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MARCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

George Kuffel was our host this month at his fine shop. We had both a good turn-out and several guests. The subject of the meeting was tips on tuning up your band saw and table saw. We do this every couple of years simply because people forget what's important and for the safety of regular tuning of these powerful tools.

The first thing to do with a band saw is to remove the cover and check the tires (after disconnecting power). If you have had problems with the blade running off the tires, look for a couple of possible causes. First, remove the blade and thoroughly clean the tires. Spin the wheels by hand and use a fine sand paper to clean of any wood residue and dust that may have accumulated. Check for tire wear. If a groove has formed on the tire, you should replace it with either rubber or urethane tires.

If there is no groove on the tire, remount the blade, set the tension to the manufacturers specification and once again, spin the wheels by hand. The blade should seek the center of the tire crown. If it does not, you may need to adjust the tracking screw (generally in the center of the upper wheel). The adjustment screw allows you to orient the upper and lower wheels such that the blade will track correctly on the crown of the wheel as they spin.

Adjusting the wheel tracking is required only rarely, so once you're happy with the tracking, take a look at the guides and rollers.

Common to all band saws are blade guides and rollers. These keep the blade in position as wood is cut with the saw. Unfortunately, there is a tendency for the blade to wander as wood is being cut by the blade. Keeping the guides close to the back of the blade is probably the most important part in avoiding blade wander. You do this by adjusting the blade guides against the blade in back of the teeth. Allowing the teeth to come in contact with the guides can ruin a blade if the guides are made of steel or just wear away the guides if they are made of wood or fiberglass.

Speaking of wooden guides, you can make your own out of just about any hardwood such as oak or maple, but they wear more quickly than the fiberglass ones. Choose a high pitch wood if possible such as rosewood or ligum vitea as these will provide a natural lubricant (then you can have fun cleaning the pitch off your table saw blade after cutting them!).

For table saws, we discussed the basic check-out of belts and pulleys. Dick Troth mentioned that he has good success with the link belts and that his saw ran smoother after installation. George Kuffel has a set that he'll get around to installing soon.

One demonstration was being certain that your blade is in line with the mitre slot. A number of techniques can be used to do this including using a caliper or a dial gauge (very accurate but requires a special jig or commercial version). A simple way and good enough for about 1° of alignment is to use a machinist's square riding in the slot. Just move the ruler so that it just touches a tooth on the blade. Mark the tooth with a felt pen, rotate the blade forward and push the square along the slot to see if the same tooth just touches the ruler again. If it does, you are in pretty good shape. If not, you'll have to slightly loosen the bolts holding down the trunnion and tap the trunnion lightly to achieve the best alignment, then re-tighten the bolts. Sometimes you have to do this a couple of times as the re-tightening will alter the alignment. ALWAYS do this with the saw unplugged.

As shown in last month's Newsletter, you can use a common framing square to set your mitre gauge. This is very accurate as long as the framing square is accurate (drop your framing square on the shop floor and you'd be surprised how far off it can get). Just align two numbers on the square (such as 5") with the mitre slot while the body of the square is against the loose mitre gauge. When the mark for the numbers are aligned with the slot, tighten the mitre hold down and you're done.

Coming Up . . . Shop of Bubba Cheramie on turning with Bill Berry, 9:00 a.m., April 10, 2004

HELP OUT OUR MEMBER

We got a call from the Louisiana Department of Rehabilitation Services the other day about long time member Lee Frazier. Lee is in need of a kidney and pancreas transplant. What he needs is a set aside for nonmedical expenses that will help pay for travel during and after the surgery, meals and extended stays in Houston for Lola and himself.

To do this, a fund-raiser will be held on Friday, June 11, 2004 at 5:00 p.m. at the Habibi Temple (2928 Pack Road, Lake Charles). What we'll do is have an auction, dinner (I am assured that there will be no \$9 hot dogs!) and live entertainment. The cost is \$7.50 which will include a meal, soft drink, live entertainment and an opportunity to enter the bidding on auction items.

The auction will have both a "silent auction" for many items and a "live auction" for larger or more expensive items including a "We Love Wood" session.

The idea is that Lake Charles Woodworker members can contribute, either financially by bidding or materially by donating one or more items that you have made to the auction.

Next month, we'll have more information regarding tickets, but we wanted to let you know about this upcoming event as soon as possible. For even more information please feel free to contact Tom Spindler, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, 3616 Kirkman St., 475-8038 (office), 478-8301 (home) or email him at tspind@juno.com.

A SPITCOAT FINISH

Spitcoating will give a professional "sprayed on" look to your project. It may look long and hard to do but it's not. It easy, fool proof, and durable. Additionally, spitcoating will allow you to re-coat whenever the finish needs a quick touch-up. Since the coats dry within a few minutes, you can put on a coat and not have to worry about dust settling in the finish or even worse... fingerprints!

Brush on a full strength coat of gloss polyurethane (oil based) and let it dry. This is the base coat from which you will build upon.

Lightly sand with 220 grit or higher to remove any dust in the finish and wipe down the project with a tack cloth. Then brush on a second full strength coat.

Lightly sand the project again and wipe it down with a tack cloth.

Dump some of the polyurethane into a glass jar and add an equal amount of mineral spirits (you can also add several drops or up to a cap full of Japan drier if you want to speed up the drying process).

Take 3 paper towels and wad them into a ball. Wrap a clean, unprinted cotton T shirt around the ball of paper towels. This is the "applicator".

Dunk the applicator into the glass jar and press the applicator against the jar side to squeeze out any excess poly-

urethane.

Wipe the polyurethane on to the surface in one direction with the grain. Start and finish each pass in one long and even stroke. Quickly return to the top and wipe a new path of poly trying not to overlap the previous path by more than a half inch. Reload the applicator with polyurethane as needed. You want it to put down a wet, flowing coat (but not so wet that it leaves heavy ridge lines.

Continue doing this until entire work piece is covered. DO NOT reapply the poly until the previous coat is dry even if it looks streaky. Failure to follow this step will screw up the finish.

The first coat may take an hour to dry. After it is dry, lightly drag a straight razor blade along the grain of the wood at a 70 degree angle. This will pull up any dust flecks without removing the finish. On curved areas where the razor blade will not go, use #0000 steel wool. Then wipe the project again with a tack cloth.

The subsequent coats will dry within 30 minutes (or less). Apply at least 4 coats.

Even if you wish to have a flat or semi-gloss sheen, it's best to use gloss polyurethane as it is a chemically stronger finish than semi-gloss and flat. To bring the gloss down to flat, use #0000 steel wool. To bring the gloss it down to semi-gloss, use rotten stone powder mixed in water and a wad of T shirt to rub it down. To really bring out the gloss, wait 2 or 3 weeks and buff the surfaces with a fine automotive finish such as 3M Perfect-It polish. *Edited from www.joewoodworker.com*

LCWW WEB SITE UPDATE

While we have many other duties (I'll admit, mostly honeydues and teaching computer science to less than sentient beings — also known as college students) we are also continue to update the Lake Charles Woodworkers web site with as much information as possible. So recently, we added some advertisers to the Search The Web page. The idea is that we can generate a few dollars to help the Club.

Northern Tool has power and hand tools, generators, pressure washers and accessories and much plus widely available products from Jet, Delta, Makita and others as well as their own brands and mostly clearance items including hand tools.

Corner Hardware carries Power Tools, Hand Tools plus Lawn and Garden, Plumbing, Paint and even Flooring. They are a general Home Improvement supplier with very good prices.

The other advertiser is Yardiack who carries some 10,000 yard and garden items that you can use when you are not woodworking.

All you need to do is go to the Search The Web page and click on the advertiser logos and you'll go to their web sites. Please check them out and buy something.

SHOW AND TELL THIS MONTH

There was a whole work bench full of wonderful items brought by members this month.

George Kuffel showed off his latest hand-made tool: a chisel plane. The body is red oak and



the iron is from Hock.

Kyle Andrepont is getting into the woodworking craft by doing something we should all do and that's practice. He showed us some of the joint samples he's recently made up.

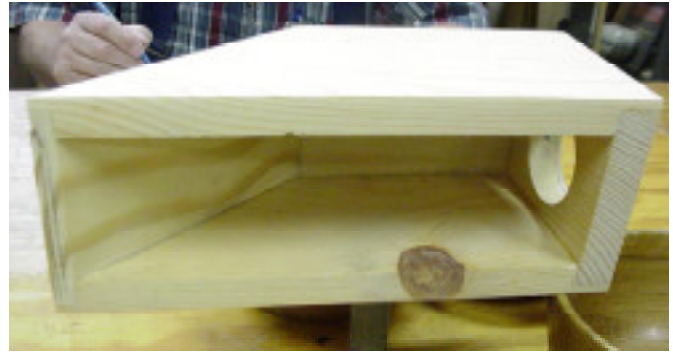
Lee Frazier has had a lathe for years but his normal cabinet and bench work has prevented him from exploring it more. Lee found that he had a large chunk of cypress that was not suitable for his regular work and turned it into a stack of bowls.



Ed Blessing is obviously hard at work building items for his grand children. The latest for

Seth and Micah is The Blessing Brothers flying rocker. Ed made the rocker from a plan he has but modified it to look and work better.

Something we all need to do more of is dust collection. Gary Rock can now keep his shop a little



cleaner with a collector for his lathe. A one inch pipe screwed into a floor flange allows him to position the collector behind the work while a hole cut to fit a shop vac hose keeps the chips and dust controlled as he turns. Gary also brought a few bowls to see. Two red oak and one gum were in the collection this month.



Of course, you can see these and many more on the new and improved Lake Charles Woodworkers web site at www.lcwoodworkers.com.

LITTLE KNOWN SANDING HAZARD

Thermite is used to weld large pieces of metal together such as railway rails or bridge components. It is also used as an incendiary. Thermite is composed of powdered aluminum and iron oxide. The aluminum acts as a reducing agent when it reacts with the iron oxide. The result is molten iron, white hot aluminum oxide and large amounts of heat and smoke.

Grind some aluminum on your sander then follow this (but don't clean the aluminum off the disk or belt) with some rusty steel or iron a day or so later. What you can then have is a thermite explosion complete with a about a 2-3 foot diameter ball of flame and lots of white smoke. If you do this, be sure to have the fire department standing by as well as a reservation at a local hospital. *Barry Humphus*

