

2023 Workshop Leaders

Altan Erginkoc – Altan is a Construction Project Manager, and has been working on gourds for about five years. He was inspired by gourd lamps made by artisans from Turkey and Japan. Alton says, “my gourd lamps are made from different regions around the world. Every gourd is created unique by nature, it is impossible to make an exact replica. I only use the natural gourd and transform it into lampshades. The thicker the gourd, the better the artwork and durability.” Alton wants to bring sustainable and environmentally acceptable lampshades into living spaces instead of plastic. His hope is to share these ideas with you to joyously transform you and your living space.

Christie DeLamater – Christie taught water color and pen and ink with oils for many years in the decorative arts field. Christie says, “a few years ago I found a book about gourds. I knew I had to try this new canvas for my artwork. I love the many different techniques one can do with gourds.”

James Anspach – Jim, and his wife Charlene, joined the PA Gourd Society about 6 years ago because Charlene wanted to learn more about working with gourds in various ways. Jim accompanied her to a class where they learned how to weave a basket from instructor, Suzi Nonn. Jim took an interest in this craft and has been making baskets ever since, and now enjoys traveling and doing basket weaving classes with others.

Joni Hasselbach - Joni fell into the love of gourds when her husband Paul grew their first gourd. She is an administrator of the OGS Facebook page and owner (along with her husband, Paul) of a paint your own pottery studio in Fremont, Ohio called, "Pottery Perfection Done Your Way." There, she teaches gourd classes with folks of all ages. Joni says, “We love giving people experiences and memories.” They have also opened a Glass Fusion studio called. Joni and Paul both enjoy gourd!

Miriam Fankhauser - Miriam has taught Native American culture and literature for several years at the university level. She was taught to weave dream catchers by a Native American woman and given permission to do so. Participating in powwows, she has made dream catchers since the early 2000s. Miriam incorporates Native American music into the background of her workshops and will talk about Native American culture as questions or time allow.

Vikkie Mustad - Vikkie has been an active member of the Ohio Gourd Society since 2006 and is current Editor of the Gourd Greetings Newsletter. She is a self-taught gourd farmer, artist and instructor. Vikkie loves learning and has traveled the world in search of unique gourd experiences.