



# CHATTERMARKS

June 2014  
Volume III Issue 6

Olympic Peninsula Woodturners  
Olympic Peninsula Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners  
P.O. Box 623 Silverdale, WA. 98383  
[www.OPCAAW.com](http://www.OPCAAW.com)

## WOODTURNING 101

### Turning made easier, with Brad Stave

Brad began working with wood at the age of 5 when he received his first toolbox. “There hasn’t been a time that I can remember, where wood has not been a significant part of my life,” recalls Brad. Brad designed and created furniture, wall hangings, table sculptures and other items in forms he liked best, and was so successful in his endeavors that by age 18, his works were displayed in a local art show featuring young artists.



He studied art in high school and college, and quit studying to build fences and turn redwood in California. He went back to school to learn better how to marry wood with art, then went into woodworking and teaching woodworking. When he wasn’t studying, he was working at making wooden toys and games. After graduation, he taught woodworking and continued working in wood. He taught woodworking to Native American school children in Wyoming, and designed furniture on the side. He married. He moved to Seattle and built his dream home (finishing off much of it himself). In 1985, he got a new job, moved to California, and expanded his family. Brad’s wife bought him a lathe to help him scratch his itch for wood, and Brad knew that he had found his niche in life. He moved back to the Pacific Northwest in 2006, retired in July of 2013, and indulges in wood quite a bit. He now works at Gallery Row in Gig Harbor, where some of his art is on display. You can also check out more about him, his class offerings,

and art at his own website, <http://bstave.com/>.

Woodturning for fun and profit has been exploding in popularity all over the world, and on the heels of that explosion has come the woodturning technology explosion. For every woodturning problem, it seems, there are a hundred tool solutions, each one better in some way than the last. For every difficult cut, there are a myriad of fixtures, accessories, modifications, or special applications, each more expensive than the last. You can shop at Craft Supplies USA, Rockler, Penn State Industries, Woodcraft, Packard Woodworks, Amazon, eBay, or myriad of other places (no offence, sponsors), and D-Way tools. Deciding on the right tool can give you nightmares, ulcers, or a drinking problem. Brad is going to show us how to do it the way it was done before the technology explosion.

The meeting starts at 6:30, starting off with Show and Tell, and the wood auction.

## The Pragmatic Woodturner.

By Russell Neyman.

**O**NE OF OUR MEMBERS brought several problematic spalted maple bowls to a meeting earlier this year, presenting fundamental questions about obstacles he encountered during the turning process. Paraphrasing his note, he asked: “Which is better—a shear cut or a scrape cut? What’s the best way to deal with ‘punky’ wood? How do you avoid catches? What is the best finish for a bowl?”

He was brave enough to bring in the slightly imperfect pieces – I wish more members would do that – and specifically asked for advice, leading us to add a “Vessels With Issues” section to our Show & Tell Table. Subsequent discussions followed and a few changes on how we will be helping the novice and intermediate woodturners in our group. It was a very healthy dialogue!

(By the way, that member described himself as a “beginner” but looking at his work, the general consensus is that he has moved well beyond the neophyte level.)

With apologies to the many demonstrators and mentors who have gone before me with clarity and simplicity, I offer the following comment about techniques and problem solving:

### **There are few absolutes in woodturning.**

That muddling statement is intended to encourage you to be flexible in your approach to the information offered in our workshops. Too often, a veteran turner will say something like, “a bowl

gouge is the only tool that should be used to turn a bowl,” or, “the only good finish is (insert any of several).”

We host expert demonstrators and promote our club mentors because they *DO* have incredibly valuable information to share. Their techniques are proven and successful. But, in many cases, their methods are not the only way to achieve a desirable end. We ask you to be open-minded but circumspect consumers. Take in all the information you can, then find out what works best for you. Listen, absorb, experiment and filter. Try *everything*. Tinker with your own options, then share the results with the group.

My own personal approach is quite pragmatic; I advocate continual experimentation

among the many tools and techniques at my disposal, and if I’m not completely satisfied with the initial result, I’ll try something else. If that doesn’t work, I’ll go to the next option or, even, go back to the first. You could say that I’m a fiddler and tinkerer, and I will try just about anything that is reasonably safe. I learned long ago that a good woodturner cannot fear failure. Yes, there will be setbacks and bowls that end up in a shattered heap, but that’s a small price to pay for the satisfaction of creating a piece of art.

At the risk of causing some eyebrows to crawl and wiggle like caterpillars on a hot rock, I’ll throw out these observations about several common axioms quoted in woodturning circles.

- **No amount of sanding can make up for flawed woodturning.** I have removed irregularities many times using sandpaper, so that is, clearly, an overstatement. There are times when a section of tear-out simply can’t be overcome using a sharp edge, so you have no choice but to



Photo of Russell Neyman at work by J Louis King

work through the problem with various grits of sandpaper. It is, after all, just another cutting device.

- **Good woodturners don't use scrapers.** This is a myth. Used with skill and care, scrapers are valuable tools. Most hollowing tools and beading tools are really scrapers, so it's nonsense that they should not be used. Reed Gray, a friend of our club who demonstrated finishing cuts recently, has a YouTube video where he turns a bowl, start-to-finish, entirely with a scraper. It should be noted that he also shows how to turn a bowl entirely with a gouge, as well.
- **Catches and tear-outs are entirely due to incorrect technique.** Yes, the wrong tool or a wrong bevel angle causes most tear-out, but some pieces of wood are simply prone to trouble.
- **You can't turn beautiful pieces from lousy wood.** You'd be surprised what persistence and tenacity will produce. Punky, rotting wood can be stabilized and made turnable. I think many turners will tell you that their greatest successes were nothing more than experiments with wood that no one would believe could create beauty.

Now, I will add my own idealistic platitude, knowing full well that someone will find an exception to it: *There is no such thing as a perfect bowl.* In fact, we should probably remove the "Vessels With Issues" sign from our Show & Tell table because they all have issues; it's just that the artist/woodturner overcame the problems and produced a satisfactory result. Others see our bowls and turnings as beautiful objects of art; we tend to see/remember all of the issues we had to overcome.

Consider all of the possibilities. Expect obstacles. Use the information the experts provide to overcome them. Be practical and resourceful in your approach to this craft, and don't worry about breaking a few rules. Results are what count.

\* \* \*

**A NEW SAFETY AWARENESS** program will kick off at this month's meeting, spearheaded by Sergeant-at-Arms Vern West. Besides regular tips designed to help our members avoid injury, fire, or other misfortune, we will emphasize the hazards of dust inhalation and other potentially harmful substances found in the woodturning shop.

As part and parcel to this, we would like to have at least one individual with a degree of medical training assigned to provide short-term assistance in the event of an emergency during our meetings. If anyone is trained in CPR or related subjects, please contact me at a meeting or through email, [PRESIDENT@OPCAAW.com](mailto:PRESIDENT@OPCAAW.com).

\* \* \*

**TRAIN RIDE, ANYONE?** Our annual club picnic will take place at a South Kitsap Regional Park in Port Orchard on Saturday afternoon, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, contingent on a few loose ends that have yet to be secured. It will be a typical family-style event, with burgers, hot dogs, cokes, and kids. People need not be members to attend.

This park features a 7½-inch steam engine and train built and maintained by Kitsap Live Steamers, a group of railroad buffs. The aforementioned Vern West is a member of the group. Besides the trains, the park features a state-of-the-art skateboarding facility, a baseball batting cage, and plenty of wooded area.

We will also incorporate some sort of turning-related activity – a saltshaker turning contest, perhaps – which will be announced at the July meeting.



*The 2014 OPCAAW Picnic will feature working steam trains at South Kitsap Regional Park on August 2nd. Photo from the Kitsap Live Steamers website.*

\* \* \*

**WHILE YOU ARE** marking your calendars, take note of the Kitsap County Fair, in which we will maintain a booth to display our woodturning as well as tout the club's activities. It remains to be seen whether we will have a live demonstration – adequate electrical power and dust control are limiting factors – but we certainly will show the work of our membership.

The Fair will take place Saturday, August 20th through Sunday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. We will be passing around a volunteer sheet sign-up sheet at the coming meeting for people to staff the booth. Members who stand watch will receive a parking pass and free admission to the fair.

\* \* \*

**OUR VIDEO PROGRAM** has been dramatically upgraded with the purchase of new equipment, thanks to crew lead Jeff Childs, but we still need a third member of the team to serve as a backup on those occasions when one of the regulars cannot attend an event.

As Dave Schweitzer points out, not only do the cameramen add a significant dimension to monthly demonstrations, but also the man behind the camera actually has the best view in the room.

Contact Jeff at 360-303-7074 if you're interested.

\* \* \*

**WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE** the new library! Not only are all of the books, videos, and magazines neatly organized on shelves, but also the entire collection is on wheels so that it can be transported intact.



The OPCAAW Lending Library is run by Barb Davis, and is offered to all paid club members free of charge. It contains a marvelous assortment of instructional and conceptual materials for woodturning. As you'll recall, previously, the collection was stored and displayed in an odd assortment of boxes and suitcases.

Thanks to Brad Stave and Ray Ewing for building the new cart.  
Anyone want a good deal on slightly used suitcases?

\* \* \*

**JET 14-42 LATHE OWNERS** might be interested to learn that I recently replaced my drive belt and overhauled the Reeves variable speed control system. I mention this because Jet insists that this is a factory job that would normally require removing the power head and shipping it to their local service center.

The point is, I am available to help you service your 14-42, either in person or by giving advice. It was tricky, but well within the capabilities of any mechanically minded turner.

It should be noted that I was able to find the replacement vee-belt at the local NAPA store, saving me about 50% from the Jet price.

--RN



## July 26th, 2014: Trent Bosch and Nick Stagg featured at Olympia's Creativity in Woodturning Symposium

Trent is a very popular woodturner and wood sculptor, known to galleries world-wide. His four days of workshops are already full, but tickets are still available for the main symposium. Nick Stagg is a popular turner and woodturning instructor. More information on Nick can be found at [http://www.woodturnersofolympia.org/?page\\_id=1929](http://www.woodturnersofolympia.org/?page_id=1929).

Richard Raffan, who was originally scheduled, will not be able to attend this symposium because of his recent health problems. For more information, go to the Olympia Club's site at [http://www.woodturnersofolympia.org/?page\\_id=1740](http://www.woodturnersofolympia.org/?page_id=1740).

**March 6-8 of 2015:** The Oregon Symposium has a nice roster of demonstrators already lined up, including our own Dave Schweitzer and other nationally known woodturners. It is a ways off in the future and info is still a little sketchy, but you can keep an eye out for updates at <http://oregonwoodturningsymposium.com/Default.aspx>.

## ARE YOU HOARDING OPCAAW MONEY?

Our Treasurer, Ellen Winnie, reports that we have had some checks issued in February, and are still outstanding. Please either cash any club checks made out to you, or let the club Treasurer know you will not be cashing the check. Ellen does a great job, but we have to keep her informed if she is to keep our books straight for us. You can catch her at a meeting or contact her at [Treasurer@opcaaw.com](mailto:Treasurer@opcaaw.com).

## SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Long hair, loose clothing and jewelry are hazardous when working around any moving machinery. Please tie hair back or confine it under hat or net. Wear short sleeves, and remove jewelry before beginning any work near lathes, drill presses, table saws or band saws.

## SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS -- SPEND THEIR MONEY!

Were you aware that you can get a discount from some of our sponsors? Try asking for a discount when shopping at one of our sponsors' establishments; a 10% discount is fairly common when requested. Also, if you have gift certificates from some of them, please use them. The sponsors would rather have them used throughout the year than in a bunch right after Christmas. Use them soon after you get them to keep the gift certificates coming in.

## NEW MENTOR ON BOARD

Brad Stave is our new mentor. Come to the meeting and watch his presentation, or read about him on page one in this issue. Brad is already a woodturning instructor, and you can visit his web page (see page 1) for some of the classes he offers. His contact information can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

## HAVEN'T HAD ENOUGH ROBOHIPPIY?

Remember Reed Gray? He was the demonstrator at our March meeting. He's the guy with the beard and his own You Tube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/user/robohippy>. How about that sharpening platform at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQ7w6yFhw4c>, otherwise known as the Robo Rest? Reed sells these sharpening platforms. You can contact him at [reedgray@comcast.net](mailto:reedgray@comcast.net).

## MEETING PLANS IN THE WORKS

The meeting of July 30 will feature the Fire Marshall, with a brief presentation on wood shop fires. That will be followed by "Fifty Nifty Shop Tips, presented by some of our more experienced turners.

On August 27, Don McIvor will be filling us in on finishes for woodturning. There is a chance that water-based finishes will be spotlighted.

The September 24 meeting is when Tones Briggs shows us how he makes those exquisite Christmas ornaments of his.

For those interested in segmented turning as the next step, Norm Hix will be showing us on October 29.

November 19 (unusual date) a mini-symposium, featuring sharpening.

These plans are a little bit fluid always subject to change, of course. A speaker can cancel, or we can come up with a better or timelier topic. Our Training Chairman, Ralph Lindberg, is always looking for ideas and suggestions, and sometimes even volunteers. You can contact Ralph at. [Training@opcaaw.com](mailto:Training@opcaaw.com).

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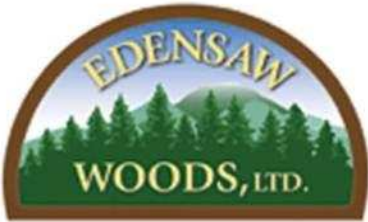
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## MENTORING PROGRAM

We are looking for some new mentors. The folks who are currently doing the great service have been doing it for a long time. See any of the board officers if you are interested. The mentoring programs has been set up to answer questions and give help to new members and those whom may be having a problem in a specific area. Although not intended to be free lessons in woodturning (many of those volunteering are professional turners and derive their income from turning and teaching), these are some friendly folks willing to give you a point in the right direction.

Dan Ackerman	Brinnon	(360)796-4155
"Tones" Briggs	Port Orchard	(360)271-6448
George Kromka	Bremerton	(360) 373-1028
Jim Leary	Kingston	(360) 297-5872
Bob Hickernell	Bremerton	(360) 479-5501
Brad Stave	Gig Harbor	(253) 514-8562 bstave@comcast.net

## Chapter Officers

President	Russell Neyman	(360)813-4484	President@opcaaw.com
Vice President of Education and Training	Ralph Lindberg	(360)779-5979	Training@opcaaw.com
Vice President of Public Relations	Larry Matkins	(360)551-1044	PublicRelations@opcaaw.com
Vice President of Membership	Schuyler Beaver	(360)698-4108	Membership@opcaaw.com
Secretary	Peter Gerstel	(360)697-6150	Secretary@opcaaw.com
Treasurer	Ellen Winnie	(360)779-5979	Treasurer@opcaaw.com
Sergeant at Arms	Vern West	(360)479-8634	SargeantAtArms@opcaaw.com
Vice President of Special Events	Cindy Allen	(360)373-3041	SpecialEvents@opcaaw.com

## OPCAAW Staff Positions

Librarian	Barb Davis	(360)373-1858
Librarian		
Video Director	Jeff Childs	(360)765-3954
Cameraman	Tex Lewis	(360)698-3893
Audio Engineer	Stan Stumbo	(206)842-1458
Photographer	Dan Marler	(360)638-2939
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