

St. Louis Woodworkers Guild



February 2013
Issue 330

Our Next Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM
February 21, 2013

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

Segmented Woodworking Techniques

Why use just one piece of wood when you can use hundreds? Join Steve Frank as he shares his secrets for adding that dazzle to your woodworking using segments.

Taming the Shaving Horse with Cecil Robertson

When our planned presenter for January backed out at the last minute, Cecil Robertson volunteered to step up to the plate and talk about using the shave horse. He began with the basic definition of a shave horse, which is a foot-powered vice. The shave horse, in its classic form, looks like a bench you straddle. Foot pressure causes a clamping system, set about 18 inches above the bench's top, to engage and hold whatever piece of wood you are working on. The faces of the clamping system often have triangular notches cut into them to facilitate holding round objects or square objects at an angle.

To better demonstrate how the shave horse works, Cecil took us through the steps he follows to make a spindle for a Windsor chair. When prepping wood for use on a shave horse, you don't rip the wood with a table saw or hand saw. Instead, you rive it with a mallet and froe. Why do you rive it instead of cutting it? Well, when you rive wood, you split it along the grain. This makes for a much stronger spindle or leg because you never have any grain run-out.

Cecil doesn't use a ruler when working with his shave horse. Instead, he uses what might be referred to as a "story block". It is a piece of wood that is as long as the spindles. The

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Cecil Robertson and his shavehorse



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Sponsors

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Wayne's Sawdust February 2013

Our Guild once again participated in the "Woodworking Show" held in Collinsville IL, on February 8th, 9th and 10th. An enormous thank you to all that volunteered to work at our booth. Special thanks go out to Dave Knudson and Jeff Morgan for the incredible St. Louis Woodworkers Guild sign which they made for the show. Rich Weitzman did a super job of coordinating with the Woodworking Show's staff. We had plenty of space in an excellent location. Keith Lissant did a great job putting together our scroll saw/toy parts activity which really helped to "break the ice" with potential new members. Congratulations also go out to Steve Briner and Brad Bernhard who won second and third prizes at the "Show Off" competition. St. Louis Guild members won two of three awards this year!

I have established a Nominating Committee consisting of Bob Brinkmann, Bob Colegate and Rich Weitzman. Open positions are President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and one Director. If you wish to nominate someone (or run) for one of these positions please let one of the Nominating Committee know your intentions.

As a new service to the community, the Guild will be assisting the Technology Education Association of Missouri (TEAM) restart their St. Louis District Competition. The Districts will be held at Florissant Valley Community Collage, Friday April 19th. We will be providing a small amount (\$200.00) of financial support. We also have agreed to make twenty wood plaques in the shape of the state of Missouri. Craig Norsen from U-Pick Hardwood Lumber has volunteered to provide the material for the plaques. THANKS Craig! We will also need to provide a minimum of eight judges. We have also been asked to provide two demonstrators to educate the middle and high school students while their projects are being judged. If you would like to be part of this very worthwhile activity please drop me an e-mail (workswood@earthlink.net) or call me at 314-541-3047.

And last but not least, DUES ARE PAST DUE. If you have not sent them in please do so.

Wayne

2013 Guild Dues

If you have not yet paid your 2013 guild dues, then you need to do so now! The cost is \$30 and you can either pay at the next meeting or you can mail your payment to Wayne Watson, 7242 Powder Ridge Ct., St. Louis, MO 63129

The DaVinci Machines Exhibition

Now through May 2013, the DaVinci Machines Exhibition is in St. Louis, on loan from the Museum of Leonardo DaVinci in Florence, Italy. It is one of three such exhibits traveling the world and contains over 60 hand-crafted inventions built from Leonardo's 500 year old designs. It is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and on Sunday from 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. every week. Admission and location information can be found on-line at <http://discoverdavinci.com>.

Review: The Polissoir, or Polishing Stick

Review by Ethan Sincox



Back in September of last year, Chris Schwarz blogged about his introduction to the polissoir, a French polishing tool described by Andre Roubo in his book, “L’Art du Menuisier”, at Don Williams’ home in the mountains of Virginia. There, Don demonstrated how this relatively small bundle of broom straw can be used to burnish raw wood or, with a little more prep work, fill grain in open-pored wood. I was immediately drawn to the idea of such an environmentally friendly finishing technique, so I contacted Don to see about ordering one.

For anyone unfamiliar with the polissoir, it is a bundle of straw, generally about an inch or so in diameter and about four inches long. Fancy ones are wrapped with designs or patterns, much like a traditional straw broom handle is. The idea behind the polissoir is that you use it to burnish the wood so highly that it shines. When used with a hard wax, such as bees wax, an additional layer of protection can be added to the wood, creating a finish that is quick and friendly on your hands and lungs.

My polissoir arrived a few months after I’d ordered it. Why so long? Well, Don had received over 500 orders for polissoirs and the local broom making artisan who had agreed to do the job was properly overwhelmed! Fortunately, I recently had a chance to use it. I made a quick box for a sharpening hone I was selling on eBay. I’d decided to do it just two days before the auction was supposed to end, so I didn’t really have time to mess with a finish by the time the box was done.

First, I had to break the tool in. You do that by trimming the end you use of any stray pieces of straw, then you pick up a piece of scrap wood and you just start rubbing back and forth! I took advantage of the break-in time to also figure out what technique works best for me, since I’d never used one before.

Once I felt comfortable with it, I started in on the box. I didn’t have any hard wax on hand, so I figured my Renaissance Wax would suffice. I applied a bit of wax to one side of the box and started rubbing it vigorously and with a good amount of pressure. It didn’t take long to see this was going to work very well and become a common finishing technique for my boxes. The polissoir did an excellent job of burnishing the flat faces of the box, and it worked equally well on the endgrain, too. I also used it to further soften the edges of the box, making a silky smooth transition from the top to the sides to the bottom.

I was very happy with the end results and I will definitely be using it in the near future. If you are interested in giving this centuries-old technique a try, you can order a polissoir from Don Williams via e-mail at donsbarn250@msn.com. They cost \$22.50 a piece, including shipping, and he accepts payment by check or money order.

Announcements

November Attendance

There were 52 people in attendance at the January 17th guild meeting.

Raffle Winner

The \$50 Rockler gift card winner for January was Rich Sanders. Congratulations, Rich!

Upcoming Events

On Thursday, March 21st, the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild will have its Annual Show & Tell and Silent Auction. Details are provided elsewhere in this newsletter and will also be provided at the February guild meeting as well as in the March Newsletter.

On Thursday, April 18th, Brad Bernhard will discuss his construction techniques for making a sculptured rocking chair.

Toy Report

We delivered 150 toys in January. There was a fine collection at the January meeting and we wish to thank all who contributed. The total contribution since 1994 is 36,252 toys. Please consider making cars, bird houses, animal kits, rabbit kits, butterflies, coyotes, cats, Tulips, heart necklaces and other flowers to bring to the February or March meeting.

If you need patterns see our web site to select and print a pattern or you can call and we will send you the patterns by mail. We really need about 20 to 30 each of any craft pattern you select.

You can reach John at 314-843-0616 or Steve at 636-866-6121 for any of the above or to arrange pick-up or delivery.

Taming the Shaving Horse

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thickness of the block matches the thickness you want for your spindle blanks, as well. It has holes drilled into it that you can use to measure all of the various thicknesses your spindle should be. Finally, the width of the block is used to determine the height of the bulge in the spindle, as it is measured up from the top of the seat.

Once he has his spindle blanks, he uses the gauge block to mark the point of the bulge. Then he uses a drawknife to get the blank closer to the proper thickness. He uses the drawknife to take four corners off the blank. This creates an end profile of something more like an octagon. From there, he just keeps removing corners until he ends up with a blank that is mostly round.

Then he flips the blank and does the same thing on the other side of the bulge. Once it is roughed pretty close to dimension, he switches to a spokeshave. At this point, Cecil pulled out a variety of spokeshaves available today, from ones with wooden bodies and flat soles to others with cast bronze bodies and wooden handles and concave soles.

Once you have enough spindles shaped, cut them all to the same length. Then lay them all out and select the nine you want for your chair. After you have them all laid out, you can also more easily determine which spindles will go in what holes.

Before he ran out of time, Cecil managed to spend a little time discussing sharpening techniques, as well. He showed us how to sharpen drawknives and spokeshaves by hand, using sandpaper and sharpening stones and even what can be done with a grinder.

If you want to learn more about using a shave horse, and would like to make a Windsor chair in the process, then you can contact Cecil at 636-978-4530 to find out when his next class is. Thanks for taking the time to show us how to tame the shave horse, Cecil!



Guild Member Denny Krupinski gives the shavehorse a try

Build A Backsaw Class with Matt Cianci

Matt Cianci, the Saw Wright and author of The Saw Blog, is going to come to the SLWG on April 6th and 7th to teach a class on building your own backsaw! Matt is a full-time saw maker/restorer from Rhode Island. You can take a look at his work and learn about his thoughts and ideas on saw making and restoration at <http://thesawblog.com> and <http://thesawwright.com>.

The class will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 6th, and from 8:00 a.m. to approximately 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 7th. The cost of the class will be \$300 and will include lunch on both days and all of the materials to build a high-end backsaw, except for the tote blank. Space is limited and there is a lot of one-on-one instruction, so the size limit for this class is 12 people. The first slots will be on a first-come, first-serve basis and require a \$100 deposit due to Mike Sistek by February 21st. Checks can be made payable to the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild. The rest of the cost is due by the day of the class and can be paid at that time or sent to Guild President, Wayne Watson.

If you are interested in this great opportunity, hurry up and contact Mike Sistek at 618-830-4516 or via e-mail at sistekmw@charter.net or spwoodworks@charter.net, to see if there are any spots left in the class!



Show and Tell

Jeff Nasser (upper right) brought in a pepper mill.



Don Snyder (lower left) showed everyone some mirrors he framed with art tiles at the top of them.



Rich Sanders made a plexiglass push-stick from the plans in Woodcraft magazine.



Dan Pace has a bunch of 3'x9' solid core doors if anyone wants one.

Phil Haskins (lower right) brought in a cabinet door he made for his son using curly white oak veneer.

Mini-Workshops

Lantern Build

On Saturday, February 23rd, starting at 10:00 a.m., there will be a lantern building workshop at the Faust Park Shop. There will be no charge for this session, so if you have the time, stop on by and help make some lanterns for the wonderful organization who is giving us our shop space!

Lidded Box with Splined Corners

On Saturday, March 23rd, Bob Brinkman and Kurt Hermann will be teaching a class on making lidded boxes with splined corners. You'll need to bring your own stock for making the box and splines and the splines need to be 1/8" thick. When the class is over, you'll not only have a lidded box with splined corners, you'll also have a box joint jig for your table saw or router table! Contact Bob (314-378-1893) or Kurt (314-608-8602) if you would like to sign up for this mini workshop session. The cost is \$20.00.

Tenoning Jig and Crosscut Sled

On Saturday, April 20th, Wayne Watson will be conducting a mini workshop on building a tenoning jig and a crosscut sled. The tenoning jig will be completely made in the class. The crosscut sled, however, must be made to fit your particular table saw, so it will not be completed in class. The cost for this mini workshop session is \$20. Contact Wayne (314-541-3047), Bob, or Kurt if you would like to attend this session.

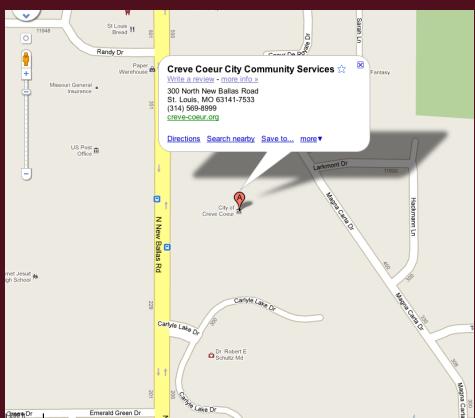
March 2013 Meeting – Annual Show And Tell and Silent Auction

The meeting on March 21st will be our annual show and tell event, along with our silent auction. If you have any completed projects sitting around that you'd like to show off to everyone else, please bring them in! If you have any tools sitting around the shop that you can't or don't use anymore, bring them in, as well! You might just clean out your shop a little bit and you'll feel good knowing your old tools are being put to good use in someone else's shop. Here are the Silent Auction guidelines:

- Items to be entered into the auction must be in place by 7:00 PM. Doors will open at 6:00 PM.
- Auction will close at 8:30 PM.
- 10% of the sale price of each item is to be paid to the St. Louis Woodworkers Guild (SLWG).
- If an item does not sell, then 10% of the starting bid price will be paid to the SLWG. (This is excepting items that do not sell and are then donated to the guild.)
- The seller must remove all unsold items.
- All auction items must be related to woodworking.
- No reserves may be set on auction items. The starting bid is the minimum bid for which the item can be sold.
- All bidding must be in \$1.00 multiples.
- The SLWG reserves the right to limit the number of auction items.
- The majority of auction items will be in "used" condition. This is to be expected. The condition of the items is as represented by the seller. The items are sold "as is"; the SLWG is not responsible for defects, hidden or otherwise.
- Large items (such as table saws or jointers) should be left in your vehicle. A photo should be made available to stand in for the actual auction item. If one person can carry an item in, it should be OK.

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.