

Jeff Cormier, President
Dick Hopes, Treasurer

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Barry Humphus, Editor, Bubba Ceramic
George Kuffel, John Marcon, Chuck Middleton

Mentoring Program - If you have a project, a problem in any woodworking area, these members have volunteered to help. Give them a call. Jeff Cormier: 582-3278; George Kuffel: 478-2707; John Marcon: 478-0646; Chuck Middleton: 625-3134; Gary Rock: 433-1679; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Truth: 583-2683. Each has years of experience and knowledge.

April Meeting Highlights

The shop of Pie Sonnier was our meeting place this month and the joy of Joy's biskets was a hit.

Jeff Cormier mentioned this month's safety alert - falls. According to OSHA, falls are the number one cause of persoanl injury in both commercial/industrial settings as well as the home including workshops. The tendancy is to lay down on the shop floor, tools, lumber and other items during a project. And of course, these can become tripping hazards in a hurry. Of course, best practice is to clean up these items as soon as practicle, especially when the job is complete. But when you walk into your shop each time, give the floor a glance to make sure there will be nothing under foot. If it is at night, turn on the shop lights and don't presume that you can navigate across the shop floor in the dark (having triped over a short stack of turning billets I forgot to re-locate up one evening convinced me of this) safely.

In general business, it was mentioned that our annual BBQ, while not a fund raiser, lost a considerable amount of money because of the catering costs. In the prior two years, food had been purchased precooked and prepared from Sam's and other sources which saved considerably over the catering services. Someone mentioned that The Woodsmith Shop has started a TV program. It is available in the Lake area but only on KLTLDT2 (digital station). However, if you have a high speed Internet connection, you can watch individual features from the shows by going to www.woodsmithshop.com.

For Show and Tell, Jim Couvillion broght us a large stack of catalogs from the Lee Valley & Veritas folks. Included were their 2008/2009 Hardware catalog (knobs, pulls, hinges) as well as the 2009 Fine Woodworking Tools Main (your basic wookworking toy) catalog. The Fine Woodworking catalog is also a great idea resource with excellent product descriptions to the point that you could fabricate some of your own (see the later article on a drawing bow).

Ray Kebodeau showed us a couple of bow kits he got on eBay and said that they are pretty good, complete with all you need (except for Ray's expertise) for making a good bow. The material was epay, brazilian walnut and bambo.

Dick Truth had a great idea regarding wood for bows. As the wood must be cut exactly along the grain (out of grain cuts will cause the bow to fail). The idea is to rive the wood instead of cutting it with a saw. Riving follows the grain of the wood (just like spiltting a log with a woodsman's axe).

Mr. Thibodeaux brought us a Fireman's Cross he did with his sroll saw along with a couple of others including a scroll basket and an Easter egg basket.

Tom Bergstedt brought us a pepper mill from black cherry. He said the CG mill mechanism is expensive but well worth it as it does a fine job and is easy to mount in the turning. The mechanism is available from Woodworkers Supply and others. Tom also showed a tool handle turned from ash. He asked about the head fitting and several folks suggested copper or brass pipe of the proper deminsion would do and is widely available.

J.W. Anderson is experimenting with tools that measure and he has built a measuring wheel made of oak. Bob Theaux brought us a fine golden oak night stand constructed from the Woodsmith Number 76 issue.

Jack Stegal's guest, Chris Smith showe off some of the CNC custom molding work he does at his commercial shop. He had a cross of ash and a few more items of walnut, curly maple and leopard wood. His CNC router will do a 25" x 25" area. The final piece was a 'Last Supper' scene that was 13" x 25" in cherry. Chris also won our door prize this month - obviously he needs to be a member now.

Bridget Garrido of Acadian Hearing was also our guest and did a presentation of hearing protection. She sited the statistics regarding sustained high volume sounds and what that can do to reduce audio accuity over time. She said that they can produce custom ear-fitted sound protection with 14-16 db reduction. She also described some commercial products including Cabel's electronically reducing ear muff system. The key is to get a base-line hearing test and then choose what is best for your work. The tests cost \$70-150 - much less than the \$1,400 to \$5,000 hearing aides of today.

Coming Up . . . Shop of Jeff Cormier, 9:00 a.m., Saturday, May 9. Don't know what we'll do, but Jeff is a great presenter.

Buying used WW Tools

Buying used woodworking tools is a great way to stretch your wood shop setup budget. Used woodworking equipment can still have many years of useful life, and can be found at auctions, garage sales, in newspaper classified ads or even online. Here are a few tips for choosing power tools that are gently used, not past their prime.

Check Out Used Woodworking Tools in Person

Always look over the tools before buying them, unless the price is so small that you can afford to be on the losing end of the bargain. Used tools can sometimes fetch high prices that don't really match the useful life left in the equipment, and sometimes the owner is more focused on recouping the cost than selling the tool for what it's currently worth. Looking at the used tools in person will help you evaluate whether the price matches the condition of the equipment.

Know Thy Woodworking Tools

A little prior research goes a long way when buying used woodworking tools. If you're looking for a used table saw, find out what new table saws cost. Check online to see if the tools you want tend to depreciate quickly or hold their value. Sometimes you'll find that it's a better deal to just buy a new tool. Also learn about the common sizes available, particularly on saws. Finding a great deal on an 8-inch miter saw won't help if you really need a 10-inch miter saw.

Look for Rust and Wear

At first glance, you should be able to tell whether a used woodworking tool has been taken care of properly. Is the machine rusted or overly grimy? A little bit of wear from years of use is normal, but if the body or moving parts are very rusty, that can be a signal of an improperly maintained machine.

Move It, Lock It, Shake It

Turn any moving parts to see what happens. Do they move freely as they are supposed to? Overly tight moving parts may mean that you'll have to replace bearings or other parts, which increases the total cost of the equipment. Check to see that adjustable parts move easily but lock tight. A table saw with a loose fence won't give you accurate cuts. Make note of any broken parts and adjust your price accordingly.

Look Inside

Open up the housing of power tools if possible and check for buildup of grit, grime or old lubricants. Be sure the machine's interior has been well-maintained, too. Buildup

makes the motor work harder and increases wear, which decreases the life of the equipment.

Check Cutting Surfaces

If you're looking at used saws or other cutting tools, check the blades for cracking, warping, nicking or other signs of overly heavy use. A worn blade is to be expected on older saws, but you will want to replace saw blades if they are damaged, to protect yourself and the saw.

Turn It On

Give any used power tools a trial run if possible. Listen to the sound of the motor. Does it turn over smoothly? Does it make grating or grinding noises? Motor replacements can be costly and aren't often worthwhile if you're looking for a bargain. Make sure the motor sounds good if you want a used tool that's still full of life.

Safety Check

Be sure that all of the safety guards are still on the used tools and that the safety devices work. Don't buy used woodworking equipment if the safety guards have been removed or are inoperable. Some older used tools may not have belt guards or safety devices at all. In that case, you'll want to figure the cost of building or buying belt guards or other safety parts.

Recommended First Aid Kit

A chair: If the unthinkable happens, you are probably going to need to sit down to keep from falling down.

Mirror: Necessary for inspection of injured areas that are not readily visible, like your eyeball.

Smelling salts: This is just in case I am lucky enough to have anyone around when I pass out - really, what first aid kit is complete without them?

Band-Aids: You need a big box with many assorted sizes, especially if you are anything like me. I am always cutting something.

Butterfly bandages: These are just in case you get a bigger cut that requires more serious attention. Butterfly closures can close a larger cut and hold it together while the flesh knits back together.

Knuckle bandages: I found some of these at a safety supply store (Vallen). They are great for those knuckle busting incidents

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Antiseptic wipes: Especially when you are really getting things done, these help when you have no running water handy. You can clean small cuts with them. Big cuts should be cleaned at a sink.

Antibiotic ointment: You need a good ointment for treating cuts.

Burn cream: This just works better than anything else on burns. Remember, if the burn is large, don't put anything but a cool damp cloth on it. If it is very large, a dry cloth - and get to the hospital, NOW!

Big bottle of beta dine: This is used to flush out cuts and sanitize them (pharmacy or from a Vet).

Pain relievers: For head or other aches. A headache may be just the distraction you don't need to cause you to make a mistake.

Gauze pads: These aid in cleaning wounds and used as dressing for larger wounds - have lots of these.

Roll of gauze: These are good for wrapping and putting pressure on bleeding wounds. they are great for holding gauze pads on larger wounds too.

Water proof first aid tape: Have a couple rolls for the gauze and labeling small containers and such.

Triangular bandages: One or two of these are great in an emergency, or to ready the patient for transport or support a strained limb after moving around 1 inch MDF or something

Tweezers and scalpel: for splinters. Scissors: for cutting gauze.

Trauma dressing: These are available at surgery supply places - they are large bandages, about 4'x4' or 6'x6' that are very thick and absorbent and have several feet of wrapping bandages attached. These helped me out more than you know once.

Instant cold pack: Use for pulled muscles etc. or keeping amputated bits cold en route to the hospital, especially if you can't get to ice in time.

One gallon plastic baggie: Used for carrying amputated bits in while en-route to the hospital. I am not kidding here. Just last year a contractor in Pennsylvania cut his entire hand off in a sliding compound miter saw. The bag has to be big enough for every contingency. Try to wash the amputated part before placing it in the bag. However, if you are unable to, I am sure the doctors will understand.

There is one final thing to need to do. Read the instructions that comes with your First Aid Kit the day you get it. Trying to follow first aid directions while or someone else is under a great deal of stress from an injury is not the time to do this. Read the directions.

The Ways of Wood

The standing tree has three parts: roots, trunk and crown. The roots take up moisture containing raw materials and anchor the tree, the trunk transports raw materials to, and supports, the crown; leaves in the crown, activated by sunlight, convert the raw materials into nutrients - which are passed down the trunk to sustain the life and growth of the tree.

Woodworkers convert the trunk into lumber - the most convenient of natural materials - but trees do not grow solely for the convenience of the Lake Charles Woodworkers. To our advantage, they grow long to hold the crown in sunlight and thick to support the crown against wind and the elements.

The inherent beauty of color and grain, the smell, the accessibility to simple cutting tools are favorable to us as well. But trees also grow twisted, branched, damaged and diseased because of climate, location, geology, the deprivations of man and animals and the nature of its species. All these factors, favorable and unfavorable, show up as characteristics in the wood we use for making wooden object of beauty and functionality.

Still to be considered is the most important characteristic of all: after wood has been dried and converted into useable parts from the tree, it changes size according to the amount of moisture in the air.

In other words, wood is a dimensionally unstable material. No other factor plays such an important role in the way we design and create things made of solid wood. For example, the parts of a cabinet must hold together and at the same time be allowed to shrink and expand. The most outstanding example of a dimensionally stable unit composed of pieces that are dimensionally unstable is the frame and panel.

To better understand the nature of wood tissue, examine a small block of oak 1 in. x 1 in. x 4 in. If you magnified the block 100 times, you would see the elements or individual units which comprise the wood. The block is largely composed of elongated fibers and vessels which support the tree and transport nutrients. Our block, in fact, looks somewhat like a box of drinking straws. However, unlike straws, the vessels and fibers are irregular. They vary in diameter, in length, in orientation and in wall thickness.

Finally, if the surrounding air contains more moisture than the block, it will take up moisture until the moisture content of air and block are the same. This moisture does not occupy the cavities but rather permeates the walls of the fibers and vessels. As the individual walls expand a minute amount, the block as a whole expands in its width and thickness but not in its length. Keeping the facts in mind will make you a better woodworker. *Barry Humphus.*