

The Cutting Edge

News for the Chainsaw Carver since 1993

“The Ridgway Rendezvous ‘06

Photo and Story courtesy of Rick Boni

It is the beginning of May already and finally there is enough of a break in the action to take the time to document my experience of the 2006 Ridgway Chainsaw Carving Rendezvous. It's always an experiment in human nature. You couldn't set foot in Ridgway without knowing something special or at least different is going on in the area. Never could exactly put it into words, but there's this feeling, happens every year. I think maybe in part it's the opportunity to excel in a very creative environment, a chance to express ourselves, to communicate in verbal and visual dialogues with people that have had similar creative challenges. It's a chance to share with the world; it's a bridge to our fellow man, a place for us and our children to really get the idea of who they are in relationship to the world.

The media coverage this year went right to the top with CBS coming from New York for a morning show dig. Several carvers were interviewed and the Chief of Police sang and played his guitar for the nation., DIY network and the local public television network were also on hand to film the event. Several articles appeared in big city newspapers and just last week an article was published in a Philadelphia area Travel section. We also gained some ground this year with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts who also sent a representative to interview several chainsaw artists.

As in the past our T-Shirt this year was designed to highlight someone who has contributed to the growth of chainsaw carving. One of the foremost female chainsaw artists, Jessie Groeschel, published her first chainsaw history book with Fox Publishing. Her efforts produced a book that belongs in every artist's library.

Carvers found the longer, ten day Rendezvous a lot more relaxing with more



time to spend with friends. Mornings were spent at the Appalachian Arts Studio with coffee, donuts and a hot fire in the wood stove. Veteran carvers gave seminars and demonstrations throughout the week and shared information on saw maintenance, sculptural design, joinery, judging events and power carving. The Appalachian Arts Pottery and the Old Pine Press print shop were open on Thursday afternoon for carvers to experience working in other artistic mediums.

Outstanding ice carvings were created on both weekends with Wayne DeMoranville supervising the construction and carving.

The weather helped preserve the ice carvings this supervising the construction and carving. The weather helped preserve the ice carvings this year being cold and dry and helped keep the Rendezvous field in good shape as well.

Live music and lots of good company was on the evening agenda throughout the week. Evening meals were available at local clubs at very reasonable rates and some for free. The Open Mic night for the Carvers Jam was over the top with some very talented carvers firing up licks on guitars and drums.

Punxsutawney Phil the famous weatherman groundhog was a special guest this year along with Wanda Shirk, a local celebrity “Survivor” contestant. Our logo this year features George Maurus from Germany. When we saw the picture of him taken at the 2005 Rendezvous we knew that it was the perfect match for our signature phrase “Life Exceeding the Dream”.

Two tractor-trailer flat beds were used as staging and filled with carving overflowing across the entire front of the auction area. And a very experienced ground crew loaded carvings for the next several hours. Never fails, the bar was raised again this year with some outstanding advancement in the quality of the carvings. Ken Sheen and Randy Boni worked over a large bear and took top at auction at \$2350. Larry Burns was second at \$1075 followed by Hiromu Kurita at \$1025 and Ken Tynan at \$1000. The total at auction was \$39,900. All monies left over from the Rendezvous will be donated to the Make-A-Wish foundation and the local YMCA.

Next years Rendezvous is set for February 17th to the 27th. Hope ya all can make it, 'cause after all that's what make it. Thanks to all of you for making the Rendezvous one of life's valuable experiences.

Where do we go from here?

As many of you know the guild has been around for many years. There has been a lot of "falling outs" amongst board members in this time. A few months ago we once again had several board members step down from their positions for various reasons. We have had several original members show interest in getting back on the board. If you followed this saga on the forums, you know there are a lot of individual conflict in the history of this guild. There have been a lot of strong opinions on where we should go from here. There are three that keep coming up over and over. We have decided to solicit the members' opinions. So we are asking you to take the time to give your input on where you feel the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild should go from here.

I will give you a synopsis of why people feel strongly about each of these choices.

- A. Bringing in founding members and moving on in a positive direction.
- B. Reorganize and Rename the Guild.
- C. Merge CCSG with UCCG

A. The supporters of this option want to move on from the negative history and build on the positives. They like the idea that the guild has been around for many years.

B. A group of past board members want to participate but do not want their reputations tarnished by the reputations of past board members of the guild. We would keep the Cutting Edge newsletter, just re-file and get a new tax exempt number. This would bring onto the board some of the carvers that helped in putting together the original guild.

C. Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild merges in with the United Chainsaw Sculptors guild to form one stronger voice for chain saw carvers.

We will be looking for your input after May 20th on the forums. sent off so it arrives before May 20th. We will be meeting in May to go over these options and will be reporting back to you in the next issue of the newsletter. -

The CCSG

The Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild is a nonprofit organization devoted to the advancement of chainsaw sculpture since 1984.

We exist to foster an exchange of ideas and information among Chainsaw Sculptors everywhere.

This newsletter is the voice of The Chainsaw Sculptor. We want your stories, photos, letters and technical expertise. We even want your opinions.

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The Cutting Edge is published bi-monthly by the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild.

The Cutting Edge newsletter is the voice of the CCSG. We want to see your stories, photos, opinions, technical expertise, or any other items you'd like to share with your fellow carvers. Publication is subject to space availability.

To submit editorials, including photos, please contact Deb Breitenfeldt at: Email: deb@ccsg.info
Mailing Address: Editor, CCSG, PO Box 624, Milton, WA 98354-0624

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Thanks to all of you for helping us grow.

We welcome news, opinions and articles and photos from Chainsaw Carvers.

Check out the web:

<http://www.network54.com/Hide/Forum/118564>
(The Carving Post — Joe King's forum with constant traffic and comment)

<http://www.chainsawsculptors.com>

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A Trip Interrupted...

by Steve Backus

Sixteen years ago, my wife, Nanette, and I made a road trip around the Olympic Peninsula, 1990 was the year, and as fate would have it...we happened across the town of Westport, and Jim and Sandy McBroom, owners of the Coho Motel and RV Park.

We hatched a grand plan, we would have a chainsaw carving contest in that small town, using my wood 'connection, and carver resources, with Jim providing some prize money and getting permission from the powers that be.

At the same time as this opportunity presented itself, the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild, of which I was a charter member of, and a passionate supporter of the same, had been struggling with the pros and cons of chainsaw carving contests in general, the criteria, the judging methods, the log distribution (any of this sound familiar??) Well, now we had a small town to experiment with, we always seemed to have more wood than carvers, it was an era of big wood in our area, and time, there wasn't the internet, nor the cheap long distance, and instant this and instant that; there were carvers still showing up with direct drive dinosaur saws, and Sears Craftsman's, there were not many Kevlar chaps or fancy pants head gear and booties an panties like 'ya got everyone dressed up with nowadays, safety is of course our highest goal, but we weren't mommy's and daddy's babysitting each other, we were fun-loving, forward thinking artists of the highest order and there were some peacocks back then; but they can't hold a candle to today's showboats. There were, of course, other contests around back then, some like Tupper Lake in New York are still kicking, albeit a faint heartbeat (go Wayne DeMoranville, go!) Everyone's favorite uncle, Hal McIntosh, who wrote one of the first books on

chainsaw carving, had the great idea of the mini contest, where the winner was the highest bidder, really simple, huh. Well, the Guild was the backbone of this as much as I would like to take credit for the humble beginnings, over time, we would add things then figure out how to pay for them, things like T-Shirts, sounds simple enough... And then programs, then a Novice Class and an Intermediate Class, then food became part of the program, then folks to handle the food, all of a sudden, there's big trucks hauling lots of wood, and the cedar is a nightmare. Then the clean up grows like a hidden monster...then the show needs a decent stage for a class act.

And you are dealing with parking issues, moving trailers, arranging tables, and shelter for judges, coming up with prizes for all them new categories we invented, not to mention trophies and medals. Oh...Did I mention motels? Tents? (Don't get me started), etc, etc, etc. Then the City folks want me to do even more... permits, insurance, go to meetings, but I am all bled out, at any rate I digress. Westport, the chainsaw carving contest, as we knew it, has ceased to exist, I will throw my energy into the Ocean Shores Sand and Sawdust event that my brother, Boaz Backus has turned into a jagernaught (Shapoor and Baer will like that word, huh?)

So, as far as I see it, Ridgway is the place to show up if you aren't afraid to show your face and there will always be contests out here in the

untamed West, and all over the world if I don't miss my guess.

So, I will take some time off from a bunch of stress (what, me worry??) or what passed for it in my world. I got no regrets about anything and one of the things that motivated me was to have none, so looks like I have won the big contest within.

Here's my advise; dream big, don't fear failure — it's the best teacher out there.... Live, Love and Laugh with gusto and if you want a friend, you gotta be a friend.....



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Valpo '06



Brent Butler

By Doug Ricks

April 1 & 2, '06 marked the 4th year that the Duneland Woodcarvers have incorporated a chainsaw carving competition with their Annual hand carving show at Valparaiso Indiana fair grounds.

The weather was damp, cool and windy. But that didn't stop the 13-chainsaw carvers from 5 states. They carved for 6 hours on Saturday creating some very interesting works of art. The judging of the carvings follows:



Jim Denkins

James Denkins from Michigan took first place with his great carving of a cowboy holding a double barrel shot gun.

Brent Butler from Pennsylvania took 2nd place with a fine sculptor of a vine and leaf configuration with small ladybugs, inchworm, snail and other small insects.

Tom Fink from ? Won 3rd place with a fine eagle.

R.D. Coonrod, from Illinois, took 4th with a



RD Coonrod



Tom Fink

very well done wolf.

The other carvers were Ron Kane, Larry Burns, Dan Harding, Elmer Hickey, Jeff Klatt, Dan Pierce, Doug Ricks, Dave Polk and Stephen Collins.

Doug and Nancy Ricks from Koontz Lake Indiana opened their home for some of the carvers to stay for the weekend. This helps the carvers with expenses.

They had a campfire cook out for all carvers that Saturday evening. A great time to hang with old friends and get acquainted with some new ones.~

The Redwood Regional Invitational took place in Ukiah, California this year. Six Pro carvers were invited to participate in the all tool competition.

Participants were allowed 15 hours to complete their main piece sculptures. The theme this year was "Building Forest Families".

- 1st Place: Jerry Muir
- 2nd Place: Jason Emmons
- 3rd Place: Mark Colp
- 4th Place: Bob King
- 5th Place: Brad Sharp
- 6th Place: Steve Backus

It was an honor for Jerry Muir to come out of retirement to compete.

Redwood Regional Invitational



Mark Colp



Jason Emmons



Bob King



Jerry Muir



(Left) Steve Backus
(Right) Brad Sharp



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