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## beadshop LIVE: 1.23.19

### Working With Bullion

With Janice Parsons on beadshop LIVE

Project by Janice Parsons

Episode Notes by Drea Carbone

Photography by Karen Marshall and Drea Carbone



Here's Janice, live from Virginia! We don't have our usual setup on the East Coast, but we made do with what we have...thanks for sticking with us through this episode! Janice shares not only her tips for working with Bullion, also known as French Wire, but also her expertise on knotting. Janice is a treasure trove of knotting wisdom...don't miss out on this episode, folks!

If you'd like to skip the chit chat and get right down to business:  
Fast Forward to **Minute Marker 5:15** to learn about today's sample,  
Belvedere, and to get to the techniques!

## **Minute Marker 5:15**

Janice's newest project combines knotting and using French Wire. With a selection of rondelles and briolettes, JP has created a really lovely and delicate necklace.

Janice also shares some of her favorite past knotting pieces in her personal collection, which you can see below.



Whether you are making a float or knotting directly between beads, Janice wants you to know how to make those knots perfect, as well as how to finish the piece off!

You can check out our FB Lives on [Bead Knotting from 10.25.17](#) and [Silk Float Away Necklaces from 7.25.18](#) to check out more knotting techniques from Emily and Kate and some how-to information on using traditional and clamshell end tips with your knotting projects, like used in these samples of Janice's.



## **Minute Marker 20:45**

Let's learn about this bullion stuff! Also known as French Wire, bullion is a tiny tiny tiny spring-like coil of very fine wire. It's meant to protect your stringing material where the clasp meets the beads. You only need a small amount to make a little U-turn at the clasp. It will cover your thread and keep it safe where it gets the most wear and tear.

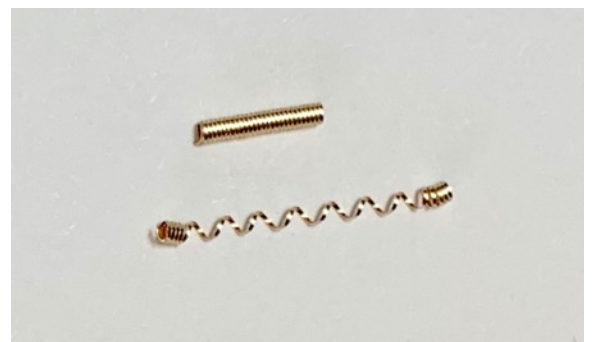
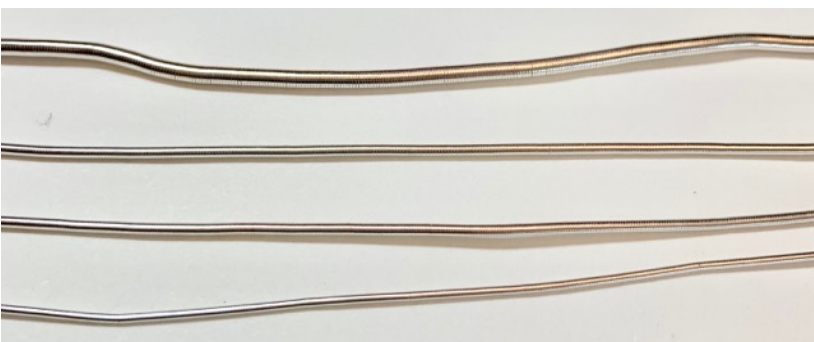
**Fine Bullion** is 0.9mm thick and has an IHD of 0.7mm, fitting up to Size 4 in Griffin Silk. **Medium Bullion** is 1.1mm thick and has an IHD of 0.9mm, fitting up to Size 6 in Griffin Silk. **Heavy** and **Extra Heavy Bullion** also exist, but we don't carry those sizes at this time.



Below, check out a side-by-side comparison of all the sizes (NOT to scale, sorry!) and also see my extreme closeup of the bullion both coiled nicely as well as stretched out...you don't want to stretch it, but we did want you to see how it's coiled and this demonstrates that pretty well!

Bullion is pretty delicate, so be sure to cut it carefully and with sharp cutters to make a good, clean cut.

You don't need much, so just cut a small piece that will neatly fit through your clasp and have the ends touch each other.



## **Minute Marker 26:00**

Let's work on the bead holes...your three beads on either end of the piece you're creating will need to fit the stringing material through twice, so you may need to ream the holes on those six beads to help accommodate. Janice is using pearls to demonstrate.

Check your bead holes on all six beads first...does your stringing material (and needle!) fit through and back? If so, you're good. If it fits on most, try a few other beads to see if you can find any that do fit...remember, pearls and gemstones have notoriously tiny holes and they may not always be uniform!

With a bowl of water and a diamond tip bead reamer, Janice begins. Wet your reamer and the bead well, and keep both wet as you ream...dip back in the water as necessary. This not only helps the process along but also keeps the dust down... something you do *not* want to breathe in!

Once you feel that there's not as much tension as you ream, your hole might just be ready! Test it again...does your thread fit two passes through? If not, keep reaming, if so...you are done!



It fits! Two passes through,  
and you're good to go!



Keep it wet, and twist away...  
carefully, please!



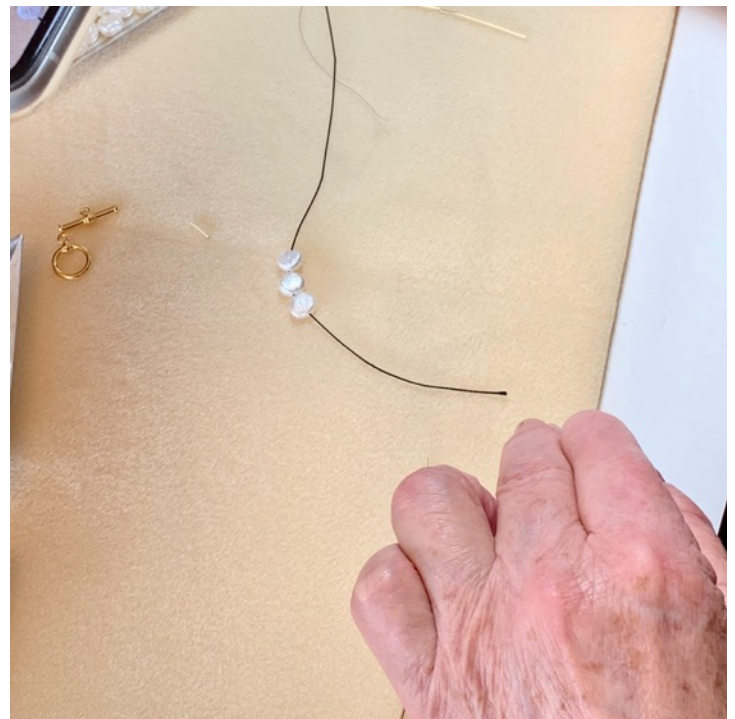
### **Minute Marker 42:00**

Here's Janice's setup...she has her beads, her clasp, her bullion, and..she has her six reamed beads separate. You don't want to mix those back up with all your other beads!

Metal triangles come in handy here... and so does a foam bead mat so you don't lose any beads if you drop or spill them...they're much less likely to roll around or bounce away from you on the foam!

### **Minute Marker 45:00**

When using Griffin silk be sure to first stretch the entire length of the silk (there are a few methods to this, but we skip talking about it...see below for my tips on stretching!) and then always start your beading at the very end...since the needles is attached to the thread itself you don't want to use the beginning of the card of thread only and then waste the rest! It's a loooooong length to work with, but string to the end, trust us!

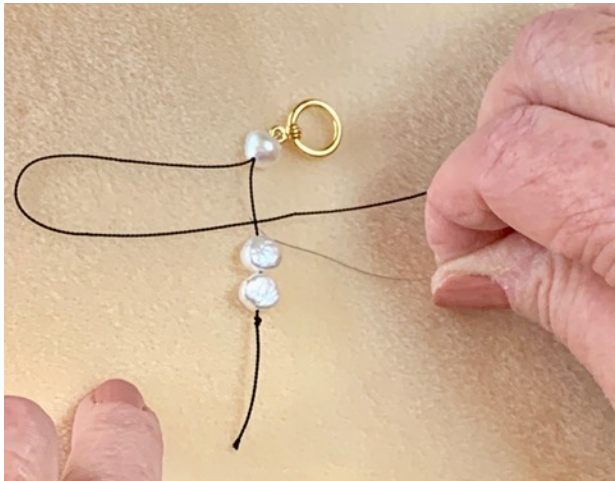


**Pre-stretch your silk!** If you don't, you risk your necklace stretching out over time and your beads will sit farther apart between your lovely knots...oh no! I prefer to wet the silk and hang it over a door with the ends weighted (I use spoons!) and leave overnight. In a rush? Dampen your silk and give firm pulls all along the entire length...just give a bunch of tugs to help stretch that silk out.

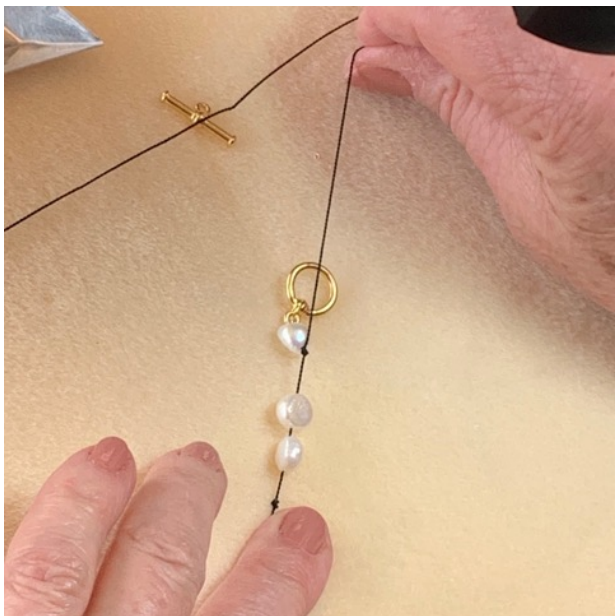


### **Minute Marker 46:00**

Let's get started! Cut a small piece of bullion fit through the loop on your clasp. If it's too long, you can always trim it a bit! String three of your larger-holed beads all the way to the end of your silk, tying a safety knot at the end so your beads don't fall off. Leave several inches of a tail. Next, string your bullion on, then your clasp, and then back through one bead.



Next, we're going to tie one knot. As Janice says, it's "over the river and through the woods." Similar to a macramé knot, loop your long thread out and over the short, then bring your needle under where the threads meet and out through the loop made. Pull tight.



Bring your needle through the next bead and tie your next knot. Again, make the loop, almost looking like the letter Q, long thread over the short, then around and under, then out. Pull tight and go through your final larger-holed bead.

Tie your final knot below the third bead, pull tight, and add a dab of glue. Once the glue is cured you can trim the short tail.



Now it's time to knot the rest of your piece, since your end is secure. Janice pre-strings several beads, but makes sure she's leaving her remaining three reamed beads aside, those will be used at the other end at that clasp, where she'll knot in the same way.

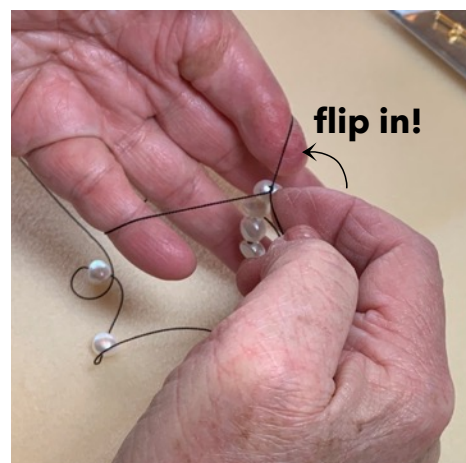
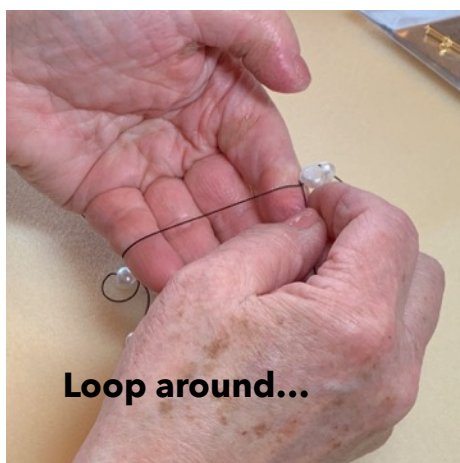
Scroll down to **Page 9** to see the alternate way Janice ties her final knot to make it more neat!

### **Minute Marker 1:01:15**

Here's Janice's knotting method...watch carefully!

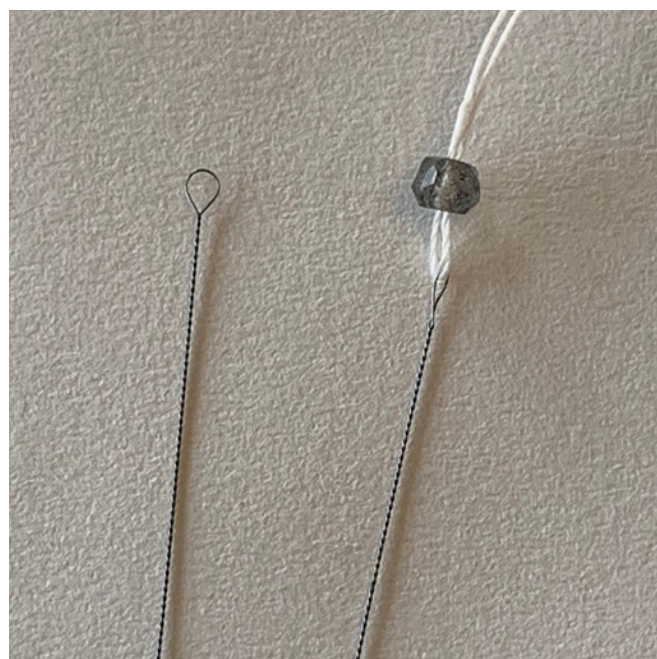
Pinch the thread under the bead, wrap around your fingers to create a loop, push your beads through, and then pinch under the bead again as you pull the knot closed, so the knot is right in that position where you want it to be. This is just an overhand knot, but Janice has this method to quickly knot and tighten without using tools...an awl or knotting tweezer is handy for some, but others may prefer this tool-free method! To really tighten that knot, Janice pushes it up and tight with her next bead.

Here are the two Class Handouts Janice mentions during the broadcast: **Pearl Knotting** (Tin Cup is also useful!) and **Gem Knotting**.



### **Minute Marker 1:10:00**

Janice shows a trick for those not using Griffin Silk (or if you need a new needle) so your needle doesn't damage your bullion. Use a Flexible Eye Needle and bring it right through a gemstone to flatten the eye of the needle. If you bring it through your bullion with the eye whole and round, it'll damage the bullion and you'll have to start over...bummer! Flatten that eye out, first! Check out the before and after to the right...see how skinny the eye gets once passed through a bead? Perfect!

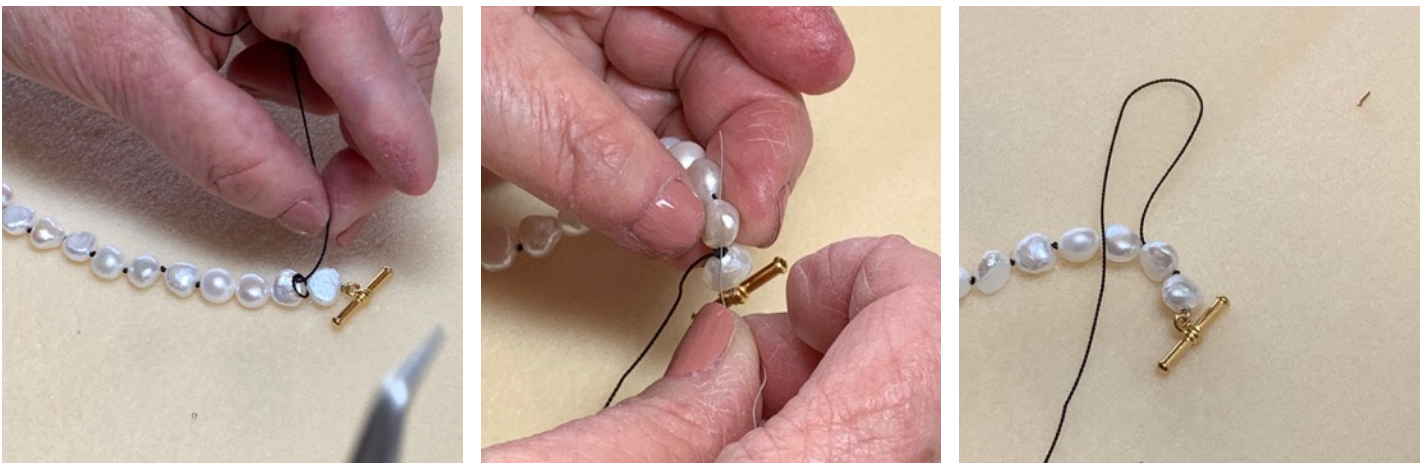


### **Minute Marker 1:12:30**

Once you're at the end of your piece, it's time to finish up with the remaining three larger-holed beads. String on your final regular bead and without knotting after it, follow with your three beads and your piece of bullion. Now we'll add the clasp and go back through those three beads, knotting between each, so you don't want to leave very much space at all, just very small knots will live between each bead and there shouldn't be extra space for any play.



Go through the loop of your clasp and back down through your first bead. Tie your knot exactly as we did back on **Page 6**, with Janice's "over the river and through the woods" technique. Go through the next bead and knot again.

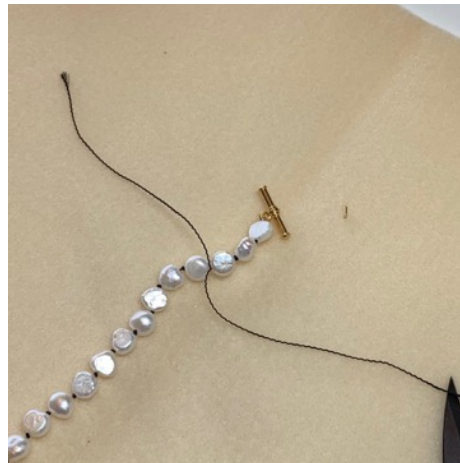
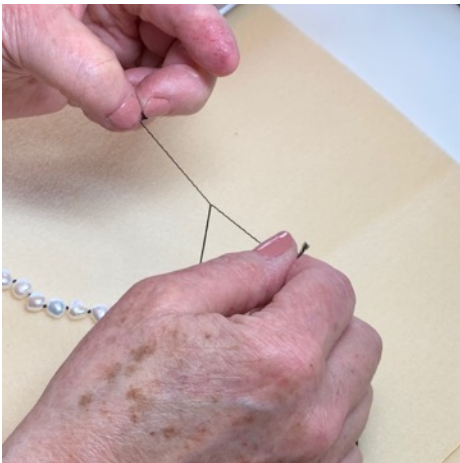


Go through your third bead, and hang tight...you can do one more of these very same knots, but here's where Janice shows a better way to create this final knot before cutting your tails short so you have a more uniform knot, and not one that's kind of pushed off to the side. See more on the next page. This is also a great technique to use if you're using End Tips.



### **Minute Marker 1:21:30**

Cut your thread a few inches from your final bead. Unravel and untwist the thread so you have two pieces to work with. Tie a knot similar to a surgeon's knot, only go through three times instead of twice, and pull tight. Flip the whole piece over and tie a second knot like this...add a dab of glue and once cured trim the tails away.



On this side, see how the knot sits sort of off to the side? This is the side we knotted back on Page 6, and it bulges out a bit to the right.



On this side, which we just knotted, the knot sits right in the center (although we don't have the cleanest cut-away from the tails since we didn't actually wait for the glue to cure!)

And that's that! You've got yourself a beautifully knotted piece of jewelry that looks very professional thanks to your bullion use and knotting technique. Now, Janice shows these tips and tricks on pearls so you can see it more clearly on video, but these are all the exact same techniques used in her necklace sample, *Belvedere*, using labradorite and moonstone rondelles and a selection of briolettes as focals. So pretty! Find the ingredients below as well as on the [Belvedere Page](#).

## Links to Events and More...

- Last Week's FB Live Broadcast: [Fun with Czech Glass Buttons](#)
- [Facebook Live Youtube Playlist](#)
- [FB Live Archive Page](#) on [beadshop.com](#)
- [Free Tip Friday YouTube Playlist](#)
- [FTF Archive Page](#) on [beadshop.com](#)
- [Kate's 2019 Tucson Classes](#)



Someone came out to say hello *after* we ended the show! Note the infamous water fountain in the back...



Beautiful Briolettes!

## Links to Us...

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- [janice@beadshop.com](mailto:janice@beadshop.com)
- [drea@beadshop.com](mailto:drea@beadshop.com)



A closeup of the bullion at the clasp of [Belvedere](#)

## Links to This Project's Ingredients...

[Belvedere](#)

- 1 [Plain and Simple Clasp- Silver](#)
- 1 Pkg [Size 2 Griffin Silk- Grey](#)
- 1 Strand [Moonstone Faceted Rondelles 3-4mm](#)
- 1 Strand [Labradorite Faceted Rondelles 3-4mm](#)
- 2 [Moonstone Briolettes](#)
- 2 [Green Amethyst Briolettes](#)
- 1 [Iolite Briolette](#)
- 1 Pkg [Fine French Bullion- Silver](#)

### You will also want to have...

[GS Hypo Cement](#), [Knotting Tweezers](#) or [Awl](#),  
[Old School Thread Clippers](#), [Bead Reamer](#),  
[Metal Bead Triangles](#), and [Foam Bead Mats](#)



## Links to Learning, Products, & More...

- [Class Handouts and Skill Builders](#)
- [Pearl Knotting and Tin Cup](#)
- [Gem Knotting](#)

- [Main Project Page](#)
- [Contemporary Bead Knotting](#)
- [FB Live 10.25.17 Bead Knotting](#)
- [FB Live 11.30.16 Knotting & Wire](#)

- [Beads & Gems](#)
- [Pearls](#)
- [Gem Rondelles](#)
- [Briolettes](#)

- [Stringing Materials](#)
- [Griffin Silk](#)

- [Components](#)
- [Clasps](#)
- [Thread Findings](#)