



## May 12, 2020 Transcript

*Ellen Matis of Hello Social Co. interviews Kathleen Schnell of Cottage Glassworks*

**Ellen:** Hey, everyone, and welcome to the next episode of the Wilds Are Working series. My name is Ellen Matis and I'm here today interviewing on behalf of the PA Wilds Center for the series. I'm here with Kathleen Schnell. She is from Cottage Glassworks, and she's going to share with us today how their organization is pivoting among these uncharted times. So welcome, Kathleen.

**Kathleen:** Welcome. Thank you so much. It's good to meet you. Good to be on board here.

**Ellen:** Yeah, absolutely. Just to get started, tell us a little bit about Cottage Glassworks.

**Kathleen:** Well, Cottage Glassworks began in January of 2015. I have a little studio on my property and I teach classes. I create artwork and I do custom work. And I've worked in glass since nineteen eighty one, so I'm thrilled to be able to share it with everyone.

**Ellen:** Great. And where is it located?

**Kathleen:** We're just outside Wellsboro, right off Route 6, near mile marker 214.

**Ellen:** Perfect. So why, why the PA Wilds. Why did you decide to start the business here?

**Kathleen:** Yeah, well my husband's job brought us to the PA Wilds at the very end of 2013, and I was thrilled to find out what an artisan community it was. Being so close to Corning... but just having a lot of artisans in the area. I always wanted this property to be a venue for us to be able to start the business. So we were thrilled.

**Ellen: Right. And obviously, as you know, as the situation with COVID-19 has evolved. Business owners are trying to find new ways to do business. How is your business model changed a bit as a result of this?**

**Kathleen:** Right now, like in the interim, I'm posting on social media, Facebook, Instagram and sharing some of the work that I'm doing. Not knowing where the projects are going to go based on this medical virus. So we're just kind of seeing where we'll go, but we're hoping that things will turn around and hopefully we'll be able to work more and get people into the shop for classes. But proximity wise, we're just not sure.

**Ellen: Sure. And I think, you know, you mentioned before this series started that you're kind of using your website and your social media a little bit more. How are you doing that?**

**Kathleen:** Well, I have done some ... demonstrations. And that's been a little challenging. But I am using Instagram more. And I would like to put on some instructional videos because not many people know or not a lot of people know what fused glass is and they don't think that they can do it. So I think it would be fun, even without the shop, to be able to share what it is and how fun it is to create glass.

**Ellen: Sure, and if there's any time to create or learn how to create something new, I think it's now. Right?**

**Kathleen:** Right! And I really have been studying and learning new techniques because glass, especially fusing, is growing all the time with new procedures and new techniques. So it's great.

**Ellen: Yeah, sure. And would you say that social media then is one of the ways that you're staying in touch with customers, or are you finding that there's other ways you're doing that?**

**Kathleen:** Yes, I've had local people find things on my website and we do offer pickup, local pickup. So that makes it easier that things don't have to be mailed. But, yes, it's nice that they can see something and don't have to browse in the shop.

**Ellen: So as you kind of have gone through this change, are there are there any programs or resources, maybe some organizations that you found helpful along the way?**

**Kathleen:** Yeah, well, first of all, PA Wilds is a great supporter of local businesses and artisans. I was fortunate enough to be involved in the PACE program that ... just ended. And it was a great program for, again, small businesses and artisans. It really, really is helpful. Our local visitors bureau and the Route 6 Alliance have been great in networking and, you know, highlighting artisans and businesses around the area to help bring in more business.

**Ellen:** And obviously, the situation has not been ideal for small businesses. But would you say that there are any silver linings for you?

**Kathleen:** I have to go back to my faith. I mean, I feel like, you know, we're not in control of this and God is. It gives us that reliance to kind of sit back, do everything that we can, but know he's in charge and see where we're going with it.

**Ellen:** Is there any inspiration that you would want to share or things that have helped keep you really going in addition to your faith?

**Kathleen:** I have really, really enjoyed seeing the outpouring of the community in this area. We are a tight-knit community and they're supporting the children that we're going to school with meals, families that are home schooling, of course, the health care workers and the graduating seniors. So it's wonderful to see the outpouring of support in this area. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

**Ellen:** Well, Kathleen, thanks again so much for your time. For those of you watching this Q&A and the others that will be live throughout the week, and as long as we can keep these going, you can find information on how to support small businesses in the PA Wilds by visiting [WildsCoPA.org](http://WildsCoPA.org) and you can also find information there if you're a business owner that would like to share your own story. So thank you, Kathleen, for coming on. And to those of you watching, well, we'll see you next time!