



# Chips & Tips

Newsletter of the Santa Clara Valley Carvers – Chapter #1 California Carvers Guild

April 2025

SCVC is a nonprofit educational organization under the California Carvers Guild (CCG), a 501(c)(3) entity. The Santa Clara Valley Carvers meet on Mondays from 10 am to 2 pm. And Thursdays, 7 pm to 9 pm. See the Calendar for times and locations.

There is a \$5 annual club membership fee for all members.

However, there is an additional yearly fee of \$35 for each member aged 55 and above who attends the Monday meetings to use the facility and enjoy all classes at the center, payable at the front desk of the Adult Recreation Center.

California Carving Guild dues are \$25. The treasurer will collect them and send them to CCG. These are optional dues but help support carving in the state of California.

## Chapter Contacts:

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Secretary: Dan Brady

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Gary Paulson

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Website: <https://SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org>

The newsletter deadline is the 25th of the month before publication. We publish at the beginning of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

Send photos and articles to

[editor@santaclaravalleycarvers.org](mailto:editor@santaclaravalleycarvers.org)

# April

## President's Message

Dear SCVCarvers,

I hope your wood carving projects are progressing, and that you have had time to carve your name tags after our January "Carving a Name Badge" program. We will use the name tags when participating in the upcoming public events.

We have confirmed our participation in the annual Blossom Festival in Saratoga on May 17. As usual, we will demonstrate whittling and woodcarving at the paved space under small pergolas. Also, electricity will be available for our wood-burning demonstration. Dave, Jim, and Roman volunteered to participate, but we seek more volunteers to demonstrate woodcarving techniques and projects. We will have space for at least four large tables. Please consider participating in or visiting the festival if you have time.

I am proud to announce that our collaboration with the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America is progressing well. In February, we organized a class to introduce woodcarving to 11 Scouts who are now on their path to earn their Wood Carving Merit Badges. I hope to see their projects at the Scout-O-Rama event on May 10 at History Park in San Jose, where our club will demonstrate woodcarving to the public.

This year will be 12 years since I started carving regularly. Looking back, I believe three factors significantly elevated my woodcarving skills. I am happy to share them with you:

1. I joined a local wood carving club (SCVC). That allowed me to meet the local woodcarvers and bounce ideas about carving approaches, sharpening techniques, finishes, and pattern design, among other things. The guidance and ideas we can get by collaborating in person are invaluable.
2. I read a few woodcarving books early on that taught me about the broad range of woodcarving styles. I highly recommend this classic book to everyone who has yet to read it: [Whittling and Woodcarving by E. J. Tangerman](#). This book is not only inspirational, but it also explains the reasoning behind traditional woodcarving techniques.
3. I began attending local fairs, festivals, and woodcarving shows, where I had the opportunity to speak with wood carvers, woodturners, and woodworkers about their projects on display. I learned something new every time. Years later, I am glad I can volunteer and share my knowledge during our public events.

Thank you for keeping your SCVC membership current. I am glad we carve together weekly. I look forward to our future wood carving activities, especially our April group project, which involves carving and decorating functional items such as spoons, spatulas, coasters, and cutting boards.

Roman Chernikov  
President of Santa Clara Valley Carvers

## Calendar and Meeting Locations

<b>Monday Day Meeting</b>	Los Gatos Adult Recreation Center, <b>Members 55+</b> 208 E. Main St. Room 206, Los Gatos, CA 95030
10 am to 2 pm	
<b>Thursday Night Meeting</b>	Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America 1900 The Alameda unit #100 San Jose, CA 95126
7 pm to 9 pm	Note: All Adults and Children over 10 years with Parents are welcome
<b>Other Opportunities</b>	Zoom meeting Mondays 7-8 pm with <a href="https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org">Tri-Valley Carvers</a> . Contact us if interested.

## Woodcarving Meeting Schedule Change

Due to Memorial Day, the Adult Recreation Center will be closed on Monday, May 26. We will meet on Tuesday, 5/27, instead.

Visit our website for the latest schedule updates: <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/>

## Upcoming events:

**April 6 - 12, 2025** – Oakhurst Woodcarvers Rendezvous at the Community Center in Oakhurst, CA. An annual event for woodcarvers, from beginners to experts and teachers from around the country.

**April 20 - 30, 2025** – Whittle a Treen or a Wooden Trinket – a group woodcarving project focusing on carving functional household items, such as spoons, spatulas, and coasters.



**May 10, 2025** – Scout-O-Rama event at the History Park, San Jose, CA. Our club will set up a booth at the event, the largest local gathering of Scouts of America of the year.

**May 17, 2025** – Blossom Festival in Saratoga, CA. Visit the event to enjoy arts and crafts, antique cars, live music, and our wood carving booth.

**June 13-July 6, 2025** – Alameda County Fair at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton, CA. The theme of the fair is “Celebrate Summer.”

**June 2025** – Let’s get a head start on the holiday season by crafting our own unique winter holiday ornaments! As a group project, we will work together to carve and paint our ornaments.

Review details of scheduled events on our website: <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/events/>

## Wood Carving Merit Badge Class for Local Scouts



The Santa Clara Valley Carvers hosted a two-evening Wood Carving Merit Badge class for 11 Scouts, teaching them the fundamentals of woodcarving and inspiring a new generation of carvers. With expert instruction and hands-on practice, the scouts learned essential skills such as safety practices, tool handling, and basic cuts, and they even had the opportunity to choose their projects to work on in the following weeks. The class was a huge success, with positive feedback from the scouts and their parents. The Santa Clara Valley Carvers look forward to hosting another class soon. Read more about the class:

<https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/wood-carving-merit-badge-class-for-scouts-2025/>

## Woodcarving Display Table

Left photo: We set up a large display table at our new carving space, featuring a variety of tiny woodcarving projects that demonstrate different styles and techniques, ranging from whittling to flat-plane carving, woodburning to chip carving, and relief to in-the-round carving. Those projects inspired the local Scouts.



Right photo: Our traditional display case in the lobby of the Adult Education Center in Los Altos, CA.

## Thursday Evening Meeting Place

Thanks to the [Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America](#) for providing space for our woodcarving club to meet and carve together on Thursday evenings.

We began using that space in December 2024 and found it to be accommodating and convenient. We use the large room most Thursdays and use the kitchen once a month. The main room is spacious enough to host classes, workshops, and woodcarving demonstrations.

Whether you're a beginner or an expert, join us on Thursdays from 7 to 9 pm at the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council, Scouting America, 1900 The Alameda #100, San Jose, CA 95126.



## Club Orders

The group **wood order** is a great perk available to club members, offering an opportunity to purchase freshly cut, kiln-dried basswood at a discount. The club covers the cost of shipping.



We just got a new batch of branded pencils. If you want one, please attend our meetings and pick it up in person.



## Woodcarvings Spotted

Let's introduce a new section to our newsletter: Woodcarvings Spotted. This name highlights the discovery and appreciation of woodcarvings in unexpected or everyday places, such as a carved welcome sign on a neighbor's porch, a wooden sculpture in a local park, or an intricately carved door at a historic building. It suggests that woodcarvings are all around us, waiting to be spotted and appreciated.

The rule is simple: you must photograph the carving yourself. Pictures from the internet are not allowed. Please submit your photo along with a story describing where you found it to the newsletter editors at [editor@santaclaravalleycarvers.org](mailto:editor@santaclaravalleycarvers.org). Thanks!

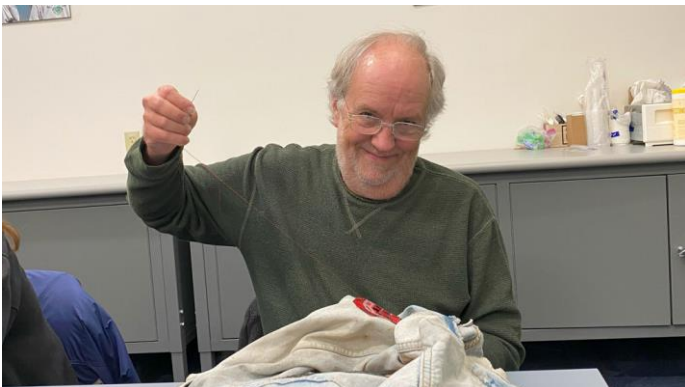


An intricately carved welcome sign at the [Thai Grata](#) restaurant in San Jose. The sign measures approximately 14 inches in length. Submitted by Roman.

## New Members



Ashraf Amirabi joined us in February 2025. She started carving a pumpkin.



Dana Chick has attended our meetings with Debbie Mize for years and has finally become an SCVC member.

Dana's projects range from chainmail to sewn jackets.

## What are the Wood Carvers working on?

### Connie Wilson



Connie is working on a deep relief of the lucky four-leaf clover – a perfect project for St. Patrick's Day.

Four-leaf clovers are considered lucky. According to Irish legend, each leaf of a four-leaf clover represents faith, hope, love, and luck. The rarity of four-leaf clovers, with only about 1 in 10,000 having four leaves, adds to their charm and perceived good fortune.

### Dave Osterlund

Dave is working on his decorative spoon carved from basswood.



WIP by David Osterlund, 2025 [SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org](https://SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org)

Other Dave's projects include an old Santa and a Fisherman.



## David Clarke

David is carving two spoons after reading the [Great Book of Spoon Carving Patterns](#) by David Western.



David also made a nice rocking chair. The chair is made of cherry and finished with Watco Danish Oil (Natural).



The rockers and back slats are steam-bent laminations. The back legs and arms were rough-cut on a bandsaw and cleaned up using a template on a router table. The biggest challenge was cutting the pieces for the laminations - the wood was highly figured in one orientation (you can see that in the wavy pattern along the back legs), so the pieces tended to chip out when I ran them through the planer that way. I had to cut new pieces in the other orientation to get them through the planer.



## Gary Paulson

This intricately carved object showcases Gary's skillful use of a silver-wiring technique. The shiny wire appears to be embedded in the wood, but it's a thin silver ribbon inserted between the fibers. If you're interested in learning more about this technique or creating checker patterns with silver wiring, talk to Gary for expert advice.



## Pranay Agrawal



Pranay carved spoons from the wood of a freshly cut apple tree.

Tip: When wood dries, it becomes harder to carve. Carving freshly cut wood, also known as green wood, allows for the creation of projects from various hardwoods that naturally exhibit distinct colors and grain patterns. Additionally, functional projects carved from harder wood than basswood may resist wear and tear more effectively.



Pranay 3D printed nice sheaths for Morakniv wood carving knives. The original sheath for those knives (at the top of the picture) is too long. The 3D-printed sheath fits snugly and helps save space in a woodcarving toolbox.

Thanks to Pranay, a few of us got new sheaths branded with the name of our club, Santa Clara Valley Carvers. If you want one, please ask Pranay; he offered to 3D print more for the club members.

## Jordan Makower's Linoleum Block Prints

### Hanson's Wisconsin Red-winged Blackbirds (1944)

On rare occasions, someone shares a story with me about a scene from their childhood. I draw what I hear. This is a 90-year-old's memory of what he saw in a marsh in Southern Wisconsin when he was a youngster.

I sketched what Hanson shared as we spoke, and later carved a linoleum block and made a print:



### A tribute to Shingleton's Pony Express, Santa Fe, NM (2012)

As I remove more of the foreground and background, the horse and rider will stand out more clearly. Enough traces of the surroundings will remain to convey depth, distance, and motion.



### Peanut Man - Boardwalk Good Will Ambassador in Atlantic City, NJ (1948)

This is a tiny 2" x 3" linoleum block that may adequately show my memory. He (actually a 'She') never spoke a word to the children to whom he presented a bag of Planter's Peanuts.

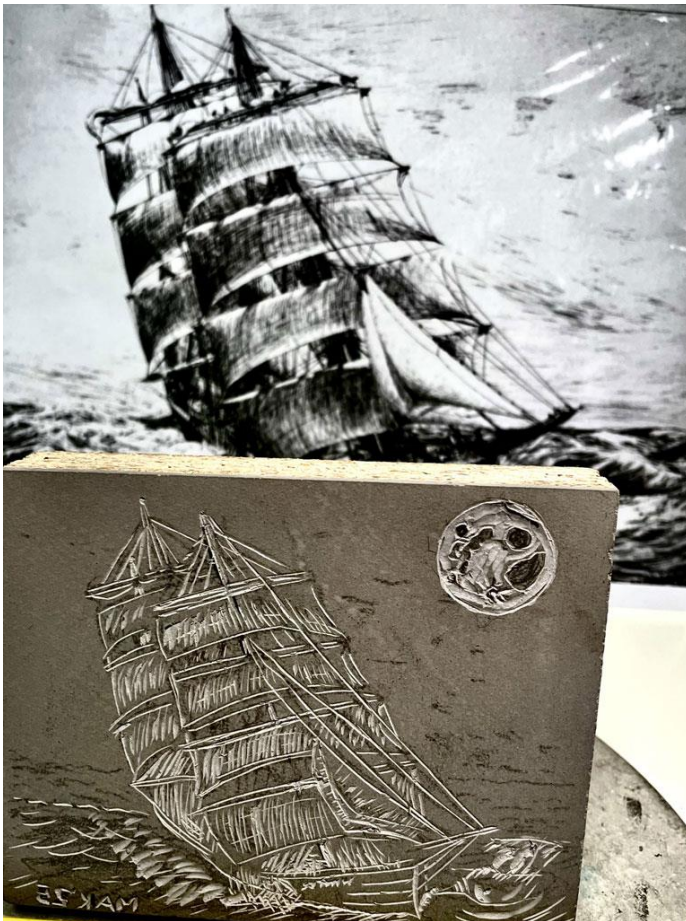
Perhaps the primitive method I use when carving isn't deep enough to show all the details in a print. Each print is different in some way, including the amount of ink used, the pressure applied by the rubber roller, the

thickness of the paper, the placement and amount of finger pressure used to push the paper into the carved block, and the amount of ink left in the grooves from the previous print. There are numerous variables. This is what the actual block looks like, after attempting to wash off the ink with detergent and hot water rub.

The only tool used in this carving was a #1 Speedball V-gouge.



### The Winterhude, Santa Barbara Maritime Museum (2013)



We visited the Santa Barbara Lighthouse Maritime Museum, and I saw a sketch of The Winterhude, built in 1911, that fascinated me.

To illustrate the rigging, I decided to carve it as a moonlit scene. I can't reproduce the fine lines of the original image here, especially on a 4" x 5" linoleum block, but I can capture the power of the sea and the struggling ship.



## David & Evan at The Bitter End (2025)

Evan and David have known each other since kindergarten. They both love music and have been part of several performing groups.

This is a 3" x 4" linoleum block. In February, David and Evan were playing at The Bitter End, NYC's oldest Rock Nightclub. This represents 2 hours' work, so far, but several more will be needed to finish and print the block.

The harsh floodlighting shown here will be modified in the printing process, and the letter "I" will show up then, too. This print was deliberately done with minimal ink, to convey the hazy atmosphere in the dimly lit nightclub.



## Evan at The Bitter End (2025)

Evan expressed interest in the most recent block print I did, which shows him and David. I asked him for a photo of him playing his alto sax.

I like the dynamism in this print, and I was partially successful in rendering the face, but better on the arms.



## The End Grain

On a closing note, thanks to everyone who contributed to our newsletter! Your projects and stories inspire us all. We will publish our next issue in two months. We invite you to share your finished or in-progress projects with us.

Check our calendar (<https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/events/>) for upcoming events and workshops. Please keep an eye out for interesting carvings to feature in our "Woodcarving Spotted" section. Thanks again for being part of our woodcarving community, and happy carving!