

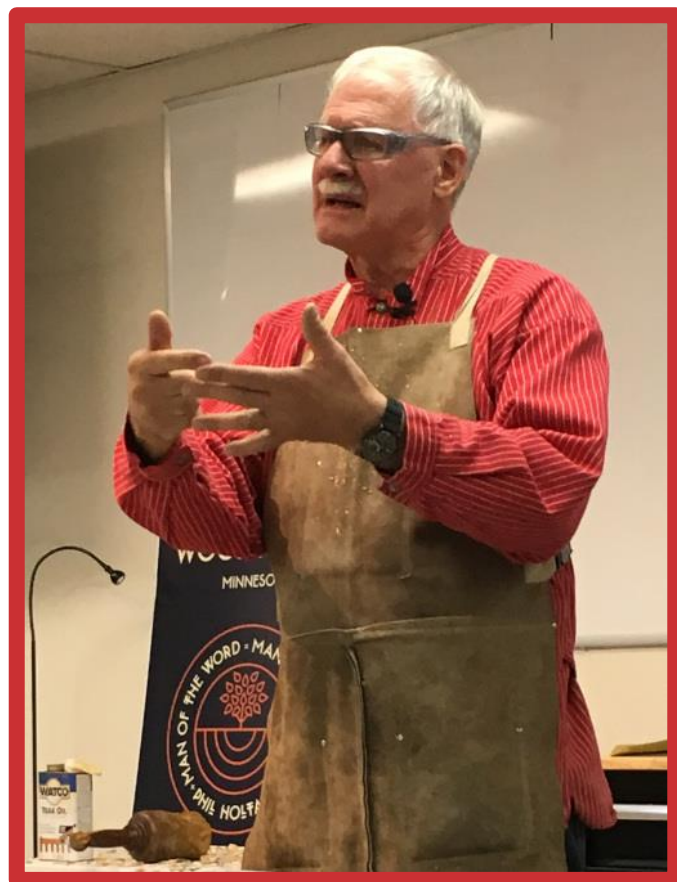


# Minnesota WoodTurners Association

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

**AAW** | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF WOODTURNERS

Volume 2019 No 10



Phil Holtan

*Rings True  
to Life*



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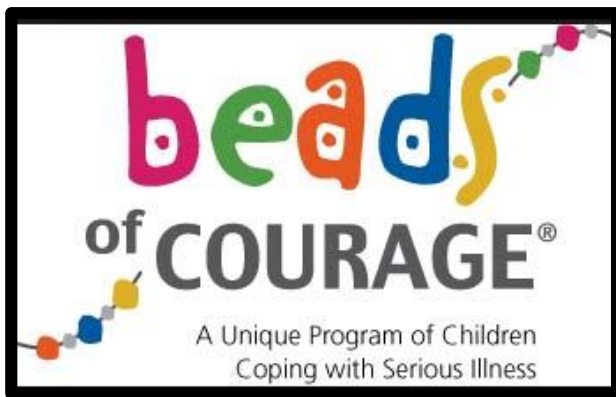
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Mike Rohrer - Newsletter

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Diane and Bob Puetz direct this program for the Minnesota Woodturners Association.



Warren Gerber talks with Bob & Diane



Some of the BoC boxes donated by MWA members this month





# Instant Gallery

Dick Hicks – hackberry (left)  
cherry (right)



Arden Griep– elm; staves  
were cut on a band saw

Dan Ernst – buckthorn heart





## Instant Gallery (cont'd)



Don Schlais – spalted maple, alder, hickory, cherry, purple heart



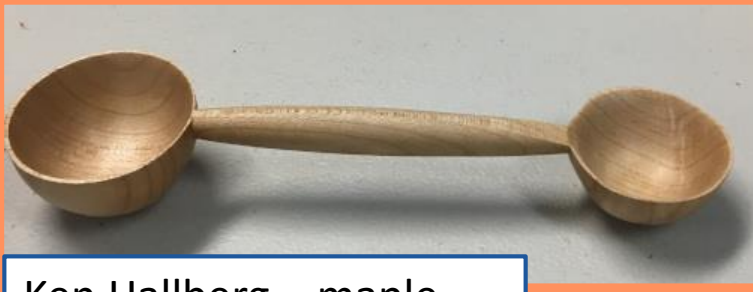
Bill Breckon



Ken Hallberg – Greta's double decker jewelry box - maple



## Instant Gallery (cont'd)



Ken Hallberg – maple  
one-piece coffee scoop



Anonymous



Ellen Starr – maple & walnut

## Instant Gallery (cont'd)



Jim Jacobs – maple & walnut and small pieces



Julie Abbott – box elder



# Before the Meeting



Ken Gustafson & Richard Messer secure good seats



Mark Relson has a question for demonstrator, Phil Holtan



Julie Abbott & Janese Evans



John Enstrom brought several bouquets



Dick Hicks looking forward to Phil Holtan's demo

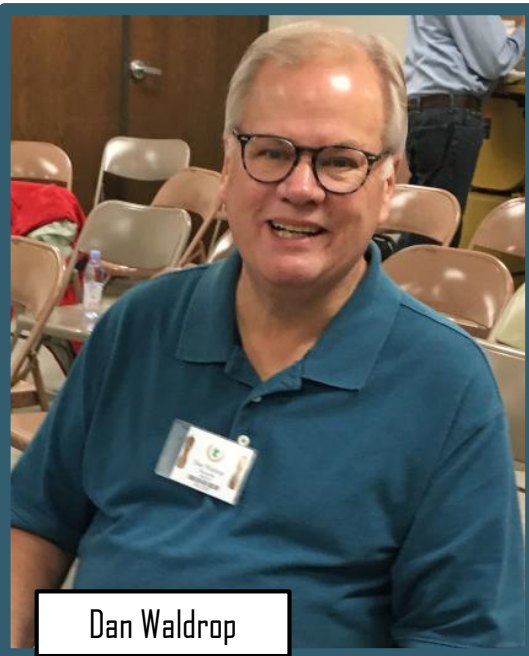


John Enstrom handles the sales table and Ken Crea manages membership

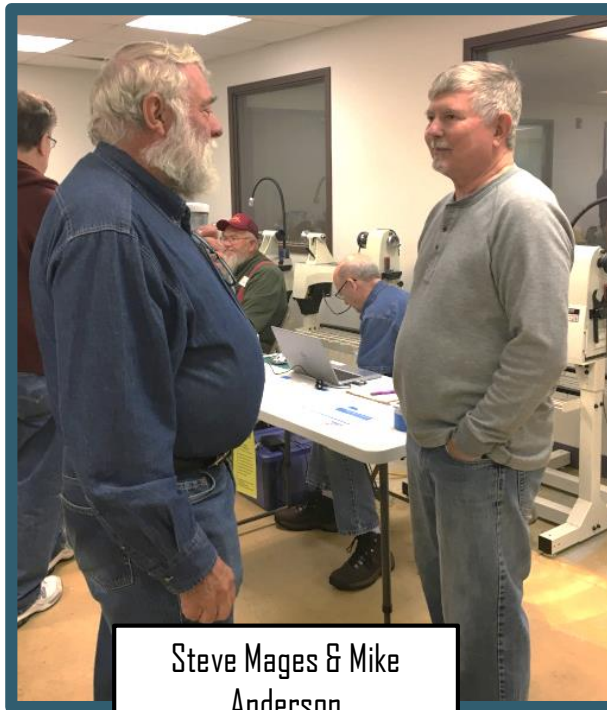




## Before the Meeting (cont'd)



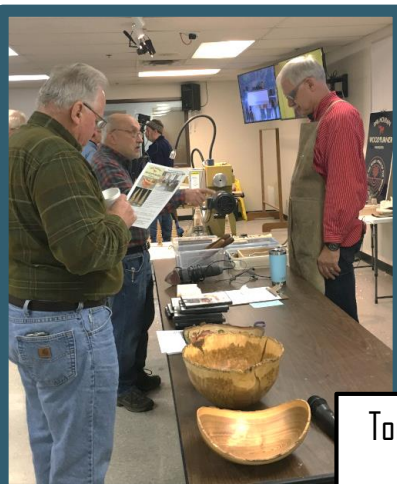
Dan Waldrop



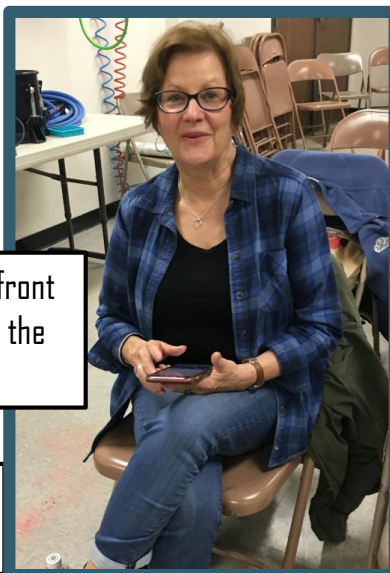
Steve Mages & Mike  
Anderson



Jeff Koltveit describes a turning tool to  
Ken Hallberg



Merrie Sue Holtan in the front  
row to assist Phil during the  
demo



Tom Spielman checks out Phil  
Holtan's display

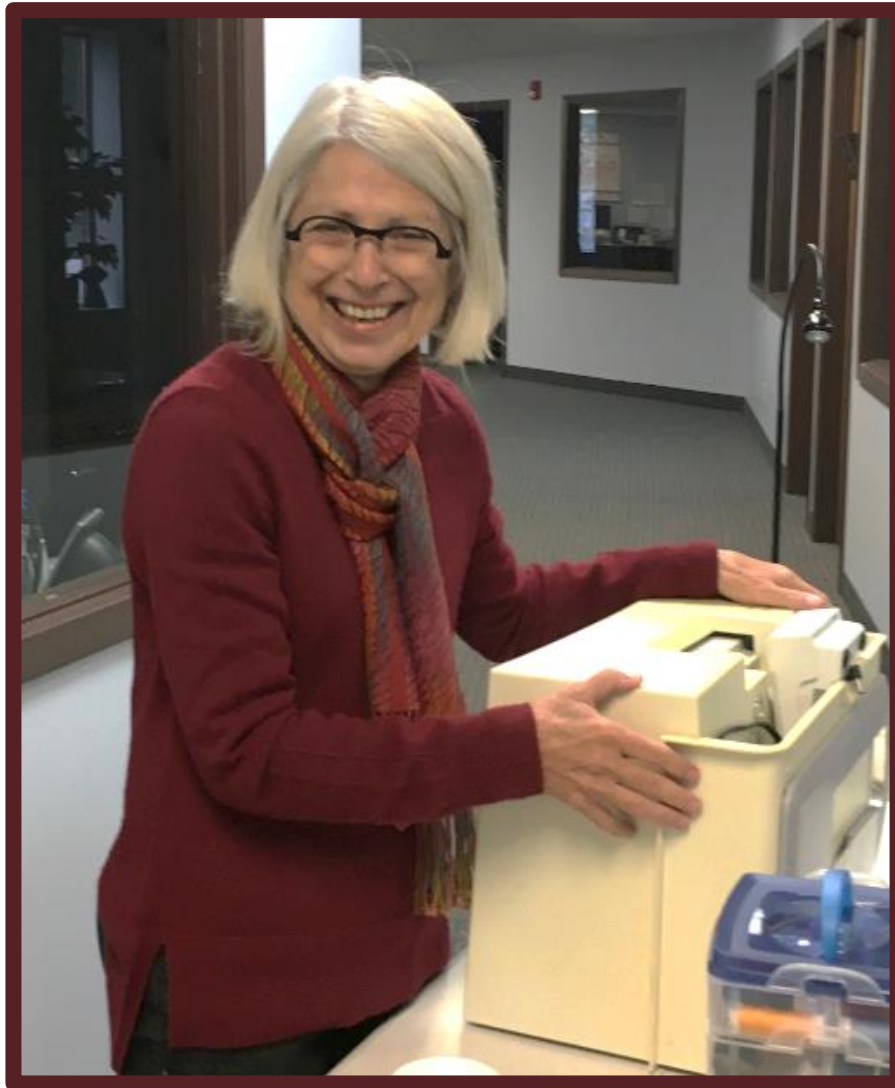


Bill Breckon asks Dan Ernst about  
a DVD



## Before the Meeting (cont'd)

Helen Larson worked all during the meeting sewing on MWA patches for members. Thanks so much, Helen!!





## Announcements

Pres. Lee Luebke:

- Rockler will hold a Pen Turning activity for veterans on November 9. Our club will provide people to help. Contact Lee if you can be an aide for this worthwhile and fun activity.
- Minnesota Woodworkers Guild will hold a tool swap on October 19 at the Bloomington Armory, 3300 W. 98<sup>th</sup> St. We will have a tool swap table promoting the MWA. Contact Lee if you can help or have tools to swap.



President Lee Luebke



- Members are encouraged to pick up one of the Beads of Courage kits that Jim Jacobs provides



## Announcements (cont'd)

### We are updating our Mentor List for all areas of the Metro

The best way to get in contact with a mentor is at a Sub Group get-together. Anyone looking for mentors is encouraged to join Area and Regional Groups for help with finding a mentor.

We need Mentor Volunteers of ALL levels. Volunteers are needed to spend a few hours with a fellow woodturner member.

Send an email to [lgluebke@comcast.net](mailto:lgluebke@comcast.net) with your email, phone number and area in the Metro where you live if you are interested.

This is a very satisfying activity for the mentor, a great way to encourage and improve the turning activities of our club, and a good way to make strong friends among turners.

Lee Luebke  
President MWA

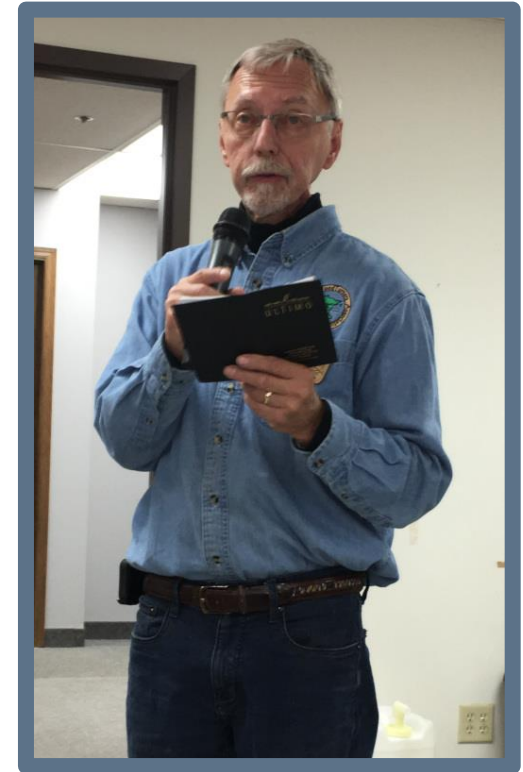


## Future Classes

- Dick Hicks' Traditional Irish Platter class is full
- Nov. 9 - Bob Myer – Traditional Bowl Turning 9am – 3pm \$25.
- Nov. 21 - Ornament Class
- Dec. 14 Santa's Workshop. Attendance fee is \$5 and kits for gifts will be available

Check the website for upcoming classes & details

Check the Website *Quick Links* for details and signing up for all classes



Dan Larson, MWA  
Class Coordinator





# October Demonstration

## Phil Holtan

### *Rings True to Life*



Phil Holtan, a woodturner of excellent skill who has taught and demonstrated for decades, was the featured demonstrator at the October meeting

Our club is extremely fortunate that Phil and his wife, Merrie Sue, have moved to our area in “retirement” to be closer to family and Phil has become an MWA member

I have two intertwined themes- one is technical about turning rings, with three ring projects of increasing difficulty. The other explores developing your style or voice in turning what is unique to you.

I have a friend who is an excellent turner, much more skilled than I. But, when I look at his work, I see a Richard Raffan box, a John Jordan hollow vessel, a Michael Hosaluk teapot. He can do anyone's work flawlessly, but I don't know what his own voice sounds like. So my second theme today is developing your unique voice as a craftsman/woodturner.

I've been teaching woodturners for 35 years. I teach people to make a Holtan natural edged bowl. But I tell them, "I want to teach you the fundamentals so a year from now, when I see your work, it will be moving to something uniquely yours." In my clubs up north, and here too, turners develop specialties, articles that are uniquely theirs. That's the way turning becomes more than just technique, but a way to express yourself and to better know who you are as a person.



I feel fortunate that people do know what a Holtan bowl looks like, and my ring items too. Some of you are there too, and others are working on it. Just a few hints. Learn the whole repertoire of skills and ideas that you can use to express yourself. Read, watch videos in the club's library and not too many YouTubes. They often use bad technique. Listen to your audience and customers. I think benefit auctions are a great way to get started. Donate and then listen to what people say. It's a good way to get the work out and educate people about turning, and also find out what people like about your work.



**So, rings.** A Fine Woodworking article from the late 70's on a turned captive-ring rattle changed my life. I have turned hundreds and now thousands. Then, at a Norwegian-American wedding reception, with those captive rings in my brain, I saw a wedding cake, called a Kransekake, as if for the first time, and said, "I can turn my rings on a cone and make that."



To find your woodturning voice, you need to know what you care about, what you think is beautiful and important. I grew up in a Norwegian American ghetto in Northern Iowa and my family has always revered its Scandinavian roots. I have made many trips to Scandinavia and am much influenced by the art and craft of Northern Europe's "wood culture." I'm also a Lutheran pastor.



First, a Celtic turned rattle. In May, and you can review this on the club website, Gary Mrozek did a great job of showing how to turn a baby rattle with captive rings. It's a great trick and very intriguing to people. I'm going to add just one little technique to the rattle that will be essential in my ringed trees project, using the skew to release the rings. It's much easier to learn and practice this on a rattle than on my ringed tree.



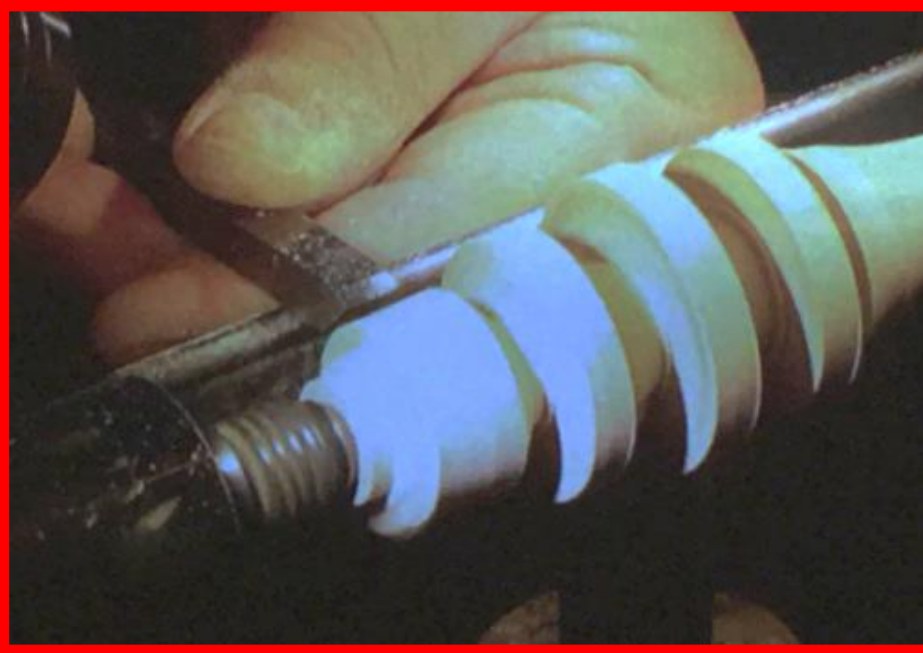
Phil begins defining the rings

So, two unique tools I modify and use: First, a ring-cutting tool based on the skew chisel. The skew is a traditional  $\frac{1}{2}$ " skew ground to be both narrower and thinner, with an oval cross section that can fit into the narrow space between rings. Second, beading and parting tools. These are  $\frac{3}{8}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  square, shop-made from extra-long metal turning bits, in HSS or cobalt steel. The traditional b-and-p tool has the cutting edge across the centerline, but I shift mine off to one edge so that when I rotate the tool, it moves me the right distance along the rest to make cutting beads easier.



I use them with the short edge up. The main angle is 40 degrees. They specialize in a bead about their own width. By tipping the b-and-p tool upside down, I can also use the side edge as a scraper to clean up the curve. I'll show that in a bit. I also use a  $\frac{1}{8}$  parting tool, not  $\frac{3}{16}$ , and a live center with the center point removed, so I can turn the point right to the top of the blank.

So, here we go. We cut grooves to create the rings, but then we must cut a clean shoulder with the skew. Remember, we line up the cut with the bevel, not with the handle. A stop grip is best, and then a little roll of your thumb is a precise micrometer adjustment to get the entrance just right. This cutting stance and angle need to go deep into your muscle memory. Make a thin cut on maple, maybe two, to make sure you have no torn grain.



Then back to shaping the top of the ring. I use my beading and parting tool, which makes a bead or ring of its own width. On a ring, in contrast to a bead, it's not easy to swing a good curve, so I tend to make several discrete cuts, then blend them with the b-and-p tool as a scraper, and then sandpaper. I agree with Gary from May, to use sandpaper is often just the quickest way, not a failure.

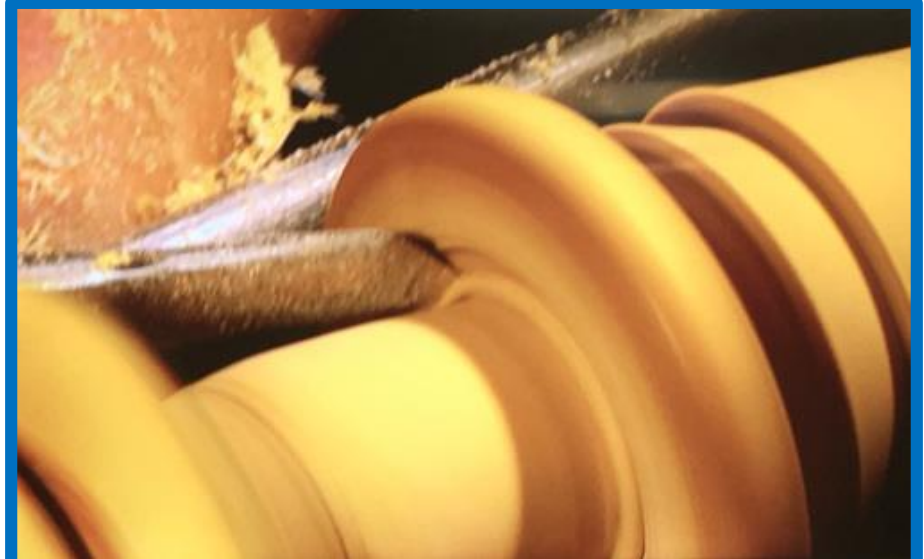


Phil rounds the rings with his modified skew

Then, I separate the rings. Gary used a curved scraper, sometimes called a ring tool. I don't. I've made a decision I don't need round section rings. That would need a scraper. I'm more interested in a quick and clean cut on end grain. So, I use this narrower skew, and with each cut, swing farther out, careful to be quick about the cut so it doesn't burn. **You will find you not only swing out the handle, but you also need to rotate the tool to keep the sharp edge out of harm's way.**

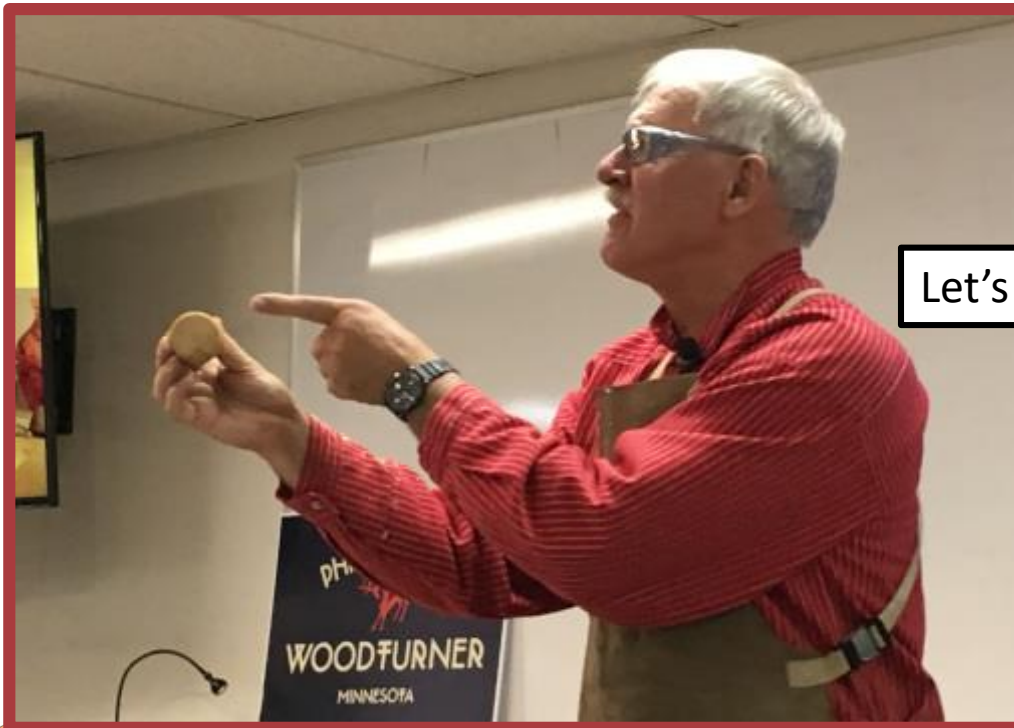


You will want to be very aware of the line on both sides of the ring, to make sure your two cuts meet in the middle. I like the look of the higher ring in the middle, full diameter of your blank, as Gary did, but I also like the way it gives me easier access to that middle ring. That's a key factor with rings and how closely spaced the rings can be. Then I clean up what might be a ragged inside by sanding on the wood itself. No sandpaper on the inside of the ring. I don't stop for that. I'm doing production work of these rattles, 10-15 minutes each, and I think the clean cut skew finish, though not a round cross section, looks great.



Phil separating rings from the shaft of the rattle

So, a few new things I'm adding to Gary's great presentation about captive ring rattles: **you may cut the shoulders with your skew chisel, use the b-and-p tool for rounding the shape and as a scraper upside down too, then the modified ½" skew to cut the rings loose. Sand the inside of the ring on the raw wood.** These skills will all be useful on my next project, but it's easier to learn on the rattle. Definitely start and get good with rings on the rattle first. One last thing, I think it's great to make a lot of a few items. I like this rattle and tree partly because they are almost a sampler of all the different turning techniques. You get good when you repeat it again and again, and it enters your muscle memory.

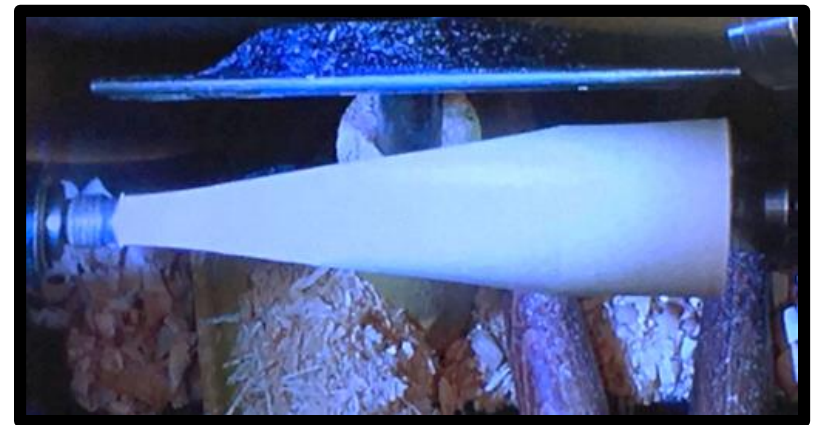


Let's move on to the ringed tree

“Kransekake” is the Norwegian name for “crown cake”, or more specifically “wreath cake,” a unique, ringed Scandinavian wedding cake that was my inspiration to design this decorative tree. I have made thousands of them since about 1982. A young girl in her bunad shows off the Kransekake cake, a “tree of rings”. This decorative tile by Suzanne Toftey shows the Kransekake cake in its setting in Scandinavian festivals, especially weddings. This historic cake and my tree-of-rings design have rich and ancient symbolism for marriage and loving relationships.



The ring (think wedding ring) means forever, many rings, more forever, and in Northern Europe the evergreen shape means eternal life, even more forever. So the shape wishes the recipients a relationship that lasts forever. A narrative, a good story, makes items easier to sell. Back to finding your own voice, if your products have a story, and better yet, a story that fits with your story, people love that.



Phil defines the shape of the tree with his large roughing gouge



Load a raw blank. Here's the process- take a block of 2 1/4 X 2 1/4 X 8 inch maple and first shape it into the cone, small end toward the tailstock. I never measure, but I list my dimensions on the MWA website. A little over 2" diameter, 8" long, with a taper starting 2" from the bottom to 3/8" inch at the top. For more precise measurement: 5.5 inches of rings, with 17-18 rings, Thickness of rings- .15 inch in the thicker, larger rings, tapering to .065 for the smaller, thinner ones, Spacing of rings .35" total for the first row at the bottom, .25" at the top row. Final thickness of the cone, 1/4" for top of cone, 5/16" for the stem/trunk.

I use a roughing gouge for the basic shape and then a skew chisel for a final finish. I use my 2" roughing gouge as a guide to the bottom section, which is also the thickness of the blank. At the top, the diameter is just larger than my Oneway center.



Next I cut grooves to shape my rings. I do that by eye, starting at the beginning of the angled section. I use a 1/8" parting tool, not the more common 3/16, and everything tapers. 2 thicknesses of 1/8 parting tool at the thickest section, to 1 thickness at the top, and tapering between.



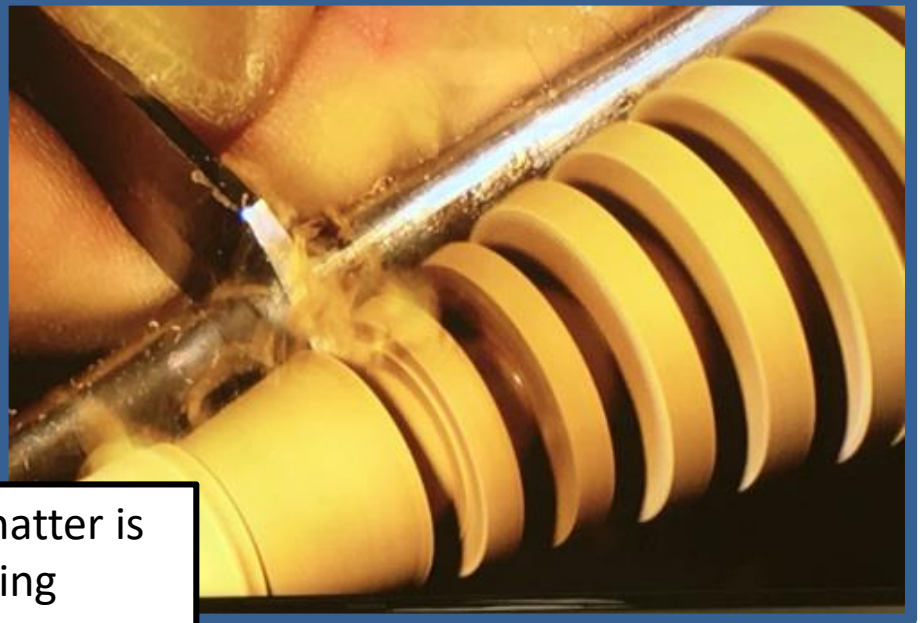
Thicker rings in the big diameters, tapering to quite thin. Also, I need to leave enough wood to cut a shoulder on every edge.

Especially if I get some chatter, the parting tool cut will be rough. I've tried other parting tools which cut cleaner, but they don't leave a flat bottom, which is essential for me. Tool pressure is what we call the resistance to our cut with particular tools.

I prefer to cut, not scrape, with the parting tool, because it causes less tool pressure. If I do get chatter, I prefer to put that chatter on the lower, less visible side of a ring, not the top. That means less chance of visible, torn grain. **I can also use the bevel of the tool to provide some steady rest, but pushing down just a bit.** This becomes a huge issue on my bigger trees, which I have made up to 36" height.



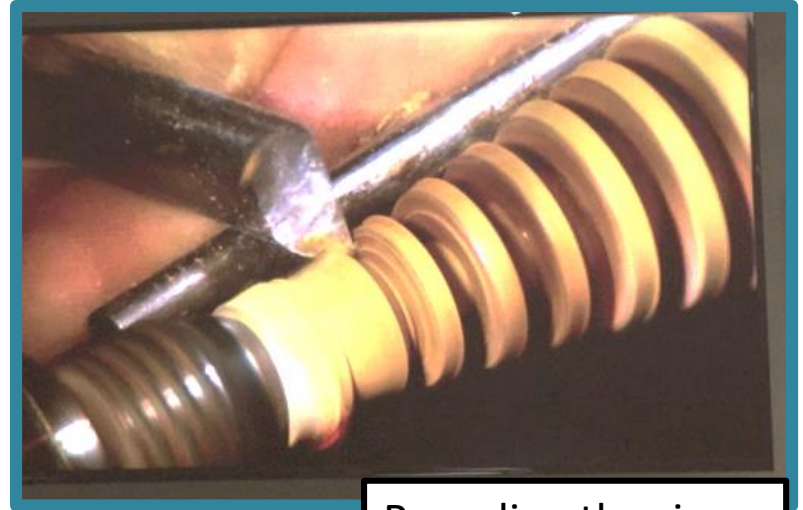
I usually have in stock 12" and 16" trees and chatter is a much bigger issue with these and I am finessing those all I can to lessen it.



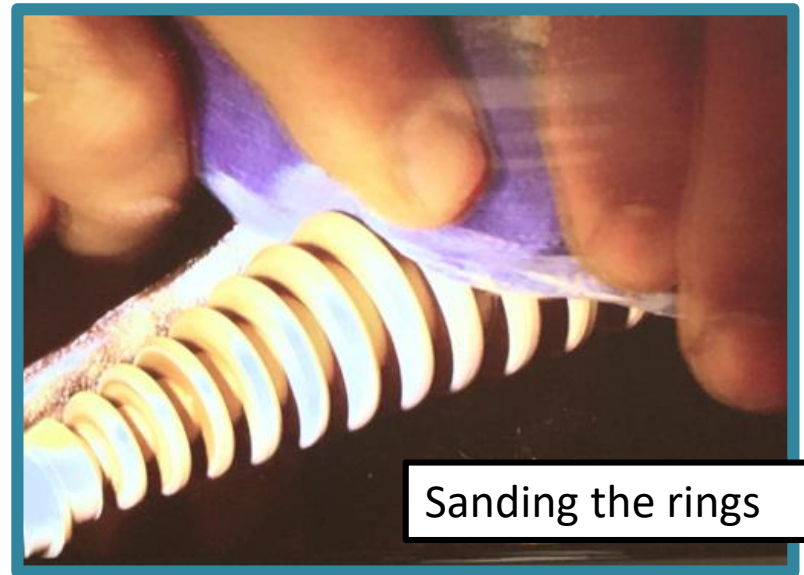


I've broken a cardinal rule of spindle turning on these trees, which is "don't cut the ends too thin until you've finished the middle." As in card playing, "Don't cheat until you know the game better than anyone else."

A second issue when cutting the grooves is **keeping the inside line, the bottom of the grooves, straight and even.** When I started making this tree, I made 6 rings, big thick ones like the rattle, and no thin stem at the base. But as I made it, I decided I had a different audience for the tree than the rattle. Not babies, hard on their toys, but adults. So, I made thinner and thinner rings, as the years went by, and guess what, when I didn't need to undercut so far, I could space them much closer.



Rounding the rings



Sanding the rings

And, I found they didn't need to be round in cross section to be strong enough; they could be 2-3 times wider than thick. That gives a good look from many more rings, still keeps them quite strong, and makes them much easier to undercut. A thick ring needs to be undercut deeply and needs lots of space alongside to do it. These, not so much.

I don't measure, I use a 1/8 parting tool, with a double thickness between the biggest rings, a single thickness between the smallest rings. Then I make a series of cuts. First, to clean up the end grain edges of the rings, I need to cut a super clean cut shoulder. Then a series of cuts with b-and-p tool to round the top. Then sand with 120, 180, 240, oil, and then with 400 wet-or-dry.



Separating the rings

My next step, I round, sand and oil the still attached rings, before I cut them loose. I use the 1/4 beading and parting tool to round the rings, not getting too fussy because I can scrape and sand quickly. Sanding is a bit of a problem, because the sanding grit I leave on the rings will dull my skew chisel a bit.

I use 120 grit, 150 and 220, then I oil with Watco Teak Oil and sand with 400 wet-or-dry sandpaper. This is wonderful paper I use on all my articles I oil. I use it after my first coat of oil. In this situation, either production or demonstrating, that wet-or-dry sandpaper also dries out the rings enough so I can move right to cutting the rings and don't have to wait for the oil to dry. Otherwise, lots of dust in my oil finish.



It's a bit frustrating for people to watch me turn these trees because easily half the time is making these rings, even before I cut them loose. I need to make the rings very well. By the way, I love to turn these trees with a crowd. I was just at the Hostfest in Minot, and I turned about 5 trees every day, and more rattles, often with 40-50 people watching. It's a great demo because there is disbelief that the rings all come from the same piece, then suspense as I cut them, and then, they want to see it done. Many people have never seen woodturning. Most people watch till it's completed, 35 to 40 minutes, which is amazing.



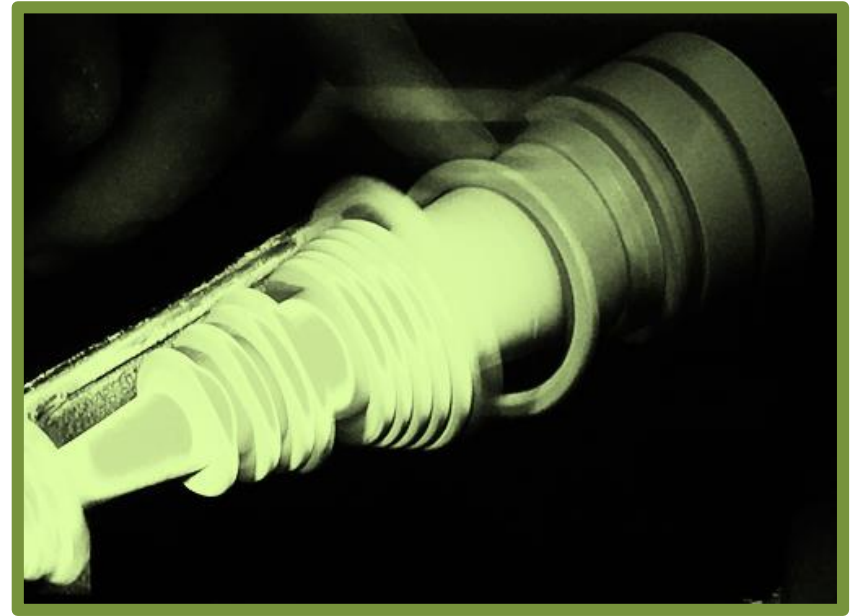
This photo shows the grooves made between the rings and the first 3 rings at the top released. I use my modified skew chisel to undercut the rings from each side. It is very delicate work and if I cut too deep, the rings will not stay high and even on the cone. The first cut is the most difficult because there is not much space alongside. If I cut the hole too big, or cut too deep into the cone, that ring will hang low and I can't do anything about it. So, go slow at first.



I have a way I cut these, usually 3 cuts from the top, each cut swinging farther over to undercut the ring and rotating slightly to keep the edge out of the ring. Then 3 cuts from below, in the more confined space under the ring. I often get an indication of the thickness by light shining through and the pitch going up. I want the two cuts to exactly meet each other, so keeping that inner cone line consistent is very helpful.

Once I have the first couple of rings cut, they slide out of my way, so I can lean the tool over for the top cut. That's the main reason to start with the small rings. If I started with the big ones, they would be in my business, bigtime. Before each cut I clean up the surface with my skew chisel, so I can keep the line of the cone very consistent and then cut just to that line.

In both my rattles and ringed trees, I am greedy to use all my wood so I end up with the point of the tailstock leaving its mark on the ends. So, I took out the point of the live center and can use the wood right to the tip.



Once I release my last ring, leaving the last for a “gate,” I use my skew chisel to clean up the surface. I’ve learned to do that in two steps, first taking most of the extra but leaving the deepest cuts. Then I line up the rings and if some are too close together, I can push the ring down the inner surface of the cone till it smokes, and burns off a bit of material so it drops lower on the cone. When I have finished that with 3-6 of the rings, usually, I make another trip to clean off all marks to a pristine surface.



Next, I use the parting tool to make three cuts, to the left of the still-attached bottom ring and above and below the base. The outside of those cuts go as deep as the 1" driving center and the middle one is halfway from that diameter to the outside diameter of the base. I use the 3/8 spindle gouge, take six runs across the base to make it smaller than the rings, then rough out the slender "trunk" of the tree. Over the years I learned to add fillets to the cove from base to rings.

My woodturning students love to make a single continuous curve from their beads into their coves, but traditional turners most often put a fillet, a short flat reveal, at the transition from bead to cove. It makes a more interesting, complex and shadow-producing shape. I like the trunk thin, maybe 1/4". I think fine woodworking must not look "clunky," but should be as light as its strength allows. I like the look of an elegant ballerina, weightless.



I cut 3 shoulders with the skew, then use the 3/8 b-and-p for the beads and fillets, and the small 3/8 gouge to clean up and further thin the cove.



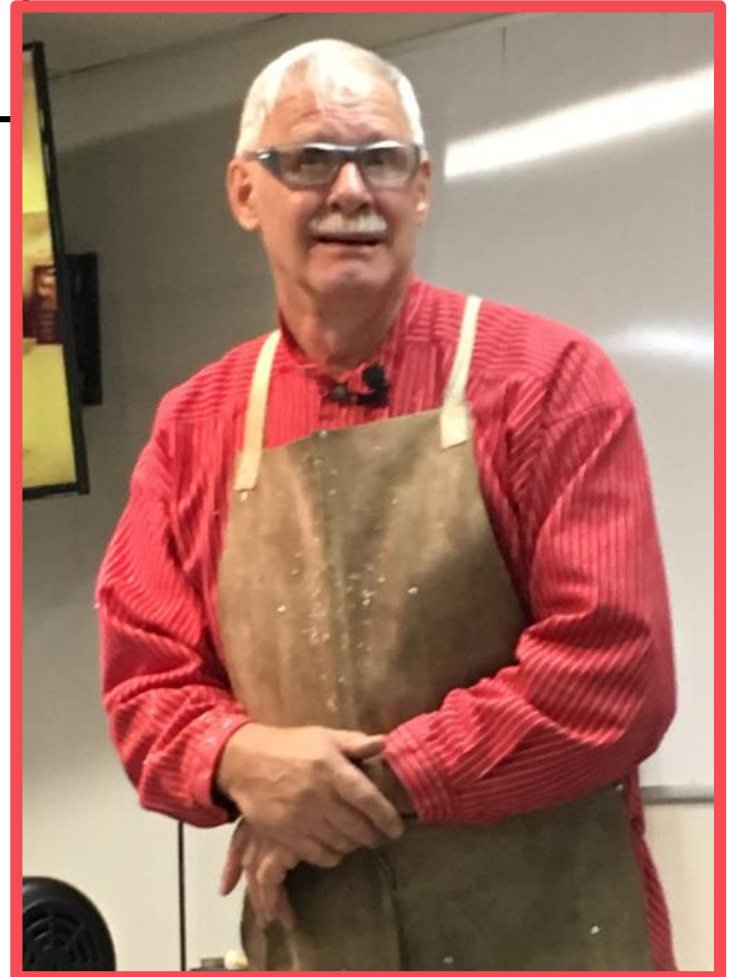
On a vertical spindle like this, I always put the center of the cove off-center, 2/3 high, as if defying gravity. Rule of thirds for good design.

There is a sequence to spindle work to avoid chatter. I worked on the middle of my turning first while it was well supported by the ends, but now I finish the ends. I cut a three false-ring finial at the top to continue the look of rings to the point. Now sand and oil, wet-or-dry 400 grit, oil again and cut it loose by cutting both ends to be very thin and then take it out of the lathe. Carve off the extra. I oil the tree by anointing it with oil, pouring it so it runs down and I work it into every ring, especially those sections not ever oiled. Let it stand 15-20 minutes and then wipe off the excess, let stand overnight and do more coats, usually 3 total.



At shows I have a dilemma, I'm running out of trees, they want the one they saw me make. I can hurry these coats along if I use my light as a kiln, and wait 3 hours between coats. Please pick up at the end of the day. Most people are willing. **I sell my eight inch size for \$115, which includes shipping. The larger sizes are \$225 for the 12 inch and \$375 for the 16 inch.**

About the story. Researchers these days, like Daniel Pink, among others, say people want to buy a product . . . and the maker of the product. They want your story too. So any way you can tell your story, and match it to your product, helps you sell it, and helps you more carefully define yourself and your unique style. People will help you. My son-in-law is a brand designer in Scotland, and decided I needed my own font. This is called "Holtan" and it's based on Norwegian runic designs and some carvings my dad did years ago. I love it, and I like to send it along with my sold products. I wish you well with your discovery of your unique style. On to the Crooked Kransecake:

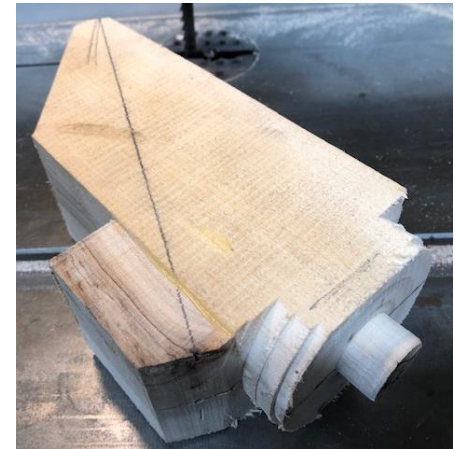


## Crooked Kransekake-

You are free to turn this project but do not sell.

First step- For maximum offset, glue an extra piece of wood off the side, 11/2 inch from bottom. Mark centers carefully and also a center line. Cut small wedges out of opposite corners to make a secure mount for centers. My first crooked tree, I used the chuck for all the tilts, and found I couldn't get enough swing. The good news is you can do this without a chuck, just shifting spindle centers.

2. Cut a 22 mm (.865") tenon on the bottom, 7/16 deep with a pilot hole bored for a 1 1/4" number 10 set screw through chuck into the bottom. That will come into play in step 4. This will fit on the Escoulen chuck made by Vicmark.



3. Trim the top corner of the blank on the band saw to get rid of waste as shown in the photo. Mount between the offset centers.





3. (cont'd) Carefully, with all safety precautions, turn the upper section corner between centers to do the top: 2 7/8 inches of rings, 1 5/16 (1.31) inch outside diameter at bottom of this section, .9 inches inside, approximately 9 rings. Sand and oil this section. Then cut the rings as outlined in the directions for the regular Kransekake (ringed tree). Finish off 3 false rings in a finial after the rings are loose, the sand and oil the completed section



4. Mount the tree in a vise or clamp, very carefully to protect the fragile rings already turned. Drive the 22 mm tenon into the ball of Escoulen chuck, being very careful to align with one of the 3 swinging axis, so all tilts will be in the same plane. It works best to pound the wood onto the shoulder at the base of the top rings. Then strengthen the tenon's grip with a coarse #10 sheet metal screw through the chuck into a predrilled hole in the tenon, with a modified washer to hold the screw. The washer and screw in the picture will be inserted into the hole in the top and screwed tight to hold the base of the tree flush against the ball, with no space between.



5. Remove the tailstock from the lathe. Mount the ball assembly into the chuck, and the chuck onto the lathe. In this next step, the chuck needs to hold the whole assembly straight, with no tailstock support. No tilt but you must slide about 3-5 mm to line up the completed top to the next section. This is very tricky. You must be able to visualize the joint between sections as you spin the assembly. To be sure, use your parting tool to cut into the spinning block and see if you are leaving an equal amount of wood all the way around the next section. Carefully measure the base of the top section. If that is  $1 \frac{5}{16}$  (1.31) and .9 inside diameter, then the next lower section begins at  $1 \frac{7}{16}$  (1.435) outside and just under 1 inch inside. About  $\frac{1}{10}$  inch difference per ring, a bit more at the joints.



Getting this right will be essential to having a nice flow of rings from one section to another. Beginning now and finishing after you turn the rings, use a carving gouge, files, and I like a triangular shaped vibrating sander to smooth the transition from one section to another. As you do that, bring the upper rings down to see how they are spaced, You want those top rings to drop a bit into the joint area but not into the next section. I tend to turn 4 rings in this section, each  $\frac{1}{10}$  inch larger than that above it. Turn this set of 4 rings. Sand and oil this section, including finishing and sanding the transition section.

6. 2 options now- either a 3<sup>rd</sup> shift to make a continuous curve, or a doubling back to make an S-curve. To get maximum tilt here, I use my parting tool to trim in close to the ball at the base, so there is no wood preventing the maximum tilt. This time you will tilt the ball and therefore the tree, by loosening set screws, to make it swing only on the axis you lined up with. For most dramatic effect, I tend to tilt the max, about 15 degrees, and then shift to match up the joints. This is tricky once again. You will often need to slide the whole assembly 10-20 mm.



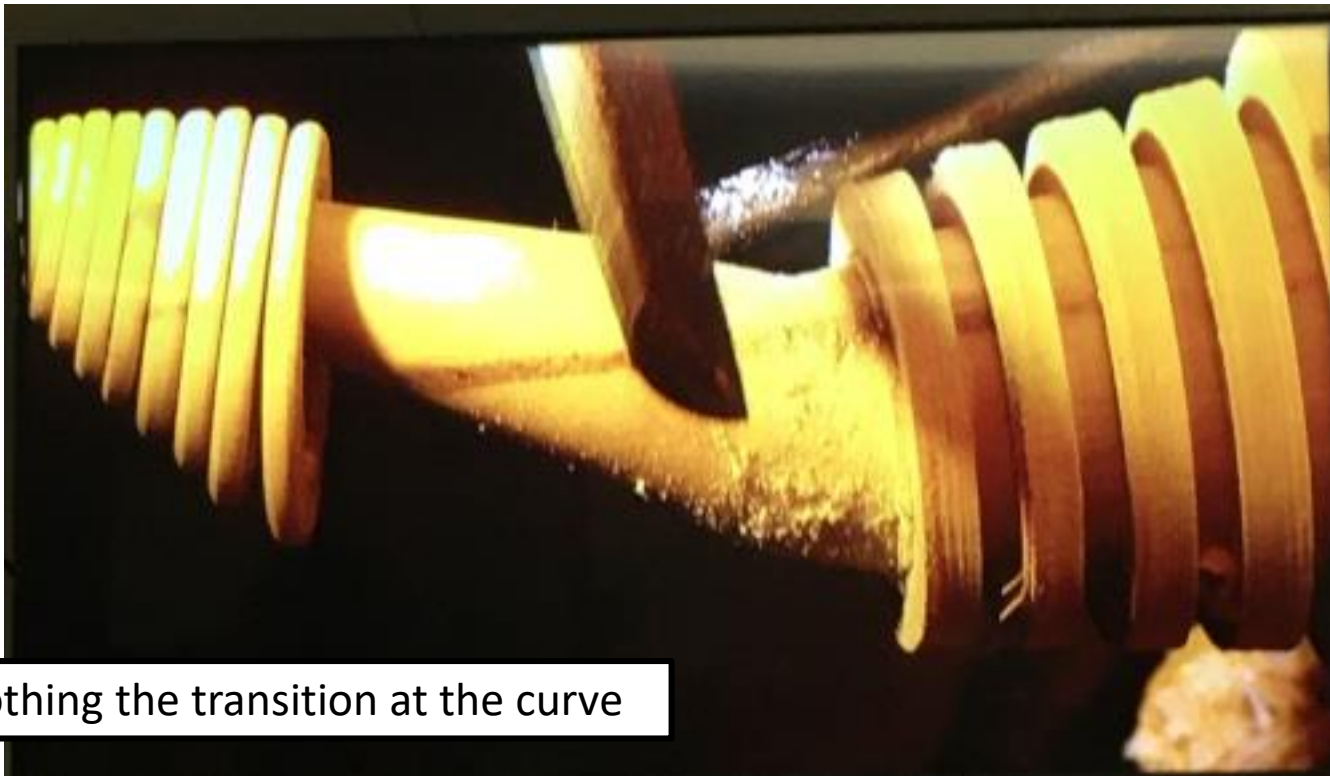
Hand cutting the curve



For a continuous curve- trim around the chuck to allow the whole assembly to tilt farther, all the way out to the third marked circle- 15 degrees. Measure from the very bottom of the blank 2 1/2 inches, and that is where the top ring section will end and the base begins. Mark out the rings, usually 4, and also turn the base ring, which will not be cut loose.



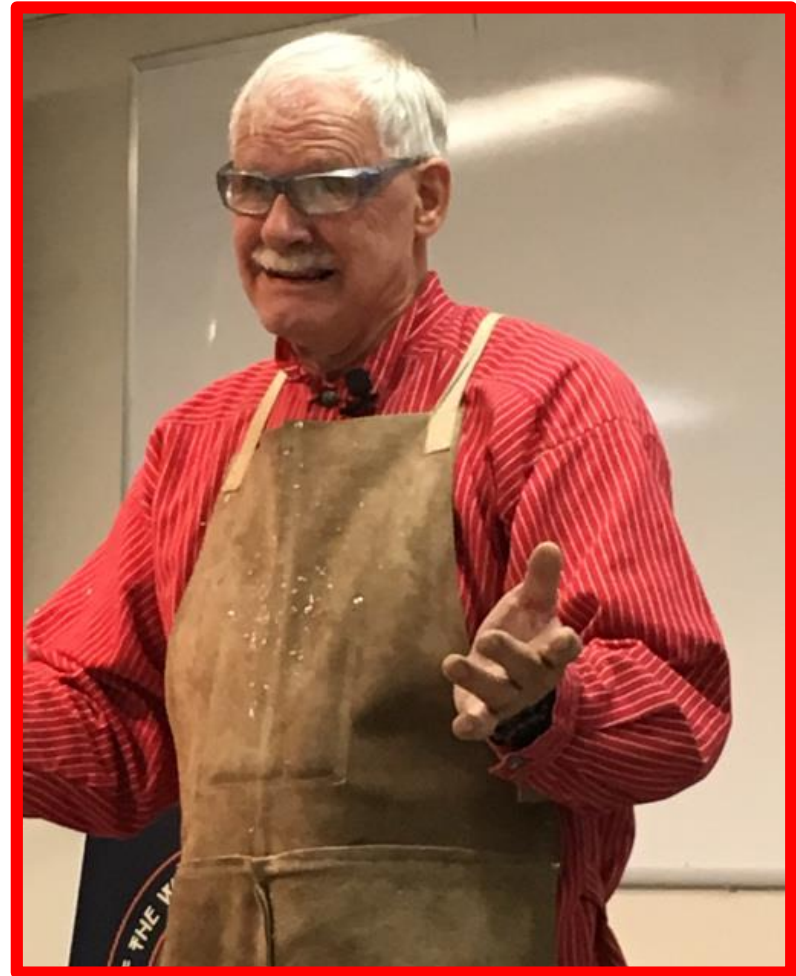
I like the base ring smaller than the bottom loose ring. The diameter of the blank may limit your outside diameter. After turning the rings, use the parting tool to cut a 90 degree shoulder about 1/2 " deep to the left of base of the ring section, with a right angle fillet at the bottom (your cleanest cut with a parting tool), and then a steep sloping curve about 65 degrees to provide clearance. I have found it is absolutely necessary to cut the bottom of un-cut base ring before you tilt or swing. Sand and oil.



Smoothing the transition at the curve

For a reverse (S) curve- Similar process but you will tilt the chuck the opposite direction from the curve of the two top sections to make an S curve. Otherwise, same directions as with continuous.

You have lots of choices for your last axis or two. Your choice will determine how the ringed tree sits- either fairly straight or very tilted. That partly depends on whether you chose the continuous curve or the S curve



Notice also the continuous curve or s curve shapes. The position of the stem/trunk brings a lot of “attitude” to the piece.



It is important that you finish the bottom with careful thought to the angle at which the tree stands, the tip over the center of gravity, or not. A precarious balance is dramatic but perhaps unstable and vulnerable. But maybe worth it for the look.





I sometimes tilt and shift the base 2 or 3 times to experiment.

After your last cut, you should determine how much material you need to part off the base and clean up the end grain surface with a skew chisel. Then carefully turn the base, blending the convex curve and fillet with the offset neck. Some carving, filing, and sanding may be necessary. Sand and oil.

Congratulations, you have accomplished a difficult task but I'm sure you are proud of the result.

Thank you, Phil. Your demonstration was extremely well organized. We especially appreciated your having so many intermediate steps prepared as separate pieces so that the audience did not have to wait through "chip making" to get to the next important step.

As detailed as your projects are, your complete and excellent explanations will allow us to tackle these projects



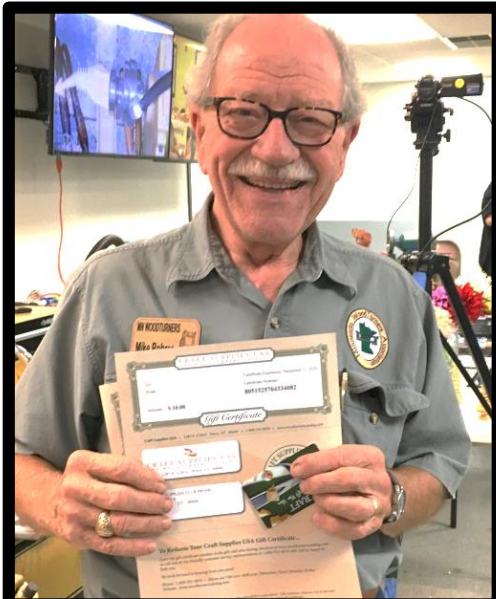
# Member Challenge (Spalted Wood)



Jeff Luedloff oversees the monthly Member Challenge. This month was very active with 20 entries.

Jeff would like an assistant who would be interested in taking over the Member Challenge in the future. Please contact Jeff ([jlued@q.com](mailto:jlued@q.com)) if you have questions and an interest in working with this highlight of our monthly meeting.

Member Challenge (Spalted Wood) cont'd.



Mike Rohrer  
Beg/Int 1<sup>st</sup> Place



Rusty Ogren  
Beg/Int 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



Warren Gerber  
Beg/Int 3<sup>rd</sup> Place



Member Challenge (Spalted Wood) cont'd.



Julie Abbott  
Beg/Int 4<sup>th</sup> Place

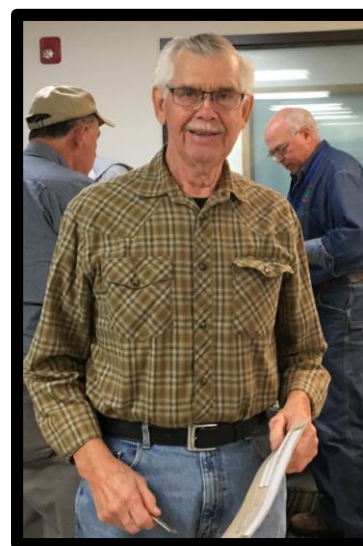


Ric Zillman  
Beg/Int 5<sup>th</sup> Place



Tom Spielman  
Beg/Int 6<sup>th</sup> Place

## Member Challenge (Spalted Wood) cont'd.



Bill Breckon  
Beg/Int 7<sup>th</sup> Place

George Martin  
Beg/Int 8<sup>th</sup> Place

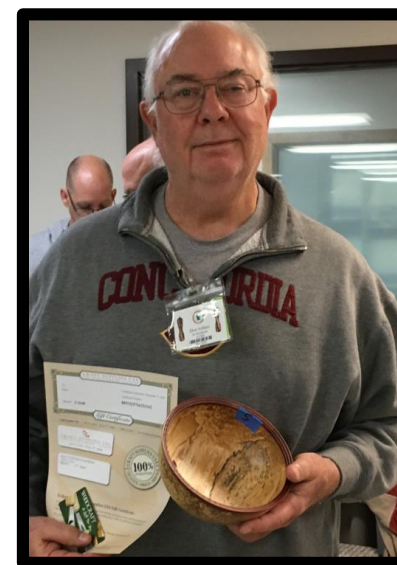
Bob Fondness  
Beg/Int 9<sup>th</sup> Place

Tom Schmidt  
Beg/Int 10<sup>th</sup> Place





Member Challenge (Spalted Wood) cont'd.



Neil Robinette  
Adv/Exp 1<sup>st</sup> Place



Lee Tourtelotte  
Adv/Exp 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



Don Schlais  
Adv/Exp 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

Member Challenge (Spalted Wood) cont'd.



Dan Larson  
Adv/Exp 4<sup>th</sup> Place



Dick Hicks  
Adv/Exp 5<sup>th</sup> Place



Dan Ernst  
Adv/Exp 6<sup>th</sup> Place





Member Challenge (Spalted Wood) cont'd.



Todd Williams  
Adv/Exp 7<sup>th</sup> Place

Ken Hallberg  
Hon. Mention

Ken Gustafson  
Hon. Mention

Roy Estes  
Hon. Mention



# Member Challenges for the remainder of 2019

Jeff Luedloff announced the remaining challenges for 2019:

|          |                    |
|----------|--------------------|
| November | Wood-turned Tree   |
| December | Holiday Decoration |





**Rick Hultgren**



**Ryan Christopherson**  
Eden Prairie

# Welcome New Members!

Ken Crea says we now  
have 326 members!

**Jack Anderson**  
North Branch

**Ken May**  
Minneapolis

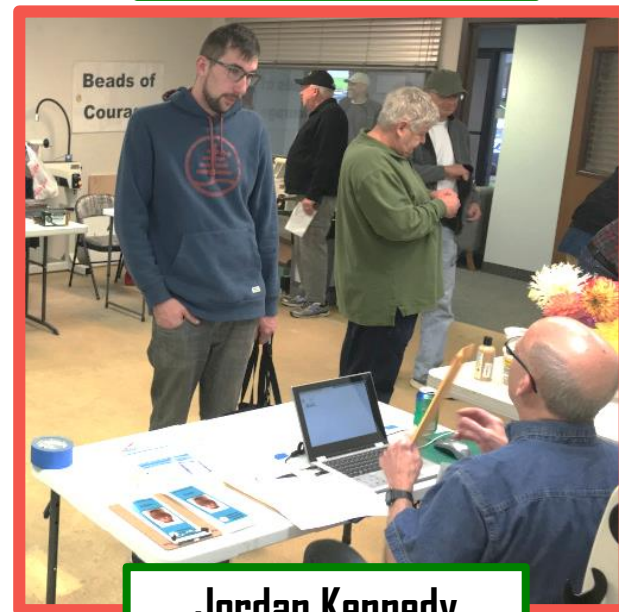
**Steve Clark**  
Delano

**Ken May**  
Lakeland

**Rosemary Moore**  
St. Paul



**Jared Sable**



**Jordan Kennedy**  
Brooklyn Center



## Next Meeting

**November 2, 2019 - Saturday morning 9:30 am**

(Arrive early for Member Challenge Voting, Instant Gallery, Raffle Tickets, Beads of Courage, Woodcraft Display, Library, Coffee, Membership issues, Donuts and Fellowship)

**Location: Houck Machine Co.**

**12811 16th Ave N Plymouth MN 55441**

**Demonstration:**

**Beth Ireland**

*Carving & Thinking Out of the Box*

**Member Challenge:**

***Wood Turned Tree***





# PROFILES IN TURNING

Dick Hicks

This is the 15<sup>th</sup> in a series  
of profiles of members of  
the Minnesota Association  
of WoodTurners



Dick's trip to Ireland to  
take a class with Glenn  
Lucas is included

**MWA:** Dick, when did you start woodturning and how did you get started?



**Dick:** About 2013, maybe 2014. I took a class in Burnsville at America's Woodshop during a break from school. I didn't have a lathe of my own then. We only used a scraper for the entire class. I finished the bowl later when I got my own lathe and managed to go through the bottom.

**MWA:** How did your turning progress?

**Dick:** I got a lathe and started doing pens. Only pens and MORE PENS! I started taking classes through the club (MWA) in 2015. This is a great thing to do; people should take advantage of our classes and start branching out to new projects and techniques.

**MWA:** How long have you been a member of MWA?

**Dick:** I joined in February, 2014.



Dick's shop is a dream  
(come true for Dick)



**MWA:** Where and how big is your shop?

**Dick:** I tore down our garage that was falling down and built this garage in 2015. I knew in my lifetime it would never hold a car; it was going to be a shop from the start. The shop/garage is 24' x 22'.

**MWA:** It is absolutely beautiful (in shop terms) and seems to be extremely well thought-out and planned. Can you use it in the Minnesota winter?

**Dick:** It's heated in the winter with portable heaters. The walls are well insulated and built with 2x6s rather than 2x4s. I plan on finishing the insulation of the ceiling before winter.

Dick's shop is extremely well planned and must be a joy to work in





**MWA:** What kind of a lathe do you have?

**Dick:** I have a Powermatic 3520B. I got this at the 2017 AAW Symposium at the same time Rick Auge got the big Powermatic for the club and Dan Larson bought a lathe for himself. Rick brought them all back in his truck. Mine was used by Nick Cook in his demonstrations and is signed by him.



Dick bought demonstrator lathe at the 2017 AAW Symposium

**MWA:** I know several people have bought lathes at the large meetings.

**Dick:** You can get a good deal on the big lathes at the symposia because the companies don't want to pay for packing them up and shipping them home. Rick bought the one for the club, Dan bought his and I was really tempted. I set an upper limit in my mind for what I would pay and they gave me a price just under my limit.



**MWA:** What is your favorite type of turning?

**Dick:** Right now, it is bowls and platters.

**MWA:** What is your greatest challenge in woodturning?

**Dick:** My biggest challenge is visualizing the shapes I want to create. I'm getting better at it. I work hard on developing the shape, for example I do a curve drawing from top to bottom before I begin. I do better when I can make a mark or a couple of marks to show where I'm headed.





**MWA:** What type of wood do you prefer, wet or dry?

**Dick:** I prefer wet wood; it cuts so much easier – and it is so much easier to get! I turn from start to finish and do not mind oval bowls. I recently got a Oneway coring system that I haven't used yet. I might start doing twice-turned bowls. I'm somewhat conflicted because I really like turning the inside of bowls best and I'm not sure if the coring will interfere with my inside turning pleasure.



Ash bowls for Dick's Mom from a tree on her property

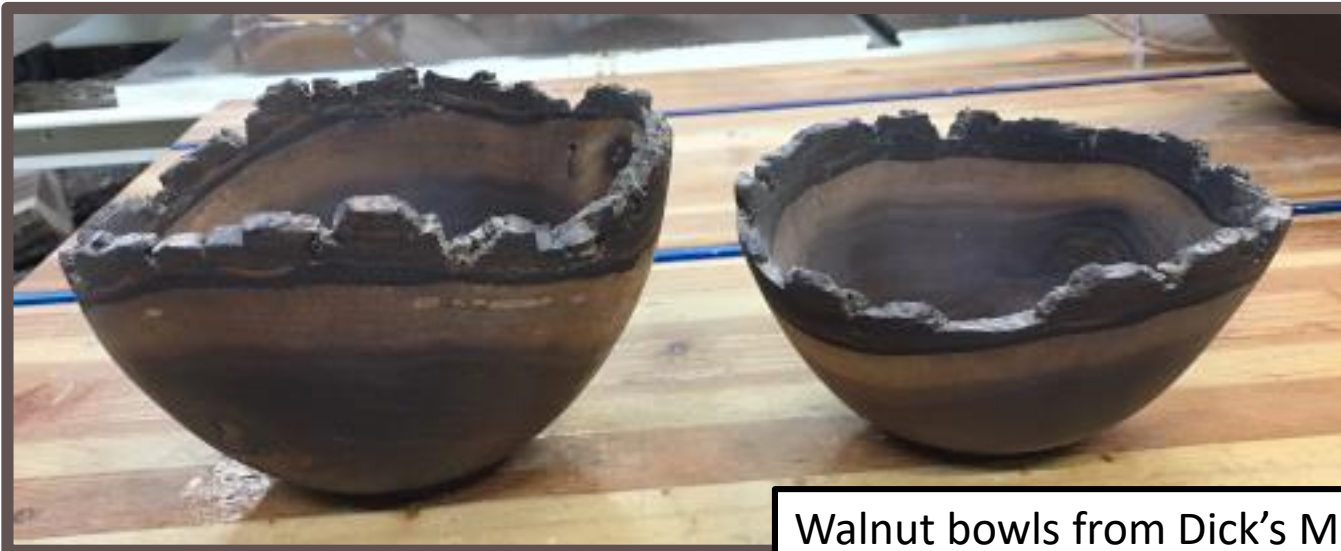


**MWA:** What's your favorite species?

**Dick:** Cherry; I really like cherry and walnut best. I like hard maple, but really, it's whatever I can get.

**MWA:** Do you have some favorite pieces that you wouldn't give away or sell?

**Dick:** Most of them so far. It's hard to get rid of the bowls you work so hard on and put so much into. Glenn Lucas says, "It's just a piece of wood", but I don't feel like that yet. I'd never get rid of the pieces I turned in Ireland. Some pieces are from wood from a tree from my Mom's house. I did some natural edge pieces from Mom's trees from her homestead, where I grew up. I'd never get rid of them.

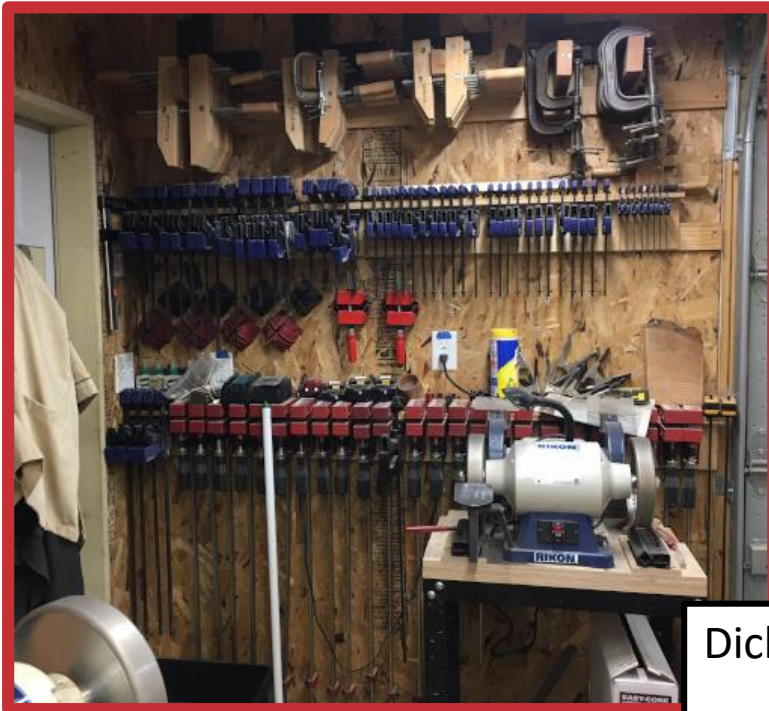


Walnut bowls from Dick's Mom's homestead

**MWA:** What did you do before you retired?

Dick Hicks Profile

**Dick:** I was a teacher. I taught at Lakeville Area Public Schools for 32 years. Towards the end of my career I was a technology coach for teachers at the district level, but then went back to finish my career in an elementary school as a Digital Learning Specialist, working with both students and teachers.



Dick strongly believes “You can never have TOO MANY CLAMPS!”





**MWA:** What do you spend your time on besides woodturning?

**Dick:** We have a couple of dogs, but I do spend a lot of the day in my shop.



Sharpening station

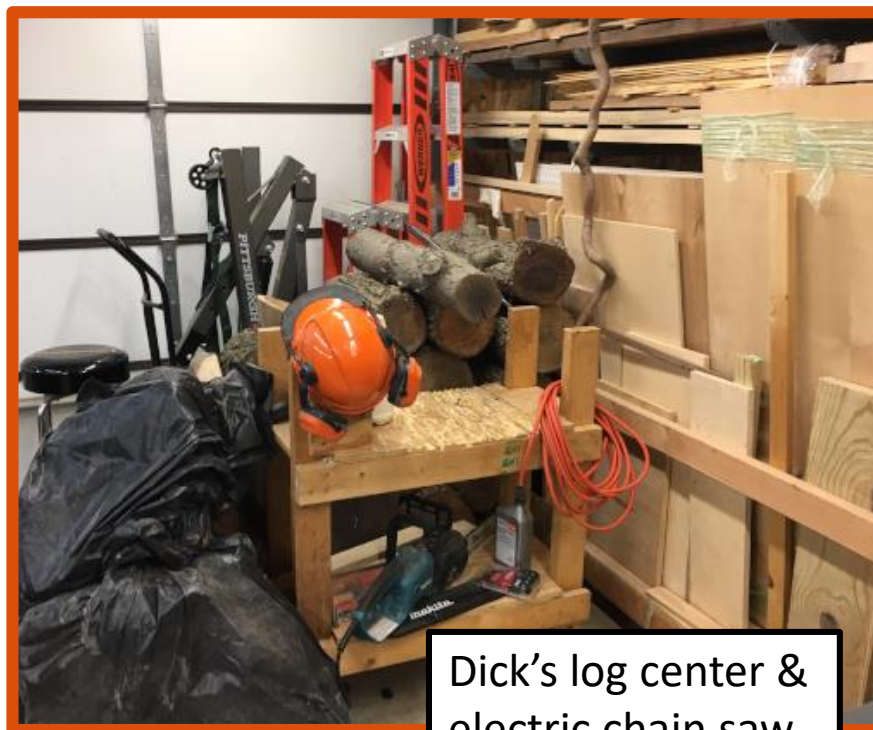
**MWA:** I'm surprised you ever leave this fantastic place.

**Dick:** It is a "bucket list" shop.





Band saw with custom table

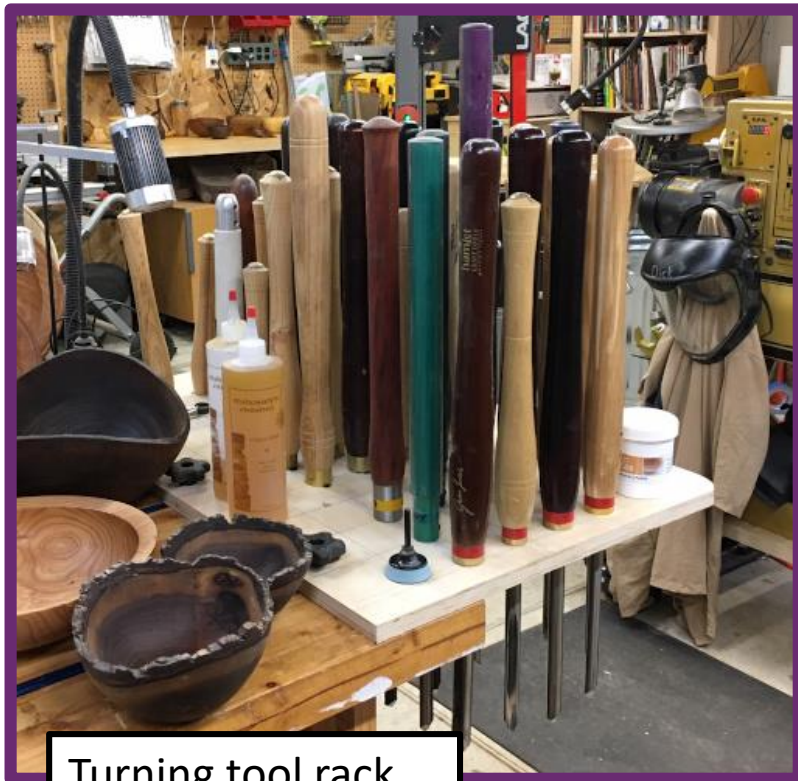


Dick's log center & electric chain saw

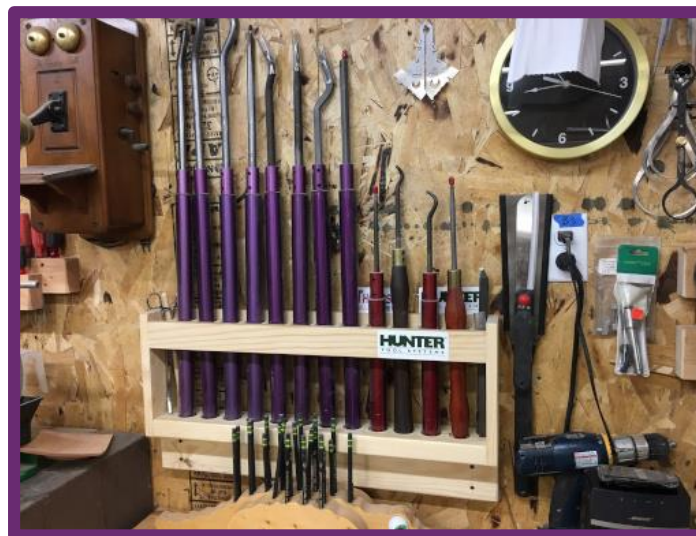


Library & suction





Turning tool rack



Two of his several  
Glenn Lucas tools



Hunter Tools





Dan Ernst says, "My Bride and I have been doing the show (St. John the Baptist) for two years now. It is a good show because it is inside and we can leave everything set up overnight. It was great to see Dick make his first ever sale. He was just beaming. Glad that he was able to display with us."



**MWA:** You took a trip to Ireland earlier this year that involved woodturning, didn't you?

**Dick:** I took a 5-day Master Class from Glenn Lucas. When Glenn came to our club, I couldn't get time off to take his Friday class. At his demo at our club meeting on Saturday I told him I missed the class on Friday, so I might just have to come to Ireland and take one there when I retire. He said, "I'll be happy to see you, I hope you do!"



Dick in front of Glenn's soon-to-be-replaced Study Centre

**MWA:** How did the 5-day class work? Did he teach it like a class in school?

**Dick:** The focus was on a particular project for each of the 5 days. But there was a lot of other stuff with which he worked with us, for instance coring, processing wood, drying wood, looking at other things that make up woodturning and he showed us how he works in his production shop.

Look at that massive bowl on the cabinet in the back of the room!



**MWA:** You must have picked up an awful lot just being around him and seeing how he does things.

**Dick:** The 5 days of turning tips were great, having such a pro looking over your shoulder.

**MWA:** How many were in your class and where were they from?

**Dick:** There were 5 of us. The other class members were from Canada, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. It was a very international group.



Dick & classmates. What a beautiful setting!



**MWA:** How did Glenn interact with all the class members?



**Dick:** Glenn doesn't have an ego; he's just a nice guy who really wants to help you out with your woodturning.

**MWA:** What were the accommodations like?

Dick Hicks Profile



**Dick:** We stayed in a Bed & Breakfast about 3 miles away, the Lorum Old Rectory. It is a fantastic place to stay!



**MWA:** What was a typical day like?

Dick Hicks Profile



**Dick:** We'd get to Glenn's about 8:15 and we'd start turning and he'd give us instructions for our project and focus for the day. Mid-morning, about 10:30 to 11:00 we'd break for coffee and a snack.





We'd turn until about 1:00 pm, wash-up and go into the family kitchen. Glenn's wife, Cornelia, would make a delicious lunch for us every day. Our afternoon break was generally for an ice cream cone. We'd usually turn until about 5:00 to 5:30.

Some of the massive logs on Glenn's property. How many bowls do you think he can envision in these big logs?



**MWA:** What did you do for dinner?

**Dick:** The 5 of us went out to dinner together every evening, generally going to a good fish and chips place recommended by Cornelia. My wife, Deb, and another wife joined us. While we were there, we celebrated Glenn's 45<sup>th</sup> birthday. The last night we went to a fancier place.

**MWA:** I assume Glenn can't spend his evenings with the students also.

**Dick:** Glenn went out with us a couple of nights. He's got kids and he can't spend all his time with these people coming to learn woodturning from him.





**MWA:** Does Glenn's wife, Cornelia, get involved with the classes other than providing the delicious lunches?

**Dick:** I think Cornelia manages the business aspects of the Glenn Lucas enterprise. Nevertheless, she was very cordial and helpful to the 2 wives who attended and took them out sight-seeing several times.

**MWA:** It sounds like Glenn has quite an organization of professional woodturning and teaching.

**Dick:** While we were there Glenn signed a contract for the construction of a "Study Center", which looks like it will be a state-of-the-art center for instruction in woodturning.



**MWA:** So, it sounds like Glenn will continue to focus partially on education rather than production turning.

**Dick:** Glenn told us that thankfully the Irish economy downturned and made him do less production work and more teaching and demonstrating.





**MWA:** It seems like Glenn is truly a kind and likeable person besides being one of the world's best turners.

**Dick:** Glenn is one of the kindest and most likeable people that I know with a great sense of humor. When I asked him how his Wood Turners Polish compared to Mike Mahoney's products, he said it was very similar. Then he turned to the class and said, "For those of you who might not know who Mike Mahoney is, he is a lesser known turner from America", with his famous Irish grin. We all had a good laugh.





Good times with  
Glenn



**MWA:** Any last thoughts you'd like to mention?

**Dick:** If you ever get a chance to work with a pro, don't miss the opportunity because you're afraid your ability level is not high enough. You learn something good almost every moment you're with the person, especially Glenn Lucas.

Some wonderful platters just waiting to emerge from these planks

Dick, Thanks for letting us see your fantastic shop and hear about your trip to Ireland to study with Glenn Lucas. It doesn't look like your retirement is going to be boring!

## Ask a Turner\*

## TURNING TIPS\*

\*All members are encouraged to contact Editor Mike Rohrer (mdrprof@gmail.com) with an answer to the “Ask a Turner” question, with a question to publish in next month’s newsletter or with a “Turning Tip.”



# Ask a Turner\*

I let a log “weather” a bit too long (forgot it behind my garage) and it was covered with fungi, and it felt a little soft. I was hoping for good spalting and when I cut into it with the bandsaw it was spalted nicely, but when I preliminarily turned it the wood was definitely “punky.” Can I salvage this spalted wood for turning? Can I use a wood hardener or is this just lost wood?  
“Fun Guy” Turner



To answer, email [mdrprof@gmail.com](mailto:mdrprof@gmail.com)



# Segmenting Class

Jim Jacobs taught morning and afternoon segmenting classes at his shop in Hastings. These classes were lecture, demonstration and observation classes, not “hands-on” and were a great introduction to 3 types of segmenting:

1. Staves
2. Compound angle staves
3. Rings

Doyle Carroll, Steve Raddatz, Sarah Schniepp, Chuck Shreffler and Mike Rohrer attended the afternoon class



Chuck Shreffler, Sarah Schniepp & Steve Raddatz



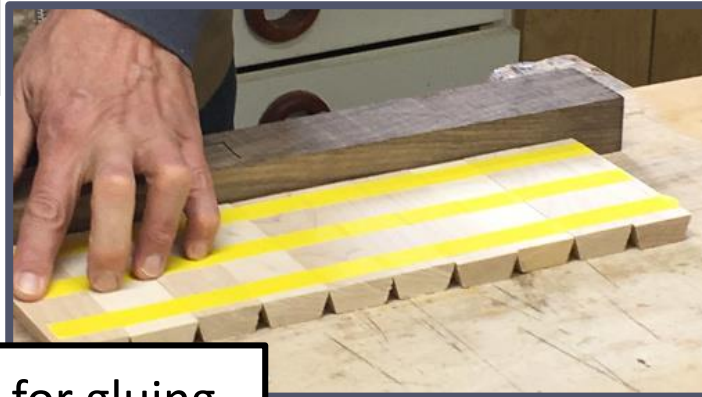
Doyle Carroll



Jim discussed the 3 types of segmenting we'd be learning



Angle of cut =  $360/\text{number of segments} \times 2$



Staves taped for gluing



Examples of compound miter and simple staves



Staves glued and clamped overnight



A "master segment" made of paraply for compound miter staves

A handle is attached for ease of pushing through the saw; screws are placed in the front and back, just through the master enough to tap into the segment for control through the table saw blade.



Master "attached" to the piece to be cut

The "master segment" will guide the segment being cut along the blade set at the correct angle thus controlling the 2 angles of the "compound miter"



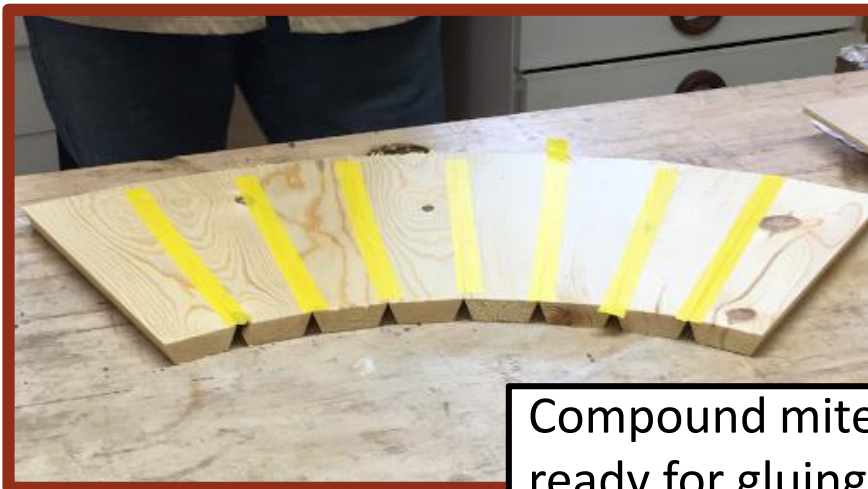
[www.delorie.com/wood/compound-cuts.html](http://www.delorie.com/wood/compound-cuts.html)

Calculator for  
cross cut angle  
and blade angle



2<sup>nd</sup> cut

The "master segment"  
guides along the auxiliary  
fence for the 1<sup>st</sup> cut



Compound miter staves  
ready for gluing





Vessel with compound miter staves with inlay



Inlay in segment before mitering



Cutting 2 pieces at one time to create the inlay



L. Inlay ready for gluing;



R. glued & clamped





For cutting segments for segmented rings, Jim demonstrated his Super Simple Segmenting System



2 rings under pressure for overnight gluing

Small jack for pressure; light bulb and insulated door for heat in cooler weather





## Area & Regional Meetings & Gatherings

Meetings of the various “Sub Groups” of the MWA are a highlight of the month for many woodturners. These gatherings offer opportunities that don’t exist at the monthly meeting of the entire MWA, which must be highly structured. The Sub Groups provide a chance to ask other turners lots of questions, spend a lot of time on one technique, discuss items brought to the “show & tell”, and really get to know one another in a casual, comfortable atmosphere.

The groups vary in location, type of meeting and size. All MWA members are strongly encouraged to contact the “point person” for the group to be included in the announcements for the monthly meetings.

Continued next page



## Area & Regional Meetings & Gatherings (cont'd)

### •HAMBURGER CLUB

The HC meets the Thursday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week following the club meetings. The next meeting is Thursday, Oct 17. We meet at 11:30 am with lunch to be ordered about 11:45 am. No topics ... just an open dialogue of woodturning friends. Several attendees will usually bring a piece of interest (something good or something that went wrong to pass around the group). Mike Hunter “organizes” the group.

Meeting place: 50's Grill, 5524 Brooklyn Blvd, Brooklyn Center

Any member who would like to be included on the mailing list please send an email to [MLH55410@aol.com](mailto:MLH55410@aol.com).



Mike Hunter, Joe Zwirn, Bob Puetz, Dick Hicks, Julie Abbott and Mike Rohrer attended the September meeting

Hamburger Club



Joe Zwirn's eccentric stemmed cups and captured ring goblet



Mike Hunter & Joe Zwirn enjoying conversation before lunch is served







Joe Zwirn and Julie Abbott discussing a question Julie had about turning walnut



Mike Rohrer's nesting birch bowls with segmented ring rims



Dick Hicks, Bob Puetz, Mike Hunter & Joe Zwirn

## Area & Regional Meetings & Gatherings (cont'd)

### • PLYMOUTH AREA SMALL GROUP

The Plymouth Area group's next meeting is Tuesday October 22. 7:00 PM. Our meetings center around open discussion on almost any topic, mostly related to woodturning. Folks bring a turning, problem, tool, or topic to share.

The usual meeting place is [10501 Belmont Rd, Minnetonka](#). To be added to the contact list, or questions or suggestions, call Steve Mages [952-544-5286](tel:952-544-5286) or email him. [smages@juno.com](mailto:smages@juno.com)



## Area & Regional Meetings & Gatherings (cont'd)

### • SE Metro

The SE Metro sub group is taking the month of September off. The group meets in various locations and types of venues, but frequently meets in Jim Jacobs' shop. The meeting is usually on the Friday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week after the MWA meeting. They generally begin at 10am and include lunch, either at the meeting location or a local restaurant. Some meetings continue after lunch.

The instant gallery is the central highlight but each meeting has a main demonstration or principal discussion point of a technique or particular type of work.

Contact Jim Jacobs at [Woodmanmn@aol.com](mailto:Woodmanmn@aol.com) to be included in the announcements for the SE Metro group

Continued next page





## Area & Regional Meetings & Gatherings (cont'd)

### Lake Johanna Sub Group

The newest sub group, organized by Gordon Fay, meets in an informal setting in Arden Hills at [3355 Lake Johanna Blvd, Arden Hills MN](#) at Dave Carlson's shop, the big white house on the corner of Stowe (enter from Stowe Ave).

Contact Gordon at [fayboy2@comcast.net](mailto:fayboy2@comcast.net) to be added to the announcement list



Gordon Fay, founder of the Lake Johanna Sub Group.

Mark Fay, Gordon Fay, Chad Anderson, Mike Rohrer, Jerry Hanscom and Ken Hallberg attended the September meeting



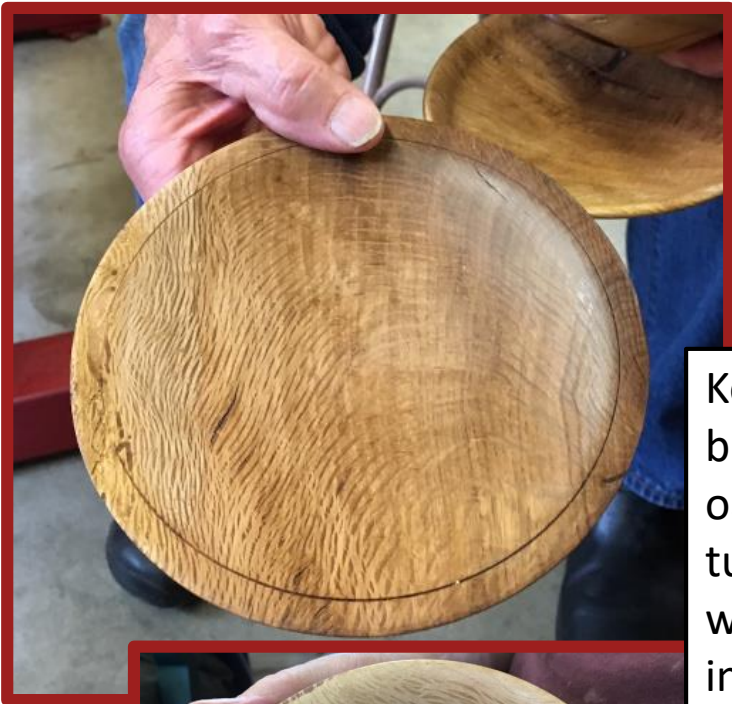
Mark Fay made this exquisite cane for his dad's 95<sup>th</sup> birthday



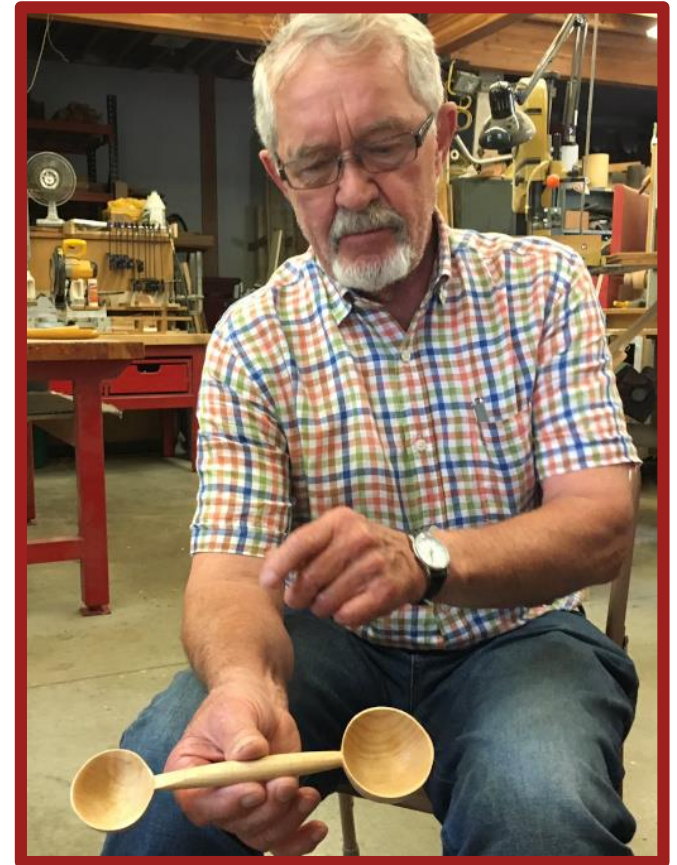
Ken Hallberg & Jerry Hanscom admire Gordon's segmented vessel







Ken Hallberg brought some live oak from Texas and turned these pieces with such interesting grain patterns



Ken described making this maple coffee scoop and how he stayed out of the way of one end while turning the other





Mark Fay brought  
maple and birch bowls



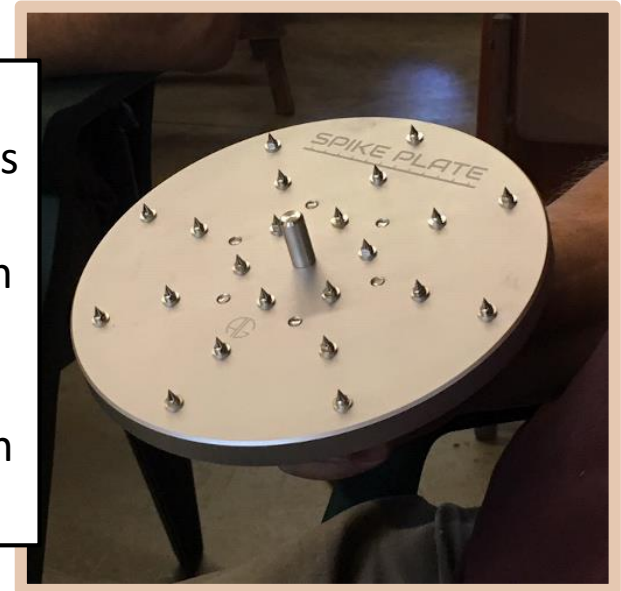
Ken turned a spalted  
hackberry lidded bowl with a  
torquoise "cabochon" in the lid



Ken Hallberg brought a jewelry box he had made for his granddaughter that is made from 2 bowls so that there are upper and lower compartments



Chad Anderson brought a spike disk by Amy Grigg. This is for turning the bottoms of bowls in a production mode in quick succession. The word that came to Chad's mind and everybody's at the meeting on seeing this was "Medieval".



## Wooden Laser Cut Name Tags



Wooden laser cut name tags are available from Bill Breckon. If you would like one the cost is \$4.00. You can contact Bill to order yours by calling him at 651-587-8211 or by email at [bnlbreckon@aol.com](mailto:bnlbreckon@aol.com)



# Lathe & Tool Opportunities



I am presently helping the widow of a lifelong friend (who was a former MWA member & recently died) towards selling his most loved Robust lathe. Sale could also include or sell separately two(2) Vicmarc chucks, one large VM120 & one small VM100. A high quality assortment of approximately 15+ turning tools, mostly Sorby and Henry Taylor HSS is available. Present day replacement cost of the above total is estimated at close to \$7,000 (+/-). Any Interested members may make an offer directly to:

Lee Tourtelotte by phone or email:  
phone - 612-670-1874

## Editor's Notes

- Please contact me with any suggestions for the newsletter
- The Member Challenge is one of the highlights of the meeting and helps encourage all members, from beginners to advanced, to stretch their abilities to the limits. Consider contacting Jeff Luedloff ([jlued@q.com](mailto:jlued@q.com)) to help him with the MC at the monthly meetings.
- LIBRARY – Our video library is outstanding. Nevertheless, it is somewhat overwhelming to approach it cold turkey in the short time before the meeting. An excellent way to use the library is to look at the list of videos on the website before the meeting and make a short list of ones you might want to view. Then at the meeting it is easy to find those alphabetically, take a close look at the synopsis on the cover and make your choice. Having a technique video for an entire month is an excellent way to improve your turning skills.
- Please consider a QUESTION or an ANSWER to *ASK A TURNER* and send me your tips to the feature, *Tips for Turner*

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