



# WOODTURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

June 2006

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



### STEVE WHITE SHOP VISIT

Steve White opened his shop to all in attendance at the May meeting. He offered us a unique opportunity to see his rose engines in action. Rose engines create the beautiful cut patterns often seen in ornamental turning. Steve has two of these beautiful machines that have been fully refurbished since he bought them.

Steve spent some time explaining the basics of operation and turned a rosette while we were there. He explained to us how the various chucks worked, one created an oval pattern in a sample piece of aluminum, and he demonstrated a completed rosette on a piece of Lexan.

It was clear that Steve has spent many hours learning about ornamental turning and is currently shooting a video explaining many of his methods and techniques. Steve designs and creates many of his own custom guides and rosettes, which is common in the ornamental turning world. Each rosette can be used to create two distinctly different patterns depending on setup, many similar variations of each pattern are also possible. Steve has also modified a Nova lathe to accept an ornamental turning attachment.

It was amazing to see these machines in action and even though we only saw a small portion of what they were capable of, everyone left with a new found interest. If you're interested in, or curious about, ornamental turning talk to Steve at one of the meetings, he'll have you hooked in no time.

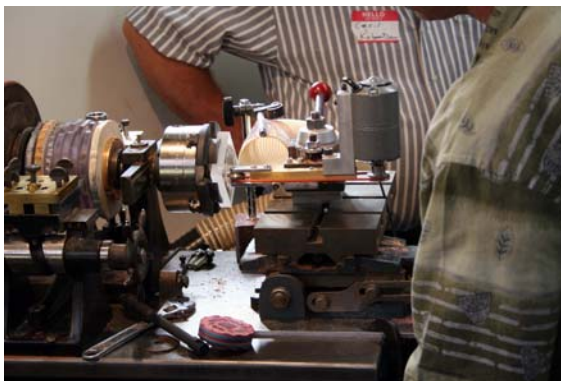
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### NEXT MEETING

July 23, 2006 ~ 1-4pm  
Woodcraft

2077 Congressional Drive  
Maryland Heights, MO 63146  
Phone: 314-993-0413



# Woodturners of St. Louis

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## HAPPY BIRTHDAY Jo & Micki!



Dear Members,

What a wonderful surprise, Thank you for everything. This was my very first time ever having a huge cake for anything that I didn't make...I like it. The day before I was saying, I really didn't want to go to the meeting (my first time even saying that) that it was my birthday and I wanted to do something else. Matt said, at the collaborative meeting, you know Jo, you want to go to the meeting (which I always do look forward to them and seeing everyone) so you might as well just go! Boy I'm glad I did for more than one reason. It was an honor to share my birthday with my woodturning family and friends and will certainly remember it as my best one yet! Thanks again for a great day and all the trimmings.

Jo Williams

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*Look for a complete roster in next month's newsletter!*

Look for an  
updated  
member roster  
in the July  
newsletter!!!



# AAW 2006 Symposium

## June 22-24, 2006

### Louisville, KY

## July Exchange

The July exchange will be a bowl. Bring in a bowl 2" to 16" in size to exchange with a fellow member. If necessary, two categories will be developed at the meeting, above and below 8".

## August Challenge

We are going to have a new challenge for the August meeting. At the August meeting bring an item turned from wood, or other, acquired at a meeting or from a fellow member. Over the last year we have given away numerous door prizes, raffles and literally truckloads of wood from generous members and non-members alike. You can bring anything whether turned two years ago or today as long as it is from something you obtained at a meeting.

During the show and tell let us know how you ended up with it.

## RAFFE TICKETS

John Buehrer has donated a lidded box. Chances are \$3.00 each.

Sycamore hat turned and signed by Johannes Michelsen. Chances are \$20.00 each.

Ray Key boxes, turned during demonstration in March chances are \$5 and \$10 each.

## COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

The project nears completion. Be sure to check out the next issue for detailed photos of this year's project as well as an update on how we did in the collaborative competition in Louisville.



## STACKABLE LIDDED BOX

A PRESENTATION BY MATT KEIM

Making stackable boxes is no more difficult than turning a single lidded box if you follow the process outlined in this article. They look difficult but can be completed in just a few hours.



To begin, start with a blank of wood 2" square by 6" long. Mount the blank between centers and turn it to a cylinder with a roughing gouge. Create a tenon on each end ensuring they are square, or dovetailed, so the chuck will mount properly. Mark the lid section off and part the blank in two using a narrow parting tool. The lid can be of various sizes depending on the shape. For a domed lid anywhere from 1/2" to 3/4" will work well. If you prefer a flat lid 3/8" to 1/2" will do. Remember to account for the hole left in the end of the blank from the drive centers when initially turning it round. This 1/4" or so will be turned away so add this much to the lid measurement. (If you do not have a chuck you can use faceplates instead)



The lid will be completed first. Mount the lid into the chuck and complete the hollowing of the inside. You must visualize what the outside will look like so you can complete the inside to match what the outside will become. Sand the inside of the lid up through 400 grit. After sanding ensure that you have a square recess for the lid to mount onto the box. The square recess can be made with a small scraper or skew. This section should be done last and should not be sanded. Sanding is never as accurate as cutting with a tool so your lid will not fit properly if this recess is sanded. Apply your finish to the inside of the lid before removing from the chuck.



Now mount the other blank into the chuck and verify it spins true. This blank should be roughly 5" long at this point. Use a skew to smooth the end grain for a clean finish. Now you must turn a small tenon on the end of the blank to friction fit the lid onto. Once your tenon is turned to the proper size snap your lid on and turn the outside to its finished shape. Stop often and remove the lid to inspect thickness. Remember that you want the contour of the outside to follow the inside. Once you are satisfied with its shape sand and finish.



Next mark off where the first lidded box will stop and the second will begin. The bottom of the first box needs to be roughly 1/4" thick. This will allow you to cut a recess into the first box to mate with the second. The boxes will grow in size as you move from top to bottom so don't worry about the first one being small. The first box, not including the lid should be between 1/2" and 5/8". Once the box is

marked you can begin to hollow from the center out with a 1/4" spindle gouge or scraper. Be sure not to touch the tenon that holds the lid on. Use a depth gauge to ensure that you have



1/4" left in the bottom of this box. After sanding, apply finish and part from the lathe using a narrow parting tool.



To finish the bottom of the first box use a faceplate or another chuck to make an internal jam chuck. Softer woods work well since they will give a bit when test fitting your box onto the jam chuck. Dense hardwoods crack easy if too much pressure is applied so take it easy. See page 7 for details on how to make a jam chuck. After you have fit your box onto the jam chuck use a skew to clean up the end grain and hollow the bottom out 1/8" deep creating a square recess on the outside diameter just as you did with the lid. This will be used to mount this box onto the next as if it were a lid itself, actually it is. Sand and then re-cut the square recess and apply finish.



You now have completed a lidded box. Next is to turn that single box into a stacking box. Reinstall your chuck with the remainder of the wood blank still mounted in it and make a clean cut in the end grain with a skew. Make a clean cut all the way across the end grain to ensure that the center does not protrude which will keep the box from fitting onto the next box. Turn a tenon onto the blank to accept the recess on the bottom of the first box. Remove the wood slowly and check the fit often. You want the fit to be snug but not so tight that you can't remove the lid. Once the tenon fits, mark off the size of this box. I like to increase the size by about 20% on each box as I go down from top to bottom, in height that is. Mark the finished size and complete this section in the same manner as the previous one.



Now you have two completed sections. I have found that odd numbers look better so I always try to have 3, 5 or 7 sections. The only change on how to complete each successive section will be size and the when you get to the last one the bottom can be finished in any manner you wish. Good luck and have fun!

At the end of the meeting we drew a name for a lucky winner to receive one of Matt's previously made stackable boxes. Congratulations Paco Navarro!



#### Helpful tools

1. Roughing gouge
2. Spindle gouge 1/4" or 3/8"
3. Parting tool, narrow if you have it
4. Box scraper
5. Round nose scraper
6. Skew
7. Chuck
8. Faceplate

#### Helpful tips

Dense exotics can often be turned very thin but can easily crack when fitting onto the jam chuck. Test the fit more often as you're reversing the box onto the jam chuck. If it does crack use thin super glue to repair and wipe the excess off right away. Use the jam chuck that was too big to open the crack as you push it on then apply the glue remove and wipe off. If you finished the inside the glue should wipe right off before drying.

Never remove the main blank from the chuck once it has been installed. I have found that rarely does it spin true once removed and remounted. Every time you have to true up the blank it will get a little smaller. I have, however, made a very nice Tower Box that had a nice taper from top to bottom this way. It was my first one and I removed the blank 3 times. I had to re-true the blank all 3 times.



## MEMBER TIPS

At the May meeting we had two members offer tips that could help us all.



Dan Schmoker talked about how much we could learn by cutting a few of our bowls or vessels in half. This is something that has been mentioned more than once at meetings and Dan brought a sample of one of his bowls and shared with us what he learned from the exercise.



Steve White mentioned a tip to hopefully save everyone the cost of a new fan blade for their vacuum. Steve suggests installing two wires in a cross hair pattern to help prevent projects from being sucked into your vacuum system and damaging it. A lesson he recently learned when one of his rosettes were sucked through the pipes and ultimately ruined the vacuum blade, a costly mistake.

## SHOW-N-TELL



## A BEGINNERS TURN

A continued series of articles by Matt Keim  
MAKING AND USING A SIMPLE JAM CHUCK

A jam chuck can be very useful for all turners. It can allow you to finish the bottom of almost any turned project. Jam chucks can be either internal or external, both have their advantages. Often scrap pieces of wood can be used for jam chucks so there is essentially no investment. Jam chucks are usually created for one project then later turned to another size or shape for a different project. Keep a small box of scraps handy for this purpose.

Wood selection is important as a dense hardwood will not give and should not be used for the chuck itself. I have found that hackberry works well and use it for most of my needs.

I have found that internal jam chucks typically hold better than external. The reason for this is that in most applications the mating surface area is greater than on external. Shape and form of the project obviously affect whether or not this is true. Internal jam chucks do, however, have a greater tendency to crack a project when not turned to the correct size and too much pressure is applied in an attempt to make it work. With that in mind, take your time when creating the chuck for your application.



In the stackable lidded box project a jam chuck is used throughout the process. Mount a block of a softer hardwood to a faceplate that is roughly 3" by 3" oriented so the grain runs along the lathes bed. Turn it to a cylinder first and clean up the end grain so it is square to the lathe.

Take your first lidded box which has the lid and inside completed. Measure the inside diameter of the box. Use a parting tool to take the jam chuck down to a tenon about 3/8" deep and a little larger in diameter than your box. Now use a small skew on its side to slowly take the tenon down to size. Go slowly and create a small chamfer at the end of your tenon each time you remove more wood. Stop often and check the fit. When the box just starts to go over the chamfer you created your almost there. If you go a little too far, by that I mean snug but not snug enough, wet the fibers of the tenon to swell them. If this does not work you have plenty of wood left so remove the small tenon and start over.

Once you have a snug fit you can complete the bottom of the box following the article on page 4.



# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION --WOOD TURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

\$30 Individual Membership • \$40 Family Membership

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this application along with your check for one-year's dues to:

**Woodturners of St. Louis**  
**2420 Cypress**  
**St. Charles, MO 53301**

or, bring it to the next Meeting.

## WOODTURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

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### CALENDAR

**June 22-24**

AAW Symposium - Louisville, KY

**June 25**

**NO JUNE MEETING**

**July 23, 1-4pm**

Regular Meeting at Woodcraft

Exchange = Turn a bowl

Demonstration = Lace Bobbins by Bill

Rubenstein

**September 23-25**

Alan Lacer in St. Louis for Demo and

Workshops.