



Redwood Intermediate School 233 W. Gainesboro Rd. Thousand Oaks, CA  
P.O. Box 1838, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358-0838

## THE BLADERUNNER

[www.cvwa.org](http://www.cvwa.org)

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### RENEWALS

Brad Eden, the Membership Chairman, says that there are still some people out there who have not paid their dues. As of March 31, you will be officially classified as a late payer and may have to endure 50 lashes with a wet noodle administered by a member of the Board. In order to avoid this public embarrassment, we suggest either you send your \$20.00 to CVWA, P.O. Box 1838, Thousand Oaks, CA 91358-0838, OR bring a check or cash to the next meeting.

**MARCH MEETING** Our new President, **Ira Goldberg**, started the meeting with the introduction of the new officers and appointees. Their names and telephone numbers appear on the back page of the newsletter. Ira is devoted to bringing new and exciting programming to the club and we should all look forward to some great upcoming meetings.

**MARCH SHOW AND TELL** **Jordan Greer** brought in a couple of teaching devices for children, a clock and a more complicated spatial forms box. The different sized dowels and colors on the dowels provided a good shape and color recognition tool. The finishes and the size of the parts were all child-safe and would not present a hazard to the child. **Bob Farnbruch** brought in some wooden whistles that he made as a woodworking demonstration for local school children. The whistles were a hit with the 1,300 children that observed the demonstrations. Bob worked with only 10 kids at a time, so you know this was a time consuming project for him. **Bill Brand** brought in some canes made from the almond tree project. Members of a certain age quickly scooped them up. **Jordan Greer** brought in a couple of teaching devices for children, a clock and a more complicated spatial forms box. The different sized dowels and colors on the dowels provided a good shape and

color recognition tool. The finishes and the size of the parts were all child-safe and would not present a hazard to the child.

**MARCH PROGRAM** Hand planes were the subject of the demonstration given by **Steven Case-Pall, Dan Gallo and Brad Ormsby**. They reviewed the history of planes and exhibited their combined collection of wooden and modern planes. The length of the plane dictated the kind of work that could be done with it, smoothing or jointing. Different shapes would allow dado, bead, rabbet or other specialized cuts. As usual, the demonstrators made using the planes look easy, but anyone who has had one of these in his hands, knows that cutting with hand planes is an acquired skill that has a slow learning curve. Thanks again for the good evening.

**MARCH VISITORS** Our guest list for March included **Harry Poschman, Mark Laufbaum, Glen Inonye, Al Culp, Len Pe'ment and Wolfgang Ludeking**.

**MARCH NEW MEMBERS** New additions to our roster include **Leonard Bellenson, Dave Hergesheimer and Harvey Paskowitz**.

**APRIL PROGRAM** We are pleased to have a representative of the Enduro Finishing Company to demonstrate its products for us. Enduro makes a line of water based finishes and fillers that can be either sprayed or brushed on, as well as a line of spray equipment. This is an opportunity to determine the best finish for your project. As always, time will be allotted for questions.

**APRIL PRIZES** The prizes for the month are a bronze Lie Nielsen low angle block plane, a set of Vix-Bits (for centering those pilot holes on hinges) and a L'il Wizard Metal Detector. In addition, Steven Case-Pall is donating one of his tuned and fettled wooden planes.

**MAY PROGRAM** A representative of the Lie Nielsen Company will demonstrate its line of wood working tools. Lie Nielsen makes a line of extraordinarily fine tools that are both a pleasure to use and to look at. Getting him to the meeting is a real *coup* for the program committee.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS THANKS AND OTHER STUFF

## **OSHA Publishes E-mail Newsletter**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has launched *Quick Takes*, a free, monthly e-mail newsletter with information on OSHA activities and regulations.

The newsletter includes news and announcements, background information on workplace health and safety issues, an overview of OSHA activities and links to detailed information sources. To subscribe, visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

## **Cerritos College**

As some of you know, Cerritos College has a fine program for woodworkers, ranging from introductory woodworking courses to production cabinet making. Summer session runs from May 28 to August 16. If you are interested in car pooling to Cerritos this summer, either email or call **Ira Goldberg**. The full schedule is posted on [www.Cerritos.edu/wood](http://www.Cerritos.edu/wood).

## **Woodworking Show**

The annual Pomona show is scheduled for May 3, 4 and 5. Sixty-five vendors have scheduled to appear. Seminars will cover carpentry, routing, finishing and carving. Additional information is at [www.thewoodworkingshows.com](http://www.thewoodworkingshows.com). Sign up sheets for car pooling will be available at the April meeting.

## **Christmas Project**

I know, we just finished this project. But it's time to start planning for the 2002 season. Please contact **Bill Aurand** if you can help with the preliminary planning.

## **Flag Cases**

Dan Gallo calls our attention to an article in *WOOD* magazine. The April issue runs a story about a project started in San Ramón, CA to assist the 9/11 victims. Phil Cullen hatched the idea to make wooden cases for the flags used at the burial rites for the 9/11 victims. He contacted several woodworkers clubs and in no time, the idea grew into a nationwide organization that is known as Woodworkers United for America. Clubs and individuals from the 50 states are currently participating in the project. If you are interested in participating, you can contact Bill Tarleton at (925) 939-8052 or at [btarl@attbi.com](mailto:btarl@attbi.com). The web site for the project is [www.woodworkersunitedforamerica.org](http://www.woodworkersunitedforamerica.org).

## Volunteers Wanted

The Refreshments Coordinator has been promoted to The Board of Directors and the club needs to have a volunteer to prepare coffee and cakes for the meeting. It's not really a hard job, and if you have the time to buy the baked goods and make the coffee at the meetings, give **Bill Aurand** a call. Your help will be appreciated.

## **Classified**

**Greg Charles** tells me that a friend of his is trying to sell a Grizzly 10" heavy duty table saw with 2 cast iron extension wings. It has a Sears XR-2424 fence, sits on an enclosed stand, dado blade, standard insert and a miter gauge. The stand needs a little paint, but otherwise the unit is described as being in great condition. You can have it all for \$350.00. Call Fred Swann, (805) 495-8630, if you are interested.

Camarillo House

**Loren Stone** reminds us that the Camarillo Ranch House has been completely renovated and is now open for weekly tours on Saturdays.

The house was built in 1892, remodeled in 1913 and completely renovated by the Camarillo House Foundation in 2001. The grand stairway, extensive cove moldings, filigree dividers. Sliding doors and large mop boards may be of interest to woodworkers. The house also contains some 1913 period furniture. On the property is the second largest Moreton Bay fig tree in California, the tallest Norfolk Pine in California and a Bunya Bunya tree [*araucaria bidwilli*, a tall coniferous tree with edible cones originating in Australia]. All the trees were planted in 1892. The facility is open Saturdays 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Exit the 101 Freeway at Flynn, turn right at the light on Camarillo Ranch Road. A short drive gets you to the property.

**Thanks to Gene West**





We know him as the raffle man, the man who buys the tools and runs the monthly raffle. But, he's also the man who brings in the wonderfully crafted toys, locks and mechanical demonstration projects - and those projects have made him better known in Ventura County as "The Toymaker" and the "Modern Day Geppeto".

"Seventy-year old Gene West, a retired mechanical engineer, has done woodworking all of his life, but he didn't start making wooden toys until 11 years ago when his wife, Pat, gave him his first scroll for Christmas. He went to the library to get ideas on what to make with his new saw and came across books on making wooden toys.

Over a decade later, West has made replicas of more than 300 toys from around the world, including ones from Russia, China, Japan, Italy and Mexico that date back as early as the 1400s. For some of the toys West makes, like carousels with intricate detail and a myriad of colors that take a couple of months to complete, he uses design plans. For others, like elaborate four-foot tall musical marble towers where marbles are taken by a hand crank to the top of a tower and then are let loose to cascade down mazes, past ringing bells, along singing xylophones and dropped through trap doors, no design plans are used. But whether it's an intricate toy that took hundreds of hours to complete, or simpler wooden European-style jumping jacks like "Punch and Judy" whose origins date back to Italy as early as the 1600s, West's collection keeps children busy for hours.

He has taken his toy collection to almost 400 different schools, nursing homes, senior centers, libraries and the Ventura Count Fair to share with people.

"I don't sell my toys and I don't charge anything to show them to people", say West. "I come out even that way".

West says that his pleasure comes from watching people's reactions to his creations.

"It's fun to watch the kids figure out how to play with them," says West. "They are intrigued by them because there are no batteries and no switches and you have to interact with these toys in order to get them to perform. It's more than just pushing a button or pressing a switch."

One of the things West likes to do is to have children give names to the toys he creates, because they seem to have a good understanding of what name suits a toy best. "Candy Cane Machine" was a name a little boy made up for a toy with colorful pegs that twirl around and bob up and down creating a rhythmic song as they move.

West makes his toys using woods like oak, mahogany and poplar so that they will withstand heavy play. But even so, when kids at schools and at the fair handle the toys, they are put to the test and sometimes get broken. This doesn't phase West one bit.

"That's the way I find the weak spots. Then I know the parts that need to be made stronger"

West and his wife have 11 grandchildren, but he says he doesn't make wooden toys for them either.

"I figure it gives them incentive to come over to grandpa's house to play with something different than the toys they already have."

West doesn't stop at sharing his toys all over Ventura County. He also volunteers with the Association for Retarded Citizens; makes displays at the Gull Wings Children's Museum in Oxnard and teaches woodworking at the Braille Institute.

In 2000 the Conejo Woodworkers Association nominated West for the Minwax Company's Volunteer Woodworker of the Year Award and he was selected as the Grand Champion, in celebration of all his volunteer work.

"I enjoy sharing my woodworking talents and giving people who normally wouldn't get a chance, the opportunity to do something with their hands."

Gene is obviously a local treasure and we are privileged to have him as a member of our club.

[The preceding article was written by Jennifer Ludlow and appeared in *The Acorn*. Permission to use this material in its entirety was granted by the paper.]

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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