

The Newsletter of the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild

V1-N7, July 2026

Editor's Note
-Ed Estlow

It seems the cooler weather we were enjoying a month ago has gone into hiding. As I write this, many of you are a the annual MNWWG Picnic. Unfortunately, I had to miss due to previous commitments. I do hope you all stayed hydrated!

I'll skip the hackneyed cliché, "Hot 'nuf for ya?" and get straight to it. This week we've got

- President's Message from Paul Ehrlich,
- The latest Education Committee news from Khrisslyn Goodman
- A hat tip to our own Kevin Groenke! Fine Woodworking published a review of MNWWG member Kevin Groenke's "PersonMadeMallet" in the August/September issue.

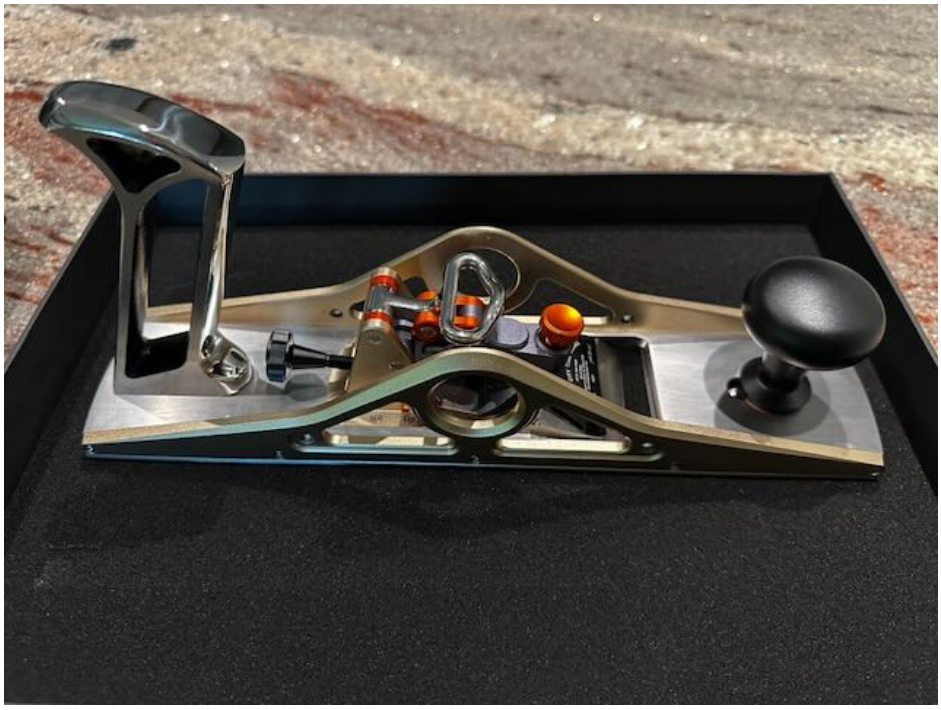
President's Message
-Paul Ehrlich

We are well into the heat of Summer today as we prepare for what promises to be a warm annual Picnic tonight.

Programs: After many years of dedicated service leading the program committee Matt Labo will be stepping down. Please take the time to thank Matt for the great job he has done in leading this effort. David Mitchell has agreed to step (back) in as program committee chair. Next month's program will feature Stu Fox talking about trees and lumber. The meeting is at the New Brighton Community Center on August 11, 2026.

Donations: Last month we were fortunate to have a generous donation of tools, materials and shop supplies. Many of these items will find a home in our education program, others were donated to other groups, some were recently sold at auction, and the final group will be available as part of our Guild Gala in October.

Our education program just received a donation of planes and other supplies from Bridge City Tools thanks to the efforts of long time Guild member Rutager West.



One of the Donated Planes from Bridge City

Education: The education team is hard at work preparing the new "Minnesota Woodworkers Guild Training Studio @ A Makers Place" ready for our first classes. The new space features a dedicated classroom as well as a shared machine room. The team has recently painted the classroom and will soon be building workbenches and other items. If you are interested in helping either in setting up the space or in teaching (or assisting) please contact education@mnwwg.org .



Training Studio Sign (on the Workbench)

Board Updates: Last month we added Chase Foreman to the board as our new Volunteer Coordinator. This month we have added David Mitchell as the new Program Director. We are also delighted to welcome Bobby Miller in a new key volunteer role as our "Education Liaison Ambassador". Bobby will be working with local schools and colleges to help them understand what the Guild is doing and to help connect students and faculty to our programs and events including Northern Woods, Expo and Education.

Woodworkers Expo: The Expo will be back at the Progress Building on the State Fairgrounds in October. This year's Expo will start on the afternoon of Friday, October 16 and continue through Saturday, October 17, 2026.

Guild Gala: This year will be the inaugural "Guild Gala" which will be held on Friday October 16, 2026. The gala will be about our "Past, Present and Future". Events will include a silent and live auction, reception, dinner and featured speakers. We are actively looking for volunteers to help us set up, promote, and run the event. If you are interested, please contact me at President@mnwwg.org.

Education

- Khrisslyn Goodman

The education committee has been busy preparing a new classroom space at A Maker's Place in Maplewood—it'll be a Guild-focused space for future classes and workshops starting this August. It's also a stepping stone to us continuing to expand our education program and eventually moving into a space of our own within the next few years.

We've been working hard to figure out all of the logistical details (coordinating with A Maker's Place on renting the space, developing a list of tools and equipment) as well as preparing the space, which included painting the walls in advance of moving workbenches into the space. We're excited to start scheduling more classes for this fall and will share details about those in future newsletters and on the website. Special thank you to Dave Duddleston, Mike Bierscheid, and Taliesin Nyala for the great paint job! Here they are in action:





As we start to fill out our class calendar for August and beyond, if you either 1.) would like to teach a class with us or 2.) have an idea for a class, please reach out to the education committee at education@mnwwg.org. We'd love to hear from you!

Currently, we have a Beginning Hand Tools series going on through July 22. Maria and Phil at Sheer Craft developed and host this course, and students are learning a variety of skills thanks to their years of experience working with hand tools and teaching students from a range of backgrounds.







Meet Rivet, the carpenter cat!

We are actively seeking volunteers for Demonstration Day at the Minnesota State Fair on Friday, September 4th!

Shifts are about 2-3 hours depending on the number of volunteers and include a variety of roles, from set up and/or tear down, making signs, demonstrating specific skills (demonstrations last up to an hour), to welcoming visitors as Guild ambassadors. Each shift includes a free day ticket to the State Fair! Please sign up via this link: https://tinyurl.com/mr2ca8uy or by emailing "education@mnwwg.org", where you can also ask any questions. Last year was so much fun getting to know other Guild members and watching members showcase their amazing skills; please consider joining us!

Finally, the education committee—with tremendous help from John Madsen, who took the lead on this project—has been developing a series of safety resources. While we intend for these to tie directly into the new classroom space, they are also of value for all our members, whether you're able to make it to a Guild class or not. There is info about safely using a variety of the most common equipment in a workshop. Stay tuned for the launch of these amazing resources soon on our website.

PersonMadeMallet by Person Make Object

- Kevin Groenke & Ed Estlow

Fine Woodworking magazine has published a review of the PersonMadeMallet by our compadre, Kevin Groenke, in the August/September issue.



For those of you who aren't familiar with Kevin's work (Kevin is, of course, the Person in Person Make Object), these mallets are composed of elastomeric urethane resin with brass shavings mixed in, bonding with a stainless steel core and shaft to make a compact and dense head that has just enough damping to reduce fatigue and prevent damage to tools.

Here's a link to Kevin's Facebook Video describing the mallet. And here's a link to editor Ben Strano's take on the mallet.

Per Kevin, there's a bunch of other interesting info, commentary, and insight from the editors' perspective throughout the preview that you don't necessarily get from reading the magazine. Recordings of these previews are accessible to subscribers - we didn't see them listed specifically, but they're easily found by searching for "preview."

Posted with approval from Ben Strano at Fine Woodworking.

SPOILER ALERT! It feels good, works great, and it looks OK too.

Follow Kevin on Instagram and Facebook. Maybe other places too, but I haven't discovered them yet.