

# Looking for something unique?

By Helena Touhey  
Daily News staff

The winter holiday season is a time most people associate with crafts and small presents. This year, when purchasing items for friends and family, consider Newport County's many artists as an excellent source for one-of-a-kind gifts.

Potter Denise Caron Wilkey has a shop by her studio in Portsmouth where she sells a variety of her own functional ware dipped in unique glazes, as well as work by other local artists.

Wilkey said her most popular items are her serving dishes and pie plates, which, as are all of her products, lead and barium free, as well as dishwasher and oven safe. A small plate costs \$25, and a large plate goes for \$55.

She has an assortment of breadbaskets that double as fruit bowls and cost \$45. Her wall vases (\$22) are also great gifts, especially for people with pets and young children who are accident prone. And for the manly man, there is a giant soup mug (\$16).

In addition to ceramic items, Wilkey also melts down recycled glass bottles that can then be used as serving trays or spoon rests.

These come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and range in price from \$10 to \$10.

Complementing Wilkey's glass bottles is stained glass work by Debra Church Young of Portsmouth. Young's pieces come in many shapes, sizes, colors and themes and range from \$20 to \$150.

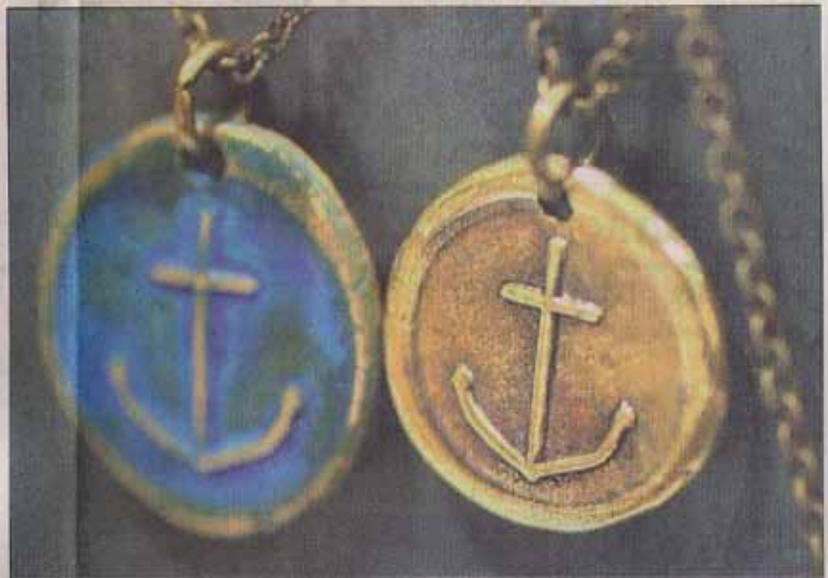
Another popular item is handmade soap by Karen E. Johnson of Portsmouth, owner of Solstice Soapworks, which specializes in earth friendly soap products. Her bars come in many scents, ranging from goat milk with honey lavender to ginger pear and blue cornmeal to



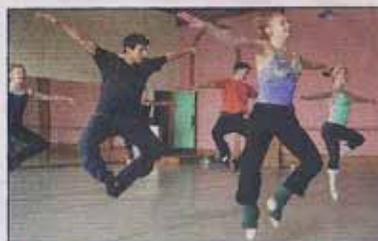
GIFTS OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

A holiday sea glass wreath by Sue Gray.

David Hansen  
Daily News staff



Above: Bronze anchor charms made from antique wax seals by Sue Gray of Newport.



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# GIFTS *of* CRAFTSMANSHIP



**Above:** Copper wall art by artist Teresa Mowery of Tiverton.

**Left:** Copper ornament made by Teresa Mowery. The ornaments are sold at Newport Scrimshander at 14 Bowen's Wharf. Mowery's products are available online at [www.patina-studio.com](http://www.patina-studio.com).

Jacqueline Marque ♦ Daily News staff photos

## Unique

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fresh linen with blueberry seed. The bars cost \$7 individually and \$18 for a group of three.

Wilkey's shop, DC Stoneware Gallery, is located at 3140 East Main Road and is open Wednesdays through Sundays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Violeta Moffat of Middletown offers unique bags created from soda bottle tabs woven with fabric strips. The bags come in a variety of colors, shapes and sizes and, as she says, "save the earth a day longer while keeping fashion stronger."

Moffat, who has lived on Aquidneck Island for four years with her husband, who is in the Navy, began making recyclable bags 2½ years ago and said her most popular item last year was a cell phone holder (\$30). Another popular item is a wristlet (also \$30).

Moffat sells her designs at Green Envy in Newport, an eco-boutique located in the Brick Market Place at 223 Goddard Row.

Newport artist Sue Gray is a craftswoman who dabbles in antique wax seals and recycled sea glass.

Gray collects old-fashioned wax seals, with both letters and symbols, which she uses as stamps for jewelry making. She uses bronze and brass surfaces, as well as fine silver.

A popular design is the hope anchor, the "symbol of Rhode Island." After stamping the design into bronze, Gray then patinas the base, giving the charm a blue-green finish. The bronze necklaces cost \$35, with the price increasing according to size. Silver pieces cost more.

Gray also is known for her holiday sea glass wreaths. The base of the wreath is made from 100 percent sea glass, with added "red berries" made from recycled glass beads Gray imports from Africa. While a holiday favorite, Gray said these wreaths are popular all year round. They

cost \$200.

While Gray attends many local craft fairs, the best way to view and purchase her items is at [suegrayglass.com](http://suegrayglass.com).

Another artist working with bronze, copper and patinas is Teresa Mowery of Tiverton.

Around the holidays, her top-selling item is a copper and brass ornament with an imprint of a compass rose and a Wendell Holms quote that costs \$16 and is perfect for those who love sailing and all things nautical. Mowery sells the ornaments at Newport Scrimshander, 14 Bowen's Wharf, Newport.

She also makes copper panels engraved with a variety of designs, such as trees and shells that range in size and cost \$50 to \$75. Mowery applies a patina to the surface using salts to bring out the natural colors of the copper as it ages.

These artists are just a small representation of the many local crafters in Newport County who form a unique network worth navigating this holiday season.