All the News that fits

Lake Charles Woodworkers Club, Inc. March 2019

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Barry Humphus, Editor, Eltee Thibodeaux
Daren Hood, John Marcon, Rob Richard

Mentoring Program - If you have a project, a problem in any woodworking area, these members have volenteered to help. Give them a call. Jeff Cormier: 582-3278; John Marcon: 478-0646; Eltee Thibodeaux: 436-1997; Dick Trouth: 583-2683. Each have years of experience and knowledge.

February Meeting Highlights

The February meeting at Stines was great as we had a couple of guests and presentations. First we have a new member, Steve Dewey and two guests: Mark Benoit and Darring Worthington.

There was a brief discussion of using sanding techniques and double stick tape.

The presentattion was by Mr. Worthington, a pastor at Trinity Baptist Church who told us about an event on March 26, 2019 at Burton Coliseum. LCWW members may promote their work during the event at no cost during the event You just hve to have a table to show your projects. This is the Lake Area Hunting and Fishing Expo that features Willie Robertson of Duck Dynasty, Carson Peters of the Iron Mountain Band and other events.While the presentation for your projects is free, should you want to enter the event, the cost is $10. For more information, contact Mr. Worthington at 337-310-8424 or 337-513-2897. The settup must start no later than 3:00 P.M. and can last until 6:00 P.M. You may sell any projects.

For Show and Tell, Steve McCorquodale brought us some storm wood pecan in a four inch slab that was dried for five years for which he made one of his wonderful tables. The variuos cracks were filled with saw dust and graphite plus the table top was finished with wipe-on poly.

J.W. Anderson suggested that all end grain be soaked for a while with poly and let it set for at least 24 hours between coats. J.W. brought a couple of great cutting boards. One was a small one going to Barry of J.W.'s mystery wood and the other larger beautiful cutting board of cypress.

Our Ray Kebodeaux brought a great segmented bowl this month ith an Indian motif made of a walnut feature ring with five layers and a nice top. Ray finished the bowl with water-based poly which he prefers.

Ron Kramer, whom we have not seen for some time brought a nice maple burl item of hybrid wood with an acrylic finish. Travis McManemin brought an innovative sand paper cutter using a frame combined with an old hack saw blade.

George Carr had a basswood box he purchased and carrved. He sometimes uses water with alcohol to wet the wood before carving as this eases the chip carving process. As typical with many of his carvings, he used a gel stain that makes it easy to control. The source of the boxes is mychipcarving.com which has a large variety of supplies for carving.

Sonny LeBleu brought the parts to contruct a saw blade clock. Of course, you could purchase one of these for your shop, but, as Sonny suggested, they are easily contructed with just about any old and worn out 7-1/2, 8, 10 of 12 inch blade you may have. The clock mechs are cheap at about $3-$4 each. With an old saw blade and a $3 clock mechanism, you have a nice shop clock. Sonny also mentioned another use for old saw blades and that is as a nice sounding wind chime. So why do you (like me) have a half-dozen dull, old saw blades in your shop? Build a clock or a nice wind chime and enjoy the sounds.

Steve McCorquodale discussed the use of poplar in projects. It is a very stable wood with very good machining and white poplar does not rot as it contains a natural antibiotic as well as silica. Note that poplar with lots of figure that contains colors may not be as rot resistant as the white variety. Steve mentioned that hundreds of log houses built 200 years ago of white poplar still stand. Poplar is in the magnolia family of woods.

Travis McManemin won the monthly Stines Gift Card and Ray Kebodeaux gave away a nice DVD on turning.

For the March meeting, we will discuss possible participation at the event planned at the Hunting and Fishing Expo at Burton Coliseum. We will also discuss participation at the Stines Store in April where we may set up tables at the entrance to promote the Lake Charles Woodworkers Club.

March is the last month for those who have not paid their dues of just $20 for membership. Please see Patrick LaPoint at the next meeting to continue receivinng your Newsletter and participating in our organization. You may also send your dues to Patrick at LCWW Tresurer, 116 E. Thomas St., Sulphur, LA 70663.

Comming Up . . . Saturday, March 9, 2019 at 9:00 A.M. at the Stines STore meeting room on Nelson Drive in Lake Charkes. See you there.

Staining Issues and Fixes

The basics of staining are easy – it's when things don't go as planned that staining becomes a difficult, frustrating task. Here are ten of the most common staining problems and how you can avoid them before they happen. Armed with some basic knowledge, you can avoid these staining headaches entirely.

The first problem is that different boards on glued-up panels take stain differently, some boards coming out lighter than others. The fix is to apply more stain to the lighter boards either directly on the wood or by adding some of the stain color to the finish and shading them darker. It's seldom possible to get an exact match, but you can reduce the contrast significantly. Another way to even the coloring is to bleach the wood using a two-part bleach (sodium hydroxide and hydrogen peroxide), then stain the wood to the color you want after sanding to remove the fuzz.Sodium hydroxide and hydrogen peroxide can be purchased at most hardware stores or even a parmacy.

The second problem is that the the stain dries before you can get all the excess wiped off. The fix: This problem is fairly common with water-based and lacquer-based stains because both dry rapidly. Apply more of the same stain, the thinner for the stain, or if necessary, a paint stripper, and remove the excess stain. If the color is then not even, or it's too light, you'll need to apply more stain. Switch to a slower drying stain, work on smaller sections at a time, or apply and wipe off the stain faster by using a cloth or spray gun to apply the stain and a large dry cotton cloth to remove the excess stain. You can also get someone else to perform one of the steps while you do the other. Stains that thin or clean up with mineral spirits (paint thinner) dry the slowest, but you have to wait longer before applying a finish.

While sanding the sealer coat, you sand through the stain on some edges.Replace the color by applying some of the same stain to the area and wiping off all the excess, or by using a touch-up marker.

The end grain on raised-panel cabinet doors gets too dark when you wipe on and wipe off a stain. The fix is to sand the end grain so there's absolutely no remaining roughness, or spray the stain in light enough coats so you don't need to wipe off any excess. The darkening is caused by more stain lodging in the rough areas in the end grain than in the smooth-sanded areas in the long grain of the rest of the door. Spraying stain without wiping deposits an equal amount of color everywhere, so the roughness doesn't impact the darkness of the color.

The stain highlights gouges and machine marks ("washboarding") left by a jointer or planer. Also highlighted are the sanding scratches left by coarse grit sandpaper and the squiggles left by random-orbit sanders.Your fix is to re-sand the wood to below the depth of the problems up to #150- or #180-grit sandpaper. Before beginning, wipe off as much of the stain as possible using naphtha, lacquer thinner or acetone so the stain doesn't clog the sandpaper. You don't have to remove all the stain color before re-staining, just get the remaining color fairly even.

The stain blotches the wood even when you remove all the excess. The blotching is caused by flaws in the wood that absorb more stain, so the solution is to keep all the stain very near the surface of the wood. You'll have to remove any blotching that has occurred by sanding. Then switch to a gel stain (which doesn't flow so it doesn't penetrate deeply), partially seal the wood with a washcoat/wood conditioner (to keep the stain from penetrating deeply), or spray the stain and don't wipe off the excess. This will leave an equal amount of stain everywhere.

Spray stain doesn't color inside corners well. The turbulence created by the air pressure prevents the stain from reaching these recessed corners. So reduce the air pressure to the minimum possible, while still getting good results, or brush the stain into these areas.

Places where sweat or water has dripped on the wood during sanding come out darker when you apply the stain. So in SW Louisiana, we sweat and what's new? The sweat (or any water for that matter) raises grain and roughens the wood, so more stain lodges. Follow the directions in problem #5 for sanding the problem and re-staining.

The stain you're using doesn't get the wood dark enough. Commercial stains vary in the ratio of pigment or dye they contain relative to vehicle (binder and solvent). The higher the ratio the darker the stain colors the wood. So an easy solution might be to change brands or to add some pigment or dye to the stain you're using.

There are two other possibilities. One is to sand to a coarser grit: #150 instead of #180, for example, or #120 instead of #150. Just don't get so coarse that the stain highlights the scratches. You'll have the greatest success if all the sanding-grit scratches from the last sanding go with the grain.

The other is to leave some stain on the wood during the wiping stage. This is called a "dirty wipe." To achieve success you must wipe every part the same, so it'll help to have a sample panel to match. Apply a coat of finish to this panel to bring out the full color.

The color of the stained wood is just a little off.

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Stain Issues Continues . . .

Add a little of the opposite color in the color spectrum to the finish and tone the wood. For example, if the wood is too warm (reddish), add green. If the wood is too cool (greenish), add red. You can also add black to reduce brightness. Keep in mind that lighting plays a part in how colors appear. Fluorescent lighting causes colors to appear cooler. Incandescent lighting causes colors to appear warmer.

Hard to Stain Pine

Antique pine often has a dark, mellow color. Unfortunately, when woodworkers try to duplicate that color on new pine by using stain, the results are usually disappointing. It's easy to end up with megablotches and it's hard to avoid "grain reversal," a peculiar effect that makes stained pine look unnatural. It doesn't have to be that way, though. If you follow the process presented here, you can give pine deep, rich-looking color without losing it's natural appearance.

Unlike poplar, pine is hard to stain for a couple of reasons. First, its grain is unevenly dense. Typical wood stains cause grain reversal because they color only the porous earlywood; they can't penetrate the dense latewood. Second, pine's surface is usually loaded with randomly occurring figure and super-absorbent pockets that suck up stain and look blotchy.

The staining process includes four ingredients: water-based wood conditioner, water-soluble wood dye, dewaxed shellac and oil-based glaze. The process isn't fast, because there are several steps. But it isn't hard, and it's home-shop friendly. You don't need any special finishing equipment, just brushes and rags.

In a nutshell, the conditioner partially seals the wood's surface to control blotching. Dyes penetrate both the earlywood and latewood, so they minimize grain reversal. Shellac and glaze add color in layers, creating depth and richness. This coloring process works on all types of pine, although the end result varies from one species to another.

Before you touch your project with a brush or rag, get familiar with the materials and the process by practicing on good-sized pieces of scrap. Experiment on end grain, face grain and veneered stock. Practice until you're comfortable with the process and know what to expect.

Before you sand, stabilize any loose knots by dribbling epoxy into the gaps. To make cleanup easier, keep it off the surrounding wood surfaces. After the epoxy has set, sand it flush with the surface. Clear epoxy transmits the dark color of the knot. If your epoxy cures milky-white, touch it up later, after you've dyed the wood and sealed it with shellac.A good-looking finish always starts with a thorough sanding job, especially with a soft wood like pine.

Sand with a block. Orbital sanders leave swirl marks that make the stained surface look muddy. After power sanding, always sand by hand, using a block, before you go on to the next grit. Sanding with finger pressure alone wears away the soft earlywood, creating an uneven surface.

Change paper often. Pine gums up ordinary sandpaper with pitch-laden dust that quickly renders it useless. Dull paper mashes the wood fibers instead of cutting them, which also creates a muddy appearance when you stain. Stearated sandpaper lasts longer.

Sand up to 220 grit. First, level the surface with 100-grit paper. Then work through the grits to create finer and finer scratch patterns. 220-grit scratches are fine enough to disappear when you stain, as long as they don't go across the grain.

Invariably, sanding leaves some fibers bent over. Water-based finishes swell these fibers so they stand up, leaving a rough surface. For smooth results with these finishes, raising the grain prior to finishing is essential.

Water-based wood conditioner makes the water-based dye easy to apply. It limits the dye's penetration by partially sealing the wood, like a thin coat of finish. Two coats are necessary to control blotching. It's important to keep the surface wet until you wipe it, and then to wipe thoroughly. Any conditioner that's allowed to dry on the surface will seal so well the dye won't penetrate.

Brush on two generous coats of water-based conditioner. With each application, keep the surface wet for three to five minutes, then wipe off the excess. Let the conditioner dry thoroughly, then sand it with 400-grit paper. Go lightly on contours and edges, so you don't cut through.

I suggest using Transfast "antique cherry brown" water-soluble dye powder. Water-soluble dye from other manufacturers will work just as well, although the color will be different. Dissolve the dye at the label-recommended ratio of 1-oz.powder to 2-qts. hot water. Be sure to let the solution cool to room temperature before use. Dissolve powdered dye in hot water. When the powder is completely dissolved, transfer it to a lidded container and let it cool.

Shellac prepares the dyed surface for glazing (Step 4). It also keeps pitch sealed in the wood. Without shellac, pine's pitch can bleed into oil-based finishes, leaving fissures or shiny spots that remain tacky, especially around knots.

You need to protect this layered finish with clear topcoats. Any topcoat will work as long as you wait until the glaze has completely dried. To check, wipe the surface gently with a cotton rag. If it picks up any color, wait another day. Barry Humphus

March Meeting Location

We have the wonderful opportunity to meet at the Stines Lake Charles kocation at 4501 Nelson Road Please enter the store and go to the back left in the store to the meeting room.

To get there go South on Nelson Road in Lake Charles going from I-10 or I-210 and tuen into the parking lot. Go to the back of the main entrance to the very back to the meeting room to find us.

Please take an opportunity to explore Stines before you leave to find the items for your shop or home that you may need. As always, thank the folks at Stines as you check out.

March 2019

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