

## ***Northwest Woodworkers Association***

# ***THE SAWDUST NEWS***



October 2017

An association for woodworkers of all skill levels to share their common interest

## ***The Next Meeting***

**Note:** Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, there will be no meeting in November.

**Date:** Thursday, December 7, 2017 at 6:30 PM

**Location:** Woodcraft Supply  
5963 Corson S.  
Seattle, WA 98125

**Program Highlight:** Marquetry



**Dennis Harrison**, a former **Association** member, will be giving us a presentation on the craft of Marquetry. Marquetry is a very old art form in which inlaid wood veneers are used to create beautiful patterns and pictures. He will be discussing the various methods commonly used, and their strong and weak points, as well as demonstrating some of his favorite techniques. He will also describe various ways to glue, sand

and finish Marquetry pieces. **Dennis** will also display some of his artistic pieces. This will be a rare opportunity to learn about this unique woodworking technique from a recognized expert in the field, so don't miss it.

# **October 2017 Meeting Highlights**

## ***Meeting Notes by Jan Erickson***

### ***Newsletter Photos by Scott Wilson***



The **October 2017** meeting of the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** was held on **Thursday, October 26, 2017** at **Rockler - Northgate**. Sixteen members were present.

We want to express our appreciation to **Michael Reszler, Manager**, and the **Rockler - Northgate** staff for hosting this meeting and providing refreshments. We appreciate your long-standing support of the **Association**.

## **New Tools**



**Tom Howorth** said that having taken a class at the **Port Townsend School of Woodworking** he learned to appreciate the finer points of tenoning. Consequently, after visiting the recent **Lie Nielsen** hand tool exposition, he invested in a quality tenoning saw. Since he also noted that he hopes to bring along some examples of what the tool can do at a future meeting. We'll be looking forward to that, **Tom!**

**Charlie Culler** mentioned that he was currently working on a project in which he wants to employ biscuit joining to assist him in keeping joints aligned during glue up. However, he noted that he does not have a biscuit joiner, so instead he has invested in a slot cutting router bit which will perform the same task. Great option, **Charlie** – we look forward to your report on the performance of the bit and the finished project.



## **Problems & Solutions**



**Jan Erickson** brought along a hard rubber sanding block expressing her frustration with installing sanding paper on the device. This type of sanding block has a slot at each end with embedded steel teeth that grip the paper. **Jan** noted that she has trouble spreading the slots enough to allow new paper to be installed and tightened sufficiently for use. Several members agreed that this type of sanding block is difficult to use. Various suggestions were made, including using adhesive backed sandpaper and clamping the block in a vise to secure it so the slot could be opened sufficiently to allow paper installation.

In retrospect, perhaps a better solution would be to purchase one of the rigid foam type sanding blocks that have a hook pad attached to permit the use of standard 5" diameter hook and loop sanding discs commonly used on random orbit sanders. Such sanding accessories are available from our sponsors such as **Rockler Woodworking** and **Woodcraft**, as well as online from such sources as **Amazon.com**. Round configurations are also available which utilize the whole area of the circular sanding disk. Sometimes the choice is best determined by selecting the one which best fits the hand and the sanding task.



## *Show 'n' Tell*

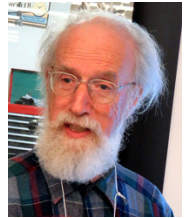


**Allen McCall** showed us a uniquely designed, space-saving, wine rack, which he makes for sale in an art gallery in Issaquah. This serpentine wine rack, designed to hold five wine bottles, was modeled after a similar design he had seen made from plastic. **Allen** noted that he made the double serpentine racks by laminating two layers of hardwood faced plywood. A router template was used to produce a smooth shape and allow exact duplication of the two racks. Wooden dowels, mounted in blind holes, space the two racks. Although it would appear to be somewhat fragile, it is a very strong configuration, utilizing the strength produced by the horizontal/vertical orientation of the laminated multiple plies mounted on edge. What a delightful project, **Allen!** Thanks for sharing it with us.





**Chris Green** showed us another of his delightful artistic creations, entitled, **Inner Glow**, along with some interesting images of the various steps and equipment used in the fabrication process.

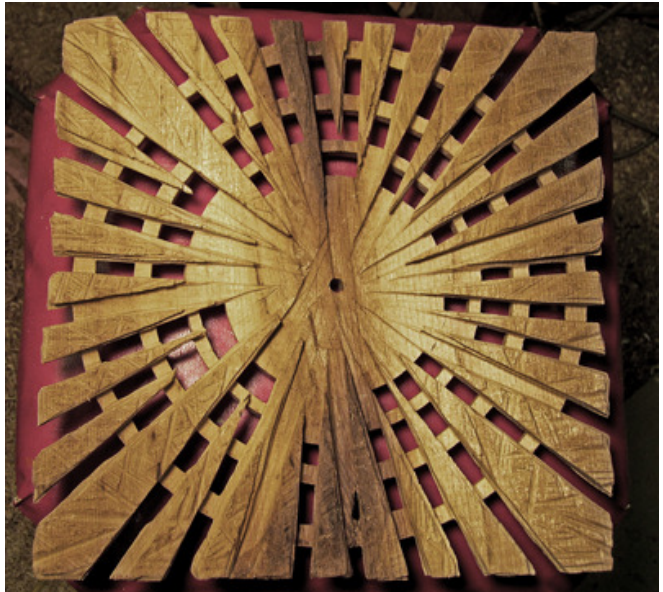


He noted that the goblet shaped piece at the center was made from a piece of cork oak, retrieved from the aftermath of windstorm. **Chris** noted that the spalted appearance of the turning was the result of moisture which tends to be trapped under the cork bark, providing a home for the cooties that produce the spalting. The ring of cork bark at the base provides a rustic contrast to the smooth surfaces of the turning.

The unique base for the creation was made from a solid piece of textured myrtle wood. The beautiful glowing interior of the goblet was produced by the application of copper leaf.



It was interesting to note that **Chris** fashioned the myrtle wood base in a manner similar to that used in making wooden trivets (wooden tiles for resting hot pans and dishes, which have holes or slots which allow cooling air flow). Radial slots cut into the top surface were subsequently intersected by relieving the back side of the tile with concentric rings turned on a lathe. These intersections produced the open spaces in the tile – a very innovative and striking effect!



In describing some of the fabrication steps, we were fascinated by the unique “texturing machine” **Chris** used to slot the top surface of the base and enhance its rustic surface appearance.

Though somewhat disguised by the custom-designed PVC guarding/guiding system, for the life of me, it sure did look like an electric chain saw.....:-) Who but **Chris** could come up with such a unique solution so well suited to the task.....?



Thanks, **Chris** for sharing this beautiful project with us, and your always interesting materials, innovative methods and techniques.!

**Program Highlight –**  
**Creating Cedar Garden Accessories**  
**Presented by Don Beacom**



**Don Beacom**, one of our newer members, gave us an inspiring presentation about a cottage business that he and his wife have started, making and selling cedar planters and other garden accessories. He noted that when they were looking for garden accessories for their own home, they couldn't seem to find items that fit their needs. So they decided to make their own.....and from there developed a lively business, **Cedar Schemes**, featuring their hand crafted cedar garden products at a local Farmers Market.





**Don** noted that he is fairly new to woodworking and says he “learns by doing” and taking classes. He said the classes have helped him with the basics of woodworking. He also has taken classes in marketing and other disciplines which he has been able to use to help him develop and grow this cottage business.

He showed us some photos of his workshop area, which is a narrow area at the back of his garage, approximately 8 1/2 feet wide and 15 feet long. He noted that his house and garage are situated on a steeply sloped lot, so working and storage space are at a premium. However, he has adapted his workflow to accommodate the available space and has been able to build a sufficient number of products to meet his current demand. Since he runs his business from a Farmers Market, his selling window is basically May through early Fall.

Interestingly, **Don** has cleverly designed his products to use standard available **Western Red Cedar** lumber sizes wherever possible. This eliminates a lot of time ripping boards to width and conserves material by minimizing waste. The cedar stock is a favorite with his customers, having warm color tones, and unique features like knots, and interesting grain configurations. Cedar also weathers to a delightful silvery gray color, enhancing its rustic look.

**Cedar Schemes** offers a variety of standard and custom designed products. Initially, his offerings were cedar planters of various sizes and configurations. He noted that his best seller is the model shown below. This cedar planter box, which he sells for \$60, has some interesting features, including a landscape fabric box liner, a slide out plastic tray underneath to catch excess water, and a storage shelf. **Don** noted that he tries to market most of his standard pieces in a \$40-\$60 price point.



Other cedar planters offered by **Cedar Schemes** include square models, having interesting boxes made of narrow strips with alternating joints simulating box joints, and modular units that can be arranged in various configurations.



**Don** explained that they try to produce only high-quality products which employ quality materials. As an example, he noted that he uses only stainless steel screws to fabricate his products. Concerned about the high cost of stainless steel components, he was very interested and open to member suggestions that he consider using deck screws, which are specially coated to resist rusting making them suitable for outdoor applications.

In addition to their standard product line, he noted that he also builds custom configurations to meet customer's unique desires and requirements. The bird bath shown below is one such custom piece.



**Don** noted that although custom pieces require more time to design and build, they are much more profitable. He hopes in the future to build that side of his business to improve profitability.



In addition to the planters and similar products, **Cedar Schemes** is branching out to produce some interesting and attractive garden accessory products, which can be seen on their website and Facebook page, cited at the end of this Newsletter.

One such product is **Mason Bee** houses. **Mason Bees** are small, virtually stingless bees which are highly regarded by gardeners as pollinators. Unfortunately, in the bee keeping world, there has been a serious reduction in the number of honey bees due to diseases and foreign insect infestations. Fortunately, **Mason Bees** do not seem to be susceptible to these conditions, so they are much sought after by gardeners.



No, I don't think that big guy is a mega **Mason Bee**, but he sure is makes for an eye catching display prop! (The actual **Mason Bees** are little guys that fit in the small holes you see in the blocks in the right hand house.)



**Open for Business! -- The Cedar Schemes booth at a local Farmers Market**

After soliciting suggestions that might help him succeed, one member addressing his limited storage space issue, suggested that he explore renting a small storage unit at a local storage facility, a cost which could probably be treated as a business expense. Another member suggested that he take advantage of his winter “off season” by fabricating component parts for his standard product line, which could be stored for assembly during his busy season. A third member suggested that he explore the use of brad nailers equipped with stainless steel fasteners as a temporary or permanent assembly method. It was great to see the responses of our membership in offering such practical suggestions. Good job, folks!

Thanks, **Don**, for such an informative and interesting presentation. We were all impressed with this business venture and wish you and your wife all the success in the world. As woodworkers, we were also impressed with your “I want to learn” attitude. Considering your serious constraints for fabricating and material storage space, you have done a wonderful job. Your simple, but effective product designs are very impressive – sometimes a lot of us spin our wheels making our projects much harder and more complex than they need to be. Your approach, based upon sound business principles, gives us a very enlightening and refreshing viewpoint. Ya did good, **Don!!** We look forward to hearing more of your success story down the road – and hopefully we will be able to help you along the way by sharing our collective woodworking knowledge and experience. Don’t be reluctant to ask for help – we love to share!

For more information about **Cedar Schemes**, please visit their very informative website and Facebook page:

[www.cedarschemes.com/](http://www.cedarschemes.com/)

<https://www.facebook.com/cedar.schemes12>

## ***Note from the Editor***



This was a very interesting and informative meeting, presenting woodworking from an entirely different perspective than we usually consider. I found it intriguing that the issues involved, the woodworking challenges and choices, and fabrication processes are so different when making repetitive products to sell at a profit, as opposed to those we use for the one off projects we usually make for our own use or to give as gifts.

On a different note, **Herb Stoops** notified the group that he intends to step down from his **Steering Committee** member position at the end of this year. He explained that the **Association** is at a critical juncture, as he is one of only two remaining active **Steering Committee** members. He noted that unless other members step up and volunteer to assume these leadership roles, the **Association** is in danger of disbanding in 2018, ending its 20+ years existence. So, he challenged the membership to become more proactive and assume its responsibility for operation and leadership of the **Association**. It is not enough to simply come to the meetings as a spectator and enjoy the programs and presentations that the **Steering Committee** has arranged for our enjoyment and education. Everyone has something to offer. Please be willing to step up and do **your** part.

**UPDATE:** At this writing, **Herb** notified me that he has had a gratifying response from some of our newer members, who have expressed a sincere desire to see the existence of the **Association** continue by offering their services as candidates for **Steering Committee** positions. Thanks, guys for being proactive! We really value your membership in the **Association** appreciate your willing to actively support and participate. Stay tuned – I'm sure **Herb** will update us with any changes to be made to the **Steering Committee**.

In closing, I wish you all a blessed Thanksgiving holiday. Despite the whirlwind of events and issues swirling around us, over which we have little control, we have much for which to be thankful. Take a moment to stop and count your blessings.....!

See you in December!

Happy and Safe Woodworking,

Paul



# **Northwest Woodworkers Association Sponsors**

We appreciate the generous support provided by our NWWA sponsors, from providing member discounts on purchased items to providing state of the art venues for us to conduct our monthly meetings. Thank you, Sponsors!

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Seattle, WA 98108  
*10% Member Discount (except sale items and power tools, and workbeches)*

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**Scott Wilson**

We encourage our members to contact any of the above individuals with questions, comments, or items that may be of interest to the membership.

In addition, please visit our website: <http://www.nwoodworkers.org>