

Jeff Cormier, President  
Dick Hopes, Treasurer

Officers and Director

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 Trough: 583-2683. Each has years of experience and knowledge.

### January Meeting Highlights

The great new outdoor kitchen at J.W. and Velma Anderson's place was our meeting place this month. Unlike the previous one, this is completely enclosed along with a wonderful porch area and some of J.W.'s neat swings and rockers. The inside is filled with some memorabilia plus a full kitchen. Velma supplied us with incredible treats, so much so, I didn't even eat lunch later.

Jeff Cormier's safety discussion this month involved the use of a tool we all like or would like to have and that is the compound mitre saw. These ubiquitous tools make quick work of cross cuts, miters and compound cuts and have largely replaced the older "chop" saw in many shops. Most of these units, especially the early ones without magnetic brakes, free spool for a long time after the trigger is released. So care should be made after the cut to allow the blade to come to a complete stop prior to permitting the head to raise. I know I'm guilty of this as I get busy with a series of cuts and there you go - one jumps back at you.

Jeff also discussed the use of paddle-type switches on equipment, especially table saws. These are inexpensive, some for as little as \$10 and generally fit in a standard outlet box. Grizzly's Model H8241 and H8242 for 120 volt and 240 volt respectively are bargains. Their magnetic switches at \$20 are also a bargain and provide safety you can't do without.

Mr. Thibodeaux's Show and Tell was a small scroll cross and a couple of small boxes. He also had one of his amazing puzzles.

J.W.'s contribution this month was an ash and cherry cutting board along with a not quite finished cedar chair. He described the pecky cypress lumber he used on the outdoor kitchen and the island counter sides. He also described the old butter churn and the great old hand made door.

Pie Sonnier showed a photo of a black walnut, maple and birch wine rack he built recently as well as a business card holder. I have one of his that I proudly have on my desk at work.

Bob Theaux showed a loose tenon jig he built from a plan in the #64 issue of Shopnotes. It is a nice, precise and apparently easy to use system.

Our new Club Treasurer, Joe Comeaux showed off some of his great wine bottle stoppers of purple heart and mahogany. He used the Pen State hardware. Joe said that if you do these, don't use the chrome plated kits for red wine stoppers at the chrome will pit over time.

Gary Rock had some bowls and discussed the use of Ritz fabric dyes on wood. The Ritz Company makes more than 25 colors that may be mixed to achieve more than 250 different colors. As they are water-based, be sure to use water to do grain raising and sanding prior to the dye application. On top of the dyes, Gary often uses Danish oil, wax and follows with the Beal Buffing System, which we hope he will demonstrate at the next meeting.

Ray Kibodeaux showed a turkey call he had rebuilt and Lee Frazier showed off some of his recent scroll saw work - a Victorian Cross in white oak ply.

There was a general discussion regarding laser guide add-ons to chop, compound miter, and radial arm saws. Basically, they replace the outer blade washer on your saw with a laser guide. In general, they are designed such that when the saw blade reaches 500 RPM, a battery-powered laser automatically switches on, shining a bright red line onto the work piece. Note that some models don't fit Bosch, Ridgid, or Pro-Tech miter and radial arm saws. The Irwin guide (amazon.com, Lowes, etc.) is very inexpensive at less than \$25. However you should be aware that the Irwin shines the laser about 1/16 inch to the left of where the cut will go. Another brand, the Infiniter RS-1 (Northern Tool & Equipment) is less than \$20 but does match the cut line. However, it does not fit the following 12in. Miter Saws produced before 2005 such as Ridgid, Pro-Tech, Makita LS1221, and Dewalt DW705S. It also does not fit the following circular saws from Porter Cable Quick-Change, all worm drives, and Skill.

Dont forget your \$20 membership dues. We need your support.

Coming Up . . . Saturday, February 14 at 9:00 a.m. at the Shop of Gary Rock. Gary will discuss the use of the Beal Buffing System and perhaps give us a good demonstration of some of his incredible turning skills.

## LCWWC Board Meeting

On January 22, Jeff Cormier hosted the semiannual LCWW Board of Directors meeting at his home. Once again, we were treated with a wonderful feast of his BBQ skills.

Attending were Jeff Cormier, President, and Board Members Bubba Cheramie, Gary Rock, John Marcon, George Kuffel, and Barry Humphus. Board Member Chuck Middleton could not attend. Joe Comeaux was also present.

Compliments were given to John Marcon regarding the recent Lake Charles American Press article about his carving and restoration work.

It was suggested that we consider placing a public service note in the LC American Press regarding our monthly meetings from time to time to possibly attract new members. If articles are written on our activities, the reporter should be asked to include a mention of the LCWW Club.

Jeff Cormier introduced a motion that LCWW member Joe Comeaux be appointed as secretary/treasurer, filling Dick Hopes position as Dick has been ill and unable to fulfill the duties as treasurer. The motion was seconded by George Kuffel and passed by acclamation.

Joe Comeaux and Barry Humphus will meet at Jeff Davis Bank and Trust to arrange for Joe to sign on the account. Barry Humphus will update the web site and obtain State filing forms to appoint Joe Comeaux as Secretary/Treasurer. Dick Hopes will remain a signatory on the account.

Jeff has contacted PPG with regard to the use of their Porter Hall facility for the annual BBQ meeting in March and PPG has said that the facility is available during the second week of March. Jeff will set a date and inform the membership.

It was recommended that the LCWW consider catering the annual BBQ and that was approved by acclamation. Jeff will contact the past caterer regarding the services and also contact Leonard Fontenot, the primary last contact for the caterer.

Monthly meeting locations were discussed for 2009 and the following places were recommended:

Gary Rock – February  
Annual BBQ – March  
Pie Sonnier – April  
John Marcon – May  
Tom Bergstedt – June (or possibly Dick Trouth)  
Jeff Cormier – July  
George Kuffel – August  
Joe Comeaux – September  
Dick Trouth – October (or possibly Tom Bergstedt)

Larry Cooper – tentative, November  
Chuck Middleton – tentative, December  
Demos and Discussions were reviewed for future meetings that included:

Hearing tests – hearing center on S. Ryan – Rock to contact

Steve LeGrue – Houston – Marcon to contact

First Aid – Humphus to contact

Bill Berry – Turning demo (possibly at Kuffel or Cheramie shop)

Paul Filler – bandsaw boxes - Jeff to contact

Fire Extinguishers

Breathing Equipment – Valin Safety or a rep

Tool demo – contact David Stine at Stines

Grinding wheel demo

It was suggested that we consider Learning Lessons at one or more meetings. Topics and places are to be determined. Examples included shop lay out, sharpening demonstration – hand and power systems, tool reviews, etc.

There being no further business, Barry Humphus made a motion that the meeting be closed and this was seconded by John Marcon.

## Vacuum Chucking on a Lathe

Turners are becoming much more aware of the advantages of holding the workpiece on a lathe with a vacuum setup. When reverse turning a bowl, for example, no marks are left on the workpiece and most natural edge bowls can be easily held with these systems. In order to set up a vacuum system on a lathe, you need three main ingredients:

You need a way to get the vacuum to pull the lathe headstock spindle. Your lathe headstock spindle must have a hole going through it to do this and most do. There are several products available for this purpose including the Oneway Rotary Vacuum Adaptor, the E-Z Vacuum Adaptor or the Hold Fast Adaptor.

You also need a gasket that the vacuum pulls through to hold the workpiece. Possible solutions include the Oneway Drum Chuck or Hold Fast Vacuum Chuck heads for this purpose or a seal making kit that can be combined with MDF and PVC pipe to make your own fixture.

The final thing you need is a vacuum source. Two possibilities exist including a Gask 1/4 Hp vacuum pump or a compressor using the Hold Fast Vacuum Generator that uses the airflow of the compressor to generate a vacuum.

You can get all of this at [packardwoodworks.com](http://packardwoodworks.com) or give them a call at 800-683-8876.

## Firm Grip, Light Touch

If you are new to turning or even an old hand, the key to learning or re-learning is in the title of this article.

The ideal way to turn, whether spindle or faceplate is using your whole body to guide the tools and not forcing them. The idea, as the late Bob Patin told us, is to let the wood come to the tool and ease the tool into the spinning blank. In short, let the lathe do the work for you.

There are several ways to position yourself and the tools you use at the lathe. For example, I prefer to keep my lower hand on a tool's handle near its ferrule. The rest of the handle gets tucked under my forearm, making the tool feel like an extension of my arm. If as a kid, you ever used a sling to pitch a rock, you'll know exactly what I mean. This position gives you greater control of the tool.

My upper hand keeps the tool on the tool rest and fine-tunes the trajectory of the cut. Also, try to keep the handle against your side and move with the tool such that your weight is behind it. By using your body weight in this way, should you get a catch, your weight absorbs the impact and that keeps you in control.

A gouge is supposed to slice and not rip or scrape the wood. In most instances, the cutting edge works best when it is presented at about a 45 degree angle to the surface of the workpiece. To get a clean cut, hold the gouge horizontally, pointing in the direction of the cut while keeping the bevel of the gouge tip against the wood.

The position of the bevel is important for the control it gives. It acts as a secondary fulcrum (the primary fulcrum is your tool rest) from which to pivot the edge as it enters the wood. In other words, there should be a smooth surface against which the bevel can rub. Any blemish on this surface will be telegraphed to the cutting edge.

If you get chatter marks, you simply need to go back to a smooth section of the curve, typically near the base, and start once more, riding through the bumps and across the dips.

The trick to getting flowing curves using a scaper is to have the radius of the edge slightly higher than the radius of the curve you want to cut. With a scaper, only a small portion of the edge contacts the wood at any one time.

In fact, you are asking for a catch if you try to cut with the entire edge of a wide scaper. You should use scapers only to stroke the surface of the wood, again, letting the wood come to the tool rather than forcing the edge into the wood - hence, a light touch.

The angle at which a scaper is held to the tool rest also influences its performance. For example, if you hold a scaper horizontally on the tool rest, it will not cut very

aggressively. So many beginners believe that the solution to this is apply more pressure with the tool. The result is almost always a catch. What you need to do in this case is to lift the handle up slightly and just brush the scaper against the wood.

## Blade Care

The world's greatest table saw can't give you good work when it has a poor blade bolted to its arbor. The table saw (as well as the miter saw and radial arm saw) sees its single greatest improvement in work results when you install a properly sharpened, top quality blade suited to the job you are getting ready to do.

Compared to the steel-tooth saw blades of the past, the modern carbide-tipped saw blade doesn't take a whole lot of care, and doesn't require sharpening very often (intervals between sharpening with carbide may be as much as 30 or 40 times greater than those with steel blades). Most saw blades will withstand an amazing amount of on-saw abuse (too fast feed, too slow feed, green wood, pressure treated wood, wood thicker than the blade is designed for, use when gummed, and on). That said, it makes sense to take care of your saw blades, because your project results depend in large part on how well and accurately they cut. There are really very few rules.

1. Do not drop blades. Sounds almost simple-minded, but it is very important. Even a short drop onto a benchtop from shoulder or eye level can ruin a blade.
2. Keep the blades clean. Whenever build-up of resins is visible, use Simple Green or even 409 cleaner to remove build-up before it gets excessive. Do not use oven cleaner: it is said that the caustic (lye) in such cleaners might affect the brazing that holds the carbide tips in place.
3. When feed becomes difficult, have the blade sharpened by a professional saw sharpener.
4. Store blades flat on wood or cork surfaces. If blades are stacked one on another, make sure there is a piece of wood, cork, or cardboard between them. Carbide is very hard, but also very brittle and will chip if carbide hits carbide.
5. Protect blades from rust. This can be done with any of a dozen substances, including Top-Cote, Boeshield T-9, WD-40...even floor wax. When any such substance is used, run about a foot and a half of scrap through the blade before running project material through.

Start by buying the best blades you can afford. Then care for them well. In turn, they'll make the work easier, more fun, and product better results.