

Southwest Louisiana Woodworkers Club December 2019

Bill Fey, President
Patrick LaPoint Treasurer

Officers and Directors

Barry Humphus, Editor, Eltee Thibodeaux
Daren Hood, John Marcon, Robin Richard

Mentoring Program - If you have a project, a problem in any woodworking area, these members have volunteered to help. Give them a call. Frank Tartarmella 802-8989; John Marcon: 478-0646; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Ray Kebodeaux: 583-2378. Each have years of experience and knowledge.

November Meeting Highlights

We had the great opportunity to once again meet at the shop of Sandy and Ronnie Kramer this month. It is a wonderful and complete shop for woodworking. Thanks to the Kramer's.

We had a new member this month and that is Mr. David Savoy. Welcome to the SWLaWoodworkers Club, David.

For Show and Tell, Aaron Andrepont constructed a fishing rod kit as a test for expensive wood that he is making for a friend. The special wood is burmise rose wood and he wanted to make a sample before turning the actual wood he has. for the handle of the rod.

George Carr brought us a very nice Tea box and of course chiped carved for quilting as his spuse does this.. George used a box of basswood (great for carving) and the



design was found at chipcarving.com as the source.

Mr. Eltee Thibodeaux brought us a cute rabbit candy dispenser of pine and MDF. You remove one of it's eras to load the candy. Very neat.

J.W. Anderson brought a very old antique (1850's) brace of wood and brass. While it was unmarked like many, it was a wonderful object. J.W. also brought three beautiful cutting boards that Barry had ordered for family and friends plus an iroko wood box with cherry strips for highlights.

Steve McCoquodale showed us photos of his latest slab table in pecan with rustic metal legs. The slab was 2-1/2 inches thick and the original slab was cut with his Wood Mizer unit.

Ronnie Kramer showed off his home-buit crab meat press and said it really works well and fast. Ronnie also demonstrated a neat peice of software called CBDesigner (available for free from lumberjocks.com for Windows and MacOS). The software allows you to easily design different patters for cutting boards and includes the ability to use many default designs as well as building your own library of designs. Ronnie also showed one of his cutting boards of cherry, purple heart and maple. He used a combination of mineral oil and bee's wax in a 1 to 1 ratio for the finish.

John Griffith showed off his tenth acoustic guitar he recently finished and it is a beauty and sounds great as well. The rosette was particularly nice. John mentioned that he is building a ukalele next in a classic design of walnut and spruce.

Steve McCorquodale brought us photos of a large pecan slab table with rustic metal legs he recently completed. He had cut the slab from a very large tree with his Wood Mizer mill.

Ray Kebodeaux brought us a couple of bowls he recently turned. The smaller of the two was turned from walnut sap wood segments. The larger vase is made of walnut with an ash ring at the top. He got the piece as a billet from Mr. Livingston's collection.

Coming Up . . . Annual Holiday party at the Seafarer's Center - **NOTE: 10:00 A.M. Saturday 12/14/2019.**





McCorquodale Table
 Carr Quilt Box
 Griffith Guitar
 Krammer Cutting Board
 Kebodeaux Bowl
 Group Photo



New SW LA Woodworkers Web Site Coming
 After much research, Barry is doing a new Southwest Louisiana Woodworkers web site. The new site will be at www.swlawoodworkers.com. The site is not active at the moment but will become active during the following months and will be announced in the Newsletter and at meetings.

The reason for the new place is mostly cost. Several reliable hosting services have dropped hosting and domain fees during the past six months and thus we can take advantage of this and save the club money.

The idea is to find a substantially less costly web hosting service that provides good service at a much lower cost that we currently are paying.

The search is on.



A Baseball Bat

The crack of a baseball against a wooden bat is a wonderful sound seldom heard today. Too often it's been replaced by the metallic "clink" of an aluminum bat. Baseball has its roots in balls, gloves and shoes made from animal hides, and bats made from trees. It seems an odd place for high tech equipment to intrude. Making a wooden bat returns you and your kids to the sound and feel of real, old-time baseball.

Almost every common wood has been used for bats at one time or another. However, a few species dominate the history of the sport. Traditionally northern ash has been the wood of choice, but currently – at least in the pros – it is a neck-and-neck race with hard maple. A few bats are still made of hickory and beech.

Bat blanks are graded differently from regular furniture grade lumber. First, only straight-grained wood from slow-growing trees of moderate size make the grade. The blank must have tight, evenly spaced growth rings and be free of flaws like knots. The best blanks are often split from the log rather than sawn in order to follow the grain perfectly. Extra care is taken in the drying of bat blanks to create an even distribution of moisture throughout the entire thickness. Contin-



Mark and shape the middle third of the bat in the same way you shaped the barrel. When you reach the last third of the bat, remove some of the waste material towards the knob end first to give you some working room. Spindle work is best done from larger to smaller diameters because it produces the least amount of tearout. As you reduce the diameter of the bat, you will experience chatter. This usually shows up as spiral marks on the surface of the wood.

To reduce chatter, use a sharp tool and keep it firmly planted on the tool rest. Take light cuts. Avoid pushing hard or you're bound to get chatter from the flexing blank. Even with all these tactics, you will need added support as the handle narrows. The traditional method is to support the narrow area with your hand. Another option is to employ a steady rest. I use a steady rest when I get to about the middle of the blank.

Continue the process of cutting and connecting the guide diameters working from the large diameters on either end towards the narrowest point on the handle.

As you approach the end of the bat, go ahead and lay out the knob area. Establish the knob's width and diameter. Then reduce the diameter on the knob's right side, blending into the handle. Leave a 1/2" to 1" length of waste material past the end of the knob. After the handle area is completed, finish off the knob by rolling away the corners with the spindle/detail gouge.

Sand the entire piece, working through the different grits up to #180. Turn the waste material on both ends down to slightly larger than your lathe centers. Remove the bat, cut the waste off with a handsaw (such as a small Japanese saw), and finish sanding the ends of your bat by hand or a disc on the lathe.

Most bats have brands to indicate how the bat should be held. Always swing the bat with the label up to reduce the chances of breakage.

The goal is to hit the ball on the radial grain, or what some woodworkers call the edge grain – rather than the tangential or face grain. So, put your brand on the grain that looks like chevrons rather than the edges of plywood. Use a woodburning tool to put whatever name or symbol you wish to use as your brand.

A finish gives the bat a nicer look as it brings out the grain. Plus it offers some protection from moisture. All types of finishes have been used for bats, including shellac, lacquer, varnish (water-based or oil-based). For this bat use a wipe-on poly; three coats is sufficient. Some players prefer the handle area to be free of finish – for better gripping and applying pine tar.

To make a full-size baseball bat you will need a lathe that can handle lengths up to 36" between centers. For Little League bats a lathe with shorter capacity will work just fine. It is best to have a live center at the tailstock end, and drive with either a spur or cup drive. If you are duplicating a bat, you will need to fabricate a simple V-block system to hold the master bat (the one being duplicated) directly behind your blank.

The bat can be turned with three tools: a spindle-roughing gouge (1 1/4" to 1 3/4"), a parting tool (1/4" wide) and a spindle/detail gouge (3/8" or 1/2"). If you are comfortable using a skew, a large one (1" to 1 1/2") can be added as an option for smoothing the shape and rounding the end of the barrel.

Complete your supplies with a pair of locking outside calipers. Make sure the caliper's points are fully rounded smooth. Sharp points can catch when used to size your bat. Round the points with a file and smooth with sandpaper. A pair of dividers is helpful – although optional – for sizing the knob's width. A plastic center finder is helpful in locating centers on round bat blanks.

Determine the type of the bat you intend to turn: Major League, softball or Little League. This can be based on an old favorite you'd like to duplicate or from scratch using a drawing based on regulations dimension. The blank should be 1" to 2" longer than the finished bat to allow for waste at both ends.

Mark the centers on the blank and mount it on the lathe. You place the barrel end of the bat at the tailstock. Then true the cylinder to the axis of the lathe.

Shape the widest part of the bat, called the barrel, first. You want to preserve the thick diameter on the blank as long as possible to avoid chatter from vibration. Start by making guide diameters on the first third of the blank with calipers and a parting tool. Set the calipers about 1/8" wider than the desired diameter to allow for final shaping and sanding. If you're duplicating a bat, place the master directly behind the mounted blank.

Next is a process of connecting the guide diameters with the spindle-roughing gouge. Shoot for smooth transitions between the guide diameters. Go ahead and roll over the end of the barrel at this time.

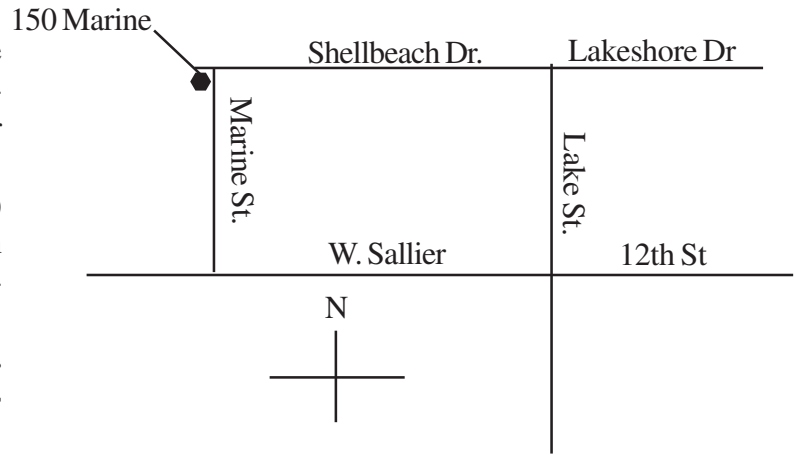
December Meeting Location

We have the wonderful opportunity to meet at the Lake Charles Seafarer's Center at 150 Marine Street for our annual holiday meeting courtesy of SWLaWW Treasurer Patrick LaPoint.

To get there go West on W. Sallier (aka 12th St) past Lake St. Turn right on Marine St. and go to the end. On your left at 150 Marine is the facility. If you should have questions, call Patrick.

Note that the meeting will start at 10:00 A.M. with lunch being served immediately after the meeting.

Please take an opportunity to thank Patrick before you leave and ask about the facility's history.



December 2019

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