

# Echos From the "BAT" Cave

Baltimore Area Turners

**BALTIMORE AREA**  
  
**TURNERS**

March, 2013

Volume 8, Number 3

## MOVING ALONG



In March, BAT met at the Jewish Community Center (*shown above*). Thanks to JCC for hosting us. The room (*below*) was spacious and great for show and tell but not suited for turning demos and had no storage. Starting in April we will be meeting at our new home at the Boumi Temple (see last page). Thanks to contributor Ron Ford for his article on his adventures in Microwave Drying.

MORE INSIDE



### *Inside this issue:*

Microwave Drying	2
President's Challenge	3
Show and Tell	4
Other Stuff	5,7

### *2013 Officers:*

**President**  
Yaakov Bar Am  
**Vice President**  
Bob Pegram  
**Treasurer**  
Wayne Kuhn  
**Secretary /  
Newsletter**  
Richard Dietrich  
**Webmaster**  
Stephen Jones  
**Librarian**  
Clark Bixler  
**Public Relations**  
Yaakov Bar Am  
**Program  
Director**  
Bob Pegram



Visit us on the web at [www.baltimoreareaturners.org](http://www.baltimoreareaturners.org)

# MICROWAVE DRYING

*By Ron Ford*

Still being very new to woodturning (about 8 months now) and generally somewhat impatient, the idea of speeding up the time between rough turning a bowl and being able to finish it became an issue. Going to the internet (what did we do before it existed???) I found many articles on the subject, no two of which agreed in any substantial way.

One point I did take from several is that this is not an activity you want to undertake using the family microwave oven. As many of you know, some species of wood are less than pleasant smelling and adding heat generally adds to the 'stink factor'. I was able to find a nice working Magic Chef unit in a local thrift store for the princely sum of \$18.00. It had everything I needed: programmable settings, a reasonably sized cooking area, and a turntable. I believe all of these are essentially must-haves in order to succeed.

I had two smallish bowls I had turned from tulip poplar a few days earlier so they became my guinea pigs. I tried some variations of the methods I had found online with the first but with limited success. I moved to my own method for the second one. The two were similar in size and weight, so the readings listed below are pretty much in line with what I experienced. The bowl was loosely wrapped in a brown paper bag for each cycle, and removed for cooling and to allow the bag and the condensation on the bowl to dry between trips through the oven.

Seeing the results of bowl #1, I decided to go to a repeated cycle of 5 minutes each at 50% power. Each cycle was followed by a cool down period of at least 30 minutes, or until the bowl was close to room temperature. It was easy to follow this cycle as I was doing other things in the shop or with long breaks as I was elsewhere or doing other things that took me away from it. The second bowl measured 7 1/16" across

and stood 3 1/2" high, weighing 667 grams on my digital scale when final roughing was complete. My scale came from Harbor Freight, costing less than \$17 and capable of weighing up to 11 pounds. Here are the readings as the process unfolded:

Cycle	Starting Weight	# Grams Lost
1	667	0 (starting weight)
2	621	46
3	589	32
4	569	20
5	538	31
6	523	15
7	499	24
8	479	20
9	462	17
10	443	19
11	420	23
12	401	19
13	383	18
14	366	17
15	353	13
16	344	9
17	337	7

By the last cycle (#17) there was a distinct odor of burnt wood in the air so I stopped the process about halfway through. There was a small amount of char on the bottom but nothing dangerous or that would create any problem in finishing. The bowl had lost roughly half its' weight by then, or about what I have experienced in other situations where I allowed them to dry over a period of months. The amount of warping and shrinkage was similar to that of air-dried bowls as well. I plan to try this again with larger bowls and other wood species, but you may want to give it a whirl yourself if your inability to wait approaches mine.

Note: In the interest of full disclosure, neither bowl survived my bungled handling in the final turning process. The operation was a success but the patients died.





The Entries on display.

## PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE

**Wayne Kuhn, Richard Dietrich, and Louie Harris** submitted matching pairs of goblets for the first President's Challenge. They discussed the techniques they used to turn the goblets and constrain the parameters to make matching goblets.

Louie showed his initial failure making Bubinga goblets, then explained his process on the submitted SpectraWood goblets. He hollowed with first one with a spindle gouge and the second with a Hunter tool.

Richard's Mulberry goblets were hollowed with a round nose scraper followed by finishing with a Hunter tool. The exterior was shaped with a skew chisel.

Wayne's S&S Hard Rock Maple goblets were hollowed with a Termite tool.

Chris Kunzle suggested initially turning the two goblets bowl-to-bowl to produce identical diameter bowls, then separating the two and hollowing individually.



Louie Harris talks goblets.



Wayne Kuhn shows his goblets.



Chris Kunzle demonstrates alternate approach





Wayne Kuhn waves his Bowling Ball pen



Dave Maidt shows his pedestal



Jim Oliver shows a Red Oak French rolling pin



Don Keefer eyes his Klimpt-inspired bowl.

## SHOW AND TELL



Clark Bixler shows turning to a template



Yaakov Bar Am talks chemical patination

**Wayne Kuhn** - showed a Schrader valve stem cap mounted on a pen turned from a Blue Bowling Ball.

**Dave Maidt** - showed a cake pedestal made for his niece. It was made in three pieces of Maple and Cherry, screwed together with threaded inserts. He cut the platform with a circle cutting jig on his router. He also had a turned cake with candles.

**Jim Oliver** - Showed two rolling pins - a Red Oak French style one colored with red dye on sawdust and a traditional Maple one with rolling handles. Both were finished with Mineral Oil. He also showed a Cherry bowl where the voids were filled with bleached Ash sawdust in Epoxy. He recommended Deck Bleach (Sodium Percarbonate) for bleaching.

**Don Keefer** - showed two 'unconventional goblets' He showed a Maple square bowl dyed with light red mahogany aniline dye and decorated with a carved Cinnabar Dragon pendant. He showed a Rosewood with Padouk bowl with a design inspired by Gustav Klimpt. He finished it with tung oil varnish and decreased the shine by scuffing with sandpaper.

**Clark Bixler** - showed a Bloodwood goblet with a carved celtic knot. This was intended to be the first of a pair for the President's Challenge. (The other one is still chucked in the lathe.) He also showed a turned Mahogany sounding board (the wood hit by a gavel) on which he will carve the name of Yorkarvers.

**Yaakov Bar Am** showed a Cherry closed bowl with a coppered bottom stippled with patina produced by Sodium Sulfate.

**Chris Kunzle** showed a picture of a Pink Ivory, African Blackwood, Yellowheart, and Gabon Ebony segmented box he made as a wedding gift for a friend. As the give had already been given, he could not display the original.





(Above) Jim Oliver's rolling pins; (Right) Chris Kunzle's ornate box



Zoom in on these photos  
to see the exquisite detail.

## SOME OF WHAT WAS SHOWN



A good lineup



Clark Bixler's partly carved  
Bloodwood goblet.

## BAT GETS A BIG LATHE

At the February meeting, Jim Oliver announced that he was upgrading his lathe and would give his old lathe to whoever would cart it out of his shop. BAT VP Bob Pegram and several other able-bodied BAT members helped Jim move in his new lathe

and move his old lathe, a General 260, to Bob's shop where it is being refurbished. Once complete, it will be stored at the Boumi Temple and used for demos. It has variable speed with 16" swing over the gap, 12" over the ways. Over the years Jim has shown many examples of what can be produced on it. Thanks, Jim!





## MORE OF WHAT WAS SHOWN



(Clockwise from above)  
 Clark Bixler - Sounding board  
 Dave Maidt - Cake and candles  
 Don Keefer - decorated Maple square bowl  
 with carved medallion  
 Jim Oliver - Maple Bowl  
 Yaakov Bar Am - embellished Cherry bowl  
 Wayne Kuhn - Bowling Ball pen with Schrader valve tool







## RAFFLE NEWS

A mother lode of wood was raffled at the March meeting. Birch, Pawlonia, Rose of Sharon, Sycamore, Elm, and Dogwood logs, a Tupilo round, Plum and Tulip Poplar splits, a cherry crotch, an apple branch, Walnut and Treewood spindle blanks and S & S Maple were available as raffle prizes.

Thanks to all who donated!

## BALTIMORE AREA TURNERS

Baltimore Area Turners meets every month on the second Wednesday of the month at the Boumi Temple

5050 King Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21237-3325

Next meeting:  
April 10, 2013 at 7:00 PM

Agenda:  
Surface Embellishment  
Jim Oliver - Chemical Treatment  
Clark Bixler - Chip Carving

## MARK SUPIK CLASSES

BAT Lifetime Member Mark Supik is offering 20% off the cost of his classes for BAT members.

[Four more](#) are scheduled in the near future and more will be announced.

The shop is located at  
1 N. Haven Street  
Baltimore, MD 21224

Mark will also be demoing at the [Utah Woodturning Symposium](#) in May

## SUSAN SHANE MEMORIAL IRONMAN COMPETITION

Rule Change:

Only 3 folks participated in the Iron Man challenge this month. The Board would like to see broader participation. The Board decided that for the remainder of this year, we will accept 'make-up' submissions at later meetings. (For instance, you can bring your box and two goblets to the May meeting.) Deadline for all submissions will be the November meeting.

President Yaakov Bar Am plans to have 5 Presidential Challenges this year.

(The term 'Ironman' is not intended to imply that participation has anything to do with gender. As Susan would have said, "Women can be Ironmen, too.")

## PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE

BAT President Yaakov Bar Am has announced this year's second President's Challenge:

**May** – Turn a box using 3 different woods either laminated or segmented.