

# WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern  
Woodworkers  
Association

January 2005, Vol. 14, Number 1

## January Meeting – Constructing An Adirondack Camp

Thursday, January 13th, 7 pm.  
Shaker Meeting House

- John Michne

The Holidays are behind us for another year. My shop time increases...no lawn to mow, no leaves to pick up, and except for an occasional snowfall to clean up, the pace of life slows delightfully...until meeting night.

The January meeting this year features a presentation by Michael Olivette, a dean and professor at Syracuse University, licensed Adirondack guide, maker of rustic furniture and guideboats, and his masterpiece...an Adirondack camp. The camp features post and beam construction, and Mike has about a hundred photographs of how he did it. He will be here for our meeting on January 13 at the Shaker meeting house, and will show us just what went into the construction. If you think dovetail joints for a dresser drawer are tricky, try a similar joint on 6"x 6" or 8"x10" beams. Come and join us for a fascinating evening about woodworking on a grand scale. 🐼



## Showcase 2005

- Charlie Goddard

Much of the planning has been completed for the next Showcase on April 2 & 3, 2005. The committee chairs meet each month to go over progress and to resolve issues. The following describes some of the features of this next show and includes a list of the committee chairs.

### Women in Woodworking

The special exhibit in the main exhibit hall this year will be Women in Woodworking. In recent years the number of women woodworkers has increased dramatically and attendees at woodworking courses report that a significant percentage of the students are women. This exhibit is intended to recognize this trend. I hope that all of our women woodworkers will exhibit at least one piece. In addition, we will be inviting nationally-known women woodworkers to exhibit their work. If there is a woman woodworker you would like to see represented in this exhibit contact Hal Bigelow.

### Jigs and Fixtures

The Mid-Hudson members will be presenting Jigs and Fixtures this year. You may recall the "Practical Workshop" organized by this group last year. This time they will turn on the machines and demonstrate how the jigs work. They will need additional jigs and fixtures from our membership, so if you have one or more that you would like to share please contact Joe Kennedy.

Continued on Page 4



**"I want you"**  
for the  
**Woodworking  
Weekend**

see page 7  
for details

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Position to be Filled

**Executive Secretary** - Charlie Goddard  
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UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, PHONE  
NUMBERS ARE IN AREA CODE 518

## Measuring devices: "Rulers" or "Scales"?

- Mike Miller

It is fairly well documented that our units of measure derive from body parts. While cubits have gone by the wayside, the obvious foot and, of course, the inch (the width of the King's thumb) have survived intact. While today we have NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) to thank for defining these units of measure, centuries ago things were not so exact. In those days, the traceable standard was the King's body. The King's feet were a foot long. The King's thumb was an inch wide.

Back in those days, people made things by eye. One day a particular craftsman was toiling away on his project for his majesty, measuring and cutting all the while by eye, and the King paid a visit. The King checked some measurements and found them off. Wrought with fear, the craftsman began flattering his way out of it and told the King how enlightened he had become working at the King's bidding, stating "wie Schuppen von den Augen fallen!" Literally translated... "the scales have fallen from my eyes"... he was expressing that he saw things more clearly than he had before. While the King was indeed flattered, he somewhat saw through this and grabbed a piece of flat metal, scribed several lines on it the width of his thumb and cut it the length of his foot and handed it back to the craftsman. The craftsman never incorrectly sized a piece again. The legend was handed down and craftsman ever since have referred to these graduated measuring devices as "scales" while grade school teachers and others refer to them as "rulers", an unwitting reference to the standard of the King's body. 🐉

## Workbench Raffle

- Herm Finkbeiner

The oak workbench that I described in the last newsletter was displayed at Family Night in "finished" condition. It is 72 inches long and 36 inches wide (including vises in the closed position). Both vises have 1 1/8" cut screw threads. The under bench cabinet (38" x 21" x 18") has 8 drawers ranging from 5 1/2" to 2 1/2" in depth. All the drawers are mounted on Accuride full extension slides. In all the bench required about 120 bd. ft. oak which together with the hardware brings the total weight to 400-500 lbs. (before filling the drawers!)

Two of the other benches that were built by class members were also displayed at Family Night. They are truly beautiful and would be excellent raffle items but the guys who built them, John Skalla and Jim Fogerty, seem to be reluctant to part with them.

The proceeds from the raffle are for the Fiske Fund and tickets are being sold only at the January general meeting, Woodworkers Weekend and the February general meeting with the drawing to be held at the end of the February meeting.

**In order to get tickets you will have to attend at least one of those meetings!** 🐉



*Fran Finkbeiner sold over \$10,000 worth of raffle tickets at Family Night for the "Finkbeiner Special" oak workbench. Wayne Distin purchased over \$9,700 worth of tickets alone, stating "I gotta have that bench."*



# Family Night 2004

- Chuck Walker

A wonderful gathering of woodworking friends and family occurred on Thursday, December 9 at the Shenendehowa Senior Citizens Center in Clifton Park. This festive holiday affair was complete with a gallery of projects, plenty of fantastic desserts, good cheer, good music and even some free oak to take home. A light drizzle did nothing to dampen the spirits of those who came. If you did not attend, you missed a grand affair. Mark your 2005 calendar **now** for Family Night next December.

Demonstrations of turning, carving, and pyrography by Lou DeMola, Louie Andrews and Bill McCormack went on throughout the evening. Bill had a large panel on display that had been burned and colored into a magnificent tapestry worthy of display anywhere. Many projects of woodworking and other crafts by family members graced the display tables. Of particular interest were a building by Ken Miller depicting Santa's workshop and other projects created by doting grandparents for some lucky grandchildren. All of the projects displayed were outstanding. This reporter did want to hear a word or two from the creators about their projects to help identify the maker and perhaps to learn a bit about the techniques used.

Background music of a varied nature from bluegrass to standard holiday tunes was provided by a guitar/fiddle duo featuring Craig Thaler on violin. Craig also displayed a violin he is making alongside a similar project by John Michne.

A display highlight was a group of three workbenches created by Herm Finkbeiner's latest workbench class. John Skalla made a bench in maple with walnut and purpleheart highlights. Jim Fogerty crafted one in oak. The third was made by Herm, the workbench master himself. This oak bench complete with drawers has been donated to NWA and is being raffled to benefit the Fiske fund for educational grants in woodworking. Herm has donated three benches in the past to benefit the Fiske fund, but this one is different in that only NWA members are eligible to buy raffle tickets. This bench and the others built under Herm's tutelage are top quality tools and an absolute must if you do any hand tool work.

The really big hit of the evening was the dessert table, which was loaded to the point of endangerment to the attendees and the table itself! Everything was delicious and we probably overdid it, but when homemade fudge is present, it is too much of a temptation to overcome. Thanks to everyone who brought goodies, projects, and themselves to make this annual affair one not to be missed. 🐾



*Jeanne Walker is intrigued by Bill McCormack's pyrography demonstration.*



*Just a few of the many items on display.*



*Musicianship meets John Skalla's workbench.*



*Our Education Chairman....*

**WOODWORKERS NEWS** is published by the Northeastern Woodworkers Association for its members. The Association's aim is to provide a common meeting ground for lovers of woodworking who want to know more about wood and the techniques for forming it. The newsletter is published monthly. It is assembled in QuarkXPress 5.0 on a Macintosh G4, duplicated by Shipmates, and mailed to more than 850 addresses.



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NWA maintains two websites,  
the first noted here  
operates continuously.  
We also offer selected  
links to other sites of interest  
to our membership.  
Webmaster - Justin Rohrer  
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The second site operates from  
January 1 to May 30  
and carries specific  
information about SHOWCASE.



**NORTHEASTERN  
WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION**  
P.O. BOX 246  
Rexford, New York 12148

# Showcase...

*Continued from Page 1*

## Judging and Awards

A new category has been added this year. The judges last year suggested that we have a category just for Adirondack Furniture and Accessories. All other categories remain the same.

Again this year pieces entered for judging by the professional woodworkers in the Gallery will be judged in a single category and will not be judged against items in the main exhibit area. This way the judges will not have to go back and forth from the Gallery to the main exhibit area for each category. All items entered for judging, in the Gallery or in the main exhibit area, will be eligible for *Best of Show* and *People's Choice* awards.

## Measuring Tools Exhibit

Ken Miller is organizing a display of measuring tools that will be located in the space where the hand plane exhibit was last year (opposite Contractors Millwork). It will include measuring devices of all types, sizes and ages.

## Lecture Series

The lecture series will include four speakers each hour in lecture rooms in the adjacent Prime Hotel. The invited speakers will be Ernie Conover, Garrett Hack, Bonnie Klein, Teri Masaschi and Gere Osgood. They will also serve as judges. NWA members will give many additional lectures. If you have a topic you would like to present, or think would make a good presentation, give Gerry O'Brien a call. Once the schedule is ready it will be posted on the Show website, [www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org).

## Toy Factory

The Toy Factory will be making birdhouse kits to give to the kids who stop by. Jay VanVranken and his crew will need help making these kits in advance of the show. If you can help, contact Jay.

Listed below are the hard working members of the Showcase 2005 committee.

Hal Bigelow	Special Exhibit	587-3847	hbigelow@nycap.rr.com
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Dale Swann	Treasurer	346-4172	swann_dale@yahoo.com
Jay VanVranken	Toy Factory	664-3034	svanvran@nycap.rr.com
Larry Zinn	2006 Gen. Chairman	583-1227	lrzn@aol.com

## Make Something for Showcase

There is still plenty of time to make something for the Show. The thing that makes our Show unique, as compared to other woodworking shows around the Country, is the number of items that are displayed. About 450 items were displayed last year by 180 woodworkers. That is the highest number of members to exhibit items in any Showcase, but we can do better. We want to display items representing all levels of expertise. We especially want to get more novices and students to exhibit their work.

This year we added a category for Adirondack furniture and accessories. Over the last few years the number of items in this category has increased significantly and last year's judges strongly encouraged us to set up a new category for judging.

Items may be entered for display only, or they may be entered for judging, as well. A revised entry form is located elsewhere in this newsletter. The rules for entering and exhibiting are listed on the back. Don't wait to finish your entry before sending in the form. Those who keep the records and make the labels appreciate early entries. For our women members, we will assume that your entries will be exhibited as part of the Special Exhibit, unless you tell us otherwise.

**Please read and follow the rules carefully.**

# SHOWCASE 2005 RULES AND ENTRY FORM

## ENTRY CATEGORIES

Adirondack furniture and accessories (new category)  
Furniture: tables, beds  
Furniture: cases, cabinets, desks  
Furniture: chairs  
Accessories: clocks, boxes, desk top pieces  
Toys/Miniatures: play things, models  
Turning: spindle  
Turning: faceplate or chuck  
Turning: segmented  
Carving: representational, conceptual, decorative  
Inlay, Intarsia, Marquetry  
Scroll sawing  
Novice: any piece crafted by a novice.  
Other: fixtures, shop equipment, cooperage, musical instruments, any piece not fitting into the above categories.

## \*AWARDS

Peoples Choice - One, any entry.  
Best of Show - One, any entry.  
First Place - Blue, one each category.  
Second Place - Red, one each category.  
Third Place - White, one each category.  
Honorable Mention - Judges' discretion, any entry.  
\*At the discretion of the judges, some awards may not be given.

## ENTRY RULES

All exhibit items MUST be delivered to the City Center no later than 7:30 PM, Friday, April 1st  
Exhibits will not be accepted Saturday morning.  
Exhibits ARE NOT to be removed from the floor before 5pm Sunday.  
Exhibits must be picked up between 5 & 7 pm, Sunday, April 3rd  
You may exhibit any number of pieces, but only one piece may be entered for judging per category.  
Entrants may enter more than one category.  
Entry forms must include title (if applicable) and description of materials.  
Award winning pieces from previous Showcase events are not eligible for competition, but may be entered for display.  
There must be at least three entrants in a category for an entry to be judged.  
The judges and the committee reserve the right to re-categorize an entry to ensure that all entries are judged.  
Woodworkers may enter as novices as often as they wish until age 16. At age 16 and older, only beginning woodworkers may enter as a novice, and may enter as a novice only one year.  
The exhibit hall is not a commercial area, no price tags or literature other than small business cards will be allowed.  
Other than brief periods, you may not remain with your exhibit(s) during show hours.  
Decisions of the judges are final.  
NOTE: The entries in the hotel gallery area (Professionals) will be judged separately from the exhibit hall, except for "Best of Show" and "Peoples Choice".

# EXHIBIT ENTRY FORM: NWA SHOWCASE 2005, APRIL 2-3

ENTRY DEADLINE: March 24, 2005

PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING FORM COMPLETELY.

NOTE: DISPLAY LABELS ARE MADE IN ADVANCE USING THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE.  
THOSE LABELS WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOU BRING IN YOUR ENTRIES.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Member: \_\_\_Yes\_\_\_No Fee: \$10 per entrant (no fee for members) \$\_\_\_\_(Office use only)

ENTRY CATEGORY (State category, give brief description of your item, list types of woods and finish used)	For Judging (only one per category)	For Display Only (unlimited - as space allows)	Display Preferences (Floor or Table)	Space Needed (Square feet)
Example: Adirondack Furniture. Table. White and yellow birch, tiger maple. Lacquer.	X		Floor	18
Example: Accessory. Jewelry box. Cocobolo. Poly.		X	Table	2
Example: Novice. Book shelf. Walnut. Shellac.	X		Floor	4
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				
#5				
#6				
#7				

# NWA WOODWORKING WEEKEND

## Registration

January 29th and 30th, 2005  
Empire State Plaza Convention center  
Albany, New York

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

City : \_\_\_\_\_ Province/State : \_\_\_\_\_ Zip : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone : \_\_\_\_\_ Email : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number and email required to contact you if there are any questions regarding your registration.

### FEE SCHEDULE

General Registration		\$95	( )
			( )
One-day lunch Ticket		\$12.50	SAT ( )
		\$12.50	SUN ( )

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse tickets only required if spouse is attending seminar sessions. Instant Gallery and Vendor's Area available at no charge.

### Cancellations and Refunds

Refunds will be granted up December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Please make checks payable to Northeastern Woodworkers Association and send to:

Gerry O'Brien 557 Albany Shaker Road Loudonville, New York 12211

[ ] I will bring up to three examples of my work for display in the Instant Gallery.

Instant Gallery submissions will be accepted on Saturday from 8:00AM to 9:30AM.

Instant Gallery Items should not be removed from the gallery floor until 5:00PM on Sunday.

Questions can be addressed to Ken Evans at 518 753 7759 or kevans1@nycap.rr.com

### Questionnaire

Please provide the following information

Please return this short questionnaire with your registration form and check

Do you belong to a woodworking club of some kind? yes [ ] no [ ]

If yes, please specify the club to which you belong \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the Woodworking weekend? (please check all that apply)

- [ ] Attended Last year
- [ ] Mailing
- [ ] Club Announcement
- [ ] Internet Newsgroup
- [ ] A trade Vendor
- [ ] Magazine
- [ ] Internet Site
- [ ] Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

thank you!



**NWA WOODWORKING WEEKEND  
SATURDAY JANUARY 29, 2005  
ROTATION SCHEDULE**

TIME	9:30-10:55	11:05-12:30	1:35-2:55	3:05-4:30
ROOM #1	Woodturning J. Whitehurst	Turning Pens Barry Gross	Relationship of Moisture and Wood Dr. Robert Meyer	Multi axis turning Tom Crabb
ROOM #2	Scrollsawing Jeanne Aldous	Aspects of Stringed Instrument Making Kim Griffon	Scrollsawing Wil Charbbaneau	Antique Planes Mike Wayne
ROOM #3	Working with Fuzzy Grain Dr. I.A.Vazquez	Introductiön to Windsor Chairs Tom Wetzel	TO BE ANNOUNCED	Glued Lapstrake Boat Building Mark/Barbara Turpin
ROOM #4	All About Finishes Bill Bush	Spoon Making Barry Gordon	Veneering Andy Pate	Beginner's Bookcase Dale Brown
ROOM #5	Boxmaking Charlie Goddard	Kitchen Cabnets Hal Bigelow	Queen Ann/Chippendale Furniture Bill MacTiernan	Japanese Shoghi Screen Eric Marzak
ROOM #6	Inlay Work Clark Pell	Using Epoxy Len Berube	Building a Greenland Kayak Alan Mapes	Antique Restoration David Anspacher
ROOM #7 45 minutes	Beginning Table Saw	Beginning Lathe Ken Evans	Beginning Drill Press Bob Nevins	Beginner's Clinic Ken Miller 90 Minutes
ROOM #7 45 minutes	Beginning Jointer	Beginning Scrollsaw Wil Charboneau	Beginning Bandsaw Bob Nevins	XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX

**NWA WOODWORKING WEEKEND  
SUNDAY JANUARY 30, 2005  
ROTATION SCHEDULE**

TIME	9:30-10:55	11:05-12:30	1:35-2:55	3:05-4:30
ROOM #1	Woodturning J. Whitehurst	Relationship of Moisture and Wood Dr. Robert Meyer	Multi Axis Turning Tom Crabb	Pen Turning Jack Teffenhart
ROOM #2	Antique Planes Mike Wayne	Scrollsawing Barry Gross	Aspects of Stringed Instrument Making Kim Griffon	Scrollsawing Jeanne Aldous
ROOM #3	Introduction to Windsor Chairs Tom Wetzel	Working with Fuzzy Grain Dr. I.A.Vazquez	Glued Lapstrake Boat Building Mark/Barbara Turpin	TO BE ANNOUNCED
ROOM #4	All About Finishes Bill Bush	Spoon Making Barry Gordon	Beginning Bookcase Dale Brown	Veneering Andy Pate
ROOM #5	Kitchen Cabinets Hal Bigelow	Boxmaking Charlie Goddard	Queen Ann/Chippendale Furniture Bill MacTiernan	Japanese Shoghi Screen Eric Marzak
ROOM #6	Inlay Clark Pell	Using Epoxy Len Berube	Building a Greenland Kayak Alan Mapes	How to make a Kayak Paddle Alan Mapes
ROOM #7 45 Minutes	Beginning Bandsaw Bob Nevins	Beginning Lathe Ken Evans	Beginner's Clinic 90 Minutes Ken Miller	Beginning Table Saw
ROOM #7 45 minutes	Beginning Drill Press Bob Nevins	Beginning Scrollsaw Wil Charboneau	XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX x	Beginning Jointer

## Help! Help! Help needed for NWA Kids' Workshop Program!

*- William Van Brunt*

NWA had an active Kids' Program several years ago, and it's time again that we introduce kids to our favorite pastime...woodworking. We have the foundation for the program in a notebook from Bill Couser and Aileen Gertzberg's archives.

The notebook has instructions for the projects done in the past and will be a helpful guide in the development of new projects. Some of the projects made by the kids in the past included a Shaker peg rack, a CD rack, an initial plaque, and a wall-hanging Nantucket barometer. The kids also turned a pen on a lathe. These projects were picked to teach techniques such as the use of a square to lay out the cuts and holes, table routing, drilling using a drill press, gluing, sanding and finishing. The projects were kept simple so they could be completed in 2 1/2 hours.

I need to hear from NWA members who are interested in working with kids and introducing them to having fun with woodworking. The number of kids is limited only by the number of volunteers. If you can help...even for only one class in 2005...please contact me. If enough kids sign up, two classes will be held on one Saturday a month, one each in the morning and afternoon. The tentative schedule for 2005 is: 2/12, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14, 10/15 and 11/12 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

You can reach me by e-mail at [wvanbrun@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wvanbrun@nycap.rr.com) or during the evening by phone at (518) 767-3060.

Let's get NWA active teaching kids about woodworking once again! 🐼

*A great obstacle  
to happiness is to expect  
too much happiness.*

*de Fontenelle*



# Wood of the Month

- Ron DeWitt © 2004

## Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*). An Evergreen Softwood Pinaceae; Pine Family

Of approximately 30 species of spruce or spruce-firs, which are widely distributed across the Northern Hemisphere only, seven are native to the U.S. Although the red spruce (*Picea rubens*) is commercially the most important of the eastern spruces (red, white and black), and Norway spruce (*P. abies*) the most common and widespread, Sitka spruce (*P. sitchensis*) is the largest and most important.

Sitka spruce, also called coast spruce, tideland spruce, yellow spruce, western spruce or silver spruce is an evergreen conifer found in a narrow, natural 1,800 mile range along the north Pacific's fog bank from northern California northward into and across much of southern Alaska. In northern British Columbia and southeast Alaska the range from the coast may extend inland 130 miles at its widest but more typically is 30 to 65 miles wide including the coastal islands. It grows from sea level up to about 3000 feet of elevation but usually occurs at altitudes below 1500 feet. The range has slowly expanded westward in southern Alaska over the last two centuries.

Sitka spruce needs a maritime climate with abundant moisture and humid conditions throughout the year; mild winters and cool summers with lots of drizzle, fog and salt air but free of extremes. It is quite shade tolerant, preferring to grow in deep, moist well-aerated soils rich in the minerals acquired from rock. It is the fastest growing of all the spruces with growth rates among the fastest in North America. Trees may reach 90 feet in 50 years.

Sitka spruce occurs in dense, often pure stands. Although commonly associated with western hemlock it may be found with any of the west coast conifers. This spruce is a very large tree, second in size only to the Douglas fir in the pine family. Mature trees may exceed 200 feet with stem diameters of 10 feet dbh, although size varies considerably over its range. Old growth trees in southeast Alaska have stems greater than 8 feet in diameter at ages of 500 to 800 years. Sitka is the largest tree in Alaska and is its state tree. Record trees in Oregon and Washington are 204 feet by 16.7 feet dbh, and 191 feet by 17.7 feet dbh respectively. A 309 foot tree, the Carmanah Giant, reportedly growing on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, is reputed to be the tallest tree in Canada.

The sharply pointed leaves of Sitka spruce are somewhat flattened, bowed slightly outward, radiating from "pegs" at right angles to and around the twigs. Upper surfaces are dark green divided by a thin center ridge with a narrow band of white stomata on each side. Undersides are more prominently keeled and lightened in color with numerous fine white lines. The light brown twigs are stout and stiff.

Seed cones 2-3" long are broadly cylindrical, light

orange-brown in color and dangle from short stalks at twig ends. Seeds drop in the autumn of their first season to be followed shortly by the intact cones. Cone scales are elongated, brittle and loose-fitting with a wavy, irregular outer margin.

The bark is initially quite smooth, gray and thin, maturing to dark purplish-brown with scaly plates. Typical of all spruces, it is never furrowed.

Trees grow tall and straight with massive, often buttressed bases. Stems taper evenly to an open-pointed crown. Primary branches develop horizontally while secondary branches tend to droop. There is little propensity toward self-pruning except in dense stands. Tree form is less neat and orderly than those of the eastern spruces with which most of us are more familiar.

Sitka spruce has 3 - 6" creamy-white sapwood gradually grading to light pinkish-brown heartwood. Growth rings are distinct, narrow to medium wide, demarcated by a narrow band of dark latewood after a gradual transition from the earlywood. Wood is moderately lightweight, moderately soft with a fine to medium uniform texture and very straight grain...often clear for long distances. The wood is not especially strong but is noted for its high strength to weight ratio. It is rated low in bending strength and shock resistance. Seasoned wood has a dry, clean feel, no taste or odor and is usually a little darker than other spruces.

Typical of the spruces, Sitka has resin canals but of medium size...larger than the others, quite variable in quantity and distribution. Rays are very fine and indistinct to the naked eye. Average specific gravity is 0.40 at 12% M.C. with a weight of 28 lbs./cu. ft. at 12% M.C., similar to eastern hemlock. Shrink on drying is average with little tendency to warp or check. Dimples, small bird's-eye like projections, are often seen on tangential or flat sawn surfaces. It is not a durable wood when exposed to weather or soil conditions. On a general appearance basis the wood may be easily confused with white pine.

Sitka spruce works nicely with hand or power tools easily producing smooth surfaces of a low luster (occasionally a piece will yield a furry patch.) Fasteners are easily placed, holding well; gluing is reliable and all finishes are readily accepted.

Eye, nose, throat, lung and skin problems are reported from working with spruce. Prudent health precautions are advised.

Sitka spruce is the principal saw timber of Alaska and a timber of many and varied uses. Its long fibers produce high quality papers from pulp; much goes into newsprint. High-grade lumber is used in general construction such as framing, siding, paneling, sash, entry doors, crates, pallets, plywood and plywood core stock. It is used also for boat building, racing sculls, oars, sailboat spars,

hidden parts of furniture, kitchen cabinets, food containers, warehouse doors, scaffolding, ladder rails, bleacher seats and woodenware.

The excellent sound resonance qualities of this spruce have made it especially valuable for sound boards in high quality pianos and for stringed instrument faces. Old growth, slow-grown trees with narrow, uniform growth rings are highly prized to quarter saw for this purpose.



# Wood of the month...

Continued From Page 9

The most important application of this timber was in aircraft construction because of its strength to weight properties and availability in large, clear pieces of uniform texture. Many of the earliest flying machines were framed of Sitka spruce and the planes of the allies in WWI used this wood extensively. Usage carried over into WWII planes and gliders, perhaps most notably for the famed British Mosquito fighter-bomber.

This remarkable twin-engine airplane was constructed almost totally of spruce (and some birch). The MK IV version had a wingspan of just over 54 feet, overall length of almost 41 feet and wing surface of 438 sq. ft. Maximum takeoff weight was a little over 11 tons. This wooden airplane, produced in large numbers from "non-strategic material" (wood) flew at 280 mph and reached a maximum speed of 386 mph.

Even today diverse experimental aircraft and "home-builts" are made of Sitka spruce as are the blades of many wind turbines.

Currently, most of the Sitka spruce cut in Alaska is milled into cants for export. Domestic supplies come from Washington and Oregon. Trees commonly scale 4,000 to 8,000 board feet but individuals may run as high as 40,000 bf of saleable lumber. Supplies are good with many areas still recovering from the heavy cutting to support World War II. Large old growth trees are seldom available. Unless specifically requested this species is likely to be included with other spruce, pine and fir when purchasing dimensional lumber on the west coast. 🌲

## New Hospitality Committee Chairpersons

- *Wayne Distin*

A hearty welcome is in order for Al and Emily Stahl, who have volunteered to head up the Hospitality Committee that provides the refreshments for the general meetings. Say hello at the next meeting as you get your coffee or soda and donut. Volunteers like the Stahls keep our Association going and growing.

## Wood Definition

- *Ron DeWitt*

**Dimension Lumber** - Lumber having a thickness of 2 inches up to but not including 5 inches and a width of 2 inches or more. A **board** is lumber that is less than 2 inches thick and wider than 2 inches. **Timbers** are lumber of 5 inches or more in their least dimension.

## Wood Questions

Q. What wood did Noah use to build the Ark?



A. According to the Bible the Ark was made of gopher wood. Gopher is Hebrew for cypress, identified as the Mediterranean cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), one of the most durable woods in the world.

## New Members

- *Austin Spang*

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to NWA:

Jude Dinan, Albany, NY  
Jack Morocco, Castleton, NY  
Richard Shoulkin, Beacon, NY  
Laurie Stander, Waterford, NY

We hope they enjoy being a member and participating in the activities of NWA.

## C L A S S I F I E D S

**For sale:** Hard Maple Beams, twice cut, 3" x 9". Quantities and lengths: Two 13.5', Five 14', Eight 15', Nine 16', Two 17'. 26 beams total, asking \$2,250.00. Contact: Dick Remis at 785-7795.

**For sale:** 8" Delta Table Saw and Jointer with many blades and fences, etc. Asking \$150.00. Contact: Dick Remis at 785-7795.

**Spoonmaking Instruction:** Nationally recognized wood spoonmaker located near Syracuse offers excellent basic through advanced instruction. Class size: 1 or 2 students. Introductory discussion and hands-on work are followed by further instruction tailored to students' interests. All wood, supplies and tools furnished by instructor. Flexible schedule, minimum class time approximately 14 hours. Contact Barry Gordon (315) 638-4749 or [barry@barrygordon.com](mailto:barry@barrygordon.com).

# CHAPTER NEWS

## *December Mid-Hudson Turners Open House*

*- Wally Cook*

An open house was held at the Opdahl Barn on December 4, with over thirty people attending to become acquainted with the facility and to watch Carl Ford tune up for his demo later in the week. Special thanks to those who traveled from the Albany area to support the Mid-Hudson Chapter: Herm, Charlie, Dave, their spouses and friends.

The Open House was a great opportunity to test our new TV monitor system which connects to a camera over the demonstration lathe. This application was Stan Rosenberg's brainchild and is an excellent vantage for the audience to view the turning from the instructor's perspective.

Next door to the main demo area, Keith Tompkins and Steve Sherman provided impromptu demonstrations in Bob Opdahl's turning studio; Keith showed the use of the detail gouge on end grain hollowing and Steve created an example of his delicate Christmas ornaments.

### **Natural Edge Bowls**

Carl B. Ford III presented the second in the series of hands-on lectures...creating the natural edge bowl. Carl has studied with David Ellsworth and uses his technique to attack large greenwood blanks.

The entire process was demonstrated, including wood selection and chainsaw technique, mounting the blank, and roughing and finishing techniques. Carl uses only Ellsworth grind gouges; two gouges of different size were the only cutting tools used in completing the demonstration bowl.

Carl discussed the importance of moisture in creating the bowl. Roughed-out bowls are packed with shavings, paper or wet towels. He generally wets the hollowed bowl with a solution of Clorox to prevent mildew and wet sands the piece. Sanding may be accomplished with a power sander while the wood is turned at slow speeds.

A two-page abstract of Carl's approach and reference information is available; email Wally Cook at [cooker.1@earthlink.net](mailto:cooker.1@earthlink.net) if you would like a copy.

Join us for the next meeting on **January 12** when Joe Mikesch will demonstrate his bowl-making techniques.

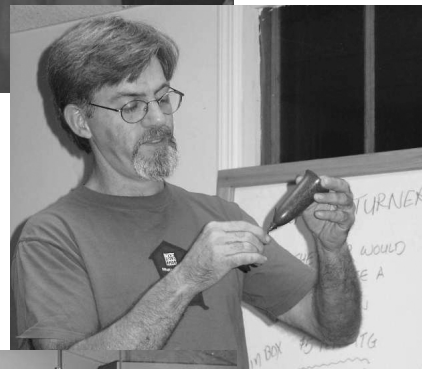
### **Sharp Minds -- Part 1**

In addition to Carl's demonstration, Stan Rosenberg presented the ABC's of Sharpening (X, Y and Z will be covered at the January meeting). Stan reviewed the composition and features of the various metals used in the making of woodturning chisels. He then clarified terminology for describing a cutting edge and demonstrated why 'clearance' is critical for a tuned edge. Each type of woodturning tool...from skew to parting tool...has a different requirement for sharpening, and Stan described the approach to be used with each tool. The sharpening primer will be continued at the January 12 meeting. All are welcome... Stan guarantees there won't be a dull moment!



*The Open House activity at the Mid-Hudson Turners. Viola Opdahl and George Norton facing camera*

*Keith Tompkins examines goblet homework assignments*



*Carl Ford creating a natural edge bowl*

*The bowl in progress*



*Show and Tell at the M-H Turners. Joe Mikesch bowl in foreground; Bob Powell natural edge walnut burl; Steve Sherman goblets*



# CHAPTER NEWS

## *NWA Mid-Hudson November Meeting*

- Wally Cook

The November meeting featured Joe Boek, who discussed his Fiske Memorial scholarship experience at the Vermont Raptor Center in Hancock, Vermont.

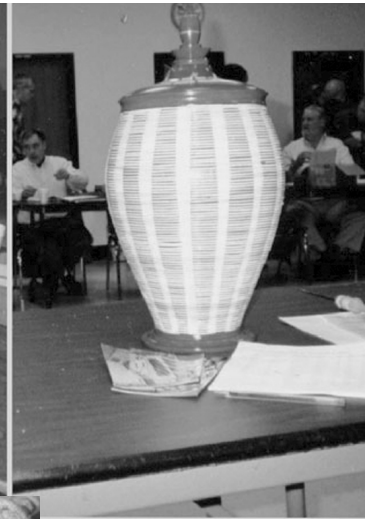
Joe attended a ten day class in carving the Great Gray Owl. The class was hosted by master carver Floyd Scholz. Also in attendance was Robert Taylor, author of *The Great Gray Owl-On Silent Wings*.

The class reviewed the complete anatomy of the owl in preparation for the carving. The Great Gray Owl is the largest of the North American owls, with a wingspan of 50"-60" and a perched height of 22"-32". The hearing of these birds is so acute that they can detect a mouse beneath two feet of snow.

Joe's piece was completed in tupelo. Other parts incorporated into the carving included glass eyes, copper wire talons, and wire armature coated with epoxy to resemble tree branches. Great care was taken on the finish painting, with two and half days devoted to the painting of the carved bird. The piece was first sealed with gesso, followed by very thin washes of acrylic paint. The washes were built up so slowly that colors were first noticeable only after 5-6 applications of the acrylic wash. The completed piece, a one third scale carving of the Great Gray Owl, is shown in the attached photo.

The November 'show-n-tell' included a woven vase by John Franklin, which was built around slices of padauk veneer. The bowl was inspired by a bowl Ray Rio brought to an earlier meeting. John documented the complexity of cutting the shaped forms in a series of pictures and reported that the weaving process alone consumed ten hours!

Stan Rosenberg passed around a platter he created. It was evident that everyone enjoyed Stan's work, because the platter was returned to Stan with a handful of change. Stan intends to use these profits for updated equipment.



*An NWA SSG...Special Splinter Group...Bart Chabot, Austin Spang and Wayne Distin cranking out quilt display racks for the Shaker Museum. Photo by Andy Foster.*





# Sheep and Wool Festival (and Llamas and Woodworkers, too)

- Wally Cook

NWA Mid-Hudson participated in the 32nd annual Sheep and Wool Family Festival at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds in Rhinebeck on October 16-17. The festival is centered on weaving, featuring both the livestock that produce the raw materials and the products derived from their wool.

The Sheep and Wool Family Festival draws approximately 50,000 during the weekend; it is an active 4-H event and an excellent venue for children. For the second year, the NWA Mid-Hudson Chapter sponsored a hands-on birdhouse building experience designed specifically for children aged seven to twelve years old.

The bluebird house kits were a hit! Parts for sixty houses were prepared for the two-day festival, but all were constructed by 1:00 P.M. on the second day. The birdhouse project takes approximately 30 minutes to build. Each child signed up for the construction with a NWA mentor, who worked one-on-one with the participant.

The enthusiasm of both the kids and the parents was evident. Inset picture shows Robb MacDonald, seven years old, of Saratoga Springs. According to his Dad, Robb loves to make things and was tremendously excited about the idea of building a birdhouse...and very proud to have played a role in building it! 🐦



Yes, and llamas, too!



Joe Benkert assisting as Robb MacDonald sands his birdhouse



Joe Kennedy acting as mentor

*Perpetual modernness is the measure of merit in every work of art.*  
Emerson

*The older I grow, the more I distrust the familiar doctrine that age brings wisdom.*  
H. L. Mencken

*No small art is it to sleep: it is necessary to keep awake all day for that purpose.*  
F. Nietzsche

# Phone Callers and Volunteers Needed for Showcase 2005

-Wayne Distin,  
Volunteers Chairman

Phone callers are needed now to help solicit 400-500 members to serve as volunteers for *Showcase 2005*. The more phone help we have, the fewer calls each person has to make. I will mail partial membership lists to each caller in January so they can start phoning for *Showcase* volunteers in February. If you can help with this effort contact me at (518) 674-4171 or at wpswan@capital.net.

We will ask volunteers to spend at least one 2½ hour shift working at *Showcase* on one or more of the event dates of April 1, 2 and 3. Areas that need to be staffed include:

**Setup** – Friday from noon till 9 pm

**Takedown** – Sunday afternoon beginning at 5 pm

**Door Hosts** - Ticket taking and handing out programs

**Floor Hosts** - Walking showroom floor, answering questions

**Ticket Sales** – Sell tickets at the show

**Lecturer's Assistants** - Help with setup/takedown; operate lights and equipment

**Sawmill Assistants** – Work short shifts outdoors/assist with sawmill operation

**Jigs and Fixtures** – Answer questions and demonstrate display pieces

**Raffle** – Sell raffle tickets during the show

**Truck Drivers** – Friday and Sunday pickup and deliver equipment

**"Anything You Say"** – If you can't decide or have a flexible schedule, give us a time and we'll place you where help is most needed

Remember, only those who work on *Showcase* either before or during the show may get in free. Markers will be put on your nametag to indicate that you have worked on *Showcase*. (Lost your nametag? Contact Austin Spang, Membership Chair).

If you want to save a phone call, contact us and volunteer now, or sign up at the January and February meetings.

*Showcase* is run completely by NWA members who unselfishly devote their time and energy to make it a success. Become a part of this unique event. You'll be glad you decided to participate. 🐿

*Simplicity, carried to an extreme,  
becomes elegance.*

Jon Franklin

# Showcase Toy to be Birdhouse Kit

- Jay Van Vranken

The Toy Factory will try something new at *Showcase 2005*. Instead of a four-wheel toy, we would like to produce birdhouse kits before the show. A child can then either build a birdhouse at the show or take the kit home.

At the show, we will probably make bird feeders as the item to pass out to the names that are drawn. However, there should be more people working with the kids and less people producing the manufactured item.

Follow the steps below to make a birdhouse.

## Toy Factory Birdhouse Kit

1. The two ends of the birdhouse are made from a 1"x6" board, cut exactly the same size as the width of the board (which should be about 5½"). This will result in square end pieces.

2. Cut a rabbet ¼" wide and ½" deep along two adjoining edges of the end pieces. These edges will be on the bottom of the birdhouse.

3. On the piece to be used as the front, mark a line from bottom to top and put a mark 2½" and 4¾" from the bottom. Drill a ¼" hole at the 2½" mark and a 1½" hole at the 4¾" mark.

4. Using a piece of ¼" plywood, cut 4 pieces to form the top and bottom.

1- 6"x6½" top piece

1- 6"x6¼" top piece

1- 5"x5½" bottom piece

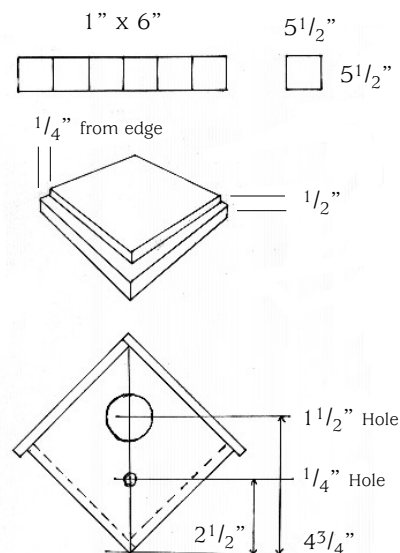
1- 5"x5¼" bottom piece

5. Sand all pieces before assembly. Attach the two bottom pieces first, then the two top pieces, with 1" - 1¼" nails.

6. Cut a piece of ¼" dowel 2" long and place it in the bottom hole. Attach two screw eyes to the top to complete the birdhouse.

This is the unit that we will be handing out to kids at *Showcase* to assemble there or to take home. We will probably need about 800 kits, pre-sanded and placed in small plastic bags.

We have some lumber available, just let me know where and how much you will need.



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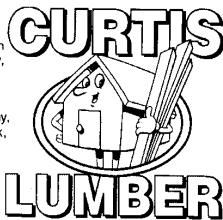
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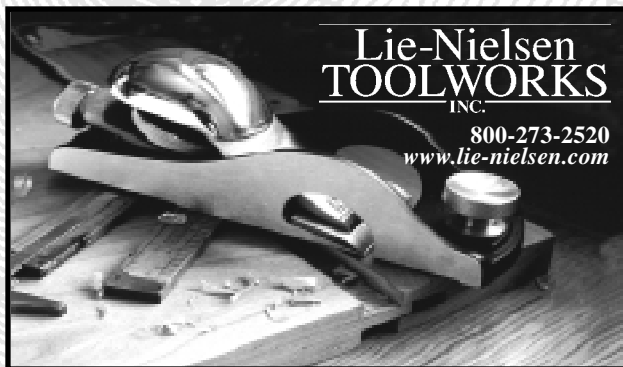


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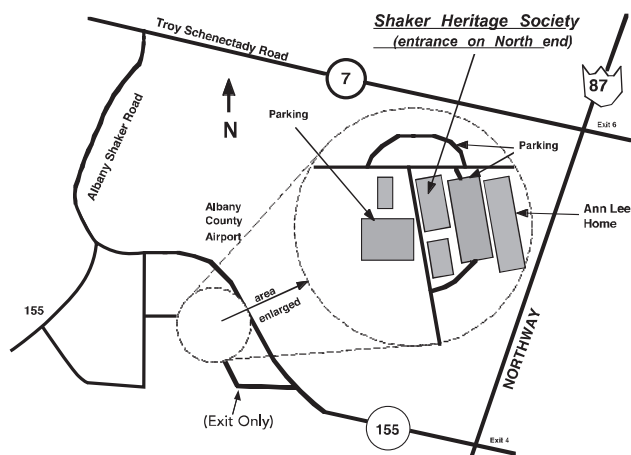
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## NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, January 13th, 7 pm.  
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House  
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany  
(near Albany airport)

## GENERAL MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

### NWA Program Schedule – 2004-2005

Jan. 13, 2005	“Post and Beam Construction” Shaker Meeting House
Jan. 29-30, 2005	Woodworking Weekend
Feb. 10, 2005	Mid-Hudson NWA Program Shaker Meeting House
March 10, 2005	“Finishing” with Jeff Jewett Shaker Meeting House
March 11-12, 2005	Jeff Jewett Workshop
April 2-3, 2005	NWA Showcase 2005 Saratoga Springs City Center
April 21, 2005	“Turning” Shaker Meeting House
April, 2005	Workshop Tours Dates and Locations to be Announced
May 12, 2005	“Double Bevel Marquetry” - Clark Pell Shaker Meeting House
May 14, 2005	Marquetry Workshop – Clark Pell Sears

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

**Adirondack Woodturners Association** - The AWA is active throughout the year. Meetings are every first Wednesday of the month (except in January and July when it is the second Wednesday), and are held at the Curtis Lumber conference room on Route 67, Ballston Spa. Beginners' sessions begin at 6 pm; the main program at 6:30 pm. Saturday “Learn and Turn” sessions are also scheduled. [www.adirondackwoodturners.org](http://www.adirondackwoodturners.org)  
Contact: Ken Evans, 753-7759 or [Kevans1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:Kevans1@nycap.rr.com)

**Carver's Guild** - meets every Tuesday evening at the Clifton Park Senior Center from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Sessions are intended for every NWA member who is interested in carving, from beginners to those wanting to learn a new technique. No reservations are necessary, just show up! Contact Bill McCormack, 233-7260.

**Scroller's Guild** - Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Woodcraft, Latham. Contact Will Charbonneau, 371-3709 or [wcharbol@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wcharbol@nycap.rr.com)

### CHAPTERS

**NWA Mid-Hudson** - The chapter meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday, except July and August, at the Central Hudson Electric Company Community Center, Route 28, Kingston. Contact: Joe Mikesch, (845) 687-4285

**NWA Sacandaga** - The chapter meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at Mayfield High School in the woodworking shop. Park by the section of the building that protrudes further into the parking lot and enter the nearest of the (5) doors. Contact: Gary Spencer, 863-6433.