

Mid-America Woodcarvers Association

NEWSLETTER

Oct 2014



Meetings and Open Carving - First and Third Saturdays 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Augustana Lutheran Church 38th and Lafayette St



FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Last call for tables for the Fall Show! It's hard to believe the Fall Show is just a few weeks away. Rich Wagner is doing a great job again this year of organizing the show. Many thanks go out to everyone that is pitching in and helping with this event. Friday we will need volunteers for set up, taking entries for the competition, as well as volunteers throughout the weekend to help at the door and to do demonstrations. Please sign up at the next meeting or show up and we will put you to work.

New this year is a banquet Saturday evening at the German American Society. If you do not have a table at the show, but wish to attend the dinner, please send us a registration indicating "Dinner Only" we would love to have you join us.

At the last meeting we held an election for an Interim Treasurer. On behalf of the club I would like to welcome Ken Kult as the new Treasurer. I would also like to thank Len Stennecke for his many years of service to the club. Happily, Len's health continues to improve and we all look forward to seeing him at club again soon.

Believe it or not, we are beginning preparations for The Doane Experience 2015. Instructor invitations will soon go out and the process will begin again. So start planning for Doane, we look forward to seeing you there.

Help wanted! Our many thanks to Ken Armsbury as Class Coordinator, we have appreciated all his help in arranging classes during club. At this time Ken has decided to step down from the position and we are now in need of a new Class Coordinator. This is a volunteer position. Ken has classes lined up for the rest of this year already, so we will need someone to begin lining up classes for next year.

Just a reminder, we are always looking for your input when it comes to MAWA. As your board we are here to help continue the traditions of MAWA as well as implement your ideas to make it better each year. We value and encourage your opinions. Please feel free to let us know your concerns and suggestions, the door to the board meetings is always open as well.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting and the Fall Show.

Maria

Once in a great while I get a call from someone, who has gotten my name from somebody, and would like to have me cut a log up for them. This time the call was not about a log but instead about a cherry burl. I have only cut one other burl, and to be honest I was surprised that anyone even wanted the wood. I guess the old saying beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder is really accurate. This time I buzzed thru it and stacked the slabs cut at 4" thick in order and the guy was happy with it so I guess that is all that matters.



Club Officers - **Maria Mulherin** - President

Mary Ann Klinger - 1st VP

PJ Driscoll - 2nd VP

Sherry LaTendresse - General Secretary

Judy Nygard - Recording Secretary

Len Stenneche - Treasurer

Board Members: **Denny Rourke, Larry Putnam, George Bledsoe, Rich Wagner, Rich Mahacek**

Membership: **Len Stenneche**

Workshops: **Ken Armsbury**

Library: **Sherry LaTendresse** and **Barb Steiner**

Tool Managers: **Ken Armsbury** and **Larry Putnam**

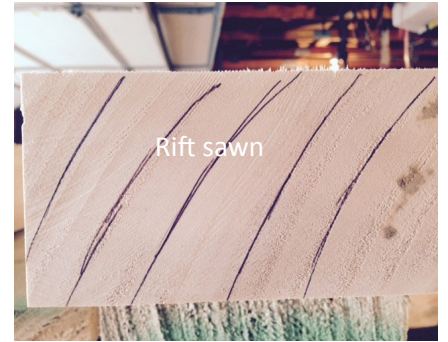
History: **Virginia Stewart** and **Sandy Floral**

Hospitality: **Sandy Floral**

Basswood 101 everything you wanted to know about basswood or maybe knot.....

I thought this month I would give you a little information about something we as carvers are all familiar with, Tilia Americana, aka Linden, aka basswood. There is a fantastic article written by my friend John Krantz that goes into great detail about this. I have included a link to the article here <https://docs.google.com/a/minnesotaforestry.org/viewer? a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bWlubmVzb3RhZm9yZXN0cnkub3JnfGhvbWV8Z3g6NjdkNTE4OWVhYjdjNWRiNA> it is well worth the read.

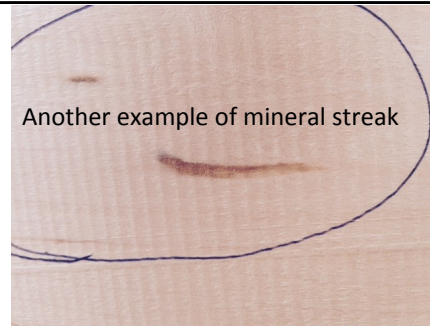
I wanted to approach it from a different angle, more from a consumer point of view. I will use one of John's photo's from the article however to show how basswood is cut from the log. Let me first give you a few points. The basswood tree grows in many places but most of the carving wood you are familiar with comes from the northern states Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan. It is a very soft hardwood and measures 410 on the Janka Hardness Scale. For reference Oak measures 1260, walnut 1010, Douglas Fir 660, and Butternut 490. This makes it wonderful to carve with hand tools, even dull ones, so if you learn how to sharpen your tools it will be that much easier. The trees are cut in the winter and usually sawn into lumber in the early spring. It is important how the logs are sawn into cants and this photo from John's article is about the best representation of how they are sawn that I have found. The log is cut to maximize the flat sawn wood and the heart or the center of the tree is cut out as it is undesirable. What you get by cutting the log this way is you maximize the flat sawn wood which is desired by carvers, the photo below in the center shows typical flat sawn grain. The photo to the right shows quarter or rift sawn grain. The flat, rift, or quarter sawn refers to how the log is cut on the mill. The direction of the growth rings relative to the face of the board. How it is cut affects the look and mechanical properties of the wood. Quarter sawing takes more time and isn't used on basswood but in other hardwood it produces stunning ray fleck and is less prone to movement that can effect flat sawn stock



The image to the left is a typical board from a basswood log, you can see defects. These defects must be processed out. The defects are removed and the clear wood is the planed and jointed to create the S4S blocks that you see when you buy wood at a carving show. In these photo's you can see how I will cut the cant to get the usable blocks. Often times there is considerable waste that cannot be used for carving. It does however make good camp firewood. In these photo's I have numbered the cuttings that should produce clear stock as you can see they are all different sizes. Some boards you will get very clear but as you go thicker stock you get more defects. This is because basswood trees tend to grow smaller up north so clear 5" thick cants are rare.



Typical rough sawn cant of basswood this piece came off of a circle mill. The dark lines on the cant are sticker stains used in the drying process and discolorations that will plane out



These marks are very light colored and usually very shallow I am not sure what causes them. They are referred to as mineral streaking but doesn't represent a big issue. They are pretty common in basswood logs and usually are shallow in depth.

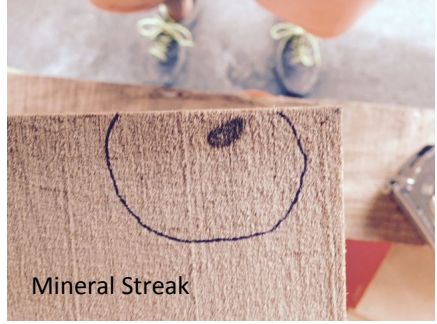
So now that you have the basic info on the how the wood is cut I want to show you some things I see in basswood and some things to look for when picking out wood.



These dark spots are called pin knots. When they are on the face they are usually shallow and not an issue.



I cut the block to cut left thru the dark spot as you can see it is a surface defect.



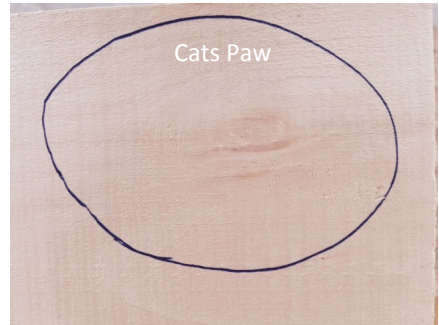
This is a spot on the end of the board, these can often run quite far up the board so they can be trouble with careful layout. These can be worked around.



Here are a couple examples of end grain checking, caused during the log drying as you can see they can be hard to see. In logs I try and seal the ends with a special paint that minimizes end checking but some still occurs. Something to look for and plan your cut out with it in mind. I remove this when I see it but once in a while it is missed.



Here is a great looking board but if you look close you can see what I call a cats paw. It is a defect that can be hard to see. It is usually caused by a wound in the tree that heals over but can be a hard spot to carve.



Here is a board with a little bark on it. The best wood come from the outside of the tree so this is no problem.



Sometimes two chunks of wood the same size can weigh different. Some wood is denser this can make it a little harder to carve but it holds detail better and some folks look for that. The top chunk was 3/4 pound heavier but the rings on the heavier piece were very tight the chunk on the bottom were farther apart.



Here is a example of the mold/fungus/bacteria (I should ask my wife the science teacher) that forms on the outside of the cants while they are air drying this is on the surface and is easily planned off.



The last thing I wanted to talk about is the moisture content of the wood. The cants when fresh cut measure 35% or more. Once the wood is dry it can range from 13% air dried down to 7.1 % when dried in a kiln. The wood will regain some moisture when it is stored in a unheated building averaging about 11% roughly. Anything is that range is ok to use. As I talked about last month wood that isn't dried correctly can be discolored and can mold, wood that isn't given enough air flow while drying can even turn a hint of blue. Which will make the sawmill owner kind of blue too!!!!

A Parting Shot.....By George Bledsoe

Another month and another newsletter, where does the time go. I decided to try and write an article on basswood and some information about it that I hope you enjoy. It is increasingly difficult to sort thru all the information that people send me to put in the newsletter (I am being sarcastic) so it has become more dependent on me to come up with stuff to fill these 7 pages of each months newsletter. So if the content is thin consider the pond it is being drawn from. I always tell people the newsletter is worth what you are paying for it. In any case I have been busy around the old homestead, I cleaned my barn, and my garage that alone should win me some sort of award. I will finish getting ready for the fall show, last minute wood prep to make sure I have that one chunk of wood you can't live without (hopefully). I mowed the pasture hopefully for the last time this year, the mosquitoes are horrible right now. I am looking forward to the first frost that will kill them. I also unloaded one of the kilns and was moving wood around with my tractor. It was all going fine until I stacked a little to much in the pile in the front yard. My yard slopes slightly and apparently the pile shifted and the next thing I know is I have a pile of pickup sticks in the yard. So that meant restacking each stick by hand which was loads of fun, 5" thick basswood cants are heavy! I also got all my logs that I have, staged and ready to be milled. The chunk on the sawmill now is a white oak crotch that I have worked on trying to whittle it down to a manageable size. I am not sure it is even worth the effort but I am bound to see it thru to the end now. The logs are mostly walnut with a couple of maples in the mix. The idea of stacking my bark I got off the internet it works really well so far unless you want a piece lower in the pile. It is sort of a first in last out kind of deal. *George*



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Mid-America Woodcarvers Association's Fall Show

German American Society 3717 S. 120th St Omaha Nebraska

Oct 11th and 12th Contact Rich Wagner for details

Rich Wagner (402)218-7270 or at chipcarver@live.com

It is now time to stop procrastinating !!!!!

Contact Rich and get a table I

It promises to be a great time for one and all

2014 Registration Form
Mid-America Woodcarvers Association, Inc.
40th ANNUAL FALL SHOW & SALE

GERMAN-AMERICAN SOCIETY, INC 3717 S 120 Street Omaha, Nebraska

Friday, October 10, 2014 Set-up time 11:00A to 5:00PM --- Competition Entry 2:00 PM to 5:00PM

Saturday, October 11, 2014 9:00AM to 5:00PM --- Sunday, October 12, 2014 10:00AM to 4:00 PM

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Exhibitors will be responsible for providing the following items.
- Table Covering— this must cover the top as well as 3 sides to the floor. It must be a fabric or vinyl covering.
- Lighting and cords— need duck tape to tape cords to the floor.
- Carving will be allowed at the tables. (Talk and Demonstrate what you do.)
- **Vendors:** The Wood Craft Shop, Moore Roughouts, and Loess Hills Sawmill
- *Average table size is 8ft, but some tables will be no smaller than 6ft in length due to space.
- Displays may not be taken down before close of show: 4pm Sunday.
- German American Society will be supplying Food and Drink at a very affordable price.
- **LODGING:** Best Western, Motel 6, Super 8, Comfort Inn, La Quinta Inn and Travel Inn all located at the intersection of 108th and L street. East of I-680 on L street.
- **COMPETITION AND JUDGING:** The competition is open to dues-paying members of the Mid-America Woodcarving Association. No one is restricted from joining. Dues are \$20.00 (USA) per year and run from Jan.1 through Dec 31. Reserving a show table is required to enter completion.
- A packet will be provided with all Competition Rules, Entry Procedures and Show Information at sign in time. You may also check our web site for this information. www.midamericawoodcarvers.com

(Buffett Dinner will be available Sat. night 6:00 pm at the German American Hall for \$12.00 each. To be paid with Registration)

Questions: Contact Rich Wagner (402)218-7270 or at chipcarver@live.com

Mary Ann Klinger (402)453-2393 or at gmklinger@cox.net

Make all checks payable to: MID-AMERICA WOODCARVERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Send registration to: MAWA FALL SHOW AND SALE - PO BOX 521 GRETNA, NE 68028

-----Cut and Return-----

Please reserve _____ table (s) *space (s) with 2 chairs \$35.00 each. Non—members—\$55.00

Exhibitor _____ Spouse _____

Address _____ *If attending*

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone(_____) _____

Cell Phone # (_____) _____ E-Mail _____

Will you be sharing a table? Yes or No (Circle one) If yes please provide information:

Exhibitor _____ Spouse _____

Address _____ *If attending*

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone(_____) _____

Cell Phone # (_____) _____ E-Mail _____

Registration Total: \$ _____ Dinner Total:\$ _____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

I/We certify that all wood projects and carvings to be exhibited by me/us are handmade or carved and are my/ our own work. I/We certify that German American Society, the Mid-America Woodcarvers Association officers and members will not be responsible for any loss, damage or injury while I/We are at the show or otherwise.

Signature _____ Date _____ Check # _____



MID-AMERICA WOODCARVERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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