

Meet The Turner

What is your name:

Erica Perry

Let us know a little about your family:

My husband Robert is a landscaper and keeps me stocked with lots of different kinds of wood. I have a daughter who lives in Baltimore, two stepsons who live in Ann Arbor, and 4 grandchildren. I also have to include two German Shepherds as part of my family, one of whom is about to give birth mid April. Anybody want a German Shepherd puppy? The breed thinks that it is a lap dog.

What do you do for a living?

What I did for a living was medical social work with dialysis patients and families for 35 years. Now I work on a grant and am a "family helper" to employees of University of Michigan Hospitals when they have special needs.

How long have you turned wood?

I retired in Dec 2012 and really began to get the hang of turning wood at that time. Prior to that, I did attend a workshop in the autumn of that year that our club held with Mark Szalay. It was the first time I ever put tool to wood and it jump started me into this passion. I then got a few lessons from Russ and Bert along with a woman who has since quit the scene.



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What got you interested?

I recently read in a woodturning magazine that most turners had grandfathers who also worked with wood. My grandfather was a German carpenter and carver and my father also made a lot of furniture. In high school I wanted to go through the "shop" series but got stuck in home economics making aprons. My father also was not encouraging regarding women and woodworking. So it took retirement and an encouraging husband to give me the time and courage to try it out.

What are you most proud of wood turning wise?

When Russ, my original teacher, compliments me on a piece, I believe I have made some progress in my turning. Also, when I actually sell some of my stuff, I get pretty excited. I turned my first burl recently and though I see errors in judgment about which end should have been up, I am glad that I finally was willing to risk ruining a burl by turning it. Also, the picture I am including is of a spalted hard maple bowl requested by a loyal friend/patron. I felt that it turned out quite nice.