



Arizona Gourds

January updates from the desert southwest...

Welcome to the January issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

2009 has appeared out of nowhere! Time flies when you are keeping busy, and it's certainly been that way around here during the past year. I hope 2009 is as fun and exciting as 2008.

Around this time of year I always find a few minutes to work on something new. If you visit my [home page](#) this month, you'll see another larger photo of this new gourd that I just finished. This gourd may look familiar to many of you, as it served as my sample gourd at filigree classes during this past year. It's also the gourd that was photographed for my [filigree project packet instructions](#), so if you have a copy you can see the gourd in progress.

This gourd had an interesting adventure along the way; while loading the car in Texas, the gourd decided to "jump" out of the back of the car before it had been wrapped and packed into a box. Fortunately, I had treated the gourd with wood hardener (shown on the bottom of my [tools page](#)) and despite bouncing out of the car and rolling across the pavement, the gourd escaped any damage whatsoever. It made a real believer out of me in regards to the strengthening qualities of the wood hardener!



It finally drove me crazy seeing it sitting there partially done, so I worked on it non stop for a couple of days to get it completed. It's a nice feeling to clear off my workbench and start on something fresh for the new year.

Update: Gourd Classes

I will be teaching again at the Southern Gourd Retreat in Georgia from March 26-29th, 2009. You may visit www.webgourds.com/southern for more information about the retreat in general and about the classes offered. **Classes are filling fast, so please don't delay in registering.**

I will also be teaching classes at the Leiser Gourd Festival in Sacramento, Ca in May 2009. Other out of town teaching locations are still a possibility.

If you would like to receive advance notice of classes, please add your name to my classes updates email list. Get the news first and have the best opportunity to select your classes! Notices of **NEW Tucson classes for February/March** will go out to this list before they are announced on the website.



[Join The Class updates List](#)

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

Have you ever been amazed to see the size of African porcupine quills and wonder about the animal that has to carry them around?

Last month, I had the opportunity to visit the International Wildlife Museum in Tucson, where I got to see one of these creatures up close. It is much larger than our American porcupine and it would certainly give most animals (and humans!) a fright if it decided to display its quills in anger.

This month, I have obtained a large supply of super premium African Quills. These quills are both long and thick and are some of the nicest I've seen. You can order them singly, or get a bonus quill if you order a dozen. You will find the quills on the [Special Embellishments page](#).

During January, if you order the "Baker's Dozen", I'll throw in an additional quill so you'll get 14 pieces for the price of 12. (*The 14th quill may be slightly shorter or thinner but it will still be a nice one.)



NEW this month: A great

Back in stock: [Micro size funnels](#) for filling oil candle inserts. These make

new structured tooth carbide bur in an inverted cone shape. This bur works wonderful for carving ripples and basketry effects. It will remove a lot of material very quickly. Look for it on the [Carving Burs page](#).

Also, I've added a [Micro Torch](#) - for creating interesting charred effects. You'll find a limited supply on the tools page.



Use the precise flame of a micro torch to create interesting charred effects.

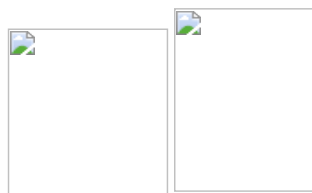


filling the [oil candles](#) so much easier, and are a thoughtful addition if you gift or sell finished oil candle gourds.



Back in stock:
Tackee Wax for Huichol style beading, and Light Cord Kits, both on the [Miscellaneous Supplies page](#).

The light cords are complete with an in-line on/off switch and a clear nightlight bulb. These are great for lighting small gourd lamps or other projects that need some safe illumination. They work especially well for creating gourd "Mosue Houses", as shown in the [Mouse House project packet](#). **This month, or while supplies last, you can get the set (a project packet and a light cord kit) at a discounted price. Look for this combination on the [Project Packets page](#).**



Scrimshaw!

Many of you know that I enjoy many different forms of art. Every now and then, I need to try something different so that I don't get too burned out doing only gourds. Last month, I did some commissioned scrimshaw pieces on antler handled knives. **Scrimshaw is the ancient art of whalers. Traditionally, designs were etched or scribed onto polished whale's teeth and then rubbed soot or ink into the scribed lines.* These two pieces are "Ulu" knives from Alaska, and each has a piece of caribou antler for the handle.

I tried a new technique on these ~ in the past, I've always scribed the lines using a sharp sewing needle held in a small pin vise. This time, I pulled out my Turbocarver. It is small and lightweight and combined with a very fine point dental bur, it worked wonderfully for scribing all of the lines. It was so much faster this way, that I completed them in only a tiny fraction of the time that it would have taken me otherwise! It also helps to have good eyesight or a [OptiVisor](#) type magnifier.



Wanted: "Crossover Gourd Artists" - Photos of your work!

I know there are a lot of people out there that are what I call "crossover artists". These are people that do gourds, but find ways to incorporate other hobbies and arts into their gourd work. For example, someone that enjoys polymer clay and uses it to decorate gourds - or perhaps a beader that embellishes gourds with beadwork. There are so many ways to incorporate our other hobbies with gourds, so please send me photos of what you are doing and I'll include them in an upcoming newsletter!

January Feature - Things you may not know about RESPIRATORS

A respirator is a type of personal protective equipment that is worn over the nose and mouth. A respirator can protect you against breathing in harmful contaminants that are in the air - if you use it properly.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO WEAR A RESPIRATOR?

Cleaning gourds or gourd carving can create a lot of dust that gets into the air. This dust may contain mold. If you breathe in this dust, you might become temporarily or permanently ill. You might become ill right away or sometime in the future.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF RESPIRATORS?

Disposable: Most gourders use N95 disposable respirators. These are good for basic protection against mold, but not against harmful chemicals like paint vapors. Some disposable masks have small exhalation valves (see below) with will keep your eyeglasses from fogging up. When using disposable masks, ALWAYS WEAR AN N95 DISPOSABLE RESPIRATOR OR BETTER. This type provides good basic protection, is inexpensive, and easy to find. It must be labeled with the words "NIOSH" and "N95." If it does not have these words, it isn't providing adequate protection!

Reusable: Another option is to use a reusable Half Face Respirator with replaceable filter cartridges. These provide a higher level of protection, but they are more expensive and it may be difficult to find one that fits smaller faces.)

CAN ANYONE USE A RESPIRATOR?

Using a respirator makes your lungs and heart work harder. If you have a lung or heart condition, wearing a respirator or working on gourds may be dangerous for you. If you have facial hair, you may not be able to wear a respirator. The edge of a respirator must form a tight seal against your skin. If the edge of a respirator rests on facial hair, contaminants can leak into the respirator. You must shave off any facial hair that touches the edge of the respirator.

MAKING SURE THAT THE RESPIRATOR FITS PROPERLY

If your respirator does not fit correctly, it will not protect you from harmful contaminants. Make sure the metal nose band is formed around your nose for a good fit. Criss cross the elastic straps behind your head to get a good tight fit. You should conduct a "seal check" every time you put on a respirator. This will help you make sure it fits and is properly positioned on your face.

- To check for leaks when exhaling, completely cover the exhalation port with the palm of your hand so that no air can flow out. Exhale more strongly than usual. If the mask bulges slightly and you do not feel any air flow escaping across your face, the respirator fits properly when exhaling.
- To check for leaks when inhaling (breathing in), completely cover any exhalation valve or filter cartridges with the palms of your hands so that no air can flow in. Inhale more strongly than usual. If the mask collapses slightly and you do not feel any air entering the mask across your face, the respirator fits properly when inhaling.
- If you are using a disposable N95 respirator - Firmly cover the mask with the palms of your hands. Inhale and exhale more strongly than usual. If you do not detect any air flow in or out around the edges of the respirator, the respirator fits properly. (If the mask has an exhalation port, be sure to cover the port when you breathe out.)

Disposable



Reusable



exhalation ports



3M 9211 Respirator with Exhalation Valve. This three-panel flat fold respirator features an innovative design. The low profile provides a good, comfortable fit (even for people with small faces!) and allows for better visibility than the common cup style mask. The exhalation valve prevents fogging of eyeglasses. This is a government-approved N95 particulate respirator. (Available on the [Tools page.](#))

Part 1, OPALS/Fantasy Film Stained Glass Paper



Part 2, OPALS/Fantasy Film Stained Glass on G...



with the F
Stamps as
nt colors o
ita, Arizon
r ranch ne

Tip of the Month: Use a Belt Sander to Flatten Gourd Bases

If you have access to a [stationary belt sander](#), then you have the means of flattening an uneven gourd so it will sit better. Sanders with belts that are 4" - 6" wide work well. This technique works best on gourds that are fairly thick. If you try it on a thin gourd, be prepared for the likelihood of creating a hole in the base. Clean the interior thoroughly before beginning so you know exactly how much material you can remove. **Do not try this technique with a portable belt sander unless you have the means to fasten it down firmly; you will need both hands to hold onto the gourd!** Turn the sander on, then grip the gourd firmly in both hands and lower carefully it onto the moving belt. Be careful, as the gourd will fly out of your hands if you don't have a firm grip! Hold the gourd as level as possible and sand just enough so the gourd will sit nicely. If you accidentally sand through the shell, you will have to glue on an added base to hide the hole.

Do you have a tip or tutorial we can feature here? Please [contact me](#).

Reader's Mailbag

Since it's the season for being thankful, I wanted to thank you personally for your unique ability to teach without creating "superiority" barriers - as many instructors do. It is a rare talent, and not lost on many of us. I also want to thank you for the time you take to send your monthly newsletter and other email that keeps us up to date on happenings.

*I completed the carved gourd started in your classes at the Florida retreat and won a First Place ribbon at the Cullman Alabama Gourd Show! Also, I just completed a gourd sculpture that I wanted you to see - it took about 6 weeks - and I call it "Senorita". It was an engineering nightmare to construct - LOL! **Terri Camp - Opp, Alabama***



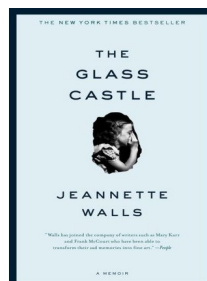
Terri Camp's "Senorita" Doll

Reader's Mailbag

*Oprah has some stiff competition! I just finished "[These is my Words](#)" and loved it. It was one of the best books I've read in a long time--and I read a lot. Thank you for passing it on. I loved reading about Tucson over 100 years ago, and I will miss the characters now that I've finished the book. I'm passing it on to my friends. Keep making book recommendations!
Marge Humphrey*

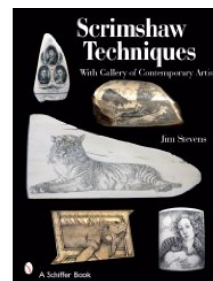
Featured Gourd of the Month: Dragonfly Spirals

This gourd is completely covered with cut out spiral areas and carved spirals overlaid with repetitive dragonflies. It also has an added wood and metal dragonfly. The dragonfly wings were dressed up with gold leafing, and woodburning and turquoise cabochons were added to the wider swirling bands.

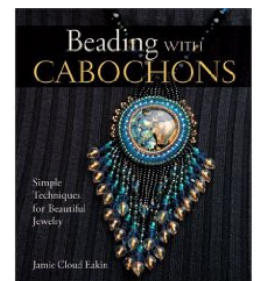


[The Glass Castle](#)

Featured Books of the Month:



[Scrimshaw Techniques](#)



[Beading with Cabochons](#)



The fre
 ur

<http://www.arizonagourds.com/Jan09.html>

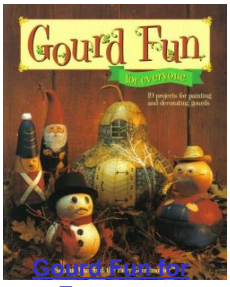
Not receiving the newsletter? You can join the newsletter mailing list by clicking on the envelope icon. If you are receiving duplicate mailings, or want to unsubscribe from the newsletter list, please send me an [email](#).



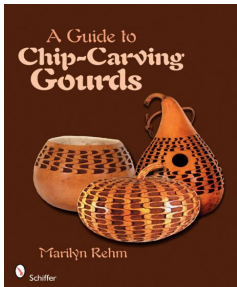
Click here to join our newsletter mailing list

Recommend This Site

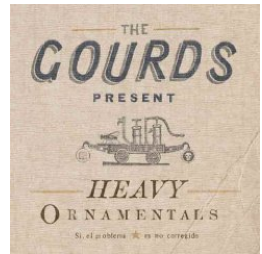
E-MAIL ME



[Gourd Fun for Everyone](#)



[Carving Gourds](#)



[Heavy Ornamentals by The Gourds](#)

The first book is not gourd related, but several people enjoyed my reading my recommendation last month so I decided to share another of my favorite titles. *The Glass Castle* is a fantastic autobiography that reads like fiction - I loved it!

For those of you that find my scrimshaw intriguing and want to try it yourself, you might enjoy this excellent primer, *Scrimshaw Techniques*. If you enjoy working with beads, *Beading with Cabochons* is another crossover craft book that is of interest to gourd crafters.

Gourd Fun for Everyone is a paperback re-release of this popular title. It focuses mainly on painting techniques and includes patterns. *Chip-Carving Gourds* is not yet out, but is available at a special pre-release price.

And just for fun, *Heavy Ornamentals* is by the musical group, "The Gourds". I figured a group that uses "Gourds" as their band name was worth mentioning! If you click on the album cover you'll have an opportunity to hear some of their honky-tonk alternative country music.



You can use this Amazon search box link to find all kinds of books and other products. I appreciate those of you that do so; Amazon purchases made through the links on this website help to support the site.

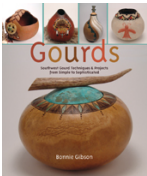
Note: It is important that you add bonniegibson@qwest.net to your "safe senders" list, as many emails bounce each month due to spam blockers.

If your email address changes, just sign up again with your new address - no need to email me the change, as I purge non-working addresses monthly.

**Please visit the book page links shown at right to view collections of related titles. Each topic includes a variety of suggested books about each subject.*

- Gourds - General
- Patterns and Designs
- Gourds - Misc.
- Musical Instruments
- Pyrography Books
- Carving Books
- Weaving
- Decorative Painting

Arizona Gourds HOME



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

(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

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

- Home Amazon Search Site Map About the Artist
- Links Gourd Art for Sale Gourd Books Project Packets
- Bone Beads Special Embellishments Earrings & More Glass Supplies Inlay Supplies
- Metals Misc Supplies Patina Paints Apoxie Sculpt Glues and Adhesives
- Tools Woodburners Mini Saws Carving Burs Freedom 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 Gourd Puzzles Images - Before and After Images - Gourd Magic Newsletter Index

