

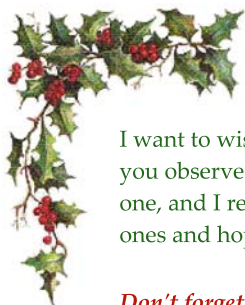
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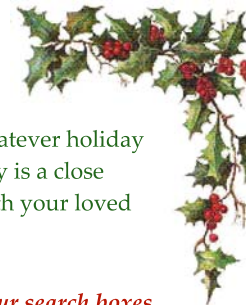
Arizona Gourds

(Somewhat unpredictable) news from the desert southwest...

Printable PDF File



Welcome to the November/December issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!



I want to wish you and your family a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas (or whatever holiday you observe) and many wishes for a happy holiday season. The gourdng community is a close one, and I regard many of you as family as well as friends. Enjoy your time spent with your loved ones and hopefully you can sneak in some time for gourds.

Don't forget, if you plan to order holiday gifts from Amazon.com, please use one of our search boxes or links. Your purchases through our links help to support our free newsletters and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts website. It doesn't cost you a thing, and you help us at the same time. Thank you!



For the holidays - we also offer gift certificates!

Want to give a gourd related gift?

Give an Amazon.com gift certificate,

OR

Give an Arizona Gourds Gift Certificate!

(Purchase and redeem on our website with Paypal.)

*You may also write me and purchase a physical gift certificate good for classes or merchandise.

[Amazon Gift Certificates](#)

[Buy Gift Certificate](#)



Update: Gourd Classes

I'm currently working on my 2015 calendar. 2015 workshops are scheduled in California, Colorado, Missouri, and in Sonoita, AZ as well as at the Wuertz Festival. Currently, all of those sessions are full. ***I have just added an additional class session in Temecula, CA for June 1-3.**

Classes for Tucson will happen in late Feb - March. If you have a request for a specific class to be taught in Tucson, please send me an email. Requests help me decide which classes to offer!

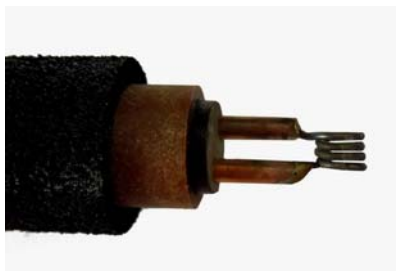
For class descriptions, please check the "[Classes](#)" page on the Arizona Gourds website.

*Enter your email address and hit submit to join the class updates notification list. Get the news first and have the best chance for popular classes!



***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!**

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

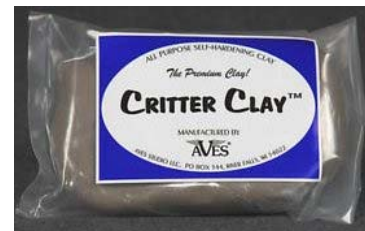


New Basketweave Woodburning pens - These burn 4 lines at once. Rotate 90 degrees and burn a basketweave pattern! On the [Woodburners page](#)



New diamond cutting wheel sets includes a mandrel and 5 diamond cutting discs for cutting cabochons and stones. (Look at the tips section of the [October 2012 newsletter](#) for directions on cutting stones) On the [Carving Burs page](#).

...s load faster, ...page to our site: "[Earrings and More](#)". Check it out!



New - PC Lumber Epoxy Putty and Critter Clay have been added to the website. Look for them on the [Apoxie Sculpt page](#). Read about how to use them in the [September 2014 newsletter](#).

Notice: Saburr Tooth has announced a price increase on their burs for 2015. Most of the burs will go up by about \$1.50 - so you may want to purchase needed items soon to get the old pricing. On the [Carving Burs page](#).



The bottom "Geometric Star" concho is available in both copper and antique silver. The top Western style concho will stay in stock; the bottom design is limited to stock on hand and will be discontinued when the current supply is exhausted.



New - Finishing sanders with a long extension, and awesome gourd scrapers on the [Tools Page](#).

Were you a winner of a top prize at 2014 AGS gourd competition? Please read below.

To reward excellence in artistry, and to promote interest in entering artwork in gourd competitions, Arizona Gourds will offer a special 2014 "Gourd Artistry" award including a cash prize. This is our way of giving back to the gourding community.

This year, any gourd art that wins "Best of Show", "People's Choice" or "Best of Division" awards, OR is entered into a "Grand Master" category at any 2014 AGS gourd show, will be eligible to compete for a \$100 cash award OR a \$150 merchandise credit from Arizona Gourds. In addition, a \$50 donation will be made to the state society that hosted the show where the winner qualified. (If the winning entry won awards at more than one show, the donation will be divided among these state societies.) Other prizes may also be awarded depending on the number of entries received.

How to enter: If your gourd meets one of these criteria, submit up to three photos of your prize winning gourd, and at the end of 2014, the winner will be announced. Because the judges will be basing their decisions on photos and will not be able to see the finished piece, it is very important that clear, high quality photos are submitted! It will be your responsibility to submit photos of your art, but competition chairpersons are strongly encouraged to submit the photo entries for all of the qualifying winners at their shows. Please include information about your photo including at which show the prize was awarded, your full name and contact information, and any special information about the piece you would like to include.

After a show is completed, please send photos and information about each winning piece to: ArizonaGourds@gmail.com or bonnie@ArizonaGourds.com. Please put "Gourd Artistry Award Submission" in the subject line. Entries may also be mailed to Arizona Gourds, 5930 N Camino Arizpe Tucson, AZ 85718-4612

*** Entries to date: 11 - FINAL CALL FOR ENTRIES!!**
Hey Folks, there are a lot more eligible entries out there.... send in your photos!
Show Chairmen: You can also submit your winners.

Feature - Shipping your Gourd Art (and having it arrive in one piece!)

There are many methods of shipping finished gourds, and no matter which carrier you use (Fed Ex, USPS or UPS), the risk of having a gourd survive the trip depends on the care that you put into packaging. You may remember an old commercial where a gorilla threw and stomped on luggage to see if he could destroy the bag and the contents; you have to assume that your package may be manhandled just as roughly, especially during the holiday season when the volume of shipped packages goes up exponentially. While your local carrier might treat your package as a fragile treasure, another employee may throw packages as fast as possible without any consideration for the contents. Let's just assume that all of your packages will be abused and plan accordingly!

Choosing a carrier: Everyone has a personal preference, but shop around as prices vary greatly from one carrier to another. You can save a lot by shipping your packages online and dropping them off at a collection station or having a carrier pick them up from your home. If you live in a rural area, you may not have as much flexibility. If you ship with FedEx or UPS, up to \$100 of insurance is included automatically, while USPS allows \$25 insurance for Priority Mail packages. UPS and Fed Ex add on an additional residential surcharge. One thing to consider: **NONE OF THE CARRIERS WILL INSURE ART.** They are happy to sell you the insurance, but getting them to reimburse you for loss is almost impossible. You will have to call your item something other than art. They may pay for a "Gourd Vase" or something similar, (no guarantees though) but if you call it "Art" they will not pay for damage. Read the fine print on their websites - I feel a better choice is to buy the signature confirmation option. Carriers take care of packages when they have to get a signature for it!

The safest way to ship your package is in a rigid, strong container, preferably double boxed with plenty of packing material between the inner and outer boxes and between the gourd and the inner box. This is not the time to use a flimsy box - look for something strong and rigid.

Double Box packaging

- 1) I start by filling the gourd with styrofoam peanuts or air cushion bubbles. The gourd is hollow, so you want it to have some interior support should the package be compressed to the point of putting pressure on the gourd.
- 2) Wrap the gourd with some protective plastic wrap or in a clean plastic bag to protect the surface from damage.
- 3) Wrap the gourd with large bubble wrap, making sure (if it has been used) that the bubbles have not already been popped. Tape securely with packing tape, then mark the bubble wrap with an arrow so you know which side of the gourd is up - with all that wrapping it may be hard to tell if it isn't marked.
- 4) Find a box that allows for an inch or two all around the gourd. Pour in some styrofoam peanuts on the bottom, add the wrapped gourd, and then fill in all 4 sides of the bubble wrapped gourd with additional peanuts. The trick is to provide cushioning with a bit of "give". You don't want the gourd to be able to shift around within the box, but it needs to have some cushioning, so cramming in a ton of extra material is not a good idea.
- 5) Place this box inside of a second, larger box. Fill between the two boxes with peanuts. Most shippers recommend 2-4" all around to be safe.

Single Box packaging

Follow steps 1-3 as described above. If you choose not to double box, you need to be generous in the amount of cushioning and distance between the gourd and the box wall. Plan for at least 4" of cushioning. It is a really good idea to fold some cardboard strips into long narrow "tents" and place these between the wrapped gourd and the box wall so that the gourd will not migrate within the peanuts and the box. Place the cardboard tents in position before filling the box with peanuts (best) or air cushioned bags. Styrofoam sheets are also good for positioning your gourd in lieu of cardboard, and it weighs less. Save pieces that can be cut into strips and wedged into the box to hold the gourd in place. The post office has a saying, "If you can shake it, we can break it." Your gourd should not shift around in the box!

Avoid using newspaper or shredded paper as packing material if possible. Newspaper is heavy and the shipping cost will go up. It's also messy and dirty. Surprisingly, it is probably not a good idea to label the box as "Fragile", as it becomes a red flag to some inconsiderate employees who may take perverse pleasure in treating your package poorly. Better to package it correctly so the fragile designation is unnecessary.



Steps 1, 2 and 3. Fill gourd with peanuts. Wrap in plastic, then wrap in bubble wrap and tape securely.



As an option, put a layer of peanuts in the bottom of the box, and then create cardboard "tents" which can hold the gourd firmly in the center. Then fill around the tents and up to the top with more peanuts. This gourd will not shift during travel.

Do you live in an area that has a collection of recyclables? Many people throw away bubble wrap, foam peanuts, boxes and other materials that are perfect for packing. I'm a big fan of recycling so I have friends that will save this material for me instead of throwing it away. You can purchase strong cardboard boxes from office supply stores and shipping stores, or check with a local retailer for a suitable box. Locally, you may be able to find moving and packing boxes available for free or low cost on places like Craigs list.

Shipping small gourds? **Linda Ashmore of Arkansas** suggests using sturdy plastic containers with snap on lids like the ice cream container shown to the right. (It also gives you a great excuse to buy more ice cream!) Wrap your gourd in bubble wrap and fill voids with peanuts. Put inside of another box for extra protection or wrap in brown paper and mail as is. Note: Shippers like UPS and Fed Ex do NOT accept items wrapped in paper or tied with string. Instead, just use a marker to cross off package markings and tape the label directly to the container. Make sure the lid is taped down securely.

Be aware of shipping regulations in regards to package size. Once you cross a certain threshold, your package becomes an oversized or large package and is priced at a MUCH higher rate. The box is either slapped with a hefty surcharge, or it is treated like a box that weighs many pounds more. Check each shippers website for specifics. Some times you can save a ton of money just by cutting down the depth of the box slightly.

Check out the YouTube video below for more shipping tips. This shows the wrapping and packing of an antique ceramic vase.



**On the topic of shipping - if you've ever been scared off by the automated shipping charges added to your order on the Arizona Gourds website, please check out our [Shipping Policies page](#). Most people end up with at least a partial shipping refund or some extra free merchandise when their package is lightweight or travels a short distance. Instead of paying for fancy shipping software, we use a free, bare bones program and pass those savings along to you by offering lower pricing on many items.*

**Paraphrased from a recent customer:
Aloha Bonnie- Instead of placing an order by email as I had done in the past, I decided to pay the shipping charge on my small order placed through the shopping cart. For Hawaii, sometimes the shipping is actually more than the item! Thanks so much for the refund!
Neola Caveny - Hawaii*

The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) is your best source for everything related to gourd art. We have well over 4000 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 gourd question! [Check out our two great GAE T-Shirt designs!](#)



[Share our Newsletter on your Facebook page!](#)



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

Yes, this is a GOURD
 Yes, they are for sale
 Your Mom grows them? Nice.
 Yes, there are seeds in them.
 No, I don't make birdhouses.
 Yes, you could copy my gourd -
 but I'd rather you'd buy mine.



Have a nice day!

Reader's Mailbag
 Hi Bonnie, I found this gourd in an abandoned community garden and was given permission to rescue it (the neighborhood kids had smashed the others) It took two of us to lift it, weighs over 90 pounds, 24" tall and huge. Caryn in Louisville KY

About a month ago I answered all the questions you hear at home from a 3 day show in Kenilworth NJ. I had my shirt next to the entrance and many people stop and read it and laugh. It provoked many more comments and even got some people inside the booth who maybe wouldn't have stopped. I pointed them to your web site to get their own!! Thank you for putting out that shirt and also for all your tips, advice and project packets. (Did very well at the show)

From one happy gourder to another..... **Jennifer Broberg - WA**

**Click on the shirt photo above if you want to order your own. They are available in different sizes and colors.*

Reader's Mailbag

**Have you "Liked" Arizona Gourds on Facebook in the past but now you are not seeing our daily art updates? FB has throttled all business posts severely. To continue seeing posts, you must visit our page and put your cursor over "Liked" and look for the pop up box, select "Get Notifications" (see the red arrow) and click "Manage Settings" to see my posts in the future.*

I found this gourd in an abandoned community garden and was given permission to rescue it (the neighborhood kids had smashed the others) It took two of us to lift it, weighs over 90 pounds, 24" tall and huge. Caryn in Louisville KY

**Nice to see a gourd orphan get rescued!*



Reader's Mailbag

I'm so glad I finally had an opportunity to attend your War Shirt class. I ended up re-doing the leather on my gourd so I have not completed it yet. Then I got sidetracked because I thought it would be fun to do a mini-shirt using a cut gourd shard. I turned out to be a fun little project that I think the tourists will like.

Anyway, so glad I finally got to attend. Not every artist is a good instructor and you are clearly successful in both areas. Thanks again, **Sunny Carpenter- AZ**

** What a great idea for taking two techniques learned in class and turning them into a new project! I love when people think creatively!*



Reader's Mailbag

Hi Bonnie, I wanted to share my experience with a ink dye bottle that was clogged up. Of course, I squeezed WAY too hard.... Not only me, but also on the Murphy bed, walls, ceiling, carpet, lamp shades, TV, etc. **An Anonymous Gourder**

** Our anonymous gourder was very gracious to allow me to share this photo so that this accident will not happen to you. If you recognize her, keep it to yourself. She says she has endured enough already. ;)*



Reader's Mailbag

Hi Bonnie, Really enjoyed your Spiral Class, always learn new techniques. Here is a photo of the finished gourd. Happy Holidays! Thanks, **Natalie Ashburn - Arizona**

Tip of the Month: What goes in a "Basic Tool Box"?

What goes in YOUR basic tool box? What you bring may vary depending on the type of gourd art you create. Here is a listing of some of the basic items you might pack into a tool box that you would take to classes.

For all classes:

Safety equipment: Dust mask or respirator, apron, eye protection (prescription, reading or safety glasses)

Xacto knife and extra new sharp blades. (Protect them in a long cylindrical toothbrush holder or other container)

Masking tape, graphite paper, pencil, Sharpie marker, a travel sized box of baby wipes

Small hand tools such as a pin vise and small drills, riffler files, sanding stick, emery board or sandpaper, small pliers and screwdriver

Cleaning tools / scraper / copper scrub pad. If needed, a drill with accessories such as hole saw, carbide cleaner.

For Carving classes: Rotary tool/Micromotor tool, bur box and carving burs, ear plugs

For Woodburning classes: Woodburner and burning pens, adapter plugs, cleaner or strop for pen tips, small fan or smoke absorber

For Weaving classes: Pin vise and drills or awl, blunt needles and small magnet to hold them, waxed linen or sinew, thimble, scissors.

For Painting classes: Small water container, brushes, latex gloves, disposable paint palette, basic colors.

Do you have any helpful tips? We'd love to share them with our readers, and we'll be sure to give you proper credit. Please send them to: bonnie@arizonagourds.com.

Featured Gourd of the Month:

"Sympatico"

Cannonball gourd, carved, dye and acrylic paint. Lid made from gourd with added handcarved basswood hummingbird and manzanita branch.



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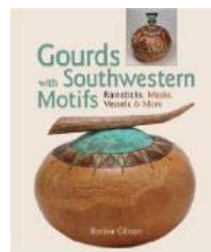
Thanks for checking out the latest news! Feel free to pass the newsletter link along to your friends.

<http://www.arizonagourds.com/NovDec14.html>

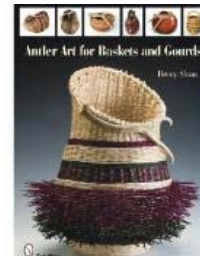
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If you are receiving duplicate mailings, or want to unsubscribe from the newsletter list, please send me an [email](mailto:bonnie@arizonagourds.com).

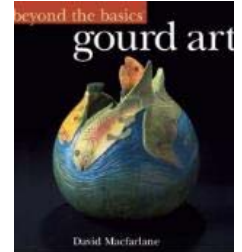
Featured Books of the Month:



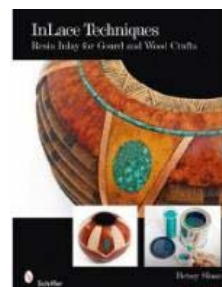
[Gourds with Southwestern Motifs](#)



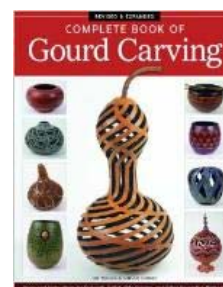
[Antler Art for Baskets and Gourds](#)



[Beyond the Basics: Gourd Art](#)



[Inlace Techniques](#)



[Complete Book of Gourd Carving - Revised](#)



[Creative Rims for Gourd Art](#)

While I have only authored one book, I have contributed articles and art photos to several others. I'm very honored to have been included in all of the books above as well as some others.

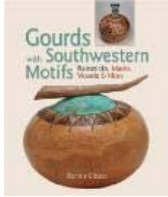
Please note - some publishers have a very disturbing practice of changing the book title and/or the cover art when they switch from the paperback to the hardback edition. My "Gourds with Southwestern Motifs" was originally published in a hardcover version as "Gourds: Southwestern Designs from Simple to Sophisticated". (It's also interesting that the titles were chosen by the publisher and were not what I would have picked!) Similarly, the "Beyond the Basics: Gourds" book was originally published with totally different cover art. So, check your personal library to see if you already own the book with a different cover and/or title.

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

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



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



Gourds with Southwestern Motifs by Bonnie Gibson

The hardcover edition is now out of print. This is the paperback version of my "Gourds" book.

(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

All copies I sell are autographed.

**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
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