



NEWSLETTER

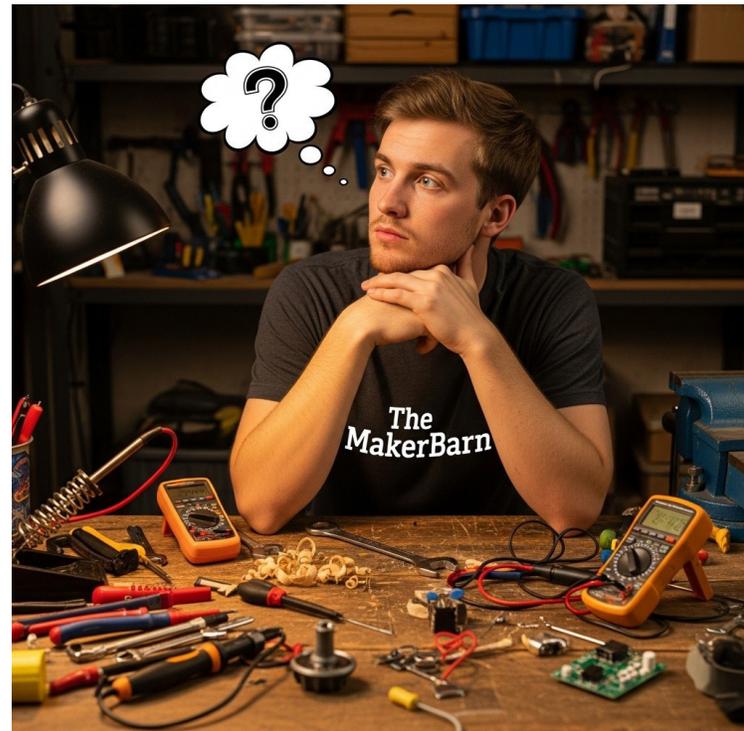
March 2026

“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 keeps growing!

We've welcomed many new members over the past few months, and we are so glad you are here. Our community has grown to 358 people, and all this new energy makes The MakerBarn more dynamic than ever. Every new member brings fresh skills to share, new ideas to spark inspiration, and new friendships waiting to be formed. It's exciting to see how this growing mix of experience and curiosity continues to shape who we are.

With spring right around the corner, this is the time of year when everything starts to feel fresh and full of possibility. It's a season that naturally inspires us to make things happen. If you've been thinking about a project but haven't taken the first step, now is the perfect time to get into the Shop or the Lab and bring those ideas to life.



Not sure where to begin? After getting inspired by your favorite makers online, consider exploring clubs and associations that connect you with others who share your interests. Several of our members are involved in local woodworking and ceramics groups, attending open houses, demonstrations, and events where they learn new techniques and discover tools. A little research can go a long way in helping you find your creative community. And remember, many of those connections are already right here. Our Slack channels are a great place to ask questions, share ideas, and meet like-minded people both within The MakerBarn and beyond.



Kathy Barbieri
President

Ceramics at MakerBarn - March

There are lots of ways to learn and enjoy ceramics at MakerBarn in March!

Lace Tray Class

All adult members are invited to make ceramic trays with us on March 9th. We will add a lace design to the clay and form the slabbed clay into a footed tray. This is a guided class geared for both beginners and experienced potters. The clay and all tools will be provided. The trays will be fired and glazed for the participants. The cost is \$20 to cover the cost of the supplies. This is a great opportunity to try out our ceramics program.. Register at https://themakerbarn.org/?post_type=event&p=5116&preview=true.



Ceramics Orientation

Are you interested in ceramics? The next Ceramics Orientation is scheduled for Monday, March 16th, from 7:00-9:00PM. If you would like to participate in the ceramics program at The MakerBarn, please register for the orientation at <https://themakerbarn.org/events/ceramics-orientation-9/>. You must be logged in with your email to view classes and register.



Makers Challenge

2026 is the year of the Makers Challenge in The MakerBarn Ceramics Studio. We kicked the year off with our Mug making challenge. We enjoyed hot cocoa in our mugs as we tested them out. Next up: Bowls! We will explore methods and ideas for creating bowls at our Ceramics SIG on March 26th at 7:00PM. Our 2026 Makers Challenge includes 5 challenges with opportunities to earn a Makers Medallion for each. Make a bowl using any pottery method and bring it to the Ceramics SIG on April 27th at 7:00PM. We will enjoy ice cream in them as we test out our creations.

Register on the website at <https://themakerbarn.org/events/2026-makers-challenge/>. The \$10 fee covers all 5 challenges. There is still time to earn your Mug Medallion. Come build new skills and celebrate making with us!

Ceramics at MakerBarn - March (cont.)

Maker Mondays

Mark your calendars! Maker Mondays are the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month at 7:00PM in the Ceramics Studio. The 2nd Monday is typically a training or class and the 4th is our Ceramics SIG. The Ceramic Interest Group is an opportunity to join with other members interested in ceramics. This year the SIG's will align with the challenge topics. It is fun to gather with other makers and explore a new skill. While the orientation is required to work with clay and the ceramics equipment, members interested in the program are welcome to join us for the Ceramics SIGS. It is a great way to meet other makers and learn more about the program.



Upcoming classes:

March 9, 2026, 7:00-9:00PM - Platter Making Class

March 16, 2026, 7:00-9:00PM - Ceramics Orientation

March 23, 2026 7:00-9:00PM - Ceramics SIG: Methods & Ideas for Making Bowls

2026 Makers Challenge

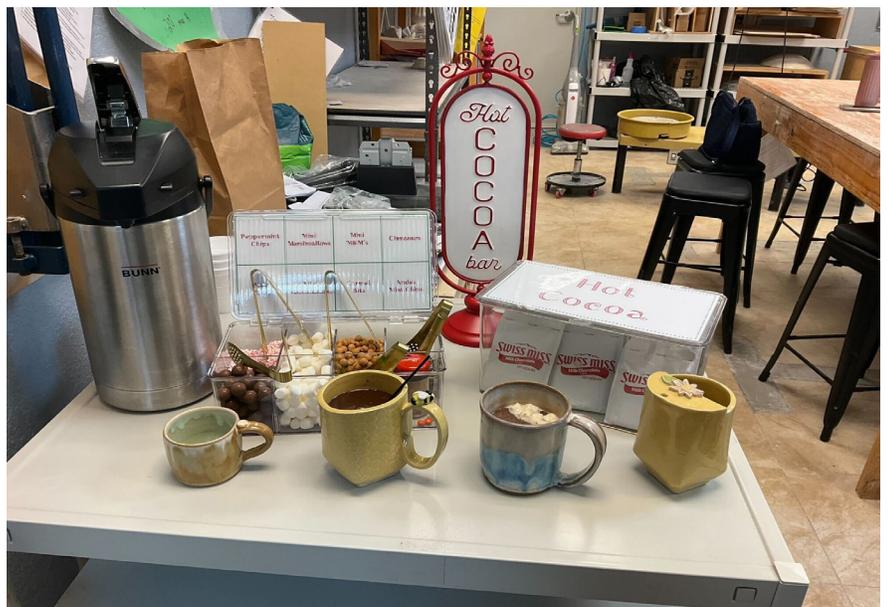
January/February - Mug Challenge

March/April - Bowl Challenge

May/June - Vase Challenge

July/August - Plate Challenge

September/October - Tea Pot Challenge



Electronics Special Interest Group

What has the Electronics SIG been up to?

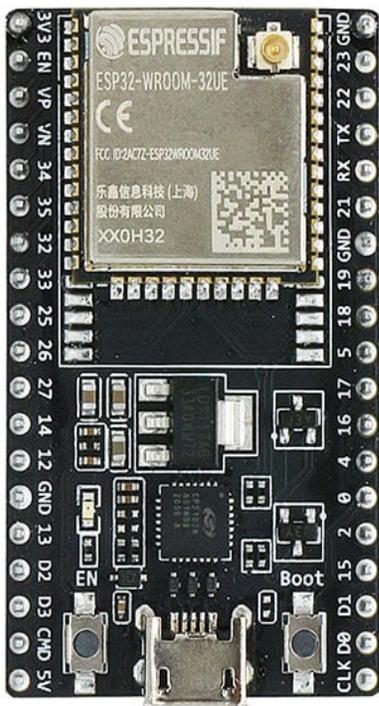
We finished the design of the Split-Flap display system. We built a set of 10 units. Carlos wrote a neat demo program in Python to drive the display. A link to a video showing the demo is here:

Demo.
John plans to build 50 units for a large display to be put into the Tomball Railroad Museum and David is going to build a display for his shop.



Learn KiCAD

Our next project is to learn KiCAD, the software used to create electronic schematics and circuit board design. The best way to learn about a program like this is to use it to create a project.



After some discussion, we decided to use it to redesign the MACS reader. George will design the unit and create a jigsaw puzzle of a schematic. The group will learn to use KiCAD to redraw the schematic and then design a printed circuit board. The new MACS will be a drop-in replacement for the old readers. We have not been able to build new MACS readers because some of the key parts are no longer available.

The new design will use an **ESP32-S3 processor** that will do everything the old processor plus replace the RFID reader module that we can no longer source. George has written the real-time code for reading the card, and Carlos will do the software for the database and networking part of the reader. So, we will learn about circuit board design and have new MACS readers as a bonus.

Electronics Special Interest Group (Cont.)

MACS Badge Tester

As part of our MACS reader redesign George had to write software to decode the information sent from an RFID badge. To test it, he designed a card reader circuit that would exercise his software. It was mentioned that it would be nice to have a device for the managers to use to test badges to make sure they function well. George took his design and turned it into a handy little box for the managers.



Most cards will read at 1-1/2” from the box. A weak card would have to be held much closer. The box was made on a Bambu 3D printer with AMS.

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!

Colleen Hellz made a vase and it is still under construction. It is a piece of buckeye burl cast in resin and turned on a wood lathe.



MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!



Cynthia Grimmer made Gnomes and flowers made with the slab roller.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Joe Foster made three pieces that support the Pines Montessori Schools Earth Connection program and will ultimately be displayed at the program finale, the “Eco Fair” in April.



A **wood duck** was largely created from the wooden shipping crate of the recently delivered new laser machines! The wing sockets were produced on one of our 3D printers, and the stand was fabricated in the welding shop. The wood duck was beautifully painted by a talented teacher at Pines Montessori School.

The **stained glass creatures** is made from acrylic cut on the lasers and colored by the students using acrylic markers. To ensure durability, each creature is finished with a clearcoat spray. The artistic arrangements for each piece are elegantly done by the Earth Connection teacher at Pines Montessori School (Joe’s teacher friend and maker partner).



MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!



For the Kingfisher mobile, the brown frame was printed using the 3D printer.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!



Jeff Rolling made this display out of walnut for his sons collection of challenge coins gathered from his time in the Marine Corps, HPD and the Army National Guard. Logos were burned using the laser.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Paul DuBose made a canister from maple wood. He glued the maple strips into a block, turned it on the lathe, and laser etched the iris. After the glue up, Paul used the lathe and the laser engraver to complete the project. This maple wood was donated to the Barn, so thank-you to the donor!



MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Sheri Acosta made Gag gifts to give to her brother and dentist.



MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Stephanie Posey made a birthday banner for her twins' birthday. This was made with acrylic cut on the laser.



Stephanie Posey made goodie bags that friends could color at the birthday party. These were made with the heat press in The Lab.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Tiffany Rollins made a ring holder for her friends who are getting married this year and wanted to have a way to pass the rings around during the ceremony to gather blessings from friends and family. This is Spanish Cedar with a glass window made with the CNC, router, and lasers. Tiffany thanks Nicole for her help.



Tiffany Rollins made some White Oak and Bolivian Rosewood cutting boards which were made to look like old books. The titles, authors, and publishers logo are from one of her favorite shows. She developed new skills with this project.

MADE AT THE MAKERBARN!

Justin Myers made a 20 year anniversary gift for a coworker. He used the CNC plasma table, powder coating and the Laser.

This was designed in Fusion and exported to the various programs. Once the emblems were powder coated, Justin used the laser to etch through the powder coating to the bare metal. A little bit of Mr. Cleans Magic Eraser and LAs Totally Awesome cleaner took away the haze left behind from the laser (as seen in the close up).

Justin used a piece of plywood on the laser to make sure that he had the orientation of everything correct before lasering in the name.



The black version was a test sample of using a textured powder coating.



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

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!



Maker Barn: The Shop & The Lab
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Phone: 832-663-6390

MakerBarn Directors:

George Carlson, Director
Jeanie James, Director
Greg Radliff, Director

Executive Committee:

Kathy Barbieri - President
Jody Cochran - Secretary
Raul Garcia - Treasurer
Jim Barron - Membership
Matt Folsom - IT
Ashley Dickson - Member at Large
Mark Bush - Member at Large
Lisa Lane - Member at Large
Joe Foster - Member at Large
John Buckley - Newsletter Editor

Area Managers: (Guru or Custodian):

Woodworking - Mark Bush
Lasers - Greg Radliff
3D Printing - Jody Cochran
Metalworking - Bryan Manka
Electronics - Raul Garcia
Welding - Joe Foster
Ceramics - Lisa Lane
CNC Metal - Gary Alose

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