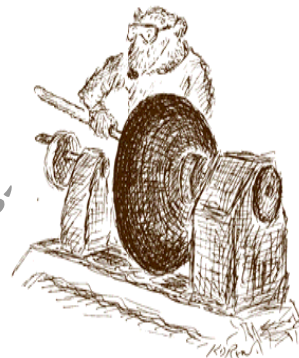


# WOODCHUCK CHATTER



February 10, 2008

Volume 5, Issue 2

## THE NEWSLETTER OF WOODCHUCK TURNERS OF NORTHERN VERMONT

An Affiliate of American Association of Woodturners

[WWW.WOODCHUCKSVT.org](http://WWW.WOODCHUCKSVT.org)

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### Next Meeting: February 21, 2008

The February 21 2008 meeting will take place on the **3d Thursday of the month, the 21st**, at our new location, The Shelburne Art Center woodshop. Starting time is the same, 7 PM.

Directions: From the 4 corners light at the center of Shelburne village, Proceed about 250 feet west on Harbor Rd. Immediately before the RR tracks on the right is the Shelburne Art Center studios and workshops. The wood shop is the one farthest from the road. Parking is to the left just before the RR tracks in the

"SHELBURNE STATION".

Our topic this month is a follow-up of the **Alan Lacer** demo on making/using a hook tool PLUS hollow turning with a variety of weapons. The cast of characters MAY include Randy Ramsden, Bill Walsh, Craig Hall, Ralph Tursini and—who knows? Perhaps The Unknown Bodger.



### Welcome to our newest members:

Tom Morley 47 Sandy Lane Burlington, VT 05408

[Tommyj1949@yahoo.com](mailto:Tommyj1949@yahoo.com) 802 363 0240 website: [www.toms\\_handiwork.com](http://www.toms_handiwork.com)

Russ Barnes 57 Cloverdale Rd. Underhill, VT 05489

[russ@mbfbiouse.enle.com](mailto:russ@mbfbiouse.enle.com) 802 858 0036

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Jonah Bourney 425 Long Branch Circle Morrisville, VT 05661

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Sophia Noceti 123 Baxter St. Downstairs Rutland, VT 05701

[snoceti@hotmail.com](mailto:snoceti@hotmail.com) 802 775 2696 Website: [www.craftsbysophia.com](http://www.craftsbysophia.com)

## Random Shots

### Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont

#### Board of Directors

President: Russ Fellows  
24 John Davis Drive  
Jericho, VT 05465  
802-899-3059  
skunkmen@together.net

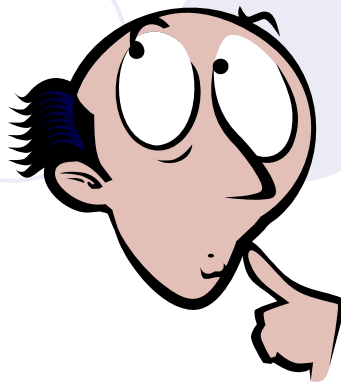
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467 Galvin Hill  
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802-425-3434  
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jantedfink@gmail.com

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1626 Hebard Hill Rd.  
Randolph, VT 05060  
802-728-4799  
apspahn@comcast.net

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.



I read an article somewhere last week which said that users and growers of wood should engage in the process of certification. That way your customers would know that you use and promote sustainable forestry. You would be able, they say, to justify higher charges for your work. Maybe someday most people will come to value the green

movement. Right now I see a mania for getting whatever at the lowest possible price. I see some folks, but not all, looking past the price tag for goods. Photographers are in price competition. Car dealers are forever advertising specials or holiday sales. And watch the furniture store ads.

Some lines of goods advertise quality or "value". Some of these offers are for pricey goods and the message is that it costs just a little more to get the value in "our" product.

Today, "green" is moving to the top in sales pitches. I don't think all consumers are ready to pay the price of "green".

Here's a novel thought. Take a look for people selling wooden goods who advertise certification. Are there any you are competing with, or are you thinking of be-

coming certified? Suppose, instead of raising your prices when you are certified, you advertised certification, explain what it means, and lowered your prices slightly? One of several things might happen. You might drive the non certified wood-wasters out of business. Or, perhaps they might get religion, end their wasteful ways, and start using certified sustainable timber. Then again, if you haven't figured your margin correctly, YOU might end broke and out of business.

I like fancy wood, and I'm not sure that my imported stuff has the stamp of sustainability. I'll do some research. I buy from only a few sources, so it won't be hard to check. Meanwhile, do good work & cut safely.

Arny

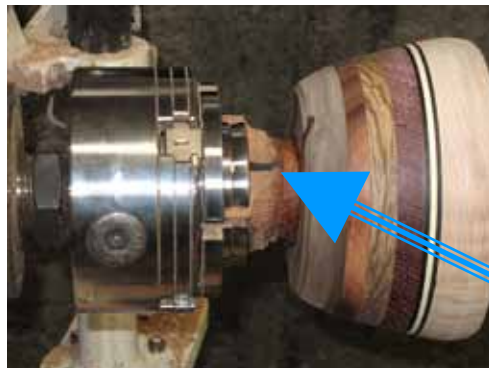
## From the Chairman of The Board

Greetings fellow "Woodchucks"! I am sorry that, due to urgent Family matters, I was unable to be with you at the January meeting. Reports have it that it was a lively and interactive gathering and there were many new members present! That is great! I am glad that the "Woodchuck" message is spreading and our circle is growing. That is what a club like ours is all about. I want to thank my colleagues on the board for pitching in in my absence and I look forward to seeing everyone again on the 21st of this month!

Russ Fellows



## Tips From The Wise Woodchuck



On occasion, I prepare to turn a series of vessels for a long session in the shop. I use a (roughly) 2"x2" hardwood stick which I cut into 2" blocks. I glue up each workpiece to a block, carefully centered, usually using the lathe, scroll

chuck, and tailstock. This method keeps pressure on the glue joint. As I bring the work pieces back to the lathe, I mark the mounting block with a broad-tipped Sharpy on the side corresponding to the #1 jaw on the scroll chuck. That way, if I have to change work pieces, I can get them back in the chuck exactly as they were, avoiding wobble when I turn the lathe back on.

Tip #2: When you get a catch which doesn't destroy your work, look at it as "an opportunity for creative design".

Arny Spahn





AM – bowl with big hole in it



Sumac bowls from a large sumac tree

## WTNV

Meeting Minutes: January 24, 2008

Location: Shelburne Art Center

Joe Laferriere presiding

Joe Powers is the resident woodworker for the Shelburne Art Center – thanks Joe.

## Old Business

Insurance – reminder as an AAW member there are some insurance benefits. For more info check the AAW web site

Scott Bennett (Woodbury's) is going to have a sale. Scott will be contacting folks with work in his retail shop to see if they would be interested in participating.

## Mentoring:

Bill Walsh will mentor on sharpening

## Dues –

Reminder that 2008 dues are now due. Still a bargain @ \$20.

## Show & Tell:

The following folks presented in order:



Bill Walsh—Laser measuring system



Craig Hall—Re-ground scraper



Table legs turned in part with square chisel



Joe for Russ:

Wolverine gouge holder

He also showed the results of turning @ 2



David Scrase—Catalpa Bowl – native species but not common

Woodchuck Chatter



Bob Martin  
Knobs made w/jig on lathe bed



Spindle Tap from Lee Valley : p/n 44J233.30. 1"X8, 17.95 other sizes \$26.95



Randy—Bowl with missing chunk – please remember to have and use safety equipment

Arny

Story about a large wooden hand wheel – Know your lathe speed before you turn it on. Don't use a speed too fast for the diameter of the hand wheel or the work piece.



Ted Fink—2" wide sanding rolls kept next to lathe; Tear off in 5" pieces and Write grit with lumber crayon on back.



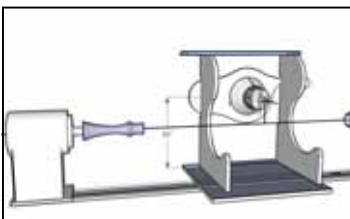
Craig Hall—Simple jig to hold spindle pattern



Ralph Tursini  
Turning w/ routed flutes . Jig from Fine Woodworking magazine "80's"



Ted—Heavy scraper with long handle; Roughened tool handles – not smooth; aids with grip / less fatigue when used for long periods of time and Jig to cut block from bottom of bowl



"Sketch up" software – from Google.com



Ed Kentish—First bowl & home made sanding attachment for power sanding

Kevlar glove w/nubs – Lee Valley Supply, p/n 67K80.3; \$18.50 per pair.



Greg—Black Walnut bowl – single turned



Bill Walsh—Tool rest with capture devices



Bob Bouvier  
Piece of Oak tapped to thread on to lathe spindle – 1" x 8 TPI

Joe L—Has a possible source of yard Walnut from Burlington. He's willing to share.

(SHARPENING -- some fine points)

In the last chatter I talked about understanding what is behind the many “rules” offered to our turning community. Other than being safe for you, others, tools & equipment, the project, and the material, there are few hard and fast rules for all circumstances.

Key to your turning process is control. The more you have the more you can artistically, precisely, and efficiently achieve desired results. Even being safe gives you better control. It’s hard to have control with a mangled hand. **The rule** should be: do what gives you more control. The details will change with experience and skill. For example, while cutting a curve, it will not be necessary to talk yourself through the balanced motion of body and tool once it becomes habit. Tool rest height, its distance from your work, and its condition were discussed. Control comes from good *habits of mind*. For example, with the lathe off you automatically run your finger tips over the tool rest to check for nicks or roughness. A related habit is to touch any part of the tool that touches the rest. All sharp edges and corners must be smooth and polished so the tool glides along the rest. Modern tool steels were designed to cut metal and their manufacturing scratches and corners will cut your rest.

Another condition that contributes to control and surface quality is tool sharpness and sharpening angle. A sharper tool with a smaller angle will tear out fewer below surface fibers and use less effort to start and move along the cut. This means less sanding and more effort available to control the cut. The related habit of mind would be checking the qualities of the edge each time you pick up a tool and often while using it. With practice and awareness you will know from the way it cuts, feels and sounds when to touch up the edge.

Now to some “fine points” about that edge: A good rule of thumb (not a hard and fast rule for all cases) is to make the included angle of the cutting wedge



between 25 and 30°. The cutting edge is where the two surfaces of the wedge come together to separate the material. The included angle is the angle between these two surfaces. Smaller angles give a cleaner cut (less tear out of fibers) but will dull faster. Larger angles will have a stronger edge but will produce more subsurface damage. Larger angles also require more effort to start and continue the cut requiring a heavier hand on the tool resulting in less control. Think about the likely result of being heavy-handed when starting the delicate cut blending the straight section of a leg into a curve or starting the last cut into the bowl at exactly the right spot on the rim. Least you start thinking about a single angle for all tools, remember, like the design of a canoe, most choices improve some performance and reduce others. A couple of factors when turning are hardness and natural abrasiveness of your wood. Materials like brass and some plastics cut better with special angles

Some of you may be thinking you are sure a noted author or a turner you know (perhaps me) said bowl gouges may need an included angle of 70° or more. True enough. The large angle is required to enable the tool to negotiate the curve in the bottom of a bowl without the bevel losing contact and at the same time prevent the tool shaft from contacting the rim. With a concave bevel, the cutting edge and the heel of that bevel must both touch the surface as it moves along the concave surface inside the bowl. Try this motion with your bowl gouge and bowls or cups with a variety of inside curves to see what angle is required to meet the above conditions. Remember the smaller the included angle, the higher the surface quality. Does this mean you need several gouges ground to

different angles? This perhaps depends on your budget and/or tolerance for sanding. Heavy power sanding to remove subsurface damage may cost you control of the fine curve you worked so hard to get just right with the cutting tool. Ring tools and hook tools and some interesting variations such as Canadian Andre Martel’s hook tool solve some of the need for large angles. (More about these in the future if there is an interest.)

A tool with a very small included angle can be dull and one with a large angle can be sharp. Sharp means both sides coming together with a very small width of edge. A dull edge is one with both sides coming together at a rounded edge from wear, a flattened edge from touching something hard or the ragged and rough edge from grinding being torn and bent over from contact with the work. A dull edge produces the same effect as a large angle. It does more subsurface damage and requires more pressure on the tool to cut. This results in loss of control. If you must or want to have a large included angle, the sharper it is the better it will cut.

To give “sharpness” another dimension, consider this: A sharp edge could be wavy or notched, but to get a smooth surface the edge must be smooth. Think about trying to carve a smooth surface with a serrated knife. If you look at your new gouge, or old one you have not honed, you will see many fine scratches or grooves in the flute from grinding or milling. As each of these reaches the cutting edge it makes a small notch. If not removed at the cutting edge they make your tool effectively serrated. If the tool is not honed after grinding then the scratches and grooves from grinding double the effect. Not honing also leaves a burr that you can see and feel. This tangle of shredded metal will be torn and bent over the edge as soon as you touch it to the turning. It will cut better than a dull tool. However, a few seconds of honing and if you want a burr, a quick pass across

(Continued on page 7)

## In House Demos:

- 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.

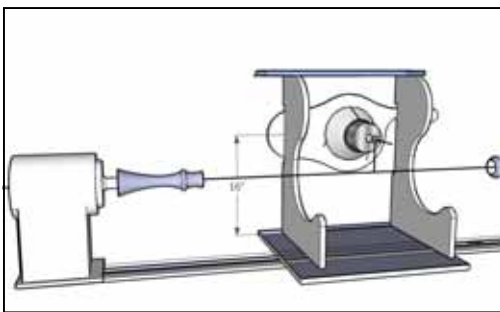


Finished black walnut ceremonial mace with fluting along the shaft at the left of the photo.

### Fluting and reeding on the lathe.

At the last monthly meeting I brought in a turned and fluted shaft for a ceremonial mace I was recently commissioned to make. I fluted the shaft with a router jig I built based on a design I had seen about five years ago in an even older Fine Woodworking article. What interested me most about this jig in the article is that it allows a flute or reed to be cut along a curved profile. With the lathe spindle fixed in position the jig is pushed along the lathe bed and the router's cutter is guided by a bearing which rides on the turning. This allows fluting and reeding of forms such as balusters and tapers. For this mace, the design called for straight flutes and the jig performed well. The real test will be to use it along a profile. Most exciting for me are the possibilities it presents for less regulated effects like experimenting with a variety of cutters on rotating work pieces. I hope to get to this when I have more time available. In the next part I will discuss the design process and a new tool I found to be invaluable.

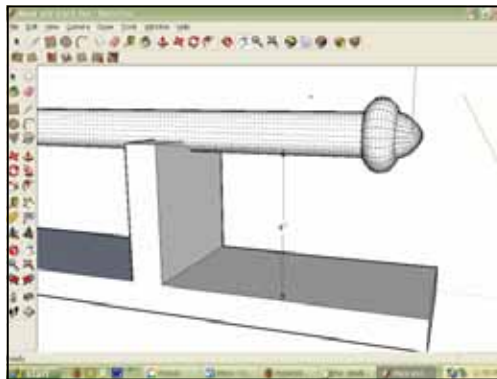
### Designing the Jig with SketchUp



2-D example of 3-D digital model of the fluting jig produced using Google's SketchUp.

In the previous part, I introduced a fluting jig which was built for making a ceremonial mace. It was based on a design I saw a while back in a Fine

Woodworking article. Scrutinizing the photos from the article gave me enough information to build the jig but I needed to scale it up to fit a larger lathe and router. I also wanted to work out the fit of the pivoting and sliding parts and alignment of the cutters before making any shavings. I did this by making a model using Google's software called SketchUp. This is a very powerful, free, and addictive design tool that allows you to create 3 dimensional digital models at any scale and level of detail. If you are fairly comfortable with computers, are willing to take time to learn, and have access to a high speed web connection for the download I would highly recommend checking this out. The learning curve on this is a fraction of professional software and it is infinitely less expensive. I found the online video and interactive tutorials and were most helpful to get started. I spent about eight hours learning and playing with it and was able to model things like my house fairly proficiently and could do so with as



A screen capture of SketchUp which shows the software's interface and a detail of the mace and stand's end.

little or as much detail as I cared to apply.

Of specific interest to turners is what SketchUp calls the "lathe" tool. This allows you to take a two dimensional shape like a turning's profile and rotate it around an axis to make it 3-D. One limit with the program, especially for woodturners is that the curve making tool only allows for fixed radius curves - no parabolic or catenary type shapes without going through an elaborate process. Freehand curves are possible but when attempted with a mouse, mine resembled kindergarten drawings!

For the software and tutorials do a web search or find the direct url on my website's link page <http://www.vermontwoodturning.com> You'll also find other links here that might be of interest.

**Ralph Tursini**

### Classifieds:

I operate a cabinet shop in Charlotte and have a General 260 (with 20" riser) for sale. It is in good condition, and I would like \$2,000.

Perhaps this might be of interest to one of the Woodchucks.

Thanks,  
Rich Steele  
(802)425-5665

[rsbrass@gmavt.net](mailto:rsbrass@gmavt.net)

## Lessons From The Sharpening Bench continued

Volume 5, Issue 2

(Continued from page 5)

the burnisher will produce a smoother, sharper, and stronger edge or burr that will resist dulling longer and make a cleaner cut than the one left from the grinder.

You may want to consider the use of a burr on a cutting tool. Although it will scrape a shaving, the smaller included angle gives less support to the burr. When cutting using bevel support the burr reduces surface quality and control.

As with most issues there is more than one side. Time is money. The seconds to hone or to pick up a different tool add up day after day over the year. But if

this is the reason not to work with a sharp tool it would be valuable to have someone working daily make an accurate comparison of the time saved from honing to the time saved from the tool staying sharp longer and not having to sand as much. Perhaps some of you with good research skills could set up a valid comparison. Personally I get more pleasure and feel my cuts are more precise when using a more refined edge, but if your eating depends on volume, you will eat better if your total project time is less.

Again our thanks to Ted Fink for starting this section and to Arny Spahn for his time and talent producing "Chatter".

If you have questions, comments, quotes, or other points of view on the above or any turning topic, please give me a call or send an e-mail. It is easy to write volumes about turning, but more satisfying to cover the particular issues and topics you find most intriguing or useful. E-mail may be the best way to get your ideas to me for now, but if you find life more sane without it, leave a message on the phone.

Richard Montague

802-584-3486

[montagueturn@hotmail.com](mailto:montagueturn@hotmail.com)

"The reward of a thing well done is to have done it." –Ralph Waldo Emerson

## AAW News



Dear Club President,

If you know an accomplished videographer who consistently gets great shots of demonstrations I need your help.

a great Videographer, who might come to Richmond, please let me know.

To recommend a videographer for Richmond: Send an e-mail to [video@hockenbery.net](mailto:video@hockenbery.net)  
Subject: Video Recommendation

Include:

- Videographer's name
- Videographer's e-mail address
- Your name and position
- A brief recommendation (150 words or less)

Thanks for your help,  
Al Hockenbery  
AAW Conference Chair

Our goal is to put the best videographers in the AAW behind the cameras at the 2008 Symposium in Richmond, VA. The best videographers will be given a complimentary symposium registration in exchange for doing the video at six sessions.

Videographers will be selected based upon recommendations club presidents, AAW board members, and Mini Symposium leaders. If your club has

## Treasurer's report

### Treasurer's Report

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Balance forward | \$2506.60 |
| Income          |           |
| Dues            | 480.00    |
| Raffle          | 46.00     |

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Expenses                  |           |
| State of VT nonprofit Fee | 5.00      |
| Balance Forward           | \$3027.60 |

Ted Fink  
Treasurer



### 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](mailto:craighall@hotmail.com)*

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

*Ralph Tursini: Spindles & bowls, vacuum chucking.  
802-899-6863  
[Tursini@pshift.com](mailto:Tursini@pshift.com)*

*Ted Fink: Bowls, spindles, & boxes.  
802-985-2923  
[jantedfink@gmail.com](mailto:jantedfink@gmail.com)*

*Russ Fellows: Segmented vessels.  
802-899-3059  
[skunkmen@together.net](mailto:skunkmen@together.net)*

*Bill Walsh: tool sharpening  
802 482 215  
[billiriquois@yahoo.com](mailto:billiriquois@yahoo.com)*

## Greetings From Skunk Hollow

Greetings from Skunk Hollow in Jericho. I am pleased to report I am recovering well from my shoulder surgery last month. While I cannot work yet, I do occasionally go out to my shop to putter around and give my lathe a hug of reassurance( see photo) and tell it that it wont be too much longer, which, given the progress I have made so far, should be in early March.

Yesterday, (Wed the 6th) I was given the 'go-ahead' from my doctor and physical therapist to spend a little time each day without my sling and start phasing in light activity. While a few weeks ago, in anticipating all this, the thought of being a couch potato for a while didn't sound too bad...watch some movies, read lots of books, etc...Now I am more than ready to ramp things up a bit.

While my lathe has not been spinning, I am trying to ensure my brain still is, and have been playing around with some new segmented design ideas ... like the bowl in the attached pic-

ture, which I made just before my surgery. It is approximately eleven by five inches, has a mahogany base with a walnut rim. The thing that makes it new is the way I handled the wenge inlay in the rim, which I did in the rim segments, before assembling them, on my drill press using a mortiser and a shop-made jig. By doing it this way I was able to stop the cuts precisely enough so the detail would only show on the outside of the bowl. I will bring it in to 'show and tell' at this month's meeting. And I have many more new projects and ideas on my drawing board waiting for full strength to return to my shoulder!

I want to re-iterate my standing invitation to anyone in the club to come out to Jericho and visit my shop, even while I am convalescing, and I look forward to seeing you again and meeting new members!

**Russ Fellows**



## Farewell to a Migrated Woodchuck

Hi Arny.

I have moved out of the NY & VT area and now live in Michigan. I'm still getting the news letter by e-mail (and that's ok) but I'm no longer a member of the Woodchucks. I'm still a woodturner and have told my family include my best gouges & scrapers when I leave for that big wood shop in the sky.

My best to all the woodchucks.

Al Johnson

Bowls-N-More

20321 St Johns Rd, Interlochen, MI., 49643.

## 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

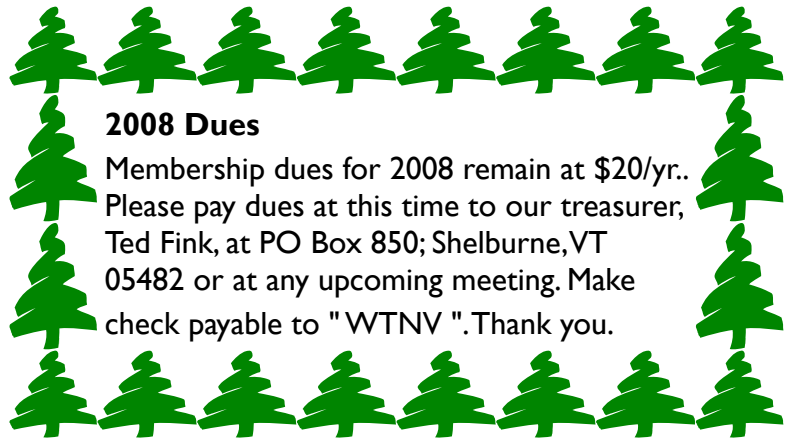
must also notify the editor of Chatter so you can be listed in Future Woodchuck Sightings.

The demonstration must have wood turning as the main subject.



**The Newsletter of  
Woodchuck Turners  
of Northern Vermont**

Publisher:  
Arny Spahn  
1626 Hebard Hill Rd.  
Randolph, VT  
[apspahn@comcast.net](mailto:apspahn@comcast.net)



**2008 Dues**

Membership dues for 2008 remain at \$20/yr.. Please pay dues at this time to our treasurer, Ted Fink, at PO Box 850; Shelburne, VT 05482 or at any upcoming meeting. Make check payable to "WTNV ". Thank you.

## 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.