



2016 Spoon Gathering June 2, 3 & 4 Information Package

Mission statement.

Sharing the knowledge of carving spoons and related handcrafts, while creating an inclusive gathering for all.

History of the Gathering

The seed for a unique green woodworking event was planted a decade ago by artist and MVAS spoon carving instructor, Frank Foltz. Frank and the founders of the Spoon Gathering envisaged an annual gathering of artists, spoon carvers, and enthusiasts of the humble wooden spoon, an international symbol of family, meals, and friendship. What started as a small gathering of spoon carvers and enthusiasts in St. Paul

has grown into a vibrant and entertaining 3 day event of carving, friendship, and food.

The Spoon Gathering today offers a family friendly festival for those interested in wood spoon carving and traditional handcrafts. The gathering focuses on wood spoon carving and related art forms and includes a variety of demonstrations, workshops, and presentations. In past years, these have included, knife sharpening, wood bowl turning on a spring-pole lathe, birch bark weaving, blade forging and Norwegian knife making, dying wood with natural dyes, and of course spoon carving.

Novices and absolute beginners are catered to and made to feel welcome.

Throughout the weekend, a tent site is set up which allows beginners to access the hands on instruction of a number of talented spoon carvers.

Other highlights of the gathering include a spoon exhibition by the gathering attendees and a Saturday evening potluck party and get-together.

Free camping facilities are available. The Spoon Gathering is a carving festival, so bring your spoon blanks and carving tools or just come to watch and enjoy the weekend.

Frank Foltz d.2009. Founder of the Spoon Gathering

Frank Foltz was born in Mt. Pleasant, MI, where he lived until leaving for Chicago to pursue an education. He began whittling when kids were still encouraged to develop their skills with a knife, carving his first neckerchief slide with the Boy Scouts at age 11. Carving became a part of his life and after moving to Minnesota in 1976, Frank began carving wooden signs for businesses.

While finishing a degree in creative therapy in 2001, Frank began carving spoons and woodenware in the Scandinavian tradition from Minnesota hardwood and fruitwood. His spoons were a co-operative venture between his creative whimsical nature and the piece of wood with which he was working. No two pieces are alike and all are intended to be used as well as enjoyed for the elegant beauty of the wood and design. One of his main interests was reviving the use of wooden spoons in everyday life for eating as well as cooking and the carving of spoons for self and friends. To that end, he found himself spending more time teaching spoon carving as folk art. Frank was an extremely popular wood spoon carving instructor at the Milan Village Arts School for a number of years.

As usual, the preparations for the 2016 Spoon Gathering are a work in progress. Some details may change as the weekend draws closer.

If you have not attended before, it would be wise to contact the school so that you can receive any updated information as it comes available.

Tickets sales are either online at www.milanvillageartsschool.org or by contacting the school.

Feel free to contact the school with any questions. Our office hours are Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. If I am not in the office, I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

mvas@fedteldirect.net

(320) 734-4807

Location: Milan Village Arts School & Burns Park, Milan (see map)

Thursday, June 02 10 a.m. till late into the evening.

Friday, June 03 All day and late into the evening.

Saturday, June 04 All day and late into the evening.

Registration

Registration Fee: Pre-purchased Tickets

Friday & Saturday: \$20 per person

Thursday through Saturday \$30 per person / \$45 family

Registration Fee: At the door

Saturday only: \$20/person

Friday & Saturday: \$25/person

Thursday through Saturday: \$35 per person / \$50 family

What do I need to bring?

Please bring your own chair.

Tools you will need for carving.

We will have a number chopping blocks and 2 carving horses.

Cooking equipment. There are no open fires allowed in Burns Park. Gas and charcoal grills are permitted. There will also be a gas grill in front of the school available for cooking. Cooking is also done on the fire pit in front of the school.

Camping equipment if you choose to camp in the park.

Coolers for food and drinks (if needed)

Fun and inclusive games and activities for young people to enjoy.

The Weather

The first weekend in June on the prairie can be almost any type of weather. We have had rain, high temps, straight line winds, cold and drizzly weather, beautiful sunny weather, but no snow yet. The best thing to do is be prepared for any type of weather, it can change quickly. We will send out a final email shortly before the weekend regarding the weather.

Refreshments

Scandinavian coffee, tea, homemade cookies & bars will be provided throughout the weekend. Complementary, though a donation is appreciated.

Carving Time

All time is carving time. This is a spoon-carving weekend. While demonstrations add to the interest of the Gathering, this is a time to meet fellow carvers, network and work on your latest project. So come prepared to carve.

Spoon Blanks

Please bring along a supply of blanks. There are generally blanks for sale. If you have extra, please bring them for sale. There is always someone looking for a blank.

Spoons on Display

As is tradition, space and tables will be provided in the school to display your spoons on the Saturday. So bring along any spoons you have carved, or other spoons in your collection. While spoons are the focus, feel free to bring other carved items of interest. **Please label your display with your name and hometown. See one of the event organizers for labels.**

Items for Sale

Carvers often have items for sale on the tables. This is OK as long as they are spoon or carving related. If you are selling a large amount, please consider donating 5% of your profit to the Spoon Gathering. All funds are used to help fund future Spoon Gatherings.

The Spoon Wheel

There will be a designated area for beginners to learn from experienced carvers. There will be an "instructor" rotation on an hourly basis so that new carvers can learn a variety of carving techniques. If you are interested in being a volunteer teacher in the Spoon Wheel please contact Phil Steele at bulldawg_65@yahoo.com

Organized Classes

Two one day classes will offered on the Wednesday before the Spoon Gathering. More details to follow. Patrick Alan Diette will be teaching a spoon carving class and Alexander Yerks will be teaching a kuksa carving class.

Organized Demonstrators

Demonstrations, workshops and presentations are still being finalized. In past years, Saturday has been the main day for demonstrations. This year, all 3 days will have something on offer. As soon as they are finalized, an email will be sent out.

Impromptu Demonstrations

Impromptu demonstrations add color and interest to the weekend. While the school arranges demonstrations and presentations for the weekend, please feel free to set up and demonstrate. You will always get an appreciative and attentive crowd. A demonstration does not need to be spoons. Other carving demonstrations or associated demonstrations are welcome.

Chalkboard Demonstrations

Keeping with the tradition of sharing knowledge freely, if you would like to share something, here is how you can communicate it to the group. We are going to have a board on the porch of the school where you can put your name, what you want to share (demonstrate), when and where.

Can I buy wood and tools at the Gathering?

Wood: In past years there have been people who have brought wood and blanks to sell. If you have extra wood, please bring some for those that are travelling from afar.

Tools: Generally tools are for sale. Once we know for sure an update will be sent out.

Music

If you are a musician, we encourage you to bring your instrument(s) . *We encourage music and singing to take place in front of the school building or in the new basement. Camping families may wish to locate on the far end of the park. Please remember we are located in the center of town. Noise needs to be kept to a minimum after 10 p.m.

Volunteer opportunities

There are many opportunities to help make the event a success, from helping to

set up before, keeping the place tidy during the event and cleaning up on Sunday.

Thursday or on arrival

On arrival, look for Ron or Kirsten. If you can't find an organizer, feel free to set up camp in Burns Park, across from the school. The school will be open at all times, so come in, relax and use the facilities. The center of the park is used for workshops and activities, so set up tents on the perimeter.

A campfire and a BBQ will be located in front of the school for the purpose of atmosphere and cooking. A small wood fired BBQ is also available on the south end of Burns Park. Wood will be provided. The school has a microwave and a small fridge in the kitchen for attendees use.

If you haven't visited Milan before, you will discover how small it is. Just 350 people! The café is not open in the evening. Both Appleton and Montevideo have places to eat.

The school will remain open as long as carvers wish to socialize.

Friday & Saturday

Friday is a day of carving and socializing. More activities, demonstrations and workshops are planned than in previous years.

Potluck Party:

6:00 p.m. and onwards. **Bring your musical instruments.**

Please bring something to add to the table. There is a microwave in the school if you wish to reheat something. Feel free to bring refreshments of your choice.

Sunday

The school is open Sunday morning, if attendees wish to use the facilities.

Accommodations

Burns Park: Free camping is available in the park opposite the school on the Thursday, Friday & Saturday nights. Pick a spot and set up camp. Toilets will be available at the south end of the park. There is also a restroom in the school. The town water in the park is safe to drink. Bottled water is available at Bergen's Prairie Market on Main St. There are no facilities for showers onsite.

Note, there are no open fires allowed in the park. Gas and coal BBQs are

permitted. A gas BBQ will be provided in front of the school. A fire pit will be provided in front of the school and attendees often use that for cooking. Also note that it is not permitted to park vehicles in Burns Park. Please park your vehicle on a side street.

If you wish to have full-serviced camping facilities, you will need to camp at the Lac Qui Parle State Park campgrounds about 5 miles outside of town. Call **320-734-4450**.

A limited number of RV hookups are available in the Lions Park on Hwy 7/59 in town. Payment is by donation. For information call **320-734-4411** and talk to the Town Clerk.

For those looking for more space or a quieter location, the field behind the Milan Community Center (old Milan High School) is available for camping and is just a short walk to downtown.

Please note that camping is only available on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. If you arrive in Milan on the Wednesday, you will need to find alternative accommodation. The Pac qui Parle State Park is a good option.

Showers

There are no showers onsite, but there are showers available at the Lac qui Parle State Park campgrounds. Please try to use the showers outside of peak camper time.

Cost:

1. If you are a current holder of a Minnesota State Parks Annual Vehicle Permit (\$25), the showers are free. No key necessary. Just go and have a shower.
2. If you do not have an annual permit, it is possible to purchase a 1 day permit at the front gates to the upper campground (\$5). The permit is per car, so several people can enter at a time.

For other choices of accommodation, please visit www.milanvillageartsschool.org and click on "location" on the top menu.

Services in Town (see attached map for location)

Bergen's Prairie Market (ATM available)

Friday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 10.00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

More Café

Friday 6.00 – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Prairie State Bank

ATM available at all times

billy maple tree's Gift Shop

Friday 10:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Gas Station

There is a new gas station on the corner of Hwy 40 and Hwy 7 as you come into Milan from the south. The station is card only.

Cell phones

Phone reception in Milan can be questionable depending on your provider.

Feel free to use the school's phone if it is an emergency. Talk to Ron or Kirsten.