

Penn- Jersey Basketry Guild

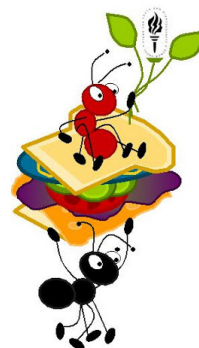
Our 36th Year



SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

pennjerseybasketryguild.org

HANDS ON HISTORY



**PJBG ANNUAL
MEETING WEEKEND
JUNE 25-26**

SAVE THE DATES!

Why not join fellow members of the Penn-Jersey Basketry Guild for a fun day weekend at historic Walnford on Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26?

The Nantucket Purse José Formoso Reyes (1902-1980)

Do you know the story of how José's baskets became known as Friendship Baskets? Paul Whitten writes in his book *Nantucket Baskets*, "A number of years ago a Nantucket woman carrying her Reyes handbag while in Paris noticed a woman across the street carrying one as well and yelled out, "Nantucket!" The lady across the street was understandably startled, and stopped to speak with the woman. That chance encounter resulted in a friendship that endures to this day." There are many similar stories such as a woman meeting her husband on a transatlantic crossing, because he recognized the basket as being of Nantucket and struck up a conversation.



José was born in Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur, Philippines
(Continued on page 4)

Guild members will have the opportunity to make a felted tree with Mary Annuziatio on Saturday from 10 AM - 4 PM. You can choose any color in a 14" or 16" height.

Our normal business meeting will take place on Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM. As always, feel free to bring any items for a swap meet and for "Show and Tell." An email will be sent by Lisa Jahn concerning picnic food. Registration for Mary's class can be found on the last page of the newsletter. Hope to see you at the picnic on June 26!

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PJBG OFFICERS

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Karen Wychock

VICE PRESIDENT

Mary May

SECRETARY

Barbara Ann Mueller

TREASURER

Carol Pollock

MEMBERSHIP

Patti Bishop

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Connie O'Connell

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Joan Darrigo

CYBER-SECRETARY

Lisa Jahn

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Karen Wychock

HISTORIAN

Joan Darrigo

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Gretchen Birdsall, Joan Darrigo,
Claire Gallagher, Carol Pollock, Mary May,
Barbara Ann Mueller, Malle Whitaker and
Karen Wychock for
contributing to this newsletter!

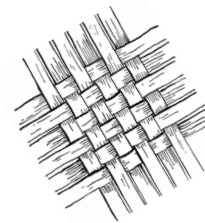
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Martha Costain
Barbara Henckler
Connie O'Connell

**PLEASE SUPPORT
ALL OF OUR
ADVERTISERS!**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings PJBG Members,

I hope you are well and looking forward to a great 2022! There is much to talk about as a guild....membership renewal, election of officers, our Annual Meeting in June and an array of upcoming classes and workshops.

First and foremost, we need you to renew your membership in the PJBG! Without you, we would not be in existence. Quite a few members did not renew their membership during the pandemic but we are hoping that they will return this year. You should have received an Email from Patty Bishop, our membership chair, this past week. Please take the time to renew your membership with the PJBG. We miss you and we need you!

It is once again time for elections! Your PJBG Board has been working very hard for you for the past two years. We had to overcome a number of challenges as the pandemic changed our way of doing business. Now that we are coming out of the pandemic we can hopefully get back to normal. So, would you be interested in running for office? We could really use help with programming. This could mean phoning potential teachers, creating a flyer, hosting a class or collecting registration forms. Please consider taking a position on the board! We welcome all members! If interested or if you have any questions please contact me or Mary May.

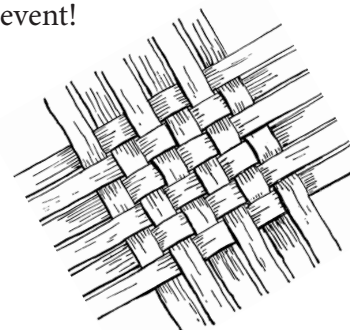
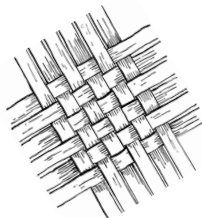
Our Annual Meeting will once again be at the historic Walnford site in Upper Freehold, NJ the weekend of June 25-26, 2022. Guild members will have the opportunity to make a felted tree with Mary Annuziati on Saturday from 10 AM - 4 PM. You can choose any color in a 14" or 16" height. Our normal business meeting will take place on Sunday 10 AM - 4 PM. As always, feel free to bring any items for a swap meet and for "Show and Tell." An email will be sent out by Lisa Jahn concerning picnic food. Registration for Mary's class can be found on page 20 of the newsletter. Hope to see you at the picnic on June 26!

I am happy to say that we have a PJBG event planned for every month this year! Please go to the PJBG website at pennjerseybasketryguild.org to find all of the class flyers. They are listed on the same page as our newsletters. Flyers are emailed to you but members often lose track of them so we decided to post all of them on the website. To date, our classes have been full. It's been great to see so many guild members in person again!

We were all saddened to hear of Sue Begalke's passing on April 16, 2022. Sue was a PJBG past president and member for quite a few years. May she rest in peace.

I look forward to seeing each and every one of you at an upcoming PJBG event!

Weave On!
Karen



(Continued from page 1, The Nantucket Purse)
 on September 15th, 1902. After schooling in Santa Maria, Jose came to the US and graduated from high school in Portland, Oregon. He then received a BA from Reed College. He also received a scholarship to Harvard University and graduated with an M.Ed.



Following his marriage to Mary E. Ham of Massachusetts he returned to the Philippines. In 1935 he joined the staff of the Philippine Military Academy becoming head of the Department of Languages and Social Arts. In December of 1941 José joined the US Army. After the Philippines liberation in 1945, José returned to the US with his family. He was discharged from the Army with a rank of Captain and automatically received his American Citizenship in 1947. That summer, José's mother-in-law invited the family to rest and recuperate at her Nantucket property. Like many others who have vacationed on the Island, José and his family knew they had found their new home and never left.



Unable to find a teaching position, José first worked as a house painter and repaired cane and rush chairs. A picture in Life Magazine of a basket with a cloth top gave him the idea to apply his weaving training learned in the Philippines to a possible money making venture on Nantucket.

It was at that time he was befriended by Mitchell Ray, who showed him the craft of weaving a Nantucket lightship basket. With Mitchy's encouragement and a few of Mitchy's molds that he had inherited from his father, José's new career was launched. In the summer of 1948, José developed



the "friendship basket" pocketbook. Another local craftsman, Charlie Sayle and his wife suggested the ornamentation of his basket tops with an ivory whale or seagull. José became well known for his innovative style and unique designs in basket weaving.

From that time until his retirement in 1978, it has been estimated that he made over 5,000 baskets. José died at his home on Nantucket, December 24th, 1980.



A SHORT HISTORY OF NANTUCKET BASKETS

<https://www.nantucketlightshipbasketmuseum.org/>



There are four distinctive elements that define a Nantucket lightship basket. The basket is woven on a mold; the staves are made of rattan; the weavers are of cane; and the basket has a solid wood base. Baskets with these characteristics developed on Nantucket during

the course of the nineteenth century. When well made, they were robust and practical as storage and carrying baskets and were in wide use in the island's stores, workshops, and homes. As the island transitioned from a whaling economy to a tourist economy in the 1860s and after, the island's work baskets became popular keepsakes of an island visit.

How this style of rattan basket developed is obscure. There are roots, certainly, in the baskets of Nantucket's Indigenous people. Native Wampanoags wove baskets using ash wood splints and weavers, through a process of stripping and soaking the layers of wood. The bottoms of their baskets were square and woven. Similar to lightship baskets, some Native baskets featured a carved flange on the handle to keep it in place. Farm baskets of New Hampshire, with their wooden bases, may also have provided inspiration for the development of the Nantucket lightship basket.

It is sometimes said that Nantucket baskets may have developed aboard the island's whaling ships, where the intermittent work of whale hunting allowed the arts



of scrimshanding, decorative knot tying, and chanty singing to flourish. There is no evidence of widespread rattan basket making on Nantucket whaleships, however, and no examples of Nantucket-style baskets made



aboard a whaleship are known, although multitudes of scrimshaw baskets survive.

Some of the earliest makers associated with the distinctive Nantucket rattan basket were, indeed, former whalers, such as James Wyer, Charles B. Ray, Thomas S. James, and James F. Chase. But only in the case of Thomas James is there any indication that any of these men might have made baskets in the course of a whaling voyage. According to an oral tradition that may need to be taken with a grain of salt, James was the first man to return from a whaling voyage with baskets he had made in his spare time, baskets that were deep



bottomed, with vertical staves and flat wood bases and folding wood handles. Whether he made baskets while whaling or not, James is one of the men responsible encouraging the weaving of baskets aboard lightships stationed near Nantucket in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The first American lightships—essentially floating lighthouses—were established by the U.S. government beginning in the 1820s. Lightships began to mark the dangerous shoal waters around Nantucket starting in 1849. Many of the mariners hired to work aboard these floating beacons were Nantucketers; some had even been whalers. Thomas S. James was mate and later

captain of the South Shoal Lightship near Nantucket beginning in the late 1860s. As Gustav Kobbé aptly put it in the Century Magazine in 1891, duty aboard the South Shoal Lightship was “at its best a life of desolation, with only a few gulls or Mother Carey’s chickens for visitors.” James and perhaps others who made rattan baskets ashore introduced basket weaving aboard the lightship, and trained other men in the craft. In this way, the distinctive baskets already made on Nantucket came to be associated with lightships, particularly the South Shoal Lightship, and the baskets started to be



called Nantucket lightship baskets. As Harry Platt wrote in 1894, “For a quarter of a century the crew of the South Shoal lightship have employed their leisure moments

in making a peculiar kind of basket, known to those who visit Nantucket as light-ship baskets. . . . At first but one or two of the crew worked at them, and their products were very rough when compared with the neat baskets made to-day. Now every man aboard is an expert basket-maker, and about five hundred are sold by the stores in Nantucket each summer for the crew.”

The list of notable basket weavers who worked aboard the lightships is long, including Davis Hall, Andrew Sandsbury, William D. Appleton, George W. Ray, Charles F. Ray, S. B. Raymond, and Isaac Hamblin. Many basket collectors regard the baskets woven by these men and their crewmates to be among the finest made. Lightships remained on duty into the mid-twentieth century, but no Nantucketer worked on them after 1905. With shipboard basket weaving finally forbidden by the government sometime before 1916, in an effort to end moonlighting, the making of lightship baskets moved firmly ashore, back where it had started.

While no longer made afloat, the island’s basket continued to be called Nantucket lightship baskets. The craft passed from one weaver to another, and molds,

tools, and trade secrets passed hand to hand as well. Mitchy Ray taught Fredrick Chadwick and later William Sevrens. A. D. Williams learned from William D. Appleton and later taught Ferdinand Sylvaro. Typically, the baskets of this time were woven over oak, ash, or hickory staves, with pine or mahogany bases. Most of the basket makers at this time signed or labeled their baskets.

José Formoso Reyes revolutionized the form and meaning of Nantucket baskets during the three-and-a-half decades he lived on Nantucket. He moved to Nantucket after World War II. Unable to find work as a teacher, he turned to basket weaving, supplementing his existing knowledge and skill with lessons from Mitchy Ray. Reyes experimented with shapes, lids, and the addition of ornamental carvings, soon developing the “Friendship basket” purse. His friend Charlie Sayle is credited with first suggesting that Reyes add carvings to the lids of his baskets.

The craft of Nantucket basket making has only grown in the last forty years. Weavers have made creative changes to materials, adornments, techniques. Some have begun formal teaching, allowing many hobbyists, who might not be adept at woodworking, to create lightship baskets. An expansion of amateur makers has created a market for component pieces.

Major contemporary and commercial weavers who make or have made their primary living from weaving baskets (and, for some, teaching) in recent decades include Dick and Donna Cifranic, Terry Sylvia, Bill and Judy Sayle, Trish and Dick Anderson, Paul Willer, Michael Kane, Nap Plank, Alan Reed, Gerald L. Brown, Karol Lindquist, and Susan and Karl Ottison. Major teachers of this time include Terry Sylvia, Donna and Dick Cifranic, Karol Lindquist, Tim Parsons, and Peter Finch.

Part of the mission of the Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum is “to mentor a new generation of lightship basket makers.” To fulfill that mission, the museum works diligently on continuing a year round youth weaving program. This program is accessible, at little or no cost to students, in the hope of cultivating new interest and future Nantucket basket weavers.

GRETCHEN, JOSE AND A NANTUCKET PURSE

BY GRETCHEN BIRDSALL

Almost 14 years ago, a woman by the name of Eleanor Fiedler came into our tent at the Wood Street Fair, in Burlington, New Jersey. She saw the Nantucket Lightship Baskets my sister, Robin and I had for sale.



She said that she had one, but didn't know much about it. I told her that it could be old and valuable. Before they had light houses, they had light ships off the coast of Massachusetts in the 1800s.



I told her to go home and look on the bottom of the basket for a map of Nantucket with the name, Jose Formoso Reyes. She asked to see if I wanted to buy it. I offered her \$500 at the

time, but she later informed me that it was, in fact, a Jose basket. I told her at the time that Jose's baskets were going for \$2,000-\$10,000. She had a gem, one way or another. That was that, I told her "Congratulations!"

About three years later her grandson called to tell me that his grandmother wanted me to have her basket. I was shocked! She really appreciated my information and honesty about her find. You see, she got it an estate sale at the end of the day. It was lying in the middle of the bed and she asked, "How much was that old basket (purse)? They said that she could have it for \$3! Long story short...



In December, 2009 I went to get this gem. The grandson, who was about 15 years old at the time, gave it to me and I had some cash for a trip the next day. I emptied my wallet of \$650 and gave it to him. He was beyond thrilled as I couldn't just take it.

I smiled all the way home. I was so excited to have and love having this basket. It's on display so I can see it every day. Some day it will go back home to the Nantucket Museum, where a replica of Jose's studio is set up.



CALLING ALL PJBG MEMBERS!



NBO MEMBERS: EVERY 1 EXHIBITION 2022

NBO members are invited to submit work for the second NBO all-inclusive virtual exhibition: Every 1.

This exhibition is being offered in conjunction with the online gathering Virtually Woven 2022, taking place on July 28 to 30, 2022. The goal of the exhibition is to provide an all-inclusive, members-only basketry exhibition that demonstrates the breadth and scope of the basketry that NBO members create. All works in the exhibition will be on view in a dedicated gallery of images hosted on the NBO website for three months. NBO encourages all its members to submit work for this celebration of basketry within our organization.

Every 1 – Everyone who enters will have work included in this show!
Check out the NBO website for details.

Entries accepted: June 1 – 30, 2022 (Entry link goes live on June 1, 2022)

Notification of selection: July 10, 2022

Exhibition will be live online July 28, 2022 through December 31, 2022

Every 1

an NBO members exhibition

“Murder” of CrowBells

By Malle Whitaker



H: each 6" | W: each 2" | D: each 2"

Each CrowBell is a hand-woven, waxed-linen thread vessel, encasing a jingling bell.

Malle Whitaker had her CrowBells in two Florida-based shows in 2020 that were cut short by Covid: 5 pieces in a Boca Raton gallery and 3 in the Florida CraftArt gallery in St. Petersburg. She was also included in the NBO Members' Virtual Show last year. Congratulations Malle!

Let's flood the exhibit with baskets from PJBG members this year!

BASKET CHATTER

Do you have an interesting photo, article, or basket tidbit that you would like to share with fellow members? Here is your opportunity to share. Simply email your information to kwychock@verizon.net. The following items were submitted by Claire Gallagher, Mary May, Carol Pollock and Karen Wychock.

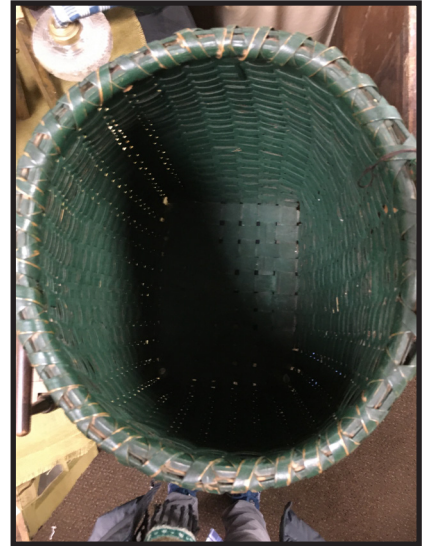
Claire Gallagher learned to weave a cheese basket in October at one of our Open Weaves. Once her friend saw the basket, she asked Claire to make another one to fit on a ceiling light. Nice job Claire! The light cover looks great!



Mary May found these great pack baskets at the Duck Decoy Show in Tuckerton last September. Thanks for all of the detail shots!



Keep your eye out for those antique pack baskets. Mary May found one at a local antique show. The pack looks to be made of ash with a hand-carved ear handle and runners. The dark green paint adds to its beauty.



Mary Mays pack basket class. Looks like they are happy with their results! Mary's grandson, Roman - a basket weaver in the making! Who knew that basket molds could become building blocks!

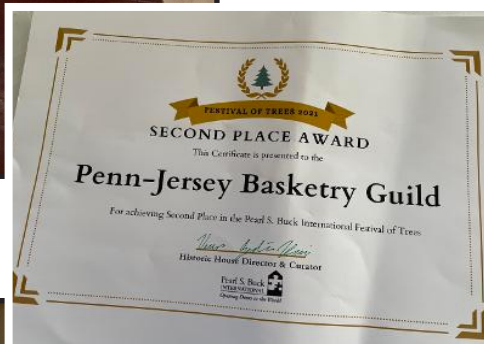
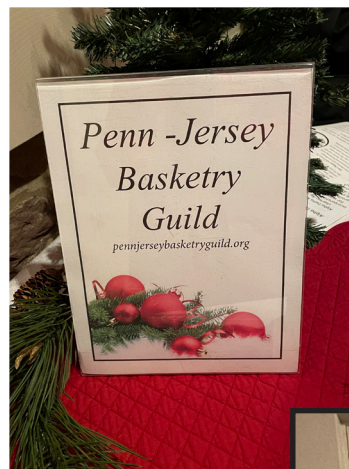


Several members of the PJBG enjoyed the North Carolina Basket Association Convention in mid-March. After a two year hiatus there were lots of smiles, and the theme was Basketmakers



Festival of Trees 2021

This past year, the PJBG was involved in two Festival of Tree displays, one in PA and one in NJ! Barbara Ann Mueller handled the display in Somerset County, NJ while Karen Wychock and Joan Darrigo headed the team in PA. Thank you to all of our members who helped to make these displays a reality. We took second place in the Pearl S. Buck House Festival of Trees. We were lucky enough to be placed in the entryway of the home so we were the first display they saw! We will continue to weave new ornaments for our trees. Thank you to Joan Darrigo for continuing her search for a basket from every state! We're almost there!



Somerset County, NJ





*Class
With
Anne
Bowers
April 2022*





THE PASSING OF SUE BEGALKE



Susan Begalke of Cherry Hill, NJ was born on July 28, 1943, in Cleveland, OH. Susan passed away peacefully on April 16th, 2022, after a battle with cancer. She remained independent and fought illness until the end.

She will be remembered as a mother, teacher, artisan, and beloved friend. She was independent, positive, creative, and smart. Susan graduated both high school and Baldwin-Wallace College ahead of schedule.

When she was young, she loved to roller skate, play jacks, swim and vacation at the Great Lakes. After college graduation, she raised her two daughters and went back to teaching. Summers were spent at the swim club with family and friends. She loved to teach math to high school students. Her hobbies were reading, watching football and baseball, quilting, sewing and painting. Her most recent passion was weaving where she hand-made beautiful baskets and served as the Penn-Jersey Basketry Guild's president.

Susan was predeceased by her parents Frederick and Edith Mueller. She is survived by sister Patricia Foust, daughters Anne DonLevy and Lisa Abersold (Mike Abersold) granddaughter Marina Shimmer (Hannah Shimmer), grandson Skylar DonLevy, grandson Matthew Abersold and granddaughter Katie Abersold. A Celebration of Life will take place in June 2022, in New Jersey and all are welcome to attend. Details to be announced later. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the hospice of your choice or Camden County Technical Schools.

BASKET HAPPENINGS!



2023 Weaving in the Sunshine State Basket Weaving Retreat
Save-the-Dates
January 31st - February 2, 2023
Ft. Myers, Florida
Questions? Send an email to BeckyBechtel@gmail.com



Central PA Basket Weavers Guild
2022 A WEAVING ODYSSEY
September 22-25, 2022
Gettysburg, PA



Association of Michigan Basketmakers
October 19-23, 2022
<http://www.michiganbasketmakers.com/events.html>

facebook



You've joined the Penn-Jersey Basketry Guild, so why not join the group on Facebook? Keep up with all of our members latest happenings! **STAY CONNECTED!**

To join the Facebook group, simply log onto Facebook and in the search box, type "Penn-Jersey Basketry Guild." When the group shows up in the search results, click on it. You'll be brought to the guild's Facebook page. Then, under the header image, click "Join." You're in! It's an open group, so no approval is needed. We hope to see you on Facebook!

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Editorial Information

Please e-mail text submissions as Microsoft Word attachments; Photos as high-resolution jpegs or tiffs (200-300 dpi) to:

kwychock@verizon.net

or mail to: Karen Wychock
108 Lyric Way
Warrington, PA 18976

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**Submission deadline for the
Fall Edition is
September 1, 2022**

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Stool & Chair Frames
Patterns
Molds
Nantucket Lightship
Accessories

FREE CATALOG AVAILABLE

EVENTS

Mark Your Calendar

2022 SCHEDULE

MAY 3-4, 2022

Linda Scherz
Pack baskets and waxed linen



JUNE 25-26, 2022

Annual Meeting
Felted Tree with Mary Annuziato



**JULY 15-16, 2022
(FRIDAY/SATURDAY)**

Pam Wilson
Manahawkin, NJ



SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2022

Annetta Kraayeveld
www.prairiewoodbasketry.com
www.basketteacher.com



SEPTEMBER 2022

Open Weave
Tuckerton Seaport Duck Decoy Show

OCTOBER 14-15, 2022

Denise Bendelewski
Manahawkin, NJ

DECEMBER 2022

Festival of Trees

All workshop flyers can be found on our webpage at pennjerseybasketryguild.org.

They are located with our newsletters.

**FELTED TREES
WITH MARY ANNUZIATO
SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2022
10AM – 4 PM
HISTORIC WALNFORD BARN**

62 Walnford Road
Upper Freehold, NJ 08501

Here is your chance to make a beautiful felted tree with Mary Annuziato! Several of your fellow PJBG members recommended Mary. You can choose a 14” tree or a 16” tree. The 14” tree has 36 branches while the 16” tree has 44 branches. She typically brings an array of greens and whites but you can choose another color if you wish. You just need to indicate your preference on the registration form below.



Mary will also bring along an array of items for sale at the time of her workshop.

DON'T DELAY!

CLASS REGISTRATION DEADLINE: June 1, 2022.

Make your check payable to the Penn-Jersey Basketry Guild. You will receive confirmation of your registration. Please phone Karen Wychock with any questions (215-460-8853). Don't delay! Register today!

Send this completed form and your check to:

Karen Wychock
108 Lyric Way
Warrington, PA 18976
215-460-8853

Felted Tree, June 25, 2022

14” Tree.....\$30.00 _____ Color: _____
 16” Tree.....\$35.00 _____ Color: _____
 Teacher Fee PJBG Member...\$20.00 _____
 Teacher Fee Nonmember.....\$25.00 _____
 TOTAL.....\$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ (Make your check payable to the Penn-Jersey Basketry Guild)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Your dues help us to pay for our insurance, newsletter, renting class sites and for our website. Please feel free to notify the guild if you have a financial hardship which would cause you not to rejoin our group.

Penn- Jersey Basketry Guild



2022-2023

Membership Application

The PJBG membership year runs from May 1 through the following April 30.

Our annual dues are \$25 per person or \$35 for a family/couple membership.

PLEASE PRINT

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (C) _____

*Email: _____

* For Guild information only; no solicitations.

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

\$25 Individual Membership

New Member

\$35 Family/couple Membership

Renewing Member

New to the Guild? How did you hear about us? _____

I consider myself: Beginner Intermediate Advanced Basket Weaver

Style of weaving / Materials most often used: _____

Basketry Interests: Weaver Collector Teacher Supplier

Suggestions for Workshops / Teachers: _____

I will contribute to the Guild by: _____

If you are included in a picture that was taken at a basketry event, would you allow your picture to be uploaded to the PJBG Facebook page? Yes No

An electronic (PDF) newsletter will be sent via email saving extra printing and postage costs for the Guild.

Please make check payable to PJBG and mail to:

Carol Pollock ■ 133 Wooley Run ■ Newtown, PA 18940-9672

Membership Forms can be included with your check or a snapshot can be emailed to Patti Bishop at patti.bishopville@gmail.com