



# TURN NORTH



Monthly Newsletter of the Northland Woodturners, Kansas City MO

March 2006

## March 2 NWT Meeting Greet Jerry Darter

Jerry Darter from the KC Woodturners chapter is going to talk to us about turning “Green and Lean”. He’s going to demo turning a very thin walled bowl out of green wood. He mentioned something about being the woodturning rendition of Gallagher. You may want to bring a raincoat! Jerry has been turning for about ten years, and has been active in many of the KC chapter’s activities and Saturday “Learn To Turn” sessions. He was introduced to turning during a demo at Paxton’s some years ago: a sense of the magical struck him as he watched square wood become something special. His favorite project right now is bowls, his favorite wood is “free”wood. He was a presenter at our 2005 NWT Symposium last October and is a strong advocate of having good tool skills. Jerry will be pushing the bowl envelope ever thinner for us. We’re looking forward to another great demo, Jerry. Bring on that wet spring wood!

**Don’t forget: Egg Challenge entries are due on March 2 as well! Hurry up!!! Details inside.**

**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>

### February Highlights

Thanks was offered to our 2005 officers. The Wood Show was announced. We talked about returning to Children’s Mercy to do tops again. About 35 in the audience a great instant gallery, and a great presentation by Jerry McMaster on Curvature. Check out his tip elsewhere in this volume.-

### Coming Attractions

March 11, '06, 9am-4pm ... Dale Nish Workshop, KC Chapter  
April 6, '06 ..... Dean Thomas, “Shapes from Chunks”  
May 4, '06 ..... Collaborative Demo, “Finishes”  
June 2, '06 ..... Chip Siskey, Satellite Bowl  
July 6, '06 ..... Lord Only Knows Who,

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

### 2006 Officers

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**Join the chapter’s Yahoo Group:**

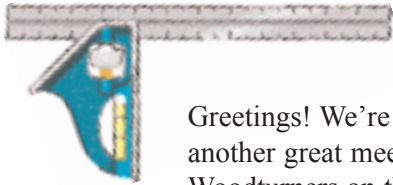
**<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TurnNorthKC/>**



## Member of the Month

The March Member of the Month is Joe Goss, who lives north of the river in Kansas City. Sadly, he doesn't get to turn often. However, when he does turn, he likes to make pens and candle sticks. Joe mentioned that many of his plates and bowls, have either become firewood or smoker wood. Joe still likes to turn as a hobby, even if it is just making sawdust. Joe learned to turn back in high school and his first lathe was a drill powered lathe. He moved up to a Shopsmith at age 30 but with travel for work and Boy Scouts, Joe finds his turning time limited.

He said he joined because Chip asked him to join. Apparently Joe has known Chip since high school—a number of years, but no one's saying just how many. Joe's kids love the items that he makes, and enjoy giving them as gifts to their teachers.



## The President's Corner

Points from chapter president, Marci Eigenschenk

Greetings! We're looking forward to another great meeting of the Northland Woodturners on the first Thursday of March. Looking forward to seeing you there.

A couple of interesting items are on my agenda for this month.

The Saint Louis Woodturners notified us that Ray Key will be in Saint Louis for a demonstration and workshop on March 18, 2006. Ray is one of the premier woodturners in the world and is internationally known for turning beautiful bowls and boxes. He emphasizes his personal approach to turning wood, focusing on elegant simplicity and purity of form. He has been turning wood for more than forty years and his making, teaching and demonstration skills are known worldwide. This is a great opportunity, as Ray is only in the United States a few times a year.

Registration Fee = \$30 for St. Louis club members / \$40 for non members. For an additional \$10 lunch may be provided for you, if not, please bring your own lunch.

If you're interested, please call Jo Williams at (636) 375-0022 to make your reservation. Checks payable to "Woodturners of St. Louis" may be mailed in advance to Jo Williams at 5551 Eagles View Dr., House Springs, MO 63051. For more information, you can download the flyer online at [http://stlturners.org/Upcoming\\_Events.60/Ray%20Key%20Demo.100.pdf](http://stlturners.org/Upcoming_Events.60/Ray%20Key%20Demo.100.pdf).

And now, on the local front. First, thanks to Gary Ficken, Ron Ford, Chip Siskey, Alex Siskey, Dean Thomas, Kent Townsend, Dave Bartlett and Dennis Avondet for all their hard work to make our booth a success at the tool show. Thank you also to all who stopped by to show support. Thanks also to Carolyn Thurman and Chip Siskey for doing the checkers for the Ronald McDonald House.

Second, when buying snacks for the club, a couple of things to keep in mind: you will be reimbursed for your money spent. Just present the receipt to Bill Wheeler, our hard working treasurer. More importantly, there are some who would like to enjoy the snacks as well but cannot (or should not) because the drinks and cookies aren't allowed in their diet. Please when making your selections, remember to grab a diet soda and some sugar-free snacks as well as the regular snacks. Thank you to those who volunteer it is truly appreciated.

Third and perhaps most important. While I understand our meetings have been casual and laid back (and I personally want to keep them that way), it is with deep concern that I need make the following request. When someone is up front speaking, especially the demonstrators who visit, please keep other conversations to a minimum. At the last few meetings, it has been hard to hear the demonstrator because of the background noise from people talking. I did not want to have to make this request however, I have received a few complaints and felt it was time to ask for everyone's attention on this matter. Thanks for your cooperation!

Looking forward to a great time in March!

## The 2006 NWT Egg Challenge

We're getting ready for our second annual Egg Challenge. Are you ready?

Voting will be by the public! Visitors to Overland Tool will cast their ballots for their favorites. Their votes will determine our First, Second, and Third Prize winners, to be announced at the April chapter meeting.



Prizes will also be announced in April. Almost anything goes. Everyone is looking forward to seeing what creative eggs we'll see.

The rules are simple:

1. Egg must be egg shaped and decorated.
2. Egg must be turned.
3. Egg must be able to stand on its own.
4. Egg must be brought to the March meeting to be placed in the showcase at Overland Tool North.
5. Fun *must* be had!



### Dale Nish Scheduled at KC Woodturners' Turn & Learn



Dale Nish, is one of the foremost woodturners/writers in the world. His broad knowledge of woodturning, as well as nearly forty years teaching experience at BYU, enables him to work with most

of the techniques and tools commonly used in woodturning. His books, *Creative Woodturning*, *Artistic Woodturning*, *Master Woodturners*, and *Woodturning with Ray Allen* have been well-accepted worldwide.

Dale founded and was responsible for the Utah Woodturning Symposium at Provo from the late 1970s until 1998. He continues to demonstrate there, at The AAW Symposium, at John C. Campbell Folkart School and other renowned venues worldwide.

The Second Saturday Learn to Turn session will be held on March 11, 2006 from 9AM to 4PM. Cost is \$10 for members or \$20.00 for nonmembers [NWT members will be registered at the member price]. Saturday's demo will consist of:

- ◆ The Turning of Eggs
- ◆ Basic Bowl Turning
- ◆ Natural Edge Bowl Turning
- ◆ Reverse Turned Vases
- ◆ Dale's Signature-Bird House Ornament

Mail check to Bud Schenke, 8225 Rosehill Rd., Lenexa, Kansas 66215. Those registering by March 9th will receive a box lunch on Saturday.

### Northland Woodturners Library

Did you know that we have a BUNCH of great videos and books in our library, and that they are available for your learning pleasure?

Want to learn more about the taming of the skew? Want to watch world-class turners craft bowls and boxes? Want to expand your vocabulary of shapes and lines? Have we got books for *YOU?!?!?*

And do you have books, videos, or magazines that you'd like to share with others in the chapter? We would *love* to have them grace the shelves of our library so that our many members could avail themselves of the hidden treasures waiting to be found.

If you'd like to donate books, magazines, or videos (either VHS or DVD), contact Librarian Ken Rogers or Secretary Dean Thomas and we'll be happy to make note of your donation.

### Help *Still* Wanted...

Are you willing and/or able to offer a couple of hours each month to physically help with the newsletter?

We currently have about 35 members who receive this newsletter via Uncle Sam's snailmail. The editor could use an hour or two of help to collate, fold, stuff, and label so that those 35 or so members can get their newsletter in good condition and in timely fashion.

If you're able to help, contact Secretary Dean Thomas who'll be eternally grateful!



## Demystifying Creativity:

Thoughts from Dean Thomas

*Note: This is a little longer than my normal "thoughts". Someone read it and decided it might be closer to a treatise. Hope it brings some inspiration.*

A favorite joke: It seemed that there was a challenge at hand. A scientist had challenged God himself, saying, "We've got this creating life thing down, God." God smiled at the human's audacity. "Oh, you've got it down, huh? Howsa'bout a little life-bringing duel?" The scientist rubbed his hands together in anticipation, saying, "You're on!" God encouraged him to go ahead and make the first move. The scientist reached down and gathered a handful of dirt, when God suddenly interrupted him, "Hey, make your *own* dirt!"

One of the big discussions in the wonderful world of woodturning has to do with the copying of someone else's patterns and style. We're going to talk about those issues, too, before long, but I'm only going to touch on the issue right now. Where do you get your turning ideas? Pattern or project books? Are you faithful to what you've discovered? Do you give credit for their ideas if you sell your stuff or even if you give it away? This is something to consider and maybe to discuss in depth in a later column.

Today, though, I want to consider some facets of form and their application to the craft and art of woodturning. One of the big deals in engineering and even in cooking today is the deconstruction of things. I want to deconstruct turning (and creativity) for a few minutes. Woodturning is taking something square and making it round or making portions of it round(ish). For this discussion, we're not going to talk about off-center turning or equipment out of the ordinary like oval frame lathes. Normal machine, normal tools, normal materials. On a spindle, what options do we have? We can leave a portion of the piece square or not. We can then apply the three basic cuts in some fashion: cylinder, bead, or cove. How we apply those cuts or absence of cuts is creativity at its base line. If we need a cylinder for a rolling pin, that's not very creative, but it's surely functional! If we form beads out of pretty wooden cylinder, we might create a necklace or earrings from smaller beads. Larger connected beads might end up as a foot massager while disconnected spheres are great for decoration or any number of other applications. Forming coves on that same cylinder, connected one to another, might create a noodle cutter or the business end of a meat tenderizer. Again, these are pretty basic, pretty functional items. Creative? Well, not terribly. But that's not a bad thing, just a thing. The ability to form a consistent cylinder is a good skill to own. The ability to form a good

sphere of any size is a good skill to have in one's bag of tricks. A nicely finished, nicely waxed sphere is very pleasant to the eye and to the touch. Nicely formed coves are also an aesthetic pleasure.

Have you ever stopped to analyze what happens when you exaggerate any of those three cut forms? Recently, I have had occasion to do just that! A cylinder that is extremely short becomes a shoulder. A cylinder that is fat at one end and narrow at the other becomes a tapered form and a base for all sorts of other adventures: ring keepers, thimbles, or parts of toys. A half-bead can become the finished end of a cylinder or one surface of a top. Connected to a square section, it becomes a pleasing portion of a baluster. Round the corners of a piece of wood, half-bead on the bottom and you have the beginning of a milk-bottle shape. Add a longer half-cove on top and another full bead and the milk bottle is complete. Take our cove shape, make it longer and gentler, and you can see the top of a water drop before it drops. A shorter, deeper cove and you can see the underside of a top coming to a deliberate point. A really narrow, deep cove becomes a v-groove. Ah, the creative vocabulary has just increased!

Going back to my favorite philosopher, Solomon, "*There's nothing new under the sun!*" That sounds kind of cynical in a sense, but I think it's an honest way to approach what we do. There are really just so many shapes and when we add the restrictions of lathe size and material size, there is a finite nature to what we do. Frank Sudol, a Canadian teacher of the art part of woodturning, would turn my cynical statement on its head (a bit of creativity in its own right). He'd say to you, "Yes, it's true, we have a very few basic shapes and a limited number of combinations of those shapes within a given dimension, but why limit ourselves to only what we have seen or experienced thus far in our lives? Why limit ourselves at all? Think about what existed at the time of Solomon. Ponder then on what Solomon might be saying if he were able to see what fantastic things have been discovered or invented after he said 'there's nothing new under the sun!'" One piece that you might remember from Symposium or from the eBay auction or from the AAW website is what started out as a hollow cylinder that was carved, burned, painted, and delicately crafted into a series of feathers, all representing endangered species of birds. Did Frank "invent" or "create" the basic form? It might be argued that he adapted the basic form from having seen a Native American war bonnet. Plausible, I think, but the use of feathers from many different birds was a new twist.

## Demystifying Creativity:

Thoughts from Dean Thomas

Frank continues to work on improving this form and its execution. When did that form and his variation become “his”, rather than, “oh, that’s just a representation in wood of a war bonnet”? Few would argue that it belonged to Frank Sudol. (if you want to see a sample, visit the Internet:

<http://www.woodturner.org/sym/sym2000/ig/ig2000.cfm?rccno=31>)

Have you seen Bob Rosand’s ornaments? His “icicles” are all pretty much the same, a signature element of his ornaments. He starts with a stick, makes a cylinder, tapers the cylinder (at least in his mind), turns inverted teardrops that increase in size as they get closer to the bottom of the ornament.

And another turner of national repute, Cindy Drozda, might answer, “So? It’s not how many shapes you have, it’s what you can *do with them!*” In her classes at the Florida Symposium in January 2006, Cindy talked about her approach to finials. She likes skinny, skinny, *skinny* finials. She’s *known* for skinny finials. She kind of shrugs when she overhears people talking, “if you want to see *really* skinny finials, you need to see Cindy Drozda’s stuff!” She smiles and sighs, and wishes aloud that folks would take a more careful look at her work to see the other aspects of her finials. So, I did! Her finials are all constructed of the same three basic wood cuts as are all of yours: beads, coves, and cylinders! Yes, almost all of hers

get really skinny, but the ingenuity—the art-of-varying three recurring elements is one place where her creativity shines. Consider the basic finial lidded box. We know that there are abundant shapes to choose from to make dandy boxes, and a wide variety of complementary finials to top those boxes. Cindy makes her living turning, and like my artist wife, Cindy has to be careful not to get bored with making the same shape over and over again. The difference between production and artistry peeks through here, not in the boredom, but in the willingness and desire to explore. What I want to share is not so that you can make finials like Cindy makes them, but so you can glimpse into her creative mind.

For Cindy, the same three “elements” are involved: an onion or teardrop shape (cove and bead combo), what I would call a “spool” shape (cove and shoulder/cylinder combo), and another bead. Ah, but what she *does* with those three elements. Check out some samples:



Look at the gallery from last month. Several members watched what Alex Garcia did with a “shelved” bowl and came with their own variations. That’s what this craft, these skills, this *art*, is about!

## Creativity Wisdom

Ancient proverbs often reflect on contemporary subjects. Confucius evidently said, “By three methods may we learn wisdom: First, by reflection which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and Third by experience, which is the bitterest.” Replace “creativity” for “wisdom” and you have the gist.

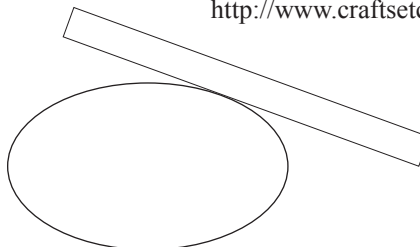
Twentieth century philosopher/artist B.J. Daniells says, “Art cannot be taught. Design, technique, method can be taught and a predictable result achieved, but ‘art’ is the quality within a work that sets it apart from the common. Our job as artists is simply to do the best work that we’re capable of and let it go at that. Not all that we do can properly be called art.” Check out his terrific works at <http://www.cartsandcrafts.com>

## Tip of the Month

Our first Tip of the Month comes from Jerry McMaster’s presentation last month, special for those who missed it! And it’s a good one!

Ever wanted to make sure that your sphere or egg or other curve was *smooooooth* and not flat? Jerry brought us a tip from his time at Arrowmont. Use an inexpensive triangular scale to avoid flat spots on curved surfaces. Provides both visual and tactile feedback when checking those curves with a straight edge! Rock the scale across the curve. You’ll be able to see a single contact point, and you’ll be able to feel flat spots when the scale clunks into place. Cheap fix found at Hobby Lobby, for only \$5.99, and viewed at:

<http://www.craftsetc.com/Store/ShowProduct.aspx?p=325332>



*Got a handy-dandy little tip for the chapter? Drop me a note telling me the tip. When we publish it, we’ll also ask you to give a quick, five-minute demo at that meeting.*

## For Sale

General wood lathe, model 160-1. Cast iron body, 4 speeds (850-1375-2160-3500) with 1 horsepower motor (American Made), reversing drum switch. 12x38 lathe with 15" swing over gap. It is in excellent condition, all bearings are tight, etc. Includes wrench, two 3" face plates, one 6" faceplate, hand-wheel, 4" & 12" tool rest, 3-jaw self-centering chuck, bowl turning tool rest, screw center, spur center, live center, dead center, keyed chuck, center knockout tool, and all chisels. Spindle is 1"x8tpi, #2 MT. Tailstock is #2 MT with 2" travel.

Chisels: Set of 12 Craftsman high-speed steel chisels, skews, gouges, scrapers. Long & strong bowl gouge (5/8") deep flute, Sorby extra heavy round point scraper, Henry Taylor extra heavy diamond side cut scraper, skew chisel, gouge.

Precision Combination Chuck complete set including pin chuck, collet chuck, screw chuck and more. Also, will include some books on woodturning.

Everything is in excellent condition. \$900 firm. See Den Avondet for contact information.



## Northland Woodturners 6th Annual Symposium?

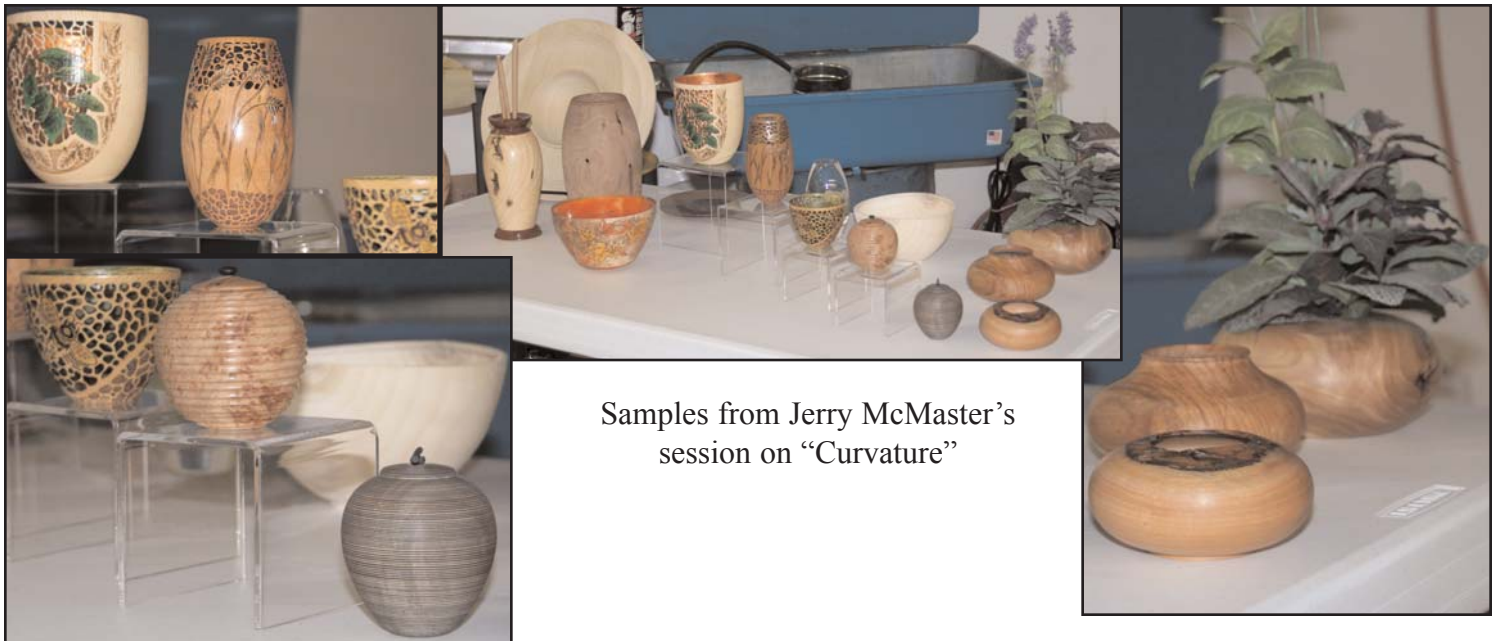
Discussions are under way to explore whether or not the chapter will host a 2006 edition of our very successful local/ regional symposium. President Marci, advisor Chip Siskey, and last year's symposium chairman, Dave Bartlett have been talking and dreaming and making some tentative plans. We hope to have some details at the March meeting, and a lot more details in the April newsletter.

**Can you bring some give-away tops to supply the Big Top on the counter at Overland Tools North? We'd appreciate it!!**

**Don't Forget!! Note the Corrected Dates:  
Plan Now: 20th Annual AAW Symposium  
Louisville KY, June 22-24, 2006**

## The February Gallery

### People & Projects



Samples from Jerry McMaster's session on "Curvature"



# The February Gallery

## People & Projects



Jerry McMaster explaining never-ending curves.



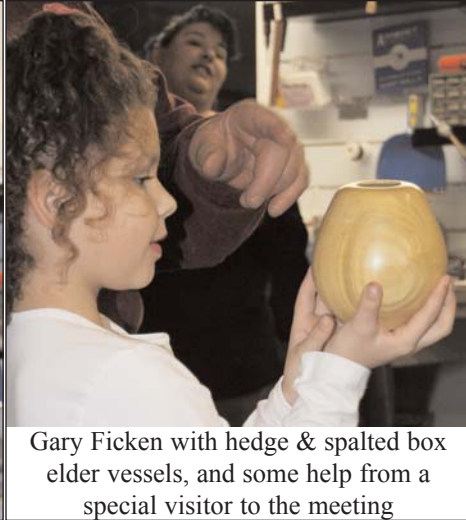
A Bob Rosand vessel



Dave Bartlett modeling his new, homemade turning smock, a shelf bowl, ornament, and sycamore bowl.



Al Szalay's production of shelved bowls, inspired by the January demo by Alex Garcia. Nice work!



Gary Ficken with hedge & spalted box elder vessels, and some help from a special visitor to the meeting

*We're looking to add more and more project pictures to our Gallery pages. Turn 'em and bring 'em, share 'em with the chapter! Everyone enjoys seeing others' work. That's part of why we're here, to observe, to learn, to share.*

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 Enter "NorthlandWoodturners" when asked for club name.




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