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Bright Expectations Baskets LLC
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Registration Continues!

www.WeavingInTheSunshineState.com

The response to registration opening has been great! Many classes are nearing capacity and will be closed soon. There are still several wonderful classes with space still available though.

Initially, it was anticipated that classes would be assigned on October 1st, but we may be running ahead of schedule and have them emailed out to registrants mid-September. Payment for classes will be due on October 31st.

Details for the [2018 Weaving in the Sunshine State](#) basket weaving retreat can be found in the Retreat Brochure on the website (click on the logo to the left) or Facebook page. The Class Catalog showcases the classes and teachers. The Class Schedule will aid you in planning your days. Be sure to include your registration fees when mailing your Registration Form. All documents will be updated soon indicated the closed classes.

New for this year will be retreat merchandise to purchase. I'm working with a local supplier to create some custom stitched items. Right now, I anticipate shirts, aprons, bags, and key chains to be available for pre-order. These items can also be ordered and shipped. The merchandise order form will be sent along with class assignments and posted on the website and Facebook page.

What?? You don't belong to our group Facebook page? It's called [Florida Basket Weavers](#) but you don't have to live in Florida to join. You just might see something posted that will entice you to come to Florida though and join in on some weaving fun. Join us by clicking on the blue link.

Guess who's going to be a first-time teacher at the Stateline Friends Weaving Retreat in 2018? Me! I'm honored and humbled to be selected with such an esteemed group of highly sought after teachers. Save the dates now – April 19-21, 2018. Pam Feix and her committee organize a fantastic event. You won't want to miss it and all the fun! Preview of classes begins 9/17/2017 and registration begins October 1st.
www.StatelineFriends.com

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

"OKSANNA" – Market Shopper Tote



I have to admit, I LOVE this basket and I really enjoyed letting creativity just come to me as the pattern evolved – pretty much on its own. However ... writing this pattern became almost an obsession to get it completed and it's taken a LONG time.

There is a total of 45 pictures in the pattern including showing the detailed steps for the base filler and handle accents. Instruction is also included for creating the unique handles using large round reed.

Accent the center of the basket as you choose. I free handed a simple wire embellishment with beads added.



There are not many market baskets that could be called "contemporary", but "[Oksanna](#)" fits that description perfectly. Be trendy when you shop at the market and shop "green". Don't use plastic.

To purchase this PATTERN, please click below.
["OKSANNA"](#)

"MILLIE" – The Mail Basket

It's funny how sometimes two baskets complement each other so well purely by accident. "[Millie](#)" the mail basket looks like it was intentionally made to go with "Oksanna". The slightly larger size of "Millie" would not only work for your mail to keep it handy, but would also be perfect to collect the kid's or grandkid's art projects from school to be saved and filed away for safe keeping later. Your refrigerator door can only hold so many "works of art" 😊.



I could envision those cute little chalkboard tags (from Hobby Lobby) being personalized with each child's name to personalize each basket and hanging them from hooks near the entryway door or in the mudroom.

What a great gift idea for your daughter or daughter-in-law for Christmas! Handmade with love and with a useful purpose in mind.

To purchase this PATTERN, please click below.
["MILLIE"](#)



Has anyone seen my wife?
She came into this craft store for "just one thing" over two hours ago!



Staining Frustrations - I'm going NUTS!!

I've always been a fan of using that "popular stain that weavers use". It's not only convenient but it also contains tung oil and urethane and that's a good thing for baskets. It not only protects your creations, but it makes them look, well ... finished. (And yes, I know, that's a personal taste but hey ... this is MY newsletter 😊). But I have an ever growing population of cans in varying states of contents. And some are almost FULL. And the frustrating part is that they will no longer SPRAY. I mean I have an investment in this that is (in my mind) a staggering waste of money. Money that could have been spent on (duh) more reed! And handles! And bases!

I actually started out staining baskets with MinWax aerosol wood stain. And someone convinced me that the "other" brand was better. I liked the convenience of picking up the MinWax stain at Lowe's or WalMart. But I made the switch and was very happy with the quality of my new best choice. But frustration is winning over as my collection of cans is growing. (I can't seem to make myself throw them away. I dream that one day I'll pick up that almost full can and it will magically spray.) I happened to have a couple of cans of my old favorite MinWax around that I used just the other day. They had been sitting for a couple of years and yet they sprayed like a charm. So why can't that "other" brand use whatever this secret is??

So, I'm beginning to think about using a much, much less expensive alternative to aerosols. And that's a good thing for the environment too, right? Enter into the scene ... walnuts (pecans and hickory nuts too). I'm sure that many of you already use this stain concoction and some have stated that they have had their same "batch" of stain for literally years and just keep adding to it. But many like me are a bit intimidated by starting out and perfecting the "recipe" so I've gathered some thoughts and ideas that others have shared.

Everyone seems to agree that you are going to need this common list of items and ingredients:

- Container that holds about 5 gallons with a tight-fitting lid.
- Rubber gloves.
- Walnuts or Crushed Walnut Shells (any nut will do though)
- Mesh – An old pair of nylon hose or a few layers of cheese cloth will work.
- Strainer
- Stir Stick (like a yard stick)
- Ammonia

Tips and Tricks

- Remove hulls as quickly as possible after collection. If you leave them for even a few days, they could begin to rot.
- If you must store them **after hulling**, use paper bags – not plastic or a sealed container. (And don't store them outside where the squirrels will still your stash 😊.)
- Don't try to store **un-husked** walnuts for any long length of time. They will rot, leak, and stain anything they are in contact with.

Sources to Order Walnut Shells or Hulls

Some basket suppliers have "Walnut Hull Stain" available to purchase. A 1# bag should make 3-5 gallons.

[N.C. Basket Works](#)

[The Country Seat](#)

STEPS TO MAKING YOUR OWN WALNUT STAIN

1. Gather your walnuts in the hull while they are still green.
2. Weaving gloves, remove the husks. Sometimes this can be done easily with only your hands or use a mallet or large rock.
3. The husks can be used right away or allowed to dry to be used later. If you are going to allow them to dry, make sure you have plenty of air circulation so they don't mold. Air oxidizes the hulls and causes them to darken. The darker they turn or the more you use determines the color of your stain.
4. Using an enamel coated or stainless steel pot, boil at least one gallon of water (more is good).
5. Place your crushed walnut hulls inside a pouch made with nylon hose or layers of cheese cloth.
6. Add the crushed hulls and let the water simmer for about an hour or so.
7. Transfer the mixture (straining again if necessary) to a large bucket and add water until you are happy with the color.
8. Add a good amount of household ammonia to keep it from smelling and molding over time.
9. Either dip, pour over, or spray your basket until the desired color is reached.
10. Keep the stain covered and in a cool place. You may add another batch of steeped walnut hulls, more water, and/or ammonia over time. (Think of friendship bread and keep feeding it 😊.)

Sampling of Bright Expectations Basket Patterns

Clicking on any PICTURE will connect you to the pattern listing.

