

The Newsletter of the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild

V1-N9, September 2026

Editor's Note
-Ed Estlow

Happy Back-to-School month for those who celebrate! The State Fair is past, school buses roam our neighborhoods morning and afternoon, and true fall weather has hit as I type this.

For this month's newsletter, we've got:

- Paul Ehrlich is on vacation this month, so no President's Message. (Don't worry, Paul will be back next month.)
- Taliesin weighs in with a quick report on Expo activities at the State Fair and this month's summary of Education activities.
- Chase Foreman discusses the Guild's volunteer activities and needs.
- Dave Mitchell reports on the Program Committee's activities, including a hat tip to outgoing chairman Matt Labo.
- Norbert Nielubowski discusses our upcoming Expo, scheduled for October 16th and 17th, at the MN State Fairgrounds.
- Paul Ehrlich's invitation to the upcoming Minnesota Woodworkers Guild Gala on Friday, October 16, 2026.

Education

-Taliesin

State Fair Demonstration Day

First, we want to offer a huge thank you to all of our State Fair Demonstration Day volunteers, especially Ron Ausen, who, with his trusty pick-up and seemingly unending dedication to the Guild, made it all happen. Thank you to our set-up crew who all had great ideas for how to optimally organize the space to make the visitor experience a success! We were thrilled to be able to use one of the easily transportable benches from the training studio, so another shout out to Mike Siemsen and the group who built these over a weekend in July.







The day was fun (even in the heat & humidity!), we enjoyed the expanded space we were given this year and can't wait to fire it all up for next year!

Upcoming classes

Sept 26: Measurement & Layout

Oct 11: Visiting Master: Fine Details

Oct 12–16: Visiting Master: 5-day Table Build

Oct. 21–Nov 11: Box-making Class

Check out the full calendar and links to sign up here:
https://mnwwg.org/calendar/

Tool Donations

We're very grateful to Kathy Whitegon, who donated her late husband's tools to the Guild. Her husband, John Whitegon, was a cabinet maker and woodworker who died in April of 2025. A big thank you to Education Committee members Mike Bierscheid and John Madsen, who went to Kathy's house to pick up the tools. We'll use these tools to further our woodworking education goals, incorporating the ones we can into our own classes, selling others, and potentially auctioning off some of them at our upcoming Gala on October 16. These kinds of donations make a huge difference in our ability to continue offering high-quality educational programming. A heartfelt thank you to Kathy!

We're continuing to develop our course offerings and to shape the educational program so that it is best serving the needs of our members. Have suggestions, ideas, or feedback? Please send it our way! Email us at education@mnwwg.org. Thank you!

Volunteering
-Chase Foreman

We have many opportunities to volunteer and connect with fellow woodworkers in the coming months. The big ones are the Gala and the Expo on October 16th and 17th. Whether you greet visitors, bring water to exhibitors, do hands on work in our demo area during the expo, or help manage auction items at the Gala, your effort will have a great impact on the day.

Click the links below to learn more and volunteer.

Oct. 16-17: MN Woodworkers Expo: https://forms.gle/u4P4xnxmzEq5BAK4A

Oct. 16: Guild Gala: https://forms.gle/FGN12Vz9PWWNr3589

Other Opportunities

Serve on a committee or the board. Bring your enthusiasm for woodworking and insights from your life and work to bear on the events, programs, and direction of the MN Woodworkers Guild.

Click the link below to learn about this and other volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Interest Form: https://forms.gle/Xpi6AnZBkw9P8HBM7

Program Committee Report
-David Mitchell

The Program Committee has recently undergone a leadership change. We acknowledge our out-going chairman Matt Labo. Matt has led this committee for many years very successfully and has left us with a full slate of upcoming events through November 2026, with proposed monthly programs waiting to be scheduled.

As the incoming Program Committee chair, I've developed a deep appreciation of the contributions from Matt.

Looking forward, we have a number of upcoming programs:

- September – Philadelphia Queen Ann & Chippendale Chair By Tony Kubalak
    - Date/Time: September 15, 2026, 6:30 pm
- October – No Program Meeting; See you at the Gala and Expo
- November – Working with the Grain by Tom Caspar
    - Date/Time: November 10, 2026, 6:30 pm

Future monthly programs (planned but not scheduled):

- December – Shop Safety or How to Stop the Bleed By Tony Kubalak
- January – Shop Tours

Proposed Future programs (unplanned and unscheduled):

- February - Electricity in the Shop
- March - Shop Sabre CNC
- April - Developing Youth, Encouraging Careers in the Trades
- May - Post Northern Woods Review

Watch our MNWWG website for detailed meeting descriptions.

Remember, the Guild operates and exists by our member volunteers!

Contact me, David Mitchell, if you can lend a hand.

Expo Opportunities
-Norbert Nielubowski

There is less than a month before our 7th annual Expo at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds on October 16 and 17, 2026. The Expo is the largest woodworking event in the upper Midwest and has been growing each year.

We are offering all Guild members who would like to participate as exhibitors a 10'x10' space free of charge. If you have a woodworking-related activity you would like to promote, contact the Expo Committee at Expo@MNWWG.org for a complimentary registration.

We also would like to have the participation of Guild members at our Members Gallery. This is an opportunity to showcase your work and the work of the Guild to the public. We don't need you to register, but if you are going to bring a piece, email us at Expo@MNWWG.org

We are also looking for volunteers to help during the Expo with:

- Greeting attendees at the entrance:
- Promoting the volunteer donation box
- Distributing water to guests and vendors
- Assisting with general questions and needs
- Monitoring the outdoor tool swap
- Supporting the kids' workshop and membership table
- Monitoring and supporting the Northern Woods and MWWG Gallery areas

Please consider signing up for a volunteer slot at:

https://mnwwg.org/woodworkers-expo-welcome-page/

and click on the "volunteer" link on the left.

And for fun, we will have Belt Sander Drag Races and a Longest and Thinnest Plane Shaving Contest, so soup up your belt sander and tune up your plane – drop us note at Expo@mnwwg.org if you would like to participate or just show up at the times below if you buy a sander or plane at the Tool Swap!

Belt Sander races 11:00am and 1:00pm

Longest Shaving Contest 12:00pm and 2:00pm

Help us make this year's Expo the most successful one yet!

MNWWG Gala Invitation
-Paul Ehrlich

The Minnesota Woodworkers Guild cordially invites you and your guests to the 2026 **Guild Gala: Past, Present & Future**, an evening celebrating 45 years of community and raising funds for a new dedicated Guild facility which will include a shop and training studio.

Date: Friday, October 16, 2026

Time: 5:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Location: The Progress Building, Minnesota State Fairgrounds, St. Paul

Highlights: Cash bar, catered dinner by Lake Elmo Inn, live and silent auctions, followed by a program which will feature nationally renowned woodworker Garrett Hack.

Register: While there is no cost to attend the program, cash bar and auctions, we recommend making an advance reservation and payment for the dinner. Dinner tickets are $50 each.

More details can be found at the Guild Website.

Sign up here to RSVP for Dinner!