

WOODTURNERS OF ST. LOUIS

A Chapter of the American Association of Woodturners

WTSTL.com

July 2026

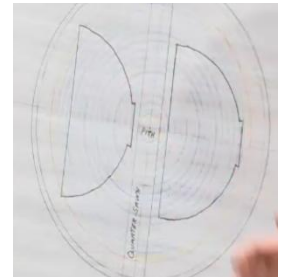
Meetings are on the 4th TUESDAY OF THE MONTH IN THE EVENING. Premeeting starts at 5pm and main meeting starts at 6:30PM. Meetings will continue to be hosted at CTF at 8300 Valcour Ave; Affton, MO. Next meeting will be August 25, 2026.



Log to a Bowl/Platter ● Ken Bald discussed the steps and options available for taking a log to a bowl.

Ken started by discussing chainsaw safety emphasizing that chainsaws are more dangerous than lathes and recommending the AAW's "Play It Safe" booklet for proper safety practices. The demonstration focused on cutting bowl blanks from logs, with Ken explaining his setup using a V-cradle system inspired by David Ellsworth's techniques.

He covered different techniques for cutting bowl blanks from tree logs, explaining how to work around the pith and discussing the pros and cons of different cutting orientations. He showed examples of both oak and walnut wood, explaining that while oak requires more careful handling due to its susceptibility to cracking during drying, walnut is more stable. Ken also mentioned that the decision of whether to place the pith at the top or bottom of the bowl depends on factors like log size and wood type,



Ken discussed his woodturning process, explaining how he handles cracked bowl blanks and demonstrated techniques for working with live edge wood, particularly cherry. He detailed his finishing methods, using butcher block oil for utility bowls and paste wax for showpieces, noting that most finishes become food safe after 30 days of curing. He shared his approach to harvesting wood in winter when sap content is lower and explained how he determines the center of a log for cutting bowl blanks, even when the pith is off-center.

He discussed techniques for working with thin slab pieces and explained how to identify and cut walnut wood with good sapwood characteristics. He shared insights about sourcing walnut wood from tree cutters and warned about the harmful effects of walnut sawdust on plants. Ken demonstrated how to properly cut and split crotches to maximize the feathering effect, emphasizing the importance of marking the best cutting lines and being careful not to cut through the crotch entirely.



Ken discussed techniques for working with crotch wood in bowl-making, explaining how to avoid pith-related cracking by cutting the blank away from the pith area and immediately covering the wood with a plastic tarp to maintain moisture. He also explained his method of preventing cracking by submerging the wood in water or using plastic bags until turning can be completed and noted that any cracks can be repaired with CA glue or resin.

Ken demonstrated woodturning techniques, explaining how to measure and prepare a bowl blank by leaving appropriate wall thickness based on bowl size when doing a rough turning. He discussed the importance of uniform drying and shared his experience storing wood in granaries to prevent cracking, mentioning that he typically lets wood sit for 2-6 years before turning. Ken also explained the advantages of turning between centers and demonstrated how to position a blank for different types of bowl shapes, including traditional and live edge designs.

He discussed different methods for mounting wood blanks on a lathe, including using faceplates, centers, and chuck systems. He explained using plaster lath stickers for drying blanks and demonstrated various techniques using Forstner bits and different types of chucks, particularly recommending Vic Mark chucks for their durability. He cautioned that green wood is difficult to chuck as it does not provide a lasting grip, and he shared his preference for tapered jaws over straight jaws in chucks. He discussed proper techniques for using chucks in woodturning, explaining that the strength comes from the flat face contact between the chuck and the workpiece more than the clamping pressure.

The hand outs on bowl blanks and chainsaw safety are from AAW American Woodturner articles. AAW members can access the articles on the AAW website.

Thanks to Ken for an informative discussion on processing a log to a bowl.

A recording of this demonstration is available on our YouTube channel. [Search YouTube for Woodturners of St. Louis.](#)



Pre-Meeting● Thanks to Ray Hinkle for his demonstration and instruction on how to use a scraper. Ray emphasized the need for a sharp tool, showed various shapes, and how to produce a bur.

The scraper handout that Ray provided is from the First State Woodturners and available on their website: [click here](#).



Open Turning / Training on the Second Tuesday of the month●

The club is now offering open turning and training on the second Tuesday of the month. **Next class is August 11, 2026; project is a garden dibber.**



The time will be to offer hands on turning, to cover techniques, and to answer questions regarding turning. It will be at the Carpenter's Training Facility, 8300 Valcour Ave, Affton, MO starting at 530pm and wrapping up by 830pm.

Members are asked to contact [Ray Hinkle](#) before the class so material will be available.

Please bring your face shield and spindle/bowl gouges/ parting tool/skew for the class.

WTSTL Tool Boxes and Turning Tools● Each of our Comet lathes has a number and there is a tool box with tools with the same number in the movable/lockable cabinets. When setting up the pre-meeting area get the numbered box that goes with that Comet. This helps us identify any missing items and which box to replenish.

It is also very important to put the tools from a specific box back into that same box for inventory control. And, be sure that the tool boxes are taken back to the meeting room and stored in the locked mobile cabinets. The chuck and all loose items (spurs, knock out bar, ...) should be removed from the lathe and put back in the tool box for secure storage.

We need your help too. Please give us feedback on the good and bad with the A/V system so we can make your online participation a great experience.

If you do not see video at the start of the meeting (~1pm CT) let us know via the Zoom Chat window.

If the video drops offline or there are other issues let us know via the Zoom Chat window

Please mute yourself during the meeting as any background noise overpowers the demonstrator and puts you in the demo screen.

Please send Steve Botkin and Charlie an email with any suggestions. **We monitor the Zoom chat but texts, email, calls, and voice feedback is difficult during the meeting as the AV team is quite occupied with operation of the equipment.**

WTSTL Hybrid Meetings● Each meeting lets us improve and address new issues with our hybrid system. In person meetings will continue to be open to visitors (except when a paid demonstrator is scheduled); remote participation will be available via Zoom. Recorded demonstrations are posted on the club YouTube channel.

Mentoring● Woodturners of St. Louis has a mentoring program for members. On our mentoring page, you'll find a list of members who have graciously agreed to invite other members into their home workshops for mentoring sessions. In some cases, mentors can visit your home to give instruction there instead. And some mentors offer consultations via Zoom or email.

We have several mentors available now, and we'd love to add more. If you're an experienced WTSTL member and would like to be a mentor, contact our President.

If you're a WTSTL member and would like to arrange a mentoring session, please go to our mentoring page. The locations of our current mentors are listed there, so you can choose the one closest to you. The topics they're willing to give instruction on are listed there as well.

We hope this program will bring members together to share our skills, spark fresh creativity and learning, and strengthen our sense of community.

Website● Electronic membership to the WTSTL is available via the club website. After entering your contact information and selecting your plan, [log on to your PayPal account](#) to complete your application and enter the amount to pay. When PayPal asks for our organization, enter **Woodturners of St. Louis**. You will receive a follow up email with your membership card. If you are not contacted within a couple of weeks, email the club Treasurer.



President's Spin● Summer is here and the days are longer. If you are like me, you have competing hobbies in the summer. I enjoy riding a bicycle, this is the right time of year for getting out. and taking in mother nature. Most of my bike rides are on the KATY Trail. Admittedly whenever I am partaking in my bicycle hobby, I am also keeping an eye out for downed trees and generally anything that can be turned on my lathe. Before I started woodturning, I would push through and not look around at any of the scenery. It is funny how your perspective changes as your hobbies change.

This month we had Ken Bald give a talk on wood preparation for turning. He gave lots of great information, there was a lot of dialogs that included excellent advice not only from Ken but fellow club members. Ken talked about rough turning bowls and letting them dry. He told us about the stacks of rough turned bowls that he has out at his farm. Everyone has a different process when they get a log. I do the standard process of cutting up the logs with my chainsaw and bandsaw. Finally, I seal the wood and wait, wait and wait some more. As it turns out I could be doing it better, I could have rough turned the wood and waited a lot less. Sitting through Ken's discussion changed my perspective when it comes to wood preparation. I appreciate him bestowing his knowledge on our club, I feel like he has forgotten more than a lot of us will ever know about woodturning. If you missed the meeting, you can find Ken's presentation on Youtube.

The President's Challenge for July was a platter. There were some amazing submissions. Art Staden was the winner; he brought a gorgeous platter made from a piece of walnut crotch. It had some subtle hints of creamy sap wood, great job Art! While the President's Challenge is always impressive, the other show and tell pieces are always impressive. Ray Hinkle brought in a stool that he made with a 2x4; Rob Conway brought in fluted glasses with stems made from recycled seat material from Arrowhead Stadium. Go check out all the submissions on the Woodturners of St Louis website.

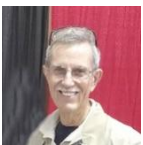
I encourage you to look for ways to change your perspective when it comes to wood turning. This month's President's Challenge will be a natural edge bowl (with or without the bark), I look forward to seeing the submissions.

Our turning nights continue to be very popular. In July we had 15 students that turned honey dippers. It was a great spindle turning project that produced a usable item. On 11 Aug we will be making a garden dibber, another great spindle project. If you are interested in coming out for the turning night, reach out to Ray Hinkle. During our August pre-meeting, Tom Zeller will be going over embellishment techniques. The main meeting demo will be Keith Buxton making a lantern. I look forward to seeing everyone on Aug 25. - **Moe Milstead**

President's Challenge • Members select their choice of winner for the PC. During the break between the business meeting and the demonstration, review the items on the challenge table. Separate your ticket and write your selection (the number in front of each entry) on the back of the one marked "TICKET". Place it in the PC bowl. Your voting ticket will enter you in the door prize drawing. One PC entry per member; entry must be turned following the challenge.

Congratulations to the July PC winner: Art Staden for his walnut plate.

President's Challenge for August 2026 – Turn a natural edge bowl. (Bark on or off).



Treasurer Report • Dues are due for 2026 membership. Electronic membership applications and payments can be made on the website. If you prefer to complete and mail a [paper application](#), it is available and can be down loaded from the club website. New members are asked to complete the application form. Club patches are available from the Treasurer for \$5. – **Charles Sapp**



Secretary's Report • July 14, 2026 Hands On Turning night - We had 18 people in attendance (3 mentors). Students tested their skills by turning honey dippers.

July 28, 2026 WTSTL Meeting Pre-Meeting Demo- Ray Hinkle talked about using

scrapers. Meeting Demonstration- Ken Bald explained how to take a log and cut it up to make bowl/platter blanks.

There were 34 members, 1 visitor and 1 person on Zoom in attendance. - **Valerie Botkin**



Library News ● Our library is only open on Sunday at our club meetings and is open to all our paid members for checking out books, videos, and DVD's.

Our library is a great source of inspiration and knowledge. Members can access complete listing content on the club website. Please take advantage of this wonderful club benefit and return items in a timely manner.

Since Moe will be serving as President the club needs a club librarian. Please contact one of the officers if you are willing to serve or assist in this needed position. – **Moe Milstead**

Community Programs ●

Donations for the Wood Bowls to Food - At the July 28 meeting we collected \$503 dollars for the bowls for a food pantry. Most of the wood came from wood donations from the Sharon Bolan estate. I spoke with Sharon in March of this year after I had picked up some wood bowl blanks from her home. I told her that we would donate the sale of the bowl blanks to the food pantry and she agreed. I am overwhelmed with the generosity of our club members. With the sale of some bowl blanks in June \$230 and the monies from the July meeting I will be mailing a check to the Show-me Woodturners for the Bowls to Food program for \$733 dollars. To all our club members thank you very much for your generous donations, I am very proud of what you did. – **Tom Zeller**



[Beads of Courage](#): The Beads of Courage is a program for kids in need. BOC is a not-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children and teens coping with serious illness. The program integrates the use of beads as visible, tangible symbols of their experiences and treatment. Children receive a bead for every test, procedure, or treatment they undergo. Woodturners donate boxes to hold the beads they earn. Details on requirements for the boxes can be found on the club web site. Suggestions for BOC bags can be found [here](#). Ceramic beads to attach to the boxes are \$1.25 (13/16" in diameter) and available from Rob. Bring your boxes (or bags) to the meeting and give them to Tom Reel.

Pens for the Troops – Kits are available from the club Treasurer for a \$3 deposit which is returned to you when a completed pen is returned for the program – get your kits and return completed pens to Charles Sapp. In 2025, our club delivered over 350 pens to Woodcraft for distribution to the troops.



Wig Stands – Wig stands will be collected and delivered to a hospital in the fall. A video is available on our YouTube channel and article links included in the March 2025 newsletter on how to turn a wig stand.



Video Resources ●

- The Woodturners of St. Louis have a YouTube channel. On it you will find many of our demonstrations. To find the videos – go to YouTube.com and search on *Woodturner St Louis*. <https://www.youtube.com/@woodturnersstlouis2950/videos>

Note – Not a member of the AAW. Check out their website: [AAW](#) .

Positions to Fill ●

- Demonstrators– Your help is needed to provide a demonstration at each of our meetings. The demo subject is your choice, whatever you enjoy doing – bowls, hollow forms, plates, boxes, pyrography, resins, stabilizing, tips and tricks, tops, Contact Rob Conaway to volunteer.
- Audio / Visual Team – Additional support is needed to help set up, monitor and understand the system for backup. Additional support would really help. Talk to Steve Botkin to volunteer.
- Pre-Meeting Mentor – Set up the Comets and be available to mentor members and visitors
- We appreciate all the help with set up and clean up. Contact Moe Milstead for more opportunities.

Tax Deductions● The Woodturners of St. Louis is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. Donations may be tax deductible. Donate up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA directly to a qualified charity through a [qualified charitable distribution](#). (As long as certain rules are met-such as you're



at least 70% when making the gift, and the check is payable directly to the qualified charity- then the distribution shouldn't be taxable income.) **Contributions accepted at any time of the year!**

ZOOM Streaming Links • Our meetings will be streamed via ZOOM unless noted in the meeting information on the web page. All members should receive a reminder and the ZOOM link during the week prior to the meeting. If you do not receive the link by the Thursday prior to the meeting, send an email to CWSAPP@CHARTER.NET requesting the link.

Vendor / Sponsor Discounts • Check the website for vendors that offer discounts to club members. *When shopping at Rockler in Bridgeton, ask them to register your purchase with the WTSTL as they provide gift cards to the club for door prizes after a number of purchases.*



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Date	Pre-Meeting 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Meeting 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm
July 14, 2026	530-830PM Turning Tuesday – Garden Dibber (see NL for more info)	
August 25, 2026	Tom Zeller – Embellishing and beading	Keith Buxton - Lantern
September 2026	TBD	Jeff Hornung – Square bowl
October 2026	TBD	Michael Blankenship - Ornament

Facebook site • Check out the club Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Woodturners-of-St-Louis/292734664135601>

and “Like” the page (click on the “Like” icon) to receive updates. You can also post your pictures on this site.



Facebook Group • Our club has a Facebook group that is a great way to post pictures of your work, provide tech tips, and share ideas. When you go to the site:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1157348070957128/?fref=nf> click on “Join” and your request will be processed by our Facebook administrator. It is a closed group and only seen by members.



Ray Hinkle



Art Staden



Ray Hinkle

Challenge – turn item from 8 foot
2x4



Charles Sapp





Tom Reel



Art Staden





Collin Cox



Steve Nagy



Steve Nagy

Open Segmented Turning



Collin Cox



Ken Bald



Art Staden



Art Staden



Art Staden

July President's Challenge
Winner – Plate/Platter



Jerry Allen



Rob Conaway



For questions, contact the web master. **Items submitted for the Show and Tell are now being displayed on the home page of the web.** Provide Charlie Sapp with good quality pictures (640 x 480) of your turnings for Show and Tell!

If you enjoy turning wood, making things on your lathe or want to learn more about woodturning then join the [Woodturners of St. Louis](#). Learn and share ideas with like-minded Woodturners of St. Louis. Our chapter normally meets from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 8300 Valcour Avenue, St. Louis, MO with a pre-meeting at 5:00 pm.

American Association of Woodturners• WTSTL is one of 350+ worldwide chapters of the American Association of Woodturners. We encourage you to join this organization. The AAW is dedicated to providing education, information, and organization to those interested in woodturning. You can join the AAW at their site: <http://woodturner.org/member/MemberLogOn.asp>.

Membership comes with access to on-line training information and includes a subscription to the *American Woodturner* magazine. Our club is a chapter of the AAW and we encourage all club members to join the AAW. They have been publishing a great series of on-line woodturning training articles for members that are worth the price of membership by themselves. They have also indexed all of the past AAW magazine articles so you can search and find help with most any issue you have or ideas on your next project.

President:	Moe Milstead	501.286.5923	moe_milstead@msn.com
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Director:	Tom Zeller	314.484.6499	zellertom83@gmail.com

Questions: webmaster@wtstl.com

Show and Tell items are featured on a slide show on the club website home page. Check it out!

www.WTSTL.com