



SCANTLINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE TIMBER FRAMERS GUILD
NUMBER 183
JANUARY 2014

East Texas project takes form

MACK MAGEE

Lake Naconiche Park pavilion workshop and raising, March 20–28, [Sue Warden](#), 855/598-1803

East Texas, thanks to longtime Guild member Tim Chauvin, has been a hotbed of TFG projects over the years. In March, we'll run our sixth project in the area, a park pavilion for Lake Naconiche. It's a great opportunity for you to learn about the craft of timber framing from several experts on hand, meet interesting people, and become part of this tight-knit historical community.

The pavilion itself, about 32 x 48 ft. in plan, will include three king post trusses forming the central , frame of the structure. The steeply-pitched central section will be fully surrounded by a lower-pitched apron or skirt, making plenty of opportunity for advanced math learning in complex hipped roofs. The design not only fits the site but will have everything from the simplest square rule joinery to compound work. This workshop is perfect for individuals with carpentry skills who are interested in learning timber framing and taking part in a fun event, as well as for those who want to ramp up to the next level of compound joinery.

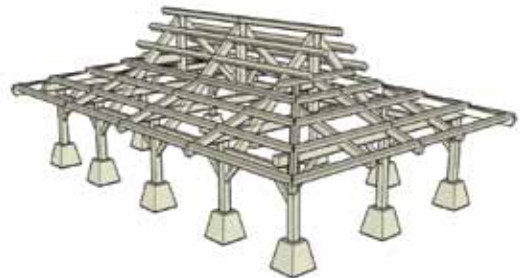
The cost, \$300 for TFG members and \$400 for non-members, includes two meals a day provided by the local community and sponsored by the Rotary club. Housing and camping arrangements are being finalized as you

read this. There is space for about 25 people, so if you're interested, sign up soon. This workshop will fill up fast.

During this pavilion workshop you can expect to gain an excellent understanding of timber framing basics, including safety, tool care, engineering basics, roof math (advanced hipped roofs) the cutting process, wood awareness, reading plans and prints, joinery and layout, cutting and drilling, finishes, assembling, rigging and raising. Instructors Curtis Milton and Tim Chauvin will be joined by others to be determined. Look for some music to happen.

For more details, including a complete tool list, see [Projects](#) on the TFG website.

It's fairly rare to find a workshop that appeals to so many learning levels, in a place that has been graced steadily by the Timber Framers Guild. We hope you can join us, in Texas, in March.



Robert Hinton

Happy holidays, from our program director

BRENDA BAKER

I hope you are all enjoying this wonderful holiday season with family and friends. Most of you are aware that this has been an unusual year for the Timber Framers Guild. We have had more changes and transition in the last year than in all the previous years combined. We feel now that we are on steady ground and moving forward.

These have been challenging times. The last five years have been tough economically and especially difficult in the construction industry. The Guild did not escape the impact of this. So we will be looking more closely than ever at how we can keep the Guild strong and offer

the member services that you have come to appreciate, such as *Scantlings* and *Timber Framing*, while becoming fiscally healthy. Services may be reduced in some areas. When there are adjustments, we will keep you informed.

The administrative staff consists now of two people. The first is Sue Warden, whom most of you know from her many years as the business manager in then-co-executive director Will Beemer's office. Sue will be handling the bookkeeping and accounting, the Guild store, phone calls to the new Guild phone number, and many other general duties. And I will serve as the program director. I

See [Happy holidays](#), [page 5](#)

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Founded 1985

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Brenda Baker, program director, 517/486-3629.

Sue Warden, executive secretary, 855/598-1803.

BOARD: John Miller, acting president • Gabel Holder, acting treasurer. Mike Beganyi, Ellen Gibson, Adrian Jones, Charles Leik, Mack Magee, Al Wallace, directors at large.

PUBLICATIONS: Susan Witter, *Scantlings* editor/web content manager • Marnie Jones, *Scantlings* assistant editor • Ken Rower, publications director.

Scantlings, the member newsletter of the Timber Framers Guild, is published in January, February, April, May, July, August, October, and November. **Next deadline:** January 7.

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LETTERS



In appreciation

Most of us are particularly good at doing something—managing a crew, say, or conceptualizing efficient load paths in a frame, or rigging with a crane. Some few manage to do several things well at once. It's exceedingly rare, though, to find someone who's good at everything. It was with regret and sadness that I learned that Alicia Spence resigned her position as head of Guild projects; she was easily the most skilled project manager I've ever encountered.

Having had the privilege of being both a project participant (in Poland) and a project leader (in Brownington, Vt.) on Alicia's watch, I am paying tribute to the amount of heart, hard work, and prodigious skill that she put into each TFG project. Organizing logistics, inventing rigging and raising procedures, navigating client and management politics, choreographing public raising events, coaxing competence from project leaders, answering technical questions about layout or historical context: she's a polymath. Most impressive was that she managed to take care not just of all the details, but of the people around her too, building friendship everywhere she went (attested to by all the bear hugs she gave at the end of every project). It's important for Guild projects to deliver a fine product, for sure, but it's at least as important that all participants find ways to contribute meaningfully, push themselves, and learn new things. Alicia was a master at cultivating this process at all levels, from complete beginners all the way down to project leaders.

Alicia was not just a skilled project manager; she also advocated passionately and articulately for a Guild that was not just about finances and technical details, but about community service and human relationships. This is the glue of the Guild—not the marketing arm of an industry association, but a community of enthusiasts and practitioners sharing experience, serving the craft and the common good. That was Alicia's vision for what TFG projects could be. Under her skilled leadership, that's what they were. As she so eloquently wrote, our nation faces a modern poverty that "stems from a pervasive disconnect from our community . . . there are few opportunities today where we come together as a community to work for the common good . . . a TFG project is one place where the opportunity to join a powerful community effort is alive and well." Guild projects, she wrote, were a "vacation from poverty," where our work together creates a foothold for meaningful community.

As a younger member coming into the fold of Guild projects, I was inspired by Alicia, who mentored me plus countless others. As the Guild moves forward, I hope we can all do what it takes to carry on her work and vision, where Guild projects are not just well-oiled logistical machines or TFG money-makers, but places where community, service, and humanity can flourish. Thank you, Alicia, for your boundless skill and your fierce humanity. You'll be missed.

Will Gusakov

Treasurer's report

GABEL HOLDER AND MACK MAGEE

Like most businesses and many of our members, the TFG has suffered financially from the recession. We have been in financial decline at least since 2007, losing \$102,000 in 2007, \$64,000 in 2008, \$27,000 in 2009, \$65,000 in 2010, \$82,500 in 2012, and maybe as much as \$95,000 this year. 2011 bucked the trend with a profit of \$68,000 largely due to the Poland project. (These numbers are for losses and gains in operations and do not include losses and gains from investments. TFG annual financial statements are available in the members only area of the website). Realizing that the Guild could not survive another 18 months of losses, the board was forced to overhaul Guild operations earlier this year.

Towards this end, we sought advice from experts in association management, hired Mike Nizankiewicz to guide us through the transition, and then chose the Drohan Management Group (DMG) to provide us with ongoing professional management. Unfortunately, we were required to terminate our contract with DMG because the Board and DMG did not move fast enough to increase our revenues to cover their costs, even though these costs were less than previous years' admin costs.

In broad terms, our administrative and publication costs have been much higher than our membership dues for years. In those years, we were able to make up the difference with surplus funds from projects, conferences, and assets. The model we used proved to be flawed for a number of reasons: project income fluctuated, conference attendance fell off sharply, and membership declined, undoubtedly impacted by the recession. As we experienced these negative financial impacts, our assets have eroded: at end of year 2010 they were \$207,000, in 2011 were \$129,000, and in 2012 were \$55,000. Then the costly transition and our false start with DMG have negatively affected us financially this year. As a result of the cumulative financial effects of the last several years, including this past year, we are in a dangerous place financially. Beyond our restricted fund assets, we have precious little.

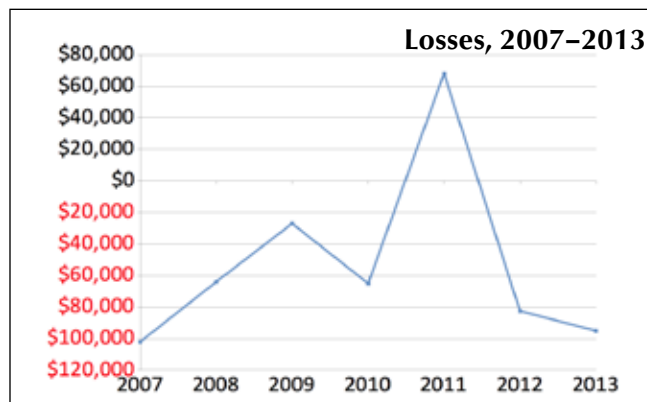
How bad is it?

Very bad. We were on the verge of shutting down if we did not take drastic measures to reduce our spending and increase our income.

What is the board doing about it?

We have set up a new office with [Sue Warden](#) as executive secretary and [Brenda Baker](#) as program director. Brenda is donating her management fee back to the TFG, meaning Brenda's cost to the Guild, except for expenses, is zero.

We decided to publish Issue 110 of *Timber Framing* in electronic form only. We intend to resume normal printing sometime in 2014 as the effects of these changes begin to show up in our operating funds. We are reducing the page count of *Scantlings* for a while, and we may



be delaying publication dates at times. We will not be investing in website improvement this year, nor will we be updating it quite as often.

We are raising advertising rates for our publications. We are going to offer opportunities for individuals and other entities to sponsor them, too.

Rather than hiring a paid project coordinator, we will return to developing and managing our projects with volunteers. This will require more effort from volunteers, and it may mean fewer projects, but we are committed to guaranteeing that projects, when pursued, will consistently yield retained earnings to Guild coffers.

As we announced at the members' meeting at the Burlington conference in August, we are raising membership dues for the first time in five years. We have heard from many members that you support this move, but for some this may be unwelcome news.

We feel confident that over the next 12 months these moves will ensure our survival. We appreciate the support of each of you as we implement these changes required to arrest our financial decline.

How do we expect to recover?

These operational changes are necessary but insufficient in themselves to dig us out of the hole we have created over the last five years. We will need to raise some money through new (to us) means. Be on the lookout for a new, but likely recurring, fundraising drive. Many of us are not in a position to give more, but some of us are and have expressed a desire to do so. Please remember the TFG as you plan your tax deductible donations for 2014. (Remember, the Guild is a 501(c)(3), so your donations are 100% tax deductible.) And you do not have to wait to be contacted—to make a donation, call call Sue at the TFG office (413/623-8759) or [email her](#). She would love to hear from you.

We know the Guild is important to you. We believe that we have made the structural changes needed to operate in the black, and we are confident that with some belt tightening by all and the generosity of those who can give more, we will get through this current cash crunch and begin to rebuild our organization financially.

For the long term, starting sometime in the new year, the board intends to reconsider the Guild's mission, how it pursues that mission, how the Guild interacts with all of its

See Treasurer's report, [page 4](#)

TFG training for apprentices, journeymen, and the rest of us

NICOLE COLLINS

2014 Annual Training/Assessment, Feb 20–24, Trillium Dell Timberworks and Farm, Knoxville, Ill. Cost: Free to \$400, depending on apprentice program membership. [Brenda Baker](#) and [Nicole Collins](#). [Read more](#)

The main training and assessment for the apprentice program in 2014 will take place in late February, at Trillium Dell, in Knoxville, Ill. While the purpose of this workshop is to train and assess the people registered in the TFG apprentice and journeyman programs, this year we are opening the training to all Guild members and the general public for in-depth exploration of timber management. After the apprentices and journeymen are considered, there should be roughly 10 spots open.

The training module covered will include selection, falling, bucking, and conversion of timber. There will be classroom learning as well as plenty of hands-on work in standing timber, woodlots, fields, and jobsite. Foresters from the Society of American Forestry will teach the morning classroom sessions. Six hours a day of structured learning are capped by evening discussions on apprenticeship and training issues. The assessments (which all training participants may view) will occur at the end of the event. This is a great opportunity to study timber management in-depth, get an inside look at the TFG apprentice program, and put Trillium Dell, a successful timber framing company, under the microscope.

The event runs from Thursday dinner, February 20, through Monday breakfast, February 24, with three full days of learning. Included in the workshop tuition is the sustainably produced local food—a goodly portion of it produced by Trillium Dell Farm—which is likely to rank at the very top of TFG communal fare.

Onsite lodging (priority given to apprentices and journeymen) is otherwise available on a first-come, first-served basis, with spots for roughly 14 sleepers, plus additional floor space. Midwest winters are apt to be cold, so bring lots of warm clothing, with extra gloves and socks.

Cost for the workshop-*rendezvous* event: free for supervising journeymen and apprentices; \$155 for registered journeymen; and \$400 for all others. For AP/JW, pre-approved travel expenses will be reimbursed in part by the TFG Apprenticeship Program. You can find more details on the [TFG website](#).

This is a great chance to gain valuable knowledge and, incidentally, “try out” the apprenticeship program, all while enjoying the companionship of other Guild members and fabulous local, sustainable fare. Please join us.

Letter from the president

The board of directors welcomes three new members at the close of 2013 elections. Gabel Holder was re-elected for another three-year term, and joining us are Charles Leik (finance), Mack Magee (projects), and Al Wallace (affiliations). In addition, Brenda Baker is stepping in as interim program director. Brenda and Mack are not completely green, as both have served on the board in the past and have been serving in 2013 as board-appointed replacements for vacant seats. Charles and Al, who have joined us on a few calls as nonvoting members, assume full board responsibilities as of this new year and bring new perspectives to the group. All the new members have brought enthusiasm and energy to help us go forward in a positive direction.

As change seems to be the theme these days, it is not totally surprising that Brenda has left the board to take the position of program director. As directed in the bylaws, the board will elect a replacement soon to fill her seat until elections at the end of 2014.

We thank John Mumaw and Clark Bremer for their service over three dynamic years, as well as past president Randy Churchill and board member Collin Beggs.

Things will begin to settle down as Brenda and Sue get the office up and running over the next few weeks. The board will hold a face-to-face meeting in early February

to elect officers for 2014 and to continue developing strategies for returning the Guild to healthy financial status. Brenda has volunteered her house and is feeding us. We board members are paying for most of our own travel expenses to minimize impact on Guild finances.

As hectic and unsettling as this year has been for our Guild, I believe we have a bright future. I am looking forward to a New Year full of promise and possibility, and, to be honest, I am hoping for less change. Enjoy the new year and look for regular communications from us going forward.

John Miller, president, board of directors
[Board personnel contact information](#)

Treasurer's report, from page 3

varied constituencies, what efforts and activities are core to its existence and mission, what may be discarded, and how we might restructure to build a sustainable business model. We will be reaching out to all of the constituencies for their input and we expect to be inclusive in the decision making process.

We would be glad to hear from you with questions, comments, or criticism. We would also love to hear any ideas you have for improving the TFG's financial situation. Please email [Gabel](#) or [Mack](#).

Double header: geometrical design intensive and rendezvous

NICOLE COLLINS

Geometrical Design Intensive—Jun 21, Trillium Dell Timberworks and Farm, Knoxville, Ill. Cost: \$1500, includes lodging (bunks, camping), fantastic meals, and supplies.

Geometrical Weekend Rendezvous—June 21 and 22, Knoxville, Ill. [Nicole Collins](#).

[Read more](#)

Mid-June will see a TFG–Trillium Dell geometrical building design intensive, taught by world-renowned geometer Laurie Smith and Trillium Dell’s Rick Collins, in Knoxville, Illinois. You can follow a geometrically-designed octagonal hardwood frame from start (a pair of dividers) to finish (an open air pavilion for the community of Knoxville), expanding your knowledge of medieval frame design, compound roof joinery, and hand tools.

Laurie Smith will lead the study of geometrical methods commonly used to design, lay out, and build historical structures (and their components). Laurie is an independent early-building researcher, specializing in geometrical design systems commonly used from the medieval period and later. He focuses on medieval structures, lectures, writes extensively, and runs practical workshops on geometrical design. In 2009 and 2010, he designed structures for, and taught at, TFG events in Massachusetts and Colorado.

Rick Collins (TFG journeyworker) will teach cutting,

tooling approaches, and tooling techniques using both hand and power tools. Rick founded Trillium Dell Timberworks in 1996. He has studied methods and tooling used by Europeans who settled the Midwest from the 1600s through the 1800s. Rick has traveled the U.S. and Europe, working and learning with some of the greatest master builders, craftspeople, and building historians on both continents.

The two-day rendezvous and raising, open to all, will give you a glimpse of the geometry of medieval frame design.

Lodging for all will be bunks and camping. The workshop tuition—\$1500—covers rendezvous lodging, fantastic meals, and supplies. Some scholarships are available. Since space is limited, for the workshop, please send your résumé or CV to [Nicole Collins](#); for the weekend rendezvous-raising, please let her know you’re coming. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn a surprisingly subtle, elegant building design method that may change your view of geometry and the built world.

Happy holidays, *from page 1*

will oversee and work with the board as well as representatives from the apprenticeship–journeyworker program and the Timber Frame Engineering Council to help keep their programs moving forward. I will also help bring viable and successful projects to the Guild as well as plan an annual Guild conference.

Ken Rower and Susan Witter, the publications staff, will continue to provide excellent issues of *Timber Framing* and *Scantlings*. We will be addressing budgetary concerns along the way, as they affect all Guild programming.

With all that has been happening in these last few months, I’ve had some time to reflect on just what the Guild has meant to me for nearly 30 years. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with, as Joel McCarty always said, “the best people I know.” What attracts these people to the Guild? It is intangible and hard to describe. I think it was Laura Brown who coined the term “Guild magic” a few years ago. The Guild has offered me, my family, and our business far more than I have given back. So now, I hope I can give back to help the Guild become strong once again.

As I was opening all the mail and throwing away the countless holiday catalogs, I noticed numerous year-end appeals from non-profit organizations that rely on contributions to provide the programming and services in their mission. The Timber Framers Guild is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to encourage and provide education and training in timber framing, expose the art

of timber framing to the public, and serve as an information center for timber framing. Programs within the Guild, including conferences, projects, and publications, have been established to serve that purpose. Our current dues structure is not sufficient to cover the organization, planning, and printing of what we do. A dues increase will be necessary. But I also think there are those of you out there who would like to support the Guild in other ways. We will begin to think in broader terms of the definition of the Guild as a non-profit and will look beyond just our traditional revenue sources.

There is no denying that finances within the Timber Framers Guild are very tight. So Frank and I, personally, will be “sponsoring” this issue of *Scantlings*. This is an example of creative contributions that we will look into more in the future. I’m sure there are others who want to ensure that both *Scantlings* and *Timber Framing* continue. The advertisers who have been such an important element in funding both publications help make this happen. But those of you who don’t have reason to place an ad can also support publications by sponsoring them. Your name will be acknowledged, and the effort will be greatly appreciated! Let me know if you have questions or additional ideas or suggestions on how we can think out of the box.

Please feel free to email me—brenda@tfguild.org—or call 517-486-3629 or 517-403-6760. I look forward to hearing from you.

TTRAG's November members' meeting report

KEN ROWER

The Guild's Traditional Timberframers Research and Advisory Group (TTRAG) held its 21st annual members' meeting, November 8–10, in Guilford, Connecticut, a coastal town with many historic houses, a few standing from as early as the mid-17th century. Initially to obtain and then to keep their standing in TTRAG, members must annually file a historic building survey, write an article for *Timber Framing*, or present on an appropriate subject at the members meeting. In addition to hours of presentations in a symposium format, with considerable audience participation (not excluding good-natured heckling), the meeting includes a Saturday tour of selected buildings in the host town.

We heard presentations on historic American barns, houses, and meeting houses, their repair, conservation, and loss, with side trips to view stone and timber buildings in Scotland and exotic monuments in China framed not in wood but in bronze and stone. Dan Miles, a

dendrochronologist from the U.K. who works frequently in the U.S., explained some of the methods and limitations of the art. All told, 20 presentations were distributed over four sessions.

Recent TTRAG member Michael Cuba arranged a tour of the Thomas Griswold house (ca. 1774), the Hyland-Wildman house (1690–1710), and the Comfort Starr house (*1646, disputed). Working back from the end of the colonial period to near the beginning took us from fully cased interior timber framing and plaster walls in the Griswold house to fully exposed framing and wood-paneled walls in the Comfort Starr house, and noticeably lower ceilings.

The next TTRAG members' meeting will unfold in the fall of 2014 at Canterbury (New Hampshire) Shaker Village, where exceptionally well-made buildings survive, in some cases in excellent condition.



Dave Lanoue

The 1646* Comfort Starr house, with later windows.



Ken Rower

TTRAG members approach Thomas Griswold house, 1774, Guilford, Connecticut.

Pemberton community barn: on deck

MACK MAGEE

The Whistler Blackcomb Foundation has awarded the Pemberton, B.C., downtown community barn project \$240,000 of the \$375,000 needed for the project. Fifty thousand dollars has already been donated by local community businesses and organizations, and another \$75,000 funding is pending village council approval. The structure, a 50 x 150-ft. exposed timber frame, includes 25-ft.-wide scissor truss bents and four 44-ft.-span parallel chord purlin trusses. There are 440 pieces and roughly 61,000 bd.ft. in the frame.

This open air structure will shelter a community market and local events to help knit the community. They expect the Guild to lead a ten-day barn raising event in early summer 2014, with an educational workshop in timber frame construction.

VMI/TFG spring 2014 project: Lexington city pool shade shelter

Late-breaking news of a Virginia Military Institute/Guild spring field training project has reached us from Grigg Mullen. This carries on the 17-year tradition of public service projects at VMI. Dates are April 4–8. The cadets have been heavily involved in design, engineering, and working drawings, and the frame will be cut at the Mullen shop outside Lexington. Watch for additional information in the February *Scantlings*.



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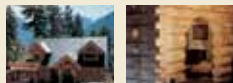
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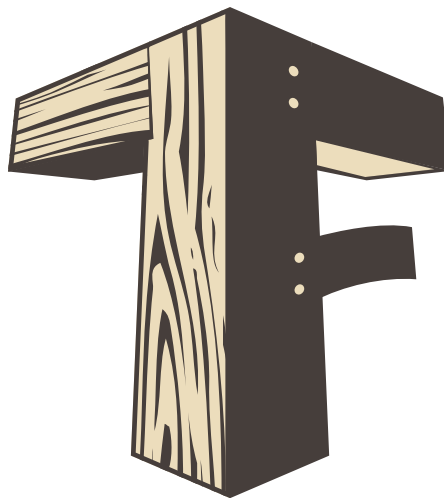
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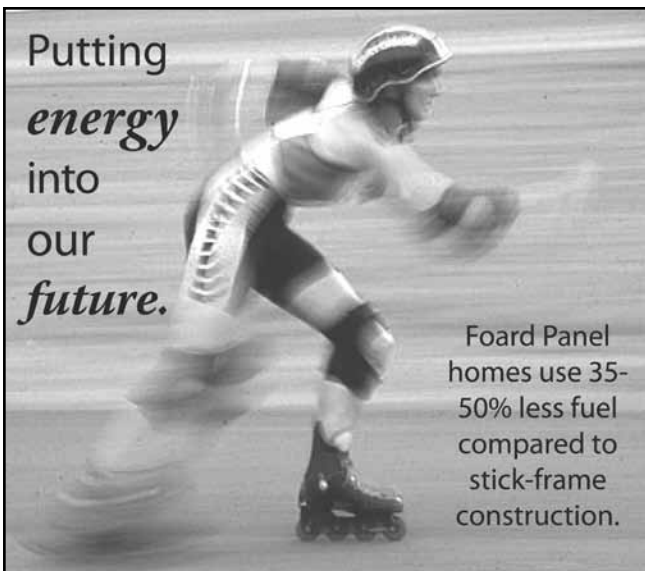


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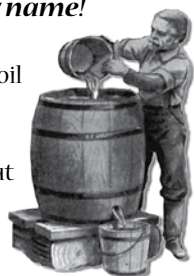
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EVENTS



These listings are for Guild workshops and meetings, were submitted by Guild members, or announce other relevant events.

Guild events

Apprentice and Journeyworker training/assessment Feb 20–24, Knoxville, Ill. [Brenda Baker](#), 517-486-3629

Lake Naconiche Park Pavilion Mar 15–27, Nacogdoches Cty., Texas.

TFEC Timber grading course Apr 7–9, Washington, Mass.

Geometrical Rendezvous / Laurie Smith and Rick Collins Jun 21–22, Knoxville, Ill., [Brenda Baker](#), 517-486-3629.

[Read more](#) or reach [Sue Warden](#), 855/598-1803.

other events

Fox Maple Workshops

Timber framing, in Costa Rica / Steve Chappell Feb 26–Mar 8

In Maine: **Natural clay enclosure systems** May 27–31

Introductory timber framing Jun 2–7

Advanced timber framing Jun 9–14 www.foxmaple.com

Gibson Timber Frames

Art du trait Feb 24–28

Build your own timber frame May 5–10

Perth, Ontario. www.gibsontimberframes.com, 613/264-9021.

Gusakov Woodworks

Traditional Estonian Log Building /Will Gusakov April 20–30,

Mooste, Estonia. [Gusakov Woodworks](#) or [email Will](#).

Heartwood School

Timber grading Apr 7–9

Hip and valley roof framing May 29–31

Sketchup for timber framers Jun 5–7

Timber framing Jun 16–20, Aug 25–29

Scribed timber framing Jun 23–27

Traditional raising and rigging Jun 30–Jul 2

Comprehensive homebuilding Jul 7–18

Finish carpentry Jul 21–25

Cruck framing Jul 28–Aug 1

Carpentry for women Aug 11–15

Converting trees to timber Aug 18–22

Compound joinery for timber framers Sep 8–12

Timber frame design and joinery decisions Sep 4–6

Advanced SketchUp Pro: Layout Sep 26–27

Washington, Mass. Michele Beemer, www.heartwoodschool.com, 413/623-6677.

Island School of Building Arts

Timber frame post and beam Apr 7–May 2

Timber frame hammer bents May 5–30

Building with logs Jun 2–27

Gabriola Island, B.C. www.isba.ca, 250/247-8922.

Robert W. Chambers

Hands-on log home construction Jan 13–Feb 11

Geraldine, New Zealand. www.logbuilding.org

NOTICES



Notices are for one-time events and offers, and they run free to Guild members for two issues per year. The cost to non-Guild members is \$60 per notice per issue. A notice, whether free or paid, runs for a maximum of two issues. Notices are intended for onetime events and offers; appropriateness for inclusion is decided by the editor.

for sale

Hundegger K-1.

May be the most affordable way to get started with CNC timber technology. The guys at Hundegger USA state that it works well. Our own timber framer decoupled its 4-sided planer, which we are keeping. He agreed that the K1 unit looked like it had been well cared for, though he did not run the machine. Price: \$85,000 cash. We would also consider a \$92,000 sale price with a \$30,000 down payment, balance due in either (1) a 3 year term at 8% interest or (2) a 5 year term at 10% interest. All prices “as is, where is.” [Brian](#), 585/924-3860, Farmington, N.Y.

Mafell, Makita tools.

New: still in original boxes, never opened. Mafell Z5ES 12-in. portable band saw, 120v, asking \$5000. Mafell LS103 chain mortiser w/stand, 1½-in. chain, asking \$3,500. Makita KP 312 12¼-in. power planer, asking \$1,875. Call or email [Ron Perri](#), Honesdale, Pa., 570/647-5512.

TFG Southeast regional meeting: another success

BRICE COCHRAN

During the weekend of November 2, 2013, I co-hosted a regional [Timber Framers Guild](#) meeting with Stephen Morrison from Moresun Woodworking. It is the third one that we have had the privilege to host and I came away with some great insights and new knowledge.

Eric Morley on photo gear, basics, and developing (using Adobe Light Room); pizzas from Humble Pie; Will McSwain on French developed drawings; Jordan Finch on scribe layout; joint busting in a cruder form; and more, [on the web](#).



Scribe layout demo by Jordan Finch.

Brice Cochran