

# Newsletter

Volume 8 Issue 9

September 2008

The meeting topic for the month of August was

## “Tour of Ferche Millworks”



**Ferche's tooling racks were impressive.**



**Charlie describes Ferche's products.**

Charlie Meyer of Ferche Millwork offered our club a tour of their millwork plant complete with a video presentation to start it off.

Ferche Millwork is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year in business this year. They are now the largest hardwood millwork manufacturer in the United States, being one of the premier producers of finished hardwood millwork for the construction trade.

Bob Ferche, and his brother Frank started Ferche Millwork, way back in 1958, at the same location where it stands today, right there on the North end of Rice Minnesota. They vastly expanded the plant in 1982, and by 1985 employed sixty people, and boasted over \$40 million dollars in sales annually, upgrading to a nearly fully automated manufacturing process, which now produces over 200 ft of finished millwork per minute. The business was eventually sold to Bob Fox owner of RAF Industries. Ferche Millwork sells primarily to the northern half of the U.S. as well as a good portion of Canada. Last year they manufactured over 7,000 different types of mouldings, of which over 50% were custom made for varying customers. Some 70% of their mouldings are made of Red Oak. Today they manufacture 18 million board feet of millwork annually. They have as many as 190 employees when times are good. Ferche also owns a hardwood lumber mill in Mount Pleasant, Tennessee, an advantage because it brings the mill much closer to the forests of Kentucky, Indiana, and Tennessee, where the majority of the hardwood is grown. Their Tennessee plant not only saws lumber, but it's kiln's have a capacity of 400 thousand board feet per loading, while their Rice plant boast a kiln capacity in excess of 650 thousand board feet.

They use nearly every scrap of the lumber in their manufacturing process, even finger jointing the shorter pieces for veneering components. They use 20% of the sawdust produced for heating their plants, and sell the remaining 80% to the farming community for animal bedding.



### Central Minnesota Woodworker's Association

The CMWA is a group of men and women from around the St. Cloud Minnesota area who share a common interest in the art and business of woodworking. We meet monthly and share information, techniques and topics of interest in the area of woodworking.

- President: Tom Doom
- Vice President: Roland Johnson
- Treasurer: Kurt Zniewski
- Secretary: John Wilson
- Board of directors: Gredo Goldenstein,  
Brad Knowles  
Jay Eggebrecht  
Gary Mrozek
- Director of Marketing: Tom Homan
- Newsletter Editor: Scott Randall
- Website Manager: Darren McKeever

## September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 <small>mtg</small>	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**Next Meeting:** September 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at Sauk Rapids Middle School.

**Board Meeting:** September 17<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM at Coborns Café in Sauk Rapids.

The September meeting will be held in the parking lot at the Sauk Rapids Middle School. The meeting time was changed to 6:00 to give us enough time before dark. There is no formal program planned. Instead, we will be having a sort of tailgating event. It is intended to be a social event where we can get to know each other better. Kurt Zniewski will be bringing BBQ's and John Wilson has agreed to bring the buns, condiments and chips. Beverages will be supplied by the CMWA. Every member is encouraged to bring a friend, a project to show off, a handy work tip, and anything else they would like to sell, swap, or share. **Note: Board meeting is at 8:00.**

The next Woodturners Group meeting will be Saturday October 18th at the shop of Dick Beumer 3750 15th Street NE, Sauk Rapids. Dick will demonstrate turning lidded boxes

CMWA Wood Expo: Mark your calendars! The tentative date for the Expo has been set for February 21<sup>st</sup> and Brad Knowles, this year's chairman, is seeking energetic volunteers for the upcoming event. Please let Brad know if you can help out.

Several door prizes were awarded this month. Ferche Millwork was generous enough to donate several 25' rulers, which were won by John Wilson, Tom Zak, Wendell Pou, James Preusser, Michael Lauer and Dick Beumers. Gary Mrozek won this month's attendance prize consisting of a saw blade carrying case.

The CMWA is now seeking a chairperson for the upcoming Fall Student Outreach program as well as volunteers for the four 1-1/2 hour evenings required to teach the class. The classes have historically been held on four consecutive Tuesday evening from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM at our usual middle school woodshop meeting place.

Brad Knowles will offer a demonstration at our October meeting using his ornamental mill, used to create twisted woodturnings such as the candlestick.



## The Wood Turners Group

On Wednesday September 3rd six members of the CMWA attended an interactive presentation and book signing at "Bookin' It" bookstore in Little Falls. Spike Carlsen who wrote "A Splintered History of Wood" entertained us with some show-and-tell from his travels in the world of wood. Carlsen is the former Executive Editor of The Family Handyman magazine and currently writes "Ask Spike" for Backyard Living magazine. He and his family live in Stillwater, MN.

Spike's collection (which we were encouraged to hold) includes a wood pulley from the 1700's, and a \$1,600 wood cowboy hat turned from a 30 lb. hunk of maple by Johannes Michelsen. He also had a small walnut box with perfectly cut dovetails that was built by a gentleman who was blind (Spike explained how there is a movement to help the disabled work with wood). There was a pencil that had the complete alphabet carved into it ...with a chain saw! Most impressive was a slab of kauri wood that was pulled from a bog in New Zealand that was carbon dated to be 50,000 years old.

Spike is a self diagnosed introvert and barely a novice woodworker, but his passion for wood is evident in his writing. Pick up a copy at your favorite bookstore. For every book that's sold, one tree will be planted at a mission school in Tanzania that will be harvested in about 10 years to provide an income for the school.

Pictured above is Spike holding the 50,000 year old slab.

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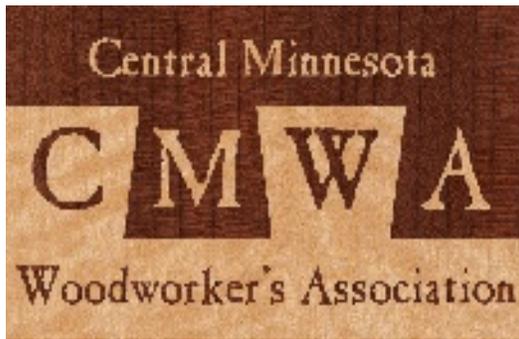
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**Next Meeting**  
**Wednesday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM**  
**Sauk Rapids-Rice Middle School**  
**Parking Lot (around back)**



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