

# The Reed Reader by Bright Expectations

**Basket Weaving Patterns \* Ready Made Baskets \* Custom Created Baskets**

## Custom Baskets - Never Say Never.

In my [Bright Expectations](#) shop, I sell a lot of custom baskets. Possibly the majority of what I sell is custom - either to a specific design (color or pattern) or to specific dimensions. You can ask my favorite wood base suppliers, I have ordered some doozies. Maybe it's because I've been asked to make some rather unusual baskets, but it's hard to shock me with any custom request.

Here's a couple of odd requests I've had. I was asked to weave a gondola basket big enough to hold a "group of 5 year olds at a birthday party" - plus ship it over 2,000 miles. A record label wanted baskets to present a new album soundtrack.

Another request was to weave a large basket for a "picnic table car" that drives out in the desert for partying. I had never heard of such a thing - but it was similar to this one.

I have to admit - these were basket orders that I turned down for various reasons. But I have learned to never say "that's impossible" or "I would never tackle that". Lest I have to eat my words. Saying no is hard for me. And well ... some folks have a bit of money and are willing to pay for what we think is frivolous or unpractical. Keep an open mind and think outside the box on how to accomplish the challenge rather than focusing on the 1,001 reasons why it just won't work.



*When you have exhausted all your possibilities, remember this - you haven't.*

*- Thomas Edison*

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You can find me at:

[www.brightexpectations.etsy.com](http://www.brightexpectations.etsy.com)

[www.facebook.com/BrightExpectations](http://www.facebook.com/BrightExpectations)

Or by email ...

[beckybechtel@gmail.com](mailto:beckybechtel@gmail.com)

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"Journey" Tray or Gathering Basket

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Iowa and Quad City Basketry Guilds

"Fall Overnight"

Wolf River Basketry Guild

## Featured Basketry Suppliers

### The Country Seat, Inc.

*Huge selection of all basketry related materials.*

[countryseat.com](http://countryseat.com)

### Basket Bees - Debbie Krzyston (262) 392-2575

*Wood Bases - Single and Double Slotted - Custom Sizes*

[www.basketbees.biz](http://www.basketbees.biz)

### Concepts in Clay

*Original Pottery Creations - Buckles, Handles, Buttons, and Sleeves.*

*Also Bread Warming Tiles for your Muffin and Bread Baskets!*

[www.conceptsinclay.com](http://www.conceptsinclay.com)

*Congratulations and kudos to Sandy Adams-Doyle! She suggested "The Reed Reader" as the name for my newsletter. I love it and hope you do too. I've sent Sandy five patterns in appreciation. Thank you all for your great suggestions!*

## "Randa" Double Walled Table Basket



To purchase this basket pattern,  
please click below.  
["Randa"](#)

A double walled basket is a very unique design. It gives the pleasing aesthetics of contrasting designs, patterns, or colors on the interior and exterior. It creates an unbelievably strong and durable basket of heirloom quality. And it provides a great topic of conversation at craft and art shows. People are drawn to them. You can hear the oohs and aahs.

Most weavers are a bit intimidated by weaving a double walled basket. Many have never attempted it. "Randa" was a pattern written for the weaver who is new to the double walled technique. Detailed instructions with 15 color photos are included to walk you through each stage - from spoke placement to attaching the rim.

The techniques you learn with this pattern will give you the knowledge to adapt to any size or shape of double walled basket. I've created small 4" round ones - and laundry baskets on a 12" x 20" oval base.

Have you ever woven a double walled basket on a wood base? If not, why not try one?

*Visit my Etsy shop, Bright Expectations, for more patterns.*

[Click Here](#)

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"Journey" is a large round tray or gathering basket on a 15" wood base with pottery handles. It was a custom request from a caterer to transport large amounts of goodies. The twill weave and pottery handles compliment "Journey" well ... on her journey wherever she goes. Pattern available by [clicking here](#).

# What's on Your Weaving Table (or floor)?

## Improvising and Making Do With What You Have Available

*When you aren't in your weaving shop or studio, sometimes you have to make do with what you have available to get the job done. Improvisation is key. Lots of everyday, household items will substitute well to replace your standard weaving tools and materials. Dollar Stores and Thrift Shops offer many possibilities.*

I'm fortunate to have two homes. My "up north" home (which is really a mid-western abode) and my "down south" home (in southwest Florida). You never know where I'll be at any given time. In Illinois, I have a basement workshop. Calling it a studio would be way too glamorous of a title. But I love it there in my cozy little space. Everything is handy and I have a LOT of weaving supplies there.

When I'm down south, well ... it's not nearly as convenient. My workspace is my kitchen counter or table. And it seems I never have on hand what I need. So improvising takes precedence - and necessity is the Mother of Invention they say.

I'm weaving on two 22" x 27" wood bases now for under sofa baskets.

The baskets are shallow - only 5 1/2" in height when finished.

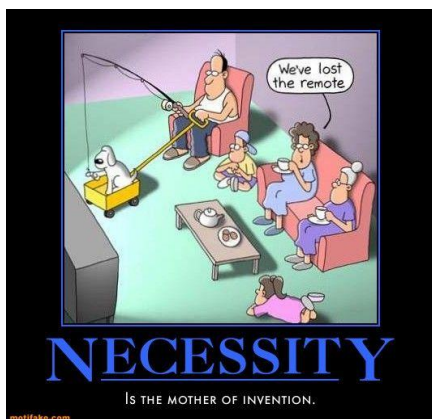


This conglomeration is at present in the corner of my kitchen floor. That's a jug of water, Tide, cooking oil, sugar canister, and Downy plus a couple of 2x4's. I scoured the house for items to upset the spokes as sharply as possible while wedged in the corner on "stay put" cabinet liner.

Did you know that Dollar Store plastic bowls make great weaving forms? Drill four holes in the top and tie your wood base on with twine. Weave around the bowl and remove the twine when finished to release. A perfect shaped basket. And my heavens, there are a lot of different shaped bowls to experiment with.

I even saw a beach ball used as a weaving form! Perfect for a graduated wider then narrower bowl shape. Simply deflate the ball when finished to remove. Plus it's lightweight and easy to hold in your lap. How keen!

Weave around a plastic trashcan. Easy to maintain shape or just leave it in when finished for a liner.



*Tip from Karen Johnson of Brookline, NH ... A Tupperware citrus peeler is a great weaving tool, especially when lashing. It slides between the reed without damaging your basket. Great with kids who can't handle sharp awls.*



Did you come up with a unique weaving concept or an innovative technique that you would like to share? Email it to me and it might just be included in next month's newsletter. Include a picture or link to make it more interesting.



*The basket shown in top picture ended up with a twin and here they are finished.*

### Tips for Shaping Your Basket:

- 1) Choose the Correct Reed for Stakes.** Select thicker pieces of reed for your stakes, reserving thinner pieces for weavers. Place them *evenly* around your wood base or within your naturally woven base. Continually monitor their distance apart as you weave the rows - *especially* on corners. It will be almost impossible to reshape a finished basket that has uneven stakes.
- 2) Keep Weaving Rows Nicely Packed Down.** Each row of weaving should be snug against the row beneath. *Gently* pack down every couple of rows and measure height to be sure that one side is not packed tighter than another.
- 3) Don't Yank or Pull Tightly on Weavers.** Unless you want a basket that is gradually getting smaller, there is no reason to pull tightly on weavers. This is the hardest for new weavers to achieve. Be extra careful on corners. Lay the reed into place without tugging. Check distance often between spokes to monitor they aren't getting closer.
- 4) Not too Wet - Not too Dry.** If your stakes or weavers are too wet, you will create "waves" in your basket. If the weaver is too tight to lay nicely between your stakes, it's probably too wide, so choose a narrower width reed.

## Iowa Basket Weavers Guild & Quad City Basketry Guild

Looking for a fun getaway this fall? The Iowa Basket Weavers Guild and the Quad City Basketry Guild have joined together to sponsor a "FALL OVERNIGHT" which will be held at the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center in Dixon, Iowa on October 2nd and 3rd, 2015.

The registration fee is only \$15 (and includes meals). Overnight accommodations in Owl's Nest Dormitory is only \$10. 2016 membership to the Iowa Basket Weavers Guild is included. This is an awesome deal and sounds like a great time!

The Wapsi River Environmental Education Center is located two miles northwest of Dixon (northwest of Davenport) on the bluffs overlooking the Wapsipinicon River. The beautiful Redtail Lodge, where classes will be held and the Owl's Nest Dormitory can be seen by [clicking here](#).

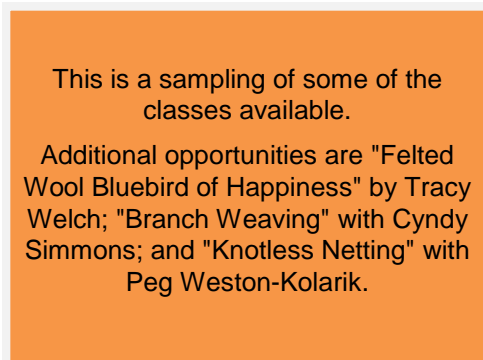
Fellowship with other weavers, enjoy the gorgeous surroundings, and learn some new techniques - what more can you ask for?!?



"Wapsi Market Basket" →  
by Sue Little



"Push Me - Pull You II" ↑  
by Sue Tucker



"Harriet's Tulip Basket" ← by Sue Tucker      "Hang It All" →  
by Lisa Brathall



"Fancy Wrapped Handles" →  
by Sue Little



The event is hosted by Cyndy Simmons and Sue Little. Registration checks made payable to Iowa Basket Weavers Guild. Class checks dated 10/2/2015 made payable to the class teacher.

Bring items or materials for Silent Auction. There will also be a small, 5" or less, basket exchange.

All registration and class fees are due by 9/1/2015 and sent to Sue Little, 2251 Palmer Circle, Iowa City, Iowa.

## Wolf River Basketry Guild - Shawano, Wisconsin

The Wolf River Basketry Guild was formed in 1993 to promote weaving in northeast Wisconsin. Membership is open to all weaving levels of expertise. Monthly guild meetings are on the 4th Saturday of the month, January through November, excluding June and July, at the Shawano Masonic Center. Guild members are welcome to participate in the seven instructor led projects. Members also receive the quarterly newsletter "Splints from the Oak Woods".

Two workshops are held each year. The Spring Workshop is in April and the Fall Workshop will be held September 25-27, 2015. The Fall Workshop is open to guild members and the general public. Basic basket weaving skills are required for participants. Friday evening offers short "make and take" classes, while Saturday and Sunday will be full days of classes. Instructors for the classes will be Jeanne Dudley, Shirley Mount (of "[The Basket Patch](#)"), and Kathy Tessler.

Vendors will include [The Basket Patch](#), [Countryside Basketry Supplies](#), and [Basket Bees](#). Please contact the vendors if you are attending and would like to pre-order supplies to pick up at the workshop.

The event will be at the Boarders Inn and Suites in Shawano, Wisconsin and a block of rooms has been reserved for those attending. Reduced rates are available when mentioning the basket workshop.

To register for the Fall Workshop, please [click here](#). For more information about Wolf River Basketry Guild, please [click here](#).

Here are photos of some of the class projects that will be available during the weekend workshop.



"Nantucket Lamp" and  
"Nantucket Wastebasket"  
by Shirley Mount



"Cherokee Pipes" and  
"Double Wall Apple  
Basket" by Kathy Tessler



"Kitchen Broom",  
"Witch's Hat Whisk", and  
"Santa's Whisk-ers" by  
Jeanne Dudley



*There are so many awesome guilds, weaving groups, and clubs across the country. There might be one near you.*

*To see a listing of guilds by state with contact and convention information, please refer to this listing provided by The Country Seat. [Click here](#).*

*If you would like to see your group featured here or have a workshop you would like to let people know about, please send me an [email](#).*

# Pattern Library - Available in my [Etsy Shop](#)

Clicking on any basket name will connect you to the pattern listing.



["Amelia"](#)



["Madalyn"](#)



["Wyoming"](#)



["Yasmine"](#)



["Cassie"](#)



["Sue"](#)



["Harbor"](#)



["Gabbie"](#)



["Kelsey"](#)



["Jaclyn"](#)



["Zoey"](#)



["Fiona"](#)



["Darcy"](#)



["Adele"](#)



["Betsy"](#)



["Emma"](#)



["Gloria"](#)



["Patsy"](#)



["Olivia"](#)



["Valerie"](#)



["Randa"](#)



["Jenna"](#)



["Lucy"](#)



["Reba"](#)



["Isabella"](#)