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Arizona Gourds

April updates from the desert southwest...



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Welcome to the April issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

April will be a busy month for me. I'm teaching 4 days of classes in Sonoita, Arizona at the After Midnight Gourd Retreat - and then I'm teaching 3 more days over in Visalia, California at the Baskets & Gourds conference. **Because of this schedule, we will not be shipping website orders from April 13-16, and from April 19 -24. Please order ahead of time if you know you need something, as I often run low on some items due to class supply sales.**

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I participated in a small gourd festival last month, and sold one of the gourd purses I created for an earlier newsletter article. The lady that bought this piece tried to convince her husband that it was ok to use it for its intended purpose - he wanted to display it as an art piece in a niche at their home!



*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



***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!**



Update: Gourd Classes

April 13th -16th I'll be teaching 4 days of classes at the annual art retreat at the [After Midnight Art Ranch](#) in Sonoita, Arizona. There are a few spaces left in the Ocean drum class.

NEW CLASS LOCATION: I'll be teaching 3 days of gourd classes in Colorado Springs, CO on August 17 - 19th. I'll be teaching a variety of classes including Inlaid Cactus Fiber, Inlace Inlay, River Bed Gourd, Filigree Carving and an afternoon "Finish up" session. For more details or to register, please contact our organizer and hostess, Merle Dallison, at mdallison@comcast.net I'm excited for a first time opportunity to teach in this area.

I'll be teaching at the **Michigan Festival of Gourds, September 14-16**. Classes and details are now posted on the [festival site](#).

**Sign up for the class updates list to the left if you want to get advance notice of all classes.*

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

Last chance to enter our CONTEST! What can you create using our metal dragonflies and butterflies? Let's see your creativity and artfulness. The only requirement is that your project must include one or more of these metal findings in any size. I will ask another respected gourd artist to help me select a winner, and that person will receive a \$25 Arizona Gourds gift certificate. We've only received THREE entries so far - so hope you'll send in a photo! **The deadline to submit a photo is April 15th.** The winner will be

published in the May newsletter.

New ~ Two new bur shapes from Saburr-Tooth!

We've received requests for more aggressive and faster cutting, low-clog burs made by Saburr Tooth. The new long taper and sphere burs are sure to become favorites along with the other shapes already available on the [carving burs page](#). The long flame is ideal for getting into tight spaces, or lay it on its side and use the length of the cutting head to carve a wide area. The sphere is larger than any of the ball shapes currently offered - the head measures 3/8" and is great for fast background removal. The cutting teeth are wider set than those on the silver structured tooth burs, so they are less likely to clog and are easier to clean.

**Are you left handed? Structured tooth carbide burs are your best choice - the teeth are designed to cut well in ANY direction, unlike traditional high speed steel and regular carbides, which are designed for right handed use.*



Back in Stock ~ Graduated Stone "Fan" Accents in synthetic Turquoise

Use them around a gourd neck and create a great necklace effect on your art - or use them to make a great piece of jewelry. I'd love to see what you create with them!

On the [Bone Bead and Embellishments Page](#).

Feature - Gourd "Bottoms"

OK, now that you've stopped snickering - (yes, I've heard all the jokes about Gourd Butts and such!) this is actually a multipurpose topic. I wanted to see how people might use cut off gourd bottoms discarded from other projects, how they could make uneven gourds sit properly, and also treatments of any type to the bottom part of a gourd piece. We've got some very imaginative gourders out there!

Cut off Gourd Bottoms - this is what you might make after cutting the bottom of a gourd to make a drum, or from the leftover piece after a gourd has been cut off and glued to a base.



Above: Juanita Marotta of Arizona uses the left over cut off bottoms from bottle or penguin gourds to make these small turtles.

Left: Kristen Johnson of Kansas uses gourd bottoms to make Christmas star tree-toppers.

Below: Bonnie Adams of Illinois had a lot of left over 4" rounds after making gourd tambourines, and found a very innovative use for them. She created a gourd disc golf game that would be perfect for a gourd festival activity!





Left: Here's another really unusual way to use a gourd bottom. **Dick Buhler** carved the deer and antlers from a single gourd bottom, leaving the outer ring of gourd still attached to the antlers for strength until the very last minute. The curvature of the gourd bottom was perfect for the antlers. He attached the finished carving to a wooden plaque.



Wall plaques - Left: Seen at the Wuertz Festival - Wall plaque made from a large gourd base - from "Medicine Shield" class by Shelley Fletcher and Margaret Sullivan.

Right: I made this from a 12" wide gourd bottom left over from an ocean drum. The piece is mounted on a saguaro rib frame.made



Gourd Bottoms - Gourds mounted on a base

Another treatment for gourd bottoms is to cut off the bottom, and mount the gourd on a flat base.



Mary Marotta of Minnesota says it's a challenge to find just the right base for the dolls and vases she and her Mother make from gourds. A friend of hers went out into the woods and found a nice birch log, which he cut up into dozens of slices in various dimensions. She says they've also used wooden bases from the craft store.

Left and Below: Roy Cavaretta of Texas use bases that vary from simple to a bit more complicated. The smaller piece below has a wooden base from a craft store. It's a great solution if the gourd won't sit well. Here he is sanding the bottom of a gourd on his belt sander.



Jan Cunningham of Arizona enjoys working with botanicals, so she made a project using some of the items she sells from her website, www.thepamperedgourd.com. This gourd was sanded, but still was not stable enough after adding the top botanicals. For the base, she glued pieces of prickly pear cactus fiber to a small, thin piece of wood. A screw was driven through the wood disc and into the base of the gourd (also using a bit of glue between the gourd and the fiber.)



Right: John Liniger made a trip to his wood pile, and came up with the perfect piece to make a gourd base that would complement his owl class carving.

Gourd Bottoms - Gourds pieces made into a base
(Save those gourd scraps!)



Left: Kristin Johnson saves gourd pieces and uses them for other projects. Scraps make a lovely matching base for this project.





Kathe Stark created this "balancing" canteen by taking the top piece and turning it into a base. For the gourd to the right, she cut a ring from another gourd and added it to her project. The filigree on both the gourd and the base pull the whole thing together.



Stands - purchased and/or repurposed!

Commerical stands are readily available, but you may also want to check your local thrift store!



Roy Cavaretta "repurposed" these stands he found at the local Goodwill store. The stand to the left was turned upside down, and deer antlers were drilled and placed over the metal legs. The lower ring was wrapped in hemp.

Below: A metal stand really shows off this filigree candle gourd by Kathe Stark.



Right: This gourd has a rounded bottom. I added African wood carved figures to create legs so the gourd would be suspended. (This is constructed in a similar method as the [Asian Suspended Vase project packet](#), which uses chopsticks as legs.



These folding wooden stands are inexpensive and come in a variety of sizes. (Look for them on the [Kits and Displays page](#) on the Arizona Gourds website.)



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We have 2500 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!](#)

Bonus Feature: Make a Simple Gourd Doll - by Judy Fleming

Many thanks to Judy Fleming of North Carolina for sharing this fun and easy gourd project!

Sometimes you need a gourd that can do dual duty as both an artistic piece and something the kids can have fun with. This little doll is able both to pretty up any mantle piece and play dress up with children.

Materials needed:
 Gourd; gourd pieces
 Superglue gel and sandpaper
 Pins, wooden disk
 Fabric; hat
 Colored pencils, satin polycyclic
 Gourd saw and wood burner

1) First find that odd little gourd that doesn't quite stand right or have a shape that fits much of anything. Cut the bottom of the gourd and glue on a wooden disk. You know all those little trim pieces of gourds you've been saving? Now select and trim a simple set of arms and sand them smooth. You don't need a lot of detail for a doll, just enough to give her some character.



- 2) Trim out a hat ribbon and apron from your material of choice and pencil in her face and arms. Drill a single hole through her arm pieces into the gourd and test fit them to ensure you have a long enough pin. Make the arm hole just a little smaller than the pin head so that the arm moves freely on the pin. Add color pencil to suit your doll's design.
- 3) Next you'll wood burn her details as much or as little as you would like. Once you have the designed amount on her, use the gel superglue on the pin going into the body. Leave the pin loose enough so that her arms are not glued directly to the body and still move freely.
- 4) Don't forget the detail on the back of the doll. Use a nice satin or matt finish for the toy. These top coats show less obvious wear over time compared to semi-gloss or gloss. Polycyclic is fast drying and easy to use without requiring extra ventilation.
- 5) Allow to dry overnight before she is allowed to be played with and enjoy!



Reader's Mailbag:
 Prill Neagles of Arizona sent these photos of the two gourds she did at my recent Tucson classes.





Reader's Mailbag:

Hi Bonnie, A friend brought me some cactus paddles and when I got the fiber out, I pictured seaweed. Thus, the pictured gourd. It was a lot of work but a lot of fun. I am happy with my first effort. Thanks for the tutorial! Nan Noble - Arizona

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

In the next issue The Versatile Gourd. This is a chance to show off the projects you've made that are a bit creative - music boxes, water fountains, chimes or unusual sculptures - anything that is a bit out of the ordinary.

Looking for photos of interesting and unusual gourd projects! We'd love to feature your work in the newsletter! Got a photo or two? Please send to: bonnie@arizonagourds.com.

Like Bonnie Gibson, Marianne Thompson Barnes and 1,815 others like this - Admin Dana Jacobsen

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Tip of the Month: Recycle those old Candle Jar Lids!

Our tip this month comes from Susan Kagel of New York. Susan uses the glass tops left over from scented candles, and places them in gourds as votive candle holders. Take off the plastic rim and use it to trace the opening size onto the gourd. Then, cut the gourd open and use sand paper to make adjustments so the top fit in snugly. This is a really nice way to recycle and reuse and make a great gourd project all at the same time.

** Do you have any helpful tips? Please send them to: bonnie@arizonagourds.com. We'd love to share them with our readers.*



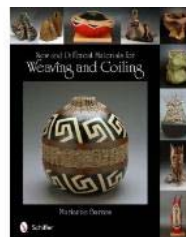
Featured Gourd of the Month:

"Ammonite Weaving"

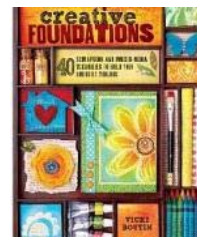
Large canteen gourd turned on its side, with pine needle weaving and ammonites. Finish is patina paint on the top and acrylics below. I decided to show this gourd because of the birch legs that were added.



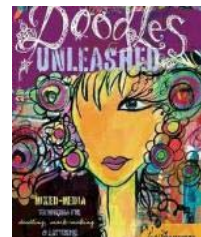
Featured Books of the Month:



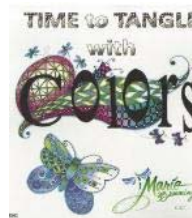
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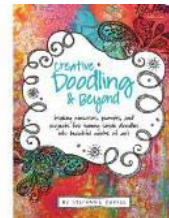
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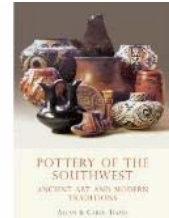
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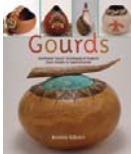
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(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

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

The hardcover edition is now OUT OF PRINT!
 I still have some on hand, but supplies are limited. Last chance to get a copy before they are gone!

[Arizona Gourds HOME](#)

Newer offerings - The first book is not yet released - "**Different Materials for Weaving and Coiling**" will be out at the end of the month. It's written by Marianne Barnes, who also wrote "**Weaving on Gourds**".

Also, several newer Doodling books are in this grouping, plus, a brand new "**Pottery of the Southwest**" book. I haven't gotten my copy of this one yet, but I love great reference books. I find them to be endless sources of ideas - the Native American artists here in the Southwest have gone way beyond their forefather's designs and have moved their art into wonderful new directions.

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



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