

June 2017 - Volume 21

Page 1:

Teachers are Selected Save the Dates!

Page 2:

"Caroline" Market Basket
How to Create an Antique Finish

Page 3:

Patterns Available on my Website or in my Etsy shop.



Please remember that when viewing the newsletter from your computer, that clicking on anything shown in blue will link you directly to the correct website referenced.

Bright Expectations Baskets LLC

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It's a Great Line-Up!

I've learned a couple of things after only organizing one basket weaving retreat. Number One ... it's a LOT of work. Probably more than I had anticipated. But, it's also a lot of fun and I'm looking forward to 2018 very much. However, there's one part of the event planning that brings me pain and that's narrowing down the teacher proposals to a select few.

We had right at 200 class proposals from some of the absolute best teachers from across the United States. The committee was burdened with the task of deciding on approximately 38 class options. While it was fun looking through the amazing baskets and weaving projects, it was incredibly hard to make the decisions on which to choose. We truly would have like to have offered every single class that was proposed. As the retreat continues to grow, hopefully we'll be able to use every teacher that proposes.

The teachers for the 2018 Weaving in the Sunshine State basket weaving retreat will be:

Alice Ogden – Black Ash Basketry

Pam Talsky – Antler Weaving, Pine Needle Coiling, and Yellow Cedar Plaiting

Debbie Hurd – Traditional Reed Basketry

Candace Katz – Traditional Reed Basketry

Patty Feather - Traditional Reed Basketry

Denise Bendelewski - Nantucket Baskets

Tonya Cubeta – Waxed Linen and Hamburg Cane Weaving

Karen Maugans – Traditional Reed Basketry

Debbie Mroczenski – Traditional Basketry & Specialty Paper

Char Ciammaichella – Traditional Reed Basketry

Julie Klienrath – Traditional Reed Basketry

and myself, **Becky Bechtel** – Traditional Reed Basketry

The class catalog will be available mid to late summer and retreat registration will begin (most likely) on September 1st. We want to give you as much time as possible to choose your classes – it won't be an easy task. So save the dates now – January 23-25, 2018 - and plan to be in Ft. Myers, Florida for the 2nd Weaving in the Sunshine State basket weaving retreat!

Did you know that you can access back issues of "The Reed Reader"? If you'd like to read any of the newsletters you missed or share back issues with a friend, just click here ...

www.BrightExpectationsBaskets.com/Newsletter

"CAROLINE" – Antiqued Market Basket



"Caroline" isn't so much about the basket itself as it is about the technique used to give it the aged, antique look. A customer had contacted me for a custom basket with some very basic instruction - the diagonally filled base from another basket, relatively shallow, and sized for a baking dish or platter. But the big thing she wanted was for the basket to look old, really OLD. The basket was to be a Mother's Day gift for someone who had an authentic pioneer cabin that had been restored. She didn't want a shiny new basket look. I love a challenge and I love being given the freedom to just create. And "Caroline" is that result.

The pattern for "Caroline" is available to purchase if you would like the instruction for the diagonally filled base and handle treatment. If you have ever bought one of my patterns, you'll know I love to include photos — and lots of them. I learn better by seeing how it's done rather than reading it and assume that it's the same for many of you. The pattern has 21 pictures to help explain the weaving techniques. Just click on "Caroline" in blue in either the above heading or in the green box to be hyperlinked to the listing.

To purchase this

PATTERN, please click

below.

"Caroline"

I'll be the first to admit, the antique look of this basket isn't for everyone. It has the appearance of a basket that has seen much usage and has weathered over the years. But the technique is a great reference to have. I received input from a few different expert weavers and combined their advice into this fairly simple process.

- 1) Using a pint or jelly sized jar, place a steel wool pad inside that has been pulled apart and is loose. Fill the jar with plain white vinegar and put the lid on the jar. Let this mixture steep for at least 24 hours. Mine set for maybe 36 hours before I used it.
- 2) Finish your basket completely. Clip all the fiber like hairs or singe them using a butane burner (my choice of method). For "Caroline", I intended to keep the process natural and not use my normal Weavers stain. Make a strong brew of instant coffee. I used the cheap dollar store variety and made two cups of brew with approximately 5 heaping tablespoons of instant coffee granules.
- 3) Using both a sponge type paint brush and also a cheap spray bottle, coat the basket with your coffee brew. I actually applied coffee three times letting it soak in as much as possible between coats and making sure to get it into all of the crevices.
- 4) While the final coat of coffee was still damp, I placed the vinegar from the jelly jar in a spray bottle and spritzed the basket well, but didn't necessarily "coat" the basket. The key to this being a success is to do this on a bright sunny day. Place your basket with the vinegar concoction on it in the direct sun. Within 30 minutes you'll see aged, grey areas start to appear. I ended up turning the basket a few times so that all areas received about the same amount of direct sun to achieve a somewhat even aged finish.
- 5) After letting the basket completely dry overnight, I applied Weavers Stain in a clear finish to provide some protection. Voila! Your new basket now looks like it's been used for generations.







Sampling of Bright Expectations Basket Patterns Clicking on any PICTURE will connect you to the pattern listing.































































