

WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern
Woodworkers
Association

March 2023, Vol. 32, Number 3

Fiske Memorial Presentations on Japanese Woodworking

Mark Your Calendars – Friday, March 31 & Saturday, April 1



Kunaiki Kishi

NWA is privileged to host Kunaiki Kishi, Furniture Master Craftsman from Tokyo, for Fiske Memorial presentations on Japanese woodworking. Mr. Kishi will give a talk on the Art of the Japanese Hand Plane, including production, setup, and tuning, on Friday, March 31 at 7:00 pm. The following afternoon, on Saturday, April 1, at 1:00 pm, Mr. Kishi will demonstrate the process of making hand cut concealed dovetails. Both presentations will be at the Herman Finkbeiner Learning Center.

Look for further details on Mr. Kishi's visit in email announcements and in the next Newsletter.

Acknowledgement: NWA thanks SUIZAN, manufacturer of some of the finest Japanese handsaws, for their generous sponsorship of Mr. Kishi's travels to Showcase and the post-Showcase presentations.

Greetings From Your New Editor

Daniel Packer

Friday, February 10, 2023

Greetings fellow woodworkers. I'm privileged to serve as your next newsletter editor. Steve Schoenberg's great big shoes will be impossible to fill, but I hope to do this newsletter justice. I look forward to receiving your feedback and ideas as we go forward with future editions. With the assistance of fellow NWA and Mid-Hudson chapter members, I know I'll be successful in this transition and look forward to serving this distinguished group.

So who is your new editor? On the one hand, I lead an extraordinarily boring life, working, paying off a mortgage, and driving a not particularly sexy car. On the other

hand, I've also lived a pretty faceted life and if a freak woodworking accident ended my time on this planet, I'd be able to say I had a pretty good run. For just under 30 years I've worked as a computer programmer, or as they call it these days, a software engineer. Now I manage other software engineers. I also teach computer science college courses



online as of the past several years. I haven't eaten meat in about 25 years, I live just outside Poughkeepsie, and I'm originally from Brooklyn and moved to the Mid-Hudson region just last year. Having been born in Kingston, moving up here from the city felt a bit like a homecoming.

The last time I was an editor was back in college, when I re-launched the school's long-out-of-print literary magazine. I also had a stint in my 20's writing for a local newspaper that we published out of a cafe. That said, most of my life has been dedicated to computers and gadgets, and though I'm an admittedly undisciplined maker of things, learning how to make things is a ceaseless passion. I'm almost embarrassed to describe my influences and areas of focus in woodworking, as I've done so little compared to almost anyone in our community, but I'll give it a shot as this is my "15 minutes of fame".

I'd say I have five major areas of interest that are currently inspiring me when I imagine the woodworking I'm pursuing. First, I'm inspired to work with repeating interlocking (tessellated) three dimensional patterns as shown in M.C. Escher's famous works which miraculously marry art to mathematics. I'm also inspired by the colorful sculptures of Tom Fruin, who uses colored translucent panels in stark steel wireframe structures to evoke other-worldly silhouettes of common architectural structures. Next, I'm inspired by oversized curved architectural structures such as the humbling archways, doors, inlaid floors, and windows of old cathedrals and state buildings. I'm very impressed with mechanisms that move under environmental or manual force but display surprising movements such as the expanding round table, or the wind-powered walkers of Theo Jensen. Finally, the toy-making activities of the Mid-Hudson chapter of the NWA have made me realize that I

could bring my lifelong obsession with games and toys into my creative woodworking. As if I didn't have enough inspiration, I also get plenty from my fellow Mid-Hudson chapter members.

I count myself lucky to have a woodworker community not only because I enjoy being around really passionate craftsmen, but because a supportive community is a treasure. For many years I helped lead and in some cases founded maker spaces in various parts of the country including San Francisco, Washington DC, and New York City. Those were essentially shared workshops, where makers could come together to teach each other skills and share knowledge and tools. So, peer education and maker community is in my blood. I teach college and I even teach courses at my day job on top of my regular work. So, being an editor of a newsletter that's all about a group of people who share knowledge suits me just fine. Sharing knowledge, tools, and having a place to show your work to others who can truly appreciate it is a priceless human activity, and one that I think shows the better side of humanity in general. Maybe the best side.

Of course, I aim to use this editorial platform to highlight the great work our community and surrounding communities are doing, and to share relevant opportunities and events with our members and readers.

Your article ideas, comments, or questions are always welcome. Contact me at: nwanewsletter1@gmail.com.



Showcase Reminder

The NWA Showcase and Totally Turning Symposium teams have been working for months to bring us another memorable set of events. This year is our 30th Anniversary Showcase, and to celebrate this anniversary we are bringing in some amazing professional lecturers as well as our own local NWA talent.

Expenses, of course, continue to increase while vendor business models are tending to move away from classical woodworking events like Showcase. That said, we have worked hard to provide an enjoyable and exciting set of events.

As I have said many times, we could never accomplish Showcase without each of you volunteering. We have so many needs in so many varied areas that it makes it easy to find a space for you to share your skills.

Please contact Learay Rayburn-Silvia, our Volunteer Chair, either by phone (518-383-9527) or via email, nwavolunteerchair@gmail.com, to sign up.

Thank you in advance! At the time of this article we have little more than a month until we all gather and take over the Saratoga City Center and Hilton Hotel! So, invite your friends and neighbors.

Finish those gallery projects and complete the entry form: [Click Here](#)

**Sign Up to Volunteer.
But Most Importantly, Attend yourselves!**

Your Showcase Chair, Wally Carpenter

Sunday Will be Family Day at Showcase

By Steve Schoenberg, Showcase Ticket Sales Chair

Our Mid-Hudson Chapter has created over 500 kits for the Toy Factory to give our young Showcase visitors their first woodworking experience. And then, of course, is our goal to have the greatest attendance we can to share the incredible gallery items, woodworking demonstrations and all that the NWA has to offer. So, we decided to make Sunday “Family Day”.

Our newest NWA member, Jim Snack, is an accomplished magician well known to many of our members. Jim will be entertaining us all on Sunday, enriching the Showcase experience for the young and young-at-heart.

Historically, we get more visitors on Saturday than Sunday. This year, our social media advertising will reach 30,000+ viewers and will give them a special reason to attend on Sunday.

And to all of our NWA members who have recently joined or who have not yet had the “Showcase experience”, we urge you to visit <https://woodworker.org/showcase-volunteers/> and sign up for just a couple hours as a volunteer. Showcase is the NWA at its best and a chance to meet other members and inspire your own woodworking in new ways. We look forward to seeing you March 25 and 26 at the Saratoga City Center.



Jim Snack Magician

Dovetails Can Be Hard

By *Anthony Tassarotti*

I've always loved to make things, and I'm not terribly picky about what material I work in. When I was younger, I had little free time and I already had a number of creative outlets. But I always loved woodworking and promised myself that when I retired, I could devote my attention to fine woodworking.

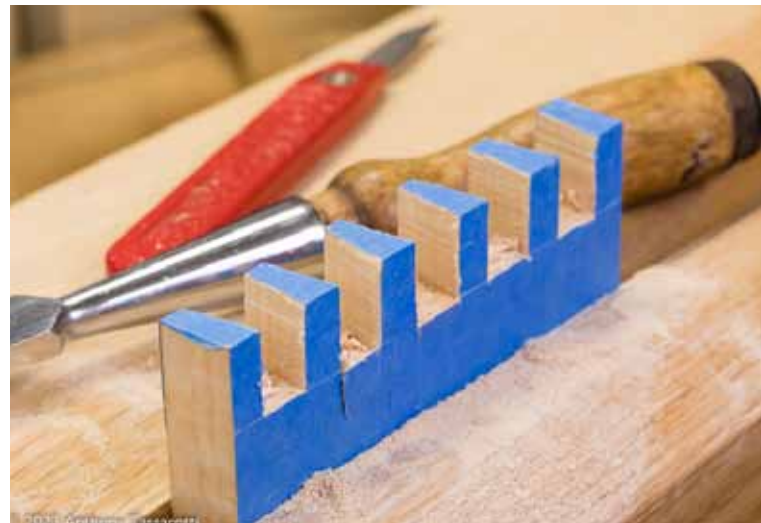
I fell in love with woodworking and carpentry when I was still a kid. My father worked in construction in the cement and tile trades, so I was around construction sites and tools. Unfortunately, my father wasn't a woodworker. I caught that bug watching Roy Underhill, and Norm Abrams on PBS. Roy's work in particular, with his antique hand tools, made me appreciate the ingenuity and craftsmanship that went into building things before there was mass production.

Another strong influence on me was my wife's grandfather, Henry Mosher. Henry was in his 90s when we were first dating and still farming his small farm, and building country-style furniture in his spare time. He was a brilliant, self-educated, all-around country carpenter. We own several pieces he made for us in the early 80s. Sometimes I wish Henry was still around so I could show him the projects I've been working on.

Over the years, I've made lots of things, but nothing as refined as a project that included hand-cut dovetails. I've always wanted to make a project like that. I just lacked the space, the tools, the time, and of course the knowledge to do it.

Fast forward to my late forties, and my youngest son asks if I could help him make a dovetail box. He's a really smart person, and before you ask, he takes after his mother. He did all the research that a 16-year-old could do on the internet, back in 2006. He was confident that with my help, he could do it. How hard could it be?

Well, as you can imagine, we failed spectacularly. And if I'm being honest, it was mostly my fault. Doing anything well always requires knowledge, experience, and the tools needed for the job. The biggest hole in my knowledge back then was tool knowledge. For instance, I didn't know back then that those brand-new chisels, bought from the big box store, needed to be flattened, sharpened, and



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honed to work their best.

That Craftsman block plane we used, which I bought in the 80s, was also never flattened, and its iron was never correctly sharpened or honed. Back then, I didn't have a workbench with a wood vise to actually do the work.



My son didn't give up, but our results were not very good. He showed the box to the high school woodworking teacher, and Mr. Casey took pity on the boy. He helped him build another box, using a router and dovetail jig. That box looked great, pins and tails were very uniform. And my son was happy, and to the best of my knowledge, he has never endeavored to build anything else in wood.

I never tried another dovetail either, until last July, when the Hand Tool SIG held the first dovetail workshop. The seminar was a mix of explanations, demonstrations, and hands-on time for participants to practice. It was really helpful to have knowledgeable senior NWA members available at the learning center to point out the proper technique.

Over the four sessions, and with lots of practice in my home shop, I began to feel like I can actually cut a usable dovetail. Follow-up Hand Tool SIG seminars on tools sharpening further built my dovetail skills. Having really sharp chisels really makes a difference.

Going forward, I'll keep practicing cutting tails by hand and incorporating them into my projects. They're not all going to be pretty, but I'm confident that none of them will look as bad as that box my son and I built.

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



Your next issue of
Woodworkers News

will be published
in early April

Copy deadline: March 10

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2023 Showcase Gallery Update

By Dale Lombardo

As of this morning, Feb 18, there's less than 5 weeks until the Friday when we set up the Gallery for Showcase. Items made by members and nonmembers at all skill and experience levels are welcome! It's a great place to share work with each other and see what can be done.

A quick 'tale of the tape': We have 48 items registered by 27 different people.

Category		Totals			
		252	211	239	48
		2018	2019	2022	2/18/2023
ACCESSORY1	Desktop Accessories & Clocks	32	10	21	-
ACCESSORY2	Small Boxes	22	19	12	1
ACCESSORY3	Kitchen Utility	-	8	16	4
ADIRONDACK	ADK style furniture and accessories	14	13	5	-
ALTMATL	Any subject.	16	11	3	2
BOATS	Functional boats	2	2	3	1
CARVING1	Chip or Relief Carving	13	12	9	1
CARVING2	3D representations of living things	3	28	20	6
CARVING3	3D functional items	18		9	1
CARVING4	3D ornamental or abstract Items	12	****	26	4
CHALLENGE	Coasters!! Protect fine furniture!	1	2	26	2
CNC-LASER	Made by CNC and/or Laser	3	6	5	1
FURNITURE1	Tables and beds	32	28	16	3
FURNITURE2	Bookcases, cabinets, chests, ...	9	9	12	6
FURNITURE3	Chairs and benches	9	12	7	4
INTARSIA	Items showing skill in intarsia	10	7	7	4
JEWELRY	Wooden jewelry of all forms	4	2	-	-
MARQUETRY	Items in marquetry	-	-	2	-
PYROGRAPHY	Items in pyrography	3	4	5	-
SCALED	Scaled models	-	-	4	-
SCROLL	Items by scroll saw	9	10	2	3
SHOPEQUIP	Wood tools, fixtures, and jigs	9	7	6	1
TOYS	Toy and play things for children	12	12	5	2
WOODMUSIC1	Stringed musical instruments	15	7	12	2
WOODMUSIC2	Non-stringed musical instruments	4	2	6	-

As you can see above, there are still categories that aren't represented, and there's room for more items in every Category, including the Challenge Category: Coasters! We've selected this year's category to be something that any and all woodworker method can participate in, and of course to "Protect fine furniture!"

There is still time to make and finish items for the gallery, but time is running out if you haven't started!

Showcase Gallery:

- [Online Registration Form](#)
- [Printable Registration Form](#)
- [Exhibit Categories and the 2023 Woodworkers' Challenge](#)

ALSO, for the turners, Totally Turning's Instant Gallery is handled separately:

- [Instant Gallery Guidelines](#)
- [Instant Gallery Entry Form](#)

See you and your display and judged items in March!
Stay WARM!

Dale Lombardo, Judging Co-Chairperson
showexhibit@gmail.com

Beginner Projects Needed at Showcase

By Steve Schoenberg

I just completed Stan Blanchard's six-week beginner turning class. I made this simple mallet and I'm going to display it in the Showcase gallery. Yes, it's got a nice shape and fits comfortably into my hand – I'm proud of it. But I have a better reason to display my beginner project at Showcase.

Our gallery will be filled with our member's exquisite creations. But we will be visited by many aspiring woodworkers who may be encouraged to know that there is a place in the NWA for beginners and we will help them become the woodworkers they wish to be.

Please display your beginner and novice projects at Showcase.



Amazon Smile Program Shuts Down

By Irv Stephens

Jeff Bezos has announced that Amazon Smile, the program that donates a small portion of a Amazon member's purchase price to designated non-profits ceased on February 20, 2023. A few NWA members did channel donations to this organization; and on behalf of the Board, I want to thank you for think about NWA as a recipient. For the short period of time that NWA was engaged in Smile, it receive several hundred dollars in donations from Amazon.

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 and Bowl Turning 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:** Maxwell Ferris at maxwellferris@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 - Also an AAW Chapter. Meets on the second Saturday of the month at the Hurley Reformed Church, 11 Main St. Hurley, NY 12443. Contact Wally Cook at 845-338-2193 or 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 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:** Steve VanDerZee stevevdz@msn.com

CHAPTERS

NWA Mid-Hudson - Presently The chapter meets on Zoom and at in-person meetings on the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM except the month of July. Meetings are at the Hudson River Maritime Museum located at 50 Rondout Landing, Kingston NY 12401. **Contact:** midhudsonwoodworkers.org Bill Sterling, President - 845-532-3754 wster1156@aol.com