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# Arizona Gourds

November updates from the desert southwest...



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

I'm finally done with my travels for the year and I'm looking forward to perhaps having a bit of time to work on a few of my own gourd projects this month! I will be heading down to Tubac, Arizona for a showing at the Red Door Gallery in December - if you get a copy of the Southwest Art Magazine, look for a gallery advertisement with photos of my gourds.

*And speaking of December... 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 these free newsletters and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts website. It doesn't cost you a thing, just use our links and order as usual. Thanks for helping!*

It may be a bit late for Halloween, but I thought I'd share this pumpkin that I made from one of those foam pumpkins you see at the craft stores this time of year. I saw a vendor in Michigan last year that did fantastic cutouts on these pumpkins, and his booth was crowded all day long. I borrowed his idea by searching out some simple Halloween silhouettes, and then drawing my own design based on them. The pumpkin is easy to cut using a small Microlux saw. (Other saws work ok as well, the the small size and manueverability of the Microlux saw made this easier to cut.) When the "carving" was complete, I bought an electric nightlight/candle from the Xmas section of the craft store, and added it. I cut a small opening in the bottom of the pumpkin and slid in the light fixture. You could also use a battery operated tealight. It looks great on a dark evening!



Even if it is too late for Halloween this year, you may want to pick up a few pumpkins from the craft store when they put them on clearance. These make great gifts for friends and family! Or, cut a Thanksgiving turkey, cornocopia or fall leaves and use your pumpkin as a Fall or Thanksgiving decoration.

### Update: Gourd Classes

*Want to plan ahead?* I will be teaching at the Wuertz Festival next February. This year, classes will not be posted until Dec. 1st. Sign up for the **class updates list (left)** to receive a reminder notice for Wuertz class signups. I plan to teach Power Carving and Filigree classes there this year.

Next **April 13th -16th**, I will be teaching at the annual art retreat at the [After Midnight Art Ranch](#) in Sonoita, Arizona. Classes will be announced soon - watch the After Midnight site or sign up for the **class updates list**.

I'll also be teaching at the conference "**Baskets and Gourds - Containers of Our Culture IV**" to be held **April 21 & 22** (Opening Reception April 20), 2012. Sponsored by Tulare-Sequoia Gourd Patch and the California Gourd Society, this promises to be another outstanding conference. For more info or to register, visit the [events page](#) on the California Gourd Society page. **Location: Mill Creek Conference Center, Visalia, California** *Visalia is a unique city with a beautiful downtown, many parks, rivers, and lakes, fantastic restaurants, nearby casinos, an adventure park, a historic walking trail, and a free downtown trolley. As the gateway to the Sequoias there is easy access to white-water rafting, camping, and hiking among the giant redwoods. Tours of Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks can also be arranged.*

### What's new on the Arizona Gourds website?

#### Dried Gourds

10+ Dried Gourds at Great Prices. Shop, Compare and Save at Pronto.  
[Gourd.Pronto.com](#)

#### Dried Gourds

Bid on Dried Gourds now! Find great deals & huge selection.  
[www.eBav.com](#)

#### Gourd Art

Everything to do with Gourd items.  
[Yahoo.com](#)

#### Gourd Art

Search multiple engines at once for gourd art  
[webcrawler.com/gour...](#)

\*Join the class updates list to receive advance notice of upcoming classes. Get the news first and have the best chance for popular classes!



[Join The Class updates List](#)



Reminder - You can use this Amazon search box link to find all kinds of merchandise on Amazon.com.

**\*ALL Amazon purchases made through the site links and search box help to support Arizona Gourds and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts websites, and it costs you nothing extra!**



Looking for an inexpensive and attractive holiday gift? Choose a piece of dichroic glass, add a silver or gold bail (glue on with E6000 glue) and you'll have a great gift for under \$10! On the [Glass Supplies page](#).

**NEW!** Brass Butterflies in 3 different sizes. Use these as accents on your



Examples of carved mate cups



**NEW! Brass Batches** in 5 different sizes. Use these as accents on your gourds - because they are brass, they may be treated with [patina oxidizer](#) or painted. These are on the [Metals page](#).

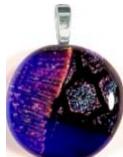
**NEW! Genuine Mate gourds** from Argentina. The gourds have a metal rim and include a metal bombilla (straw) for drinking yerba tea. The gourds are natural color so you can add your own artwork. Do a little carving! Read more about yerba mate gourds and order your own gourd cup set on the [Yerba Mate page](#).

**Specials: Bone Spears** on sale on the [Bone Beads and Embellishments page](#)

1/4" wide masking tape in stock on the [Kits, Displays and Supplies page](#).

New - **Carbide Mushroom Cleaners** and Birdhouse cleaners now have a longer 10" shaft! Donut cleaners also in stock on the [Tools Page](#)

\*A price increase is coming on the [woodburners and burning pens](#). Please order this month to buy at the current price.



### Feature - Distressed Gourds and Molded Gourds

Have you ever wondered what to do with that poor, shriveled, collapsed gourd? Did you drop a gourd while cleaning it, only to see large cracks form? You've probably admired the shape of a gourd, only to see that the gourd was riddled with bug bites or holes. While some people view these gourds as disasters and want nothing to do with them, others see them as having "potential". Several artists have shared their uses for those less than perfect gourds. Perhaps after seeing some of these ideas, you might be inspired to root through your gourd pile and rescue a gourd or two. You might even convince your local gourd grower to pass some less than perfect gourds along instead of turning them into campfire fuel.



Above and right: **Sue Bidwell-Williams of Arizona** makes these wonderful diorama creations. What a fantastic way to use a broken gourd!



Left: **Vickie Siefert of California** writes that this was one of her first gourds and the bottom of the gourd was totally rotted (which she didn't realize until cleaning it.) The beautiful rainbow of color around the rot also wasn't noticeable until after cleaning. So, she cut the rot out, saving the rainbow, and inverted the gourd. There is no color added to this gourd, it's totally natural.



**Right: Elaine Linton of California** was making a mask, her first. She dropped the finished project on a ceramic tile floor and it cracked completely through in several places. The only part of the broken gourd where you could hardly see the crack was the turtle design. So she cut the turtle out and left it around the house where she could see it until some sort of idea came to her. She coiled around it with dried pine needles. The needles were old and brittle, but still beautiful. She didn't want to throw either away, hence, a swan from two ugly ducklings!



**Kathy Stark of California**

The gourd on the right is an early piece. It had more than 10 significant and deep bug bites, so she added some more and then put wood stain in each to darken them and make them all appear to be naturally inflicted.

The gourd on the left is a very large gourd that wasn't thick enough to sand the bottom and it wouldn't stand up; it was crooked - leaning to one side and had a large 6" deep crack starting about 4" down from the top. She cut out the crack, used tops from snake gourds to fashion 3 legs, and intentionally maintained some of the crooked, off-center shape.



**Bonnie Adams of Illinois**

The original gourd was damaged and holes were filled with putty. Ink dye and stained glass paints were put on in three layers to create an embossed look and feel to this "rustic gourd".



**Este Wiggil of Windhoek, Namibia**

Sent a picture of a gourd fixed the African way. Este has a gardener who helps her clean gourds, and by accident the gourd slipped and was cracked. He felt so bad, he took it home for his wife to fix. They use soaked palm leaf to heal the wounds. It looks like they first stitch along the sides, then lay the strips over the crack lengthwise and then stitch over. It is the same material that is used to weave their baskets.

**Phyllis Sickles of Tucson** uses distressed gourds for sculptures, and uses parts of distressed or collapsed gourds to add interest to her gourd sculptures. The woodcock sculpture was created from a gourd that grew through a fence and some extra parts for the head. The wings were carved, beaks were added. The fish hook barrel cactus sculpture sits on a base made from a large piece from the top of an

wings were carved, beaks were added. The fish hook barrel cactus sculpture sits on a base made from a large piece from the top of an ocean drum, with added small collapsed gourds to give it texture. The jellyfish sculpture sits on a similarly created base made from a shriveled gourd. The remainder of the sculptures are all made from gourd pieces and parts. You can see more of Phyllis's work on her [website](#).



**Pat Boyd of California** is another master of manipulation. Pat creates wonderful sculptures of African people, and a distressed gourd is just another challenge and creative stimulus. Below are a few figures that were created from those less than perfect gourds. In the first piece, the baby is added where the gourd had collapsed and sunk in. (You can see more of Pat's gourds on her [website](#), but please be aware that Pat is currently on a hiatus from gourd crafting.)



Last month, we showed a few photos of molded gourds from one of our GAE members who is from China. Here is some more info on molded gourds and fruits - they are not "distressed", but they certainly look quite different from a regular gourd!



My husband forwarded me a copy of this photo that he found of molded fruit - this method is the same way that some gourd growers in China mold gourds into a variety of interesting shapes. Basically, a mold is placed over a small, growing gourd, and as the fruit swells, it fills the mold



and conforms to that shape. The YouTube video shows a farmer that grows Buddah shaped pears.

Here's a [link](#) to a page showing how to grow a gourd inside of a mold. It features our good friend, Jim Wiless of the Caning shop.

And speaking of molded gourds - check out this [molded gourd bowl](#) that recently sold at a Christies Auction for over \$200,000!

Plant Artist, Dan Ladd, creates art with a variety of plants including vines, trees and gourds. His [website](#) has a lot of exotic manipulated gourd and plant photos.



**Reader's Mailbag:**

Right: Gourds made by Colleen Heinemann of Colorado. Colleen made these after taking some of my carving classes.



Left: **Sandy Phillips of New Mexico** did a wonderful job on this "Fall Tree" gourd. She used an armature to build the branches, then covered them with [apoxie sculpt](#) for strength. The finished tree is very firm and solid. She used bronze apoxie sculpt to make and attach the leaves so they would be solid as well. You can see more of Sandy's gourds on her [website](#) or on her [GAE page](#).



**Did you know..... that people that "Like" Arizona Gourds on Facebook get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourding updates?** Please consider joining us on Facebook for the latest news and specials. I always post newsletter notices, new items, sales, and other gourd related info onto the Arizona Gourds page routinely. (Just a note - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourding friends.)

**Coming Soon.... HELP! Got a Suggestion?**  
**What do you want to read about in upcoming newsletters?** It's hard to come up with new ideas each month, so if you have a suggestion for future articles, please send it to: [bonnie@arizonagourds.com](mailto:bonnie@arizonagourds.com).

Like Bonnie Gibson, Nathan Walton and 1,590 others like this. Admin Page · Insights Follow us on



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](http://www.arizonagourds.com) continues to grow! We have **about 2150 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 a quick answer to a gourd question! [Check out our two great new GAE T-Shirt designs!](#)

### Texas Gourd Festival Report

I just returned from the recent Texas Gourd Festival in Fredericksburg, TX. The weather was just perfect, the volunteers were helpful, the students were fantastic, and a great time was had by all! I was very honored and pleased to have won some major ribbons at the competition with my "Bugling Elk" piece, that was being delivered to a Texas member who had purchased it for their collection. It was really a fun time and I want to thank everyone for making us feel so welcome! These are just a few random photos from the competition - I didn't get the names of all of the artists so I apologize to them for not having them with the photos.



First Place Div 1 (Novice) Dolls and Best of Division



First Place Div 2 Dolls and Best of Division



HUGE sculpture in the Division 3 (Master's) category by Mike Peyton



My "Bugling Elk" gourd.



Interesting Patina and texture finish on this one by Margaret Bell.



Barbara Longenecker had these small filigree ornaments in their patch booth - amazingly, she removes the seeds and pulp carefully from the ornament through the little filigree holes!



Barbie Holton





### Tip of the Month - Fun and Easy Gourd Ornaments

While teaching up in Idaho, my hostess, Sue Kosta, showed me some wonderful gourd ornaments her Mother was making. The ornaments were made from coyote or egg type gourds, and were colored in lovely "doodle" type patterns using [Pitt Pens](#). Each ornament was then coated with a thick layer of 2 part [Envirotex](#) high gloss coating for a heavy, glossy finish that also added strength to the ornament. The ornaments were finished off with fancy metal ornament hangers. I was inspired to create my own ornaments to kill time on the long car ride to and from Texas (no, I wasn't doing the driving at the time!) They might have been even nicer had I not been in a moving car - but overall, I was very happy with my results. These will be sold at a local charity fundraiser.



**How to:** Clean your gourds, discarding any with cracks or holes. Coyote/Buffalo gourds break easily, so use care when cleaning. Drill a small hole at one end, and insert a tiny metal screw eye. (Alternately, use loops of leather cord or metallic round braid glued into the hole.) Draw on designs with [Pitt Pens](#). These pens are india ink based, and will not run or smear with the application of sprays or resin type coatings. (*Basic color pen sets and black sets are available on the [Kits and Supplies page.](#)*) Brush on the finish using a disposable foam brush, then hang with a paperclip over newspapers and let any excess finish drip off. Wipe off the last large drip at the bottom just before the resin starts to set. Wear gloves, as the resin is a bit messy. Dry overnight before handling.

*\*Do you have a tip or tutorial we may feature in a future newsletter? Please [contact me.](#)*

### Featured Gourd of the Month:

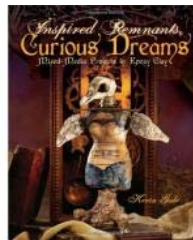
#### "Canteen"

This is an older piece - but one that was a "distressed" gourd when I started. The gourd had heavy surface blemishes, so after adding handles with wooden rings and clay, I used [patina paint](#) to color the entire surface. Other accents include woodburning, inlaid [dichroic glass](#) and beads, and gold leafing.

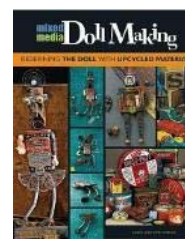


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### Featured Books of the Month:



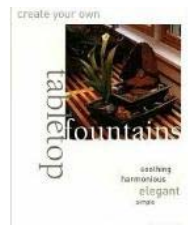
[Curious Dreams](#)



[Mixed Media Doll Making](#)



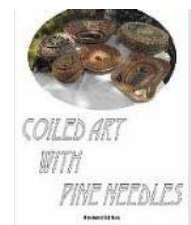
[Wire Wrapping](#)



[Create Your Own Tabletop Fountains](#)



[KINDLE BOOK Decorative Paint Effects](#)



[KINDLE BOOK Coiled Art with Pine Needles](#)

**Curious Dreams** comes highly recommended by an experienced user of Apoxie Sculpt. She says the book has quirky projects but lots of great tips for using epoxy type clays. **Mixed Media Doll Making** looks interesting for those of you that are inspired by some of the dolls made from distressed gourds.

**Wire Wrapping** and **Create Your Own Tabletop Fountains** are good sources for some unusual gourd projects - learn to wire wrap decorated

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<http://www.arizonagourds.com/November2011.html>

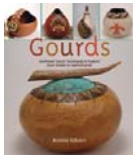
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If your email address changes, just sign up again with your new address - no need to email me the change, as I purge non-working addresses monthly.



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(Click on book cover for ordering information.)

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

**The hardcover edition is now OUT OF PRINT!**  
 I still have some on hand, but supplies are limited. Last chance to get a copy before they are gone!

[Arizona Gourds HOME](#)

gourd snarads (or grass, stones, rossis) and use them for jewelry or gourd projects. The book on fountains even has a chapter on making gourd fountains.

The last 2 books are both Kindle e-editions. If you own a kindle, both of these books are very inexpensive and easy to download to your reader. The first book deals with using decorative painting techniques such as patinas, and the second one is a coil weaving with pine needles instructional book. ["Listmania" listing on Amazon](#)



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

- Home Amazon Search Site Map About the Artist
- Classes Links Gourd Art for Sale Gourd Books
- Project Packets Drum & Musical Bone Beads Special Embellishments
- Glass Supplies Inlay Supplies Metals Misc Supplies
- Patina Paints Tools Woodburners Mini Saws
- Carving Burs Foredom Rotary Tool Accessories 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 Images - Gallery A Images - Gallery B Gourd Puzzles
- Images - Before and After Images - Gourd Magic Newsletter Index



0013