



CARVEWRIGHT™

WOODWORKING SYSTEM

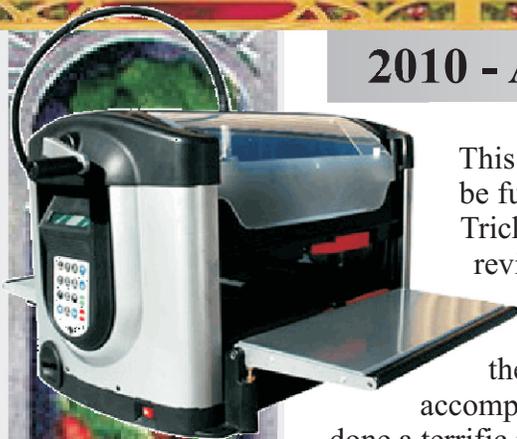
TIPS & TRICKS



December 2010

2010 - An Exciting Year for CarveWright Owners!

Michael Tyler, Editor



This month, I thought it might be fun to devote this Tips & Tricks issue to a “year in review”. It’s been an exciting year for us as CarveWright owners to witness what the CarveWright Team has accomplished in 2010. They have done a terrific job in adding new products and features to help us all reach our full potential with our wonderful machines!

Excitement and interest for this amazing tool always increases when features and accessories are updated or added. This past year (2010) was especially inspiring!

In no particular order, here are a few of the things that were added to our ‘user arsenal’ in 2010 that expand our creative capabilities and/or simply make our experience with our CarveWright tool more fun, productive and enjoyable...

The DXF Importer

Many users like to draw out their project design outlines in other programs such as CorelDraw, Adobe Illustrator and/or CAD software when creating a plan or mock-up of certain types of projects. However, there was no way to incorporate these outlines directly into the CarveWright Designer software and it was necessary for the user to re-create these outline drawings from scratch using the Designer drawing tools. This created an extra step that was not especially convenient and we wished it could be avoided.

With the development of the **DXF Importer** add-on software utility, we now have the capability to import our 2D vector drawings into the CarveWright Designer when the original outline drawings have been saved in the common DXF (Drawing eXchange Format) file format.

The DXF Importer allows you to apply certain changes to the outline drawings with handy features for scaling, rearranging, flipping, rotating, auto-connecting of lines, splitting (tiling designs), as well as creating virtual boards to layout your drawings and shapes in preparation for importing into Designer.

For those of us who are accustomed to drawing our vector outlines in other programs rather than directly in Designer, the DXF Importer option has really streamlined the process of getting those drawings into our projects!

Editor’s Note: I like to copy/paste the imported vectors onto a fresh project board from the imported virtual boards, so I can have complete control over my project layouts. I especially love this feature when creating “fit critical” projects (like boxes that have multiple pieces that need to be assembled after carving/cutting) - I can draw my vector outlines of each component to full-scale in another program, then import these outlines into Designer to arrange as I wish. It has been a real time saver!

cont.

Please visit the manufacturer’s website for more information about the CarveWright machines and see the Pattern & Project Depot at:
www.carverwright.com

For Additional Patterns you can add to your Designer software library, please visit:
www.carvebuddy.com

The DXF Importer - cont.

The DXF Importer also enables us to import rather complex outline drawings that would be difficult (or nearly impossible) to draw directly in the Designer software. Once these outline drawings have been imported, you can assign V-bits and/or Bit Profiles to yield very interesting designs and effects. (fig. 1)

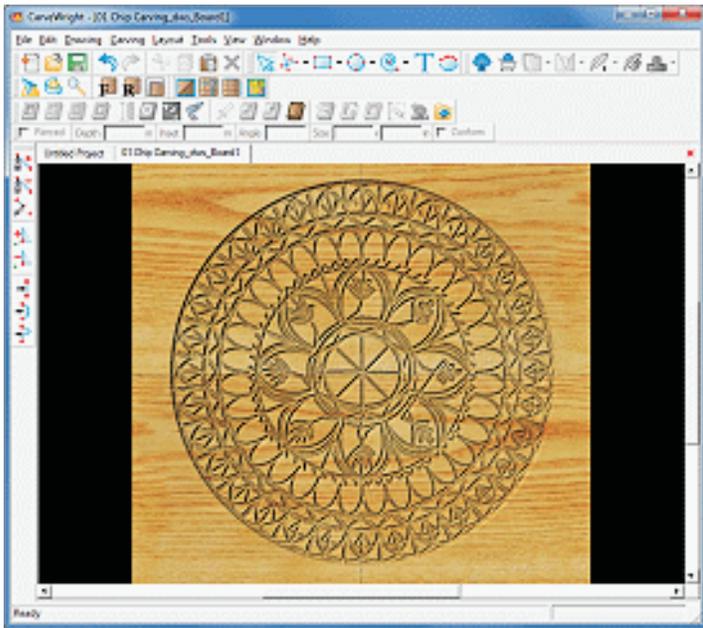


fig. 1

You can also assign Cut Paths to vectors to cut out complex outline silhouette items such as snowflakes and other shapes that were created in other programs.

Editor's Note: The DXF Importer presents us with tremendous creative possibilities. I have yet to see anyone (including myself) take full advantage of this, but I'm sure as time goes on, we will start seeing more imaginative use of this feature.

There are some examples and tutorials posted at the CarveWright website to give you a more complete idea of what can be accomplished:



▶ See **TUTORIALS**

↶ See **SAMPLES**



fig. 2



The mops come as a "kit" and requires simple assembly that varies according to the desired 'stiffness' or 'softness' you prefer. After it's assembled, you then insert the mandrel of your sanding mop into a hand held drill, drill press or lathe (*not* your CarveWright chuck!). Start the mop spinning in your drill, drill press or lathe, then move your workpiece against the frayed edges of the abrasive cloth to groom the surfaces of your projects prior to applying your stain/paint finish.

Editor's Note: I'm hoping CarveWright will be able to offer additional woodworking accessories to their online store in the future. It would be nice to enjoy even more of this convenience for some of the common woodworking odds-and-ends that are useful for our particular genre of projects.

STL Export

This feature was added for users *who already have* the [STL Importer](#) (made available in June 2009) **and** the [Pattern Editor](#) software (the software that is included with the [Scanning Probe](#) or it can be purchased separately). If you already have **both** the STL Importer and the Pattern Editor licenses, the STL Export feature automatically appears as a menu item in the File Menu of the Pattern Editor as long as you are using CarveWright software version 1.176 or above.

Many users wanted the ability to export a CarveWright pattern file (PTN) to the STL filetype (an STL is a common 3D model format - STL is an acronym for “stereolithography”). The STL Export feature now allows us to do that. A couple examples of how useful this can be are as follows...

- STL versions of PTN files can be used in popular 3D and 2.5D modeling software for further editing, tweaking, and even combining with other models.
- STL files can be shared with owners of other CNC machines that cannot read the CarveWright PTN format. Pattern makers can expand their CNC pattern customer market!

Before the new STL IMPORT feature was added, we were not able to use CarveWright patterns outside of the CarveWright System itself. Now we can! Simply open your own MPW or PTN in the Pattern Editor and select the “File/Export to STL...” menu item. (fig. 3)

Then the STL menu will display so you can input your STL settings. After that, you will see your new STL appear in your STL Importer window where you can alter, slice, resize, etc. and save as STL or PTN, as you wish. The STL Export feature is a wonderful addition!



fig. 3



The CarveTight Spindle and “C” Machine

CarveWright introduced two major changes to the tool this year. The CarveTight Spindle upgrade and the new “C” version of the machine itself.

I wrote an extensive article about the CarveTight upgrade in the [April 2010 Tips & Tricks, entitled “Announcing the CarveTight!”](#). Essentially, the CarveTight spindle is a complete re-design and optional replacement upgrade for the original Quick-Change chuck and is much easier to maintain and use. Furthermore, due to it’s one solid piece of hardened ground steel design, it achieves greater reliability and trouble-free performance. It is an easy upgrade for owners of the original Quick-Change machines wanting this new chuck system. Read the full article for all the details of this major improvement!

The exciting new “C” Machine was introduced in 2010, as well. It incorporates new upgrades and several improvements over the original “A” and “B” machine releases. Some of the changes include the following...

- CarveTight Spindle System
- Base Reinforcements
- Vertical Guide Rod Stabilizer Feet
- Reinforced Strapping on Power Supply
- Modified Board Tracking Sensor
- Simplified X Gear Drive



For a much more detailed description of the improvements incorporated into the new “C” Machine, visit the [CarveWright website](#).

Editor’s Note: *I own two CarveWright machines, both purchased over three years ago (“A” machines). One machine has been kept totally stock, keeping it equipped as I originally purchased it. The other machine has the new CarveTight upgrade, the new Board Tracking Sensor and the heavy-duty rubber traction belt upgrades. I affectionately refer to it as my “Guinea pig machine” since I use it for testing “new stuff” (hardware and software). Both machines work great, but I’m not sure how much longer I’ll hold off on upgrading my “stock” machine! I’ve been keeping it “stock” mainly because it has helped me help others who own similar machines. As time marches on though, there will be fewer folks that have “stock” A machines, as the new upgrades are almost irresistible!*

New 3/16" Cutting Bit

With its more robust diameter than the stock 1/8" cutter, the CarveWright 3/16" straight cutting bit allows for faster, tougher cutting through materials, including hardwoods and plywood. It is a 3-Flute Straight Carbide end mill, with a maximum cutting depth of one inch (same maximum depth as the stock 1/8" bit).

The 3/16" cutting Bit comes equipped with the CarveTight pressed-on steel collar/adaptor only. (fig. 4)



fig. 4

In order to utilize this bit in the CarveWright Designer Software, you must use Version 1.177 (or later). This version and beyond, has the added support for the new cutting bit.

***Editor's Note:** At the moment of this writing, I've not had the chance to try this new bit yet. I can hardly wait to put it through the paces - I've heard through reliable sources that it's a winner, and I already have a few projects in mind that can use it!*

Conforming Vectors!

This advanced feature was a "high-request" item from users and it was finally developed and released publicly in 2010! The [Conforming Vectors](#) software utility add-on allows vector paths to be mapped to conform to virtually any surface such as a carved recessed or raised region - flat, domed or dished, textured or not; it even works on vectors that flow over patterns! One of the main reasons users wanted this feature was to be able to V-Carve Centerline Text within a recessed carve region. In addition, the Conforming Vectors works on any vector cut such as those created with Designer's drawing tools, the Outline (and Centerline) Text, as well as vectors brought in through the DXF Importer.

Look at the example of Centerline Text "with" and "without" the Conforming Vectors add-on feature to see how useful and flexible it can be for raised and dished areas you want text to appear within. Great for adding personalized text on convex box lids! (fig. 5)

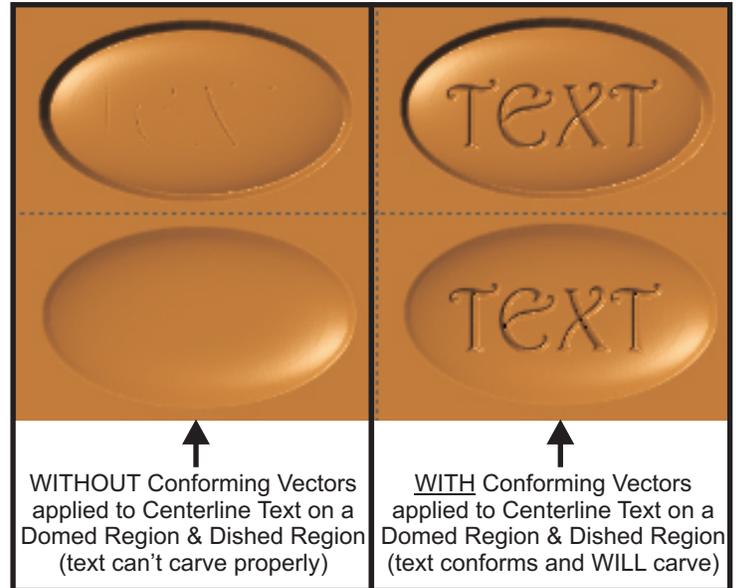


fig. 5

As mentioned, you can use the Conforming Vectors on any vector cut you wish. This is another feature that will see some imaginative and creative use, but the ability to allow Centerline Text or Outline Text to carve on recessed or raised shapes is well worth that alone! *NOTE: To use Centerline Text with Conforming Vectors as shown in the example, you must already own the license for the Centerline Text option.*

IN CONCLUSION

I hope you enjoyed this brief "Year in Review" and found it interesting to recap some of the new items and features that were introduced in 2010. Have a wonderful Holiday/Christmas Season! See you next year and Happy Carving!

Michael

Michael Tyler - Editor



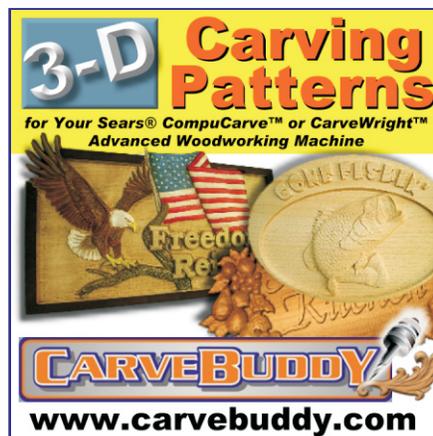
The
CarveWright Team
Wishes You All a Great
Holiday Season
and a Merry Christmas!

Additional Resources

RESOURCES...

There are numerous resources for the CarveWright/CompuCarve owner to make their experience with these machines much more enjoyable.

Every owner should join the CarveWright User Forum (<http://forum.carvewright.com/forum.php>) where fellow users share their experiences and knowledge with these machines on a daily basis. It is a FREE service that you will surely appreciate. A handy Search Feature helps you find answers to any questions you may have.



Any trademarks, brand names and logos (the "Trademarks") used in this publication are registered and unregistered Trademarks of LHR and others.