

John Griffith, President
Patrick LaPoint Treasurer

Officers and Directors

Barry Humphus, Editor, Gary Rock
Steve Thomas, Joe Comeaux

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; John Marcon: 478-0646; Gary Rock: 433-1679; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Trouth: 583-2683. Each have years of experience and knowledge.

May Meeting Highlights

Our meeting was at the wonderful Stines store on Nelson in Lake Charles and we had a good crowd. We also had two new members join: Ray Floyd who is a carver/whitler and Joe Dees who makes custom knives. Welcome aboard and we look forward to seeing your work at a future meeting.

As John Griffith was attending the McNeese graduation, Patrick LaPoint stepped up and did a great job conducting our meeting. We had a new member added this month : Ray Floyd and a couple of guests, Joe Dees and Alex Felton.

May was hearing protection month according to Patrick LaPoint. He discussed several types of ear protection including the various levels provided by these devices.

When hearing protection is worn, your level of exposure to noise is based on the NRR rating of the protection device being used. This means that if you are in your shop with a level of noise exposure at 100 dB and you are wearing a hearing protector with an NRR 33 dB, your new level



of noise exposure is 87 dB. There is a more complete discuss later in the Newsletter.

Mr. Eltee Thibodeaux started off Show and Tell this month with some of his colorful spinning tops. He sells these for \$20 each and I got one for a small child. George Carr chip carved a “tea” box in a quilt design. He used a wipe-on gel stain to enhance the figure of the carving.

Pie Sonnier brought some very nice business card holders made from walnut, spalted sycamore and osage orange. Pie also showed off a very old meat cleaver. J.W. Anderson brought one of his great end-grain cutting boards made of the beautifully figured wood he showed us in the

past.

Ray Kebodeaux showed off a great mallet he constructed. The pecan head is hollowed and filled with bird shot to give it some heft. He uses the mallet in his flint napping. Ray also mentioned that he has a supply of sweat bay magnolia that members can get. Ryan Navarra showed a nice frame saw made from a pattern from Highland out of oak. Ryan also brought a couple of small saw horses built from pine with mortise and tendon construction.



Travis McManemin has built a great down-draft sanding table adapted from a Rockler plan. Simple in design, it should really keep down the dust. Patrick LaPoint showed a child’s teaching puzzle. He is producing several of these for a school. Darren Hood mentioned that there is a reclaimed



wood store called (I believe) Gabby Barnes. It is located just north of

Jennings.

Steve McCorquodale brought a wonderful spalted pecan crotch with great mineral colors. For the spalting, he left the bark on the log for several months to speed up the spalting process. Joe Dees, who is a knife maker, showed off a knife who’s handle was made from stabilized spalted maple. He also made the leather sheath. Pie Sonnier won the Show and Tell Stines gift card.

Coming up . . . Saturday, June 9 at 9:00 A.M. at Stines in Lake Charles.

Tools for Accuracy: Part Two

Last month we talked about how to start the process of getting precision tools in your shop. In this part, we'll talk about rules and tapes.

Early on, I remember reading somewhere that you should never rely on measuring tapes in a woodworking shop. Only use your rulers, never tapes. Though I understand the idea suggested because tapes are heavily used and vulnerable, I thought it seemed an odd idea. In practice, I neither agree with nor follow that rule. Because I have made furniture — where many part dimensions are longer than most rules, I find that using them too impractical and inconvenient in most situations.

I also don't believe in the concept of "good tapes" and "bad tapes" though I know a lot of woodworkers that do. Only "good tapes" are allowed in my shop. I go to a lot of trouble to qualify all my measuring tapes and check them before they are purchased and from time to time after use. If something isn't up to snuff, it's immediately removed from the shop. Using the same thinking, I spend whatever time it takes to tune my table and miter saws, jointers and sanders and other fixed tools so they all match my standard setting instruments. That way I can rely on them. The point being, that after qualifying and testing every tool and measuring device in the shop, I can rely on all of them because they're all the same. I need to know that everything involving measurements in my shop agrees with the other and can be trusted. Doing this makes life so much easier. The way you do this is by using standards set by your most accurate tools: precision rules.

Like many woodworkers, I have rules of various sizes. My most used models are 6", 12" and 24" long Starretts or PECs. I always buy the thick, heavy versions. I have one 36" and one 48" PEC rulers that come out as needed. In my apron pocket, I carry a 6" rule. In another pocket is a 6" combination square. For a long time, I would buy my rules in what's called 4R configuration.

For a long time, I would buy rules in what's called 4R configuration. This is the most common format for woodworkers. That means 8th and 16th front and 32nd and 64th on the other side of the ruler. 16R rules take this one more step to 64ths and 128ths. That gets really hard to see at my age. Lately, I've been assembling a set of 5R format rules which are 10ths and 100ths on one side because these are the units you use in CAD work. It's just so much easier to do things in base 10 if digital is involved. This is the standard ruler format for the aircraft industry and I have to say after using it for a while, I really like it. I learned this from my colleague Sunshine Radford, the chair of SOWELA's air-

craft maintenance programs. Ms. Radford really knows her stuff and I have learned much from her. I also have metric rules, and a few combined E/R rules. To avoid confusion with other rulers, I try to buy metric rulers with a distinctive or reversed black finish or at least mark them with a large M to indicate metric. That works for me.

I like to trust my tapes. Only good tapes are allowed to live in my shop. I expect them to be as close the accuracy of my very accurate rules as possible. I also consider it critical that all the tapes in my shop are tested so that I can trust whatever one I happen to have in my hand at the time. To do that, there is a picky process in place for selecting tape measures.

If you are in production mode, building some furniture, rely on two matched tapes in your shop. One is always in your apron pocket. The other is a floater that moves around key locations in the shop. The key word here is "matching". All tapes are the same and tested against my standards: Starrett rulers.

There are all kinds of tape sizes and configurations and choices, but when it comes to personal preference, I've found for furniture and general work, a 16' long by 3/4" wide tape, with measurements on both edges, is perfect. With this selection, I'm inferring that we're stuck with the Imperial system for measurement and materials, for the time being at least. I've found that this model is long enough to measure imported and domestic hardwood lumber commonly available up to 14' long, yet wide enough to have a decent stand-out, doesn't get damaged as easily as smaller tapes and yet, compact and light enough to comfortably fit in your apron pocket.

I'm not a fan of unnecessary size, bulk or added cladding on a tape. These added features are for contractors and carpenters, not woodworkers. A small shop is just not the same as a job site where dropping a tape from a ladder is common. I prefer bright colored tape measures over shiny metal ones that are heavier. As parts and sawdust pile up on shop surfaces, a left-behind tape is hard to find. I've found that color really helps. Next, I only use thumb lock tapes. I have yet to find any form of a spring held tape to be anywhere close to reliable and I've tried many.

How you select your tapes is a process in itself. It's fair to say that you don't exactly buy off the rack. Go to local home centers with a trusted Starrett ruler in hand to try each tape before you buy. Find the model you're after and start testing. Put on a strong set of reading glasses (at least for me) and if the extended length doesn't align dead center with the 12" ruler marks, move on. Also check the pushed in

Continous on Page 3

Tools for Accuracy: Part Two, Continued
position. Finally, carefully check the hooks and rivets to see if something is bent or out of alignment. Unfortunately, I would say only 15-20% of the tapes tried pass. If you find good ones, buy and use tapes in sets, so purchase 2 at a time.

Back at your shop, double check the new recruits with even longer very accurate Starrett or PEC rules — just in case. Finally, use a Sharpie and write the purchase date on the back of each tape to serve as a reminder. Once a tape is no longer up to snuff, mark it with an X and remove it from the shop to spend its retirement life on garage/household/property owner duties.

Though I'm very careful with all my tools, my measuring tapes typically are on duty only for a year or three before they fail qualification. Barely stretched tapes or bent hooks, slightly worn rivets or rivet holes or the rare kink are enough for you to retire a tape to less-critical tasks if it no longer meets the standards.

Being picky about measuring tapes, you may want to pay a lot of attention to design, engineering, casting, construction and every little detail that goes into tape measures. About six years ago, I qualified and brought home two well-engineered Fisco Class 1 grade (this means a minimum accuracy of .3mm over 2 meters) tapes made in the UK that had an added feature: a bump stop or shock absorber to protect the blade and hook when it comes crashing home. The tapes also have very rigid hooks and bigger rivets. I first thought the bumper was a gimmick. It is not. Even after years of use, those two tapes are still in my shop and remain accurate to this day.

A few years ago I bought a Japanese brand of tapes called Tajima. They were not easy to find, but US distribution is starting to pick up as you can now get them from Amazon. A 16 foot costs less than \$18.

Calipers, micrometers, dial indicators and more is the next segment of this treatise. Barry Humphus

Noise Protection and the NRR

Patrick LaPoint reminded us in May about ear protection from excessive noise. My own hearing loss has come from hearing lots of so-called white noise from computer fans. Fortunately, they are not so noisy these days.

When hearing protection is worn, your level of exposure to noise is based on the NRR rating of the protection device being used. Keep in mind, however, that while the NRR is measured in decibels, the hearing protector being used does not reduce the surrounding decibel level by the exact number of decibels associated with that protector's NRR. For example, if you are at a rock concert where the

level of noise exposure is 100 dB and you are wearing earplugs with an NRR 33dB, your level of exposure would not be reduced to 67 dB. Instead, to determine the actual amount of decibel deduction applied (when decibels are measured dBA which is the most common), you take the NRR number (in dB), subtract seven, and then divide by two. Given the previous example, your noise reduction equation would look like the following: $(33-7)/2 = 13$. This means that if you are at a rock concert with a level of noise exposure at 100 dB and you are wearing a hearing protector with an NRR 33 dB, your new level of noise exposure is 87 dB. If you are wearing a product with an NRR of 27 it would deduct 10 decibels $(27-7)/2=10$.

When hearing protectors are worn in combination (i.e. earplugs AND earmuffs), rather than adding the two NRR numbers together, you simply add five more decibels of protection to the device with the higher NRR. For example, using 3M E-A-R Classic Earplugs (NRR 29) with 3M Peltor H7 Deluxe Earmuffs (NRR 27) would provide a Noise Reduction Rating of approximately 34 decibels.

While this is the best protection most folks need, you may not hear that call to diner.

For a better grasp of industry standards, here are a few of the most common producers of noise levels that OSHA consider to be dangerous: lawnmowers, rock concerts, firearms, firecrackers, headset listening systems, motorcycles, tractors, power tools and industrial machinery. The use of hearing protection is strongly recommended during continued exposure to any of the previously listed environments, as all can deliver sounds in excess of 90 decibels.

Exposing yourself to high decibel environments can result in permanent damage to your hearing. In the event you find yourself in one of these environments, protect yourself with the proper hearing protection. Barry Humphus

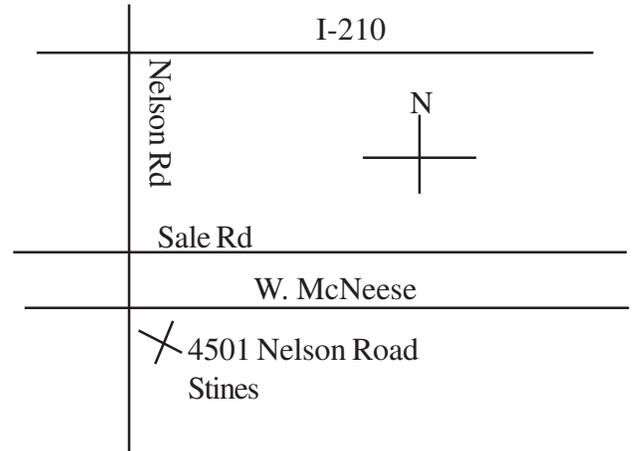


May Meeting Location

We have the wonderful opportunity to meet at the Stines Lake Charles location at 4501 Nelson Road. Please enter the store and go to the back left in the store to the meeting room.

To get there go South on Nelson Road in Lake Charles going from I-10 or I-210 and turn into the parking lot. Go to the back of the main entrance to the very back to the meeting room to find us.

Please take an opportunity to explore Stines before you leave to find the items for your shop or home that you may need. As always, thank the folks at Stines as you check out.



June 2018

Lake Charles Woodworkers Club, Inc.
www.lcwoodworkers.com
1039 Timberlawn Dr.
Lake Charles, LA 70605