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Arizona Gourds

February updates from the desert southwest...



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Welcome to the February issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

It's almost time for me to head to the **Wuertz Festival in Casa Grande, Arizona** - and I'm hoping to see many of you there! It's usually pretty hectic and crazy, but please do take the time to say hello! I'll be teaching a class on Thursday before the festival (outdoors in my usual location, at the building just on the other side of the restrooms) and I'll be in the same booth location that I've had every year, **D8 & E8**, right at the crossroads of several aisles. I'll be bringing all the supplies from the website, plus a few extras. This is the only show each year where I actually have a vendor booth.

This month I'm running an updated version of "Tips to Enjoy a Gourd Show" that was originally published a few years ago. Some of these tips will really make your experience a lot more enjoyable and successful, especially if you've never been to a really large show before. Be sure to leave plenty of time to visit the Arizona Gourd Society competition!

PLEASE NOTE: Orders placed on the website from January 30th -February 3rd will be delayed. In addition, some items may be out of stock due to sales at the festival. To avoid additional delays during restocking, please place your web orders before these dates!

GAE Members:
Annual GAE dinner and gathering on Friday, Feb. 1st at the Golden Corral in Casa Grande at 6 PM. Please submit your name on the GAE website so we can make nametags!

Wuertz Farm's 10th Annual "Running of the Gourds" Gourd Festival
Ah, the Gourd Life!

February 1-2-3, 2013
at the Pinal Fairgrounds
Casa Grande, Arizona

FRIDAY & SATURDAY 9:00am-5:00pm
SUNDAY 10:00am-3:00pm

Admission: \$8 (Kids FREE)
Rain or Shine, Most Activities Indoors



Update: Gourd Classes

February classes in Tucson are full - but I am plan to offer additional classes in March. *Please sign up for the class updates list (link is below to the left) if you want to hear about new offerings as soon as they are posted.

Next **April 26th - 30th**, I will be teaching at the annual art retreat at the [After Midnight Art Ranch](#) in Sonoita, Arizona. Classes are now posted - visit the After Midnight site to register for individual classes.

May 15th - 16th, I will be teaching 3 different classes in Visalia, California. Info is available on the classes page.

The **June Raymondville, Missouri** workshop is now full. Please contact [Sophia Delaat](#), to join the waiting list. The **June 7-9 Colorado Springs, CO** workshop is now full. Please contact [Merle Dallison](#) for to be on the wait list.

*Join the class updates list to receive advance notice of upcoming classes. Get the news first and have the best chance for popular classes!



[Join The Class updates List](#)

Search Now:

Search New and Used [amazon.com](#).

***ALL Amazon purchases made through site links and the search box help support Arizona Gourds and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts websites, and it costs you nothing extra!**



What's new on the [Arizona Gourds](#) website?

If you are looking for a Dremel hanger, here is my own version - and it not only costs less than the regular Dremel hanger, but it is adjustable and fits many more tables! I am taking preorders for these and will have them available up at the Wuertz festival. I don't normally stock them on the website because of the difficulty in finding suitable shipping boxes - but the hook will come off and you can pack one of these in a regular size suitcase. If you want to preorder a hanger, please send a note to bonnie@arizonagourds.com. \$18.50

New Item: **Staybowlizer** gourd holders are now available. (See the review



"Do you need a gift for a gourd pal? The Staybowlizer is the best gift you can give. I love mine, it really helps keep your gourd in place while you are working on it." - Michelle Barber



in the [January 2013 newsletter](#).) The at the bottom of the "[Tools](#)" page.

Closeout/ Special Purchase Items: I was able to get a limited supply of 1mm round **REAL leather cord**. Packaged on a 25 yard spool, these normally retail at about \$15 or more. While they last, only \$5 per spool! On the [Special Embellishments](#) page.

Heavy, premium quality cast slotted conchos - not stamped from thin metal. Loop leather lacing through these, great on gourd rims and on masks. These retail at \$4, closeout priced at \$1.50. On the [Metals](#) page.

[Micro-Pro Carving tools](#) are now in stock and ready to ship. You can also pre-order and have one held for you for pickup at the Wuertz Festival. To order, please send a note to bonnie@arizonagourds.com.



Feature - Meet Some Gourd Artists!

Each month I receive emails from many people, and some include photos of their work. I try to include as many of those as possible in the reader's forum. Every now and then I discover an artist that is doing something unique or doing really exceptional work, and I like to share those with you and give you a more in depth look at their work.

The first artist is **Vicki Shell, of Johnson City, TN**. Vicki is a musician and builds mandolins out of canteen gourds. She says her instruments are different than most because she has found a way to tune them to standard pitch. (Most all gourd instruments are tuned an octave low to prevent putting too much pressure on the gourd and cracking it.) I have seen some beautiful gourd banjos and guitars, but this is the first mandolin I've seen. I'm not a musician myself, but I can certainly appreciate the technical aspects that go into construction of an instrument, especially one that is meant to be played and not just to look at!



In addition, Vicki has done some great Native American portrait gourds.

The hair on these pieces is crafted from corn husks.





"Elder"



"Hiding Pheasant"



"Selu Corn Mother"



"One Feather"

Our second featured artist is **Jordan Straker of Alberta, Canada**. Jordan and I crossed paths a few years ago when I discovered his woodworking [website](#). He mentioned that he was interested in trying gourds, since a gourd project could probably be completed faster than some of his large woodcarving projects. I featured some of his woodcarvings and early gourds in the [February 2010 newsletter](#) - and it's amazing to see the gourds he has done in just the last year. Jordan's gourds mirror his woodcarving in themes; Native American and Western have never looked more impressive. Jordan is truly a master carver, and YES - those details are all carved!



"The Hunt"



"Tea and Crumpets"



"YeeHaw"



"All Dressed"



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](http://www.arizonagourds.com) continues to grow! We have over 3000 members, with gourd enthusiasts from all over the world! Membership is free and easy. The site also has state groups, event listings, a Q&A forum and a chat feature if you need an quick answer to a gourdng question!
[Check out our two great new GAE T-Shirt designs !](#)



*GAE members - don't forget to wear your GAE t-shirt or sweatshirt to our annual dinner on Feb 1st (details on the GAE website) for an extra door prize chance!

"Like" Arizona Gourds on Facebook to get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourdng updates. (*FYI - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourdng friends.)

Like

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Special Feature: Pointers to help you enjoy a gourd show!

- 1) Make a list of what raw gourds and supplies you REALLY need. Make a list, and write down everything you can think of. Then, prioritize which items you must purchase and the ones that you can live without. If you need any tools, add them to the list too. Write down specific questions you want to ask vendors about tool use, glues, materials, etc. Set a budget and plan to stick to it.
- 2) Be prepared to walk a lot, and take a fold up shopping bag and drinking water with you. You may also want to pack a light healthy snack to avoid the temptation to buy expensive, fattening goodies. Walk around the show area first, just checking it out and asking prices, and making mental notes of where you saw things of interest. Then do a second round and buy the things on the top of your list first. (However, if you see something truly exceptional and one of a kind, you may have to make a snap decision or risk losing out!)
- 3) When choosing what to wear to the show, add a gourd name tag or other gourd jewelry. These items are eye-catchers, which will lead to compliments and comments, and is a great way to make new friends. Dress in layers as show venues often heat up later in the day. Wear comfortable shoes, as many show venues are on hard concrete or uneven gravel.
- 4) Be prepared with cash and checks as well as credit cards, as smaller vendors very often do not accept credit cards. If you use a credit card, please be aware that venue may not be accessible to good cell signals and it may be difficult for the vendor to complete a transaction. Always carry some cash or checks as alternate methods of payment just in case.
- 5)When you ask prices on finished gourd art, make sure you take into account factors such as quality of the work, originality, and your own gut feeling. Remember that many new artists often make the mistake of pricing their work too low. Their first show may be your only opportunity to purchase a particular artists' piece at a low price.
- 6) Allow yourself some splurge money, but determine how much before arriving at the show. After you have done all your priority shopping, then you can just buy what you like, but only up to your preset max. If you can, take a break halfway through the show and evaluate your current purchases. Have you ever realized halfway through the show that you bought certain items twice, at different vendors?
- 7) Shows are the best place to actually try out tools to see which woodburner, saw or other tool really works well for you. Don't just take the word of the vendor that their tool is "the best". Whenever possible, try it yourself. Does the tool meet your needs, is it within your budget?
- 8) When purchasing, ask the name of the vendor for their card or write the cost of the item and the name of the supplier on the package, business card or receipt. This helps you to remember the cost of certain items, where to buy more of a specific or hard to find item from a supplier in the future; and to write accurate descriptions of the materials used in your gourd creations. Remember, most of the vendors are people who love gourds just like you do, and they can become good friends. Later on, you can contact them and buy needed items direct.
- 9) Always ask first before taking photographs at a show. Some vendors will have a sign posted if they do not want you to take pictures. Never assume that it is ok; it only takes a few seconds to ask, and the vendor will appreciate the courtesy.
- 10) Finally, wash your hands after leaving the show. Handling raw gourds and even supplies all day can leave you feeling grubby. When leaving, ask for a "return pass" at the exit if you intend to return, most shows allow re-entry later that day.

Most of all, remember to have fun... !!!

Coming Soon..... Colored Pencil Gourds!

Looking for photos of interesting gourds where colored pencils were used. We'd love to feature your work in the newsletter!

Got a photo or two? Please send to: bonnie@arizonagourds.com. Please include what brand of pencils you used, and if you have any comments about them either pro or con. There are so many types of pencils out there, and your input will really help out other gourd artists. Thanks for your help.

Reader's Mailbag: Beth Lively of Texas wrote in to share this photo of a kalimba made from one of our [kalimba kits](#). This kalimba was made by her 13 year old nephew, who won a first place award at the 2012 Texas State Gourd Show.

Reader's Mailbag:

Hi Bonnie, I have done several night lights from your [kits](#) and so far everyone likes them. Here



Widdon at the 2012 Lone Star Gourd Festival competition. Great job, Shane!



are some I painted with fabric paint. Madonna Watermon - MO



Reader's Mailbag: Clint Appelt of Nevada wrote to tell me about the glass engraving he has been doing with his [Shofu tool](#). **(I also use my Shofu tool for glass engraving, egg carving and scrimshaw.)* He also uses the tool for his gourd carvings. The tall kokopelli piece is a thunder drum.



Tip of the Month: Unusual Gourd Cleaning Method

This tip comes from **Jennifer Zingg of Hawaii**: Sharing a good gourd cleaning technique- I tried this today. When you have gourds that are hard to clean, rub them all over with plain yogurt, place in plastic bag and refrigerate over night. Next day, scrub them like you normally would. You will be amazed at how easily the skin comes off. I had few waxy coated gourds from Arizona that I had given up on cleaning. Reading about the benefits of yogurt (active cultures and enzymes), made me think of this. It worked like a charm!

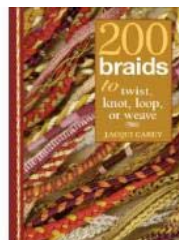
Featured Gourd of the Month:

"Palette Flow"

Gourd with inlaid colored pencil slices and resin, and fancy filigree cut openings.



Featured Books of the Month:



[200 Braids](#)



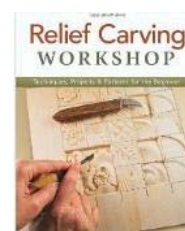
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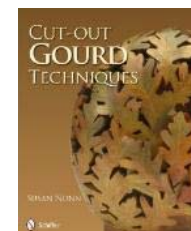
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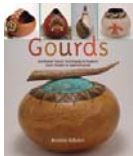
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(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

Gourds Southwest Gourd Techniques & Projects from Simple to Sophisticated
by Bonnie Gibson

The hardcover edition is OUT OF PRINT! ONLY 4 copies left - Last chance to get a hardcover edition before they are gone. The last few copies are sure to sell out at the Wuertz Festival!

Arizona Gourds HOME

The first three books are currently available. After seeing the beautiful gourd mandolin in this issue, you may be interested in **Making Gourd Musical Instruments**. I have owned a copy of this book since it was first released and it is a good resource.

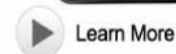
The last three books are available as pre-releases. The first book, **Learn to Burn**, is a basic beginners woodburning instruction book. **Relief Carving Workshop** is by Lora Irish, who has written many excellent woodcarving books. The first two have a March release date. **Cut Out Gourd Techniques** is by GAE member Suzi Nonn. It is available in May. (Preorder any of these titles from Amazon and they will be shipped as soon as they are available.)

*Want to see my listing of top gourd books? Here is my ["Listmania" listing on Amazon](#)



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Newsletter Index - article and tip index from all the past newsletters
[Newsletter Index](#)

- Home Amazon Search Site Map About the Artist
- Classes Links Gourd Art for Sale Gourd Books
- Project Packets Drum & Musical Bone Beads Special Embellishments
- Glass Supplies Inlay Supplies Metals Misc Supplies
- Patina Paints Tools Woodburners Mini Saws
- Carving Burs Foredom Tools Rotary Tool Accessories Micro-Pro Carver
- High Speed Air Tools High Speed Dental Burs Tutorial - Carving/ Inlay Tutorial - Drum Making
- Tutorial - Lids Tutorial - E B Ornament Tutorial - Resin Inlay Tutorial - Candle Holder
- Tutorial - Gold Leaf Tutorial - Luffa Gourd Soap Tutorial - Step by Step Tutorial - Photography Tips
- Tutorial - Workspace Tutorial -Yerba Mate Images - Gallery A Images - Gallery B
- Gourd Puzzles Images - Before and After Images - Gourd Magic Newsletter Index

0003