

Gulf Coast Woodturners Association

GCWA Newsletter

February 1998

GCWA 10th anniversary next month.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Good news, people! The 2nd Annual Spring Woodturning Retreat is well on it's way. Boyce Gahagan is taking care of putting the show together. He will need many people to step forward and help out to make the show a real success. In fact, Boyce volunteered to take charge AFTER the Executive Board voted not to have the retreat this year because nobody seemed willing to take on the responsibility.

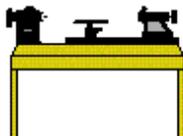
The retreat will be in Conroe again this year (same place), the Conroe Fairgrounds, thanks to people like Howard Moore and Richard & Clo Chambless & the City of Conroe. We will be in the air conditioned part of the building, with only one major change: no vendors, not even me. We decided on this because we really want our focus to be hands-on turning, with no distractions. This will be to everyone's benefit.

Well, along with the retreat comes elections. You need to start thinking if you would help by sharing your skills as secretary, treasurer, or board member. I would like to ask Bill Berry to serve as nominating chairman this year. He knows what each of these jobs require.

Thanks to everyone who handled the February meeting in my absence. I understand we had quite a crowd

See you at the meeting.

Bobby Bridges



SPRING RETREAT

The 2nd Annual Spring Woodturning Retreat is scheduled for May 15, 16 & 17. The main focus of the retreat is a hands-on turning experience. We have a few volunteers; we need several more to make this the huge success it was last year.

We were fortunate enough to secure the same facilities, the Montgomery County Fairgrounds in Conroe, at no cost. Lunch for both days will be provided by the same great place, Kountry Katfish. Coffee and other refreshments throughout the day will be part of our own club volunteer service, like our regular meetings.

There will be no vendors at the retreat. We are negotiating with major manufacturers for donations for the raffle.

We will have a short session at the February meeting to recruit volunteers for the various positions needed. Don't be afraid to volunteer. It's a great learning experience. Keep your calendar open for May 16 & 17th. See you at the meeting.

Boyce Gahagan

THIS MONTH

9:00 to 9:30 - sign in (get name tag), library check-in and check-out, buy raffle tickets, Show and Tell display, get coffee, and talk about turning.

9:30 to 10:00 - Judging of turned projects. Bring whatever you've been working on this last month.

9:45 to 10:00 - Announcements. We are keeping this part of our meeting brief, so items of interest need to be included in the newsletter.

10:00 to 10:30 - Award winners of turned projects. Winners will have the opportunity to tell about their project: kind of wood, design considerations (planned or unplanned), problems encountered (if any), type of finish, other comments.

10:30 - Raffle drawing.

10:45 to 12:00 - Four demonstrations to pick from: David Berry turning a **mushroom box**, Luna Ford demonstrating a **lidded box**, George Keener showing a **perfume bottle**, and a mystery turner demonstrating **bowl** turning. Bring your safety glasses and gather around a lathe.

Helen Young

WEBSITE

Gary Rodgers has found a spot for a GCWA web site. We need photographs and photographers. Your original pictures will be scanned and returned to you.

The web sites that catch my eye have pictures and lots of them. GCWA has woodturning talent we should spotlight on the Internet. Let me know what you will do to help. helen@orbitworld.net

GCWA is affiliated with the American Association of Woodturners. GCWA meetings are usually held at 9:00 a.m. on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Check the last page for our Calendar of Events. Annual dues are \$15. Dues may be mailed to Helen Young, 2502 Esther Ave., Pasadena TX 77502-3239. Make your check payable to GCWA or Gulf Coast Woodturners Association.

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ELECTION TIME

The board of our woodturning organization includes the usual: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. There are also four other people on the board to represent the membership. The past President serves on the board, along with the very necessary appointees, our newsletter editor and our librarian. This varied group is responsible for implementing our ultimate goal of **organizing and educating woodturners**.

The election of officers and board members for GCWA is just a few months away. What does this really mean? To most of us it means we get a ballot in our newsletter and a few of us will send them in. A return of about 30 to 40 ballots is normal, which is not a good representation for an organization of nearly 200 people. The good news is that the nominating committee, utilizing a bit of arm twisting, manages to recruit people to fill the vacated positions. This "arm twisting" is what concerns me.

The first step to becoming a member of the board requires that you be a

member of GCWA and have an interest in woodturning. The second step is a simple expression to the nominating committee that you are interested in one or all of the following :

- Furthering woodturning
- Helping other members to develop as woodturners
- Meeting and discussing the directions and goals of GCWA
- Continued improvement of GCWA as an organization
- Upholding quality of our meetings
- Improved learning opportunities

During the past 5 years I have been on the board of GCWA. It has been a rewarding experience for sure. I have felt fortunate to be able to take knowledge from members of GCWA to build on my own woodturning skills.

The experience of giving something back is what makes it come full circle. It is time for you with fresh new ideas and interests to step forward and help move GCWA to a higher level.

--Bill Berry

Positions Available:

I am ready for some other folks to get involved, too. I have served on the Executive Board for almost six years. I asked the Board to "subdivide" my duties. The Board agreed and voted to have a Secretary and Treasurer {2 people}.

This year we will vote on three positions. We will elect a new **Secretary**. I will seek reelection as **Treasurer**. David Berry has served on the board for the past two years so we will be voting on that **board member** position.

Murray Powell has graciously volunteered to serve as editor and the board voted to nominate him to that position. I will continue to do some of the mechanical things involved in newsletter preparation and maintain the mailing list.

Helen Young

One **always** has time enough, if one will apply it well.

--Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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SHOW & TELL

Special thanks to *Jonathan Bartz* and *Richard Wright* for judging Show and Tell.

In the Beginning Category, *James Herron* won first place for a candy bowl which was his first project and his second month in GCWA. Way to go!!

In the Intermediate Category, *Jim Getola* won first place for a pecan closed form. *Murray Powell* won second place for a maple bowl. *C. G. Habermann* received a special award for his wine bottle holder.

In the Advanced Category, *Steve Russell* won first place for an English brown oak burl bowl which was commissioned by a collector, and second place for an oak closed form. *Kip Powers* took third place for a maple wall hanging. A special award went to *Dale Barrack* for a mahogany bowl.

We had some other fine pieces on the show and tell table: *Dale Barrack* brought four soft maple bowls, two ash bowls, two pecan bowls and two soft maple confetti lamps. *Jim Keller* showed a flower of mulberry & manzanita, an ash scorched flair, and a mesquite closed form. *Kip Powers* turned a dyed mahogany bowl, a dyed poplar bowl and an ornamental pear weed pot. *Gary Rodgers* brought a mesquite hollow vessel with feet. *Steve Russell* turned a silver maple bowl.

Diana Gahagan displayed a segmented bowl glued up by *Howard Moore*, designed by *Clo Chambless*, taught by *Richard Chambless*, and turned by *Diana*; talk about the spirit of cooperation!

LIBRARY

All tapes and books are due at the next meeting. If you can't attend the meeting, either mail them to Ernie Thornton at 2502 Esther Ave., Pasadena TX 77502-3239, or ask someone to take them to the meeting for you.

The Cutting Edge will accept your books or tapes, and send them to the meeting.

Call Helen at 713.475.2940 or E-mail helen@orbitworld.net to renew for a second month.

After the second month, a late fee of \$5 per item per month is assessed. The late fees go directly to the Library Fund and are used to purchase library materials.

Ernie Thornton

Since your Librarian will be in Delaware the day of the meeting, I'm going to need a volunteer to help check out material. I'll transport the library to the meeting.

Helen Young

T-shirts with a beautiful embroidered emblem are \$10 each, \$12 for XX Large or larger. Caps are \$10 each. Polo shirts and jackets are special order. See our inventory at The Cutting Edge. Stop by and see them.

This will be your last newsletter if your membership dues expired January 31, 1998.

WANTED: Dumb Questions

I'm having a lot of fun with the Newsletter — as the "features editor" I get to question people about the things I'm interested in! For upcoming issues I've asked Steve Russell to tell us the story of his burl bowl, and Luna Ford to show how to make our own tools. Bill Hubbard will help us discover new sources for wood, and Kip Powers will share his experiences in setting up a side-line business. I'm leaning on Linda Box to do some interviews (because we really don't know each other), and I hope Andy Box will help us see how different people solve typical shop problems. All of these articles are driven by questions. And while none of these folks really want to write these articles, you and I must encourage them —and others— to do no less.

The Club is about to celebrate 10 years because some folks had nagging questions about turning. They got together not because they were experts, but because they wanted to get better. The spirit of sharing and cooperation was fueled by a need for one another's knowledge and skills. Funny, then, that what I hear over-and-over at meetings is, "But, I'm not that good a turner." Well, Halleluia! That's why we're here! We all have questions about turning, and we all want to take our skills further. And unless we ask, we'll never receive...

So, what questions do you have about turning, or GCWA? Call me at 713.682.2810, or email to mpowell@wantabe.com and share your questions and comments. Oh, and your answers would also be much appreciated, too!

-Murray Powell

SAFETY TIPS

Working wood on a lathe can be dangerous. Here are a few safety tip for new turners (and for experienced turners who are slow learners(!).

Protect your lungs.

Turning wood creates shavings and dust. Sanding creates a LOT of dust. The shavings usually fall to the floor. But the dust drifts around and if you don't take proper precautions, it will end up in your lungs.

Certain woods are worse than others. Some are toxic and spalted wood contain fungus that becomes airborne with the dust.

There are many options available to protect your lungs, from inexpensive to very expensive. Choose the one that's right for you-- BUT CHOOSE ONE! At a minimum, wear a dust mask at all times when you're turning and sanding.

The American Association of Woodturners suggests that you also ventilate your work space and remove all moldy (spalted) wood and shavings *immediately*.

(Protecting your lungs from paints and lacquer vapors is also a must, but that's the subject of another article. Hint: vapors are much more difficult to filter out and most options to protect your lungs from dust are largely ineffective against vapors.)

Protect your eyes and your body.

Working wood that has not been kiln dried (like the log your neighbor gave you a year ago that's been laying behind your garage) increases the chance of deterioration. That increases the probability that the wood might not anchor securely on your face plate, chuck or spur drive. Wood that's out of balance AND deteriorated, increases even more the likelihood that something could go wrong.

Inspect your wood carefully. Reject the pieces that common sense tells you are going to be a problem. Use a band saw

or chain saw (carefully) to get the wood as round as possible, and if you're attaching it to a face plate, get it as flat as possible where it attaches.

After you get the piece on the lathe, stand back and turn on your lathe to the slowest speed setting. Increase the speed until the piece starts to shake the lathe. Then decrease the speed to eliminate shaking and turn the lathe off. Inspect the mounting (where the wood attaches to the face plate, chuck or spur drive). If the piece is loose, either re-mount it and go through the proceeding process, or discard the wood and find a better piece.

Wear a face shield when you begin to turn an out-of-round/deteriorated piece at least until you're sure that the wood is attached securely and you get it completely round. It's also a good idea to wear a face shield when you're making the final cuts on a thin-walled vessel. It's easy to cut through the bottom and have the vessel "blow up" on you. (Sharp objects being thrown off a lathe at high speed can do nasty things to your appearance!)

Of course, it's safest to wear a face shield at all times when you're turning.

If you wear long sleeve shirts when you turn, ensure the cuffs fit very tight, or better yet roll them up. Don't risk getting your sleeve caught on the work piece or the chuck.

If you wear a glove when you are turning, David Ellsworth recommends that you cut off the fingers of the glove. He believes doing so will give you better tactical feel and will avoid the possibility of the glove material on the small finger getting entangled with the work piece or the chuck.

Lay off the Sauce!

It shouldn't need to be said, but don't drink and turn – work sober. To quote AAW: We care about your continuing good health and all the turning you have yet to make!

MEMBER'S NEWS

Next month marks the 10th anniversary of GCWA. I am sending special invitations to the folks that were members in the beginning of the club. If you know someone that used to be a member and isn't active, why not call and invite them to our March meeting?

Please welcome our new members, *Roger Elswick* and *Ansel McDowell*. Make yourselves at home.

Lots of our members don't know each other. Why not wear a name tag and help us know who you are?

Helen Young

BRING BACK

Woody Woodard donated two Osage orange mallets I thought would be rather good "husband persuaders." My view was not shared by the mostly-male members who attended February's meeting! I must have been so enamored by the possibilities of the mallets, I failed to note who won them.

Buddy Cappell joined GCWA in November and won a bring back piece at the December meeting. He bought a used lathe with no drive spur and no chuck. He turned a candlestick between centers using a drill chuck to grasp a hole saw. That's the spirit of the bring back. He wasn't able to attend the January meeting, so he asked Max Wohlgemuth to take it to the meeting for him.

Jerry Alspaw won a tea light turned by *Bill Dyer*.

So whoever won Woody's mallets and Buddy Cappell's candlestick, and Jerry all owe us bring back pieces for the February meeting.

Helen Young

LAST MONTH

My special thanks to Bill Berry, for sending the correct map for last month's meeting. David Berry and Max Wohlgemuth made sure there were correct maps and instructions posted on the door of the place I told you we were going to meet! Sorry about that, folks. As many people as we had at Jim Glock's shop, makes you wonder how many would have come if the map had been right....

I always think a meeting at Glock's shop is a special treat. Jim, we appreciate the time and effort.

Helen Young

Dale Barrack

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RISK MANAGEMENT

With even a modest array of tools and equipment, at some point our investment as turners begins to add up to “real money.” Not only is there the lathe, but all those \$25 tools and accessories (that’s what I tell my wife they cost). A small shop that’s dedicated to mostly making pens can easily have \$1,000 in equipment. A larger shop can quickly go 10 times and more that amount. While we’ve all seen the warnings about marking our tools, when did you last look around to see just how vulnerable your shop might be to theft or even fire?

I recently had a hard learning when some power tools were stolen from my garage. One of the doors was up, but we live on a dead-end street, our subdivision has an active Citizen’s Patrol, it was a Saturday afternoon, and my wife and daughter were home at the time. None of these assumptions hindered someone from getting my circular saw, a router and three electric sanders. Our burglar went against “good sense” and walked out with an armload of easily pawned tools.

Sure we have insurance, with a \$250 deductible figured at replacement cost. And I was extremely glad that I’d made the effort to inventory our house. And no one got hurt. But my tools were gone, and so was a piece of my innocence. I felt like a cliché, and that made me mad. My initial response was even to act like a victim. I kept the garage doors closed all the time. I found myself thinking mean and nasty thoughts about how to booby trap certain areas. After all, now they know what I have.

But those thoughts were mentally “expensive” to me. I really felt closed-in with the doors down, and I’d probably be the one to get caught in the traps. I at least wanted out of the trap of being a victim. So I’ve gotten back to basics and tried to hit a happy medium between taking risks and being secure.

Recommendations:

Having talked with two police officers and my insurance company, here are some specific recommendations:

- Create an inventory of all equipment. This is essential. I wasn’t even sure of what was missing until I got my list out. Insurance companies want you to be as detailed as possible in your description, with any receipts or other proofs of ownership. At least include the full serial number, approximate date of purchase and sales price. Consider taking snapshots, or make a video tape of your tools.

- Regularly review your insurance coverage. Definitely send a copy of your inventory to your agent.

- Clearly and *deeply* engrave your tools with your name and Texas Driver’s License number. The police say this and the serial numbers are the keys to getting your things back from a pawn shop. And don’t be neat about it. Write it big, and color it in.

- Use a photo-eye across door opening(s). Mine came from Radio Shack, and I wired it to a doorbell just inside the house. I have a switch

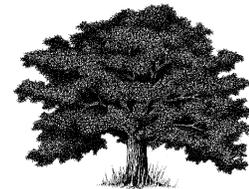
to disable the bell, which I turn back on as I walk back into the house.

- Store your power tools as *inconveniently* as possible(!). By having to walk or reach further, you might also be keeping them for longer. Store them as far as you can from the door, and either up high or down low. Don’t “showcase” them. Putting them behind cabinet doors would be even better.

As you look around, be very careful about your “good sense” assumptions, which can lead to complacency. Look at your shop with an eye toward damage and disaster control. Our members who are plant engineers call this Risk Management Assessment. Look and ask, *what could go wrong?* What could I do to prevent a theft or a fire? You would do well to ask a friend to help with this, getting an objective opinion.

Like habitually wearing a face shield while turning, don’t trust to luck in this area, either. Assess your risks, and avoid becoming a case number.

-Murray Powell



Sorby representatives Peter Gill & Mark Barker will be at Woodcraft, Tuesday, March 17, 1998, from 2 PM to 9 PM.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 18, 1998 ~ 7:00 PM ~ Executive Board Meeting @ Bobby Bridges' house.

March 21, 1998 ~ Deer Park High School, North Campus.

April 18, 1998 ~ The Cutting Edge

May 16-17, 1998 ~ 2nd annual Spring Woodturning Retreat, Conroe, Texas

June 20, 1998 ~ meeting open

July 18, 1998 ~ meeting open

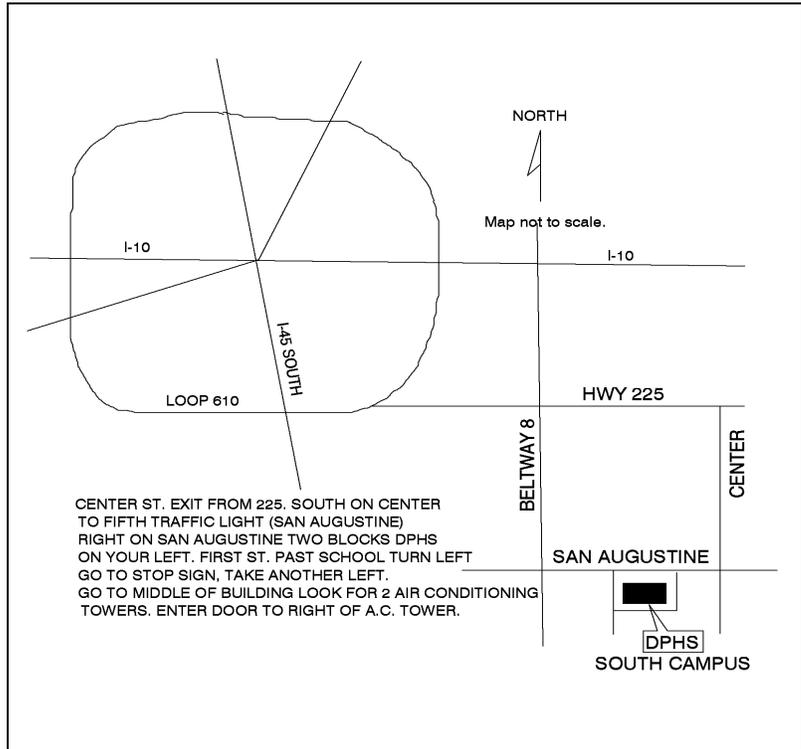
August 15, 1998 ~ meeting open

September 19, 1998 ~ The Cutting Edge

October 10-11, 1998 ~ Texas Turn or Two VII

November 21, 1998 ~ meeting open

December 19, 1998 ~ meeting open



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THIS MONTH

February 21, 1998 ~ 9:00 AM ~ GCWA meeting at Deer Park High School, South Campus, hosted by Max Wohlgemuth.

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