

Who they are

An interview with The December 2021 Monthly Contest Winners



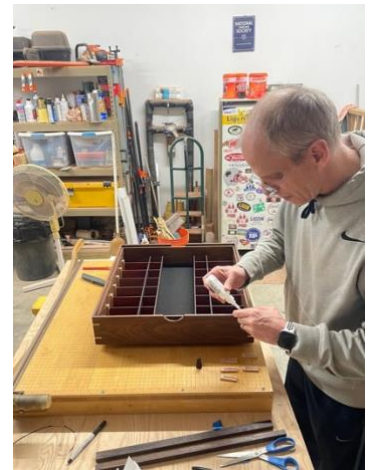
Three woodworkers across two generations in two, ½ garages makes for a really nice chess set. One woodworker is a recent UNC@Chapel Hill graduate in engineering (Eric). One woodworker sells facility management related software (Linc). The other woodworker is in healthcare IT (Bill). Seems they find some stress relief in woodworking. Recently Phil S and I (Dee2) had a Zoom meeting with our 2021 December Contest winners, Bill L, Eric L and Linc H to learn more about the creative processes at work to create the winning chess set.

It seems the three of them have been collaborating for a while. Eric, the Gen-Y representative provides the creativity by challenging the near-Boomers to try different things. “He pushes us to try things we haven’t considered.” say Bill and Linc. Eric is the designer using Fusion 360 and what he comes up with they try to find a

way to make.

With a ½ garage on one side of the street and another ½ garage on the other side of the street, Eric says, that “Between us we have a whole garage workshop. A lot of the fab work starts in Bill’s ½ garage and finishing-sanding, at least-happens across the street at Linc’s. According to Linc, “The neighbors have strange thoughts, I’m sure, when we are walking back and forth in our shop aprons.”

The idea of the chess set just evolved. Apparently, they spent some time learning block glue ups with some real failures. When they got the board finished, they showed it to a friend, Bryan, a pastor in Florida. He not only wanted one, he wanted the prototype, a wenge and padauk board that was the contest winner. Bryan wanted this board as a gift for his son. He also wanted a box with drawers and the chess pieces. According to the creators, there was a lot of collaboration, a lot of Youtube, a lot of Google to find out how-to, and some “fine open-board surgery”. They called their glue-up effort a “struggle”. The assembly was spread over a couple of weekends and then the trim was opened-up, recut, and then reglued. The finished product is impressive, and the final recipient is pleased. Eric was responsible for the board design and as the collaboration proceeded during the build, changes were captured with Fusion 360 to guide and record their processes. Linc said, “We didn’t build it to win, we just built it.”



Their approach to woodworking is that “It is not about the money” according to Bill. “I don’t want this to become wood ‘work’. I want to enjoy woodworking.” According to Linc however, “...people see what you do and ask can you do this. And, we figure it out.” Bill added that “I’d still be making simple things and Eric makes me push my boundaries. We all (3) want to try new things. Still, they say that as commissioned pieces come in they get priority.

It seems they found the NCWW forum only recently. February 2020 according to Bill. Eric wanted to make chess boards and so they used Google to search for woodworking and found NCWW.net. They find the site to be a helpful community. Regarding the forum, Linc said, “I like the way you bring people in. The 30-day period is good. It is stair-stepping through wood working.’ Bill suggests the forum provide more learning classes such as sharpening, turning, building a vise and says, “I would jump at the opportunity to go to any class.



They have some recommendations for woodworking newcomers. Eric says, “I think doing more things rather than trying to get it perfect the first time. Make 5 chess boards and the 6th one will win a contest.” Bill opined that, “as new woodworkers, we expect everyone will see the mistakes we see. Don’t be critical of yourself. Do the best you can. I’ll ask a question on the forum that I know I can Google, but I want to ask. There are people on the web site that will help you.” Linc added, “Build relationships. Reach out. Ask questions. The journey of woodworking is building and refining skills.

What’s next? They are starting a fly-fishing net project next and building an ottoman tray using cypress they got from another NCWW member. There is also talk of a Super Bowl charcuterie board.



When it comes to encouraging young woodworkers, Eric, the Gen-Yer, says his interest should be credited to Bill and Linc. “They go along with what I suggest, and we just try it out. It is great to try something and then to hold something we tried.” Eric also credits time under the tutelage of NCWW member Mike Davis and Charlie Stickney. Eric will soon be getting feedback from Charlie on his first segmented bowl as he already got several rings completed.

That is the story on the NCWW 2021 December Contest Winners. Congratulations to Linc, Bill and Eric on winning the 2021 Dec contest. If you are interested in the details of the chess board, contact them about the Fusion 360 files.