



## San Fernando Valley Woodworkers since 1988

<http://sfvw.org/>

### Meeting Minutes

by Eitan Ginsburg

SFVW – Minutes February 15, 2024 meeting

Club president Jim Baldrige welcomed everyone on the club's return to our longtime meeting location, the Balboa Park Recreation Center. He asked new attendees to introduce themselves. Tom Gallagher said the last time he did woodworking was when he did a pinewood derby car. Patrick Phelps said he is a self-taught woodworker and is interested in working with hand tools. He's made some bookcases and projects around the house. Kyle Bochenek said he has a shop set up in his garage. Tyler Cook mostly uses pull-saws and hand planes and builds things mostly from scrap wood. Roberto Barajas, has made a go-cart, toys, a baseball bat, and boxes. Jerry Penske is attending as Jack Robbins' son-in-law.

### Reports

Finance: Jeff presented a financial report showing prior years' budgets and the planned budget for 2024. Our biggest expenses are materials for the toy builds and rent for the meeting room. Club dues remain \$35 a year. Jeff announced that he brought some donated wood for people to take home and make things that we can sell at the gift boutiques we participate in a few times a year.

Toy Committee: Chuck Nickerson noted that the club makes about 1500 toys each year to give away in December via 14 different charities. We are currently making 10 different types of toys and anyone can join the Toy Committee meetings, which are held via zoom. We need volunteers to join in the prep sessions throughout the year and in the final big build, usually on a Saturday and Sunday in mid-October. We also need help sewing the quilts and dolls that go with the cradles.

Program Committee: Emily Lichtman asked

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### Our President says...

by Jim Baldrige

As I sat in my office pondering what to address in this month's edition of Planetalk I came across a blog written by Owen Madden, in Fine Woodworking. I would like to share his thoughts on his take on learning the top three ways of "maintaining your mental flexibility."

Most of us, myself included, don't become good woodworkers overnight. It is more about the skills that we acquire through time and experience. As we have all experienced, the better we adjust when we make a mistake, the better we become at problem solving. "For example, dovetails: From cutting them by hand to using a table saw and routers, people from different backgrounds have come up with many different techniques for doing the same thing."

Mr. Madden refers to our skill cache as our mental flexibility. I totally agree, the more I make mistakes doing the same thing the more ways I learn not to do it until finally the correct way sticks. What is important is to be able to take a skill from one project to another, mental flexibility.

For some of us this is quite easy as others may have to work harder to maintain. In the end this is what makes us accomplished woodworkers.

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### March Presentation: Stained Glass

by Stefan Dusedau & David Feinner

Our March presentation will focus on Stained Glass. Stefan and David will discuss how to create stained glass panels and incorporate them into your projects or create standalone works of art. They will review the "how to" of stained glass, from selecting and cutting it to soldering and finishing. Make sure to join us for what is sure to be an interesting presentation!



## Who We Are

The club was formed in 1988 for the purpose of enhancing skills, providing information and sharing the joys of working with wood. The membership reflects a cross section of woodworking interests and skill levels - both hobbyist and professionals. Annual dues are \$35. Full-time student dues are \$15.

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According to Mr. Madden he believes there are three main ways to keep the brain working hard and make us a more versatile woodworker.

### Collaboration

When stuck in a routine the best way is to break it is to work with someone else. Having another set of eyes and experience can never hurt. For many of us, woodworking is therapeutic, and we love to do it solo. But there are times when we need to be with others to reinvigorate our thought processes or help us look at a problem on a piece from another perspective. This goes directly to mental flexibility.

### Get out of your comfort zone

If you are a cabinet maker, like Mr. Owen, move away from what makes you at ease. For him, it is right angles, rectangles, and squares. In other words, try something different for a change. Get out of the rut that makes your woodworking easy, and try challenging yourself with something you are not accustomed to.

### Trial and error

At least for me, this is the category my ego seems to love. I cannot even begin to tell you how many trials and errors I have accumulated in my time as a sawdust maker. For sure, the man upstairs knows too well just how many trees I have wasted creating that one perfect toothpick!

Bottom line, if you are not willing to put yourself out there, then you/we will never accomplish anything in our workshops.

Keep the sawdust flying!

Jim Baldrige

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members to respond to the Google Forms survey sent out by Gary. This will help us understand club members' interests for planning monthly programs and bonus outings. She said the upcoming monthly programs are:

- **March:** stained glass
- **April:** Hand tools demonstrations
- **May:** SketchUp and other methods for designing projects

### Announcements

Jim Baldrige said the member challenge for April is to make something out of one board foot of lumber. It can

## Club Officers

President: Jim Baldrige

Vice President: Emily Lichtman

Secretary: Eitan Ginsburg

Treasurer: Jeff Bremer.

Photographer: Luke Wyatt

Publisher: Gary Coyne

Librarian: Grant Christensen

Web Master: Ed Sheanin

Toy Chair: Jim Kelly

Toy Distribution: Sheila Rosenthal

Refreshments: Open

be made from different species so long as the total source material is no more than one board foot. One board foot is a volumetric measurement equal to 12" x 12" x 1".

Jim also asked for a volunteer to help coordinate snacks for the monthly meetings (the club will reimburse the cost).

Jim also asked for a volunteer to design and build a portable workbench for demonstrations at the Balboa Rec Center. Eitan Ginsburg said he would work on this project.

Greg Massini announced that Saturday, February 24, will be the 70th anniversary event at the Rockler in Pasadena. He also regretted to inform folks that the Pasadena Rockler store will be closing in April due to losing their lease.

February 24 is also the quarterly Old Tool Swap Meet, held at Anderson Plywood in Culver City.

A faceplate turning demonstration featuring Matt Monaco will be held on February 24 at the [Channel Islands Woodturners](#) meeting from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Eitan Ginsburg provided details for the club tour of the Petersen Automotive Museum on November 19th.

Jim also announced that we will host a member tool sale at our June meeting. This is a great opportunity to clear out tools you don't use or are duplicated in your shop (and

*See "Minutes" on page 4*



Balboa Recreation Center Location  
Map courtesy of Google Maps

## From the Web

### ----- Tips, Tricks, and How Tos -----

📎 I discovered an AMAZING 2x6 trick for woodworkers!

<https://tinyurl.com/ms57f2c9>

📎 Achieving the Perfect Finish: No BS Guide to Sanding like a Pro

<https://tinyurl.com/mrxxet32>

📎 Behind the Scenes in Veritas Manufacturing and Quality Assurance [Ed note: Not much depth, but does open up a window as to why some of our tools cost as much as they do — there's a lot behind the quality.]

<https://tinyurl.com/hyxku6jb>

📎 Cutting Aluminum on your Tablesaw

<https://tinyurl.com/5kc93cre>

📎 Woodshop has been disappearing from California schools for decades. Here's why one Bay Area teacher is bringing it back.

<https://tinyurl.com/5n84af4r>

📎 Jim Heavey answers his most common Titebond Glue questions

<https://tinyurl.com/ynpf69ad>

📎 A New Style of Workbench

<https://tinyurl.com/4a9kbm55>

📎 2 Tricks for Router Feed Direction

<https://tinyurl.com/s8mm2dfc>

📎 De-Bonding CA Glue

<https://tinyurl.com/28z4cuww>

📎 A Long List of Pneumatic Nailing Tips (This is a long page with many tips; do not stop after the first five.)

<https://tinyurl.com/49r39num>

## Toy Build Workshops

If you're curious how Santa's elves turn this



Into *three* of these -->

Attend the many toy workshops that happen throughout the year. You'll get to learn new techniques, learn to use machines you don't have,



see how other people organize their shops and get to know other members in a more casual environment. The workshops are announced through emails and live at meetings.

For more information, and to be added to the emails, contact Jim Kelly at [jimkelly@earthlink.net](mailto:jimkelly@earthlink.net)

📎 How To Make A Cross-Laminated Joint

<https://tinyurl.com/yu9kp39t>

📎 Using and Making Veneers - Live Q & A (9 Mar 2024)

<https://tinyurl.com/mur3wn8t>

📎 My Stupid Little Plant Stand Took 3 Jigs and 3 Days to Complete

<https://tinyurl.com/2y847bhp>

📎 10 Essential Woodworking Joints You Need to Know - The Best Joints of the Week

<https://tinyurl.com/mwz6pc9t>

### ----- Reviews -----

📎 A New Product for Rust Removal! | The Wood Whisperer

<https://tinyurl.com/597j67da>

📎 WGM ToolWorks Helical Cutter Head Review

<https://tinyurl.com/mwhh8eed>

📎 Harvey MG-36 Pro Miter Gauge: Worth the Upgrade? | The Wood Whisperer

<https://tinyurl.com/z49na55z>

📎 Best Battery Screwdriver 2024? \$13 vs \$188! Let's Find Out!

<https://tinyurl.com/2ukf7n4h>

📎 AMAZING old saw technology was KILLED by industry for \$\$\$\$\$!

<https://tinyurl.com/2s4ady2j>

📎 Harvey Big Eye Rip Fence System Review

<https://tinyurl.com/cc4mz3t>

## Dues are now Due!

If you haven't paid yet, *it's time*. Our dues are \$35 per year (\$15 for students), and our esteemed Treasurer, Jeff Bremer, can take your dues many ways:

- Cash (pay at a meeting)
- Check (make out to SFVW)
- Zelle ([jabremer@msn.com](mailto:jabremer@msn.com))
- Venmo (@jeffrey-bremer-2, (Last 4 digits of phone No: 6892))

If you need to contact Jeff for any questions, his email and phone number or on the Page 2 in the Club Officers.

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make room for getting new tools!) and for other members to pick up things they need. Details are still being set, but we thought it would be great if 50% of the sales could go to support the club.



### Q&A

John asked for suggestions for finishing an old walnut bookcase that is unfinished, and portions have been faded by exposure to sunlight. The general consensus was to use an oil finish (BLO, Tried & True,

Watco, etc.). Eitan suggested adding a topcoat of garnet shellac.

Tyler asked what finish to use to make the table he made shinier. So far, he has applied a red stain and a semi-gloss sealer. Chuck suggested a topcoat of super-blond shellac. Another suggestion was to use spray-can lacquer.

Jim Baldrige asked about finishing a wooden diving board that will be used outside (not



as a diving board). One suggestion was to apply spar varnish, which must be sanded and re-coated every couple of years. Another suggestion was to use teak oil—building coats—by reapplying every six months (no sanding/stripping needed).

Dave asked if someone could help him mill down some old wooden skis that he would use to

make some Adirondack chairs. Several people volunteered to help.

John said he has an old olive tree stump that has been sitting outdoors for about 10 years, and if someone wants to use it, they can take it.

### Show & Tell

Eitan brought a couple of spatulas that he turned on the lathe from soft maple. He also showed a serpentine stepladder he designed and made from poplar.



Calvin Sov presented a heart-shaped box he made using his CO<sub>2</sub> laser. It featured box joints and kerfing that allowed bent curves and was made from 1/4" Baltic birch plywood.

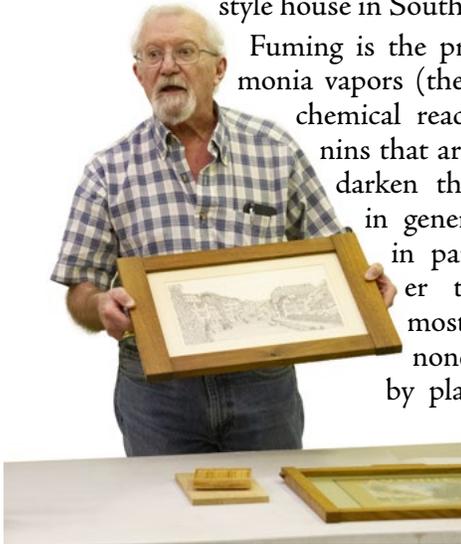
Jeff Bremer showed a jig/fence he made that attaches to his block plane to cut repeatable-depth chamfers. The jig is attached with rare-earth magnets and wing nuts. He of-

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ferred to share the plans with anyone interested (Members will receive a PDF plan of this).

### Presentation

Gary Coyne spoke about Fuming to create a dark finish on white oak. This is his preferred wood, as he often uses it to build Arts & Crafts-style furniture for his Craftsman-style house in South Pasadena.



Fuming is the process of using ammonia vapors (the fumes) to create a chemical reaction with the tannins that are in oak woods that darken the white oak. Oak, in general, and white oak, in particular, have higher tannin levels than most species; most have none. Fuming is done by placing the workpiece in an enclosed tent with a small dish of 3–4 ounces of high-strength ammonia. Gary uses

a 27–29% concentration of industrial ammonia. (You can use regular household ammonia, but the process can take 24 hours or more.)

This chemical reaction darkens the wood to a depth of 3 to 7mm. This differs from placing stain on the surface, which is only surface deep. Thus, scratches on fumed wood can be repaired by sanding and replacing the finish.

The resulting darkness is based on the length of the fuming process and/or if one of the ingredients runs out before the other. Once the tannins are depleted, the process will stop, and subsequent darkening will not occur. Gary showed samples of plain white oak, lacquer finish, light fuming and longer fuming.

His fuming process usually lasts about three to six hours, which is the color level that he likes. Occasionally, he goes much longer for a much darker result. If your oak source is from different areas, the appearance of one board to another may vary, so you do need to be a bit careful with that.

He made three fuming tents of different sizes, but they are all made from a simple pine frame with mylar sheet plastic attached. The frame pieces are held together with small clamps. He clamps the frames in three to four places on each end, and the weight of the assembly is sufficient to create a seal against the bottom sheet of plastic. You don't need to tape the joints to keep the ammonia inside because the clamps put enough pressure on the plastic-covered frames.

Gary fumes already assembled pieces, except doors and drawers, which he will put in the tent simultaneously but

not in place to allow the fumes to circulate freely. He also leaves off metal hardware. After the fuming process, he assembles everything. Because he doesn't want the finish to fill any inadvertent chasms around any ebony parts, he also inserts any ebony buttons after the item has had the finish applied.

He said that while temperature can affect the fuming process, there isn't much to worry about in our Cali-



ifornia climate. Probably the biggest thing you might notice is if your wood has both summer and winter wood (heartwood and sapwood). Sapwood has no tannins, so it doesn't darken at all. If that bothers you, you probably should not fume and should stain the wood. Gary thinks that these small regions add to the beauty of the final furniture.

The person should be careful because the ammonia is very strong. He does not recommend doing it in an attached garage because the fumes can inadvertently enter the house. Also, since ammonia is flammable, don't do this with an exposed flame, such as a gas water heater. Lastly, if you have a pool, it is imperative to keep any bleach and ammonia storage away from each other. You MUST use ammonia cartridges on an organic vapor mask when you are working with ammonia. You should also use swimming goggles to keep the fumes out of your eyes.

The whole process works by assembling the fuming tent, placing all of your items to be fumed into the tent, putting on your safety equipment, and pouring out the 3-5 oz of ammonia. Finally, close the fuming tent up and do something for the next 3-6 hours. When you're first learning the fuming process, place sample pieces in the tent and pull them out every hour or so. Wipe on some paint thinner to see the final finished result. Once happy, Gary dumps the remaining ammonia into a bucket of water and then dumps that onto his backyard cement. The odor passes VERY quickly. After the fumes dissipate from the wood (overnight), there is no odor or toxicity to the finish.

You can try to fume other woods, but any darkening effect is minimal to none because they have lower to no tannins. Some people take tea and wipe it onto the wood as a pre-fuming step, but Gary feels there are too many ways that that can go wrong.

Gary wrote two articles that can be found at the Woodworkers Guild of America. One is called "[How to Safely Fume Your Furniture](#)", and the other one is called "[Fuming Tent Construction](#)". Both of which have more extensive information than was presented at this meeting.

*A message from Chrystal Craver of the  
Glendale Woodturners Guild*

Hi Everyone,

Our February meeting will be on February 24th from 9 – 4. This will be a live all day demonstration with professional woodturner Matt Monaco. [This event will be at Cabrillo Middle School, 1426 E. Santa Clara St, Ventura, CA] Fee for the day is \$35 for members and \$45 for non-members and includes lunch. There will also be a workshop on Sunday, the 24th (6 spots are available). If interested please contact Chad Ishikawa at [docish@me.com](mailto:docish@me.com).

Matt is a full-time professional turner with 20 years' experience, one of Matt's missions is to make the highest quality products, that reflect both the mastery of the tools, and the functionality and timeless beauty of wooden decor in others' lives. Matt is one of very few modern traditional woodturners having apprenticed and trained as a trade professional and worked closely within a high-end furniture production landscape — Shackleton Thomas Furniture and Pottery. At the center of Matt's work is his understanding and mastery of tool control as an expression of traditionally crafted design as fine art in producing forms and items that are as tactile as they are sublime and made with intent and purpose.

At our meeting Matt will be turning a detailed platter. His emphasis will be on beginning – advanced sharpening modifications and cutting clean using traditional tools to create surfaces cut straight off the tool. The major differences between scraping, cutting, and shearing will be clearly demonstrated with methods that allow members & students to be engaged in learning the process of creating a fine, classic form, and also be useful for understanding effective ways to finish this style of item as a utility or display item to a fine food safe sheen.

This should be a fun, and informative meeting. Hope to see you all there. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you, Chrystal <[sunkiyahzi@gmail.com](mailto:sunkiyahzi@gmail.com)>



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