

# Hardware Show Roundup

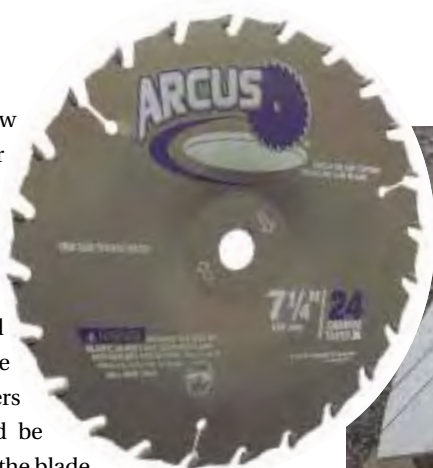
by Patrick McCombe

Cool tools and products from this year's event

## A Circle Cutter That Works

Curved cuts are usually reserved for a jigsaw or router, but now you can add a circular saw to your arsenal of curve-cutting tools. According to the maker, the Arcus 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch *Saw Blade* can cut curves with radii from 15 inches on up. Its secret is a slightly dish-shaped, tempered blade — plus 24 V-shaped C6 teeth. The demonstrations I saw were quite impressive. The inventor cautions users that the C6 carbide is brittle and should be protected when the blade's not in use. Also, the blade is thicker than normal, so it won't fit every circular saw; contact the maker for product compatibility. It costs \$40.

■ **Arcus**, 502/495-2959, [www.arcusblade.com](http://www.arcusblade.com).



## Sure Stick

For years, Gorilla has had a firm grip on the polyurethane wood glue market, but a couple of worthy competitors showed up at this year's show. Macco Adhesives, for example, launched *Liquid Nails Rhino Ultra*. This glue sets up in 40 minutes (20 if the mating surfaces are dampened) and offers a high-viscosity formula that allegedly makes it less messy than Gorilla Glue. A 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce bottle sells for about \$8, and an 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce bottle for \$14. The maker says it'll be available nationwide by September.

■ **Liquid Nails**, 800/634-0015, [www.liquidnails.com](http://www.liquidnails.com).



## Large Capacity

Most adjustable wrenches with a 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch capacity aren't going to fit in your toolbelt easily, but Channellock's *WideAzz* is a notable exception. Decked out with the company's cushy Code Blue grip, this high-quality wrench boasts an 8-inch handle for greater portability and less weight. It costs about \$25.

■ **Channellock**, 800/724-3018, [www.channellock.com](http://www.channellock.com).

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### Demolition Bar

Unlike traditional wrecking bars — which were originally designed to demolish crates, not houses — the *Gutster Demo-Bar* really is made for residential demolition. The inventor, a professional remodeler, claims that the 4-foot all-steel bar can pry up sheathing and flooring, wrench away studs, remove siding, and pop off sheetrock and cabinets. It comes in two versions: Series 1 (\$70) and Series 2 (\$80). The latter includes a secondary grip and toothed nail-pullers on the front and back.

■ **Gutster**, 732/868-8303, [www.thegutster.com](http://www.thegutster.com).



### Bobble Beam

When I tested the Wobble Light a couple of years ago, my only gripe was how big it was (*Toolbox*, 6/04). So I was glad to see the *Wobblelight Jr.* introduced at the show. The junior version has the same features as the original, including an internal cooling fan, a built-in power outlet, a high-impact polycarbonate lens, and a unique self-righting base. The only difference is size: It's 27 inches tall and 14 inches wide, compared with the original's 36 inches by 18 inches. It comes in 2,400- to 9,000-lumen models; prices range from \$60 to \$130. The maker says the lamp will be available in September.

■ **Wobble Light**, 847/577-3720, [www.wobblelight.com](http://www.wobblelight.com).

### Hooked Up

Although more makers are including rafter hooks on their framing guns, thousands of hookless framing nailers are still in daily use, and few new finish and siding guns come with hooks. Here's a pair of solutions. Made from billet aluminum and steel, the *Super Hook* (\$10) can hold nailers, cordless drills, recip saws, caulk guns, and other tools. It attaches to your belt and folds out of the way when you don't need it. The *Sky Hook* (\$25) replaces a standard air fitting; it incorporates a swiveling hook with a shock-absorbing rubber bushing.

■ **Gunook**, 888/486-6657, [www.gunook.com](http://www.gunook.com).





### What a Snip

I still wouldn't say that working with fiber-cement siding is fun, exactly, but at least now there's an effective hand-operated cutting tool. Designed for  $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch-thick planks and panels, Malco's *Fiber Cement Hand Snip* can allegedly carve out circles as small as 2 inches in diameter and trim as little as  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from plank ends. Compound levers reduce cutting effort and heat-treated blades ensure long life, says the maker. The tool costs about \$30.

■ **Malco**, 800/596-3494, [www.malcoproducts.com](http://www.malcoproducts.com).

### Desk Jockey

Looking to get more organized on the job site? Check out the *Plan Station*. The hanging workspace is large enough to hold a set of blueprints and packs storage pockets for everything from file folders and writing implements to electronic devices. It even has a cup-holder. The whole rig folds up for transport, protecting your important business stuff while you're on the go. It sells for about \$110 (plus shipping); assembly requires a half sheet of  $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch plywood.

■ **Plan Station**, [www.planstation.biz](http://www.planstation.biz).



### Copper Cutter

Ever do your own plumbing? Superior's *UltraCut Cordless Tubing Cutter* might save you some time and effort. Powered by a NiMH battery pack, the tool can cut through  $\frac{1}{2}$ - and  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch copper tubing in about three seconds. According to the maker, it leaves minimal burr and works well in tight spots. A long, angled handle helps users reach pipes in 8-foot ceilings without a ladder. The cutter sells for \$100.

■ **Superior Tool**, 800/533-3244, [www.superiortool.com](http://www.superiortool.com).

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### Flat-Free

You'll never have to worry about getting a flat with Jeep's *Professional Contractor Wheelbarrow Model Pro FR* (\$145), thanks to a foam-filled tire designed for easy passage over wet and sandy soil. The heavy-duty 6-cubic-foot wheelbarrow also sports high-leverage steel handles, an easy-rolling wheel bushing, a boltless tub, a heavy-duty frame, and a rolled bumper meant to protect soft concrete from damage. The maker says the whole thing takes less than 10 minutes to assemble, which should give you enough time to put it together even after someone yells, "Concrete's here!"

■ **Jeep Wheelbarrows**, 914/934-9833, [www.jeepwheelbarrows.com](http://www.jeepwheelbarrows.com).



### Roll On

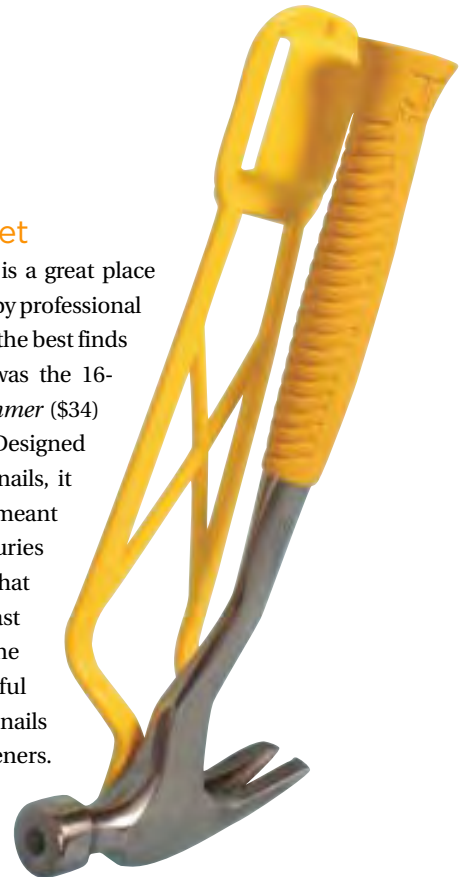
While spraying is certainly an efficient way to paint new-home interiors, spraying inside existing homes is seldom an option. However, *Speed Rollers* — says the manufacturer — can apply paint two to three times faster than conventional methods (up to 100 square feet per minute) and eliminates overspray, because the paint isn't atomized. The system uses ordinary roller covers and requires an airless sprayer that delivers at least 1/3 gallon per minute. Cleanup supposedly takes about 5 minutes. The 9-inch version (Model 04-2500) sells for about \$150.

■ **Trac Tool**, [www.speedrollers.com](http://www.speedrollers.com).

### Magnetic Mallet

The Hardware Show is a great place to see tools invented by professional tradespeople. One of the best finds at this year's show was the 16-ounce *Magnetic Hammer* (\$34) from JC Hammer. Designed for roofing and cap nails, it has an offset handle meant to reduce hand injuries and a magnetic face that holds the nail for fast one-handed starts. The magnet is also useful for pulling individual nails from a fistful of fasteners. The company makes a unique hammer holder, too: The Easy Holder (which comes with the hammer for an extra \$4) keeps the handle upright for fast grabs. It works with the company's entire line of magnetic, conventional, and roofing hammers.

■ **JC Hammer**, 877/760-0262, [www.jchammer.com](http://www.jchammer.com).

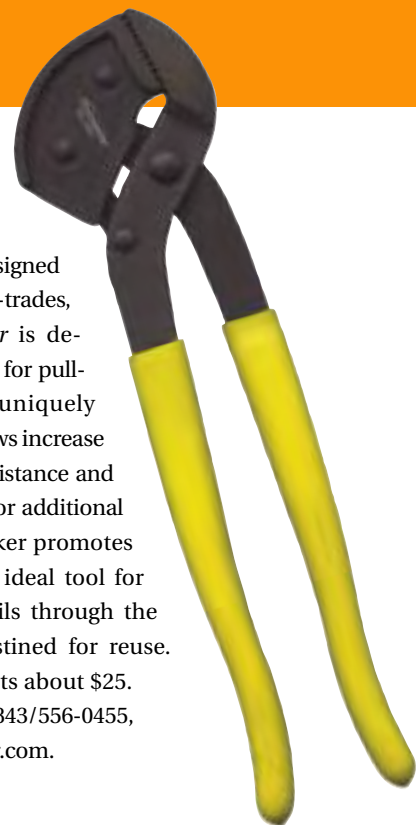




### Even Finish

Among the many headaches that pro painters have to deal with are “shiners” — no, not black eyes, but the noticeable changes in sheen that occur when paint is applied over caulk and sealants. According to its manufacturer, *Infinity* is the first paintable acrylic sealant to solve the shiner problem. The product allegedly won’t pick up dirt and provides superior durability, adhesion, and elasticity. Since it’s meant to be painted, *Infinity* comes only in white. It sells for \$5 per tube.

■ **GE Sealants and Adhesives**, 866/275-4372, [www.gesealants.com](http://www.gesealants.com).



### Get a Grip

Most pliers are designed to be jacks-of-all-trades, but the *Extractor* is designed exclusively for pulling nails. Its uniquely shaped parallel jaws increase their grip with resistance and act as a fulcrum for additional leverage. The maker promotes the pliers as the ideal tool for pulling finish nails through the back of trim destined for reuse. The *Extractor* costs about \$25.

■ **Jefferson Tool**, 843/556-0455, [www.nailextractor.com](http://www.nailextractor.com).



### Stay Sharp

The *Striker* mechanical carpenter’s pencil is one of those products you can’t believe somebody didn’t think of sooner. At least that’s what all my nonconstruction friends say when I show it to them. It contains what the manufacturer calls Dura Lead, which is 18 percent thicker than the lead found in the lumberyard’s free pencils. A *Striker* pencil with five extra pieces of leads sells for approximately \$4.

■ **Biss Product Development**, 704/528-7818, [www.striker1.com](http://www.striker1.com).



### Bar Keep

A full-size flat bar ranks among a remodeler’s most useful tools, but since it’s too big for a toolbelt, keeping it within arm’s length is a challenge. Replacement window installer Bill Flynn has come up with just the solution: the *FlynnSter Pry Bar Holder*. You can hang the plastic holster from your belt or mount it on a bench, wall, or stepladder. It costs \$9 plus \$5 shipping and handling.

■ **FlynnCo Products**, [www.flynncoproductllc.com](http://www.flynncoproductllc.com).

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### Smaller Toolbelts

Not every construction project calls for a super-size leather framer's rig. If you routinely work on handyman projects — or if you have back problems — Toolster's toolbelts may be just the ticket. According to the company, the form-fitting neoprene belts won't spill your tools and often eliminate the need for back support. Products range from the *Mini Stealth* (\$50) — allegedly designed as a covert tool rig for the armed forces — to the *Toolster Pro* (shown; \$40), touted as the best bet for “indoor carpenters.” The belts are not intended for framing.

■ **Toolster Belts**, 800/211-5416, [www.toolsterbelts.com](http://www.toolsterbelts.com).

### Wood Goo

Anyone who's used two-part repair epoxy to fix rotted or damaged millwork knows the stuff is a bear to work with — plus the smell can be overpowering, especially indoors. A promising alternative is *PL FIX*, a two-part polyurethane wood repair kit. Its color and workability mimic that of white pine, it doesn't stink, and it purportedly dries in about four hours. The kit costs \$12 and makes about 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> cups — 315 grams — of material.

■ **Henkel**, 800/321-3578, [www.stickwithpl.com](http://www.stickwithpl.com).



### Cable Champ

Perhaps you've mastered the art of driving cable staples, but I'll bet there's at least one person on your crew who hasn't. With a *T72 Wire and Cable Staple Gun*, you can make securing Romex easier and prevent cable damage caused by errant hammer blows. The rather ordinary-looking staple gun shoots insulated staples for 12/2 and 14/2 nonmetallic sheathed cable. A removable guide centers the stapler over smaller cables. The gun costs about \$40; a box of 300 fasteners costs \$6. The T72 should be available by August.

■ **Arrow Fastener**, 201/843-6900, [www.arrowfastener.com](http://www.arrowfastener.com).