



## In the Workshop with Charles Neil

Monthly Newsletter

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Welcome to all New Subscribers!

### As Much As Things Change They Remain the Same

My dream - I have always wanted to put the project videos up for Free, but there has always been that heat, lights, mortgage, food, taxes thing, but I was determined and I just felt so strong that it would be a good thing. So, we went to some of the manufacturers and asked if they would help us out with production costs, not cover, but help. Some didn't hesitate, some balked, some never answered at all.

We did a survey of a random selection of our newsletter subscribers and asked some questions, we polled about 700 of you and we were delighted and humbled by your response.

I just want you to know that the sponsors were my choice and I called them. My choice in tools and products are my personal choices and in no way am I telling you that the tools and products you see me use are the only ones out there, there are a lot of good products, but the ones I use are because I have used them for years. I may have some that are a little high tech and definitely look better, but they are still my work horses. The ones I have relied on forever and have come to trust. Feel free to disagree, that's ok, my goal is to pass on what I know and to help you, all I can tell you about is how and what I use. I just want you to know that my

techniques and product choices are my own and it is to that end that I can teach.

So to kick this thing off, we just launched the first project video -

The Shenandoah Valley Quilt Rack  
Episode 1

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid1305031876>



We do hope you like it and let us know what you think. It is our first full-length project broadcast on-line so we decided to start simple and get our feet wet before diving into some of the more difficult projects. Too much time and effort to get in too deep until we know all of the bugs are exterminated.

The quilt rack took four days to film, a few more to finish (not full time). Now, we are not going to be able to get very deep into the finishing, it simply takes too much time, we will however give you our finishing schedule in the companion reference .pdf which can be downloaded along with the patterns and material list for the products we used.

A few of the manufacturers didn't see the value in "giving back." They just didn't see the point. We didn't seek a lot of funds, nor a lot of manufacturers. I have always known that giving is a part of receiving, perhaps not the modern day approach to economics, but a couple thousand years ago this "plan" was introduced. For me, it has never failed and so while the response wasn't what it needed to be, we decided to do it the Charles Neil way and dive right in, do it in spite of the uncertainty. I've learned to build many a piece of furniture utilizing this same method and I've never not got it done. I have looked back and thought, "How could I have done something different, or better." But hindsight is always 20/20 and right now I ain't looking back but definitely forward and as long as you want what we offer, we'll find a way to get it done.

One of the things I did get done this month was to write down some things I have observed over time and thought you might enjoy them. Sherri is putting a new one up each morning at the top of our web page, here are a few to get started with:

"Wet glue prompts telephones to ring!"

"Wood is a renewable resource, body parts are not."

"Talent is the perfecting of desire and ability."

Check the website each day for more....

## My World

Can't believe it is August - just last week was July 4<sup>th</sup>. Ever heard the old saying, "The hurrier I go, the behinder I get?" Well, I can sure relate, videos, garden, furniture.

My garden is my escape, love it, hard and hot work but I still like it. It has done very well, had to deal with some mildews due to the rain but it is going strong.

We've been freezing and putting up for winter and have given more away than we use. My garden is about 55' x 120', not huge - but not small. The amount of food it produces is amazing. I spend 2 to 3 hours in it every day and more when I can, just planted more for Fall crops. I like it, I tried golf once, but after 2 hours I still couldn't get that stupid ball in that hippos mouth and gave up.

## Taper Jig

If you missed the video on my taper jig, here it is.

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid1305031876>



Yep, it's the same one I used to sell, just couldn't get it manufactured and keep it affordable and it is just too easy and safe for you not to have, so take a look at the video and it has a companion download as well, just click on the link below the video player screen. Hope you make one soon!

## In My Opinion

### The Magic of Routers DVD Set

Well, just finished counting and I have 22 routers and probably a hundred or so bits. There isn't much you can't do with a router. Use as a jointer, cutting, cutting veneer, carving (did a pie crust with patterns), pattern cutting, raised panels and flat panel doors, oh yea, they do pretty good on edge profiles too!

I don't know of anything we missed. Crowns, Ogee feet, goose necks, picture frames, fluting, inlays, planing, dovetails and a ton more.

Like my Finishing DVD Set, this puppy ain't holding nothing back and I don't know of anything that comes closer to covering all things a router does, I saw to it. I read and watched everything I could get my hands on then with a lifetime of using them, I went to work. **In My Opinion**, it is a great set to have.

Now, through August 15<sup>th</sup>, you, as a subscriber to this newsletter, may place your pre-release order at a substantial savings of \$20.00 off the set. Here's the link if you haven't already ordered.

<http://www.antiquesbuiltdaily.com/routerdvdpresale.htm>

## The Finish Line

In hot weather like we have been having, finishes can dry exceptionally fast...too fast. They don't flow out and if you're spraying, overspray can be a big issue so retarders and extenders (water base) are good ideas.

Thunderstorms can cause an issue as well as they dump a lot of humidity into the air and blushing can occur. Blushing is when your finish clouds up, looks milky. It is moisture trapped in the finish. Some will tell you that

having a fan blowing across the work helps, I have found the opposite to be true. A fan will cause a finish to "skim" over, sealing moisture in. Retarder (solvent) and Extender (water base) both help but it can still occur. Retarders and extenders slow the dry which allows the moisture to come out and the finish to flow out. Water base seems to be worse than solvent as it has water already in it.

Here's a tip - if you are getting blushing in solvent based (lacquer/shellac), spray some lacquer thinner or alcohol on top to help "re-open" the film. Water base, it doesn't help. One other thing you can do is to use a hair dryer to warm the finish. Be careful with solvent, the warming helps the moisture to come out.

Keep your air compressors well drained and use water traps as far from the compressor and as close to your spray gun as possible.

## The Weather Report

Been a might warm. The other day I saw a bird land on a tree branch, he looked like he was dancing, couldn't figure out what it was doing. Upon closer inspection, he was lifting one foot then the other, that's a might warm!

We have had a lot of rain, mostly thunderstorms. Sandwiched between a couple of mountain ranges, we have been getting more than our share. Twenty miles in any direction you can walk through a lawn and its like walking in a forest of dried leaves, grass just crunches, no rain at all.

Keep an eye out for humidity in your shop, that project can swell up really quick and cause a lot of construction problems. Make sure when you aren't working on a project, keep the parts and pieces in plastic bags and your projects wrapped in plastic as well.

## Craftsman Profile

### *What's Your Story Denis?*

Denis, I really like this young man and have found him to be not only a very talented and sharp woodworker, I have also found him to be a respectful and pleasant young man, a definite tribute to his parents. I first encountered Denis, aka teenagewoodworker on the Lumberjocks.com forum. I was quite impressed by his questions and comments so I emailed him and we have become good friends. Shortly after I had met him I did a little profile on him, but I have gotten to know him much better and thought I'd bring his story to you again.

The piece I wrote about earlier in "The Finish Line" about blushing was a result of Denis having sprayed some drawers with shellac and when he went inside to clean his gun, it had rained and his drawers had blushed. He emailed me and then I called him and using the hair dryer trick, we got it resolved.

Denis is active on the Lumberjock forum as well as the forum hosted on my web site. He has posted on both forums a torsion box router table he made that I think is just brilliant. So here is Denis, age 15, aka teenage-woodworker in his own words.

<http://lumberjocks.com/jocks/teenagewoodworker>

### **What is your first memory of woodworking?**

*My first memory of woodworking was sometime when I was around 5 or 6 years old. Nothing much just cutting wood in my dad's workshop with an old drywall saw that he had. My first memory of actual woodworking though was when I saw my first episode of the New Yankee Workshop and I decided to try woodworking out. For Christmas I got a drill and shortly after I got a jigsaw. From then on I was hooked.*



### **How old were you?**

*As I said at first I was 5 or 6, I really started actual woodworking though when I was 13. It really didn't kick in until I was 14 though and then I got the bug, and in the last year I've gone from a drill and jigsaw to a fully functioning shop where I am taking in commissions.*

### **Where do you live?**

*The good old United States of America*

### **Family, pets?**

*I have one brother and one sister along with my mom and dad. No pets, but a very large extended family with over 50 people on one side and around 20 the other.*

### **Other Hobbies?**

*I play hockey, as a defenseman for my city league. And also really like history, also woodworking history which I learned about some in Charles Neil's Sugar Chest Videos. Its very interesting stuff!*

### Do you have a particular interest in one woodworking area?

*For woodworking I really am interested in everything. I have the basics down right now so I am expanding into other things which I am hoping will put me ahead of the game. Such as finishing which I love about as much as building, also hand tools, hand cutting dovetails, mortise and tenons. And I want to start getting into inlays carvings and turnings. I am planning on doing another sugar chest soon out of pine which will be all hand tools except for milling the lumber. I think that will be a real challenge.*

I'm very proud of you Denis, keep up the good work.

## The Tool Crib

*Woodpeckers, Inc.*

<http://www.woodpeck.com>

For me, messing around with tools that don't hold up and do the job, just isn't part of what I deem a productive day, they have to work and keep on working.

One such company I have found whose products do exactly what I need is

Woodpeckers. I have many of their products and have had for a long time One of their products is "router lifts." Now I have already told you I use routers constantly and through the years I have had a lot of lifts. The ones I have had are in boxes,



upstairs, broken. Won't stay in adjustment, just not pretty, but then, I do work them pretty hard. That's when I found Woodpeckers and the Router Lifts they make. This weekend we will be uploading a video on our website about this tough router lift.

To learn more about it, visit this link:

<http://www.woodpeck.com/prlv2.html>

## Sherri's Update

As I was typing this newsletter I realized that we hadn't written as much about tools and tips, etc. I was afraid that we had talked too much about the videos. Well, we're a little excited about them and they won't do you any good if we don't let you know they are out there. A picture is worth a thousand words and we think you will be able to take a lot from the videos so we hope you enjoy both the newsletter and the videos.

### Website

Trying to update the site, I have been working on a re-design but this takes a lot of time and it is not quite ready to go yet. I have made a few changes to our splash page, one being a quote from Charles Neil at the top of the page each morning.

### Full Length Project DVDs

The first episode of "Making a Shenandoah Valley Quilt Rack" is available for viewing on our website at the following link:

<http://www.antiquesbuiltdaily.com/tips.htm>

This is a temporary home for the projects but we'll keep you informed. If you have any questions about the project, don't hesitate to email us.

### **Subscriber Savings on DVD Pre-Sale**

As a subscriber to our newsletter, you can still save \$20.00 by purchasing between now and August 15<sup>th</sup>. The sets are due in around August 20<sup>th</sup> and will ship to you no later than September 1<sup>st</sup>. We plan to attend the IWF Show in Atlanta and may be gone when they arrive. Click on the link below to go to the special shopping cart to receive this discount.

### **DVD Update**

The Lathe/Turning DVD set which will cover furniture turning (legs, balusters, finials, etc.) as well as some hollow vessel turning is scheduled for this Fall.

### **Ask Charles Neil Forum**

The forum is a place for our friends to meet up, discuss woodworking and have some fun. We hope you check us out.

<http://www.freeforum101.com/charlesneil/>

## **My Furniture Making World**

Let's see...

It's been a big month for videos, we did a slew of them for Woodcraft and did the entire quilt rack video, so.....I've completed two Shenandoah Valley Quilt Racks and a Contemporary Cherry and Walnut Armoire that was commissioned by clients in D.C. Other than that, not a lot of sawdust happened this month. Got a lot started and got to get it done.

One Last thought before I close.....

The voice of the woodworkers needs to be heard. One of the problems we encountered with the manufacturers was that it is hard to

come by verifiable numbers. We have never offered "affiliate" programs from our website where you click through from our site and we get a percentage of the sales if you buy from them...and we have never set anything up that allows us to really track hits, page loads and all of that stuff. It seems that those things are really important, it is what demonstrates how many people we reach, and that is what they want to see, without that, we're just running our mouth. I hope Sherri can come up with a way to get them some numbers and I ask that you all take the time to let these sponsor's know that what they are doing for you is appreciated. This thing is for you so please, click on the links and support the sponsors who have allowed us, to bring you the projects.

Our Sponsors:

Bartley Gel Stains  
DeWalt Power Tools  
Eagle America Router Bits  
Gemini Coatings  
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Jet Woodworking Tools  
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Powermatic  
Timbermate Woodfiller  
Turbinaire HVLP  
Waterlox  
Woodpeckers, Inc.  
WoodRiver by Woodcraft  
Pro Tool/Worksharp

Pass the word around, together we can get it done.

That's about it for me this month, thanks for your voice and your support. Without you, this is all in vain. *Visit My Forum* and let's chat. I hear the sound of that whip cracking so gotta run. Catch ya next month!



