



Alabama Woodturners Association

February 2015

AWA Newsletter



A member of the American Association of Woodturners

Location: Homewood Senior Center at 816 Oak Grove Road, Homewood, AL 35209
Web Site: www.alabamawoodturners.com

Coming Events

February 14-Bert Workman
March 14-???
April 11-???
May 9-Round Robin?
June 13-???
July 11-???

February 2015-Bert Workman

I enjoy making items out of wood. We try our best to use all natural wood for our creations. When we tell you it is made of solid oak, that means it is all oak with the exception of adhesives or other connective additives. Of course, there are some drawbacks to using solid wood. Wood moves with the change in temperature and humidity.



Officers of AWA

President-John Sowell

Vice President-Carl Cummins

Treasurer-Jennifer Smith

Secretary-Laura Reder

Directors-Staten Tate, Bill West, John Sowell, Dwight Hostetter

Webmaster-Michael Malinconico

Newsletter Editors-Jean Cline, Amy Benefield

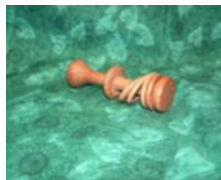
Many of our turnings start at the tree and end at the finished product. All turning are one of a kind. We attempt to get our wood from fallen trees or ones that have to be removed for safety reasons. If you are a turner and you are looking for turning blanks, let us know. We will probably be listing turning blanks soon. We have blanks that are up to 2 years dry and some that have recently been cut. Let us know what you are looking for and we will try to fill your needs and wants. We can also supply some flat stock cut for smaller projects (most air dried, some kiln dried).



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Carnauba wax used in buffing many of these products because it is food safe. It is a botanical product found in everything from candies to packaged foods. It is used to coat medicinal tablets, dental floss and often as a vegetarian alternative to gelatin. It does not flake off, but will become dull with time, but can be buffed back to original shine or you can apply food safe mineral oil. Biographical information and pictures copied from Workman's Wood on ETSY.com.



Notice

How many Christmas ornaments have you made and turned in? As of our February meeting, there are only 314 days until next Christmas but, more importantly, 260 days until we decorate the Christmas tree at Children's Hospital!



Do you have a birthday? If so, please see Jean or Amy at the sign in table or email us at cline-clan1@gmail.com or leobenefield@gmail.com.



2215B Pelham Pkwy N (US 31)
Pelham, AL 35124
Phone: (205) 988-3600
Web Site: www.woodcraft.com
Email: Woodcraft511@bellsouth.net
Manager: Jay MacDougall
Store Hours:
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 9 am - 7 pm
Thursday: 9 am - 9 pm
Saturday: 9 am - 6 pm
Sunday: noon - 5 pm



Harvey Meyer-January Guest Demonstrator

Basket Illusion Supplies

Polar Graph paper for designing the patterns:

<http://www.blackcatsystems.com/software/graphmaker.html>

free demo version will print a demo watermark on the graph paper or pay 19.99 for a registered copy to eliminate the watermark

Beading tools

<http://www.d-waytools.com/tools-beading.html>

available in 1/16", 1/8", 3/16", 1/4" and 3/8"

1/8" and 3/16" are used for this project

Tools come unhandled – I use them unhandled

Price is \$42 each or 2 for \$82

Sanding Mop: from Klingspor: www.woodworkingshop.com/

use a 4" mop – 180 and 320 grits – 1" x 4" flutter sheets

Sandpaper for burning between beads – from Klingspor – heavyweight paper backed roll of 180 grit

www.woodworkingshop.com/product/pr98949/#.VFmT0Wf1aCc

Burning tools: *as of 12/2014, very difficult to get these – takes a long time*

I use 1/8" and 3/16" fish scalers (matches the beading tool size)

<http://www.woodcarverssupply.com>

1/8" is Detail Master 9C vented pen - Item# 501132

3/16" is Detail Master 9D vented pen - Item# 501133

I prefer the vented pens @ \$31.95 each, but if you have a pen that accepts various tips, then you can buy the replaceable tips @ 17.95 each

Any woodburner power supply is suitable. I use the Optima 1 (\$107). Razortip or others are fine.

Optima 1 available at <http://www.carvertools.com/> and other suppliers. Razortip available from Cynthia Gibson.

Colored Ink Pens

I prefer Faber Castell Pitt artist pens – these use India ink and are archival quality

I use 2 nib sizes "brush" and "superfine" of each color.

Colors: Black, Sanguine, and Sepia are the only colors that have fine or superfine nibs – all other colors only have a brush tip.

Alcohol dye markers (Prismacolor, Sharpie, Copic, etc) have better color/tip selection but care must be exercised when applying finish. The finish must be tested to be sure it does not dissolve with alcohol. If it reacts with alcohol, the colors will smear – DAMHIKT.

I've also tried Sakura Pigma pens. These are pigmented and behave more like paint. Wide color selection, but I'm not sure if I'll continue to use them. The pens don't last very long and the colors don't penetrate into the wood as much as dye based markers. Nibs are very fragile.



Saturday Afternoon Mentoring (Starts about 1 hour after the morning session ends or about 1:00)

Don't forget about Phil's Drop-In Skills Class in the Craft Room before the start of the meeting on Saturday!

If you are interested in participating either as a student or a mentor, Phil would love to talk to you and sign you up! Phil Fortmeyer-(205) 612-7496.

Phil Fortmeyer is our mentor chairman. Classes are scheduled that are of interest to a wide range of experience with preference being given to turners with limited experience. There is a nominal fee for these classes to cover the cost of the material used in the class. Bring your own tools or use the tools provided by the club. The club owns six Rikon Lathes, chucks and tools necessary to use in the classes. The training is held in the Craft Room at the Homewood Senior Center.

Things were so crazy at the Christmas party and the January meeting that we didn't draw names for the birthday prizes (and besides, I forgot to bring the gifts!). We'll draw for December, January and February at the February meeting.

If you have a birthday, don't forget to let Amy or Jean know when you sign in! You can't win if you don't tell us!

Raffle!

Birthday Gift Door Prize News

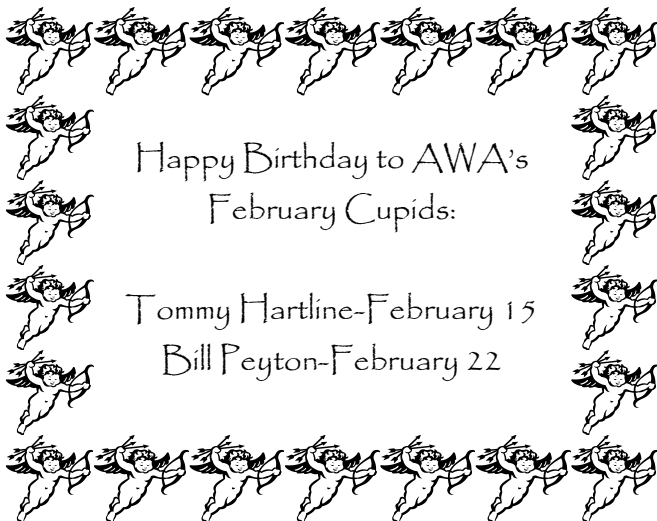
The 'regular' raffle for January will be a \$100 gift certificate to Woodcraft.

If you've been to the meetings for the last few months or actually read the newsletter, you've noticed that the AWA has been giving a birthday gift door prize to a turner who has a birthday during the month of that meeting.

Here are the 'rules' for 2015 as they stand now:

- 1) This is a door prize so, yes, you need to be at the meeting to win.
- 2) You need to make sure Jean and/or Amy have your correct birthdate. No fair changing your birthdate in the middle of the year! You're stuck with the one they originally gave you!
- 3) We have prizes for the entire year that we have been numbered. The prize winner for the current month (i.e. February) will draw the prize number for the next month (i.e. March) so Amy and I don't have to bring all of the prizes to all of the meetings. (We sometimes have a hard time just getting *us* to the meetings!)

If you have raffle ideas, please see Jean or Amy at the raffle/sign in table.



Happy Birthday to AWA's
February Cupids:

Tommy Hartline-February 15
Bill Peyton-February 22

Alabama Woodturners Meeting Location—816 Oak Grove Rd. Homewood AL

From I-65 N, exit 256B (From I-65 S, exit 256A). Turn West on Oxmoor Rd. go about .5 mi – halfway there take the left fork at the traffic light (means you'll go straight ahead) – Turn left onto Oak Grove Road and go about .2 mi. Homewood Senior Center is on the right. Check out our Web Site at www.alabamawoodturners.com for much more about our club.

January Turn and Tell



How'd They Do That?





More How'd They Do That?



Tree Talk: Sweet Gum

Liquidambar styraciflua, commonly called **American sweetgum, sweetgum, sweet gum, hazel pine, American-storax, bilsted, red-gum, satin-walnut, star-leaved gum, or alligator-wood** is a deciduous tree native to warm temperate areas of eastern North America and tropical regions of Mexico and Central America. Sweet gum is one of the main valuable forest trees in the southeastern United States, and is a popular ornamental tree in temperate climates. It is recognizable by the combination of its five-pointed star-shaped leaves and its hard, spiked fruits.

This plant's genus name *Liquidambar* was first given by Linnaeus in 1753 from [the Latin] *liquidus*, fluid, and the *Arabicambar*, amber, in allusion to the fragrant terebinthine (Editor's note: Pertaining to turpentine) juice or gum which exudes from the tree.



The common name "sweet gum" refers to the species' "sweetish gum", contrasting with the black gum ([Nyssa sylvatica](#)), only distantly related, with which the sweet gum overlaps broadly in range. The species is also known as the "red gum", for its reddish bark.

The earliest known published record of *Liquidambar styraciflua* is in a work by Spanish naturalist Francisco Hernández published posthumously in 1651, in which he describes the species as a large tree producing a fragrant gum resembling liquid amber, whence the genus name *Liquidambar*. The species was introduced into Europe in 1681 by John Banister, the missionary collector sent out by Bishop Compton, who planted it in the palace gardens at Fulham in London, England.

Sweetgum is one of the most common hardwoods in the southeastern United States, where it occurs naturally at low to moderate altitudes from southwestern Connecticut south to central Florida, and west to Illinois, southern Missouri, and eastern Texas, but not colder areas of Appalachia or the Midwestern states. The species also occurs in Mexico from southern Nuevo León south to Chiapas, as well as in Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras. In Mexico and Central America, it is a characteristic plant of cloud forests, growing at middle elevations in various mountainous areas where the climate is humid and more temperate.

Liquidambar styraciflua is a medium-sized to large tree, growing anywhere from 33–50 feet in cultivation and up to 150 feet in the wild state, with a trunk up to 2–3 feet in diameter, on average. Trees may live to 400 years. The tree is a symmetrical shape and crowns into an egg shape when the branches get too heavy after its first two years of cultivation.

Another distinctive feature of the tree is the peculiar appearance of its small branches and twigs. The bark attaches itself to these in plates edgewise instead of laterally, and a piece of the leafless branch with the aid of a little imagination readily takes on a reptilian form; indeed, the tree is sometimes called Alligator-wood. The bark is a light brown tinged with red and sometimes gray with dark streaks and weighs 37 lbs. per cubic foot. It is deeply fissured with scaly ridges. The branches carry layers of cork. The branchlets are pithy, many-angled, winged, and at first covered with rusty hairs, finally becoming red brown, gray or dark brown. As an ornamental tree, the species has a drawback—the branches may have ridges or "wings" that cause more surface area, increasing weight of snow and ice accumulation on the tree. However, the wood is heavy and hard with an interlocking grain, but is difficult to season.

The leaves usually have five (but sometimes three or seven) sharply pointed palmate lobes. They are 3-5 inches wide on average and have three distinct bundle scars.

The rich dark green, smooth, shiny, star-shaped leaves generally turn brilliant orange, red, and purple colors in the autumn. This autumnal coloring has been characterized as not simply a flame, but a conflagration. Its reds and yellows compare to that of the maples, and in addition it has the dark purples and smoky browns of the ash. However, in the northern part of its range, and where planted in yet colder areas, the leaves are often killed by frost while still green. On the other hand, in the extreme southern or tropical parts of its range, some trees are evergreen or semi-evergreen, with negligible fall color. The leaves are three to seven inches broad with glandular serrate teeth. The base is truncate or slightly heart-shaped. They come out of the bud plicate, downy, pale green, when full grown are bright green, smooth, shining above, paler beneath. They contain tannin and when bruised give a resinous fragrance.

While the starry five-pointed leaves of Liquidambar resemble those of some maples ([Acer](#)), Liquidambar is easily distinguished from Acer by its glossy, leathery leaves that are positioned singly (alternate), not in pairs (opposite) on the stems. Luna and Promethea moth caterpillars feed on the leaves.

The flowers typically appear in March to May and persist into autumn, sometimes persisting into the Winter. They are typically about 1–1.5 inches in diameter and are covered with rusty hairs.

The distinctive compound fruit is hard, dry, and globose (Editor's note-Having the shape of a globe), 1–1.5 inches in diameter, composed of numerous (40-60) capsules. Each capsule, containing one to two small seeds, has a pair of terminal spikes (for a total of 80-120 spikes). When the fruit opens and the seeds are released, each capsule is associated with a small hole (40-60 of these) in the compound fruit. The seeds are about one-quarter of an inch thick, winged, and wind-dispersed. Goldfinches, purple finches, squirrels, and chipmunks eat the seeds of the tree.

Fallen, opened fruits are often abundant beneath the trees; these have been popularly nicknamed "burr (or bir) balls", "gum balls", "space bugs", "monkey balls", "bommyknockers" or "sticker balls".

Sweetgum is one of the most important commercial hardwoods in the Southeastern United States. Its wood is bright reddish brown (with the sapwood nearly white) and may have black grain in the heartwood; it is heavy, straight, satiny, and close-grained, but not strong. It takes a beautiful polish, but warps badly in drying. In the carpentry industry, the timber is referred to as satin walnut and is one of the most important materials for plywood manufacturers. It is used for furniture, interior trim, railroad ties, cigar boxes, crates, flooring, barrels, woodenware, and wood pulp. It is also used for veneer for plywood. The wood is very compact and fine-grained, the heartwood being reddish, and, when cut into planks, marked transversely with blackish belts. Sweetgum is used principally for lumber, veneer, plywood, slack cooperage (Editor's note-barrel containers that are not tight but would be fine for flour grains and other non-liquids), fuel, and pulpwood. The lumber is made into boxes and crates, furniture, cabinets for radios, televisions, and phonographs, interior trim, and millwork. The veneer and plywood, (typically backed with some other kind of wood which shrinks and warps less) are used for boxes, pallets, crates, baskets, and interior woodwork. It was formerly used in the interior finish of railroad sleeping cars. Being readily dyed black, it is sometimes substituted for ebony for such uses as inexpensive picture frames. The species grows best in moist, acidic loam or claysoil, and tolerates poor drainage. It typically grows with other coastal plain species such as willow oak and sweetbay magnolia. Its salt tolerance is moderate. Chlorosis can develop on alkaline soil, especially where organic matter is low. Also, the American sweetgum tree doesn't grow well in shady areas.

The organizers of the September 11th Memorial in New York donated a grove of sweet gum trees to the Flight 93 Memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

