

App



# The LAPIDARIAN

Maple Ridge Lapidary Club Newsletter February 2014, Vol. 3, Issue 2

## Maple Ridge Rock & Gem Show

### March 1 & 2, 2014

Hope to see everyone at the Show. There are still lots of opportunities for Club members to help out with set up and take down of the Show as well as other areas. Remember to remind your friends and family to come out and help to support the Club. Raffle tickets will be on sale at the Show and the draw is Sunday afternoon. Don't forget the classes – maybe you know someone who would really enjoy learning a new skill. Details are on the club website at [www.mrlclub.com](http://www.mrlclub.com).

#### REMINDERS

- **General Meeting** is Thursday **March 6, 2013** at 6:30 pm



#### Upcoming Club Shows:

**ALBERNI VALLEY ROCK & GEM CLUB**, March 8 & 9, 2014; Saturday: 10:00 AM - 5:00PM and Sunday: 10:00 AM - 4:00PM; Cherry Creek Hall, 3720 Moore Road, Port Alberni, BC; Contact: Dot or Dave West, 250-723-0281 or [E mail](mailto:dot@albernirockandgemclub.com).

**VICTORIA LAPIDARY & MINERAL SOCIETY – Birthstones**, March 14, 15 & 16, 2014; Friday: 12:30 PM - 8:30 PM, Saturday: 10:00 AM - 6:00PM, Sunday: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM; Leonardo Da Vinci Centre, 95 Bay Street, Victoria, BC; Contact: Mike Hill, 250-813-1307 or [E mail](mailto:mike@victoriapreciousstonesociety.com). Admission by donation.

**HASTINGS CENTRE ROCKHOUNDS**, March 15 & 16, 2014; Saturday & Sunday: 10:00 AM - 5:00PM; Hastings Community Centre (in Gym), 3096 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, Across from the PNE grounds; Contact: Linda Foy, 604-299-3903 or [E mail](mailto:linda@hastingsrockhounds.com). Admission by donation.




**Field Trips:** As always, check the BC Lapidary Society website for more information: [http:// www.lapidary.bc.ca/trips.html](http://www.lapidary.bc.ca/trips.html)

**Field Trip: Fossils – West Harrison, March 30, 2014 (Sunday),** meet at 9:00 am at the Sasquatch Inn, 46001 Lougheed Hwy, Harrison Mills, BC. Material: Fossils (buchia/clamshells, belemnites). Equipment: Rock hammer, bucket, digging tools, gloves, sledge hammer, waterproof boots, warm clothing. Vehicle: car with full tank of gas. Other: bring food, water and a back pack. Be sure to check with the WagonMaster BEFORE you go!! Wagonmaster: Gordon Pinder 604-556-6489

### **What are Belemnites?**

From The Free Dictionary (online)

bel-em·nite  (bĕl'əm-nīt') *n.*

A cone-shaped, fossilized internal shell of any of an extinct genus of cephalopods related to the cuttlefish.

### **Birthstone of the Month: Amethyst**

The February-born shall find  
Sincerity and peace of mind,  
Freedom from passion and from care,  
If they an [amethyst](#) will wear.

According to Wikipedia the poem above was first published in a pamphlet by Tiffany & Co. in 1870. While the author is listed as unknown, the poems are attributed to the Gregorian calendar which is also called the Western calendar or the Christian calendar. A chart included on Wikipedia shows that [amethyst](#), [hyacinth](#), [pearl](#) were the stone of choice in for February in the 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Amethyst was the choice for the US and Britain in 2013. Hindu culture is listed as preferring [chandrakanta](#).

### **PROJECT/INFORMATION**

***This article from Jewelry Making Daily (February 21, 2014) is not a project but takes a look at new jewelry making techniques and encourages us overcome our fear of trying new things.***

## **Learn New Jewelry-Making Techniques: From Wirework to Metalsmithing**

*For a long time, I often said wireworking wasn't my thing. Then I realized just how much wireworking I was doing without even realizing it. When I read "Exploring the World of Metals" in the April/May 2010 issue of Step by Step Wire Jewelry, I was struck by this line: ". . . you've already been hardening, stretching, bending, and shaping metal with wire." That helped me realize how similar the two techniques really are. While I hesitated to*

*make the move from metalsmithing to wireworking back then, I know many of you hesitate to move from wire to metals. This article was eye-opening and encouraging for me, so I wanted to share it with you. --Tammy*

## **Exploring the World of Metals**

by Ronna Sarvas Weltman

Like many other jewelry artists, I started out by stringing store-bought beads onto beading wire, and finishing off my pieces with store-bought clasps and other findings. Gradually, I found myself wanting to express my own "voice" in my jewelry. This led me first to learning how to work with wire and eventually exploring metal fabrication techniques with sheet metal, including cutting, forming, stamping, texturing, and riveting.

If I had unlimited time, studio space and plenty of money for tools and equipment, I'd be exploring new jewelry techniques all the time. But here's a little secret, and I bet it's your secret too: I'm kidding myself if I think it's that simple. Often the barrier has nothing to do with time, space, or money. Rather, I'm reluctant to jump into something new. And I have neither excuses nor explanations for my reluctance.

"People, especially women, are intimidated about taking that next step," explains Kristi Zevenbergen, a jewelry artist who has taught thousands of students. "There is a fear of failure." But Zevenbergen believes that success comes with guidance and opportunities for practice. It's all about encouragement and empowerment. "In my classes," she adds, "I give permission and freedom."

Zevenbergen reminds students who are ready to move from wire to learning to work sheet metal that they're already working with metal, it's just in a different form. "What you know about wire, you can transform to sheet metal," she says, explaining that you've already been hardening, stretching, bending, and shaping metal with wire. "Metal is a material, just like paint, dough, felt, fiber, clay, or wood. Just like any material, it has its limitations and it has working characteristics. Once you understand how it behaves, you own it."

She's right. Many techniques that I use regularly-riveting, working with a torch, even filing edges of sheet metal-were initially intimidating to me. Usually my first approach is to look in a book. Zevenbergen, who is self-taught, methodically went through *The Complete Metalsmith* by Tim McCreight. "I learned in 3' x 5' of space," she explains. "I did that for six years with four kids. That's what I did after the kids went to sleep."

Sometimes you may need a little more explanation, a little more guidance . . . perhaps even some hand-holding. That can be particularly helpful when a certain "feel" or "touch" is needed, such as knowing just how that saw blade needs to feel-and sound-to be properly secured. Acknowledging that it's difficult to communicate through the written word how to saw properly, Zevenbergen likens it to a potter learning how to throw a pot on a wheel. It's a transfer of movement and intention from the body to the piece. In fact, I did not grasp sawing in my first metalsmithing class. Nor my second or third. And even after I had paid close attention to three different teachers, it wasn't until I also watched several YouTube sawing tutorials by different artists that I finally felt comfortable with sawing. But there's a lesson there. The saw itself intimidated me, with the various knobs to turn and saw blades to insert. I kept getting confused about which way to put in the saw blade. And I didn't practice enough. There's something to be learned from muscle memory. Perhaps if I had continued practicing after my first introduction to sawing, I would have mastered it then. I suspect my reluctance to practice sprang from my fear that I would be unable to master the skill. Don't you just hate unconscious self-defeating fears?



***"Felted Flower" by Kristi Zevenbergen. Sterling, felt, fabricated and forged. Photo by Charlie Coultas.***

The fear, though, isn't always unconscious.

Author and *Step by Step Wire Jewelry* Editor-in-Chief Denise Peck teaches metalsmithing techniques, including a DVD entitled *Metalwork Wire Fusing & Other Torch Techniques* and several books. "I think the term 'metalsmithing' can be a mystery to people who work with beads and wire," she explains, "and it implies the use of a torch. When I talk with people about increasing their scope and moving from wire into more metalworking, many of them immediately say, 'But I'm terrified of the torch.' I hear that over and over again. A torch can be terrifying if you are picturing huge tanks of acetylene and oxygen in your home. However, there's so much that can be done with a little Blazer or crème brulee torch."

Although I love playing with fire, I worry about burning my house down with an acetylene or oxygen tank, so I'm quite contented to work with a small torch and fine silver. There's also a lot of paraphernalia that goes with soldering, including chemicals in pickle. Using a mini torch on fine silver wire is a low-tech, minimal-equipment way to fuse metal.

Randi Harper owns The Ranch Center for Arts and Craft, a teaching studio in Snohomish, Wash., just outside Seattle. She knows students are paying close attention to their budget and whether they can easily access equipment when deciding which skills to learn next. "I like to bring in teachers who can say, 'Here's what you can do on a kitchen table.' You can go a long way without having a big studio setup with lots of tools. I appreciate a teacher who says you don't need an exhaust hood and torch to do your first soldering. You can take a crème brulee torch, and then when you've gone as far as it can take you, then you go to the next step." Harper feels it's important for students to ask themselves, "Will I be able to do this at home?"

Harper also believes that investing in good-quality tools will help students master new techniques more easily. "Women won't always admit it," she says, "but we're tool junkies just like the guys are. I'd rather spend my money on three really good tools than twelve cheap ones. It really affects how you move your hands and what you're able to accomplish. Some lousy tool may make you think you're not good at a technique, it's too much of a pain, but if you have the right tool from the beginning, you'll have a whole different sense of it. It's important to be thoughtful about what you really need versus what's cool. A good teacher can help you know what to invest in."

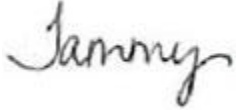


***Kristi Zevenbergen, "Collection #4" Sterling, 18k gold, natural and vintage found objects, fabricated. Photo by Charlie Coultas.***

Of course, there will be times when even the best-quality tools can't move you past your resistance to a particular technique. While many jewelry artists love the zen-like feeling they get from using a saw, there are others who find it exasperatingly slow, or just don't feel like learning how to use it. Many wire jewelry artists' first foray into metalsmithing is making their own charms from sheet metal. Tin snips, which are widely available at hardware stores, can be used to cut metal sheet. Shear cutters, available from jewelry catalogs and supply stores, will give you better control.

Regardless of the technique or medium you choose to expand your expertise in jewelry-making, you'll achieve the most success by reminding yourself that mastery of any technique takes lots of time and lots of practice. I know my jewelry gets better every year. Perhaps mastering new techniques has helped that progression by perhaps ten percent. The other ninety percent? The insight and inspiration that came while I was practicing and goofing around. The times when I asked myself "I wonder if . . ." and tried it out on a piece of metal. Often what I created wasn't all that impressive or exciting. But, eventually, it led to a spark of an idea, that led to more practice, that eventually led to something that made me really happy. --RSW

Whether you're a wireworker, a metalworker, both, or neither (oh no!), now is a great time to learn new jewelry-making skills and techniques.



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