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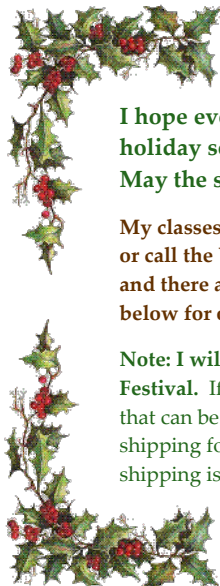


# Arizona Gourds

Updates from the desert southwest...

Printable PDF File

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



I hope everyone had a very happy Thanksgiving and I wish for you a wonderful holiday season, no matter what holiday you celebrate or in what country you live. May the season bring peace and good will to all - and of course, lots of gourds!

My classes at the Wuertz Festival are all full, but if you didn't get a slot, don't hesitate to email or call the Wuertz farm and ask to be placed on the wait list. Plans often change for people and there are usually places that open up before the festival. Check the class updates list below for other class opportunities in 2017.

Note: I will be teaching 4 days of classes this year, and will NOT have a booth at the Wuertz Festival. If you need something from the website and want to pick it up from me at the festival, that can be arranged. Out of state customers, please note that even though you will not pay shipping for purchases at the festival, you will be charged state and county sales tax - sometimes shipping is less.

### Class updates

Upcoming classes: 4 Days of classes at the **Wuertz Festival** in Feb. 2017.  
3 day retreat classes in **Temecula, California** April 28-30 overflow classes May 2-4 2017. **More info below.**  
Classes in the **Portland, Oregon** area May 20-21st, 2017 (Basic Power Carving and the Riverbed Gourd) Contact Joan Arens at [jjarens@centurytel.net](mailto:jjarens@centurytel.net) for information.  
Gourd Retreats in **Page, Arizona** in October 2017 - **See info at bottom of article below.**  
To receive details of new classes when they are available, please sign up for the classes email list below.

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

\*Please consider doing some of your online holiday shopping through our Amazon link. 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.



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

**New Picture Jasper Oval Cabochon/Bead sets** - Reasonably priced natural stone cabochons for inlay are difficult to find. This new oval bead set is a perfect alternative! They are drilled from side to side as beads, but each oval stone is flat on the back and has a domed top side, making them perfect for inlay. In each set you get 6 - 13x18mm cabs, one 20x30mm cab, and 8 small round beads. Also available in larger teardrop stones. On the [Inlay Supplies page](#).



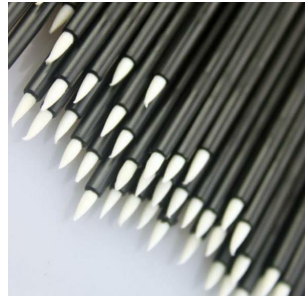
Micro Pro Carvers are in stock and ready to ship. **This is the carver I use myself.** It is a high quality tool (the control box is NOT made in China, like some other brands) with a 46,000 RPM high speed handpiece! *\*Have you lost the collet adapter needed for smaller burs? We sell top quality replacement collet adapters that fit any brand of micro carver.* On the [Micro-Pro Page](#)

New on the [Tools page](#) - Keyless Chuck Pin Vises with drill bit set, sets of 10 artist brushes and 25 piece packs of fine tip

**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**

applicators all at very competitive prices!

*sincerely appreciate your business.*



### Feature - Gourd Retreat in Page, Arizona

In October, I taught at a retreat in northern Arizona that was hosted by two lovely ladies, Marcia Krickhahn and Diana Blochberger. The event was held in Page, which sits on the Utah border right on Lake Powell. If you have never visited the area, you are really missing out on some spectacular scenery. Many of the photos below were shot directly from the back yard of the retreat location! This retreat was all inclusive for the students - it included gourds, instructions, food, lodging and more. Everyone had a fantastic time, and it will be repeated next October. In fact, we anticipate a huge demand since the students from this year all want to return - so we will offer two sessions if needed! Please contact me ASAP if you are interested, and I will send you full details. This will be a 3 day event, with a 2 day hummingbird gourd carving class and a second 1 day class to be determined. Contact me at [bonnie@arizonagourds.com](mailto:bonnie@arizonagourds.com).

On the drive up to Page from Flagstaff, I stopped at 2 National Monuments that I had never visited before, **Sunset Crater Volcano** and **Wupatki**. Sunset Crater is a huge area of lava flow that was both amazing and a bit forbidding in appearance with its jagged black lava formations. Wupatki was only about 20 miles further down the road, and it had wonderful preserved ancient pueblos and artifacts of the indigenous cultures. (If you have a National Parks Senior pass, admission is free!)



I also took some time and stopped at the historic **Cameron Trading Post**, where you can get a wonderful fry bread taco and see some beautiful art in their gallery, as well as just enjoying the historic building. Below are a few photos including a Hopi Katchina carving in progress, and a few shots from the gallery.





Here is a sunset view from the backyard of our retreat location! The host owns a home here, and she rented a VRBO property across the street for extra lodging and for the actual class location. The VRBO has a huge RV garage with tons of space and was perfect for classes! The weather was perfect, but we felt good knowing we had a secure location for classes no matter what the weather held.

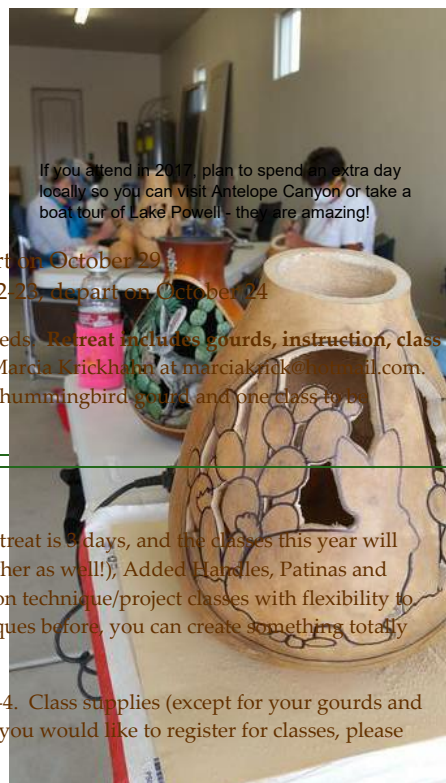




2017 Page Gourd Retreat - arrive on October 25, class October 26-27-28, depart on October 29.

\*If first class fills, additional session - arrive on October 26, class October 27-22-23, depart on October 24

The cost varies slightly depending on single (\$700) or double (\$600) occupancy (King beds). Retreat includes gourds, instruction, class materials, food and lodging. For more information or to register now, please contact Marcia Erickson at marciaerickson@hotmail.com. ALL registrations should be booked directly through Marcia. Classes include a carved hummingbird gourd and one class to be determined.



If you attend in 2017, plan to spend an extra day locally so you can visit Antelope Canyon or take a boat tour of Lake Powell - they are amazing!

### Temecula Gourd Retreat 2017

The Temecula gourd retreat will be our third year of classes in the same location. This retreat is 3 days, and the classes this year will include Leather Tooled carved/burned gourds (with a chance to try actual tooling on leather as well!), Added Handles, Patinas and Textures, and Inlaid OR Native Treasures - to be determined. These are combination technique/project classes with flexibility to add your own personal creativity into the designs, so even if you have tried these techniques before, you can create something totally different.

The dates are April 28-30, and if there is enough interest, a second retreat will run May 2-4. Class supplies (except for your gourds and bringing your own tools) are included in the cost. Classes are \$180 for the three days. If you would like to register for classes, please contact me at bonnie@arizonagourds.com.

Lodging is available on site right at the location - this is a lovely VRBO home and a second VRBO home right next door. (You may also make your own lodging arrangements elsewhere if desired.) Meals are on your own, but there is plenty of kitchen space and a lot of gourd friends to share food with. We also hold a pot luck the first night after class and usually have plenty of leftovers for the rest of the retreat. For more information on lodging, please call the property manager, Danuta, at 323-600-3951 or email her at: ranchodelvinedosinfo@gmail.com



A couple of photos from our 2016 Temecula retreat

"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.)

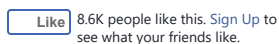
**\*NEW GROUP on Facebook - "Gourding Destash". This is the place to sell your used gourd tools and excess supplies. No fees to sell your surplus supplies and raw gourds.\***



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) has about 5125 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.

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

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 Articles and Tips are indexed.  
[Newsletter Index](#)



### Feature - Sanding Tools and Techniques

Sanding a carved gourd project is something a lot of people dislike, but it can mean the difference between a really beautiful result and one that looks unfinished. There are many options for sanding, more than what I will share here - but these are some of the things I like

to use. If you have others, I'd always enjoy hearing about them and passing the information along.

**Sandpaper** There are many kinds of sandpaper and they are not all the same. There are some designed for wet/dry finish sanding, some for coarse wood removal, and everything in between; no one type will do everything. The most important thing is to have several grits and to use them from coarsest to finest. Sandpaper is numbered; the higher the number, the finer the grit. I usually keep a range from about 120 to 400. There are sandpapers mounted on paper or cloth, on flexible plastic backing, and on mesh. I use stiff cloth backed sanding belts cut into strips when I need to sand with something firm because paper backed sandpaper gets too floppy with use. I use mesh sandpaper ([Abranet](#)) which has a fuzzy backing with my disc sanders, because the backing allows for quick grit changes and repeated uses of the same piece of sandpaper - pressure sensitive adhesives (PSA) do not hold up as well, and once you peel that kind of sandpaper off of the tool, the adhesive is shot.

**Hand Tools** There are many types of hand tools, but my favorite sanders for hand use are riffler files, diamond files and sanding sticks. [Riffler files](#) are curved tip files which are normally double ended. The curve allows you to work in tight or curved areas where a normal straight file won't reach. Riffler files have fine cutting teeth, and can be cleaned with a brass toothbrush. They are designed to cut in a pushing motion. Don't confuse these with RASPS, which have very coarse cutting teeth and are much too coarse for gourd work. [Diamond files](#) have a straight shaft with one cutting head and a handle. The cutting head is coated with diamond grip and can come in different grits. These are perfect for smoothing things like filigree holes where curved files will not work as well. [Sanding Sticks](#) are sandpaper belts mounted on a spring loaded holder. The belt may be rotated to get to a fresh area of sandpaper, and the holder has both rounded and sharply angled ends to sand different surfaces. These are great when your fingers start to get numb from holding sandpaper or you've sanded off the skin from your fingertips with too much hand sanding!

**Power sanders** When possible, I let power be my friend to make sanding easier. I use a **mini disc sander** (there are several brands) for large areas, like when I want to remove overall roughness from the gourd skin, or to sand down Inlace resins. I added velcro to the disc sander backing disc, and I use several grits of abranet to do the job. If you don't want to spend the money on a disc sander, there are some good alternatives. I also use [mini disc sanders](#) that have a 1/8" shank and fit into my carving tool. They are available in a small (about 3/4") and larger size (about 2"). There are also small disc sanders made for full sized drills and for air tools that run from an air compressor, but the bulky tool tends to be a bit impractical for most gourders. An important note - all disc sanders should be run at lower speeds than carving burs. The grit will burn instead of sanding from friction generated by speed, and if you are using PSA discs, the friction will cause the glue to melt and the disc to fly off of the tool. Other options are small [drum sanders](#), which are available in more than one size. For gourds, I find the 1/2" size to work the best. **Flap sanders** are good for sanding the inside of the gourd, but are of almost no use for sanding carved or detailed areas.

**Sanding Burs** I really like [diamond burs](#) for sanding. They come in a wide range of sizes, shapes, and grits. While you can't use these directly on gourd skin (the resins in the skin clog the diamond particles and they can't be cleaned properly), they are great for sanding, carving and texturing the inner lighter gourd pulp. Larger headed burs usually do a better job unless you are working in a very tight area. If you need more control, instead of using them in your carver, try using them in a [pin vise](#). The pin vise acts as a handle for the bur and lets you do some fine hand sanding with any diamond bur.



#### Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, This fall gourd was done with a mini jigsaw and leather dyes. **Eileen Marcotte - CA**

#### Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, As always, thanks for the leadership in the gourd world, from creating to selling, advocating and writing. Here are some Christmas gourd pics for the newsletter. **Kay Lovingood - GA**



#### Reader's Mailbox

Hi Bonnie, Holiday dinner - everything except for the platter is made from gourds! Barbara Ward - MI

#### Tip of the Month: [Patina Paint Tips](#)

Here are some tips to help you get good results from patina paints and oxidizers. Remember, part of the fun of using these paints comes from the unpredictability of the finished results. The finished results will vary greatly depending on your methods of application and by environmental conditions.

- 1) Be sure you stir the paint to mix it thoroughly. The paint contains real metal particles that must be dispersed in the solution for best results. Two coats are required. The more metal that is laid down, the more dramatic the end appearance can be after the oxidizing solution is applied. Stir, stir, stir, before you start!
- 2) Apply one coat of the metallic glaze paint and let that coat dry. It will lose its glossy appearance as it dries. If the paint is slow drying you may use a hairdryer to speed things up. Apply a second coat and WHILE IT IS WET, apply the oxidizing solution. You can apply it in many methods including dripping, brushing, sponging, spraying, or splattering. (It looks nice when you leave bits of the metallic paint uncoated or the whole surface will oxidize.) The amount of time it takes to see the final results will vary depending on temperature, humidity and thickness of metal application. Sometimes the best results won't show up until much later, so don't despair if you don't get the results you desire immediately. Misting the area with water or alcohol while the paint is damp will extend the oxidation time - this is effective when the solution dries too quickly in hot, dry climates. You can also wrap the entire piece in saran wrap to retain some moisture, and let it sit overnight. The majority of the oxidizing effect ceases when the surface is totally dry - but unsealed patinas will continue to change over time especially in high humidity. Didn't get enough color change? You can always recoat with additional paint and apply more oxidizer. CAUTION: If the oxidizer runs, it can stain carved areas or even painted areas. Use a tissue to blot off the excess from areas not coated with the metal paint.
- 3) Once it is dry, additional layers of paint may also be added over top if you accidentally applied too much solution and lost all of the metallic effect. I sometimes use a scrap of sponge to blot on some metallic highlights. Seal the dried surface before adding the extra paint, or the new paint may also oxidize.
- 4) Once you are satisfied with the results and the surface is completely dry, apply a finish. Use only a matte spray finish to maintain the natural, dusty look of oxidized paint. Glossy finishes will "muddy" the appearance and change the colors.



### Featured Gourds of the Month:

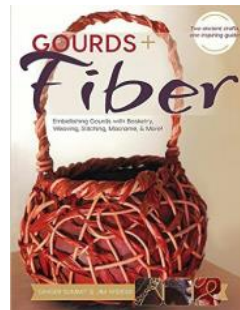
#### River Runners

Carved gourd, applied patina finish, added small stones and cabochons. (Fish are carved into gourd surface, and not added.)

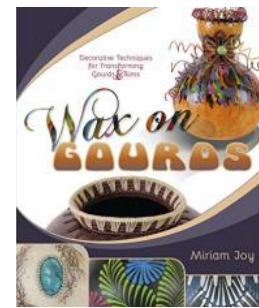


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### Featured Books:



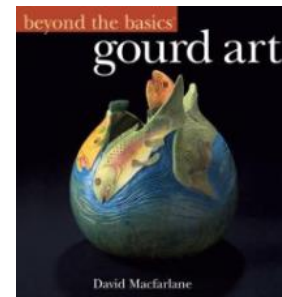
[Gourds and Fiber - Revised Edition](#)



[Wax On Gourds](#)



[America's Favorite Birds](#)



[Beyond the Basics](#)

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<http://www.arizonagourds.com/Dec16.html>

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

*Gourds on Fiber* is a newly revised edition of Jim Widess's original publication.

*Wax on Gourds* by Miriam Joy is available as a prerelease from Amazon. Amazon guarantees the lowest price when preordering. This book is due out the end of this month.

*America's Favorite Birds* is an adult coloring book with lovely designs that might be altered and incorporated into your gourd artwork - or buy it as a lovely Christmas gift for someone.

*Beyond the Basics* is an older book, but if you don't own a copy, it is well worth adding to your library. Used copies of the hardcover book are available on Amazon for less than \$5 including shipping! (I am featured in one chapter of this book.)

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

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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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