



# Newsletter

<http://www.midwestwoodworkers.org>  
January 2015

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## President's Letter

Greetings Woodworkers,

Our December Meeting -- Our December meeting was our annual Holiday Dinner. The Holiday dinner was held once again courtesy of Harrold Ankeney and the church, at the community cafe at Community United Methodist Church, 3301 W. Broadway. The Holiday Dinner is our opportunity to spread some holiday cheer to the children from the Coyote Hill home. We gave them a night out, fed them, and sent each child home with a wooden car. MWA members also discussed a few Show-and-Tell items to give the attendees a sense of woodworking. A good time was had by all. Thank you to everyone who participated in making that night possible.

Our January Meeting -- #1 --- The most exciting thing about our January meeting is that Ernest Hilderbrand's neighbor, Will Scherer, and Will's mentor and teacher, Master Violin Maker Tom Verdot, are giving us a presentation on making and repairing string musical instruments.

After their presentation, I'm sure they will be happy to take questions about instrument making and repair. In addition I believe they would entertain questions about such things as how one goes about getting the education and experience to become a luthier, wood sources, types of wood that work best, etc. I am looking forward to it.

#2 --- The second most exciting thing about the meeting coming up this Monday is that we are raffling off a brand new Ridgid spindle sander. It is courtesy of Scott Stager. Scott won it at the MWA Holiday Dinner, but said he does not have an active shop and wanted to donate the sander to the MWA. Way to go Scott! You da Man! Thank you very much.

I had a theory that having this classy spindle sander as a door prize would increase woodworker attendance at the Holiday Party. The experiment disproved the theory. However, Scott's generous offer has made it possible to give all a second try, at a regular laid-back low-pressure MWA meeting (actually the Holiday Party shares these characteristics, but people (including myself) seem to assume otherwise until they have worked up the courage to give it a try).

In honor of our second chance, it bears repeating my description of the sander from our December Newsletter. The Ridgid spindle sander was just rated in the Winter 2015 edition of Fine Woodworking's annual Tools & Shops issue as Best Overall and Best Value. Retailing at \$200, the reviewer liked it much more than other spindle sanders, including those that cost more than twice as much. Also, a nice man at Home Depot (which owns Ridgid, along with the Ryobi and Milwaukee tool brands) advised me that as long as you register your new spindle sander within the allotted time, Ridgid provides a lifetime guarantee.

Our own Tom Stauder said that he owns one, and said that it is a good machine. Among its advantages are an especially large table surface in front of the spindle (to hold your work). It also comes with a small belt sander attachment, that allows you to sand both curved and straight surfaces with this machine. By showing up

next Monday evening, in addition to an exciting subject for the presentation, you can buy raffle tickets to win this sander and benefit the MWA (as well as yourself).

#### Other Matters --

Talarico Hardwoods -- Scott Stager, in addition to donating the Ridgid spindle sander, came across an interesting link that he shared with us. In Scott's words: "I think this would be of interest to the Woodworking Club membership. I came across this in an old tools email list I am on. One fellow makes guitars and bought over \$300 worth of wood to just make one guitar. Interesting notes on sustainable growing in old forests in Europe."

In addition to Scott's points, the Talarico Hardwoods site (the link's destination) shows gorgeous huge slabs of wood, and offers many varieties of responsibly harvested wood. The huge cross-section slabs tie this site into our November program by Ernest Hilderbrand and Tom Stauder on making a jig to use a router to level large tree trunk cross sections. Scott's mention of buying wood from Talarico to make string instruments also ties it to our January presentation. Kismet! The link is: <http://www.talaricohardwoods.com/imports.htm>.

"The Woodworking Shows" -- This year's Woodworking Shows have snuck up on us. The Kansas City show is this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The St. Louis show is February 6-8, 2015 in Collinsville, Illinois. For more information, go to [www.thewoodworkingshows.com](http://www.thewoodworkingshows.com).

For those not familiar, The Woodworking Shows are a travelling annual weekend of woodworking tool displays and free short workshops, by many, many tool and supply manufacturers. It is a chance, for example, to see and try out most of the Lee Nielsen hand planes, without travelling to Maine to do it. You can also ask the manufacturer's reps questions about their products. Power tools, hand tools, workbenches, and supplies such as sandpaper and saw blades, are featured. Tickets are required for admission and cost \$12 at the door (cash only) and \$10 in advance on-line.

Life Lessons and Saw Blades -- I hope you have all had chances to work wood. I have in fact done a little tinkering in the shop, but nothing notable. I did have one learning experience. Previously, while ripping a couple of eight foot 2x4s into 2x2s on a three horsepower Delta Unisaw, the cut was going extremely slowly and pushing harder to feed the wood didn't help. Suddenly the saw blade began swerving back and forth making a shallow wave pattern as it progressed through the wood (even though the wood stayed pressed against a 42" fence). Frankly, it was scary. I inquired of MWA members how this could happen, and the best guess was that I had a dull blade (but it hasn't been used that much!).

What I have learned is that my 90 tooth 10" diameter blade was designed for finish work and not for ripping long cuts through thicker boards. When I bought and substituted a ripping blade with 24 teeth, it went through the 2x4 like the proverbial hot knife through soft butter.

I also noticed that when using the 90 tooth blade I was burning wood a lot, even just cutting through three eighth inch plywood. When ripping 2x4s it was almost as if the blade would get so hot that it would kind of crystalize the wood in front of the blade, either slowing or completely stopping progress in the cut. The new blade eliminates that as well. I believe the reason is the same as the reason that they recommend a bandsaw blade with just three hooked teeth per inch to resaw large pieces of wood into thinner pieces. And like those bandsaw resaw blades, this 24 tooth ripping blade has very large gullets (spaces between the teeth) built into the design. As Highland Woodworking explains it:

"As you saw through very thick stock, each saw tooth shaves out an enormous amount of waste. In order to maintain a reasonably productive feed rate, there has to be somewhere for that waste to be stashed out of the way until the teeth emerge from the cut. Otherwise the gullets between the teeth fill up and stall further advance until they've cleared the stock."

Clearly, using the right blade makes a big difference. The bottom line is: "Too soon old, too late smart" (or maybe "live and learn" would be a more upbeat perspective).

That's all for this month. I hope to see you this Monday for the program by Tom Verdote and Will Scherer on making and repairing string instruments, and for a chance to take home the Ridgid spindle sander, as well as the usual enjoyment and camaraderie of hanging out with woodworkers.

Be safe in the shop, and have fun.

## Midwest Woodworkers' Association on Facebook

Norm Anderson created a group for the MWA on Facebook. If you use Facebook, take a look and join the group. It will be a good place to post information about projects and share information. Thanks Norm!

Facebook group page for the Midwest Woodworkers Association. The page shows the group name, a cover photo, and a post by Bob Youngquist from January 12 at 6:59pm. The post includes a photo of three wooden lidded boxes and text: "Thanks, Norm for setting this up. I had time to play with the lathe today and finished some lidded boxes. Not sure what I will do with them but made some shavings." The right sidebar shows group details: "Closed Group", "7 members", and options to "Add Description", "Message", and "Invite by Email". Suggested groups include "Antique Woodworking Hand Tools - Post and Boast" and "Cast Iron Anonymous [CIA]".

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