

# WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern  
Woodworkers  
Association

March 2009, Vol. 18, Number 3

## March Meeting

*Thursday, March 12, 2009, 7:00 pm  
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House  
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany*

### *Making Shaker Oval Boxes*

*by Gerry O'Brien*

"May your boxes bring satisfaction to you, and joy to others"

This motto captures the essence of the philosophy and craftsmanship which Master Boxmaker John Wilson will share in this special presentation to kick off a series of Oval Box workshops as the first co-operative effort between NWA and the Shaker Heritage Society.

John began woodworking with hand tools in his father's shop at age 8. He worked as a carpenter during his college days while he pursued a degree in Social Anthropology. After graduation, he spent a number years teaching Anthropology at several colleges. When he was not granted tenure, he accepted a last minute offer to teach a woodworking course at Lansing (Mich.) Community College. With no course outline to follow or any definite plan on how to proceed, John stopped by the library on his way to the first class and picked up a book on Shaker Furniture Design. The students selected a project to build and the rest as they say, is history. John was impressed by both the Shaker's design elements and, due to his anthropological background, the society itself. He was especially intrigued by the oval boxes and tirelessly sought out information on the techniques of their construction. John held his first Boxmaking workshop in 1983, and in the intervening 25 years he has passed on these traditional methods to over 4000 students. In 1985, he was invited to Sabbathday Lake, Maine by the remaining members of the Shaker Community to help re-introduce the craft to the public.

If you've ever admired an Oval Box which was constructed in the past 20 years, you've probably seen some of John's handiwork. Although he may not have crafted that particular box, he most likely had a hand in it. You see, when the W.W.Cross Nail Company stopped production of the copper tacks used in assembling these boxes, John bought the 1800's vintage machinery to manufacture them. Today he is the sole supplier of copper tacks in 9 graduated sizes which correspond to the size of the box being constructed along with other supplies needed for the Boxmaking trade.



If you can't make the regular meeting, you have a unique second chance since the demonstration will be repeated at the same time on Friday night. Either way, don't miss out on this special opportunity. It promises to be a most enjoyable evening. And as to the subsequent workshops?...craftspeople putting their "hands to work" in Wisdom's Valley... I think Mother Ann Lee would be pleased. 🙏

**Those who get their  
Showcase entry forms  
in by March 13 will be  
eligible for a drawing.**

**First prize is a \$150  
gift certificate  
from Lie-Nielsen  
and the second prize  
is a \$50 gift card  
from Lee Valley.**

## OFFICERS

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UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, PHONE  
NUMBERS ARE IN AREA CODE 518

# Fiske Scholarship Fund

*By Joe Kennedy*

We closed out 2008 with a large number of awards. So far this year, we have made two awards. **Bill Van Brunt** will take a class in mastering woodworking machinery at the Rosewood School. **Dick Flanders** will take a class in making a bench at the Banner Hill School.

We have some big news in regard to the composition of the Fiske Scholarship Fund Committee. I will be stepping down as Chairperson. **Tom Osborne** has agreed to take on this job. Dave Lasinski will be stepping down as Treasurer of the Fund. **Perry Bonanni** has agreed to take on this job. Many thanks to Dave for all his years of service.

This change will be virtually seamless for each member. The only difference is that you should submit your application forms to Tom Osborne henceforth. Remember that we still have enough money in the fund to help you take your class.

*Editor:* Joe, we all wish to thank you very much for your long and devoted service in this position! You have acted as a true professional and responsible chair. Our Best wishes. We also thank Tom for volunteering to fill your position and someday, your shoes.

# Fisk Scholarship Fund

*By Tom Osborne*

As Joe Kennedy has said in his letter I have agreed to take the Chairman position on the Fisk fund for the next three year term. The bylaws of the fund are written so that the only changes are the name and address of the person that you would contact to apply for a grant. The Chairman's job along with some other deities is to serve in that function and accept your applications and distribute them to the other members for evaluation and processing.

I have been a member of the NWA sense the first or second event held at Curtis Lumber in the early 90s I have been active most of that time most recently in the education committee and a member of the Saturday group at Jim's shop. I have also been the recipient of 3 Fiske Fund awards. I am looking forward to serving you and hope that I can do as good of a job as Joe Kennedy. 🐾

# Lancaster County Woodcarvers

*By Charlie Goddard*

The Lancaster County Woodcarvers will be holding their 36th annual Woodcarving and Wildlife Art Festival May 30 and 31 at the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster PA. There will be competition, displays, sales and demonstrations of Wood Carvings and Wildlife Art. For more information go to [www.lancarvers.com](http://www.lancarvers.com) or call Pete Kovarovic at 717-392-4814.

# St. Lawrence River Rustic Show

*By Charlie Goddard*

There will a showcase of fine craft and art at the Bonnie Castle Recreation Center in Alexandria Bay, July 31 to August 2, Friday 5 PM to 8 PM, Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM and Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission will be \$7 which is good for all three days. The show is being sponsored by Creations in Wood, Redwood NY 13679.

# Northeastern Woodworkers Association 2009 Young Adult Woodworking Workshop

*By Ray Gannon, NWA Youth Program Coordinator*

NWA YP is alive and well. We held a "Construction Carpentry Woodworker Safety Awareness Program" for Cub Scouts needing their finishing points for there Woodworking Badge. This group is led by Kathleen Kalmer.

Our NWA Expert Construction Woodworker Mark Hammond explained to the Scouts the industry history and current functions related to today's construction carpentry. The Scouts were interested to know that most of the Woodworking in today's construction has migrated to metal components for the most part. Mark a long time NWA member with 35+ years Construction Carpentry experience. We are most appreciated to Mark for sharing his knowledge with the Scouts. Mark surprised the group with a sampling of his Fine Scrollsaw Wood Art. These helped us with the Wood Toxicity portion of the presentation.

The Scouts had many Q&A that made our time fly. Our hats are off to this group and to their leadership; 1st for the enthusiasm shown, and 2nd for their numerous serious questions. Mark and I were able to answer all the questions. Wow is all I can say.

The presentation fine points.

Construction Woodworking/Woodworker Safety a 2 hour session:

- Hand tool safety & usage
- Power tool "How to Safety"
- Shop Support Equipment & Safe usage,
- All young adults will not use any power tools but will have hands on experience for the hand tools used in construction and wood working
- Math will be covered and it's importance.
- Wood toxicity will be discussed at their level or above as needed.

All NWA Members are reminded to pass along the word that we have an active NWA Youth program.

1. We work up our programs/presentations for each group according to the ages and interest.
2. Volunteers' are needed for the success of this program. You can contact Ray Gannon at LoRayG@Gmail.com to discuss your expertise and availability.
3. The local Scout groups have been contacted as with the local 4H and County Extension offices. Explaining our current program. 🐾

I looked up in my family tree and found out I was the sap.

Rodney Dangerfield

It is not enough to have a good mind.  
The main thing is to use it well.

Descartes



*Photo is from our Feb. 7th presentation.*

**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.



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**Woodworkers News**  
will be published  
in early April  
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#### **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



# Volunteers Needed for SHOWCASE 2009

*By Celia Carpenter*

Dear NWA Members, Thank you for the response from the sign up sheets at the last two meetings and the email blast. Many of you have signed up but we still require more people to make this a successful showcase. If you have not volunteered, please sign up. I guarantee that you will have an enjoyable time with fellow members and with people wanting to share our love of the art of woodworking.

**The following areas still need volunteers:**

## **Door Hosts**

Saturday 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Education Booth**

Saturday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Floor Hosts**

Saturday 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Lecture Assistant**

Saturday 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Membership Table**

Sunday 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Raffle Tickets**

Saturday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday 9:45 to noon, noon to 2:30  
and 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Sawmill**

Saturday 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5:00pm

## **Set up, Staging and Take-Down**

Friday 9:00am to done  
Sunday (Take-Down) 5:00pm until done

## **Ticket Sales**

Saturday 2:30 to 5:00pm  
Sunday 9:45 to noon, noon to 2:30 and 2:30 to 5pm

## **Truck Assistants**

Thursday, March 26  
Friday, March 27  
Sunday, March 29  
Monday, March 30

Please sign up early so you can get your choice assignments. Remember that you will get into the show free and you will be eligible for prizes.

Please sign up by calling your Celia J. Carpenter, Volunteer Coordinator at 518-434-1776 or by emailing her at [c.j.carpenter@earthlink.net](mailto:c.j.carpenter@earthlink.net).

# Bread Boards and Picture Frames at Showcase

*By Ken Miller*

VOLUNTEER young men and women, VOLUNTEER! If you ever wanted to use your scraps of wood on functional projects, then volunteer to make breadboards and picture frames in my workshop space at Showcase. You may take the ones you make home. Learn how to sharpen, use a hand plane, glue and clamp wood, flatten and surface boards, and scrape surfaces smooth during the weekend. Many picture frames too will be made for Hole in the Woods. Work begins on Friday to have some intermediate steps ready for further processing and discussion with the attendees during the show. Minimal experience is necessary. Weekend warriors needed. See me at the next meeting or email me at [millek3@rpi.edu](mailto:millek3@rpi.edu)

**Editor:** I can personally guarantee you will have an enjoyable and memorable time while ending with an amazingly beautiful product from "scrap" wood.

# Wharton Esherick Museum Thematic Woodworking Competition and Exhibition

*By Charlie Goddard*

The Esherick Museum has announced its Sixteenth Annual Competition. This year the selected subject is library ladders. If you are interested in entering, more information is available by contacting Paul Eisenhauer at, [whartonesherickmuseum@netzero.net](mailto:whartonesherickmuseum@netzero.net) or 610-644-5822. If you are not familiar with Wharton Esherick take a look at [www.levins.com/esherick.html](http://www.levins.com/esherick.html). The museum is well worth visiting. Wharton Esherick was a very creative woodworker.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**"Two solid workbenches for sale.** Built for a woodworking class in the nineties but never used. Patterned after a design by a Japanese woodworking master. The bases are of recycled hemlock timbers and tops are 2" thick wide elm single planks. 33" high, 18 1/2" wide, 70 1/2" long. There are no vises, but the 13" overhangs allow for end vises. Photos and drawings available. Call Tico Vogt 518-584-0641 or e-mail at [tico1@verizon.net](mailto:tico1@verizon.net)".



# EXHIBIT ENTRY FORM

## NWA SHOWCASE      MARCH 28-29, 2009

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ Member: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

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

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ Professional: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

☐ Check here if you'd like this information to be available for inquires about your work.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE ENTRY FORM AND SEND IT TO:**  
**NORTHEASTERN WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. Box 246, Rexford, NY 12148**

**Submit your entry form by Friday, March 13 and be eligible for a drawing of two gift certificates**

**ENTRY DEADLINE IS MONDAY, March 23rd**

**Any entry received after that date will not be entered for judging, but for display only.**

***NOTE:** Display labels are made in advance using the information you provide below. Those labels will be waiting you when you bring your entry on Friday, March 27th. No entries permitted after 7:00PM .*

ENTRY CATEGORY AND DESCRIPTION	FOR JUDGING ONLY	FOR DISPLAY ONLY
(State category, give brief description of your item, list types of woods and finish used)  <b>Example:</b> Furniture 3; Windsor chair, tiger maple, honey oak stain, lacquer finish.	(only one per category)	(unlimited as space allows)
#1		
#2		
#3		
#4		
#5		
#6		
ADDITIONAL NOTES		

(see page 2 for entry rules)

**WHAT: NWA SHOWCASE 2009 ([www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org))**

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

**WHEN: Saturday and Sunday, March 28-29, 2009, 10 AM – 5 PM**

### **EXHIBIT HALL ENTRY CATEGORIES**

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**

- Any woodworker may exhibit his/her work. There is no entry fee.
- Entry forms must be received by March 23rd to be eligible for competition. 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 27th. 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 per category for judging.
- 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 reserve the right to re-categorize an item for judging.
- The exhibit hall is not a commercial area. No price tags or literature other than small business cards will be allowed.
- The decisions of the judges are final. At the discretion of the judges, some awards may not be given.

### **AWARDS**

1. Best of Show: One from any entry
2. Richard Pagano Memorial Award for turning
3. First Place: One each category - amateurs only
4. Second Place: One each category - amateurs only
5. Third Place: One each category - amateurs only
6. Honorable Mention: One each category - amateurs only
7. Best Professional: One each category except for 10, 11 and 12.\*

\* Professionals: You are a professional if half or more of your livelihood is derived from woodworking. You may submit an entry in any category except 10, 11 and 12.

\* Professional entries displayed in the Professional Gallery will be judged separately.

**For questions:** Ken Evans, Showcase Chair (518) 753-7759, [kevans@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kevans@nycap.rr.com)  
Chris Knite, Judging Chair (518) 810-2757, [9danke@earthlink.net](mailto:9danke@earthlink.net)  
Charlie Goddard, (518) 370-0388, [CGodd@aol.com](mailto:CGodd@aol.com)

# Kaatskill Woodturners Monthly News

By Chuck Walker

## Coloring on the Lathe for Dummies:

Carl Ford, a talented presenter and innovator of turning ideas, presented this program demonstrating how to use simple coloring techniques for turning. Use of color to enhance wood is debatable but Carl offers reasons that you can use less than top quality figured wood or even perk up good wood to make its eye appeal greater. Frequently just breaking up a large space with highlights will make something more desirable to the viewer. He does suggest that the color be not more than 30-40 % of the surface area so as not to overpower the fact that wood is the main material. And in some form designs, such decoration emphasizes a piece's function such as Southwestern Native American low profile hollow forms. Carl makes it as simple as painting between the lines!

Yellow is a favored color for Carl as it complements the natural yellowness of many woods and is a bright warm color. Contrasting colors like green and red provide interest. Blue shades are sometimes on the dark side and do not register on the viewer as well. Ideas for color schemes may be found in looking through magazine ads or a walk through a florist shop or a well planned garden. Keeping a notebook of designs and color schemes is a good idea for reference and will provide a plan when approaching a piece to color. Also, you should prepare test pieces with the colors to be used to see what effect the background wood color will have.

Two types of media were discussed, Sharpie™ permanent markers and acrylic paints especially the Golden™ brand, a high quality product with great colors (including gold and silver) and flexibility of use. In both types, the work piece is prepared with lines burnt in with either a wire (wrapped guitar strings work very well) applied at high lathe speed for decoration around the outer perimeter. A doubled piece of adhesive sandpaper cut in a curve to burn circular lines on a curved surface where a wire would not work. Vertical or cross lines (along the axis of the piece) are burned using a

pyrography or woodburning tool, hand held and with the lathe off. The work piece stays mounted on the lathe throughout all operations to preserve the true center. The burnt lines provide a prominent guide for application of color and also define and highlight the colors after finishing.

Using Sharpie™ markers is easy in that you simply color between the lines following the scheme selected. To protect the color from running when finishing, Krylon™ Workable Fixative is sprayed on the colors. After that, finishing may be done with Watco™ Danish Oil. Just pour it over the piece and wipe off excess with paper towels. After a short time a second (and perhaps third) application can be made. Set the piece aside to dry. After a week, if the finish is not right, spray polyurethane varnish may be used to achieve the desired gloss.

The Golden™ brand of acrylic paints may be applied to small areas like the permanent markers and also used to paint continuous lines around the piece. Use a round brush for best application and control of where the paint goes. Use good quality brushes. The lathe is run at low speed and the brush with the paint held at a downward angle using the tool rest to support the hand. Apply the paint up to the burned lines. The paints are thinned slightly with a special additive from Golden™ called GAC 200. This increases the flexibility of the final paint so that natural movement of the wood will not tend to crack the color. Overcoating of acrylic paints can be done with Rust-Oleum™ Crystal Clear Enamel which will not affect the acrylic and will add greater protection.

Other larger colored pieces they may be painted with gesso before application of color. They can be sanded quite smooth and will make the final color stand out brilliantly being unaffected by the wood color underneath. Many other ideas can be achieved with varieties of the products listed here. Experimentation is a good thing to do as it will inevitably lead to a new idea that will set your work apart.



*A low vase shaped form decorated with permanent markers.*



*Garden ornaments using color and marks to break up space.*



*Applying permanent marker colors to pattern burnt on bowl.*



*Colored area close-up.*



*Brushing acrylic at low speed.*



# NWA Safety Message

*By Ray Gannon, Safety Professional*

*"We are always looking for another tip to work safely."*

Resistance from our Dirty and Rusted Woodworking Tables can be the Hazard that can cause us to cut a hand or loose a finger at best. Kick back can be another hazard related to un-kept iron and steel tables. When feeding our pieces across the table into the saw blade it shouldn't be strenuous! We want the wood to glide smoothly and under our control.

The following will help resolve this condition;

A couple of us have been having an ongoing discussion on just how to properly recondition our iron/steel machine surfaces.

Roger's method and in my mind the best one that he has used time and again on saw beds. Mine was a period method. I have to say the new formula really did the job for me. You see most of my tools were in storage for 7 + years while we were running literally around the world. While the tools were in storage they developed some unsightly rust spots and stains.

*Ok enough here is Roger's formula use it as best you can.* WHILE IN A WELL VENTILATED AREA, WD 40 and Gunk are considered to cause a breathing hazard. Please use caution at all times.

1. First unplug all the tools you will be cleaning. Lower the blades below the table or remove the blades so as you don't injure yourself. Dull blades will cut you as easily as a sharp one.
2. Now with WD-40 wet all surfaces that will be worked. Let the WD work for awhile. Remember to read the caution label for all chemicals you plan to use. WD-40 is Flammable. Double check to make sure that all Electrical sources are unplugged. Keep spray away from open sparks and don't use power tools in close proximity to this operation.
3. Fit a Scotch bright pad to your manual sanding block. Now scourer the surfaces.
4. Next clean all surfaces with Break Drum Cleaner to remove Grit, Oil and Grease.
5. If you still have stains or have in bedded rust that didn't free up during the WD-40 operation. I have used Gunk Liquid Wrench and let it sit for a few hours to penetrant the areas in need of further cleaning. Scotch Bright again
6. Now that the stains and rust have been removed Spray on Break Drum Cleaner and wipe down.
7. Major step -- for keeping your tools in great shape. *Use JJ Paste Wax*, if you can't obtain JJ you can substitute Butcher's Wax a Boston Polish to finish the job.
8. With a Lint free "Pad" hand rub the surfaces until you are satisfied.
9. This is a strenuous operation but once completed all you need to do is apply JJ again and polish to maintain a great working surface that looks great as well.

Good Luck and Always Work Safely  
Responses are always welcome  
LoRayG@Gmail.com

# AWA Meeting

*By Ken Evans*

The February meeting of AWA featured Ken Evans discussing the multitude of ways to hold things on the lathe. Ken pointed out that the RULE is, "Anything can be successfully mounted on the lathe and turned safely." When faced with a mounting problem, one need only remember this rule and think about the problem until it is solved. NEVER believe there is NO WAY to make a safe mounting on the lathe. Ken pointed out that mounting problems are similar to that problem of standing an egg on end. Most folks believe it cannot be done and therefore give up without really giving the problem any real thought.

By the way, eggs can be stood on end ANY day of the year and it is really not hard to do. No tricks! Just stay with it and you can do it. Just ask George Gurtler who stood on end the egg in the picture after hearing Ken's talk.

Ken showed everyone his steady rest made by Ken Miller. And a steady rest made for mini lathes by a George Gurtler design. Steady rest come in many design variations and very good ones can be made of wood.

Ken discussed the many types of foam pads he uses in holding things on the lathe as well as duct tape, plastic wrap, and hot glue.

Many devices used in holding especially difficult items on the lathe can be made by the turner out of both ordinary household items and items pressed into service for the job at hand.

Remember, don't give up! Now, go stand an egg on end on the kitchen counter.

George Gurtler took the challenge and did it that same night when he returned home from the AWA meeting.



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## WOODWORKERS SHOWCASE 2009

### MARCH 28 & 29, 2009

10AM - 5PM, Saturday and Sunday

Saratoga Springs City Center • 522 Broadway

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# CHAPTER NEWS

## NWA Mid-Hudson Chapter News

By Wally Cook

**Good Sledding:** Ron Mower demonstrated his approach for constructing segmented ornaments by gluing inserts into a fluted cylinder and turning down the segmented blank.

An interesting part about Ron's demo is the tooling to create a router "sled" which incises the flutes while the piece is on the lathe. The basic principal is to secure a small router to a base which will slide along a narrow table secured to the tool rest base (banjo). The router can run parallel to the spindle and present a perpendicular aspect to the spindle blank. An indexing feature is needed on the lathe to lock the piece and to advance the rotation of the spindle for multiple flutes.

Generally a small router is used; specifically one where the motor housing can be removed and fixed on a sliding base. Routers which work well for this application are the Trend T3 plunge router and the MLCS Marvel 40 router -- both can be had for under \$100. Several examples of homemade sled are shown below; note that the depth adjustment is usually controlled by moving the cutter through a bull nose opening at the front of the sled.

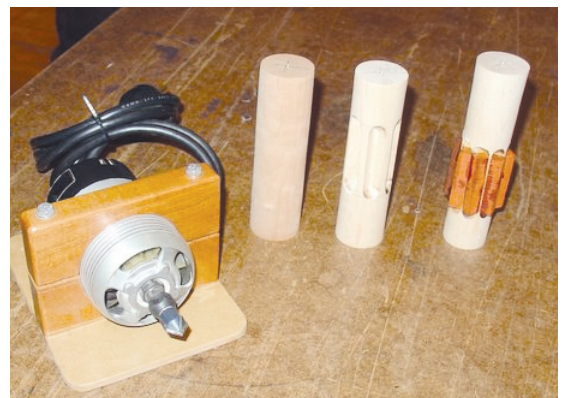
In Ron's demo, parallel grooves are cut around the cylinder and wedges of contrasting wood are glued into the flutes. The resulting segmented blank is shaped to an oval with finials top and bottom.



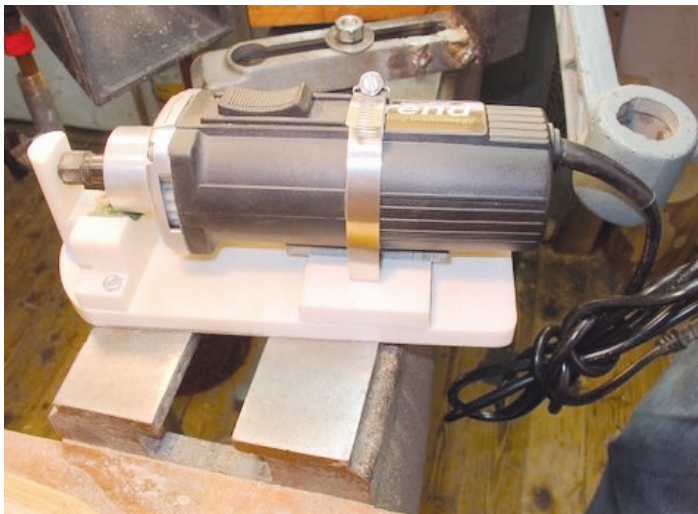
*An example of Ron's segmented ornament.*



*Ron showing the approach of fluting the cylinder.*



*Ron's sled, the blank cylinder, fluted cylinder, and segmented glue-up.*



*Steve Sherman used Corian for the base of his sled.*



*Ralph Zimmerman flutes a pedestal with is MLCS router sled.*

When we can not find contentment in ourselves, it is useless to seek it elsewhere.

La Rochefoucauld

# Wood of the Month ©2009

- Ron DeWitt

## Pumpkin Ash (*Fraxinus profunda*) (Bush) Bush A Deciduous Hardwood Oleaceae - Olive Family

Classifying ash in the Olive Family may seem confusing. The olives are evergreen hardwoods, ashes are deciduous. Olives have sweetly scented, petaled flowers; ash flowers have neither scent nor petals. The ashes, however, have an oil in their wood that is chemically very similar to olive oil.

Derivation of the genus name *Fraxinus* is from the classical Latin name for ash. The epithet or species name *profunda* is from the Latin for "deep" or "profound," referring to the tree's chosen swamp habitat. The common name pumpkin ash is derived from the sometimes pumpkin-shaped base this tree develops to better support itself in very wet locations.

The ash species number 21 in North America (16 in the U.S. and Canada) and about 50 more in Eurasia for a world total of about 70. Almost all are native in the North Temperate Zone.

The pumpkin ash, *Fraxinus profunda*, is also called swell-butt ash or red ash, the red reference from the cinnamon-orange color of its inner bark. This species is a member of a large group of colorful ashes: the white, black, green (also called red), blue, and indigo.

The original native range of the pumpkin ash, all in the U.S., is in the swamps and river bottoms of the coastal plain from New Jersey and Maryland south across northern Florida into Louisiana. This quite discontinuous range, with many small outliers, also extends up the Mississippi Valley into Illinois, Ohio and Michigan (first noted in 1992). Recently it has been found in southern Ontario, Canada.

Pumpkin ash grows well in wet to very wet swamp margins, wet woods and poorly-drained river bottom land. Soils are usually mineral types of various textures from silt loam to clay loam. The tree is sensitive to drought and fire. Frequent companions may include baldcypress, water tupelo or tupelo-gum, water-elm, and red maple. On better-drained sites it will associate with some of the less common oaks, American elm, and sweetgum.

Pumpkin ash is a medium to large tree, occasionally growing to 130 ft. (40 m), with stems 5 ft. (1.5 m) dbh (diameter breast high), but more often to about 100 ft. (30.5 m) by 3 ft. (0.9 m) dbh. These trees may live 300 years. The U.S. National Register of Big Trees lists a pumpkin ash, found in 1995 in Big Oak Tree State Park in Missouri, at 103 ft. (31.5 m) by 5 ft. (1.5 m) dbh.

This tree usually self-prunes to grow straight and clear from a broad expanded butt to an open, rounded crown of

heavy branches. Like the flared buttresses of the baldcypress, the bulbous base of this tree is thought to help stabilize it in its boggy habitat.

The opposite, pinnately-compound, 8- to 16-inch- (20- to 40-centimeter-) long leaves of pumpkin ash are usually composed of seven to nine short-stalked leaflets topped by a longer-stalked terminal leaflet. Leaflets are 3 to 8 in. (8 to 20 cm) long, elliptical to lance-shaped, only occasionally with saw-toothed margins but hairy along the underside of the midrib. Leaflets are dark green above, yellow-green below. An identifying feature, useful in separating this ash from the others, is the heavy hair cover on the underside of the leaf axis or stem.

Pumpkin ash is dioecious, having male and female flowers develop on separate trees. Small inconspicuous yellow male and greenish-purple, wind-pollinated female flowers are without petals. Flowers appear in early spring before the trees fully leaf out. The fruit, a single wing key or samara is 2 to 3 in. (5 to 7.5 cm) long and about 1.5 in. (3.8 cm) wide, usually rounded at the tip. The wing nearly extends to the base of the single seed. Fruits develop in multiple clusters and mature in late summer or autumn. They may continue to drop well into winter. The fruit is popular with ducks and other birds. The individual fruit and leaves are larger than those of any other native ash, another distinguishing feature of this species.

Twigs are stout, light brownish-gray when young and densely hairy which may persist for one to three years. Bark darkens and becomes scaly as it ages, developing coarse, tight furrows and divided ridges that form diamond-shaped patterns. The tree grows rapidly, occasionally to 20 ft. (6 m) in its first six years. It is considered moderately shade tolerant.

Sapwood of the pumpkin ash is creamy-white and relatively narrow with an abrupt transition to the tan or light brown heartwood. Growth rings are distinct. Wood is coarse, even textured, straight grained, usually with little figure, medium hard and medium heavy. Average sp. gr. is about 0.55 and it weighs about 38 pcf (609 kg/m<sup>3</sup>) at 12 % M.C. This wood is tough, has excellent shock resistance and excellent strength, among the best on the basis of strength to weight. The wood has no distinguishing taste or odor.

The wood is ring-porous; early wood pores are moderately large, distinctly visible to the naked eye. Early wood is 2 to 4 pores wide. The transition from early wood to latewood is abrupt. Latewood pores are small, barely distinct to the naked eye and solitary or in radial multiples of 2 or 3. Rays are 1 to 3 seriate, indistinct or barely visible to the naked eye. Tyloses are plentiful in heartwood.

Pumpkin ash dries quickly with average shrink and only a moderate tendency to warp, check or degrade. This ash works nicely with hand or power tools, although slightly dulling cutting edges. Sanded surfaces have a soft, lustrous appearance, the result of a small amount of a volatile oil in the wood. Pre-drilling for fasteners is recommended. It turns well, carves nicely, especially with power, and is excellent for steam-bending. Those large early wood pores do require filling before finishing achieving smooth surfaces. It glues, stains, and accepts almost any finish, including paint, with normal care. It is stable in service, but durability is poor when exposed to moisture, soil or weather.



Pumpkin ash.

Continued on Page 11



Dermatitis is an occasional consequence of working with any of the ashes. Skin cover and breathing and eye protection should be routine when working around this wood or its sawdust.

Perhaps the most important use of pumpkin ash for Native Americans and early settlers was that of carrying its leaves in their shoes or about their person. This "proved" to be offensive to rattlesnakes and so provided protection from snakebite. (In the event of failure the leaves were used to treat the bite.)

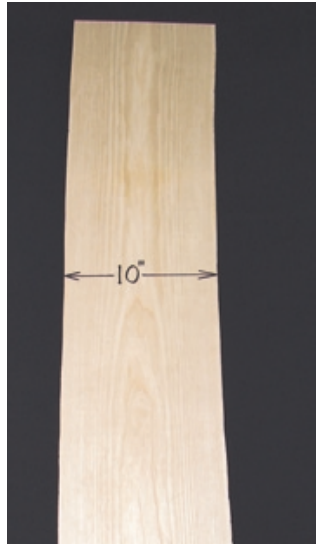
Pumpkin ash also reportedly has some medicinal benefits, probably from glucosides and essential oil in the wood and bark. A beautiful, clear, reddish-orange, very bitter tasting infusion prepared with pulverized fresh bark of twigs and roots (and two parts of alcohol) have been used "where an astringent tonic was deemed necessary." Infusions were found useful as a cathartic, stimulant, for relief of constipation, for treating mastitis and enlargement of the spleen. Bark poultices were used to treat eczema, arthritis and gout. Consuming the seeds was thought to prevent accumulation of body fat.

Wood of pumpkin ash is a very desirable firewood. It easily splits along radial lines. The oil in the wood promotes good burning, green or dry. High quality wood is used for tool handles, farm implements, dimensional lumber and trim stock. It is also used for furniture, cabinets, flooring, caskets, plywood, veneer, steam-bent parts, boxes, walking canes, crates and pulp.

In its growing areas it is usually mixed with and sold as white, Oregon, or Pennsylvania ash or simply as "hard ash." Pricing is comparable to that of the other common hardwoods. At present supplies are adequate but are seriously threatened.

The threat comes from the Emerald Ash Borer, *Agrilus planipennis*, an exotic beetle first discovered in North America, in southeastern Michigan, in the summer of 2002 and in Ontario, Canada, later that year. It is believed the beetle probably came into the U.S. accidentally in wood shipping material of surface or air cargo from its native Asia. Adult beetles are about 5/8 in. (15 mm) long with metallic green wing covers and a coppery-red or purple abdomen. They are usually seen from May through September. The insect is selective, living only on the ash species. Adult beetles feed on ash leaves, doing little damage. The larvae, however, feed on the inner bark, disrupting the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. Symptoms of invasion are 3/8 in. (9 mm) "D"-shaped exit holes in the bark and dying upper branches followed by the death of the tree from the top down.

Since its discovery the Emerald Ash Borer has killed tens of millions of ash trees in Michigan and more in infested adjoining states. The epidemic is progressing at an alarming rate, having reached Ohio in 2003, Indiana by 2004, Illinois and Maryland in 2006, Wisconsin, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Virginia in the summer of 2008.



Pumpkin ash plank.

At present the future of the native ashes of North America is in question. This insect is well established and will be difficult to eliminate or contain. Quarantines of nursery stock and firewood in infested states may be slowing the advance. An injectable insecticide is showing some promise, but without massive proactive measures, our ashes could go the way of the American elm and the American chestnut.

## Wood Questions

Q. What wood did the Dutch use for wooden shoes?



A. Wooden shoes were traditionally made of willow and poplar. Willow shoes were warmer and more durable when worn in wet areas, but also more expensive. If you lived and worked in wetness you chose willow; for high ground you chose poplar.

## Wood Definition

- Ron DeWitt

**Rotary-cut veneer** - Veneer cut on a lathe by rotating a log or bolt against a cutting knife set in such a manner as to peel off a continuous thin sheet usually about 1/28 inch thick.

## NWA Woodworking Classes at the Stillwater Shop

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

### Drilling a Windsor Seat

#### *The 3rd Installment of the Windsor Chair Series*

Tom Wetzel

Sat & Sun, Mar. 14 & 15

9 AM to 4:30 PM

Cost: \$75 plus materials

All remaining sessions in the series are sold out

### Shaker Boxes

#### *These workshops will be held at the Shaker Meeting House in co-operation with the Shaker Heritage Society*

John Wilson

2 sessions available:

Thur. 3/12, 7 PM to 9:30 PM and Fri. 3/13, 8 AM to 4 PM

or

Fri. 3/13, 7 PM to 10 PM and Sat. 3/14, 8 AM to 4 PM

Cost \$125 including all tools and materials to build 5 nested boxes in cherry

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



# Update on the Stillwater Shop

*By Dick Flanders*

Since early January, several NWA members have been very active in the Stillwater Area Community Center, renovating our old shop area and getting ready for the planned move to the first floor room previously used by the Head Start program.

Before we could make this move, we had a lot of work to do:

- Partition off an area in an existing storage area outside the north end of the building, resulting in an approximately 16' x 19' unheated area with 10' ceiling height.
- Move any/all surplus or unnecessary equipment from the shop to this storage area.
- Remove our blinds from the windows.
- Remove our dust collection system from under the window ledge / shelf.
- Cut back this shelf to a more desirable depth and enclose the radiators below.
- Add a 220v circuit near the windows for the A/C unit the Head Start group will install.
- Remove the carpeting from the walls, install masonite panels and trim on the walls, prime and paint the walls to match the color in the first floor room.

- Remove our doors and shelves from the closets in the shop, close in the area above the closets to match the upper closets in the first floor room.
- Prime and paint the window and door trim a complementary color to blend with the rose colored louvered doors to be installed in the closet openings.
- Remove the doors and shelving from first floor closets and re-install these upstairs.
- Remove the shades from the 1st floor windows, and re-install in the upstairs windows.

After all this work was completed, we had to get more volunteers involved to actually move our equipment downstairs and move the Head Start equipment upstairs. This was finally accomplished the end of the 2nd week of February, just in time for Tom Wetzel's Windsor Chair class the following two days.

Below are a variety of pictures showing the various stages of the renovations and setting up the new shop:



*Ken Evans, Roger Holmes, Rich Duval, Darrell Welch and Pete Howe "hard at work" on a radiator cover frame.*



*Charlie Goddard looking out from the newly framed in upper closets.*



*Wayne Distin and Ray Gannon assisting.*



*Sheetrock and taping completed on closets.*



*Charlie & Ray trimming out new closets.*



*Gerry Verner (painting on scaffold), Ray Gannon (holding scaffold). Darrell Welch & John Zukowski installing trim on wall.*

*Continued on Page 13*



*Prime coat of paint completed on the walls and trim.*



We now have everything on the first floor, including the storage area which is a short distance away from this room. This will simplify moving of equipment and supplies for Showcase, as there will no longer be a need to move equipment up and down the stairs or with the limited capacity elevator in the Stillwater Community Center.

There is still more work to be done in the new shop, but that will be done over a period of time as people, time and materials are available. It will be an ongoing, evolving project from this point on.

- Install blinds in windows (lower section only – for privacy & security).
- Add electrical outlets along the window ledge / shelf area.
- Modify and install dust collection system (main trunk line will be just above the lower half of the windows, with drops coming down at convenient locations).
- Re-install doors on the closets and organize the tools and supplies in the closet areas.
- Review the carpeted area – determine what to do with the floor for best shop use.



*Ray and Gerry install doors on upper and lower closets.*



*Old shop area filling up with the Head Start equipment.*



Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped out with these projects:

Lou Andrews, Al Caruso, Wayne Distin, Rich Duval, Ken Evans, Dick Flanders, Ray Gannon, Charlie Goddard, Lou Hill, Roger Holmes, Pete Howe, Dave Jarose, Ken Miller, Steve Schoenberg, Bill Storz, Dan Tipton & his son, Gerry Verner, Darrell Welch, Larry Zinn and John Zukowski.



*New shop area being set up.*



*Wayne Distin and Al Caruso setting up shop.*

**Editor:** Though many NWA members helped with the recent move of the Stillwater shop, special thanks must go to Dick Flanders. Dick organized the volunteers, purchased the supplies and materials, loaned many of his tools and spent numerous hours working on the project. Thank you, Dick.

More Photos







*New shop all set up and ready for first use.*

## New Digs for NWA Carvers

*By Ray Gannon*

NWA Woodcarving now possible with-in our Stillwater activity room. The Stillwater community ctr. NWA Class/activity room is ready for us to start organizing a NWA sig specifically for NWA members. Woodcarvers and want to be woodcarvers are encouraged to respond. Email LoRayG@Gmail.com.

Bill McCormack and I have discussed the needs of our current woodcarvers and the want to be woodcarver. Now the Stillwater activity room is a reality for all NWA woodcarvers. At last a home where we can start a carving from conceptions to competition having access to all the necessary equipment.

Let us get started we need a couple simple things;

1st – please let me know what your thinking

2nd – as far as what time to meet ---day or a night

3rd – which day of the week, please give a couple of day choices,

- Not on Wed's it's Turners night

4th – This will get us started and we can work out the fine details once we know your needs

- Back ground

We currently are NWA members and nonmembers meeting at various locations without a complete carving facility. My goal is to have a location where we can satisfy all carvers and their styles. We can train and assist with the usage for the tools available. If your not comfortable or having the confidence to make the many cuts needed to finish the carvings.

Our activity room (a first floor room) that is 100% ready. Set up with the carver in mind.

- The change

1. The NWA Woodcarver Stillwater activity room for all location will be for NWA members.

\*\* Insurance coverage is only for NWA members.

2. One Stop Woodcarving location for NWA members,

## Totally Turning 2009

*By Peter Case*

***Chairperson Totally Turning 2009***

It is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, March 28 and 29, 2009 in Saratoga Springs, New York!

Totally Turning is out of the downtown Albany area, has a bigger Instant Gallery, a much larger vendors area, far more total rotations, your hotel is attached to the site, tons of places to eat, a spouses program, and spring in Saratoga is pretty terrific. The price has remained the same with far more to do and see over the two days.

In 2009, on March 28 and 29, the Adirondack Woodturners Association will present Totally Turning in the same location as SHOWCASE. Every Totally Turning registrant will have full access to BOTH the woodturning rotations of Totally Turning 2009 and to all of SHOWCASE 2009.

Totally Turning 2009 will be held at the Saratoga Springs City Center and the adjoining Saratoga Hilton Hotel. No more driving through Albany, NY to get to your Hotel.

Saratoga Springs, NY is a beautiful small city, filled with places to eat and shop, and quite famous for its horseracing track. Located about 35 miles north of Albany, NY, Saratoga Springs is easy to get to just off scenic route 87.

Our website [www.totallyturning.com](http://www.totallyturning.com) will give you everything you need.

See you in March!

**See the Totally Turning  
2009 Registration Form  
on the Following Page**



**Totally Turning 2009 Registration Form**  
**Saratoga Springs NY 12866**  
**March 28 & 29, 2009**

**NOTE:: REGISTRATION FOR NWA MEMBERS IS \$80**

Registration for Turner/Student and Spouse includes access to Totally Turning 2009 and all aspects of SHOWCASE 2009.

<b>TWO DAY Registration</b>	<b>SATURDAY ONLY Registration</b>
Turner - \$160. _____ check here	Turner - \$120. _____ check here
Spouse - \$80. _____ check here	Spouse - \$60. _____ check here
Student - \$60. _____ check here	Student - \$40. _____ check here

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total

Turner/Student **(Please circle one)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State/Province

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip/Postal

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student School/College/University

\_\_\_\_\_  
Club Affiliation

Spouse Registration

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

Questions regarding the event or registration, call (518) 283-4235

**Please make checks payable to: AWA**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **(amount enclosed)**

**Mail this Registration Form and Payment to Totally Turning 2009 Chairman:**

**Peter Case**

**177 Werking Road**

**East Greenbush NY 12061**

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**Separate here and keep this portion for your records: Ck # \_\_\_\_\_ Date pd. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_**

**Totally Turning 2009 Symposium Emergency Phone Call Numbers:**

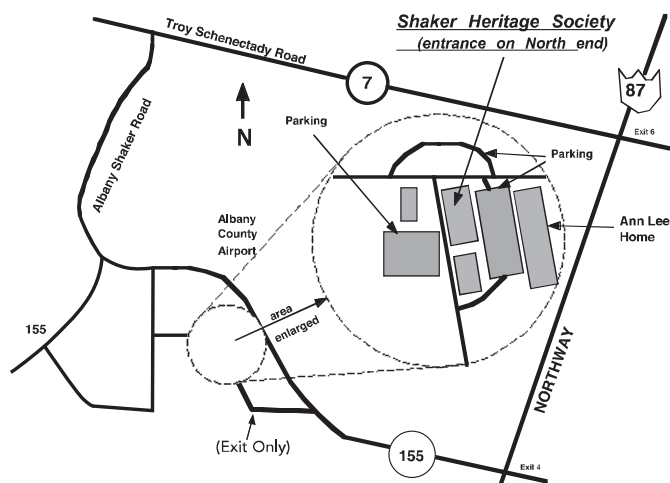
**(518) 225- 6480**

**(518) 281-0779**

**(518) 281-8117**



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



## March Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 2009, 7:00 pm  
Shaker Heritage Society Meeting House  
Albany-Shaker Road, Albany

GENERAL MEETINGS  
AND SPECIAL EVENTS

### NWA Program Schedule 2009

April 10, 2009  
Sacandaga Chapter

May 14, 2009  
Jigs & Fixtures  
(Mid Hudson)

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. Wednesday "Learn and Turn" sessions in Stillwater are also scheduled from 6 pm - 9 pm except on AWA member meeting nights. [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 on the third Wednesday of the month at The School at Northeast, 1821 Hamburg St., Schenectady. A beginner's session starts at 6:30 PM followed by a general meeting at 7:00 PM. Contact: Donna Phillips, (518) 372-3337 or [dlphill@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dlphill@nycap.rr.com).

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

#### 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 Pete Chast, (518) 945-1636.

**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.