

# WOODWORKERS NEWS



Northeastern  
Woodworkers  
Association

June 2005, Vol. 14, Number 6

## NWA Annual Picnic

### *Hot Fun In The Summer Time*

Sunday, July 24, 12:00 noon - 5:00 pm.  
Jonesville Fire House

- Ken Evans

If you are a member of NWA, if you are a member of an NWA Chapter, if you are a member of an NWA Special Interest Group, if you can spell W-O-O-D, this is for you and your family. Rain or shine it happens Sunday, July 24, 2005 at 12:00 Noon.

Don't think of it as a picnic, think of it as a day to....

RELAX,  
FORGET YOUR TROUBLES,  
VISIT WITH FRIENDS,  
MAKE NEW FRIENDS,  
CHILL OUT,  
EAT GOOD LOW CALORIE FOOD,  
WATCH THE TAPE MEASURE RACES,  
WATCH THE WOOD CARVING,  
WATCH THE TURNERS TURN,  
WIN A PRIZE,  
EAT GOOD LOW CALORIE FOOD,  
SIT UNDER THE TREES AND CONVERSE WITH FRIENDS,  
EAT GOOD LOW CALORIE FOOD,  
LEARN FLY CASTING,  
ENJOY THE ITEMS IN THE INSTANT GALLERY,  
EAT GOOD LOW CALORIE FOOD,  
SHOW OFF YOUR FAVORITE DESERT,  
EAT SOMEONE ELSE'S FAVORITE DESERT,  
SHOW OFF YOUR NEW TAPE MEASURE IN THE RACES,  
GET ADVICE ABOUT YOUR LATEST WOODWORKING  
PROJECT,  
ENJOY GOOD LOW CALORIE FOOD,  
SEE WHAT CARVERS DO IN THE CARVER'S SIG,  
WIN SOMETHING IN THE SILENT AUCTION,  
SEE WHAT SCROLLSAWERS DO IN THE SCROLLSAWING SIG,  
FIND OUT WHY THE MID- HUDSON CHAPTER OF NWA  
HAS SO MUCH FUN,  
or think of it as just a  
NICE DAY AT THE NWA PICNIC.



Sunday, July 24 is the ANNUAL NWA PICNIC at the Jonesville Fire House. Bring something for the Silent Auction if you wish (proceeds to the Fiske Fund). Enjoy the lunch by John McDonald (this year there will be an all new menu...think Southern style barbecue ribs-brisket-chicken and all the fixins'). Bring your favorite desert to share with friends. Adults are \$5.00, kids under five are free. Send checks to John Michne, 10 Evergreen Ave, Clifton Park, NY 12065, or call John at (518) 371-6690 to make a reservation and you can pay at the door (you must have a reservation so we have a count for lunch). Starts at 12:00 noon and ends at 5:00 pm. Check the map on the back for directions. 🗺️

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# From the President

- *John Michne*

We have just about wrapped up another great season at NWA, led by Pat McCord. Pat joined the ranks of Past Presidents at our annual meeting in May after an outstanding year of service. I know I speak for the membership in expressing my appreciation for the long hours of work she has put into NWA. Thank you, Pat.

The new season will be here before we realize it, and there will be some new committee chairs. As you know, Ken Evans will step into the Vice President/Program Chair slot. Herm Finkbeiner will assume Ken's Education Committee post, and Austin Spang will take over for our retiring treasurer, Dale Swann. Austin's Membership Committee chair will be filled shortly. Clark Pell will take over the Publications Committee from the able hands of Fran Finkbeiner. Clark is presently the editor of the Woodworkers News, and will continue in that position as well.

We sincerely thank the committee chairs, both the old and the new, for their spirit of volunteerism and dedication to their respective positions. The NWA can only continue to succeed in its mission of education with volunteers so dedicated. If you would like to help out on any of the committees, contact them at the addresses shown in the column on the left.

Have a great summer! 🌞

## Summer Picnic to Feature "Michne Challenge"

- *John Michne*

Ah....the ubiquitous, common 2 x 4. They are all over the place, being used for just about anything from their intended purpose of construction framing to bracing, workbenches, levers...you name it. There are about 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> board feet in an eight footer', and it costs a buck or less per board foot. Granted, the wood is not usually furniture quality, but a few knots, checks, dings, dents, cupping, twist, and bowing should never dissuade an imaginative woodworker from creating a silk purse of sorts from this sow's ear.

To prove the point, I challenge the membership to make something out of a single 2 x 4 according to the rules below. To further encourage you to demonstrate your creative skills, there will be some really nice winning prizes...something like a new portable power tool, or a gift certificate, or both, depending on the number of entries.

### 2 x 4 Challenge Rules

1. Build or make anything from a single construction 2 x 4 eight feet long, using only the 2 x 4 as the source of wood. Cutting an equivalent piece from a larger piece, such as a 2 x 6, 2 x 8, etc., is not allowed. Premium grade wood as seen in Lowe's or Home Depot may be used provided it is a construction 2 x 4.
2. The wood may be cut, carved, turned, drilled, routed, etc., using any normal woodworking operation.
3. The piece may be fastened with screws, nails, glue, etc.
4. Additional parts, such as wheels, knobs, hinges, fabric, filler, etc., not usually shop made, may be used.
5. The piece may be finished in any way common to a wooden piece.
6. Bring the piece to the annual NWA picnic on July 24, where it will be donated to the silent auction, with the proceeds going to the Fiske Fund. Your piece will be judged, which will be by People's Choice. Really nice prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third, depending on the number of entries. Oh yes... if you want to bring your masterpiece home with you, you can be the high bidder in the auction.

So there you have it. It should be fun. I am planning a sewing box, but it may turn out to be a so-so box. 🌞

# NWA Youth Program - Shaker Peg Rack Class

- *Bill Van Brunt*

Thanks to six volunteers from NWA, the youth participants had a great time in the two Shaker Peg Rack classes on Saturday, April 23, 2005. Nine kids, including some grandchildren of NWA members, each spent about 2 1/2 hours in the Sears workshop making the racks, and all went home with their peg racks completed. While there was a lot of hard work done by the kids (sanding anyone?), smiles were seen throughout the day. The kids were thrilled to have a completed Shaker Peg Rack to take home after starting with a 48-inch poplar board.

Each class started with the kids being shown a completed project and introduced to the volunteer instructors. They were given written instructions on the steps they would follow, and then directed to the workbenches to get to work.

At each step in the process, the instructors provided guidance with the tools being used and how to use them safely. They started with tape measures and squares to determine where the long boards needed to be cut, then proceeded to figuring out how to measure the location to drill the holes for the pegs and the mounting screws, and then went to the drill press to make the holes.

The volunteers, who worked one on one with each child, also had a great time sharing their love of woodworking and their knowledge from years of experience. Each provided assistance and instruction at each step of the process.

With the help of the volunteers, every child went home with a completed rack with an oil finish.

I want to thank the following NWA volunteers who made the classes a success: Herm Finkbeiner, Charlie Goddard, Louie Andrews, Frank Netzer, Bob Honeyman and Jeff Suitor. I

encourage you to speak with the volunteers about their experience participating in the classes. You will discover the fun and satisfaction of working with kids.

The next class in the new NWA Youth Woodworking Program is still being planned, and will be announced as soon as plans are finalized. If you have an idea for a class project, or would like the satisfaction of seeing miles of smiles on kids' faces as they work on and complete a project, please contact me at 767-3060 or [wvanbrun@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wvanbrun@nycap.rr.com). 🐾



*Group shot of Shaker peg rack class. In front, right to left: Zack Goddard, Hunter Goddard, Nathan Rohrer, Brigid Myers, Rachael Suitor, and Joni Zucker. In back: Bob Honeyman, Bill Van Brunt, Herm Finkbeiner, Jeff Suitor, and Louie Andrews.*



*Louie Andrews provides some up-close and personal instruction to Zack Goddard in making a Shaker peg rack. In background is Rachel Suitor.*

**WOODWORKERS NEWS** is published by the Northeastern Woodworkers Association for its members. The Association's aim is to provide a common meeting ground for lovers of woodworking who want to know more about wood and the techniques for forming it. The newsletter is published monthly. It is assembled in QuarkXPress 5.0 on a Macintosh G4, duplicated by Shipmates, and mailed to more than 850 addresses.



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**WEBSITE(S)**  
[www.woodworker.org](http://www.woodworker.org)  
[www.nwawoodworkingshow.org](http://www.nwawoodworkingshow.org)

NWA maintains two websites, the first noted here operates continuously. We also offer selected links to other sites of interest to our membership. Webmaster - Justin Rohrer  
[rohrej@woodworker.org](mailto:rohrej@woodworker.org)

The second site operates from January 1 to May 30 and carries specific information about SHOWCASE.



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# Wood of the Month

- Ron DeWitt © 2004

## Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*). A Hardwood Salicaceae - Willow Family

The cottonwoods (including the poplars and aspens) number about 40 recognized species worldwide. Eight species are native to the U.S. and North America; one is naturalized. Most are found in the temperate zone of the Northern Hemisphere. Numerous cultivated variations have been introduced and many natural hybrids occur to add a bit of confusion and occasional disagreement to the botanical classification of this group of rather common undistinguished trees. (There are reported to be over 5,000 genotypes of hybrid poplar today, most identified only by number.)

The eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), considered the most important of North American cottonwoods, is followed in significance by a variety called the plains cottonwood of our mid-west, and the black cottonwood, common throughout Alaska.

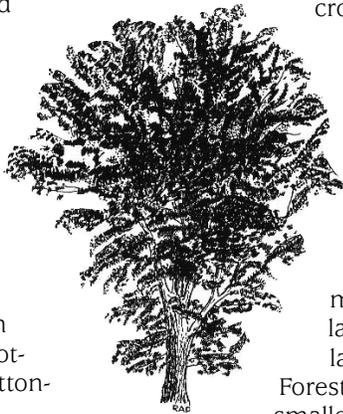
Eastern cottonwood is also considered the fastest growing commercial tree species in North America. Although short lived (50 to 75 years) it is also ranked as one of the largest of eastern hardwoods. Range of this cottonwood extends from southern New Hampshire, New York and Quebec, westward into Manitoba and the Dakotas, south into central Texas and eastward across Georgia and north Florida. It is the state tree of Nebraska and Kansas.

The eastern cottonwood, also called southern cottonwood, Carolina poplar, eastern poplar or necklace poplar grows well in deep, infertile soils but does best in moist, well-drained sand or silt in mixed stands close to streams. It commonly associates with other species that seem to enjoy wet feet...black ash, American elm, red maple, sycamore and black willow. It does not become well formed at elevations of more than 15 to 20 feet above the average level of a nearby stream. This tree is intolerant of shade.

Trees typically reach 50 to 60 feet in 40 years, maturing at 90 to 100 feet with diameters of four feet or more. Heights of 175 to 190 feet have been reported, with stem diameters of over six feet, in the southern areas of its range. The handbook *Silvics of North America* discusses experiments in the same area that have produced a 43-foot tree in three years and a height of over 100 feet at nine years. One plantation developed a stand of trees averaging stem diameters of 11.4 inches DBH at age five.

New York's big eastern cottonwood is 128 feet with a stem diameter just over 8.5 feet, discovered in Cattaraugus County in 2004.

The simple, alternate leaves are roughly triangular in shape, leathery, twice as long as they are wide and tapered to a pointed tip. Leaves have 20 to 25 rounded teeth along each side, disappearing along the tip. The five to seven veins are arranged feather-like along the mid-



vein. Three to five distinguishing warty glands occur at the base of the leaf blade where it meets the long leaf stalk. The flattened leaf stalks tend to keep leaves in motion in the slightest breeze. Leaves are bright green on top, dull on the undersides.

The eastern cottonwood is dioecious; female and male components develop separately on different trees. Male flowers develop before the female. The flowers develop between February and April, before the leaves, in the form of catkins 3 to 5 inches long for the yellowish males, 6 to 12 inches for the reddish females. Seed dispersal occurs through mid-summer from the hanging strings of bead-like capsules.

These trees are prolific seed producers with huge crops almost every year. It is estimated that a single, mature open-grown tree will bear 48 million seeds annually. Seeds are transported on tufts of silky hairs which in turn produce great amounts of cottony fluff to accumulate in air conditioners, window screens, buildings, automobile and equipment radiators and to litter the landscape.

Bark on branches and the stems of young trees is smooth, yellow-gray, maturing to a deeply furrowed ash gray. Open grown trees develop short massive stems divided near the ground into a few large wide-spread branches forming a broad irregularly shaped, extravagantly branched open crown. Forest grown trees extend tall and very straight with a smaller rounded crown. Clear identification of this tree is difficult. It may require observations three times over a year; at flowering, fruit ripening and again just before leaf fall as each of those features is important in sorting the aspens, poplars and cottonwoods.

General characteristics and properties of the wood of these same groups are also very similar. Sapwood of the eastern cottonwood is whitish, sometimes streaked with brown, often merging without a well-defined boundary into the grayish-white to light grayish-brown heartwood. Wood is usually straight grained and uniformly medium to fine textured. Growth rings are distinct but inconspicuous, varying from narrow to very wide. Dry wood has no taste or odor but becomes foul smelling and sour to the taste when wet.

Cottonwood requires very careful control when drying to minimize warping/checking and remains unstable after drying. It has a low durability rating. The wood is classified as semi-ring to diffuse-porous. Pores are small, numerous, scarcely visible to the naked eye. The uniseriate rays are very fine, rarely visible with a hand lens.

Eastern cottonwood has a specific gravity of .40 at 12% MC, weighing about 28 lb./cu. ft. at that same MC (compared to a weight of 49 lb./cu. ft. green). It's a lightweight, only slightly heavier than aspen or basswood. Shrinkage from green condition to oven dry is 3.9% radially, 9.2% tangentially and 13.9% in volume. The wood is soft, tough, brittle and weak.

The wood works easily with hand or power tools but produces dull, fuzzy surfaces, a serious drawback. Sharp edges don't help much and there is no "proper" or best knife edge angle. It requires a lot of sanding; a scraper sometimes helps. The wood takes fasteners nicely without splitting but does not hold well in service. It usually stains unevenly but takes and holds paint very well.

Continued on Page 7

# CHAPTER NEWS

## *Mid Hudson Banquet Honored Stan Rosenberg*

- *Wally Cook*

The Fourth Annual Mid-Hudson Woodworkers Banquet was held at Twin Lakes resort on April 15. The banquet planning committee, including Kathy Powell, Joe Benkert, Bernie O'Malley, and Chuck Walker did an outstanding job!

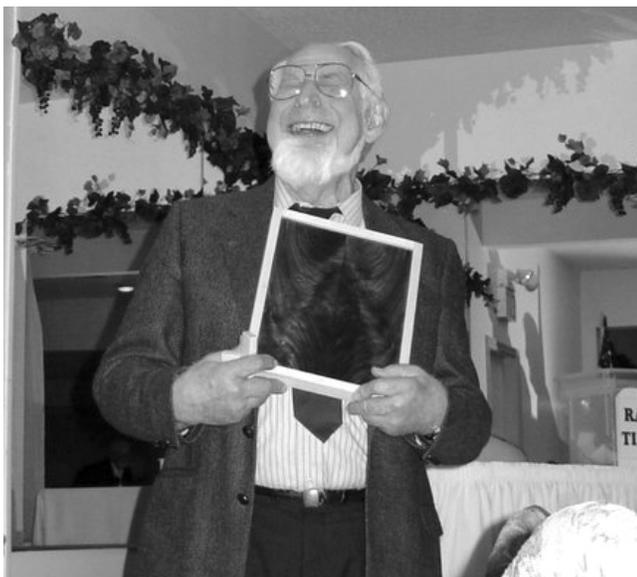
Stan Rosenberg was honored as Woodworker of the Year for his contributions to the chapter. Stan was the driving force to initiate the Kaatskill Turners SIG and orchestrating the monthly program. Stan received many accolades from his co-conspirators in wood, as President Joe Mikesh presided. Secretary Joe Benkert presented Stan with a monetary award; Dap Cole and Joe Kennedy provided Stan with a framed match cut piece of walnut, whose graining resembled a Rorschach image. It seemed an appropriate gift for a man of vision.

Joe Kennedy was also recognized with his second Purple Heart award, following a slight mishap at the dovetail practice bench at Showcase. Joe was sanguine about the accident, but it qualified him for an oak leaf cluster made by Dap Cole.

Entertainment was provided by the After Hours Quartet, an a cappella singing group. The ladies perform competitively as part of Sweet Adelines International. Their skill and Barbershop harmonies were excellent.

Kathy Powell ran the traditional Mid-Hudson raffle and set a new benchmark for the quality of items. Many members contributed handmade pieces, while Kathy also solicited commercial items from woodworking vendors.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the success and fellowship of the evening!



*Stan and his Walnut CAT Scan*



*After Hours Quartet performs their Elvis number*



*Andy Champ-Doran and John Grossbohlín select their raffle winnings*



*Joe Kennedy with Oak Leaf Purple Heart*

# CHAPTER NEWS

## *Mid-Hudson Chapter News*

- *Wally Cook*

### **Welcome Carvers!**

The Mid-Hudson Carving Guild has joined the NWA and will form a Special Interest Group. Officers for the SIG are:

President - Joe Boek  
Vice President - Jurgen Walter  
Secretary - Chuck Garofalo  
Treasurer - Dick Dillon.

The group sponsors a broad venue of carving activity from whittling and chip carving to relief and figural carvings. There are currently thirty-three members; all are in process of joining the NWA.

The Mid-Hudson Carving SIG will continue to engage in public service and educational activities. A series of classes for beginning carvers is now being arranged...the general format will be one day per week for 5 weeks. Anyone with interest should call Frank Lauffer at (845) 246-2924.

The SIG will meet at the Opdahl Building the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 7 pm.



*Joe Boek's Trout carving*

### **Hello Scrollers!**

Hank Frueh and Bill Reynolds conducted an information gathering for those interested in scroll sawing projects. The first session attracted a dozen attendees who listened to Hank's overview of the craft, from tool requirements to cutting techniques.

Hank demonstrated straight, curved and turn-in-place cuts on his Hegner saw, while also discussing the benefits of blade types and pattern issues. He distributed an excellent summary of basic scroll saw tips, which is also available in soft copy from Hank at [hank@valstar.net](mailto:hank@valstar.net).

The group decided to meet on the first Thursday of each month at the Opdahl Building at 7 pm. Attendees are welcome to bring their scroll saws if practical. Guidance on projects will be the prime focus, with instruction on basic technique.



*Hank Frueh's scrolled Bear Paw*

# Wood of the month...

Continued from Page 4

There are no reported health hazards from working with the cottonwoods but the usual dust precautions are well advised.

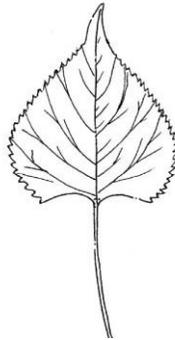
Native Americans and later the early Americans gathered the cotton-like material for use in applying medications and to protect wounds. Cottonwood inner bark was boiled to make a tea, used as a vermifuge to rid the body of intestinal parasites.

Cottonwoods are important food sources for wildlife, too. The resinous buds as well as the seed capsules are favorites of many birds. The wood is easy poking for woodpeckers excavating for nest sites. Deer and rabbits enjoy seedlings and twigs. It is also easy chewing as well as good food for beavers.

In spite of its sorry rating eastern cottonwood is a wood of many uses. It is pulped for high-grade book and magazine paper. It is ideal for excelsior, veneer for furniture plywood, musical instruments and secondary furniture parts. A large majority of cottonwood goes into pallets, boxes, crates and especially berry baskets and cheese boxes. It is also used for chicken coops and brooders, bee boxes and frames, food pails and ironing boards. Occasionally it is used for millwork and trim lumber, venetian blinds and shutters. In the Great Plains area it is often planted for windbreaks, ornamental purposes or soil stabilization although the cotton can be a serious annoyance.

Because of their high yield potential and coppicing ability eastern cottonwoods have generated much interest as a source of energy biomass where a ton of this material has produced 186 gallons of methanol. The same material is being included in cattle feed--a good source of cellulose, relatively free of undesirable components like tannins. New fiber growth is also high in protein and minerals.

Eastern cottonwood is in good supply and readily available at low cost in its growing areas. Sometimes mixed with aspen or poplar it may be called "white poplar," a more desirable name. It sells in the range of \$1.40 to \$1.80/bf for clear lumber S2S (surfaced two sides).



# Wood Definition

- Ron DeWitt

**Nurse tree** - A tree that provides a sheltering crown for seedlings of other species. After becoming well established the protected saplings grow through the nurse tree crowding it out. The nurse tree is usually a hardwood protecting conifers.

## Wood Questions

Q. When were dry kilns first used to season lumber?



A. At the beginning of the Civil War, a New York City manufacturer could not provide enough dry oak for gun carriages. Experiments with heat and steam produced acceptable results after numerous failures. About 1870 a pine manufacturer in Virginia "successfully" produced a box-like structure six or eight feet off the ground with an open fire beneath. Called a smoke kiln, results were exciting if uncertain and

## Annual Lumber and Tool Auction - September 17, 2005

- Charlie Goddard

The annual auction is scheduled for September 17, 2005, at the large Shaker barn near the Meetinghouse where we hold our regular meetings. Currently stored in the barn are about 800 bd ft of walnut from the tree we sawed up two years ago, about 900 bd-ft of cherry and another 1,000 bd ft of mixed hardwoods. So far, no tools have been collected.

We need additional lumber and tools. If you have items that you are willing to donate please give me a call. We can move things into the barn for storage most days. If you don't want to donate the full value we can share the proceeds from the auction. All donations are fully tax deductible.

The auction is the main source of money for the Fiske Education Fund, providing \$5,000 to \$8,000 each year.

# C L A S S S E F F E D S

**Wanted** - Issue number 51 of ShopNotes magazine. I need it to complete my collection. John Michne, 371-6690 or jmichne1@nycap.rr.com.

Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm.

Winston Churchill

# NWA Annual Picnic

## *Save The Date!*

*Sunday, July 24th*

*12 P.M. (Noon) to 5 P.M.*

*Jonesville Fire Station No. 1*

*Main Street, Jonesville (Clifton Park) N.Y.*

Mark your calendar, look up the recipe for your favorite dessert, pack up your lawn chairs and join us on July 24th for a day of fun and relaxation. It's a great way to get to know other members and learn what kinds of woodworking they're interested in.

### *Marquetry Class*



*Marquetry workshop participants show off completed projects. From left: Tom O'Donnell, Marion Kratky, Gerry Verner, Steve Mapes, Donald Rexford, M.K. Purohit, Pam Cook, Herb Cook. Missing from photo: Art Nokes*



*Will it fit? Pam Cook carefully applies glue to piece of wood she has just cut in a recent workshop in double bevel marquetry.*

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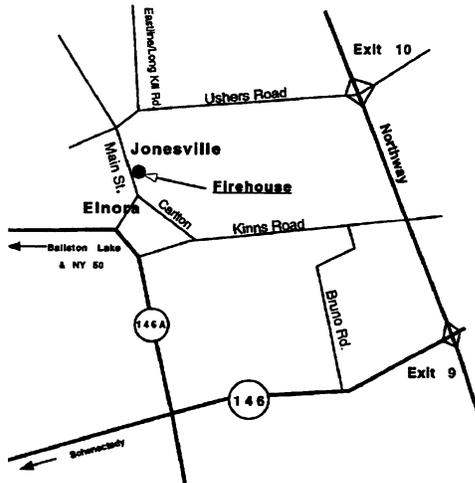
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Rexford, New York 12148-0246



Summer Picnic, Sunday, July 24  
12 P.M. (Noon) to 5 P.M.  
Jonesville Fire Station No. 1

GENERAL MEETINGS  
AND SPECIAL EVENTS

For meeting cancellation information,  
call Pat McCord 439-1232,  
John Michne 371-6690  
or Charlie Goddard 370-0388

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

**Adirondack Woodturners Association** - The AWA is active throughout the year. Meetings are every first Wednesday of the month (except in January and July when it is the second Wednesday), and are held at the Curtis Lumber conference room on Route 67, Ballston Spa. Beginners' sessions begin at 6 pm; the main program at 6:30 pm. Saturday "Learn and Turn" sessions are also scheduled. [www.adirondackwoodturners.org](http://www.adirondackwoodturners.org)  
Contact: Ken Evans, 753-7759 or [Kevans1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:Kevans1@nycap.rr.com)

**Carver's Guild** - meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at the Clifton Park Senior Center from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm. Sessions are intended for every NWA member who is interested in carving, from beginners to those wanting to learn a new technique. No reservations are necessary, just show up! Contact Bill McCormack, 233-7260.

**Scroller's Guild** - Meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Woodcraft, Latham. Contact Will Charbonneau, 371-3709 or [wcharbol@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wcharbol@nycap.rr.com)

**Kaatskill Woodturners** - Meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Opdahl property in Hurley. Contact George Norton, (845) 331-1705.

### CHAPTERS

**NWA Mid-Hudson** -The chapter meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday, except July and August, at the Central Hudson Electric Company Community Center, Route 28, Kingston. Contact: Joe Mikesh, (845) 687-4285

**NWA Sacandaga** - The chapter meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at Mayfield High School in the woodworking shop. Park by the section of the building that protrudes further into the parking lot and enter the nearest of the (5) doors. Contact: Gary Spencer, 863-6433.