

Marquetry Workshop

March 7, 2009

By: Mike Cunningham

I was fortunate to have signed up and I attended a Marquetry Workshop at Tulare Western High School on Saturday. The workshop was hosted by Dave Summers and conducted by SJFWA's own marquetry expert, Ron Zanini, from Springville. Ron, you may remember, gave an introduction to the technique at the May 2008 monthly meeting in Kingsburg and since then I have been dying to learn the craft from him.

Ron teaches a version of French Marquetry with several of his own twists. His class was well attended with 12 students present. Included in those attendees were SJFWA members Wes Hofer, President Dave Dunlap, J.C. Charles, Dave Summers, Al Sindlinger, Chris Grothe, Bob Cravy and Josie Flashberger. All brought their own scroll saws or used one kindly provided by the workshop staff.

Ron started out with a short history of his education and style, he showed several pieces of work he produces for sale and then he provided raw materials, patterns and a get to work order (I think Ron has some Drill Instructor genes or was one once).



We picked out one of the patterns, a Begonia flower with stem and leaves or a tulip pattern. We stacked three different types of wood (I did Walnut, Eucalyptus and Orange Wood) and put them in a stack with the pattern on top. We wasted no time in learning how to break as many saw blades and drill bits as possible and were quite successful at it. Somehow, we all managed to cut out the patterns we selected, with Ron, Dave Summers

and J.C. Charles's help. During the pattern cutting, Ron would give us tips and new techniques to apply on our projects. It was quite a challenge for many of us to complete a pattern but we did.

We broke for a provided lunch courtesy of Dave Summers' wife. It was a delicious short rib dinner with pilaf, beans, salad and desert. Excellent food and Ken Kenoyer and his wife made a short appearance at the lunch. Ken had surgery recently and is still recuperating, he did look good though, welcome back, Ken!



Ron herded us back to the classroom and we continued on our projects. He taught us how to shade for depth using hot sand to singe the wood or to use an open flame to attain the affect we wanted. It was much easier than I thought and I didn't break any blades or drill bits doing it.

Next, Ron showed us how to glue the project up and fill in the saw kerfs with a sawdust, glue and acrylic paint mixture. We sanded the marquetry to

take away the residue of the paint mixture and evened up the wood surface and, Shizzam, a finished Marquetry piece. We actually got three flowers for each stack we cut out by mixing the woods and came up with three pleasing marquetry pieces to incorporate in future projects. It was a day well spent enjoying the friendship of other wood enthusiasts and creating something pleasing. Thank you Ron for such a fine class. I look



forward to future classes. To see more photos of Ron's work and the class, go to our web site and look in the Galleries section.