

## Holiday Gift Ideas for Woodturners

Yes, the Holiday Season is 6 months away, but we turners hate boredom! Here are some ideas to occupy short but useful bits of time and get a head start.

Our November 16, 2024, demo will feature **Kevin Stierhoff** making a top, a rattle with captured rings, and a rolling pin...all in an hour or so! All of these will surely make an impact when the ribbons come off. Be sure to make this one in person!

Criteria for a welcome Gift: Handmade by the donor. Clever, pretty, & durable.

Criteria for the Turner: Fast, inexpensive, entertaining...with materials you have lying around. Spend a little more for special gifts, needless to say.



Trivets—for cut offs too shallow for a platter, too pretty to turn into BTU's

Link: [trivets\\_10-23.pdf \(scwoodturners.org\)](https://www.scwoodturners.org/trivets_10-23.pdf)



Wine Coasters—Maple and Cherry here.

Any blank 4–4.5” diameter, 1.25-1.5” thick will do. Redwood or Ipe deck cut-offs, scraps too small for a salad bowl, a rejected project with clumsy uppers but a sound tenon...so many possibilities!

One of these takes about 20 minutes to turn and sand. Finish with a durable, waterproof, alcohol resistant, surface film...varnish or polyurethane. Rinse off & dry!

Space on a holiday table is precious, so don't make these wider than necessary. (A guide coming to our website before too long.)

Angle the rim slightly inward so drips don't slither onto the tablecloth.

Rocks...



*From left, clockwise:*

*Carnelian/  
Bay*

*Obsidian/  
Manzanita burl*

*Celestite/  
Wenge*

*Malachite/  
River birch*

*(2-3" each)*

Stone spheres fit perfectly in the kinds of openings we make with ease every day. It's tempting to make "cradles" with woods of complementary colors and figure.

A semiprecious stone sphere in this size range, made of a family member's birthstone, can be affordable at rock shows and craft fairs. That makes a dandy birthday present.

Or...make your own wooden spheres of contrasting colors and grain.

These little baby bowls and saucers are great gifts...you know who wants 'em!



All of these fit in your palm...great for playing house, storing little things, sorting beads, playing with contrasts in wood color and grain. The raw materials, about a tennis ball size piece of interesting wood, are likely resting in a box in your shop...too nice to throw away. Perfect project for a rainy afternoon.



Finished that practice cove and bead spindle? Hate to toss it after all those tense negotiations with the skew and the spindle gouge?

Make it into a celestial communication beacon for the Star Wars enthusiast.

In this case, a transmitter of intergalactic joy made of Monterey Cypress and ametrine for a purple-loving granddaughter's birthday.

## Time has Come Today



*It's 09:25*

The oak design could be...a shimmering ocean tucking into an inlet on a serene desert island under an artist's mackerel sky. Better than a smiley face and definitely better than kindling! Need a blank 4-10" diameter, 1.25-1.5" thick, to accommodate a battery powered mechanism which runs 6 months on a single AA battery. Available online (Woodcraft and others), with a wide range of sizes and designs of hands. Circular thermometers look good framed in wood, too! *Expect to spend around \$15.*



Battery & Mechanism in place



A rescued "funnel" error



These eccentrically turned, matching goblets by John Wells are well beyond the reach of most of us...but the theme of matching vessels with different woods is one any turner can tackle!



Try making a matching set of cups or small bowls, each of a different wood. It's a fantastic present for a family gathering...and you'll never find a set like that in any store.

Granted, these are not identical...just "similar"...what I have lying around. You could do better!

(From top, clockwise: Ash, Bay, Mahogany, Chestnut, Yellow Cedar, Maple, Black Acacia, Birch)

Betcha can't ID them all from this tiny photo...but stay tuned...there's a rumor brewing about a wood identification exhibition for another club demo!

Boxes take a little more time and skill, but for presents? *Gangbusters!*



Simple or elaborate, people love little places to store their goodies. Little boxes are a fine destiny for pieces of figured wood too small for salad bowls...and bowling pins.



*Birdseye Maple and Olive. These all fit in one's palm*

Hints: For “hermetic seal” boxes, that opening “pop” is a novelty achieved with true diligence. They’re dandy for aromatic and precious things a user accesses occasionally.

Depending upon what the user is storing, consider finishing the insides simply with wax...or leave it natural. Do NOT use unfinished wood of pungently aromatic conifers (like incense cedar) for a box that will be used for jewelry. (Makes a scum on silver...and an unhappy spouse.)

For jewelry, keys, and hearing aids at the end of the day, a looser fit allows the lucky recipient to open it with just one hand. Consider a lower profile (hate to say “squatty”) and slightly heavier box to avoid tipping over.

Elaborate, tall finials are triumphs of the turner’s craft...but not too user friendly for some, so make the lids easy to grab for these practical purposes.

And of course, no harm in making gifts that will make hearts glow...more time required, but they become lifetime treasures!



*Aimee...Now a new turner.*

Enjoy your warming shops, and come join the best of company at Santa Cruz Woodturners monthly meetings!

Wells Shoemaker, Past Prez, Demo Coordinator 2024  
[www.scwoodturners.org](http://www.scwoodturners.org)