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Arizona Gourds

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Welcome to the January issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

As we enter 2015, it is time to say thank you to all of you who have supported Arizona Gourds over the past 15+ years that our website has been online. It has changed a lot over the years, and I'm hopeful that it has helped everyone with plenty of valuable information along the way.

It is fun to look back on our previous Arizona Gourds newsletters, which became a monthly feature in 2006. All of our previous newsletters are indexed for you to enjoy; although some of the time sensitive class info and other material may be dated a bit, the articles and photos are always worth revisiting. Links are available on the [Newsletter Index page](#).

Thank you in advance for your continued support during the new year! I'm looking forward to whatever the new year brings and will be seeing many of you at the upcoming Wuertz festival in February and at classes during the year.

(I will be in Booth D8 and E8 at the festival, the same place where I have been for the last 11 years!)

Wishing you a wonderful 2015 ~ Bonnie Gibson

PLEASE NOTE: Orders placed on the website from February 4th -February 8th will be delayed. In addition, some items may be out of stock due to sales at the festival. To avoid additional delays during restocking, please place your web orders before these dates!

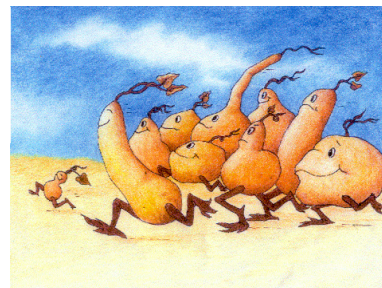
Wuertz Farm's 12th Annual "Running of the Gourds" Gourd Festival and Arizona Gourd Society Competition February 6-7-8, 2015 at the Pinal Fairgrounds - Casa Grande, Arizona

FRIDAY & SATURDAY 9:00am-5:00pm Mini Gourd Car races Saturday afternoon.

SUNDAY 10:00am-3:00pm

Admission: \$8 (Kids FREE)

Rain or Shine, Most Activities Indoors



Arizona Gourds Newsletter Index

See all our old newsletters from the past 7 years! Articles and Tips are indexed.

[Newsletter Index](#)

***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.*



Update: Gourd Classes

I will be teaching classes at my home in Tucson the weekend of February 21-22 and possibly again in early March. I plan to offer a basic power carving class and Sea Life Patterns, but I am open to suggestions for others if you have a request. Just send me an email with your interests. bonnie@arizonagourds.com

Sign up for the classes email notifications (to the right) if you want to hear when new classes are offered - the official notice to sign up will be going out soon.

Submit

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

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

There are several new items on the website since our last newsletter, and to celebrate the new year, heishi is on sale through mid January - details below.

Left: Designed especially for us, the new Saburr Tooth Safety

New to the website - New earrings for wearing or for gourd masks. These are also great for center



Head Dovetail is the same great dovetail bur, but now even better for carving ripples and for areas where a smooth, clean cut is important. Because there are no teeth on the end of the bur, you can cut cleanly right along a line. On the [Carving Burs page](#).

Note: I had a lot of these and they sold out quickly. I have more on order and hope to have them in by mid January.

pieces for beading projects. The turquoise earrings are available in two sizes, and the shell earrings are now available as a 3 piece set. You'll have the best dressed gourd mask anywhere! Look for them on the [Earrings and More page](#).



Examples of hand beaded earrings.



New color of Stone Fan - Rhodonite. On the

[Earrings and More page](#)



Limited Supply of Battery Operated Turntables -

It has taken me about a year to obtain a few of these from my distributor. If you need one for a display at the upcoming Wuerz festival, better order one now while I still have a few; I never know when more will be available.

These run on a single D battery, and will operate continuously for about a week. Perfect for gourd shows.



New - Oyster Shell heishi This natural shell heishi comes in shades of tans and soft greys. It's a beautiful neutral accent heishi.

SALE! Heishi was the FIRST item ever offered on our website, and we rarely offer savings on this staple item. For 2 weeks only, all regularly priced \$3 strands of heishi are on sale for \$2. This price is good only through January 14th, or while the current stock remains. Some colors are available only in limited supply, so order soon for the best choice. On the [Inlay Supplies page](#).

New! - Phone and tablet skins with gourd images! Choose from many different images and for many different models of phones and tablets - these are just two examples. [From Nuvango](#).



New metal button for inlay. Made just like a concho, but with a button loop. Domed on the back, so in many cases you can just drill a small hole for the loop and glue in place - or inset into the gourd surface. The design goes well with leather tooling patterns, too. Great low price! On the [Metal 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.**

Feature - 2014 Special Artistry Award

The American Gourd Society has established a special Jim Story award for growing manipulated gourds, but surprisingly, there has never been an equivalent special award for gourd ART. We decided that it was time to offer a special cash prize for "Artistry", and during 2014, there were monthly notices posted in each of the Arizona Gourds newsletters. The requirements for entering were that the piece had to be entered in an AGS sanctioned event such as a state show, and it had to win either a Best of Division, People's Choice, Best of Show, or be entered into a non-judged Grand Masters category in order to qualify. There was a bit of confusion this year as people were not really sure which awards and which shows qualified, but I plan to sponsor this award again for 2015 and will clarify who may enter. I'd like to suggest that show chair persons either send in all qualifying entries or encourage their winners to enter!

The winner of this award receives either a \$100 cash award or a \$150 merchandise credit from Arizona Gourds. In addition, the state society where the winner won their prize will also receive a \$50 cash award!

I am posting ALL of the entries I received this year, and even though only one entry wins the cash award, each piece is beautiful in its own right. The judging was difficult, so everyone who qualified and entered should consider themselves a winner! The judging was done by 3 gallery owners who are also artists themselves. They had a very tough time coming up with the results since the works were all very different from each other.

Judges: Debbie Barrios of the Rogoway Turquoise Tortoise Gallery - Tubac, AZ www.rogowaygalleries.com
 Cynthia Wearden of the Red Door Gallery - Tubac, AZ <http://www.thereddoorgallery.com/>
 Esther Rogoway of the Pink Door Gallery - Tucson, AZ <https://www.facebook.com/erogoway>

Congratulations to our winner for 2014, Michelle Green of Washington.

Michelle's piece was entered into **Washington State's Northwest Gourd Art Exhibit** in Bothell, Washington, where it won **Best of Show**. It is titled "Raptors" and is a wrap-around design featuring five raptor faces: an eagle, a Cooper's hawk, a gyrfalcon (white phase), a peregrine falcon and a kestrel. It is carved, burned, stained and painted with openwork branches throughout the design. Michelle's father, Dale Green, made the custom metal-work base, and Michelle added the finishing color on it to complement the colors in the gourd.



Other Entries

All of the other entries were so good, that I am including photos of them here for you to enjoy. They are presented in alphabetical order.



Brenda Blackwelder -People's Choice winner at the Arizona Gourd Society Competition at the Wuerz Gourd Festival.



Joyce Campbell - First Place and Judge's Choice in the Master's Division at the CGS Northern Gourd Art Competition



Roy Cavaretta won a first place in Master's division at the Lone Star Gourd Festival competition in Texas.



Michael Ford - Peoples Choice Award at the Lone Star Gourd Festival held in Texas.



Sidney Freeburg - Best in Division, Best in Show, People's Choice at the Idaho Artistry in Wood show.



Michelle Green - People's Choice at the Washington State Northwest Gourd Art Exhibit



Lorraine Hickman - People's Choice award at the Show Me (Missouri) gourd festival.



Miriam Joy - Judge's Choice award at the Arizona Gourd Society Competition at the Wuertz Gourd Festival.



Heather Kinkaid - Grand Master's award at the Arizona Gourd Society Competition at the Wuertz Gourd Festival.



Cheryl Kroll
Left: President's Award
North Carolina Gourd Festival

Right: Best of Division
North Carolina Gourd Show





Laura Lybek - Best of Novice Division at the Wisconsin Gourd Festival



Marlies Schmitt - Best of Show at the Idaho Gourd Festival



Heather Schmutzer - Best of Master's Division and Best of Show at the Arizona Gourd Society competition at the Wuertz Gourd Festival.



Above: Rebecca Truex - Best of Intermediate Division at the Texas Lone Star Gourd Festival



Phyllis Sickles - Grand Master's award at the Arizona Gourd Society competition at the Wuertz Gourd Festival.



Kathy Voyles
Left: Best of Intermediate Division at the Indiana Gourd Festival



Kathy Voyles - Chairperson's Award at the Indiana Gourd Festival.

**Unfortunately, the bottom two entries were submitted after the deadline and were not included in the judging. If you win a Best of Show or People's choice next year, please send your entries in right away so you don't forget!*



Jill Nelson - Best of Show at the Wisconsin Gourd Festival.



Carol Signore - Sponsor's Choice award at the Arizona Gourd Society competition at the Wuertz Gourd Festival.

***For 2015, entries will only be accepted from AGS accredited shows, and will be limited to Best of Show, People's Choice, Best of Division and *Grand Master's entries (*usually a non-judged category for display of top level art.) No Judge's Choice, Sponsor's awards or Chairman's awards will be accepted for 2015 in order to keep the number of entries manageable.**

"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.)

The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We have **over 4250 members**, with gourd enthusiasts from all over the world! Membership is free and easy. The site also has state groups,



Like You, Carla Marie Bratt and 5,585 others like this.



event listings, a Q&A forum and a chat feature if you need an quick answer to a gourd question!
[Check out our two GAE T-Shirt designs !](#)

Repeat Feature: Pointers to help you enjoy a gourd show!

- 1) Make a list of what raw gourds and supplies you REALLY need. Make a list, and write down everything you can think of. Then, prioritize which items you must purchase and the ones that you can live without. If you need any tools or books, add them to the list too. Write down specific questions you want to ask vendors about tool use, glues, materials, etc. Set a budget and plan to stick to it.
- 2) *Be prepared to walk a lot, and take a fold up shopping bag and drinking water with you. You may also want to pack a light healthy snack to avoid the temptation to buy expensive, fattening goodies. Walk around the show area first, just checking it out and asking prices, and making mental notes of where you saw things of interest. Then do a second round and buy the things on the top of your list first. (However, if you see something truly exceptional and one of a kind, you may have to make a snap decision or risk losing out!)*
- 3) When choosing what to wear to the show, add a gourd name tag or other gourd jewelry. These items are eye-catchers, which will lead to compliments and comments, and is a great way to make new friends. You may even want to wear your State Society T-Shirt or Gourd Art Enthusiast apparel to connect with others. Dress in layers as it may be cold in the morning and heat up later in the day. Wear comfortable shoes, as many show venues are on hard concrete or uneven gravel.
- 4) **Be prepared with cash and checks as well as credit cards, as smaller vendors very often do not accept credit cards. If you use a credit card, please be aware that venue may not be accessible to good cell signals and it may be difficult for the vendor to complete a transaction. Always carry some cash or checks as alternate methods of payment just in case. (Note - this is definitely true at the Wuertz festival - cell access is poor and a lot of the vendors do not take credit cards.)**
- 5) When you ask prices on finished gourd art, make sure you take into account factors such as quality of the work, originality, and your own gut feeling. Remember that many new artists often make the mistake of pricing their work too low. Their first show may be your only opportunity to purchase a particular artists' piece at a low price.
- 6) *Allow yourself some splurge money, but determine how much before arriving at the show. After you have done all your priority shopping, then you can just buy what you like, but only up to your preset max. If you can, take a break halfway through the show and evaluate your current purchases. Have you ever realized halfway through the show that you bought certain items twice, at different vendors?*
- 7) Shows are the best place to actually try out tools to see which woodburner, saw or other tool really works well for you. Don't just take the word of the vendor that their tool is "the best". Whenever possible, try it yourself. Does the tool meet your needs, is it within your budget? Ask other gourders you meet at classes or at the show for their opinion. People that actually use these tools day to day will give you a more honest assesment than you may get from an inexperienced but eager sales person.
- 8) *When purchasing, ask the name of the vendor for their card or write the cost of the item and the name of the supplier on the package, business card or receipt. This helps you to remember the cost of certain items, where to buy more of a specific or hard to find item from a supplier in the future; and to write accurate descriptions of the materials used in your gourd creations. Remember, most of the vendors are people who love gourds just like you do, and they can become good friends. Later on, you can contact them and buy needed items direct.*
- 9) Always ask first before taking photographs at a show. Some vendors will have a sign posted if they do not want you to take pictures. Never assume that it is ok; it only takes a few seconds to ask, and the vendor will appreciate the courtesy.
- 10) *Finally, wash your hands after leaving the show. Handling raw gourds and even supplies all day can leave you feeling grubby. When leaving, ask for a "return pass" at the exit if you intend to return, most shows allow re-entry later that day.*

Most of all, remember to have fun... !!!

Tip of the Month: Abranet Sanding Mesh

I visited the International Woodturners Symposium this past summer, and enjoyed visiting the vendor booths. While I was there, I purchased some "[Abranet](#)" sanding mesh and I am totally sold! This sanding mesh lasts for a long time even with heavy use, and because it is on a mesh, the sanding dust doesn't clog the surface the way that it does with ordinary sandpapers. It's great for both hand sanding and for use with power sanders. Abranet has a fuzzy "grip" backing that works well with hook and loop fasteners, and I like it so well that I have recently converted some of my disc sanders for use with Abranet. Here's how I did it:



I began with the hard plastic disc that came with my Microlux disc sander, and added a 3/16" thick disc cut from soft foam sheet purchased from the craft store. I used some spray contact cement (spray adhesive) to adhere the foam to the disc. This foam cushion provides a little "give" so the sander rides better on the gourd surface. Just trace around the disc and cut the foam with a pair of scissors.

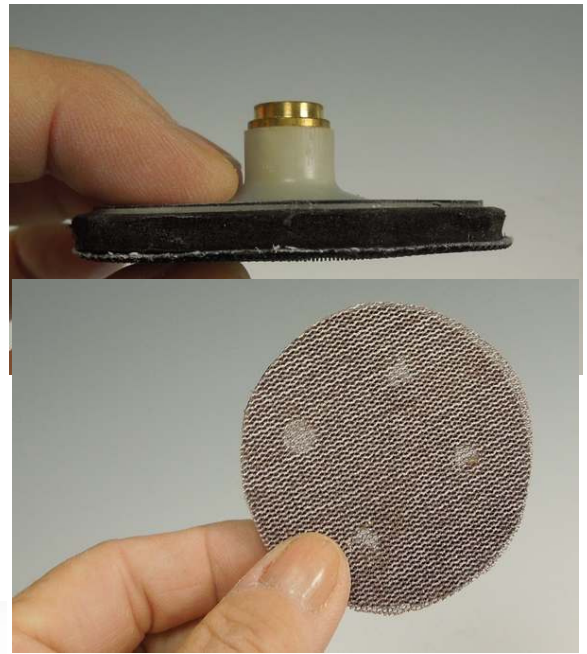
Next, I cut a piece of hook and loop backing material and attached it to the other side of the foam. This is the hook portion of a velcro type fastening sheet. This particular piece had some adhesive on the back side, but you could use spray adhesive for this part as well. See the disc, foam and fastener sandwich created in the photo below.

Next, I took a regular drill bit and drilled through all of the layers. Place the disc with the fastener side down on a piece



of wood so that you can drill a clean hole all the way through the 3 layers. These holes allow the sanding dust to escape through the Abranet mesh while the sander is turning. The manufacturer suggests that a foam backing with vent holes will extend the life of the Abranet mesh.

The photo to the right shows the disc from the other side, with a piece of the Abranet cut to fit and attached to the hook and loop fastener. You can see through the mesh and to the drilled holes on the backing. Abranet is available in sheets and rolls that are the perfect size to cut into discs with very little waste, and it comes in many grits. Or, use it for hand sanding!



While this sandpaper is a bit pricey, it lasts so long and is so easy to use that I think it is well worth the cost. The [Abranet assortment pack](#) shown to the left is available on Amazon in an assortment of grits from 80 - 600.

Rolls of 10 or 25 yards and precut discs are also available, but an assortment is a good way to try out the product.



Featured Gourd of the Month:

Waiting by the Wall - A tribute to southwest Native cultures. Carved, inlaid turquoise-dyed magnesite, wood dyes and acrylic paint.



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Interesting Products from 2014:



[Craft Scrubbie](#)



[Sanding Star](#)



[Staybowlizer](#)



[Adhesive Measuring/Masking Tape](#)



[Heat Tool](#)



[Benchtop Smoke Absorber](#)

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<http://www.arizonagourds.com/Jan15.html>

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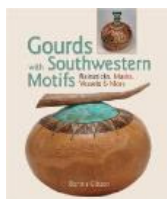
Instead of books this month, I am showing some of the more popular and unusual gourd tool finds ordered through our Amazon links!

My personal favorite is the inexpensive Craft Scrubbie, which was a gift to me from my friend Phyllis Sickles. I guess she got tired of seeing my stained hands. This works well for removing paint, dyes and computer printer ink from your hands.

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Gourds with Southwestern Motifs by Bonnie Gibson

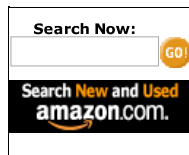
The hardcover edition is now out of print. This is the paperback version of my "Gourds" book.

All copies I sell are autographed.

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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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