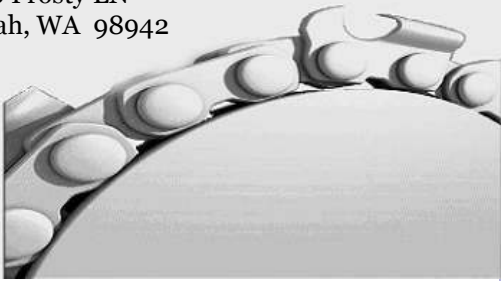


240 Frosty LN  
Selah, WA 98942



# The Cutting Edge

Since 1993

May - August 2008

Abstract form by Lorraine Botteril, England

Picture submitted by Angie Polglaze

## CCSG's Online

[www.theccsg.com](http://www.theccsg.com)

On our website you can find:

How to Join

Members Websites and Links

Listing of Officers

Upcoming Events

Newsletters from 1993 to present

The CCSG's Forum is at:

[www.network54.com/Forum/249381](http://www.network54.com/Forum/249381)

### Inside this issue:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Letter from the President<br>by Mike McVay                      | 2         |
| Letter from the Editor<br>and The Wolf Pack<br>by Jack McEntire | 2         |
| 20 Minute Totem<br>by Mike McVay                                | 3         |
| Chainsaw Carving in the<br>UK by Angie Polglaze                 | 4         |
| To Keep or Not<br>by Steve Backus                               | 6         |
| Judging Ocean Shores<br>by Mike McVay                           | 7         |
| Should Judges Work as a<br>Group by Susan Miller                | 11        |
| A Taste of History<br>by Angie Polglaze                         | 12        |
| Upcoming Events   | 13        |
| <b>CCSG Free Give Away</b>                                      | <b>13</b> |



**Letter from the President  
by Mike McVay**

We'd like to welcome everyone to another issue of the Cutting Edge. There's a lot of food for thought in this one, and we hope you will respond with opinions of your own. Please note that we are giving away a Cannon carving bar and a quarter-pitch chain with this issue.

You'll find a comprehensive article on judging at the Ocean Shores Sand and Sawdust event, where the Guild provided the service to the organizer for a fee. The idea was to provide solid, qualified judging with consistent criteria to give carvers a better shake all around.

When the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild (CCSG) was formed, it was intended to be an advocate for the carvers and their rights vis-à-vis the fairs. In those days the fairs were the only places sponsoring carving competitions. They controlled the space, time and (very little) money. They also kept the winning carvings.

Since then things have changed for the better in some places but not in others. One of the earliest beacons of change was at Westport, where the organizer tried his best and insisted that carvers be able keep their main pieces. It's not an idea that caught on as well as it should have.

We intend to address this issue, along with a lot of others in a new program that will help show would-be promoters how to do it right. If an individual, town or organization has a simple question or needs extensive help, we want to be able to provide what's necessary. We'd also like to hear about your experiences if you'd like to tell us about them.

Rate-the-Events ([www.theccsg.com/rate.htm](http://www.theccsg.com/rate.htm)) is going into its second year now, and we need more input from more carvers. Express yourselves--all responses are confidential. This is not necessarily a negative poll. We want to give credit for the good events as well.

Finally, I want to say how proud I am to continue playing an active role in the CCSG. It's had its up and downs, but now we have good people serving as officers, board members and editors. We're moving in a strong, proactive direction to the benefit of all carvers. Please join with us.

Thank you, Mike McVay

**The Cutting Edge**

240 Frosty LN

Selah, WA 98942

509-697-8853

[ammy@charter.net](mailto:ammy@charter.net)

Amy McEntire - Editor

Jack McEntire - Coeditor

The Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild exists to foster support for the art and craft of chainsaw carving by encouraging communication between carvers through every means possible, including newsletters, websites, forums, meetings, demonstrations, mutual support and the preservation of our history.

**Letter from the Editor  
and The Wolf Pack by Jack McEntire**

The summer season is here once again. My first shows of the season, Sequim and Ocean Shores, are "in the can". During the shows we had a fund raiser for the guild. I'm always struck by the amazing generosity of the carving community, virtually everyone contributed carvings for our auction. These auctions, both online and in person, will be a more important part of our fund raising efforts than ever before. During the Sequim show, we held a guild meeting and a vote was taken to allow carvers to donate carvings in lieu of cash for their dues. The carver can donate any carving large or small worth at least \$20 for the current years' dues. It's always easier for a carver to come up with a carving than cash. For those that want a non-profit receipt one will be provided.

At the meeting we also voted in a few new board members and elected our officers. The board now consists of: Mike McVay, Steve Backus, Bruce Thorsteinson, Jack and Amy McEntire, and new members: Paul Jones, Butch Elrod and Jerry Heneger. Paul is a master carver with many years of experience and wisdom to offer. Butch has the energy of someone relatively new to chainsaw carving, has years of experience as a professional artist and lots of computer knowledge. Jerry has been carving for some time, his son Josh is one of those up and coming carvers, and Jerry's standing as a neutral skeptic brings even more transparency to the guild. Mike McVay was elected President and Bruce Thorsteinson was elected Vice President. Susan Miller has volunteered to serve as secretary and treasurer. All three of these people are widely known and bring many talents and years of knowledge to the guild. (Angie Polglaze was also voted onto the board in August). Both shows were a great success and the guild raised \$1760 from donations and dues. I would like to thank all of those who gave of their time and from their inventories: the carvers who help set up and donate carvings, the set-up/clean-up crew, the cooks, security, wood donors, Boaz (as coordinator/auctioneer), Steve (the go to guy), the crowd, press, the weather, you get it, everyone who makes it ALL possible.

**The Wolf Pack**

Sequim also provided several colorful moments for the cameras. Dave Tremko did a unique version of the normal log falling competition at the log show. Before he started we cut up some of the watermelon target for lunch - that's what it's for - right? He carved a beaver into his pole before the start and got 2 large saws 'bound up' in the pole, leaving him with only a MS200 with a 12" carving bar to beaver the pole down. The old Bull Buck of the show eyeballed him intensely as he cut a beaver type notch all around the pole. He knew Dave had years of experience as a logger and could see that he wasn't endangering the crowd. However, some of the young loggers thought this 'fool' was



Dave Tremko beaver cutting his log to fall on a watermelon at the Sequim Washington Show. Picture by Jack McEntire

going to kill himself. Everything went well and eventually Dave dropped his pole straight at the melon but the pole was a few inches too short to hit it.

As for myself at Sequim, I was busy filming and painting with a chainsaw. I put sheets on a scaffold, attached a pump sprayer with various colors of paint, and made a scene called Meadow at Midnight and a few fish. You could say it wasn't your typical show.

Ocean Shores was also another one of those normal carving shows where nothing goes normally. Is any carving show ever normal? A group of carvers and I are starting a group called, "The Wolf Pack" previously, "The Black Sheep", devoted to the idea of focusing less on the piece of wood in front of them and turning around to playing to the crowd, both in person and via the media. Once we have enough footage we plan



Jack McEntire Painting with his Chainsaw at the Sequim Washington Show. Picture by Jack McEntire

(Continued on page 6)

## 20 Minute Totem, from "Seven Easy Pieces, a collection of chainsaw carvings you can do in less than thirty minutes" by Mike McVay



This last installment of "Seven Easy Pieces" actually comes in two parts.

The first step is carving the body of a raven figure (20 minutes), which I'll cover in this article.

The second is carving and fitting the wings (20 minutes), which will be covered next issue.

The two steps take the same amount of time, so if you are doing quick-carve demonstrations for a crowd, it's best to do them an hour or so apart.

As I've said before, in order to get the time down, you'll need to practice until you can make the cuts without thinking or letting your saw idle.

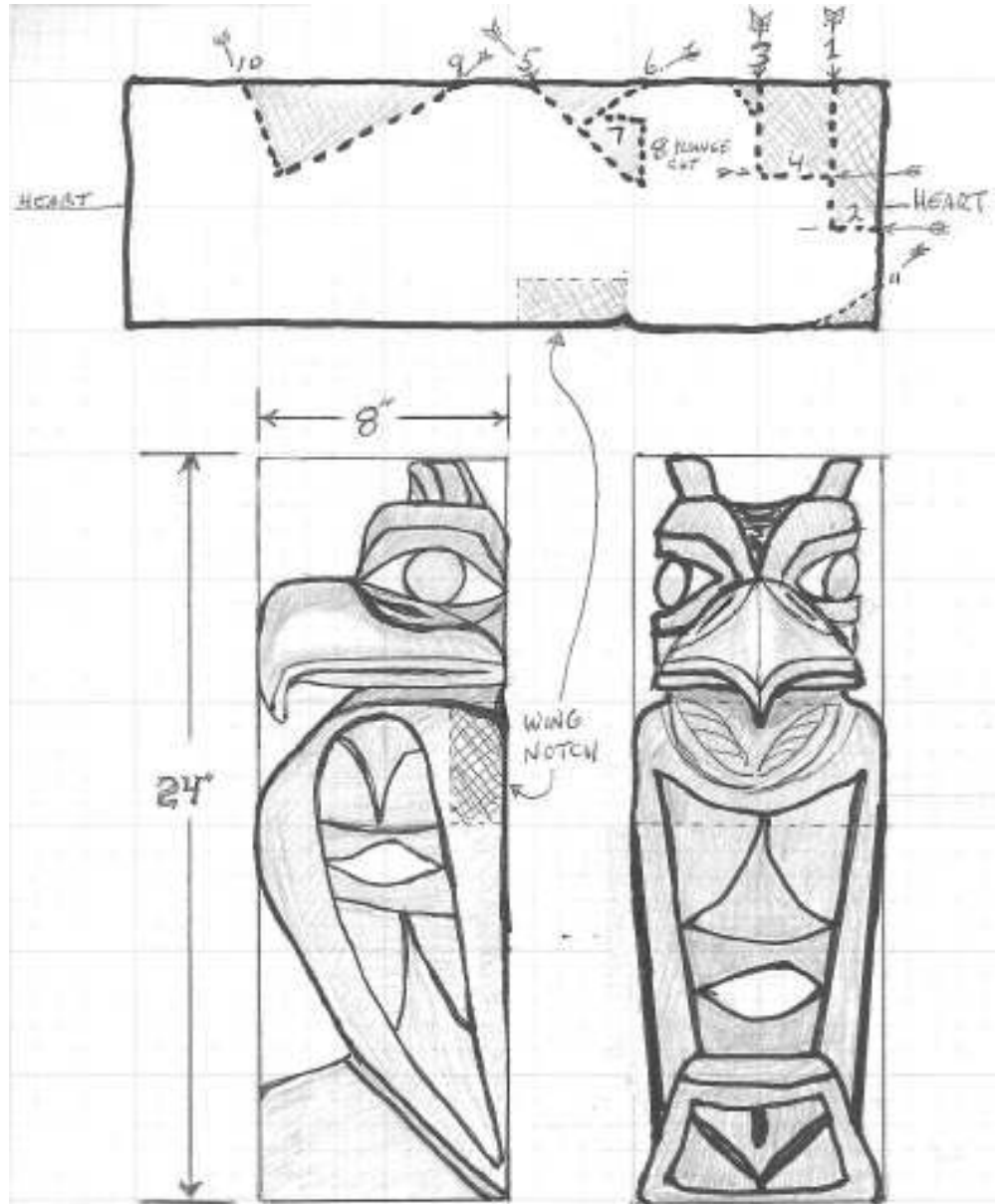
The subject of this little totem pole is the raven, which is held in reverence by native people. With its hooked beak and jaunty ears, it makes a dynamic carving.

A small log, 8" in diameter and 24" long, is all you need. I've marked and numbered the first eleven cuts in order. Follow the numbers faithfully. What's not shown are the cuts to define the width of the head or the shape of the beak. There's no room here for that, so I'll try to get them posted on the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild website. Be sure your email is registered so I can send you a notice.

In the beginning you'll find it helps to use a felt-tip pen to mark the cuts beforehand. Once you get used to the design, there'll be no need to do that. Be sure to keep the carving bar level to insure uniform depth. Once you've done a few, you'll find you don't have to stop and think about it.

The details, such as the eyes, chest and side patterns are all drawn with the tip of the bar. There is very little to bevel. Just carve the lines and you're done.

Keep carving (so you don't have to get a job).  
All the best, Mike McVay



## Chainsaw Carving in the UK 2008 *by Angela Polglaze*

***"Only a very deluded person would expect to successfully imitate a natural object with a piece of wood...."***

... All art is an abstraction – a taking from. The function of the artist is to abstract what he requires from the subject and change or add to it as he sees fit. The product of these deliberations constitutes his vision and, interpreted by his technique, becomes the manifestation of his vision that is his work of art."

-- Ian Norbury

This creative adventure begins back in 2002 when I first started traveling the world to carve with a chainsaw at events and landed in the UK for the first time. Little did I know that traveling was to soon encompass my whole life and way of living completely.

Attending and participating in the various events, both competitive and non competitive, is hard, solid work and I am always deeply impressed by what the incredible artists involved can achieve in the small window of opportunity granted them. It doesn't matter how much I travel, or where I travel, or how many events I participate in, I am still constantly amazed at the imagination, unique styles and enduring ability that I witness every single time ... and once again the UK carvers have risen to the occasion.

Now it is time to let the pictures do the talking!!

Take care all ... Angie



Right Top Carving by Bert Davidson of Sweden. 'Parrot Chair', bottom right Carving is 'Dragon and Maiden' by Tommy Craggs of Scotland, Bottom Left Carving by Leon of England. Pictures submitted by Angela Polglaze



Left top carving of ship by Andy Barton of England. Meercats and kitten to the right carved by Harry Thomas of Wales. Fantasy Critter below sculpted by Nansi Hemming of Wales. Bottom right is an owl detail from chair by Simon Hedger of Wales.  
Pictures submitted by Angela Polglaze



(Continued from page 2)

**The Usual, Unusual Show by Jack McEntire**

on starting an online carving channel.

As a part of this effort Dave has bought a full size PA system. This baby is powerful, can you say bone rattling? He cranked out a wide variety of music and we watched as people from toddlers to seniors would come up and start a slow wiggle that became an exuberant full out dance.



Dave Tremko and his PA system at Ocean Shores, Wa  
Picture by Amy McEntire

I spent my time filming and talking to both the crowd and every carver at the show. As part of the filming effort I drove around with the camera on a 30' high man lift getting aerial shots. On the first day a couple of TV crews showed up and I chauffeured them in the man lift. They told me they have never gotten such good high shots before.

Like always, everything went smoothly. There were no dis-



Jack McEntire on the man lift filming at the Ocean Shores, Wa . Picture by April Etue

putes. Thor and Kerry didn't lose their starters, Jerry didn't have any trouble with his fuel pump, and Jeb had no trouble with his master cylinder. The judging was also universally praised and all the judges were heralded as wise men. The normal—right?

I left Ocean Shores with my ears ringing, my arms covered in motor oil and my camera finger blistered. We will see to it that the next show isn't "normal" either. At every show I look forward to reuniting with old friends and meeting many new ones. See you there, or at another show during this busy season. ---Jack

**To Keep or Not**

by Steve Backus

I have been giving some thought to the issue of ownership of sculptures that are made at events, contests, straight up charity events, and the uncomfortable (to me at least) combination of the two.

In the 1980s during the birth of chainsaw carving competitions, (Puyallup fair September 1981 was the first one) it was county and state fairs where the chainsaw carvers were first used as entertainment for the viewing public. This coincided with the development of some of the first lightweight chainsaws. Plastic, aluminum, and aircraft technology, not to mention the growing consumer market, all trickled down and contributed to the advancement of the chainsaw, thus the art!

The fairs in the early days set up the shows. No one had a clue as to how to really run the contests, and them darn fairs would copy each other. Sound familiar? So, while keeping the carving seemed to make sense to the fair, it kind of pissed us carvers off a little, not to mention how the contest was judged! At any rate, because they got em cheap, they did not take too good of care of them and few survive to this day.

Let's leap to 1990, by then we had formed the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild and drafted the "1989 guidelines" we, as carvers, thought it should be (they can still be looked up online), but the fairs thought otherwise. This is the mindset we had as a group when the opportunity to do it like we thought it should be done occurred in a small coastal town just south of Ocean Shores Washington.

At the top of list was "THE CARVER KEEPS THEIR CARVING". It seems mundane now but it was a real act of defiance at the time!

Then along comes "the Ridgway Rendezvous" non-combative gathering of carvers (chuckle). You give up your carving but it was for charity, it was a fun time, and you didn't have to bust your hump if you were tired. It was an accepted given that your main piece was auctioned off, but everyone knew that going in, and carved accordingly.

I haven't forgotten about the quick carve, it evolved as an alternative to giving away the main, and raising money to do a show. It grew into a Frankenstein of its own in some ways, but without it we wouldn't have seen the growth in carving contests that we have seen.

So, what is provided for a carver if their main carving will be kept? Food, shelter, transportation, depends on the event I reckon. The contest/charity events are the tough ones because ya want to try hard. You gotta feel sorry for the widows and orphans, while at the same time honing your killer instinct!

The straight up contests are good, although up in British Columbia, Canada they are keeping the carvings but even last place pays out some decent money plus rooms, great food and helpers. The carvers are decorating B.C. towns and hopefully they will realize that the carvers are a valuable resource and always deserve a pay raise!

I see a time ahead where carvers are going to be looking to the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild as a voice. The towns and events will listen to us if we are making sense. The first thing a town will do to save money is cut our perks down to nothing, but they will still want a show.

Keep the carving or not to keep the carving, that is the question?

Clear as mud huh Steve Backus.....

**"When someone pulls you on a string, there are two things you can do; cut it, or play tug of war."** --- Kyle Schiemo



## Judging Ocean Shores

by Mike McVay

The biggest problem of judging a chainsaw carving competition has always been the lack of time allotted for it. There's never enough time to do the job in the best way possible. There is always plenty of time at the beginning for the judges to get together and discuss the criteria. It's after the competition is over and everyone is filing into the bleachers for the award ceremony that time is short. That's when the judging takes place.

When I was acting as Top Judge at the English Open a few years ago, we were given ninety minutes to judge the carvings and tally the scores of fifty-two carvers on a five-acre field. That meant an hour of actual judging and thirty minutes for doing the tally before the awards ceremony.

A little arithmetic will tell you it was not possible. Walking the field and looking at everything without stopping took over an hour. In the end it was all accomplished by short-listing by which any carving that, in my opinion, couldn't win first, second or third place was left off the list. That cut the field to twenty-five, which was still too many. On the morning of the last day, possible second and third-place carvings were dropped until, just as the competition ended, ten carvings were left. Ten carvings in sixty minutes meant a judging time of six minutes each. It still wasn't enough time, but there was nothing to be done about it.

Thus, armed with a volunteer to keep track of the time, we set out to get the job done and finished the field in an hour and ten minutes and the tally in thirty-five minutes. Fifteen minutes over the limit. The tally man ran the scores over to the stage where the carvers waited, the announcer hemmed and hawed and the crowd pawed the ground and murmured in that quiet English fashion. It felt rushed at every step, and it was.

At Ocean Shores, one of the things I noticed about all the judges, including myself, was a tendency to be very careful with points when the judging began. The first few carvings took a lot of time and really earned their scores. By the time the last few were judged, there was a noticeable relaxation and the scoring went much faster. Did this affect the scoring? Were some higher or lower than they should have been? I can't say, but I'm uneasy about it, and I have a suggestion: Have the judges go around twice. Simply let them go back around with the same scoring sheet and make any adjustments they think necessary. Every judge will be sure the scores are as they ought to be and the carvers will be better served. This worked on a smaller scale in Hackensack, although it was used there to make sure there were no ties because of the screwball three-point scoring system they were using.

The problem, as always, is time. By allotting thirty carvers ten minutes each for judging, you arrive at three hundred minutes. That's five hours, which would be wonderful if it weren't for the fact that the organizers seldom build that in. It was close to that when Westport was at its heyday, before all the suspicions and lack of appreciation by a bickering town shut it down when the organizer finally threw up his hands and said "enough".

Carving was stopped Saturday night and the judges were given until noon on Sunday to do all the scoring and discussing they wanted. It worked pretty well too, since the town closed up early and threw out any hungry-thirsty carvers and judges; nobody could stay too late nursing too many pitchers of warm beer. Getting up early on Sunday came easy which, for many, was something different.

### The Judges

The judges for this event were experienced and I want to thank them all for their fine efforts. Dennis Hermey and Ian Coffey were from Ocean shores and had judged the event several times in the past. Doug Harrison is a certified judge for hand-carvers in the Northwest and has been a contributor to Chip Chats magazine. Jerry Schieffer is president of the UCCG and a carver. He flew all the way out here from the Midwest. As for myself, I've been a carver for fifty years, and currently am following in the footsteps of Susan Miller and Steve Backus to serve as president of CCSG.

### The Judging Criteria

The judging criteria were developed over a long period of time. I wrote the originals almost thirty years ago for use at the Puyallup Fair, and they've been evolving ever since. The current judging sheet was developed by Susan Miller and has been adopted



First Place Pro sculpture created by Don Eture at the Ocean Shores, Washington competition. Picture by Amy McEntire

by the CCSG. It is recommended for use in all chainsaw sculpture competitions.

The criteria allow for twenty points in each of five divisions making a possible total of one hundred points for each carving per judge. The better it is, the higher the score. The number 100 is easy to understand. It's the number of pennies in a dollar and the very best "A" grade at 100%. We had five judges at Ocean Shores, so there were a total of five hundred possible points available per carving. As you might expect, with so many points available, there were no ties, although fourth (with 422), fifth (with 421) and sixth (with 420) had only one point between each of them.

I'm going to list the judging criteria and use different carvings as examples. Please don't assume I'm singling you out for show-and-tell. I'm not trying to pick on you or make you feel bad. You were in a public event and made a product. I was a judge. I'm writing about it for a carver's newsletter. Deal with it.

**Judging Criteria 1:** Context, Clarity of Intent. This is worth up to **20 points**.

Does this sculpture make a clear and unique statement about the theme?

Or effectively communicate the artist's intent?  
Score \_\_\_\_\_

The theme at Ocean Shores was NAUTICAL. This implies the ocean, it's creatures above and below the surface, and the commerce it supports.



Carvings created at the Ocean Shores, Wa competition. Left carving by Dave Westburg, 5th Place Pro and carving to the right was carved by Matt Hambrook, 3rd Place Pro. Carving on bottom right was sculpted by Dave Tremko, 8th Place Pro. Pictures by Amy McEntire



It is about WATER. More specifically, it is about the SALTWATER. It doesn't imply LAND and AIR, so an airplane wouldn't count in the theme, but a seaplane would.

Most of the carvings dealt with the theme pretty well, but some were conflicting. Eagles fly above the sea and catch fish. That's OK, but when they fly to a rock pile or into a tree to eat them, they are moving onto the LAND. Fish and Eagles = Theme. Rocks and Trees = Not Theme. With the eagle carvings, two out of three elements are in the Theme. How do you score them?

The most perplexing was Bigfoot with a real surfboard. This creature lives in the mountains and that makes him a land animal. But he goes to the ocean to surf. That's cool, but the surfboard is a real surfboard and not a carved surfboard. That makes this dude a surfboard holder for wherever you keep your surfboard. How do you score that one for Theme?

**Judging Criteria 2:** Effectiveness of Design. This is worth up to **20 points**.

Use of sculptural elements to achieve Balance, Contrast, Emphasis.

Front view.. up to 8 points.

Side view.. up to 4 points for each side.

Back view.. up to 4 points.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

The most striking carving, when I first saw it, was of a



These pictures are of the piece Mark Harrington, 6th Place Pro did at the Ocean Shores Competition in Wa. Pictures by Amy McEntire

leaping Swordfish behind a leaping Dolphin fish. It was really a WOW, well proportioned, well carved, well finished, etc. etc. But... it diminished as it was rated in this criterion. From the back there was only one fish visible, and from the sides, the wheels fell off. A large chunk had been cut from the center of the log leaving an edge-view of two straight slabs. Those slabs were those same wonderful fish with all their personality gone. If only they had been turning, pirouetting, leaping past one another, they would have walked away with it all, at least in this section. How would you score it?

**Judging Criteria 3:** Use of Material.....This is worth up to 20 points.

Structural Integrity.. up to 10 points

Design decisions which make use of the unique character of the wood... up to 10 points.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

There were several carvings that toyed with fragility. And there is the problem of mixing species in a competition. Sitka Spruce will withstand a mighty whack that would shatter cedar. Old-growth cedar is the most delicate of any wood we whittle in the west and demands much attention to structural integrity.

That graceful carving of the two dolphins leaping was a very nice bit of work. Well finished and wonderful to look at, but the dorsal fin on the larger of the two had one of those sneaky cancers that is often found running down the heart of a tree. Any little touch or wiggle and the fin would break off. Alas, it was not your fault, but it was there nevertheless. How would you score this one?

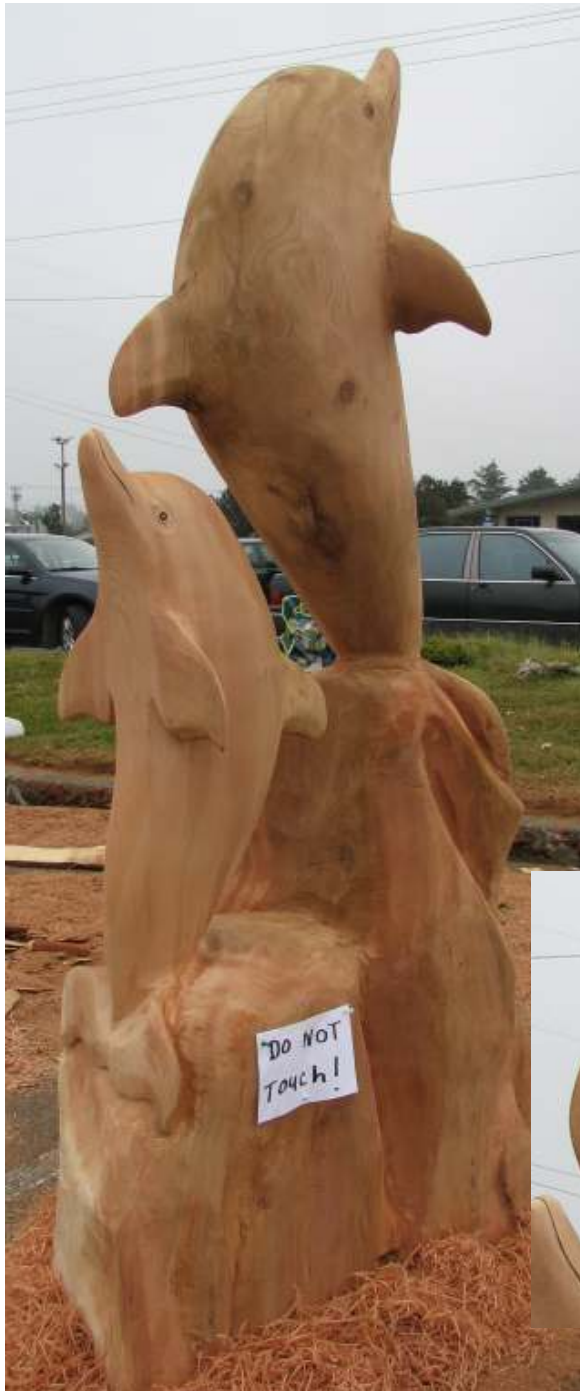
**Judging Criteria 4:** Difficulty .....up to **20 points**

Difficulty of rendering an image: up to 10 points.

Skill with the tool: up to 10 points.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

There were many difficult carvings presented there. Too many to pick one out and nearly everybody showed a great deal of skill with the tool. Score your own.



Dolphins by Rick Boswell, 7th Place Pro at the Ocean Shores, Wa competition. Pictures by Amy McEntire

**Judging Criteria 5:** Craftsmanship ..... up to 20 points.

Precision of cuts.. up to 8 points.

Completion.. up to 8 points

Presentation.. up to 4 points

score \_\_\_\_\_

Precision of cuts cost a few carvers a few points, but as you can see, it can't cost you more than 8 points per judge. The same goes for Completion. It's also worth 8 points (and it cost the wonderful spiral-of-salmon carving quite a bit over all the judges). They're both important, but the thinking behind these scores is to keep an unskilled judge from being blinded by the shine of polished wood. That shine might give an advantage to a lesser carving and an unknowing judge could give it all the points. It's happened. Some folks like shiny things and that's all they see. We think there's more to it.

Presentation means about the same as it does in a restaurant, i.e. what does it look like in its setting? Has the sawdust been cleaned off, or is it all over the carving? Is the area swept up, the chunks in a pile? Can a judge step into the area and walk around without having to worry about twisting an ankle?

Everyone's area was pretty well cleaned up, but some weren't, and they were all scored accordingly. You can score yourselves on this one too.

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

So there you go. Fill in your score sheets, add them all up and hand them over to the tally-people, in this case Amy and Gerri with laptops and calculators double checking the numbers before passing the whole thing off to Tana, the awards-printer. Then all info goes to the Check-writer, Sam, and he writes furiously until someone gathers up the award certificates and the award checks and hand-carries them down to the stage where Boaz, the head organizer and Em-Cee, chatters and calls the winners up to the stage. Whew. It takes a team to get 'er done, and this one really did it. Special thanks to Boaz and Steve Backus for doing what they do best- Making all this magic happen. Congratulation fellas. You da best.

This one had a few surprises. (One big one, several small ones). It happens. What's the answer? Better time allotment is the biggest. Going around twice is big. Numbers only and no names at the carving spot, and the spaces should be numbered instead of the carvers. The numbers at Ocean Shores were handed out to carvers who took them to whichever space they chose. It made for confusion about who's number belonged to whom as they were written on paper plates and tacked somewhere nearby, often as not doubled over or half covered in sawdust. Bringing the carvings to one central area would help cut down on the judging time, but it would add to the logistical time, so it's a tradeoff. Someone suggested no judges in the carving area until after the competition is over, avoiding suspicions of pre-judging. Another question is whether the judges should circulate alone or as a pack. Both methods have advantages and disadvantages. Let's hear from all with opinions to share. This is your organization too.

I once had a judging task at a place in the Midwest. The criteria were unfamiliar and didn't really make much sense, kind of like whoever wrote them wanted to sound important and smart, so they used big words. I asked the organizer what the terms meant and he mumbled awhile and finally said it didn't matter what those words meant. He just looked at the carvings and then wrote down the scores so the best one would win. As far as all this artsy crap went, he wasn't interested. It was a bunch of California fairies hanging a bunch of laundry in the wind and he didn't want anything to do with it.

He may have been right, and if you're knowledgeable about carvings, it may work for you, I suppose. But then I hear a voice say, "If that one's the best, why is #2 better than #3? Or #4? All the way down the line it goes, and at #50 you smile and say "I don't know, or I don't remember." You can avoid all that. With a scoring sheet you can point to the numbers and say "that's just the way they added up."

Mike McVay

To see a complete list of winners and points of Ocean Shores go to the CCSG forum at: [www.network54.com/Forum/249381](http://www.network54.com/Forum/249381)



Davey Gange, 12th Place Pro carved this spiral of Salmon at Ocean Shores Competition. Picture by Amy McEntire



Left photo of 2nd Place Pro carved by Bruce Thorsteinson and right photo of 1st Place Semi-Pro by Jason Smathers at the 2008 Ocean Shores Contest.  
Pictures by Amy McEntire

## Should Judges Work as a Group?

by Susan Miller

### SHOULD JUDGES WORK AS A GROUP OR AS INDIVIDUALS?

**This is a question that is appropriately decided by the contest promoter and the head judge, but I'll try to weigh in.**

#### Independence:

Many times I have heard complaints that in a group, the head judge just tells the other judges who to vote for and they blindly follow his orders. But Oh, Please... would a bunch of qualified judges be so uncertain of themselves that they wouldn't have some ideas of their own? Perhaps a group of totally unqualified people would do this, but it is the job of the organizer of a competition to choose good judges, isn't it?

And an effective head judge will understand that part of the head judges' responsibility is to see that every other judge is encouraged to express his observations and opinions. After this opportunity to hear each other out, I do think that each judge should step back and mark his or her score sheet independently.

#### Keeping track of time:

O.K., you're judging. One carving catches your eye, and you spend more than the allotted minutes looking at it. You have to rush, and only look at a couple of other carvings from one side, or notice a detail such as sanding. And for goodness sake, working alone, it's easy to lose track of which carvings you have actually looked at, especially if the numbers assigned to carvers are randomly placed all over the carving area.

With a group approach, the head judge can appoint a time keeper, and guide the examination of carvings, (Now we are only considering the intent or theme", "Now we are only looking at the use of the wood", "Now we're scoring the front view, " and so on.)

The judging team can also appoint a person with good handwriting who can write on the feedback sheet to be given to the carver. I suggest two remarks about what the judges find desirable and one or two about improvements that could be made by the carver.

#### Learning from each other:

Working in isolation, your opinion and tastes are unquestioned. This may be fine, but how will you stretch your self and grow as a judge this way? No one knows it all. There are regional differences, differences in the various species of wood, little tricks with tools and finishes. Some people are more expert in technical aspects and some are more knowledgeable about design. It costs money to put up and transport judges, and a recurring competition should work toward developing and educating a pool of local judging talent. I believe there is no better way to improve than to have a good and lively discussion about what you observe and what you think is desirable or not in a carving. New judges can learn quickly in this way, and after a little exposure can begin to make very good observations on their own. If you see a bunch of judges waving their arms and pointing to different parts of the carving they are looking at, you know the piece is getting plenty of consideration.

#### Supporting each other:

When the judging is over, and some people are licking their wounds while others are waving around that beautiful ribbon or trophy, it's good if carvers can ask, "Why didn't I win?" Chances are that if a judge has discussed the carving's weak and strong points, and if a feedback sheet is provided, it will be easier to talk to the carver in a constructive way.

It is also sometimes easier if two judges together can talk to the carver, especially if someone is a little testy. (Personally I think this is better than getting put on the spot by an irate carver, and saying something like, "Well, I would have given you first place, but Susan said your carving sucked!")

**As competitions proliferate, and prize money becomes more abundant and important, we need a good pool of judges and a good method of training new judges. Since we will probably never have a judge training school, what better classroom than a competition with motivated and talented carvers carving outstanding wood? What better teachers than other experts? I believe that judging as a group is the way to go.**

## A Taste of History

by Angela Polglaze

During my first trip to the USA in 2002 I was enthralled to learn of the CCSG and to meet people who had been carving with a chainsaw for most of their adult lives. There was history there ... and it was alive and vibrant and creative and fun ... and it was still being written. I wanted to know more !! Here is a taste of what I have discovered !! As many CCSG members would be aware the Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild was established in 1986 to work toward promoting the art of chainsaw carving, to maintain standards, and to try and help protect the interests of it's members. Much has changed since those heady days, and yet much has also stayed the same.

Here is a paragraph from the CCSG newsletter of '89, which is actually the minutes of a meeting as the 'Cutting Edge' newsletter wasn't to be published until later in '93 ...

### CASCADE CHAINSAW SCULPTORS GUILD NEWSLETTER Feb 24, 1989

*At last meeting, held Feb 11 at Libertoes included the election of new officers and board of directors. The election was prompted by Oley throwing up his hand and saying, "I quit!" Larry Carter gets to be president because he wants to be and nobody else was nominated. Mike McVay is the new secretary because his brother Pat told everyone he had a typewriter and could spell pretty good and nobody else was nominated. Foxy was reelected treasurer because she's been doing a good job and is the only one everybody trusts. Judy McVay was elected Vice-president because she didn't object and everyone thought she would be good at it. Also elected was a new board of directors. Nobody was real sure what that was but Steve Backus, Pat McVay, and Sunshine Jack Livingston got the job because they were the only ones left that hadn't been elected to something else. The transfer of the reins of power went smoothly as is wont in this age of enlightenment and the freedom of the common man – and woman – person.*

So you see much has changed as we now know what a Board of Directors is, and what they do, and the CCSG has established a set of by-laws. And much has stayed the same, in that here you see many familiar names of the committed individuals who have passionately promoted and encouraged the growth of chainsaw carving for decades, a true asset for all CCSG members as we move on into an exciting and unpredictable future.

Another paragraph from those same minutes reads as follows: *Hal Schloman, an organizer of events such as trade fairs, was on hand to answer questions about making the carving contests more of a show and hopefully more profitable. Left us with the message that we must organize on a National or International scale to have something to promote.*

Although the CCSG has had international members for a couple of decades, today in 2008 there is now a thriving International Chainsaw Carving Community on a truly global scale, and the art works being created are often phenomenal in execution, creativity, skill and originality. With the burst of popularity of the internet in the late '90's the world became a much smaller place. There were more carving events being established, more information, more carvers, and more carvers were traveling the world to create their art. Today it is not unusual to have up to, and over, half a dozen different countries represented at a Chainsaw Carving event. The face of Chainsaw Carving was changed forever. But there is still MUCH to promote ... in fact more than ever ... and the CCSG through the Cutting Edge, is still leading the way.

I encourage all carvers to pay their annual dues (\$20 USA, \$25 non USA) and get the Cutting Edge delivered to their homes. To all those online subscribers I can assure you that nothing really beats holding a hard copy in your hands, especially 12, 13, or 14 years after it was published, a truly historical document. It's not expensive and you will be supporting the positive energy and passion that drives the CCSG as well. And another thing that has never changed ... we also want stories ... about YOU and your carving adventures ... especially the funny ones. WE want lots of good pictures too. Carvers are generally a curious bunch and some of us find inspiration in the most unexpected places. Take care all ... and happy carving ... Angie

**TOP TEN LIST**  
**TYPICAL QUESTIONS THE PUBLIC ALWAYS ASK THE CARVERS**

10. You do that with a saw?
9. Is that wood?
8. What kind of wood do you use?
7. What kind of saw do you use?
6. Are you going to finish that? Or is that all?
5. You do this for a living?
4. Did you go to school for this?
3. I know somebody else that does this, but he's good.
2. Isn't that cheating?
1. Were you an artist before this?

From the Cutting Edge ....March 1994



Giraphant Abstracted  
Carving and Picture by Angela Polglaze

**"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." ~ Henry Ford**

## Upcoming Events

This list is very brief, a complete and more detailed version can be found online at [www.theccsg.com](http://www.theccsg.com) under upcoming events link. Listed events are not endorsed by the CCSG. If you would like to list an event please send them to: [jackNamy@charter.net](mailto:jackNamy@charter.net)

**August 20<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>h</sup>**

**Manitowoc, Wisconsin**

10 pro artist \$10,000 in prize money  
Contact: RD or Vicki Coonrod (217)653-8133  
If interested, please fill out application form at:  
<http://www.loghoggers.net>

**August 23rd  
Greenville, MI**

Blue Water Chainsaw Carving Series Event  
Contact: Lonnie Glines (989) 539-9456  
[lonnieglines@yahoo.com](mailto:lonnieglines@yahoo.com)

**August 23rd-25th**

**Knutsford, Cheshire, Manchester, England  
English Open Chainsaw Carving Competition**

Contact: Chris Wright Ph: 07889786413  
[vaqvandweller@googlemail.com](mailto:vaqvandweller@googlemail.com)

**August 29th -31st Oscoda, MI**

**Great Lakes Chainsaw Carving Championship  
& Paul Bunyan Days Festival**

Contact: June Wygant  
Events Coordinator  
PH:(989) 739-7322 FAX: (989)739-9195  
[events@oscodachamber.com](mailto:events@oscodachamber.com)

**August 30th**

**Carrbridge, Scotland**

**6th Annual Carrbridge Chainsaw Carving**

**Event** Contact: Gavin Gerrard  
Heatherdene, Carr Road,  
Carrbridge  
Iverness-shire, Scotland,  
PH23 3AD  
+44(0)1479 841 608

[info@carvecambridge.com](mailto:info@carvecambridge.com)

[www.carvecarrbridge.com](http://www.carvecarrbridge.com)

Carver's info contact:

[carvers@carvecarrbridge.com](mailto:carvers@carvecarrbridge.com)

Tom Jones

[jonesbunk@aol.com](mailto:jonesbunk@aol.com)

**September 6th & 7th**

**Driffield, East Yorkshire, UK  
CANCELED**

**September 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Westport Washington**

**CANCELED due to economic reason.**

**September 12th - 13th**

**Brookville, PA**

Lumber Heritage Festival

Contact: Bill Stien

Brookville Kiwanis

814-849-9979

[biandiarts@mac.com](mailto:biandiarts@mac.com)

**September 13th & 14th**

**Nr Kings Lynn, Norfolk, UK**

Contact: Chris Wright Ph: 07889786413

[vaqvandweller@googlemail.com](mailto:vaqvandweller@googlemail.com)

**September 18th - 20th**

**Cannock Chase, Birmingham, UK**

Echo Chainsaw Carving Championship  
Contact: Exhibition Secretary Ian Millward

10 Warren Road

Reigate, Surrey

RH2 0BN, UK

[apfexhibition@gxn.co.uk](mailto:apfexhibition@gxn.co.uk)

Registration can be done on this site: TBA

[www.apfexhibition.co.uk](http://www.apfexhibition.co.uk)

**Oct. 2nd -4th**

**West Salem, Ohio**

**Fall Carving & Craft Festival**

Contact: Denise Leach

99 West Buckeye

West Salem, Ohio 44287

(330)421-1696

Web Site & Registration:

[www.fallcarvingandcraftfestival.com](http://www.fallcarvingandcraftfestival.com)

**Oct. 2nd -4th**

**Wooster, OH**

Fall Carving & Craft Festival

Contact: Denise Leach @ Country Crafts

6096 East Lincoln Way

Wooster, OH 44691

[www.fallcarvingandcraftfestival.com](http://www.fallcarvingandcraftfestival.com)

**October 3rd-5th**

**Albuquerque, NM**

2008 Echo Chainsaw Carving Championship  
Eight pro-carver finalists from echo qualifying  
events allowed to compete  
[www.echo-usa.com/carvingsereies](http://www.echo-usa.com/carvingsereies)

**October 3rd - 5th  
Sheffield, PA**

Johnny Appleseed Festival  
(814) 730-7633 or (814) 968-3906

[johnnyappleseed@verizon.net](mailto:johnnyappleseed@verizon.net)

**October 4th & 5th  
Lecis, UK**

Contact: Chris Wright  
Ph: 07889786413

[vaqvandweller@googlemail.com](mailto:vaqvandweller@googlemail.com)

**October 11th & 12th**

**Nr Knutsford, Cheshire, UK**

Contact: Chris Wright Ph: 07889786413

[vaqvandweller@googlemail.com](mailto:vaqvandweller@googlemail.com)

### *Cascade Chainsaw Sculptors Guild* **2008 Subscription Form**

For Paid Members Dues are \$20 (US) or \$25  
(foreign) for the year payable to the CCSG

- Paid Membership: newsletter online
- Paid Member ship: newsletter in the mail
- Free Online Subscription (newsletter  
online)

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Email

Send your dues to:  
CCSG Membership  
71233 Hwy 47  
Mist, OR 97016

## CCSG Give Away!

CCSG is giving away a **Cannon Carving Bar** (CCD-C1-12-50, twelve inch,  
dime-tip, fifty gauge bar) and **Quarter-pitch Chain!**



To enter all you need to do is be a paid up member, so make sure your dues  
are paid by the next issue!

**Next issue we will announce the winner.**

*No officers or directors are eligible*

## The Cutting Edge

240 Frosty LN  
Selah, WA 98942

## Carvers on the Edge

### Advertise in the Cutting Edge!

Full Page: \$200

Half Page: \$100

Quarter Page: \$50

Business Card: \$25

#### **Classifieds: \$10 per 20 words**

We can design your AD or use your own design.  
Yearly ADs get a 10% discount and will appear in  
each issue of the newsletter as well as on the CCSG  
website!

**Contact:** [jackNamy@charter.net](mailto:jackNamy@charter.net) for more  
information.



Ken Tynan and his amazing Incredible Hulk carving.  
Picture from Ken's My Space Site <http://www.myspace.com/kentynan>



Bench by Nyal Thomas that placed 9th Place Pro in Ocean Shores, Washington  
Picture by Amy McEntire



Kerry Hargand's carving that placed 4th Pro at the  
Ocean Shores competition. Photo by Amy McEntire