September 2026

Festival News

Ready, Set, Go, Go, Go!

As September settles in, all our months of planning, cleaning, carving, and crafting are finally coming to life for our long-awaited September festival. The moment the doors open and visitors catch their first look at what our passion and imagination can transform from a simple dried gourd, every bit of shared hard work, sawdust, and laughter becomes entirely worth it. A heartfelt thank you to each of you-your creative spark, boundless energy, and dedicated spirit are the true heartbeat of the vibrant Idaho Gourd Society.

September 18-20, 2026

Franz Witte Garden Center, 20005 11th Ave. N., Nampa, Idaho

Our September membership meeting will be held at Franz Witte on Saturday, Sept. 12. That ought to get us all in the mood for the festival. If you have any last-minute donations for the Gourd Store or Silent Auction, bring them to the membership meeting.

Speaking of donations, Gordy's Goodies is out of things for our Saturday drawings. Bring any donations for Gordy's Goodies to the membership meeting on Saturday, Sept. 12.

Volunteer Help is Needed

Think about ways you may support the festival. Each area of the festival needs volunteers to make it happen. From set-up to the Gourd Store, Silent Auction, Competition Staging, Judging, Security, Welcome Table, Make & Take, and Demos.

Name Tags are prepared for all vendors and volunteers. Pick up your personalized name tag at the Gourd Store. Return your name tag to the gourd store at the end of the festival.

Competition

Festival competition registration is now open, and members are encouraged to prepare entries early so staging, judging, and check-in can run smoothly.

This is an AGS sanctioned competition, following AGS guidelines. You can find the prospectus and registration form on the website at idahogourdsociety.org

IDGS members who pre-register can enter three (3) for free. After September 12th entry fee is $3 for members.

Intake/registration check-in for competition pieces is on Thursday Sept. 17, 9:00 am-1:00 pm.

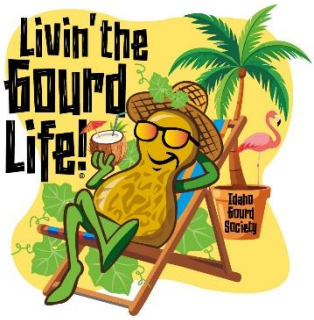
Please send your registration forms in early to Corlis. Information is on the registration form. It will help Corlis prepare the cards for staging.

Randy Lentell is actively seeking volunteers for the judging teams and clerk positions. Judging occurs on Thursday from 1:00 till 6:00. Sandwiches will be provided for volunteer judges & clerks. Please contact Randy if you can help: *boiserandy34@gmail.com*

We don't hide our *Crazy*...We *parade* It!

We will be having the parade again this year--Saturday, Sept. 19. Think, design, create something wearable with gourds being a part of your wearable art.

If you are working at booth or other location, we will help cover your spot for the parade. The parade is relatively short in duration-you should be back at your booth within a half hour. On Saturday morning, stop by the Gourd Store to get your parade number and a parade flag – Franz Witte employees will be voting on their favorite apparel. $25 is awarded to the winner, presented at the Festival Dinner.



Festival T-Shirts

Check out our newest line of IDGS T-Shirts

Shelly Garber (Texas) will be a vendor at the festival. She will be printing custom made T-shirts. The design was created by our very own Helena Freillich. The prices of the shirts are $25 for small, medium, & large. $30 for xl and up. Stop by her booth, pick out your size and color, and she will make the T-shirt as you wait.

Make & Take

Just the cutest little monsters that you will ever see! Janet and her team of helpers have prepared several projects for the ***free*** make & take area at the festival. Be sure to invite your friends and family to the festival. They just might like to have some fun, get creative and make a monster, a bug, a fairy wand, or a hot air balloon.

Feeling Hungry?

Food Vendors at the festival

- Friday: Idaho Poe BBQ, Perfect Sips, & Great Harvest Bakery
- Saturday: Pastry Parlor & A3 Caribbean Food
- Sunday: 7th Heaven Dawgs & La Finca Brew

Light snacks and water will be available for Festival volunteers and vendors

Festival Banquet

Let's celebrate together at the annual festival banquet at Jade's Garden in Nampa. Join us Saturday evening for a relaxed gathering with great food, good friends, laughter, parade honors, the "Out of Your Gourd" special award, People's Choice award, and door prizes. *Please let Alan know if you plan to come.* We would like to give the restaurant an approximate head count.

Hint: Paying by cash will speed up your check out at the end of the meal.

Date: Saturday evening, Sept. 19, 2026
Time: 6:00ish. You can begin gathering as early as 6:00 pm. Festival workers may join when their duties at the festival are finished for the day.
Address: 1514 Caldwell Blvd, Nampa

Cost:
Adults: $16.50
seniors (60+): $15.50
children (age 5-10): $9.50
sodas, coffee and tea: $2.50

15% gratuity will be added to all check

Festival Classes

Whether you want to master a new craft and/or create unique gourd art, our festival classes are where the magic happens.

Wednesday, September 16/pre-festival classes: IDGS members only (*RSVP to Radenne* to reserve a spot)

- Marla Garber-Turtle class, $85, class size-17 people
- Sue Haberer-Ancient Digs class, $75, class size-12 people

Pre-festival classes will be held at Liz's studio in Nampa

Festival Classes at Franz Witte

- **Friday, September 18**, open to members & the public (register at FranzWitte.com)
  - Lisa Libby-faux beading
  - Kathy Allen-Thrills and Frills
- **Saturday, September 19**, open to members & the public (register at FranzWitte.com)
  - Sue Haberer-Circus Butterfly
  - Cathy Baldwin-Fibonacci Gourd Birdhouse
- **Sunday, September 20**, open to members & the public (register at Franzwitte.com)
  - Marla Garber-Bubbles Galore
  - Susan Carter-Zentangle

See Franzwitte.com for class information and pictures. Registration for classes is now open.

Vendors at the Festival

Get ready to explore the vendor tent where handcrafted treasures and local flavors bring the festival spirit to life! Come wander through the vendor tent to discover incredible makers, including two specialty booths where you can pick up tools of the trade to start your own creative journey.
Look who has reserved a Vendor Booth…

- Anne Frankel & Robin Moore-unique, one of a kind gourd art
- Cass Iverson-painted, sculpted, & carved gourd art
- Chris Peters-gourd art featuring birds & mammals, southwest inspired art, beads & embellishments
- Co-op Vendors-3 talented artists
- Gaylene Austin-gourd art
- Kay Coughran-gourd vessels, cards, ornaments, gourd related paintings
- Marla Garber-Optima Wood burners, Ram carvers, Duragrit Burrs, Epoxy Wood putty, supplies
- Ron Swank-gourd art, musical instruments, rainsticks, thunderdrums
- Shelly Garber-on demand T-shirts with custom design
- Sue Haberer-decorated gourds & Powertex
- Taeko D'Andrea-gourd art, various sizes and mediums
- Woodcraft-Razertip Wood burners, Tools, CA glue & Accelerant, supplies (discount during festival)

Silent Auction

AI generated picture

As our second-largest income stream, Silent Auction's success depends on all of us! Silent Auction Chair, Christy Pletcher, needs your help to make this year a triumph. You can get involved by joining her team or securing donations from your favorite local spots-think restaurants, coffee shops, boutiques, or service providers. Member's gourd art would make a wonderful addition to the silent auction. Remember, bidding is open to the public, so broad-appeal items like themed gift baskets, coffee and gift card combos, tools, and artwork perform exceptionally well. Let's rally together and make this our most successful auction yet! ***Christypletcher@gmail.com***

Snapshot of some of the items donated to the Silent Auction

Spotlight Entertainment

Stop by the Spotlight Stage for the grandest of entertainment!

Friday September 18th-

10:00 a.m. Scrubbing Momma - Join Scrubbing Momma for a fun filled presentation on how to properly scrub gourds to get them ready for crafting. Audience participation is encouraged. Clean craft ready gourds will be given out as door prizes throughout this presentation.

11:00 a.m. Gourd Trivia - Join your host Alan Sweeney for a spirited game of gourd trivia. Audience participants will need to brush up on all things gourds. Some of the topics will include, Gourd history, tools of the trade, famous people of the gourd world and much more. Door prizes will be given during the game.

1:00 p.m. Gourd Crafting Challenge - Artists, start your engines! This challenge is designed to test your artistic abilities and spark creativity. Participants will be given a raw gourd as a blank canvas, a few tools, and a bag with a variety of embellishments. They will then race the clock to come up with the most creative masterpiece. All entries will be judged by the audience with the winner receiving the Golden Gourd trophy and recognition in Karo's Gourd Shards Newsletter. Who knows, you might even make it in the American Gourd Society Magazine.

4:30 p.m. Guitar Students from Ridgeview High School

Saturday September 19th

10:00 a.m. - Resito Belovich

12:00 noon - Idaho Gourd Society Gourd Parade

1:00 p.m. - Sangha Taiko Japanese Drum Group

2:30 p.m. - Orchestra Students from Ridgeview High School

Sunday September 20th

10:00 a.m. - Olivia The Magical Gourd- A gourd puppet show with a heartfelt ending.

11:00 a.m. Aled Roberts

Gourd Store

Stop in to purchase a unique piece of art. We also have a huge supply of raw gourds.

Donation Needs

Our biggest source of income for IDGS. Can we count on your support?

Is that gourd art just gathering dust? Ready to make space for a new masterpiece? The Gourd Store offers a wonderful solution! Our customers adore unique art, and your piece could find a happy new home. If you're willing to part with your treasure, please consider donating it to the Gourd Store.

- Member's Gourd Art
- Bag of gourd shards
- Painting supplies-alcohol inks, acrylic paints, leather dyes, ink dyes, embossing powders, brushes, etc.
- Embellishments
- Weaving Supplies
- Tools-new or used
- Art books-gourd related only
- Storage containers

*Donated supplies should be in "new or gently used" condition.

Donations can be brought to the IDGS monthly meeting or dropped off at the Sunshine Patch in Nampa.

englishlradenne@gmail.com

Thank You, Thank You!

Look who is behind our success…

Gourd Prep for Make and Take-August 9, 2026

Once again, seven volunteers gathered at Janet's house to prepare the Little Monsters-one of the featured art projects for the Festival's Make and Take. A tremendous thank you for giving up a Sunday to complete this make and take preparation. And a special thank you to John and Janet for hosting and providing lunch (again).

Janet Melligh, John Melligh, Corlis Kent, Marcelle McMillin, Chris Peters, Peggy Lee, Bonnie Starr, & Radenne English,

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Fall Challenge-August 8, 2026

Incredible, spooktacular, and full of witchy fun!

The fall challenge was a huge success. Ten talented artists entered the fall challenge. Carol Joyce received top honors for this year's challenge with her Jack Skelleton art. Thank you all for your contributions, which will be on full display at the Festival Gourd Store.

Christy Pletcher, Ken Gordy, Radenne English, Alan Sweeney, Jannet Melligh, Peggy Jared, Carol Joyce, Karo Frazier, Cheryl Byron, and Steve Kiser.

Festival class preparation-July 31

Seven fantastic volunteers spent a morning cleaning and prepping gourds so that everyone has exactly what they need for the "Bubbles Galore" festival class. Class participants may stop by the Gourd Store to grab one of these perfectly prepared gourds for only $10 each, and all revenue goes right back to supporting the Idaho Gourd Society.

A special thanks to Alan Sweeney, Chris Peters, Janet Melligh, Karo Frazier, Ken Gordy, Carla Arnold, and Radenne English for ensuring that this class can be a success.

Finishing Touches Workshop-July 9, 2026

A huge shout-out to three of our incredibly dedicated volunteers- Janet Melligh, Bonnie Starr, and Radenne English. They recently teamed up to put the finishing touches on the beautiful gourds created during our June 27th pop-up. Each spent five hours diligently finishing, spraying, pricing, and carefully wrapping the projects. Thanks to their hard work and the 16 members attending last month's pop-up, these gorgeous pieces are projected to bring in over $600 in sales at the Gourd Store, directly benefiting the society. Thank you, Janet, Bonnie, and Radenne for your time and effort!

Individual Donations to the Gourd Store

A shout out to the generous people who have made donations to our IDGS Festival Gourd Store

8/27 Bonnie Starr-Halloween Jack Lantern

8/27 Bonnie Starr-Santa gourd

Janet Melligh-Halloween gourd art

8/26 Sharon Willis-gourd bowl with woven leather rim

8/26 Liz Meyer-oven baked clay

8/21 Alan Sweeney, necklace kits (9)

7/21 Chris Peters, Janet Melligh, & Alan Sweeney-gourds for Bubbles Galore class

7/15 Marcelle McMillin-shoes for little monsters make and take (100+)

7/15 Radenne English-Halloween Gourd Art (10)

7/14 Esther Ussing-Halloween Gourd Art (2)

6/27 Karo Frazier-gourd art

6/27 Karo Frazier-book

6/27 Chris Peters-tissue paper

6/27 Chris Peters- Skellington King, glow in the dark gourd bowl

6/27 Chris Peters-gold leaf, French inspired Marie Antonette gourd

6/27 Alan Sweeny-19 gourd art bowls, completed with transtint & decoupage

6/23 Anne Frankel-gift bags for Gourd Store

6/14 Janet Melligh-50+ gourds for the Jack Lantern pop-up (in addition to the ones already donated). Finished art is donated to the Gourd Store.

6/10 Ron Swank-laser cut and wood burned name tags for gift bags

6/2, Janet Melligh-gourds for Jack Lanterns for the gourd store inventory

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5/12 Corlis Kent-gourds & supplies for geodes

4/11 Alan Sweeney-gourd shards for the gourd store inventory

4/17 Alan Sweeney, Christy Pletcher, Janet Melligh, Radenne English-gourds for Halloween ornaments

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Donations to the Silent Auction

Blick Art Materials-$100 gift card (www.dickblick.com)

Royalwood, LTD-$50 gift card, specializes in weaving supplies (www.RoyalwoodLtd.com)

Karo Frazier-Groovy Board, (Ron Swank special)

Ken Gordy-collector plates

Taeko D'Andrea-Acrylic pens, set of 84 colors

Dee Smart-Smoky Mountain Pizza $25 gift card

Razer-materials and pyrography book

Christy Pletcher-coffee mug and &15 gift card

Christy Pletcher-giant Yatzee game

Christy Pletcher-champagne & sparkling cider basket with wine glasses, (special select Korbel champagne)

The Canning Shop-electric gourd tools (saw, drill, sander)

Janet Meleigh-hand crafted quilted fall wall hanging

Beverly McGaha-gourd bowl with butterfly and pine needle rim,

Anonymous-grab bag

Radenne English-$25 gift card to Michael's and candy dish with candy corns

PAST EVENTS

Jack Lantern Pop-up, June 27

Janet and John Melligh hosted the annual Halloween/Jack Lantern Pop-up to benefit the festival's Gourd Store. Chris Peters and John Melligh were busy cutting and carving gourds, as our infamous artists were creating away. Alan Sweeney showed up with 19 completed gourd bowls, finished with decoupage & trans tint. Chris Peters and Karo Frazier arrived with finished art for the Gourd Store. And a big yummy thank you to Janet and John for providing the taco bar lunch.

Thank you to the 16 people who traveled out to Middleton to make the cutest, spookiest, Halloween inspired art for the Gourd Store.

Alan Sweeney, Bonnie Starr, Britini Spencer, Carol Joyce, Cheryl Byron, Chris Peters, Christy Pletcher, Esther Ussing, Janet Melligh, John Melligh, Justin Reif, Karo Frazier, Ken Gordy, Peggy Jared, Radenne English, Rose Russel

Gourd Prep for Halloween Pop-up, June 14

Hats off to the team that lent a hand in getting gourds ready for the Jack Lantern pop-up on June 27.

Janet Melligh, John Melligh, Bonnie Starr, and Radenne English

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Summer Challenge, June 13, 2026

The creativity was off the charts this year, and we want to give a massive thank you to everyone who submitted entries and contributed to the Gourd Store! You all blew us away, but one incredible design stole the spotlight-congratulations to our talented gourd member, LeAnna Saentz, the official winner of a fully paid 2027 membership.

Thank you to following people for their entries and contribution to the Gourd Store:

Carol Joyce, Christy Pletcher, Janet Melligh, LeAnna Saenz, Madlen Tarlton, Radenne English, Sharon Jozwik, and Taeko D'Andrea

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Pop-up Gourd Cleaning, June 2

Just another opportunity for a few members to clean gourds. We got down and dirty and in a hurry. We had the gourds all scrubbed up before noon. These gourds are dedicated for use in the Jack Lantern pop-up on June 27.

Thank you to this fun crew: Anita Faull, Alan Sweeney, Carol Joyce, Janet Melligh, John Melligh, Ken Gourdy, and Radenne English

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Pop-Up Gourd Cleaning, May 22

Members got "down and dirty", played in the water, and scrubbed a LOT of gourds. Thanks to the following people for your help with cleaning gourds.

Alan Sweeny, Anita Faull, Anne Frankel, Brittney, Carla Arnold, Corlis Kent, Esther Ussing, Gaylene Austin, Irena Lane, Janet Melligh, John Melligh, Justin Reif, Karen Hibdon, Karo Frazier, Ken Gordy, Kym Everman, Linda Ungston, Lynette Rushton, Pat Looney, Peggy Lee, Quency Murphy, Radenne English, Robin Moore, Steve Kiser, Taeko D'Andrea, Terry Kent, Veletta Murphy

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Art Party-Geodes, May 12

Light up your world with the magical gourd geode. Thank you to the following people for your contributions of geodes.

Chris Peters, Corlis Kent, Justin Reif, Leslie Bonney, Linda Ungson, Marcelle McMillin, Radenne English, Randy Lentell

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Pop-Up Halloween Ornaments, April 17

Members got into the groove with the making of the Halloween ornaments that will hang on the spooky Halloween tree at the Gourd Store. Wait till you see how cute and spooky these ornaments are. We set a goal of 50 ornaments, based on last year's sales. And we hit that mark. Thanks to the following people for your help:

Anne Frankel, Barb Gamel, Esther Ussing, Janet Melligh, Linda Ungson, Marcelle McMillin, Mellow Prock, Peggy Goldey-Coleman, Radenne English, Randy Lentell, & Sue Lentell

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Art Party- Chipped Carved Lidded Bowl, March 16

The beautiful chipped carved lidded bowl was a roaring success. Thank you to the following people for your contributions.

Alan Sweeney, Anne Frankel, Bonnie Starr, Darlene Escobar, Gaylene Austin, Helena Freilich, Justin Reif, Ken Gordy, Krissy Vollrath, Linda Ungson, Marcelle McMillin, Mike Ciulla, Peggy Goldey, Peggy Lee, Radenne English, Randy Lentell, Steve Kiser

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If have missed recognizing your donations, please let me know. I want you to know how much your contributions are appreciated.