

# St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



July 2011  
Issue 314

## Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM  
July 21, 2011

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

## Restoring Vintage Machinery: Resources and Methods with Alan Hunt and Eric Lavelle

Join Alan Hunt and Eric Lavelle of the Edwardsville Woodworkers Guild, as they show you (from experience) how to find and restore old machines. It will be followed by a shop tour of Alan Hunt's shop on Saturday, July 23 from 9:00 am to Noon. Donuts and coffee will be provided.

His shop is at:  
4900 Autumn Oaks Dr.  
Maryville, IL 62062

## At Our Last Meeting: Precision Woodworking by Bill Turner

Bill Turner, of Turner & Associates, was the guest speaker for the June 16th meeting. Bill has been in "the business" for over 30 years, has an architecture degree from Washington University, and did trade shows several times a year up until the 9/11 tragedy, when that sort of business event slowed down significantly.

When you are used to working with metal with precision that involves 1/1000th of an inch measurements, one can imagine it is pretty difficult to not try and work with that same level of precision in wood, as well. While it is not always possible (wood is wood, after all, and wood loves movement), he does find it useful for such aspects of his woodworking as joinery.

In addition to talking about some of the engineer-level precision in which he cuts wood, Bill threw in a hearty dose of discussion (and some pictures, too) on precision metal working. Because machinists often make spares of whatever they are making, he had plenty of examples to pass around. Of course, the work he does in metal is generally for some aspect of a woodworking project, such as custom hinges or drawer pulls.

Bill's lathe is a machinist's lathe. It takes tapered heads, like you would find on any other

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## Bill Turner at his milling machine during a tour of his shop



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## Wayne's Sawdust

July 2011

On June 11th Grizzly Tool in Springfield MO had their annual "Tent Sale." This is a one day deal in which Grizzly puts out all of the tools which have been damaged, discontinued or have been used or were display items. For the second year in a row, Dan Coleman and I drove down on Friday, did some shopping at Bass Pro Shop, (worth the trip by itself), swung by Grizzly to check things out, had a wonderful dinner and hit the rack early to be ready for the big day on Saturday. The sale which is held under tents in their parking lot opens at 8:00 am on the dot. We arrived at about 7:15 am and joined the line about 100 yards from the entrance. The folks in the front of the line must have slept on the sidewalk overnight! Once inside it's like the Oklahoma land rush. Each machine is tagged with the price and a very accurate description of its condition. If you wish to purchase a piece of machinery, you remove the tag, pay for it and the Grizzly folks will help you load it. The machines on sale ranged from 12 inch thickness planers (average price \$50.00) up to 12in sliding table saws. Everything from bandsaws to milling machines were available with huge discounts. The trick was to find the machine that was discontinued, a display model or with minimum damage that could be easily repaired. In addition to the large machines there was table after table full of small tools, parts, router bits or what have you. I was able to snag a Parrot Vise for \$22.00 and a complete former showroom display JessEM "Mast-R-Lift" for only \$100.00. Tool venders like Forrest, DeWalt/Porter Cable, Fein and Bessey had super bargains going as well. 20 percent off new tools was the norm. I was able to buy a Porter Cable 690LR router for \$89.95 and I received a rebate of \$20.00, a \$35.00 edge guide, and a small set of router bits in the bargain. Being a tool hound this has to rank as one of my favorite events of the year. And going with someone like Dan Coleman who is as nuts about machinery as I am, (He's got me studying up on metal machinery operations!) makes the trip a fun "Boys Night Out". Grizzly always holds their one day "Tent Sale" in June. If you love tools and a bargain, I would definitely recommend putting this event on next year's calendar. You'll see me there!

While I have machines on my mind, the Executive Board would like to upgrade and add to the tools the Guild has at the Faust Park Shop. We would like to add a good grade of Cabinet Saw, a 6 or 8 inch Jointer and a decent thickness planer to the inventory. If you have any of these items that you might be willing to donate to the Guild please contact me or Keith Lissant.

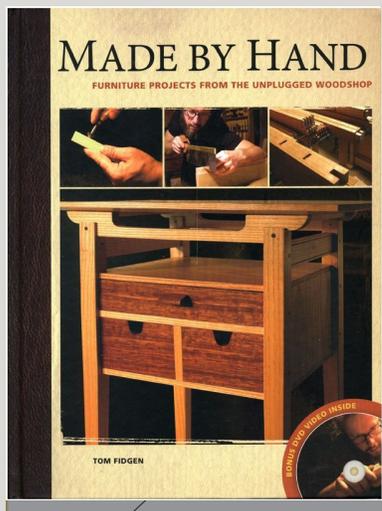
The Executive Board is studying the feasibility of opening the shop for our members to use. This would be in addition to potential classes we would hold there or donated work for the Heritage Village or other County projects. If you have any thoughts on the subject please communicate them to myself or any member of the Executive Board.

Last but not least, Bill Hobson and Rich Weitzman who co-chair our Membership Committee have been working on improving our booth at the Woodworking Show in Collinsville next February. If you have any ideas for possible improvements, please talk to Bill or Rich.

*Wayne*

## Made By Hand: Furniture Projects from the Unplugged Woodshop By Tom Fidgen

Library Corner by Ethan Sincox



I started reading Tom Fidgen's blog, The Unplugged Woodshop, back in 2008. For more than a year, I followed him as he progressed through the various stages of his projects, impressed with his writing style, rejoicing in the occasional philosophical thought that made me look at the mundane from a different point of view, and fully delighted with his carefully thought out words and the incredible photography accompanying each entry. So when he announced he was in the process of writing a book, called *Made By Hand*, I couldn't wait to get my own hands on it. And then, a bit later, when he said he was taking pre-orders, I was one of the first to sign up. If it was anything like his blog writing, I knew it would be well worth the money. Finally, in November of 2009, my copy of *Made By Hand* arrived in the mail and I immediately dove in.

Right out of the box, I was impressed with what Tom had put together. I really prefer the 8.5"x11" format in a woodworking book, which is what Tom used, and I'll pick a hard-bound book over a soft-bound copy of the same book any day of the week. The paper is high quality and low gloss, and the simple serif font is set on an off-white background, so the pages are easy to turn and easy on the eyes. Anyone who has enjoyed one of James Krenov's books will find the familiarity of the front cover quite pleasing – certainly Tom is influenced by Mr. Krenov in more than just his project design.

My experience with real honest-to-God artists, time and time again, has shown that their artistic talents are not limited to just one medium. Tom once again proves that theory with his book. He is not just a great woodworker; on the credits page, you will see him listed as the photographer. And the photography is indeed of the highest quality – each picture is framed just right, with an artist's eye, to properly portray the intended message without so much clutter. So far this book was living up to every one of my expectations.

Finally, I got to the content of the book. It is broken down into two basic parts. The first part is a section of three chapters that cover the essentials of what basic tools you should have in your shop, useful workbench appliances, and detailed information on some hand tool techniques. The second section contains design ideas and a walk-through for six projects.

More excited than ever, I began reading. I spent most of an afternoon plowing my way through the book; unfortunately, this is where the brass started to lose some of its shine. Thinking that maybe it was just me, I read it again, more slowly, over a period of about two weeks. The brass was still tarnished. (Please keep in mind, as you read this part of the review, that I write and edit technical documentation for a living, so what may be obvious and troublesome to me could very well pass by most people unnoticed.)

While, for the most part, the writing was fairly clear and the sequence well-organized, it was not the same writing I was used to seeing in his blog. Oddly enough, it seemed more casual than his blog writing ever was, with incomplete and poorly structured sentences throughout. Maybe it was a result of time constraints with the writing or, more likely, the editing. Or maybe Tom was trying to avoid the dull and humdrum content one finds in so many books on woodworking. Whatever the case, I felt it needed a bit more work. Overall, I was fairly pleased with the end result, but, personally, I would be happier with a second edition.

## Announcements

### Membership

Rich Weitzman presented his report as the Membership Chair Head. He indicated we needed to do some things to improve the Collinsville Woodworking Show this next year. He is looking for some larger items that can stay there the whole time. He also wants some woodworkers to display some techniques, like inlay, hand-cut dovetails, and joinery. Finally, he asked that everyone try to bring a friend to one of the up-and-coming meetings.

### Mini Workshops

The board is floating around the idea of offering mini workshops several times per year. Some ideas include, but are not limited to, inlay, box making, pen turning, hand plane tune-up/use, sharpening, scratch stocks, and machine tune-ups.

They suggested holding one to two classes per quarter, or between four and eight classes per year. Class size would be limited to between five and ten people. The classes could either be taught in the instructor's workshop or possibly at the Faust Park workshop. The cost would probably be around \$15 to \$30 and reservations would be required. If you have any ideas for mini workshops, or want to host one, please contact Wayne Watson.

## Toy Report

A total of 772 toys have been delivered to hospitals so far this year, with 132 of those items being in June alone. Since the program's inception, the Saint Louis Woodworkers Guild has donated over 33,000 toys to area hospitals. This year's Woody Award, received for making the most toys, was won by Jim McKenna, who made 309 toys in 2010. The trophy this year was carved by Bob Colegate and depicted a relief carving with a watch. The saying carved into it read, "Time to make toys!"



Bob Colegate (left) presents Jim McKenna (right) with the Woody Award.

## Raffle Winners

Denny Krupinski was the raffle winner for the \$50 Woodcraft card and Dan Sudkamp won the \$20 Rockler gift card – congratulations, Denny and Dan!

## Precision Woodworking (continued from cover)

woodworking lathe, but it also takes collets. And the beauty of being a precision wood and metal worker is that you can probably make your own collets if you do not own the size you need! A lathe-turned project he passed around was one of the many gavels with grooved handles he has made over the years.

While he does use the lathe quite often, much of his woodworking and metalworking is done on a Bridgeport Supermax milling machine. It is not something you are going to find in your normal run-of-the-mill shop – that's one big piece of machinery! It has a variety of uses, from making box joints to machining brass into hinges for the box!

When using it to make box joints, Bill uses HSS (high speed steel) slitting saw blades set apart at exact distances on a shaft. With this setup, he can make box hinges in 1/1000" measurements for very precise joinery. They are so precise, in fact, that he said he often has to assemble the joint within a short period of time or the minute amount of wood movement that happens within a few hours will cause the joints to not fit.

Another joint he makes with the milling machine is his mortises for furniture projects. Because of the nature of the cutting tools he uses, the corners of his mortises end up being round. This can be accommodated by either rounding the adjoining tenon's corners or by squaring up the corners with chisels. He uses the table saw to make his tenons (I know... boring, right?).

He uses the milling machine for a variety of metalworking projects, as well. When he was commissioned to make a door with a 270° swing, he could not find hinges that would work for the project, so he made his own. He has also used the Supermax to make butt hinges, custom door handles, and stainless steel drawer pulls and glass hardware. Samples of most of these projects were passed around.



Throughout the presentation, Bill showed us pictures of the custom furniture he's made over the years, including book cases, display cases, even a custom hickory table made for a Fredrick Remington sculpture. The collection boxes he made to display his rock collection were just as much a showcase of his box joints as they were the rocks nestled between all of the precision dividers.

Bill ended his presentation by announcing he would open his shop up for a shop tour at 10 AM on the 25th of June. Thanks, Bill, for all the great information you provided us, and for opening the doors of your shop for a visit!

Bill Turner shows off some of his precision woodworking

## Show and Tell

Doc brought in a tool chest (and the tools found therein) that belonged to his grandfather.



Denny Krupinski passed around several small boxes he'd made from scraps of figured wood.



Vic Barr's business card holders show how you can put even the smallest pieces of scrap wood to good use!

Eric Lavelle passed around several pictures of his molding machine from the 1890's, along with one of the molder blades – very heavy and sharp!

Cecil Robertson stood up and talked about the 12" jointer with a 7' bed and the old workbench he purchased from an organ-making company's auction earlier in the month.

Dan Coleman had information on a Delta contractor's saw that was being sold for \$100 if anyone was interested.



Rich Sanders showed everyone his latest scroll saw teddy bear.

## Faust Park

The board is currently working on coming up with some set times when guild members can have access to the workshop at Faust Park. It will require having designated guild members there to open and close the shop on those days and, most likely, a power equipment safety class will be necessary, as well.

The Faust Park workshop still needs some tools, if anyone is interested in making a donation. It still needs:

- unisaw or other cabinet saw
- 6" – 8" jointer
- 12" – 15" planer

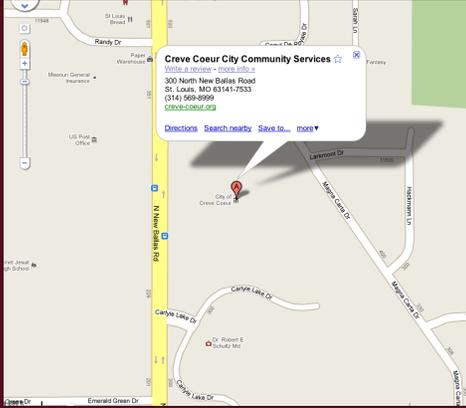
Faust Park also has a project available for any guild members who feel so inclined to volunteer. They have a large amount of period shutters that need restoration (repair, stripping, painting). Contact Wayne Watson, guild president, if you want to assist them with this project.

### June attendance

There were 41 people total in attendance at the June meeting, including 2 guests. Be sure to check the contact list at the back of the room and make sure your contact information is accurate. This will be available at every monthly meeting.

## 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.*