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Arizona Gourds

Updates from the desert southwest...

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Welcome to the September issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!



Some of my gourd friends may not be aware of the passing of my husband on August 7th. Thank you so much to all of you who have sent me cards, messages, emails and comforting thoughts. Your kindness has been so appreciated during this difficult time. Many of you that visited the Wuertz Festival or some of my classes had a chance to meet and know Everett, and while he wasn't a "gourder" himself, after supporting my activities for the past 20 years, he was probably as knowledgeable about gourds as anyone. He helped me, supported me in all my activities, and made me a better person. There is a huge void in my life, and his kind spirit will be missed by those who knew him.

For the first half of our 40 years together, I was "Dr. Gibson's wife". He was a full time Emergency Room physician, and I gave up my career as in athletic training/sports medicine to stay home and raise our children. Everett was very active in his profession and also devoted a lot of his time to volunteer activities, especially with scouting. When he retired, he took over a lot of our household activities so that I could devote more time to my art and other endeavors. We laugh that in later years, roles were reversed and he became "Bonnie Gibson's husband". We had a true partnership in our lives and he made it possible for me to succeed in my art career. He even encouraged me to write my "Gourds" book, and took all of the photos. He patiently sat at classes and sold supplies so that I could devote my time to teaching.

I will continue to teach and run the website - at this time it is good to stay busy as much as possible. We will see what the future holds down the road, but in the meantime it has been great to enjoy the friendship and support of my fellow gourders. Thank you for your kindness and understanding.

Class updates

I will be holding classes in both Las Cruces, NM and Albuquerque NM in September. Please contact [Sylvia Hendrickson](#) for info about the Las Cruces classes, (Inlace Inlay and Closed Coiling, Sept 14-15) and [Barbara Blackwelder](#) for info on the Albuquerque classes (Sept 17-18, River Bed Gourd and Fancy Filigree). **NOTE: Albq. classes are full - you will be placed on a waiting list.**

Tucson fall classes may be offered in November. I need a bit of time to regroup but should have something posted soon.

Enter your email address into the text box, and hit the submit button to join the **class updates notification list**.

***Please consider doing some of your online shopping through our Amazon link. 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!**

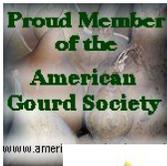
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What's new on the [Arizona Gourds](#) website?

Coming soon - a new, deeper red coral color stud. This stud is larger than the others we



have available, measuring 8.5 mm. They should arrive by about September 20th. The newer colors currently available in addition to turquoise are coral red (almost a salmon color), deep teal blue, and black. Also available - beautiful conchos with an inset coral stone.

On the [Metals page](#).



New items on the website - **New, extra long Saburr Tooth long taper bur.** This one is about 1/4" longer than the regular long taper, is slightly thinner, and has a finer pointed tip. On the [Carving Burs page](#).

Thunder Drum Springs and Kits. You will find them on the [Musical Supplies page](#).



These ultra lightweight respirators by 3M are N95 rated (sufficient to protect you against gourd dust or even the bird flu!) and are much cooler and more comfortable than half face masks. They fit ladies' faces far better than cup style masks, and they also have an exhalation valve so your glasses won't fog up when wearing one. **NOTE: They have been improved and now have cloth elastic bands instead of the old rubber band style.** On the [Tools Page](#).

Large Bur Boxes with snap down lid and carrying handle are back in stock on the [Rotary Tool Accessories Page](#). All styles of **Carbide Gourd Cleaners and Finishing Sanders** are back in stock on the [Tools page](#).



I got a new batch of machined brass shavings - and they are really nice. Each bag has fine thin curls and interesting shapes. These thin brass shavings grind down well when using it as an inlay with Inlance or other resins. On the [metals page](#).



New **Lion's Paw shell teardrops** with a drilled hole for hanging on the [Earrings and More Page](#). Check out the beautiful mask by Kathe Stark using one of these!

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.**

NOTICE: I will be teaching classes and will not be shipping from September 13th through September 20th. Orders placed during this time will be held and will go out in the order they were received starting on September 21st. Thank you for your understanding.

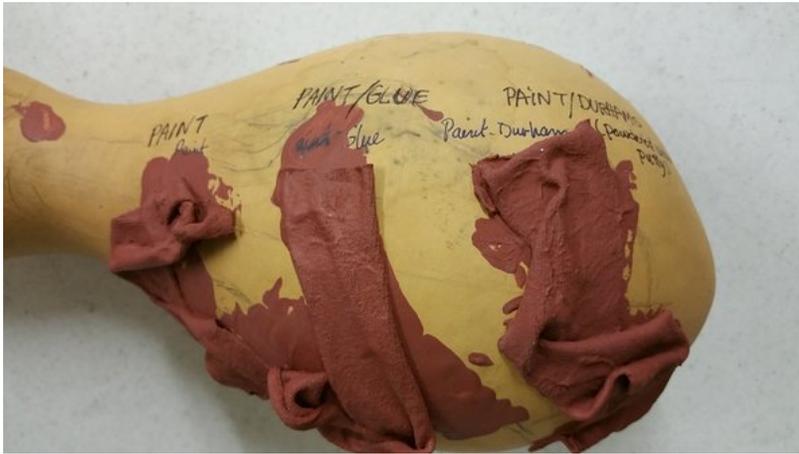
Powertex substitute

In [December of 2010](#), and [July of 2011](#), I published product reviews in the monthly Arizona Gourds newsletter. The product being reviewed was **Powertex**, a fabric draping/stiffening mixture. I spent the day working with powertex with my gourding buddy, Phyllis Sickles. Both of us took a different direction that day - I added some "Stone Art" powder made by Powertex, and added some cactus fiber. Phyllis used the product a bit more traditionally, dipping and draping the soaked fabric into interesting patterns that made her think of slot canyons and walls with petroglyphs.

Phyllis has gone on to create more of these lovely rock wall/slot canyon gourds, but felt that there might be a product alternative that would 1) cost less and 2) be able to be purchased locally. Powertex is made in Belgium, so shipping costs, import duties and taxes so make it a fairly expensive product, around \$50 per quart. One of the qualities that Powertex has is its strong durability and ability to be used for items that

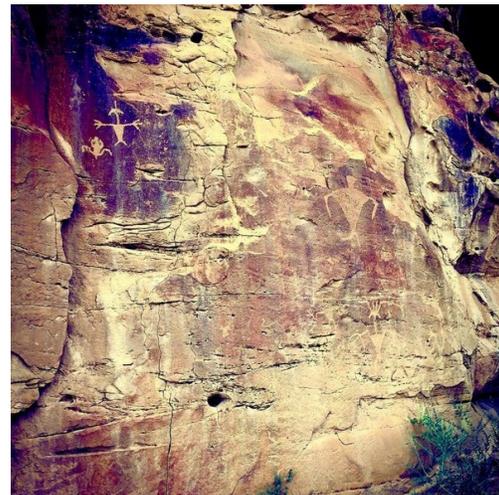
will be outdoors and subjected to harsh weather - but this is not a characteristic that is important to Phyllis for her art gourds. She just wants something that will hold its shape and provide a good amount of stiffness.

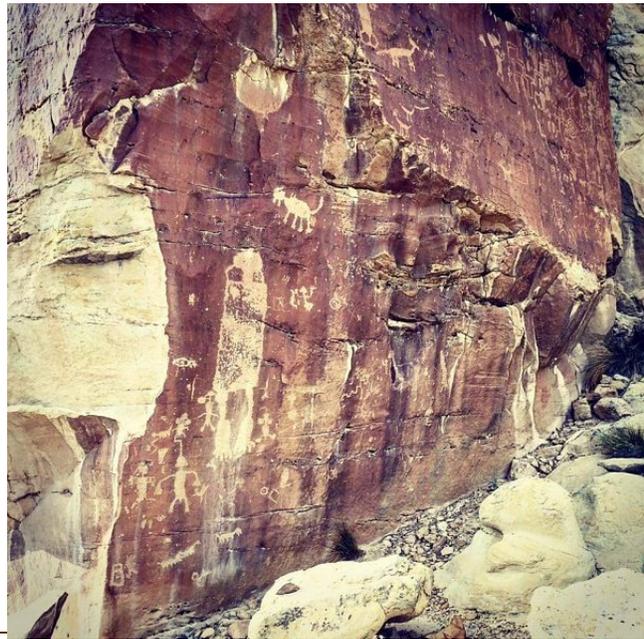
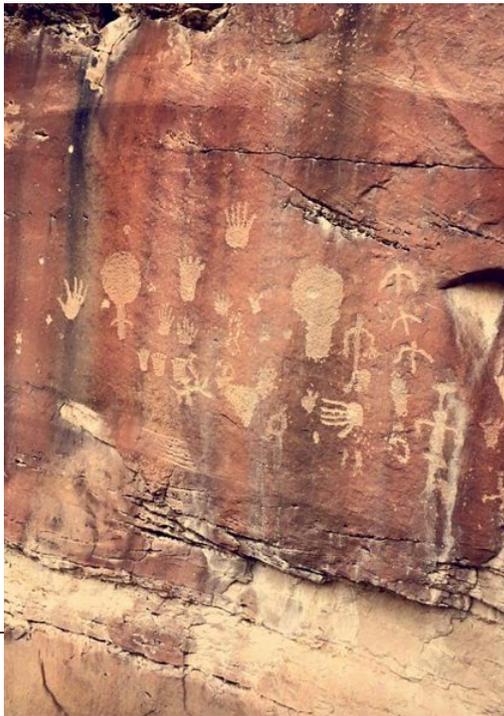
At one of our club meetings, Phyllis brought in one of her gourd wall hangings that was carved with cliff dwellings surrounded by draped fabric stiffened and painted to look like sandstone cliffs. She also brought in a sample gourd where she had been experimenting with other, cheaper techniques. She passed around a gourd with three different techniques she had tried. First, she just painted the fabric - it worked, but didn't stick well to the gourd and wasn't really stiff enough. Second, she mixed paint and Elmer's glue - it worked better, with a stronger hold on the gourd. For the third experiment, she used paint mixed with Durham's Water Putty powder. This is a multipurpose repair powder sold at most hardware stores. She found it gave a good amount of stiffness, strong hold on the gourd, and dried harder. In all cases, she used a T-shirt as the fabric. When she doesn't want the fabric texture or threads showing through on the finished piece, she coats the T-shirt with gesso to hide the fibers. When asked about the mixtures and ratios, she said she hadn't bothered to measure anything, but simply mixed it to a good consistency, probably something like pancake batter. The photos below show her results.



Thank you so much to Phyllis for allowing me to share photos of her work and her experimental gourd.

Below are some photos of actual cliff walls with petroglyphs.





"Like" Arizona Gourds on Facebook to get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourding updates. (Just a note - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourding friends.)

NEW GROUP on Facebook - "Gourding Destash". This is the place to sell your used gourd tools and excess supplies. No fees to sell your surplus supplies and raw gourds.



The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) has over 5000 members, with gourd enthusiasts from all over the world! The site also has state groups, event listings, a Q&A forum and a chat feature.

NOTE: I have funded the GAE website for one additional year. The level of participation will determine if the site remains beyond that time.

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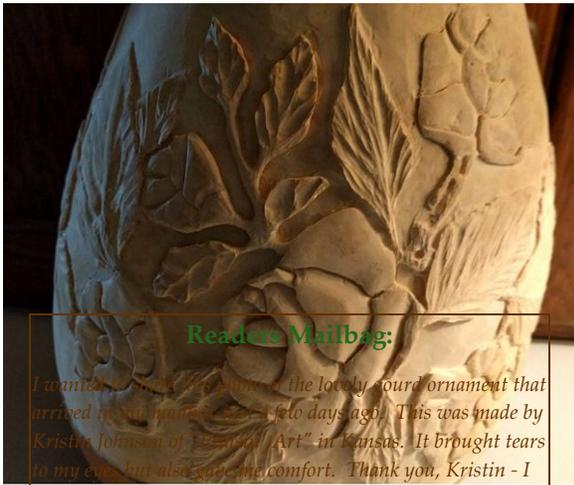
Readers Mailbag:

Dear Bonnie, Thank you for the wonderful website and always willing to share your knowledge. I wanted to share with you a new technique I did on a gourd. This may have been done by others, but I am not aware of it. When cleaning gourds, I often keep the sawdust, depending on how it looks. This is used for making gourd bases. In doing this gourd, I wanted to add texture to the gecko, so I mixed gourd sawdust, glue, paint and water and painted the mixture onto the design. The results were great and it looks much better in real life. Again, thank you for all you do for gourd enthusiasts. **Andi Wardlaw - TX**

I have heard of using gourd sawdust to repair cracks in gourds, but using it as a paint texture medium is a good idea!



Readers Mailbag:



Readers Mailbag:
I can't tell you how much I love the lovely gourd ornament that arrived in my mailbox just a few days ago. This was made by Kristina Johnson of "Gourd Art" in Kansas. It brought tears to my eyes but also gave me comfort. Thank you, Kristin - I will treasure it.

Hi Bonnie, There is a lot of blending and smoothing to go but this is the start of it. **Madonna Watermon - MO**
I am thrilled by how many people have plunged into carving. In the 20 years since I started doing gourds, the finished art has changed dramatically, and there are lots of people doing wonderful work.



Tip of the Month: Glycerine Pine Needles

Some people prefer treated pine needles because they feel they are more supple and durable. Here is a recipe for using glycerin on needles.

- Materials:** 1 lb pine needles, 2 pints glycerin, and water to cover
- Equipment:** Large Roaster pan - disposable aluminum type is ok if doubled for strength. An electric roaster is even better if you can find one large enough. (Check thrift stores for used ones.) Tongs to handle needles, bricks or other heavy items to weigh down needles, and rubber gloves.

Directions:

NOTE: *If you wish to dye your needles, mix 2-3 packets of Rit dye with the glycerine prior to adding the pine needles to the pan, and stir the mixture up well after adding the water.*

Place the glycerin in the roasting pan, and add needles. Divide the needles in half and rotate 1/2 so the capped ends are on opposite ends of the pan and the tips overlap. Add water to cover the mixture, and mix by swishing the pan a bit. Place bricks or other heavy objects like plates over the needles to help hold them down. Place the pan into the oven at 250 degrees and check them in an hour. The liquid should be simmering slowly. Reduce temperature if needed, and simmer another hour. Put on rubber gloves and use tongs to remove bricks or plates, and to move needles around to ensure all are absorbing the mixture and taking on the same color. Stir the needles a bit if needed, and leave for another hour. When they are done, turn off the heat and let the needles sit overnight or at least until they are completely cool.

To finish, pull the needles out of the mixture and place them into a large bucket or clean pan and rinse them thoroughly. Spread them out on towels or paper to dry. Flip the needles periodically to make sure all sides are dry. They must dry completely before storing, or they will mold. You can try to reuse the glycerine or glycerine dye mixture, but a subsequent batch will not be as good as the first one.

[Glycerine on Amazon](#) is available in several sizes, and is less expensive the more you buy.



Featured Gourd of the Month:
"In the Wind"
 Class demo piece

Featured Books:



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Wax on Gourds by Miriam Joy is available as a prerelease from Amazon. Amazon guarantees the lowest price when preordering.

The *Woodburning Treasury* book is a good resource for all things woodburning, including info on tools, patterns you can use, and how to's. The *"Big Book of Pyrography Projects"* is a compilation book with articles from many authors, compiled by the editors of the Pyrography Magazine. *"Realistic Pumpkin Carving"* is a brand new release, just in time for the fall and Halloween. *"Calabash on the Vine"* is a 150 page journal book.

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*Want to see my listing of top gourd books? Here is my ["Listmania" listing on Amazon](#)



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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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