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Arizona Gourds

Updates from the desert southwest...

Printable PDF File

Welcome to the April/May issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

I'm combining a couple of months in this newsletter because it will be a really busy time with upcoming classes. This will involve quite a bit of travel the next couple of months, so please be sure to check the home page of the website for notices about scheduled shipping delays.

The change in weather is going to increase everyone's time outdoors and hopefully allow some of you in colder climates to finally plant your gourd crop. I know some of you are eagerly awaiting warmer weather that will allow you to do clean gourds and other messy jobs outside. It's already heating up in Arizona, temperatures here already hit the low 90's in March so we are doing as much as possible now before the summer weather sends us indoors.

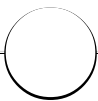
Note about the newsletter email list:

Once you have signed up for the newsletter email list, you never have to sign up again, unless you change your email address. If you have already signed up and you aren't getting the emails, it is because your email provider considers our emails to be spam and they are blocked at your end. **Signing up again will not help and makes a lot more work for me - the email list is maintained by hand. You can always read the current issue from the home page of our website, and you can read old issues from the newsletter index link on the home page.**



71 Year Olds Skin Secret

The Ultimate Skin Tightening Remedy Helping Older Women Look Younger



flawlessbeauty...

***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!**

Just type what you are looking for into the search box below. **Can't see the search box? Please disable your ad blocker for the Arizona Gourds domain.*



Arizona Gourds Newsletter Index

See all our old newsletters from the past 9 years! Articles and Tips are indexed.

[Newsletter Index](#)

Update: Gourd Classes

All of my currently scheduled classes in various locations are full at this time. Please sign up for the class updates list if you would like to receive notifications about any future classes. Classes in Tucson will resume in the fall; some other classes are sponsored by patches in various parts of the country and are usually open to local patch members or invited guests.

Enter your email address and hit the submit button to join the class updates notification list.

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

The latest addition to the Carving burs page - the Saburr Tooth large flame bur. This is a good general purpose shape, a bit fatter and shorter than the bud.

Did you know: all of the Saburr Tooth burs are

I am really excited about this new metallic hematite heishi. It is real hematite stone that has been electro-treated to add color. Each strand is a lustrous jewel tone. It lets you add a pop of "bling" without being gaudy. Real stone - 16" strands in 5 colors. On the [Inlay Supplies page](#).

available in a slightly coarser green color for faster carving. Email me - green burs are available by special order. On the [Carving Burs page](#).



New - Diamond core drills. These small drills are actually a hollow tube coated with diamond grit for drilling through glass and stone. These are used with water for lubrication (I dip the bit into water or immerse the stone in a small amount of water as I drill). Perfect for either enlarging holes so they will accept leather cords or laces, or for adding holes to cabochons or glass for hanging. 3/32" shaft, about 2.5 mm hole size (about the same size as typical heishi bead.)

Also, **8mm diamond inverted cones** are perfect for undercutting, sanding and texturing. 3/32" shank. On the [Carving Burs page](#).



Magnesite turquoise stone fetish bear beads are drilled from top to bottom. On the [Inlay Supplies page](#).

New - Dark Mud Bead strands. Made from bone, the designs, shapes and colors vary but all are beautiful. On the [Bone Beads and Embellishments page](#).

* I just found out recently that the shopping cart button for the new engraved Chinese character bone beads. was not working. It has been fixed now! On the [Bone Beads and Embellishments page](#).



Thank you! Your purchases made from Arizona Gourds and from our Amazon links enable us to keep these free newsletters and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts site available. **We sincerely appreciate your business.**

Announcement - 2015 AGS Special Artistry Award

The American Gourd Society board has voted to take on responsibility for an annual Artistry award, and it is anticipated that the cash award will be a higher dollar figure for 2015. Entries for 2015 will be limited to those who enter an AGS judged show and receive a Best of Show, a People's Choice award, or are entered in a non-judged Grand Masters division which is typically open only to previous winners of those two awards. Because the award will now be sponsored by the AGS, the artists must be a member of the American Gourd Society to qualify for entry. **The winning entry will receive a substantial cash award.**

With festivals already having taken place this year, there are already several people eligible to send in their entries. This is not automatic; artists or show chairmen must submit photos of the qualifying entries for consideration. Photos of qualifying entries should be sent to the Artistry award committee chair: bonnie@arizonagourds.com.

Look for more details in the upcoming AGS Gourd Magazine!

Feature - Product Review - Freedom Portable Rotary Micromotor

Last year, Freedom came out with a new portable version of a micromotor tool. This tool runs from a long lasting lithium battery and allows for up to 5 hours of use in areas where power is not available or is inconvenient. This tool is small enough to fit into your pocket, and small enough to take with you wherever you go. Built by Freedom®, this micro-motor with a 1/8" collet handpiece is small but powerful. The handpiece is comfortable to hold for extended periods of time. Regular retail from Freedom for this unit is \$399.

Product Specs for the **K.103018** model (1/8" collet version)

- The built-in, rechargeable lithium-ion battery delivers between 3 and 5 hours of power depending on the work you're doing. After an initial 3-hour charge, the battery fully recharges in about 2 hours, getting you back to work fast. The charging unit offers dual-voltage capability and doubles as an AC adapter—so you can keep on working when you need to.
- A digital LED display in the top edge of the control unit for easy adjustment of the handpiece speed as you work; speed adjusts from 0 to 30,000rpm using the rotary dial on the face of the control.
- The collet-style handpiece features an efficient twist-release action that speeds the changing of tools; accommodates 1/8" shank burs. Can be used with collet adapters, that step down the collet sizes to either 3/32" or 1/16".
- Suitable for carving, shaping, smoothing, polishing, engraving and more on gourds, metal, stone, glass, and a variety of other materials.
- Brush-type motor is fan cooled, runs cool and vibration-free even in continuous use. It has permanently lubricated, shielded ball bearings that require no additional lubrication and includes a spare pair of motor brushes.

Kit includes:

- Control/power unit with rechargeable battery
- Collet-type handpiece with 1/8" collet; max. speed is 30,000rpm
- Charging unit/AC adapter, dual voltage capability
- Handpiece cradle
- Set of replacement motor brushes
- Collet wrench set

Two Year Limited Warranty, made in the USA.

Review:

I hesitated to purchase this tool, because it is more expensive than some other micromotor tools such as the [Micro-Pro](#) that I also use. I also was concerned that the tool would not have enough power or running time to be useful, but in the end I decided to give it a try as the portability feature is very handy for class

situations.

One thing that led me to feel comfortable with the initial purchase is the reputation of the Freedom company. They are a long standing industry leader with a reputation for quality, long lasting tools. This tool certainly passes the eye test, it is beautifully designed and comfortable in use. The entire unit and handpiece is small enough to fit on the palm of your hand. I also purchased an optional carrying pouch that straps around your waist and has a compartment for the power unit and a handpiece holster.

The tool required a few hours of charging before using it for the first time, but I was pleasantly surprised to find that the tool ran for a long, long time. I don't always carve for 5 hours solid, but I used it for a 1-2 hours several times before the power was expended. When it does stop, it quits suddenly, not by a gradual slowing down. It was easy to plug it back in for a recharge, or you can use the tool continuously while plugged in.

I used the tool on and off in a few classes, and found it easy to drop the tool into my apron pocket and travel around from student to student. (The optional carrying pouch is nice, but awkward if you are already wearing an apron.) Where I was most surprised was to find how handy it was for small jobs where I wanted to work away from my regular work station. I was drilling some glass and wanted to work in an area closer to a water source for cooling the diamond burs - and this tool really made that easy. I didn't have to worry about running an extra cord or having to move my regular carving tools from one place to another.

To save the battery, the power pack turns itself off when not in use for a minute or so. The power switch is on the side, and there is a rotating variable speed controller on the front that controls the speed from 0-30,000 RPM. I found it easiest to use the speed control to turn the tool off and on when changing burs. The handpiece has a rotating sleeve that locks and unlocks the collet. It is easy to change burs quickly, and collet adapters make changing bur sizes easy as well. ***Note: The collet adapters made for the Micro Pro also fit this handpiece, and they are less expensive than those sold by Freedom. (These adapters are sold on the [Micro Pro page](#) on this website)** There is an optional on/off foot pedal also available for the carver, but I did not purchase one since I normally carve without one, but some people might prefer a foot control.

If you are looking for portability, then this tool is for you. It does cost more than other micromotors, but if your budget allows for it, and you want the freedom of carving without a power source, then I would recommend this tool as a great option.





Shown above are the optional carrying pouch, foot pedal and a carrying case. ***Note: I purchased a [plastic ammo box carrying case](#) for mine for about \$10 - the Foredom case retails at \$50.** The standard price for the foot pedal is \$26, and the carrying pouch retails for \$19.



If you are interested in ordering a Foredom Portable Micromotor unit, please check out our [Foredom tools page](#), where this tool is offered at substantial discount over the regular suggested retail price. In addition, we offer any other item sold by Foredom tools, including some not shown on our page. Foredom tools are available from us at at least a 10% discount. Just email me for more details at bonnie@arizonagourds.com

This you tube video produced by the Foredom Tool company explains all the features of the tool. It is worth a view if this tool intrrests you.

Here is my tool packed into an inexpensive but very sturdy plastic ammo box [carrying case with handle](#).

Feature - Illustrator and Gourd Sculptor Cara Bevan

Cara Bevan is a young at heart artist from North Carolina, who also is young in years (relatively) and should have a long, wonderful career ahead of her in whatever medium she chooses. Cara is from North Carolina, and exhibited her talents from a young age, deciding in high school that art would be her career. She attended a few classes at the John C Campbell folk school in North Carolina where it solidified her dream of focusing on animals and nature as her subject of interest. She currently lives on her family's animal rescue farm, where she sees the beauty of nature and in every living creature. Her love of nature's inheret beauty shines through in every creation she makes, whether it is a painting or a gourd.

Cara is a published illustrator of a beautiful children's book, *"Improbable - Never Impossible"*. (See video below) She also sells her work on various art sites, and has her own website, "Art from the Heart" <http://www.carabevan.com/> and facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/cara.bevan>. In addition, Cara has some art blogs, and is a member of the [Gourd Art Enthusiasts website](#).

Right: Cara and her friend, Buddy.

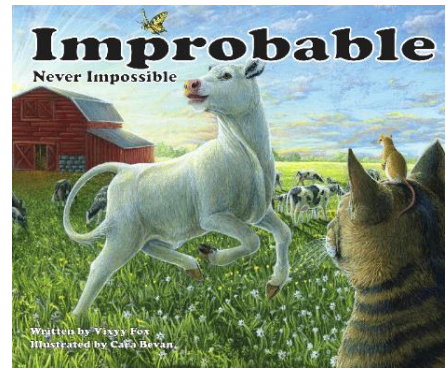
Left: An animated short from youtube showing illustrations from her book.

Lower Right: Cover of "Improbable -



Never Impossible"

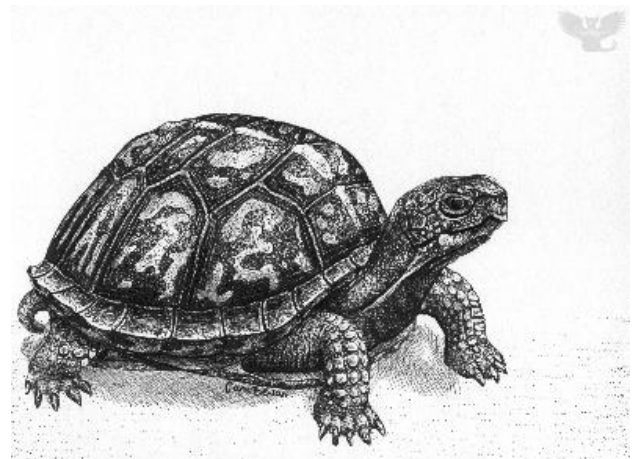
Cara's work shows the personality and spirit of the animals she portrays, including the rescue horse shown below.



Two Dimensional Art - Paintings and Drawings



Three Dimensional Art - Gourd Sculptures





Life sized baby elephant sculpture in progress - gourds were used as the armature for this amazing creation.



Below: Dragon in progress



Gourd Chickens



Below: A real cat checks out a gourd toad.



Check out this wonderful YouTube video Cara has done showing her techniques for building her gourd sculptures. The gourds are armatures, with added [Apoxie Sculpt](#) clay used to form the textures and characteristics of each animal.

Many thanks to Cara for allowing me to use her photos and information in the newsletter. I definitely consider her to be a superstar in the gourd world!

Wall-hanging gourd owl progress



Cara Bevan

"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.)

****NEW GROUP on Facebook - "Gourding Destash". This is the place to sell your used gourd tools and excess supplies.****

Follow us on 

Like You, Linda Gerson-Kurowski and 5,727 others like this.



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We have **over 4350 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 gourding question!

[Check out our two GAE T-Shirt designs !](#)

Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, I just wanted to thank you for my recent order, I received it so quick after ordering - and that is very much appreciated. Also, it was very nice to find the extra trinkets you put in at no charge. You are the Best!! Just wanted to let you know that I absolutely love gourding and you are an inspiration to me as I strive to be more creative.

Deb Deffenbaugh - FL

Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, I thought I'd share a picture of the perfect earrings I ordered from you for my maiden. **Kathe Stark - NM**

www.happyheartgourd.com

Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, I have been working on a 3 foot warrior for the niche by my front door. I finally finished him yesterday - 3 months, but who's counting? Pretty good for an amateur. ;) **Kathy Steuck**



Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, I have been using [Apoxie Sculpt](#) on my gourds for many years now and I love it. Here are some pictures of my Santa gourds that I have sculpted. I have more pictures on my blog: www.thecountryhollow.blogspot.com
Janae Matue - Utah

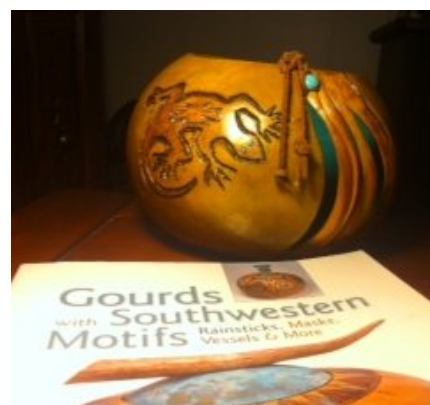


Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, I finally finished my class gourd and feel pretty good for this having been only my 2nd carving class ever. **Diane Frederick**

Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, Thank you for a great class. I thought you would enjoy seeing the finished product! **Carol Brassfield**



Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, I am finally finishing up some UFO's. (*Unfinished Objects.*) My carving is



improving but I still
have a way to go.
Diane Fleming - AZ

Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, Here is some of my latest work, I am calling it the "Stranger in Paradise" series. There are 14 pieces in the series. **Vicki Shell - TN**



Updated Tip of the Month: Dye Clean Up

In the [October 2014 newsletter](#), the tip of the month was about staying neat when working with dyes. Since then, I have heard from others about a few products that they use for dye cleanup. I think most of us have suffered through a dye spill or leakage through gloved hands, and knowing how to get the dye off enough to avoid going through strange looks and embarrassment is a good thing!

From Jim Widess of the Caning Shop:

Stain or dye on your fingers: Before you use water, squeeze a healthy amount of [blue Dawn](#) detergent on your fingers and work it into the dyed areas of your hands. Use a fingernail brush to scrub it into the stain.

After a couple of minutes, rinse. Water will set dyes and stains into your skin and then it's really difficult to remove. "[Reduran](#)" is a product made for removing dye, but I haven't found it works any better than blue Dawn. Reduran does have some abrasive powder mixed in which acts like the fingernail brush.

From another reader - [StazOn](#) is a stamp pad cleaner with a solvent. It does a pretty good job of removing excess ink dyes.



From my own personal experience: the [Craft Scrubbie](#) is a long lasting bar with just enough abrasive power to clean most stains from your hands (without removing your skin at the same time!)



Featured Gourd of the Month:

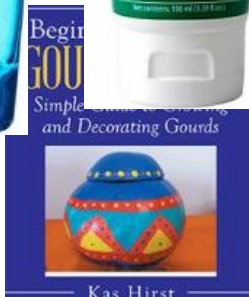
d Books:

Sitting Pretty: Lesser Goldfinch

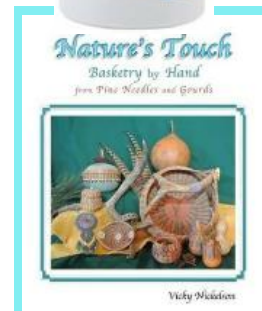
My interpretation of a flowering prickly pear cactus. 1 goldfinch is hand carved from juletung (wood). Bloor are carved from gourd tops. Added prickly pear fiber texture, acrylic paints.



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[Beginners Book of Gourd Craft](#)



[Nature's Touch: Basketry by Hand](#)



[Handmade for the Garden](#)



[5 Seasons](#)

The first two books are relatively new and I have not seen them myself, however, you can click on the titles and read a portion of them on the Amazon website. The first book looks very basic and may have limited interest to experienced gourders, but this link is to a kindle version and is not expensive (a paperback version is also available). The second book is in paperback format and looks a bit more promising. It has a lot more basketry content but does have some projects with gourds. You can also read a portion of this book online on the Amazon site.

The second two books are not gourd books, but gardening books, which seems appropriate this time of year when people are finally getting outside and enjoying their gardens. The Handmade in the Garden books has more gardening information than the second book, which appears to focus more on decorating.

Thanks for checking out the latest news! Feel free to pass the newsletter link along to your friends.
<http://www.arizonagourds.com/April/May2015.html>

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***The current issue is always available from our home page.**

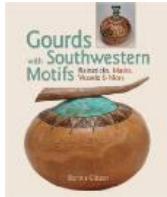
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Gourds with Southwestern Motifs by Bonnie Gibson

Out of Print - some copies still available through Amazon.

(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

**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.*

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Arizona Gourds HOME

Newsletter Index - article and tip index from all the past newsletters

[Newsletter Index](#)

I often get questions about shipping costs that are added to shopping cart sales. To clarify things, I've added a new page to the website,

[Shipping Policies.](#)

I am using a no-frills shopping cart program that has limitations and little flexibility. By not paying for expensive software, I can offer you lower prices on the website merchandise. **I'm not looking to make a profit on shipping; if you order lightweight items you will likely get a refund or some freebies to make up for it.** Please take a minute to look at the shipping policies page for clarification and explanation of how things work. If you ever have any questions, please feel free to email me directly. I value your business!

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