

# Woodworkers Guild

of

Southwestern Michigan January 2013



## Next Meeting

**January 8, 2013 7:00pm**

### Location

**Al Collison's Shop at  
10292 Douglas Ave.**

Take Douglas North to Cooper, it is 2 ½ miles North of Cooper, on the right (East) side. Or you can take 131 to D Avenue East to Douglas and turn left, (North). Al will have an orange cone and flashing light out to get your attention.

The January speaker will be George Armstrong, a long time wood turner, and vice president of the West Michigan Woodturners. He enjoys making all types of turned items including all types of bowls, spindles, finials, Christmas ornaments, candle holders, goblets, and bird houses.

He not only enjoys turning, but also making and modifying tools necessary to make truly unique items.

George will be demonstrating a rose engine lathe. A lathe unlike any that we have seen/used in our meetings before.

George made the rose engine lathe that he will be using, and will give pointers on how to make one of your own for a fairly small investment.

Samples of George's work will be at the meeting.

At WMU's College of Engineering, we had a wonderful tour. Fred Sitkins, Director of Cooperative Education, was a fantastic guide throughout the building. First, we toured the plastics laboratory and were privileged to get a up-close look at the Sunseeker, Western's solar-powered race car. The car can reach a top speed in excess of 85 mph and has enough available torque to beat a Corvette off the line! As Fred explained the nuances of the solar car and answered many member questions, we were all impressed with the details and specifications. Each car takes approximately 2 yrs. and \$300,000 to build. The volunteer student teams build the car and all of its components from the ground up. The body is made of a strong, lightweight fiberglass honeycomb material. Many other components were made from carbon fiber and lightweight plastics and metals. Fred shared that the Sunseeker is one of the most powerful vehicles in the cross-country races it enters, but it has not yet notched a first-place finish because it is too heavy to compete with the lighter weight designs of other universities. Future cars are focused on addressing that problem.





After the "car" lab tour, we headed over to the CNC machine shop where the engineering students learn how to program and run the machines, and learn how to teach others to use CNC equipment. Next on our tour were the rolling and fabricating rooms. We jealously eyed the brand new barbecue and smoker they had created and were volunteering to be the first to use it! Then we strolled through the college machine shop where less technically inclined students can get assistance building their projects. There was a lot of nice equipment there! We also spied a few Baja cars and go karts in various stages of production and/or repair.



Then we explored the extensive engine testing wing. There were a couple of different dyno machines. They are used for calibrating many parts of the vehicle (such as speedometers) and for performance testing and analysis. One room was completely vibration free. It rested on an 18' thick mass of rubber to isolate the equipment from any possible vibrations, whether it be other equipment on campus or even nearby US 131! Talk about a high-tech lab.

After our tour was complete, we listened to a presentation about WMU's famous trolley which ran up and down the hill at East campus. Students attending Western State Normal School used the trolley to travel up the hill from Davis Street down below in what is now the student ghetto. It was in service from 1908-1949. Fred showed many historic photos, as well as some from the reconstruction project.

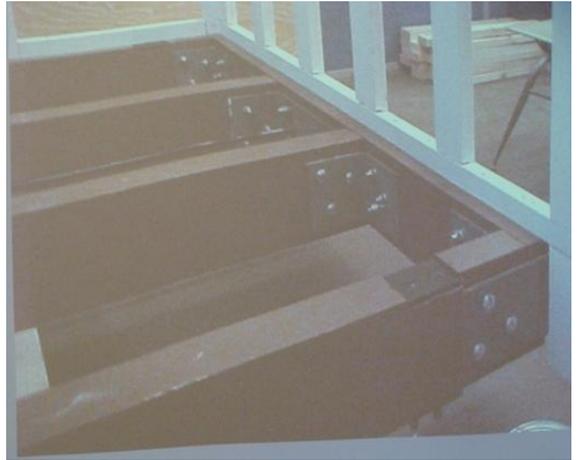
As he described the challenges associated with recreating the trolley without any original parts or specifications, we were fascinated with the level of detail and precision the new trolley was built. The completed trolley was installed in front of the Bernhard Center on permanent display in 2003. However,



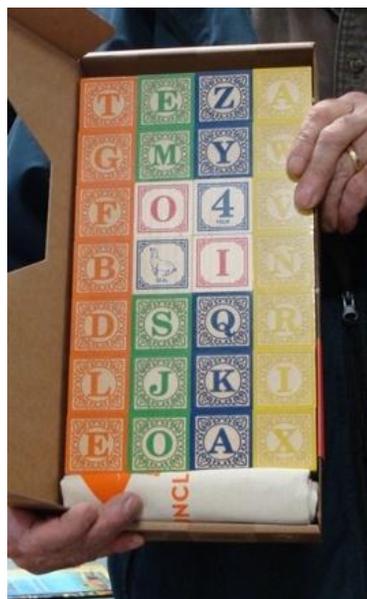
deterioration of the trolley. Now, the trolley has been refurbished and "weatherproofed" with several coats of spar urethane and will be on permanent display on Oakland drive in front of East campus. It is planned



to be part of the new East campus as the university has plans to demolish, rebuild, and renovate the buildings there. We thoroughly enjoyed the evening.



Many thanks to Ben Overbeek for doing a fantastic job with this write-up and Wolfgang Lugauer for all the photos from the December meeting.



A couple show and tell items from the December meeting

## Guild Officers

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#### *Directions*

*New Hwy 6 E. off 131 to  
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