

MARCH 2024

STWG

# SUSQUEHANNA TRAIL WOODWORKERS GUILD

## FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK

We have an unidentified hardwood tree in the front yard. It is probably Maple, Dogwood, Cherry, or one of a number of squat, slow growing trees builders randomly leave in the front yard of every property. This year, as in years past I pruned the tree - before the first buds - to give me clearance for lawn mowing, and to shape its growth upwards. But this year I sorted the branches for some green woodworking projects I am doing: canes and spoons.

I choose relatively straight sections at least 1/2" thick and between 40" and 6' long. I cut all the suckers (small branches) off, and set the limbs aside. Everything else I chipped and used for mulch.

For spoons I took the widest branches (~4") and bucked them between suckers (anywhere from 6" to 16"). Then I split them to remove the pith (center), stripped off the bark, put them in a freezer bag, and put them in the freezer. This allows them to stay green until you are ready to work with them.

For walking sticks, canes, and thumb sticks I buck them to between 40" for canes and 6' for walking sticks. I try to keep as much character as I can when choosing where to cut. Once bucked, I seal the ends and knots with paste wax. This doesn't prevent all checking, but it helps.

To make a spoon take a blank out of the freezer, and let it stand for 10 to 15 to warm up. Carve it (lots of great books and classes on this). If you cannot finish within one sitting just put it back in the bag in the freezer. When you're done, the best way to dry them is to collect wood shaving in an old pillow case and put the spoons in there. Those shavings give the spoon mass allowing it to release moisture more slowly making it less likely to crack. Finish with cooking oil and use.

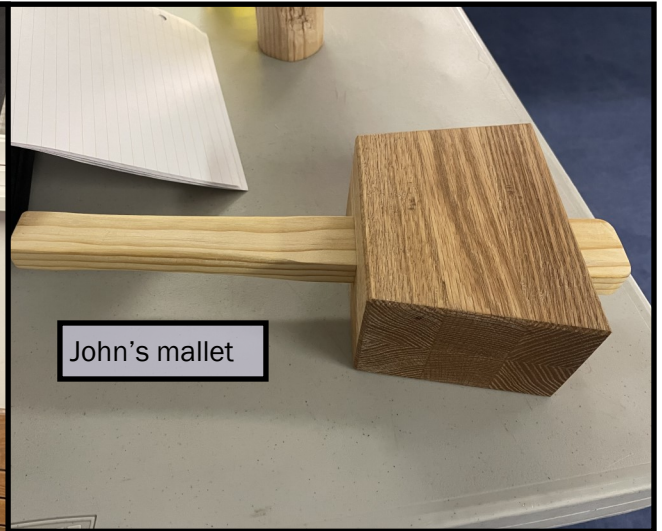
To make a cane take a stick, peel the bark off, and carve it to the shape you want. It will be held in the hand, so the best carvings are smooth to the touch. You can use the knife, square on, to scrape the wood smooth (same idea as a scraper plane). Once done you can immediately apply non-film finishes like Boiled Linseed Oil or paste wax as they will slow down but not halt the drying process. For the foot, warm a bowl of dry rice (stove or microwave) and place the bottom 1" in for 15min. Let it cool for another 15, then shape it to just barely fit in a cane tip, and push it on. As the cane foot regains moisture it will grow ensuring the tip remains stuck.

Come to the meeting and show off some of the things you have done during the show and tell. I'll be showing off some of what I have done.— John





Mark's Coat rack



John's mallet

CONTACT US!  
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Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 28th, at 7 pm.

Scott Schaefer will discuss Pyrography (writing with fire); specifically, wood burning.

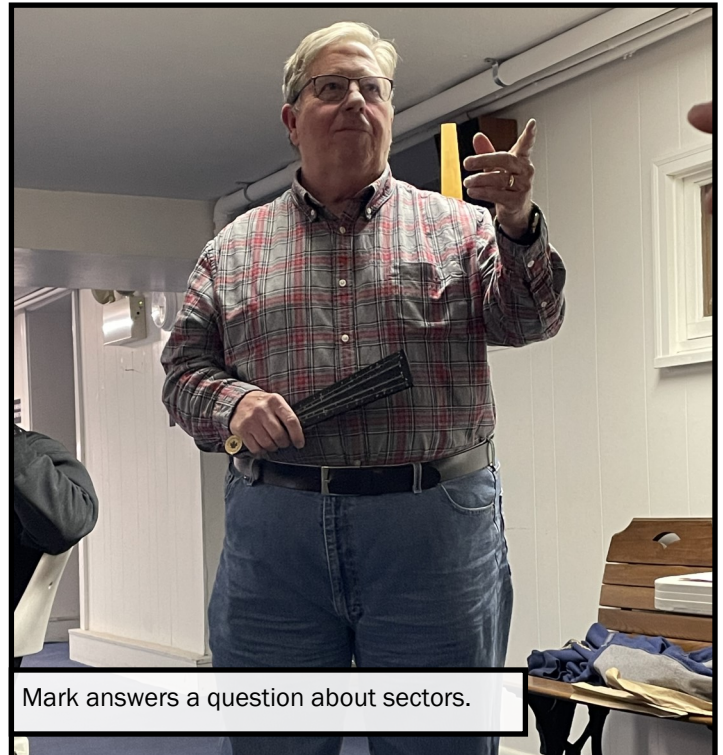
NOTE: We will be meeting downstairs. Take the elevator, or stairs, down to level 2.



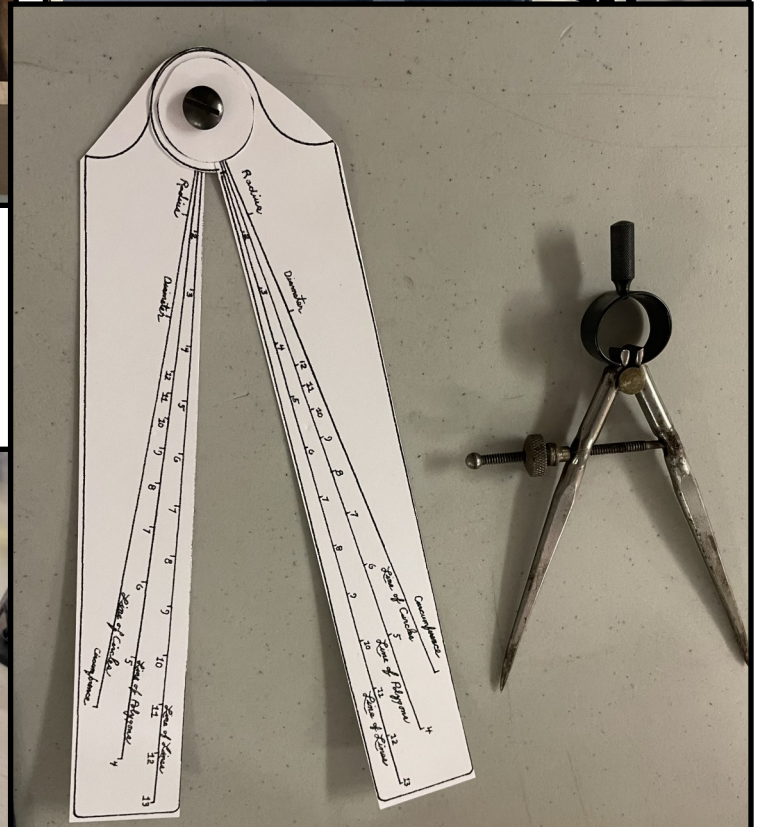
**STWG.ORG**







Mark answers a question about sectors.



With these simple tools, a straight edge, and some basic math skills, it's amazing what you can build, almost to an unlimited scale.



### VERY LARGE

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks boast many of the world's largest trees by volume. The General Sherman Tree is the largest in the world at 52,508 cubic feet (1,487 cubic meters).

### VERY SMALL

Growing to a mere 1-6cm in height, the dwarf willow (*Salix herbacea*) is arguably the world's tiniest tree. Well adapted to live in arctic and subarctic environments, this tiny wooden sprout has developed the key strategy to surviving the cold; staying really small.

