

NORTHWEST CORNER WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

April 2008

Next Meeting: April 1, 7:00 PM
Round Table Discussion at 6:15 PM
Gary Holloman's Shop
11966 Westar Lane, Burlington

Phone: 360-770-7203 or 360-387-4174

I-5 exit 230 (Highway 20). Go West on Highway 20 to Higgins Airport Way. Turn right onto Higgins Airport Way and drive north to Peterson Road. Turn right on Peterson Road to Gary's shop.

From the Prez

When we moved to Whidbey ten years ago I had it in mind that I would take up woodworking; something that I was unable to find time for when I was still working. The full extent of my w o o d w o r k i n g knowledge at the time was gleaned a little from my dad, a little from attending the Shoptsmith booths at state fairs and watching a few shows on PBS such as The New Yankee Workshop and the The Router Workshop.

It would be safe to say that my father was a minimalist when it came to woodworking. For tools he had the bare minimum - a Craftsman hand saw, a large and small screwdriver (the old oval wooden handle type), a chisel etc. Somehow, with just these few tools, he was able to take the boards from the packing

crates we used to move from Chicago to Milwaukee and turn them into two beautiful bookcases and a corner cabinet that I have to this day. As I remember, he used a lot of sandpaper and steel wool before varnishing.

April Program Gary Holloman's Shop

Bob Doop will demonstrate the beauties of vaccum clamping. You'll learn how to, when to, and what to use.

Please read important notices on
Page 7

The one tool that he did not have was a scraper. Actually, this is not true. He did have a big old Red Devil scraper that I was taught to use on the storm window frames and board siding of our house. This was not one of my favorite chores and probably the reason that when I was told about how important a scraper is to a woodworker by some of my more

knowledgeable friends that I met when I took up the habit, I was a little skeptical!

Since then, I find myself using a scraper just about all the time. I love power tools but like everything

else, they have their limitations. To get a really smooth surface there doesn't seem to be any tool as easy and efficient to use as a "simple" card scraper.

Perhaps some of you are also new to woodworking and unfamiliar with this wonderful tool. That is where NCWA can help! **Dave Blair**, a NCWA sharpening guru suggested at our last board meeting that NCWA have some "learn from an expert" tables set up at our monthly meetings. Look for more on this subject from Dave further on in this newsletter. I am sure that it will be worth your while! – Walter Meyers

T o d a y ' s Woodworkers Begin in Grade School

When last we met in early March, two of our members who were chosen Woodworkers of the Month told us how they got started in woodworking at the junior high school level. That's probably the starting point for most of us in the Club. **Chuck Robertson** and **Jim Bucknell** had dads with limited tools at home for DIY projects, but both responded with childhood eagerness to "make something out of wood." And, of course, that led to a lifetime interest in woodworking that grew into full time hobbies for each one and a keen interest in devoting time to helping others advance their skills in woodcraft. Chuck is the Chairman of our Education Committee and Jim has volunteered

to take on the duties of Program Chairman. They are both advanced and dedicated to the task of creating beautiful things from wood.

Chuck remembers his first project, a stand for the family TV, and then a corner cabinet, that had the flaws of an inexperienced woodworker. "There were gaps between the cabinet doors," he confessed. Chuck spent 20 years as a community college instructor and retired four years ago. He

has shown us his work before and this time he exhibited a fanciful floor-standing easel of multiple picture frames created from Alowood.

Jim's dad had a Skill saw and some hand tools, which led Jim to his first wood project, a challenging fireplace surround that encouraged him to make other items for the home. He sees his NCWA membership as a constant challenge to determine how you are going to do things as you work your various projects. "As you learn, you make mistakes," he said, "but you are also

advancing your abilities. If you keep pushing yourself then it becomes really rewarding."

– Jay Geisel

Woodfest Bird Houses

Gary Weyers, who heads our Activities committee, reminded members that *bird feeders and bird houses are expected for the forthcoming WoodFest at Sedro Woolley High School.* The items will be auctioned off to the public with proceeds going to the Club. Members are asked to bring their donated work to the school at set-up Saturday morning, April 5, before 9:00AM.

Items from the March Meeting

Bob Doop held a vacuum clamping class that was also "rewarding," but only three students showed up. There were three instructors also to give their

demonstrations on how to assemble these interesting air clamps. Vacuum clamping by refrigerator-style pumps or air compressors allow the woodworker a strong suction that keeps the workpiece “glued” to the bench when routing or performing other functions. The class demo will be repeated by Bob at our April meeting.

Nick Van, who co-chairs the Shows Committee, wants members to again exhibit their best work in the expanded display area assigned to the Club. Two large tables will be provided as well as an area for demonstrating sharpening and displaying joinery samples. WoodFest is an excellent opportunity to see what our youngest woodworkers can build under the school system’s manual training banner. Student entries from several county high school manual training departments vie for awards and honors and the prestigious “People’s Choice Award” given by our Club. Our members also contribute the judging panel that determines the winners. We are judges, not critics, who use a detailed scoring sheet for each entry that helps the student learn how his, or her, project can be improved.

Phil Choquette, co-chairman of Shows, asked for the use of two large tables for WoodFest and requested volunteers to work the tables during the two-day event. Each year we field woodworking questions from the public and inquiries about Club membership. We usually gain six to eight new members from our contributions to WoodFest.

Webmaster **Mike New** has given a new look to our Home Page and has introduced a new feature that he describes as a Forum for Members, a venue to address woodworking problems, concerns, and contributions in the expectation that others will join in the chat to give their help, opinions, or comments to fellow members. Mike sees this on-line help feature as a quick and easy way to link multiple voices to the subject at hand. Mike welcomes your suggestions, photos, and other input.

Larry Tomovick, who heads up the Dealer Discount Program, has a supply of new Hartville Tool catalogs. If you haven’t got yours, see Larry. – Jay Geisel

Bring and Brag.

Larry Tomovick produced a tool that he finds useful in his shop. It’s a small, lightweight steel square that can be carried in an apron pocket.

President **Walter Meyers** brought two identical bedside tables made for a friend. They were his first attempt at drawer-making and he was relieved to finally get the delayed project out the door. Made of red oak, the units were coated with Benite, stained a dark color, and then given a few coats of shellac and followed up with spray-on wax to give them a deep, lustrous semi-gloss finish. Very nice, Walt. – Jay Geisel

NCWA Meeting Goes to the Dogs; Toboggan Racing Leads to Icy Business

Shades of Iditarod! Why did we schedule a dogsled enthusiast for our March program? Well, he’s a nice guy and a former NCWA member who recently rejoined the Club. But?

Bill Dowe is crafty. He enjoys the sport of dogsled racing so much that he saw a business opportunity in making sleds and toboggans. There’s not much call for that, but in a limited market he’s big. Bill showed his sled and toboggan products at the March meeting and we found them to be excellent

Fiction and Fact from Nick’s Almanac

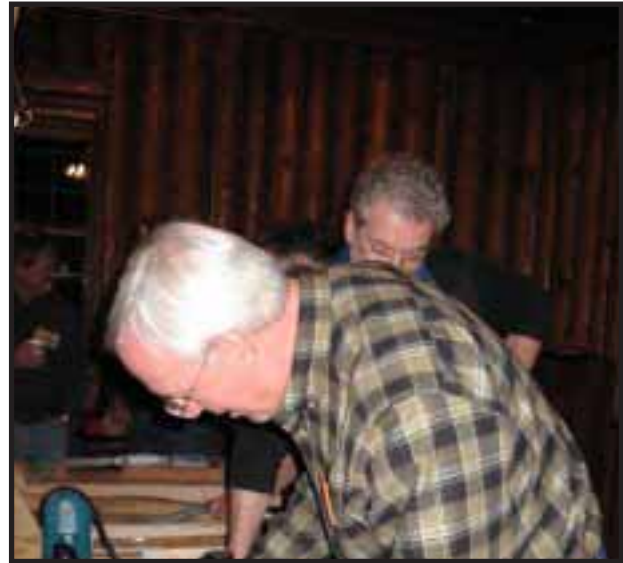
What nine-letter word in the English language is still a word when each of the nine letters is removed one by one? Answer on page 6.

examples of woodcraft. The standard-sized racing toboggan, about six feet long, weighs only 28 pounds but is intrinsically assembled with small-profile pieces of ash and hickory by mortise and tenon joinery and bound by leather at the joints, giving the entire structure amazing strength and fluidity.

Bill's present line of sleds and toboggans, all hand made, grew out of a half-dozen design and construction models. He found after the sixth attempt that he had finally got it right. He's been doing it right for the past 30 years and has an annual market of about four dozen toboggans a year. He also sells replacement parts to his customers who keep him in business by word of mouth.

Bill took us through the manufacturing process from making bent wood ash runners to the joinery and assembly techniques. He brought his special tooling, jigs, forms, and fixtures to show in detail how to make a true-to-spec dog racing sled. The steam box he made is a necessity because several components must be bent to final shape. His

rugged terrain. Throughout the building project, however, lightness is the goal that keeps his racing enthusiasts happy.



Bill Dowe demonstrates the fine art of dog sled fabrication



special jigs for routing the ends of the hardwoods allow him precise mortises and tenons with the proper amount of “give” to keep the framework together while the sled is pulled and racked over

For most of us dogsled racing is a not a well understood sport. But those that do it enter competitions with 4, 6, or 7 trained dogs to a team, racing over snow and ice for distances upwards of 400 miles. It's not a spectator sport, unless you have an airplane and a fur-lined parka. Bill enjoys racing and the love of his dogs.

I surmised that one of the setbacks to the sport is to fall off the runners and watch your team disappear around the bend. “Yeah,” he said, “and they run at more than 20 miles an hour. You could never catch up.” I asked who or what was carried on the toboggan seat during a race and Bill said that space is reserved for a dog that might get injured or sick. —Jay Geisel



From the Education Committee

The club is sponsoring two classes in April. On the fifth, **Bob Doop** will be teaching us about veneering. Whether you plan to do veneering now or next year or never, it is another skill to add to your woodworking repertoire.

Then on April 19th, **Larry Tomovick** will teach us how to do inlays. That is one you won't want to miss! **Cec Braeden's** work bench class has been postponed from its April 12 date. A new date has not yet been chosen.

And **Val Matthews** has volunteered to offer another plane-making class in May if there is enough interest. Are you interested? Call Val at 360-757-7730 or email him at lmattews@wavecable.com.

To sign up for any class, go to the club website (<http://www.ncwawood.org/>), click on the Classes tab and then the Registration Form on the left side of the page. Fill out the form – that's all there is to it.

Next Month

The "El Ripperoff"
A New Age Band Saw Sled

Ron Grant -- a Friend and a Teacher

The following are remarks made by **Bob Doop** at the memorial service for **Ron Grant**, who recently passed away.

"I was asked by the Woodturners and Woodworkers to express some thoughts about my friend, Ron Grant.

Ron had a love for his wife, Barb, for life, for his family and for woodturning. If you look at the body of his work, it includes segmented pieces, sandblasted turnings, dyed embellishments, lacquer, and other art. He stayed with and worked on each, perfecting his skills until he owned the technique and each piece that he produced was gallery quality, each one unique.

Yes, he was a very good turner -- 'was' is not easy to say. In my mind and heart, he will live on through his body of work, through his students with whom he generously shared his techniques, and through the memories that we all carry of him.

He loved the club. To say he was active totally understates his contributions. He was a member for over 10 years and twice served as President, *including this year!* He was the force behind the Woodturners participation in Arts Alive in LaConner, Woodfest in Sedro Wooley, the Deming Log Show, and Tops in the parks in Mt. Vernon and Bellingham. He would trade his demonstrations at other clubs for a demonstrator for our local club.

When I saw him in the hospital last week, he knew he was sick, but expressed no complaints. He wanted to talk about the club, the mentor program, and how to make the classes better.

We talked and laughed. Then he rested. We talked about the club some more -- how to make it better, stronger, and more fun. He had great plans for the woodturning club.

As I talked to club members these past days, two things were always mentioned; Ron's ready smile

and his gift for teaching. Most all of the turners carry with them some important lesson we learned from Ron. If you were new to turning - *he was the 'go to guy.'* If you were more experienced and wanted to get better -- *he was the 'go to guy.'* He would and could show you how to tame the skew and not to cut threads, buy actually make something beautiful.

So, how will I remember Ron? By the things he left with me; the true gift of the teacher always generous to share his knowledge and craft with others, and the gift of a steady encouraging friend.

. . .And what do I think he is doing now? I can imagine him teaching some new friends his special techniques. Maybe he's organizing a club of woodturners. I think he is in a place where none of the turnings will ever again 'break through,' 'fly off the lathe,' or 'blow up.' The lathes are all blue, and there is no sea-fin. That would be heaven to me.

Farewell Good Friend. I hope to meet with you again one day."



Meet new members -- Dan & Kathy Gatza

Answer to question on page 3:

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Starling	Sin
Staring	In
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Thank you, Bob. You spoke well, and from the heart, for all of us.



Meet new member -- Marshall Eberhart

Roundtable Discussion - Basic Cabinet Construction

6:15PM - April 1 just before the membership meeting. Jim Bucknell, Nick Van, Dave Blair and Bob Doop will be there to answer any or all of your questions about building cabinets and/or furniture. Each month, a new topic will be discussed. Come one, come all. It'll be a blast!!

Woodfest

**Saturday and Sunday April 5 and 6
Sedro Wooley High School Gym**

Set up at 8:00AM

Open to the public at 9:00AM

Bring your favorite projects, new or old, for sale or for display only, finished or unfinished, hardwood or softwood.

Display your work for an appreciative public, eager to learn about you, our club and woodworking in general.

View the craftsmanship displayed by the woodworking technology students at up to eight different high schools! Enjoy the work of other vendors and their craftsmanship.

See you there!!!

LOST

Your help is needed. In completing an inventory of the club library, the following books turned up missing.

Practical Design Solutions and Strategies- Fine Woodworking Magazine

Woodwork Joints- Charles Hayward

Router Handbook- Patrick Spielman

The Bandsaw Book- Lonnie Bird

Woodturning Wizardry- David Springett

If you can help locate the wayward books please contact Jim Torrence.

THE WOOD SHED.....

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COMING EVENTS

April 1st	6:15 PM	Roundtable Discussion	Gary Holloman's Shop
April 1st	7:00 PM	Membership Meeting	Gary Holloman's Shop
April 16th	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Farmhouse Restaurant on Hwy 20
April 19th	Noon	Newsletter Deadline	Nick's Email (nvan@verizon.net)
May 6th	7:00 PM	Membership Meeting	Hillcrest Lodge, Mount Vernon

The NCWA is open to all interested woodworkers, and was formed to promote high standards in woodworking, woodworking education and showcasing local woodworking. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Location is announced in the newsletter. Dues are \$30 per year, payable to NCWA, 150 Swinomish Dr., Laconner, WA 98257. Newsletter submissions are welcomed and are due by the 3rd Saturday of the month. Submit to NCWA Newsletter, 24 Jacks Pass Court, Camano Island, WA 98282 or Email to nvan@verizon.net or call 360-387-4174.

2008 Officers and Chairpersons

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