

THE SPIRIT OF TIMBERLANE



Artisans of the Valley features a variety of chainsaw carvings by [Bob Eigenrauch](#) in our online portfolio. The majority of these carvings are completed by Bob, but a few are combined efforts featuring the skills of multiple craftsmen, this wolf carving is such a joint venture.

Bob handled all the rough carving, the heavy lifting, taking a blank and reaching the shape and profile of the sculpture down to the muscle tone and body definition. This is then followed by Artisans' Stanley D. Saperstein who completed the detailed carvings.

This photo chronology on the next page shows the steps from a solid block of poplar (a blank) to a completed life size wolf carving. Blanks can be logs or milled lumber. If the carving is to be placed indoors milled lumber is required. For carvings destined for an outdoor life, logs are the preferable medium.

The carving process starts by tracing a template profile onto the blank. Then begins the rough-in - removing large chunks of outer material that will not be required for the finished figure.

As the rough-in transitions into more detail the actual features of the carving start to take shape. The body begins to flow into the physical form of a wolf, the head takes shape, the neck, the ears start to protrude. Chainsaws change with specific steps in the process, larger more powerful saws are used for the roughing phases, switching to a midsize saws take care of the next steps.

When the outer form is shaped - the next step is to begin removing material to create voids required to split the blank into sections showing the legs, tail, and other features of the newly forming creature. Muscle tone and rough fur layers, separation of the head and definition of the neck take place using a detail or specialty carving chainsaw.

The body shape and flow (muscle tone) for this project was handled using a carbide power carver. This high speed wood grinders remove material while starting the smoothing and finishing process.

Switching from power to hand work - Stanley's larger scale wood sculpture and carving tools come out to begin the detail work. The carving was then coated in a plaster (gesso) to seal all the cracks and prep the piece for painting.

Painting takes place using various spray techniques, brushes, and other hand techniques to create texture and layering of colors. Oils, acrylics, and enamels can all be employed for color before a clear coat is applied in the appropriate sheen.

This commission is featured in the lobby of Timberlane Middle School in Pennington, NJ. A donation by retired teacher Michael Riley in honor of the staff and students of the school district that gave him his thirty-two year career. Presentation took place at the opening of the 2007 school year.

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