



The Smoky Mountain Woodturners Chapter of AAW meets each month of the year on the 3rd Tuesday of the month starting at 6:00 pm. Our meetings are in-person and on ZOOM. To attend zoom, visitors should send their email to jevogelsang@charter.net. Guests are always welcome. MEETING Location:



February 2026

Newsletter

Pauline Bayne, editor

## President's Message — Bill Thurman

We had a great group attending our February meeting. Glad to see that everyone has survived our current period of cold weather, now we can watch things come alive. I love seeing all the vibrant colors in the spring. Thank you, Jack and Colin for an informative demonstration on embellishing your woodturnings with power carving. For me the hard part about starting out on a new adventure is making the decision on type of equipment I need to accomplish my task. We now know two resources that have experience with several types of power wood carving tools. With the comments and questions asked we have others in the club that would be good resources also.



I was glad to see a lot of people wanting to continue our participation in the Beads of Courage program with Children's Hospital. These boxes help to put a smile on the kids' faces as they fight their health issues. We also will continue support to Cancer Support Community East Tennessee by providing wig stands. These stands are given out when ladies come to their work shop on wig care. I encourage everyone to get involved.

Lucy Bobb brought in a nice cherry burl that she is donating to the club for the wood auction which will be during our May meeting. Thanks Lucy.

The March 20-22 wood turning weekend at Arrowmont is full and there is a waiting list but if you would like to put your name on the list you can contact Ron Comtois or Andy Milligan.

Are you going to the AAW Symposium in Raleigh June 4--7? If you are and you want a \$40.00 discount, use the Code SMWTTN2026. You have to be a AAW member to use the code. For the best price register before February 28.

Pauline Bayne will be bringing us our next level of embellishing our wood turnings with her demonstration in March on Pyrography Techniques.

Remember, Life is Good when we are making shavings so keep them coming.

**ANNUAL DUES of \$30 are due — by March 31**  
**Please Pay at a Meeting or Send \$30 annual dues to:**  
**SMWTS Treasurer**  
**P. O. Box 50141,**  
**Knoxville,**  
**Tennessee**  
**37950-0141**

**Failure to pay dues will result in no access to the Members Only section of our website.**

## 2025 Club Calendar

General Meetings 3rd Tuesday: 6 pm, Location: Woodcraft Knoxville  
 Board Meetings, 2nd Tuesday, 5 pm, Location: Woodcraft Knoxville - open to all

- January 6 - 1st Quarter Board of Directors meeting, 3rd Wed of Jan, April, July, Oct, 5 pm, Woodcraft
- January 20 - Cindy Drozda: *Finial Box —an IRD, Interactive Remote Demo*
- February 17 - Jack Harris & Colin Chambers: *Carving your Turnings*
- March 17 - Pauline Bayne: Pyrography Techniques for your Woodturnings**
- March 20-22 - Arrowmont Turning Workshop (reservations filled)
- April 7 - 2nd Quarter Board of Directors meeting, 3rd Wed of Jan, April, July, Oct, 5 pm, Woodcraft
- April 21 - Ron Comptois: *Offset Napkin Holder*
- May 19 - Annual Wood Auction
- June 16 - Jake Niedling: *TBD*
- July 7 - 3rd Quarter Board of Directors meeting, 3rd Wed of Jan, April, July, Oct, 5 pm, Woodcraft
- July 21 - Ted Pelfrey: *Embellishing Hollow Forms*
- August 18 - Bob Henrickson - *TBD*
- September 15 - John Lucas - *Using a Router at the Lathe*
- October 6 - 4th Quarter Board of Directors meeting, 3rd Wed of Jan, April, July, Oct, 5 pm, Woodcraft
- October 20 - Covered Calabash Bowl - *TBD*
- October 24-25 - Fall (demo & workshop, Sat & Sun, 9 - 3
- November 17 - John Jordan - *TBD*
- December 15 - Annual Christmas Party

## 2026 Officers, Board, & Committees



### Board of Directors:

- Randy Fritchman, 2024-26
- Pauline Bayne, 2025-26
- Maria D’Elio, 2026-27
- Colin Chambers, 2026-2027

**President**  
Bill Thurman

**Vice President**  
Gordan Sloane

**Treasurer**  
Jack Harris

**Secretary**  
Gordon Fowler

### Committees:

- Beads of Courage / Wig Stands:* Bill Thurman
- Education/Wears Valley:* Robert Law
- Fantasy of Trees:* Ron Comptois
- Membership:* Maria D’Elio & JerryDeLaurentis
- Mentoring:* Ron Comptois
- Newsletter:* Pauline Bayne
- Pens for Troops:* Randy Fritchman

- Photographer:* Randy Fritchman,  
Assisted by Terry Fritchman
- Program:* Gordon Sloane, Colin Chalmers,  
& Jake Niedling
- Safety Officer:* John Jordan
- Video/Internet:* Jim Vogelsang, Website  
Andy Milligan, Video

### Wood Auction Contributors:

Larry Gardener (Tellico Village club), Gordon Fowler, Roy Cuff, Gordon Sloane, Andy Milligan, & Lucy Bobb

### Visitors:

One visitor, **Mickey White**— Welcome!

## BUSINESS Meeting

### COMITTEE REPORTS

#### *Treasurer's Report - Jack Harris*

The current balance is \$10,132. 32 members have paid dues, about 1/2 of the total. \*\*\*\*

*Fantasy of Trees - Ron Comtois is seeking an assistant who will be chair in 2027. Please contact him if you are interested.*

To maximize sales of our turning works, this year we need to consider quality over quantity—embellishment, paint, carving. \*\*\*\*\*

#### *Pens for Troops - Randy Fritchman*

He has both kits and wood for the asking. Only 4 members have turned in pens at this point.

Please turn your pens! \*\*\*\*\*

#### *Beads of Courage & Wig Stands - Bill Thurman*

This is a national program for children's hospitals where young long-term patients get a bead for each procedure and need a box to hold their "bragging rights". For the wig stands, we give them to Community Cancer Support of East Tennessee. They recently sent us a very nice Thank-You note and published it in their newsletter, giving us some nice publicity. Only about 10% of club members produce turnings for these charities so he asked if we want to continue both of them. The answer was "yes" to

### WEARS VALLEY RANCH

Bill Pence gave a summary of recent activity—one day of teaching per month with about 12 students; they will be working on plates/platters this month & pyrography in April with Pauline Bayne

### WINNERS

January Drawing:

Arrowmont: Lucy Bobb

### Business - Bill Thurman

National Symposium, Raleigh NC, June 4-7, Early bird deadline Feb 28. Our website has a code to get a \$40 discount on registration fees.

Arrowmont Weekend, March 20-22: Reservations are full, but contact Ron Comptois to be on the waiting list. Non-turning attendance is possible as well.

The Board of Directors decided to drop the J.C. Campbell Folkschool because of a major cost increase. Arrowmont tuition raffle tickets are still available each month with a December drawing.

### New Ideas for the Newsletter - Pauline Bayne

Bill Thurman has suggested:

1. Feature a short bio of a different club member each month. Pauline will start with our new President, Bill Thurman.
2. Let's all participate:
  - Member-submitted short articles, such as:
    - favorite finishes and why
    - clues to better sanding, etc.
  - Tips & Tricks

*Do let Pauline know if you would like to do this, or she might just recruit you anyway.*

### NEW OPPORTUNITY

Colin Chalmers is offering a free two-day class (plus material fee) at his woodturning studio (in Kingston) per quarter to any member chosen by raffle. Email is going out to determine your desire to participate in the March drawing for his April 18-19 class.

January Attendance  
37 present, plus 3 on ZOOM

# DEMO: Carving your Turnings

## Jack Harris & Colin Chalmers

The topic tonight was power carving tools. Jack gave a summary by way of a slide show of many products on the market: rotary tools, flex shaft tools, micro motor tools, etc. Power Carving Depot is a company started by the same person who used to own Woodturning Wonders. He is offering our club members free shipping, and 10% of purchase goes back to our club. Jack and Colin recommend “Big Blue”, a heavy duty motor that powers up to two hand-pieces and can accept a variety of burrs. Jack finished his portion with a summary of available accessory tools, such as a chuck for holding the workpiece, various dust collectors, and examples of professional turners who embellish their work with carving. Colin demonstrated a variety of tools on scrap wood to demonstrate carving techniques. Jack and Colin brought many different tools for the members to try.



Tennessee  
Association of  
Woodturners  
Symposium



Andi Wolfe - Wood as Medium



Dixie Biggs - Wood Artist



John Jordan - Textured & Carved



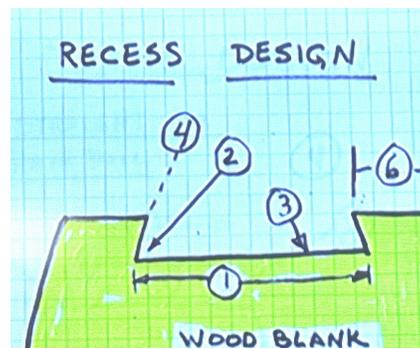
Betty Scarpino - Wood Sculpture



## SAFETY TALK - Jake Niedling

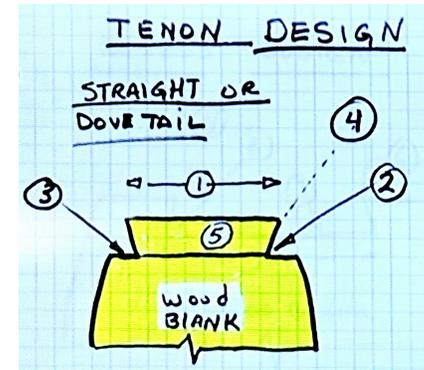
### Recess Design (cutting the wood to hold the tenon)

1. Proper diameter
2. Sharp corners
3. Flat & straight surface
4. Angle matches chuck jaws
5. Recess depth is shorter than the jaws
6. Wood width outside the recess should be  $1/2''$  minimum. Type of wood is a factor.



### Tenon Design

1. Proper diameter
2. Sharp corners
3. Flat & straight surface
4. Angle match the jaws of the chuck
5. Length of tenon should be shorter than depth of the jaws



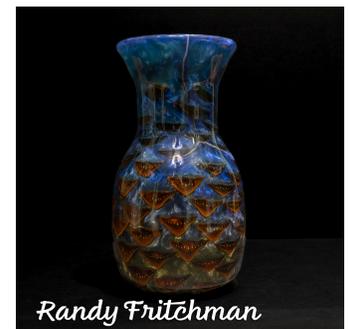
## SPOTLIGHT: Randy Fritchman

Randy & wife, Terry, our intrepid photographers, bought property in Wear's Valley, TN in 1992 and moved up permanently from the Atlanta area in 2003. In the mid-90s, before coming to TN, Randy started turning. At that time, he had a corporate job and worked way too many hours. One Sunday morning PBS, he saw a guy turning a pen and thought that looked relaxing. That Christmas Terry bought him a Ryobi lathe—every heard of that brand? That was his start in woodturning. He didn't really have a teacher or a club, so he learned by watching at several Georgia Woodturning Shows. Once in TN, he took a class at Arrowmont with Ray Key and then a Bob Clausson class at Woodcraft. These were the times he made his first bowls. Before these classes, his only tool was a scraper. He had no knowledge of tools or even sharpening. So Randy has been contributing to our club for a long time. He was awarded a Lifetime Membership in 2025, and both of them are our club photographers.

As a professional turner, he started doing craft shows, along with stained-class creator Terry, in 2003. It was at a show that another fellow told him about Smoky Mountain Woodturners so he came to his first club meeting in December 2003—the Christmas party! The club demonstrations—as is true for many of us—gave him continuing education in turning. Randy's influences have been Ray Key, David Ellsworth, and Glen Lucas. He loves going to Ireland to study with Lucas. Now that he is into epoxy turning, Canadian Jim Sprague ranks as an important influence.

The Fritchmans have been doing craft shows for a long time, up to 30 per year at the beginning and gradually tapering off as they became involved in the better ones. They did the Gatlinburg Craftsman's Fair twice a year (10 days & 18 days—what long hours and days!). Both of them joined the Foothills Craft Guild and are still doing shows there along with the Gatlinburg Craft Community (3 shows per year). So now, it is these last two indoor shows that are their routine.

Randy says the most challenging thing about being a craftsman is the selling, especially when there are economic downturns as in 2008. These days, they don't travel to do shows but really enjoy personal traveling. The pair have seen Paris, Scotland (4 times), Ireland (4 times), and are set to go on a Danube River cruise in November.



## Tips and Tricks: Thin-Walled Pierced Bowl

One way to show off thin-walled bowls is to pierce it with decorative negative spaces. There are some tricks to creating these unique pieces with walls between 1/16" and 3/32" thick. You don't need lasers, cameras or special equipment to create thin walls. Here's how:



- 1) Use dry stable wood
- 2) Orient the wood for end-grain turning. With the wood fibers running up and down, the small section between pierced areas will be stronger than if they are cross grain.
- 3) Do not try turning thin walls from the inside, it much easier and safer to turn thin from the outside.

- a) Establish the outside profile of the bowl first.
- b) Turn the inside to match the outside profile but with walls consistently 1/4" thick. Use a figure 8 caliper, starting at the wall base and pull it to the wall top looking for areas that are thicker. Mark the location on the outside, and turn that section measuring a repeating.



- c) Once you have consistent wall thickness, finish the inside and start turning thin from the outside. Here are several ways to do that:

- i) If you know where you plan to pierce the wall, drill small holes so you can see the wall thickness.



ii) You can actually design the bowl with a void to help gauge thickness.

iii) Starting at the top, turn the outside down. Measure frequently with calipers. As you reach the bottom, add a little thickness, you want the vessel to be bottom heavy.

iv) Replace the tail stock live center LED light that can go inside the vessel. Starting at the top, turn until the light comes thru the wood and is a consistent color from the top to bottom. The lighter the color the thinner the wall.



d) When piercing, I use a simple rotary tool with two 1/8" shaft tool bought at Home Depot: A tile cutter and a grout removal bit. Both can drill and cut. The grout remover has a 1/16" burr tip that is effective and lasts a long time. If clogged with wood, they can be cleaned by burning off any wood with a torch.



Dremel 1/8 in. Rotary Tool Carbide Grout Removal Accessory with 1/16 in. Rotary Tool. ★★★★★ (2.8 / 245) Model# 570+569 \$20.70

e) In actually cutting, layout negative areas, avoiding a precise grid pattern. It's difficult and any mistake shows up. Instead use a varied pattern between two edge lines

f) Finally, adding a slightly thicker ring of wood at the top of the vessel, adds strength and avoid cracking the top edge.



Have fun experimenting.



If you have questions about our SMWTS educational program at the Ranch or would like to participate as an instructor, contact Bob Law - rockytopbob1@gmail.com

## What's Happening at the Ranch in February?

This month, Ed Lewis introduced the intermediate students to Segmented Wood Turning. They started by gluing the pieces together to make rings. Then they turned their base & finished the day by gluing the rings in place. In Open Shop Thursdays they will complete the project by turning the assembled project into shape. Our new students have been practicing their bowl turning skills. They were also introduced to wood grain & structure this month..





# Show and Tell

*Roy A. Cuff*



*Roy A. Cuff*



*Roy A Cuff*



*Roy A. Cuff*



*Randy Fritchman*



*Ken Godwin*



*Gordon Sloane*



*Gordon Fowler*



*Harry Ford*



*Harry Ford*



*Dick Hoffman*



*Dick Hoffman*



Jack Harris—Power Carving



*Bill Thurman*



*Bill Thurman*



*Dick Hoffman*



Great work -one and all !

*Dick Hoffman*

