



IWG News

The Newsletter of the Island Woodturners Guild

February 2025



About the IWG:

The [Island Woodturners Guild](#) meets from 1:00 - 4:00 PM on the 4th Saturday of each month (except for July/Aug) at the Central Saanich Senior Citizens' Centre, [1229 Clarke Road](#), Brentwood Bay, BC.

Visitors are welcome.

Executive Committee

President:
Don Costello

Vice President:
Don Robinson

Treasurer:
Chris Leach

Secretary:
Michael McEwan

Members at Large:
Hovan Baghdassarian
Virginia Lee

Past President:
Tim Karpiak

Interim Newsletter Editor:
Virginia Lee

The IWG gratefully acknowledges the support of the following companies:

[Artisan Wood to Works](#)
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THE PRESIDENT'S TURN

Hello guild members. I hope you enjoy this, a departure from my usual President's Turn.

Woodturning vs. Relationships: A Humorous Comparison

Initial Selection

- **Woodturning:** You carefully select the perfect log, free of major defects, with just the right size and species.
- **Relationships:** You swipe right on Tinder, hoping you've found someone who's not a total weirdo and whose profile picture isn't from a decade ago.

Preparation

- **Woodturning:** Cut the log to size, seal the ends, and rough out the blank.
- **Relationships:** You clean yourself up, put on your best outfit, and try to impress them with witty conversation and exaggerated stories of your accomplishments.

Mounting and Balancing

- **Woodturning:** Secure the wood on the lathe and make sure it's well-balanced.
- **Relationships:** Secure a dinner reservation and balance your excitement with a hint of cool indifference, so you don't come off as too eager.

Turning Process

- **Woodturning:** Gradually shape the wood, removing unwanted material and revealing the beauty within.
- **Relationships:** Gradually shape your persona, removing any off-putting quirks and revealing just enough of your true self to keep them interested.

Adjusting Speed

- **Woodturning:** Adjust the lathe speed according to the workpiece.
- **Relationships:** Adjust the pace of the relationship to ensure it's progressing smoothly without any sudden rushes or awkward slowdowns.

PRESIDENT'S TURN....cont.

Tool Usage

- **Woodturning:** Use sharp tools and proper techniques to avoid catches and kickbacks.
- **Relationships:** Use sharp wit and proper manners to avoid arguments and awkward moments. Remember, a dull sense of humor can be just as dangerous as a dull chisel.

Inspection

- **Woodturning:** Inspect the workpiece for hidden defects and make necessary adjustments.
- **Relationships:** Inspect for red flags and make necessary adjustments to your behavior or escape plan.

Finishing Touches

- **Woodturning:** Sand and polish the piece to perfection, bringing out the natural beauty of the wood.
- **Relationships:** Smooth out any rough patches, charm them with your best qualities, and hope they see the natural beauty beneath your flaws.

Admiring the Finished Piece



- **Woodturning:** Step back and admire the beautiful creation you've crafted with patience and skill.



- **Relationships:** Step back and admire the beautiful relationship you've built together—if it all works out, of course!

Remember, both woodturning and relationships require patience, effort, and a good sense of humor. And just like in woodturning, sometimes you might end up with a pile of shavings, but other times, you'll create something truly extraordinary. Happy turning and loving!

Hope to see you on Saturday.

Don Costello

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY February 22: 1:00 p.m.



This meeting will feature a hybrid demonstration by Kai Munzer who will be showing us how to turn an elegant cube shaped box with winged corners that has a sphere shaped inside. You will explore a unique box shape and learn how to build a dedicated wooden clamp in addition to many other skills. The demo

is intended for turners with some turning experience but there will be tips for all levels of experience.

The Teams invite to the meeting will be sent out on Thursday, February 20th. The demo will be followed by a presentation of the *Show and Tell*.

MINI 101: INTRODUCTION TO WOODTURNING

Congrats!

to our recent 101 graduates! Thank you to the organizer, Neil Bosdet, the mentors and assistants who have contributed their time to this project. We are looking forward to meeting the new turners and encourage them to bring their first pieces to the February Show & Tell.

RECAP OF JANUARY DEMONSTRATION



January's demo featured a remote Zoom demonstration by Dave Landers on turning a Kuska – Camper's Coffee Cup.

In this demo, Dave showed us his woodturners version of a Kuska: a multi-axis turned cup.

You can watch the video on our Members Only Page: [Dave Landers - Kuska Cup Demo](#) You will have to be logged in to watch it. He has also provided a how-to pdf you can download.

WoW

What is **WoW**?

From the website:

"The World Of Woodturners site (WOW originated in November 2001). At its start it was the only interactive site where woodturners could post photos and descriptions of their work and engage in discussions about their art. WOW members think of themselves as a family. They are artists who have become friends and who willingly share their talents and skills. This is a place where the novice freely mixes with the seasoned professional in an atmosphere of shared respect. No one is anonymous and everyone uses their own name. From this venue has arisen some incredible art, some of which can be seen in the public gallery. Enjoy this display of fine work. Access to the site itself is at no cost, by obtaining a membership invitation from an existing WoW family member or contacting site administration at wow@hdv.net. Include your name

and a brief description of your woodworking experience in the message. The site is owned and maintained by the World of Woodturners, Inc a non-profit organization." [World of Woodturners](#)

You do not have to be an experienced woodturner to join. You will find the website to be a great source of inspiration.

WOODTURNINGS ARE LIKE ZUCCHINI

reprinted, with permission, as seen on **WoW**, written by guest contributor, Mike Stafford (bio at end of article)



On virtually every wood turning forum, eventually someone will ask how everyone else either sells or otherwise disposes of their excess wood turnings. It can be far easier to turn pieces of wood into useful and decorative objects than it is to get rid of those same turnings. Every wood turner has this problem sooner or later. I equate this problem to the problem a gardener has in getting rid of his excess zucchini.



Wood turnings are like zucchini. Most years we grow more zucchini than we care to eat. So, we start giving the excess away to neighbors. Initially the neighbors are glad to receive the fresh vegetables. After a few trips up and down the street our neighbors start drawing their curtains, hiding, and pretending not to be at home. They will not answer the door when they see us with

the vegetable basket marching down the street. They don't even want to receive any of my wife's delicious zucchini bread.



The same thing happens when you try to give away your wood turnings. After a few years folks do not want any more bowls, boxes, etc. It is almost like you must move to a new neighborhood to get rid of more turned stuff. I used to pass them out at the neighborhood Christmas party. Initially people were excited to receive a small candy bowl, a box for paper clips, some candle stands or an ornamental bird house. Now we don't get invited to that event. We live in an established neighborhood.

It has been a while since anyone new moved in. But it is always nice when someone new moves onto the street. Firstly, this event provides opportunities for housewarming gifts. I can unload, I mean, give the newcomers a box full of turnings and if they have children, you can't believe how much stuff I can give them. And secondly, for the next few years I can add to their collection. Then like the rest of the neighbors they will draw the curtains and pretend to not be at home. Sometimes they will not even acknowledge you when you see them at the grocery store where they are buying their own zucchini for fear that in accepting free zucchini, they might be obligating themselves to more turnings.

Relatives can be a reliable venue through which you can give turnings. But even relatives have their limits. For many years I gave many turnings to the family at Christmas and for birthdays. One year it was decided to have a big family reunion. I took a large box of turnings to the family reunion and made an announcement that anyone who wanted a turning could have whatever was in the box. At the end of the day, I had two more than I started with. I got the message....and the turnings went home with me.

My wife is good about collecting some of my turnings as her favorites. She displays them in several places around the house. I did a count and currently there are 47 pieces on display. She has a closet devoted to her collection which she rotates in and out of the displays. I don't know how many turnings are in there but as she adds new favorite pieces to the collection, she sometimes takes older pieces out and puts them in the giveaway boxes. Even she has her limit.

It is so quick and easy to turn dozens of pens, and everyone needs a pen, right? Even pens can be difficult to get rid of after you've been turning them for a while. When I was selling lots of pens, I had access to two colleges and sold many expensive pens to faculty members. But that market became saturated, and my sales dried up.

I also had some reliable traveling salesmen who would buy pens from me as gifts. The tax laws changed and now these salesmen cannot write off the expense of gifts. Nowadays, no one uses a pen, and I haven't turned any styluses (or is it styli?).

I usually give pieces to guests when they come to visit. Now no one wants to visit. Even the religious groups stopped coming when I handed them a turning in exchange for the religious tracts they were passing out. That was a great exchange because it was easy for me to dispose of a religious tract.

It has been years since I have seen any door-to-door encyclopedia or magazine salesmen, but if any drop by I have something for them. I never see the woman who delivers our paper because she does it in the very early morning. I suspect she is aware that contact with me might result in woodturning gifts.

I would love to exchange a few turnings for a check from the Publishers Clearing House Prize Patrol. I don't see that happening any time soon. I don't enter that contest.

I don't have the heart to try and unload turnings on the Girl Scouts as their arms are usually full of boxes of delicious cookies. They will not barter for turnings either. I know, I have tried. The Boy Scouts used to hang a big bag on the front doorknob for their food drive. I started throwing in a couple of turnings along with the cans of peas and corn and dry pasta. I guess the hungry aren't as hungry as they used to be as I don't see those bags anymore.

And whatever you do don't drop any turnings in a child's Halloween pumpkin. Almost certainly the police will pay you a visit and want to know why you are giving kids wood instead of candy. I always give a turning to my mailman for Christmas because he is kind enough to deliver my mailed wood purchases directly to my shop. But I fear that eventually he will want to move to a different route to avoid being given any more dust collectors, er, wood turnings. The UPS and FedEx folks deliver packages to the front stoop, ring the doorbell and run back to their trucks before I can give them something.

I used to sell in two galleries, but I don't want to get into that rut again. Both galleries are at the beach and cater to tourists. The best part about tourists is that they represent a shifting population that changes somewhat each summer, so you have a completely new market for your work. As long as the stuff you offer is small and easily packed with the dirty laundry in their suitcase they seem to be interested. Larger items that have to be shipped don't seem to sell as readily. But I feel bad when items don't sell, and the gallery owners have to dust them (not that bad really). At this point I am unable to produce enough work and deal with getting it

to the galleries to make it worthwhile for any of us. I still believe this to be a good outlet, but I just can't deal with it anymore.

I have an ETSY shop where I sell turnings tailored to needlewomen such as ort (waste) bowls, needle cases, laying tools, etc. I even manage to sell a few boxes, bowls and birdhouses on this site. This has been very successful because of my wife's connections and standing within the needlepoint and embroidery community. But even that seems to be reaching its saturation point. I don't know how much longer I will be able to sell in that venue. Besides, another vendor on the site copied my designs and sells them cheaper.

I send pieces to my online woodturning friends as Christmas gifts. So far, I have not had any pieces returned. I did have some close calls this past Christmas when the mailman delivered some packages that were in the same boxes in which I sent my gifts. Before opening one of those packages, I wrote to the person whose return address was on the box and told him that I did not accept returns of gifted items or offer cash refunds and that he was going to have to keep what I sent him. He informed me that he was re-using the box to send some of his excess turnings. I sent him one piece of work and he sent me two so that was a net gain of one to my turning inventory. The same thing happened with a couple of other turners this year so even the long-distance gifting ploy has failed. I may have to move so they can't send me any more turnings. I cannot afford to double the number of wood turnings in my home. But at least I have some nice wood turned art to add to our collection.

While I was sick and being treated, I gave all of my doctors, radiology technicians, nurses, orderlies, receptionists and therapists pens, boxes, bowls, birdhouse ornaments etc. etc. I was able to get rid of a lot of stuff although I cannot recommend that particular avenue of distribution to anyone. I've noticed that they no longer want to see me as frequently as they did. At least two of my doctors left town. I hope it was because they are seeking better opportunities and are not just trying to avoid seeing me. I guess it could be because I am getting better, but I suspect it might have something to do with all the turnings I passed out. I am not eager to acquire a new disease to open up additional medical practices where I might distribute my turnings.

One of my woodturning friends came to visit me while I was in the hospital and brought several boxes and bags full of wood turning blanks and a number of wood turnings. So, I gained in the number of turnings I have and wasn't even going to the shop. He was kind to visit...If he ever gets sick, I will repay the favor.

I donate a couple of pieces each year to the local art center fundraiser. So far, they haven't rejected any of my donations but they will not share their member list with me so I can gift those people with turnings and perhaps find a few new patrons.

These are my experiences with trying to get rid of my turning production. You will note that I did not say "production turning". I have never been a production turner. Because of my experiences with getting rid of what I do turn, I have trouble relating to those production

turners who turn and sell thousands of items each year. I have never come close to turning that much stuff in one year. Even with my limited production, I have accumulated so much stuff that we no longer have closet space in which to store it. I am not going to build another wing on the house. The U-Store-It places are too expensive.

In the winter my shop stands idle as I don't turn during cold weather but as soon as it warms up, I head out to the shop and turn something else. Perhaps some Mormon youth wanting to raise money for a mission trip by washing windows will come by and I can gift them with a few turnings. I really need my windows washed. If they do show up it would even be better if they come during zucchini season.

AUTHOR'S BIO



Mike Stafford

(from WoW) Besides being blond, blue-eyed and exceedingly average looking I am between 6'1" and 6'3" depending on which convenience store measuring chart you use. I have always been short for my weight and was supposed to have been 6'8" or 6'9" tall. I played lots of sports when I was young and went to college on an athletic scholarship in track. No, I didn't run, I lumbered around the shot put and discus circles....which explains why my right arm is 5 inches longer than my left. I am married to a wonderful woman, Gail, who has been the love of my life for more than 40 years. She has achieved recognition as a Master Craftsman in needlepoint and teaches mathematics at the university level. I am a retired food

scientist/engineer. I worked in industry for the first half of my professional career, then worked as a consultant for a while and then worked in the government/food regulatory sector developing food safety, training and inspection programs and emergency response programs. I am retired now working at being a househusband, wood turner, gardener, chef, writer (I really enjoy writing about woodturning and have been published in several magazines) and raconteur. I am a lifelong woodworker who discovered wood turning late in life. Wood turning has become an addiction I enjoy and WoW helps me get my daily fix. I am from Rocky Mount, NC, USA

SECOND CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS IT'S YOUR TURN

Sadly, if members don't step up to volunteer, the members who do volunteer will burn out, stop volunteering and the Guild will cease to exist. The Guild can only exist with member involvement. This year comes with changes to our Executive and we need more members to step forward to contribute to the continued growth of the Guild. We have only had one member step up to fill one of our vacant positions and need more (see below).

***It won't take up a lot of your time to volunteer for these positions
but it will have great impact!***

We are currently seeking passionate, dedicated individuals who are eager to contribute their time, skills, and energy to help us achieve our goals. Whether you have a few hours to spare or can commit more regularly, your involvement will make a meaningful difference.

Who We're Looking For:

Executive Positions

- The current President is stepping down. We are looking for an enthusiastic individual who can lead our meetings and collaborate with the Executive team members.
- Our Vice President is also stepping down. This position holds the duties of responsibility for Programs – in person demonstrations and Interactive Remote Demonstrations (IRDs).

Our AGM takes place in May when we will be electing the 2025 Executive. The Executive Team meets once a month on the first Thursday of each month except for July and August.

Volunteer Positions

- **Newsletter Editor** and/or to contribute articles or ideas for the Newsletter. *Happily, a few members have stepped up to contribute articles to the Newsletter but we can always use more.*
- **Photo taker.** *Ken Halstead has volunteered to take the photos and edit them for the website and the newsletter.*
- Help with the Audio/Visual setup and take down for the in-person meetings. Training will be provided.
- Mentoring
- Assisting with workshops
- People to assist with the set up and take down of the meeting room.
- 101 Workshop Mentors and Assistants
- Demonstrate a skill you have learned as a woodturner or provide ideas for demonstrations you would like to see. The demonstrations can be:
 - in your workshop as a remote demo (we come to you)
 - an “in the can” demo where your demo is videoed in advance and you appear in person at a meeting to narrate it and answer questions
 - or at in-person at the meetings.

Benefits of Turning Up:

- Gain hands-on experience in a nonprofit environment
- Meet like-minded individuals and become part of a supportive community
- Make a real impact and help us create lasting change

How to Turn Up: To learn more or to offer your time, contact Don Constello at president@islandwoodturners.ca. Contact Don Robinson (tycondon@shaw.ca) for demos and

Virginia (remoteva@gmail.com) for newsletter contributions or volunteer to become the Newsletter Editor.

We rely on members contributing and sharing their knowledge.

**Without members turning up and contributing to the guild,
we won't have a Guild!**

Together, we can keep the Guild active and interesting for the members.

**Welcome to those who have volunteered to be part of our team and Welcome
to our new members!**

PARTING OFF



A BIG thanks to the 101 Teachers and Mentors who showed up during the unexpected winter weather. A big welcome to the Guild to all the new members.

CONCLUDING THOT

