

# Woodchuck Chatter



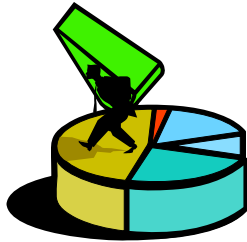
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Volume 4, Issue 10

## Special points of interest:

- Random Shots:
- Woodchuck News
- What's Coming Up

## Meeting of October 18th



This month, **Russ Fel- lows** will demonstrate his methods of produc- ing the stunning seg- mented vessels he makes. He will explore the design and cutting of the segments, plus the assembly of the rings which will be stacked to make a ves- sel.

**Spahn** will show the step-by step method he uses to make a laminated vessel. His current vessels were inspired by a wood worker in Vir- ginia, whose simple, elegant designs **Arny** saw on a trip over the Blue Ridge Parkway. Where **Russ** uses design as the focus of his work, **Arny** concentrates on figured wood lay- ered with contrast- ing colored wood to please the eye.



Following **Russ, Arny**



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## September Meeting—Making Toys



"No man stands taller than he who stoops to help a child"- Anonymous

The focus of this month's meeting was the making of toys for the children's wing of the Ethan Allen Hospital. The Good

Humor cart needs replenish- ment because used toys might spread contagion. Hand made wooden toys seem to be the way woodworkers can help kids through a hospital stay. There are many toys which a turner can make and even more that a turner with other tools can make. **Dick Montague** showed us several traditional toys and demonstrated making a "whimmydiddle" on the lathe.

**Arny** showed how to make a "cup and ball" toy. The discus- sion touched on safety for kids, and **Dick** handed out papers with ideas for toys and what is suitable for various ages.

**Dick**, as usual, was well organized and able to demon- strate on the Woodbury One- way lathe. **Arny** was far less orga- nized and, because the

'Chuck's Nova lathe was out on an assignment, he was—perhaps thankfully—unable to use his Nova chuck & centers for a demonstration of his turning technique.



## Random Shots

### Woodchuck Chatter

### Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont

### Board of Directors

President: Ralph Tursini  
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Woodchuck Chatter will be published monthly. Deadline for submissions is the 7th of the month. Please E-mail all submissions to the Editor in text or Word format. Visuals can be submitted as JPEG or TIFF.



This is a pretty good club. We are sharing skills. We have had two club projects to support others. The Good Humor Cart is one of them. None of us would put out a shingle saying we are toymakers. However, bringing a little cheer to a kids is a good thing, and takes us out of the little box we are comfortable in.

We produced over 2000 Vermont wood pens for our Green Mountain Boys going over to the war. No matter how we feel about what is now an occupation of a foreign country, we are proud of our warriors and support them. Many of the folks who turned the pens had never made a pen before. Some of us had never done anything other than bowls, so we all learned new skills.

We have grown a lot in the last 4 years. At the start, we could have met in a closet and still had room for a lathe. Today, there are 74 on our mailing list. Probably 55 or so come to our meetings during the year. Our average attendance is 22, perhaps because our present quarters are about the right size for 22.

In Olde England, we would be called a guild. We would take on apprentices and some of our master turners would train journeymen. At the end of a few years, we would be a smug bunch of so-and-so's showing off exquisite pieces just barely resembling vessels. We would come up with titles like "Grand Exalted Bark-peeler" or some such. We would have secret techniques which were passed along with ritual and pomp. We would develop some peculiar regalia to preen when we went to gatherings.

Some people thrive on that kind of diet. Most of us Woodchucks are happy to attend a meeting where jeans and ball caps are the uniform of the day and an occasional pun relaxes, not offends, the old goats of the club.

Do you feel lucky that we can all relax and learn at a meeting? How about putting a couple of bucks in the pot and winning an interesting chunk of wood? Did you know that the members' section of the Handbook is there

so you can contact a member and get help solving problems? Turning can be fun, it can be profitable, and it can keep the mind stimulated.

WTNV is the grass roots of the turning movement. It is the face-to-face stuff we do which really builds the skills.

We can benefit from what the American Association of Woodturners disseminates. WTNV recommends that you join AAW for the higher level of knowledge you get. The bi-monthly magazine has photos of work from both famous and talented unknown turners. Articles on technique, projects, and activities are always interesting.

AAW annually publishes a resource directory. The bulk of the book is a listing of the individual members, but there is a lot more in it than that. There's a listing of clubs by state. There's a listing of all the demonstrators registered with AAW. There's a listing of turning resources ranging from the 3M Custom Woodworking department through wood-oriented magazines to tool manufacturers.

I may be preaching to the choir, but we need a little inspiration to learn from time to time. Stay curious, and keep turning.

**Army**

## Woodchuck Sightings

### Humble Bowls

The wood shavings smell like bread dough. They fly off the lathe, covering Ralph Tursini's arms in pale yellow confetti.

Tursini again pushes a long steel chisel into the spinning block of black cherry, inward and down. In response, a circle seems to move outward, like a slow-motion ripple in a pool of wood. He's making a humble bowl.

### What is Russ doing?

One of the things I have been playing around with lately is to try to take advantage of the larger capacity of my new lathe, and am learning about the very changed dynamics in turning bigger pieces! The one on the left in the picture is 18" by 8" deep, mahogany, and is doing way more chattering than I have experienced before. I have it down to about 3/8" inch sidewall and that is probably too

thin for a piece this size. The other one is ash, 16" by 4 1/2" and I was able to keep enough control of it to get it completed. I like the challenge though, and am seeing better why bigger dimensions usually translates into bigger \$\$\$! It should!

Am also continuing to make a lot of my "stock" segmented pieces, which are selling quite well.

**Russ**





# Alan Lacer Comes To Vermont

Before we even got word out about the event, someone from North Ryegate contacted me and asked if she could participate. What a nice surprise and unintentional result. I met Janet Collins Friday at the demonstration and found out that she is an accomplished furniture maker and teaches at the prestigious North Bennet Street School in Boston. You can see a gallery of work at her website <http://www.jacwoodworking.com> It's a pleasure to have Janet join us and I hope she can find the time to participate in our future activities and broaden our pool of experience and talent.

After returning home from my shop, hav-

the form of some new and interesting work emerging at the regular meetings' show and tell.



Toby Fulwiler and Bob Martin look on as Alan shows his karate chop, or was that about skew clearance angles...

night at his home in Fairfield. Alan was fed well from what I understand. Greg Drew, who couldn't make it for either days' events, drove over to deliver an extra lathe for the workshop. Arny put together a great email announcement and organized sign up for Saturdays workshop. Thank you all for volunteering your time. It was a big help.



Alan grinding the initial shape into the hook tool blank on a homemade grinding disk - yet another application for the lathe.



Everyone looks on as Alan warms up with some skew work.

Alan is a great teacher. It was easy to be impressed with his thorough understanding of the associated fields that constitute woodturning, from wood properties to the ancient history of the practice, to tool making and theory. More impressive was the seeming ease with which he conveyed this while holding everyone's attention throughout (and even after) the presentation. I am sure others were armed with new ideas and inspiration as a result. I sure was.

ing helped Alan Lacer pack up his tools and get on the road, my thoughts about the workshop crystallized a bit. I realized what a great experience it was on many levels. I expect that what was taken from the workshop by those who attended will quickly begin to ripple out in

Member demonstrations and presentations are very important for the vitality of the club but let's not forget that relying on this exclusively is a quick road to burn-out, for both demonstrators and audience. As a club I think it is important to invite professional demonstrators and teachers into our fold and to fairly compensate them. What better investment is there - we directly support their contributions to the field of woodturning and achieve our purpose as an educational organization. I expect growth (in numbers but more importantly quality) would naturally result.



Things got hotter when Alan brought out the canned propane. The night air cooled things down a bit.



Alan makes a shoulder cut on a tenon for chucking the box blank

I hope that the folks who made tools during the workshop can plow this experience back under by organizing a similar workshop for club members who like me could not attend. I would be willing to provide the space again. I thought that practical tool making was a refreshing component of the event.

Many club members made this successful. Please thank Russ Fellows, for helping me clean out my shop and set up in preparation for the group. He then donated an abundant spread of great food and drink. Toby Fulwiler, a new member who can't make most monthly meetings, came through by putting Alan up for the



-Ralph Tursini

# Secretary's Report, September Meeting



### Old news:

Updated member list is available from Arny.  
Ted still has club tee shirts available.  
Hartville Tool is now offering a 20% for members signed up and 15% for the following year.

### New:

Fall board meeting will be at Ted Fink's, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30. All members are welcome please bring a dish to share.



David Scrase- maple burl bowl

pital were presented by Dick Montague & Arny Spahn.

### Show & tell:

- Joe Laferriere- butternut bowl
- David Scrase- maple burl bowl
- Hav Smith- pine burl & maple burl bowl



Hav Smith—maple burl bowl



Joe Laferriere- butternut bowl

Issa, from the African relocation camp will be offering his mahogany carvings at the Stowe Craft Fair at Top Notch field in Stowe, October 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup>. Scott showed us Issa's work and explained about his connection to Waterbury Woodworks at our September meeting.

### Misc. :

nominations for board members are:

- Russ Fellows- President.
- Joe Laferriere- vice president.
- Randy Ramsden- secretary.
- Ted Fink- treasurer.
- Joe Barry- member at large.
- Arny Spahn- member at large.

*(Our Bylaws permit one member at large)*

Elections will be held at the October meeting

*Please note, you must be a member of the AAW to run for the board*



Hav Smith— Pine burl vessel

Segmented demo by Russ & Arny will be the topic for the October 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.  
Annual Totally Turning symposium will be held October 13<sup>th</sup> & 14 in Albany, NY.

An auction was held to purchase cherry burls collected by Bob Martin. We raised about \$60.  
Demos of various toys for the Children's Hos-



Chairing the meeting.



Turning the notches on a stick



Our auctioneer



Unloading the cherry burls.



Checking out the triple whimmydiddle





More than likely something you make out of wood will have its intended use bringing it into contact with food. You will then be faced with the decision of what finish to apply to your scoop, bowl, plate, cutting board or utensil.

We have all heard that pretty much any finish is safe as long as it is cured but some finishes are better choices than others. An excellent article by Jonathan Binzen in Fine Woodworking (1998 vol. 129, pp 67 - 69) covers this topic well. This is a summary of that article.

He divides all finishes into 2 categories: film-forming like polyurethane and penetrating such as oils. He makes the case for avoiding film finishes whenever choosing a finish for a cutting or chopping surface because these films will be sliced through and water will get underneath them.

So this leaves penetrating finishes which he also divides into two groups: unmixed oils (pure Tung oil, raw linseed oil, mineral and cooking oils such as pure walnut oil) and mixed oils such as boiled linseed and a variety of oil-varnish mixtures sold as teak oil, Tung oil finish and Danish oil. These mixed oils are synthesized blends of oils, resins and driers. These mixed oils offer better protection against water and staining. These are undoubtedly safe once cured though none other than Behlen's Salad Bowl Finish has been tested to the satisfaction of the FDA.

Unmixed oils are for the most part safe, being entirely edible, but these often do not dry and provide very little moisture protection. They often need frequent reapplication Using pure Tung oil which is extracted from the china wood tree, turns into a long term project because it is difficult to apply, needs several coats and it takes weeks to cure. It does provide the best water resistance among the unmixed oils however.

Mineral oil, though derived from petroleum, is colorless, odorless and tasteless. It is also inert and is sold through pharmacies as a laxative. It will not dry, needs frequent reapplication and has little water resistance. It can be blended with beeswax by melting the wax in heated mineral oil to form a very nice finish. (See below)

Walnut oil, pressed from the nuts of walnut trees, is the best of the cooking oils to use as a finish because, unlike the others, it does dry by naturally polymerizing. This process also makes it inert so it does not go rancid. (This is a concern with many of the other cooking oils. Rancidity is more likely to occur in the unsaturated oils. We tend not to detect rancidity in these unsaturated vegetable oils compared to rancidity in saturated oils because they tend not to produce as strong an odor./TJF)

Beeswax which is solid at room temperature, is a pleasant smelling natural substance that is usually blended with oils to make it easier to apply.

Carnauba wax is a product of the Brazilian palm tree. It is harder than beeswax and much more water resistant. It too is often an additive in many finishes.

Shellac comes to us from the lac bug and is harvested in India. Super blond shellac (dewaxed) in flake form is most water resistant. This is a film forming finish and any alcohol coming into contact with it will dissolve it.

Then there is always the option of leaving your woodenware unfinished and allowing it to develop its own patina with use over time.

Recipe for a food safe finish from Jim and Jean Lakiotes of WV

This finish is a mixture of beeswax and mineral oil. To make it, warm mineral oil in a pan over low heat or use a double boiler to minimize any fire hazard. Melt in a chunk of beeswax equal to about 1/5th to 1/6th the volume of the mineral oil. As the wax begins to dissolve, stir it frequently. When the mixture is fully blended, pour it into a jar and allow it to cool and solidify.

To apply the finish wipe it on the wood liberally, allow to set for a few minutes then wipe off the excess. If you prefer to apply it as a liquid simply heat it up beforehand. Similar proprietary blends are available in woodturning catalogs.

## In House Demos:

- November 15.  
Turn in toys.  
Holiday cheer.
- December.  
No meeting.
- January 17.  
Round table on  
skills, techniques.
- February 21. Hook  
tools. A follow-up to  
Al Lacer's  
presentation.
- March 20.  
End grain turning.  
Covered boxes.
- April 9.  
Spring Board  
meeting.
- April 17.  
Thread chasing.  
Threaded lids. Craig  
Hall.
- May 15.  
Green bowl turning.  
Ralph Tursini.
- June 19.  
Drying green wood.
- July 17.  
Open.
- August 21.  
Picnic meeting.

## Treasurer's report

Treasurer's Report	Alan Lacer Hook Tool	30	
Balance Forward	\$2624.62	Al Stirt picnic platter	20
<b>Income:</b>		<b>Expenses:</b>	
Dues	60	Picnic Food	100
Raffle	34	Cherry burls #46	80
T-shirt sales	15	Alan Lacer class/demo	450
Live auction of Cherry burls	150	Balance Forward	\$2543.62
Alan Lacer hook tool demo	200		
Silent Auction			
Mahogany Block	40		



New member:  
Please welcome  
Doug DeWitt  
21 Munsill Ave.  
Bristol, VT 05443  
802 453 4263  
[DWit@MAC.com](mailto:DWit@MAC.com)

## October Board Meeting



### Woodchuck Mentors

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

*Craig Hall: Bowls, spindles, & hollow forms.  
802-644-5344  
craighall@hotmail.com*

*Dick Montague: General turning, all aspects plus tool sharpening.  
802-584-3486  
Montagueturn@hotmail.com*

*Ralph Tursini: Spindles & bowls, vacuum chucking.  
802-899-6863  
Tursini@pshift.com*

*Ted Fink: Bowls, spindles, & boxes.  
802-985-2923  
jantedefink@gmail.com*

*Russ Fellows: Segmented vessels.  
802-899-3059  
skunkmen@together.net*

lone Member At Large position.

A Bylaws Committee has been formed consisting of Russ Fellows, Ralph Tursini, and Arny Spahn. They will look at several areas which could be altered to make a better club. The current Bylaws require 6 weeks notice of change and voting at the Annual Meeting. We should have the Bylaws fine-tuned by next year in time for the Annual Meeting.

Since November is our last meeting of the year, the Board decided to make that meeting sort of a party in celebration of all the toys our members will bring to the event for the Good Humor Cart. We plan on soft drinks, snacks, and a cake. Bring your toy gifts, your Show & Tell items, and a raffle item if you wish.

Bill Rowley is moving away, apparently part time, so the Board would like a member who attends regularly to take over management of the video library. Bill has done a great job getting the system organized and we thank him for the hard work.

Meanwhile, we are working to get all the videos transferred to DVD so the originals can be stored safely away. Skip Parker is doing VHS- To DVD transfer as he can, and Arny is doing DVD-DVD transfer. Originals are going

for safekeeping to Dick Montague's house.

Ted has been given permission to buy the 3-disc set from this year's AAW symposium.

Here is the calendar for the coming months. Dates and subjects are subject to change. Any one wishing the chance to teach the group will be welcome.

- **November 15.** Turn in toys. Holiday cheer.
- **December** No meeting.
- **January 17.** Round table on skills, techniques.
- **February 21.** Hook tools. A follow-up to Al Lacer's presentation.
- **March 20.** End grain turning. Covered boxes.
- **April 9.** Spring Board meeting.
- **April 17.** Thread chasing. Threaded lids. Craig Hall.
- **May 15.** Green bowl turning. Ralph Tursini.
- **June 19.** Drying green wood.
- **July 17.** Open.
- **August 21.** Picnic meeting.

This is the unofficial report of the October 10 Board meeting at Ted & Jan Fink's home in Shelburne. Accurate minutes were taken by Craig Hall; this "Chatter" could not wait for the official report.

First item: Our host, Scott Bennett, has decided to close shop at Woodbury about the first of the year. We need to find a new meeting place. Ted Fink has made some initial contacts with the Shelburne Farm museum and the Shelburne Art Center. We will have to accommodate our meeting to the host facility. The Board discussed storage for Woodchuck property and have tentatively decided on several sites.

At the meeting, we confirmed that we have at least one candidate for each chair, and discussed expanding the Board to include more than one Member At Large. The two reasons are that our club has tripled in size in 4 years, and we suddenly have more than one candidate for the

## Policy on AAW Liability Insurance

Members of WTNV who are giving public demonstrations are covered by the AAW-sponsored liability policy under the following conditions:

You must be a member of

AAW and WTNV.

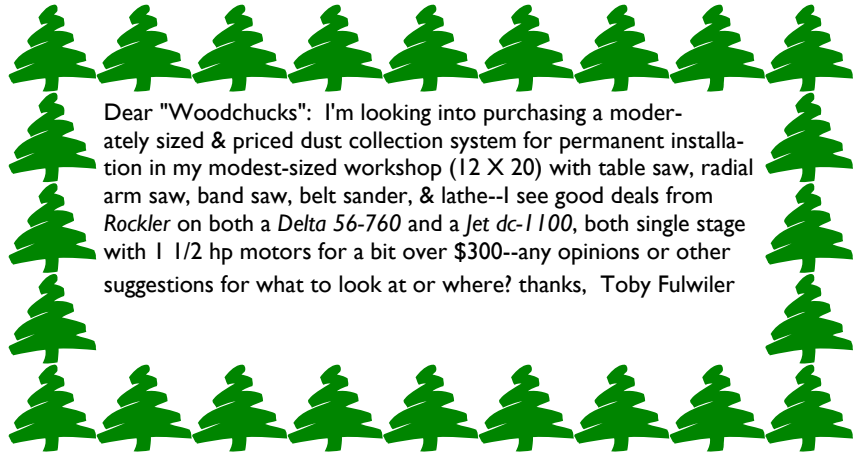
The event must be "sanctioned" by WTNV. That is, you must notify the Treasurer, who will provide a copy of the cover sheet for the policy. You

must also notify the editor of Chatter so you can be listed in Future Woodchuck Sightings.

The demonstration must have wood turning as the main subject.

Woodchuck Turners of  
Northern Vermont  
An associated chapter  
of  
American Association of  
Woodturners

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Dear "Woodchucks": I'm looking into purchasing a moderately sized & priced dust collection system for permanent installation in my modest-sized workshop (12 X 20) with table saw, radial arm saw, band saw, belt sander, & lathe--I see good deals from Rockler on both a *Delta 56-760* and a *Jet dc-1100*, both single stage with 1 1/2 hp motors for a bit over \$300--any opinions or other suggestions for what to look at or where? thanks, Toby Fulwiler

## Help Wanted

### Candidates for Woodchuck Board.

Enthusiasm for turning and desire to help lead turners to new heights a must.

Will train on the job if necessary.

President Ralph Tursini has expressed a desire to retire from presidency on top of his game. All other Board positions are open for nominations. Nominations open with the September meeting; elections in October.

## Policy On Borrowing The Club Lathe and Tent

This is the policy which was formulated at the October 2004 Board meeting. It was first printed in the October 2004 Woodchuck Chatter.

The primary goal in buying these tools is to have good equipment available so we can demonstrate in public, thereby attracting new members and recruiting would-be turners.

All members in good standing (paid up dues) are eligible to bor-

row the equipment primarily for demonstration purposes. We may borrow the equipment for ONE WEEK at a time. The Treasurer is responsible for knowing where the equipment is at any time; therefore the borrower is responsible to sign the equipment out—by phone or in person— and back in.

The lathe and its parts are a unit. Don't ask to borrow only the chuck or other parts.

The borrower is responsible for transporting the equipment to and from its storage location. The

borrower is responsible for returning the equipment in excellent condition with all its parts intact.

The borrower is responsible for any liability rising from the use of the equipment.

Only club members may operate our lathe to avoid litigation by untrained turners.

The Chapter has first dibs on all equipment so that we can show our stuff at public events.