

# WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern  
Woodworkers  
Association

March 2007, Vol. 16, Number 3

## March Meeting

### Yurts Aren't Just For Nomads

*Thursday, March 8, 2007, 7:00 pm*

*Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House  
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany*

*- Larry Zinn*

Be sure to mark your calendar to attend the upcoming NWA meeting March 8, 2007, at the Shaker Hall. Stanley McGaughey will be there to pictorially and verbally lead you through the process of building a yurt...or in this case a set of yurts...for a home or vacation place.

The Nomadic people of Mongolia made circular domed tents out of animal hides that could be packed up and carried from one pasture land to the other on the backs of their yaks, horses or camels. The yurts featured for March 8th are built of wood, and they are very permanent. They were also an exceptional challenge to design and build. Come see how it was done.



*You can't pack this yurt up and haul it with you across the steppes of Mongolia or anywhere else, but wow is it beautiful and functional.*

## Showcase 2007, March 24th & 25th

City Center, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

*-Larry Zinn*

By the time you read this it will only be few days before Showcase. A lot of work has been done to provide you and the general public the kind of show you have come to expect--and then some!

- A great lecture schedule (our website is [www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org)) check it out!
- Great speaker/demonstrators
- Over 50 commercial spaces
- Special exhibits
- A great show of your woodworking skill--if you enter
- A Gallery of pieces made by professionals
- A great raffle including a DeWalt planner, that beautiful canoe 4 of our members made, a tool chest, a hard maple chopping block, a boat shaped set of shelves, etc.
- Turners, carvers, scrollers and toy makers
- Our Education booth
- The beautiful staging of all of the special pieces submitted for exhibit and/or judging
- The wooden hat turner
- A teardrop camping trailer
- And more

**Volunteers** - We don't have enough volunteers to run this show. Have you signed up yet? Please do that post haste. Sign up for more than one shift if possible. Volunteering doesn't take much time or energy, and it gives you free admission and a chance to win a nice prize. Plus, you get to know a lot of your fellow members better.

**Entries** - As you know, the beautiful show of woodworking talent makes the show. The entry form is reprinted in this Newsletter. Your entry is important and it is important to send the form in right away. Don't miss the deadline. You may enter your work for exhibit only or to be judged. See the form on page 7.

# From the President

## - *Ken Evans*

### Why Showcase, why Totally Turning?

Events such as The Totally Turning Woodworking Symposium and NWA's Showcase are giant undertakings. In today's woodturning world, woodturning symposia are usually sponsored by larger clubs or by a consortium of smaller clubs. Showcase is a woodworking show sponsored by the Northeastern Woodworkers Association. Only one other, sponsored by the Long Island Woodworkers Association, is similar in the USA. What is the value of these events to the clubs that sponsor them?

The idea of AWA sponsoring a woodturning symposium first surfaced before AWA became a SIG of NWA. Most of the AWA members were NWA members and as such were familiar with the concept of a large woodworking show (then called EXPO) sponsored yearly by NWA. NWA had reasons for sponsoring Expo each spring. These reasons were adopted by AWA as it planned its first Woodturning symposium. These reasons included:

**Education** – The NWA motto says it all. For all those who enjoy working wood... and want to get better at it. Both NWA and AWA are driven by a desire to help their members and the public learn about woodworking in general and woodturning specifically. Both organizations have classes, demonstrate at fairs, and in general hold events to educate members about wood and woodworking. Totally Turning and EXPO, now Showcase, are obvious extensions of this education philosophy.

Learning more about woodworking depends on having both a teacher and a student. For AWA and NWA the largest pool of teachers is other members. There is a problem however. Learning, especially informal learning, is most effective if members are known to each other. The best way for two people to become known to each other is to work together toward a common objective. Developing a show over a period of months almost guarantees that the co-workers get to know each other. The whole process has an additional benefit as new friends are made.

**Funding** – Money raised from Showcase helps fund NWA's activities throughout the year and helps buy the hardware needed to run two shops used to hold classes. In a similar manner, Totally Turning funds activities of AWA. Revenue from Totally Turning has been used to purchase several big lathes, nine mini jets, tools and associated hardware in order to offer Learn and Turns and Wednesday turning gatherings at the Stillwater facility plus helping to pay the rent at Stillwater. The low cost of special programs is also made possible by the revenue from Totally Turning. The money that NWA and AWA have in interest-bearing accounts was also generated from these events.

**Leadership Resources** – Besides the educational benefits mentioned above, the shows also produce groups of members who learn to work together. The involved members bond together and learn to cooperate in the best interests of the organizations. It is these members that make the organizations function and solve difficult problems when they arise. It is activities like the shows that provide the management skills and experience the clubs need to continue to be successful.

I urge the membership of NWA and AWA to get involved in the operation and production of Showcase and Totally Turning. Your involvement is a great way to support these organizations and their educational efforts. 

## John Michne to Make Presentation on Building Guideboats

NWA member and past president John Michne will be giving a Power Point presentation on "Adirondack Guideboats - Then and Now" at the new Clifton Park - Halfmoon library on Moe Road on Friday morning, March 23, at 11:00 am. John will describe the history and evolution of the craft, comparing original building techniques with modern methods, and give a brief pictorial description of actually building a boat. 

OFFICERS	
<b>President</b>	Ken Evans 753-7759 kevans1@nycap.rr.com
<b>Vice President</b>	Pete Howe 885-9331 phowe1@nycap.rr.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Kitty Scharl 765-3189 crowridge@empireone.net
<b>Treasurer</b>	Austin Spang 393-2859 spang@nycap.rr.com
<b>Past President</b>	Pat McCord 439-1232 tmccord@localnet.com
<b>Historian</b>	Position to be Filled
<b>Executive Secretary</b>	Charlie Goddard 370-0388 Cgodd@aol.com
CHAIRPERSONS	
<b>Mid-Hudson Chapter</b>	
Joe Kennedy, President	845-473-1598 jkenn23333@aol.com
<b>Sacandaga Chapter</b>	
Co-Presidents	
Fritz Henze 883-8537 fjhenze@citlink.net	
Rod Nielsen 863-8794	
<b>Education</b>	
Herm Finkbeiner 371-9145 hfinkbei@nycap.rr.com	
<b>Adult Programs</b>	
Position To Be Filled	
<b>Youth Programs</b>	
William Van Brunt 767-3060 wvamburn@nycap.rr.com	
<b>Fiske Fund</b>	
Joe Kennedy (845) 473-1598 JKenn23333@aol.com	
<b>Hospitality</b>	
Al and Emily Stahl 587-2420 astahl@nycap.rr.com	
<b>Library</b>	
Wilhelmina Evans 753-7759 wiltw0@nycap.rr.com	
<b>Membership</b>	
Pam Cook 392-5638 butternuthill@taconic.net	
<b>Programs</b>	
Ken Evans 753-7759 kevans1@nycap.rr.com	
<b>Publications</b>	
Position to be Filled	
<b>SHOWCASE</b>	
Larry Zinn 583-1227 lrzn@aol.com	
<b>Tool Crib</b>	
Gerry O'Brien 459-9266 go12211@yahoo.com	
<b>Videographers</b>	
Dave Ellison 872-0980 ellisd@rpi.edu	
Hans Kappel 861-8753 bluespruce@juno.com	
Pat Pugsley 634-7144 ideas@mhoneonline.net	
Bob Conahan 355-9032 conahanbob@hotmail.com	
Kirk Hardenburg 725-1997	
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, PHONE NUMBERS ARE IN AREA CODE 518	

# Wood Identification Meeting

Note: Unfortunately the February 15, 2007 meeting of the Wood Guild had to be cancelled because of the depth of the snow in Esperance. It will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

- Herm Finkbeiner

## Wood Guild Meeting

7:00 pm

Thursday, March 15

Clifton Park Senior Center

(where Family Night was held)

## Identifying Trees, Summer and Winter

Ed Miller

Proper identification of trees before they have been turned into boards is important for many reasons. The identification is critical to foresters, botanists, homeowners, landscapers, those who are just interested in the world around them and, of course, to woodworkers. When learning to identify trees one immediately learns about keys, the systematic sorting tree characteristics from the grossest feature to more and more detailed specifics. Successfully pursued the key ultimately leads to the one species that has all the right characteristics

Unfortunately it is not as simple as it sounds and the process has many potential pitfalls.

Ed Miller is an accomplished amateur botanist who will lead us through some of the methods that are used in identifying trees and how to go about using those methods. By background Ed is engineer but has long been active member of local conservation groups and most recently has been the driving force behind the construction of a "native plants" section of the Landis Arboretum. In that effort, Ed and his co-workers have established a collection of every woody plant that is native to this part of the northeast. ☺

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

### For Sale

**Jet Jointer**, Model JJ-6CSX, 6" x 46" table, with Delta mobile locking base and push blocks - \$325.

**Dewalt Thickness Planer**. Model #733, with Delta mobile locking base - \$275

**Craftsman Table Saw**, Contractor Series, 10" Belt Drive, 3 HP, Model # 113.299410, w/ Delta mobile locking base - \$195.

**2 Workbenches:** 86" L x 29"D x 41"H w/14 drawers and cupboard storage - \$125; 119" L x 26"D x 40"H w/5 sets of 3 drawers with open storage below each set of drawers - \$200

**Wood Dryer**, exterior dimensions 76"W x 40"D x 44"H plus 43"H base, interior dimensions: 50"W x 27"D x 36"H, w/6 shelves - \$175

Call Betty (518) 322-9445

**Sears Craftsman 10 inch table saw** model No.113.299040. Cast iron table, two table extensions, optional retractable caster set, motor develops 2 hp, all safety attachments, stock rip fence, manual. About 20-25 years old, little used. \$175.

Call Bruce (518) 677-3913.

Rosiness is not a worse windowpane than gloomy gray  
when viewing the world.

Grace Paley

**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 an iMac G5, duplicated by Shipmates, and mailed to more than 1,000 addresses.



Your next issue of  
**Woodworkers News**  
will be published  
in early April

Copy deadline: March 15  
Clark E. Pell, Editor 731-2475  
cepell@MSN.com  
Elizabeth Keays Graphic Artist  
Designer



### WEBSITE(S)

[www.woodworker.org](http://www.woodworker.org)

[www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org)

Blog Site:  
<http://woodworkerorg.blogspot.com/>

Website Editor  
Position to be Filled

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  
rohrej@woodworker.org

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

# Kaatskill Woodturners

- Wally Cook

**'Isis, Isis** – I'm having a crisis', invoked Beth Ireland as she executed a critical cut. Her mantra worked, because Beth turned in a flawless performance at the Kaatskill Wood turners workshop. Her main focus was to encourage the group to turn on the creative juices in designing projects.

She focused on two mixed media projects: a) adding castings to wood turnings and b) combining bandsaw and woodturning techniques to create boxes.

In the first project, Beth made a bowl blank from cherry and plywood. The plywood section of the bowl is a sacrificial piece, used only as a form for the casting resin.

A 3/4"

groove is cut into the vertical edge of the plywood with a parting tool. The cut extends to the juncture where the cherry and plywood are joined. The groove serves as the form for poured resin. Beth usually adds objects into the casting – such as pieces of tinsel or fimo clay items. The whimsical objects are anchored in the groove as the resin is poured.

When the resin has cured, the bowl blank is finished to the desired shape and thickness. The plywood is turned off to the resin layer, which



Cross-section of the cherry and resin bowl



Glue up for the box "slices"

can be worked with lathe tools. The result is a segmented cherry and resin bowl, featuring visual elements in the resin. The resin can also be colored. A cross-section of the finished bowl is pictured.

The second project was a bandsawn and turned box. The box starts with dimensional wood of choice. The blank is ripped longitudinally on the bandsaw into three roughly equivalent slices. Keeping the three slices together, one end of the grouping is crosscut laterally – this will be the top of the box. The center section of the remaining slices removed and cut again, leaving two walls and the bottom of this section intact. The waste defines the shape of the negative portion of the box. The center section is sand-

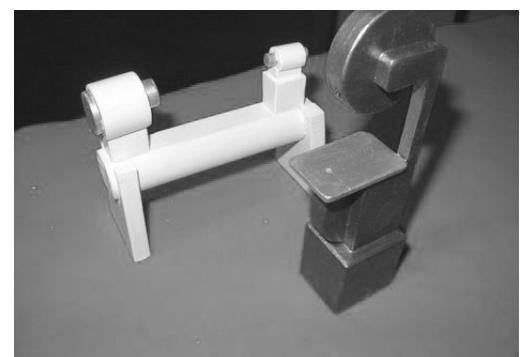
wiched and glued to the two outside slices – and you have the beginning of a box (the glue-up of the three slices and the top is pictured).

The outside of the box blank can be turned or carved – or

both. A piece of the center section waste becomes the tenon for the top of the box, which can also be turned and embellished. The remaining waste piece of the center slice can be turned into a box as well – already dimensioned to nest in the larger box.



Beth's finished box with carving



Her favorite tools! Beth was presented a miniature Oneway and bandsaw

There are two kinds of people who don't say much, those who are quiet and those who talk a lot.

Things should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler.

Albert Einstein

Being young is a fault which improves daily.

Swedish proverb

# CHAPTER NEWS

## Sacandaga Chapter News

- Gary Spencer

Our February 14th program was to feature two of our chapter members. Kirk Hardenburg of Gloversville was to offer a program on "Evaluation and Use of Random Orbit Disc Sanders" and Joe Artikuski was to do a segment on "The Making of Cabriole Furniture Legs" Since this was the big storm day, we did not meet. This program will be rescheduled for later in the year.

Our next meeting is scheduled for March 14th and Mike Kratky of Northville will do a wood turning presentation. He will do a " Demonstration/ Presentation on the Turning of Goblets".

The club has endorsed having members construct items again for Showcase 07. The items are well underway and will be a Row Boat Shaped Bookcase, a Deluxe Tool Cabinet, and a Butcher Block Kitchen Table & Workcenter. These items will all be raffled off at the Showcase, so bring your gambling spirit and you may be a big winner.

The Sacandaga Chapter meetings are open to all, and light refreshments are served.

Remember we have door prizes at every meeting but you do have to be present to win!

Our regular monthly meetings are the second Wednesday of each month and begin at 7:00 P.M. at Mayfield High School woodshop. Come on out!

## NWA Mid Hudson Chapter

- Wally Cook

**Goodbye, Joe!** Change may be good, but we'll all miss Joe Mikesh, who is moving to Florida. Not so incidentally, he is also getting married on St Patrick's Day! Our chapter sends good wishes to Joe and Penny as they start their new life near Ft. Myers. Joe has done an outstanding job as the president of the Mid-Hudson Chapter. He will be succeeded by Joe Kennedy.

The interim officer state is now:

President: Joe Kennedy

VP: Joe Benkert

Secretary: Duane Henry

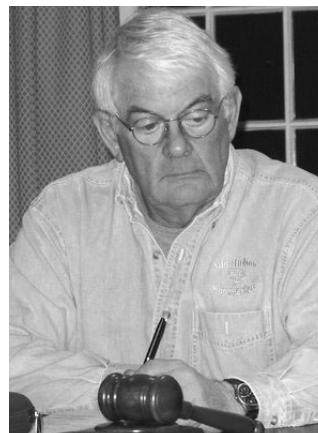
Treasurer: John Grossbohlin

**New Meeting Place:** The chapter meetings will be conducted in Schadewall Hall in the Hurley Reformed Church. The move was made necessary by the impending sale of the Central Hudson building. The Reformed Church is minutes away from our old meeting site: continue on Rte 209 to Hurley exit, turn right at the stop sign and a quick left into the church parking area.

**Got to Keep on Movin':** is the theme of the woodworkers challenge to be held in May. Any object that is kinetic and constructed from wood is eligible. So bring your spinning tops, mobiles, weather vanes, and moving toys to the May meeting. All entries will be donated to the silent auction of the Hurley Heritage Society and aimed at the roof fund for the historic Col. Jonathan Elmendorf Museum building.

**Mid-Hudson Woodworker of the Year:** Joe Benkert will be honored at the annual dinner as our chapter's woodworker of the year. Joe has served as Secretary of the chapter and the KWA SIG.

Don't forget the Chapter Dinner to be held at Twin Lakes on April 13. As always, good food, entertainment, and mega-raffle are planned. Tickets are \$25 per person - Joe Benkert is the contact.



Joe Mikesh presiding at the chapter meeting



Quentin Champ-Doran showing his turned gavel



Jack Collumb's 3d scroll



Win Crans maple vase

# Showcase 2007

March 24, 25, 2007  
Saratoga Springs Civic Center

*Have you: Entered your project for display?: Volunteered to work one or more shifts?: Made plans to attend with family and friends? Don't miss this premier event of NWA.*



# EXHIBIT ENTRY FORM

## NWA SHOWCASE      MARCH 24-25, 2007

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

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

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

Check here if you'd like this information available for inquiries about your work.

Member:    Yes    No  
 Fee: \$10 per entry  
**No Fee for Members or those under 16**  
 \$    Enclosed  
 \$    (Office use only)

**ENTRY DEADLINE IS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21st**

Any received after that date will not be eligible for competition, but display only.

**PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING FORM COMPLETELY**

**NOTE:** Display labels are made in advance using the information you provide below. Those labels will be waiting for you when you bring in your entry on Friday, March 23rd. No entries permitted after 7:00PM .

ENTRY CATEGORY	FOR JUDGING ONLY	FOR DISPLAY ONLY	ARE YOU A PROFESSIONAL?	
(State category, give brief description of your item, list types of woods and finish used)	(only one per category)	(unlimited as space allows)	YES	NO
<b>Example:</b> Furniture 3; Windsor chair, tiger maple, honey oak stain, lacquer finish.	✓		✓	✓
<b>Example:</b> Accessories; Jewelry box, black walnut and holly with turquoise gem stone inlay, sprayed poly.	✓			
<b>Example:</b> Other; Workbench, maple & ash, Bush oil.		✓		N/A
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				
#5				
#6				
FOR ADDITIONAL NOTES				

(see page 2 for entry rules)

**WHAT:** NWA SHOWCASE 2007 ([www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org))

**WHERE:** Saratoga Springs City Center & The Saratoga Hotel

**WHEN:** 10-5 Saturday and Sunday; March 24-25, 2007

### **EXHIBIT HALL ENTRY CATEGORIES**

(\* New category or redefined for 2007)

1. Adirondack furniture and accessories
2. Furniture 1: Tables, beds
3. Furniture 2: Cases, cabinets, desks
4. Furniture 3: Chairs
5. Accessories: Clocks, boxes, desk top pieces
6. Toys/Miniatures: Play things, models
7. Turning 1: Segmented
8. \*Turning 2: Bowls, platters, plates, vessels
9. \*Turning 3: Pens, finials, spindles, ornaments
10. \*Beginner Turner: Over 16 and new to turning in the last 12 months
11. \*Beginner Woodworker: Over 16 and new to woodworking in the last 12 months
12. \*Youth: 16 and under.
13. Carving: Representational, conceptual, decorative
14. Inlay, Intarsia, Marquetry
15. Scroll sawing
16. \*Musical instruments
17. Other: Shop equipment, boats, or any piece not fitting into the above categories

### **ENTRY RULES FOR EXHIBIT HALL**

- Entry forms must be received by March 21st to be eligible for competition, any late entries will be entered for display only.
- All exhibit items must be delivered to the City Center no later than 7:00 PM, Friday March 24th. No exceptions.
- Exhibits are not to be removed from the floor before 5PM Sunday.
- You may exhibit any number of pieces in more than one category, but only one piece for judging per category.
- Award winning pieces from a previous Showcase event 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/or the committee reserve the right to re-categorize an item for judging that may be misrepresented.
- The exhibit hall is not a commercial area, no price tags or literature other than small business cards will be allowed.
- **Professional Gallery:** For those professionals who desire to commercialize their work. They may also enter an item into the exhibit hall in the appropriate category(s) for judging against their peers.
- **\*Professionals:** You are a professional if \_ or more of your livelihood is from woodworking. You may enter in any category except # 10 and #11.
- The decisions of the judges are final. At the discretion of the judges, some awards may not be given.

### **AWARDS**

1. Best of Show: Purple Ribbon: One, from any entry
2. First Place Professional, multi color ribbon, one each category except for # 10 & #11
3. First Place: Blue Ribbon, one each category
4. Second Place: Red Ribbon, one each category
5. Third Place: White Ribbon, one each category
6. Honorable Mention: Green Ribbon, one each category

**PLEASE SEND ENTRY FORM(S) TO:**  
**Northeastern Woodworkers Association**  
**Box 246**  
**Rexford, NY 12148**

For questions: Larry Zinn, Showcase Chairman (518) 583-1227, [lrzn@aol.com](mailto:lrzn@aol.com)

Mike Kratky, Judging Chairman (518) 863-2821, [theinspector@frontiernet.net](mailto:theinspector@frontiernet.net)

Dave Mobley, **Professional Gallery** (518) 346-1146 [dmobley@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dmobley@nycap.rr.com)

# Safe Jointer Tenon Trimming

Dale M. Brown

Tenon trimming using a jointer is one of the many (at least 9) tasks this tool can do. But since the jointer's head guard must be removed one's hands are endangered. In the book Machine Woodworking by Hunt and Cermak, the chapter which describes tenon trimming using the jointer states:

## SAFETY FIRST

- A. Observe precaution in holding the material.
- B. Keep the hands clear of knives.

Obvious but accidents do happen and several years ago it happened to me!

I was tenon trimming a large number of rails for the paneled doors of a large cabinet. And what can happen when repeating a process sequentially from one piece to another almost automatically is that the mind wanders or gets distracted. Surprisingly and like it was happening in slow motion, I looked down to see my right index finger resting over the rapidly rotating cutter head. And the tip of this finger was cut.

My solution to this safety hazard was to build a guard out of Plexiglas (Fig. 1). Two holes bored through from edge to edge enables the guard to be fastened using two Allen bolts to the board bolted to the steel fence. A flapper door was mounted to the outer edge as shown and rotates up and down as the rail is moved across the rabbeting ledge as the trim cut is made (Fig. 2).

Mortises in the styles are cut first using either a router or mortiser. And both of the styles' faces are used as alignment surfaces. This ensures that the mortises are cut in the exact center of the style. The length of the tenon is established by cutting slots in the faces of the rails using a table saw. The jointer's fence is adjusted so that the ends of the knives are extending just a bit past the outside edge of the saw slot. Taking a series of light cuts and alternating between the two opposite faces of the rail for alignment ensures that the tenon is centered in the end of the rail and enables a snug fit in the mortise.

Since the styles and rails were planed to have the same thickness before starting there should not be an "edge" where the rail butts against the style at the joint. ☺

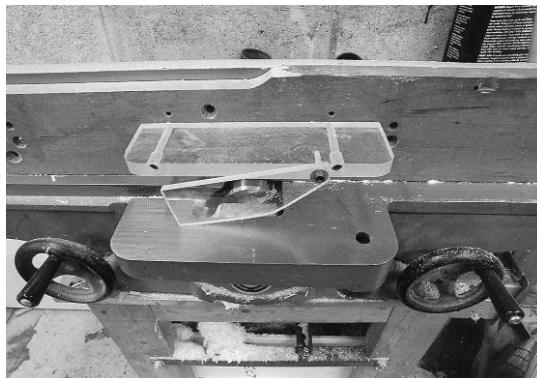


Figure 1



Figure 2

# NWA Woodworking Classes at the Stillwater Shop

For more information about any of these classes see: <http://woodworkerorg.blogspot.com/>

## Power Tool Fundamentals: The Jointer

Allen Craft

2 sessions are available

Monday Mar. 5 from 6 PM to 9 PM

OR

Tuesday Mar. 6 from 1 PM to 4 PM

Cost: \$20

## Build a Jewelry Box

Charlie Goddard

Tuesday Mar. 6, 13 & 20 from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM

Cost: \$50 plus materials

## Make a Joiner's Mallet

Herm Finkbeiner

Wednesday Mar. 7 & 14 from 12 noon to 3 PM

Cost: \$30 plus materials

## Plane Tune up Clinic

Tom Osborne

Sat. & Sun. Mar. 10 & 11 from 1 PM to 4 PM

Location: to be announced

Cost: \$30

## The Turned Box

Ken Evans

Wednesday Mar. 21 from 9 AM to 2 PM

Cost: \$20

To register contact Gerry O'Brien at:  
go12211@yahoo.com (518) 459-9266

If at first you don't succeed  
perhaps you have found a  
way of life you can live with.

A fellow who is always declaring  
he's no fool usually has his suspicions.

Wilson Mizner

# Wood of the Month® 2005

- Ron DeWitt

## White Oak (*Quercus alba*) L. A Deciduous Hardwood Fagaceae - The Beech Family

Derivation of the genus name *Quercus* is from the classic Latin name for oaks...taken from Celtic words for fine and tree; the epithet *Alba* is Latin for white.

The oaks, thought to have first appeared in what is now Southeast Asia 60 million years ago, have evolved into a genus of as many as 500 species worldwide. Almost all of the oaks are found in the Northern Hemisphere. This is the largest genus of trees native to the U.S., composed of 58 tree species and a few shrubs.

In attempting to make the oaks of North America more understandable, they have been divided into two groups with similar characteristics: red oaks and white oaks. The white oak group consists of all of the white, chestnut, post, bur, overcup and live oaks.

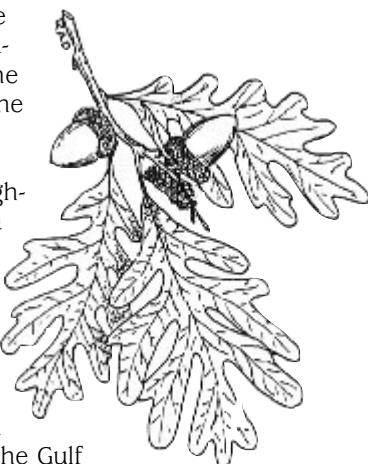
The white oak (*Quercus alba*), also called stave oak, ridge white oak, eastern white oak or forked-leaf white oak, is described as the most important lumber tree of the white oak group and the most important oak in the U.S.

White oaks are found throughout most of the eastern U.S. in a roughly square area from Maine west across southern Quebec and Ontario into Minnesota, then south across western Iowa into eastern Texas, then east across northern Florida. It is not usually found in the high Appalachians or along the Gulf coast.

White oak grows in a wide range of site, soil and climatic conditions. It tolerates temperatures of -50 degrees F (-46 C) in Minnesota to 95 degrees F (35 C) in Florida. It puts down a deep tap root and does best on north or east-facing lower slopes in sand, gravel, rich uplands or well-drained loams, to elevations of 500 ft. (150 m) in the northern part of its range to 4500 ft. (1370 m) in the south. Optimum conditions are found in the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys but the largest trees have been located on the eastern shores of Delaware and Maryland. In its native habitat the ideal sites were those areas cleared by early settlers to produce the best farmlands.

White oak is most often found with other oaks and hickories. Regular associates also may include beech, ash, maple, cherry, white pine or hemlock. Occasionally it will be located in pure second-growth stands. Content to live alone in the open or in the forest environment, it is only moderately tolerant of shade. White oak is a slow-growing tree reaching 1.5 in. (3.8 cm) dbh in 10 years, about half the rate of northern red oak.

Open-grown white oaks are distinguished by their short massive boles, heavy irregular branches and very broad, spreading crowns. In a more crowded forest environment they produce a tall straight stem with a smaller, denser crown. Mature trees are typically 80 to 100 ft.



(24 to 30 m) tall and 3 to 4 ft. (1 to 1.2 m) dbh in 100 years. Trees to 150 ft. (46 m) tall, 8 ft. (2.5 m) dbh and 600 years old were not uncommon. The *National Register of Big Trees* lists a current champion at 86 ft. (26 m) by 8.3 ft. (2.5 m) dbh with a crown spread of 116 ft. (35 m) growing in Lawrenceville, Virginia. A few years ago New York listed a 97 ft. (29.5 m) by 7 ft. (2.2 m) dbh white oak in Columbia County as its champion. This is the state tree of Connecticut, Maryland and West Virginia.

The alternate, simple leaves of the white oak are 4 to 9 in. (10 to 23 cm) long, 2 to 4 in. (5 to 10 cm) wide, elliptical in general form, narrowing toward the base with 5 to 9 deeply furrowed and round-tipped lobes. Leaves tend to be widely spaced along the branchlets but clustered at the tips. Leaves are smooth surfaced, slightly pink in spring, maturing to bright green on top, pale green below. Leaves turn rust-red to brown in autumn, often hanging on the tree through winter. Male flowers...bright yellow catkins...form at the same time as the leaves in late spring. Female flowers, on the same tree, appear as a small red spur at the base of the leaves. Fruit, acorns (true nut), are .75 to 1.25 in. (2 to 3.2 cm) long, becoming shiny brown and proportionately narrow. They form singly or in pairs, only occasionally in clusters, maturing in the first year. The acorn's scaled cap encloses about a quarter of its length. Under the cap the acorn is marked by a wide, pale-white circular scar. First acorns are usually produced at about 20 years. Thereafter good crops occur only every four to ten years.

Moderately stout twigs may be olive to purple-gray in color. Bark becomes ash gray to almost white, separated into many thin scales, aging to become up to 2" (5 cm) thick, divided into broad flat ridges.

Similar to most of the oaks, white oaks are ring-porous hardwoods. Earlywood is composed of up to four rows of solitary, large to very large round pores, clearly visible to the naked eye. Tyloses are plentiful in the heartwood. Latewood pores are thin walled, very small, numerous and indistinct even with a hand lens. They range outwardly across the latewood forming radial fan-like arrays. Growth ring boundaries are easily noted as the transition from earlywood to latewood is usually abrupt. Rays are quite uniform, in two sizes: very large, conspicuous and visible to the naked eye, or smaller and just visible with a hand lens. Rays may be more than 1.5 in. (3.8 cm) high, occasionally to 5 to 7 in. (12.7 to 17.8 cm).

Sapwood is whitish to tan, varying considerably in thickness from tree to tree. Heartwood is rich light brown to dark brown, darker than red oak. The change from sapwood to heartwood is not well defined.

The wood is heavy, hard and very durable. White oak has a sp.gr. of 0.67 and weighs about 45pcf(721 kg/m<sup>3</sup>) at 12% mc, a little heavier than northern red oak or about the same as beech.

The wood is usually straight grained with a moderately fine texture. Figure is quite plain in flat-sawn lumber but can have a spectacular ray effect when quarter-sawn. White oak is considered more attractive than red oak.

White oak dries slowly with a pronounced tendency to warp and check. Drying must be done with care. Like most oaks this wood is easily stained by contact with iron. Shrink from green to oven dry is high-average at 5.3% radially, 9.2% tangentially and 15.9% of volume.

It's reasonably stable in service. The wood has no distinct odor when dry but has a slightly bitter taste.

White oak is readily worked with power tools to produce smooth surfaces and crisp edges. Hand tools must be very sharp and require more effort and care. This wood has some dulling effect on tool edges. Gluing calls for good adhesives and careful control. Fasteners hold very well but pre-drilling is necessary to minimize an inclination to split. This is an excellent steam-bending wood. Stains, oil and varnish work very well but those large earlywood pores require filling to get smooth finished surfaces. This wood is extremely durable in contact with soil, water or weather. Ammonia fuming does not produce uniform coloration in white oak.

The tannic acid compounds in white oak result in some toxicity causing eye, skin, lung and nasal passage problems. Appropriate precautions are well advised.

White oak is usually selected when strength, hardness, resilience and durability are required, such as for railroad crossties, fence posts, shingles, mine timbers, poles, piling, barn beams, bridges-open and covered, and farm equipment components. Its impermeability to liquids make it the ideal material for staves of barrels, casks and kegs used commonly to age and store beer, wine, rum, liquor and molasses. Today's best grades of many spirits as well as Louisiana tabasco sauce are still aged in white oak.

Large quantities of lumber are used for furniture, including chairs, tables, desks, frames, cabinets, handles, caskets and coffins. Quarter-sawn figure makes it popular for plywood, veneer, flooring and general millwork. Poor quality material goes into charcoal, pallets and excellent firewood.

White oak has a long history in boat and ship construction where it is still widely used. Perhaps its most famous success was in planking on the *USS Constitution*, launched in 1797. The 175 ft. (53.3 m) ship was framed of 14 in. (36 cm) live oak (*Q. virginiana*). Ribs were placed only 2 in. (5 cm) apart. White oak planking 4 in. (10 cm) thick was laid inside and outside against the ribs providing a hull over 22 in. (.6 m) thick in its strongest parts. In 1812 during the American Revolution she proved a superior warship. British gunners reported their cannon balls bounced off the hull earning the ship its nickname, "Old Ironsides." The oldest commissioned ship in the U.S. Navy today, the *USS Constitution* now serves as a floating museum in Boston Harbor. The all-wood minesweepers of World War II were of white oak as were the keels of most patrol boats. Today, white oak boat construction can be seen in many places along the New England coast.

Because of its "mighty oak" appearance, white oak is sometimes planted as an ornamental or landscape tree, although the planter rarely lives long enough to see it as a big tree.

White oak was also looked to for sustenance. Large quantities of acorns were consumed by Native Americans and more recently by early Americans as a food source,

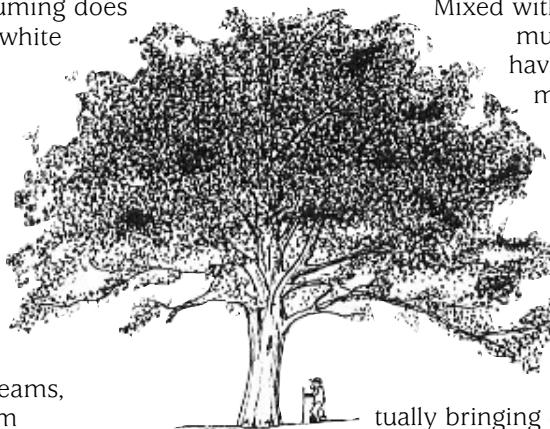
usually for bread or cake. Acorns were first shelled and dried then ground. An acceptable ersatz coffee was made by drying and roasting the nut meat then grinding as with coffee. A sprinkle of real coffee helped immensely. Acorns are an important food source for wildlife of all kinds. Acorns were said to be at their best when first processed by a pig.

Not only did white oak provide food and housing, it also provided medication. Strong tea-like decoctions of inner bark helped heal wounds. It treated diarrhea, hemorrhoids, sore throat, fever and lung congestion. It was also taken for goiters, ulcers and applied to sore eyes.

Mixed with bear grease it provided liniment for sore muscles. White oak inner bark healing claims have been legitimized by its inclusion, for many years until 1936, in the *US Pharmacopeia* as a recognized drug.

White oak has the usual assortment of damaging agents. It is occasionally weakened by wood boring insects and defoliation by gypsy moths and tent caterpillars. Once afflicted it is more susceptible to attack by fungi or fatal damage from fire. More frequent in our area is heart rot which destroys its heartwood, rendering it useless for lumber and eventually bringing down the tree.

White oak lumber cannot be reliably separated from others in the white oak group. They sometimes get mixed and sold as "white oak." This oak is currently in good supply, although rarely from an old growth source. In its growing areas most large mills or yards carry it in 4/4, 5/4 and 8/4 thicknesses. Locally it can be found in 4/4, to 8 in. widths, S2S (surfaced two sides) priced from \$3.50/bf and up compared with northern red oak at \$3.25/bf.



## Wood Definition

- Ron DeWitt

**Pitch Pocket** - A pocket or opening extending parallel to the annual growth rings in a log or board that contains or has contained solid or liquid pitch; it is found in certain conifers, most often fir and spruce.

## Wood Questions

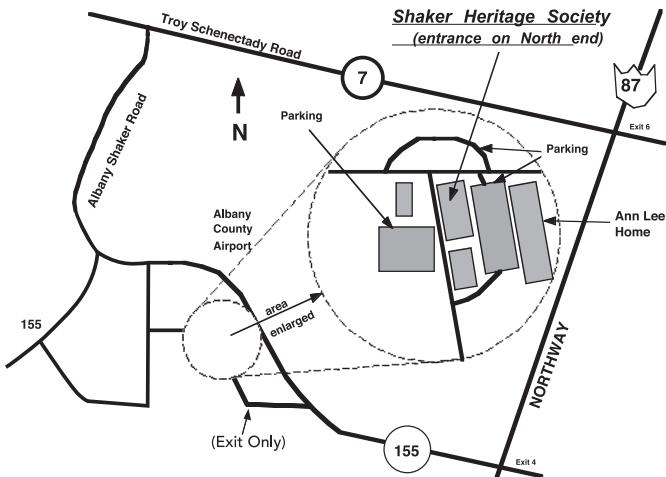
Q. Which nails cause less splitting of wood, old fashioned square-cut nails or modern pointed nails?

A. A square, flat-bottomed nail sheared the wood fiber and pushed it ahead of the nail as it was driven, caus-



# Northeastern Woodworkers Association

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



## March Meeting

Thursday, March 8, 2007, 7:00 pm  
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House  
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany

## GENERAL MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

### NWA PROGRAM SCHEDULE 2006-2007

**March 8, 2007**

Yurts

**March 24-25, 2007**

Showcase

**April 12, 2007**

Making Stools  
Tom Osborne

**May 10, 2007**

Jigs and Fixtures  
Pete Howe

For meeting cancellation

information,

call Ken Evans 753-7759

or Charlie Goddard 370-0388

## 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 Friday at the Clifton Park Senior Center from 9:00 am to 1:00 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 Sears, Colonie Center. Beginners' session starts at 5:30 followed by a general meeting at 6:15. Contact Tom O'Donnell (518) 581-1167 or [todonne3@nycap.rr.com](mailto:todonne3@nycap.rr.com).

**Kaatskill Woodturners** - Meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Opdahl property in Hurley. Contact George Norton, (845) 331-1705.

**Jim's "Hole in the Woods Gang"**

Meets every Saturday, from 9:00 am until noon at Jim Kennedy's shop at 86 Guideboard Rd., in Halfmoon. (just 1 mile east of the Halfmoon Diner on Rt. 9). Our general purpose is public service work for various charitable organizations, including the Double H Hole in the Woods camp for children. We strive to foster a learning environment for our members through the projects we work on and the informal training/learning sessions given by and for our members. Sharing fellowship and relating experiences are a major part of our sessions, as we do accomplish many tasks during our times together as well.  
Contact Dick Flanders, (518) 393-5215 ([rflander@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rflander@nycap.rr.com)) or Darrell Welch, (518) 477-8431 ([ydwelch@taconic.net](mailto:ydwelch@taconic.net)) for more information.

### 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 the Hurley exit from Rte. 209. Right at the exit, right at the stop sign and left into the Church parking area. Contact Joe Kennedy, (845) 473-1598

**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.