

MONTHLY MESSAGGERO

Conveying the most important messages between the DIY, fashion and independent arts communities and yours



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La Chica del Craft, Defender of Glitter and Artiste Extraordinaire

CM: What advice would you give someone wanting to follow their dreams of crafting, fashioning, styling and creating as a business?

The most important aspect is to have a signature style that defines you and to know what your mission statement is. In order to stand out and be successful, you have to offer something different than what is out there. So take some time to look within yourself and pull out the defining traits of what sets you apart from everyone else and then build your brand around that. Develop a mission statement that is specific to what you are all about. You can then use that statement as you build your brand. You can refer to it when you get confused about something. Once you are confident with your brand and style, then you are ready to conquer the world! Another important aspect is that you cannot go into this business just to make money or seek fame. You have to do it because you love it. Only then will success follow!

CM: As small business owners we at the NPCM are very interested in hearing success stories. Please share some of your memories of making it and some of the highs and lows along the way.

I knew I wanted to live an artful life from the day I was married. My husband is an artist too and we had worked in an office 9-5 before and knew we wanted our lives to be more fulfilling than settling for a career we didn't love. The high point is that we have always been able to make a living from our art, but sometimes that meant making hundreds of pieces for wholesale orders so we could pay our bills. It has always forced us to be innovative and stay ahead. We've been able to travel to teach others to be creative, it has led to book deals and a national product line. Living as

artists has taught us to think frugally and be debt-free. However, there have been dips too. We've had to work long hours to make ends meet. We needed health care for our kids so I did get that 9-5 job for 13 years – but even then I made it a positive. I picked a place that I always

Kathy Cano-Murillo, aka the Crafty Chica, describes herself like this: "I'm a mommy, wifey, artist, author & left-handed middle-child binge crafter Sagittarian. I love chocolate, coffee, and I collect Chihuahua stuff (we have 4 live ones). I have my own product line coming out this summer. I write a weekly nationally syndicated craft column for The Arizona Republic. My 7th craft book comes out next year, as well as my first novel. I make a line of Chicano Pop Art with my hubby and we have sold it all over the country since 1990. Doing my best to live in the moment and savor it all!" A look at any of her many products will prove both her creativity and success. More information can be found at:



www.craftychica.com

wanted to work at – a newspaper—and worked my way up from a clerk to an entertainment reporter and syndicated craft columnist. It turned out to be the perfect balance of art and writing. I loved that job as much as I loved making art.

CM: Your website tells the fascinating story of how you came to be the Crafty Chica. The story is inspirational and really sets a wonderful example of what dedi-

cation, focus and hard work can do. What would you say is the foundation that kept you dedicated, focused and working?

To keep doing what I loved – crafting, making art, writing, teaching/motivating others to do the same. I love my husband and kids and I want to be a happy role model for them. I can only do that by having a job I love. Life is too short to be negative and grumpy. I look at all of this as a blessing and want to do something good with it, so I try my best to spread positivity. I also try to be honest. Life is not always sparkly, and I share the ups and downs on my blog so readers can see I am just like them. We all are doing the crafty hustle and I learned there are many other people like me!

CM: With Dia de los Muertos approaching how do you recommend that crafting become part of the celebration? Can you recommend a craft project that is both fun and educational for those who want to learn more about the place this day has in Mexican and Mexican-American culture?

Crafts are a huge part of Dia de los Muertos! From the iced sugar skulls and ruffled paper flowers to papel picado banners and papier-mâché skeletons, there is a lot to choose from. I would say the easiest way to participate is to decorate a frame or shadow box for a loved one who passed away. Use small items, colors or phrases they liked. You can also make a collage or write a letter to them. Set it out on Nov. 1, that is the day the spirits return to be with loved ones. It is a nice token to let our dearly departed know they are remembered.

(See next month's newsletter for Part 2 of this interview.)

Ciao Bellas! Ma has decided to continue the theme of the last months by, instead of answering one or two requests for counsel, addressing what she considers a resounding theme in the requests she has gotten over the tenure of her job as consigliere.

Inspired by the soulful creations of this month's cover interviewee, Ma has decided to remember her passed loved ones with crafty flair this Dia de los Muertos. This and other tutorials can be found at www.craftychica.com.

La Catrina Cigar Box Shrine

cigar box, clean
craft knife
decorative scrapbook paper
acrylic paint
loose glitter
thick cardboard
La Catrina image
Sculpey polymer clay (to make skulls)



1 strand of Mardi Gras beads
4 balls or blocks for feet
hot glue (E6000 Industrial Strength Adhesive)
dimensional squeeze paint

1. Use a craft knife to remove the lid from the cigar box and set aside.
2. Cut a piece of scrapbook paper to fit as the background of the box. Use hot glue to attach.
3. Paint the inner borders and quickly sprinkle on the loose glitter over the wet paint.

ASK MA FIOSA

Mamma Fiosa, known more widely as Ma Fiosa, has served as consigliere to the North Park Craft Mafia in all our crafty needs. Lucky for you, now you don't have to be made to get counsel.

4. Apply the La Catrina picture (**figure A**) to a piece of scrapbook paper to act as a border. Flip it over and glue a piece of thick cardboard to the back so it will give a dimensional look when in the box.
5. Apply hot glue to the back and set the picture in the center of the box.
6. Pinch off four dime-size pieces of clay and shape them into skulls. Bake according to manufacturer directions and then paint on eyes, nose and teeth. Let dry and then glue on in each corner of the box.
7. Use the glue gun to attach the strand of beads around the edge of the box.
8. Glue on a ball or black to each corner of the side of the lid that you had cut off earlier to act as the "feet" to the shrine. Let dry and then set it right-side up. This will be the platform that holds your cigar box shrine.
9. Apply a generous amount of glue to the bottom of the cigar box and set it in the center of the lid.
10. Decorate the outside areas with fancy papers and/or squeeze paint. Let dry.

Tip: Add in personal objects as desired and have fun!

Like this idea and want to try others? Visit the Crafty Chica's website, read her books and check out her videos on www.Lifetime.com. Other ideas listed on the site include: [Day of the Dead Felt Banners](#), [Candy Sorter Placemats](#), [Furry Monster Candy Totes](#), [Glow-In-The-Dark Jewelry](#), [Halloween Zombie Dolls](#), [Horror Flick Fabric Coasters](#), [Hot Glue Eye Masks](#), [Mason Jar Lanterns](#), [Personalized Lucha Libre Masks](#), [Pumpkin TV Set](#) and MUCH more!

No question is too stupid or too complicated— Ma loves giving crafty counsel. Write her today at AskMa@sandiegonthparkcraftmafia.com or see the back of this newsletter for further methods of contact.

MADAME CRAFTINA

Rock On! Birthstones ' Exciting Properties

If you are like the many of us out there whose grandma was the type to get you birthstone jewelry for each of your birthdays, you probably know already know the gem that symbolizes your month of birth. What you may not know is the healing properties and qualities of the stone that shows the world your month of birth. Madame Craftina believes in healing and crafting, so let her enlighten you as to the many benefits of your birthstone, then you can decide the most creative way to incorporate it in your world.

January: The **garnet** is great for removing negative energy from your chakras and represents commitment and the physical aspect of love.

February: **Amethyst** helps to balance the major dynamics of our beings; our intellectual-emotional- physical. This purple crystal is calming and sedative, increases psychic awareness, and is helpful in dealing with addictions and alcoholism.

March: Courage, protection and awareness are associated with **aquamarine**. This stone also helps to protect your temple from pollutants.

April: The girl's best friend, the **diamond** serves as a tool for mental clarity and confidence. It brings a loving nature, strength and abundance in all areas of life.

May: The beautiful green **emerald** helps one to communicate and to discover the truth, a great little tool when needing to get to the bottom of something.

June: **Pearls** offer the power of love, money, protection and luck. A gift from oysters; pearls have also been used to treat digestive disorders.

July: The red **ruby** is a very powerful stone. It's useful in treating headaches, fever, in use for dream recall and is great protection from psychic attack!

August: **Peridot** creates a protective shield around your body and is useful for stimulation and cleansing of the heart and naval chakras.

September: The blue- hued **sapphire** represents prosperity, clarity and healing. It brings joy and peace and helps to rid unwanted thoughts.

October: If your dream time needs enhancement, take advantage of the **opal**. Opal will make your dreams more exciting and intuitive and it's also good to purify the blood and kidneys.

November: Give thanks to **topaz** for its well rounded properties. Topaz aids in the treatment of depression, replaces negativity with love and is great for the flow of creativity.

December: Of all the birthstones, **turquoise** tends to be the master healer. This very popular stone dissipates negativity and offers protection. It also helps in communication skills, maintaining physical energy and aids in suc-

CRAFTY BLACK BOOK:

NORTH PARK NIGHTS

One of San Diego's most artistic neighborhoods is host to this fantastic arts event. NPN is the evolution of the original event, Ray at Night, which became popular with San Diego locals. Every month people come from throughout the San Diego area to enjoy North Park's galleries and other establishments. Wander on over to **Vintage Religion, located at 3821 32nd St., from 5 to 9 pm**, & join several members of the **NPCM** where they'll be selling crafty wares in front of the store! Check out all the great items inside too. They carry an eclectic mix of art objects from local and international artists.

SAN DIEGO CITY-BEAT'S BEST OF PARTY

Wonder which restaurant is the most romantic in San Diego? Or who has the best shopping? Check out this year's **CityBeat Best Of** edition on stands the week of November 12th. In the mood to celebrate the winners? Join CB (& the Craft Mafia at a craft shopping area inside) for an evening of food & beer tastings, music and fun on **Wednesday, November 12 from 7-10 PM** at **The New Children's Museum at 200 West Island Street**. Proceeds from this event will go to the museum.

CRAFTY CONSPIRACY

Consider yourself crafty or want to learn to be? Join the NPCM at **Filter Coffee House on Tuesday, November 25 from 7 to 9 PM** for an interactive **craft night**. Take a break from those holiday preparations and craft! This month we will not be doing a group project, so bring your own project to work on. Come and meet other crafty people and show off your craft skills!

HOLIDAY HIT LIST

Santa and other thoughtful and creative gift givers will LOVE this opportunity. This year's **San Diego North Park Craft Mafia's Holiday Hit List** will take place on **December 7** and feature close to 65 vendors, music, crafty demos, raffle items and much more. The success of the Mafia's Spring Line-Up prompted the need for a larger venue. We heard your pleas, so the HHL will take place at the **NTC Promenade's Corky McMillin Event Center located at 2875 Dewey Rd.** in Point Loma. Want a booth? Vendor apps. are posted on our website .

SUNDAY, CRAFTY SUNDAY

Celebrates Dia de los Muertos



Join the San Diego North Park Craft Mafia from noon to 5PM on the first Sunday of each month. SCS events feature both Mafia members and other local artists and designers offering their DIY wares for sale. Learn how to make an altar at our craft demo starting at 2 pm. This SCS event will take place at **Filter Coffee House on November 2**. This event will have a Day of the Dead theme, so calaveras and marigolds are encour-

THE OC: CRAFTY EDITION

Plan to be in near Santa Ana on **November 9th**? If so, join members if the North Park Craft Mafia and over 80 other So Cali DIY vendors at the **Patchwork Indie Arts & Crafts Festival at 2202 North Main Street in Santa Ana** for an afternoon of early holiday shopping. Look for NPCM member businesses: **Made with Luv, Belle Pepper Couture, Velvet Klaw and PYP Arts & Designs** for some of the hottest and most fashionable buys.



MA MANGIA

THEM BONES: ITALIAN DAY OF THE DEAD COOKIES

There is no doubt that Ma has been influenced by the beauty and soul of Mexican culture. So you can imagine her delight when she discovered an Italian ceremony with similarities to Mexico's Day of the Dead. With origins in pagan days and ceremonies to mark All Saints and All Souls Days, Italians have nurtured traditions around remembering those who have passed on. Celebrated in many but not all parts of Italy, these remembrances and celebrations have always included cookies that looked like the fingers of the dead called *Ossa di Morto* or *Ossi dei Morti*. The following recipes will help you make your own version. *Mangia!*

First Recipe

- 1 2/3 cups (200 g) flour
- 1/2 cup (100 g) sugar
- 1/4 pound (100 g) almonds
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 egg
- Lemon zest, vanilla extract, or orange water

Second Recipe

- 1/2 pound (225 g) almonds
- 1 cup (100 g) flour
- 1/2 cup (100 g) sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 egg
- Lemon zest, vanilla extract, or orange water

Third Recipe

- 1/2 pound (225 g) almonds
- 2 cups (100 g) powdered sugar

Lemon zest, or other flavoring as you prefer

For the first two recipes, peel the almonds and grind them to half the



size of a grain of rice with the sugar. Mix them with the flour and the remaining ingredients, adding enough rosolio (a mild, sweet liqueur) or aquavit to obtain a soft dough. Break the dough up into pieces the size of fava beans; you should obtain between 60 and 70. Put them in a greased and floured copper pan and brush them with egg yolk. Bake them in a 375 F (185 C) oven, keeping in mind that they'll cook rapidly because they're small.

This information comes from http://italianfood.about.com/od/holidaydishes/a/aa100999_2.htm. Picture from Pia & Co.



WHO IS KEEPING SAN DIEGO CRAFTY?

Teresa Salazar of *Velvet Klaw*
www.velvetklaw.com

Svea Komori-Ang of *Belle Pepper Couture*
www.bellepeppercouture.com

Penni Hawkins of *p-starr products*
www.p-starr.com

Sarah Sweeney of *PYP Arts and Designs*
www.pypdesigns.com

Amy Smock of *Designs de Luna*
www.designsdeluna.com

Meagan Rae Longtin of *Meagan Rae Designs*
www.meaganraedesigns.com

Karen Jorgenson of *Altered Provisions*
www.alteredprovisions.com

Stefanie Histed of *Made with Luv*
www.madewithluv.com

THE SAN DIEGO NORTH PARK CRAFT MAFIA WAS FOUNDED IN SEPTEMBER 2007 AND IS DEDICATED TO CRAFTING, FASHIONING, STYLING AND CREATING THEIR SAN DIEGO.

www.SanDiegoNorthParkCraftMafia.com
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P.O.Box 711464
San Diego, CA 92171

MAFIOSA OF THE MONTH

STEFANIE HISTED of *Made with Luv*

What would you like us to know about your business?

Madewithluv.com is all about fun, unique products for home and baby, and our blog chronicles the craziness of life, crafts and the genius of Lifetime television.

Why DIY?

Why not? Why wouldn't you pick an original product handmade with luv over a mass produced item that anyone can grab at their local mega-mart? It makes sense to shop indie for so many reasons.

Shaken or Stirred?

Neither- just pour me a big glass of red and I'm good to go. And then refill it a few times please.

Favorite movies?

I will watch pretty much anything on Lifetime. My favorites are the "spooky" ones where a woman has like ESP and moves into an old house and sees the spirit of a girl murdered in 1831 and has to solve the crime and meanwhile her family thinks she's losing her mind. Right now you are thinking I'm talking about a particular movie but seriously there are dozens of them like that. I also love all their Christmas movies. You always know how their movies are going to end, so you don't have to pay close attention which makes them the perfect background to a day of crafting!

If I came to your home and looked in your refrigerator, what would I find?

You would find a lot of condiments, but very few things to put them on. You'd also find a lot of pre-cooked food from Trader Joes- all their heat-and-serve meals are sooo dang good. Delicious meatloaf in four minutes? Yes, please!

If you were a tree, what would you be?

One of those that looks real pretty but sheds those annoying berries all over the sidewalk, causing people to trip and slide. The tree means well but can't help making a mess.

What was the most interesting trip you have ever taken? Why?

I love urban vacations, so once a year I try to spend a long weekend in a city I've never been to and just walk, eat and drink my way through it. In the past four years I've done New York, Chicago, Seattle and Austin. Next on my list are Portland and Boston.

What was the funniest thing you have ever experienced?

I surround myself with people who make me laugh and constantly find myself in hilarious situations, and there are way too many to choose just one. I am very lucky in that I have fun more often than not!

Do you speak to your pet? Do they speak English?

I can't have pets in my apartment, but somehow I got stuck feeding these two very entitled, rude alley cats that bully me into giving them food but won't let me pet them. I talk to them all the time; they are named Bustah and Siamese Dream. Even though I'm very much in the city, there is also a possum and a skunk who like to hang on my patio. The Possum is named Tobias and the Skunk is Lucille. I yell at them a lot too.

If you could be any character in fiction, who would you be?

I over-identify with Tina Fey's character on 30 Rock- a smart, ambitious woman surrounded by frustrating goofballs. Only she's way funnier than I am.

If you were written about in the newspaper, on the front page, what would the headline say?

"Enraged Woman throws sewing machine out window, yelling obscenities about broken bobbin winder; neighbors not shocked, claim it was only matter of time"

