



# Carving Newsletter

## April 2024



Dear Carvers,

Inspiration - where do we find it?

My friend Jon Madian was an artist in residence who once taught writing to inner city children in West Los Angeles. He said there was nothing more terrifying to students than a blank piece of paper. Fast forward to our blank piece of wood. How do we decide what to carve next?

Ideas, we need ideas, and lots of them in order to end up with a good one. Some ideas we get at shows, and we are lucky to have such an opportunity at the Salem [Capitol Woodcarvers Show](#) on April 6-7. It's worth the drive. Lots of carvings and carvers for inspiration. Same dates for the [annual show in Boise](#).

For virtual shows, our monthly Zoom program on April 9th will be a Super Show-N-Tell, with member photos as well as highlights from recent shows in Boise, Mesa, and Salem. Please share your own work too (recent or past). Don't be shy; your work can trigger ideas for others. [Email me](#) your photos (by April 7th) for the slide show and you can talk a bit about them at the meeting. Wayne Harrel already put together some slides for work inspired by Setziol and Rothko.

Nature is a source. Our noted Japanese carver, Masa Nitani, takes daily walks at Tyron Creek Park and recently showed me a unique section of a fallen tree that he salvaged.

Inspiration comes from carving books, magazines, videos, museums, YouTube, Pinterest, art from other disciplines, history, culture, stories, fantasy, family, friends, memories, antiques, Mother's Day, life's events - the list goes on.

At the Mesa show I resonated with a gargoyle door knocker. I've wanted to carve something for my front door but knew something for the whole door was too ambitious. A knocker was doable. I mentioned this to Jerry Boone, and he said that he thought the design came from a Shawn Cipa book. It did, and I now see how it was made. I would rather have a door knocker in a Japanese style, so now I get to let my right brain stew on new alternatives.

Our guild is a source of inspiration when we share, explore, and experiment. Thanks for being part of our journey. Happy carving.

Larry Wade  
[lpwade@gmail.com](mailto:lpwade@gmail.com)



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

## Monthly Evening Programs

### Finding Inspiration - Super Show-N-Tell, April 9th, 7PM, Zoom only

Click [here](#) to register (free)

Many of us hit the wall while searching for what to carve next. This program may help by showing lots of examples from members and recent shows, including:

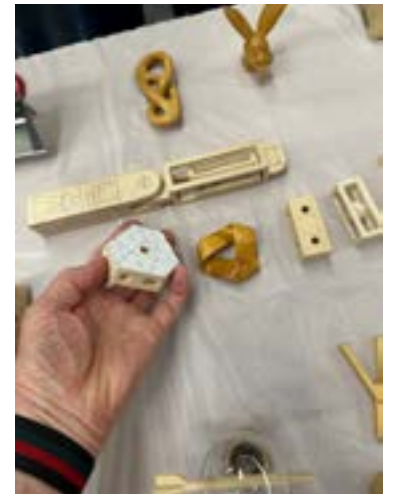
- » Desert Woodcarving Show, Mesa, AZ (Feb 2024)
- » Capitol Woodcarvers Show, Salem, OR (Apr 2024)
- » Idaho Artistry in Wood and Gourd Show, Boise (Apr 2024)

Please send in an example or three of your own work so that they may be included in the slide show. Email the best photos you can to [lpwade@gmail.com](mailto:lpwade@gmail.com) and be prepared to say a few things during the Zoom meeting—if you want to. Recent and favorite past examples are welcome.

July 2021 was the last time we had a dedicated program with member show-n-tell, so it's time. You can watch the last one [here](#).



Please register to get the [Zoom link](#) and in case there are last minute changes.



Our monthly programs are usually on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. All Zoom programs are recorded and posted to our website and [YouTube](#). You can see past programs by [clicking here](#). Alternatively, you can navigate to Galleries/Video Galleries from <https://oregoncarvers.com/>.

These programs explore the breadth and depth of carving topics and expose us to new ideas, techniques, persons, or resources. While most of us carve wood, it isn't the only material we use. Occasionally we might consider carving gourds, stone, foam, wax, food, ice, linoleum, and whatever else will carve.

Many of us work primarily with gouges, but others work primarily with knives, power carving, or pyrography. For some, carving is one of many hobbies, but for others it is *the* hobby. Many of us wish we were better painters, designers, or photographers—better with art as well as craft. Some people like carving big things, tiny things, totem poles, carousel animals, or Japanese netsuke. Some have the patience of Job to carve and paint realistic birds and mammals, while others need to finish projects in hours, not months or years. Spoons anyone?

## In Case You Missed It...

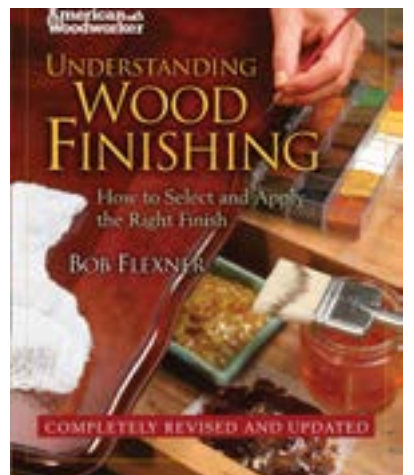
### Clear Coat Finishes with Chip Webster

Chip is a professional woodworker with a distinct background in finishing. He led us through the world of clear finishes for carvings, covering the major product alternatives, discussing the pros and cons, talking about safety, and applications.

Other topics included:

- » Safety issues involve lung, skin, and eyes as well as fire hazards.
- » What kind of gloves are best?
- » How do we handle end grains absorbing faster than long grains?
- » Is Howard Feed-N-Wax a good finish?
- » How do I achieve a matte or glossy finish?
- » What are the best ways to finish outdoor pieces?

The recording of the Zoom meeting is on our [YouTube channel](#).





## Remembering Alan H. Pearson

### Remembering Alan H. Pearson - May 9, 1943 to February 9, 2024

By Robert Ahrens

Alan Pearson died after nine years fighting cancer. That alone made him an extraordinary man, but that was the least of his accomplishments.

He was first my friend, and second my mentor. He taught me to carve, demonstrating his skill every time we could get together. But Alan was a many-faceted guy, and carving was only one of his loves - his family was first! We talked about many things as we carved - life, politics, people, community. A fair amount of our carving took place at the Sherwood Senior Center, where he held open carving sessions on Tuesdays for anyone who could come, either to carve, watch, or talk. He was happy to show people what he did and how he did it! As his cancer got worse, he had many days where he was too weak to come, and I occasionally went over to see him at home. I now wish I'd done that more often.

As he endured cancer treatments that often weakened him severely, Alan's obsession for the last years of his life was carving those blockheads (caricature heads from small blocks of wood). Literally, in the last six months of his life, he carved over two hundred and gave them away to everyone he dealt with in the cancer clinics - doctors, nurses, technicians, office personnel, and near the end, to other cancer patients. It was his way of saying thank you and leaving some kind of legacy.

But it wasn't just his legacy. He wanted carving, as a skill, career, or hobby to be passed along to new generations. That was one of the reasons he was teaching me, and why he wanted to leave his "legacies" behind. He felt it was a benefit to the community, and community was very important to Alan.

Here's what his son-in-law, David Specter, had to say:

*"Alan was many things. He was, among other things, a political scientist, a teacher, an executive recruiter, a politician, and in his later years, a prolific woodcarver. He was a beloved friend and a mentor to so many - in the last few weeks I've been able to discover just how wide his sphere of influence was. Most importantly, he was a loving husband and a doting father and grandfather. No father could be prouder of his daughter and granddaughter than he was, and he LOVED bragging about them."*

*"Alan also believed in me (sometimes more than I believed in myself) and in the somewhat insane winery dream we had. He and Alice uprooted their lives in Cincinnati to follow us to Oregon. He was not a wine drinker, but he threw himself into learning as much as he could about the craft so that he could be our biggest supporter, and that support has been a critical factor in the successes we've had."*

*"Alan knew this time was coming, and approached this situation with a grace and dignity that we can only hope to achieve. He posted a FB message which read in part "I am in the final weeks of my life. I am telling you this not for sympathy, but to say goodbye to all my friends and family. Thank you for your love and friendship. Your presence in my life has brought me great joy. DO NOT MOURN MY DEATH."*

So, to honor Alan's life and his legacy, we celebrate his life as the benefit to his community that it was.



Alan Pearson



Blockhead Examples I

## Classes Hosted by Sherry Klein

### Classes from Izo Becic and Josh Guge

Location: Sherry's studio in Milwaukie, OR

For both classes, carvers can call or email Sherry. She will then send an email listing where her studio is and more about the class. Cost for each class is \$500.00. A deposit of \$250.00 is required to hold a spot in the class (half the class cost). The balance will be due on the first day of class.

Sherry Klein, phone: 503-704-0796

Email: [sklein23@icloud.com](mailto:sklein23@icloud.com)

### Architectural Carving with Izo Becic, July 15-19

Izo is an Award winning European trained Master Carver. His carving specialty is the restoration and duplication of altars, statues, antique furniture and architectural detail. Designs will be set up on the blank by Izo. Tools required are: gouges, mallet and at least two or four clamps for holding the blank. Izo will have some tools for loan and to sell. You will be proud of your carving and walk away with knowledge from the Master. Izo will call each student to verify project blank choice. Blanks could be in butternut, basswood or black walnut. Blanks range in price from \$60-\$350.



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### Hummingbird Habitat with Josh Guge, May 13-17

Josh is a three-time world champion wood sculptor and art instructor. Over the last two decades, he has worked with thousands of students in over 25 states around the country.

This is a power-carving class and the use of the provided dust collection systems are required. There will be time during class for us all to build our own habitat for this nest and bird. He has suggested we each bring a branch to use.

At this point I only have one spot left in this class.

Supplies you purchase from Josh during class are to be paid for at the end of the class.



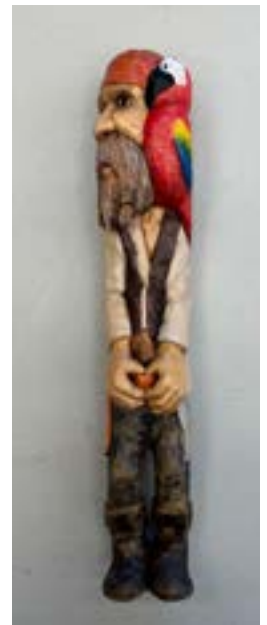
## Caricature Carving Review

### Caricature Class Review

By Larry Wade

Terry Moss taught his second weekend caricature class in the Portland area in March, in addition to recent classes he taught in Salem and Rockaway Beach. Terry uses 2x2x12 basswood to create a variety of figures. This class had the option of carving a Leprechaun or Rabbit. Previous projects were Santa, Frankenstein, Willy Wonka, and Uncle Sam, and this summer Terry plans to have variations of a pirate. His ideas are endless. The format is a workshop rather than a lecture or demo class which allows Terry to provide personalized attention.

If you would like to consider taking future caricature classes from Terry, please put your name on his [Interest List here](#).





## Monthly Classes

### Sharpening for Beginners — in-person (repeats monthly)

Taught by Roger Crooks or Larry Wade

To register, click on one desired date: [May 8](#), [June 12](#), [July 10](#)

Sharpening is critical. While there are many articles and videos online, they are often contradictory. 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. This beginner's class delivers information with a handout, a video, and hands-on coaching. There is fine line between getting an edge sharp and making it duller by rolling it over.

Correcting stropping techniques in real time will start carvers on the right path to building muscle memory for sharpening. The class repeats monthly, and requires students to read our [white paper](#) and watch our [video](#) ahead of time so you can concentrate on practice and technique.



Leather Strop

### Incised Carving Class (free) — in-person (repeats monthly)

Days and times vary. To register, click on one desired date: [May 18](#), [June 15](#), [July 10](#)

This one-session, in-person, 2-1/2 hour class is for those new to carving or who want to try incised carving. The 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 everything needed - wood, V tool, patterns, and a carving mat. The class is taught in-person carving Dogs Welcome sign. The tool can be borrowed for up to month afterwards.



Dogs Welcome Sign

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### Caricature Carving Class with Terry Moss — in-person

Weekend session, July 27/28. To register, click [here](#).



Terry Moss is a skilled caricature carver and the president of the Capitol Woodcarvers Club in Salem. You will carve either the Leprechaun or Rabbit In this weekend workshop.

This class can get you started with caricature carving—a world of its own. For some carvers, it's all they do, and gives them endless choices for artistic expression. The class is also for experienced carvers to work on a delightful project under the guidance of a skilled carver and accomplished teacher.

Both beginner and intermediate carvers are welcome. The figure is carved out of 2x2x12 basswood, which will be roughed out ahead of time. This allows students to concentrate on the essential carving.

The class will be taught at a delightful shop in South Beaverton.





## Carving Special Interest Group

### Carving Special Interest Group (CSIG)

We meet monthly except summer and December, and you can attend either evening or daytime. Each session is two hours long, with an optional hour before to eat, work, or chat. Register your general interest using a link below for either group, even if you attend sporadically. Monthly email reminders are sent to both interest lists.

- » **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](#)

### Focus Topics for upcoming CSIG Meetings (free)

You can just show-up at the meetings, but it helps us plan if you register for a specific meeting, in addition to expressing your general interest. Click on a date and its link below.

#### Nuts and Wax [April 4th](#) and [April 18th](#)

Rick Martin carved for 50 years but never wood. He was a professional jeweler and carved jeweler's wax to make detailed models of rings, bracelets, and necklaces before casting them in precious metals. He used a Foredom because jeweler's wax is very hard to carve. This will be a power carving demo with a chance to experience a little hands-on yourself with a variety of rotary shaft tools (Foredom, Dremel, Micromotor). Try your hand at carving a Tagua Nut, too.

#### Clear Coat Finishes Workshop [May 9th](#) and [May 16](#)

This will be a follow-on to the March monthly Zoom program. We'll have sample boards already finished with a variety of the clear finishes that were discussed (shellac, oils, waxes, polys). We'll also have extra test boards that you can use to practice applying finishes while at the meeting or to take home.

	Days	Evenings
Nuts and Wax	<a href="#">April 4</a>	<a href="#">April 18</a>
Clear Coat Finishes Workshop	<a href="#">May 9</a> (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday this month only)	<a href="#">May 16</a>

### In Case You Missed the Last CSIG Meeting on Photography

Jeremy Bailey led the two meetings on photographing our carvings. He provided a re-cap of the basics from his October monthly Zoom program ([here](#)), answered questions, and provided opportunities to take our own photos with our camera (smart phone). We had two different setups for lighting and backdrop. Jeremy brought the flat panel system he made, and we used a NEWER NL660 LED light owned by the Guild along with a hand-held LED spotlight. In addition, we could use a Limo Studio 700 watt fluorescent light box as an alternative. One discussion focused on the settings and capabilities of smart phones, and another discussion centered on photography and lighting basics. It became obvious that most of us don't know much about the camera controls on our phones. Other obvious lessons were to practice a lot, bracket many pictures, experiment with lighting to emphasize the carving highlights, and plan ahead in order to minimize the time needed to post process a shot.





## Interest Lists

### Afghanistan Style Chip Carving by Ahmad Rauofi



Ahmad on the left with the pilot class students

On March 17th, Mike Chia organized and hosted the pilot class on Nuristani Chip Carving taught by Ahmad Rauofi. Four students met for four hours to learn how to draw then carve the pattern shown using just a half inch carpenter's chisel (#1 single bevel). The cuts could be made with hand or mallet power. The pilot proved that the amount of time was OK and suggested follow-on topics for more classes. Ahmad learned carving and woodworking while attending a post-high school program in Kabul before moving to the U.S. a few years ago. We expect to repeat the class, and if you are interested and haven't put yourself on the list yet, you can join the interest list by [clicking here](#).



Clark Moss and John Wheeler

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### 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.



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### Caricature Carving with Terry Moss – Interest list only

[Click here](#) to register interest

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



Comfort Critters by Tom Siep, headed for a local cancer treatment center



Comfort Birds by Tom Rich, headed for Gathering of the Guilds.



Skiing Santa, carved by Gene Tilton, Basswood, 4" long

## 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

## Carving Harder Rocks

### Carving Harder Rocks By John Zipprich

I have carved two different types of rock. I started with a soft, pink/red stone that is pretty common here on the east side of the Cascades, but I don't know its name. I think it's a type of rhyolite, it is definitely solidified volcanic ash flow. I used an old chisel, cut down putty knives for scrapers, and an old saw that I cut into pieces and added handles. I made a bunch of salmon reliefs and abstract designs. I did not save any pieces or take photos of them; all were sold or given away years ago. The photo shows some experimental carving on a piece of this rock that has been left outside. You can see that it is quickly weathering. It would have been fine if left indoors.

Editor's note: This builds on the short article on very simple rock carving in last months newsletter. John Zipprich is a master carver who lives in Pine Grove, Oregon. For decades he has been the principle carver at the classic Timberline Lodge on Mount Hood. He has carved many works for public buildings as well as businesses and private parties. See more of his work and a previous OCG article under the Resources tab of OCG website.



Rhyolite?

Then I was commissioned to etch basalt columns for the park in the city of Dufur. If you are on the east side of Mt. Hood, go to the Dufur city park. The columns are laying on the ground like benches around a center area the speaker would be. Below photos show a number of the images chosen by Dufur school children. Another carver and I carved other figures chosen by the children for this park.

Basalt is on the high side of the hardness scale. I had to tool-up for the project.

The photo below shows a pneumatic hand piece with 3 chisels from Trow and Holden. I also got an adapter so I could use the pneumatics with my wood carving tools to quickly hogout a new project in wood before refining the piece with mallet and gouges. A new compressor working in-line with my old compressor gave me the needed air volume.



Basalt is super hard, but the air tools did the job. The vibration is pretty bad, but it was a good commission! I made more than enough to justify the \$700 spent for the hand piece, chisels, and compressor. I had a box fan blowing full tilt onto the pieces as I was carving. You don't want to breathe that stuff in! Also wear an N95 respirator if there is any chance of dust blow-back!

Carving big pieces of basalt means you usually have to go to the stone. And the way I did it means you need electricity too. The ancient Egyptians and natives here in the west, and around the world, carved/etched fantastic things in basalt. Mind boggling.



Tools Used for Carving Basalt





# Carving Newsletter

April 2024



## Upcoming Events

# APRIL

### Capitol Woodcarvers – Salem, OR

Center 50+, 2615 Portland Rd. NE, Salem, OR. April 6-7,



This annual two-day show is a great hit. Members of Capitol Woodcarvers display their carvings to other carvers and the public. The show typically includes vendors, breakout sessions, auction, raffles, classes, demonstrations, contests, and a lot of sharing of techniques. More information is posted on their [website](#).

### Idaho Artistry in Wood Show

2024 Wood and Gourd Art Show

Jack's Urban Meeting Place, Boise, ID. April 6 - 7, 2024



The Idaho Artistry in Wood 2024 Wood and Gourd Art Show will be held Saturday, April 6, 9:00am to 5:00pm and Sunday, April 7, 10:00am to 4:00pm 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. It also is an opportunity for artists to sell their work. Their [website](#) will have more details soon.

### Oakhurst Woodcarver's Rendezvous

Community Center, 39822 Rd 425B, Oakhurst, CA. April 14-20



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.

Check their [Website](#) for updates.

### The Gathering of the Guilds

Oregon Convention Center, Portland, April 19 - 21, 2024



Six Portland-area guilds with over 300 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](#).

# JULY

### NW Carving Academy, Ellensburg, WA

Kittitas County Fairgrounds Event Center, July 8 - 12



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](#).

**Mining The Mallet for Gold**

*HOW TO CARVE  
THE STYLIZED  
DUCK*

By  
STROUD S. CUSTER

PREPARED BY THE  
*National Carvers Museum*  
Woodcarver Road, Monument, CO 80132



**Mining The Mallet for Gold (cont'd)**

# 9 EASY STEPS-

**STEP ONE**  
Divide the block into 23 equal spaces high, 7 wide and 8 long.

**STEP TWO**  
Draw the side and end patterns on the block. To change the "hand" of the carving (the curve of the neck) simply put the end pattern on the other end (of another block).

**STEP THREE**  
Saw it out with a bandsaw. (It's easiest if you cut the front and the far side out first. Then cut the back of the duck. Re-draw one line on the end pattern and cut it last.)

**STEP FOUR**  
Round-off the bill and tail. Draw the line from the tip of the bill to the tail. The bill can be made narrow or broad for variation.

Height  
Width  
Length

STEP ONE  
DIVIDE WOOD INTO SQUARES

OPPOSITE ENDS OF 2 PIECES OF WOOD  
STEP TWO

PUTTING THE END PATTERN ON THE OPPOSITE END (ON ANOTHER BLOCK) PRODUCES CARVINGS WITH OPPOSITE BENDS IN THEIR NECKS.

(shaded areas in the drawings always show the last cuts)

FRONT (FIRST CUT)  
FAR SIDE (SECOND CUT)  
BACK (THIRD CUT)  
NEAR SIDE (LAST CUT)

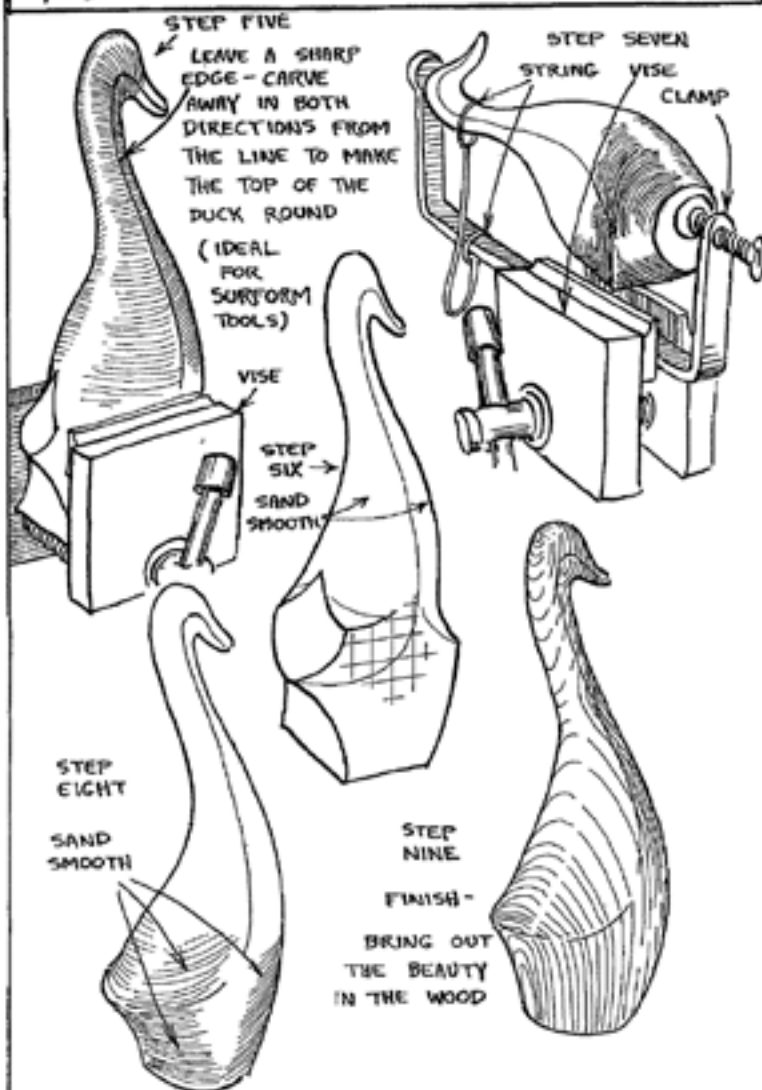
ROUND-OFF BILL  
DRAW LINE  
ROUND-OFF TAIL

STEP THREE  
STEP FOUR



## Mining The Mallet for Gold (cont'd)

The wood I used for these stylized ducks\* is Obeche from West Africa (*Triplochiton scleroxylon*). It is an extremely soft, light wood. I personally like to work with wood that is more dense. I make one of these ducks from each kind of wood I can obtain. I have carved considerably over 500 of them. I now have in excess of 400 different woods represented in my collection and another hundred drying.



STEP FIVE  
Hold the base in a vise and carve the head, neck and back as shown. Generally you remove the wood to make a rounded shape from the line on one side to the other.

STEP SIX  
Sand smooth everything you have carved so far while the DUCK is held in the vise.

STEP SEVEN  
Use a cabinet clamp held in the vise to secure the carving from the base to the head end. I usually loop a string around the neck to prevent the carving from striking the floor if it slips from the clamp. I learned when they hit the floor the bill usually breaks off. Carve the lower part of the Duck as shown.

STEP EIGHT  
Finish sanding and carve your initials on the bottom.

STEP NINE  
Finish it. I use KYANIZE fast sanding sealer and KYANIZE #70 satin finish.

\* Stroud S. Custer's "How-To" display of seven carvings, from which these drawings were made, is on display in the National Carvers Museum.

## Safety Corner

### It Happened in a Blink of the Eye

by Leslie Kantor

#### What happened?

One of our members sustained an injury while power sanding.

#### What led up to the incident?

Carving club member was smoothing a small carving using a sanding flapwheel rigged on a hand drill. Both hands were used to move the carving around to get a continuous smooth surface with their left hand positioned below the drum, pressing upwards. The drum came in contact with the inner wrist part of a glove this member was wearing. The drum caught the glove pulling the glove and hand forward and around the drum.

Injured person: *"I had a panicky split second when I realized I couldn't easily access the switch on the drill, but then the shaft of the flapwheel drum snapped. At that point, the drum and attached broken shaft was inside my glove with my hand wrapped around it."*

#### How serious were the injuries?

This member sustained a hyper-extended wrist, and cut finger. There was potential for more serious injuries had the drum shaft not broken when it did.

#### How can we prevent this type of incident from happening again?

Gloves are sometimes recommended by rotary tool manufacturers to manage the potentially harmful effects of vibration and to guard against abrasion. However, wearing gloves while using rotary tools is not without significant risk. For the same reasons as tying back long hair and not wearing loose clothing while using these tools, ill-fitting gloves can be caught in the rotation, resulting in injury. Even skin-hugging gloves can get caught if the spinning bit gets close enough, to grab it, wrapping the glove and the hand within around a sharp bit, causing injuries requiring stitches or worse (don't ask me how I know this, but there may have been skin hugging gloves, a Forstner bit and drill press involved. There are scars!).

Another factor in the reported incident was that there was not easy access to the power switch.

Thank you to the member who humbly shared this incident with us so that we may learn from their mistakes and take steps to prevent another similar incident within our club. Please follow this person's example and share your incidents so that we may all continue to learn and improve our safety. Efforts will always be made to protect your anonymity.

#### Take 2 minutes

Before any operation with a power tool, or any tool for that matter, take 2 minutes to assess how things might go wrong. Before proceeding, Take measures to address any risks. Am I using the right tool for the job? Is it in good condition? Am I in the right frame of mind to be performing this task? Is the environment conducive to safe work? If something were to go wrong, would I be able to easily and quickly shut down the tool? Am I wearing appropriate safety gear? Am I positioning my body for optimal safety?



## Wood Presents the Inspiration

### When the Wood Presents the Inspiration

By James Spitzer

A major ice/wind storm in January caused a high pressure system east of the Cascade Mountains to funnel through the Columbia River Gorge and into the West Hills of Portland, blowing down numerous trees. With several neighbors I volunteered to limb and stack the branches and cut and haul out the trunks from two 50-60 foot cypress trees in a natural area across the street. The root balls tipped back into their holes. We decided to cut one into a seat with a back. For some reason I took the part that we cut out.

Then inspiration hit me. My book club had just read a book called 'How to Be Perfect: The Correct Answer to Every Moral Question,' by Michael Schur.' One of the many memorable quotes was from a 3,000 year old engraving on a temple in Delphi, Greece.



With the exception of practice during a Mary May class years ago, I had never carved letters before. So I excitedly went for it. I chose a font, copied and enlarged letters, laid them out on paper cut to the shape of my approximately 18 x 34 inch working surface, taped the letters together, and traced them onto the planed and sanded wood surface through carbon paper.

After rough carving the letters I deepened the narrow parts using a 35 degree V-gouge, painted them with acrylic paints sold by the tube in art stores, and then sanded the excess paint off the surface. I waxed the end grain and applied a finish of Olympic Elite Stain/Sealant (Natural). The piece will eventually be in our garden.

Then the back of the 'seat' remaining in the natural area called to me. It needed something. What might I carve that would not upset neighbors and our homeowners association? The seat/stump is only 20 feet off the sidewalk and is highly visible. I thought, "How about

something that is minimalist and has universal appeal." How about artist Robert Indiana's LOVE sculpture/painting! But to better fit the piece I skewed the letter 'O' to the left instead of right, and created space between the letters so there would be fewer narrow pieces where the wood would rot-out between the letters. To make them stand out, I textured the letters with a V-gouge. But not wanting to push HOA restrictions, I decided not to paint the letters red as in Indiana's original work. I finished the surface with the natural Olympic Elite Stain/Sealant stain and waxed the end grain to slow checking. The result is on the right.

May you also find inspiration that excites you.





## Tool Tote

### Evolution of a Container

by Jerry Boone

I'll admit to being something of a tool junkie.

In the dozen years since I began carving, I have accumulated roughly 300 knives and gouges. Some of them I purchased new; most came from pawn shops, off Craigslist postings, trading with other carvers or from estates.

I don't need every one I have, and over the years I've amassed a number of duplicates.

About half the time I spend carving I'm away from home. In Oregon I often carve once a week with friends in Forest Grove. While wintering in Arizona, I get together with other carvers at the RV resort twice a week and often do a 100-mile round trip to carve under the tutelage of Jeff Harness.

In Oregon and at the RV park, my collection is often used as a lending library for carvers who need something they don't have, so I try to haul as many as I can to each location.

Over the years I've gone from a simple wood box to a series of tool rolls. I quickly outgrew the box and the number of tool rolls I carried often took up most of the bench space I had to work with.

The most recent—and most successful thus far—solution is a small tool chest with six drawers. It takes up just a little over a square foot of real estate and puts the tools readily to hand.

It began with a plastic sandpaper vault sold at Woodcraft for about \$25. The drawers are long enough that they can hold a full size tool with a bit of length to spare. To help keep the tools from rattling around, I used two-part epoxy to hold a series of Harbor Freight magnets to the bottom of the drawer. The epoxy has worked only just OK and I'm still looking for a better solution.



For the first year or so I used just the plastic box, but I found that it didn't hold up well to constant use and it began to crack. Eventually I ended up with a box held together by large pieces of Gorilla tape slathered hither and yon.

The solution was to create a plywood box to contain the original plastic one. I had plenty of plywood scraps lying about the shop, so coming up with the pieces was no problem. If you take your time laying it out, I think you could build the entire thing with a 4 X 4 sheet of 1/4 or 3/8 plywood.

## Tool Tote (continued)

I used right-angle trim to hide the seams and conceal the corners. (No one is going to mistake me for a cabinet maker). The front trim stands proud of the box edge to create a channel for the sliding cover, with also serves to prevent the trays from sliding out if the box is tipped. A folding handle on top makes it easy to carry the assembly.

One of the modifications I made to the drawers was to sand off the triangular tabs on the sides of them so they can be pulled out entirely. I now have two cases, and removing the tabs allows me swap drawers back and forth to easily create a single box for all the tools I need for a project.

Labels on the trays helps me identify what's inside, so I no longer have to open up 11 trays to find the one I need. I've sorted the tools by sweeps: 1 and 2 in one drawer, 3 to 5 in another etc. Two drawers contain palm tools, another is set aside for my D-Series collection. One is filled with knives. You will come up with your own system that works for you.

Depending on the size of what you are packing, one box can carry around 70 tools, all of them easily accessible.

I'll agree that's a lot of tools to haul around, and the selection is fairly complete and perhaps a tad on the heavy side. The one issue left to resolve is, so how come the one tool I need is still the one I left at home?



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### Oaxaca Carvings

by Allison Rogers

Small carvings from the town of La Union Tejalapan, Oaxaca, Mexico. La Union, outside of Oaxaca City, is known for these imaginative and whimsical carvings.

Unlike the more sophisticated and refined alebrije carvings the area is becoming known for, these more rustic carvings are made and painted by the same hand.

Most typically made of copal wood, they can be carved from whatever fallen branch is readily available.





## Educational Opportunities

### Carving with Nancy Girard Elsie Stuhr Center

The new round of classes taught by Nancy Girard is coming up soon and the sign-ups are going on right now.

It's for 55 and over only. It takes place on Tuesday mornings, from 10:00am - 11:30am. Elsie Stuhr Center is located at 5550 SW Hall Blvd, Beaverton, OR, 97005, between 9<sup>th</sup> street and 12<sup>th</sup> street.

For more information go to the Tualatin Hills Parks & Recreation [website search page](#) with the search requirements "55+" and "Arts & Crafts", and it will be the last one on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page.

### Wilsonville - Charbonneau Golf Club's Activities Center

Weekly carving classes are Monday mornings from 9am to noon. The drop in rate is \$15 per session. Bring your own project or get one from instructor Nancy Girard for a fee. New carvers are welcome also and can borrow Nancy's tools in class for the first month. Join us for some carving time. For information send an email to Nancy at [girard.accessories@outlook.com](mailto:girard.accessories@outlook.com).

### 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 are two woodcarving classes and a pyrography class. You can check out the classes at the [Sitka Center website](#).



## OCG's You Tube Channel

HERE





## Clubs and Guilds

### Coastal Carvers — Lincoln City

The club meets at the Lincoln City Seventh Day Adventist (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 / Kingsway Wood Carvers — weekly on Thursdays

Thursday evenings from 6 - 9pm (summer 9am - noon). Contact Dan McMurry at [mcmurry530@gmail.com](mailto:mcmurry530@gmail.com). 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).

### 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](#).

### Sherwood Senior Center Open Carving

Beginning on Tuesday, April 9th and continuing through at least May, open carving sessions will be held at the [Sherwood Senior Center](#). They will start at 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Open carving will be on April 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, then May 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. If there is enough interest, sessions will continue after that.



# Carving Newsletter

April 2024



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