



The Newsletter of the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild

V1-N4, April 2026

Editor's Note

-Ed Estlow

If you thought you noticed something new at the top of this newsletter, you're right! A new newsletter title AND banner!

You'll recall that last month we sent out first a request for newsletter title suggestions, and then a survey for the most popular of the top six suggestions. "Northern Woods" was chosen by a decisive margin and approved (ratified?) by the Board. This seems fitting since Northern Woods was the title of the previous newsletter upwards of fifteen years ago. (Were all of you channeling the membership of the early 20-teens? 😊)

And much thanks to Paul Ehrlich for creating the header you see above!

This month, we've got information and updates from several folks:

- President's Corner from Paul Ehrlich,
- Information on another batch of MNWWG supporters from George Lucas (be sure you patronize these folks as you need to and show them your MNWWG membership card!),
- A raft of classes and additional info from Khriisslyn Goodman (I'm amazed at how Khriisslyn and her committee – as she puts it – keep so many plates spinning!),
- A report on the recent Nakashima Day at the MN Landscape Arboretum from Mike Johnson. Mark your 2027 calendars to participate next year!

And remember, coming up quickly is the 2026 edition of our Northern Wood Exhibition at Eden Prairie Center! Make plans early to attend, and please volunteer if you are able.

President's Corner

-Paul Ehrlich

April is always an exciting time in the Guild as we prepare for our 42nd Northern Woods Exhibition. This year's event is April 23 – 26, 2026 at Eden Prairie Center. There are a lot of activities going on with the event including set up, judging, and awards. But one of the most interesting sessions is on Saturday afternoon (April 25, 2026) from 2:00 – 4:00 when we have “meet the maker” and there is a chance for the exhibitors to be on the floor and interact with the public. We have over 40 entries this year and are looking forward to seeing some great work at the show.

- **Volunteers Needed:** Everything we do at the Guild depends on the generous time and expertise provided by our volunteers. We do need more volunteers to help with Northern Woods – especially on Sunday April 26, 2026, during the day and for tear down at the end of the show. Click here to sign up: [Volunteer](#) We also have openings for members of many of our committees (Programs, Expo, Education, etc.) as well as the need for board members. Please e-mail to me or to Volunteers@mnwwg.org.
- **Newsletter Name:** Last month we ran a poll to get input on a name for the newsletter. We had a lot of responses to the poll, and the clear winner was “Northern Woods” – which is both an homage to the Northern Woods Exhibition and the name of the newsletter which was last published in 2013. To avoid confusion, we have decided to use the name “Northern Woods Newsletter.” Thanks to everyone who participated.
- **Scholarships:** The Guild will be awarding a total of three \$1,000 scholarships for members who would like to take a class to advance their skills. Two of these are funded by the Guild and the third was donated by the Mark Laub Studio. Applications will be taken through the end of May. See [Scholarships](#) to apply.
- **Strategy:** The board is working on developing a long-term strategy for the organization. Much of the focus is on continuing our current strengths with events like Northern Woods, Expo, Programs and Supporters. But the plan also includes the development of new programs focused on Education and Volunteers. More details will be provided in the coming months!

Mentorship Opportunity: The Furniture Society has a program to help mentor craftspeople and has resources that include scholarships. For more details please see [Furniture Society](#).

Minnesota Woodworkers Guild Supporters

- George Lucas

The Minnesota Woodworkers Guild currently has nearly 50 Supporters. Each of the supporters offers guild members a special deal, usually a discount or wholesale pricing. These supporters offer nearly everything that the woodworker may need for their projects. See <https://mnwwg.org/supporters/> for a current list of supporters and details of what deals they offer to guild members.

Woodworkers often need to sharpen their tools, whether it be saw blades, Jointer or Planer knives, or specialty tools. The guild has two supporters that offer sharpening services to guild members at a discount.



1690 Fieldstone Ct, Stacy, MN 55079

Phone: (763) 786-9652

<http://www.servicegrinding.com>

Service Grinding and Sharpening, located in the North Metro, offers precision grinding and sharpening services to guild members at a 10% discount. You must show your guild membership card to receive this discount. They offer pickup and delivery with a week turnaround, or you can bring in your tools for sharpening. They can sharpen and recondition a wide range of tools including spiral bits, Forstner bits, countersinks, router bits, hole saws, and drills.



12000 Riverwood Drive, Burnsville, MN 55337

Phone: (952) 890-5984

<http://hancocktool.com/>

Hancock Tool, located in the South Metro, offers precision grinding and sharpening services to guild members at a 10% discount. You must show your guild membership card to receive this discount. They can sharpen and repair a wide variety of cutting tools that woodworkers use. They will tailor make tooling for shapers and routers.

Education

Khrisslyn Goodman

The Education Committee is currently keeping many plates in the air! Here's a brief summary of the planning efforts we've made and some of what's planned for the future.

Strategic Planning

The Education Committee is working to develop a strategic plan. The plan will reflect how the Education Committee's efforts align with the overall goals of the Guild. As noted in the Guild's survey results from last year as well as the results of the focus group Zoom calls this winter, education is one key reason members join. The Education Committee is focusing on: 1) hands on training with classes at a variety of skill levels; 2) using one or more shared facilities as well as online classes; 3) Guild members can be instructors as well as local and national masters, and 4) consideration of scholarships to increase opportunities within the community for those who need support.

PDF Reference Library

Check out our ever-expanding PDF reference library, housed here:

<https://mnwwg.org/reference-revised-2026/>

Currently we have a "starter shop blueprint" with everything you need to get started in woodworking, as well as a reference sheet on wood glue.

Classes

Following the online focus-group calls this past winter and from the survey in February of 2025, we heard a large portion of our members wanted classes in design, finishing and joinery. We started our education programming with a SketchUp class, delivered by Zoom in February. This beginning design class is now going further by an Autodesk Fusion class, an alternative to SketchUp. Fusion is a software program used to design and build wood projects. The first Zoom session started April 11 and continues two more Saturdays, until April 25.

A mortise-and-tenon class taught by Steve McLoon took place on March 28. It was a fantastic day of woodworking and Guild fellowship (as you can see in the photos!) and since the class had a waitlist, we are excited to offer it again on June 20th.



A big thank you goes to Dave Duddleston for all the legwork he did for the class. Thanks also to George Thomas for being an awesome shop assistant, and to John Madsen for providing resource PDFs.

Computer design and build classes are just one part of our plan to offer a wide range of educational classes. The Education Committee has planned the following additional classes which are available for sign-up. While we are working on our page on the Guild website, the easiest way to sign up is via links below:

Saturday, May 2-Introduction to Woodworking, taught by Yana Frank. Yana's introduction class includes using the table saw, planer, bandsaw and router. Students will each make a small wooden box with a sliding lid to take home. Yana's class is methodical, well-thought out and sequenced. One of the Education Committee members found the class encouraging and refreshing. Just four spaces available for this date as of April 14th!

https://members.mnwwg.org/site_event_detail.cfm?pk_association_event=36983

Saturday, June 20, Mortise and Tenon Joints. This too is a one-day fundamental skills class in which students will learn and understand this essential joint using a variety of different methods and tools. These include hand tools, table saw, band saw, drill press, router, hollow chisel mortiser, Leigh and Festool jigs. Taught by Steve McLoon, a Guild member and master craftsman, it is a great opportunity to learn multiple ways to make this joint. As of April 14th, there are two more spaces available.

https://members.mnwwg.org/site_event_detail.cfm?pk_association_event=36939

Wednesdays and Mondays for five sessions starting July 8, 6-9 pm This class will be taught by boatbuilders Phil and Maria at their Sheer Craft shop in St. Paul. Check out their website at sheer-craft.com! Your project will be a wooden tool tote, where you will familiarize yourself with the use of many hand tools as well as sharpening. There are six spaces available for this class.

https://members.mnwwg.org/site_event_detail.cfm?pk_association_event=36843

Saturday and Sunday, June 13 and 14 (coming soon on the website to sign up!)

This class is taught by Steve McLoon and reviews everything done in the intro class 1 by Yana Frank plus some additions. It is a great class for people already comfortable with ripping and crosscutting on the table saw and is an excellent follow up to the intro class 1. The additional skills include milling wood 4-square, making bevel cuts with the table saw, route rabbets on the router table, drill holes with the drill press and cut grooves for splines with the table saw. Each student will make a small wooden box with a lift lid and splines to take home.

A **finishing** class and more **hand tool** classes are being planned for this summer. Stay tuned!

Nakashima Day 2026

Mike Johnson

On Monday, March 23rd, eight Guild members volunteered at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum to clean and oil the remarkable collection of Nakashima furniture housed in the Andersen Horticultural Library. The collection, commissioned in the 1970s by former Governor Elmer Andersen and his wife Eleanor, remains one of the Arboretum's most treasured features.

This year marks the third year that the Minnesota Woodworkers Guild has partnered with the Arboretum for this annual preservation effort, a tradition that began when Susan Cross single-handedly completed the very first cleaning—an experience she jokingly dubbed “Miserable Day.” Thanks to the combined efforts of Guild members, Arboretum volunteers, and library staff, the event is now anything but miserable. For woodworkers, it's a rare opportunity to study, handle, and care for pieces created by one of the most influential furniture makers of the 20th century.

We look forward to continuing this partnership for many years to come. Keep an eye on your email next February and March (2027) when we send out the call for volunteers.



Volunteers for the 2026 Nakashima “Miserable” Day (from left to right) Kristen Mastel – Head Librarian, Dan Waldrop – MNWWG, Tib Shaw – MNWWG, Kevin Alto – MNWWG and Arboretum member, Susan Cross – Arboretum, Jim Strom – Arboretum, Brendan Dawson – MNWWG, Eddie Phillips - MNWWG, Ken Simon – MNWWG, Wayne Gartland - Arboretum, Mike Wallien - MNWWG , Colin Russell – MNWWG, Paul Macek – Arboretum.