Vol 10 Number 8 http://www.themakerbarn.org

NEWSLETTER February 2026

"The MakerBarn is a member-driven family-friendly makerspace that exists to provide a place for our members to envision, design, and realize creative projects. We are dedicated to building a creative maker community among our membership and the community at large."

MakerBarn is Buzzing!

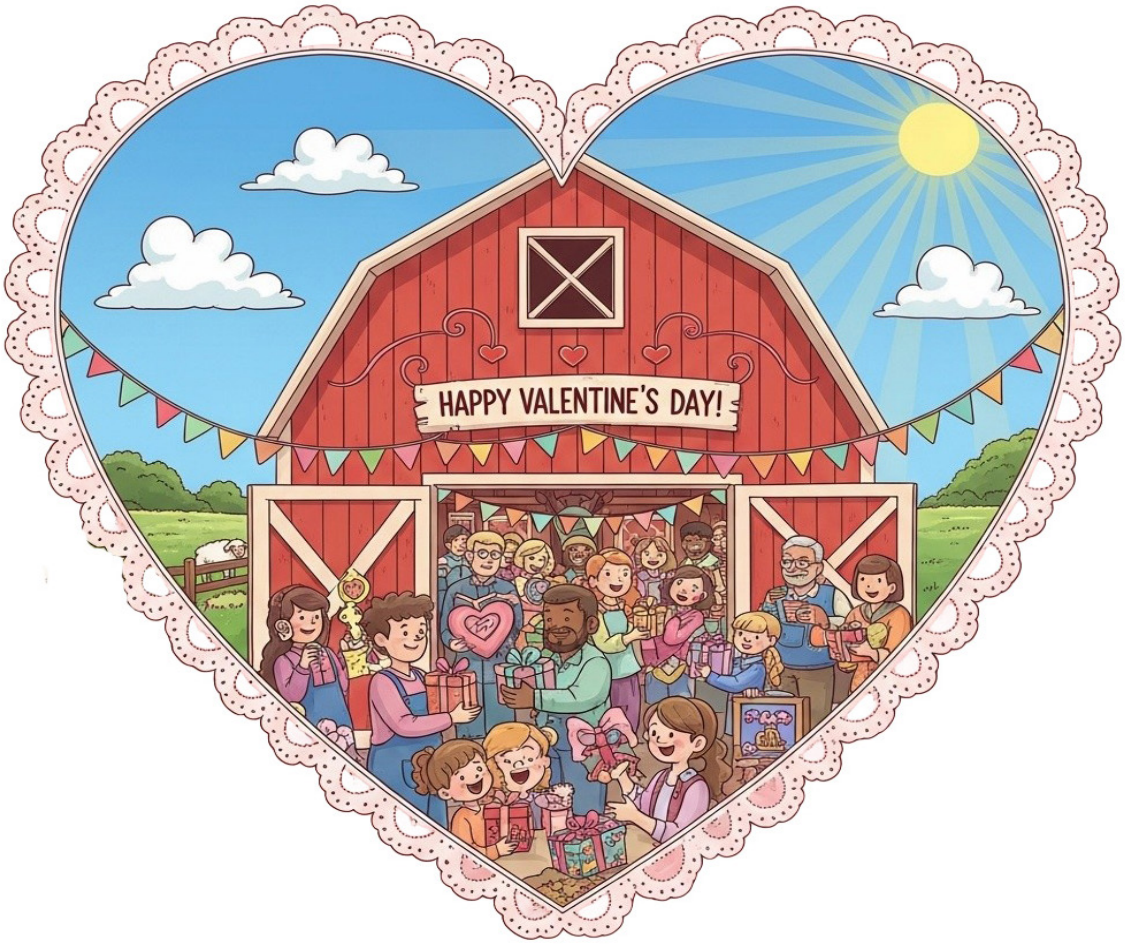
The MakerBarn is buzzing with creativity and a little relief as we officially made it through the freeze weekend! Thanks to everyone who checked in, stayed flexible, and helped keep things running smoothly. With warmer days ahead (fingers crossed!), the shop is once again full of sparks flying, ideas taking shape, and members collaborating on all kinds of projects.

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, which makes this a perfect time to create something thoughtful and handmade. Whether it's a laser-cut keepsake, a ceramic gift, a woodworking project, or something entirely your own, The MakerBarn is a great place to turn a bit of love and creativity into something special. Check out what's coming up below, jump into a project, get inspired by items other members are making, and let's keep building, learning, and making together.

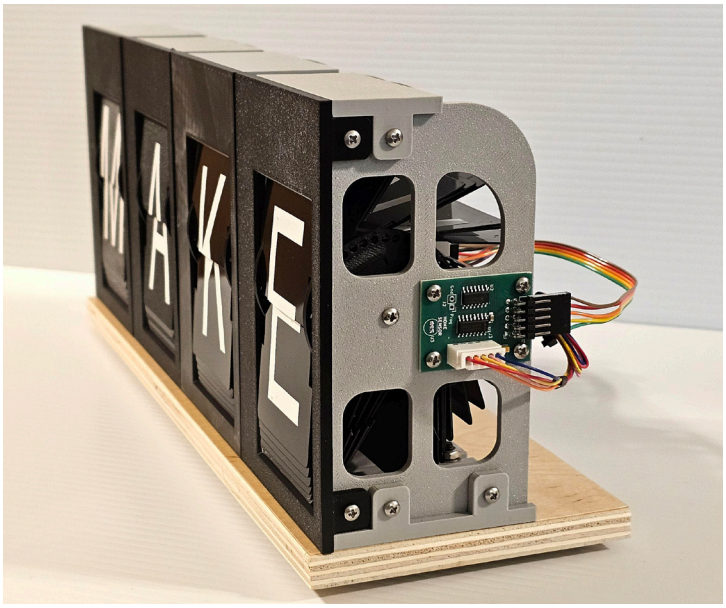
Welcome to our newest members! About a dozen people were on-boarded last month.

Thanks,

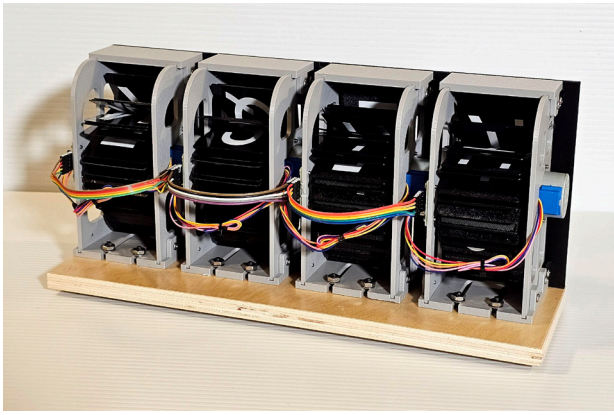
Kathy Barbieri
President



Electronics SIG making Split Flap Displays



We've been busy in the Electronics SIG. Over the past year we have been studying various aspects of electronics. Much of our time has been learning about microcontrollers, motors, and mechanical drives. A perfect project for the group to show off its new skills is the design of a Split-Flap display. Displays of this type were used for many years in airport terminals and train stations. Unlike LED displays, these displays are not affected by ambient light and are always easy to read. We thought it would be a neat idea to update the design of the display using modern micro-electronics and stepper motors.



The display has forty flaps that create the display characters. The characters on the flaps are made using vinyl. Each character is split. The lower half is shown on the front side of the lower flap and the upper half is shown on the back side of the upper flap. The flaps are mounted on a drum. As the drum rotates, different characters appear. To rotate the drum, we used a small stepper motor. The stepper motor is controlled by a tiny microcomputer. Each display module has its own microcontroller. Data from a computer or other source is sent to the first module on the left. It takes the first character it receives, then transmits the rest of the data to the next module and so on. Using this technique, any number of modules can be connected to build a display panel.

Bird Nesting Box Workshop

A big thank-you to Jeff Rohling for holding bird nesting box workshops at MakerBarn in January. Jeff says, "Over the past few years I've made a lot of bird boxes for small cavity nesting birds. I've tried many styles but keep going back to one that is almost guaranteed to work. Almost!"

Jeff explains, "It is made with 1 2x6 cedar picket (so super inexpensive), and can be cut in just a few minutes. If there is any interest, we could do something where members could put together already cut out kits or do a get together to cut the pieces and then put them together.

I've did a get together with a group of younger scouts, where I brought already cut out kits and they put them together. They seemed to really enjoy it and all got a nesting box to take home.

This is the prime time to put up a box in your back yard because the bluebirds, chickadees and many others start looking in Jan/Feb for a place to nest."

Are you Manager Material?

The MakerBarn runs on volunteers. If you have been an active member for two months or more, we would like you to consider becoming a Shop MakerBarn Manager.
MakerBarn Managers work 3-4 hour shifts during which they supervise the general operation of the Shop keeping a close eye on safety and noting any maintenance issues that arise. They also devote a fair amount of time to general cleaning of the shop floor and emptying the dust collection and trash systems. They give prospective members tours and update MACS access cards as needed for members.
Oh, and they enjoy 24/7 access to the Shop!
If the Shop manager role sounds interesting to you, contact Jim Barron via Slack. Thanks!

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Joe Foster made either a plant stand or a cat tree - we can't tell! but it is supposed to be a plant stand. The complete solution was modeled in Fusion 360. The wood components were cut using the CNC router (double-sided routing). The metal brackets were cut with the CNC plasma machine. The welding shop was used to weld the metal components together. Joe used the laser to cut posterboard templates and mock-ups to verify proper fit prior to committing to cutting the materials. The wood is black walnut. The stand is on castors for ease of movement. He purchased the wood from Houston Hardwoods and the steel from Triple S Steel on Jensen drive. The rectangular tubing was from the salvage area of Triple S Steel (i.e. cheap!).

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

John Hoaglun made a flat pack sleep and storage platform for his 4Runner using the CNC machine. Using his new platform he can put a sleeping pad and bag on top and get to his photo gear in the back. There is even room for a small fridge and battery station up front and clothes bags in the middle. Next steps are some sanding then seal it with poly.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Mike Briggs made his first end grain cutting board at The MakerBarn.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Stephanie Hohenschutz made a Solo Mahjon board. She will make the cut file available for anyone else who enjoys Mahjong as much as she does!

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Kathy Barbieri made coasters using dye sublimation. She gives these out as gifts for her Air BnB hosts while travelling in Europe.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

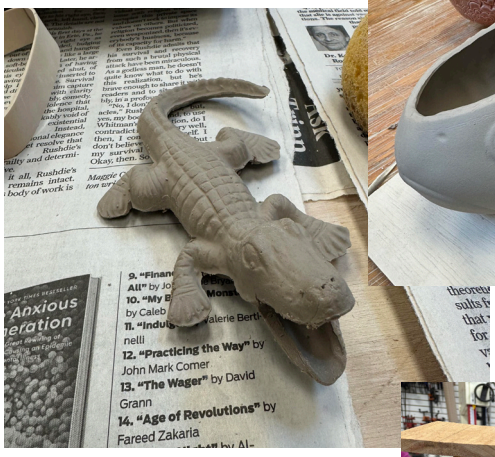
Rita S made this sampler shooter tray out of cherry for her sister's 50th birthday. It was her first project using VCarve Pro software and the CNC for the glass pockets and letters. She says, "Thank you Kevin for all the help on the CNC!" She also used the miter saw to cut to length, router to slightly round the top edges, and sanding station.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Jennifer Romito made three things this month;

She used the table saw and miter saw to make a TV console to add some much needed storage to our cabin. I customized the build to have a long shelf for the sound bar and a cabinet to tuck away the PlayStation.

She had some fun using the molds in the Ceramics Lab to slip cast some fun items!



...and she made a birdnesting box at Jeff Rohling's workshop.

Jennifer says "I cherish my time spent at the MakerBarn!"

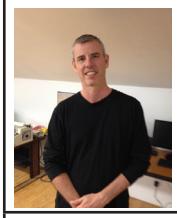
Meet the Area Managers

WOODWORKING
Mark Bush is area manager of woodworking. Contact him via SLACK.

LASER PRINTING
Greg Radliff is an artist and expert at using Laser Cutter and Engravers. Greg can show you the LightBurn software we use and can check you out for use of the Laser printers in the Lab. Contact him via SLACK

METALWORKING
Bryan Manka is area manager for metalworking which includes the metal mill and the metal lathe at the Barn. He can check you out for use of either of these machines. Contact him via SLACK.

3D PRINTING
Jody Cochran is a graphic artist with deep experience in 3D printing and other graphics tools. Jody can show you slicer and other software used with the 3D printers. Contact him via SLACK.



ELECTRONICS
Raul Garcia is area manager for electronics. More of a fixer than designer, but willing to help and learn together. See Raul for anything related to microcontrollers, electronic devices or other electronics related projects. Contact him via SLACK.

CERAMICS
Lisa Lane is area manager for ceramics. Contact her via SLACK.

WELDING
Joe Foster is area manager for welding. Contact him via SLACK.

CNC MACHINING
Gary Alose is area manager for CNC metal machining. Still learning but happy to help! Contact him via SLACK.

For New Members

WELCOME to the wonderful world of making!! We know you will come to love this place as much as we do.
First and foremost, this place is about the people. We would like to encourage you to see yourself as more than just a member. We are a community. Because we don't have any employees, we rely heavily on our community to keep things running. So please join in, pitch in, and get involved. Ask lots of questions. We are a really friendly group and love to help one another. The MakerBarn is a fantastic community of makers and we are glad you are here!

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