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JULY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Eltee Thibodeaux (Mr. Thibodeaux to all of us) hosted our July meeting at his shop in Westlake. The shop is large, having three rooms with one dedicated to Eltee's favorite woodworking activity — scrollwork.

Gary Rock started off by reminding us of the need to keep hydrated during woodworking and yardwork. The Summer heat can deplete you of needed water and electrolites during most activities. While water can help, some of the better drinks you should consume will be products like GatorAid or their generic equal. Water and electrolite depletion can cause you to faint which is not a good thing to do in a shop full of sharp tools. Gary mentioned that many fluids we may drink, such as coffee, tea or even your blood pressure medication are diuretics and remove water from your system.

George Giltner did a great looking pecan platter for the Bring Back Item which RoyLee LeBlanc won. This is the second time RoyLee has won so get him to pick your Lottery numbers! Guest Ray Kebodeaux won the Door Prize this month, a nice combination ratchet screw driver set.

Speaking of guests, Ray Kebodeaux, Bob Loomis, Elwood Manual and Jack Stegal joined us for the meeting. All four are now members.

Jim Couvillon showed a cane carved of mimosa wood. John Perry noted that while this wood is very hard, it also has a relatively low burning point so cutting it with power tools can easily cause burn marks.

Theresa Wilfret brought us a pen turned out of walnut while Lee Frazier showed off a really neat motorcycle puzzle

plus an outstanding hall seat made of cypress. Lee used a Deft urathane finish. Pie Sonnier brought a backhoe and bucket tracktor vehicle made of boadarc and cherry.

John Perry showed an example and discussed how he uses a Sears molding cutter to not only dress up window frames but to replicate older molding patterns.

Tom Bergsteadt had photos of his antique woodworkers bench. It is a French design by Roupo. The bench came with only one of the original hold-downs and Tom purchased another from Gramecy. Tom pointed out the substantial difference between the old heavy hold-down and the more modern one.

J.W. Anderson brought a neat little antique drill press that still works quite well. Someone said this must have been an early "cordless" drill press. In fact, the Millers Falls Company made hundreds of different hand drills, braces and planes from 1868 through 1982. In 1982 it was purchased from Ingersol-Rand by the company that eventually became Gorilla Glue. But Gorilla Glue couldn't make it work so shut it down in 1983. If you are interested in old tools, go to www.oldtoolheaven.com for a comprehensive history of this company. The site also has links to other old tool resources as well.

Gary Rock showed off three small goblets including one of cedar, cottonwood and elm. He used a Deft wipeon urathane for the finish.

Elwood Manual has a Delta 10" contractor saw for sale. It has a 1-1/2 hp 110/230 motor, Unifence and mobile base. Call Elwood at 477-3186 if you have an interest.

Also, Bubby Cheramie has a woodworkers bench for sale with two working vises, dogs and hold-downs. Bubby realized he hadn't used it for a some time and it was taking up valuable space in his shop. Call Bubba at 912-9030 and make an offer.

Don't forget the annual BBQ coming up on Wednesday, October 17 at 6:00 p.m. at the PPG Family Center in Westlake. Once again, tickets are just \$10 per person for lots of great food and more. See Dick Hopes, Gary Rock or Barry Humphus for tickets.

Coming Up . . . Saturday August 11, 9:00 a.m. at the shop of J.W. Anderson with Show & Tell.



BATTERY REPLACEMENTS

Several members have asked about sources of replacement batteries for shop tools. I wrote an article a few months back that gave one source but have since found several.

With the cost of replacement batteries for drills, power saws and the like exceeding the original cost of the tool (with one or two batteries), it has not been particularly economical to buy the replacement batteries from the power tool manufacturer. The fact is that the tool producer does not manufacture the batteries. They simply contract a specialty producer to provide batteries to specification.

Some folks just buy a new power tool as the cost of a battery set is higher than the cost of a new tool. For example, my HVAC contractor does this. When the batteries fail (won't hold or take a charge) on his Ryobi drill/driver, he simply buys a new one. For example, a new Ryobi 12 volt cordless drill is about \$50 with one battery at Home Depot and Lowes. A set of two replacement batteries is \$65 at the same stores. You can do the math. However, it is true that replacement batteries from the OEM supplier have gone down over the last year or so. Still, if you are as frugal as me, you look for better prices.

Another issue is that the OEM replacements are generally less powerful than third-party replacement batteries. For example, a Ryobi replacement battery is rated at 1,300 milliamps and recharges in 3 to 6 hours. A replacement battery not from the original manufacturer may cost 10-20% less, provide higher performance and charge faster.

Still another issue is how you use them. If you are doing a job with your battery powered tool, a common practice is to put one of your batteries in the charger in anticipation of using it as the first one dies. Too often, you forget that charging battery and it stays in the charger for days, weeks or longer. This is very bad for the life of the battery. As mentioned in the April 2007 issue, the charging electricity causes the charging battery to lose its ability to recharge if left in the charging state for an extended time.

Most OEM charges have a light that blinks when charging. As soon as the light stops blinking and is steady, pull the battery out of the charger.

This helps in two ways: the battery is charged and you won't have a fire in your shop due to over-charging.

The following is a short list of web sites and phone numbers of third-party battery replacement sources and covers most popular products:

www.lowcostbatteries.com 877-462-2883

www.camera-batteries.net 877-313-7867

www.batteryweb.com 877-746-2288

www.abatterypack.com 877-313-7867

www.batteryprice.com 800-634-8132

Note that there are many more. In fact, always check at the local suppliers (Sears, Home Depot, Lowes, Stines, etc.) first as often they may be running specials. *Barry Humphus*

President's Message

We had a real good turn out at our monthly meeting at Eltee's shop last month. Even though it was warm, towards the end of the meeting the sky darkened and the bottom fell out and cooled things down real good. At the end of the meeting, Eltee showed a video and demonstrated his new Legacy router system and many questions were asked during his demonstration.

At our August meeting at J.W. Anderson's, Barry Humphus will have the "Bring Back Item," and for September meeting Roy Lee LeBlanc won the "Bring Back Item." Guest Ray Kebodeaux won the "Door Prize" for this meeting.

Tickets for our annual B.B.Q. coming up in October are now on sale for \$10, which is a real bargain for the fantastic food that comes from Hollier's. If you can bring a desert, please do so.

I want to Welcome all of our new members to the club and if you have a question please call me. Our club has mentors that can be called if you have a woodworking question or a problem and need help. There was a real nice showing for "Show and Tell." Keep up the good work.

Our September meeting will be at Jeff Cormier's shop in Iowa. The November meeting will take place at one of the Stine Stores and as more info comes in I will put the word out. If any one of our members has an idea of what they would to see be demonstrated at one of our monthly meeting please contact me and it will be put on the agenda. It is still **HOT** out side and if you do any work at all outside, please drink lots of water. You don't want to pass out an fall into or onto a piece of running equipment and make a trip to the hospital. Remember to be safe and you will work safely and at the end of the day, you will be able to close the shop all in one piece an go into the house.

Gary Rock

Support Our Sponsors

When you need building materials, electrical, plumbing, tools or other supplies, please remember our sponsors: Diamond Lumber, Home Building Materials and Stines. All of them are locally owned and not only support the Lake Charles Woodworkers but other community organizations as well. When you go to one of their locations to shop, be sure to mention that you appreciate their continued support for the LCWW.

My Brother Needs a Table Saw

My brother Dean was looking at various portable or bench table saws recently and wanted a recommendation. Dean and I learned lots of things from our father. But Dad loved metal working. Dad could build just about anything as long as it had a lot of metal content. To this day, I'm surprised we didn't have a steel dining room table!

So Dean and I got to woodworking late. For me it was being a poor college student and having to build furniture rather than buy it. For Dean, it is just a challenge. He wants to do his own thing but in wood. Now my brother is brilliant and he's a very successful video engineer in Hollywood who can afford just about any tool he desires. His real problem is real estate. His home, though very nice is not much bigger than some of our member's larger shops. So his workshop space is limited.

Dean said in his email, "I just don't have the room for a full pro table saw in the garage and for the odd cuts I have to make occasionally, a portable would work nicely. There's just no substitute for a table saw." He's right.

So Dean (like many of us) has a limited amount of space in which to do woodworking. Given that requirement, he wanted a small table saw that would still have the capacity and power needed to do those jobs around the house that we all know and, and, and love. You know them. They are the ones that come up over breakfast or dinner. "Darling, it would be very nice if we could have a made of wood". You know the story. It's been going on since the beginning of (power tool) civilization.

Lots of power tool manufacturers have a wide variety of portable products that can meet your needs. If you need to cut wide panels, a portable bench table saw is not typically the best choice (what you use are saw horses, jigs, straight edges and a circular saw). But for most projects, a small bench table saw is just the power tool you want.

What I recommended were three table saws that would meet the needs of portability, power and capacity. These included a Bosch, Craftsman and DeWalt.

What Dean needed first was capacity and what he needed next was portability. The three recommended brands mention above do both but with some reservations for each. So let's review what they have and the pluses and minuses.

All of the recommended table saws are 1-1/2 HP despite what the brochures may say. You cannot get more than 1-1/2 HP out of a 15 amp, 115 volt circuit — otherwise, you'll blow the circuit or burn up the motor. That said, you can get a bit more with any 1-1/2 HP motor, it just has to be able to stand the heat and not fail. All of the saws come with a 10" carbide blade (24 to 36 tooth) and both a decent miter gage and rip fence. All have a dust

port for shop vacuum hookup and dado capability plus a stand and are direct drive.

Based only on the specifications, my first recommendation was the Bosch Model 4000-09, 10". The table is 29" x 21-1/2" with a precision rip fence. The motor has circuitry that monitors torque demand and instantly delivers additional power to maintain constant speed under load and an arbor lock for easy blade changes. It comes with a rolling stand with pneumatic wheels. The integrated cutting rail system extends the table to another 25" ripping capacity. You can get them at Sears, Amazon and many other resellers for less than \$600. Note the cost of shipping if ordering online.

The Craftsman was initially thought superior in my view to the DeWalt. The sliding front and rear rails allow for 33 in. right and 30 in. left rip capacity. The sliding miter table with oversized miter fence and built-in miter gauge allows for smooth and accurate cross-cuts. The built-in router table mounting kit allows for router hook-up. The stand has 8 in. wheels for good maneuverability. The rolling stand, 36 tooth carbide blade plus an arbor lock and low cost make this a good choice. At Sears it costs less than \$360. For maximum capacity and low cost, the Craftsman is a good choice but note that the Craftsman comes with a non-standard miter guide.

The DeWalt Heavy-Duty 10" Portable (Model 744S or 745S) ended up being my recommended choice. It has a 26-1/2" X 19-1/4" table and telescoping rails that retract within the saw top for easy portability. The telescoping rails make this a very flexible configuration. It comes with a rack and pinion fence design that makes fence adjustments fast, smooth and accurate ensuring that the fence is always parallel to the blade — a real plus with portable table saws. The only real down side to this saw is the non-rolling stand. Once again, it's available at Stines, Sears, Amazon and many other (local) dealers. The cost is about \$500 but found cheaper at some locations.

My final recommendation for Dean's purpose was the DeWalt 744S (now replaced by the 745S) product. While the DeWalt is not low cost, it is readily available and comes in a very portable configuration. While the Bosch and Craftsman have great stands in terms of rolling them around, both stands end up making these saws very large in terms of the space they take up, even when folded and put away. I didn't realize this until I went to Sears and took a look and played with the controls for a while. If you need a new table saw with great portability that does not take up much space set up or folded, the DeWalt Portable model 744S or 745S is your best bet.

Barry Humphus with Dean Humphus.