

Steve Thomas, President
Joe Comeaux, Treasurer

Officers and Directors

Barry Humphus, Editor, George Kuffel
Gary Rock, Jeff Cormier, Dick Trouth

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.

November Meeting Highlights

We had a couple of guests this month including Mr. Patrick LePoint. We met at the big shop of professional cabinet maker Darren Menard.

LCWW President Stephen Thomas did our safety presentation this month on fireplace and chimney safety. Yes, some of us have fireplaces and while I don't use my fireplaces too much during the colder period of the winter, it is so very important to make certain that your chimney is safe.

Steve has had a flue fire and this is something that anyone with a fireplace could have and dread. Call your local firesweep. The scope of work performed in the inspection or evaluation of a fireplace, stove or other venting system had previously been left to the discretion of the chimney service technicians. There are several firms in the Lake Area that do this service. We have had this done over the past several years and they are good for advising you, cleaning your flue and doing a good job.

Steve also did a nice demonstration of glass cutting. For many years, Steve worked for a glass company and



knows all of the tricks for cutting glass.. Steve suggested that you lube the cutting tool. The glass cutters can vary from very inexpensive and high cost depending on your need. Consider a replacable cutting wheel unit and of course chase the score.

You should score once and break the cut immediately. Should you wait too long, the score will 'heal' and it will not break as you want. Always use safety glasses and

wear protective gloves.

For our Sow and Tell, Mr. Eltee Thibodeaux is going into competition with Pie Sonnier with a Dodge wooden car and a religious scrowl work piece but Pie came back with his Black Hawk with a completed finish for that wonderful project.

Ray Kebodeaux brought us a bowl of cedar in mahogany that was very lovely. Joe Comeaux provided a carpenter bee trap of interest. Joe described the unit and suggested

some variations as well. Mr. Eltee Thibodeaux is going into competition with Pie by showing a Dodge wooden car while Pie shoed us the finished version of his Blackhawk helicopter. Ray Kebodeaux turned Spanish cedar candy dishes along with a nice mahogany bowl.

Bob Theaux brought a nice small wine rack of walnut and beech. Steve Thomas showed a segmented bowl with 960 pieces in an Indian blanket pattern. He also did a bucket of oak with a laminated handle. Gary Rock showed some of his great tree ornaments and said he was doing a turning demo the following week in Houston.

Joe Comeaux (our new Treasurer effect January 1, 2014) said that he would appreciate some help on Friday, December 13 at Larry Cooper's place to prepare the gumbo for Saturday. Give Joe a call at 855-6361 if you can lend a hand. Also, feel free to bring a dish or treat.

Coming Up . . . Saturday, December 14 at 10:00 A.M. at the shop of Larry and Ledie Cooper along with a holiday feats. Note the start time: 10:00 A.M. this month.



Selecting Sheet Goods

HARDWOOD PLYWOOD: Veneers (softwood or hardwood) glued in layers with alternating grain, and covered with hardwood veneer.

The traditional sheet good of choice for everything from furniture and cabinets to wall paneling and boxes. Available Sizes: 1/4", 1/2", and 3/4" are most common. Occasionally, you'll find 1/8", 3/8", and 5/8" in some species. Common Grades include Face: AA, A, B, C/D/E, Special. Back: 1, 2, 3, 4. Core: J, K, L, M. Panel types: Technical type, Type I, Type II (Type II most common for interior use.)

More stable and less expensive than solid wood, widely available, made in a variety of species, and with many choices for veneer matching on faces. Cons: Thick sheets are heavy, exposed ply edges may mean you'll have to band with solid wood, thin face veneers (1/32") are easy to sand through and damage.

Home centers carry a few species, such as oak, birch, maple. Turn to building suppliers and hardwood retailers for other species. Price (3/4"x4x8', sheet unless noted): \$35 to \$100+. Prices vary greatly due to species, face and back grades, ply count, and cut of veneer. A/2 or B/2 is reasonably priced and suitable for furniture.

BALTIC AND FINNISH BIRCH: Made from ultra-thin (1/16"), void-free birch veneers. Finnish birch is like Baltic, but is made with exterior adhesive for outdoor use. Used to create shop jigs and fixtures, cabinets, drawer sides, furniture, and as a substrate. Available Sizes: In millimeters: 4 (1/8"), 6.5 (1/4"), 9 (3/8"), 12 (1/2"), 15 (5/8"), and 18 (3/4") in 60x60" sheets.

There are no standardized grades, but manufactured with void-free plies and face veneers carrying a grade of B or better. Pros: Stiff, stable, consistent thickness, no voids, nice-looking edge, holds screws. Cons: Hard to find, costly, odd (60x60") size sheet, available only with birch face. Where to find it: Woodworking-supply stores, hardwood retailers, mail-order catalogs (small sizes). Price (3/4"x4x8', sheet unless noted): \$45+ for standard-size 60x60" sheets.

APPLEPLYD: American version of Baltic birch with alder and birch core plies and quality veneer faces. Birch face is standard, other woods available. Uses: Same uses as Baltic above, plus applications where a fine-hardwood face veneer is needed. Available Sizes: Available in 1/4", 3/8", 1/2", 3/4", 1", and 1-1/4" thicknesses, in 4x8' sheets.

No standardized grades, but manufactured with void-free plies and face veneers carrying a grade of B or better. Pros: Stiff, stable, void-free, nice-looking edge, holds screws, offers a variety of face veneers. Cons: Difficult to find, costly, requires large order to get optional veneers.

Where to find it: You'll find distributor information at www.statesind.com. Price (3/4"x4x8', sheet unless noted): \$50+.

BENDABLE PLYWOOD: Plywood with a single face veneer and core plies with all grain running perpendicular to face to allow cross-grain bending.

Used mostly as a substrate for building cabinets, etc., with rounded corners. Sheets with clear face veneers are suitable for furniture. Available Sizes: 1/8" and 3/8" are common, though thicker sheets are produced. Sold in 4x8' sheets.

Common Grades: Able to conform to tight radii without splitting or cracking with no need for kerf-bending or steaming. Pros: Flexibility allows radiused corners, decorative shapes. Cons: Not designed for structural use, quality of face veneer varies greatly. Where to find it: Building-supply stores and hardwood retailers. Price (3/4"x4x8', sheet unless noted): \$35+ (1/8" 4'x8' sheet). Edited from Wood Magazine.

It Pays to Buy Good Plywood

Is it your imagination or is good plywood getting harder to find? Not if you shop smartly. Armed with these buying tips, you'll sort the stack like a pro to pick the perfect plywood for your next project.

When evaluating a sheet of plywood, start by looking at its edge. Thin veneers of wood, glued and pressed with crossing grain directions—transform humble core woods into sheets that are wider, flatter, and more dimensionally stable than anything found in nature. But modern plywood manufacturing, especially overseas, has shifted from birch-only cores to other often-inferior woods at the expense of core quality and stability.

When examining plywood, ask yourself: Are the layers straight, of a consistent thickness, and free of large voids? Irregularities in the core veneers can telegraph through to the thin face veneer and broadcast themselves during sanding and finishing.

Sight along the edge to check the sheet's straightness. A bow indicates unevenly dried core material that only warps more, as cutting the sheet releases internal tension.

Although the 13-ply construction is more forgiving of the overlapping core layers and voids than standard 7-ply sheets, the defects can be severe enough to telegraph as an undulating face, especially with a glossy finish. The superthin face veneers, around 1/50", would make sand-through difficult to avoid, and cross-cut splintering a near certainty. So watch for this as you make your selections.

One alternative to traditional veneer-core plywood, combination-core plywood, eliminates worries about incon-

It Pays to Buy Good Plywood - Continued
consistency and flatness by retaining the three center veneer plies and replacing the outer plies with medium density fiberboard (MDF). The MDF provides a smooth and flat surface immediately below the veneer faces.

As strong as plywood must be on the inside, it must also be pretty on the outside. Plywood grading, as much aesthetic art as science, designates one face as the front and one as the back; grading is on separate scales.

Most domestic hardwood plywood manufacturers use the Hardwood Plywood and Veneer Association's (HPVA) voluntary standards for grading. The front face, judged for uniformity of color and consistency of grain, receives an AA, A, B, C, D, or E grade. For the back face, the grade is designated 1, 2, 3, or 4, with respectively less-restrictive allowances for defects and repairs.

Much like hardwood, hardwood plywood comes in plain-sliced, riftsawn, and quarter cuts. But unlike hardwood, face veneer can also be rotary-sliced, a method in which the veneer is peeled off spinning logs, like a roll of toilet paper. This produces an unnatural, wide, swooping grain pattern, but generally yields the most veneer of the cutting methods, producing the least-expensive sheet.

I was privileged to watch this peeling operation at the All-Woods Schroedure veneering facility many years ago and it was amazing to watch the huge machines being used in this plant.

For non-rotary-cut face veneers, look for the glue-up pattern where the face veneers are matched on the plywood core, as you might match veneers on your own project.

The C3-graded red-oak plywood is sold in the home center as "cabinet-" or "furniture-grade" plywood. At a quick glance, the rotary-cut faces look decent. But close inspection of the edges often reveals uneven core veneers, large voids, and a distinct curl. Watch for this when buying.

Manufacturers of A1-graded plywood don't skimp on the core materials. The hardwood-store-bought sheet has consistently even core veneers and a plainsawn, slip-matched face. The price, 50% costlier than C3, is justified for projects that display both faces. If you can afford this stuff, go for it.

Combination-core plywoods combine the best qualities of veneer-core plywood (rigidity and screw-holding power) with MDF-core products (surface flatness and dimensional consistency) into a furniture-friendly sheet.

Unless you need ultra-high-end (and high-cost) AA-graded hardwood plywood, stick with A1, A2, B1, or B2 for furniture or cabinets with visible faces. Rarely will a hardwood plywood dealer carry more than a handful of grades.

Rather, at a well-stocked dealer, you'll find a selection consisting of a good-on-two-sides (G2S) grade, such as A1, alongside a lesser grade, such as B2, often in multiple species. A good-on-one-side (G1S) grade, like A4, might also be on hand, but retailers often only stock this in 1/4" for case backs. From Wood Magazine, edited by Barry Humphus

Sawing Plywood Tactics

When fibers, splinters, or even sizable chunks of wood break away from your workpiece while you're cutting or shaping it, that's chip-out. Fortunately, you can avoid nearly all of that surface damage by taking a moment to prepare before you cut, rout, or joint a piece of wood.

Follow two basic rules to prevent chip-out: Use sharp cutting tools, and provide solid backing for surfaces that are likely to be damaged. I've described below some of the best ways to lend that support, no matter which cutting tool you use.

Start with a "scoring" cut on furniture-grade plywood or solid wood that shows a tendency to chip out. Set the blade just 1/8" above the table, and run the workpiece through. Then raise the blade and make the final cut.

You'll get cleaner results because in a scoring cut the blade's teeth meet the wood at a shearing angle, rather than pushing down on the bottom surface of the stock. Also, shallow cuts produce better results than deep ones because you're not forcing as much sawdust through the kerf.

When crosscutting with a miter gauge, use an auxiliary wooden fence to back the workpiece in line with the blade. Most traditional miter gauges include screw holes that you can use to add an auxiliary fence. If you have an extruded-aluminum fence on your miter gauge, use double-stick tape to attach a temporary wooden fence.

Now Is The Time To Pay

This time of the year is special for all of us and it is also special for the Lake Charles Woodworkers as well. To do what we do as an organization, we need your support in terms of your continued membership. The small fee you pay each year (\$20) pays for many things including a full family membership, our Newsletter, our website (currently under construction), the prizes we hand out to members each month and the end of the year gathering with food, cheer and companionship.

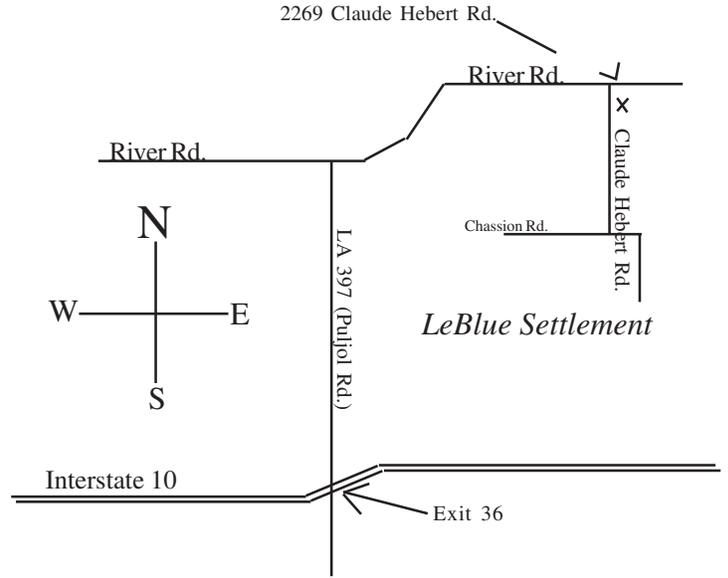
Please consider a membership for 2014 for yourself and family. Of course each member of the Lake Charles Woodworkers wishes you and your family a most joyous holiday and a glorious new year.

December Meeting Location

It is without doubt that the shop of Leddie and Larry Cooper is one of among the best of those that we visit each year. The shop is large, comfortable and everyone has a great time there. Go nuts or get nuts as you wish!

To get to Larry & Leddie's shop, take I-10 East from Lake Charles to the LA 397 exit (Exit 36) and go north to River Road, were it ends. Turn right onto River Rd. Follow River Rd. to Claude Hebert Rd on your right and turn right onto Claude Hebert Rd..

Thier home and shop are at 2269 Claude Hebert Rd. on your left. The shop is the green metal building. If you need further directions, give Larry or Lede a call at 515-3391 or at home - 582-6516. Recall the meeting time is 10:00 A.M.



December 2013

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