



Education: Lindly Haunani will be here on June 26th and 27th to teach “Sagacious Sumptuous Intentional Color–Collaged Brooches” workshop. It is a 2 day class. Registration is available on-line at mdpag.org. The class fee is \$175.

Library: If you have overdue library items, be sure to turn them in at the next meeting.

Outreach: Meetings and Retreat are a great time to work on covering or filling Bottles of Hope and making canes or extruded canes for our Outreach projects. Thank you for all you do! Information is on the back page.

Retreat: Retreat 2020 is coming! The Guest Artist is **Jan Montarsi**. He has lots of techniques to teach us and inspire us with. Registration for Retreat is now closed. If you still owe a balance, contact Kathy Weinberg.

Website: The website needs your pictures! If you have some good ones of your polymer clay artwork and from guild events, send jpgs to Linda Vilas Helton. Thanks!



October and November Meeting Pics



Photos by Dorothy Greynolds

Denise's Corner



Welcome back from our winter break! Spring is almost here. The temperatures are slowly rising, grass is turning green, flowers are starting to bloom, and the birds are chirping their little hearts out. I'm more than ready for sunshine and shedding my heavy winter coat.

I enjoy Spring. I love the pastel colors. I noticed even Polyform now has a new pastel multi pack of polymer clay. It looks like it will be different from the pastels Fimo introduced years ago. Fimo's has translucent in it where Polyform looks like it will be opaque. Looking forward to giving it a try.

I just love all the new projects coming from the Polyform team. Plus, they have been so generous supplying clay and donations to our Trina's Way fund. While I have the other brands, my go to polymer clay is Premo and Soufflé.

I am just about finished with a flower mosaic mirror frame for Retreat and the pieces are all made out of Polyform clay.

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Swap Reminder

Please remember to bring your swap items to the March meeting, when they are due. If you're not able to attend the meeting, make arrangements for someone else to bring them, mail them to Kathy Weinberg, or drop them off before the meeting.

Write your name or initials on the back of each tile. Put them in a Ziploc bag labeled with your name.

Swap items will be returned at Retreat and at the May 16th meeting.

The total number is swap participants is 23. Make one 3" x 3" tile for each person.

Swap Participants:

Billie Conroy	Jane Sylvester
Beverly Currie	Carol Vandeboga
Lorna Dufrane	Kathy Weinberg
Susan Duxter	Elizabeth Walther
Diane Ferguson	
Janis Garich	
Dorothy Greynolds	
Kathie Harroun	
Linda Vilas-Helton	
Lori Kozlowski	
Charmaine Lipa	
Valerie Nix	
Denise Osborne	
Helen Pope	
Cristy Rice	
Kathryn Savickas	
Sue Screws	
Suzanne Stiles	
Mona Sullivan	

Upcoming Events:

All meetings/clay days are held on the third Saturday of the month at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 39020 Five Mile Road in Livonia. The time is 10 am to 5 pm. The meeting portion will start at 10 am followed by time to clay. We may have sign ups for bringing food. Bring your clay projects to work on or plan on doing charity donations. (See Back Page). Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Meeting/Clay Day: Saturday, March 21st: 10 am-5 pm

Demo: Suzanne Stiles will demo making mobiles with polymer clay items. She and Bev demoed making them at an earlier meeting and passed out information on how to create them.

Education: Lindly Haunani will be here in June to teach a 2-Day workshop. If you are interested in taking the class, an online sign up is on the guild's website.

Library: Please bring any items in you have borrowed.

Lunch: We will have a baked potato bar. Sign up on Signupgenius for a topping to bring and if you want to participate.

Special Request: Dorothy Greynolds would like to send a care package to Lindly Haunani, who was in a car accident in February and is recuperating in a rehab facility in Maryland. Small items (maybe bottles of hope) would be appreciated. She will bring a get well card for members to sign.

Retreat 2020: Thursday, April 16th - Sunday, April 19th:

Jan Montarsi will be our Guest Artist. He has many demos of techniques planned. Plan on bringing an item or two to donate to the Silent Auction. It is our main fundraiser of the year. A good portion of the money raised goes towards the "Trina's Way" fund. Retreat is a great time to work on projects or to create some Bottles of Hope or canes for our Outreach charity projects. Whether it's your 20th Retreat or your first, it will be a fun time for all attendees.

Lindly Haunani Workshop: Friday June 26 & Saturday June 27: 9am - 5 pm

Lindly will be teaching her "Sagacious Sumptuous Intentional Color-Collaged Brooches. She has been one of our Retreat Guest Artists and has taught several workshops for MDPAG. She has a vast knowledge of color and is an inspiring and enthusiastic teacher. You can sign up at our website: mdpag.org. Class will be held at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. It is a 2 day class and cost is \$175 for current members.

In this class you will: Expand your color awareness, refresh your knowledge about color and perfect your skills when combining colors.

Reminder:

There is no meeting in April because the third Saturday of the month is during Retreat.

Tips from my experience with polymer clay

By Susan Duxter

I began exploring polymer clay almost one year ago and quickly put aside my watercolor paints and brushes. I gave up my easel for a six foot table. With no plan of what to do with finished pieces, I dedicated myself to learning how to let this medium become the vehicle through which I would express my creativity. This fascination began after having seen a picture of a mosaic piece on Pinterest. I simply had to know how it was done. I began to watch Youtube tutorials and became even more determined to learn how to do this in polymer clay. In July of 2018, I purchased my first blocks of clay, a roller, a tile and a cutting blade. My journey began. At the age of seventy, I became dedicated to using clay to express my creativity. Here are some tips I've learned through my journey with polymer clay.

Inspiration:

- Watch one Youtube video each day to build your knowledge base.
- Watch tutorials, read books on polymer clay and subscribe to clay blogs by people you admire.
- Keep a notebook to record ideas for the future, urls of favorite Youtube tutorials, suppliers of clay products, names of Facebook friends as you establish relationships, to do lists, etc.

Projects/Goals:

- Less is more. Quality not quantity. Find your niche and stay focused. One thing at a time will help keep you focused and allow you time to become an expert at one technique before pursuing another.
- Too many supplies, like too many projects, can lead to inactivity and depression.
- Break your goal into small parts.

Workspace/Organization:

- Keep your studio neat, clean and organized. Organization is key to your success.
- At the end of your clay day, wipe down your work surface, roller and blades with baby wipes. Put all scrap clay and cane ends into a zip lock bag.
- Use labels on drawers and bins. A label maker makes this easy.
- Use multi drawer units, medium sized bins for each stage of clay progress, plastic lidded containers for your canes, a large white tile for a work surface and a garbage can.
- Pre cut 4-6" squares of parchment paper and plastic sheets - place in two 4-6" square plastic containers easily found at the Dollar store, label them and keep handy on or near your work surface.
- Arrange four medium sized bins marked: to be sanded, to be varnished, to have findings added, and completed. Set aside time to devote to moving pieces to the final finished bin. Do not begin a new project until the present one is cured and in one of the bins.

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Denise's Corner

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We have several new members, welcome to MDPAG. Our first meeting of 2020 will be March 21st. Lunch theme is a Baked Potato Bar. If you haven't signed up on Signupgenius, give Kathy a quick email or text to let her know you will be participating. Kathy makes awesome baked potatoes.

Thank you everyone for signing up on our new group site. If you still haven't done so, and you're coming to the meeting, we can help you sign up.

If you signed up for the swap, remember to bring in your swap items to the March meeting.

Looking forward to see everyone in a few weeks.

Happy Spring

Denise Osborne

MDPAG President

Thank you to Linda Vilas-Helton

At the October meeting Linda brought in many examples of texture sheets she had made, a large variety of items she had used to make sheets (including shark skin) and demonstrated how to make several sheets.

Linda was gracious enough to repeat the demo at the November meeting for members who had missed it at the October meeting. Thank you, Linda, for your generosity and giving spirit.

Tips from my experience with polymer clay

Materials / Tools:

- Google information on the right glue, the best resin, the differences in clay brands, necessities versus extravagances, comparison of suppliers and prices online, where to buy specialty tools. Keep the information in your notebook. Watch for regular sales.
- Try shopping at thrift stores and dollar stores.
- Substitute old eye shadow for mica powder.
- Buy a clamp to hold your extruder to your table. I purchased a tiny vice from AliExpress.com for under six dollars.
- Finger cots can be ordered online and are useful for eliminating fingerprints and are easier to wear than gloves.
- Keep all your supply receipts in a box in your studio.

Conditioning Clay:

Never skip conditioning. Use your pasta machine to get all colors for a project equally softened. If one clay sheet is too wet, place it between two pieces of bond paper with a book on top for an hour. If a clay is too hard, use softener or baby oil in very small amounts until it matches the others.

Color Mixing:

Trust that you can mix and make any color of clay. It isn't necessary to buy them all. Sparkle can be added to clay to create special effects.

Pasta Machine:

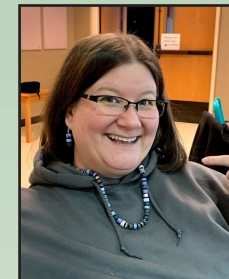
- Make certain that the width of the clay you rolled out is even.
- If the thickest setting on your pasta machine feels too thin, double two pieces of clay together and carefully roll out air bubbles without using too much pressure.

Canes:

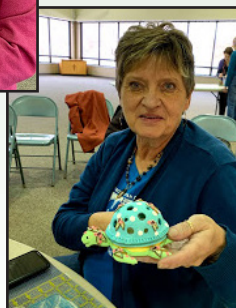
- Make a list of canes and methodically learn and practice each one until you have gained mastery of at least half a dozen.
- Never throw out your scraps or cane ends. There are wonderful things you can do with them such as making a stropel-cane, Natasha beads and many more projects. You can also blend to create new colors.
- Take a slice of every cane you make or a sample of each veneer and glue them on to a background for easy referral.

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November Meeting Pics



Some of the raffle winners with their new art pieces.



*Photos by
Kathy Weinberg*

Tips from my experience with polymer clay

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Textures:

- Learn to make your own texture sheets. Once baked, make another of the reverse for your files.
- Always spray a texture sheet lightly with water or mold release. Sometimes brushing the surface with cornstarch keeps the clay from sticking.
- Never press a texture sheet into the clay! Lay the sheet texture side up, put your conditioned clay on top. Use your fingers to make sure every bit of texture has transferred to the clay, then use parchment paper and a burnisher to smooth the surface of the clay before lifting it off of the texture sheet.

Cutters:

- Put plastic wrap or part of a baggie over a clay piece before cutting with a cutter as it nicely rounds the edges. Remove the plastic and cut deeper to be sure the shape is cut all the way through.
- After cutting a piece, gently wipe the edges with 99% rubbing alcohol to smooth them. Use a flexible blade to skim under the piece to remove it from your work surface. Pick it up carefully, so as not to distort the shape, and use your finger with a touch of baby oil or alcohol to smooth the edges again before placing on a tile to cure in your toaster oven.
- Clean your cutters with warm water and soap.

Finishing:

- If you have prepared a thin veneer with cane slices, etc. be prepared to lift the piece and lay it on top of a backing that is the appropriate depth. Run it through the pasta machine on the thickest setting under a sheet of parchment to reduce distortion or roll gently with your roller.
- When a piece is almost ready, burnish it by place a piece of parchment over it and smooth gently using your finger, the back of a soup spoon or a coffee tamper. Never skip this step unless there are three dimensional adornments you cannot disturb.
- Finishing touches make all the difference between a beginner and a more experienced artist. For example, add a thin veneer of clay to the back of a piece of jewelry. In most cases texture it and add a neat border to enhance the piece.
- I like the look of a shiny finish using gloss coat (Future, two part resin,

water based varathane, specialty products, etc.), but have come to realize that I find clay is most beautiful with some Renaissance wax and buffed. These pieces glow, never fingerprint and feel smooth to the touch.

- Take pride in your work. Keep working on a single piece refining and perfecting it to the best of your ability. Take a picture and study it for flaws that you can correct. Photos show what the eye refuses to see. Once satisfied, sign your work or order a rubber stamp to use on the back.

Sanding:

- Sanding a finished piece can be soothing. I sit with my four squares of sandpaper and a bowl of water. Piece by piece I use 400, 600, 800 and 1000 wet/dry paper purchased at the local auto store to bring out the brilliance of my work.
- If you can afford it, purchase a poly sander tool to make the job of sanding easier. Later you may want to acquire a small drill.

Curing:

- Avoid burn spots on your clay. Always tent your pieces. I like the square aluminum baking pan from Dollarama. Place it upside down over the pieces which are cured on an 8" tile. Works perfectly! Use parchment under the pieces on top of the tile to avoid shiny spots on the backs. You can buy 8" square tiles for under 50 cents each at Lowe's or Home Depot.
- Never cook at a higher temperature than recommended by the clay manufacturer, but you can safely bake much longer without worry. I usually bake for 45-60 minutes.

Promotion:

- Decide who you are and write a statement of intent. Are you selling or are you creating for pleasure? Have you figured out what to do with finished masterpieces? There is no need to compete with other artists. What you decide is exactly right for you. Stick to that and have confidence in your decision. Let family and friends know this is your journey and ask them to respect your choices and decisions.
- Create a simple website or at the very least open a Pinterest account where you can store photos of all your work year after year.
- Design a business card on Publisher or any simple program. This will allow you to print ten cards on a sheet and always have art cards with you in the event that someone needs to get in touch.



2019-2020

Meeting/Clay Days: Saturdays 10-5:

July 20	March 21
August 17	May 16
September 21	June 20
October 19	
November 16	

Workshops: Fri. 6/26 & Sat. 6/27:
Lindly Haunani 2-Day workshop.

Retreat: April 16-19, 2020, The Guest Artist will be Jan Montarski.

Guild meetings are held on the third Saturday of the month March - Nov. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 39020 Five Mile Road in Livonia.



Cut this out and use as a bookmark!



Dorothy Greynolds
5678 Eldridge Drive
Waterford MI 48327

OUTREACH PROJECTS:

Use your creative talents to help people dealing with cancer and other serious illnesses. Bring them to meetings, Clay Days or Retreat. Your donations are appreciated!

Bottles of Hope:

Decorate small glass bottles (MDPAG provides) with cane slices, Skinner blends, textures, etc. for Gilda's Club. Bottles are given to their members (men, women, teens and children).



Bracelets & Badges of Hope:

MDPAG member Kathy Weaver sends bracelets, badges and zipper pulls to children's hospitals across the US.

Any of these are greatly appreciated:

- **Zipper pulls:** sports, superheroes, Minecraft, etc. Use fishing swivel hooks or lanyard hooks on them.
- **Badges:** sports, superheroes, Minecraft, etc.
- **Spacer beads:** cured clay, metal, plastic or glass - 6mm or smaller
- **Cured Canes:** any colors, patterns or holiday themes (3/8" - 1/2" in diameter) Kathy will slice and drill the canes and use them and spacer beads in bracelets.

