



WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

NEWSLETTER



"Bittersweet October. The mellow, messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause between the opposing miseries of summer and winter."-- Carol Bishop Hipps

You mean it's no longer summer? How did that happen?

However it happened, we've said good-bye to summer and opened our eyes to Fall. This morning, we were glad to have a crisp and sunny autumnal morning to gather at the Phoenix Club in Mt Jackson for our October monthly meeting.

Jeff Fleisher, our vice president, gave us a splendid demonstration on how to conserve



wood when "scooping" a bowl blank out of what otherwise would have been nothing more than a pile of shavings. In a time of ecology, Jeff put the "green" back into turning!

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www.woodturnersofthevirginias.org

PAGE 1

WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

We were originally going to have a presentation of new tools, but the vendors have also fallen on hard times and no longer send reps out to clubs. Scrambling to come up with a good substitute, President Don Voas asked



Jeff if he would show us how well the One-Way system works. Jeff quoted from a review written by Dave Wilkins in the Fall 2009 edition of Woodturning Design to describe what is on the market today. The main competitor to the One-Way is made by Kelton-McNaughton, which is a worthy tool but a bit more difficult to use than the One-Way. From this most informative presentation by Jeff, the One-Way certainly lived up to its reputation of being "well thought-out, strong and accurate."

Bidnez News

In Don's overview of what's happening with the club, please note the following:



--Jeff displayed the award for third best Website in the AAW contest.

--Ed

Moore, who was to give an all-day demo last month, is recovering well from a band-saw accident that prevented him from joining us in September.

--Treasurer Peter Shoemaker said our account now stands at \$1,158.42.

--Peter will also research current costs if enough members want more T-shirts with the club logo printed on them. He will let us know what he finds out at the November meeting.

--Our reference library continues to grow, thanks to Harry Kellam who donated several books and DVDs and to George Marrah who

donated a book on band saw boxes. Please check the Literature Tab of our website for the latest listing of what is available.

-- Jeff was featured in the Fall Home Improvement Section of the Daily News Record (30 September) for the cabinets he made as part of the recent refurbishing of the Fleisher household master bath. He also was mentioned in the November edition of



Fine Homebuilding for this beautiful Cherry/Bubinga creation.

--Peter's planned basic introductory course on woodturning did not draw enough people to be included in the Shenandoah County Department of Parks and Recreation program this fall. Peter will invite those who did enroll to come to the Phoenix Club on 13 and 14 October to still get the training. He is now

WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

exploring other classes for next year, including ones for children. Evening sessions are also being considered.

--Jeff will be organizing a beginner's class in chip carving. Right now, we have George Marrah, Ed Hughes, Bill Millett, Wayne Sharp, Harry Kellam, Hank Marien and Peter Shoemaker interested. Details will be forthcoming.

--The club chose Starbond over Klingspor as our CA Glue source. Starke will continue to supply the glue, along with Danish oil, and the 3M sandpaper.

--Our practical meetings on the third Saturday of the month continue to be popular and productive. Mark your calendars for the next gathering on 17 October.

--For our November meeting, we will have inside/outside turnings by Peter; oil lamps by Alyce Pollock; and tops by Ashton Waters.

--For those who still have dial-up service, Jeff has tweaked our website a bit to get you faster entry. If you're stuck with a slow-network connection, just type in

www.woodturnersofthevirginias.org/dial_up. You won't get the pictures, but the narrative will be there.

--Many thanks to Joan and Harlan Hott for providing the pastries and fresh grapes we enjoyed today.

New Member

We welcomed Russell Comer of Shenandoah as a formal



new member today. Great to have you!

For Sale

Hank Marien is upgrading to a Powermatic PM2000K table saw and wants to sell his Delta 10", 1 1/2 HP model. Asking price is \$750. You can contact Hank at 540-740-8294 or hmarien@shentel.net.

Roy Good now owns Harry Kellam's Jet lathe and wants to find a new home for his TjL Industrial standard size lathe with variable speed

(600-2,400 RPM), 12" swing and 1/2 HP. Chuck does not come with lathe. Roy, who is asking \$150, can be contacted at 540-433-8584 or kgood21502@aol.com.

Show and Tell

The master of the natural edge bowl, Harlan Hott brought in a beautiful Walnut bowl made from wood provided by a neighbor of Ed Hughes. From the colored specks in the sapwood, members concluded that the tree probably had some mineral uptake.



In contrast, Don Voas made a small platter from the same wood that had a "double chocolate ice cream" look.

WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

Roy Good put his recently acquired Jet lathe to good use and made a concerted effort



to get away from the old "brown and round" shaped bowl. The new natural

forms in Apple were quite pleasing to the eye.

Bill Millett brought in one of the canes he made as part of our program to assist disabled veterans. Bill added a new twist



to this one, though. A cane used by an elderly lady he recently met included a neat cloth loop attached by Velcro to sling over a peg to stow the stick when it's not in use.

Charlie Wenzel made some nice Maple and Oak handles for some multi-purpose screwdrivers. He also



brought in another of his big-



selling .50-caliber twist pens that he gets from Penn State.

Dwight Miller didn't get caught with his hand in it, but he did



make a good-sized Walnut bowl complete with lid that he dubbed "Grandma's Cookie Jar."

Starke Smith uses about as much of that CA glue as he sells, especially when dealing with interesting but fragile



wood. Today's example was a fine-looking Sweet Gum bowl with plenty of fissures and "crooked nannies." Starke also had a large bowl made



WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

from a recently cut Weeping Cherry that had twisted and turned into a most interesting shape. Finally, he brought in an article by Ron Odegaard on “Whimsical Pens” that appeared in the Fall 2007 edition of Woodturning Design.



Ed Hughes didn't include the wine, but he did fetch his sweet goblet that he had made from some “mystery” wood.



Don Voas and Harry Kellam added the music this month by playing their Buddhist Inkin Meditation Bells. Harry had met Bill Stephens, a retired university professor and Zen



Buddhist monk, earlier at a monastery in Earlysville near Charlottesville. The brass bell is attached to a Walnut handle which has a hole at the end to accommodate an Ipe (exotic Brazilian wood) striker. If you're interested, contact teid@brzen.org or www.stillsitting.org.

The ringing of the Inkin bell is used to signal rest and waking periods during meditation as well as the beginning and end of silent meals.

Charlie Galambos brought up the end of the show-and-tell with his early holiday season ornaments made from Cedar.



WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

Meet Your Club Woodturner....



Not to worry, I'll get to you eventually. If you're wondering how I go about writing these sketches, I have no particular method other than that expressed by Virgil Thomson, who was once music critic for the New York Herald-Tribune. He was fond of writing what he called "portraits"--musical sketches of people he knew. When asked how he did this, Thomson replied: "I just look at you and I write down what I hear."

So there you have it. And this month, I listened to what our pal and accomplished turner

and woodworker Starke Smith had to say and wrote it down.

Starke (and that's not "mad" or "neked") is always fun, good natured and chatty so writing down what I heard was not particularly hard. And his sweet and charming wife Jean helped out immensely by reminding Starke of some of the funnier incidents in his life that might give us a better peek into his long and happy adventure.

What is most striking is that the young Airman Starke was part of an Air Force rescue of American citizens in the Congo in the early 1960s when that former Belgian colony's independence turned nasty. Although they probably never met, Starke was there under unusual circumstances when Fred Williamson, president of Central Virginia Woodturners, was the young son of missionaries who were amongst those being evacuated. We're all glad they both got out safely.

And speaking of the two men, Fred and Starke undoubtedly overlap in many ways, but the most evident one to me is their self-reliance.

Starke grew up in Augusta County and took to woodworking and electronics at any early age. After he finished his hitch with the Air Force as an "Airborne Radio Technician," Starke built on these interests in his careers as a quality control manager in a number of electronics firms and as a furniture maker. One of his last jobs before retirement was at a mill near Waynesboro that made Shaker-style furniture for the Thorn company in Charlottesville.

Starke was one of the founding members of our club and also plays a major role with the Central Virginia Woodturners. If you need glues, Danish oil or sandpaper of various kinds, he's the go-to man. He's also one of our main suppliers of the wood that our silent auction table groans under at all our meetings.

He and Jean live in the lovely home they purchased in 1973 a few miles from Fisherville in what they call Walnut Dale. They both have a great passion for birds and have made their 2 and one-quarter acre property "wild life

WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009



friendly.” Starke is responsible for getting my wife Jody involved in raising meal worms to feed those hungry Blue Birds which will hang around all winter with this rich protein enticement.

Starke’s big shop has to be seen to be truly appreciated. As he told me, “Wood has a

pictures don’t begin to do justice to the amount of wood stored upstairs, downstairs, and in the maid’s chamber, if there were a maid. And that doesn’t include the various tree trunks that one can find in the “corral” part of the

for him. He also seems to provide the resting place, sometimes temporary and sometimes permanent, of trees that have been cut in the area and that would have otherwise been destined for some landfill.

And fortunately for us, he’s always putting out the call to come on down with your chainsaw to get the latest special. “Generous” is his middle name.



When not collecting raw logs or finished wood from the mill, making fine furniture or turning world-class bowls on his One-Way 2436, Starke and Jean play loving



yard. Starke has made arrangements with the local Blue Ridge Lumber mill to set aside “unusual” wood



way of finding me.” If you can’t locate what you’re looking for at Starke’s, you can’t find it. My



grandparents to their four grandchildren--Haley, Anna, Mason and Lindsey. Both daughters, Elaine and Emily, live close-by so the Smiths

WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

have adult kids and grandkids popping in all the time.



As is the case with several other couples in the club, membership is a family affair for Starke and Jean. The lady of the house, who had her own rewarding career as a Registered Nurse before retirement, is also the official photographer of everything that comes off Starke's lathe or his table saw. They have a well-lit space in the upstairs of the shop where Jean takes excellent photos with her new Sony Cybershot 10-megapixel camera.

She's also an avid caretaker of "own root"

Although not green or made of wood or with a distinctive rose scent, the Smith's latest "toy" is a white 1999 Porsche Boxster. It's officially Jean's motorcar, but Starke gets to drive if he's been well behaved.



We are all most fortunate to know these two gentle folk of accomplishment. They are the people we think of when we say we are blessed with the best of friends.

May you both enjoy many more years of your rewarding lives.

heritage roses and has a variety throughout the property, the oldest being the "mannerly climber" Sombreuil dating back to 1851.

WOODTURNERS OF THE VIRGINIAS

03 OCT 2009

The November Centerfold

Next month, we'll visit the shop of Bill Millett who lives west of Mt Jackson with his dear wife Josephine, a premier quilter. Bill will be celebrating a special birthday on 1 November which Josephine has referred to as "Lordy, lordy, guess who's going to be two times forty." In addition to being a world traveler with his wife, he is also a turner, stained glass creator, and picture framer. Last but not least, Bill is a master craftsman with his scroll saw, so stay tuned for a glimpse into the always active and exciting life of the Milletts.



*Wishing you safe and
rewarding turning, I leave
you with this final thought:*

***"Never change diapers
in mid-stream."***

Don Marquis