

Bubba Cheramie, President
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Barry Humphus, Editor, Brent Evans
George Kuffel, John Marcon, Chuck Middleton

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

The shop of Bubba Cheramie was our meeting place and Bubba our host and presenter this month.

Bubba makes lots of casework — tables, cabinets, etc. For years he used standard mortise and tenon construction for his casework. The problem with this method is not it's strength and durability, but the trouble you go through hand tuning each connection. Biscuit jointery is an alternative but lacks the strength of mortise and tenon — you won't want to use biscuits on a leg and rail connection because it just won't hold up over time.

Bubba's solution made his casework faster and stronger as well as accurate: pocket hole jointery. He uses the Kreg system and there are many others on the market that work well.

We began by looking at the Kreg promotional tape Bubba got from Kreg. The tape demonstrates some of the fast jointery that can be done with the system: face frame joints, leg and rail, and angle joints.

Kreg makes several models. The K2000 ProPack kit is very complete with the K2000 jig, the two-hole Rocket jig and the one-hole Mini jig. In addition, you get two wing supports incorporating a depth collar guide for various material thicknesses, a toggle clamp, a step and riser block, a 6" face clamp, 3/8" drill bit, 3" and 6" square drivers, depth collar and a selection of screws. The jig itself is made of a nylon reinforced fiberglass and everything comes in a case. The entire ProPack retails for \$140 but the K2000 jig by itself can be purchased for \$100, retail. You can also get the Rocket model by itself for \$60.

Bubba actually has the original Kreg aluminum unit that after he built the proper wings, works

like the K2000. The original unit is now sold as the K2. The K2-MP (with the toggle clamp, drill bit, depth collar, face clamp, drivers and starter pack of screws) is the same price as the K2000 ProPack. If you are getting one of these, get the K2000 ProPack.

Just like the video, Bubba demonstrated a few joints for us which were as easy to do as was shown in the tape. You always have a bit of suspicion that the guy on the tape gets edited only to show perfect results. But Bubba showed us that it was not editing — just easy to do as the tape showed.

Bubba showed us a few joints not shown on the video tape. He did do a faceframe butt joint to show us how easy it is to do but then showed us a mitered faceframe joint. He also did something you would never be able to do easily with biscuits or tenon jointery: an end grain to end grain joint. It seemed remarkably strong and just as easy to do as the rest of them.

Bubba also has modified his jointer with a featherboard. It was one of those "Why didn't I think of that?" modifications. Bubba says it makes handling wide boards a breeze and it is removable as needed. Eltee Thibodeaux showed off a neat little "Angel" clock while Chuck & Charlene Middleton had a box frame mounted "last Supper" creation. See them in the Gallery on the website.



2003 LCWW DUES

Now is the time of the year to pay your \$20 dues to make certain that we can offer programs in the future. Please send your \$20 to Dick Hopes, Treasurer, 1139 Green Road, Lake Charles, LA 70611.

Coming Up . . .

Saturday, November 9, 9:00 a.m. At the shop of the "Original" Tool Man, Coy Bennett - Antique Tools.

AROUND YOUR HOUSE

Your significant other comes out to your shop and asks “What is that green stuff all over the side of the house (or Shop, gas grill, the car)? I thought you were going to get rid of that.” While the temperature drops a bit in this area, the growth of algae, mold and other scum on the surface of nearly every thing outside, never seems to stop. There are many ways to fight this growth, but none are better than just blowing it off with a pressure washer (after all, it’s a Power Tool!).

There are alternatives to power washers such as the garden hose, a pump-up sprayer with some chlorine bleach, a little trisodium phosphate, etc. You could even use a stiff brush. Well, maybe not.

Given that I had a lot of scum on nearly every outside surface and didn’t want to scrub brush it off, I began looking at pressure washers. First, I considered the problem.

Most of this stuff is on the very surface of the object and relatively easily removed. A standard gasoline-powered pressure washer will do a great job of removing it. Just crank it up and blow it off (along with the paint off the car, wood off your deck, the grout from your brick house, the end of your shoe, etc.). One of the real problems with using a pressure washer is controlling the pressure.

As some 99% of the stuff you need to remove from various surfaces doesn’t need a lot of pressure. So what you end up doing is using your gasoline powered 2,300-3,000psi pressure washer at half or less of it’s rated output if you don’t want to damage what you are spraying.

The most common pressure washers for the home market are sold by Generac, GE, Karcher and Porter-Cable. There are many other brands, but most of the the motor and pumper units are manufactured by one of these. They range in price from \$300 to as much as \$2,000 for gasoline models and \$100 to \$300 for electric ones. The gasoline motors are mostly supplied by Briggs & Stratton or Honda while the electric units are powered by GE or Karcher motors.

So which should you purchase? Again, consider the problem. Given that the scum is easy to remove and you would have to use a standard 3-5hp gasoline engined model at half power or less to avoid damaging the surfaces, the best advise is to get a rela-

tively low powered unit. The best ones in this category are electric and not gasoline powered.

I realize that many of you want to get the most powerful power tool you can afford. But consider the problem: surface scum is easy to remove and doesn’t need much power. Why pay \$300-\$2,000 or more for twice the power you need.

In fact, I once needed a powerful pressure washer to remove adhesive from concrete. What I did was to borrow one (thanks again, Brent). You can also rent these mighty (and mighty noisy) machines from local rental companies for a few dollars a day. They are great for those once-in-a decade problems. Not so good for a once-a-month job.

What are the options? If you really want a gasoline powered pressure washer, take a look at the generic brands. You won’t use them very much and remember that they weigh more than 100lbs (that’s why they are on wheels). But the price is right if you have at least \$300 to spend. A good selection can be found at local retailers such as Lowes, Home Depot or Sears. Also at these retailers, you can find electric models ranging from \$100 to \$200 that will do a great job.

For electric models, look for one that has a GFCI circuit built into the plug or always use a GFCI plug extension with these units (see our previous article on building your own GFCI extension cord).

The thing is, you really should not use anything more than a good detergent through their pickup systems. Except for big professional systems costing several thousand dollars, the consumer units are not suitable for anything but water and detergent. Moving almost anything else through one can ruin the pump in a heart beat.

Another caution is spraying your house. Pressure washers at full power can take off paint and stain in an instant. They generally work very well on vinyl but be careful with brick. Water can get through fine cracks in brick walls and ruin insulation in a hurry. The spray may also take off the patina on bricks such that you end up cleaning more frequently.

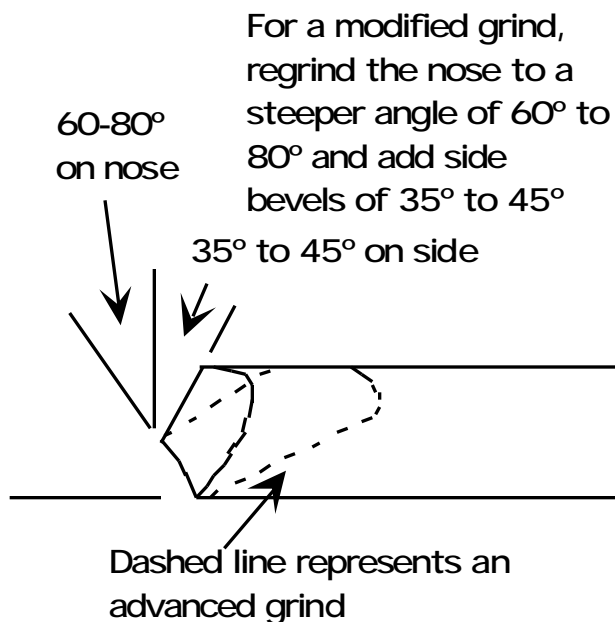
The bottom line — remember what you are trying to do: remove some surface scum or algae. An electric 1,400 to 1,600 psi power washer for \$100-\$200 will do that at a low cost and less trouble. *Barry Humphus.*

MODIFYING TURNING TOOLS

If you've purchased a turning tool recently, you have a good idea of the high cost. For example, a HSS Sorby or Crown 3/4" bowl gouge can cost as much as \$90. Beading and skew chisels range from \$35 to \$60 or more.

What if you could get a whole set of 8 HSS turning tools with nice long maple handles for under \$70? Well you can at Home Depot, Lowes or any retailer that handles Delta Machinery products. Delta sells a very high quality set of 8 standard HSS tools for \$69.95.

Now all you have to do is change the shape of these basic tools to get what you need. To start, you'll need either a bench grinder, belt or sanding



disk with an 80 to 100 grit abrasive. The nice thing about high speed steel (unlike carbon steel) is that it's very tolerant to heat. That is, it is very difficult to over-heat HSS. Still, HSS is very brittle, so don't beat on it and never try to bend it (or even drop one). Unlike carbon steel, turning HSS blue from heat does not reduce it's hardness.

If possible, take a look at photos or samples of the tool you want to make (e.g., a fingernail profile bowl gouge) before you grind. Alternatively, you can grind off a bit, sharpen the tool and try it out on the lathe. This is really better as you will know exactly when to stop grinding. For a modified grind bowl

gouge, reduce the nose to between 60 and 80 degrees with side bevels of 35 to 45 degrees. Then rake the flute to between 15 and 30 degrees from the near verticle of a factory grind.

From the Delta set of spindle gouges, I've re-ground three excellent bowl gouges, creating fingernail profiles that work almost as well as the \$90 version for only \$9 each plus a little grinding and sharpening time.

Using the Delta 1" skew, you can form a wonderful hooked nose scraper (like the \$36 Corwn), a heavy rounded scraper (like the \$57 Sorby) or even a ring cutting tool. With the 1/2" skew or round nose scraper you could do a couple of bead forming tools (\$40-60).

Another thought is that no grind is particularly the best, even the ones that come from the factory on a premium brand. The key is that gouges and scrapers should be modified to fit your needs for turning instead of you changing your technique to fit a tool. You should feel free to change any of them to make your turning faster and better.

In addition, you don't necessarily need to buy expensive grinding equipment or grinding/sharpening jigs. An upside-down belt sander with an 80-100 grit belt will work just fine. The famous woodworker and teacher Tage Frid (and long time *Fine Woodworking* contributor) used a belt sander to sharpen all of his turning tools at his school. It has a flat area (for skews and scrapers) and a rounded area (for hollow grinds).

To do this, I simply made a jig that allows me to flip my old Craftsman belt sander upside down and secure it to my bench. I lock it to on and by eye, tune up the tool edges. If I need really honed or smoth grinds, I take the tool to the lath. There, I spin on one of a couple of different disks with various grits of sand paper glued to them and use the bajo as a tool rest to do the sharpening. For gouges, just rotate the tool against the grit (such as 400 grit W/D sand paper glued to the disk) to give it a polish. For skews and scapers, just duplicate the angle or change it as needed for a particular job.

Besides buying the Delta set from a retailer, a used set can also be had for as little as \$25 on eBay.

Barry Humphus