

# WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern  
Woodworkers  
Association

November 2020, Vol. 29, Number 9

**There will be no more general meetings  
until January 2021.**

## NWA President's Column - October 2020

Greetings, Woodworkers - Great news from Ray Puffer about progress on the revitalized machine qualification program that the Education Committee and LCOC have been working on.

Ray will be assembling a group of volunteers to complete a review and update of the current MQ documents and prepare instructional materials to be used by MQ instructors. The concept that will be tried out is to offer a series of Machine Qualification classes, each one targeting specific machines.

Club members will be able to sign up for those specific classes that are relevant to the SIG(s) they belong to and the machines they routinely use. Each class will include a discussion and demonstration of the safety concerns, operation and (when appropriate) maintenance of the specific machine(s). Attendees may be required to read relevant instructional materials, and to pass a written quiz. Before being cleared for independent operation of the machines, participants will be required to demonstrate proficiency in machine operation. Individuals who receive certification as Machine Knowledgeable (MK) or Machine Qualified (MQ) will have such certification posted in the shop, and will have their club membership badge so annotated.

Individuals who wish to volunteer to serve as instructors for the MQ program may contact Ray Puffer at, or 518-272-6421. MQ classes will be free to club members, and will be used as a mechanism for recruiting new members to the club. Relevant MK and MQ information will be posted on the club web site.

Recently two members asked me a couple of questions that I've decided to cover here.

**Scam Warning!** Folks - There is a scam going on whereby someone contacts an NWA member (whose email is listed on our web page) asking them to make a payment related to NWA business. The email is signed by me, but it is not really me! It is fake. If you see such an email, please forward it to me so I can keep track.

Regards, Rich Cerruto

### Question #1: Is NWA in serious fiscal trouble?

The Board recently passed an operating budget for the coming year that shows a projected operating deficit. If you happen to believe that you should never spend beyond your income, a budget deficit is a bad thing, of course; but I believe the Board is correct in approaching this year's budget from a half-full glass perspective.

Now obviously NWA cannot run operating deficits indefinitely; but the organization has the reserves to cover these kinds of deficits for

several years while it adjusts to whatever the new normal will be. Quite frankly, I think it will take several years for NWA to get back on an even keel; and as I mentioned in a previous column, NWA is exploring different approaches to selling tools, lumber and craft pieces; it will be setting up woodworking classes and NWA is starting to look at how it needs to present itself to people who are either unaffiliated woodworkers or who are interested in finding out about woodworking in order to turn both types into new members. Some of these initiatives may develop quickly, some will take more time and, certainly, not all may work out.

### **Question # 2 : What the heck is the LCOC?**

Long term members know the jargon: LCOC = Learning Center Operations Committee. For new members the LCOC is the group of people charged with 1) setting and overseeing Shop use policies regarding both the operation of machines and facilities, and 2) keeping Shop woodworking equipment running, the heating and A/C working, dust control managed, maintaining cleaning supplies, emptying Shop Vacs along with removing trash - to name just a few necessary chores. The group also

works closely with members of the Education Committee to coordinate the scheduling of Shop activities so that conflicts are avoided.

If you are mechanically inclined, some of the tasks can be interesting; other activities less so and hard to delegate, e.g. one person is stuck being responsible for taking out the trash because it entails entering the Erie Materials facility.

How can you help? Everyone helps a little tidying up at the end of an activity session. You can also mention to a SIG leader, Board member or your NWA friend about your special skill, ( e.g. plumbing, electronics, A/C, piano tuning, whatever). Let other members know a little bit more about yourself in real life so that maybe someone will think to contact you if a special problem needs attention at the Shop. If you would like to get even more involved with keeping the Shop open, think about actually joining the LCOC. There are not many meetings, and it provides another way to meet other NWA members and to learn more about how NWA works.

- Stay safe and keep woodworking,  
Irv Stephens

## **NWA General Meeting October 1, 2020**

*By Susan McDermott*

Irv Stephens opened the 7:00 PM meeting with announcements.

Beware of phishing scams using Rich Cerruto's name. Examine the source of the e mail. Do not open attachments or reply. At present NWA Board members have been the targets. See message from Rich on page 1.

John Slezak asked members to purchase hand sewn shopping bags for \$15 to support the Cohoes Senior Center. His daughter-in-law, Beth Slezak, is the Program Manager of LifePath Living Center. You may call her at 518 235 2420 or email her at [eslezak@seniorservicesofalbany.com](mailto:eslezak@seniorservicesofalbany.com) to order these unique and attractive bags.

Dave Mobley informed members that Michael Donovan has a slab flattening jig and will give a demonstration October 24 at the Shaker Picnic Pavilion.

Lee Hilt brought some logs to give away to turners. He announced the On-line Lumber Sale to open Sunday, October 4 at noon.

[Click the link](#) for more information about the auction.

There is about \$6500 in air dried hardwood boards for sale in lots of 50 to 100 board feet. Also included are two black walnut slabs from Union College and bowl blanks. Buyers may pick up their purchases at the Shaker Barn October 10 and 17, 9 AM to noon.

The final raffle tickets for a \$200 Tiffany gift card were sold at the meeting. The winner was Brea Barthel, on the day after her birthday!



*Irv Opens the meeting*

### Instant Gallery

John Slezak displayed his pen box with continuous matching grain sides and ends. He explained how this is accomplished by mitering the corners but not cutting completely through the wood and folding the corners. Ask John for more details!



*Slezak's pen box*

Wally Carpenter built a beautiful blanket chest whose sides taper from 19 inches at the base to 17 inches at the top for an aesthetically pleasing view. It is made of airdried walnut. The curly maple splines are dovetailed into the lid to make a sturdy top that permits cross-grain movement. The finish is Arm-R-Seal that was cured for a month before Wally applied a hard wax. [Click the link](#) for more photos of the chest.



*Wally Carpenter's chest*

### Program Presenters

Dick Flanders showed our members how to hide gaps in dovetail joinery. He claims there is no perfect dovetail. The conventional method of mixing sawdust saved from the sanding of a project mixed with glue is poor as the mixture does not accept stains. The better method is to apply shellac and sawdust with a Q-tip or brush and sand between applications.



*The lid without hinges yet*

Making dovetail joinery with contrasting woods has fewer visual gaps. Brushing shellac on an unfinished joint can reveal the gaps to fill. Dick displayed several types of shellacs he uses (Zinsser, flakes, prepared jars with a brush inside).

He also made a jig with clamps to hold wood pieces at 90 degrees while marking and cutting tails. [Click the link](#) for more photos.

Wally Carpenter brought in his impressive collection of Japanese wood tools. In the course of his career in semiconductors, Wally travelled to Japan some 40 times. Upon retirement, he immersed himself in furniture making, and Japanese tools allowed him to work with the technique and precision he appreciated. He explained Japanese woodworkers may sit on the ground or in a low position, which defines the movement of their tools. They pull rather than push their saws. The draw saw has a blank edge at the end of the teeth that permits the completion of a two-dimensional cut that removes the final wood fibers at the center.



*Shellac reveals gaps*



*Dick's joinery jig*

The chisels are a combination of hard and softer steels that keep a sharp edge longer. The chisels have metal bands to reinforce the striking end. Wally had two small Japanese hammers for that purpose. [Click the link](#) for photos of Wally's collection of Japanese tools.

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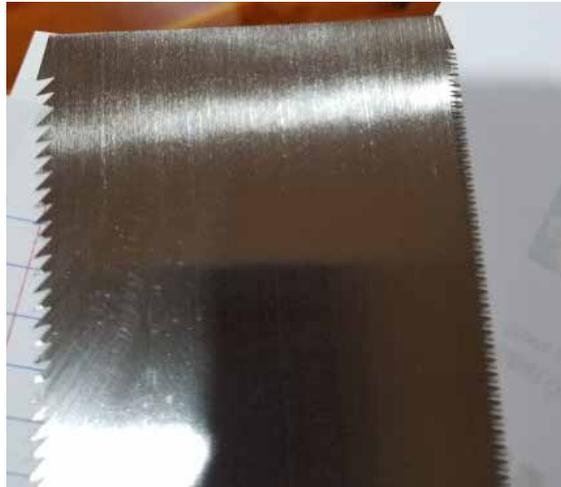
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*Dick's display of shellacs*



*Japanese draw saw with missing teeth at the tip*



*Wally's set of pricey Japanese chisels made by a master blacksmith*



*Japanese chisel has both hard and soft steel*

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



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# On the Net: Wood Database and Poster

*By Brea Barthel*

Some NWA members can glance at a board and immediately identify the wood or know exactly which woods are best for which purpose. But if that is not you, and one of our friendly gurus isn't nearby? There is help available on the web. The Wood Database website offers a "Wood Finder" catalog of over 300 tree species that can be filtered by wood type, geographic area, color/appearance, decay resistance, and more. Or you can enter the name of a species and get detailed information about it. [Click the link](#) for more information.

How detailed? In a word, VERY. Even the gurus will find something new here. Descriptions include color/appearance, grain/texture, rot resistance, allergies/toxicity, and common uses. But to feed your inner geek, also look at the items such as crushing strength, specific gravity, porosity, lookalikes, "modulus of rupture," "Janka hardness"...you get the idea, detailed. With images. And information on sustainability status from two different sources: CITES and IUCN.

If that's too much information, or you don't want your laptop next to you in the shop, or you want to practice your identify-at-a-glance skills, the Worldwide Woods poster may do the trick. It identifies over 500 species of trees, divided by native region, with color/grain image, common name, Latin name, comparative level of hardness, and more, all in 2'x3'format. The poster is available on Amazon for \$30. That is less than 6 cents per species, but only in a complete set. [Click the link](#) for the poster.

Beyond identification, the Wood Database has a section with 40+ articles covering everything from wood basics to "Top Ten Most Overrated Woods," as well as shop references and allergy/toxicity warnings. So, when you need a break from your shop, head to your computer.

## NWA Lumber Online Sale #3 Final Notice

NWA Online Sale #3 is nearing completion. Although many items have been sold, many good pieces remain. The sale will run until Midnight, Wednesday, October 21st. After that time the sale link will be taken down, and all remaining items will be restocked in the Shaker Barn.

**NOTE:** All Baltic Birch Plywood sales will end on Saturday morning, October 17th.

General online sale information can be found at the below Lumber Online Sale page. <https://woodworker.org/lumber-tool-auction/>

Sale item pictures, descriptions, and prices for NWA's Lumber Online Sale #3 can be found at: <https://woodworker.org/lumber-sale/>

NWA Lumber & Tool Auction/Online Sale Committee,  
Lee Hilt, Chair

# Signs for Shaker Heritage Society

*By Charlie Goddard*

NWA stores lumber and tools in the dairy portion of the big barn at the Shaker Heritage Society site. In payment, NWA works on projects to help maintain the Shaker site. For example, NWA members built a foot bridge, repaired and painted the sales shop, built the large sales cabinet in the sales shop, made repairs to the big barn, and built the doors in the drying house.

This year's project was the construction of supports for ten signs which describe various parts of the site. Each sign is 24" by 36", made from aluminum sheet. Two different supports were used – six hold up signs in a horizontal orientation. The remaining four signs have a vertical orientation and are mounted on simple 4x4 pressure treated posts.

For the horizontal signs, pressure treated 4x4's were used to make frames which hold the signs up at a 30-degree angle for convenient reading. Lap joints were used to make a frame to hold a 24" by 36" panel to which the aluminum signs are attached.

The first step in setting up the signs was digging the post holes. Fortunately, Jim Faddegon has access to a track mounted post hole digger which we used to dig 14 holes. Though we found a few rocks, the digger produced holes of sufficient depth, approximately 42".

The following day NWA members carefully installed the sign supports into the holes, making sure they were level, vertical and at a height which satisfies the American Disabilities Act (ADA). We had

a great crew, and the work was done much faster than anticipated. Included were Jon Bennett, Rick Bird, Don Cooke, Dick Flanders, Charlie Goddard, Don Orr, Austin Spang, and Bob Stevens. Steve Schoenberg loaned us a manual post hole digger which was used effectively for cleaning out the holes. The last step was mounting the aluminum signs to the backer boards using tamper resistant nuts provided by the company which made the signs.

When you go to the Shaker site next time, take a few minutes to read the signs. They are well designed by those at SHS and do a great job of describing what the Shaker community must have been like years ago.



*Vertical*



*Horizontal 30 degrees*

# My Week of Timber Framing

By *Fiske Fund* recipient, *Greg Farley*

I would like to first thank the Northeastern Woodworkers Association for my grant which enabled me to enroll at the Heartwood School in western Massachusetts and attend their week-long Introduction to Timber-Framing class. It was taught by Will Beemer, the head educator at Heartwood, and Evan Taubes, owner of Scratch Builders in Vermont. The class covered a bit of everything that has to do with building a Timber Frame from start to finish. They covered layout systems, tools, joinery, selecting timbers, etcetera. At times, the class did feel on the information level a bit overwhelmed. It was a lot to take in very quickly, especially if one intends to apply methods alone. But it is a good introduction to the trade and a good initiation to what it entails. One of the most crucial and interesting parts of the timber framing process is the lay out of the whole building as I will describe below.

In the U.S. historically, there are primarily two layout systems that have been used to construct timber frames. One was called “Scribed Rule” which enabled the use of curvy and irregular timbers. Pieces are mated to one another, and they are not interchangeable. There is much more physical handling of the timber as you would imagine. A big reason this method came about is out of necessity. In the United Kingdom and Europe, straight timbers were scarce because of high grade harvesting, clear cutting, and industrialization.

In the early 1800s a new system came into place called “Square Rule”, and this is the layout system we focused on and used in our building project. In Square Rule, the belief is that in each supply of timber, there is a perfect timber. It may be a bit smaller than the actual dimension of the timber you are working with. In this case, you must determine what the biggest variation in size your timbers are, from

piece to piece. If the variation is less than 1/2 an inch, then you just determine that perfect timber is within is half an inch. If the variation is oversized, it is not a concern. If the variation is greater than a 1/2 inch, then you need to consider getting more precise at operating your mill, hewing axe, or hire a new sawyer. Not all timbers need to be reduced to the same size, just timbers of the same type should be. The Square Rule enabled a much a quicker



*Greg Farley and instructor Evan Taubes (left)*

and proficient method of timber framing as handling was minimal, marking was fast and with the great hardwood and softwood stands of the American forests at that time, it surpassed Scribed Rule.

The building we made had three bents. A bent is a section where two posts are on either side of the building with a beam to connect them. To orient ourselves, we were taught to identify sides of building by how they were positioned: north, south, east, west. A classmate and I had the middle bent, the western facing side of the building.

My classmate and I built bent II, the middle bent of the building’s west side, a 7x12 post. It had many mortises to be made and tenons

to be cut on top and bottom of the post. We first got our post and brought it over to the sawhorses. We then checked all the sides looking for two best faces which would be our reference faces that all measurements and markings would be taken from. We were looking for straightness and any knots that may interfere with our joinery. One also must consider which faces will be visible and which would be to outside of the building for aesthetic reasons.

Once we got our two faces selected, we took some building chalk and made an arrow on each one pointing to one another to remind us. Once we had this figured out, we needed to get our shoulder to shoulder length. The shoulder is where the post would seat the sill beam and the top plate. We stretched our tape out to the length and then moved it as we wished to avoid knots for our mortise locations. Once this was agreed upon, we went about marking our shoulder lines. We used a framing square from our references faces to transfer the line around the timber. Then we marked the width and length of the tenon. We then proceeded to mark off the dovetail mortise for the tie beam, two girders, and three braces at their locations using our framing square and sliding T bevel square off our references faces. Once everything was marked, then the teachers would check our locations, and then we could begin cutting. We must check our markings before we begin cutting and label our post so as not to forget what piece belongs where.

Again, this is just one aspect of the timber framing process, but one of the most important, as marking out your tenons and mortises is crucial. Cutting them is a whole other task, as is deciding what is the necessary size of tenon, or depth of mortise, or type of joint. The class taught me a lot and has sparked a deeper interest in now taking what I have learned and applying it in my own building. Thanks again for the grant and best wishes to all this fall!

Greg's contact information:

gfwoodworksny@gmail.com

<https://www.instagram.com/gfwoodworks/?igshid=jm0tw3ser9rm>

## Classifieds

For Sale :

Craftsman Style Cabinet Doors - Five Pair.

Crafted from poplar wood rail and stiles and MDF panels. Primed - ready to paint. Holes drilled in rear to fit European style hinges.

Brand new. Price - \$199.95

Sizes : 24 3/4" X 28" H - (2)

24" X 28" H - (4)

21" X 28" H - (2)

19 1/2" X 28" H - (2)

Pick up only in Saratoga area. No shipping.

Call John Olenik - 518-587-0306 or irmjohn@aol.com



## 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

January 14 TBA

February 11 TBA

March 11 TBA

April 8 TBA

May 13 TBA Election of NWA officers

\*To be updated with additional information

**There will be no more  
general meetings  
until January 2021.**

## 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

**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 kevan1@nycap.rr.com, or John Heimke at heimkj@sage.edu for more information.

**The NWA Wood Carvers SIG** - Meet 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

**Scrollers SIG** - Meets every Monday and Wednesday 6 to 8:30 PM. Contact Pam Bucci woodglass2@gmail.com 518-429-6440 (for Mondays) Kay McCampbell kmcccampbell@nycap.rr.com 518-371-9608

### **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