

Azalea Woodturners February 2016 Newsletter

The February Meeting of the Azalea Woodturners was held Saturday, February 27, 2016 at Driven Engineering.

The meeting began with a few comments from Mike Francis (President) that included collection of dues to support ongoing guest appearances, the March meeting and workshop with Ron Browning, and recruiting younger members. He requested members contact Patsy Allen if they would like to order a wooden nametag with the Azalea Woodturners' logo available for \$15 each. He stressed the opportunities to learn from our club demonstrators as well as from other area clubs including the Bayou Woodturners (Ponchatoula, LA), the Artistic Woodturners of North West Florida (Pensacola, FL), and Lighthouse Woodturners (D'Iberville, MS. Notable demonstrators that are scheduled at area clubs include Jimmy Clewes at Bayou Woodturners August 13th, Mark Sillay in Pensacola on March 12th and Jimmy Creel at the Artistic Woodturners of North West Florida Oct 15th. At our own club, Ron Browning will be here next month and Rudy Lopez will be here in April.

Next, members viewed the gallery that had an encouraging number of participants and beautiful creative work including: a turned three legged stool with a Claro walnut seat, several hollow form boxes with contrasting finial tops, a number of natural edge bowls of local walnut, several segmented turnings (produced using a hand built sled similar to the one illustrated in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpFNE1CHsc4>) a walnut bowl, pepper grinder, a vase with an insert, pens including one made with Alaskan Caribou and another using stabilized punky oak, a mallet, and froe club. Pictures will be posted on line soon.

There was not enough material available for the wood raffle, but several members donated wood that was available for a \$1 donation.

Following the gallery, John Byl began a platter demonstration noting that a platter is a shallow bowl for holding food that can be readily turned from 4/4 wood that has been sawn round with a band saw. John selected a rosewood board that was rather wide. However, he noted that one can resaw wood and book match them or just cut a single board lengthwise and slip the halves together. In both cases edge glue them with waterproof Titebond Type III glue hiding the joint by placing the tight growth ring edges together.

John said here were several ways to hold platters. Faceplates were impractical with thin wood since the holes would later show. For thin boards he recommended using a Nova chuck screw with a 3/8 shim between the work and the chuck noting that at least three threads should penetrate the board. For hard wood John recommended drilling 1 step or 1/64 below 3/8" and for softwood drilling 3 steps below 3/8" or 3/64. In either case, the threads should be reinforced with superglue and allowed to dry before final assembly. Glue blocks can also be used and many turners use brown paper bag material to facilitate removal. Some turners also use special double stick tape. In any case always use the tailstock since it helps keep the material on and also marks the center point.

Before beginning he warned that new turners should start with a small diameter platter since larger platters can more easily warp, the rim rpm is higher, and they are more subject to vibration problems. He also warned that a face shield must be worn, the lathe speed turned down, and the turner must step to the side when starting the lathe. To determine the optimum turning speed, increase the rpm until vibration starts and then reduce the rpm until the vibration subsides. He also warned that accidental contact with the thin rim or sharp rim edge of platters can produce dangerous cuts.

The first priority should be to get the rim of platter round using the tip of a bowl gouge to achieve concentricity. Once the rim is round, the rpm may be adjusted a little higher. Next, does an OG shape on the bottom of the platter marking the face in increments of 1/3. He does the outside edge first gradually moving inward for material support. Loose belts on the lathe safely stop the lathe when there is a catch and prevent excessive damage. He uses a shear cut to get rid of imperfections holding the tool at a 45 degree angle from horizontal keeping the top edge 1/16 from the work but sometimes has to finish with a scraper.

Once the bottom is complete, John prepares and attaches a glue block with the grain in the same direction as that of the platter. He applies medium viscosity super glue around the outside edge of the glue block and sprays accelerator on the platter and then uses the tailstock to apply pressure and center the glue block. Then he turns a spigot on the glue block for insertion into the chuck noting that it is difficult to center the glue block and normally requires a little work to turn it concentric and square.

Next, he marks where the bowl portion will be on the platter and normally does not go deeper than the original hole for the screw chuck. He begins with the outside area and works toward the inside using a bowl gouge. He uses a scraper if necessary to remove the ridges before sanding. Finally, he sands using Minwax 209 sanding sealer using cheap foam brushes that he buys in bulk from Hobby Lobby. Since the sanding sealer is oil based, it makes it a little more yellow but it reduces the dust and produces slurry that helps fill in imperfections in the finish. He sands using a 1/4 sheet of sandpaper folding such that it is never grit to grit: Fold in half and then into a 1/4. Then unfold it, tear a 1/4 fold half way down and refold being care to have the backing against the grit on each fold. Alternately, fold the sandpaper in thirds avoiding grit to grit contact. He usually sands at 300 to 600 rpm sanding between the 9:00 and 6:00 positions and reapplies the sanding sealer as he goes through the grits from 80, 120, 180, to 220. He commented that 3M sandpaper with plastic back works great.

Since the platter had some vibration problems, a discussion as to the probable causes included: Internal Stresses releasing as the blank was reduced in size, Stress associated with applying the gouge and deflection of the relatively thin product, Loose chuck, Lathe vibration due to the contact with the uneven floor and possibly the sliders, Weight variation in the blank itself, and Lathe vibration possibly due to worn bearings.

In summary, it was a great informative meeting and demonstration. Hope everyone gets an opportunity to turn a platter before the next meeting.