

Arizona Gourds

July updates from the desert southwest...

Thanks to all of you for signing up for my email updates. I hope to expand on this newsletter format and eventually provide you with some extra tips and hints for gourd crafting. Right now I'm just getting started, so any feedback or ideas for what information you'd like to see would be appreciated.

I thought I'd start out by mentioning a few small **updates**. No, there's no news on the exact release date for my upcoming book. I have had to relearn the meaning of the word "patience" throughout the book writing process. My completed book was sent to the editors at Sterling publishing on April 1st, 2005. Guess the April fool's joke was on me, I didn't realize that the book would sit on an editor's desk for 6 months before they even looked at it! However, the ball is rolling now and the book is in Hong Kong for printing. I have seen the black and white draft and I hope you will enjoy reading the finished copy as much as I enjoyed creating it. Latest word on release is still late 2006. I will set up a preorder page this summer, and all preorders will be sent personalized and autographed as soon as they are in stock.



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

If you haven't already seen them, I have 8 new [project packets](#) available on the website. These were projects that were cut from the book when it ran long - so this is one way to get a sneak peek at some of the types of projects that will be available.

The featured item this month is **Turquoise**.

Check the [inlay supplies](#) page for a great new selection of turquoise cabochons. The new large freeforms are terrific. Mention this offer in an email when ordering turquoise of any kind and I'll throw in a piece of dichroic glass at no charge.

A great new selection of [feathered cabochons](#) and [beaded cabochons](#) have arrived!

Welburn's Festival Report

I had a great time at the festival and got to see many of my gourd buddies. I also enjoyed meeting lots of new people and visiting with many new friends. My favorite time was class time. I taught a special class in Ramona for the Fallbrook Gourd Patch, and then 3 more classes at the festival. You've never seen such a group of hot, tired, and happy gourd carvers! Below are a few shots from the festival and classes.



Here I am in front of my booth - that sweet guy standing next to me is my wonderful husband, Everett. He says he is my "business manager".

Mark and Karen Klay make incredible large sculptures from gourds. They are also from Tucson - in fact, there were 4 different Tucson artists represented in the festival.



A view of my booth while I was getting set up. This is before the crowd arrived on Saturday!



Dave Sisk is another great gourd artist from Tucson. He makes wonderful "masques".



Festival attendees enjoying the art.



Another great artist from Tucson. My best carving buddy, Phyllis Sickles. Phyllis was one of the Featured Artists at the festival. Here she is giving a brief talk on her work. She makes incredible pieces - look for more of her work at www.gourdvisions.com

Class time at the festival. They have a wonderful grove of trees that provides shade for many classes. You can see some of the other classes going on in the background. A fun time was had by all!



Tip of the Month:

Are your carving burs not cutting as well as when you first bought them?

Carving burs can be clogged with built up layers of resin, dust and grime, greatly reducing their cutting power. To keep steel cutters clean, get a small baby food or similar size jar. Fill the jar with some solvent. A strong solvent such as acetone works quicker than milder solvents such as rubbing alcohol. Leave the burs in the solvent overnight - the next day, scrub them with a brass or regular toothbrush to remove any remaining residue.

Structured tooth carbide burs are extra tough. This type of bur can be cleaned by flaming the head of the bur with a propane torch (leave the bur chucked into the tool so you don't work with the flame close to your hand!) Brush the remaining ash off of the bur with a brass toothbrush. Don't try this with any other type of bur! This method is only for carbide burs, as steel burs will lose their temper when they are exposed to great heat!

If all else fails, replace an old worn out bur. Dull burs are frustrating to use and ineffective.

*See bur types on the [Tools](#) page.



Featured Gourd of the Month:
Hummingbirds and Trumpet Vines

Carved completely from the gourd shell in high relief.
Nothing added - but lots was carved away!

Featured Book of the Month:



[How to Make Hawaiian Musical Instruments](#)

This is one of Jim Widess's lesser known books. I saw it for the first time while on a trip to Hawaii and really enjoyed it! The book has complete instructions on making all kinds of musical instruments including drums, shakers, (some of these have fancy feathered tops and are really beautiful), wind instruments and more from the Hawaiian culture including many that are made from gourds. This book is as well done as all of his other gourd books and a nice addition if you have any interest in musical instruments.

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