

## ***Northwest Woodworkers Association***

# ***THE SAWDUST NEWS***



October 2014

<http://www.nwoodworkers.org>

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

### ***The Next Meeting***

**Date:** October 30, 2014

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

**Program Highlights:** Paul Stoops will give a presentation entitled “*Designing and Building An Optical Illusion*”. This program will describe the field pattern development techniques and build of the follow-on serving tray to **Paul’s First Prize** entry in this year’s **2 x 4 Challenge**. This should be another of our “**Don’t Miss!**” member presentations. Hope to see you there.

### ***September 2014 Meeting Highlights*** ***Newsletter Photos by Scott Wilson***



The **September 2014** meeting of the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** was held on **Thursday, September 25, 2014** at **Woodcraft Supply** in Seattle. A special thanks to **Ron and Michelle Hall** and the Woodcraft staff for providing this great venue for our meeting and setting it up for us.

There were 15 members present and one guest, **Mark Martinez**. **Mark** described his woodworking interests as “hobby stuff in my garage”, which certainly fits right in with a lot of our members. He said he had heard of the **Association** and was attracted



by one of the brochures he obtained at one of our sponsors. After the meeting, he told us he was intending to join our group. Glad to have you **Mark!**

**Charlie Culler**, who had been looking for available shop space, reported that he was able to find suitable shop space and facilities at the **Pratt School of Design** in the Central District of Seattle. He reported that **Pratt** offers classes in the evening and rents out shop space during the day. That's great news, **Charlie** – glad it worked out for you. Hope to see some more of your great projects showing up at future meetings.

**David Beyl** suggested that we contact the **Pratt School** folks to see if a future tour of their facilities and a presentation of their available classes and resources would be of benefit to the **Association**. Thanks, **David**, for the suggestion. The **Steering Committee** will follow up on this idea. We learned later that **Jan Erickson** volunteered to check this out for us and report back.

We discussed the upcoming **Woodworking Show** here at **Woodcraft Supply** on **October 3-5**, and whether or not we wished to provide and staff a table of **Association** representatives for the event, as has been done in years past. However, in part because we have received no new members from this event in recent years, there was very little interest from the group in this endeavor. So we decided to let our brochure speak for us and verified that brochures will be available for the event.

We briefly discussed the **2014 2 X 4 Challenge** and expressed our disappointment in the very limited number of entries this year – only six as compared to the 13 we had last year! We speculated that perhaps some of our members who participated last year may have been on vacation or were otherwise unable to attend. To that end, we are considering moving the date of the **2015 Challenge** to one of the **Spring** months, so that perhaps more of the members will be available to participate. The **Steering Committee** will make this determination and notify the membership well in advance of the **2015 Challenge**.

**David Beyl** expressed his opinion that each of the members who plan to participate should provide detailed plans for their project to the group prior to the **Challenge** meeting. After discussion, the group overwhelmingly decided that one of the unique and attractive features of the **Challenge** is the surprise factor in not revealing their projects until showing them at the meeting and that we should continue to conduct future **Challenges** as we currently do.

## **Show 'N' Tell**



Our **Secretary, Jan Erickson**, showed us a lovely Mahogany box embellished with a Purple Heart panel in the top and a custom handle for the lid. Finely crafted box joints were used for the corner joinery. She thanked **David Beyl** for providing her with leftover wood from his shop and **Herb Stoops** for



teaching her how to make dowel hinges for the box. A lovely piece, **Jan!** Thanks for sharing it with us.

Our **Webmaster, Tom Howorth**, explained that he had made an entry for the September meeting **2 x 4 Challenge** but was unable to attend so he brought it along for us to enjoy. He mentioned that the project started out to be a turned wooden wine bottle, but due to some construction difficulties, it somehow turned out to be smaller and in the shape of a beer bottle! However, it was well done (even if it was empty.....!)



In addition, **Tom** also brought along a couple more of his recent creations. The first was a wooden spatula, that he explained was made with a 2D bandsawing technique in which the piece is sawn from a block face up and then rotated 90° and resawn to shape on edge. After sanding and smoothing, the lovely Jatoba spatula looked too pretty to use!

His other creation was a lovely wooden pizza peel, made with a variety of colorful wood species. He explained that he and his family like pizza and had purchased a stone for cooking pizza on his grill. The stone had come with a smaller peel that had a very short handle, which made it a touchy situation to reach in and remove a pizza without getting singed. So he decided to make a long handled version. He said it works very well – and sure saves the hands! Great project, **Tom** – Well done!! [**Ed. Note:** I think he should have brought in some pizza just to prove to us that it really does work..... :-) ]



## **Upcoming Events**

**October 2014 Meeting** – **Paul Stoops** will give a presentation entitled “**Designing and Building An Optical Illusion**” – the journey of designing and building a serving tray with a unique, fascinating field pattern and some other interesting features. This presentation might just open up some new challenges for you and get you thinking about potential Christmas gifts.....!

**Remember that due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, there will be no meeting in November!**

**December 2014 Meeting** – The **December** meeting will be held on **Thursday, December 11, 2014** at the **Rockler - Northgate** store. Due to scheduling constraints this meeting will be held on the **second Thursday of December**. Meeting content is still under development. Please let us know if you have any suggestions for this meeting.

# **Program Presentation**

## **Making the 2013 2 x 4 Challenge First Prize Step Stool**



World-renowned wood turner **Bonnie Klein** was our featured speaker for the meeting. In her words, **Bonnie** said, *“I designed this small stool with grandchildren in mind to be easy to pick up and move around. The four legs make it extra stable and the stretchers provide additional places for little hands to grab onto. I will show how to design the stool, figure the angles and use jigs for drilling holes, and demonstrate the use of a story stick to turn the spindles.”*

To begin her presentation, **Bonnie** noted that she has been making similar stools for the last 20 years. She said she has taught many students and classes the art of stool making all around the Puget Sound area and beyond. To illustrate her point, she showed us a binder with many photos showing the widely varying, creative stool designs her students have made. She also mentioned some very special ones – one stool featured ice cream cone-shaped stretchers, and another had human torso-shaped spindles with stretchers like outstretched arms! No wonder she likes encouraging her students to use their imaginations!

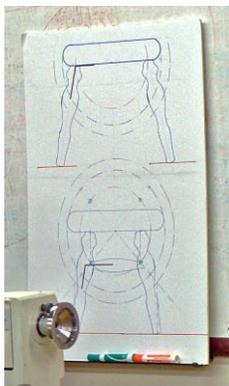
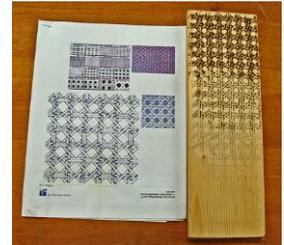
**Bonnie** noted that she likes working with various hardwoods, but especially cherry and poplar. Part of the reason she favors the latter materials for her classes is that they are available in wide 8/4 (2 inch) boards, noting that her stool design requires 2 linear feet of 2 inch thick, 12 inch wide material. These requirements suited the **2 x 4 Challenge**.



She began her presentation by showing us her **Challenge** prize winning stool and a variety of other ones of different materials, sizes, colors, and configurations. **Bonnie** noted that the pink one was half of a pair she had made for her twin grandchildren – a pink one for the girl and a blue one for the boy. She also had one of her stools disassembled so that she could demonstrate how the pieces went together.

She noted that she had searched on the internet for a suitable cane pattern for the seat of her stool and was able to come up with a design that suited her. But then she was faced with the task of figuring out how to transfer the design to the seat of the stool for wood burning. Deciding that it would be very difficult to just draw the pattern on the seat, and that using carbon paper to transfer the design wouldn't work, **Bonnie** came up with a very ingenious way to accomplish the task. She downloaded the cane pattern from the internet, printed out a paper copy, and pin pricked the intersections of the cane pattern onto the wooden seat. She then drew in faint lines between the intersections as a guide for wood burning the pattern – guess that's what is referred to as “connecting the dots”..... :-)

To illustrate the method used, she passed around a sample board that showed each of the steps in transferring the pattern and completing the delightful cane pattern – from the pin pricked pattern of intersections to the lightly sketched cane pattern, to the wood burned outlining of the cane, to the final texturing of the cane pattern. What a clever solution, **Bonnie!**



She then took us on a fascinating journey through the design and building of one of her four legged stools. Using a graphic illustration, **Bonnie** described the method she uses for determining the angles for the splayed legs of the stools. She noted that for short stools like these, she typically makes the centerline radius of the bottom of the legs 1 inch larger than the radius of the seat. She also noted that for taller stools, the leg centerline radius needs to be increased to improve the stability of the stool. To illustrate the point, she had us measure one of the tall commercially-made stools in the classroom and noted that the centerline radius of the legs was 2” greater than the radius of the seat.

Using line projections on her graphic illustration, she was able to establish the angle between the centerline of the legs and the seat for both the opposite and adjacent legs to enable drilling of the holes in the seat for the spindles and the holes in the legs for the stretchers. Interestingly, some of our sharp-eyed members noted that her method for determining the angles for the stretcher holes between the adjacent spindles ignored the fact that these were actually compound angles in two planes. She acknowledged the situation but, bless her heart, she had a ready answer for them – when assembling, just stand the stool on a flat surface and use a “convincer” before the glue dries to tease the spindles and stretchers into alignment so that the stool doesn't wobble!



Having established the desired angles for the holes for the spindles and the stretchers, she made a simple double-ended template with one of the angles on each end. She used that template to develop a pair of drill jigs which could be used on her drill press to accurately drill the holes in the seat and the spindle blanks using a Forstner bit.

**Bonnie** then showed us how to use a story stick to establish the critical diameters and features on the turned spindles and stretchers. Her story stick was a piece of hardboard with a full size paper copy of the desired part profile attached. Notches were cut in the edge of the story stick as guides for the pencil marks she applies to the turned blank to denote the feature locations. She noted



that a story stick is much easier to use and more foolproof than measurements and gives a graphical representation of the desired profile. Though she didn't mention it, I suspect that critical dimensions such as the tenon diameters were noted on the story stick.



Another tool that she demonstrated and recommended to the group was an aluminum vernier caliper available from **Harbor Freight Tools** (<http://www.harborfreight.com/24-inch-jumbo-aluminum-caliper-96509.html> ) Although this tool started out to have a 24" capacity, **Bonnie** had her husband shorten it up to about 8" for ease of use for her purposes. As she mentioned, she recommends this tool because it is very inexpensive, easy to read, and durably constructed. [ **Ed. Note:** If purchasing, you might do well to read some of the user reviews. In spite of some of the reported shortcomings, this tool looks like it would be a great value for this application, especially for the attractive price. ]

Then we were treated to one of **Bonnie's** well known turning demonstrations as she turned some spindle blanks to the finished profile – blanks that had been drilled for the stretchers using the previously described drill jigs. Using her story stick, she marked the location of critical profile features on the turning blank. Then she applied an interesting technique in which she used a vernier caliper preset to the desired diameter pressed against the back of the turning while she manipulated the lathe tool with the other hand and reduced the diameter of the turning until the caliper would just slip over the part. She used this same technique to verify the full length of the critical diameter of the tenon on the seat end of the spindle to ensure fit to the matching holes drilled in the seat.



Then the "magic" began as she skillfully contoured the spindles by eye to match the profile drawn on the story stick. [ **Ed. Note:** Kinda reminded me of watching a professional tennis player – making every movement look so easy! 'Course I suspect that this isn't the first one of these she has done ..... :-) ]



A short visual inspection of the finished spindle held up against one she had previously sure made it like a clone! How'd she do that anyway?? She also noted that the ends of the spindles that contact the floor should be chamfered on the inside edge to increase contact with the floor. Similarly, the ends of the tenons on the stretchers need to be chamfered where they intersect in the spindle holes to allow complete insertion.

At the end of her presentation, **Bonnie** mentioned that one of the simple but useful things she has done is to color code the handles of her turning tools for easy identification, since so many of them look somewhat similar. But then that really isn't too surprising – shouldn't a pretty, creative, artistic lady have pretty tools??



Someone from the group asked her about her method of sharpening her lathe tools. She noted that she had learned from another turner that his preferred method was to use a diamond wheel typically used for lapidary grinding. After using his diamond wheel, she decided that was the method for her so she ordered one and adapted it for use on her variable speed lathe.



The diamond grinding wheel she uses is an 8” diameter rigid aluminum wheel with fine diamond grit bonded to its outer surface. A custom insert adapted the wheel to the headstock of her lathe. Although somewhat expensive, this tool does an excellent job and has a long anticipated service life – definitely a worthwhile investment for the serious wood turner!

She noted that best technique for using the diamond wheel was to first use a black ink marker to completely coat the outer surface of the tool to be ground. This method provides a very distinct contrasting visual indication of the area being ground. She also noted that when grinding rounded surfaces like a gouge, it is important to continually rotate the tool while grinding to eliminate any flat spots in the contour. She noted that using the diamond wheel is definitely her method of choice for sharpening her lathe tools.



Thanks, **Bonnie**, for the wonderful, informative and educational presentation, the time and effort you invested in preparing it, and for sharing your skills, woodworking knowledge, and enthusiasm for your craft. What a blessing it is to have you as one of our proactive members!

## **A Note from the Editor**



All of you who weren't present at this meeting really missed another jewel! **Bonnie Klein**, our resident world-renowned wood turner and long time **Association** member, gave us a wonderful presentation describing the design and building of her **First Prize** winning stool from the **2013 2 X 4 Challenge**, as well as design and fabrication techniques we could use to make similar pieces.

Personally, I was especially impressed with the simple way she devised to transfer the rather complex caning pattern to the top of her stool for wood burning. And the sample board she displayed illustrating the steps in applying the technique was an amazing visual aid! Well done, **Bonnie!**

We were also fascinated by her explanations of simple ways to determine the seemingly complex angles required for the splayed legs of a stool. As always, we were enthralled by her creativity and hands-on demonstration of simple techniques for establishing and measuring critical diameters like tenon sizes, and her exquisite, effortless turning skills.

And lastly, I am going to take this opportunity to scold those of you **who could have, but didn't make the effort** to attend this meeting – and I can do that because I am the **Newsletter Editor!** What a grand opportunity you missed to see a recognized expert do skillful hands-on woodworking! And even if you are not into wood turning, this was an opportunity to show support for one of our own members and appreciate the time and effort she made to share her knowledge and skills with us! Does membership in the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** really mean anything more to **you** than just the Sponsor discounts?? Makes me wonder.....sure wish you would prove me wrong!

Happy and Safe Woodworking,

Paul

# **Northwest Woodworkers Association Sponsors**

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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 and forum: <http://www.nwoodworkers.org>