



# NORTHWEST CORNER WOODWORKERS ASSOCIATION

July, 2008

**Next Meeting: July 1, **Bob's Saw Shop****

**2117 King Street, Bellingham, WA**

**7:00PM General Meeting**

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

**I-5 exit 254 (Iowa Street if Northbound, James Street if Southbound). Proceed one block west to King Street. Turn right onto King Street and proceed to 2117 (one block north of Hardware Sales and Service. Bob's Saw Shop is on your left.**

## **From the Vice Prez**

Welcome new members and, of course, old members. We had a good winter education program this year and now it is time to take those great ideas to your shop this summer. My wife said I spend more time going to these education programs than I do working in my own shop.

**WHATEVER!!** We have a great club and great members. But clubs/organizations can become stagnate. So I'm sending out a challenge to all of our members. Look around at the next meeting and encourage members who are new to become more active and bring in some new ideas and fresh suggestions. We all benefit from getting to know each other better.

Invite any new "recruits" into your circle and help them to feel welcome by asking them to car pool, or to attend the next gathering at your shop.

Personal invitations really help to encourage new members to become more active and share their ideas.

We always need more help on our committees, so encourage a new member to join in and share their knowledge and experience. We are also looking for new ideas for meeting programs. Perhaps

one of our new members would offer to organize a program if they were encouraged by one of our long term members.

## **July Program**

**Bob's Saw Shop** will host our meeting on Tuesday, July 1. Bob has been in business for many years and has much to add to our knowledge of saw blade sharpening and shaping. Bob is participating as an advertiser in this newsletter and provides discounts for our membership. Bob takes great pride in providing excellent service and quality workmanship. This will truly be an instructive event.

**Dave Blair** gave an excellent presentation on planes last meeting. Thanks Dave, for all of your efforts and your contributions to the club. Each one of our members has equally unique talent which is what makes our club so successful and fun to be a part of. I'd like to thank all our committee members for doing a great job.

As always, I'm looking forward to seeing all our members at the next meeting. -**Jeff O'Donnell**



Dave Blair explains his planes



Fearless Leader

### June Meeting Cool but Collected

When last we met it was chilly and wet, just the right conditions to keep you in your warm shop on a favorite project. Nothing changed weatherwise as Spring advanced, so it was not surprising that we had a really fine turnout for our June evening meeting at Hillcrest Lodge in Mount Vernon. Members crowded into the hall to see and hear **Dave Blair** talk about his hand planes. Dave has a fantastic collection of these basic woodworking tools, and he knows how to keep them in top working condition.

It was another monthly meeting to feature one of our own members' expertise with woodworking

methodology, and Blair did an excellent job exhibiting and explaining the virtues of about four dozen wood planes, some quite rare, but all sharp and in good working condition.



A small sample of Dave's collection

Our new leader, **Jeff O'Donnell**, presided and called for an introduction of several guests (and subsequent new members). Committee chairmen gave their reports in the business session prior to the program. **Jim Torrence**, Library, announced that we are now focusing our purchases on DVD's

rather than books, and he reported that six new titles would be acquired within the next 30 days.

**Jim Bucknell**, Programs, will be holding his first of two sessions on cabinet-making at his shop. He announced that a group of six students would construct a utility cabinet over the course of the two sessions, concluding on Monday night, June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Meanwhile, **Gary Weyers**, Internal Activities, reminded members of the **2X4 Contest** (see inset on Page 6 for Contest Rules) set for the August picnic. He urged members to contribute their thought-provoking design ideas for constructing a wood product from a single 2x4 measuring 8 feet in length. In past events of this kind clever woodworkers have created amazing woodcraft items, many humorous, and some utilitarian! Judging and awarding prizes will occur at **Val and Laura's** place when they host the August 23<sup>rd</sup> picnic.

**Ed Pysher**, our Membership Chairman, is asking for help. He needs volunteers on his present three-person committee for follow-up duties with new members, getting our brochures in the hands of retailers, preparing membership guides, and many other details that occupy time for this busy and important cog in our Club's operations. Every **NCWA** member is expected to pull his weight in making this organization work. Your help is urgently needed.

Other activities that need our members' participation and personal involvement are the Toys for Tots program and the forthcoming Arts Alive! exhibition of arts and crafts wood projects. **Gene Benson** announced that he needs a couple of woodworkers to assist in making doll cradles in his shop two days a month. Pull toys like the Grasshopper developed last year are being constructed in **Val Matthew's** shop on selected Saturdays. Both would like some help.

And **Phil Choquette**, Events Chairman, reminds us that Arts Alive!, scheduled for the first weekend in November, requires a bountiful collection of member's wood projects again this year to remain a successful attraction. So, members, loosen up your schedules and devote some of your time to these Club activities. The fun and comradeship are thrilling and you might learn something too.

**Mike New**, Internet Chairman and club webmeister, is working hard to bring additional substance to our website. He recently improved the Member's Gallery that welcomes images of your projects, finished or "in progress." **Larry Tomovick**, our notable producer of fine furniture, has posted some photos of his works in the Gallery. He currently is winding up a rocking chair project that he hopes to have ready for Arts Alive!

The website offers a Forum where anyone can ask questions relating to woodworking. Your questions will be answered by one or more of our more expert craftsmen. These on-net conversations can set you straight and save valuable time on your projects. "I encourage you to use it," Mike said, then added, "It won't cost you a penny." -**Jay Geisel**

## Bring and Brag

We had another excellent B&B session Tuesday night highlighted by **Lyle Hand's** story about a very special flyrod and flyrod case, one of many Lyle makes that endears him to American fishermen. A few years ago Lyle delighted this Club with a DVD he produced that showed his arduous technique to produce custom bamboo flyrods.

Lyle also makes and sells excellent jewelry boxes and fishing lure boxes and exotic wood-handled nets. But his long, extremely flexible rods have made a name for Lyle in the flyrod fishing fraternity. By word of mouth only, Lyle has kept himself busy tending to a small number of custom orders each year.



Lyle spins his yarn

Tonight, Lyle told the fascinating story of a rod and case he made, both of which will be placed on display at the Bellingham Museum. The rod was fashioned from bamboo harvested before many of us were born (see Lyle's story on page 7) and the case was made from old growth Redwood harvested in the 1850's. Estimates are that the tree was in excess of 2,000 years old.



Shelley's Dad is delighted with his new table

**Shelly Clouse** made a table for her dad just in time for father's day. She recycled some exterior grade lumber and created a good-looking patio table finished to withstand rough weather. Her dad must have been one proud dude.

**Bill Thisius** joined the B&B crowd for the first time with a sturdy and expertly made auxiliary that attaches to the table saw fence and protects it while dado cutting. An elaborate fence made of Corian, it is tall and milled with a T-slot its full length to



Bill's dado fence and hold downs

attach hold-downs or a stop. Bill said that **Glenn Koontz'** Bridgeport machine was used to cut the T-slot.

**Gene Benson** showed us a beautifully crafted piece of woodworking; a large, elaborate jewelry box featuring beautiful spalted maple and contrasting woods. The box incorporates two full-width drawers below the upper, lidded compartment and is fitted inside with dividers. He

has made six of these cases for members of his family.



Gene Benson's nieces' will be thrilled

**And finally, Cec Braeden** announced that he has had another meeting with Marc Schofield of Fine Woodworking Magazine who addressed our Club last year. Marc has requested Cec to urge members to send articles, suggestions and tips to the magazine. **-Jay Geisel**

### **Roundtable Discussion a Smash Hit**

About 12 members gathered around a couple of large tables to discuss woodworking, our successes and problems, and sometimes a failure. It was fun and helpful. We learned others had faced the same problems with a project, and we got reassuring news on how to proceed.

This all happened during the hour before last month's 7:00PM general meeting. We heard that

an informal chat was to be held for any member that wished to show up early for NCWA's regular monthly meeting. The organizers, **Dave Blair** and **Nick Van**, got the word out that a pre-meeting woodworking forum was about to get underway.

Just discussing other members' woodworking concerns was revelation enough to secure the worthiness of this discussion group at future meeting nights. Blair and Van want to add mini-demos of tools and techniques to this table when time permits. If you're for-em, join-em. **-Jay Geisel**

**(Editor's Note:** The Discussion Roundtable will not be held when our general meetings are held in locations other than Hillcrest Lodge. Please note that the July meeting **will not** be held at Hillcrest Lodge.)



Jean and Greg Shumate, Bill Thisius and Jay Geisel add their input to the roundtable discussion

### **Fiction and Fact from Nick's Almanac**

Seven of ten Canadian hockey players will lose a tooth during a game. That figure drops to five in ten for those who don't play.

## Library News

Our library is expanding. This year we are focusing on adding to the visual section of our library. Presently, we have added six DVDs and one CD. The selections are:

**Wood Turning**

**Router Jigs and Techniques**

**Making Jigs and Fixtures**

**Fine Woodworking Tips**

**The Versatile Router**

**Working with Veneer**

**Wood Finishing Basics**

These new additions, along with other books and videos, will be available to check out at the July monthly meeting. **-Jim Torrence**



Shhhh!!! Don't wake him!!!

## 2X4 Contest Rules

The object of the contest is to see what you can make using one 2X4 and also to encourage all the membership to be actively involved in woodworking. The Rules are:

1. Participants shall be NCWA members in good standing.
2. All projects shall be completed and presented at the 2008 picnic.
3. Project shall be constructed from a single 2X4 of any wood species, purchased locally.
4. Two or more contestants may combine their 2X4s to make a single entry.
5. Participants may submit more than one entry.
6. Entries remain the property of the participant.
7. Entries may include one other material for decorative purposes or for a usage that cannot be replicated with wood. The material must not be the primary focus of the entry.
8. There are no restriction on the types of fasteners and hardware.

Questions about rules should be submitted to Gary Weyers who will make up required new rules or arbitrarily change existing rules as needed. Woodworkers, start your saws!

## Beginning of an Heirloom

It probably all began in the year 1929. About 130 miles northwest of Canton, China, close to the town of Waitsap on the Sui River. A rhizome of *Arundinaria Amabilis*, a species of bamboo, stirred to life and put forth new shoots. When a new plant sprouts, it grows very fast, taking only five to eight weeks to reach its full height and girth (Bamboo is a form of grass). It then takes three to five years to full mature. The stalk, known as a culm, is not harvested until it is at least three years old.

The culm for this particular flyrod was cut when it was five years old, in 1934. It was bundled with other culms and hauled to the river, where they were scrubbed with sand and water to remove the patches of lichen and fungus. The culms emerge from this operation a shining sage green. The bamboo shafts are then stood on end and fanned out in hourglass shaped bundles and left either to ten days to dry. The culms are then loaded on sampans to make the 130 mile journey to the seacoast.

In Canton, the culms are graded and then bundled in matting or burlap, twenty culms to a bundle. The bundles are loaded into ships to be distributed around the world.

A number of the bundles were destined for New York City. The firm of Charles Demarest importers had ordered the bamboo to supply their customers for the coming year. After storing the bamboo in a warehouse for a short time, a bundle was shipped

by railroad to Mr. Ed Gooch in Bellingham, Washington.

Mr. Gooch was a fishing rod builder who used bamboo to fashion fishing rods in Bellingham from the early nineteen twenties through the late nineteen thirties. When the new bundle of bamboo arrived at his house, he could not store all twenty culms in his workshop. His son, who was home on a break from college, helped Mr. Gooch carry ten culms to the attic of their home. The year was 1936 and the culms rested in the warm, dry attic overlooking Bellinham Bay for the next sixty-three years.

The son and his wife occupied the family home after the passing of his parents when, in 1999, they decided to sell the old home and move into an easier to care for dwelling. While cleaning out the old workshop, the bamboo in the attic was remembered and, after almost three quarters of a century, was delivered into the hands of an active rod builder who proceeded to honor the memory and history of Mr. Gooch and his remarkable talents.

One of the culms has been fashioned into an exquisite flyrod and is now finished and delivered to the Bellingham Museum. May the rod find it's intended use, and may there be many new chapters written of beautiful places, and of great and marvelous fish. -**Lyle Hand**

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**COMING EVENTS**

July 1st	6:00 PM	Roundtable Discussion	Not Scheduled at this meeting
July 1st	7:00 PM	Membership Meeting	<b>Bob's Saw Shop</b>
July 16th	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Farmhouse Restaurant on Hwy 20
July 19th	Noon	Newsletter Deadline	Nick's Email (nvan@verizon.net)
August 5th	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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**NCWA NEWSLETTER**

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