

President's Message

I Love Luffa—The 2010 Luffa Challenge

By Karen. K. Niemeyer

For the remainder of our Indiana winter I am challenging readers of *The Tendril* to complete a gourd craft using luffa, either the long or the mini-ball luffa.

Quality photographs, not the entry itself, are due to me, either by email (<u>niemeyer@frontiernet.net</u>) or by mailing to 1217 Wesley Court, Thorntown, IN 46071-8955. The deadline for entries is March 1, and the top two winners in each category will receive one-year free memberships to the Indiana Gourd Society.

There will be four categories: mini ball, individual project; mini ball, team project; long luffa, individual project; long luffa, team project.

Since this is a new venture, photos of projects completed in previous years may be submitted. This is not a photography contest, but all photos should be of high resolution with good detail, lighting, and an uncluttered background.

Judges will see the pictures with no artist's name attached and will see only the photographs.

Winners will be announced and photos reproduced in the next issue of *The Tendril*.

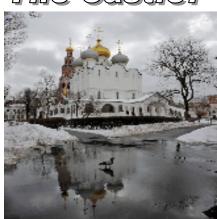
A one-paragraph statement about the entered gourd and about the artist should be included.

If a self-addressed, stamped envelope is included, mailed photos will be returned after publication.

All who submit entries are invited to bring them to the May 22 spring meeting so that the luffa projects may be enjoyed "in the flesh."

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Frozen In - In The Castle?



Graff Gourds!

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How Do J Dry Gourds?

By Ron Bair

This is a question that is asked a lot. Which in turn causes another question to be asked - What do you want to do with them? Or what do you want them to look like when they are dried? First of all, you need to be sure you have fully mature gourds. A fully mature gourd has been allowed to grow the entire required season. It should be real firm and solid. Give it a pressure test, try to squeeze it with your thumb and fingers. A mature gourd should not allow any depression. Gourds are 95% to 99% water when harvested. Remember - In working with gourds, very seldom is there methods that work 100% every time. However, some methods do work extremely better than others. In some cases, methods with good results may be as low as 50%, such as in green-scraping, a method referred to as "trying to fool Mother Nature".

The finish product - "the dried gourd"- The seeds will normally rattle inside the gourd when the gourd is pounded against the heel of your palm. However, the seeds will not always rattle inside the gourd when they are dry. The dried gourd that you desire makes a difference as to how you want to dry it. Do you want a dark colored gourd with mottling effects? Do you just want a dark colored gourd? Or, do you want a light colored gourd with little or no mottling effects? Mottling effects

are created by mold growing on the gourd as it dries. Some folks think that when the mold appears it is getting rotten and want to throw it out. NOT TRUE - the mold is the natural drying process that takes place in a warm environment as the moisture leaves the gourd. Only if the gourd shrivels and wrinkles and becomes mushy it is in the rotting process, and this is usually because of an immature gourd.

To achieve a dark colored gourd with mottling effects, simply bring it in out of the weather where it won't freeze. Set it where the air can circulate around it as much as possible. Some folks will use a wire mesh fastened to a frame work, or refrigerator racks setting up on saw horses or such, so that air can get under it as well as around it. Some folks will hang them in a mesh sack such as an onion or potato sack. Rotate them, or shake them around if in a mesh sack, at least once a week or in some instances more often. Some of the Lagenarias, commonly known as hardshells, will have a tendency to lighten in color as they begin to dry, sometimes to almost a grayish color... As the gourd begins to dry out, mold will appear. This can be left in place to acquire the largest amount of mottling effects possible or, can be wiped off with a soapy water solution and rinsed off with tap water and dried

(Continued on page 5)

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REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS FROM IGS MEMBERS!

SPRING ELECTIONS for your IGS Board are coming soon! The positions for which nomination will be accepted are President, 1st.Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Membership, and Director 1, and Director 2. Please submit the names of members you wish to nominate, along with each of the positions to either of the following three members of the Nominating Committee as shown below.

Who can be nominated? Any standing member of IGS may be nominated for one of these opening positions as long as they are not currently an officer of IGS.

Rich Rodriguez (rich8141@embarqmail.com)

Delaina DeHaven (jerdel@remconline.net)

Ida Kennedy (ikennedy5@msn.com)

(Continued from page 1)

I was first attracted to the Indiana State Fair booth of the Indiana Gourd Society when I saw a vest, high on a wall, decorated with cross sections of the long luffa gourd.

It turned out to be a project by Helen Parker, but it was enough to cause my husband and me to pause at the booth, look at all the other entries, pick up information and attend the Ohio Gourd Show that October, buy and plant seeds, then join the Indiana Gourd Society.

The following 13 years are history—a pleasant one.

I'll look forward to seeing luffa projects' photographs in the near future.



2010 Spring Meeting Date Change

As some of you may be aware, the date for the 2010 Spring Meeting has been changed to May 22, 2010.

The event will still at the 4-H fairgrounds in Hancock County (Greenfield).

First vice-president Emily Wallace is the chair of this event.

Contact Emily at

Phone: 765-623-0621 or eMail: emmewal@aol.com.

We'll have more information as time progresses.

A Death in our Gourd Family

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of IGS member Mary Miller of El-wood. She was also a member of the Pendleton and Alexandria Garden Clubs. She held a bachelor's degree in education, and taught many years in both the Monroe County area and in Elwood. Her talents, knowledge and entries at the IGS state gourd show will be missed. She married HoneyBear in 1947, together they had five children.

Meet Our Members

Helen and Lee Parker

By Ruth Moorhead



If you were to look at the historical beginnings of the Indiana Gourd Society, you would find that the Parkers were involved from the very first.

Helen knew Jim Story through garden club and it was she who "dragged" Lee to that first organizational meeting of what would be called The Hoosier Gourd Society. At that meeting Lee was elected Vice-President. Helen was already growing bushel gourds on their 55 acre farm, with seed from Shumway Seed Company, and those gourd plants had overtaken her garden. Lee served as President of the gourd society in 1993.

Their involvement had a number of other "firsts". It was the Parkers who named our newsletter "The Tendril". The first issue was mailed in May of 1993. Lee wrote it as a way to keep all members informed of Society events, ideas and gourd information in general and make them feel an important part of the new organization and encourage them to participate. It was the president communicating with each member. Ron Bair wrote his own as did John Sturgeon. An editor came later.

In August of 1993 they set up the first exhibit booth at the Indiana State Fair with gourds loaned by Rosemary Dougherty, Jim Story and others. They wrote and printed the first tri-fold brochure about gourds and the new society to hand out at this booth. Each time they went to check on the booth a crowd quickly gathered and they answered questions until they were hoarse to interested people, most of whom had never heard of gourds.

Because they are savers they have kept copies of im-

portant documents of the gourd society even though there is an official Historian. Lee has helped with dried gourd judging at the state show and also the Kentucky show. Although growing was their forte, Lee was good at cutting, sometimes his own pattern and sometimes what Helen wanted and sometimes in consultation. Helen enjoys both flower arranging with gourds, and many types of crafting with gourds.

What you don't know....Lee gradated from Morgantown High School and was in the Army Air Corps from May '44 until June of '46. He graduated from Tri State College in Angola, IN with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He worked at Allison in Indianapolis and AC Spark Plug in Milwaukee. During his employment at AC the family lived in Boston where he spent one year with the Apollo Space program at MIT as industrial support engineer. AC manufactured gyroscope designs by MIT for those space missions. Lee transferred back to Allison Division, in Indianapolis in 1964. Later Lee worked for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Engineering Division until retirement in 1992.

Helen grew up on a farm in Allen County and trained as a nurse at Methodist Hospital School of Nursing in Indianapolis. She met Lee through a nursing friend as a blind date. She laughingly said, "I just married him because he drove a convertible." Unfortunately the convertible got traded in on a compact. When the boys got older she worked as a floor nurse at Wishard Hospital in Indy, (helping keep Ruth Moorhead alive in 1982.) She was a wonderful nurse.

After Lee transferred back to Indiana they bought a 55 acre farm in Morgan County, raising Shorthorn cattle, pasture, hay and garden. Helen canned or froze everything from the garden, and tended to their two sons, Paul Michael, and Mark Andrew.

They have been married for 50 years and have two grandsons in Denver. Two years ago they sold the farm and now live in a lovely retirement village in Greenwood where they have been hosts to several gourd patch and organizational meetings. When asked what they most enjoy about the gourd society, they answer, "the people".

If you would like to see a "Meet Our Members" for a particular person please drop a note to the Editor of *The Tendril* and I will forward the information to our Interviewer.

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with a towel. Some folks will use a bleach solution made of 1 part bleach and 10 parts water-instead of soapy water to help kill the mold. NOTE - Do not use hot water with bleach. This bleach mixture can be stored in a jug and used as needed, shake well before using. If you should choose to leave the mold on the gourd until the gourd is completely dried out, in order to gain all the mottling effects possible, the gourd should then be submerged in a tub of warm water, soapy water, or the bleach mixture solution, and scrubbed with a stiff brush or a scouring pad to help remove the mold and the skin. The skin must be removed before crafting can begin. Sometimes a paring knife, a pocket knife, or a large dull knife may be needed to scrape stubborn skin off Try to scrape the gourd in a vertical pattern (from stem to blossom end).

This usually works faster and is more efficient, and less apt to gouge the gourd or leave scraping marks. The skin will normally come off a wet dried gourd easier than a fully dried gourd. This is why it is recommended to soak in a tub of water. Some folks will take gourds outside and allow them to sit in the rain to help loosen the skin. Even though the mold is wiped off periodically, you will probably still have mottling effects. These will make some real attractive designs. This helps enhance the appearance on gourd dishes, dippers, birdhouses, and other

varieties of gourd works. Also by using this method of bringing them in out of the weather and not allowing them to freeze, the seeds can be removed when cut open and can be planted later. Remember – when saving seeds. if the gourds you are working with weren't grown in isolation or hand pollinated (which most of them aren't), the seeds will be cross-pollinated with the other varieties of gourds they were grown nearby and your seeds will be a mixture of these varieties. However, these crosspollinated gourd seeds can produce some real interesting looking gourds, especially for craft work. The finish color of a dried gourd is also determined on how much sunlight is available during the drying process. If the gourds are kept in a dark basement, usually their color will be darker. Using this drying process, gourds will take anywhere from I month to 6 months or more to dry. Larger gourds require more time than smaller ones generally.

To achieve a dark colored gourd with little or no mottling effects you can leave the gourds outside and let them freeze. Most of the time, these will not mold under these conditions. Again, these must be fully mature gourds to get good results. Set the gourds upon a trellis, hang in mesh bags, or spread out on wire racks or such to allow for air circulation around them. Allowing them to freeze dry will have a tendency to make the shells more

(Continued on page 7)

Joyce Dankowski
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Your local supplier for your gourd crafting needs.

We now are a Distributor for MicroLux Saws, Drills, Blades, and Transformers. Also new are Pine Needles in natural and colors along with Fiebing's Dyes. All added to our regular line of Feathers, Gold Leafing, Rivets, Swarovski Crystals and Lacing. Let us know your needs and we'll help you get your supplies.

State Fair 2010

Update - Year of Pigs!

We have received word that the theme of the 2010 state fair has been changed to be "Year of Pigs" The fair will run from Aug 6-22, 2010. We are in need of volunteers to help meet and talk with fairgoers, helpers for setup/teardown, and demonstrators. We will have a sign-up form in the Tendril later for you to identify when you can help. Workers get a free pass into the fair for their efforts.

Your state fair co-chairs, Jesse, Loretta and Phil

Did you pick up the trick of using the GLAD Press'n Seal method of transferring a pattern to your gourds? If so, you have a roll available.

Here's another trick, especially if your gourds are stored in an outside shed and the knob/lock freezes shut. Use your barbecue lighter to push a flame into the lock to thaw it out then place a small section of Press'n Seal over the knob and twist it into place. Easy to remove for the key and to replace, sticking to itself again to form a pocket around the knob. I've had the same piece in place on a garage door knob through three weeks of very cold weather and haven't had a problem with a freeze up since it was applied.

Jesse

IGS 2010 Show Workshops

Hello everyone. I hope you are getting as excited as I am about the spring show coming soon. We have a lot of great classes scheduled so I hope you will be able to attend some of them. I think we have something for everyone. Look through your show book when you get a chance and review what the classes are going to be or go on the internet and pull up the Indiana Gourd Society website and check them out there. I am looking forward to another enjoyable year with everyone.

Ida Kennedy, Workshop chairperson

ikennedy5@msn.com

2010 Fall Meeting

Oct 30, 2010 Hendrix County (Danville, IN)

The 2010 Fall Festival and Membership Meeting is moving!! We are going to Hendrix Co in Danville to their exposition center / conference center.

More information will be announced, but we wanted you to put this date on your schedule. This is a great opportunity to move into the west side of Indianapolis and try to gather new members.

Story Gourd Patch Meeting **Pendleton, Indiana**

Sunday, February 21st - 2:00 PM to 4 PM

Near or far from us you're welcome to join in on our fun afternoons of gourd crafting

For information please call or eMail Emily at contacts shown below.

emmewal@aol.com or Phone: 765-623-0621

New Class Added to Show Exhibits

We are adding a new class (18A) to the show schedule. This is necessary to allow exhibitors who do not fit the classes 15-18 to enter manipulated gourds.

The description of class 18A is:

Any other manipulated gourd not fitting in classes 15-18.

After the IGS judging by class, we will then judge classes 15 to 18A together for a blue ribbon winner that can be entered in the AGS Jim Story competition at the national level. Exhibitors will be responsible for all documentation and paperwork to enter at the AGS level.

(Continued from page 5)

durable, especially with the ornamentals. The skin will become flaky toward the end of the drying process and can usually be removed fairly easy soaking them in warm water and using a scrub brush or scouring pad. Normally it takes until Spring time before the gourds are dry enough to work with. In this freezing process, the embryo inside the seeds will usually be ruined and the seeds will not germinate. The seeds may still be of a good enough quality to make necklaces and used for other gourd craft work.

To achieve a light colored gourd with little or no mottling effects this requires a lot different drying process known as "green-scraping". Using this method you are "trying to fool Mother Nature" by hurrying up the drying process. Scrape the gourds in a vertical pattern with a knife when the gourd is still green. Ornamentals with all their colors are still considered to be green. A fully mature gourd is most important in this process. Some folks will wait till they see that first speck of mold before they begin to scrape green gourds, noting that it is starting to dry. Scrape the green skin with a paring knife or with large gourds a heavy duty utensil may be needed such as an edge of a putty knife or a dull fishermen's' fillet knife.

Try to use an edge that is not real sharp to help avoid gouging and digging into the shell. After scraping all the skin off, scrub under water with a scouring pad to help remove small particles of skin still on the gourd, wash with soapy water, rinse with tap water and dry with a towel. Now, to help get the real light tan finished color of the shell, set the scraped green gourd outside in bright sunlight preferably on a breezy day, providing it's above freezing and there isn't a wind chill factor below freezing. The most desirable temperatures would be 550 to 800.

Rotate these very often to get consistent drying results. With the small gourds rotate as often as every 2 hours, and with the larger ones rotate them a couple times

a day. Bring them inside before any dew sets in and/or before it rains. Keep the gourds as dry as possible. The bright sunlight will make the gourds a lighter color. The breeze will help them dry out quicker. Wipe any mold off that appears with the bleach solution, rinse, and dry. Put these gourds outside as much as feasibly possible. If unable to set outside, try and set them inside on paper or cardboard in the sunlight and rotate them often. Some folks set them near heat to help speed up the drying process.

The drying process inside may take longer than outside because of the lack of a breezy wind to help dry them out. However, a fan can be used to substitute for this. The method of green-scraping at times may cause the gourds to shrivel and collapse, because of the speedy drying process. After the gourd is completely dry, it can be cut and the seeds removed if so desired. The seeds should be of good quality and should be able to be planted. Using this drying process gourds have been known to dry as quickly as 2 weeks with the smaller ones, and about 6 weeks with some of the larger ones.

There are other methods of drying also. Some folks will drill or cut holes in them when they are green to aid in the drying process. This can invite pests and diseases inside the gourd and ruin the seeds and possibly ruin the gourd too. Other folks have set them immediately beside a heat source such as a heat register or wood stove to help speed up the drying process. I have heard of other processes too, such as setting them in freezers and even boiling them. I have not had any experience with any of these methods.

The methods I have gone into detail about are the ones I'm familiar with and am willing to share with you, (marked #). These are not the only drying methods that work to achieve the finished product "the dried gourd", but these are the ones I have experienced, and I hope this helps some of you. These methods will work for both the ornamentals and the hardshells. Try some experimenting of your own. Gourds are a lot of fun and you have numer-

So, looking forward to Spring 2010, what do your gourds need? Lots of good soil, lots of water, good drainage, and lots of care.

Here is a site I found while looking for information for The Tendril that will help beginners in their efforts to cultivate that perfect gourd. http://www.entrancesbysandy.com/id261.htm

This is a short article chock full of information from a grower. Helpful hints and how to's for your soil preparation, fertilization, and planting are included.

There is also a link about drip irrigation and the parts and pieces required if you want to go to that extent with the care for your gourds.

JESSE



To print a nice full page copy of the flyer above please go to our IGS Web Site at the link shown below. http://www.indianagourdsociety.org/publicity/2010/IGS_Publicity_01_16_10.pdf

Gourd Cleaning

There are two methods that I use: (1) Green clean. (2) Clean when dry. I use these methods for both ornamentals and hardshells. Green cleaning is the scraping the skin from green (fresh) gourds prior to the start of the curing process. Dry cleaning is done after gourds dry. I need to add that gourds can be cleaned anytime during the curing (drying) process. There is a stage in the drying process when the skin comes off easily. Observe gourds being cured outside and when the skin is soft and comes off in large pieces it is a good time to clean. Advantages of green cleaning are: You get gourds free of mold spots; Gourds dry fast. I have had green cleaned gourds dry in four weeks.

Green cleaning tips: It is important to select fully mature gourds because immature gourds will shrivel and crack during the drying process. Green cleaned gourds dry rapidly and cause cracking, & shriveling. With experience you will learn to read gourds, enabling you to determine which ones are mature. To remove the skin, scrape with a pocket or paring knife. The stem has a skin too which should be removed by scraping. When the scraping procedure is complete, wash (scrub) the gourd in warm, soap sudsy water with a copper or steel scouring pad to remove fine skin particles missed in the scraping process.

<u>Gourd stem tips:</u> Sometimes it takes me as long to clean a gourd stem as it does the gourd. I save gourd stems as replacements for lost or weak stems. When I judge gourds particular attention is paid to the stems. The appearance of a gourd stem can be enhanced by proper cleaning, sanding and cutting tip at an angle. Look at gourd stems on craft in gourd shows and see which ones are well groomed and those that are not.

A side note to the above article: It is usually a requirement of most classes that your gourds have at least a 1" portion of the stem left on the gourd for competition purposes. READ THE RULES before you cut those stems off!

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Seed Harvesting - Seed Purchasing - Seed Packaging

Well, it is the season to harvest seeds, purchase what we cannot supply on our own, and then have another packaging party.

Seeds have been flying through the mail lately to Steve Sullivan for germination studies on what is left in inventory.

Steve has also been busy on some of these really cold days getting a head start on his Seed Harvesting Day set for the Thorntown Public Library on Saturday, February 6th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM to extract, clean, wash down, and do a rough estimate of seeds from the gourds resulting from the Pure Seed Project. A list of volunteers has already been set, so this meeting is covered for labor.

Steve sent two pictures of some of his work and I thought you should see these. This is a time consuming task and I'm sure the drying process leaves an odor as well. After his bulk packaging is complete Steve sends the seeds to me so that I have time to generate all of the labels necessary for our Seed Packaging Day at the Thorntown Public Library. We have changed the date of this to Saturday, March 6th, 2010.





As usual we invite all of you to join in on the packaging. This is labor intensive as we have to pen in the new germination rates on all of the remaining inventory as well as counting, packaging, and labeling all of the new inventory from the bulk packages.

We usually have a carry in lunch after the packaging and the Board holds a meeting after all the work is finished.

Everyone else then has time to catch up with what they have all been doing through these cold winter days.

Come by and join the fun!

JESSE

Going Green Tips

Every ton of mixed paper recycled can save the energy equivalent of 185 gal. of gasoline.



Recycling just 1 ton of aluminum cans conserves the equivalent of 1,665 gal. of gasoline.

By recycling & composting 83 million tons of municipal solid waste, we reduced carbon dioxide emissions by an amount equivalent to removing more than 33 million cars from the road, & we saved an amount of energy equivalent to 10.2 billion gallons of gasoline.

From: http://life.familyeducation.com/energy-resources/humans-and-environment/56571.html One replacement CFL bulb will save #30 in electric costs over its lifetime. Multiply that by the total number of light bulbs your replace and you're talking about enormous savings.

From: same site as above. Another major contributor to phantom load is an AC-DC converter, like the charger for a cell phone or an iPod. Plug in these chargers only when you need them, and you'll make a noticeable difference on your electric bill.

From: same site as above. The benefits of a digital thermostat are twofold. One is that you can set the exact temperature, and note more clearly the effect that reducing your home's temperature even a degree or two can have on your heating bill. Second is that you can automatically set your house to lower its own temperature during the times you're not usually there—it will do the work for you!

Gourd Happenings In Our Gourdgeous World

February 12-14: Southern IL Gourd Event in Mount Vernon Free gourd seminar to the general public on February 12, 2010 entitled "All About Gourds" (growing, history, crafts, etc.) around noon and will also on Saturday, February 13 around 6 p.m. Workshops, family fun, gourd art in vendor booths. See http://americangourdsociety.org/ILGS/2010_feb_event.html for details

March 6, 2010 - IGS Seed Packing Day INOTICE: This is a date change in Thorntown at the Public Library. Many hands make quick work of the packaging, after which we have lunch with the carry ins. It's a relaxed time to meet other members without the hassle of manning a booth or chairing an event. Come join us, but, check the Web Site for specifics.

April 4, 2010 - Wisconsin Gourd Festival: GOURDS GONE WILD!! 9am - 4pm Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison, WI. Details on website

April 18, 2010 - The Ghost Creek Gourd Festival is sponsored by the South Carolina Gourd Society, Ghost Creek Gourds, and TurtleFeathers. There will be classes, demonstrations, food, and entertainment. Gourd Art and supplies will be available for sale. The annual meeting of the SC Gourd Society will take place at the fest. More information will be on the SC Gourd Society website at www.scgourdsociety.com

IGS State Gourd Show

April 9/10/11, 2010 - St. Joseph County Fairgrounds, 5117 S.

Ironwood Rd, South Bend, IN 46614 Map on Web Site Admission: \$6 for entire weekend, open to public Large gourd competition, Vendors, IGS Gourd store, Gourd Seeds Demonstrations, kids booth, Auction Saturday and Sunday For additional info: Alice Pawlowski, 219-942-2529 or e-mail: showchair@indianagourdsociety.org [An IGS Sponsored Event]

IGS Spring Membership Meeting and Festival
May 22, 2010 - 9am - 3pm NOTICE: This is a date change
Hancock Co. 4-H Fairgrounds, Greenfield, IN
Classes, Vendors, Auction, IGS Gourd store, Gourd Seeds and
Plants - Come, Purchase your lunch and make it a day!
Membership Meeting will be held at 2:30-4pm
For additional information: Emily Wallace, Ph 765 623 0621 or email: emmewal [at] aol.com [An IGS Sponsored Event]

IGS Fall Membership Meeting and Festival Oct 30, 2010 Hendrix County (Danville, IN)

The 2010 Fall Festival and Membership Meeting is moving!! We are going to Hendrix Co in Danville to their exposition center / conference center. More information will be forthcoming.

[An IGS Sponsored Event]

THE TENDRIL
P.O. BOX 822
MARION, IN 46952

INDIANA GOURD SOCIETY, INC.

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eMail editor@indianagourdsociety.com

<u>Change of Addresses—Mail To:</u>
Pat Moore - Membership Sec'y
Indiana Gourd Society
691 W. Veach Road

Bloomingdale, IN 47832 Phone: 765-597-2049 eMail pmoore@hughes.net

Advertising / Rates: Mail Checks to: Phil Moorhead, Treasurer &

Tendril Publisher

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eMail: igs tendril ads@yahoo.com

President, Indiana Gourd Society

Karen K. Niemeyer 1217 Wesley

Thorntown, IN 46071-8955 Telephone: 765-436-7518 Fax: 765-436-7011

eMail: kniemeyer@thorntown.lib.in.us

NEW submissions due March 15, 2010 for the next Tendril Issue!

ADS ARE TO BE PREPAID. AD SUBMISSIONS MUST BE IN JPEG FORMAT.

All submissions welcome! <u>ARTI-CLES MUST BE IN MS WORD</u> 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.

CHECK EXPIRATION DATE
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MAY BE YOUR LAST ISSUE

IGS Advertising Rates

2" Column \$10 1/4 page \$15 1/3 page \$22.50

1/2 PAGE \$30 Full page \$60

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Director - Ida Kennedy - ikennedy5@msn.com

Director - Rich Rodriguez-rich8141@embarqmail.com
Director - Delania DeHaven - jerdel@remconline.net
Director - Jesse Glessner - jessgless@comcast.net
Director - Carolyn Rushton - crrush57@yahoo.com