

# Antelope Valley Woodturners Association



November 2009

Newsletter

Volume 9 Issue 5

Newsletter of the Antelope Valley Woodturners' Association  
2535 E. Ave R-3, Palmdale CA 93550  
Member of the American Association of Woodturners

President	Bob Clark	661-947-7448
Vice President & Membership	Martin Littleton	661-944-4365
Treasurer	Mickey Burns	661-948-3261
Newsletter Editor	Dan Yost	661-948-9347
Special Events	Charley Williams	661-942-8105
Web Master	Dan Oliphant	661-274-1944

The next meeting will be at Bob Clark's, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011  
From 09:00 to??



## President's Message

By Bob Clark

First I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and joyous holidays. This holiday season is a great time to use your wood lathe to make gifts for the ones you love. I am still amazed that my adult children still have the simple gifts I made for them when they were little.

In this issue of the AVWA news letter we are reprinting an article by Pete Carta on how to use your lathe to make spinning tops. They are simple to make. You can use scrap wood and the little people in your life will treasure them.

While we are on the holiday theme at our last meeting we had a Christmas ornament challenge. It was fantastic, each ornament was unique. And the winner of our challenge was Dean Petrie and Dean is also one of our newest members. One of the great things about these ornaments is that they can be turned on any lathe. It is not a matter of bigger lathes or more expensive tools. It is a matter of using your imagination, developing your skills and having a good time turning wood. Isn't that why we all got into this hobby?



Dean Petrie's Winning Ornament



Dave Acuna's Entry



Martin Littleton's Entry



Dan Yost's Entry



Dan Y's 2<sup>nd</sup> Entry



Mickey Burn's Entry



Bob Clark's Entry

I would also like to thank all the members that attended the November meeting, we had a great turnout and once again Dan made his annual Thanksgiving chili. Dan you do make good chili. Dan also demonstrated how to make a wooden box with a finial lid. The delicate features of the finials and the classic lines of the box made a beautiful piece. Additionally, this was another example of fantastic projects that can be made from small pieces of wood. Sometimes I find myself looking for a big piece of a log to turn and I overlook the great projects that can be made with just few dollars worth of left over wood.



Dan's finished box with finial



Parting off the lid from the body



Defining the onion base with a parting tool



Final adjustments to the finial

This month I am starting a new safety feature in the newsletter. With each news letter I plan on a paragraph or two on how to improve the safe operation of our wood lathes. This month's article will be on the ergonomic advantages of having your lathe adjusted to the correct height. My hope is that in each news letter we can hear from different members with different safety ideas. Along with these safety suggestions, a short paragraph or two with examples would be great.

In January Southern California woodturners have an opportunity to attend demonstrations by two excellent world-class woodturners. On January 3, Alan Batty will be demonstrating in Torrance and on January 16, Malcolm Tibbitts will be demonstrating segmented woodturnings in Glendale. I plan on attending each of these demonstrations and anyone can ride down there with me. The cost of the demos is \$35 for Alan Batty and \$30 for Tibbitts. Call me at 947-7448 if you are interested in attending either demo.

Our next meeting will be at my house on January 23. At the January meetings we always set up the demonstration schedule for the upcoming year. So far we have Keith Pipoly volunteering for March. Martin Littleton will be hosting us in May. Corky Lunceford will have us all over for the annual AVWA barbeque in July with Dan Yost doing finials with members having a hands-on opportunity. I will do January. We are still looking for someone to demonstrate in September and November. So now is a great time for someone to volunteer. You never know what you can do until you do it.

Also at our next meeting I plan on a demonstration on the use of the bowl gouge. I know it seems simple but I spent a week in a class last January with Stewart Batty and it helped me a lot. Remember, what skills you have with the bowl gouge are skills you do not need with sandpaper. I do not know anyone that likes to sand. Well some people may like to sand but they are the mentally ill! So bring you bowl gouges for a hands on good time!

Keep Turning - Bob

## EDITOR'S CORNER

By Dan Yost

I would like to thank the AV WA members and guests who braved the cool weather and came to my unheated garage for the November demonstration. We hope the three guests who attended the meeting return as members. Guests are always welcome so if you have a friend or neighbor who you think might enjoy woodturning bring them to a meeting.

I was unable to complete the finial vase in the time allotted but finished it later. It will be an auction item at the January meeting. See picture in this newsletter.

Dues for 2010 are due at the January meeting. Several members have already taken care of this chore. After January, the dues will be prorated by being reduced \$5.00 each meeting for new members.

For those members who paid for buckeye burls they are at Martin Littleton's. You can check with Martin for a time to cut them up or transport them to your location.

As our AVWA president stated, we will begin a new safety feature. This looks like it will be an important part of the newsletter. I think I could fill in a couple of issues – from experience. I have bounced a number of wood pieces off my antique car across the garage. In the U.S. Navy's flight safety magazine there is, or use to be, a section called Anymouse, (i.e. anonymous) where a crewmember could relate an experience, usually a human error, without identifying themselves. These articles were designed to help prevent other crew members from doing the same thing. Perhaps we could, occasionally, include a member's Anymouse in the safety section. Again, I could write a couple of Anymouses. Corky could relate how he managed to shoot a piece of wood through his shop widow. Any of you members have an Anymouse?

A reminder letter with directions to Bob Clark's shop will be sent to AVWA members about a week before the January meeting.

## NOVEMBER SHOW & TELL



Charlie William's segmented bowl



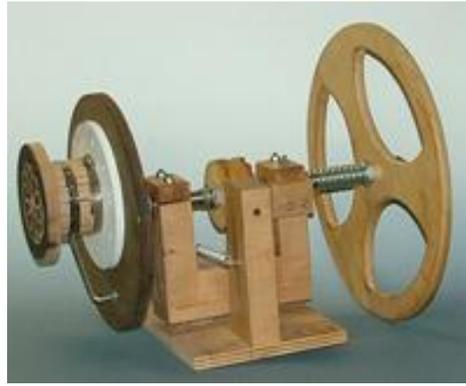
Corky Lunceford's hats



Dean Pertie's goblet & ball



Martin's napkin rings



Steve Moe's rose engine



Rose engine adapters/cutters



Pete Catra's candle holder



Dave Soward's Carib vase



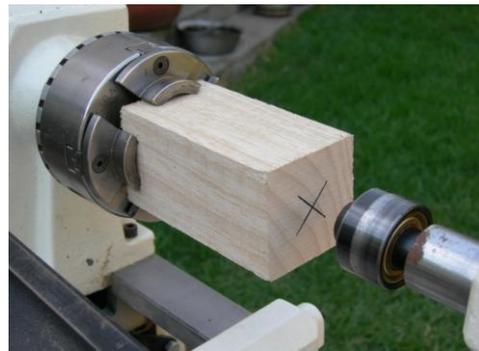
Dave Soward's natural edge bowl

## Spin Top Project

By Pete Carta

Spin tops are fun to make and help develop good tool control skills. Tops are turned as spindles with the grain running parallel to the lathe bed. The entire project can be completed with only a spindle (or detail) gouge. There are many options that can be used to turn and then decorate the tops. The completed tops can be a great gift for a youngster or for the youngster in each of us.

1. **Select a blank** that is about two inches by two inches by four inches long. Straight-grained hard maple would be a good choice for this project. Avoid blanks that have cracks or checks. Use a rule to mark one end of the block.
2. **Mount the blank in a scroll chuck.** Use the tailstock and the center to align the block in the chuck before tightening the jaws. *alternate method would be to use a faceplate and glue block if a available.*



inches long.  
project.  
the center on

marked  
An  
chuck is not

3. **Turn the outside** to form a cylinder at least three inches long maximum diameter possible. A spindle or detail gouge can be used for this step. *A spindle-roughing gouge could also be used. (New turners may want to use a parting tool near the chuck.)*



and the  
used for this  
turners may

spin longer.  
down to the  
decoration in  
be a good  
surface. Do

4. **Form the bottom** of the spin top. Low profile tops seem to Start the cut about 3/8 of an inch from the face. Slowly cut center. Do not force the gouge into the wood. At this point, the form of “chatter-work” or colored pens can be used to



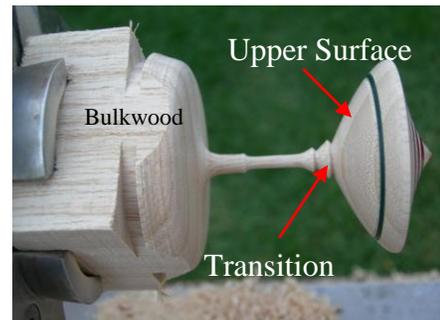
look of the top. This would  
time to sand and finish this  
NOT sand the tip.

5. **Form the upper surface** with the spindle gouge. Additional detail (chatter-work, colored markers) may be added to this surface. *Cut away more of the bulkwood on the left side as you proceed, to AVOID A CATCH.* This would be a good time to sand and finish this surface



6. **Turn the transition** between the upper surface and the stem. *(Small beads look good).* Keep cutting away some of the bulkwood on the left side as you proceed to AVOID A CATCH.

7. **Reduce the diameter of the stem** in gradual steps. The bevel of should **lightly** rest on the stem. *Cut away some of the bulkwood as proceed to AVOID A CATCH.* This would be a good time to sand the stem.



the gouge  
you  
and finish

**CATCH.**

8. **Part off the top** with the tip of the spindle gouge. **AVOID A**

**Supplies:**

Top Blank (2x2x4)  
Sand paper  
Sealer (finish)  
Pencil

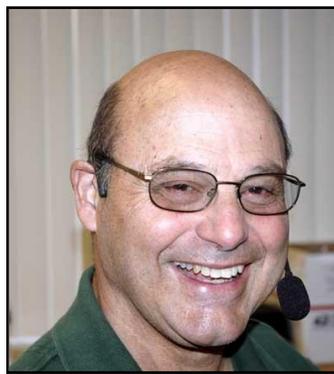
**Tools:**

3/8 Spindle Gouge  
Parting Tool (Optional)  
Spindle roughing gouge (Optional)  
Chatter Tool (Optional)

*“Enjoy the beauty of your creation and use this experience as a foundation to create more tops for all of the ‘young’ people in your life.”*

**Pete Carta**

Is a member and past president of the  
El Camino Woodturners  
Guild



## **Safety Section: Setting Your Lathe Height**

By Bob Clark

Recently my employer required me to sit through a lecture on ergonomics. One point the speaker made is that if a person has 100 lbs of force on their lower back when they are standing straight then the same person could have 220 lbs of force at the same point on the back when they are forced to work in a bent over position. Just think about it, your lathe is the only machine in your shop that you need to stand at for hours at a time. Also, most of us are standing on a hard concrete floor and none of us are as young as we used to be. The repetitive stress of working hunched over on your lathe for hours can severely damage your lower back and take all the fun out of woodturning.

In the current issue of American Woodturner Magazine, Kurt Bird discusses setting the proper lathe height for woodturners. He recommends that the height of the lathe spindle be set at the height of the turners elbow to two inches higher when he is standing straight.

Today many lathes like Oneway and Robust and others have adjustable bases and some lathes cannot be adjusted. Dan Yost solved the problem of no height adjustments by placing wooden blocks under the feet of the lathe. Spacers can also be made and placed between the lathe bed and the lathe base on some lathes. There is always a simple way to fix this problem. Just look for the simplest solution.

As you all know I am taller than most woodturners. I raised the spindle height of my old lathe three inches. It went from 44 inches to 47 inches and it was much easier to use. All of a sudden I was not hunched over trying to work on a lathe that was too short for me. Trust me it was well worth the effort and it made turning a pleasure again no back pain from turning. So check out your lathe and set it up to fit your needs. Your back will thank you.