

IDAHO WOODCARVERS GUILD

August 2025

Newsletter

Guild Officers

President: Cathy Carson

Vice President: Phil Kelly

Treasurer: Nate Meeks

Secretary: Nate Meeks acting

Trustees:

- Jairus Taylor
- Issac Bradfield
- John Greener

Newsletter:

- Jerry Robertson

IAW Reps:

- John Greener
- Issac Bradfield

Websites:

- Eric Owens
- Michael Chamberlain



MEETINGS

Summer Update Our regular business meetings are on summer recess and will resume in September. In the meantime, creativity doesn't take a vacation! Open carving sessions are still going strong—join us at Woodcraft on Thursday evenings and the Meridian Senior Center on Tuesday afternoons to keep your carving tools—and inspiration—sharp.

Update: Good News for Thursday Carving Nights!

Last month, we shared that IWG was in search of a new venue for our Thursday evening carving sessions, as Woodcraft had informed us they could no longer keep the store open past 7pm. Thanks to some behind-the-scenes conversations and renewed support, we're pleased to announce that **Woodcraft will continue hosting our sessions after all!**

We're grateful for their flexibility and commitment to our carving community. So—no changes needed. Bring your tools, bring your spirit, and we'll see you Thursday night as usual!

Getting to Know your Guild treasurer



Hi, I'm Nathan (Nate) Meeks. My wife Karen and I moved to the Treasure Valley from California in March 2021. We simply decided to vote with our feet. I started carving at the Meridian Senior Center in May of 2021. I was appointed Treasurer of the club in 2022. My hobbies include golf, hiking and fishing. See if you can tell in which of the three statements below I am lying.

- 1) I've had two hole-in-ones.
- 2) I had the pleasure of shaking hands with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- 3) I've water skied on the Snake River.

Spotting two truths and a lie in last month's report

Phil Kelly's journey has never been about top honors—he'll be the first to tell you he wasn't a valedictorian. But he's collected stories that no award could ever rival. Like the time he shared a bologna sandwich with Rosa Parks at a Detroit Special Olympics track meet. Or when he took center court as a referee at a Special Olympics basketball game, only to be met with a thunderous chorus of boos from 40,000 fans at halftime of a Pistons game in the Pontiac Silverdome.

Mark Your Calendar



Join Us for the IWG annual picnic! Saturday, September 20, 2025

Hillview United Methodist Church 8525 W Ustick Rd, Boise (next to the fire station between Milwaukee & Maple Grove) Doors open at **5 PM** | Dinner served at **6 PM**

Come enjoy an evening of good food and great company! Weather permitting, we'll picnic outdoors—otherwise, we'll have the comfort of indoor space. The club will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, and all the necessary cutlery. You're invited to bring a **side dish or dessert** to share.

We'll have full kitchen access to help keep your delicious contributions warm or chilled.

Let's make it a night to remember!

MONTHLY PROJECTS

The Guild is dedicated to fostering and promoting the art of woodcarving, pyrography (wood-burning), and other wood artistry forms. Our weekly open carving sessions are an excellent opportunity for beginners to learn about tools, safety, basic techniques, and the types of wood used.

Guild leaders are available to provide an introduction to woodcarving. Our open carving sessions are held weekly at the following times and locations:

1. **Thursday Evenings:** 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Woodcraft. This session is ideal for those who work during the day or live in the eastern part of the valley.
2. **Tuesday Afternoons:** 12:30-3:30 p.m. at the Senior Center at Kleiner Park, 1920 Records Way, Meridian. The Senior Center requests a donation of \$2 for members and \$5 for non-members per session to help cover costs. This session is perfect for those who prefer daytime gatherings or live west of downtown Boise.

Each month, we plan a project to help novice carvers try new techniques and improve their skills. An experienced member will lead the project and provide one-on-one assistance as needed. Loaner tools are available, and materials will be provided whenever possible.

We look forward to seeing you at our sessions and helping you develop your woodcarving skills!

FESTIVAL OF TREES

For 41 years now the Saint Alphonsus Festival of Trees has kicked off the holiday season in the Treasure Valley. This year the Guild has announced our participation in the festival. We will be contributing a tabletop tree, and we need your creativity to make it shine.

We encourage all members to craft hand-carved ornaments, each within a 3–4-inch size limit. There's no designated theme, so let your imagination run wild and create designs that truly inspire you.

Cathy has collected about 50 ornaments but about 100 ornaments are needed. You can submit your completed ornaments to Cathy Carson or Jairus Taylor before November 1st. If you need pattern ideas, Cathy is more than happy to assist. The Guild will provide the wood for your creations. Eric will provide cutouts for the Thursday group. Larry Crist will provide cutouts for those attending sessions at the senior center.

Thank you for your creativity and support in making this event a success! Let's make our tree the talk of the festival.



Here are some ideas that Larry brought back from the NWCA. He will have cutouts for these.



The Western Idaho Fair is coming up and it's time to share our love of carving with the attendees of the fair. Below you will find a link to click on for a sign-up sheet. We've broken the time into two-hour blocks with two people for each block. The carving demonstrators will be in the air-conditioned arts/crafts building, so no worries about the heat.

All demonstrators will be given free passes for the days that you are demonstrating. We can't quite confirm it yet, but we may be able to provide passes for a family member as well. we'll confirm that and let you know.

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP.](#)

Please just type your name into the time slots that work for you! Thank you in advance for signing up.

Pacific Northwest Woodworking and Maker Expo

Woodcraft is sponsoring the "[Pacific Northwest Woodworking and Maker Expo](#)" October 4-5 at Expo Idaho.

There will be vendors, a maker marketplace and seminars. Woodcraft has asked the local woodworking clubs to showcase their talents and interact with interested members of the public. We need volunteers from 10 - 5 Sat Oct 4 and 10 - 4 Sun Oct 5. Members who want to volunteer their time can speak to a member of the executive committee.

Northwest Carving Academy Draws Carvers from Across the Region

The Northwest Carving Academy, held annually in Ellensburg, Washington, once again offered an inspiring week of creativity, skill-building, and camaraderie from July 14–18. Just a six-hour drive from Boise, this event attracts carvers of all skill levels to explore diverse carving styles and expand their craft.

This year's academy featured 10 classes with topics ranging from chip carving and Northwest Native American styles to architectural carving, relief carving, fish and habitat carving, basket weaving, Santa and caricature carving, and spoon carving—which even included forging custom carving tools.

Held in a spacious and well-lit Fair Grounds exhibit building, the Academy provided the ideal setting for creativity to thrive. Lodging was convenient, with nearby motels and ample RV parking.

Approximately 70 carvers attended the 2025 session, with a strong showing from Idaho—10 attendees, making up 15% of the total. More than half of these represented the Idaho Woodcarvers Guild (IWG), including members Dave Colliver, Larry Crist, Jerry Robertson, Jairus Taylor, Eric Owens, and past member Jim Jameson. Under the guidance of renowned instructors such as Pat Moore, Ryan Olsen, Rohn Collins, Izo Becic, Dick Wilk, Rich Wetherbee, Tom Henscheid, Dale Barret, Jeff Gibson, and Anita Wells, participants created memorable carvings and forged new friendships.

The Academy continues to welcome all carvers, from beginner to expert. The experience goes beyond carving—it's about learning, laughter, and the shared joy of craftsmanship. Many instructors have already committed to returning next year, making this a must-add to your calendar if you haven't experienced it yet.

As one attendee put it: *"Go once and you'll want to go again—every year."*

Editor's note: Eric Owens made a short video at the carving academy that you can see here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHyQnjvk74U>

All of the photos this month, except for Tony's cutthroat trout, are from the NWCA event.



Sciascia's unfinished Cutthroat Trout. Here is the finished project.



David Colliver attended the Northwest Carving Academy in Ellensburg Washington. He took the carving and painting class conducted by Pat Moore. This is Dave's finished project.



This was the NWCA people's choice winner this year. The photos on the following page are of the other candidates.







IWG Scholarship Program

Thanks largely to the proceeds from past Idaho Woodcarvers Guild and Idaho Artistry in Wood shows, the Guild has some surplus funds available that should be used in keeping with our status as a non-profit educational organization. With this in mind, the IWG provides a scholarship program that allows club members to apply for partial reimbursement of money spent on a class, seminar or workshop that helps them improve their carving, painting or other artistic skills used in producing wood carvings. Members who are up to date with their club dues may apply once each year for a scholarship to reimburse them for up to ½ the cost of a course they have completed. The amount approved cannot exceed the dues paid by the member since joining the Guild. Those who receive this support should plan to share what they learned with others at a future meeting. Scholarship applications may be submitted at any time during the calendar year to be reviewed by the Executive Committee for approval. The Board may limit scholarship funding each year to maintain sufficient reserves to keep the club in a healthy financial position.

Application for IWG Scholarship

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Course, class or program attended: _____

Provider: _____ Location: _____

Brief description of instruction received:

Amount paid: _____ Year: _____

For Board Use

Executive Committee action: Approved: _____ Not approved: _____ Date: _____

Date awarded: _____

Open Carving Opportunities

Boise

Open Carving at Woodcraft is held on Thursday evenings from 6-8 p.m. with Eric Owens in charge. Bring your own project and enjoy the fellowship. We are working on making some carving projects available for those who are new to woodcarving.

Meridian

Open Carving at the Senior Center is held on Tuesday afternoons from 12:30-3:30 p.m. in the center at Kleiner Park, 1920 N Records Way, Meridian. Club leaders provide instruction for new carvers. Experienced carvers can bring their own projects. The Senior Center asks participants to make a donation when they sign in of \$2 for members, \$5 for non-members to help cover their expenses.

Tips from the Experts



- Whether you're starting from a roughout or a block of wood, keep marking your work piece as you carve. Don't hesitate to change or alter your original idea as you work on it, and use your pencil to mark your changes. ~ *Pete Ortel*
- Using a small, stiff brush with liquid soap and warm water will clean off the smudges from the pencil marks on your carving. ~ *Pete Ortel*



**I started reading a book about mazes—
I got lost in it.**

Media

Website: <http://idahowoodcarversguild.org/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSYHBkob1WFSPgMaydZ7Yfw>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Idaho-Woodcarvers-Guild-254983304512338/>

Archive: <https://jerryrobertson.com/iwg/>