

The Chip Pile



The Newsletter of the Central Texas Woodturners Association

Austin, Texas

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

May Meeting May 21, 2013

Janice Levy, *Finals and Beyond*

7:00 - 9:00 PM

American YouthWorks - Austin, Texas

1901 East SH 71

(about 1/4 mile east of I-35 on south side of SH 71)

June First Saturday

Tool Exchange

June 1

Jim Brinkman's Shop

President's Shop

I'm playing hooky from both the May First Saturday and the Intermediate Turning Classes. When it comes to choosing between wood turners and my five year old grand daughter, you can guess which will win. I really needed this vacation. I overcommitted myself this year and haven't had this many things on my plate at one time since I retired. When I really need to get away and calm myself, nothing works better than a long road trip on the two-lane back roads through the American west.

Among my favorite driving roads are those through the mountains of New Mexico. The scenery is beautiful. There are certainly more spectacular drives and I have driven many of them, but for calm scenic beauty and pure relaxation there is nothing more relaxing than cruising through these mountains with almost no traffic and cool jazz playing on my iPod. In one 200 mile stretch from north of Silver City almost to Gallup, I saw only nine other vehicles total. It's too bad these roads are so far away.

Everyone should line up to thank Jim Spano for the considerable effort he has put into organizing these classes, finding the instructors, wrangling the students, and seeing that everything is order. It is an effort way and beyond what any of us could ask of him.

Continuing thanks as well to Pat and Clyde Little for continuing to open their shop to the invasion of students, teachers, and assistants. These classes wouldn't be possible without their excellent, large facility. Thanks finally, to the instructors and assistants who share their expertise with our less experienced members. We will all be expecting to see at least one new piece at Show and Tell from each of our newly improved intermediate turners.

It is time to start thinking about your summer and making plans to attend the SouthWest Association of Turners (SWAT) woodturning symposium in Waco in late August. If you have been turning for awhile, you already know what a big event this is. There will be over 800 woodturners in attendance, many talented demonstrators, a fantastic Instant Gallery, and a big trade show with all the latest lathes, tools, and other toys for woodturners. It is the second largest woodturning symposium in the world, and by far the least expensive large symposium and it is only 100 miles up the road. You can get all the information on the symposium on the website at www.swaturners.org. If you register by July 25, you can save \$30. So make your plans, get yourself registered, and plan to participate in this outstanding event.

Speaking of SWAT, don't forget the

Beads of Courage project, to make boxes for kids undergoing difficult treatment for serious health problems like cancer. Details on the sizes of the boxes, etc., are also on www.swaturners.org. A number of us picked up Beads of Courage beads from Johnny Tolly to incorporate into our boxes. We will plan to have a Beads of Courage box President's Challenge for our July CTWA Meeting and hope to have a nice selection of boxes representing our club at the Symposium.

Now, I have to go play Scrabble Jr. with Lydia, then read her a couple of books.

See you at the meeting on May 21.

Charlie Kay

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Demonstration April 2013

Tom Enloe Long Stemmed Techniques

Tom Enloe, from the Gulf Coast Woodturners Association in Houston travelled up to Austin and gave us a terrific demonstration on turning long stemmed goblets. He also showed us an impressive fishing pole he turned using the same techniques.



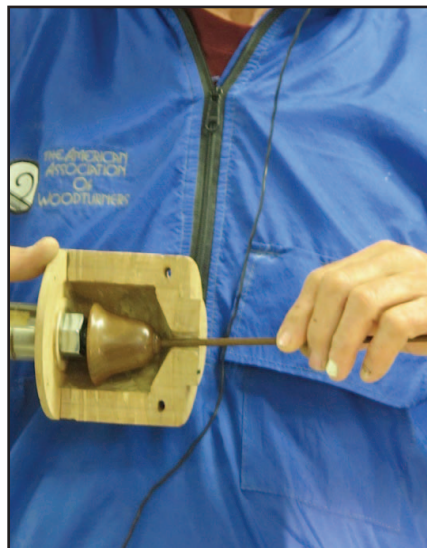
First, Tom turns the cup portion of the goblet. He holds the piece of wood square in the tenon. He sands and fin-



ishes the cup, as well as the first part of the stem.



Tom has created what I will term as a “spindle puller jig.” The idea behind Tom’s jig is the cup of the goblet goes into a holder that allows the tail stock to “pull” the cup of the goblet. What makes this design interesting is the technique eliminates the bow that can occur when the pressure is pushed from the tail stock into the chuck.



By pulling the tail stock, the cup of the goblet is secured via the chuck and the tail stock jig. This allows the wood to remain taut while turning the stem down, thus preventing the bow from the pressure of pushing the tail stock into the head.

Tom indicated that the jig would make a sound—indicating adjustments need to be made to the pressure on the goblet. Of course in demonstrations, it



never works that way, so Tom had no sound while trimming down the goblet to a narrow diameter.

It is always so much fun to see a new technique and witness a new demonstrator. CTWA is most appreciative of Tom driving up to Austin to share his talents and ideas. Stacey Hager did a great job of getting a wonderful wood



turner for this demonstration. I’m hoping Tom will demonstrate making the jig at SWAT!

Photos

Photographs for this month’s **Chip Pile** were provided by **Charles Kay & Drew Shelton**. If you have digital photos that you would like to have considered for use in the newsletter. Send them to the Editor at hildac@mac.com.

Upcoming Demo's & Classes

Intermediate class May 11th & 12th:

May 11 Bowl Instruction by Craig Timmerman

May 12 Box Instruction, leader: Stacey Hager.

Goblets will NOT be done at this time.

May Demonstrator Janice Levi

The title of the presentation is "Just Finials."

All too often a turner creates a beautiful box or Christmas ornament from exotic wood or highly figured native wood, then adds a finial top or icicle that distracts from the turning, rather than complementing it. This demonstration is aimed at helping turners select a style of finial that will aesthetically enhance their beautiful wood box or ornament. We will look at silhouette cut-outs of paper finials, boxes and ornaments and select those finial designs that seem to be most pleasing in appearance. There will be a brief discussion of proportion and the Golden Mean. We will also discuss wood color, density, and grain to consider when choosing finial material. And, of course, not all finials must be made of wood. Sometimes selecting Corian or acrylic can result in a beautiful finial that complements the overall design. There will also be some tips on successfully turning a delicate finial.

Here are only a few of Janice's creations:



June Demonstrator: Tool Sharpening Equipment, Technique and Specifications Panel

Stacey has lined up an impressive group of demonstrators to discuss tool sharpening.

Presenters:

Orlando Banos - Grinders and wheels.

Len Brissette - Tool shapes and specifications.

Jim Spano - Sharpening with a sander.

Craig Timmerman - Sharpening by hand and with jigs.

July Demonstrator: Craig Timmerman, Turning a Perfect Sphere (the way the old masters did it)

Report from Beginner's Class

Our latest Beginners Turning Classes took place on April 6 & 7 at **Clyde and Pat Little's** shop on Lake Travis. We had eight students: **Rick Compton, Suzi Parker, Dean Ginther, Bea Ofer, Rick Greenfield, Vaden Mohrman, Jim Howe, and Dwight Schaeper.** **Len Brissette** demonstrated bowl turning on Saturday, and **Charlie Kay** demonstrated box turning on Sunday. The rest of the instructors were: **Jim Brinkman, Craig Timmerman, Bob Duncan, Ed Roberts, Jim Spano, Jerry Whiteaker, and Clyde Little.** Both sessions started off with sharpening reviews. While not everyone finished their turning on either day, you could see them learning and improving as they went along. The instructors are learning as well. That is why we sharpened tools for the Intermediate Classes at the May First Saturday, to be sure that we don't use teaching and turning time sharpening.

Thanks to Pat and Clyde for again sharing their shop and their home, to Pat for picking up and distributing our meals and to Clyde and his brother in Llano for cutting and blocking up the wet mesquite for the bowls.

Now, we expect to see some turned pieces from these students at the May meeting Show and Tell.

—Charlie Kay

Random Ruminations:

“A Crooked Path”

BY

Charles Kay

Inspiration comes from unlikely places and when you least expect it. As I was driving from doing some errands this afternoon, I heard an interview with poet **Stephen Dunn**, a Pulitzer Prize winning poet who played Division I basketball on a championship winning Hofstra team. He majored in history and expected to spend his life as a high school gym teacher or history teacher, but it didn't turn out that way. He certainly never even considered that he would end up as a poet, and neither did his friends or associates.

I was struck by one comment that he made, “Most of our lives are a crooked path.” Perhaps not as elegantly stated as I might have expected of a poet, but the phrase struck a chord with me, as I often marvel over how much the direction of our lives is directed by serendipity rather than our conscious plans. It is my opinion that we have far less control over our lives, what we do, and what we become, than we think we do.

I had already been musing along those lines after our weekend beginners turning classes. I am about the most unlikely woodturning instructor I can imagine. Add to that the equally unlikely circumstances that led to me undertaking that task in Austin, Texas. Although I am a native Texan, fifth generation to be exact, I lived and worked outside Texas for more than twenty years and never planned or expected to live in the state again. I had fallen in love with the West Coast and fully expected to go back there when I retired.

Those plans collapsed with a whimper, not because of a big change of heart, but because Texaco had sent me to Houston for what turned out to be a three year “temporary” assignment and I retired from there. At that time, our three sons lived in the three time zones that we weren't living in. At the age they were then, one can never predict where they will wind up. So, my wife wanted to stay near the center of the country and I had a couple of old friends living in Hays County. I had gone to school in San Marcos so, to keep the peace, I agreed. None of this was part of a plan.

I had worked with wood and carved wood in what little spare time I had, as I raised a family and worked long hours, but had long been fascinated by turned wood pieces. While I was living in Houston in a furnished apartment, I took a six hour bowl turning class from **Steve LeGrue**. I had no lathe and no place for one there, but I was hooked. So, when I retired and moved to Central Texas and got my shop built and set up, I bought a lathe and a few tools and started trying to turn. It had been nearly three years since my class and I had forgotten what little I learned. A serious automobile accident set my start at turning back another four or five months.

When I finally got started, I just tried to figure it out on my own. I went to the club meetings and watched the demos and tried to do what they seemed to be doing with no real clue to how to correctly hold the tool and get it to cut. I turned some truly awful bowls and platters. That only began to change a year or so later when I took my first lessons, from **Stuart Batty**. I learned a lot there, and my work actually began to look as if I might eventually be able to do this.

That was followed a year later with classes with **Cindy Drozda** and I knew that I could make some pretty good looking stuff. Cindy inspired me to explore making boxes. I started by trying to duplicate the boxes that she makes, but I soon found that I was more interested in simpler, plainer shapes than she makes. Before long, the bowls and platters that I had aspired to turn out in large numbers were no longer of much interest to me. I found that big wasn't my thing.

Over the years, I got better at this business called turning. I really learned tool control and getting a good finish cut by turning boxes full of wine bottle stoppers. I was really taken aback several years ago when various folks started to ask me questions about turning and finishing techniques. I wondered why they weren't going to the guys who really knew how to turn. Slowly it dawned on me that I had become a pretty good turner and that I knew enough to be helpful to others. Without me really noticing, I had become one of the “old guys,” one of the experienced turners folks turn to for help, rather than one of the beginners.

I tried my hand at a couple of demonstrations at club meetings and that seemed to go well enough. Still, I was surprised when I was asked a couple of years ago to be one of the instructors at our first class. I now know how to do a reasonable amount of stuff on the lathe, but I was more than a bit shaky on the details of the fundamentals and I wasn't sure that I could make clear enough to beginners how to do these things. I know that there are many turners in our club who are much better than I am and who do understand and can clearly explain the fundamentals. Still, I enjoy the process and I hope that, as a result of our classes, folks come away picking up at least one or two things that will help them on the road to becoming successful turners. If so, in fewer years than they can imagine, they will find themselves one of the “old guys or gals” that folks come to with their questions.

Still, this is not where I would have expected an old one-eyed chemist to wind up. A crooked path indeed.

Charles Kay

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This newsletter is by and for members. The Editor welcomes any written materials and will provide assistance with getting your information into publishable form if you want. DEADLINE IS THE FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH. Contact me with your ideas and drafts by phone at 512.395-7782, by E-mail at hildac@

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basics, platters
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segmented turnings
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Judy Williams 512.293.7479
spindles
Jim Spano 512.835.5023
novelty items, tops, shop gadgets
Len Brissette 512.258.4004
bowls, platters, sharpening

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big vessels, bowls, platters
Ed Roberts 512.255.3294
basics platters

LOCKHART/SAN MARCOS

David Dick 512.357.6517
basics, spindles, architectural

Calendar

The calendar listings are an attempt to keep you up to date on upcoming CTWA events, as well as other events of particular interest to woodturners. All regular 3rd Tuesday CTWA Meetings are at American Youthworks. Check Website for latest information.

All 1st Saturdays are from 9 am-noon. All meetings are 7 PM to 9 PM

Events & Dates subject to change, watch for emails or website notifications!

May 11-12 Intermediate Class
place: Clyde Little

May 21st CTWA Meeting
Presenter: Janice Levi
Just Finials

June 1st 1st Saturday
Place: TBD

June 18 CTWA Meeting
Presenter: Panel—Tool
Sharpening, Technique
& Specifications
Orlando Banos
Len Brissette
Jim Spano
Craig Timmerman

July 6th 1st Saturday
Place: TBD

July 16 CTWA Meeting
Presenter: Craig
Timmerman—Turning a
perfect Sphere the way
the old masters did it

Aug 3 1st Saturday
Place: TBD

Aug 20 CTWA Meeting
Presenter: TBD

Aug 22-25 SWAT Waco, TX

Sept 7 1st Saturday
Place: TBD

Sept 17 CTWA Meeting
Presenter: TBD

Editor's "Turn"

Some months are better than others for turning. This month, I worked on a beautiful piece of wood to make a bowl. I liked the shape, and decided not to make it thin for piercing with my NSK dental drill.

I decided to use my new easy tool (round nose) to hollow out the inside of the bowl. I really liked the results. But . . . I ran into one problem, I failed to hold the tool horizontal toward the end of the bowl . . . yep, I ended up getting a gouge at the top of the bowl. ARGH! I should know better than to turn when I'm getting tired. My concentration goes right out the garage door. The bowl is still sitting in the chuck on my lathe awaiting my decision on whether the gouge will simply be a part that makes the bowl "custom" ha, or whether I'll spend a lot of time with 60 grit sand paper trying to smooth it out.

I'm not especially fond of sanding, you see. However, I really hate it when I make that "last wood turner cut" and the bowl ends up as a platter because it is out of round and I have a blow up.

I won't be able to make the portion of the Intermediate class that deals with bowls, unfortunately, or I would take this bowl and get **Craig Timmerman** to coach me on how to get rid of the gouge.

I am looking forward to the box class, though. I understand **Stacey Hager** is teaching it! If you don't know

Stacey, you want to get to know him. Rumor is that the last time Cindy Drozda gave a class here, the two of them stayed up until early in the morning after the class refining grinds on spindles.

On a different note, one of the things I love about this club is how everyone gets along. Each month I look forward to seeing old and new friends and learning something new.

If you are new to the club, be sure to ask around about 1st Saturday's, you will meet some wonderful, fun folks that simply love wood turning! Plus, you will be able to get 1:1 tips from some of the best turners in the country.

Keep turnin' it on!
Hilda
Editor

Members In the News

Last month, **Jim Spano** and **Clyde Little** put together a two day class for beginners. I spoke to a couple of people who attended. Their feeling was it was a great learning experience. We owe a great debt of thanks to both Jim and Clyde for their continued support of new and intermediate turners. Clyde is always appreciated for providing the venue at his terrific shop.

Business Meeting

Charlie Kay started the meeting by welcoming visitors **Tim Hoffman, Alan Loibl, Adam Lanton, Tom Enloe**. **Stacey Hager** announced that **Cindy Drozda** would be teaching the next class in October/November time frame. Her visit here will include a demonstration on a Saturday. **Jim Spano** reported that they had a big class for the beginner woodturner meeting. He said they had a good time. **May 1st Saturday** is going to focus on sharpening tools. Charlie reminded the members that there is a binder that will contain all the Chip Pile's along with the Board Meeting minutes. **Hilda Carpenter** promised this would be at the next meeting. The business meeting section of the Chip Pile serves as our record for the short business meeting that occurs at the beginning of each meeting. Charlie also announced that **Pat Little**, incoming Chair, and **Len Brissette** audited the books for 2012 in service to Ed Roberts. Each year the incoming President will serve as the committee chair for auditing CTWA books from this point forward. Ed welcomed this help. With no further business, Charlie introduced this month's demonstrator **Tom Enloe**.

SWAT is Coming!

SWAT REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

For the latest information regarding the Southwest Association of Turners (SWAT) symposium upcoming in August you can visit their website <http://www.swaturners.org> for a current list of demonstrators, local hotels that provide discounts for attendees, and general descriptions of Waco, TX. The convention center is a great place for this event, since hotels are conveniently located.

I'll repeat what I said last month, "This show is the second largest show in the US (next to AAW symposia). Vendors offer great discounts, the demonstrators are selected from Professional and club turners alike.

You will not leave the symposium without a new trick, or maybe you'll even win the raffle and bring home a nice new lathe."

Beads of Courage

Johnny Tolly and others have mentioned the Beads of Courage activities and invited all the CTWA woodturners to participate in this worthwhile cause. For more information check out <http://www.beadsofcourage.org>

Several of you have asked about the specifications for the boxes:

In order to hold the beads, turned boxes for the Beads of Courage program need to be about 6 inches in diameter (5 inches minimum), rectangular lidded boxes about 4x6x4 inches. If possible, have Beads of Courage engraved or burned in the lid. Make sure the lids are easily removable. Also, finials should be easy for a small child to grasp and not too elaborate.

If you would rather create or donate beads here is the information from

Beads of Courage:

Program Beads are commercially manufactured due largely to the sheer quantity involved. These beads are the ones that you may have seen on bead guides that correspond to specific events in a child's treatment journey.

Act of Courage Beads are the artist-made glass beads that are given to acknowledge the milestones in a child's treatment journey. This year, we expect to need approximately 100,000 of these handmade beads donated so children can continue to receive one-of-a-kind beads for significant treatment milestones. These beads truly bring the arts to our Arts-in-Medicine mission. Thank you!

What is an Act of Courage Bead? Act of Courage Beads can take almost any form that you would like to make-it's an opportunity for you to let your imagination go! The 3/32" mandrel is preferred but other sizes are also usable.

Special Requirements for Act of Courage Beads: Please have nice 'puckers' on the ends of the beads, sharp edges on the bead holes cut fingers and can not be sent out. Overly frilly bits sticking out may break off and leave sharp edges on the surface, be sure that raised dots have solid connections (no undercuts) and that surface decorations are robust enough to take some knocking about.

We ask that you refrain from using reduction frit or glasses that give a metallic sheen on the surface due to heavy metal issues with these materials. We can't send metallic reduction surface beads to the kids.

Anneal your beads properly in a kiln to ensure they don't crack. Cracked beads have to go in the waste basket.

Please make sure that the bead release is cleaned out. Beads with the release still inside take more time for our volunteer staff to clean and this tremendously slows down turnaround time to the hospitals.

Polymer Clay Beads are used in many of our programs including Creative Courage Journal, Beads of Courage Program for Siblings, Arts-in-Medicine Workshops and as a Member's Choice bead in the Beads of Courage Program.

Special Requirements for Polymer Clay Beads: Any size or shape is acceptable. The kids love bright colors! Our preferred hole size is 3/32" with no sharp corners, edges, or protrusions

that would easily break off. Please remember that they beads are worn and handled by children and should be sturdy enough to stand up to wear and tear.

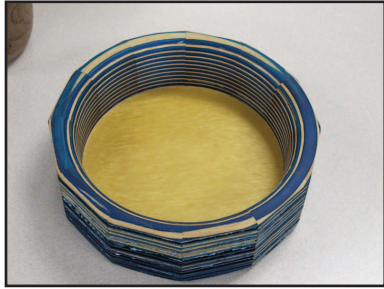
Grinding Tools

You are invited to bring tools that you would like sharpened at the May 18th meeting. Each First Saturday will have sharpening instruction as long as there is interest! Let's Keep Sharp!

—Stacey Hager

April Gallery

Mack Peterson (6)



Steven Green



Dwight Schaeper (3)



Hilda Carpenter (2)



Bring Back Raffle

Greg Stowers: Charles Kay



Congratulations if you won a Bring Back. You need to bring back a turning to share next month.

Your turning should represent the level of your turning skill. If you do not have a lathe, or don't feel you have the experience, go to a first Saturday, contact one of our volunteer instructors to help you prepare a Bring Back piece. So buy a ticket, get involved and have fun.

It's the end of the year. Think back & if you still owe a bring back, it's a good time to turn it out, or ask one of the volunteers or officers to help your catch up. You know who you are!

Hilda Carpenter: Joe Kirk

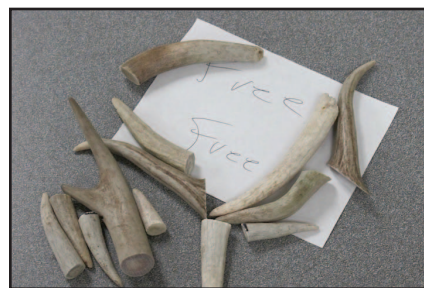


May 1st Saturday

1st Saturday of May was held at Drew Shelton's workshop in Georgetown. We had a good turn out of about 25 members. Although a brisk wind greeted us in the morning, it warmed up around 10:30 -11:00 and turned out to be very pleasant.

The main objective for this 1st Sat was to grind tools the upcoming intermediate class attendees. The class is scheduled for May 11th & 12th to be held at Pat & Clyde's workshop.

Antler horns provided for free from Johnny Tolly



We had four grinders available with wolverine vari-grind attachments, some grinders had diamond wheels and some had aluminum oxide wheels. **Craig Timmerman** and **Len Brissette** ground several tools that were "factory ground" but not suitable for cutting wood.

It's surprising what a sharp tool will do when sharpen properly. Bowl gouge angles and their limitations were discussed and

illustrated. Several of class attendees then continued to grind their tools after the initial instructions. Very little turning was done at this meeting.

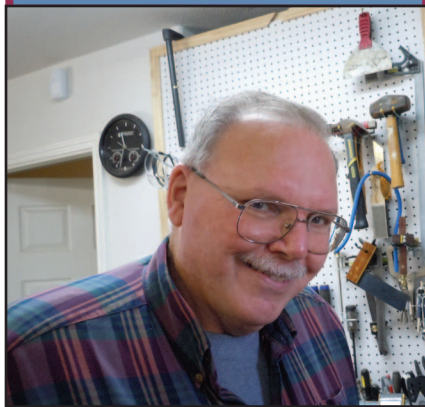
About 14 of us went to Mesa Rosa for Mexican food and fellowship – a good time was had by all.

—Jim Spano



Volunteer Your Shop for First Saturday!

1. It doesn't need to be fancy, or big.
2. We'll bring the lathes.
3. You make the coffee.
4. We'll bring the donuts.
5. Have enough room for at least 1-2 turners (easy in the summer).
6. Let Len Brissette lbrissette@austin.rr.com know! Or email the editor.



Len Brissette

First Saturday



Membership in CTWA

We welcome NEW MEMBERS to join our band of merry turners anytime. An interest in woodturning is the only requirement. Dues are \$35.00 per year, prorated to \$3.00/month for new members. CTWA members are also encouraged to join the American Association of Woodturners, AAW. Those dues are \$38 online membership only, \$48.00 for individuals and \$50 for families. Your membership includes the AAW magazine, American Woodturner, a first-class quarterly magazine full of woodturning articles, tips and ideas with color illustration of the world's master turners' techniques. With our membership, whether you are experienced or a novice, we will teach you, or learn from you, and build long-lasting friendships based on a common kinship of matching wood, metal, machine and man, or woman as the case may be.



A Note of Caution: Save your knuckles

One thing that those of us who have tried our hand as instructors has humbled by is the fact that there are several (or many) things that we do in our everyday turning that really aren't done the way that they should be done and that may be unsafe. We were taught properly by those who instructed us, but sometimes didn't completely understand what we were being taught. Slowly, however, we progressed as tuners and developed our own successful turning style, able to turn safely even when using some techniques that could lead to serious problems in the hands of inexperienced turners. That experience has made me far more aware of my techniques and whether or not they are appropriate.

The experience has also lead me to offer some advice for all new and less experienced turners. Learn what you can from your instructors and our demonstrators, but don't just blindly follow what they show you. They may have drifted into some unsafe practices without being aware of it. If it looks unsafe to you, don't do it, and at least raise a question with other experienced turners.

Two recent examples suffice to illustrate the point. When I was doing a dry run for my beginning box demonstration, it was pointed out to me that I wasn't rubbing the bevel as I hollowed my little boxes with a spindle gouge. This was probably a product of not fully understanding the technique when I first took box making classes and of just hollowing those shallow little boxes with the spindle gouge I already had in my hand, rather than switching to a more appropriate bowl gouge that would make it easier to rub the bevel. I had enough experience with my technique and enough tool control that I was able to do this repeatedly with no adverse consequences. In the hands of a rookie, though, trying to duplicate my technique would likely lead to disastrous results.

A similar situation at our April demonstration also deserves a word of caution. Our demonstrator has worked out a technique for chucking his goblet blank that works for him and that he has learned to use successfully. However, I would seriously caution you to consider an alternate way to chuck your blank rather than chucking it square as Tom did. Chucking that big square blank causes the jaws to extend well beyond the body of the chuck, running a serious risk of a serious whack to your fingers or even catching the flute of your gouge. Neither of those things would be pleasant. It would be far safer, and the recommended practice, to round the blank between centers and turn a tenon on the end to fit your chuck so you can keep those jaws safely out of the way.

Turn safely, enjoy your turning, and trust yourself. If you aren't sure it is safe, check it out with one or more experienced turners before you try it.

Charles Kay

The Chip Pile

Central Texas Woodturners Association
A chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

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To:

Meeting Location

The CTWA meets at American YouthWorks, 1901 East Ben White Boulevard (Texas 71) in south Austin. The building is on the south side of Ben White, just east of Interstate 35. The best entry is off Woodward Street, just south of a little strip center. You enter an alleyway into a lighted parking lot. We will enter through the back door. As you drive in, you will see a truck dock in the back of the building with a big roll-up white door. The entryway is just to the right of the truck dock. Folks coming from the north may want to exit I-35 at Woodward and proceed south on Woodward across Ben White.

