

IDAHO WOODCARVERS GUILD

May 2026

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



Founded in 1980 as an Idaho nonprofit corporation, the Idaho Woodcarvers Guild, Inc. is dedicated to fostering and advancing the craft of woodcarving, along with complementary artistic techniques such as pyrography and other wood-based art forms.

MAY MEETINGS

The next monthly meeting will be Thursday, May 14, at 6:00 pm at Woodcraft in Boise. The meeting for the Meridian group will be the following Tuesday, May 19, at 12:30 pm at the Meridian Senior Center.

May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, but for woodcarvers, it is perhaps best celebrated as the unofficial start of outdoor carving season — longer days and warmer weather mean more time in the shop or on the porch with a knife in hand! Major observances include Mother's Day on May 10, a perfect occasion to carve a heartfelt gift for the special women in your life, as well as Armed Forces Day on May 16 and Memorial Day on May 25, both wonderful opportunities to honor veterans with patriotic carvings. May 1 marks both May Day and National Loyalty Day, May 4 is Star Wars Day ("May the Fourth be with you"), May 5 is Cinco de Mayo, and May 22 is National Maritime Day. Food holidays this month include Chocolate Truffle Day, Pulled Pork Day, and National Barbecue Month — the whole month! In other words, there are plenty of opportunities in May to carve a floral tribute for Mom, a proud eagle or flag for Memorial Day, or even a whittled Yoda to delight the Star Wars fan in your life!

IWG Meeting Highlights — Thursday April 9th (Woodcraft)

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was read. There were no questions.

Idaho Artistry in Wood (IAW) Show Report

(The report is covered on Page 4)

Elections in May

(Elections are covered on Page 3)

Presentation - Jairus Taylor gave a presentation about Woodworking and Air Filtration

- Important points of information
 - Large particles we can see and fall to ground quickly, small particles 1 micron in size are invisible to naked eye and can stay in air a long time
 - Concentration of particles matters, size of room matters
 - Harm caused is different for the different types of woods, based on allergies and toxicity and additives. Wood-database.com lists what exotic species are known to be toxic
 - Protection is important - wear a good mask that fits!
 - NIOSH-approved respirator with HEPA filter
 - N95, KN95
 - Other types are not as good, but better than not wearing a mask
 - Dust collectors and dust extractors can help
 - Ventilation of work area is as important as using the dust collectors/extractors

Election of Officers

IWG Annual Elections — Your Vote Matters!

It's that time of year again — the IWG will be holding its annual elections at the May meeting! This is your opportunity to help shape the future of our club, so we encourage every member to participate.

About the Positions

The offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary are elected annually, while Trustee positions rotate on a three-year cycle.

Current Officers & Status

Position	Current Officer Status	
President	Cathy Carson	Declining nomination
Vice-President	Phil Kelly	Declining nomination
Treasurer	Nate Meeks	Eligible
Secretary	Open	—
Trustee #1 (<i>Financial Audit — next election May 2028</i>)	Jairus Taylor	Not up for election
Trustee #2 (<i>Elections/Nominating Committee</i>)	Issac Bradfield	Declining nomination
Trustee #3 (<i>Show-n-Tell — next election May 2027</i>)	John Greener	Not up for election

Nominations were closed April 30.

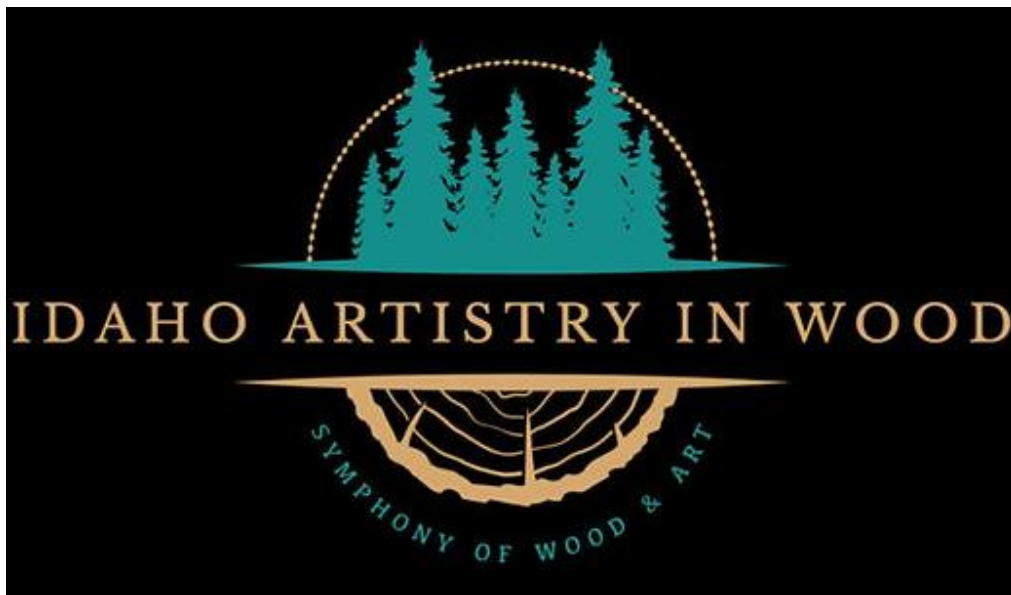
How to Vote

Ballots will be available and voting will take place at the regular May meeting at both the Woodcraft store and the Meridian Senior Center.

Can't make it in person? Mail-in ballots are welcome! Send your vote to Issac Bradfield at issacbradfield@yahoo.com no later than May 19th.

Every vote counts — we hope to see strong participation from our membership this month!

2026 Idaho Artistry in Wood Show



- By the Numbers
 - Attendees: current year 756, last year 1051, 28% decrease
 - Total Entries: current year 392, last year 343, 14% increase
 - Carvers Entries: current year 126, last year 60, 110% increase!
 - Silent Auction: current year \$3107 (38 pieces), last year \$3767 (36 pieces)
- Discussion:
 - Attendees - this year the weather was very good - perhaps people did outdoor activities, last year Treefort was on the same weekend - we know we had some people from Treefort stop by to checkout the IAW. Note: JUMP has signed an exclusive deal with Treefort, so our two events will not overlap in the future. Can't determine what advertising did or did not work.
 - Carvers accounted for much of the increase in entries. Believe the free advance registration helped, also had entries from two clubs from afar - Twin Falls and Kitsap
- Disbursement of Funds to Clubs
 - Has ranged in past from \$300 - \$1000 to each club
 - Show costs approximately \$6000 per year to fund, committee wants to keep approximately 2-years worth of funding in the IAW account.
 - Questions were raised by attendees about where funds go? How are they used? Discussion was held about sponsoring workshops, donating items to non-profits (such as Shriners), etc. Letting clubs apply for funds to pay for supplies for educational/charitable projects.

- Decision was made to give each club \$500 now
- Next Year's Show will either by Mar 6-7 or Mar 13-14, waiting for confirmation from JUMP
- Show Chair Proposal
 - In past, the Show Chair position was rotated each year between the 5 clubs.
 - Because this position requires so much work and so much knowledge, the Executive Committee proposed pausing the current rotation. The Woodworkers would be responsible for the show again in 2027, with Annie McCutcheon remaining in the chair position.
 - Woodcarvers are next on the rotation. We would need to find a person willing to volunteer for a 2-year position, vice chair for the 2027 show and chair of the 2028 show.
- Club Representatives
 - Both of the IWG Show Representatives are stepping down. We need 2 members to volunteer for these positions. You are responsible for once a month meetings (Sep - May), and communicating show news, objectives, projects, etc., to the club, and then reporting opinions/actions back to the show committee.
- Club to Club Awards
 - Board wants to continue. If this moves forward, we need to create an award each year to be presented to one entry from another clubs submissions.
- Blue Ribbon Award
 - Show Board started this award this year. An award to recognize an individual or business that has given support to the IAW. This year's recipient was Monte, from Woodcraft.
- PBS
 - Most felt positive about experience even though we did not have exact numbers to verify if it helped with our attendance
 - PBS did receive \$31,000 in donations while our group was volunteering
 - Moving forward, need to know value of items to be auctioned off, discussion of having multiple sets of packages to be auctioned off
- Apparel - did not sell well this year, we believe due to location. Suggestions were made to improve saled.
- Other positive points and challenges were brought forward, but we did not have time to discuss.
- Next IAW Show Committee meeting is Tuesday May 5, 5:30 pm at Woodcraft.



PHOTO GALLERY

The April project at the senior center was carving a cowboy bust. Larry is giving instructions on how to carve the face.



Eric Owens

[Click here](#) to see woodcarver's photos at the 2026 IAW show.



My Winter Learning Flat-Plane Scandinavian Style Carving

by Jerry Robertson



Last summer, Larry Crist introduced our group to a wonderful resource: *How to Whittle Fascinating Characters in Wood* by Charles Banks. When I headed to Arizona for the winter, I brought the book along — and it turned out to be the perfect companion for a season of learning something new.

Larry had generously provided some cutouts using the "universal blank" from the book, and all of the male characters I ended up carving came from that blank. It gave me a consistent starting point and let me focus on what I was really after: getting a feel for flat-plane, Scandinavian-style carving.

The Style Itself

My goal going in was simply to learn and get some practice with the flat-plane approach. I'll admit I didn't stick to it strictly one hundred percent of the time — old habits have a way of creeping in — but I came away having learned a great deal. What struck me most about the style is its emphasis on form and body posture over fine detail. Rather than chasing every wrinkle and button, you're making deliberate, confident cuts that let the shape do the talking. It's a refreshing discipline, and one that I think makes you a more intentional carver overall.

A Surprise at the Painting Table

The Scandinavian characters presented another challenge I hadn't anticipated: the painting. Many of these figures are decked out in "ugly" Christmas sweaters, which called for a level of detail well beyond what I was used to. My most advanced techniques going into this project were color blending and dry brushing — solid standbys, but not quite up to the task of replicating intricate sweater patterns.

The solution was a small mascara brush, and I'm glad I gave it a try. The fine tip allowed for much more controlled, detailed work than I expected to manage. Honestly, it turned out to be far

less difficult than I'd feared, and I found myself genuinely enjoying the extra freedom of expression it offered. There's something satisfying about adding that kind of personality to a piece.

Worth the Trip

Spending the winter with this project was time well spent. If you haven't looked at the Banks book yet, I'd encourage you to track down a copy — and thanks again to Larry for putting it on our radar. Whether you're a dedicated flat-plane purist or, like me, someone who dips a toe in and learns what you can, it's a style that has plenty to teach.

If you've spent time this past season exploring a new style, tackling an unfamiliar technique, or just stumbling onto something that surprised you at the bench, I hope you'll consider writing it up for the newsletter. It doesn't need to be polished — just tell us what you tried, what you learned, and maybe what didn't go quite as planned. Articles like this one are a great way to share what our members are up to and spark ideas for each other. Reach out to the editor at glrobertson@yahoo.com if you'd like to contribute a show-n-tell piece for a future issue.

Wordsearch



Find these words

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Basswood | Figuring | Rasp |
| Burr | Gouge | Relief |
| Butternut | Grain | Roughing |
| Caricature | Hardwood | Softwood |
| Chainsaw | Heartwood | Stop |
| Chip | Incised | Treenware |
| Chisel | Knot | Whittling |
| Crossgrain | Mallet | Woodgrain |
| Curl | | |

[Click here](#) for a printable wordsearch puzzle.

A decorative banner with a brown background and a black border, featuring a ribbon-like design at the ends. The text "IWG Scholarship Program" is centered on the banner in a yellow, sans-serif font.

IWG Scholarship Program

The Idaho Woodcarvers Guild is pleased to offer educational scholarships to our members. The scholarship program is funded by proceeds from our successful shows and exhibitions.

Program Details:

Current members in good standing may apply once per calendar year for reimbursement of up to 50% of eligible educational expenses. This includes classes, seminars, or workshops that enhance your carving, painting, or related artistic skills.

Eligibility and Limits:

- Must be current with club dues
- Reimbursement cannot exceed total dues paid since joining the Guild
- Recipients are encouraged to share what they learned at a future meeting

How to Apply:

Submit your application to the treasurer at any time during the year. The Executive Committee will review and approve requests on a rolling basis, with annual funding limits set to maintain the Guild's financial health.

This scholarship program reflects our commitment as a non-profit educational organization to support the continued growth and development of our members' woodcarving skills.

If you are reading this online you can [click here](#) to view or print the scholarship application.



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. Join us Tuesday afternoons from 12:30-3:30 p.m. at Kleiner Park (1920 N Records Way, Meridian). Club leaders offer instruction for beginners, while experienced carvers are welcome to work on their own projects. A donation of \$2 for members or \$5 for non-members helps cover senior center expenses.

A decorative banner with a brown background and a black outline, featuring a ribbon-like design at the ends. The text 'Regional Workshops / Shows' is written in a yellow, sans-serif font across the center of the banner.

Regional Workshops / Shows

The [2026 Montana Woodcarver's Show](#) will be held from May 1-3 at the Missoula County Fairgrounds. Content includes wood carving, wood turning, wood burning and scroll saw works. The contact for the show is Doug Stinger at 406-231-3546.

[Rocky Mountain Woodcarvers Roundup](#) in Midway, Utah.
May 18 - 22, 5 days of carving for \$400

The [Kitsap Carvers – Artistry in Wood show](#) will be June 13 & 14 at Sheridan Park Community Center, 680 Lebo Blvd, Bremerton, WA 98310

[Creede Woodcarvers Rendezvous](#) in Creede, Colorado
July 11-15, cost varies based on courses taken

[Northwest Carving Academy](#), in Ellensburg, Washington.
July 13 - 18, cost varies based on courses taken, \$75 - \$490

[Western Idaho Fair](#), Boise, Idaho
August 21-30, woodcarving entries fall under the **Open Class → Hobby Craft Department**. The official handbook lists 10 **classes (categories)** you can enter your carvings into.

Before You Go



Carve every day. The meaning of this saying is "the more one carves, the better one carves" and "the only way one will learn to carve is to carve." If you carve every day, in a year's time you will not believe how much you improve.

~ Don Mertz

Dispatcher: Nine-One-One What's the nature of your emergency?

Caller: My wife is pregnant and her contractions are only two minutes apart.

Dispatcher: Is this her first child?

Caller: No, you idiot! This is her husband.



Media

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

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

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

Newsletter Archive: <https://iwgresources.com/>