

# **Knot Knews**

Monthly Newsletter of the Collins Woodworkers

**December 1996**

**Vol. 2, No. 4**

*Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 17th 5:00 p.m. at Main Plant Cafeteria*

## **December Program**

Our December 17 meeting features a presentation by Jim Parent on bird houses. A few good bird houses, built and placed now, will help attract birds to your yard when nesting season arrives. This is the time of year when wild birds must spend more time looking for food and a continuously stocked feeder will become a popular gathering spot for seed eating species.

In addition to Jim's presentation, Emil Krepcik is bringing a router table and discussing its features and construction. If you are planning to build a router table, you may be able to pick up a few tips from Emil.

## **January Meeting**

Our January 21 meeting features a portable tool extravaganza. Members will bring their own tools to the meeting for a big "show and tell" event. This will give members the chance to see which tools others find useful and to learn something about tools they may be considering for purchase.

Naturally, the success of this event depends on *you*. Please consider bringing a few of your favorite portable tools to the January meeting so they can be displayed for all to see. You won't need to speak in front of the group, just explain your tool(s) to other members as they stop by.

We're looking for all types of portable tools, though naturally we don't want to wind up with 40 routers and cordless drills (some... just not 40). Dig out that unusual tool that you may not use often but is a real gem when you need it. Tools need not be electric; they can be air driven, hand powered, new or old. The key is to bring portable tools you enjoy using and that others might find interesting.

## **Goodbye Old Friend?**

This may be the last issue of *Knot Knews* you'll receive. Beginning with the January newsletter, we will be trimming our subscription list to include only *paid* members. New prospective members will be given a short (say three months) subscription but if they elect not to join, they will be dropped from the subscription list as well.

We hope you are a paid member. If not, look on bulletin boards for meeting notices and drop in when you can. We'll always be glad to see you.

## **Future Meetings**

Plans for future meetings will include: a field trip to Puckett Tools & Fasteners for a professional demonstration of Bessey clamps (Feb. 18); and a program on finishing techniques (Mar. 18).

Other future meeting topics include picture framing and matting, biscuit joining tools and techniques, the health dangers of wood dust and ways to reduce this hazard, and tuning hand planes for precision work. We hope you will express your thoughts on these ideas and help us plan the kind of meetings you look forward to attending.

## **Hardwood Sources**

Jim Parent is taking on the task of updating our list of wood mills and sources. Jim will be asking for volunteer help at the December meeting. If you know of any sawmills or suppliers within a hundred mile or so radius of Cedar Rapids, be sure to let Jim know. If you can help with information on business hours, species availability, prices, phone number and directions, it will certainly be a big help to Jim.

## Wreck Dot Woodworking

(Great thoughts from the Net)

### Tree of the Month "Oak"

Characteristics of the sapwood of oak is white to very light brown, while the heartwood is light to dark brown in the white oak group and reddish brown in the red oak group. Oak wood has a coarse texture; it is heavy, straight-grained, hard, tough, very stiff, and strong. Fast-grown oak, with wide rings, is stronger and heavier than slow-grown oak.

**Working Properties:** Oak wood has good working properties. It machines and glues well and holds fasteners extremely well. It tends to split when nailed, unless pre-drilled. Oak finishes well, but shrinks considerably.

**Durability:** The oaks are rated with respect to resistance to heartwood decay as follows: Very resistant burr oak, chestnut oak, Gambel oak, Oregon oak, post oak and white oak. Moderately resistant swamp chestnut oak. Slightly to nonresistant black oak and red oak.

**Preservation:** The heartwood of the white oak group is resistant to impregnation with preservatives, whereas that of the red oak group is more easily penetrated.

### Carpenter's Clamps

Having trouble holding your project together while the glue dries? Here's How:

Many budding carpenters have all the hand tools they think they need... until they find they need a second pair of hands to hold things together. That's when any of the various types of woodworking clamps are worth their weight in gold! "C" clamps, pipe clamps and spring clamps are just a few of the kinds that are available. When using them, be sure to spread clamp pressure by using several clamps rather than one or two, so as to protect the workpiece. Always use blocking between the clamp's jaws and the workpiece to prevent marring. When tightening a clamp, use your hand, not a wrench or pliers as over-tightening could damage the project surface.

### Storm Door Maintenance

Want to prolong the finish and weather-stripping on your front door? Here's How:

If your storm door is exposed to direct sun, change over to screens early in the spring and wait until the end of fall before putting the storm windows back on. The windows can act as a greenhouse, heating up the space between the two doors, causing weather-stripping and the finish to deteriorate quickly. When choosing metal replacement screens, check the compatibility of the metal screens with the metal of the door. In some cases, dissimilar metals in contact with each other will hasten corrosion.

### Web Sites of Interest

If your home computer can access the Internet's World Wide Web you may find these sites worth visiting.

<http://www.augusthome.com/welcome.html>

This is the homepage of the company that publishes Woodsmith and Shopnotes. You can search their back issue data base for particular articles and subjects. If you're looking for project plans, this could be a valuable resource.

<http://www.escape.ca/~denisroy/>  
<http://www.lowes.com>

These sites feature birdhouse plans. The first one has plans for a purple martin house, helpful in keeping the mosquito population down. The second site was referenced as containing general birdhouse plans.

If you happen to run across an interesting Web site, discussion list, or news group while "surfing" the net, pass it along and we'll publish it here so others can check it out.