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March 2003

Volume 4,
Issue 3

Using Scraps



[Tips, techniques and Ideas](#) Judi Weers, Peggy O'Neill, Jeanne Rhea



[Using Scraps and a Clay Gun](#) Gabriele "Dukky" Curlett

[Tools From Trash](#) Trina Williams

Your Workspace



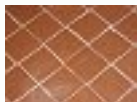
[Good Night Irene Studio](#) Irene Semanchuk

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Tutorial-Miniature Floor Tile and Grout



Jane Wicherski

Gallery-Miniatures



Wreath Project

San Diego Polymer Clay Guild



Guilds

Patty Barnes

Polymer Clay Polyzine


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Towson, MD

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43,000 women will die every year. Please click every day to help fund free mammograms.

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Using Scrap Clay

Click on images to see larger images.



Fiesta Pins

[Judi Weers](#)
Cardinal Creations



In San Antonio, we have a 10-day celebration mid April called Fiesta. Almost every group involved makes pins and medals to sell and/or trade. It's quite a deal to see how many you can obtain and wear around during Fiesta.

I started using my scrap pieces for my "trading pins". I use small cookie cutters or make my own in designs that work with Fiesta. Each year is a different shape. Mix different pieces of scrap, roll out, cut, bake then glue a pin on the back. When one bit of clay begins getting too mixed, I add another color or scrap combination. Each pin is one-of-a-kind and they are a great hit. I've managed to get some really special pins in trade, too.

Judi



Bottles Of Hope

[Peggy O'Neill](#)



"I've used scrap clay on Bottles of Hope and beads.

They are very colorful marbled bottles and the ones with silver and gold embellishments on them."

Peggy

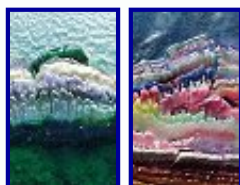
[Click here](#) to see where Peggy and the members of Global Fantasy Dolls have shared their BOH . Follow the link at the bottom of the page to see their dolls, too!

For more information on Bottles of Hope, [click here](#)



"Scapes"

Jeanne Rhea



Jeanne creates surreal and beautiful "landscapes". She does this by scraping the colorful scraps of soft clay from beneath her pasta machine and laying them onto slabs of clay.

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Using a Clay Gun

Gabriele "Dukky" Curlett

Click on thumbnails to see larger images.



I've been saving scraps of clay from projects, cane ends, or things that just didn't work out for about a year now. I sort them into paper bowls by color family.



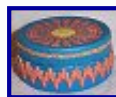
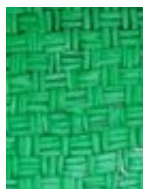
On Christmas morning I finally got an idea as to what to do with them. The only tools I've used are a clay gun and a craft knife with a flat-topped blade. I pick up a bunch of scraps, roll them into a snake and then extract it through the ribbon die of the clay gun.




I then slice off very small slivers of the clay with the blade and lay it on a sheet of clay that will be used to cover something later or I lay it on a piece of baked clay already cut into the shape I want. This is accomplished all in one motion. Cut, leave the slice on the blade and then use the blade to position the sliver of clay.



The design you end up with is determined by the way you lay down the slice. I've only used the ribbon die so far but I'm sure that you can do this with any of the dies that come with the clay gun.



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Most of us cant walk by any kind of gadget without thinking “how can I use that with polymer clay?” I'm no exception. From apple corers to zesters, cookie cutters to pizza wheels, cosmetic applicators to old electric toothbrushes we came, we bought, and we improvised.



My latest conquest is what I like to call Brass Trash. You can buy it by the bag from any model shop and the MicroMark catalog. Mainly scraps of brass rods it also contains square shapes and oval shapes lengths from ¼ to 7 inches. I saw it advertised in the MicroMark catalog while I was recovering from my broken shoulder. Shopping on-line was my only recreation.

My imagination was way ahead of my tool building skill but I have come up with a few things that are workable and I'm sure the rest of you can add to that.



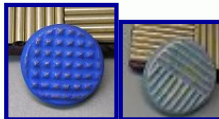
The first thing that attracted me was the oval, or tear drop, shape and I envisioned putting the various sized ovals together with a rubber band into a design that could be changed to suit my mood. Wrong. The rubber band will hold a basically round configuration but anything elliptical needed something else. Scotch tape? Seems to work pretty well. Embedding in clay? I need to learn to cut the pieces smaller. This one is a work in progress. Although the rubber stamp designer at Embossing Arts was impressed with it enough to keep my original sample. I used this one as both a texture tool and a cutter, although the clay gets stuck in the smaller holes. A water release helps.



The second “tool” was rather serendipitous. I picked up a length of rod and it was stuck with another piece of rod inside a bigger rod. A few drops of glue and another design was born. Dipping it in Pearl Ex gives you another look.

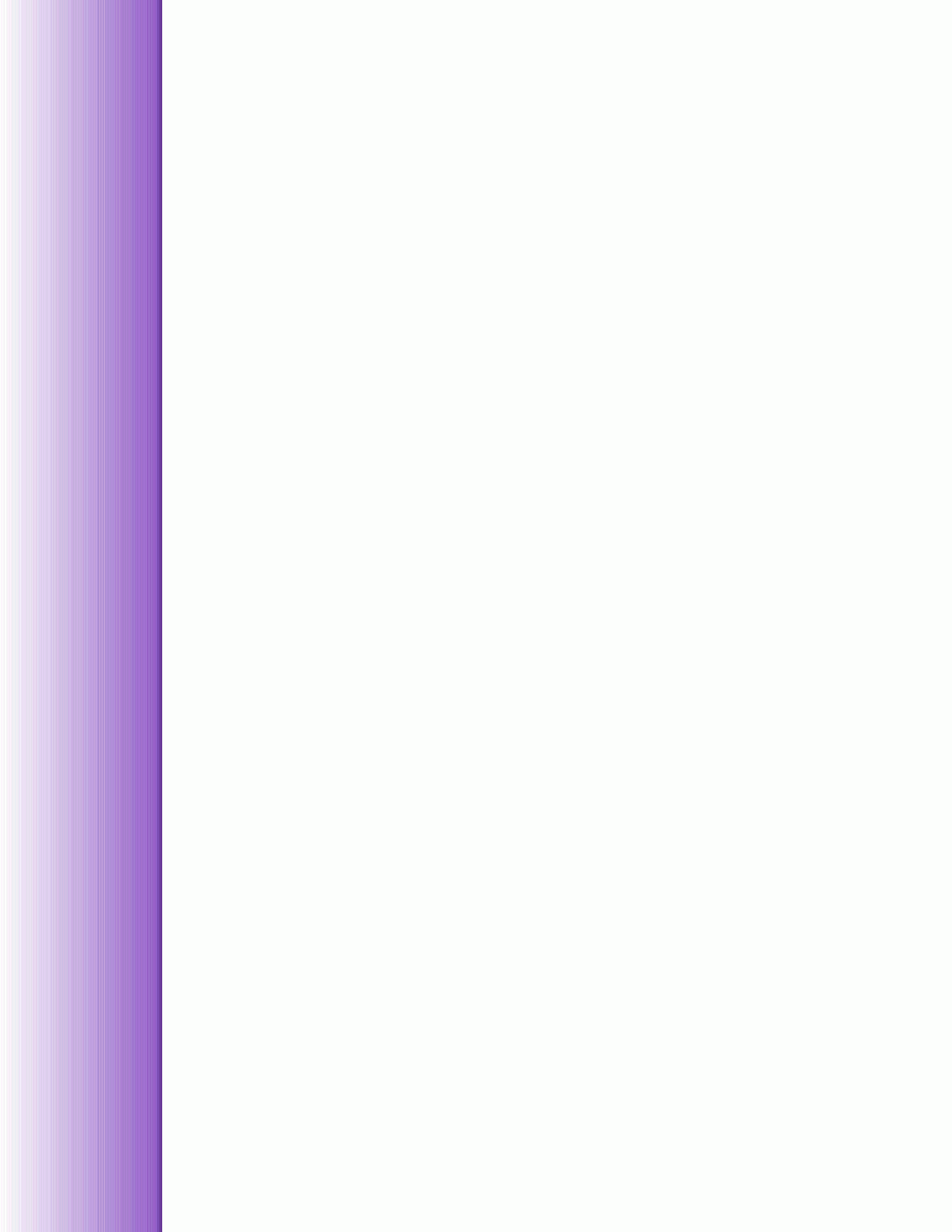



The most versatile tool is simply a series of same diameter rods embedded in a piece of clay. After baking flip the pieces out and then glue them in with your favorite glue. As you can see from the pictures you can get three different patterns and as someone in the button swap will see, it makes great buttons!



I also found a very small square rod, about an eighth of an inch and a similar sized hexagon that are too small to photograph but will make excellent impressions.

So here is a challenge to you all. Invent a new tool from scrap. It's fun and will keep you out of trouble.



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Workspace

Good Night Irene Studio

Irene Semanchuk Dean

Click on image to see full-size image.



This is my new workspace! The bay window looks out onto the wooded portion of our lot, and the smaller window provides me with a view of the bird feeders in the side yard.

To see the rest of Irene's studio and read how she set it up, [click here](#).

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Workspace
[Teri Persing](#)

You will be seeing Teri's contribution to The Great Polyzine Button Swap in next month's issue.



This is what Teri needs to move



This is where it's supposed to go.



Cleared off with a rotary quilt cutting mat under a sheet of acrylic



More of the stuff moved.



All ready to clay!

<http://hobbystage.net/art/teri/>

<http://albums.photo.epson.com/j/AlbumList?u=4023576>

See my eBay auctions:

<http://www.stores.ebay.com/id=491030&ssPageName=L2>

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My Workspace
Elizabeth
Polyparrot

Click on images to see larger images.



New Baskets and stackers



Moved most of the tools off of the table.....
.... and into the little rolling cart. The table has only the things that I use all the time. The things I reach for nearly as often whether claying or stamping are now in the rolling cart. This gives me tons of free space on the table - I can do clay stuff or paper stuff without running out of elbow room.



Replaced that student desk!
I pulled the dark desk out of this corner and it holds instead - tada! - four tall stackers with lots of "stuff" neatly organized! Most of the inks are in the back corner - the white stackers contain the things I use the most with clay - cutters, texture, button molds, pulvers & powders, foils, stamps, oil paints, acrylic paints, Pinata inks, finishes.



Starting on the left side
Rolling stackers filled with tools I don't use very often, millefiori canes, mokume gane pads, blended sheets, etc. Then two stackers with unwrapped clay sorted by color family. Paper stock, grids, sheets of glass, then a tall stacker full of paints, pastels, foils and two drawers of mica powders.




Utility cart full of jewelry stuff
Beads, wire, glues, beads, jewelry tools, storage containers and did I mention beads?



The proverbial 4" square of workspace
No matter how big the table, we end up working in a tiny little clear area. This one is surrounded by color-corrected lamps, the oven, most-used tools, clay still in wrappers, more canes and sheets, pasta machines, camera, rollers and brayers.



The hellhole
The corner I rarely have to dig into, thank heavens! More clay, more inclusions, stamps, textures, tools, tools, tools. To the right of this area is the computer, scanner, printer, etc... but I ain't showing that. ;-)
Elizabeth

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Workspace

Our thoughts on our workspaces, what we've done, what we'd like to do and coping.

Home is where the heart is and my work room is where my "Stuff" is..... Everything is in big plastic boxes under my bed. Sometimes I just drag them out and sit on the floor and use the boxes as a work surface. Sometimes I use a ridiculously small TV table in the bedroom, and drop clay and tools on the floor about every 5 seconds. Then there's the coffee table in the living room which is glass, so it makes a nice big work surface and of course, there's always the dining room table. And when things get slow at work I have a nice big glass countertop. I manage an art supply store, so I'm never too far from the clay. The word "organization" is not in my vocabulary!
obirtasil



I have two rooms and four work tables. No matter where you sit, there is a project or two waiting to be worked on. I do many crafts and lots of sewing. I have two sewing machines. One heavy one for making teddy bears. The other takes over my dining table. I have a table for beads. A large work table for cut out cloth and all kinds of things get worked on there. Then I have a drafting table for clay, books, rubber stamping and a lot of other projects. My one big chair has a mag light and a stand to hold my cross stitch. My computer is in my bedroom with a lot of books, magazines and about 3 or 4 hundred bears, dolls etc. Lots of books and magazines in the other room. I don't think I will take phot's! LOL alicejoy




Ok and I thought if I got a bigger work area I might actually not have as much clutter as I do right now. But from what I see ;-) it seems that you just get more stuff to fill it up then ROFL! Mine is a small (and I mean small) table hidden at the back of the sofa in the lounge. And another smaller table beside it filled with everything I can pile on it. I really need to get a bigger table. Wish I could get a whole craft room. Now why didn't anyone think of that when they made the place lol. My work surface is piled with clay blocks, tools, pasta machine and leaves me with a tiny place to work. Ok I am going to get that new table lol.

Erum Munir
[Claybies](#)



More next month!

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Dollhouse Tile and Grout
[Jane Wicherski](#)

Click on images to see larger images.



I went to the local hobby shop, not my fave place, but they had the mini lumber I was needing. While there, I chatted up the model train expert re the grout situation. He pointed me at a 1/2 gallon milk carton size of a product called Extra Light HydroCal. This stuff is used to lay streets, etc. on the train boards, as it is light, doesn't shrink, doesn't get hot when hardening, can be carved or sanded when hard, can be colored.


It is pretty cheap, considering. It cost about \$8.00 for a 2 lb. carton, enough to grout all the tile I will ever do, or for lightweight plaster-type molds, etc. And it air hardens with about a 45 minute working time, and a 45 minute "cure" time. Initial cleanup is with soap and water, and was purported to be very easy.

I brought it home, mixed half acrylic craft paint and half water with a dab of powder, and smeared it around on my test strip. The strip was simply cardboard with bits of the shingle cardstock leftovers glued down fairly close together. It seemed to mix up smoothly, colored well, went down nicely, could be removed with water where unwanted, hardened fairly quickly, didn't shrink, didn't resist sanding or putzing with when hard. I heaved a big sigh of resolve, and did the kitchen floor with it. It came out great, and went so quickly! It cleaned right up and reminded me of working with real grout. I got things as tidy as I could with a wet cloth, then went off to work on other things.

In about an hour I was able to wipe things down with a dry soft cloth to get the "bloom" off. Then I noticed a tiny spot I didn't like really well, so dug the container of "leftovers" out of the garbage (the label warns not to wash any down the drain), and fixed the little spot with some of the still-soft goop left at the very bottom (the top was pretty solid by then).

I went back to look this a.m. with an eye to shooting some digi photos and it Looks Fabulous! Doesn't come out of the cracks with some rubbing, etc.

No shrink, no cracks. So success!
 Janey

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Art Gallery-Miniatures

And we mean miniature!

Kathy Weinberg[Sky's the Limit](#)

Basket 1



Basket 2



Basket 3



Basket 4



Basket 5



Basket 6



Basket 7



Basket 8



Created By

Kathy Weinberg

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March 2003
Wreath Project

**San Diego Polymer Clay Guild
Bug Wreath**

[Click here](#) for pictures of the SDPCG Wreath Project

How the Wreath Project Works:

Any member of a guild or other clay group becomes interested in one or more of the proposed wreath projects and offers the idea to that group. A vote is then taken on which project to do. One or two people are designated as collectors of the items to go onto the wreath. This person or people is responsible for collecting items, names to go with the items and getting them safely to the meeting or Clay Day to assemble the wreath.

The group will decide what type of wreath to use, and there are no limits to the type of materials used, and where the funds for materials will come from. Any member may donate or make a wreath to be used, or the group as a whole may delegate funds to be used from a treasury or take up a collection.

The article is not hard to write. We will even help you write it. Remember who assembled the wreath, take pictures of this happening, include minor and major disasters, funny stories and the like. Group pictures are welcome. Individual pictures of the items are recommended, but we can take them from several large, high quality images of the finished wreath if necessary. If you would like to include a tutorial on the assembly of the wreath, that would be very appropriate and welcome!

Once the wreath is assembled, it is up to each guild to decide what will be done with it. Suggestions: raffle at group meeting, enter into a fair or show, make it a door prize at a holiday gathering, donate it to a charity, auction on eBay for group funds, or donate it to Polyzine to be sold!


Here are the themes I will be proposing for 2003:

March (Austin Guild)	Buttons	Taken
April	Eggs OR Flowers	
May	Mother's Day OR Tea Party	
June	At the Beach OR Shoes	

July	Quilt	South Texas
August	Hawaiian vSweet 16	
September	For Teacher OR Dollhouse	
October	Fall Leaves OR Halloween	
November	Winter Veggies OR Thanksgiving	
December	Snowflakes	San Antonio

Any month that says "Proposed" is in process at a guild. Month specified refers to the month that the article is **due to Polyzine**.

If you have a group that would be interested in participating, **email IR**.

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Guilds

Patty Barnes

Once upon a time there was a clayer who pined because she had no claying playmates. As she lived in the hinterlands, it was several years before the internet became available in her area. But, when it did, she found online newsgroups and the National Polymer Clay Guild site. She envied the guild members and finally managed to attend a clay day with a guild three hours drive away. She fell in love with guilds! They talked clay, played clay and loved clay as much as she did.

Then she was able to attend a retreat hosted by another guild and met clay "queen" Marie Segal and other notable clay artists. She whined that she didn't have a guild near her and she was admonished to "start your own". She returned home with the desire and determination.

Two months later she met another clayer in the clay aisle of a craft store. This clayer told her of another clayer who she immediately contacted. And that clayer knew of another. So, the lonely clayer screwed up her courage, contacted the local library to secure a meeting place, and then notified the other three clayers. They met just three months after the retreat and a guild was born!

Then the lonesome clayer wasn't lonesome anymore, but because the guild was so much fun, she encouraged some of her clay students in another city to start a guild, too. With about eight people, a location at a Hobby Lobby was decided upon and another guild was born! And there were over 30 people after the first year!

One member from the first guild could no longer drive the long distance to the guild meetings and she mourned the loss of her guild. With reassurance from the first lonely clayer, she contacted some friends and the Hobby Lobby in her town and another guild was born!

Why have a guild, you ask? Clay mates! Fellow enthusiasts to encourage, inspire and learn with and from, to share tips, techniques and fun, to meet new people and to form great friendships. Why not? I can't think of a single reason.

How to start a guild? Contact your friends who might or might not be fellow crafters and invite them to be a founding member in the new guild. Then quick! find a place to meet. Where to meet? Here are some suggestions for free places: your home or another friend's, craft stores, libraries, churches, synagogues, schools, community centers, and recreation centers. Poll your new members for other place they may know about.

When to meet? Many guilds find that Saturday afternoon is best for them, but Sunday afternoon or weekday evenings might work, too. Select the time best for most of the members.

How long? For a regular meeting, three hours seems to work well. This provides for any business meeting, a demo or video and time to make something and perhaps even bake it. For a clay day, set aside several hours and have either a pot luck lunch or sack lunch. After all, claying and talking needs plenty of energy!

Most guilds meet monthly on a specified day. This allows members to schedule other things around that day and they can set that day aside for themselves. Of course, clay days can be as often as the guild wants.

Dues? Yes or no? This depends upon the desired structure of your guild. It can be basically informal with members just getting together periodically or is it more formal with desired outcomes such as a lending library, guest artists, Bottles of Hope distribution, retreats, raffles and other such things? If it is the latter, then in my opinion, dues would be in order. Having paid dues, most people will consider the guild more "theirs" and participate more frequently. The amount can be whatever the guild wants, but the three guilds previously mentioned decided upon yearly dues of \$24 for one person and \$36 for family membership. This amount is easily divided by 12 so that incoming members dues can be prorated according to the fiscal year. Dues can be used to establish a lending library of books, magazines, the PolyInformer, and videos or for guest artists, a newsletter or for a retreat.

Officers should most likely be elected if there is money involved. The basics of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian are fine to start with. And obviously jobs can be combined such as Secretary/Treasurer or other ways. As the guild grows (and it will) then more positions might be needed such as a program chairman, membership chairman, etc.

As the guild grows larger, then perhaps a set of by-laws can be written and perhaps a web site developed and/or a newsletter published. All of this depends upon the nature of the guild. There is no right or wrong way.

To help the guild grow, here are some suggestions: in the newspaper's "what's happening" section, radio public service announcements, television local shows, flyers distributed to schools for the teachers, flyers posted in craft stores by the clay (with the stores' permission), other guilds such as rubber stamping, calligraphy, fiber arts, quilters, scrapbooking, beadery, also museums, art centers, retirement homes, chamber of commerce offices and of course the National Polymer Clay Guild or [NPCG](#), Polymer Cafe and PCPolyzine!

Now go forth and multiply! Let us know about your guild. Who knows? We might just drop in for a meeting!

Patty

Editor's Note: Visit our [Guilds](#) page for listings of a guild near you.