



From The Shop



The newsletter of the Lehigh Valley Woodworker's Guild

Issue 04.2009

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 21st, 7:30 PM
Location: Woodcraft on Lehigh Street in Allentown**

Topic: Fun for the guild with a secret celebrity speaker – who shares their worst wood moments and what they'd do with wood if they could.

A real change of pace!!

I took a look on the web about our April guest. He or She does emcee with and spent some time on the radio as a broadcaster and has done a lot of voiceover. Based on what I read about this person, we are in for a good evening. They do a lot of local charity work and has taken this gig (I am starting to use show business verbiage since taking up blues harmonica) for our normal speakers fee as opposed to his regular fee because we are a local guild. I am looking forward to this and hope you are as well.

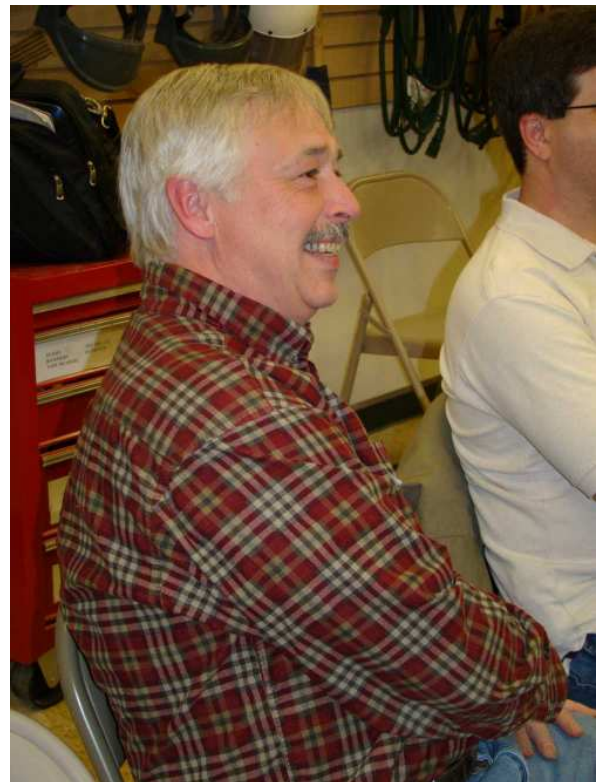
Last meeting highlights:

Toxic affects of Wood with Dr Basil Dolphin, Lehigh Valley Hospital - Occupational medicine.



Dr Basil Dolphin, left, got going before he even started with some folks quizzing him as he sat among out members and visitors.

Doctor Basil Dolphin provided in interesting and serious look at the impact of wood dust and toxins on humans and other living things. He started his discussion with a very interesting and simply stated but sobering comment: Think of each species of tree as a miniature chemical factory. That is pretty heavy duty. Each tree or plant has unique characteristics that enable it to survive. We are familiar with Poison Ivy. We do not touch it with bare hands or short sleeves on because we will break out – at least I do. This is obvious. But, more serious danger lurks in the things that are not obvious. And there are unknowns. Doctor Dolphin pointed out that the Cashew tree is a relative of Poison Ivy. That is pretty interesting. Been meaning to send a big jar of raw cashews to my mother in law...



I guess the subject was pretty interesting as it brought out woodworker, author, speaker, and bon vivant Fred Matlack. Fred has spoken to out group often and it was good to see him back.

Names given to wood have absolutely no correlation to the type. Peruvian Cherry may look like cherry but it is not. Exotic hardwoods are thought to be the most toxic, but hardwoods in general are more toxic than softwoods. Good old Oak is known to be related to nasal cancer. I think the doctor also mentioned Beech.

I have the handouts and so do folks who attended. READ THEM. The real problem with tropical / exotic hardwood is that the use of these rare woods in most cases has been limited and diseases associated with them has not been tracked in any way, so exposure to them carry many potential dangers and unknowns. Dr Dolphin brought an ample supply of excellent handouts with him. READ THEM. I did as preparation for this article. They are easy to understand and they break down each common and some uncommon species dangers.

Sawdust that falls to the floor – larger particles – obviously are not the danger. It is those that stay airborne – 5 microns or less in size – that are the problem. Anything taken into the lungs is brought into the blood stream very quickly and efficiently. We have all seen the disturbing images of people snorting coke. They ingest it this way for a reason. This process is also used for some other drugs that are actually useful. Asthma inhalers and such. Dust masks actually do very little good as the fine particles get past them, especially if you have facial hair. (maybe that is why none of my family wants me to shave my beard... GOD!)

Interestingly, OSHA classifies wood dust as a nuisance. In Australia, all wood dust is classified as a carcinogen and they think we are throwing caution to the wind to not have the same standard. Remember – OSHA is also influenced by our great political system. “Well, sir, as senator from the fine state of Pennsylvania, we got many forests of oak in my state and I stand here before you today, as tall and proud as the mighty oak, saying that even if an oak tree falls on ya, it won’t hurt ya! Ya’ll a-feared of a little sawdust? Ma kids eat the stuff. Roughage! Keeps ’em regular. Naa, I cannot vote to declare it a carcinogen. Oak dust is your friend!” This is not to say that OSHA itself is a bad group or lax. We have had their folks speak before us. They enforce what they are bound to enforce and I know that in the talk we had, the rep was excellent in his presentation and very conscientious indeed about making the point to give us ALL the info. They tell it like it is, but what they enforce is different.

Western red cedar and some maples cause asthma. Pine can as well. Douglas fir causes decreased lung capacity. Wood dust can cause Hodgkin’s. Many solvents can cause liver problems due to skin and fume contact, as can formaldehyde. MDF supposedly is high in formaldehyde, as are some insulations. One office building in Binghamton, NY was supposedly shut down for 15 years due to a formaldehyde contamination. Woods can also carry molds and fungus – we probably all know that spalted woods have that trait as the result of fungus. Many cause dermatitis. Look at the chart! Woods high in silica are a nasal irritant. Black Cherry can cause wheezing and giddiness. East Indian Satinwood and Teak can cause swelling of ... look at the chart – this is a family

newsletter. I am a black cherry guy myself – Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha! Sorry – feeling a little giddy... Glad I am not driving or operating WOODWORKING EQUIPMENT!!!



Dr Dolphin has an excellent command of his subject as an occupational medicine specialist.

OK, you have a big old helmet with air intake and get no dust in your lungs? Great. But ya got this rash... Dermatitis! The doctor used an expression – “once sensitized, twice bitten.” At that point, I brought up an interesting topic – to me anyway. I was working on a new deck with pressure treated pine lumber. They tried to sell me lifetime TREX decking but I told them I was 60 years old and pine was fine. I had a pea sized spot break out on my elbow I thought was an abrasion. Doctor looked at it during a routine check up and said it was dermatitis but keep an eye on it. (I told him I cannot touch my eye with my elbow and if I could I would be stranger than I already am, and walking around that way would be difficult, let alone driving. Doctors... Just Kidding, Dr Dolphin!!) It did not go away. Winter came and I stopped working on the deck. The spot disappeared. In the spring, I went back to work to finish the staircase on the deck. Exact same mark came out in the exact same place. Looking at the chart, pine is listed as a source of contact dermatitis. In my case, when I come in contact with pine needles, like when mowing the lawn, anywhere the pine needle tips touch me, I develop a red spot for a few hours and it goes away. Weird. Newer treatments chemicals are not as toxic as the old arsenic based system, but still carry some dangers above raw wood/

We touched on dust masks. The typical dust mask will keep you from inhaling like moths and birds and small rodents. Finer ones may help to some extent with finer dust but not the small stuff. None offer protection against fumes of the many chemicals used in woodworking and other craft hobbies. Moreover, solvent fumes can actually get trapped inside of a mask, so the mask gives a false sense of security. Bottom line is area ventilation is critical. OK – you have a big air filtration box right on the wall behind you. GREAT! That means that all the dust you generate is being pulled PAST YOUR FACE before it makes it to the air filter device. Put these things to they carry the air away from you. The other way, you get first shot at all the best particles before they make it to the air filtration device.



Another really good turnout for Dr Dolphin's presentation.

Full head helmets make better sense. They are not cheap and the doctor said that where they get their air source from is critical. We all heard Bill Grumbine caution that his air intake was in the back of his helmet and could be hazardous depending on what he had eaten. The doctor did not advise of that caution but since he will be proof reading this, he may be able to use that anecdote in future presentations if he dares. In Bill's case, the fumes may have life endangering consequences. I understand that his family is grateful he spends a lot of time in his barn / workshop.

Negative respirators are very good protection but they do make it difficult to breathe and may be a problem for some folks or for everyone over a long period of use. Any masks using cartridges are only as good as the frequency with which you change the cartridge and where you store the cartridges before you use them – presumably in a clean container.

Can you reverse the process? Sometimes. The mucous traps a lot of contaminants and expels itself gradually. Lungs can clear themselves. Asthma does not reverse. Emphysema, a condition where you actually lose lung tissue, cannot reverse. The doctor

cautioned his entire presentation by saying that the large over-riding factor is your own biology. If you are prone to getting something, you will get it and if you are not, you may not. Like the old timer who worked in a textile plant all his life, never exercised, at all the wrong foods, smokes a pack of Chesterfield regulars and drinks 3 – 4 shot of whiskey every night for medicinal purposes and lives to 95 years old. And someone who lived the careful life and dies of lung cancer for no reason at 40. The message – you want to gamble on being the old timer or the victim? Up to you. I have a lot of longevity in my family, but each person is unique.

All in all, our hobby / vocation of woodworking, like any other, carries dangers. Dr Dolphin told us some of the dangers of ours, and made it clear that there are unknowns. We thank him for his presentation and for the work he does in occupational medicine here in the Lehigh Valley.



Refreshment time. Ken and Judy did it again!



The readers corner in Woodcraft is a great refreshment area for our meetings.

WOODCRAFT HAPPENINGS

Friday, April 24 and Saturday, April 25th
Sale, Demos, Contest, Prizes, Scott Phillips!

John Schaeffer made a short introductory speech about some Woodcraft happenings that are important if you are shopping soon. April 24th and 25th, a Friday and Saturday, there will be a lot going on at the "toy store". This is the 5th Anniversary of our local woodcraft store. And, as John said, we hear all about gloom and doom of our economy – Ray and Mary are expanding. They have moved into the former computer space next door and are calling it Power Tool Alley. Busted a hole in the wall. I went over there to make sure that I got all the info from John in order to make sure you, my loyal readers, were well prepared for any of the activities. This place is all set and is hardly an alley. Spacious and airy, it will house stationary tools from Steel City, Powermatic, and many more of your favorites. And Ray and Mary are always looking to expand their line with quality equipment. This will be like a car showroom for power tools.



GREAT NEON SIGN! Invites us to Power Tool Alley!



Archway connecting the two areas looking into Power Tool Alley. Hardly an alley! It is going to be a great browsing and buying place.

1. Contest – you need to fill out an entry form and get it to the store by April 23rd. The categories are:

- Woodworking – small – boxes and such
- Woodworking – furniture – under 3 x 5 floor space
- Carving
- Turning
- There will be first and second place prizes/
- \$4000 in prizes overall including a Steel City dust collector, a Fein Multimaster, a Rikon mini lathe, a porter cable dovetail jig and more. Festool has donated something as well.

2. The judge is Scott Phillips! Scott has been involved in writing, Television, and has spent many years in woodworking as a professional and personality. He will be at Woodcraft from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

- 10 – 12 – meet and greet and autographs
- 2- 3:30 – Judging projects in Power Tool Alley.
- 3:30 – 5:00 Q&A with Scott in the classroom.

3. Demos – you name the vendor, they will have a rep there. I am sending a complete flyer out on this with a schedule of demos.

4. 10% off everything except for Festool, Steel City, Leigh, Sawstop, and gift cards and classes. That leaves a whole lot of stuff.

Get your entry form at

www.woodcraft.com/allentown -
Phone - 610-351-2966

And we all know this, but I say it again, John Schaeffer does a great job there and with this guild. No matter when I call or what the question, he always makes time.

Blocks 2009! And Presentations . Trips, etc.

Allen Powell presented some excellent documentation on the block project for 2009. We expect to be project managing this in a much more hands on way for 2009 than at any time in the past. I am a Certified project manager, but I do newsletter in this capacity. You have to pay me to do that. Allen may not be a certified project manager, but he did stay at a Holiday Inn Express. (I love those commercials). Kudos to Allen for taking this to the next level.



Judy and Ken. They do so much for us.

Judy Muth said a lot of things and when she asked Ken if he had anything to add, he told her that she had it pretty well covered. Smart man.

Just is looking for ideas and offered many. Trips to Allen Organ, Martin Guitar, Frank Klausz. Not regular meetings, these would likely be weekend jaunts. Give us feedback – let us know what you want. Thanks! And thanks, Judy, for keeping up the suggestions.

Drag and Brag.

Nothing this month.

And the Woodcraft Winner is.....



What can you say about a guy who calls is own number?
Nice going, Bob Lindenmuth!

HELP!

On that note, we are ALWAYS looking for speakers. You hear of someone, let us know.
Thanks!

Wood Specials

SHADY LANE TREE FARM

Louise & Mike Peters
5220 Shimerville Road
Emmaus, PA
610 965-5612 Please call

FLEETWOOD LUMBER & FLOORING

BILL BURKERT
27 Rapp Rd.
Fleetwood, PA
610 944-8364 Please call
Member discount 5%

Bailey Wood Products, Inc.

441 Mountain Rd.
RD#2 Box 38
Kempton, PA
610 756-6827

Woodcraft

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Refreshments and so many other things.. Ken and Judy Muth	

2009 Meeting Calendar:

Month	Topic	Speaker
April 21st	A fun non woodworking speaker shares their worst wood moments and what they'd do with wood if they could	Secret Celebrity
May 19th	Potential Freud Wainscot bit demo	
June 16th	Bill Hylton Returns – ROUTER TABLE MAGIC	The one and only.

Next Meeting: April 21st, 2009 (3rd Tuesday!) 7:30!! That'd be P.M.

Location: Woodcraft

Parkway Shopping Center
1543 Lehigh Street
Allentown, PA 18103
Phone: (610) 351-2966

Topic: Non woodworking celebrity speaker has some fun with us and shares his worst wood moments and what he'd do with wood if he could. Consider this meeting a break from the normal and a night of laughs.