



GOING 'ROUND

Front Range Woodturners Newsletter

Vol. 26, No. 2 February 2026

Editor: Brenda Blaesing

JANUARY DEMONSTRATOR –DON PRORAK **Tuesday, February 3rd–In Person and via Zoom**

Greg Broughton - frw.vicepres@gmail.com

Originally from Chicago, Don Prorak is a musician, music teacher, composer, and woodturner. His musical career has encompassed classical, jazz, rock, pop, musical theater and world music, and he taught music at all levels from elementary to university and adults. For the last several decades he has focused on steel pans of Trinidad & Tobago and has travelled there many times to perform and experience the culture.



Don started woodworking in the 1980s with a circular saw, drill, router and a few cheap hand tools. He purchased a Shopsmith and started to play around with woodturning. As he describes it, “Back then I had very few tools and even less knowledge; now I have a lot of tools!” He got serious about woodturning around 2012 after meeting Bruce Perry and joined FRW in 2014. Since retiring from public school teaching in 2016, he has taken an active role in the club, serving as Youth Mentor (2017 - present), Group Purchase Chair (2022) VP/Program Director (2020, 21, & 23), and President (2024- 25). He is also a member of AAW, as well as the Rocky Mountain, Pikes Peak, and Pueblo clubs. As a demonstrator he has appeared at all the local clubs as well as the Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium, and has taught classes for LOTL, HOW, and the Brown Bag Demos.

Don has studied with and been influenced by many prominent woodturners, including Bruce Perry, Keith Gottschall, Trent Bosch, Cindy Drozda, Laurent Niclot, Jean Francois Escolen, Richard Raffan, Pat

WHERE TO FIND US:

Website: www.frontrangewoodturners.org

Facebook: <https://tinyurl.com/yacakdwa>

Ladies of the Lathe: <https://tinyurl.com/yap8m6x4>

YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/yxem4vw9>

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CLUB INFORMATION

Front Range Woodturners is the Denver-area chapter of the AAW (American Association of Woodturners), serving woodturners throughout Colorado's Front Range. We help woodturners gain experience by providing monthly demonstrations with professional turners, mentoring, a ladies group (Ladies of the Lathe) and youth mentoring.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Everyone is welcome to check out one of our monthly meetings. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at Rockler Woodworking, 2553 S Colorado Blvd. #108 in Denver. Meetings start at 6:15pm.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual - \$45, Couple - \$50, Student - \$22.50.

FRW members consist of the following:

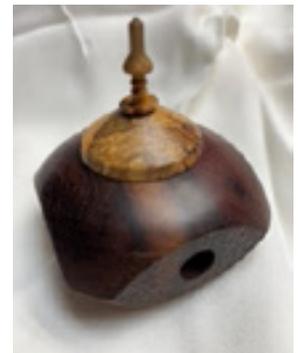
Co-Club Members	21	Lifetime Members	21
Family Members	14	Roster	10
Individual Members	77	Student, Online	2,1
Total Membership	149	paid for 2026	

CLUB OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

- President: Raleigh Lockhart
- Vice President/Program Director: Greg Broughton
- Secretary: Patrick Crumpton
- Treasurer: Larry Abrams
- President Emeritus: Don Prorak
- Club Historian: Rick Orr
- Coffee Chair: Gary Starritt
- Communications Chair: Pat Scott
- Group Buy Coordinator: Jay Miller
- Internet Chair: Pat Scott
- Ladies of the Lathe Chair: Marcee Morris
- Librarian: Brian Tooker
- Membership Chair: Scott Schlapkohl
- Mentoring Program Chair: Marty Christensen
- Newsletter Editor: Brenda Blaesing
- PHEOG Grant Chair: Ken Rollins
- Photographer: Jim Record
- Publicity Chair: Robyn Herman & Raleigh Lockhart
- Shop Tour Chair: Al Murphy
- Videographer: Larry Abrams
- Wood Drawing: Lavonne Kaiser
- Youth Chair: Don Prorak

Carroll, and Roberto Ferrer. He particularly enjoys turning pieces with "Wings, Rings, & Off-Center Things".

For our February demo, Don will show his design of a square-to-round box with spinning top lid. The box body starts from a square cross grain blank of dry wood with top and bottom curving towards center. The box body is hollowed and can have holes drilled in the flat sides. The end grain lid doubles as a spinning top which can be spun on the inverted box bottom. The piece is enhanced with carving and/or pyrography. The project involves careful layout, cross-grain and spindle turning, and hollowing technique.



PRESIDENT'S SERVICE AWARD

Raleigh Lockhart

This January, we are proud to honor **Lavonne Kaiser** for her exceptional dedication and service to our FRW club. A dedicated member since 2001, Lavonne's contributions were formally celebrated when she was awarded Lifetime Membership status. Beyond her long-term membership, her leadership as the Wood Raffle Chair has been instrumental to the club's success. Through her years of service in this role, she has ensured the wood raffle remains a thriving staple of our monthly meetings. Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment to the Front Range Woodturners!



AAW MEMBERSHIP

Front Range Woodturners is a chapter of the American Association of Woodturners. Club members may become individual members of AAW, if desired. Benefits include resources, weekly emails on various woodturning topics, and the quarterly American Woodturning magazine. See AAW's website at www.woodturner.org for more information.

LADIES OF THE LATHE

Marcee Morris -
marcee.morris@gmail.com



In January, the LOTL learned “outside-in” turning, demonstrated by our own **Debra Higley-Feldman**. Using Schacht maple, we learned how to do the initial glue-up of four equal pieces to form the inside of our hot air balloon ornaments. After turning a curve, these were separated, then reglued to the form the outside of the ornaments.



In February we will be turning eggs and adding a wide variety of embellishments. The class will be taught by **Henry Williams**.

LOTL is proud to announce that we have received a grant from the AAW and have used these funds toward the purchase of eight new Record Power SC2 chucks. A huge shout-out to **Debra Higley-Feldman** for initiating and writing this grant application.

BROWN BAG DEMO

Robyn Herman - rherm@gmail.com

Raleigh Lockhart led a very informative class/discussion of laser engraving at the January BBD.

He demonstrated his small, portable engraver and **Bob Franklin** showed his stationary one. **Andy Boudreau, Andy Zartman** and **Pat Scott** also contributed their knowledge.

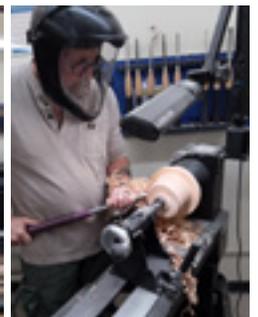


In February, **Ed Cypher** will be demonstrating bent wood rings, wood rings with metal cores, inlaying rings with a variety of substances and tools/jigs that make the process easier.

H.O.W. CLASS

Keith Motzner -keithmotzner@gmail.com

Jay Miller gave a great HOW class on turning mini cowboy hats with wet wood blanks. He showed the use of a bowl gouge in turning the tenon on what would be the top of the hat, shaping the hat, flipping to turn the inside, and sanding on low speed and coarse grit while still on the lathe. He also talked about steaming the wood once turned and using a jig to shape the rim of the hat. Others have used rubber bands to bend the rim, but he has found use of a jig to get a more symmetric bend.



MENTORS

Marty Christensen -
mecturning@gmail.com



Some FRW members have volunteered to be one-on-one mentors to help other members. No matter what skill level you are, a few hours of personalized instruction may be all you need to master a new tool or technique. Check out who is available in your area. If you're interested in being a mentor, contact Marty.

LOCATION OF MENTOR	NAME/ CONTACT INFO	AREA OF EXPERTISE
Arvada	Dennis Fanning dcfanning@aol.com	General
Aurora	Robin Luther robin.luther@ymail.com	General
Boulder	Dave Hawley Dbh001@gmail.com	Beginner/ General
Brighton	Don Prorak donprorak@comcast.net	Beginner/ Youth
Centennial	Keith Motzner kmotzner@me.com	Wood Gathering & Prep/ Sharpening/Tool Skills
Centennial	Les Stern sternsclass@hotmail.com	General
Denver SW	Henry Williams williamshenrya@gmail.com	Spindles/ Bowls
Denver-Rockler store	Larry Abrams laabrams.51@me.com	General
Highlands Ranch	Rick Orr rickorr.1848@yahoo.com	Boxes/Inlay/ Thread Cutting
Hudson	Marty Christensen mecturning@gmail.com	General
Lakewood	Debra Higley debrakhf@gmail.com	General
Littleton	Jay Miller jaymiller9637@comcast.net	General
Louisville	Roger Holmes roger_holmes@comcast.net	Beginner
Thornton	Bob Franklin Btheb66@gmail.com	General/ Stabilizing

MENTORING CLASS

Marty Christensen - mecturning@gmail.com
The next mentoring class will be held on **Monday, February 9th** from 5:00 to 7:00pm at Rockler. The subject will be Sharpening, part two of the two-part series.

QUARTERLY GROUP BUYS



FRW places group buys once a quarter-in January, April, July and October-to get discounted pricing from the below manufacturers. The next group buy will be in April. Jay Miller is the group buy coordinator and Ted Mellin is his assistant. See the FRW website for more info, price lists and order forms.

Industrial Abrasives - send orders to Jay Miller

Industrial Abrasives is our principal vendor for sanding supplies. Prices for hook & loop mandrels and discs remain the lowest in the marketplace and their backing is a heavier weight than the competition.

Starbond - send orders to Jay Miller

There is no longer a minimum order amount, we now get 25% off retail prices on ALL products. There is a flat \$4.99 shipping fee and no tax. The order forms have been updated, go to the website for the current price and enter the quantity, size, description, and price on the order form. The eForm will do all of the calculations for you.

Craft Supplies - send orders to Ted Mellin

Craft Supplies sells a very wide range of products. Our minimum group purchase is \$1000. Members may not place individual orders to get a discount.

Spence Industrial Supply - send orders to Ted Mellin

We will be purchasing band saw blades from Spence once a year, in April, unless a member can meet the minimum order in another quarter. All blades are carbon steel flexback in 1/4" (4 tpi), 3/8"(3 tpi), or 1/2" (4 tpi) width, hook tooth, and .025"thick. Our minimum buy is 20 blades for each width in any length.

Send orders and checks to:

Jay Miller	Ted Mellin
9637 W. Vandeventor Dr	9043 W Coco Dr
Littleton, CO 80128	Littleton, CO 80128

Individual Catalog Orders

Two additional companies, Klingspor and Penn State Industries, offer discounts to members who wish to place individual catalog orders. You must be on their list of FRW members to get the discount. To get on the list, please sign up at a meeting or send an e-mail to Jay Miller (jaymiller9637@comcast.net).

PHOTO GALLERY

Here are some projects that members have been working on this month.



These are a few of the balloons **Debra Higley** turned for the January LOTL class. The outside-inside balloons, made from Schacht maple, are up to 2" dia x 4" high. The finish is Tenbow watercolor pens, Golden mica acrylic, and spray lacquer.



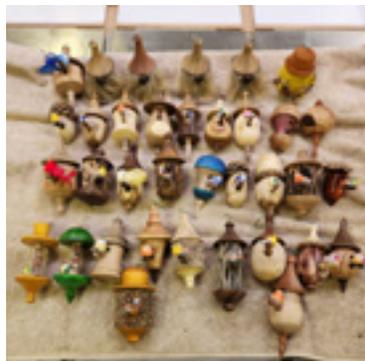
Russell Dewey has been working on several projects. Eventually they will all be donated to the local zoo as part of their annual fund raiser in June. These types of items as well as the numerous Christmas tree ornaments he provides for them generate quite a bit of money for their mission and expenses.



First is a maple bowl, 8-1/2" x 3-1/2", then a burl (unknown wood) hollow form measuring 5" x 3" and a burl lidded box, 4-1/2" x 3".



All were finished with wipe-on poly. The last picture is of the ornaments for their 2025 Christmas tree they put in the entrance to the gift shop.



Matt Price turned an 8" tall salt/pepper mill set from cherry stock with thin maple and walnut ripped strips to differentiate the salt and pepper respectively. He found an old beat up salt/pepper mill set at a thrift store for \$3.99 and noted that the mechanisms



were in great shape. The new mills he made were based on the measurements of that second-hand hardware and it worked very well. The pieces were finished with two coats of Tried and True Original and after a few weeks, four coats of wipe-on polyurethane.



Lavonne Kaiser made a variety of kitchen tools from Schacht hardwood maple scraps. About 10-12" long, she finished them with lemon oil.



New member and fairly new turner **Tyler Johnson** got a buffing system for Christmas which he says is a total game changer. He's happy with these new pieces made from sapele, a



6" bowl and 4" tall vase. Both were finished with carnauba wax.

Kim Komitor made this box of maple burl along with walnut and turquoise. It measures 3-1/2" x 3-1/2".



Scott DeWeese finished several platters this month: a 16" cedar platter with reed embellishments in pyrography, colored India inks and finished with matte Osmo Oil, a 16" silver maple platter with basket illusion design, India ink and finished with matte Osmo Oil and a hard maple platter with pyrography and India ink and finished with spray lacquer.



Keith Motzner made this spalted cherry bowl from a blank he won as the door prize at Roper's 2025 shop tour.



Todd Bowen made a 12" Claro Walnut platter and a small bowl with a story. A dear friend approached him about turning something with a turquoise inlay and her father's ashes. Seems the funeral home wanted to sell her a crystal heart with a place for those ashes within it for \$800. Her father was a carpenter and the crystal option just did not fit. She had had her dad's ashes for a number of months when she approached Todd, asking if he could inlay her dad's ashes with turquoise. She wanted whatever he did to have some rough edges (apparently, like her dad). The pieces were



finished with Waterlox. He also made an eco-friendly, lightweight, portable, locally sourced, energy-efficient walnut boom box finished with Odie's 2c.

Curt Vogt got in a little turning this month and there seems to be a pile of ornament parts waiting to be completed. At least he remembered to take a photo of these four magic wands. They're made of curly maple and recycled Idunno wood, finished with a rubbed-in wipe-on poly.



FROM THE WEB:

Al Murphy -
ajmurphy1@comcast.net



Have some scrap wood? Maybe you want to try making miniature furniture. Check out this link for some inspiration:

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2026/01/terry-facey-victoria-albert-museum-miniature-furniture/>

FROM THE WEB:

Al Murphy -
ajmurphy1@comcast.net



Here is a link from Jason Matischeck on how to sharpen everything:

<https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2026/01/terry-facey-victoria-albert-museum-miniature-furniture/>

ROCKLER

Patronizing the Rockler store is the best thank you we can give Rockler for their generosity in letting us use their facilities for our meetings. They keep the register open late on meeting nights just for us, but be sure to complete any purchases no later than the mid-meeting break. All FRW members get 10% off all items, except electrical or sale items, all the time. Just present your FRW membership card at time of purchase. Note: This offer is good only at the Denver store and is not valid at other Rockler stores or for online purchases.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Brenda Blaesing - b.frezeman@yahoo.com

Articles and photos for the monthly newsletter are always welcome. Please email your submissions by the 25th of the month for inclusion in the next issue.