

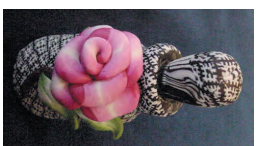
In her own words, this is how Diane conceived of the project:

"I was actually getting a chemo treatment at the Woman and Infant's Breast Health Center and playing with my clay. On the days of getting TAXOL I was there for 6 to 7 hours every week, and I noticed that the nurses threw away tons of small, glass medication bottles. After making sure they were non-toxic, I took some home, covered them with clay and made tops for them. When I brought them back in for the nurses, they LOVED them and so did some of the patients who saw me making them. They seemed fascinated with the clay and the colors, and for a while, they made people forget where they were. I started giving them away to the friends I had made at the center and called them "Wish Bottles". I told my friends to just make a wish, write it down and put it in the bottle, and it would come true. I don't know why, but we all just believed this... maybe because we just wanted to, or that it was something to hold on to. But they LOVED these little bottles. They brought together - for one moment - women sharing pain without having to speak about it. Now all the staff has them and they are all over! I bring them down and put them on the window sill, and when the patients ask, the nurses tell them about me and the meaning of the bottles, which now have grown into *Bottles of Hope!*"

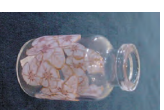
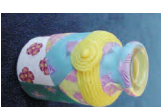
Since then, Diane has run workshops at the hospital where the patients cover bottles with polymer clay to make their own Bottles of Hope.



Thanks to the members of the Southern Connecticut Polymer Clay Guild, bottles have been distributed to patients at other hospitals in New England. Guild members cover bottles in their spare time, run contests and hold workshops to encourage the Bottles of Hope project.



Our hope is that other art guilds around the country will also participate and bring Bottles of Hope to cancer patients at hospitals and treatment centers everywhere.



What you can do: We are appealing to polymer clay guilds, art guilds and individuals to expand the program to a national initiative. There are no special rules or forms to fill out. You can make bottles or host a workshop at a hospital. If you have no local outlet for the bottles, you can mail finished bottles to the Southern Connecticut Polymer Clay Guild and we will make sure they are distributed to cancer patients in our area.

Mail to: BOH, c/o Donna Panciera, 835 Indian Corner Rd
POB 76, Slocum, RI 02877



How to make a Bottle of Hope: We use small glass bottles (about 2-3" tall) You can use small bottles from your veterinarian, some small glass medicine bottles, or other small bottles such as those for contact lenses.

If the bottle has a metal cap, it can be removed with tin snips, and the rubber stopper can be saved or a stopper of clay can be constructed. The labels are soaked off in warm soapy water.

Any method can be used to cover the bottles. Try rolling out a thin sheet of clay and wrapping it around the bottle. Then decorate it with thin slices of clay "canes", or sculpt additions of flowers, leaves, animals, etc. You could texture the clay with lace, stamps, or tools. The clay covered bottle should be baked according to the clay manufacturers' directions (usually 250-275°F for 20 minutes). Bake without the top in place because air inside will expand!

