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NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

FEBRUARY 2009 MONTGOMERY COUNTY WOODTURNERS MEETING...

DATE Thursday – February 12, 2009

TIME 7:00PM – 9:00PM

LOCATION The Woodworkers Club
4950 Wyaconda Road
Rockville, Maryland 20853
301/984-9033



AGENDA 6:30-7:00 — Bring a chair, if you wish... please be sure to wear your name tag... meet and greet other members... register your items for **Show & Tell** with Richard Webster... make your bid on **Silent Auction** items... sign out and pay Cliff Poodry for videos from the club's **Lending Library**.

7:00-7:30 — Business meeting... **Show & Tell**.

7:30-8:45 — PROGRAM – **Ed Karch** will demonstrate his use of earth, bleach, and fire to enhance wood turnings.

8:45-9:00 — Pick up and pay for any of your items from the **Silent Auction**... help pack up and clean up the space.

FEBRUARY DEMONSTRATOR — ED KARCH

Ed Karch is a retired forester who spent most of his 20 year career working in 23 different African countries. His focus was promoting sustainable development and he planted hundreds-of-thousands of trees. Throughout his travels he observed many local artists and craftspersons... always searching for a medium of expression that best suited his artistic impulses.



When Ed discovered turning four years ago, he knew he had finally found the perfect medium. He has attended many workshops and courses by world class turners. His work has been displayed in galleries in four states as well as locally. This will be his third demonstration for MCW.

Ed refers to the techniques he will demonstrate as *earth*, *bleach*, and *fire*. His inspiration comes from textile patterns and processes used by the bogolon makers in Mali. Three tones can be seen on vessels masked with mud, treated with bleach, and scorched with flame. Ed will explain how to manipulate these three techniques to enhance turnings and make them more interesting when the wood used has no significant figure.

LET CHIPS FLY WHERE THEY MAY

MICHAEL BLAKE

AS I was trying to come up with a distinctive name for our newsletter, for some reason the picture of Stuart Batty spraying a torrent of chips out on the audience during his demo kept coming back to mind. Kathy and Bert jumped up like bullets were flying.

Eventually the name *Let Chips Fly Where They May* popped up. But only two people thought it was a good name for the newsletter – Ed Karch and me. So, I dropped it.

But as you can see, I could not let it go. This and future columns will contain my personal thoughts and experiences – for whatever they are worth – and *let chips fly where they may*.

[1] I have been fortunate to be able to attend almost every club meeting for the past two years. But, I have noticed how often the same 20-25 people show up. I suppose that's normal and it's not my intention to preach, but... over the past 2 years we have had **far more than a few exceptional demonstrators**. What's more, our own members are doing some outstanding work. The *Show & Tell* sessions at each meeting get better every month. I know Thursdays are a "school" night, but for those members who never seem to be able to make it to a meeting... you are truly missing some exceptional, inspiring woodturning.

You will not regret taking time out to come to the meetings on the Thursday before the second Saturday each month.

[2] After our January meeting, Jerry Mauch and I spent an afternoon at the **Arts & Crafts Center** at the U. S. Army Forest Glen Annex.

Chris Wright – manager of the Center – is very talented, enthusiastic, and dedicated. His ambitions include providing access to the Center for wounded/disabled military personnel. While the woodworking shop has almost everything you'd want to see, it's too small and crowded now to allow wheel chair/handicapped access. Inadequate dust collection is another concern. Chris also has to work out plans with the rehabilitation and transportation departments.

In my opinion, supporting the Center is a worthwhile effort for MCW. But going in, we have to know it will take quite a while to overcome the challenges. With any government bureaucracy, nothing happens quickly, no matter the need.

[3] If you happen to be one of the people who does not have, or cannot afford, health insurance, AAW's new program for quality, group-priced insurance sounds worth investigating. [See p.5]

CALL FOR ENTRIES

PHIL BROWN

1. Spirit of the Southwest Details are on page 17 in the Fall issue of the AAW Journal and on the AAW website at:

www.woodturner.org/sym/sym2009/spirit/SpiritApplication.pdf

Applications are by February 7, 2009.

2. The Creative Craft Council will again hold its all-media, juried exhibit of work by members of guilds in this metropolitan area at the Strathmore Hall in North Bethesda from May 30th to July 11th, 2009. The application form is due March 20th and is at:

www.creativecraftscouncil.org/

If you are unable to print the instructions, re-

quest a copy from Phil Brown. Turned wood is welcome in this multimedia juried exhibit. For any MCW member interested in selling high quality work, building a resume, and gaining exposure, this is a first class exhibit and an important local event to enter.

3. MCW and Chesapeake Woodturners (CW) will hold a joint juried show of members work at the **Columbia Art Center (CAC)**, from September 12th to October 10th. Jurying will be of the actual submitted pieces at the CAC. Plan to bring your pieces to our August meeting, or deliver to Phil by September 2nd, or to CAC by the 4th. An application will be available soon.

JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

ED KARCH/TIM ALEY

THE first meeting of 2009 was held on January 8th and called to order by Phil Brown. Twenty-five members attended.

The *Silent Auction* had a lot of variety the and quantity this month. There were some spalted maple logs donated by **Gary Guenther** and apple half rounds donated by **Phil Brown**. **Ed Karch** brought several large boxes and a truck bed load of cutoffs of Walnut, Cherry, and Maple.

Hal Burdett took pictures of *Show & Tell* pieces, and **Richard Webster** assisted with documentation. **Stuart Glickman** collected dues for 2009 and answered membership questions. Stuart also took the meeting candid photos and Gary Guenther shot the demo candid photos.

Our exhibit in the **Bethesda Library** will conclude on January 30th. The Librarian, Patricia Buck, said *"What a fabulous exhibit your group installed! Very impressive work."*

MCW's next exhibit will be at the **Quince Orchard Library** in Gaithersburg for March, 2009. Pieces for this exhibit will be collected at the February meeting, which is the same time pieces will be returned from Bethesda. Hopefully many of you will continue to lend your pieces that are now on exhibit.

If you have not checked out the new format of the newsletter, be sure to see it on the web site. Michael Blake has done a great job redesigning it. Michael thanked Bert Bleckwenn, Phil Brown, Ed Karch, Michael Colella, and Gary Guenther for their help getting the new newsletter launched.

Bert Bleckwenn has completed and submitted an **AAW Educational Opportunity Grant** application for \$1,500 for sharpening equipment, chucks, and other tools for the Woodworking Shop at the former Walter Reed annex in Silver Spring.

There are concerns about the shop being closed for budget reasons. The base itself has been re-named the **U. S. Army Forest Glen Annex** and the



planned closing of the historic Walter Reed base in 2011 should have no effect on the fate of the current Woodworking shop. **Jerry Mauch** brought **Chris Wright**, manager of the Forest Glen shop, to the meeting. They showed photos of the facility and discussed its needs and plans.

The **National Children's Center** at the National Institutes of Health would like to find a volunteer woodworker to construct a copy of a badly damaged telephone box outside their entrance door.

Clif Poodry led the *Show & Tell*. We had a good turnout with some interesting items. You can see these pieces on pages 6, 7, and 8 and in the Photo Gallery link on our Website. Please bring your new work, completed or in-progress, or even old favorites, to the February meeting and show us what you're doing.

Program Chairman, **Gary Guenther**, introduced our member demonstrator for the evening, Mark Supik, from Baltimore. Mark demonstrated his method and techniques for his end grain bowls.

At our February meeting, our own Wood Wizard, **Ed Karch** will present his program called "Earth, Bleach, and Fire" and demonstrate his unique methods for enhancing turnings.

MEMBER NEWS

PHIL BROWN

THE WOOD TURNING CENTER in Philadelphia will be exhibiting "selections from the collection" donated by Joe Seltzer from March 6th to April 11th. The exhibition includes a donated 7" piece by Phil Brown, finished in 1997, and a second recent piece available for purchase..

- **CLIF POODRY** teaches a one-day **Beginning Bowl Turning** class at the **Woodworkers Club** in Rockville, Maryland on March 21st, May 16th, July 25th, and September 19th. He alternates to a two-day **Advanced Bowl Turning** on February 21st & 22nd, April 18th & 19th, June 20th & 21st, and August 15th & 16th. For more information, see:

www.woodworkersclub.com/practice%20class1.htm

- **MARK SUPIK** offers a full-day Saturday class on between-centers turning on both February 14th and April 11th at his Baltimore shop and designing and turning your own beer keg tap handle on March 18th. The Oliver lathes are a treat to see and use. For details see:

www.marksupikco.com/School/schoolwinter08-1.html

- **ED KARCH's** – **BREAKING NEWS** – Ed's "Roswell" won an Honorable Mention award at the **Gallery West 12th Annual National Art Show**. Awards were presented at a reception on Saturday, February 7th. It can be seen at www.gallery-west.com/. The gallery is located at 1213 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia.



CLIF POODRY



"ROSWELL" BY ED KARCH – THE ONLY TURNED ITEM CHOSEN FOR THE GALLERY WEST ART SHOW.

DON'T BE SHY – PROMOTE YOURSELF. Let us know about your wood turning activities so they can be included in the newsletter each month.

Send your information to Phil Brown at philfbrown@comcast.net, or call 301/767-9863 OR to Michael Blake at mb7298@comcast.net or call 301/589-1815.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

PHIL BROWN

As of early January, there were still some great opportunities to attend woodturning classes at the **Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts** in Gatlinburg, Tennessee in the spring of 2009. The instructors and facilities are the best in the world. There are still spaces in the classes with Ray Key, Alan Leland, Stephen Hatcher, Al Stirt, Malcolm Tibbetts, Jacques Vesery, and Bonnie Klein.

For more information and/or to register, log on to: www.arrowmont.org/

FINANCIAL REPORT

BOB BROWNING

Through January 31, 2009, cash on hand is \$3,454.46.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

STUART GLICKMAN

At the end of 2008, there were 73 people on our active membership roster.

As of January 31, 2009, 52 have renewed their membership and 21 have yet to do so.

If renewing has slipped your mind, please be sure to see me at the February 12th meeting OR make your \$20 renewal check payable to MCW and mail to me at → 2896 Glenora Lane – Rockville, MD 20850

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

PHIL BROWN

In our new effort to support woodturning for active duty and retired military members at the woodshop at the U. S. Army Forest Glen Annex in Silver Spring, Bert Bleckwenn prepared and submitted an *Educational Opportunity Grant* proposal to AAW. We requested \$1,500 for sharpening equipment, chucks, and other tools for use with the Jet Mini lathe and General Midi lathe recently donated to the shop.

Through our volunteer efforts in 2009, we hope to gain experience in teaching and mentoring our local military personnel. The shop's manager plans to coordinate with Walter Reed rehabilitation and transportation departments to provide access to the shop for handicapped/wounded personnel. The now crowded shop will also require modifications for safety, dust collection, and wheelchair/handicapped accessibility. If these initial efforts are successful, we may be able to expand the program in 2010 and help with acquisition of a larger lathe.

Once our efforts get underway, we will keep MCW members up-to-date so those who want to volunteer in teaching and mentoring. Bert is coordinating our efforts with fellow MCW member, Jerry Mauch, until his transfer in June. We are now now in touch with annex's Woodshop Coordinator, Chris Wright. Let Bert know if you are interested in getting involved.

ED KARCH has had to resign as MCW Secretary for personal reasons. I would like to talk to anyone willing to prepare minutes of our business meetings for the next newsletter each month. Any other potential support would be your call. I look forward to Ed's continued contributions to MCW in wood identification and articles in this Journal.

OUR pieces from the Bethesda Library exhibit will be at our February meeting. I hope you will continue to lend several pieces or bring new ones for the Quince Orchard Library exhibit in March.

ANY MCW MEMBER without health insurance should check out the competitive rates of a new group health insurance program now offered by the

American Association of Woodturners. Their description is at:

www.woodturner.org/org/mbrship/health.htm

At any MCW sponsored event, such as demonstrating woodturning, as an AAW member, you are protected by liability insurance in the event an observer were injured. I received the Certificate of Liability Insurance for 2009 from AAW. The insurer is Travelers. Fortunately, there has yet to be a need for any Chapter to file a claim. Hopefully, that trend will continue nationwide without interruption.

AT a recent visit to the Renwick Gallery, I looked over the display from the permanent collection on the second floor. Usually there are several turned wood pieces, but now the only piece on display is a large Rolled Edge Bowl from 1989 by Ed Moulthrop.

IF you have not been to the Smithsonian American Art Museum at 8th and F Streets NW (Red, Yellow, and Green Metro lines), make a visit there to the fourth floor of the Luce Foundation Center. On isle #54 you will find some of the turned wood pieces in their collection. Some day I hope to post a list of the turners whose work is being shown. Pieces in other media are in nearby isles. At this link:

<http://americanart2.si.edu/luce/lightbox.cfm?categoryID=1259,1260,1262,1263,1264,1265>

There is a search box in the Craft category where you can enter a turner's name to see if SAAM has a piece by a turner in their collection and/or on display.

IT has occurred to me recently that our Webmaster should be an "officer," not a "volunteer." The sheer amount of work and responsibility involved clearly warrants this change in status and I intend to bring the matter up for a vote at our February meeting. I hope everyone will support this overdue proposal.

BE SURE TO JOIN US at our February 12th meeting for Ed Karch's demonstration of several of his artistic and intriguing "enhancement" techniques for turned pieces.

JANUARY SHOW & TELL

HAL BURDETTE/STUART GLICKMAN



ED KARCH

Fibonacci Feu – Oak & Iron

Placement of iron spikes in the piece is based on the *Fibonacci Sequence* – beginning with 0 and 1, each number in the sequence is the sum of the previous two numbers – thus, 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233, etc. The higher up in the sequence, the closer two consecutive numbers, divided by each other, will come to the *Golden Ratios* of 1:1.618 or 0.618:1.



ED KARCH — *EARTH, BLEACH, & FIRE*



ED KARCH — SEGMENTED PEPPER MILLS



TIM ALEY

5" x 2" SQUARE EDGE BOWL
[SPALTED MAPLE]

6" x 3 1/2" BOWL [CHERRY]



5" x 2" BOWL
[WOOD UNKNOWN]

TOM ANKRUM



SET OF
NESTED
BOWLS
[HICKORY]

JANUARY SHOW & TELL

HAL BURDETTE/STUART GLICKMAN



"And then with the lathe running on high, you stick your finger right here in this little hole and use your finger nail as a negative rake scraper. You have to press real hard, but it works... trust me!"

ELIOT FELDMAN
12" HOLLOW VESSEL
[CHERRY]



Maybe if I just keep smiling long enough Ed back there and everybody else will actually think I made this on purpose, all by myself.

CLIF POODRY
TWO VASES
TURNED AND
HOLLOWED IN
WITH MULTIPLE AXES.
[WALNUT]



I don't know... it looks pretty good... the bottom's really flat... no big cracks... the grain's pretty cool... and it's all nice and shiny. But what do you think... maybe it's warped?

DON VAN RYK
10" x 3" BOWL
[ORANGE OSAGE]



EDITOR'S NOTE – When I saw these pictures, I immediately thought... Eliot's about to stick his finger in that hole, Clif's expression is like a kid who just got away with something bad and is very pleased, and Don appears to be very worried about something. I made up these musings to have a little fun at their expense – no offense intended. M.B.

JANUARY SHOW & TELL

HAL BURDETTE/STUART GLICKMAN



STAN SHERMAN



BOWL [WALNUT]



BOWL [MAPLE]



6⁷/₈" x 6⁵/₈" SEGMENTED VESSEL
[WALNUT, REDHEART, MAPLE, PAU AMARILLO]



DON COUCHMAN

13" x 5" SALAD BOWL [ENGLISH WALNUT]



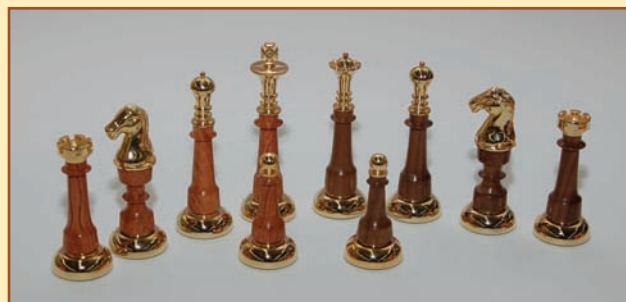
BOB BROWNING

BOTTLE STOPPERS & CHUCK SCREW JIG



JERRY MAUCH

L – BOTTLE STOPPER w/CORKSCREW [PURPLEHEART]
R – BOTTLE STOPPER [MAHOGANY & WALNUT]



CHRIS WRIGHT [GUEST]

CHESS PIECES [WALNUT & ROSEWOOD]
GOBLETs [THROWN CERAMIC BOWLS, CHERRY BASES]

JANUARY DEMONSTRATION

MICHAEL BLAKE

MCW MEMBER MARK SUPIK actually makes a living doing woodturning. His business in Baltimore specializes in industrial turnings such as columns, spindles, balusters, newel posts, curved moldings, furniture parts, balls, and finials. Since it's founding in 1981, the company has become widely known for unique handles for the taps of beer kegs for taverns, bars, and breweries.

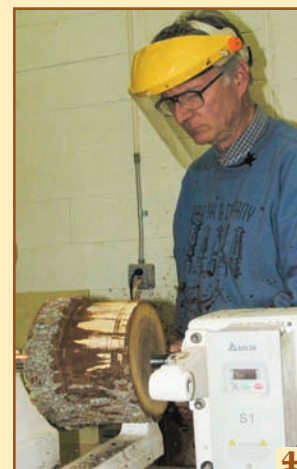
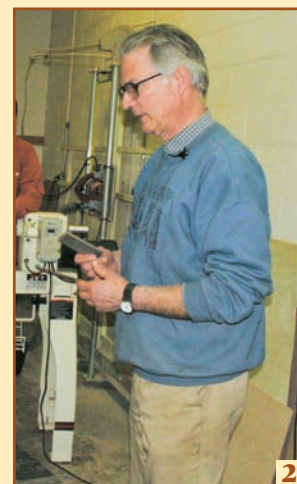
As a graduate of the Maryland Institute of Art's sculpture program, Mark's strong artistic streak finds personal outlet turning end-grain bowls. MCW was very fortunate to have Mark demonstrate his techniques.

To begin, Mark mounted a Walnut log between centers. [1] He uses only local woods from naturally felled trees. This piece of Walnut was about 14" long by 12" in diameter and was slightly green.

Before starting, Mark hones his 1/2" Bowl Gouge with a diamond hone available only from Alan Lacer (See p.11 for details). [2] These hones do such a good job of maintaining a sharp edge, every person in his shop keeps one in a pocket or on the lathe all day. This makes constant re-grinding unnecessary, allows for very smooth surfaces, reduces sanding, and saves on tool costs. At the end of the day, everyone drops their hone into a small bucket of oil. The next day, they take them out, wipe them on a rag, and the residue from the day before is gone. These Lacer hones cost \$88, but Mark has had his for over five years. It still cuts as well as it did when it was new and has paid for itself many times over.

Never working from plans, Mark "scopes out" the piece on the lathe to set in his mind's eye the shape he wants to create. [3] Then, working from right to left, he begins rough shaping the outside surface. [4]

Continuing to follow the shape stored in his internal processor, Mark leaves a fairly wide section of bark at the right – what will be the top of the bowl. [5] Then he begins to shape down to what will be a tenon for mounting on a faceplate and eventually, the foot of the bowl. [6]



JANUARY DEMONSTRATION

MICHAEL BLAKE

When the tenon is close enough to the size of his faceplate, Mark flattens the top, bark edge of the bowl [7] and removes the piece from the lathe.

Then using brute force and a hand power drill, he attaches the faceplate. [8]

The small bowl shown here in [9] illustrates the approximate final shape Mark is shooting for with this larger piece of Walnut.

With the faceplate now mounted on the lathe headstock, the tail stock removed, and the tool rest reoriented, Mark begins hollowing out the bowl.

The majority of the hollowing is done with the same $\frac{1}{2}$ " Bowl Gouge. One of Mark's *rules of the road* is to keep things simple by using as few tools and as few steps as possible.

Cutting from the inside of the bowl toward the edge, he cuts with the grain so the gouge tip is supported by the long fibers underneath. [10]

As he cuts deeper into the bowl, he moves the tool rest for better tool support. [11]

Using touch alone, Mark hollows with the grain until he gets to about an inch from the edge. [12]

At the bark edge, Mark cuts carefully against the grain inside, from the outside edge toward the center to avoid tearing off the bark. The two, opposing cutting strokes will meet at a transition point about an inch from the edge. The ridge created is carefully cut down before final parting off.

Mounting a light on the lathe bed and moving the tool rest back to the side, Mark returns to shaping the outside final profile to match the inside. [13]

Approaching $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick, the walls can begin to waver and distort. Mark uses his left hand fingers as a "steady" as he carefully smooths the outside profile with the gouge in just his right hand. [14]

It's almost scary to watch him holding the gouge with his right hand alone and cutting, while using his left hand as his steady and depth gauge. ↓



JANUARY DEMONSTRATION

MICHAEL BLAKE

But as mentioned earlier, the transition ridge separating the two opposing cutting strokes should be carefully trimmed until the inside of the bowl is suitably smooth.

After the outside edge smoothing is done, Mark uses the same bowl gouge to turn down the base to an appropriately sized foot.

(Again, Mark did not sand down to the foot, but if sanding is needed should be done at this point.)

Using a thin parting tool in his right hand and his left hand to catch, Mark carefully parts off the completed bowl. [15/16/17]

All that remains is to trim the foot and apply the finish. [18/19]

It was a treat and a terrific learning experience to see this elegant bowl come to life in the hands of such a master craftsman and artist.

PHOTOS BY STUART GLICKMAN & GARY GUENTHER

ALAN LACER'S DIAMOND SLIPPER

The original diamond honing tool combines two flat surfaces and two different radii to hone virtually any woodturning tool. Both flat surfaces and both radii are electroplated with diamond – not glued. The hone is made to the same specifications as high-speed diamond-grinding wheels and have an extremely long life. 4½" long, 2" wide, ¼" thick tapering to ⅛" at the narrow side. Available in 600 grit for turning tools and 1200 grit for carving tools.

NOTE: This is not the honing stone that appears in some catalogues and uses Alan's name – those are flat hones with diamond only on one side.

This hone with two radii and two large flat areas – all covered with natural diamond – is only available from Alan Lacer at www.alanlacer.com

PRICE – \$88.00 US



THE WOOD WIZARD

ED KARCH

My personal favorite wood is **Spalted Pecan**. Pecan (*Carya Illinoensis*) is a member of the family referred to as **Pecan Hickories**, but are not true hickories. Pecan hickories are Pecan, Nutmeg Hickory, Bitternut Hickory, and Water Hickory. The true hickories are Shagbark Hickory, Pignut Hickory, Shellbark Hickory, and Mockernut Hickory. Both hickory groups are genus *Carya*.

Traditional uses for the genus are food for humans and wildlife from nuts, tool handles, wood implements, baseball bats, furniture, and cabinetry.

Pecan hickories are distinguished from true hickories by the semi-diffuse porosity rather than the ring porosity of the true hickory group. [FIGURES 1&2]

The sapwood of Pecan is a light tan to white with the heart wood a darker reddish tan.

When Pecan becomes spalted, the dark zone lines accent the darkening areas and often include some red streaking. [FIGURES 3&4]

The spalted areas of Pecan retain much of the strength of hickories, making turning and finishing much easier with no soft spots to contend with, in contrast with other species such as spalted maple. [FIGURE 5]

The hardness also enhances the ability to hold a much finer detail than softer woods, and this characteristic also allows the wood to take a high polish. [FIGURE 6] The density also enables very clean piercing of thin vessels [FIGURE 7].

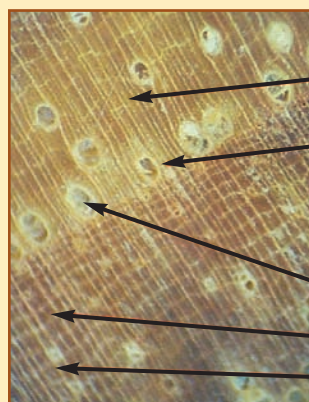
One of the drawbacks of Pecan's hardness is the ease of turning **decreases** as the wood dries and some turners refer to dry pecan as **peconcrete**.

FIGURE 1 – PECAN



- Extremely dense wood
- Dark, reddish brown heart-wood.
- Semi-Diffuse porous. Pores appear throughout, but are smaller in late wood.
- Tyloses moderately abundant
- Banded parenchyma throughout
- Rays indistinct, but visible with hand lens.

FIGURE 2 – HICKORY



- Extremely dense wood
- Pale brown heart-wood.
- Ring porous. Generally a single row of large, early wood pores, indistinct, but visible with hand lens.
- Tyloses
- Banded parenchyma.
- Rays indistinct, but visible with hand lens.



FIGURE 5



FIGURE 6

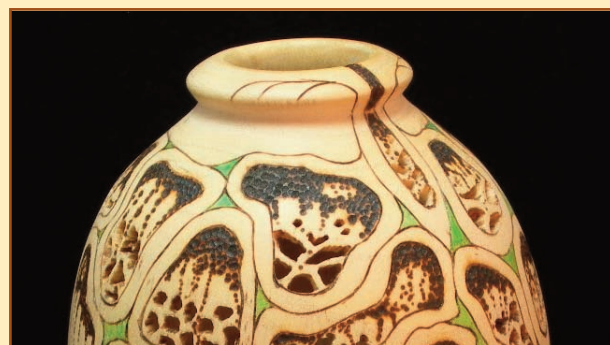
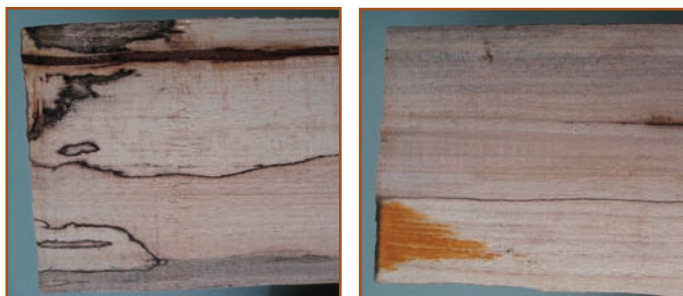


FIGURE 7 – VESSEL WITH DETAIL PIERCINGS



FIGURES 3&4 – SPALTED PECAN

NEW(?) TURNING PRODUCTS

MICHAEL BLAKE

WOODCUT TOOLS, LTD. in New Zealand has produced a unique range of bowl and spindle gouges with **replaceable tips** for almost 20 years, but are little known in the United States. The manufacturer sums up the advantages of the tools in the following points:

- Shafts have almost no flex, especially in small diameters.
- Full round shaft is more comfortable than a full flute shaft.
- The length of the gouge stays relatively the same.
- Tips are M2, triple-tempered, high-speed, Swedish steel.
- Tips are sharpened, flutes are finely ground and polished by hand, ready to use out-of-the-box.
- Tips can be replaced for a third the cost of an equivalent gouge.
- Gouges are available handled or unhandled.
- Unhandled gouges are supplied with a heavy duty brass ferrule.

The tips are adhered to the shaft with *Loctite* or *Titan Anerobic* glue and stand up to rugged use. Tips are intended to last for several years, and when the time comes, Woodcut provides the glue with the new tip. Heating the tip joint turns the glue to a powder, making removal easy. All that remains is to thoroughly wire brush the powder from the shaft, apply glue to the shaft spigot/flange and the hole in the tip, stand upright, and let set for a few hours,

Woodcut Tools, Ltd. is apparently fairly well known in the U.K., but not in the U.S. Three U.S. distributors are listed on the Woodcut website – Craft Supplies USA, Packard Woodworkers, and Woodworkers Supply. But none of their websites or catalogs offer the tools.

Having no U.S. source would normally have caused me to drop this investigation. But just as I was about to log off of the Woodcut website, I noticed you can choose a variety of currencies for their prices. When I clicked on U.S. Dollar, the listed prices dropped by about half. In fact, one New Zealand Dollar currently costs 52¢ (the website is not always up-to-date). What's more, the New Zealand 12.5% GST does not apply, and shipping ranges from \$10 to \$25. Example: 13mm Bowl Gouge = \$40.78, 13mm Spindle Gouge = \$40.78, Shipping = \$25.50 — TOTAL = \$107.06. [The same gouges sell for \$64.12 each from the U.K. distributor.]

Bowl Gouges are available in a Standard 35° grind in 10mm[$\frac{3}{8}$ "], 13mm[$\frac{1}{2}$ "], 16mm[$\frac{5}{8}$ "], 19mm[$\frac{3}{4}$ "] with a parabolic U-shaped flute and 10mm with a V-Shaped flute. Fingernail grind Bowl Gouges are available in 10mm, 13mm, and 16mm. Spindle Gouges are available in 13mm and 16mm. Unhandled gouges average about \$10 less.

The website for Woodcut Tools, Ltd. is shop.woodcut-tools.com/

NOTE – The Sorby Micro Tool sets featured in last month's newsletter are now available from Craft Supplies at woodturnerscatalog.com



SPINDLE GOUGE 19mm



BOWL GOUGE - 13mm V-SHAPE FLUTE
FINGERNAIL GRIND 35° ANGLE



BOWL GOUGE - 19mm U-SHAPE FLUTE
STANDARD GRIND 35° ANGLE



UNHANDLED BOWL GOUGES WITH
FINGERNAIL GRIND
L-R 10mm, 13mm, 16mm, 19mm

YOUR MILEAGE MAY VARY**GARY GUENTHER****SANDING WITHOUT THE SAND**

As woodturners, we like to have an edged tool in our hands, with curls flying everywhere. Almost invariably, we end up with sandpaper. Our most common reaction to sanding is that it's a necessary evil. If the turned item is well formed coming off the tool, I actually enjoy moving up through the grits from 150 or 180 to 400 or 600; but when I start putting the finish on, I am often disappointed to find scratches. I hate scratches! This is when the sanding becomes really tedious and a chore. There are products that will help.

There are many reasons for scratches. The first, of course, is poor sanding technique. Let's leave that aside for another discussion and say you've sanded carefully, with the grain, and cleaned the surface at every grit. Even with proper technique, it's not unusual to find some scratches when you start getting a little gloss in your finish. The reason is the sandpaper. Conventional sandpaper is designed to be aggressive so that it will dig deeply and remove material. In its manufacture, the abrasive crystals are electrically charged so they will stand up, and they are locked into a hard resin base. Scratches arise because, at the microscopic level, sandpaper is a mass of rigidly-held sharp points of varying sizes and heights. When you apply the paper to a surface, it literally tears in to remove the material you are sanding. The crystals cut in a raking motion, leaving inconsistent scratch patterns. Some sandpapers have a better-controlled distribution of grain sizes than others, but ultimately the problem is all those sharp, irregular, hard points. Happily, there are alternatives.

First, let's get steel wool out of the way. In some ways, steel wool is a wonderful product. [Did you know that it was originally produced in the 19th century as an accidental waste product from metal-working lathes?] Those fine strands cut cleanly like hundreds of little gouges and leave an excellent surface. Although coarser grades can be used to remove scratches, this doesn't seem to be a common prac-

tice among woodturners. On the other hand, good old "four ought" (0000) does a great job of leveling a finish without leaving scratches. Even so, I will personally not use steel wool – I cannot tolerate the residue. I'm just not



going to have little bits of metal all over me and my surfaces, or embedded in the wood to later turn the area black. These can be a serious problem if they get into electrical equipment, and can be bad news on your eyeglasses. As noted in the December MCW Newsletter, steel wool is also a fire hazard. Regardless of whether you like steel wool or not, you'll want to read on, because there are excellent alternatives for removing scratches, leveling finishes without adding scratches, and achieving just the right amount of shine.

My goal with this article is not to tell you how to sand or to recommend specific products. Rather, I want to highlight the fact that we have easy access to a number of good options, such as sanding sponges, Abralon, Abranet, and Micro-Mesh, that you might not be aware of.

How we sand and what we sand with will depend, to a certain extent, on the size of the piece we're working on. My experience is with small and medium-sized pieces. For work on the lathe, I still mostly use traditional sanding discs – in an electric drill, in a passive sander, in forceps, or by hand – but I am beginning to experiment with Abranet discs (more on that below). Off the lathe, I use mostly sanding sponges and "cushioned abrasives" (such as Abralon or Micro-Mesh) to remove scratches from earlier sanding on the lathe (as they become visible during the finishing process), to level the finish between coats, and to achieve the final desired luster. (I still use sandpaper for sanding the nub off the foot, if the tail stock was used to the end.)

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GARY GUENTHER

NON-WOVEN ABRASIVES

Did you ever wonder, like George Carlin, “What’s a ‘woven’ abrasive?” Well, that would be things like “sandpaper” made with a cloth backing. Coated abrasives are created by bonding abrasive grains to one side of a paper or cloth material. They offer an aggressive method of stock removal as the grains come into contact with the surface being finished. Because of their basic structure, including a relatively hard substrate and variations in grain size, standard sanding products leave scratches. Coated abrasives clog fairly easily, and their cutting power constantly and quickly declines with use.

A non-woven abrasive is a finishing product in which the grit is not only embedded on the product’s surface, but bonded throughout the web-like, three-dimensional, open structure of a nylon pad or sponge. Non-woven abrasives are designed to provide a controlled, sustained cutting action. Their spring-like construction greatly lessens the risk of gouging or scratching the surface of the work piece. As the nylon fibers of the product wear away, fresh abrasive grains are continuously exposed, providing a long life and consistent finish over time. They can be washed and reused.

Originally introduced in the 1970’s by the 3M Corporation, non-woven products are typically made with aluminum oxide or silicon carbide abrasives. They are very flexible and mold nicely to the surface being sanded. They are reasonably tough, do not rust, and do not shed a rain of small particles like steel wool does. They are often known by their color (representing grit size) and are also used for a wide variety of household and commercial applications other than woodworking.



Available from multiple manufacturers, they come as pads, sheets, or rolls in different weights, sizes, and grits. 3M’s original **Scotch-Brite®** product line is perhaps the best known, but many others are now available. I have used Klingspor and Norton 3X with good success. Because of their rather benign cutting action, in my personal experience, I find that these products tend to behave as if they were a finer grit size than listed. For example, I may use a 220 sponge where I would never consider using 220 sandpaper.

ABRALON®

Combining the best features of sandpaper and non-woven products, **Abralon** by Mirka is a very popular product for wood finishing. It is constructed with a flexible, abrasive-coated, mesh fabric face, a ¼”-thick foam center, and hook & loop backing. The closely-sized silicon carbide abrasive produces a very smooth sanding pattern, works well on wood, finishes, metal, and plastics, and is excellent on contoured surfaces and edges.



The open weave of the fabric and foam core allow water and oils to flow freely, resulting in both non-clogging and cooling. Because the foam center provides even surface pressure, using this material eliminates cross-grain scratches and finger marks and results in an improved finish. Abralon comes in discs and pads that can be used on or off the lathe, wet or dry, and by machine or by hand. It cleans up easily with a flick of the finger, with compressed air, or in soapy water or mineral spirits and is said to last at least five times longer than sandpaper. It has been reported that the discs can be damaged if used hard, such as in sanding the interrupted edges of a square turning.

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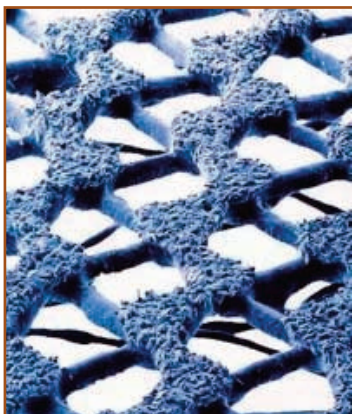
GARY GUENTHER

Abralon is effective on both wood and finish, but I personally use it mainly on finish. Grits range from 180 to 4000 (on the frequently-used European FEPA “P” scale), but I find this material to be much less aggressive than sandpaper, and I typically start at 500 (after sanding to P600).

If I have scratches from the sandpaper, I will drop back to the 360 (“medium-fine”), or even to a 220 non-woven pad first, if needed. The “fine” (500 grit) and “super-fine” pads (1000 grit) level the finish; the “micro-fine” (2000 grit) leaves a satin finish; and the “mirror-fine” (4000 grit) creates a nice gloss. This is my standard finishing product. I generally buff with carnauba wax at the end.

ABRANET®

Abranet, also from the Mirka company, is a relatively new and possibly revolutionary product composed off a see-through fabric mesh with aluminum oxide particles bonded to it. This unique, net-like sanding material contains innumerable small holes, making it very resistant to clogging. This makes it good for wet sanding and for sanding green or oily woods.



The result is said to be a very even and uniform sanding pattern and a smooth surface. I haven’t used it enough to be able to talk about scratch patterns, nor have I used it for leveling a finish yet. Finer grades are supposedly excellent for this purpose. It is said to be “dust free”, but I don’t understand that. It can also be used for sanding many materials other than wood.

Abranet comes in sheets, rolls, and hook & loop discs and can be attached, for example, to a hand sanding block as well as to standard rotary sanding mandrels. It doesn’t work well if folded. I like the discs because they are very aggressive and don’t clog.

To me, they seem to be a little more aggressive than their grit ratings. They are said to be durable, long-lasting, and hence cost effective, but I’ve had a problem with the disc edges getting torn or wrinkled. Consequently, I’m not happy with the high prices.

Because the discs are quite insubstantial, heavy use can lead to damaging the underlying hook & loop surface on your sanding mandrel; as a result, disposable interface pads called “protectors” are available for purchase.

I have to reserve judgment on this material – I don’t have enough experience with it to recommend it. I intend to continue to experiment with potential uses on both bare wood and finishes. Right now, I tend to prefer other products, and I suspect that Abranet will remain, at least for me, a niche product to be used in situations when other materials tend to clog.

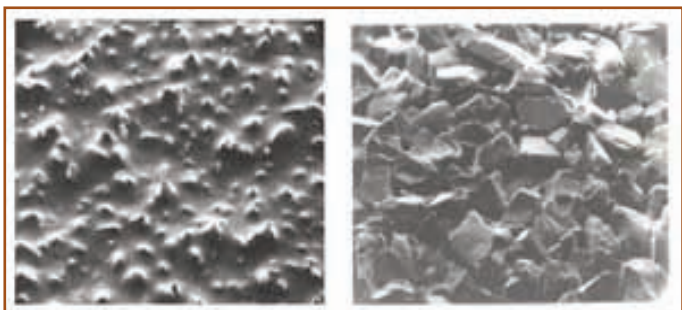
MICRO-MESH®

Micro-Mesh from Micro-Surface Finishing Products Inc. is a unique, cushioned abrasive capable of giving very fine, controlled scratch patterns. It is similar to Abralon in concept, but very different in construction. The backing is long-lasting cotton cloth to which a flexible cushioning layer is applied. On top of this layer is a flexible, resilient glue (not a hard resin) that will hold the abrasive crystals while allowing them to subtly move and rotate without coming loose.

When you start to apply pressure to sand with Micro-Mesh, the crystals go into the cushioning



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AT THE MICROSCOPIC LEVEL, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SANDPAPER [LEFT] AND MICRO-MESH [RIGHT]

layer while beginning to cut a bit. If you push harder, they will go further into the cushioning layer, thus serving as a safety valve. The cushioning layer allows the crystals to cut with a planing motion that leaves a refined and consistent scratch pattern that can result in high levels of gloss, instead of the deep, irregular scratches that sandpaper makes.

Micro-Mesh was originally designed to polish acrylic windshields on aircraft and found application for most hard plastics, fiberglass, epoxy, gel-coat, raw and finished wood, cultured marble, and metals. It is not an aggressive stock remover. Common sandpaper products are required for the removal of deep scratches prior to using Micro-Mesh to polish the surface back to clarity or a high gloss. The nine available grits range from 1500 to 12000. Note that these go higher than Abralon, if that is desired. The 1500 is roughly equivalent to American CAMI-scale 600 sandpaper, and the 12000 will leave scratch patterns that cannot be detected by the human eye.

There are four different kinds (Aluminum Oxide, Regular, MX, and MXD), so one must be careful in purchasing – it has been said that these different products don't necessarily even share the same grit ratings. I can't speak to that. All formats of Micro-Mesh are available in sheets, rolls, discs, belts, pads, and specialty kits. For most woodworking uses, the "Regular" would be preferred. Woodworking applications include woodturning with all types of woods (particularly pen turning), polishing on the lathe, removing scratches and stains, rubbing out top coats, replacing rotten stone and steel wool, and removing

defects in all types of finishes. Micro-mesh abrasives can polish to an optically clear, reflective state or, through the use of a coarser grit, leave a matte or satin finish.

Micro-Mesh can be used wet or dry, with either water, water/detergent, or oils as a lubricant. Solvents will cause delamination. In my experience, Micro-Mesh tends to clog rather quickly. Stopping to wash and dry it is a bit of a frustration. I use it mainly by hand. Some people feel that Micro-Mesh is too soft for power sanding except when using a lubricant, as in wet sanding. The bonding agent that binds the grit to the backing may be a little softer than used in Abralon. If you generate too much heat, you can melt the surface of the disk to the wood. My experience with Micro-Mesh is limited because I generally stop at Abralon 4000.

If you wish, you may examine and purchase non-woven pads, Abralon, and Abranet at a discount from an MCW member. See Bob Stroman at meetings or view and order his products at www.2sand.com. (Be sure to ask for your club discount.) He does not carry Micro-Mesh products at this time.

Always use common sense. Things that work in one situation may not work in another. Follow all Safety Rules. If it feels wrong, it probably is – stop and rethink. Your Mileage May Vary.

AAW OPEN LETTER**MALCOLM TIBBETTS, AAW VICE PRESIDENT****HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM AAW**

HOW quickly a year flies by. With the passing of 2008, the AAW board looks to the future with the same economic concerns that everyone seems to have. These are scary times for sure, but we are very fortunate to have a strong association, filled with very dedicated and passionate members. Our future remains rock solid... we don't need a "bail out."

With the New Year, there are many changes.

We say goodbye and extend a big thank you to outgoing board members Al Hockenbery and Corey Anderson, and our past president Angelo Iafrate. (It's not really a goodbye, for I'm sure they will all continue to contribute to the AAW mission). And we welcome newly elected and very qualified board members, Dale Larson, Binh Pho, and Cassandra Speier.

In addition, Betty Scarpino has taken over the editorial duties of our journal and this will be Mary Lacer's first full year as our executive director. Board member, Bill Haskell has "stepped up to the plate" and by unanimous board vote, taken the reigns of our association presidency. We are in very good hands.

We're going through almost as much transition as Washington, but without nearly as much controversy. The future looks very bright indeed.

In February, the board will be visiting the Albuquerque facilities. The 2009 symposium is shaping up to be another "not to be missed" event. Hotel rooms are already starting to fill up, so don't delay in making your plans. Even if you can't make it to Albuquerque, you can still participate. Consider submitting an entry into the "Spirit of the Southwest" exhibition. The submission deadline is right around the corner on February 7th, so get busy.

For more information about this exhibition, visit our website. www.woodturner.org

Speaking of submissions, how about contributing a good story for the 25th anniversary book that

is being created? This is going to be a fantastic publication, to be published prior to our 25th symposium in 2012.

John Kelsey has been hired to oversee this project and he would love to receive short stories or essays from AAW members. Tell a funny story or recognize someone who has made a difference and try to include a photo or two. Send your best stuff to John at editorkelsey@gmail.com.

By the time that you read this, the Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG) annual submission deadline of January 15th will have passed. As chairman of the EOG committee, I am very proud of this aspect of our organization.

Each year, the EOG committee has the responsibility of selecting grant recipients and it's never an easy job. I wish we could approve all applications, but we do not have unlimited funds available – best of luck to all that have applied.

A bit of a personal note... At the conclusion of the first "segmented symposium" held in November 2008, attendees expressed a desire to form an association. I am involved with the creation of a new "specialized" AAW chapter of segmented turners. I invite all segmenters to consider joining this new group. You can sign up at:

www.segmentedwoodturners.org/

If you haven't yet renewed your AAW membership, then I encourage you to do so as soon as possible. You can be assured that we'll put your hard earned dollars to good use.

Wishing everyone the best for the New Year,

Malcolm Tibbetts, AAW Vice President

CLICK IT

GARY GUENTHER

RECOMMENDED WEBSITE – www.carolinamountainwoodturners.org/galleries/cmw/gallery_select.htm

CAROLINA MOUNTAIN WOODTURNERS (CMW) is a large and very active AAW chapter. They began with 8 members in 1998 and now have over 400. They are privileged to meet at the Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Asheville, North Carolina (a great place to visit if you haven't). Over eight years worth of their excellently designed, turned, and photographed pieces are available in the monthly galleries linked chronologically at this site. The same is true with their newsletters. The latter can be downloaded whole, or on an article-by-article basis (a nice touch). They also have a "Tips & Techniques link on their Home Page. The galleries are spectacular and the newsletter articles are interesting. This is probably the finest AAW chapter gallery I have ever seen. Visit, peruse, return often, and gain some insights from the galleries into forms and design that you can expand upon yourself. Very highly recommended.

FUTURE DEMONSTRATIONS

GARY GUENTHER

- **February 12th – Ed Karch – Earth, Bleach & Fire.**

What is a Bogolon? How is it made and can we transfer this technology to our turnings? How do you get "Ghost lines"? These and other burning questions will be answered when Ed demos the use of bleach, mud and fire for interesting enhancements to blah turnings. The demo will cover techniques from woods to finishes, and equipment needed from mustard to torch. If this won't make them more interesting then the fireplace may need another piece of wood.

- **March 12th – Stan Sherman – Segmented Vessels.**

We have all enjoyed and appreciated Stan's outstanding segmented vessels. Stan will give us an explanation of the design, cutting, and glue-up process and show us how he holds and turns the results.

- **May 7th– Barbara Dill – Multi-Axis Work.**

Barbara left the nursing profession in 1989 to become a professional woodworker and became a full-time turner and teacher after a class at Arrowmont. She is known locally for her beautiful salad bowls and hollow forms from local woods and teaches at the Visual Arts Center of Richmond. Currently, she is fascinated with the adventures of multi-axis spindle turning, which she demonstrates via a conceptual model that helps clarify the tools, techniques, and results. (See www.barbaradill.com)

- **August 6th – J. Paul Fennell – Creating a Work of Art – design, hollowing, carving, piercing, and finishing.**

Paul is a Charter Member of AAW. You can see his work on the cover of (and inside) the recently issued book "New Masters of Woodturning" and at www.jpaulfennell.com. If you attended our meeting at Jerry and Deena Kaplan's house, you may remember Paul's exquisite *Woodturners Wifflebat and Ball* in the Library. Try to plan your vacation time so as not to miss this demo – you will not regret it.

Although we have not set firm dates, I have agreement in principle from **David Ellsworth** and **John Jordan**. These will be very special demonstrations, not to be missed. If you have suggestions for future demonstrators, or would consider demonstrating yourself, please contact Gary Guenther at gary.guenther@att.net or 301/384-7594.

MCW MEETING SCHEDULE – 2009

Meetings are held on the Thursday before the second Saturday each month, from 7:00-9:00 PM, at the Woodworkers Club in Rockville, Maryland. See our website for a map to the meeting site.

2009 MEETING DATES	JAN 8	FEB 12	MAR 13	APR 9	MAY 7	JUN 11
	JUL 9	AUG 6	SEP 10	OCT 8	NOV 12	DEC 10

MCW'S TURNING JOURNAL

A monthly publication of Montgomery County Woodturners – An American Association of Woodturners (AAW) Chapter.

Editor: Michael Blake – Phone: 301/589-1815 – Email: mb7298@comcast.net

We're on the Web at: montgomerycountywoodturners.org

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Exhibit Committee	Phil Brown, Hal Burdette, and Clif Poodry		

MEMBER DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

ROCKVILLE WOODWORKERS CLUB – woodworkersclub.com

MCW and other club members, remember to support the Woodworkers Club by purchasing turning supplies during our meetings and save 10% on the retail price (Power tools are not included).



2SAND.COM – www.2sand.com or call 301-897-1590

2Sand.com is a coated abrasive specialist focused on fast service and fair prices that provides superior sanding discs, sandpaper sheets, and woodturning tools to woodshops. MCW Member Discount is 10% (discount code available in the restricted area of the MCW Website)



CRAFT SUPPLIES USA – woodturnerscatalog.com

Club members can save 10% on all finishes & disc abrasives from Craft Supplies USA. Just mention your club name and save, all year long. You can always see current club specials by clicking on the members login button on their homepage. New 15% specials are updated on the 1st of the month, which can be accessed by using on the link above and going to the club member login located on the lower right portion of the page.



HARTVILLE TOOL CLUB – www.hartvilletool.com

Members get a 15% discount, with MCW receiving a 3% rebate. If you have not signed up for this program, let Stan Wellborn know you want to do so. He will let Hartville know you are an MCW member and sign you up. Catalogs and ordering instructions are available or at meetings.

