

The Stained Glass Class

by Bonnie MacFarlane

Red, Yellow, Green, Orange, and Turquoise – Pieces of glass and the colors of my Southwestern kitchen. I am replacing the ugly plastic kitchen cabinet with a very ambitious project of an Indian (Native American) pot design.

If you like to work with your hands, have a lot of time, patience and stamina, can stand, sit, and bend over a relatively high table using steady hands, then, perhaps, the stained glass class is for you! There are times I like it, times I hate it, and times that my body and brain are so tired, that I can only work on it for one hour. It takes me a minimum of two hours to accomplish anything in this class.

The steps in a stained glass project include: picking out a pattern and sizing it; choosing the pieces and colors of glass; setting up the design on a board; cutting out the various pieces of glass; grinding each piece to perfection – my least favorite – and pinning the pieces on the board; soldering the pieces after applying copper around each piece; and finally, putting a frame around the entire project. No doubt, it's very labor intensive!

The rewards and frustrations go on! I've been working on my project 2-6 hours/week since last Spring and am maybe 30% of the way finished. The emotions during the creative process run high: from deep frustration while having neck and back pain and cut, bleeding fingers to satisfaction and feelings of accomplishment and joy.

When the project ends, I will feel proud and satisfied with my creation. The beautiful colors, shapes and textures of the glass will be enhanced when the sunlight filters through them. I will feel much pride when showing off my stained glass window to my friends and acquaintances. They will "ooh and aah" over my accomplishment and wish they had the time, patience, and stamina to put into a project like this!