

# SOUTH BAY WOODWORKERS' NEWS

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## Guest Column

By Bill Henzel

Our president is off enjoying a well deserved vacation. Over the last year I have enjoyed overseeing the construction of 4 large teak garden benches with curved backs. Two brothers chose to build two garden benches each for their eagle projects. After discussing the best wood to use for outdoor benches with our members, Tom Gaston informed me about a large surplus of teak that his neighbor had obtained for a construction project. A friend of his neighbor drove a small pickup truck completely filled with teak to my house and offered to sell the entire load for a fixed price. The majority of the lumber consisted of 4-6" logs, some with bark. The project began last May with several days of milling the logs into planks that would be used for the various parts of the benches. The two brothers worked together milling the lumber while learning how to use a large band saw, jointer and thickness planer. The older brother then began his project by working with scouts to make all of the templates needed for the many curved parts of the benches. Over the course of many months a stock pile of bench parts began to accumulate. The curved arches were laminated together using Titebond III glue. The lower back rail was

mortised using a multirouter, a safe and efficient tool in the hands of several skilled Boy scouts. Finally a bench was completed and installed with brackets into concrete. This process was repeated 3 times as of last week and the final bench is almost finished. The scouts have learned the basics of fine furniture construction and maybe someday some will have shops of their own.



## March Program:

The program was given by Kathy Matsushita, a retired school teacher, who makes guitars, ukuleles, banjos and violins. Her workshop is a spare bedroom that measures 10 by 12 feet. Her power tools reside in an outside shed in the backyard that also measures 10 by 12 feet.



She brought in the very first guitar that she made and the latest one. There is a marked difference in the workmanship between the two of them. The newer one has two features that do not appear on the older instrument. Along with the traditional hole in the top, there is an additional smaller sound port in the side so that the player can hear more of the sound. On her newer guitar, she has chamfered the top edge of the body where the arm rests so the sharp edge no longer chaffs the skin. The arm rest bevel is made of basswood, shaped and then covered with figured veneer.



Kathy showed us a unique ukulele that she called a harp ukulele. There is the usual body with four strings, but then there is an additional neck sticking out of the upper portion that contains four base strings. The additional neck starts out at an angle from the body, but then curves slightly inward at the far end. She explained that all eight strings must be in the same plane to work properly.

She brought in many of the tools that she uses in making her instruments and gave a brief description of their uses. There were four jigs for forming the bodies, two for guitars, one for ukuleles and one for violins. She has an electronic caliper that gives results in fractions, decimals, and millimeters. There was a small curved draw knife, and a Dremel sized router with two bases. One base for cutting grooves for purflings and the other base that cuts the circular hole and groove for rosettes. Kathy has a round disk of MDF that is about 36" in diameter that looks flat on the surface, but that is actually dish shaped with a radius of 15 feet. It's used to establish the curvature of the front and back of guitars. The dish is used in conjunction

with fiberglass bars and a custom made press to glue the brace wood to the front and back of the box. The top and bottom of the box need to be curved in order to withstand the tension of the steel strings.

After talking about the instruments and the tools she brought in, Kathy showed us a video of where she works, some of the tools and devices she uses that could not be brought to the meeting, and the process used in constructing these instruments.

As with the evolution of constructing a guitar from the first one to the current instrument, the finishing process has also evolved. Kathy started using nitrocellulose. She applies twelve coats before buffing, resulting in a smooth glossy finish. She performed this operation in her backyard because of the smell. She has also used water based lacquer, but is now using the French polish method. She has found an easy method for applying the shellac that she finds relaxing and produces an excellent finish.

**GUEST**

There were two guests this evening, Daria and Alexey Pluzhnik. Alexey is a student of Tracie Johnson’s.

**SHOW AND TELL**

Mike Papa brought in several objects made from wood that Syd Dunton brought to the club in February. He made a pen or pencil stand from a piece of burl that was glued to a base of what looked like bamboo. A groove in the base keeps the pens or pencils from rolling off. Two other pieces of walnut in the shape of stylized buffalo were glued to acrylic

bases. After sanding to 600, tripoli, white diamond, and wax are applied to the bases using the Beale buffing system to polish the chamfered corners.

Syd Dunton is experimenting with the texturing of wood using a chain saw in one case and an angle grinder with a chain saw-like disk in the other case for an upcoming sculpture he is working on. One side of the granadillo block obtained from Global Wood Source was textured with the chain saw while the other side was textured with the angle grinder. Syd bought the Lancelot wood cutting disc that comes in two sizes at Wood Craft. The 4 inch diameter disk has 14 teeth and the 4 1/2 inch diameter disk has 22 teeth. They come with an arbor hole of either 5/8 or 7/8 inches.

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<b>Program Committees</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Members</b>
January 23	Tom Kenyon LeRoy Nelson
February 27	Tom Gaston
March 27	Tracie Johnston Ed Vincent
April 24	Jeff Lucanc Dennis Yamamoto
May 22	Don McKell Leroy Nelson
June 26	Bob Koningsberg Richard Winslow
July 24	Allen Glesser Ron Gerard
August 28	Bill Henzel Larry Schwarcz
September 25	Mike Papa Richard Sprague
October 23	Todd Johnson Tom Kenyon
November 27	Bill Sprague Larry Patulia
December	Officers
Contact Richard Winslow for any changes to the committee schedule	

### Next Program Committee

Please take the ice chest home after the meeting

### Refreshment Suggestions

**Variety of Soft Drinks**

Water, Regular, Diet, Caffeine-Free,  
Juices

**Varied Snacks: Donuts, Cookies, Chips,  
Nuts**