

Women in Turning Newsletter

Autumn 2025



The Turned Connections Initiative

by Angela Gunn

Turned Connections is a new initiative by Women in Turning (WIT) designed to foster stronger relationships within the woodturning community. The core of this project is a simple concept: turning small beads that can be exchanged with other turners. You can swap beads at symposiums, classes, club meetings, or any event where you make a new connection.

Why Exchange Beads?

The goal of this project is to inspire you to engage with fellow turners and build new friendships. Beads are an ideal object for this purpose. They're small enough to easily carry with you to events and simple to mail to people you connect with online. Best of all, you can string your collected beads together on a lanyard or paracord braid to create a visible testament to all the connections you've made.

While we're starting with beads, we hope to expand this initiative in the future to include other turned objects like ornaments or tops. The possibilities are endless if they encourage us to connect with each other.

Bead Design & Specifications

Your beads can be any shape, size, and material you can imagine. This makes it a great project for everyone, from beginners looking to build fundamental skills to seasoned turners who want to express their unique style. It's also a perfect way to use up those beautiful small pieces of wood that are too nice to throw away but too small for other projects.

The only suggested guideline is that the bead hole should be 7mm. While this size hole might seem a bit large, it's a common size for paracord beads and helps ensure consistency. Many woodturners already have a 7mm drill bit because it's the same size used for slimline pens. While it's fine if your beads have a different hole size, a consistent size will make it much easier for people to string their beads together.

Who Can Participate?

While this project is a WIT initiative, everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate. We're starting with the WIT community to get the project off the ground, but we hope it will grow into something everyone in the woodturning community will enjoy.

How will I know who made my bead?

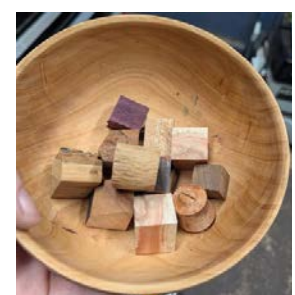
Take a picture with the person you exchange beads with, take notes, or exchange contact information to build the connection you are making!

How to Get Started

You can use any method you're comfortable with to turn your beads. If you're not sure where to begin, here are a series of steps to help you quickly turn multiple beads at once.

Step One – Choose Your Wood

I used some scraps I had from previous projects, odd-shaped cut-offs, and some wood I thought would just make a pretty bead.



AAW | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS



Turned Connections, con't

Step Two – Cut a blank to “bead size”

I used a bandsaw to cut the blanks to 0.5–1.0” pieces, depending on the width of the blank and what I was inspired to create.

Note: You may choose to drill the 7mm holes in the spindles before cutting into the smaller bead size. This will allow you to drill once instead of drilling each bead individually.

Step Three – Drill the holes

I use pen jaws to hold each piece on my lathe then drilled the 7mm hole. Alternatively, a drill press could be used. You may also drill the holes prior to cutting the spindle to bead size (see note in Step Two).

You can glue brass tubing into each blank if desired, but it is not necessary.



Step Four – Assemble on Pen Mandrel

Using a pen mandrel and bushings used for 7mm pen kits, assemble the bead pieces with a bushing between each piece. Use a mandrel saver in the tail stock. This is important because the size of the beads may decrease so you will need to keep tightening the tension.

Note: You can mix and match woods or other materials on the same setup since you will be turning each bead individually.



Step Five – Start Turning

Round the pieces then start your creative process. Some notes on this:

1. If you have mixed woods or acrylic, the way you turn each bead may change, especially if moving between wood and acrylic, or hard and soft woods.
2. I recommend turning the corners off each bead, giving a bit more leeway for turning the adjacent beads.

Turned Connections, con't

3. Wood often doesn't do what you expect it to do. If it chips or cracks, you can turn the bead smaller or change the design.
4. Keep checking the tension of the tailstock. As beads are turned and rounded on the end, the blanks may become smaller requiring the tailstock to tighten up.
5. If you are not using the brass tubing, remember the blanks will not sit perfectly on the mandrel. Finish one bead before moving on to the next to prevent the bead falling out of alignment before it is finished.
6. Be creative. Work with the characteristics of the wood and have fun with it.



Step Six – Sanding and Finishing

Sand and finish the pieces. I sand my beads to 600 then use a friction polish. Other options can be a CA finish or any other finish you have available. These do not need to be food safe.

1. When sanding, consider the woods you are turning. You may want to use different pieces of sandpaper for different beads so the dust from one species of wood does not contaminate another.
2. After removing the beads from the mandrel, you may want to sand the ends to remove any sharp edges. You can also roll a piece of sandpaper to sand the inside. I've only done this on a few pieces that looked a bit rough, but nobody will be sticking their fingers in there to see how smooth it is.



Step Seven – Start Making Connections!

Take your beads to symposiums, club meetings, classes, and anywhere else you may want to meet people and share your hobby.



Photos from the Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium bead exchange.



The Ripple Effect: How Community Service Changes Lives

by Linda Ferber

The Minnesota Woodturners Association (MWA) has a strong history of community service, so it was natural that when our logo was updated in 2024 the tagline, How Community Changes Lives, was incorporated into the design. Our chapter has close to 300 members and is very dedicated to outreach programs.

In March 2024, MWA joined the national AAW Women in Turning initiative crafting wig stands. “Our goal is to give back to our communities in this worthwhile effort, especially since cancer has likely impacted each of us, our family, and/or our friends.” MWA is partnering with two local/regional groups who provide free wigs for distribution of the wig stands to recipients in need. Wigs for the Cure, based in Mora, Minnesota, serves Central Minnesota. Ebeauty is associated with the Hennepin County Cancer Clinic. We have donated 124 wig stands to date. Twenty-five were displayed at the AAW 2025 St Paul Symposium. In addition to the wig stands, members and friends of members have knit over 130 cancer caps. We have created a few bright moments in the lives of women with cancer or other illness.

Since the program began in 2006 MWA members have provided thousands of lidded boxes, hundreds of bead bags, and hundreds of toys to children undergoing cancer treatment and other serious illnesses. MWA Beads of Courage (BOC) program has been a very prominent and ongoing community service project for us for a decade. In the past 12 months members have made and donated boxes, bags and toys for this incredible organization.

The ripples of these programs bring exciting news for 2026! An exhibition proposal was submitted and accepted by a metro area Art Center. We will have MWA handcrafted wig stands and BOC boxes on display for one month at Rumriver Art Center. Our chapter will have posters accompanying the display introducing visitors to woodturning and our community service programs. For the exhibition opening we will have a lathe and ongoing demonstrations. We are thrilled to have this opportunity to reach out to the general public.

Wigs for the Cure, which serves central MN, has three branches: the clinic, a beauty shop, and a non-profit fund raising group. The local paper in Mora, MN will be featuring an article on their services, and MWA will be mentioned with links to our website.

Ebeauty has recently published an article for their e-newsletter featuring woodturning and citing WIT as a partner in their program.

I have learned that community work, taking time to be selfless and put a cause or group of people first, greatly impacts not only our chapter and partners but the individuals doing the work as well. Character development is a huge part of life, and I have firsthand experience in seeing how community service and engagement change lives.



The following email was received by the Minnesota Woodturners Association:

Hello, wonderful people!

My wife and I had the greatest pleasure today as we met with Linda from Wigs for the Cure. Such a beautiful heart she has to assist those, as my wife, dealing with chemo treatments. What a wonderful program.

After she finished giving my wife special care to find and fit the perfect wig that gave my wife the emotional “freedom” to feel as normal as possible, Linda then offered us a choice of some beautifully turned wig stands. And she said “They’re free, donated by the MN Woodturners!”

We choose one of the beautiful pieces, but what was more powerful was knowing some artist created this for someone who needs a lift.

We wanted you to know that your kindness comes through the beautiful wood as a healing energy.

Ripple Effect, con't

I live in Mora, and, though I'm a wood worker, I don't turn. I just appreciate the time and artistry that goes into it.

What I'd like to do is provide a membership to someone wanting to join. Is it possible to purchase a membership and you can give it out?

I'm hoping you'll say yes.

Thank you for the love through your wood craft that you all provide to so many. I know it's appreciated by all.

Warm wishes to you all,

Jeff B
Mora

Turning and Learning, Beyond the Club

by Sheila Balzer

Co-WIT Liaison, Fraser Valley Woodturners Guild (FVWG)

Perspective can make a difference. Although relatively new to the woodturning community, I've experienced and listened to many perspectives shared by a wide range of people from all around the world. It is often said that woodturning is a lonely activity with a flow that comes when it is just you, your lathe, and the hunk of material mounted between centers. But there is also community—one that can be local, regional, or international—if you are adventurous enough to find it.

Sadly, I have also heard a wide range of stories from individuals for whom the local club experience was not satisfying. At first, I thought it might be related to a particular gender but have since come to understand that it is a broader issue and can affect anyone. There are many reasons why individuals look beyond their local club.

Here are some possible ways to explore should you find yourself in this predicament:

- Find another club. Sometimes another club, perhaps a little farther away, is a better fit. Instead of butting heads and expending time and energy trying to advance skills and interests with an incompatible group, a better fit you may find elsewhere. I have heard from LOTS of others that this is something they had to do. Be curious, find a club that is a fit for you. Different clubs have different flavours. Many clubs continue to welcome members who live far away and cannot meet in person.
- Seek out other ways to learn. By connecting with other craftspeople (woodcarvers, potters, painters, quilters, fibre artists, lapidary artists, or glass) that use different skills, we can learn other ways of approaching projects and expand our woodturning skills too.
- Meet in small groups. There are many examples of people creating connections beyond the club, such as senior centers, men's sheds, community groups and those who meet privately. Often these smaller groups of individuals share more detailed information that helps grow and expand world views. You are not alone as a woodturner, so find those like-minded individuals and push each other to explore more.
- Look online. Organizations like the AAW (American Association of Woodturners) offer an extensive archive of interviews, ideas, and skill building material. Be sure to mine the AAW video and article archives, especially in the Focus on Fundamentals. Plus explore the communities under the umbrella of the AAW, such as WIT (Women in Turning) where everyone is welcome. The WIT Virtual Exchange is an incredible way to make connections, and this can all be done online. Pat Carroll's *Meet the Woodturner* and IRDs (Interactive Remote Demos), either put on by the demonstrators, or organized through another group, can be fantastic ways to learn too.
- Attend regional symposiums. There are many regional symposia happening throughout the year. Attending one is a wonderful way to renew old connections and make new ones, see what is new in their Instant Galleries, and watch people share their passion on a scale beyond the local club.
- Attend an immersive class. Take a hands-on class with the people making and creating. Everyone talks about these experiences as wonderful ways to connect and expand skills. I have yet to do one, but several are on my wish list.

Perhaps one of these suggestions will spark an interest for you, or perhaps you have thought of something else that might work for you. Explore. Be Curious. You are not alone.

The Fraser Valley Woodturners Guild (<https://fvwg.ca/>). FVWG has added a Satellite Membership option to their regular membership offerings to serve those turners in remote communities who might not have a turning group nearby.

Turning and Learning, con't

Most of all, be encouraged, find your way. It is possible to still be connected and advance your skills safely and thrive doing something that has piqued your interest and curiosity.



Making a Lighthouse hands-on class at the Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium (9/25/25, Loveland, Colorado).

Margaret Stiles, Sheila Balzer, and Laurie Newberry.

Turned Connections beads: Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium 2025 – a good example of making connections beyond the club.



*“No matter what happens in life, be good to people. Being good to people is a wonderful legacy to leave behind.”
– Taylor Swift*



WIT EXCHANGE

VIRTUAL 2026

SAVE THE DATE

Join the Virtual WIT EXCHANGE

Be part of a community of women makers fostering collaboration, creativity, and self - confidence. Watch for announcements To learn more

Registration Opens: January 2nd
Orientation Meetings: Early February
Final Projects Due: Early April
Presentation of Projects: April 18

Women working in any media and any skill level welcome

Seeds of Growth Collaborative Fundraising Project

Women in Turning (WIT) was born from a few women at the AAW Symposium in 2014 who recognized that women were an under-represented population and decided to do something about it. In 2015, after Kathleen Duncan was elected to the AAW Board, she introduced a proposal to the Board for forming a committee to serve this underserved group of turners with the intention of growing this segment of the woodturning community. As with many organizations, there was no budget for this committee. No problem!

AAW Live (formerly EOG) Auction Collaboratives

Women recognized that the activities envisioned at the Phoenix meeting would require some seed or “egg money” and decided to embark on a fundraising project, Egg Crate, that was auctioned at the 2015 Pittsburg symposium. Women throughout the country responded to calls on the Facebook page to make eggs. Women made and submitted so many eggs, that it required three decorative crates to display them. Egg Crate sold for \$9,000 and 49 women participated. The money from the sale went into a restricted AAW account for WIT use.

The committee undertook a second EOG auction collaborative in 2016, Fruits of Our Labor, that was auctioned at the Atlanta symposium for \$12,000. Fifty-two women participated.

In 2017, 43 women contributed to the Open and Shut collaborative piece, a collection of turned boxes auctioned for \$9,500 at the Kansas City symposium. Finally in 2018, 49 women contributed spin tops to Topsy Turvy which was auctioned for \$3,000 at the Portland symposium.

We are now entering 2026 and our original “seed money” is about to be completely depleted. Thus, the committee has decided to grow the WIT funds by returning to our roots and creating another collaboration project to be auctioned off at the 40th anniversary AAW Symposium. The project, appropriately named Seeds of Growth, will include invited artists and a selected pool of juried artists with the goal of raising money for WIT programming.

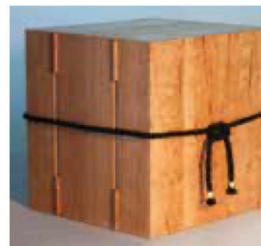
There will be more information coming through email, Facebook, Call for Entry on the AAW/WIT webpage, and upcoming WIT newsletters so start thinking about what you might want to submit for the juring process. The size limitations will be 2” x 2” x 3”. We can’t wait to see your submissions!



Egg Crate, 2015, cherry, various woods for the eggs, 13" x 14" x 10" (33cm x 36cm x 25cm)
Members of the virtual chapter Women in Turning turned and decorated eggs, which, housed in a fitting stackable crate, will be up for auction during the AAW's Pittsburgh symposium this year.
Photos: Randy Batista

Women in Turning's EOG auction collaborative,
Fruits of Our Labor, Various woods, 7½" x 36" x 24" (19cm x 91cm x 61cm)

This sculpture will be sold at auction Friday night at the Atlanta Symposium. More “fruits” will be added to the display at the event.



Open and Shut, WIT's collaborative work to be auctioned during the AAW International Symposium in Kansas City, 2017, Case is made from cherry, maple, plum, fabric, Plexiglas®; Individual boxes from various woods, Open (as pictured): 15½" x 50" x 14½" (39cm x 127cm x 37cm); Shut: 15½" x 14¾" x 15½" (39cm x 37cm x 39cm)
Photos: Dixie Biggs



WIT Collaboration, Topsy-Turvy, 2018, various woods and sizes

Women in Turning - Sharing Experiences

Arizona Woodturners by Sarah Slocum

The Arizona Woodturners WIT group has been busy exploring new techniques or ideas during each of the last 6 months. During the last days of the Arizona State Fair many of the women turned tops for kids and other items during their shifts.

In the workshop we explored making kitchen tools, spoons, French rolling pins and biscuit cutters. We also made ring boxes with Sputnik shells (idea from Sally Ault) and delved into captive rings while making baby rattles. Another month we worked on off-center turning, making groovy mushrooms with the option of a dirty pour on top. Last month one of the men from our club led us in making barrel staves for the Beads of Courage boxes.

Our group is expanding in size, confidence, and abilities. We have so much talent to tap into. It makes it all worthwhile when I go to the monthly meeting and see WIT member's completed items on the table and know that they continued to work on projects at home after our class!

There are so many ideas left to tackle.



First State Woodturners by Marge Sloan

Naomi Michelle, a First State Woodturner WIT member, won the Novice Award at the Mid-Atlantic Woodturning Symposium. She has been turning for only a few months.



Peace River Woodturners by Cheri Bauer

The Peace River Woodturners hosted two booths at the Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Gardens' inaugural Timber Jamboree in Punta Gorda, FL, on October 11, 2025, from 9 AM to 4 PM.

At the Woodturning Demonstration booth, members created small goblets, vases, mushrooms, bowls, and other items on three lathes. Visitors marveled at the demonstrations and had the opportunity to ask lots of questions and shop at the woodturning sales booth.

Fifteen members, including five women, engaged with Garden visitors providing information about woodturning and the organization.



Wig Stand Update (November 9, 2025)

3,578!

Carolina Mountain Woodturners by Pam Dergins

On a very hot July 26, 2025 we gathered at our Learning Center to make wig stands. It was a mixture of experienced turners and newbies helping each other. We completed ten wig stands that were donated to Hope Cancer Center in Asheville NC.



The photo below is our WIT display at the library in Hendersonville NC. We had two signs in the case. One explained WIT and our club (CMW) and the other was about the wig stand initiative. There were some beautiful pieces, including wig stands. Thanks for the help of Laurie Bingaman Lackey, Dawn Lytle and Michele Parsons.



Women, Wood & Wonder— What an Amazing Day!

by Regina M. Cox (for Woodcraft in Norfolk, VA)

The Women in Turning—Woodturning/Art/Woodworking event at Woodcraft of Norfolk was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who came out to support, learn, and get inspired. The shop was buzzing with creativity from start to finish— from the spinning lathes to the hands-on demos, every station brought something special to the day.

A huge shoutout to our incredible featured artists and demonstrators, Barbara Dill, Annie Ogg, Joy Cowan, Ashley Fekete, and Claire Charlem, for sharing their time, talent, and passion with us all.

Turn a Pen for the Troops – We turned many pens as part of the inspiring Turning for the Troops initiative by Woodcraft, with heartfelt thanks to Scott Gray and Don Amlaw for leading the charge and keeping this meaningful project alive and thriving.

Resin Art & River Tables

Live Demos & Interactive Stations

Discounts earned at every demo station. Well done to all who participated!

The **Women in Turning group of the Tidewater Turners** also had a fantastic day learning to make beads for the Turned Connections project, sponsored by the AAW WIT program. This fun and creative initiative allows women turners across the country to trade handmade beads and make new connections one turned bead at a time. What a powerful way to build community and celebrate craftsmanship!

We heard you loud and clear: you want more, and we're making it happen!

Stay tuned for the launch of three exciting new classes:

- Resin Ornaments with Claire Charlem. (Sometime in November and December 2025)
- Lamp Making with Joy Cowan
- Power Carving with Joy Cowan

PLUS, we've received multiple requests for the return of the ever-popular Miniatures Class with Annie Ogg. Keep an eye out for upcoming announcements!

Thank you again for helping us celebrate and support women in woodworking. This is just the beginning — let's keep building something beautiful together.



Cape Cod Woodturners by Robin McIntyre

Turners met several of times to prepare for our February 2026 WIT exhibit at the Falmouth Art Center.

Two turners met on June 28 at Jan Casiello's shop to work on eggs, and five members met again on July 22 to work on woodburning, a box, a bowl, a snowman, and some finishing.



Five members met at Jan Casiello's on August 20 to work on woodburning, bowls, and a weed pot.



In September, we met to preview our turnings and finalize our title, Works in Wood: Women in Turning, and other details. We made mock-ups of displays for our group plus 11 individual members who will have their own displays. We are feeling good about the volume of turnings to date. A gallery exhibit is a first for us!

Atlantic Shore Woodturners by Susan Kotas

On August 2, 2025, Atlantic Shore Woodturner (ASWT), WIT Group met at the turning center in Howell, NJ for a Turn-a-Bowl event. We had three beginners and three seasoned turners and were supervised by ASWT members Bruce and Chris. Some women finished their bowls—one was taken fresh off the lathe to a library display, and another member used her bowl in a later pyrography event.



Atlantic Shore WT, con't

On September 20, 2025, ASWT members Jesse Abraham (Secretary) and Jody Forbes (VP) coordinated a wig stand class at the turning center in Howell, NJ. Five members attended and turned wig stands. The Atlantic Shore Woodturners supports Princeton Breast Cancer Resource Center (BCRC) in Princeton by creating custom wig stands that are provided to women who have experienced hair loss due to their cancer treatment.

I have struggled with woodturning because I do not do it consistently and I have difficulty translating what is in my head to the wood. This is the third or fourth time I have taken this class and usually I complete only one part. Jesse was very patient and took the time to explain each step to Emily and me. We both completed a wig stand that day. Emily put a finish on hers, but I chose not to so I could embellish it. I took my piece home and thought of how I could enhance it. Since we were planning a mixed media WIT event focusing on pyrography, I pulled out a coloring book of flowers and picked one I thought would fit nicely on the base. After tracing the flower on copy paper I used carbon paper to transfer the outline onto the base of the wig stand. I burned the flower onto the base and added a little color. I finished it with a couple of coats of spray lacquer.

I am the person who suggested to our WIT liaison the idea of turning wig stands and have been watching WIT groups and clubs across the nation turn them (3,449 have been delivered so far), but I struggled with understanding how to do it. I watched Linda Ferber do a demonstration at SWAT earlier this year and got inspired. Although I cannot draw or paint people, I started with a simple flower. I thank my club for having these events and WIT for being encouraging. I can say I am proud of the way my wig stand turned out.



Atlantic Shore WT, con't

On October 1, 2025, Karen Ricotta, Anthony Chiarello and myself went to the Berkeley Branch Library, Bayville, NJ and set up a display for the month of October.

Librarian Julie Casper was so excited looking at the display and couldn't believe all the items that could be turned on a lathe. We even discussed having a demonstration at the library in the near future.



On October 5, 2025, we had a mixed media event focusing on pyrography and hosted by ASWT member Sebastian at her home. We had a beautiful day on the deck with the warmth of the sun and great food, snacks, and conversation. Bruce and Chris of ASWT lent us their equipment for the day. Bev also brought her equipment, paints and knowledge. It was a lot of fun and participants showed a lot of creativity.



“If you see someone without a smile today, give ‘em yours.”
- Dolly Parton

Women in Turning Shine at the North Carolina Woodturning Symposium by Regina M. Cox

Women in Turning (WIT) was out in full force at this year's North Carolina Woodturning Symposium! A lively lunchtime meeting brought together women woodturners from across the region to share ideas, encouragement, and strategies for jump-starting or reinvigorating local WIT groups.

Linda Britt highlighted the WIT Virtual Exchange, an inspiring online collaboration organized by Linda Ferber and Marie Anderson, which connects women turners nationwide through shared projects, discussions, and creative challenges.

Attendees also discussed the exciting new Turned Connections initiative—a bead-exchange project designed to help WIT members meet new people, build relationships, and celebrate the spirit of connection through the simple act of turning and sharing beads. Each bead becomes a symbol of friendship, creativity, and community within WIT.

Throughout the symposium, leading woodturners such as Rebecca DeGroot, Barbara Dill, Helen Bailey, Seri Robinson, and Annie Ogg provided inspiration through their demonstrations, artistry, and dedication to mentoring others. Their enthusiasm for sharing knowledge and supporting one another continues to elevate women in the field of woodturning.

Throughout the weekend, lathes hummed, shavings flew, and creativity filled the air. Members attended live demonstrations from world-class turners, learned new techniques in spindle and bowl turning, explored the latest tools and finishes, and traded tips on everything from perfecting shear scraping to achieving flawless curves.

Between sessions, turners shared their own work, swapped stories, and drew plenty of inspiration for future projects. Whether experimenting with new forms, mastering hollowing tools, or testing exotic woods, everyone walked away with fresh ideas and renewed enthusiasm for the craft.

It was a weekend full of energy, learning, and connection, proof that women in turning are not only honing their craft but also shaping a stronger, more connected woodturning community for the future.



Central Ohio Woodturners by Chris Stein

Central Ohio Woodturners delivered 27 wig stands to the Zangmeister Cancer Center on September 11. They were so appreciative, they put this photo on their social media.



Women in Turning Gallery - Beads



Tracey Lee

Beads brought to the
Rocky Mountain Wood-
turning Symposium for
exchange

Sheila Balzer

Beads traded at the Rocky
Mountain Woodturning
Symposium for exchange



Women in Turning Gallery - Beads



From Noel DeSafey
Beads exchanged at the Rocky
Mountain Woodturning Symposium
in September



Women in Turning Gallery - Beads



Suzanne Bonsall Kahn

Opportunities for Women in Turning

Classes, Workshops, Exhibits, Demonstrations, and Grants

AAW: Resouces for Remote Demonstrations:

<https://www.woodturner.org/Woodturner/Chapters/Chapter-Officers-Toolkit/Chapter-Remote-Demonstrations.aspx>

2026 Schedule

Arrowmont:

21–26 Jun: Dixie Biggs

1-6 Nov: Andi Wolfe

John C. Campbell Folk School:

13–15 Feb: Annie Ogg

22–28 Feb: Scarlett Rouse & Michele Parsons

1–7 Mar: Elizabeth Weber

8–13 Mar: Christine Smith

22–28 Mar: Joy Cowan & Alan Leland

29 Mar – 4 Apr: Annie Ogg & Joy Cowan

3–8 May: Cheryl Lewis

14–17 May: Andi Wolfe

17–23 May: Andi Wolfe

7–13 Jun: Crystal Earley

25–30 Oct: Dixie Biggs

Peters Valley School of Craft

23 May: Kate Davidson

5–9 Aug: Julia Swyers

7-11 Oct: Annalise Rubida

Cetter for Furniture Craftsmanship Turning Intensive

12 Jan–Mar 6: Beth Ireland, Dixie Biggs (Feb 23–27)

Marc Adams

20-24;25–26 Apr: Dixie Biggs

15–19 Jun; 24–28 Aug: Jennifer Shirley

8–12 Sep: Kimberly Winkle

14–18 Sep: Heather Marusiak

Useful links for Women In Turning

[AAW Website](#)

[WIT website](#)

[Newsletter archive](#)

[WIT Liaison](#)

[WIT events archive](#)

Videos from AAW Video Source & YouTube

[Making a Bead for Beads of Courage - Sam Angelo](#)

[Turning Beads from Scrap Wood - Richard Raffan](#)

[Making Wood Beads](#)

AAW Grants available for WIT

[Under-represented Populations Outreach Grants](#): These grants may be requested for events such as activities or workshops to promote women in turning. All AAW Grant applications are reviewed annually. However, since these events may be time-sensitive, such grant applications will be considered periodically during the year. More details are available on the AAW website. Grant recipients are expected to disperse information about AAW, and promote its activities. Grants cannot be used for food or personal expenses, or to pay a stipend to the grant applicant.

[WIT AAW Membership Grants](#): To encourage women to join AAW, the WIT Committee offers a limited number of WIT-sponsored half-price one-year “General” AAW memberships to women. WIT is also offering at no cost a one-year “General” AAW membership to women who join AAW for the first time AND join their local chapter for the first time.

Eligibility

To be eligible, a grant recipient must be a woman who has never previously been a member of AAW.

Process

Only the chapter AAW WIT Liaison, chapter president, or chapter vice-president may request the grant. If you have questions, please email wit@woodturner.org.

[AAW Woodturning Fundamentals](#)

[Learning Portal](#)

[\(sign in as a member to access\)](#)

Would you like to support the programs and activities sponsored by the AAW Women In Turning Committee? It's easy to donate to the program online. Your gift will help strengthen communities and enrich lives through its investment in a variety of activities. [Click here to donate](#). Thanks!

Women in Turning - From the Archives



UPROARIOUS RECIPROCATION

The 2018 Women in Turning eXchange



Photos by Andi Wolfe, unless otherwise noted.

Women in Turning (WIT) is a committee of the AAW, bringing together women worldwide who share a passion for woodturning. WIT is dedicated to encouraging and assisting women in their pursuit of turning, to sharing ideas and processes to

further members' skills and creativity, and to increasing participation of women in the field of woodturning. For more, visit WIT under the "Services" tab on the AAW website (woodturner.org). Women in Turning also has a public Facebook page.



Word tile photo: Dawn Herndon-Charles

On the afternoon of September 4, 2018, thirty-nine women, including six members of the Women in Turning (WIT) committee, gathered at the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, for the first AAW WIT eXchange. Participants came from across the United States and ranged in skill level from beginners to professionals. The purpose of the gathering was to spend three-and-a-half days exchanging ideas, techniques, and fellowship. The goal was to empower participants by building skill and con-

fidence, with an emphasis on process, not product. We also came together for inspiration, enrichment, experience, fun, friendship, and adventure. The natural beauty and serenity of the setting aided on all counts.

The collaborative process

The first evening, participants were assigned to groups of three, each a mix of women who had self-identified their skills as beginning, intermediate, or advanced. Using a word-play approach devised by Jean LeGwin, each group blindly drew a wooden word tile

from each of two bags, one containing nouns, the other containing modifiers. (Elizabeth Amigo, with contributions from other WIT committee members, had carefully selected these words in advance for their possibilities.) After a few minutes of individual reflection on the words—and with the option to trade them if a group deemed them unfruitful—the groups discussed ideas their two words inspired and what kind of object might express that inspiration.

The next morning, groups refined their ideas and gathered at their assigned full-sized lathes in the lathe

room. Then the fun began! Each group had an identical bundle of wood with which to work. Groups could use all, some, or none of their wood and were free to barter, trade, and raid the Arrowmont scrap bins. Also available for everyone's use were mini-lathes, grinders, band saws, drill presses, sanders, reciprocating carvers, and all the rest of the equipment and tools in Arrowmont's well-furnished wood shop. In addition, the fiber studio was set up with tools for embellishment: pyrography equipment, micro-motors for rotary carving, paints, dyes, colored pencils, pens. We also had an NSK Presto for piercing. WIT committee members served as facilitators to help locate tools and equipment and instruct in their use. With the emphasis on process and exploration, no group had to actually finish a project; nonetheless—and despite constant reminders that these were “sketches, not museum-quality pieces”—every group worked hard, and sometimes overtime, to produce work they could stand by.

Groups were asked to document their work by taking pictures throughout the day and selecting five photos to upload to a Dropbox account. Andi Wolfe also took photos, and each evening she assembled two slide shows: one of her candid shots, the other of the groups' documentation of the day's work.

After dinner each day, we convened in the large auditorium to view Andi's slide shows and each group's creations, set up in an instant gallery on the stage. Each group had a spokeswoman talk for up to four minutes about how their words inspired the piece and the actual making, as Andi projected their pictures of the process. These off-the-cuff presentations were revelatory. After much-deserved collective appreciation of the work, new groups were formed, and they chose their words for the next day. Lather, rinse, repeat! The groups were arranged so that, while maintaining the mix of skill levels, each day



The day's wood stock in the full-size lathe room. Each team began with the same materials: a 12"- (30cm-) long segment of a maple or ash baseball-bat blank, a 10"- (25cm-) long block of 5½"- (14cm-) square green cherry or poplar, and a 3"- (8cm-) thick blank of 9½"- (24cm-) square kiln-dried maple.



(Left) Ena Dubnoff, Aviva Furman, and Joan Busby work on their design. (Right) Their design sketches.



Anna Duncan, Ana Marie Lappégard, and Pat Reddemann on some of the mini-lathes.



Sally Ault, Pat Reddemann, Lynn Reece, and Adrienne Lobel learning and teaching sharpening on a grinder.

every woman was working with new people. (This strategy also allowed for every woman to take home one piece she had worked on over the three days.)

On both Thursday and Friday, we were able to invite Arrowmont interns to participate. To accommodate them and still keep our groups of three, two of the WIT committee members served as participants those days rather than facilitators.

On Friday, Greg Schramek, current AAW President, stopped by to talk to the group. One of his messages was the ▶



Dixie Biggs facilitates activity in the fiber studio cum surface embellishment room.



Kimberly Glover paints some pieces.



Adrienne Lobel, Lynn Reece, and Betty Scarpino consider their next step.

importance of women's involvement in local AAW chapters, at the national level, and in leadership roles at every level of the AAW.

Almost everyone tried something new during the eXchange: new turning and sharpening techniques, pyrography, piercing, painting, sandblasting, carving, planing, power sanding, and more. The foremost new skill was collaboration: most of us had no or limited experience working cooperatively with others on a creative project. The challenge was daunting but rewarding. As Pat Reddemann described it, "I was incredibly nervous about collaborating, as I had never done that before. I was afraid I wouldn't have anything meaningful to contribute. But once I got to the eXchange and we began our teams and drew our words, I saw that I could learn a lot from the process. We each came to the project with different ideas, and I loved building ideas off each other's thoughts. Seeing the ideas that others came up with and combining or discarding them, then refining them, was really a pleasure. I believe that I will look at creating in a whole new way after experiencing this collaborative play."

Varied approaches

Every group worked differently. Some worked collectively on every aspect of their piece. Other groups worked together to come up with their idea, then divided tasks and worked sepa-

rately until final assembly. Others alternated working together and working separately. Sometimes a group couldn't agree on a single idea, so the members went off and made their own pieces and brought them together at the end of the day; remarkably, even these contentious efforts ended with a unified piece.

Thinking "artistically" was also new for many. As Lynn Reece put it, "I've been turning for several years now, but I've never really felt creative. I have pretty much only turned brown, round bowls. Many times, I have said, 'I just don't think like those people.' A friend and mentor often adds *yet* to my statement. The eXchange opened the *yet* window for me. Working alongside so many free-thinking people gave me insight into how to explore my creative side. I am so glad I got out of my comfort zone and embraced the eXchange."

The sharing wasn't limited to the defined groups. Participants across groups freely chatted, consulted, and helped one another, as we shared space, tools, meals, insights, and laughter. A spirit of playfulness infused the whole experience—which was also exhausting in the best way, as everyone gave her all for the entire weekend.

The outcome was thirty-five remarkable pieces. But, more importantly, every woman went home with a sense of community and confidence she could translate to her own work—and to her local AAW chapter. As one

"I had a lot of firsts at this eXchange. I tried pyrography. I tried staining. I tried power-carving. I used new equipment, including a vacuum chuck, a planer, and various sanders. One refreshing aspect to me was having egos checked at the door and everyone willing to put in the work to make this a true eXchange: a place where talent, ideas, knowledge, and processes were freely shared."

—Marie Anderson

"The energy in that room for those three days was wild, crazy, fun, rewarding!"

—Joan Busby

"Although participants had different levels of turning skills, in each group I found that each person brought important skills to the project that didn't involve turning. Each person's contribution to the concept of the project came from personal experience and knowledge that had nothing to do with turning skills and couldn't have been known beforehand."

—Ena Dubnoff

"Turning is usually a very focused and solitary activity. With the collaboration, you give up some of the control, let other people in, have them challenge your ideas and present their own—and usually come up with a completely different but ultimately better product. Even when the result is not objectively successful, there is development and learning in the process to apply in future work."

—Dawn Herndon-Charles

"I learned that there are as many ways to approach collaboration as there are personalities. Each group tackled the words in different ways. I got to know members of my groups in ways I would never have in an ordinary workshop or demonstration."

—Anne Ogg

participant stated, "What happens at a WIT eXchange doesn't have to stay at a WIT eXchange." eXactly!

The next WIT eXchange will take place September 5-7, 2019, at Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. There will be a maximum of forty-five participants due to space restrictions. Please watch the WIT webpage and Facebook page for details. ■

—Lynne Yamaguchi and Kathleen Frey Duncan

Collaborative Works from 2018 WIT eXchange

Noted at the start of each caption are the pair of words used as inspiration.



Dimpled Imagination:
Susan Canfield, Ettasue Long, Kim Wolfe



Luxurious Friendship:
Ana Marie Lappegard, Anna Duncan, Crystal Earley



Inspiring Happiness:
Marie Anderson, Lou Kinsey, Sue Janis Bergstrand

Pastoral Independence:

Julie Schmidt,
Patricia Rasmussen,
Adrienne Lobel



Relaxed Form:

Connie Rayburn,
Susan Rennie,
Julie Schmidt



Joyful Opportunity:
Ena Dubnoff, Aviva Furman, Joan Busby



Fortunate Evolution:
Sue Janis Bergstrand, Aviva Furman, Kimberly Glover



Empty Balance:
Lynne Yamaguchi, Connie Rayburn, Bina Rothblatt

From the Editor:

There have been a lot of great events over the past several months to highlight talented women in turning. The Rocky Mountain Woodturning Symposium made history with its all-women schedule of demonstrators. What a great time that was! Beads were exchanged by several women as the *Turned Connections Initiative* got underway. It will be fun to see how this grows.

Regional symposia are also a great way to make connections with other women in turning, and they have opportunities for women to participate. We need more women demonstrators at these events and at the national symposium, so do pay attention to calls for demonstrators. Along those lines, submit photos of your work to the AAW forum. It's hard to feature women in turning if our work isn't put out there for the public to see.

If you have the opportunity to visit Washington, DC, in the coming months, be sure to stop by the Renwick Gallery to see the *State Fairs: Growing American Craft* exhibition. There are only two examples of woodturned art in this show, one by Betty Scarpino and the other by Andi Wolfe. The exhibition ends September 7, 2026.

Many thanks to the contributors for this edition of the newsletter: Marie Anderson, Sheila Balzer, Regina M. Cox, Cheri Bauer, Pam Dergins, Noel DeSafey, Linda Ferber, Angela Gunn, Suzanne Bonsall Kahn, Susan Kotas, Tracey Lee, Robin McIntyre, Marge Sloan, Sarah Slocum, and Christine Stein. A special thank you to Jean LeGwin for help with copy editing, and to members of the WIT committee for proofreading.

I'm always looking for articles to put into the newsletter. If you have news to share about your local WIT group, a story about your journey in woodturning, tips to share, or projects to share, please [send them to me](#). The newsletter is only interesting if we share our activities with one another.

SO.....Please do send me information from your WIT groups and stories about your events and successes. I'd also like schedules for demonstrations and classes you teach.

“Creativity is an energy. It’s a precious energy, and it’s something to be protected. A lot of people take for granted that they’re a creative person, but I know from experience, feeling it in myself, it is a magic; it is an energy. And it can’t be taken for granted.”

— Ava DuVernay

Endnotes:

Encourage WIT. The mission of WIT is to encourage and retain women in woodturning. Here are some suggestions of how you can help: 1) Introduce a friend or neighbor to woodturning by bringing her to a chapter meeting, 2) accompany her to an open shop session, 3) teach her in your own shop, and/or 4) offer to be her mentor for a year.

If there is a new member in your chapter who is not yet a member of AAW, tell her about AAW's 90-day guest membership: <https://www.woodturner.org/Woodturner/2020%20Grants/WIT%20membership.aspx>.

Pay it forward. Instead of telling a new member about the guest membership, buy her a membership. In return, she can pay it forward by bringing another new member into the AAW. This generous gift may be the beginning of a lifetime of enjoyment for many new woodturners.

Did you know? There are many benefits of AAW membership, including a world-class journal, publications on techniques, videos, a directory of learning opportunities, and other online tools. Check out all the opportunities for members at [Why Join AAW?](#) If you've not had an opportunity to explore the AAW website, take a few minutes to look around at <http://www.woodturner.org>. The [Women in Turning website](#) is hosted by the AAW site. You'll find all our newsletters, information about WIT outreach grants, and many other goodies there.

Diversity Statement:

The American Association of Woodturners (AAW) is dedicated to advancing the art and craft of woodturning worldwide by providing opportunities for education, information, and organization to those interested in turning wood. The AAW welcomes and encourages participation by all individuals regardless of age, race, culture, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental difference, politics, religion, socioeconomic status, or subculture. We strive to cultivate an organization built on mentorship, encouragement, tolerance, and mutual respect, thereby engendering a welcoming environment for all. The AAW further promotes diversity in all areas of activity, including membership, leadership, committees, staff, outreach, public engagement, and recruitment, within the association as a whole and within each chapter.

(Adopted April 19, 2019)

Women in Turning Committee Contact Information:

Kimberly Winkle (Chair)	Email: wimkinkle@yahoo.com
Marie Anderson	Email: danmar12@yahoo.com
Dixie Biggs	Email: dixie@dixiebiggs.com
Linda Ferber	Email: lindajaneferber@gmail.com
Jean LeGwin	Email: jlegwin@ec.rr.com
Robin McIntyre	Email: robinmcintyre@comcast.net
Tib Shaw	Email: tib@woodturner.org
Andi Wolfe (Newsletter Editor)	Email: andiwolfe@yahoo.com
Linda Britt (ex-officio)	Email: lbritt@comcast.net

*“The worst enemy to creativity is self-doubt.”
– Sylvia Plath*

AAW

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF WOODTURNERS

WIT Newsletter Editor: Andi Wolfe - andiwolfe@yahoo.com