

Meet The Turner

Tell us about yourself:

I am Art Varady and my wife Jackie, Daughter Kelly, and her Husband Mike are all turners at different stages of experience. I have been an automotive controls engineer for 30 years now and have had the opportunity to work for GM, Ford and FCA.



How did you get started in turning?

I probably started turning because of the way my father described my uncle Lou's tool collection and knowledge of how to use them. He always seemed most fascinated by his lathe, this might also explain my interest in engineering. It was clear that this was a noble goal, to know how to use tools. I have been turning since 1998 when I bought my delta steel bed lathe. It came with a set of tools, and a how to book, and I started with 2x2's a lot of which jumped off the lathe in the beginning. Then I found some more books, and read them and tried those techniques, and of course bought some more tools. Since I wasn't sure how far this hobby would go, I started making some tools because it was cheaper, and fun too. Then I ran across the turning groups at the woodworking shows and joined my first group; this shortened the learning curve, and I started doing bowls, and other non spindle items.

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What type of projects have you worked on?

My projects were generally things for Jackie, Kelly, and Mike who are all great at coming up with novel projects. We enjoy designing, and then trying to realize the designs. One of my favorite projects was when Kelly came home from college one time with Mike, and they wanted to design a beer stein for a friend who played the "Busty Wench" at the renaissance festivals. Kelly and Mike designed a cup with the proper curves, we turned it, they wood burned a corset, and Jackie painted it. Over the years we have turned a carving set from padauk, and birds-eye maple based on fencing foils, a 40" diameter mirror frame, segmented bowls, pens, darts, beer tap handles, and a lot of things made from the wood we find in our yard, or leftover wood from either remodeling projects, or some of the flat work I have done. For years I gave the pieces to family members and friends and since their shelves are pretty full now, I have been selling pieces and donating the proceeds to various charities which is a new source of fulfillment. Jackie has found the camaraderie of the sales to be fun, and is now taking a more active role in this hobby as well.

Any future turning goals?

I still would like to turn a finial that I am happy with, and take more time with my work so I can have better geometry, and finishes. I will always enjoy working with different kinds of woods.