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## Letters to the Editor

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Dear Editor:

[Tommie's] article [in [August 2001](#)] is right on the mark. I have a very special reason for passing on polymer to the next generation. I am a widow who lives alone and my grandkids, neices, and nephews love to come to my home. I teach them how to use polymer clay to make wonderful things. So they bug their moms and dads to let them visit me, and I get to see them more often.

As a retired teacher I feel guilty that I haven't done as you suggested and made an effort to reach more children to develop their creative abilities. I intend to remedy that as soon as possible.

With great respect,  
Marlene



Dear Editor:

One of my great joys is having my sons and their friends sit with me as I work with clay. There is something exciting about hearing a young one say, "I don't know what it is, but it is going to have blond hair with gold highlights!" She had been given yellow, gold, gray, and green clay.

Making the materials and the instruction available to children is invaluable in molding the next generation of artists. This is especially true when one considers that art classes in many public schools are non-existent, or so short in nature as to be ineffective.

Finding time to share our skill with children is important for the future of the child as well as the

art. Finding courage to share our skill with children is important to the very nature of who we are as artists!

Evalie Lockard



Dear Editor,

Congratulations on producing a fabulous magazine. I can hardly wait for the new issue to come out each month. I particularly love Tommie Howell's column.

As an artist working in miniature and selling at "full size" craft shows I really appreciate his comments about the "arteest" mentality - I have a very hard time convincing other craftspeople and show organizers to take my work seriously because it is BOTH polymer clay and miniature! This despite national recognition and exposure in main stream magazines including the April 2001 launch issue of ELLE magazine's Canadian edition!

Your how to columns are also excellent and inspire me to try new techniques and projects. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,  
Jacey Ann Culham Lindsay  
Ontario Canada

PS Are there any clay artists out there in or near my part of Ontario, Canada? If so I would love to hear from them.



Dear Editor,

I can't begin to tell you how excited I was when I encountered PolyZine. It's definitely a source I can return to and highly recommend it to anyone who loves PC or is thinking about getting into it.

I was introduced to PC back in high school, and even though that was about 10 yrs ago, not many people had heard of polymer clay in my area. Of course this last decade has been totally astounding with more and more people having access to the internet and so many new and interesting books on the subject, not to mention, I can now pick up any craft magazine and find at least one project involving pc. LOL

Just in the last few years I have really gotten back into the pc world and it has been wonderful!!! I recently got a pasta machine for my birthday and it was then I was recommended to this site when I inquired about projects involving the pasta machine. Totally blew me away!!!!

I would love to join a guild but there are none in my area and I have no idea what would be involved in starting a local one. I'm not a member of the National one yet (just started a new job and am waiting for a few extra bucks to surface).

Anyhow, looking forward to each new issue and have pretty much memorized what's in each previous issue. I can't say enough what a great source this is. Totally amazing, efficient and easy site to navigate too. Wonderful!!!

Keep up the awesome work!  
Andrea (Turtle)



Hi Guys!!

First of all, Polyzine is wonderful - if it were a clay piece, it would have won prizes galore. It gives links that go on and on and on...

I'm a recently acknowledged Polyholic - living in a country which has not yet invented Premo Sculpy (just Fimo and Cernit), and where things like Kemper tools just bring forward a distant glazed look on the faces of the shop assistants. Not to mention all the other fun stuff you people have over there - including fantastic artists like yourself, work shops etc.

Thanks ever, ever so much for your generous illustration and explanations - and I have already ordered more books than I can read for a while. Anybody over there wanna adopt a 43 year old that loves to clay? I'm an American citizen.....:) (Don't mention my hubby, my Great Dane, my large poodle and my gem of a Lakeland terrier - it tends to make people somewhat reluctant) (Not too good for hitch-hiking either, come to think of it...)

I live in Norway, near Oslo, and I have come to the conclusion that I'll create a place for alienated clayers (the ones where the house is in shambles, the husband (or wife) has left, infants and pets have starved, and the rest moved out). This must be near on a great place for the first P.A. (Polyholics Anonymous). Anyone for the idea? Just shows that you never know what can come in handy.

Seriously, I have planned to work a bit with Fimo first, Classic and Soft (Good knows I'm no Michaelangelo, better not blame my not too stylish earrings on the clay), and then see if I can order some Premo from the UK or elsewhere later. When I get really rich and famous I'll send you a gift - clay made. Don't wait up.

Keep up the good work, it makes life bearable for us up in the sticks.

Best regards,  
Linda Mellingen



Dear Editor:

For a polymer clay Newbie/Novice like myself Polyzine is the greatest resource on the net. I really look forward to the new issue every month. As a beginner with a limited budget I'm not able to buy the poly clay books, magazines and videos. This makes your tutorials/lessons/projects even more rewarding because they are given freely.

I focus ever so closely on the tutorials and have read several letters mentioning the size of pictures and the effect it has when printing the projects. I really like the way several lessons have been produced such as the Troll series. The actual tutorial could be printed with smaller pictures yet links are available for people such as myself who like and need the additional detail of the larger format pictures. I hope this type of format will be utilized more frequently in the future thus satisfying everyone's needs.

If you need assistance utilizing Adobe Acrobat feel free to email me I could reproduce your magazine in the pdf format and would be pleased to make a contribution. Please keep up the fine work and my thanks to everyone who has provided their time and talent.

Rick Coates

Rick has already helped us by showing us some Adobe Acrobat tips! Thanks Rick!

Deirdre



Dear Editor:

I am new to polymer clay. I have been reading books. Now i am confused. I purchased parchment paper and a cookie sheet. Today i recvd. The New Clay I had ordered. Should I be using an old pyrex cake plate? Plan to work a lot with the clay while we are at the beach. I am unable to go outside and climb the stairs very often. Decided to work with a new craft. I've seen interesting segments on TV. Looks like a great way to entertain myself while everyone is on beach. Please give me some baking input. I'm ready to try this new way of self-expression.

Sincerely,  
Jane Santa-Cruz

Hi Jane!

The best material to bake on is manila folders. You can place the manila folder on the cookie sheet if you want.

If you are using cookie sheets, I am going to assume that you are using your regular oven to cook in. If so, make sure you cover all your polymer clay items with a large piece of tin foil (balloon it around so it's not touching your pieces), so all the fumes/residue stay inside the tin foil and don't cover the inside of your oven.

A lot of people have a toaster oven that they use for polymer clay only. If you have an old toaster oven, or can get to a thrift store where they sell old ovens for \$10 (or even the dump -- people are throwing away toaster ovens all the time), it's a good investment.

Enjoy working with the clay!

Deirdre



Dear Editor:

[Tommie's] "Thoughts on Family and Friends" really touched me. It can be a very lonely world at times, and it is wonderful how art and interests can bring people together. I'm glad for you :)

Best wishes,  
Kathy



Dear Editor:

Hi...just went to a great craft show in our area and met this woman who makes buttons from polymer clay. She gave me your website to check out.... I am very new to polymer clay (just a little intimidated by it) but ready to jump in and try it...

Thanks  
Linda



Hi,

I don't know if you can help, but I have a real problem. I bought several cakes of fimo on a close out. Odd colors, thought I could use to do body parts for my mini dolls. Well I have done everything but stand on my head and all I can get is small grain like pieces. I have used a conditioner, still nothing. It just will not hold together. What am I doing wrong, and what can I do? Please help, any info will be appreciated. Thanks so much for this wonderful site. I am very new to clay, but I love it.

Vicki

Dear Vicki:

It sounds to me like your clay cured already, probably in the package while it was being stored in a hot warehouse or a hot truck.

Does anyone have any suggestions for Vicki! Can we reconstitute cured clay?

Deirdre



Dear Editor:

I would be interested in hearing from people in my area. Sometimes the wilds of Virginia seem a bit isolated and the net is not quite the same as sitting around the craft table in person trading canes and ideas.

I love your site (as evidenced by the fact its 3am and I'm cking out my friend Joanie's article- love those fish!) As an art educator myself I was thrilled to see someone stand up for the importance of sharing with the next generation. I am always amazed by the ideas that spill out from my son. He constantly challenges me to explore new directions because no one has told him it can't be done. I wish more adults would realize what children already know- it's the shared exploration and personal discovery that are the important parts and if you're not having fun don't do it!

Keep up the good work.

Antoinette deAlteriis  
Virginia Beach, VA



Hello.

I would like to thank Deb Hayes for answering my question on the news group rec.crafts.polymer-clay.

Thank you,  
Bill GirarD



Dear Editor:

I have been a substitute teacher in four of the local public schools. My third and youngest child enters her senior year of high school today.

After much observation of the education system, it is my belief that we do a major disservice to our society when we remove the children from the daily life of the community, insulating each child from anyone else of an age other than theirs, with the exception of a few (very authoritarian) adults. Children don't know how to act around adults.

What's more, they are not taught the necessity, the art, or the practice of exercising courtesy and respect for other people. What's more, the adult workers in our society do not know the youngsters, and do not teach them the things they can do.

In much of my pondering, my conclusions usually return to the idea that our children need, really need, to be entered into working society as apprentices at preteen ages. They would still live at home, of course, but their environment would be much more kinetic and hands-on compared to the classroom in a school. I have seen too many bright children being forced to do mind-numbing repetitious reading and writing over and over each day for most of 180 days a school year, and most of it sitting down and sitting still and being quiet, or else being in trouble.

If young children could spend half a school day on site at a place of work (=positive social additive) helping and interacting with experienced workers who can show them how things are done and why they need mathematics, reading ability, communication skills, and problem solving, these children would grow in the oft-referenced "self-esteem" by the practice of doing things. It's such an achievement to be doing things that make sense.

So many times, as I have listened to middle and high schools students vent their frustrations, I have heard their disbelief that what they were being tested on had any application to the real world (as they knew it, of course.). My belief is that our society has become age segregated. I don't think anyone really masterminded this to cause damage to our society, but I do believe damage is being done.

Jean Florian

ps. My apologies for this being so long. I'll get down off my soapbox, now.



Hello,

I was hoping you could help me find a wholesaler for plastic vials for necklaces that I am making. I have been able to find a lot of sites that sell glass vials for jewelry making , however acrylic/plastic is hard to find. Any suggestions where to look?

Thank you for your time,

P. Fawcett Readers: Can anyone help P. Fawcett find plastic vials? I suggested he use empty film canisters (free at your local photoprocessing store). Any other suggestions?

Deirdre



Hi,

My name is Pamela and I want you to know I love the e-zine! It has a lot of techniques that I want to try.

I wanted to share with you about polishing. I find that when I have some older pieces that look dull, whether they were merely polished or were coated with Future, the fleece side of a sweatshirt does wonders!!!! I used to use Future on everything. But the nice polish I get with the fleece finds me setting the Future floor polish aside.

I also was unhappy with the small size of the muslin polishing wheel. I decided if the fleece worked nicely when polishing by hand, it should be even better on my dremel. I have the battery operated kind. I cut 3-4 circles from an old sweatshirt, poke a hole in the middle to accommodate the screw and I then attach it to the mandrel. Works wonderfully!!!! It brings up a fast luster. When you need a larger one or a newer one it takes just minutes and you are up and polishing again. I no longer use muslin. Try it!!!!!!!!!!!!

Regards,  
Pamela Simpson

p.s. I like the idea of making my own mandrel!!! I'll have to try that! Dear Pamela:

Thanks for the tip. I know I will try it!

Deirdre



Dear Editor:

I just found your site and am thrilled. I took a polymer class in making boxes from NYC artist, Louise Fisher Cozzi, at Augusta Heritage Festival in West Virginia this summer. Prior to that, my experience was in watching my ten year old son. He played with sculpey III clay all the time. But I was not interested in making little figures and besides they were constantly breaking. That was all I knew about polymer clay, and I wasn't sure how I'd like this class. I am now hooked. I've made over a dozen boxes since I got home and I want to learn more.

Your website has given me that opportunity. What a great sharing of ideas. Thank you. I also appreciated your editorial about demonstrating this wonderful art/craft to children. Some of us know we are not good enough to be considered "artists", but we do it and love it for the opportunity of creative statement. Passing it on to children, so they too can have a way to express their creativity, enhances both the art and the craft. Hooray!

Thanks.  
Anna D.



Dear Editor:

I love your web site! Wanted to print out the instructions for the rainbow altoid tin and can't get anything but the text to print. Any advice?

Thanks.  
Yeager1

Dear Yeager1:

I don't know why those particular pictures won't print out. I'll run your letter in this month's letters to the editor and see if we get any suggestions from other readers.

Deirdre

