

St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



September 2012
Issue 326

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
September 20, 2012

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

International Woodworking Fair by Jeff Morgan

At our September guild meeting, Jeff Morgan will dazzle and enthrall us with his report of the IWF (International Woodworking Fair) in Atlanta, GA. From what I hear, his dynamic presentation will include pictures, video, audio, and scents.

At Our Last Meeting: Table Saw Safety and Set Up by Dan Coleman

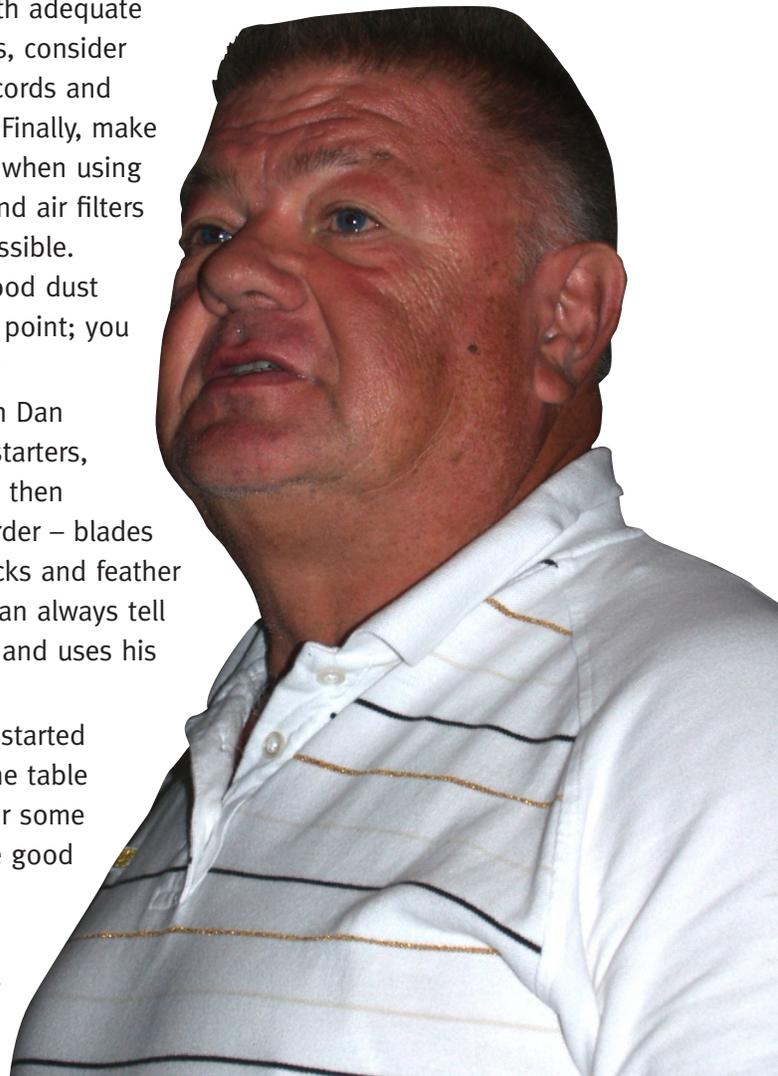
Almost every one of us has this tool in our workshop or garage, but how many of us are safely using it? Of course, I'm referring to the main staple of most hobby woodworkers, the table saw. At the last guild meeting, Dan Coleman spent some time going over table saw safety and gave us some tips on getting it properly set up.

Dan began his presentation, as he begins all of his presentations, with a quick review of general shop safety. 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. And be sure to follow the 3 and 12 rules – never get closer than 3" to a guard and be careful with pieces of wood shorter than 12" long.

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 effects 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 always has 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. Remember, you can always tell a craftsman by the way he chooses and uses his tools.

After his general safety review, Dan started focusing on safety as it relates to the table saw. The first think he did was cover some additional basic safety tips (that are good *continued on page 4*



Dan Coleman 

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Wayne's Sawdust *September 2012*

I would like to begin by thanking all of you for your kind thoughts during my recent hospitalization and recovery. Your calls, cards and visits meant a great deal.

I have just returned from a short vacation in Edisto Beach, South Carolina. Edisto Beach is just forty five miles or so south of Charleston. It's a beautiful area and my wife and I were considering relocating to the Charleston area in the future when she retires. On this trip we have spent a great deal of time investigating real estate and the other elements that make a community a great place to live.

They call this area the low country for good reason. Salt marshes abound and the water table is very high. As a result basements do not exist along the coast. This means that a shop ends up in a garage or separate building. For me a garage shop is a poor choice because I would have to share it with my wife's car. Therefore, I will have to build a separate building to house the shop. This is not as easy as it seems. Every decent place that we looked at either had zoning and/or Home Owners Association restrictions that would make building a separate shop a challenge.

Charleston is a lovely city. There is a waterfront; they have Fort Sumter, the USS Yorktown and fresh seafood in every restaurant except Taco Bell. What they don't have, is a single dealer of hardwood lumber. I am astounded that a metropolitan area of a quarter million people can't support one hardwood lumber dealer! There is not a single woodworking store or tool supplier to be found either. The closest woodworkers club is in Columbia SC at least two hours away!

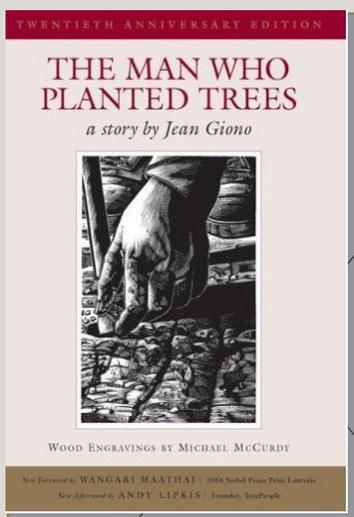
I had not given it much thought before, but we are extremely fortunate, to have the woodworking infrastructure in St. Louis that we do. There are over a half dozen hardwood dealers in the metro area. Rockler, Woodcraft and Hydraflow to name a few tool suppliers are located here. But perhaps most important, we have an active Woodworkers Guild with numerous opportunities to learn, share ideas and participate in community activities. As you might have guessed Charleston SC is no longer in my future!

Wayne

Annual Picnic / September 22nd

Just a few short days after the guild meeting is the SLWG Annual Picnic! This year's picnic will take place on Saturday, September 22nd, at Kunz Carpentry in Trenton, IL. Their address is: 16 East Broadway, Trenton, IL, 62293. The Kunz Carpentry Warehouse is located at: 18 South Main St., Trenton, IL, 62293. There will be a tour of the shop from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., with lunch from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. There will be a tool swap/sell during the luncheon. At 2:00, everyone is invited over to Jeff Morgan's workshop for a shop tour.

Book Review: *The Man Who Planted Trees* written by Jean Giono Review by Ethan Sincox



This month's book review is a little break from the norm. *The Man Who Planted Trees* is a work of fiction. And there is no sub-title of, "... and then he used the lumber to make..." It isn't a book about building tables or chairs or boxes. It isn't the final word in cutting dovetails, or even a comparison of dovetail cutting techniques. And there isn't one mention of any kind of hand tool, other than an iron rod about four and a half feet long. Instead, it is a story about reflection, hope, and power. It is an illustration of how just one person can make a difference. It is a story about preserving and renewing the natural resource we all love to touch and smell and work with, long before it is cut into lumber.

The hardbound copy I have is the 20th Anniversary Edition, printed in 2005. It is illustrated by Michael McCurdy with some amazing wood engravings. If you chose to read this book, please don't forget to spend some time looking at them – the detail and design is fantastic. I'm not sure about earlier editions, but this one is printed on 100% recycled paper and has a stitched binding.

The story is narrated by a man who first meets a shepherd in a barren land in Provence, France. That night, the man watches his host sort out acorns. The next day, as they walk along a hillside, the shepherd uses an iron rod to make holes and plants 100 oak trees. He had been planting trees like this for the last three years and his count was up to one hundred thousand by that time. Of those, twenty thousand had sprouted and he expected to lose half of them to the processes of nature. But that left him with ten thousand oak trees growing where nothing had been before.

Our narrator returns to the barren land periodically to check up on the shepherd. He finds the old man has continued planting trees – birch and beech, this time - and comments on the changes the forest has brought to the land. Creeks once again flowed with clear, clean water. Hunters occasionally strolled the wooded area, looking for hare and wild boar. Mother Nature helped out with her own plantings of flowers, undergrowth, and meadows ; all she needed was a place to start. And, finally, he returns to find a thriving community – a village of 28 inhabitants, new houses and farms, and fields of barley and rye.

This is a work of fiction. But it is based in fact, as is evidenced by the foreword from Nobel Peace Prize laureate Wangari Maathai and the afterword from Andy Lipkis, founder of TreePeople. The idea of planting a forest to revitalize a community – to bring water back to dry wells and streams, to renew depleted soil, to restore the natural environment – is something we should always carry with us in the back of our minds. With that, we should remember that we, as individuals, can make such a change happen.

Read the book the first time through for the enjoyment of the story. Read it through a second time to take in the wonderful wood engravings. And as you read through it a third time, start asking yourself what you can do in your life to facilitate such a change on our planet, whether it is planting your own forest or making a contribution to one of the many forestation projects and organizations out there. Not sure what you can do? Fret not, fellow woodworkers – there is a section in the back of the book (page 55) that helps you get started.

Announcements

August Attendance

There were 41 people in attendance at the August guild meeting.

Raffle Winners

The Woodcraft \$50 Gift Card went to Brian Teixeira.

The \$20 Gift Card from Rockler went to Phil Haskins.

October Guild Meeting

With just two months to go until Christmas, the meeting in October will be our annual Holiday Gift presentation meeting. If you are interested in giving a brief (5-10 minutes) presentation about one of your favorite gifts to make around this time of the year, contact Mike Sistek at 618-243-6071 or at sistekmw@charter.net.

Toy Report

We delivered 150 toys in August. The year-to-date total through August is 1,203 toys. Since 1994, the guild has donated 35,410 toys and craft items to local hospitals.

In anticipation of several up-coming holidays, craft items we could really use include: Halloween cutouts and anything related to Thanksgiving or Christmas. We also have need of heart necklace medallions, cats, coyotes, bears, and airplanes.

If you need patterns, you can print them off of the website or call one of us and we will send you the patterns by mail. We would prefer it if you could make the toys in batches of about 20. You can reach John Patton at 314-843-0616 and Steve Briner at 636-866-6121 for pattern needs or to arrange toy pickup or delivery.

Table Saw Safety and Set Up

continued from page 1

to follow for other power tools, as well, to be honest with you). Always make adjustments with your saw turned off and unplugged. Make sure the blade is no more than 1/8" above the wood you are cutting; it can mean the difference between laceration and amputation.

When ripping lumber, you should make sure your feather boards should stop just before the blade; you don't want the feather board pushing the wood into the blade sideways. Don't stand behind the blade in case you do end up with some kickback. Push the wood past the blade before removing it and hook a finger or two on the other side of the fence as you're pushing.

When crosscutting, don't ever trap wood between the blade and the fence. While you can use the fence (with a spacer block) to set up crosscuts, make sure the wood is never touching the fence as the blade cuts it. Finally, don't remove loose material until the blade stops.

Accessories don't do you any good if you don't use them. So be sure and get accessories – miter gauges, blade guards, zero-clearance inserts, feed rollers, splitters, and feather guards – that are easy to attach and quick to adjust so you'll use them. One accessory that you'll use every time is a paddle switch. This makes it easier to turn your table saw off with your hip or leg without dropping your concentration on where your hands are. These can be picked up through Grizzly for just a few bucks.

When you are cleaning and tuning your table saw, it is always good to have a manual handy. If you do not have the manual to your saw, get one. Start by checking with the manufacturer. If you have an older saw, you can also check OWWW.org to see if anyone has shared it there. Manual in hand, you need to gather up your cleaning supplies – brushes, steel wool, solvents, WD40, paste wax, lithium grease, oil, rags, and towels. For tools, you'll need a screwdriver, wrenches, and probably some picks.

When cleaning, try not to use compressed air on the motor; you can actually blow sawdust and dirt further into the motor and damage it. It is better to vacuum the dust off. Lubricate appropriately. Wax flat metal surfaces. Visually check the wiring and belt condition and alignment. One of the best maintenance things you can do for your newer table saw is to replace aluminum pulleys with cast iron pulleys that are machined and balanced. And don't forget to clean the face of the arbor.

Once it is clean, make sure your table top and wings are aligned and flat. Use shims (washers, tin cans, whatever works) where necessary. Don't beat cast iron with a hard hammer, no matter how tempting. When aligning your blade (it needs to be parallel to the fence and the miter slot), use an alignment tool or make one with your dial caliper. Measure and mark the same tooth on the saw blade in the front and back positions. If you have to adjust the blade, only loosen three of the four bolts connecting the saw to the top.

Miter gauges need to be adjusted, as well. To check for alignment, make test cuts and check by flipping the second piece to see if it throws the ends of the boards out of alignment. Adjusting your miter gauge is most easily done with one of those big plastic drafting triangles.

Riving knives and splitters are great ways of preventing kickback. But you have to make sure they are adjusted properly or else they won't work. Finally, make sure the blade is adjusted to 90 degrees, as well. Dan has found one of the best tools for this to be the digital angle cubes you can get through most woodworking supply stores; they are easy to use and highly accurate.

For more information on table saw setup and performance, there is a lot of information on-line. Wood Magazine and Fine Woodworking Magazine both have websites with great information and videos on them. You can also find lots of videos on YouTube – look for the one by Bob Vaughn.

Thanks again for stepping up and passing on your knowledge, Dan!

Show and Tell

Cecil Robertson – As a sort of appetizer for Dan Coleman's presentation on Tablesaw Safety, Cecil showed everyone the injury on his right forearm as an example of what can happen when kickback occurs. He also announced he will be doing a Windsor chair class in the fall or winter. See him at your earliest convenience for information on the class.



Vic Barr – Vic brought in one of his latest jewelry box projects, a 5-drawer box made with bloodwood, spalted maple, cherry, and sugar pine. It was finished with a wipe-on polyurethane.

John Dahl – John showed everyone a naval display for the USS Chicago that he made.

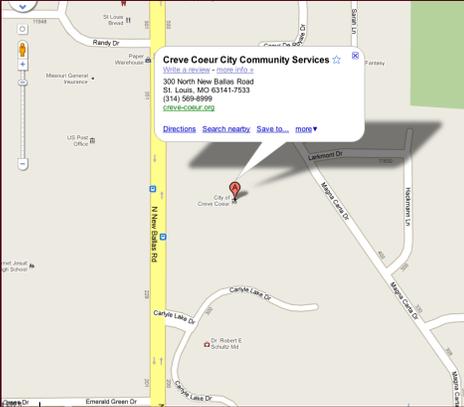


Mini-Workshops

We are still looking for ideas for mini workshops! This is an easy way for you to get some instruction on practically any technique or subject related to woodworking. Just sit down for five minutes and think about something you'd love to learn more about or get some instruction in, and send an e-mail to our vice president or the committee chair, who are both eagerly awaiting your letter. You can reach Mike Sistik at sistikmw@charter.net and you can reach Kurt Herrmann at kurtdee@sbcglobal.net.

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 \$30 for one years dues to: St. Louis Woodworkers Guild, c/o Treasurer Larry Grzovic, 2849 Championship Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63129.