

OREGON WOOD WORKS

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY JOHN DUBAY

The Shop Tour in Eugene last Saturday showcased six shops, each one demonstrating a different aspect of woodworking. We visited a violinmaker, a craftsman who makes room-sized furniture in an 8' X 10' shop, a door and sash maker, an artist using natural/materials and designs, a chair maker, and three woodworkers running a successful high-end cabinet shop. Together they exemplified what I deem the two C's of excellence in woodworking: craftsmanship and creativity.

We can learn craftsmanship, the nuts and bolts of joining pieces of wood parts into a whole, finished piece, and we develop the skills required by repetition and practice. We must also learn much about the nature of the raw material, the tools to work it, the methods and techniques best suited to the job, and at least some rudiments of finishing. We must learn these things. We can learn them either slowly through observation or reading the many books and magazines available today, or more quickly by interacting with, or receiving instructions from, skilled woodworkers.

Creativity, however, seems a more elusive characteristic. Like artistic ability or athletic prowess, we seem to be born with it in varying amounts. Few if any schools offer classes in creativity. The closest in the Guild have been seminars on design. Even these do not teach creativity but techniques to stimulate the creative impulses you were born with, like recognition of the cognitive shift when using your

right brain. Another well-recognized technique to stimulate creativity in design recommends numerous variations of your first idea put on paper (or screen), each one an inspiration for the next iteration in the design process.

I think it was Justice Douglas who once said, "I can't define pornography, but I know it when I see it". Defining creativity is similarly difficult but quickly recognized when you see it. Everyone on the Shop Tour last Saturday could recognize it in the work of Tim Boyden whose home and yard overflows with unique rustic furnishings. Whether you like or dislike that style, you would be struck by Tim's inventiveness with sticks, stones, and twigs.

So while the Guild does not teach classes in creativity, it does provide many glimpses into creativity in full flower. When you do get such a glimpse, and say, "I can do that, but I'd do it a little differently", you have just gotten a glimpse of your own creativity.



THE ANNUAL GUILD PICNIC: FOOD, FUN, GAMES, & MORE!

Don't miss the fun at the Annual Guild Picnic on Saturday, August 20th, starting at noon and ending around 6:00 pm. This year's events will include 4-5 woodworker "competitions", games, swimming, and socializing. Guild members and a guest are invited, so please **RSVP no later than August 15th to Northwest Healthcare at 360-574-5293, as we need a "head count" for the steaks and chicken.** This is a potluck, so please bring a side dish or dessert to share, and some of your favorite beverage. A chair is optional, but nice to have. **BRING YOUR SWIMSUIT AND TOWELS; AN OLYMPIC SIZE POOL IS AVAILABLE!**

The picnic is being held at an estate at 18611 NE 184th St. Brush Prairie, WA (a tad east of Vancouver). To get there, take I-205 north to the Padden Parkway exit, and go east on Padden. Padden will turn into Ward Rd., but continue straight for a number of miles, through Hockinson until you get to 184th Street. Right on 184th, and in a few feet you will see stone bears to the right... that's the entrance to the estate.

SHOWS: SALEM ART FESTIVAL

BY BOB OSWALD

*It was set in the spacious
and luxurious setting of
Bush Park.*



*“under the spreading
chestnut tree”*



SHOWS: SALEM ART FESTIVAL (CONT'D)

BY BOB OSWALD

The Salem Art Festival was a perfect venue for high-quality artisans and that obviously included the Guild. It was set in the spacious and luxurious setting of Bush Park, right in the middle of downtown Salem. Magnificent old maple trees, a manicured lawn and quality vendors made this a great show to visit.



Thank you again to George for the guild presence at this show. It was unfortunate that George was still recovering from surgery and could not be there. Be assured, George, that we were well represented.

The Guild had a display the equivalent of 4 to 6 booth spaces at a normal show, "under the spreading chestnut tree" as it were. Our workbench out front formed the focus. During the time I was there, we were demonstrating hand-sawing techniques. It was rewarding to look in that direction and see several women trying their hand. During a slow time building birdhouses, a lady stopped by and expressed quite a bit of interest in woodworking. We built a birdhouse together for her to take home. There were quite a number of questions about woodworking, the process and tools. I saw a budding woodworker there. I later emailed her plans for the bird houses. She said she was going to start using her husband's tools. I can see her at a meeting one of these days. That's one of the rewards of volunteering at an event like this.

Several guild members displayed products. There were clocks, pens, jewelry boxes, quilt holders, bookshelves and more. I failed to take proper note of all products displayed. As usual, all were beautiful pieces of work typical of the Guild. The show ran three days. I arrived Saturday about noon and kicked off the birdhouse building project.

I started unwrapping one kit and before I knew it, there were kids everywhere. They must have been saving up. So we started building bird houses. At the peak, I think there were five families building houses at the same time. It was challenging to spend a few moments with one and then another, guiding and yet not controlling what they were doing,

trying to be there for everyone. Fathers and mothers both were helping their children. It was so much fun to get the women involved. A voice would call out "Where does this part go?". Then a half-hour of silence until the next wave of kids appeared.

We had about 30 birdhouse kits, thanks to the kind efforts of a few members. Know that your work was greatly appreciated. We have the opportunity to do this on a much grander scale for the State Fair. Fortunately, there were a limited number of children at this show, so the project was able to last about 4 hours. We sent home 30 happy children. We demonstrated that an event like this is popular and that we can draw attention. A few interesting changes for next time would include a sign that tells who we are and why we are doing this and a footstool so those short legs and little arms aren't trying to drive nails above their head.

I don't have children and don't particularly know how to work with them. But I have to admit that it went far better than I expected and I had a great time with them. I learned that, like managing high tech projects, you have to take control, control what needs to be done, and yet provide the freedom to explore. Mistakes were made but the nails were small enough to allow us to pop them apart and fix the problems.

Thanks very much to every one of the Guild members who staffed the show and told the world about our craft. You Rock!!! You make it happen! Next time we'll have some literature, too.

And for all of you, think about some kind of involvement in next show, the Oregon State Fair. It is OUR organization. You're a part of it. You and the Guild would be well served by demonstrating a technique, no matter how simple it might appear, or showing a product, or just being there to talk about woodworking.



SHOWS: SALEM ART FESTIVAL (CONT'D)

BY BOB OSWALD



2X4 CONTEST

This contest was re-vitalized at last year's show and is planned to be offered again. Be thinking of a project. The basic ground rules are to start with a single species, rough dimension 2x4, 8 feet long. The original intent was to rough out and idea, not necessarily build an elaborately finished project. So no

extra points are given for wood variety, finish, etc. Build something with one 2x4. And you can add only minimal extra items, such as hinges.

The Guild will be establishing a group soon to get things underway. Contact George DuBois in Salem at 503-365-7636

MENTORS: A REQUEST

We have a member in the southern valley (Corvallis) who would appreciate the mentoring from a member experienced in turning. This is a novice with a great willingness to learn and he hopes to make turnings for a bagpipe! Any members interested in taking on this opportunity for sharing their craft please feel free to contact me. Now I know we have some

very fine turners in Salem and points south so I expect to be filling this request quickly! Interested parties can email me (arielyphyllis@msn.com) or call and leave a message at 503-286-4828. Keep your fingers! Ariel Enriquez, mentoring coordinator.

Help: I want an article on anatomy of a hand plane. Write about the parts and their purpose. It would be nice if this came from someone but faithful Lee.

SHOWS: SALEM ART FESTIVAL (KUDOS)

by Mitch Patten

The fair was great once again. It wasn't the same without Good Ol' George there, but he did a superfine job of teaching me what needed to be done and was still available via telephone. I have learned a great deal from this show and have quite a ways to go still. This was my third time to participate in this particular show, but first time as acting Show Chairman.



Joel Bohling came with an impressive display. His "2x4 competition chair" was quite interesting to the show patrons. He also had a traditional style Shoji display with some awesome joinery, and boxes with bookmatched tops and exquisite inlays made from wood from his dad's farm. People were fascinated with his designs. He also gave demonstrations on the use of hand tools and on how to use a workbench. He also had some sales, which is a side benefit of displaying at the events. He did a great job of promoting the guild. Thanks Joel!

David Jeske brought his display of high quality woodworking handtools that he crafts. They had exotic wood handles that would make any woodworker drool.

Newcomer David Miller brought a contemporary hall entry table that mounts on the wall that featured hand made screws. Hence the name of the piece, "All Screwed Up".



Many thanks go out also to **Chuck Elkan, Bill Bolstad, John DuBay, Larry Buttrick, Joe Stolfus, and Bob Oswald.**

Chuck was indispensable. He was there all 3 days, setup and teardown included. With a very impressive display of clocks, that he has been crafting and selling for over 20 years. An inspiration to any woodcrafter.

Bill Bolstad had a very fine display of his famous boxes that would make "The Real Mother Goose", lay an egg. He was there for setup, teardown, and on all 3 days as well. He also does a lot of work behind the scenes. The Guild Show trailer is stored at his place, so he is the one that carts it around.

Bob, John, and Larry did a great job taking on the

"Birdhouse Project" for the kids. Once we had hammers and nails they started snagging kids from the crowd and the birdhouses were gone in a couple of hours. The kids had fun and the parents were pleased to join in. Thanks guys!

John DuBay helped on all three days, plus teardown and setup. He really was a big help. Great job John. Thanks!

DECEMBER 2005 ART & WOODWORKING SHOW

This is an early reminder, and a note to new members, since time slips away faster than we all realize. It's the second annual **The Best of the Northwest** joins with the **Guild of Oregon Woodworkers** to present, "A Marketplace for Fine Art and Crafts and a Fine Woodworking Exhibition." The show will be held at the Portland Convention Center in early December.

Besides the fine art & crafts area, the woodworking show will feature the work of more than 40 craftsmen, including fine

furniture, carving, sculpture, marquetry, intarsia and wood turnings. The show is open to all woodworkers, regardless of skill level. Last years show, the first, was very popular. We are all hoping that word of mouth will bring even more buyers this year. The woodworking area alone is nearly 5,000 square ft.

Additional information can be obtained from George E. DuBois, show chairman, 1325 Cara Ct. NW, Salem, Or 97304. Tel: 503-365-7636 or by email at duboisge@comcast.net.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mark Balmer, Michael Denham, Dick Emmel, Dave Miller, Harold Vail, Brian Warrington,

FINISHING YOUR PROJECTS AND ACHIEVING INNER PEACE

BY A FELLOW WOODWORKER

People, and even my wife, keep commenting on all my projects. I recently came across this simple advice from Dr. Phil so I am passing on. Maybe it can also help you. "The way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you've started." So I looked around my house/shop to see all the things I started and had not finished. Before leaving the house this morning, I finished off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of White Zinfandel, a

bottle of Bailey's, a bottle of Kahlua, a package of Oreos, the remainder of both Prozac and Valium prescriptions, the rest of the cheesecake, some saltines and a box of chocolates. Now you have no idea how freaking good I feel and tomorrow I am going to finish all my projects in the shop.

Happy woodworking!

BEGINNERS: TEAR-OUT

We all grow through this stage, and it usually takes a long time. You drill a hole in a piece of wood on the table of your drill press. The table hole is aligned under the bit so when it breaks out of the wood it doesn't hit steel. And the first time or two you drill through, look at the back side and you see a few splinters where the drill broke out. So next time you speed up the drill a bit. It helps, and then another time it doesn't. And another time you slow it down. It helps, and then another time it doesn't. You adjust the feed rate, slowing as you approach the bottom side. All this trying to reduce the splinter effect. I don't know how long it took me by trial and error and frustration to "put a scrap board under the work". I know it wasn't the second hole I drilled. And I can be sloppy, reuse the same scrap board time after time – and holes accumulate but you move the board around. And then one time, on an important hole, you will break out straddling a previous divot. And you'll get a little tear-out. Not as bad as a fully unsupported piece, but still there.

All of this seems so simple in hindsight and yet how many of you don't know, don't worry about it, aren't careful enough, don't care or don't know what to do?

So with the drill press as an example, the same thing happens with the router, table saw, band saw, every cutting tool in your

shop. As the teeth break out the exit side of the board, they will always tear out little fibers of unsupported wood. There are exceptions but in general, count on it. Sharp blades, the right feed rate, grain orientation, etc can minimize it but it's there. Wood is laminar. It is strong along its grain either in tension or compression and torsion. But it is weak in the direction of a cross grain cut on the exit side. And nearly every saw cut will catch the wood in some way where it can rip off a few fibers. A rip typically won't because you are cutting parallel to the fibers instead of across them. But if the grain is not perfectly straight as you rip, it's only a matter of degree as to how far off of parallel you have to get to have a little tear out in localized spots.

Mind the gnarly teeth of the tear-out monster. The tried and true solution is a sacrifice piece of clean, straight wood backing up the breakout point.

Some critical points – The backing board should be flat and true or you'll still get ragged edges where contact is not tight. Also it the surfaces must be parallel. Just realize that if the backing board has a taper to it, the hole you drill will not be perpendicular to the surface of your project. That may or many not matter to you.

SEMINARS & CLASSES

8/13/2005

Router Workshop – Learn basic router techniques, use of fixed and plunge routers and router table basics in this half-day workshop. 1-4 pm \$20 tuition

9/10/2005

Jigs with George DuBois – Salem - Jigs and fixtures can make your work safer, easier and more productive. Join us at George DuBois's shop and learn how to make and use some of

the most popular and useful jigs.

9/17/2005

Chairmaking with Jim McKee – Eugene – Back by popular demand, this seminar features one of the Northwest's finest chair makers, Jim McKee. Walk through each of Jim's production steps and learn various techniques with a master chair builder.

Applications on the website.

TIPS: JOINTER SAFETY

A couple months ago we talked about jointers. I want to stress here, especially for beginners, the importance of safety when using this tool. It's true that every tool in your shop will do you damage if improperly used, some more than others.

ALWAYS use the guard on a jointer. I have been tempted in the past to adjust the rules on some tools. And once I did on the jointer, and all was well. I'll never do it again. The jointer, if it grabs the work, or you slip, will take off fingers so fast you won't even feel it for a while. It is wicked. Even with the guard in place, use push blocks.

SHOP OF THE MONTH Apparently no interest. I heard nuthin' from nobody.

THE GRAND TRINITY OF GOOD FURNITURE DESIGN

BY LEE JOHNSON

I recently taught a five-week course on furniture scale drawing and design for the Northwest Woodworking Studio, and, as usual, teaching forced me back to basics.

The fun and challenges of playing with the Golden Ratio, Square root of 2 rectangles, Hambidge sequences, classical proportions of the Greek Orders, so-called “negative space”, line, decoration, *ad infinitum*, tend to make me forget my basics. And when that happens, I usually design something that’s too complicated – or try to teach something that’s too complicated – and I have to junk it and go back to the Grand Trinity – Utility, Strength and Beauty.

The first of the Trinity, Utility, is pretty simple – or not. Will the piece do what it is supposed to do? Will it fit where it’s supposed to fit? Will it perform the function for which it is made in the first place? Will it withstand reasonable changes in its use over time? If the piece won’t do its job, no matter how beautiful it might be, no matter what exciting wood grains it exhibits, no matter how clever its line, it ain’t worth spit.

The second of the Trinity, Strength, is why we learn our joinery. My favorite old furniture maker guru, Franklin Gottshall, says of furniture, “It should be planned to last, not only through a life-time, but for several centuries.” What a novel idea! Could this idea be the key difference between a well-made custom piece and Ikea? Learn to make a good mortise and tenon joint, and you’re 50% there. Learn a good dovetail, be it thru, half-blind or lapped, and you’re 75% there. Learn the rest and you’re all the way there (learning the last 25% is a lifetime of pleasure).

This element of the Grand Trinity, however, is one that lures me frequently into fuzzy thinking about my furniture. I

sometimes mistake the quality of my joinery – especially exposed joinery – for one of the other two. If the silverware drawer has lovely dovetails, but is six inches deep, it violates the principle of Utility. If I’ve used a great haunched tenon with tidy-looking ebony pins to fasten the table skirt to the leg, but the skirt is too narrow and looks too frail, I’ve violated the principle of Beauty.

Then the third member of the Trinity, Beauty, steps up. It enfolds the first two and takes wing into proportion, line, balance, space, decoration, color, and a myriad of other considerations. Making our pieces beautiful for us and other human beings to look at, to touch, to use, is all about learning what we humans find pleasing to our senses, and then finding how to incorporate those values into our pieces. Here is where the fine lines shift between artist and artisan and sometimes meld. It can be the clean simplicity of a well-proportioned Shaker table or the antithetical, riotous lines of a Rocco mirror frame. It is the silken feel of a hand-rubbed finish, or the cool gleam of a glass-like table top.

My suggestion to students who want to succeed at making their furniture beautiful is to learn their basics – proportion, balance, and line, which will get them 75% of the way there, and then join the rest of us learning for the rest of our lives. It is a thing at which to marvel – we can never know it all about making our pieces beautiful, so there is no end to our learning – it need never get boring.

But it darned well gets confusing, so when you find yourself in that particular swamp, take comfort in going back to the Grand Trinity: Utility, Strength, Beauty and see if they don’t show you the way.

Now THIS is Woodworking:

I have a large collection of photos that are incredible, cars, clothes... all kinds of things made of wood. This is from “The Best Carpenter in Venice”. I’ll publish more in future issues as space allows.



CLASSIFIED ADS

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Ryobi 10 inch contractor-style table saw with complete accessory kit; **Ridgid 13" thickness planer**; **Ridgid 6.5" jointer.** All in excellent condition and presently in use in our shop. All for sale to best offer. Need to sell ASAP to make room for new equipment. These would cost ~ \$1300 if purchased new. Call 503-434-5264 if interested. Tools are located in McMinnville. All tools have wheels for ease of movement.

Tiny Tip: Why is it called re-sawing?

Because the board was already sawed from the log once at the mill. It may have been run through a planer to smooth up the sides. You re-saw it to a thinner dimension for your purpose.

The Guild of Oregon Woodworkers is a group of professional and amateur woodworkers like you, committed to developing our craftsmanship and wood-working business skills. The Guild offers many benefits for members, including

- *monthly educational meetings*
- *monthly newsletter*
- *mentoring program to help members develop their skills in specific areas*
- *discounts*
- *woodworking shows*
- *network of business partners (the key to our development as members and as a Guild, providing additional learning opportunities)*
- *and a network of support.*

For information on how you can become a member, contact Guild President John DuBay at 503-391-7890 or email jldubay@comcast.com

GUILD OF OREGON WOODWORKERS

P.O. Box 13744, Portland, OR 97213-0744

CLASSES, SEMINARS, DEMOS, AND SUCH....

Northwest Woodworking Studio 503-284-1644, www.northwestwoodworking.com

Rockler Woodworking 503-672-7266, www.rockler.com

Oregon College of Art and Craft 503-297-5544, www.ocac.com

Woodcraft 503-684-1428, www.woodcraft.com

Woodcrafters 503-231-0226, 212 NE 6th Avenue, Portland

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Guild of Oregon Woodworkers

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