



## FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

Gentlemen,

Those of you who missed our Saturday Field Trip missed out on a nice one. We had 10 people go (wished there had been more). You will find more information about the trip in the newsletter.

Summertime is approaching and if you are like a lot of woodworkers I know, you hang up the chisels come summertime and wait on cooler weather. However, please don't forget us. We plan to have some very informative meetings during the summer and your participation is wanted and appreciated.

This is also the time of the year for one very important project in your shop — SPRING CLEANING. I don't know if you have even thought about what a real fire hazard **your** and **my** woodworking shop is.

First of all most of our shops are wide open areas which lead to rapid fire spread. These wide open areas are also filled with numerous electrical machines, lights, electrical outlets and extension cords, any of which could overheat, short, or spark to provide an ignition source to cause a fire. To make matters worse, a lot of woodworkers carry around an unprotected ignition source between their two fingers — A Cigarette!

Now we have a wide open area with plenty of ignition sources but how about combustible materials to burn? Well if your shop is like mine, you have a big stack of lumber at one end and scrap pieces scattered from one end to the other. In addition to this, there are numerous cans of paint, stain, laquer, thinner, etc. that, not only will burn, but under proper conditions, may actually explode. There is also another little demon that we tend to forget about or simply ignore. That is, those little piles of shavings and fine particles of sawdust that cling and coat our shops from floor to ceiling.

Now it takes approximately 450° to ignite a block of wood — reduce that wooden block to shavings or sawdust and it only takes 275° to ignite and support combustion. Some la-

quers and thinners have a flash point of -32°. A spark, electrical short or burning cigarette generate substantial heat to ignite these materials.

What do you do with your staining and finishing rags when you are through with them? If you throw them in a box, in a corner of your shop, or back in the bench drawer you might as well throw a lit cigarette in your sawdust pile because spontaneous combustion is going to get you.

Since most of us work during the winter months we must heat our shops so we use space heaters of the electrical type (these help overload our already overloaded circuits), kerosene heaters or potbellied stoves, both with open flames or heat ducted in from the house. These will also provide an avenue of fire spread should fire occur.

When you think about it, you might be amazed and grateful that you haven't had a fire already. So what can we do to make sure our luck holds out?

I. Simply make cleaning your shop a routine habit (we train our children to do this to their rooms so why not ourselves). Keep the floors swept and vacuum the **WHOLE** shopbenches, machines (inside out), walls, ceilings, and don't forget those florescent light fixtures.

II. Keep all volatile liquids tightly capped and stored away in a cool place.

III. Keep extension cords off the floor when possible and make sure all connections are tight. Never allow an electrical connection to lay in sawdust or other combustible materials. Make sure all electrical outlets have covers and vacuum them periodically. Make sure all electrical motors are clean so they will properly cool.

IV. Don't smoke or allow smoking in your shop. You are asking for trouble, I don't care how careful you are.

V. Dispose of all oily rags in tightly sealed containers or submerge them in water.

## NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Alabama Woodworkers Guild will be on Thursday, June 14 at 7 P.M. The speaker and subject were unannounced at publication time. The meeting will be held this month at Pelham High School.

The officers and board of directors will meet at 6:15 also at Pelham High.

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## Y'AWL'S POINT. . .

### THE MEMBERSHIP COMMENTS

Your comments or suggestions to the club should be addressed to:

Larry Aaron

Newsletter Editor

5617 12th Avenue South

Birmingham, Alabama 35222

Comments will be passed on to appropriate committees and may be printed when appropriate. Let us hear from you.

Also, we'd like to hear from other Guilds who read our newsletter.

The deadline for next month's newsletter is to be in the hands of the editor by Thursday, June 18th.

## JUST YOUR TYPE

The Guild is looking for a donor of a manual or electric typewriter. If you have or know of a typewriter which is in working condition and can either be donated to us or sold to us cheap, please notify Spruce McRee.

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