



**American Hardwoods™**

## Hackberry Goes to the Fair



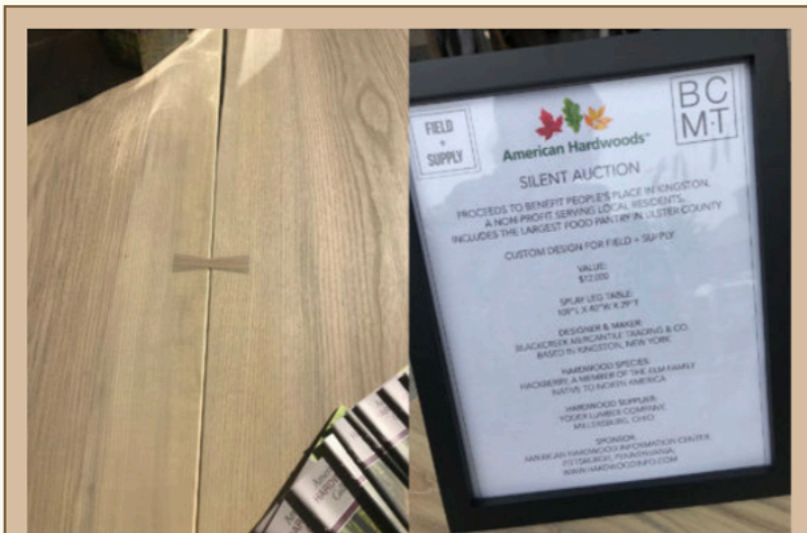
Josh Vogel of Black Creek Mercantile & Trading Co. crafted a table from slabs of hackberry supplied by Yoder Lumber Company of Millersburg, Ohio.

Each fall I look forward to attending Field & Supply, a modern interpretation of a traditional arts and crafts fair held annually at the Hutton Brickyards in Kingston, New York. This year's event, which took place over Columbus Day weekend, was of special importance to the American Hardwood Information Center who partnered with Josh Vogel of Black Creek Mercantile & Trading Co., a Kingston-based furniture and accessory maker, to create a dining table that was auctioned off during the fair to raise funds for People's Place, a local thrift store and the largest food pantry in the county.



Vogel's splay-leg hackberry table awaiting silent-auction bids at the entrance to the main pavilion at Field & Supply. Photograph by Scott Rudd.

"Partnering with Josh was especially rewarding because he looked beyond the classic species like oak, walnut, cherry, or maple and settled on hackberry, a less-familiar American hardwood that belongs to the elm family," says AHIC's Linda Jovanovich. Ohio-based Yoder Lumber Company supplied the hackberry, named for its small purple, cherrylike fruits that ripen in the fall and were a rich source of calories and protein for Native Americans. "One of the things that interests me most about design is investigating new and different materials, or elevating common materials by using them in a different way," says Vogel. "What about hackberry? Have you even heard of it? Given the opportunity, why not try something new?"



Details like Vogel's use of butterfly joints to secure the hackberry planks—some with natural edges—insured a successful silent auction.

The nine-foot-long, splay-leg table Vogel designed and built showed hackberry to be a warm, characterful material. By using a non-toxic hand-rubbed linseed oil finish, he allowed the wood's creamy-white color and fine, uniform grain—somewhat reminiscent of white ash—to shine through. As it sat awaiting silent-auction bids in the afternoon sun at Field & Supply, the whole piece took on a glow that attracted considerable interest from fairgoers. Up close, they were able to examine Vogel's superb craftsmanship, which included the deft use of butterfly joints to bind together the tabletop planks, some of which were left with natural edges. The lucky top bidder acquired a beautifully proportioned, elegantly detailed dining table that will no doubt become a family heirloom.

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