



FRESH FROM THE KILN

News from the studio of
Susan O’Hanlon Pottery LLC

Fall 2019



The cool, crisp days of Fall are here already! Every day, month, year, and decade seem to fly by. Is it the same for you? It’s been almost a year since I’ve issued a bona fide newsletter, and it’s been a busy year!

Looking ahead, here are a few dates to remember:

Saturday, 11/30 Sunday, 12/1	10am-6pm 11am-5pm	Holiday Sale @ my Home Studio in Downingtown, PA (Get seconds and glaze tests while they last!) Follow this link to my FB event, where I'll be posting pictures of pieces I'll have available in the next week.
Thursday, 12/5 Friday, 12/6 Saturday, 12/7 Monday, 12/9 – Friday 12/13 Saturday, 12/14	7-9:30pm 10am-8pm 10am-5pm 10am-8pm 10am-5pm	The Potters Guild Holiday Sale @ Community Arts Center in Wallingford, PA Opening Reception, Thursday, 12/5 (\$5 at the door) Free Admission remaining dates
Friday, 1/31 Saturday, 2/1 – Sunday, 2/9	6pm-9pm 12pm-4pm daily	Villanova Fine Art Show & Sale @ The Academy of Notre Dame de Namur in Villanova, PA Preview Cocktail Party, Friday 1/31 (Ticketed Event) Free Admission remaining dates



Looking back, I made some big changes in 2019! The biggest by far relates to the way my work in clay interacts with other aspects of my life. I’ve struggled in recent years to balance the many aspects of making a living as an artist with meeting my personal commitments, nourishing my relationships (the elixir of life, right?), and participating in activities I find meaningful to recharge my body and soul. I’ve recognized that I need to make a renewed effort to spend more time out of my basement studio, and so my clay journey this year has focused primarily on four things:

1. Teaching and mentoring (because I love to share my passion for clay),
2. Experimenting with new techniques both in and out of the studio (because growth is important),

3. Building my slow feeder pet bowl brand (because I love my four-legged customers, too)
4. Managing the business end of my business more effectively (admittedly, still a work in process)

Working toward those goals, I've accomplished a lot!

Our youngest moved out, and I rearranged bedrooms and set up a first-floor gallery space in our home. **Plan to stop by during my first annual Holiday Sale on Small Business Saturday (November 30, 10-6) and Sunday (December 1, 11-5) to see the gallery space for yourself.** I'll have a wide range of pieces available to help you tick items off your gift (or wish) list!

BONUS OPPORTUNITIES! Forward this email newsletter to a friend and cc me at susan@susanohanlonpottery.com to receive an additional 10% off coupon. Bring a friend with you and you each get another 10% coupon!

Most of my in-stock inventory is now on display year-round in this space, so whenever you need a perfect gift in a hurry but want something special and not mass-produced, email me at susan@susanohanlonpottery.com to schedule a time to see what's new!

Are you travelling over the Thanksgiving Holiday and can't make the sale? Email me to schedule a time to come by to see the show!



The "Holiday Décor Display" in my home gallery



Me and my die-hard Raku Sampler Class participants huddling around the Wayne Art Center raku kiln to keep warm.

I joined the teaching faculty at [Wayne Art Center](#)! My **raku sampler class** introduces students to making and firing work for saggar firing as well as traditional glazed, horsehair, naked and sea urchin raku processes. It's a modified version of the Raku Clay Camp I offer during the summers at my home studio AND it gets me out of my basement studio. Another session starts up in January, with firings anticipated in April when the weather is warmer. The class is appropriate for those working in clay at all levels, whether you hand build or throw on the wheel (or both). If you're interested, reach out and I'll share a link with you when it's posted on their website.



I started a blog! Did you know that I was a professional resume writer for almost 30 years before taking my own advice and following my passion for pottery? Even though I love to write, newsletters always feel like a daunting task to me; as a result, I tend to put them off until there's so much to share it feels overwhelming. My solution? Share random news via a blog and share events and big news via a shorter newsletter. On my blog, I'll also share pottery

Check out my blog [here!](#)

If you like it, subscribe and post a comment here and there.

I'd love to hear from you!

making and business tips, studio shots of work-in-process, short instructional videos, life lessons clay continues to teach me, and much more. I've got a few posts up already, with more to come. One of my next posts will include another **BONUS Coupon** for my Holiday Sale, so be sure to check it out!



I opened up a space adjacent to my studio to accommodate larger groups of pottery enthusiasts for classes and private events. I also introduced Clay Camp for Grown-Ups this summer, and I'll offer these intensive, consecutively scheduled three- and four- workshops again in 2020. In contrast to my weekly progressive skills classes or one-time workshops, Clay Camps are extended day programs that focus on specific aspects of making - like Raku Pottery, Surface Decoration and Paper Clay. You'll see and hear more about the Summer 2020 line-up at my May Open Studio Sale (on the Chester [County Studio Tour](#)), or you can check my website starting in March for the Summer schedule.



I fell in love with soda firing! Apparently, many of you did as well, because I nearly sold out of my first soda-fired pots on the Chester County Studio Tour this past May. Since then, I've participated in another guild group soda firing and took a soda class with Justin Benn and Nate Willever. The pots I've been making in this class are making their way home weekly now, and I'll be offering them up at my Holiday Open House later this month.



In July, I spent the most magical of weeks at the [Saratoga Clay Arts Center](#) in NY with Jack Troy! Jack is an institution among clay folk, a master potter, a poet, and an insightful, entertaining, mindful and incredibly generous soul. Our work focused on salt firing and practicing wheel techniques to introduce more fluidity and expressiveness in our pots. The photo to the right is of Jack Troy holding one of my pieces fresh from the kiln.

I came away from this workshop renewed and inspired to make new work for the soda kiln at the Community Arts Center in Wallingford. While I loved this salt firing experience, the brighter tones and juicy glazes of soda firing continue to sing to me in my dreams.



Jack Troy at Saratoga Clay Arts

I taught my first clay class specifically for art education teachers at the Downingtown School District High School. I loved sharing all I know about paper clay with this energetic and enthusiastic group of elementary, middle school and high school art teachers. If you're an art teacher (or know one), reach out to me about a customized class for your staff. It can cover any aspect of clay work, including making (hand building or wheel throwing), surface decoration, raku firing, glaze mixing and more!



I took a bead making class with the talented Barbara Hanselman. I've always loved Barbara's clay jewelry, and I've found that bead making appeals to the whimsical and playful potter that lives within me.

AND, I can work on beads at the dining room table, and in doing so spend more time out of my basement! The photo to the left shows the current view from my dining room table, where I'm working on beads when I'm not in my basement studio. The dogs' bed is at my feet, and we all enjoy spending time in front of the window with the sun shining in on us!

If you've never seen Barbara's work, visit her [Etsy shop](#) to see some of her beads, jewelry and rattles. If you're a clay texture enthusiast, you can purchase her unique rubber texture mats there as well. (You may see some of her fabulous patterns emerging in my work in the coming months!)

I took a workshop with the amazing Heesoo Lee, a ceramic artist who creates exquisite functional porcelain work rich with imagery reminiscent of the landscape in her native country, Korea. Here's a link to an [article](#) that includes lots of mouth-watering pictures of her work.

Heesoo's work spoke to me when I first encountered it several years ago, and I was thrilled to be able to purchase this piece she brought to the workshop.

I've been busy in the studio incorporating some of the techniques Heesoo shared with us into new work that will be soda fired. I'm really excited about this series of work, and expect it to be ready to show in the Spring!





A few of my soda-fired glaze test bowls and a larger, bare clay serving bowl inspired by Bonnie Ann Burnett, all fresh from the soda kiln.

I spent several studio days with one of my soul sisters in clay, Bonnie Ann Burnett, a fellow guild member who just relocated to Michigan. Before she left, Bonnie Ann shared with me her process for making her exquisite bowls and plates, along with some of her molds.

[Bonnie Ann's work](#) has always inspired me, and her way of making is one that I find to be fluid and deeply meditative. We made some bowls together before she moved, and I have since fired them in both salt and soda atmospheric kilns. I've made some of my own small and large forms using her techniques since, and am experimenting with glazing and soda firing on these forms. Here are a few recent gifts from the kiln, with plenty more to come!

My art as activism piece, "PLAN{et} B Ain't Pretty" won the 3-D award at Earth Speaks V: A Juried Exhibition on the Environmental Crisis.

This piece, created in collaboration with woodworker John Cargill, IV, speaks from the deepest part of me on the issue of climate change. I am always thrilled when I have the opportunity to share it and influence others about this existential threat to our planet.



Ceramic Slow Feeder Bowl

Every bowl handmade with ❤️ in the USA



My ceramic slow feeder pet bowls were re-branded and re-launched at the Pet Expo at the Oaks, PA Convention Center in January. Now called The Bandit Bowl (named after our SPCA rescue, Bandit, because he deserves credit as the inspiration behind my creation), my slow feeder bowls continue to be my best seller. You can follow Bandit on Instagram and Facebook @BanditBowl and order bowls online on a dedicated page on my website: www.banditbowl.com. Don't worry ... fame hasn't gone to Bandit's head (much).

My [website](#) got an overhaul and I formalized my business structure as Susan O'Hanlon Pottery LLC. The website is still a work in progress, but it now offers e-commerce capabilities, dedicated pages for workshops and the Bandit Bowl, a blog, a member only section that I hope to flesh out in the coming months, and a new and improved gallery section that will showcase some of my newest work going forward. Go check it out! While you're there, become a member for free; you'll get first dibs on my new work, which will be listed on my website exclusively for a limited time before being offered in my Etsy shop. **And remember to subscribe to my blog so you'll get that bonus coupon for my Holiday Home**

Studio Sale appearing in the next blog post!

WOW! As I re-read this, it's so much easier to see the progress I've made in each of the areas I identified as goals early in the year. I'm definitely feeling renewed and refreshed. More importantly, I have inspiration for new work and the time and space to experiment with ways of bringing that work to fruition for the first time in a long while. As always, my wonderful husband, Steve, supports my endeavors, offers encouragement and good counsel whenever I need it, and still lights up when I walk into the room after 32 years of marriage -- even if I'm covered in clay. For all of the above, I consider myself a very lucky lady, and I'm so very grateful each and every day.

I'm grateful to you, too, for sticking with me on this journey. I couldn't do the work I do without you! You have my very best wishes as we prepare to celebrate holiday traditions with family and friends, and soon after usher in the new decade (Y2K seems like yesterday, right?).

All the very best to you and yours,

Susan 😊

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