

Alabama Woodturners Association



Newsletter

JULY 2026

A member of the American Association of Woodturners
Meeting at Hardware Park, 811 5th Avenue North, Birmingham
Meeting time: The second Saturday of each month at 9 am
www.alabamawoodturners.com

JULY AWA PRESIDENT'S NOTE

July, America's 250th Birthday, incredibly hot weather in conjunction with as much rain as we can bear. As the year progresses, I'm seeing more new faces in the crowd which means we're growing and expanding! We've got a group of highly talented and knowledgeable woodturners in one place. This got me thinking about the questions I always have when I'm in the shop. Simple questions that YouTube can definitely answer, but sometimes I don't want to watch a whole 10-minute video about the leg angle of my Vari-Grind jig. I'm going to open the meeting with a few minutes of open Q&A in case anyone else has questions they can't easily find the answers to or have just been too afraid to ask.

This month's demo is going to be another incredible experience. Leslie Ballard, from Milton, Ga will be joining us to demo her use of resin in turning. She will go through the entire process with us, helping us avoid common mistakes. She will be creating a wood and resin bottle stop and has even promised a "mid-demo science experiment" so we are in store for a real treat.

Also, we need to revisit, as a club, the Karl Harper Perpetual Challenge. In February, we floated the idea of 'rebranding' the President's Challenge as the Karl Harper Challenge. The purpose would have been to preserve and honor the legacy of Karl Harper and his continual "Try Anything" attitude. In its present form, the Karl Harper Challenge's biggest challenge is participation. I was the only volunteer in June, and I just so happened to be the receipt of last month's challenge. You can see this is not an ideal situation. I am again asking for your ideas. Please email me any ideas you have to increase participation and keep this challenge alive. We will again vote on a solution prior to the demo next week.

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JULY DEMO BY LESLIE BALLARD



Demo: Resin and Wood Process/Bottle Stop

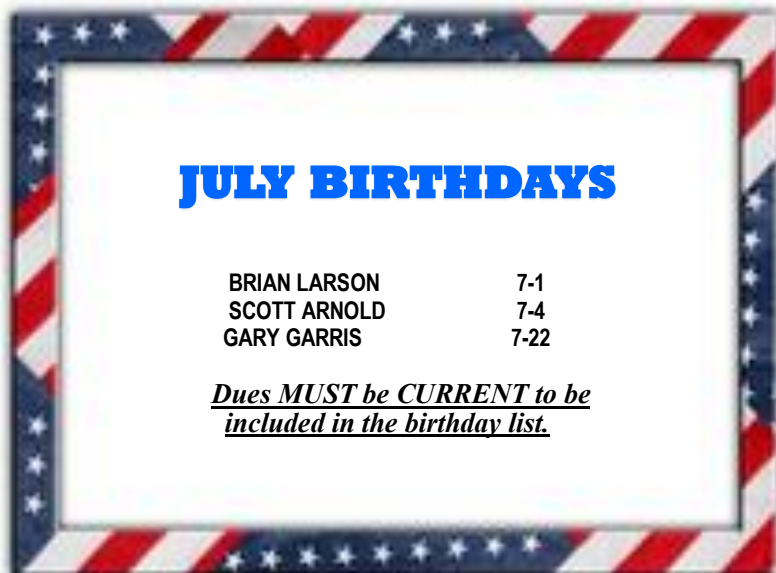
I am a wood turner specializing in the combined use of wood and resin to create works of art. Hollow forms, vessels and bowls are stunning additions to any art collection. And peppermills, bottle stoppers, and bottle openers are functional pieces of art for the kitchen or bar.

Bio:

My mother was an acrylic artist specializing in animals and landscapes, so my interest in creating pieces of art came naturally. I followed in her footsteps as an acrylic artist until I discovered resin in 2015. Resin as a medium creates movement and shine in art pieces and each piece is totally unique. I began using resin to create large, abstract wall art pieces. Some of my pieces can be seen in people's homes across the country, as well as in local businesses such as banks and wine bars.

My focus now is three-dimensional work combining resin and wood. My family took a leap of faith and gifted me a lathe, tools and various accoutrements for Christmas one year after I made a casual comment about wanting to know how to turn a vase/bowl. I had no experience whatsoever in woodworking, but it was obviously a terrific gift as I have been an avid wood turner ever since. Interestingly, almost everything I know about turning I learned through YouTube videos! The process of taking a piece of wood from its natural state to a piece of art fascinates me. The wood must be bone dry, shaped, molded with resin and then turned and finished. This multi-step process keeps me engaged and entertained! There is a thrill in discovering what the wood and resin become as they unveil themselves on the lathe.

I am a resident of Milton, Georgia and can be found fishing for trout, playing golf or taking photographs around the world.



JULY BIRTHDAYS

BRIAN LARSON	7-1
SCOTT ARNOLD	7-4
GARY GARRIS	7-22

Dues MUST be CURRENT to be included in the birthday list.

NEW MEMBERS

JAMES CLASEN
Birmingham

JUNE DEMO WITH HELEN BAILEY



Afternoon class with Helen Bailey

President's Challenge:

Remember to bring your July President's Challenge item to show it off during the June meeting. Also, below is the calendar of challenges:

Jan -
Feb - Carvers Mallet
March - Finial
April - Item assembled from multiple turned items
May - Live Edge Anything
June - Duplicate Item
July - Hollow Form
August - Rolling Pin
September - Ornaments
November - Cup/Goblet



Alabama Woodturners Association
(AWA)
Supporting
Children's Hospital of Alabama



Children's
of Alabama®

**Please bring your ornaments to the meeting.
We will need about 300 ornaments for the 2026 tree at Children's Hospital.**

Children's Hospital AWA Christmas Ornament Project

Collecting turned Christmas Ornaments now!

Don't forget to bring your turned ornaments to the meeting.

Percent Ornaments Remaining to Collect

55%

Months Lapsed 6

Months Remaining 4

(last meeting to collect – October 2026)

Percent of Time to Collect

40%

Note #1: We still need a volunteer to make the 2026 tree topper!

Note # 2: Ornaments find “a pride of place” on the tree when it weighs about 2 ounces. Hollowing helps manage heavier ornaments. Also, if the height is under 7 inches it helps placement. If you have an ornament a little heavier or longer it will be used but it is more difficult to place.



2025 AWA Tree Topper



ARTICLE FROM MAURICE CLABAUGH

TITLE- #12604- "ONE LAST GULP"

TYPE- SCULPTURE

WOOD- AMERICAN HORNBEAM BARKED ROOT BURL

DESIGN- SCULPTURE WITH TEAK VENEER FISH TAIL

SIZE- 12" W X 4.75" H

FINISHED WEIGHT- 11.9 OUNCES

WORK HOURS- 28 HRS

ORIENTATION OF BOWL- Burl waste cut-off from the American Hornbeam tree.



PICTURE OF A CUT-OFF FROM THE BURL CONTAINING ROUGH BLANKS FOR #12601 "FREE FORM," AND #12603 "SILKY POND IN BARK CANYON" AND SALVAGING A BLANK FOR "ONE LAST GULP".



INSPIRATION- The artist/wood turner immediately saw a pelican-shaped object in the "shard tearing" of the burl from the original American Hornbeam tree. The crown with partial bark, a dark, half-circular "eye" at the tip of the crown of bark; short, stubby, pointed snout with a "ragged gullet". The artist refined these elements by highlighting them by leaving these features in their natural, raw state, depicting a similarity to a brown pelican.

Also, bark left over from previous bowls was attached to the pelican's head, slanted the head upward, and completed it with a glossy finish to depict wetness. Handmade glass eyes were used to finish the pelican profile. The beak was sanded, and a mouth was created using an existing split in its beak. The pelican's head is in an upward slanting position, pointing toward the sky, as if it were breaching the water. It was very appropriate to include a fish tail in illustrating the motion of a fish capture. More than halfway down the pelican's gullet, the tail of the fish remains flapping in its beak, forming "ONE LAST GULP", the name of the sculpture."

PICTURES FROM THE JUNE MEETING



CHRIS HENLEY
Winged Bowl



HOWARD KING
Hollow Form



JACK WEBB
3-sided bowl
Purpleheart



HOWARD KING
Segmented Hollow Form



Ash Bowl &
Liming Wax

LEE FERGUSON

Salt & Pepper



PICTURES FROM THE JUNE MEETING



JOHN SOWELL

Holding the his cane Howard King turned
and John finished.



LEE FERGUSON

Footed Bowl



LEE FERGUSON making announcements at the beginning of the meeting.

PICTURES FROM THE JUNE MEETING



RON HERBSTER
Linden Vase



Ornament

SANDRA MCMILLAN

Square Bowl



LEE FERGUSON
President's Challenge



NOAH LOHAN
President's Challenge



ROCKY KIMBLE
President's Challenge



CHRIS HENLEY
President's Challenge

WHAT EVERYONE HAS BEEN DOING



RANDY TYNER (4)
15" Cherry Burl



CARL CUMMINS
Elm 2-5/8"x 3-3/8"



MARTY COGEN

WHAT EVERYONE IS DOING



MARTY COGEN



CARL CUMMINS
Elm 6" x 3"



JOE PETRANKA

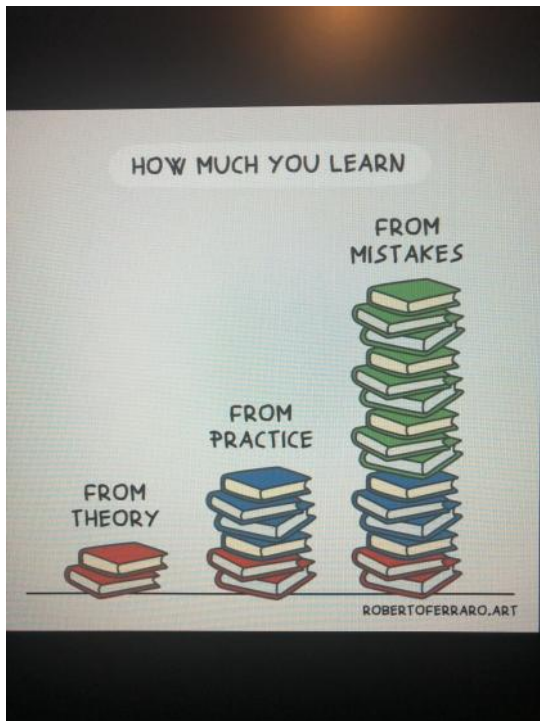
First time turning boxes from black cherry and English birch .
Really enjoyed Raleigh and learned so much. Trying to apply what I took in in the classes.
box on left sanded to 8000,
center poly, right tried and true

RELATED TO TURNING

BRIAN LARSON



Here's a little reminder of the importance of safety in the shop. Last Friday afternoon I was cutting a bowl blank on my bandsaw in preparation for turning it. I'm usually very safety conscious but in a lapse of concentration I forgot to use a push stick for the last part of the cut. The wood pushed through and my hand contacted the blade. Fortunately, no major injury resulted- a visit to the UAB urgent care clinic (high praise to them), 14 stitches and a little numbness in my hand from a small nerve branch cut. No arteries or fingers were involved. This was a huge wake up call for me to keep safety first in my mind at all times.



These are from HOWARD KING

AWA LIBRARY

The materials in the AWA Library are now available for checkout. Since this is a new system (it actually began in 2020 but right before the Covid shutdown) I'd like to go with the following procedures and see how well it works. Your feedback is welcome.

1. A chart listing the materials will be available on the AWA website. You can find it on the "Learning" tab at "Library Listing" which is a link to <https://alabamawoodturners.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AWA-Library.pdf> The materials are grouped according to type: DVDs, Books, Magazines. If you want to check any item(s) out please let me know by sending an email to alawoodturners@gmail.com prior to the next scheduled meeting. Please give me both the item number and its title so I can make sure I get the correct item.
2. The day of the meeting I'll pull these items from where they are stored. I'm going to plan to be in that room in the other building, i.e. the Red Mountain Makers space, from about 8:15 - 9:00 in case anyone wants to come browse and see what's in the library. Around 9:00 I'll bring any requested materials to the Hardware Park meeting room and check them out. I'll probably plan to stay at the meeting until around 9:30, but if you want an item and are going to be late let me know so I can stay until you get there.
3. Items will be checked out for one month, so they will be due back at the next monthly meeting. If you need to keep something longer please let me know; as long as no one else has requested it there shouldn't be a problem with keeping it an additional month. Questions, problems, suggestions, etc. can be sent to me at the above email address or see me at the meeting.

Thanks,
Jane Rabey
AWA Librarian

RIDDLE ANSWER: They keep dropping their needles!

Why join the AAW?

Plain and simple, you are enthusiastic about woodturning.

An AAW membership offers you access to the single largest portfolio of high-quality educational woodturning resources available in the world. Membership is the fastest way to learn and enhance your woodturning expertise.

An AAW membership can help you:

- Experience the remarkable world of woodturning.
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- Make a commitment to your own personal and creative development.
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With an AAW membership you have access to:

- 3,000+ online projects, articles, videos, and tips are in AAW's Explore! search tool. Get the best project instructions, technique guidelines, and information in just a few simple clicks. Easily searchable by topic and includes all interest areas.
- 12,000+ images of member work are in AAW's Forum gallery online. Get inspiration, ideas, and feedback simply. Connect with woodturning enthusiasts using this member-moderated virtual community.
- 475+ online videos are quickly searchable by topic in AAW's Video Source. Avoid the frustration of searching YouTube. Get relevant woodturning videos in just a few clicks. All videos are prescreened by the AAW for quality content and safety.
- 150+ issues of American Woodturner are online with a searchable index.
- 38+ issues of Woodturning FUNDamentals publication and the Woodturning FUNDamentals online learning portal offer one-stop basics. Helps newer turners build and expand their woodturning knowledge and skills safely with a curated selection of information, projects, tips, and videos.
- 365 affiliated chapters are all easily searchable in our directories. Find a chapter near you fast. Also, search for symposia, demonstrations, exhibitions, events, organizations, and schools, and more, quickly and easily.

The Karl Harper Perpetual Challenge

AWA has established a perpetual turning challenge in memory of Karl Harper. This challenge is an excellent remembrance of Karl as he continuously expressed a 'try anything' spirit and was an inspiration to us all.

This is how it works: A piece will be turned by a member to be presented at the next meeting. A name will be drawn from the sign-in sheet at that meeting. If the person whose name is drawn accepts, they will take that piece to keep and will bring a piece the following month. If they decline, then another name will be drawn until someone accepts the challenge.

If you question your skill level, **don't!** Karl never did! You are good enough at whatever level you are! Karl would want us to put a bag over our heads before we turned because he thought 'Lights are for people with disabilities!'

Rocky Kimble turned a bowl for the June challenge, won by Lee Ferguson for July-2026.



If you want to watch the video of Karl Harper turning here is the link!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_XGRjlvMDk

COPY & PASTE
Also on the AWA website.

Turning Pens for Troops

Turning pens for the troops sponsored by Woodcraft has been a long-time project of our club. This project provides pen to our troops all over the world. Several of our members have met soldiers that have received a pen. All the service members speak of how much this meant to them and that they still have the pen. Last year, our club turned in over 300 pens! How the program works is that for every pen that we turn in Woodcraft gives us a slimline pen kit to make another one with.

From David Fancher:

Pen for Troops is doing well. At the last meeting 30 pens were turned in. A new pen style that is becoming popular is a slime line pen with a 308 cartridge for the top. Hoover Tactical Firearms has been kind enough to supply us with these. If you're interested come by the table at the meeting to get some.

Lee Beadles, a longtime member of the club has literally made 1000 of pens for Pen for Troops. He and his wife recently moved to Kansas. I'm sorry to say that his wife has recently passed. I know your thoughts and prayers are with Lee and his family



LEADERSHIP

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