



Newsletter

<http://www.midwestwoodworkers.org>
September 2013

President's Letter

Greetings Woodworkers,

I hear that our August meeting was very enjoyable. Mike Gentsch gave his presentation on stabilizing wood. According to Ernest, Mike did a great job.

“You could hear a pin drop. He explained his vacuum setup and where he got the parts. He demonstrated stabilizing some pen blanks, when the air bubbles stop then the wood is saturated with the resin. He also showed examples of wood that he has stabilized. He then answered a lot of questions. Mike's setup probably cost \$40 versus buying a commercial system for close to \$500.”

Thank you to Mike for putting on the presentation. We all appreciate learning, and to do that someone has to be willing to organize their info and make the presentation. We are glad that Mike was willing to make the effort.

For September, we do not have a program. Because of that, and because the Heritage Festival runs this weekend and our meeting would have been Monday, we are calling the Heritage Festival our meeting for September. This would be a great time for any members who have not had an opportunity to work the festival in the past to “come on down.” We could use the help, we would be happy to see you, and it would be an opportunity to get your fix of woodworker small talk this month in lieu of a meeting! The festival runs from 10 to 5 both Saturday and Sunday. If you had a chance to let me know when you were coming (jgorman@ptclabs.com or 356-7681) that would be great. But otherwise just show up. If you don't know where the booth is, just walk around until you find us, I can tell you from personal experience that approach works.

In other goings on in wood, the Columbia Art League is currently presenting a show based on an interesting pairing of forty visual artists (including at least one woodworker) and forty artists of the written word (such as poets). The show is called “Interpretations.”

It is an absolutely fascinating concept where each visual artist is paired with one of the writers. The visual artist does not choose his or her writer, or vice versa. Instead, you are assigned to each other. Each member of the pair would write or make (as appropriate) something reflective or interpretive of the other's work. You first simply receive your partner's piece of art, but don't know who they are until after both partners have completed their interpretation piece (so you can't get any help from your partner about what their work was “supposed” to mean). Because every human interprets things in their environment differently, the interpretations may not be what we expect, but they are always interesting. It also sparks a lot of thinking and conversation about various pieces of art.

I can't give away too much about individual exhibits, including Tom's, because it is part of an ongoing show, and you really need to see it in person. But I can tell you a little.

Our own Tom Stauder's entry in this affair was pictured on the cover of the Ovation section of the Sunday Columbia Daily Tribune on September 8th.

Sunday, September 8, 2013 at 1:30 am



Nick Schnelle/Tribune

From left, Shannon Hensky, Lisa LoPorto and Diane Coffman gaze at an artwork by Tom Stauder, Aug. 24, at Columbia Art League's Interpretations exhibit. The show paired up artists and writers to exchange and create interpretations of one another's work

The pictured piece is his initial submission, applying to be entered into the show. He named it O (pronounced Oh!) (personally I thought it was a doughnut, but I will defer to the artist's right to name his own work, and O definitely sounds more artsy!). I found the piece to be even more interesting (intriguing actually) in person at the gallery than in the picture. Obviously the jury that was deciding which submitted art would be admitted to the show was also intrigued, and made it one of the forty admitted visual arts entries.

For this show, Tom was paired with a fabulous writer (a fact I was able to deduce from her work in the show) by the name of Marta Ferguson. The written entries were limited to 100 words and each is (from my layman's point of view) essentially a poem, whether it rhymes or not. Marta interpreted Tom's O in a piece entitled "After the Turned Cherry Burl O." At the end of her piece she acknowledged some assistance in her research from our own Steve Massman. I was truly wowed not only by the doughnut, which has infinite facets, grain, and interest, but also by Marta's writing. Unfortunately, all I am able to tell you about it is that her interpretation made me appreciate O even more. It is truly worth seeing for yourself.

Tom, in turn, got to make a work of wood interpreting Marta's original submission to the show, entitled "Table for One." You may be able to anticipate some aspects of Tom's interpretation, just from the title, although I must say that the poem itself, which Marta penned in 1999, was much deeper and more fascinating than I would have guessed from the title. In under 100 words, it struck chords in me that aren't often heard. Again, you really should see it.

I highly recommend that you see the Interpretations show at the Columbia Art League gallery at 207 S. 9th Street in downtown Columbia. There is no admission charge (it's free) and the show runs through November 1st, and the hours that the gallery is open to the public are Tuesday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 11 to 5.

On another subject, I hope you have all had opportunities to make sawdust. Personally, I am reveling in having had such opportunity two months in a row now. I attended the Marc Adams School of Woodworking (MASW) in Indiana with my brother Mark's son, Ben. Ben and I had gone two years ago, and liked it so much that we went back.

We actually attended two classes. A weekend class on embellishing your work (inlays in your furniture or other work piece of many different products including contrasting colored wood, pure silver, diamond shapes of different kinds of pearl-like stone, etc.) It was particularly interesting to "design," draw and cut 1/8 inch deep grooves to make a tiny vine with leaves and flowers. You then fill in the indentations with different colored crushed stone, apply glue on top, and once it dries you sand it down flush with your piece (being rock, the sanding is not so easy, so you try not to leave your crushed rock stick up much).

The weekend class was taught by two guys who make their living selling furniture they build. Their main point was that, after all the time you put into your project, you can add fairly little time to embellish it in ways that really help sell the piece, or get your work admitted to shows, or increase the sale value. The slides of their work are fabulous. For example, they had a lot of ebonized cherry furniture (a shiny black look) with inlaid lines and dots of silver—a stunning look. Bill Wells lives in Ann Arbor and mostly sells through art shows in Chicago. He had some amazing pieces. Some had a crazy amount of fancy embellishment that some of his wealthier clients requested, including pieces from his "I'm glad she's not my wife" series.

Michael Fortune lives in Toronto, and says that he makes his entire living (apart from teaching perhaps six classes a year at MASW) making special pieces for six or eight wealthy families (he is now also doing pieces for some of the second generation members of the families, who were small children when he started). He said that on average they might each order one piece or set per year. He had some dining room chairs that he sold for \$10,000 each!!! Where do you find these clients??? Some of the pieces seemed to be designed more for the owner's bragging rights than for functional use, but I guess that's where the money is. He has

also done special pieces for various organizations, including the Canadian Parliament. He apparently has quite the reputation in Canada. He also has a ton of great skills in areas like curving wood (a separate class), band saw use (lots of jigs and suggestions, a two-day class in itself), inlay, etc. He is a great resource.

Our Monday through Friday class was entitled Joinery I, and was taught by Marc Adams (I understand he put on a workshop for MWA before my time). We worked ten or twelve hour days to make, first by hand and then by machine, a wide variety of wooden joints. We discussed joining wood by glue alone, in butt joints, edge gluing and face gluing. We made dovetail joints with varying numbers and sizes of pins and tails. We made sliding dovetails, faux dovetails, through and half blind dovetails, lap dovetails, etc. We made many different types of mortise and tenon joints. We made through and blind tenons and mortises, angled mortise and tenon, trestle mortise and tenon with key, etc. We also made a hip joint, which is a very strong joint used, for example, by Sam Maloof (and other chair makers) to connect rocking chair legs to the seat.

The main part of the class was actually all things related to joint making. All of the "how to" stuff. How to hold the chisel, how to glue, how to sharpen tools, etc. I worked a huge blister into the palm of my right hand with chisels on day one. Fortunately the next day I was retold and could see, and now understood, that this was not the right way to hold the chisel. For the rest of the week, every time I would slip into pushing the chisel from behind with the palm of my hand, I got a quick reminder to change my method. We also got some good advice about what tools etc. to buy, and from where.

Marc's main mantra, posted at the top of the white-board for the entire week, was "layout is everything." We learned how to lay out the joints, how to use a backsaw to cut close to the lines, how to use chisels to clean up the lines and to knock out what couldn't be sawed out---and how to do it without accidentally tearing out chips or fibers in the part of the wood that was a keeper and would show in the finished product.

When we would switch to making joints mostly by power tools (what a relief) the mantra changed from Layout is Everything to "Set-Up is Everything." Of course, even then, the layout was still incredibly important.

One of the big benefits I got from these classes was a new attitude about the famous Joe Gorman "someday-to-be-built" workbench. The problem with these classes (besides the expense of the class and the hotel) is that if you don't have a way to go home and use and improve these skills, it all simply goes away. With the stupid perfectionist streak that gets in my way sometimes (I own five different Workbench how-to books!) I have been thinking of this workbench as a once in a lifetime perfect workbench, and as a result ultimately nothing happens. So halfway through these classes I realized I need to change my attitude about my first workbench. The new attitude is "the first one is just practice." So hopefully that will work and you will get some news of progress in that direction over the next six months (you didn't expect me to say six days did you?).

The good news for all of us is that, with the human resources in our woodworkers club, you don't need to go anywhere else, or spend a lot of money, to learn or improve all kinds of woodworking skills. Just ask. Some members bend over backwards to give us opportunities, like Ernest and the wood turners. And most members are more than happy to help if you have questions or something specific that you want to learn. We could also post requests for specific help, if you don't know who or how to ask. Just let me know.

I apologize for the length of this newsletter. But you do get Monday night off after all.

I hope to see you at the Heritage Festival.

Until I see you again, have fun working wood and, above all, be safe (and check out that Art League show---a little culture won't hurt you, honest, and you might even find out that you like it).

Joe Gorman

August 2013 MWA Meetings

Officers' meeting, August 26, 2013

Meeting held at Boone County Mill Works

Present: Terry Selby, Clyde Rea, Ernest Hildebrand, Dale Andrews and Karl Haak

We discussed future programs

We discussed the Heritage Fest

Business Meeting Minutes; August 26, 2013

Meeting held at Boone County Mill Works

Clyde Rea-Vice president

19 members present

1 guest present

Minutes read

Treasurer's report showed that the woodworkers had a balance of \$4054.36 and the turners had \$1305.49 for total of \$5359.85

Terry had scrap wood and toy car stock

Ernest said that he had talked to Bill Bass and he is now in hospice care. Ernest suggested members take lunch to share with them.

Contact Ernest if you can do this, Bill is one of our oldest members and was very active in the club. Ernest also said that Harold Anderson, a former member, had a major stroke.

Don Bristow announced a neighborhood garage sale on Sept 13-14 with wood working tools.

Mike Gentzsch gave program on stabilizing and hardening wood using wood hardener and a vacuum pump.

Show and Tell

1. Darren Laup showed an intarsia eagle he made
2. Olin Hatfield showed a bowl he turned and showed how he repaired the wood

3. Tom Stauder showed a pepper mill he turned
4. Mike Gentsch showed a tool box he put together and a seam ripper he turned

There was no raffle

The door prize was won by Mike Gentsch

Ernest announced a toy workshop on Aug. 29th at the PET shop and a turners' workshop at his house on Sept. 5th.

The Heritage Fest is on Sept 21st and 22nd, 2013. We need as many volunteers as possible. If you can help let Joe Gorman know. It is a lot of fun and helps promote our club.

Midwest Woodworkers' Association

c/o Bob Youngquist

4435 Highway PP

Columbia, MO 65202

youngquistr@missouri.edu

