



The Curling Chip

March / April 2024

Spring is in the air - oh wait - it's Winter. Just kidding Spring again! No - now it's Winter. While we wait for Mother Nature to make up her mind on the season, we have been enjoying our monthly gatherings of carving, painting, and chatting. Becky led us through a Tushroom project, and Eric escaped the indecisive weather on a trip to Iceland! Doug refreshed our mental palate with painting techniques, and Matt brought knotwork cutlery to the table. We finished off the month by crafting windows (mostly doors) into the fae world.

Have an idea for an article? Did you take woodcarving photos on a trip? Please send them to Becky at thewoodwurm@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Becky Barnes

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<https://FlickertailWoodcarvers.org>



FlickertailWoodcarversND



FlickertailWoodcarvers



makerspace.social/@FlickertailWoodcarvers



FlickertailWoodcarvers

2024 Leadership

President: Cliff Orgaard
President Elect: Becky Weisgerber
Past President: Becky Barnes
Programs: Eric Gaasland
Treasurer: Warren Schlecht
Secretary: Becky Barnes
Librarian: Todd Engelstad
Historian: Clara Sherman Yonker
Membership: Doug Smith
Annual Show: Eric Gaasland
Property: Becky Weisgerber
Publicity: Becky Weisgerber
Buckstop Gallery: Mike Knudson, Doug Emerson
Facebook: Eric Gaasland
Pinterest: Cindy Roth
Mastodon & Instagram: Becky Barnes
Website: Becky Barnes



NORTH DAKOTA COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

Monthly Meeting Minutes for Flickertail Woodcarvers

March 2, 2024



Call to Order by President Cliff Orgaard

20 members present. 3 Boy Scout visitors: Jeremiah Thurn, Oliver, and Finn worked on their whittling / carving badge, and learned knife safety from Becky B., while working on a practice stick.

Secretary's Report

Secretary's Report – Motioned as read by Eric Gaasland, seconded by Todd Engelstad

Treasurer's Report

Warren was unable to attend the meeting. He submitted a report that the balance was \$9,675. The income from the Winter Celebration Carving event has not yet been deposited. Of the total balance, \$3601 is designated for the Buckstop Junction improvement fund. Motioned as accepted by Eric Gaasland, seconded by Diane Lehman-Turck.

Committee Reports

Membership (Doug Smith): Not present.

Programs (Eric Gaasland): On to plan "C" for the October show – an email sent off to Charles Banks. James Ray Miller also a potential carver, who works with flat plane figures. Jim Paulson was contacted about a Spring (May) Ale Bowl class (either pheasant, dragon, chicken, etc.), and was checking into costs for expanding the class to accommodate 12 people.

Publicity (Becky Weisgerber): No changes.

Property (Becky Weisgerber): No changes.

Library (Todd Englestad): New book added from Eric Gaasland about fan carving.

Historian (Clara Yonker): Not present.

Facebook (Eric Gaasland): Updated.

Website (Becky Barnes): Updated – new patterns added, and new club officers listed.

Buckstop Junction Upgrades (Doug Emerson, Bob Pedigo, Mike Knudson, Warren Schlect,

Cliff Orgaard, Todd Engelstad): A new ad hoc committee was created to help jumpstart additions or changes to the current Buckstop Junction carving display. A large preexisting 6' x 8' case was filled with Frank Koch's carvings – the case needs an upgrade or to be replaced. They are looking at adding glass doors to it, purchasing a new (used) display case, or crafting a new custom case. Todd E. has volunteered his workshop space in the case of crafting a new cabinet. This might be an opportunity to call around to different businesses that want display carvings – swapping out carvings over time.

Old Business

None

New Business

Whittle-In Project: Thank you Becky B. for bringing in “Tushrooms” - small mushroom people.

Becky Weisgerber has accepted the position of President Elect – as such, she would like to make this year the last year for her making the raffle tickets for the Annual Show. She is willing to help train in a new volunteer. The position needs someone to shake down the club members for raffle donations, as well as printing the tickets (costs reimbursed by the club).

Show and Tell

River challenged Denis to a whistle carving contest, and they brought in their results. River crafted a spiral evergreen tree version, while Denis worked up a mushroom hut. They also showed off some faces carved from the insides of golf balls.

Cliff brought in a love spoon with the handle recessed, so it could hold sea shells.

Meeting was adjourned.

Meeting was adjourned.

March 2, 2024 Whittle-In Tushrooms by Becky Barnes

Due to scheduling conflicts, the meeting and Whittle-In were held in the Lower Youth Room of Trinity Lutheran Church. We had plenty of vacuums there to make sure no chips were left behind!

Becky brought in “Tushrooms” for the group to work on - little anthropomorphic mushroom people with short stubby legs, and a lot of attitude.



Above: Extra tables were hauled in, and the group worked in the Lower Youth Room.

Right: Becky B. helps out with visiting Scouts who wanted to learn knife safety and beginning carving.



Above: Dennis and River brought in their whistle challenge - a mushroom hut and a spiral tree. They also brought in some carved golf balls, and a finished bear project from the Winter Celebration.



Below: Cliff brought in a Love Spoon blank he modified, from Bob's class in February. He added a recess to the handle to accommodate shells he brought back from vacation.



Tree Spotlight: Butternut *Juglans cinerea*

Wood from the butternut tree is also known as “white walnut” or “poor man’s walnut” – and while different than the darker walnut that might first come to mind, Claro and American walnut also reside in the same genus: *Juglans*. Butternut prefers a cooler climate to grow in, and can be found in the eastern United States, and southeastern Canada. They are slow-growing trees that can reach between 20-40 meters (66-130 ft.) tall, with a trunk diameter between 40-80 cm (16-31 in.) wide. Their leaves are similar in appearance to ash leaves, with between 9-15 leaflets, but branch in an alternating pattern instead of a paired arrangement.

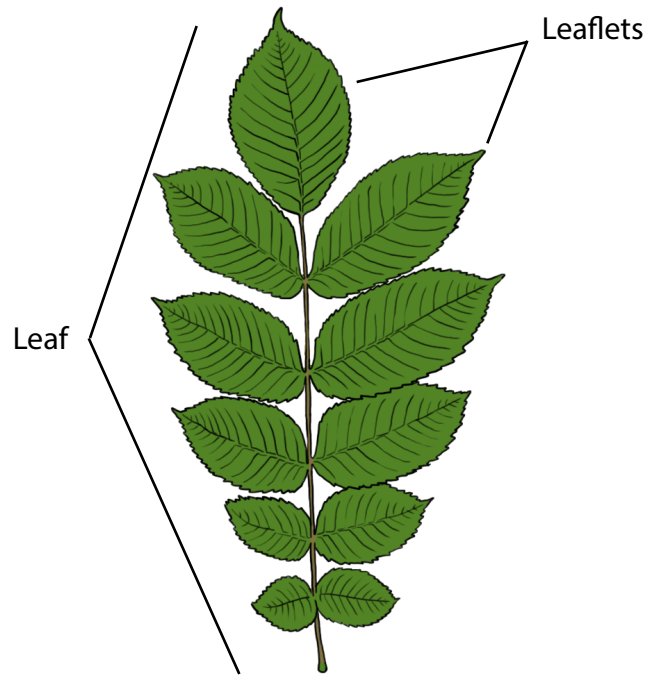
The nuts of these trees are longer and more oval than those of the Black walnut, but still edible. A buttery fat can be collected by boiling the nuts, hence how the tree got its name. Flowers are divided into longer catkins that produce pollen, and smaller pink spikes near the new-year growth which produce the nuts.



Photo by Steven Katovich

Butternut heartwood is a light to medium tan color, and the sapwood a paler cream. The grain is coarser than basswood – so beware grain direction to avoid tear-outs. When sealed, the wood can have a slight **chatoyance** (iridescence).

Sadly many Butternut trees in North America are susceptible to



“Butternut canker,” a type of fungal infection. Infected trees must be removed from stands in order to prevent the spread of the fungus. In some states over 80% of the trees have died. Because of the decline in tree numbers, the US Fish and Wildlife Service list it as a species of federal concern. It is listed as an endangered species in Ontario.

What does a canker look like? Long fissures, sunken and black, with white edges – they can be shiny and gooey looking like tar in the spring. Multiple cankers may grow together – too many, and the branch or trunk is girdled, cutting off nutrients to anything above. Branches with cankers can be pruned in the hopes of saving the tree, but the fungal spores spread easily by wind, rain, and insects.



Some Flickertail members expressed interest in growing their own Butternut trees via seeds – thankfully they tolerate growth zones 3-7, with North Dakota sitting at a 3-4. The trees can grow broad, up to 60 feet wide, so plan your space well. Make sure to keep it away from garden areas or other desired plants, as like their cousin the Walnut, they produce “juglones” which spread in the soil. This is a toxic compound that can stunt or kill other plants (grass seems unaffected). The tree prefers moist soil, and areas with plenty of sunlight.

As of April 2024, I have found seeds available:

<https://sheffields.com/>

<https://spencercreeknursery.com/>

<https://www.incredibleseeds.ca/>

<https://www.perfectcircle.farm/>

Want to read more on Butternut?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juglans_cinerea

<https://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/field-guide/butternut>

Or more about Butternut Canker?

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/butternut-canker/>

<https://www.invadingspecies.com/invaders/forest/butternut-canker/>

Need to know more about Butternut Care and Keeping?

<https://www.thespruce.com/butternut-growing-profile-3269254>



Janka Hardness Test

What is the Janka hardness test? This test was developed in 1906 by Austrian-American Gabriel Janka to test the average hardness of a wood. How? By seeing how much force in pounds (or Newtons) it takes to press a steel ball (measuring .444 inches / 11.28 millimeters) into a block of wood until half of the ball's diameter was inserted. This can vary based on how much moisture is in the wood, or how fast or slow the tree was growing – so to combat the first problem the test is done at 12% moisture content (similar to air-dried lumber). Even if it's not perfect, it gives people a good idea just how tough a piece of wood might be - and what might be a good option for hand carving.

For example:

Basswood - 410

Butternut - 490

Walnut - 1010

Osage Orange - 2040

Ipe - 3680

Great for carving!

A little tough, but not impossible

Maybe stick to power carving...

Used as flooring



March 19, 2024 Whittle-In
Let's Talk About Painting
with Doug Emerson

We met back in the normal Fellowship hall this Tuesday, for a discussion around painting. As Doug Emerson led the group, he asked “How many of you got into carving because you wanted more things to paint?” Not many hands went up. Exactly his point - but a finished carving may not look “finished” until it has been sealed or painted. He brought in numerous samples plates worked up with different sealers,

thickness of paint, and coatings to demonstrate using washes of paint, rather than thick coats.

This wasn't a talk on How To Paint - this was a talk on options, techniques, washes, and patience. Since every project will need something different, it's good to know your options.

A recording was added to YouTube:

[Let's Talk About Painting](#)

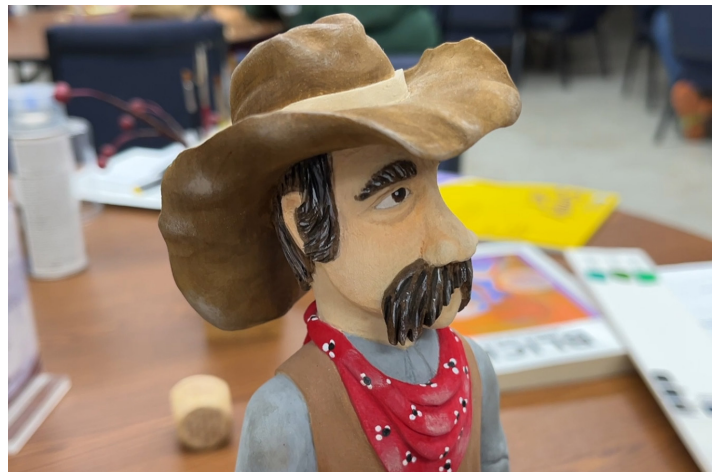


Above: Heart first painted pink, then dry-brushed with a lighter pink / white.



Above: Waxwing with over 12 coats of light washes to build up the color.

Below: Cowboy with washes of color, as well as dry-brushed highlights.



Monthly Meeting Minutes for Flickertail Woodcarvers

April 6, 2024

Call to Order by President Elect Becky Weisgerber
17 members present.

Secretary's Report (Becky Barnes)

Secretary's Report – Motioned as read by Eric Gaasland, seconded by Diane Lehman-Turck.

Treasurer's Report (Warren Schlecht)

Warren reported the club had \$10,085.40 in the bank, with all bills paid. There is ~\$3,600 in the Buckstop Junction upgrade fund. Motioned at read by Eric Gaasland, seconded by Anna Wright.



Committee Reports

Membership (Doug Smith): Not present.

Programs (Eric Gaasland): Eric passed around an Events Calendar for people to earmark any meeting or whittle-in they wished to bring a project for.

The Spring Carving class is scheduled with Jim Paulson of Leeds, ND for a Scandinavian Ale Bowl carving class to be held at Bob Pedigo's garage. Anyone that has a spare 6' table, or folding chairs, is requested to bring them along for extra carving space. The class can hold 12 people, and about half of the spots are filled. Cost for the class is partially subsidized by the club, and is reduced to \$200. It is scheduled for May 3-5, 2024.

Fall Show: The previous carvers contacted have prior commitments, and are unable to join us in October. Eric is thinking to perhaps contact Dick Skauge of Fargo-Moorhead, to see if he'd be willing to teach his eagle plaque class. A menu is being started for the show (October 12-13, 2024), at the Bismarck Public Schools Career Academy, on the BSC campus. Please make sure to contact Joe Jewett early if you have any specific wood requests for Basswood, prior to the show, so he has time to cut it.

The Fargo Show still has a few openings for their classes (as of April 6th) - their show is scheduled for April 26-28 at the Fargo Air Museum

Publicity (Becky Weisgerber): Becky Weisgerber is requesting someone take over volunteer responsibility of making raffle tickets, and shaking down the club for raffle donations. She'll teach the volunteer what to do - she just needs a person to take charge, since she'll be stepping up to fill President in 2025. Anyone that has any raffle items for the 2024 show, please let Becky W. know so she can add them to the tickets. Actual items to not need to be donated right *now* - just a promise and a description of what it will be.

Property (Becky Weisgerber): The club is adding Dale Heglund's single-spindle duplicator to its inventory.

Library (Todd Englestad): Nothing new.

Historian (Clara Yonker): Not present.

Facebook (Eric Gaasland): Many views and comments surrounding Eric's trip to Iceland, especially those of the Icelandic Museum's carving collection.

Website (Becky Barnes): Updated – new patterns added, and new club officers listed.

Buckstop Junction Upgrades: The group met at Doug E.'s place, with talk of Troy F. building a new case, and looking at costs. They have plans for a case that is 6' tall, 8' long, and 25" deep with glass on the front and sides. If the cost goes above what is currently in the fund, we may need to use some of the regular checking account money or some from a Grant for overflow costs. We may also need some club members' elbow grease to help with the actual building.

Old Business

Warren would like a volunteer to become a backup signatory for the Flickertail bank account. Just in case something happens, or Warren is out of town and a check needs to be written. Ron Holtz is currently the backup, but he would like to step down.

New Business

Bismarck Public Library – the carving display this year will run from August 1 to November 1. The theme is Chip Carving. Keep that in mind!

Summer Activities:

- There may be an opportunity this July for a "Valley City Carving Convergence" (working title) – with the dwindling of the Sheyenne Valley Wood Carvers, there are not people there to teach new people carving. Wes Anderson of the Barnes Co. Historical Society said there are some young people who want to learn. Might be a good excuse for a mid-summer Saturday or Sunday to converge in Valley City, set up a tent or work in the museum, do some show-and-tell, and some basic carving lessons for people who stop by. Becky B. is working with Wes on setting something up, and the Fargo-Moorhead group seems interested in teaming up as well. Woo!
- Bluegrass Gone Pink (Doug E.) – right now it sounds like July 25 th ?
- Capital A'Fair (Becky W.) – August 3 & 4
- Applefest September 21 (only 1 day this year)
- Cornfest ??? – Buckstop Junction's Hootenanny Aug 17 & 18

Meeting project: (Matt Hlebechuk) – We thanked Matt for bringing in a Celtic Knotwork Knife. Matt in turn thanked Becky Barnes for helping cut out the blanks. Becky in turn thanked Eric Gaasland for housing the wood that was used. Eric in turn thanked Warren Schlecht for driving to Fargo to pick up the wood from Mike Kuvaas. Go team!

Show & Tell:

- Anna W. brought in her finished Tushroom, painted as a fly agaric, and her finished painted bear from the Winter Celebration.
- Becky W. had three female caricatures painted, from a class by Ryan Olsen; a Paul Bunyan tray puzzle, and Latoya's kiwi project finished.
- Eric G. brought in his finished Jim Paulson dragon chip carving, a bear by Arne Tjomsland, and a puffin carving purchased from Iceland.
- Cathy L. was working on a tiny whale carved from scrap wood she had – she will be attaching

it to some carved waves.

- Bob P. purchased a blank “Duke” box last year at the show, and completed the chip carving on it.
- Todd E. had a Grizzly bear bust carving.
- Becky B. brought in some finished cross-stitched designs in wood to try and generate more ideas for the October non-carving class. She also brought in a “Doom-shroom” or corrupted mushroom her daughter requested. It had spikes and pseudopods, and pointed teeth.

Meeting Adjourned

Motioned by Alvin Braunagel, Seconded by Todd Engelstad



April 6, 2024 Whittle-In Knotwork Knife by Matt Flebechuk

Matt found a fun Celtic / Knotwork Knife pattern in a 2021 special “Whittling” edition of Woodcarving Illustrated by Bob Kozakiewicz. He teamed up with Becky Barnes to help shrink down and cut out the blanks. A big thank you to the club for purchasing Whittle-In wood, and to Eric Gaasland for storing it. Remember: if you have an upcoming Whittle-In, and don’t have the wood for the project, let the club officers know and they’ll make it happen.

A short video was uploaded to YouTube showcasing the project, and Show & Tell:

[Knotwork Knife and Show & Tell](#)



Above: Becky W brought in an assortment of caricatures, all finished and painted.

Below: Becky W also brought a Paul Bunyan / Babe the Blue Ox puzzle.



Left: the original project in the magazine - shrunk down to ~70% of the original size.

Right: Anna W. finished carving and painting her Tushroom.





Above: Eric G. is adding this polar bear to his collection of Arne Tjomslund (1915-1970) carvings. Arne was a self-taught carver from Norway who specialized in simplified figures of animals and people - carved from wood or whalebone. Read more about Arne here: <https://www.eikund.com/designers/arne-tjomslund/>

Below: Eric finished his Jim Paulson Norwegian carving project from earlier in the year.



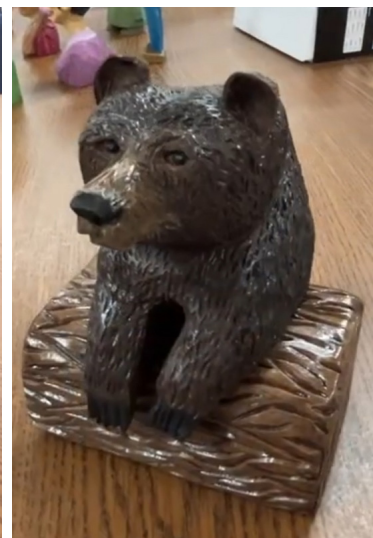
Above: Two cross-stitch-in-wood designs Becky B. brought in. At left is a Mario Star, and at right is a simplified cat skull. She is working up project designs for the October show non-carving class. If you have an idea for a small pattern, please share it. Video game sprites make good inspiration.



Above: Cathy L. is making use of every bit of scrap-wood she has, carving this little whale-on-waves.

Below Left: Eric G. picked up a puffin souvenir from his trip to Iceland.

Below Right: Becky B. worked up a "Doomshroom" at the direction of her daughter.



Above Left: Grizzly bear by Todd E.

Above Right: Finished bear by Anna W. from the Winter Celebration class.

April 16, 2024 Whittle-In Fairy/Gnome Doors by Eric Gaasland

Eric stalks a number of carving Facebook pages, and people post great inspiration. Today's project took inspiration from Fairy or Gnome doors - small carved doors that could be placed next to the base of a tree, or house, to look like wee fair folk had taken up residence.

He had a number of examples worked up - (below) arched doors, round hobbit holes, wonky doors - some with an even brick, some with chunks of stone. He left it up to peoples' imaginations on how they wanted to design their doors.



Tuesday was an early birthday for Becky B, and a belated one for Vince B. Becky brought along some pie to celebrate - French Silk chocolate, and Apple!

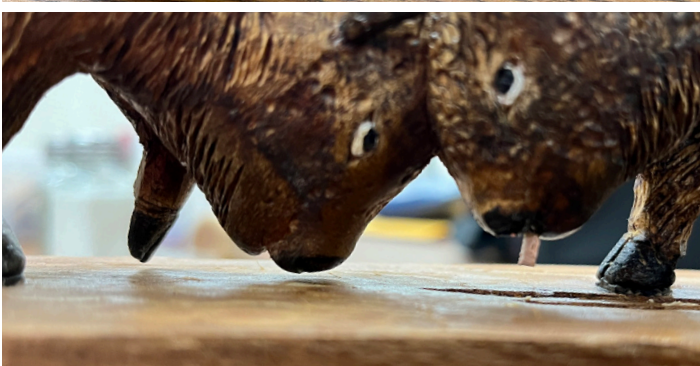


Above: Alvin works on his door.

Below: Michaela adds a weathered skull to the top of her door.



Above: Becky W. experimented with ply-splitting and braiding, crafting a basket from paper raffia, and a star ornament from fibers used for camel girths.



Above: For Show & Tell Vince B brought in a Roadrunner (top), an intarsia dragon (middle), and a pair of fighting bison (bottom). One of the bison is sticking its tongue out!



Above: Becky B brought in a scrollwork / fret horse, modified from a Steve Good design called "Fancy Horse". The original pattern is available on his website here: <https://www.stevedgood.com/catalog/>

Below: Becky B also brought in an in-progress Fish Wood-Spirit. The patterns are by Nima Kian, of London, UK. They have an Etsy store with numerous patterns to download for inspiration, available here: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/Woodcarverkian>



Above: Marlene R works on some chip-carving, using a rotating turntable.