

Best Practice #018, Starting a New Chapter  
Heading: Chapter Structure  
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The requirements for starting a new woodturning chapter are few in number, but long in effort. Begin by locating about four or five individuals with similar interests - motivations will vary widely. With this core group, find a centrally located place to meet and make a commitment to that location for at least a year. Target a first meeting date and time about two months in advance, set a short but informative program, and set the core group on the task of advertising the meeting. Advertise in the local papers (most run short announcements in the community interest section of the paper), place flyers in the local woodturning supply houses (many national stores are happy to distribute your flyers to their customers). In most cases this is about all it takes to "get started".

In the case of Emerald Coast Woodturning Guild, we located four to five folks interested in woodturning by simply going through the AAW directory looking for local zip codes. AAW also provided us with an updated list of members in the area. We determined that people would travel about an hour to attend a meeting so we set our area of draw as the five surrounding counties (that could be five surrounding blocks in some cities). We found a community center where we could meet and the facility fees were waved for non-profit or potential non-profit organizations that were open to anyone in the community and reserved the facility for the 2nd Saturday for a year. We made up flyers, put them in all the hardware, wood supply, home centers and paint stores in the area. Our meetings consist of a brief business meeting and a demonstration. In the first meeting, the demo was the chatter tool and everyone interested got to take home a token with chatterwork.

Within three months, we had 20 members and we are on a roll.

Want to start a new AAW chapter? - just do it!

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