



## CURRENT OFFICERS

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**Next Meeting: Tues, May 12 @7:00 p.m.**

The May meeting will be held at our regular meeting place, Tri States Automotive, 745 W. Gaines Street in Tallahassee. (see map on next page)

Meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of the month.

We have an open program for May so this will be a good opportunity to bring your questions or ideas to run by our cadre of experienced craftsmen and craftswomen.

### Highlights From the April Meeting

In spite of the meeting falling the evening before tax day we had a good turn out, including two new attendees. Welcome Nancy Usiak and Ed Garrett.



The April meeting had an open agenda. Our president was out of town so Austin opened the meeting. Opening comments evolved into an interesting discussion about members' shops and current zoning and restrictions affecting the construction of shop buildings.

Another informative discussion involved saw blades. Gibson Saw Repair was mentioned by several members as an excellent place for blade sharpening and repair. They are located at 813 Briandav street which is off of South Monroe just north of Capital Circle. Phone 877-1983. The owner's name is Buddy.

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### CONGRATULATIONS!

In March, member Regine Maligne-Lynch became an American Citizen. Regine said: "I am so proud to be part of the great American experiment of people governing themselves. We were 75 in the ceremony from everywhere in the world - from Australia, China, Asia, Africa, Europe, South and central America. Very touching to see that America is such a mixture and I am now part of it!"



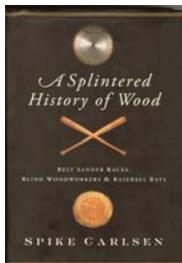
### Buy Sell Or Trade

Our club Treasurer, Austin Tatum, reports he has a bunch of tools for sale and some even for "give-away."

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### SPLINTERS: excerpts from Spike Carlson's book "A Splintered History of Wood"

#### BASEBALL BATS: A DAVID-AND-GOLIATH AFFAIR



Jim Anderson and Paul Johnson are giddily flipping through the pages of the latest Sports Illustrated. Not the swimsuit issue. They find the page they're looking for and hold it up to show off a full-page picture of Jimmy Rollins, shortstop for the Phillies and holder of a thirty-six-game hitting streak, the longest in the majors. The streak excites them. But what excites them more is the stick of wood Rollins has casually resting on his camel-hump right shoulder. Jim and Paul will gladly tell you it's a MaxBat—and it came off the

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## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS *(Continued from page 1)*

**Show and Tell:** As a follow up to his Dulcimer crafting demonstration at the March meeting, John McDevitt brought in a curved dulcimer side piece. John explained that his bending technique involves moistening the wood, then bending it over a piece of metal pipe that is heated just enough to cause water to sizzle.



Joe Doker brought in a set of salad tongs that he had made for Christmas gifts last year.

**Project Problems:** Spencer opened the floor for members to ask for input on project problems.

Bob Whitworth mentioned he is refurbishing a communion table for a church. The piece is at least 50 years old. The sides of the piece are tapered at five degrees in two directions and the mitered joints are coming apart. Bob asked for suggestions for trimming out the joint. The ensuing discussion brought up several good ideas for handling the issue.

Ed Garrett asked for input about ducting for the dust collection system he is installing in his shop. Several members recommended using regular round metal duct pipe. They recommended this over PVC because the metal takes care of eliminating the need for a separate grounding system to dissipate static electricity. A couple of members had “shocking” tales to tell about static electricity.

Ed also described a unique clean air breathing system he developed for use in his shop when sanding or doing other dusty work. It involves a hood with a face shield that is attached to an “umbilical cord” made of dryer vent piping through which is fed fresh outside air using an in-line fan. He noted his head does get a little cold in the winter time.

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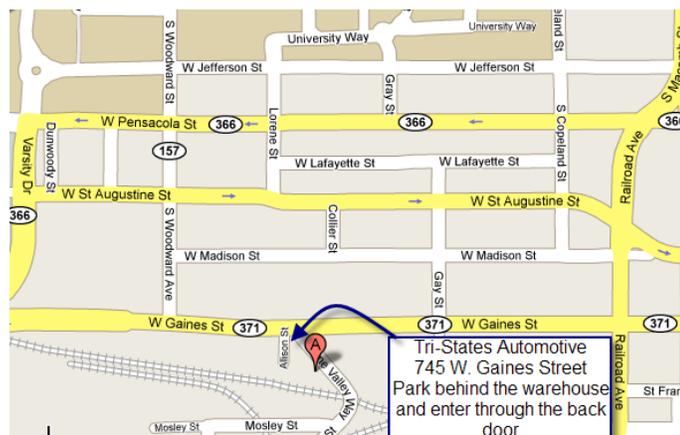
## Buy Sell Or Trade: *(Continued from page 1)*

John McDevitt says he has a Sears band saw that he is willing to give away to a good home.

Jan Winans has a nearly new 1.5 hp Grizzly shaper that he wants to sell.

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Directions to the regular meeting location.





**SPLINTERS:** *(Continued from page 1)*

lathe of their small manufacturing facility in Brooten, Minnesota just three months ago. “When you’re a bat manufacturer, there’s no better advertising than when one of your guys goes on a hitting spree,” explains Paul.

What makes this small bit of notoriety loom even larger is that the world of major league bat making is a David-and-Goliath affair. Goliath is Hillerich & Bradsby, maker of the Louisville Slugger—the official bat of major league baseball—with 70 percent of the pro market. This year they’ll make one million wood bats, a far cry from MaxBats with an output of thirty thousand per year. But while Louisville Slugger has been around for almost a hundred and twenty-five years, MaxBats has been around for two.

But manufacturing capacity isn’t the biggest thing differentiating the companies. While Louisville and most other manufacturers use the traditional northern white ash, MaxBats uses Maple. Their slogan is “Our maple kicks ash,” and Paul is more than willing to explain why. Maple has a tighter grain than ash, it’s 5 percent denser, and it has greater surface hardness, which gives the ball more “pop” off the bat. Paul explains that while ash softens with use, maple becomes more compact and harder with use.

Not just any maple will do. Maple that grows in Vermont and other parts of the northeast is too dense because of the long winters, and maple grown in the far south is too soft because of the long summers. But Pennsylvania maple—with just the right balance of density and resiliency—hits the sweet spot.

The ash that Hillerich & Bradsby uses comes from a similar geographic location. Theirs is a 200-mile strip along the border between New York and Pennsylvania, “a wooded, rolling, mostly remote area blessed with just enough sun, just enough rain, and just enough glacial till.” Though large, the company continues to be picky when it comes to picking wood. They own 8,000 acres of timber, but only a small portion of the 10 to 12 million board feet of ash the company mills annually comes from those holdings. Of that vast quantity of wood, only 2 percent will become baseball bats. The perfect bat blank, or billet, will come from a 60-year-old tree, preferably one growing on a north-facing or east-facing slope, where the soil is richer, the trees more numerous, and as a result straighter and taller in their competitive bids to reach the sunlight. The perfect billet will have straight grain and eight growth rings per inch, and it will come from the lower 10 feet of the tree. A completed 32-ounce bat starts with a 20-pound 40-inch-long piece of green ash. Eighteen pounds of sawdust and moisture later, a Derek Jeter bat will emerge.

Two other types of wood bats that have recently been developed will never find their way to the MLB playing fields. The first is made of thin plies of wood, glued and rolled up like a newspaper; it’s virtually unbreakable. The second is a bat made of laminated layers of bamboo, a substance with a surface hardness rivaling that of iron. Neither meets the “solid wood” stipulation in the rule book; indeed, the bamboo version—since bamboo is a grass – doesn’t even meet the “wood” stipulation. And that’s just fine with the MaxBat folks.