

February 22, 2018

Member Profile: Paul N. Courtright Member # 33428



Paul Courtright enjoys teaching woodturning and here he discusses the fine art of making funnels at a club demo.

Paul Courtright has served his local woodturning club, [Central Ohio Woodturners \(COW\)](#), as president for four years. During that time, Paul worked closely with AAW, attending symposium leadership classes and simply making lots of telephone calls to the staff to help him in guiding the "COW." After his four years as president, Paul is now more concerned with having fun turning and is convinced that in today's technological world, woodturning might be the best stress reliever in this century.

Name: Paul N Courtright
Home Town: Delaware, Ohio
Chapter Affiliation: Central Ohio Woodturners
Number of Years Turning: 35 years (20 years self-taught and 15 years learning correctly as a member of COW)

What motivated you to join AAW?

My motivation to join AAW followed a winding path. A friend at church told me about a tool store called Wood Werks. Though people I met at the store, I learned about the [Central Ohio Woodturners \(COW\)](#). Then, of course, through COW, I learned about AAW. When I looked at what the AAW had to offer: the benefits (magazine, symposium); the leadership and

IT'S ALL ABOUT TOOL CONTROL!

VIDEO SOURCE: FLICK OF THE WEEK

Maintaining proper stance while woodturning will help to ensure tool control, accuracy, and comfortable turning. In this video, Stuart Batty demonstrates appropriate stance (foot position and weight transfer) for an assortment of cuts.



[7 Fundamentals: Stance,
Part 1, featuring Stuart Batty
\(14:59\)](#)

AAW EXPLORE! STAFF PICK

We are ecstatic with the February 2018 issue of Woodturning FUNDamentals under [newly appointed Editor John Kelsey](#). So, this week we have selected the entire issue of Woodturning FUNDamentals, instead of a single article. In this issue, John Kelsey features several articles on the topic of tools and tool control.

staff; and most of all, the association with other turners that I could learn from, I was motivated me to join AAW.

When you look at your turnings, what do you see?

We as turners are our worst critics. That being said, I see my mistakes.

Lyle Jamieson said once that if you do a series of something (200 of the same bowl or a vase), the first few you will be the most critical of, but as you get close to the 200th piece, you become less critical.

I always amaze myself as to what I have done with a piece of wood—bringing out the beauty from within.

Who, or what, was your greatest teacher/influence?

I first have to say that my Mom and Dad were both a great influence in my life. Their toughness has made me what I am today and I'm thankful for it.

I also have to willingly admit that finding Christ has greatly influenced my life. I still act like a buffoon every now and then but with God's help, I'm getting better each day.

As a new woodturner, my greatest influences were my fellow club members of the Central Ohio Woodturners. Their willingness to teach me and answer questions as well as to encourage me to join AAW and to attend my first symposium in Tampa, Florida, all influenced me. That is where my eyes were opened wide by the fellowship and the genuine friendship that we as turners share. The turning community is like no other organization I have ever been a part of.

My greatest influence locally are the past officers and our board members, and their willingness to help build the Central Ohio Woodturners club to what it is today. I'm very proud and honored to be a part of this club.

As professional turners go, a few of my favorites are Lyle Jamison, Rudy Lopez, Jimmy Clewes, and Nick Cook.

What was your happiest turning moment?

I would say when I made a vase and flower for my wife, and she loved it so much that she took it to work and bragged to her coworker that I made it just for her. Another moment that I recall was making a walnut vase for a club challenge and having it win the challenge. And, I always feel warm and fuzzy when I give one of my turnings to someone - especially when they are taken aback by its beauty and that I gave them something from the heart.

In general, woodturning has made me a happy guy. I can take a piece of wood that someone has discarded or even threatened to throw into the fireplace, and I have made something out of it and presented it back to them. Just the smile and the look of sheer wonder on their faces are priceless. I still like to sell my work at craft shows and galleries, and that makes me pretty happy too.



[Click here for a direct link to the article \(you must be logged into the AAW website\).](#)

TIP OF THE WEEK: HOW TO PREVENT TOOL RUNNING

To prevent the tool running to the outside and damaging the rim when hollowing the inside of a bowl, start each cut with the flute completely closed (90° to the rotation). Roll the flute open for the best cutting angle only after the bevel has sufficient support on the wood to prevent running.

~ Ed Pretty, Langley, British Columbia, Canada





Paul shows his sense of humor with "Chicken or the Egg" made of cottonwood. The 2017 piece measures 16" x 7".

What is your favorite wood/tool and why?

My favorite wood is walnut. I just love the smell and the chocolate color it has. I think it is the most beautiful wood there is.

As for my favorite tool, I have two tools that I love. The first one, as strange as it may sound, is the skew. I had one of my fellow club members show me how to use it correctly and I was amazed as to what I could do with it. My second favorite tool is my hollowing system (Lyle Jamieson system). I started doing hollow forms, tried lots of them, and found that (for me) the Jamison system made hollowing forms so much fun. I even did a demo with the hollowing system at one of our club meetings.

Where do you see the field of woodturning going?

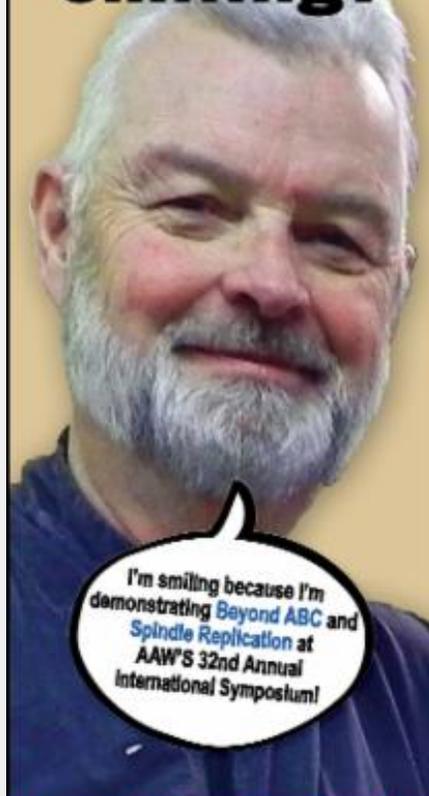
With technology the way it is today--cell phones, computers and how they control our world--it is going to be hard to get and hold kids' interest in turning, but I feel that kids are the future of the turning world.

As adults, we just need to unplug and find something that we can do that is fun and not stressful. One could say that turning is the 22nd century stress reliever. If we can just keep finding ways to make turning fun, I think woodturning just may become the newest household word.

In addition to woodturning, what other crafts/hobbies have you enjoyed?

Anybody who knows me knows that my first love is wood. I'm always looking at trees and wood along the road. One can never have too much wood. But outside of woodturning, I love to EAT. I have a degree in Food Science and have worked in the food industry in some fashion all my life. Food has become a passion for

Why is Ed Pretty smiling?



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me. I'm not the best cook but I can sure boil water. I also love to be outdoors hunting, fishing, gardening, and raising chickens.

Has being a part of AAW affected your life and work? How?

I would have to say, 100% yes. I was president of the Central Ohio Woodturners for four years, and I worked closely with the staff of the AAW. Being a member of the AAW has been a blessing and helped me be a better president of my club. In addition, I have sharpened my leadership skills by working with the AAW organization and attending and taking classes at the symposiums. In addition, I have had many phone conversations with the AAW staff (Jane, Linda, and Phil) and have been given valuable advice and guidance. What I have learned as a member of the AAW has spilled over into my day job, helping me to become a better leader and employee. I cannot say enough as to the value that the AAW and COW have given me over the years. I also thoroughly enjoy the AAW magazine that is sent to all members every other month. You can't get that from any other organization.

What is your favorite project or piece?

My favorite piece is a walnut vase that turned out better than I expected. A close second is a piece that I named, "Hanging Holes." It was made from a holey piece of ash that I suspended with guitar strings.



"UA Vase," measuring 12" x 8", is made of ash from a city park affected by the emerald ash borer.

How has your local chapter helped you?

My local chapter, Central Ohio Woodturners (COW), has given me the opportunity to be their president for

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four years. Being president gave me confidence to get up in front of my fellow woodturners, not only to lead a meeting but to speak about the craft we all love, woodturning. Also COW members encouraged me to do demos and be a better teacher of the art of woodturning. I cannot thank the members of the COW enough for their encouragement and support. It gives me great pleasure and I am honored to say, that I am a part of Central Ohio Woodturners, the best club in the land.



One of Paul's favorite turnings is a piece called "Hanging Holes" which is suspended by guitar string. The piece, made in 2016 of wormy ash and walnut, measures 16" x 7".

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