



December 2025

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. We're a chapter of the California Carvers Guild, a 501(c)(3) entity. Our club runs by volunteers. Our mission is to learn and share our passion for woodcarving with others. We publish our woodcarving newsletter every two months.



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 mentor beginners.

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 at least 5 days before any of our publication dates: 1st of February, April, June, August, October, and December.

Coverage: October - November

Membership: The SCVC membership fee is \$5 per year. However, an additional annual fee of \$35 is required for those 55 years of age and older 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 on our website . Find other clubs in the area .	

President's Message

As the year draws to a close, it's the perfect moment to look back, give thanks, and look ahead.

2025 has been a vibrant year for Santa Clara Valley Carvers, and I'm proud of what we've accomplished together: This collage captures our activities in 2025; [click it to enlarge](#). Thanks to all who volunteered and contributed to our success!



Public outreach: We participated in many public events, attracting new faces to the art & craft of woodcarving. What was your favorite event?

Workshops: We organized several workshops for members and scouts and helped carvers acquire wood and tools. My favorite: name badges & icicles.

Member growth: We welcomed **26** new members so far. Thank you for joining the club!

Resources: We organized a book library; it currently has **176 titles** on carving, turning, and woodworking. It is great to see the club members use it. [Browse our library here](#) and borrow a book.

Online presence: Thanks to everyone who submitted photos and updates on their carving projects for sharing on [our website](#) and social media platforms. You may find and follow our accounts here: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Reddit](#). Thanks for engaging with our content online: follow, like, share, and comment. Every like counts!

Officer nominations: All current officers will serve another term, but fresh ideas are always welcome. Please submit nominations for officer positions before the January vote.



I'd like to remind everyone that learning to sketch can make you a better carver. I started with the simple exercises in a kids' sketch-book, and the habit has since helped me develop clearer patterns and work out carving ideas on paper in minutes. At a recent [Tri-Valley Carvers](#) meeting, I was delighted and later surprised to see a fellow member sketching. Can you recognize anyone in this sketch by Diane Torquato? ;)

Flyer tip: Adding a small carving to our club flyers is a memorable way to spread the word. It only takes 20 minutes to carve an

alligator from a clothing pin.

We value your feedback on club operations, events, and ideas. One suggestion I'm excited about is **participating in the [Santa Clara County Fair](#)** next year. Please let us know what you think.

Don't forget our **Winter Holiday Potluck Party** on December 11, 7-9 PM. Pizza will be provided; we'll appreciate a salad or dessert contribution. Please [RSVP here](#) so we can order enough pizza.

Happy carving,

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



Meeting Schedule Change

Our carving meetings are canceled on the following dates due to holidays:

- Mondays 12/22, 12/29, 1/19
- Thursdays 12/25, 1/1.



Upcoming Events

December 11, 2025 (Thursday): SCVC Winter Woodcarving Party and Potluck for the club members and friends at the Thursday meeting place from 7 to 9 pm. Please [RSVP here](#).

January 19 & 21, 2026: Carve Your Love Story! Join us for a Valentine's Day woodcarving event where we'll craft heartfelt wooden hearts. Whittle, carve, and love. All skill levels welcome!

February 14, 2026: Chip carving demonstration at 1 pm at the [Woodcraft store, San Carlos](#), CA.

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

Carving Programs by Oregon Carvers Guild

Register in advance to attend:

[Sharpening Presentation](#) by Dave Dignam, Zoom on **Jan 13**. Dave was an SCVC member years ago.
[Advanced Whittling](#) by Scot Lang, Zoom on **Feb 10**. Scot lived in the Santa Cruz Mountains before.

Woodcarving Display Table: Winter Holiday Ornaments

Every couple of months, we re-arrange our woodcarving display table in the [Adult Recreation Center](#) lobby – the same space where we meet on Mondays in Los Gatos, CA.

This month, we included a colorful assortment of hand-carved and painted winter holiday pieces: Santas,

snowmen, and Christmas trees. It also includes a set of icicles carved by the club members after our "Whittling Unique Icicles" workshop in November 2025. The unique ornaments brought festive color to the case and highlighted the joy of seasonal carving.

Contributors: Al Furtado, Connie Wilson, Dan Brady, David Clarke, David Osterlund, Joanne Carroll, Leon Truan, Rena Gooding, Roman Chernikov, and a few ornaments from [Central Coast Wood Carvers](#) and other carvers.



Our Recent Activities and Publications

Please take a quick look at the new articles on our website.

A Full Year of Our Woodcarving Display Table

We display our woodcarving projects in the glass case in the lobby of a place where we meet. Please read about [our display table](#) and see pictures of all the arrangements we took during this year, 2025.



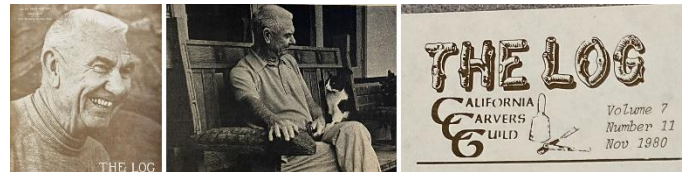
Walnut Coaster with a Duck Scene Decoration by Gary Paulson

Gary Paulson carved a beautiful coaster from a walnut board. He carved the duck over a meadow design and decorated the rim, giving the coaster a charming touch. Read Gary's article and step-by-step instructions on [how to carve a walnut coaster](#).



Lucien Dean Hertert: Carver, Teacher, and Organizer

Lucien Dean Hertert, a founding member of the California Carvers Guild and a cornerstone of our club's history, wore many hats: organizer, educator, chief judge, and master carver. His passion for the craft helped shape the community we cherish today.



Read [our feature article about Lucien Hertert](#) to see how his legacy still echoes through our activities.

David Osterlund's Woodcarving Gallery

We're pleased to share that [David Osterlund now has his own woodcarving gallery](#) on our site. Inside, you'll find photos of his distinctive whittling and carving projects. A few years ago, a local newspaper highlighted David's work on its front page, and we added the image to the gallery.



Jordan Makower's Linoleum Block Printing Gallery

We're excited that **Jordan Makower** now has his own gallery on our website; it is growing quickly and features photos of finished blocks and prints, snapshots of pieces in progress, and the personal stories behind each work. Take a look [here](#).



Woodcarving Training for Local Scouts



In our [October woodcarving newsletter](#), we highlighted the carving intro we gave to local scouts to help them earn their woodcarving merit badge. Several scouts have kept coming back to finish their projects and sharpen their skills through our post-training program, and one of them has even become a regular club member.

Special thanks to our Scouting Leaders: **Dan Brady**, **John Parissenti**, **Mike Campi**, and **Nitin Varshney**.

SCVC Woodcarving Library Update

We've just added **72** new titles; primarily woodworking and woodturning, with selections on carving, sharpening, and pyrography. Want to see only the latest arrivals? Use [this link](#) to filter the catalog.



We are glad to announce that our growing book collection is now open to two neighboring clubs, [West Bay Woodturners](#) and [Silicon Valley Woodturners](#), who are also contributing books and DVDs.

Reserving a book is easy: [browse the online catalog](#), click the "Reserve" button, and pick up your title at the next meeting. Happy reading!

Woodcarvings Spotted. Submitted by Roman:

During his vacation in Austria, Tom (Roman's friend) stayed at a house adorned with hand-carved details. Though the carver has passed away, his work, finished in 1973, still amazes every visitor. Tom photographed the decorated items for us to enjoy and be inspired by. Thank you, Tom!



A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!

We're delighted to announce that **Charlene Staricco**, who visited us with Jack to explore our woodcarving activities in August, has officially joined the club as a member. We can't wait to see the projects she'll create alongside our fellow carvers.



Cooper Lee is a scout. He joined our club after participating in our woodcarving Merit Badge workshop in September and attending our after-training program in October. The photo shows Dan Brady, our longtime member and club secretary,

teaching Cooper knife-handling techniques. Cooper started carving a welcome sign, and we are eager to see his finished piece soon.

Visit us on Thursday evenings



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

Thursdays from 7 to 9 pm at:

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.



Visit us on Monday mornings



We carve together at the [Adult Recreation Center](#) in Los Gatos. Room 206, 2nd floor.

Mondays from 10 am to 2 pm at:

208 E Main St
Los Gatos, CA 95030

Age requirement: 55+ years old. Membership of the Adult Recreation Center costs \$35 per year.

History Corner: Woodcarving Show Banner from 1968



Our club still keeps the original banner from the 1st Annual Woodcarving Show in 1968 – the year after our club was founded. The hand-inked 18 × 23-inch piece lists the show's San Jose location, the admission price, and a complete list of collaborators, offering a fascinating glimpse into our early history.



The Santas playing sports throughout this newsletter were carved by **Al Furtado**. Thanks to the Al's family for donating all his tools and carvings to the club in 2024.

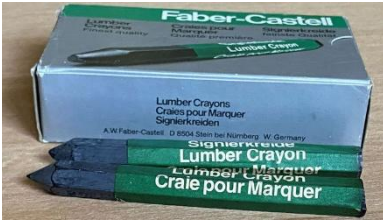
Want to know about previous winter parties?



We celebrated the 2019 winter holidays in a lovely setting. The party included a dinner, celebrations, and a gift exchange. We also celebrated Jack Thompson's birthday with 101 candles that time. See [more photos here](#).

Donations to Santa Clara Valley Carvers

Your help keeps woodcarving alive in the Bay Area, even as technology changes everything around us. Thank you for donating to our nonprofit and helping us preserve this craft for future generations.



Thanks to the family of **Alan Huntzinger** for donating a box full of carving books, magazines, and supplies. The box included a few high-quality black crayons, perfect for sketching. To get a crayon from the club, show us any sketches you have; we would love to include your non-carving creations in our newsletter.

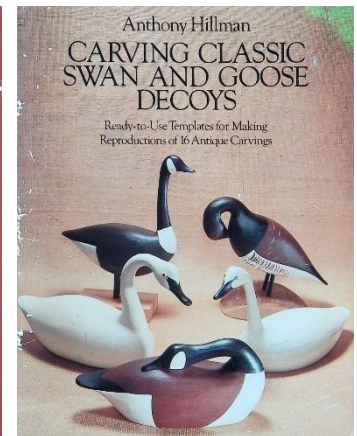
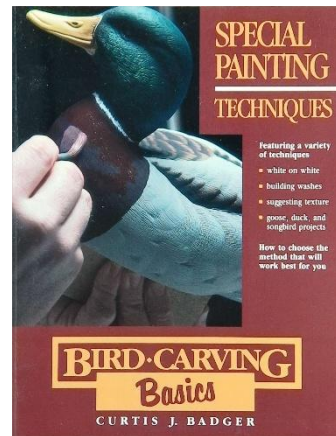
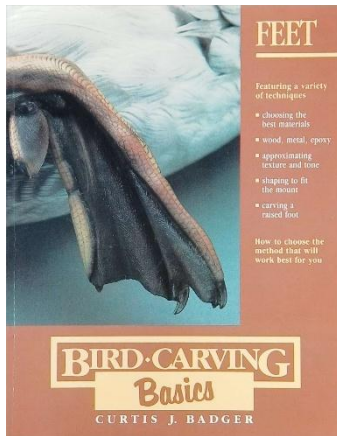
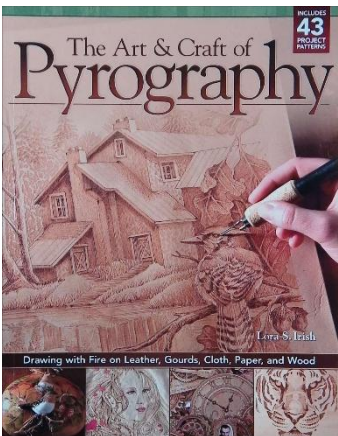


Thanks to **Roman Chernikov** for donating pencil sharpeners. Those are very handy for sharpening the club-branded pencils we acquired earlier this year. Want our pencil?



Carving tip: never sharpen a pencil with your carving knife... unless you want to spend extra time practicing your sharpening skills. Pencil lead is made of graphite, a hard, brittle material that dulls sharp blades quickly.

Roman also donated these books to the club library. He acquired the bird-carving books at the [Tri-Valley Carvers Woodcarving Show](#) in September for the club library.



Special thanks to [Silicon Valley Woodturners](#) for contributing three woodturning books and a DVD to our library.

Wooden Items Available

The club has a collection of wooden parts for assembling wooden toys. Those parts could be more challenging to carve than basswood, but still possible, including with power tools. If you'd like to get those, please let us know. Hurry up, they are free to club members on a first-come basis.



What's on the Workbench?

Ashraf Amirabi



Ashraf Amirabi joined our club earlier this year and has already upgraded to a new set of gouges. She's tackling a relief carving of a pear with leaves. It is still a work in progress, but her persistence guarantees it'll be finished soon.

Connie Wilson

Connie Wilson sewed the vibrant carving apron you see in the photo from a colorful piece of thin leather she bought at a local craft store. She told us the biggest advantage of a self-made apron is the ability to control all aspects of the design, including making straps that fit perfectly and stay comfortable all day. Connie also carved a dozen trees for winter décor, using a dry-brushing technique to highlight the tool marks and give a frosted-snow appearance. Those trees are 2-4" tall.



David Clarke



David Clarke is experimenting with several fir-tree designs. He also carved a set of 3 to 6-inch swirled icicles and finished them with Watco after attending our "Whittling Unique Icicles" workshop last month.



While many of his pieces are done in basswood, he regularly works with other wood species, choosing the grain that best suits each carving.

Jim Phipps



Jim Phipps carved a sleek, stylized whale from a piece of redwood many years ago. This carving is special; it is the first project Jim has ever carved.

The simple, flowing lines capture the creature's graceful shape while letting the wood's natural grain shine through. The carving is about 6" long.

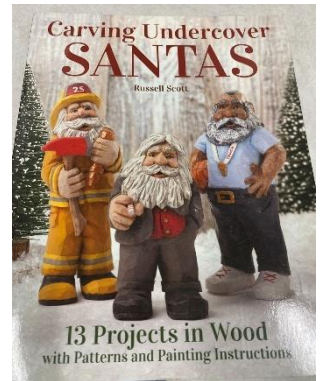
Dave Osterlund



David Osterlund is carving a gnome using a pattern from [Woodcarving Illustrated](#). The design is beginner-friendly: the face details are hidden beneath the hat and beard, and the hands stay out of sight inside the pockets, so there's no need to tackle tiny features.



David also loves carving Santas. One shows Santa carrying a bag of golf clubs, and the other is dressed in farmer overalls. If you're curious about what Santa does when he's not delivering presents, David points to Russell Scott's book [Carving Undercover Santas](#).



Joanne Carroll



Joanne Carroll shared this message along with her carving that includes embedded stained-glass windows:

My new club, **Lincoln Hills Woodcarvers**, decided to create a Cottonwood Bark Village for our display. I was chartered with carving a church. My piece of bark was tall and thin but lent itself nicely to a fantasy church. I hope you enjoy it.

I miss you all. Have a wonderful holiday season.

Dan Brady

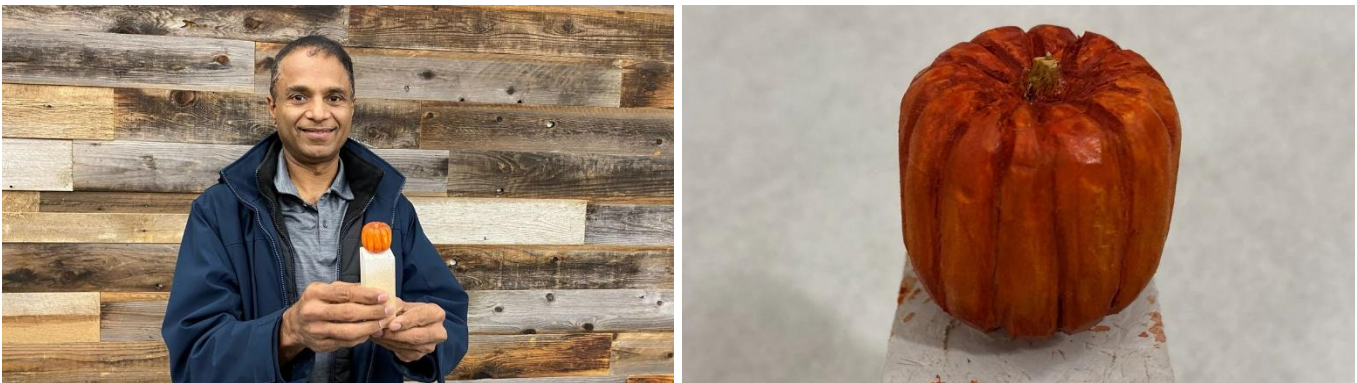
Dan Brady has an impressive set of neckerchief slides he carved himself. He always wears one when he's with the scouts to show them how cool woodcarving can be. This slide is hand-made from walnut and features a wire inlay in the shape of a simple Celtic knot.



Dan also carved and painted a couple of icicles after participating in our recent “Whittling Unique Icicles” workshop, and we have included them in our woodcarving display case. He also finished carving a tree and a cute bear neckerchief with a PVC loop on the back.

Kim Vellore

Kim Vellore joined us in October, and he's already finished a basswood pumpkin, painted a vivid orange. We can't wait to see what he carves next from the rest of that block.



Nitin Varshney



Nitin Varshney became a member only a few months ago, and he's already diving into his first spoon carving project, a simple measuring spoon. As he works with gouges, he's picking up an essential **carving tip**: avoid carving the bowl too deeply.

It's a work in progress, and we're excited to see his spoon take shape!

Pranay Agrawal



Pranay Agrawal is expanding beyond soft basswood, carving tougher woods like walnut, cherry, and apple. His newest walnut three-candle holder features crisp, unsanded cuts that reveal his sharp tools and confident technique. It reminds us of mountains!

Pranay's painted Santa ornament nods to our recent "Whittling Unique



Icicles" workshop, where we proved that any shape can be transformed into a sparkling icicle.



Pranay has also begun chip carving, creating two forest-design coasters on a basswood board whose single, discolored grain resembles a horizon line above the trees. This work is still in progress.

Our club member, Roman Chernikov, designed the Forest chip-carving design and shared it on his website [READ N TRY](#), which features a collection of free and paid unique chip carving patterns.

Roman Chernikov



Roman Chernikov chip carved Christmas ornaments, and now he is testing various techniques for painting inside the chips. Getting paint into the deepest cuts can be tricky, and sometimes the pigment seeps through the grain, softening crisp chip carving lines.

Roman designed this Fir chip carving pattern in 2016, and he shares it as a PDF download among his other [free chip carving patterns at READ N TRY](#).

Terry Davis



Terry has been with the club for only a few months, yet she's already moving from small projects to an ambitious relief carving of a dragon. The piece is still in progress, and you can see the carving tools she's using as the design takes shape.

Jordan Makower's Linoleum Block Prints

In this woodcarving newsletter section, Jordan shares photos of his latest linoleum block prints, highlighting his skill and attention to detail. These scenes are based on Jordan's memory. Review sketches, carved linoleum blocks, and final prints below.



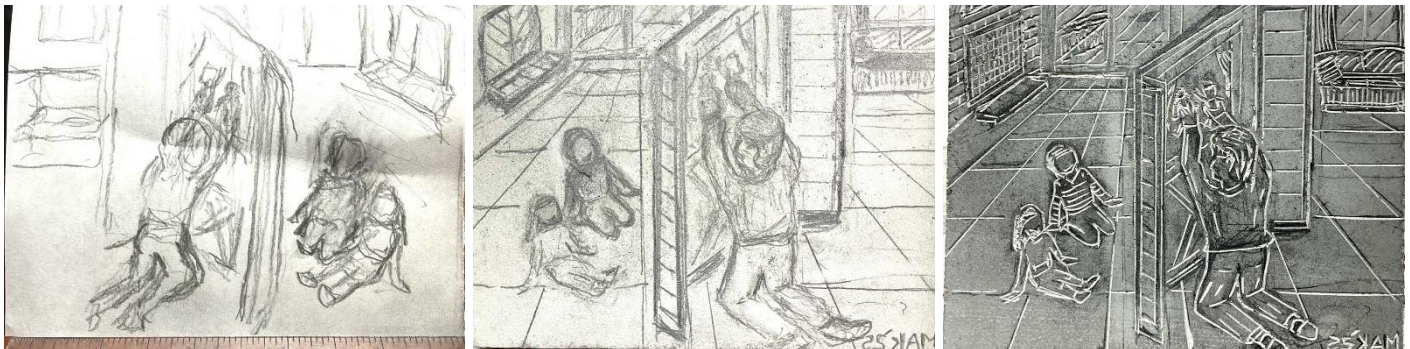
The Draftsman at Hunter College, Bronx, 1959

One of the most valuable classes I took, besides those in Science, Journalism, and Mathematics at college, was Drafting. I wanted to visualize my memory about that time, so I decided to carve a linoleum block and make a print. Please read the full story, including carving tips, in [my article here](#).

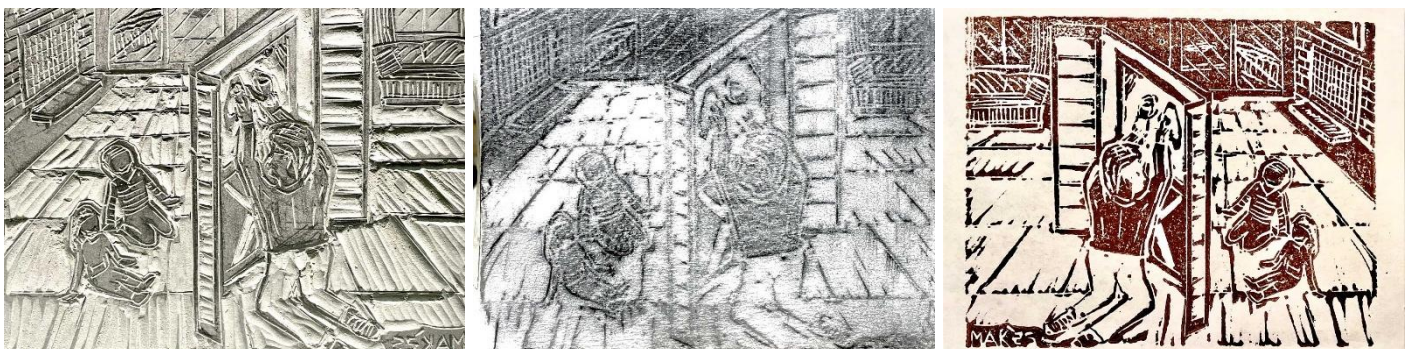


Josh's Puppet Theater, New City, NY, 1974

I built a Puppet Theater for Josh to use so that he can entertain David and Jennifer. He would use his toy action figures and his imagination to put on 'mini-plays' for them when we lived in New York. As I draw, I remember more details and enhance the sketch. Decisions must now be made to balance light and dark areas. The linoleum block is 4 x 5".



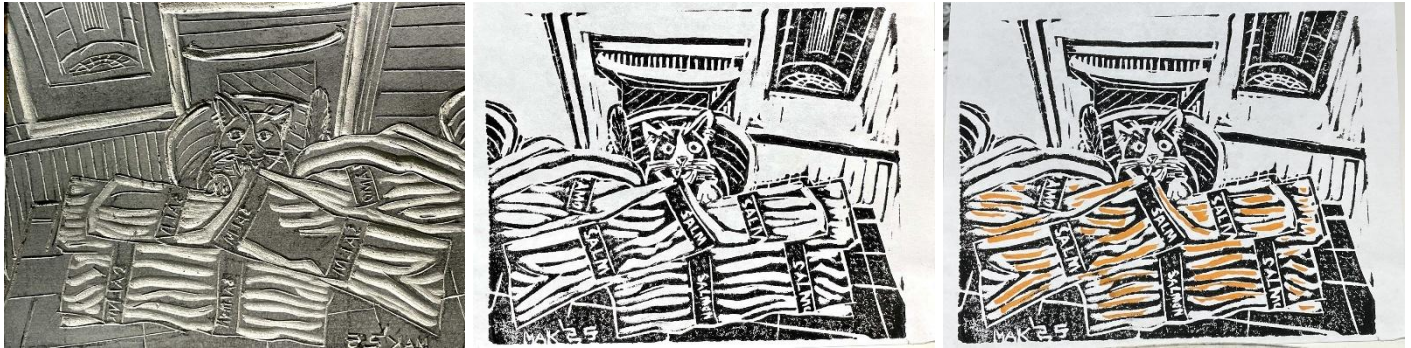
There is an intermediate stage, after deciding which areas should be light or dark, that I'll call 'bordering'. If two light areas are adjacent, one might blend into the other, so a thin 'island' of linoleum is left to separate the two, which will appear as a thin line in the print.



The middle picture is a pencil 'rubbing'; a technique I use to determine the relative light and dark areas, as well as to find errors before doing a test print. Some details are visible.

Cat's Dream Come True

I'll do a pencil and paper rubbing next, to see the areas that need work. The transparent plastic wrappers enclosing the pink salmon are a challenge for a two-tone linoleum block print.



The middle image shows the block before 'lightening' the background. The right image shows the print, slightly retouched.

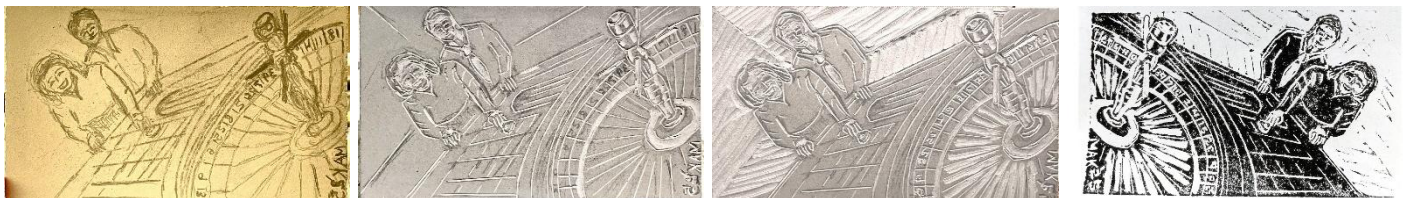
Esther's '56 Chevy BelAir

We had moved to Connecticut from Oregon in 1965. I needed one car to go to work, and Esther needed one to get around. This was her first car. She was thrilled. Our duplex house in Columbia, CT is envisioned in the background. The linoleum block is 3" x 4".



Esther's Dime Roulette, Las Vegas, 1960

On our honeymoon, we stayed at an inexpensive motel, but went to a grander one to see a show. No one was at one roulette table, and we had very little money, so the 'spinner man' let Esther play 'dime' chips. She squealed loudly at each win, amassing \$2.30, and attracted a crowd of real gamblers. As that happened, she began to lose, and we left, but we had FUN!



The linoleum block is 3" x 5". Faces are always tough, and it will be difficult carving the small numbers 🙄 Carved away the background in a pattern, so that any traces will suggest walls and flooring. Had to hold the smallest 'V' gouge (#1) sideways for the smallest surface carve facial features (1/8" - 1/4").

The End Grain

Each of us has picked up at least one new technique by experimenting with different carving methods this year. As we look ahead to next year, consider passing those skills on. Host a short workshop or demo for fellow carvers and help keep our community learning and growing together.



Let's raise awareness of woodcarving, as many don't realize it can be a rewarding and relaxing hobby. Please help us promote woodcarving in-person and online. Follow us on social platforms and like our posts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Pinterest](#).



Carving Tip: Before you paint, use a knife or a woodburning tip to cut the grain along the border where two colors meet. By separating the fibers, you create a clean barrier that prevents paint from bleeding through, giving you a crisp line. You can see in the picture that the paint bleeds where the paint touches the unpainted grain without a cut.

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter edition. Please [rate this newsletter](#) and share [your thoughts and ideas in the comments](#). Thank you!

By the way, how many Santas did you spot in this issue of our woodcarving newsletter? Let us know in the comments; you might win the bragging rights!