

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

New things to say in this column seem to come hard in some months. The wife says I should say something "presidential" . . . Four score and seven days ago I had nothing to fear but fear itself but asked not what the AWG could do for me but what can I do for the AWG. That's Bad — Bad!

I am assured that Leonard has discussed Kerry McCalla's resignation elsewhere in this newsletter but I will have to say a few words about it. The AWG is surely going to miss him. His contribution to the Guild over the years has been outstanding. His talks on antique tools have taught us all a great deal about the history of hand tools. Kerry, we wish you the best of luck in your new job and if you find a ready source of cheap walnut somewhere in Nashville let your old AWG buddies know.

If anyone is looking for a contemporary style house with a great shop location in the basement I am sure that Kerry would like to hear from you.

Roy Bates is the new treasurer. Roy and I joined the club about the same time (several years ago but I forget how many). He has an accounting background so I am sure we have a good man handling the cash!

Don't forget to mark your calendar for September 22, 1990. Henry Barrow will present a one day seminar on WOOD FINISHING. All woodworkers seem to want to learn more about the art of finishing, here's your chance. We will publish all the details next month.

NEXT PROGRAM AUGUST 9, 1990 • 7:00 p.m.

Most of us know, but for the benefit of some of our newer members, our Guild has participated in Toys for Tots almost from its conception. It was the wisdom of its founding fathers that the Guild should engage in some form of community work and after surveying the countryside they arrived at the conclusion Toys for Tots was the best way to meet what they felt was an obligation to contribute the skills of its members to the community. The first one I (editor) remember required each member to make small toys or games and these were turned over to the TFT folks; the receiving area was the Liberty National Building on 20th Street South. The next year we made some larger things, as well as small, and the receiving area was a room provided by the Hyatt Hotel at the Civic Center, and we had a covered dish dinner to make the event more festive. After dinner, the toys were turned over to the Hotel. At that time the Hyatt participated with other Hyatts around the country by having the World's Largest Office Party, at which the Rich & Famous (to borrow a title) bid for our toys in auction and there was raised some \$3,000 which was given to the TFT people to buy toys for their Christmas program. The next year we participated in the auction again, but due to poor publicity few people came and the proceeds were a little under \$1,000. After that experience we decided to make nice toys, games, small furniture, etc. and deliver them directly to the TFT. This has worked well. Year before last

we had about 500 toys, last year between 700 and 800, and this year the goal is 1,000. The sequence of the events in the early years may not be exactly right, but is hopefully close enough to present the picture. As of June 30th we had 175 active members — and if each member makes just five toys each we will meet our goal. However, for each member who doesn't get in on the fun that means those who do will have to make a few more than five to meet the quota. Ben Neighbors has been our Chairman the past two years and has graciously accepted the job again. He is bringing us our program this month and if he does as good a job of motivating us as he has in the past, you will go home from that meeting enthusiastic about getting into the program.

LAST PROGRAM — JULY 1990

Gene Benitez, our program chairman, invited the Porter-Cable people to bring us a program on machine and tool maintenance. Messrs. Craig McClure and Mike Franklin represented P-C. Craig is the manager of their outlet in Birmingham, and Mike is their Senior Service Technician. Between the two of them we were impressed with the need to pay more attention to our tools so that they last longer and so they perform as designed. Mentioned, for instance, Mike has seen many electric hand tools with the wire having come loose inside the casing because the owner carried it around by the wire. We were told about the importance of changing the brushes in our tools, and how we should remove dust

from the brushes so it won't overheat, and that there are some 174 grades of brushes to choose from and that we should be sure we are getting the right ones. The idler on our portable belt sander should be greased periodically; and he suggested we might want to replace the wear plate on the sander with a graphite plate for better results. When changing brushes use a gun brush to clean out the brush hole; don't use silicone lubricants; use compressed air for blowing dust out of them; if the tool has a worm gear, check oil daily; belt pulleys should be perfectly lined up and this may be checked with a straight edge. On the subject of safety he suggests we use push sticks, stand to one side of blade of table saw so kick backs won't hit you, don't wear loose clothes and watch the wires to machines so as not to trip over them or accidentally unplug them. We appreciate Porter-Cable's sharing their expertise with us.

WE HAVE A NEW TREASURER

Due to the transfer of Kerry McCalla to Nashville we had to scrounge around and find a new and honest Treasurer. Now that may not sound like much of a task, and thankfully it didn't turn out to be a task at all, because Roy Bates agreed to have his name placed in nomination. It was, and immediately a motion was made to close the nominations, and upon calling for a vote, he was unanimously elected. Roy is also a fine woodworker and faithful member of the Guild, and we welcome him to his official position.

LOST — SECRETARY-TREASURER

Kerry McCalla has been the only Secretary the Guild has had, we think. He has kept up with the roster of members, produced the mailing labels placed on your newsletter, provided the printer with names for name tags, and so many other services too numerous to mention. Kerry and Lynn are natives of Ohio, but when Kerry went to Vanderbilt for graduate studies he met Lynn who

departured for Washington. We are proud of Mike and Judy and glad we number them one of us.

immediately, if not sooner, lassoed him before he got away and thus began the McCalla clan which begot Kevin. Lynn was working for the Telephone Company, and upon completion of his studies Kerry became employed by them. After some service in Jackson, Tennessee they were transferred to Birmingham and they have been here 13 years. A very important contribution to our educational advancement has been Kerry's Antiques. He has a fabulous collection of such tools and over the past several years of sharing them with us has not brought the same tool twice. We will miss Kerry, but we wish him well and continued success as well as Lynn and Kevin. We hope he can manage a visit with us occasionally, and when he is able to do so will bring a tool or two with him. As an expression of our appreciation for Kerry's contributions to the Guild, he was presented with a Record #7 Hand Plane, the one known as the Jointer Plane since it is some 22" long. (Oh yes, we forgot to mention the fact Kerry became Treasurer also the first of this year, thus the title Secretary-Treasurer and we appreciate the job he has done with this, too.)

KERRY'S ANTIQUES

This may be, but hopefully not, Kerry's last sharing of his tools with us. This month he brought several wooden braces (you know, brace & bit) like they had before the metal ones were produced. To strengthen the weak turns in the handle they put brass plates on each side which also made them pretty to look at. One of those he displayed was a Record #7, a beautiful piece indeed. At one time they were called Bit Stocks; were made by hand; had a square chuck (since you couldn't tighten the chuck); Preston & Sons made them out of Rosewood; an English company made them out of Boxwood and Ebony; Marples (England) called one they made The Ultimatum. As a last show piece, Kerry produced a telescoping spyglass he picked up at a scientific instruments show "just because I thought it was pretty and I wanted it." He did not mention what Lynn thought of this purchase. Thanks, Kerry.

CONGRATULATIONS MIKE ROY

Congratulations are indeed in order for Mike. He received a phone call the other day from the White House inviting him to be present for the signing of Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This mental and physical disability bill was signed July 26th in Washington by President Bush and Mike was invited to be the representative from Alabama. It prohibits discrimination in the workplace and provides for accessible transportation. Our local TV station did a piece on their

departure for Washington. We are proud of Mike and Judy and glad we number them one of us.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Judy Roy, the lovely wife of Mike Roy, attends our meeting now and then and did so again at the July meeting. Judy works with handicapped people. She asked if any of us would undertake to make a table for a man who wants so desperately to live on his own. The table would have to have a cutout so he could roll his chair up into it and rest his arms on it. It also should have a recess in which to place his food plate and also one for his glass or cup. We are pleased to announce two of our members volunteered to make this a joint project and Ronnie Acton is donating the material. Those are the kind of people our Guild is made of. Thanks, men.

SHOW AND TELL

We had several fine pieces this month. To whet your appetite for making toys, Ben Neighbors and Don Adcock showed toys: a laminated wooden bank with old post office brass door by Frank Jones; two fine clocks by Joe Cleveland; and a bowl made in the turning class. Thanks, fellows.

LIBRARY

It continues to grow. Leon Anderson donated the Work Bench edition of Fine Woodworking last month. You should check out our library before the next meeting. You may be surprised what all is now in it.

FALL SEMINAR

Plans are actively under way to have a fall seminar on a subject indicated by most of you as the thing you want most to know more about — FINISHING. Not too many details are available at this writing but an artist and craftsman from Baltimore will probably be the seminaror for us seminarees. Watch and listen for more about this later.

SAFETY MOMENT

Gene Benitez continues to bring us a brief moment at the close of each meeting on that important topic of safety. This month he showed us Ground Fault Protectors. They come in two styles — Receptacle type and Circuit Breaker Type. It is recommended we use them with all our electric machines or tools as a safeguard against their not being grounded or for any reason they have become ungrounded. Thanks, Gene.

Alabama Woodworkers Guild Newsletter is published monthly for its members and other interested parties. Guild meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday at 7:00 P.M. at Acton Moulding & Supply Co. Information concerning the Guild may be secured by writing P.O. Box 506, Helena, Al 35080 or calling the Editor, Leonard Sanders, at 822-6876.

The International Woodworking Machinery & Furniture Supply Fair - U.S.A. will be holding its annual show in Atlanta at the Georgia World Congress Center August 24-27, 1990. The show hours are 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day. If you register in advance you save \$15 in registration fee. Call (708) 390-2420 for an application form. If you have never attended this show you haven't seen "nuthin" yet, 'cause it's fabulous. If there is a machine that will work on wood you can find and see it here.

**Out of the Woodwork by Jeff Taylor
Why I Still Need a Router**

My new router, an off-brand, is temporarily out of commission. Naturally, jobs requiring a router have multiplied beyond count from the moment it took sick. It only needs one little part, but apparently they first have to mine the ore, forge the steel, ship it to Chingadaville, Venezuela, where they keep the template, make one part, let it cool for a month, and pack it on a mule headed to my house. The smart tool user always buys name brands.

Right now I have to put an ogee on a small oak top for a dictionary stand. Putting the ogee bit in my drill won't work; long ago, when I was young and stupid, I tried it. Almost gave myself another oversize nostril. So, reluctantly, I pull down my old, old router from the shelf marked "Fix Someday," and examine its rusty casing, its floppy shoe with the missing screw, its cracked plastic trigger. The resourceful woodworker always has a backup tool.

Step one: remove the old dull bit from the collet. But it seems to be corroded into the socket. I jiggle and jerk the stubborn little honeymooner, but it won't budge. For the next fifteen minutes, I pry and twist and pull it with pliers, trying to gain a purchase on the son of a gun. Nothing. I hose the collet down with about a pint of rust melter, and pry and twist and pull it with pliers again. No progress.

Losing patience, I clamp the bit in my vise and stick a flatbar under the shoe, levering upwards. Immovable object of stuck crud, meet irresistible force of good right arm. Grunt, strain, heave—POP! The router goes up like a champagne cork and crashes to the concrete floor.

It doesn't rattle too much when I pick it up. After cleaning out the bit grabber with emery cloth, I'm satisfied it won't pull the same trick with my new ogee bit, which I insert and tighten down. Even with eye protection, however, I want to test it first. I plug it in and put on my goggles. Holding the router low, I

pull the trigger. Remember the cracked trigger? Too bad I didn't notice the bare wire, hungry to shove 110 volts at a goodly amperage into my sweaty finger. My poor digit rides the lightning; once more the router slams to the floor. The safety-conscious power tool operator always unplugs such tools—which throwing them down will also accomplish.

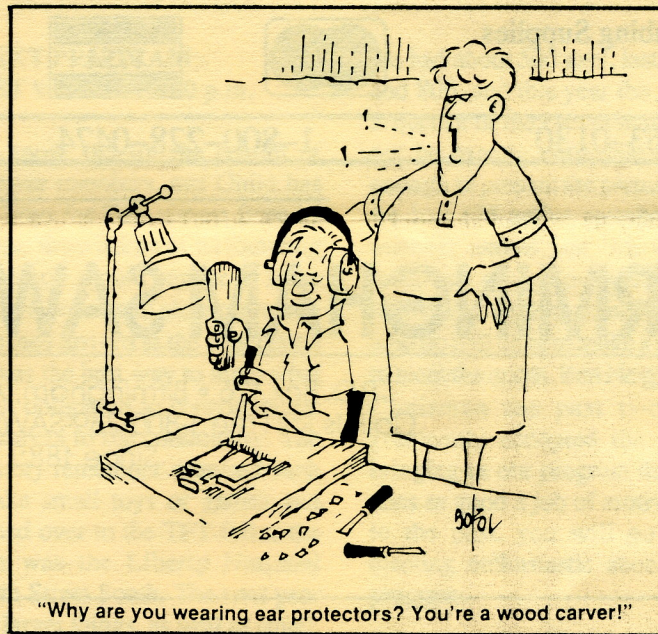
For a second, I consider using a sharp knife to whittle the ogee, or filing my incisors to the right shape and gnawing on the oak. I also consider driving into town with my other, made in Chad, dud router and forcing the salesman to fix it right now, at gunpoint if necessary.

But instead I put on a rubberized glove, determined to willpower this thing to work. The persevering wood artist always finds a way. My oak panel is clamped down, face-sanded and ready to go. Insulated from the machine's many treacheries, I start routing. The motor only smokes and sparks a little, but it makes a wobbly hooting sound,

like an owl in a centrifuge. Oddly enough, the ogee turns out pretty well on the first pass. I'm not unhappy with it, not until I blow away the shavings and a deep parallel scratch appears like magic.

I unplug the router and examine the shoe; there it is, a tiny little pimple of rock embedded in the plastic. Now I've got to sand the panel all over again.

It's unwise, even dangerous to use slightly broken or very worn power tools, especially when you're in the grip of powerful emotions like rage. It is not enough to put them aside, or even to throw them away. The wise craftsman first ascertains that the tool is indeed unusable, as I've done, before he puts it on the floor and strikes it repeatedly with the sledgehammer, so that no one will ever again mistake it for a tool. The careful workman then gathers up the fragments and throws them in the garbage pail with all his might, muttering loudly to himself. And then the careful, thorough, resourceful, bad-router-terminator remembers his new ogee bit.



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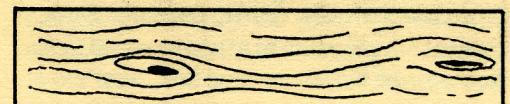
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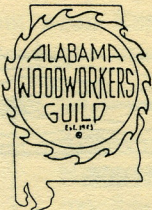
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