



# Arizona Gourds

August updates from the desert southwest...

Welcome to the August issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

**Things are moving slower than normal here in Tucson.** Between the summer heat and trips to escape from it, I'm not getting a whole lot productive done gourd-wise. However, August is the month where I usually make the time to create something a bit more elaborate just because I want to! Next month I'll let you know if I was successful or not.

**Note: I am going to be away to attend another family activity this month.** Because of that trip, **I will not be shipping orders from August 5th to August 14th.** I promise to ship out any orders promptly just as soon as I return.

## Update: Gourd Classes

Just a little over a month before I head out to teach classes at the Florida Gourd Retreat. I'm also teaching a special Pre-Retreat Power Carving workshops on September 17th and 18th, as well as some shorter classes at the weekend Retreat. Please visit the [Florida Gourd Society](#) page for more information and to register for classes.

**My classes at the [Texas Gourd Festival](#) (October 17 - 19th) are filling up fast. Please visit their site to register.** Texas has a lot of great gourd artists and I think this festival will just continue to grow and become better every year. I'm looking forward to attending!

\*To get notice of classes as soon as they are posted, please add your name to my classes updates email list. People on this list will get the news first and have the best opportunity to select the dates and classes they prefer.



[Join The Class  
updates List](#)



This photo was taken last month at our family gathering in northern Minnesota. Don't let your eyes fool you - my brother Jeff is illustrating the actual size of this fish I just caught!

## Gourd Trivia

**This trivia item comes from Bev Tomek of Texas.** Many thanks to all of you that send me these interesting items!

**Before the Greek Sailors had cork, they used gourds for floats on the fishing nets.**

This information has been backed up by historians - and gourds were not used only by Greek fishermen. Evidence shows that many different cultures have used gourds for a similar purpose.

**Another interesting tie between gourds and fishing nets:** Fishing nets are a great storage option for people with limited floor space to store their raw gourds. Fasten one side of a large fish net (available at places such as World Market) to the wall. Place a row of screws or nails (spacing them 6-12" apart), to a large wall. Stretch the net out, and twist, tie or wrap the net cording firmly around the nails or screws, so that one side of the net is now attached to the wall. Add a second row of fasteners above the first, (fewer are required for this row) so the the distance between rows is no more than about half the width of the netting. You may want to use small hooks instead of nails for this row. Hook the two corners of the net to the first and last hook in the top row. You now have an elongated tube like sack to store gourds. Add the gourds, then hook other places along the top edge of the net to the row of hooks to secure them. You will be able to see what you have and by undoing one hook you will be able to reach in and grab the gourd you need.

**This is only one storage idea out of many.** Do you have a good storage method? Please [email](#) your ideas (either written text and/or photos) to me and next month I'll add them to the newsletter.

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

Just Arrived!



I've had some requests for the **needle carving drills** that are shown in the filigree tutorial instructions. I will stock these on a limited basis until I determine how much interest there is for them. This type of steel carving bur dulls more quickly than the carbide filigree burs, but they do cut quickly and produce a smooth edged cut. You can order them on the [Carving Burs](#) page. Instructions on how to use these burs is found in the [Filigree Project Packet](#).

I have also added **Dremel 3/16" router burs**. **Note:** These should only be used in conjunction with a Dremel Cutting Guide (shown to the left). Many people have one in their Dremel kit but they don't know what it is - but the cutting guide can be used as a mini router. You can order the router bits on the [Carving Burs](#) page. *\*Caution: Never use spiral type cutting drills that often come with the cutting guides. These are intended for cutting drywall, and they will wreak havoc on gourds!*

**New Orange Coral Heishi** strands on the [Inlay Supplies](#) page!

I've also added **Light cord sets** that have an in-line on/off switch. These are great for illuminating small gourd projects, or for use with the "Mouse House" project packet.

These are on the [Kits and Displays](#) page.

### August Feature: Student Art Work

This month I'm pleased to show you art work from some of my students. It's been interesting to see how some students have taken techniques or skills they've learned and have developed their own style over time. There are a lot of talented gourd artists out there!



#### Dance of the Dead - A Luiseño Legend

Gourd by *Elaine Linton* of the Fallbrook, CA Gourd Patch

Once a year the People of Kamak left their village and went up Palomar Mountain to gather acorns. Everyone went, young and old, and even the ill were carried along on litters so that the village could stay together at this important time. The house were left empty, no one was afraid of thieves in those days.

While the village was deserted, a man from another nearby village called Ahoya came to Kamak. He found everyone gone. He knew where they had gone, and why, so he knew he could not see his friends this trip. He decided to spend the night and go on his way the next morning. He did not go into anyone's house, but rather he took a large basket normally used to store grain and turned it over. He crawled under the basket, where the wind could not bother him. He fell asleep.

In the early evening, but long after dark, he was awakened by someone calling People out to dance. At first he thought the People of Kamak had come back from acorn gathering. Then, being a old man, he began to recognize the voices of People he had known many years ago, but who were now long dead He began to realize that the voices were spirits of the Dead! While the People of Kamak were away, the Dead had returned to dance.

The old man lay quietly under the basket, listening to the voices of all the People, all the way back to the ancient days. He heard the Woman-who-was-turned-into-rock as she sang. He heard the Man-who-scooped-rock-with-his-hand as he sang. All the People of the ancient days were here in the village again.

The old man could not stand to wait any longer. After he had listened for hours, he wanted to look at the People he had known as a young man and the faces of the People he had only heard about in old stories. He threw the basket off and looked where the Dead had been dancing.

There was only a flock of birds, and they flew away, startled by the basket overturning. The turtle-shell rattle the Dead had played all



night as they danced lay on the ground. It was now just a piece of soap-root.

The old man was not allowed to see the Dance of the Dead.



Russell Dent of New Mexico took the advanced carving class.

Made by Edna Fehling

Pat Dukes made this for a charity raffle.



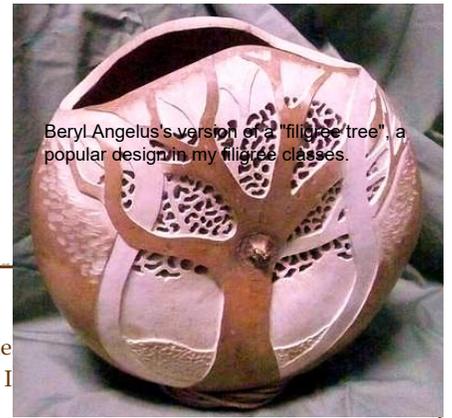
The surrounding 4 photos are from Joan Vonglis of upstate New York. Joan writes: Just wanted to let you know that I've received all my items that I ordered. I have to tell you that I am simply amazed at both of the new tools. What an incredible difference from the dremel that I've been using for the past few years! You have made me a very happy gourder.





Betty Stegmitz of San Jose, CA made her own version of a "filigree tree".

Right: Gary Carr of Washington made this gourd based on one of the projects in my "Gourds" book.



Beryl Angelus's version of a "filigree tree", a popular design in my filigree classes.

what I wrote in with their own comments and solution with their next order as a thank you. Here are:

I've had several smelly gourds. I've filled them with hot water and left them in the garage for two months & the odor went away. I also used bleach (overpowering). **Sam McKinney Tulare, Sequoia Gourd** [Link](#)

I experienced a very offensive, smelly gourd also, and tried just about everything you mentioned, including the wood hardener, Fabreze, saltwater and a spray polyurethane finish. I finally ended up sealing it with Krylon Stone Texture finish and set it outside to air out for several days. The gourd not only smelled better but it looked very nice inside. **Gloria Crane - [www.gloriousgourdcreations.com](http://www.gloriousgourdcreations.com)**

I had a gourd with that problem. It smelled rotten and sour, and the smell was fairly strong. I put bleach and water inside it and let it soak, which reduced the smell considerably. I decorated it, and put some potpourri inside of it. It's been in my living room forever, and I no longer can smell anything unless I stick my face inside it. The smell is faint now, and not noticeable in the room. **Vicki Kataja -California**

Try Arm and Hammer Bicarb. (Baking Soda) Make a paste, smear the insides then let it rest and then rinse. Or, try Kosher salt, same process. I used to preserve star fish this way. They really stink as they're drying, however, it worked well enough that my super clean Jewish mother didn't complain when I strung up the dried star fish in my bedroom. Another option is Lysol. If the smell is coming from either yeasts or bacteria that emit odors then Lysol will at least stop the progress of these microbes. My last recommendation is to keep the stench, in fact encourage it. Then give the gourd to someone you really don't like.

**Joel Axelrod (I love Joel's sense of humor!)**

My husband worked in Africa for many years. They use gourds as a "chamber pot". In the morning they fill the gourd with cold fireplace ashes. (pure carbon). I have tried this, left the ashes in the gourd for a week, replaced them with fresh ashes and my gourd was (almost) odor free. I would think a month's worth of treatment would be sufficient. **Jan G**

I think shellac can be used to seal in a smell. **Linda Tindall**

I too had a gourd that when I opened it about knocked your socks off and threw you 30 feet away. It was bad. But I kept at it with a strong dilute of bleach with water and sunshine. I would soak the solution inside for 5 to 10 minutes, dump out the solution and place the gourd outside. I also scraped away the soft mush of the gourd inside each time. I did this solution in the gourd about every 3rd day and it took about 2-3 months before it finally was acceptable to place in the house. I did seal the inside with modpodge and beach sand and pebbles after I was sure the smell wouldn't come back. It never did in the 6 months after finishing and so I sold it later without a problem. My clue this gourd had a problem was it wouldn't rattle and it had a bulk heavy area I could feel when holding the whole gourd. I've learned to open before burning now if the gourd requires it. **Sharon Donahue**

*\*Do you have a tip or tutorial we can feature here? Please [contact me](#).*

## Reader's Mailbag



*"I took the flex shaft off of my Dremel tool, and now I can't figure out how to make it work! What am I doing wrong?"*

This is a common question and often comes up in classes. Unfortunately, Dremel tools don't include great instructions, but attaching a flexshaft is easy.

First, if you haven't done so already, remove the keyless chuck or collets and collet holder from the end of the Dremel tool and place them on the handle end of the flexshaft attachment. Next, remove the screw-on plastic cap at the end of the Dremel tool. Be sure to save this piece in case you remove the flex shaft in the future. At this point, you will see a small, threaded metal tube sticking out of the end of the Dremel tool, and screw threads on the end of the plastic housing. Next, screw the flexshaft drive nut onto the threaded metal tube. This drive nut has a square opening, don't confuse it with the nut that holds collets in place. Sometimes it is hidden away in a little slot in the Dremel case. Next, place the screw-on end of the flexshaft close to the tool and insert the square ended inner flexshaft into the opening of the drive nut. Once the inner shaft is in place, you can screw the flexshaft into place on the end of the tool. Now you are ready to go!

## Featured Instructional Videos of the Month:

We need access to more gourd videos. Visit the SmartFlux site and

Click on the link above to visit SmartFlix.

Great for those who don't learn as well from books!

suggest your own favorites. If they get enough requests they'll carry more gourd titles.

[An Altered Journey: Discover The World Of Inks, Papers & Beyond](#)

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[Painting on Driftwood](#)

### Featured Gourd of the Month: Cremation Urn

This gourd was made for a long time friend whose wife was a pig collector. He wanted her urn to remind him of her interests. I have to admit it was a difficult piece to do - this folk art style is certainly different from my normal work.



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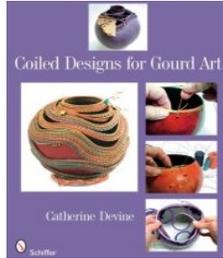


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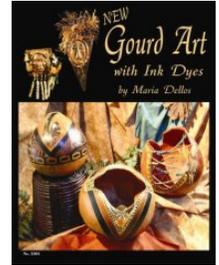
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### Featured Books of the Month:



[Coiled Designs for Gourd Art by Catherine Devine](#)

[Gourd Art with Ink Dyes by Maria Dellos](#)



[Olivia the Magical Gourd](#)

[Tuscan Whole Milk](#)



I'm repeating the listing of Catherine Devine's *Coiled Designs for Gourd Art*, as the book is now available and has been receiving excellent reviews for both the content and the photographs.

*Gourd Art with Ink Dyes* is by another artist from Tucson, Arizona. Maria Dellos is the originator of the crossover use of stamping inks on gourd surfaces.

*Olivia the Magical Gourd* is a book for children written by Elinor D'Andrea, who is a gourd enthusiast herself.

**Ok, the last item isn't a book - nor is it gourd related.** But don't be fooled! This product has been reviewed by almost a thousand people on Amazon. If you'd like a laugh, please visit the page and read just a few of these amusing reviews. (My favorite was the one where the cats ordered 500 gallons for themselves using their owner's credit card.) I admit it, I have a very quirky sense of humor and thought a few of you might also enjoy this. *Want to write your own fun review on Amazon? You might add your review of "Bitter Gourd Pickles with Garlic".*

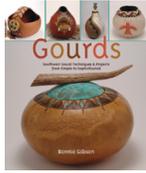
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