

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

December Meeting Highlights

Once again, we were priviledged to meet at the Stella Maris Seafarer’s Center compliments of Treasure Patrick LaPoint. As John Griffith was at the McNeese graduation, Patrick took over the start of the meeting with a description of the Seafarer’s Center and its function to support sailors comming to the Port of Lake Charles and the Port of Cameron. The Center provides transportation to the Center as well as local stores. The Center is funded by the loacal Diocese making it one of eight in the country funded externally. The Stella Maris is one of the oldest Centers in the U.S. and was founded in 1962. The five employees serve more than 1,100 ship crews per year representing over 25 thousand sailors and crew. Several of those attending brought covered dishes while the Club supplied the ham and turkey. It was a delicious spread.

George Kuffel, long time member and a fine woodworker passed away December 14, 2017. We were prevelidged to have many great meetings in his fine shop. George will be interned at the Central Louisiana Veterans Cemetery in Leesville near Fort Polk.

Show and Tell brought Eltee Thibodeaux who has been turning pens. His recent work includes interesting mechanical designs from Penn State. The pens are the “rifle” type complete with litte gun cases for carrying about. Pie Sonnier brought a beatful biplane but even in its unfinished state, it is a wonderful creation. Made of oak and sycamore it is to be clear coated to show off the great grain and figure

wood in a checker board design. J.W. also brought a couple of old tools including a brace of wood and brass plus a Stanley nuber 71 router plane with the original box, three cutters and instructions.



There are many Types in this series from the No. 1 (1884 -1885) through the Type 15 (1974-1993).

Frome the appearance and finish, J.W.’s looks like a Type 15.

George Carr told a quick story about the Cuban family he sponsors saying that they are so very grateful to be in the U.S. George made a very nice chip carved mirrow for the lady as her Christmas gift.



Ray Kebodeaux had a beautiful spalted pecan box with dark mahogany trim. The interior was flocked and exterior finished with a semi-gloss poly. Steve Thomas brought his first band saw box in a Yin-Yang design he found on Wood Magazine. It has two drawers and the wood is alder stained as walnut and flocked inside. Steve mentioned something we all know -- stain and poly covers many an error.



Please remeber that if you have not paid your annual membership, it is now due. Please see Patrick LaPoint at the January meeting to update your family membership of \$20.

Coming Up . . . Saturday, January 13, 2018 begining at 9:00 A.M. at the Stine’s Store in Lake Charles on Nelson Road. Please join us.



## Productive Jointing

Straightening wood on a properly adjusted jointer is easy once you understand the process. It is also important to realize that you are stronger than the wood and can “force” the jointer to make bad cuts. The key is letting the jointer do the work and moving the wood across it so that the least amount of wood is removed to correct a defect.

Though it may seem expedient to joint a long board before breaking it down into project-sized pieces, the opposite is usually true. Many consider the maximum length that can be processed on a jointer to be roughly twice the length (overall) of the tables. Most manufacturers warn of jointing short pieces with minimum lengths often in the 12 to 18" range. While very long boards can be successfully jointed with proper support outside the tables, it is almost certain that more wood will have to be removed to eliminate a defect, particularly an arch between the ends.

Breaking a long board down to near project sized pieces not only makes them easier to handle, it can reduce defects such as arching or bowing between the ends by as much as 50%. Far less material must be removed from the shorter pieces to eliminate a defect, leaving a thicker board when jointing is complete. I always cut long boards down, creating pieces 1" to 2"-longer than needed for the project. Then, after they are jointed, planed and squared, final trim cuts can be made to bring them to their final length, now with absolutely square ends.

The same principle applies to width. It makes no sense to joint the wide face of boards that are considerably wider than needed for the project. If the board is considerably wider than needed, I'll joint the straightest edge, take it to the table saw and rip it down to the size needed, plus 1/4". Then, I can joint a wide face, go to the planer to make the other wide face flat, parallel and reduce the stock to the wanted thickness if necessary.

With the wide faces parallel, I go back to the jointer to make sure both edges are square to the newly machined faces. If the board is within 1/4" to 1/2" of the needed width and does not have serious edge defects I can joint and plane the wide faces first. However, to avoid accidentally coming up narrower than needed, inspecting the edges carefully is important. Experience is the best teacher here.

Part of letting the jointer work properly is feeding the stock across the knives slow enough to allow the cutters to slice the wood away. Even with a 3/4"-thick board on edge, an excessive feed rate can overpower the knives. A telltale sign of a too-fast feed rate is a rippled appearance of the edge after cutting. Slowing the feed rate slightly will allow the knives to clear the surface evenly and leave a flat, smooth edge.

When jointing the wide face the feed rate has to be slower yet because there is so much wood being removed. After gaining a little familiarity with the jointer you develop a feel for when the knives are working as opposed to when they are fighting the wood.

To minimize chipping, jointer knives should be cutting down or with the grain. There are temporary exceptions to this rule, as described below. To prevent chipping, tearout and get the best surface possible from the jointer, its knives have to cut down or with the grain on the final finishing passes.

On some pieces, particularly when jointing the wide face, reading grain can be very difficult. Occasionally, taking very light cuts (1/32" max) in both directions and inspecting the surface between will reveal which produces the smoothest cut. Applying too much downward pressure to the wood can easily flatten a bow or twist as it passes over the knives. With the wood pressed flat, or close to it, the jointer dutifully cuts it flat in that position but when released, it springs back up and the defect reappears.

One of the harder things to learn when operating a jointer is developing a feel for how much pressure is necessary to maintain control of a piece of wood as it moves across the knives. Any more pressure than that begins to flatten the wood on the jointer, reducing the defect that the jointer sees.

Waxing the tables and keeping the knives sharp reduces the effort necessary to control the wood and makes this an easier lesson to learn. You still have to develop the feel for what it takes to control the wood but it is easier when the wood and jointer are not fighting back in the form of excess friction. The best teacher in this case is practice: and messing up a few pieces of scrap wood.

Because some portion of the board on the outfeed table is already flat, that is where our hands should focus what pressure is being applied. We are forced to have our hands over the infeed table to get the piece started and to guide the piece until a large enough section at the leading edge is machined flat. However, as soon as there is enough wood flat on the outfeed table, your hands and the pressure they apply should focus there to keep the machined edge of the wood flat on the outfeed surface which forces the rest of the board to follow on the line.

If the wood has a serious defect such as an arch or bow we may have to apply enough pressure before and after the cutter head to keep the board as level to the table as possible during the initial cuts. Then, as soon as the jointer begins making a flat surface on the leading edge, pressure can be concentrated over that spot on the outfeed table.

Jointery continues on Page 3.

## Jointery Continues

That way the knives can extend that machined-flat portion and minimize the amount of wood that is removed during however many cuts needed to eliminate the rest of the defect.

Another technique that can help true a mildly distorted board is swapping ends between the first few cuts. While we want the finish cuts to be made with the knives working “down” the grain, reversing the piece during the initial cuts will help average wood loss at either end, help bring the board down flat to the tables evenly and actually minimize the amount of wood removed.

If the defect is big, especially on an edge, it may be better to reduce its severity with a preliminary cut with a hand-operated saw or even a hand plane. For more on this technique, see our companion story, “Preparing Wood for the Jointer.” This additional step can save time, wood and help reduce tapering of the board.

The jointer is like any other woodworking machine in that understanding its limitations and gaining experience are what make you proficient using it. Once you learn to use a jointer correctly and start producing truly straight and square material for your projects, you may wonder how you ever built anything straight without it.

One more thing is the length of the boards you joint. As mentioned above, boards that are more than twice the length of the jointer bed really need support at the outfeed. Use either a lift support or a person to assist you. Boards that are less than 6 inches are not safe to run across a jointer (I know because of an unfortunate throw of a board across my shop). Always use push blocks -- always.

## New Year Shop Safety Checklist

Sure, you know your tools and materials. You’ve done it all before, right? But all the same, you can never take safety for granted. Here are a dozen things to ponder before you begin any woodworking project. Just like the launch of an airplane or a big rocket, check them off one by one as pilots do in their places of work.

**1) Do you know exactly what you’re going to do, and feel like doing it?** Think through the operation and each move you must make before you make them. And don’t do anything with power tools if you’re tired, angry, anxious, or in a hurry.

**2) Is your work area clean?** Keep your work area uncluttered, swept, and well lighted. The work space around equipment must be adequate to safely perform the job you’re going to do.

**3) What are you wearing?** Don’t wear loose clothing, work gloves, neck ties, rings, bracelets, or wristwatches. They can become entangled with moving parts. Tie back long hair or wear a cap.

**4) Do you have the right blade or cutter for the job?** Be sure that any blade or cutter you’re going to use is clean and sharp so it will cut freely without being forced. Dull tools are a safety hazard.

**5) Are all needed power tool guards in place?** Guards — and anti-kickback devices — also must work. Check to see that they’re in good condition and in position before operating the equipment.

**6) Where are the start/stop switches?** Ensure that all the woodworking machines you’ll use have working start/stop buttons or switches within you’re easy reach.

**7) Are the power cords in good shape?** Don’t use tools with signs of power-cord damage; replace them. Only work with an extension cord that’s the proper size for the job and route it so it won’t be underfoot.

**8) Do you have your power tools properly grounded?** Tools other than double-insulated ones come with three-wire grounding systems that must be plugged into three-hole, grounded receptacles. Never remove the grounding prong from the plug.

**9) Do you know what safety equipment you need for the job?** Around cutting tools, always wear safety glasses, goggles, or a face shield. Add a dust mask when sanding. Wear hearing protection when required. (If you can’t hear someone from 3’ away, the machine is too loud and hearing damage may occur.)

**10) Where are the chuck keys and wrenches?** Check that all chuck keys, adjusting wrenches, and other small tools have been removed from the machine so they won’t interfere with the operation.

**11) Have you checked your stock?** Inspect the wood you’re going to use for nails, loose knots, and other materials. They can be hidden “bombs” that possibly may injure you or damage your equipment.

**12) Where’s your pushstick?** Keep a pushstick or pushblock within reach before beginning any cut or machining operation. And avoid getting into awkward stances where a sudden slip could cause a hand to move into the blade or cutter.

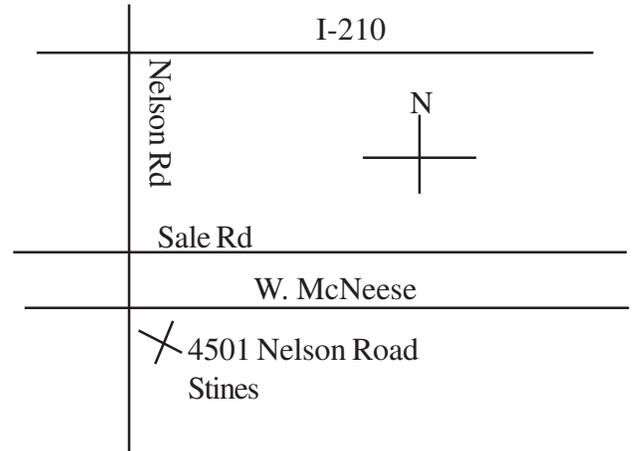
*This is the New Year and Now is the time to pay your annual dues to the LCWWC. Please see Patrick LaPoint, our wonderful Treasurer this month and give him your \$20. That pays for our monthly refreshments and the monthly Newsletter plus the new web site at [www.lcwoodworkers.com](http://www.lcwoodworkers.com)*

### January 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.



January 2018