



February 2026

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.

2026 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.

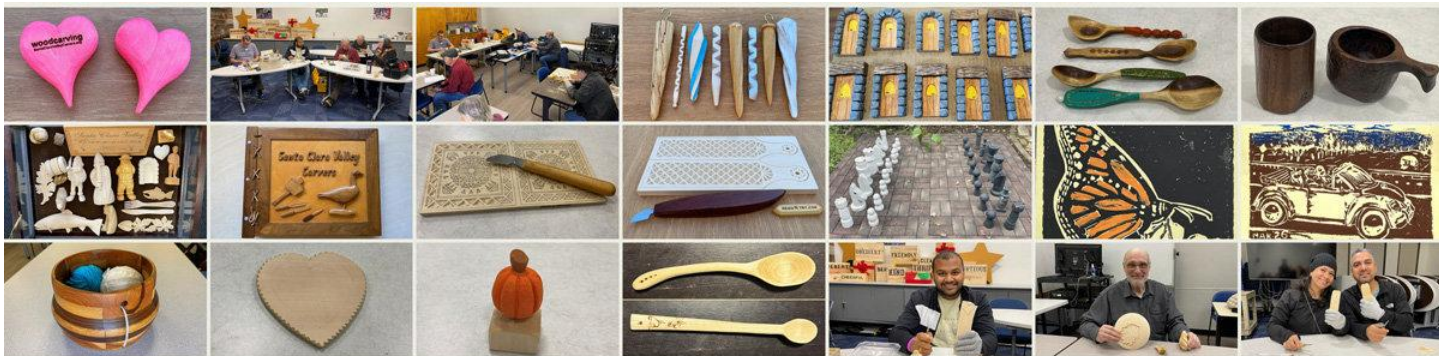
Coverage: December - January

Membership: The SCVC membership fee is \$6 per year. However, an additional annual fee of \$45 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

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, this issue's theme is **Love & Hearts**. Let's celebrate the holiday by carving a simple heart or adding a subtle heart motif to a spoon or an ornament.



It's dues-collection time! For just **\$6 a year**, please renew your 2026 membership. Bring a check or cash to any meeting or [pay the dues online](https://SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org). Your support helps us keep the traditional craft of woodcarving alive while technology changes everything around us so fast.

We've lined up six 2026 workshops featuring simple projects that suit both beginners and seasoned carvers. After our January heart-carving session, we are planning to whittle chains and carve Halloween ghosts, winter ornaments, and chip-carving decorations later in the year. Attendance at our workshops is optional and **free for members**; a modest donation is always appreciated.



Also, I'll be teaching a **DIY-decorated strop workshop** in May. The chip carving pattern is already posted on my website; just a heads-up that the workshop is coming soon!

I want to encourage you to invite friends to our meetings. Let them see our carvings, watch a demo, and even try a simple whittling project themselves. We keep a stack of flyers on the shelf; please take a few and hand them out at work, at school, at coffee shops, or on community boards. By sharing those flyers, you help more people discover that woodcarving is a relaxing, rewarding hobby, and that our club is right here in the neighborhood.

[Last time, I recommended](#) adding sketching or drawing to boost your carving skills.

I'm happy to report that our library now holds [six titles on the subject](#), most donated by **Leon Truan's** family, an avid caricature carver who passed away a few years ago.



Carving tip: After using a strop, wipe your blade thoroughly to remove any buffing compound that may have stuck to it. That will help keep your carving clean. I recommend using a Polishing Cloth for Metals to clean your blades.

Please follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Pinterest](#).

Happy carving,
Roman Chernikov, President of [Santa Clara Valley Carvers](https://SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org)

Wood Carving

We promote woodcarving & whittling
SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org
Established in 1987, our club has been promoting the art of woodcarving ever since. We are affiliated with the California Carvers Guild, a 501(c)(3) non-profit and educational org.

Join our carving club to learn how to carve animals, objects, walking sticks, flowers, jewelry, welcome signs, people, and cute ornaments. Our skills range from beginner carvers, who are just learning, to experts who have been carving for a lifetime. We mentor beginners.

Monday 10 am - 2 pm
Adult Recreation Center
208 E Main St, Los Gatos, CA
Seniors only. Check requirements online

Thursday 7 - 9 pm
Scouting America
1900 The Alameda,
San Jose, CA
Adults & kids 13+ y. old
Visit our website for details:
<https://SantaClaraValleyCarvers.org>

Schedule Change: No meeting on Monday, February 16, due to the holiday. We will meet on Tuesday, 2/17, instead.

Upcoming Events

February 10, 2026: [Advanced Whittling](#) Zoom session by Scot Lang. **Register in advance to attend.** Scot is currently serving as the president of [Central Coast Woodcarvers](#). Organized by the [Oregon Carvers Guild](#).



February 14, 2026: Chip carving demonstration by Roman Chernikov at 1 pm at the [Woodcraft store, San Carlos](#), CA. Come and see how to chip-carve wooden ornaments.



March 9 & 12, 2026: Whittling workshop: carving chains with just one knife. Taught by David Osterlund during our regular carving hours.



April 19-25, 2026: Oakhurst Woodcarvers Rendezvous in Oakhurst, CA. Annual gathering for carvers of all levels. See [event flyer here](#).



Find a full list of scheduled events & workshops online: <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/calendar/>

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 building where we meet on Mondays in Los Gatos, CA.



Display theme:
unpainted carving projects

Contributors: Al Furtado, Connie Wilson, Dan Brady, David Osterlund, Jack Thompson, Roman Chernikov, and others.



Our Recent Activities and Publications

Check out three newly published articles on our website:



News and Publications about SCVC

Review a [curated list of articles](#) in newspapers, magazines, and archives that have featured our club or club members. It includes articles from local newspapers such as Mercury News, Campbell Reporter, and Palo Alto Times.



Whittling Workshop: Whittling Hearts for Valentine's Day, 2026

Our club hosted a sweet-themed [Whittling Hearts workshop](#) in January 2026. Roman guided **16 participants** through the history of the heart symbol and a step-by-step demo.



Woodcarving Winter Holiday Party, 2025

We gathered for [our winter holiday party](#) in December 2025. We set up a display table filled with carved ornaments and decorations. A potluck of salads complemented the club's pizza. Each participant received a small prize, and our group photo captured the joy of carving and cheering together.



SCVC Woodcarving Library Update

We've just **added 124** new titles, including books on various crafts such as leatherwork, metalwork, and papermaking. We also got a few titles on making whirligigs, chess sets, lettering, and a few craft books for [kids 10 years old or older](#). Not counting our modest [collection of Chip Chats magazines](#), the library now **contains 300 titles**. Thank you to all who donated!



Use [this link](#) to see the latest arrivals. Reserving a book is easy: [browse or search the online catalog](#), click the "Reserve" button, and pick up your title at the next meeting. Happy reading!

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!

Ann Mayers stopped by our Monday meeting in December, loved the carvings on display and the chat with local artists, and joined the club on the spot. Thank you, Ann, for your support!



Avaneesh Alla discovered our website and dropped by the Thursday meeting last month. He picked up the basic cuts fast and made steady progress on his first whittling project, a pumpkin. Last week, he joined the hearts workshop and almost completed his heart in a single session!



Carolina Padilla-Pineda & Anthony Pineda joined us on our whittling workshop day. After a quick whittling crash course with Roman, they skipped the usual pumpkin starter to carve with the group and dove straight into carving wooden hearts for Valentine's Day with us.



Jane Park, a recent college graduate, met us at the [Winter Holiday Party](#) and officially joined the club a week later. In the past few months, she's whittled dozens of spoons, which she loves gifting to family and friends.



Sorin Papuc joined us to learn carving as a complement to his woodturning work. Already equipped with his own tools, he's tackling a few challenging projects right away.

Sorin is also an active member of the [Bay Area Woodturners Association](#) and the [Silicon Valley Woodturners](#).



Paul Goodman, a San José-based woodworker and artist, has long wanted to dive into carving, and he finally joined our woodcarving club. Explore [Paul's designs and creations on his website](#).

Woodcarvings Spotted



Black Bears are Everywhere



Spotted by **Nitin Varshney**: We walked into [Black Bear Diner](#) in Sunnyvale and felt like we'd entered a bear's den, thanks to the many carved black bears. The artist turned the usual restaurant vibe into a wild, immersive woodland scene.

All of the Black Bear Diner bear carvings are created by [Ray Schulz](#), a Washington-based woodcarver.



Carving Love, Preserving Trails

Spotted by **Roman Chernikov**: I spotted a heart carved into a [Manzanita tree](#) trunk on a recent hike. I wish the maker would channel that creativity with us, keeping the trails pristine. Please spread the word by handing out our flyers so others can discover the club and practice safe, responsible carving.

Woodcarving Workshops

Explore past and upcoming [woodcarving workshops on our website](#).



Carving Icicles Workshop, November 2025

Last November, our club gathered for a "Carving Icicles" workshop led by **Roman Chernikov**. He introduced two beginner-friendly designs: a graceful swirl that can be carved clockwise or counterclockwise, and a Tramp-art-inspired icicle carved from a square dowel. Carving those designs required just one tool: a gouge or a knife. Participants quickly got the hang of the techniques, and the room filled with the crisp sound of fresh shavings.



Roman also showed how to add a simple eyelet using a piece of wire and a handheld drill, turning each carved piece into a ready-to-hang holiday ornament. The result? A sparkling collection of icicle-shaped carvings that look perfect on any tree or mantel.

Thanks to **Dan Brady**, **David Clarke**, and others who carved, shared tips, and helped make this workshop a chilly success!

Carving a Bottle Stopper Workshop

Is there any interest in carving a bottle stopper or a corkscrew? Let us know in the comments. We have [books on the topic](#) in our library, and there are many examples available. The photo of vintage corkscrews was taken at the [Culinary Institute of America's](#) museum.



Check out an impressive gallery of hand-carved bottle stoppers gathered by the [NilesBottleStoppers.com](#) team.



Visit us on Thursday evenings

Visit us 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. We always set aside time to mentor beginners, to present a carving topic, or to demo a new carving technique. Our membership fee is **only \$6 per year**.



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 \$45 per year.



History Corner

The club has this custom-made album, carved in the 1970s, assembled between 1978 and 1990. It contains dozens of photos of carvers, their projects, and cutouts from newspapers and magazines. The album size is 15 1/4 x 12 1/4"; height is 1 1/2".



The album includes this group photo taken around 1980. We can see that woodcarving was quite popular during that time, given the group's size. The roster from that time lists 150 carvers! Unfortunately, it is hard to identify the people in the photo, except maybe one or two in the group, since it was so long ago. Also, very few photos included the exact date.

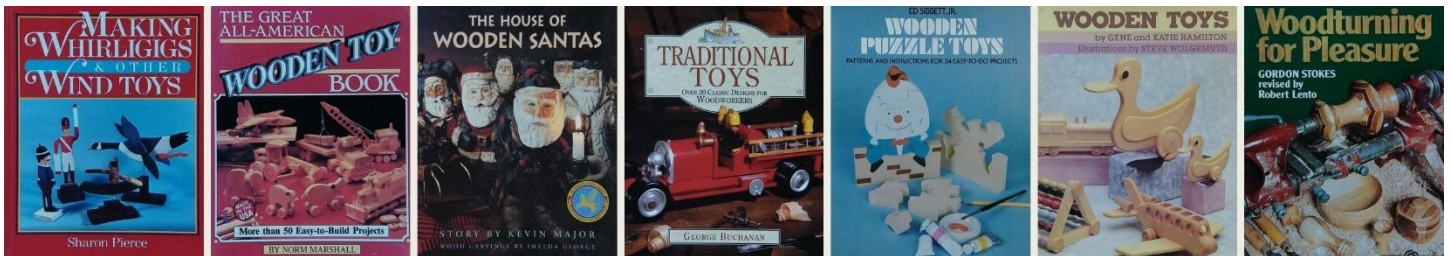
Let's use the album as an example of dedicated historical preservation. But let's also improve by using modern technologies such as digital cameras and the Internet. Let's document our activities and inspire the future generation of carvers.



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 **David Osterlund** for donating **books and magazines** to our library, including these:



What's on the Workbench?



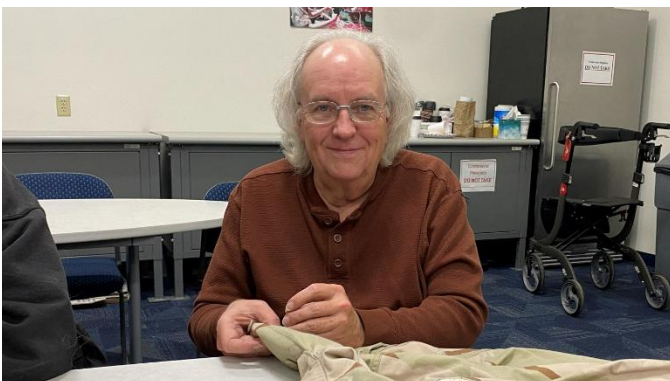
Ashraf Amirabi

Ashraf joined our [“Whittle Hearts” workshop](#) and skillfully carved two charming hearts as a single piece. She's now exploring options to bring her carvings to life with vivid paints. She plans to try watercolor pencils.



Connie Wilson

Connie **loves** carving in multiples; she enjoys gifting her tiny carvings to family and friends. So far, she's whittled six simple hearts and carved and painted at least two dozen of fairy doors.



Dana Chick

For years, Dana has been a regular at our carving sessions, though you won't see him carving. He spends his time repairing and stitching jackets with needle and thread, and he delights us with tales from the festivals and conferences he's visited. His presence reminds us that a woodcarving club isn't only about learning new techniques; it's also a warm, friendly community to enjoy.

Dan Brady



Outdoor checkmate! Dan, our club secretary, turned and carved massive 6-inch beams to make a full set of chess pieces. He arranged them on a red-and-white tiled board so his family could enjoy a game under the open sky.

He also turned and carved a segmented “yarn bowl” from assorted wood species.

Dan is an organizer who always helps local scouts complete their programs and earn merit badges with

the [Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America](https://www.siliconvalleymontereybaycouncil.org/).



David Osterlund



David enjoys carving everything from Santa figurines and Viking warriors to delicate spoons. Over the years, he's built an impressive collection of hand-carved neckerchief slides that inspire local scouts.

During our recent [“Whittling Hearts” workshop](#), he paused his warrior project to carve a little heart of his own.





David Clarke

In addition to his woodworking, David enjoys whittling simple projects, experimenting with various designs, and often carving several items at once.

In the photo, he's carving a basswood penguin inspired by [Doug Linker's video](#).

Debbie Mize

Debbie is a seasoned woodcarving judge who's always working behind the scenes at local woodcarving shows. She's currently chip carving the "Supernova" coaster set from [READ N TRY](#). If you want to carve that design, download the [PDF chip-carving pattern from our website here](#).



Jane Park

Jane began carving only a few months ago, yet she's already mastering spoon carving. Each heart-melting spoon she carves improves on the last, and she loves gifting them to family and friends.



Nitin Varshney

Nitin is gearing up for Valentine's Day, carving both large and small hearts. The big one features a Tramp-art-inspired border, and we're eager to see which design he'll carve in its center.

Pranay Agrawal

Pranay never fails to amaze us with his woodcarving talent. Last month, he carved a beautiful family sign with chip-carved lettering and a purple wood frame.



He enjoys working with walnut, adding chip carving patterns to his spoons and kitchen pieces, and sometimes decorating them with milk-paint accents.



Sometimes Pranay leaves the tool marks visible, giving each item a rustic, one-of-a-kind character.

Jim Phipps

Jim has been whittling for so long that he can't recall when he first picked up a carving knife. We're putting together a gallery of his work, and this photo offers a sneak peek at a few of his projects.



Mike Campi

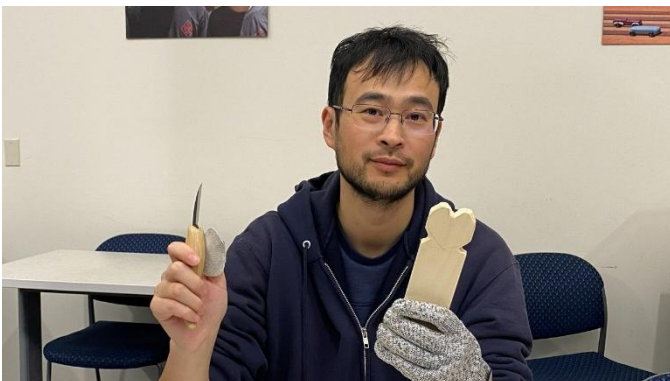


Mike is a scout leader, and he always makes sure the scouts get proper training and receive their merit badges.

Mike carves with us on Thursdays. He participated in our [Whittling Hearts](#) workshop and started carving a heart from a basswood board.

Xiaohan Ma

Xiaohan began whittling a heart at our recent workshop. He also completed his first project, a vibrantly painted pumpkin.



Roman Chernikov

Roman carved a set of wooden hearts to use as examples for our January “Whittling Hearts” workshop. He often embeds magnets in his pieces, turning them into unique fridge magnets.



Roman designed and shared a chip carving pattern for decorating strops. Learn more about his [DIY strop-making expertise and download the free PDF chip carving pattern](#) in his article at READ N TRY.

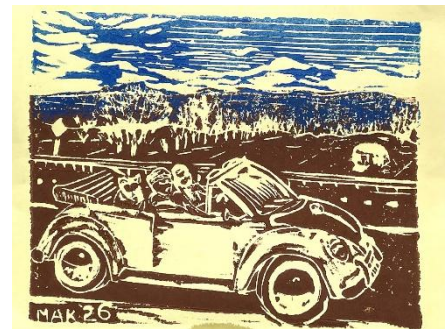
Jordan Makower's Linoleum Block Prints

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



Enjoying the New Convertible. Rte. 9, Amherst, MA 1963

We had just picked up our yellow VW from Northampton Motors, and enjoyed a ride with the car's top down. Hadley's hills are in the background. In those days, a lot of land was fields and trees, and one old Army Quonset hut that was probably used as a nightclub.



When I printed Phase 1, I put a 1" strip of masking tape at the top of the block, covering the sky & clouds that I had previously carved. The tape prevented the brown ink from touching the top of the block. I removed the tape and washed the block (and tools), then used a small 1" roller to apply blue to the top portion. Any overlap looks like a shadow cast on the hills.

Dandelion Seeds



I was thinking about how our family has spread out, and came across an image that demonstrated the concept. Many of the 'seed carriers' are so thin that it is difficult to show them at all, or accurately.

Photographs of dandelions show geometric perfection and symmetry. The best I can manage is 'organized chaos' 😊

It's always a 'wonderment'; although the carving is relatively simple, with no intended background, each print is unique, showing different aspects of the dandelion in the

wind, as well as hints of a background!

Esther's Butterfly. Museum of Natural History, NYC 2001

I heard a local radio report on the declining numbers of Monarch Butterflies in this general area and thought I would try to render one in a linoleum block print.

The Museum had a live exhibit. People entered into a warm, humid environment (in March!) by passing through a 'curtain' of a long plastic strip. Butterflies were in motion everywhere. One first landed on Esther's hair, then was attracted to a scent (probably remnants of candy) on her thumb. We all felt 'blessed' by that contact.



Only a hint of the hand's deeply grooved lines is intended to show in the final print. This photo of the block shows the manner in which the fingers and hand were carved at this point. The 'ridge crests' must be carved away, else the hand will look 'wrinkled'.

The linoleum block is 4" x 5". The orange color was applied with a Sigma Brush (TM). Retouching was done with a black brush from the same package.

Review more of [Jordan's work at his gallery](#).



Carving tip: Before you start a new piece, chat with fellow carvers about the project. They can share lessons from similar work, recommend the right tools, or help you think through grain orientation. Our club brings together decades of carving expertise (and life experience), so tap into that collective knowledge. It can save you time and effort when carving your project.



The End Grain of our Woodcarving Newsletter

We've scheduled six optional workshops for 2026 and hope you'll join us to carve, learn, and have fun. We're also seeking volunteers to give brief 15-30-minute talks on any subject you enjoy, such as carving birds or bookmarks, sharpening, finishing, sanding, painting, safety, pattern scaling, etc. If you have a topic that excites you, please step forward and share it with the club!

We promote the club and the art of woodcarving through public events, our website, and social media. If you're on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Pinterest](#), please follow us and like, love, or share the posts you enjoy. We don't run paid ads; our reach depends on supporters like you, and every like signals that **our efforts matter**.



We hope you enjoyed this **lovely** newsletter edition. You can [subscribe here](#) to receive an email when we publish next time.

Please [rate this newsletter](#) and share [your thoughts and ideas in the comments](#).

Thank you for keeping [your membership](#) current and for your support. If you haven't joined our club yet, consider becoming a member. Happy carving!

