



# Chips & Tips

April 2026  
Covers February-March

## Woodcarving 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 is run by volunteers. Our mission is to learn and share our passion for woodcarving with others. We publish our woodcarving newsletter every two months. Read the newsletter at <https://santaclaravalleycarvers.org/newsletter-2026-04/>

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.

Membership dues: starting at **\$6 per year**. Extra fees may apply depending on location. See page 3 for details.

### Meeting Times and Locations

<b>Monday Meeting</b> 10 am to 2 pm	<a href="#">Los Gatos Adult Recreation Center</a> , Room 206. <b>Members 55+</b> 208 E. Main St., Los Gatos, CA 95030
<b>Thursday Meeting</b> 7 pm to 9 pm	<a href="#">Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council of Scouting America</a> 1900 The Alameda, #100, San Jose, CA 95126 Note: Adults and children over 10 years with parents are welcome
<b>Other Opportunities</b>	Zoom meeting Mondays 7-8 pm with <a href="#">Tri-Valley Carvers</a> . Contact us if interested.
Please check the latest updates to our <a href="#">meeting times and locations on our website</a> . Find <a href="#">other clubs in the area</a> .	

# 2026 Chapter Leadership

President: Roman Chernikov

Vice President: Jim Phipps

Secretary: Dan Brady

Treasurer and membership: Gary Paulson

SCVC Adviser: Dave Osterlund

CCG Adviser: Roman Chernikov

Contact us by email: [contact@santaclaravalleycarvers.org](mailto:contact@santaclaravalleycarvers.org)

## President's Message

Our woodcarving workshops are becoming more popular, and more people are participating. Thanks to David Osterlund for leading the chain carving workshop in March. If you're interested in our upcoming workshops, check out [our schedule online](#); the next one is "**Making a Strop**" in May 2026. Our workshops are free for SCVC members, and we welcome carvers of all skill levels to join.

Our collaboration with the [California Carvers Guild](#) (CCG) is going well. Parts of our newsletter are reprinted in *The Log* (a bi-monthly CCG publication about woodcarving in California), our events are insured through the Guild, and 14 members hold dual memberships. I'm also leading a [CCG website](#) upgrade and training 10 volunteers on WordPress. Please let me know if you want to be involved.



A sincere thanks to Dave Woulf (CCG President) and Gary Eaves (CCG Editor) for their support.

As a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, we've recently joined the **Amazon Affiliate Program**. This lets us earn a modest commission on most woodcarving tools you purchase through our recommendations. Please take a look at [our curated shopping list](#).

The **Oakhurst Woodcarvers Rendezvous** is back. If your schedule allows, it's a great time to learn various woodcarving techniques and pyrography. With over 20 workshops available, it's a solid gathering for carvers of all experience levels. Please register in advance. See [event flyer here](#).

The Bay Area Woodworkers Association (BAWA) is hosting a **woodworking show** at Woodcraft in San Carlos on **May 1-3**. It's a great chance to meet local artisans, see their finest projects, and chat about techniques. Mark your calendar; find details on the [BAWA website](#). The show is **free to visit**.

We'll be at the [Santa Clara County Fair](#) on Friday and Saturday, August 21-22, from 2 to 6 pm. Volunteers are needed to show woodcarving to fair visitors. If you can help, let me know **ASAP** so we can arrange tickets and parking passes in advance.



**Carving tip:** If rust is a problem, make a simple oiler from a small tin can and an old T-shirt. Fill it with **Camellia oil**, an excellent **rust preventative**, and treat your carving

knives and tools as needed. A purchase link for the oil is available on [our Shopping List page](#).



Happy carving,

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

**Schedule Change:** No meeting on Monday, May 25, due to the holiday. We will meet on Tuesday, 5/26, instead.

## Upcoming Events

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



**May 1-3, 2026:** Woodworking Show organized by the [Bay Area Woodworkers Association](#), hosted at the [Woodcraft store](#) in San Carlos, CA.



**May 9, 2026:** Scout-O-Rama at History Park, San Jose, CA. We will participate in the largest local Scout gathering. Read about [our participation in 2025](#).



**May 18 & 21, 2026:** Join our workshop to make our own strops decorated with chip carving or shallow relief carving during our regular meeting hours. **Free for members.**



**June 13, 2026:** Saratoga Blossom Festival. Our club will again demonstrate woodcarving alongside antiques, music, and crafts. Read about [our participation in 2025](#).



**June - August 2026:** We will make winter ornaments for our holiday gift exchange in December. It will include carving Santas, snowmen, and other ornaments.



**August 6 & 10, 2026:** Group project to carve ghost ornaments for Halloween during regular meeting hours. If you have a nice design in mind, please let us know!



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

## Membership

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. CCG membership is optional, but recommended as CCG supports our club and carvers in California.

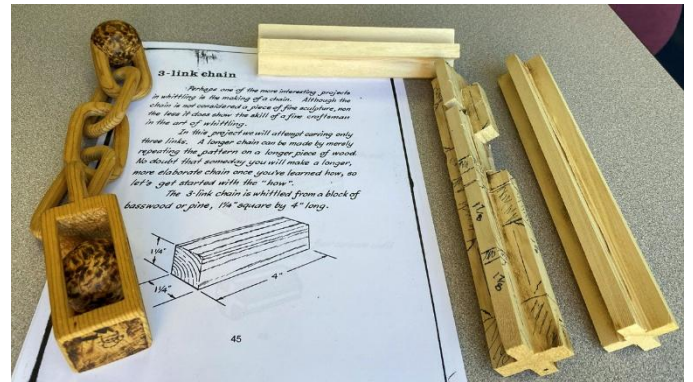
If you want to be involved in our woodcarving community, even if you are remote, you can join our club online by filling in the ["New Membership Application"](#) and [paying the dues online](#).

# Woodcarving Workshops

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

## Whittling Wooden Chains Workshop, March 2026

In March 2026, we held a chain carving workshop led by **David Osterlund**. He guided beginners through the basics of whittling a full chain from a single wooden block, while experienced carvers joined in to refine their technique. Each participant received a wooden blank and a copy of a six-page handout detailing every step of the chain carving process.



**Dan Brady** pre-cut the blanks into cross-shaped sections on his table saw, reducing the amount of material each carver had to remove. Thank you, Dan, that helped a lot!

The woodcarving workshop was **free for members**, and **20** of us signed up and took part. All of the finished and some in-progress chains are now on display in the lobby of the Adult Recreation Center.

## Woodcarving Display Table: Carved Wooden Chains

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:  
**Carved Wooden Chains**

Contributors:

Ashraf Amirabi,  
Dan Brady,  
David Clarke,  
David Osterlund,  
Nitin Varshney,  
Roman Chernikov,  
Terry Davis,  
and other carvers.

# Our Recent Activities and Publications

Check out our newly published article online:

## Chip Carving Demonstration at Woodcraft, February 2026

On Valentine's Day 2026, our club members demonstrated chip carving at Woodcraft in San Carlos and guided attendees in chip carving on practice boards. [Read more here.](#)



## SCVC Woodcarving Library Update

We added **35** woodturning and woodworking titles to our library, bringing the total to **332**. 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!

## 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.



# A Warm Welcome to Our New Members!

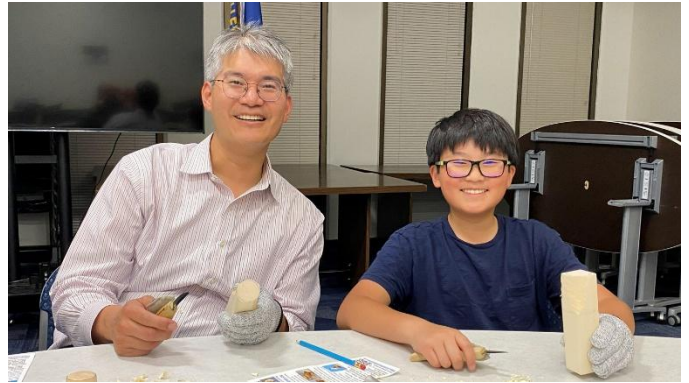


## Tom Nachbaur

Tom attended our recent [chip carving demo at Woodcraft](#) in San Carlos and was amazed by the level of detail the chip carving artists could achieve. After carving a few chips on a practice board, he joined our club on the spot.

## Alan Lee & Hudson Lee

Alan and his son Hudson learned about our club from a neighbor and stopped by on Thursday. After a short safety briefing and a quick mentorship session, they started carving their first project – a wooden pumpkin.



## Jonathan Collins

Jonathan discovered our club through a co-worker and came by on Thursday. After a quick introduction to basic knife cuts, he began carving a basswood pumpkin. Every pumpkin turns out differently, and we're eager to see how Jonathan's piece develops.

## Jonathan Jackel

Jonathan recently started woodcarving, and he has already completed a couple of projects, including a comfort bird. He found our club online and visited our meeting on Monday. After talking to many carvers and taking a crash course on carving, he joined our club the same day and started carving a pumpkin. Welcome Jonathan!



# Woodcarvings Spotted

## Neighbor's Carved Bear

Submitted by **Roman Chernikov**: My neighbor has displayed this carved bear on his porch for years. It once held a welcome sign, but it has deteriorated and is now missing. He tells me the bear was originally acquired in Tahoe.

Adding a hand-carved figure or welcome sign to a porch gives a home a warm, personal touch.

Have you carved one for your home?



## Amazon Affiliate Program



Our club joined the **Amazon Affiliate Program**, so we can recommend woodcarving tools and supplies and receive a modest commission on purchases made through our links. Check out our curated list of recommended woodcarving items here: [SCVC Woodcarving Shopping List](#).

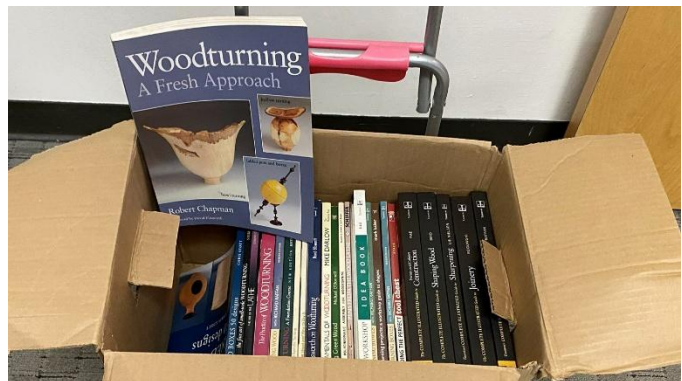
If you have an excellent tool to recommend, please let us know!

## Donations to Santa Clara Valley Carvers

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

## Steven Dahout's Book Donation

Thanks to **Steven Dahout**, who is a member of two local woodturning clubs ([SVW](#) and [WBW](#)), for donating a **super nice collection** of woodturning and woodworking books to our library. Steve, we appreciate your support! We are happy to share that two of those books were already checked out!



## Tom Goudy's Books and Tools Donation

Thanks to **Tom Goudy** for donating books, magazines, and a suite of large tools, including a scrollsaw, grinders, a table saw, a bandsaw, and a drill press. Tom was an active SCVC member in the early 2000s; today, he carves only occasionally, yet his support remains strong. While preparing to move to Florida, he's packed his carving knives and hopes to join a local carving club there. Tom, your contributions keep our library and workshop thriving. Thank you for everything!



## Woodcraft San Carlos Knives Donation

Thanks to [Woodcraft San Carlos](https://www.woodcraft.com) for donating **two high-quality chip carving knives** to our club. The knives are branded with our club's name, sharpened to razor-sharp edges, and ready for our next chip carving workshop in May: decorating strops with chip carving.



**Carving tip:** Make a DIY mini-saw by mounting a scrollsaw blade in a dowel. The compact tool reaches tight spots, perfect for carving small wooden chains.



## What's on the Workbench?



### Ashraf Amirabi

Ashraf is carving a chain, like most of our club members, after attending our recent chain carving workshop. She not only made good progress carving a wooden chain, but she also learned how to use a coping saw and an electric drill to remove excess wood more quickly!



### Terry Davis

Terry joined our chain-carving workshop last month, began carving her first chain, and is having a blast! Check out the photo of her smiling right after she loosened the first link; great work, Terry!

## Dan Brady and Terry Davis



Dan, our club secretary, is a very experienced carver and gladly mentors beginner carvers and local scouts, helping them improve their woodcarving skills. He is currently working on not one but two wooden chains, including one with heart-shaped links.

Special thanks to Dan for preparing blanks for all club members for our chain carving workshop. Those blanks helped so much!



### David Clarke

David used his woodworking skills and experience to sand and polish the chain links that he carved with his knives. In this photo, the links are still attached to each other with small wooden bridges to make the sanding easier.

## David Osterlund

Thank you, David, for leading our chain-carving workshop and guiding members as they finished their wooden chains. Your help with the tools (a drill and a coping saw) made all the difference. We're also excited to see your latest project, a Viking warrior, nearly ready for its first coat of paint.



## Jim Phipps

Jim, our club's vice president, has finally broken his unofficial oath to never smile on camera. And now we have proof that Jim has a bountiful smile! :)

Jim is carving basswood eggs, making various Easter ornaments, and we are looking forward to seeing them completed soon.



## Gary Paulson

Gary, our club's treasurer, has mastered many unique skills, including checkering and silver wire inlay. Gary has been working on his current project for a while now, and he is currently hammering in the second bazillion of silver nails into the maple stock. Stop by our carving meeting on Monday and ask Gary to explain how the silver wire inlay is done; it is truly fascinating!



## Mike Campi

Mike is getting ready for Easter by carving a cute bunny from a flat piece of basswood.

## Jane Park

After carving many wooden spoons, Jane started learning woodturning and took a class with Frank Moulia at [Woodcraft in San Carlos](#), turning several nice pens and a pen holder.



## Nitin Varshney

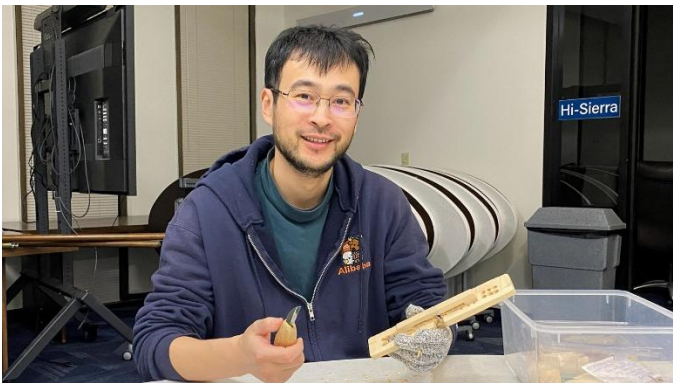
Nitin participated in our chain carving workshop and completed his second chain. He is also finishing carving a comfort bird.



## Pranay Agrawal

Pranay hand-carved two walnut bowls using only gouges. Though they look as if they were turned, no lathe or sandpaper was involved — the visible tool marks in the photo show the pure carving process. The bowls are about 9 inches in diameter and finished with oil to highlight the wooden grain. Pranay is currently making a shrink pot.





## Xiaohan Ma

Xiaohan joined our chain carving workshop and decided to carve very large links to make his chain stand out. We are looking forward to seeing it finished soon.

## Roman Chernikov

Roman participated in our chain-carving workshop and is finishing up his 7-link chain. He also made three leather strops, each featuring a different chip carving design, for our May workshop. He designed the chip carving patterns with beginners in mind while ensuring the strops can withstand the rough conditions of everyday use. Roman also wrote an article on [making DIY strops](#) and posted those chip carving patterns for free download on his website, [READ N TRY](#).



## Sorin Papuc

Sorin began carving only a few months ago, yet he's already tackling challenging designs in various hardwoods. See his interlinked-heart pieces crafted from Cherry and Poplar. The Poplar one on the right is still a work in progress (WIP).



# 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, linoleum blocks, and final prints.

## Picking Blackberries at family campground, 1945

In June 1945, a Makower family group vacationed in a Workmen's Circle family campground near Monticello, NY. Cottages were scattered on unmowed grassy hills. There were no swings or slides. A nearby tennis court was overgrown with weeds. Children roamed the fields, improvising their own Nature Walks, picking flowers and berries. This is a rendering of that moment in time.



My cousin, Marilyn, had a distinctive hairstyle as a 6-year old. I've looked at hundreds of photos online and can't find one like it. She had two bunches of golden hair on either side of a central part. I've sketched what I remember. Also, I don't have a photo of her, so I've improvised there, too.

## First Driving Lesson, 1975

This 4" x 5" linoleum block shows a memory of a bicycle training lesson.



We lived on a quiet street, abutting woods. Teaching my children to ride a bike was easy. Pictured here is the moment of 'letting go', when the child realizes they are on their own, and that they have mastered the skill of bicycling.

## Bear Stops for a Snack, 1961

We were tenting across the US in our VW at Avalanche Creek, Glacier N.P. When we pulled into this campground, we saw a bear's hind legs sticking out of a metal trash barrel, and were told to bang pots and pans if one 'visited' us. It did!

There was too much detail to be rendered in a small block, so a 5" x 7" is used. Scene shows our isolated camp area, adjacent rapid creek, steep/massive rock slope, tent, VW with big bear swatting freezer chest, and us banging pots and pans. Bear was unfazed. Distant campers were possibly alerted to the intrusion. The bear left after several unsuccessful tries. Even after 65 years, that campsite is still there!



A 5" x 7" block has a greater surface area. I'm using that to simulate more details that I remember. I've had to redraw some things to correct my 'scale'.

If I had the skill, I would have colored the cross-hatched stream blue, the bear brown, and the tent khaki-green. You'll just have to use your imagination to do that 😊

## Coed Challenges Jordan's Minibike, 1964

When I was a grad student at OSU, I had 5 jobs in order to support my family in Corvallis, OR. I gave Esther our VW Microbus to use during the day, while I drove a (\$75) minibike down backroads to work at the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. One day, a girl on a bicycle challenged me to a race, "I'll drag you," she said! I knew she would win. I looked out of place (and outclassed) on that 3.5 hp bike.



**Editor's note:** We may never find out who won the race unless we all ask Jordan to [share more in the comments](#).

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





**Carving tip:** Plywood tags are small and thin, and also sturdy and affordable. They can be used for quick labels, paint or stain test swatches, woodburning temperature checks, laser-engraver test cuts, small carving templates, glue spreading, as shims to set carving or drill depth, and many other cases. Is there any interest in placing a group order for them?



## The End Grain of our Woodcarving Newsletter

Our regular woodcarving workshops are gaining momentum, with participation on the rise. If you have a carving topic you're passionate about, offer to lead a 10 to 20-minute session for the club. Sharing what you love helps us all learn and grow together.

If you use social media, help us share our carving projects on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [Pinterest](#). Also, review [our curated shopping list](#) for new woodcarving tools and whittling supplies.

We hope you enjoyed this newsletter edition. You can [subscribe here](#) to receive an email when we publish next time. If you haven't joined our club yet, consider [becoming a member](#) even if remotely.

Happy carving! What do you think?



*Nitin's first carved chain, September 2025*