

IDAHO WOODCARVERS GUILD

September 2026

Newsletter



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.

September Meetings: The next monthly meeting will be Thursday, September 10, at 6:00 pm at Woodcraft in Boise. The meeting for the Meridian group will be the following Tuesday, September 15 at 12:30 pm at the Meridian Senior Center. *Note that the senior center has increased the activity fee for non-members of the senior center to \$10. The fee for members remains at \$2 per activity.*

September brings the first real taste of autumn, with cooler days, changing leaves, harvests, and plenty of reasons to put a new seasonal idea under your carving knife. It's National Honey Month, National Mushroom Month, and National Sewing Month, offering subjects ranging from busy bees and woodland mushrooms to tiny sewing machines or quilt-inspired designs. Labor Day arrives on the first Monday, Patriot Day is September 11, and Constitution Day is September 17—while Grandparents Day on September 13 offers a chance to carve a sentimental keepsake. The autumnal equinox around September 22 officially welcomes fall, making pumpkins, apples, corn stalks, scarecrows, squirrels, and colorful leaves natural choices. September also brings football season, county-fair memories, and the beginning of hunting and fishing traditions for many of us. Whether you choose a harvest scene, a woodland creature, an old-fashioned fall character, or simply a single colorful leaf, September gives us plenty of inspiration to celebrate the changing season in wood.

Join Us for the IWG annual picnic!



Saturday, September 19, 2026

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 contributions warm or chilled.



Idaho's Gift to the Nation

As the holiday season approaches, Idaho will have a special place in the Christmas celebration at our nation's Capitol. The **2026 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree** will be an impressive **80-foot grand fir from Idaho's Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests**.

The tree was selected from 60 candidates because of its beautiful form, full shape, and excellent structure. It is also the **first grand fir** ever chosen during the 62-year Capitol Christmas Tree tradition. This year's theme, **"Over the Rivers and Through the Woods,"** is especially appropriate for a tree that comes from Idaho's forested mountains and open country.

From Idaho to Washington, D.C.

The tree will be harvested in late October and then begin a special **whistlestop tour through Idaho communities**. Along the way, people will have opportunities to celebrate the tree's selection, sign banners, enjoy activities, and learn more about Idaho's forests and responsible forestry practices.

Once the tree reaches Washington, D.C., it will be decorated with thousands of handmade ornaments created by Idaho residents. About **3,500 ornaments** will decorate the main Capitol tree, with additional ornaments displayed on smaller trees around the West Lawn.

And that brings this wonderful Idaho tradition a little closer to home for our carving club. **Our members are busy carving decorations for the tree!** It's exciting to think that some of the ornaments made by Idaho woodcarvers could eventually be part of this national celebration.

More Than a Christmas Tree

The Capitol Christmas Tree represents much more than a holiday decoration. It celebrates Idaho's forests, wildlife, communities, and the people who care for our public lands. The project also brings together the U.S. Forest Service, the Society of American Foresters, local communities, and the Nez Perce Tribe.

The tradition began in **1964**, and over the years trees of many different species and sizes have stood on the Capitol grounds. The tallest reached 88 feet, making this year's 80-foot grand fir an impressive addition to the long history of **"The People's Tree."**

For Idaho, the 2026 Capitol Christmas Tree is a wonderful opportunity to share a little of our state with the entire nation. And for those of us who work with wood, it is especially meaningful to know that **Idaho woodcarvers are helping put a handmade touch on this year's Christmas celebration**.

So, while we enjoy the coming holiday season, let's take a little pride in knowing that a magnificent tree from our Idaho forests—and ornaments crafted by Idaho hands—will be bringing Christmas cheer to the U.S. Capitol.



Members are busy carving Christmas ornaments for the Capitol Christmas Tree. Below are some samples:





Chips From the Editor

When I was demonstrating our craft at the fair in August I was asked, **“How long did it take you to carve that?”** My answer was, “I don't know. I don't keep track.”

After some thought, that answer sometimes seems a little strange. After all, when we buy something or hire someone to do a job, we often want to know how much time was involved. Time is a way of measuring the value of many things.

But I've never thought of carving that way.

For me, the amount of time it takes to complete a carving is really beside the point. I don't carve because I need to get something finished as quickly as possible. I carve because I enjoy carving.

A carving might take an afternoon, a few evenings, or several weeks of picking it up, working on it for a while, and then setting it aside until I feel like working on it again. Sometimes I may spend a surprising amount of time working on a tiny detail that nobody else will ever notice. But I notice it—and knowing that I got it the way I wanted is part of the satisfaction.

That's one of the things I like about this hobby. There is no clock running.

When I sit down with a piece of wood and my carving tools, I'm not thinking about how many hours I've put in. I'm thinking about the shape that's beginning to emerge. I'm deciding how much wood needs to come off, trying to get an expression just right, or wondering whether another cut will improve a feature.

And there is something wonderfully relaxing about that process.

The world seems to slow down when you're concentrating on a piece of wood. The chips pile up, the carving gradually takes shape, and before you know it, an hour or two has passed. I may not have kept track of those hours, but I certainly don't consider them wasted.

Quite the opposite.

Those hours were the point.

There is also a special sense of accomplishment when the carving is finally finished. You can hold it in your hands and look at something that wasn't there when you started. It began as a block of wood, and through a combination of imagination, patience, and a few thousand cuts with a knife or gouge, it became something with character and personality.

So, the next time someone asks me, “How long did it take you to carve that caricature?” I suppose I could give them an estimate. But that would miss the point.

The better answer is probably:

“Long enough for me to really enjoy making it.”

And as far as I'm concerned, that's the best way to measure the time spent carving.



IWG Calendar

Save these dates

Date	Event
Sept 19	Fall Picnic
Oct 3–4	Woodcraft Makers Expo
Dec 12	Christmas Party

Regional Workshops / Shows

September

[Spokane Carvers' Association Show](#) - The HIVE in Spokane, WA

[Arts of the Terrace Juried Art Show](#) - Mountlake Terrace, WA

[Clash of the Carvers](#) - Libby, MT

October

[Northwest Carvers Association's Artistry in Wood 45th Annual Show](#)

Waller Road Grange, Tacoma, WA

October 10-11, 2026

WISCONSIN RIVER WOODCARVERS, INC.

22ND ANNUAL WOODCARVING

Show, Competition & Sale

Saturday, Sept. 19th, 2026
9am-5pm

Sunday, Sept. 20th, 2026
9am-4pm

"Largest Woodcarving Show in Wisconsin"

FEATURED CARVER
John Engler

Demonstrations Throughout Both Days!

Multiple Vendors

Holiday Inn
1001 Amber Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54482
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
\$5 ADMISSION
(12 & UNDER FREE)

For more information, contact:
www.wisconsinriverwoodcarvers.org

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Caricature Carvers of America

2026 Caricature Carving Competition

In Conjunction with
Wisconsin River Woodcarvers, Inc.

September 19-20, 2026

- *Competition
- *CCA Carving Display
- *Silent Auction
- *Live Demonstrations
- *Whittling Competition
- *School of Caricature Carving

New Location!!!

Same Events!!

Holiday Inn Steven's Point - Convention Center
1001 Amber Avenue
Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54482



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.

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.

Before You Go

TIP!

Acrylic paint should be thinned to a consistency of a stain or wash so the wood grain shows through. To test if the paint is thin enough, paint on a newspaper, if you can still read the newsprint, it's usually okay. White is the only color you may not want to thin.



Someone broke into my house last night and stole a dozen eggs. They also left a pan of boiling water on the stove. Police believe it was poachers.

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/>