

# The Bladerunner



P.O. Box 1838  
Thousand Oaks  
California 91358-0838

July 2021

## President's Message



Hello fellow woodworkers:

Last month's meeting was held in the backyard of our President (me). Although we only had a total of 17 people, it was well received. Stephen Case-Pall and I talked about finishing. We had refreshments and a raffle. Summer month attendances are always low due to vacations.

Currently, we are not planning a meeting for August.

Our Picnic which is usually held in August may be held in September. We will let everyone know more details soon.

The Club is looking into a new location for our regular meetings. An offer has been made to us by Sport Court of Southern California to hold our meetings at their location in the West end of Simi Valley near Madera Rd and Easy St. Board members will be invited to visit their facility for inspection and approval. We have not heard from the Conejo Valley School District and believe it will take a long time for them to make their decision. Our main concern is having meetings at the same location each month. We will advise members of our decision soon.

Will Robbins has volunteered to run our annual Auction in October this year. Depending on our decision about our new location, it could be held in Will's front driveway or in the parking lot at Sports Court in Simi Valley. Either way, get tools and stuff from your garage ready to donate. This is our largest fund raiser for the Club. More information will be sent via E-mail and announced in the Bladerunner and on our Website. We will need several members to volunteer at this Auction. Let Will Robbins know if you can help.

All the donated wood which was stored at my house for club members is depleted. I was glad for those who received the wood, and I am glad it is gone out of my garage. I will let members know when I get more.

If anybody has ideas for future programs, let me know. I am always looking for something new and different. We have a lot of talent in the Club, please become a speaker or help find a guest speaker.

I am also still looking for used redwood 4 x 4 posts for this year's toys. I am going to have a small workshop to build redwood heart boxes. Please think about making toys yourself for the Ventura County Fire Department's "Spark of Love" program. The toys need to be completed by the November Club Meeting. Contact Dick Wiley (toy chairman) at 805-377-2340.

Keep Safe,

*Bill*

Bill Aurand  
President

## July Meeting

The Club Meeting in Bill's backyard (AKA the Wild Bunch). Stephen Case-Pall did a great job!



The following article from the Acorn is about what you can do when you are determined to be a woodworker! The gentleman involved is not a Member. Does anybody know him? We should recruit him!

Thousand Oaks Acorn

July 8, 2021

## NEIGHBORS

# Carving through COVID

■ T.O. man turns retirement unit into wood shop

By Dawn Megli  
dawn@theacorn.com

Knock on wood.

There's light at the end of the tunnel for the COVID-19 pandemic, but there's no end in sight for Larry Thrasher's pandemic woodworking project.

When California went into lockdown last spring, the 79-year-old University Village resident knew he needed a hobby to keep his hands and his mind busy.

He wanted to start making old-fashioned wooden toys, so he took to the internet and started ordering woodworking equipment that would make Bob Vila proud, like a drill press, vertical mill, belt sander, router table, table saw, wood and metal lathes, and an oscillating spindle sander. And of course, a dust collector.

It turns out that making toys is no game to the retired manufacturing executive.



Photos by MICHAEL COONS/Acorn Newspapers

**WORKING WITH THE GRAIN**—Above, Larry Thrasher's woodworking equipment includes a table saw in his home at University Village in Thousand Oaks. Below, a selection of toy trucks that he's built. He also makes a variety of other toys as well as furniture.

ing executive.

The Ohio native designs all of his toys on CAD, or computer-aided design software. So far, he has produced wooden toys with moving parts that would make any Amish child jealous, like a boy herding geese, a pig that walks, two lumberjacks sawing a log, two railroad hands pumping a cart, milk maidens churning butter, a man on a tricycle and an acrobat doing flips.

"I've always liked making toys," Thrasher said.

The father of three and grandfather of 10 doesn't have a garage, so he squirreled away the equipment in his 1,186-square-foot University Village apartment. But you would never know it.

On first glance, Thrasher has a fastidious two-bedroom apartment with white carpet. But when he pulls back the shower curtain in the guest bathroom, it reveals two levels of woodworking equipment surrounded by acoustic panels.

A router table is in the broom closet and the lathes are tucked away in patio storage. The table saw and shop vac are hidden in his master bedroom closet. He said the equipment does not violate University Village's community rules.

"When I looked for the equipment online, I checked to make sure everything was the right dimensions to fit the space I had," he said.

Woodworking has been a lifelong hobby for the septuagenarian.

His father had woodworking equipment in the basement when Thrasher was a child, and Thrasher's grandfather worked at a lumber store, so he would always bring home extra bits of wood for Thrasher, who would tinker with the remnants.

Thrasher earned degrees in electrical engineering, and when he went to work in manufacturing

— Please See **Page 14**



# Wood shop

From Page 13—

in Detroit, he had a small wood shop in his basement where he would create tiny toys for his nieces and nephews.

Thrasher's career took him to Mexico and Australia, but he eventually returned stateside and moved to Wood Ranch in Simi Valley while working in Moorpark.

As retirement approached, his wife decided he needed a creative outlet, so they moved to a home in the Santa Rosa Valley, where he designed a standalone wood shop where he built furniture, cabinets and playhouses for his family.

He also made jewelry boxes for his granddaughters and Christmas toys for underprivileged children.

Thrasher gave up woodworking when he moved to University Village four years ago and donated

his large equipment to Hume Lake Christian Camps. He resumed his hobby when Joy, his wife of nearly 56 years, died in February 2020 and pandemic-related restrictions took effect the next month.

"I had time on my hands," he said.

Chelsea Wilson, who handles public relations for University Village, said that while moving to the retirement community required Thrasher to downsize his wood shop, it also reinforced his love for the hobby, and the pandemic elevated his desire to continue pursuing his woodworking passion.

"Larry Thrasher is living the dream of having his own personalized wood shop that he doesn't have to leave his couch to enjoy," she told the *Acorn* in an email. "It's amazing how he's able to create such intricate toys in a downsized space."

Wilson said studies show hobbies like woodworking have many benefits, including improved memory and self-esteem. She said the hidden wood shop has caught the attention of his neighbors and he recently did a presentation and displayed some of his designs and creations for others to enjoy.

Now that restrictions are lifting, Thrasher is resuming his pre-pandemic activities, like the drama club, which is working on a production of "Meet Me in St. Louis."

But even with University Village residents vaccinated and life returning to normal, Thrasher said, he'll continue whittling away his hours in wood.

"It keeps me busy," he said.

**JOIN TODAY!**

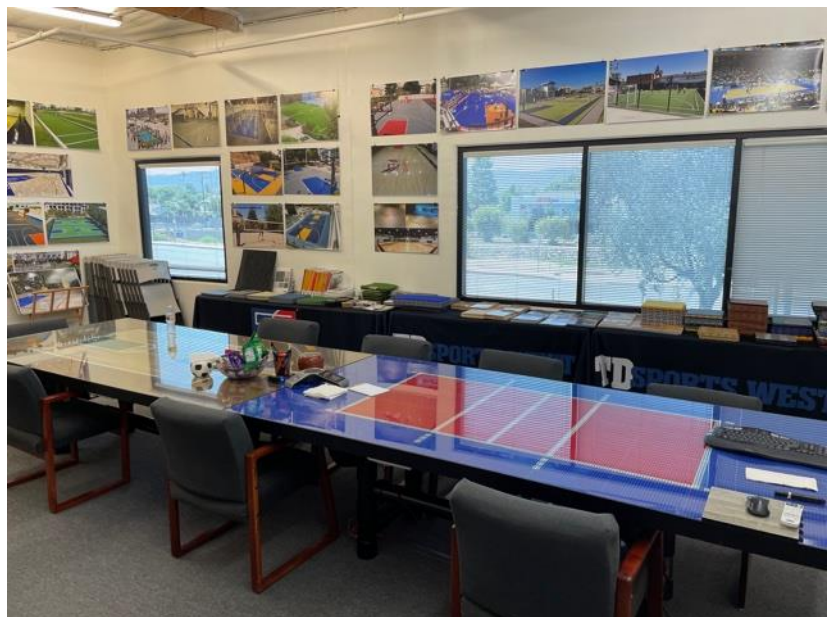
**WELCOME!**

**Classes:**

- X Classes
- ment Classes
- Virtual Classes
- emand Virtual Library

**ROW FAMILY YMCA**  
Westlake Village  
[www.sevymca.org](http://www.sevymca.org)

Pictures of Sport Court for Future CVWA Meetings?



## **A Woodchuck Chuckle**

**I tried to come up with a carpentry pun that woodwork...**

**I think I nailed it but nobody saw it.**

## Board Members

### Elected Officers

President	Bill Aurand	(805) 229-1559	president@cvwa.org
Board Member	Mike Gorn	(805) 265-6150	mcgorn@roadrunner.com
Board Member	Stacy Gerlich		
Board Member	Stephen Case-Pall	(805) 603-9394	<a href="mailto:tschako666@gmail.com">tschako666@gmail.com</a>
Communications	Randy Spengler		communications@cvwa.org
Membership	Arlen Handberg	(805) 527-0211	membership@cvwa.org
Past President	Deena Case-Pall	(805) 290-0460	k9psych@gmail.com

### Appointed Positions

Editors/Bladerunner	Tom & Sharon Welz	(805) 630-1299	setlwelz@gmail.com
Mentor Program	Dave Seidler	(805) 491-2599	
Photographer	Aubrey Grey		cvwa9@aagrey.net
Raffle	Bill Battocchio		
Raffle	Rande Bence	(805) 349-5507	
Refreshments	Andy Anderson	(805) 484-3985	<a href="mailto:willardanderson805@gmail.com">willardanderson805@gmail.com</a>
Silent Auction	Stephen Case-Pall	(805) 603-9394	<a href="mailto:tschako666@gmail.com">tschako666@gmail.com</a>
Sound	Randy Spengler		
Toy Project	Richard Wiley		
Webmaster	Randy Spengler		<a href="mailto:webmaster@cvwa.org">webmaster@cvwa.org</a>
Wellness	Al Fournier		
Auction	Will Robbins		robbinswill@yahoo.com
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