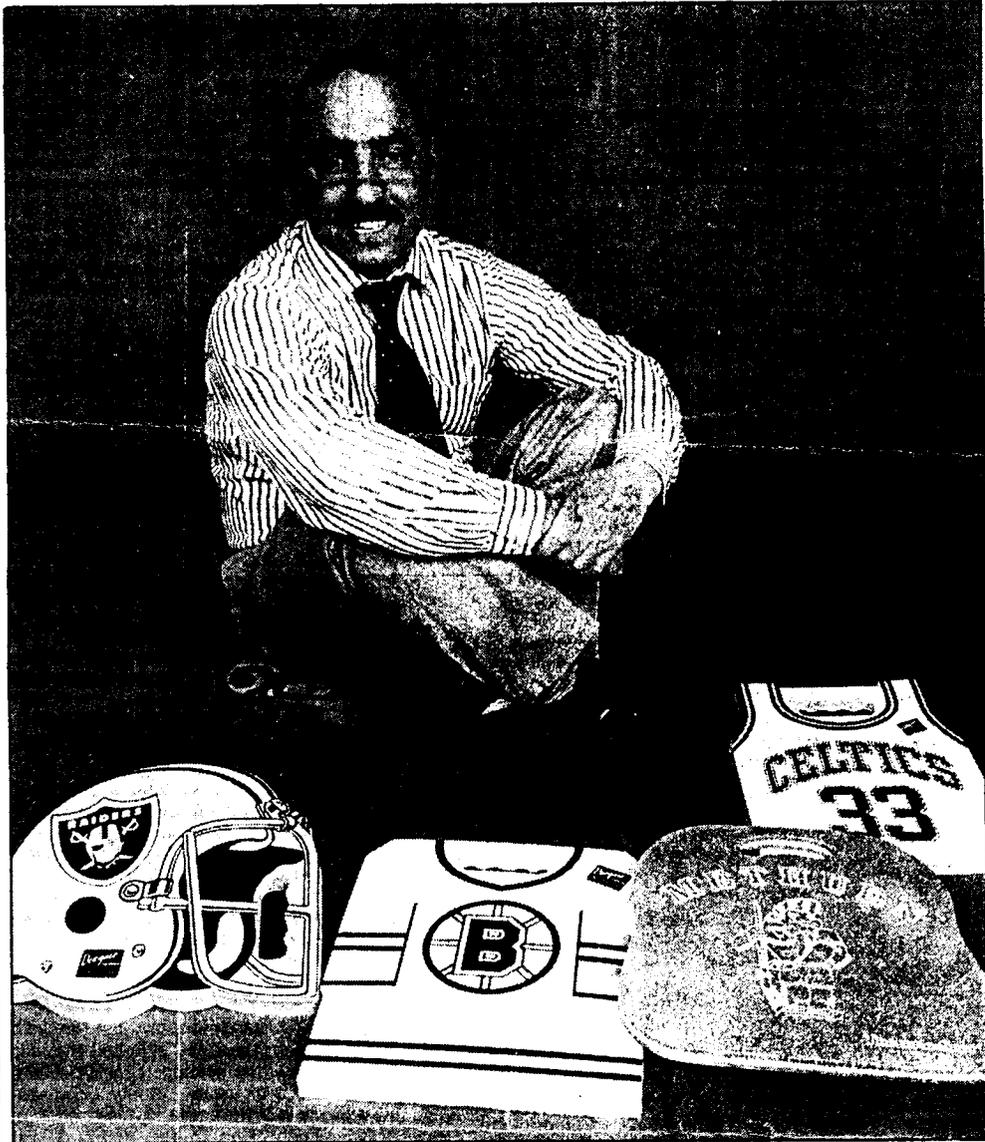


From carpenter to cushion king



Judy Emmert/Eagle-Tribune

Peter Luccisano of Methuen shows off some of the cushions he sells. He invented the seats, now called Therm-a-Seats, and sells them through his own company.

Local hunter's plight leads to a new career

♦ Peter Luccisano invented a new seat cushion because his old one was ripped. His spur-of-the-moment invention changed his life forever.

Peter Luccisano is a 39-year-old carpenter from Methuen who loves to hunt. Each year Peter and his brother, Vinnie, would leave Methuen on the Sunday before the shotgun deer season opened and spend a week deer hunting in the Berkshires.

Roger Aziz

In 1982 there was a major snowstorm the night before the shotgun season for deer opened. Because Peter and his brother plowed snow for the state during winter, they were called out for the storm. It was not until midnight before they were relieved.

The two hunters decided to leave at 4 a.m. Monday for the Berkshires. While on the phone planning their departure, Peter's brother ran through a list of items they would need. Peter had everything for the hunt but a Hot Seat used to sit on in the woods. His Hot Seat was torn and he forgot to buy another.

In desperation Peter searched for a substitute seat. He found four pieces of foam used for insulating houses when applying vinyl siding that was left over from a job. He

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glued four one-quarter inch thick pieces together and cut them into a round seat. The improvised seat worked so well his friends wanted them too. They suggested that he ought to sell them.

One day while siding a house Luccisano banged his thumb with a hammer. The swelling and pain decided his fate. At 30 years of age, Luccisano decided to try to manufacture his hunter's seat.

"If I didn't mash my thumb with the hammer while doing a siding job, I might still be in the business. I much more enjoy producing the cushions and being a part of the outdoors product scene," he said.

It took a great deal of learning before Luccisano could embark on his new adventure. First were pat-

ent lawyers who told him he could not pattern a round cushion. However, they advised him that if it was shaped differently he could possibly apply for a patent.

Peter came up with the idea to produce the cushion in the shape of a seat from a kitchen chair. A patent was granted and Peter Luccisano is now in business.

Through the years, Luccisano has had to learn the intricacies of various foam products, how to screen paint them so that the ink would not adversely affect the foam, and finally, how to market the product.

In 1985, Peter Luccisano sold his first Therm-a-Seat made of one inch thick Evazote through his company, Northeast Products. The seats were first made in Peter's shed on a part time basis. By 1988, he was producing Therm-a-Seats full time from a new shop in Methuen.

Today, Therm-a-Seats can be found in sporting shops nationwide. And to meet a growing demand, different shapes and sizes of seats have been developed. Seats are now sold from one inch to two inches thick in several foam types. Luccisano is now making stadium seats with team logos, foot cushions, tree stand seats, and hand warmers for the grips on metal compound bows.

Peter Luccisano is living proof that sometimes a sportsman's last minute emergency can turn into something positive.