

December 2025

West Michigan

Newsletter

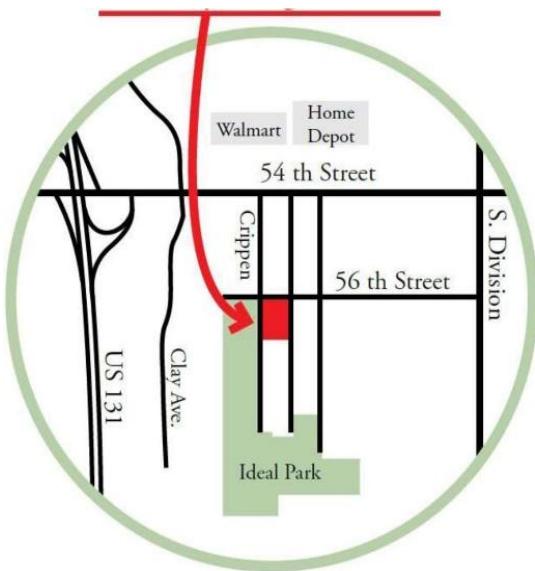
Woodworkers Guild

Next Meeting

Tuesday, December 9th, 7:00 pm (setup 6:30)



**Ideal Park Christian
Reformed Church
Activity Center
320 56th Street SW
Wyoming, MI**



December 9th 'Auction / Sell'

Bring in an unwanted tool, wood, whatever to donate to our sale to support the guild.

December's Meeting Activities

Bring in your
Favorite Shop Jig



Holiday Pizza Party



December 9th 'Show and Tell'

All are encouraged to share your latest project or creation with us! Big or small, any condition.

President's Corner

by Les Derusha



President's Corner

Pizza Party!, our December Staple.

Pick your Pizza and soft drink and let me know via e-mail (Les@derusha.org).



We still need to replace me, I did say I would continue until 1/1/2026, however last I checked that day is coming VERY SOON!

For our December meeting Subject, we will be Sharing our favorite home-made shop jigs. My first suggestion is to not overlook things you take for granted because you've used them so long. It may be old hat to you but unfamiliar to your peers. And there is probably a good reason you still use it.

It may also be something you use in a more imaginative way than initially intended.

If it's valuable to you in the shop it will most likely be helpful to your peers.

Bring your stuff help all of us!

November 11th *SHOW & TELL*

Jim Jakosh



Clock from Pistachio



Box for Tuning Fork (hand therapy)



Lock Box using magnet & Ball

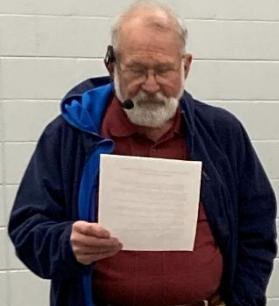
Bryan Vaughn: Door made into a bookshelf



Ralph Lindholm:

Plane with a etched (scrimshaw) markings on brass side





In case you missed it:
November 11th Presentation
Scrimshaw with **Sam Lacina**
shared his techniques, methods,
and procedures of this art form.

Two pages of Sam's hand-outs follow:



Scrimshaw

Examples of engravings on ivory, stone, wood or bone found as artifacts of prehistoric man are rare, but interestingly one of the more common stone artifacts/tools found are engravers. Many of us have seen examples of Eskimo/Inuit ivory and bone carvings with details carved/engraved and darkened on the surface. These are probably a close reflection of that early craft.

Scrimshaw is a term given to engraving on whale tooth and bone by sailors of the 17th and 18th century. (The term scrimshaw, originally had the meaning of wasting time.) Classically scrimshaw could be defined as an image created on whale bone or ivory (typically whale tooth) produced using a sail needle or sharp metal instrument usually colored with soot from whale oil lamps and whale oil. These were produced by the sailors and traded for goods at their ports of call. With the disappearance of whaling, they became collectibles during the 20th century. The term scrimshaw is now used to describe any image engraved onto the surface of ivory or bone and colored with various inks and pigments. Most early etchings/ scrimshaw were more symbolic art, much of modern scrimshaw is a highly realistic and detailed art form.

Scrimshaw, getting started:

Develop an image: either freehand drawn or copied.

Prepare the material: I typically use old piano keys which are the most readily available form of legal ivory. Other materials may be used including a variety of plastics, cow and camel bone, cow/buffalo horn, antler, vegetable ivory (Tagua nuts), as well as a few sources of legal ivory, these include warthog tusks, hippo tusks/teeth and fossil ivory (mammoth, mastodon, walrus). Modern elephant ivory is no longer legal. Elephant ivory was used as piano key veneer in the 1800s and early 1900s, this is still legal to own and use. (I typically find them for sale on eBay). Any of these materials will need to be prepared, some materials such as hippo teeth require specific surface preparation because of the hard dentin on the surface. There are multiple resources available which cover that process in detail.

Any of these materials require sanding/polishing to a high/fine Grit at least 600 to 1,000. After the material has been polished to this grit, it is typically inked and re-sanded. This is to assure the artist that there are no hidden scratches, cracks, unusual grain or other defects in the material. Pores, grain and softening are more of a concern with materials such as bone, antler and horn. Cracks and staining are very common in fossil ivory. If you are using bone, some makers will cover the surface with *Renaissance Wax* to fill its pores.

Most artists like to have the image of what they are engraving on the surface of their project before they start. After ivory has been sanded to a fine grit, it becomes very slick

and it is very difficult to draw an image directly on the surface using a pencil. I have arbitrarily called the two methods/ways of working around this the dark-field and light-field methods.

Dark-field Method

After the surface is prepared, the artist will re-ink the surface. The surface can be free hand engraved without a surface image. As it is engraved, the white background will show through the dark surface allowing the artist to monitor their progress. This is probably the method that was used by the scrimhanders of the whaling period. (My speculation) The artist can also draw on the dark surface with a graphite pencil the image they wish to engrave. The disadvantage is, that it will be a dark on dark image.

Light-field Method

The light-field method is a more common choice for the modern scrimshaw artist. As mentioned before after the surface of a piece of bone or ivory has been sanded/polished it is very difficult to draw on that polished surface. To solve this problem, a coating/ground is applied to the surface of the material. The coating/ground is usually diluted acrylic paint (typically white), engravers ground (paint-ish kind of material) or the residue of a soft eraser that has been rubbed on the surface. After the ground has been applied, the image can be transferred, either being freehand drawn or transferred using carbon paper, tracing paper or projection (less common because of the small size of the image).

Using any of the above methods the artist may now start engraving and proceed until they are satisfied with the amount of detail they have transferred onto the surface. The surface is re-inked and the excess ink is removed, the engraved lines will define the selected image. The artist may now add progressive layers of detail, repeatedly engraving and re-inking.

Tools: For drawing and engraving I use a small straight edge as well as a metal French curve. (The French curve was made for use as a cabinet scrapper.) I use washers of various sizes for use as a guide, both for drawing and engraving. I find engraving a sweeping line is much easier against a metal guide. I have cut curves into thin sheet steel to use as an aid, for both drawing and engraving curves such as a hook bend or hook eye.

I use a variety of shop made engraving tools. Most were made from high speed steel or O-1 drill rod using a grinding wheel. I also use the point of an X-acto knife and a pin vise with a stiff needle mounted in it. Many modern scrimshaw artists will cut in the image using fine scratched lines, then refine the image using a fine needle point engraver, and a stipple technique (multiple fine dots). They also use a power engraver to speed up the process.

In the past I used an engraving ball but now mainly use a wood platform mounted on a lazy-suzan base, that is held in my vise. I will use double stick tape to attach the ivory to the engraving base. (you can use a strip of painter's tape, attach it to each surface, then super glue the back of the tape layers together.)



The Guild's Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/groups/wmiwwguild
(Capture this QR code with your cell phone camera) 



Notice: The Guild's original Website is being updated and should be available soon

Guild Supporters

EST 1928
WOODCRAFT®

2914 Broadmoor SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512
616-957-9663

www.woodcraft.com/stores/grand-rapids
woodcraft550@gmail.com

Free monthly flyer:
Woodworking Equipment & Supplies,
Classes, Demos, Advice



FESTOOL



JET

POWERMATIC

RIKON

LAGUNA SuperMax

December Events at Woodcraft

Grand Rapids Wood Turners

free monthly meeting

Sat. Dec. 20th 9:30 am



Cabinet Workshop Class

W Dale Smith \$250 materials included

Saturday, Dec. 20th 9:30am – 6 pm.



Guild Supporters



Bill's Sharpening
5252 Division Ave S.
Kentwood, MI 49548
(616) 784-1755



Econaway Abrasives
Producing Top Quality Abrasive Products Since 1953

Sanding Belts and Abrasives
Jim Schultz
Phone: 616-846-2550
Grand Haven, Michigan
<http://www.econaway.com/>
Special Pricing for Guild Members!



SHERWIN-WILLIAMS.

**Special discounts for all West Michigan
Woodworkers Guild Members at any
Sherwin-Williams store.**

FESTOOL

Tools for the toughest demands



Carter Products Company, Inc.

2871 Northridge Drive, NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49544



Toll Free: 888.622.7837

Phone: 616.647.3380

Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm EST



Atwood Forest Products

1177 17 Mile Rd NE

Cedar Springs, MI 49319

616-696-0081 Office

atwoodforestproducts.com



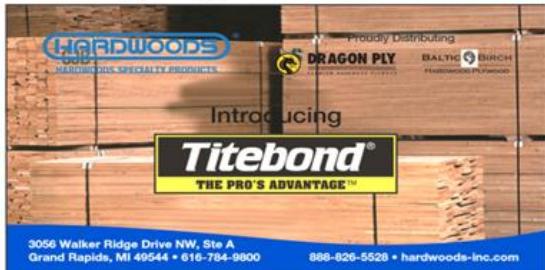
Wolverine Hardwoods Inc

2810 113th Ave, Allegan, MI 49010

(269) 686-7004

wolverinehardwoods.com

GrandRapids@hardwoods-Inc.com



show members card for 10% off 616-784-9800



**TEEPLES
&
TEAGUE LAW PLLC**

230 Fulton Street E. - Suite 3
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(616) 776-7200

**KRISTLE
TEAGUE**

Attorney at Law
kteague@teeplesandteague.com