The Men’s Shed is an international phenomenon with thousands of clubs worldwide. We answer men’s innate need for activity. A Men’s Shed is a club, mainly for older guys. We have tools and materials for pursuing our interests and passions, for learning something new, sharing skills, making stuff and tinkering. We share a pot of coffee in a friendly atmosphere. In the end, we make friends and discuss troubling health issues. The key to our popularity is best expressed in our motto:

men don’t talk face to face, we talk

**shoulder to shoulder**

[USMensSheds.org](http://USMensSheds.org)
RUSTON MEN’S SHED, Ruston, Louisiana
Beulah Laster

Good Morning Fellow Shedders! I was asked to write a little about our Shed - just one year old on November 3. This has been such a marvelous journey for me as a woman starting a Shed.

How did this start? My daughter worked as a counselor for a court-mandated treatment center for drug and alcohol abuse. One day she said to me, “I wish I had something for my guys to do. I’ve got the women talking while they knit, but I wish I had some Lego’s for the guys.” I thought I could solve that, so I ordered four boxes of Legos. When I asked my daughter how it was working she said “Oh, mama they are building whole cities and they are talking.”

About that same time I read an article in The Guardian about the Men’s Sheds starting in England. It really got my attention because I had lived in England for eight years. I showed the article to my brother and he said “Now, Sister, if you show that to the Mayor he will want you to head it up.” I told him that wasn’t exactly what I had in mind and I would have to pray a lot more about it, but the idea stuck in my mind and wouldn’t let go so off I went to talk to Mayor Walker. Sure enough he asked me to head it up and I said ok. The hill I climbed to open a Shed was very steep and hard. I had no money and my first open meeting attracted only a few people. I formed a board. I needed a building!

Although the City had buildings, they were out in an area that was not so safe. I drove all over town many days looking for a building. In the end I stopped by our local community college. I asked Doug Postel if I could possibly use part of the building where they teach welding. He said “No” and then said “I have an idea. Let’s go.” We rushed across campus and he opened the door of a very large old building where they once taught carpentry. I looked up and saw all of the electrical fittings hanging down and knew I had found us a home. I told Doug, “If you could see my heart, it is flying around this room with wings on it”.

Not only did I find a place; we had it given with rent, utilities and insurance paid for us. What a perfect place for us. We have a Gathering Room, a small office, a huge carpentry shop, a side space that we are using for crafts and just completed toilets. Things have come to us in abundance.

At the very beginning a man called me. He had planned on having a shop when he retired but had become very ill. He said he had been reading about me and he had a 10’ x 12’ garage full of tools still in their boxes he would like to give to me if I could use them. I thanked him. In the end the tools he gave us came to around $28,000. What a fabulous start. More gifts started coming when folks believed that we were here to stay. Recently we were awarded a $10,000 grant to install toilets. They ask on the application how we would know if our grant was a success. I wrote, “When I do not have to go out on a gravel parking lot and use a Port-a-John.”

We have completed many community projects and at the same time members have completed their own projects. Check out some of our work on the next page.

We are celebrating our first year with an open house on November 9th. We only have two main rules. We do not talk about religion or politics. It is a very friendly and happy place.
RUSTON MEN’S SHEDDERS AT WORK

CORNHOLE BOARD GROUP PROJECT

RONNIE AND JOHN WORKING ON A CORNHOLE BOARD

JOHN AND DEAN TAKE A BREAK AT THE PEACH FESTIVAL
ELGIN AREA MEN’S SHED, Elgin, Illinois

Gary Smith

It is said that you make your own luck. In this case it is true. We created our group, the Elgin Area Men’s Shed in January, 2018. After our press release ran in a local newspaper we quickly had six or seven members. Then a resident read the article and called offering a basement workshop full of tools. The catch was that they were free if we could get them out of her basement. There were two tablesaws, a wood lathe, two planers, a dust collector, a shaper and a bunch of hand tools and accessories.

The larger tools are contractor professional grade. Every saw, shaper, large vise and planer weighed up to 300 pounds. We thought about hiring movers but that would have drained our bank bone dry. We decided to move them ourselves. One of our members hired his young and healthy grandsons, and with a great deal of optimism we took almost every tool apart into pieces that could be carried.

We put everything into donated storage space until recently when our first Shed was donated as well. We slightly more MATURE Shed members brought some of the equipment to our new shop. With luck we will heal quickly with heating pads and a couple of gallons of Bengay. We’ll sit in our lounge chairs and brag about how robust we still are.

MAKING LEOPOLD BENCHES FOR THE GIRL SCOUTS

ADMIRING OUR NEW TOOLS
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A USMSA DIRECTOR
Mark Winston, USMSA Board

My typical day begins with coffee in hand, catching up on the news that occurred since retiring last evening. Next hour or so is usually concerned with returning emails, setting up conference calls and double checking the schedule, making sure nothing will be missed for today. Depending on the day, it is now between 7 and 9am; just now it is 8am. Time to get to the gym.

First call of the day is at 10 with a group from Tennessee who are looking to start sheds there. They are enthusiastic and sincere. Changing people’s lives for the better is the focus. It is agreed they will communicate often, with us acting as consultant coaches along the way - 40 minutes. Now it’s time to write up a brief of the call, check texts and emails.

Two of our directors called. We discussed the next newsletter along with our mission/vision statement. Yes, I have to write another article for the newsletter. A request made by our editor. We are all looking forward to the working group session tomorrow. We will have the new constitution finished, (we hope) and ready for a vote at our next board meeting.

It’s 12:45 and the next call scheduled is with a shed leader from Illinois at 1:00pm. The call went very well. We discussed mutual cooperation regionally as well as nationally for the movement. The focus regionally will be to start a cluster of sheds in and around the area this leader’s Shed is located. The plans will be memorialized so other Shed leaders may duplicate or not, depending on what was successful and what wasn’t. 52 minutes. Now write up the brief of the call, check emails and texts.

It’s now 2:19pm; time to get lunch before the working group begins at 3 today.

It’s now 4:12pm. The working group went well. We discussed mutual work being done by us with the help of AMSA (Australia). They have been a terrific help, coach and mentor to the fledgling USMSA since the beginning, along with the likes of John Evoy, Mike Jenn, Doug Mackey and Barry Golding. We also discussed beginning to modify our by-laws as we have just done with the constitution. These are very demanding and time consuming undertakings, made especially so because we are thousands of miles and many hours apart. There is a six hour time difference from one end of the directors to the other. Don’t even ask what it is between us and Australia. We also reviewed where we are with our outreach program. Time to check emails and texts. If it’s Wednesday, there is a board meeting at 6pm pacific time, after which it is time to check all forms of communication again and get ready for tomorrow. 7:15-7:30pm.

The reason I do this most days is simple. I’m committed to seeing the Men’s Sheds in the USA thrive.
PORTLAND MEN’S SHED, Portland, Oregon

WE’VE TEAMED UP WITH THE PORTLAND/METRO CHAPTER OF SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE TO BUILD BUNK BEDS FOR KIDS WHO OTHERWISE WOULD BE SLEEPING ON THE FLOOR

TALK ABOUT TEAMWORK – AND WHAT A LIVELY, BUSY, FUN-FILLED TIME WE’RE HAVING!

HAPPY KIDS WITH A BED OF THEIR VERY OWN
OUR RANDY WONG, A RENOWNED PLASTIC SURGEON, TURNS BOWLS AND MENTORS MEMBERS. ON SATURDAY AFTERNOONS HE TEACHES TWO DOZEN FELLOW SHEDDERS TAI CHI TO IMPROVE MIND AND BODY.

BOB FINISHING A FLAT-BED TRUCK HE BUILT FOR HIS GRANDSON - ALL FROM SCRAP LUMBER

A TEACHER REQUESTED 3 PICNIC TABLES! WE PLANED, FILLED, SANDED AND PAINTED CONSTRUCTION GRADE LUMBER, THEN ASSEMBLED AND DELIVERED THE TABLES. THE CHILDREN LOVE THEIR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM!

HAWAII KAI MEN’S SHED, Honolulu, Hawaii

FOLLOWING HAWAIIAN TRADITION, OUR NEW MEN’S SHED WAS OPENED WITH A BLESSING CEREMONY IN THE HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE COMPLETE WITH MAILE LEIS, ANCIENT WATERS, TI LEAVES, AND A CHANT. SHOWN HERE IS KAHU KEKOA, KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOL CHAPLAIN, PRESIDING. THE CEREMONY WAS FOLLOWED BY - WHAT ELSE? - A SIZZLE.
We just celebrated our first anniversary. During the past year we’ve had a chance to get to know each other and learn more about our interests. While most of our activities and events take place at the North County Senior Center, we do lots of things ‘off campus’. This includes a behind the scenes tour of the Palm Beach County Zoo, a visit to the Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience and a trip to the Piper Aircraft factory.

During a roundtable discussion we learned that many of our members are current or former pilots. Shedder Roger Hork inquired into touring the Piper Aircraft manufacturing facility at Vero Beach.

Piper began making general aviation aircraft in 1927. Over time it has had several ownership changes and since 2009 it has been owned by the government of Brunei. Today, Piper is one of only three US manufacturers of general aviation aircraft. All aircraft models for both domestic and export are produced in Vero Beach.

Roger was able to arrange for a tour in early October. Because of space limitations, only ten Shed members were allowed to attend. Carpooling arrangements were worked out and the group met up at CJ Cannon’s restaurant which is located at the Vero Beach Airport.

Following lunch, representatives of Piper took the group on a tour to see the various phases of how the planes are made. One surprise was that we learned that Piper does not rely heavily on robotic manufacturing but does rely on a significant amount of hand finishing. Seems that everyone enjoyed the tour and we are all looking forward to many more exciting activities and events at the Shed and in our local community…

…and deep-sea fishing

Recently several of our members ventured out on a deep sea fishing trip in the Atlantic Ocean. One of our members, Frank Panas is an avid fisherman and he made all the arrangements for us to take out the charter boat “Country Club.” We left the Castaway Marina in the Jupiter Inlet about 7 am and were back by noon.

The day was beautiful and the seas were calm despite the fact that Hurricane Dorian had passed us by only a few days before. The captain and the crew were great and everybody caught something including several large king fish, a mutton snapper and several sand sharks. A large Hammer head shark also circled the boat several times. More fishing trips are in our future!
GRAND TRAVERSE MEN’S SHED, Traverse City, Michigan

LEARNING TO SHARPEN A CIRCULAR BLADE

WE’RE REPLACING THE OLD WITH THE NEW

ROSEVILLE MEN’S SHED, Roseville, Minnesota

WE ASSEMBLED THIS PICNIC TABLE FOR THE STUDENTS AND STAFF IN THE ROSEVILLE ADULT LEARNING CENTER. JACK ROACH APPLIES STAIN.
As you see, US Men’s Sheds are really taking off. We’ll keep you up-to-date with quarterly newsletters. Please send articles and photos for the next newsletter to Glenn Sears at gsears@stanfordalumni.org

REGARDING PHOTOS
"A picture is worth a thousand words" is true only if the picture tells a story. Send action photos with eyes on the activity in progress rather than on the camera. Photos of comradery and group effort are especially interesting!

Glenn and Mary Sears, Editors