

Volume I, Number 2

Editor: Jeanette Brewer-Richardson

Contact Info

Phone: (817)460-8122
www.engravingconcepts.com

Randy Allen, ext. 203
randy@engravingconcepts.com
– *Inside Sales & Tech Support*

Roy Brewer, ext. 202
roy@engravingconcepts.com
– *Outside Sales*

Jeanette Brewer-Richardson,
ext. 201
jeanette@engravingconcepts.com
– *Schedule Demos &
Installations; A/R; A/P; Find
Randy &/or Roy; anything else
you need!*

Lynnette Brewer-Mayberry,
ext. 227
lynnette@engravingconcepts.com
– *Customer Service*

NOTE: Our voicemail system is monitored 24/7. If you leave a voicemail here after hours/weekends/etc., I should be able to track one of the guys down to help you.

Tech Support Info

Epilog Tech Support
(303)215-9171 (press 1)
OR email tech@epiloglaser.com
www.epiloglaser.com/service.htm

Xenotech Tech Support
(225)752-0225 (press 2) OR
email tech@xenotech.com
Unlock Codes: 225-752-0225
(press 7)

Texas Trophy & Awards Show

This year's *Texas Trophy & Awards Show* promises to be bigger & better than ever! It's time to start making your travel plans now. Once again, we'll meet at the *Moody Gardens Hotel & Resort*. Call *Moody Gardens* directly (at 800-582-4673 or www.moodygardens.com) for room reservations (TTA Show rate: \$163/night).

2006 Schedule:

3rd Annual Family Fishing Outing – Thursday, July 27 (8am-12pm). \$75/person.

Exhibits Open: Friday, July 28 (10am-5pm) & Saturday, July 29 (10am-3pm). No charge.

Friday Night Party: Friday, July 28 (6pm). Live entertainment & FREE hors d'oeuvres! Air-conditioned.

Xenotech Users' Clinic: Sunday, July 30 (9am-12pm). Hosted by Engraving Concepts; Moderated by Roy Brewer, CRM. No charge.

What's New in X3? Corel Clinic: Sunday, July 30 (1pm-4pm). Presented by Roy Brewer, CRM. \$40/person.

To register for the *Fishing Outing*, call 800-433-0965. \$75/person. Deadline: July 1.

3 Ways to pre-register for the Show:

- 1) www.claytex.net – then click on View Catalogs.
- 2) Call 800-433-0965
- 3) Email claytex@claytex.net

To register for the *Xenotech Users' Clinic* or the *CorelDraw Clinic*, email jeanette@engravingconcepts.com or call (817)460-8122 ext. 201 or 227.

Roy's Corel X3 Review

Because of the great improvements in CorelDRAW 12 that targeted the ability for DRAW to interface with MS Office products, more and more corporate Americans are using CorelDRAW. You, my clients, expect me to be familiar with the latest software; I suspect *your* clients expect the same of you – this might be the most significant reason you should upgrade. Even if you, like me, are not able to make X3 your “main man”, you should have it for the things it does really well *and* for your clients. X3 includes numerous new features. Several are so good, so helpful, so powerful that I feel everyone should have this program. Having said that, though, this review is significantly more negative than *any* review I’ve read on X3.

Window> Dockers>Fillet/Scallop/Chamfer

This may be my favorite. Finally we can round/notch/chamfer corners properly– even after they have been stretched. This tool is even more powerful because it is not just for rectangles (Corel native object) but for any shape – even scanned/vectorized object, two welded ellipses, etc. For an engraver who becomes familiar with this, I suspect that a single hour will not go by that you don’t use one of these functions.

Effects>Create Boundary

While probably not to be used as often as the Fillet/Scallop/Chamfer, the ability to instantly create a vector cut path around a complex piece of clip art (or group of objects) will be an enormous time saver for those who have been doing this manually. It will add a great new level of creativity for those who never took the time to do it manually. CorelDRAW made a pretty good attempt at this when “print & cut” machines started becoming popular. Beginning with Corel 10, we could Contour a simple group of objects with a single step contour but the more complex the group became the more likely the function would “fall apart”. For instance, how about an 1/8" alder school mascot adhered to the top of a plaque? Done instantly (and in my experience, done flawlessly) with this new tool.

The new *Smart Fill Tool* is fantastic! The *Smart Fill Tool* has become the 6th tool in the toolkit. Was it considered important enough by Corel Corp to put it in the tool kit? Probably not. I think they just finally agreed to hide the much-touted but totally useless *Smart Drawing Tool* which “flies out” from the *Smart Fill Tool*. For those who use, or have used, DesignCAD to digitize logos, this gives us the tremendous power of DesignCAD’s “Paint” tool. That is, it will allow us to hatch fill, or contour fill, non-closed areas. For others: have you ever needed to hatch fill parts of a graphic that your client created in AutoCAD? The objects do not come in closed and it is often an incredibly difficult task to connect all segments just to allow us to fill areas. Another application for which this works wonders is for those laser owners doing “scroll saw” type work on the laser. This type work often desires certain lines to be cut shallow for line art and others need to be cut clear through. Possibly a better example would be those who are customizing the *LaserBuzz* type product with your own graphics and need certain areas in the center to be cut out. In this case, you smart fill with “none” color and apply a thin outline to the object in the color that will cut clear through. Mechanical engravers: try filling an area with the *Smart Fill Tool* with a Gradient Fill and then paste (or export/import) into your engraving software --- most will be surprised!

Possibly by the time you get this newsletter, I’ll have had time enough to put this article on my website and show some illustrations to make this more meaningful.

The *Crop Tool* is another welcome addition to the tool kit. It is in position # 3 of the tool kit with the *Knife Tool*, *Eraser Tool* and greatly improved *Virtual Segment Delete* tools “flying out”. While it has long been possible for us to crop a bitmap in CorelDRAW, this cuts the time to less than 5% of what it took using older methods. Ah, but the real power of this is that it will also allow us to crop vector clipart, groups or basically any combination of selected items. This will be **enormously** useful!

There are also numerous interface enhancements. Not the least of which is the Fonts List Box which shows the actual font and has flyouts that let you view the styles available for that particular typeface.

X3 Continued...

PowerTRACE is the glamour child of most X3 reviews. I'm quite disappointed with it. Most are impressed that it is no longer a separate application but a function called directly from & inside CorelDRAW. While there are some advantages to having a separate application, the current iteration of *PowerTRACE* will result in fewer files and, therefore, less garbage disposal. I have to agree with other reviewers that it is an improvement over the older *CorelTRACE* iterations. I'm disappointed that the resulting vectorization is still not as good as that provided by *HP PrecisionScan* – that means we'll need to continue refurbishing the no-longer-available scanner/software partners.

This will possibly be less important after one or more patches, but *PowerTRACE* too often gets confused and will not vectorize at all. This always requires starting DRAW again, rebooting the PC and, on a couple of occasions, I've had to reinstall the software to get out of this condition.

The new *Image Adjustment Lab* is going to be tremendous help in teaching people how to modify photographs (and to a lesser degree, any bitmap graphic). *Image Adjustment Lab* has no new functionality. Everything in *Image Adjustment Lab* has been available in *PhotoPAINT* forever, and for some time, even in DRAW ... but it brings the majority of "adjustments" into one delightfully simple interface that will not only be educational for the "newbie", but useful for the master. It is available both in PAINT & DRAW.

Effects>Bevel is very nifty. While I think this will be more useful to sublimation people than engravers, laser owners should try this on the text for the awardee &/or awarder to make them stand out (?).

Corel programmers have apparently put quite a bit of time addressing the postscript (.AI, .EPS, .PS, .PRN, etc.) import issues. Personally, I've had much better luck with the new filters. **Caution**, however, since numerous newsgroup posters indicate they've had nothing but trouble and feel like the current import filters are a step backwards. Scores of people report certain files they could open in DRAW12 that would not open in X3.

Most report no stability problems. My experience has been much worse. Possibly it is because I, altogether too often, have numerous applications up in memory crunching away all the time while trying to get DRAW to work. Much lost work in both DRAW X3 and PAINT X3 has kept me from using it for serious work. One PAINT example to illustrate: in creating a complex mask in PAINT, often it is destroyed if I try to Save my work. Cannot Undo. **Very unacceptable!**

In DRAW, **Effects>Emboss** is non-functional (I'll admit it later if it turns out I just haven't figured it out yet). Often, I wind up with a Control Curve that simply can't be turned back to a normal curve and thereby eliminates its usefulness. I could list 20 or so little issues that I can work around when I have the time, but when I'm seriously behind, I must go back to my trusty Corel12.

Please continue to let us know your experiences with X3. We'll continue to work through our issues (and yours) and report our conclusions.



Since we took up all our space with Daddy's X3 Review, I'll use this little corner of this issue to remind you to check out our website for upcoming events and other important information – www.engravingconcepts.com.
Upcoming **ECToday** articles: *Lasering Photographs*; *Renaming Fonts in Corel X3*

LaserBits Laser Clinic in OKC

Engraving Concepts is hosting a LaserBits Laser Clinic in Oklahoma City this summer. The 2006 clinics are geared toward laser “newbies” or folks who are considering the purchase of a new laser.

Mike Fruciano (president, LaserBits) is conducting this 6-hour clinic for us. I think you’ll enjoy Mike’s teaching style and will learn quite a bit from this gentleman who has been in the laser industry for many years.

For more information and/or to sign up for this clinic, email jeanette@engravingconcepts.com or call (817)460-8122 ext. 201 or 227.

\$75/person (includes Continental Breakfast on Saturday)

Session I: Friday, August 18 (5:30-8:30pm)

Session II: Saturday, August 19 (9:30am-12:30pm)

Clarion Meridian Hotel
Oklahoma City, OK



PO Box 120322 * Arlington, TX 76012-0322
(817)460-8122 * (817)469-8560 FAX
www.engravingconcepts.com