



# January Chatter

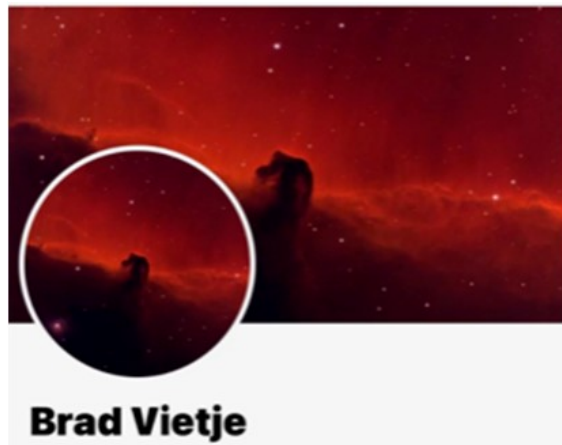
*Newsletter of the Woodchuck  
Turners of Northern Vermont*

An affiliate of the American Association of Woodturners  
**January 15, 2024 : Volume 21 Issue 1**

[woodchucksvt.org](http://woodchucksvt.org)

## January Meeting Preview

Our January meeting will be Wednesday the 17th of January at the Champlain Valley High School in Hinesburg; starting at 7:00 pm. Feel free to come a bit early to talk and mingle. Brad Vietje will be doing a demo on hollowing. This meeting will not be available virtually.



## Reminders

- 2024 dues are now due
- Please bring a piece of wood or something else to add to the raffle
- Bring something for share and tell
- Let me know if you'd like anything listed in the classified section
- Please please send in stories for chatter - I need content!

## Russ Fellows Tribute

As a tribute to our dearly loved friend and mentor Russ Fellows; I will be publishing a random article that Russ contributed to chatter from past years. Let me know if you have a favorite article you'd like to see posted again.



# September 2018

Woodchuck Chatter

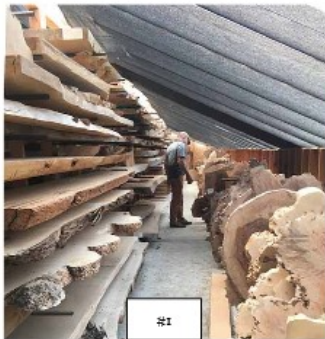
Woodchuck On The Road—Russ Fellows

Volume 15, Number 9

Earlier in the Summer, when we started to put a short summer trip together, and I realized we would be in western Massachusetts, a soft “bell” rang in my head. I remembered hearing about a slab and burl supplier, somewhere in the Berkshires? A short internet search led me to Berkshire Products.

([berkshireproducts.com](http://berkshireproducts.com)). Located in Sheffield, MA, it was right on the route to our Family gathering in northern Connecticut.

With only one wrong turn, and that due to a bridge closing, our GPS led us right to the spot. Sprawling over several acres and with four warehouses, plus a mill, we knew this would very likely live up to its claim of being the country’s largest supplier of specialty slab and burl. Specializing in claro walnut (not an actual subspecies, but a hybrid of native and English walnut developed in the 19th century, mostly for parks in California, it grows to impressive dimensions in the moist coastal climate), and western big leaf maple, they also had a large inventory of eastern hardwoods.



The first picture shows me “cruising” a long row of maple slab and burl, one of five rows in the second of four warehouses!

The next shot shows a pile of slab (one of dozens!), waiting outside to be catalogued, priced, and moved inside.



The next shot is a slab of claro walnut, all smoothed and finished, waiting for a customer with a good idea for a dining table.....and a check for \$6,000!! Further below is a pic of two eastern walnut logs waiting to be milled. (#4) They were well over three feet in diameter! And finally a stack of big leaf maple slab for pedestal type tables. There were hundreds of these! (#5)

On we wandered, for almost two



hours, through all four warehouses. If not for the family gathering waiting for us.....AND the fact that it was a hot day and the translucent roofing panels had turned the warehouses into saunas, we might have spent even more time, and taken more pictures! As it was, we did not depart empty handed. Because both burl and slab are quite pricey now, we were fairly restrained in our purchases, but, hey, it was a shopping experience not often encountered by most



Woodchucks.

The next stop on our Woodchuck “shopping trip” was in Seymour, Connecticut. Bad Dog Burl(<http://burlsource.com/>) is a company I was familiar with, but it had moved and changed owners since my last visit, so I was interested to see what changes had been made. Located in a quiet residential neighborhood, we drove by it thinking it to be just someone’s garage...which it was! He had yet to put out a sign!

In sharp contrast to the acres of inventory we had encountered the day before, this place was even more specialized, and consolidated. The owner buys harvested burl caps in crates

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

from a supplier in the Far East, mostly Australia and Indonesia. In the case of most of his species, trees such as mallei and coolibah, the trees are not cut down to harvest the burls. They are rather, sliced off the tree bole and left to produce another in the same spot a few years later. (As I think more about this, it may be true with burl trees in our eastern forests? While we usually cut the tree down to harvest our burls, it is not necessary always to do so? We can slice a burl off a tree and the tree can go on living for years. Whether it will grow another to replace it is a question warranting more study?) This was good to hear, because in looking around his shop, and assuming there are many other such shops around the world, one could easily start to think the world supply of burl cap was a finite affair? As I ponder how to use the burl I have acquired over the years, it is much more comforting to think of it as a 'renewable' resource! The photos below show, 1) a typical basket of cap, 2) the owner pulling out a piece of slab from behind two huge burl caps, 3) an even larger cap that commanded its own crate, 4) a couple more boxes of cap.....you get the picture! The final shot is a big coolibah cap, showing the gorgeous red color of the grain under all those points. Most burl wood, particularly that sold in smaller chunks, is sold by the pound, typically \$4-\$5. With Cindy Drozda's words echoing in my ears, recalling her spirit of competitiveness in wood buying with her late husband, David Nittman, "Real Woodchucks don't buy wood when they need it, but rather when they find it, and the need will come later!"...I weighed my basket and wrote a check for a little under \$300. As a little "bonus" the owner went over to a bin of cut-offs and

grabbed several pounds of "thank you" tokens to throw in my shopping bag! It was another enjoyable stop on a vacation trip that almost always manages to include wood or woodchucks in one form or another! I am grateful for having a very understanding traveling partner!

Russ



# December Potluck & Yankee Exchange

On December 13th the club meet for a Potluck, Yankee Exchange, and time of fellowship. Good food, gifts, an laughs were shared by all.



o Group Photo



o Andy looking excited?



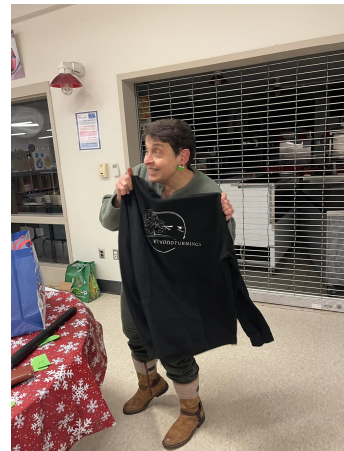
o Bob needs his glasses to see what he got!



Serious chatter happening here



Chris choosing a gift



Karen showing off t-shirt



Marilyn's not quite sure...



Neither is Brad :)



Kevin's wondering if he can eat it now



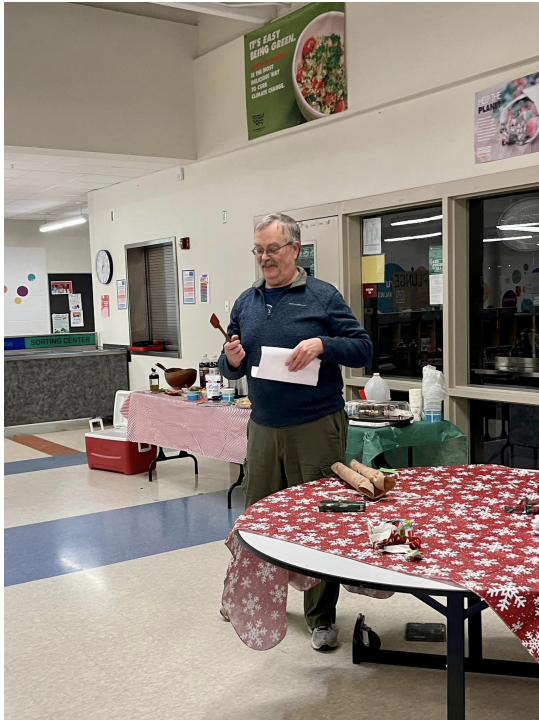
Adam teasing Karen



Jake with gift



Jake and Andy swapping?



Gary's turn



How many turns did Jake get? :)

## Board of Directors

President: Karen Drennen

Vice President: Adam Wager

Secretary: Gary Walz

Treasurer: Brad Jackson

Newsletter Editor: Elsa Oppenheimer

Members at Large: Bob Martin, Tom Dunne, Ross Mitchell

## Treasurer's Report

## JANUARY 2024 Treasurer's Report

### Bank Balance forward

5225.71

### INCOME

Dues 150.00

Glue 10.00

### EXPENSES

**Bank Balance ending** 5385.71

The Board of Directors of The Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont gratefully acknowledges the payment of dues from the following members for **2024**:

Bob Coates, Karen Drennen, Matt Harpster, Linda Hollingdale, Brad Jackson, Chris Lumbra, Bob Martin, Sherry Pidgeon, Harvie Porter, Edwards Smith (10)

Scott Bennett, Ted Fink, Michael Mode, Dick Montague, Nick Rosato, Hav Smith, Army Spahn, and Al Stirt are Honorary Lifetime members (8)

If you have paid your dues for the 2024 year but do not see your name listed above, please contact me at [BradJackson234@gmail.com](mailto:BradJackson234@gmail.com) to correct that error of omission. Dues for 2024 are \$25. Checks should be made out to "WTNV" and sent to: Brad Jackson, 14 Rustic Drive, Essex, VT 05452

Please note: The following privileges are only available to dues-paying members:  
Video library use, mentoring program, bulk purchase discounts for CA glue and Anchor Seal.  
10% discount on purchases from Klingspor, Penn State Industries, Rare Woods USA,

WoodTurnersWonders, and Craft Supplies.  
Klingspor requests you login **before** you order.

PSI requests you mention the club.

Rare Woods USA requests you order using coupon code WOODCHUCKSROCK or mention the club.  
Woodturnerswonders requires the individual member to create an account at [woodturnerswonders.com](http://woodturnerswonders.com) and then send an email to [members@woodturnerswonders.com](mailto:members@woodturnerswonders.com). They should include their name as well as the name of the club in which they are a member. Woodturnerswonders will then add the discount to their account and send them an email explaining the next steps. This will give them a 10% discount on Lamps, Sandpaper, and Sanding Accessories.

Craft Supplies gives Club members 10% off abrasive discs and finishes when ordering as an individual. They just need to call in the order and mention their membership when ordering those products.

*Reminder: As previously advertised, unless you have paid your annual dues by April 1st your name must be removed from the discount list.*

**Brad Jackson/Treasurer**



woodchucksvt.org

**Woodchuck Turners of Northern Vermont**

Skunk Hollow Studios, 05482, Shelburne

This email was sent to [tjaybailey@yahoo.com](mailto:tjaybailey@yahoo.com)  
You've received this email because you've subscribed to our newsletter.

[Unsubscribe](#)

