

WOODWORDS ON THE BRANDYWINE

Woodworkers Guild of Delaware

Volume 18, No. 6

February, 2007

Last Call on Dues!

Dues for calendar 2007 were to be paid before December 31, 2006 -- \$35.00, or \$40.00 for family membership. The few who haven't paid will be dropped from membership March 1. Check your mailing label; if the date December 31, 2006 still appears you need to pay at the February meeting or mail your check to Richard Libera, Treasurer, at 402 Apple Rd., Newark, DE 19711.

February 21, 2007 Meeting Agenda:

This meeting's special guest is a national treasure -- Mario Rodriguez, artist in residence at Philadelphia Furniture Workshop. Mr. Rodriguez is a superb furniture designer and craftsman whose work has been featured in Architectural Digest, Country Living, House Beautiful, Metropolitan Home, Hudson Valley, McCalls, Fine Woodworking and the New York Times. He is a major author on woodworking topics with two books to his credit: "Traditional Woodwork" and "Building Fireplace Mantels" (both published by Taunton Press) and countless articles in the leading woodworking magazines. He has been a Contributing Editor of Fine Woodworking. He is a widely revered teacher, having taught for many years at the Restoration Department of Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, at his own Warwick County Workshops, and more recently at Philadelphia Furniture Workshop.

This meeting is an unusual opportunity. Mario Rodriguez will bring to our meeting a piece of furniture that he recently created and discuss its materials and the techniques that he used, all illustrated by slides (he is a traditionalist in more ways than one). Don't miss this one!

For more about Mario Rodriguez visit his Fine Woodworking profile at www.taunton.com/finewoodworking/Community/ArtistProfilephiladelphiafurnitureworkshop.com/, or simply visit philadelphiafurnitureworkshop.com.

This month's raffle prize will be a 14.4 volt Craftsman drill/driver set. As always please bring "show and tell" items; those who do will receive two FREE raffle tickets.

January 17, 2007 Meeting Highlights:

Webmaster Bill Wuhrman showed us a preliminary version of the Guild's new website and led a short discussion about it; see the Website item below. Our special thanks to Bill for his work on the website, and to Pell Sherman for supplying the projector he used.

This meeting featured Philip Lothrop, a scholarly collector of antique tools whose collection and expertise were featured in a July 20, 2006 News Journal article. He presented and explained a broad selection of eighteenth and nineteenth century hand tools, some simple and familiar and others richly ornamented rarities – a plethora of planes, braces, scrapers and drills, many of which are themselves works of craftsmanship and beauty. Other items looked ordinary but had interesting early technology. For instance, on close inspection a simple looking axe revealed a joint – a steel edge piece was hammer welded to the cast iron body. Our congratulations to Phillip Lothrop on his spectacular collection, and our special thanks for his fine presentation about it.

The meeting also featured one of the massive and elegant walnut dining tables that Felix Connolly builds in the George Nakashima style. The top alone -- seven feet long and over 1.5" thick – weighs more than 200 pounds. The supports are beefy trestles reminiscent of Japanese tore gates.

The size and weight of the piece presented special problems, for which Felix devised ingenious solutions. For instance, the boards for the top were too big for the jointer so Felix clamped them 5/8" apart and carefully ran the router through to do both sides of the gap at once. That way any slight irregularity on one edge would precisely fit the same irregularity on the other. For extra strength he joined the top boards with blind poplar splines in blind grooves. Felix described how he laid out the gentle arc of the side edges, the many steps that went into the darkly glowing polyurethane finish, and much else. Special thanks to Felix Connolly for his instructive presentation of an extraordinary piece.

At show and tell Vince Passalacqua presented a wood spirit handsomely carved in flowering pear wood. Bill Walters presented a Fibonacci gauge that he built, and provided copies of a magazine article about it (Wood Magazine No. 173, November 2006, p. 13, or visit www.woodmagazine.com/fibonacci). This is a layout tool that provides a simple way to apply the "golden mean" ratio of 1.618 to 1.

David Webber reported that the Guild's Delaware Hospice Christmas tree was bought for a fine price by an anonymous buyer who in turn donated it to The Wellness Community, a support organization for cancer patients and their families. The Wellness Community sent a gracious thank you letter (reproduced at page 5, below) to Mike Reese, who co-coordinated the project for the Guild. Thanks again to Mike and to all the Guild members who participated.

Rich Dell won the raffle prize, a 14.4 volt Bosch impact driver. Special thanks to John Dunbar for donating this prize.

Website Project Advances:

You can see the preliminary version of the Guild's website at <http://www.billandlucinda.com/wgd/>, and soon after you read this your Webmaster expects to have an improved version online at www.delawarewoodworkers.org. Afterwards, he can make further improvements

members and the Board may suggest. To keep the website interesting and draw visitors back, it helps to have attractive pictures, and to make frequent changes and updates. **Request:** So, let's start providing to Bill Wuhrman those impressive pictures of your favorite projects, and afterwards let's keep doing that as we go forward. The easy way is by e-mail to Bill (bill@billandlucinda.com). Or, bring them to him at the February Guild meeting.

Future Programs:

The Guild has announced a contest for the best frame for a picture, mirror or the like, to be judged at our April meeting. There are no restrictions as to size or shape.

We want to hear more from our members about how you plan, make and finish projects. Please volunteer to make a presentation, and please help us locate other professional woodworkers and knowledgeable amateurs who can be invited to teach us.

Membership Program:

Chairman Pell Sherman is putting the finishing touches on our recruiting brochure and expects to have a final or near final version for your comment at the February Guild meeting. Please help rebuild our membership. Invite woodworking friends and acquaintances to Guild meetings, and encourage them to join.

Get Well Soon:

Guild Treasurer Richard Libera is on the mend after a heart attack and surgery. Although not yet entirely up to speed, he continues to regain strength and expects to join us at the February meeting. He has been missed; our best wishes for his speedy recovery.

Upcoming Events:

The Philadelphia Invitational Furniture Show will be held March 24-25 2007 at the Cruise Ship Terminal in the former Philadelphia Navy Yard at the foot of Broad Street. This is a major show, with a wide selection of the finest work being done in our section of the country. For details visit www.pffshow.com.

Benefactors of the Guild:

Several merchants, suppliers and restaurants have been generous in supporting the Guild; please keep these friends in mind when you make purchases: Woodcraft, Lee Valley and Veritas, Lie-Nielsen Toolworks, Bell's Supply Co. Inc., Café Gelato, Eagle Diner, Fair Hill Inn, Arby's, Giordano's of Kennett Square and Hearne Hardwoods of Oxford, PA.

Treasurer's Report:

Balance forward at 12/31/2006	2221.71
Dues Income	215.00+
January meeting raffle proceeds	52.00+
January Newsletter expense	126.90-
Ending balance at 1/31/2007	2361.81

By: Richard Libera, Treasurer

2006–07 Meeting Schedule:

Dates: Guild meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month of the school year, September through May. This year's remaining dates are: February 21, March 21, April 18 and May 16. The Guild often has a June meeting, and normally does not meet in July and August.

Place & Time: During the school year we normally meet in the carpenter shop at Hodgson Vo-Tech High School in Glasgow, DE; June meetings are normally elsewhere. At Hodgson we meet from 7:00 pm to about 9:00 pm. Some arrive earlier, which is fine -- the shop is open to us around 6:00 pm.

The school entrance is on **business** 896 (Glasgow Avenue, old 896) south of Rte. 40, and the shop is in the rear by the dust collection system. Park in the side lot near the shop; **violators of parking rules may be towed.** Also, **bring a flashlight** because the parking lot and shop entrance may be unlighted. If the school is closed due to weather, that evening's meeting is cancelled. Local radio stations broadcast closings and WDEL also reports them online at www.wdel.com, News Center, SnoWatch.

Board Meetings: The Board often meets at Hodgson immediately after Guild meetings. It sometimes meets at the homes of officers, normally on the Wednesday evening one week after a Guild meeting. Board Meetings are open to all Guild members.

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Woodworkers Guild of Delaware
402 Apple Road
Newark, DE 19711

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