

# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XI NUMBER 10 OCTOBER 1993

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Ed Sheriff . . . . . Vice President  
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Frank Jones  
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I know that we all have to agree that Dale Lewis is an exceptionally talented woodworker. But he is even more than that! I can't imagine someone with all these designs running around in their head, let alone with the talent to bring them to reality. Even if his pieces weren't great, just think of the time that it takes to complete a project. Dale is very productive even while working full time. We are truly fortunate to have Dale as one of our group.

Now is the time to get busy on your toy making! The toys should be brought to the November meeting. If you have additional toys, bring them to the December 4th Christmas party. The following is excerpted from a brochure that was distributed last year concerning Toys for Tots.

Q: What is TOYS FOR TOTS?

A: Each year, members of the Alabama Woodworkers Guild make more than 800 wooden toys that are given at Christmas to children who might otherwise not have any gifts.

Q: Who distributes the toys?

A: Three Groups: The Children's Hospital of Alabama, The Helena Police Department, and the United States Marine Corps Reserve.

Q: Can I pick the group that gets the toys I make?

A: Children's Hospital and the Helena Police Department hand pick individual toys for specific children,

so designating a group is not practical. Since the Marines serve many children, they will pick the child to fit the toy. You can be assured that the toys will be cherished by the children who receive them.

Q: Any suggestions on what I should make?

A: Push toys, cars & trucks, and other traditional toys are always popular. However, small tools and other items that help small people cope in a big people's world are also welcome. Give some thought to toys for girls and boys as well as toys that would be used by both. If you want more ideas, the Guild Library has several books with plans that you can borrow without charge.

Q: Are there any guidelines on construction?

A: Yes. Make them sturdy! Kids play rough and broken toys bring no joy. Hardwoods like maple and cherry hold up well and don't splinter easily. Round all corners and soften edges. Also, any parts that come off must be too large to be swallowed (the Guild has a go/no go gauge for this purpose). In the past we requested that all wood should have a durable, clear-coat finish, however this year Children's Hospital mentioned the need to have some unfinished toys so the children could paint them as part of their therapy. You be the judge of what should be done. Remember, the quality of the toys you produce is a direct reflection of the Guild.

Q: When should I start?

A: Right Now! That way if you run into a problem, you can bring it to the next guild meeting and get lots of help from the membership.

See you at the October meeting.

Fred

## NEXT PROGRAM OCTOBER 14, 1993 • 7:00 PM

There is one aspect of being a woodworker that makes most of us shrink in horror and just plain wish we didn't have to engage in — and that is FINISHING. There are so many different finishes available it is difficult to select the right one for the project we are working on. There are different ways to apply the finishes so it is sometimes difficult to select the right method of application. If you remember, back in June, we had a really great program where we were treated to methods and types of finishes by Ed Ramsey and Jim Caldwell. That program was not finished that night because we ran out of time. So, we are going to finish that program and we have a line-up of finishers who know their "stuff" and who have put a finish on boards of different kinds and of different finishing materials. Now that you know what the program is you need to know who it is: Frank Jones, Dale Lewis, Ivan Kronberg, Fred Baker and Walter Burnett. With a motley crew like that how can you lose by being there?

If you will refer to your September Newsletter you will find the program billed as one not to be missed. The billing was right. It was an outstanding presentation. Down through the years DALE LEWIS has brought his works to our meeting for the show and tell part of the meeting and he has entered his works in all of our annual shows. There have been comments about some of his tables and chairs to the effect "how does he dream up those designs." After his slide presentation, where he explained how he came to design some of his works, we came away with a new appreciation for this artist. We learned, for example, he was first an artist and his studies in art gave him the ability to translate ideas into form applying the principles of balance, line, shape, texture value, color, variety, rhythm, utility, strength, size, character of wood, grain, finish, and wearability. How many of us have given attention to all of these considerations? In addition to that he has only been woodworking some twelve or thirteen years. Included in his slides (very well made slides) were bowls, chairs, benches, end tables, coffee tables, all of which were unique in design and superbly made and finished. We appreciate Dale's setting up his slide equipment and sharing with us many of the things we all should be taking into consideration when we take beautiful wood and work with it. Thanks, DALE.

Yes, it is that time of year again. President Baker announced the formation of the committee with Ed Ramsey, Chairman, assisted by Charley Brown and Jerry Vines. With all the talent in our Guild these men will have a tough task to perform.

### SHOW AND TELL

This is a popular interlude in our meetings, and this month was no exception. Leading off was ETHEL K. OWEN (the "K" is for Knowledgeable). Ethel, our master basket maker had two items — a truly "different" basket made of pine needles and an Indian drum made from a gourd with skin stretched tightly over the top; CHARLES YERBY displayed a well crafted cherry table; a mahogany Pembroke table by BOB COLLUM; a weed pot by Mike Key; an elm bowl by IVAN KRONBERG; JERRY VINES showed a trout he had carved and finished realistically; and JACK PERRY shared with us a child's rocker made in 1888 and passed down from his grandparents; and Pres. BAKER (the gadgeteer) demonstrated a device called an AngleWright — a device used to set a table saw for cutting compound angles. All in all, a very fine show and tell.

### THE SHOW

In the September Newsletter we listed all the ribbon winners and included as many pictures of the entries as we could. We also told you we could not announce the winner of this year's PEOPLE'S CHOICE award. Visitors to the gallery during the two weeks of the show were asked to evaluate the objects they had seen and give us the benefit of their appraisal of the best item in the show. The five who received the most votes by the public were, in reverse order: (5) John Lord, (4) Dale Lewis, (3) Ben Neighbors, (2) Ed Sheriff, and (1) ED RAMSEY. Congratulations to each and all of you. You have exhibited what our Guild and woodworking is all about — learning to create useful or beautiful objects from wood.

Lest we forget, Ronnie and Sue Acton are our hosts each month for our meetings. Not only do they furnish the space, they furnish the air conditioning, fans, coffee and cookies, and a completely friendly atmosphere for us. Not only all of the above, they return to us the profit (\$68 this month) they would have made on materials and supplies we purchase from them. This money is designated for defraying at least part of the expense in having professional seminars for our members each year. If the opportunity presents itself, it would be well if we told them how much we appreciate them.

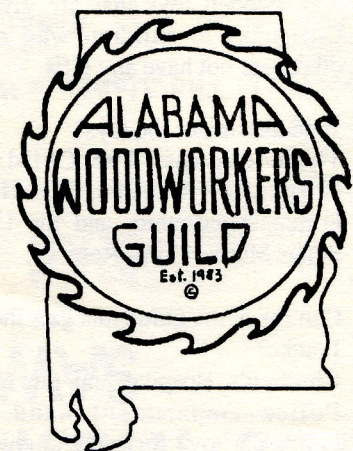
### NEED A PIECE OF MAHOGANY?

There is a lovely young lady who has a luscious chunk of Mahogany she bought for a mantel but didn't use. It is 12/4, by 10" wide and 5 1/2' long. Her name is Tammy Black at 979-0757 and she wants \$60 for it.

### CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Pres. Baker announced the Hospital has need of some talented woodworkers to work on a project to construct a castle for use in the Festival of Trees at the Civic Center in December. They requested we help them on Saturday, September 11th. Well, Pres. Baker was the only one to make an appearance, and he worked all day and didn't quit until about 5:30 PM. This is not intended to be too critical of our members, but just a reminder we have tried all down through the years to be as sensitive to our community needs as we could. There will be another work day shortly and if you receive a call requesting your help, please respond.

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.



## CHRISTMAS PARTY

No, we don't think it is too early to be thinking about this really fine bash we have each year. MARY SPANOS is Chairman of the party which will be held on Saturday, December 4th, and she will be calling on some of you to give her a hand. Do it, if she calls you.

## GOLF CAPS

No, we aren't going to bring golf into our Guild, but we plan to order a new supply of caps with our logo on them. We did this several years ago along with golf shirts and tee shirts with our logo thereon. This was popular then, and we believe it will be again. Watch for their appearance at a future meeting.

## TOYS FOR TOTS

What can we say that hasn't already been said about our yearly participation in this wonderful program. Just a reminder — we divide our production of toys with three entities: Children's Hospital, U.S. Marine Corps and the Helena Police Department. The some 900 toys we made last year were all distributed to needy or hospitalized children. There can't be anyone among us who is not sensitive to a child waking up on Christmas morning and having nothing under the tree (if he or she even has a tree). It is great fun to make toys. They say men have more fun making toys than children have playing with them. Children's Hospital say they have need of unpainted picture frames (the children put pictures in them), unpainted cars, trucks and trains, jewelry boxes or boxes with lids of all sizes, mostly small. The Marine Corps and Helena Police Department just want toys. Pull toys, jigsaw puzzles, chairs, tables, bulldozers, trucks, cars, tops, and by now you get the idea — Toys for Tots. Each Guild member is requested to make at least ten toys (we have some that make 100 to 300 each year), and if we do we will meet our stated goal of at least 1,000 toys this year. We are asked to bring them to the November meeting and if you don't have all of yours made by then you may bring them to the Christmas party.

## DOOR PRIZE

You all know how this works — a number between one and the total number of members present is selected by a supposedly neutral member or guest and the name that appears on the sign-in sheet on that number gets the \$15 gift certificate. We know you won't believe this but guess who asked Mike Key's little daughter to select the number, and when she did, guess whose name was called, yep, you guessed it the President himself, President Fred Baker. No one would ever suggest there was any collusion involved with the procedure. Nice going, Mr. President. Then, Pres. Fred held up some boxes of Gel Stain he had conned someone into donating to the Guild. So, the same procedure was followed and five members were rewarded with cans of the gel stain and they were: Messrs. Griffin, Yerby, Patton, Tilson and McGuire.

## EAST TENNESSEE WOODWORKERS GUILD

We have received a notice that our neighbors to the north are holding a Master Woodworkers Show, October 22-24 at the Candy Factory, 408 - 10th Avenue on the World's Fair Site, Knoxville, Tenn. If you have any interest in showing your work there or need more information you may call Michael Perrin, 615-933-8436, or write to The Guild, P.O. Box 5282, Knoxville, TN 37918.

## NOMINATIONS FOR 1994

President Baker appointed a nominating committee of Ed Ramsey, Chairman, Charles Brown, member and Jerry Vines, member. The results of their deliberations (and arm twisting) is as follows:

### CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION

Edwin P. Sheriff	President
Richard C. Brewer	Vice-President
John F. Parker	Secretary-Treasurer
Leonard Sanders	Newsletter Editor

### DIRECTORS

Frank Jones  
Mike Key  
Ben Neighbors  
Harold Phillips  
Mary Spanos

## EX-OFFICIO DIRECTORS (Former

### Presidents)

Baker, Fred  
Brooks, Nelson  
Caldwell, Jim  
McRee, Spruce  
Sanders, Leonard

## FLATTENING THE FACE OF A BOARD WITH A HANDPLANE

Like most other woodworking skills, handplaning wide boards is daunting only until you give it a serious try. All you need are one or two well-tuned planes, some elbow grease and a couple of days of practice.

The two planes I use are a scrub plane and a bench plane. The bench plane alone would be sufficient, but the scrub plane saves time and effort by removing wood quickly from seriously cupped boards. Scrub planes are made for rough work, and there is no trick to tuning them beyond sharpening the curved blade.

A bench plane is a more precise instrument, which requires greater attention to get optimum performance. The sole should be flat and polished, the blade sharp enough to shave with and the frog adjusted by trial and error for the best result. (For more information on choosing and tuning bench planes, see FWW #99, pp. 67-71.) Bench planes come in a wide range of sizes. For flattening boards, I prefer a 14-in. jack plane, but I know other woodworkers who like to work with a longer, heavier plane, such as a 22-in. jointer plane.

To set up for planing, I clamp the work on a flat benchtop, making sure that nothing extends above the board's surface. A bench with dogs and a tail vise is best, but you can also wedge a board between stops that are either clamped or screwed to the bench. I usually place the convex side up, so the board sits securely on the bench. Also, I find it easier to take down a center hump than to attack raised edges.

Using winding sticks and a long straight edge, I locate and mark the board's high spots and determine the degree of twist. Winding sticks are simply sticks of uniform width placed across each end of the work, parallel to each other. Sighting along their tops reveals the exact degree of twist in a board. Once I've marked all high spots with a pencil, it's time to plane.

I set my scrub plane's blade so that it protrudes about 1/16 in. beyond the sole. I plane diagonally across the grain in parallel strokes, removing wood quickly and minimizing the chance of severe tearout, which would most likely occur if I went with the grain. Then I go back and plane on the opposing diagonal until I've covered the board. If I didn't have a scrub plane, I would begin flattening the board by using the jack plane in the exact same manner, but the process would just take longer.

When the work is more or less flat across, I switch to my bench plane, planing with the grain along the length of the board, check for cup, bow or twist every once in a while and again mark any high spots with a pencil. It's important to avoid planing low spots because they'd just become that much lower. If my plane starts to make dust instead of shavings, I resharpen the blade. I find that rubbing paraffin on the sole of a metal plane cuts down on friction tremendously.

My straightedge and winding sticks tell me when a board is flat, but it's evident to, when I'm able to take long, lovely shavings over the full length of the board.

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