



# TURN NORTH



Monthly Newsletter of the Northland Woodturners, Kansas City MO

January 2006

## Alex Garcia Presents at January 5 Meeting

Alex Garcia will be kicking off 2006, presenting “Zen and the Art of Woodturning”. The demos this year are going to focus on creativity in woodturning, starting off with Alex. Alex has been turning since 1999. His demo will show us how to turn projects by listening to what the wood has to say.

If you are struggling with design, this is a demo you don’t want to miss! Plus, Alex will be demonstrating by breaking in the chapter’s new Powermatic lathe.

**The chapter meets from 7-9 pm at Overland Tool North, 1404 Gentry, North Kansas City MO 64116.** Their phone number is (816) 268-4304. Off Missouri Hwy 9, turn east & go 4 blocks on 14th St.--Off I-35, take the 16th St. exit, go west to Gentry & south to the intersection of 14th St.

For a map, visit: <http://maps.google.com/maps?q=1404+Gentry,+North+Kansas+City,+MO&iwloc=A&hl=en>

### December Highlights

As shared in the last newsletter, the December meeting was a busy one. Chip Siskey introduced the 2006 officers, presided over the monthly raffle, the White Elephant Gift Exchange, and the voting for the Best Ornament Award (won by Dennis Avondet). Chip also provided a quick demo on making tool handles. Overland Tool asked the regional representative for Jet Tool, Randy Johnson, to come visit and provide a preview of new lathes in the tool lines that he represents. Those present got to see and hear some details about a new lathe being offered by Powermatic, as well as the history of Jet tools. Our thanks to Randy for being willing to come and share. Thanks also to our “landlord”, Steve Dinwiddie from Overland Tool for his willingness to help the Northland Woodturners. And thanks to the outgoing 2005 officers, Chip Siskey, Kent Townsend, and Ron & Jan Ford for all their hard work. Where would we be without them?

### Coming Attractions

February '06 ..... Jerry McMaster, “Curvature”  
March '06 ..... Jerry Darter, “Green & Lean”  
April '06 ..... Dean Thomas, “Shapes from Chunks”  
May '06 ..... TBA, “Finishes”

**Website: <http://www.NorthlandWoodturners-KC.org>**

### Editor’s Note

*Profound apologies are offered for the lateness of this first issue of the new year. Holidays attacked the new editor! It’ll get better, honest. More pix next month!*

### 2006 Officers

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Chip Siskey, Advisor

Kent Townsend, Advisor

**Join the chapter’s Yahoo Group:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TurnNorthKC/>**

## Members of the Month

We're going to try and feature one or more members of the chapter each month, trying to get to know each other a little better. This month we are starting off with by Chip Siskey and Kent Townsend together as our members of the month. Thank you both for all the hard work you have put in over the past year (and for your continued work since you are staying on as advisors). The biographies will be read at the January meeting and will also be posted on the website. We're sorry for not having the bios ready for this newsletter; however, with the ho-ho-holiday season and all that's crazy, we're hoping everyone understands.



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## Lookie in the NWT Library!

With a few short reviews by Dean Thomas

As a result of the recent auction of goods from Turnabout Wood, the chapter has purchased a number of good books. Have you visited your NWT Library lately?

The new titles include:

- ***Bowl Turning Techniques: Masterclass*** by Tony Borase. Guild of Master Craftsman Publications, 1999, 150 pages. [Lots of pictures, lots of emphasis on technique.]
- ***Segmented Wood Turning***, William Smith. Schiffer Publishing, 2002, 64 pages. [I bought this one for my personal collection just for the front cover. All color pictures, many diagrams, lots of talking through of both traditional and “open” segmented turning, dealing with design, construction, and turning techniques. Smith spends a little time exploring variations on themes, pushing my “watch-for-creativity” button. In my opinion, this book is not on par with a couple of the most recent books on segmented turning by Tibbetts, Hampton, or Kandler, but still a good resource book.]

There are also four books by one of my personal favorite authors, Dick Sing. Dick writes in a very personal yet practical way, uses lots of pictures, lots of wit, and doesn't hide his goofs...er, his “creative opportunities”. Several of his books could easily qualify as coffee table books, the pix are that good. The new Sing additions to the library include:

- ***Turning Ornaments & Eggs***. Schiffer Publishing, 2002, 64 pages (notice a pattern with Schiffer??). [This is one of my two personal favorite look and lust coffee table books. Great pictures, good narrative. No gaps in the process, no leaps in woodturning logic. Be sure to read the story behind how he got started turning eggs.]
- ***Unique & Unusual Pens from the Wood Lathe***. Schiffer Publishing, 1997, 64 pages. [This volume is “the most recommended book for new pen turners”, says the moderator of an on-line discussion group for pen turners.]
- ***Useful Beauty: Turning Practical Items on a Wood Lathe***. Schiffer Publishing, 1995, 64 pages.
- ***Wood Lathe Projects for Fun & Profit***. Schiffer Publishing, 1994, 64 pages. [This early volume was printed in China. The quality of the paper & covers is not great, but the information inside is good.]

A couple of books are by Richard Raffan, another well-recognized teacher and wood-video artist. The wry humor so apparent in his videos is replaced by a very matter-of-fact teaching style in his books.

- ***Turned Bowl Design***. Taunton Press, 1987 (reprinted in 1996), 169 pages. [Richard packs hundreds of black & white pictures and design profiles into this primer. With the emphasis on creativity in the newsletter for the next several months, this book is a perfect resource for exploring shapes for bowl turning.]
- ***Turned Boxes***. Taunton Press, 1998, 171 pages. [Again, lots of pictures both in color and b&w, pages of profiles, details on hollowing techniques and tool use. Both are great companions to the videos.]

Other titles include:

- ***Decorating Turned Wood: The Maker's Eye***, Liz & Michael O'Donnell. Guild of Master Craftsman Publications, 2002, 145 pages. [Interesting and plentiful color pictures. Spends time talking about color theory, dyes, resins/epoxies, alternate materials, marbling, gilding, pyrography, and more. The type is pretty small for these old eyes, and the pictures are often a bit artsy for my taste, but plenty of ideas to stir up the creative juices.]
- ***Turning Green Wood***, Michael O'Donnell. Guild of Master Craftsman Publications, 2000, 132 pages.
- ***Wood Turning for the Garden with Mike Cripps***, Jeffrey Snyder. Schiffer Publishing, 1997, 64 pages. [Mike spends about 18 pages on basics of tool handling and then launches into three projects that range from a simple spindle project (a dibble or dibber, if you're British) to End-Grain Bowl Turning 101 (turned, full-size bird house) and a planter.]
- ***The Woodturner's Workbook: An Inspirational and Practical Guide to Designing and Making***, Ray Key. Batsford Press, 2001, 112 pages. [Lots of practical stuff in this one. Lots of great photography showing Key's sensitive attention to grain as a design element. Many profile diagrams to show good or bad design elements.]
- ***Turned Boxes: 50 Designs***, Chris Stott. Guild of Master Craftsman Publications, 2002, 177 pages. [50 fun shapes with much more detail than the Hunnex volume.]

## Lookie in the NWT Library!

*Continued*

• ***Turning Wooden Jewelry***, Judy Ditmer. Schiffer Publishing, 1994, 64 pages (surprised?). [This is an okay little book, but not to be confused with the brand new *Woodturning Jewellery* (sic) by Hilary Bowen, published by Fox Chapel Publishing, or Bonnie Klein's jewelry projects. Some good thoughts in shapes and combining of parts and pieces, but too little emphasis on the use of exotic woods to achieve color and contrast. Instead, the concentration on the coloring of wood with markers is not going to endear any turner to any women that I know or convince them to wear earrings with pink and green marker or Sharpie designs. My wife says, "Maybe if someone was into cowboy, peasantry kind of stuff, but not me, though!" But then, what do I know about picking women's jewelry. Just ask my wife. ☺]

• ***Woodturning: Forms and Materials***, John Hunnex. Guild of Master Craftsman Publications, 2003, 143 pages. [Mostly one project per page with narrative and description of woods and techniques used. Interesting compilation, smaller type again. Bring your reading glasses to this one, unless of course you just want to look at the pretty pictures.]

We'll try to get a complete list of books and videos in the chapter library and put it up on the web site and on the Yahoo group page as well.

All of these should be available for check out at the January meeting or the February meeting at the latest.

We'll try to give an update next issue on other goodies in the library. We'll also try to get a complete list uploaded to both the chapter website and the NWT Yahoo group.

## Creativity—Your Heritage

Thoughts from Dean Thomas

There's a great lie that murmurs throughout the realms of amateur arts and crafts of all varieties. "Oh, I'm just not creative at all." My hope is that by the time this series of small articles is finished, there will be a number of converts to the truth that there are creative juices in all of us.

As with most everything, there are degrees of creativity. I am a musician, a writer, an artist, and a worker in wood. No, I'm not as gifted as a musical Mozart, or a wordsmith Shakespeare, or an artistic Van Gogh, or a woodsmith Dave Ellsworth, but there are creative corpuscles coursing through my veins! There are creative impulses of inspiration brimming in my brain...and yours.

What is creativity? To create means to make, to produce, to manufacture something from something else. Making oatmeal out of oatmeal is not creativity. Making oatmeal cookies out of oatmeal-with a recipe-is manufacturing. Adding raisins is a normal variation on the theme, but adding three different kinds of raisins when the recipe calls for one, that's creativity. Adding almond flavoring instead of vanilla is creative. "How does that relate to woodturning?", I hear you ask. I'm glad you did. Let's talk!

Woodturners can be divided into a bunch of different categories. This list may change from month to month, to make different points. And we all know that my list might not match your list. That's okay. Color that creativity, too! ☺ The bottom line? Once you know the basic moves, you are a 'turner. Once you can take those basic moves and imitate someone else's "creation", you've graduated to a new level. Once you can take those basic moves and a raw chunk of wood and transform it into something that other turners handle and make knowing "mmmm" noises over, you've graduated into the creative realm. Most of you are already there.

In her book *The Creative Habit*, Twyla Tharp says, "Creativity is not a gift from the gods... It is the product of preparation and effort...make creativity a habit, an integral part of your life: In order to be creative, you have to know how to prepare to be creative." Albert Einstein is credited with having said, "The secret of creativity is knowing how to hide your sources." And my favorite quote when it comes to creativity is from the man deemed by many to be the wisest who ever lived, King Solomon: "There is nothing new under the sun. No, nothing." For the turner, creativity is taking an existing material, making some assessments, using existing tools, existing forms, and following Anthony Harris' cardinal rules of woodturning, the first of which is that the inside diameter may not exceed the outside diameter.

Over the next couple of months, we're going to look at various aspects of creativity from sources, resources, creativity tools, vocabulary, and more.