

The Seat Weavers' Journal

Volume 15 – Issue 3, July, Aug & Sept 2023

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The Corner Peg – Doug Lowman

OK, summer drags on with heat and rain here in northeast Tennessee. Thankfully, the temperature is nothing like what those in the Arizona are feeling. We have put considerable effort this spring and summer into helping our daughter move to Greenville, NC, so the garden took a back seat regrettably. Hopefully we will be able to dig out before fall!

Many thanks to Sue Muldoon and her truly able team of Rhonda Voos, Chris Pera, Suzan Diaz, Liz Cottrell, and Jennifer Cardwell for putting together a great program for the 2023 Gathering in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The program was very well received with several new members talking about how useful the weekend was to enhance their seat weaving skills. The attendees ate very well thanks to Suzan's organization of the weekend food. The raffle was a great success thanks to Liz's organization efforts and Jen kept all the financial matters in order. Thank you to each of these folks along with workshop presenters for your efforts to make the 2023 Gathering a great success. I regret that I was unable to attend the weekend but I did get to watch the Finnish dancing through Sue's live broadcast on Facebook. It looked like the attendees had a great time watching and learning Finnish dance.

Wayne Sharp is developing great plans for our 2024 Gathering in Mankato, Minnesota. So, mark your calendar for the weekend of July 26 – 28, 2024, for a great weekend in Mankato.

Several members stepped forward to fill Board positions. Lynn Nulicek is the new Secretary. Wayne Sharp and Cindy Olotka join Bill Brick as Members-at-Large. Liz Cottrell moved from Secretary to Vice-President and Nominating Chairperson. We are looking for a Membership Chairperson so if you are interested in supporting TSWG by serving on the Board, please contact me.

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TSWG Mission Statement:

To preserve, teach, and learn the many forms of seat weaving practiced throughout history.
To establish an understanding of excellence for each form of seat weaving that we seek to preserve.
To educate the public on the value of seat restoration and preservation of the craft.
To share with each other and the public, tips and techniques used in seat weaving.
To encourage the development of new designs and use of seat weaving in modern furniture.
To educate and advise each other and the public on all aspects of establishing and maintaining a seat weaving business.

TSWG Color Brochure

Teaching a class or giving a presentation or demonstration? Please spread the word about The SeatWeavers' Guild, Inc.® by passing out our lovely color brochure! Thanks, and hope to see you soon at one of our next annual Gatherings! You can find a PDF of the brochure on the website.

<https://www.seatweaversguild.org/brochure>

Membership News – August 2023

by Rhonda Voos

Membership renewals came up in June! Stay connected to your seat weaving community! We will be sending out an email reminder with a link to sign up online. If you want to get it done sooner, you can go to our website and renew now. Membership renewal covers July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.

If you know of any caners in your area who are not members, please invite them to join our Guild! All you need to do is give them our website: www.SeatWeaversGuild.org

Below are the different categories of membership. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at my email: TSWGmembership@gmail.com or by phone 860-716-8884.

Your Membership Chair, Rhonda Voos

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL ANNUAL DUES AND BENEFITS:

1) General Membership (U.S.)/ Individual - \$30 one vote at meetings, receive newsletter, access to membership list

2) Business Level Membership (U.S.) - each level with only one vote at meetings

a) Cottage - \$50 includes newsletter, business listing in newsletter, access to membership list.

b) Business - \$75 includes newsletter, business listing in newsletter, link on TSWG website, access to membership list.

c) Corporate - \$100 includes newsletter, advertising space on both the newsletter and TSWG website, access to membership list.

***International Levels = Additional \$10 US Dollars**

We currently have a total of 133 members in 35 States and 1 in the UK!

The top 5 states with the most members are:

Massachusetts – 16

Ohio – 12

New York – 11

North Carolina – 10

Connecticut – 8

By categories we have:

8 Corporate Members
25 Business
41 Cottage
97 Individual
3 Lifetime Honorary

If you want to see where our members live, we have a map on the **Members Only** section of our website (www.SeatWeaversGuild.org). Click on the Members Only Tab and enter the password that you received in a letter with your Membership renewal or registration. Scroll to the bottom of the page to see the map. You will have to enlarge it by clicking on the + at the bottom of it. New members may not be listed yet until it gets updated. If you can't find the password, you can contact Rhonda Voos @ her email: TSWGmembership@gmail.org

Welcome New Members!

Meet one of our newest members:

Brad Kerr - Hamilton, NY

My seat weaving business, at this point, is notional. I hung out my shingle and am waiting for that first customer. I live in a small college town in a rural part of upstate New York, and in the fall I plan to demonstrate chair caning at our very popular farmer's market. I learned to cane from my mom, who learned it from my dad, who had an upholstery shop, but didn't enjoy caning. My grandfather and great grandfather were caners too. I took it up as a way to connect with my mom. But it's also because the kitchen is my favorite room in a house, and the idea of someone sitting in their kitchen on a seat that I restored makes me happy. Through the guild, I hope to improve my skills and contribute to the well-being of our craft. Thanks for the opportunity!

PS(From Rhonda Voos)- Brad lives in Hamilton, New York which is home to Colgate University where I went to college many years ago. It is also near a big antiques area on Route 20 in Bouckville and Madison, NY. Madison Bouckville Antiques week is August 14-20th, 2023. Mical Wilmoth Carton will be there with a booth selling antiques.

Melanie Bowman – Irvine, California



Thank you for this opportunity! I got into chair caning a little over a year ago, when I was working in a furniture restoration workshop, the last in a series of jobs as I searched for a path after finishing my PhD and deciding to leave academia. The owner of the shop suggested that I learn to do some of our cane and rush work, and I just knew I would love the combination of pattern-repetition, problem-solving, and history. That job didn't last, but the love for caning did; I now split my time between paying work for customers and related artwork (brooms, brushes, baskets, and occasionally furniture) for myself. Readers can find me in my workshop in Irvine, CA and my website at materialknowledgedesigns.com

Pic of me working on my first Lincoln rocker.



John Bradbury - Milford, Ohio

Hi, Caners!

I've been weaving chair seats since about 1986, shortly after my wife and I took up basket weaving as a shared hobby. I do hand- and pressed cane, splint, bark, rush, seagrass, rope, Shaker tape, and wicker repair. I have

taught community-ed classes, and presented workshops at schools and events in Ohio, Georgia, and Tennessee. Caning has been a hobby, a sideline business, and a respite from reality at various times!

Pictured are a couple of my favorite restorations from about 30 years ago.

423-314-6187



Phyllis Briller – Bellvale, New York

In 2000, I faced early retirement with a severe visual impairment. As a girl, I remembered that the local "sheltered workshop" trained the blind in chair caning. So perhaps that was something I could learn. Ha! Few people in my community caned and none were under 80. But I persevered, read everything I could find, linked up with a couple of wonderful gentlemen who were generous with all the information they could remember. One pointed me in



the direction of HH Perkins. There I could take a class. That helped. Not having a caning community around me has been irksome. But with the internet has come videos. When I saw one explaining how to remove stubborn spline using steam, I watched it repeatedly, then immediately bought a steamer, adapting the hose with a piece of copper piping to fit the chair's channel. Hallelujah. Felt like I was on my way. I don't do a lot of caning but recently I completed the attached with counsel from Caryl at HH Perkins. It was a trip. Recently on FB, there was the suggestion to use sections of a pool noodle attached to a backer board to cushion a chair back. Next time, that's what I'll use! This is a great community. Thank you for taking me in.

Brian Webster – Woodstock, Georgia

SouthernRestorations.com is my business. I'm semi-retired with a second home in Sanford Fla, traveling back and forth every couple months to spoil grandchildren. Been doing Furniture Restoration, Repair and Refinishing for about 28 years. Just entering the world of Hand Caning as an avenue to make money in my trailer, close by the Pool in Sanford. It has become impossible to find practitioners in my busy marketplace North of Atlanta in Woodstock Ga. Here resides my Home Shop where I still do work for generations of customers and a few new ones who find me.

Appreciate the opportunity to join you all.

WE ARE SO GLAD YOU JOINED US!

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Amanda Hemm	Maynard	MA	amanda.hemm@gmail.com
Sarah Martin	Arlington	MA	Sarah.Sullivan.Martin@gmail.com
Mary Murtland	Lancaster	MA	m.murt@comcast.net
Brian Webster	Woodstock	GA	Southern.Restorer@gmail.com
Wyndham Ratcliff	Holly Springs	NC	Wyndham.Ratcliff@gmail.com
Melania Bowman	Irvine	CA	materialknowledgedesigns@gmail.com
Bradley Kerr	Hamilton	NY	bhkerr@gmail.com

Membership Questions: Rhonda Voos, TSWG Membership Chair, 96 Bayard Ave.
North Haven, CT 06473

860-716-8884 (Cell) Email: TSWGMembership@gmail.com





The Annual Guild Gathering – What a SUCCESS!!!

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

So many people to thank for such a busy, informative and memorable weekend but we want to give special shoutouts to people who donated generously to our 2023 Gathering Raffle Table. We hope you will also show your thanks to these businesses by purchasing from them so they will know they are valued.

Businesses:

Silver River Center for Chair Caning
5 River Arts Pl. Asheville, NC 28801

DELS Nantuckets
246 Middleboro Rd Freetown, MA 02717

Royalwood Ltd
517 Woodville Rd. Mansfield, OH 44907

NC Basketworks Inc.
130 Main St. Vass, NC 28394

H.H.Perkins
370 State St. North Haven, CT 06473

Woodcraft
3 Walpole Park South, Walpole, MA 02081

Wicker Woman
Wickerwoman.com

Basket Makers Catalog
Basketmakerscatalog.com

Sue Muldoon
www.reduxforyou.com
Individuals who generously donated were:

Faith Blackwell
CeCilia Sullivan
Jen Cardwell
Lynn Nulicek
Liz Cottrell



The New Board Members Elected at The Annual Gathering

The Annual Membership meeting was held July 16, 2023 in Gardner, MA as well as virtually. Welcome to the volunteers that have stepped up to lead The SeatWeavers' Guild Inc.

Vice President - Liz Cottrell
Secretary - Lynn Nulicek
Members at Large - Wayne Sharp and Cynthia Olotka
David Dick - Parliamentarian (one year)

Doug Lowman - President
Jen Cardwell – Treasurer
Bill Brick – Member at Large

Rhonda Voos (temporary) – Membership (a voting Board Member)
Sue Muldoon – Website / Publicity
Andrew Dick – Compliance Officer
Bonnie Rashleigh - Newsletter

Hotel blocks are reserved. The Gathering location is the Blue Earth County Museum. More details to follow in each newsletter.





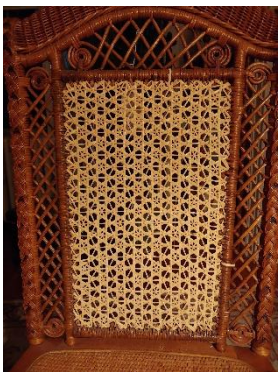
Board Member Bio–Rhonda Voos, Noth Haven, CT Membership Chair

My seat weaving career began with a chair I took from my parents' house when I moved from our Cleveland Hts, Ohio home after college. I later took the board off the seat and saw that it had caning on it. I was living in Connecticut in 1983 and took a class from Cathy Meder in Guilford. She taught me how to hand cane and to replace a press caned seat. I moved on to redo some of my mother-in-law's chairs which included fiber rush and splint seats, and then chairs of her friends. My "Country Caner" business began.

I taught classes in Adult Education programs for about 10 years in hand & machine caning, rush, and splint weaving. I really enjoyed teaching those classes as it also gave me time to be with other adults when my daughters were still young.

Around 1989 when I was at the HH Perkins Co, buying caning materials, I saw a cardboard sign on the wall for someone looking for a caning instructor. I called the number of Arlene Szczarba who set me on the path of a 30-year career. She was working with individuals with mental illness starting a caning business called The Association of Artisans to Cane (AAC) in New Haven, CT. They needed my help with chairs they didn't know how to do. Yale University gave them a room to work out of at Dwight Hall. (Founded by undergraduates in 1886, Dwight Hall is an independent, social organization whose mission is to nurture and inspire students as leaders of social change and to advance justice and service in New Haven and around the world.) This program eventually became part of Marrakech, Inc, a CT based private non-profit agency. I came to Marrakech with the program and started running The Association of Artisans to Cane. We worked with individuals with developmental, physical and mental disabilities who we taught and paid to do the caning repairs for our customers. The business grew to include an art program, a storefront gift shop and is now called East Street Arts.

<https://www.eaststreetartsnh.org> Check out their beautiful creations that are for sale online!



I retired 2 years ago but continue to work on repairing chairs and baskets at home for my own clients. I particularly enjoy repairing wicker furniture and Danish modern pieces. I like the process of figuring out how to fix them. I also do traditional hand caning, splint weaving, Danish cord, machine caning, shaker tape and fiber rush if I have to! I am a basket weaver and hope to learn to weave with willow in my retirement! That is when I'm not out hiking, sailing, gardening or travelling!

Here's a picture of the first chair I caned. The first seat I put on it was the traditional 7-step pattern, not easy to do as my first project. The seat recently broke, (lasted 40 years, but it hardly was used). I decided to try a fancy pattern for fun.





Board Member Bio – Liz Cottrell, Tiverton, RI, new Vice President



My first class in caning was about 42 years ago in Newport, RI and I picked right up on it since I do many different crafts this was just one more. I caned chairs over the next decade and taught myself how to do fiber rush, splint, and pre-woven cane chairs as I picked up cheap chairs over the years. I hadn't done much weaving after 1990 since I went back to college and earned my teaching degree in Secondary English then taught for 20+ years. In 2011 my fiancée passed away from cancer and he had owned Gray's Store, the oldest general store in the U.S. so his cousin, in 2012, decided to keep the store open during the summer and I joined her. Then in 2013, we have an artisans' group in the area that, for two weekends during the summer, have open studio weekends. I was asked to sit on the doorstep of Gray's Store and cane a chair to bring in business to the store. That first day we had a traffic jam with people stopping in or blocking traffic when they saw me weaving. I had no intention of going into business. After doing a bit of online investigation I came across The SeatWeavers' Guild which was having a Gathering in Sturbridge the next weekend. I drove up to see what the Gathering was about, met the members and joined. The rest is history. My nickname is The Porch Lady since so many people saw me for years sitting on the doorstep in front of the store caning. I met so many wonderful people on that doorstep and some

would drop off fresh strawberries, apples and give me free chairs since Saturday was dump day in the town and the store was on the road which was on the way to the dump. I was given a set of eight Shaker Workshop chairs which are now in my dining room.

In my area I'm number one on Google since I have very little competition and I'm never without many months' worth of work at any given time. During the pandemic I was booked out for a year. I've been featured in the Newport Daily, Newport, RI newspaper, Providence Journal and The Ledger newspaper which is up closer to Boston. I also had a piece written about the Bishop's Chair that I recaned for The Portsmouth Abby, a private school in Portsmouth, RI that serves international students. My customers are the greatest and word has gotten around to the point where I pick and choose what work I want to do and what I don't want to be bothered with. My last day of teaching occurred in June 2019 (talk about perfect timing) and now I have a great source of income to supplement my pension so I can travel more and play golf. Connecting to The SeatWeavers' Guild has given me connections to information and introduced me to the most wonderful, quirky group of weavers that I never would have met if I hadn't done a Google search and found them. Life is a constant gamble and so many roads can be taken. Some roads are paved while some are uninviting. One very bad road led me to an adventure that I'll never regret, so on that note – let's celebrate the chair nerd in all of us and go for ice cream!



TSWG Website – <https://www.seatweaversguild.org/> Member Password: Caners2023

TSWG Forum – <https://www.seatweaversguild.org/forum>

TSWG Facebook Page – <https://www.facebook.com/theseatweaversguild>

TSWG Facebook Group – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/theseatweaversguild>



Photos From the Gathering

Garner Mass. is home to many BIG Chairs. Including chairs built into porticos. Can you see it?



Dancing – fun for all!



Tips & Tricks Session and Suzan Diaz working on a medallion chair



The Whole Crowd - 2023 Gathering



Tips & Tricks Shared at the Gathering by Lynn Nulicek

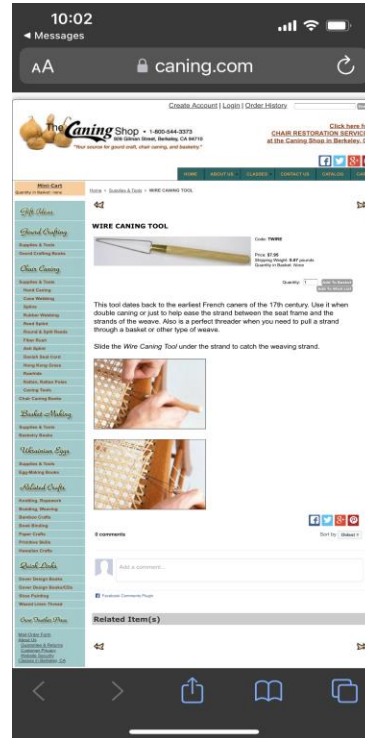
Wayne Sharp - Wayne's grandson Eli has been selling caning fingers he created with his Dad on a 3-D printer since he was eleven. They are great if you haven't used them! Eli is now 13 and his caning fingers will be available at H.H. Perkins for \$20.

Dave Peirce - Dave shared a rush seat that was stuffed with cattail butt ends.

Dave creates a before and after photographic documentation of his client's projects. When the client picks up their project Dave gives the client a copy

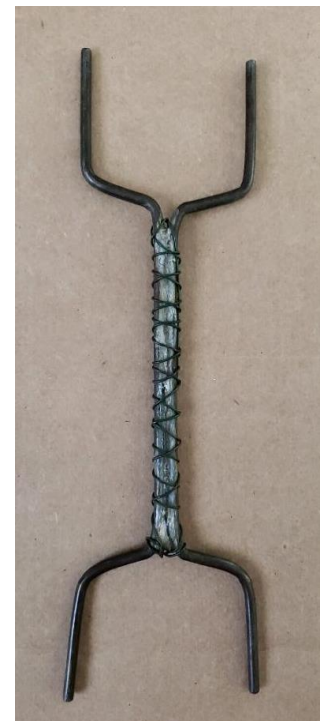


of the restoration. This is a great way to let the client know what was involved in the restoration and a nice way to justify pricing. When the client picks up their chair Dave offers to put the chair in a 50 gallon garbage bag to protect it. Dave keeps a 3 ring binder of his work creating a portfolio.



Jen Cardwell - Jen had a machinist make a thin steamer nozzle for spline removal. Jen also shared this wire caning tool she uses for the 7 step method

Caryl DeFrancesco - H.H. Perkins will be soon be carrying Mical Wilmoth Carton's caning nail and clamps used for wishbone and some rush seats. H.H. Perkins is researching having Sue Muldoon's metal rush shuttle made. Also, all Guild members can receive a 15% discount using code **welcome15**





Liz Cotrell - Liz made a board utilizing pool noodles to stabilize pressed cane Breuer chair backs that are curved. Pool noodles are also great to stabilize rocking chairs. Liz also shared a great rotary tool made by Milwaukee for spline removal.



2460-20

2460-21

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Mical Wilmoth Carton - When working on hand caned Breuer and Bentwood chairs that have wood spline it is best to blind cane them rather than risk breaking the wood spline. Cribbage pegs work well when your holes fill up. Caning needles are available at Peerless Rattan and are a great time saver.

Kennedy/Carolina rocker replacement seats and backs can be purchase from The Carolina Co.



The SeatWeavers’ Guild Inc. Board Members’ Contact Info

- Doug Lowman- President lowmand637@gmail.com 423-534-0311
- Liz Cottrell - Vice President cotrellliz@yahoo.com 401-524-1731-cell 401-624-4928
- Jen Cardwell - Treasurer treasurer@seatweaversguild.org 804-822-6119
- Lynn Nulicek - Secretary lynnnul@chairweave.com 630-405-3933
- Bill Brick - Member at Large chairman@pa.net 717-630-2728 717-860-5556
- Wayne Sharpe - Member at Large waynesharp1@gmail.com 507-779-8550
- Cynthia Olotka - Member at Large colotka@yahoo.com 508-274-7378
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- David Dick - Parliamentarian rees42277@gmail.com 217-251-7700 217-466-1655
- Sue Muldoon - Publicity suemuldoon@suemuldoonimages.com 860-394-5470
- Bonnie Rashleigh - Newsletter seatweaversnews@gmail.com 419-260-0627



Share Your Craft – Show Off Your Workspace!
Let’s ZOOM About our Projects! – Rhonda Voos

LET'S MEET ON ZOOM AND SHARE WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON! We will set a date and time when we can have an informal Chat & Cane via Zoom. Information will come via email. Watch your inbox! Interested in hosting one? Contact Rhonda Voos @ 860-716-8884 or email @ rondina2003@yahoo.com

This was a very successful project back in 2022 when people signed up to host a zoom session either about their workshop or just time to work on your favorite project and share it with others.



Honorary Lifetime Members

- Lillian Peterka
- Jim Widess
- Richard Saunders

In Remembrance

- Thomas Holtkamp (Founder & Member at Large)
- Sharon Dempsey (Member at Large)

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

- President: Doug Lowman
- Vice President: Liz Cottrell
- Secretary: Lynn Nulicek
- Treasurer: Jen Cardwell
- Membership: Rhonda Voos
- Members-at-Large: Wayne Sharp, Bill Brick, Cynthia Olotka



The Last Strand – Letter from the Editor

If you, or another guild member has “made the news” or has been recognized in some way and you would like to share it with your members, please send those stories and news items in for publication in our next newsletter. Special stories about unusual chairs, special customers, tips, tools, pictures of your studio or you at work, demonstrating or anything of interest to the Guild members would be welcome items for this newsletter. This is a way to make this journal yours!

The SeatWeavers’ Journal is published four times a year: February, May, August and November. Content deadline submission is the 5th of the publication month with publication on or before the 15th of the month. Our newsletter is sent electronically to all members in good standing. To receive your newsletter on paper in the mail, contact: seatweaversnews@gmail.com

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