



# North Texas Woodworkers Association

See us at: [www.ntwa.org](http://www.ntwa.org)

Volume 23, Number 3

Newsletter

March 2014

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## Welcome

*President John Loftis*

## Guests

*Bill Harmon*

## Announcements

Bill Richards announced he has a new shop and offered to open it up for a tour.

John recognized Joe Polich as the new editor of the newsletter and Johan Gustavsson as the new webmaster.

Lynn Floyd added to his presentation last month that he has box dies and taps for 1/2", 3/4", 1" and 1 1/2" that are available for members' use. Just call him before dropping by his shop.

## Shop Questions

**Mike Hollander** asked if anyone knew if SketchUp will let you create a bill of materials to create a cut list. Steve Jenkins said it could for sheet goods. Joe Polich suggested a program he uses called Cut List. It comes in a number of versions and allows you to enter all your materials, sheet goods as well as lumber and will generate cutting diagrams from the parts list you enter for your project.

**Mike** also asked about storing lumber – horizontally or vertically. The general consensus was it depended

on the amount of room you have and the length of your pieces. Either way is acceptable.

**Lynn Floyd** asked if anyone knew of any sources for resorcinol glue. He's working on a project that will spend some time underwater. Steve Jenkins suggested plastic resin glue and stated it has a 1 year shelf life. Lynn asked if the brown glue he mixes is waterproof. Steve Jenkins confirmed it is.

**Sidney Futrell** made an Arrow of Light display for a local Boy Scout troop that he sprayed with clear shellac. The troop wants it darker and he's wondering if he can just apply a different top coat to darken it. The consensus of the club was that if he used dewaxed shellac, then yes.

**Bill Harmon** has a rosewood table he'd like to put a more durable finish on. He brushed on shellac and ended up with brush strokes. John Loftis said shellac is probably the worst finish he can use for a dining room table as it has very little resistance to spills, especially anything with alcohol in it. He suggested using a General Finish product called Enduro-var and said it is the favorite finish of Dan Chenaut at Rockler. But... this product has a tendency to yellow over time.



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## **Officer Elections**

Elections for 2014 offices was conducted by Vice President Steve Yaunch. The slate was presented at the February, 2014 meeting.

A motion was made by Bill Bush, seconded by Wendell Brough, to accept the nominations as presented.

All votes were in favor.

Nominated are:

President:	John Loftis
Vice President:	Steve Yaunch
Treasurer:	Gary Bobenhausen
Secretary:	Joe Polich
Website:	Johan Gustavsson
Membership:	Ken Clayton
Newsletter:	Joe Polich
Programs:	Open
Raffles:	Johan Gustavsson
Shows:	G.T. Robinson

## **Show & Tell**

Bill Bush: Intarsia project for his grandkids made from picture of favorite dog.

Bill Jacobs: Scroll sawn Christmas ornaments. He said he's made 85 so far and finishes them with a coat of shellac followed by a coat of poly.

The \$10 show & tell drawing was won by Bill Bush.

## **Raffle**

Jim Palanco: Pittsburgh 25' tape measure & 6: dial gauge

Bill Jacobs: 2 roller stands donated by Mike Hollander

Joe Polich: 5 piece Irwin clamp set

Chris Hathaway: 6" Inca Rule marking protractor

Bill Bush: Dewalt KS-2 drill set donated by Mike Hollander

Members were reminded that all raffle tickets go into a pool for a big prize at the July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic. The prize for this year's July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic raffle will be a \$400 Rockler gift certificate.

## **Program – Starting Your Own Woodworking Business**

President John Loftis asked Lynn Floyd, Steve Jenkins, Bill Richardson and Pete Yavner to give some of their insights into what how they got started in their woodworking based businesses and what it takes to open and run a business.

**Lynn Floyd** said he grew up in construction and decided to branch off into a cabinet building business of his own 36 years ago. At the time he started, there were 6 cabinet ships in his area. Five of those failed and he feels the common reason they failed was due to a lack of tools.

His 1<sup>st</sup> five years involved long hours and he decided to ask for some help



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from the SBA on how to improve his business.

The SBA provided 2 advisors, both of whom came to the same conclusion that Lynn success was due to the fact that he was doing the work of 3-4 people. They recommended that he raise his prices which he did. The result was he didn't lose very many customers and he worked less, but made more money. Later he switched to mill work starting with doors.

Lynn emphasized that good equipment pays for itself and if you find you keep needing a tool you don't have, then you've already paid for it in the time wasted in inefficiencies.

He also stressed the importance to have insurance to cover both the business and employees.

**Steve Jenkins** started as a serious hobbyist for something to do when he was off cycle as a commercial diver in New Orleans. He began working part time in a local cabinet shop. The cabinet shop owner decided to move to Dallas in 1982 and offered to let Steve buy into the business if he made the move with him. That business became the Wood Gallery.

As the Wood Gallery business evolved into mostly furniture and architectural panels, Steve decided to open his own cabinet and furniture shop in 1992.

Steve builds mostly tables, beds and other types of furniture along with cabinets. He works with designers as much as he can to avoid the uncertainties of the general public in not knowing exactly what they want.

His preference is to work by himself to avoid having to manage people along with the business.

Steve also recommends to those contemplating opening their own business to not quit their day job until they consistently have a 6 month back log. He says to require a 50% deposit to get started and to require the balance on delivery. He also says to be cautious about contractors. They pay slow and don't want to pay until the full job they are working on is completed and they get paid.

Steve also invited anyone who would like to tour his shop to drop by.

**Bill Richardson** is a retired Dallas fireman and got his start with a fellow firefighter who had a cabinet shop as a side business during his off days. They built the cabinets on-site.

Bill has also done remodeling, roofing, painting and general construction. For the last three years Bill has built up his base of designers and has built up the business enough to move from his garage into a 2400 sq. ft. commercial shop.



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Bill says you need to focus on your work and to charge appropriately. The hardest thing for him to learn was to not be afraid to charge the right price so he could make a profit. He says you do that by understanding your processes to determine the correct hourly charges to your quote.

**Pete Yavner** says he is more of a serious hobbyist than a commercial woodworker. He likes to make kitchen and entertainment items like cutting boards, rolling pins, pepper mills, wine stoppers and similar items. He uses exotic woods and only sells on consignment. Almost everything he makes is unique and he works when he wants.

He selects high-end retail shops to place his consignments and either they call him when they need something or he calls them periodically when he's getting ready to make certain items.

## Q&A

John Loftis asked, "What are the biggest changes in customer desires?"

Lynn Floyd says the biggest change for him was moving away from entry level jobs to high-end homes where the customer is willing to pay.

Bill Richardson says the big cabinet shops are overloaded because they are reluctant to hire more people. As

a result, they don't want to do small jobs which are going to the smaller shops such as his.

Steve Jenkins says the changing trends in home electronics has led to less large entertainment centers covering a wall to low credenza type cabinets to hide the electronics used with wall mounted TVs. He also sees designer work slowing because their clients want to "touch and feel" before committing to buying.

Steve also stated that you must have solid reasons for charging higher prices for your work when people make comparisons to lower cost cabinets at the big box stores.

Other comments from club members: Keith Johnson: if you call in advisors, listen to them!

Wendell Brough: You need a good business plan for startup and you must effectively establish a value for your work and price it accordingly.

Lynn Floyd: Use one year of cost data to come up with a realistic cost/hour.

Bob Moore: As an insurance agent, Bob wanted everyone to be aware that most home owner's policies won't cover items used in a business unless you get an endorsement (only available with some carriers). Home owner policies cover injuries to guests, but not yourself if it's a business.

Bill Richardson: Bill says you need to do a lot of research and even with that you'll probably come up with some holes. He suggested calling your insurance carrier for guidelines, your city for permitting guidelines, the utilities, etc. Then you need to factor all this into your overhead.

**Next club meeting:**  
**Apr. 15th, 2014**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**The Party Barn**



John said he gets most of his cutting board lumber from a distributor in Pennsylvania who understands his needs and provides cherry, walnut and maple. Finding good walnut locally is especially difficult.

John was able to increase his cutting board production dramatically in his new location by adding a glue station with a pneumatic press to flatten the boards during glue up. The \$5000 station has nearly paid for itself in less than four months.



## Shop Tour – Lone Star Artisans

The club toured John Loftis' new shop on Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. John moved into the commercial location in December from the garage at his home. John welcomed everyone with coffee and kolaches.

John's desire was to build custom furniture, but found the work to be very cyclical and difficult to create a steady income flow. He decided to supplement the work with high-end cutting boards which now makes up the majority of his business today.



*Photos by Ken Clayton*

**Thank you  
John!**