

The Cutting Edge

Volume III Issue III

May 1995

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Carved at the *EXLE/Central WA Sculpture Contest*



Artist: *Fred Bero of Concrete, WA*
Carved at *EXLE/Central WA Sculpture Contest '95*

THE CUTTING EDGE

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Just received your March and January Cutting Edge. It is quite enjoyable, informative and entertaining to finally learn more about carver Mike McVay. This is definitely a piece of that will become American Art History. Nice Work.

The story on Ray Murphy was good, with the exception of the closing line comment. Ray has over 30 documented different chain saw cuts on his body. One is from his jugular vein to his forehead. Many of his wound are on his knees and upper legs. I don't think any of us want to give new comers the impression that safety is of no concern.

This year as you probably know many outdoor chain saw sculptures have been listed in the Smithsonian Registry as Outdoor Sculpture. Also we are in some of the most prestigious Art Galleries in North America.

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NEW MEMBERS

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*"Small minds talk about people
Average minds talk about events
Great minds talk about ideas
Today's ideas are tomorrow's events"*

Notes from the Editor

Here's another exciting issue of the Cutting Edge. I want to thank all of you who have been sending me photos of your work. There's a lot of people carving nice things out there. I appreciate the photos. But I'm concerned about something. There seems to be trend among you carvers... While your carvings are good, your photographs, well, here's a few tips on taking a good photograph.

When you finish your carving, try to take a good photograph of it. Spend a few minutes arranging your shot. It seems to me, from the photos I'm getting most people work hard on a carving but don't care about taking a good picture of it. The typical carver finishes his carving delivers it, starts driving away. It's at this point the carver is in his truck, driving away at 50MPH, remembers he didn't get a shot of it. Speed doesn't deter the carver, he sticks his neck out the window, (risking injury) along with his sure shot camera and clicks away at the carving that's fading fast into the background.

When he gets the pictures back, all he sees is a little black dot that represents his carving. Then he sends them to me...Take pride in your work!

I would like to print more photographs of the members work, but I need a supply of good photographs. Since I am based out here in Washington and can't afford to fly around to take pictures of everybodys stuff, I'm depending upon you to provide me with some good photographs.

Here's what I need. Black and white photos are best, the more contrast in the photo, the better. No cluttered backgrounds. Choose examples of your work that are crisp and close up. Closer the better. A color photo with good contrast in depths of color will work, but its not as good as a black and white photo.

I would like a file of photographs to work from. Send in your photographs, articles, etc. Newsletter deadlines is usually the week before the first day of these months, Jan., Mar., May, July, Sept., Nov.

I would like to thank Samco for being a great supporter of the Guild. Tim thank you.

Jessie

CALENDAR of EVENTS

MAY

May 13, 14 3rd Annual Irrigation Days Carving Contest, Sequim, WA. Contact Dennis Doran, 4701 Sequim Dungeness Way, Sequim, WA 98382 360/ 683-2597, \$500 1st prize

THIS CONTEST IS FULL

May 20 Idaho City, Idaho. Carving Contest Contact Rae Bennet, PO Box 164, Idaho City, Idaho 83631, 208/ 392-4416

May 20, 21 Bucks County Chainsaw Sculpture Contest, Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Contact Bill Plant, 4366 US HWY 202, Doylestown, PA 18901, 215/ 794-8268

JUNE

3rd Annual Maple Valleys Days Carving Contest, Maple Valley, WA. Contact Steve Backus 360/ 579-3574.

2nd Annual Washington Coast Championships, Ocean Shores, WA. Contact Don de Aprille, 509/ 722-6109

June 17 Idaho City, Idaho. Carving Contest Contact Rae Bennet, 208/ 392-4416

JULY

6th Annual Northeastern Regional Carving Championships, Tupper Lake, NY. contact Hal MacIntosh, Route 214, Lanesville, NY 12450. 914/ 688-7875

July 15 Idaho City, Idaho. Carving Contest Contact Rae Bennet, 208/ 392-4416

AUGUST

August 4-6 - 6th Annual West Coast Championships, Nautical themed at Westport, WA. Contact Steve Backus, 360/ 579-3574 or Carla Goudy 206/ 537-6263. Prizes will be at least the same as last year.

August 5, 6 Tall Timber Days Festival, Grand Rapids, MN. Carvers invited to carve. Contest on the 5th. Sign up deadline is July 1, Entry Fee \$50.00, limited to 12 carvers Contact Tall Timber Days Festival, Jerry Sweet, PO Box 134, Grand Rapids, MN 55744, 218/ 326-0976. Prizes, 1st Place \$500, 2nd Place \$400, 3rd Place \$300, 4th Place \$200, 5th Place \$100

August 19 Idaho City, Idaho. Contact Rae Bennet, 208/ 392-4416

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 16 Idaho City, Idaho. Carving Contest Contact Rae Bennet, 208/ 392-4416

OCTOBER

3rd Annual Carving Contest, Shelton, WA. Contact Charlie Hubbard, E. 1161 Mason Lk. Rd. 2, Shelton, WA 98584. 360/ 426-3038

DECEMBER

2nd Annual McClenden's Hardware & Samco Christmas Carving Contest. Contact Carla Goudy at Samco, 206/ 537-6263

The results of the 3rd Annual KXLE/Central Washington Carving Championships

By: Jesse Groeschel

Once again the annual Central Washington Chainsaw Carving Championships was held on a beautiful weekend in Ellensburg, WA, March 25&26. The contest was limited to fifteen carvers but five extra carvers showed up as alternates. The organizers bent the rules and allowed the extra carvers to participate. One carver was from Juneau, Alaska, Mike Pacheco, another one, Steve Hodgeman, was from neighboring state, Idaho and Rob Chalk participated in one more carving contest before returning to his home country of Australia.

The contest was held for two days. The theme western. As usual, all the carvers produced winning sculptures. But a winner needed to be named. The judges judged and tallied up the scores. For the first time in the history of this contest there was a tie for first place. Two carvers had received the same amount of points of 240 points apiece. The two carvers that were tied was Don Etue of Ocean Shores, WA who carved a dramatic Indian praying to the heavens, and Pat McVay of Whidbey Island, WA who went a different route and did a band of cowboys playing musical instruments with a couple dogs howling. To break the tie organizer, Dan Whited flipped a coin and the winner of the coin toss was Don Etue. Other people placing was third place, John Schulz of Elk, WA who carved a big Indian Chief, 4th place went to Don Keifer of Davenport, WA who did the very creative the spirit of the owl. And there was a tie for 5th place between Steve Backus of Puyallup, WA and Charlie Hubbard of Shelton, WA. Steve carved a western bench and Charlie Hubbard did an Indian with a great headdress.

The mini contest winners were, For Day One, Fred Bero of Concrete, WA, who



Artist: Pat McVay of Whidbey Island, WA

did a bear on all fours. Day Two was Pat McVay of Whidbey Island WA, who did an old cowboy holding his lariat. For there winning efforts they both received chainsaws from Husqvarna.

It was a fun weekend for all with many prizes being donated from area merchants. Husqvarna gave away some nice chaps to the first fifteen carvers. Along with six chainsaws. Also the local chainsaw supplier donated files, bar oil, mix, safety glasses, and gas containers. Thanks to everybody including organizers Dan Whited and Rich Carr. Rich Carr promised next year prizes will be interesting, including airlines tickets and other great prizes.

Thanks again!



Artist: Don Etue of Ocean Shores & Fruitland, WA

A Message from the President

Hello Folk's

Hope this find's you all well and carving up a storm, or at least a little gale!!! A note on our points system: It has generated alot of interest. That's good!!! To say it needs a little streamlining would be fair. But it is definitely on the right track. Input! Input! Input! Let's hear from you. If I can write a letter every issue, some of you real smart folks should be able to scrawl out a few lines with some ides, huh, anyway lets hear some stories.

I believe that the reason that our guild is enjoying a surge in membership is the newsletter! Getting one is great. I wait until I have a minute to read it, then I sit down and devour it! Every time a story comes out it adds to the history of our art. A true American folk art it is. Started in this country and spread like wildfire.

There are all sorts of folks who get the newsletter. Folks who carve full time, part time, fan's who want the event schedule, parent's of carvers, and grandparents of carvers. Do you know any in the business? If you want to get ahead, you make yourself knowledgeable about what you do, you hang out with folks who do what you do. Talk to like-minded folk's but, be sure to have healthy debate involved. If someone smiles and agrees with you on every point that's no fun. Besides if they do it with you, they do it with everyone, so do not let them negotiate any deals because they will agrees with both sides and get nothing done. The other extreme is the person who yells, or the "yeller" or "I'm right" "and if you don't agree I'll scream louder and louder until you shut up" That's one reason for our guild. We have meetings and figure things.

One thing we are going to figure out soon is what exactly is a guild sponsored/sanctioned contest? The only way we can raise money for ourselves is annual dues, mini-contests, raffles and donations. The dues have to be begged for most of the time. Raffles are new and take volunteers which don't exactly come running out of the wood works. True donations don't raise much money, if any. This brings us to the mini contests. What we are heading for is a dual purpose, they count for points lots of points, if more than one contest is held. They generate revenue for the club (at least her in the Northwest) and the carvers in the contest. So unless the guild handles the mini contest and collects and distributes the money the points do not count!!

What I've seen happen lately, is someone other than carvers handle the mini. They don't get good wood for one thing and we have non guild members doling it out. Not! It will not work that way, if our point's system is applied. If we learned anything is is to separate things, let sponsors promote the contest as a whole but the carvers provide rules' and criteria etc.

How do we make the contest's all over the country fit into the points system?

In the last issue there was a very good story about pioneer

carver Mike McVay. I've known Mike for a while, a good carver for sure. His sister, Judy is also a carver, one of the first woman carvers. Anyway a nice article on Mike.

I would like to see more articles like that. We print stories like that for a couple of reasons, first, it's true and a very real part of carving history, second, we can only print what we know about (just the facts, maam) So after that issue about Mike, a very talented carver from Pennsylvania contacted the editors of the *Cutting Edge* and said "you guys just write about yourselves, how about the rest of the country's carvers." (I guess we are shameless self promoters but who else will do it?) As the editors have said all along, "send us something and will print it." It is that simple. If you send it, then and only then can a story of an article start to take shape, get it?

Well I'm out of coffee so that mean's I'm done meeting. Come and vent, write to us and be a part of history

Prez - Steve Backus

Joke: I carve Irish totem pole's - they don't tell stories, they tell lies!



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Tales from the Cutting Edge

Many of you have done the stump job. It's hard work because you have to carve on location and depending on the size of the stump, build scaffolding or rent a truck with a bucket to lift you up and down. If it all clicks, it could be a fun project and profitable as well or it can turn into disaster.

This story is about Mike Feeney, a carver known for carving wooden trolls in Mount Horeb, the Troll Capital of the World. Many of his trolls can be seen on the Trollway



"The Gardener" by Mike Feeney

TREE COMES BACK TO LIFE IN NEW FORM

By Elizabeth Bloom: Waterloo Courier, December 28, 1993

When lightning struck an heirloom tree on his family's century old farm, Bob Boeke got a flash of inspiration.

The stately red maple on the south side of the Boeke farmhouse was outwardly unchanged by the the storm that struck in July 1991, but the shock of the bolt apparently was too much for the tree.

And even though Boeke had left the farm at age 17, eventually renting it to a local businessman, he wasn't willing to see something his grandfather planted end up as firewood.

He had a vision of transforming the piece of maple into another kind of family heirloom—a wood sculpture, a "memorial to Dad and grandfather"

"It just seemed right," said Boeke, who lives in Ames after retiring as senior vice president and director of John Deere. "I guess we have strong family ties to the location... it just seemed like the right thing to do." While the decision was easy, finding a carver willing to work on a piece of wood 25 feet high and six feet wide wasn't. His two year search for a sculptor took him from Colorado to Washington to Missouri, only to be turned down again and again.

Most artists either aren't interested, weren't suitable or had projects booked several years in advance. "We were just at wit's end," Boeke said.

Artist Michael Feeney was among the ones who had a full calendar when the Boekes showed up at his Wooden Chicken studio in Mount Horeb, Wis., earlier this year.

Then Feeney saw a photo of Boeke's wife, Kay, dwarfed by the towering hulk of the maple, and decided to find the time.

"The only reason I'm in Iowa doing this in December, is this is an exceptional tree, a gorgeous tree, a nice piece of wood," Feeney said. "It's a shame it got hit by lightning."

Feeney is known for carving the wooden trolls that decorate Mount Horeb, which bills itself as the Troll Capital of the World. His lighthearted sketches of a farmer holding a stalk of corn were enough to convince Boeke not to go with a "Grant Wood" type of figure.

"I thought, 'You've got to have a farmer, but not in the traditional sense,'" said Feeney, 49. "If it's not funny, it doesn't drive me...people have to walk away with a light feeling."

The figure at the Boeke farm definitely bears Feeney's whimsical style. A smiling chicken sits at the farmer's feet, smiling corn borer worms nibble at the ear of corn in his hand.

It's the first farmer Feeney's ever done, and his 1st sculpture in Iowa. As he works, he enjoys seeing people coming down the rural road into town slow down as they catch sight of the carving.

For those who stop for a closer look, he added details such as the tiny faces on the corn borers. "People kind of just get sucked into it— There's a magnetism to sculpture," Feeney said. "When they get up close, you have to have something for them."

Chipping away at the old maple only

made Feeney appreciate the tree more. It had almost no hollows, and the grain and whorl patterns in the wood are nearly perfect.

The project has literally hit snags at times. Weather kept him from starting until October. Then, Feeney ruined two tools when they come in contact with wire from a stock fence buried deep in the wood. The tree had grown around it.

November and December have been mild enough that Feeney has been able to work almost daily, staying with a local family at Boeke's expense.

Feeney hope to have the carving done by Thursday, in time to go home to Mount Horeb for Christmas. His family has only had him on weekends for two months.

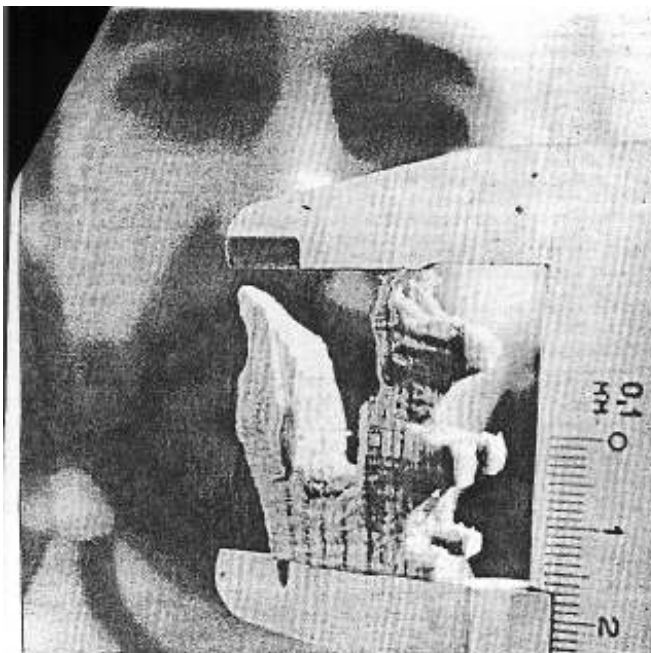
This is probably the last time we'll do something like this," Feeney said, chipping away steadily. "Had I thought about it a little harder..."

He'll be back in spring to coat the tree with a fixative that should protect it from mildew, fungus and moisture. Though he's not sure what effect the root system will have, he believes the carving may hold up another 50 years with proper care.

As an outdoor sculpture, Boeke's farmer won't hold the value that a collector's piece might. Though he won't reveal how much he paid Feeney to carve the piece, Boeke say he doesn't regret his choice.

"I couldn't have bought a very good car for what it cost me," he said. "If it turns out as good as it's looking, it'll have been worth it."





Mario Tabozzi and his 3.4cm squirrel

The Tiny Squidrel

In the Nov. 94 issue of the Cutting Edge, it featured a picture of a carving by Mario Tabozzi who carved a woodcarving of a squirrel, 3.4 cm tall with a chainsaw.

Since I printed that article, I've heard from two people: Brian Ruth of Hartsville, Pennsylvania and Carroll David Sanders of Hawesville, Kentucky. Brian said he has done a squirrel smaller than that. And Carroll sent me a copy of a cartoon of this amazing feat which was featured in Ripley's *Believe It or Not*. Carroll carved a squirrel even smaller than Mario Tabozzi, it was 1.5 cm, 3/4 of an inch. Why are all these carvers carving such small squirrels?

By the way, Guinness has said there is no category, yet, for the world smallest carving done with a chainsaw. Although they have a category for the world tallest totem pole, which stands 197 feet. In 1987 a group of North West carvers in our guild planned to break this record but when the tree was dropped, it broke into 3 parts. No known attempts has been made since.

Also, Pat has said that he was working on a 10 foot carving and he noticed one of the chips that flew from the saw looked like a squirrel, it was only 1 cm tall, now Pat want to know if that counts?

If you have carved a smaller squirrel, send in a picture and the story of how you did it! PS. It doesn't have to be a squirrel. Maybe Mr. Sanders will send in a picture of his squirrel that was featured it Ripley's



The Cutting Edge Carvers News

Check it out!

Fellow CCSG member Skip Roth and his son Chris were featured in the May 1, 1995 issue of *People* magazine. *People* devoted a whole page to them, wrote a nice article and even featured a color photograph of their work. A quote from Skip & Chris, from the *People* article, "Not that there's much competition out there, but we figure we are the best in the world."

Skip & Chris great article! Maybe we'll see you guys at a contest this year.

1-800...

carving, etc. supply hotline

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Husqvarna <i>Chainsaws</i>	1-800 438-7297
King Arthur Tools <i>Chainsaw carving tools, attachments for grinders</i>	1-800 942-1300
Lab Safety & Supply <i>Safety equipment</i>	1-800 356-0783
Mitchell Graphics <i>Color photo business cards, posters, brochures, etc.</i>	1-800 841-6793
Stihl <i>Chainsaws</i>	1-800 43 Stihl
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Cascade Chain Saw Sculptors' Guild was founded in 1986 with the purpose of promoting public and private awareness of chainsaw work as an art form, provide trade information and to invite a collaboration of energy among members. Annual membership dues are \$20.00 (U.S. Funds). Dues money pays for the bi-monthly newsletter The Cutting Edge, other mailings, and expenses of the CCSG. Dues are collected in January for the current year. To join, please return this form, \$20.00, check or money order, payable to the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild

NEW MEMBER RENEW

Name _____ Phone# _____

Address _____

Date: _____

To help us get to know you please complete the following:

YEARS SCULPTING WITH SAW? _____

TYPE OF SCULPTURE USUALLY DONE? _____ LOG _____ USUAL LOG SIZE _____

MY BEST TYPES OF WORK ARE _____

YOU ARE: ___ FULL TIME CARVER ___ PART TIME CARVER ___ NOVICE ___ FAN of the ARTFORM

REMARKS/COMMENTS: _____

Please return to: The Cutting Edge, 7371 S. Holst Rd., Clinton, WA 98236

Staying in line with 21st Century

Here's a few tips to help you. With the dawn of a new era rapidly approaching, it's important to keep up with changes.

1. Never turn down a chance to learn something new:

Be diverse. Always try to learn something. Just when you start thinking you're better than the rest, somebody much better comes along.

2. **Be decisive and show initiative:** Take risks, if you don't you won't grow as an individual. Work on your weaknesses. Avoid negative people

3. **Network:** Meet as many people as you can. Don't be shy. Pass out that business card. Get their business card. Make follow up phone calls. But don't be pushy.

4. **Accounting** Cash the check and get out of town before the carving cracks. (Just kidding) Back up your work.

.....
 ♦ *Be bold and courageous. When you look*
 ♦ *back on your life, you'll regret the things*
 ♦ *you didn't do more than the ones you did.*

.....
 ♦ *Nothing touches a work of art so little as*
 ♦ *words of criticism.*

Rainer Marie Rilke

Meeting Notice

When: May 13, 1995, Saturday after the contest on the 1st day of Sequim

Where: At the carving area, we may move it somewhere else.

Agenda: We'll be discussing the rules for the 1995 point system. And other matters of the group.