

The Kramer Letter

News and information for the friends of Kramer's Best

Issue Number Five
FALL/WINTER 2009

We always have something to say...

We have never committed to exactly how often we would be sending out *The Kramer Letter* — we've used "as possible" to describe our schedule. However, it has been almost a year since the last issue, and we really intended to do better than that.

A recently-received newsletter stated that it was produced "...when we have something to say." That's not us. We may have a problem finding time to get it all put into newsletter form, but we always have something to say — and stories to share — about *Kramer's Best*.

This issue features more comments and photos from our continuously very satisfied customers. Life is good when you hear regularly from folks who appreciate your product and your efforts.

A testimonial...

"I first discovered your product at the River Market Antique Mall in Kansas City. They have a large display at the counter and each time I went in there I'd look at it, then talk myself out of it due to the cost. So, after wasting a great deal of time, money, and energy on other products, I broke down and purchased an 8-oz. bottle. WOW!

"I own a 100-year-old home filled with antiques — most of which were purchased at very low prices from estate sales and auctions and not always in the best of shape. Most of my pieces have been given the 'Kramer' treatment and are now museum quality. The next project is the woodwork in my 3-story house." — Ottawa, KS

Preserving the past...

PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HARRISON HOME



Indianapolis, Indiana

This great house was built by Benjamin Harrison in 1874 and, except for his years in the US Senate and serving as our 23rd President, it served as his home until his death in 1901.

The 10,000-square-foot home, with 16 rooms, three stories and a basement was finished in one year at a cost of \$29,000. More history and information about the home's activities is available on the President Benjamin Harrison Web Site (www.pbhh.org) and a "virtual tour" can be viewed at: www.venueviews.com/harrison/10.html

EACH report of our *Kramer's Best Antique Improver* playing a part in restoration of what John Kramer refers to as a piece of our "tangible historic record", is gratifying to us.

Whether your restored antique is a treasured baby cradle made by great-grandpa from a tree on the "home place," or a piece you picked up at a flea market, it is significant — it is proof to John that his product is fulfilling the purpose he intended.

And, when we hear from museums and other historic sites and collections about their successful use of the product, it is our most satisfying confirmation.

We have, for a few years, been in contact with Jennifer Capps, curator at the President Benjamin Harrison home in Indianapolis, IN, as they used *Antique Improver* on various projects. She recently sent these photos of some of their latest "Kramerizing" successes.

We are definitely proud of the contribution our product has made toward the preservation of this significant piece of our nation's history.



In the President's bedroom, wall-to-wall carpet was removed, the floor cleaned of dirt, and Kramer's Best Antique Improver was applied.



Antique Improver was used to repair moisture damage of unknown origin present on this bedroom door.



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**More 'Good Words'
from our files...**

"I found this product thru a local re-sale store where I shop, sell, and is owned by a family friend. I bought it today, used it only an hour ago on a 65-yr-old floor that had seen better days. I didn't want the mess of sanding and refinishing and couldn't justify the expense. I am totally amazed at the results in only a few minutes.

"I had to stop to place my order and brag on the quality

"I'm beyond words at the fantastic results." and effectiveness! It's simply a miracle — saved me countless

hours of work, money, and time — which we all have limited amounts of. You are a genius — and for those that own older homes like I do — and bought them as fixer-uppers, this is the ideal product. I also used it on one cabinet door and drawer in my kitchen. I'm beyond words at the fantastic results. I can't wait to tell my friends. This is why I'd like to be a dealer . . .

"Thank you for eliminating the frustration I've had over these floors for the past 5 years!" — P.F., Amarillo, TX

"I am so glad I found your product. I have a nearly 100-year-old Steinway baby grand

The piano enjoyed it's 'spa treatment'... piano. It was my grandmother's. I just used your product on it and it is saying 'thank you'. I live in Central Oregon where it is very dry. The piano enjoyed it's 'spa treatment' and the mahogany finish already looks so much better after just one application.

I have read your instructions and I will 'feed it' again in two weeks time. . . . Now that I have found it, I will never run out again and the piano, as well as my other antique pieces, will continue to improve." — J.C.S. Oregon

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PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HARRISON HOME *(continued)*



After so many years of use, the floor of the upstairs hallway could not be saved. It was replaced with new wood, stained, *Antique Improver* was applied and a period-style runner completed the restoration.



**Chuckwagons and more...
Western Artifacts
Benefit from Kramer's**



The 'Spear-O' Chuckwagon (see the brand)

Since the crew at the Big Horn County Museum in Hardin, Montana, first discovered our *Antique Improver* in 2004, they have been avid "Kramerizers."

The museum staff, plus many volunteers, care for this 22-acre site that includes 3 exhibit buildings, plus 24 historic structures furnished with vintage artifacts. Each spring cleaning includes an application of *Antique Improver* on the wood pieces.

The "Spear-O" chuckwagon, pictured above, made its debut at this past Fall's "Will James Gathering". The staff "Kramerized" all of the food service area and amazingly-complete food storage compartments of this great artifact, and intend to go over the entire wagon as time permits.

For more information about the museum, go to the museum web site, www.bighorncountymuseum.org. There are many of photos of museum buildings and grounds and even on the web site you get caught up in the great history of this historic Custer-country area. A visit would be even better. It's another place we are proud that our product makes a contribution.

Not the first chuckwagon!

We've heard of use of our product on chuckwagons before. These photos show a wagon that a *Kramer's* dealer was transporting back to their Texas home after purchase in a northern state. They stopped off at John's shop to show us their "find" and let us do a little test.

Collectors of antique farm equipment are also *Kramer's* fans — it's good on the metal as well as the wood.



The natural materials of *Antique Improver* restore life and color to old paint as well as the wood.

"We don't normally send emails expressing our appreciation for items purchased via the internet. However, we could not let your company go without thanks not only for its great products, but also for its great customer service. We were "Kramerized" years ago and have bought your products through various dealers

Thanks for the great customer service!

throughout the years. We placed our first on-line order Sunday, February 15, 2009, and were amazed at how quickly the order was filled and delivered. Here it is two days later and we have our order in hand. Thanks for the great customer service!

"Also, a big thank you for sending the products with environmentally-friendly packaging. We will be able to take all packing materials to our local recycling center.

"We have always been impressed with your products and add to that your fantastic customer service!" — M&C T

"I plan to use your product to restore antique hand saw handles, preserving the original finish and therefore

...antique hand saw handles, preserving the original finish and therefore their historical value...

completely rehabilitated by Mark of Techno Primitives, a saw sharpening and restoration service in La Crosse, WI. He uses your product to restore the beech and apple wood handles of antique saws, preserving the original finish while providing protection." [www.technoprimitives.com] — see the "Dry Restore Your Handle" page. — PY

Our customers tell it best!

'Letters With Pictures' Page Now on Our Web Site

Yes, the long-promised page featuring some of the photos we have received from our customers is now available on our Web Site. Be sure to take a look — and also send us photos of your projects. A glimpse at some of those included are shown below. Go to www.kramerize.com/letter_picts.htm to see the complete story of these and more.



Military Surplus Rifle



Redwood Picnic Table Set



Philco Radio



1957 Cushman Eagle



Breakfast Table

We will be adding to this page and would like to include your project!

Retail Shipping Rate Increase Takes Effect January 1, 2010

Yes, a price increase. We are hoping to maintain our product pricing for a time yet, but the current retail shipping and handling rate just isn't covering our costs. Effective January 1, 2010, the retail S&H rate will increase from \$7.50 to \$10.50 (per order).

Shipping has always been a challenge for us. Since our products (except for the *Wood Food Oyl*) are classified as "flammable" we must ship within ORM-D requirements. Not only are ORM-D rates higher, but required packing materials and methods are more costly.

Our current \$7.50 per-package charge has been in effect since 2006. There have, of course, been increases from our shipper, UPS, and there will undoubtedly be another coming with the new year.

Our billing records show us that the cost to ship one 8-ounce bottle ranges from \$7.69 (Illinois) to \$10.57 (Pennsylvania). Even shipped locally the charge for the same package was \$6.47.

...S&H rate will increase from \$7.50 to \$10.50 (per order)

Obviously our current \$7.50 per-package rate doesn't cover shipping cost — let alone materials and labor required to prepare each package (the "handling" part). We have no choice but to raise the price.

The only other change at this time will be to the "Internet Special" offered on our Web Site. That offer of "Free Shipping on Orders of \$75 or Over," will change to ". . . \$100 or Over." (Keep in mind that if you want to take advantage of this offer and do not have Internet access, just mention the offer when you phone or mail your order and we will honor it.)

There is still time until the end of the year to order at the present rate, and we encourage you to stock up and to always take advantage of the "per order" part of our pricing structure by combining your order with friends.

We appreciate your understanding, and we do appreciate your business.



THE WAY IT WAS



WHEN John Kramer bottled his first *Kramer's Best Antique Improver* 22 years ago, the Label was his creation of hand lettering plus type-writer type. The "Instructions" consisted of an 8" x 4" sheet folded into a tag consisting of eight 2" panels.

There have been many changes to the labeling and to the instruction book over the years, but the product in the bottle has not — and will not — change.



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Notes from The Kramer Place...

We're goin' fishin'! . . . Well, maybe not fishing exactly, but we've decided it is time we scheduled in some regular vacation time. In the past 20 years, aside from occasional weekend jaunts, our only vacation — both of us at the same time — was in 2005 when we abandoned phones and duties during the week between Christmas and New Year's.

Whenever trips on business to maintain antique mall booths, to antique shows, etc., were necessary, we have always made sure one of us stayed home to be available for our customers. We are going to change that. We are scheduling ourselves two regular vacations. Beginning this year, *The Kramer Company* will be CLOSED the week between Christmas and New Year's, AND the week of July 4th.

...**CLOSED the week between Christmas and New Year's AND the week of July 4th.** It isn't much, but it's a start, and judging by response we've received from those we've mentioned it to, it shouldn't be a problem. You can order on the Internet, and leave phone messages to which we will respond when we return — but no orders will ship during those times.

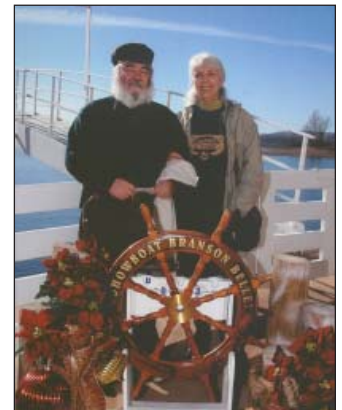
Also, keep in mind that in addition to Thanksgiving Day, UPS does not pick up from us on the following Friday. They also do not pick up on Christmas Eve day. Our standing schedule is that we ship next business day after receiving your order — what we have listed above are the exceptions.

As always, we do appreciate your business and strive to give the best service possible. We hope these changes are not a great inconvenience.

Santa Claus? . . . When we took our "after Christmas" vacation trip to Branson, Missouri in 2005, we took advantage of as many of the well-promoted attractions as we could fit in. One was the excursion and dinner show aboard the "Showboat Branson Belle."

At that time, John was sporting his longer Winter beard (that has "mysteriously" turned more white in recent years). It was a highlight of our day when, as we were in the midst of the crowd slowly moving toward the exit, a lady reached through and tapped John on the shoulder. She drew him aside to tell him that her young son had spotted him from their seat in the balcony and *knew* he was Santa Claus. The mother asked John if he would speak with the boy, which, of course, he did.

The visit not only made the boy's day, but John enjoyed the "thanks you's" undoubtedly intended for his counterpart in the red suit.



**Vacation 2005
Branson, Missouri**

KRAMER'S BEST — Products that do what you hoped the others would do!

If you are looking at the "print" version of this newsletter — black and white photos — and would like to see the photos in color, go to the "Newsletters" page on our Web Site. This issue, plus the previous two, can be seen there in color.

Customer Satisfaction — We want happy customers! Whether you purchase directly from us, or from one of our dealers, if you have any questions or concerns, CONTACT US. If you need advice about a project or use of the products, CONTACT US. We want you to use our products SUCCESSFULLY!