



Chips & Tips

October 2025

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 club is run solely by volunteers. Our mission is to learn and share our passion for woodcarving with others.

We meet weekly in the South Bay Area. Everyone 11 years old or older is welcome to join us. No prior carving experience is required to participate. We learn, mentor, and have fun.

2025 Chapter Leaders:

President: Roman Chernikov
Vice President: Jim Phipps
Secretary: Dan Brady
Treasurer and membership: Gary Paulson
SCVC Adviser: Dave Osterlund
CCG Adviser: 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: August - September

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 its classes.

[California Carving Guild](#) annual dues are \$25. Optional, but CCG supports our club and carvers 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 . Find other clubs in the area .	

President's Message

Last month, we were out in the community more than ever. We had a strong presence at the Tri-Valley Carvers Show, displayed our work at Maker Faire, brought woodcarving to the Cars in the Park event in San Jose, and taught local scouts how to carve and whittle. Details of all these activities can be found in the Recent Publications section below.

Looking ahead, we have several exciting events on the calendar: a chip carving workshop in October, a whittling-icicles session in November, and our annual winter pizza party in December. Please check [our woodcarving calendar](#) online for dates and locations. We keep our calendar up to date on our website at all times.

Our partnership with [Scouting America](#) is thriving. In the latest issue of [Chip Chats](#), you'll find our article detailing the collaboration: how we train local scouts in woodcarving, help them earn merit badges, and participate in events such as Scout-O-Rama.

A heartfelt thank you to every member who makes our carving sessions welcoming and educational, and to the volunteers who generously donate their time and supplies, allowing us to share this craft with the community. We couldn't thrive without you!

While browsing an online shop, I noticed many knives were mislabeled as "chip-carving" simply because they can make chips. For reference, here's a quick guide to common blade shapes:



1-3: chip carving (new-world style); 4-5: straight-edge / Wharnccliffe; 6: straight-back; 7: clip point; 8: hawksbill; 9: drop point; 10: skew (versatile; also works for old-world chip carving). Note, a skew knife differs from a marking knife in that the skew has

bevels on both sides, whereas a marking knife is beveled on any one side.

We're working to grow our online presence and need your help. If you use Facebook, please like and follow [our woodcarving page](#), share a link to this woodcarving newsletter with friends, comment on posts on the platform and our website, and submit photos of your carvings for the world to see. Growing our online presence is an important part of connecting members, attracting new carving enthusiasts, and sharing the vibrant work of our club with a broader audience. Every like, share, comment, and photo you contribute makes a real difference.

Want to learn more or meet fellow carvers? Visit us at the Adult Recreation Center in Los Gatos or the Scouting America building in San Jose. [Our schedule and directions](#) are available online; no tools or wood are required, so you're welcome to come as a guest.



See you there soon, and happy carving!

Roman Chernikov, President of [Santa Clara Valley Carvers](#)

Upcoming Events

October 4 (Saturday), 2025: Annual woodcarving picnic and potluck at Oak Meadow Park in Los Gatos, CA. From 10 am to 3 pm. We will show our projects to the public and enjoy lunch in the park.

October 13 & 16, 2025: Refine your skills and take your chip carving to the next level! Join our expert mentor, Roman Chernikov, for a hands-on learning session.

November 10 & 13, 2025: Join our woodcarving group project! Let's work together to create a winter wonderland by woodcarving and whittling unique icicles. All skill levels welcome!

December 11, 2025 (Thursday): SCVC Winter Woodcarving Party for the club members and friends at the Thursday meeting place from 7 to 9 pm. Details to follow.

Find a complete list of scheduled events on our website: <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/events/>.

Woodcarving Display Case



We regularly change carvings at our woodcarving display table at the Adult Recreation Center in Los Gatos, CA.

Thanks to the contributors this month: Darryl Easter from [Channel Islands Carvers](#), Scot Lang from [Central Coast Wood Carvers](#), David Osterlund (SCVC), and David Clarke (SCVC). Huge thank you for submitting your pretty spoons!



Our Recent Activities and Publications

Tri-Valley Carvers Woodcarving Show

The club's main woodcarving event of the year is undoubtedly the Tri-Valley Carvers Woodcarving Show in Pleasanton in September 2025. The highlight of the show is that the members of our club, Santa Clara Valley Carvers, won the Best of Show awards in **all classes**: Novice, Advanced, and Expert. **Wow! Way to go!**



Read more in Roman's article about the [Tri-Valley Carvers woodcarving show](#); it includes **over 80 high-resolution photos** of amazing woodcarving projects and views behind the scenes.

Woodcarving at Maker Faire Bay Area

We brought woodcarving to the Maker Faire on Mare Island, Vallejo, CA, again this year. Hundreds of makers discovered that woodcarving, a traditional craft, is not only amazing in its own right, but it also intersects with modern technologies. For example, carvers may use software to fine-tune their patterns or use laser engraving for branding and other purposes.



Our woodcarving booth was a joint effort of three local woodcarving clubs, chapters of [California Carvers Guild](#): [Sonoma Country Woodcarvers](#), [Tri-Valley Carvers](#), and Santa Clara Valley Carvers. Thanks to Ken Morgan for leading the collaboration efforts.

Read our article about [the joint woodcarving booth at the Maker Faire here](#).



Cars in the Park

A few of us presented woodcarving at the Cars in the Park event in History Park, San Jose. Read more about the event and [our woodcarving booth here](#).

Thanks to Dave Osterlund, Xiaohan Ma, Dan Brady, Roman Chernikov, and Nitin Varshney for the woodcarving demonstrations and for welcoming our booth visitors during the event.

Wood Carving Merit Badge Workshop

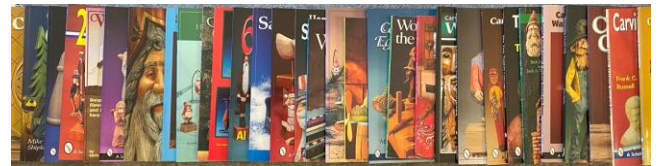
September 18 & 25, 2025 (Thursdays): Intro to woodcarving for Scouts (ages 11-17) to earn Wood Carving Merit Badges.



Nine scouts learned woodcarving with us. Read about [our scout training here](#).

SCVC Woodcarving Library – Open Now!

Thanks to the recent generous donations of woodcarving books by Charles Fee's family, we're excited to announce that the SCVC club has created its very own library, and it is now available for SCVC members. More than a hundred woodcarving books are currently available, and we are adding more every month. Woodworking and woodturning books will also be available soon.



We've simplified the checkout process so you can get your hands on a book with just a few clicks. Browse the [library catalog](#) and reserve a title online; pick it up at the next meeting. Happy reading!

SCVC Tool Library

Great news! We've added new carving knives and gouges to our tool collection. They are perfect for beginners who want to try tools before buying their own. We especially recommend Flexcut's and BeaverCraft beginner-friendly tools. And now these new tools are owned by the club:



All of the added tools bear the club's name and are now available in the library along with other tools:

- 3 boxes of Flexcut Beginners Palm Sets
- 6 knives (a mix of whittling and detail blades)

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members and Guests!

Welcome aboard! We're thrilled to introduce each new member who joins our community of carvers, sharing their stories, inspirations, and first projects as they begin their carving journey with us.



Let's welcome **Sarah Liu** to our woodcarving club! After years of dreaming about picking up a gouge, Sarah finally decided to join the club, and she arrived ready to carve. A thoughtful gift from friends gave her a top-quality carving kit, and she's already put it to work by turning a block of basswood into a charming pumpkin – perfect timing for Halloween. See her carving in this issue's "What's on the Workbench?" section.



Ron Richards joined the SCVC woodcarving club in 1982 and has spent decades carving a variety of projects, including faces and caricatures. After a recent hiatus, he rejoined the club, and we're excited to start carving with Ron weekly again!

Can't wait to see what Ron will carve from a fresh piece of basswood that he got when he attended our meeting last month.



Please join us in welcoming **Birdie Gardiner** and **Ursula Kelly-Tolley**, our newest members at the Adult Recreation Center in Los Gatos. From the moment they picked up their tools to begin carving pumpkins, they've already shown impressive progress.

We welcome **Rhiannon Lacefield** and **Kim Vellore**, who not only became club members but also joined the [California Carvers Guild](#) to promote woodcarving across the state. Thank you very much! We look forward to carving with you and enjoying the experience of woodcarving together soon.



Our Guests

Jack and his daughter **Charlene** stopped by to explore woodcarving at our place. Club members, including **Gary Paulson**, our treasurer, showed their projects and tools and answered the guests' questions. We look forward to welcoming Jack and Charlene back soon!

Basswood Group Order from Heinecke



The recent club wood order was a huge success. We purchased almost two cubic feet of high-quality basswood from [Heinecke Wood Products](#). The club subsidized shipping costs up to 1/4 cubic feet per person, making the wood purchase cost-effective for all participants.

Carving Wooden Spools

Have you ever carved a wooden spool yet? We have a couple of dozen spools available: 1.5" long, 1 1/8" outer diameter, 3/4" inner diameter, 1/4" hole. Please ask Dan Brady, our secretary, if you are interested in trying your hand at carving spools. Also, if some of you would like to carve a spool, we can easily turn a spool from a fresh piece of basswood to any desired size; it only takes a minute to turn a spool by hand. Just let us know.



Basswood Items Available



We offer a selection of basswood pieces to club members, including turned plates and boards with natural bark edges. If you'd like one, please let us know; a modest donation is appreciated.

Visit us on Thursdays

Visit our carving meetings at [Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council](#) of Scouting America.



Thursdays from 7 to 9 pm:

1900 The Alameda #100,
San Jose, CA 95126

We welcome anyone age 11 or older. Our gatherings are informal, and we always set aside time to mentor beginners, to present a woodcarving topic, or to demo a new carving technique.



Alan Huntzinger Memorial Party

Our heartfelt thanks go to [Alan Huntzinger](#)'s family for arranging a gathering on August 23, 2025, where we could share stories and memories of Alan; he is deeply missed. The memorial celebration also gave us the chance to admire Alan's beautiful carvings one more time.



Woodcarvings Spotted

During his recent trip to Costa Rica, Dan Brady spotted not only a striking wood carving but also a live on-the-spot carving demonstration. He met a local artisan who handmade simple turtles from a coconut shell using just a single tool. It is truly impressive to see traditional skill and creativity come together in such a spontaneous setting.



Central Coast Woodcarvers Show

Roman spotted this wooden sign at the Central Coast Woodcarvers show in Cambria, CA, when he attended and participated for a few hours there in September 2025. The sign's simplicity works wonders; it cleverly incorporates the club's emblem, the pelican, into the design.



Fixing a Broken Blade

Accidents happen. If the tip of your knife snaps, don't panic. View it as an opportunity to practice safer carving habits, and remember that you can reshape the blade to make the knife usable again. In the photos below, the left image shows a chip carving knife with a broken tip; the right side displays the repaired blade (top) alongside its original shape (bottom). The new shape of the blade features a slightly different geometry to make it harder for beginners to break the tip again in the future ;)



Donations to Santa Clara Valley Carvers

Your generosity keeps the timeless art of woodcarving thriving at the heart of the Bay Area, where technology races forward, but tradition endures. Thank you for your donations to our nonprofit and for helping us preserve the art and craft of woodcarving for future generations.

Woodcarving Knives, Strops, and Books

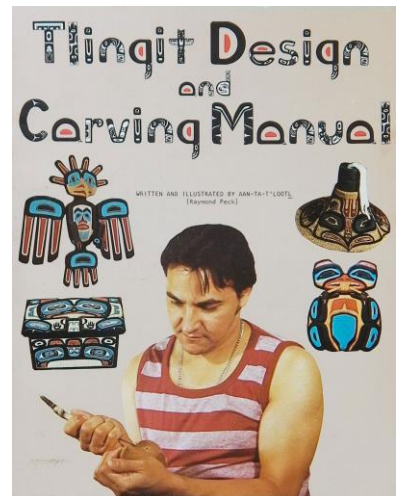
A big thank you to **Pranay Agrawal** for donating two woodcarving knives to our club. The smaller blade is a Flexcut chip carving knife that perfectly complements our existing tool library. Both knives are branded, sharpened, and ready for use by our new carvers.



Thanks to **Roman Chernikov** for making and donating three handcrafted wooden strops to our woodcarving club. They're already in use at our carving meetings and scout-training sessions. Watch the [workshop calendar on our website](#): the club members will be making, decorating, and personalizing their own strops in 2026.

Thank you to **David Osterlund** for donating the woodcarving book, [Tlingit Design and Carving Manual](#), by Raymond Peck. It is now available in [our book library](#).

This book aims to provide students of Tlingit art with a solid foundation in basic design principles. After two decades of studying Northwest Coast art, first as a hobby and later as a profession, the author has compiled key details and motifs that will be both useful and inspiring for woodcarvers.



What's on the Workbench?



Bruce Dahl

Bruce enjoys turning straight branches into walking sticks because carved staffs, canes, and walking sticks are perfect gifts for family and friends. His only hurdle is finding a branch that's straight enough for his next masterpiece. We can't wait to see the finished stick that Bruce is holding in the photo! It is currently a work in progress (WIP).



Connie Wilson

Connie is carving a dozen tiny trees to line the toy-train tracks under this year's Christmas tree. She'll soon paint them, giving us a chance to compare the work-in-progress with the final, colorful pieces.



David Clarke

David is carving another basswood spoon; this one has a delicate swan design. Even at this early stage, you can see how light and graceful it will be.



Dan Brady

In our [previous newsletter](#), we showed Dan's neckerchief slide as a rough sketch. It's now fully carved and stained, designed to provide a striking contrast against a light-colored neckerchief.

Sarah Liu

Sarah joined the club only a few weeks ago, yet she's already completed her first project – a carved pumpkin. Starting from a square block of basswood, she achieved an impressively round 1 1/5-inch pumpkin using only a whittling knife (no sandpaper).



The visible tool marks and tiny details, such as the curved stem and the deep grooves on the pumpkin's surface, reveal the care she put into every cut. Let's give Sarah a big round of applause!

Dave Osterlund



Dave carves spoons regularly, and we've already shown one of his pieces in the [previous woodcarving newsletter](#). Now it's been finished with oil, which brings out the beautiful grain; it's definitely worth a second look.

Congratulations to Dave for earning a Best of Show award at last month's [Tri-Valley Carvers Woodcarving Show](#) with his stunning Grape Leaf Love Spoon (pictured below).



Roman Chernikov



Roman combined his expertise in turning and carving to create a simple, utilitarian kitchen or picnic set: an 8.5-inch plate, fork, and knife; all handcrafted from maple. Because maple is a tough wood, he relied primarily on power tools to complete the project.

The pieces are still unfinished; should Roman apply food-safe walnut oil to highlight the grain, or leave them natural? Please [let us know in the comments!](#)

Nitin Varshney

Nitin's first foray into link-chain carving turned out beautifully. Using only a newly acquired set of tools, he fashioned a five-link basswood chain; each link crisp and evenly spaced despite the learning curve. The result highlights his growing skill and promises even more intricate work as he becomes more familiar with his new tools. Nitin also whittled this cute miniature bear and the bearded face.



Pranay Agrawal



Pranay carved the letter opener from Koa wood that he got many years ago. Finished with just tung oil. Added some chip carvings on the handles. Pranay says that Koa wood is not too hard to carve, but it's essential to read the grain direction carefully, as it can change quickly.

Small bowls carved from Redwood burl. Finished with spray lacquer and beeswax. Redwood burl was a challenge to carve with knives, as it was very brittle and hard. Best suited for power carving or turning. Taking very light finishing cuts with sharp knives helped.



Small mushroom houses carved from basswood and painted with acrylic colors. Protective lacquer on top. Saw some similar carvings in Scotland and wanted to recreate them. Design is from [Doug Linker](#).

Interesting Woodcarving Projects

Whittling by Scot Lang

Whittling sounds simple, but sure, whittling doesn't have a complexity limit, and we can prove it! Take a look at the ball bird-in-the-cage project, carved from a single piece of basswood by Scot Lang from [Central Coast Wood Carvers](#). Scot also whittled the swirling ball-in-the-cage with a working bell complete with a wooden clapper!



Chip Carving by Ed Heskett



The photo shows Ed Heskett's superb free-style chip carving. Ed is a member of the [Tri-Valley Carvers](#) club. He combined curved cuts, varied angles and depths to render the rose motif with striking realism.

After years of mastering chip carving, Ed's clean, precise cuts turn all his projects, including this tissue box, into an outstanding example of a master carver's work.

A Carving Tip



A carving tip from Roman: Don't discard oddly shaped off-cuts. Turn them into tiny projects, like whittled ornaments or mini fridge magnets. It's a fun way to give scraps a purpose! It was quick to whittle the little heart shown in the photo.

Remember to **wear a cut-resistant glove** when you hold a small project in your hand while carving.

Jordan Makower's Linoleum Block Prints

In this newsletter section, Jordan shares photos of his latest linoleum block prints, highlighting his skill and attention to detail. Review sketches, carved linoleum blocks, and final prints.

Zach and his Cardboard Car (~2008)

My grandson, Zach, was happy, playful, curious, and inventive, when he was about 3 years old. He would delight in scooting up and down the house's hallway. I should have taken a photo, but I found a similar one (showing a more elaborate/expensive box) used by a child of his age. ZACH thought of it first!



If you carve linoleum, learn from my mistake here: only use light/colored blocks! It's difficult to see my sketching on a dark one.



First Trip to The Donut Wheel (2025)

There is a lot of detail to be rendered in this 4" x 5" linoleum block. Difficult areas will be the glass door(s), the 'tile' floor, the white display case, and the suggestion of donuts.

I wanted to get an idea about how the block might print, so I rubbed a paper with a pencil over the surface. The carved block is shown below. It is still difficult to figure out how it will print.



A "MOOer"

This is the linoleum block before inking and printing. There is still 'room' to correct some errors. Among the difficult areas are the clouds in the otherwise clear sky. It's hard to show a 'wispy, fluffy' white cloud against a white background ;)

To help render the illusion of clouds, carving has been roughly parallel to the 'horizon/ground'.



The End Grain

Each issue of our woodcarving newsletter marks another chapter in our shared woodcarving journey, highlighting the progress we've made and the impact we've had on the community. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

We hope you enjoyed this edition. Remember to [follow us on Facebook](#) and help spread awareness of woodcarving both online and in person. Please [rate this newsletter](#) and share [your thoughts in the comments](#). Thank you!