



# St. Louis Woodworker's Guild

# NEWSLETTER

June 2008  
Our 24th Year

Visit us at:

//[www.stlwoodworkersguild.org](http://www.stlwoodworkersguild.org)

Number 281

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**Meeting Room,  
Mailing Address**  
Courtesy of Woodcraft



## Next Meeting

### Round Front Drawers

Guild member John DeLuca will present a program on building furniture with round front drawers. John will also discuss his techniques for furniture veneering. If you ever aspire to build furniture for family and friends, this is a program not to miss.

## Next Meeting

**Thursday 7:00 PM**

**June 19, 2008**

**Wood Craft Supply Store  
2077 Congressional Dr.  
Maryland, Heights, MO**

## Last Meeting

### Wood Sculpture Art

Larry Oliver, a wood carver from Springfield, Missouri, did a great job presenting his unique carved wood product that he produces in his shop, and markets at wood working and craft shows. Larry's primary product is carved from a solid block of wood and resembles a rope that has no end and intertwines over and under itself for one or two intertwined rotations. See picture following. He also markets similar carvings of musical treble clefs and other items.

Larry had a part interest in a lumber yard which sparked his interest in wood carving and sculpture. This interest in carving became his hobby, and now his business. When the lumber yard closed he decided to he could make a living producing a sculptured product. He set up a 10 X 12 basement shop and equipped it with the bare essentials to pro-

duce his sculptures. Keeping the shop space small makes it is more efficient and it stays much cleaner that way. Larry uses a Shop Smith pen router, that he purchased several years ago, for much of the rough out work. His basic carving tool is a dye grinder with a rotary rasp blade; See picture. It appears to be a large and cumbersome tool to use; however, he has developed a technique to hold it between his arm and hip. This method works well for him. He also uses several Dremel tools pre-loaded with different bits for the various cuts he has to make. Larry uses no clamps on the work piece. He holds the piece with one hand while he carves with the power tools in the other hand. It takes about ten minutes to rough one sculpture out. The rough-out finish work is all done with roll and sheet sand paper 80 – 100 - 180 grits. He does the final sanding with 320 – 400 – 600 grit wet or dry paper.

In the early days Larry used linseed oil with thinner to finish his sculptures. The biggest problem was it took 30 days to dry. He now uses Varithane natural oil finish. Most his sculptures are made of walnut, maple or cherry as these woods are local and plentiful. The best wood for these carvings appears to be dogwood, however, available dogwood blanks are usually too small, mostly due to the small size of dogwood trees. He mounts most of his sculptures on a block of granite or other stone remnants he obtains free from a local stone counter top company. Cutting and shaping the granite is done with a carbide blade mounted in a radio arm saw.

Larry makes several sizes of sculptures; however, the bigger ones have a necessary high price (about \$600) which limits his sales. As a result he sticks to and pushes the smaller items and sells more. Larry has invited our members, who happen to be in Springfield , Missouri to drop in and see his shop and his methods. Great job Larry! Your products and methods are well thought out, and well done; we are sure you will do well.

See pictures Page 5.

## Toys

### Toys for Hospitalized Kids

There is no report of toy deliveries this month; however, toy making is going strong for deliveries next month. We continue to receive thank-you letters and notes from the child life staff and nurses at the hospitals. They are very appreciative of what we do for them; following is a note from Cardinal Glennon.

#### **SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center**

Dear Members of the Woodworkers Guild

Your generosity (and talent) is an endless gift! Once again we thank you for thinking of our patients here at Cardinal Glennon. The kids really do love to paint these skillfully crafted wooden items. I think they just like to make a mess! And the moms and dads love that they don't have to clean it up! We have them all organized by different holidays and other things, so the patients can easily find the holiday and event related items.

Your guys and gals are wonderful!!!

Thanks again,  
Carolyn Gau CCLS

## Other News

Don't forget the Recycled Furniture Contest! Judging will be in the fall with a prize of \$100 to the winner. Rules indicate you must build a new item from one or more pieces of recycled furniture. To be eligible to win you must have pictures of the original piece or pieces of furniture, as well as the completed new project.

You should use the majority of the wood from the original piece in the new project. However, you need not use all the wood or fixtures from the original piece, and you may add additional wood or fixtures to make your project complete.

## **President's Article February, 2008**

So, we made it through our first meeting together and I think all went well. I was pondering what great words of inspiration I would share with you and what I would write about in this article. I decided to make it simple - it's about me (sort of).

I decided that one of the things that we needed throughout the guild was a little more social interaction and to get to know everyone better. This will give us more to talk about and probably lead us to a member that can help when we have a specific problem. I would like each member to do a biography about them selves, for others to read, that we will post on our website along with photos of yourself and your work. To get everyone in the mood, I thought I would do mine first, so that you would have an idea of what I had in mind. Here it goes.

My name is Scott Wunder and I have recently been appointed as the President of the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild. I own WunderWoods Custom Hardwoods, a business in which I mill, dry, plane and sell local hardwoods. I generally get the logs from tree services, friends and construction sites. I often joke that I can smell when a tree is down, which I then have to quickly retrieve.

In my operation I currently run a TimberKing horizontal bandsaw that I co-own with Matt Laposia. This is the fifth sawmill I have owned. I also have an old crane truck for moving logs that comes in very handy. With that truck I have moved a lot of logs and never had to leave one in the woods that I really wanted. I sell my finished lumber from my shop behind my house and on ebay.

Besides producing the lumber, I also use it. I originally got into milling while I still had a "real" job working as an art director at an ad agency in town. I was fresh out of college and wanted to build furniture, but the lumber was much too expensive (especially from Home Depot-I didn't know any better). I built items for the new house and then started working on commissions. Now I spend about half of my time doing woodwork for a steady supply of customers. Much of my recent work has been building custom wine cellars and that is where my woodworking focus has been.

I am married to my beautiful wife Chris that I have been with since we were 15. I am 38 now, so we have been together 23 years and married 16. Wow! We have a two-year-old daughter named Mira (short for miracle) that we finally had after 13 years of trying and hundreds of guys offering their assistance. We like to spend our free time enjoying the outdoors and Culver's.

I enjoy a few other hobbies besides woodworking. I like to fish, play hockey and I have recently started keeping bees. And, yes, they do sting-even through the gloves.

We will have more details on what you need to provide for the bio's at the next meeting.

Thanks, *Scott*

## Library Corner

### Simple Colonial Furniture

Franklin H. Gottshall

I hope to continue my trend of linking a library article with the prior month's featured speaker in this newsletter. *Simple Colonial Furniture* deals not only with a pragmatic approach to creating functional pieces of furniture, but includes simple adornments that can elevate a piece from mundane to museum quality. I hope it will prove a logical choice for this month. I'd also like to mention this book was donated to the library some time ago by Bob Colgate.

Though rather thin at 125 pages, it's jam-packed with great how-to information on constructing all sorts of colonial period furniture. Originally published in 1935, it tried to capture a renewed interest in this type of furniture during years of a depressed economy. Mr. Gottshall's intention was to provide a reference as well as textbook on American furniture design. He claims all designs are "new" - not copies - and employ principles that are closely held to the originals.

The book is separated into three parts; Part One provides a definition of *Furniture Design*. Part Two (the bulk of the book) deals strictly with *Colonial Furniture Design*. Part three is a wrap-up with instruction on *Furniture Finishing*.

*Furniture Design* stresses how furniture was borne from a simple life in colonial times. All were imbued with inherent strength that reflects a character trait typically found in those that lived a hard life. Settlers worked land that was reluctant to offer up crops and gardens. Forests were dense with large, old-growth trees defiant to both saw and axe. To survive, these folks became quite resourceful. Often-times furnishings were created from bits of scrap left from daily chores such as chopping firewood, repairing buildings, and mending fences. Even during this period, when most possessions were need-based and crafted from necessity, furnishings featured three key elements the Author defines as his "Essentials of Design". First is utility - furniture should fill a need, be comfortable, and exist in harmony with other furnishings. Second is strength - must obviously be strong, with good joinery, and employ proper adhesives for long-life. Third is beauty - of paramount importance, for a piece that meets the first two criterion is abhorred by its maker if he fails this final design element.

The year 1725 seems to mark a chronological line of demarcation for colonial furniture styles. Early pieces tend to fall under a European or Jacobean design influence, while pieces that follow are of a Georgian flair. Either style selection was simplified by the hard-working colonists, and many may not have been cognizant that they were creating furniture of a particular style.

*Colonial Furniture Design* contains many small chapters that describe completed pieces of furniture. Many are listed in this part, so I limited my selection to a sampling for description here;

- Wing Chair; constructed with a full-back (to keep drafts off a person's head and back), with scrolled side-panels and carved arms
- High-Post Four Poster Bed; with a scrolled headboard that could easily receive relief-carved motifs, and turned finials on each post
- Gate-Leg Table; uses many turned components in stretchers and legs, and has four gates that support two leafs on either side
- Colonial Mantel Clock; has carved quarter-columns, a scrolled bonnet-top, and turned urns to cap the top
- China Cabinet; uses many finials and rosettes, with carved pilaster mouldings

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Every chapter includes detailed patterns rendered within a grid and drawn to scale, along with sketches of what the end product should look like. Everything is black and white, but you still get a good feel for how ornate some of these items can be.

In *Furniture Finishing* Mr. Gottshall admits finishing is an art, and to describe in a few pages is just plain inadequate. He also speaks candidly about antiquing; i.e., **don't do it!** He believes this to be deceitful, and thinks colonial furniture should be finished as new, to echo the honesty and integrity of the maker. In the few pages that comprise this part he lists five key elements of a proper finish.

One - Prepare surfaces properly, with filing and/or sanding.

Two - Apply a suitable oil-based stain to the piece.

Three - Apply filler to open-grained woods that may be employed.

Four - Apply a protective film, either shellac or varnish.

Five - Rub-down the piece with a pumice stone.

A good furniture-maker believes finishing time should be comparable to the time allocated for initial construction.

I thought the Author sounded familiar to me. Sure enough, we have several other books already in our library by Franklin Gottshall. *How to Design & Construct Period Furniture* contains much more about furniture design, and is a great reference for not only woodworkers, but collectors, antique dealers, and even decorators. Really pegs detailed design for many periods throughout history. *Provincial Furniture Design & Construction* is all about furniture produced during our nation's early years, both sophisticated and simple. What's most surprising is this book is identical to another entitled *Making Early American and Country Furniture*. Not sure why he or his publisher decided to sell two identical works with different titles, but I surmise there was profit to be had somewhere! Anyway, we got a sort of two-for-one bargain with this copy. While these are all old editions (published back in the '30s and '40s), they prove their worth with relevance today. I hope to review these in future articles. *Simple Colonial Furniture* will be available for checkout at the next general member meeting.

### Mark Gezella - Guild Librarian



Lawerence Oliver Sculpting



Lawerence with Finished Sculpture

## **St. Louis Woodworker's Guild Membership Application**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Types of woodworking  
you enjoy \_\_\_\_\_

Amateur, Intermediate  
or Expert \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you obtain this application  
and learn about the Guild? \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this application with your check for \$25.00 for one year's dues to: St. Louis Woodworker's Guild, 2077 Congressional Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63146. You will start receiving this Newsletter, which will keep you informed of the time and place of meetings and  
other events.

St. Louis Woodworker's Guild  
2077 Congressional Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63146

