

# St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



April 2009  
Issue 290

## Our Next Meeting: Intarsia with Dan Sudkamp

Thursday April 16, 2009  
7:00 PM

Guild Member Dan Sudkamp will be giving a presentation on intarsia, or making pictures with wood. Dan has created many wonderful works of art using only the natural colors of the wood. The pieces that he will show are also sculpted to give even more depth to his work. Dan will show you all of his tricks including good sources for patterns, which are critical to a successful intarsia project. This presentation promises to be very interesting for all of our members and make sure to see Dan's raccoon.

**Meetings held at:**  
Woodcraft Supply Store  
2077 Congressional Dr.  
Maryland, Heights, MO

## At Our Last Meeting Power Tool and Shop Safety with Dan Coleman March 19th, 2009

Dan Coleman, former Industrial Arts teacher, knows how to repair, recondition, and rehab most every woodworking tool you might find in your shop. He learned most of these skills working on tools for his Graduate Assistance Program while in college. Dan Coleman is the new best friend of every guild member with an antique tool in their garage or basement.

Dan's presentation focused on two aspects of woodworking; shop safety and tuning up some of the main tools in the shop. He started off the night with a discussion of the three areas of safety we should all be aware of; Personal, Environmental, and Tool.

Your personal safety begins with your attitude. Respect your tools and know your limitations. If you are tired or out of sorts for some reason, then you should consider not using power tools for the time being. Always wear personal protective equipment, including safety glasses, ear protection, dust masks, and a close-fitting shop apron. Never wear long sleeves or dangling jewelry and keep long hair tied back or pulled up out of the way.

Environmental safety involves being aware of your surroundings. Remove clutter from your work area. Equip your work area with adequate lighting. If you have florescent lights, consider adding tube guards to them. Keep cords and wires out of the way with wire ties. Finally, make sure you have adequate ventilation when using chemicals and use dust collectors and air filters to keep the shop air as clean as possible. The adverse affects of micro-fine wood dust particles are not fully known at this point; you don't want to be a research subject!

Finally, there is tool safety, for which Dan had all kinds of advice. For starters, use the correct tool for the job. And then make sure that tool is in working order – blades are sharp, guards in place, push sticks and feather boards are handy. Replacing smaller handles with larger ones gives you greater control and leverage.

*(continued on page 4)*

Dan Coleman



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Meeting Room, Mailing Address  
Courtesy of Woodcraft

## President's Article, April 2009

### Habit 7 (of highly effective people) – Sharpen Your Saw

This month's tour of Quinn Saw got me thinking about sharpening and how important it is. For me it is especially true with saw blades. I spend a lot of time cutting wood at the sawmill with bandsaw, chainsaw and circle blades. I have found a sharp blade to be imperative. Probably all of you know this already, so I am preaching to the choir. But I wanted to add a few things that you may not know.

**A sharp bandsaw blade will overcome almost all of its other shortcomings.** Your blade may not have the proper set, may be tracking to the left or right, or have other issues that will cause crooked or wavy cuts, but once sharpened it will always improve. I can't tell you how many times I have had a blade that started out strong and cutting perfectly, only to find that the cuts quickly became wavy. I would tell myself that I must have a problem with the saw, maybe with the blade guides, because I haven't used it that long and it just couldn't be dull yet. And, though one time I did have a blade guide issue, every other time the blade was just dull. Dull and nothing else. I probably hit a rock and didn't know it. Here I was worried about the set of the teeth and it has never been the set. Now, I don't question it. If the saw isn't cutting right I put on a newly sharpened blade and all is good.

**A sharp circular blade will overcome almost all of its other shortcomings.** See a theme yet? Not long ago I owned a circle mill with a 48" bottom blade and a 30" top blade. These big blades are set at a slight angle to the feed of the log so that the trailing side of the blade is out from the cut just a bit. The saw guide on the front would keep the blade in the right place, but only if the saw was sharp. If it wasn't sharp, the blade would dig in, cut crooked, warm up and cut more crooked until finally it became a big salad bowl. With a sharp blade the tolerances of the setup were much less critical. As long as it was sharp it would just cut... and cut... and cut.

**A sharp chainsaw blade makes life worth living.** There is nothing better than a chainsaw that cuts fast. It makes the job enjoyable and a lot less like work. I sharpen my chainsaw a lot. If it is not throwing out big chips at a fast rate, I stop and sharpen. I sharpen my chain on the bar with a hand-held electric grinder until the teeth get so thin they break off. I highly recommend this type of sharpener. It uses your car battery for power and will sharpen a 20" bar in just a couple of minutes.

"GIVE ME SIX HOURS  
TO CHOP DOWN A  
TREE AND I WILL  
SPEND THE FIRST  
FOUR SHARPENING  
THE AXE."

– ABRAHAM LINCOLN



12 volt Oregon electric chainsaw sharpener

Scott



For several reasons, I thought this relatively new publication worthy of mention this month. I noticed a year or two ago that Woodcraft offered it's first full year of back issues in a package for \$9.99. Since each issue retails for something like \$5.99, it was a bargain I didn't want to pass up. I put it off initially, but finally decided to make the purchase. It was definitely worth my ten bucks!

Published bi-monthly, you get six issues each year. Hard to believe it's already in it's fifth year of publication. The first year volume features both projects and people in each issue; a diverse group of projects such as a Queen Anne table, porch swings, bottle stoppers, etc., and notable folks like Nora Hall, Betty Scarpino, and Sam Maloof. I'd be surprised if our membership finds these names unfamiliar, but if they are...

- Betty Scarpino has been working wood since the 1970's. She's self-employed as a wood sculptor and turner, but also teaches and offers services as a printmaker. She's widely known for her fluid, ambiguous style of sculpture.
- Nora Hall is a woodcarver of international acclaim. Born in Holland in 1922, she has both talent and longevity to her credit. It's fascinating to read about Nora, as I never expected a carver to have such a storied past. She learned woodcarving from her father (a Dutch master), survived seemingly endless surprise searches by the Germans during Nazi occupation of Europe, and immigrated to the United States in 1956. Can you believe after all of this, she finds herself teaching at both Rockler and Woodcraft, and can boast of clients such as Gibson Guitar and Hugh Hefner?!
- Sam Maloof - referenced in many Woodcraft issues over these last five years, I'm confident he needs no introduction.

I began by stating there are several reasons for spot-lighting Woodcraft Magazine this month. Aside from the bargain package, I've been wanting the July '07 issue ever since I first saw it in the Woodcraft store. It featured an article about Mooney Warther, proclaimed by his descendents (and the Dover Chamber of Commerce!) to be the greatest carver of all time (you may recall my write-up about him in the October 2004 newsletter?). His talent and prodigious number of carvings is astounding. Even more incredible is his plethora of accomplishments; aside from his prominence as a carver, he was a guest on the Tonight Show w/ Johnny Carson, made a chess set for Henry Morgan (TV personality), exhibited at the Chicago World's Fair, became a master bladesmith, built his own house and workshop, kept a full-time job for decades at a local steel mill, and raised five children! What tenacity!

The final reason for talking up the magazine? Issue #27 (Feb/Mar '09), which includes a feature article about our own Mark Koritz and his workshop. Woodcraft did a first-rate job of describing Mark and his shop. I felt they included the right mix of detail; both description and pictures, and aptly described Mark and how he feels about his slice of heaven here on earth!

My impression is Woodcraft Magazine competes well amidst other highly rated how-to publications. Content is certainly on par with those I've subscribed to over the years. It's a bit heavy on advertising, but I guess that's to be expected from a newer publication. Paper weight seems a bit thinner than most, but I suspect that's due to cost-saving measures and/or an attempt to use post-consumer content. Regardless, next time you're in the store, take a gander at the magazine rack - compare the latest issue to some of the others and see what you think.

## Library Reminders

The books, magazines, and tools of the library are there for the benefit of all of the guild members. Please keep that in mind as you check materials out and try to return them in a timely manner.

## Show and Tell

To start off Show and Tell for the month, Vic Barr brought in a finish sample board he uses with his customers. He uses this to help them determine what kind of finish they want for their box or project.

Wayne Watson brought in an old NiCad battery that had melted during its last charging session. He indicated the need to keep an eye on older batteries like this and ensure you don't leave them plugged in overnight.

Cecil Robertson reminded everyone that the Guild has a WorkSharp™ system available to guild members. It can be checked out for a brief period of time, just like the library books. For anyone interested in seeing how it works, he offered to demonstrate the system at 6:00 PM on Thursday, April 16th, just before the monthly Guild meeting at Woodcraft.

Norm Stoecker brought in a cherry drop-front desk with a dovetailed carcass.

## Toy Report

Steve Briner provided an update on the number of toys made to date – 28,789 in all! Another Toy Group meeting will be held in the near future at Kurt Hermann's workshop. Contact him at 636-394-4517 for details. Toy parts are also available for anyone who wants to make toys but cannot make the Toy Group meeting. Contact Steve at 636-922-1947 for more information.

## Other Notes

Attendance at the monthly meeting was solid, with a total count of 56 members and guests. Congratulations to Brian Gilstrap, winner of the March meeting's raffle. His prize was a \$50 gift certificate to Woodcraft.

Bruce Shockley made an announcement about a safety issue with router bits and bearings. Please make sure the bearing is tightened up every time you get ready to use your router bit!

## Power Tool and Shop Safety with Dan Coleman (cont)

Belt guards on any exposed belts keep your fingers safe while a hose clamp on the drill press column, just under the table top, will help to keep it from falling too far if it slips while being moved.

After discussing shop safety, Dan reviewed some general cleaning and tuning recommendations. For starters, have the owner's manual handy. If you don't have one, try the manufacturer's website or [www.owwm.org](http://www.owwm.org). Then assemble your cleaning kit – brushes, wire cleaners, steel wool, solvents, WD40, lithium grease, paste wax, machine oil, rags, and paper towels. Simple Green in an old Tupperware container can be used to soak parts for cleaning. As you gather your cleaning supplies, get into a machinist's frame of mind; you're dealing with precision now and 1/64th of an inch is considered a rather large gap. Tools you might need include wrenches, ice picks or awls, screwdrivers, measuring devices, feeler gauges, and painter's tape. Any old belts should be replaced with link belts when possible.

After going over the basics, Dan started discussing the four power tools he would then cover – the table saw, the band saw, the jointer, and the drill press. First he discussed the table saw.

To begin, raise the blade and adjust it to 90 degrees. Set the stops and the pointer, then adjust the blade to 45 degrees and set the stop again. Confirm the blade is parallel to the miter slot, checking with the same tooth at both extents. If any blade adjustments need to be made, be sure to only loosen three of the trunnion bolts when doing so. Adjust the miter gauge to be accurately perpendicular and the fence to be accurately parallel to the blade.

The bandsaw can be a handy tool in the shop when fully tuned. To begin, adjust the wheels so they are co-planer; brass shims may be necessary here. This will help make the blade track in the center of both wheels with proper tension and all guides in place. Replace the tensioning spring with a better one and be sure to untension if you tighten down for cuts. Check the condition of the guide blocks and flatten them if necessary. When setting them up, allow for a clearance of about .004" clearance (a one dollar bill works well for this). When adjusting the back bearings, they should not be touching the blade when it is running but not cutting wood. It should, however, just ride against the bearing when cutting. Finally, stone the back of the blade to remove any burrs and allow for tighter curves.

There isn't much to adjust on the jointer, but accuracy will be key for what you do need to tune up. If the knives need to be removed, apply penetrating oil the night before. After sharpening, all of the blades should be about the same weight to help keep them balanced. Adjust the fence, out-feed and in-feed tables to the proper positions and wax the bed really well to reduce friction.

Finally, Dan covered the tuning of the drill press. Begin by adjusting the tension of the return spring. The chuck should operate smoothly and the table should be squared to the spindle. If the quill is dirty, give it a good cleaning and then check it for run-out. It is a good idea to keep hold-downs handy near the drill press; you always want to tightly clamp down the piece you are drilling. Ballast should be added to the base of top-heavy machines to prevent them from tipping over.

Dan provided us with a lot of information, too much to keep to the 650 word limit, but it was all useful. When working on an unfamiliar tool, be sure to keep track of all the parts, take notes and pictures when necessary, and take your time! And if you get stuck, Dan works for pizza and Pepsi.

## Shop Tour: Quinn Saw Company

On Saturday, March 28th, approximately 24 members of the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild showed up at the W.D. Quinn Saw Co. for a shop tour. Everyone was excited for the chance to see just how a dull table saw blade was made shiny and new. Everyone was, I believe, just as excited about getting a 10" saw blade sharpened for free!



We were met by Bill and Joe Zickel, the current owners. They started the tour by explaining how their grandfather, William D. Quinn, began in 1903 with a saw blade sharpening shop for lum-

ber and woodworking industries. His services included the sharpening, repairing, balancing, and straightening of saw blades. Their father took over the business after their grandfather retired. He has since retired, as well, but can still occasionally be found in the building. In fact, he was on site the day of the tour and joined us for most of the time we were there.

After a brief history of the company, they went about explaining the process of cleaning and sharpening a saw blade. The first step obviously takes place when blades are brought in. They are first labeled with permanent marker, but then later etched with the owner's name and phone number. They are then brought over to the cleaning station, which uses ultrasonic technology to remove pitch and buildup. This process takes about 10 minutes.

Once the blades are cleaned, they are individually inspected for chips and given a check for flatness. Chipped or missing teeth are marked. A runout scanner does an even more thorough inspection to confirm the blade is flat. A runout of .003" to .005" is generally OK.

Next, broken tips are replaced. A slight amount of steel is removed behind the tip so the carbide grinder doesn't have to grind as much steel. A sand blasting machine clears up the grinder marks and the blade is polished to clean it up.

During this part of the demonstration, my eyes wandered around the shop for a bit, taking in the sights. The first thing I noticed was the asphalt-covered wood floor. I've read about end grain block floors before, but this is the first time I'd ever seen one! Bill's dad was standing next to me, so I asked him about it. He confirmed my thoughts that this kind of flooring was easy on the feet, kept machine vibration to a minimum, and allowed workers to set a saw blade on the floor on edge without fear of damaging it.

Back to the tour, we were next brought to a large block of metal sitting on the floor. If a blade needs to be straightened, it is done on an anvil that weighs around 400 pounds. The main part of it is 18" of thick cast iron with a harder 1/2" thick steel cap. After it is flattened, the teeth are reground on the sides, face, and top to bring them in line with the original blades. About 100 saw blades can be repaired and sharpened on an average day.

After the tour, lunch was provided and Bill presented us with examples of some of the saws sold by Quinn's. A selection of 40-, 60-, 80-, and 120-tooth multipurpose blades that rival Forrest II blades in quality can be purchased there for much less money. He also explained how they are able to get new band-saw blades of any size at a highly competitive price, as well. While they don't sharpen hand saws, garden tools, and kitchen knives in-house, they can have them sharpened and back in the shop for pickup within a week.



## Calendar of Upcoming Events

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Elections are going to be held during the April meeting. If you want to take part in the selecting new officers (or confirming the old ones) then please make it a point of attending!

**May 21, 2009**

### **Guild Meeting:**

The May meeting presentation will be given by Denny Krupinski. Denny is going to discuss woodworking with children, covering aspects from getting them involved to safety issues that should concern you.

**New Website On Its Way**

In conjunction with our recently remodeled newsletter we are also updating our website with a new look. We are in need of new photos of your work or any other items of interest that you think should be included. Please don't be shy and e-mail your submissions to Michael Beaudoin at michael@ba-doyne.com or bring in prints for us to scan. The new site is almost ready for launching and will include many new features.

**Membership Application**

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

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

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Type of woodworking you enjoy \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

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

*If you would like to join the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild please attend our next meeting or mail this application and your check for \$25 for one years dues to: St. Louis Woodworkers Guild, 2077 Congressional Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146.*