

As the Wood Turns

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CHICAGO WOODTURNERS ASSOCIATION



30 YEARS OF ART, CRAFT,
TECHNOLOGY, AND
TRADITION.

AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF WOODTURNERS

April Newsletter 2018

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President's Curls

Whoever dies with the most stuff, wins. Words we all live by, right? But what does this mean in real life? What happens to all that “stuff,” once you win?

Last month's tool sale was because Tim Putnam “retired” from turning due to a rotator cuff injury, and wanted the blanks he had so carefully roughed out over a few years to be finish turned, not rot in a pile. We were also able to help him distribute his tool library. Unfortunately, we have not been able to help him find a new home for the Oliver Lathe and 1-1/8 inch faceplates.

Jason Swanson's friend with colon cancer wanted the tools to go to someone who will use them, not profit by selling them. I believe he came to the right place. The member who purchased his lathe and tools is a definite turner, and a good one.

Sometimes it's just a single well-loved machine that's too big for a move, or no longer serves the owner's mission. Or maybe, after many years of puttering, teaching or production work, it's simply time to move on to the next phase and take up golf (which requires a lot fewer tools).

CWT is often called upon by an estate for help in selling or otherwise disposing of a shop and tools, either for a long-time member or someone who has contacted us through the website or a referral. Some of our members have considerable experience in running these sales and otherwise assisting during what can be a traumatic time. I have been involved in many of these, and I feel that helping someone through this an important part of CWT's mission.

More often than not, this is required because of a serious illness or death which forces a family member or friend into the position of dealing with a whole lot of something they know absolutely nothing about. How many of us have done any pre-planning, either for ourselves or others? Remember, we are all afraid our significant others will sell our tools for what we told them they cost.

On a positive note: Chicago Woodturners will make a presentation of Beads of Courage boxes to Lurie Hospital during the month of May. This is a continuing CWT community outreach program, so please contribute. We always need more boxes. More information about the program is posted on the CWT website, along with guidelines for the boxes.

Turn On! Chicago is coming! Registration is open. At the April meeting Al Miotke will have more information. On April 11 the Turn On! Chicago Committee will be meeting at CLA and we invite anyone interested in volunteering for our signature event to attend. Ask Al, me, or any other member for more information.

More immediately, the April meeting will have a Gallery Review by Darrell Rader and a demo by Clint Stevens. The demo topic is a closely-held secret. (Don't call Clint, because he doesn't know either.)

Andy Kuby, President

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Secretary's Report

Frank Pagura

Meeting started at 7:00 PM. The first announcement confirmed that Roger Basrak would be tonight's gallery reviewer.

A fully recovered Ken Staggs was our demonstrator and put all his eggs in our basket.

A table was set outside in the hall for the Tim Putnam tool and accessories sale. Included are several, heavy duty faceplates, mostly 1 1/8 inch thread, many long and strong gauges and hollowing tools. Also more Tim Putnam bowl blanks were available for the taking.

Andy Kuby asked for a show of hands from members who plan to attend the AAW Symposium in Portland, Oregon on June 14-17; more than half a dozen hands were up. Andy suggested making connections for ride-sharing from airport to hotels or sharing hotel accommodations. He also reminded everyone that the deadline for videographers sign up is March 15. Don't miss out on the best seat in the house.

The AAW is looking for someone to be the club liaison for Women In Turning. Andy has contacted Marie and Dawn, and they think others should have the opportunity. Apparently this does not have to be a woman. Check out full description on the website.

CWT received a request from a sister club, The Segmented Turners, to rent our AV equipment for their St. Louis Symposium in October. The Board deemed the request in line with the CWT educational objectives and approved it.

Jason Clark gave a short recap of his upcoming demo on April 7. In his demo Jason will show and challenge us with his multi-axis turning and hollowing of a torus—great stuff! His master classes will be at Normak on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, April 8- 10. Jason requested that if you sign up for the master classes and have a captive hollowing system, you should bring it with you. He would prefer a Lyle Jamison-style hollowing system, but others will do. Saturday demo is \$30. Master Classes are \$ 125 each day. Matt was ready in the back of the room with a demonstrator schedule for you to sign up for this and/or the following additional demos scheduled for later this year.

Emmet Kane Demo will be on June 9, with hands-on classes on June 10 and 11.

The Jason Breach Demo will be on September 22, with Hands-on Classes on September 23 and 24.

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Al Miotke gave a brief update on TOC and let us know that registrations are coming in at a good pace, with many turners from Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, and one as far away as North Carolina. It is obvious that The TOC Symposium has gained a respectable reputation. Al pointed out that Illinois registrations are still rather anemic!

Rich Nye is still actively soliciting Auction Pieces for the banquet.

2018 TOC Posters are available from Julie Basrak. Sign the spreadsheet to keep track of displayed locations.

The new AV equipment is in. On April 17, there is going to be a set up and videographer orientation day at Christian Liberty. This all-day event is an opportunity for everyone to get proficient with the new equipment. Frank Magnifico is looking for additional volunteers, so he passed out sign up sheets.

The Board is considering having updated Member Bios on file. Membership approved the concept and asked the Board to work out the details. Bios will be kept off the web; one idea is to store them in the members-only section of the web page.

Tonight's Safety Book Drawing was the last of the series. Roberto Ferrer, last month's winner, gave the safety tip, "Watch out for the sharp edges of the rotating piece." I think he spoke from experience. Tonight's winner is Joel Lamplough. Joel will report at the next meeting with the safety tip he learned from reading the book. For a future month it was suggested we watch the Tim Yoder Catch Video.

Jason Clark announced that The Windy City meeting will be March 27 (NOT on March 20 as previously scheduled).

The Festool Road Show Truck will be at Buffalo Grove Woodcraft on April 6. Andy had cards that could win you \$100 if you attend. Additional cards are available on the day of the event at Woodcraft.

Bob Schultz reported that new books and videos have been added to the library open before, during and after meetings, so go by and check them out.

Rich Piper brought in a bunch of hand files to give away. See him if you are interested.

Jason Swanson reported on a super deal on a lathe and tools package, which was snapped up at the break!

Roger Basrak's Membership Report: 65 members in attendance tonight; 125 paid up members as of today; 3 new members signed up tonight, and 2 special members here tonight, Robert and Dave from Rockler.

Mary reported that the raffle total was \$145 tonight. See the winners later in the newsletter.

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Gallery by Roger Basrak. Tonight's pieces showed the vast variety of skills the club is able to display: texture, color, carving and even a piece involving metal and a 20-ton press! Roger used the Pens For Troops and Beads Of Courage pieces turned in tonight to emphasize the membership contributions to these worthy causes. Roberto Ferrer's The Almost Flying Saucer was selected as the piece to be displayed for a month in the CWT display case at Woodcraft in Buffalo Grove.

At the break the Tim Putnam sale continued.

Demonstration by Ken Staggs who had Easter Eggs on his mind. A lot of "Clucking Going On."

Respectfully, Frank Pagura

Membership

Julie & Roger Basrak

Our March meeting was attended by 65 members. There are currently 134 paid members for 2018.

New members at the March meeting were Cathy Bloome from Franklin Park, Tony Lira from Elk Grove Village, and Joel Lamplough from Wayne. Since the meeting, two additional new members have sent in their applications and dues. They are Frank Kelly from Hoffman Estates and Mark Jundanian from La Grange.

Don't forget that all members, including new members, and guests are welcome to join us each month at the front of the room for mentoring sessions. The mentoring sessions are held before the meeting from about 6:00 pm until about 6:50 pm. It's a great opportunity to see and try turning up close and personal. Feel free to introduce yourself to anyone in the group that you don't already know.

If you would like to volunteer to mentor or assist the mentor, please talk to Darrell Rader, Don McCloskey or Al Miotke.

Beginning with the April meeting, name labels will be printed only for those members whose 2018 dues have been paid. As soon as 2018 dues have been received, member names will be added to the list and printed for the next meeting.

Either cash or a check in the amount of \$30 (individual membership) or \$40 (family membership) can be accepted at any meeting or demonstration. Otherwise, feel free to send a check for the correct amount and payable to Chicago Woodturners to the following address: Chicago Woodturners, c/o Julie Basrak, 563 W. Ruhl Rd., Palatine, IL 60074.

We look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

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Gallery

Jason Clark



The selected photos this month help demonstrate that it's possible to turn more than just salad bowls and also possible to turn more materials than just wood. Scott Barrett presented small lidded boxes in faux ivory and faux bone along with a small metal box and metal earrings decorated with ornamental turning.

Bob Shuford showed us that you don't need a large piece of

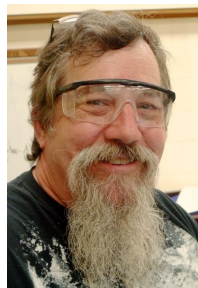
wood to make a striking piece. His small bowl turned out a chunk of Desert Ironwood that is only about 3" in the largest dimension, but I think Bob has done it justice.



Demonstration

Paul Rosen

Egg Turning, Firecrackers, and Snakes



Our demonstrator for March was Ken Staggs. Fully recovered from his recent bout with the flu, Ken was ready to turn with a 6-inch long blank of a relatively soft wood, alder, 2-inches square, held firmly in his scroll chuck. After rounding the square to a cylinder with his spindle roughing gouge and slightly tapering one end, Ken brought out his skew chisel. Ken explained that an egg is simply an asymmetrical bead. He quickly finished the narrow end of the egg, and then

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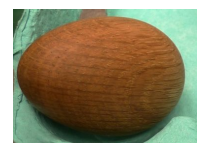
trained his attention to the fat end. The egg was completed in 10 minutes. So in case you missed it, Ken turned another one, this time in 9 minutes.

After the demo ended, I asked Ken exactly where the skew was contacting the wood. Ken replied, “You have to find the sweet spot.” If you watched closely, you could see that Ken used the tool in two positions. When the long point, aka “the toe,” was in the trailing position (near the top surface), the actual point of contact with the wood was about one-third of the way up from the heel (short point) of the tool. But when he was making near vertical cuts, the toe was in the lower position, and the point of contact was about one-third of the way back from the toe. It’s a subtle difference, but critical to avoiding the dreaded catch, which pushes the tool back, leaving a “corkscrew” flaw on the surface of the turning. Do you hear a “ringing noise” while turning a long spindle with a skew? That usually means the tool is vibrating during the cut, which leaves marks, usually at the center of the spindle. The solution? Sharpen the tool, try using less pressure during the cut, and consider supporting the spindle with a three-wheel jig like the one Andy Kuby showed us last month.

Ken also used his skew chisel flat on the tool rest, as a scraper to remove tool marks. Ken says, “The key to using a scraper is to use a light touch. A heavy touch causes tearout.” Used properly, the skew as a scraper will produce very fine shavings. Also, when using the skew chisel as a scraper, keep the tool constantly in motion.

A sharp skew chisel is important. In alder, a relatively soft wood, Ken can get six to eight eggs before re-sharpening the tool. With hard maple, the skew needs sharpening after just two eggs. He sharpens the bevel, with six to eight strokes on each side, using a diamond card sharpener. Ken says that when a skew is cutting properly, the wood comes off the bevel in curls.

Ken is a veteran, accomplished turner, so he made the entire enterprise look really simple. It’s not. Mastery of the skew comes only with practice. Inspired by Ken’s demo, I fired up my lathe and produced what I thought was a pretty respectable egg, in ash, in about 45 minutes. I knocked out a couple more, getting my time down to about 20 minutes, with only one semi-catastrophic catch that was fortunately repairable. I ended up giving two of the eggs to a five-year-old, who immediately started a game of “spin the bottle” using the egg as a pointer. She positioned a half-dozen of her cartoon-character toys like the numbers on a clock, and then proceeded to spin the egg, to see which toy the egg would point to. You might want to keep this game in mind for Easter, just in case you have some five-year-olds in your family.



Ken’s demo reminded me of the egg-turning demo Dick Sing has delivered in the past. Dick is both technically oriented and precise. He tells the story of taking out his micrometer and measuring the length and major diameter of a series of eggs in his refrigerator. So he knew the size he was after up front. His technique was a little different. As I recall, he used a 3/8-inch spindle gouge sharpened with swept-back wings, like a bowl gouge. His control of the tool, like Ken’s skew chisel, was masterful.

Because his major diameter was consistent, from egg-to-egg, Dick was able to devise a jig made from a piece of 2-inch PVC coupling. He ran one end of the PVC coupling oriented vertically in a 2-inch hole bored in 3/4-inch pine jig, across a table saw three times, so he ended up with six saw kerfs, each about 1.5-inches deep, spaced at 60-degree intervals around the PVC.

These became “jaws” that could contract around the major diameter of his egg, when persuaded by an adjustable hose clamp. (FWIW, I measured the major diameter for 11 eggs I had in my refrigerator; the result: 1.71-inches (range: 1.69- to 1.75-inches). The other end of the PVC was mated tightly to a spigot, which was held in place by the jaws of his scroll chuck. By carefully turning the outer diameter of his eggs to just slightly under the internal diameter of the PVC, Dick achieved not only consistency in the size of his eggs, but also the ability to hold them firmly within his jig. With that much thought and preparation behind him, Dick ended up turning eggs in every species of wood he could get his hands on. Generously, he donated his collection to the highest bidder at the recent Turn On, Chicago! seminar. But not before some of those eggs got hidden under the cushions of his sofa or behind chairs, for his kids to discover after a visit from the Easter Bunny.

Ken offered a tip for egg sizing. Position a light directly over your lathe bed. Hold an egg lengthwise on the imaginary line between lathe centers, and trace the shadow on a piece of cardboard sitting on the lathe bed. Then tape the cardboard to the lathe bed. Use the resulting drawing as a guide when turning your egg blank to size.



So what do you do when a 60-minute demo is over in 20 minutes? Why you reminisce about your childhood, of course. Ken told the story of an adventure with his younger brother, growing up in Bensenville. Not far from his home was the municipal wood chip dump, where the city would grind up the remnants of their tree-trimming efforts. It so happens that Ken’s father had a job working in a fireworks factory, so he and his younger brother had access to a generous supply of M-80s (read: loud firecrackers). The two brothers enjoyed visiting the wood chip dump, where they learned to find the top of burrows left by numerous rattlesnakes.

Once the top of the burrow was located, they proceeded to light the M-80s and throw them down the snake holes. On one particularly productive afternoon, they netted ten motionless baby rattlesnakes, which they proudly took home to store in the family bathtub. They intended to skin the snakes later. It was about an hour later when his mother let out a scream, followed by the incriminating question, “What are all those live rattlesnakes doing in my bathtub?” Apparently, the snakes had only been stunned by the M-80s--another life’s lesson learned in the childhood of Ken Staggs.

Dick Sing also had a couple of egg stories, as recalled by club librarian, Bob Smith. Dick grew up on a farm, with horses and chickens. Farmers have learned that a turned wooden egg, strategically placed in a hen’s nest, will encourage the hen to mount the nest and “incubate” the wooden egg. This encourages nesting behavior, if you want to breed chickens. But the other use of wooden eggs was to provide pseudo-sustenance for the snakes that would occasionally visit the nest for eggs. Once they swallowed a wooden egg, they were not likely to return to the nest. Poor snakes. I don’t know which is worse: surviving an M-80 attack, or trying to digest a wooden egg.



Ken decorated his eggs with a variety of finishes. One had multiple stripes applied with Magic Markers. Another was gray, with a salt-and-pepper finish that came right out of a spray can. Want a shiny finish? Sand the egg down to 320-grit, and then use spray-on lacquer, or use cyanoacrylate (CA) glue. You can also coat the egg with gray primer, and then apply a two-tone finish one on each



end. Ken had one egg that was red on top and blue on the bottom. And if you do them in ash, you can apply colored dyes, followed by liming wax to bring out the striped grain pattern. Ken even had some egg stands, which required boring and hollowing-out a depression to accommodate the narrow end of the egg. Egg turning is a good exercise in skew chisel control which, executed properly, will leave an almost perfect finish, requiring little sanding. So how many eggs did you turn this Easter?

CWT News

Kiln for Drying Wood

Attached to the end of this month's newsletter is an article that Andy thought might interest many of the members: how to build a kiln for drying wood.



Register Now for Turn-On! Chicago 2018

Registration for our biennial symposium Turn-On! Chicago, which will be held from August 3-5, is open. Visit the symposium website www.turnonchicago.com to learn more about the event and the demonstrators. Don't miss out on this educational opportunity right here in the Chicago area.

AAW News

Michael Gibson will demonstrate how to turn a teapot from log to finish at the Woodcraft Store in New Berlin, WI on April 14, 9:00 AM - 4 PM. This event is sponsored by Milwaukee Area Woodturners. For more information, email admin@mawturners.com.



The highly acclaimed **Utah Woodturning Symposium**, the country's oldest symposium, runs from May 10-12. The event includes today's top professionals and up and coming woodturners in a friendly, informal learning environment with over 80 demonstrations to choose from. A full schedule of Special Events include: Instant Gallery, Banquet Dinner, Live Auction, Silent Auction, Youth Hands On Turning, Pen Turning Rendezvous, Swap Meet, Spouse Program and Great

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Egg Cup Race. Demonstrators include Richard Findley, Eli Avisera, Stuart Mortimer, Anthony Harris, Benoit Averly, Kelly Dunn, Tom Edwards, Bob Fehlau, Doug Schneider, Dennis Paullus, Pat and Peggy Bookey, Dave Best, Mike Mahoney, and more. Pre-registration required. Early \$299 for 3 days. Late \$355 for 3 days. Single day \$100. More information: <http://utahwoodturning.com/>

Are you a segmenter who wants to learn new techniques? Are you new to segmenting and interested in learning the basics from some of the best? Do you want to see one of the largest and most amazing Instant Galleries of segmented work ever assembled? It's all happening this fall when the Segmented Woodturners, an international on-line chapter of the AAW will be hosting the **6th Segmented Woodturning Symposium** from October 11-14 at the Marriott St. Louis West Hotel, featuring 45 demonstrators, including CWT's own Al Miotke. Registration is at www.segmentedwoodturning.org. *Segmented vase by Scott Holman.*



For Sale, Trade, or Wanted

A Few More Putnam Tools

Available from Tim Putnam, TPU9209380@AOL.COM Please contact Tim Putnam directly for additional information.

Oliver Model 20-A (Serial Number 90537). From the serial number it appears to date from 1958. The Model 20-A was originally a pattern-maker's lathe with a swing of about 16 inches (see photo <http://vintagemachinery.org/photoindex/detail.aspx?id=2535>) Tim's looked to have about 4 inches of risers. Here's flyer about a slightly earlier model of the lathe (<http://vintagemachinery.org/pubs/609/288.pdf>)

A reproduction of the manual is available from Amazon and ebay for about \$35. See this link <https://www.amazon.com/OLIVER-Pattern-Makers-Turning-Owners/dp/B01B6N8H4A> <http://vintagemachinery.org/mfgindex/detail.aspx?id=609> for a summary of the company.

Shop Light

Magnetic Lathe Lights. A limited number of Magnetic Lathe Lights, similar to the ones on all of the Chicago Woodturners demonstration lathes, are available for \$40 each. Contact Andrew Kuby, 847-922-8201 or riverwoodsturner@gmail.com.

Meeting Agendas

Date	Gallery Review	Demonstration
April 10	Darrell Rader	Clint Stevens - TBA
May 8	Rich Hall-Reppen	Jason Clark - Platters
June 12	Tom Boerjan	TBD - Log to Bowl
July 10	Paul Shotola	TBD - Boxes
August 14	Clint Stevens	TBD - Chainsaw Sharpening
September 11	Darrell Rader	Marie Anderson - Ornaments
October 9	Paul Pyrcik	Don McCloskey - Open Segmenting
November 13	TBD	TBD - Embellishments & Tricks

Chicago Woodturners Board of Directors and Committee Chairs 2018

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Membership	Julie Basrak	847-471-2047	cwtjulie@hotmail.com
Librarian	Robert Schultz	815-245-7495	grislakers@att.net
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Audio-Video Co-Chair	Dawn Herndon-Charles	630-588-8431	dcharlesster@gmail.com
Education	Darrell Rader	815-648-2197	d.rader@woodfineart.com
Demonstrations	Rich Nye	630-406-1855	nyewoodturning@earthlink.net



About us

Membership in the Chicago Woodturners Association is open to anyone wishing to increase their turning skills through education, discussion and critique. Annual dues are \$30 for a single membership and \$40 for a family. Visit our website for an application or contact: Julie Basrak, Membership Chairman.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7:00-10:00 PM at Christian Liberty Academy, 502 W. Euclid Ave., Arlington Heights, IL. Please join us. All are welcome.

Chicago Woodturners is a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. Visit the [website](#) for more information.

Kiln for Drying Wood

By Larry Zubke



To speed up the drying process and improve the odds of successfully preserving wood blanks, I built a drying kiln. A kiln provides a stable environment by maintaining a consistent temperature and humidity. For research, I spoke to woodturners in my local club and also found articles on the Internet. I discovered that there are no hard-and-fast rules for building a kiln, so I took several ideas and combined them into something that would work for me.

A small chest freezer that had quit working began the project. The metal walls with insulation between them help retain heat, making this kiln economical to run, even in wintertime. For safety, I installed a hasp and padlock on the door.



Mounted on the left-hand side of the kiln are the controls, power switch, and outlet, as well as the greenhouse controller. Note the padlock for safety.

I removed the compressor and mounted casters on one side to stand the freezer up so it can move around easily. The vertical positioning of the door allows easy access. An upright freezer or refrigerator might work better, but this unit takes up less space.

I installed open-wire shelves to support the green wood and to allow air to move freely within the kiln. A watertight light fixture with two 60-watt incandescent lightbulbs mounted on the base of the freezer provides the heat source. A thin sheet metal plate sits over the bulbs to protect them from dripping water. The metal also retains heat from the bulbs, slowly releasing it after the power is off.

A greenhouse thermostat with a remote sensor monitors and



A fan is mounted underneath the wire shelf.

regulates the temperature inside the kiln by automatically turning the bulbs on or off so that a consistent temperature is maintained. I drilled four 1/2" (13mm) holes in the bottom of the freezer below the lightbulbs and four matching holes in the upper rear wall. Heat convection from the bulbs draws outside air into the freezer through the bottom holes. Warm humid air exits the freezer through the top holes.

After my first batch of wood was dry, I decided to install a 5" (13cm) fan, salvaged from computer equipment. This fan runs all the time and helps circulate the air, which speeds up the drying process. Without the fan, the first batch of wood took approximately seven weeks to dry. The second batch took only five weeks.



The lightbulbs are mounted on the back of the kiln near the bottom, a sheet of metal covers the bulbs, and the holes are drilled through the bottom of the freezer.

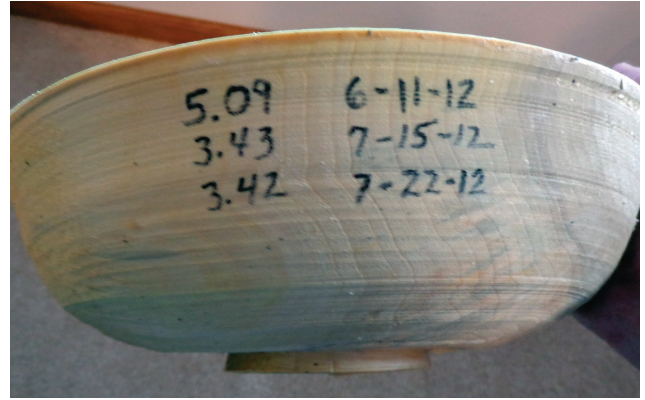
I generally start by setting the temperature at 80°F (27°C) for the first week. At week two, I increase the temperature to 85°F (29°C). The third week, I raise the temperature to 90°F (32°C) and leave it there until the wood is dry.

During the first few weeks, the humidity is 70 to 80

percent, so the air exiting the kiln often condenses on the outside of the holes. As the drying process progresses, the humidity continues to drop. The time it takes for the blanks to finish drying depends upon: the time of year the tree was cut, wood species, diameter, rough-turned wall thickness, stor-



The sensor for the greenhouse controller is mounted to the ceiling inside the kiln. The four holes drilled through the upper back wall of the freezer can be seen.



A 13" (33cm) cottonwood bowl, rough turned from green wood, weighed 5.09 lb (2.3kg) June 11 when it was placed in the kiln. It weighed 3.43 lb (1.6kg) July 15, and 3.42 lb (1.6kg) July 22. This bowl stopped losing weight, is dry, and ready to be finish turned.

age-environment temperature, and humidity.

To measure the wood's dryness, I weigh the largest and thickest blanks with a digital fishing scale and write the weight and date on each blank. At first, I check the blanks monthly, and then weekly as the weight loss begins to slow.

When the blanks stop losing weight (moisture), they can be finish turned. ■

Larry Zubke has been an avid woodworker all of his life, learning from his father and other family members. Since joining the Dakota Woodturners, his focus shifted to woodturning.