

## From the Editor

In July, a 52-year-old Canadian woodturner died from a blow to his head. While no one knows exactly what happened, the evidence of a broken chisel and stray piece of wood, the smaller portion still attached to the lathe, suggests a major catch and no faceshield.

Recently, I taught a hands-on workshop. One man showed up with the most strangely ground bowl gouges I had ever seen, and I've seen some odd ones. He said he learned how to sharpen from watching a video. (I seriously wondered which one.)

After editing an article for an upcoming issue, I realized what went wrong with this turner's interpretation of how to sharpen a bowl gouge. He had performed only step one, which was to reshape the profile by holding the tool with the flute upside down on the grinding wheel. The short length of his bowl gouges amazed me . . . he had spent a lot of time grinding and turning.

I'm fairly certain I got him and the gouges straightened out, but what about other woodturners who do not know much about turning? The Gulf Coast Woodturners Association's spring retreat offers a perfect solution. This annual two-day, hands-on workshop provides turners with the skills they need to be safe and to enjoy turning. Read more about it on page 7.

I encourage *everyone* to participate in some form of hands-on woodturning lessons, either to share knowledge or to receive instruction. Most turning mishaps don't result in death;

however, enjoyment of woodturning is enhanced when proper techniques are used.



– Betty Scarpino

# President's Letter



The Board of Directors' primary objective is to provide more value to the AAW membership. The following initiatives have been implemented just this year to give our members more value for their money:

- *Adoption of a health care insurance arrangement that offers significant savings to some.* While this benefit will not apply to those who receive Medicare or who have preexisting conditions, it has been a significant cost improvement for some members. One member said, "My savings in health

insurance costs, resulting from switching to AAW's new program, was enough in the first 12 months to pay my AAW dues for the next 42 years."

- *Expansion of AW journal to six issues per year in 2010.* This means more articles on a wider range of woodturning topics that are of interest to beginning, intermediate, advanced, and professional turners. There will also be more information on a timelier basis for such things as events and chapter activities.
- *Launching of a new online sales venue where members can list their work for sale.* With only two months of operation, this venue has been highly successful. Over 240 pieces of work have been listed, with a total value approaching \$1 million. Sales have already exceeded \$60,000. Since the inauguration of this sales venue, AAW website hits have grown significantly. In terms of site visits, our website ranks in the top 1/10 of a percent of the total global Internet.
- *Exhibitions abound!* The WOOD (Wood Objects On Display) exhibits started this year with three exhibits, and there are four more planned in subsequent years. These exhibits offer AAW members more opportunities to showcase work in fine galleries while exposing more of the public to woodturning.
- *Distribution of a comprehensive handbook of symposium demonstrator handouts and symposium program information to all attendees.* This four-color handbook was received with much acclaim.
- *Implementation of a monthly electronic chapters newsletter.* This newsletter, in a new easy-to-read format, provides information that is timelier and more pertinent to local chapters. Chapters are encouraged to forward the newsletter to their members, and many do.

The purpose of the AAW is to foster a wider understanding and appreciation of lathe turning as a traditional and contemporary craft and a form of art among the general public, hobbyist turners, part-time, and professional turners. This is to be accomplished by providing education, information, organization, technical assistance, and publications related to woodturning. This fall, we will conduct a survey of the membership to get their input, which will help us to gauge the membership's opinion on the association's success in meeting these goals. We value your feedback and look forward to your response.

We are a vibrant and growing organization that is a worldwide leader in the woodturning field and an invaluable resource for our members. Our membership continues to grow and our programs continue to expand and offer more to our members.

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