

Northern Woods

The Newsletter of the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild, Est. 1982

Volume: 142

Issue: December 2012 - January 2013

President's Notes

Charlie is wrapping up his three year term as president. He talks about his successor as well as changes to the newsletter and other Guild communications.

[Full Story](#)



Changes coming to Guild Newsletter

Changes are coming to how the Guild communicates with our members.

[Full Story](#)

October Meeting: Guitar Kits with George Vondriska

George gave attendees an overview of building a guitar from a kit. He discussed the differences in kits at various price points, and talked about key factors that make a kit guitar sound good. The meeting closed with a bit of Johnny Cash music!

[Full Story](#)

Fall Seminar: Robert Van Norman

Robert Van Norman, Director of the Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking presented a highly education seminar featuring tool-making, cabinet-making and of course his mentor James Krenov's philosophy and wisdom.

[Full Story](#)



What's On Your Bench? - Coasters

Ray Ayotte made patterned coasters following a plan in Woodsmith. In this article he describes several changes he came up with to improve and simplify the process.

[Full Story](#)



Innovative Game Table

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Guild Member Bill Catlin sent along this link to a very cool game table on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

[Full Story](#)

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President's Notes

Story by Charlie Kocourek



Change is good!

There are two separate, but related changes that I want to tell you about today. The first is that Jerry Beutel has accepted the position of Guild President effective January 1st, 2013. The other is a change with the newsletter and a shift in how we communicate to the membership.

Jerry Beutel is an amazing and extraordinary man. He is a down to earth, hard working and very intelligent person with a warm personality. He also brings wealth of managerial and leadership experience from the corporate world. We are fortunate to have him in this key leadership position and we can rest easy knowing that the Guild is in good hands. Please join me in welcoming Jerry to his new position!

We on the Board have been thinking of ways to capitalize on email and electronic media to improve how we communicate to the membership. For the last few years Jerry has edited the newsletter. He successfully transitioned the newsletter from paper to the more recent electronic version. Jerry (or anyone else) cannot be expected to perform the presidential duties and edit the newsletter simultaneously. This actually presents a perfect opportunity for us to implement some of the improvements we have been considering.

We are going to move from a single newsletter that is sent out once every two months to more timely and more frequent email blasts. There are many advantages to this; the most significant advantage is that you will receive information while it is still fresh and relevant. You will hear and see more about this.

One concern we have heard is that some people might not want multiple emails, and we have developed ways to address this concern. First, Guild members can easily edit their email preferences. You can do this by logging into your Guild account and clicking on "Edit Profile Information". From there you have the ability to customize email preferences to your own personal tastes. You can select exactly which, if any emails you want to receive. Even if you choose to forego emails altogether relevant information will still be available to you on the Guild website.

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I turn the Guild Presidency over to Jerry with great pride and great optimism. Most importantly, I believe in the Guild. I believe it is the best Woodworking organization in the country, and like computer processors, it just gets better every year. We have an amazing membership and a remarkably dedicated leadership team. I am proud to be a member of this organization and I am very optimistic about our future. I have been on the Board for several years in varying capacities, and I have served as President for 3 years. Change really is good, and it is time for fresh ideas. I will remain active on the board, but in some different capacity. I know we will see many great and innovative ideas from the new board and from Jerry's leadership. During my three years I tried to emphasize personal interaction and fun! It is all about woodworking, but none of us would be here if we didn't enjoy it. I am truly honored to have served as Guild President and I thank you for the opportunity.

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Classifieds

Advertising in the classifieds is provided to members of the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild free of charge. Ads placed should be for goods or services of general interest to the woodworkers who make up the guild community. Ads for services will run until cancelled. Other ads will run for one issue unless renewed. Submit ads to [Jerry Beutel](mailto:Jerry.Beutel)

Power tool training wanted

I happen to be blind. I am looking for someone willing to show me the basics of using power tools in woodworking. I am certain this can be done without sight. I know of other blind woodworkers. However, I don't want to come up short a few fingers figuring out how that can be done safely.

Mike Hanson@ mhanson@winternet.com

Tools

Powermatic 6" jointer, Model 54A for sale, \$600. Excellent condition, with extra set of knives.

Jointer is in my shop in Finlayson, MN - about 100 miles north of the Twin Cities. (Mandatory, free, shop tour part of the purchase!)

Contact: Roger Knudson
320-233-6543
rwknudson@frontiernet.net
25470 Hwy 18
Finlayson, MN 55735



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Woodworking machinery

First 8 items are new, some still in packaging:

- 1) Woodmaster 37" 3875 drum sander & sand paper \$2800
 - 2) Woodmaster db-500 5 hp 6" port, bags & duct work to fill 2 55 gal drums \$975
 - 3) Powermatic 66 10" table saw 5 hp upgrade left tilt 50" extension & Powermatic mobile base for saw & extension \$1800
 - 4) Delta 2 speed shaper x5 43-431x 3/4 & 1 1/4 spindles & Delta mobile base \$1200
 - 5) Delta 3 hp 15" planer x5 22-785 infeed/outfeed tables & Delta mobile base \$1050
 - 6) Delta 1hp power feeder 36-851 3 roller 4 speed \$900
 - 7) Delta mortiser 14-651 \$200
 - 8) Jet jous-10 osillating floor spindle sander 110v \$800
 - 9) Delta osillating edge sander 31-396 less than 3 hours use \$2000
 - 10) Jet dc 110orc dust collector 110v dual 4" ports, remote control, Dust Dog v weave top metal canister filter 110v less than 3 hours use \$350
 - 11) Jet 18" bandsaw jwbs-18 1 1/2 hp 110vless than 30 hours use \$800
 - 12) Apollo 80osp self contained turbine spray system with Apollo A5010 sprayer less than 10 hours use \$600
 - 13) 3/4" Pony bar clamps most are new \$10 piece
 - 14) Central Machinery 34" radial floor drill press 3/4 hp 110v less than 2 hours use \$225
 - 15) Central Machinery 2 hp 5mic dust collector(new) \$180
 - 16) pallet jack 2000lb used 2x \$150
- air nailers, many new woodworking gadgets, wood spindles, mouldings, hand rail

joe.kaeder@hotmail.com

SHOPSMITH Mark 5 with attached jointer and a speed increaser that I would like to sell. Price \$2000.00 or best offer. I also have a **SHOPSMITH band saw** with power stand for \$200.00, a **ryobi surface planer** \$100.00 and a **craftsman radial arm saw** \$100.00 all immediately available.

Jerold.hahn@comcast.net

Wood

Hackberry tree:

Standing Hackberry tree trunk for sale. Approximately 20' tall with diameter about 18 inches. The tree is straight. Can send a picture. I could have the trunk cut down or it could be cut by the buyer. I have no means of delivering it so would have to be picked up in our Lakeville, MN home.

tleuma@aol.com

Hardwoods for Sale:

Kiln dried, surfaced, straight-lined, 15/16" thick, 3'-5' lengths, 4" – 11" wide, sold as 500 pound pallets (approx. 150 board feet).

\$250 -- Red Oak (approx. \$1.67/b.f.)

\$275 -- Hard Maple (approx. \$1.83/b.f.)

\$225 -- Poplar (approx \$1.50/b.f.)

End Trims, kiln dried, surfaced, straight-lined, 15/16" thick, less than 20" lengths, 4: - 11" wide, sold as 200 pound pallets (approx. 60 board feet).

\$50 -- Red Oak

\$60 -- Hard Maple

\$40 -- Poplar

**Contact Phil Ayotte, Northland Forest Products, Inc. Shakopee, MN
612-353-1928**

Premium Red Oak. I have the following red oak available (in Minneapolis):

(9) 1X6 16'

(1) 1X6 11.5'

(1) 1X6 10'

(1) 1X8 16'

(1) 1X8 11'

(2) 1X10 13'

(4) 1X10 12'

\$750.00 Call **John 612-743-0986**

Walnut \$100. The main piece is 3.25" x 8.5" x 8.5' long. Also included are these smaller pieces: 4 @ 2.75X.75X17 inches, 8@ 1.75X.375X17 inches, 1@ 2.75X.375X10 inches, 1@ 2.75X.375X12 inches, 1@ 2.75X.5X10 inches. All for \$100 alans@att.net

Red Oak Timbers. I am a Sawyer, I have recently started to cut up some Red Oak Timbers that have been down for approximately four years. I'm interested in selling the slabs, they are 1" X 16" X 10'. If you are interested, you can contact me at: kattermaggie@comcast.net 763-443-2628

Veneers and marquetry tools. Variety of marquetry tools(including a press) and veneers for sale. A list of veneers follows: Rosewood burl ,African Mahogany, East African rosewood ,Rosewood ,Premium Walnut ,Olive ash,White Oak, Red Oak,Poplar Birch,Sycamore,Dyed Black, Hare-wood

Maple, Walnut, African cherry, Aqua Birdseye, and Dyed green. Any halfway reasonable offer will be accepted. Private party. Contact surselyd@msn.com

Shop Space

Shop space at 11490 Hudson blvd Lake Elmo. Three 2400sq.ft wood working bays available in Lake Elmo off of Manning ave and Interstate 94. Piping for pressurized air, heavy power, ventilation and an interior drive in so you product will never get wet. Great access to Interstate 94. The whole complex is either wood working shops or a pallet company so you never have to worry about running your equipment. \$850. Contact Chad at chad@javaprop.com

The Mill is a new educational industrial arts/maker space in Minneapolis, Minnesota that celebrates the do-it-yourself culture and creative communities by providing members with access to tools, equipment and instruction. From woodworking to metalworking and electronics, members of the Mill will work on individual or collaborative projects in a well-stocked, industrial grade fabrication workshop. The Mill offers a unique solution to address the knowledge, space, storage and social constraints of building projects at home.

The Mill is community resource. Beyond its identity as workshop, the specific purpose of the Mill is to encourage technical, scientific and artistic skills through individual projects, social collaboration and education. The Mill is conceived as an infrastructure provider for technical-creative projects. We will also fulfill our role as a community resource by hosting classes in a number of areas including electronics, woodworking, digital fabrication, metal fabrication, artistic use of industrial equipment and any other skills that our members or guests are willing to share.

The mission of the Mill is to serve as an incubator of ideas; to foster a collaborative community where members utilize industrial arts concepts, cutting edge technology and time tested fabrication equipment to create innovative solutions to technical issues in fabrication and making. Through classes, group interaction, and an inclusive environment, the Mill is a space where innovation and creativity can be fostered for novice and expert alike.

www.mnmill.org

The Mill

2300 Kennedy St NE

Suite #130

Minneapolis, MN 55413

North Country Woodshop – Woodshop Open to the Public. The easiest way to describe North Country Woodshop would be this: It's a health club for woodworkers. But, instead of treadmills, we have table saws...instead of dumbbells, we have drill presses, lathes, joiners, sanders, and so on. If it

belongs in a woodworking shop, North Country Woodshop has it. And the best part, all the tools are available to use with a simple membership to North Country Woodshop.

Have your own hand tools? Bring'em! Don't have your own hand tools? Rent ours. Our staff of veteran woodworkers will show you how to swing that hammer without hurting yourself...or others. If you need lumber for your project, but don't have time to pick it up yourself, give us a call and we will have it waiting for you when you get there. And when your project is done, we can deliver it for you as well.

North Country Woodshop offers a wide variety of classes for all levels of woodworking ability. We offer classes from beginner to advanced with a large variety of projects and techniques. Our classes are taught by our team of expert woodworkers as well as local and world renowned guest instructors. Contact info at [North Country Woodshop](#).

Services

Mike Siemsen's School of Woodworking. Woodworking with a hand tool focus. We have a great line up this year including some tool sharpening and tool tuning classes. Our Workbench Class was a huge success and will be offered again in the future. Take a look at my website, improve your sharpening or furniture making skills! Classes are held in my shop on a quiet rural setting 35 miles North of the Twin Cities. The shop is heated and air conditioned for your comfort year around. Reserve your spot now! Visit my [website at www.schoolofwood.com](#), e-mail mike@schoolofwood.com or call [651-257-9166](tel:651-257-9166) for more information.

Woodcraft Education Program. Located in Bloomington, we offer the Twin Cities most complete selection of woodworking classes. Our classes cover furniture making, carving, turning, hand and power tools, and finishing. We also offer free demonstrations every month. Close by, small class sizes and the best local and national instructors make it a great place to bring your skills to the next level. Website: [Woodcraft Bloomington Store](#) *Phone: 952-884-3634*.

Workbench Plans. Plans now available for Adjustable Height Workbench with a built in Mobile Base. Email Charlie Kocourek at Charlie@Jack-Bench.com or visit my [website www.Jack-Bench.com](http://www.Jack-Bench.com)

Plane soles milled flat, price ranges from \$12 for a block plane to \$40 for a #8. Sides can be milled square to the sole for \$15-\$20. Contact Chuck Pitschka at [952-935-0660](tel:952-935-0660), or by e-mail at cepitschka@yahoo.com

Exhibitors Wanted

Announcing CAFE: Chicago Art Furniture Expo
Friday, April 19 thru Sunday, April 21, 2013.

The Donald E. Stephens Convention Center
9301 West Bryn Mawr Avenue
Rosemont, Illinois

Chicago Art Furniture Exposition (CAFE) is an exposition of handcrafted and small-run furniture and decorative accents. The show will feature creators of furniture, lamps, mirrors, sculpture, painting, rugs, tableware, and more, who wish to display and sell their products to devotees of handcrafted objects, architects, and interior designers and decorators.

CAFE will also support furniture makers who are just starting their careers with an Emerging Artists area. This section of the show will be open to craftspeople who have been practicing for five or fewer years. The Emerging Artists area will consist of a shared booth. Artists work will need to fit in a 50 square foot space.

To be an exhibitor contact: Paul Segedin at 773-262-6086 or
paul@chicagoartfurnitureexpo.com

More information is available at: <http://www.ChicagoArtFurnitureExpo.com>

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Supplier Discounts

One of the many benefits of belonging to the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild is the discounts available to members on wood, finishes, tools, hardware and more.

See the complete list of supplier discounts [here](#).

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New Members

Welcome to these new members!

Chad Hoffman	Charles Manther	Richard Fox
Steve Smith	Luis Herrera	David Bruder
Russell Quanbeck	David Costello	Nate Hennen
Duane Wagner	Jeffrey Berg	Steve Jackson
Jim Boerschinger	John Crosby	Erik Belgum
Andrew Mazorol	Daniel Empanger	Jim Walters
Craig Marble	Tom McLaughlin	Peter Lewon
Ronald Van Gerpen	Matt Geller	Mike Gustafson
Paul Schuller		

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Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming Meetings:

A brief listing of planned meetings. Watch the [Guild website](#) for updates and to get a map to each meeting - and as always a Blast will go out to all members (who have signed up to receive them) prior to each meeting.

December 12th: Build a jointer bench for \$200, Mike Siemsen

Location: Mike Siemsen's School of Woodworking, Chisago City

Time: Instant Gallery (Bring a Project to share) at 6:30pm. Program at 7:00pm.

January 16th: The Annual Handtool Olympics

Location: Forest Product Supply, 2650 Maplewood Dr., Maplewood, MN. On the north east corner of Hwy 61 and County Rd C.

Time: No Instant Gallery. We start promptly at 6:30pm.

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Fall Seminar: Robert Van Norman



Once again the Guild brought in a highly renowned woodworker for a weekend presentation to Guild members. Robert Van Norman is the founder, resident craftsman and teacher at the Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking. Robert apprenticed under master cabinetmaker Erich Janisch, further refining his skills at the College of the Redwoods under the direction of James Krenov. In 1991 he founded a small woodworkers cooperative where he began to make commissioned and speculative pieces of his own design. Robert's work has been exhibited throughout North America, Europe and Japan. He has taught and lectured at schools throughout Canada and the United States. Robert maintains a small benchroom at the school, where he continues to work at his craft.

The seminar opened on Friday evening with a slide show presentation by Robert of his work and that of his students. As the photos were projected Robert pointed out design strengths, influences of James Krenov (Jim, to Robert) and particular challenges to the build.

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On Saturday Robert talked about the wood and tools of fine cabinetmaking. Regarding the tools, Robert described himself as a tool minimalist. The primary power machine tool at the College of the Redwoods is the bandsaw. Not to say that they don't have other machines, but there is a strong leaning towards the use of hand tools whenever possible.



Robert's discussion of materials included discussion about the effects of various milling techniques (quarter sawn, etc.) and about matching of pieces such as book matching and slip matching. The overall theme was what he called "grain graphics." He stressed the importance of making the grain work with the piece. He went on to demonstrate a technique he developed to build a double curved crest rail for a chair (arched both horizontally and vertically) in which the grain direction follows both curves. Robert laid a finished crest rail on a flat surface (table top) and demonstrated that from the table top to the highest point on the curve was 3". He

mentioned the difficulty of obtaining good quality 12/4 stock in some exotic species so he demonstrated a procedure to cut the crest rail from 8/4 stock *and* get the grain lines to follow both curves!

Another example of the techniques used to obtain the best grain graphics is making drawer front, back and sides that have a continuous grain pattern at all four intersections. He accomplishes this by cutting the drawer parts from a resawn board.

Robert described his hand planes as the tools he considers dearest to him. During the class he built a plane from scratch during the weekend and auctioned it off (proceeds to the Guild) at the end of the session. His plane making process includes 32 primary steps, and when he is done the meticulous care that he exercises results in a precision tool that is a thing of beauty as well. What started coming through on Saturday and was reinforced further on Sunday, was that great woodworking happens due to patience and a non-rushed approach. Robert put more time into creating a gluing caul that exactly fit the pieces to be glued up than most of us put into the finished piece. Frequently he would take a few moments to sharpen his chisel so that he was always shearing with a "perfect" edge.



Attendees took the opportunity during breaks to inspect Robert's specialized (often times handmade) tools, and the pieces he made during the seminar. He gladly answered the many questions directed to him as well. Auction activity on the handplane was spirited with Mark Laub emerging as the winning bidder.

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October Meeting: Guitar Kits with George Vondriska

Story by Ron Corradin

Guitars From a Kit by George Vondriska

The October Guild meeting was held in the wood shop of Andover High School. George Vondriska spoke about building an acoustic guitar from a kit, and brought several kits and completed guitars.

George has built a lot of guitars from kits, alone or with a class full of guitar builders making as many as 20 at once. Some group project guitars have been donated to Guitars 4 Vets (guitars4vets.org) to help veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). George explained that a vet who takes twelve lessons gets to keep the guitar, and that music is a great help to them.

George brought the following kits: Grizzly - \$90; U.S. Guitar - \$225; U.S. Guitar - \$300; Renaissance - \$399; and Stuart McDonald - \$425.

He said that with guitar kits as with most things, the higher the price, the better the kit. Solid wood makes a better guitar than laminated materials (plywood), and the less expensive kits have more laminated materials. The better kits have better materials overall and require more assembly. For example, the Grizzly kit has a pre-assembled body while the Renaissance and Stuart McDonald kits are all separate pieces.

Important design features also vary between kits. The neck on the Grizzly kit is aligned with dowels and glued to the body. The neck on both U.S. Guitar kits is bolted on, the neck on the Renaissance Guitar kit has kerfs in it for the sides, and the neck on the Stuart McDonald kit is dovetailed in place.

In each kit, a steel truss rod inside the guitar neck helps resist the pull of the steel strings. In contrast, classical guitars use nylon or gut strings that do not pull as hard on the guitar, so these guitars have no steel truss rod in the neck.

George explained that the fret board needs to be crowned after it is glued to the neck. This makes the centerline of the fret board slightly higher than the outboard edges. The crown can be set to a 12", 16" or 20" radius with a radius block and sandpaper, working from 80 to 400 grit

Each kit's fret board comes grooved for the frets. The pre-cut frets are pressed into the fret board, not glued. It's a delicate operation, and a special tool called

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a fret press can be a big help. There are also specially ground side cutters to trim the frets.

George said that he always uses yellow carpenter's glue for guitars and Duco cement for the banding and purfling. He usually finishes a guitar with three coats of catalyzed lacquer, although once he used ten coats, and has also used shellac. He tries to stay away from custom guitar building tools, which are available through Stuart McDonald but pricey. He uses blue painter's tape to secure the sound board (top) to the body during assembly. Jorgensen F-style clamps will also work, as will spool clamps, which are easy to build in quantity. They require two pieces of 1" dowel with holes drilled through them, a machine screw with a wing nut, and some washers and pads.

George's overall theme was that it's one thing to build a guitar as a woodworking project, but another to build a functional musical instrument. The essence of a guitar is that it has to sound good. It has to play well. The builder has to get certain things just right.

For example, the distance from the strings to the fret board cannot be too great or the guitar will be hard to play because the guitarist will have to press down too hard on the strings to press them against the fret board. Too small a distance and the strings will buzz. The tension in the truss rod has to be set right to keep the strings parallel to the fret board and sound board, because it controls the amount of bow in the neck. The location of the bridge (where the strings are raised above the sound board near their bottom ends) is also very important. If it is positioned wrong then even if the strings are tuned correctly, the guitar will not produce the right notes when played. The tuning pegs have to be installed accurately to keep the strings aligned.

George said that it's possible to exceed the capabilities of the Grizzly guitar if you play well enough, another argument for spending more for a better kit. But a novice woodworker and guitar player would be better off with the simpler Grizzly kit.

If it has always been your dream to play screaming electric guitar then you can also get electric guitar kits from the same manufacturers. They also make electric bass guitar kits.

For further information George Vondriska can be contacted at The Woodworkers Guild of America, www.goa.com.

George closed the show by playing Johnny Cash's song Folsom Prison Blues, a first at a Guild meeting and a hard act to follow.

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Changes coming to Guild Newsletter

Story by Jerry Beutel

For the past 3 1/2 years I've been editing this newsletter, sending it out first in paper form, and then electronically, every two months. At the last several Guild board meetings we've talked about the future of the newsletter once I move on to my new role in the Guild. Multiple requests for a volunteer to take over as newsletter editor have gone unanswered.

Ideas that we discussed ranged from simply discontinuing the newsletter to hiring someone to do the production. In the end we decided to replace our bi-monthly newsletter which has 8-10 stories and features, with more frequent but less detailed electronic communications. This seems to be a natural evolution in view of the fact that the Guild's website and blasts are doing more and more of the work that used to be done by the newsletter. We're still working out the details of these changes, but the table below will give you some ideas of what is being discussed.

Newsletter Category	Planned changes
Upcoming meetings	Maintain list on website and send out blast prior to each meeting
Classifieds	Include in a blast to be sent out at some TBD frequency (weekly?). Also available on the website.
New Members	Include in a monthly communication
Meeting Summaries	Include a very abbreviated summary in a monthly communication
President's Notes	Continue on a bi-monthly basis - in every other monthly communication
Supplier Discounts	Always available on the website
What's On Your Bench?	Continue on a bi-monthly basis if someone will volunteer to coordinate this.

If you have any comments about these changes please let me or any of the board members know. My email is: jebeutel@gmail.com If you would like to volunteer to coordinate the What's On Your Bench stories, please contact me about that as well.

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Northern Woods

The Newsletter of the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild, Est. 1982

Volume: 142

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What's On Your Bench? - Coasters

Story by Ray Ayotte

Photos by Ray Ayotte

Coasters for Christmas? There is still time.

Background

For Christmas 2011 I decided to make the coasters featured in the 2011 October/November issue of Woodsmith magazine (Vol. 33 / No. 197) as gifts for our children and for our own use. The project took much longer than I had planned and the finished products were delivered well after Christmas. As you will see, the design featured in the magazine (photo below) is somewhat time-consuming since it involves nine glue-ups for each set of coasters in addition to the border accent, but as the article states, once you get the idea, coming up with your own design is easy. I decided to make a few more coaster sets for this Christmas using symmetrical designs rather than the more random designs featured in the article. What I will share below are my own deviations from the construction process outlined in the Woodsmith article.



Getting Started

I suggest you obtain a copy of the Woodsmith article before getting started for the drawings and dimensions. The process followed is to build one thick (1 1/2") coaster and then slice it into four thin coasters. The magazine plans call for creating a blank 1 1/2" thick from 3/4" stock. I happened to have maple butcher block in the shop which was the right thickness so I was able to avoid this step. Further, the different wood textures add interest in the coasters.

Cutting Thin Strips

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Cutting the thin strips (to create the pattern) of consistent thickness is important. I first tried cutting them on the band saw, but I had difficulty getting consistent thicknesses. So I used my table saw with a thin kerf blade, using a Woodsmith tip for cutting thin strips. [See quick tip.](#) The thickness of my strips were about 3/64", as close as I could get to the band saw blade kerf. The picture below is a leftover piece after cutting the butcher block. I did a test cut to determine the thickness of my band saw blade.



Curved or Straight Line Design

I decided to do three sets of coasters using left over wood in the shop, two with geometric patterns, and one straight line pattern. Here the different design options are up to your imagination and creativity. Depending on the design, I used either the band saw with a 1/2", 3 TPI blade to cut the curves or the table saw.

Glue-Up

The Woodsmith article provides a plan for a clamping fixture. I made my own fixture for easier diagonal clamping.



Prep before cutting individual coasters from blank

After all gluing is complete, you will be ready to cut each blank into four coasters with a finished thickness of 1/4". I found that sanding one side of the glued up blank was helpful. I used my belt sander to do this using a simple hand screw set up clamped to my bench. This allows you to cut the first and subsequent coasters to nearly perfect thickness on the band saw and allow enough additional thickness for finish sanding.



Cutting individual coasters

Based on my earlier experience, I decided to forgo making a push block as suggested in the article; instead I installed a tall fence on my band saw and used my miter gauge with a fence in lieu of a push block. I also used a piece of 4x4 cedar post scrap to keep my fingers well away from the blade while cutting the last coaster and keep the coaster blank tight against the fence. Again, I used a 1/2" band saw blade with 3 TPI for this operation. The thickness of the blade gives you ample room to cut four coasters from your blank and maybe even 5 depending on how much sanding you have to do to create a perfectly flat face for the block.



Building the Coaster Tray

I followed the Woodsmith article suggestions here making sure that the bottom of the tray was about 1/16" wider than the coasters to allow sufficient side clearance for the coasters. The only deviation here was that I used a couple of 1/2" pin nailer brads to steady the sides during glue up. If you decide on this approach, be sure to keep the pins well away from the center where the finger slot will be located.

Finish

In my original effort, I used General Finishes wipe on polyurethane. This time around, I used their clear gel coat with good success.

Now find your favorite beverage and use the coasters or give them away for Christmas.



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Innovative Game Table

Story by Metropolitan Museum of Art

Innovative Cabinetmaking

This finely crafted piece of furniture has a secret.

Swing out a leg. Adjust an arm. And voilà! Leaves unfold to reveal multiple configurations: a felt surface for card games, a game board for chess or checkers, a desk with a leather writing surface and book rest. Tug at a hidden latch, and a spring-driven backgammon board pops up.

The brainchild of German cabinetmaker David Roentgen, this sophisticated gaming table once graced the intimate interior of an aristocratic European home. A 3-D animation of the table demonstrates its different configurations and illuminates its concealed features.

[Click here for a video link](#) that shows the many secrets of this table.

This table is on view in the landmark exhibition Extravagant Inventions: The Princely Furniture of the Roentgens, which is the first comprehensive survey of the cabinetmaking firm of David Roentgen (1743–1807) and his father Abraham (1711–1793).

Marvel as 3-D animation and video demonstrations expose the complexities of seven additional Roentgen studio masterworks, including an automaton of Queen Marie Antoinette playing the clavichord and a writing desk that transforms into a private altar. These videos are displayed on touch screens in the exhibition galleries and are also available online.

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