

Northwest Corner Woodworkers Association

Volume 14 Issue 8

December, 2001

**Next Meeting: Gary Holloman's Shop
500 Metcalf St. Sedro - Woolley, WA. (360) 855-3376
October 1, 2002 7:00pm
Speaker: Stuart Welsh, Bellingham Technical College Woodworking**

Success pronounced "Picnic"

Twenty-six hungry picnickers, sated and satisfied on buffet-served BBQ ribs and chicken, took a close-up look at Ray DeVries' woodshop facilities, vegetable packing shed, and farm on Calhoun Road near Mount Vernon on Tuesday night, September 10th. It was the scene of the annual NCWA picnic and September business meeting where we were honored again by the generous hospitality of Ray and Becky to celebrate summer's end and the exhilaration of another outdoor gathering in a scenic farmland setting. Ray and Becky were perfect hosts and provided much of the necessities and accoutrements to accommodate the large dinner group.

Food, prepared that afternoon by a Bellingham caterer, was delivered by picnic chairman Lyle Hand in special containers and re-warmed in Mount Vernon prior to the seven o'clock serving. Ray's three children helped set up the picnic area. Becky and Judy Chartier served the food buffet-style and the apple crisp dessert prepared by Judy Chartier proved to be the crowning culinary achievement of the evening. Thanks to Pat Murphy for her yummy zucchini bars.

Business Meeting

A short business meeting, led by vice president Larry Tomovick, followed the meal. Larry thanked the hosts and others who assisted in creating "another

memorable woodworkers' picnic." Acting secretary Nick Van circulated a response sheet again for those planning to participate in the forthcoming *Arts Alive* event in November, and secretary Jay Geisel asked for a better response from members to join the Seattle resources bus tour scheduled for October 19.

Bring and Brag. Two members showed their woodworking skills with items brought to the picnic. Walter Meyers was proud to present a plywood rowboat, almost four feet in length, crafted for his first-born, who arrived before a planned infant's bed was finished. The early arrival caused a change in design and function. The nicely finished interactive toy features handholds (oarlocks) and a Nordic-styled carved figurehead.

Bob Doop received a mini lathe last Christmas and has been making lots of shavings. He showed us three examples of lidded boxes turned from big leaf maple. They were mostly 3 by 4 inches in size and handsomely decorated even to the insides of the lids. Doop will be traveling to Calgary this month for a weeklong training seminar given by Richard Raffan, one of the masters of woodturning. Bob's got the bug to purchase a big lathe.

With that, we ended the meeting and headed for Ray's big barn woodshop.

Jay Geisel,

A Visit with Ray DeVries

His Shop

Like most of us, Ray has a passion for woodworking and not enough time to enjoy it. His tastes run mainly to big construction. You can tell that the instant you enter his huge shop. He's got machines he's using and machines he might use. They are all king-size tools, including a 4,000 pound shaper with a surface the size of a card table. His shop is a work in progress from the time he acquired it, decades ago. He has raised the original roof four feet, poured a new concrete slab to level it, and added almost 1,000 square feet of additional space, with skylights to improve lighting. Further improvements were the overhead wiring and plumbing, dust vacuums and lines, new heating, and, now another planned addition to the east side of the building. The two additions double the size of the original 20 x 50 building.

Ray says he finally figured out how to buy tools. "Buy them used, not new. If you find something that interests you at a very good price, buy it," was his advice. He's been buying and housing tools for several years, waiting for the time he can put them to use. Some machines he works frequently while building or remodeling his shop or guest house. But mostly, he keeps busy farming. Need a 16-inch jointer? How about a horizontal mortiser, or a machine that cuts a complete tenon in a single operation? Ray has machines crammed in corners blocked by others too heavy to be easily moved into a position for use. But he sees a future of profitable woodworking ahead when he will have time to develop a millworking business. As we said, Ray loves woodworking, but for now farming pays the bills.

The Power of Wood

During our visit and amid all those machines, Ray's teenage boys were busily engaged in a wood project of their own, an unfamiliar heavy duty

frame structure with metal angle reinforcements. The question arose from the curious visitors: "What are you making?"

The boys lifted the oddly shaped 3 by 5-foot assembly upright and said it was a launcher, a giant slingshot. Asked what they were going to launch, they replied: "Water balloons, potatoes, and stuff."

■ *Ray's Farm*

Ray grows vegetables. Some carrots and squash, but mostly leeks. His parents came to America and began organic farming the same land with almost total energy devoted to establishing themselves as growers of leeks, the sweet cousin to onions that's kind to the digestion and never leaves a bad odor in the mouth. Today, organic farming is "in" and Ray's produce is in demand all over the continent. The mild tasting leek is not as well known as most other vegetables, but Ray has a ready market with the big grocery chains that truck his product to market. We visited his packing shed where the hand-picked crop is placed on power-driven conveyor belts, washed, trimmed, culled, banded in groups of two and packed into cartons. The vegetables are then refrigerated until delivery. The entire operation is handled by a dozen men and women who find continued employment for 10 months of the year. Ray's planting schedule maintains steady production of the organically produced crop over a full 10-month growing season. Members who visited the packing shed were given leeks, carrots, and yellow squash to take home. Ray suggested slicing and dicing the leeks for their breakfast omelets and dinner soups and salads.

Jay Geisel,
Secretary

Calendar:

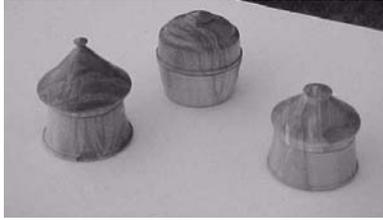
October 5 Price and Visser Millwork . Annual Garage sale. 2536 Valencia Bellingham

October 25, 26 & 27 Woodworking show at Seahawk Stadium, Seattle.

November 2&3 NCWA show At Laconner

December 3 Election of officers (regular meeting)

ne-
ld



An assortment of lidded boxes by Bob Doop



Walt Meyers boat shaped rocker.



Ray's boys making a water balloon launcher.



A photo of Ray's shop

Map to the Meeting Place

Take Highway 20 through Sedro Woolley until you go under the Railroad trestle. Take an immediate Right onto Metcalf. Turn right into industrial area just before you get to the railroad tracks. Go to left rear buildings. (This is one of the old Skagit Corporation Buildings.)



Jake Strauss

Kiln dried NW Washington hardwood lumber. (Sales by appointment only)

Now Available: Black Walnut, Black Locust and Catalpa.

6389 North Star Rd.

Ferndale, WA 98248

(360)384-3948

The NCWA was formed to promote high standards in woodworking, woodworking education, and showcasing local woodworking. The NCWA is open to all interested woodworkers.. Dues are \$24 per year, payable to NCWA, 7550 Ershig Rd. Bow, WA. 98232. Newsletter submissions are welcomed and are due by the 18th of the month to NCWA Newsletter, 925 South Hills Dr. Bellingham, WA., 98226. Or call (360) 734-9473. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. Location announced in the newsletter

2000-20001 Officers:

President	Gary Holloman	(360) 855-3376	
VP	Larry Tomovick	(360) 293-4580	
Sec.	Jay Geisel	(360) 466-3908	
Treas.	Laura Matthews	(360) 757-7730	
Library	Tom Chartier	(360) 734-9473	tc1376gp@aol.com
Programs	Larry Tomovick	(360) 293-4580	
Editor	Tom Chartier	(360) 734-9473	

le-
d

NCWA Newsletter
925 South Hills DR
Bellingham WA. 98226.

