



Alabama Woodturners Association

May 2013

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

- May-Round Robin
- June - Sean McCurley
- July - Roger Smith
- August-Pat Johnson
- September -Cynthia & Michael Gibson
- October - Staten Tate
- November—Round Robin
- December—Party

The April Program - Jess Walls:

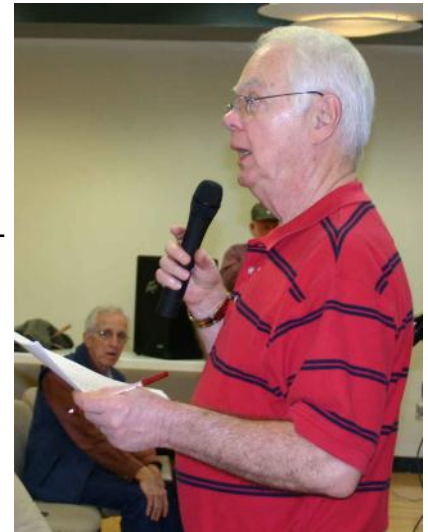


Your Newsletter editor was not at the meeting in April so thanks to Richard and Jerry for feeding me information about what went on. I hated to miss Jess's demo as he always does a great job. This demo was no exception I hear.

Meeting Notes: (From Richard Serviss)

Allen Holmes won the raffle for the \$100 gift certificate from Woodcraft. Jess Walls donated the demo bird house for the raffle and it

was won by Chuck Smith. The door prize, an AAW ball cap was won by Phil Fortmeyer. Dr. John Killian donated 20 books to our wood turning library. There will be another raffle for a \$100 Woodcraft gift certificate.



Officers of AWA

- President – Richard Serviss
- Vice President – Open
- Program—Will Pate
- Treasurer – Jennifer Smith
- Secretary – Laura Reder
- Directors: Staten Tate, Bill West, Sean McCurley, Jeff Hicks
- Web Master – Michael Malinconico
- Training – Phil Fortmeyer
- Newsletter Editor – Dave Chanslor

May Program: Round Robin. See p. 3

Inside this issue:

Show & Tell

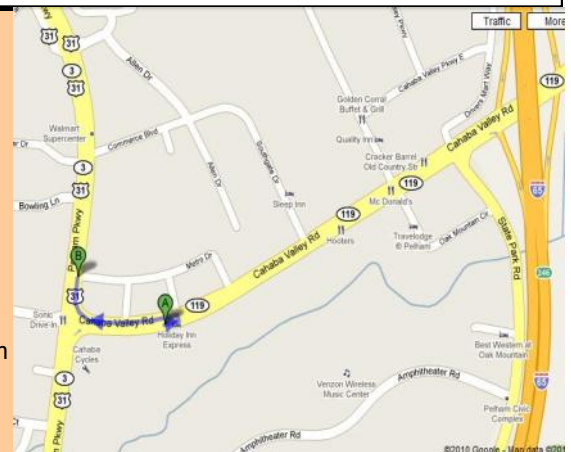
Craft Show Tips by
Nick Cook

Notice

*Wear your
Name Tag!*



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



SHOW AND TELL TIME



Persimmon



Found Wood



Sycamore



Segmented



It's a, it's a...
What is it???



Red Maple



Carved & Textured

Thanks to Jerry Hanchey for the photos for the show and tell pieces.



After she hit me with this stick, I thought, this would make a great cane!



Ring thing



Bowl

May Round-Robin Demos:
 Will Pate—Bottle Stoppers & Holder
 Jerry Hanchey—Ornaments
 Jean Cline—Football
 Dwight Hostetter—TBA
 Jack Capps—TBA

On the right are picture of some of Jess Wall's turned bird houses.



A video of each AWA meeting is provided on DVD for your benefit for only \$10 postage paid. You can log on to www.alabamawoodturners.com/ then click on Club Videos or www.melbrown4u.org/video.htm or call Mel Brown at 687-1247

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.

How to Succeed at Craft Shows

by Nick Cook

Craft shows are frequently the first exposure many woodturners have to selling their work. It always starts out very innocently as a hobby or so you tell your spouse. Then, at some point, usually after you have given one of everything you make to everyone you know, someone comes up with the bright idea that you should go out and sell what you have been making and giving away. It is usually your better half who wants to know when all that equipment is going to start paying for itself.

So you start looking at the possible markets. There are gift shops and galleries, mail order and catalog sales, commissions, wholesale shows and retail craft shows. The possibilities are endless.

Retail craft shows are by far the best place to start. They are the easiest and usually the least expensive to get into. They do vary greatly depending on where they are and who is promoting the show. You can find shows in various locations around most any town on any given weekend. They are especially popular in the spring and fall.

Many shows are put on by local churches or civic groups and have limited resources for advertising and promotion. Others are run by professional marketing companies who usually do extensive in local media as well as press releases and even direct mail (that's why you fill out those forms for door prizes and other goodies). These shows will be more difficult to get into but will also be more profitable in the long run. The entry fee will be higher as well. Most of the better shows select participants by a jury process. You submit slides and panels of professional artists review those slides and choose the artists for the show. Some shows break down the mix of artists by two-dimensional and three-dimensional. Other shows divide it up by media, ie, wood, clay, jewelry, fiber, etc. It is up to the promoters or jurors or in some shows, it is a matter of who you know.

Slides

The first and most important thing you will need for getting into most any craft is high quality color slides. They should be well lighted, in sharp focus and shot against a clean neutral background. Each piece of work should be photographed in a separate overall view and then additional shots taken to show important details. Always bracket your exposures to ensure clarity in highlights and shadows. It is much easier to shoot more exposures the first time around than it is to set up all over again.

Once you have good slides, have duplicates made by a dependable, professional lab. Never send off your originals. Professional labs can also imprint the slide mounts with your name and other required information. Duplicates are inexpensive enough to make in larger quantities and most professional labs do a great job.

You might even consider having a professional photographer shoot your work for you. It can be a fairly expensive proposition initially but well worth the price if you get into more shows. If you do decide to hire a professional, get references from other crafts people and see examples of his work, in your media if possible.

Display and Presentation

Once accepted to show your work, you will need some sort of display. Most shows allow each exhibitor a space approximately 10' x 10', some are larger and some smaller. It should be designed in such a way that it is not only portable but flexible and safe. It should be simple and uncluttered, sturdy and resistant to wind and rain. You should also provide some means of lighting your work.

Your work should be presented in a professional manner. Use neutral fabrics to cover tabletops and shelves. Fabric is inexpensive and can be washed if soiled. Make or buy a selection of risers to position your work at different heights rather than all on the same plane. Avoid having too much work out on display. Sometimes, less is more. Keep your display neat and uncluttered.

Products

Retail craft shows attract a wide assortment of consumers, most of all, impulse buyers. People just like you and me, they see something they like and they buy it on the spot. You should have a variety of items in various price ranges. Start out with what you do best, this is usually the reason you got into business. It should be a product that you can readily produce in quantity and at the same time keep the price affordable. Pay close attention to details and point them out to prospective buyers. Build on your original idea and develop additional products that compliment it.

Price will be a very important factor in selling your work. When you start to price each item, take everything into consideration, not just the cost of the raw materials. This is a frequent mistake made by hobbyists who are trying to get into the marketplace. Having made things for fun in the past, pricing becomes quite a problem. Be sure to consider all the costs involved including your tools and equipment, shop space, insurance, your time and hopefully even a profit. Remember too, this is retail and if you are planning to sell to shops and galleries, they will expect to pay only half of the marked price. You should also check out the competition and see what they are getting for similar products.

Larger, more expensive pieces will attract attention and bring people into your booth while the less expensive, production items sell faster and help to generate cash flow. You will find more people willing to spend ten or twelve dollars on a baby rattle or cutting board than those wishing to spend \$500 to \$1000 on a one-of-a-kind piece. The higher the price, the fewer the buyers.

Do's and Don'ts

Have all your work priced, people in general are reluctant to ask the price of artwork. Make professional looking signs with a brief description and price, then have them laminated in plastic. Have people sign up to be on your mailing list. This will allow you to build a list and let customers and would be customers know about upcoming shows, open house sales and new products.

Have plenty of stock on hand. There's nothing worse than to have something that sells like hotcakes and run out before the show is over. Plan ahead and allow enough time between show to produce adequate inventory. Maintain a list of what sells at each show so you will be better prepared for future shows.

Set up a commercial banking account in order to establish credit card merchant accounts so you will be able to accept plastic. You will find people are more likely to hand over a credit card faster than cash especially on larger purchases.

Never dicker over the price of your work and don't have sales. The only discounts should be if someone wants to purchase in quantity. Perhaps a 10% discount on six or more of the same production item. Try to treat all customers equally.

Apply early. It doesn't do any good to have the best work in your media, a great display and competitive prices, if you don't get into the show. Pay close attention to the deadline on applications and send everything requested. Incomplete applications are returned without consideration.

Create your own press releases and send it to local newspapers about three weeks prior to the show. It should be brief and to the point including only the who, what, when and where of the event. Also include a good black and white photograph of yourself working rather than one of your work. People are interested in seeing people.

Last but certainly not least, always have a good supply of business cards on hand. Give one to everybody. It's a great, inexpensive way to get your name out. As funds become available, you might look into designing and producing brochures and price list to hand out.

Good luck with your marketing strategy. Copyright, Nick Cook, 2000