

Steve Thomas, President
Sandy Kramer, Treasurer

Officers and Directors

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

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; Gary Rock: 433-1679; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Trough: 583-2683. Each have years of experience and knowledge. Call them with your ideas.

December Meeting Highlights

It is always a real treat to visit the shop of Lede and Larry Cooper. The great shop is big enough for a large crowd of woodworkers, family and friends. Thanks again to both of them for hosting our holiday gathering. The food was outstanding once again. This time Joe Comeaux and his friend Wayne Grey did an outstanding job creating two wonderful gumbos - seafood and chicken. Able to taste both, each were great and we need to get the recipe. We had spouses and children present and it was good to see them all. The only guest I found was Joe's - John Reeves. We also had Sister Barbara and Bobby Brown as guests. Mr. Daniel Menard is a new member as well.

Speaking of Joe Comeaux, he is now our Treasurer effective Januray 1, 2014 as Sandy Kramer is so very busy wit other things. Joe has lots of business experience and he and Barry will get together in January to do the paperwork at the bank.

Show and Tell was once again featured with Pie Sonnier's articulated earth scraper built of osage orange and



black walnut plus other woods from a plan. Sadly, Joey Sonnier passed away

Thursday, December 26. We all loved her interest in Pie's projects and support of the LCWW when we met at their shop. Please give Pie your condolences.

Joe Comeaux brought brought a set of turned pens that will be gifts. He uses super glue as a finish and these were purchased as a kit. Mr. Eltee had a photo of his latest projects of Santa and plans that included a great wood puzzle.

Gary Rock is such a wonderful turner, does such creative work that we all admire. This time he presented a series of bird house ornaments of elm and white oak with a super glass ploy finish. Of course they were all impressive

Don Elfret gave showed a couple of items that were well received while Steve Thomas turned a splated beech bowl plus mysterery wood (possibly elm per Gary Rock)..

Next we had the Show and Tell drawing and Mr. Thibodeaux (often) won this drawing. Perhaps we should all follw Eltee to the gaming areas.

Then we did the gift exchange where members who brought exchange gift were able to exchange their sub-missions.



Larry and Lede Cooper submitted a bunch of containers of nuts (walnut, cashews and more) for a drawing to raise funds for the LCWW. The cost of the drawing was \$1 per ticket and 6 tickets for \$5).. The LCWW generated some \$68 for the drawing and much thanks to Larry and Lede for this. Thanks Larry and Lede as always.

The the year will be special as we have a great President in Steve Thomas, a most creative member who does such great items in terms of woodworkin including his segmented bowls, the incredible Kalidescopes and so many other items. Joe Comeaux, our long member and great cook from time to time has volunteered to be our Treasurr for the future and his experience in the LCWW has been most helpful.

Your Membership Dues

The Lake Charles Woodworkers Club has been a viable organization since 1989, some 25 years. The founders of this organization have all passed, yet we continue, we have had many folks in our organization that have contributed so much over the years. Now is the time to continue your membership by sending in your dues of \$20 for a family membership. See Joe Comeaux at the next meeting.

Coming Up . . . Saturday, Janurary 11, 2014 at the great shop of Jeff and Mary Cormier in Iowa. Please join us at another great meeting.

Router Safety and Tips

Whether used freehand or mounted in a table, a router is possibly the most useful power tool in the woodshop. But working with a device that spins sharp carbide-tipped bits at high speeds can be quite hazardous, unless you follow good safety practices each and every time you rout. Here are a few tips for using a router safely while getting the best results with this versatile performer.

When using a router freehand, always make sure the workpiece is clamped down securely to your bench or work table (the exception is large workpieces, such as cabinets or furniture heavy enough to stay put on their own). Placing a friction mat atop the bench/table before clamping can help prevent the work from shifting. When routing boards too narrow to clamp, use bench dogs with the end vise on a traditional-style work bench to hold the strip steady.

Always keep your hands and fingers well clear of the bit. When routing freehand, never use your free hand to hold the workpiece. For safe router table operation, your



table should be fitted with a guard that covers the area immediately above the bit. Whenever possible, use a push stick or push block to propel the work

past the bit. This is mandatory for smaller and/or narrower workpieces, and helps keep your hands out of harm's way when routing larger parts as well. It's also a good idea to use a feather board to keep the work pressed against the fence and/or table as you rout. Not only does a feather board help keep fingers safe, but it can improve the quality of the cut by keeping the workpiece in the perfect position as it's cut.

Never do any adjustments on a router without unplugging it first! Always disconnect the power when changing bits, servicing the router, or mounting an attachment, such as a fence. Make sure the router's on-off switch is switched off before plugging it back in and confirm that the router's collet and attachments, clamps, etc. are securely tightened before powering the router back up.

After selecting the bit you wish to use, inspect it for damage or visible dullness. Once you're sure it's in good shape, insert the bit fully into the router's collet, then pull it

out approximately 1/16 in. Leaving the bit in full contact with the bottom of the collet can cause it to loose during routing—a dangerous possibility. Also, don't over tighten the collet's locking nut. When working with a short bit, don't extend the shank too far out of the collet: Always have at least 3/4 of the shank's length in the collet. It should go without saying, but only chuck proper router bits in a router: NEVER use carving burrs or grinding points, drill bits, etc. even if they have 1/4 in. or 1/2 in. shanks!

In addition to hurling chips and dust with great speed, routers are notoriously noisy tools that are also capable of churning out clouds of fine dust. Therefore, safety demands that you wear proper eye, ear, and dust protection each time you rout. In addition to wearing a dust mask (I like the cloth, washable kind), connect your router to a dust vacuum or collection whenever possible. Also, don't wear loose fitting clothing or jewelry which might accidentally come afoul of the bit. If you have long hair, wear it up or keep it under a hat.

Never start up a router with the bit in contact with the workpiece. Doing so when working freehand can make you lose control of the router; if it happens with a router table, the workpiece may be flung with surprising force. Starting the router with the bit touching the work may even bend the bit's shank, or in extreme cases, damage the router. When the cut is finished, make sure the bit is clear of the work before switching the router off. When working freehand, wait until the bit stops spinning before you set the router down.

Many modern routers have a slow speed start. If yours has this feature, always take advantage of this. For safety sake, the workpiece should always be fed against the rotation of the bit. Freehand routing, say rounding over the edge of a shelf or cabinet, is always done moving the router from left to right. When the router is mounted in a router table, the workpiece should always be fed past the bit from right to left. Feeding the workpiece in the direction of the bit's rotation (a process know as "climb cutting") is very dangerous and can cause you to lose control of the router or workpiece. Jeff Cormier has both demonstrated this and warned us. The only exception is if stock is shaped using a router table fitted with a power feeder that controls and propels the workpiece through the cut.

It is both safer and cleaner to rout a large edge profile, a deep groove or a wide dado in a series of passes, rather than in a single pass. The heavy cut taken during a single deep pass may incur a dangerous kickback. It's also more likely to cause splintering and tearout. Lighter passes are a breeze when routing with straight bits (including vee,

Router Safety Continued

bullnose, core box, etc.); simply reduce the bit's cutting depth, then increase it slightly for subsequent passes until full depth of cut is achieved. When routing an edge profile with a router table, make your first pass(es) with the bit protruding just slightly beyond the fence, then move the fence back a little for each subsequent pass. If you're routing freehand with a piloted bit, refit the bit with a larger bearing for the first pass, then replace the standard (smaller) bearing for the second pass.

Never force the router through the cut. If excessive feed pressure is needed, reset the bit for a lighter cut. (If you're using a particularly large bit, you may need to use a more powerful router). If routing scorches the wood, it's likely that your bit is dull and needs sharpening or replacement. Anytime you detect unusual noise or vibration, stop the router immediately and inspect it and the bit for damage.

Bits larger than 1" in diameter or longer than 1-1/2" should not be used in a freehand router—switch to a router table for those cutters. Larger diameter bits should have a 1/2" shank and be used in a variable-speed router with its RPM should set to suit the bit's cutting diameter: 18,000 RPM for bits between 1" and 2" in diameter; 16,000 RPM for bits between 2 in. and 2 1/2 in. in diameter (check your router's manual or literature that came with the bit for more specific speed recommendations).

When shaping an edge on the router table, always rout with the bit inside the fence and the material edge against the fence—never rout the far edge, which traps the stock between the bit and the fence. This can cause the bit to catch the wood and hurl it suddenly. Having the fence far away from the bit makes it harder to use the proper guards.

It's never safe to get your fingers too close to a spinning router bit. So when a part gets too small to hold safely while routing on a router table, secure the part in a jig such as a coping sled or other sliding carrier. If the part has parallel (or near-parallel) sides, an option is to hold it in the jaws of a wooden handscrew-type clamp. An even better option is to do as much routing as you can on a larger piece of stock, and then cut it down to its final size after the routing is complete. So here are the rules.

1. Use push blocks to position your hands a safe distance from the bit.
2. Large-diameter bits are for use only in a router table. Using bits over 1 in. dia. in a handheld router can easily cause you to lose control of the tool.
3. Always wear eye and hearing protection.
4. Take light cuts. Heavy cuts invite kickback. If

necessary, move the fence closer to the bit or switch to a larger guide bearing.

5. Use a featherboard to support the workpiece against the router table or fence.
6. Never climb-cut. Always feed the stock from right to left.
7. Avoid shaping small stock. Instead, shape a larger piece and reduce it in size afterwards. If you must shape a small piece, build an appropriate jig or secure the work within the jaws of a wooden handscrew clamp.
8. Always use a guard. If the fence didn't come with a guard, purchase an aftermarket guard or devise one of your own.
9. Never start the router with the bit in contact with the stock.
10. Don't force the bit or overload the router.
11. Secure the motor in the base before starting the router.
12. Don't bottom out the bit in the collet or partially insert the bit. Instead, completely insert the bit, and then back off approximately 1/16 in.

Please expand your skills through understanding of the router and what you can achieve with it. Routers are very powerful and you must understand them while you work. In my view, you must be very careful.

What Counts while routers:

There are many variations on this tool but only two basic types: fixed base and plunge routers. Some routers are available as kits that include both a fixed base and a base for making plunge cuts. These offer a less costly alternative to buying two different tools.

- Low vibration
- Power of motor and maximum bit capacity
- Ease and smoothness of operation for plunge routers
- Availability of speed control for large-diameter bits
- Quality of accessory fence
- Collet size
- Ease of bit changes

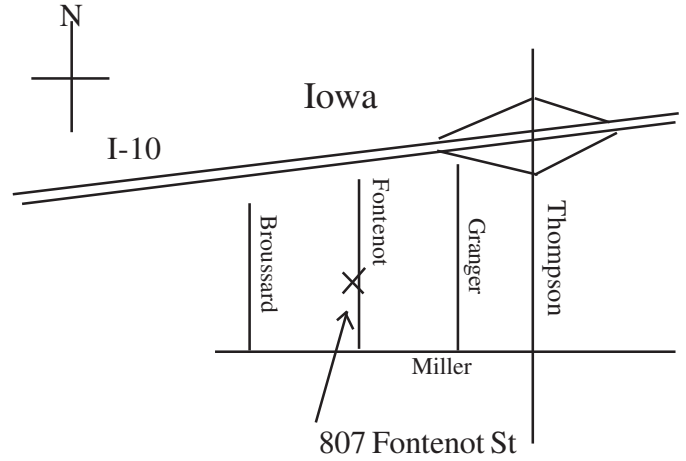
Some routers require the use of two wrenches to loosen the collet and change the bit. More convenient are routers with a spindle lock and a single wrench. A dust port and a micro-adjust feature for bit height are two other desirable features. Barry Humphus edited from *Fine Woodworking*.

The Januray Meeting Location

Our next meeting will be at the great shop of Jeff and Mary Cormier. All you need to do is to show up and have a cup of fine coffee and a donut or two. Mary almost always does something special as well.

The shop is air conditioned, offers all sorts of great power tools to admire and as always, Jeff is a great host particularly when he goes to the local donut shop.

To get there, go East on I-10 to the Iowa exit and turn Right at the first traffic light. Follow Miller Road and turn Right at Fontenot. Jeff's place is on your left just past the duplexes. If you need further directions, call Jeff or Mary at 337-582-3278.



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