



YOU HEARD IT THROUGH

THE GOURD VINE

CHANNEL ISLANDS GOURD SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF THE CALIFORNIA AND AMERICAN GOURD SOCIETIES

Visit our website at

www.channelislandsgourdsociety.com

SEPTEMBER 2011

Presidents Message

With first place in the AG building and a peoples choice award along with 100 ribbons won by our members in the 2011 Ventura County fair we certainly can celebrate a successful year. Ribbon count is Donna Sandlin 1--Judy Ascherman 3--Karen Hibdon 4--Shirley Gorman 4--Tammy Burt 4--Luana Hunsinger 5--Janie Knappenberger 7--Elsie Cogswell 8--Charlene Smith 8--Carolyn McDonald 9--Cathy Agnew 11--Sharon Harvey 11--Stephanie Staie 12--Debbie Guzman 12. Congratulations to all.

Our annual pic-nic on Aug. 20th was a smashing success and our thanks go out to Elsie for hosting it even with a broken wing. Everyone had a good time, the food was great and the games fun. Those of you who missed it can make arrangements with Elsie to pick up your Halloween challenge. She provided everyone with 2 gourds with one to be brought back at the October meeting in a Halloween design. There will be prizes for Funniest, Scariest, Best Mask and Best Jack O-Lantern.

I am excited to tell you we have a new Historian. Karen Hibdon has volunteered to take over and I am sure she will do a great job. Thank you Karen.

At our Sept. meeting Anthony will take home the traveling gourd and lay out the pattern for us to complete. He will have categories for you to choose from and a general idea of where it will go. This should be a fun project and I hope all of you will participate. Each month a different member will take the gourd home and work their magic.

September also brings our next challenge. So let the fun begin. This will be a doll or figurine challenge. It doesn't have to be human just original. I will give each of you a gourd for the body along with two coyote gourds for a head if you want to use them.

(Pres. Message continued page 2)

CIGS Annual Picnic Fun for Everyone!!



Stephanie Staie, Debbie Gutzman and an unidentified husband are playing a game by holding a tongue depressor between their teeth, using only 1 hand stack 6 dice one on top of another, one at a time.



Annual Fall Harvest Festival

When: October 1 - October 31, 2011

Festival Hours: 9:00am - 6:00pm

Where: Moorpark Location

3370 Sunset Valley Road

Moorpark, CA 93021

Visit www.underwoodfamilyfarms.com

(Pres. Message Continued)

You can add, subtract or cut and carve, anything you can think of. This project will be brought back in November for show and tell.

We will discuss the cut and handle design for the Basket gourd and Tammy will take it home and make those beginning designs. This is the yearly money maker for CGS and will be filled with decorated egg gourds done by all our members. There is a prize for the best basket and I hope we can be in the running for that. These baskets made by all the Calif. patches will be raffled off in April at the patch leaders meeting in Visalia. Elsie has the tickets that you can purchase for a chance to win one of these beautiful baskets.

We now have a beautiful display in the E.P Foster Library on Main Street in Ventura. Unfortunately many of the gourds you sent with me were too tall for the display case and we could not use them. Luckily we had enough to fill the case and it looks beautiful. Thanks to Cheryl, Huei Mie and K for helping me with the set up.

At our Sept. meeting Debbie Guzman will to a demo on stippling. This is a fun technique and if you have never done it you will certainly enjoy this demo. Debbie is an accomplished gourd artist and will have lots of tips to help you get started.

THIS IS ALSO A RAFFLE MONTH SO BRING THOSE GOODIES IN and don't forget something for the food share box.

See you at the meeting
Charlene

CIGS Annual Picnic

CIGS picked a perfect afternoon for a BBQ and picnic this year. The weather was perfect and about 30 members and their husbands and family attended the the picnic. We want to thank Karens husband, Stan, who did the cooking and did a great job. We will invite him back again next year!!

Everyone had fun thanks to Helen Howlett who is the master mind behind all the games that were played.. And she comes up with some really crazy stuff!! (where does she get all these ideas??!!)

According to Helen here's the scoop on each one of the games pictured.

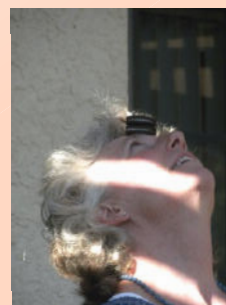
Helen also took all the pictures so we could see how funny we look!!

Stack cups one at a time into a pyramid and then break them down one at a time.



Bounce a 'to-go' cup into the upright position and then from the other side of the table, bounce a ping pong ball into the upright cup with only one bounce.

One at a time stack 8 'oreo' type cookies on your forehead





Underwood Family Farms Fall Harvest Festival

Underwood Family Farms' 14th Annual Fall Harvest Festival is around the bend! This year's Festival will feature all of the activities from past years plus many, many more.

Underwood is a great place to bring the family for a day of fun, food, music and special events. Every weekend highlights a different theme. So check out their website for more info: underwoodfamilyfarms.com

Again this year, CIGS has been invited to participate every Saturday and Sunday during the month of October. We will have a booth set up and do demos and sell our gourds. To sign up for a day or for the weekend please contact Shirley Gorman at gormansj@gmail.com or phone 805-643-3677

It's A Bird Tale

Nature has a way of improvising and using whatever is out there to survive. I have several net bags of gourds hanging in my back yard. To start with I had to hang them up high to keep the squirrels from eating them.

Several of them had holes compliments of the squirrels but I figured I could use them for something. Imagine my surprise when I discovered a little bird was building a nest in one of my gourds. She had made her own "bird house" with no help from me!

Well, my husband and I watched for several weeks as she came and went from this gourd bringing in her building materials. Then we noticed the eggs and then finally one day there were four little sets of eyes peeking out at us as we peered into the hole. Of course we had to be careful to watch out for mom as we sneaked a peek at the babies. We listened and watched for several weeks as the babies grew. We showed our grandchildren the babies and how mother nature works her magic.

Momma and babies are gone now. They, have flown out of the nest. I'm glad I was able to get a quick picture of them before they took off. I think I'll just leave that gourd where it is and see if we get any new residents.



Family Fun at the Faulkner Farm Pumpkin Patch

A Ventura County tradition continues at the Santa Paula Rotary Pumpkin Patch at Faulkner Farm. Experience great autumn weekends on acres of Bright Orange Pumpkins, a Red Corn Maze, and Towering Hay Pyramids to climb upon. Jump on a Hay Ride to learn about the area and see the Farm Animals.

Channel Islands Gourd Society has once again been requested to participate in the Pumpkin Patch with a booth for educational information and decorated gourds to sell.

The Pumpkin Patch is open every Saturday and Sunday in October! For more information visit : www.faulknerfarmpumpkinpatch.com

If you are interested in participating in this fun event please contact Shirley Gorman at gormansj@gmail.com or phone 805-643-3677



Look Closely!!!

1 2 3 4



Lagenaries

Growing, harvesting and drying gourds

The culture of the Lagenaria Gourd is the same as for the curcubita, except that they require a longer growing season and plenty of room to grow. Those experienced with growing the ornamental gourds have a surprise in store when they plant the hardshell or lagenaria gourds. They have large white, almost luminous night blooming flowers and a rampant growth habit which is absorbing to watch. The foliage is quite large and much more velvety in texture than that of the Curcubits and sometimes has almost a musty odor. As the plants resent being disturbed they will not grow for about two to three weeks if transplanted, but when they start to grow day to day growth is suddenly almost unbelievable. If uncontrolled, the vines will grow over almost anything within reach and bridge incredible gaps. The tendrils are especially interesting to watch. Place a wire, string or twig within reach of one and in an hours time it will start to encircle it. The plants are extremely tenacious. During the hurricane, a fence on which the lagenaria gourds were growing is reported to have bent to a 45 degree angle, but the gourd vines clung to the fence.

TIPS FOR GROWING

The time for planting lagenaria, or hardshell gourds varies with the climate and locality but they should be planted as soon as possible after danger of frost is past. Time can be gained by soaking the gourd seed three or four days before planting. This speeds up germination. Seeds can be started inside, but they should be planted outside within about two weeks or they will become weak and stunted. They should be hardened off before being set out. Like curcubits, they cannot withstand frost or cold damp ground. If set out early they must be protected. It does not pay to start them too early since being native to warm countries they respond to warm, sunny weather the best.

To insure germination, plant the seed eye down as there is less danger of rotting. If they are kept warm and moist they should germinate in about a week or ten days, and sometimes sooner if they have been soaked prior to planting. If started indoors allow one plant per pot and try to set out as soon as possible. If they stay in the pot too long they will become root bound and stunted. A light soil is recommended if starting seeds indoors.

A warm, protected spot with full sun should be selected for the lagenaria gourds permanent growing area and the ground should be well pulverized. If the soil is reasonably good no fertilizer is needed. If otherwise, manure or some good commercial fertilizer may be worked into the soil.

However if small gourds of the type planted are desired the fertilizer need not be added. Fertilizer high in nitrogen should not be added too late in the season as it tends to cause excessive growth and well rotted delays maturity of the gourds.

Cultivate the plants until they begin to run, then just pull weeds by hand. Do not cultivate too close to the plants as the feeder roots are shallow and run laterally. They may be cut or pulled loose by close cultivation and usually they will not fully recover from the injury. Gourds take lots of water when growing and should be watered thoroughly about every week in dry weather but less frequently towards the end of the season. By withholding water at this time the vines will harden off and the gourds will mature more readily.

The worst enemies of the lagenaria gourds are aphids, cucumber beetles, squash bugs, mildew and sometimes wilt. Control of these enemies must start early, probably as soon as the gourds come through the ground. A dust or spray of "Sevin" or other similar material gives about as good results as anything. Treatment should be done as needed, usually after each rain and until the gourds have vines two or three feet long. Do not put too much on at a time as the dust will sometimes burn the young gourds. After the gourds have started to develop they may need to be treated to prevent insects from eating them while they are young and tender. (Editors note: In California we have snails. I found that when the little gourd sprouts out of the ground it's a good idea to put some snail bait around the tender sprout to keep the snails from eating it) Another good policy to help control these enemies is to rotate the gourds from one area to another and also to burn all the vines after harvesting in the garden and piled up to burn when they are dry, as they are a good place for insects and disease to winter very. Be careful when burning as they sometimes explode and spread fire.

TRELLIS OR GROUND??

An effective way to grow the lagenaria, except the very large ones, is on an arbor or porch where the fruit can hang down. The gourds will be straight and have fewer spots and flat places on them than the ones that grow on the ground. Some of the large lagenarias such as the Zucca, African Bushel and the Nigerian Giant, cannot be grown on a trellis as they get too heavy and the vines cannot hold them up. If however a curve shape is desired of the smaller lagenaria, such as the dipper and marankas, the fruit should be grown on the ground.

(Continued next page)

(Lagenaries continued)

If grown on the ground, a board or straw should be placed under the gourds to prevent ground stains and rotting. The fruit should be watched to make sure it does not get caught in the trellis or a tendril wraps around it and spoils the shape of the fruit. The fruit can be shaped to an extent on hot humid days by bending a little each day and holding in place with twine or a cloth, being careful not to leave it too long as it will leave a scar on the gourd.

HARVESTING – DRYING – CLEANING

The time for harvesting gourds is always a question. Lagenaria gourds take longer to mature than the cucurbits. A lagenaria should not be harvested until after the tendril on the vine next to the stem of the gourd is dead. The longer the gourds can be left on the vine without damage from insects, disease or weather the more mature they become. If wanted for exhibit they should be harvested before the first frost or shortly after the first light frost, as frost will sometimes discolor the gourds. If the gourds are not wanted until later, they may be left on the vines to weather. However, if they are wanted for seed they should not freeze. It is best to cut the fruit from the vine with pruning shears, allowing the stem to remain on the ground. Do not handle the gourd by the stem as it will break off easily.

After harvesting, the gourds should be washed thoroughly and then rinsed in warm water to which a small amount of household disinfectant has been added. The clean gourds should be hung or set in a dry, well ventilated place, careful watch kept to see that no fungus has a chance to spread. Any sign of fungus should be wiped off with a cloth. The gourds should be turned every few days to aid drying and to prevent shriveling, soft spots or uneven drying.

When fully dry, gourds will be lightweight, the seeds will rattle and the gourds will be brown in color. Once they are well cured, the fruit can be placed in hot water for a few minutes and then scrape off the outer film. Any roughness should be rubbed with fine sandpaper until a clean smooth surface is attained. After sanding, wipe clean with a damp cloth. When the gourds have completely dried again they can be painted, waxed or shellacked. A high grade floor, car or furniture paste wax is preferred to shellac or varnish as the later may change the color of the gourd. A high glossy surface does not have a natural appearance. If the gourds are to be cut, it is easier to cut them while still damp from cleaning, using a fine tooth saw and not trying to cut too rapidly. Any rough edges left may be smoothed with sandpaper or steel wool.

The most important factor in curing gourds is time. They cannot be hurried. Weeks or even months must be allowed for them to cure properly before any decoration is attempted. Do not worry if the gourds mold. This means that the gourds are mature. As long as they don't get soft spots or decay they will be fine. Holes bored in either end to hasten the drying is also a mistake as this will permit disease organisms to enter.

Happy Gourding,
By John Stevens AGS

Outreach Classes

CIGS has three dates for classes at three different facilities. Our outreach program is really catching on and folks are finding out how much fun it is to play gourds!!

Two classes on Oct.12 at Oceanview Pavilion in Port Hueneme 10-11 and 11-12:00.

Since the Oceanview class is so close to Halloween I thought we might do small to medium size jack-o-lanterns. If you have any gourds you would like to donate please let me know.

Two Classes on Nov. 18 at ARC of Simi Valley at 10:45 & 1:00

With this being close to Thanksgiving we could do a pumpkin with leaves for a Thanksgiving decoration.

If you would like to donate a cleaned gourd please let me know. Both of these facilities aid physically and mentally challenged young adults.

Nov. 5 at Simi Valley Sr. Center -a womens group wants us to give a talk and do a Christmas ornament project with them. Karen Hibdon has the lead on this project and if you would like to come and help with any of these classes listed above, please contact me at themimi@roadrunner.com or 805-796-1612.

Thanks,
Cathy

Channel Islands Gourd Society
Elsie Cogswell, Treasurer
11030 E. Las Posas Rd.
Santa Rosa Valley, CA 93012

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Upcoming Events

- Sept. 1-30 Gourd Art Display at E.P.Foster
Library in Ventura
- Sept. 21 Regular CIGS Meeting
Another Challenge
- October Every weekend Underwood
Farms in Moorpark and Faulkner
Farms in Santa Paula

Channel Islands Gourd Society is dedicated to the education and instruction of those persons interested in the culture, use, history, horticulture and/or crafting of gourds.

We meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Santa Rosa Valley Community Clubhouse 11701 E. Las Posas Road, Santa Rosa Valley (Camarillo) CA
For more information contact:

President: Charlene Smith, 805-649-9868 or
ojairedhead@hotmail.com

VP. Anthony Hepton
heptonpac@aol.com

Editor: Cathy Agnew 805-796-1612 or
themimi@roadrunner.com

