

Zumbro Valley Woodturners

Presidents Comments for May 2008

I have not had any feedback on your bowl turning session at Harmon's but I am sure you all picked up a few pointers on turning bowls, thank you Harmon for doing the session.

The evening of your last session Donna and I left for Brookings SD Thursday morning to attend my SDSU Foundation meeting, Thursday evening it started to rain and then on Friday morning about 8:30 it started to snow and by noon we had about 10 inches of snow. The interstate highway was closed so we had to spend an extra night in Brookings. You can be glad you did not have this type of weather because your meeting at Harmon's would have either been canceled or if you made it out to his place you would have possibly spent the night in his shop practicing what he had taught you.

On April 19th and 20th at my Coulee Region Woodturners Chapter meeting we had John Jordan demonstrating. John is recognized as one of the top bowl and hollow turning professional in the business today. Selling turned pieces for in the \$15,000 range.

John only uses wet wood for his turnings and he does not rough the piece out and then let it dry. He will turn it to its final thickness and put his finish on it at that time.

John will spend a considerable amount of time selecting the piece of wood for character and looking for cracks, if he thinks he will be getting a crack do not use the wood because there is more free wood available than a person will ever use.

John's demonstration consisted of bowl turning, wood properties and selection, hollow turning and carving/texturing/surface decoration.

I really learned a lot, for example how should you get rid of the free water (John's terms) in the wood? He uses the air hose prior to applying his finish. His finished turnings are generally ¼ inch or less. As all professionals John did have a DVD for sale so I purchased it for my library to help me refresh my memory when I am trying some of John's techniques.

If any of you are ever interested in expanding your knowledge of wood turning I would recommend you attend some of the professional demonstrator's sessions that are held though out the area you will learn many new techniques.

At this month's meeting we will have an exciting and interesting demo on Pen turning by Bill Beckman. We will meet at my shop May 29th 6:30 PM, 1221 20th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901. Bring your turnings for the show and tell.

Keep turning and be careful. Lyle

The April meeting of the Zumbro Valley Woodturners met on the 24th at the Harmon Pierce shop. Twenty five were in attendance. Todd vandeWalker opened the meeting at 6:45. After some general remarks, everyone introduced themselves as there were some new faces in the crowd. The visitors and hopefully potential new members were identified as Paul Klym, David and Maryanne Edens and Ray Overland.

Irv Miller gave a short update of the Wood Carvers show in which the Zumbro Valley Woodturners participated. We had two tables and enjoyed an active audience participation in our activities, mainly turning tops as well as items for sale and discussion.

The Show and Tell portion of the meeting had several types of products. Toni Kohler talked about a tool he made from bar steel. Richard Myos showed a thin walled weed pot he had turned as well as a shallow dish that he colored with iron oxide. Bob Post showed his first turning of a Sumac log as well as a second turning in progress. Sorry Richard - my photos were not usable.

Richard won the drawing for the ten dollar gift certificate from Craft Supplies.



Tony Kohler with a turning tool that he made from a piece of steel. I am sure he will discuss this with you if you contact him. Perhaps get into the tool making business?

Bob Post with a work in progress.
Bob also shared his first bowl turned from a piece of Sumac. Keep turning Bob!



With the casual part of the meeting behind us, Harmon took up the discussion of turning a basic bowl. Harmon turns only wet wood and this demonstration was no exception.

Bowl blanks are cut into circles on the band saw and mounted on a screw chuck for the basic outside turning. Harmon turns to the final outside bowl shape before remounting the blank. From experience, Harmon knows the approximate diameter of the bowl foot that will fit his chuck for reversing the blank. A point made was that he prefers the diameter to be such that the chuck points engage the blank for holding it secure.

There was a short discussion as to the reasons for turning wet wood. Comments were to the effect that tools are cooler, easier to turn and any warpage of the finished product added character.

Bowls are turned to their final shape, sanded and then treated with polymerized tung oil from Sotherland Welles Ltd., co. Bowls are then put into paper bags and allowed to dry on a shelf or floor of the shop for several weeks, generally six weeks. Shop humidity is kept at about 50 percent.



A close up of the spinning bowl and the gouge engaging the wood.



The photo is offered to remind everyone that turning wood can be dangerous. A simple catch on the bottom of the nearly finished bowl resulted in it blowing up and hitting Harmon. Not only dangerous, but costly!

Here the bottom/outside of the bowl is being turned. Note the live center helping to stabilize the wood blank. I do not recall that the turning speed was mentioned.





Here the bottom of the bowl is taking shape. Harmon turns a foot to grasp with his chuck.



Sanding the outside of the bowl. Harmon turns to final shape so sanding at this point is part of the finish process. Did not record the grit for the final sanding.



The photo is not too clear but shows the extra grind that Harmon puts on his bowl gouge to facilitate making a smaller radius curve on the bowl interior.

For some reason I did not get a photo of the finished bowl. My apologies Harmon! Thanks for an excellent demonstration. You make it look very easy.



Review: Woodturning with Alan Lacer, Getting Started RIGHT
A Review of a DVD in the ZVW Library, by Irv Miller

Some of us got into woodturning because we wanted to do a woodworking project that required turned parts. Others appreciated the artistic element and decided to see if turned objects could be their form of artful expression. Still others thought that turned objects could be profitable, saleable craft projects. Many of us just sort of stumbled into woodturning, picking up the basics in a piecemeal fashion as we went along, and many still aren't sure if we have them down yet. Alan Lacer's DVD puts the basics all together in one place for the about-to-begin, the novice, and even the intermediate woodturner.

As a start, Alan's 1 hour and 48 minute video devotes 41 minutes just to lathes. He starts with a bit of history, follows it with discussion on lathe anatomy, continues with lathe types and sizes, gives some guidelines on purchasing a lathe, and then makes some recommendations for beginning woodturners. This is the most comprehensive video discussion on lathes that I have run across.

The next 25 minutes are devoted to tools and sharpening. Alan breaks the tools into the usual 2 classes: scrapers, and cutting tools. He then breaks the cutting tools into 3 subclasses: parting tools, skew chisels, and gouges. Briefly showing how each tool is used and his way of sharpening it, he leaves you with the feeling that you really understand why the tools are shaped the way they are, and why sharpening them correctly makes all of the difference in the world. You will not learn the fine points of turning cylinders, beads, coves, or grooves, or of shaping and hollowing boxes, bowls, platters, or vessels. These are left to more advanced works on techniques and projects. But you will learn when and where to use each tool, how to sharpen it, and how to know when the tool is sharp -- so that you will get started right.

The next sections are on the types of objects that can be produced on the lathe, in a safe way, with attention to the orientation of the wood grain for particular items. Alan shows a wide variety of items that he and some of his friends have turned. He does not turn a project in this video.

Lastly, Alan spends about a dozen minutes on how to hold wood in a lathe with chucks, centers, and drives, with emphasis on how he modifies a tailstock dead center to act as an ultra-safe and non-threatening slip-clutch headstock drive for beginning turners.

Irv - thanks for the review. We should all make more use of the library.

Are you interested in having an area in the newsletter for sales/exchange/surplus equipment listing?
Give your feedback if you are interested.

The next meeting of the Zumbro Valley Woodturners will be held May 29th, starting at 6:30. Directions to find Lyle Solems' shop can be found on our website at: <http://www.zvwoodturners.org/>

ZVWZVWZVWZVWZVWZVWZVWZVW

The Zumbro Valley Woodturners, established in 2001, is a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. Its mission is to provide a means for woodturners to get together, share ideas and techniques, and educate each other and the public about the wonder and complexity of woodturning.

Club membership is by household and dues are \$20 annually payable at the start of each calendar year. High school and college students interested in woodturning are invited to be student members at no charge.

To serve on the board of directors, a club member must also be a member of the American Association of Woodturners.

2008 ZVWoodturners board

President: Lyle Solem ldsolem@aol.com
VP: Todd VanDeWalker vandewalker.todd@mayo.edu
Secretary: Mel Turcanik turcanik@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Tom Paska tmpaska@charter.net
Librarian: Dennis Holt , HoltDM@aol.com
Website editor: Irv Miller, ilmiller@kmwb.net
Harmon Pierce harmon@us.obm.com
Clair Ewert, audreyewert@juno.com
Bill Beckman, editor, wpbeckman@earthlink.net

ZVW website: <http://www.zvwoodturners.org>

Don't forget the mentor program. Help, fun and ideas are just a phone call or email away!

Feedback/contributions/comments of any flavor are most welcome and encouraged.
wpbeckman@earthlink.net

