

# Alexandriacarvers.com



December 2017 *The Newsletter of the Parkers Prairie Woodcarving Club*

Web Page: alexandriacarvers.com

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Remember to bring an extra \$10 per person to carving classes to pay for the use of the facility.

Dues are due first of the year.  
Adults or family = \$15.  
Junior membership \$5

## Newsletter/Dues

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# Tip of the Day

## SAFETY

One trip to the emergency room will pay for a lot of gloves. Wear one on you non carving hand. **Remember**, always pretend any safety device is not there. Don't depend on the glove. Do not carve toward your other hand even though you have a glove on that hand.

Keep your tools razor sharp to avoid miscues. A dull tool will 'jump' off the wood easier than a sharp tool.

Don't scratch your face with a tool in your hand.

Don't place your carving project on your leg when you carve. The **femoral artery** is a large artery in the thigh. If you should slip and cut that artery the probability of you surviving is slim.

# Calendar

November 18: Woodburning with Brenda Lodermeier

December 2, 3: Carving a fish with Troy Helget

January: Open

February 17, 18: Carving a Turtle with Don Fisher

March: Open

April 13, 14 15: To be determined with Marty Dolphens



**Pyrography** or **pyrogravure** is the art of decorating wood or other materials with burn marks resulting from the controlled application of a heated object such as a [poker](#). It is also known as **pokerwork** or **wood burning**.

The term means "writing with fire", from the Greek *pur* (fire) and *graphos* (writing).<sup>[1]</sup> It can be practiced using specialized modern pyrography tools, or using a metal implement heated in a fire, or even sunlight concentrated with a magnifying [lens](#). "Pyrography dates from the 17th century and reached its highest standard in the 19th century. In its crude form it is pokerwork."<sup>[2]</sup>

A large range of tones and shades can be achieved. Varying the type of tip used, the temperature, or the way the iron is applied to the material all create different effects. After the design is burned in, wooden objects are often coloured. Light-coloured [hardwoods](#) such as [sycamore](#), [basswood](#), [beech](#) and [birch](#) are most commonly used, as their fine [grain](#) is not obtrusive. However, other woods, such as maple, [pine](#) or [oak](#), are also used. Pyrography is also applied to leather items, using the same hot-iron technique. [Leather](#) lends itself to bold designs, and also allows very subtle shading to be achieved. Specialist vegetable-tanned leather must be used for pyrography (as modern [tanning](#) methods leave chemicals in the leather which are [toxic](#) when burned), typically in light colours for good contrast.

Pyrography is also popular among [gourd](#) crafters and artists, where designs are burned onto the exterior of a dried hard-shell gourd.

## Safety

The main hazard to be wary of is the extremely fine wood dust when sanding the wood or in some cases the pitch/sap or resin that emits harmful fumes when burning. All wood dust is hazardous & can cause respiratory problems if you do not wear a mask, some more than others & should be avoided. You should always wear a quality dust mask/respirator while power carving, and use a good dust collection system to avoid a lifetime injury to your lungs. These recommendations really are not just for power carving or sanding, but they should be used for burning as well. Remember:

- **DO NOT** burn on pressure-treated wood. It is treated with chemicals that, although safely bound in the wood fibers for construction purposes, are inherently dangerous to woodworkers and woodburners.

**DO NOT** burn on any type of treated wood: Chemically treated, stained, painted, sealed with a finish, etc. If you must use this type of wood be sure that you have thoroughly sanded it to remove all traces and are burning on **bare** wood.<sup>[9]</sup>

Prepared Wood, Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF), man made boards and plywood should never really ever be burned on for several reasons. Prepared wood usually has been chemically treated and burning on it will release toxins into the air. MDF is made out of toxic materials and may cause cancer and other health issues. Man-made boards and such also have layers of glue that releases toxins that may not cause immediate harm but impact one later on in life.<sup>↓</sup>