



West Michigan Woodworkers Guild

December 2022

Newsletter

President's Message

By Les Derusha



Upcoming meeting

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

7:00 PM to 9:30 PM

Ideal Park Christian Reformed Church
Activity Center
320 56th Street SW,
Wyoming, MI

The West Michigan Woodworkers Guild will be meeting on Tuesday December 13th at 7:00PM. We will be meeting at Ideal Park Christian Reformed Church Activity Center, 320 56th St SW, Grand Rapids.

For December we will start off with Show and Tell. We will give an update on our Guild Incorporation and Insurance plans.

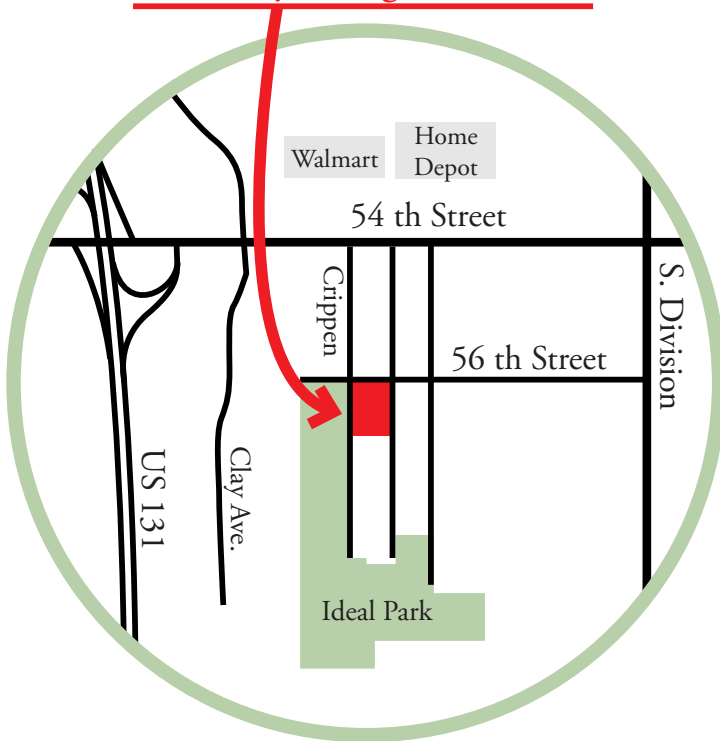
For the Raffle we are asking each person (at your option) to bring in a no longer needed tool or piece of wood as a donation to the raffle. We will no longer have the 50/50 portion of the raffle. All proceeds will be earmarked for our TV/Projector video solution.

With an abundance of caution, because of COVID we have made the decision to not have the normal Pizza Party, but instead will have cookies and soda.

For our December Meeting topic we will be having a discussion on Contributory Router Bits, Recommendations, Cleaning, Sharpening, Router Table vs. Hand-held and any add-ons that you find help make you a better woodworker.

Tell us all about yours and anything you think could help other members. If you feel so inclined, bring yours and show us. Put us on your calendar!

-Les



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Case VanderMaas - Treasurer
Steve DeVries - Newsletter

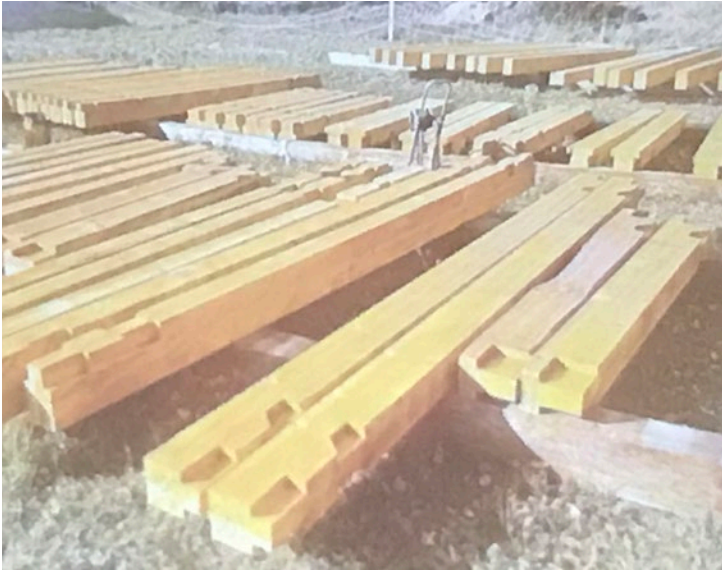
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Jim Jakosh - Member at Large
Zach Danzer - Member at Large

Dale Smith - Vice President
John Pflug - Program Director
Tom McDonald - Guild Contact

Steve Babcock - Member at Large
Don Stump - Member at Large

Show and Tell



John Phlug showed off some photos of a timber frame structure that he was building. All of the tenons and surface pockets were cut by CNC so that the structure would fit together like a puzzle. Um...yeah. Wow. Very impressive John!



Mark Nickerson brought in the latest violin he built. This violin has a spruce front with maple ribs and the usual astronomical amount of detail and precision in the build. Mark does fabulous work but the real question is, when is he going to build a Cello?



Dale Smith has graced us once again with his latest intarsia project. I especially like the inclusion of the grasses and cat-tails on the bottom. It really make the whole project feel like a small vignette of life in the wetlands.



Jim Jakosh built this Wheat Vase. The original design was by Frank Lloyd Wright and build from copper. Jim built his from cherry wood and used a coppering finish. Unless you pick it up you can't tell the difference. Nice work Jim.





And lastly for Show-and-Tell we have this tool box that Doug Scott built from re-purposed lumber. The top has lock-miter joints and the small end drawers have dovetail slides. Doug said he used 1/2" pine veneer for this box and had to special order the drawer-pull hardware.



Choosing tools : A debate as big as time.

I am sure I am not the only one in the guild who has spent a ridiculous amount of time shopping and comparing different models of tools. And regardless of what tool that is, the same questions keep popping up :

- Is the expensive one really worth 4x the price of the cheap one?
- How much capacity/feature do I really need vs. the features I would really like?
 - Can I get a version of this tool that is made ANYWHERE but China?
 - Should I just get by with the one I have and save the money?
 - Will I use it enough to justify the expense?
 - Do I have space for the larger model?
 - Is Feature "X" really that important?

And part of this internal monologue also involves nature of woodworking. If my goal in woodworking is simply to have the finished product, then I should logically choose the minimalist version of a tool that will get the job done and be cost effective over time — you know, the analytical response. However, for some of us, it isn't about arriving at the finished product, but taking the journey, and for me, The Journey is the Entire Point. For me, this boils down to my personal tool philosophy : The enjoyment of using a tool is almost as important as the job the tool is doing. And that enjoyment from using a tool comes down to several things :

- Is the tool easy to use?
- Is the way the tool is designed and adjusted make setup simple and effective?
- When the tool is set up, does it hold its setting or does it need constant fiddling to keep it set up right?
 - Do parts move smoothly?
 - Is there obvious care in the machining and fit/finish?
 - Are cast iron parts molded well and ground smooth?
- Am I going to wish I had bought the other one? (either cheaper or more expensive)
- Would I rather use a restored tool from the 1940's or a new tool with modern conveniences?

These questions are not always directly related to cost, but often are. More expensive tools on average have better design, tighter machining tolerances, and easier adjustments — if these things are important to you. For example, take the two scroll saws shown below. Neither is intrinsically better than the other, it all depends on your priorities and what you need it for.

\$120
As of December 2022



Pinned or pin-less blades
5-10 minute pin-less blade setup (super frustrating)
Requires disassembly to thread blade in new hole
Enough vibration to register on a seismometer
Table tilts
400-1600 stokes/min
Rough metal castings

Either saw can
get the job done

\$940
As of December 2022



Pin-less blades
30 second blade setup
30 seconds to change blade holes on work
Virtually zero vibration
Motor tilts
400-1400 strokes/min
All machined metal parts

Here's another example. I use a lot of wood dowels in my model building and I am constantly on the lookout for a better way to make them from the woods I want. There is the cheap way on the left, and the expensive way on the right.



Either tool
can get the
job done



\$10 at the local Big Box store for chisel and clamp
Lots of finicky testing and setup to get right
Prone to loosening up
Not micro adjustable at all
Requires ability to finely hone your chisels

\$450
Some testing and setup to get right
Part lock down securely for accurate repeatability
Micro-adjustable
Requires ability to finely hone the blades

And honestly here, neither way works for me. I use dowels enough that the cheap way simply isn't accurate, adjustable, or repeatable enough, and is fraught with frustration. The expensive way is simply too much. I can't justify that cost. And both ways require sharpening skills that I don't have, or further purchases of sharpening equipment.

The journey is the entire point

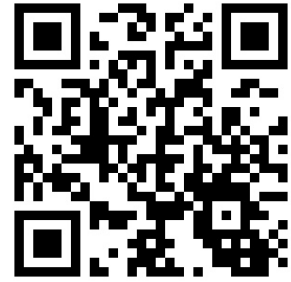
It isn't all about expensive tastes either. Here is one example of a cheap tool that is a joy to use. This mini-belt sander is made in China and I paid about \$50 for it. It was almost a joke when I bought it. It looked like a cool idea, but I assumed that it would be a piece of junk. Boy was I surprised. Whoever designed and built this thing took some obvious pride in their work. All of the parts are finely machined aluminum, fully adjustable with set screws. There is a variable speed adjustment, and changing belt is a breeze. Now, most of you don't need a tool like this, but for a model builder like me, this low-power machine is invaluable to detail work. Super cheap, but a super joy to use.

Some people are obsessed with chisels and take great joy in using a finely honed piece of steel. I am not one of those people. I use the \$1.99 chisels from Menards because I am not good at sharpening. If I mess it up, I'm not wrecking a fine tool.



So the take away from all this is that you shouldn't simply look at cost and features when deciding what tools to buy. Personal enjoyment and potential frustration should be figured into the equation. I place a very high value on tools being easy to use. For me a tool that only costs \$50 might have a hidden frustration cost of about \$500 on top of that. Everyone's values are different, just make sure your are calculating all of yours.

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Watch West Michigan Woodworkers
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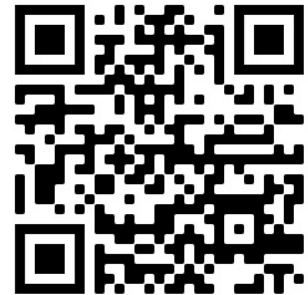
FREE Guild Membership!

Join the West Michigan Woodworkers Guild for FREE!.

To join the WM Woodworkers Guild and to receive our monthly Newsletters and to post to our Facebook Page, all you have to do is send us the following information:

Your Full Name
Your E-mail Address
Your Mailing Address
Your Phone Number
Your Favorite Type of Woodworking

Send your contact information to:
Information@westmichiganwoodworkers.org



The Guild's website :
www.westmichiganwoodworkers.org

How Woodworkers Keep in Touch.

There are three ways Woodworkers can keep in touch with one another during this time of pandemic meeting restrictions:

One: Join the West Michigan Woodworkers Guild

Two: Receive our Monthly Newsletter (FREE from September through June, annually)
(Send us your contact information, Name, e-mail address, mailing address and phone number to: information@westmichiganwoodworkers.org)

Three: View and post questions, projects, items for sale or desired or general
woodworking information to our Facebook Page regularly.
www.facebook.com/groups/wmiwwguild



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