

TURNERS ANONYMOUS

An Association of Wood Turners in Western Pennsylvania

NEWSLETTER

No 117

September 2008

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Meeting: Jack Brown: Christmas Ornaments

Location: Society for Contemporary Craft, Strip District, 21st and Smallman

Date: Saturday September 20, 2008

Time: Doors open 9:30 am meeting to start 10:00 am
No, Santa is not coming to town but a man who is almost as jolly and is definitely a more accomplished turner than Santa will be at our next meeting. Jack, for those who may not be aware, has done numerous demonstrations for many AAW chapters, both in and out of the state of PA, as well as demo'ing at various regional symposia and even at the National AAW symposium. His presentation to us will include a slide show in which Jack will take us through some of his past and present designs for 40 different turned Christmas Ornaments. Jack has a very demanding holiday custom he perpetuates with his family. He designs and makes a new ornament for each household of his and



Dianne's quite large extended family. I believe he needs over 40 ornaments of each years design to satisfy this family custom.

During the second part of his demo Jack will move to the lathe to let

the chips fly. He will first turn and decorate a simple one piece ornament made from a piece of construction lumber and then move to a second turned ornament to



demonstrate how to turn a hollow ball/globe with a separate finial and icicle. Hopefully Jack's icicle will not "melt" prematurely before he parts it off the lathe.

Marilyn Campbell OCT 25-26 2008

Please note our October meeting will not be held on our normally scheduled date, the 3rd Saturday of the month. It will be held 1 week later on October 25 and it is an all day event featuring Marilyn Campbell. Marilyn is from Ontario Canada on the edge of Lake Huron and has been featured at past AAW Symposia. She combines the use of epoxy, which she colors, as both overlays and inlays in her

turned wood pieces. For Overlay work Marilyn places epoxy over a turned form and after it has cured takes it



back to the lathe for turning. In her inlay pieces, an example is pictured, she uses the bandsaw to cut blanks and epoxy in segments of contrasting wood in order to create the piece. We will be supplying lunch in addition to coffee and donuts in the morning.

Attendance at this event

requires you to pay a nominal fee. Such events are design to pay for themselves. In addition to Marilyn's Saturday all day demo we are offering a hands on session for 8 people on Sunday October 26, 2008. Lunch will be supplied. If you need more info on the Sunday event please contact Dave Beringer 412-414-9694 or Craig Smith at 412-996-5666. Seats remain available for both Saturday and Sunday. The Marilyn Campbell demo and hands on admission fees will be on sale at our September meeting or by emailing Ted Owen at treasurer@turnersanonymous.org. The demo is \$25 thru our September meeting, thereafter it will be \$35. The hands-on demo is \$150 with a deposit of \$50 or more needed to reserve your space. Mark your calendar.

Announcements from the Chairman:

As we start another year of club meetings please read the following 2 reminders:

1. The doors open at 9:30 am for our normal meetings. If you want to come to help set up you may arrive earlier but please plan on helping.
2. There is also limited parking in the SCC lot behind their building. We have been asked to only occupy the spots on the side opposite the building next to the jersey barrier.

Lastly, as we begin a new year I appeal to all members who value this club to consider stepping forward and becoming involved. It would be nice to have more of you join the team. You can serve either as a board member or as a non board member. We need help with the newsletter, with welcoming new members, meeting setup and take down. Don't assume things just happen. They happen because people make sure they happen. I know a number of you have the qualifications to fill these roles. Mostly it involve time and caring that things are done right. Ask yourself, why not me? Don't assume someone else will do

the job that you can. I would like to see people volunteer not only to help but we also need people to assume responsibility for these tasks. If more of the members pitch in we can become a better club. We have had a large increase in membership over the last few years and there are a number of board members who have done a wonderful job for the club and deserve a break. We need to identify those of you out there who are the next leaders of Turners Anonymous. Again why not you??? Please consider talking to me at the meeting or by phone (412-414-9694). I will be happy to provide you with more information and answer questions. Care about this club's future? Call me or talk to another board member. After making prior pleas I have never received a signal response. You can change that.

Dave Beringer

Christmas Ornaments for Martin Stople

As you may remember I asked for your help in supporting Martin Stolpe's efforts to provide Christmas Ornaments to the Children's Hospital out his way in the Lancaster area. Many of you signed up to provide 1 or more ornaments; I have the list. I informed you at the May meeting these ornaments will be collected starting at the September meeting. Ornaments are due at the October meeting. Please have your ornaments completed by then. If you are not sure whether you signed up or didn't sign up and would like to participate please see me at this meeting or contact me at 412-414-9694.

News Blurbs:

- Did you happen to see the article "Six Days to Windsor: Making this iconic chair takes muscle, patience and a converted turkey fryer", in the Post-Gazette on Saturday August 16, 2008? It features Craig Smith's Chair Class at the Society for Contemporary Craft. If you missed it see the link <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08229/904681-30.stm>. Congratulations Craig!
- The Board of the AAW has selected, Betty Scarpino, a former Journal editor and professional woodturner, as the new journal editor as of 2009. In addition, Mary Lacer has been appointed Executive Director as of September 2, 2008, replacing Larry Sommer. Mary has been with the AAW since its inception.
- Malcolm Tibbetts – AAW Board member has informed me of the first ever Symposium exclusively organized for "segmented" turners. The dates are November 14th-16th at the Marc Adams School in Indiana. All the details are posted on the event website at: <http://www.segmentedwoodturners.org/>
- John Bridges may be willing to have any interested parties out to his place some time after mid-

October. John, for those who may not know, owns a band saw mill. The idea would be to show how his mill works and perhaps for him to provide some wood to those attending. Again these plans have not been finalized but please see Dave Beringer if you have an interest in participating.

Pen Turners Corner by Harold Poland

Lose the Center Band

First I would like to say that I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer and welcome back!

One of the easiest pens to modify is the slim line, but the one thing that limits the size and shape of this pen is the center band. Here is a way to make your own custom center band out of a scrap of contrasting wood, and thus make a thicker pen that does not have a "wasp waist". This is also known as a "fat line" pen. In this article I will use mulberry for the pen and make a center band from a small piece of ebony.

To begin, cut and drill your blanks following the instructions



for the slim line kit. Glue in the brass tubes and square off the ends with a pen mill. Also drill a 7 mm hole in the contrasting wood to be used as the new center band and



square off one side of it with the pen mill.

Turn the pen as usual, leaving it thick in the middle. You can use a bushing from a larger kit for the center or just

"eyeball it".

Using a 1/16th parting tool, cut a tenon down to the brass tube on the lower barrel.

Glue the faced side of the ebony to the tenon, I use thick CA, then after it cures for a few minutes I



give it a spritz of accelerator. Cut off the excess ebony with the band

saw (leave a little extra).

Use the barrel trimmer to get back down to the brass tube.



Put the two halves back on the mandrel this time without the bushing in between them, this way the two halves can be turned and sanded as one for a better fit

After you turn it down to size you will be left with a 1/16th wide center

band that adds an elegant look.

After final sanding, put the bushing back between the



two halves before you apply the finish, especially if doing a CA finish. Finish and buff as normal. I like to clean the ends very lightly with the barrel trimmer before assembly. The finished Mulberry pen with ebony center band and black hardware is picture below



Power Tools for Turners

Editor's Note: I asked Martin Stolpe our club Forrester to provide us with some help with selecting a chain saw. He agreed to do so and provided the story below.

Chainsaw Dust, by Felix Sylvius (713)393-2184

Somebody told me you are contemplating buying a chain saw. That you run across potential turning blanks in your travels around town. That it seems someone in your neighborhood is always cutting a tree down and you would like to have some of the wood. Besides that, your brother-in-law has 10 acres of woods and says you are welcome to any wood you can use. Turners can find lots of reasons to buy a chain saw.

Let's look at the experiences of two turners I've known for quite some years now.

Ozzie is an erstwhile outdoorsman. He enjoyed the woodshop class he had in high school, and an acquaintance in church told him about Turners Anonymous, so he went to a meeting and was hooked. A few years later, he had bought a band saw, two lathes and a whole bunch of tools from the listings in the club newsletter. However, he was regularly reminded by his wife, Stella that he was spending too much money on turning blanks, especially from that place in Illinois that he found on the Internet. She knew all about it, since Fed Ex and Big Brown delivered those heavy boxes while he was at work. She had refused to leave them on the porch or inside the front door in the living room. What would her bridge club think? And, that's how she strained her back!

Ozzie had an important decision to make. Only when he opened his mail and saw the bill from the chiropractor did he realize the extent of the problem. With due deliberation, Ozzie came to the conclusion he needed a chain saw. He went to his stash of tool catalogs, and found three of them with chain saw listings. The least expensive one cost just under \$200, including shipping. He called the 800 number and ordered one. That really took a load off his mind. He was never going to buy a turning blank again!

When the saw arrived, Ozzie felt the rush of exhilaration he always felt with a new tool, and it reinforced his belief that his problems were solved, despite Stella's doubts. He explained to her that after he read all the literature accompanying the saw, including the safety warnings, he

would be set to go and would never have to buy another turning blank again.

He was up till midnight checking out his new saw. He was very tired, it had been a long day, and he realized he would have to go to the hardware store to get a gas can, some bar oil and some oil to mix with the gas for his new saw. His "tool high" was gone!

After returning from his trip to the hardware store and gas station the next morning, Ozzie mixed his chain saw gas, filled the saw tanks with gas and bar oil, and was ready to go. He went to his backyard and eyed the old apple tree in the corner by the tool shed. Its branches hung over the neighbor's fence and at least two rested on the tool shed roof. There were at least 50 or more turning blanks in the old tree, and he had already spent \$25 for the one he had bought from that "online" outfit.

He got his saw running and cut the limbs off that hung over the neighbor's fence first. After getting them back into his yard, he cut them up and got three good blanks out of just those couple branches. He then cut the branches resting on the tool shed. They were pretty big and after they were cut up, he had twelve blanks already. Only the saw wasn't cutting as good for some reason. As he thought about it, he remembered seeing sparks when he cut that last limb over the tool shed. Looking at the edge of the metal roof, he saw where he had cut a notch with the saw. It was only about a quarter inch deep but had obviously dulled the chain. Well, he couldn't stop now! A couple of hours later, only the 6' trunk of the old apple tree remained. He really wanted the blanks from it – they were at least a foot in diameter. But, he couldn't start the saw, and knew it was probably too hot. The chain was so dull, it would hardly cut at all, and the saw was making a strange noise the last time it was running. He picked-up his blanks (he now had 44 of them), and piled them in the garage for processing later. Ozzie piled the cuttings at the curb and wondered how much the refuse company would charge to remove that big mess.

After supper, he went back to the garage and put anchor seal on his blanks. He contemplated turning a rough shape, but was too sore. The next morning it was off to the hardware store. He was told they would check out his list of problems with the saw and call him with an estimate. Ozzie thought that sounded ominous. When Ozzie returned in two days and the mechanic brought out his saw, he knew from the guy's expression things were bad – real bad! They guy knew Ozzie because he had dealt with him for over 20 years. He explained all he was able to do was sharpen the chain and that due to overheating, the saw engine was "froze up" and he had no access to parts for that particular brand of chain saw. It was made in China, and cheap – real cheap!

Now let me tell you about Melvin. He had the same reasons for wanting a chain saw as any other turner. Plus he had a nephew, Jake, who was the owner/operator of a tree service company. Mel told Jake about his plans for

obtaining turning blanks in addition to the ones Jake saved for him on occasion. Jake explained that the most important consideration in buying a chain saw was the dealer from whom he buys it. He said the dealer should be located convenient to Mel's neighborhood and should sell one of the top two brands of saw (Stihl and Hasquvarna). Jake told Mel that as a tree expert he often had problems with his equipment, especially his chain saws since they were used the most. He thought Mel would enjoy turning his blanks more than working on a chain saw. Jake said buying a quality saw from a dealer who would provide parts and service promptly was the key to solving most problems connected to owning and using a chain saw. Jake said there were two reliable chain saw dealers in the area. One sold the top brand and the other the number two brand. Jake explained since he had two crews, he dealt with both dealers because his two crew chiefs disagreed on which brand was best. Jake admitted he preferred the orange colored brand and that dealer was closest to both their homes, but said both brands seemed adequate for the crews' needs.

He gave Mel the following advice: choose a saw with a 16" bar because that size is best for 90% of tree work. He stated that both dealers would be certain to see that the engine and bar would match for efficient cutting. He knew a competitor, who to save money, bought less expensive, smaller engines with bars too long, and had serious problems with his saws.

Jake told Mel to buy three chains for his saw. He explained that chains often become dull for many reasons in the midst of a job. Putting on a sharp chain and finishing the job without unnecessary delay was just common sense.

Jake advised him to purchase gas and oil cans with flexible spouts to conveniently fill the saw's tanks. Then he said to obtain a tool box for his saw tools that would not leak through the top when it rained. He said the tool box should contain the following items:

Saw wrench/screwdriver

Grease gun for the bar nose bearings

Extra chains

Stiff bristle brush for cleaning the saw

Screw driver or similar tool ground to fit and clean out the bar groove

A pair of smooth jawed pliers for those times the gas or oil cap is too tight to be removed by hand

Some small rags for clean-up

Finally, Jake told Mel to call him anytime he needed help or had any doubts – after all, he was family.

HELP! With Video Equipment by Joe Rostas

I need your help in setting up the video equipment before each of our meetings. It would require you to arrive at the meeting approximately 45 to 60 minutes before the meeting begins to get the equipment out of the storage area

and set it up in the demo/meeting room. No special skills are necessary, just a little bit of your time and muscle. If you are interested in lending a hand, please contact me by phone at 412 367-0629 or email jroostas@verizon.net

Summer Picnic

If you missed our summer picnic August 2 at 12:30 at the Chieftain Archery Club shame on you. We had over 50 people who filled themselves with great food and drink. It was quite an enjoyable time under blue skies and sunshine. If you needed shade the clubhouse was full of it. Terry Morrill and his wife Nancy took care of everything and worked hard to provide everyone with a good time. Thanks again to Terry and Nancy for a good day.

Club Fund Raising by Tim Janeway

We have been invited again to display and sell our woodturnings at Shadyside Hospital from November third to the twenty-first. At last year's sale we achieved through that event over a thousand dollars, which was a third of the purchase price our club's new Powermatic lathe. This year's sale again will help our club and thus all of us Turners Anonymous members.

Please look in your shops to find a piece or two of your turnings that you might spare and/or make something new specific for the Shadyside sale. This event gives our club exposure to potential new members and is a nice public showcase for our work. It was very well-received last year.

I already have three pieces that I'm giving. We would like 40 to 50 turnings to give them, but, as that number was easily sold last year, we will happily accept every piece we can get. They will be priced by our committee to generate as much revenue as possible. Some will go for \$25 and some for more than \$125. All types will be well-received from pens to candlesticks to boxes to bowls to ornaments to tops, etc. And I'm sure that there are other wonderful things that would also be well-received.

Bring your pieces to the September and October meeting and give them to me or Bill Hayes. But you also could leave them at my house as late as November 1st. Each person bringing at least one piece for the Shadyside sale will receive along with the personal satisfaction of helping our club, a bonus. You will get a ticket to participate in a special Christmas raffle. (any questions call 412-259-8578)

An Afternoon With A Chainsaw by Leslie Struthers

Logs - Check

Saw Horse - Check

Oil and Gas - Check

Chainsaw - check

Manual - Check

Insecure feeling something is missing - Check

Where's my dang hard hat - of course - covered in spiderwebs! Clean it off.

Hard hat - Check

Ok - it's Sunday afternoon - my chores are done, time to

tackle sawing logs for natural edge bowl blanks. Add gas. Add bar oil. Set the choke to full. Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Set choke to half. Pull! Nothing. OK, that is to be expected. Readjust choke to full. Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Set choke to half. Pull! Nothing! Again! I've started to sweat. Suck in a deep breath. Pull! Still not even a tiny rumble. Sweating harder - thinking of swearing. Stand up, stretch my back, wipe sweat out of my eyes. Readjust choke to full. Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Adjust choke to half and pull! Absolutely nothing. No hint that this thing will start ever again. Grab manual, read trouble shooting section. (I look around first to make sure no one sees me checking the manual. I have dignity...)

Decide to replace the spark plug. Trek to the basement to get the spark plug wrench. Stomp unnecessarily hard on the steps in annoyance. Take the cover off the chainsaw, struggle with the spark plug. It's not moving. I mean it's really not budging an inch. I'm starting to sweat again. Who sweats while changing a spark plug? Decide swearing is in order. Decide to clean the airfilter since the spark plug won't come out. Lightly sand the end of the spark plug for good measure. Reassemble the saw. It's going to work this time, I'm sure of it.

Take a deep breath - wipe sweat from my eyes - cuss a little for luck and adjust the choke to full. Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Adjust choke to half. Take another deep breath. Figure out you can't cross your fingers and pull the cord at the same time. One final pull...NOTHING! Decide swearing is better than sweating, but stomping around grumpily does relieve some frustration. So does growling about tossing this piece of crap over the neighbor's fence and buying a decent saw that actually starts upon command. (Conveniently forgetting the total lack of use or maintenance for the last 12 months or so.) OK! One last try. Adjust choke to full. Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Pull...! Adjust choke to half. PULL! Oh MY! I heard a sputter. A definite sputter. PULL! FINALLY! Success! Hope is renewed, sweat doesn't matter, feel like the chain saw gods love me! I snatched this saw from certain replacement. (The hot sun may have affected my thinking here.) Let the saw idle. Rev a few times. Calm myself down, I don't want to lose an appendage celebrating the basics here. Shut the saw off (secretly fearing it will not restart).

Set up the saw horses - put a log up. Restart the saw - yep! Purring like a kitten now. Begin cutting the log, a very nice line right down the pith. Smoke? Why is there smoke? There isn't supposed to be smoke! Where'd it come from? Stop the saw. Look at the cut. Well, look where the cut is supposed to be. I see a blackened channel in the wood. Hmm, I vaguely remember hitting a hunk of barbed wire in the last log I cut. I clearly remember swearing. CRAP! Jump in the Jeep, head off to the Big Blue Box store. Oh man! I realize half way across the parking lot I'm still wearing my hard hat. Find the chain,

buy it, and head back to the parking lot as I battle a sinking feeling the chain won't fit.

It fits - I'm still in favor with the chainsaw gods. Restart the saw (YES!) and begin cutting. All is well and several logs yielded many very nice blanks for natural edge bowls. Shut the saw off, wipe it down, clean it up and give it a pat as I leave the garage. I head for a shower and a cold beer. I leave a small neat pile of chips in a corner along with a promise to the cooling saw to provide much better maintenance going forward.

Over my beer I reflect on what I had to learn. Again.

1. Tool maintenance is a must. Sounds simple but it really is a basic. Remember that the tool you got mad at because it wouldn't do a job it wasn't designed to do? Go clean it up, you may need it one day.

2. Swearing helps. I get that from my Dad. He doesn't swear much so when he does you know, you just know.

3. Perseverance helps. I get that from my Mom, she was right, she is always right!

Next to tackle? The bandsaw. I think I will go get a couple of extra blades, and maybe some replacement guides. Just in case....

(Editor's Note: Leslie submitted this story after our recent Processing green wood program. Maybe I should have sent her a personal copy of Martin's article above.)

Monthly Raffle:

This month's raffle should prove to be another good one. We have the usual \$50.00 cash prize, a Craft Supply and a West Penn Hardwoods gift certificate, a box of dust masks, a few nice pieces of wood and maybe some other surprises.

For Sale:

Delta portable air cleaner with unused washable filter, may be suspended or benchtop \$150 call Tim Janeway 412-259-8578 or Email at janewayt@hotmail.com

Vendors who offer discounts to Turners Anonymous Members

di legno Woodshop Supply
1452 Fleming Ave
McKees Rocks, PA 15136
1 877 208 4298
<http://www.dlws.com>
discounts vary, but are generally 10%

Rockler
7402 McKnight Road
412 364 7751
<http://www.rockler.com>
10% discount except on sale items

Harbor Freight Tools

639A Clairton Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15236
412 650 9691

*Discount 10%, cannot be
combined with other
coupons*

Klingspor

1 800 228 0000
<http://www.woodworkingshop.com/>

*Discount 10% except on
power tools and sale
items. Must set up a
customer number and
password*