

Rural lots approved From litigator to woodworker

The consortium that owns the recently approved Monckton development on Acton's eastern outskirts has put the eight lots on the east side of the Fourth Line, north of Highway 7 on the market. Each of the rural lots will be sold separately for custom homes. Both Town council and Halton Region recently gave final approval for the development that includes lots between 1.3 and 2 acres in size. Neighbours' concerns that eight additional wells might effect the quantity and quality of their water will be addressed through a monitoring program, paid for by the developer.

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Hendrik Varju's passion for wood is more than just the name of his fledging furniture-making business outside Acton. Varju, 28, says "Passion For Wood" describes both himself and his clients, who appreciate fine workmanship and superior service.

Varju, 28, shocked his parents and some friends a little over a year-and-a-half ago when he abruptly quit a promising career as a Toronto litigation lawyer to learn to be a woodworker.

"I was dealing with other lawyers who are often trained to be very aggressive, even nasty, even unethical and you encounter judges who sometimes fall into a lot of those categories as well," Varju said, explaining why he left the rat race of the courtroom.

"I totally lost faith in the whole (legal) system and I didn't like living with hostility and aggression and fighting," Varju said, adding "his wife decided to quit practising law just before he did."

Varju said that when he was a toddler his dad, an immigrant house painter, told him that he wouldn't have to work with his hands if he became a lawyer and that was always the plan. Today, Varju is happy that he can work with his brain and his hands.

"My parents don't even know how much I have to work with my brain to do this

kind of high-quality, fine work. It's takes a lot of planning and even science," Varju said. He started making projects with very few tools in the kitchen of his Toronto apartment and when he quit the law he moved into his in-laws, planning to apprentice with a woodworker. That plan fell through so Varju taught himself and three months ago moved to this area and opened the business in his home.

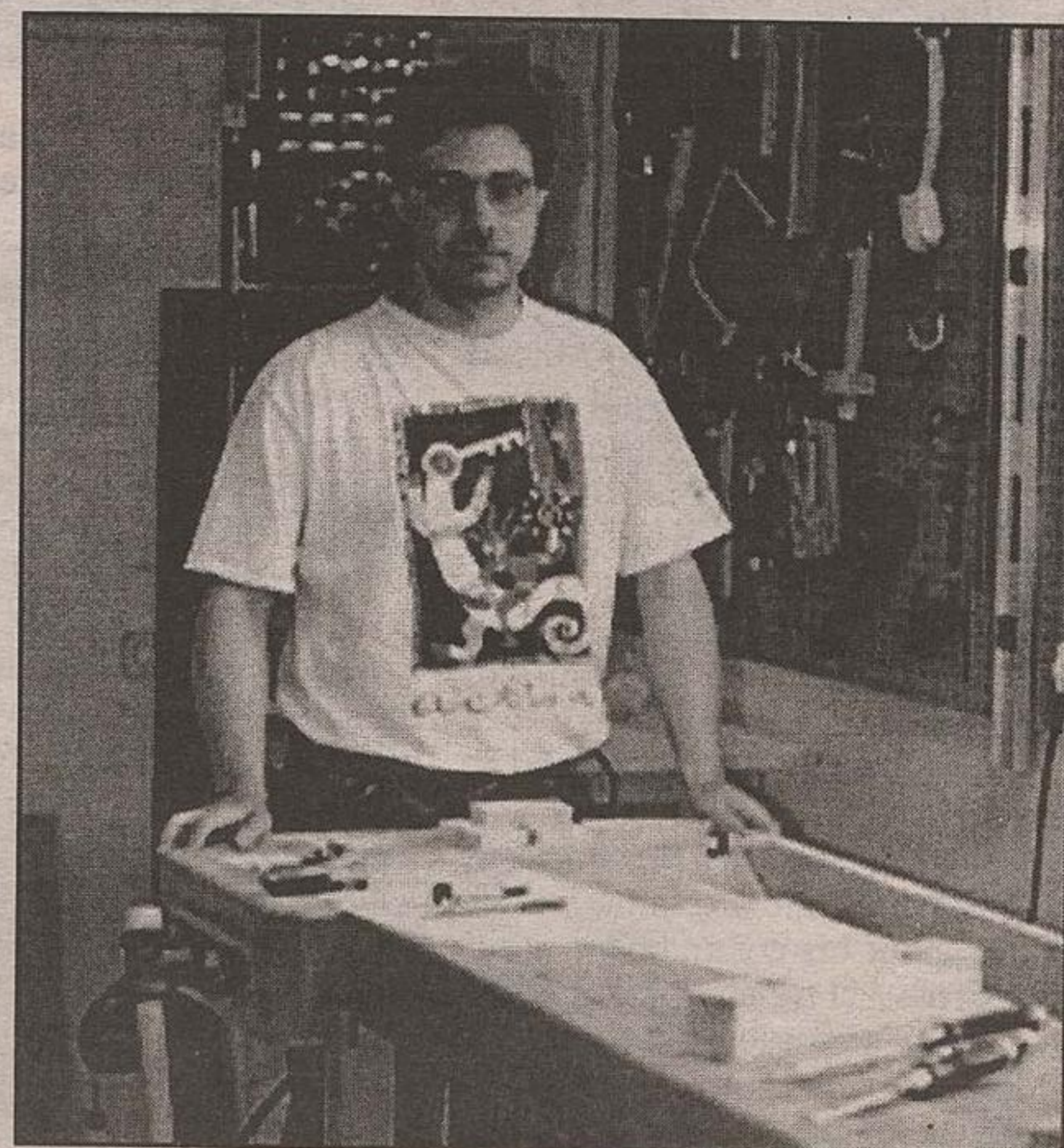
Most of his work to date has been custom pieces - a headboard, CD cabinet, blanket boxes and kitchen table - and in his carefully laid out workshop an aquarium stand is taking shape. One law Varju still worried about is the law of nature concerning the movement of wood in reaction to humidity.

All of his top grade wood supply and works in progress are stored in a humidity controlled environment so the finished piece won't ever crack or bow. For finishes Varju uses dyes instead of stains because they add a more uniform colour to wood with richer and more vibrant colours. After curing, Varju hand rubs the piece using special oil and tries to stay away from lacquers commonly used with mass-produced furniture.

Ever on the lookout for new markets, Varju created a display cabinet for ornamental eggs after reading an article in *The New Tanner* about two local women who taught psyanky- the Ukrainian art of egg decorating. Varju traded a cabinet for some decorated eggs and the women hand out his business cards when people ask about the cabinet at craft shows.

Varju hopes to stock local craft stores with some of his smaller pieces. Plans to teach woodworking classes are also in the works.

Passion For Wood can be reached at 853-2027.



Hendrik Varju poses in his rural woodworking shop with one of his first projects - a state of the art workbench. - Frances Niblock photo

Coins stolen in rural break-in

Between April 30 and May 8 someone broke into a house on Town Line Road and stole \$80 in Canadian coins and \$45 in U.S. coins from the master bedroom of the house. The owners each thought that the other had taken some coins and didn't realize that there had been a theft until they confronted one another. The homeowners told police that they had found the drawer where the money was kept open on one occasion but didn't think anything of it at the time.

Nothing else from the home was taken and there was no sign of forced entry. Police have no witnesses or suspects.

Booth battered

Between midnight and 6 a.m. on Sunday an unknown person smashed an 8.5' x 3.5' tinted window panel of a Bell telephone booth in front of Acton Town Milk at 91 Main Street North. Damage is estimated at \$100.

KFC fire

A grease fire in a deep fryer at Acton's Kentucky Fired Chicken outlet had been extinguished by the time fire fighters got to the scene on Saturday at 10:24 a.m. There were no injuries and no damage.

Construction causes delays

It will be at least three weeks before Wallace Street will again be a quick way for motorists to avoid driving through downtown Acton.

As a result of the housing development in the area, Wallace Street is being constructed to urban standards - curbs and gutters - from Main Street North to Commerce Crescent. The road is open only to through traffic.

Planning is also underway to reconstruct Main Street North and the former Highway 25 from the rail tracks north to Wellington County Road 124 (formerly Highway 24).

In a joint project the Town, Region and Wellington County will pulverize the existing road pavement, blend it with new asphalt and do minor drainage and shoulder work.

The Town's portion of the project is a short stretch from the tracks north to the urban limit at the BT plant and is budgeted at \$50,000. Halton Region's \$200,000 project continues from that point northerly for 1.6 kilometres to 32 Side Road and Wellington's project continues north to County Road 124.

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