

# Gourd Fever



artists, growtips, info & more

**Note:** If using Outlook click the above bar where it says "Click to download photos" The photos are the best part!

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Pondering Painter by Cyndee Newick

**In This Issue:** Californians are known around the world for "thinking outside the box", for being in the forefront of trends and ideas and always ahead of the game. This month we are pleased to feature artist Cyndee Newick, owner of Earthborn Gourd Creations, a Californian with a passion for creating art and music, and who easily fits the above description. Cyndee's art is imaginative and her description of working with gourds is "having never ending fun from a plant!" We are thrilled to feature Cyndee and her unique art forms.

## Volume 8, Number 90

[www.northerndipper.com](http://www.northerndipper.com)

Email: [info@northerndipper.com](mailto:info@northerndipper.com)

### **In this issue:**

**Cyndee Newick - Earthborn Gourd Creations: Setting Trends With An Ancient Art Form**

**The Bulletin Board: News From Northern Dipper**

**In The Gourd Garden: Enjoying the Serenity In The Gourd Garden**

**Out Of The Mailbag, Gourd Sightings & Trivia**

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## The Bulletin Board

### **Fall Workshops**

A hands-on experience that is educational and fun. Come and join us at Northern Dipper in a beautiful rural setting.

See you there!



A Young Deer by Cyndee Newick

In the gourd garden things are quiet. The fruit is slowly maturing under cooler nights and warm days preparing for its late October/early November harvest. In light of this, our article "In The Gourd Garden" will be short but there are a few do's and don'ts that you will need to know to ensure a successful harvest and drying period.



**Pine Needle Rim**  
Saturday, September 8



**Hand Crafted Ukulele**  
Saturday, September 29  
Instructor: Dena Lee  
This workshop is filling up quickly so please book today.



**Drum Making**  
Sunday, September 30



Also mail, gourd sightings and music picks to celebrate the passing of summer and more. So tune in, relax and enjoy this September issue of *Gourd Fever*.

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## Cyndee Newick



Cyndee Newick lives in Campbell, California in the area more commonly known as the Silicon Valley. As an organic gardener, she was looking for an art form that used natural products, was environmentally sensitive and versatile. She had played around with drying plants, papermaking and growing herbs but they didn't resonate with Cyndee.

For information on these workshops as well as October's schedule (which includes seasonal Halloween and Christmas classes)

click here:

<http://www.northerndipper.com/workshops.php>




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## Cyndee Newick

"Gourds have a unique historical, cultural and ethnic quality that I think could be better exploited to help remind people of our interconnectedness with the earth and our agrarian roots."



In the late 90's she saw some simple gourd projects in a craft book and could immediately see the potential. The library provided her with more books and soon after she attended her first local gourd patch meeting.

Cyndee's diverse interests range from archaeology, mythology and symbolism and these blend well with a vine fruit that can be used for so many utilitarian, decorative, ceremonial and spiritual functions. The fact that Cyndee is contributing to the continuity of an ancient art form and using something from the earth is appealing to her philosophy and lifestyle.



Corn Mother

"A graphic arts instructor once said that design should tell a story. I have tried to incorporate that concept into my art."

"If I am creating a sculpral figure then I use the shape of the gourd to indicate movement and emotion. If I am painting a person or animal then I want that figure to be engaged in some activity or indicating some emotion."

### Gliding Swan

An inquisitive nature became obvious when Cyndee was a child. Nothing made her happier when making things or taking broken things apart to see how they worked. She built forts, explored creeks and climbed trees and the plants, animals and birds she saw during these activities fascinated her.

As an adult she is still inquisitive. She has a B.S. degree in Recreation and as part of her job for 20 years, she taught craft classes to children and adults, created holiday and special event decorations, and published flyers, posters, newsletters and brochures.

Cyndee has taken 40 graduate units in Clinical Art Therapy, which she didn't finish due to a lack of job opportunities. She also has about 20 units in Digital Media Arts. In short Cyndee has a lot of art making experiences from indirect sources.



Giraffe Family

"Before I found gourds I had done needlework, quilting, woodworking and acrylic painting. I like painting but found the flat, rectangle canvas limiting. The variety of gourd shapes and the ability to use just about any art medium makes gourds so versatile. It is never ending fun from a plant! "



Black Cat

Cyndee lives about 2 1/2 hours from the nearest gourd farm and even though she keeps a large stash of gourds on hand, when she has an idea, she never seems to have the "right" gourd. She finds it works better to go through her gourds, find

a gourd she likes and start with the shape.

Regarding her art, she wants the design to be congruent. The shape of the gourd, the colours, embellishments and all the design elements should be consistent. She researches symbols or uses photos or real life objects to check for important details such as eyes.

The design should have depth and the shadows should be subtle. It should not overpower the gourd. Using primarily translucent acrylic mediums Cyndee keeps in mind that gourd shapes and surfaces are not perfect so therefore she accepts the fact that the end results are not going to be perfect either.



Witch



Canyon Spirit

"I like earth tones and shapes and prefer the natural look of gourds. I try to incorporate the mold patterns of the gourd into the design, not cover it up. Gourds are the perfect medium for animal, nature and spiritual themes."

"Probably my biggest challenge is finding the supplies. I get ideas, but then I can't find the right gourd shape, or I can't find the right materials or embellishments I want."

For the past 12 years Cyndee has belonged to a local gourd patch called the Calabash Club. Meeting with other like-minded artists has been a great resource in learning new techniques, asking advice and testing out tools, embellishments and different mediums. She also takes advantage of the workshops and demos offered at Gourd Festivals.

Ginger Summit, a name we all know, (bet you all have her books too!) is the founder and past president of the Calabash Club. Patch members have had the good fortune to be showcased in her books and have viewed her wonderful slideshows and extensive gourd collection from her research



travels.

Gourd art from California is unique and many think that it is because Californians are so willing to experiment and embrace new ideas. In California gourd art is considered an art medium, not a craft.

Currently mixed-media art is popular and non-gourd artists have begun to incorporate gourds into their paintings, doll-making, sculpture and book arts. Gourd artists are moving beyond traditional burning, carving and embellishments and are using paper, fabric, faux painting techniques, gel and metallic paint mediums. Zentangle is popular. In California anything goes!



Mesa Horses

When Cyndee began with gourds she just wanted to paint designs on gourds; in other words, gourds would be her canvas. But during the last few years she has been creating more bird, animal and figure sculptures. She would like to create some wall sculptures - perhaps mounting gourds on canvas.

When asked about teaching she replied that she has led a few free form art sessions but her "make it up as you go" approach doesn't really lend itself to teaching classes.

Cyndee has an on-line Etsy shop and sells gourds at a small number of shows. She is hoping to



Beehive Bird



Maiden

become involved with a co-op art gallery soon.

When not busy with gourds Cyndee can be found out in her sunny organic yard that is filled with fruit trees, vegetable and herb gardens and native plants. She and her husband are blessed with a large oak tree which they love.

Last spring they became beekeepers which ensures continuous pollination plus honey! They share their solar powered house with 2 cats and 2 dogs and Cyndee plays flute with a local community band and also plays Celtic folk harp.

To summarize Cyndee states "I am an artist, a gardener and a musician. I guess it shouldn't be a surprise that I create art from a plant in the heart of Silicon Valley."

To learn more about Cyndee Newick click here:  
<http://www.earthborn gourds.com/index.html>

Thank you Cyndee. We love your art and especially your sculptures. We would love to see future work so keep in touch. (Really like the fact that you garden organically and have bees. Maybe a few laying hens need a home in your garden too!)  
 Carolyn and Linda

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## In The Gourd Garden

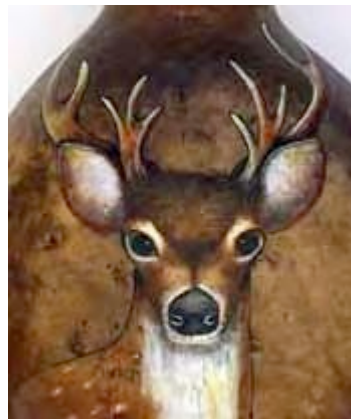


There is not much to do in the gourd garden in September other than sitting back to appreciate the beauty of nature and how, through the act of planting a tiny seed, you can end up with a gorgeous gourd laden vine. At this time of year the gourds are maturing and it is important to just leave them be and let them do their thing.

### Words of Advice for New Artists

"Keep it simple. Know when to stop. Pay attention to the shape of the gourd. Unless the gourd is a one of a kind shape, don't be afraid to mess it up. Experiment on gourd scraps first."

"Gourd figures and animals gain interest and personality from the shape of the gourd - the twist of a tail, the tilt of the head or body. Turn the gourd upside down and look at it from different angles. Work the flaws, mold stains and cracks into your design. Don't force a gourd into something it isn't. Join your local and regional gourd groups."



"I think the role of art always stays the same - providing functional objects, decorative art or social commentary. It is just the style, techniques and mediums that change."

"Probably the biggest challenge today is reaching consumers. Technology limitations affect the look of art in books and on the web. Art needs to be experienced in person to be truly appreciated."



**Things to know....**

1.) Do not, under any circumstances, cut the gourds from the vine until after the first hard frost. In many areas this normally happens at the end of October. In other words, as long as the leaves are green, do not harvest your gourds.

2.) Do not drill holes in the gourds thinking it will help them dry. Mother Nature has been drying gourds for centuries and she knows what she is doing.

Next month will be our last grow report and in it we will discuss the harvest and the storage of the green gourds over the winter. Until then enjoy the serenity of the early fall garden and store those memories for the long winter days that lay ahead.

**Out of the Mailbag**

Hi Carolyn and Linda,  
Thought I would share my gourd growing success story with you. I reside in the High Laurentiens; a 3 hour drive north of Montral in zone 3A. It is not easy with gardening here.

I tried gourd growing before with minimum success due to the short growing season but this year I thought I would try it again after purchasing different varieties from your place. (Purple Martin, canteen, cannonball, warties)

I grew them on a wooden arbour and plan to use the gourds for birdhouses or feeders. (I am a decorative painter.) Here are some photos of my success.

Suzanne Levesque



Dragon Keeper

"I have always felt that if I could figure out a way to combine my interest in music, gourds and gardening that I would be a happy camper. I am still pondering that."

**Gourd Sighting**

While having lunch at Nando's (delicious, spicy chicken) we happened to look up and there, on a shelf, were a few fine examples of engraved gourds. Here is one shelf displaying gourds, old wood & other artifacts.

To learn more about Nando's click here:

<http://www.nandoscanada.com/index1.html>

**It's A Dog's Life**

Suzanne's gourd garden is filled with hidden gems.



A work of art from Suzanne and Mother Nature



Thank you Suzanne for these fantastic photos. In the spring the birds are going to love their houses and feeders. You may want to green-peel a couple of these beauties. Instructions will be in next month's issue in "In The Gourd Garden."

Carolyn and Linda

PS Send photos of these once they are dried and

## Getting A New Dog Adoption VS A Breeder... What Is Best?



Royal was picked up as a stray in New Mexico. Gentle and dignified, she was the best.



Ella was picked up out of a ditch. It looked like she had been hit by a car and we didn't think she would live through the night. We didn't want her to die alone on the side of a country road so we brought her home, wrapped her in blankets and waited.

Turns out Ella was a little fighter and within a couple of weeks she was running around. A great dog - adopt if you can, it is the thing to do.

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Napoleon once said, "If you pull a dog from the gutter, and you feed him and make him well, it will never bite you. This is the significant difference between a dog and a human being."

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Some friends recently decided to get a dog and after a few weeks of research decided to adopt rather than going to a breeder.

For first time owners make sure you do some research before taking the plunge. It is

painted. We would love to see them.

We have always loved Suzanne's art. To see it for yourself click here:

<http://www.artamongfriends.ca/Susan%20Levesque%202012.htm>



A secret place in the garden.

## Looking Ahead: October 2012

Californian artist Carla Bratt, owner of Laughing Fish Studios, is an explorer in the arts. Creative energy sparks images of ocean life, nature and Asian life on fine art gourds and it is easy to get lost in her encaustic/college art. Carla is also a master at gyotaku, the art of fish printing. A talented artist and a fascinating woman, please welcome Carla Bratt in the October issue of *Gourd Fever*.



It is harvest time; a time that is both joyous and bittersweet. It will be the last article on gourd growing and we will finish up with tips on how to harvest and store the green gourds. We'll also talk about green peeling which many woodburners and carvers do. (Green peeling leaves a flawless shell.)

Don't forget about the Canadian Gourd Society "Gourd and Creative Art Show", held on September 22 - 23 at the Buckhorn Community

important to get a dog that fits your lifestyle. For example are you high energy doing 20 km runs every day or are you more of a laid back individual?

Here is a website that poses some good questions and gives good answers for those of you interested in adopting.

<http://www.canadianpetconnection.com/adopting-dog-dos-donts/>

## Music Pick of the Month



Summer is making a quick exit so here are a couple of tunes that always bring memories of the lazy, hazy summers of the past.

The Musician:  
Percy Faith

The Song:  
A Summer Place  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rt7SPm7N6D8&feature=fvwr>

and

The Musician:  
Janis Joplin

The Song:  
Summer In The City  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEy1B1NtzD8>

## Other Stuff



Centre in Buckhorn, Ontario. We'll be there so stop by and say hello. For details, including directions, click here:

<http://www.canadiangourdsociety.org/>

Carolyn Cooper and Linda Bond

PS Photos, comments and stories can be sent to [info@northerndipper.com](mailto:info@northerndipper.com)



As artists we always have a keen interest in new emerging art forms. Leaf carving is an art form created in China and the concept reminds us of gourd green-peeling in the sense that the outer most skin is scraped away from the surface.

What precision is needed to accomplish this from a leaf with a knife! It is delicate work and would require a steady hand and patience.

To learn more about leaf carving click here:

<http://www.treehugger.com/culture/leaf-carving-an-incredible-new-art-form.html>

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Published by:

Pam Grossi

Victoria, BC, V8R 2Z7

[bell.grossi@shaw.ca](mailto:bell.grossi@shaw.ca)



**Northern Dipper**

PO Box 1145

5376 County Road 56

Cookstown, Ontario