

# WOODCHUCK CHATTER

## NEWSLETTER OF THE WOODCHUCK TURNERS OF NORTHERN VERMONT

AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

WOODCHUCKSVT.ORG

April 12, 2023

Volume 20, Issue 4

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Vice President: Karen Drennen  
Secretary: Gary Walz  
Treasurer: Brad Jackson  
Newsletter Editor: Andrew Duling  
Members at Large: Bob Martin, Adam Wager,  
Tom Dunne



Last Meeting: March 15th, 2023  
*Platter Turning with Kirk DeHeer*  
Next Meeting: April 19th, 2023  
*Hands on Platters at CVU*  
After that: May 17th, 2023  
*First Meeting Back at Russ's*

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**April Meeting— Hands on platter turning at CVU, applying what we learned in March to make platters. With 7 Lathes at CVU and a cohort filled with skill and knowledge everyone should come prepared to learn and teach. Meeting April 19th at CVU shop in Hinesburg, Zoom invite to follow.**

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**Puzzler:** Wine and whiskey barrels are made of oak. They impart nuances to the spirit's taste but only white oak can be used to make the barrels, never red oak. Why is this? **Last month's answer page 8**

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**Reminder!** Call for woodturners to exhibit in the *Turning Vermont: a show of wood* being held on June 24 through July 30, 11-5:00PM. Woodturners in the gallery and beyond are invited to add their work to the show.

Objects can be for sale at the discretion of the maker at a rate of 60-40 commission with 60% going to the artist. Items purchased during the show will have to be left on display until the end of the show when they can be picked up by the new owner or shipped if other arrangements have been made.

In conjunction with the show there will also be an on-line silent auction of donated wooden items. The proceeds of the silent auction will be sent to the *World Central Kitchen* to aid Chef José Andrés and his work in Ukraine. Artists in the show are encouraged to donate one item for this worthwhile endeavor. To register please [click here](#). Contact Jim Holzschuh at [Jim@grandisleartworks.com](mailto:Jim@grandisleartworks.com) for more information .

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Russ Fellows: Buy One, Get Two Free

Russ gives us three articles , one about bottle brush, one about heading north, and one about Florida Woodchuck sightings. (p4-5)

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Joe Gaines: Joe shows us some of his recent work and writes a few words about a bowl from a former family farm. (p6)

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Dave Buchholz: Dave tells us about an award winning ash vase he decorated to look like paper birch.

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Damon Hartman: Damon tells us about an award winning sugar maple vase that looks like sugar maple. (p7)

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Misha Pemble-Belkin: Slows his ShopSmith down to stay safe and shows off an impressive bowl. (p7)

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Andy Duling: Ross and Jake save the Day. (P8)

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## Woodchucks Meeting Minutes 15-Mar-2023

Meeting was called to order by President Harvie Porter at 7:05. Meeting was held via Zoom due to a paid presenter. Well over 20 members attended some or all of the session.

Due to the length of the presentation there were no other topics this month.

### Feature Presentation – “Platter Turning with Kirk DeHeer”

Kirk is the owner of “A Cut Above Bowl Co, Inc.” and is an experienced and much sought out instructor. He is the face behind many of Craft Supplies USA [Woodturning 101](#) videos.

Kirk is making a private YouTube video of our session available to all Woodchucks, a link will be sent out.

If you didn't catch his live presentation, it is highly recommended that you watch the video.

A few quick highlights of what we learned:

His primary tool is a ½” bowl gouge.

One of his teaching techniques is to put a red marker line on the bottom of the flute. You should never see the red.

“Red is Dead”

His blank for the demo was a face grain white oak.

He uses \*no\* spindle tools (i.e., skews, spindle gouges, spindle roughing gouges.)

He likes to mount blanks like this on a woodworm screw, and brings a cup point tail stock up to it.

He uses standard tool rest height

Speed: Dia x RPM s/b between 6,000-9,000

Almost always has the handle down for all of his cuts.

He sands the bottom at roughly ½ the speed of the cut.

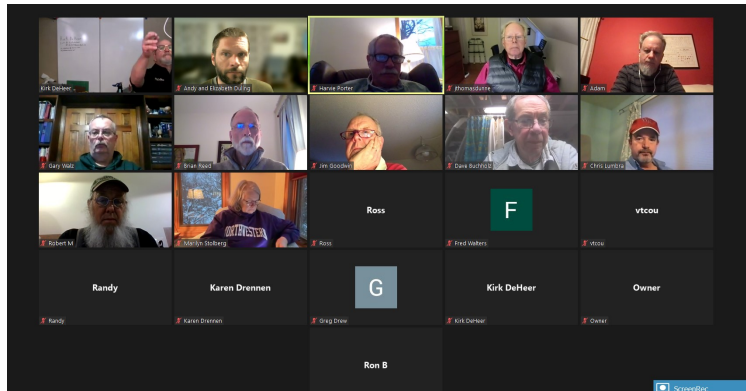
After sanding he uses “Scratch Free” abrasive paste and wax.

[Dr. Kirk's Scratch FREEE Woodturners Polishing Wax](#)

Respectfully Submitted,

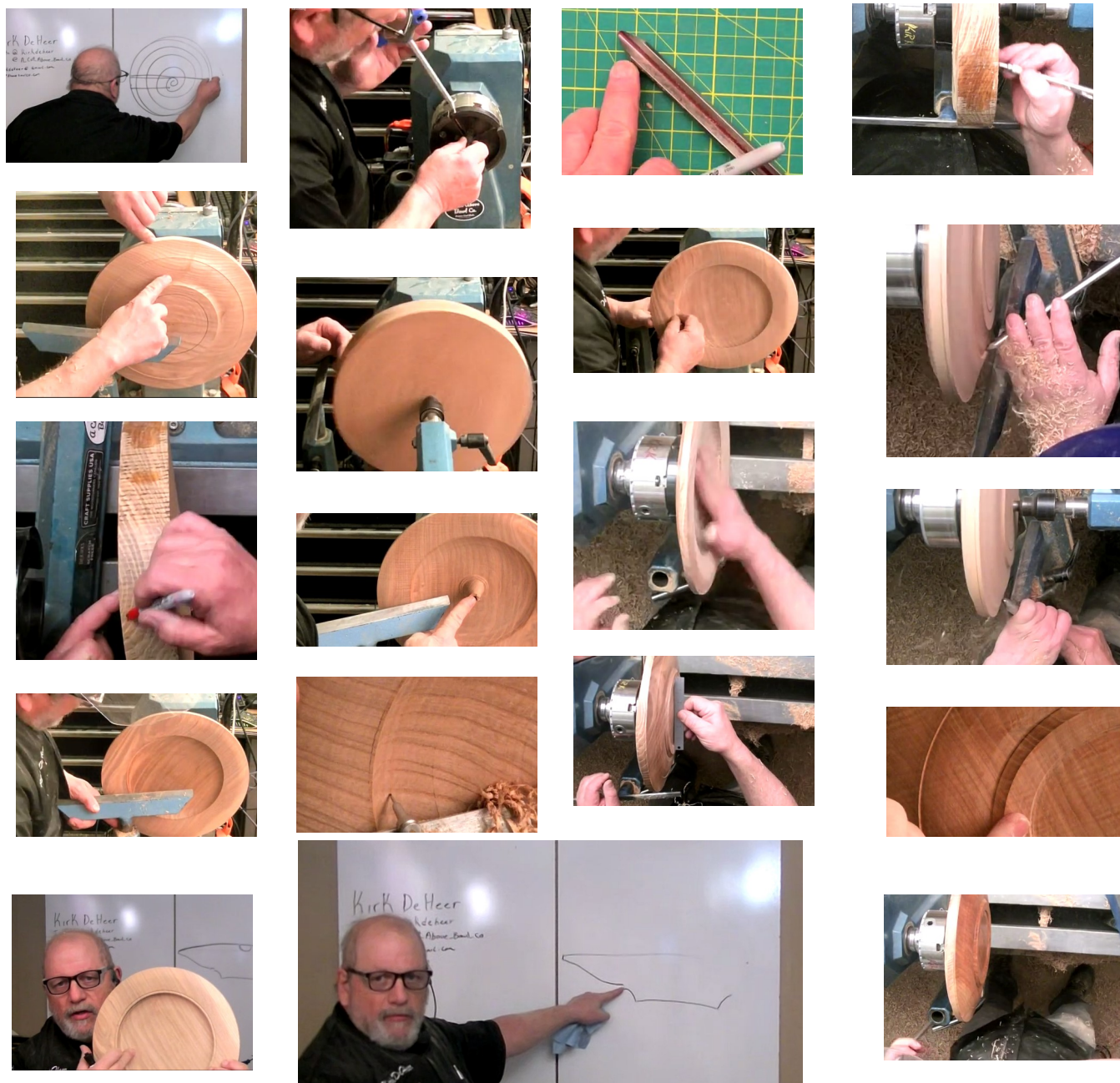
Gary Walz, Secretary

# Pictures from March Zoom meeting



Above, the gang assembled to see Kirk DeHeer's demonstration on platter turning .

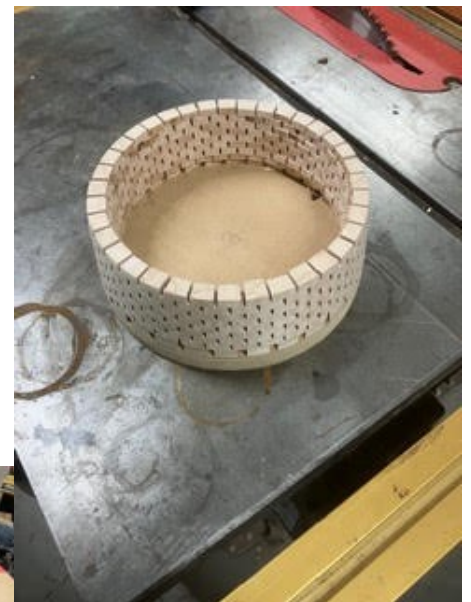
Below, some pictures of Kirk and his platter making process





“FOLLOW UP.....BLUES WITH THE BOTTLE(BRUSH)”

In an earlier issue I talked about our rather comical attempts to tame the wild bottle brush tree (<https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/bottlebrush-bush.html>) we had been given. It has proven to be the wettest and most unstable wood we have ever worked with here, and we have had some dillies! Even after several days in wood chips and a course of microwave drying I was still getting readings on the meter in the high forties! Everything we made out of it twisted, warped, and shrank wildly. I even tried one end-grain vessel, thinking it would behave. My plan was to let it dry and splice in the segmented piece shown below. I turned the vessel, (the two halves are shown in the paper bags shown in over an inch larger than the segmented ring, thinking that would allow for shrinkage? Not even close! The two pieces kept shrinking and warping and shrinking and warping, and after two months in paper they were still over 30% moisture! It was not going to work! Before I threw them in the bonfire (sorry no pix!) they looked like plastic tumblers “baked” in the oven! One final attempt was the one I alluded to in my last article, I would turn a finned vessel hoping it WOULD warp, but not split. This is a technique made famous by British turner, Melvyn Firmager, ([link to his site here](#)). The result of this is shown below, and is what I will demonstrate at the May meeting in Skunk Hollow. I have waxed up several pieces and will bring them back to share with you! Good luck!!



## “MISCELLANEA”

It's nearly time! Soon I will be loading the truck for the trek back north. As always, I have been selectively cutting and waxing some turning stock collected over the winter. In this year's haul I will have, in varying quantities, camphor, rosewood, Java plum, carrot wood, laurel oak, eucalyptus, monkey pod, Chinese elm, Norfolk Pine, and of course the notorious bottle brush!



## “WOODCHUCK SIGHTINGS”

Back in early February the e-mail “rang”, and it was fellow Woodchuck and Vermonter, Brian Reed! He was going to be in Sarasota and wanted to stop by and say hello. We agreed on a day and soon he appeared. I gave him a studio tour and we chitchatted as bit, as woodchucks will do. Since he was under some family constraints, I couldn't entice him into making some chips, but it was great that he made the effort to come by. I always welcome northern guests, whatever May bring them to town! Don't ever hesitate to give a shout if you plan to be near!

A couple days ago I decided to reach out to Ted and Kathy Beebe, fellow Vermonters and loyal Woodchucks, who live about an hour south of Sarasota. We agreed on a time and place to meet and have brunch. I inquired about his club, The Peace River Woodturners( <https://www.peacriverwoodturners.org/> ) and he offered to take us into town to see their setup. They lease a building in a park in the old part of town, appropriately called “Historic Park”. In this one spot they have a gallery, a small workshop, and space for their monthly meetings. It was a very nice layout and Ted kindly gave us a tour and introduced us to other club members. Although the building is available seven days a week, the gallery is only open to the public on Sundays, in conjunction with a farmers market. We were there on a Sunday, and there was a constant stream of visitors. He said that even just being open for sales one day a week, they generated more than enough revenue to pay for the entire space. And, the bonus is that members get to sell their work without making big commitments to producing a quantity of work. A “win-win” arrangement! Thanks very much Ted!

I will be back in Jericho about April 28, and open for the first Sawdust Session on Wednesday May 3. See you soon!





## Updates from Joe Gaines

I've been busy stocking up on gifts. First one is a spalted maple tea light. The second one is cherry tea light. The third one is a maple bud vase with a bark inclusion. The fourth one is another advanced stage, spalted maple tea light with bug holes. The last one is a small piece of maple burl tea light. All were made from downed trees that were headed to friend's wood stoves before I snatched them up. I'll bring them and a couple others to the next club meeting.

The red oak bowl has a back story. It came from a piece of red oak from my dad's farm in Panton VT where I spent the first year of my life. Long story short, I came into possession of the piece from the current owners of the farm. The bowl is not fancy but there's some sentimental historical value to me and my brother. I was too young to remember the farm but my older brother does. So I'm giving it to him.



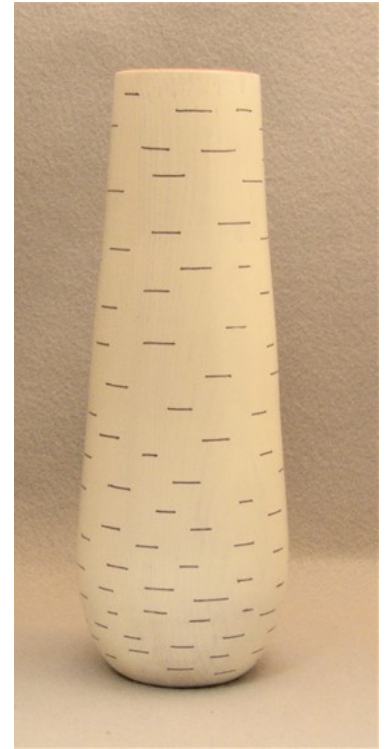
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Damon Hartman won third prize in the Adirondack Artist Guild annual juried art show with this impressive sugar maple vase.

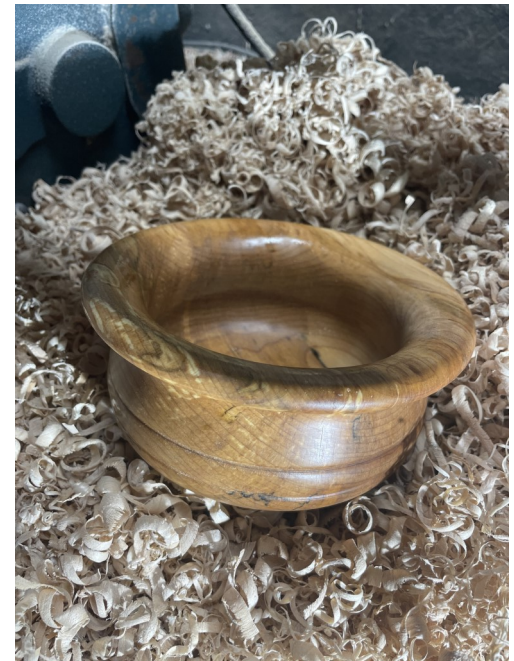


### Update from Dave Buchholz

While I was cross country skiing through a white birch stand this winter, I wondered if I could turn a white birch vase. Since turning white birch with the bark on is very fragile, I needed to come up with an alternate approach. This is my whimsical approach at turning a white birch vase. It is turned from ash and covered with white milk paint. I added the usual black lines with a black sharpie pen. The final finish was several coats of spar varnish. The height is about 8 inches. I displayed this at the gallery at Totally Turning in Saratoga in March. It was awarded an honorable mention prize in the vase category.



Misha Pemble-Belkin updates us that he got his Shop Smith tuned up with an upper 6 inch pulley which took a lot of Dremel work to get set. This slowed it down with the four step lower pulley where he was able to turn this bowl out of a piece of wood he got from out back of the shop at the last Jericho meeting.





## Notes From Ya' boy

Last year in separate conversations Ross Mitchell and Jake Jemas both told me I needed to switch from 2inch sanding discs to 3inch sanding discs. It wasn't that I didn't trust them, I didn't think they were in the pocket of big sandpaper or were paid lobbyists of the Velcro corporation. I believed them, but I was setup with everything I needed for my 2inch sanding discs so I didn't do anything.

Last month I made a large order from The Woodturning Store ([thewoodturningstore.com](http://thewoodturningstore.com)) and received with my purchases a choice of a free giveaways. One of the things on the free list was a 3inch sanding backer. Remembering Jake's and Ross's advice, that is what I selected. Jake and Ross were correct. The 3inch discs are not only faster but seem to result in a better finish as well. I still use 2inch disc when I need a little more precision, but that mean none of my 2 inch discs or backers will go to waste. I think back on all the hours I wasted just using the 2inch disc and I hang my head. I think the moral of this story is when two Woodchucks say something you need to listen.



March Puzzler: Why is Tulip poplar the preferred wood for use in shoring up coal mines shafts?

March Puzzler Answer: Unlike other woods Tulip poplar makes loud popping noises as it comes under stress but well before the timbers actually break. This warning allows the miners to escape before a cave-in occurs.



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## Treasurer's Report

### APRIL 2023 Treasurer's Report

**Bank Balance forward**  
5569.86

#### INCOME

Dues 125.00  
Donation 99.90  
224.90

#### EXPENSES

Insurance 550.00  
Kirk DeHeer demo 350.00  
Zoom Subscription 149.90  
1049.90

**Bank Balance ending** 4744.86  
Cash on Hand 25.00

The Board of Directors of The Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont gratefully acknowledges the payment of dues from the following members for **2023**:

Dale Bergdahl, David Bisbee, Chris Bishop, Robert Bouvier, Dave Buchholz, James Bushey, George Cacchio, Mike Dever, Joe Gaines, Jim Goodwin, Rick Hamilton, Damon Hartman, Linda Hollingdale, Jim Holzschuh, Brad Jackson, Paul Jagielski, Kevin Jenness, Scott Johnson, Luc Lefebvre, Kevin Liddiard, Bob Martin, Russ Michel, Ted Nelson, Harvey Porter, Randy Ramsden, David Scrase, Dave Smith, Edwards Smith Marilyn Stolberg, Adam Wager, Fred Walters, (31)

The Board of Directors of The Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont gratefully acknowledges the payment of dues from the following members for **2024**:  
Harvey Porter (1)

Scott Bennett, Russ Fellows, Ted Fink, Michael Mode, Dick Montague, Nick Rosato, Hav Smith, Army Spahn, and Al Stirt are Honorary Lifetime members (9)

If you have paid your dues for the 2023 year but do not see your name listed above, please contact me at [BradJackson234@gmail.com](mailto:BradJackson234@gmail.com) to correct that error of omission. Dues for 2023 are \$25. Checks should be made out to "WTNV" and sent to: Brad Jackson, 14 Rustic Drive, Essex, VT 05452

Please note: The following privileges are only available to dues-paying members: Video library use, mentoring program, bulk purchase discounts for CA glue and Anchor Seal, and 10% discount on purchases from Klingspor, Penn State Industries, and Rare Woods USA. To ensure your discount, Klingspor requests you login **before** you order. PSI requests you mention the club. Rare Woods USA requests you order using coupon code WOODCHUCKSROCK or mention the club.  
*Reminder: As previously advertised, unless you have paid your annual dues by April 1st your name must be removed from the discount list.*


**Brad Jackson/Treasurer**

## Classifieds

## **Mentors**

*These Woodchucks are able and willing to help other Woodchucks wanting some hands-on instruction.*

Dick Montague: General turning, all aspects plus tool sharpening.  
802-584-3486  
montagueturn@gmail.com  
Groton

Russ Fellows: General, segmented, & multi-axis turning  
802-343-0393  
russfellows@outlook.com  
 @fellowswoodart  
Jericho

Ted Beebe: Segmented work.  
802-849-2436  
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Fletcher

Tom Dunne: Hollow turning, etc.  
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