



CWCA NEWSLETTER

Sept., 2026

Connecticut Wood Carvers Association

1976-2026
50TH ANNIVERSARY

Upcoming Events

Sept. 13 - **CWCA Club Meeting** 10am-2pm - @ CFPA (Due to Labor Day. Usually CFPA on 1st Sun.).

Sept 17 - **Evening Carving Night** 5-8pm - at Bristol Carousel Museum
(pumpkin class, register with the Museum or just come and carve for no charge)

Sept. 18 - 21 - **Woodcarving Retreat** at Wisdom Retreat House in Litchfield

Sept. 26 - **Family Nature Day at White Memorial** 11a to 5 p, set up starting at 9 a
(no selling unless you purchase a booth space through the preserve.) We will need volunteers!

Sept. 27 - **SoCCA Dragonfly Event** Southington, Ct 10 a to 2 p register with SoCCA

Oct. 4 - **CWCA Club Meeting** 10am-2pm - @ CFPA (usually CFPA on 1st Sun.).

Oct 15 - **Evening Carving Night** 5-8pm - at Bristol Carousel Museum

Oct. 17 - **Walking Stick Demo - Family Wildlife Day** Watertown, CT
Veterans Memorial Park, 570 Nova Scotia Hill Rd, 10 a to 2 p, we need volunteers!

Oct 17-18 - **Spirit of Wood** 9 - 4 pm Wilmington, MA

Nov. 1 - **CWCA Club Meeting** 10am-2pm - @ CFPA (usually CFPA on 1st Sun.).

Nov. 19 - **Evening Carving Night** 5-8pm - at Bristol Carousel Museum

Check the club calendar for updates & more info. Hold *control* & right click: [Calendar](#)

President's Report – September 2026

Our mission: "We're the Connecticut Wood Carvers, we teach people how to carve."

We are excited to announce plans for activities coming during 2026 and into 2027! We have Maker's Events, new novice projects, classes for our supporting groups, and demonstrations.

In our meeting on September 13th (second Sunday due to Labor Day), we will be presenting some new membership options for consideration. We turn 50 in October. The Club will be celebrating our 50th anniversary of our creation at our annual holiday party on December 6th.

Novice projects and classes:

We have a brand new lineup of novice projects that will be presented starting in September. We have a whale starting us out in September Camile will be running the first project. In October, we have guest instructor, Darren from NEWC will be presenting an acorn. This is a fun little project we encourage you to try. If you would like to make additional acorns, NEWC has a program called Tree of Hope where they sell donated carvings to raise money for charity. Please consider helping them.

We have been presenting projects for the Carousel Museum (July -lady bugs, August – bumble bees, September – pumpkins) and the Southington Community Cultural Arts (a dragonfly class on 9/27). The classes have been received very well and have been successful!

Multi-Month Fall Project

Mark will be instructing a project of a pumpkin person or snow person. This is a tall project of a stack of pumpkins with a top hat or a three snowball snow person with either a top hat or a twisty hat. Of course, if you are really open for an adventure, you could do a double project with one on each side! A draw knife and a jaw horse will be available for use to attendees for the initial rough out. All work can be done with a knife, should you choose.

For all of our classes, there is a nominal cost for the blanks, direction sheets, and/or any little additional pieces necessary to complete the projects. Novice projects are typically a dollar to three dollars, and the multi-month project will be \$5 this fall. (*continue page 3*)

Artificial Intelligence Comes To Wood Carving

You may have noticed images of ornate carvings on line and elsewhere, and suspected that they are just clickbait. It could be that they look fake because they are! Since it can be a lot of work to make patterns, people try to carve from these images and find they are difficult to use in place of a purpose-drawn pattern.



For instance, ChatGPT generated this image which even has unconnected portions; and is more fantasy than pattern.

Other things that make these images unusable to carvers and CNC operators are: shading highlights, gradients, texture noise, hallucinations, and micro-details that should not really exist (and break your tools because the details just cannot be carved).

It is a different experience carving from a sketch – which intentionally simplifies an image, and communicates structure, not *appearance*. A sketch, rather than putting things into the image just for appearance, has a design language built in. It tells a carver: where necessary edges are, where planes change, cuts begin and end, and what is foreground vs. background.

So, have we discovered something which AI simply cannot do? Not necessarily. With the right prompts, AI can provide something more useful. Here are some useful prompts to arrive at something more useable: *“Black-and-white line art, no shading, no gradients, clear contour lines, high-contrast, simplified shapes, wood-carving design, engraving style, strong outlines, no texture noise, no photorealism, suitable for relief carving”*.

You can also convert an AI generated image with these steps:

1. Strip out shading
2. Identify depths, contours, and plane breaks
3. trace: outlines, interior edges, and major curves
4. Remove micro-details
5. introduce only carving details like hatch lines, and directional strokes.

Last of all, Here’s a checklist you can use to establish the usefulness of any pattern – whether drawn by human or machine.

1. Are the edges clearly defined? - Strong outlines.
2. Is depth indicated by lines, not shading?
3. Are major shapes simplified? – no micro-details, noise, unnecessarily ornate.
4. Is the silhouette readable at a distance?
5. Are foreground and background clearly separated? -You should be able to tell: what is raised, recessed, & overlaps.
6. Are there any impossible surfaces?
7. Is the design carve-able at the intended scale? - A detail that looks great at 12 inches may disappear at 4 inches.

That brings up one other useful thing that AI can do - change the scale for you when you are trying to make a pattern fit the piece of wood you have available :-)

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President's Report – September 2026 (continued from page 1)

Walking Stick Demonstrations!!

We have three planned presentations. September 26th Family Nature Day at White Memorial in Litchfield, October 17th Family Wildlife Day in Watertown, and October 17-18th at the NEWC Spirit of Wood Show. We need volunteers for the two Connecticut events, and help collecting sticks. We have a new supply!! We are partnering with the forester at White Memorial to clear birch to promote other slower growing trees on their 4000 acre preserve!

We have some tentative dates to collect sticks. Friday September 18th before the retreat, Monday September 21st after the retreat and Saturday October 3rd. The forester only works every other Saturday, 9/5 was too early and the retreat is on the 19th. We can do most work days with the forester, but most of us also work on work days.....

Maker's Events:

We will continue the Maker's Events with the Turners and Scrollers with dates to be announced shortly.

Creating new opportunities:

We are always looking to create more opportunities to show off carving and attract people to the craft. If you have an idea or an event we can try to demonstrate for, please let our Education Committee know and we will reach out to the group.

We are so excited to continue to provide more projects and opportunities over time. Please help us with your ideas, and maybe, one or two **small** tasks on our committees! The more volunteers, the more value we can provide.

Keep the chips flying and clean out your shoes (I get so many in there!).

Mark

Upcoming spring classes/monthly projects:

- Whale - September
- Acorn - October
- Tree / Snowperson - November
- Penguin - January
- Heart - February
- Fish - March
- Elephant - April
- Mushroom - May
- Banana - June



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