

**The Newsletter of the Loose Bead Society of Greater Milwaukee**  
The Loose Bead Society of Greater Milwaukee began in 1999 as a fellowship of kindred spirits with the purpose of sharing and promoting the creation of beautiful beadwork.

## Beading ... Chatting ... and Having Fun Together

A beautiful fall day, some chocolate, some nibbles, some beads. What more could a person want! We all had a wonderful time beading and chatting at the Loose Bead Society's October Bead-In.

Over 35 people were able to get together in the New Berlin Library's Community Room to work on their latest projects. **Jackie Hillman** brought a delicious bean dip for all of us to enjoy. Everyone shared ideas and tips and techniques.

The date for our next Bead-In is February 11th. Don't miss it! It's a wonderful opportunity to relax and enjoy yourself while making progress on a new project or one of your UFOs (Un-Finished Objects).



Tammy Rae Wolter showed us some of her gorgeous lampworked beads. Tammy Rae used to live closer but has moved to Neenah, so she traveled back especially for the Bead-In.

— by Kathy Willmering

# Loose Bead Society Bringing Together

Volume 10 Issue 4 Winter 2011

## LBS a Vibrant, Talented Group

I am so happy that we've decided to take the President's letter off of the front page! The Society has real newsworthy events that should have the lime-light! The few pearls of wisdom (Wow! Why haven't I used that line before? Good bead society pun, even if it's been done many times before!) . . . as I was saying, the Presidential pearls of wisdom cannot stand up against the exciting news that deserves front page headline coverage! Certainly every quarter, something big occurs in LBS world, so our decision is to put those features on the front page where they rightfully belong.

For my final Presidential pearls, I can only reiterate that this year has reinforced my belief in the Society as a vibrant group of talented, creative individuals! At each LBS event there is an energy and commitment from the Board and the members to make the most of the time we spend together. Participation in events such as the Retreat, the Bead-Ins, the Rumage Sale, the Christi Friesen weekend, the Royal Wedding Challenge and tea, Loominosity, Jewelry at the Domes, and the President's trip, as well as seeing everyone at our monthly meetings, has made for a spectacular year for us all!

## Sales Success Times Two

November was a busy—and successful—month for Loose Bead Society members who sell their jewelry, with LBS participating in *Loominosity* from November 3 through 6 and in *Jewelry at The Domes* on November 12 and 13.

In our second year working with the Wisconsin Handweavers at Loominosity, members sold 171 pieces of jewelry and doubled the dollar amount sold in 2010. Happy LBS exhibitors commented, “I loved how the jewelry was displayed and that there was a single checkout,” “loved that LBS took care of the credit card machine, change box and inventory control,” and “I really like having the ‘display designers’ do the display because I learn[ed from] what they did.”

Exhibitors enjoyed their time at the event, whether selling, checking out customers or providing demonstrations. “I had a wonderful time working at the show...doing demos was fun and many people were really interested” remarked **Joan Hoss**. “Working at the show was easy and a great experience,” said **Stefanie Neustedter**, a first-time seller.

Personally, my time serving as President has been a rewarding, enjoyable experience. The opportunity to work with the talented, intelligent people on the LBS Board has been a delight! Each month the Board comes together to energetically plan and implement our events with the hope that we meet the expectations of our members. The Board sets high standards while being fiscally responsible and has always listened to the suggestions of those we serve. I am confident the future will bring a continuation and growth of excellent programs and events.

As our Society grows and new challenges arise, our standards will remain high, but the Society will need more assistance in the implementation of these events. It is my hope that our members continue to contribute to the Society through active participation.

Will each of you commit to furthering our goals by offering your suggestions to a Board member, volunteering to join a committee, or accepting the challenge to join the Board? The spirit of us all working together is what makes our Society strong. I thank you, LBS Board and members, for making this a year of enriching, energizing and joy-filled experiences!!!

— *Helen Dahms, President*

Jewelry at the Domes was an opportunity that was offered to LBS just six weeks before the show. Despite the short notice and that it was a new show, the event went extremely well, and an amazing variety of jewelry was displayed. The staff of The Domes was extremely helpful and accommodating, and impressed each exhibitor by unloading her vehicle, wheeling her materials right to the assigned booth, and then unloading the cart.

“The set up and atmosphere were great,” according to one exhibitor. Several exhibitors commented on the camaraderie of having a show with LBS members. “The other members were very helpful,” said **Karen Weinberg**, another first-time seller.

Thanks to the Show and Sell Committee members for their hard work: **Helen Dahms, Joan Hoss, Judy Markworth, Judy Menting, Marilee Rockley, Maggie Roschyk, Debbie Schamber, Brenda Schweder** and **Kathy Willmering**.

— *Julie Miller, President-Elect*



*The Show and Sell Committee is already at work evaluating both Loominosity and Jewelry at the Domes, analyzing the results of a survey of exhibitors and planning ahead for sales events in 2012. Watch for announcements early in the year.*



*Setup for any show requires a lot of work. Left, one of the gorgeous displays at Loominosity, and right, completing a lovely table for Jewelry at the Domes*

## And the Winners Are ...

In August, the LBS Nominating Committee began compiling a slate of officers for 2012. The committee, made up of **Jan Falk**, **Gail McGuire**, **Sue Stachelski**, **Kathy Willmering**, and chairwoman **Helen Dahms**, worked diligently to line up candidates for the open Board positions. Elections were held at the October membership meeting. The winners are ...

**President Elect - Kathy Willmering:** Kathy has recently served as our Membership Coordinator, as well as on the Programming, Special Events, Show and Sell, and Community Service committees, and has volunteered at the Bead&Button Show, as well as on the newsletter. Kathy has seen many of the facets of LBS at work. She states "I'm ready to lead our fair Society forward during the next few years."

**VP Special Events – Kat Feldman:** Kat has been the VP Special Events for the past two years. Prior to that she served as the LBS Community Service Coordinator. Kat enthusiastically says, "I had so much fun doing events the past two years, I thought I'd do it again!"

**Treasurer – Marilyn Johnson:** Marilyn has been a member for "enough years that I can't remember how long it has been." She has volunteered for the Bead&Button Show, local shows, State Fair demonstrations,

and the Community Service and Greetings committees. Her professional duties include budget accountability for an R&D group, and she has also served as treasurer for a number of clubs.

We welcome our new LBS Board Members and look forward to their leadership over the coming years.

— Sue Stachelski

### Loose Bead Society 2011 Board Members

**Helen Dahms**, President  
**Julia Miller**, President Elect  
**Maggie Roschyk**, VP-Programming  
**Kat Feldman**, VP-Special Events  
**Judy Markworth**, Secretary  
**Amy Smith**, Treasurer  
**Brenda Schweder**, Past President  
**Kathy Willmering**, Membership Coordinator  
**Traci Otte**, Website Coordinator  
**Michele De'Brabant**, Community  
 Service Coordinator  
**Carol Haiar**, Newsletter Coordinator

## Pippentooth, a new column

— Brenda Schweder and Friends

I met Dawn Blair of Topeka, KS, when she took one of my Craftcast.com online classes with Alison Lee. Dawn makes stunning wire wrapped gemstone and art glass jewelry. We admire each other's work and have grown our friendship through Facebook.

Dawn works full-time in technical support at her local library, and is also a concert pianist. She practices her wire (and now lapidary) work after hours. Recently I interviewed her by phone, and she shared these thoughts on growing a jewelry business.

*How did you start?* The way I got my first local break was to wear my work all the time, and put myself in places such as gallery openings where I could be seen by people I wanted to buy my work. I'm six feet tall and wore clothes that provided a black canvas for my jewelry. People came to me.



But I had to be willing to say "This is for sale if you're interested" or "This is made of ...", or "Here's my business card, I do some things on consignment." I also cut my teeth on earring sales at the library gift shop. And your work has to have high craftsmanship.

*What means do you use to sell your work?* Primarily I sell by word of mouth and social media. And I get commissions.

*What advice do you have for designers who are just starting to sell?* Artists and designers need to ask themselves, "What sets my work apart from other people's?" And until you can see your work with a critical eye, ask others for their feedback.

Consider who you want your audience to be; you need to be in your public's eye. If you're targeting young mothers, find Facebook groups where those women gather. My average client is between 45 and 65 with a mid to upper income, so that's who I'm involved with online.

If you would like to sell at work, or in hair salons and

places like that, it's just a matter of asking permission to do so. Women are very likely to spend if they can buy while at work.

If you want to sell at shows, then sell at shows. But choose the right type of show for your work. Certain work sells better at certain shows. I actually adjust my work for different shows. At some I can expect to sell a lot of higher-end pieces. Even if I don't sell at such a show, I get commissions.

When you know you have a show coming, set a production schedule and work two to three months out. That way you don't burn out or risk your quality.

Set up everything you can ahead of time. I get as much packed as possible the night before. I price everything and preload my earring spinners. I wrap them in Saran and when I'm done setting up, I cut off the plastic. I can set up a whole show in a half hour!

If you're not confident selling your stuff, find someone who is, someone who loves your work. My mother is incredible and my customers relate to her.

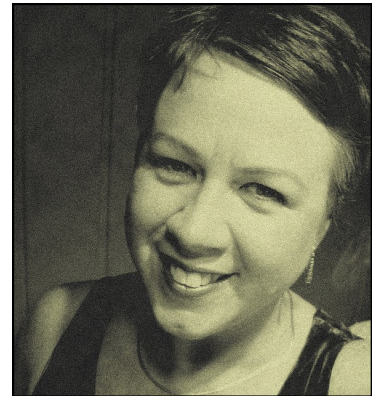
It also helps customers feel more comfortable if I'm not behind the table, since I'm so tall. I need to be on the side or in front of the table. You have to be acutely aware of how people are relating to you.

Keep your display clean and minimal. The more streamlined you keep your look, the better. Don't use print fabric. My boxes, busts, and spinners are all one color: black. My table covering is chocolate brown. Anything else that catches your customer's eye takes the focus away from the jewelry.

After doing a few shows you realize you've got to get the schlepping down to as few trips as possible. I have a nesting box system—it enables me to utilize a small amount of space for travel, but also stacks and offers levels. Lift your work to eye level.

Never apologize for your work or your display. People are sort of iffy; if you're not confident about your work, they question whether they should buy.

(Continued on next page)



## Beady Tips and Tricks from Our Members

**Judy Menting** says, “Recently I found two nice articles about posting to Facebook that I thought might interest LBS members. I really love this newsletter by Rena Klingenberg:

“<http://www.home-jewelry-business-success-tips.com/planning-for-facebook-part-1.html>, and

“<http://www.home-jewelry-business-success-tips.com/planning-for-facebook-part-2.html>.”

“The other site I LOVE is [jewelrylessons.com](http://jewelrylessons.com). There are great projects and tutorials GALORE!”

Judy’s tips are the first in what we hope will be a regular column of tips and techniques from Loose Bead Society members. Our goal is that, as Judy says, it will be “a great way for beginners and seasoned beaders to contribute without feeling as if they have to do a whole article. Everyone has their favorite trick for some little thing.”

## Many Hands Make Light Work

Many of you who come to monthly programs know me as the Treasurer – the one who stands up there and reports that we have a good, strong, vibrant Society money-wise. As I leave the Board after serving nearly 3 ½ years, I’d like to remind you that the Society is a good, strong and vibrant Society due to our members, but especially our volunteers.

Maybe serving on the Board is not something you can or want to do right now, but put that in the back of your mind — a better time may lie ahead.

In the meantime, consider how much work it takes to put on a program like the November beaded button program. Plans have to be made, beads procured and sorted and put into kits, and table captains trained and ready. Setting up the tables and chairs takes time too!

Committees also need help and yours would be welcome. You might bring the greatest idea to a committee – you never know!

The Loose Bead Society lives on its volunteers. Without them, we wouldn’t exist. Be a Loose Bead Society volunteer today!

— Amy Smith

Thank you, Judy, for your tips and for your idea!

On that note, one of the Newsletter Coordinator’s favorite sites is <http://bead-patterns.com>. They have oodles (37 pages at last count) of free patterns and thousands more patterns for sale.

— Carol Haiar

*(Continued from page 4)*

Pay attention to the details. Wear your jewelry over unwrinkled clothing, use a lint roller to remove cat hair from your display throws, dust off your pieces.

You want to make your pieces inviting to touch. Shoppers are more likely to buy when they interact with your things. Glass cases are no-no’s.

Make your prices accessible. Too many people walk away if they have to ask for prices. And create streamlined pricing; all my earrings are the same price and all my pendants are the same, too. I have maybe four or five prices total. That strategy takes price out of the equation and people can make decisions on style alone.

If you can, stay away from entrance and exit placements. Shoppers don’t want to spend when they just get there and are done by the time they leave.

*I notice you post on Facebook quite frequently—how does social networking work for you?* I wouldn’t be where I am without my online presence. I put the pix up on Facebook and identify them for sale, then “friends” just contact me, pay via PayPal, and I ship it out. It’s so easy!

But Flickr was my foray into social media. By perusing it, I learned to take good pictures because I saw what worked for others. A pair of friends I met on Flickr barter their stones for my wire settings and show my work at Quartzite and Tucson. Through them, I connected with my best customer.

That’s the bottom line: be everywhere you can be; take good photos and put them up. Use Craffhaus, Flickr, Jewelry Lessons and Facebook

*(You can see more of the interview as well as a list of Dawn’s resources at Brenda’s blog, [www.brendaschweder.com](http://www.brendaschweder.com).)*

## Kalmbach Dinner a Special Event

Each June the Loose Bead Society helps out at the Bead&Button Show with an information table, package/coat check, and spelling vendors who need a break. A few months later, Kalmbach throws us a dinner at their corporate headquarters to show their appreciation. All our members are invited, and we are able to mingle with folks from the jewelry magazines as well as the Events Marketing department.

After dinner, Marlene Vail spoke to us about the show, giving details about this year's event and some hints about what's to come next year. She fielded questions from the group, and she and Linda Kollatz pulled names for door prizes. Every LBS member there won a prize, ranging from books, magazines, gift certificates, show souvenirs, and more. Each of us also received a bracelet stringing board and a set of Susan Lenart Kazmer's charms.

While we chose our prizes we had a sneak peek at potential classes for the 2012 show. Some of them were from nationally known teachers while some of them were from LBS members. Very exciting!

Kalmbach's generosity never ceases to amaze me, and I look forward to helping out at the B&B Show.



Members of Kalmbach's Events group joined us for dinner; that's Marlene Vail at left.

— Traci Otte

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## 2012 Retreat Is Coming

We are excited to invite you to the 2012 LBS Spring Retreat. We will be enjoying a great weekend of camaraderie, classes, shopping, and more centered out of the Radisson Hotel Racine Harbourwalk. We will enjoy a glass blowing demo at Hot Shop Glass and an evening at Funky Hannah's with appetizers, beverages and 10%-off shopping spree. You may enjoy taking LBS classes and/or working on your own projects, as well as learning to blow glass.

Registration brochures will be available at membership meetings or from our website. All class information will be posted there along with project photos. Don't miss this preview to Spring in Wisconsin with all your LBS friends. See you in March!

— *Kat Feldman*



*Decisions, decisions, decisions! Members on the President's Trip take a few minutes before lunch to ponder some jewelry design possibilities.*

## President's Trip an Artful Success

The weather outside may have been frightful for the President's Trip, but that only made the colors of the polymer clay pieces at the Racine Art Museum all the more brilliant. Some 34 LBSers boarded the warm and comfy chartered bus for the outing.

First on the agenda was the "Terra Nova: Polymer Art at the Crossroads" exhibit, which featured the works of top polymer clay artists. Included were not just gorgeous necklaces and bracelets, but innovative purses, sculptures, wall installations and even furniture. Polymer clay presented possibilities that

## Community Service Matters

As 2011 draws to a close, I would like to extend my gratitude for the active participation of LBS members in the delivery of multiple successful service projects in the greater Milwaukee community.

Whether you beaded a Chemo Cap or created and/or assisted a young lady choose prom jewelry at the Cinderella Project event, know that you have made a difference in someone's life.

We ended the year with delighted members who attended **Jan Falk's** Wet Felted Bead class at the Badger Association, now known as Vision Forward.

With the New Year, we invite you to join us at the Mayfair Mall food court (next to the grand piano) for the Community Service meeting on Monday, January 23, at 6 p.m. to dream and explore our vision for upcoming Community Service projects.

— *Michele De'Brabant*

## Growing Our Membership

We continue to grow and have new and talented people join our group. As of the end of November, we had crossed the 200 member mark, an all time high, with 205 members! Thank you to everyone who has talked up our society to your friends! Just in case you haven't met them yet, our newest members are: **Bette Bourbon, Ramona Chase, Jill Erickson, Cindie Gapinski, Susan Hitchler, Nancy Horwath, Lisa Jones, Christine Klingseisen, Cheryl Lippmann, Adele Mayer, Arielle Mayer, Patty McCourt, Christina Noyes, Rosann Owens, Leayn Tabili, Patty Tiry, and Candy Uecke.** Thank you to all the people who have recently joined and thank you to everyone who has renewed their membership for 2012.

— *Kathy Willmering*

most of us on the trip had never imagined. The RAM gift shop was selling works by some of the artists, but alas, the prices tended to exceed most budgets.

Next we enjoyed a private Spanish luncheon at the wonderful Olde Madrid restaurant, followed by shopping at our choice of Funky Hannah's, art galleries and antique stores. It turned out to be a splendid December day after all!

— *Carol Haiar*

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