



## President's Message

Karen Niemeyer

### A GOURD-GEOUS HOLIDAY AND NEW YEAR!

How many gourds became Christmas gifts, and how many pieces of gourd art will help welcome a new year and the winter months? It is truly impossible to imagine ever getting bored with gourds when there is such variety. I am impressed with how much location and fertilization make a difference in gourd production. A local gardener Kelly Frank planted Corsican gourd seeds this year and gave me two plants; one died, one finally bloomed in September. In November Kelly gave me four magnificent Corsicans that are now drying beautifully at my home while she dries others. She used a plot that had recently had a lot of manure. That reminds me of my first gourd-growing experience in 1996. We converted a cattle lot on our 101-acre Thorntown farm to a gourd patch and I was delighted to get more than 46 martin house gourds off the two plants I had bought from the IGS spring show. I thought this was great but little realized how unusual my crop was until experienced members and, later, my own experience, taught me the uniqueness of my first growing experience. I still love getting 200 spinner gourds from a plant, even though the size is considerably smaller than martin houses. I am successfully drying 4 martin house gourds that I bought as an experiment at the end of September at our local festival. I really thought they would rot from being harvested before frosts, but some of you experts explained that they really just get thicker the longer they remain on the vine and that early picking does not always guarantee rotted gourds.

(Continued next column)

*(President's Message, continued from prior column)*

Congratulations-and gratitude- are in order to Loretta Pressel who, on October 21, agreed to serve as IGS secretary. Thanks, also, to Ruth Moorhead for filling in for several months. The IGS has decided to again participate in the Indiana State Fair next August and will be welcoming anyone who wants to volunteer at the booth or to enter the competition or provide demonstrations; we thank Diane Werblo for offering to chair this opportunity.

Somehow I have ended up being the one to fill the two large concrete planters that sit outside our church doors in Thorntown. After summer flowers, I switched to silk leaves, sea oat grass and two large natural gourds in each. When children wanted to remove the gourds, I took in other dried gourds for their personal use. When getting ready for Christmas, I used real evergreen branches, red and white silk poinsettias, and nestled two of my prize-winning gourds in the center...only because someone asked me whether or not there would be gourds in the holiday planters! I'll admit to photographing my gourds just in case the end up in someone's home other than mine. I love to share, but..... This has caused me to accept my own challenge of including gourds in each change-out of the planters: maybe white and silver garland in greenery for January with snowmen and snowflakes? When I get called upon to provide a children's sermon, it always includes gourds and last time I sent the boys off to Sunday school class with gourd rattles in little hands. Do you suppose that is why it was my last children's sermon?

This year at the library I decided to wish everyone a gourd-geous Christmas and affixed red velvet bows to our light bollards and added a club, bottle, or other gourd to each. They are crudely painted with holly and snowflakes, but I hope each of us and ALL Tendril readers truly have great gourd fun all year.

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# PATCH NEWS

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## **Central Indiana Patch (Diane Werblo, contact)**

In November we decided the squares for Sandra Townsend's long-term gourd patchwork quilt project should be drilled before they are painted so that the art doesn't get damaged. Diane handed out info on flattening the pieces. Sandra, having provided most of the supplies, then led a class in making ornaments -- not necessarily for Christmas! Jean Long took photos to post on the IGS facebook page. We were happy to see Ann Stankiewicz and Kathy Stuart at the meeting; for a long time they had been MIA due to work obligations. No December meeting due to the holidays. In January we will drill the flattened quilt squares. We are leading with our hearts in February: painted, drilled, cut, decouped or anything your heart desires! CIP meets on the 4th Tuesday each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. ET at the Garfield Park Arts Center in Indy.

## **Sugar Creek and Thorn Tree Gourd Patches (Karen Niemeyer, contact)**

Gourd enthusiasts are always welcome at the Thorntown Public Library, 124 North Market St., Thorn-town. The Sugar Creek Gourd Patch was the first formed and meets 6-8:00 p.m. ET on the first and third Wednesdays of each month; the Thorn Tree Patch meets 2-4:00 p.m. ET on the second and fourth Wednesdays. For now, both patches are working on similar projects. Call Karen (765 436 7348) to reserve supplies for any session. On December 6 and 13 participants made Santa candy dishes as taught by Denise Bechtold and on Dec. 20 we finished some Christmas gifts! Who knows, we may still be working on those on Dec. 27! January sessions will be snowman time, experimenting with gourd lamps, and working on quilt squares. Thanks to Helen Thomas for offering to cut some 4" squares for us. Thunder drums are in our future again, as we experiment with the various sounds from different sizes of gourds. Denise will be teaching drum necklaces on January 3. In February and March we shall focus on finishing our gourd lamps so they are ready for the IGS May show. Want to play with gourds? Call and then visit a patch session.

## **Lakeshore Gourders (Loretta Pressel, contact)**

The Lakeshore Gourders finished the year with a Christmas Party, on November 14, at Salem Chapel UMC, LaPorte. We enjoyed a full dinner and a gift exchange. We missed several of our members who had already left to a warmer climate for the winter. Oh well, the rest of us will carry on until they return in the spring. We will be meeting January 16, February 20, March 20, and April 17. These meetings will be at the church. Our Indiana Gourd Society State Show is May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> at the Fulton County Historical Society Museum at Rochester, IN. Our patch will busy working at the show. New members are always welcome, or just come to visit. We are a fun group and there is always food, fun, and fellowship. Men, don't be shy. We have four in our patch. At the January 16th meeting, Ron Pressel show us how to make a Wall Pocket. Do come and learn something new! Wishing you all a belated Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## **Gourd Crafters (Lois Wright, contact)**

The Gourd Crafters met October 21, 2017 at Becky Whitted's home. Nancy Donahoe, Becky Whitted, and Lois Wright furnished the refreshments. There was a change in class plans from making textured paper for gourds to making an alcohol ink vase. We had 11 people in attendance: Becky Whitted, Roxanne Flesher, Nancy Donahoe, Cletus & Linda Hammer, Jenny Daur, Bob and Joyce West, Verla Stewart, Savanne Hogle, and Lois Wright. It was a nice time shared together. Our next meeting will be in late March due to the busy holidays.

## **West Central Indiana Gourd Patch (Shirley Gates, contact)**

We continue to meet the third Thursday every month at the Danville fairgrounds. Here are a few of our previous activities: April --made and painted dipper gourds; September --Artie Bowles led the group in making a ghost pumpkin; October--we had a Field trip to visit Helen Thomas at her gourd farm and museum; November--each painted a Santa Claus gourd which will be finished at the December meeting.

# Green Gourd and Seed Harvest Basic 101

*Pat Moore, December, 2017*

**PLEASE DO NOT TAKE GREEN GOURDS INTO YOUR HOUSE OR BASEMENT OR ATTACHED GARAGE TO DRY.**

**PLEASE ALL MATURE, DRYING GOURDS WILL MOLD, THIS MOLD IS NOT GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH!**

## When to harvest gourds

### I am in Indiana:

- The growing season here ends with a vine killing frost that comes in October and the vines start to die.
- In November, I harvest my gourds.
- Do a simple maturity test at this time and keep the good gourds.
- Cut them off vines and place them OUTSIDE on pallets to dry all winter.
- ALL gourds will get moldy and nasty looking while drying over the Winter - that's just part of the process.
- In spring, dry moldy gourds can be CLEANED.
- Once cleaned, you can safely store them inside or outside till they are needed.

### In other states:

- When your growing season ends, wait a few weeks or a month to harvest your gourds.
- Do the simple Maturity test.
- DRY gourds OUTSIDE all winter.
- All gourds will get moldy and nasty looking over the winter.
- Clean the dry moldy gourds in spring.
- CLEANED gourds can safely be stored inside or outside till they are needed.

## Gourd Maturity Test 101

In the fall, do this simple test on both Hardshell and Ornamental Gourds to tell if a gourd is mature and will dry or rot over the winter.

**The Test** - Somewhere on the bottom of gourd push your thumbnail straight into the gourd.

### Results:

- If your nail CAN puncture the skin and meat of the gourd - it's NOT mature and most likely will rot. But you can use it for decoration until it starts to rot.
- If your nail CAN NOT puncture into the gourd shell - then it IS mature and mostly will dry over the winter. You can use it for decoration, then let it dry outside, over winter- then clean it and craft it.
- Do this test when harvesting your gourd crop, and keep the good ones.

## Drying gourds

- In a shed or barn is good - but - drying outside, on pallets, in open air is best!
- Mother Nature will work her magic and they will clean much easier in the spring.
- Freezing weather will NOT hurt the gourds - but it could hurt the seeds inside if seeds are not dry.
- For the most part, this year's green gourd crop should be dry by spring of next year.
- Drying time depends on the size of gourd:
  - ◊ Small gourds, eggs, spinners, ornamental dry much quicker than larger gourds.
  - ◊ Large gourds, kettles, martins, etc., can take all winter into March, April.
  - ◊ Really large ones, 100# bushels, African wine kettles, take even longer, sometimes over a year.
- Just wait - better safe/dry, then sorry.

*(continued on p. 4, Gourds 101)*

### Want to keep/harvest seeds

- Harvest them now, before the "green/fresh" seeds freeze.
- Remove them from the gourd, clean them and DRY the seeds, (could take a month to dry).
- Then you can store DRY seeds in the freezer to use at a later date/year.
- If seeds are still "green/fresh" and the gourd freezes, (not a frost) the seeds could be killed.
- If seeds are DRY inside a gourd, a freeze should not hurt the seeds.
- Yes, cutting a hole in gourd to remove the seeds, could be fatal for that gourd.
  - ◊ It may shrivel up totally or dry but shrivel up where cut or just rot, but you'll have good seeds.

### Information about gourds and seeds

- Just like gourds have stages of life: green/fresh, mature and DRY, so do seeds.
- Seeds that are "green/fresh" are vulnerable to environmental changes (water, heat, cold, freezing, etc.) that could cause loss of life.
- Seeds MATURE at the end of the growing season, as do gourds.
- Gourds then DRY, so do seeds.
- DRY gourds and seeds can withstand much.
- DRY seeds can be alive for years if stored properly.

### Care for healthy seeds

- Seeds like constant temperatures and humidity.
  - ◊ So, freezing them is good way to control both.
  - ◊ They can also be stored in a refrigerator or other controlled environment area.
- The germination rate may become lower as years pass; if so, just plant a few more seeds.
- Healthy gourd seeds found in the Pyramids of Egypt were planted and grew.



Judy and Jan from West Central Gourd Patch at Sandlady's, selecting gourds.



Gourd Crafters Becky Whitted (standing), with Bob and Joyce West (seated to the right)



Artist: Lois Wright from Gourd Crafters

## Message from the Show Chair

We are getting ready for our 2018 Gourd Art and Craft Show - "Red, White, and Blue Gourds". This year's show will be at the Fulton County Historical Society, Richland Center Memorial Hall, 4 miles North of Rochester, Indiana, off US 31. I want to give a big THANK YOU to EVERYONE for all your support and help in the past years and for this year, too. We are again looking for people to participate in our next show:

- \*We need vendors:
- \*We need volunteers to man tables and help in other areas
- \*We need everyone to enter their gourds in the competition and/or an exhibit
- \*We need for everyone to promote the show by "talking it up"
- \*We need items donated for the Auction
- \*We want everyone to come and have a good time, showing, selling, learning more and talking gourds

Once again this year there will be NO SHOW ON SUNDAY. Thursday will be for set-up and competition placement only. Open to the public on Friday (10 AM - 7:30 PM ET) and Saturday (10 AM - 4 PM ET) with everything going on. We will be having a Fellowship Breakfast on Saturday at 9 AM - everyone is welcome to come-more details later.

Competition placement will be on Thursday (2-8 PM ET) and Friday (7-10 AM ET). The judges' meeting will be on Friday (10 AM ET), followed by competition judging until completed. The competition area will be closed during judging.

The Children's Competition Classes had many great entries last year. This year, we are continuing with many fun classes for kids, check them out (Division 7). If you have any suggestions on how we can make our shows more exciting for kids, please let us know. We also welcome all groups of kids: schools, Scouts, 4 H, etc. If you would like to be a part of our show, let us know and we will find ways to supply small gourds and help with supplies.

**WARNING:** When you get a show book, please read it carefully and pay close attention to the competition class rules. Your entry could be marked down by the judges if you do not follow the requirements. Make sure you put your entry in the right class. Also, some classes require a 3 X 5 card to define type, etc. so make sure you have one with your entry.

This 2018 show will be the 6<sup>th</sup> annual vendor competition for the Joyce Dankowski Memorial Award, *Best Vendor Display*. We would like to congratulate the 2017 winner, Sue Westhues, for her impressive display last year. Good luck to all our 2018 vendors.

Workshops haven't been finalized yet but we have some very talented artists lined up for the show. Among them are Delaina DeHaven-(painting), Ron Pressel-(woodburning), Blanche Murrin, and Bonnie Gibson from Arizona (carving basics). If you would like to teach a specific skill, or learn something different, please contact us asap. The show books and workshop fliers should be out shortly. Please keep checking our website for updated info - [Indiana-gourdsociety.org](http://Indiana-gourdsociety.org) or contact me.

Ida Kennedy, IGS 2018 Show Chairperson [ikennedy5@msn.com](mailto:ikennedy5@msn.com)

### PATCH CONTACTS

Central Indiana	Indianapolis	Diane Werblo	317-783-1428
Gourd Crafters	Ridgeville	Lois Wright	317-370-1418
Lakeshore Gourders	Walkerton	Loretta Pressel	574-586-2502
Linda's Patch	Greenfield	Jim Ballard	317-468-5717
Patch 4	West Lafayette	Verona Clark	765-242-1967
Story Gourd Patch	Pendleton	Inactive	
Sugar Creek	Thorntown	Karen Niemeyer	765-436-7518
Thorn Tree	Thorntown	Karen Niemeyer	765-436-7518
West Central Indiana	Avon	Carol Brown	317-742-5184 or
		Shirley Gates	317-306-6383

# Roll of Honor

1999	2003	2009	2014
Dorothy Crowder	Acy Puckett	Jesse Glessner	Linda Harlow (posthumous)
Owen Crowder	Jane Snider	Sid Meyers	Ida Kennedy
Dr. Charles Heiser	John Sturgeon	<b>2010</b>	Pat Moore
Honey Bear Miller	<b>2004</b>	Loretta Pressel	<b>2015</b>
Jane Story	No award	Ron Pressel	Sherry Benedict
Jim Story	<b>2005</b>	Peg Sullivan	Tom Benedict
Hazel Thompson	Bob Dillard	<b>2011</b>	Delaina DeHaven
Richard Thompson	Dick Harshman	William Friehofer	Alice Pawlowski
<b>2000</b>	Bill Taylor	<b>2012</b>	<b>2016</b>
Rosemary Dougherty	<b>2006</b>	Ruth Moorhead	Mac McCrary
Nancy Norris	No award	Karen Niemeyer	Diane Werblo
Helen Parker	<b>2007</b>	Carolyn Rushton	Phylis Kingen
Lee Parker	Debby Grunden	<b>2013</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>2001</b>	Joe Lee	Fran Bascom	Sandra Townsend
Ron Bair	Renee Meyers	Emily Dillard	
Dallas Lunsford	Helen Thomas	Phil Hart	
<b>2002</b>	<b>2008</b>	Ed Minarik	
Valene Alexander	Jim Ballard	Emily Wallace	
Barbara Puckett	Phil Moorhead		
	Guy Shutt		
	Steve Sullivan		

## Roll of Honor Nominations

Nominations for the Indiana Gourd Society Roll of Honor are due to secretary Loretta Pressel by February 15, 2018. Anyone can nominate a member who has exemplified themselves with extraordinary service and volunteerism to the society. Nominations should include the person's name, your name, and reasons why you think this person deserves recognition. Mail paperwork to Loretta Pressel, 8226 E St Rd 104, Walkerton, IN 46574 or send to the secretary (see last page for address)

The IGS was formed and exists pursuant to the Indiana Not-for-Profit corporation statute Sect. 501 (c) (5). The corporation has never attained Sect. 501 (c) (3) status of the Internal Revenue Code. Therefore, gifts to IGS are not deductible for income tax purposes.

Interested in helping maintain the Indiana Gourd Society Facebook page? If so, please contact Phil Moorhead 765-674-8088 or treasurer@indiangourdsociety.org

Address Change: Fill out form and mail to indicated address below.

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**The Tendril** published 6 times per year  
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**Issue: Articles Due:**

*Jan/Feb            Dec 1*  
*Mar/Apr          Feb 1*  
*May/Jun          Apr 1*  
*Jul/Aug           Jun 1*  
*Sep/Oct           Aug 1*  
*Nov/Dec           Oct 1*

All submissions welcome!

**ARTICLES MUST BE IN MS WORD OR RTF FORMAT.**

Send as an attachment to your email or mail your submissions to the above address. Please send us your pictures, stories, tutorials, and anything else gourd-related plus your suggestions for improving or inclusion in *The Tendril*.

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