

The Push Stick



Ron Holtz

I called long time WOW member Ron Holtz to get his story. He has been a member of WOW since about 1997, after he retired.

Ron was born and raised in cold North Dakota. Willow City to be precise. He moved from there to Ray, North Dakota in his sophomore year of High School. He went to a two year college in Minot where he took a crafts class as an elective. He helped the teacher by showing students how to use a lathe. Turned out he liked teaching. Ron took a two year "vacation" in Korea, courtesy of Uncle Sam, when he was drafted into the Army in 1952. Ending his military stint in Fort Collins, Colorado he stayed in the area and went to Colorado State University on the GI Bill. He received his teaching credential in Industrial Arts. He met his wife Joanne there, as she was earning a teaching degree too.



I asked Ron how he ended up in the Los Angeles area. He said in 1958 Norwalk, California was recruiting teachers for their expanding school district, so he and Joanne headed out here. He became a metal shop teacher at Centennial High School. In 1964 they opened Benton Jr. High in La Mirada and he taught wood shop there until 1972.

I had Mr. Holtz as my wood shop teacher at Benton in 1968. You had better put those tools away and clean up! Jr. High kids and sharp tools, not a good combination. One semester he had a drafting class. It was great! We each designed a simple house, cut it out of thin wood on the jigsaw and assembled it. I have taken a hundred classes over the years and have forgotten most of them, but I still remember Ron's with a smile. He didn't yell at me that much.

He worked at different schools in the district until 1978 when he had his 20 years in. Then he became a truck driver. When asked "why a truck driver?", Ron said he had been doing it during summer break for a couple years and it paid better than teaching. He drove 18 years for a freight company traveling the western states. He retired on his 65th birthday and joined WOW a year or two later. Asked what his favorite type of wood is, he likes walnut. He likes it because it looks good and is easy to finish with Watco oil. If the finish gets damaged just add some more. Thanks Ron for being an active member all these years!

June 14th Meeting

Cub Pack 919 Bear Pack Leader Laura Fisher has picked three cub scouts to show us the useful woodworking projects they made to get their woodworking patch. This is in addition to the Pinewood Derby project they already did.

We should also have some reps from **Accuride** extension drawer slides with us. They are looking for a member who uses their slides. Louis Lopez does.

Club

Volunteers

President
Paul Wilson
(562) 968-4162

Vice President
Louis Lopez
(562) 947-0503

Treasurer
Arie Korporaal

Secretary
Dick Toney
(562) 328-6102

Membership
Jim Lockwood
(562) 926-7069

Raffle
Gene Getz
(562) 777-1480

Refreshments
Julie McCamey
(562) 698-7496

Push Stick Editor
Website

Alan Webster
(562) 943-4919

Founders
John Erickson &
Jerry Hughes



Cliff Schmidt Gourd Carver

Is he out of his gourd? Well...maybe, but he sure likes carving them. Cliff came to our May meeting to show us his hobby. Gourds have been used for thousands of years for water carriers, ladles, scoops, bowls or whatever else their natural shape lends itself to.

Cliff has been carving gourds for 20 years. He belongs to the Orange County Gourd Society www.ocgourdsociety.org that promotes the growing, carving and decorating of gourds. There is a farm down in Fallbrook, CA that grows the type of gourds Cliff likes, with thick hard skins. Gourds have to be left on the vine until the stem is brown or the gourd will rot. Rotting is a problem when using gourds.

Every trace of pulp and fibre must be removed from inside the gourd or it will rot. Insects in the skin can be killed by freezing or soaking in a bleach solution. You have to do all this prep or your creation will self-destruct.

Once a gourd is stabilized, Cliff can start using different tools to carve and decorate them. He uses rotary tools with different bits and wood burners. Paints and stains add color. The only limit is the imagination of the artist. It is amazing all the varieties there are. Once a year the O.C. Gourd Society partners up with the Orange County Carvers Guild for a show in Santa Ana. This year it is October 27 & 28th. I encourage you to go. Thanks Cliff for sharing your hobby with us.



Club News

We have 44 paid members. Thanks to Matt Tran and Art Hernandez for rejoining. New member Jason Munter. Welcome Jason!

At the June meeting we will vote for the **Woodworker of the Year**. The two nominees are our secretary **Dick Toney** and our treasurer **Arie Korporaal**. Ballots will be handed out at the meeting. The winner will be announced at the July meeting.

The guys at **Hathaway Ranch** would like to thank **Emmett Cassidy** for donating a metal cart to move around the heavy pieces of wood there.

Hathaway Ranch block building project—is an ongoing project to build toy blocks to give away to children at Christmas time. It has been going for 18 years. The gang at Hathaway would be glad to have your help. They meet Monday mornings 8:30 - noon at Hathaway Ranch, 11901 Florence Avenue, between Norwalk Boulevard and Pioneer Boulevard. Open the gate and drive in, close gate. Call Jim Sparling 562-943-3013 for more information.

Battel's Hardware had their 75th Anniversary

Club Calendar

June Meeting-Thursday June 14th 6:30-8:00 p.m.
 Steering Committee- Tuesday June 19th 7-8:00p.m.
 July Meeting -Thursday July 12th 6:30-8:00 p.m.
 Steering Committee-Tuesday July 17th 7-8:00p.m.
 Meet 2nd Thursday of the month at Adventure Park
 10130 Gunn Avenue Whittier , CA 90605

