



# Building Connections

Vermont WoodNet is a coalition of small-scale woodworkers and wood-related businesses with the mission to strengthen business opportunities for Vermont wood product businesses based upon a commitment to the sustainability of the forest resource.

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### Mark your calendars

- Sept 9 Official presentation of Welcome Center Display Cases, 11:00 am
- Sept 18 WoodNet Annual Meeting at Shelburne Farms. Business portion 8:30am. Guest speaker Richard Donovan, Chief Forester of the Rainforest Alliance & Executive Director of SmartWood at 9:00 am. Woods Walk around 1:00 pm
- Sept 18 Harvest Festival and WoodNet Sustainable Woods Showcase at Shelburne Farms, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
- Dec 30 Publication of new Resource Guide 2005 Edition

### 2005 Calendar

- Sept 24-25, 2005 Wood Products Marketing Council Showcase, Woodstock

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## Featured Member: Randall S. Ouellette Owner, R & K Woodworking

R & K Woodworking was started in 1990 in a converted garage making items for the craft industry such as unfinished butler trays, napkin holders and other items for area crafters. Larger items such as hope chests were mainly made as donations to area churches and other good causes. Furniture repair and restoration was also being done.

In January of 1993, the shop burned and with it, most all the tools and machinery. After rebuilding from the ground up, I started making more pieces and parts for different types of businesses. (My motto is "One to One Million Parts"). It was that way until November of 1998 when Jonathan Landell of Landell Flutes contacted me about making custom flute cases for his handmade titanium flutes. While I was working on that, I contacted Powell Flutes in Massachusetts to ask where they were getting their hardware. Being a good salesman, I also queried as to where they were getting their cases and if I could bid on them. After a bit of determination on my part, they gave me the first purchase order to build 50 cases. That's when it really started to happen and as a side note, I was still working a 40 hour job for another company.



Randy Ouellette checks a job on the CNC Router at R & K Woodworking

Powell Flutes then gave me a purchase order for 500 cases, which I was cutting out on a small Delta inverted pin router. About the time that I had completed the 400<sup>th</sup> case, I noticed that my body was failing – my shoulders and wrists were just giving out. That's when I noticed an article in Woodshop News on affordable CNC's and I discovered the company, ShopBot in Durham, NC and I purchased one of their small routers (that I am still running).

As 1999 progressed, I could see I had the opportunity to go out on my own. I had additional business and so many tools and machinery that my shop was too small and I had to move. That was when a local business owner approached me to see if I was interested in moving into his 2400 square foot garage. We started construction May 1, 2000 and moved in on July 17<sup>th</sup>. That's when I bought my second ShopBot router. One that was bigger, faster and stronger than the first one. It was also then that I hired my first full time employee. During the time that has followed, we have acquired many new clients, making a vast range of items from the flute cases to parts for Adirondack guide boats to chair seats, plus still working in repair and restoration and donating to local charitable organizations. We have also been fortunate to be a part of the governor's table and the statehouse chair projects. In May of 2003 an article was written in *Custom Woodworking Business* magazine about us being a small business using CNC routers.

I now have 3 full time employees and 1 part timer. The business has grown to the point that we may be buying another CNC from ShopBot. The next big event for R & K Woodworking is going to be September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> when we are hosting the first Camp ShopBot in the Northeast and the future looks great!

## First Annual Vermont Wood Product Marketing Council Showcase

On April 30 and May 1 2004, the Vermont Wood Products Marketing Council held the first annual showcase of Vermont made wood products at the coach barn at Shelburne Farms. Vermont WoodNet is a charter member of this council.

There were 20 booths and over 100 wood producers represented at this event. Vermont WoodNet had its own booth and had items from over 40 members on display for the two day event.

The booth (about 12' x 12') was a gift to Vermont WoodNet from Shelburne Farms via the Vermont Forests and Parks Department. It was originally built for the Big "E" in 1997. It is stored at Randall Henson's and is available for Vermont WoodNet members to use. Contact Vermont WoodNet (info@vtwoodnet.org or 802-349-9612) for details.

The showcase was attended by over 1000 people, mostly from Vermont. It was a great opportunity to show the quality and breadth of Vermont handmade wood products.

Along with the showcase was a design competition with entries in 9 categories. Vermont WoodNet members won 9 of the 31 awards. They were Randall Henson (two), Ted Fink (two), Mark Thibault, Stephen Foster, Jim Christman, T. Breeze Verdant, and Bob Bouvier. Congratulations for their efforts and to the high quality of craftsmanship displayed.

Award certificates were presented to the winners by Governor Jim Douglas.

Mark your calendars! **Next year's showcase will be held on September 24 and September 25, 2005 in Woodstock, Vermont.** Members, start planning now! WoodNet will again have a members-only booth and you can submit items in the design competition.



Vermont WoodNet booth at the 2004 VWPMP Showcase. More than 40 WoodNet members displayed their products in the booth.

### Presentation of Welcome Center Display Cases

On Thursday, September 9, 2004 Vermont WoodNet will present the two Welcome Center Display Cases to the State of Vermont at 11:00 am in the Northbound Welcome Center. All WoodNet members are welcome at the ceremony.



## Sustainable Woods Showcase at Shelburne Farms

On Saturday, September 18, 2004, VT WoodNet will hold their annual meeting, a public Showcase of our members, and a sustainable wood woods walk at Shelburne Farms. Marshall Webb, from Shelburne Farms has invited us to be a part of their Harvest Festival on that day, giving our members a great chance to be seen by many people.

The annual meeting will start at 8:30 am, with the business portion of the meeting. Richard Donovan, Executive Director of SmartWood and Chief Forester of the Rainforest Alliance will be our guest speaker at 9:00 am. After the meeting, Richard will be available to talk with members.

The Showcase will begin with the Festival at 10:00 am and run until 4:00 pm. There will be many activities going on throughout the day, with live music, a children's activity tent, food, a blacksmith, and much more. There will be several WoodNet members doing demonstrations throughout the day.

Ted Fink — wood turning  
 Jim Cunningham — pen making  
 Dick Montague — human powered pole lathe  
 Rick Gravelin — harps builder/player  
 Don Heurman — wood carver.

The woods walk portion of the day will be open to anyone who is interested in taking a short guided walk into the woods to learn a little more about good forest management. Marshall Webb, from Shelburne Farms, and Stephen Taylor, from WoodsWork, will be leading the tours. The tours are free to everyone. All you need is a desire to enjoy the beauty of the forest and a desire to learn a little more about how to keep them that way. There will be sign-up sheets for the walks at both the main entrance to the festival, and the WoodNet table in the WoodNet tent.

The whole day promises to be an exciting, fun, educational experience for all. We hope to see all of you there to enjoy the day with us. We are looking forward to a wonderful time – and great contacts and sales for our members.

## Agenda for the Annual Meeting, Sept 18, 2004

- 8:30 Election of board members and officers for the coming year  
 Update of WoodNet projects since the last annual meeting  
 Governor's tables  
 Rest area displays  
 WoodNet Administrator – Judy Balch  
 Shelburne Farms showcase  
 Web site/store  
 Membership  
 Vermont "Wood logo" use  
 Brochures  
 Chain of Custody Certification (COC) +15 members  
 Advertisements  
 VT Life/Woodlands  
 Wording change in Bylaws
- 9:00 Richard Donovan, Chief Forester of the Rainforest Alliance, and Executive Director of SmartWood

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### Changes to the WoodNet Bylaw

When Vermont WoodNet became an official non-profit organization and began applying for grants to support our activities, we found that we needed to change our organizational structure from one that has a Steering Committee to one that has a Board of Directors. This change required a formal vote by the Steering Committee at a regular monthly meeting. This has been done and the former Steering Committee is now the Board of Directors. The Bylaws are being updated to reflect this change.

The Board is also considering the following wording for the Mission Statement. "Vermont WoodNet is a coalition of woodworkers and wood-related businesses whose primary mission is to strengthen business opportunities for small-scale Vermont wood product businesses." The Board will vote on this change at the first board meeting after the annual meeting.