



March 1, 2009  
ISSUE 2



## "CHANGE" ...

As we move further and hopeful into 2009. . .  
It's all about "**CHANGE**."

We all are experiencing some kind of changes, whether it be career changes, a new President, a new diet so we can fit into our old jeans, or adjusting our finishes to fit a tighter-fisted economy. We all strive to be better at everything we do at home, at work, with our families and within ourselves.

We have gathered some great things below to inspire change and spark some new ideas for you!

And don't miss your chance to [enter our latest contest](#) and win a set of cabinet blanks for displaying your best finishes!



***"In times of change, learners inherit the Earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."*** - Eric Hoffer



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Look what THEY can do!

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a HANDful of questions answered by one of our members

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Business Advice

#### From our Hands

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THIS

Product Review

### Future Focus:

#### Our Next Newsletter!

The theme for our next Newsletter:  
May 1, 2009 will be  
**"Green"!!**

With that in mind, we are announcing a CONTEST!  
The theme for the contest is, of course, **"Green"**.

## APPLAUSE!



### **Yes, we are pulling *you* into the spotlight, Cathy Friel, and giving you a HAND!**

They say things happen for a "reason".... we believe this to be completely true. When we contacted Cathy and told her that we wanted to feature her and applaud her for her talents and share her story with our readers, it was a perfect fit. When we told Cathy that our issue was going to be focusing on change we learned instantly that Cathy is just like many of us, head-first into dealing with change personally and professionally.

Cathy touches those around her without being aware of the effect she has. Her talent is pure, her intentions are genuine, she is a joy to be around and her spirit lights up a room. Something that she may not even be aware of, but those who know her or have just met her briefly are instantly aware that there is just "something about her."

We asked Cathy to share what she meant when she said "Change is coming for me." We thought it best for her to explain it herself here below in her own words.

*I am both humbled and honored to be recognized by The Sisters Hands.*

*I have been working in the decorative arts field for the past 12+ years. Knocking on doors and continuing to stay updated with the latest products the industry has to offer I feel is paramount.*

*Since this is an issue about change, I know that "change is coming for me!" As I mature, not only in age, but with my profession, I find myself having to continually adjust my business portfolio to stay ahead of the current trends.*



**Win a Set of  
Cabinet Blanks!**

You may be as creative as you like and **submit either a photo of a "green" product OR a finish in the *color* green.**

We will select 2 winners, one for each category. The winners of the contest will win a set of cabinet blanks

**All entries must be submitted to the Sisters Hands by March 17th** (a green day so you remember the deadline)

[Click Here for Contest Details](#)

***"The most successful people are those who are good at plan B".***

**- James Yorke**

Sisters Hands, Decorative Artists Consortium,  
[www.sistershands.com](http://www.sistershands.com)

Susan Bickford

*In this shrinking market of affluence, I have tried to forecast where I want to be in 10 years and how I can continue to have a thriving business. The answer is "change." Be willing to seek out new ideas, products and people with whom you can collaborate. Always be willing to learn something from somebody. When you think you know it all, you better close up shop. "Never dig in - always move forward," a quote from General Patton, is how I try to live life. Stay positive and positive things happen.*

*I have recently had to shift gears in regards to my decorative painting. It has become abundantly clear that the older I get, I will not be able to do the difficult scaffolding jobs; however, to continue to secure revenue, I have branched out into wall art. I am now marketing large scale pieces to commercial clients, as well as those private homeowners that want a splash of color on their expansive great walls. The response has been overwhelming. In the next 10 years my goal is to work in my studio creating commissioned pieces of art and do the occasional residential wall treatment job that will challenge me to think outside the box.*

*I find this field to have some of the most generous people I know, willing to share ideas and techniques. You just have to ask. Change can be a good thing, helping your heart, mind and soul to expand your horizons.*

Cathy, we thank you for your insight and willingness to share your story with us! Cathy lives in Northfield, New Hampshire where she lives with her husband, Jim and has 2 sons, Chris(23) and Sean(21) . She has been featured in many local magazines including the Cover of Accent Magazine,07', NH Home Magazine 09', Cover of NH Furniture Masters Catalog 08', New England Home Magazine 07', and New Hampshire Magazines "Top 100" Issue 08'.

Cathy can be contacted at [cafriel@metrocast.net](mailto:cafriel@metrocast.net). For those with a Facebook account, an online gallery of Cathy's works can be viewed there. We know that her words will strike a common cord with others in the industry. ~ Sisters Hands

***"To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly."***

***- Henri Bergson***

Marti Carroll  
Elaine Castronovo  
Cindy Everett  
Renee Holder  
Judy Norman  
Krista Vind  
Cait Whitson  
Julie Young

## **At your Fingertips...**

Handy resources to help along your way!

[Altered Provisions](#)  
[FabulousFinishes](#)  
[Blog](#)  
[My Notting Hill Blog](#)  
[Design Inspiration](#)  
[Snapdragon Garden](#)  
[Patricia Gray Blog](#)  
[Fresh Palette Blog](#)  
[Meanwhile Here in](#)  
[France Blog](#)  
[Indexed](#)  
[Design Amour](#)  
[Faces in Places Blog](#)  
[Fauxology](#)

***"Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change."***

***- Thomas Hardy***

## Getting to Know Us...

**Meet Julie Young:** Our featured "Sister"

We consider Julie to be our *Sister Earth*. She keeps us grounded and takes care of us with healthy advice for our bodies and spirits. With 11 years in the business, Julie has a wealth of knowledge and experience.



She was the president of her local IDAL chapter, Artisans by the Sea, for 2 years and has moved on to become a member of the West Coast Artisans Guild [www.westcoastartisansguild.com](http://www.westcoastartisansguild.com). We asked Julie some questions below for a more up close and personal look at the gal behind the artist. To learn more about Julie, please visit her website at [www.julieart.us](http://www.julieart.us).

**SH** *"What would you advise people to do when faced with change affecting their business?"*

**JY** When we think of change most of us tense up and resist it. As Artists and entrepreneurs it is best to challenge ourselves to think of change as an adventure or an anticipated event rather than a burden or stress. Everything in life evolves so when you accept change as a part of living rather than resist it – you will be better able to step outside of your comfort zone and find creative solutions to your problems.

**SH** *"What would you say has changed the most about the industry since you began your career?"*

**JY** What has changed the most for my business in the last several years is all of the new products that have come out, the amount of education available, and that my clients are more interested in the different finishes. I love to try the new products and will push the finishes that excite me the most. I love the many layered textural finishes so I am drawn to that aspect of our work. Like attracts like and I am able to attract clients that want something fun, custom, textural and artistic. Having said that, colorwashes are making a come back and I have been asked to do several recently. They are actually fun to do when you treat them as a work of art rather than an assembly line product. They are cost effective and are good bread and butter finishes.

**SH** *"What is one thing that you would change, if you could, if anything was possible?"*

**JY** – I truly believe that anything is possible already. I believe that we create our own heaven or hell on earth. Our attitude and the words we speak create our future. I am constantly reading



motivational books to help me on my path to practice living in the present moment.

**SH** *"How do you handle changes and the unexpected things that occur in your life?"*

**JY** I forget who said it, "It doesn't matter what happens to you - it is how you handle the 'it' that matters..." The easiest way for me to get the message across is to acknowledge "it" whatever it is... and do not become a victim of your circumstance. Stuff happens to everyone. Analyze, evaluate, and make a decision then move on to the important things in your life. I'm not saying you shouldn't learn the lesson. Think about why stuff happens, how you might have created it to happen, then move forward knowing that you are the cause in most things in your life.

**Some of my favorite motivational books/tapes are:**

"The Power of your Subconscious Mind" by Dr. Joseph Murphy

"You Can Heal your Life" by Louise L. Hay

"The Attractor Factor" by Joe Vitale

"The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz

"A New Earth, Awakening Your Life's purpose" by Eckhart Tolle

Holosync Meditation CD's by Centerpointe

<http://www.centerpointe.com/>



***"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself."*** -Leo Tolstoy



## **Get A Grip!**

**Our Business Tips and Advice-**

*From the pen of Susan Bickford*

### **HOW TO SURVIVE - BE THE ONE MOST RESPONSIVE TO CHANGE**

Change is inevitable; change is constant. How we recognize and adapt to change will predict how successful we are in the long term. We are all facing enormous changes and shifts in our markets as a result of the current economic crisis. We face important decisions – should we adjust our pricing? Should we adjust our marketing strategy? Should we diversify? We each have to be attuned to our individual markets to know how to adapt. Darwin said, "It is neither the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to

***"The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers."***

**-M. Scott Peck**

change." In other words – the ones of us who can adapt to change and EVOLVE will survive. So let's look at some of these decisions as they apply to our unique business.

Should our pricing change? Are you seeing changes in your market? Is your work slowing down? If so, be smart and adapt – don't lower your rate of pay; offer less expensive finishes. Think outside the box – be creative and come up with unique finishes that require fewer passes, less expensive materials, and less time to accomplish. By doing this you can offer your client quality finishes for less. Stay competitive by being smart and creative.

Should you adjust your marketing strategy? It's a rule of thumb in business that when the economy turns down, marketing is more important and should be increased. Yet few businesses actually do this. If you can afford to set aside more (or some) for marketing, do so. This is your window of opportunity to get your name out there. Use your marketing dollars wisely – focus your marketing dollars on your specific niche market. Find a match that targets your demographic.

Should we diversify? If you are in a position to offer more than one service, do so – diversification is smart in any market and any economic climate. Consider color or design consulting, consider offering more add-ons such as trim and ceilings, cabinets and countertops, furniture work, original art pieces, and accessories. The more options you can offer your clients, the better.

Focus on what your clients are now willing to spend. Maybe an entire large room is not feasible, but they can afford a ceiling redo, or a focal wall. Think in terms of offering smaller elements by enhancing architectural details. You can offer your client something more affordable, still make the same hourly wage, and move on to another job where you can continue making your normal hourly wage. Don't be adverse to the idea of multiple smaller jobs instead of a few larger jobs.

The bottom line – ADAPT, EVOLVE, BE CREATIVE in both your art and your business!



***"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."***

**- John F. Kennedy**



## From Our Hands

In each issue we will share a [FREE RECIPE](#) available for download from our website

Follow the link below to download our current free recipe!



["Toffee and Teal"](#)

*"It's not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear . . . . It's like being between trapezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to."*

- Marilyn Ferguson

## Get Your HANDS On This!

Our most current THUMBS UP product review:

[All About Top Coats](#)



***"The most important thing to remember is this: To be ready at any moment to give up what you are for what you might become." - W.E.B. Du Bois***



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*All of us in Sisters Hands would like to thank everyone for your continued support and encouragement for our group and its efforts!*

*A special thank you to those who signed up for our mailing list and the email responses we have received! We appreciate all of your input!*

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[Click here](#) to view a schedule of our upcoming classes in 2009!


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Want to share something with the Sisters?  
Questions, ideas for a future Newsletter?  
Want to recommend someone for an Applause?


**Please do not reply to this message-**

**[Contact us here!!](#)**

**Forward-to-a-Friend**



***"Change is inevitable, except from vending machines."***  
- Unknown



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