

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Over 5,000 Expected at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Gourd Art Festival**

**June 22, 2009** With over 5,000 people expected to attend, the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Gourd Art Festival, which takes place every year at the Welburn Gourd Farm in De Luz Canyon about half-way between Fallbrook and Temecula, has become one of San Diego North County's premier art events.

The Gourd Art Festival began as part of an effort for Welburn Gourd Farm founders, Doug and Sue Welburn, to continue their annual tradition of a 4<sup>th</sup> of July barbeque at their home in De Luz canyon in the township of Fallbrook. "The gourd farm had gotten so busy, we hardly had time for those activities we used to enjoy so often," remarks Doug Welburn, President of Welburn Gourd Farm. "Rather than let the business take over our lives, we combined it with our annual party!"

The Welburn Gourd Farm is now the leading gourd supplier in the world, growing over 350,000 gourds per year, and the Gourd Art Festival, now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year, has grown from 300 attendees to over 5,000, many of whom travel from across the county to attend. "It's the largest event of its kind," says Marketing Director, Phoebe Welburn, daughter of Doug and Sue Welburn. "At no other festival will you see a gourd that sells for \$3.00 raw, selling for over \$3,000 as an art piece. New people who attend are always amazed at what they see."

The Gourd Art Festival offers plenty to keep patrons busy, including 40 exhibitor offering everything from gourd books and tools to custom gourd art, a gourd crafting arena where festival-goers can try their own hand at gourd art, over 50,000 dried gourds for sale, live entertainment, gourd crafting demonstrations, a wine garden where ten of the top Temecula Wineries will be offering their most popular vintages, great food, and more.

New to the festival this year is the addition of the 'People's Choice' Art Competition where festival attendees have the opportunity to cast their vote for their favorite gourd art pieces. Voting starts Saturday morning, June 27<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 am, and will end at 4:30 pm the same day. Results will be displayed Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9:00 am.

Along with the opportunity to vote on the artwork in the People's Choice Competition, festival attendees can also get involved with gourds by visiting the Gourd Crafting Arena during the festival and creating their own gourd art masterpiece. The cost is \$5 for children ages 6-12, and \$10 to create an adult-level project, which includes a gourd already cleaned and cut (children get to scrub and clean their gourd!).

Full-day gourd art classes are also available the Thursday and Friday before the event, June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Eighteen classes are on the schedule and advanced registration is recommended, although walk-ins are welcome for those classes that still have openings on class day. To see photos and descriptions of available classes and to register, visit [www.GourdFestival.com](http://www.GourdFestival.com).

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Gourd Art Festival will take place on Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Festival admission is \$11.00 at the gate, or \$8.00 if purchased in advance. Children 12 and under get in free. To purchase tickets and for more information, call the festival office at 760-728-4588 or visit [www.GourdFestival.com](http://www.GourdFestival.com).

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