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# Arizona Gourds



July updates from the desert southwest...

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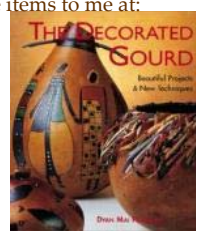
## Welcome to the July issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

**Some of you may know me well enough to know that I enjoy sports.** I actually have two degrees in physical education and sports medicine (which doesn't explain why I make my living as an artist, but does explain why I love sports!) After the NBA finals, a popular topic was the difference between individual "superstars" versus great teams.

I'd like to think of Arizona Gourds (and myself) as ultimate team players. If you ever have a question about gourds, I will try to answer it or send you to the right place for the answer if I don't know myself. If you want to buy a tool, and I think the tool I sell is not the right one for you, I will send you somewhere else to buy. I'm all about supporting the gourd hobby, educating new gourders, and enjoying the camaraderie of my fellow gourd artists. If you are here, welcome to the team!

I had hoped to have an article this issue about using different forms of resist on gourds. This article has been pushed back for a bit until I can gather more photos and information. If you have done resist techniques on your gourds, I'd love to see photos and hear about your methods. Please feel free to send these items to me at: [lorrie@arizonagourds.com](mailto:lorrie@arizonagourds.com)

**I'm sorry to report the passing of Dyan Mai Peterson, author of the book, "The Decorated Gourd".** Notes from her estate: "Dyan was a well known gourd artist, an author and teacher, a member of the Southern Highland Craft Guild and founder of the Western North Carolina Gourd Society. Dyan was dedicated to the preservation of gourd art and history."



[The Decorated Gourd](#)

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### Frontgate Garden Decor

Statues and Sculptures to Decorate Your Garden - starting from \$49. [www.Frontgate.com](http://www.Frontgate.com)

### Designer Garden Sale

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### Update: Gourd Classes

I will be teaching at a **gourd workshop/retreat in Kentucky August 4-7**. Classes are held indoors so no worries about the heat and humidity. Please note that I plan limit my travels - this may be the last chance to take my classes at this location. The class information and registration is available on the [Kentucky Gourd Society page](#).

**NEW TUCSON CLASS - "Rock Art and Gourd Pottery"** (Photo to the right) Check out the [classes page](#) for more photos and details!

**Classes in Boise, Idaho September 23-25** - 5 different classes, information available on my [classes page](#) - contact [Sue Kosta](#) for registration, travel and lodging information.

I will be teaching 4 days of classes at the **Texas Gourd Festival**, October 13-16. Classes and registration information are posted on the [Texas Gourd Society page](#).

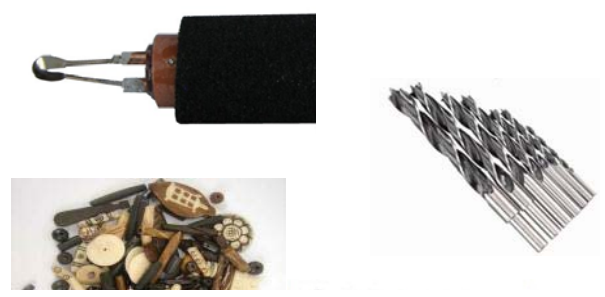


\*Join the class updates list to receive advance notice of upcoming classes. Get the news first and have the best chance for popular classes!



**\*Notice: I will be not be shipping from July 4th - July 18th. All orders placed during this time will be held and shipped out starting July 19th. Orders will be filled in the order in which they were received.**

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



**New! Spoon tipped woodburning pen.** The tip of this pen is cupped like a spoon, and is angled slightly for comfort during shading. Burn soft, shaded areas with no hard edges! On the [woodburner page](#).

The mixed bone beads were very popular last month, and I ran out quickly. More are on the way! I expect them by about 6/30.

**TOOL SPECIALS:** While they last, , buy a pack of **brad point drill**

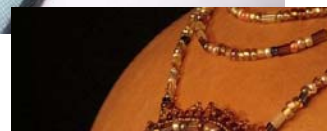


bits for **half price** on the ["Tools"](#) page! Brad point bits have a spike on the drill tip so they won't "skitter" around on the gourd surface. Also, 30 pc. diamond bur sets are on sale on the ["Carving Burs"](#) page.

**Continuing Sale:** Special pricing on 14 and 16" drum skins on the ["Musical Supplies"](#) page

### Feature of the month - Emerging Artists

If our gourd hobby is going to continue growing, we need to encourage younger people to join us! Demographics of the gourd hobby show that most gourders are predominantly female, and in the 55-75 year age group. Bringing younger people into our hobby also brings fresh ideas and approaches, as you will see from the two artists illustrated below.





Above: Nikki Ogle of Denton, Texas is a 34 year old creative artist, whose work has been featured here in the past. Nikki is influenced heavily by the insect world and sea life, and uses a lot of beadwork in her gourd jewelry pieces.

*"In April of 2007, I discovered gourds and have been enamored ever since. I continue to be impressed with the limitless techniques that can be applied to their shells which are quite similar to wood. As an avid gardener I was smitten to transform these gifts from nature into sculptures with lasting presence. I enjoy the challenge of bringing out the possibilities in my pieces even as each gourd dictates the outcome with their own shape and characteristics. And as a human I am gripped with wonder as I learn about the symbolism and practical uses applied to gourd harvests since the beginning of time all over the world."* You can read more about Nikki's art on her [etsy page](#) or on her [facebook page](#).





**Cara Bevan is a 23-year-old artist from North Carolina.** Ever since she could hold a pencil or tape items together she's been making art. With the support of her artistic family, she flourished and decided to make art her career. When her grandmother, Yvonne Spinks, introduced her own gourd art, the ideas began to flow. "Although I consider myself a professional acrylic painter," Cara says, "I was attracted to gourds. Being a nature nut, it was the perfect material! I made my first gourd sculpture in 2007. It was a large gourd turtle." Since then, Cara has made hundreds of realistic gourd animals and creatures. She loves to turn them into creations beyond, but inspired by, their original shape. "I've made realistic turtles, frogs, bears, cats, mice, dragons, birds, and much more! I just can't stop creating. To see more of Cara Bevan's work, visit her [page on Gourd Art Enthusiasts](#) or on her website, [www.carabevan.com](http://www.carabevan.com)

**World Gourds:** My son was fortunate enough to be part of a touring show that recently traveled and performed for a month in China. They traveled all over, and knowing my interest in gourds, he took photos of some gourd related items.



A gourd shop in Shenyang. Shenyang is in the northern part of China, close to the Korean border. Below - the shop proprietor demonstrates playing the "hulusi" - a traditional gourd flute. Right - carving on gourds.

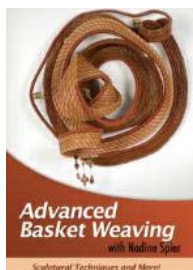




Below- Gourd shaped metal and cloisonne vessels seen in museums. The small, lighter colored gourds are carved from jade and applied to the surface. The gourd is a symbol of good luck, health, longevity, and propagation, and is commonly found in Chinese art.



*Review - Advanced Basket Weaving with Nadine Spier*



**Advanced Basket Weaving**  
(2nd in the series)



This DVD is the second in a series from Nadine Spier, In the first DVD (reviewed in the [March 2011 Arizona Gourds newsletter](#)), Nadine covered basket weaving essentials - and this second DVD expands on the subject.

Videos cost more than books, but for those that learn more effectively with classes or hands on instruction, a well made video is the way to go. This video is professionally done, and Nadine does a great job at the pacing and the amount of information given. The photography is excellent; this time you'll enjoy the lovely views around her back yard in the background, and great closeups of the techniques. Unlike taking a live class, with a DVD, you can stop and rewatch portions, or fast forward to particular sections.

Subjects covered include learning how to collect and prepare pine needles, other common plants you can use to basketweave, how to coil around a polished stone cabachon, how to line up stitches on both sides of the basket, how to do the solid wrap stitch, putting beads between coils, how to start around anything with holes such as a walnut slice, how to shape the vessel, how to finish, and more.

Even though it doesn't deal specifically with gourds, the information and materials used are perfect for gourd projects. I have personally found both of these DVDs to be excellent instructional tools. Nadine maintains a good pace, shows plenty of closeups and examples, gives lots of helpful tips and in general provides an excellent class. I highly recommend these to anyone that is interested in basket weaving with pine needles.

2 hour DVD - Cover price: \$39.99

Here are a couple of pine needle baskets I made after



**Basket Weaving Essentials**  
with Kristie Spier

**Basket Weaving Essentials**  
(1st in the series)

watching these videos.

\*Note: *Basket Weaving Essentials* should be watched before viewing *Advanced Basket Weaving*



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We now have over 1900 members and over 6600 gourd photos to inspire you. 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 gourdging question!  
[Check out our two great new GAE T-Shirt designs !](#)

**Coming Soon: Resist methods and designs**  
Have you ever done a gourd doing wax resist or other resist type techniques done using liquid resist products, crayons, contact paper, masking tape, china markers, or any other substance? If so, please send your ideas and photos for the next issue to: [bonnie@arizonagourds.com](mailto:bonnie@arizonagourds.com).

### *PowerTex Contest & "Stone Art" Review*

In the [December 2010 Arizona Gourds newsletter](#), I reviewed a sculpting product called **PowerTex**. PowerTex is a liquid medium that is used with natural fibers such as cotton cloth, paper, and other organic fibers. Items are saturated in powerTex and as the medium begins to dry, it allows you to move and position the cloth or fibers in a sculptural way. After this review, enough interest was sparked in the gourd community to prompt the [Canadian distributor](#) and the [US distributor](#) of PowerTex to sponsor a gourd competition to see who could come up with most interesting and creative projects. You can see the results of the contest on [this page](#) - also look for the link to the tutorials provided for each of the winning entries. Many thanks to the PowerTex distributors, Bridgette Thompson and Regine Dossche for sponsoring this competition and providing prizes. Congratulations to all the winners!



*Left: Grand prize winner by Ardee of Hawaii - the flowers are made from pieces cut from a cotton t-shirt and soaked in powerTex. Each flower is poked into holes drilled into a large gourd that makes flower base; a second gourd is carved and decorated for the vase.*

After experimenting with PowerTex, I was interested in trying another product made and sold by the same company. "**Stone Art**" is a unique structural powder made specifically to work with powerTex. For my project, I used a small gourd and some fibers from prickly pear cactus, plus transparent PowerTex and Stone Art.

Step 1: Soak cactus fibers in PowerTex.

Step 2: Mix Stone Art powder with PowerTex to create a sticky clay. The powerTex isn't adhesive enough by itself to hold the fibers firmly to the gourd surface, so I used the clay to cover all of the raw edges and hold them down.



Left: If you mix in a disposable container, there is no cleanup. If you have leftover mixture, store it in an airtight container - but plan on using it fairly soon.

Below: Place the fiber sheets on the gourd and add clay over all raw edges.





Step 3 - Rub dry Stone Art powder over the wet clay to give it a stone like appearance and texture. Let the project dry.

Right: Finished gourd! After the project dried thoroughly, I added two prickly pear flowers carved from scrap gourd tops. Then, I sponged on acrylic paints and highlighted the fibers with metallic rub on paint. The added hummingbird is hand carved from basswood.

Tips: Keep an extra container of water handy at all times. In our dry desert climate, the powertex and clay both dried rapidly. I decided to NOT wear gloves - as both the powertex and clay are super sticky. I get a better feel for the material by not wearing gloves. Clean up is easy with water - but wash your hands and tools in a bucket and not in your sink. Material that goes down the drain may harden and cause plumbing issues!

The prickly pear fiber is a bit delicate and difficult to adhere using regular glue. Soaking it in powertex provided a good permanent bond and hardened the fibers and made them stonger at the same time.



**Reader's Mailbag:**

I have combined two of my skills, both gourds and beading. I also collect antique crystals for a hobby. I use them in my gourds to create SunCatchers. I have many hung around my house on my curtain rods. The morning sun shines thru the crystals and prisms of light radiate around the room. I use colored pencil, ink dye, beads, stones and acrylic paints to fashion the gourd. The crystals are strung on wire jewelry thread and use crimps to hold it all together. *Patti Tyk - Illinois*



**Reader's Mailbag:**

Hey Bonnie, This year I have been asked to be an Artist in Residence at the 2011 Georgia National Fair during October. I had won a 1st, 2nd, 3rd place and honorable mention in the 2010 Fine Arts Category in Basketry and Gourd Art. In my short bio, I mentioned your name as being one of my favorite teachers. Thanks for your inspiration and sharing your talents with me.  
*Phiny Musgrove - Albany, GA*



**Reader's Mailbag:**

This is a sunflower gourd that I just finished for a customer, it's made from leftover parts.  
*Danna Haddock - AZ*





I got to see this piece in person that was created by *Donna Vargus of AZ*. The center part is a top from a very large gourd that has been carved and textured on the inside, and an piece of another gourd is added to the middle. Weaving was added around the outer edge. This is a surprisingly large piece and very unusual. Thanks to her husband, Gary, for sending me the photo.



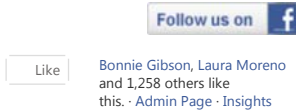
**Reader's Mailbag:**

Hi Bonnie - Just received my order today and I wanted to thank you for the extra piece of turquoise that you included with it. It was very nice of you to do that and I appreciate it! *Sioux Westberry-Kaufman - AZ*

*\*Sometimes when packages are lightweight and shipping costs are lower than usual, I will add some freebies to make up for it! The flat rate shipping option in the shopping cart is not perfect; but you are always welcome to email orders and pay by check. This will avoid the automated paypal fees that are built into the flat rate shipping fee.*

**Did you know..... that people that "Like" Arizona Gourds on Facebook get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourding updates?**

Please consider joining us on Facebook for the latest news and specials. I always post newsletter notices, new items, sales, and other gourd related info onto the Arizona Gourds page routinely. (Just a note - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourding friends.)



**Sneak peek - the rest of the gourd will be unveiled on the Arizona Gourds Facebook page.**



During June, I was fortunate enough to attend a wholesale fine crafts show in Las Vegas, where I met up with some gourding friends. Mark Doolittle is a fine woodworker, and together with his wife Kathy, they produce some wonderful gourds for shops and galleries across the country (you won't see them at gourd events.) They are pictured here with one of Mark's fantastic wood sculptures. Mark was the first person to carry over the piercing techniques he used on his wood sculptures and use the process on gourds, while Kathy does beautiful things with handmade papers and gourds. They collaborate on many exquisite gourd pieces. It was exciting to see gourd art represented so well among all of the other fine crafts!

**Tip of the Month: Rainstick Tutorial**

Orange County Gourd Society

Russ Conley's



**RAINSTICK TUTORIAL**

2011 Revised\* Version

\*Revised and updated by his friends Bill Duncan, Jack Thorp and Susan Sullivan, OCGS President



Russ Conley was a gourding friend that was stricken with ALS. While he was alive, he was a very active gourder and was known and loved by many. He wrote a rainstick tutorial, which has been revised and edited by members of his home patch, the Orange County patch of California. They have graciously allowed me to share this tutorial with you. Promoting his method is their way of remembering and honoring Russ. The tutorial is in PDF format and is easy to download and print. Enjoy!

 [Russ Conley Rainstick Tutorial.pdf](#)

\*Watch for photos of the artists and entries in the Rainstick Category at the Annual California Gourd Society Competition, which will be published in a future issue of the AGS gourd magazine.

*\*Do you have a tip or tutorial we may feature in a future newsletter? Please [contact me](#).*



### Featured Gourd of the Month:

#### "Native Treasures"

Inspired by jewelry art of the southwest - the "jewelry" on this gourd is all carved from the gourd shell. The only added items are a strand of heishi and a few little turquoise cabochons in the crosses. The sandcast metal effect is done with carving and acrylic paints.



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<http://www.arizonagourds.com/July2011.html>

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**Note:** Please check your spam folder near the end of each month and add our address to your "safe senders" list. Many emails bounce each month due to spam blockers.

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 Gourds Southwest Gourd

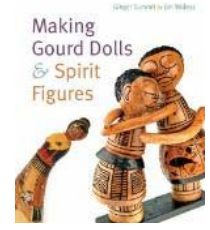
### Featured Books of the Month:



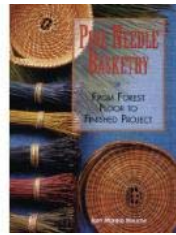
[Southwestern Indian Jewelry](#)



[Contemporary Southwestern Jewelry](#)



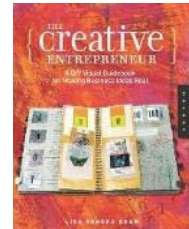
[Making Gourd Dolls & Spirit Figures](#)



[Pine Needle Basketry](#)



[Exploring the Latest Trends in Mixed Media Art](#)



[The Creative Entrepreneur](#)

The first two books were the inspiration for the "Native Treasures" piece to the left. The first book, "**Southwestern Indian Jewelry**" is a gorgeous coffee table type book that normally retails for \$55. Amazingly, you can purchase from Amazons third party sellers for under \$10! The second book is a bit more; but it is also filled with a lot of gorgeous photos of Native jewelry. Great design ideas!

If you don't already own a copy of "**Making Gourd Dolls and Spirit Figures**", then this is the time to buy, as it has been slashed to a fraction of the original cover price. "**Pine Needle Basketry**" is a great book if you are intrigued by weaving with pine needles and want great deal on an excellent book.

"**Exploring the Latest Trends in Mixed Media Art**" is included here because it is one of the few books I could find that mentions Powertex as a craft medium, and "**The Creative Entrepreneur**" is another good reference book for those of you who are interested in selling your gourd art.

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



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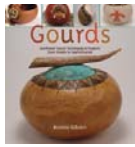
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**Techniques & Projects from Simple to Sophisticated by Bonnie Gibson**

**The hardcover edition is now OUT OF PRINT!**

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*collections or related titles. Each topic includes a variety of suggested books about each subject.*

- Gourds - misc.
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