

One thing I hope we can all agree on, and that I propose as two basic, principal rules:

Rule #1. Nothing we do can be allowed to take the fun out of our hobby. Minimalist approach to rules, regulations and formalities...only what is necessary to assure a safe, secure, effective, minimally intrusive and enjoyable woodworking experience for all concerned.

Rule #2. When in doubt, consult rule number 1.

In order to get this thing going, I have solicited ideas/notes from all of you, and this FB group can perhaps (and hopefully will) facilitate the open but purposeful exchange and discussion of these ideas. However, as yet, not a lot has been forthcoming (understandable, since we have yet to accumulate a significant amount of members to this group). So I would propose that we have several “jobs” ahead of us in preparation for getting down to the actual work of implementing the club.

1. Get all interested parties to join this group in order to participate in the formation, growth and development of the club.
2. As some may not be able (or want) to use this FB group, we need to schedule another physical meeting as soon as everyone has had a chance to gather their thoughts.
3. The meeting should have a rather defined agenda. We can't accomplish everything overnight and don't need to...we need to define priorities...first things first.
4. And firstly, we need to agree on the purpose of the club...its “mission statement” then decide on a structure for the club which will best implement that. My personal preference is somewhat regular meetings, no mandatory attendance, report status on agenda items from previous meeting, discuss new agenda items, maybe socialize a little, and get on with our lives and projects.
5. We've got plenty of time to do this. As Mike said, the woodshop isn't going to be opened anytime in the “foreseeable future”, so no rush, let's do it right. A rather loose association seems appropriate at first- it is a living entity and will grow and develop over time, naturally morphing into a structure which will best serve our objectives as we go along.

As I see it, these are the areas that should be addressed initially:

Mission Statement

Reiterating our purpose- our common objective. What is it? Isn't it, most basically, to enjoy our woodworking and “make stuff”...everything else is secondary. The club has to enhance that, not detract from it. So I propose something like the following as our “mission statement”, short and sweet:

The purpose of Friendly Valley Woodworking Club is to provide a locus of contact among those residents who enjoy woodworking and to facilitate and promote the safe and knowledgeable use of the shop to

Corollary: You can participate as much or as little as you want in the business of the club. You can devote time and talent to accomplishing its aims, or you can just use the facilities (subject to its rules).

Membership

1. Club organization

1. There is an old saying that I find apropos: “He governs best who governs least”. I think everyone might agree that we don’t want some monolithic, unwieldy, intrusive, overbearing structure, and no one but a politician would want a structure that takes a huge effort or a lot of our time to administer. What we need, I think, is a structure that allows us to accomplish our purposes with the minimum amount of administrative effort.

2. As far as designating “officers”...I don’t think we need to do that at this point. Maybe I’m wrong, but my thinking is that we don’t need to rush into anything, and that we have plenty of time to figure out who might best fit those positions on a meritocracy basis, i.e., over time it will become apparent which members have the interest, skills, abilities and time to best perform those functions. If there are more than one, we can vote. Meanwhile, we can continue to meet, discuss, and see how things are working out. See next item.

2. Who is willing to volunteer for what- list of skills/interests/availability. People and skills inventory. Areas assigned by skills/interests/time available. Some may have multiple roles. What roles are needed?

3. Criteria for membership

1. FV resident- interest in woodworking-no guests except possibly as observers?

2. Must be a member of the club in order to use the facilities.

1. Membership imposes no duties or responsibilities other than to be/become competent enough to operate the machinery safely and follow the rules (how will this be determined/established/enforced?)

1. No mandatory meeting attendance

2. Dues? See funding in subsequent section.

3. How to join

1. Attend a meeting, sign Release of Liability form, receive and agree to copy of safety rules...what else?

1. An immediate action item should be the procurement of a Release of Liability form/review of the current one. Mike has stated that the lawyer he consulted informed him that a release “isn’t worth the paper it’s written on”. I question whether the same might not be said of that attorney’s opinion. The fact appears to be that in CA the opposite is true of an adequately prepared and worded document, and that CA courts have traditionally sided with the defendant rather than the plaintiff in these cases (per one of the four legal sites I checked). Not being an atty myself, I suggest we have a Release drawn up/reviewed by a firm that specializes in this area.

4. Membership levels- might be a good idea to have different levels with different responsibilities, capabilities:

1. For want of a better term, a “movers and shakers” level- full privileges- full voting rights. This level would be for those who actively use the shop, are involved in different aspects of club activities such as machinery maintenance, training, administration, etc.

2. Member- privileges limited to use of equipment and facilities- full voting rights. This level would be for those that don’t want to get involved donations of time and talent to the club and just want to be able to use the equipment as needed.

3. Conditional membership- limited privileges- no voting rights. This is basically a person who has very limited experience and needs ongoing instruction and mentorship with the

equipment. Can become full member upon demonstration of familiarity with safety rules and the safe operation of particular machines.

4. Non-member- no privileges- no voting rights. This would be for those who may need to have an occasional something done which requires the use of shop resources but has no knowledge or interest in obtaining the requisite knowledge. This person would require the assistance of a shop member to perform the work.
4. Criteria for revocation of membership
5. Procedure for revocation of membership

Funding

1. How much can we count on from the rec board and for what? At least maintenance/safety items.
 1. Mike Fennick has stated that he has approval authority up to \$500 for miscellaneous facility maintenance items, etc. Anything above that requires Board approval.
 2. What will have to be covered by donations and/or possible dues?
 1. Probably any extras- what these “extras” might be needs to be determined as we go along and discuss what we would like to do.
 2. The amount of dues (if any- also needs to be discussed) would be dependent on how ambitious we get with the future plans.
 3. We can also use monetary donations as a resource. In fact, that might be a good way to “vote with our dollars”, i.e., if you want something bad enough, do you want it enough to actually PAY for it? Some existing users have already contributed significantly in repairing equipment and minor improvements, etc. This is certainly one sure way of proceeding.
1. Regarding donations other than monetary: we can keep our eyes and ears open for friends that are looking to get rid of equipment the shop could use, or other sources of free or almost free items/supplies.
2. I am wondering if we could structure the club as a non-profit entity that would enable donations to be made and deducted? Might be something to look into.

Access Control

1. New door lock. One that would accomplish, preferably, a logging function to supplant the necessity of the current paper based (and generally ignored) log.
 1. This requires further research as to type (card access, fingerprint access, push button, etc.)
 1. Using our existing FV gate cards was mentioned at the meeting. Although technically possible, Al from Security stated that an installed card reader would be necessary and that it would not perform a logging function.
 1. The card is a ProxCardII by HID Corp. The programmer used to program it is, per Al, not capable of programming other types of cards, so we would be limited to using HID compatible equipment.

2. It is possible that there may be other locks available (rather than just an auxiliary reader) that use the same HID cards, and would perform a logging function. Further research is needed regarding availability and comparative pricing.

3. Not sure at this point whether the cards themselves are programmed with unique identifiers which would tie a specific individual to a specific card, or whether our gate cards only perform a generalized access function. If the former is the case, it would be possible to use the existing gate card. However, unless there is a lock available that reads it directly and logs the entry, or alternatively inexpensive software that the reader could be interfaced with to provide the logging function, this option may not be viable. Requires further research.

2. Other types of locks, i.e., fingerprint and pushbutton alternatives are available and need research.

1. These types of locks are limited to the number of users that they are capable of handling...many are limited to 20 users, which obviously would be useless for our needs. Number of users are an obvious criteria along with the logging function and capacity (i.e., some can log up to 3000 "events" internally).

2. There is always the possibility of sticking to a regular keyed lock and paper logging if an adequate locking system cannot be identified.

Safety

1. Primarily the responsibility of the user, and all users will be required to sign a Release of Liability for shop use.

2. Despite the above, as I understand it, the main "gotcha" in all Release of Liability cases, is not the assignment of liability to the individual, but is the ability of the plaintiff to establish that there was negligence on the part of the defendant. This being the case, it behooves Friendly Valley (and us) to address at least the following (and any other points a consultation with a legal specialist might determine) in order to remove any claim of negligence:

1. Insofar as possible, the shop should be kept clean and free from any items that may be stumbled over.

2. Machinery must be maintained (maybe with a formal maintenance schedule), be in operable and safe condition at all times, with perhaps a clause in the safety rules (see below) that if a user observes some reason that a particular machine is inoperable or lacking in some respect he agrees to report it immediately and refrain from using it until corrected. Upon receiving the report, a designated representative will repair or disable the machine until it is repaired. There are a few items in particular that may need attention in this regard:

1. The tablesaw has had its blade guard removed. This is understandable as it tends to get in the way in certain operations. However, it should probably be reinstalled for the reasons noted. If a user needs to remove it for some reason then he is defacto assuming responsibility for having done so, and must replace it upon ending his operation.

1. We should also have available a number of fingerboards that can be attached in various configurations to the saw and other applicable machinery for safe work holding.

2. Riving knife/splitter should be a part of the blade guard set up, or obtained and installed separately.

2. Dust Collection- again, maintained such that it and the ducting operate at intended efficiency. This is particularly applicable to the sanding area- the ventilation in there is ineffective and substandard.
3. Safety equipment: eye protection and masks should be specified in the rules as required to be used. If the user disregards these protections, he assumes liability for his own unsafe practices.
3. General safety rules (to be determined) should be drawn up, published, signed and adhered to.
4. Other items?

Security

1. Security cameras? It has been suggested that a security camera be installed in the shop. The camera would not be monitored, but the feed would be recorded and available for review. I can't say that I am particularly enthralled with this idea, but the stated advantages are as follows.
 1. It would serve as a replacement for relying on the card, fingerprint, or pushbutton access shop lock for the log function. Or, if not replacing it, would enhance it by logging exit times (the door locks only record entry times as far as I know).
 2. It would serve to analyze what happened in case of an injury or missing equipment.
 1. May also serve as a deterrent to the above in that things would be less likely to be "borrowed" and safety rules less likely to be ignored.
 3. My personal objection, valid or not, is as follows: I have mentioned a security camera to monitor the woodshop before, but as I think about it, I am no longer in favor of it. I'm getting pretty sick of all the political and big tech surveillance environment that is being created in the world and I don't want to see that stuff enacted in the microcosm of our little comfortable space. And, I DO find it to be a comfortable space, a little hideaway and refuge, a place to yak it up a little with whomever may stop by...as well as a place to just sit and peacefully contemplate project details, escape the house to a different environment, or consult the magazines for a next project...you know the drill. Having a camera there would intrude and in my opinion, be invasive and spoil the whole thing...like an itch that can't be scratched, in the back of my mind would always be the awareness of big brother looking over my shoulder...I would find it, at least, annoying.

Competency

It has been suggested that, if we make it our business to determine and judge competency that we may personally (the person that makes the judgement/declaration of competency) and severally (FV in general) be assuming liability. Bob Penoyer mentioned, as an alternative to declaring someone competent, that we may without liability declare a person as a danger to himself or others and on that basis preclude them from using the shop. Seems like a good and valid idea. Also, maybe we can have competency specifically addressed in the Liability Release form.

Shop Organization/Inventory

1. There's a lot of stuff in the cabinets and drawers that hasn't seen the light of day in years...i.e., jigs, dado blades, manuals. I'm thinking this stuff needs to get discovered, inventoried, checked/repared, and put out in the open on a slat wall or something to remind us it's there and to make it convenient to get to. Some of the cabinets will have to go to accomplish this.

2. IF we decide that we want to keep a basic inventory of nuts, bolts, screws, drill bits, whatever we will need an adequate organization/storage accommodation as well as periodic inventory.

Shop Improvements- to be determined

1. Maybe top of the list would be a suggestion box (actual or virtual) perhaps the FB group could serve that function. The FB group is a piss poor substitute for a properly designed web site, but it can function for now...until someone else with the desire to put the endless hours into designing and maintaining a web site magically appears.