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JULY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Architect Richard Johnson was our guest speaker this month at the Calcasieu Parish Library. Richard has been to Lake Charles many times in the past and has now moved here to work with King Architects in Westlake, LA. He has been designing commercial buildings and homes in Peru and other countries for many years (his wife is from Peru) and his web site www.elcondor.net, shows off some of his wonderful work. Along with building designs, he also designs and builds some of the furniture that goes with the interiors.

Richard's academic carrier began with a four year program at the University of Minnesota in Forestry. He then went through the 2 year pre-architctual program at McNeese under Noel Dast (our speaker a year ago this month). He later received a BA and Masters in architecture at the University of New Mexico. His interest in indigenous architecture in South America lead him to receive the prestigious Fullbright Scholarship award that allowed Richard to travel to Peru and then on to Guam and Bali in Indonesia to study the native architecture.

His approach to building design logically follows what he learned from Dast and his travels: the form should follow the nature of the indigenous environment. To illustrate this, he showed photos and film of the people and their buildings from these areas. Especially interesting were the carvings found on doors and transomes of churches. When some of these peices became available due to reconstruction, he acquired them and incorporated the pieces into furniture he designed.

Richard discussed the many varieties of wood found in and used by the peoples where he stayed and worked. When members stay long after a meeting to ask questions of the speaker, you know what he said was interesting and useful. Such was the case this time.

C-CLAMPS ON DRILL PRESS

Whenever you want to clamp a workpiece to your drill press with C-clamps, the ribs that are cast into the underside of the table are always in the way.

The ribs are spaced so they're always right where you want the clamp to be. And they're so narrow that if you try to clamp to the edge of one, the clamp slips off as it's tightened. To solve this problem, cut and glued some scrap blocks to fit between the ribs.

Because you occasionally might use the slots in the table, you don't have to permanently fix the blocks to the table. Just put a few drops of glue from a hot glue gun on each scrap. Then stick the blocks between the ribs. (You could also use double-sided carpet tape to mount the blocks.)

To remove the blocks, insert a small punch through the slot and tap them out, or pop them off with a screwdriver. *From August Home.*

<http://org.laol.net/woodworker>

ABRASIVE PADS

To get a really smooth finish on a project, it's important to sand between coats. This eliminates any "nibs" that can be caused by anything from dust in the air to bubbles in the finish.

For years, sandpaper and steel wool have been the choice of most of us in between coats to smooth out a finish. But in the last few years, abrasive pads have become a better choice for many sanding applications.

The pads look a lot like the kitchen pads used to clean pots and pans. They didn't clog up with dried finish like sandpaper or leave tiny "slivers" behind like steel wool. They are flexible enough to mold to curved parts of a project.

The pads consist of small abrasive particles that are bonded into a "web" of interlocking fibers. This web is what gives the pad the flexibility to conform to irregular shapes. The web design also prevents the pads from loading up with dried finish.

As you rub the pad across the work piece, the fibers wear away and expose fresh abrasive particles. So it's like having a new pad with each stroke. The result is a uniform surface that accepts the next coat of finish evenly.

One other advantage of the pads is they're especially suitable to water-based finishes. That's because the fibers that make up the web are synthetic. So unlike steel wool, you don't run the risk of accidentally leaving behind a "sliver" that can rust when the finish is applied.

The pads are available from hardware and woodworking stores and mail-order catalogs. There are several brands, and several grits in each brand. Each manufacturer color codes the pads according to grit.

The confusing part here is that the coding isn't consistent from one manufacturer to the next. So look carefully to be sure you're getting the grit sizes you want. Grits range from very coarse to extra fine.



Mixed wood, turned bowl from John Leonard Fontenot

COMING UP.....

August 12th, Saturday — Mr. Julian Dondis of Geengate Garden Center on garden design and outdoor furniture at his home.

September 9, Saturday — Millenium Park Site at the Lake Charles Civic Center.

LUMBER GRADING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Hardwoods and softwoods are graded differently and by a number of organizations. Even the names assigned to various grades differ from organization to organization. But let's concentrate on the most widely recognized rules for grading hardwood lumber, which come from the National Hardwood Lumber



Association (P.O. Box 34518, Memphis, TN 38184; 901-377-1818). The following NHLA publications explain all you could want to know about grading: *An Introduction to Grading Hardwood Lumber* (\$2), *An Illustrated Guide to Hardwood Lumber Grades* (\$ 5) and *Rules for the Measurement and Inspection of Hardwood and Cypress* (\$7).

The fundamental premise in grading hardwood lumber is that any given board is going to be cut into defect-free furniture components. With this in mind, lumber graders calculate how many potential clear components (or cutting units) are in a given board. Three things count in determining grade: the minimum size allowed for the clear sections, how few of these sections there are, and what percentage of the board's total area consists of these sections. The basic principle is that the larger the clear sections and the fewer of them, the higher the grade.

The best way to get the lumber you need is to see what a mill or lumberyard is selling as No. 1 common or selects. Get what you can use from these lower grades, and spring for higher-grade lumber only when you absolutely need long, wide, clear boards.

The grades: The best lumber grade is FAS (firsts and seconds). Firsts and seconds are really two grades, but they're only sold together. Firsts must yield at least 917~% clear cuttings on the worst face. Seconds must yield 812/3% clear cuttings on the worst face. FAS boards must be at least 6 in. wide and 8 ft. long, and the minimum size of clear cuttings that count toward the specified yield is 3 in. by 7 ft. or 4 in. by 5 ft.

The two next-best grades, FAS 1F (FAS one face) and select, are graded using both faces. For both, the best face must meet 1[AS requirements, and the other [ace must be No. 1 common. FAS1F boards, like FAS boards, must be at least 6 in. wide and 8 ft. long. Selects can be just 4 in. wide by 6 ft. long.

No. 1 common lumber must be between 66 2/3% and 831/3% clear. The smallest No. 1 board can be 3 in. wide by 4 ft. long. Minimum clear-cutting size is 3 in. by 3 ft. or 4 in. by 2 ft.

No. 2A and No. 2B lumber usually is grouped together. Boards must be at least 3 in. wide and 4 ft. long. Minimum clear-cutting size is 3 in. by 2 ft.

No. 3A, No. 3B and "below grade" lumber generally is not considered furniture grade. From *Fine Woodworking*.

COMMON LUMBER TERMS

Knowing what to look for and the terms used to describe lumber can be half the battle of making that wonder item of wood you have dreamed about. Here is a summary of common wood selection terms.

Board foot (bd. ft.): A unit of measurement equivalent to 1in. by 2in. by 2in.

Bow: A curve along the face of a board from end to end, like a ski.

Casehardening: A defect caused by improper drying, which results in a board with latent stresses and possible honeycombing. A casehardened board cannot be re-sawn without problems.

Checking: Cracks resulting from uneven drying. They may be at the ends of a board or throughout the board as a result of casehardening.

Crook: A curve along the edge of a board from end to end.

Cup: A concave face on a board.

Flat-sawn: Sawn parallel to a tangent of the tree's growth rings. Flat-sawn lumber shows face grain, with oval, U- and V-shaped patterns.

Flitch: A slice of the tree from bark to bark.

Four-quarter (4/4): Lumberyard/sawmill jargon for 1-in. stock. And 6/4 pronounced six-quarter) is 1-1/2 in., 8/4 is 2 in. and so on.

Grain: The predominant orientation of cells in wood. Grain direction can be seen in the growth rings of a board.

Honeycomb: Large checks all the way through a board and evident on its surface, which indicate casehardening. The checks are a result of improper drying.

Kiln dried (KD): Wood that has been dried in a kiln, usually to a moisture level of 6-8%.

Pith, pith tracks: The pith is the very center of the tree. A pith track is the hollow or papery cross section of the pith that's exposed when a tree is cut into boards at its center

Quarter-sawn: Quarter-sawn lumber is made by sawing a tree into quarters and then sawing boards so the growth rings run perpendicular to the face of the board. It's dimensionally more stable than flat-sawn boards and often reveals beautiful fleck in species such as oak (red and white), cherry and sycamore.

Rough lumber: Unplaned lumber.

Sapwood: The outer rings of a tree, through which the sap flows. Sapwood always is light colored in contrast with the heartwood.

Twist: Wood that looks like it's spiraling.

Wane, wany: Wane is where the natural edge of the tree tapers so that it shows up on the edge of a board.



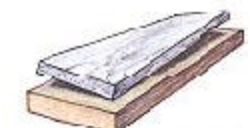
Bow



Crook



Cup



Twist

MINI ROUTER TABLE

Small pieces often require precise routing that just isn't safe on a full size router table. And, trying to shape the workpiece in one hand with a rotary tool held in the other isn't any better. To solve the problem, WOOD® magazine reader (and LC WW president) Chuck Middleton built this scaled-down table to house his high speed rotary tool.

To make your custom holder, start by cutting clamp blocks to fit the body of your rotary tool. Line the inside curved surface of the blocks with weather stripping or some type of foam. The foam allows you to secure the rotary tool between the blocks without cracking the tool housing when tightening the blocks around the tool. Now, cut the table, end supports, and back to the sizes shown on the drawing below right. Assemble the table. Secure your rotary tool in place, being careful not to overtighten the knobs. Mark the hole location needed for your largest rotary bit, remove the table, and drill the hole. Screw the table back in place.

Clamp the mini table to your work bench as shown in the photo, or slide one of the protruding ends of the back into a flush-mounted bench vise.

For really small pieces, we prefer to hold the workpiece with a miniature clamp, or even secure the workpiece to the end of another piece of wood with double-faced tape or hot-melt glue. This keeps our fingers safely away from the spinning bit. From August 2000 *Wood Magazine*; Project Design: Chuck Middleton, Sulphur, Louisiana. This project is also on the LC WW web site.

