

St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



May 2011
Issue 312

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
May 19, 2011

Creve Coeur
Community Center
300 North New Ballas Road
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

Guild Member

Mike Sistik

Mike Sistik will be our guest presenter in May. He will go over techniques and tools used to make inlay! If you've seen one of Mike's presentations before, then you know how good he is; if you've never seen one, then you can't miss it! See you on May 19th!

Router Table Tips and Tricks by Rockler Woodworking and Hardware Store

April's presentation was given by Brian Romaine, the store manager for the Rockler Woodworking and Hardware store in Saint Louis. Brian took time out of his busy schedule to talk to the guild about router tables.

According to Brian, router tables are not just a luxury item; they are a must have. Not only are they safer than hand-held routers (with the proper set-up), but they also make using a router easier and more accurate. Plus, there are things you can do with a router table that you really cannot safely do with a hand-held router.

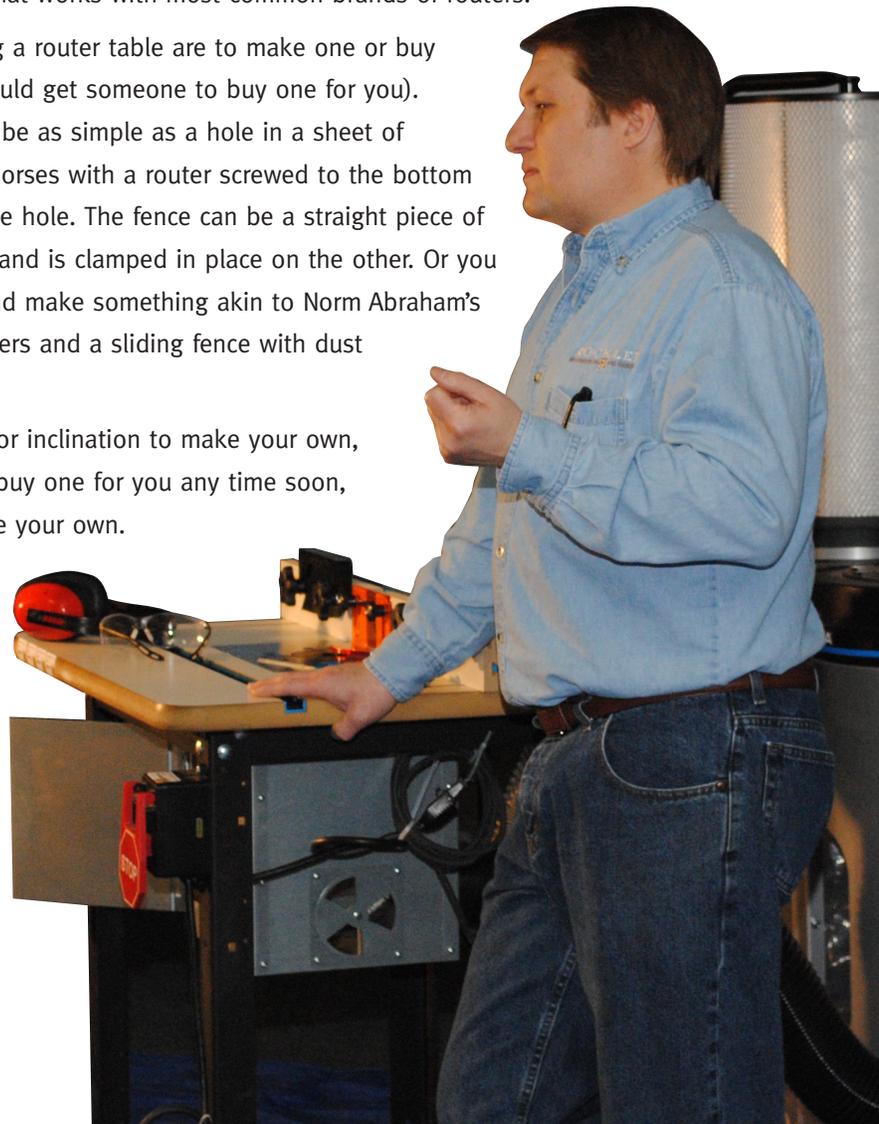
Router tables are generally about 32" x 24" or so in dimension. They can have T-tracks or grooves in them for using miter sleds or for using specially designed hold-downs. Most commercial tables come with a mounting plate that works with most common brands of routers.

Your two options for obtaining a router table are to make one or buy one (unless, of course, you could get someone to buy one for you). A homemade router table can be as simple as a hole in a sheet of plywood resting on two saw horses with a router screwed to the bottom and a bit sticking up out of the hole. The fence can be a straight piece of wood that pivots on one end and is clamped in place on the other. Or you could go the other extreme and make something akin to Norm Abraham's deluxe router table, with drawers and a sliding fence with dust extraction built in to it.

If you have neither the time nor inclination to make your own, and nobody seems willing to buy one for you any time soon, then you will have to purchase your own.

There are three different levels of router table tops available – laminate-topped tables, solid surface tables (like Corian), and metal tables. Laminate, being the least expensive, is quite commonly the first thing people buy. As long as you take care of it, the top

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St. Charles Hardwoods

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314.644.6677

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314.621.7711

Wayne's Sawdust

May 2011

Change, it is a constant of daily life. I was thinking back to my beginnings as a hobbyist woodworker in the late 70's. I started out as a model builder, primarily model ships. I soon started adding machinery to support my model building hobby. These were machines like an entry level contractor's table saw and no-name thickness planer, etc. At about the same time my father gave me a Gage G-3 smoothing plane. While it was not a rare item, it was uncommon, and I decided to learn more about it as well as how to use it. Back then as I recall one the few books available on hand planes, was a title called **Planecraft; Hand Planing by Modern Methods**. First published in 1934, this English work opened my eyes to the diversity of purpose made hand planes that were available. This revelation changed me into a tool collector and I now have a collection of over 600 tools. The tool that I still admire most is that humble smoother that my father provided, as it changed my woodworking activities from models to furniture and other "full scale" projects.

Change, it's really like a journey. I was fortunate; I had woodshop classes in both Junior High School and High School, growing up in Philadelphia. Today very few schools even offer shop classes. In the early eighties there were very few schools available for the hobbyist to expand his knowledge and skills. So like most woodworkers I was largely self-taught, I attended a few classes at places like Woodcraft but by and large I experimented with techniques that I read about in Fine Woodworking and other magazines. As my skills and experience grew so did my shop. Over time my underpowered contractor saw was replaced by a Delta Unisaw, the six inch jointer gave way to an eight inch model and my thickness planer grew to fifteen inches and so on. A shaper was added a few years ago along with a 1930's vintage mortising machine. It seems my problem has always been that I never met a tool that I didn't like!

Change, for better or worst, goes on. I am amazed at the change in the diversity of tools that are available to the woodworker today. Very high quality hand planes are back in production. Excellent shop machinery is available for just about any budget. I receive dozens of woodworking catalogs every year but the biggest change is the internet. You can watch craftsmen from around the world demonstrate techniques on sites such as You Tube, order tools and supplies, and receive advice from numerous websites.

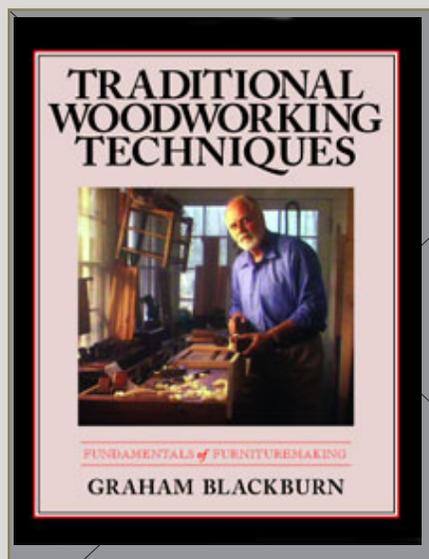
But even with all these advances, the smartest thing I did was to join the St. Louis Woodworker's Guild. It opened up a wonderful world of talent and expertise. Attending events with "masters" of the craft, such as Frank Klausz, Marc Adams, and Jeff Jewitt would not have been possible without the Guild. Being exposed to many different woodworkers is a huge advantage. I have been able to visit other member's shops, admire their workmanship and question them on their methods of work. But most important were the friendships I have made. While for most of us, woodworking remains a solitary activity, I know that with a phone call or two, I can fill my shop with knowledgeable people, from our Guild, willing to help me out of a jam.

The Guild is also changing. We have a new spacious and comfortable meeting location, the beginnings of a new shop space at Faust Park, all changes to the good. Please let me know what changes that you would like to see as our Guild moves ahead.

Wayne

Traditional Woodworking Techniques
by Graham Blackburn

Library Corner by Ethan Sincox



On the eve of our weekend seminar with Graham Blackburn, I thought I'd pick an appropriate companion book to go with the March book review and the May 7th and May 8th class. As is his other woodworking books, this one is almost entirely written, illustrated, and published by Graham Blackburn himself.

Traditional Woodworking Techniques is a great starting book for literary instruction on the fundamentals of working wood. It is intended to be able to assist you with becoming a proficient woodworker, even if you are starting off with the most basic tool knowledge. Before you even pick up one hand tool, Graham starts off the book with a quote to make you think: Wood will do what wood wants to do. It is a gentle reminder

that we are working with an ever-changing medium that cannot always be controlled.

Part One of the book includes a progressive series of projects that are designed to introduce you to the basic concepts and techniques. This means that each project builds upon earlier projects in order to expand your skills and teach you something new. It starts with the construction of a pine box. It then expands upon that by having you make more boxes, in the shape of a bookcase, a desk box, and then finally a chest. From there, it moves on into tables – a side table, a trestle table, and a dining table. The last two projects, a cabinet and a side chair, seem quite daunting at first, but it shouldn't be a problem if you've following through the book like you're supposed to.

Part Two of the book discusses joinery and methods of woodworking. It is a more detailed look at some of these processes discussed in the first part of the book and designed to give you a better understanding of the methods employed. He discusses how to make all of the fundamental joints, how you can go wrong with your techniques, and what he feels is the best approach to each one.

If you are just starting off your woodworking library, this is a "must have" book that will turn into a reference you use for years to come.

Announcements

June 2011 Meeting

Join us on Thursday, June 16th, as Bill Turner turns us on to precision woodworking!

April attendance

There were 45 guild members and guests in attendance at the April 2011 meeting.

Toy Report

We were able to deliver 164 toys in April. So far, we've delivered 488 toys in 2011 and 32,774 toys total. Thanks to all who contributed!

But we are still in need of lots of craft items and cars for the May and June deliveries. Bird houses, heart medallions, and animal kits (including rabbits, butterflies, coyotes, cats, and bears) are all great items. If you need patterns, then check the website (www.stlwoodworkersguild.org) to select and print them. Or contact John (314-843-0616) or Steve (636-922-1947) for any information related to toys or to arrange delivery or pickup of completed kits.

Raffle Winners

Kurt Herrmann won a free ticket to the Graham Blackburn presentation.

Bill Jamison won a Rockler gift card.

Router Tips and Tricks (continued from cover)

should remain relatively flat (flat enough for our purposes, in any case), but you still have to watch out for things like moisture that could ruin the particleboard or plywood top underneath the laminate. Solid surface tops usually come in the mid-range, as far as price is concerned, and are much more stable. Metal tops have positives and negatives, just like anything else. If they are too thin, you could get a lot of flex in the top, which is bad. But when they're made properly, movement is so minimal that the router top will, for all intents and purposes, not move.

To make using your router table easier, you should consider installing a lift kit in it. The lift kit will securely mount your router below the table and allow you to change and adjust bits without removing the router from the mount or squatting down to try and perform the action from below

Most router tables have one of two kinds of fences – the solid fence and the split fence. The solid fence is easy to set up. You can even make a zero-clearance insert easily enough by pivoting the fence into a spinning bit and burying half of the bit into the chunk of wood. The one major drawback to a straight fixed fence is that you cannot easily joint board edges.

The split fence is usually attached to the table top via a T-track. Unless you are using a miter gauge in a T-track set into the table itself, it is not important that the fence be parallel to the front of the table or perpendicular to the sides of it. Many commercial split fences can have the in-feed side shimmed out just a few thousandths of an inch for jointing boards. They also generally come set up for easy dust extraction.

With a router in a router table, you can safely perform many functions that would be scary or unsafe when compared to doing them with a hand-held router. With a large enough router to handle the larger bits, you can run crown molding or handrail profiles. You can make stopped cuts. You can cut tenons. You can profile edges. You can even make dowels!

On a final note, Brian reminded everyone of the 10% guild discount off of many of the items at Rockler when they show their guild ID and of the gift card program we have with them. For anyone who doesn't know what this program is, every purchase by a guild member at the St. Louis Rockler store, Rockler will apply \$1 to a gift card. When there is enough money on the gift card (\$20 to \$50), Brian will pass the card over to the guild to be raffled off as a door prize. In order for your purchase to credit towards this program, you must inform the sales associate of your membership.

Thank You Mark!

President Scott Wunder, honors Mark Gezella (right) for his service as the Guild's Librarian. Mark kept our library in top shape and wrote in-depth and insightful book reviews during his seven years of service. Thanks again Mark!



Show and Tell

David Duffey completed five candle lanterns for Faust Park. ▶



Dan Coleman brought in a dust collector piece that was made for the Rigid jointer. With a little bit of time and some ingenuity, he had converted it into a dust collection piece for his 14" bandsaw. This piece was purchased for less than \$2.00 at a Cummings tool store before it shut down. ▼



Vic Barr showed everyone one of his latest projects, modular boxes that, together, made a nice sized jewelry box. ▼



Cecil Robertson passed around pictures of students and chairs from his latest Windsor Chair Class at Woodcraft, while new member Brad Bernhard showed off a chair he made in Cecil's class. ▼



Other Notes

Officer Elections:

Officer elections for 2011 were completed. All those nominated for the positions were accepted. Please welcome the new officers and Board of Directors for the Saint Louis Woodworkers Guild:

President: Wayne Watson

Vice President: Mike Sistek

Secretary: Keith Lissant

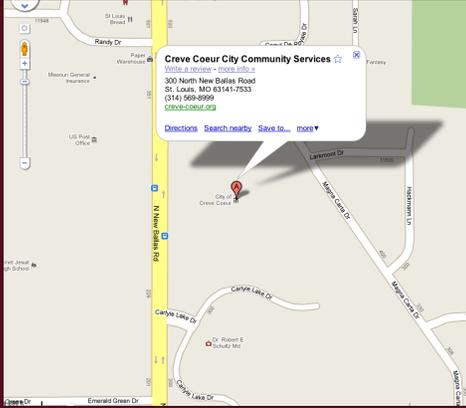
Treasurer: Larry Grzovic

Board of Directors:

Bob Colegate, Kurt Herrmann, Mark Koritz, and Rich Weitzman

Meeting location.

Creve Coeur Community Center,
located at 300 North New Ballas
Road, St. Louis, MO 63141.



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, c/o Treasurer Larry Grzovic, 2849 Championship Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63129.