

## **Between Turns**



## **Michigan Association of Woodturners**

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A chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

September 2006

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## Calendar

The Calendar listings are an attempt to keep you up to date on upcoming MAW events, as well as other events of particular interest to wood-turners.

- MAW meeting: October 1st
- Nick Cook 2 day demo will be on December 9 & 10

## **Meeting Announcements**



Herman Spaeth demonstrating his bird house on the club's newly acquired lathe.

Herman Spaeth gave a demonstration at today's September meeting of how to turn a bird house. Those that want the plans may go to the clubs website and download a color PDF version. To download the plans from this newsletter, click on the following link:

#### **Download Herman's Bird House Plans**

## **AAW Dues**

As part of the Fall 2006 membership drive, the AAW will be giving away a **free** Powermatic 3520B lathe to one lucky member who joined/renewed **ONLINE**. You can see and learn about this lathe at <a href="http://www.wmhtoolgroup.com/shop/index.cfm?navPage=4&iid=6056397">http://www.wmhtoolgroup.com/shop/index.cfm?navPage=4&iid=6056397</a>

By joining on line, your correct address, phone, etc. will appear in the directory

and your Journal will be mailed to the correct address. If you use the paper mail-in form, mistakes can happen in reading and retyping it. The lathe will be given away in a drawing just after January 1, 2007. To qualify for the drawing you must join or renew online using the AAW website join/renew feature. Members who join/renew by phone or by paper will NOT qualify for the drawing. Only members who join/renew online between August 15, 2006 and January 1, 2007 will qualify. The free lathe includes free

For more information, visit the AAW website at <a href="http://www.woodturner.org/">http://www.woodturner.org/</a>.

The first time you login, use the username and password provided to you from the Fall 2006 individual AW Journal you received. If you just joined the AAW for the first time, the username and password were provided to you either electronically, or via postal mail with your order. After you login, you will be prompted to create a unique username and password combination.

John Hill - AAW Chapters and Membership chairman

828-645-6633

#### johnrhill@charter.net

shipping up to \$400.

If you do not have a computer and need assistance in this, please contact Tom Mogford.

## Demonstrator Needed

If you or someone you know is interested in giving a demonstration at our October 1st meeting, please contact Tom Mogford.

## **Nick Cook Demo**

\$95.00/year, includes
A.A.W. Membership. Remit at the December meeting or by

demons strators cludes
Come j

Tim Morris, Treasurer 1673 Woodlake Circle Brighton, MI 48116

#### Meetings:

mail to:

will now be held from 1-3 p.m. on the first Sunday of the month at the workshop of:

Dave Gordon 10621 Milford Rd. Holly, Michigan 48442

**Next Meeting:** 

**October 1, 2006** 



Seats are filling up for the Nick Cook demo on December 9th & 10th. Two days of top notch demonstration by one of the AAW's best demonstrators. Cost is \$80.00 for both days. This includes continental breakfast and lunch both days.

Come join us and take a wealth of information home with you. Call Tom Mogford at 810-629–6176 for reservations.

## MWW.Mep.edite

Please visit the club's website at www.michiganwoodturner.org

If you have a favorite turning you would like to have posted in the "GALLERY", please email a digital picture to the webmaster.

rroehrig@charter.net

## "07" Club Picnic

Thinking ahead to next summers picnic, the club decided to save the \$100 registration fee and hold the annual picnic at the club's meeting location. With the excellent facilities and spacious grounds, this should work out very well.

## Photo's

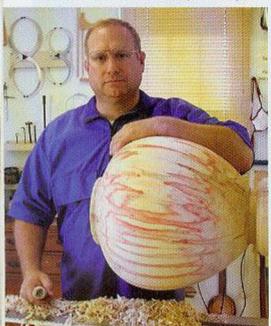
Photographs for this months "Between-Turns" were provided by Bob Roehrig. If you have digital photo's that you would like to have considered for use in the newsletter, please send them to the editor at:

# how to find the pearls in burls

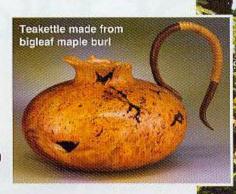
urls—those odd, bulbous growths on trees that result from an injury or disease-hold hidden treasures of exotic figure beneath their haunting exteriors. For a woodworker, this figure makes for eye-catching turnings; accents such as inlays, box lids, and handles; and veneers. To get the most from burls, you need to know how to properly cut and preserve them. Bruce Hoover, an award-winning professional woodturner from Virginia's Eastern Shore, knows burls inside and out. He shares his tips below on preparing these prized beauties.

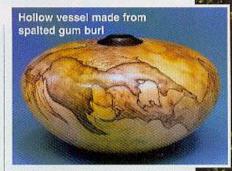
#### Start with the harvest

When you're lucky enough to come across a downed tree with burls (and you have per-



Author Bruce Hoover shapes a large hollow vessel from spalted box elder, characterized by the fungus-induced red streaks.





In the photo, right, a red maple tree bulges with burls. Though eerie on the outside, these growths yield beautiful figure, as evidenced in the turnings above by Bruce Hoover.

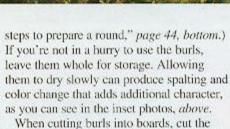
mission to take them), cut oversize sections that include a minimum of 6" of trunk material above and below the burls. The extra wood, Bruce notes, will protect the burls from drying too quickly and checking. To save as much of a burl's figure as possible, avoid slicing the burl from the trunk. However, if a trunk section is too large to handle, you can cut through the pith to remove

the back half of the trunk, reducing its size and weight.

For extremely large burls, you may be better off cutting them into more manageable sections or slabs for transport, again allowing extra material, where possible, for drying and mounting on a lathe or later slabbing into box material or some other project.

## For faster drying, trim and size the burls

To speed up drying, cut the burls that you plan to use in the near term into rounds and blocks for turning or boards and veneers for other woodworking purposes. (See "3 easy



boards 25 percent thicker than you'll need to allow for distortion during drying. Also, be aware that your cutting direction can make a difference in the figure's appearance, depending on the burl's grain pattern. Burls typically have either an eye figure or random, swirling grain. If you're cutting a burl with

Continued on page 44

eye figure, the board will exhibit either eyes or radiant lines depending on the way you slice it, as shown on the drawing at right.

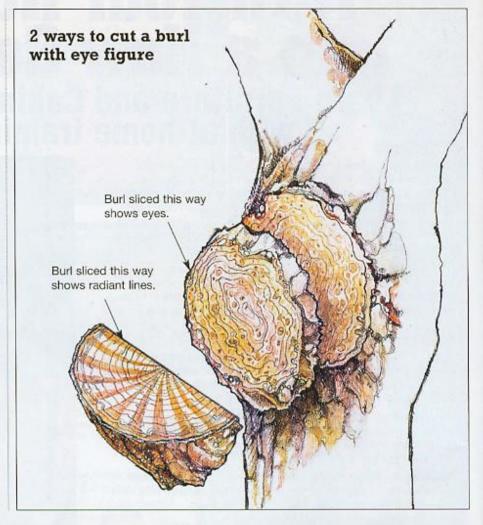
How can you tell if the burl has eye figure? You can't be sure without taking a thin slice off the burl's top. But, you generally can expect to find eye figure in maple, cherry, ash, and walnut burls. If a burl has swirling grain (typical in mulberry, gum, and birch), you needn't be concerned about the cutting direction. Just cut it to get the best yield.

## Seal and store your gems

In order to slow the release of moisture, seal the exposed end-grain surfaces on your cut pieces. (It's not necessary to seal any oversize sections or rounds that you plan to turn wet within 8 to 10 weeks.) Use a sealer, such as End Grain Wood Sealer, available from Packard Woodworks Inc. (call 800/683-8876, or go to www.packardwoodworks.com).

Now, store oversize sections outside, off the ground, and sheltered from direct sun and rain. Keep the cut pieces inside. How long will it take the cut pieces to dry? This varies with temperature and humidity conditions. As a general guide, Bruce has found that small rounds and blocks less than 1½" thick or boards less than ¾" thick dry in about 12 weeks in warm air. Thicker pieces can take up to 6 months.

Illustration: Mike Mittermeier Photographs: David Dereng



## 3 easy steps to prepare a round

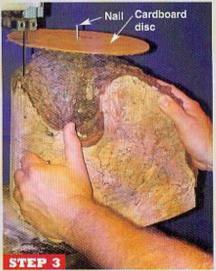
In order for the weight of your burl to be evenly distributed when turning it on the lathe, you'll need to flatten its back and round its outside, as shown in these photos. Waiting about four weeks before turning the burl will allow initial moisture release to help stabilize the wood so there's less chance of distortion.



Chainsaw through the pith of the oversize section to remove the back half of the log while also flattening the back of the burl.



Trim the excess trunk ends, then chainsaw along the sides of the burl to square it, as shown here.



Nail a cardboard disc of suitable size for a cutting guide to the burl's top. Bandsaw the burl round, following the disc.