



This organization is supported by a grant from the Grassroots Arts Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, a state agency, and the Cabarrus Arts Council.



***Southern Piedmont
Woodturners***



*H*ello woodturners. I'm happy to report that we had another good and well-attended meeting in March and there is a lot to share. The February meeting was held at our studio in the ClearWater Arts Center on March 28, 2026, with 23 members and guests present. In addition, we had members staffing our booth at the Art Walk on Union, where they spent the morning setting up and the afternoon entertaining the public by turning spinning tops for the kids and other items of interest. And following our meeting and a break for lunch, we had an afternoon workshop in which members learned to turn bud vases, spinning tops, and pendants, which were all presented during the demonstration session at the morning meeting. It was a very busy day. Once again, I am encouraged by the turnout for the meetings, workshops, and open turning sessions.

Club Business

2026 Dues

Before addressing anything else --- The period for paying 2026 dues to remain on the active membership list ended on March 28. Any member who has not paid dues is now moved to the inactive list until such time as they catch up. The dues amount for 2026 remains the same as the past couple of years at \$55.00 for regular annual membership. Dues can be paid using PayPal at our website or see Gina or Larry if you wish to pay by cash or check at a meeting. Or

you can mail a check to Southern Piedmont Woodturners, 223 Crowell Drive NW, Concord, NC 28025.

Cabarrus County Fair 2026

It is never too soon to start turning items for the fair. We almost completely depleted our inventory of tops to give to the children, so we need to start building the supply back up. Additionally, we will need 7 or 8 relatively high-end items for the raffles, which were a big success at the 2025 fair, and we will need many other turned items for our fundraising efforts at the fair and other similar fundraising opportunities.

Art Walk on Union

The Art Walk is an annual event each spring that is sponsored by the Cabarrus Arts Council. It is a very popular event for artists and the public alike, with over 80 artists participating in this year's event. Special thanks to Steve Lusk for organizing our efforts this year, Phil Goodman for hauling the equipment to and from the event, and to Steve, Beth Bjerregaard, Harold Kemplen, Gina Brown, Mike Baillargeon and Darrel Huskey for staffing our booth. Aside from the exposure and good will that is generated with the general public through events such as this, the event also brought in some \$364.00 in donations.

Tops, Tops, and More Tops

The challenge for each member to make 3 tops per month, 36 for the year, to support our community outreach efforts is once again in place for the year. Our big fundraiser, the one that supports most of our rent for the year, is the Cabarrus County Fair. We have a number of members demonstrating the art and craft of woodturning during every hour that the fair is open, and we give away, literally, hundreds of tops to the kids. And they really appreciate them.

We give out so many in fact that five turners cannot typically keep up with demand. So, the purpose of the tops challenge is to build an inventory over the course of the year so that we have tops to hand out even during the busiest times at the fair. Please help us reach our goal of filling the two large plastic jars before the fair starts.



Lathe Maintenance

A huge shout out goes to Vern Cockayne for providing his time and mechanical skills to maintain our lathes. Recently, Vern spent a couple Saturdays at the studio putting in new bearings, fixing jammed quills, tapping stripped threads, and performing other maintenance activities to keep our lathes in good operating condition. Thanks so much, Vern.

Open Turning

This month we again had two well-attended open turning sessions with several members participating in each. For new turners, we tend to concentrate on reinforcing the skills that have been presented in recent demonstrations and workshops as a method of teaching those skills. For other folks, some work on pet projects while others just concentrate on honing a skill of interest to them. We are always in need of additional support from our experienced turners. Come on out and join the fun and share some of the skills, knowledge, and expertise that you have built over the years.

March Meeting and Demonstrations

This month we decided to try something a bit different for the demonstration at our monthly meeting. Rather than 1 demonstration of, typically, a relatively advanced topic, we decided to have multiple demonstrations of some less involved projects of the type that can be turned relatively quickly and in quantity to support our County Fair fundraising efforts. Accordingly, Phillip Cooley (right) demonstrated how to turn small bud vases, which were a huge hit at last year's fair.

Vince Keipper (left) has enjoyed huge success at the fair turning small pendants that he makes into necklaces and



hands out, primarily to the little girls, so our second demonstration had Vince showing how he makes these.



And for the third demonstration Gina Brown provided a demonstration on making the spinning tops that are so popular at the fair. Gina showed us not only how to turn the tops, but also how to decorate them by adding color(s) and embellishment using texturing tools.

One of the demonstrators remarked on how intimidating it is to get up in front of other turners to present a demonstration of this type, and it can be. But all three of the demonstrations presented were very professionally done, interesting, instructive, and well-received by those attending. Thanks for a great job.



March Workshop – Support the County Fair Turnathon

Continuing with our recent trend in which an afternoon workshop concentrates on turning the same form(s) as demonstrated in the morning, a workshop was held following the March meeting to emphasize turning spinning tops, pendants, and bud vases and, in the process, provide some items to support the fundraising efforts at the fair.

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendar

- April 25 – April regular meeting, 9:00 – 11:30 am – This month we have a special treat in store for the meeting demonstration. John Jordan is a well-known and prolific turner who hails from the Knoxville, TN area. For those of us who attended the NC Symposium last fall, we were able to see the results of several of John's efforts in the pop-up gallery, and all were very impressive. John makes a couple of signature items in quantity, one being his Harry Potter wands and the second what he calls a small,



squarish, dished platter. During the meeting, John will demonstrate how he makes the Harry Potter wands.



- Afternoon Workshop – After the meeting, we will have the usual lunch break and then will reconvene at 1:00 for a workshop led by John Jordan. The main theme of the workshop will be the Harry Potter wands, but for anyone interested, John says that he can support them in turning the small, squarish, dished platter as well. Participation is limited to 10, as that is about all that the studio can accommodate when the lathes are brought out for turning. There is a small fee of \$30 for the workshop to cover materials, and to help offset John's travel and living expenses. You can reserve your spot by visiting the website. Just go to the calendar, find the workshop, and click on view details. If you cannot make that work for any reason, just send an E-mail or text message to Larry Nottingham or Steve Lusk stating your wish to attend and you can then take care of the fee on the day of the workshop. John has prepared excellent, detailed, illustrated instructions for both projects, which

are attached. We do not have any preplanned arrangements for lunch that day, but we will be ordering lunch carry out for anyone interested and, of course, you can bring a lunch, as you prefer. Lunch provides a good opportunity to socialize with fellow woodturners, so come join us.

- March 25 – Cannon School Arts Jam – Also, on that same day, SPW will participate in the Arts Jam at the Cannon School from 1:00 until 5:00. This is another community outreach at which we will have members performing turning demonstrations and turning tops for the kids. For anyone available and willing to participate, we could still use another turner or 2.
- American Association of Woodturners (AAW) International Symposium 2026 – Raleigh, NC, June 4–7, 2006, Raleigh Convention and Performing Arts Center – One update on the Symposium. AAW offers a discount for AAW members who are members of an affiliated club (e.g., SPW) that has 5 or more club members registered for the event. At this point that I know of, SPW has 6 AAW members registered for the Symposium. So, if you are attending, and you are an AAW member, please let me know so that I can apply for the refunds for everyone. This will be the best chance you likely will ever have to attend an AAW Symposium. It is right in your backyard.

Website

The website has received a lot of attention over the past few months and is now better able to support the members. A couple of things you might want to look at:

- You can now make reservations for workshops and other events for which there is limited availability so that we can keep track of the number of attendees registered and cut off registration when full.
- You can pay your dues and pay for fee-based events at the website.
- You can now build you own individual gallery of up to 10 of your favorite turnings. During the meeting, at least one member indicated that he had attempted to create his gallery but could not make it work, and I will admit it can be a bit tricky. If you want to enter your gallery, please just drop a text or email note to Larry Nottingham requesting support in setting it up. If there is enough interest, we could have a workshop devoted to creating galleries and do this as a fun team effort. Just drop a note and let me know how you would like to proceed.
- We have started adding links to YouTube creators that we feel provide value in terms of instructional videos. These can be found on the website under Resources.
- Effective in May, we will be losing our website creator and maintenance person, who will no longer be available to support us. We have identified 3 candidates and will select a replacement imminently.

Show and Share

First up for Show and Share was Harold Kemplen, who brought in three items to share with the membership, two of which have molded and turned epoxy-filled sections. The third, a figured maple bowl also has some decorative items added. Harold also made some pens that he brought in. The one,

as can be seen in the picture is engraved with "Kemplen Designs".



Darrell Rader brought a couple of his typically very interesting and unique art objects to share and, as usual, had interesting stories to go with them. The first was a very unusual piece made of madrone burl. Darrell explained that he made this during a class and it started with a very wet piece that was first turned, then carved, and then allowed to dry and let nature take its course. The second was a small, walnut ball captured in a block. When Darrell's young grandson saw it his response was "ball, out."





Justin Fowler is one of our newer members, and he has been very active in our open turning sessions as well as the meetings. At an open turning session in February, Justin turned a hatchet handle that he made in a oval cross section by turning it off center – see February newsletter. He is also a carver, and since then he carved the business end. Here Justin shows the completed assembly. Justin also brought in a small bowl that he turned from maple and coffeewood and finished with tung oil.



Claude Shealy brought in two lighthouses that he made from cedar and finished using Polyurethane. You will recall that Claude made some snowmen that he shred at an earlier meeting. Those featured glass balls with tiny LED lights inside, similar to the one that Harold Kemplen brought as an exchange gift to the Christmas gathering. Well, now Claude has incorporated the same idea into his lighthouses. Very nice, Claude.



As we all know, Ric Erkes adds embellishments to many of his artistic turnings. Examples include carving, pyrography, mixed woods, etc. For Show and Share, he brought along one of his early practice carvings, a leaf plate made from cherry and finished with poly. Outstanding, Ric.



And, last but certainly not least, we come to another new member, Darrel Huskey. He might be new to

woodturning, but he is not new to woodworking. Shown here is Darrel with a cool cutting board that he donated to us for our fundraising efforts at the Art Walk. And this was not the end of his donation. He also donated 2 smaller cutting boards, a set of coasters, and a trivet.



Thanks for your generosity, Darrel. These are well appreciated.

That about it for this Show and Share. Everyone is encouraged to join in and let us see some of you turnings as well.

General club info just so you have it:

SPW Board of Directors:

President – Larry Nottingham

Vice President – Steve Lusk

Secretary – Beth Bjerregaard

Treasurer – Gina Brown

Board Member – Vince Keipper

Board Member – Michael Martens

Board Member – Bill Joyce

Board Member – Ric Erkes

Board Advisor – Cindy Boehrns (nonelected, nonvoting)

Board Advisor – Phil Goodman (nonelected, nonvoting)

In case anyone wants/needs to contact the President about anything club-related, here is his contact information:

Larry Nottingham – Lnottingham@structint.com

Cell phone – (704) 236-1412

That's it, folks. I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting on April 25 or in the meantime at one of the open turning sessions.

Best and keep 'em turning,

Larry Nottingham