



Wood Words

The newsletter of the *Kansas City Woodworkers Guild*



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**Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 15,
 My Wisdom of the Hands – Doug Stowe**

Sawdust:

The Presidents Corner



Now that things are returning to normal, here at the Guild, I thought it was time that I wrote about something near and dear to my heart, workbenches. That's right, workbenches. I can't explain my fascination with them, except to say that my Holtzapffel workbench is my favorite tool in my shop. Tool, you say? Why yes, it's more than a piece of shop furniture. What other tool can hold a 24" case side for dovetailing and then hold a panel flat and steady for planing. And then, it's there to hold your parts at the right level for assembly. Like I said, my favorite tool.

I guess you could blame this fascination on the writings of our recent guest, Christopher Schwarz. As many of you know, Chris has written numerous articles and two books on building, using, and caring for your workbench. I was so mesmerized by these

writings that when the opportunity presented itself to build a Holtzapffel workbench, under his tutelage, I jumped at the chance. A week was spent in Berea, Kentucky, at Kelly Mehler's School of Woodworking, soaking up all the knowledge I could and building a darn, fine workbench.

You'd think that building one bench would be enough, wouldn't you? But nooo! I had to build another. I had identified a need for a workbench, for our monthly presentations, and ask our Leadership Committee for permission. It was built as a part of a class, that ended up with only one student, Brad Swaters. Now I don't know if Brad learned anything or not, but he built a good heavy workbench to call his own. And the Guild had a presentation workbench that has been put to good use by many presenters including my guru, Christopher Schwarz. It passed his inspection and I was very happy.

This brings me to the

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Beaver Timber
 3133 Merriam Lane, 64106
 913-831-2518

Van-Ton Machine
 John Van Goethem
 913-631-1094

reason for this topic. With our new shop, with its classrooms, we have a need for more and better workbenches. Let's face it, our bowling alley topped benches have served their purpose but it's time to replace them. Warning! Here comes a shameless plug! VP Rob Young and I will be teaching a free, hands-on clinic while we build 3 Roubo workbenches for the Guild. If you don't know what a Roubo workbench looks like, I suggest you look at the cover of Christopher Schwarz's book, *The Workbench Design Book*. Or you can see it on the cover of *Popular Woodworking Magazine*, issue #184 August, 2010. To say the least, these will be substantial benches.

So if you think you'd like to learn how to cut really big thru dovetails and tenons, keep a place on your calendar open. The clinic will be done in three installments on Saturdays July 9th, 23rd, and August 6th. Rob and I look forward to seeing you there.

I have one last, not so little, detail to share with you. I would be remiss if I didn't take this moment to thank Christopher Steck and the rest of the folks at Beaver Timber. They are a new sponsor and they provided the massive 5"x 5" beams that will become our bench tops. Thanks a whole bunch, guys.

So till next month, I hope you're making sawdust.

Kevin



Gold Leafing Techniques

Walter Murphy of Home Team Solutions presented tips and techniques to add interest to woodworking projects. He restores goods, typically damaged by movers, to furniture, marble and statuary. In the process of restoring goods, he's had to do some gold leafing to make the repairs match the existing gold leaf. He shared what he knew and how to do it. He stated he's not an expert nor did he have all the answers. However, Walter has more answers than most of us about these techniques. Gold leaf gets everyone's attention because people know it's expensive and it has a special look all its own.

Gold leaf can give your projects a refreshing new look and bring attention to specific parts of your project. Gold leafing the entire project is not only expensive, it's not accenting something special. Stop and think about it; picture frames are quite often gold leafed, which brings your eye to the picture. He showed a carving and how the gold on

just the leaves accented the whole piece. He pointed out how part of the carving was painted black. Also, the gold leafing was rubbed through to the red clay undercoating to give it more character. He introduced several tools and products.

The most desirable woods for applying gold leafing are basswood, poplar and cherry as these are all close grained woods. Open grained woods have to be filled with layers of gesso to obtain a smooth surface.

To get started, the first thing is to size the items you so the gold leaf will adhere. Sizing is the same as glue. All the old trades have their own vocabulary, which adds mystique to what they do. Sizing is not only an adhesive, it must have these special characteristics—it must set up quickly so it is tacky for the gold leaf to stick to, and must stay tacky long enough to complete the project.

He used an oil sizing for the demonstration, which set up in about twenty minutes and stayed tacky for about two hours. It is classified as fast sizing. Varnish could be used, but it takes a long time to become tacky and a long time to cure. Some of the sizing will take up to five hours before losing tackiness. This would be an example of slow sizing. He does not recommend shellac which becomes tacky immediately after putting it on, because it is alcohol based, the alcohol evaporates too quickly, so you lose your tackiness too quickly.

While waiting for the sizing to become tacky, he discussed the gold leaf itself. Because gold is so expensive and ductile, it's logical that it would be hammered into thin sheets. Some gold leaf is hammered down to a half a micron in thickness. It is so light that it can float on a puff of air, and so thin you can see through it. Gold can be applied to an object and polished, and it will never tarnish or fade. Not all gold leaf is the same, it can be 24 carat, or it can be 23 1/2 down to 6 carat. The remainder can be copper, silver or other metals. Each metal alloy has a different color and this is important when you're matching gold leaf for repairs. Equally thin metals can be purchased in platinum, aluminum, copper and silver. Some of the metal leaves are variegated. You can pick from French, Italian, German, Chinese or Japanese gold leaves. They are all in book of 25 leaves.

There are two broad categories of gold leafing, one is water gilding and the other is oil gilding. To prepare the surface for gold leafing, gesso is applied. Gesso is a combination of titanium oxide or chalk, and some kind of binder. The gesso

any imperfections in the wood, two or three coats may be required. You need to sand between each coat to obtain a smooth surface. The next step is to apply a minimum of three coats of color clay, also called burnishing clay. Your clay needs to be the consistency of toothpaste. The purpose of the clay is to absorb the water in the sizing. Each coat needs to be dry before adding another coat. It needs to be sanded after each coat is dry with 400 grit sandpaper, if needed. Water based sizing follows, like rabbit sizing or hide glue, which is mostly water. The sizing is flowed on the area to be gold leafed. The gold leaf is then applied and can be burnished after several hours. Burnishing is done with a special tools made with agate stones. These tools smooth out the gold for a mirror-like reflection.

The second method is oil sizing. He uses mainly oil sizing on his repair jobs and favors fast sizing from Mohawk. He used several products from Mohawk during the demonstration. Typically doesn't use gesso, but instead applies the red or yellow clay and sands the dry surfaces so they are smooth between each coat. He brushed the sizing exactly where the gold leaf is to adhere.

The purpose of using the red and yellow clays is so the finish can be "rubbed through" and the finish acquires an "antiqued" look. When repairing picture frames that are gold leafed and antiqued, he often sees dead flat areas, often in crevices. To duplicate the look, he uses casein paints that are dead flat and dusty looking.

Walter brought catalogs and extensive sample cards for various gold leaf products and related supplies. He also had available books with discussions of gold leafing. An online source for more information is www.societyofguilders.org. They have classes on gilding, at \$800 plus materials. Further resources:

Gold Leaf Techniques—Edition 4, by Kent H. Smith, 1998, 513-421-2050

Gold Leaf; Application and Antique Restoration, by Helen Pecker, Schiffer Publishing, 1998, 610-593-1777

Decorative Gilding by Annie Sloan, 1996, Reader's Digest Book

Fine Woodworking on Finishing and ReFinishing, 5th printing in 1992, Taunton Press, 800-888-8286

The Best of Find Woodworking: Finishes and Finishing Techniques

Supplies:

Mohawk Finishing Products, a division of RPM

Wood Finishes Group, Inc, 800-545-0047
Sepp Leaf Products, the gilder's source for leaf, supplies, tools and materials, 800-971-7377, sales@seppleaf.com



May 2011 General Meeting Program

Our regular monthly meeting of the Kansas City Woodworkers Guild was held on Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 7:00 P.M. in our new shop located at 3189 Mercier, Kansas City, Missouri.

The general meeting started with show and tell.

The program portion of the meeting was given by Gary Kepko pertaining to his six year hobby of Building a Longbow. Gary explained how to make different types of bows and covered the different materials used. He discussed his first attempt at making a recreational bow and demonstrated the process in putting it all together. He explained the way in which he dries all the different woods. Gary demonstrated the process of putting all pieces together prior to gluing and curing the bow. He then explained how he figured the draw weight that he was looking for. The draw weight is the amount of force it will take to pull the bow string back. Gary demonstrated the fine instruments he used to measure the draw weight which included his \$9.00 Wal Mart analog scale and his 2x4 tillering tree with notches every inch.

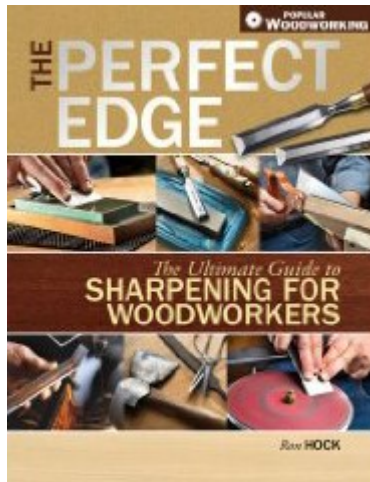
Gary shared an important part of history regarding the origin of being shown the middle finger, which came from the old English long bow archers. The English started their archers out when they where five or six years old. By the time they were military age they could pull back those heavy bows. This, of course, gave them an advantage over the French during the war. Consequently, every time the French captured an English archer they would cut off their middle finger so they couldn't draw back on their bow. So, at the end of any battle that the English won, the archers would walk by and show that they still had their middle finger, thus the origin of presenting someone the middle finger.

What a night we had, learning about the long bow and getting such an important history lesson. Now remember, next time someone shows you their middle finger, they are just letting you know they can still draw back on a bow.



The Perfect Edge—by Ron Hock Book Review by John Tegeler

Recently, Rob Young asked me if I would do a book review of the book 'The Perfect Edge' by Ron Hock who is the owner of Hock Tools. Hock Tools of course makes blades for planes and other woodworking tools. He knows his stuff and this book proves it.



This book is about sharpening for woodworkers. Now, Rob knows how much I struggle with hand tools, let alone sharpening them. If there is a power tool that does the job that I need to do, I will use it first. A hand tool is the last thing I want to use. The thought of sharpening chisels, plane irons, and scrapers just gets me someplace that I just don't want to be. I even asked him if he was sure that he wanted me to do this. He said, "Absolutely". Reluctantly, I agreed.

According to the cover of the book 'The Perfect Edge', this book is 'the ultimate guide to sharpening for woodworkers'. The book is essentially divided into four general categories.

First part, chapter 1, goes into detail about why we sharpen tools. Second part consists of chapters 2, 3, and 4 which talks about steel, abrasives, and how wood is cut. The third part, chapter 5 gets into the basics of sharpening. The remaining ten chapters go into copious detail about sharpening different types of tools. The first five chapters are a must read. The rest takes what you learned in the first five chapters and goes into the specifics of sharpening the specific tool that you want to sharpen.

So, what is a perfect edge? A perfect edge is 'the intersection between two surfaces, one that performs its assigned task the way you want it to'. All you need to do then is essentially three things:

1. Determine the correct angle for that intersection.
2. Rub the tool at that angle on an abrasive surface until you have that angle.
3. Repeat the above step 2 on successively

finer grits to the desired degree of polish.

It's on these three steps that the book is devoted to spelling out.

Why do we sharpen? We sharpen to cut wood better. A sharpened blade does the job better, easier, safer, and faster. Sharpening for me is a struggle. The time it takes, the effort involved, and the energy needed to sharpen a tool is just difficult. For many, it is a joy taking the tool and step by step, grinding, polishing, beveling and finally oiling and placing the tool in its rightful wrapping or case. Then, at some time, the tool is used with a great sense of accomplishment. Me, I just want it sharpened so that I can get the job done and move on. For me, it's a necessary evil and not a source of meditation between me and my tool. This book satisfies both extremes. The author goes to great length in each chapter to give the basics and then expand the topic much, much more.

All blades are made of steel. Steel blades are not just steel blades. They are a complex mixture of steel and carbon. The right mixture of steel and carbon, the right temperature that it is subjected to, and a wide variety of additives all come together to form a steel blade. In chapter 2, the author goes into the history of steel, its uses, how it's formed, and why we have steel. He supplies charts, diagrams and plenty of pictures to document this interesting metal. I was overwhelmed with the information provided. However, I can honestly say I do have a much better understanding of steel. Too much carbon, steel gets brittle, not enough carbon, steel gets soft. Rust is the product of oxidation of the metal. Keep your tools dry. I am happy knowing these facts, and there is a much more in the book to satisfy the inquiring mind.

Now that we have a steel blade, how do we get it sharp? It's abrasives of course. Sand, silicon dioxide, is the most common abrasive. Well, it's not that simple of course. You just don't drag your tool through sand. Yes, it's a complicated process, although, Mr. Hock provides copious details on the origins, sharpness, friability (fragility), the uses of abrasives, and how abrasives are delivered to the consumer. Some examples are: sandpaper, grinding wheels, and stones.

Abrasives come in a variety of types. Basically, we have silicon carbide which is the black, wet or dry sandpaper. Then there are a wide variety of super abrasives such as diamonds, and also many new super abrasive compounds. The one that most of us use and are familiar with is aluminum

oxide or simply AO. This is the meat and potatoes of the tool sharpening industry. This is the one that we, as woodworkers, probably have in our shops.

We now have the steel and the sharpening agent. But before we sharpen, we need to know how wood is cut. Wood cutting is removing some wood from a larger piece of wood. It is done by a 'sharp edge'. The edge of the tool wedges its way through wood fibers and shears them away. The blade must compress the wood fibers before cutting them. We must minimize the compression in advance of the failure. So, a sharp edge makes it so much smoother and easier.

Cut orientation is important also. We cut with the grain, across the grain, or across the flat grain. With a sharp blade and together with understanding the cutting orientation of wood is how wood is cut. This is important because if you cut against the grain, you end up with a real mess. This may all sound pretty basic, but that is what this book is about, basics.

Chapter 5, The Fundamentals, puts the process of sharpening all together. Grinding is the process of reshaping the edge. Honing is the process of refining that edge. And finally, polishing which is putting on the final touches. The bevel angle is the most important angle. The author gave a very good example of the bevel angle by comparing the bevel angle of a razor and the bevel angle of a wood ax. It brought home the concept of the bevel angle. They both have bevels. The ax has a huge bevel, the razor has a very, very fine bevel.

We sharpen to get to a zero-radius. When a blade is dull, it has a rounded edge. Sharpening gets the rounded edge of the blade sharp and to a point. The rest of chapter 5 demonstrates and discusses how to get to that sharp point. That's what it is all about-The Perfect Edge.

The rest of the book, chapters 6 through 15, takes on a specific set of tools and goes into great detail on how to sharpen that set of tools. Some examples are as follows: chisels, axes, knives and power tools.

After reading the first 5 chapters, I have a greater appreciation of the sharpening process. I have a better understanding of the practice and why I do it. I even have a small sharpening area set up in my shop to sharpen my chisels and plane irons.

Believe it or not, I am using my chisels more. I sharpen less begrudgingly now that I have read the book.

A FAVOR FOR THE GUILD

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Include the Title, Author, Publisher and copyright date. Give readers an idea of for whom the book is written: beginners, experienced woodworkers, etc. Briefly summarize the contents: projects with plans (what kinds of projects), shop tips, how to use a specific tool, finishing techniques, gluing techniques, etc. If you like you could list names of chapters. Is the book well illustrated? What did you learn from the book? Would you recommend it to others?

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Kansas City Woodworkers' Guild Proudly Presents June Program

Doug Stowe June 15, 2011, at our Regular monthly meeting. Doug is an Author, Box Maker, Professional Woodworker, & Teacher. He will present an overview of his work, has a powerpoint presentation, and he will talk some about "My Wisdom of the Hands" program and the need to create greater opportunities for hands on learning for kids. One of his pet causes is to reform our nation's education, and give wood shops back to schools. He will be selling Box Making and other of his Books and DVDs

Your article could have been here.....



Correction: Proudly made by Kevin McAndrew (May)



Correction: Made by Ken Grainger (May)



Jerry Watson—Dovetail vise, ash screws, mallet with leather head wrap



Russ Amos – Wooden book – birch, hidden compartment in spine



Dave Roth – marquetry vase and flowers plaques – 9 veneers stack cut and combined



Dave Clark—box with three drawers to hold hair sticks, engraving highlighted with semiprecious stones, leather lined, shown open and closed.

John Beal — Roubo style book rest, cut from one piece of wood into two interlocking pieces.



Dave Winters – bandsaw box with 4 leaf drawers

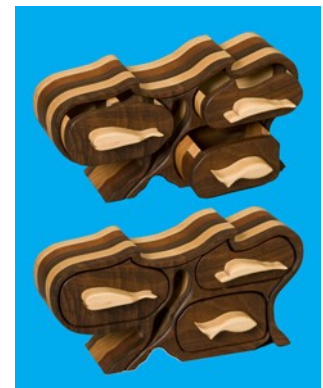


James Childress- ball bearing catcher in red cedar and juniper, interesting laminations

John Tegeler – ocean wave bandsaw box, laminated birch, cherry and walnut



John Tegeler—marquetry plaque



Arnold Baker—small box from walnut scrap



Dave Clark and Spring Fisk– children’s toys using a variety of woods and construction techniques



Rob Young – lightweight English saw bench



General Meeting Programs

- June 15 – My Wisdom of the Hands – Doug Stowe
- July 20 – Antique Tools – Don Kruse
- Aug 17 – Making Claw Feet – Calvin Hobbs
- Sep 21 – Woodmaster Tools – Barry Bland
- Oct 19th – To Be Determined
- Nov 16th – Inlay projects – Jim Ramsey
- Dec 21 – Holiday Party

Calendar

Leadership Meetings, 7:00pm, 3189 Mercier, Kansas City, MO 64111-3631—map at www.kcwwg.org

Guild meetings, 7:00 pm 3189 Mercier, Kansas City, MO 64111-3631, come at 6:15 to share and visit.

Executive Meetings 2011 Guild Meetings

Jul 6	Dec 7	Jun 15	Dec 14
Aug 3	Jan 4	Jul 20	Jan 18
Sep 7	Feb 1	Aug 17	Feb 15
Oct 5	Mar 7	Sep 21	Mar 21
Nov 2	Apr 4	Oct 19	Apr 18
		Nov 16	

Workshops and Clinics

Will be announced soon!

Check the calendar at www.kcwwg.org for details.

**Kansas City Woodworkers Guild
3189 Mercier
Kansas City, MO 64111-3631**