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ISSUE 96

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# WOODCARVING

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in this **issue**

## FEATURES

### 20 *Keeping the Tradition Alive*

Māori woodcarver 'Broxh' levels up his craft online

*By Hannah Carroll*

### 22 *Product Review: MakerX® Rotary Tool & Airbrush Combo*

Unique power hub gives you the freedom to craft wood wherever the open road takes you

*By The Staff of Woodcarving Illustrated*

### 52 *Storytelling With Wood*

Nikki Reese carves everything from fishermen and gnomes to classic video game tropes—and crafts wild bios for them all

*By Kaylee Schofield*

### 88 *Comfortable Carving*

Practice these simple stretches to enjoy carving for long periods of time

*By Don Swartz*

## TECHNIQUES

### 76 *Carving a Viking Drinking Cup*

This dragon-shaped drinking vessel is fit for a fairy tale

*By Jon Mac*

### 81 *Twig & Leaf Drawer Handle*

Add woodland flair to drawers and doors with this one-of-a-kind embellishment

*By Robert Kennedy*



Search for Woodcarving Illustrated  
on Facebook, Pinterest, TikTok, and Instagram

47



## PROJECTS

### 27 *Sea Captain*

Use the rich tones of cottonwood bark to highlight this weathered sailor's features  
*By Alec LaCasse*

### 33 *Spooky Jack-O'-Lantern Caricature*

This expressive pumpkin is ready for Fright Night  
*By Matt Kincade*

### 40 *Power-Carved Barn Owl Chicks*

Shape, sand, and texture these baby birds of prey  
*By Paul Purnell*

### 45 *Simple Scarecrow Pin*

Make a fashion statement this fall with a classic three-step brooch  
*By Wayne Laramore*

### 47 *Wendy the Shelf-Sitter Witch*

This charming carve is sure to light up your favorite ledge, desk, or book nook  
*By Richard Embling*



76

## PATTERNS

### 37 *Gridiron Gus*

Rush into fall with this game-winning football caricature  
*By Floyd Rhadigan*

### 62 *Spooky Santa*

This costumed Kris Kringle mixes two favorite holidays into one fun piece  
*By Dave Francis*

### 65 *Classic Swirl Rosette*

Get comfortable carving three-corner chips with this elegant repeating design  
*By Marty Leenhouts*

### 54 *Tiny Gnome Home*

Turn basswood scraps into clever little cottages  
*By Nikki Reese*

### 57 *Grumpy Lil' Man*

This walnut-sized carve has a whole lot of attitude  
*By Karen Scalin*

### 67 *Mr. Chanticleer the Rooster*

Deck out this folk art fowl with bright colors and playful patterns  
*By Larry Green*

### 71 *Little Pilgrim*

With a splash of paint and just a few tools, you can add this classic character to your harvest collection  
*By Alex Joiner*

### 85 *Trick-or-Treater Caricature*

Transform a basswood turning into an adorable work of art  
*By Lori Dickie*

57



## DEPTS.

- 4 *Editor's Note*
- 6 *Letters to the Editor*
- 7 *Coming Features*
- 10 *Artists to Watch*
- 12 *Stay Connected*
- 14 *News & Notes*
- 15 *Tips & Techniques*
- 16 *My First Carve*
- 93 *Ad Directory*
- 94 *Calendar of Events*
- 96 *Woodchips*

## COVER

- Cordless \$150 Kit ... 22*
- Realistic Sea Captain ... 27*
- Mini Gnome Cottage ... 54*
- Quick & Cute Trick-or-Treater ... 85*
- Adorable Barn Owls ... 40*

*Find these free extras at*

**WOODCARVINGILLUSTRATED.COM**

**Free Project** Get instructions for simple folk art accessories to add to your Spooky Santa scene (page 62)!

**Free Pattern** Download multiple bonus gnome home patterns (page 54)!

**Bonus Design** Snag an additional jack-o'-lantern pattern from Matt Kincade (page 33).





## Everyday Magic

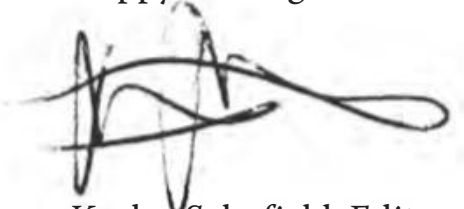
No pumpkin is exactly like another—which is why the annual tradition of making jack-o'-lanterns in October never quite gets old. The mess of a pumpkin carving table has a magic of its own, but perhaps even more special is the part that comes next—the part where you bring your creation out on the porch to smile at strangers you may never meet. It is one of the most hopeful and generous things you can do: sending your handiwork out into the world for no other reason than to delight people. Do that, and you're making what we like to call "everyday magic."

This issue will help jump-start that magic-making process. Follow along with *WCI* newcomer Richard Embling to make a charmingly toothy shelf-sitter witch, and then carve an extra to stick on a friend's mantle (page 47). Enchant your relatives by swapping all your drawer pulls for handcarved ones inspired by nature, courtesy of Robert Kennedy (page 81). Or, craft a Scandinavian-style dragon drinking cup by bushcrafter Jon Mac and wow fellow campers with its functionality and storybook appeal (page 76).

Sometimes, as fairy tales show us, enchantment grows even more pronounced in miniature. No one knows this better than Karen Scalin, another *WCI* newcomer, whose walnut-sized caricature would fit perfectly behind the salt shaker next time you leave the diner (page 57). Let CCA member Wayne Laramore show you how to make a classic scarecrow pin in just three steps, and then make another for your aunt, or mail carrier, or CPA (page 45). Next, once you've read about Nikki Reese and her penchant for hiding gnomes in trees as gifts for passersby (page 52), carve one of her 1½"-high gnome homes and do the same in a local park (page 54). With just a knife and a wood scrap, you can change someone's whole day—simply by carving up something surprising and being bold enough to share it.

One of the things we enjoy most about woodcarving is that its "magic" is built for everyday use. This fall, as you carve up pumpkins and turkeys to mark the holiday season, let the projects in this issue join them. The best magic, after all, is magic you share.

Happy carving!



Kaylee Schofield, Editor  
[schofield@foxchapelpublishing.com](mailto:schofield@foxchapelpublishing.com)

**Make your own tiny gnome homes to gift and hide using the instructions on page 54.**



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◀ **Christmas Gnome**  
I thought Betty Padden's "Winter Solstice Tomte" from the winter issue (#93) would be a fun little project, and it was! Thanks, *WCI*, for providing so many interesting carves. I always look forward to the next issue.  
**Roger Beane**  
*Bell Plaine, Iowa*



◀ **Learning in the Layers**  
Betty Padden's "Layered Relief Ornament" from issue #93 was my first real attempt at detailed carving. Although the painting was a real challenge, I'm pleased with how it turned out.  
**Rolf Beuttenmuller**  
*Bellport, N.Y.*



◀ **Off-Duty Santa**  
Thanks, Russell Scott and *WCI*, for the fun "Saucer Sled Santa" pattern in the winter issue (#93).  
**Saskia Vittoz**  
*Rastatt, Germany*

**Starry Night** ▶  
I made Betty Padden's "Layered Relief Ornament" as a Christmas present for my wife. For an added touch, I painted the Orion constellation in the sky.  
**Michael Schiller**  
*Korb, Germany*



**Good Memories** ▶  
The Santa on the cover of the winter issue (#93) reminds me of simpler times. My brothers and I used the same type of sleds when we were younger. I knew I had to carve him.  
**Jim Fenton**  
*Summerfield, N.C.*



◀ **Light the Way**  
I enjoyed Floyd Rhadigan's "Lantern Santa" project from the winter issue (#93). I added a pair of glasses to mine.  
**Billy Terrell**  
*Fort Worth, Texas*

***Note from the Editor:** We love hearing about the carvings that readers like you are creating! If you tried your hand at one of our projects, or put your own spin on an existing design, send us an email at [editors@woodcarvingillustrated.com](mailto:editors@woodcarvingillustrated.com). Please include high-res photos and a brief description of the piece.*



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Fox Hunt  
winners  
on Page 93!



Carve a folk  
art style  
Santa and  
his flock of  
holiday hens.





**Anastasia Antropova** *Moscow, Russia* ▶

Anastasia Antropova has been teaching woodcarving since age 18. She specializes in tatianka—a style of hyperrealistic relief carving that originated in Russia. “Tatianka allows you to work in flat- or high-relief to not only make simple ornate carvings, but also complex 3D patterns and designs,” she said. Anastasia is currently working on several woodcarving teaching guides, which she hopes to offer in both Russian and English. “I think there is no better material for the craftsman than wood,” she said. To see more of Anastasia’s work, visit @naja\_vinci on Instagram.

**Bob Bruu** *McKinney, Texas* ▶

Bob Bruu carved his first piece while attending a woodworking show in the ‘80s. The rest was history. He right into carving decoys, and then began to focus his attention on everyday items. “I aim to bring life and character to objects that might otherwise be overlooked,” he said. To execute *Casual Friday*, Bob used a combination of hand and power carving tools to create folds and creases in the shirt for extra dimension and depth. To see more of Bob’s work, visit [bobbbruu.com](http://bobbbruu.com) or @bob\_bruu\_wood\_carver on Instagram.



▶ **Jan Vreys** *Lumber, British Columbia*

With a carver and logger for a father, Jan Vreys naturally grew up with a deep appreciation for wood. After Jan inherited some old Henckel chip carving knives, he took up the woodcarving mantle, too. He based this regal rodent on a Charles Van Sandwyk’s book, *Mr. Rabbit’s Symphony of Nature and Other Tails*. To find more of Jan’s work, visit @j.v.\_woodworking on Instagram.



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**Anne Fergman** *Stocksund, Sweden* ▶

Anne Fergman discovered her love of spoon carving about three years ago. After retiring from cabinet making, Anne longed for woodworking projects she could complete in the comfort of her apartment. Spoon carving fit the bill. "I love the feeling of a sharp edge making woodchips," she said. "Wood is an adaptable material, and it's satisfying to transform it into whatever you want." Making finials is by far her favorite part of the process. For more of Anne's work, visit [@whittlinglady](#) on Instagram.



◀ **Erin Eberle** *Selinsgrove, Pa.*

Erin Eberle discovered pyrography last fall. She finds the craft soothing and relaxing, and is still astonished that few tools are needed to make a work of art. Her latest piece, *Promenade in Spring*, was inspired by a 2015 trip to Paris. "I have been dreaming about visiting France again and decided to challenge myself with a burning that could bring me back to that place and time," she said. To find more of Erin's pyrography work, visit [eberleimages.com](#).



◀ **Brandon Yantis** *Callahan, Fla.*

Brandon Yantis discovered woodcarving last year after carving a cross into a log. "I picked up that chainsaw, and it was truly a feeling of love," he said. Brandon often incorporates skills from a 20-year-long career as a welder and a tattoo artist into his carving projects. To see more of Brandon's work, visit [facebook.com/brandon.yantis](#).



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# Stay Connected

Looking for ways to engage and connect with fellow carvers outside of your club or workshop? Check out these online resources to stay up-to-date with the world of woodcarving and keep in touch with those in the community.

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## Podcasts to Listen To:

- **Modern Woodworkers Association Podcast - Conversations Among Woodworkers** - A weekly podcast where woodworkers such as Danielle Rose Byrd (from issue #95) and Dan Schwank (hobbyist woodworker-turned-master toolmaker) share their knowledge and experience with the woodworking community.
- **Wood Talk** - Hosts Marc Spagnuolo, Shannon Rogers, and Matt Cremona playfully explore and discuss the latest tips and tricks for the modern woodworker.
- **Behind the Makers Podcast** - Hosts Tiff and Nikole interview all types of makers, including *WCI* contributor Alex Joiner (see more from Alex on page 71) and woodworker Merissa Piper.

## Blogs to Check Out:

- **Wood Bee Carver** - Woodcarver and *WCI* contributor Don Mertz shares his experiences, techniques, and carving projects for the woodworking community. For more information, visit [woodbeecarver.com](http://woodbeecarver.com).
- **Carving Explorations** - David Fisher, a carver from Western Pennsylvania, offers insight for turning green logs and fallen branches into bowls, spoons, and embellished containers. To learn more, visit [davidffisher.com](http://davidffisher.com).
- **My Chip Carving** - *WCI* contributor Marty Leenhouts posts how-tos and helpful tips on his [mychipcarving.com](http://mychipcarving.com) blog to help those learning the art of chip carving. Find one of his designs on page 65.

## Facebook Groups to Join:

- **Whittling and Wood Carving** - The perfect place for carvers and whittlers to share projects, patterns, tips, and techniques, and to ask questions and discuss topics related to the world of woodchips.
- **Wood Carving for Beginners** - A place where beginner carvers can learn how to power carve, hand carve, relief carve, figure carve, whittle, and glean advice and tips from others in the woodcarving community.
- **Woodcarving-Woodcarvers-USA Event Listings** - Where carving fans can find information relating to upcoming woodcarving events such as roundups, shows, competitions, club activities, classes, and seminars.
- **Woodcarving Illustrated Magazine Community** - A place for carving fans to ask questions, share techniques, and stay connected.

## YouTube Channels to Subscribe To:

- **Gene Messer** - Gene Messer, a well-known carver and lifelong woodworker, regularly posts instructional videos to teach carving basics to beginners. Visit his profile at Gene Messer.
- **Carvers Woodshop** - Arleen Zomer uploads instructional carving videos and live classes for carvers of all skill levels. Visit her profile at [carverswoodshop.com](http://carverswoodshop.com).
- **Doug Linker** - Doug Linker posts a variety of videos on everything from carving tutorials to travel and tool care. Visit his profile at Doug Linker.



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# Maine Coast Workshop

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By Hannah Carroll

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The Maine Coast Workshop's curriculum focuses on all kinds of woodworking.



William Francis Brown has created a picturesque venue for learning.

and carving books. Classes run at a relaxed pace, with plenty of time for one-on-one instruction and opportunities to explore the Camden area. The 2021 season classes are available and open for beginner to skilled-level carvers. *Note: All classes will be between 4 to 6 students maximum. All benches, machines, hand tools, and door handles are sanitized after each class. The workshop follows all current state COVID-19 guidelines.*

For more information, visit [mainecoastworkshop.com](http://mainecoastworkshop.com).



## International Association of Woodcarvers

**Find discussions, demonstrations, and new carving resources within this virtual woodcarving community**

By Kelly Umenhofer

**I**nternational Association of Woodcarvers (IAWC) arose during the pandemic in response to the widespread cancellation of club meetings, classes, and shows across the carving community.

“We felt it was necessary to provide valuable content and resources so people could continue learning and growing—despite not being able to meet in person,” said cofounder Blake Lunsford.

Blake and fellow carver Thom Bate created IAWC in April 2020 and have since hosted a meeting every Saturday at 3PM EST via Zoom with a new presenter each week. The presenters, who are largely prominent figures in the carving community, share

project demonstrations and carving insight, as well as engage in group discussions with meeting attendees. Past presenters have included Sara Barraclough, Dan Gallagher, and Caricature Carvers of America (CCA) members Bob Hershey and Dave Stetson. Each Zoom meeting is recorded and then uploaded to the IAWC Facebook and YouTube pages for carvers to watch at any time. IAWC is a no-fee online club and all are welcome to join.

For more information, visit [International Association of Woodcarvers on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/intlassocofwoodcarvers), or email [intlassocofwoodcarvers@gmail.com](mailto:intlassocofwoodcarvers@gmail.com).





# The Jig is Up

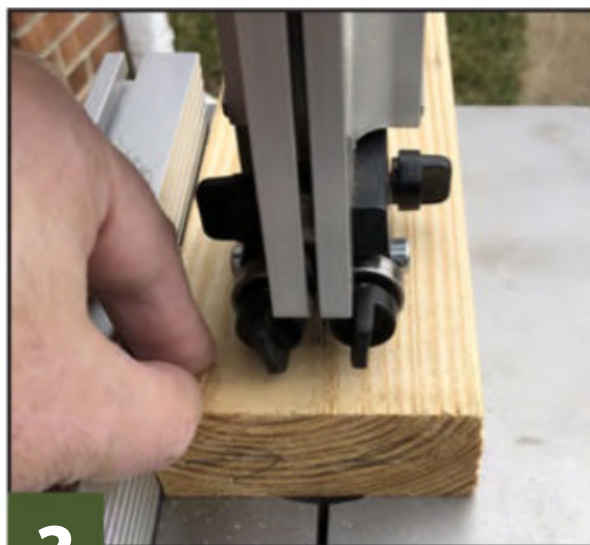
**These simple steps show how easy it is to make a jig—without a table saw**

*By Paul Holder*

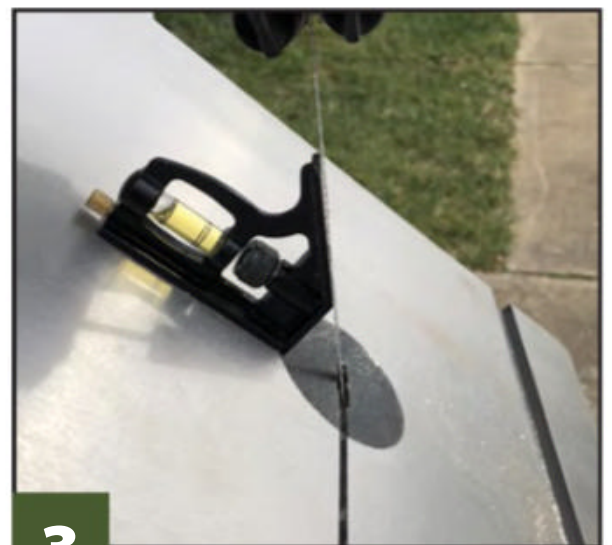
**W**hen I began my woodcarving journey, I bought a band saw for my cutouts as well as a handful of educational books and videos. Several referenced the need to rip blocks into triangles for carving on corners, and described how to make jigs on a table saw. But I had just purchased a band saw! I didn't have a table saw, and I did not want to make another big purchase so soon. I thought about how I might be able to get around this by using what I already had. I succeeded with my band saw, and now have plenty of triangular blanks for ornaments and trinkets. After several members of my club, the Triad Woodcarvers of N.C., asked me how I did this, I thought I should share my process so that other carvers without a table saw can make their own jigs, as well.



**1** Start with a 2x4 or 2x6 board.  
*Note: The length of the wood does not matter.*



**2** Rip the piece of wood down the middle.



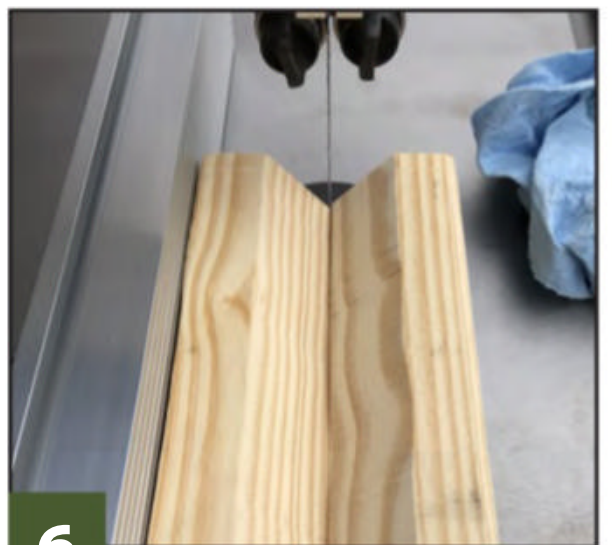
**3** Set your band saw table to 45° and cut a wedge off the inside of each piece.



**4** Put a little wood glue where the two wood pieces will be joined.



**5** Clamp the pieces together until the glue dries. Set a piece of wax paper under the wood to catch any squeeze-out.



**6** Cut the blade slot at the far end. This allows the jig to support the block as it is being cut.



# My First Carve

**Bob Kozakiewicz shares how carving a camel with an X-Acto® blade turned into a lifelong passion**

*By Bob Kozakiewicz*

Bob Kozakiewicz's first carving.



**T**he first time I picked up a carving knife was in 1967. I was just 15 years old. I came across a book on carving caricature animals in shop class and the topic fascinated me. Instead of making bowls or bookshelves like the other boys in my class, I wanted to try carving some of the animals included in the book. Luckily, my shop teacher said yes.

Using an X-Acto carving knife with a small #11 blade, I began to carve my first project—a camel. It took me a week to complete my first carving, and I was proud of what I had made. Needless to say, I was bitten bad by the carving bug. I forged on with that tiny knife and carved every character in the book.

I've come a long way since those days back in junior high shop class. Although I'm completely self-taught, I've learned a lot in 50+ years from reading books and watching other carvers. I now have a box full of custom-made carving knives and more carving accessories than you can imagine—from sharpening equipment to gouges, V-tools, and more. Plus, a wood supply that termites would die for!

It still feels like it takes me forever to finish a carving, but what matters is that I enjoy what I'm doing. It's about the journey for me, not the destination.

*To see more of Bob's carvings, visit Bob Kozakiewicz on Facebook and @carverbobk on Instagram.*

These holiday caricature carvings are recent examples of Bob's work.





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# Pin it on Me

**Fred Erbisich's handmade clothespin puppets are the talk of the town**

*By Kelly Umenhofer*



**F**or the past eight months, Fred Erbisich has made scores of clothespin puppets for elementary schools all over his hometown of East Lansing, Mich. It all started when his granddaughter asked if he could carve something for her 3rd grade students. Fred had some extra basswood lying around but had no idea what to do with it. Then he found some inspiration online.

"I saw cardboard puppets glued on clothespins, and I wondered if I could do the same with wood," Fred said.

He drew a pattern on a piece of wood, cut it with a scroll saw, carved

the details, sawed the shape in half, and then glued the pieces back together on a clothespin. Eureka! He rounded the outside edges with a knife and marked the prominent features with a V-tool, leaving them unfinished so their recipients could be part of the creation process, too.

"I never paint the puppets," he said. "I always leave that up to the kids."

Fred sent 30 clothespin puppets to his granddaughter's class, who got a kick out of the gift. The experience was just as much fun for Fred, and he decided to make similar puppets for other teachers in the area, homeschooled children in his neighborhood, and anyone else who wanted one (or a dozen). Fred soon learned that children enjoyed designing his puppets as much as they loved



**Fred leaves his puppets unpainted so that children can decorate them.**

painting and playing with them. His ten-year-old grandson has designed several pieces, which Fred has happily cut, carved, and glued together.

Fred hopes his wooden puppets demonstrate to children that carving can be enjoyable, simple, and inexpensive. His goal is to enlist other carvers in the fun—but in the meantime, Fred is happy to carry the torch.

"I hope these puppets continue to be a creative outlet for kids—something that a teacher may be able to use for an afternoon craft or project," he said. "Plus, you can't beat being able to carve and help others in the process."

*For more information, contact Fred at [ferbisich@gmail.com](mailto:ferbisich@gmail.com).*



**Fred's clothespin puppets are sometimes used for educational activities in the classroom, including lessons on marine biology.**





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# Keeping the Tradition Alive

## Māori woodcarver 'Broxh' levels up his craft online

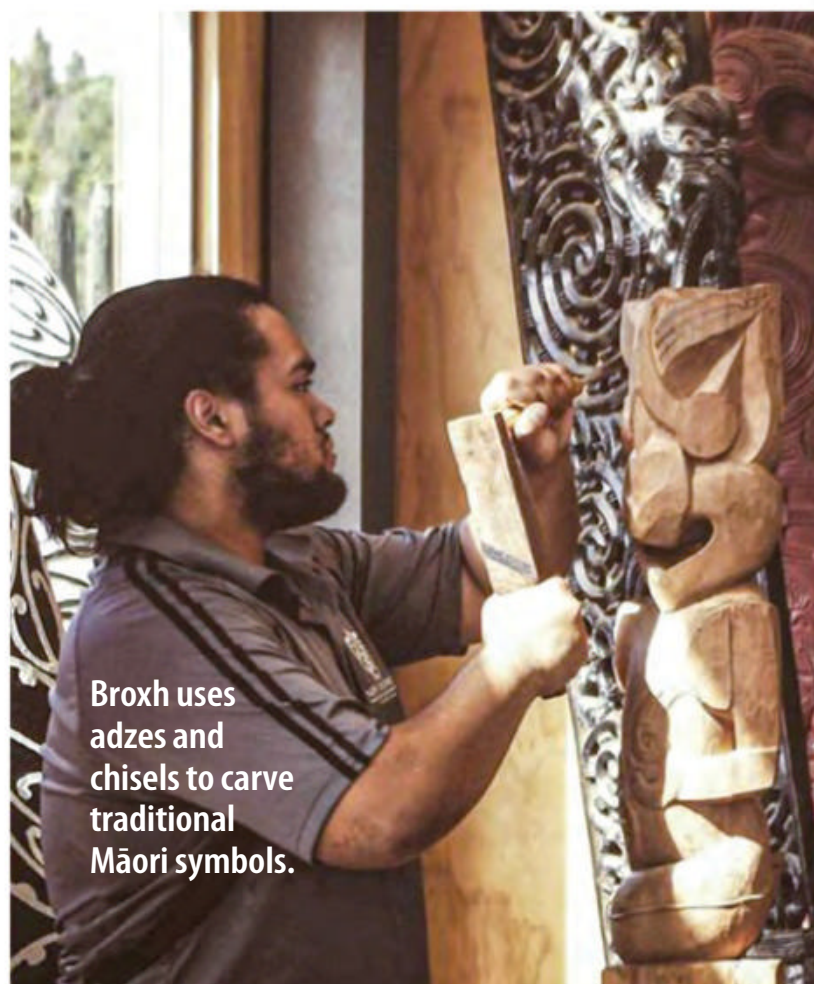
By Hannah Carroll

**A** New Zealand native, who goes by the name Broxh, joined Twitch at the start of the pandemic to showcase his love of gaming and connect with others. Twitch is an online streaming service that offers nearly anything you'd want to watch, from cooking and crafting to fishing and bird watching. Shortly after joining, Broxh began livestreaming another one of his passions—the traditional art of Māori woodcarving. His talent and humble nature drew people in, and his fan base quickly grew to over one million!

"I think people respond most to the stories I share about specific designs in my culture," Broxh said.

Broxh is a descendant of the Māori, the indigenous Polynesian people native to New Zealand. The Māori's cultural practices are still used to this day, including whakairo—the art of carving curved patterns and symbols to express a unique narrative. Common symbols include the tiki, which represents the human figure, and the manaia, a creature with a bird-like head and serpent-like body, associated with guardianship. The stories are carved into wood, bone, or stone to explain traditions and tribal history, then passed down from one generation to the next. Broxh's uncle passed down the tradition to him at the age of 12, and Broxh has been carving ever since.

In April 2020, Broxh was among the first creators featured in Twitch Australia and New Zealand's Creative Showcase. The recognition helped grow his audience, but fans flocked by the thousands to his page after his attempt to refund gifted subscriptions (subs) went viral. Viewers can support streamers' channels by buying subscriptions or making donations, either on a recurring or a one-time basis. Broxh disabled the donation button on his page—an unusual move on a platform known for its paid content. While Twitch streamers often receive flack for misusing relationships with their fans to earn revenue, Broxh has continued to encourage people to engage and watch his streams for free. And people from all corners of the world have tuned in.



Broxh uses adzes and chisels to carve traditional Māori symbols.



"They came for the gaming and stayed for the woodcarving," he joked. But it's clear to see that people keep coming back for something more.

Jacinda Ardern, New Zealand's prime minister, even stopped by Broxh's shop to meet him in the fall of 2020. The pair shared appreciation for their island home, made lighthearted jokes, and had a brief carving session. Broxh explained to Jacinda that the trees used for whakairo represent Tāne, the Māori god of the forest, and some even require special rituals for use.

"The connection whakairo carvers have to the trees of our homeland is sacred," he said. "We've grown up alongside them, and as we grow older, the connection grows stronger."

A novice carver could expect to spend up to 20 years mastering the art of Māori woodcarving. But Broxh doesn't want that number to deter anyone who has a desire to learn the craft; his best advice is to just start.

"Invest in the tools you need and go for it," he said. "And don't be afraid to mess up. In the words of Bob Ross: we don't make mistakes, just happy accidents."

*To see more of Broxh's work, visit [twitch.tv/broxh](https://twitch.tv/broxh) or @broxh\_ on Instagram.*



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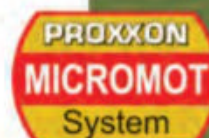
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*By the Staff of Woodcarving Illustrated*



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One of the greatest joys of carving is the portability of the craft. There's nothing like putting knife to wood on a porch or park bench, in your backyard or on a cross-country trip. Until now, power carvers might have been the exception to this, but a unique system from WorX lets you unplug in a whole new way.

This was one of the first thoughts that hit us when we examined the MakerX rotary tool and its amazingly portable-power hub: now, power carvers can have the same freedom as hand carvers do.

## The Power Hub

The MakerX hub transfers the energy of a 20-volt lithium ion battery to any attached tool through a super flexible cord. The hub has an onboard power switch and variable speed control, negating the need for them to be incorporated into the individual tools. The kit we tested includes a rotary tool and an airbrush—but the hub can power additional MakerX tools, such as an angle grinder, heat gun, and burnisher. The WorX Power Share battery can provide up to three hours of power on a single charge, depending on the tool and how it's being used.

## The Rotary Tool

The handpiece has a comfortable ergonomic design with a soft-textured rubber grip. There's plenty of power in the brushless motor, which allows for speeds from 5,000 to 35,000 RPM. We used several carving bits on pine and walnut blanks, and the tool performed well. The universal  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) collet holds any brand of rotary accessories.

The tool is not loud, but has a high-pitched whine, especially at faster speeds. It's worth noting that the tool will shut off when pushed too hard. This is a design feature that surprised us at first—but it occurs so that the bit or blade will not kick back or become difficult to control. If this occurs, reset the system by turning the startup button on the hub off, then on again. Once familiar with the tool, we were able to carve with minimal interruptions.





The compressor pump provides a stable base for the airbrush to stand upright.



Adjust paint flow with the knob on the end of the pen.

### The Airbrush

No noisy, bulky compressor or hose needed with the MakerX airbrush! The airbrush pen mounts directly onto a lightweight canister-type compressor that provides 14-18 psi of air pressure. It also doubles as a comfortable handle for the brush, and solidly supports the unit upright when not in use. The pen itself is a high-quality tool that rivals those from well-known airbrush manufacturers.

### Conclusion

When you place all the elements of the system into the well-designed carry bag, you'll truly appreciate the compact portability of the MakerX. The tote is lined with pockets to hold the tools safely and separately, with ample space left over for carving blanks, a water bottle, several bottles of paint, and an extra battery or two to keep you crafting on the go. The price is modest for the array of quality tools in the kit—not to mention the capability to power carve nearly anywhere you want.

### Kit Contents

- MakerX rotary tool
- MakerX airbrush
- Airbrush compressor
- MakerX hub
- 20V battery
- Battery charger
- Accessory case
- Storage bag
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- Bristle brush (1)
- Drum mandrel (1)
- Cutting accessories (8)
- Sanding accessories (12)
- Polishing accessories (4)
- Grinding accessories (5)
- Engraving accessories (4)
- Screw-on mandrel (1)
- Threaded mandrel (1)
- Drill bit: 1½" (29mm) (1)
- Spanner wrench (1)
- Dropper (1)
- Cleaning brush (1)

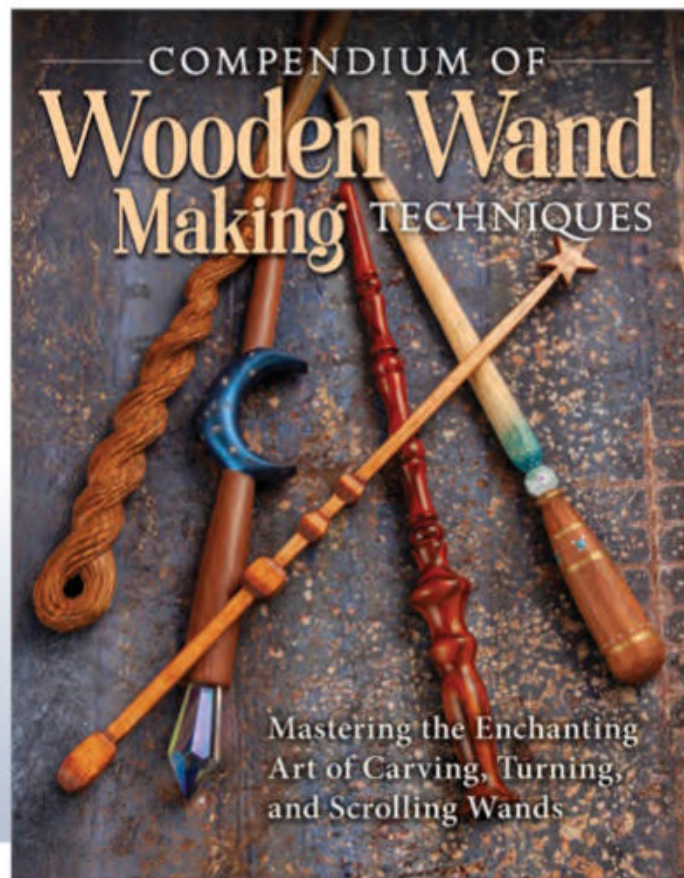


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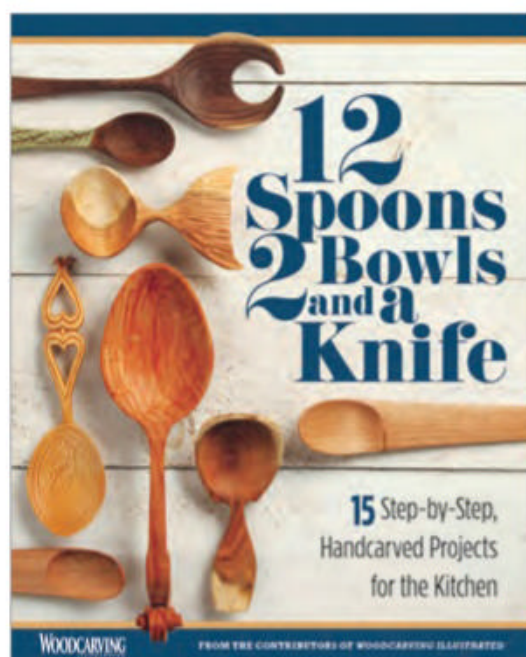
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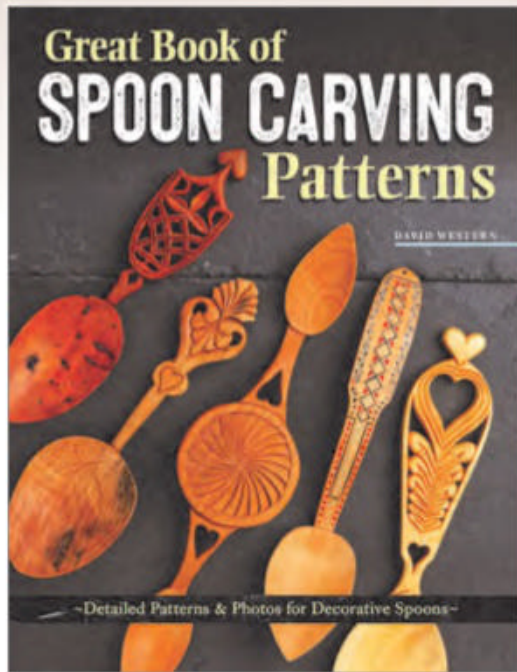
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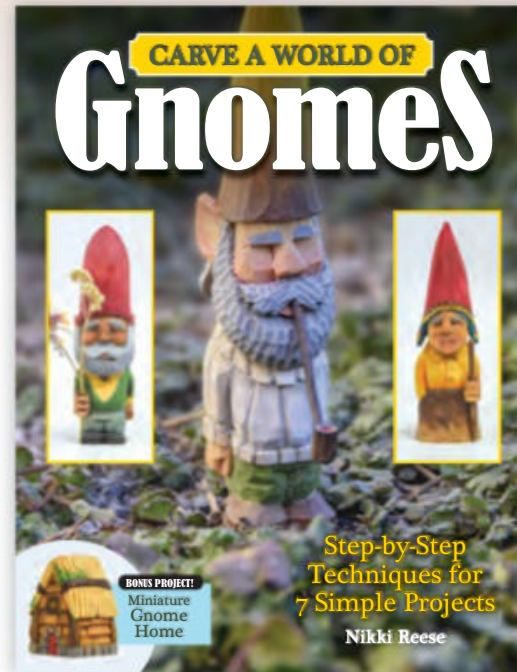
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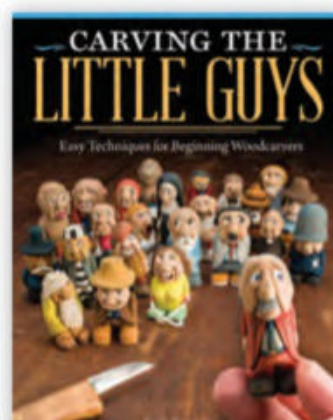
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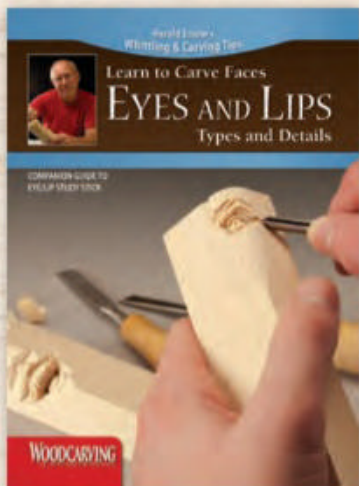


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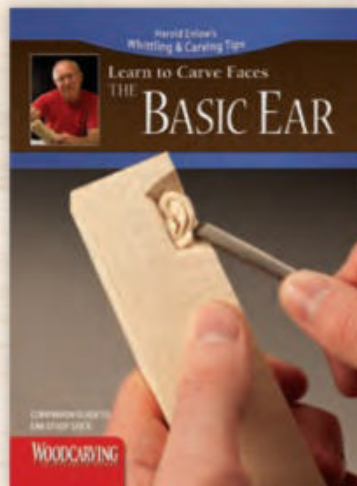
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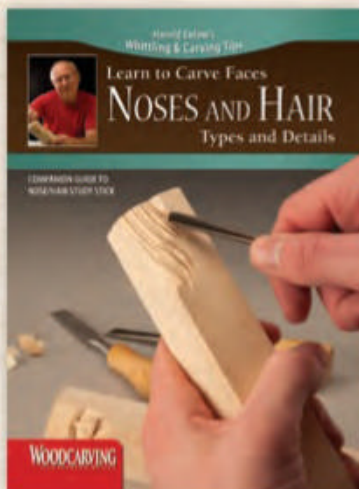
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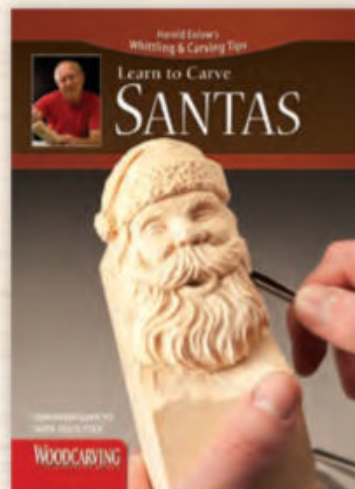
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# Sea Captain

**Use the rich tones of cottonwood bark to highlight this weathered sailor's features**

*By Alec LaCasse*

*Step photos by Ben Lew*

I have always found the human face to be the most interesting subject in the world. The face carries emotion that goes beyond conscious thought, and the art of capturing expression never ceases to challenge and intrigue me. This intermediate-level project will show you how to create a realistic face that contrasts with a simple, rough piece of wood. You will learn how to set up the basic proportions of the face and create fine details that strike a pleasing balance between tough and tender.

## Getting Started

I prefer to have both hands free while carving bark. The setup described below will allow you to carve without holding the piece you're working on (but feel free to use your preferred securing method):

Mount the piece to a 6" by 24" (15.2cm by 61cm) scrap backer board using two screws at opposite ends of the piece. Then attach the board to an A-frame armature using 2" (5.1cm) spring clamps. Secure the armature in the jaws of a clamping workbench.





## ROUGHING OUT



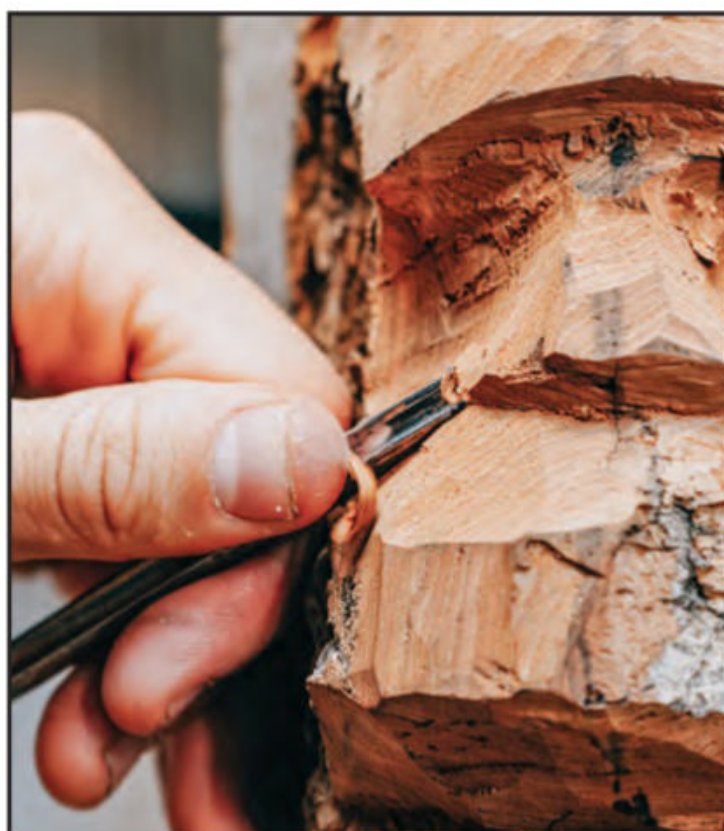
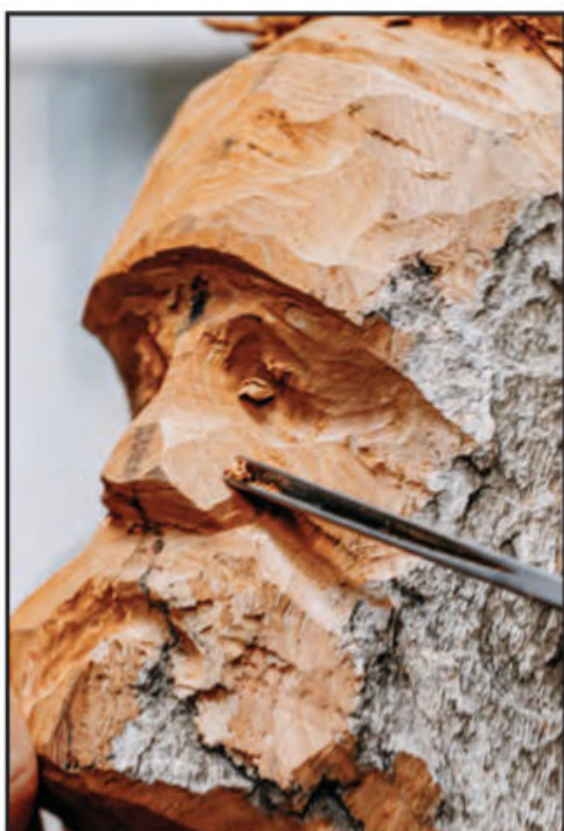
**1 Remove surface material from the area to be carved.** This will reveal the orange inner bark. Use a 1" (25mm) #4 gouge, maintaining a slight curve from right to left to allow for the roundness of the face. Then use the same tool to round the top and bottom of the head.



**2 Shape the head.** Use a piece of chalk to mark the bottom hat line about two-thirds of the way up from the bottom of the carving. Mark a line indicating where the bottom of the chin begins—about 1" (2.5cm) from the bottom of the head. Draw a line halfway between the chin line and the top of the head; this will indicate the bottom eyelid. Then draw a line dividing the bottom area in half again; this line will indicate the bottom of the nose.

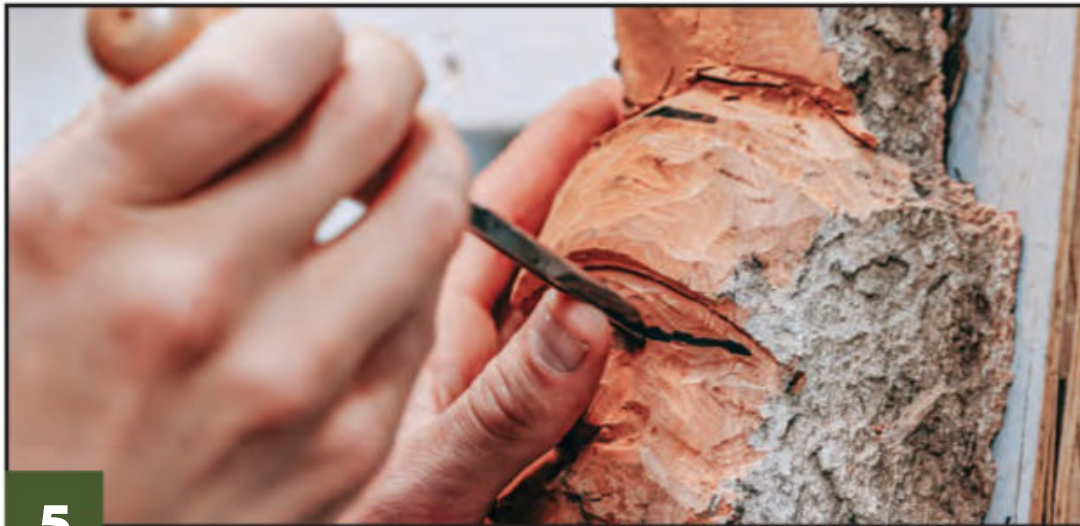


**3 Define the hat.** Use a 1/6" (4mm) 45° V-tool to carve the curved hat rim. Then remove material below this line. Draw a triangle between the first midpoint line and the second. Use a 5/8" (16mm) #9 gouge to create two dish shapes on either side of the triangle, tapering and increasing them in depth laterally. Use the first midpoint line as a stopping point for the dish shape. Then, using the 1" (25mm) #4 gouge, create a stop cut at the second midpoint line to indicate the bottom of the nose. Remove material below the second midpoint line using the same tool. Rest your dominant hand on the piece of wood to control your cuts. Do not lop off the nose.



**4 Refine the nose.** Using the 5/8" (16mm) #9 gouge, carve the lower corners of the triangle down to push the soon-to-be nostrils back into the face. Then use a 1/4" (6mm) #11 veiner to create two grooves starting at the bottom corners of the triangle and moving up into the sides of the face. This creates separation between the cheeks and beard. Use the 1/6" (4mm) 45° V-tool to define the separation lines created with the 1/4" (6mm) #11 veiner. Use the V-tool to create the nostrils. Do not cut into the side of the nose, as you will end up with too little nostril to detail later. Use the side of the V-tool as a guide and hold it perpendicular to the cheek and parallel to the bridge of the nose.





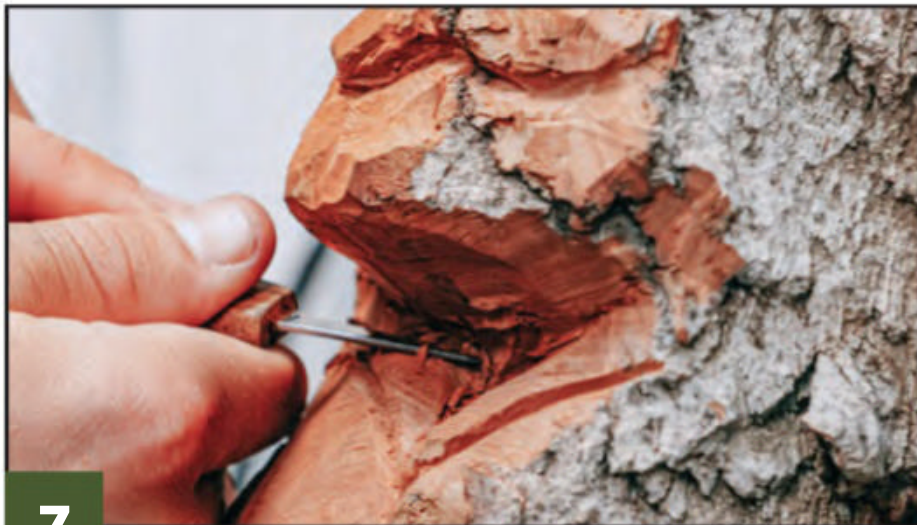
5

**Shape the eyes.** Use the vine chalk to mark the eyes. Then use a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) #11 veiner to create the eye mounds by carving around the eye socket. The shadows around the eye can be seen in the reference photo on page 27; use it as a guide for the path of your veiner. Do not use the veiner to carve above the eye; emphasize depth on the outside, inside, and lower sides of the ball.



6

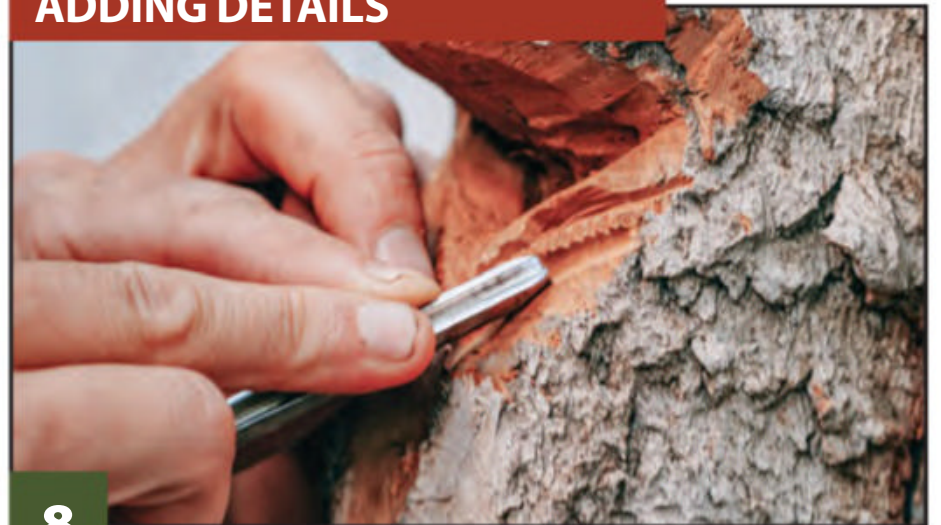
**Roughly shape the mustache.** Use the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) #11 veiner to create a slightly upturned mustache. Use the 1" (25mm) #4 gouge to bring material down about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) below the mustache.



7

**Shape the beard.** Use the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) 45° V-tool and a bench knife to cut an upside down triangular shape about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (3.8cm) below the beard line. Use the knife to carve out the inside of the triangle, tapering the neck downward from the throat to the clavicle using stop and relief cuts.

## ADDING DETAILS



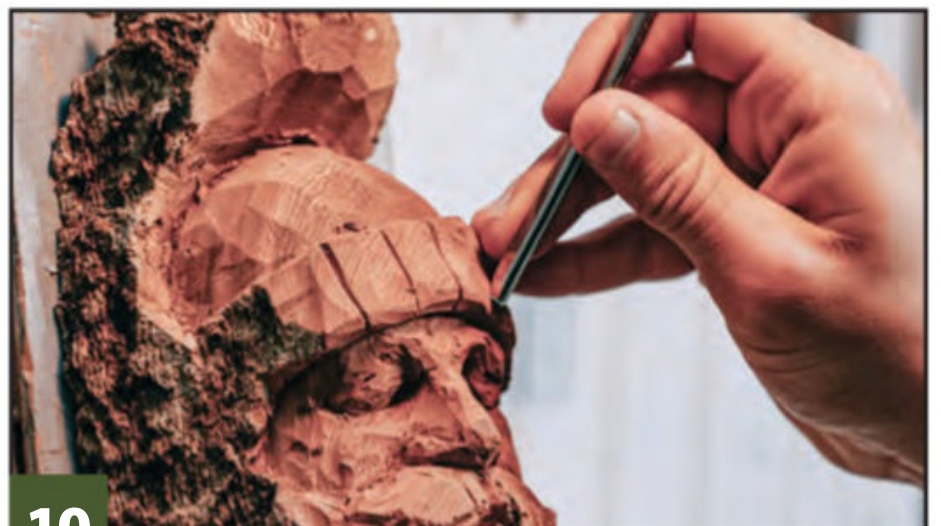
8

**Rough in the shirt collar.** Use the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) #11 veiner and  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) 45° V-tool to create lines that suggest the collar of a shirt and jacket. Use the V-tool to create the look of a zipper, and don't be surprised if the details chip off and you have to re-carve them; this happened to me multiple times. Beat the bark—don't let it beat you!



9

**Shape the brow.** Use the knife to gently taper the brow ridge by removing some material above the eye in a scooping motion. Do not go deeper than  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) into the upper area of the eye. Rough in the fold of the hat by using the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) #11 veiner, and then use the 1" (25mm) #4 gouge to remove material from above the folded area.



10

**Refine the hat.** On the upper and lower fold of the hat, use the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (4mm) 45° V-tool to create vertical lines evenly spaced and about  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (1cm) apart from one another. Continue carving lines, dividing each area in half until the lines are tight with one another and mimic the appearance of a knit beanie. Don't worry about making it perfect. Imperfect lines add character. Using the bench knife, round the areas around the eye to create a partly exposed ball.





**11**

**Define the upper eyelids.** Using a reference picture of the human eye as a guide, draw the almond shape of the upper and lower lid using a pencil. Use the 1/8" (4mm) 45° V-tool to follow the pencil lines and create the upper eyelid. Remember the shape should be rounded. Use your nondominant thumb to stabilize the V-tool as this step requires a steady hand and attention to detail.



**12**

**Define the lower eyelids.** Mark the lower lid, and then follow the line with the 1/8" (4mm) 45° V-tool. Use the knife to carve the area in between the upper and lower lid. Use a light touch. If you have to push hard—or if the wood is cracking—your tool is not sharp enough. Use the knife to shape the nostrils. Notice that the nostril holes are arched slightly and the nostrils themselves are rounded; you can achieve this with careful use of the knife.



**13**

**Add hair texture.** Using the 1" (25mm) #4 gouge, create subtle texture beneath the eyelids to indicate wrinkles. Use the same tool to create texture in the beard and mustache. Then use the 1/8" (4mm) 45° V-tool to carve random areas of depth, especially around the ends of the beard, to break up the tufts, and where the mustache meets the beard.



**14**

**Add more wrinkles.** Using a 1/16" (2mm) #11 veiner or the 1/8" (4mm) 45° V-tool, create lines under and around the eyes to indicate bags and crow's feet. Use the 1/8" (4mm) #11 veiner to carve wild eyebrows and add more texture to the beard and mustache.



**15**

**Detail the eyes.** I used a basic rotary tool, such as a Dremel®, with a 1/8" (3mm)-dia. ball-shaped fluted bit. Create the iris by carving a round dish shape. Carve the pupil by plunging the bit into the center of the iris and cleanly pulling it out. Creating this shadowed effect is my favorite way to carve eyes.



**16**

**Lightly sand the piece.** Fold a piece of 320-grit sandpaper into a rigid triangle and use the corners to gently soften the areas of detail around the eyes, cheeks, nose, and forehead. Do not apply too much force or sand too vigorously, since this will cause you to lose the important details you've worked hard to achieve. Use 220-grit sandpaper to soften the collar and shirt areas, and then finish with 320-grit sandpaper.



Finishing

Using a China bristle brush, apply a clear finish, such as satin lacquer or polyurethane (you must be quick with lacquer). Then immediately dab off any extra finish with a lint-free cloth or paper towel. Use a dry brush to remove any excess finish in tight areas. Let the finish dry and repeat this process three to five times to build up an even luster. Carve a small divot in the back to hang and display.

materials & tools

**MATERIALS**

- Cottonwood bark, approx. 3½" (8.9cm) thick: 4½" x 12" (11.4cm x 30.5cm)
- Backer board, ½" (1.3cm) thick: 6" x 24" (15.2cm x 61cm)
- Sandpaper: 220- and 320-grit
- Chalk
- Pencil
- Screws: 2 each (optional—for mounting)
- Finish: satin brush-on, such as Deft®
- Paper towels or clean cotton cloths

**TOOLS**

- Bench knife
- Rotary tool with bit: ⅛" (3mm)-dia. ball-shaped fluted
- #4 gouge: 1" (25mm)
- #9 gouge: ⅝" (16mm)
- V-tool: ⅛" (4mm) 45°
- #11 veiners: ⅛" (2mm), ⅛" (4mm)
- Spring clamps: 2 each 2" (5.1cm) (optional—for mounting)
- Brush: natural, such as China bristle

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*



Alec LaCasse is 26 years old and lives beside Cranberry Lake in Oakland Township, Mich. He has been carving since age 12 and teaching about carving the human face since age 16. For more information about Alec’s work and classes, or to request a private online lesson, visit [aleclacasse.com](http://aleclacasse.com).

Sea Captain  
Pattern  
(Side)



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## Sea Captain Pattern



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# Spooky Jack-O'-Lantern

## CARICATURE

**This expressive pumpkin is ready for Fright Night**

*By Matt Kincade*

**P**umpkin carving is at the top of my kids' fun list for fall activities. They enjoy the real deal, but I prefer the wooden alternative. One thing pumpkins and wood have in common is that the carving possibilities are endless! Jack-o'-lantern shapes and features are limited only by your imagination. For this Spooky Jack, I went with a wicked smirk and dark, petrifying eyes. If scary isn't your thing, try the bonus friendly pattern (available online) or dare to create your own!



### Getting Started

Cut the blank on a band saw. Transfer the front pattern view to the blank with graphite paper and a pencil, making sure the grain runs vertically. Then use the band saw to cut away the waste. Stop knives and tools thoroughly before carving; I typically re-stop after every 15-20 minutes of use. Wear a cut-resistant glove and a thumb guard at all times while carving; it is easy for tools to slip while working with a large blank. *Note: These photographs omit the glove and thumb guard to clearly show tool positions.*

### ROUGHING OUT



**1**

**Shape the eyebrows.** Using the tip of a rough out knife, carve along the eyebrow line to create a stop cut. Then use a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) #3 palm gouge to carve down into the stop cut, approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) deep. This will likely take several passes.







2

**Round the pumpkin.** Use the rough out knife to smooth the sharp corners, keeping the sides symmetrical. Pay attention to grain direction. If you feel any resistance, turn the project over and cut in the opposite direction to prevent splitting. Round over the sharp edges of the eyebrows.



3

**Mark the face.** Find the center of the face by drawing a vertical and horizontal centerline, having them intersect in the middle. Use both centerlines as a guide to sketch in the facial features. Use wing dividers or a ruler to aid in the placement of the shapes. Mark the ribs at the top and bottom of the pumpkin.



4

**Carve the eyes.** Use the tip of a detail knife to make a stop cut around the outline of each eye. Remove deep triangular chips from the inner and outer corners of the eyes. These deep cuts will create shadows that add visual interest. Be mindful of grain direction and round the eyes with small, controlled cuts. *Note: Make sure your knife is sharp.*



5

**Carve the nose.** Use the same triangular chip method as in Step 4. Go back over the cuts with a sharp knife and clean up any loose fibers. Then do the same for the corners of the mouth and under the cheeks. Use the tip of the knife to make a stop cut around the outline of the mouth. Then carve down to remove material for the teeth. Carve as deep as possible so that the teeth appear to curve back into the shadows.



6

**Draw a line to separate the two rows of teeth.** Then make a stop cut across this line and along the bottom of the mouth. Using a  $\frac{5}{16}$ " (8mm) #2 palm gouge, clear out material below the top row of teeth. Make shallow marks between some of the teeth to separate them from one another with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) 70° V-tool.



7

**Shape the stem.** Using the rough out knife, round the stem into a cylindrical shape. Draw a circle on the top to use as a guide, if needed. Make long, smooth slices, turning often and checking for symmetry. The base of the cylinder should measure approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) in diameter. You'll detail it later.



## ADDING DETAILS



8

**Redraw the rib lines all around the pumpkin.** Don't forget the ones that form a forehead above the eyebrows and a chin below the mouth. I prefer to split and stagger the rib lines instead of running each one from top to bottom. Use the rough out knife to turn these lines into deep V-cuts.



9

**Refine the stem.** Use the rough out knife to taper it down so that it leans to one side. Then extend the rib lines on the sides of the pumpkin into the base of the stem. When rounding these over, make sure to carve in a downward direction. This will make the stem appear to be coming out of the pumpkin, instead of just plopped on top.



10

**Give the stem some character.** Use the 1/4" (6mm) 70° V-tool to carve grooves into the stem. Vary the length and depth of these cuts to give it a gnarled look. Then cut randomly placed notches on the top of the stem. Examine the carving with a critical eye and clean up the cuts with the detail knife. Look for pencil lines and erase or carve them away. Then wash the carving with a mild cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn® dish soap, and scrub it with a toothbrush. Allow to dry thoroughly.



11

**Paint the carving.** Start with an even coat of watered-down burnt sienna. The color should be transparent enough for the woodgrain to show through slightly. Allow the paint to dry before switching colors; a hair dryer can help to speed up the process. Paint the eyeballs and teeth with thinned French vanilla. Then paint the rest of the pumpkin, excluding the stem, with thinned spiced pumpkin. Once dry, paint the stem with thinned Hauser light green. Using a small brush, paint the corners of the eyes with midnight blue. Quickly clean your brush, and while it's still wet, blend the blue toward the middle of the eye. Use the same technique for the nose and corners of the mouth.



12

**Add finish.** Spray the carving with a non-yellowing matte finish and allow to dry. Then cover the entire pumpkin with thinned FolkArt® down home brown antiquing medium. Promptly wipe it down with paper towels. Then, using a dry paintbrush, lightly brush full-strength warm white across the center of the eyeballs. Do the same with the teeth, being careful not to cover the dark corners. Mix a tiny bit of black with full-strength midnight blue and paint in the pupils. Then take a toothpick and dot a white highlight in each eye. Give the carving a final spray of finish, and then go scare your friends!



# Spooky Jack-O'-Lantern Caricature Patterns



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## materials & tools

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MATERIALS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basswood, 2½" (6.4cm) thick: 3½" (8.9cm) square</li><li>• Graphite paper</li><li>• Pencil</li><li>• Paper towels</li><li>• Cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn® dish soap</li><li>• Acrylic paints, such as DecoArt® Americana: black, burnt sienna, Hauser light green, midnight blue, spiced pumpkin, warm white; such as FolkArt®: French vanilla</li><li>• Antiquing medium, such as FolkArt®: down home brown</li><li>• Finish: non-yellowing matte spray, such as Rust-Oleum®</li><li>• Toothpick</li></ul> | <b>TOOLS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Band saw</li><li>• Knives: rough out, detail</li><li>• #2 palm gouge: 5⁄16" (8mm)</li><li>• #3 palm gouge: 3⁄8" (10mm)</li><li>• V-tool: ¼" (6mm) 70°</li><li>• Wing dividers or ruler (optional)</li><li>• Paintbrushes: assorted</li><li>• Hair dryer (optional)</li><li>• Toothbrush</li></ul> <p><i>The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.</i></p> |
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ON THE WEB

Find a friendly version of the jack-o'-lantern pattern.

woodcarvingillustrated.com



Matt Kincade has been interested in art since childhood. He grew up watching and admiring his mom, who was a talented oil painter and watercolorist. Matt has taken classes at the University of Indianapolis and the Indianapolis Art Center, and has completed the Art Instruction Schools correspondence course. After years of trying different things, he found his true creative passion in 2018 when he stumbled upon caricature carving. It seemed to come naturally, and he's always pushing himself to learn and improve. Matt lives in Lebanon, Ind., with his wife and twin boys. See more of his work on Instagram @matt.kincade.



# Gridiron Gus

**Rush into fall with this game-winning football caricature**

*By Floyd Rhadigan*



Add plenty of curves to the shoe area to give a sense of movement.

**F**all is my favorite time of year. The leaves change color, the air gets crisp and cool, and football is on every week. Not only do I enjoy watching the sport, but I have fond memories of attending my hometown's Friday night games.

Since football is a rigorous sport, a football player carving should have a lot of movement. I made mine appear as if he is in mid-run, rushing the ball down the field. My football player is from a few decades ago and is sporting a vintage uniform. Have fun with this carve and make it your own.

## Getting Started

Draw the patterns on the blank with a pencil, making sure that the grain runs vertically. Cut the views on a band saw, starting with the front. I like to have three points of contact with the saw bed at all times, so I included two tabs on the front pattern view to prevent the wood from rocking. Then cut the side view.

## Carving

Rough out the football player. Start shaping the head and rounding the shoulders. Isolate the helmet opening with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) 45° V-tool, and then use a knife of your choice to carve the face. Remember that the face is shaped like a triangle when viewed from the side, with the forehead, nose, and chin representing the three different points. (Even though the top of the head is hidden under the helmet, always keep this in mind.) Carve the shoulders, being mindful of which arm is holding the football (this one will be angled slightly lower than the other). Block out the embellishments on the helmet, including the chin strap and the rounded areas over each ear. Use the knife to rough out the raised knee and the hand holding the football.

Define the eyes. Using a  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm) #9 gouge, make a cut under the brow from side to side. Then cut deeper into the bridge of the nose. Using the knife or V-tool, cut in the bottom of the nose. Use a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) #9 gouge to cut up each side of the nose to the brow. I used a detail knife to carve the eyes; make a stop cut



along the upper lid, and then carve up to it. Repeat for the lower lid. *Note: If you are right handed, always carve the right eye first. This way, the first eye will be visible for reference as you carve the second. If you are left handed, do the opposite.*

Add the remaining details. I used my knife, along with various #9 gouges, to shape the arms, legs, and feet. Use the detail knife to define the clothing, and then use the gouges of your choice to add wrinkles and folds. Use the detail knife to carve the belt and buckle. Carve the patch of grass smooth with your choice of tools, and then use the ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool to carve notches into the edges to mimic grass. Use a pin drill with a ⅛" (2mm)-dia. bit to drill several holes into the bottom of the raised cleat, and two in the back cleat. Insert toothpicks into the holes with a dab of glue. Let dry.

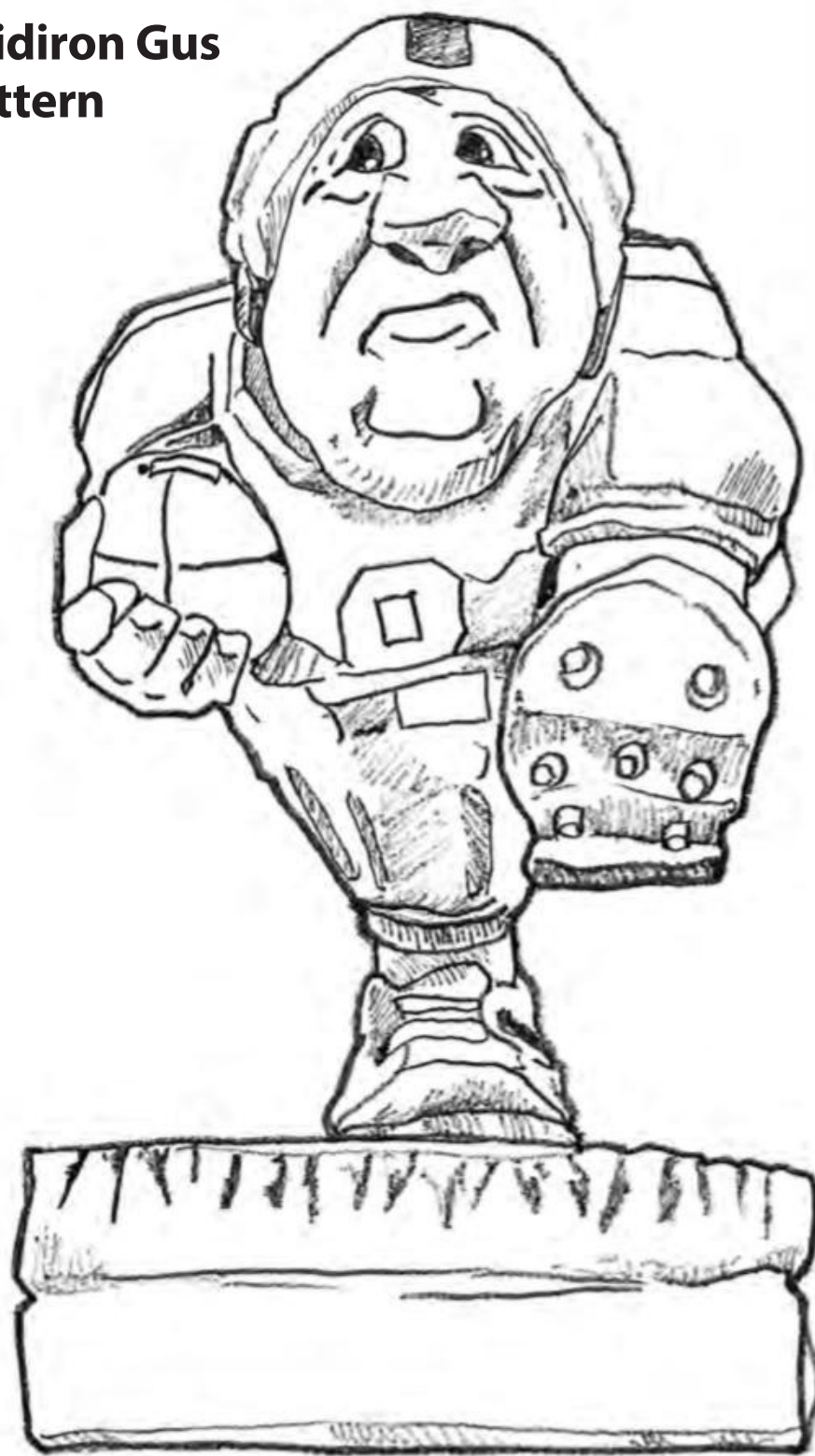
### Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. I scrubbed the entire carving with warm water and a mild cleaner and degreaser, such as Simple Green®, using a denture brush. *Note: This gets rid of pencil marks and dirt or oils from your hands.* Rinse and let dry. Spray on a light coat of Krylon® clear matte finish to keep the paint from bleeding into unwanted areas. Then paint the carving. I use a lot of water and very little paint—roughly two drops of paint to 20 drops of water, mixed well. Start with the light colors, and then gradually move to the darker colors. Dilute the paint less in areas you want to stand out, such as the eyes.

Once you're done painting, spray the carving with one more light coat of Krylon in order to seal it. Then antique the carving to give it a rustic feel and a rich patina; I used a mixture of 70% Watco® satin finishing wax to 30% oil-based walnut stain. Paint it all over the carving, and then rub it off quickly with a clean paper towel. Let dry. *Note: Remember to dispose of any used paper towels according to the manufacturer's instructions for the finish applied, as oil-soaked rags can spontaneously combust. I submerge mine in a bucket of water.*

## Gridiron Gus Pattern

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### materials & tools

#### MATERIALS

- Basswood, 3½" (8.9cm) thick: 4½ x 6" (11.4cm x 15.2cm)
- Pencil
- Mild cleaner and degreaser, such as Simple Green®
- Acrylic paints, such as Jo Sonja®: carbon black, metallic silver, moss green, phthalo blue, plum pink, smoked pearl, sky blue, raw sienna, warm white, yellow oxide
- Toothpicks
- Wood glue
- Finish, such as Krylon® matte #1311
- Antique stain, such as Watco® satin finishing wax (natural)
- Oil-based stain: walnut
- Paper towels

#### TOOLS

- Band saw
- Knives: bench, detail
- #9 gouges: ⅜" (2mm), ¼" (6mm), ½" (13mm)
- V-tools: ⅛" (3mm), ¼" (6mm), ½" (13mm) 45°
- Pin drill with bit: ⅛" (2mm)-dia.
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Denture brush

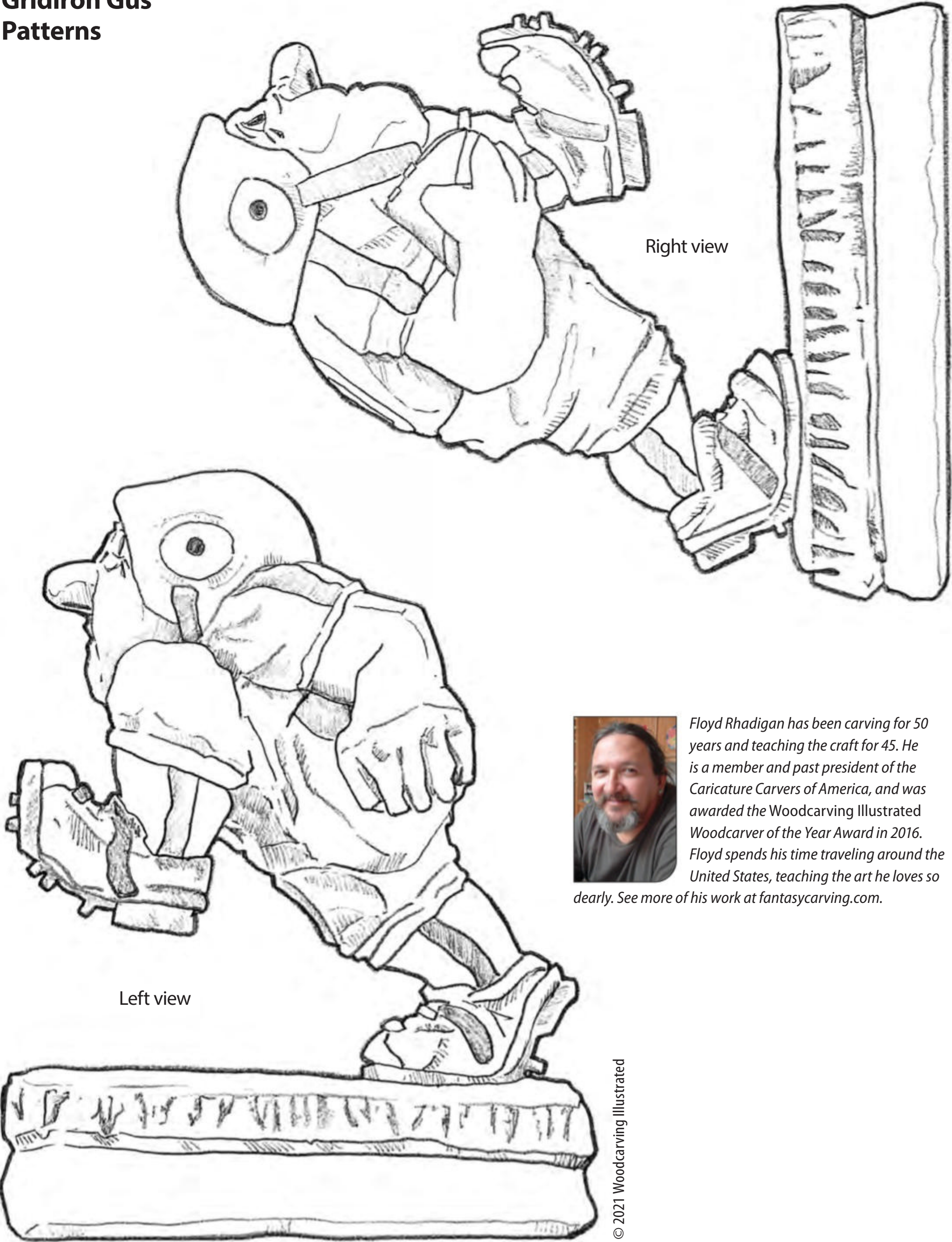
*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

#### SPECIAL SOURCES

Roughouts for this project are available for \$28 each + S&H. To order, e-mail Floyd at rhads134@comcast.net.



Gridiron Gus  
Patterns



Right view

Left view



Floyd Rhadigan has been carving for 50 years and teaching the craft for 45. He is a member and past president of the Caricature Carvers of America, and was awarded the Woodcarving Illustrated Woodcarver of the Year Award in 2016. Floyd spends his time traveling around the United States, teaching the art he loves so dearly. See more of his work at [fantasycarving.com](http://fantasycarving.com).

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# POWER-CARVED Barn Owl Chicks

## Shape, sand, and texture these baby birds of prey

By Paul Purnell

**T**he county where I live, Lincolnshire, is host to a healthy population of barn owls. Inspiration for this project came organically after I spotted two chicks, almost fully fledged, playing on the edge of a nest box erected by a local woodland trust. Barn owls nest there every year, making it a great place to observe from a distance. This wall hanging can be completed by carvers of all skill levels—with just a handful of tools and a little perseverance.

### Getting Started

Select a base. Before carving the chicks, decide what kind of base you wish to use. These carvings are designed to sit within a “nest” hole. I used a piece of elm burl, from which I carved an opening. After you decide on a base, sketch the patterns onto the wood blanks, with grain running vertically. Cut the profiles of both owl chicks on a band saw.

### Barn Owl Facts

- The barn owl has two stomachs.
- The color of an owl’s eyes indicate the time of day they hunt. Those with orange eyes are active during twilight (crepuscular); dark brown or black eyes are nighttime hunters (nocturnal); and owls with yellow eyes prefer to hunt during the day (diurnal).
- Owls have a locking, ratchet-like mechanism in each foot, which keeps the toes locked around a perch or prey without the need for the muscles to stay contracted.
- Owls have three eyelids. The upper eyelid closes when the owl blinks and the lower eyelid closes when the owl sleeps. A third eyelid, called the nictitating membrane, closes diagonally across, from the inside to the outside, to clean and protect the eye.

### ROUGHING OUT



1

**Shape the facial discs.** Use a  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) coarse-grit cylinder-shaped carbide-point bit to round over the crown and roughly shape the sides. Then draw a centerline around both blanks. Mark the positions of the central ridge and bill. Use the same bit to take back the facial discs on each side of the centerline. Use a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) medium-grit ball-shaped carbide-point bit to refine the facial disc and forehead. Then quickly go over the blanks with 120-grit sandpaper in a cushioned-drum sander.



2

**Attach the chicks to each other.** Dry-fit the chicks.

Then use the  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) coarse-grit cylinder-shaped carbide-point bit to remove a portion of the left chick (when viewed from the front) so that it nestles into the chick on the right. Go slowly and constantly check the fit. *Note: The chick on the left is slightly behind and turned toward the other.* Mark the spots where you achieve the best fit. You will secure them in place later.



Choose a piece of interestingly figured wood to house your owls.



3

**Prepare the nest hole.** I needed to remove wood from the back of the chicks so that they would fit in my base. There will be a backing plate, so this will not show. Set the nest aside for later.



4

**Shape the faces.** Use a  $\frac{5}{32}$ " (4mm) ball-shaped diamond bit to deepen the facial discs. Reference photos of barn owls come in handy here. Sand the facial discs with 120-grit sandpaper in a split mandrel. Redraw the centerline and the positions of the ridge and bill. Use a ruby flame bit, and then a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) V-tool 45°, to shape each.





5

**Shape the eyes.** *Note: The left chick is dozing off with partially closed eyes, and the right chick is awake. Start with the right chick. Mark the shape of the eye and outline it with the 5/32" (7mm) medium-grit flame-shaped carbide-point bit. Use this and a 1/8" (3mm) ball-shaped fluted carbide cutter to deepen the area around the eye, especially the outer edges. Round over the eyeball with the ball cutter. Once you are happy with the shape, define the eyelid with a carving knife and the 1/8" (3mm) 45° V-tool. Repeat on the other side. Complete the eyes for the sleepy chick following the same technique. *Note: The left eye of the sleepy chick tucks into the body of the right chick and is not fully visible.**

## ADDING DETAILS



6

**Add the feather insert.** The insert will help cover the joint between the chicks, as well as add visual interest. Use the carving knife to remove a section of the facial disc where the insert will fit. This needs to be about 1/4" (6mm) deep. Then, using 240-grit sandpaper in the cushioned-drum sander, shape the inner edge of the insert to match the contour of the facial disc. Remove excess wood from the outer edge of the insert on the band saw. Thin the edge with the cushioned-drum sander, and then use the carving knife to roughly shape each individual feather. Glue the insert in place with epoxy glue. Then refine the shape of these feathers using a 5/64" (2mm) flame-shaped diamond bit.



7

**Add texture.** Shape the remainder of the feathers with a 3/16" (5mm) #10 gouge and the 1/8" (3mm) 45° V-tool. Sand the feathers with 240-grit sandpaper in the split-mandrel sander. Add random grooves and notches on the inserted feathers with a scalpel. Carve soft waves into the surface of the feathers with the 5/64" (2mm) flame-shaped diamond bit. Use a 5/32" (4mm) bull-nose blue ceramic stone to add some texture to the face and head; add texture to the ruff with a 5/64" (2mm) cylinder-shaped blue ceramic stone. Use this same stone to texture the remainder of the facial disc. Then use a 3/16" (5mm) inverted cone-shaped blue ceramic stone to further texture the head. Repeat this process for the second chick.





8

**Add the chicks to the nest.** Make adjustments, if needed. Once you are happy with the fit, add epoxy putty or wood filler to the joint between the chicks. Let dry. Smooth and texture the filler with blue ceramic stones. Remove any loose fibers with a 400-grit nylon buffing wheel and wipe it down with mineral spirits. Let dry.

## A Note on Painting

Barn owls can vary in color from almost white to almost black. Males are generally paler than females. I chose a lighter variation for my chicks. If you wish to make yours darker, increase the value of the paints used. You can always increase the intensity of the colors, but it is much more troublesome to lighten them if you start dark.

## PAINTING & FINISHING



9

**Add paint.** Seal the chicks with a sanding sealer before applying several thin coats of white gesso. Let dry. Then apply several thin coats of buff titanium mixed with yellow ochre as a base coat to the top and back of the head, the ruff, and around the eyes.



10

**Paint the top of the heads.** Start with a mixture of buff titanium and tiny amounts of dioxazine purple and quinacridone gold. Use a dry brush to stipple this mixture in random areas, and then stipple random areas with zinc white. Use a pointed brush to stipple darker patches with a mixture of raw umber, burnt umber, and titanium white. Build up several layers of color in this manner. Repeat on the sides of the head.



11

**Paint the feathers around the face.** Paint the ruff with a mixture of quinacridone gold, yellow ochre, and titanium white. Add burnt umber to this mixture and darken the ruff on the lower half of the face. Use a weak wash to highlight the edges of the feathers. Use this wash to highlight some shadow in the valleys on the top of the head and around the eyes, especially the inside corners and down the sides of the central ridge. Add random highlights beneath the bill with zinc white. Add a hint of raw umber to the zinc white and add highlights to the face and down the middle of the nose ridge. Add a very weak wash of raw umber over the white areas to tone down the brightness. Then use a pointed brush to speckle the top of the head with titanium buff, zinc white, and raw umber.





12

**Paint the eyes.** Paint the eyelids with a base coat of quinacridone gold, buff titanium, dioxazine purple, and zinc white. Add a hint of dioxazine purple to the mixture, lightly blending the color into the area above. Add a mixture of cadmium red medium, buff titanium, and zinc white to the upper eyelid. Paint the bottom eyelids with a mixture of raw umber and buff titanium. Paint the bill the same as the eyelids. Wet-blend buff titanium onto the bottom half. The eyes are a very dark brown, but appear almost black. Base coat the eyes with ultramarine blue and top this with lamp black.



13

**Add finish.** Apply two coats of satin varnish to the body and gloss varnish to the eyes. Add finishing oil to your base. Secure the chicks within the nest with epoxy glue and dowel rods. Add a dark stain to the inside of your back panel. Screw this to the base, and then add hooks to the back to hang and display.



Paul Purnell has been carving as a hobby for 15 years. While he carves mostly wildlife in the round, he has been known to make anything from tiny netsuke to owls in flight. He started making walking sticks, with either basic or fancy heads, following a request from the owner of his local gun shop, where his handiwork is now sold. Paul is retired and lives with his wife in a village near Lincoln in the United Kingdom. He is the author of *Carving Creative Walking Sticks and Canes*, available at [foxchapelpublishing.com](http://foxchapelpublishing.com).

## MATERIALS

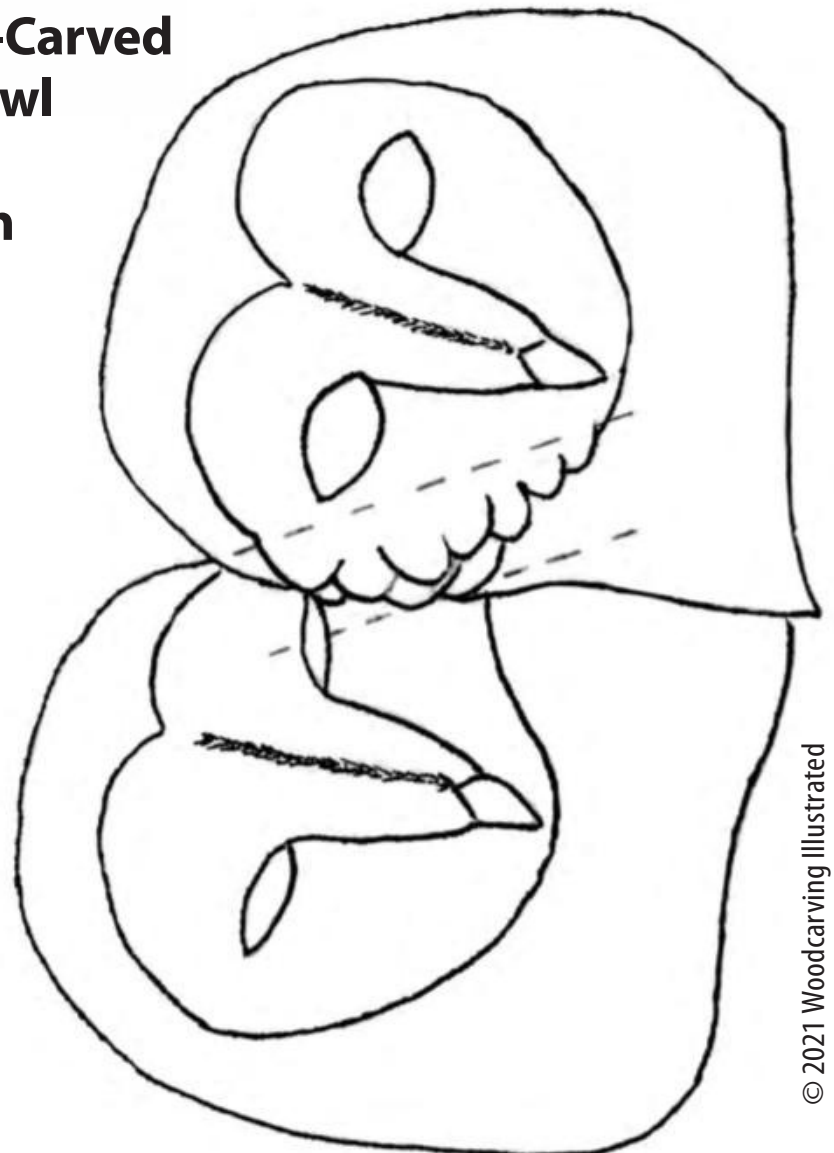
- Wood, such as basswood or limewood, 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (6cm) thick: owl chicks, 2 each 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (2.8cm x 3.2cm)
- Wood, such as basswood or limewood,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) thick: insert,  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (10mm x 3.8cm)
- Wood, such as tempered hardboard,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) thick: backer, fit to size
- Wood, such as elm burr or similar, approx. 3" x 7" (7.6cm x 17.8cm)
- Glue: epoxy, hot glue
- Sandpaper: assorted grits to 400
- Mineral spirits
- Natural oil finish
- Varnish: satin, gloss
- Sanding sealer
- Stain: dark walnut, such as Minwax®
- White gesso
- Dowel rods
- Acrylic paints, such as Winsor & Newton™: buff titanium, burnt umber, cadmium red medium, dioxazine purple, lamp black, quinacridone gold, raw umber, titanium white, ultramarine blue, yellow ochre, zinc white
- Screws, 4 each  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm)
- Hanger: 2 each D-ring

## TOOLS

- Band saw
- Scalpel
- Carving knife
- Rotary carving tool
- Carbide-point bits:  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) coarse-grit bull-nose cylinder,  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) medium-grit sphere,  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) medium-grit flame
- Fluted carbide cutter:  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) ball
- Ruby bit: flame
- Diamond bits:  $\frac{5}{64}$ " (2mm) flame;  $\frac{5}{32}$ " (4mm)-dia. ball
- Blue ceramic stones:  $\frac{5}{64}$ " (2mm) cylinder,  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm) inverted cone,  $\frac{5}{32}$ " (4mm) bull-nosed
- #10 gouge:  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm)
- V-tool:  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) 45°
- Sanders: cushioned-drum, split-mandrel
- Buffing wheel: 400-grit nylon or Scotch-Brite® pad
- Paintbrushes: assorted

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

## Power-Carved Barn Owl Chicks Pattern



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# Simple Scarecrow Pin

**Make a fashion statement this fall with a classic three-step carved brooch**

*By Wayne Laramore*



**T**his is a great project for carvers of all skill levels, especially beginners. You only need a few tools and some paint. The features are fairly simple, but their simplicity makes this pin a statement piece. Use it to add some extra flair to your autumn ensembles.

## Getting Started

I transfer the pattern onto a triangular piece of wood with the center of the face oriented on a corner. Give yourself a little space on the outline of the project. Then use a rough out knife to clean off the saw marks. *Note: Always wear a carving glove and thumb guard. The photos were taken without them to clearly show hand and knife positions.*

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS

- Basswood, 1½" (3.8cm) square: 3" (7.6cm) long
- Glue: cyanoacrylate (CA), tacky
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Creative™ Ceramcoat®: antique white, blue heaven, burnt sienna, cherry red, Christmas green, licorice, light foliage green, pumpkin, sandstone, tangerine, yellow
- Pre-stain conditioner, such as Minwax®
- Finish: semigloss, such as Deft®
- Clip
- Foam plate (optional)
- Toothpicks

### TOOLS

- Rough out knife
- V-tool: ⅛" (3mm) 35°
- #11 veiner: ⅛" (3mm)
- #16 gouges: ¼" (6mm), ⅝" (8mm)
- Paintbrushes: assorted

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*



## ROUGHING OUT



1

**Rough shape the piece.** Use a 1/8" (3mm) 35° to outline the hat, face, and hair. Use the knife to work the face and hair up under the hat. Remove wood from under the chin. Make a stop cut halfway down the face and carve up to it at an angle to form the nose. Use a 5/16" (8mm) #16 gouge to remove wood from underneath the collar. Then use the same tool to make folds in the collar.



2

**Carve the face.** Use the knife to round the nose and chin, and a 1/4" (6mm) #16 gouge to remove material for the eyes. Add a smile with the 1/8" (3mm) 35°. Use the tip of the knife to remove tiny chips out of the corners of the mouth, and then round the lips. Draw the sunflower on the hat. Use the knife to round the top of the hat down and into the flower. Then shape the floppy hat brim. Add the scarf under the chin.



3

**Detail the hair.** Use a 1/8" (3mm) #veiner to splinter the hair in staggered rows, to give it a straw-like appearance. Be careful not to break any pieces off. Continue until you have worked all the way to the bottom. Apply cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to stiffen the hair and keep it from breaking. Repeat on the other side.



### Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. Seal your project with a pre-stain conditioner and let dry. Add a clip to the back of the pin with tacky glue. Let dry for 24 hours. You can hold onto the clip while you paint.

Add paint. Instead of a pallet, I use a foam plate to mix my paint colors with water. Apply two or three thinned washes until you achieve the desired color. Let dry for 24 hours, and then spray with a light coat of clear finish.



### Simple Scarecrow Pin Pattern

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Wayne Laramore, a retired mental health administrator, resides in Sparta, Ill., with his wife Pat. He is the father of two and grandfather of four. Wayne was selected to join the Caricature Carvers of America in 2016. He is a member of the Belleville Midwest Carvers Club and a guest carver at Silver Dollar City. To see more of Wayne's work, follow @waynelaramore on Instagram.



# Wendy the Shelf-Sitter Witch

**This charming carve is sure to light up your favorite ledge, desk, or book nook**

*By Richard Embling*

**W**atch out—this mischievous little shelf witch is up to no good! Her flexible legs add a nice twist to a Halloween favorite and take inspiration from traditional puppetry techniques. This is a great beginner's project, but the concept can easily be adapted to suit your imagination. You can complete the project with just a knife, but I also used additional tools from my arsenal, such as gouges and a hand drill, to bring the look together.

## Getting Started

Attach the pattern views to two adjacent sides of the blank using your preferred method, making sure the grain runs vertically. I traced around the pattern lines with a pencil. Cut the views on a band saw and remove the blanks from the block. Set aside the waste wood. Then draw the basic landmarks.

Cut the blank on a band saw.





## ROUGHING OUT



**1 Shape the hat.** Round the hat with a rough out knife. Use a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) #9 gouge to slightly hollow the brim, but be careful not to remove too much wood yet.



**2 Separate the head from the body.** Using a  $1\frac{15}{32}$ " (12mm) 90° V-tool, outline the head, face, and hair. Use the knife to cut under the hat brim, where the hair meets the shoulders, and around the head. Make a stop cut around the face and cut up to it to bring out the face from the body.



**3 Shape the face.** Use the pencil to mark the mouth and nose. Make a stop cut under the bottom of the nose and cheeks. Then cut along the sides of the nose to separate it from the face.



**4 Create the eye sockets.** Using a  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) #9 gouge, make a shallow well going across the forehead above bridge of the nose, making sure not to remove too much of the nose. Round the cheeks and nose with the knife.



**5 Shape the body.** Mark the arms, and then use the  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) #9 gouge to outline the marks. Use the knife to further separate the arms from the body. Use the tip of the knife to make deep cuts around the arms for added depth.



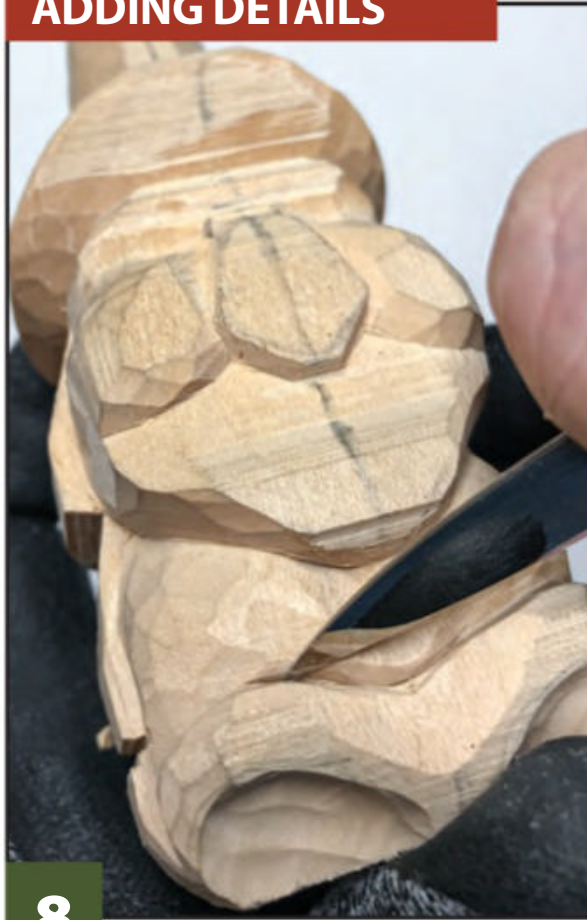
**6 Carve the chest.** Use the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) #9 gouge to hollow the space under the chin slightly. Then round the chest with the knife.



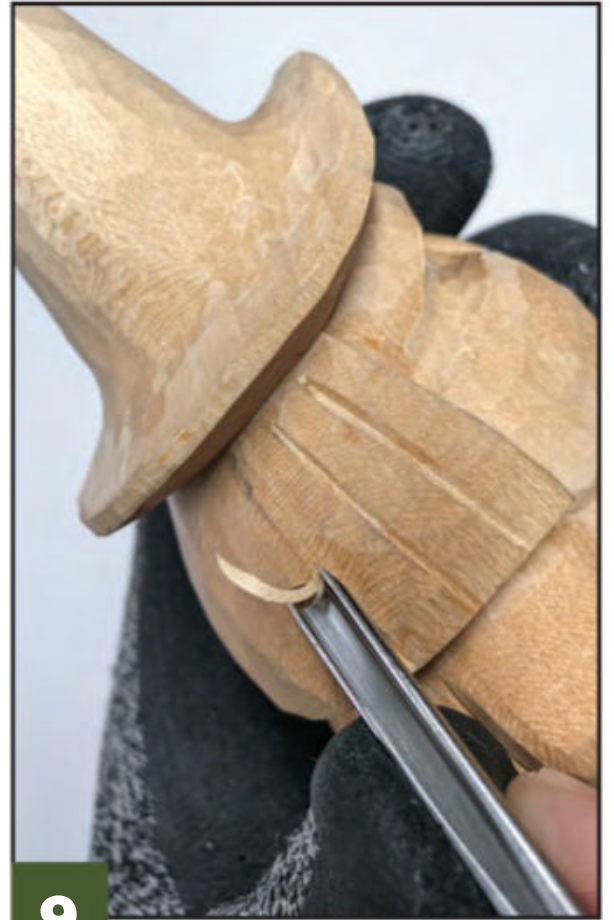
## ADDING DETAILS



**7 Shape the bottom of the dress.** Use the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) #9 gouge to make two hollows where you'll affix the legs later. Deepen these hollows with the  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm) #9 gouge.



**8 Add the clothing details.** Refine the folds in the dress with the knife to create the illusion of fabric. Round the cuts above the hollows for the legs. Finish shaping the hat.



**9 Add hair.** Use a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) #11 gouge to outline the eyebrows. Add vertical grooves to suggest locks of hair with the  $\frac{15}{32}$ " (12mm) 90° V-tool.



**10 Shape the mouth.** Draw on a crooked grin, and then use a detail knife to outline it. Draw the teeth and remove wood around them so that they protrude. Carve the nostrils with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) #11 gouge.



**11 Add the eyes.** Draw them on with the pencil, use the tip of the knife to outline the shapes, and then carefully carve up to the cuts to round out the eyes.

### TIP

#### MAKING EVEN EYES

*Making both eyes symmetrical can be challenging. Consider using a pair of wing dividers to mark out the eyes prior to carving.*







**12**

**Attach the legs.** Using a  $\frac{7}{32}$ " (5.5mm)-dia. bit, carefully drill holes about 1" (2.5m) deep into the hollow areas at the front of the dress. Use the same angle when drilling both holes.

**TIP**

**DRILLING GUIDE**

*Wrap a small strip of masking tape around your drill bit to mark the desired depth to which you wish to drill. Just make sure you don't go past the tape.*



**13**

**Make the boots.** Mark the center on the top of each boot. Using the  $\frac{7}{32}$ " (5.5mm)-dia. bit, drill about halfway down into the marked center.



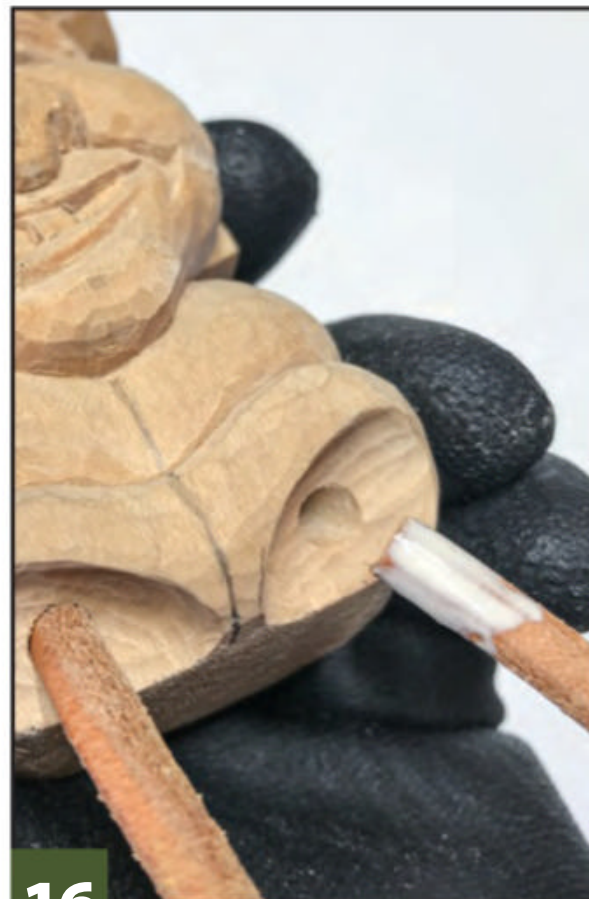
**14**

**Refine the boots.** Use the rough out knife to round the corners of the right boot. Remove extra wood from around the heel to recess it from the sole. Repeat the process on the left. *Note: The boots should mirror each other in shape.*



**15**

**Make the legs.** Cut two pieces of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm)-dia. leather cord to about 4" (10.2cm) long. You could use thin rope or shoelaces, if preferred. Just remember to use something flexible enough to let the legs hang freely.



**16**

**Assemble the pieces.** Add a small amount of wood glue to one end of the leather cord and carefully insert it into the right boot. Add glue to the other end of the cord and insert the leg into the right leg hole. Repeat on the left side. Clean up any excess glue with a damp paper towel while the glue is still wet.

## Paint Notes

**Hat and boots:** black, drybrushed with black pearl

**Hair and eyebrows:** orange spice, pure pumpkin

**Face:** forest green, leaf green

**Freckles:** forest green

**Eyes:** light antique white

**Irises:** island blue

**Pupils:** black

**Mouth:** black, light antique white

**Dress:** bright purple, African violet

**Stockings:** light antique white, black





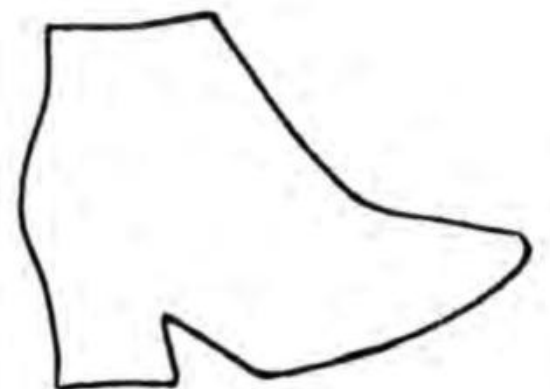
## Wendy the Shelf-Sitting Witch Patterns

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### Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. Scrub the piece with a toothbrush, and then seal it with a homemade primer. I make mine by mixing 1 part white craft glue with 5 parts water in a small jar. Then add a few drops of white acrylic paint to tint the mixture slightly and help lighten the carving once sealed. Add this wash to the entire piece—except the legs. Let dry overnight.

Add paint. I used matte acrylics (see paint notes at left) and thinned them with water to the consistency of skim milk, as this helps to build the color in layers while allowing the wood grain to show through. Paint the hat and boots with thinned black. I mixed thinned leaf green and forest green for the face. Paint the hair with thinned pure pumpkin mixed with thinned orange spice. Paint the mouth with black and the teeth with thinned light antique white. I used a mixture of thinned bright purple and African violet for the dress. Paint the legs, alternating between stripes of light antique white and black to mimic stockings. Paint the eyes with light antique white and the irises with island blue. I added a black pupil and a white eye highlight with a toothpick. Then add some freckles across the cheeks with undiluted forest green. Drybrush the hat and boots with undiluted black pearl to make the facets pop and shimmer. Allow the paint to dry for 24 hours. Then seal the carving with a coat of satin spray lacquer and allow to dry for an additional day.



### materials & tools

#### Materials

- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) square: witch 6" (15.2cm) long
- Basswood, 1" (2.5cm) thick: shoes, 2 each 1½" x 2" (3.8cm x 5.1cm)
- Leather cord: ¼" (6mm)-dia. 2 each 4" (10.2cm) long
- Glue: wood; white craft glue, such as Elmer's®
- Acrylic paints, such as DecoArt®: African violet, black, bright purple, forest green, island blue, leaf green, light antique white, orange spice, pure pumpkin, white; such as DecoArt® Dazzling Metallics: black pearl
- Pencil
- Paper towels
- Finish: satin spray, such as Deft®
- Tape: masking (optional)
- Toothpicks

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

#### Tools

- Band saw
- Knives: rough out, detail
- V-tool: 15/32" (12mm) 90°
- #9 gouges: 9/32" (7mm), 3/8" (10mm)
- #11 gouges: 1/8" (3mm), 1/4" (6mm)
- Drill with bit: 7/32" (5.5mm)-dia.
- Wing dividers (optional)
- Toothbrush
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Small jar



Richard Embling lives in Wales. He has been carving since age 12 and originally carved walking sticks and decorative canes. Over the past five years, he has developed a passion for carving wooden puppets and marionettes. See more of Richard's work on Instagram and Facebook @TheUrbanTinker.



# Storytelling With Wood

**Nikki Reese carves everything from fishermen and gnomes to classic video game tropes—and crafts wild bios for them all**

*By Kaylee Schofield*

A self-professed “fast carver,” Nikki says that she’s always happier when she slows down.



**F**or Nikki Reese, a carving is never just a carving—it’s a part of a bigger story. A longtime fan of fantasy books, she taught herself to carve two years ago, pulling from gnome lore, Lovecraftian horror, and her own unique childhood as she honed her style. Like in classic role-playing games (RPGs), each new carve has an elaborate backstory and a “superpower,” whether it’s guarding the forest from intruders or guiding lost beluga whales back to sea. But the story doesn’t end with the carving itself; around 90% of Nikki’s work is gifted, hidden in nooks and crannies for strangers to find, or auctioned off for charity—all geared toward infusing some much-needed magic into everyday life. And the more she carves, the more her own mythos expands to include characters even she never saw coming.



Nikki’s mushroom soldiers, or “mushwarriors,” act as companions to her gnomes. This shield carrier protects the forest against invasive parasites.



**WCI: What led you to carving?**

**Nikki:** I've been whittling sticks into smaller sticks for as long as I've been able to get my hands on a knife. I wanted to make art that was tangible and giftable, and carving just felt right. I'd been meaning to do it for most of my life.

**WCI: What's behind your fascination with carving fishermen and women?**

**Nikki:** I was born (and spent a good portion of my childhood) in Alaska. My dad was a commercial fisherman, and my mom was the fish camp cook. I spent my days running around the fish camp and was looked after by a small army of fishermen. I have fond memories of that time, and my carvings of fishermen and women are informed by that part of my life.

**WCI: Why gnomes?**

**Nikki:** They hearken back to my childhood. I thought gnomes were real-life guardians of the natural world. I like carving them because it feels like I'm capturing some of the carefree magic of my early years and sharing it with others.

**WCI: You often create rich backstories for your carvings. How do they unfold?**

**Nikki:** I love telling stories, but I am a terrible writer. The backstories give me a place to share ideas or

**Nikki enjoys creating little homes for her characters, like this 1½" (3.8cm)-tall witch's cottage. To learn how to make your own cottage, turn to page 54.**



At the end of a long day, this gnome couple dons matching jammies, swapping their daytime hats for softer caps dyed with indigo.

daydreams in small, bite-sized chunks. I don't come up with a story for a carving until it's carved and painted. Once I know what they look like, I can give them little lives.

**WCI: What is your workspace like?**

**Nikki:** I live in a small apartment with my wife and dog, so my workspace is the far corner of the couch; a small, foldable laptop table holds my tools. I usually curl up and carve with an apron to help catch some of the woodchips. You don't need a big workspace to carve.

**WCI: What are your go-to hand tools?**

**Nikki:** I'm really into this knife made by Emma F. V. Smith, a custom knifemaker in the United Kingdom. It feels like an extension of my hand! I've also got a Helvie small detail blade with a handle I made from scrap cherry—I don't think I could live without it. I always keep some OCC knives and gouges around.

**WCI: You've mentioned the idea of hiding carvings around for people to find. How often do you do this?**

**Nikki:** I've been hiding carvings as long as I've been carving them. Sometimes I'll attach a tag to the carving with my Instagram handle and a quick note, and other times

This Alaskan fisherman was inspired by Nikki's childhood at a fish camp. After a busy haul, he likes to warm his chilly limbs by a beach fire.



I just leave them in the nooks of trees with no explanation. I've probably hidden around 50 carvings, but I don't keep an exact count. I like the idea of something pulling you out of the mundane and often cruel grind of daily life—just a little splash of magic can shake it up.

**WCI: What would you say to a carver who's starting out?**

**Nikki:** Just keep carving. It's going to get better! It's easy to get discouraged and compare your work to others' when you're starting out. It doesn't matter what your carvings look like as long as you're having fun. If you keep doing it, you're going to get better at it; it just takes time. Oh, and buy decent wood—and keep your knives sharp!

*Find more of Nikki's work on Instagram @yetirage.*



# Tiny Gnome Home

Turn basswood scraps into clever little cottages

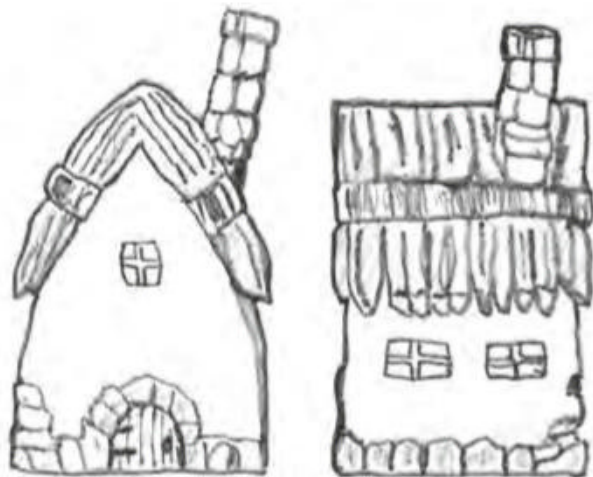
By Nikki Reese

I like to imagine a gnome kicking up her feet at the end of a long day and enjoying a pipe in this cozy little cottage. It's a simple project you can complete in an evening with minimal tools, and the customization possibilities are endless. I designed a stucco cottage with stonework and a thatched roof, but you can add half-timbering, a moss roof, a round door, or anything you like to yours. Best of all, you probably have dozens of scraps this size already lying around; it's a great way to turn low-cost materials into tiny works of art.

## Getting Started

Prepare the blank. With a pencil, mark the top and bottom of the cottage. *Note: Always wear a carving glove and thumb guard. The photos were taken without them to clearly show hand and knife positions.*

## Tiny Gnome Home Pattern



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## ROUGHING OUT



1

**Carve the basic shape.** Using a rough out knife, cut the corner off the top of your cottage blank to form one half of the roof. Carve off the opposite corner in the same manner, gradually creating two slopes that meet in the middle to form the peak of the roof.





2

**Draw the landmarks.** With the pencil, add lines to indicate the roof, door, windows, foundation, and stones. As you carve, you will need to periodically redraw your lines.



3

**Separate the roof from the cottage body.** Make roofline stop cuts all the way around the cottage. On the front and back, carve up to these lines at an angle to sink the body of the cottage into the roof. The roof should hang over the body of the cottage noticeably. Deepen your cuts and make another pass all the way around. Then follow the rest of the detail lines you drew in Step 2 into stop cuts.



4

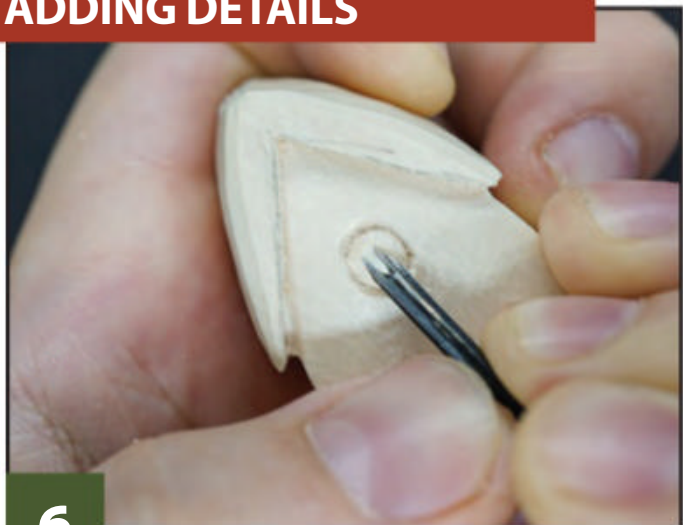
**Begin to shape the cottage elements.** Carve down to the foundation lines to create depth between the cottage and the foundation. Carve up to the stone lines around the door, and then carve the door from the inside out to the stop cuts to sink the door into the cottage. Carve the exposed stones in the walls. Use a knife of your choice.



5

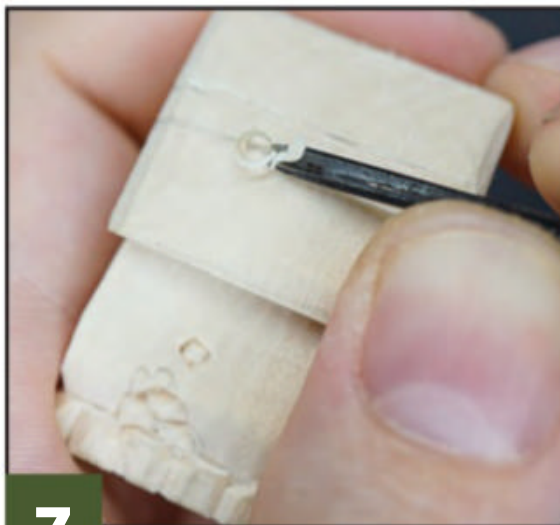
**Rough in the windows.** Carve the insides of the windows out toward the stop cuts to sink the paned areas into the body of the cottage. Carve the individual stones in the foundation and around the door by making stop cuts with the detail knife and carving around them to create depth and layering. *Note: You could also use a 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool to separate the stones before shaping them.*

## ADDING DETAILS



6

**Add the window details.** Use the 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool to add crossbars in every window. *Note: You could also achieve this look by making V-cuts with a knife, if preferred.*



7

**Add the roof details.** Draw the roof bands on either side of the roof and carve along the lines using the 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool. Use the same tool to carve vertical lines up to the bands, and from the tops of the bands up to the roofline. This creates a thatched roof effect. Use the detail knife to cut small triangles in the bottom of the roof, to make a less uniform thatch. Inspect the carving from all angles and clean up your cuts.



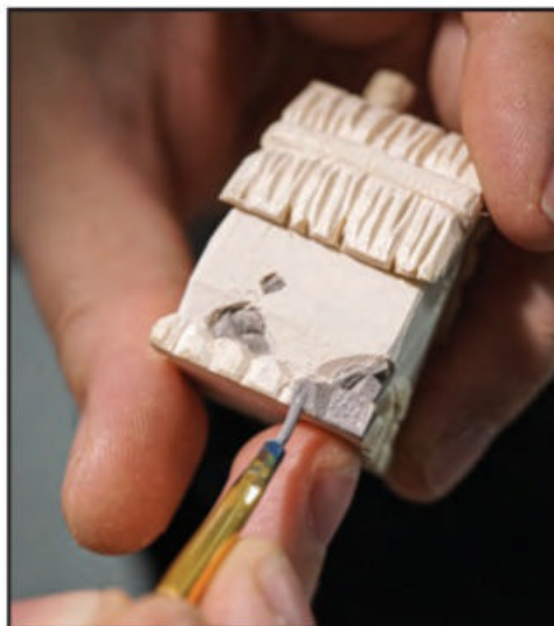


## PAINTING



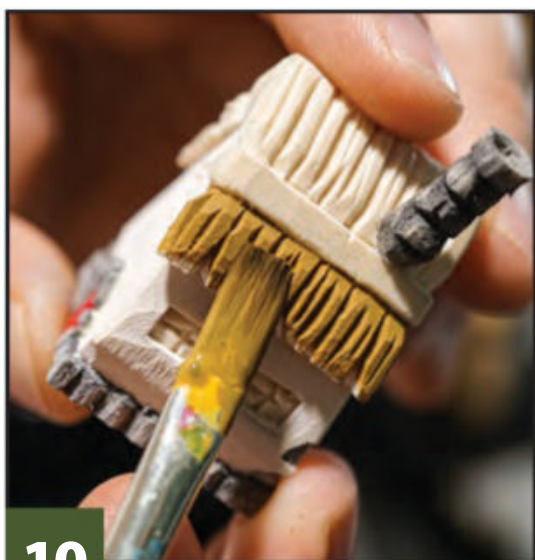
8

**Carve the chimney.** Use the same technique that you used in Step 5 to carve the foundation stones here. Separate the individual chimney stones with the  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) micro V-tool, and then round over the stones with the tip of the detail knife. Glue this onto the roof with cyanoacrylate (CA) glue.



9

**Paint the main body of the cottage.** I diluted titanium white heavily with water to make a wash. Using a less diluted classic French gray, paint all of the stonework. Then add a tiny touch of licorice to the classic French gray and paint it into the cracks of the stones with a thin paintbrush. This will create a shadow effect.



10

**Paint the door details.** Paint the door itself with diluted cardinal red and the thatched roof with a diluted mixture of yellow ochre and real brown. Heavily dilute pure orange in water, and dab that into the windows. Once it's dry, apply yellow ochre or daffodil yellow in the same areas. This will create a mottled, glowing window affect. Dip a very thin brush in licorice to create door braces and a handle. For added depth, you can also heavily dilute classic French gray and use it to paint shadow lines under the roof.



### Finishing

Apply a finish. I used FolkArt® clear wax, but you could use Danish oil or a wax of your choice. Let dry, disposing of any used paper towels or cloths safely.

**ON THE WEB** Find multiple bonus gnome home patterns online.  
woodcarvingillustrated.com

### materials & tools

#### MATERIALS

- Basswood,  $1\frac{1}{8}$ " (2.8cm) square: cottage,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (3.8cm) long
- Basswood,  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) square: chimney, approx.  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) long
- Pencil
- Glue: cyanoacrylate (CA)
- Acrylic paints, such as FolkArt®: real brown, cardinal red, classic French gray, daffodil yellow, licorice, pure orange, titanium white, yellow ochre

- Finish, such as FolkArt® clear wax, Danish oil or wax
- Paper towels or cloths

#### TOOLS

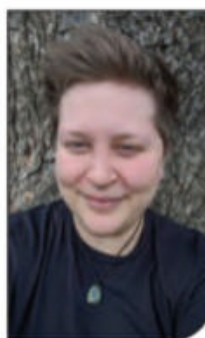
- Knives: rough out, detail
- Micro V-tool:  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm)
- Paintbrushes: assorted small

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

### FURTHER READING

**Carve a World of Gnomes**  
by Nikki Reese

Item 01777. Available for \$9.99 + S&H (parcel post) from Fox Chapel Publishing, 800-457-9112, FoxChapelPublishing.com, or your local retailer.



*After several years of procrastination, Nikki started carving in 2019 and hasn't looked back since. She lives in Austin, Texas, with her wife and dog. Find her on Instagram @yetriage.*



# Grumpy Lil' Man



**This walnut-sized carve has a whole lot of attitude**

*By Karen Scalin*



Carving 1" by 1" by 2" blanks needn't feel restrictive—you can add plenty of movement and character, no matter the size.

**M**y fascination with miniature figures began with an introduction to Jack Price's book, *Carving Small Characters In Wood*. A few years later, I took a carving class with Caricature Carvers of America (CCA) member Dave Dunham and was fascinated further. Dave advocated for dynamic figures with lively facial expressions and body positions suggesting movement; these can really enhance the spontaneity and uniqueness of the carving.

I typically start a carve without a pattern or idea in mind. Using basic starting points to set up the piece, subsequent knife cuts determine what form I see taking shape, allowing the character to develop its own personality with attitude and expression. It may be a mini, but you still have a lot of room to create your own amazingly expressive little guy. I have provided a pattern to get you started and encourage you to apply the technique to future carves.

## Getting Started

Transfer or draw the top view pattern onto your block. Draw a horizontal line around the block, splitting it in half. The top half will become the head, and the bottom half will be the body and feet. *Note: Do not rush or use force when carving minis, as they can (and will) easily break.*

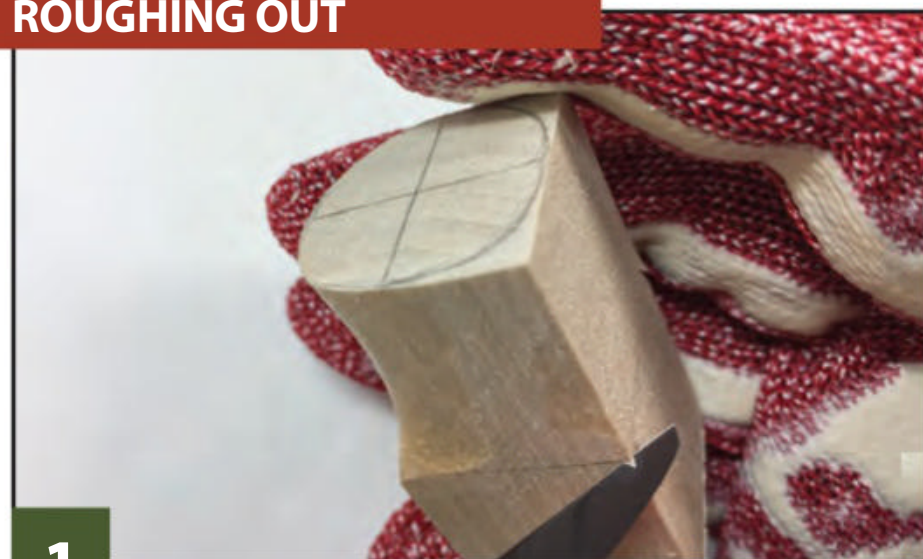
## Knife Selection

Many people think a short-bladed detail knife is necessary for carving miniatures. Actually, I find that the longer the blade, the easier it is to use. A longer blade allows me to reach areas otherwise inaccessible with a shorter blade. But you can carve a miniature with any of the knives shown here. So, what is the right knife for you? Whichever handle shape, blade length, or style you are most comfortable with.





## ROUGHING OUT



1

**Shape the head.** Use a knife of your choice to carve the top half of the block into a cylindrical shape. Carve upward from the horizontal line to the top of the blank, following the drawn circle pattern.

## TIP

### QUICK REACH

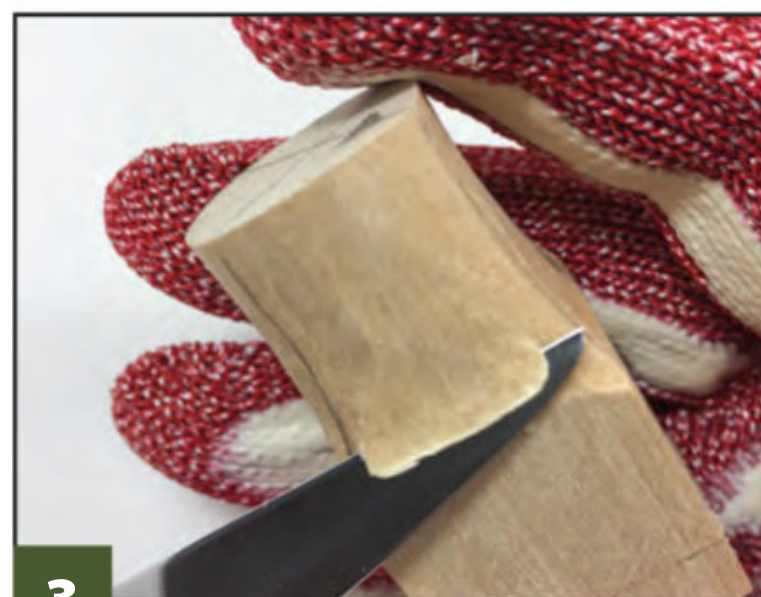
As you carve, a mess of tools can wind up in your carving space, making it hard to distinguish them from each other. I devised a color scheme to quickly identify each tool based on sweep, and then used millimeters to determine width. With just a glance, I can easily spot the tool I'm looking for. I used Sharpie® oil-based paint markers to mark the colors and numbers.



2

### Establish facial direction.

To turn the head toward the left shoulder, draw two heavier lines, each bisecting the original lines drawn on top. *Note: Using this method allows you to turn the head to any position.* Mark an arrow to indicate the direction that the face will turn. From the arrow, draw a line down the side of the cylinder. This line represents the centerline of the face. Follow the other two heavy lines and draw them down the sides of the cylinder. These lines split the head in half and represent the front of each ear.



3

### Create the facial planes.

Use the knife to shape each side of the face back to a 45° angle. Starting at the bottom of the cylinder and following up to the top, make a cut from the centerline of the face over to the line for the front of each ear.



4

**Separate the head from the body.** Draw a line around the cylinder. Angle this line up slightly, starting from the centerline of the face over to each ear. Then follow it around the back of the head. Use the knife to cut in at a slight angle from above and below this line to create a shallow V-shaped cut.



5

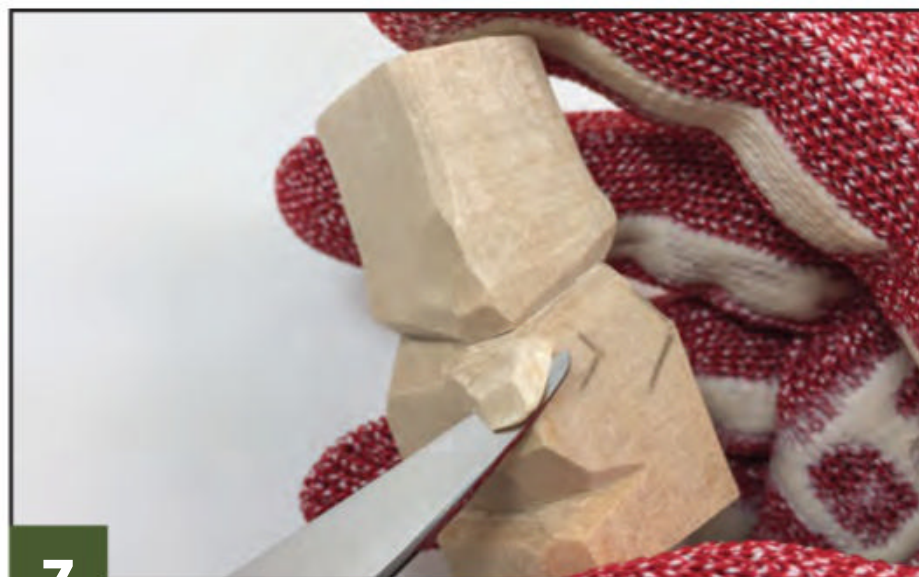
**Rough out the feet.** Though the head is turned, the feet face forward. Draw a line approximately 1/8" (3mm) up from the bottom of the blank. Use the knife to block in the top of the feet. Carve in at a slight angle from above and below this line to create a V-shaped cut. Extend these cuts a little to the left and right sides of the blank.





6

**Mark the arms.** Each arm is bent at the elbow, with the hand inside the pocket. *Note: The arm position is set in relation to the feet, not in relation to the position of the turned head.* Draw the arms a bit wider than the finished carving will be. This will allow for making adjustments to match both sides. Draw a line across the back from elbow to elbow to ensure that the arms are even.



7

**Shape the body.** Use the knife to round the body, removing all sharp edges. Round the chest, shoulders, and upper back area by cutting inward and up toward the head. Round down toward the feet.



8

**Rough in the ears.** Draw a line back from, and parallel to, the ear line. Draw this line a bit wider than the finished carving will be. This will allow for making adjustments to match both sides. Use a 1/4" (6mm) 90° V-tool to carve along the drawn lines. This will set the ear blocks out and away from the face and back of the head.



9

**Carve the arms.** Use the knife to separate the arms from the body. Following the drawn arm lines, make a cut starting at the top of the arm and following the arm profile down to the wrist. Then slice down from the top of the arm to remove a triangular chip.



10

**Add facial features.**

Draw lines for the bottom of the nose and eyeline. Draw additional lines just above and below them across the face and onto the ear blocks. Use the knife to cut in the facial details. Make a stop cut on the nose line and carve up to it to define the nose. Carve up to and down from the eyeline at a slight angle to form a shallow V-cut.



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11

**Shape the ears.** Make stop cuts on the lines drawn on the ear blocks. Carve away excess wood above and below the stop cuts. Cut around the outside edges to finish shaping the ears. Use a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) #5 gouge to scoop out the inside of the ear.



12

**Round the head and body.** Use the knife to shape the jawline and round the neck area, body, and the top and back of the head. Finish the arms and cut in and separate the feet and legs with the same tool.

## ADDING DETAILS



13

**Define the face.** Use the knife to create the nose wings. Make a cut to angle each side of the nose up, and then shape the nose wings with a sweeping cut. Cut in the smile lines. Then, using a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) #10 gouge, shape the sides of the nose and open the eye sockets.



14

**Draw the eyes.** Cut in on the lines with the tip of the knife, and then round the eyeball from top to bottom and side to side. Draw the mouth. Use the knife to make a stop cut on the line, and then carve up to it at an angle to create the mouth opening. Cut in under the bottom of the lower lip and carve up to that cut, rounding over the lower lip as you do so.



15

**Add wrinkles.** Shape the upper eyelid with a  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) 60° V-tool. Then use a  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) #10 gouge to create under-eye bags. Shape the eyebrows with the knife, and then add texture to the eyebrows with the  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) 60° V-tool. Establish the hairline shape and cut it in with the knife. Use the  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) #10 gouge to add texture to the hair. Use the  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) #10 gouge to detail the ear rims. Refine the cuts with the knife.

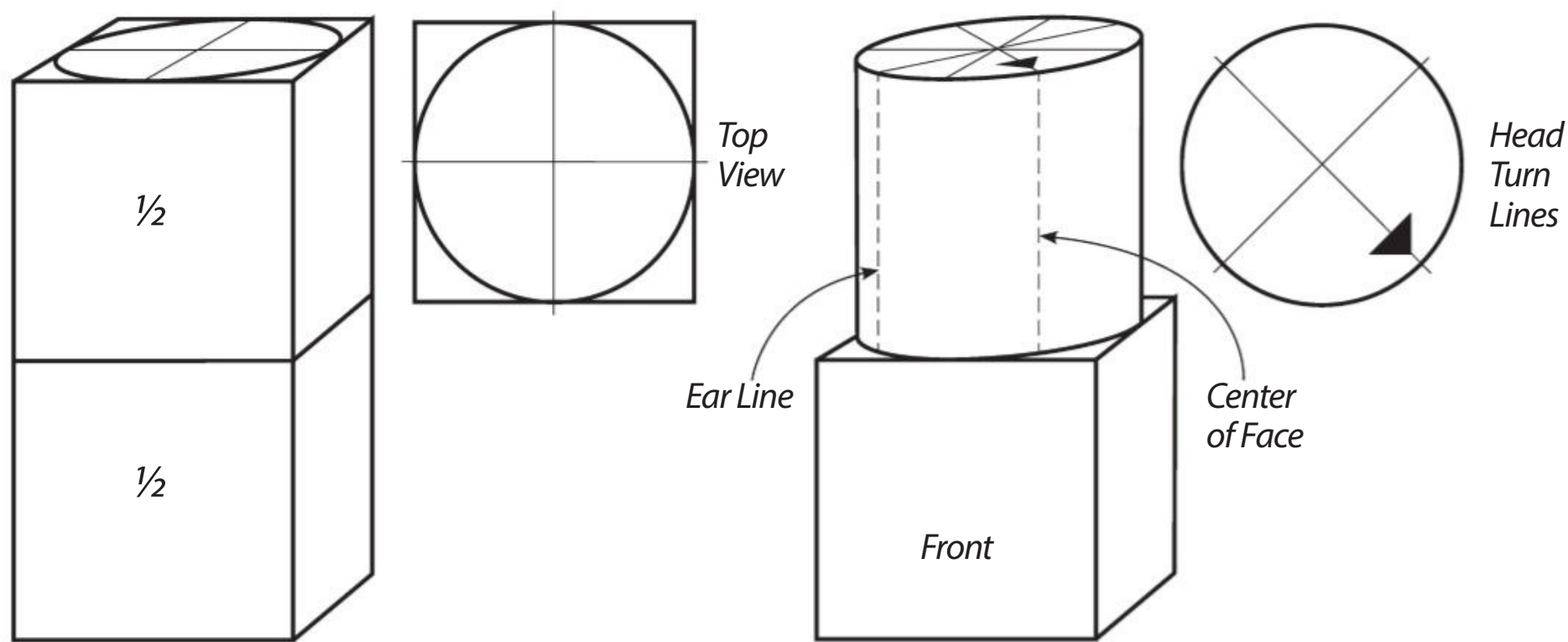


16

**Add clothing details.** Add a potbelly, shirt, sleeves, pants, and shoes. When cutting in clothing, don't be afraid to remove wood to get the depth and detail that you need. Use the knife to carve down close to the finished shape before putting in any final details. Clean up your cuts.



# Grumpy Lil' Man Templates



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## Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. Brush the entire carving with a stiff toothbrush to remove fuzzies, dirt, and oil from your hands.

Paint the carving. I paint directly onto dry wood with heavily watered-down acrylic paints. Paint the face with fleshtone, the hair spice brown, and the lips and cheeks with tomato spice. Then paint the eyes with oyster white, denim blue, and charcoal. Paint the shirt with empire gold and oyster white, the pants with navy blue, and then the shoes with hippo grey. Keep the brush fairly dry to reduce paint bleeding. Let the carving dry completely, and then dip it in a small container of boiled linseed oil (BLO). *Note: Dispose of the paper towels appropriately; BLO-soaked paper towels and rags can spontaneously combust.* Let dry.

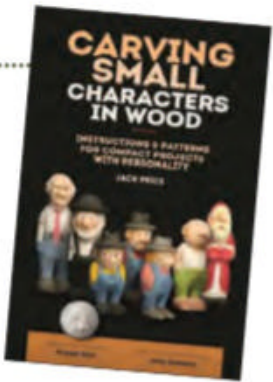
Seal the carving with DecoArt® Americana multi-purpose sealer (a water-based sealer) and let dry. Then antique it with FolkArt® Antiquing Medium Plaid 811 (a water-based stain). Apply the antiquing medium, watered down to half-strength or less, on the face and light-colored areas. Use at full-strength on the other areas. Work very quickly at this stage—put the stain on and immediately pat most of it off with a paper towel or cotton rag. Let dry completely. Then apply a coat of Howard Feed-N-Wax® and allow the piece to sit for 20 minutes. Wipe away the excess and let dry.

## WANT MORE TINY CARVES?

### Carving Small Characters In Wood

by Jack Price

Item 00183. Available for \$12.99 + S&H (parcel post) from Fox Chapel Publishing, 800-457-9112, [FoxChapelPublishing.com](http://FoxChapelPublishing.com), or your local retailer.



## materials & tools

| MATERIALS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | TOOLS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basswood, 1" (2.5cm) square: 2" (5.1cm) high</li><li>• Pencil</li><li>• Acrylic paints, such as Delta Creative™ Ceramcoat®: charcoal, denim blue, empire gold, hippo grey, navy blue, oyster white, fleshtone, spice brown, tomato spice</li><li>• Boiled linseed oil</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sealer, such as DecoArt® Americana Multi-Purpose</li><li>• Antiquing medium, such as FolkArt® Plaid 811</li><li>• Finish: Howard Feed-N-Wax®</li><li>• Paper towels</li><li>• Soft cotton rags</li></ul> <p><i>The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knife of choice</li><li>• #5 gouge: ¼" (6mm)</li><li>• #10 micro gouges: ⅓₂" (1mm), ⅓₁₆" (2mm)</li><li>• V-tool: ¼" (6mm) 90°</li><li>• Micro V-tool: ⅓₂" (1mm) 60°</li><li>• Paintbrushes: assorted</li><li>• Toothbrush</li></ul> |



Karen Scalin has been carving on and off for 25 years. She lives in a suburb of Chicago. Find more of her work on Etsy at [WoodCarvedMinisByKLS](http://WoodCarvedMinisByKLS).



# Spooky Santa

**This costumed Kris Kringle mixes two favorite holidays into one fun piece**

*By Dave Francis*

**S**pooky Santa is what happens when holidays collide in a woodcarver's mind. For a departure from more traditional interpretations of Santa, I decked mine out with jack-o'-lanterns and spiderwebs. You can complete this project with very few tools and a handful of paint colors. Modify his costume as you see fit—add sparkles to the mask, give the robe stripes, or even add a spider to the web. This piece is made to be personalized!

## Getting Started

Choose a variety of wood; I used basswood for this project, as it is easy to carve, with a straight grain and very few defects. Trace the front profile with a pencil, making sure the grain runs vertically. Cut the shape on a band saw. Since this is a carving in the round, meaning it will be lifelike and viewed from all angles, keep reference photos of all sides handy. Always keep turning your block of wood while carving to keep the piece symmetrical. Try to not get carried away with working on just one angle, or you may remove too much wood.

## Roughing Out

Rough out the project. I always try to use the largest gouges possible; this method removes wood quickly, but be careful not to remove too much early on. Round the blank and establish the basic shape with a 1 1/16" (40mm) #5 gouge. Draw landmarks for the pumpkin stack, hair, and the hands holding the front pumpkin. Follow these lines with a 3/8" (10mm) 60° V-tool. Then rough in these areas with a 1" (25mm) #5 fishtail gouge, taking your time and checking your work often. With a bench knife, clean up the areas you just carved, making sure to leave plenty of wood around the nose (see Sidebar below), as lots of figurine carvings end up being too flat in the face.

## Leaving Enough Wood for the Nose

When preparing to add facial details, it's important to leave enough excess wood for the nose. A good strategy is to draw a line down the middle of the face and try not to carve it off during the detailing process. That way, as you remove wood on the sides of the face, you'll have a visual reminder of the areas that are off-limits.





## Adding Details

While carving this Santa, I cut out eye holes in the mask, but did not actually carve or paint the irises and pupils. If you prefer a different look, add the eyes based on your preference. I like the lines between the different areas of my carvings to be very clean, so a bench knife is helpful. Make sure to strop it often to keep it nice and sharp.

Add the details. Round the pumpkins, define the hair and beard, and add the facial features and mask. Round the front pumpkin into the beard. Separate the arms from the torso and the cuffs from the hands. Smooth the sharp edges, creating small, flat planes all over the piece. Add the pumpkin ribs and clothing wrinkles with a series of V-shaped cuts. Add the hair texture with a  $\frac{3}{32}$ " (7mm) #8 gouge and a  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm) 60° V-tool. This will add some movement to the hair.

Personally, I do not use sandpaper on any of my carvings. If the tools are sharp enough, you will end up with a nice, smooth surface for applying finish.

Add the woodburned details. I drew them on first, and then used a variable temperature woodburner with a skew nib to burn the jack-o'-lantern faces onto the pumpkins

and the spiderweb onto the robe. Keep your lines nice and thin, and take your time.

## Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. I always wash my hands before I carve, so the wood stays fairly clean. If you need to clean your carving, you can use a very mild cleaner (such as Simple Green®) and a toothbrush to lightly wash it. Let it dry thoroughly before you start painting.

Paint the beard and hair with snow white. Then paint the flesh with warm beige or a color of your choice. Paint on additional coats to these two areas, if needed. Paint on a mixture of warm beige and watered-down true red to the cheeks and lips. Paint the pumpkins with watered-down jack-o'-lantern orange to let the grain show through. Next, paint the mask, cuffs, and pumpkin faces with black; paint the pumpkin stems with medium foliage green. I left the robe natural, but you could paint that, if desired. Let dry, and then lightly spray the entire carving with clear satin polyurethane. Allow to dry overnight.

**ON THE WEB** Instructions for carving a bonus pumpkin are on our website.  
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## materials & tools

### MATERIALS

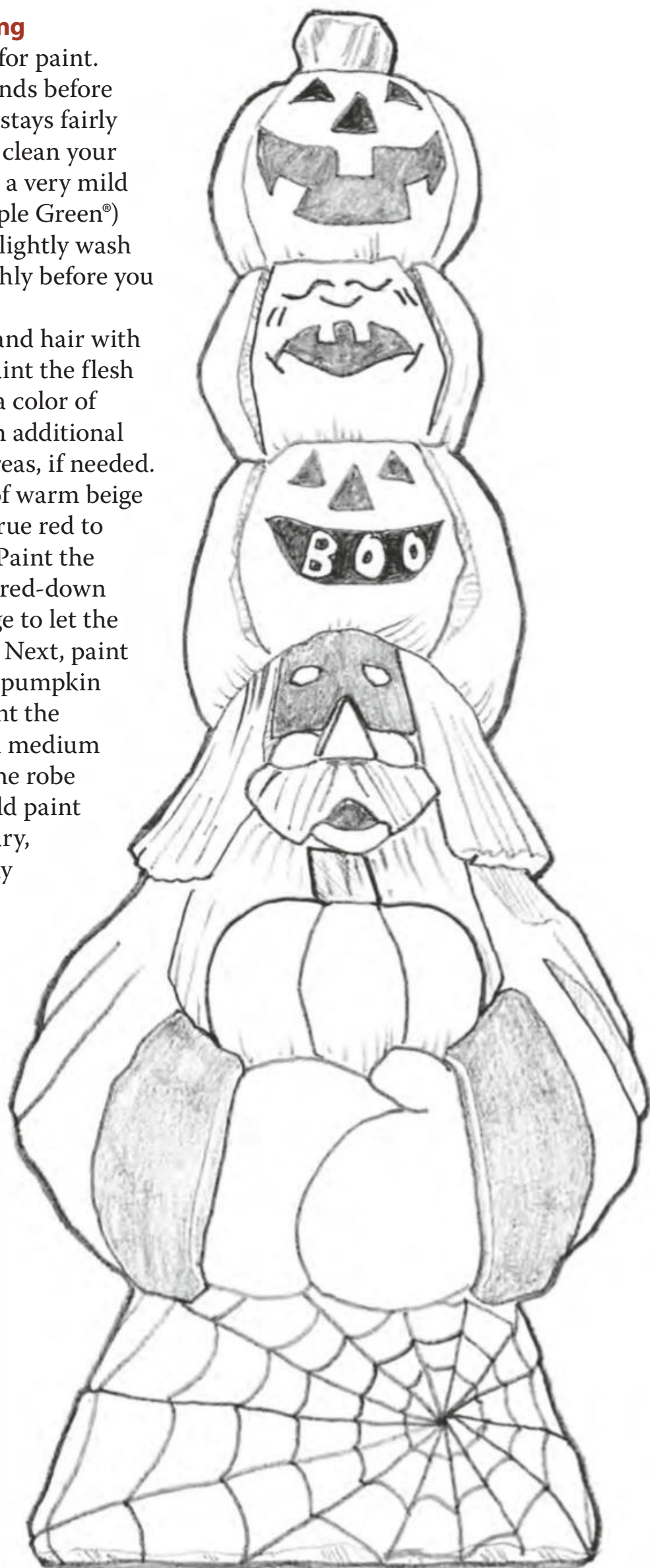
- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) thick:  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9" (11.4cm x 22.9cm)
- Pencil
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Simple Green® (optional)
- Acrylic paints, such as DecoArt® Americana: black, jack-o'-lantern orange, snow white, true red, warm beige, such as Delta Creative™ Ceramcoat®: medium foliage green
- Kelly's Shoe Cream: dusky brown, neutral
- Clean rags

- Clear finish, such as Varathane® satin polyurethane spray

### TOOLS

- Band saw
- Bench knife
- #5 fishtail gouge: 1" (25mm)
- #5 gouge:  $1\frac{1}{16}$ " (40mm)
- #8 gouge:  $\frac{9}{32}$ " (7mm)
- V-tools:  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm),  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) 60°
- Variable temperature woodburner with nib: skew
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Toothbrush

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

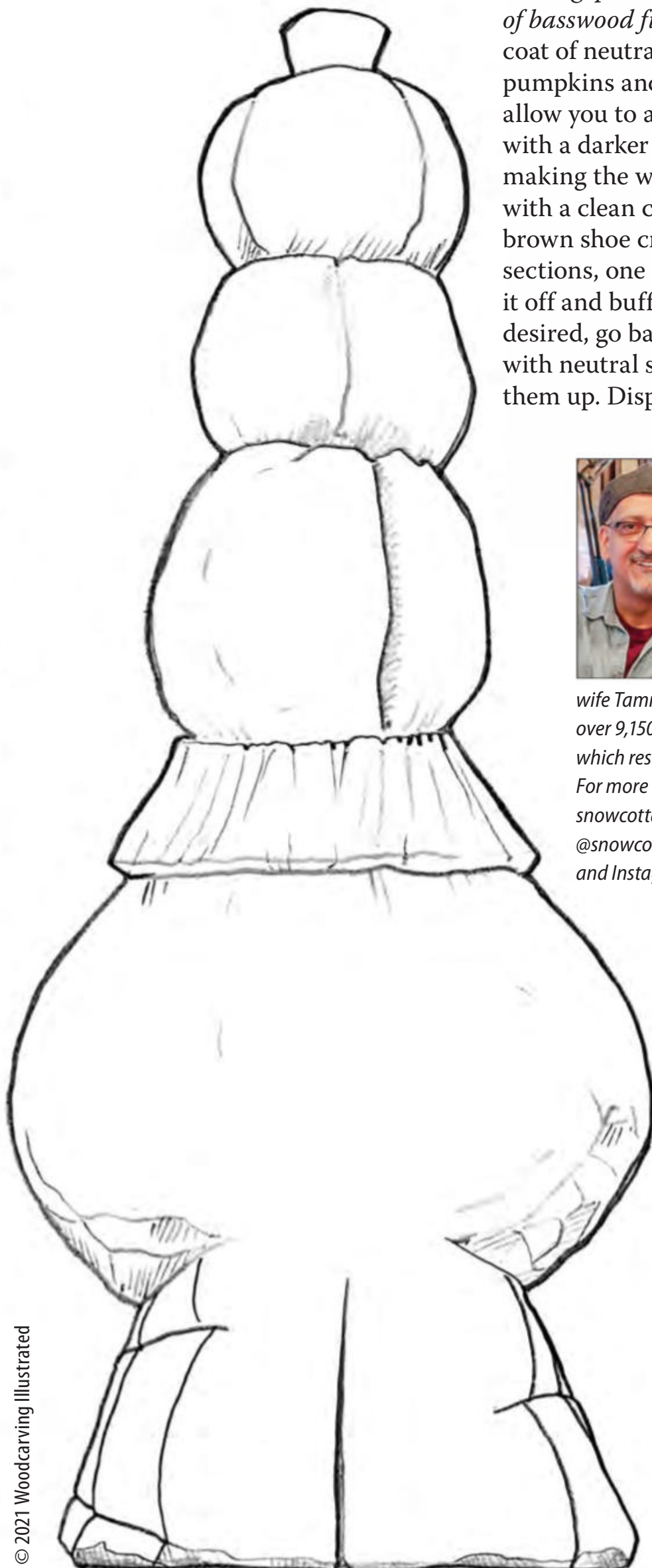




## Spooky Santa Patterns



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### Antiquing

Antique the carving. *Note: If you are apprehensive about antiquing your carving, practice on a scrap piece of basswood first.* I applied a light coat of neutral shoe cream to the pumpkins and the robe. This will allow you to antique the carving with a darker shoe cream without making the wood too dark. Buff with a clean cloth. Then apply dusky brown shoe cream to the other sections, one area at a time. Wipe it off and buff to a nice shine. If desired, go back over the white areas with neutral shoe cream to brighten them up. Display as desired.



Dave Francis has been carving since getting hooked in 1992. He lives in the small West Kootenay town of Castlegar, British Columbia, with his

wife Tammy. To date, he has completed over 9,150 Santas and related carvings, which reside in collections worldwide. For more of Dave's work, visit [snowcottagecarvings.com](http://snowcottagecarvings.com) or follow @snowcottagecarvings on Facebook and Instagram.





# CLASSIC Swirl Rosette

**Get comfortable  
carving three-corner  
chips with this elegant  
repeating design**

*By Marty Leenhouts*

**C**arving this swirl rosette without a center chip missing is a challenge most carvers will enjoy. Don't expect perfection the first time, though. Learn as you go and self-evaluate along the way. And by all means, make sure your knife is scary sharp!

## **Getting Started**

Pre-sand the blank to 320-grit until no marks remain. Apply the pattern using either a photocopy and a Pattern Transfer Tool (see Special Sources on page 66) or graphite transfer paper and a pencil.



## Carving and Finishing

Carve the piece. Grain direction is important when it comes to determining where to make your first cut. Make sure your first cut goes with the grain from the outside to the inside. When your cut reaches the delicate center region where all of the chips meet, lighten the grip on your knife and gently drag the knife to the center. A light grip will equal a light cut.

Continue making these same outside-in cuts on just the right side of each three-corner chip, moving around the swirl in a counterclockwise direction. When you're back at the beginning, start the second round of cuts, this time on just the left side of each three-corner chip. Start each of these cuts from the inside out where your very last outside-in cut ended. Keep a light grip on your knife, increasing the depth on your cut as you reach the outside of the swirl. Make the third cut to remove the chip. Then rotate your work in a clockwise direction so that each second cut can be made along the edge of the chip just removed. This will create a nice, sharp ridge between chips. Then remove the small outside chips. Make the inside cuts first and then remove the chips with the outside cuts.

Remove any leftover pattern lines with a Tombow sand eraser. Apply a finish. I sprayed on four coats of clear matte acrylic. Lightly sand and vacuum off any dust before adding the final coat.

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### Everyday Chip Carving Designs

by Editors of Woodcarving Illustrated

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Available  
Sep 2021

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS

- Basswood, ½" (1.3cm) thick: 4" (10.2cm) square
- Self-adhesive cork backing: 4" (10.2cm) square
- Sandpaper: assorted grits up to 320
- Pencil
- Graphite paper (optional)
- Gel stain, such as Varathane Ipswitch pine
- Clear finish, such as spray matte acrylic or satin lacquer

### TOOLS

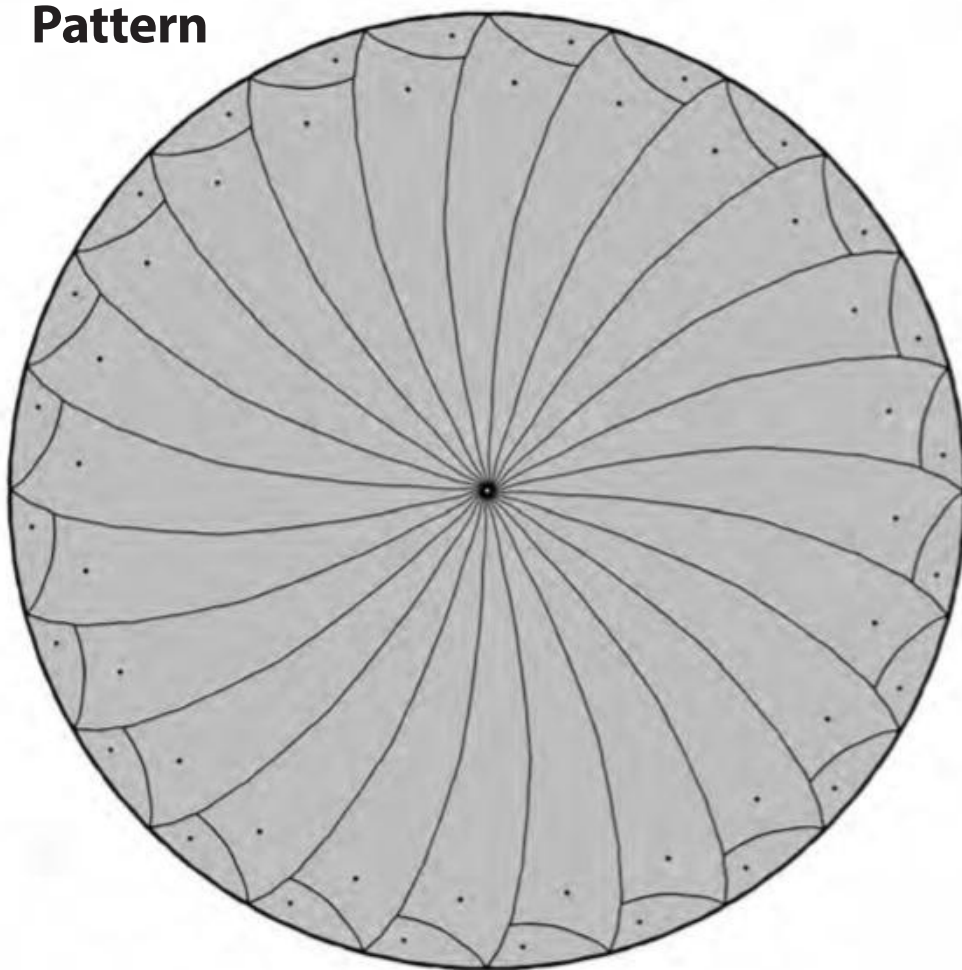
- Chip carving knife
- Foam brush (for applying stain)
- Pattern Transfer Tool
- Tombow Sand Eraser
- Vacuum

### SPECIAL SOURCES

Scary Sharp Sharpening Kits and Pattern Transfer Tools are available from [mychipcarving.com](http://mychipcarving.com).

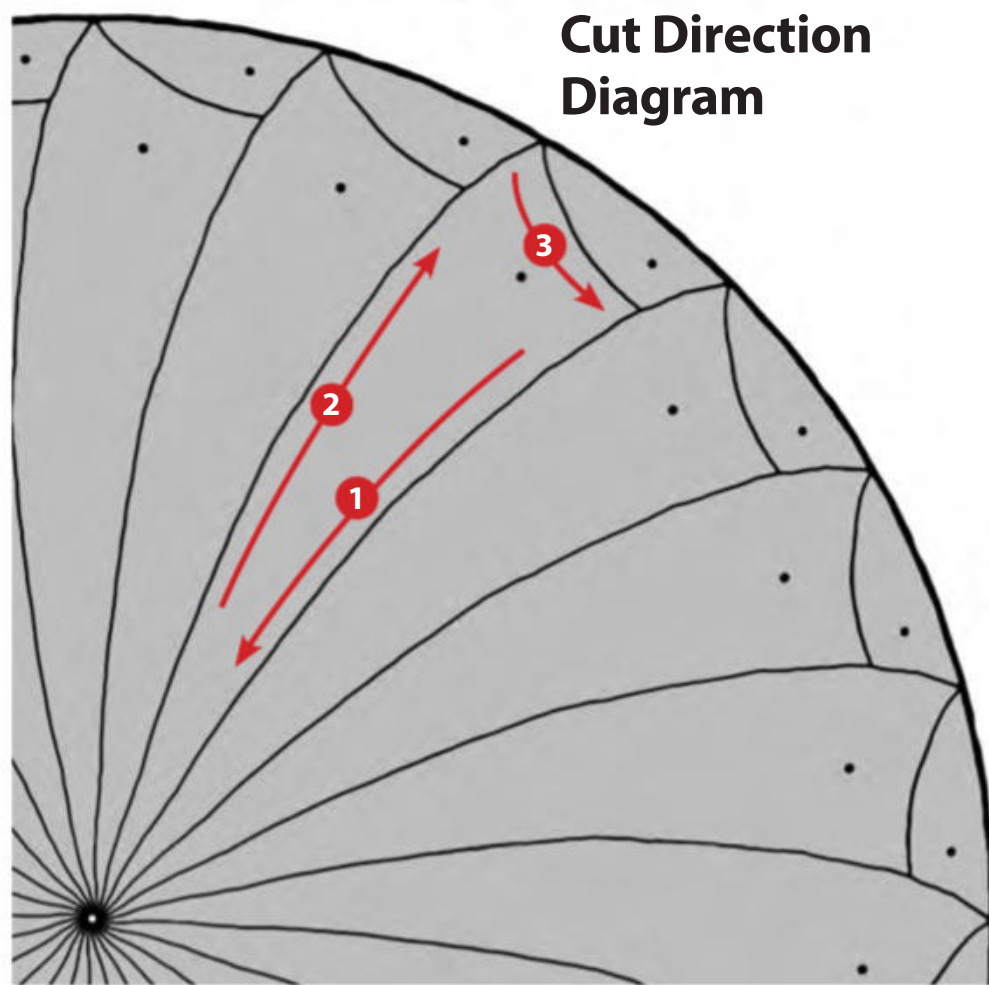
*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

## Classic Swirl Rosette Pattern



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## Cut Direction Diagram



Marty Leenhouts is a regular contributor to Woodcarving Illustrated and the author of Chip Carving Essentials: A Step-By-Step Guide to Successful Chip Carving. The owner of [MyChipCarving.com](http://MyChipCarving.com) and [EZcarving.com](http://EZcarving.com), he has 30 years of teaching experience. His instructional videos have 3+ million views and can be found on YouTube under MyChipCarving.



# Mr. Chanticleer the Rooster



**Deck out this folk art fowl with bright colors and playful patterns**

*By Larry Green*

**I** have always loved caricature carving due to its playful designs and colors. This project incorporates my favorite elements in a design that's achievable for any beginner. His name was inspired by the wily star of Geoffrey Chaucer's book, *Chanticleer and the Fox*, who loves to prance around the barnyard and sing. I painted him in a style reminiscent of Swedish Dala carvings, but you can use whichever colors and patterns you choose. Get out there and create your own Chanticleer!

*Note: Wear a glove when carving. The photos were taken without one to clearly show hand and knife positions.*

## Getting Started

Prepare the blank. Trace the pattern on a piece of wood with the grain running vertically. Cut the perimeter of the pattern on a band saw. Look over the blank and sand with 220-grit sandpaper if needed. Clean away any dust with a soft towel before carving.





## ROUGHING OUT



1

**Shape the legs and feet.** Draw a line to separate the body from the legs and feet. Make a stop cut on the line and carve up to it at an angle on all sides. Use a knife. Remove all corners and saw marks from the leg-and-foot area, making long, clean cuts as you round.



2

**Shape the tail.** Draw a vertical centerline along the back and mark the locations for the feathers. Use the knife to make V-shaped cuts on those lines. Then round the tail into the cuts so the feathers come to a point at the centerline. Round the tail on the neck side, as well.



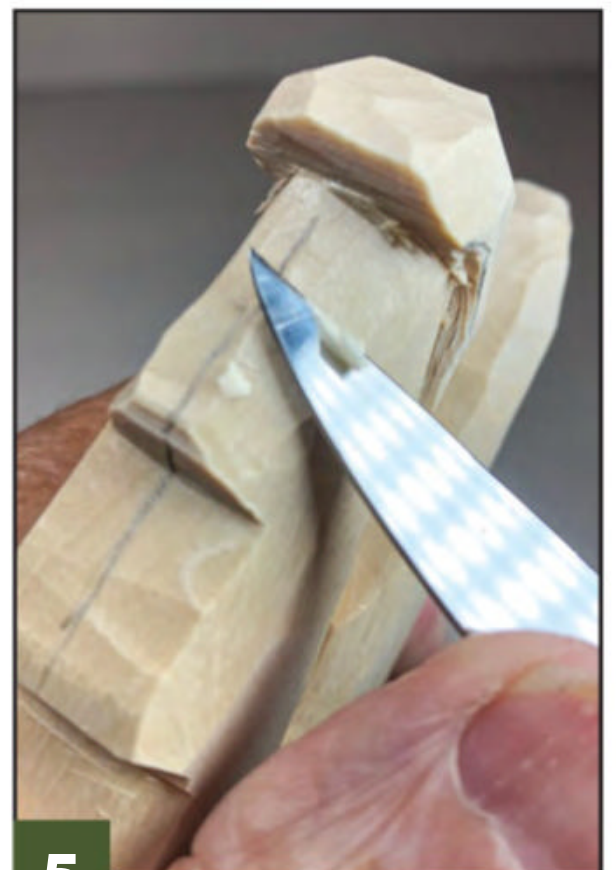
3

**Round the body.** Remove the corners and saw marks from the bottom of the body up to the wattle, and then from the bottom up to the lowest tail feather. Round the back of the neck up to the top of the head, using the same long, thin cuts.



4

**Lay out the comb.** Draw a centerline on the beak and wattle, and then mark the shape and location of the comb. Make a stop cut on the line and cut back from the wattle to the comb on both sides of the centerline, making sure your cuts roughly match on both sides. Continue shaping the head into the comb all around the piece. Shape the top of the comb to your liking.



5

**Finish shaping the beak area.** Use the knife, starting at the base of the beak and carving upward to make angled planes that meet at the centerline and stop just under the comb.





6

**Add the beak details.** On the centerline, make a stop cut  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) down from the comb, and then cut back to the comb from the stop cut to create the forehead. Draw an angled line on each side of the beak as shown, and then run a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) 60° V-tool along the lines, stopping where the forehead begins. Use the knife to remove the sharp edges created by the V-tool, making a smoother transition between the face and the beak. Continue making small cuts with the knife in this area until you are happy with the shape.



7

**Define the wattle.** Draw a line to mark the shape on both sides and run a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) 60° V-tool along the line, turning the tool so you are removing wood only from the wattle and not the neck. This will give some separation between the wattle and neck. Use the knife to finish shaping the wattle. Clean up your cuts and remove any remaining burrs.



## Painting and Finishing

Scrub the carving with a toothbrush and a cleaner and degreaser, such as Simple Green®. Rinse and let dry. Then begin to paint; I like to thin my acrylic paints to around 20% paint and 80% water, except for the eyes, dots, and feathers, which I paint at full-strength. Refer to the Paint Notes (at right) for specific colors. For the eye dots, I used black illustration pens and then added a small dot of white paint in the center of each. You can add the dots on the head and torso with a small paintbrush, or the round end of a paintbrush. Let dry thoroughly.

Finish the carving. Apply a few light coats of clear matte finish, letting it dry between coats. If desired, add a coat of Delta Creative™ Ceramcoat® gloss varnish to the eyes to make them shine. To wrap up, I prefer to use Bob Kozakiewicz' approach: "Apply a coat of Howard Feed-N-Wax® and allow to set for 20 minutes. Then buff with a soft cloth and a horsehair show brush." Display as desired; I mounted my version on a 4" (10.2cm) round base.

## Paint Notes

**Legs, feet, base:** antique gold

**Dots, pupil highlights:** white

**Head and neck dots:** pansy

**Head, neck:** blissful blue

**Comb, wattle:** fire red

**Beak:** bright citrus

**Body:** lima green



# Mr. Chanticleer the Rooster Pattern

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS

- Wood, such as basswood, 3/4" (1.9cm) thick: rooster, 4" x 8" (10.2cm x 20.3cm)
- Wood, such as basswood, 3/4" (1.9cm) thick: base, 4" (10.2cm) round (optional)
- Pencil
- Sandpaper: 220-grit
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Simple Green®
- Acrylic paints, such as Ceramcoat®: antique gold, blissful blue, bright citrus, fire red, lima green, pansy, white
- Markers, such as Prismacolor Premier® illustration: 01 pen (for outlining iris), Black B pen (for pupil)

- Varnish, such as Delta Creative™ Ceramcoat®: gloss
- Clear finish, such as Deft®: satin
- Howard Feed-N-Wax®
- Soft cloths

### TOOLS

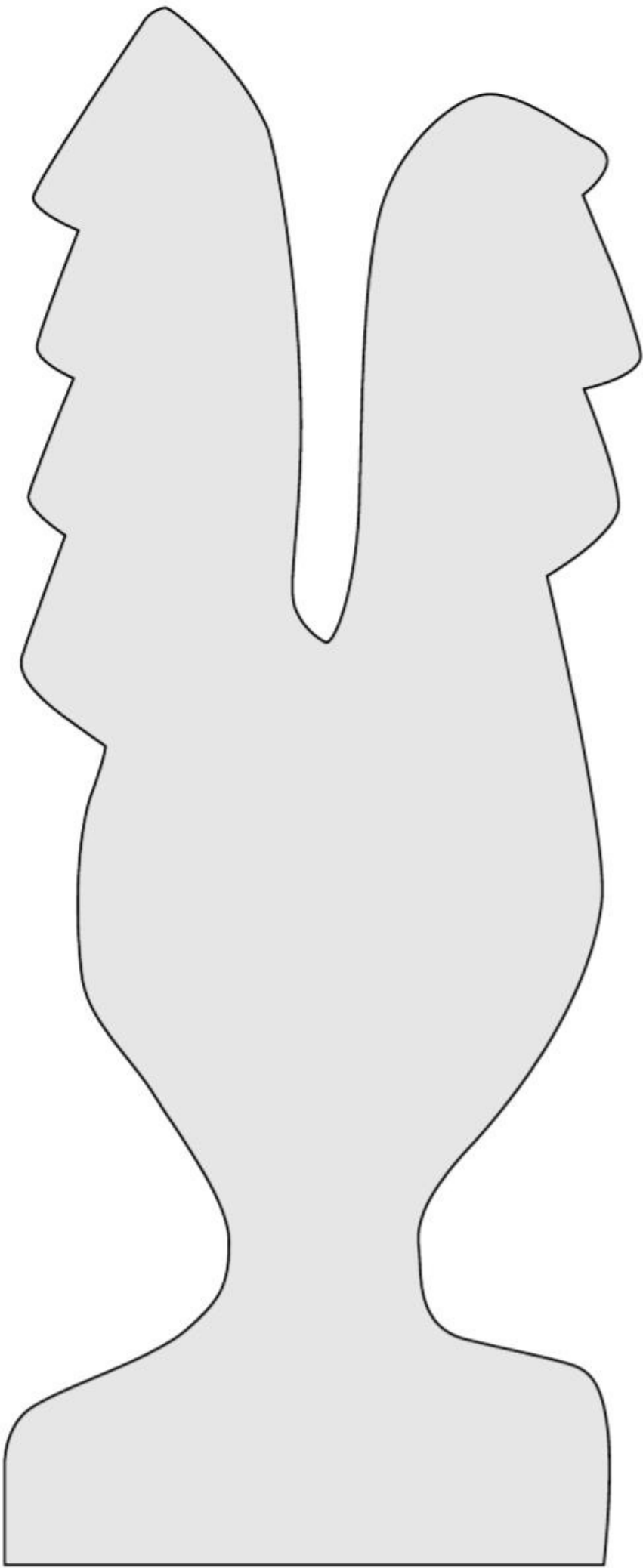
- Band saw
- Carving knife
- V-tools: 1/8" (3mm), 1/4" (6mm) 60°
- Toothbrush
- Shoe brush: horsehair

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*



Larry Green started carving in 1970 and has written six woodcarving project books with artist Mike Altman. He has even worked in the woodcarving shop at Dollywood Theme Park. Larry is a member of the

Southern Highland Craft Guild, was selected as an Indiana Artisan, and teaches a weeklong class at John Campbell Folk School. You can contact him at [lgreen@sent.com](mailto:lgreen@sent.com) or follow him on Instagram @woodcarving.



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# Little Pilgrim

**With a splash of paint and just a few tools, you can add this classic character to your harvest collection**

*By Alex Joiner*

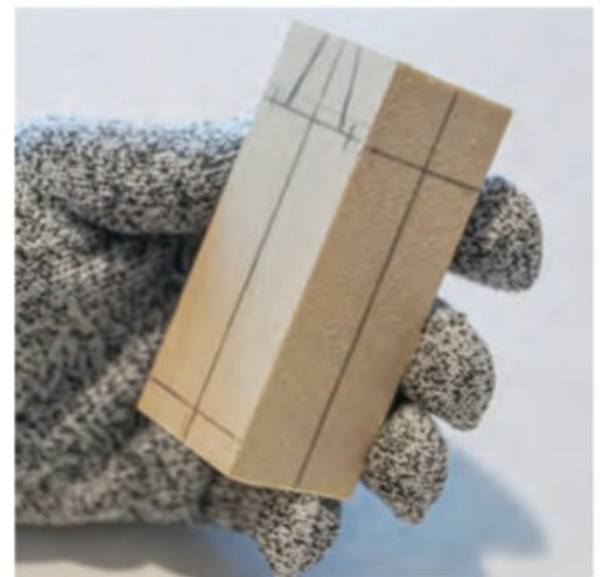
For an extra challenge, give the pilgrim open eyes.



**T**hanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. You get to stuff yourself with food and spend time with family—what's not to love? This year, I designed a little caricature to honor a classic fixture of the season. With small dimensions and minimal painted details, this pilgrim is sure to warm the hearts of your friends and family the next time you gather under one roof.

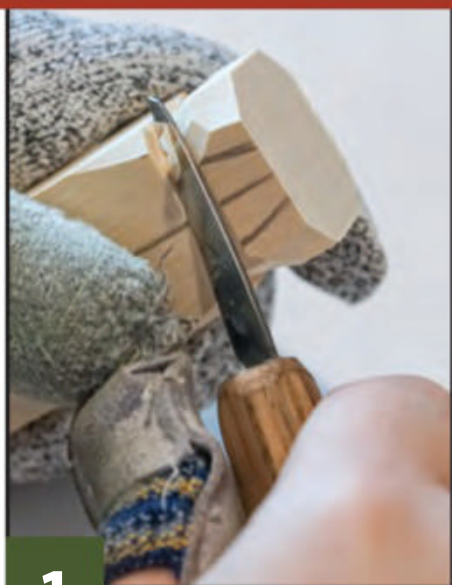
## Getting Started

Strop your tools so they're razor sharp. With a pencil, draw a centerline on the blank from top to bottom on all four sides. Next, draw a horizontal line  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) down from the top all the way around. On the front of the blank, draw another horizontal line  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) up from the bottom. Make a mark  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) in on both sides of the top horizontal line and draw the basic landmarks for the hat.



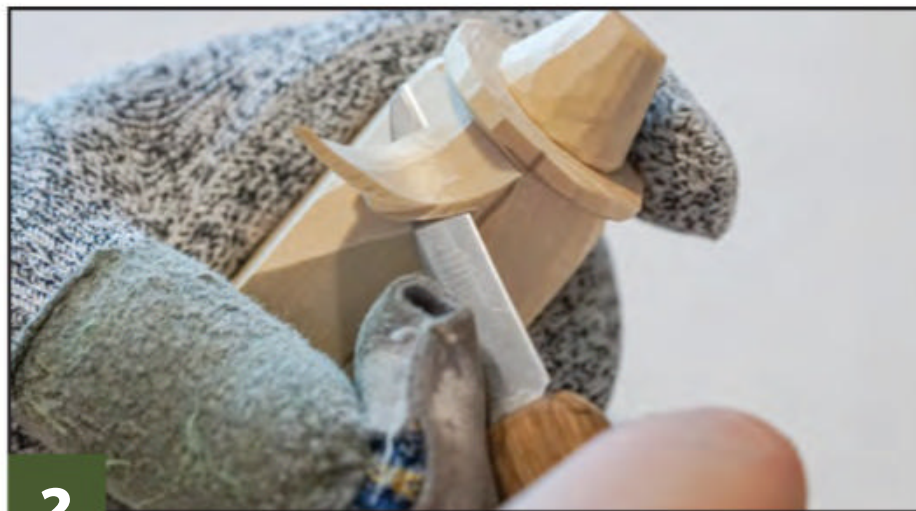
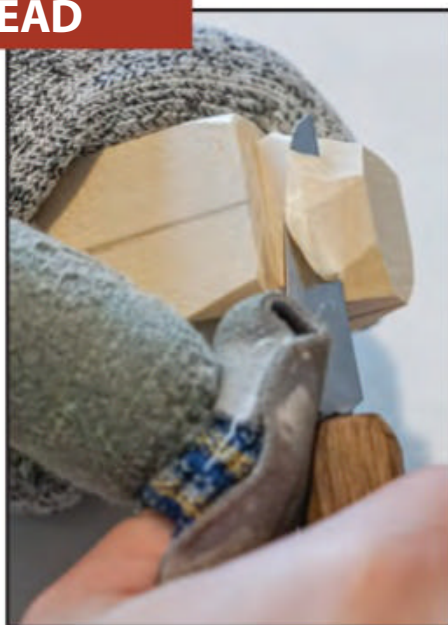


## CARVING THE HAT & HEAD



1

**Rough out the hat.** Remove all four corners on the hat with a rough out knife, starting  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) down from the top and slicing upward. Next, make a stop cut all the way around the blank at the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) line. Then carve down to that line at an angle all the way around. Carving toward the top, taper the hat into a cone-like shape, leaving some flat space at the very top.



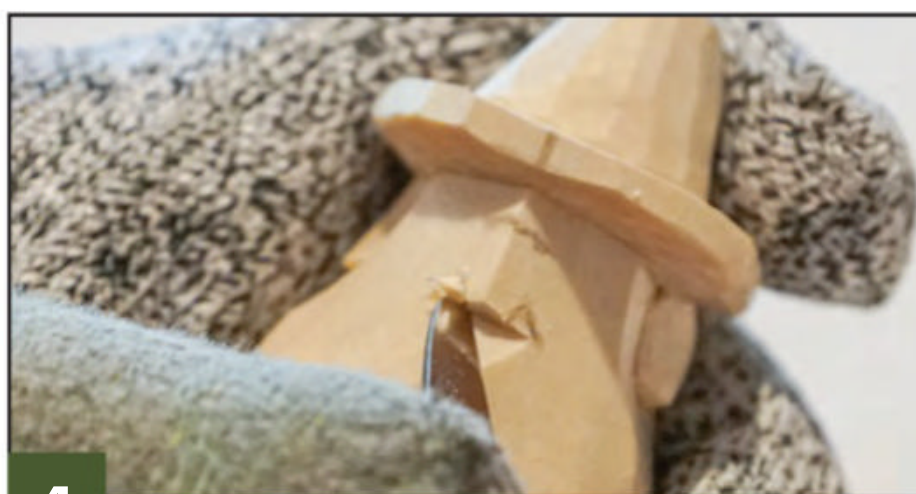
2

**Shape the head and hat brim.** Draw a horizontal line  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) down from the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) line where the hat starts; this marks the hat brim. Push your knife straight in to make a stop cut along this line, and then cut up to the line all the way around. On the front of the blank, starting  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) down from the hat brim, round this area until you reach the centerlines on the front and sides. On the back, carve up to the hat brim from  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) down, but don't round this area yet. Taper the top of the head into the hat on all sides so the hat brim sticks out.



3

**Carve the ears.** On the centerline for each side, draw an egg shape that extends  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) down from the bottom of the hat brim and  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) in front of the centerline. Using a detail knife, follow these lines with one continuous stop cut. Relieve the area behind each ear using the rough out knife, to separate the ears from the head. The front of the ear should be flush with the face. Next, draw a triangle in the center of each ear and carefully push the tip of your knife in at an angle on all three sides to remove the chip.



4

**Shape the face.** Make two small horizontal lines with the pencil: one  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) down and one  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) down from the bottom of the hat brim. At the  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) mark, make a deep stop cut and carve up to it. Cut out a small triangle on both sides. Make a stop cut along the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) mark and cut down into it at an angle from the forehead. Next, draw a diagonal line  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) long on each side of the nose to mark the eyebrows. Follow the lines with stop cuts, and then carve up to the cuts to define the brows.



5

**Carve the nose.** Draw a diagonal line on each side and follow the lines with stop cuts. Then slice away material along the sides of the nose, carving toward the inner eyes. Round the nose with the detail knife.



6

**Add the sideburns and smile lines.** Draw lines on both sides of the face, and follow the lines with the detail knife. Cut up toward the smile lines from the upper lip area to define them. Then carve in toward the sideburn lines, slicing away material from bottom to top on the front of the face.





7

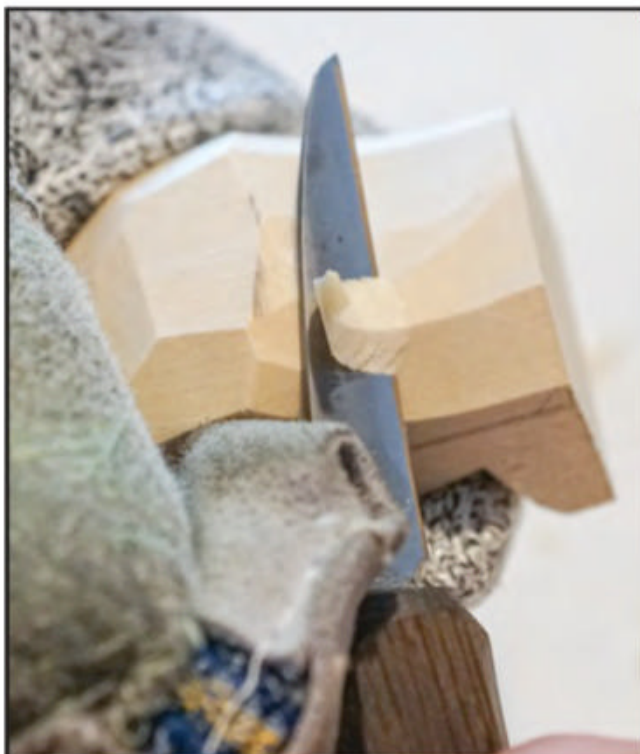
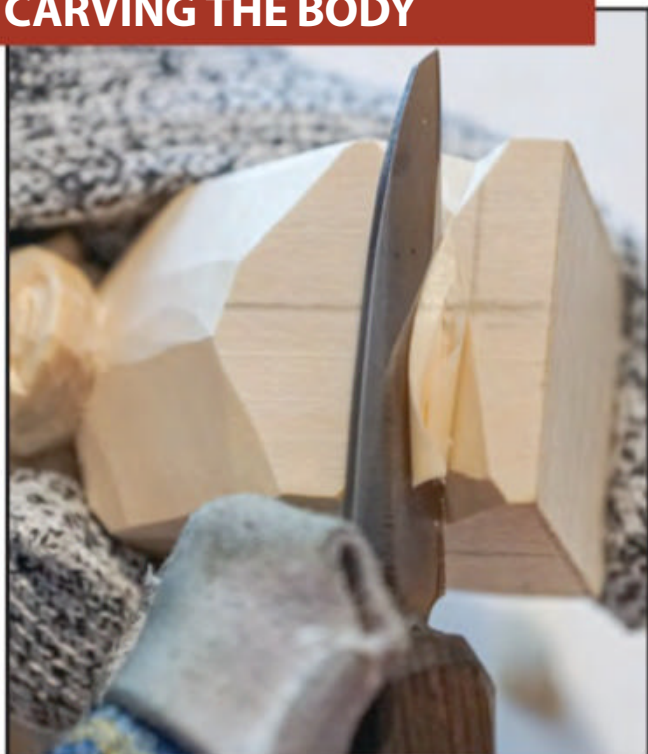
**Define the chin and the back of the head.** Draw curved lines for each, starting roughly at the bottom of the ears. The chin will be slightly pointier than the back of the head. Follow the chin line with a stop cut, and then carve up to that line with the rough out knife. Thin out the sides of the face and neck and continue to round the face. Flip the piece over and follow the line for the back of the head with a stop cut. Carve into that line from above and below to make a V-cut. Next, use the tip of the knife to cut out a triangle underneath each ear to separate the hair from the jawline.



8

**Add the lips and eyes.** Draw the lips, follow the line with a stop cut using the detail knife, and carve down toward the line at an angle. Round over the lower lip with the same tool. With a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) micro U-gouge, carve a channel directly under the lower lip. Flip the gouge upside down and push it into the edges of the nose to create a stop cut for the nostrils; then separate the chips at the bottom with the detail knife. Draw the squinty eyes, follow the lines with the detail knife, and cut up to the line on each side to remove small slits. Draw the upper eyelid and define it with a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) micro V-tool. Then scoop out a channel from the top of the nose up to the hat brim using a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) micro U-gouge. Define the upper eyebrows with the  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) micro U-gouge.

## CARVING THE BODY



9

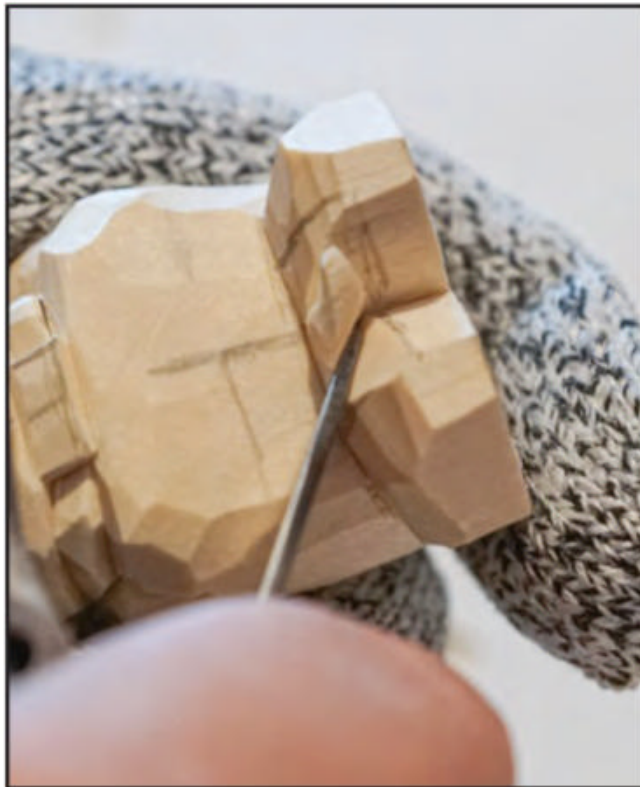
**Shape the torso.** With the rough out knife, make V-shaped cuts  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9cm) up from the bottom, and begin rounding the front of the body into those cuts. Then carve up along the chest to the head to make the head stick out more. Carve the front corners only up to the side centerlines. On the back, carve down from the waist area to taper the legs slightly forward and round the bottom. Do not round into the sides yet. At  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) up from the bottom, make stop cuts to define the tops of the shoes and carve into those cuts from above and below. Taper what will be the stockings into the shoes so the heels stick out. Round the side corners from the waist to the feet.





10

**Add the arms.** Draw them onto the sides and cut from the top of the shoulder down into the elbow crook. Define the bottoms of the arms and round them. Draw the pockets, follow the lines with stop cuts, and carve in toward those cuts from the back to define the pockets. Add two to three V-cuts in each elbow crease to create the clothing wrinkles. Draw the backs of the arms, follow those lines with vertical stop cuts around ½" (1.3cm) long, and carve out toward them from the center of the back to make them stand out.



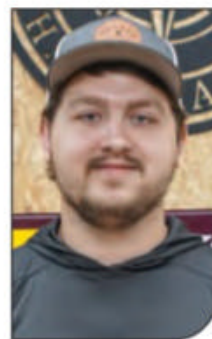
11

**Add the clothing details.** Draw the shirt, collar, belts (pants, shoes and hat), and shirt cuffs. Start by defining the collar with stop cuts and carving up to those at an angle. Round the shoulders. Separate the belt from the shirt and use the same method of stop-cutting and carving in at an angle to make the shirt hang over the belt slightly. Separate the shoes with a stop cut, and then carve in toward that cut from both sides. Taper the legs into the shoes on both sides and round over the shoes with the detail knife. Add the belt buckle details, hollowing them with a micro gouge of your choice. Add the cuffs with stop cuts, and then carve in toward those cuts from the back to make them stand out above the pockets.



12

**Detail the leg area.** Separate the legs on the back and front. At ¾" (1.9cm) up from the bottom, make stop cuts around the legs and carve in toward those cuts from above and below to define the stockings. Round the socks with the detail knife.



Alex Joiner, 24, lives in Pinson, Ala. He has always enjoyed woodworking, but in July of 2018, he discovered woodcarving and has carved something almost every day since! He entered his first national carving competition in August of 2019 and got 3rd and 4th place ribbons. Since then, he has placed in several other

competitions, including winning a special merit award from the Caricature Carvers of America. Alex has found his passion in woodcarving and doesn't plan on stopping anytime soon. Find him on Instagram @joiners\_handcrafted.



# ADDING DETAILS



**13** **Add texture.** Draw the shirt crease, and then follow the line with a stop cut. Carve in at an angle toward the cut from one side to create the illusion of overlap. Draw the shirt and cuff links. Then push straight into them with the 1/8" (3mm) micro U-gouge, making two crescent-shaped cuts that meet. Relieve the areas around the cuff links with the detail knife or micro gouge. Create the shoe heels with a stop cut at the start of the heel, and then carve back toward it from the toe area at an angle. Define the soles by running a 3/16" (5mm) micro U-gouge around the shoe a short distance from the bottom. Define the inner thigh area on the front and back with a few V-cuts. Add hair texture with a 3/16" (5mm) micro V-tool.



**14**

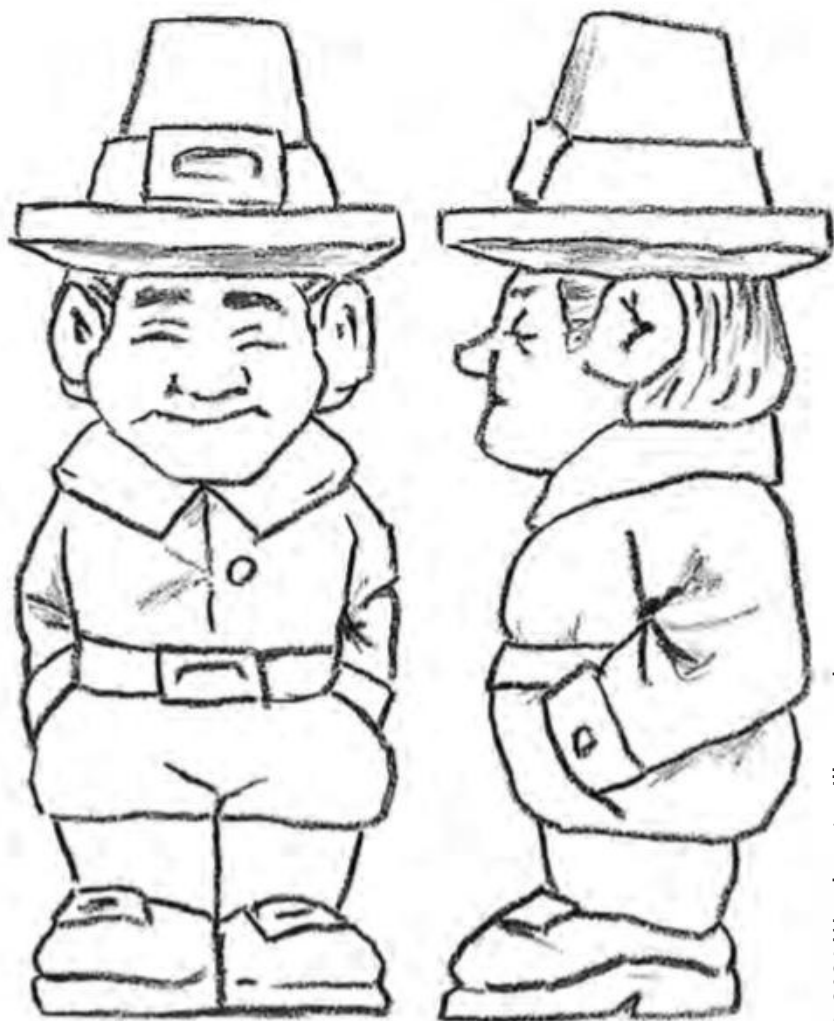
**Prepare the carving for paint.** Wash it lightly with water and a toothbrush to remove any dirt. While the carving is still damp, mix yellow ochre and apple red until you achieve your desired shade, thin with water, and paint this on the face and ears. With a small brush, apply thinned apple red to the lips, cheeks, and the tip of the nose. Paint the collar, cuffs, and socks with matte white. Paint the shirt, hat, and shoes with licorice; then paint the belts with thinned burnt umber and the buckles with brushed silver. Paint the hair and sideburns with thinned yellow ochre. Once dry, apply a clear finish of your choice.

## TIP

### BEFORE YOU PAINT

*After every color change, be sure to wash your brush; if you have a hair dryer, dry the paint after painting each color, too.*

## Little Pilgrim Patterns



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## materials & tools

### MATERIALS

- Basswood, 1 1/2" (3.8cm) square: 3 3/4" (9.5cm) long
- Pencil
- Acrylic paints, such as Apple Barrel®: matte white; such as FolkArt® matte: apple red, brushed silver, burnt umber, licorice, yellow ochre
- Finish: clear matte acrylic

### TOOLS

- Knives: rough out, detail
- Micro V-tools, such as Flexcut®: 1/16" (2mm), 3/16" (5mm)
- Micro U-gouges, deep, such as Flexcut®: 1/16" (2mm), 1/8" (3mm), 3/16" (5mm)
- Paintbrushes: small, medium
- Toothbrush
- Hair dryer (optional)

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*



## This dragon-shaped drinking vessel is fit for a fairy tale

By Jon Mac

**A** kuksa is a deep drinking cup, traditionally crafted by the Sami people of northern Scandinavia. I have been carving kuksa for the last 15 years or so. In the beginning, I limited myself to a handful of tools: axe, basic carving knife, and hook knife—plus a few bits and pieces to keep everything sharp. I'm a hiker and hillwalker so the tools I use must be portable and useful in order to make the cut. I carved kuksas with simple lines, but recently, I wanted to stretch my skills. I started to carve stylized ale hens, and then applied what I learned to the kuska. I added a few more tools to my arsenal, including a small detail knife, a folding pull saw, and a deer antler. All of my carvings, whether kuksa or spoon, are undertaken "in hand," so no holdfast or vise is required.

### Getting Started

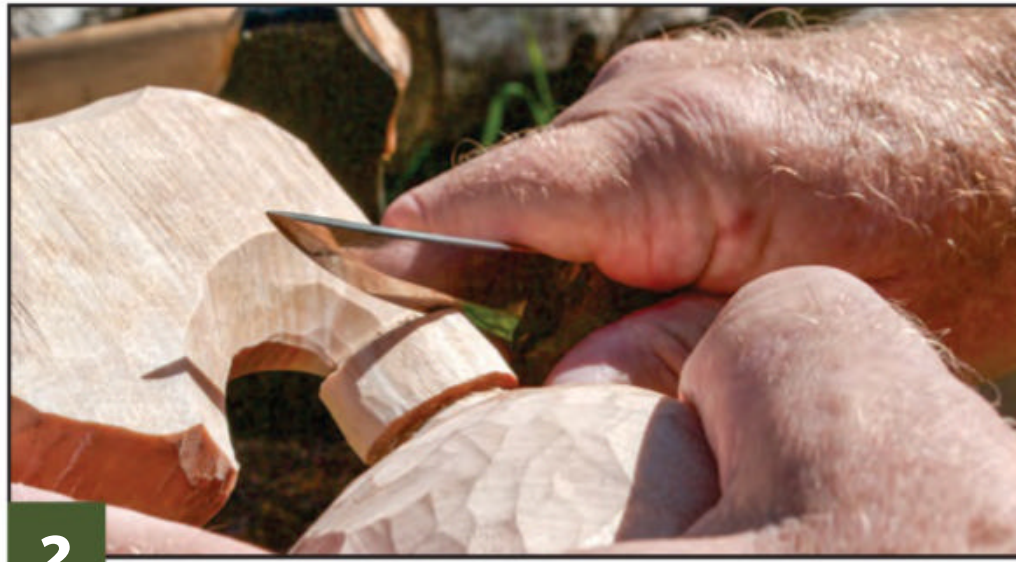
Choose a type of green wood; I used birch. Prepare the blank. Split the wood in half lengthwise, making sure one half is free of major blemishes and knots. Use an axe to carve out a teardrop shape. Axe the neck, and then round off the back and underside of the bowl. Reduce the size of the blank until it fits comfortably in your hand. Leave a little wriggle room on the blank to allow you to center up and add details later.

### ROUGHING OUT



1

**Shape the neck.** Carefully axe out a V-cut to form the neck. Axe out the top of the bowl to allow for a sweeping bowl rim. Once you have achieved a suitable depth, switch to a carving knife and round the neck. Use sweeping cuts.



2

**Add a collar around the neck.** You will soon encounter a problem with grain direction halfway along the neck. To remedy this, make two stop cuts with the knife—approximately 1/2" (13mm) apart—where the grain from the head and the grain from the body converge. Carve into the stop cuts to form a thick collar around the neck where the two grain directions meet.



3

**Refine the neck.** With the knife, make sweeping cuts set at 45° across the grain to form the inside of the neck. Don't forget that there is a secondary part to the inner neck, which forms the lower jaw of the dragon. Work the knife over the length of the cup, smoothing the overall shape and centering everything up. Consider chamfering the outer rim of the bowl; you'll undercut the inside of the bowl later to follow the shape of the chamfered edge.



# Carving a Viking Drinking Cup



Take this elegant, functional vessel on your next outdoor adventure.



4

**Hollow the bowl.** Use a hook knife. Generously remove material from the bowl, changing the direction of the tool often. Make several passes with the hook knife until the wall of the bowl is approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) thick. Taper the wall's thickness to about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) at the rim.



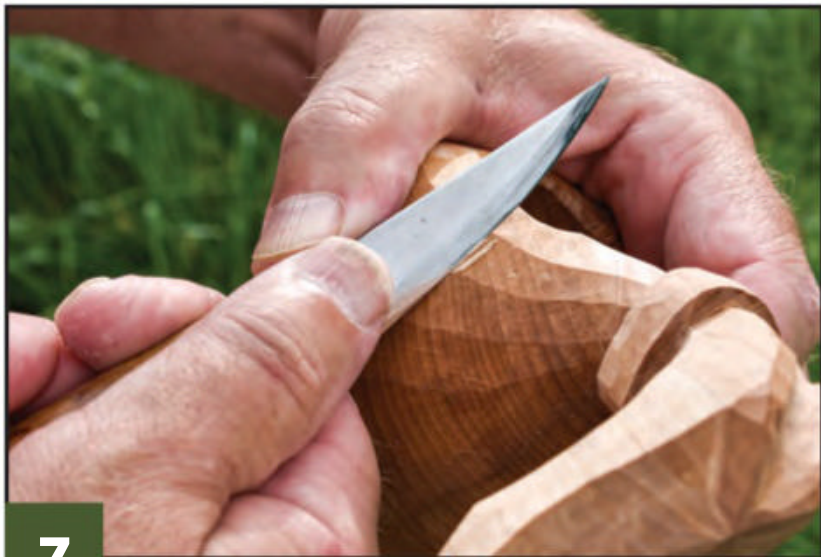
5

**Shape the dragon's face.** Using the knife, make sweeping cuts set at  $45^\circ$  across the grain. Pay attention to the curve of the dragon's neck from the collar, over the top of its head, and down to its face. The sweep needs to be graceful and higher than the lip of the bowl. You should have enough space to lower the bowl lip, if needed.

6

**Simmer the cup.** Put the kuksa in a large pot and cover it with water. Add three tablespoons of salt, and then bring the water to a boil. Simmer the kuksa for an hour. The water should take on a light brown color. Remove the kuksa and let it sit overnight. In the morning, the kuksa should be cool, but wet to the touch. Dry the piece with a towel.





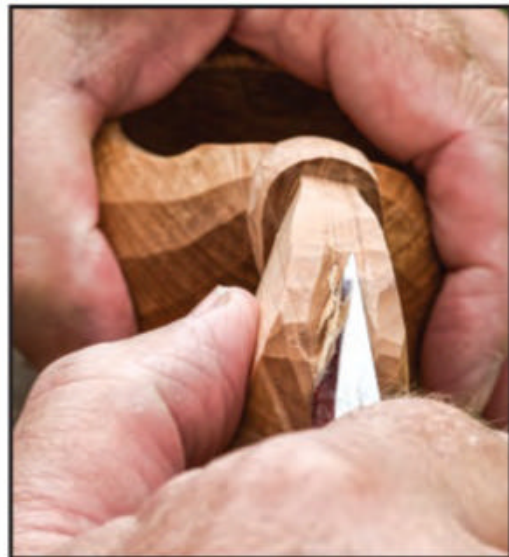
7

**Add planking.** To make the planking effect, start at the lip of the bowl, and carefully drag the edge of the carving knife to the collar. Tidy up the first plank and move down to the next. Continue in this fashion, adding planks as you go. *Note: You may find that the kuksa is still a little damp; you can go over the planking once more with a re-sharpened knife later once it has dried further.*



8

**Shape the mouth.** Use the carving knife to cut out the dragon's mouth with a V-cut. Carefully widen the opening with twisting cuts, using the tip of the knife. I left two small triangles at the edge of the upper and lower jaw to indicate teeth. Then cut in the horns on the top of the head. Make them simple and sturdy. Clean up the bowl interior and undercut the lip. Once you've tidied the rim, it is difficult to revisit the interior of the bowl, as you will damage the rim in the process.



9

**Add the mane.** Make tiny V-cuts with the carving knife to create the dragon's mane. Carve a little detail around its mouth using your chosen detail knife. You might also want to add a little scalloping around the collar. Do this with the detail knife, making dish-shaped cuts.



## PAINTING & ADDING DETAILS



10

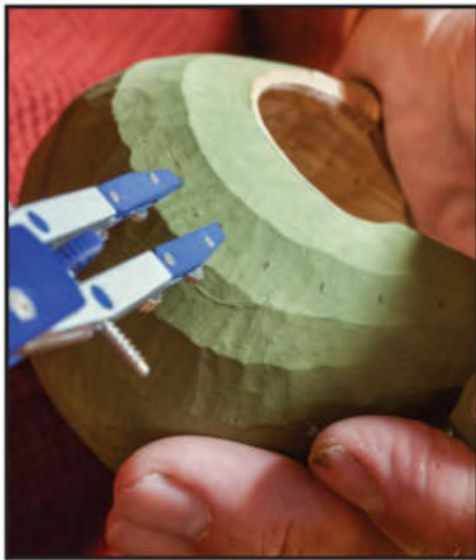
**Wait at least a week before painting.** The boiling process (completed in Step 6) should speed up the drying time and relax the wood. Once the kuksa is fully dry, paint the exterior, leaving the inner bowl natural. I used milk paint. Start with a tablespoon of warm water, adding the milk paint powder sparingly to make a light wash. Apply a thin coat of green and let dry overnight.



11

**Add a second coat of green milk paint and allow to dry.** Paint the mouth with thinned salmon-colored milk paint, let dry, and apply a second coat. Use the pencil to mark eyes, nostrils, and flames going down the sides of the neck. Follow these lines with the detail knife. Use a colored wax pencil to add highlights as desired.

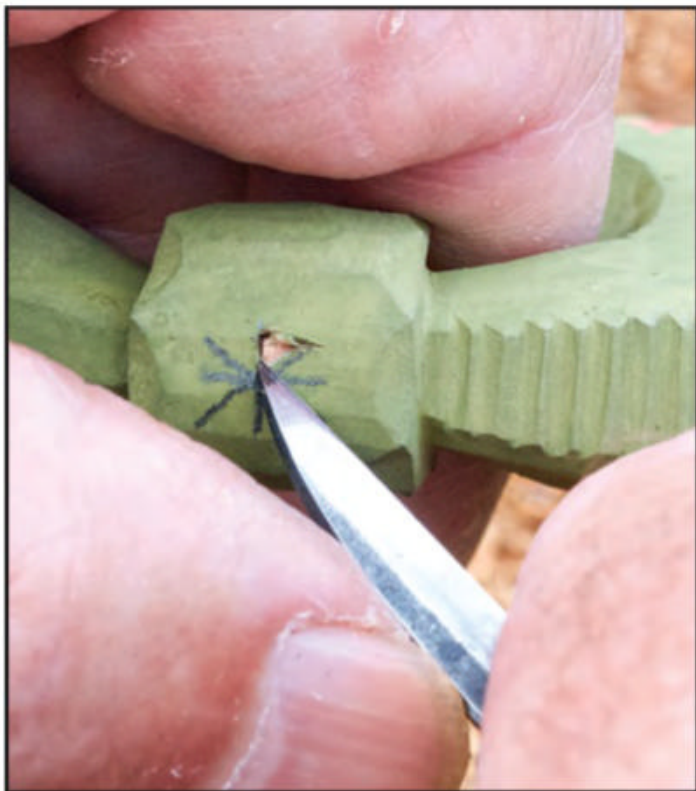




**12**

### Decorate the bowl.

Use a compass to mark out the rim decorations; usually the second plank down is best. You can incise the compass marks by using a round-ended bone or antler pressed into the wood. Make triangular stab cuts with the point of the carving knife.



**13**

### Decorate the collar.

Mark a small, eight-tipped star shape, and then use a chip carving knife or the tip of the detail knife to make triangular cuts to remove the chips. *Note: Make cut #1 from tip to center, rocking the blade in. Cut #2 moves from the first tip to the adjacent tip. Cut #3 removes the chip with a slicing motion.* Relieve the design on the top of the bowl in a similar way, with a long vertical centerline cut and two angled sweeping cuts on both sides.



**14**

**Add gold leaf.** Apply gilding paste to the dragon's teeth, the scallops around the collar, and into the dents around the bowl rim. Let dry until the paste is sticky to the touch, and then apply gold leaf to these areas. I used the point of a kebab stick or sharpened match to set it in place. Once dry, brush away the excess with a soft brush.



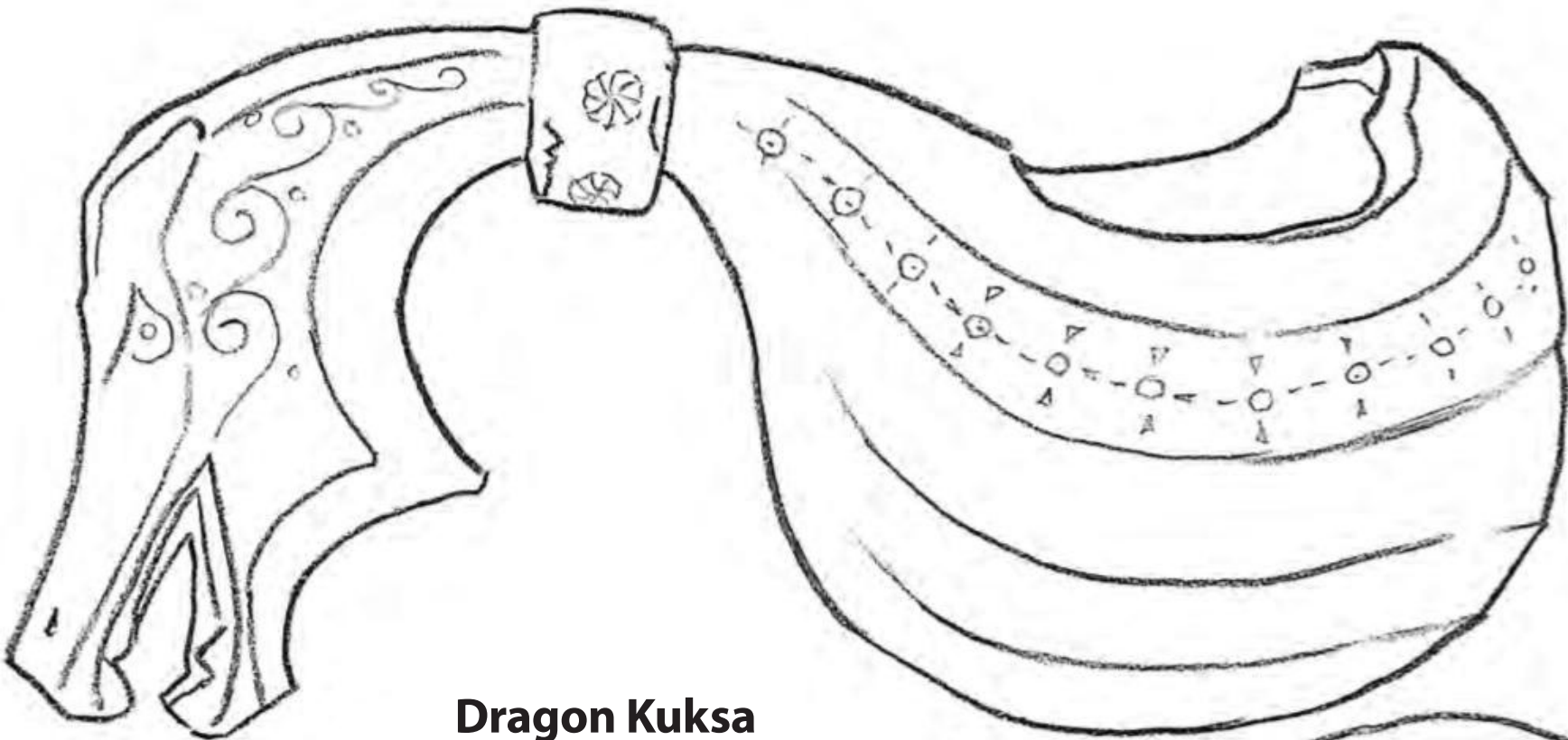
**15**

**Add fine coffee grinds to the stab marks.** With your finger or a rag, apply oil to the band of stab carvings around the lip of the kuksa. Massage coffee grinds into the oil, making sure it gets into the holes, and then wipe off with a clean cloth. You should be left with little black triangles surrounding the gold leaf dots.



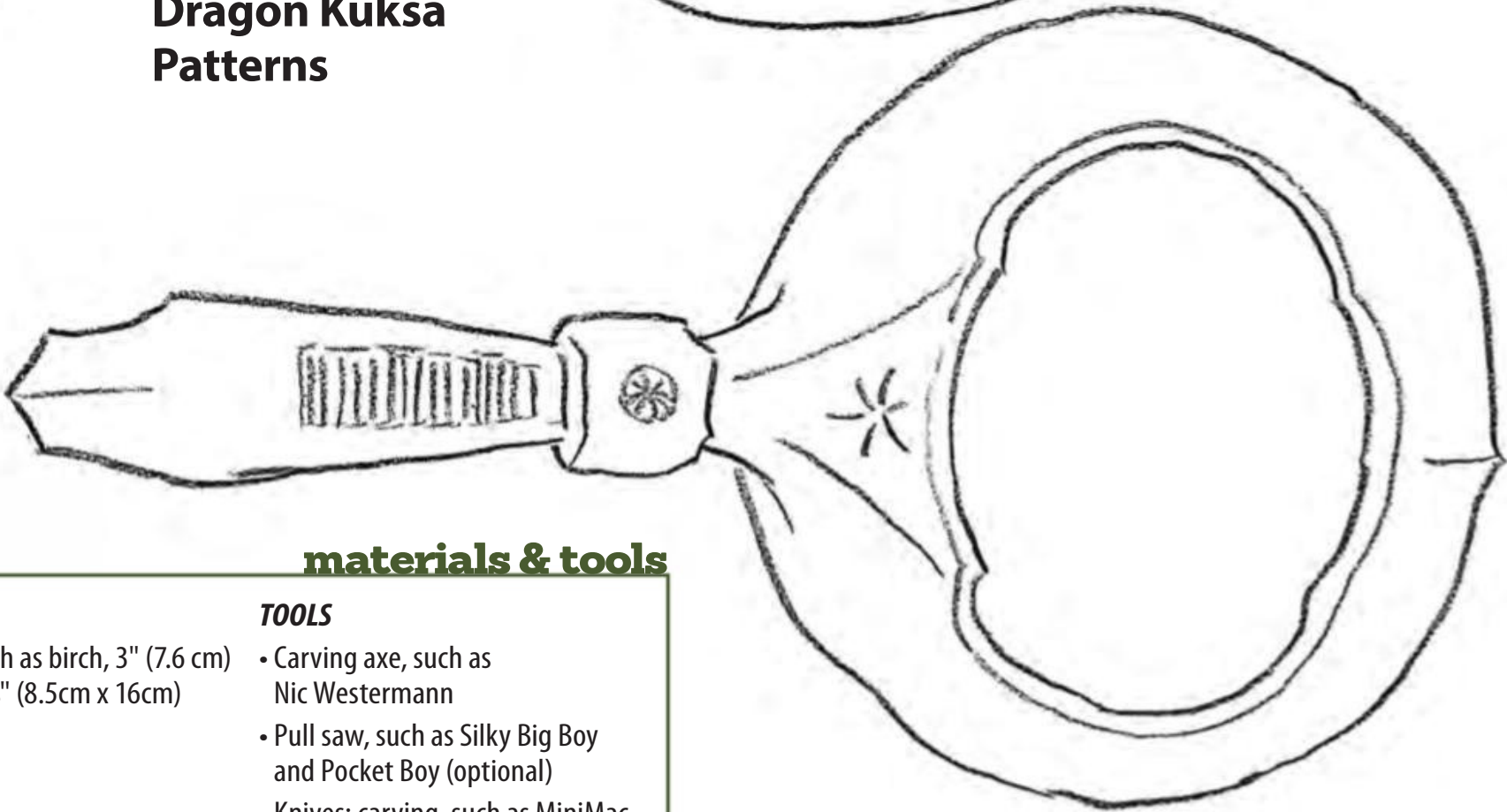
Finishing

Add finish. Coat the kuksa with tung oil, let it soak in, and then wipe away any excess. Allow it to dry for several days. Then repeat the process with a second coat. You should now have a beautiful dragon kuksa, ideal for water, tea, spirits, or ale. *Note: Avoid beverages that are boiling hot, as this can damage the carving.*



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Dragon Kuksa  
Patterns



materials & tools

| MATERIALS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | TOOLS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Green wood, such as birch, 3" (7.6 cm) thick: 3 3/8" x 6 5/16" (8.5cm x 16cm)</li><li>• Carving stump</li><li>• Blu Tack®</li><li>• Pencil: 2b</li><li>• Colored wax pencils: black, red</li><li>• Milk paints, such as Old Fashioned®: green, salmon</li><li>• Gold leaf, such as Pebeo Gedeo</li><li>• Wooden kebab sticks or sharpened match sticks</li><li>• Gilding paste, such as Pebeo Gedeo</li><li>• Finish: tung oil, such as Liberon</li><li>• Fine coffee grinds</li><li>• Clean cloth and rags</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carving axe, such as Nic Westermann</li><li>• Pull saw, such as Silky Big Boy and Pocket Boy (optional)</li><li>• Knives: carving, such as MiniMac (Scandinavian grind); detail, such as Nic Westermann chip carving; hook, such as Nic Westermann finishing blade</li><li>• Compass</li><li>• Paintbrush: small</li><li>• Stab tool, such as antler</li></ul> |

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*



Jon Mac lives in England, near the Dartmoor National Park, with his wife Sarah. Jon is a keen hillwalker, hiker, and camper. He designs knives, spoons, stylized ale hens, and the traditional Scandinavian drinking vessel—the kuksa. Jon enjoys sharing the craft with others, and teaches carving skills to beginners and seasoned carvers alike. To see more of Jon's work, visit [spooncarvingfirststeps.com](http://spooncarvingfirststeps.com).



# Twig & Leaf Drawer Handle



I attached this project to a handmade drawer, but you can use it for anything you choose.

## Add woodland flair to drawers and doors with this one-of-a-kind embellishment

By Robert Kennedy

**W**hile making keepsake boxes as gifts for my family, I had the idea to spruce them up with a carved twig and leaf handle. I've since modified the design to include hardware, so the handles can be added to existing furniture, boxes, cabinets—or whatever your heart desires. After grasping the gist of the concept, make the design your own by using different woods and leaf patterns!

### TIP

#### THE SKINNY ON SCREWS

Binding screws are widely available online for a reasonable price. I recommend getting a kit with different lengths so you can suit them for the different thickness of drawers. Look for the ones with flat thin heads. If the head is thicker than  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm), you may have to sand them down a bit with a grinder or belt sander.

### Getting Started

Cut the blanks to size, and then transfer the patterns to the blanks using graphite paper and a pencil. *Note: If you're making a handle for existing furniture, you'll have to measure the holes and shorten or lengthen the twig accordingly.* Before cutting out the twig pattern, drill the holes for the mounting hardware using a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm)-dia. bit. Only drill about  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm) to  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) deep into the bottom of the blank. Remove waste wood from all blanks using a band saw. *Note: Always wear a carving glove and thumb guard. The photos were taken without them to clearly show hand and knife positions.*



Use a drill bit to make holes for the mounting hardware.

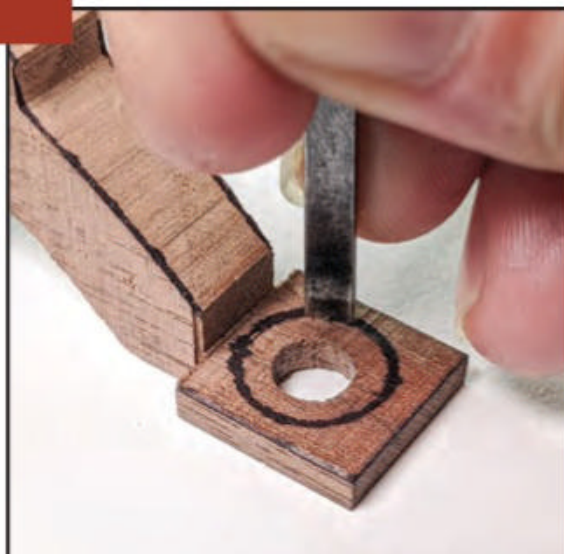


## ROUGHING OUT



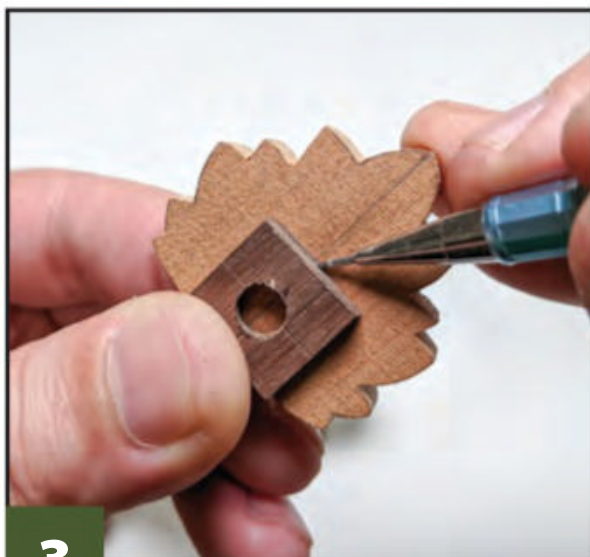
1

**Insert the binding screws into the hole.** Use a felt-tip pen to mark around the diameter of the head. Then remove the screw and use a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) #3 gouge to make a downward stop cut along the circumference of the mark. Go only as far as the thickness of the screw head, in this case about  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm).



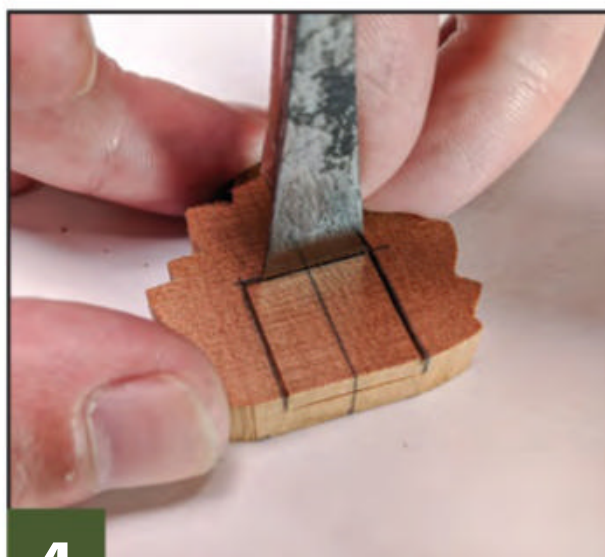
2

**Level the edge.** Using a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) #1 gouge, cut from the edge of the hole to the stop cut along the circumference. Then reinsert the binding screw. The head of the screw should sit flush or just below the surface.



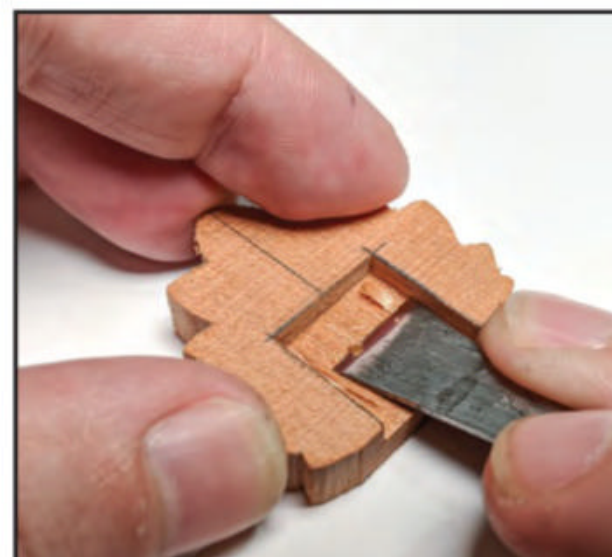
3

**Place the bottom of the leaf onto the twig blank.** Making sure it's centered, use a pencil to outline the edge of the twig blank onto the leaf.



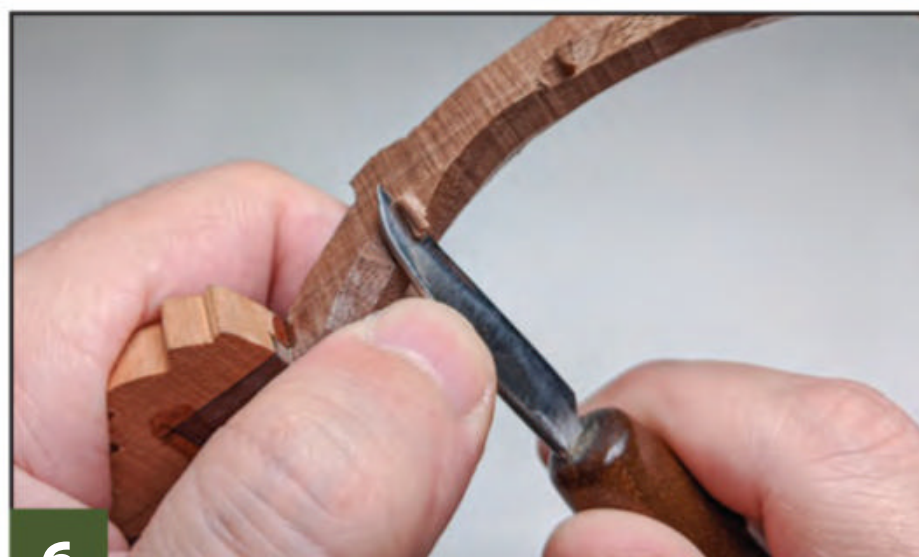
4

**Create a shelf for the twig blank.** Using a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm) #1 gouge, make a downward stop cut along the marks you drew in Step 3. Carve into it to a depth of about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm). *Note: Do not try to achieve the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) depth all at once—you will likely split the leaf. Lower the depth a little at a time. Once finished, the leaf should socket flush into the twig. Repeat Steps 1-4 for the other side.*



5

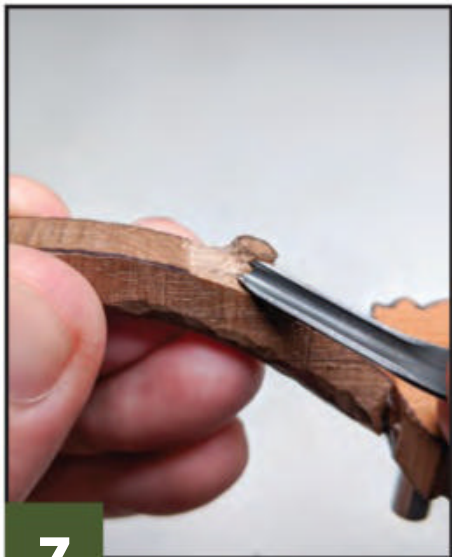
**Insert the binding screws back into the twig.** Apply two-part epoxy to the twig and leaf socket, press them together, and wipe away any squeeze-out. Repeat on the other side. Make sure the binding screws are straight. Once the epoxy sets, these will not move. Let sit overnight.



6

**Shape the twig.** Using a carving knife, begin rounding the underside of the twig, working with the grain toward the center. It's best to take a little off at a time to avoid tear-out. Near the center, you'll have to do a bit of back and forth; cutting in both directions to achieve a clean cut where the grain meets.





7

**Mark the stumps on the top side of the twig.** Then, using a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) #9 gouge, cut toward the center of the circumference. Work with the grain along the sides. Repeat for the other stump. Use the carving knife to taper the end of the twig into the leaf, working with the grain. You may have to switch back to the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) #9 gouge to clean up the cuts around the stumps.



## ADDING DETAILS



8

**Draw bark lines on the twig.** Reference photos of real-life twigs or step outside for inspiration. Use a  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) 45° V-tool to cut in the lines. Then go back over the lines with the same tool, angling it slightly to the left and right, to round the lines.



9

**Add the leaf details.** Drill four holes on each leaf using a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm)-dia. bit. You don't need to go all the way through—just about  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm). Mark around the edge of the leaf about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) from the bottom. Draw a centerline from the tip of the leaf to the twig.



10

**Shape the outer edge of the leaf.** Use a  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm) #4 gouge, working from the back to the tip, bringing the edge down to the line. Then use the  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) 45° V-tool to cut the centerline. Use a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) skew chisel to round any hard edges. The shape of the leaf should look like an open book when viewed from the front. Repeat on the other side.



11

**Add the leaf veins.** Mark them with the pen or pencil, and then use the  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm) 45° V-tool to cut them in, working outward from the center. Then, using the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) #9 gouge, make small, concave cuts between the leaf veins and the edge of the leaf. This adds some shadow and visual interest.



12

**Bevel the outside edge of the leaf.** Use the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) skew chisel to round the outside edge in toward the eyelets. The bevel should be about  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm) or less. Then bevel the eyelets with the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm) #9 gouge, angled downward toward the center. Flip the leaf over and use the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) skew chisel to bevel the underside of the leaf up until it nearly meets the bevel on top.



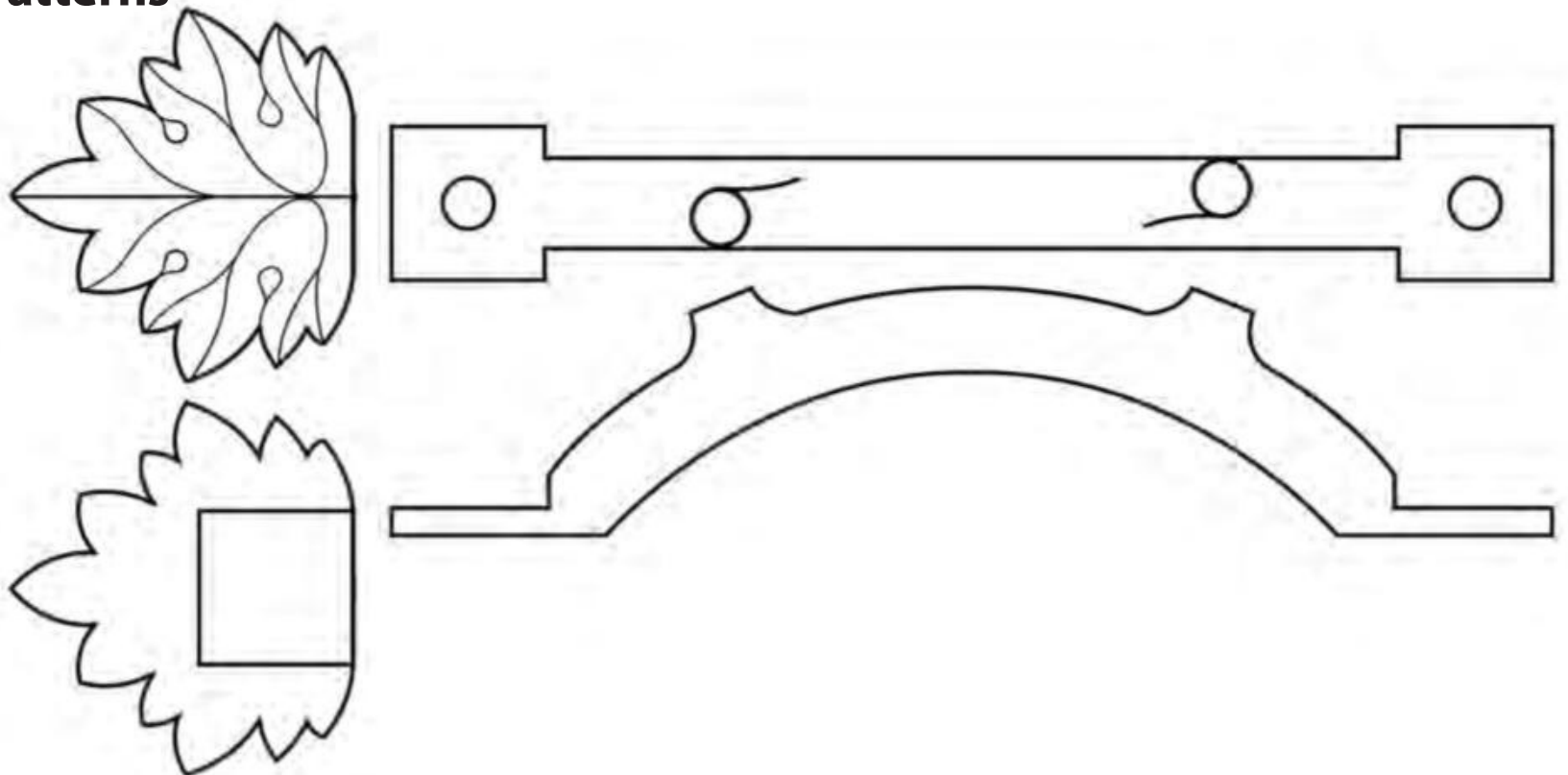




13

**Add embellishment.** Use the  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm)  $45^\circ$  V-tool to cut in a couple of concentric circles in the top of each stump. Work slowly, being careful not to remove too much wood at once. I keep my thumb pressed against the edge of the stump and the side of the V-tool, and I spin the twig rather than the tool. Repeat for the other stump. Add a finish; I applied four even coats of Deft® semigloss spray lacquer, letting the finish dry between coats. Attach to a drawer or cabinet after the finish dries and use!

## Twig & Leaf Drawer Handle Patterns



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### materials & tools

#### MATERIALS

- Wood, such as cherry,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) thick: leaves, 2 each  $1\frac{3}{8}$ " x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (3.5cm x 3.8cm)
- Wood, such as walnut,  $\frac{5}{8}$ " (1.6cm) thick: twig handle,  $4\frac{5}{8}$ " x 1" (11.7cm x 2.5cm)
- Graphite paper
- Pencil
- Epoxy: 2-part, such as Gorilla®
- Binding screws: 2 each  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm) long
- Finish: clear semigloss spray lacquer, such as Deft®
- Felt-tip pen

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

#### TOOLS

- Band saw
- Drill with bit:  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm),  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm)-dia.
- Carving knife
- Skew chisel:  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm)
- V-tool:  $\frac{1}{32}$ " (1mm)  $45^\circ$
- #1 gouges:  $\frac{1}{16}$ " (2mm),  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (13mm)
- #3 gouge:  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm)
- #4 gouge:  $\frac{3}{16}$ " (5mm)
- #9 gouge:  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3mm)



Robert Kennedy, of Central Ark., has been carving a variety of subjects—both in relief and in the round—for 16 years. See more of his work on Instagram @rlk\_wood\_carving.



# Trick-or-Treater Caricature

Transform a basswood turning into an adorable work of art

By Lori Dickie

**H**alloween is a favorite holiday for my family. We enjoy decorating our houses with spooky decorations, getting together to carve pumpkins, watching scary movies, and—of course—going trick-or-treating! We even compete each year to see who has the most unique costume. Speaking from experience, transforming a youngster into an alligator (or just about anything else) means many trips to the craft store, but each one is worth it. Do you think this little fella would win the most unique costume award in your house? There's only one way to find out.



## Getting Started

This carving is made with a premade basswood turning that I purchased online (see Special Sources on page 87). Draw a centerline down either side of the blank. Then transfer the pattern onto the blank using graphite paper. Draw the basic landmarks; I used a marker.

*NOTE: Always wear a carving glove and thumb guard. The photos were taken without them to clearly show hand and knife positions.*

## ROUGHING OUT



1

### Shape the face.

Use a rough out knife to make a stop cut along the entire circle for the child's face. Then use the tip of the knife to outline the alligator teeth. Carefully remove wood around the teeth and lower and round the face.



2

### Round the top of the costume.

Make stop cuts around the eyes, nostrils, and the top of the spine on the alligator. Make a stop cut around the neck, further separating it from the head. Use the knife to round the eyes and gently shape the rest of the head.





**3** **Rough shape the front of the body.** Make stop cuts around the pumpkin basket, arms, and feet. Round the chest by cutting up into the neck, and then cutting down into the arms and the pumpkin. Remove wood around the cuts to make the details stand out from the body.



**4** **Shape the back.** Make stop cuts around the tail, spine, and feet on the alligator costume. Remove wood around these cuts to separate them from the body. Clean up the cuts to further define the costume details.

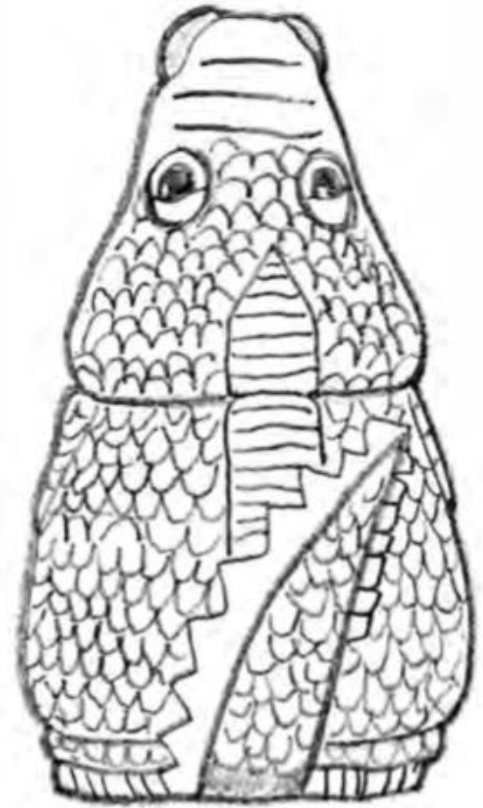


**5** **Carve the feet.** Use the tip of the knife to outline the alligator claws on the feet. Carefully remove wood around them, and then round and shape the shoes.



**6** **Add woodburned details.** Using a woodburner with a spear nib on a medium-to-high heat setting, outline the costume and add details, such as belly stripes going down the front of the alligator and scales going down the back. I gave the pumpkin a jack-o'-lantern grin, and then added hair and a sweet smile to the child's face.

## Trick-or-Treater Caricature Patterns



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## FURTHER READING

### Quick & Cute Carving Projects

by Lori Dickie

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## materials & tools

### MATERIALS

- Basswood turning, approx. 2" (5.1cm) square: 3" (7.6cm) high
- Graphite paper
- Marker or pencil
- Acrylic paints, such as Craft Smart®: brown, white; such as DecoArt®: sour apple, warm beige; such as DecoArt® Dazzling Metallics: crystal green; such as Delta Ceramcoat®: black, bright red, maroon, pumpkin

- Finish: matte varnish, such as DecoArt® DuraClear
- Toothpicks

### TOOLS

- Rough out knife
- Woodburner with a nib: spear (optional)
- Paintbrushes: assorted

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

### SPECIAL SOURCES

Turned basswood blanks are available from:

- Stadtländer Woodcarving Supplies, 1-330-931-7847, [stadtlandercarvings.com](http://stadtlandercarvings.com) (item 5646)
- The Woodcraft Shop, 1-800-397-2278, [thewoodcraftshop.com](http://thewoodcraftshop.com) (item 554731)

## Finishing and Painting

Add paint. I used an assortment of acrylic paints (see Paint Notes at right). Paint the child's face with warm beige or your desired shade. Once dry, paint the cheeks with thinned maroon. Paint the hair with heavily thinned brown or your desired hair color. I painted the front of the costume (the underside of the alligator) with sour apple and the back with crystal green. Paint the alligator's eyelids, spine, and tail spikes with sour apple. Paint the alligator's pupils with white and the irises with black. Use a toothpick to add a highlight in each eye with a dab of white. Then paint the alligator's nostrils with black. Paint the jack-o'-lantern basket with pumpkin and its facial

features and handle with black. Paint the shoes with bright red and the soles with white.

Allow the paint to dry fully. Then mix a thin wash of brown acrylic paint with water and cover the entire carving with this mixture to antique it. Once dry, apply finish. I used two coats of matte varnish.



*Lori Dickie lives on a small farm in Michigan with her husband Steve. She has been carving for 20 years and displays her work at local shows. Find her on Etsy at [Imdickie1](https://www.etsy.com/shop/Imdickie1).*

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## Paint Notes

**Alligator body:** crystal green (3), sour apple (2)

**Alligator nostrils:** black (4)

**Alligator eyes:** black (4), sour apple (2), white (1)

**Alligator teeth and claws:** white (1)

**Skin:** warm beige (2)

**Cheeks:** maroon (4)

**Hair:** brown (1)

**Jack-o'-lantern:** black (4), pumpkin (4)

**Shoes:** bright red (4), white (1)

1 Craft Smart®

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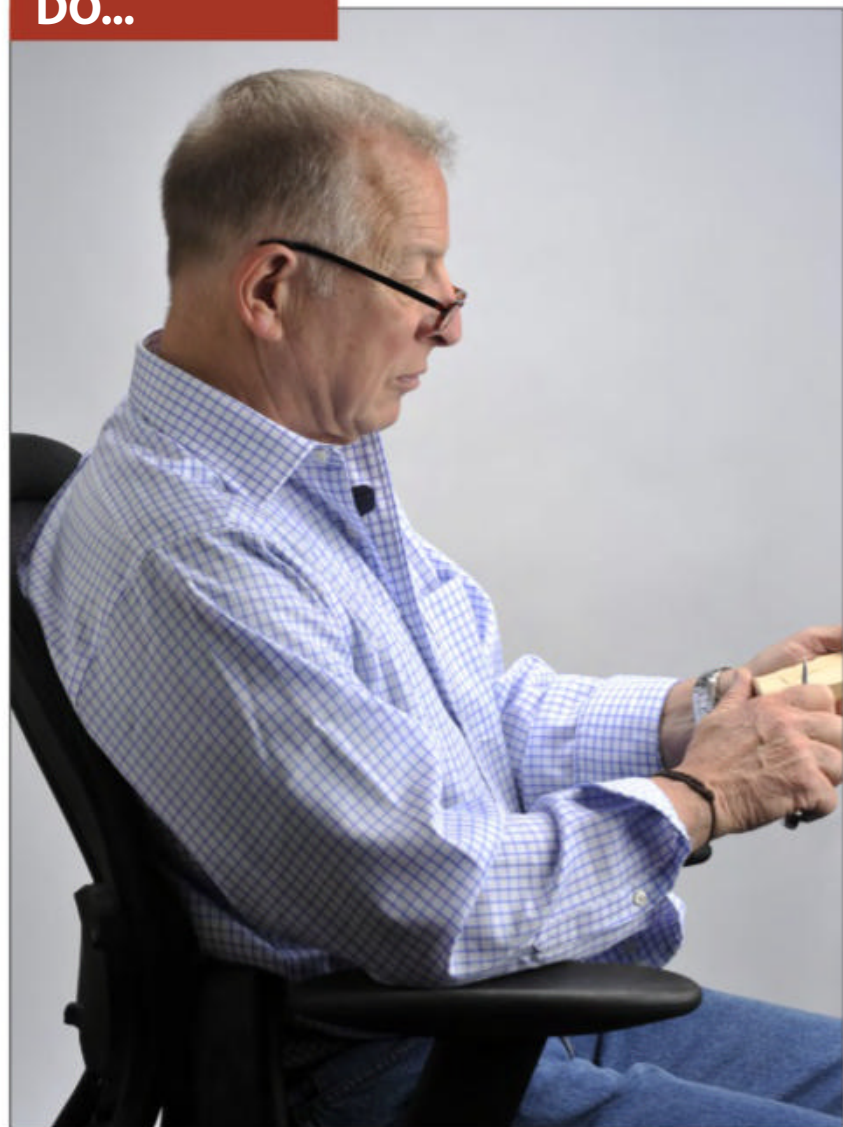


# Comfortable Carving

**DON'T...**



**DO...**



## Practice these simple stretches to enjoy carving for long periods of time

By Don Swartz

**W**hen you are carving, do your arms and shoulders get tired? Do you feel pain in your neck, back, or extremities? Most carvers feel fatigued during or after a carving session. My background as a physical therapist taught me several ways to reduce the pain and make carving more enjoyable—and now I'll share them with you.

### Posture

Carvers have a tendency to pull their work in tight to the body, and slouch and stare straight down at it. These actions can easily strain one's neck and back, causing fatigue or pain.

It's easy to correct these problems. Choose a comfortable chair with armrests (if possible, high armrests). Tuck your tailbone into the back of the chair and sit up straight with your feet flat on the floor. If necessary, use a cushion to encourage proper

These exercises are for woodcarvers who do not have a medical diagnosis of injury or disease in their neck or shoulder regions. They are generally considered safe, but perform them at your own risk. If you have any specific medical concerns, please check with your doctor or physical therapist.

lower back positioning. Hold the project out from your body and use the arm rests for support, or place it on a table, so your neck isn't bent down. In short, find an upright position that still allows you to be comfortable as you carve.

Also, make sure to look around. Your eyes will get tired from focusing on the same spot. Rest them by periodically looking up and focusing on a few different places around the room before looking back down at your work.

### Exercises and Stretches

While you carve, stop and take a deep breath every so often. Stand up and walk around the room, and then try a couple of these stretches (see stretches on page 90). Hold each stretch for five seconds and repeat them three to four times. The stretches should never be painful; strive for a gentle pulling sensation.



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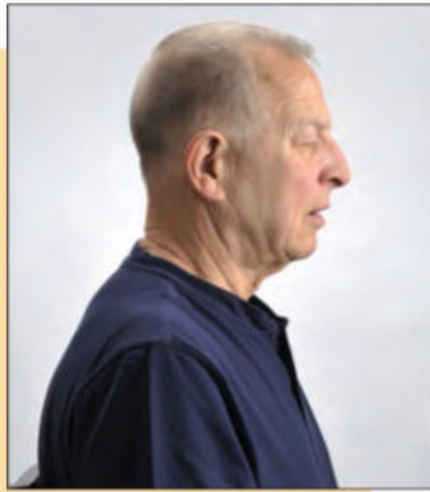
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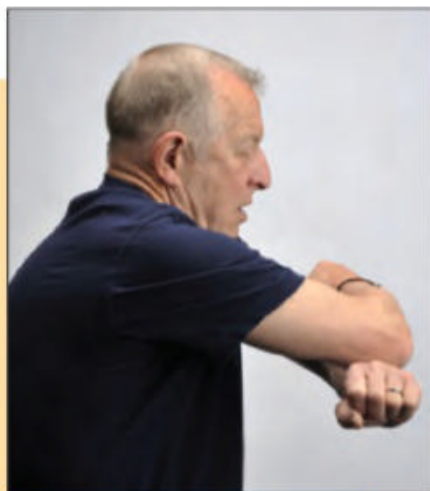
### Shoulder Shrugs

Lift your shoulders up toward your ears and lower back down.



### Side-to-Side Neck Stretch

Grip the top of your head with your hand, and then gently pull your head from one side to the other.



### Shoulder Blade Stretches

Move your elbows back and squeeze your shoulder blades together; relax. Then move your arms and elbows forward, crossing your arms to spread the shoulder blades as far apart as possible.



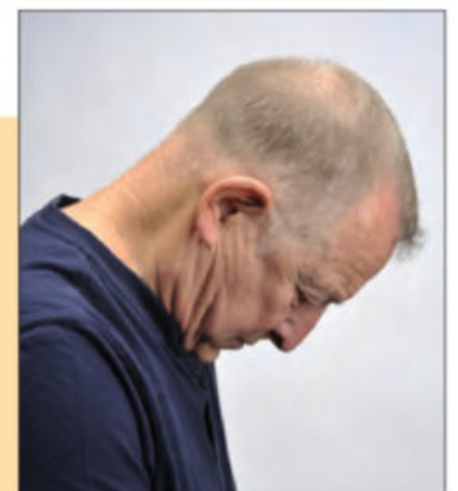
### Neck Rotations

Turn your head to the side until you feel a gentle stretch. Then turn your head to the other side.



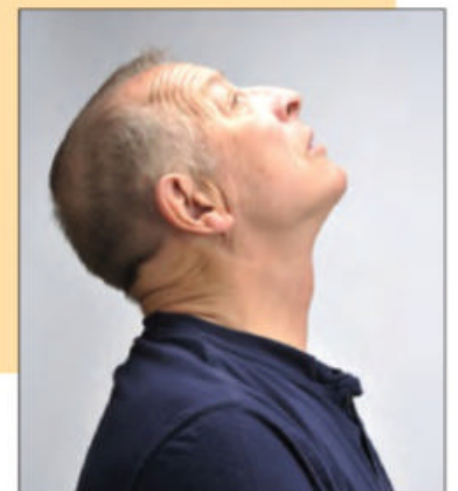
### Flap Your "Wings"

Clasp your hands behind your head. Move your elbows together until you feel a stretch in your upper arms and shoulders. Then move your elbows apart until you feel a stretch.



### Front-to-Back Neck Stretch

Bend your neck forward until your chin touches your chest. Then extend your neck back like you are looking up at the stars.





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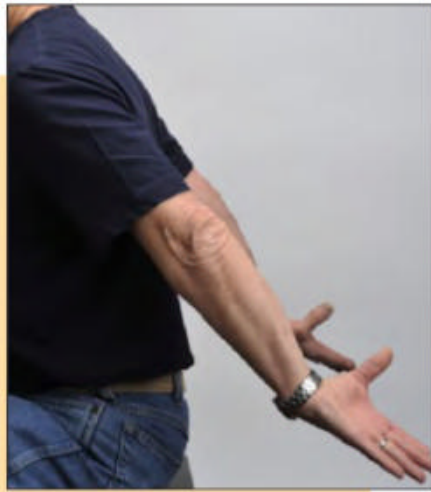


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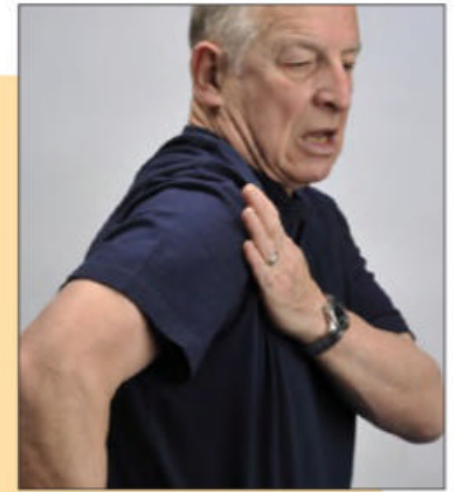






### Back Arm Stretch

Clasp your hands behind your back at the waist. Move your hands up, bending your elbows, until you feel the stretch. Then unclasp your hands, keep your arms straight, and lift them away from your back until you feel the stretch.



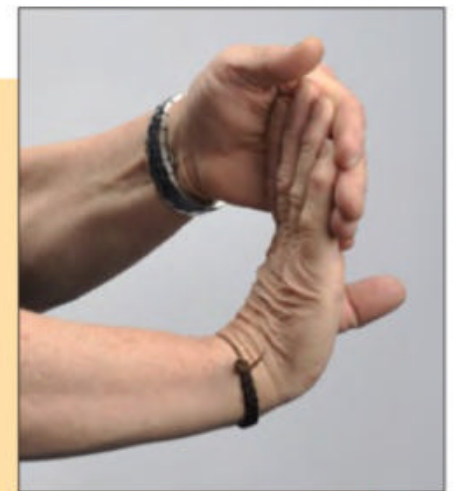
### Shoulder Rotations

Put your opposite hand on your shoulder as a landmark and to isolate your movement. Bend your arm at the elbow and rotate your arm up. Then rotate your arm down.



### Forearm Stretch

Tuck your elbow into your side and hold it in place with your other hand. Straighten your arm and extend your hand. Rotate your hand so the thumb moves from side to side.



### Wrist Stretches

Extend your arm, curl your fingers into a fist, and bend your wrist down. Open your hand and use the other hand to pull your fingers back.



### Carpal Tunnel Stretch

This stretch requires help from another person. Have your helper position their thumbs parallel with the inside of your wrist, and wrap their fingers around the two sides of your hand. The helper should rotate their wrists to bend the sides of your hand backward, stretching the palm of your hand.



*Don Swartz of Lancaster, Pa., was a physical therapist for nearly 40 years. He is the owner of Hillcrest Carving, a carving supply store near Lancaster.*



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**8** **Attach the fins.** Once you are pleased with the fit, attach the fins using cyanoacrylate (CA) glue. Then add panel and windows to the rocket ship using a woodburner on a

## FOX HUNT

Thomas Stover of Dayton, Va., and Janice Fortier of Tucson, Ariz., are the winners drawn from the correct entries received for *WCI* Summer 2021 (Issue 95). The fox was booking a flight on Rick Stoddard's rocket ship on page 44.

Find the fox in this issue, and contact us with the page number and location. Two readers randomly selected from all correct replies will receive a \$25 Fox Chapel Publishing gift certificate. Entries must be received by Sep 9, 2021, to be eligible. *NOTE: With his feet on the "ground," the contest fox faces left (other foxes in WCI don't count).*

Send your entry to: *Woodcarving Illustrated*, Attn: Find the Fox, 903 Square Street, Mount Joy, PA 17552, or enter online under the contests link at [woodcarvingillustrated.com](http://woodcarvingillustrated.com).

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Woodcarving Illustrated publishes a general listing of carving shows in each issue. To list your show in our Calendar of Events, send the following to [editors@woodcarvingillustrated.com](mailto:editors@woodcarvingillustrated.com):

- Name of event
- Date(s)
- Location (include city, state, address, and building name if applicable)
- Hours for each day of show
- Admission
- Contact information

Deadline for the Winter 2021 Issue is Sep 9, 2021.

## ARKANSAS

### Nov 6-7: ROGERS

41st Annual Woodcarving Show and Sale. Frisco Station Mall, 100 N Dixieland Rd. 9am-5pm Fri. and Sat., 10am-3pm Sun. Free adm. Contact Scott Boyle, 479-381-3014, [sdascoot62@hotmail.com](mailto:sdascoot62@hotmail.com).

## COLORADO

### Oct 9-10: COLORADO SPRINGS

Pikes Peak Whittlers Annual Woodcarving and Woodworking Show and Competition. Colorado Springs Shrine Club, 6 S 33rd St. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. \$3 adm. for adults; \$2 adm. for military and children. Children under 12 free. Contact Steve Gurnett, 719-339-5164, [sgurnett@comcast.net](mailto:sgurnett@comcast.net).

### Oct 23-24: LAKEWOOD

46th Annual Colorado Carvers Club of the Denver Metro Area Show, Competition, and Sale. West Metro Fire Training and Event Center, 3535 S Kipling St. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. \$5 adm. per group. Fire dept. personnel, first responders (with ID), and children under 12 free. Contact Lorraine Givens, 440-935-2256, [cccannualshow@centurylink.net](mailto:cccannualshow@centurylink.net).

## FLORIDA

### Dec 4: INVERNESS

24th Annual Nature Coast Carving Club's Show. Citrus Co. Fairgrounds Auditorium, 3610 Florida S. Ave. 9am-4pm. \$3 adm. Children under 8 free. Contact Gene Short, 352-634-2003, [shortywoodshop@gmail.com](mailto:shortywoodshop@gmail.com).

### Jan 7-8: PUNTA GORDA

2022 Southwest Florida Wood Art Exposition and Competition. Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, 75 Taylor St. 9am-4pm Fri. and Sat. One-day adm. \$7; two-day adm. \$10. Contact Jim O'Dea, 941-697-2002, [jeodea@aol.com](mailto:jeodea@aol.com).

## IDAHO

### Sep 18-19: BOISE

Idaho Artistry in Wood Show. J.U.M.P. Boise, 100 Myrtle St. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. \$5 adm. Children 12 and under free. Contact Rich Froelich, 360-561-1371, [cdmrchieboy@gmail.com](mailto:cdmrchieboy@gmail.com).

## KANSAS

### Oct 2-3: WICHITA

Great Plains Woodcarvers Woodcarving Show and Sale. Cessna Activity Center, 2744 George Washington Blvd. 10am-5pm Sat., 11am-4pm Sun. \$4 adm. Contact Randy Landen, 316-250-1667, [randy@landenwoodcarving.com](mailto:randy@landenwoodcarving.com).

## MINNESOTA

### Sep 25-26: BLAINE

Metro Chapter, MWCA Woodcarving Show. Northtown Mall, 398 Northtown Dr. 10am-5pm Sat., 11am-5pm Sun. Free adm. Contact Bruce Christofferson, 612-475-9606, [osage-n-cedar@hotmail.com](mailto:osage-n-cedar@hotmail.com).

### Oct 2-3: COON RAPIDS

Metro Chapter, MWCA Annual Carve-in Seminar. Coon Rapids VFW Post 9625, 1919 Coon Rapids Blvd. 9am-4pm Sat., 9am-4pm Sun. Members only. \$90 per person/ seminar fee. Contact Tom Sheldon, 763-213-4178, [tbshel@comcast.net](mailto:tbshel@comcast.net).

### Oct 7-10: EDEN PRAIRIE

The Minnesota Woodworkers' Guild 2021 Northern Woods Exhibition. Eden Prairie Center, 8251 Flying Cloud Dr. 10am-9pm Thurs.-Sat., 11am thru 6pm Sun. Free adm. Contact Charlie Kocourek, [charlie@jack-bench.com](mailto:charlie@jack-bench.com).

## MISSOURI

### Oct 16: CAMDENTON

Lake of the Ozarks Woodcarvers Show. Community Christian Church, 1064 N Business Rt. 5 Hwy. 8:30am-3:30pm. Free adm. Contact Doug Bibles, 573-286-1049, [dbibles@charter.net](mailto:dbibles@charter.net).

## NEBRASKA

### Oct 16: OMAHA

Mid-America Woodcarvers Association Wood Art Fair. German American Society, 3717 S 120th St. 9am-5pm. \$5. Children under 12 free. More info at [midamericawoodcarvers.com](http://midamericawoodcarvers.com).

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Oct 30-31: ASHEVILLE

Folk Art Center, 382 Blue Ridge Parkway. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. Free adm. Free parking. Contact John Nieburg, [johnnieburg@msn.com](mailto:johnnieburg@msn.com).

## OHIO

### Sep 17-19: WELLINGTON

LaGrange Steam Engine Show and Flea Market. Lorain County Fairgrounds, 2300 Fairgrounds Rd. Bldg #14. 9am-5pm Fri. and Sat., 9am-3pm Sun. \$3 adm. Free parking. Contact Suzanne Kristoff, 440-935-2256, [zann550@gmail.com](mailto:zann550@gmail.com).

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Oct 9-10: FAIRLESS HILLS

PA Delaware Valley Woodcarvers Annual Artistry in Wood Show and Competition. Bucks County Technical High School, 610 Wistar Rd. 10am-4pm daily. \$5 adm. Contact Maxine Ernest, 215-752-7193, [maxern1568@gmail.com](mailto:maxern1568@gmail.com).

### Mar 12-13: MILLERSVILLE

47th Annual Woodcarving and Wildlife Art Festival. Millersville University Student Memorial Center, 101 Shenks Ln. 10am-6pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. \$5 adm. Children under 15 (with adult), students (with ID), and veterans (with ID) free. Contact Bob Hershey, 717-951-5569, [bzcarvn@ptd.net](mailto:bzcarvn@ptd.net).

### Oct 30-31: BERLIN

Woodcarving Art Show & Sale. East Berlin Area Community Center, 405 North Ave. 9am-4pm daily. \$4 adm. Veterans, active duty military, and children 12 and under free. Contact Kyle Gabel, [info@conewagocarvers.com](mailto:info@conewagocarvers.com).

## UTAH

### Sep 23-25: SPANISH FORK

Utah Valley Woodcarvers Show. Veterans Memorial Building, 400 N Main St. 12-7pm Fri., 9am-5pm Sat. Adm. for members: \$4 online, \$5 in-person. Adm. for nonmembers: \$5 online, \$6 in-person. Contact Gary Heaton, 385-329-5442, [drgaryheaton@yahoo.com](mailto:drgaryheaton@yahoo.com).

## TENNESSEE

### Oct 9-10: SEVIERVILLE

Smokey Mountain Woodcarving Association Show. My People Senior Activity Center, 1220 W Main St. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. Free adm. Donations for senior center accepted. Contact JR Hemmerlein, 309-620-1197, [corngrinder50@yahoo.com](mailto:corngrinder50@yahoo.com).

## VIRGINIA

### Sep 18-19: BIG STONE GAP

The Mountain Tradition Woodcarvers' Carv-In & Show. Carnes Gym. E. 5th St. 9am-5pm Sat., 12pm-4pm Sun. Free adm. Contact Victoria Eldridge, [veldridge.emt.ff22@gmail.com](mailto:veldridge.emt.ff22@gmail.com), or Maurice Vanhook, [mauricevahook@yahoo.com](mailto:mauricevahook@yahoo.com).

## WASHINGTON

### Oct 9-10: TACOMA

Northwest Woodcarvers Artistry in Wood. Waller Road Grange, 2708 64th St.E. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. \$5 admission, maximum \$21 for family. Children under 12 free. Contact Robin McDonald, [rmadrin@comcast.net](mailto:rmadrin@comcast.net).

## WEST VIRGINIA

### Sep 4-5: WHEELING

Oglebay Woodcarving Show. Oglebay Park. Wilson Lodge, 465 Lodge Dr. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-4pm Sun. Free adm. Contact Oglebay Woodcarvers Guild, 724-255-3514, [showinfo@oglebaywoodcarvers.com](mailto:showinfo@oglebaywoodcarvers.com).

## WISCONSIN

### Sep 11: JANESVILLE

Rock River Valley Carvers of Wisconsin Inc. Show and Sale. Rock County Fairgrounds Craig Center, 1301 Craig Ave. 9am-4pm. Free adm. Donations accepted. Contact Brad Crandall, 608-931-0188, [bwkicrandall@gmail.com](mailto:bwkicrandall@gmail.com).

### Sep 18-19: STEVENS POINT

Wisconsin River Woodcarvers Annual Show, Competition, and Sale. Holiday Inn, 1001 Amber Ave. 9am-5pm Sat., 9am-4pm Sun. \$5 adm. Children 12 and under free. Contact Ron O'Kray, 715-341-2214, [webmaster1@wisconsinriverwoodcarvers.org](mailto:webmaster1@wisconsinriverwoodcarvers.org).

## CANADA

### Oct 1-3: NEW BRUNSWICK

New Brunswick Woodcarving Competition and Sale. Sir James Dunn Academy, 180 King St. 10am-5pm Sat., 10am-3pm Sun. Free adm. Contact Brian Dykeman, 506-450-9571, [bmdykeman@gmail.com](mailto:bmdykeman@gmail.com).



(Continued from page 96)

Since Sisi works with organic materials, her creations have a short shelf life. An etched pumpkin can last up to three weeks. A carved apple or avocado will look good for two days. Simple shapes, such as flowers and leaves, are quick carves, while more difficult designs can take hours to complete. To extend the life of her pieces, Sisi sprays her materials with fresh lemon juice. Each work of art calls for just a handful of tools: a scalper, peeler, melon baller, and a Thai style pro carving knife with a flexible blade.

When the pandemic erupted in 2020, Sisi realized her business model—which was heavily dependent on commissioned pieces for corporate events and private parties—would have to change. She thought about the possibility of delivering her pieces directly to clients, so they could enjoy and even eat her work from the comfort of their own homes. She began creating personalized gift boxes stuffed with handcarved chocolate bars, gourmet soaps, and fruit. They became so popular that Sisi decided to launch her own brand—Rosegold & Grey—last spring.

“I constantly step out of my comfort zone,” she said. “It’s how I learn new things and grow. Launching my own brand has been thrilling and a bit frightening at times, but I am excited for what lies ahead. My passion for food carving has already led me to wonderful places.”

*To see more of Sisi’s work, visit [sisifoodsculptor.com](http://sisifoodsculptor.com), [rosegoldgrey.com](http://rosegoldgrey.com), or [@sisi\\_food\\_sculptor](https://www.instagram.com/sisi_food_sculptor) on Instagram.*



**Cheese.**



**Melons are one of Sisi’s favorite carving mediums.**



**Broccoli.**



**Soap.**



# Carving Up the Produce Aisle



## Szirometta Zombori shapes edible items into incredible works of art

By Hannah Carroll

Photography by Russell Sach and Szirometta Zombori

**S**zirometta “Sisi” Zombori is not your typical carver. She slices into artisanal soaps, gourmet cheeses, ripe melons, and broccoli stalks to create sculptures that look too good to eat. Despite their different textures and densities, Sisi carves each one with ease to reveal beautiful flowers and patterns hiding behind the skin and rinds.

Sisi grew up in a small Hungarian village called Tiszaalpar. She dreamt of becoming a professional artist, but struggled to find a medium that moved her. A few years ago, a friend told her about some fascinating food carvings he saw in Germany. Sisi enrolled in a food sculpting course and was, as she recalls, “immediately drawn to the craft.” She’s been carving fruit and vegetables from her local market ever since.

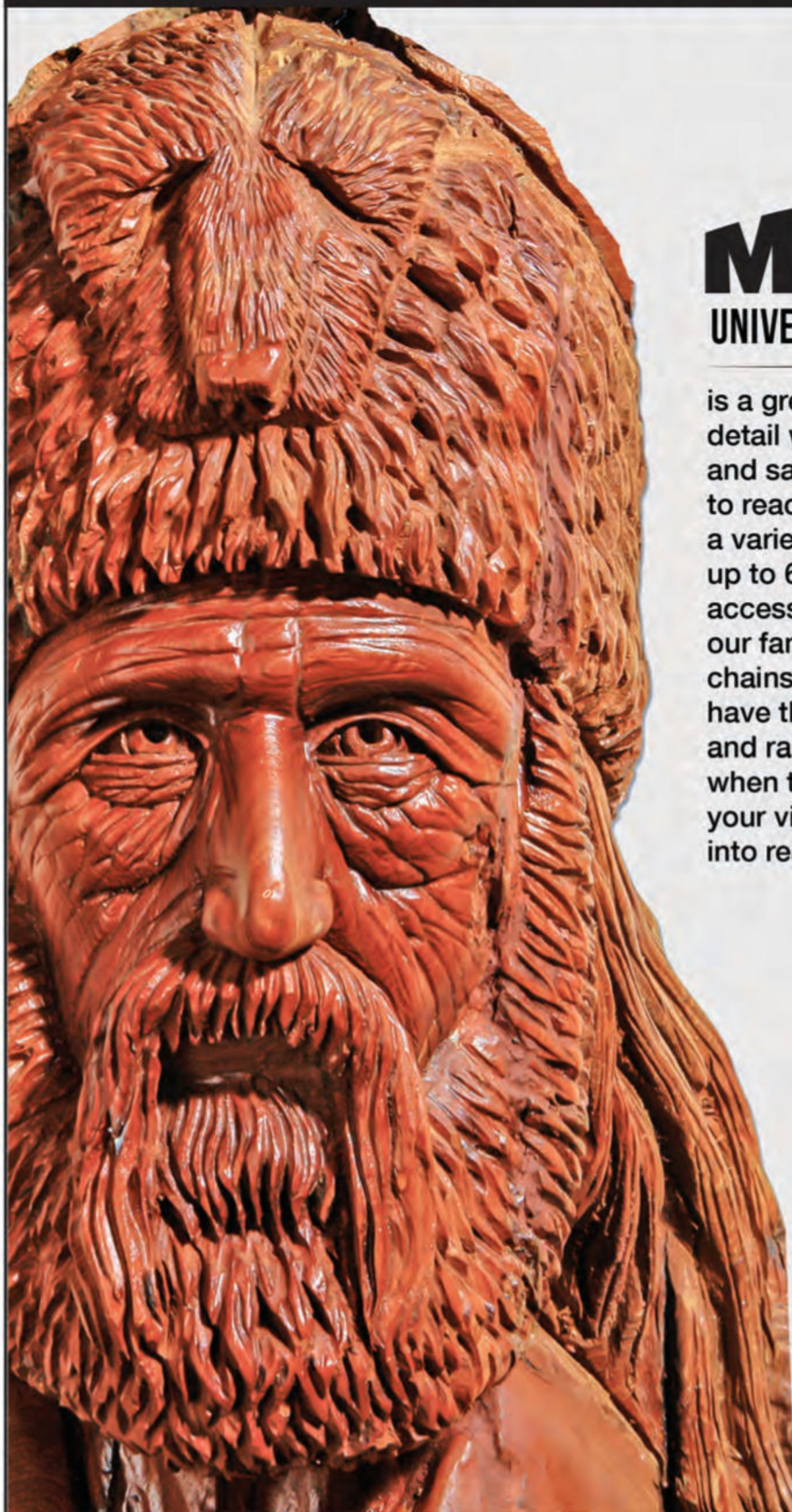


*Avocado.*

(Continued on page 95)



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