

WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern
Woodworkers
Association

May 2020, Vol. 29, Number 5

UPDATE ON THE SHOP, THE APRIL MEETING, AND THE ANNUAL MEETING IN MAY

NWA's Board conducted a virtual meeting on March 31, and considering state emergency declarations and federal guidelines relating to the COVID-19 crisis decided the following:

1. THE SHOP ON RAILROAD AVENUE WILL REMAIN CLOSED THROUGH APRIL 30.
2. THIS MONTH'S MEETING SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 9th IS CANCELED.
3. THE DATE OF NWA'S REQUIRED ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN MAY WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE BOARD EARLY MAY TO DETERMINE IF THE DATE AND/ OR VENUE OF THE MEETING WILL NEED TO BE CHANGED.

In late March, the newsletter reached out to NWA members in an e-blast asking for stories and photos of woodworking activities they are doing at home during the pandemic crisis. The submission of members' stories has been generous and inspiring.

Jacquelyn Donahoe's Community Service and Carving

by Jacquelyn Donahoe

"I have been picking up hand sewn face masks and delivering them to nursing home and health care facilities. These have included Glendale Nursing Home, Baptist Nursing Home, Attentive Health Care and Wildwood. The idea is for the staff to wear these to prevent the virus from spreading in these high-risk environments. I have been putting on a lot of miles on the car but using safe distance techniques. This is part of a bigger push started locally to provide hospitals with cloth masks. The group I am in also provided these masks to nurses at St. Peters Hospital in Albany.

Joann Fabrics has been handing out kits to sew and donate masks or to return them to Joann's. The ones that are collected have been sent to Ellis and Samaritan Hospitals. It has been an amazing experience to be part of this project to ensure the safety of health care professionals who are in the front line in the CORVID 19 battle."



Rabbit in progress

The Balsh Wood Carvings

Submitted by Diane and Ernie Balsh

Angry Bird carvings were made by Diane and Ernie Balch. Diane's is on the left; Ernie's is on the right. Diane's is carved out of Butternut, Ernie's out of Basswood. We used a few gouges, a carving knife, and wood burner. They were painted with acrylic craft paints. The idea came from the latest issue of *Woodcarving Illustrated* magazine. "Hangry Hawk" was the article's title.



Diane's on left; Ernie's on right

Brad Conklin's Dancing Box

By Brad Conklin

The story of Robox (the dancing box) actually started back at Showcase in 2014.

Then I made a box I called "Thinking to Get Inside the Box". This box was made to bring items I needed to show such as business cards, a card holder, and a couple tools. John Olenik happen to see me setting up and asked if I would display my opening box during Showcase.

Of course, I agreed, and the response of attendees was overwhelming. The reactions of the children were the most gratifying as it was like they had just seen a miracle or just caught Santa under the Christmas tree! They were the highlight of the show for me.

That's when the idea came to me; how cool would it be to have another box sitting just there, nothing special, pretty ordinary until you hit a remote, and the box stands up and starts dancing. Little did I know that it would take more than six years to have all the stars line up and get my Robox to dance.

The woodwork and metal work were never the problem. The challenge was to find someone who could get the mechanical to be in sync with the music. Computers are not my forte. But while I was doing an art show in Kent, Connecticut, one of judges came up to me and asked if I would be interested in showing at his gallery. Teejay Jones was that judge and director of The Art Institute at Maplebrook A.I.M. in Armenia, NY.

After chatting with Mr. Jones, I told him my dilemma and asked if he knew anyone who can help the remote activation of my Robox. He did, and the road was open to start making Robox a reality. His connections mentioned electric actuators, and after doing some searching on the internet, I came across Frightprops a web site that sells parts for Halloween props. Going back and forth through email, I told them my plan, and they made suggestions of what I needed. I had an incredible support team.



OFFICERS

President - Rich Cerruto
r_cerruto@yahoo.com
845-706-7718

Vice President - Irv Stephens
irvstephens@gmail.com
518-273-4843

Secretary - Chris Stolicky
stolicky@hotmail.com
518-272-7325

Treasurer - Ron Roberts
nwatreasurer1@gmail.com
845-245-8308

Past President - Steve Mapes
mapessteven@gmail.com
518 527-2976

Executive Secretary - Charlie Goddard
Cgodd@aol.com
518-370-0388



Mid-Hudson Chapter

Jim Lee, President - 845-382-6045
debbielee3649@gmail.com

Sacandaga Chapter

Vacant

CHAIRPERSONS

Banquet

Kay McCampbell
kmcccampbell@nycap.rr.com

Education

Chairperson - Steve Mapes
mapessteven@gmail.com
518-374-2207

Registrar - Chuck Watson
nwaeducation@gmail.com

Members - Jim Lefebvre, Rich Glover,
and Mike Mascelli

Fiske Fund

Chairperson - Bill Sterling
fiskefund@gmail.com

Treasurer - Juliana Shei
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Historian

Wayne Distin - 518-674-4171
wdistin@nycap.rr.com

Hospitality

Lee Hilt
lhargh@earthlink.net

Learning Center

Operations Committee (LCOC)

Vacant

Library

Susan Hill - Cell 954-557-3146
Susanh1122@att.net

Membership

Bob Stanley - 518-429-5362 (cell)
nwamembers1@gmail.com

Programs

Irv Stephens - 518-273-4843
irvstephens@gmail.com

Publications

Susan McDermott - 518-438-1909
Nwanewsletter1@gmail.com

Publicity

John Olenik - 518-587-0306
jolenik@nycap.rr.com

Showcase Chair

Wally Carpenter - 518-434-1776
nwa.showcase.chair@gmail.com



Once I got all the parts and pieces, the next hurdle was to find someone to program my computer. I lucked out as my son was able to figure out the program and get Robox dancing with a little choreographing of the dance sequence. We were set for Showcase 2020, but we were not ready for COVID19. Below is a video of my dancing Robox.

<https://youtu.be/Ed-qsPUAY4g>

Brad Conklin <bradconklin731@gmail.com

Stan Blanchard Combines Photography with Turning

by Stan Blanchard

I have done quite a bit of turning this winter. My routine does not change much from week to week and I spend the afternoons working in my studio. Before I retired, I was a professional photographer with my own business. At one time I had cameras ranging from 35mm, 2 1/4 square, 4x5, 5x7 and 8x10 cameras. Who would have thought that a magical device would come along and essentially replace all that equipment? Certainly not the people at Eastman Kodak (where my Dad had worked for 45 years.)

With all the turning I had done in the past three months, I wanted to photograph them with my iPhone 11 pro and see if I could eliminate the need for my somewhat simple point and shoot Nikon. Since I was a photographer, I photograph everything I make. So, I set up my little still life studio that I use in my basement. I know that in order to get sharp photographs, I need to use a tripod, but there was no way for me to fasten the phone to the tripod. On-line there are several items that would work well for fastening the phone/camera to the tripod, so I modified one of the ideas and created a bracket to hold my phone to the tripod. It worked fairly well, and I was in business photographing my bowls. Using the phone to photograph my bowls is not quite as



Custom made phone holder

WOODWORKERS NEWS

is published by the Northeastern Woodworkers Association for its members. The Association's aim is to provide a common meeting ground for lovers of woodworking who want to know more about wood and the techniques for forming it. The newsletter is published monthly. The newsletter is available online at www.woodworker.org



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Susan McDermott, Editor
(518) 438-1909

Nwanewsletter1@gmail.com
Elizabeth Keays Graphic Artist
Designer



WEBSITE

www.woodworker.org

Webmaster: Andy Moss
nwawebmasterhelp@gmail.com



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



easy as using the camera, but when I am finished, I do not have to transfer images from one device to another. My experience tells me I have a device that I can carry in my pocket that takes really decent photographs when I have the urge (which is quite often) and takes studio quality photographs when my need arises. But my little wooden bracket didn't really work that well, so I ended up buying something called SQUARE JELLY FISH for \$12.95. It is well made and makes using the tripod really easy. When we can get together again, I would love to assist anyone who wants help in turning or in setting up their own studio for photography.



Close up of holder



Still life bowls

Little Boxes Made of ticky-tacky Curly Ambrosia Maple (Apologies to Pete Seeger)

By Howard Jackson

After making a few lamps for Showcase I was looking for something different to do and spied a piece of curly ambrosia maple in my wood supply. I'd made a small jewelry box before out of a single block of wood but was somewhat disappointed because the matching grain all the way around and inside didn't stand out because of a lack of figure. This curly ambrosia maple seemed like a perfect remedy. There was enough wood that I could get five 1.75 x 5 x 7 boxes with enough cutoffs to glue up and slice for the inlayed bottoms. Here are six photos of the steps I took (the pictures are of different boxes so the grain won't be the same in each).

In photo #2, You might be able to see the epoxy used to fill the worm holes in the near corner of the insert. The photo was prior to sanding the excess. This is done everywhere a hole or tunnel is exposed



Bandsaw the 1/2 in thick top and bevel the edges where the barrel hinges go.



#2 Using an mdf template and plunge router with a bushing installed, rout the three inside openings.



With another mdf template rout the recess for the bottom using a 1/2 in pattern bit.

using quick set epoxy. I got somewhat close to the correct color match using a small amount of acrylic paint (grey or brown or a combo). Just to be clear, on a dime size mix of epoxy only one or two toothpick ends dipped into the paint is needed.



A small round over bit is used at the router table to ease the top edges of the insert and the inside of the box. The bottom is fitted. Normally I would chisel out the corners, but I was afraid of breakout on the short grain ends, so I rounded the insert corners on my stationary sander.



Scroll saw the insert away from the box. I used a #5 double reverse blade. Patience and a slow stroke and feed rate prevented burning in the 1 + in thick maple.



Almost done. Just a couple of more coats of Waterlox and a felt bottom will hopefully match the bloodwood handle. The insert is raised up a bit to show the matching figure.

Kitty Scharl's Cypress Desk Organizer

by Kitty Scharl

Kitty sent the NWA newsletter photos of her recent project. "At the August 2019 NWA Auction I noticed a somewhat unusual piece of wood, approximately 66"x6"x2", standing against the barn wall. The grain and color were unfamiliar to me and, curious, I went over to have a look. Turned out to be cypress, which I knew little about, and the graining on the



Organizer with cat

wide side wasn't particularly interesting, but the 2" edge had wonderfully straight grain. Envisioning strips from this narrow edge cut and glued together to make wider boards, I decided it could potentially make an interesting piece. So, with the much-appreciated help of Mary Gillespie, who made the winning bid for me, I purchased the board, cut it into strips, and what eventually evolved was a badly needed desk organizer. The idea for the drawer unit, definitely challenging as I had never made two flush drawers before with nothing in between. This came first, and then, well, one thing led to another... The drawers themselves are Port-Orford cedar (with cypress front panels) which, when opened, will offer up their distinctive and lovely fragrance for years. The finish, except for the drawers, is just wax as the natural color of the cypress is appealing as it is.



Desk organizer's features



Organizer's drawers

Ann Marie Miller of New Paltz Begins a New Fish-Pond Table

by Ann Marie Miller

Ann Marie contacted the NWA Newsletter to share her current project: a second fish-pond table.

"I had entered the goldfish pond table in the spirit of the wood show Oct. 20th 2019. It was chosen for the People's Choice Award. A photo of myself and the table ended up in the national wood carving magazine, *Chip Chats* Jan/Feb issue."



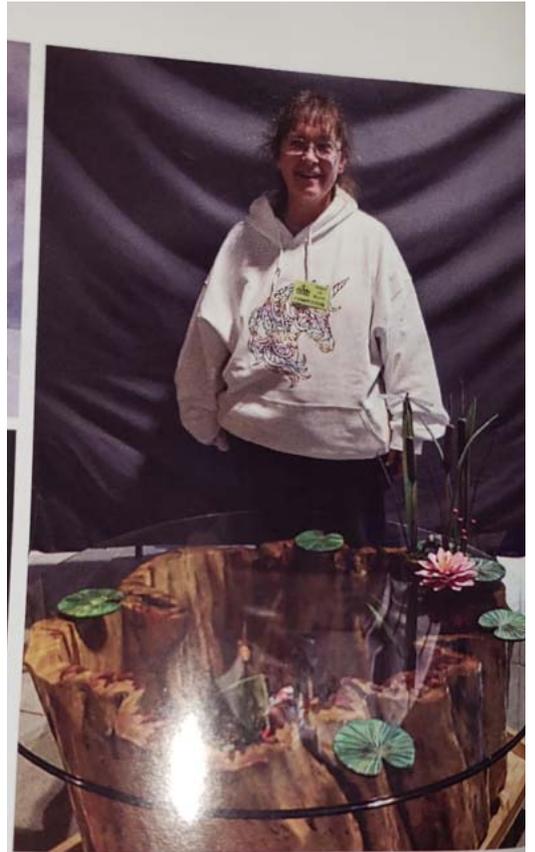
Ann Marie's first fish-pond table



Carvings of fish environs



Ann Marie begins a second table



Ann Marie Miller's coffee table fish pond won the People's Choice vote; best-of-show heron, top left, by George Ford; "Lucile," left, is the work of John Ruggerio.



Carved fish

nautical piece. Best novice carving was a painted fish by Paul Bartlett.
Humor is always welcome in any circumstance, and the SOW competition did not disappoint. Robert Grimm carved one of the rarest trout, though apparently still a problem in Maine. "Brook sharks" you might

Chip Chats article

Steve Oaklander's Recent Sawmilling

by Steve Oaklander

Many of you may know me from the extensive sawmilling I've performed on behalf of the club over the past 3-4 years.

I just completed five days of sawmilling with my WoodMizer LT40 HD sawmill on the weekend property of a prominent NYC orthopedic surgeon in Sherman CT. Although I didn't compile an accurate count of the stockpile of logs, I am guessing that I milled somewhere between 90-100 logs. The logs were all hardwoods; the vast majority was split nearly equally between ash and various red oak species. Additionally, there were several hard maples, silver birch, and hickory logs milled.

This was a challenging job in some ways. Many of the logs were close to or in excess of 30 inches in diameter. Milling logs of this size can be problematic, as the maximum throat size on my mill is 24 inches. This means that the logs must be whittled down to achieve a maximum two-foot cant width. On several occasions I was forced to suspend cuts in order to use chainsaws to remove enough excess material (mostly bark) to allow the cut to be completed. It can also be complicated to rotate logs



30 inch diameter ash log



Stacked lumber after three days of milling



Book matched Ash 2 inches thick with live edge slabs

weighing in excess of 3000 pounds on the sawmill bed. It's a little terrifying to have logs of that weight crashing down on the bedrails!

I was lucky that my client had several pieces of equipment available to feed logs into position for the sawmill, including a 100+ HP FialAllis backhoe and a Komatsu excavator. However, he also had no idea of what and how he wanted the logs milled! I ended up milling most of the big ash logs into 2" and 3" thick boards of various widths. I have no idea what he's going to do with that stuff! Quite a bit of the red oak species logs were cut at 5/4 thickness; I quarter-sawed as many of the large diameter logs (24" +) as possible. The maple and birch was mostly sawn into 4/4 thickness for possible cabinetry applications. For the sake of expediency, I milled many of the midsized logs (14"-20") into beams at the request of the client. The larger logs were milled into 14" beams and the balance into 10" beams. These were removed directly from the bed of the sawmill using the backhoe. Once again, I have no idea how the client intends to use these!

Any questions or comments please reach me at qakcraftmilling@gmail.com

Building a Buffet

By John Hodgson

Original furniture design is not my long suit, so my wife and I scoured endless magazines, catalogs and web sites for design ideas for a buffet for our Adirondack camp. Suffice to say, it was a relief when she finally made the decision, handed me a picture and said, "That one!" Using it as a guide, I was able to calculate dimensions and create the detailed drawings needed to build a reasonable facsimile - with a bit of customization.

Taking Stock of the Stock

The legs called for rift sawn, eight-quarter cherry, so my first stop was Curtis Lumber in Ballston Spa. Not finding what I wanted, the staff agreed to call me when they got their next shipment. A week later they called, and I got to the store right away and soon found what I needed.

The amount of five-quarter cherry that I purchased several years ago was still more than adequate. I also had a half-sheet of three-quarter inch cherry veneer plywood that would serve well for the carcass and shelves. All in all, I was pleased that much of the wood was already on hand, so the project was not going to break the bank.

Start at the Ends

At the end of last year, I finished cutting out the legs and gluing up the two end assemblies. They are a combination of solid wood and veneer plywood joined with mortise and tenon joints and biscuits.

Building the Box

After Christmas, I worked on the horizontal frames, internal shelves, divider, and back. I used a combination of cherry and soft maple for the frames. The vertical dividers and removeable shelves are veneer plywood with solid wood edging. To strengthen the carcass, I used Baltic Birch plywood for the back.

The bottom shelf of the cabinet was to be a sheet of the veneer plywood with a solid wood edge. There was too much flex in it, however, so I stiffened it with a spine in the back and a two-inch wide face frame in the front. The cabinet glued up (with dutiful and patient help from my wife) without too much grief.

Drawers and Doors

Rather than cutting dovetails into the drawers I used a lock miter bit I received for Christmas. After some trial and error, the drawers came together solidly. Full extension drawer slides completed the install. A single wide board of clear cherry became the drawer fronts. Note the matching grain.

For the doors I used a router bit to make coped rails and stiles. The panel inserts have figured cherry veneer on the fronts and plain cherry veneer on the backs. The veneers are glued onto quarter-inch MDF planed down to accept the veneer but still fit the quarter-inch dado made by the router bit.

Nearing the Finish

The finish is a wash coat of shellac sealer with a water-based urethane topcoat. I chose a product from Vermont Coatings which is free of VOC's. It goes on easily and lays down to form a nice smooth surface with minimal or no brush marks. A soft rubout with 0000 steel wool and wax left a nice satin finish.



Buffet carcass



Buffet with drawers

Topping it off

My wife and I decided that since it is a working piece for a kitchen, the top should be something durable and washable. So, we bought a discounted piece of quartz countertop from Solid Surface Craftsmen in Scotia from their “boneyard” of remnants.

The picture shows the result in the dining room of our house, not the camp. We are awaiting help from a burly friend to bring it up to its intended home.



Finished buffet with quartz top

Fiske Fund Rule Updates

Updated March 2020

In consideration of fiscal health and fairness to the NWA members, Fiske Fund Committee met and decided to make the following changes to the current grant rules.

Previous Rule

NWA membership is not required.

Covers up to 50% of approved expenditures for tuition, materials, food and lodging.

An application for grant must be submitted before the course begins.

Awards no more than \$1,000 per year or \$2,000 for a period of five consecutive years.

There is no minimum dollar limit.

No required “pay back” by the awardees.

Reimbursement procedure is not clear.

Fiske Fund web page has been updated.

<https://woodworker.org/>

Under Education and Shop, go to Fiske Fund.

The details and application form are found there.

<https://woodworker.org/fiske-fund/> Specific questions can be answered by e mail - fiskefund@gmail.com.

Revised Rule

Preference is given to active NWA members in good standing.

Covers up to 50% of approved expenditures for tuition and lodging.

An application for grant must be submitted at least 10 days before the course begins.

Awards no more than \$750 per year or \$2,000 for a period of five consecutive years.

Tuition cost of at least \$100 would be considered.

Awardees are requested to share their learned skills with the NWA membership. This includes the individual or group reporting at the NWA monthly meeting or SIG meeting, making a presentation, writing a newsletter article, or teaching a course.

Receipt for tuition and associated expenses, if any, along with a statement or certificate of completion (if available) must be submitted within 3 months of the class completion.

Wood Donations

By Jacquelyn Donahoe

On behalf of the Carving SIG, I just wanted to thank Bob Cooley and Lee Hilt for their donations of wood. We will totally enjoy the Basswood and Butternut once we get back to meeting in the shop.

NWA Education Offered Classes: Two Ways to Make Finger Joint Box (Part 2)

By Susan McDermott

On Saturday, March 14, Eight NWA members and two teachers met at the shop for a second half-day instruction in box making. Dave Mobley led four students on the construction of a cigar sized box using the router and custom jig to cut the fingers while Joe Carmola simultaneously taught the other group of four the same steps of construction using two jigs and a table saw.

For both means of cutting and assembly, the measurements are the same. The 34 + inch long planed hard maple board for the four sides is first cut for two grooves to hold the top and bottom panels. The grooves are ¼" (with router bit or dado blade on the table saw) and 3/16" deep and 1-1/32" from either edge (see photo #1). The third groove (11/16") is to separate the body and its lid. The board is then cut into two 9" and two 6" sides with the miter saw (photo #2).

After setting the ¼ inch dado blade height, finger slots are first cut on the short 6" sides using the table saw and jig (photos 3, 4 and 5). Note the proper positioning and hold of the sides (#6). Repetitive cuts while moving the side closer to the fence completes the short sides (#7). The long sides will need a space for the first finger only (#8).

While the finger joints now mesh perfectly for all the sides laid flat, rabbets will have to be cut on the inside ends of the long sides 3/16" wide and 3/16" deep. Also, the short sided will have rabbets cut 3/8" wide and 3/16" deep (photo #9) for a tight 90 degree fit (#10). Joe's first pass of the dado blade is on the edge of each side's end is to prevent tear-out prior to the second pass of that same end.

The remaining steps of box assembly, glue up, box clamping, microwave quick dry are the same as the first class. They are repeated below.

With all cuts made, some sanding and trimming of fingers will help a dry assembly of the entire box before glue-up. Then glue the box together with Tight Bond II glue applied to each fingers' sides. The jig and wedges will square up the box and plastic wrap around the joints insure a tight bond.

One minute in the microwave will speed the glue drying. Another minute with the box and jig turned 180 degrees will complete the drying process. Then the box lid will be cut from the box body on the table saw after setting the fence exactly to separate the box from its lid (#11).

A custom-made piece will separate the partially cut box so as not to collapse the uncut sides. A final sanding can ensure a good fit of the top to the box.



The box project



#1 Grooves are cut for top and bottom panels and lid



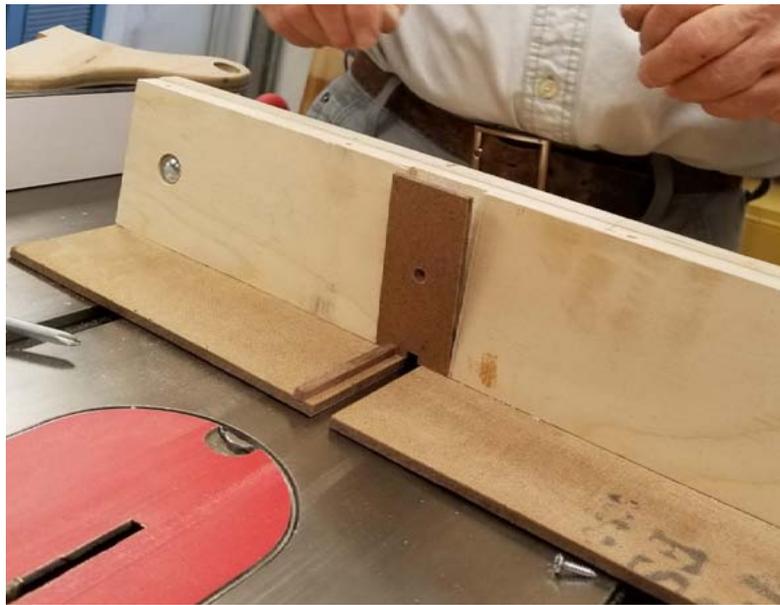
#2 Four sides are cut with the miter saw



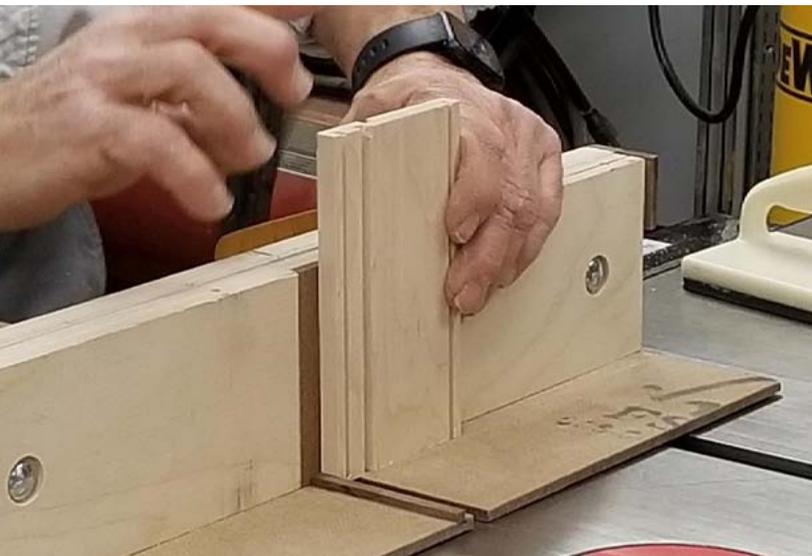
#3 Joe sets the 1/4" dado blade's height for cutting finger joints



#4 This critical measurement is triple checked before the class cuts precise fingers



#5 jig and saw blade ready for multiple passes



#6 The proper positioning and hold of short sides



#7 The repetitive cut of fingers while moving the side toward the fence



#8 A spacer is used for the first cut of the long sides



#9 Saw and new jig with clamp set to cut rabbets



#10 Rabbets on all eight ends of four sides make a tight 90 degree fit



#11 Setting the fence to the box lid groove



#12 Using the spacer for cutting the last two sides of the lid prevents movement



#13 Perfect finger joints made with the table saw and jigs

May Meeting

To Be Determined

2020 MONTHLY MEETINGS*

Unless noted otherwise, held at the Shaker Meetinghouse on the Second Thursdays at 7:00 PM

For meeting cancellation information,
Charlie Goddard 370-0388

*To be updated with additional information

The newsletter has received great articles and photos from our members. The June issue will also welcome articles from members that fit the guidelines of submission.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs): Please note meetings will commence at our new location at 97 Railroad Avenue.

Adirondack Woodturners Association (AWA) - The AWA is active throughout the year. **General** Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month (except in January and July when it is the second Wednesday), at the NWA Learning Center located at 97 Railroad Avenue, Colonie, NY from 5:30 PM to 8:45 PM. **Contact:** Kevin Ramsey Cell 518-769-9665 or kmrammer@yahoo.com

Spindle and Pen Turners - Meets Mondays 5:30 PM - 8:45 PM. Contact: Pam Bucci at 518-429-6440 or woolglass2@gmail.com Wednesday "Learn and Turn" sessions occur on all other Wednesdays at the NWA Learning Center. These sessions run 5:30 PM to 8:45 PM. www.adirondackwoodturners.com **Contact:** Kevin Ramsey Cell 518-769-9665 or kmrammer@yahoo.com

Scroller's Guild - Meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the NWA Learning Center located at 97 Railroad Avenue, Colonie, NY. Shop opens at 5:30 PM both Wednesdays followed by a general meeting at 7:00 PM on the fourth Wednesdays. **Contact:** Tom O'Donnell at Todonnell180@gmail.com

Kaatskill Woodturners - Second Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM at the Opdahl property in Hurley, NY. **Contact:** Wally Cook at wally.cook@gmail.com

NWA Crafters - Meet Tuesdays and Saturdays 9:00 AM to noon. They provide public service woodworking for various charitable organizations, including the Double H Hole in the Woods camp for children and the GE Toy Modifications Group, and the Make A Wish Foundation. Sharing information, fellowship, and relating experiences are a major part of these sessions. **Contact:** Wayne Distin at 518-674-4171 or wdistin@nycap.rr.com, Ken Evans at 518-281-0779 or kevans1@nycap.rr.com, or John Heimke at heimkj@sage.edu for more information.

The NWA Wood Carvers SIG - Meet 1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th Thursdays 5:00-8:30 PM all year at the NWA Learning Center located at 97 Railroad Avenue, Colonie, NY. The goal is to promote the art of wood carving and to have a good time doing it. The only prerequisite is a desire to carve while making new friends. Wood, tools, and patterns are available. **Contact:** Diane Balch at 518-885-9899 or signs@balchsigns.com

Hand Tool SIG - Meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00-9:00 PM in the Herm Finkbeiner Education Center at 97 Railroad Avenue, Colonie, NY. **Contact:** Dave Parkis at 518-429-6581 for further details: dparkis@nycap.rr.com

CHAPTERS

NWA Mid-Hudson - The chapter meets at 7:30 PM on the third Thursday, except July, at the Hurley Reformed Church. The Church is just off the Hurley exit from Rte. 209. Right at the exit, right at the stop sign and left into the Church parking area. **Contact:** midhudsonwoodworkers.org Jim Lee, President - (845)382-6045