

Northwest Woodworkers Association

THE SAWDUST NEWS



May 2015

<http://www.nwoodworkers.org>

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

The Next Meeting

Date: **Thursday, June 25, 2015, 6:30 PM**

Location: Woodcraft Supply
5963 Corson S.
Seattle, WA 98108

Program Highlight: *Veneering*

This will be an opportunity to share your experiences with veneering and display your projects made with veneer from our December 2014 Veneer Giveaway. Bring along a thumb drive with pics to illustrate your projects. Great opportunity for all of us to learn about this woodworking skill. Don't miss this one!

May 2015 Meeting Highlights

Newsletter Photos by S. Wilson & D. Cordwell

Meeting Notes by Allen McCall



The **May 2015** meeting of the **Northwest Woodworkers Association** was held on **Thursday, April 28, 2015** at **Rockler - Northgate** with 12 members present.

We want to express our appreciation to the **Rockler - Northgate** staff for providing a wonderful venue for this meeting and refreshments for our meeting. We really appreciate your continued support.



We were pleased to have new member and **Association Sponsor Scott Love** visit our meeting. **Scott's** company, **Craftsman Studio**, located in Everett, specializes in a wide variety of hand woodworking tools, and is the West Coast dealer for **Lie-Nielsen** products. He is offering a 10% discount to **Association** members. Thanks, for joining us **Scott** – glad to have you aboard!

Upcoming Events

June 2015 Meeting – The **June** meeting will be held at **Woodcraft Supply** on **Thursday, June 25, 2015**. This meeting will highlight all things veneering -- including veneered projects, veneer preparation, veneer application methods and techniques, etc. Please plan to bring your veneered projects as well as any photos or other information you may have on a thumb drive to help us all get up to speed with this woodworking technique.

July 2015 Meeting – The **July** meeting will be held at **Rockler – Northgate** on **Thursday, July 30, 2015**. This meeting will feature a presentation and discussion of the Freud line of woodworking products. More program details will be available in the **June 2015 Newsletter**.

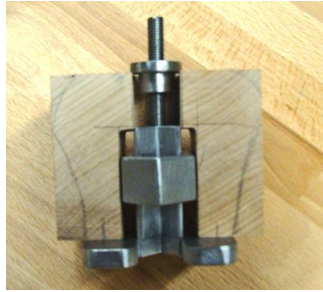
Show 'N' Tell



Dan Cordwell showed us some photos of the scissors lift tables he had made and displayed at the Mega Show 'N' Tell at last month's meeting. He explained that he had designed the smaller one as an outboard support for his drill press. He noted that the larger one works great as an auxiliary assembly table and he has used it to lift as much as 130 lbs. Clever design and great engineering, **Dan!**



Dan also brought along a couple of other projects to share with us. He explained that he wanted a smaller version of his manual router plane, so he fabricated one with a wooden body which uses the same blade as his commercial model.



He also showed us a small, nicely crafted table/bench which he said he built from 5/4 cedar, using pocket hole construction. A lovely project, **Dan!**



Program Highlight – Photographing Your Project



We were treated to a wonderfully informative and entertaining program by guest speaker, **Charley Drake**, regarding the best techniques for photographing our woodworking projects using simple materials and our point and shoot cameras.

Charley is a retired Industrial Arts teacher who has taught photography classes to a wide variety of groups during his career. The focus for his presentation was the importance of proper lighting for project photography, and the use of simple low cost equipment and materials to enhance the lighting a provide suitable photographic backgrounds.

One of the points he made was eliminating the use of the on-camera flash, wherever possible, as its use tends to produce harsh shadows and unwanted reflections. Instead, **Charley** recommended utilizing natural lighting when feasible, especially the light introduced through a North facing window, as light from this direction tends to be more diffuse and nondirectional. Also, cloudy days tend to produce a more diffuse light.

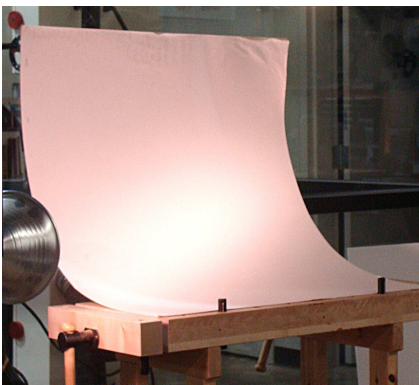
However, recognizing that many of our photographic situations in the workshop may not lend themselves to natural lighting, he showed us some other possible lighting options. These options ranged from a studio type light with integral diffuser, halogen lamps, which are readily available as workspace lighting from the local home centers, to a simple clamp-on work light with an integral reflector.



Regardless of the light source, **Charley** noted that it was important to diffuse the light as much as possible. Interestingly, he recommended using plain white insulating house wrap materials like **Tyvek**®, which he said can sometimes be obtained free from building sites. However, he also cautioned that most of the lighting sources, especially halogen lights, generate very high temperatures, producing a potential fire hazard, so any diffusing medium needs to be used judiciously and spaced sufficiently from the light source to provide adequate air circulation.

Another of the important photographic issues he discussed was selecting a proper background for a photograph. As an illustration, he showed is a picture of a wooden bowl placed among a large array of tools on a bench, noting that it was difficult to pick out the subject of the photo with all of the background clutter.

He then showed us a very simple low cost photo background panel made from a piece of plain white tagboard purchased at a local craft store. But the most interesting issue was the **shape** of the background. **Charley** noted that by propping the top of the background panel against a vertical surface like a wall, or clamping it to the frame of a ladder, etc. and allowing the panel to naturally drape into a curved surface to a horizontal plane like a table top, produces a background with no vertical reference. This technique tends to make the background diffuse and undefined, focusing the viewer on the subject in front of the background. He noted that this technique is widely used in the photo media industry to provide commercial backgrounds.



Using this background, he illustrated the effects of using a diffusing medium, such as **Tyvek**® to even out the lighting of the background. Note the comparison with the undiffused lighting in the left hand photo.



He noted that colored backgrounds can also be effective, depending upon the subject. He also cautioned about the use of sheets or other fabric materials as backgrounds, noting that folding these materials for storage will produce wrinkles in the fabric that will be enhanced in the photo. Unless you like ironing, the recommended storage method for fabric material backgrounds is carefully rolling the material over some sort of tubular core.

As a test subject, **Charley** brought along a wonderfully carved piece made from cottonwood bark.



As can be seen in the photo, the background panel is not a distinguishing factor. Also, lighting the subject from the side tends to bring out surface texture of the subject. He also noted that in lieu of shooting straight from the front of the subject, changing the viewing perspective of the camera can produce some very striking and interesting photos.

Charley also noted that it is important to fill the frame with the subject, as this tends to reduce any negative effects of the background and emphasizes the features of the subject.

He noted that the use of proper techniques are important when photographing, emphasizing gently squeezing the shutter release to avoid jarring the camera and holding the camera still until the camera has finished processing the picture. He highly recommends supporting the camera on a tripod, or at least carefully bracing one's arms to steady the camera. Another interesting technique he recommended was the use of the camera's time delay shutter release to further eliminate camera movement. Another advantage of using the time delay would be to allow you to position a hand held auxiliary light source after pressing the shutter release.

Charley also recommended studying your camera instruction manual to become familiar with some of the optional camera shooting modes. Many of us simply put the camera on an **Automatic** or **Program** setting and leave it there for all of our photography. However, other modes, such as a **Portrait** mode can sometimes be useful as this mode tends to make the central subject in sharp focus while slightly blurring the background. Experimenting with other modes such as **Aperature Priority**, which can also tend to provide better control of the background (i.e. depth of field) can also yield some interesting results. One of the blessings of digital cameras is the ability to experiment and shoot multiple shots and just throw away the bad ones! In any mode, it is important to allow the camera's autofocusing mechanism to do its thing. As most digital cameras have some sort of visual (and sometimes audible) indicator to show when the image is in focus, be sure to wait for that indication before pressing the shutter release button. Our present day digital cameras have internal computers with amazing capabilities – we need to do some experimenting to take full advantage of these features. We put a lot of work into our projects – let's put some effort and thought into taking good pictures of them!

Charley also recommended this article in **Fine Woodworking** magazine, **Issue #213**, which describes techniques for photographing our woodworking projects:

<http://www.finewoodworking.com/how-to/article/a-woodworker%E2%80%99s-guide-to-photography.aspx>

Note from the Editor



We thoroughly enjoyed **Charley Drake's** presentation at this month's meeting. I would guess that everyone left the meeting having learned at least something new about project photography!

It was especially enjoyable for me in that in times past I was fascinated with closeup flower photography – back in the day of 35mm film cameras.....:-) Dating myself, there, huh! I have to confess to becoming a lazy photographer, what with the nice automatic features of our modern digital point and shoot cameras, though my current one is some years out of date now! But **Charlie's** presentation got me inspired to get out my tripod and my camera manual and do some experimenting.....!! Thanks, **Charley!!**.

We are looking forward to high member participation at the upcoming **June 2015** meeting which will feature veneering. Having received such a generous gift of a large quantity of high quality hardwood veneer, which was distributed to interested members in our **Veneer Giveaway** during the **December 2014** meeting, we hope that our members have had sufficient time to experiment and work with this material.

We anticipate seeing some new projects incorporating this donated material, and a number of members sharing their learning experiences working with the veneer. Having had a long career in the research and development field, I have found that sometimes the most useful information comes from failed attempts, so please be willing to share your veneering experiences – either good or bad. We need to know what works and what doesn't.

This is a new woodworking skill for most of us, so any and all information and experience we can share with each other will be beneficial to the whole group. Bring along jigs, fixtures, specialized tools, etc. as well as photos and other information on a thumb drive so we can project it on the screen at the meeting. Let's work collectively to learn how to use this unique material form.

Bring along your questions and observations. Remember, the only dumb question is the one that isn't asked – we are here to help each other improve our woodworking knowledge and skills. Veneered boxes and furniture are waiting in the wings to spring forth from your shops..... :-) Bring 'em on folks!!

Happy 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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Woodcraft Supply
5963 Corson S.
Seattle, WA 98108
10% Member Discount (except sale items, power tools, workbenches)

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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.nwwoodworkers.org>

