



TURN NORTH



Monthly Newsletter of the Northland Woodturners, Kansas City MO

April 2006

April 6 NWT Meeting: Dean Thomas to Demo

Yes, your fearless correspondent and newsletter editor is about to step up to the demonstrator plate. Dean's been turning for more than 20 years, most of that time self-taught. He's been part of the NWT for more than a year and is also a member of the KC Woodturners Chapter and of AAW. He likes to turn little stuff, ornaments, doo-dads, miniatures, and more. His favorite wood is maple in all its varieties. Bowls, plates, and toys are some of the things that come out of his workshop. Continuing with the creativity theme, Dean is going to explore "Shapes from Chunks". Expect some turning, some talking, and lots of questions!

The winner of the Egg Challenge will be announced at the April meeting. Who will it be??

The May meeting is going to be a collaborative demonstration on Finishes. Think about your favorite finish and how you could do five minutes of how to or "why" talking. Friction, spray, wax, oil, and more...

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>

March Highlights

The topic of dealing with inactive members was touched on with the hope of finding some creative and acceptable ways of encouraging inactive members back, and of how to graciously deal with those who have not attended in a long time. New dates for the AAW symposium in Louisville were announced and a request was made for donations of Christmas ornaments for the "give back to the community effort."

Coming Attractions

May 4, '06 Collaborative Demo, "Finishes"
June 1, '06 Chip Siskey, Satellite Bowl
July 6, '06 Lord Only Knows Who,
Aug 3, '06 Dwight Herrick, "Duck Calls"

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

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Marci Eigenschenk, President

(816) 734-4248 –

President@NorthlandWoodturners-KC.org

Dennis Avondet, Vice President & Webmaster

(816) 734-4248 –

VicePresident@NorthlandWoodturners-KC.org

Dean Thomas, Secretary & Newsletter Editor

(816) 421-5781 –

Secretary@NorthlandWoodturners-KC.org

Bill Wheeler, Treasurer

(816) 587-8385

Ken Rogers, Librarian

(816) 630-4545 – kenneth8890@sbcglobal.net

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Join the chapter's Yahoo Group:

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Member of the Month

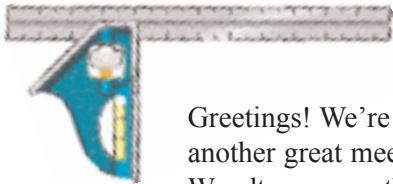
The April Member of the Month is Gene Pease. Born here in the Kansas City area, Gene has lived in a few interesting places far from here. He has lived in Colorado, California, and even served in the military down in the Panama Canal area. He married his lovely bride (of 44 years now) and they both lived in the Panama for the first 11 months of their marriage. Gene has been turning for about 2 to 3 years now, pretty much around the same time he joined up with NWT. Gene joined the Woodturners because he wanted a lathe and he liked the things he saw others make on the lathe. Gene mostly makes pens and small items, even a few gavels for people. Recently, he has not been able to turn because he injured his hand however, he is getting ready to get back to making chips so he can fill up the dust collection system he's installing in his shop.

Another Great Book

While doing research for the April demo, Dean ran across another great resource book that may show up in the NWT library. It is about to be re-released in the US. David Weldon's *Shapes for Woodturners* is just what it says it is. All of the half-shapes that Weldon collected are laid out on grids for easy translation via graph paper or copier to templates or smart sticks for translation into wood. Also included are some basics on types of wood (European domestics), finishes, tools, and making of design decisions (now you know why I found this book!). With a little tracing paper or a copier, a turner can borrow parts and pieces and change the hundreds into thousands of pleasing designs. The designs run from angular to sleek, from contemporary to classic, from delightful to downright chunky. Sure to find something to please any palate

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 April. Looking forward to seeing you there.

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

We're hot after some prizes from AAW for our newsletter and our new website. I think we've got a darned good shot at winning!

A reminder, that the dates for the AAW Symposium have changed. The new dates for the Louisville, KY event are June 22-24, 2006. Get your reservations in early if you're planning to attend. Hey, they might even need some help in the Youth Turning room again. Volunteers??

Last year, we were asked to bring or send tops to the Symposium. Those tops were auctioned off to raise money for the Children's Hospital as part of the Return to the Community effort of the AAW. This year, they're asking us to make and donate Christmas ornaments. The charity

in Louisville evidently dresses and auctions Christmas trees (holiday trees??) and brought in something over \$400,000 last year. Let's see if we can send some ornaments with Kent & Chip (and anyone else who attends) and do our part to help. Y'all do such nice work! If you can't send them with our folks, I have an address where you can mail them.

We're working on dates for a return turning trip to the KC Children's Mercy Hospital. Stay tuned for details!

There won't be our usual raffle at the April meeting. We have something special in its place. You'll want to be there!

If you can't be at the April meeting, try to get by Overland Tool North and see the display of the Easter Egg Challenge that are right next to the door. Be sure to cast your vote for your favorite.

Looking forward to a great time in April! Here's hoping you have a wonderful Easter or Passover, or any other holiday of your choice!

A Few Highlights from the Dale Nish Turn & Learn at KCWT

Dean Thomas

I was truly blessed to spend the day with Dale Nish on March 11. Seven hours of listening to one of the grand masters of the wood lathe share thoughts, ideas, opinions, and his life experiences. What a JOY!

One of the things he talked about was turning eggs. He related a story about a well-known turner from Amish who made much of his livelihood at middle and upper level crafts fairs and shows. Dale talked a little about earning a living as a turner and wanted to make a point about this guy using eggs to do it. Talked and turned, joked and teased and exhorted. (It was a very good day.)



The PA turner was from eastern PA, probably not far from Lancaster County. The man had gone out of his way to meet and know the Amish and was accepted by them, even to a point of being invited to the barn and house raisings, things that are mostly Amish community only. Seldom are non-Amish invited to participate. Dale was visiting this old turner while he was turning cedar eggs.

Couple of minutes to lay out, a very few minutes until there was a cedar egg completed and in the basket. Dale made mental note of the speed and efficiency that he was seeing. "How many of them eggs are you going to make?" "Oh, about 5,000." "Five THOUSAND? Don't you mean five HUNDRED?" "Nope, 5,000." "And how much are you going to get for them?" "I'll get \$5 each for them, mostly from the Amish who'll be at the fair. I'm making eggs for them." "Why aren't you charging more than that for them?" "Because that's all they'll PAY for them!"

We all laughed, but reality hit home when we did the math. He figured that he'd probably sell out before the end of the week long fair. 5000 eggs at \$5 each... hmm... That's \$25,000. Twenty-Five THOUSAND-Dollars! Dale commented, "His pocket money for the summer."

It took him seconds to chop saw blanks from a 2x2 cedar stick, a minute to mount, rough to 2" round, to lay it out, & another 3-4 minutes to shape and skew it to final condition. No sanding needed if the skew cut is clean, no finish on the wood because you want the cedar to keep the bugs away and make the clothes smell good, right? \$5 is an inexpensive remembrance of

the fair, and something practical for the keepers of the clothing, both he and she. Practical, inexpensive, fast to make. Such a deal.

He went on to share how it was done and to share that eggs are great skill builders. You can make 'em with either a skew or spindle gouge. After a few of them, you don't need a template, as most of us can remember the basic shape, plus the egg is one shape that is VERY forgiving. If it's a little pointy, or its butt end is a little fatter/skinnier or pouchier, that's okay, it's still kinda egg-shaped. 8^)

He continued on (we spent probably 75 minutes talking around the couple of eggs that he demonstrated on), talking about how eggs are a great way to display various kinds of wood. Great way to show off all aspects of its grain and color. Great way to learn if a wood is easy to turn or hard to turn, whether a skew cut will produce a good, marketable finish, or if it doesn't matter WHAT you use you're going to have to sand it like crazy. Good thoughts for those of us who continue to learn and continue to want to know more.

Dale also shared that it was a great reason to get a little chunk of some wood from somewhere special in the world in his travels, that he could almost always stick a chunk of wood large enough to do an egg in the luggage.



The last thing that he shared was that, if you think about it, the egg presents curves that are very easy on the eye. He made a joke about another shape that often interests the eyes of the males in the audience, but quickly went back to the egg. Something that I knew, but had not thought about for a long time is that any way you slice an egg in any direction, you will have a gracious curve or set of curves. Anyone interested in the shapes of bowls and vessels could take a bunch of eggs, do slice'n'dice and have an abundance of curves on which to base your vessels and bowls. HUNDREDS of shapes in that little package of God-given wonder, the egg. "And you know, I never cease to be amazed. The chicken pays absolutely no attention to them. Just keeps cranking out those eggs, totally oblivious to the wonder she's creating, but like most woodturners, puts up a racket until you notice what they've produced!"

Thought I'd share my good time with y'all.

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.

Creativity: Getting Started and Keeping Going!

Thoughts from Dean Thomas

It's me again, your friendly local creativity pusher! I hope you're having half the fun reading and doing that I am thinking and writing. If so, tell me! If not, well, I guess I want to know that, too.

The question was asked, "Why do you turn?" I had to laugh, but then I had to think about the "rest" of the question. Most of us turn because we love turning. That part's pretty simple. Maybe the second question is, "Why do you turn *what* you turn?" Maybe that's the one that needs to be explored. Why *do* you turn what you turn? Have you ever talked about that with anyone?

I talked to Jerry Darter last month in preparation for his demonstration. He likes to turn bowls. He *loves* to turn bowls. A couple of our members love to turn whistles. A friend loves to turn goblets (or "bowls with stems," as he calls them). WHY??? Jerry "just likes 'em" and "finds turning them satisfying." The goblet guy loves to see what the grain will look like in the four or five basic patterns that he turns. I love ornaments and tops. Why? Heck, I don't know. Maybe because tops are such a quick little project. Maybe because I get a real charge out of watching the look on other people's faces when they touch a top or ornament and I can see them begin to imagine where that ornament will go.

Then, I have yet another woodturner friend who loves to turn pens (and pencils). He turns lots of pens every week. He's motivated. He turns lots of pens every week because he sells lots of pens every week! But he really is not just a production turner. He really does love to turn those lovely little practical works of art. He loves to play, both with shapes and woods. He listens to the customers as they ooh and aah, point and touch, and chatter about the look of a particular shape or wood that has captivated them. Here is a man who has found a wonderful niche. There is enough variety in what he does to allow him to be artistic and creative within the bounds, to help him maintain both his interest in pen-turning, and his passion for turning. Shapes, grain patterns, variety, appreciative audience (one that pays, no less), and he can make a living at it. Is that a great thing or what!? Can you hear the envy? Sigh, I'm working on that.

What fuels your turning fires? What drives you to the lathe? Are you project driven, doing your 20 new ornaments every Christmas, the occasional bowl for a gift for family or friends? When you get to the lathe, what excites you? A Florida friend turns Norfolk Island Pine

almost exclusively. He turns all sorts of projects, mostly thin, almost exclusively spalted. I asked him why. His dual drives are simple. He is absolutely enthralled by the patterns, colors, and symmetries of the species, plus he has 20 acres of NIP and the summer storms always down trees. Freewood at its best. Free, his, and in his back yard with plenty to share with friends. Firing his passions.

Wood excites me. It's not a Tim Allen, "more power" thing, although I can see that monster Oneway lathe living in my shop. I love studying this stuff, looking at pictures of pieces from familiar species to see what lessons I can learn. I love watching grain emerge from a chunk of wood. I love trying to figure out what shapes and details will show off a particular grain. Will too many curves and beads enhance or distort? What kinds of classic techniques can I apply to make this the best it can be? What kind of "out-of-the-box" thinking can I employ to make this special piece of wood into an even more special finished piece? The "out-of-the-box" aspect is sometimes hard for me, and sometimes it causes me to lapse into analysis paralysis. That's my personal sworn enemy, sometimes defeating creativity, not to mention work. Can I get an "amen" out there??

And of course, that's part of why I'm doing the particular demo that I'm doing this meeting, "Shapes from Chunks." For many years, I've enjoyed contact with lots of turners and woodworkers and watching what they do with wood, "listening to the wood," as Alex taught us in January, and letting the grain and shape of the chunk help define what that chunk will become. (There's a hint about the coming demo in there if you're looking.) We've all seen beautiful shapes that beg to be touched and enjoyed. We've seen curious pieces that make you say, "How'd they do that??" Most of us have also seen "art-for-art's sake" pieces that maybe just make us wonder, "Why?"

The artist part of me wants to make pieces that draw the "oohs and aahs". I guess I'm just that kind of artistic. How long will it be until we end up with starving woodturning artists' sales? ☺ But I digress... Sorry for the rant. Well, kind of sorry.

Have you ever thought about why you like this stuff? Or what exactly you like to turn and why? I'd really like to hear your stories. Drop me an email or print me a note—anything so long as I can read it—and hand it to me. I'll be happy to share your stories with the gang.

Woodturning Jewellery

A Book Review by Carolyn Thurman

Woodturning Jewellery, by Hilary Bowen, is a very nicely done book with many ways to use our small exotic wood scraps. She covers everything including health risks and safety. One thing we often forget about is to stop turning when we are tired. Most of us can remember an accident that could have been prevented. She also talks about the precautions to take when we are turning toxic woods. She points out that the pieces we will be working with are often very small and we may need to make a jig to use when cutting them on a band saw. There are also many different types of chucks that can be used.

Chapter 5 is on design. She has great suggestions about what works and what doesn't. All of her ideas are shown with great illustrations. She has many different styles of earrings, how to mount them and how to turn them. She says the most difficult thing is to get the two earrings identical.

There is a chapter on pins, brooches, and bracelets. I don't think I ever thought of turning a bracelet until I read Hilary's book. What a great gift idea for the woman in your life. I would love one! She has a great idea for putting four different grits of sand paper on a spindle that can be mounted on your lathe. This makes sanding these small items easier.

She even has a chapter on rings, so you see, you really can make use of even very small scraps. If you have a friend that uses a lot of exotic wood species, have them save you the small pieces they can't normally use.

Her chapter on necklaces is full of great, inventive design ideas. The photography throughout the book is excellent. Her choices of materials provide lots of wonderful design possibilities. Recent articles on segmenting and laminated bowls seem to pull on similar design techniques for great effects.

Hilary shares lots of techniques and refinements. These are great ideas to use on our other turning projects as well. She will not waste your time. She uses stains and dyes to color woods, and then inlays wire for great affects. Especially interesting were the directions on how to inlay wire on the diagonal. One chapter is on turning laminated pieces. Other ideas include the use of gold leaf, carving and beading. She also shows how to set in stones. One chapter is on findings for jewelry. The last chapter is on how to finish the projects.

This is a book chock full of great ideas for any turner, whether or not you ever turn jewelry.

Creativity Wisdom

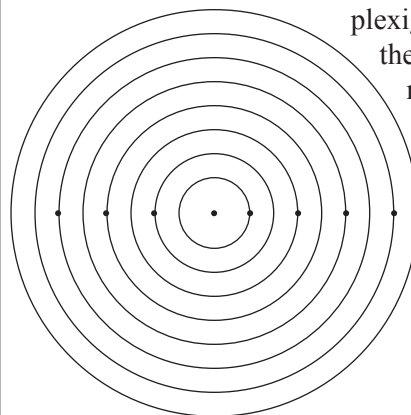
Ancient proverbs often reflect on contemporary subjects. Confucius evidently said, "By three methods may we learn wisdom: First, by reflection which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and Third by experience, which is the bitterest." Replace "creativity" for "wisdom" and you have the 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 is a variation on a long-time standard woodturner's method of operation. Adapt for the swing of *your* lathe.

Okay, you've got this chunk of log, not even a full half-log, maybe a third. Or you have a great chunk of elm crotch. How much bowl can you get out of that piece? Turners have been using cardboard circles of various sizes for a long time, and then someone saw this. Make it out of



plexiglas or lexan. Drill a nail sized hole at the center, and pencil sized holes at the 1" marks, on opposite sides of center, odds on one side, evens on the other, to keep from weakening the circle.

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.

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**

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.

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!

The March Gallery

People & Projects

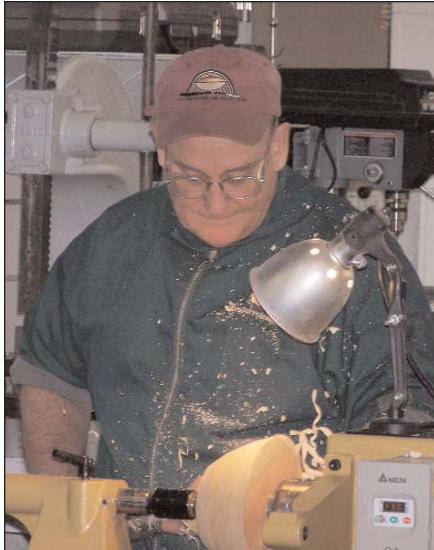


Entries in the 2006
NWT Egg Challenge



The March Gallery

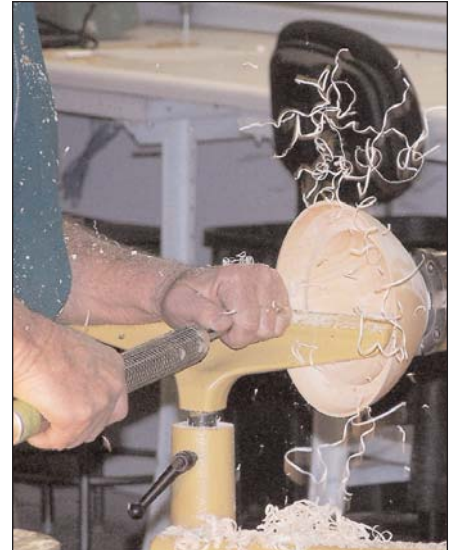
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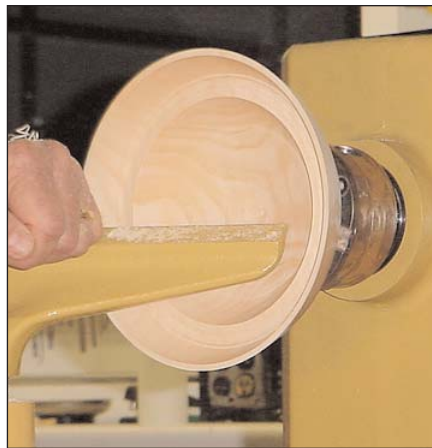
Jerry D. kickin' up dust, shaping that greenwood bowl, getting ready to demonstrate "Green & Lean"!



Working fast to minimize heat build-up and to avoid excessive reshaping that would be needed after warpage.



How lean can he go? "Thin enough? NO??" Final wall was even and less than 1/8".



Jerry's greenwood bowl kept getting thinner...and thinner...thinner... and finally, SEE THROUGH!!





Kenny, Al, & Richard share great projects in maple, osage orange, and spalted box elder.

And someone's gonna have a really nice shop set up!

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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