



CHIPS & Chatter

THE SILICON VALLEY WOODTURNERS' NEWSLETTER

Dick Pickering's nutcrackers

Dick Pickering discusses the steps to producing an elegant nutcracker.



Our own Dick Pickering took center stage at the January meeting to tell how he builds those elegant nutcrackers he's been showing off over the years. Some of our photos are pictures of his slides, so they're focus is a little soft, but they'll help you remember what you saw.

Dick has been making a production run of a dozen or so nutcrackers each Christmas, for friends and relatives, since 1988. He's made over 200 so far! Each year he picks a different theme for his figures. Past efforts have included the Beast (from Beauty and the Beast), Millie the Y2K Bug, Herr Drosselmeyer from the Nutcracker, and this year's production, the American Soldier. He starts in October, and can usually be found in the shop in November

and December, slightly frazzled and covered in chips.

Dick begins with design sketches and working drawings, then he glues up blocks to turn into the bodies of the pieces. Story sticks, dedicated calipers, and jigs developed over the years help insure that he efficiently turns his pieces to uniform dimensions.

Limbs and feet are turned as separate elements, then carved as necessary and glued to the growing assembly. For an arm or leg, Dick will turn a spindle to shape, cut it at an angle where the joint would be, then rotate one piece 180°



Top to bottom: parts ready to turn or carve, design sketches, and preset calipers.

[Go to pg. 5](#)

PRES SEZ



Paperwork arrived today for our next Home and Garden Show, 2/27 – 2/29, at San Mateo Expo Center. I will post the sign up chart this weekend. I will try to explain this H & G stuff for the new members.

We (SVW) are “given” a booth for the show with the understanding that “We” demonstrate Woodturning. That means, while the show is open and we are in the booth, we are runnin’ the lathe, makin’ Something! Anything! Just a ROUND thing is good enough.... The point is: Show “OPEN”=Lathe “ON”.

It’s best if only THREE club members are in the booth at a time. One person “Turns”, one is in Charge of the “Cash box”, and one is in Charge of the “Display”. We try to give everyone a chance, “IF” they want it, at the lathe;

so every hour we rotate jobs. That gives you a chance at the display and dealing with people, talking about turnings and selling a piece, any piece, from the display. The person in charge of the cash box does the paperwork and collects the \$\$\$. As the display/seller person, you help bag the piece and make sure a “Business Card” from the Turner/Artist goes with the piece. This is **very important**.

At the end of the Show on Sunday, the last shift collects a piece from each displaying artist. We record the pieces on an inventory sheet, then I take them to the show office. This collection of pieces (“rent” is what I call it, they call it “donations”) is the other condition of doing the show. If you want to sell stuff in the booth, “You” must take a shift for the show and give up a turning for me to use as rent. We usually try to give pieces in the \$25 - \$35 range, so make one available. It is better if you pick the piece than one of us on the last shift just grabbing what’s left. We have a rent box set up on the first shift so you can put your piece in it, or make arrangements to get something in there.

Not everyone wants to sell, and that is OK. They are welcome to take a shift and help out SVW. It usually is fun. I generally have free show tickets, or at least some that are \$1 off. The free tickets are for our family members, etc. If you are working the show, I will try to give you tickets as long as they last: usually a couple each, so let me know soon. The sign up chart will have places to pick the shifts you want to work. I will have a place to sign up to display or sell. First come, first served. Our display is 16 feet long, and we try to give each Turner/Artist a couple of linear feet on all three shelves.

After the show, monies and paperwork go to Michelle, who takes out the taxes and produces reports of what sold and for how much. She will give you a check for your sales, and a check for

Next Meeting

Join us on Wednesday, Feb. 4th, at 7 P.M., when Rich Johnson demonstrates chucking techniques. Location: Rich Johnson's Woodturning Center in San Jose.

Rich's Center is located behind his home at 14979 Joanne Ave., San Jose. From Hwy. 680, take the McKee Road exit East about 1.5 miles to Toyon Ave. Turn left and go 0.6 mile, turn right onto Joanne Ave.

Bring your chair and items for Show and Tell. We all learn together.



PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE: GLUE UP!

Continued on page 4

TURNING OUT

Show & Tell and President's Challenge

President's Challenge: Plate/Platter

Tom Donnelly brought a redwood plate.

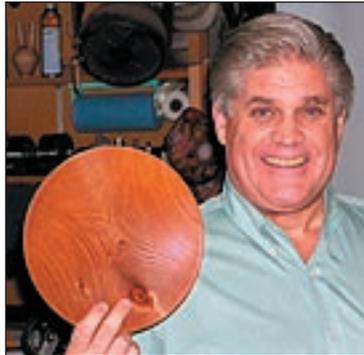
Bob Tang showed us a black Acacia plate.

Bill Robinson brought an oak platter.

Jim Gott presented a Philippine mahogany platter.

Mike Magrill showed off a red gum eucalyptus plate.

Mike Rude brought a mahogany plate.



Clockwise from top left: Tom Donnelly, Jim Gott, Mike

Continued on page 4.

Challenge,
con't. from
pg. 3.

Show and Tell

Show and Tell had only three participants this evening.

Tom Donnelly presented an ash bowl.

Allen Gore showed



a small ash bowl and small black acacia bowl.

Mike Magrill was the most prolific with a zebrawood plate, a coco

bowl, two mesquite bowls, and a pittosporum bowl.

Clockwise from top left: Tom Donnelly, Mike Magrill, and Alan Gore.

*Pres Sez,
from page 2*

the taxes goes to Jim. One thing New we are going to try this time is: "All CHECKS ARE TO BE MADE OUT TO: MICHELLE JOHNSON". The reason is: she can cut a check for you easier and on the spot without all the other names involved. It saves time for her and you get \$\$\$ sooner.

YOU are responsible for your own turnings! I am NOT! SVW is NOT! What that means is; "YOU" make arrangements, if you can't make it to set up or close, with someone to get "your" turnings to and from the show, as well as set up and taken down. I now have a shell on my truck, but I can only haul so much. Taking all the show stuff, my turnings, whomever rides with me (this time it will be Jay) and their (her) stuff, my truck is FULL! So please make arrangements.

All of your display pieces "Will" be listed on an Inventory sheet in the binder at the show: each pen, bottle topper, everything. If not, we cannot keep track of the sales and the bookwork gets messy. Each piece "WILL" be priced! If your pieces are not listed or priced they will be removed from the display. All display pieces are for sale, and must be signed. You wanna be paid, don't ya??

Whew..... I think that covers it.

So sign up as soon as you can for Sales/ Display space and shift preferences. If you need Inventory sheets, they are on our yahoo group site.

BTW don't forget to glue up!!

Happy round things.

Rich

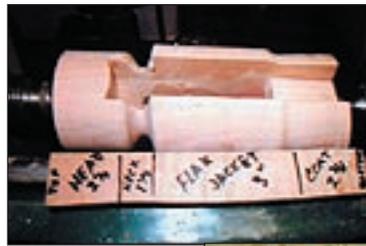
*Jigs, con't.
from pg. 1*

and glue it back on, making a convincing elbow or knee joint. He makes the nut cracking lever/jaw as a separate piece, cut out on a bandsaw, then shaped on a spindle sander, then shaped on a spindle sander to make the curve of a smiling lip.

Hair looks natural, because it is. Years ago, Dick got an old mink stole (which he figures is too dressy to wear to meetings). He cuts pieces out of it to make his nutcrackers' hair, then glues it into place before adding a hat or helmet.

This year's soldier sports plastic goggles, to keep desert sand out of his eyes. Dick cut the goggles from sheet plastic, then formed them into a face-hugging curve by softening them over soft drink cans in his oven.

Once all the pieces are shaped, Dick lines them up and paints them, then glues or pins them together. He makes bases, brands them with his name, glues the pieces on them, and they're ready for the world.



Top to bottom: the turned body above its story stick, the carved turning, and the turning on its legs.



Making an arm, from spindle (left) through attachment (right).

Dick couldn't demonstrate the actual making of a nutcracker in an hour, so he showed a series of pictures, put together by his daughter, Kathy, into a wonderful computer presentation. His son and daughter were there at the meeting to cheer him on as he told us all how he does it.

IT WAS A FANTASTIC SHOW.



Top left to bottom: sanding a smile on the lever/jaw, the assembly line, two finished nutcrackers, several years' worth of designs. Below: the American Soldier.



STAFF REPORTS & OTHER BUSINESS

RICH JOHNSON (PRESIDENT)

We're part of the February Home and Garden Show. Be sure to sign up if you want to sell at the show. We're also invited to be part of the June 4-6 Home and Garden Show in San Jose and the September 10-12 show in Santa Clara. In between, we can enjoy the annual Utah Symposium in Provo (June 10-12).

HERB GREEN (VP/PROGRAMS)

Rich Johnson will present chucking techniques in February. We have booked John Jordan for a workshop on April 10th (Saturday). Fee is \$25. Send your check to Herb Green.

JIM GOTT (TREASURER)

INCOME

Raffle	\$49
Dues	\$35

EXPENSES

Rich/Micelle gift certificate	\$50
Challenge prizes	\$20
Xmas Party ham (Michelle)	\$59.01

NEW BALANCE (spendable) \$1288.42

PHIL ROYBAL (SEC'Y. / EDITOR)

Get your dues in to Jim Gott. I'd like to make a new roster for release after the February meeting, so if you want to be in it, re-up by then.

OTHER BUSINESS

A motion was made by Craig Thorson and seconded by Tom Donnelly that we set the following dates. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS.**

- Annual Club Picnic: July 10th.
- Annual Club Turn-off, if we are chosen to host: Saturday September 28th.
- Annual Christmas Party: December 4th

These dates were chosen at this time so we can start planning and make them more successful.

Dick Jessing passes on

Richard Jessing, a club member since 2001, died on January 2nd in Walnut Creek. Dick had retired in 1989, after 30 years at Lawrence Livermore Laboratories, to devote himself to music, woodworking, and fishing. He was a member of SVW and Bay Area



Woodturners, and served as a woodshop volunteer at the Pleasanton Senior Center.

We remember Dick as the man who showed many of us how to hand chase threads on delicate little boxes, making it look deceptively easy. He was a quiet and meticulous worker, and attended meetings regularly until the last month of his life.

Dick is survived by his wife Roberta, eight children, and 14 grandchildren. Services were held on January 6th, in Pleasanton.

FOR SALE

Even Roy wants to know... How did you do that?

Rich Johnson's Woodturners' Boot camp.
Learn the basics, from chainsaw to polish.
An all day class. Book available. Sign up
now. (408) 254-8485.



Woodfast lathe for sale

16" capacity, variable
speed, good condition.
Credit card OK. E-
mail Josh Salesin at jls-epi@pacbell.net for more
info.

*Affordable
Elegance*
*Custom
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**Deborah
Bress**

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MENTOR PROGRAM

Our Mentor program now includes five volunteer mentors. Contact Phil Roybal to join the list. Members who need some help (but not formal lessons) can contact:

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Jim Gott	(408) 265-9501
Rich Johnson	(408) 254-8485
Ron Newcomb	(510) 797-6665
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