

Dick Trouth, President  
Joe Comeaux, Treasurer

Officers and Directors

Barry Humphus, Editor, George Kuffel  
Gary Rock, Jeff Cormier, 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 Trouth: 583-2683. Each have years of experience and knowledge.

May Meeting Highlights

Bill Fey was our host this month at nice nice shop in DeQuincy and thanks to Mrs. Fey, we had most delicious goodies to distract us from woodworking.

Jeff Cormier led our safety discussion this month on band saws. The first thing to do before even starting the machine is to check your adjustments. A band saw utilizes a substantial number of blocks and wheels to keep the blade in its proper position throughout a cut. These blocks and wheels should be regularly checked for wear and adjusted as per your manufacturer's recommendations.

The second thing is after any adjustments have been made, put on your safety glasses before starting the saw. We have more on band saw safety on the following page.

There was also discussion about compound mitre saw kickout. A couple of folks had experienced this problem. Advice included holding the saw arm down until the blade comes to a complete stop. Allowing the arm to lift may cause one of more teeth on the blade to catch the work, particularly if the wood is hard. Another recommendation is to use either the built-in hold-downs or add a clamp to the work piece to make certain the the item cannot move even while lifting the arm after a cut and while the blade is still spinning.

Show and Tell brought us lots from Mr. Thibodeaux. He had a napkin holder and a scroll work that read 'Don't Text While Driving' plus some NASCAR key fobs.

Sandy Kramer is going to catch Eltee pretty soon as she brought a scroll work of a flower pot with lap-jointed and painted flowers, a scroll work cross, a scroll work dragon motif vase, a box with a dove motif and a whale made from a compound cut one her scroll saw.



J.W. Anderson had a napkin holder of mimosa and a great cypress bench. AHe also had a cypress swing he built for the raffle.

Jeff Cormier showed off a very nice oak table with four-sided tapered legs. He said he will stick to two-sided tapers in the future. I certainly agree as I once caused a taper jig to explode right off a table saw attempting to do this and had to buy George Kuffel a new jig!

Doug Trotti had turned some pens of various materials including cocobolo, osage and a few others plus he brought some of his canes complete with a stand.

Jack Stegal showed off a very nice scroll work clock made of black walnut. Pie Sonnier is adding to his fleet of vehicles by building a 1949 Ford pickup made of maple, cherry black walnut as well as the rest of the usual suspects.



Gary Rock always impresses with the beautiful turnings he does. This month we saw a cherry bowl with a cocobolo insert plus inlaid with pewter. Gary also had a pine bowl the bottom of which was sand blasted. Gary talked briefly about where he gets the pewter and how to apply it to a bowl and turn it to completion. The metal is easily turned as it consists of 85-99% tin, with the remainder consisting of copper, antimony, bismuth and lead.

Irwin Monroe brought some of his unique bird houses as well as a few canes he made recently.

Great meeting with lots of good information.

Coming Up . . .

Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 9:00 A.M. - at the shop of Dick Trouth. This small shop is full of tools and great advise for woodworking. Please be there.

## Band Saw Safety

The band saw is widely regarded as among the safest of all woodworking machinery. However, it is still a dangerous woodworking tool, one that can cause considerable injury if used improperly. Below we'll discuss a number of items to keep in mind when using your band saw, to diminish the risk of injury and to help you get the most out of your band saw.

First and foremost, when working with any woodworking tools, always wear safety glasses. Band saw blades rotate at considerable speed, and small pieces of stock can be propelled in nearly any direction. Even worse, if a blade should break, the possibility exists that a piece could come loose. Your eyesight is too valuable to take chances woodworking without protective eye wear. Develop the habit of wearing your safety glasses at all times.

You should also wear appropriate clothing for working with your band saw. Avoid loose fitting clothing, particularly long sleeved shirts, that could get caught in your work or in the band saw blade.

Your band saw utilizes a substantial number of blocks and wheels to keep the blade in its proper position throughout a cut. These blocks and wheels should be regularly checked for wear and adjusted as per your manufacturer's recommendations. Failure to adjust these blocks and wheels appropriately will cause undue wear and tear on the blade, and likely cause the blade to break prematurely. And check that the tension on the blade is set to within the limits outlined in your band saw's owner's manual.

Once your band saw is adjusted properly and tightened to the appropriate tension level for the blade you're using, you should prepare the saw to make a cut on your stock. With the motor turned off, place the stock to be cut flat on the band saw's table, and lower the blade guards to within 1/8" to 1/4" of the stock. Leaving the blade guards too high will place undue tension on the blade, increasing the likelihood you'll break the blade. Keeping the blade guard within this distance from the stock will also increase the accuracy of your cut.

Start up the band saw and wait until the motor is at full speed before beginning any cut. When operating a band saw, always place the stock flat against the table. Do not attempt to "free-hand" the stock in mid-air. The stock must remain flat on the surface of the table at all times during the cut.

If a specific, consistent-width rip or specific angle is to be cut, use a band saw rip fence or miter gauge to assist with the cut. Not only will this increase the accuracy of the cut, but it will make the cut safer as well.

When cutting curves, draw the outline of your pro-

jected cut cleanly on the stock. Then, keeping the wood flat against the table, ease the stock through the saw along the outer edge of the cut line. It is almost always preferable to leave a slight bit of stock outside the line that can be cleaned up with a spindle sander after completion of the cut, as your band saw blade will likely leave cut marks that need to be sanded smooth. Cutting directly against the cut line will not leave room for sanding.

When cutting curves, always move slowly and methodically. If you must back out of your cut, hold the stock firmly in place with one hand and turn the motor off with the other. Do not attempt to back the stock out of the cut until the blade has come to a complete stop.

When cutting tight curves, go slowly and use "relief cuts" wherever possible. These are cuts that cut through scrap portions of your cut out to give you a better angle on accessing a section of your outline. It is safer to make a lot of relief cuts and cut a tight curve in short sections than to try and make one long, inaccurate cut.

At no time during any of your cuts should your hands be any closer than about three inches from the blade. One hand should be on each side of the stock, easing it through the blade. You should never place your hand directly in the cut line, even if it is more than three inches away. If you must hold the stock closer than three inches, do so only with a push stick.

You should also never reach across the band saw. If the on/off switch is on your left, use your left hand to turn it on and off.

When using your band saw, there will often be very small pieces of stock that are cut off of your big piece of wood during the cutting process. Do not attempt to flick these away from the blade with your fingers. Use another piece of stock or a push stick, preferably with the blade stopped. Often this is not necessary, as the next cut will push the piece safely away from the blade. Once it is clear, push it off of the table. Never leave loose pieces on your table that could impede your cut.

When working with woodworking machinery, do everything you can to avoid distractions. If someone tries to interrupt you while making a cut, do not avert your eyes from the tool; finish the cut or safely turn off the saw before diverting your attention. Too often, injuries occur because the operator was distracted, even for only a moment. Establish a rule with those around you who might be inclined to interrupt: If they need to disrupt you when working with your woodworking machinery, ask them to wait until the cut is complete before interrupting so you can give your full attention to them. *About.com & Barry Humphus*

## Get Really Sharp and Really Fast

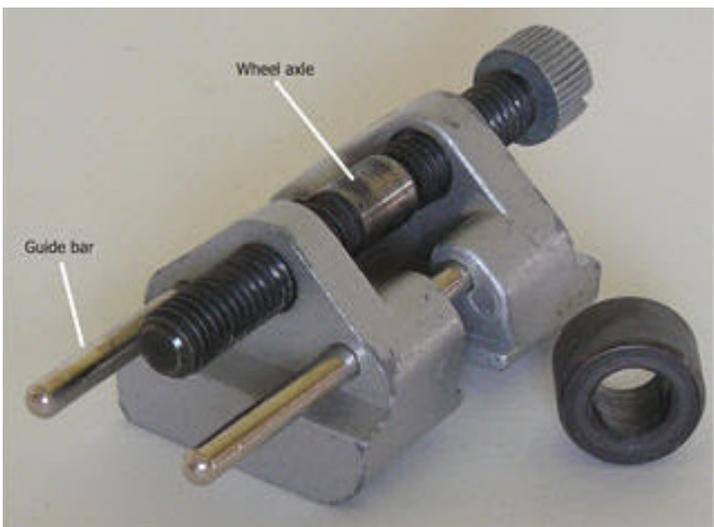
If you want to get an animated discussion going for our woodworkers, just mention sharpening. Everyone has his or her own answer for getting the best edge in the least amount of time.

The price range for sharpening equipment is huge. At the low end of the cost scale is hand sharpening. All you need are a couple water stones and you're good to go. Hand sharpening is a wonderful skill to have but, like any skill, it takes time and practice to develop. That leaves many woodworkers frustrated and looking for a product that will give them consistent results without the learning curve. The array of sharpening jigs and machines found in woodworking catalogs testifies to that demand. Cost for these sharpening aids can range from a few dollars for a simple jig to hundreds of dollars for a powered machine.

But here is a system that I think delivers the best of both worlds; it's quick, easy like a machine, but also inexpensive, like hand sharpening. Total cost is less than \$50.

You can touch up a tool edge in seconds or do a thorough edge treatment in a few minutes. But the best thing about the system is the result - an unbelievably sharp edge on my bench chisels and plane blades. I must admit that I do both power sharpening (with a Jet water sharpening system) and hand sharpening. You can do both but for this article, we will focus on hand sharpening.

This hand sharpening system consists of a piece of plate glass, strips of self-stick (PSA) sand paper, an inexpensive commercial honing guide and a simple wood sled. Shims are used to create micro-bevels though many guides have this feature built in. Two optional strips of coarse grit in back are used for lapping the backs of chisels and plane blades. Strips of masking tape insure the blade is even with the paper for back lapping.



Normally, the honing guide rides on top of the sandpaper. That takes up valuable real estate on the abrasive and limits the sharpening stroke. Plus, a steel or brass wheel running back and forth on the abrasive will shorten the life of the abrasive.

Self-stick abrasive paper is mounted on plate glass to provide a flat abrasive surface for sharpening tools. Alternatively, you can use regular wet/dry sand paper and simply coat the glass and paper with a light spray of contact adhesive. The self-stick, or PSA paper is readily available from automotive or woodworking outlets, and comes in a variety of sizes. I like the 3" x 1" size. Four grits of approximately 800, 1200, 1500, and 2000 grit can bring a tool from out of the box dull, to razor sharp, in minutes. If you need to lap the backs of your cutting tools or remove nicks, you may want to buy some coarse grit paper (220 to 600-grit). You can use a second piece of plate glass for the coarse grits.

The plate glass insures a dead-flat surface so I never spend time flattening dished out stones. The glass should be 1/4" or thicker and at least 12" x 18" to comfortably hold four strips of 3" x 11" sandpaper. Have the edges of the glass sanded smooth for safety. Where do you get the glass? All glass shops can prepare what you need in a few minutes at very low cost.

Apply the sandpaper on the glass, leaving enough room between sheets for the skids on the sled to move freely. Start by peeling a portion of the backer off of one end and position it on the glass. Then pull the backer off as you press the paper in place. Take your time to insure there are no air bubbles trapped under the sandpaper.

The next step is to properly set your plane blade or chisel in the holder. Adjust the blade projection with the honing guide on the sled until the bevel lies flat on the abrasive. Lock the blade in the guide.

Now you're ready to sharpen. Use a little mineral spirits or honing oil to lubricate the paper. To sharpen, hold the sled and blade as shown with your fingers over the top of the blade and your thumbs hooked behind the sled.

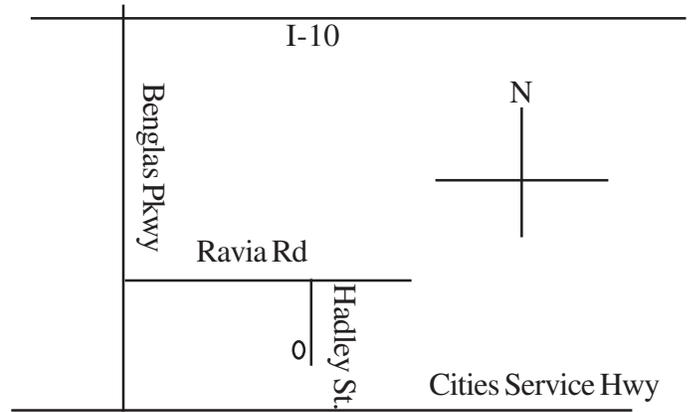
Pull the guide towards you for the sharpening stroke. Keep downward pressure on the blade throughout the pull stroke. Then, tip the blade up so the edge is not in contact with the paper, slide the sled forward, drop the blade, apply pressure and pull towards you again.

Sharpen on the pull stroke only. Otherwise you risk tearing the paper. If you are coming from an out of the box blade, work your way through each grit while maintaining the same angle of stroke. What you'll end up is a mirror-like finish. *Barry Humphus; photo from Lee Valley.*

### June Meeting Location

Dick Trouth will be our host at his neat shop for June. The shop is "L" shaped and so full of incredible tools and supplies, you need to be nice to your colleagues during the meeting. The meeting will be very special as we will discuss the mysteries and techniques of fine wood finishing from sanding to staining to final finish and much more.

To get there, go south on Benglas Parkway (LA 3077) off I-10 to Ravia Road and turn left. Go to Hadley St. and turn right. Dick's home will be on your right. If you need further directions, give Dick a call at 583-2683.



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