Kim Winkle…….. or, When is a metal peg not a metal peg?
By Pat Thobe

After the Kim Winkle demonstration, it can be said that "good things come in small packages." Ms. Winkle, a very petite lady, introduced herself with a slide show summarizing her journey through art. This visual prelude helped us to understand what is in the mind of a person who "paints turned wood." Her demonstration that followed, clearly explained the technical how's and why's of the project.

We learned that she has a passion for design, color and texture combining them with the material for maximum effect. She demonstrated an "oculus mirror," inspired by the circular, domed roof on the Pantheon in Rome, which has a central opening (like an eye) to the sky. In addition to learning her technique for turning the "frame and backing" for the glass mirror, we learned:

- Poplar is used for the frame and MDF is used for the backing (MDF requires washers with the screws when joining the backing to the frame so the screws will not pull through the MDF.)
- She uses Old Fashioned Milk Paint in her work for its durability, range of colors, ease of use and desired effect. (milkpaint.com)
- The milk paint is mixed with water using a 1:1 ratio.
- A foam brush is used to paint; one with small pores in the foam.
- Prismacolor colored pencils are used because of their high density of pigment. (prismacolor.com)
- Colored designs are drawn directly onto the milk painted surface prior to finishing.
- Colored pencils are sharpened using an electric pencil sharpener rather than a mechanical one to prevent breaking the lead in the pencil shaft.
- She uses lighter colors first on the design and graduates to the darker ones and then "frames" the designs in black to make them pop.
- Her finish of choice is spray polyurethane. Although polyurethane seems to bond better to the milk paint, it will yellow over time, so expect colors to change some. Polyurethane must also be sprayed very lightly at first to prevent smearing of the pigments; and then 6 or 7 coats of heavy spray using 320 grit in between coats to achieve an ultra smooth finish.
- The mirror will reflect the underside of the frame, so that underside must be painted the same color as the rim around the mirror.
- Other unseen wood surfaces are also painted so that they breathe and move the same as the top of the mirror.
- She likes the BeeGees.

So what does all of this have to do with metal pegs? For one of her boxes she wanted metal pegs but didn't want to get into having to have a blacksmith make pegs whenever she needed them. After some thought, she turned pegs with little balls on top. Hammered on them so they would look like they had been hit with a blacksmith's hammer. Painted them with a silvery paint. Burnished them with steel wool. Used the side of a black Prismacolor pencil to hit the high spots. And, VOILA….A wooden/metal peg. These can be seen in the gallery images on the Milkpaint site. (milkpaint.com/gallery-winkle.html)

Whether we want to paint wood or not, or whether we want to “make art” or just see what’s inside that piece of wood, Kim helped to remind us that our lathe is most basically a tool; one that can help us to achieve results that we want. So give your creative spirit permission to be light, spontaneous, undisciplined or whatever else it wants to be. Don’t be afraid to listen to your creative spirit. Kim’s not afraid.