

Steve Thomas, President
Joe Comeaux 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.

August Meeting Highlights

George and Nancy Kuffel were our hosts this month at their fine shop and as always, it was great to be there. The shop is nice and large and well suited for our meetings. As always, thanks to them for a great venue.

We had a couple of guests including former member Sonny LeBleau and a Mr. Thibideua whose first name that I missed.

Steve Thompson discussed extension cords. We all use them but the key is to get the correct one for your purpose and tools. Make certain that that you know the power rating for the tool and only then get the correct cord for the use. For example, I have a 100 foot cord that is 12 gage and while it was very expensive, this cord can handle nearly any tool that I own including a powerful electric chain saw

Steve also talked about plate joiners and pointed out that the process is alignment of joints. That is, you use the biscuits to align a joint as they actually do not increase the strength as that is what the glue does. Note that plate joiners throw out a lot of dust, you should always wear dust protection while using one of these. Steve showed of a nice Porter-Cable plate jointer as an example.

For Show and Tell, Mr. Eltee Thibideaux did a lid-



ded scroll sawn birch ply with some unknown wood included. J.W. Anderson brought some of his wonderful cutting boards for us to admire. built of purple heart and some mystery wood. J.W. did a mineral oil finish.

Bill Levy brought us some tivets that were large and

built of sycamore, cherry and walnut. Pie Sonnier brought us



a tracktor with a bush hog attached made of walnut, cherry and more that was much admired. Gary Rock's bowls are truly art and he showed a sycamore laced bowl with stone paint with wipe-on ploy on the inside.

Don Elfert showed off a leg tapering jig he made for a curent project as well as an AutoCad drawing for the item. The small table is of pe-can with gloss poly and d o w e l jointery.



Steve Thomas had a fig wood bowl

with natural edge finish with poly and spalted. Sonny LeBleau showed off a mechanical clock of great complexity and with a second hand. Sonny actually found it in a trash can and apparently came from a church. Sonny also has an 18" band saw for sale and little used should anyone be interested. It is a 1-12 p unit and can handle up to a 2" blade. Give Sonny a call at 478-1701.

Coming Up . . . Saturday, September 12 at 9:00 A.M. and once again we are meeting at the wonderfl Stine's on Nelson Road in Lake Charles. Be sure the SHOP!

Hide Sand-throughs

If you get a little too aggressive with your sander, in a heartbeat you can cut right through the thin face veneer on plywood. On highly visible workpieces, such as a cabinet top, you'll probably need to replace the damaged workpiece. But it might be worth trying this trick first. If the damaged spot is in an inconspicuous location, it might never be seen. Practice on scrap, then work on your project. What have you got to lose?

This fix works only on lumber-core plywood. With MDF-core plywood, the substrate will absorb finish and turn dark, so either replace the part or patch the veneer. Test your technique first on scrap, especially when working with a dark veneer, such as walnut, that contrasts with the light-color core plies.

In general the grain on the layer beneath the veneer runs perpendicular to the surface layer. Use a sharp razor knife to replicate the surrounding veneer grain pattern in the substrate. Make some shallow slices and some slightly deeper.

Using yellow, tan, and light-brown colored pencils, blend the sanded-through area with the veneer. Long strokes in the direction of the grain help enhance the grain look. Use a fine-tip dark-brown pencil to draw in ray flecks, overlapping them onto the surrounding veneer. Let the nearby grain guide the length and spacing of your rays.

With the spot camouflaged, spray on a coat of clear shellac to seal the wood -- brushing may lift the colored pencil marks. A coat of gel stain may provide a uniform color. Create additional "grain" by lightly wiping on a second coat of gel stain over the spot, leaving light streak marks.

Getting Nice Pine Finishes

Many woodworkers love pine because of its low cost, easy workability, light weight, and wide availability. A clear-finished, pine radiates a warm glow found in few other woods. What's not to like? If you prefer a darker, stained finish, things get a little trickier. That's because a bare pine surface absorbs stain unevenly, yielding an unnatural, blotchy, or zebra-like coloration. Pine is much like maple in this way. But don't let that deter you. Pine can be pleasingly stained—it just requires a bit of extra prep work.

Within the pine bins at your local lumber retailer, you may find any number of tree species loosely defined as "pine." Even within the same pine species, boards can vary greatly in how they absorb stain. That adds up to a lot of staining unpredictability. To manage the situation, you need to test your finish on sample boards made from the same wood used in your project.

First buy the right boards. Most pine lumber has

knots, an "imperfection" that's part of the wood's charm. Just avoid knots so loose they're about to fall out, especially ones near the tree's pith or with wildly swirling grain. Secure and seal knots with an application of clear epoxy.

Next you should sand and smooth the wood. After sanding all surfaces with successively finer grits up to 180 or a bit higher, using a random-orbit sander, sand once more by hand with at least a 180-grit block, stroking with the grain to eliminate any swirl marks.

Then sand the ends to 220 grit to lessen the tendency of end grain to soak up extra finish. Next, seal the wood.

Stain should be applied directly to a bare pine surface can yield a blotchy look. Because gel stain absorbs into the surface less than liquid stain, it tints the surface more evenly. But it still leaves a blotchy surface with too much contrast from early- to late-wood grain lines.

To put the brakes on uneven stain absorption, you have to seal the surface. Use a wipe-on polyurethane finish (it's available in stores, or you can blend your own by mixing polyurethane and mineral spirits). However, you can also use reduced shellac which is easier to use, quick drying and can be used under or over any finish.

After allowing those sealants to dry completely, then lightly abrading them with a 320-grit sanding sponge stroked with the grain, we applied a liquid stain. The swatch sealed with wipe-on poly (or shellac).

Then apply a gel stain of your choice. Although you can successfully apply any stain over a surface sealed with thinned polyurethane or shellac, a gel stain gives you the greatest control over the ultimate color. That's because its thicker consistency allows you to build (and darken) it with successive applications.

Building stain coats takes time because each stain coat must dry completely. Otherwise, you risk removing part of the initial coat with the application of the second coat.

Again, as with the liquid stain, blotchiness can still occur. Now stain your pine projects without fear of blotching—but don't be overly brave—you still need to test your finishing products and methods on scrap.

Why Do Your Outdoor Finishes Fail?

Bare wood quickly falls prey to everything under-and-including-the sun. To ward off the brutal elements, we apply finishes and other protections to our outdoor projects. As seasons pass, the paint on the garden arbor cracks and peels, the patio furniture splits and spalls, and colonies of mold form a forest of black dots on decks and planters. If you've with

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these signs, you may wonder why these outdoor finishes failed. This provides a prevention and fix-it program for you.

Left to the elements, bare wood quickly falls prey to everything under—and including—the sun. To ward off the brutal elements, we apply finishes and other protections to our outdoor projects. Once we store our brushes and sprayers, too often we forget that these finishes require periodic maintenance. As seasons pass, the paint on the garden arbor cracks and peels, the patio furniture splits and spalls, and colonies of mold form a forest of black dots on decks and planters. If you've witnessed these signs, you may wonder why these outdoor finishes failed. We'll tell you, and provide a prevention and fix-it program to boot.

Outdoor wood finishes fall into two groups: penetrating and film-forming. As the name suggests, penetrating finishes soak into the wood's fibers. Many contain water repellents and preservatives that work to prevent mold and mildew and ward off invasions by insects. Film-forming finishes, which include paints, solid-color stains, and varnishes, lie on top of wood surfaces. These shed water while providing various degrees of protection from the sun. Pigmented films best shield wood from the elements. Through wear and abuse, though, all outdoor finishes weaken over time, regardless of their properties.

So what happens when a piece of finished wood sits outside? It gets beaten up, as if struck by the old one-two punch. The first blow is a pounding by the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, causing the protective finish to degrade. Film finishes may crack and peel open. With clear finishes, the sun's rays attack the lignin that holds wood fibers together, causing them to loosen and flake off with the finish. Penetrating finishes also erode due to photochemical degradation. This leaves a degraded, gray surface that won't bond.

Note that exposure to direct sunlight and excessively rainy climate shortens finish life. For bare wood you can use one coat. However, oil-based semitransparent stains actually bond better to a slightly weathered surface. With the breakdown of the finish, the second punch, in the form of moisture, delivers a much deeper blow, especially through end grain. It saturates the wood's fibers, making them swell, much more in width than in length. In colder climates, this

moisture can freeze, prying fibers apart. During warm, dry periods with exposure to direct sunlight, the wood gives up moisture and contracts unevenly. The result of these swelling and contracting cycles is the end-grain checks, peeling paint end grain splits, checks and radial cracks may appear along the wood particularly in non-kiln-dried wood.

When moisture spreads on the underside of a finish, it makes the finish lose its grip, causing film-forming finishes, such as polyurethane and paint, to flake or blister. The worst-case scenario occurs when the wood's moisture content exceeds 30 percent: Microorganisms break apart wood fibers, create sponginess, and lead to total rot (note that 12–19 MC is typical of kiln-dried softwoods, 6–8 MC for kiln-dried hardwoods). Finally, we can't talk about failed finishes without touching on poor wood preparation, inadequate finish coverage, moisture penetration via hardware holes, mildew, and critters.

So prepare your wood surfaces very carefully.

Cleaning your Blades

Pitch, tar, and resin build up quickly when cutting wood (especially soft woods, such as pine) and can gum up saw blades until they cut like dull ones, leaving behind burn marks and tearout. A few dollars worth of supplies—an oil-change pan or 5-gallon-bucket lid, a brush, and some blade cleaner (we like CMT Formula 2050, no. 817541, woodcraft.com)—combined with a little elbow grease could save you a trip to the sharpening shop. Just follow this simple process to restore your blades. For safety, work in a well-ventilated area and wear gloves and eye protection.

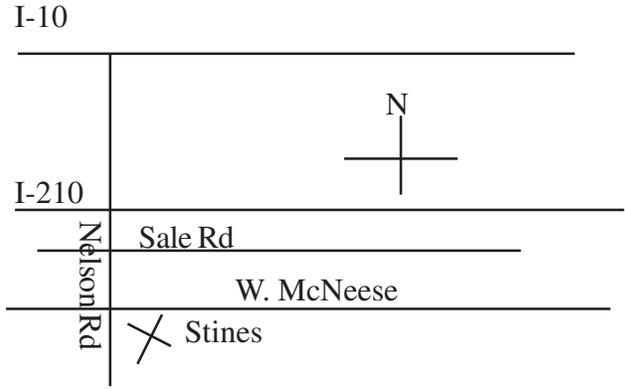
When soaking multiple blades, slide plastic lids (such as those from yogurt or margarine containers) between the blades to prevent the teeth from chipping. Steel-bristle brushes cut through grime quickly, but they can also damage or dull your blade's carbide teeth. Scrub with nylon or brass brushes instead. Spray or pour the cleaning solution on your blades. Let the blade sit for 15–20 minutes; then scrub the cutting edges and the gullets between the teeth. Wipe the blade dry with a clean cloth; then apply a rust-blocking sealant, such as Bostik BladeCote (no.124626, at www.woodcraft.com).

September Meeting Location

We have the wonderful opportunity to meet at the Stines Lake Charles location at 4501 Nelson Road, this May, June and now at the July meeting. Please enter the store and go to the very back left in the store to the meeting room.

To get there go East on Nelson Road in Lake Charles going East 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.



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