

NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN WOODTURNERS

## newsletter

### Volume 7, Number 10, October, 2023

We had an estimated 23 members in the room. Norm Dill and Chuck Vernon joined us by Zoom. We also had 3 students join us from the Construction Trades Class, Thomas Russell, Nick Muorn (sp?), and Kaleb Schaub. (Photo by Steve Alguire)



**Next Meeting: November 11, 8:30 for coffee and donuts. Career Tech Center Shop or Online.**

**The November demonstration will be an IRD by Carl Jacobson, in appreciation of our order of bottle stopper kits.**

The December meeting will feature Pete Meyer demonstrating an inside out Christmas ornament. We will also have a club Christmas ornament challenge. Bragging rights only.

### Upcoming events: From the AAW Events Page –

Please go to <https://woodturner.org> for more information and to register for sponsored events.

**October 28, 2-5:30pm Eastern – Scott Hampton, The Holiday Series, Part Two: Woodturning Heirloom Globe Ornaments – Advanced Design and Techniques.**  
Cost is \$18.00  
Register on the AAW Events Page.

**October 29, 2:00pm Eastern – Pat Carroll's Meet the Woodturner.**  
**This featuring Lupe Neilsen.** Go to <https://patcarrollwoodturning.com>, and sign up under Meet the Woodturner.

**November 4, 1-4pm Eastern – Cindy Drozda – Tapered Triangle Box**  
An elegant, Oriental-style Box, with gold accents. It's not round, but is all turned on the lathe!  
All skill levels  
Cost \$20.00  
Register on the AAW Events Page.

**November 8 – 7-9:30pm Eastern – Live with Lyle – Christmas Ornament Part 2 of 2, Finial Techniques.**  
Comprehensive discussion/demonstration of finial design and techniques.  
All skill levels

Cost @14.95  
Register on the AAW Events Page.

**November 2-3 – Virginia Woodturning Symposium**, ExpoCenter, Fishersville, Virginia.  
<https://www.virginiawoodturners.com/>

**November 3-5 – North Carolina Woodturning Symposium**, Greensboro Coliseum, Greensboro, NC  
<https://www.ncwts.com/>

**December 2 – 3-5:30pm Eastern – Live with Lyle – Nut Bowl Gift**  
From blank to finished product.  
Beginner Skill Level  
Cost \$14.95  
Register on the AAW Events Page.

**February 15-18, 2024**  
**Florida Woodturning Symposium**  
RP Funding Center, Lakeland, FL

If you are an AAW member of affiliate member, watch your email for the weekly “Toolbox E-Newsletter: and the bimonthly “Keep Turning E-Newsletter. Or go to the AAW website, Resources Page [www.woodturner.org](http://www.woodturner.org) **If there are other events, they will be listed there.**

And don't miss the AAW Member-Moderated Forum on the same page. This page also guides you to the other resources, including all issues of American Woodturner magazine, Woodturning Fundamentals and others.

**Bring Back Raffle – Dale Kukla** won a wonderful threaded box by August winner, Pete Meyer.



## **Business Meeting**

15 members took part in the Hands-on training with Matt Monaco.

**Christmas Party** – Jim Scarsella and his spouse Flavia will be hosting a Pot Luck meal, with a turned, wrapped gift exchange for our spouses or partners on Sunday, **December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 2 to 5pm. Please email Gary Perkins ([garydperkins@gmail.com](mailto:garydperkins@gmail.com)) if you are coming. Include who will be coming with you, and what dish you will be contributing to the pot luck.** We need it all, meat, casseroles, vegetables, vegetable platters, potato/pasta dishes, deserts. It can also be paper products (plates, cups, plastic ware, etc.) The club will provide lemonade and coffee, and rent tables and chairs if needed. BYO Drinks, but keep it soft to beer or wine please. As an added bonus, Jim will also be taking our female guests on a tour of his shop. We might even be allowed to tag along.

For the December meeting, we will have a Christmas Ornament Challenge at the Show and Share time. Members will vote for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>, place bragging rights.

We need club demonstrators for the coming year. Everyone in the club has the knowledge and ability to put on a demonstration for the club. As Joe Breech said, you will never find a more supportive bunch of people to demonstrate in front of, and I agree. Contact any of our Board members and volunteer a little time.

Club Swag as Gary calls it – Marv Slee is taking orders for club hats, T-shirts (long and short sleeve), or sweat shirts. See or email Marv ([marv1253@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marv1253@sbcglobal.net)) to put in an order. Marv will be putting in order in the near future.

**Wig Stands** – Dennis Ferguson is our coordinator, and says that we are getting a bit low on our inventory. To correct this, we need you turners to turn some. If you need the plans for a standard wig stand, please contact Dennis at ([dennis45th@gmail.com](mailto:dennis45th@gmail.com)) and he will email it back to you.

Also, Pete Meyer has volunteered a few days at his shop for a few turners to get together and turn wig stands. He will let us know what dates are available. He has a wonderful American Beauty Lathe, and also is keeping the 2 club mini lathes for us. So let Pete know if you are interested in taking part. [hammergrips@gmail.com](mailto:hammergrips@gmail.com)

Steve Bujalski shared that his wife is a teacher at the Northern Michigan Christian Academy, and her middle school students are doing an art project of embellishing wig stands. The club will look into getting some to her. Just turned and sealed, not finished. Contact Gary ([garydperkins@gmail.com](mailto:garydperkins@gmail.com)) if you are interested.

**Library Display – take down**

We have a wonderful display of our turnings in the Traverse City Library for the month of October. 17 club members brought in pieces to display, and as usual, the arrangement of the cases resulted in just WOW. Now we need to **take it down**. We will do that on **Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM.**



**So, if you haven't seen this in person, you have until Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>.** And don't miss the smaller display in the Atrium, and Pete's video, "Turning a Bowl"

**Left Hand Charlie's**



On September 30<sup>th</sup>, our club held an outdoor demonstration from noon to 6 at the invitation of Left Hand Charlie's in the Commons in Traverse City. It was a great day for turning, and we had our 2 club lathes going pretty much the whole time. And we even sold some bottle stoppers to benefit the club. That's Marv at our recently acquired jet midi on one of the 2 lathe stands that he made for the club.

**Treasury Report** – Jan reported to the Board that, with all bills paid, our club balance is \$3,796.73.

Jan also wants club members to know that he will begin collecting 2024 dues at the November meeting. He also proposed in the July Board meeting, and the Board accepted, to institute a membership information form. This form is for new **and existing** members to submit to Jan with dues payment. Its intent is to help us keep membership information up-to-date. The form is also for students seeking membership in our club, and providing for parental authorization. *Jan is also asking that Life and Honorary Life members fill out the this form, **without attaching dues.***

The form will be an additional attachment to the email that you receive with this newsletter. **Jan asks that you print it out and return it with your 2024 dues payment.**

**Student Mentoring** – September started a new school year, and it also started another year of paying our meeting rent by introducing/mentoring students of the Construction Trades Program to woodturning. Our coordinator, Ken Hunter would very much like to have some more flexibility in scheduling, so we need more of you to step up in this school year. Give Ken a call (**231-499-9474**) to get more information, and get in the rotation.

**Board of Directors – Your Board of Directors for 2024 are:**

Gary Perkins - 231-640-0377

Pete Meyer - 231-499-7935

Jan Bachman - 734-730-7038

Kris Roberts - 701-400-9160

Dennis Ferguson - 231-492-6475

Kieran Goodman - 812-298-5747

Marv Slee - 231-499-1719

Chuck McLaughlin - 231-668-1901

Jim Scarsella - 313-220-5077

Our Board members are here to serve the club. If you have a need, concern, or suggestion, please get in touch with one of us. The Board meets the first Thursday of

the month at 7:00pm virtually by Zoom. All members are welcome to attend by contacting me, your secretary, before a meeting so I can send you the Zoom invitation.

**For Sale:**

**Supplies: CA Glue and Anchor Seal Wood Sealer. CA Glue – Glue will be sold at meetings. See Jan.**

**We will not be ordering another 55 gallon drum of Anchor Seal. We will be on our own. The Anchor Seal website, <https://uccoatings.com/shop/product/anchorseal/> lists their product for sale either online, or the nearest retailer, which is Woodcraft of Grand Rapids. It is offered in sizes quart, gallon, or 5 gallon. Joe suggests that you could get a 5 gallon pail of it and share it out with others. That option is by far the least expensive on a per gallon basis.**

**For Sale or Wanted:**

**If there is something you are looking for, or want to sell, send an email or text to me and it will be sent out to the club.**

**October Meeting Gremlins**

For those of you who were at, or Zoomed into the meeting this month, you know that the Gremlins once again snuck in to our media equipment. We had 2 major problems and some minor ones. 1) We couldn't get the speakers in the room working, which wasn't that much of a problem, as most of us have good voices that project well, and our crowd wasn't large. The sound started out fine to the Zoom participants, however. 2) One of our camcorders decided it didn't want to work. Trying to tweak on the fly caused at least a couple more problems, with Zoom losing sound too for a while. We came up with a work around with a small web camera that Jim McKimmy has given to the club. Trouble shooting and repairs are underway.

**Show and Share**

**Pete Meyer** – Hands-on session Calabash bowl. Bowl of black locust with



sunflower embellishment. Sculptural piece from firewood with curly grain (in process). Black locust threaded box (no photo).



**Marv Slee** – 3 bowls of beech with danish oil, and another bowl from the hands-on finished with wipe on poly. Sorry, only got this photo.



**Vern Steinfort** – Two hollow form vessels of cherry, one with bark inclusion on the side. Both in the drying process, and with wipe on poly. Large natural edge maple bowl.



**Joe Breech** – Two bowls, one with in-swept, hilighted rim, and one natural edged bowl. Sorry Joe, didn't catch what the woods were.



**Kieran Goodman**– A series of pens. An Egg-o-scope.



And a resin vase with piecones on a turned base. Kieran also brought in a



couple of small bowls of larch (no photos), and wondered if any of us were familiar with the wood. I'm not sure anyone was.

**Steve Bujalski** – Two wig stands, one with two captured rings.



**Ty Gilliland** - A Christmas ornament that resulted from practicing finials and captured rings with the skew. Wonderful outcome, I don't care what the chipmunk thought.



Ty also showed us two Halloween



bowl/platters of Poplar. One with resin and oak insets (dyed with vinegar and steel wool). The other with pine cone



insets. He rough turned the blanks, cutting a deep wide channel for the resin and inserts, then final turned both sides so the resin areas are translucent. All around, an excellent showing, Ty.

**Chuck McLaughlin** – Continuing on the resin theme, Chuck proudly showed us two Resin vases. One with pine cones and three colors of resin with integral wood base. The second, which I



have no better photo, was the resin poured around pieces of maple burl. Colors were poured one at a time. Beautiful pieces, Chuck

**Dale Kukla** – Showed us a large lidded urn. The wood is cherry, and he finished it with Danish Oil.



**Mark Andrus** – In-swept rim bowl with bead and texturing around the rim. Is it maple or cherry? And he almost got away without a picture.



**Gary Perkins** – Small threaded boxes.

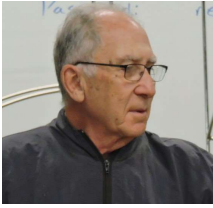


On the right is a threaded purple heart box. On the left is an olive box with purple heart inlay, and a shot gun shell brass face. Gary also showed us a threaded sphere box.



**Norm Dill** – I heard oohs & aahs from the turners in the room, watching the screens, but unfortunately, nothing came through on the recording. I'll try to get Norm to send me photos for next month. However, Norm tells me that the 2 bowls were wood from a plum tree.

## Club Demonstration SPHERES – With Rich Foa and Gary Perkins



Rich and Gary put on a two part demonstration. Rich used a traditional (to us) method of turning a sphere, and Gary showed us a new jig that does the hard, detailed work for you. Well, most of it.

So, all of you who were there know that the gremlins were back in the system, and while we evicted most of them before Rich and Gary demoed, my patience was shot, and I pretty much just sat behind the computer and switched cameras back and forth. So, not too many photos, and I may even be a little shy on relating what they told us. On the other hand, a couple of things might slip in that Rich didn't mention, as I remember when we had the late Dick Gerrard here doing Sphereology in 2016. Do you?

One of the things that I really liked about Rich's demonstration is that he talked right at the start about why we would want to turn a sphere. Just to make a sphere to roll off a shelf? How many other uses can a solid sphere be used for? He also talked about using dry wood for sphere turning, whether from a solid piece of wood, or from a glue up.

And he related that if you want to turn from green wood, expect warping and cracking unless you are really careful with wood selection and drying after turning, although you might still get cracks. Oh, and he warned us about using a micro-wave oven to dry the green sphere quickly, and I can vouch for his precaution, as I charred out a rough turned bowl, smoke and embers, a few years ago. So if you use that method, only a

minute or so at a time, followed by **complete** cooling. The burning starts in the middle of the piece, not the outside.

The first thing that Rich showed us and talked about is his little black table, designed to fit loosely over the banjo, to allow you to better see the profile you are turning than you would if you have a somewhat cluttered background. The table must be high enough, and wide enough, to let the banjo move freely underneath it, while also being large enough to allow you to look down on your work against the background of the table to better see the profile you are generating.

He also talked about making a half circle pattern to check the profile, and to help you see if you are getting off profile.

Rich chose a piece of raw wood (maple), somewhat air dried, and solid. Mounted between centers. Balance/center it approximately and turn it round to a uniform cylinder, and to the diameter (plus a hair) he wanted the sphere to be. Having arrived at that, he measures the diameter with a caliper, marks the length on the cylinder, finds the



center and marks that too.

Rich next marked 2 points around the center line, 180° apart, making them distinct (deep) enough to find later if the center line has been turned away. These will be the new drive access points when the form is rotated. How you determine 180° apart is up to you. Use an indexing wheel, or as Rich does, use a flexible measuring tape, like a seamstress' tape.

Using a parting tool, he reduces the size of the ends of the blank to remove as much waste wood as he safely can. Rich doesn't worry about leaving enough for a mounting tenon, as all turning is going to be done between centers.

Now begins the shaping of the sphere, in this axis. As Rich says, "just turn a big bead". He uses a bowl gouge. Remember that little black table? He cleaned that off so he could see the profile he was making. As he got closer to the profile he wants, he reduces the size of the ends further, both to help in refining the profile, and to make it easier to turn away these ends when the piece is rotated. In fact, when he took it piece off the lathe, he used a saw to reduce the size of the ends even more.

It's time to change to the next axis that he marked around the center line. Rich uses a safety drive now, and a cup center in the tail stock. This minimizes what you need to deal with at the end of the project. Turning now with light cuts, Rich refined the shape, and by watching the far side of the piece, or the shadow cast on the black table, he could see how closely he was approaching his spherical shape.



The next step is to rotate the spherical shape again to clean up the drive axis points. Can't use the safety drive and the cup center now, as it will leave more marks. So Rich reached for his "rubber chucky" drive and live

center. If you don't have a set, you can make both from a soft wood. I will have a gauge at the next meeting to show you the simple way to turn a #2 Morse Taper for the drive. Then you turn a cup to fit the curve of your sphere in the other end, roughing it up so you get enough friction to drive. Turn the same cup for the live center, but the mounting for the tail stock needs to fit into, or onto your live center.

You really need to pay attention when mounting your sphere so you have the axis aligned so you don't get off centered. Rich then used shear scraping or scraping cuts to take off the previous tool and axis mark.



Then change the axis slightly and do it again. As many times as you need to achieve the finished sphere you want. Remember, at each of these axis rotations, you are just taking off the high points and tool marks, not changing the diameter. Sanding can be done at each rotation as well.

Rich then talked about what to do with the sphere. Use it as a sphere (as in a croquet set), or put the sphere back in the rubber chuckies and embellish with v-cuts or any other way you would like.

### **Gary's Sphere Jig**

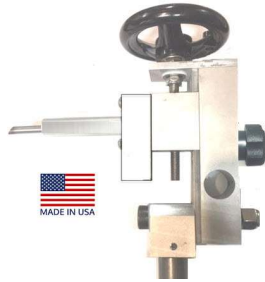
Gary started out with a very good caveat. Using a jig to turn a sphere still requires the proper preparation, the same as Rich did. And, as he got into his demo, it was clear that still more planning preparation is required during jig set up. The jig does,



however make the turning of the sphere much more precise, with less effort in the actual tool work.

So first, Gary's jig comes from Chefware Kits, [www.chefwarekits.com](http://www.chefwarekits.com).

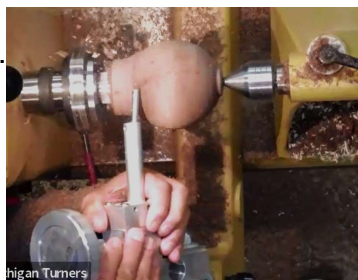
There is some set up needed before you mount up your blank. The jig comes with, (I think), a tool rest post collar. It is necessary to set up and lock in the height of the jig cutter above the banjo. To do this, there are marks on the jig that can, if your banjo allows, be mated with the drive center and live center axis. Gary had to eyeball it for the PowerMatic. Lock in the post collar securely, and remove the whole jig assembly from the lathe.



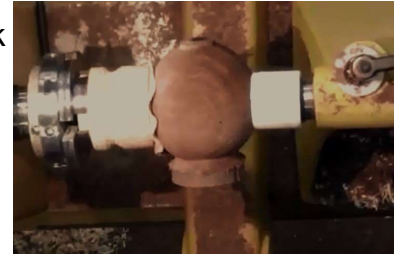
So, let's jump in to turning. First, you still have to start with a cylinder turned to a little larger than the diameter of the sphere you want to end with, and as in Rich's method, mark the center line (in jig parlance, the equator). Here is where the method changes slightly.

You next mark lines on each side of the equator line  $\frac{1}{2}$  the distance to the end of your anticipated sphere (yes, on the cylinder). Now you turn off both ends as much as possible at a  $45^\circ$  angle back to the new lines, just to remove wood, and then gently smooth out (trim off) the line, back toward, but not erasing the equator line.

Now, set your jig in the banjo again, and using the adjustment wheel, in the head of the jig, set the cutter just touching the equator line. Start the lathe, and lean the jig over each way, taking the first cuts. Back to the equator, and set



the cutter  $\frac{1}{8}$ " or less deeper (depending on the wood), and do it again, repeating until your sphere is what you want along this axis. Next, remove the jig, put in your rubber chuckys or, as Gary does, your home made sphere chucks. Gary's are turned from wood, and he places a patch of leather between the drive head chuck and the work piece, both for traction, and to keep from burning a chuck ring into your work.



Now, we are right back to the same thing that Rich does next, turning off the axis nubs. In Gary's case, because he was using a concentric chuck, one nub was much larger, and he had to be careful, using small cuts. When he got the nubs mostly off, he switched to shear scraping to remove tool marks and refine the shape. Remember, with those nubs on, he was turning a lot of "air" wood, even when he began shear scraping. The mounted axis is now the one he turned with the jig, so it is "perfectly" shaped. The turning now is to meld the original axis to the jig's shaping.

With that done, it is right back to what Rich talked about. Change the axis as many times as need, shear scraping or scraping to get to your perfect sphere. Then sand the same way, or out of the lathe and by hand.



One other thing that Gary mentioned. In his show and share, he showed a threaded sphere box he used the jig for. I didn't completely understand his full method, but did pick up

that to maintain the sphere shape, and not make it a clam shell, you have to add about a half inch for the thread cutting at the equator on your first axis (cylinder). I missed, even in the recording, how he then used the jig to cut the sphere on that axis. Well, another day when we get him to come back to do a threaded sphere box from start to finish.



**Respectfully Submitted,**  
Kris Roberts, Secretary