



# Carving Newsletter

March 2023



Hello Carvers,

The annual [Salem Carving Show](#) on April 1st and 2nd should be an inspiration to us all. The Capitol Woodcarvers have a large membership with diverse carving styles. This will be their post-pandemic debut and should be worth the drive - free entrance.

Those who took Adam Mclsaac's November *Native Columbia River Art* workshop rated it very highly. We've now scheduled a repeat class for April, and a second new workshop for early June. Take a look [here](#).

The Gathering of the Guilds is now eight weeks away, lots of time, but little time. We need volunteers to work shifts on the three days of the show, April 28-29-30. Volunteers work in the Store, the Demo area, and during setup the two days before. Can you help? Go to [SIGNUP GENIUS](#) and follow the instructions. If you get stuck, [contact me](#).

If you are selling carvings at the Gathering, stay tuned. I will be sending more detailed information as we get a little closer.

Our carving club had a birthday this month - we turned 50. This newsletter has a short [origin story](#) featuring Mack Sutter, and I'll add other historical tidbits from time to time. We all benefit from the work of those who came before us, and many are still around.

Thanks for your continued support and membership. We don't exist without you.

Larry Wade

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**OUR MISSION: Encourage carvers at all levels through education, fellowship, and mentoring**

## Programs

### MARCH 14th PROGRAM - Make a Knife and Adze, [click here](#) to register

We can make carving tools, buy them, or hire a blacksmith. Making them might be a novel thought, so this program will demonstrate how two are made. You just might get inspired to try. Making a tool might be as simple as carving a new handle, one that fits your hand or solves a problem. Why not?



Scot Lang will demonstrate making a knife blade from a jig saw blade along with its corresponding handle. He is the president of the Central Coast Woodcarvers club near Morro Bay, California, has decades of carving experience, and has made dozens of these knives.



Jim Bergeron will show how he makes adzes as documented in a high quality video he produced. Jim lives near Astoria and will join us live to fill in the blanks and answer questions.

Jig saw blade and handle

### APRIL 11th ZOOM PROGRAM - Carving in the World of Art Nouveau, [click here](#) to register

In this program local professional Mark Downing will introduce us to the wide world of Art Nouveau woodworking. Mark is a designer, woodworker, carver, metal smith, contractor, and sailor with an impressive body of work. The program will originate at his century old home in NE Portland that is a showcase of his philosophy. He will show slides of his extensive Art Nouveau research in Paris, and we'll look at pieces that he has made and carved. We won't have time to cover his work on Northwest tribal projects, the three summers he spent building a log lodge in remote BC for EcoTrust, or his work to build a seaworthy sail boat.



Mark Downing



Art Nouveau Door

## Mary May Returning

### Mary May is coming back May 16-21, 2023

Mary May is one of the most well-known carving instructors in the United States. She taught here twice before, the last time was just before the pandemic.

There are four opportunities to learn from her:

#### A free evening presentation

Tues, May 16, [click here to register](#). She is speaking at the Guild of Oregon Woodworkers and you can attend either on Zoom and in person.

#### Carving Tips & Tricks, a demonstration & lecture class

Tues, May 16, 3 hours, [click here to register](#). This has been a popular format where she shares her insights on a wide variety of carving topics and answers all your questions; not hands-on.



#### Relief Carving for Beginners - carving a Calla Lilly in both Low and High Relief

Wed & Thurs, May 17/18, [register here](#). Mary is a master at relief carving, and you will get to learn two styles and see for yourself the dramatic differences between low and high relief. Many of her beginner classes are five days, so be prepared to do some homework and carve a five pointed star ahead of time and get your tools sharp.



Calla Lilly in High Relief

#### Carving a Gothic Corner Leaf -

Sat & Sun, May 20/21. This is a class for intermediate and advanced carvers, 2 days (Sat & Sun May 20/21), [register here](#). This project is deceptively simple, but Mary emphasizes it is anything but. You will learn carving techniques that will apply to a wide variety of designs, whether or not you care about this particular pattern.



Gothic-Corner Leaf

For questions:

Contact Heidi McNamee [by email here](#).

### Oregon Carvers Guild Password Changes

If you have received a notice from admin@oregoncarvers.com requesting that you change your password, it is legitimate. Our web provider launched a program to improve security, and this was a part of the process. If you receive such notifications in the future, please follow the instructions. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.



## Classes with Masa Nitani

### Texturing Techniques with Masa Nitani - In-person only

March 8, 2023, 1 – 5pm. [Click here](#) to register

Masa is an experienced Japanese carver and woodworker and in this class you will carve a variety of texturing techniques you can apply to your own projects later. The texturing in this photo shows examples of hair and fish scale patterns (from his Ainu bear eating a fish).

Texturing exercises will be done on basswood, and you will get to use some of Masa's tools to experience the ergonomics of his unique handles.



### How to Carve an Ainu Bear with Masa Nitani - In-person only

April 12, 2023, 1 – 5pm. [Click here](#) to register

Masa will demonstrate how he carves the Ainu bear, the traditional symbol of his native northern Japan heritage. He mastered bear carving as a teenage apprentice in Sapporo and has carved hundreds. Bears of any size take a long time to carve, so in four hours you will see the process and watch how he approaches the various stages but on a miniature scale. Once a bear is roughed out and refined, its hair is textured. The traditional Ainu bear has a salmon in its mouth and is carved out of one block of wood, with the fish scales added at the end.



## Classes with Adam Mclsaac

Adam is a professional carver who works in the style of the tribes of the Columbia River Basin. He conducts workshops at his LaCenter studio near Vancouver, WA. Two intermediate level classes are now scheduled, each can be taken independently.

### Native Columbia River Art Workshop with Adam Mclsaac

April 14/15, [click here](#) to register

Students will carve a ceremonial ladle with an animal icon. The essence of the workshop is to experience the use of traditional tribal tools (adze and crooked knife) while working with traditional green wood (Alder).



### Secpnd Native Columbia River Art Workshop with Adam Mclsaac

June 2/3, [click here](#) to register

Students can choose to carve a ceremonial tray or a salmon. The essence of the workshop is to experience the use of traditional tribal tools (adze and crooked knife) while working with traditional green wood (Alder).



## Classes

### Carving Class with Monica Setziol Phillips - In-person only

March 11 and 12, 2023. [Click here](#) to join the Wait List.

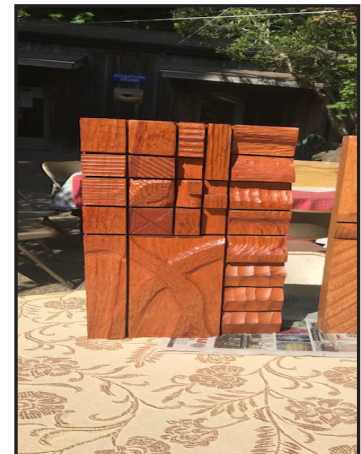
This class is currently filled, but you can still put yourself on the wait-list in case there are cancellations and to get early access to her future classes.

The workshop gives students the opportunity to experiment and expand creative horizons based on explorations of possibilities in wood carving. Emphasis is on discovery. Students will work with a panel of alder approximately 10" x 16" that has been scored to form a grid. Within this, students will be able to explore alternative inner patterns of their choosing.

INSTRUCTOR/ARTIST BIO: Monica Setziol-Phillips learned to carve in her father Leroy Setziol's shop. She has been seriously carving since 1986. She has exhibited her work in galleries around the state and her work is in private collections around the country. Public Art commissions include Sunriver Lodge, McMinnville Civic Hall, and Salishan Lodge. She has taught carving at Sitka Center for Art and Ecology for 11 years, and lives in Sheridan, OR.



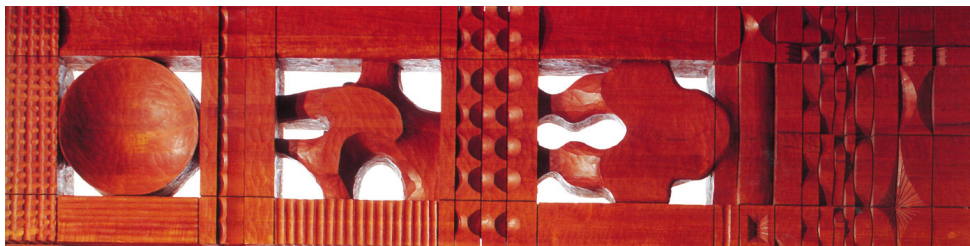
Large commission by Monica in Alaska Yellow Cedar



Examples of class project

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Work by the artist's father, Leroy Setziol.



From [1991-Leroy Setziol Retrospective Exhibition.pdf](#),  
published by  
University of Oregon Museum of Art.  
(used with permission)

## Monthly Classes & SIGs

### Sharpening for Beginners – in-person or online

Taught by Roger Crooks, Larry Wade, or Terry Burnside  
Click a desired date to register, [March 8](#), [April 12](#), [May 10](#)

One of our main charters is to preserve the art of carving and to do so requires teaching beginners. We all know sharpening is critical. There are many articles and videos online, and they often show contradictory ways to sharpen. For a beginner with few tools, figuring out how to start sharpening is daunting.

Our philosophy is to start with good tools and keep them sharp with stropping. Reshaping tools, power sharpening, and using stones will be taught in future classes.

This beginner's class delivers information with a [handout](#), a [video](#), and hands-on coaching. There is a fine line between getting a sharp edge and rolling over the edge making it duller.

Correcting stropping techniques in real time will start carvers on the right path to building muscle memory for sharpening. The class repeats monthly, and can be attended either in-person (preferably) or via Zoom.



Leather Strops

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### Incised Carving Class (free) – in-person, or online

Days and times vary. To register, click on the desired date: [March 15](#), [April 8](#)

This one-session, 2-1/2 hour class is for those new to carving or who want to try incised carving. This class repeats most months.

The incised style carves lines into the surface of wood and can be done safely with one tool. Students will be provided with Basswood, a loaner tool, patterns, and a carving mat. This workshop will be taught in-person (as long as COVID-19 numbers are low) or it can be taken via Zoom.

Students will carve the Dogs Welcome sign shown, and wood is available for a second project afterwards. Students will use a parting (V) tool and can continue borrowing it for a month.



Dogs Welcome Sign

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### Carving Special Interest Groups (SIGs) - in-person

Two groups meet monthly, one in the evening, one during the day, each two hours with an optional hour before to eat, work, or chat. Click on a link below to register for the respective series, even if you attend sporadically.

- » **EVENINGS** at Guild of Woodworkers Studio (third Thursdays), 7-9pm, [click here for the evening series](#)
- » **DAYTIMES** at Woodcraft in Tigard (1st Thursdays) 1-3pm, [click here for the daytime series](#)

For the March focus topic Larry Wade will lead a discussion on Japanese carving related to woodblock printing, netsuke, and how the Japanese taught carving in the late 19th century.



## More Learning Opportunities

### Woodcarving Class at the Beaverton Elsie Stuhr Senior Center through the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District (ages 55 and above), tuition varies

Taught by Nancy Girard, usually Tuesdays, weekly classes are from 10 - 11:30am.

Classes continue year round. New carvers pay a start-up fee of \$20, which includes a safety glove and thumb guard, three projects, and use of instructor's tools for the term along with instruction.

Experienced carvers get new projects and/or help for their own projects. All get the company of fellow carvers, which is vitally beneficial. More information at [THPRD.com](http://THPRD.com) or contact Nancy Girard at [girardaccessories.com](http://girardaccessories.com).



### Eastside Carver's Gathering — Tom Rich, coordinator

True North Studios 455 NE 71st Ave Portland, OR 97213

March 4 (First Saturday of the month, noon - 2pm)

The project for the East Side Carver's Gathering at True North Studio will be a simple "Ball in Cage". It requires only one carving knife and a fairly small block of wood. Gloves are recommended, of course, because the carving is small and the carver needs to hold the piece. Wood will be provided for this project. As usual, I will bring a few pieces in different stages of completion so you can visualize the process.

If you enjoy this project, much more elaborate configurations can be the next step. The pictures show a simple ball in cage that we will do, and a more elaborate design with several cages which you might try later.

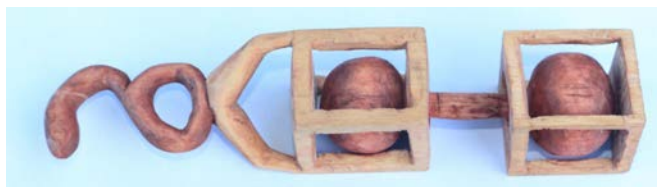
Bring your own carving knife and safety gear like gloves if you have them. A few gloves and knives will be available for new carvers to try.

Our gatherings are always the first Saturday of the month. This month is March 4th from Noon to 2:00 PM.

If you are a wood carver or would like to learn, please join us every first Saturday of the month starting from Noon to 2pm. Please join us and please register by [clicking here](#).

If you are a carver and would just like to meet and talk with other carvers, you are welcome to come. Bring your own project to work on and share techniques, interests and a good time.

We hope to form an "Eastside Carver's Gathering" that will continue indefinitely at True North Studios. Questions? Contact Tom Rich. ([tom@tomrich.me](mailto:tom@tomrich.me))



## More Learning Opportunities

### Woodcarving for Beginners with Nancy Girard (this class generally repeats monthly and is produced by Nancy)

Date: March 18, 2023

Location: True North Studios

Address: 455 NE 71st Ave. Portland, OR 97213

Time: 1pm-4pm

Cost: \$60

To sign-up: [Click here](#)

The class includes: 3 hours of instruction & carving time, project kit of choice, use of Nancy Girard's tools, carving glove & thumb guard, and paint for finished carvings.

At end of the class you take home your own carving glove & thumb guard, the project kit to carve and practice what you learned in class, and a brand-new carving knife to start you on your woodcarving journey or add to your collection of tools. Your project choice this month will be one of the eggs or the shamrock.



### Backer Board Tip

One of the things mentioned during [Mary May's February Presentation](#) was a method for attaching a backer board to a relief carving that was quick and easy. A backer board is an important safety item for relief carving a small or irregular shape. A prime example of the latter is the star Mary showed us how to carve, see [page 12](#).

This tip substitutes double-sided tape with painter's tape and [Cyanoacrylate \(CA\) glue](#). The process is simple: you put painter's masking tape ("blue tape") on both the backer board and the carving blank, then put CA glue on one side and (optionally) Activator on the other. Press the two together and the two will stick together until you pry them apart.



## Interest Lists

### Walking Sticks & Wood Spirits — Interest list only

Taught by Terry Burnside. [Click here](#) to register interest

Terry will teach this class once there is enough interest. Add your name to the list if this is a future possibility for you. No obligation.



This class is designed for those not familiar with carving a wood spirit or face carving in general. Terry developed his techniques over 25 years, incorporating the methods of several well-known carving professionals.



### Call for Pictures of Your Carvings

One of the highlights of face-to-face meetings is doing a “show and tell” about carvings we have done. Each month we will include a brief narrative with pictures of members’ work. When you send photos of your work to [OCG Newsletter Editor](#), please let us know some details, such as:

- » Wood used
- » Size, including thickness of stock
- » Finish, including coloration, if any
- » Special techniques or considerations, if any
- » Any other information of interest

#### A few tips on taking photos:

- » Position your camera (or phone) parallel to your work
- » Use natural light (sunlight) if possible
- » The only shadows you see should be in the work (not you)
- » Use a high contrast background so your work stands out



"Catch a Bird of Paradise"  
by Mack Sutter  
From the OCG Collection





# Upcoming Events

## GOING ON NOW

### The Odyssey of the Historic Jantzen Beach Carousel



Oregon Historical Society, Portland, OR, now through April 28, 2023,

The Odyssey of the Historic Jantzen Beach Carousel examines the carousel’s journey from Parker’s Leavenworth factory to California’s sunny shores to the Jantzen Beach Amusement Park, “Portland’s Million-Dollar Playground”, on Hayden Island in the Columbia River.

For more information see the [exhibit website](#).

## APRIL 2023

### Capitol Woodcarvers Annual Show – Salem, OR, April 1-2, 2023 at Center 50+



Capitol Woodcarvers is having its 1st “in person” show since 2019.

See the poster on their website: <https://www.capitolwoodcarvers.org/eventsclasses.php> for more details. Admission is free. There will be carvings and woodburnings displayed, along with vendors and breakout sessions. In addition, there are still a few tables available if members of other groups wish to display or sell their work. .

### Idaho Artistry in Wood Show

2023 Wood and Gourd Art Show

Jack’s Urban Meeting Place, Boise, ID. April 1 - 2, 2023



The Idaho Artistry in Wood 2023 Wood and Gourd Art Show will be held Saturday, April 1, 9am to 5pm and Sunday, April 2, 10am to 4pm at Boise’s premier exhibition hall located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of JUMP (Jack’s Urban Meeting Place), 1000 Myrtle St., Boise, ID 83702

Competitors from all skill levels (Novice to Expert) may submit their wood carving, turning, scroll work, fine wood working, CNC creations, gourd art, and pyrography entries for public display and judging. The show will feature demonstrations, vendors, raffles, an auction and banquet, as well as the opportunity for artists to sell their work. Their [website](#) has more details.

### Oakhurst Woodcarver’s Rendezvous

Community Center in Oakhurst, Ca. April 16-22, 2023 near Yosemite



This special week of carving is guaranteed to be fun for the whole family, and they are extending a special invitation to you to come and join in. They generally have several different carving classes lined up. Classes range from relief carving, power carving, bark carving, jewelry boxes, stepping stones, gourds and pine needle baskets, scroll saw, and others. One registration fee will allow you to attend as many classes as you like, or you may choose to spend the whole week in just one class. All

classes will be on a first-come first-served basis. See the [California Carvers Guild website \(look under shows\)](#).



# Carving Newsletter

March 2023



## APRIL 2023

### The Gathering of the Guilds

Oregon Convention Center, Portland, April 28 - 30, 2023



Six Portland-area guilds with over 200 artists will join forces to exhibit and sell art and functional products. All of which are unique and of exceptional quality. Details on the [Gathering of the Guilds website](#).

**NOTE:** The Oregon Carvers Guild will have a large booth and encourages all members to consider offering their creations for sale at the show. Also, if you can help at the Gathering, please let [Larry](#) know.

## JULY 2023

### NW Carving Academy, Ellensburg, WA

Kittitas County Fairgrounds Event Center, July 10 - 14, 2023



This is a long-established, week-long educational opportunity with multiple instructors from around the region and country. The classes that are offered include hand and power carving, pyrography, painting and design, and baskets. Additionally, special interest classes are offered for spouses and partners.

Registration is open; For more information, [click here](#).

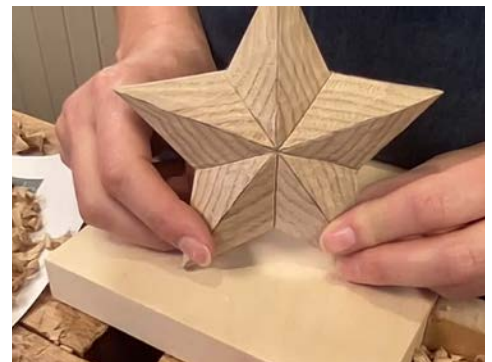
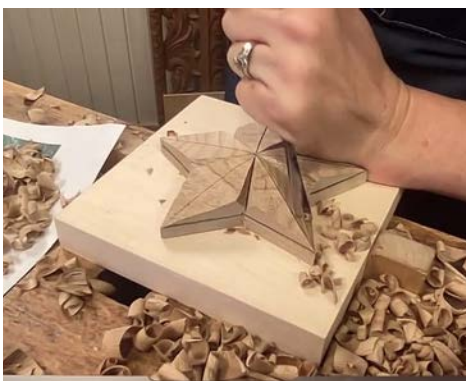
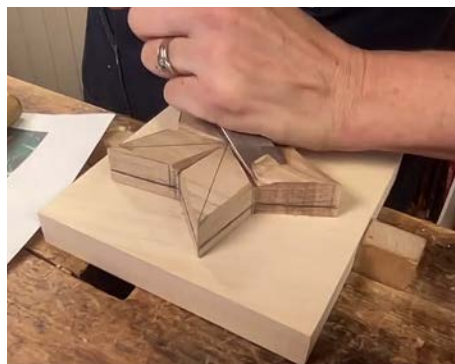
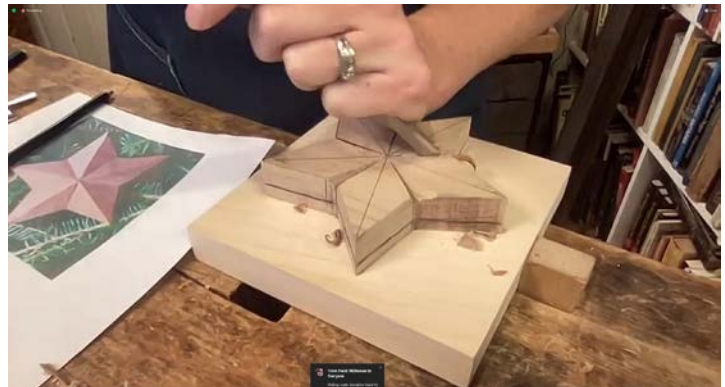
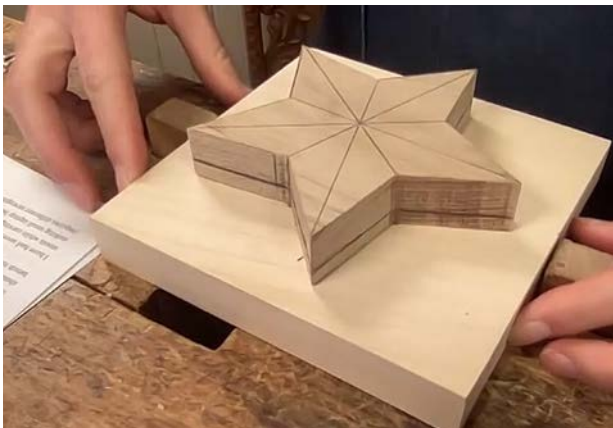




## In Case You Missed It...

Mary joined us from her studio in Charleston, SC, to grease the skids for her upcoming classes in May. She demonstrated carving a five-pointed star, a simple but powerful project that emphasizes grain training. The program was held at the Guild Studio in Multnomah Village and also on Zoom. The Zoom recording can be found [here](#).

To learn more about Mary May's Traditional School of Woodcarving, [click here](#).



## We were born in 1973

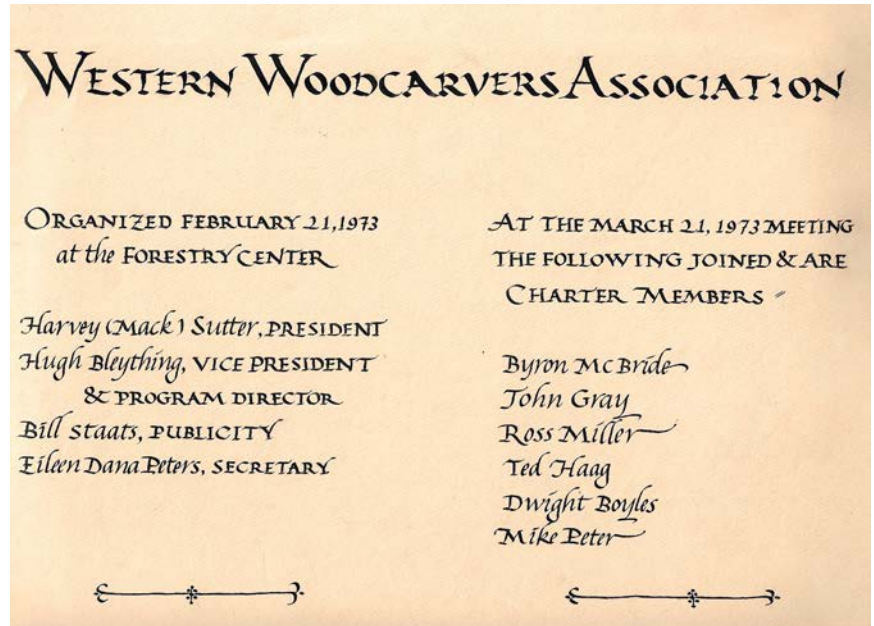
### ...And the Rest is History

By Larry Wade

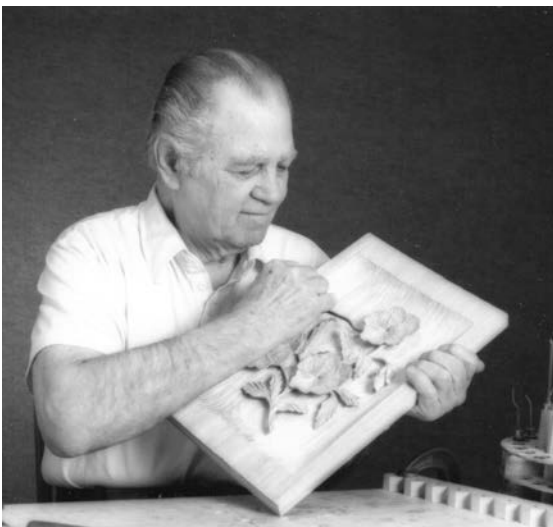
Our carving club just turned fifty. On February 21, 1973, the four founders met to create what became the Western Woodcarvers Association (WWA). By 1985 it grew to one of the largest in the United States with 500 members during the heyday of carving.

We owe a lot to those four, to the hundreds who followed, and to the Western Forestry Center, the earlier name of the World Forestry Center. Our club was formed in a partnership with them, hence the use of "Western" in our original name. They became our patron saint. They printed and mailed the monthly newsletter and provided free space for meetings, classes, and semi-annual carving shows. They provided us with a dream location.

Mack Sutter was the first president and one of the four founders. Over his lifetime he taught carving for forty years, and I think he did more than anyone to promote carving in Oregon. He mainly taught relief carving. He specialized in deep relief floral carving and left a legacy of over 70 floral examples, many documented in contemporary photographs on our website, and in two Dover books.



The relationship between WWA and the Western Forestry Center was great while it lasted. However, it came to an end when they changed their mission to worldwide forest preservation and their name to the World Forestry Center. Changing focus from local to global meant they could no longer allocate resources exclusively local activities. WWA lost its nest in 2002 and began a search for a new identity.



Mack Sutter in 1985

In the era of high tech everything, carving interest waned, locally and nationally. Leadership aged and passed on; newcomers were not sought; membership declined. Then one hundred members became fifty, then 25, then ten. In July 2020, the club was reborn and renamed to the Oregon Carvers Guild and rebuilt during the pandemic. We now number over 100 members.

The founding president's impact on our guild continues. Mack's son John and his sister Julia donated Mack's large collection of tools to our tool library, along with the relief carving knowledge that Mack taught for decades. Mack's substantial set of the deep relief floral carvings will likely be preserved in the archives of the Oregon Historical Society.

Thank you to the founders who met fifty years ago. Thank you Mack.



## Comfort Bird Project Update

### Comfort Birds; Why do we do it? Joy and Peace

By Julie Niemeyer

“Comfort Birds are designed to fit in the palm of your hand so that you can rub them for peace.” ~Sarah Morin/CBC News.

Birds, by their very nature, usually bring happiness, perhaps a sense of freedom, a moment of reflection or delight when watching them. All of these feelings can come to a person handling a small comfort bird.

As a personal experiment, I leave them lying about in my shop, on the kitchen counter, or in strategically placed locations in order to invite inquiries. Invariably, someone will ask about them. It is at that moment in which I hand them one of the birds and they take it as if it's a fledgling chick that needs great care. I have yet to hand one to someone who hasn't returned a smile or a story about a person they know who should have one; an aging parent living in long term care, a brother suffering a brain injury from a motorcycle accident, an anesthesiologist who would like to have one for each of her patients, a daughter trying to find her way in the world, and grandparents of grandchildren whose parents are divorcing. These stories are the reasons all of us, in many ways, are doing what we can to make these birds. The need in the world for a small token of joy is enormous.

I like to believe that these stories are the reason why we have people many volunteers working on them. Between the Guild of Oregon Woodworkers, the Oregon Carvers Guild, and the CNC SIG, we have about 75 volunteers donating wood, carving, and sanding birds, CNC routing birds, and finishing these little hatchlings. Thanks to Roger Crooks for stimulating this whole project into existence for us.

Altogether we have hatched about 250 birds. Many are ready for sanding and finishing, but more need to be incubated. Two members are doing the bulk of the band sawing work, but we need members to come to Larry Wade's "Hatchery" on Mondays to help rough shape, final grind, or sand these beauties to 600 grit, soft as a baby's bottom. Or, learn in the Hatchery and borrow the tools and sandpaper to work at home. Our goal is to have many to sell at the Gathering of the Guilds and then find local organizations to receive the remainder of our flock. Contact Larry Wade or Julie Niemeyer to help.

Our 2023 total goal is 500 little creatures. While most are birds, some members are carving fish, turtles, and even a slender slug. Owls, cats, bunnies can be made if you would like to be creative.

Members create the birds in a wide variety of ways - by hand carving, using rasps and power sanders, or with rotary power carving tools. The CNC SIG members each have their own way of producing birds. In Larry's Hatchery, Karen Kettler, Joanne Rekow, and Jeremy Bailey each use a slightly different process to carve birds with power tools.



Photo: Sarah Morin/CBC News



Karen Kettler power sanding Mahogany birds in The Hatchery



## Comfort Bird Project Update

If you like to learn to hand carve a comfort bird there's a good, 13-minute video from the Triad Carvers Club in Winston Salem, NC - [Carving a Comfort Bird](#). They use the pattern from *A Bird in the Hand*, [an article by Kathleen Ryan](#) in Woodcarving Illustrated. The directions in the article are slightly different than the video and describes the process that Frank Foust developed in 1982. In addition, there are several [useful resources](#) on the Oregon Carvers Guild website.

The stories, from people I've met along this journey, are incredible and are a constant reminder why we are doing this project. To hand a small token of joy to someone in need of affection can be a reminder that someone was thinking of them while carving these tiny creatures. It gives peace in times of distress.



Jeremy Bailey using a Dremel to rough grind a pair of Comfort Birds



Ian Walton's Birds of A Feather made from Douglas Fir using his own CNC. Look at his smile!



Joanne Rekow using a Micro Motor rotary tool in The Hatchery to fine grind

## Safety Corner

### A Couple of Safety-related Topics by Tom Siep

#### The Introductory Safety Class from the Guild of Oregon Woodworkers

I took this class because it is required as the first step in gaining access to the GOOW's shop. I had expectations but this safety class did not meet those expectations. I expected to:

- » Have the GOOW Safety Manual regurgitated at me
- » Be bored
- » Not learn anything useful beyond the Guild manual

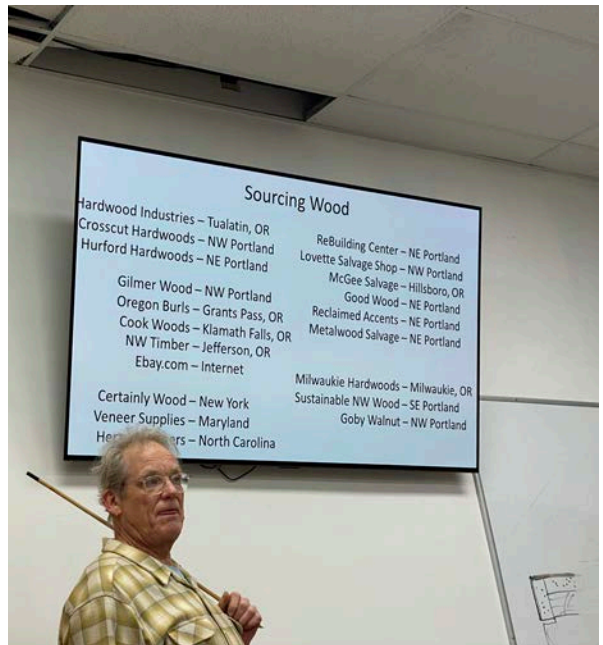
The class completely failed to deliver on my pessimistic expectations. It was really good! Jeff Hilber did a great job of teaching.

My history with safety classes up to this time had been dismal. Working for semiconductor companies for most of my career, I have had at least a dozen courses on factory-floor safety. While I appreciate that semiconductor manufacturing facilities are dangerous places, I never actually set foot in the buildings where chips were made; I did software in a research lab. Needless to say, previous safety courses were not relevant.

In great contrast to my previous experience, Jeff assumed we read and understood the manual and that it did not require restatement. Jeff added to the material with personal history, stories, and advice.

Jeff was not boring. His lively, interactive style made the class time fly by. He even had a small bit of controversy by disagreeing with a detail or two about the manual (he wanted to make it a little better by adding a bit of margin to the distancing policy).

Best of all I learned a lot, and I think I am going to be a safer woodworker because of this class.



Jeff Hilber

#### Carving Safety Manual in the Works!

The Guild of Oregon Woodworkers has an extensive safety manual that measures 73 pages, [available here](#). This manual largely concerns itself with the big machines in the Guild's facility and has very little to do with carving safety.

Larry Wade saw the need to have an appropriately targeted safety manual, aimed at carver's needs. This manual does not replace the GOOW manual; it adds the hand-tool safety information that carvers need.

The manual is still being developed, but the goal is to have it available to carvers by next month.

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## Carving Ice

### John Zipprich Team Wins Top Award for Snow Carving

By John Zipprich

I did the design and was team leader. The elements of the design bear no relationship to each other; I just like the shapes - industrial and natural. I called it *Improbable Juxtapositions*.



**Improbable Juxtapositions**

The whole idea of snow sculpture is to have suspended weight, held together only through frozen snow, so the colder the better. Because of the unsupported areas, these large sculptures can be fragile. A sunny day can bring one down. You have to push the limits of the material if you want to win. I've seen sculptures collapse because the artists went too far.

The tools are just like wood carving tools only larger. I made my own gouge from a posthole digger and chisels of various sizes from old shingle hatchets. The hatchets make great chisels because one side is flat. I welded on a chunk of pipe for a handle socket.

A saw is made from 1/8" cable. I slide rivets with the center nail removed onto the cable, alternating direction with every rivet then smashing the rivet body to secure it to the cable. It saws through frozen snow like a champ.

I made a sander from nail plates used in home construction. The finish sander is the expanded mesh from the drywall industry. I enjoy making my tools I've got a bunch of them.

I've been into snow sculpture since 1990, competing in Russia, Finland, Colorado, and Idaho. Great fun and great people. Maybe I'll do the Nationals next winter.

The Idaho piece was carved out of a packed block of snow 8'x5'x5'. Organizers make the blocks with a form, a loader, and grape stompers to get it all packed tight. In Breckenridge, Colorado, their blocks are 10'x10'x10', over four times the size as Idaho, but they let four-man teams do it. That is truly a lot of snow to move. Most contests are done in 8x8x8 blocks. Rules vary with events, but power tools are never allowed. My team won in Breckenridge in 1991.

More information on the event is at [McCall Winter Carnival website](https://www.mccallwintercarnival.com/).

*"Have you ever carved ice? Fantastic stuff. No grain. No sanding. Just hit it with a torch and it's clear and smooth."*

-- John Zipprich

Note: John Zipprich is an Oregon Carvers Guild member whose wood and snow carvings were featured in the [October 2021 newsletter](#).



L to R: Phil Black, John Zipprich, Dick McCumber





# Carving Newsletter

March 2023



## Clubs and Guilds

### Coastal Carvers — Lincoln City

The club meets at the Lincoln City SDA School. Monthly meetings are usually held the first Sunday of October through May, at 1:30pm. Club members also meet weekly on Tuesday evenings, from 6 - 8pm for unstructured carving. For details, [click here](#).

### Capitol Woodcarvers — Salem

Meets on the last Tuesday of each month, except the months of August and December. Meetings are from 7 - 9pm. Meetings are held at the Salem Center 50+ located at 2615 Portland RD NE, Salem, OR. For more information, [click here](#).

### Vancouver / King's Way Carvers — weekly on Thursdays

Thursday evenings from 6 - 9pm (summer 9am - noon). Contact Jim Mather at [jimmatherxx@gmail.com](mailto:jimmatherxx@gmail.com) or 360-931-0079. This group has been meeting since 2007 in a first class art room at a large private high school at 3606 NE 78th in Vancouver (Hazel Dell). The facility is locked so call ahead for the access code. They are a friendly and experienced group of carvers with a variety of interests.

### Milwaukie Woodcarvers — Milwaukie

This established group has recently restarted in-person carving sessions weekly on Wednesdays from 8 - 11am at the Milwaukie Center. Drop-ins welcome for a small fee of \$1 or \$2 fee per session. Support for beginning carvers is provided. The address is 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr, Milwaukie, OR 97222 (off Hwy 224 near Rusk Rd).

### Central Oregon Wood Carvers — Bend

Central Oregon Wood Carvers is group of carvers in and around Bend. For information, contact Scott Beyer at [dxdevolt@gmail.com](mailto:dxdevolt@gmail.com).

### Madras High Desert Carvers — Madras

Meets weekly on Thursdays from 4:30 - 7pm, drop-ins welcome, 224 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Street Madras, OR 97741. For more information, contact Sharon Miller, [madrasnana25@live.com](mailto:madrasnana25@live.com), 541-550-6355, or Royce Embanks, [royce@btstys.org](mailto:royce@btstys.org), 541-325-1586.

### Olympia Woodworkers Guild— Olympia

They occasionally have interesting carving presenters for their monthly meetings. For information contact Bill Cogswell at [info@owwg.org](mailto:info@owwg.org) or see [owwg.org/blog](http://owwg.org/blog).

### Idaho Carvers Guild

This is a long-established group of carvers in and around Boise that have some meetings online and some in person. For information, contact Eric Owens at [idahowoodcarvers@gmail.com](mailto:idahowoodcarvers@gmail.com).

### California Carvers Guild (CCG)

This statewide umbrella organization supports over 40 local clubs throughout the state and has a very long and deep history. The local clubs produce a variety of notable shows and events. The CCG produces a comprehensive newsletter called *The Log*, and trains judges for shows. Click here for their [website](#).





# Carving Newsletter

March 2023



## Educational Opportunities

**Nancy Girard teaching at True North Studio** Nancy is an experienced carving instructor teaching Woodcarving for Beginners once a month at True North Studio. [Click here](#) for True North's Upcoming Events by month to register.

### Wildcraft Studio

A multi-arts non-profit that frequently has carving classes—[click here](#) for their website then scroll through their calendar. Rose Holdorf frequently teaches carving classes on the Scandinavian Dala Horse, spoons, and kitchen utensils. Their classroom is now at 50th and SE Division, Portland, OR.

### Port Townsend School of Woodworking

A very important regional resource that frequently has visiting carving professionals, including Mary May. For information, see the [Port Townsend School of Woodworking](#) website.

### Sitka Center for Art and Ecology

Among the many workshops the Sitka Center offers, there are 2 woodcarving classes and a pyrography class. You can check out the classes at the [Sitka Center website](#).

## Contact Us

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