



# Shavings

Hill Country Turners  
Monthly Newsletter



Volume #17

Issue #2

February 15, 2012

## Next Meeting, March 8, 2012

### MEETING PLACE

**Hill Country Turners** meet in the basement of the KACC (Kerr Arts & Cultural Center) at 228 Earl Garrett, Kerrville, Texas at 6:30 pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

### February Meeting

The February meeting was well attended with visits from **Gordon Kincheloe, Richard Wagner, John Sherman, Chip Taute** and again this year, from Cheyenne Wyoming, **Larry Barkell**.

Alan Trout did the demo. He came last year and showed us his CA glue finishing techniques and we saw some of his (CA finished of course) fine catalyzed resin hollow forms. This time he showed us his techniques for making the hollow forms and the casting process he follows. A handout was made available and is provided following the newsletter.

Basically, Allen prepares a blank, with a tenon for chuck mounting, in the rough form of the final piece as a guide for adding decorative inclusions so that they will be at the correct depth when he finally turns the piece. The bottom of the blank, above the tenon, incorporates a base that can be stuck (glue, masking tape and duct tape) to a tube to create a pot with the piece in it. Fill the pot with catalyzed resin in the pressure vessel, pressurize the thing to squeeze out the bubbles. After a couple of hours it is ready to cool and turn. Sounds simple, but the devil and the art is in the details. Wow!

Here are a couple of pictures. The first shows Alan, his pressure vessels and cups for mixing and coloring the resin. The second shows how a tube is added for the resin fill. The third shows the excess resin turned away, the piece hollowed and ready for finish.



### March Meeting

**James Johnson** will do the demo in March and will highlight the dyeing of wood.

### Show and Tell

This is often the best part of the meeting. This one was really good. **Will Aymond** brought a big clock from big leaf maple complete with a window to show the pendulum. He also showed a nice pepper grinder. **Tom Canfield** showed a large bowl from Bradford pear and, to prove his careful stewardship of wood, a tiny platter from the waste. I put **Allan Trout's** "purple haze" hollow form in the S&T, since it was a finished piece and well worth the extra glance.



**Jerry DeGroot** brought a very good mesquite bowl. **Harold Dykes** brought a segmented piece of a different style with many diamond shaped pieces highlighted by a star in the center and superb joinery. **Roger Felps** showed a walnut hollow form inlaid with ?. **George Taylor** showed a whole lot of wine bottle stoppers of wood and resin on a nice mesquite display. He also had a very nicely dyed bowl that was a study in texturing (sorry I didn't get a good look for you at the sides.) **Jimmy and Debbie Walker** showed a mesquite bowl of well chosen wood that required all kinds of support and extra care to turn, but with good result and excellent finish. Not shown, **Linda Arnold** brought an excellent lighthouse that I failed to get a picture of. I'll make it up to you somehow Linda.



**Business:**

**Plea for Current Information:** If you have any doubt that your contact information is correct, please send your name, spouse, mailing address (with ZIP) and phone number and e-mail address to **Jay Shimek** at [taztiger@hctc.net](mailto:taztiger@hctc.net) .

**SWAT: Kathy Roberts**, our SWAT rep. said that at the January Board meeting things were going strong and that SWAT would be held the last full weekend in August. That would be August 23-26. She also brought back DVDs of all the demos from 2011 SWAT and they are available for checkout from our library.

**Lathe Guard: Uel Clanton, Chuck Felton and Joe Johnson** have done a great service to all of us, especially those in the front rows of the demonstrations. They have installed a clear plastic lathe guard to shield those in front of the crowd from debris being thrown from the lathe.

Big Brothers: **Will Aymond** announced a new policy of appointing a BIG BROTHER to new members. Our first Big Brother is Jerry DeGroot to our newest member **Tom Canfield** from Fredericksburg who moved here from Tyler. **Nick Huntly** recently moved to the Tyler club, so it was an even swap, according to Nick.

**Craft Supply Order:** There was a Craft Supply order that went out shortly after the meeting, but the point is that **Uel Clanton** had ordered 25 Craft Supply Catalogs and there may be extras left over. If so, contact either **Bill Hussey** or **Will Aymond**.

**Open Shop Saturday:** The next Open Shop Saturday looks like will be March 17th at **Jerry DeGroot's** shop. Details will be forthcoming in the March meeting. Also, **Joe Johnson** will host the open shop in April on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

## Drinks and Snacks

<u>Month</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Drinks</u>	<u>Sweets</u>
March	8th	Pete Cowger	Darrell Korman
April	12th	Keith Longnecker	Denise Smith
May	10th	Larry Walton	Don Kaiser
June	14th	Mike Shoup	Martha Hill
July	12th	Anna Rachinsky	Valerie Shimek
August	9th	Roger Arnold	Harold Dykes
September	13th	Liz Farris	Jim & Kathy Hampton
October	11th	Paul Hewitt	Will Aymond
November	8th	Jerre Williams	Bill Hussey
December	13th	Christmas Party	Christmas Party

## HCT Mentoring Program

It has always been a practice to encourage new members to visit in the shops of other members to help them get oriented to turning. Now we are offering for new turners a special list of members eager to help along with their area of interest. Even some less-than-new members who would like to talk to someone in a special area might take advantage of the help with special interests

The following members have volunteered to serve as Club Mentors. If you have a woodturning or tool/equipment question, call one of these individuals. They would be happy to help.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Specialty</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Specialty</u>
Roger Arnold	830-866-3670	Shop Practices	Uel Clanton	830-896-5288	General/Spindles
L. A. Cude	901-355-7046	Lacquer Finish	Chuck Felton	830-792-5249	General
James Johnson	830-895-4170	All	Joe Johnson	830-896-5924	General
John Jones	830-536-4503	General	K. Longnecker	830-257-6033	Split Turning/Pens
Ken Morton	210-833-7148	Natural Edge	Raul Pena	830-6342545	General

## “THE BIG CHIPS” of HCT

*Hill country turners is a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners dedicated to providing education, information and a place to meet and discuss woodworking and woodturning.*

President	<b>Joe Johnson</b>	(830) 896-5924	
Vice President	<b>Ken Morton</b>	(210) 833-7148	
Treasurer	<b>Jay Shimek</b>	(830) 634-7779	
Secretary	<b>Will Aymond</b>	(830) 285-2702	
Special Events	<b>Bill Hussey</b>	(830) 896-8093	
Newsletter/Webmaster	<b>Jerre Williams</b>	(830) 895-3206	
KACC Liaison	<b>Uel Clanton</b>	(830) 896-5288	
SWAT Representative	<b>Kathy Roberts</b>	(325)247-6266	
Audio-Video Director	<b>Don Kaiser</b>	(830)966-3314	
Website	<b><a href="http://www.hillcountryturners.org">http://www.hillcountryturners.org</a></b>		

# Basic Casting Steps and Safety Considerations

Alan Trout

Casting can be rewarding and challenging and offers the opportunity to make unique turnings and other objects. However, there is some risk associated with casting. First, the pressure vessels that are typically available are not rated for the pressures that work best to prevent voids and air bubbles. I typically use pressure over 110 PSI. The pressure vessels are only rated at 80 PSI or less. There have been reports of catastrophic pressure vessel failures which could be life threatening. You must understand these risks and mitigate them where possible. The primary safety precaution is to never pressurize the vessel while standing over it. Second is wearing a face shield. The fumes are also a hazard. Polyurethane resins have a very mild odor and that is the dangerous part. The fumes are very toxic and ideally an organic vapor mask should be worn when mixing the components or at least be in a very well ventilated area.

Pressure pots/vessels that we use are generally paint pressure pots. They can range in price from under \$100 to over \$1000. The cheapest pot available is the Harbor Freight brand unit that can be had for about \$80.00. Then add another \$20 to \$40 worth of fittings and it can be put together for around \$100. These are the pots that have had the most reported failures so keep this in mind if you plan to use one. I dismantle the safety pressure relief valve to get to my desired pressure levels, but this is a critical safety component and its removal is the main reason pots fail. The more expensive pots will start at about \$400 and up.

I use a polyurethane resin with the name brand Alumilite. It can be purchased directly from [www.alumilite.com](http://www.alumilite.com) this is a two-part mix, parts A and B are mixed in equal amounts by weight (not volume) so a precision scale is needed. A simple analog postal scale will work fine as long as it will handle the amount of weight being placed on it. Alumilite is a quick-cure resin that has about a seven (7) minute pot live, so you must work fast. But while you have to be quick with the pouring the resin, you can de-mold in about two hours. I always let the resin cool before turning.

You must be conscious of the pigments used in the Alumilite. Polyurethane resin reacts with moisture and will foam. That is how the polyurethane wood glues work. The pigment cannot be water-based. Alumilite sells its own line of pigments but others will also work. Most of the dry powder pigments are what I use under the Jacquard brand name. Potters for decoration commonly use these pigments. I have also used Trans Ting liquid dyes that can be purchased at Woodcraft and other woodworking stores. This type of dye will give you more of a translucent effect.

Selecting the wood and forming for the item needing to be cast is the next step. The wood or other material must be dried to under 10% moisture content, and be relatively dirt free. I make forms from whatever I can find, poster board, Sonotubes, plastic buckets, cups, bottles and lots of masking and duct tape. The form has to support the weight of the resin or a big mess is the result. This has happened to me, and it is not much fun losing 80oz of resin. (Of course the form also has to fit inside the pressure vessel.)

These are the basic steps of casting and some of the considerations. The challenge for the artist is to figure what you want to do and how to accomplish your casting goals.

Transcribed and minimally modified by JGW from handout by Alan Trout