

Chips & Tips

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

Established in 1967, the Santa Clara Valley Carvers (SCVC) is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to promoting the art of woodcarving in the community. We're a chapter of the California Carvers Guild, a 501(c)(3) entity. Our mission is to have fun while learning and sharing our passion for woodcarving with others.

We meet weekly in the South Bay Area, and everyone 11 or older is welcome to join us, beginners and experts alike! You don't need prior carving experience to participate. We're a community of carvers who gather to share knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for woodcarving.

2025 Chapter Leaders:

President: Roman Chernikov
 Vice President: Jim Phipps
 Secretary: Dan Brady
 Treasurer and membership: Gary Paulson
 SCVC Advisors: Dave Osterlund, Rena Gooding
 CCG Advisor: Roman Chernikov
 Newsletter Editor: group effort

Chapter Links:

Visit our website:

<https://SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org>

Contact us by email:

contact@santaclaravalleycarvers.org

Please contribute to our newsletter by sending your content to editors@santaclaravalleycarvers.org before the 25th of the month before publication on the 1st of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

Coverage: **April-May**

Membership: The SCVC membership fee is \$5 per year. However, an additional annual fee of \$35 is required for those 55 years old and above who wish to attend the Monday meetings at the Adult Recreation Center in Los Gatos, CA. The center membership allows you to use the facility and enjoy all their classes.

[California Carving Guild](#) annual dues are \$25. Optional, but CCG supports us and woodcarving in California.

Meeting Times and Locations

Monday Meeting
10 am to 2 pm

[Los Gatos Adult Recreation Center](#), Room 206. **Members 55+**
208 E. Main St., Los Gatos, CA 95030

Thursday Meeting
7 pm to 9 pm

[Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America](#)
1900 The Alameda, #100
San Jose, CA 95126

Note: Adults and children over 10 years with parents are welcome

Other Opportunities

Zoom meeting Mondays 7-8 pm with [Tri-Valley Carvers](#). Contact us if interested.

Please check the latest updates to our [meeting times and locations online](#).

President's Message

Dear SCVCarvers,

I hope your current carving projects are bringing you joy. I wanted to take a moment to thank each of you who contributes to making our woodcarving club such a vibrant and welcoming place.

A special thank you goes out to all our volunteers, whose efforts keep our club thriving. As we continue to grow, with nine new members joining us since [our last newsletter](#), I encourage all members to think about how they can get involved and contribute to our community. Whether it's leading a demonstration, organizing an event, or lending a hand with tasks such as tidying up our space or organizing materials, or simply sharing your passion for woodcarving with others, every member has something unique to offer. Your contributions are invaluable and deeply appreciated.

Our collaborations with local organizations are flourishing. We've recently demonstrated chip carving at Woodcraft in San Carlos, introduced whittling to attendees at the Blossom Festival in Saratoga, and showed our woodcarving projects to local scouts at the Scout-O-Rama event. More details on these activities will be shared later in this newsletter.

We're also enhancing our online presence. Our website, <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org>, is regularly updated with news about our activities, making it easier for people to find us and learn about our club. Recently, we've launched a Facebook page where we share updates, tips, and inspiration. If you're on Facebook, please consider following [our Facebook page](#) and liking our posts. We are also seeking volunteers to assist in managing our online presence. If you have an interest in web technologies or social media, please let us know.

As we continue to participate in public events around the Bay Area, we're encountering an intriguing challenge: many people are interested in purchasing our projects on display! To address this, we're looking for a volunteer with the skills and interest to carve a "NOT FOR SALE" sign. The letters should be between 3/4" and 1" high, hand-carved to blend seamlessly with our other projects.

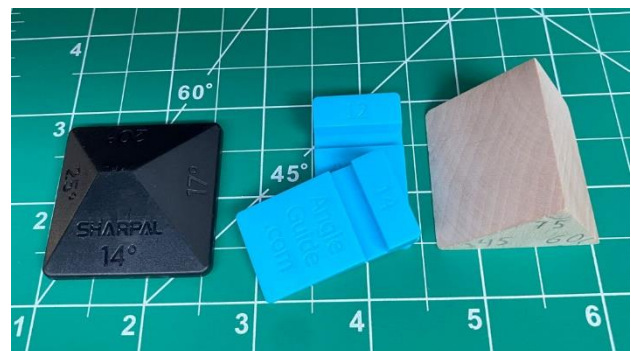
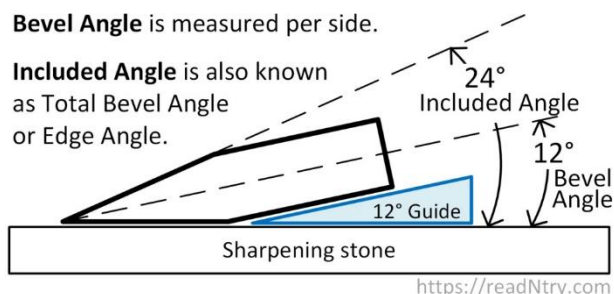
Exciting news for both new and returning members: we've added PayPal integration to our website, making it easier than ever to [join our club or renew your membership online](#). The website visitors can now apply and pay securely with a credit card or via PayPal. As of 2025, the annual dues remain just \$5, so thank you for keeping your SCVC membership up to date.

Sharpening Tip: To enhance our discussions about sharpening, I'd like to share key terminology and provide examples of sharpening guides that can help determine optimal sharpening angles.

Knife Sharpening Terminology

Bevel Angle is measured per side.

Included Angle is also known as Total Bevel Angle or Edge Angle.



Thank you all for your support and creativity. I look forward to seeing what we carve together next!

Roman Chernikov, President of Santa Clara Valley Carvers

Upcoming events

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



July 7-17, 2025 – The SCVC group project to carve unique holiday ornaments! We will carve fall and winter ornaments, including flowers, leaves, pumpkins, ghosts, and Santas. Join us to carve the ornaments during our regular meeting hours.



July 12-13, 2025 – the 53rd [Pacific Flyway Decoy Association Wildfowl Art Festival](#) in Sacramento, CA. Check the PFDA website for all of their events.



July 19-20, 2025 – [Tri-Valley Carvers](#) will participate in the [Art under the Oaks at Alden Lane Nursery](#) in Livermore, CA. The event is open to the public from 11 am to 4 pm.



September 13, 2025 – 25th Annual Cars in the Park. From 10 AM to 4:00 PM at History Park, San Jose, CA. The largest annual antique & classic auto show in the West. See [details here](#).



September 13-14, 2025 – [Tri-Valley Carvers show](#) in Pleasanton. Visit the biggest woodcarving show in Northern California to see amazing woodcarving projects and talk to local carvers.



September 18 & 25, 2025 (Thursdays) – Introduction to woodcarving for Scouts from 11 to 17 years old to earn their Wood Carving Merit Badges in San Jose, CA.



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

Join Us on Thursday Evenings!

We're grateful to the [Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America](#) for generously providing us with a meeting space, **free of charge!** Every Thursday evening, from 7 pm to 9 pm, our woodcarving club gathers to share ideas, learn from each other, and work on our latest projects.

Whether you're just starting or are an experienced carver, you're welcome to join us. Our Thursday evening meetings are an excellent opportunity to meet fellow woodcarvers, get feedback on your work, and learn new techniques.

We meet on the 1st floor of the building at:

**1900 The Alameda
San Jose, CA 95126**

Drop by anytime between 7 pm and 9 pm to say hello, show off your latest project, or carve and chat with fellow carvers. We look forward to seeing you there!



Our Recent Activities and Publications

We've been busy sharing our passion for woodcarving with local communities, and we're excited to recap some of our recent activities. Read on to learn more about our adventures, and don't forget to [follow us on Facebook](#) to stay up-to-date on our latest news and publications.

Please consider volunteering at our public events, similar to those listed below, even if it's just for a few hours. Your time will help us share the joy of woodcarving with the community, enabling us to participate in more events and reach new audiences. Our next event is the Cars in the Park at History Park on September 13.

Woodcarving at Saratoga Blossom Festival (May 2025)



We had a wonderful time at the [Saratoga Blossom Festival](#), where we showed our latest woodcarving projects and shared our expertise with festival-goers of all ages. From demonstrations to hands-on activities, we inspired many to try their hand at this traditional craft.

[Read the full article online](#) and relive the excitement of the festival.

Woodcarving at Scout-O-Rama (May 2025)

The [Scout-O-Rama](#) event at [History Park in San Jose](#), CA, was a huge success, with over 2,000 scouts participating in various activities, including woodcarving. Our booth was a standout attraction, featuring intricate woodcarving projects and demonstrations that sparked the interest of many young adventurers.

[Read more about our experience](#) and see how we inspired the next generation of woodcarvers.



Chip Carving Demonstration at Woodcraft in San Carlos (April 2025)



Our chip carving demonstration was a successful collaboration between our club, the Santa Clara Valley Carvers, and [Woodcraft in San Carlos](#), highlighting the shared passion for woodcarving and commitment to education. Woodcraft hosted the event, and the SCVC members shared their expertise with the local community, introducing about twenty attendees to chip carving.

[Learn more about the event](#) and discover the art of chip carving.

Oakhurst Woodcarvers Rendezvous (April 2025)

The Oakhurst Woodcarvers Rendezvous is a week-long event in California that brings together hundreds of carvers from across the nation. With classes ranging from whittling and spoon carving to relief carving and chip carving, this celebration of woodcarving excellence offers something for every skill level and interest.

[Read Roman Chernikov's article](#) about his experience at the event and get a glimpse into the world of woodcarving.



A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!

We're thrilled to introduce **nine** new members who joined our woodcarving club in April and May. We're excited to have you on board and look forward to sharing the joy of woodcarving with all of you.



Allisa and Alexander Truong joined us in April, inspired by their experience with our woodcarving introduction for local Scouts in February. They've already made a great start, carving animals and working on other projects.



Photo on the right: **Dylan Fullington** also joined in April, bringing his existing whittling skills and toolset to the table. He's been attending our Thursday meetings, and we're enjoying having him as part of the group.



Left: **Nitin Varshney** discovered us at the Scout-O-Rama event in May and was impressed by our woodcarving booth. With prior carving experience, he's already completed several projects and is eager to continue learning.

Zoya Khandpur visited a few of our carving sessions to earn her Woodcarving Merit Badge and decided to join the club in May. She's been benefiting from Dan Brady's expertise in relief carving, as shown in the photo (right).



Left: **Mili Gupta** joined us without any prior carving experience. She's started with a fun project of carving a pumpkin from basswood!

Debbie Lee and **Arthur Singer** were captivated by our display table at the Scouting America and decided to join on the spot! We're delighted to have them as part of our carving club.

Liangfu Chen stumbled upon our carving booth at the Saratoga Blossom Festival and was immediately drawn in. He joined us right away, eager to explore the world of woodcarving.

A huge thank you to all our members who participate in public events and share their passion for woodcarving with the community. Your enthusiasm and dedication are what inspire people to join us, and we appreciate your efforts in growing our woodcarving club.

April Workshop: Whittling Treens and Wooden Trinkets

In April, our club members gathered for a fun group project, whittling small wooden items known as treens and trinkets. We focused on creating functional kitchen treasures, including spatulas, coasters, and cutting boards. The star of the show was undoubtedly the butter spreader, which proved to be the most popular project among our members. A big thank you to **David Osterlund** for generously providing pre-cut blanks from basswood and butternut, as well as sharing his expertise and a finished example to guide us. With his help, many members were able to complete their projects in just two or three carving sessions.



For those interested in exploring this project further, the pattern is featured in [John Welch's](#) article "Carving a Jam Knife" in the [Spring 2022 Issue 98 of Woodcarving Illustrated](#) magazine.

But what exactly are treens and trinkets? The term "**treen**" originates from Old English and refers to small, functional, or decorative wooden objects, such as spoons, bowls, or other household items. In contrast, a **trinket** is a small, decorative item that serves no specific purpose beyond adding a touch of charm.

Looking ahead, our **next workshop is scheduled for July**, where we'll be carving and painting fall and winter holiday ornaments. All are welcome to join us during our regular carving hours, regardless of prior experience. We invite you to come and discover the joy of woodcarving with our friendly and supportive community.

Woodcarvings Spotted

Last time, we introduced a new section in our newsletter, where we share photos of woodcarvings discovered in unexpected or everyday places. From intricately carved welcome signs to stunning wooden sculptures in local parks, we want to see and share them all! This is an excellent opportunity for us to appreciate the craftsmanship and beauty of woodcarvings in our community.

To participate, follow these easy steps:

- Photograph a woodcarving you've discovered in a public place
- Send the photo, along with a brief description of where you found it, to our newsletter editors at editors@santaclaravalleycarvers.org

We can't wait to see what you've spotted!



Here's a submission from Roman:

A smiling chain-carved bear can be found in the lobby of the [Oakhurst Inn](#) in Oakhurst, CA. Standing approximately 3 feet tall, this impressive carving is a must-see for any woodcarving enthusiast.

We look forward to receiving your submissions and sharing them with the club!

What's on the Workbench?

Our woodcarvers have been busy creating some amazing projects, and we're excited to share them with you. Let's take a look at what some of our members are working on:

Dave Osterlund

Dave always impresses us with his classic whittling projects, which draw the attention of visitors to our booth. His handmade wooden chains and ball-in-a-cage projects are particularly popular, and people often ask about his techniques and the tools he uses to create intricate items, such as handcrafted wooden chains and ball-in-a-cage projects. Here is a photo of his knife, which has a narrow blade that is very useful in tight spots.



Dave also observed Memorial Day weekend with a meaningful tradition: hanging a wooden flag he made years ago. It's a beautiful example of how woodcarving can be used to create meaningful and lasting tributes.



Pranay Agrawal

Pranay has been busy carving spoons and utensils from a variety of woods, including walnut, apple, and cherry. His functional designs are perfect examples of how woodcarving can be both beautiful and practical. Pranay's spoons and spatulas were featured in our April workshop on whittling treens and wooden trinkets.



Ashraf Amirabi



Ashraf is a relatively new member, but she's already making waves with her enthusiasm for carving floral designs. We're excited to see where her talents take her, and we're looking forward to seeing more of her work in the future.

Connie Wilson

Connie's fairy door carving project was a hit at the latest [Blossom Festival in Saratoga](#). Her beautifully crafted display showed the progression from start to finish, and it was one of the most popular woodcarving projects on display. We're not surprised, Connie's attention to detail and creativity are always impressive.



Dan Brady

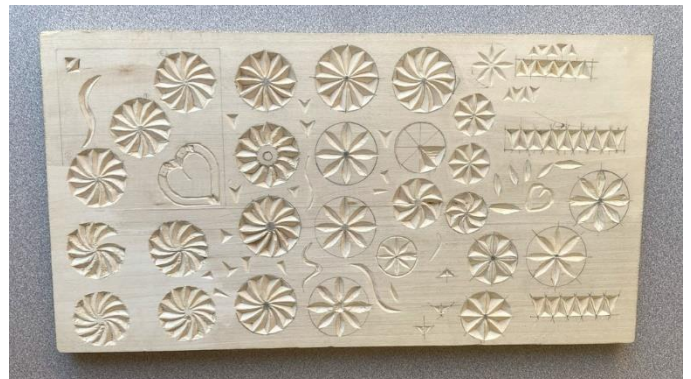


Dan has been working on a special project: repairing an angel figurine with broken wings. He carved new wings with a Celtic pattern in oak and used a two-part epoxy to attach them to the original body. It's a great example of how woodcarving can be used to restore and preserve treasured items.

David Clarke

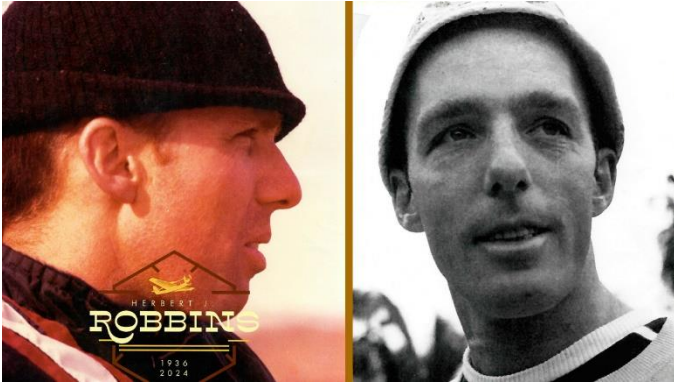
Having successfully added intricate chip-carved floral designs to his wooden spoons, David is now taking his skills to the next level by exploring more complex chip-carving techniques. As part of his practice, he has carved one side of a basswood board, which will help him develop the muscle memory needed to maintain consistent carving angles.

Specifically, he is working on curved rosettes, an excellent exercise for mastering chip carving. We're eagerly anticipating the completion of the other side of the board and can't wait to see the finished result!



A Celebration of Life: Remembering Herb Robbins

In April, some of our members had the opportunity to attend a Celebration of Life for Herb Robbins, a long-time and beloved member of the Santa Clara Valley Carvers. We are grateful to Herb's family for inviting us to participate in this special occasion in Los Gatos, and we would like to extend our thanks to those who attended.



As a tribute to Herb's passion for woodcarving, his family set up a beautiful display of his work, including a stunning collection of carvings in various styles. In a touching gesture, they invited attendees to take a piece of Herb's artwork as a tangible memory of him. We want to thank Mark, Herb's son, and the entire Robbins family for their kindness and generosity in sharing Herb's legacy with us.



One of Herb's remarkable pieces on display was a chip carving board (pictured above). What makes this board truly special is the intricate detail and craftsmanship that went into creating it. Take a closer look at the chips in the bottom row - they are uniquely carved with two vertical sides and one beveled side, and are further adorned with nested chips of the same type. These chips are particularly noteworthy due to the challenging acute angle (at the top of the chips) required to carve them, making them a testament to Herb's skill and dedication to his craft.

We will miss Herb's presence in our club, but we are grateful for the memories and inspiration he left behind. His passion for woodcarving continues to inspire us, and we hope to honor his legacy by sharing his story and showing his beautiful work during our public events.

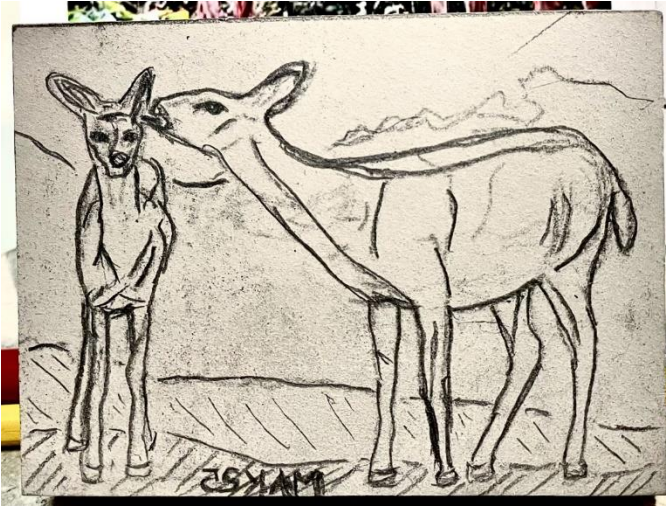
Jordan Makower's Linoleum Block Prints

In this newsletter section, Jordan shares photos of his latest linoleum block print creations, highlighting his skill and attention to detail.

A Mother's Love

This is from a photo sent to me by a friend. She had observed the deer in her neighborhood.

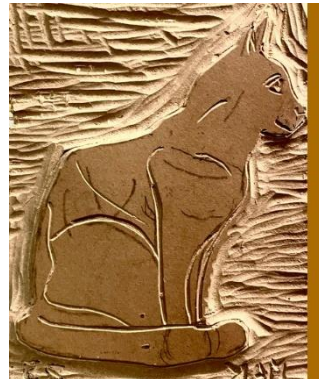
The linoleum block is 3" x 4". It was difficult for me to simplify the carving, leaving out unnecessary details.



The Cat

My daughter's hobby is making pottery. She has used very creative techniques to make her art. A friend had suggested using a carved block to imprint a design on a piece of her work. We agreed on a cat. This is a thin piece of 3" x 4" flexible linoleum. I'm working on removing the extraneous lines.

Showing the thin 3" x 4" linoleum sheet before printing, then a pencil rubbing (looking for my mistakes), and finally a print. I deliberately did not place my name in a spot that would show up in the print, but rather unobtrusively at the bottom of the sheet itself.



Ed (2025)

I took a screenshot of Ed during a ZOOM meeting. I thought I would 'challenge' myself by trying to improve my linoleum block carving of faces. This block is 2" x 3". All the lines drawn will not be carved; they are there to help me delineate light and dark areas.

The pencil is shown for scale, as the block is approx. 2" x 3". The challenging part, as it usually is, was lighting the face, leaving lines for shadows, and shading.



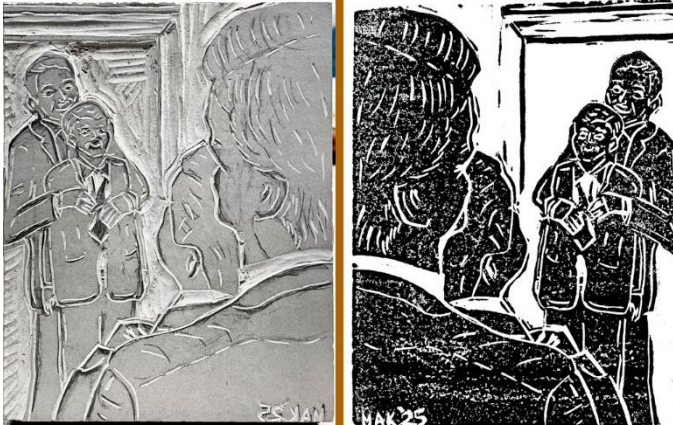
Garden Rose



Pencil guidelines still show. All carved lines will eventually be white, and the print will show red petals. Shading must be calculated, then carved by closely spaced lines, as they are only an illusion.

Sometimes I do a 'rubbing' before I continue carving, to see what needs to be emphasized. I can see some edges that need smoothing/removing.

Joey's Tie (2019)



Joey's sister, Gabrielle, was in town, taking photos on this special occasion. She sent me one, suggesting that it would look good on a carved, printed linoleum block. I agreed.

Gordon & Great-grandson (2025)

This sketch is on a 3" x 4" linoleum block. Carving facial detail is always difficult.



The End Grain

Thank you to everyone who participated in the club activities over the last few months. Thanks to your efforts, **thousands** of people learned that woodcarving is alive and can be enjoyed as a relaxing and rewarding hobby.

As we continue to grow and improve, we're eager to enhance our online presence and reach an even wider audience. If you'd like to lend a hand, please consider volunteering your time and talents. Every contribution counts, whether it's liking and sharing our social media posts, writing short articles for our website, <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org>, or submitting content for our newsletters. And if you're a Facebook user, we invite you to [visit our Facebook page](#) and join the conversation.

We also appreciate your participation in our **optional** [group projects and workshops](#), which have been an enormous success. These collaborative efforts are not only fun but also provide an excellent opportunity to learn from one another, share ideas, and create something truly special. So, keep on carving, and we look forward to seeing what you'll make next!

Are you still considering carving the "not for sale" sign for the club? We would appreciate it!

We hope you enjoyed this issue of our woodcarving newsletter! Let us know what you think by [sending your feedback to us by email](#) or commenting online, and help us make our future newsletters even better! Happy carving, and thank you again for being part of the Santa Clara Valley Carvers!