



## CURRENT OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Spencer Cullen... (850)878-8409

TREASURER: Austin Tatum... (850)561-1400

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Joe Doker... (850)509-1337 e-mail tws@redbaystudio.com

**Next Meeting: Tues, January 10th @7:00 p.m.**

Happy New Year! The January meeting will be an open forum round table format. One topic we wish to discuss is what items Santa brought for your woodworking shop. Bring 'em in if they aren't too big.

Don't Forget your Show and Tell items.

The 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 held on the second Tuesday of the month.

## Highlights From the December Meeting

We had a decent turnout of 15 members at the December meeting. During the general discussion portion of the meeting, we discussed where to get planer blades sharpened (Gibson's) and where to locally acquire band saw blades and get them welded (Holly, Inc.). In addition **Val Tuck** spoke about how he matches and selects his stain color for cabinets and **Richard LaSalle** showed us a 1-1/4" under sink drain plumbing fitting that can be used to attach a hose to a dust collector port.



Dave Adams explains Windsor Chair construction.

Our program for December was about Windsor Chairs. Club member **Dave Adams** recently completed a Windsor Chair workshop and brought in

some of the tools he uses plus a partially completed chair. Dave gave a great description of the methods used to construct these classic chairs. This includes an assortment of significant hand tool work. Nice job, Dave.

**Mike Reilly**, another member and Windsor chair maker, brought in one of his completed chairs for us to see.



**Buy, Sell or Trade**

Austin reports the following items for sale or free:

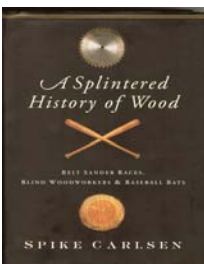
- Several used lathes, some for cheap, some free.
- Stainless table, 30"x30": \$30.
- Metal or plastic drums, 35 gal = \$10., 55 gal = \$15.
- Delta scroll saw with stand: \$90.
- Short lumber pieces.

The following items are free:

- Vacuum system parts.
- A/V carts.
- Work Bench



**SPLINTERS:** excerpt from Spike Carlson's book "A Splintered History of Wood"



## The Steinway D: Twelve Thousand Pieces of Indestructible Music

*(In this topic of his book, Spike Carlson presents a great description of the construction of Steinway's top-of-the-line grand piano. I've selected a few segments-particularly those dealing with the types of wood used. Ed.)*

"Wu Han and Gilbert Kalish have just finished putting their piano through a torture test that's the musical equivalent of the 24 Hours of Le Mans. They've played Igor Stravinsky's "The

*(Continued on page 2)*



(Splinters, Continued from page 1)

Rite of Spring.” The score involves eggbeater trills and relentless hammering. A conservative estimate shows their twenty fingers have dealt the eighty-eight keys a cumulative twenty-five thousand blows over the course of the piece. Each of those twenty-five thousand key strikes involves the Rube Goldberg-like chain reaction of fifty-eight different components that constitute the action for each key. And through all those million and a half intricate interactions, there is not one slip, stick, twang, or tick. It’s a Steinway Model D concert grand: the grandest of the grand pianos.

The next morning we attended a tour of the Steinway factory located in Queens, New York. Bob, our host for the morning, tells about the indestructible lineage of a Steinway. He stands besides an army-green upright called the Victory Piano. It was one of three thousand pianos made by the factory during Word War II with the unique ability to be air dropped to our fighting troops.

The gestation period of a Steinway, like that of a human, is nine months. If you subtract the weight of the 350pound cast-iron harp to which the strings are attached, a Model D tips the scales at 640 pounds. Of that 640 pounds, 90 percent is wood. Warren Albrecht is the person in charge of procuring that 90 percent, and for all the Steinways produced, it adds up to just shy of 1 million board feet a year.

Five basic woods—maple, yellow birch, sugar pine, poplar, and Sitka spruce—are used in every piano; more in custom-made or limited edition models. When a piano costs \$30,000 to \$90,000, you only use the best. Hard (or sugar) maple used for the rim comes from the New England area as does the yellow birch used for the inner core of the hammers. Poplar is used for the core for veneered components like the top.

But Albrecht spends the lion’s share of his time seeking out and buying the \$2 million worth of Sitka spruce used yearly for the soundboards. His beloved Sitka spruce grows along the west coast of North America, the bulk of it coming from Alaska and British Columbia.

Veneer is applied to all of the rims, tops, and other exposed surfaces regardless of the final finish. The majority—which are destined to be lacquered black—will receive hard maple veneer, which accepts the glossy finish well. The most exotic veneers go into Steinway’s Crown Jewel Collection.

Steinway continues to make one-of-a-kind and few-of-a-kind art pianos. Perhaps none of these will reach the fame and auction price attained by the Alma Tadema art case piano built in the late 1800s that recently sold for \$1.2 million—but you can buy a recently built re-creation for \$675,000.

Today this American company makes about two thousand grand pianos and six hundred uprights a year.”

Directions to the regular meeting location.

