

Sandkühler Studio™



Terine captured bean-shaped sea glass using sterling silver and the Viking Knit technique at our 2011 Glass Beach Retreat.

Newsletter for January 2012

- **Get By With a Little Help From Your Friends**
- **Glass Beach Retreat: February 3rd-5th**

At a New Year's party, I was listening to my friend Natalie agonize over the task of writing the memoirs of her uncle. Life and relatives were getting in the way. She couldn't abandon nor fulfill her promise and the frustration haunted her day and night.

Natalie was suffering from what I often observe in many of my self-motivated, creative students: analysis paralysis. Her intentions floundered amidst the daily grind. The research piles grew and moved around like an unorganized roadblock (what I call "hell piles"). Sound familiar?

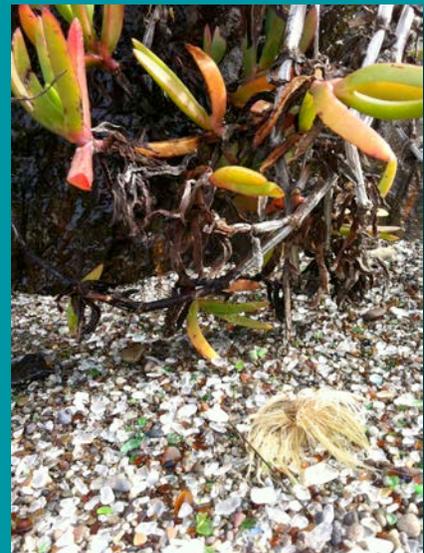
I recognized myself in her. I've been meaning to write the next newsletter. Notes are clipped and waiting in a tight row in the studio, to become the next classroom jewelry project. -The next distance-learning lesson. -Or two. -Or three. My muse's monologue is going around and around in my head but I can't *find* the time to capture it.

What's getting in the way? Everything. Life. Responsibilities. Myself. My perspective. My priorities. "Finding" the time rather than "making and defending" the time. That's the problem.

In the 1990's, I had a colleague and friend at Georgia Southern University. Bernie Solomon was an accomplished printmaker and super funny guy. I regarded him as father figure. A year after he unexpectedly passed, I noticed that his mailbox in the faculty office was still getting mail. The man had left the earth over a year ago and he was still getting things to do! The pressures were still there. The obligations were still there. Bernie was nowhere. It was perhaps his final joke (or lesson), and it really put things into perspective for me. Nature abhors a vacuum. Things will always come along to fill that space and keep you distracted.

I asked Natalie if she could spare two hours per week to write. I pointed out that it didn't sound like much, but it was more than she was currently doing. What about accountability? How about getting the proverbial "gym buddy" to make sure you show up? I needed a writing buddy too. -And so did Kimberly who overheard our conversation at the holiday soiree.

This morning, the three of us met at the local library to write. Our rules thus far are: 1) Show up on time. 2) Fiercely defend this time/space in your schedule. 3) Spend the first 15 minutes sharing our bite-sized goal and strategy. 4) Write for one hour with absolutely no talking during that time. 5) Use last



This year's Beach Glass Retreat, on the Mendocino Coast of Northern California is February 3-5th. Interested in attending? Email me for details.



Copper Viking Knit necklace captures faceted topaz.

15 minutes discussing our challenges, accomplishments, and distractions. 6) Acknowledge that this one and a half hour slot is really a two-hour slot when you consider traveling. 7) Don't consider inviting anyone else until we get our groove on.

How did we do? So far, so good. We shared a collective sigh of relief to have discovered kindred spirits, and organized a time and space to move forward.

This writing solution came easily to me because I use a similar strategy to keep moving forward in the rest of my life. Need to explore a creative technique? I call a friend with like-minded interests and we experiment together (play date)

at the studio over wholesome snacks and libations. Hate crunching numbers for itemizing taxes? Have an artist/tax party and invite fellow procrastinators. Tons of emails? Schedule your favorite TV program and work on them for the duration of a commercial (only). Want to get away but be creative? Design a GLASS BEACH RETREAT and invite all your students, student friends and their dogs and significant others.

So let me end this newsletter by reminding you that IT IS THAT TIME AGAIN when we head north to Mendocino County, gather at a Bed and Breakfast for a three day weekend and scour the glass beaches for treasures to capture in the Viking Knit and Viking Bezel Knit jewelry techniques. Return students, do not have to pay for the instruction again, nor do they have to pay for the tool/materials fee if they bring absolutely everything they need. Otherwise the instruction/mat fee is \$135.00. The bed/breakfast fee is additional. As always, I purposefully scheduled the retreat at the last off-season weekend (just before Valentines Day) for cheaper rates. Interested in joining us Feb 3-5? Contact me with the subject line: Glass Beach Retreat 2012. I'll be going up a few days earlier: Feb 1-5 to creatively chill. Princess Running Wolf (Tosca) will be joining me again as well.



The basic freestanding Viking Knit with a fine silver (Matchsticks and Torches) clasp and Swarovski crystal.

Otherwise, stay creatively hungry and healthy in this New Year! I'll see you via my classroom workshops, classes, private lessons at the studio and distance learning. Follow me on Twitter and Facebook if your vicariously curious as to what adventure I'm currently involved in. I also post photos fairly regularly.

xxx Iris Sandkühler