NEWSLETTER EDITOR
TOM HUBER

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Dion Fralick Stabilizing Wood
- President's Message

VOLUME I, ISSUE 4 APRIL 2024

Working with Stabilized Wood- Dion Fralick

Have you ever had a beautiful piece of wood with beautiful figure and interesting spalting but it was too soft and punky for anything but firewood.? Our April Demonstrator Dion Fralick will demonstrate how this wood can be saved through a process of stabilization. This process can also be used to add color to various woods, making them eve more attractive.

Dion is a former member of the Tidewater Turners from the Norfolk area. He has moved to Northern Virginia and has become a member of our motley band. Dion will be our last demonstrator in CAW's Bryant School meeting place.

Starting in May our meeting s will be held in the Pimmit Center. Our last meeting in Bryant will also have the added benefit of having a big sale of many of the items we have acquired over the years, These items will be available at "fire sale"prices since our goal is to clear out our storage space.

So don't miss this opportunity to learn a new technique for saving and improving your wood stocks. Take advantage of the rock bottom prices to acquire, tools, materials, and miscellanea. Come early, bring a piece or two to share, and get a good seat for a great show.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message— Big Changes Coming

In March, we were privileged to have Stewart Furini conduct an interactive remote demonstration. Furini captivated us with his skills as he turned and embellished a platter, showcasing his preferred techniques such as air brushing and carving. If you missed the live session the recording is still available, check your email for details.

As we move forward, April marks the end of an era for us at Bryant. Our meetings at Bryant will cease indefinitely as the space is slated to undergo transformation into a welding lab. The construction is expected to commence later this year, necessitating our relocation. Starting in May, our new meeting location will be the Pimmit Hills Center, located at 7510 Lisle Ave, Falls Church, VA 22043.

Transitioning to Pimmit Hills presents exciting opportunities for the Capital Area Woodturners. Fairfax County has expressed a need for instructors in its adult education program and anticipates offering four or more classes per year, which our members will have the opportunity to teach. This presents a unique chance for our members to not only share their expertise but also to cultivate new talent within the craft. Let's seize this opportunity to fulfill our mission and inspire new and experienced artists.

(To facilitate our move, we must streamline our inventory stored at Bryant. During the April meeting, we will be hosting a fire sale of items we do not plan to take with us. This could include small tools, supplies, wood, and woodworking equipment. (continued on page 3)

CAW Monthly Meetings

CAW's monthly meeting are held the second Saturday of each month (except August and December) at the Bryant School. The doors open about 8:00 with a coffee and donut social time. Our meeting begins **at 8:30 with show and tell, followed by a quick business meeting.** Demonstrations begin at 9:30. Until further notice, our meetings will be limited to a one half day demonstration. In 2023 CAW will conduct bi-monthly in person meetings at our Bryant School location. The school is on Popkins Lane in Alexandria. Entrance is around the back across from the large parking lot. Check the CAW website for directions. Our newsletter will give our members plenty of notice about the dates, times, and programs of our in-person meetings and Interactive Remote Demonstrations.

Bryant High School

Alexandria, Virginia

CAW's Online Look

CAW's web page contains excellent information about CAW programs. It's very attractive and user friendly. You can also use it to pay your dues. It's an great resource **for all things woodturning. Check them out:**

Website: https://capwoodturners.org

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Artist/Capital-Area-Woodturners-310034189708779/

Flickr:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/capwoodturners/albums/with/72157711559707478

More Ways to Support CAW

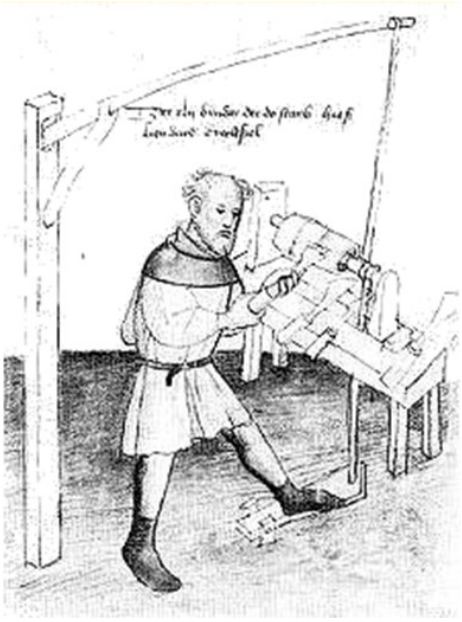
CAW now accepts donations, $10 and up, on our website from anyone who wishes to contribute. Anyone donating $100 or more gets a free CAW Polo from the color choices. The donations are through PayPal, however, you don't need to have a PayPal account or be a member of CAW as anyone can checkout as a guest using a credit card.

Another way of supporting CAW is by donating items to CAW. These items can be tools, equipment, materials (sandpaper, finishes, etc) , or timber. CAW can sell these items to our members at substantial discount. This is a great way to free up space in your shop and help out fellow turners. All donations are eligible for a 501 C3 tax deduction.

Additionally, in April, Dion Fralick will be demonstrating his techniques for dyeing and stabilizing wood, followed by the turning of a stabilized piece.May will be the first meeting at Pimmit Hills, we currently are scheduled to have doors opened for us Saturday May 11th at 8am. Bob Pezold will be demonstrating a smaller version of a Nick Agar off center wall decoration. This demonstration will include turning, embellishment, and painting.

Looking ahead, mark your calendars for our annual Picnic hosted by Jim and Carol Neam in Warrenton on Saturday, June 8th. This family-friendly event promises great food, turning, games, and an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful property. Spouses, children, and grandchildren are all invited to join in the fun.

As we embrace these changes, let's not forget to spend some time enjoying our craft. There's no better time than the present to create shavings, experiment with texturing, or embark on a new turning project. I'm look forward to seeing you all at the April Meeting. Happy and Safe Turning, *Ben Johnson*



Dang! I thought Craig's List said a Polish lathe!

2024 Demonstration and Workshop

January 13 – Steve Schwartz

Using computer graphics to embellish

Jan 17 SEW

February 10

Tips and Tricks (topics TBD)

Feb 14 SEW

March 9– IRD

Mar 13 SEW

April 13– Dion Fralick

Apr 17 SEW

May 11– Bob Pezold

May 15 SEW

June 8– CAW Picnic

June 12 SEW

July 13– TBD

July 17 SEW

August– No Programs

September 14—Mark Gardner

Sept 18 SEW

October 12– Colwin Way IRD

Oct 16 SEW

November 9– Ann Ogg

Nov 13 SEW

December 14– CAW Holiday Party

(No SEW)

A Harbinger of Spring– Asparagus

One of the earliest green plants to come up in Europe after the winter is asparagus. As a result, asparagus is associated with Spring and rebirth.

Asparagus has been used as a vegetable owing to its distinct flavor, and in medicine due to its diuretic properties and its purported function as an aphrodisiac. It is pictured as an offering on an Egyptian frieze dating to 3000 BC. In ancient times, it was also known in Syria and in the Iberian Peninsula. Greeks and Romans ate it fresh when in season, and dried the vegetable for use in winter. Emperor Augustus coined the expression "faster than cooking asparagus" for quick action.

A recipe for cooking asparagus is given in one of the oldest surviving collections of recipes (Apicius's 1st century AD *De re coquinaria*, Book III). In the second century AD, the Greek physician Galen, highly respected within Roman society, mentioned asparagus as a beneficial herb, but as dominance of the Roman empire waned, asparagus' medicinal value drew little attention until al-Nafzawi's *The Perfumed Garden*. That piece of writing celebrates its purported aphrodisiacal power that the Indian *Ananga Ranga* attributes to "special phosphorus elements" that also counteract fatigue.

Asparagus was brought to North America by European settlers at least as early as 1655. Adriaen van der Donck, a Dutch immigrant to New Netherland, mentions asparagus in his description of Dutch farming practices in the New World. Asparagus was grown by British immigrants as well; in 1685, one of William Penn's advertisements for Pennsylvania included asparagus in a long list of crops that grew well in the American climate.

Many German cities hold an annual *Spargelfest* (asparagus festival) celebrating the harvest of white asparagus. Schwetzingen claims to be the "Asparagus Capital of the World",[80] and during its festival, an Asparagus Queen is crowned. The Bavarian city of Nuremberg feasts a week long in April, with a competition to find the fastest asparagus peeler in the region; this usually involves generous amounts of the local wines and beers being consumed to aid the spectators' appreciative support.

So, while asparagus is one of the first vegetables of spring, it does have a down side. The effect of eating asparagus on urine excreted afterwards has long been observed . Asparagus contains asparagusic acid. When the vegetable is digested, a group of volatile sulfur-containing compounds is produced. Despite this drawback, asparagus is low in calories and high in vitamins and minerals. It's good for you. So celebrate Spring by eating your asparagus.

Asparagus— Two Ways

Steamed Asparagus

Prepare a bunch of asparagus by chopping off the tough ends.

Place an inch or two of salted water into a large sauce pan. Try to insure that the asparagus are in one layer of two. Bring the water to a boil, then reduce heat to s simmer. Cover the asparagus and steam them for 3 to 4 minutes or until they are ender. Try not to overcook them. Drain the asparagus, place them on a plate and dress them with 2 to 3 tablespoons of melted butter. Option 1: dress with 3 tablespoons of melted butter stirred together with 1 Tablespoon of lemon juice. Option 2- Melt 3 tablespoons of butter in a sauce pan ; add 1/2 cup of breadcrumbs. Stir the butter and breadcrumbs until they are golden brown. Pour the breadcrumbs over the asparagus.

Roasted Asparagus

Prepare a bunch of asparagus by chopping off the tough ends.

Set the oven to 425 degrees. Liberally coat a baking sheet with ultra virgin olive oil. Place the asparagus on the sheet. Place in the oven and roast for 5 minutes. Flip the asparagus over and sprinkle liberally with pgrated Parmesan cheese. Place back in the oven for 3 to 4 minutes.

Cooked asparagus can be served cold with salad or as an appetizer.

Stabilizing and Dying Spalted and Punky Wood—Dion Fralick

I suspect many woodturners have come across pieces, of highly figured, spalted, or otherwise, really great pieces, of wood to turn only to discover it's too punky or too far spalted as a candidate for turning on the lathe. Into the trash or fire pit it goes. Some time ago, I came across several YouTube videos (you can find almost anything there) where the topic was stabilizing and dying pen blanks. I thought what a great way to save prized and highly figured wood that is too punky and too far gone from the heat of the fire pit. I was intrigued and thought I could potentially use this process for more than just pen blanks. I took a chance, bought the necessary equipment, and began experimenting. I have extended this process for producing blanks for bracelets, necklace pendants, bottle stoppers, bottle openers, birdhouse ornaments, shawl pins, buttons, etc. The results have been extremely positive and produced some striking results. In this article, I will share my experiences with equipment, setup, the stabilization process, preparation, turning and finishing of stabilized wood.

The Equipment

To begin exploring this process, I needed to purchase some equipment. I already owned a vacuum pump that has been in use for a vacuum chuck, so I did not need to purchase one. It is a small 2.5 cfs rotary vane HVAC vacuum pump (Figure1). You can find these at garage sales, on-line and even stores like Harbor Freight. Woodcraft and other woodturner supply stores sell a venturi vacuum pump that works with compressed air that will produce a good partial vacuum. However, rotary vane pumps will produce a higher level of vacuum (better). I did some research and purchased a small 3-gallon vacuum vessel. It came with a glass top (important), a seal for the lid, a pressure gauge and all the plumbing pieces required (Figure 2). If you choose to begin experimenting with stabilizing resins, make sure you get a vessel with a glass top. Polycarbonate and other plastics are designed for vacuum degassing of epoxies and silicone molding compounds and will degrade with exposure to stabilizing resins. I looked at various places for a used toaster oven and finally found one at Goodwill for $10. This is required for curing of the stabilizing compound once the vacuum process is complete. It is a bit dented and beat-up but I am still using this one. If you are interested in exploring this process, I recommend a used one that you can dedicate to this process and keep in your shop or garage. A note of caution here! DO NOT use the toaster oven you have in your kitchen…that will not go over very well with others in your household!

Figure 1 Vacuum pump used for stabilizing projects.

Figure 2 Three- gallon vacuum chamber, gauge, valves and filter

I placed the resin-saturated and wrapped blanks in a toaster oven at 200 deg F for roughly an hour. This allowed time for the internal temperature of the wood blank to reach the point where the resin cures. The resin curing occurs when the temperature in the wood blank reaches between 177 deg F and 205 deg F, for 6-8 minutes. This usually takes about 45 minutes to an hour, or even longer for larger blanks. I keep bottle stopper blanks in the toaster oven for 65-70 minutes, since they are thicker than pen blanks, to ensure the internal temperature reaches the curing temperature for long enough. Smaller or thinner blanks used for buttons or pendants take less time to cure. The blanks are allowed to cool and then unwrapped. At this time, they are ready to turn. The blanks, once stabilized (Figure 5), are much heavier (and denser) and each weighed-in at roughly 3.5 oz, a three-fold increase in weight. Note: one of the blanks was sanded to provide a glimpse of the resulting color from the dye

Process Overview

For a recent demonstration, I prepared two bottle stopper blanks. (Figure 3). First, I dried them by cycling them in the toaster oven several times for an hour at a time, at 175 deg F. The stabilization process works better if the moisture content of the wood is as close to 0% moisture content as possible. The pre-stabilization weight was roughly 1.5 oz for each blank. The stabilization process was initiated by submerging the wood blanks in the stabilizing resin solution. I used a separate container that could be lifted into the vacuum vessel (Figure 4). Note that wood, especially soft and punky wood, floats. Additional weight was added on top of the blanks to ensure they remained completely submerged. I used some garage-sale ½" drive sockets as inexpensive weights. The container with the blanks and stabilizing solution was placed into the vacuum vessel. The glass top was then centered on the top of the vessel. I started the vacuum pump and the vessel remained under vacuum for several hours. I let the pump run until the air bubbles stopped emerging from the solution. Once the bubbles stop, the air is essentially evacuated from the wood. It is easy to watch for this through the glass lid (Figure 4). This can take as long as six-to-eight hours or more depending on the porosity and species of the wood

Figure 3 Pre-stabilization-process, dried, spalted-maple bottle stopper blanks. Size 1.5" square x 2.25" long.

Vacuum Vessel

Figure 4 Blanks submerged in dyed stabilizing solution and under vacuum. Note the high-tech weights to keep the blanks submerged. Bubbles emerging from the solution is the air being extracted from the wood.

I released the vacuum once the bubbles stopped. The resulting increase in air pressure enables the stabilizing resin to fully penetrate the wood blank. The blanks are left in the vessel and continue to soak overnight. This provides time for the atmospheric pressure to force the stabilizing resin into the wood. I have found I get better results with dye penetration if I leave the blanks to soak at atmospheric pressure for at least twice the time they were under vacuum. After soaking the blanks for some time, I removed the blanks from the solution and wrapped them in aluminum foil.

This is an optional step to minimize mess in the toaster oven.

I placed the resin-saturated and wrapped blanks in a toaster oven at 200 deg F for roughly an hour. This allowed time for the internal temperature of the wood blank to reach the point where the resin cures. The resin curing occurs when the temperature in the wood blank reaches between 177 deg F and 205 deg F, for 6-8 minutes. This usually takes about 45 minutes to an hour, or even longer for larger blanks. I keep bottle stopper blanks in the toaster oven for 65-70 minutes, since they are thicker than pen blanks, to ensure the internal temperature reaches the curing temperature for long enough. Smaller or thinner blanks used for buttons or pendants take less time to cure. The blanks are allowed to cool and then un-wrapped. At this time, they are ready to turn. The blanks, once stabilized (Figure 5), are much heavier (and denser) and each weighed-in at roughly 3.5 oz, a three-fold increase in weight. Note: one of the blanks was sanded to provide a glimpse of the resulting color from the dye

Figure 5 Stabilized and dyed bottle stopper blanks

Turning and finishing

Stabilized wood can be turned with high-speed steel or carbide turning tools. I have found it is a bit dustier to turn and highly recommend a dust mask if you are not already using one. Note that the stabilization process does not necessarily fill voids. Voids and latent defects can be addressed with cyanoacrylate glue as needed and works very well. Sanding and finishing stabilized woods can be done with readily available abrasives and finishing products. Most stabilized woods will take an extremely high polish. My process is below. I sand to P600 grit using standard products. I then switch to Norton foam-backed abrasives and sand to P1200 grit. Following the sanding process, I switch to polishing compounds. I use my own polishing compounds made of pharmaceutical grade mineral oil, beeswax and two different polishing compounds: pumice and rottenstone. I used these because I had them in my shop. There are commercially available polishing compounds and other methods that will work equally well. I then finish with a light coating of thin cyanoacrylate glue and then polish again with the finest polishing compound. Some examples of finished bottle stoppers are shown in figure 6.

Figure 6 Completed Dyed and stabilized bottle stoppers.

Dyed and stabilized wood is a great candidate for several turned projects. A sampling of some finished items are included below (Figures 6,7 and 8). Almost all of the finished items have turned out extremely well. Some are very striking! I have found there is a downside to this experiment. It now redefines my definition of scrap wood! Pieces of highly figured and spalted wood that otherwise would have been thrown away are accumulating now in my shop! I have used Cactus Juice from TurnTex and used the StickFast stabilizing resin available from Woodcraft, both with good results. There are a lot of on-line resources and information available. A YouTube search using “stabilized pen blanks” or “stabilized wood” will get you started. Included at the bottom of the article are some links for some on-line resources if you are interested in this process.

Additional Resources

https://www.turntex.com/

https://www.woodcraft.com/

https://www.frugalvacuumchuck.com/

Additional Ideas for Stabilized Wood

Figure 7 Dyed and stabilized necklace pendant

Figure 8 Dyed and stabilized, turned-section combined with beads

Figure 9 A sampling of dyed and stabilized turned items

Trees we Turn– Australia– Tallowwood

Eucalyptus microcorys, commonly known as tallowwood, is a species of medium to tall tree that is endemic to eastern Australia. It has rough, fibrous or string bark on the trunk and branches, lance-shaped to egg-shaped adult leaves, flower buds in groups of seven or nine, white to lemon-yellow flowers and conical fruit. It grows in forests near the coast of Queensland and New South Wales.

Tallowwood trees typically grow to a height of 130–200 feet occasionally to 230 feet. These tree can grow between 400 and 800 years. Tallowwoods mainly grow in tall open forest on fertile soil on slopes and ridges and in valleys. They are found from Fraser Island in Queensland, south to Cooranbong in New South Wales

The heartwood of this species ranges in color from pale to dark yellow-brown, with occasional tinges of olive green. Sapwood is a whitish colour. The texture of tallowwood timber is moderately coarse, generally with interlocked grain. Unusually for a eucalypt species, tallowwood is free of gum veins. Figure is lacking but the timber possesses a distinctive lustre and 'greasy' appearance.

Tallowwood timber products exhibit exceptional durability in both in-ground and aboveground applications, where life expectancy is greater than 25 and 40 years, respectively. Although tallowwood is highly resistant to decay and will withstand damp and wet conditions quite well, its sapwood is susceptible to lyctid borer (powder post beetle) attack. Untreated timber of this species is equivalent to 'fire retardant treated timber' .

Historically, tallowwood has been used for bearings, mallet heads, mauls, wheel spokes, and tool handles. Current engineering applications include wharf and bridge construction (as sawn and round timber), railway sleepers, cross-arms, poles, piles and mining timbers. Construction uses range from unseasoned framing to dressed timber cladding, internal and external flooring, linings and joinery. Tallowwood is also used in fencing, landscaping and the construction of retaining walls. Decorative uses include outdoor furniture, turnery and joinery. Other applications include boat building, the construction of coaches, carriages and agricultural machinery, and structural plywood.

`Like many other eucalyptus species, tallowwood trees have been exported to other continents where it has found very congenial conditions for growth. Tallowwoods are found in Asia, North America, and Africa. They grow quickly and are used for landscape plants in suburban areas. Unfortunately, they have a tendency to drop substantial quantities of leaves and bark. This litter is filled with oils making a great fire risk if the litter is not removed. Tallowwood from domestic sources can be sourced from trees that are being removed. It is good turning wood and can be found in very large sizes.

Large tallowwood salad bowl

Tallowwood yarn bowl

Natural edge tallowwood bowl

An unusually figured tallowwood bowl

Texturing turned Pieces– Stamping

An embellishing technique that comes from ceramics, leatherwork, and metalwork is stamping. Stamping can be done with specially made stamps or stamps can come from found or everyday objects. The technique is particularly effective when it is combined with coloring and highlighting. A good example of this is Nick Agar's Viking Bowl.

This picture shows how Nick has used a variety of rotary tools to make the even radial designs, then used stamping to add additional interest. The stamps he has used are specialty stamps used in leatherwork and metalwork. When the bowl is solid and hasn't been hollowed, the exterior is sanded then embellished. This allows the stamp to be used forcefully to make an imprint. The exterior is then painted black and metal or colored cream is applied. Since the cream doesn't go into the indentations created by the stamps, the designs show up as black figures.

While Nick uses a variety of commercial leather and metalwork stamps, this isn't necessary. Similar effects can to created by everyday objects you may have in your shops.

The following piece was an experimental piece made with already existing tools like the Sorby texturing tools and found objects available around the shop.

In this case, the “stamping” tools used were a nail punch (circles), a Philips head screw driver (stars), and a flat head screwdriver (lines). Virtually anything harder than wood can be a stamping tool. Screws laid on their sides creates line patterns, nail heads create circles of different sizes. V and U shaped chisels create lines, V shapes and diamond forms. The possibilities for embellishing by stamping are only limited by your imagination and the items in your toolbox and shop.

So, if you have an undistinguished piece, stamp the heck out of it, paint it black, dark blue or green, then apply some metal paste in silver, bronze, copper, or gold. Your results might surprise you.

Member's Gallery

"Tea Bridge" cup in spalted maple
Gary Guenther

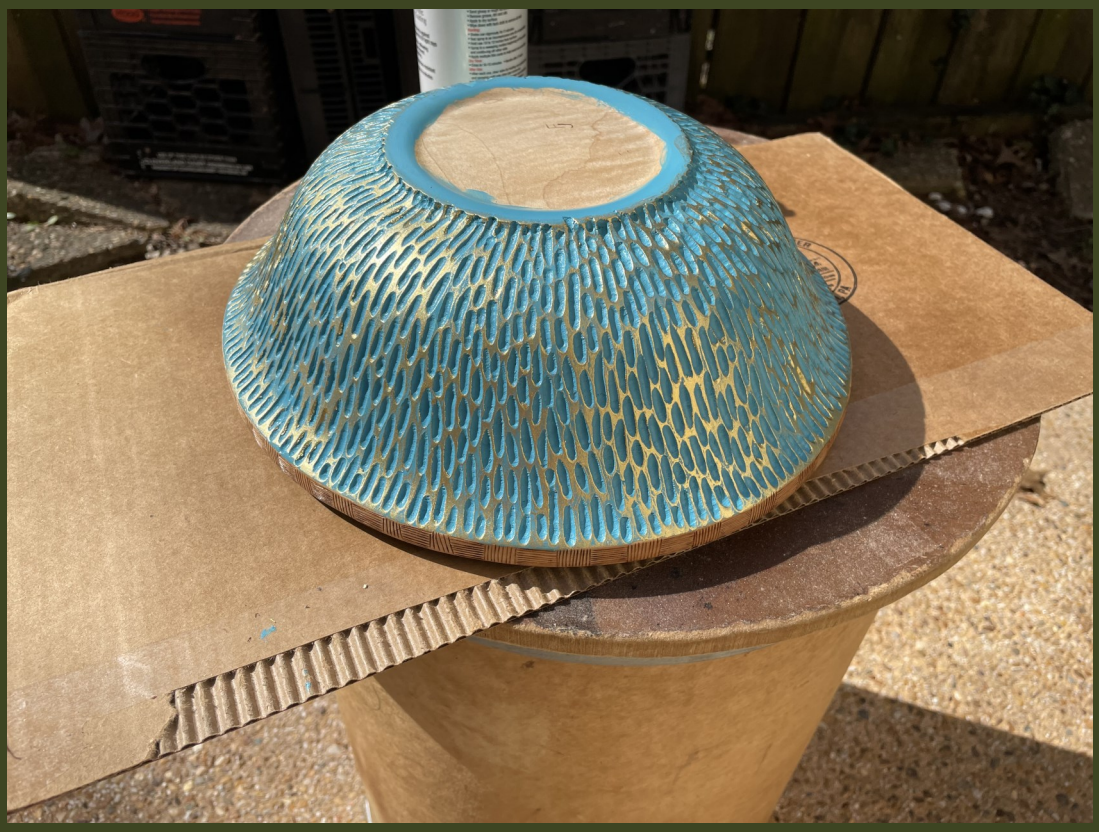
Embroidery laying tools in various woods
Tom Huber

A button box and a spool box
Tom Huber

Wide rimmed cherry bowl with swallows
Steve Schwartz

Steve will be exhibiting in the Art At The Mill spring art show in the Burwell Morgan historic mill in Millwood, VA. April 20 through May 5.

Textured and painted maple bowl
Frank Jessup



Woodlawn red oak bowl with handles
Tom Huber

Chines style “ *bi* ” form in maple burl
Gary Guenther

St. Patrick’s day tops

Patrick O’Brien

Erin go Bragh!

The John Clements Gallery
Bowls in different woods with
various embellishments

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Monthly Meeting Information -
Bryant Adult Education Center
2709 Popkins Lane,
Alexandria, VA 22306
Map with driving directions here:
www.fcps.edu/maps/bryant.htm

Capitol Area Woodturners is a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

Directions To Bryant High School

From VA or MD, take I-495/I-95 towards the Wilson Bridge over the Potomac River.

Take Exit 177A to Route 1 South on the VA side.

Drive approximately 1.9 miles on Rt. 1 South and you will pass the Beacon mall complex with Lowe's on your right. Drive past the main entrance to Beacon mall and go 4 more stop lights (about 1/2 mile).

The 4th stop light is Popkins Lane. Turn left and go two blocks.

Contact CAW

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