

May 21 event: , Buscuits, Dowels, and Pocket Hole joinery:

These joinery approaches all have benefits, challenges, and dissapointments. Come see Gary Coyne and Brittany Joyner all about these issue for each of these joinery helpers.

The meeting starts at 7 PM on May 21st.

Meeting Minutes

by Luke Wyatt

SFVW – Meeting Minutes, February 2026

Eitan, choosing not to call the meeting to order with a loud slam of the gavel, quietly addresses the group and gets everyone to settle down. The meeting begins, and we welcome anyone attending for the first time to stand up and introduce themselves.

New attendee (and member) Mike Briggs stands up. He tells us that he has just finished a bunch of pens and shelves. He's from Burbank. Welcome, Mike!

The club has received many wooden parts as donations for members to take. We also have boxes of sample sanding pads from Peek Safety.

There is a company called Keita Design. They make furniture out of urban trees. They are in Pasadena, and we are working on getting a tour of the shop.

Upcoming Presentations

June: Peek Safety (<https://tinyurl.com/3ksw77zb>) – Particulates and how to avoid them

July: Dados and Rabbits

August: Sharpening – Note: If you want to bring a chisel, make sure it's flat on the back (<https://tinyurl.com/3sjmmy8b>).

September: 3D printing

October: Jigs and Fixtures

November: Super Show and Tell

December: Holiday party.

Toy Committee

Jonathan let the group know that every year, we build lots of toys for

See "Minutes" on page 2

Our President says...

By Eitan Ginsburg

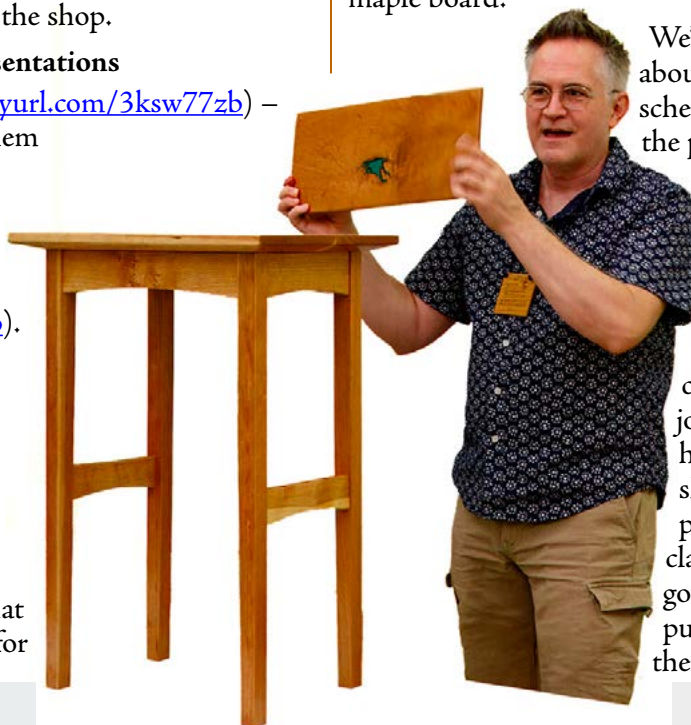
Woodworking brings its dangers and benefits.

Of course, there are the physical risks, but a different danger for me is that I can get pulled into OCD mode. I might fixate on the design, details, or progress of a project and let my attention to other responsibilities slip by.

Yesterday, however, I was reminded about one of the benefits — sharing the craft. As I mentioned in last month's Plane Talk, I've been helping my friend, Charisse, build a credenza stand. This was her first real foray into woodworking, so the endeavor was not simply about providing access to tools. We began last September by taking measurements, sketching out a design, talking about the look she wanted and which wood would suit that goal, then heading to a nearby lumberyard to buy a rough ¾ maple board.

We've been getting together about once or twice a month, schedules permitting, to advance the project. Each time, she made more progress on the stand, starting by breaking down that eight- or nine-foot board and milling it into the necessary parts. We spent a few sessions laying out and cutting mortise-and-tenon joints (yes, pocket holes would have been faster and easier – she'll use them on her next project). Yesterday, we laid out clamps, did a dry fit, then she got to experience the rush of putting not-too-much glue into the mortises and pulling all the

See "President's Message" on page 4



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 courtesy 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
Web Master:	Jan Min
Toy Chair:	Jonathan Nail
Toy Distribution:	Tara Wyatt
Refreshments:	Greg Golden

"Minutes" from page 1

charities. Then, at the end of the year, we have one big toy-build day at a local high school. He wants everyone to get involved in a toy-build day that runs year-round. There are several toys being built that need help at all stages. Get in there and help support this wonderful initiative.

Finance

Gregg lets everyone know that we sold about \$950 at the quilt show. He also mentioned that most everyone has paid dues, and that's great. The club is doing well, and the finances are always available if anyone wants to see the actual numbers. We currently have 56 paid members. Also, if you have a toy purchase reimbursement, let him know, and he'll pay you back.

Announcements

We are doing a couple of other shows. On Friday, December 4th, at Highland Hall, we'll have a booth for their holiday sale. We also have another quilt show in Santa Clarita, a week after the big toy build in October.

Jeff Bremer brought in a couple of tools that he is looking to rehome.

Brittany Joyner tells everyone about Art Deco LA [<https://artdecola.org>] and invites them to join their

mailing list to learn about upcoming art events.

Calvin Solv, our member who makes our sweet name tags, lets everyone know that if you need one, you should see him. He likes to do them in batches, so check back next meeting if you didn't see yours yet.

The next meeting is a live Zoom presentation from Florida, so we will adjust the meeting order to accommodate it. We'll start at 7 p.m. with the presentation, then have our normal meeting afterward.

Summer Build Challenge: It's summertime! Members are encouraged to build something seasonal or related to the many holidays in June. For example, June 10th is National Ballpoint Pen Day, and June 21st is National Day of the Gong. There's also the 4th of July and America's 250th birthday. A \$50 gift card is up for grabs.

Questions & Answers

Marc Collins asked what folks do with their old band saw blades. There were mixed opinions. Some folks put them in their black bin; some put them in their blue bin.

Luke and Emily are looking for table saw accessories for their Delta Unisaw and have asked if anyone has experience with Shark Guard. One member gave a solid review

See "Minutes" on page 3

and recommended it.

Jim McGuire has a good bandsaw and is looking for someone to come over and give him an in-person lesson on how to set it up properly. A few members volunteered.

Show And Tell

Brittany Joyner shares with us the recording studio that she made during the pandemic. She recently signed with another VO agent, and she's doing 12 auditions a day. She's trying to make the room cooler without adding sound (aka noise) that could make any sound recordings worthless.

Jonathan Nail shows us his cherry end tables that are similar to a coffee table he built a few months ago. It's beautiful, and he really enjoys the beveling on the top that he cuts with a fixture on the table saw. His second end table has a malachite inlay. It's finished with a base coat of Danish oil, then steel wool, and then a shop mix of varnish, oil, and mineral spirits. His favorite finish!

Luke Wyatt shared his collaboration project with Jim McGuire with us. It's a scroll saw project that features a football player diving into the end zone. He talked about going down the artist path and the changes that he is going to make moving forward to get better results. He also shared a few photos of an interactive poster he is working on. He hopes to bring it to the group's next meeting.



Marc Collins shares Skill Trees with us —a learning-journey aid that shows multiple paths for learning skills. In addition, Marc has found the mecca of veneer in Southern California, GL Veneer (<https://glveneer.com>). They offer 4x8 and 4x10



veneers. They supply many woodworking stores, but they also sell directly to the public. They stock a wide variety of veneers in various qualities. For example, he got some quarter-sawn figured cherry.

Safety

Bob Bilyeu: Miter saw safety.

"That energy must go somewhere!" A lot of us have mobile saws that just sit on top of a table. If the blade catches on the wood, and the saw is not properly clamped (or screwed) to the surface, the saw can come flying up at you. The moral is to clamp that baby down so the energy can be dissipated. Miter saws are not for small work. Make sure all the knobs are tight, and your fingers are far from the blade.



[Editor: for an additional handle on this, I'm repeating three of the videos that were in last month's "From the Web."]

Why Don't People Know This About Miter Saws? Basic safety precautions for Miter Saws, along with great safety tips. Watch it through the end for one last important tip. Also, read some of the responses; there's more data.

- <https://tinyurl.com/44wc9zr4>

Bad YouTube advice can cost you a hand - Miter saw mistake! Another video with advice on improving safety in the shop.

- <https://tinyurl.com/mtkwupn5>

My last video upset a LOT of people! A bit of elaboration on comments from the above video

- <https://tinyurl.com/3zvm656c>

From the Web

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

A Profound Revolution

- A quick summary of how things have changed for hobby woodworkers

<https://tinyurl.com/2dx46t48>

Seven Mistakes That Quietly Ruin a Pen

- A video that shows the various issues

<https://tinyurl.com/h8phdxez>

An interesting box latch

- For anyone wanting to try, the video is silent but very straightforward

<https://tinyurl.com/msnurkh8>

A woodworker's guide to installing keyhole hangers. They aren't hard.

- A bunch of handy tips along the way

<https://tinyurl.com/8vd4reyb>

Rustic Coffee Table from Reclaimed Wood

- Watch how a battered table turns into a Rustic Coffee Table

<https://tinyurl.com/yfsh88z6>

Ottoman Coffee Table Build – Start to Finish

- No words; a lot can be picked up just by watching (and biscuits joints are used!).

<https://tinyurl.com/2er5z66y>

Honing Guide for Thin Blades | Paul Sellers

- Part of the “Keep it Sharp” process

<https://tinyurl.com/2nhe4js2>

This unique wooden book is a keepsake box

- And many tips along the way for this gift item

<https://tinyurl.com/2s3d9cnb>

Why do dowels need grooves?

- Some handy knowledge and tips for dowels

<https://tinyurl.com/ypp7u4w2>

Rich Benson May Have Wood For You

by Rich Benson

I made a cross-country drive in early May to my Michigan woodlot, took some urban lumbering equipment east for continued use in the forest, and brought back a pickup load (about 300 bf) of ¾ soft maple (*Acer saccharinum*) and ¾ black cherry (*Prunus serotina*). Some maples are spalted, some curly. Will bring a few to the June meeting. Also shown are ¾ quarter-



a great job building the stand, but for me, the more significant accomplishment was seeing how well she'd digested some of the fundamentals, such as grain direction and wood movement, and her readiness to use both hand and power tools.

Heading home, not only was she talking about some ideas for her next project, but she had all of her off-cuts to start her scrap pile. Another one hooked!

parts together before a joint locked up too soon. There were a few anxious moments where we had to crank down a bit on a clamp to pull a joint together, but there were no gaps in the end.

Charisse was thrilled with having completed the stand and took it home to apply the finish and bring the credenza to sit on top of it. She did



sawn sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) salvaged from the Altadena fire — some have lively grain. How about \$4, \$5, and \$6 per board foot, respectively - obo.

The odd shapes are slices from a couple of walnut root balls (*Juglans nigra*). These were left in the Michi-

gan woodlot after a timber sale in 2015, dug out with a backhoe in 2016, and slabbed with an Alaska mill (Stihl 088 & 4' bar) in 2017. After air drying for a few years, I leveled them and made a few coffee tables for locals. Now have a few in Altadena on 1¼ and 1½; \$16/bf if any interest.

If intersted, please contact Rich: 626 429 9721 by calling or texting

Presentation

Gary started by asking for a raise in hands of who owns a biscuit cutter, and almost all of us have a biscuit cutter — surprisingly. Gary got his about 40 years ago after seeing one at a woodworking show. After finally talking himself



into buying one, he almost bought one from eBay, but just as his finger was going to press the "Buy" button, he noticed that the handle was facing the wrong way. It turns out that Porter Cable has/had two different models: one whose handle is in alignment with the body (called the "D" handle), and one whose handle is perpendicular to the body. It turns out that the "D" handle model is inferior to the other one. So, he ended

up buying it from a woodworking store (it was so long ago, he doesn't remember which one).

Biscuits are little football-shaped pieces cut down the



middle, available in sizes "0," "10," and "20." There is also the FF size (sold only by Porter Cable as their Cutter can also hold a 2" blade that can cut the FF biscuit slot). Their primary function is to keep things aligned and in place during

a glue-up. There's no significant strength benefit. Most

blades are $\frac{5}{32}$ " thick, and the biscuits should match. (Before you buy a whole bunch of biscuits, verify the thickness of YOUR cutter.) IN preparation for this presentation, Gary glued up the four sizes of biscuits onto a board showing the size of the biscuit and the size (width) of the slot the biscuit cutter cuts. He liked it so much that he regrets not doing this long ago as it's handy to see what size biscuit goes with any size wood.



Gary showed us how the biscuit cutter works. The blade

protrudes and cuts a groove. The bottom of the blade is $\frac{5}{16}$ " from the base of the tool, and is an easy way to set up the tool for repeatability. That is, if you set the biscuit cutter flat on a table and cut into anything, they will all lie flush on the bottom.



There's some grace in the biscuit cut of almost $\frac{1}{4}$ " of side-to-side allowance for the joint. There is no vertical allowance.

The kinds of things he uses biscuit joints for can vary — face frames and aligning boards. He demonstrated how to make a "T" joint by joining one

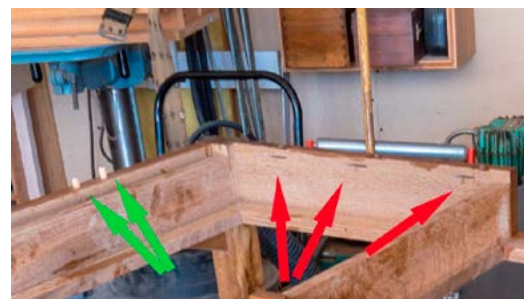
board in the middle (width-wise) of another board. He showed us a photograph of his mortise table with drawers on both sides. This let him make all the drawers the same width and saved a lot of time by avoiding the need to make multiples of different-width drawers.

He then moves to dowels. Dowels provide some added strength, but again, are mostly used to align boards for glue-ups. He demonstrated a jig that sits on top of the workpiece and is designed to always align with the board's center.

Gary shows us photos of projects he's made featuring biscuits and dowels. The kitchen island used a biscuit cutter to make slots on the inside of its sides. These are used to screw "Z-clips" into the underside of the top, and the other end of the "Z-clips" [See: <https://tinyurl.com/4za4brr2>] goes into the slot. This allows for expansion and

contraction of the top and securely holds it to the body. He also used dowels in the middle of the top to ensure the top would

remain centered on the island. By expanding and contracting from the middle, and the "Z-clips" letting that move-



Member Spotlight

This month is featuring *Nicole Yalung*

What year did you join the SFVW? I joined in May of 2025.

Woodworking

What is a project you are especially proud of and why? I am still currently trying my hand at a fancy flat-pack planter box.

What is your favorite tool (at the moment)? Table Saw! I've been able to get some hands-on experience through some very generous members of the club so far,

Personal Life

Where were you born? Where did you grow up? When did you come to the San Fernando Valley (or any other place where you live now)? I was born in the Philippines, but have lived in California, USA, since high school. I have lived in the valley, specifically in Reseda, since 2024.

Can you tell us a fun fact about yourself? For example, something you've done, an interest you have, something you've learned — that is special or unusual.



and I'm really hoping to get my own in the future.

What is a favorite woodworking podcast or content creator? I learned about an acclaimed Filipino woodworker named Benjie Reyes (<https://www.instagram.com/p/CIzuEIJH4DM/>) during my trip this past December, and now I would love to own one of his pieces someday. But locally, I've been quite fond of Casey Parlette's sculptures (<https://caseyparlette.com/sculptures/>), who is based in Laguna Beach, CA.

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 would love to eventually make my own custom furniture and a greenhouse!

My estranged paternal grandfather actually used to create, repair, and upholster furniture in the Philippines, so woodworking has become quite a way for me to reconnect with my roots.

Other Interests

What is one hobby or interest you have outside of woodworking? I quite enjoy gardening and traveling.

Where is a favorite place to which you have traveled? My motherland, the Philippine Islands, and most recently the Gigantes Islands.

What kind of books do you like to read? I like to read fictional novels that leave me with some food for thought. Finally read *Fahrenheit 451* recently, and a horror one called *This Thing Between Us*.

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).

"Minutes" from page 5

ment slide in and out, no failure will occur. (In the photo, the green arrow is pointing toward dowels and the red arrow is pointing toward slots for the Z-clips



He also used the smallest Porter Cable biscuit (called the "FF" size) for some bathroom mirror frames before he learned how to make Mortise and Tenon joints. He demonstrated that by placing the biscuit cutter flat on a tabletop for both

the rails and styles, it was possible to have one thick board properly proud of the other thinner board.

One other advantage of biscuits over dowels is that they do not cut very deeply into the piece you are joining. With dowels, if you are drilling into the side of a board, you need to not drill too deeply, so Gary uses some blue tape on the drill bit to limit the depth.

Next up is Brittany Joyner with a pocket-hole joinery presentation.

[Note: as of the time this newsletter is being prepared, there is a sale on Pocket-Hole systems from Kreg. Go to: <https://tinyurl.com/2byx6xc3> for more information. I was unable to find when the sale will be over. -Ed]

There's no barrier to entry with the pocket-hole jig, and it's easy to use. Pocket holes are a hidden joint and very useful. It's an



angled hole drilled into one board and used with a self-tapping screw. She shows us photos of the pocket-hole jig in use. There are many different types of jigs for pocket holes. She's using the Kreg K4. She goes

over images and details of how it works. You adjust the



jig to the thickness of your workpiece. Once it's clamped and the adjustments are made, it's time to drill the holes. After drilling the holes, you can use flat clamps to keep everything flush (if you don't do this, the wood will move on you and the boards will not be flush.

The screws and holes have a flat, step-like part to prevent the screw from going too far. There are different types of screws for hard woods (finer threads) and soft woods (coarser threads).

Tips: When driving the screws, she likes to drill in a little bit, then back out, and then go forward again a couple of times. In her experience, this prevents splitting.

She likes to use them in face frames, boxes, panel glue-ups, tables, and desk or bench frames, and edge-joining boards.

She showed us the framework of the face-frame cabinets she did for her kitchen.

She also uses them on mitered joints. She's a fan, and the pros are that they're fast and easy, strong, hidden, and beginner-friendly.

The cons would be visible holes, nontraditional joinery, weaker strength in some applications, a risk of splitting, and that they are not recommended where structural strength is required.

She finishes by showing us her finished work: kitchen cabinets, a bathroom project, a coffee table, and bookshelves. Beautiful work, Brittany!

The meeting was running low on time, but we still had time to head to the back of the room and do some live demonstrations of the pocket-hole jig. Members tried it out, and questions were asked.

A special thanks to Gary and Brittany for their presentations tonight. Excellent work, guys!



Old California Lighting Factory Tour

By Brittany Joiner

I recently had the chance to join the Art Deco Society on a guided tour of the Old California Historic Lighting Factory, and I'm afraid two more hobbies now sound pretty appealing to me- metalwork and stained glass. As if I have time for any more hobbies!

The factory (and showroom) are located in Orange, and tours can be arranged.

Upon entering their lobby, bedecked in stunning pendants, lanterns, lights, post office boxes, and address plaques, my creative senses were sparking in all direc-

tions. Many are designed in the Arts and Crafts, Greene and Greene, and other similar period styles, and I can guarantee you there was nothing cookie-cutter about any of them. All were meticulously made in their factory be showstopping pieces, either in your home or, for their larger corporate clients, at places like Disneyland.

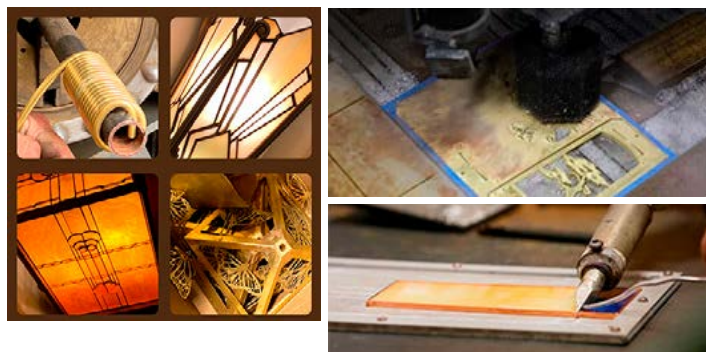
They are primarily a metal shop, but they also cut and piece together art glass for the shades and lanterns. They also have a few woodworkers on their staff who work from home, crafting some of the wooden elements of their fixtures.

On the factory floor, we were shown the star of the production- the water jet cutter, which takes the design from the computer and shoots out water at 50,000 psi to cut intricate designs in metal. It finishes the piece with a blast of crushed garnet. The piece is then taken to the tumbler, filled with porcelain stones, which carefully remove all burrs.

We were then shown the metal bender and the area where they take glass pieces to be lined with copper tape along the edges, then soldered together. We also marveled at several large booths with precision drills that cut designs into the pieces. The factory also makes its own metal chain, so it can replicate the round links prevalent in the last century. In addition, they have a few spot welders to assemble the pieces.

Next, we were shown the glass cutting (they get their art glass from a supplier in the northeast), as well as the small

kiln where they can bend the glass into a round shape for a curved pendant light. Finally, it was on to the finishing area, where there were baths of hydrochloric acid to give the metal a patina and worn appearance. Individual green hand-painted metal supplies that have a nice, weathered



copper look. It's then sealed with several coats and wired for lighting.



I came away from this tour inspired to try my hand at making similar pieces, but, of course, with a bent towards Art Nouveau. This poppy lantern, coming in at a cool ~\$600, certainly inspired me, and I'm already brewing up ideas of how I can create analogous works of art!

You can find out more about the factory and browse their beautiful collection here: <https://www.oldcalifornia.com/>

