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SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
WOODWORKERS
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April 16 event: Speaker Build and Veneer Tutorial:

We are cranking it up to 11 for our April presentation, featuring Marc Collins and his breakdown of the process behind his beautiful speaker build. Marc will cover the overall build process and mechanics of the speakers and spend additional time on the veneering aspects of the project. Don't miss this unique and interesting presentation of both a functional build and a useful woodworking skill!

Meeting Minutes

by Luke Wyatt

SFVW – Meeting Minutes March 2026

Emily Lichtman was in charge of running tonight's meeting. With a swift bang of the gavel, the meeting started, and she welcomed a new member, Rick Dipeole. He's had a long-running woodworking shop in Chicago with a long woodworking history.

Emily also reminded folks that if you need a badge, make sure to let the club know, and we have business cards and flyers to distribute throughout the local area.

Dues are now Due!

If you haven't paid yet, it's time. Our dues are $35 per year ($15 for students), and our esteemed Treasurer, Gregg Masini, can take your dues via check, cash or Venmo. [Now: @san_fernando1]

If you need to contact Gregg for any questions, his email and phone number are on the next page in the Club Officers.

Upcoming Presentations

April – Marc Collins: Custom Speaker Build + Veneer

Joinery and Sharpening demos are planned, and details will be coming.

May & July - Joinery Presentation: This will be a different format that will help people get some hands-on experience. Each meeting will be two joints, each created by power tools and then by hand tools. The power tool example will be a video presentation shown to the group. The hand tool example will be a live demonstration at the meeting, and then there will be stations where all the members can try their "hand" at



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Our President says...

By Eitan Ginsburg

President's Letter – April 2026

Some of you may recall that I missed our March meeting because my wife and I went on a short vacation in Mexico. I was bummed to miss Brittany's presentation, if for no other reason than we visited Guédelon (but just for an afternoon) when we were in France last year, and I wanted to hear about her immersive experience there.

Still, Tulum – the town on the Yucatan coast where we stayed — was beautiful and restful. We enjoyed some marvelous food and learned a little about the ancient Mayans. However, it did come up a little thin on the woodworking angle, something I always keep an eye out for when we travel.



The only tool-related thing I saw in a museum was a plumb bob used by Mayan builders from over 1000 years ago – it was interesting to see that civilizations an ocean apart came up with basically the same tool. I often keep an eye out for distinctive furniture, but there wasn't too much that caught my eye in that department. There were a lot of slab tables and big-cookie tables in some of the restaurants, made from very wide tree trunks. I couldn't identify the wood, but

See "President's Message" on page 3

Who We Are

The club was formed in 1988 for the purpose of enhancing skills, providing information and sharing the joys of working with wood. The membership reflects a cross section of woodworking interests and skill levels - both hobbyist and professionals. Annual dues are $35. Full-time student dues are $15.



Balboa Recreation Center Location
Map curtesy of Google Maps

Club Officers

President:	Eitan Ginsburg
Vice President:	Emily Lichtman
Secretary:	Luke Wyatt
Treasurer:	Gregg Massini
Photographer	Gary Coyne
Publisher:	Gary Coyne
Safety Coordinator:	Bob Bilyeu-9354
Web Master:	Jan Min
Toy Chair:	Jonathan Nail
Toy Distribution:	Tara Wyatt
Refreshments:	Greg Golden

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making the joint. Members are encouraged to claim a joint and get involved. Chuck has volunteered to do Rabbits or Dados. Another example would be Miter Joints, Dovetails, Mortise & Tenon, etc. Please contact Emily if you are interested.

June – Zoom Presentation (Peek Safety): Particulates and VOC safety. (This might be the first presentation in the meeting.)

August – Sharpening Demo: with hands-on opportunities

September – 3D Printing

October – Jigs and Fixtures

November – Super Show and Tell

December – Holiday Lunch (No Meeting)

Toy Committee

Build days are being scheduled. Treasure Chest and Sports Cars are underway. If you are interested in helping with a build, please contact our Toy Committee chairman, Jonathan Nail. All of this hard work will lead to a big build day on Saturday and Sunday, October 17th – 18th. Mark it in your calendars!

Field Trips

Eitan will be updating the group soon with a schedule for visiting Sam DiMaggio. Stay tuned for the next meeting to find out the possible days.

Finance

Gregg Masini took the stage. We have 41 paying members so far this year. Dues are due, and Gregg knows who you are if you haven't paid. You won't get a visit from his cousin Vinny, but let's make sure to get those into the group ASAP. $35 for the ENTIRE YEAR!! What a deal.

Quilt Show

Our Quilt Show is rapidly approaching, and we still want Members to contribute items for sale to benefit the club. There is wood available in the meeting closet. The sewing crowd loves a ruler holder, hand irons, kitchen items, etc. Let's see what you can come up with!

Questions & Answers

George Zaleksi brought to the group's attention that Angel City Lumber has a free wood giveaway on Fridays at 10 am. Nobody from the group has gone, so he will attend and then report back on his experience. Angle City Lumber specializes in taking fallen trees, slabbing them

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"Minutes" from page2

out, and offering them back to the community at a discounted rate. So, if you are looking for live-edge material, this is the place for you. See his article on Page 8!

Luke Wyatt asked Marc Collins about making a router template with a 3D printer. Luke wants to create a fixture for the treasure chest hinges. Marc was confident in the process, and they would work together to accomplish this task. Yay teamwork!

Tips and Tricks

John Fisher shared an air compressor accessories. He showed us a type of safety disconnect, called a "***Safety Air Coupler***." It's used for air tools that depressurizes the fitting so that removing it doesn't make a sound or shoot air out. Available at many locations.



Safety Talk

Bob Bilyeu gave a safety talk on the Table Saw. He started with push sticks: make them, use them, remake them. It's alright that the wood touches the blade, and it's better than metal or plastic. Feather boards are also helpful as they are designed to keep the piece pressed into the fence. Most feather boards run down the miter slot of the table saw, but he also showed us a rare-earth magnet feather board that can be activated on cast iron. Stefan Dusedau emphasized the importance of not losing focus while doing repetitive work. The gripper is also a great tool for the table saw and JessEm Stock Guides. [See a review of the JessEm Stock Guide on page 9.]



Announcements

Gregg Masini urged the group to hurry up and get their Router bits and Sawblades — the tungsten used for these tools is rising dramatically in price.

Show and Tell

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one person thought it was xircote (it wasn't — that is so distinctive I'd recognize it.

A visit to the Mayan archaeological zone in Koba was amazing. We saw towers, pyramids, and a ball court built of stone and stucco. I saw and learned about two fascinating local tree species: chechen, which has patchy black-and-white bark, and chaka, whose bark is reddish-brown. Apparently, chechen sap is toxic (also called "black poisonwood"), and chaka is its antidote. What's more, these two trees often grow right next to each other, sometimes down to the roots. Here is a link to an article that gets into the science of it. https://tinyurl.com/kwne255y



A Mayan lunch at a village nearby brought us face to face with some local beehives. These bees are native to the region and do not have stingers. The bees are very small, produce a special, prized honey, and enter their hives through tiny holes in a tree. At the village, they have built hives from sections of logs, again keeping the narrow openings.

I wish I'd found a local lumberyard to buy wood, but it wouldn't really have been practical to bring back. Still, maybe I could have squeezed a turning square into my suitcase. Oh well, another time.

(see page 5)

Presentation Guédelon – Brittany Joyner

Brittany starts the presentation with a few comments about how much she's practiced and how she forced all of her family to watch. She bribes the group with Snickers candy to set the tone.



The presentation is broken down into three sections: *The What*, *The Why*, and *The How*.

~: The What :~

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From the Web

------ Tips, Tricks, and How-Tos ----------

✎ **Everyone Needs a Pair Of 123 Blocks - Here are some of their uses**

- *What everyone needs to know about 1-2-3 blocks*

https://tinyurl.com/4ensyuwt

✎ **A Comprehensive Guide: Table Saw Clear-Cut Stock Guides**

- *A very good overview of this tool, but insufficient areas where it can be an issue.*

https://tinyurl.com/yxbfjms2

✎ **What did they do to sandpaper???**

- *A history of sandpaper*

https://tinyurl.com/yc6yazye

✎ **Cutting slots with a router is DANGEROUS!**

- *A very good set of rules for doing this safely (and why)!*

https://tinyurl.com/yt9dhymn

✎ **Guédelon Castle: Building A Medieval Castle From Scratch**

- *If you liked Brittany's presentation, at just under three hours, there are lots of details.*

https://tinyurl.com/3en8t9ec

✎ **Woodworker Sam Maloof, MEMORY episode**

- *Too short (7' 44") watching Maloof in his shop talking about his work*

https://tinyurl.com/55yf6b88

✎ **A whole bunch of wood-related videos**

- *Some long, some short) on wood and woodworking from Craft in America*

https://tinyurl.com/c4w4nuf8

✎ **What the heck is a climb cut?**

- *It's always good to run over the basics. Great visual.*

https://tinyurl.com/547kx7mr

✎ **Which way do you cut with a router? Is climb-cutting safe? When and how do you do it?**

- *Another run with a different voice if you need confirmation.*

https://tinyurl.com/f57hr8p2

✎ **I Wish I Knew THIS About Dust Collection Sooner**

- *An excellent breakdown of dust issues and solutions.*

https://tinyurl.com/y2ev85dk

✎ **3,500-Year-Old Loom Preserved by Fire**

- *Reveals Bronze Age Textile Revolution*

https://tinyurl.com/mt42v4hn

✎ **Precision in the Woodshop**

- *Myths, truths, and tips of measurement*

https://tinyurl.com/2a9h8w44

✎ **Why Don't People Know this About Outdoor Wood**

- *How to make outside furniture last*

https://tinyurl.com/499m4vw3

✎ **Pigeonhole Cabinet for Workshop Storage**

- *A solution to storing many tools of different sizes.*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8f8quEVpkCU

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Guédelon is an experimental archaeological site in the Puisaye region in northern Burgundy, France, about 2 hours south of Paris. It began in 1997 at an abandoned stone quarry near a lake, with trees as far as the eye can see.



Experimental archaeology is a field of study that employs the methods, tools, and techniques of a specific time period to discover what has been lost and to better understand how construction would have been carried out. So much to Brittany's dismay, there would be ZERO power tools!

Guédelon welcomes 300,000 visitors a year and is completely funded by ticket sales. The 70-plus workers are paid employees, with experience and training in their craft. They work on the castle from April to October, and the castle closes to visitors over the winter.

There are many artisans represented at Guedelon, including quarrymen, painters, stone masons, stone carvers, carpenters, joiners, basket weavers, potters, bakers, chefs, blacksmiths, mortar makers, gardeners, rope makers, carters, and shingle makers. In addition to the builders, there are many tour guides and administrative employees.

She learned of the experience watching a BBC documentary called "Secrets of the Castle," and within 5 minutes of watching the program, she turned to her husband and said, "I have to do this". She then began hounding the administration through various channels until they could no longer hold her back, and she was invited to participate. Funny story, she joined our woodworking group as a ploy to boost her "resume" – Thankfully she is going to keep coming!

~: The Why :~

"The question I got asked by so many visitors while there, and the main question I asked myself as I struggled through each day was: why are you here?



And it's a good question. As far as I know, I'm the first American to ever work there. There are females, but not a huge number have worked in carpentry. There were no

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Show and Tell

Jeff Bremer showed us the banding that he's been working on. He's been working on making banding for his own inlays over the past few years and trying to perfect the designs so that when used in a miter situation, everything still aligns. He likes to put them into boxes. They are very pretty and delicate. He gave some of them out to members on one condition: that they use them!





Edgar May took Jeff's hand plane class and showed us his plane, made of beech. He really enjoyed Jeff's shop and appreciated how patient he was with everyone. He then showed us his handmade (engagement) ring box made of mahogany and shaped with lots of tools. He painted it with acrylic paint. It worked the charm, and she said YES. It's simply beautiful. [For the box ring, see page 1, closeup of the open box, see above. Photo of Edgar with plane is by Jeff Bremer.]





Dave McClave brought in a redwood branch to Jeff's shop and milled a rough log into usable material to create an Adirondack chair, using used snow skis as the back.

"I'm making an Adirondack chair of old skis and redwood from a tree felled in my complex a few years ago. Jeff turned the log into lumber for the frame."



Luke Wyatt showed the group a project he just completed for a woman that contact the group. She had him finish for solid Oak doors with Rubio Monocoat. The color mixture was 90% Walnut and 10% Smoke. The doors came out great, and she was very happy. Luke thought it was cool that our community could contact our group and get assistance like this.



Emily Lichtman shared her new batch of earrings that she made from wood she purchased from the Boardman sale. She has some new ideas for the next batch. These are finished in Lacquer, which is the 3rd type of finish she tried. She's still dialing it in. (Available for sale if interested.)





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native English speakers, and while I was there, I was the only redhead among 70-80 employees.

Within 1 day, everyone knew I was the "Hollywood actress" with red hair working in carpentry. Rumors flew about that I was famous, with the most egregious suspicion being that I was Brittany Snow, a comparison I welcome, but I question why they imagined a very successful movie star would want to come to the middle of nowhere and do unpaid manual labor for three months.

So, onto the why am I here? What it comes down to is curiosity. Something probably most of us here share. How does it work? Can I get it to work? Can I fix this? Can I make this? What don't I know that I want to learn?

And it sounded like a massive challenge that would throw me in the deep end, beyond my abilities, so I would have ample opportunity to fail and therefore grow as a

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Member Spotlight
This month is featuring *Jonathan Nail*

What year did you join the SFVW? 2023

Woodworking

What types of woodworking projects or techniques do you particularly enjoy? I love building furniture and boxes, and I switch off between the two. I finish up a major piece of furniture and then find myself picking up some offcuts and making a box or two.

What is a project you are especially proud of and why? I recently completed a mission-style coffee table made from cherry. This was my own design, borrowing elements from the masters of the style, but what I'm really proud of is how the wood's grain patterns played out. I lucked out with a piece of quarter-sawn cherry for the top and some highly figured ¼ for the stretchers and end caps.



What is one species of wood you most like to use and why? It has to be cherry because of its exceptional workability, stunning, rich color changes over time, and fine, smooth grain. An oil/varnish finish brings out the depth, color, and character of the grain, and I am just mesmerized.

What is a dream project (something you would someday love to build but may be out of reach for now due to time, skill, money, or equipment)? I'd love to build a proper library built-in with floor-to-ceiling shelves and a wrap-around ladder rail.

Personal Life

Where were you born? Where did you grow up? When did you come to the San Fernando Valley (or other place where you live now)? I was born an only child in Blytheville, AR, but raised in southern Illinois. Spent my summers and winter breaks at my grandparents' in the rural parts of Illinois and Arkansas. After I graduated from the University of Illinois in '94, I moved to San Diego, and four years later, I moved to Los Angeles.

When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up? I became hooked on acting during my freshman year of High School and graduated with a BFA in Theatre. I booked my first professional acting gig in 2001 (Malcolm in the Middle). Then over the next 11 years, I booked several small TV roles (Criminal Minds, Carnivale, Mad Men) and a handful of forgettable short films. I wrote, produced, and starred in my own webTV series back in 2009-2010 (built a spaceship set in my garage). I hung up my acting hat in 2012, but I still appear in the occasional stage production of The Nutcracker as Drosselmeyer for my daughter's ballet academy.

Tell us about your family/loved ones. I met my wife, Jan, during the summer of '93 at the British American Drama Academy in Oxford, England. I moved out to California to be with her, and we'll celebrate our 29th anniversary in May. We have two amazing teenage daughters who love STEM subjects, baking, and dancing. Gillian (19) is transferring to UC Davis this coming fall to finish out a Food Science degree. Isabel (16) still participates in ballet/tap/arial, loves action movies, volunteering and hasn't a clue what she wants to be when she grows up but maybe something to do with the ocean.

What was/is your day job? Tell us a little about your professional career. For well over 20 years, I've been doing email marketing, and for the last eight, I've been a successful CRM/marketing automation consultant for numerous small to medium-sized ecommerce companies. I advise my clients on strategy and do the occasional hands-on work, as well.

Other Interests

What is one hobby or interest you have outside of woodworking? Gardening. Over ten years ago, I transformed a 10x20 plot behind our garage into a small raised-bed garden and have since turned our entire ¼-acre property into a garden with six fruit trees, blueberries, blackberries, and several vegetable beds. If it doesn't provide food for my family, or for the pollinators, it doesn't belong in my yard. Grow food, not lawns.

Where is a favorite place to which you have traveled? Central Coast of California, mainly Monterey. Here's a photo of the family somewhere along the Central Coast of California.

If you wish to be featured in future months of a Member Spotlight, please contact our Vice President, Emily Lichtman (see page 2 for contact information).

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human being."

~: The How :~

After navigating early travel challenges—language barriers, limited navigation, and unfamiliar driving conditions—she arrived on-site and began work with the carpenters, initially producing hand-split oak shingles using traditional methods without metal fasteners.



After her first day, she transitioned to the joiners' workshop, where she spent three months apprenticing under Simon and Nicolas. There, she contributed to smaller-scale work, including furniture and architectural elements, gaining hands-on experience with traditional joinery techniques such as box joints and mortise-and-tenon joints, many of which she used for the first time with only hand tools.



She then walked us through the full lifecycle of her primary project: building a wooden chest from raw logs. This included splitting and squaring timber by hand, planing stock, cutting joinery, forming grooves, fabricating panels, and assembling the piece using only wooden dowels—no glue or metal hardware.

She also highlighted the broader Guédelon system: a fully visitor-funded operation where artisans work in open workshops, which at first was very stressful for her, and even though she didn't speak fluent French, she knew that she was being judged by the visitors. She also got to try a few other areas of work, including blacksmithing, stonework, and tool sharpening.

Here are her Key takeaways from the Guédelon:

1. Being treated as an absolute equal by everyone there at work. No concessions made, no doubting my abilities.

2. A closed-circle system. Everything came from within. If the masons needed a template for an arch they were building, they came to me and drew out what they needed. I planned the wood and cut it to size, and got it to them by the end of the day. I needed hinges for my chest, so Caro, the blacksmith, came over, drew out the dimensions and design, and made them in the forge. We needed a basket for cast-off wood, and the weavers made us one. Chalk for the chalk line was given to us in a pot made by the potters, filled with ochre powder from the quarry gathered by the painters. We mixed it with water and dipped our rope that was made by the rope makers, and were able to snap lines on our lumber.

It instills a real atmosphere of reliance and community within the confines of the castle that I hadn't really experienced in my life up to that point.

3. A different way of communicating. Language was a barrier, but it also encouraged creativity on both sides as they found ways to connect. When you wanted to talk to someone, you walked over to the castle or the grounds, asked around for their location, then found them and talked to them. If they weren't there, you just told someone you were looking for them, and the person would eventually find you. It was honestly refreshing and offered welcome interruptions and breaks from what you expected to be doing. We weren't texting or calling each other. It was all in person. I can also say there was a lot of laughter in my time there.

4. I can do really hard things. And when the apocalypse comes, I'm betting on myself.

The presentation ended with her showing off pictures and videos of her experience, and the group's appreciation was shown with a big round of applause! Amazing work, Brittany!

Egyptian Woodworks

by Ron Sabatino

As part of my holiday, I went to Torino for a few days. While there, I visited the Egyptian Museum (https://museoegizio.it/), the largest one outside of Cairo. While looking at some amazing artifacts, I realized they were not only woodworkers but also masons.

It was quite crowded with tour groups, and I didn't have time to take pictures of the info cards, but I thought the group might appreciate seeing these treasures. https://tinyurl.com/ybzmab37

Free Wood Fridays

by George Zaleski

My experieince at Angle City Lumber's "Free Wood Friday."

They open at 9 AM so get there early if you can. First, the wood is green, so bring a truck for large slabs and a friend to help lift; many people there are all about helping each other. Angel City Lumber has a list of people with kilns you can connect with, or if you have the time and patience, you can dry it naturally.

The types of wood I saw included Shamel Ash, Ponderosa Pine, Fir, Black Locust, and Cypress. There were some slabs of Canary Pine as well. Different days probably have different types of wood.



The photos with the wood on the side of the building show what was available when I showed up. Total number of people there, I would say, was around 15. There is a bin with smaller cut pieces as well. The smaller pieces I selected seemed dry, but I was told all the wood is green. So, I need to check those with a moisture meter to see if they are in a usable state. The small pieces in the photo are ponderosa pine and fir.

As for the total event itself. I arrived 20 minutes before Angel City Lumber opened, and the slabs and wood were already out, and people were grabbing wood. I will say that a number of the people there seemed to be students at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), but the group varied in age and in the equipment they brought. There was someone from Angel City Lumber walking around, answering questions about types of wood. I did walk around inside, and they had some neat pieces, although I think they were outside my price range.

Their website: http://www.angelcitylumber.com/

And their Instagram site, where they post the information: https://tinyurl.com/37cktjcm





George's "Pickings" once at home!

Review of JessEm Clear-Cut Stock Controller

by Gary Coyne

I'd been eyeballing this for some time, but a sale several months ago pushed me over the edge. The quick review: it's fantastic. Nonetheless, there are a few minor issues that might make or break this expense for you. So read on for both negatives and positives.

This fixture pushes your wood both down and against the edge of your fence. And it does this wonderfully. If you examine your tablesaw cuttings closely, you may see a change on the blade side of a freshly cut piece during the moments when you move your hand or switch from hand-pushing the wood to using a push stick. That "interruption" in movement can be seen unless you are very careful and/or have a very consistent pressure against the top of the wood and against the side. In addition, in regions of wood that are not firmly held down, cutting imperfections can occur. Now, when I cut a piece of wood, the quality of the cut remains the same from beginning to end, even if I let go of the wood to grab my push stick.

And, perhaps most important of all, this completely eliminates any chance of kickback.

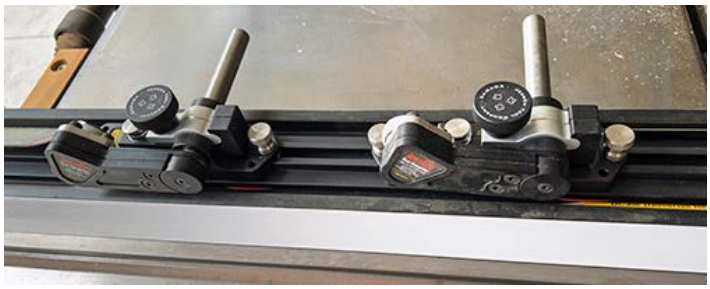
To shorten this review, I encourage you to watch this video, which covers many aspects of mounting the tool and how to use it. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9CenrC8Gbs).





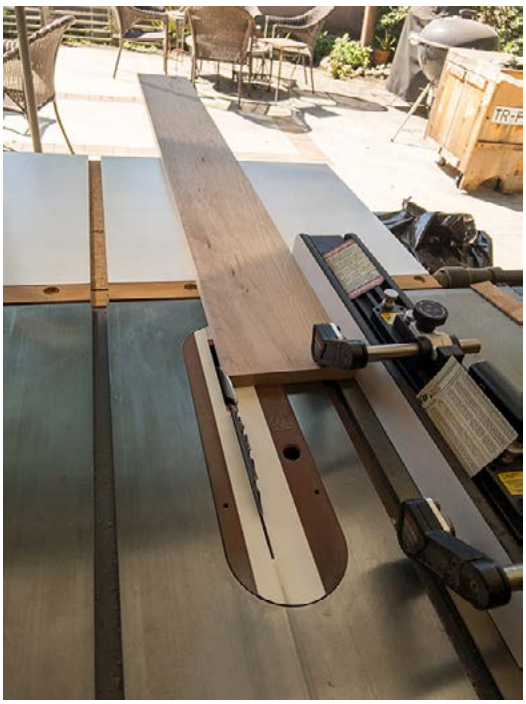
As stated in the video, you use one clamp before the blade and one after. To set the height at which to place the clamp, you place the "non-rolling" section of the clamp (adjacent to the roller) on top the wood you are cuttin, then tighten the set knob. To do this, you have to get the blade out of the way and that probably requires you to lower the blade below the surface. If all of your wood is the same thickness, this is not an issue. But if you are constantly switching wood thicknesses, it will be an interruption as you work. And, keep in mind, once you have the wood cinched by this device, you cannot pull it back out like you can with featherboards. And this is why this is so good against kickback. The wood is being held both down and against the fence.

Another thing to consider is that if you are cutting strips with widths less than ≈3″, you cannot use a standard push stick. You can use a smaller strip of wood that is just



as thin (or thinner) and the same width (or narrower) to push your desired piece of wood past the blade. Otherwise, you can easily "park the clamp rollers up and push them back over the top of your fence and out of the way. However, this negates the whole purpose of using this fixture. If all of your pieces are all 3″ or narrower, this will not help you (unless you push your wood through with a thinner piece, as previously mentioned).

Now, I promised you one of the other positive things that is not pointed out in the video highlighted above, and that's once you've pushed your piece past the blade and the board is sticking out the far side of your saw, you can turn your saw off (or not, depending on what all is taking place), the "after" blade clamp is now securely holding your wood letting you walk around the saw, to pull the board away from the blade. Obviously, at some length, this may not be possible, but if you have an outfeed table, you'll be good to go.



One last suggestion, if you do get one: make sure you've made your table-top slick. When you have a piece of wood that is being pushed down and into the fence, any extra friction will make it more difficult to push your wood past the rollers. So, using Bostick's "GlideCoat®" (my hands-down favorite) or even applying Paste Wax will help (though Paste Wax requires more frequent application). Either way, use it, you'll be glad you did.