



# Newsletter

January 2011

Dear Creative Friends

January is near its end, and with it the period of grace for getting organized for 2011. I'm a scaredy cat when it comes to change and when it appears that things are going well I have a philosophy of 'don't mess with it'. Things around us change all the time though. Sometimes it is necessary to face up to the changes and adapt in order to be able to keep doing things well. We are at such a moment of change.

After much consideration I have decided to do away with the *Sewing Circle* classes. I will miss your company, but I hope that we will be able to catch up every month in the new *Make it with Megan* class. If you are going to miss the socializing of a weekly class, why not start your own sewing circle and invite your friends? There is nothing nicer than getting together and sewing with a cup of tea. For the serious bear makers there will be a weekly online class starting towards the end of February. The weekly tutorials will be similar to the ones we shared in *Sewing Circle* last year, but with lots of added content and some new topics.

### *Make it with Megan*

These classes are held in the first week of the month. Similar to the old *Sewing Circle*, except that you need to book and pay in advance. Each class costs R 55, with a discount when paying for the year in advance. If you have paid for the year, then your space is guaranteed in every class. This change in the class booking system was necessary to aid me in planning more effectively, thank you in advance for your co-operation!

I have also added an extra hour to the class time, so that you have time to socialize, or extra time to work on your projects. There is an attachment to this email with class dates for the year. I also have printed copies available in the studio. Please note that it is possible that dates might change. If they do, I will notify you well in advance. It is also possible that there might be extra *Make it with Megan* sessions during the year. Likewise, when this happens, I will let you know.

Read about *Weekend Workshops* and *Class Projects* on the following pages of this Newsletter.

I look forward to seeing everyone in class next week!

Regards

## ***Make it with Megan***

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A class project is available to persons wishing to participate, and will be announced one month in advance.

Morning sessions are on Tuesday and Wednesday.

These sessions run from 9am till 12, when the class is over, you are welcome to stay until 1pm to continue working on your project and socialize.

Evening sessions are on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday.

These sessions run from 7pm till 10pm. The studio will be open from 6pm for an hour of socializing and to give you extra time to work on your project. The cost per session is R 55 per person, your place will be confirmed on receipt of payment. There will be 11 sessions in 2011, this equals R 605. Pay for the entire year and get 10% discount, R 545 for all 11 sessions.

Some special projects require additional preparation on Megan's part. If you are working on something that you need to paint or glue, or need equipment or materials to be prepared for the workshop, please remind Megan before the class so that she can get it ready for you.

## ***Class Projects 2011***

Our kick-off project for the year, no pun intended, is Bear in a Boot. This is a new pattern by Nerina Roberts from Cloth Characters. Although the pattern calls for felt, for the class project we are making the bear from mohair. There will be lots of room for individual touches with this project. I also selected it because once you have mastered making a boot and have the pattern, you can adapt it to fit your bears and dolls. No cobbler's children going bare(bear?)foot this year!

The workshop kit contains mohair and all supplies needed to make the bear, fabric and supplies to make the boot. Please bring an A4 size sheet of firm cardboard along to class.

(Two layers of cereal box glued together with Pritt will do nicely). Additional items not supplied in the kit is the blanket and pillow. There are instructions in the pattern for making these, and suggestions for alternative blankets if you don't want to crochet your own. **Cost of the kit including pattern is R 155. If you would like to participate in the project, please email or SMS Megan to reserve your kit.** Patterns are available at R 30 if you are not joining the class project.



The next class project will be an *Easter Bunny*. This is one of Megan's designs, and the pattern will only be for sale to persons attending class. Samples and kit information will be available at the March class.

## ***Online Workshops***

During 2010 Megan offered forty short tutorials in sewing circle, encompassing basic bear making techniques. This was a practice run for launching online workshops. Following the sequence of steps to make a bear right from the beginning, Megan will offer these workshops as an online sewing circle course. The workshops will be broken down into four groups of 10 sessions, each with its own special teddy bear pattern. You will receive a weekly email with news about what's happening at the studio and a bear making tutorial. Megan will also offer personal assistance with your bear making project. You will have the opportunity to email photos of your work in progress, and ask questions. Each set of ten sessions cost R 250. On offer later in 2011 will also be an online teddy bear design workshop, and an in depth tutorial series about creating teddy bear faces.

## ***Weekend workshops***

A short workshop is offered on the afternoon of the last Saturday of every month. This encompasses bear and doll making, clay sculpture and other crafts. See the [Calendar](#) on the Tin Soldiers Website for the workshop program.

Our first short workshop for 2011 is [Bottle Cap Pin Cushions](#). The class on 29 January is fully booked. We have had so many enquiries that we decided to repeat the workshop on 26 February. SMS or email Megan to book.



On the first weekend of every month we have a full day workshop offering intensive bear and doll making classes. The workshop is limited to ten persons to ensure that everyone gets enough attention. As soon as ten persons have booked for the Saturday class, an additional workshop will be offered on the next day, Sunday.

A full day workshop is the ideal place for beginners to make a bear from start to finish, learning all the basic techniques. If you are an advanced bear maker, you can participate in the projects that are available, or just join us for the day to work on your own bears. The program and more details can be found on the [Workshops](#) page.

## ***My Little Secret***

A number of people have contacted me asking whether there will be a Valentine bear this year. At first I wanted to say no, St Valentine's always comes so soon after the start of the year and I'm too rushed to cook up something really nice. Then a thought struck me. I have been playing around with ideas for a bear with a secret compartment for a while. This is definitely a project for advanced bear makers, a great opportunity to go beyond the basic bear body. One can decide whether to hide chocolate hearts, Easter eggs or some other small treasure close to your bear's heart. Although it will be a little too late for St Valentine's day on the 14th February, I'm going to offer this project as a combined Valentine/Easter workshop in full day workshops on the 5th March and 2nd April. I will post pictures on the website as soon as I have a finished sample.

## When attending a workshop at Tin Soldiers Studio

Tin Soldiers Studio is our workplace, and also our home. We like to think that the studio and classrooms, garden and animals all contribute to our customers' creative experience. By welcoming you to our home we make ourselves vulnerable to the behavior and attitude of lots of visitors. Please consider the following, and adhere to the rules. We would like to be able to welcome you back in future.

- The driveway is steep. When you ring the bell, please wait until the gate has opened before you drive down, especially in wet weather.
- Parking for visitors and persons attending classes is in the parking area below the Irish Cottage. *Parking next to Cape Cottage is for off-loading and persons in wheelchairs and on crutches only.* Please respect this and don't park there, even if there are no other cars parked.
- We have several large dogs. Apart from being family pets, they perform the important duty of guarding the property. If you are cynophobic phone Megan when you come in the gate so that she can meet you at your car.
- We are not unsympathetic towards smokers. However, please smoke outside and do not leave any evidence behind.

In the studio:

- Check with the teacher before working in class with patterns/materials that didn't come from Tin Soldiers. We would like to ensure that no one gets frustrated by patterns that don't work properly or wasting time with inferior materials.
- Please mark your tools such as scissors, pliers and hemostats. If something gets lost or left behind, it is so much easier to trace the owner.
- Please do not borrow books, tools, materials etc. from the studio. They are needed in other workshops too.
- During workshops please switch off your cell phone, or set it to silent. If you need to answer the phone leave the classroom so that you don't disturb other people.

## *Make it with Megan*

### **Monday Evening**

31 January

28 February

28 March

2 May

30 May

27 June

1 August

29 August

26 September

31 October

28 November

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*Make it with Megan* sessions during the year. Likewise, when this happens, I will let you know.

Workshops are from 7pm till 10pm. Studio is open from 6pm if you would like a bit of extra time to work on your projects.

Booking is essential for every Workshop. Book by email: [soldier@lantic.net](mailto:soldier@lantic.net) or SMS to 083 305 5954.

Your booking will only be confirmed on receipt of payment.

Cost per session R 55.

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## *Make it with Megan*

### **Tuesday Morning**

1 February

1 March

29 March

3 May

31 May

28 June

2 August

30 August

27 September

1 November

29 November

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## *Make it with Megan*

### **Wednesday Morning**

2 February

2 March

30 March

4 May

1 June

29 June

3 August

31 August

28 September

2 November

30 November

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### **Thursday Evening**

3 February

3 March

31 March

5 May

2 June

30 June

4 August

1 September

29 September

3 November

1 December

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