

Arizona Gourds



updates from the desert southwest...

Welcome to the July issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

Summer is here with a bang....

You know it is summer in Tucson when it is 85 degrees at 5 am! We are shooting well into the 100's here, but I continue to work outside under my covered porch. We have very low humidity this time of year, so I need to be careful when cleaning gourds. If they are soaked for cleaning, the sudden change from humidity in the low teens to being saturated can cause gourd shells to crack. Some of the local gourders have been cleaning their gourds by burying them in a plastic tub of moist potting soil. The gourd absorbs the moisture gradually, and by leaving them for several days the skin breaks down and can be removed easily. Those of you that have ever cleaned a gourd with tough skin will appreciate the possibilities!

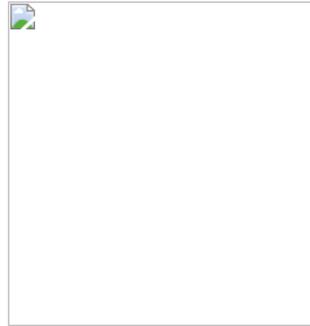


Happy 4th of July!

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

ALS Fundraiser One of my special gourd friends, Russ Conley, has been battling ALS for the last year. He has been raising funds for ALS research, and in addition to a donation I've already made, I would like to offer this gourd (made by me) as a special fundraiser.

This piece is approximately 9" w x 8" h and has a reed woven top. It is embellished with gourd seeds and local desert pods. The color and design should blend into almost any decor. **Raffle tickets will be available only during the month of July and ALL proceeds will go to ALS research.** I will ship the gourd to the winning ticket holder in August. Tickets will be available for \$1 each. *Please note that paypal will automatically deduct a substantial transaction fee. To ensure your ENTIRE donation goes to ALS, please send payment by check. Make the check payable to ALS Association and send to:



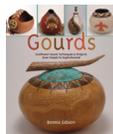
ALS Raffle
C/O Bonnie Gibson
5930 N Camino Arizpe
Tucson, AZ 85718-4612

Update: Gourd Classes

Fall classes are almost full, but I've added a new Tucson session of [Power Carving](#) on Thursday, Nov. 8th *Be sure to join the class updates list if you want to be among the first to receive information about upcoming classes. Also, let me know if you have an idea for a new class you'd like to see offered.

Tentative plans are underway to travel to Savannah, Georgia in January to teach special pre-classes before the "Southern Gourd Retreat". I will also offer a few classes at the retreat, these will be open to all retreat attendees. This event is being coordinated by Charlotte Durrence (gourds1@aol.com), please contact her for more information or visit the retreat website at: <http://www.webgourds.com/southern/>


[Join The Class
updates List](#)



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

July Special Feature: Stained Glass Gourd Votive Project

by Billie Jo Phillips

This month our special 4th of July project comes from Billie Jo Phillips of River Bank Gourds. Billie Jo is a member of the Alabama Gourd Society. Many thanks to Billie Jo for so generously sharing her project.

Tools Needed:



Supplies Needed:

Cut & cleaned stem end of the gourd
1/4" Copper foil tape
Glass Votive Holder
Stained Glass pieces
Solder
Candle stand

Burnisher
Glass cutter
Breaker pliers
Soldering iron
Grinder or diamond file
Flux & flux Brush
Marker & Ruler
Gloves

**Please remember to follow safety rules when working with gourds and glass!*

Directions:

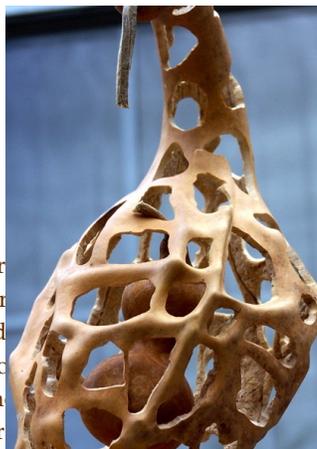
1. Start with a cleaned, cut gourd. Decorate the gourd to your taste. (Paint, wood burn, etc.) Measure around the open end of the top. This will give you the number of glass pieces you will need.
2. Select your stained glass in the colors of your choice. Measure enough glass pieces to fit around the top of the gourd. I used glass that was 1" wide x 2" tall. Cut the glass with a glass cutter and if necessary, grind or file the edges of the glass to remove sharp edges. (photo 2)
3. Foil the glass and gourd. Center the foil on the glass so that the foil covers both sides of the glass. Center the foil over the gourd lip. Burnish all of the edges that have been foiled. Use a lot of pressure making sure all edges are secure. (Photos 3 and 4) Plug in your soldering iron now.
4. Apply flux to all foiled parts. Make sure you have covered all foiled part completely; flux will not hurt your gourd.
5. Solder the gourd first. Touch the solder and the iron to the foiled edge of the gourd top. Pull the tool and solder in the direction that is most comfortable to you. Completely solder the whole top of your gourd.
6. Now you are ready to start attaching the glass to your gourd. Put on your gloves at this time. **Caution:** Glass can get very hot. You can start at any point on your gourd top, solder only the bottom edges of the glass pieces at this time.
7. Hold your glass piece to the edge of gourd, lightly touch soldering iron so that it melts the solder of the glass and gourd together. This will only take a second. It will stand on its own at this point. Continue all the way around the gourd until all glass pieces are attached. When this step is complete, go back and solder all the vertical joints, covering all foiled parts.
8. Clean the gourd foiled edge and glass. Add a glass votive cup and a candle. You now have a beautiful Stained Glass Gourd Votive that will fit into any decor.



Tip of the Month: Growing a Gourd within a Gourd! By Scott Nelson

If you are looking to do something a little different in your gourd garden this year, Scott Nelson of Dutton, Virginia has a great idea for you! You may remember that a few months ago Scott shared his "History of Gourds" in our newsletter. Special thanks go out to Scott for his generous nature and for continuing to share his information and ideas.

Start off with a clean dried gourd of medium size. I use Marankas because of all the neat lumps and bumps. Using a Dremel or a mini saw, cut/carve out a lattice work with lots of holes on the gourd. Be sure some holes are at least an inch around. Carefully clean the inside. Takes a little work, and you have to be careful you don't break any of the lattice work. *(Don't forget to wear the appropriate safety gear when cutting the gourd!)*



I'd already trellised a mini bottle up on a 6"6" concrete reinforcing wire from posts. I used some garden twine to hang and tie the cleaned gourd on the trellis with the bottle baby. I would carefully insert the baby mini bottle inside the cleaned gourd, just the stem/vine was sticking out, and then let nature take its course. I would make sure the mini bottle was still positioned inside the other gourd, and not would break the lattice work. At the end of the season, I harvested the gourd with the rest of my gourds. I kept the gourd in my shed, and slipped part of a paper plate inside and under the mini gourd so the mold/mildew wouldn't get on the inside of the outside gourd. When the mini bottle was dry, I carefully cleaned the mold/mildew off, and there it was, a gourd within a gourd!

The mini bottle had grown big enough so that it could not possibly have been put into the other gourd after it was grown. Makes for a great conversation piece. With a smile, I tell people that it's like the bent nail puzzles. You just have to know the secret of how to get it out. Sometimes I let them off the hook, and would tell them how I did it, but sometimes I'd just let them walk off shaking their heads.

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

Welburn Gourd Festival Report

I thoroughly enjoyed my trip to Southern California at the end of June. The weather was very cooperative this year and the temperature was perfect!

For the first time in many years, I did not have a booth at the festival. It has just gotten to be too difficult to do both classes and a booth. I have a smaller car now and it was packed full with class supplies - there was just no way to squeeze enough gourds in for a full booth. I do plan to return next year to teach again at the festival.

I apologize to those of you that looked for me and never got a chance to say hello. I did enjoy meeting lots of old and new friends and really enjoyed the chance to see the California Gourd Society Competition. This year, the Best of Show award came from someone in the Novice division - that was pretty exciting.



Valentin Ruesga
1st Place, Mixed media, Novice
Best of Division, Novice
Best of Show



I was surprised to see that one of my gourds previously purchased by the Welburn family was the featured item for the door prize raffle. Can't wait to find out who won!

Right: Teaching in the beautiful outdoor class area.



Daniel Montano
1st Place, Open
Best of Division, Open
Fantastic Feathers - they look so lifelike you have to touch them to see if they are real...

Featured Gourd of the Month:
Santa Clara Style

Featured Books of the Month:

This book is a great resource if you

This piece reflects my admiration for the Contemporary style Native American potters. This gourd was carved and inlaid with a large amount of turquoise, some heishi, and has gold leaf accents. This piece is currently available at [El Presidio](#) gallery in Tucson



Same gourd, two different views.



are looking from some inspiration from the Southwest. This book features collections of pottery from all the major pueblos and has great art from many famous potters.

For many more books on Native American designs, please visit the "[Native American Patterns and Designs](#)" book page found on my website.

**Be sure to visit all these different book pages to see some of the many other titles that are available. Click on each topic to see a variety of books about each subject.*

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