

WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern
Woodworkers
Association

April 2013, Vol. 22, Number 4

April Meeting

*Thursday, April 11, 2013, 7:00 pm
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany NY*

Basic Tools and Materials for Successful Woodworking (flat boarding, turning, carving and scroll sawing)

By Dick Flanders and Kitty Scharl

When the bug bites, you have to scratch the itch. Something has sparked your desire to try a little woodworking—perhaps you've always loved wood and for one reason or another have decided now's the time to make something out of it.

Or you came across old woodworking tools or a stash of neat wood when you recently cleaned out your father's garage.

Or you saw a beautifully turned or carved or scroll-sawn piece at a craft store.

Or you need a coffee table for your living room and think, heck, I could make something simple myself.

Or you already have a collection of power tools from years of home improvement projects and now finally want to try your hand at fine woodworking.

Or, maybe you attended the Northeastern Woodworkers Association's terrific Showcase in Saratoga in March and got inspired. Who wouldn't??

So – what are your options? And what do you need to start?

At this point things can get a little confusing—you know you need a bunch of tools (hand tools and possibly some basic power tools). Maybe you aren't a millionaire, or maybe are intrinsically systematic and deliberate by nature—but have determined that you must think carefully about which ones are most essential, and which ones are worth spending maybe slightly more on than you are comfortable doing.

Continued on Page 7

Member Profile: Bill McTiernan

By Stan Blanchard



How could a retired lawyer from the New York State Department of Transportation earn Best of Show for Showcase in 2012?

When you enter his shop, a small two car garage converted to shop space, you are NOT immediately struck with fancy new machines and state of the art equipment. In fact what I noticed right away was a large cabinet full of hand tools, a lot of hand tools, with several variations of each kind of tool nested together for easy access. Lee Valley and Lei Neilson tools were in abundance. Bill likes to treat himself to a new tool at Showcase and over the years he has accumulated a nice working collection. When you are doing good work the right tool makes for easier work and smoother progress. However, he admits to squeaking thru a project without the tool he needs only to purchase it after the project is done.

Let's get back to the shop. In 1983 he was in the basement of the house but realized he needed more space so he had new concrete poured in the garage and now has a fine, rustic workspace. Over the entire shop floor are placed interlocking rubber mats. It feels great underfoot and the space is heated with a natural gas heater that keeps the place at a toasty 60 degrees in the winter.

The other aspect of the shop that I did not immediately notice was the absence of a table saw. Bill is a strong proponent of using a radial arm saw for all his sawing needs. In fact he wrote an article about using the

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OFFICERS

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gnarus@verizon.net

Vice President - Karen Arkison
nydivergirl@earthlink.net

Secretary - Kitty Scharl 765-3189
crowridge@nycap.rr.com

Treasurer - Austin Spang 393-2859
spang@nycap.rr.com

Past President - Dan Tipton
reallybigdan@verizon.net

Historian - Wayne Diston 674-4171
wdistin@nycap.rr.com

Executive Secretary - Charlie Goddard
370-0388 Cgodd@aol.com



CHAIRPERSONS

Mid-Hudson Chapter

Bob Boisvert, President - 845-298-0454
greenwd1@verizon.net

Sacandaga Chapter

Co-Chairpersons

Clyde Cheney - 661-5138

Ray Laubenstein - 863-6071

RLAUB@Roadrunner.com

Education

Stan Blanchard

stanleyblanchard@gmail.com

Tom Moran

tmoran9@hotmail.com

Youth Programs

Wayne Diston - 674-4171

wdistin@nycap.rr.com

Fiske Fund

Brian Walsh

b_p_walsh@hotmail.com

Hospitality

Lew Hill

ssrhill@aol.com

Library

Darrel Welch - 477-8431

ydwelch@fairpoint.net

Membership

Fred Treeseitl - 464-0517

ftreeseitl@hotmail.com

Programs

Karen Arkison - 598 4100

Publications

Wally Carpenter - 434-1776

c.j.carpenter@earthlink.net

Publicity

OPEN

Showcase Chair

Ken Evans - 753-7759

kevans1@nycap.rr.com



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, PHONE
NUMBERS ARE IN AREA CODE 518

Jewelry Box Class with Charlie Goddard

By Ken Evans

Charlie Goddard has done it again. Sharing his love for flat-boarding and the skills he has refined by repairing fine furniture, Charlie recently led a class of six NWA members through the process of making a jewelry box.

Safety was the foremost aspect of the class, with an eye on detail. Charlie addressed both of these issues by bringing in the jigs and sleds he designed and built to help him create his boxes. Taking into account the varying woodworking skill levels of the students, Charlie led the group through each step with plenty of one-on-one time, so no one was overwhelmed or left behind.

Some of the creations were destined to be Valentine's gifts and one will be a 40th birthday present, and we can be hopeful that many will make their way to showcase. Each student was very pleased with the outcome and several have already begun planning their next box endeavor. Thanks, Charlie.

Photo by Stanley Blanchard, students Stan, Dave, Rich, Gary, Joe and Mariiruth shown with instructor Charlie Goddard.



Member Profile: Bill McTiernan

Continued from Cover

radial arm saw for the shop. The main points of the article were featured in last February's NWA newsletter.

When someone builds such fine quality furniture it seems natural to wonder if Bill sells any of his furniture. He knows how much time he spends on each piece and feels that it would be difficult to get what he thinks would be a good price for the furniture. So when he has finished building something, friends and family are the lucky recipients of the more than 100 pieces of furniture that he has made over the years. Bill has been retired 10 years and spends about 20 hours a week building something so it is not surprising that he could build 100 pieces over the years.

I asked Bill about practicing to make dovetails and with the confidence of someone who has mastered the technique he defined the process as simply needing very sharp tools. "It isn't rocket science you know." Then he showed me his beautiful Lie-Nielson dovetail saw which helps explain why he would think making dovetails is so easy. Bill does admit that there are mistakes in everything and working with them (covering them up) is part of the interesting challenge of woodworking.

For forty years Bill has been woodworking. He first was introduced to good furniture when he went to auctions. Some of those pieces needed repair so it was repairing old furniture that got him into woodworking. Next Bill was building pieces from scratch by making Shaker reproductions, but that wasn't challenging enough so he slowly moved onto making the more complicated styles like Chippendale furniture. "Look...", said Bill "there is no perfect piece of wood. Therefore there is no perfect piece of furniture and in the construction of every complicated piece, there will be mistakes made. A big part of what a craftsman learns is which mistakes can or should be left and how to remedy those mistakes that can or must be corrected." That explains why he would build a copy of a Secretary from Salem Massachusetts that earned best of show in 2012. 🐦

Wood Carvers Lecture Series

By George Rutledge

In a new foray for the NWA Wood Carvers, we have instituted a series of guest lectures this year that are open to all NWA members with announcements going out through email blasts.

On January 17, Carl Borst of Rotterdam held an audience of almost 40 carvers and would be carvers in rapt attention as he shared his extensive and sophisticated knowledge of Caricature Carving. Carl stressed the importance of anatomical detail and proportion as it relates to achieving a convincing likeness and through lecture and demonstration enlightened us on aspects of carving ranging from knife work and understanding how to depict folds in clothing to finishing your carving.

On February 17 we were treated to an exposition on Song Bird Carving by Walt Le Clair. Like Carl, Walt brought a large assortment of his own carvings for us to enjoy and gave us the benefit of his many years of experience and expertise at carving and finishing beautiful birds. Walt inspired several of our SIG members to try their hand at bird carving and I expect to see many fine works in progress at future SIG meetings.

Our sincere thanks go to Carl and Walt for generously sharing their time and knowledge with our group.

Speaking of the future, though nothing was scheduled for March because of Showcase, our next event will take place on April 25th at 6PM when Jerry Wergedal will speak on and demonstrate the fine art of Fish Carving at the Learning Center. Jerry prefers hand carving unlike the power techniques employed by many fish carvers. He will give special attention to attaching fins, setting eyes and painting the work as well as mounting for a realistic presentation. It will be a great addition to a series that is off to an excellent start and as always, all are welcome.



Carl Borst



Carl Borst



Walt Le Clair



Walt Le Clair

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. The newsletter is available online at www.woodworker.org



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Wally Carpenter, Editor
(518) 434-1776

c.j.carpenter@earthlink.net
Elizabeth Keys Graphic Artist
Designer



WEBSITE(S)

www.woodworker.org
www.nwawoodworkingshow.org

Webmaster - Kurt Hertzog
kurt@kurthertzog.com



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



Wood of the Month ©2013

No. 109 in the series

By Ron DeWitt

Sabicu *Lysiloma sabicu* (L.) Benth.

An Evergreen Hardwood

Leguminosae - The Pea Family

Syn. *Mimosa latisiliqua*

Derivation of the genus name, *Lysiloma*, is from the Greek *Lysis* for “loosening” or “setting free” and *loma* for “border” or “margin,” in reference to the breaking away of the dried seed pods. The epithet or species name, *sabicu*, is the name of a hardwood tree found in Cuba and Jamaica, first described by George Benthham, the English botanist, in 1854.

Lysiloma is considered a Mexican genus with extensions into Central America and the West Indies. The *lysilomas* number about 30 recognized species, all in tropical America.

Only two of these are native to the U.S., one the littleleaf *lysiloma*, *Lysiloma microphyllum*, in southeastern Arizona, and the second, *Lysiloma latisilquum*, ranging from southern Florida, including the Keys, the Bahamas, Cuba, southeastern Mexico, and Belize. Of greater commercial interest (at one time) is the *sabicu*, *L. sabicu*, a native of Cuba and the West Indies, naturalized in southern Florida and the Keys.

The *sabicu* is sometimes called horseflesh mahogany because of the rich color of its wood. It may also be called false tamarind, wild tamarind, or more accurately Cuban *sabicu*. Commercially it is sometimes called Jigue.

Sabicu trees may be found from sea level to elevations up to 3000 ft. (915 m). Habitat may vary from thinly forested, bare, rocky soil to well-drained rich soils. They are very tolerant of severe drought or salt water conditions.

The *sabicu* is a medium-sized, spreading and weeping deciduous evergreen tree, 50 to 65 ft. (15 to 20 m) tall with a straight stem to 3 ft. (0.9 m) dbh (diameter breast high). Stout spreading branches form a wide, flat crown. Bark on stems and branches of young trees is thin, smooth, light gray, occasionally lightly tinged on the

edges with pink. Bark on older trees becomes shaggy, sometimes free of branches for 25 ft. (7.6 m). These trees may live 250 years.

Leaves are bipinnate, having 1 to four pairs of pinnate and 3 to 7 pairs of ovate leaflets. Leaflets tend to die back when temperatures drop to about 41 degrees F (5 degrees C) but quickly recover with rising temperatures. Flowers are clustered in small, white to pale green, fuzzy spheres, about 0.3 in. (8 mm) in



Stem and bark of 8 inch diameter (20.3cm) *Sabicu* tree

diameter. Fruits are thin, red-brown, flat, and oblong (legumes), 4 to 6 in. (10 to 15 cm) long. Ripening in the autumn, they persist until the flowering period of the following year.

Authors note: the writer acknowledges a number of inconsistencies and some confusion found among the published sources of information obtained for this article. Hopefully the selected material is reasonably accurate.

Sapwood of this species is white to light tan, abruptly separated from the brown heartwood, which may have occasional darker streaks. Texture is moderately fine and uniform, grain is quite straight but may be somewhat variable. *Sabicu* is diffuse porous. Growth rings are distinct, clearly visible to the naked eye. Pores, visible to the naked eye, are few in number, irregularly distributed, and decreasing in size toward the growth ring boundary. Vessel lines are clearly seen by the naked eye. Rays are 1 to 3 cells wide, few and scattered, seen only with a 10x lens or better. Heartwood is fluorescent.

Sabicu is a heavy, hard, strong species; weight is about 50 lbs./cu. ft. (800 kg/m³), specific gravity about 0.77. The wood dries slowly with little degrade. It is very stable after drying. This is a durable wood tolerating fungi and insects as well as soil and weather.

Sabicu works easily with hand or power tools to produce smooth satin-like surfaces and crisp edges. Pre-drilling for fasteners, although not a requirement, does produce somewhat better results. This wood turns cleanly, carves nicely, glues well, accepts most oil and varnish finishes, and polishes beautifully without filling.

There have been numerous reports of cold-like symptoms from woodworkers using *sabicu* wood. More specific data could not be located. As with any wood, adequate protection for eyes, nose, lungs, and skin should always be used.

Because of its working characteristics, great strength, and overall durability, *sabicu* has been sought



Leaves and flower



Dark hanging fruit

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KWA Chapter News

By Wally Cook

Beall System: John Franklin provided an overview and tips for using the Beall buffing system. The Beall system is an 8" three wheel buffer using red rouge (tripoli), white diamond, and carnauba wax. The wheels are different material: a) tripoli wheel is flannel, b) white diamond wheel is flannel/cotton, and c) wax wheel is all-cotton. A spindle extender is recommended if the system is purchased – but watch out for the flat spot on the extender if deep bowls are being buffed as the rims may be rubbed.

John underlined the effectiveness of buffing using plates of Plexiglas that had been sanded, each with a different grit of sandpaper. The pattern of scratches was visibly removed with the red and white wheels.



Elements of the Beall buffing system

The most important step in buffing is to have the work piece prepared properly. This means that the surface must be sanded free of scratches (using grits up to 400 at a minimum) and that the surface finish must be thoroughly dry. It is easy to buff through a finish if it is either inconsistently applied or not entirely cured. Curing time will depend on shop conditions and type of finish, but in general, John waits two days for Min-wax brush-on polyurethane and one month for lacquer. John also uses a heated drying box which ensures that the temperature of the finish and the temperature of the work piece are similar during application. (Note: John reminded the audience that the outside of a bowl should be finished before the inside to avoid cracks).



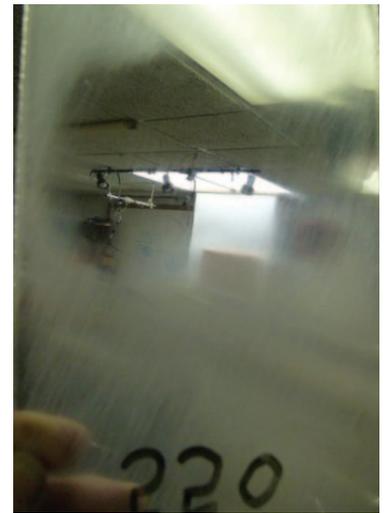
John Franklin showing a buffing system constructed of paint rollers by Steve Sherman

Wax should not be the finish of choice prior to buffing, as the wax will contaminate the red and white wheels. In fact, the wheels should be stored in separate containers to avoid contamination. Any loose grit or

dye picked up by the wheels can ruin the surface of the next piece to be buffed.

Care must be taken to clean the piece before finish is applied. Any fine dust left on the piece prior to finishing will leave a haze that will be particularly visible on dark woods. Polyurethanes attract a lot of very fine particles that are difficult to see, so a tack cloth should be used to remove any static dust or stray grit prior to buffing. Do not use tack cloths impregnated with pitch. John recommended micro fiber dust cloths sold in the house wares department.

When buffing, avoid presenting the rim directly; edges are easy to over-buff through the finish – and easy to catch on the wheel. Let the buffing wheel address the rim on the bottom of its circumference to avoid catches. John buffs at approximately 1200 rpm. He never holds the piece in one position long enough to generate heat build-up. Note that as you move through the wheels, that the red rouge will leave a reddish stain which will be removed when the piece is buffed with the white diamond. In turn, the white diamond will highlight every scratch remaining on the piece – an ample reason for solid surface preparation. However, with a little patience, the use of the buffing step really pays off by taking a reasonable finish to a higher level.



Effects of buffing scratches made by 220 sandpaper on Plexiglas

View Show: The KWA was invited to provide an exhibit at View, the Arts Center in Old Forge, NY. Sixty pieces will be selected for the exhibit during a jury process to be completed at the Hurley Reformed Church on April 6. All work must be dropped off and registered between noon



A sample of instant gallery items at the KWA meeting

and 1PM on that day. The exhibit will be displayed from May 4 to June 28. Contact Wally Cook (wally.cook@gmail.com) if you have any questions. 🐼

CHAPTER NEWS

Mid Hudson Chapter

By Wally Cook

Bees: Remco Krafft discussed beekeeping in the wake of a prior meeting where beehive building created an interest in the subject. Remco kindly supplied the text summary below:

Do not keep bees with the idea of making a profit. Rather beekeeping brings rewards through its intrinsic enjoyment and the ability to reap your own honey, especially comb honey. Comb honey is the best honey in the world – and difficult to find, even in farm markets.



Remco Krafft demonstrating the mechanics of a bee hive

Keeping bees is not difficult, but does take initial preparation. First, ensure that you are not allergic to beestings. Next, you will need a spot to keep your hives and some safety gear (veils, gloves, hive tool, a smoker). These are all available (even the bees) from the recently opened Hudson Valley Bee Supply (600 Sawkill Rd. in Kingston). Get your wood ware – hives, frames, etc. – from the same supply house. It is advised to start with two or three hives for comparison purposes.

Guidance can be obtained from publications ([Beekeeping for Dummies](#)), but it is more effective to pair up with a mentor and take classes through a local beekeeping club (try Catskill Mountain Beekeepers Club at Catskillbees.org). A great deal of information is posted on the internet, such as Beesource.com. *Bee Culture* and *American Bee* are two superb publications.

The most significant obstacles to successfully keeping bees are: a) varroa mites, b) American Foulbrood, and c) Colony Collapse Disorder. Occasional beestings are unavoidable and no big deal, as long as allergies do not play a part of your medical history. An added plus, is that your new found knowledge of beekeeping will provide interesting conversation at your next cocktail party or barbeque!

MOTY: Our chapter member of the year is John Grossbohlin! John is our current treasurer and has done an admirable job in keeping the chapter in good financial trim for a number of years. An avid hand tool enthusiast, John worked at colonial Williamsburg as a demonstrator. John is also actively involved with the Boy Scouts of America and the Ruffed Grouse Society. Please come to the annual dinner on Friday, April 12 to honor John and enjoy the company of your fellow NWA members. The dinner will be held at Twin Lakes resort in Hurley, starting at 6PM with a cash bar. Tickets for dinner are \$28. Please send your check to Joe Benkert made out to the NWA Mid-Hudson Woodworkers at 31 Brewster St. Kingston, NY 12401.



John Grossbohlin now and at Colonial Williamsburg



Show and Tell: Scott Neeley's pieces for Kubba, a Swedish lawn game

CHAPTER NEWS

Sacandaga Chapter

By Gary Spencer

Our March 13th program featured our own Chapter members who in two teams made some nice projects for NWA to raffle off at the showcase.

Team A made a Shadow box of Butternut with a mirror interior back. They presented their team's finished project and described how they chose it and steps in constructing it, they described the problems they encountered, how they were solved, how they finished the item and did a general critique of all phases of building the item including what they would not do again and changes they would make for a next time. Team members were: Bob Boyer, Neil Meyer, Jeff Vass, and Don Wilson.

Team B made a Shaker Wall Clock for the raffle. It was also made of Butternut. They also described the steps for construction, finishing, problems and how they would change if doing the project again. Team members were: Clyde Cheney, Dick Edel, Howard Ferguson, Kirk Hardenburg, Fritz Henze, Jim Hopkins, Ray Laubenstein, Tom Ruliffson, Ralph Simonson, Paul Vingerhoet, Bart Warner, and Don Wilson.

There was also discussion of a Podium made from Oak that a team from the chapter recently made to honor a Chapter member who recently passed way.

Our April 10th meeting will feature the second Part of Jim Schreiner's work on Adirondack and Rustic furniture decorative features. It's an excellent prospect for an outstanding program.

We will still have a show and tell and hope many of you will bring something to show. We will still have 50/50, and door prizes so come on out.

Our regular monthly meetings are the second Wednesday of each month and begin at 7:00 P.M. Our next regular meeting will be April 10th, 2013. We will meet at our shop at 55 2nd Avenue, Mayfield, NY. Come visit.

For Directions or information contact:

Ray Laubenstein - 863-6071 • Clyde Cheney - 661-5138

Gary Spencer - 863-6433

Wood of the Month

Continued from Page 4

after for use around the world. Huge quantities were shipped to Europe, especially to England. Lesser quantities were brought to the U.S.

When available in sufficiently large sizes, usually from Cuba, this wood was used for structural work and boat building. It has been popular for flooring, house framing, and high-quality joinery. Some is used for furniture, indoor and outdoor cabinetry, interior trim, and veneer.

It also served well for knitting mill bobbins and shuttles, novelties, turnings, and machinery parts. Poor quality sabcicu went into long-lasting railroad cross-ties.

In Mexico, bark extractions, because of

its high tannin content, were used for tanning purposes. Today sabcicu trees are rarely large enough to be of commercial value. In several southeastern Florida cities, sabcicu is used for street trees and occasionally for landscaping.

On an historical note, the stairs of the Crystal Palace, in London during the Great Exhibition of 1851, were of sabcicu. At the end of the Exhibition and in spite of the tremendous traffic, the wood had been affected little by wear.

Today sabcicu can usually be obtained from sources in the West Indies. Availability and price are uncertain as may be the correct identity of the species received. In southern Florida true sabcicu may sometimes be found by collectors and hobbyists. 🐾



Standard wood specimen-
sabcicu and heartwood

April Meeting

Continued from Cover

On the other hand, perhaps you're not a total novice at woodworking and fall into the category of those who have already tried his or her hand at a project or two only to be confused about joinery techniques, or have been disappointed with the outcome. Then you realize that you could use a little elementary information.

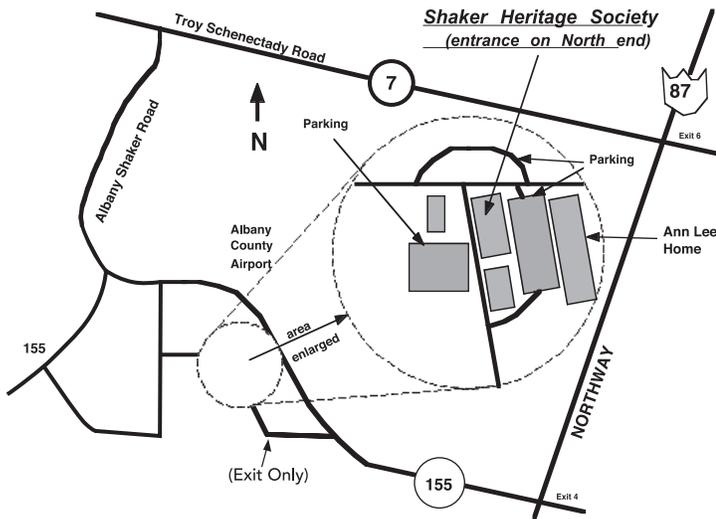
Whether you are just getting into woodworking or have been doing it by the seat of your pants for years, the NWA general meeting on April 11, 2013 promises to be helpful, because this meeting will offer some experienced thoughts on the basic tools, materials and references necessary to make a success of your woodworking efforts in either flat boarding, turning, carving or scroll sawing.

And for the old pros attending the meeting, the challenge will be to help add to the lists of essential equipment and invaluable advice for those whose experience is nil or limited. Please be giving serious thought to what tool or book or piece of advice has been most helpful to your success in, and enjoyment of, woodworking. After all, this is what NWA is all about and does best—learning from each other.

Jot down your questions and bring them along – there will be plenty of time and numerous members to present these to and receive some good feedback. See you there! 🐾



Northeastern Woodworkers Association
P.O. Box 246
Rexford, New York 12148-0246



April Meeting

Thursday, April 11, 2013, 7:00 pm

Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House

Albany-Shaker Road, Albany NY

GENERAL MEETINGS
AND SPECIAL EVENTS

For meeting cancellation information, call Ken Evans 753-7759 or Charlie Goddard 370-0388

May 9th
Election of Officers

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Adirondack Woodturners Association (AWA) - The AWA is active throughout the year. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month (except in January and July when it is the second Wednesday), and are held at the NWA Learning Center located at 1 Mustang Drive, Cohoes, NY. (This is just off Rte 9 at the light at Fonda Road) from 6:30 PM to 9:00PM.

Wednesday "Learn and Turn" sessions occur on all other Wednesdays at the NWA Learning Center. These sessions run 6pm-9pm. www.adirondackwoodturners.com **Contact:** Ken Evans, 518-753-7759 or kevans1@nycap.rr.com

Scroller's Guild - Meets on the first and third Thursday of the month at the NWA Learning Center located at 1 Mustang Drive, Cohoes, NY. A beginner's session starts at 6:30 PM followed by a general meeting at 7:00 PM. **Contact:** Jeanne Aldous at AMJAMtat2@aol.com or Barbara Nottke at scroller87@aol.com or 869-6268.

Kaatskill Woodturners - Meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Opdahl property in Hurley, NY. **Contact:** Matt Clark, (845) 454-9387.

NWA Crafters - Meets every Saturday and Tuesday, from 9:00 am until noon at the NWA Learning Center located at 1 Mustang Drive, Cohoes, NY. The Crafters provide public service woodworking for various charitable organizations, including the Double H Hole in the Woods camp for children and the GE Elfuns toy modifications group, and the Make A Wish Foundation. Sharing information, fellowship, and relating experiences are a major part of these sessions. **Contact:** Dave Axton (518) 237-6942, daxton@nycap.rr.com, Wayne Distin (518) 674-4171, wdistin@nycap.rr.com Steve Schoenberg (518-371-1260), sschoen1@nycap.rr.com for more information.

The NWA Wood Carvers SIG - Meet each Thursday at 5:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. all year except the 2nd Thursday of each month at the NWA Learning Center located at 1 Mustang Drive, Cohoes, NY. Programs are determined at the previous weekly sessions. Discussions start at 7PM. The goal is to promote the art of Wood Carving. Individual private sessions are available Wednesday evenings by appointment. Wood, tools, and patterns are available. **Contact:** Ray Gannon. LoRayG@Gmail.com

CHAPTERS

NWA Mid-Hudson - The chapter meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday, except July and August, at the Hurley Reformed Church. The Church is just off the Hurley exit from Rte. 209. Right at the exit, right at the stop sign and left into the Church parking area. **Contact:** Pete Chast, pchast@francomm.com.

NWA Sacandaga - The chapter meets at 7 p.m. on the Second Wednesday of each month at 55 Second Avenue, Mayfield, NY. **Contact:** Gary Spencer, 518-863-6433.