All the News that fits

Lake Charles Woodworkers Club, Inc. January 2017

Mentoring Program - If you have a project, a problem in any woodworking area, these members have volenteered to help. Give them a call. Jeff Cormier: 582-3278; George Kuffel: 478-2707; John Marcon: 478-0646; Gary Rock: 433-1679; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Trouth: 583-2683. Each have years of experience and knowledge.

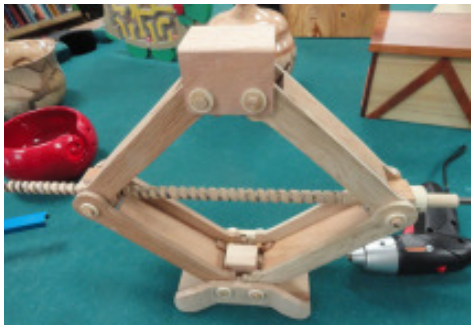
December Meeting Highlights

For the first time, we met at the Stellar Marie Seaman's Center in Lake Charles thanks to our Treasurer, Patrick LaPoint.

We had a few guests including Glenn Ward and one of John Griffith's students who's name I did not get. Don Elfret has had some health issues and could not attend and it was reported that Dick Trouth is doing better.

Patrick described the facility as the meeting began. It provides a break for merchant marines as they come into the Port of Lake Charles with comfortable seating, a full service kitchen, reading material and games. In addition, the Center has Internet access for folks to contact their families and friends. Patrick said that the Center was established some 54 years ago in 1962 and has expanded a couple of times. The Center also has vehicles to provide transportation to area stores and other facilities. It was also a great place for our annual holiday meeting and feast. Please thank Patrick the next time you see him.

For Show and Tell Mr. Eltee Thibodeaux stepped up firstwith a CNC cut ball chase game for his grandchildren. Pie Sonnier brought us a really cool car sissor jack made of wood. While you won't be able to jack up your car with this, it was fully functional.



J.W. Anderson had a nice push stick he made for his band saw plus a nice clock of sycamore and a neat lidded box of cherry and mystery wood from the Port.

Steve Thomas had a spalted oak bowl with wonderful figure and a 'yarn' bowl of cypress finished with analine dye. He plans a couple of other yarn bowls of dogwood finished in multiple coats of poly. Steve had also done a segmented bowl (171 individual pieces) in a dashhound motif of old walnut and mahogany. finished in poly.

Patrick LaPoint had a name plack (that Eltee had cut) and a religious scrowl work and inlay for the Center that John Griffith had made for him.

Gary Rock showed off a 'water' bowl of ash with a mulberry wood cup and ladle that was hand carved. Bubba Cherimie showed off a turning steady rest of aluminum using wheels from a skate board. Bubba said that the welding was done by Southside Welding.

Reminder for Annual Dues

It is that time to pay your annual dues as a member of the Lake Charles Woodworkers Club. The cost is only $20 and provides you and your family to attend, take part and benifit as a member. Your dues pays for our monthly refreshments and this Newsletter. Please see Patrick LaPoint with your payment.

Comming Up . . . Saturday, January 14 at 9:00 A.M. at the Stines Store meeting room on Nelson Rd. in Lake Charles.

Turn Off Your Stove - Automatically

Member Bob Theaux gave me a call recently with the question of what you do with your kitchen and cooking a nice meal if you go out to your shop and start working on something important and simply forget what was on the stove. While you could simply forgo the cooking and that potential wonderful meal, there is another way.

Ops - that has likely happened to more than one of us. I recall that both my wife and I went to a meeting a few years ago and shortly after it had started, she looked at me and asked "Did we turn off the beans on the range?" No. I rushed home and saved our kitchen and possibly our home from a fire.

Some very modern and expensive rangetops have a timer you can set or you can set some sort of alarm (and hopefully remember to take it to your shop) and there are some other methods. You could tell a family member to watch the stove, giving your meal a stir as needed. But I found a possible better solution at Bob's request.

Most ovens these days have a timer built in so you can set a particular time for cooking a roast, chicken or other meal. Few range tops have such a device. But there are solutions.

I looked at the Internet for such devices and quickly found several. While there are several designs, the most useful simply plug in to the electrical outlet of your range top (220V) and your range top plugs into the module unit. A cable (typically UBS) goes from the module to a sensor that its mounted at eye level. By the way, these are available for natural gas installations as well.

For electrical ranges, you first must determine if your range uses a three prong plug or a four prong plug. As these are generally 220V connectors, they are not the standard grounded plug for normal household use and are specially shaped to accept 220V connections only. Check this before you purchase one of these devices.

Note that some ranges are hard wired. This means that your range top has been wired directly into your home electrical system by an electrician. If this is the case with your installation, you MUST get an electrician to remove the connection and replace it with the appropriate safety module. Unless you are a licensened electrician or really, <u>really</u> know what you are doing with a 220V wired connection, do not do this yourself. Really.

The control part of the systems work at the eye level using an ultrasonic or infrared sensor. What this does is to detect you in front of the range. Once set on automatic at what ever time you set for the cut-off time, it senses a person at the range and continues to work cooking your food. If there is not someone present after a preset time, it cuts off the range power. This is easily reset once you get tired of doing what ever you were building in your shop and you can continue with the meal preparation.

But here is the deal: do not leave stuff cooking on any range top unless you are attentive and can be about and aware. A few of us are at an age where things can be forgotten even when it comes to that delicious gumbo on the range top. Be safe.

As mentioned, most of the units are easy to install. Unplug your range, plug in the module, plug in the range power and mount the sensing device above the range in an appropriate area. Once the stove has been automatically turned off, some units only require the person to return to the kitchen for the range to come back on, whereas others must be manually turned off and back on again.

Depending on the manufacturer's instructions, the sensor must be placed either to the SIDE of the stove (e.g., under an upper cabinet or on the wall) or ABOVE the stove (e.g., on the rangehood, wall, or under the cabinet). The sensor must have an unobstructed view of the user.

The vendors that I reviewed are: CookStop, HomeSense and Stove Guard (gas or electric).

CookStop: Sensor timer is automatic – set it only once and the unit remembers the programmed time. (Timer only begins to count down if the person leaves the room.) and the sensor can be reprogrammed for a longer time as needed. http://www.cookstop.com/home.html. 408-929-8808.

HomeSense: This device will automatically turn the stove off after the preprogrammed 8 minute time period if the person leaves the kitchen and forgets to return. If a person turns the stove on, leaves the kitchen, and forgets to return within the default 6 minute warning time period, the device begins a series of beeping alerts and flashing lights for a two minute period. https://www.stoveguardintl.com/ 877-785-9901.

Stove Gaurd: Sensor timer is automatic – set it only once (range is from 1 to 39 minutes) and the unit remembers the programmed time. (Timer only begins to count down if the person leaves the room.). Sensor timer can be easily reprogrammed if a longer cooking time is needed – say, for a holiday meal. Note: This product only works with modern 4-prong stove outlets and if you have a three prong, you will need an electrician. It also works with natural gas ranges and for this, you will need a plumber to make a safe connection. https://www.stoveguardintl.com/ 888-607-8683. Be safe.

Half-Blind Dovetails and More

Dovetail jigs come with a template or "comb," with a series of "fingers" that you guide a router along to cut the dovetails.

A standard 1/2 " template works in conjunction with a 1/2 " dovetail bit, and typically has fingers spaced 7/8" apart. However, I've seen some templates with 1" spacing.

Some manufacturers offer optional templates with smaller finger spacing. For example, with my Porter-Cable jig, I have occasionally used a 1/4 " template that has fingers spaced 7/16 " apart. Measure the spacing and make a note of what you have done.

The one I work with is the Porter-Cable unit but there are many examples from many suppliers such as Rockler, Leigh, Akeda, Woodstock and VRS. Most can be purchased at local suppliers or on the Internet. These vary in cost from $90 to $175 depending on your interest and check book.

Make the width of your workpieces an increment of the finger spacing. For example, a template with 7/8 " spacing will work nicely with 3-1/2 "-, 4-3/8 "-, or 5-1/4 "-wide pieces. That way, your workpiece will have equal half dovetails at the top and bottom of the joint. This also leaves a full tail correctly positioned for a drawer bottom. Plan to center a 1/4 "-wide, 1/4 "-deep bottom-holding groove on this tail after you machine the dovetails.

By the way, there are many possibilities for error in all of this. Try to do some of this on scrap at first if you are new to dove-tail jigs. In that way, you will save some expense with the nice wood you purchased for the final project.

Most likely, your dovetail jig will have a set of stops on both ends that the edges of the workpieces butt against. Set these according to which template you are using. Of course, you should review the manual that came with the jig and particularly the safety information.

Now, select your stock and plane or resaw it if necessary. Drawers typically have 1/2 "-thick fronts and 1/2 "-thick sides and backs. With a Porter-Cable jig (what I have in my shop), the 1/2 " template requires workpieces at least 1/2 " thick. The 1/4 " template works with drawer fronts at least 3/8 " thick, and sides at least 5/16 " thick. Cut your workpieces to size, making sure they are square, and arrange them . Mark the top edges and number all of the matching inside corners.

Grab two workpieces with same-numbered corners. Place them into the jig with the numbered ends together, the drawer side positioned vertically, and the front or back sitting horizontally. The inside (numbered) surface of the drawer parts should be facing away from the jig, visible to you. The workpieces should be in contact with the stops, and tight against each other, with the face grain of the horizontal workpiece flush with the end grain of the vertical piece.

To speed things up, place workpieces on both ends of the jig. This only works if the width of your pieces is less than half of the jig's capacity. Pay close attention to this

Mount the correct guide bushing into your router's base. My Porter-Cable jig requires a bushing with a 7/16 " outside diameter (O.D.) when using a 1/2 " template, and 5/13 " O.D. bushing for its 1/4 " template on my Porter-Cable router. Secure the necessary dovetail bit, and use a known accurate metal rule to adjust its height according to the instruction manual for your jig system.

Perform the following steps with scrap stock that's of the same dimensions as your workpieces.

After you're satisfied with the results, cut your actual workpieces. Working from left to right, move the router in and out of each of the template fingers. Go slowly, especially near the ends of the cut, to ensure clean results. Remove the two workpieces and check their fit with one another. The dovetailed ends should slide together with firm hand pressure or light tapping with a rubber mallet. If the joint requires more force than that, or won't go together at all, decrease the height of the bit and repeat your test cuts. If the dovetails fit together too sloppily, increase the bit height.

If you run into grain splintering near the end of the cut, add a scrap piece at the ends. The scrap may splinter, but it will help keep the workpiece clean if the two are tightly butted together.

Now, check if the dovetails go together so that the face grain of the drawer sides aligns flush with the end grain of the front or back. If they won't align flush, you need to increase the length of the dovetail cuts by adjusting the templates in, away from the router. If the dovetail cuts are too long and the workpieces go more than a hair past flush, adjust the templates out, toward the router. With my Porter-Cable jig, I have done this by loosening a holding screw and micro-adjusting a setscrew in or out with a hex key. Your system may have some similar capability but always read the manual (and as I say to my computer science students: RTFM). You know what I mean.

As various dove-tail jigs work in slightly different ways, it is very important to review all of the material and instructions that you recieve with the unit.

Fortunately on the Internet, there are many great videos on Youtube.com to help you get the best results. Take the time to watch a few of these as you will learn from them, do so with greater accuracy and in particular, do so with greater safety. Be safe.

Barry Humphus

JanuaryMeeting Location

We have the wonderful opportunity to meet at the Stines Lake Charles kocation at 4501 Nelson Road Please enter the store and go to the back left in the store to the meeting room.

To get there go South on Nelson Road in Lake Charles going from I-10 or I-210 and tuen into the parking lot. Go to the back of the main entrance to the very back to the meeting room to find us.

Please take an opportunity to explore Stines before you leave to find the items for your shop or home that you may need. As always, thank the folks at Stines as you check out.

Home Building Materials
Sulphur, La.

Stine

January 2017

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