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**Established 1965**

**New England Wood Carvers**

[www.newc.org](http://www.newc.org)

Facebook New England Woodcarvers

July/August/September Edition 2023



### One of the Greats

NEWC was notified by his daughter that Louis E. Dennis Jr. 82, one of the most generous, talented and revered wood carvers, passed away on July 2. She also said that Louis did not want a memorial service but those who met Louis will memorialize him in our own way. As Kim Rhault said, "he will always have a special place with us."

According to his website, Louis Dennis Jr. did not start carving until after his own master carver father passed away. Prior to picking up the family tradition, Louis worked building houses and making furniture. Once he had a knife in his hand, he found a new way to bring the best out of a piece of wood. Starting by carving a small spoon, he graduated to carving birds, ever larger and more grand. (photos below)

Louis is known for his generosity, giving many of his beautiful bird carvings to the Tree of Hope. That spirit of giving was recently seen alive and well when two very large donations were given to the Tree of Hope in Louis' memory. "The tree I don't think couldn't have been so successful without our friend Louie's yearly support both to the Tree and The Club!!! He will surely be missed for so many things!!!" Rick Boyer related. If you care to make a donation to the Tree of Hope in Louis' name, please contact Rick.



These little birds are a few examples of the quality work he did, even those he donated to support others (photo from denniswoodcarver.com),



The above photo was taken at the Spirit of Wood Show in 2019. Louis' life sized and superbly realistic eagle seemed to be swooping down on unsuspecting viewers.

# ALERT!

We are finding a number of member email addresses that are incorrect on the member list on which all of our communications to member are based. If you received an email from NEWC, please let other members you meet know that and then tell any who say "Well, I didn't get it!" that they need to contact the President and Mary Chouinard to have any errors corrected immediately.

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## Annual Meeting Report

On June 24th, the Annual Meeting was held at the Senior Center in Westminister, Massachusetts. Following a general carving and chat session, the Annual Meeting was called to order. Several announcements were made:

The Guild of New Hampshire will be hosting its 1st Annual Woodworking Show and Competition on Saturday, October 21st at the Christa McAuliffe Center in Concord, NH. Carvers are encouraged to join in the competition for substantial cash prizes. We need to teach the turners and furniture makers all about wood carving! You can find the full announcement on their website or as an attachment to this newsletter.

Chatham Fine Arts and Crafts Festival is being held in the Chatham Community Center in Chatham, Massachusetts September 9-10. They welcome woodcarvers to reserve spaces to sell their artwork. There is a cost to set up. Check them out online for more information.

Due to the high cost of producing the hardcopy version of the newsletter, anyone who is able to receive it via email will be able to save the extra \$25 that is necessary to cover the cost of printing and mailing a hardcopy. Please contact Jan LeClair (Jan@newc.org) to receive the email version in the future.

As of July 1 this year, all memberships will run from July 1 to June 30. If you renew now for 2024, you will only pay a portion of the annual renewal cost. Contact Mary Chouinard to renew soon if you haven't already.

If your club's carving location asks for a certificate of insurance, you may join in the NEWC policy for an affiliation fee that will cover your club. Contact Jan LeClair for more information.

Donations for the SOW Bucket raffle and Silent Auction are coming in! But we need many more. Please consider carving something special to donate to the raffle to help support NEWC activities throughout the year. One of the highlights this year is a donation from the family of Paul Ward of an Armand Lamontagne sign print called Wolf Robe Cheyanne. This print has sold for \$450 but you can bid in the Silent Auction for it; there will be a reserve on this item. (Photo below). Also in the Silent Auction will be a one of a kind NEWC clock, which may need new works, also pictured below.



## ~Member of the Year 2023~

The winner for 2023 is a gentleman who has done much to revitalize the Granite State Woodcarvers post-covid. He has also been a teacher and contributor to the Guild of New Hampshire for more than twenty years.

Congratulations to our friend and colleague as NEWC Member of the Year, presented by Kim Rhault, to **Mr. Bob Schwinger!** Next time you see Bob, congratulate him for his many good works.

N.B. Member of the Year 2020 was missing in the Annual Meeting program. Apologies to Mary Chouinard, our winner that year.

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## Paul Ward Auction

Following presentation of the award, the auction began. Gary Filiault served as auctioneer, doing an amazing job and keeping the audience in stitches throughout. Books, tools, wood of all kind! Whatever the family of Paul Ward had donated to NEWC flew off the tables and into the hands of eager buyers. A total of \$318 dollars was realized by the end of the auction. (The original amount announced was revised following the discovery of accounting errors.) Our thanks to the family for contacting Robin Trudeau about the donation of Paul's collection.

To finish off the afternoon, members were asked for their input regarding the dissolution of the New England Woodcarvers. Reasons to consider dissolution included the lack of volunteers to fill empty Board positions, reluctance to volunteer to help at the SOW, and a drop in membership. Despite these very good reasons, the majority of members were in favor of continuing the effort to save the organization. Several salient suggestions were put forward toward that end: finding a permanent home; revising our mission statement; advertising for new members; encouraging volunteers by finding small tasks for them to do; assisting local clubs to expand their membership; changing our perception of NEWC as more than a club but also an association that provides services that bring local clubs together.

A questionnaire was sent to all members to solicit their feedback about NEWC. If you haven't completed yours yet, please do so as we will be compiling results to report here.

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## *Spirit of Wood News*

Hello Fellow Carvers,

As you may know, the Spirit of Wood 2023 is coming October 14 and 15. So get your carvings ready! Last year was the first time I had organized the event and I had a blast coordinating a great team, visiting the woodcarving clubs from all around New England and seeing all the great carvings people produced in 2022. I even entered some carvings myself. Not so much to win an award but to make sure we meet our goal for the number of carvings entered. Anyway, I had won several ribbons in the novice level.

I understand at the Spirit of Wood, my carvings are judged and placed in competition with so many great carvers but that is not why I carve. To me, the Spirit of Wood isn't about competition. I don't carve to win prizes. I never did. It is about the enjoyment of carving. I carve simply to make people happy by carving a gift that will put a smile on their face. To give family and friends a handmade carving that reminds them of our friendship, the smile on their face is the greatest prize of all.

Last year, four of my carvings won a ribbon in the Spirit of Wood. When I gave those carvings away, I showed the person the ribbon I got for it. Behold, something new and wonderful happened that I wasn't quite expecting. They felt extra special because they were receiving a prize-winning carving from me. There was more than a smile on their face. There was pure joy in their heart. Now that is the Spirit of Wood.

I personally invite all you to come to the Spirit of Wood and enter your carvings. Those carvings that win a prize will become extra special to you and your loved ones.

Yours in the Spirit of Wood,

Darren Boehm

## HOTELS FOR SOW 2023

Many regular competitors for SOW are calling concerned about the cost of hotel rooms near Peabody, MA. One person mentioned that rooms were going for up to \$1200 per night! And finding a room is very difficult. Why? Because Peabody is not far from Salem, MA, the witch capital of New England in October.

Recommendations:

1. Check Hotels.com, Expedia.com Vrbo and any of the other booking sites for prices and availability.
2. Look outside the immediate Peabody area. One hotel recommended that people search communities along Route 95 a 30 to 45 minutes north and west of Peabody. Woburn and Danvers are good places to look for hotels.
3. If you are close enough, 60 to 90 minutes from Peabody, drive from home. The NEWC President may be doing that.
4. If you live within 30 minutes of Peabody, can you host a carver for one night, someone you know from previous SOWs?

We want to make this SOW a success. But that means you all need to enter the competition. So get busy working on some amazing stuff!

And speaking of entering, all the information and forms you need are on the newc.org website under Events. Any questions about the competition and judging, contact Robin@newc.org. General questions about the SOW, contact Darren@newc.org.

## Volunteers Needed!

The following volunteers are important to the success of the show and competition . If you have time on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, please contact Darren and offer your services.

Set up Tables - Friday and Saturday

Take Down Tables - Sunday after the show

Sell Raffle Tickets - Sunday all day

Judge - judges and assistants are needed on Sunday

Record for judges - work with judges on Sunday

Register competitors - Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning

Runners - Sunday morning

Membership - Saturday afternoon and Sunday all day

You don't necessarily need experience to volunteer, just the desire to help.



Darren Boehm, Laurie Farrell, Robin Patten and Kim Rhault (above) spent a day with the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers selling raffle tickets and doing wood carving demonstrations. The Guild had over 50 beautifully handcrafted items for raffle at the 90th Annual Craftsmen's Fair in Tent E at the Mount Sunapee Resort. Mike DiMaggio (right)



was doing an excellent demonstration on sharpening chisels and knives.

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### **Membership and Board Meetings**

The dates and location for member meetings for the rest of 2023 are:  
September 23, 2023 Westminster, MA Senior Center  
December 16, 2023 Westminster, MA Senior center

And for the first half of 2024 the dates are:  
February 10, 2024 location TBA  
April 13, 2024 location TBA  
June (Annual Meeting) 15, 2024 location TBA

The dates for Board meetings are:  
November 19, 2023 via Zoom time to be announced  
January 21, 2024 via Zoom time to be announced

Check on the newc.org website for updates.

Are you from Vermont or Cape Cod? The Board could use your help. Please contact [Jan@newc.org](mailto:Jan@newc.org).

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