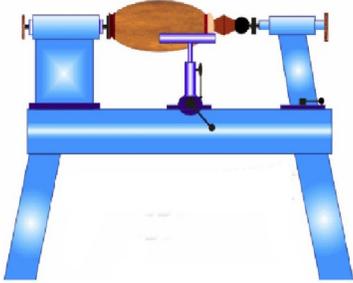


GATWT TURNINGS



NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE WOODTURNERS

<http://www.goldentrianglewoodturners.org/>

May 2009



Our next meeting is 7:00pm April 27th
NOTE MEETING DATE CHANGE!!!

After listening to the discussions regarding the newsletter at our April meeting I am using the editor's prerogative and implementing a few changes. You will find five new areas: Editor's bLOG, New Members, Articles of Interest, Bring Back Winners and Classified Ads. I have deleted the treasurer's report as it is probably not advisable to have this available to the general public.

In the Editor's bLOG I intend to say a few words regarding club activities, personal observations and general information that hopefully will be of interest. I would also like to include a short biography of a club member so we can get to know each other better. To accomplish this I will be asking one individual each month to provide me with an autobiography of themselves and a photo. I will not twist arms for this if you do not personally wish to do it. To kick things off I will "volunteer" to be the first victim.

This month you will find an article about Virgil Leih, a woodturner that specializes in extremely large turnings. There are also links to his home page and a youtube video... check it out!

The classified add section will give club members an opportunity to place an add for any woodturning associated item they have for sale or want. Please email these to me at least 10 days before the next meeting. The adds will run for one month unless you reinstate them.

A couple of notes regarding distribution of the newsletter. I generate the newsletter in OpenOffice.org Draw format and provide it to John Solberg in a Adobe Acrobat .pdf format. This is as "universal" a format as is available. John then emails the letter to all registered member of our club and also places it on our web site. If you are unable to open the newsletter file you will not be reading this! Since you are reading this you obviously have opened the file or have a printed copy from somewhere. If you can not open the file there is a free Acrobat Reader program that you may download from Adobe. This is a very safe web site and download. Download here <http://get.adobe.com/reader/> . The default is for Windows but you may select any operating system before download here <http://get.adobe.com/reader/otherversions/> . If you want a printed copy of the newsletter simply click on the  icon or select "print" from the "file" menu. Having some printed copies available at the meetings for visitors and non-internet equipped members is being discussed by our club's board. Please realize that printing seven or eight color pages is expensive and time consuming. So if you want a printed copy and have the capability to print it please do so.

Editors bLOG continued

Now for the Bio.

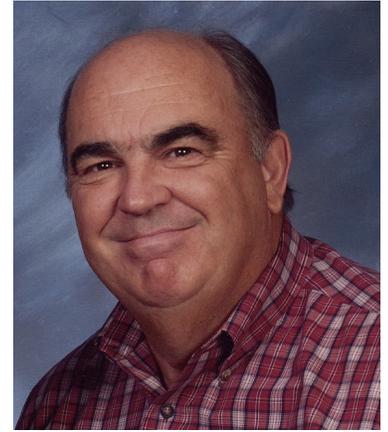
My name is Glynn Cox. I was born in Shreveport, Louisiana and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I attended the University of New Mexico majoring in Electrical Engineering and graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington in Mechanical Engineering. I married my childhood sweetheart, Patricia, 45 years ago. We have two children, Sheryl and David and three wonderful grandchildren. Pat and I enjoy traveling by RV and lately have started doing some cruises. I am a member of First Baptist Church Hurst.

I retired 5 years ago from a 37 year career with Bell Helicopter where I was in charge of Customizing Engineering. In my job I traveled to 34 foreign countries working with customers on their custom configurations.

I have always been a "hands on" type of person and was tutored from an early age by my dad in the art of fixing and building everything. I have not deviated from that as I not only enjoy woodturning but also "flat wood work", metal work, antique restoration and electronics... too many hobbies. When I retired I told myself that I was finally going to learn to turn wood and have now been actively doing that for about 4 years.

Pat and I live in the northern part of Keller where I have a 800 square foot shop that houses all my toys including a Powermatic 3520B lathe and a Jet mini.

So now I have broken the ice, I may be asking YOU next.



Neal's NEWS

Our demonstrator for May will be none other than the world famous Al Stirt.

We are very fortunate to have Al Stirt demonstrate turning, carving and design techniques at our next meeting on April 27. Al's works are on display at numerous museums, including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. His demonstration will focus on Sgraffito platters. He will turn a platter with a wide rim which will then be painted and carved. Turning beads and coves on faceplate work as well as developing and carving patterns will be demonstrated and discussed.

In Al's own words:

I consider myself a "bowl maker" more than a wood turner because, although the turning process fascinates me, it is the resulting bowl that commands my interest. From the earliest times bowls have had meanings for people beyond the purely utilitarian. The bowl as vessel has a resonance deep within the human psyche. I have always thought of each piece that I make as a composition utilizing elements of pattern, line, weight, texture and form. Even in the most simple pieces I try to find a harmony of grain and shape. I seek a balance in my work between the dynamic and the serene. By playing with the tension created by combining the circle's perfection with the energy of pattern I am trying to make pieces that have life. I use patterns, whether created by grain structure or organic fluting & carving or repeated geometric shapes, to develop harmony in each of my pieces. I find myself always looking for a new means of expression within the turned form.



photo: Dave Brown



President's Patter

It is not every month that we get an opportunity to learn from a woodturner with the experience and talent of Al Stirt, but thanks to Gene Colley and his Copper Canyon Studios that is what we get this month. Because of his schedule at Gene's studio we elected to move the date of our May meeting up a week so that we could accommodate Al Stirt. The May meeting will now be April 27. Mark your calendars and tell your friends. We are in for a woodturning treat!

At our last meeting the club voted to purchase two new mini lathes so that we could support functions outside of our normal once a month meeting. First use of them will come the last weekend in April with the Denton Arts and Jazz Festival. We again this year will be turning tops and cars for the kids of Denton. We need your help to make that weekend a success. We only had two people sign up at the last meeting. Please consider coming out and lending a hand that weekend. We can't do it without you. The second opportunity to use the new lathes will come on May 16th. We have scheduled an "OPEN SHOP" from 9:00 to Noon that day at the famous Peter Tkacs shop. We are open to suggestions as to how that morning should be organized so let us know what you would like to do, see or learn. All suggestions welcome.

For those of you at our last meeting know we were able to get a portion of our Audio Visual equipment up and running. It was a big improvement and allowed for better visibility for everyone. We are in serious need of one or two people to step up and help with that equipment. Please don't just sit back and wait for someone else to help. It might not get done. In order to improve our monthly meeting for everyone we need your help. Please take an active role in your club and step up and help us with this effort.

See you April 27

John Solberg

Welcome New Members

Chuck Harding from Corinth

&

John Standridge from Haslet

UPCOMING EVENTS

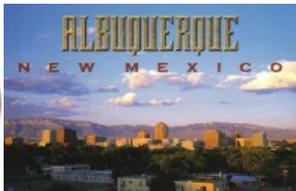
DENTON ARTS & JAZZ FEST



Hear the sounds! Experience the art! Taste the flavors! Revel in the colors! Absorb the exhilaration! An encounter you won't forget!

The Denton Arts & Jazz Festival is a FREE 2 1/2 day event held in the heart of the city, beautiful Quakertown Park . Over 2,200 performers on 6 stages, fine arts and crafts, children's art activities, food and games, and four hundred festival members volunteer their time each year for this exciting annual event on the last, full weekend in April.

Again this year GTWT will have a booth with lathes turning out cars and tops. Volunteers to control the tools to make the cars and tops are desperately needed. Contact John Downs for more information, schedule and signup.



The AAW 2009 Symposium is being held in Albuquerque, New Mexico this year. The dates are June 26th thru 28th. This year's symposium features many internationally known demonstrators along with a chance to win the raffle.

Take time to visit Old Town Albuquerque, the Sandia Peak Tram or the great art studios of Santa Fe.

It is only a 11 hour drive (or less depending on the weight of your foot and bladder capacity).

Go to <http://www.woodturner.org/sym/sym2009/> for more information.

Freedom Pen Turnathon

On July 25 Wood World is sponsoring a Freedom Pen Turnathon at their store in Dallas. Wood World continues to support our club and this would be a good opportunity to return that support.



Southwest Association of Turners Symposium is being held in Wichita Falls on October 16th thru October 18th.

Several outstanding demonstrators are being featured including Stuart Batty, Mike Mahoney, Jimmy Clews and others.

You really need to attend this one. It is close, inexpensive and has great events. Go to <http://www.swaturners.org/welcome/welcome.shtml> for more information.

Empty Bowls

It is not too early to start turning bowls for the October Empty Bowls program. Our goal this year is 150 bowls. Last year we donated 179. They are counting on our support again this year.

Photo Highlights of last meeting



Bring Back Winners

Terri Sargent
Gene Colley
Chuck Raney
John Solberg

Mickey Morgan
Neal Brand (2)
Peter Tkacs
Sharon Ayers

Bring back winners remember to bring a woodturning related item, preferably one you turned, back next meeting.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The following article appeared in the April 8th edition of the Minneapolis Star Tribune and is reprinted here with their permission

Carving a niche into tree trunks

JOY PETERSEN , Star Tribune

Virgil Leih visits a tree graveyard each week to find something that he might be able to work. His prize isn't the 2,000-pound stump he brings back to his Bloomington shop. Instead, it's the piece of art he creates from within.

The lifelong woodworker began log-turning five years ago -- a process by which he takes discarded tree trunks and turns them into pieces of art. Though some artists use chain saws to carve out a shape, Leih use a chain saw to smooth the outside and inside of a log to make a piece of art. And through research with fellow artists, he believes he's the only person who works this way.

"My deal is all one piece, always tree trunk and there's nothing glued up."

The Edina resident will premiere 20 pieces at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in the "Spring Trunk Show: Art of the Tree" exhibit running Friday to May 4. The artwork will be for sale, ranging from \$4,000 to \$8,000.

Though he's been working on his technique for five years, Leih said, "I was not interested in showing until I thought that this was about as good as I could do."

Steeped in experience

Growing up in a carpentry family, Leih said he was cutting wood on an open saw at the age of 8. He continued working with wood during his 20s in a California door-making shop with German woodworkers. However, his most recent project, a cabin in Ely, Minn., inspired his current works of art.

Through working 80-foot logs into smooth matching pieces to build the cabin, he said, "I really was taken with the beauty of these things."

"This is just an extension of being able still to work full logs, full tree trunks," he said.

The process is meticulous. It takes more than 120 hours per piece and involves transporting 2,000-pound tree trunks, sawing, turning, carving inside and out, sanding, drying, sanding some more, then finishing the pieces.

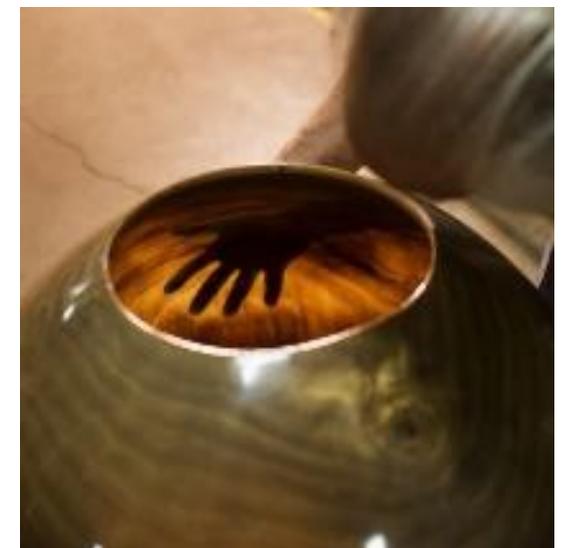
For turning the wood, Leih said he needed something large to carry the weight and length of a massive tree trunk. He said he looked everywhere for a lathe big enough, and when he found a 1917 Oliver lathe in Massachusetts, the rest was history.

"When I saw this advertised, I bought it sight unseen over the phone. I said, 'Do not sell this to anyone,' and, 'I'm wiring you money.'"

He hauled the nearly 8,000-pound machine, which was once used to make pattern molds for Navy ship driveshafts, back to his shop. "This is not made to make vases," he joked.

The lathe cost more than \$10,000, but he said he considers it a small price to pay.

"There were hundreds of men who have worked on this lathe, so it's kind of a privilege, you know, to be an extension of this thing," he said.



Leih article continued

Drying out

After carving the wood into particular shapes, Leih said he knew the wood needed to dry completely or it would crack. He invested \$20,000 in a custom-made kiln, only to find it didn't work.

"I wasted 18 months of my life to make it work."

Leih enlisted the help of his friend of more than 30 years, Dale Bowman, to come up with a solution for drying his pieces.

After using a kitchen microwave oven to dry smaller pieces of wood, Leih and Bowman decided to make a microwave big enough for the pieces.

Bowman, a retired Honeywell temperature control manager, said they had experimented by making a microwave out of an emptied out washing machine, which worked. However, Leih needed something larger. Though they designed it together, complete with three microwave tubes and a makeshift control panel, Bowman said Leih researched how to build the contraption from scratch.

It's in Leih's character to finish what he starts, Bowman said.

"If he has an idea, he's going to drive to a point of getting it done one way or another. I don't know that I've ever seen him start something that he's not completed or failed at," he said.

The final design is a 128-cubic-foot microwave oven that pulls the remaining water out of the wood in one to three weeks.

"There's not anything that I cannot dry," Leih said.

It's all about the finish

For finishing, Leih contacted a man he calls the "guru of wood finish," Mitch Kohanek.

Originally trained at the Smithsonian Conservation and Analytical Laboratory, Kohanek has been teaching wood finishing at Dakota County Technical College in Rosemount for 31 years.

Kohanek said he was intrigued by Leih's ideas and wanted the pieces to have the best finish.

"To complement his pieces, I was more than happy to sit down with him and discuss what some of his options were. And shellac, for what he's doing, there's just no more beautiful finish," he said.

This final step takes 10 coats of shellac and 20 days to finish the procedure.

Leih said he hopes to continue improving his pieces for the next 10 to 15 years, but for now he's looking forward to his April show.

Joy Petersen is a University of Minnesota journalism student on assignment for the Star Tribune.

Link to Mr. Leih's web site <http://virgiltreart.com/Welcome/tabid/377/Default.aspx>

Link to youtube book video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qm9CljA5gyl&featur>

CLASSIFIED ADS



GIANT TENT SALE
AT OUR SPRINGFIELD, MO FACILITY

If you have ever been to a Grizzly® "Scratch & Dent" Tent Sale, you understand why woodworkers and metalworkers form long lines to get in early. Grizzly® will liquidate an impressive quantity of scratched, dented and as-is woodworking and metalworking machines, tools, and accessories, as well as samples and one-of-a-kind items. This is definitely an event that no bargain hunter should miss.

2009 SCHEDULE
Saturday, June 6th
3am - 3pm

All sales are on a first come first served basis, so get there early for the best deals and the largest selection!

POWER TOOL DEMOS
See what's hot while vendors showcase their new tools

STEP INSIDE our spacious showroom for Spectacular Showroom Specials

HOTEL INFO

1815 W. Battlefield Springfield, MO 65807
417-887-9191
fax: 417-887-6154

Click on the map for directions

YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS ONCE A YEAR EVENT!

This is not exactly what I was thinking for a classified ad but it is something that I think would be interesting to many members, particularly tool nuts like me. I have attended this sale for three years and have had a GREAT time. There are some real bargains to be had. They setup several big tents and have rows of saws, lathes, sanders, dust collectors, mills, hand tools, etc. The condition can be "new" or "fell off the back of a semi". Problem descriptions are well provided. I bought a new metal lathe that had a slightly bent drip pan for 50% off and a Vicmarc type wood lathe chuck for \$30 among several other major tools.

This is about an 8 hour drive (453 miles from Denton) and you need to be there at least one hour before opening time as the line gets long. It would be possible to leave Friday evening and get home Saturday evening if you had more than one driver.

If you need any more incentive contact me, Glynn Cox .