



# EUGENE 5160 CLUB ~ MAY 2012



The May Meeting will be Thursday the 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6pm at the Woodcraft store in Sheldon Plaza on Coburg Road, Eugene. Informal get-together at McDonald's at the North end of Sheldon Plaza around 5pm.



## MAY MEETING

We'll start out with show-your-work – so if you've got something to show & get feedback on, bring it!

If you are too bashful to bring recent work (or like me have not had time to *do* any recently) – you could bring a knife that has something interesting about it for the knife-maker in all of us.

I'll bet Wayne Goddard will have some advice and anecdotes. And with our usual spontaneous group discussions – who knows what tidbits will shake out.

This will be our last meeting at the Sheldon Plaza Woodcraft store. Joe & the Woodcraft crew are moving to Delta Oaks – at Delta and Beltline. They will open the new-improved-bigger-better Woodcraft store after Memorial Day.

As I understand it, the new store will be kitty-corner from Dick's Sporting Goods and Walmart – down the row from Market of Choice.

May's meeting is the last hurrah for 5160 Club at Sheldon Plaza and the “old” Woodcraft store.

See you there!



## APRIL MEETING NOTES

**JEFF CROWNER** gave us a fantastic demonstration of his methods for making Kydex sheaths. He walked us through the process while making a couple of sheaths right in front of us – and then got a volunteer from the audience up to make their own sheath for one of their own knives.

But to start with there was general discussion – Wayne announced that next year he will have been a full time knife-maker for 50 years.

He also shared a sample of what happens when you dry bamboo too fast – here's a shot of a piece of bamboo someone sent him that they had oven dried.



On the outside everything looks fine – but the inside is cracked in all directions. Wayne says that it takes bamboo three years “on the shelf” to do it right. (see Wayne's notes in older newsletters about drying wood in a bag with newspaper to absorb moisture)

Jeff Crowner passed around some examples of his work – which inspired a number of questions from

the crowd. In answer to a question on his bluing process on one of the blades: he first bead-blasted the surface, then did three rounds of a soak in a (mild?) ferric chloride bath – rinse (baking soda can be used also) – soak in a bath of bluing (Brownells Oxpho-Blue was mentioned) – rinse – with a light steel-wool rub between each round. Clean with rubbing alcohol and the final touch: Pam kitchen spray protects the finish like you would not believe. The result is impressive.



Somebody asked about the buckle on the Kydex sheath below – and Jeff said that [knifekits.com](http://knifekits.com) is a good source of such add-on hardware.



[Texasknife.com](http://Texasknife.com) was also mentioned as a good source for many supplies.

I butted in before the demonstration to show my goofy pieces and see if anybody else had any “bring your recent work”... I showed my bamboo pairing knife and a leather tooled belt loop. I'm more pleased with the forged D2 blade and the copper ferrule than



I am with the bamboo handle – we'll see if I get another one done before the July judging!

I had fun with this cross-draw belt loop... and this



brush blade I bought from Crowner a year ago is the best I've ever put my hand on.

Jeff shared that they will be moving to Texas this Summer. And that the Crowners are expecting their firstborn son!!!

Then Jeff launched into the demo with safety notes. No loose clothing in a shop with power equipment. No bracelets, necklaces, chains. And no gloves. If a glove gets caught in machinery it can suck your hand in before you can blink. Without the glove you might lose the tip of a finger. With the glove you might lose the hand – or worse.

There was discussion about Kydex in different climates. Jeff noted that you don't want to leave a Kydex sheath on the dashboard in the desert heat.

Jeff proceeded to make two sheaths. One “taco” and one “pancake” (aka “coffin”).

Jeff's tools for working with Kydex are:



A toaster oven (white, at the far end) – a Kydex press (black, foreground) – a drill press, bandsaw, belt grinder, and a rivet press (gray – between the oven and the Kydex press in the above photo). Sure – you can set the rivets by hand, but if you do any quantity the rivet press is a sanity-saver.

The Kydex press is a heavy duty shell that hinges at the back – with firm, temperature resistant rubber pads both top and bottom.

To get started on the taco style sheath, mark your sheet of Kydex based on the knife blade, having the Kydex shoulder up on the handle, rolling the knife over on the spine to get the width, and leaving at least an inch on the sides and tip. Kydex is not expensive and it's much better to rough cut more than you need

and trim it down as you work on the sheath. So mark out a rectangle that will give you plenty to wrap around the knife and up onto the handle.

You score thin and medium thickness Kydex just like drywall. Score it and then bend on the score to break straight lines.



Preheat the toaster oven to 325-350°F before putting the Kydex in. Check the Kydex occasionally until it gets hot enough that you can easily bend it – and the bend lays right back down.

Have the Kydex press open and your knife ready. Pull the Kydex out of the oven – lay it on the press – fold it over the knife, making sure you have everything lined up and a little of the Kydex up on the handle – and close the press. It will take a lot of pressure to keep the press closed. After a few minutes the Kydex will have cooled and hardened.



Pop the knife out before drilling holes. For a taco style sheath Jeff drills the 1<sup>st</sup> rivet hole about 1/4” down from the blade heel and 1/4” forward of the end of the handle. Decide how many rivets you want and drill the rest of the holes so that they are evenly spaced out to the point. Run the drill *very* slowly.



If you are going to drill for riveting a clip-on or other attachments to your sheaths, it pays to create a

template for accurately placing the holes.

You may want to drill a “moisture” hole at the tip to allow the knife to air dry – Jeff uses a 1/16” or 1/8” bit for this hole.

The rivet press is a time-and-sanity saver if you are making a number of sheaths.



Now you are ready to trim the sheath to its final shape. Both a bandsaw and a belt grinder are handy. Run

the bandsaw slow, and use a course grit (like 50) on the belt grinder.

Cut and grind the sheath to the desired shape – keeping in mind that you want enough purchase on the knife so that you can hold the sheath upside down with the knife in it and the knife will not shake out. On the other hand you want the knife to be loose enough in the sheath that you can deploy it with two fingers. Getting the sheath grip “just right” can be achieved through both the final outline of the sheath, and if necessary using a heat gun to soften and re-shape the throat of the sheath.



Jeff uses an Elmax knife to trim the edges of the sheath, then buffs it with a solid wheel charged with white compound. Here's a trick: use a light wipe of WD-40 to give the Kydex a clean, lustrous finish.

For a “pancake” or “coffin” sheath the steps are pretty much the same, except you are using two separate pieces of Kydex – top and bottom. Be sure you have the smooth side of the Kydex inside against

the blade.

When heating the Kydex pieces, as they get up to temperature, flip them over to be sure both pieces get evenly heated. Put the knife between the hot sheets and press them as before.

Drill the first rivet holes with the knife *in place* and then set those rivets before drilling the rest. Jeff recommends the sequence shown in the photo below.

Here are both sheaths that we watched Jeff make:



If you need to re-heat and re-form the sheath after the first rivets are set, do *not* put it back in the oven as the Kydex will pull away from the rivets – use a heat gun to re-mold portions of the sheath as needed.

Jeff's final words of wisdom: Don't be afraid to mess up a few times. Keep at it and you *will* succeed!



### IT'S A WRAP!

**JOE AND SUSAN ESSIN** have been great to 5160

Club and we look forward to holding future meetings at their Delta Oaks location – this week's May 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be our last at the Sheldon Plaza location. Joe



put in a call for donations for a Kids for Christ fundraiser. I believe that particular event is over – but contact Joe about future events.



We had our usual general discussions – here is Wayne critiquing one of Jeff's blades... and then off we went into the night – some folks gathered back at McDonald's for what has become traditional desert, coffee, and conversation.



### DE-CLASSIFIEDS

I haven't gotten feedback recently on the *declassified* section. Let me know if there is still interest in having it! Here's the older postings that might or might not still be valid:

Larry "Bear" Criteser has a commercially made oxy/acetyl. cart with an 80 or 100 cubic ft. oxy bottle (not sure which) with unknown amount of gas in it, for sale. No acetyl. bottle, sorry. He'd like to get \$75 for the cart and bottle. He also has an extra oxy bottle the same size as the one with the cart, with some gas in it for \$40. Home phone is 541-689-5680, or email at [bearsgunnery@criteser.com](mailto:bearsgunnery@criteser.com)

Marty has a 6" jaw width post vise for sale. Also 1050 and 5160 steels, old files to make knives out of, and anhydrous borax. Martin Brandt 541 954-2168

Wayne's totally revised **Wonder of Knifemaking** is now available. And I believe he still has an active free steel pile beside his driveway, and an ongoing tool sale. Call for an appointment: 541 689-8098.

Mighty Mike has access to a steady supply of used LARGE brake drums that can be welded up as bases for post vices, grinders, propane forges or whatever. Let him know if you are interested: Mike Johnston 503 351-3104.



### BAMBOO-HANDLED KNIFE CONTEST

Don't forget this challenge/contest! Judging at the July meeting.

Your Scribe ~ ~ ~

Michael Kemp