



25 years of Art,  
Craft, Technology,  
and Tradition.



The Monthly newsletter of the Chicago Woodturners

October 2012

**Thin Wall Turning**

**Paul Rosen**

Thomas Stegall is a big, burly guy. For a pickup football game on a Saturday morning, he'd be the guy you would pick No. 1 or No. 2. But Thomas is also a multi-talented and creative woodturner, dedicated to sharing his knowledge with students. He started by showing us a turned lampshade made from box elder, a project not for the faint of heart. Then he mounted the cylinder of spalted river birch in the chuck, pith to pith. It looked huge. He explained that for a lampshade, the pith-to-pith orientation tends to minimize distortion during turning. The blank was maybe 18 to 20-inches long, and perhaps 9-inches in diameter. He was able to turn it to a cylinder, but the 50 mm jaws were not strong enough to hold the mass, especially when the tailstock was removed. A set of 75 mm or 100 mm jaws would have been more appropriate, but unfortunately, none was available that night. (Typically, Thomas would have used a face plate with 3-inch screws to mount a blank this large.) But he persevered nonetheless.

In the sample lampshade he passed around for inspection, the thickness was on the order of 1.5 mm. He now aims for a 1 mm thickness in his thin

turnings. That level of precision can be achieved with proper feed rate, bevel pressure, and tool angle. To master this requires practice. Thomas conceded that he turned for two years before he understood the concept of bevel pressure. To start, he dropped the tool handle of his bowl gouge to about 20-degrees below center and gradually pared away the mass of wood, starting at the center and moving toward the greater diameter in a series of repeated passes. The objective is to establish the outside thickness first. Then repeat. "How fast an rpm are you using?" someone asked. Thomas didn't know. But he suggested that sound and feel are more



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**A week with Jimmy Clewes**

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You might recall that Mark Dreyer was our 2011 recipient for the CWT education grant. Mark wisely chose to take a hands on class with Jimmy Clewes in his private studio. You can't find many professionals that offer such a wide variety of skills in a low key and entertaining environment. On Tuesday Mark will give us the Readers Digest version of his experiences that week.



### Presidents Curls



President

Scott Barrett

**J Paul Fennel  
class at  
NORMAC is a  
success**

**Plans are  
underway to  
schedule 4  
world class  
demos in 2013**

**Thanks to Paul  
Pyrzik for a  
successful Pen  
Pals for Paul  
event.**

September marks the return to the NORMAC facility for our classroom. By all accounts the move went well and our first classes with J Paul Fennel were a success. This venue gives us the flexibility we missed at CLA by allowing us to utilize Sunday for a class. Richard Nye is putting together an impressive slate of demonstrators for 2013. As soon as a decision is made, he will begin the tedious task of scheduling the demonstrations and classes. We are projecting 4 demonstrators in 2013. For this program to be successful we need a good turnout for the Saturday demo and the strong interest in the classes. Reverting to our Sunday, Monday-Tuesday class schedule should enable those members whom still report to work on Monday, a chance to participate in the 1 day class.

The Education Committee has held its first meeting following TOC 2012. Our successful auction and raffle made it possible to add more than \$14, 000 to our education fund. The board will meet soon to consider the projects they will bring before us. We have yet to complete the projects approved for 2012. This would include the awarding of up to \$2000 for the grant program. The grant deadline was October 1. The committee will sift through the applications and make their decision before years end. We will also be awarding an AAW membership by drawing to those members that brought guests to a meeting that last year. Lastly, we are looking forward to the scheduling of an Ornamental Turning Seminar with a nationally recognized demonstrator. This looks like it would be a 2 day event in early 2013.

Our club members should be proud of bolstering the education fund. It is the goal of both the education committee and the CWT board to continue providing a highly rated experience by scheduling world class demonstrations. If you have suggestions for turners you would like to see, contact Richard Nye with your input.

Richard has been actively contacting turners to see how their schedules mesh with ours. Your comments are just as important as your participation.

I would like to acknowledge the foresight and efforts of Paul Pyrcik and his assistants for their success in the “Pen Pals for Paul” project. Their organizing on very short notice the project to solicit donations for Paul and Jan Shotola is commendable. This is another example of the quality of people we have in our club. The donation of pens, purchase of pens and unselfish monetary donations demonstrates the strength and compassion of Chicago Woodturners Club members and friends. Thank you Paul, for turning your vision and hard work into what can only be described as an overwhelming success. I know the Shotola’s will forever be grateful to you and the participants for conceiving this charitable project. It did not go unnoticed that during your own time of personal grieving you persevered and completed a most meaningful project.

See you Tuesday

## Thin Wall Turning

Paul Rosen

*(Continued from page 1)*

important. He also likes to use a strong light source shining on the outside of the turning. You can tell when you are approaching the appropriate thickness because the wood starts to become translucent. If you see “bands” in a thin turning, they imply that you don’t have a constant thickness. Ironically, your fingers (rather than your eyes) are more sensitive in determining thickness. Thomas also uses calipers with sharp tines (not rounded) to measure edge thickness. The calipers let you “see” down to 0.1 mm. For a large lampshade, the turning process could take 8 or 9 hours to complete. And once you get down to what will be the top of the lampshade, you will need a scraper to smooth out the inside of the turning.

What sort of wood is appropriate for this project? Walnut and ash offer poor translucency, so they would be inappropriate. Same goes for red oak, which is hard, but inflexible and lacks translucency. Box elder, on the other hand, may look boring, but it gets interesting when you shine a light through it. Note that you can’t do all the turning and then do all the sanding. The sanding must be done while you still have most of the wood mass still intact. So sanding alternates with hollowing, intermittently. Thomas admitted to not being a fast woodturner. But he enjoys the process as much as the finished project. Sometimes the journey is as much fun as the destination.

Is your source wood wet or dry? If you are turning a recently harvested wet piece, after you complete the outside shape, you should hollow-out immediately. So budget your turning time accordingly. If you set the piece aside and decide to hollow out on a later day, you may find that it has gone out-of-round by anywhere from 1 to 3 mm. You can actually hear this when you re-mount the piece, as the tip of the gouge will make intermittent, rather than continuous contact with the edge of the spinning wood.

One of the problems daunting the inexperienced turner is the tendency to place too much pressure on the bowl gouge. That pressure, combined with perhaps a slightly inappropriate angle of attack, can knock the piece out-of-round while spinning.



Indeed, that happened to our demonstrator, but the result was likely the fault of the 50 mm jaws rather than inappropriate pressure or tool angle. Finally, Thomas decided to insert a Forstner bit into the tailstock end and bore a hole about two inches deep, so he could later advance the tailstock into that hole to help stabilize the piece. That turned out to be an *ad hoc* creative solution to prevent the piece from shifting in the chuck jaws.

Thomas has also ventured into making his own turning tools. He starts with a 3/4" diameter piece of cold-rolled steel, available from the big box shopping centers for around \$4.00. It not only dampens vibration, but it’s relatively soft and easy to drill into. You can then get high-speed steel tool tips 3/8" square from places like Enco, and then mount and glue them into the hole drilled at the end of the 3/4" shaft. Mount the shaft in a turned handle, and you have your own home-made hollowing tool(s).

Would you like to pursue thin-walled turning further? Talk to Thomas. He teaches 3-hour classes, and you might pick up some valuable pointers in a one-on-one session. Despite reading books, watching videos, or attending seminars like Turn On, Chicago!, sometimes you can learn a lot more faster under the watchful eye of an experienced and talented wood turner.



## Low Cost Vacuum Chucks

Paul Rosen

Bob's August Demo did not make the September issue but we definitely don't want to miss seeing Paul's review of an excellent demo

—Editor, Al Miotke

The schedule said that Bob Leonard and Phil Brooks were going to show us how to build an inexpensive vacuum chuck. Why? So we can finish the bottom of turned bowls. True, you could go out and invest in some Cole Jaws to mount on your OneWay chuck. Or you could mount a sacrificial piece of MDF on a face plate and make grooves to hold the lip of the bowl and apply duct tape around the outside of the bowl to secure it. But a vacuum chuck is perhaps a more elegant solution to the task at hand.

Bob managed to score a used (but fully functional!) DeVilbiss vacuum pump of the type used by hospitals. It had 474,000 hours on it, but it worked. You may be able to find one of these online or at a local flea market. Alternately, you could purchase a rotary vane pump, such as the Gast pump, but the cost is considerable (read: upwards of \$350.00 new). So the pump itself is probably going to be your major capital outlay if you can't find a used one. The DeVilbiss pump gets a little noisy as it pulls a vacuum. A good shop vac will pull 5" of mercury, but the DeVilbiss can pull 20" of mercury (that's 2/3 of normal atmospheric pressure), which amounts to about 116 lb of force with the 4" diameter PVC cylinder Bob had assembled.

To couple the PVC cylinder with the turned piece, Bob used closed cell foam. A computer mouse pad can be sacrificed for this purpose. (I've been told that neoprene is also a suitable gasket material.) Bob's setup is fashioned after an article that appeared in the Fall 2009 issue of Woodturning Design. Key to the assembly is a length of threaded lamp rod (available from Menards). Lamp rod is 0.39" OD. Take the threads off the tip, so it can fit inside a Sealed Bearing from Grainger (Part No. 1ZGD4), which is 3/8" ID and 7/8" OD. That bearing fits into a 7/8" hole that you drill with a Forstner bit into a home-made face plate, onto which you must mount a piece of 4" diameter PVC plastic drainage coupler. The fabricated face plate is then mounted into the jaws of a Oneway Stronghold chuck (see photo). Follow the photos as a guide to routing the tubing between the filter, vacuum pump, and shutoff valve.



The balance of the parts required can be purchased for a reasonable sum at Grainger and Menards. Fortunately for us, Bob and Phil were kind enough to assemble a list of everything needed. Here is their list:

You can view the parts list, along with current costs, by visiting [www.chicagowoodturners.com](http://www.chicagowoodturners.com) and clicking on "Prior Meetings Newsletters." The resulting page will give you a pair of hypertext links. Click on the one after "Powerpoint:" and get a comprehensive (printable) parts list, along with itemized costs.

Phil Brooks was prepared to present on the scientific rationale for vacuum chucking. But because the meeting was running late, Phil graciously agreed not to make us stay past 9:30PM. He plans to present a detailed explanation on how to build different styles of the actual chucks, including how to hold different shapes, and what works and what doesn't, at an upcoming demonstration.



Bob's demo system was purchased by the club and is available for checkout. Be Don McCloskey if interested.

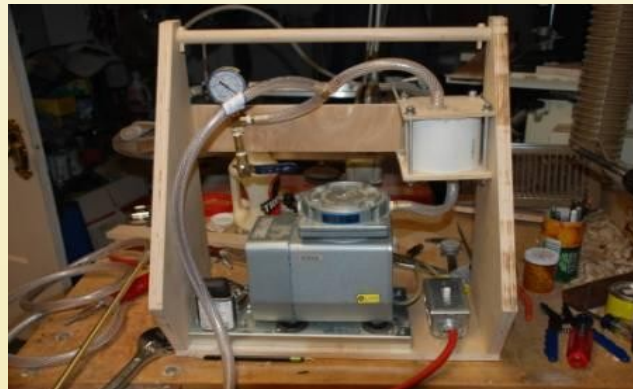
*(Continued on page 5)*

**Low Cost Vacuum Chucks**

**Paul Rosen**

*(Continued from page 4)*

<b>Items Required</b>	<b>Source/Part No.</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Used Vacuum Pump	Flea market or ??	\$35.00
Sealed Bearings (3/8" ID x 7/8" OD)	Grainger	\$ 8.00
Vacuum Gauge	Grainger (1ZGD4)	\$ 8.00
Lamp Rod (1/8" NTP x ?? Long)	Menards	\$ 5.00
Small Engine Air Filter	Menards (TAF115)	\$ 3.50
Clear Vinyl Hose (3/8" ID x 10" long)	Menards	\$ 5.00
Ball Valve or ??	Menards	\$ 2.00
Misc. Barbed Straight and T's	Menards	\$ 8.00
4" Plastic Drainage Couplers	Menards	\$ 5.00
Misc. Blocks Hardwood (closed cell)		
Misc. All Thread, Nuts, etc.		
Epoxy Glue/Construction Glue		
Closed Cell Pad (Mouse Pad) cut to fit		



Eric Mah gave the this assembly approach a try and the results look impressive.

**Members!**

Don't forget your nametag. It's worth one raffle ticket for BIG prizes.



**Don't Forget your Raffle Tickets at**

# CWT News

## September Mentoring Sessions

Marie Anderson

September's Saturday mentoring sessions were held in Gurnee at Phil Brooks' home and the Itasca session location was temporarily moved to Geneva at NORMAC for this month only. The session in Geneva was filled with smiles as the ladies and mentor Marie Anderson started with a very wet, green maple log and turned it to a nicely shaped rough turned smile bowl. (We deemed it the "Smilie" bowl because it has a lovely bark inclusion.) We intend to complete this bowl next month.



September Mentoring session at NORMAC

## October Mentoring Sessions

Marie Anderson

October Saturday mentoring session locations will be announced at the October meeting.

Prior to the October club meeting there will be not one (1) but two (2) mentoring sessions.

The first session will run 6-7pm and will be in the format that we have been following since January with a mentor (or 2) offering advice and suggestions as club members work "hands on" at the lathe on various techniques. This month will once again focus on spindle turning - remember, once you master spindle turning you have all the skills necessary to turn a bowl. After all, the outside of a bowl is a bead and the inside of the bowl is basically a cove. Darrell Rader has agreed to head up this session but as is often the case, he may recruit assistants.



Thomas demonstrates bowl turning during the August meeting's

The second mentoring session will be held from 6:30-7 prior to the October meeting. Don McCloskey, Paul Pycik and Marie Anderson will be on hand to guide you on how to complete a CWT grant application. We will give you pointers on what the panel will be looking for in a completed application. If you have an interest in getting a little help to further your woodturning education you should be taking advantage of this opportunity! We will walk you through the process.

As with anything, come prepared with your homework: What do you want to do? Take a class? Buy a book? Fund a new project? Whatever it is, determine your complete budget to do it (include travel, housing, cost of class, materials, etc.). Take time to consider: How will this benefit you? How will this benefit the club? Grant applications are available on the website and there will also be blank

## Itasca Library Gallery Show

Marie Anderson

The Itasca Library will be the venue for our next Gallery show. The show will be installed on October 1st and will run through the 31st. The show will include work from CWT members and there will be an accompanying demonstration on Saturday October 13th from 1-2:30pm at the Library. The library is located at 500 W. Irving Park Road, Itasca, IL 60143. Fall hours are M-Th 9:00 am - 9:00 pm; F-Sa 9:00 am - 5pm, and Su 1:00-5:00pm. There are 2 glass "wall" cases in the entry of the library. All library patrons will pass by our display and be exposed to our wonderful craft. Why not make this one of your activities this month? Get it on your calendar!!



# AAW "Photo's of the Week" in September



©Michael Gibson

Week of September 3  
Ambrosia Maple



Week of Sept 17  
Cherry



2012 © Steve Schweitzer

Week of September 10  
Citrus



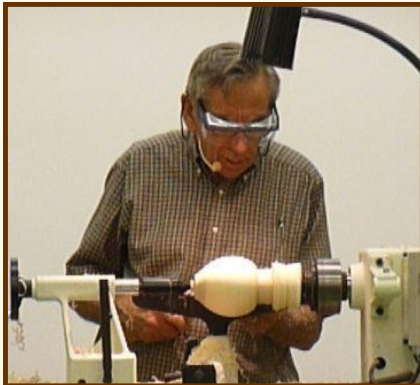
Week of Sept 24  
Olive

## Chicago Woodturners Board of Directors and Committee Chairs 2012

President,	Scott Barrett	847-562-9121	dr@bdental.net	46 Bridlewood Lane	Northbrook, IL 60062
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Tools & Equipment	Don McCloskey	847-420-6978	mccloskey@ameritech.net	2028 Gilboa Ave.	Zion, IL 60099
Set-up / Clean-up	Duane Painter	224-643-7696	duane.painter@comcast.net	25680 Lehmann blvd	Lake Villa, IL 60046
Audio & Video	Ian Kuhn	312-213-3772	ian@dmbroad.org	1510 Dale Dr.	Elgin, IL 60120
Educational Committee	Darrell Radar	815-648-2197	drader@clear.net	10703 Allendale Rd.,	Woodstock, IL 60098
Demonstrations	Rich Nye	630-406-1855	nyewoodturning@earthlink.net	40W257 Seavey Road	Batavia, IL 60510

# J Paul Fennel Saturday Demo

During the FREE Saturday demo on September 21, the 50+ attendees had the pleasure of watching Paul effortlessly create a hollow form in preparation for the afternoon session when everyone saw the tools and layout techniques for carving the intricate patterns he is so well known for.



## 2012 Meeting Agenda

Month	Gallery Review	Demonstration
January	Phil Brooks	Marty Knapp—Leather work on turning
February	Thomas Stegall	Andy Kuby—Galactic Arm Spirals
March	Jason Swanson	Ken Staggs—Spoon carved Goblets
April	Al Miotke	Larry Fabian—Coloring techniques
May	Presidents Challenge—Phil Brooks	Rich Nye—Carved Channels on turned vessels
June	Roger Basrak	Tom Waicekauskas—Photographing your work
July	Francisco Bauer	Donn Hamm—Stunning Hollow Ornaments
August	Darrell Rader	Bob Lenard and Phil Brooks—Making a great vacuum chuck system for \$75
September	Marie Anderson	Thomas Stegall—Thin wall turning
October	TBD	Mark Dwyer—Summary of Jimmy Clewes hands on Class.
November	TBD	TBD
December	none	Holiday Party



Member's Gallery



Phil Brooks & Eli Avisera  
Maple



Francisco Bauer

Andy Kuby

September Meeting



Bob Bergstrom  
Box Elder



Michael Kanis  
Acrylic



Francisco Bauer



Member's Gallery



Roy Lindley  
Cherry Burl, Kingwood

September Meeting



Bob Schultz



Tim Feeley  
Buckthorn



Francisco Bauer  
Cherry



Thomas Stegall  
Bradford Pear ,Walnut

Member's Gallery



Alan Carter  
Birdseye Maple



Bob Bergstrom  
Ash



Ken Staggs  
Box Elder

September Meeting



Marty Knapp  
Cherry



Steve Shannon  
Maple, Black Walnut



## Editor's Choice



Thomas Stegall



Francisco Bauer  
Cherry



Thomas Stegall  
Siberian Elm



Bob Barbiera  
Osage Orange, Bubinga



Scott Barrett  
English Boxwood

## Editor's Choice

A well designed and executed piece seems to draw my eyes to it naturally.

That is what happened when I looked at this piece by Francisco. A nice piece of cherry with a simple but well executed interior curve seems to compliment the more detailed exterior of the bowl. Your eyes are drawn to the perfectly executed scallops that add a nice touch.

Finally, the satin finish is perfect for this piece. It enhances the beauty of the wood without being overpowering as a more glossy finish often does.

I'll make my personal selection each month. You might agree or not, it's a democracy, but I'm the Editor.

Member's Gallery

September Meeting



Don Johnston  
Spalted Elm Burl



Charlie Scheffel  
Oak Maple



Larry Fabian  
Cherry



Tim Feeley  
Red Maple



Ken Staggs  
Jatoba

## For Sale, Trade, or Wanted

Contact the Editor to post your items

No items currently listed

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## Symposiums

3rd Segmenting Symposium, Lake Tahoe, CA Oct 18-21, 2012

To add events to the calendar, contact Al Miotke at  
847-297-4877 or [alan.miotke@chamberlain.com](mailto:alan.miotke@chamberlain.com)

Items of interest to woodturners for sale, wanted, trade or free are welcome.  
Non-commercial ads only, please. To place an ad, contact Al Miotke.  
847-297-4877 or [alan.miotke@chamberlain.com](mailto:alan.miotke@chamberlain.com)



**Monthly Meetings  
are held on the 2nd  
Tuesday of each  
month at:**

**Christian Liberty  
Academy  
502 W Euclid Ave  
Arlington Heights,  
IL  
7:00-10:00 PM**

**Please join us  
All are welcome.**

**Visit our website**  
*[chicagowoodturners.com](http://chicagowoodturners.com)*

**Membership in the  
Chicago Woodturners  
is available to anyone  
wishing to increase  
their turning skills  
through education,  
discussion and  
critique. Annual dues  
are \$25.00 for a single  
membership and  
\$35.00 for a family.  
Visit our website for  
an application or  
contact:**

**Julie Basrak  
Membership  
Chairman**

The Chicago Woodturners is  
a chapter of the American  
Association of Woodturners  
(AAW). Visit their website for  
more information.

[www.woodturner.org](http://www.woodturner.org)