

SEPTEMBER 2014

# TURNERS TALK

THE MID-SOUTH WOODTURNER'S GUILD





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Bill Bleau Platter

#### Above photo:

Mike Maffitt

Off-Center Turning Demo

#### Right Photo:

Mike Maffitt

Off-Center Turning Demo

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# NOTES FROM THE WOOD PILE



Fall, the season of the crafts show. A time where the really ambitious turner could stockpile a quantity of wood turnings, organize a display booth and invite the public not only to be impressed, but to be so enthralled that money is exchanged for a particular turning. Some of the guild members are at this point, more of us should be. I turn for fun, for gifts at special holidays, most often I turn just to be turning. My wife, the accountant in the family, insists that I sell my turnings to generate some income so that I can claim a loss on my taxes and help pay for the next tool set. Last year a vacuum pump and accessories, this year I would like to explore hollow forms. We know that some specialized tools will be required - translated to "it's gonna cost".

There have been ample opportunities to display with other guild members in such shows as the Jewish Community Center - Memphis Camera Club showing, the recent Delta Fair, and upcoming River Arts Fest 2014. The Pink Palace Crafts Fair held each October at Audubon Park is an excellent venue. At least one of our members participates each year at this show.

Just a few weeks ago, the Cooper Young Festival had a estimated attendance of over one hundred and thirty thousand people. I did not see a single wood turning vendor. An opportunity not utilized.

If the Instant Gallery is any indication of the skill set and the variety of turnings members of MSWG are able to create, next year we should all have our turnings represented in at least one of the local shows.

I have not participated beyond the Instant Gallery, I do not think my turnings are ready for a really critical examination, maybe I lack the confidence to feel that I can ask money for something I have turned. But then again, I hope that I am turning better than a year ago, and that maybe with one of the MSWG's mentors or training, I could enhance my techniques and raise my personal bar to the point that maybe I will individually or with a fellow turner make the lineup at a local show.

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**Robin  
Boyd**



# The President's Corner



I apologize for not having attended the Aug meeting, I had a scheduling conflict and was out of town. I did however hear that Mike Maffitt did a great job with his demo, thank you Mike.

We are still looking for up to six people to step forward and help serve on the Board of Directors. We meet once a month, usually on the Tuesday night prior to our regularly scheduled meetings and discuss club business and future plans. Please email me if you want to be considered as we have an election during our November meeting and we need to announce ahead of time the nominees by our October meeting.

Here's just a quick preview of upcoming events: next month we will have our annual Octoberfest, an all-day turn fest with some good food and fun. Remember that the pens for troops turn in will be due during Octoberfest and we will have our semi-annual tool sale/swap. John Lucas will be our featured demonstrator. In November we will have

a BOD election and an ornament contest where first place will be \$50 and second place will be \$25. December will bring us our Christmas party/auction, your BOD has promised to turn in an item each for the auction.

So you ask, "how do we get the money to keep MSWG running". I'm glad you asked. Let me throw some ballpark figures at you. We pay \$100 per half day for our meeting room, \$400-\$600 plus expenses for an out of area demonstrator, \$40 - \$50 per meeting for refreshments, \$75 for the ornament contest winners and insurance coverage. Membership takes in \$25 per year for each member (pretty good value considering what you get), we take in

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Skip  
Wilbur



about \$60-\$80 per month for the raffle and then there is our annual Christmas auction. Now in order to sustain this level of education/entertainment we need your help. We always need items for our monthly raffle so think about that next time you are on your way to the meeting, grab a piece of wood and donate it. Enter the ornament contest in Nov, those items will be auctioned off as well and you are always welcome to donate a piece or offer an instruction class to bid on. Don't throw away those woodturning magazines and books, donate them to our library. Then of course there is the auction, "bid high and bid often". There are always the few who will do all of the above mentioned projects and there are always a few who will do none of those. I'd like to encourage the ones in the middle; politicians like to call you "independents". I understand during the year you may have had a conflict with work, family, weather etc. etc. But you've been giving that excuse now for a few years, so it's time to participate and contribute. Try kicking out a bowl, enter the ornament contest, write an article for our newsletter, volunteer to do a demo (you don't have to be a pro), offer a tip at a meeting and get involved, join the BOD. A political question started in 1980 politics was "are you better off now than you were 4 years ago"? Both political parties have used this effectively since then. I'm not here to talk politics but to ask you, "are you a better turner than you were a year ago"? Please be honest when answering that question for if not then either we or you have failed. The MSWG buffet provides all the dishes

necessary for your nourishment (demo's, hands-on, library, newsletter, discussions at meetings, etc). If you want to improve your skills and creativity you need to partake of this nourishment, ie: practice, submit to the instant gallery, participate in discussions and most of all have fun.

Turn on, turn in, help out!

"Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others. Unsuccessful people are always asking, 'What's in it for me?'"

- Brian Tracy

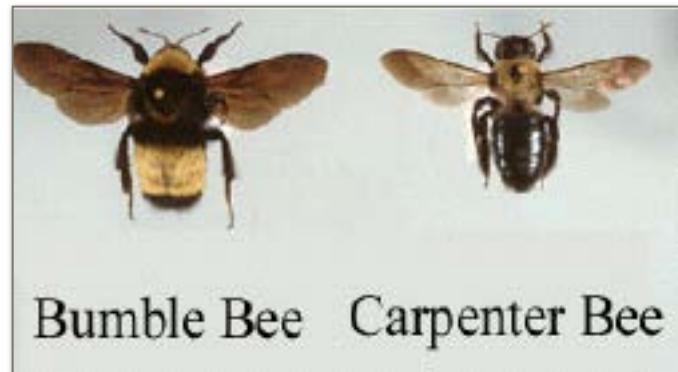
# WOOD SPIN

## To BEE a Carpenter

When I was a youngster growing up in West Tennessee, I had a cousin who would catch bumble bees in her bare hands. This impressed me to no end as I had been stung a couple of times by bumblebees and those were not pleasant experiences. She finally told me her secret – she only caught the bees that had white faces. Despite her urging me to catch some white faced bumble bees, I never trusted them not to sting.

It was years later before I learned the facts of life as they relate to the bees and the bees. What my cousin had been catching were carpenter bees, not bumble bees, and she was catching only the males, as they have the white dots on their heads (see photo) and do not sting. The solid black females can sting if aggravated.

Carpenter bees resemble bumble bees in color, size, shape, almost everything except that carpenter bees have shiny abdomens, not fuzzy one like true bumble bees (see photo). Plus, of course, the important (to little boys) white faces



Comparison of Bumble Bee and Carpenter Bee

present on male carpenter bees, a feature absent in bumble bees.

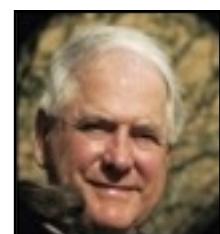
By this point the reader is wondering why a woodturning newsletter writer is rambling on about bumble bee look a-likes? While their name provides some hint, here is the fascinating connection of carpenter bees with woodturning – these bees drill perfect circular holes, usually 16 mm in diameter, in establishing channels into wood to make their nests. I mean the holes look like they were drilled by new Maxi-cut Forstner bits, not by the rasping mandibles of primitive insects.

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Male Carpenter Bee

Emmett  
Manley



In recent years, I have pondered if these little animals could be trained to drill holes for woodworkers, woodturners, and others who need perfect holes 16 mm in diameter? Could we select or breed different bees that would drill holes of sizes larger or smaller than 16 mm? Even now there are different species of carpenter bees that drill holes of slightly different diameters. Perhaps some future woodworkers would have insect boxes in their shop such that they could select a 12 mm carpenter bee when that diameter hole is needed? There would be details to work out including how to get the bee to drill exactly where the hole is needed, but it might be possible. A lifetime project for some entomologist, and with our society's emphasis on natural, organic, sustainability, etc., this research might receive major funding from Washington.

Back to the bees. Unlike honey bees, termites, and ants, carpenter bees are not social insects complete with queens and assigned roles, rather just individuals who may gather to establish their nests in favorable locations. While textbooks report some 500 species of these "carpenter" bees worldwide, only 4-5 species are found in the United States and by far the most common bee is the *Xylocopa virginica* which seems to be the bee in our neck of the woods.

These bees will infest any wood but prefer soft and untreated wood, as common construction pine. They usually drill about one inch into wood and then bore side channels leading to areas they prepare as nesting cavities. Unlike termites, carpenter bees don't eat wood but the result can be the same – wood is being replaced by open space in the form of holes and chambers. Generations of bees may use the same wood, just boring additional channels – thus weakening the structure over a period of years.

When it becomes necessary to eliminate carpenter bees, the usual insect sprays may have limited effectiveness because it is difficult to reach the bees in their chambers. A better



Carpenter Bee Damage

method, and one which allows woodturner creativity, is to collect the bees in traps made from screw cap clear plastic bottles. The internet is filled with directions for making such bee catching devices (see link below for an example). In recent months, Hershel Miller has made three bee traps and all seem to work well (see photo below).



Carpenter Bee Trap

Until we are able to purchase sets of White Faced Drilling Bees from Craft Supplies, we will have to be content to just watch these fascinating little carpenters make precise holes in our workshops.



**Membership Meeting - August 25, 2014**

**Call to Order** - 9 a.m. by Joseph Voda. Minutes were approved and seconded by club members.

**Treasurer's Report:** Matt Garner, Treasurer

**ACCOUNTS**

|                            |                  |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Checking Account Balance - | \$1963.99        |
| Joan Kelly Fund -          | 1051.04          |
| Education Fund -           | 2631.60          |
| <b>TOTAL -</b>             | <b>\$5646.63</b> |

**DEPOSITS**

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Memberships -    | \$75.00         |
| Raffle -         | 105.00          |
| Book Donations - | 14.00           |
| <b>TOTAL -</b>   | <b>\$194.00</b> |

**EXPENSES**

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Rent         | \$100.00        |
| Bank Fees    | 41.10           |
| Refreshments | 56.76           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>\$197.86</b> |

48 Grants Given Out

87 Members have paid 2014 dues.

**Guest** – The club welcomed Sam Dawson.

**School or workshop -**

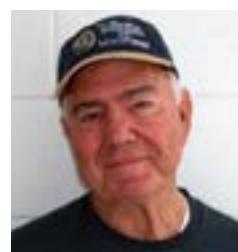
- Bill Bleau participated in the Jimmy Clewes workshop at the Arkansas Craft School
- Joseph Voda demonstrated at the West Tennessee Club and the Central Mississippi Club
- Stewart Batty will be at the Magnolia Club (Jackson, Ms). A possible two day event with MSWG is being explored.

**President's Promotions -**

- All AAW members were encouraged to vote for the new AAW Board of Directors.
- Attendance at "Turning Southern Style" presented by the Georgia Association of Woodturners September 19-21 in Dalton, Georgia
- Participation/ Attendance was promoted for the Memphis Jewish Center Fall Show - August 24.

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**THOMAS  
WRIGHT  
PILLOW**



## President's Promotions

- The Delta Fair is an excellent way of showcasing your art and earning a bit of money. Skip Wilbur will not be available to take items to the show, so those who will be showing must take them to be entered.
- Pens for Troops.
- A field trip is planned to observe a metal spinning lathe.
- MSWG has been invited to demonstrate woodturning at River Arts Fest 2014.



Mike Maffitt

## Dust Evacuation System -

- The MSGW Board of Directors is looking into the possibility of purchasing or making a dust evacuation system for the meeting room. If you have suggestions, talk to a board member.

## Demonstration -

- Mike Maffitt presented a live turning demonstration featuring off-center turning.
- Ray Tanner presented a video on turning safety emphasizing actions *not to do*.
- Rick Gillespie presented a “mystery wood” puzzle detailing *ebonized Philippine Mahogany*.



Ray Tanner

## Raffle

**Adjourn - 12:00 Noon**



Rick Gillespie

# Upcoming Demos & Events

**September**

- **Turning Platters - Mike Zinser**

**October**

- **October Fest**  
- **Special Guest John Lucas**

**November**

- **Board of Directors Election**  
- **Tips and Techniques on Steroids**

**December**

- **Christmas Party**  
- **Christmas Tree Ornament Contest**

# INSTANT GALLERY



**NORM FOWLER**  
Natural Edge Bowl.

(cont. on next page.)



**CHAD DALTON**  
Bottle Stoppers.



**NORM FOWLER**  
Bowl.

(cont. on next page.)



LARRY SEFTON  
Hollow Form.



BILL BLEAU  
Box.



RICK GILLESPIE  
Whistles.

(cont. on next page.)



RICK GILLESPIE  
Black Palm Shoehorn.



RICK GILLESPIE  
Ornament.

(cont. on next page.)



RAY TANNER / JOHN JOHNSON  
Bowl.



NORMAN FOWLER  
Bowl.

(cont. on next page.)



LARRY SEFTON  
Hollow Form.



LARRY SEFTON  
Hollow Form.

(cont. on next page.)



JIM TUSANT  
Vase.



BILL BLEAU  
Platter.



RICK GILLESPIE  
Bracelet Assist, Letter Opener.

(cont. on next page.)



**RAY TANNER**  
Coasters.



**RAY TANNER**  
Coasters.



**RAY TANNER**  
Coasters.  
<http://www.midsouthwoodturners.com/>

# Special Guest September Demo

Michael W. (Mike) Zinser  
3025 New Natchez Trace  
Nashville, TN 37215  
[mike.zinser@yahoo.com](mailto:mike.zinser@yahoo.com)  
615/292-8652 h  
615/480-3025 c

As I remember, my first woodworking project was completed in my grandfather's wood shop at nine years old when he and I made my dad a set of bookends for his birthday. While they are both gone, I still display the bookends in my home. After a rather undistinguished wood shop class in high school, woodworking lost interest for several years.

Probably about forty years ago I purchased my first woodturning lathe. Since most of my projects at the time centered on furniture for the house, having a lathe for turning table legs, and sometime later bed posts, was an essential shop tool. At the time it never occurred to me that the lathe could also be used to create bowls, platters, pens, or wall hangings.

After joining the Tennessee Association of Woodturners in the early 1990's I was introduced to a whole new variety of projects I could be doing with the lathe. And when I retired in 2001, woodturning became my focal point in woodworking. From the instructional help received from club members and having taken several woodturning classes at The John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Gatlinburg, TN, and the Appalachian Craft

Center, Smithville, TN, along with attending yearly woodturning symposiums presented by the Tennessee Association of Woodturners, my interests have moved through a variety of different turned projects, but now my focal interest has settled on wall hangings with natural wood finishes, spirit stains to add color, carving and texturing and sometimes adding metal, glass and acrylic pieces to enhance appearance.

My presentation will include the information derived in classes with Frank Penta, Nick Agar and Doug Fisher all rolled into my version of the wall hangings. I'll turn off-center and off-axis, with burned, textured, carved, spirit and Goldfinger and other pigments added for color.

In addition to the Tennessee Association of Woodturners, I have membership in the American Association of Woodturners, the Duck River Woodturners, the Mid South Woodturners Guild, all woodturning associations as well as two other woodworking organizations. I have demonstrated at woodworking clubs, the Tennessee Craft (formerly TACA) spring and fall craft fairs at Centennial Park, Nashville, TN, and help as a woodturning instructor and mentor at The Narrow Gate Foundation, Williamsport, TN.

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