

The CAW Newsletter

The CAW Newsletter is the official publication of the Capital Area Woodturners Chapter of the AAW, and is published for the information of its members. Membership in the CAW Chapter is open to anyone

Meeting Announcement:

Date: Saturday, Jan 11, 2002
Time: 9:30 AM — 4:30 PM
Place: Bryant Education Center
2709 Popkins Lane
Alexandria, Virginia

DIRECTIONS TO THE MEETING: From Virginia or Maryland, take I-495/I-95 towards the Wilson Bridge over the Potomac River. Take Exit 177A (Rt 1 South) on the Virginia side. Approximately 1.9 miles south of the Beltway, you will pass the Beacon Mall complex with Lowes Home Improvement Warehouse on your right. From the main entrance into Beacon Mall, go 4 more stop lights – about ½ mile. The 4th stop light will be Popkins Lane. Turn Left onto Popkins lane and go down 2 blocks. The Bryant Learning Center entry will be on your right. Drive to the East side of the building. Plenty of parking on the side or in the rear of the building. The entrances to the woodworking shop and meeting rooms are off the East side of the Bryant Center.

Program For The Month

8:30 AM Help set up for the demonstration. Look over the For Sale items in the equipment room. Have a cup of coffee and a donut with your fellow turners. Discuss the items on the Show & Tell table or put in a bid on one of the silent auction donations. Rent a video. Talk over problems and techniques with someone who might already have been there and done that. Or just enjoy the normal hour of skill enhancement and practice time on the lathes.

9:30 AM A normal business meeting. Photos of member items will be taken for the February Newsletter. The tape library will be open. A silent auction table will be available for donated wood and items. A Show & Tell of pieces brought in will be conducted. Supplies & tools for sale will be shown.

✧ **A Full Day Demo \$5.00 Fee** ✧

10:30 AM An informative demonstration and discussion by Betty Scarpino on turning design concepts. See plans in next column. Betty is a warm, informative speaker who makes a special point of giving ideas and hints to turners of every level that they can use day-to-day in their own shop. When we see Betty's pieces, inevitably we say: "How could she do that." She'll tell us how, and demonstrate that you can do it too.

Bring your lunch, arrange to split a pizza with some other member, or visit a restaurant on Hwy 1 during the lunch break.

Betty Scarpino Demo Plans

Betty will share with us her techniques for working with turned items after they leave the lathe. These include cutting, carving, texturing, bleaching, and coloring.

Throughout her presentation, she will discuss design considerations and talk about creativity. Her slide show will outline the development of an idea through a discussion of her nest/egg vessel series.

Betty's approach to demonstrating is to present her material in a way that is useful to everyone so that you can learn how to develop your own individual approach to making things using the lathe.

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Familiar Strangers



Nest/Egg Vessel



Bearing Blue Eggs

Education:

- B.S. Industrial Arts, with a specialty in woodworking, 1981 University of Missouri-Columbia. While there I also studied wood sculpture.
- 1982- Studio Woodturner
- Summer 1999, Resident Artist, International Turning Exchange Program, Wood Turning Center

See additional biographical information on Ms. Scarpino at:
<http://www.carolinamountainwoodturners.org/scarpino/scarpino1.htm>

**See additional information about a special
 6-Person HANDS-ON Workshop
 With Ms. Scarpino on Friday, January 10th
 at 09:00 AM to 4:00 PM
 (((Boxed item on page 2)))
 Presently full, but you can get on a waiting list**

Special Workshops

Special, For-Fee, Hands-On Workshops available

Call Frank Stepanski for cost and availability

These workshops are essentially the same information as will be presented at the next day's CAW demonstration. However, you will get an opportunity for Hands-On turning to try the techniques under the watchful eye of the demonstrator.

Estimated cost per head is based on planned participation of 6 registrants. Actual cost will be determined by the equal share of all participants of the cost of the demo.

Betty Scarpino workshop:

Friday, January 10th

09:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The Bryant Adult Education Center

Cost: \$100.00 per head

Focus: Demo and practice of techniques for working with turned items after they leave the lathe. These include cutting, carving, texturing, bleaching, and coloring.

Presently full – get on the waiting list

Bruce Hoover workshop:

Friday, February 7th

09:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The Bryant Adult Education Center

Focus: This workshop will address the topic of sanding in depth. Beginning with surface preparation prior to sanding, including a discussion of shearing cuts using both gouges and scrapers on outside and inside surfaces. Plus much more! Need to bring materials.

Bruce Hoover Demonstration to the CAW planned in February

Innovative Sanding Techniques

This demonstration will address the topic of sanding in depth. Beginning with surface preparation prior to sanding, including a discussion of shearing cuts using both gouges and scrapers on outside and inside surfaces. Next, covering commonly accepted and familiar methods for sanding and introducing many different ones as well. Included are some new uses for old familiar tools. It covers self powered sanders, random orbit units, and methods of hand sanding. If time allows, there will be a brief explanation of wet sanding techniques.

Next will be methods for sanding inside surfaces on anything from an open bowl to deep vessels using commonly available tools and many shop made tools as well. Covered also are methods for sanding small objects and spindles, and off-lathe sanding techniques, as well as ways to avoid staining when gluing with CA.

Throw in a myriad of potpourri: small tools, gadgets, and useful helpers to ease the tasks of sanding and regardless of skill level, everyone will walk away from this demonstration with some new skills to use.

Notices:

CAW-S/E WORKSHOP—BRYANT SCHOOL

WED. 01-08-03 9:00AM TILL 3:00PM

TUES. 01-28-03 9:00AM TILL 3:00PM

Any special requests contact:

C.A. Savoy cadjsavoy@msn.com

Or: Don Riggs driggs11@cox.com

Or: Don Johnson drjapaw@aol.com

YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF WOODTURNERS IF YOU WANT TO TURN

About Our Members

by Phil Brown

Attendees at our CAW Woodturners Ball on December 15th selected three winners in the Holiday Ornament competition. **Chris Cuyler** (a relatively new turner) received the 3rd place award (a \$25 certificate), **Don Johnson** received the 2nd place award, and **Tom Boley** the 1st place award. Winners were also selected for the grab bag table with **Annie Simpson** winning 3rd place, **Frank Stepanski** winning 2nd place, and **Paul Burk** winning 1st place.

Last October 4th to 6th, **Tom Boley** exhibited woodturnings in the Old Mill at the Waterford Fair, Waterford, VA. This was the annual fund-raiser which the Waterford Foundation sponsors to raise money for preservation of its historic town, located just north of Rt 9, west of Leesburg, VA. **Tom** also exhibited his woodturnings at the annual Fall Bazaar at Messiah United Methodist Church, Springfield, VA, last October 19th.

Bill Hardy participated in a successful home sale show over the December 7th weekend, despite all the snow on the ground.

CA Savoy continues teaching Bowl Turning Classes at the Woodcraft store in Springfield, Va. on January 22, February 26 and March 18, 2003. Turn a bowl while learning wood selection, preparation, mounting techniques, finishing and the proper use of the side ground bowl gouge. Call the store at 703-912-6727 for details and to reserve your place.

Richard Allen will also be teaching woodturning classes at Woodcraft in January and February. His "Introduction to the lathe" classes will be held from 10 am to 5 pm on Sundays, January 12th and February 9th at the Springfield store. Richard's class focuses on basic lathe spindle turning while covering tool selection, sharpening, and setup. Call the store as above.

CAW's Mentorship Program
HONOR ROL

As of Jan 2003

Bob Grudberg *** Don Chamlee
Don Johnson ** Bill Hardy
Bob Pezold ** Alan Becker*
Richard Allen **** Tom Boley**
Andrew Blackwell ** Pat Berry*
John Overman Richard Preston
CA Savoy xx Don Riggs xx
Jim Marstall *

*** denotes number of people being mentored
xxx denotes tue & wed skill enhancement

Many thanks to those who are giving back, by helping others. Any who are missing or are willing to help others, contact Paul Burke, at. 703-534-9076, Woodturner@Pburke.net Let's Grow Woodturners!

About Our Members (Cont'd)
Other Items

It is sad to report that we lost **Palmer Sharpless** on December 4, 2002 after a recent struggle with cancer. Palmer was a life-long wood turner from Bucks County, Pa just north of Philadelphia. He taught woodworking at the George School in Newtown, PA for over forty years and maintained a lifetime friendship with many of his students. Palmer was special for woodturners in several ways. He helped Albert and Alan LeCoff start a 5-year series of wood turning symposia at the George School in 1976. These symposia later lead to formation of the American Association of Woodturners (AAW). Palmer was a founding member and officer of the AAW. He also helped to establish the local Bucks County AAW chapter and remained active until October. In his retirement Palmer continued to teach a few students in his home shop and demonstrated at many AAW symposia and local chapters. He was admired and loved by all who knew him. A memorial service was held on December 21st in Newtown, Pa.

Membership Renewals Are Now Due!!

Renew your CAW membership for the year 2003.
\$20 for individual membership
\$15/person for multiple persons in a family

Bring your dues to the next meeting or mail them to:
Mike McInerney, CAW Treasurer
14526 Creek Branch Ct
Centreville, VA 20120

Make checks payable to Capital Area Woodturners

If you are unsure if you owe dues for the year 2003, look at the mailing label on the newsletter in the upper right corner. If it says DEC-02, you owe. If it says DEC-03, you are paid up.

If you get the newsletter via email, check our website at the following link:
http://www.capwoodturners.org/dues.htm, or call or email Mike McInerney, CAW Treasurer, at 703-378-8117 or mikemc1421@aol.com to verify your membership.

CAW 2003 Officer Roster

<u>Name</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
<u>Position</u> <u>Bob Pezold</u>	8018 Hammond St. Alexandria, VA 22309
<u>President</u>	202-675-4328 ext102 (work) rpezold@cox.net
<u>Tom Boley</u>	8316 Botsford Ct. Springfield, VA 22152
<u>Vice-President</u>	703-569-2548 tboley@erols.com
<u>Mike McInerney</u>	14526 Creek Branch Court Centreville, VA 20120
<u>Treasurer</u>	703-378-8117 mikemc1421@aol.com
<u>Bob Reynolds</u>	7627 Mineral spring Court Springfield, VA 22153
<u>Secretary</u>	703-455-2931 reynoldsrf@aol.com
<u>Frank Stepanski</u> <u>Committee Chair</u>	1203 Washington Dr. Stafford, VA 22554-1902
<u>Program Director</u>	540-720-4202 rcpilot@tidalwave.net
<u>C. A. Savoy</u>	1309 Gatewood Drive Alexandria, VA 22307
<u>Show Director</u>	703-765-7268 cadjsavoy@msn.com
<u>Jim Marstall</u>	6213 Capella Ave. Burke, VA 220215
<u>Newsletter Editor</u>	703-644-6797 jim.b.marstall@boeing.com
<u>Club Support Volunteers</u>	<u>Gerry Headley</u> - Video Library <u>Cal Frantz</u> - Group Buy TBD - Auctions <u>Chris Cuyler</u> - CAW Clothes

Red Mallee Australian Burl



Paul Burke



Capital Area Woodturners
2002 Holiday Party
Peoples Choice Contest

1st Place

Experimental New Treatment for Wood

By Ron Kent, Hawaii

Prologue:

"I'll bet you own a restaurant," said the friendly supermarket checkout clerk. "No," I replied, "I'm a woodworker". "A woodworker? Then why..."??"

Why, indeed! What does a woodworker do with five gallons of but I'm, getting ahead of myself! I will give you the answer to that question, which was only friendly banter at the checkout counter, but which may be of interest and use to other craftsmen. I'm going to tell you about a product and procedure that I developed a few months ago and now use as an integral part of every woodturning project. It involves a liquid that I use to soak all my wood, before, during, and after shaping and completing my work.

It had a very simple beginning: I bought a gallon of a product that promises to "stabilize and condition" wood. Tried it, liked it. Liked it enough to buy more and to incorporate its use in my daily production. I liked everything about it except the price: nearly fifty dollars per gallon!

I started wondering if there wasn't some other, more common liquid, that might do the same job. Something that might soak in, harden, and become part of the wood, bonding the fibers more firmly while also imparting a lubricating quality. It had to be transparent and non-staining. I started my search at the hardware store (Where else?) walking up one row and down the other, scanning each shelf for ideas. Then came the supermarket and the drugstore. One product caught my attention and seemed to hold a lot of hope....Clear acrylic liquid floor-wax! Transparent as water, promising to harden into a tough protective shield. Bonds firmly to the floor so certainly would bond to the wood fibers to form a dense composite. And anyone who has slipped on a newly waxed floor knows wax's ability to "lubricate".

Tried it, liked it...well, sort of liked it. Acrylic floor wax did indeed meet the criteria I had set up, but in doing so reminded me of another very important characteristic that I had forgotten to consider. Turns out that wax-impregnated wood does not take well to the multiple oil-soak technique I use to enhance translucence. The brilliant golden ambers now looked dusty and dull. And the price of the wax was little better than the conventional product I was hoping to replace. Back to the drawing board!

I tried a number of products over the next few months, haunting again the hardware store, drug-store, supermarket, and giant discount house; trying all sorts of concoctions, individually and in various combinations. In most cases the results were innocuous, in some, downright messy. Till one day, while on a shopping safari with my wife, I noticed her picking up a big bottle of syrupy golden liquid to add to our shopping cart. I made a mental note to give this a try when we got home.

Perhaps it is time to end the suspense. The liquid I tried and now find so useful is...are you ready for this?.... concentrated dishwashing detergent: Costco's Kirkland brand sells for about \$7.00/gallon in Hawaii, quite possibly less in other parts of the country. (My guess is that this is their private label on a similar product with familiar major brand name, and that many or most other brands will deliver the same results.)

What are the benefits that I find? First, there is the advantage of stabilizing the wood; a great deal less "moving" and warping both while working on the vessel and after it is taken off the lathe. A second favorable difference shows up in cutting. The shavings are a delight! Clean, long, cohesive ribbons, both for fine trimming and for the macho adversarial plunge-cuts that characterize my favored rough-shaping "technique". It feels almost as if the wood has been lubricated and allows the edge of the tool to slide through the cut. I never did figure out what "conditioning" means. Whatever it is, I'll bet detergent does it!

Ah, and on the rare (Hah!!) occasions when I resort to using sandpaper it's a whole new sanding experience. For one thing, it allows sanding work that not only is green, but even wood that is soaking wet. The sandpaper still becomes clogged, mind you, but a couple sharp slaps on the bed of the lathe clears the grit and allows reuse again and again. And with dry wood, well, you have to try that to see for yourself. The closest I can come to describing the difference is to compare it to certain special woods (ebony comes to mind) where the dust seems to be tiny beads rather than that with which we are more familiar. Again, the sense of lubrication.

Technique:

Now back to my story.....! Though the experimentation never ends, I currently use a dilution ratio of one part water to one part concentrated detergent. (I've also tried diluting with isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and suspect I get better penetration, but am not sure it justifies the added expense.) Even after this dilution, the result is a viscous, syrup-like liquid, leaving me to suspect that further dilution would heighten the economy without losing effectiveness. I vary the proportion each time I mix it, still seeking an optimum ratio. I do, however, regularly add eucalyptus oil to the mix - available at most drug stores. I use about one teaspoon per gallon. What does this add? A distinctive, pungent scent. It just smells good!

Green wood:

All of my work is on logs that I get from local tree-trimmers. They bring it to me as soon as the tree is cut, and I'm likely to start turning it the very next day. The wood at this stage is not only green, it is soaking wet! I strip the bark, mount the log, and rough-turn the shape to about one inch thick. (Attention NASA Engineers: Please read as 2.54 cm.) I remove the work from the lathe and slather on a thick coat of the mix, wait a few minutes for the foam to soak in, then repeat, as many as a half-dozen times, inside and out.

I haven't...yet...adapted detergent to my old "trick" of total immersion. (For many years I have used an open vat of Varathane...75 gallons of the stuff...for multiple immersion of completed turnings). A detergent" pre-soak"----at an early stage of turning---seems the logical next experiment to try. I'm planning a five-gallon tub for starters. (I also have begun experimenting with the mix as a "sealer" on end-grain of cut logs, waiting in my woodpile. I suspect it will decrease splitting and checking. As for other woods...woods not as porous as Norfolk Pine...well, I'd be very interested in hearing from you if you find out.)

After the soak---by whatever means---I set the work aside for a few days to allow detergent to permeate the wood, and become surface-dry.

Before I started using detergent this was a chancy thing to do. When I was lucky, the vessel-to-be only warped. I wasn't always lucky. There was a definite risk of losing the work altogether due to checking and cracking. With this new technique my experience to date has been minimal "moving" and zero checking.

At this point, I re-mount the workpiece and proceed using the usual tools and procedures, enjoying the benefits to cutting and sanding described earlier.

Dry wood:

I use the same procedure on logs that have dried out standing in the woodpile, and I find the benefits are even more marked. Norfolk Pine dries and spalts very rapidly in Hawaii's humid climate. Spalting typically starts within a month of the tree's cutting. By the fourth month the wood is almost completely black. Though there still is considerable moisture in the log, the wood acts as if it were dry. It is significantly more difficult to cut smoothly, and it is easily subject to bruising and tearout. This dark-and-dry wood drinks up detergent like a camel in the desert, but the overall process differs mainly in quantity. My goal is to penetrate...permeate...the wood with liquid detergent. Sometimes I start working the piece right after the soaking, before the detergent has even had a chance to dry. More often, though, I will subject the rough-turned form to repeated soakings over a period of days, then allow up to two weeks of standing before I finish the piece. Did I mentioned "conditioning" and "stabilizing? Let me now add another word: This wood acts as if it has been rejuvenated.

Effect on Finish:

I told you about trying acrylic wax and rejecting it because of its effect on the final finishing process. Detergent, on the other hand, seems to actually enhance my own particular technique. Remember, my finishing process consists of multiple cycles of soak, oil-sand, and dry. The detergent-treated vessel is fully receptive to absorption of the oil. It is difficult for me to be certain, but it seems to me that I am achieving even more dramatic translucence from the oils when using wood that was treated with detergent during forming of the vessel. How will detergent affect other finishing techniques on other woods? I haven't tried it, so I do not know, but my strong expectation is that, once dry, the detergent-treated wood will accept any of our standard, traditional finishes and that it might greatly improve cohesion of the new water-based products.

Safety:

We woodworkers should always be conscious of safety in our work...personal as well as environmental. (My membership card in American Association of Woodturners recently arrived in the mail with a Dayglo checklist of cautions). Our workshops are virtual minefields of chemical, mechanical, and biological hazards. The concentrated liquid dishwashing detergent, however, seems quite benign. The bottles carry only a mild word of caution: "In case of eye contact rinse thoroughly with water", and "if swallowed (swallowed??) drink a glass of water to dilute.

Contact a physician." Oh, yes, "To avoid irritating fumes do not mix with chlorine bleach." The label also boasts that it is "specially formulated to kill germs on hands when used as a hand soap, contains no phosphorus, and has biodegradable cleaning agents." It even is "Safe for septic tanks".... though that doesn't happen to be one of my own concerns. Note: No mention of use as a wood conditioner or stabilizer. I think it is a safe bet that the manufacturer never envisioned this usage and it behooves us to make our own list of common-sense cautions. Primary among these is dust protection. I'm no more anxious to breathe detergent-treated dust than I am any other kind. Everything I've described in this article is still (may always be) in the experimental stage, with more questions than answers. "Benign?" Maybe, but I strongly urge everyone to use all of the normal precautions that accompany good practice in the shop.

About the author:

Ron Kent - thin oil-soaked, uplifted vessels turned from Norfolk pine are immediately recognized as his and his alone (though imitators have appeared). No one else has his minimalist/classical sense of form. The wood itself is an important part of the content. Norfolk pine is ubiquitous in the Pacific; legend has it that Captain Cooke saw to it that this very straight tree was planted everywhere to provide masts for sailing ships. Kent, like the sage wood pioneer. Wharton Esherick, seems to believe that all the wood you need can be found in your own backyard. Norfolk pine local (on Hawaii where Kent lives), renewable, and for the asking. Kent has an eye for spalting and, since he lives in the tropics, he now deep-freezes roughly turned pieces to halt the configurations where he wants them to stay. But translucency is Kent's miraculous innovation. Properly lit, his bowls glow. He can control the light by the thickness and the thinness of the walls so that the turned bowl shapes light. Kent turns light. There is one piece that only glows near the base. Others glow as if radioactive. The shadow of one's hand can be seen through the wood.



Left: Three samples of Ron's translucent, multiple-soaked, oil-finished thin bowls. To see other examples of Ron's beautiful work, and to read other unique tips and techniques that Ron Kent has pioneered over the years, visit his web site at:

<http://www.ronkent.com/>

Jim Marstall, Newsletter Editor
Capital Area Woodturners (CAW)
6213 Capella Ave.
Burke, VA 22015



CAW Newsletter — January 2003

Additional comments from Ron Kent on the experimental soap treatment for green wood article, provided when he granted us permission for re-production:

"Somewhere in the editorial process, this article came out a lot stronger than I had intended or feel. Please read it as a report on experiments and results I experienced, with a lot of accompanying "I think", "usually", "often", "it seemed", etc. Perhaps the single purely positive statement I can make is that the detergent process worked as well for me as the much more expensive commercial product I set out to replace. (At least that's how it seemed to me.)"

Please also credit woodturner Phil Wall, who read my original article, and then did an immense amount of additional research.