sailboat, a 16' gaff-rigged sloop (see WB issue 200, Jan/Feb 2000, and <https://www.ssclassassociation.org>), and sailed it for several years on Shinnecock Bay. Owning that boat gave rise to the question 'how do you bend wood to a curved shape?'

It wasn't until I was in my 30s (1984), when I took a class with Simon Watts on building a lapstrake dinghy, that I got the answer to that question. I learned how to bend wood to a curved shape. It changed my life! It would be ten years or so before I opened my own shop in Palo Alto, CA, and began building boats. Given the dry climate of the Bay Area, I focused on glued lapstrake construction using okoume plywood.

When we moved to West Linn, OR in 2007, I had hoped to get back to building boats again. But having MS curtailed those plans. I'm currently working with John Ost, sharing my knowledge and skills, helping him build a 10' Herreshoff pram in the shop.



**6'8" Peterson Pram (Murray Peterson)**

## 15' Blackfish Dory (Iain Oughtred)



**My Life With Boats (cont'd from previous page)**

**Steve Najjar**



13'6" Grebe/Tammie Norie (Iain Oughtred)



**Four 17' Herreshoff Pulling Boats**



## Skin-on-Frame Canoe

**Chester Jung**

Last year, I helped John Ost finish a skin-on-frame canoe donated to the Club by Steve Najjar. I enjoyed working on it and I decided that I'd like to build one for myself. John Ost gave me the plans for it, a Geodesic Snow Shoe Explorer 14' skin-on-frame. I don't have room to build in my garage so I rented a half bay down at the shop for four months starting in January of this year. In preparation, I started cutting out the molds in December, mounted the molds on to a strong back borrowed from John, and began my canoe in early January. I did all the lashings myself, John helped me with steam bending, clamping the ribs, mounting the seats and skinning it. I used mostly Doug Fir with the exception of the ribs which were white oak. I ended up buying the seats for it. The canoe weighs about 45 lbs. It was completed at the end of April and John and I launched it May 9 under the St Johns Bridge. Since then, I've made two paddles and, now working on a bent shaft paddle for it. If anyone in the club wants to build one, the molds and strong back are stored in the loft area of the shop and I have a copy of the plans they can use.



## RiversWest Small Craft Center

### Virtual Open House - First and Third Saturdays

We are meeting in Zoom sessions open to all on the first and third Saturday of every month. Times and instructions to join will be sent out each week before the meeting to our entire mailing list. Take the opportunity to meet



the members who are a friendly group of boating enthusiasts. We will take you on a tour of our facility which includes our wood shop, boat building spaces which are available for members to rent and our livery of boats. You can even browse through our extensive lending library including our collection of WoodenBoat Magazines.

### Boat Shop

Our boat shop is equipped with the necessary equipment to build your boat. Many members who are building their boats at home take advantage of our complete wood shop, saving the cost of renting or purchasing their own tools. Fellow members can provide free advice and helping hands when you need it.



### Bay Rentals

Our boat shop is configured with bays that members can use for restoring or building their dream boat. Available for rent on a monthly basis, these bays, 10 x 23 feet, offer a dedicated workspace with light, electrical power and immediate access to our wood shop. And best of all, there are plenty of friendly and experienced craftsmen available to offer advice on the techniques of building a boat.



**When you're a member of RiversWest, you don't need to be a shipwright, own a shop full of tools or have a large space at home to build your dream boat. We have it all.**

**[riverswest.org](http://riverswest.org)**

## Crater Lake Boats Still Available

We are still looking for good homes to adopt the remaining two Crater lake Boats. We sold one several years ago; we thought we had a deal for the other two but it fell through at the last minute. We hope that these boats will have a new life somewhere, they are beautifully designed and built, with solid mahogany planking. These boats would make truly luxurious cabin cruisers.



They can be viewed underneath the ramp leading to the Hawthorn Bridge, at Salmon and Water Streets. If you want to get a close look inside the fence, please contact a board member.



## Shopping for Tools in all the Wrong Places

Mitch West

Over the course of several boats (all glued lapstrake), I have accumulated a tool bag full of items that I have found useful for boat-building. Of course, most came from the woodworking stores, but some did not. Below are several items that I have found in other departments, and adopted or adapted. This article focuses on two categories. First, fitting: Boats are made of bits of wood that are not straight or square. Second, epoxy work. Mixing and applying the goo that holds a lot of modern boats together.

### Fitting Tools:

In the kids aisle at Freddy's, you will find crayons and sidewalk chalk. When planing to a line, a crosshatch with a crayon lets you judge when to refine the cut, and whether your bevel angle is consistent. Crayon will also transfer. Color one piece and tap it into where it belongs. The bits that don't quite fit will be marked with the crayon wax. Chalk is helpful for labeling parts, preventing cutting or gluing the wrong piece or side. I hear that can happen.

Technically, you will find an automotive feeler gauge among the tools, but not woodworking. When fitting a complex shape like a floor or breasthook, you can loft the shape and cut the bevels so they are close (preferably oversize). When nearly there, choose your personal tolerance (.005 for me). You can feel the high spots where there is contact. Plane them off. When the feeler gauge won't slip in anywhere, the fit is near perfect. Epoxy will fill gaps you can measure with a ruler, but we all have our pride.

Again, not a woodworking tool. Drywall knives are thin, flexible, and cheap. Here, I have cut the edges of a drywall knife square to reach into corners. The back side is covered with 60 grit sandpaper. I am perfecting the bevel on the transom where the plank lands. My right hand holds a batten that mimics the plank, while I sand the transom with the knife held at the perfect angle by the batten. Saves on regrets and epoxy!



From the scrap pile. In marking up a plank template, some marks are easiest to make on the inside, others on the outside. These two batten scraps are glued to a scrap of planking plywood, such that they are exactly parallel,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch apart. When the inner leg touches the transom, I can mark the transom edge on the outside of the plank. Also very handy when you want to drill for hardware bolts. You can mark where the drill will come out. I have another sized for  $\frac{3}{4}$  stock.



## Shopping for Tools in all the Wrong Places (cont'd from previous page) Mitch West

### Epoxy Tools:

Syringes are a staple for epoxy work, filling fastener holes, making fillets, and just getting epoxy into that gap you wish wasn't there. You can buy a 3-pack from West System. They have a plastic tip you cut to size. You can't go smaller. A medical supplier (or Amazon) will send a lifetime supply for the price of a dozen at the marine store. Look for "Luer lock" syringes and needles. The Luer lock is a push and twist needle attachment. Blunt needles are available in many sizes. 20Cc Syringes are about the size of the West syringes. 8 Gauge needles are good for big fillets, while 14 ga is about as small as works for thickened epoxy, and great for filling holes. The needles clean easily with alcohol and last nearly forever. Syringes can be cleaned, but you will eventually be unable to get them clean enough. These are so cheap, they may not be worth the solvent!



Toothbrushes are fantastic tools for spreading epoxy. Unlike the disposable acid brushes, they never leave bristles behind, and they are better for scrubbing unthickened epoxy into the wood. They also carry more thickened epoxy, and leave a very even layer (for me, plank laps are the best application). Your retired toothbrush is fine, but they are a bit pricey, and impossible to clean. Disposable toothbrushes are available, used in education/outreach programs. They are less robust, but available at around 7 cents each. I can do all my epoxy spreading for under 3 bucks per boat. Note: Search for "toothbrushes in bulk".

If you work with small batches of epoxy, the metered pumps can be wasteful. Online, you can find digital scales. Mixing by weight is more accurate, and you can mix just what you need. You can find scales with a range in carats, grams, ounces, or whatever matches your usage. As a reference point, the West System pumps produce 20 grams of resin, 4 of hardener per stroke (I often need  $\frac{1}{4}$  to half that much). Jeweler, postal, or kitchen scales all work. Look for a "tare" function, that zeros the scale between cup, resin, and hardener.



Artist's palette knives are great for tooling fillets and shaping epoxy. They are thin, flexible, and cheap. This set was about 6 bucks at a craft store. Go cheap—you intend to abuse them! When you press a bit too hard and the blade rotates in the wooden handle, don't despair. Pull the blade out, dip the shank in your epoxy and put it back. Finish the job with a different knife, and tomorrow the first one will be better than new.

It is epoxy, remember. You are going to make a mess. Clean up what you can, but you will miss some, or won't be able to reach it until the clamps are off. In the paint department, you can find

standard steel hook scrapers. They work, but plan to sharpen every 5 minutes or so. For just a bit more, you can find solid carbide paint scrapers with replaceable blades. The kind with the forward handle is best, as you will have to bear down. I wear out about one double-edged blade per boat (and I am quite messy). Not only do they last, but for reasons I can't explain, the carbide shaves off hardened epoxy without even marking soft Okume plywood.



Student \$50  General Membership \$75

Donations: \$50  \$100  \$250  Other\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues and donations to RiversWest qualify for tax deductions. Ask your tax advisor.

*Please return the following with your check to the address below,  
or sign up online at [riverswest.org](http://riverswest.org)*

New member  Renewing member  Change of information  Additional donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Day/Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Benefits:

Members receive the RiversWest newsletter

Access to RiversWest boat shop and space rentals

Access to all RiversWest educational programs

Invitation to all RiversWest boating and social functions

**RiversWest Small Craft Center Inc.  
P.O. Box 19234, Portland, OR 97280**

### Membership Form

RiversWest is a non-profit membership organization whose mission is to encourage personal involvement in the construction of small recreational wooden craft and their accessories.

## RiversWest Board

### Officers:

Mark Ramsby, President:

[president@riverswest.org](mailto:president@riverswest.org)

Craig Bryant, Treasurer & Web Mgr:

[treasurer@riverswest.org](mailto:treasurer@riverswest.org)

[website@riverswest.org](mailto:website@riverswest.org)

John Bouwsma Secretary, Newsletter, Demos

[secretary@riverswest.org](mailto:secretary@riverswest.org)

### Directors:

John Whitehouse Membership Coord

John Ost Shop Mgr

Bruce Goodrich, Librarian

Mitch West Donations Coordinator

Chuck Stuckey Family Boat Build

Russ Smith

Bob Meehan

Steve Najjar

Mike Simmons, Board Member Emeritus

Art Wilson, Board Member Emeritus

**RiversWest Small Craft Center,  
Inc.**

P.O. Box 19234

Portland, OR 97280

[www.riverswest.org](http://www.riverswest.org)

