



Tidewater Woodworkers Guild

December 2023

Woodworking Adventure:

"Sometimes, when I'm feeling really crazy,
I only measure once!"

What's In the Newsletter?

- Upcoming Events
- President's Shavings
- NASA Tour
- Guild Member Projects/Challenges
- PHP Bench Brigade Update
- TWWWG Programs
- Election of 2024 TWWWG Officers

Upcoming Events

Pinewood derby day at Woodcraft

Saturday Jan 6th, 9:30 am

Lead: Fran Foster

Benchtop Talk at Woodcraft

Monday January 8th, 6:30 pm

General discussion, planning for robotics workshop

Lead: Terry Nienaber

Robotics Competition Field Element Construction

Saturday January 13th, 9 am

(TBD location)

Member Meeting at Woodcraft

Monday January 22nd, 6:30 p.m.

Safety and Safety Tips/Hacks



Note: New meeting time!

The start times of monthly meetings and benchtop talks have **been moved to 6:30 p.m.**

President's Shavings

Greetings Guild Members and Friends,

In this holiday season, I count among my blessings the opportunity to lead the Guild in 2023. I'm happy to see our membership rise this year to pre-pandemic levels, with new members and with good attendance at any given meeting and activity. I'm thankful to the fellow officers, committee members and volunteers that have stepped up for activities, and particularly to Woodcraft of Norfolk/Virginia Beach for the space and support they lend us.



As I've shifted from my prior role of audio/visual support to a more active meeting leader, I want to give a shout out to the team efforts by Ryan Evans and Aron Zielezinski. These two have stepped in and now run the computer, camera system, and Zoom connections during the meetings. Many of you have commented on how helpful the camera and monitors are in the room to zoom in on the bench activity. Additionally, the Zoom meeting option allows anyone unable to join in person to remain engaged. It's harder than it looks to stay focused, both literally and figuratively, and keep the microphones and cameras dialed in on the action, particularly while listening to such interesting and entertaining topics.

Along the line of communication and engagement, Greg Guertin and Cheryl Davis have done an outstanding job of maintaining a strong Facebook presence this past year for the Guild. They post pictures from guild activities and reply to inquiries from the public. We've picked up several new members and have been offered opportunities for tools and wood this past year thanks to our social media page and to the new website.

In new developments, I'd like to welcome Jim Francis to the role of newsletter editor. Our prior editor of many years, Gary Stephens, requested to step down to focus on his health after the May publication. His contribution has been missed. The absence of a newsletter publication since July is my doing...or rather not-doing? Despite my best intentions, I never found time and energy to finalize content. While I relied on emails and Facebook posts to communicate with members, with Jim's help and renewed support in generating content from members, we plan to reestablish a regular cadence of this newsletter. Please keep the photos and project information coming to the wwwguild@gmail.com email address.

While I've mentioned a few of our members, what we've accomplished this year reflects the combined efforts and engagement of our 70+ active membership. We're on track to see much more of the same in 2024. We've already been contacted to repeat both the robotics field element construction and the pinewood derby support. In addition, I'm certain we'll continue to have requests for more woodworking benches for the Purple Heart Project. And the program committee continues to find interesting topics and challenges. I'm proud of what we did together, and I look forward to seeing what we accomplish as a Guild in 2024!

Terry Nienaber

TWWWG President

2023 RECAP by Terry Nienaber

We've had great participation in the many meetings and activities. Just to drive it home, here are a few of the highlights from this past year:

- *Hampton Streetcar*

Jim Francis led efforts to restore the Hampton streetcar window frames, door panels and doors. Jim estimates the guild has contributed more than 400 hours of work accomplished by the Guild, which is still ongoing. The hope is to finish this work in the first quarter of 2024.



- *Bob Fenske Tool Donations*

The family of Bob Fenske, a long-time member of the Guild, generously donated his tools and wood to the Guild after his passing. Collection, organization and distribution of this collection of hundreds of items was a huge effort undertaken by Ryan Evans, Chris Haycox and Gary Stephens.



- *Purple Heart Project*

Chris Zuchristian and more than a dozen members partnered with the Rob Cosman Purple Heart Project Bench Brigade, Woodcraft, and Wurth Wood Company to construct five benches this year for combat veterans.



- *Pinewood Derby*

We helped members of several Scout packs to design and shape their pinewood derby cars at the Woodcraft store in January, with plans for a similar event in January of 2024.



- ***Guild Member Challenges***
Members responded to three “challenges” this year with fun and truly amazing entries for each!



- ***Field Trip to NASA***
Twenty members visited the NASA Langley Research Center model fabrication shops where wood and composite artisans contribute to the implementation of modern technology in space travel vehicles and support equipment.



- ***Donation from Scott Gray***
New member, Scott Gray, donated two lathes to the TWWWG and Tidewater Turners when he needed to make room for new equipment. Our member, Aron Zielezinski, found homes for these lathes in exchange for monetary donations from the recipients.



- ***Dedication of Chimney Swift Habitats***
Fran Foster represented the TWWWG during the dedication ceremony of the two habitats the guild fabricated and installed at the Paradise Creek Nature Park. The habitats were completed in 2022, now with a dedication plaque in appreciation for guild efforts, as well as other sponsors that helped make it happen.



- ***Guild Picnic and Holiday Parties***
Pat Lester opened his shop up for our fall picnic in October for more than 20 members attending. Additionally, we met again with nearly 50 members at Little Italy Restaurant in Chesapeake for our Holiday Party. Both events were loads of fun and a great time to socialize with fellow members.



Visit to the NASA Langley Research Center by Terry Nienaber



On October 27th, I had the honor of escorting more than 20 Guild members and guests on a guided tour of the NASA Langley Research Center. The Guild in fact has four members who work at the Center and assisted me in the tour and talk about the work each of us perform for the agency. The tour consisted of visits to the following areas:

- Structures and materials test lab
- Lunar surface systems concept development lab
- Model fabrication shop for wood and composites
- Metal machining and fabrication facilities
- Makerspace for 3D printing, laser engraving and electronics fabrication
- Electron-beam additive manufacturing facility
- Robotic arm test bed for automated large-scale carbon fiber fabrication



Members were offered over four hours of presentation and discussion at the various stops. It was rewarding to see the excitement of the very experienced NASA engineers and technicians, including an extended discussion with Don Smith, a 40+ year employee at the Langley Research Center, whose work on wood and composite models has contributed to realization of countless innovations in both aeronautics and spaceflight. It was truly a joy to see my two worlds interact, aerospace engineering and traditional woodworking!



Guild Member Projects

Furniture Construction – as presented at the July 2023 meeting by Bret Lancaster

Summer of 2003: Wife wants a new dresser.

September 18, 2003: Hurricane Isabel comes in at the outer banks of North Carolina and into Virginia. Coworker / friend's neighbor has large maple tree blown down; @ 27 inches in diameter and trunk is about 27 feet long.

Milling was performed by Paul Garrity – Garrity Custom Sawing.

Air dried lumber and sticker in shop before using.



2023: Completed Dresser

- Maple / Purple Heart
- 41 inches H
- 70 inches W
- 25 inches D



Headboard

- Maple / Purple Heart
- 54.5 inches H
- 64 inches W



Nightstands

- 25 1/2 inches H
 - 23 1/8 inches W
- 17 1/8 inches D

7-Drawer Dresser (in progress)

- 54 inches H
- 36 inches W
- 15 1/2 inches D



TWWWG Member Challenges by Terry Nienaber

Since our July newsletter, we've had two member challenges, both with impressive entries.

For both challenges, the following rules applied:

- Any type of wood may be used.
- It is preferred that wood is bought locally.
- The entry may also include other wood or non-wood materials for decorative purposes or for functional purposes.
- The additional material shall be less than 15% of total materials used.
- Any type of fasteners, glue, and finishing method may be used.
- Any finish is okay, including paint.
- No kit-based projects may be used.
- You can build from someone else's plans.

Judging

- Participants will present their project to the members prior to intermission. Participants must use the documentation provided for the project to briefly describe the project to the members.
- Judging is done by members in attendance at the event.
- Leadership hopes that attendees will review each project presented for its quality of design, construction, use of wood, and finish and then vote appropriately.

Prizes (Woodcraft Gift Cards):

- First Place: \$50
- Second Place: \$25
- Third Place: \$10 – Name will be pulled from a hat for all remaining participants.

Below are just a few of the entries for these challenges.

Challenge: Holiday Decorations or Gifts (July – September of 2023)

Focus: Make any Holiday Decoration or Gifts. There were a number of good and inspiring entries. However, the elf-on-the-shelf tasked with doing a report and taking pictures was goofing off. Will try to find a better elf next time.



Challenge: Want to Play a Game? (May-July of 2023)

Objective: Make any game you want; indoor or outdoor.

Boomerang, by Steve Mokrzczi

One of the interesting entries was from Steve Mokrzczi with his boomerang. See the following link below to see it in action. <https://photos.app.goo.gl/BapFvduqwyokeAAB8>



Super Scrabble Set by Karl Bogott

Karl Bogott, a perennial crafter, built the following Super Scrabble set; and provided a summary of materials used and build process.

This is a set of 100 Scrabble tiles from hard maple.

- The set began as two 12' x 9" 4 quarter boards. Joined and ripped to 4" wide, I cut them into workable lengths and planed them to 1/2" blanks.
- I sealed the blanks with clear shellac and cut them to 4" final dimension, rounding over the edges with a 1/8" round over router bit.
- That was the easy part. Using a set of Scrabble stencils, my granddaughter, Natalie Johnson, next outlined the letters and scores and then filled them in. There are 98 letter tiles and two blanks, matching the defined number of each letter in the Scrabble universe.
- They are finished with sprayed on lacquer.

Notes: The original design, from DIY Backyard Games by Colleen Pastoor (Fox-Chapel, 2002), is for a modified Scrabble called Speed Scrabble. In the case of my version, I made these tiles to be donated to my Granddaughter's school. In that vein, I added two additional sets of rules to provide a diverse educational experience for differing age groups.



Purple Heart Project Bench Brigade Update by Terry Nienaber



In the spring of 2023, Greg Guertin received a Facebook message from Jack Lane of the Purple Heart Project (PHP) Bench Brigade asking for our help. Greg brought that request to the guild, and our members responded!

Chris Zuchristian, guild vice president, volunteered to lead the effort to build two traditional hand tool woodworking benches that would be donated to combat veterans. The Rob Cosman woodworking school donates a portion of its class spaces to veterans suffering from physical or emotional stress related to combat. The Purple Heart Project is a partnering organization that helps provide solid workbenches for the class graduates by coordinating with local woodworkers.

Since then, TWWWG members have completed five workbenches to military combat veterans, all in just the second half of 2023. The five benches constructed in 2023 were completed in two groups to support graduates from two separate woodworking classes. Basic construction of each group of benches was completed in three work sessions where members cut and kit the parts, then begin to laminate the sheets of plywood and MDF into the benchtop, trestles, stretchers and tool trays. Parts are

then assembled and finishing touches are handled by one or two members, including the application of a finish.

Build #1 – For the first build, we were assigned two Purple Heart Project graduates; Matthew Catanese of Virginia Beach and Mark Kroll of Lexington, South Carolina.

Chris gathered materials and arranged the first work session at his house in August. He also secured a partnership with Woodcraft to help pay for some of the materials.

The first workday focused on cutting and “kitting” the parts for assembly.

The assembly group met at Woodcraft two weeks later. After two days, the trestles and stretchers were built up and the tops were laminated.

Final assembly, cutting dogholes in the benchtop, and finishing was done back at Chris’ house over the next couple of weeks.

Chris delivered the first bench in September to Matthew Catanese in Virginia Beach, and Terry Nienaber delivered the second bench to Mark Kroll in Lexington, NC.



Build #2 – For our second build, which occurred during November and December, we assigned benches for three veterans. Our veteran recipients included Justin Dougherty (King George, VA – delivered by Jim Francis), Noah Mutrie (Winston-Salem, NC – delivered by Tim Roach), and Ward Taft (Jacksonville, NC – will be delivered by Chris Zuchristian on January 6th).

Each of the builds costs close to \$500 in materials, plus the vice and dogs that are provided directly by the PHP Bench Brigade. While the membership voted to support the cost of the materials, we seek outside contributions to offset that cost. For this build, once again, Woodcraft contributed generously toward the construction materials and allowed us to use their classroom for three days. The extra space was much appreciated. Additionally, Tim Roach secured a partnership with the Wurth Wood Group to provide thicker (1”) MDF sheets and all our wood materials at a significantly reduced cost. With that, we were able to use higher grade plywood and maple instead of pine for tool trays. Also, the Marine Corps League, John A. Lejeune Detachment 332 paid for the materials for the Marine Corps recipient. And unable to attend the work sessions but wanting to contribute, our member, June Richie donated a generous amount toward the cost of one of the benches.

In addition to being a great cause, guild members who participate have found construction of the benches, which follow a plan provided by the PHP Bench Brigade, to be rewarding and a good focal point to get



to know other members and share woodworking techniques and tricks. The recipients of the benches are extremely appreciative, understanding the work and care that goes into these benches. Time permitting, we intend to provide an opportunity for anyone interested to sign the tool tray to show their support.



If you would like any more information on this program, check out the following link:

<https://www.thepurpleheartproject.org/>

TWWWG Programs by Chris Zuchristian

January's program will be Safety and Safety Tips/Hacks **by you, the membership**. The rest of the year's programs will be announced periodically.

Election of 2024 TWWWG Officers

An election of 2024 Guild officers was held in November. Following are the results:

- Terry Nienaber, President (incumbent)
- Chris Zuchristian, Vice President (incumbent)
- Cheryl Davis, Treasurer (incumbent)
- Ryan Evans, Secretary

Happy New Year to you all! We'll see you at the 2024 guild activities!