



NORTHERN ALBERTA WOODCARVERS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Next Meeting

Date: Mar. 7th, 2018 **Time:** 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Location: Duggan Community League Hall
3728 - 106 Street, Edmonton



Detail of 2017 first place *Open-Bark-Carving* by the very talented Ryan Wispinski!

Here we are, already three months into 2018! The new year is a good time to start new projects, or finish old ones, especially when you think that April (and our Annual Show) is just around the corner!

President's Report



As the season after Christmas has been rushing by, I have been thinking about our upcoming Annual Show (April 27th to the 29th). A few drops of sweat started to form on my forehead because of the many tasks to complete beforehand. I'm fortunate though, to be surrounded by a great group of helpful club members. So, as the show closes in on us, the show committee members may be asking for help with various tasks. If you are able to assist with something it would be greatly appreciated.

More importantly though, please be sure to complete any carvings that you are currently doing so they can be entered. You could win a wonderful prize, a pin and ribbon – perhaps even the quiet congratulations from a fellow club member of a job well done! For our novice carvers, do not for a moment think that your

first-time carvings are not good enough. Everyone enjoys seeing the wonderful and completed pieces – remember that we all started somewhere!

Have a great day everyone and carve on....

Harold K. Hough

What's Happening at the NAWCA

Membership Renewal!

The club currently has 85 members! If you haven't already renewed your membership, please see Bonnie Budge to fill out your membership form. \$40 for single, \$50 for family, and \$50 & \$60 respectively if you need to have the newsletter mailed out.

The Northern Alberta Woodcarvers' Association Website

Make sure you check out the NAWCA Website (www.nawca.ca). We have a new webmaster, Kevin Wallace, who has been working to make regular updates to the site since he took over.

Thanks for taking this on, Kevin!

If you have any items, suggestions, or questions, please talk to Kevin or send him an email.

Duggan Display Case

Faye Hough is planning to redecorate the Duggan Display Case, and the club is looking for some carvings to add to the space. We can open and lock the case, so you can retrieve a piece any time you might need it back! If you're interested in loaning a carving, please contact Faye Hough (faye.thful99@gmail.com), or Harold Hough (bigarm01@gmail.com).



Riverbend Display Case

Thanks to Weasel and Barb Sedgwick for setting up the club's Christmas-themed carvings on show during December in the Riverbend Library display case. Thanks also to Jack & Cam Wallace, Cliff Dumouchel, and Doug & Donna Bean for lending the carvings for the display.

2017 Festival of Trees

Here's a photo of the club's donation for the Festival of Trees from our decorating bee on Wednesday, November 22nd, 2017. Thanks to everybody who managed to make one, or two (or twelve!) ornaments for the tree last year.

Also, thanks to Jeanine Cloutier for another wonderful tree-topper!

It's never too soon to start on some new ornaments for this year's tree. Please check with Doug and Donna Bean (who work hard to provide the club with several Christmas blanks all year long) if you need another ornament to work on.



Upcoming Demonstrations

Our Demonstrations Director, Mike Irwin, is looking for volunteer carvers for all upcoming demos. Let Mike know you're interested (MJ_BUD@hotmail.com), pack up a new project to work on (like a name tag or a spoon), and have fun representing the club while chatting with interested carving-lookers!

Upcoming dates include:

The John Janzen Nature Centre – Sunday, March 11th – *Fairy Festival* – 11am to 3pm

Upcoming Courses

Laurie Wilson-Larson Teaches Wood Carving with *Edmonton Lifelong Learners (ELLA)*

If you are 55 or older you might be interested in this wood carving instructional opportunity.

The **2018 Spring Session** is scheduled for **April 30th – May 18th**, so save the dates! The registration package describes the course this way:

EL32 Learn to Carve Wood: Carving a Wood Spirit

Instructed by: Laurie Wilson-Larson

You will create a Wood Spirit in Cottonwood Bark. Wood Spirits are realistic human faces that are carved in bark and look like an expression of the spirit of the tree from which the bark grew. Throughout the course you will learn how to use and care for your tools and learn basic cuts as you progress toward making a Wood Spirit. You will practice cutting skills as you carve a 'story stick' that breaks down the steps in carving facial features and will take this home for reference.

As you create your piece, you will learn to layout the features of the face, learn how to carve facial features onto your piece and how to finish the piece to create a lasting work of art. This course would be suitable for never carved before beginners, as well as advanced, students. More advanced students will plan for and carve deeper into the bark, creating details that add interest to their pieces. You may also be able to create multiple faces on your piece(s). This class has a capacity of 20.

Laurie is an award-winning wood carver who has specialized in carving human faces. At Lee Valley Tools, St Albert Seniors Association, and with ELLA, she has instructed individuals of all skill levels to carve Wood Spirits, facial features, caricatures, and carving faces in a golf ball. As a recreation therapist she has proven skills, teaching elders and individuals with special needs.

YOU MUST BE A MEMBER TO REGISTER

Membership is **\$20.00 annually**.

It takes time to process your membership application, so you should **register early**
– NOW wouldn't be too soon.

FEES FOR THREE WEEKS OF CLASSES – 5 DAYS A WEEK - \$250.00

- You may take 1 to 4 courses for this set fee
- Laurie's course covers 2 blocks of the 4 – you can select 2 other courses
- **3 hours a day for 15 days of instruction at \$250.00** is a great instructional fee!

To get into classes like Laurie's that have limited registration you will need to go online and register as soon as registration opens.

- You'll need your membership before this date.
- Online registration opens on **Tuesday March 13 at 10:30 a.m.**
- Deadline for registration and/or course changes is Monday April 23 at 2 p.m.
- Members receive the course description – so again, get your membership NOW!

For more information, and to get your membership, go to: www.my-ella.com

The Vancouver Island Woodcarvers Club welcomes you to join them at the Community & Conference Centre in Parksville B.C. for their 28th annual ***Pacific Brant Carving and Art Show***, 21st annual ***PNW Fish Carving Championships*** AND a new ***Art Expo*** – Show and Sale!

The **first week in April** is a great time to come out to the west coast and enjoy the early spring!

There will be a lot happening at the carving show, but don't forget the annual migratory return of thousands of Brant sea geese to the Parksville-Qualicum area! **Brant Wildlife Festival** events for 2018 will occur in March and April, so check out the festival website for updates at: www.brantfestival.bc.ca.

AND...you'll find **ON-LINE REGISTRATION** and all the carving show info at their website: www.thebrant.ca.

Burke's Western & Wildlife Art Workshop – July 14-20, 2018
Doane University, Crete, Nebraska

A complete brochure can be seen at www.westernwoodcarvers.com,
or you can contact Nancy Burke at 402-623-4383.

(Past President Doug Bean says this is a good deal, so check it out if you feel like doing some destination carving!)

Lee Valley & Veritas® – Llew Bertsch reminded me that one of our excellent sponsors, Lee Valley Tools, runs several seminars every month! Everything from carving to gardening. Keep an eye on their *In-Store Seminars* listing at: www.leevalley.com/en/home/SeminarList.aspx?c=1&rs=30.



NAWCA and Facebook

If you're on Facebook, make sure to join/follow the Northern Alberta Woodcarvers' Association Facebook page. It's a great way to see up-to-date content from club members and to find out who's online!

Recognition for First Nations Carving

By Werner Groeschel

It was a great honor for me to be presented with a Ceremonial Blanket by the Elders of the First Nations Amiskwacyi Academy (<http://amiskwacyi.epsb.ca/home>) on October 06, 2017 during the school's Fall Feast celebration.



The blanket was given to me in recognition of the First Nations bust carving I had carved and donated to the Academy.

I would like to thank Amiskwacyi Academy, their Elders, staff, and Principal Fred Hines for inviting me to their Fall Feast, and for giving me this beautiful gift. It will be treasured by me and kept in a special place in our house, together with other First Nations carvings I have created over the years.

Many thanks to Werner for all his hard work on the NAWCA website over the last two years. It's greatly appreciated, Werner! Werner will continue helping the club's Facebook page.

Demos!



Carving demonstration at the Muttart Conservatory on Sunday, December 10th.

More Demos!



Demonstration at Edmonton's *Deep Freeze Byzantine Winter Festival*, January 13th and 14th. I heard there were more than a few cold feet!

Canada's 150th Wooden Quilt Update



At the Edmonton International Airport in July/August.

The exact details are being finalized, but it looks like all three of our wooden quilts have found a permanent home at the Edmonton International Airport. It seems that the EIA is planning to make them a part of the ***Canada Wall*** located in the customs area. We'll keep you up-to-date on these exciting developments!

The Hazards of Wood and Wood Dust

By Thierry Varem-Sanders

Everybody knows that handling sharp knives is what makes woodcarving at least somewhat hazardous. Fewer people seem to be aware that just being exposed to wood or wood dust can also be perilous to one's health. Fortunately, some of the most popular carving woods are also some of the safest to handle. These include Basswood, Aspen and Butternut. However, some other species need to be handled with extra care.

IRRITANTS: The oils in some hobby woods can cause immediate severe reactions in some people (i.e.: redness in and/or burning eyes, itchiness, and/or breathing difficulties). These woods include Birch, Red Cedar, Cherry and Maple. Other woods produce less severe or short-lived symptoms but are still considered irritants: Alder, Yellow Cedar, Jelutong, Redwood, Tupelo, Black Walnut, and Willow. Many other woods can be outright poisonous when handled, but fortunately, most of those are not popular with woodcarvers.

SENSITIZERS: These are woods that may or may not be initially irritating, but repeated exposure over time can cause some people to develop severe allergies to them. Unfortunately, there is no way to know if you are susceptible until you have already been sensitized and this may take from days to years to develop. Those woods known to cause sensitivities include Alder, Birch, Boxwood, Red Cedar, Maple, Redwood, Tupelo and Black Walnut. I know of at least one carver who can no longer stand to be in a cedar forest because he has become so sensitive to cedar wood.

WOOD DUST: Even if the woods themselves are relatively safe, it is never safe to breathe in wood dust if you are sanding or power carving. Small particles lodge in the lungs and can be difficult to remove. The result can be short or long term respiratory problems.

MOLD: Some woods present special hazards if the dust is inhaled. A debilitating lung condition called HP (Hypersensitive Pneumonitis or "maple bark disease") is surprisingly common amongst hobbyists who work with spalted maple and is caused by breathing in the fungal spores. This is also a strong consideration when working with "found" wood (driftwood or bark that may be partially decomposed). Woodcarvers can suffer significant exposure to fungal spores when simply cleaning the sample with a wire brush.

OTHER: If you have an allergy to aspirin, stay away from handling willow, poplar, and poplar bark, as both species contain a significant amount of aspirin in their bark.

PRECAUTIONS: Most of the woods listed here can be handled safely, but it is wise to take some minor precautions to preserve your health:

1. To avoid breathing the dust, always wear an effective dust mask when power carving or sanding any wood. Ditto if you are cleaning the surface of bark or driftwood with a brush.
2. If a wood is a known sensitizer, or irritant, work in a well-ventilated area, use only well-seasoned wood, wear gloves to avoid direct contact, and wash or shower frequently to remove the oils from your skin.
3. Lastly, if you develop persistent rashes, watery eyes or breathing difficulties when working with a particular wood, either take extra precautions with it, or stop using that wood altogether (and contact your physician).

The following table summarizes the health effects of some common carving and hobby woods available in the Edmonton area (summarized from www.wood-database.com).

Table 1 - Common Hobby Woods and their Potential Health Effects

Common Name	Genus	Prevalence	Reaction
Alder	Alnus	Rare	Irritant (S, E, R), Sensitizer
Balsam Fir	Abies	Rare	Irritant (S)
Basswood, Limewood	Tilia		-
Birch	Betula	Common	Irritant (S, R), Sensitizer
Boxwood	Buxus	Common	Irritant (S, R), Sensitizer
Cedar (Red)	Thuja	Common	Irritant (S, E, R), Sensitizer
Cedar (White)	Thuja	Rare	Irritant (S, R)
Cedar (Yellow), Cypress	Chamaecyparis	Rare	Irritant (S)
Cherry (Black)	Prunus	Common	Irritant (R)
Elm	Ulmus	Common	Irritant (S, E), Sensitizer
Hemlock	Tsuga	Common	Irritant (S)
Jelutong	Dyera	Rare	Irritant (S)
Maple (Manitoba), Boxelder	Acer	Common	Irritant (S, R), Sensitizer
Maple (Spalted)	Acer	Common	(HP)
Mountain Ash	Sorbus	Common	Irritant (S, E, R)
Pine (White)	Pinus	Common	Irritant (S, R)
Poplar (Black), Cottonwood	Populus		-
Poplar (White), Aspen	Populus		-
Poplar (Yellow), Tulip Tree	Liriodendron	Rare	Irritant (S, E, R)
Poplar BARK	Populus	Rare	(HP)
Redwood	Sequoia	Rare	Irritant (S, E, R), Sensitizer, (HP)
Rosewood (Brazilian)	Dalbergia	Severe	Irritant (S, E), Sensitizer
Spruce (White, Black)	Picea	Rare	Irritant (S, R), Sensitizer
Tupelo	Nyssa	Rare	Irritant (E, R), Sensitizer
Walnut (Black)	Juglans	Rare	Irritant (S, E), Sensitizer
Walnut (White), Butternut	Juglans		-
Willow	Salix	Rare	Irritant (S, R), Sensitizer (Bark)
Yew	Taxus	Severe	Irritant (R), DIRECT POISON

S = Skin E = Eyes R = Respiratory system HP = Hypersensitive Pneumonitis



On January 23rd the club had our first relief carving session at Mike Leahy's wood working shop. Five NAWCA members were learning how to create a 9 x 12 inch relief carving using chisels and mallets.

A BIG THANK YOU to our Sponsors:

Lee Valley Tools – www.leevalley.com

Canadian Woodworker – www.canadianwoodworker.com

Chanin Hardwoods – www.canpages.ca/page/AB/edmonton/w-g-chanin-hardwoods-ltd/2170959.html

Chipping Away – www.chippingaway.com

Copperfields Books – www.copperfields.com

Razertip – www.razertip.com

Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village – www.ukrainianvillage.ca

Fort Edmonton Park – www.fortedmontonpark.ca

Fox Chapel Publishing – www.foxchapelpublishing.com/woodcarving

Canadian Woodworking Magazine – www.canadianwoodworking.com/current-issue

PlanetCom Inc. – www.planetcom.ca

Newsletter – Next newsletter will be the Spring Edition. Please send me any photos, interesting articles, member achievements, or new carvings you've made. Include all the pertinent information (who, what, where, when)! I'll try to add your news to the newsletter. You can send items to campbellwallace@shaw.ca.