

The Nutmeg

Newsletter of the Nutmeg Woodturners League
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www.nutmegwoodturners.com

NEXT MEETING

Monday, November 10, 2014

Program: Bird House Ornaments
By: Joe Larese

Zach Hadlock's Studio

39B Mill Plain Road (Routes 6 and 202)
Danbury, CT 06811

6 to 7 pm – Informal Gathering, Library Open

7:00 pm – Club Business

7:30 pm – Program

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Presidents Page Nov 2014

1. Tim Yoder Demo

- a. I am sorry we had to cancel the demo on short notices. The attack on the FAA forced the cancellation.
- b. We turned the day into a Learn & Turn at Zack's and had a lot of fun.

2. Waterbury Youth Services

- a. The summer program at WYS was a wonderful accomplishment.
- b. Please read Jay's article attached.

3. Demo for Nov. Meeting Bird House Ornaments – Joe Larese

- a. This is a fun project that makes a great Holiday Gift!

4. AAW 2015 Symposium Pittsburg, PA.

- a. The symposium will be in Pittsburg on June 25-28, 2015
- b. If you have never been to a symposium here's your chance

5. **Learn & Turn's**

- a. Zack is willing to open his shop for L&T's when ever required.
- b. Don Metz has a lot of rough turned bowls that we can finish for the AAW 2015 symposium.

6. **Show & Tell this Month**

- a. What have you turned lately?

7. **The Library**

- a. Do you have club videos and/or books?
- b. Please bring them to the meeting.

8. Club Raffle

- a. Tickets will be \$1.00 or 6 for \$5.00.

9. Shop Safety

- a. Please remember both bandsaw and lathe safety!
- b. **Safety is your first priority.**

“Keep a Sharp Edge”

Buster

Waterbury Youth Services

Guiding youth to discover their unique talents and potential for success – One Life at a Time

Wow, talk about a motto... This is the motto of the Waterbury Youth Services Systems Inc. (WYS). Originating in 1976 as a youth service bureau, this private, non-profit organization is committed to providing services that promote the overall well-being of children, youth and families who reside in Waterbury, Connecticut and the 11 surrounding towns. With many services targeting at risk youth, how have they achieved their great history of success?

“Our method is simple. Give our youth the tools they need to succeed; safety, belief in themselves, hope, encouragement, caring and opportunities. They can-and do-become productive citizens.”

How can a local chapter of AAW be a part of this very worthwhile effort? Easy, contact a local community youth organization and offer to demonstrate woodturning to their kids, and watch their eyes light up. That’s how the Nutmeg Woodturners League became a partner with WYS in teaching woodturning to some children that could use a break.

I met with Kelly Cronin, the then Executive Director of WYS, in January explaining that I was a member of Nutmeg Woodturners and we have demonstrated woodturning to youth groups including Scout troops, a local High School, The American School for the Deaf, and Freedom Pen sessions. I brought a few examples of my turning showing the types of things that could be turned on a mini lathe. Kelly immediately went through their facility gathering students and teachers and brought them into her office to see the turnings and gauge their interest; and boy where they interested. I was impressed with the youth’s demeanor as well as their questions. Unlike some of the “adults” I have demonstrated for, no one touched any of the items until I offered them to feel the finish and texture. Kelly not only asked for us to demonstrate, but asked if I would consider a longer term commitment to bring woodturning to WYS. At the next Nutmeg meeting I raised the opportunity to demonstrate at WYS and indicated that if a considerable amount of interest was raised by the youth, we could have an opportunity to partner with WYS to bring some encouragement and positive adult supervision to some children who really could use it. As expected, the club was eager to participate.

After two demos utilizing three personal mini lathes of club members and four demonstrators, it was time to make a commitment. Several officers of Nutmeg met with Kelly Cronin and she explained that their organization was planning a summer program in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families where they would provide several youth supervised instruction for 20 hours per week for 6 weeks. She asked if Nutmeg would participate in this effort by providing 8 hours of woodturning instruction per week and offered to establish a woodturning shop for us with the hope of continuing involvement after the summer program is completed.

Nutmeg Woodturners responded tremendously with 8 members signing up to teach in the summer program and several others assisting with project ideas and models. A shopping list was developed by Nutmeg, approved by Jackie Caulfield, Finance & Operations Director of WYS, and supplied by our friend John Matchak from his Norwalk, CT Woodcraft store.

A conference room at WYS was converted into a woodturning shop with three mini lathes, supporting tools and equipment including a sharpening station, drill press, and storage cubicles for the student's projects. The Nutmeg team developed a schedule of projects we would like to have the kids complete, and assigned ourselves to the 6 week schedule with one person identified the lead instructor for the day and two assistants. This pre-selection of projects allowed for the identification of prep work required and individuals volunteered to complete the tasks.

Now the fun began... We had nine teenage boys in the program and with the limited number of lathes we had to do some creative scheduling. We of course started out with introductions, safety and lathe nomenclature. Each week we assembled in the shop while the lead instructor reviewed basic safety and demonstrated the project for the day, or in some cases, a portion of the project. We then split the group into threes, with the first group each assigned to a lathe and the remaining kids did some prep work, finish work, or spent time with another component of the summer program, a woodworking class run by a staff member of WYS. The groups were rotated as each completed the assigned lathe work. By the end of the day, each boy had his personal time on a lathe and each instructor had a chance to work with three boys on a one-on-one basis. The first day started out with a rather quiet reserved atmosphere, but the group soon warmed up when they got to experience the fun of turning. By the second session it was obvious that both teacher and student were having a good time. Some of our scrupulous scheduling and project forecasts soon went out the window as we adapted to the students and the limitations of having only three lathes and nine students. We utilized AAW's Young Turners Program for project ideas and requirements for the students qualifying for the "Woodturning Student Certificate." The first project was a "Bead and Cove Stick," and then progressed to a honey dipper. Although most of the kid's didn't have a clue what a honey dipper was, you could see their pride in completing a project that contained beads, coves, tapers, and were nicely finished.

The goal of the effort was to give the kids an opportunity to build their confidence by successfully creating useful items that they are proud of. After the honey dipper we progressed to turning a pen, and then a small mahogany bowl. This selection of projects exposed the boys to both spindle turning and bowl turning.

The final project was to turn a “Battle Top.” This may seem like a less challenging project from what they had done before, but we used it as a fun way to close out the program. After each boy turned and decorated their battle top, they spent the off lathe time completing the hand launcher and ensuring the top spun freely in preparation for the class “Battle Top Challenge.” The class was divided and assigned to two conference tables. On signal, all the tops were spun and the last top spinning on each table had a spin off to identify the student winner. The student winner then had a spin off with two of the instructors. The results of the challenge proved that we did a good job of teaching them how to turn a top. The Nutmeg team that participated in this effort included; Alan Ganek, Buster Shaw, Don Metz, Jay Hockenberry, Jim Degen, Jim McNamara, and Steve Bader.

Whether they ever continue with woodturning or not, these kids know that they have the ability to learn new skills. They produced turned items that they were proud of. I was talking to Kelly Cronin after one of the sessions and she told me that during the day two students, each at separate times came into her office to show her the pens they made. Kelly stated that in the 20 years she had been running the program, nothing like that had ever happened before. Another indicator is peers of the students, involved in other activities at WYS, asked if we were going to run the program next year because they want to sign up. The kids had fun. The only thing I am not sure of is if they had more fun than the instructors.

Was it worthwhile? Let me again quote from WYS: ***“Our method is simple. Give our youth the tools they need to succeed; safety, belief in themselves, hope, encouragement, caring and opportunities. They can and do-become productive citizens.”***

As I write this article, we are starting an afterschool program. One day a week the Nutmeg Turners will be working with WYS students to learn to produce marketable items. We are hoping to be able to expand our efforts by acquiring additional lathes.