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ANNUAL BBQ POSTPONDED

Due to Hurricane Rita, the Annual LCWW BBQ has been postponed to a date to be determined.

Barry Humphus contacted several members to find out how they fared during and after the storm. Aaron Andrepont reports minor damage to his shop and none to his new home (where we will meeting in November). Bubba Cheramie reports little or no damage other than some to his shop roof. Jeff Cormier reports little or no damage to either his home or shop. Brent Evans said his forest is decimated but the home is fine. Unfortunately, Jimmie Everett's home suffered extensive roof damage. J. L. Fontenot reported little or no damage except to trees. Lee Frazier reports that the roof is off his home. George Giltner is OK. Mickey Hart had a little damage to his home and none to his shop. Barry Humphus had minor damage to his home and shop and his mailbox is now about 1/2" thick. Ray Krull is OK. George Kuffel lost a few shingles but had extensive damage to his shop. Chuck and Charlene Middleton road out the storm in their new home and report no damage. Bob Patin is OK. Charlie Richard had some minor damage to his home and shop. Gary Rock reports a few holes in his roof but no shop damage. Jeff Silker is OK. Pie Sonnier reports little or no damage to their home. Dick Truth reports that they are OK and minor roof damage.

Unfortunately Barry has been unable to contact other members because of downed phone lines or they are not yet back. We understand from J.L. Fontenot that Eltee Thibodeaux's home was hit by a tree and we are certainly concerned for his loss.

While we see dramatic damage all over the Lake area, it is not as extensive as we feared it would be. However, a tremendous number of trees were broken, uprooted or damaged so severely that they will be removed. Amazingly, all five of Barry's 100 year-old plus red oaks survived but left a lot of limbs on the ground but he was able to pick up some maple, pecan and cedar logs in his rounds of the neighborhood. Some good things come from storms but mostly not.

The officers and directors of the Lake Charles Woodworkers sincerely hope that everyone is safe and well. If anyone needs help with their damage, please, please contact Barry and he will try to coordinate some assistance.

SEPTEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

LCWW met at the studio of Frank Thompson last month for a little Show and Tell as well as demonstration and discussion by Frank of the work he does.

Because of substantial competition from overseas, Frank does less in the way of custom doors these days. Instead he has turned to doing much more stained glass work including windows and smaller items.

Frank begins by discussing with his clients a general idea of what they desire in a stained glass window. He then does a color rendering for presentation and approval. Next, he does a full scale cutting template. As he cuts glass to fit the template he also fits the glass into the lead came which is cut in strips as needed. The came come in various section widths to accommodate various thicknesses of glass. If there are to be multiple panels, he creates a cutting template for each.

After the mechanical assembly, the joints where the came meets are soldered on both sides of the piece. Because the solder is a brighter color than the lead came, a chemical is used to darken both the lead and solder to a uniform tone.

Frank also uses a kiln to fuse different colors of glass to get the effects he needs for the job. Frank showed use his window and door assembly area as well as his cabana he built last year plus his most remarkable home. Much of the wood interior has been reclaimed from historic buildings in the Lake Area. The stairs, for example, came from the old KC Hall in Lake Charles.

Comming Up . . . Saturday, November 12 at 9:00 a.m. Shop of Aaron Andrepont. It's a brand new shop so come see what a dedicated scroller does to make his life easier.

ABOUT ELECTRIC GENERATORS

Hurricane Katrina and Rita brought home the need for many people to buy, borrow or in some cases, steal, an electric generator. In fact in early September, I got mine out for it's semi-annual run test. It didn't run so I thought about taking it in to Harlow's for service. Unfortunately, I thought about it too long and Rita came along. Fortunately, I was able to borrow a Coleman Powermate Pulse 1850 from a friend in Houston, so it wasn't so bad.

An electric generator is a simple device used to convert mechanical energy into electrical energy. The generator is based on the principle of "electromagnetic induction" discovered in 1831 by Michael Faraday, a British scientist. Faraday found that if an electric conductor, like a copper wire, is moved through a magnetic field, electric current will flow (be induced) in the wire. So the mechanical energy of the moving wire is converted into the electric energy of the current that flows in the wire. Many of you have likely replicated his experiment in a physics or science class at one time or another.

Generators that you purchase are generally rated in watts. They range from about 1,000 to 20,000 watts. This is actually not very meaningful as what you really need to know is the amps. The amps are what 'push' electric motors and watts is what they use when running. So it would be very nice if generator manufacturers told you what the generator would actually do. For example, a modern refrigerator takes about 15 amps to start its compressor. When running, it does not take nearly this much. The problem with the ratings from the manufacturers is that watts do not easily convert to amps

You can't convert watts to amps, since watts are power and amps are coulombs per second (like converting apples to miles). If you have at least two of the following three: amps, volts and watts then the missing one can be calculated (but it is an approximation only). Since watts are amps multiplied by volts, there is a simple relationship between them. Amps are how many electrons flow past a certain point per second. Volts is a measure of how much force that each electron is under. Think of water in a hose. A gallon a minute (amps) just dribbles out if it is under low pressure (voltage). But if you restrict the end of the hose, letting the pressure build up, the water can have more power (watts), even though it is still only one gallon a minute.

So how do you determine what you bought in terms of amps (which is actually what you need to know)? The simple answer is to divide the watts by the voltage. For example, if you have an 1,850 watt maximum rated generator with continuous 1,500 watts, the equation is $\text{amps} = \text{watts} / \text{volts}$ or $12.5 = 1,500 / 120$. In other words, a 1,500 watts continuous rated generator, at

best produces 12.5 amps of power. But why is it rated at 1,850 watts? That is the watts that can be produced by the generator at its peak capacity (amounting to about 14 amps, at best).

This is not enough to start the compressor of a modern refrigerator or freezer (at least the new ones in my home).

OK, so you look at the generators at the local home supply center and there is a great deal of variance in capacity (watts) and price. What you have to think about is what are you going to use the generator to power. If it is a few fans, a TV, radio, computer, electric chain saw or other similar appliance, a 1,000 to 2,000 watt unit will do and they are cheap. For example, the 1,850 (1,500 continuous) watt unit I used during the aftermath of Rita was running three fans, a small TV, a battery charger, an electric chain saw and a computer. I used a very high-end filtered surge protector for the computer and 12 gage 50 or 100 foot extension cords for the supply (these can handle up to 15 amps). But it just didn't have the capacity to run a refrigerator or freezer compressor.

What you need today is at least a 2,500 watt (2,200 continuous) generator. In fact a 5,000+ watt would be better (but much more expensive and heavier). Ideally, you may want to consider a whole house generator. In all cases, always check the oil levels when running a long time. These are powered by basically lawn mower motors and the motor typically has only a combination oil/compression ring. That means that it will use oil and always check the level between fueling.

A whole house generator generally is in the range of 7,000 to as much as 20,000 watts and runs on either gasoline (8 to 10 hours) or natural gas (or propane). The natural gas/propane units are generally stationary (though Leonard Wilfret has a propane towable unit at his farm). They are about the size of a large external central A/C unit and must be installed by a qualified electrician.

The best units have an automatic start feature that comes on when power has been interrupted for 30 seconds or more. They have sensors that detect when the main power is back and shut down to avoid problems when sending power back through the commercial electrical grid and potentially harming power company workers.

These units range in price from \$3,000 to \$7,000 plus installation. Again, it is critical that they be installed by a professional. You will need natural gas access (and probably a plumber to run the gas line) plus an electrician to install the necessary sensor equipment to insure that it turns on and turns off when necessary. Most come with extensive warranties, maintenance contracts, etc. plus have timers to run a periodic test each month and are available locally. *Barry Humphus*

CHAINSAW BASICS

In the aftermath of Hurricane Rita, many of us have used a chainsaw to remove limbs, trees and other debris from our property. In fact, I've been riding a couple of chainsaws for more than a week. As my hands tingle and my back hurts from using these machines, I thought I would find out more about what is available and what you should consider when you purchase a new one or replace the unit you now have.

Chainsaws were invented in the 1830's with the first practical ones manufactured in the 1920's but over the last ten years or so, they have improved greatly for the home user.

The modern consumer chainsaw consists of a motor (gasoline or electric powered), clutch mechanism, bar and cutting chain.

Gasoline powered units are the most common and range in price from \$125 to more than \$400. Manufacturers such as Briggs and Stratton, Poulan, Homelite, etc., sell a wide variety of units of differing capacities. Many of these manufacturers also make units for other resellers such as Lowes, Home Depot and Sears under their own labels.

You should buy only the saw you feel comfortable with. Chainsaw manufacturers are using newer and lighter materials to build more powerful but durable machines. You need to search for the machine that is comfortable to you and that will not fatigue you too quickly. Do not forget to consider purchasing an electric saw if you are only an occasional user.

The model and brand you buy should be able to be serviced should it fail in some way. Most small engine repair and sharpening shops can repair most chain saws. In fact you could go by and ask someone such as Ed McStay of the Nu-Way Saw Shop (2706 Ernest Street) regarding his recommendations based on his long experience at repairing chainsaws.

There are many brands of chain saws available on the open market and as with everything else, some are better than others. Keep in mind that Sears and others have various manufacturers build their saws for them and then put their own name on them, such as Craftsman. If you want cheap/inexpensive saws, go to Walmart or Kmart and purchase a Homelite, McCulloch or Poulan but remember the warning about warranty work.

I will not mention all of the brands available as I have not used them all, so can not rate them properly. My personal recommendations go with a Stihl or Husqvarna. They are both excellent chain saws and will last a long time, given proper maintenance, and are excellently engineered pieces of equipment for their weight to power/

chain speed ratio. The Stihl's require metric tools and the Husqvarna's do not, if you must work on them. The Husqvarna's are also easier to work on, if you ever have a need.

I recommend these because of two things I've observed. First, a survey of the National Forestry Association by About.Com indicated 41% of the members surveyed preferred the Husqvarna and 40% preferred the Stihl. You'll likely have to order the Husqvarna on-line or through mail order, but the Stihl's are available locally. Second, nearly everyone from the power company, tree trimmers and others I've seen on the roads of Lake Charles recently, have been using one or the other of these brands.

But consider what they are doing: cutting very large trees and limbs. In fact I saw a friend cut a chunk of pecan burl that was 33 inches across with his 30" Husqvarna (ah, the bowls I'll turn from this!).

If you've got less work to do with a chainsaw, consider one of the lower cost consumer units. They will do the job, but are slower and may not be as convenient to use as the higher end brands.

The key to keeping your saw running is to use it. Ed McStay gets lots of units in for repair (primarily fuel related) and most of these are in because the fuel has sat in the unit too long and is either no good or gummed up the carb.

You could drain the fuel each you put it away for a while or you could get a machine for which this will never happen: an electric chainsaw. The power and freedom of a gas-operated chainsaw often influences people to purchase a saw that they just don't need. Gas powered saws can be heavy, hard to start, high maintenance and expensive nightmares for people who only occasionally use chainsaws.

For these reasons many people just don't need the expense or power of a gas chainsaw. If you mainly use saws around the house you need to reconsider your purchase to include a good electric chainsaw first. Electric saws have less power and will increase your sawing time.

Electrics are not designed to cut and buck large trees and are tethered to a 100 foot power cord. But they are lighter in weight, lower in vibration, quieter and safer. Plus they take much less maintenance and are cheaper in price. Remington, McCulloch and Sears units are \$65 to \$90 ranging in rated power from 1.5hp to 5hp. The one I use is a Remington 3hp and was the one I used the most after Rita. With the Poulan, I had to wear hot ear muffs and after a while, the vibration just about numbed my hands and arms. I could go an hour or more with the electric. But for any electric, you need power — see the previous article on generators. *Barry Humphus.*