

# Water Comes to Hauntsville



One of the great joys of constructing villages is the opportunity to work with such talented (scary, spooky, and temperamental) individuals as Mistress Juniper. While this witch can create the waters of Hauntsville with a mere shake of her broom, I am a bit slower. Please note this slowness is entirely my fault, I'm just not a wizard as Mistress Juniper constantly reminds me. Please allow me to demonstrate what I have learned under Juniper's kind instruction.

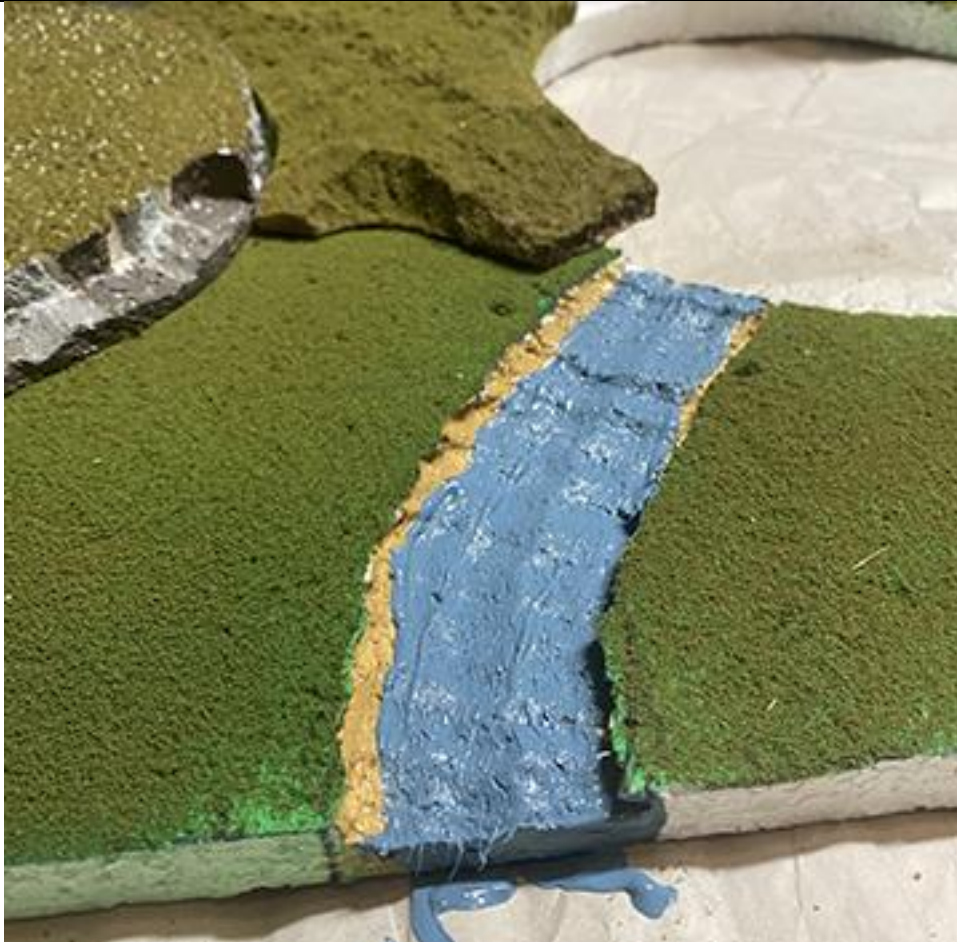
Water Making Materials

My water is made from simple caulking made for Tub and Tile by GE. I always use the clear caulk. I use GE caulk because some brands of caulking will melt Styrofoam the instant it is applied. This GE caulk does not melt the foam. You will also need a caulking gun and a cheap throw away putty knife to spread the caulk.



In my previous article on Landscaping (also under the guidance of Mistress Juniper) I demonstrated how I applied grass to the landscape and some of the painting details as well. In the image below you will see the grass (turf) has been applied and the river bed has been cut into the Styrofoam using my Hotwire Sculpting tool. The river bed and the bank has been painted and is now ready to add the water (caulking)





After loading the caulk tube into the caulking gun I will apply a bit of caulk directly onto the river bed as shown below. Then using the putty knife I spread the caulk and cover the banks and river bed.



I use the putty knife to spread the silicone along the river bed. As shown below the river will “flow” from the top toward the bottom of the image. Thus, when spreading the silicone I always stroke the silicone in the direction I want the water to flow. In this instance I wanted the water to look a little rough and wild so while spreading the silicone I lift the putty knife to add peaks to the water. Sometimes I used the entire width of the putty knife, other times just a corner. It is best to let the silicone set up for a couple of minutes as this will make it a bit stiffer and allow for more detail to show in the water. I kept the silicone thicker in the center of the river and along the edges I left it quite thin. This is where you can use your creative skills to make the water take on the appearance you desire.



As noted in previous articles I like to have different levels in the display. This river section is on the highest level. There is a two inch drop from this level to the next level “down river”. Thus I needed to create a cascade so the water could fall from this level to the next. How I made the cascade follows.

### **THE CASCADE**

I used my Hot Knife and a 2 inch piece of Styrofoam to create the cascade. In the image below note how I cut a low section where the water would flow over



the cascade and painted that part blue. The purple foam areas on the sides were carved a bit more rugged as they would represent the land on both sides of the cascade.



After the blue paint for the river dried, I used scraps of newspaper held in place with floral pins to mask the water. In this way when I sprayed the land areas with the green paint I use to affix the turf material the water would not catch any of the overspray.



Next I added the grass (Woodland Scenics turf) to the land portions of the cascade. The rough cutting I did with the hot knife allowed the land remain rugged when the turf was

added. The steps for adding the turf were described in the previous article on landscaping. Basically I just spray painted the land areas and poured the turf over the Styrofoam while the paint was still wet.



Finally, I added the silicone to create the water for the cascade. Making the water for the cascade did require a bit of doing. I wanted the cascade to have the look of flowing into the pool below the cascade itself. To accomplish this I placed a piece of glass under the cascade as shown in the image below. Before placing the cascade on top of the glass I took a rag and wiped a bit of WD-40 on the surface of the glass. Then I applied the silicone in the same manner as I did for the river described above. I used the putty knife to create the water splashing over the cascade by lifting the putty knife and dragging the silicone into peaks of water as can be seen below. This is easier to do when the silicone is getting stiff and drying. Finally, I dragged and spread a thin layer of silicone coming from the base of the cascade and out on to the glass. Then I waited for the silicone to partially dry. I used a flat knife blade to slide under the silicone and cut it free from the glass. The WD-40 helped to keep the silicone from sticking to the glass and made it easier separate from the glass. Then I just waited for the silicone to completely dry.



In the image below you can see both the river we made earlier and the cascade as it flows into the water pool as its base. I think it has a rather realistic look to it and I have Mistress Juniper to thank for making this work out.





### **The Flat Pond**

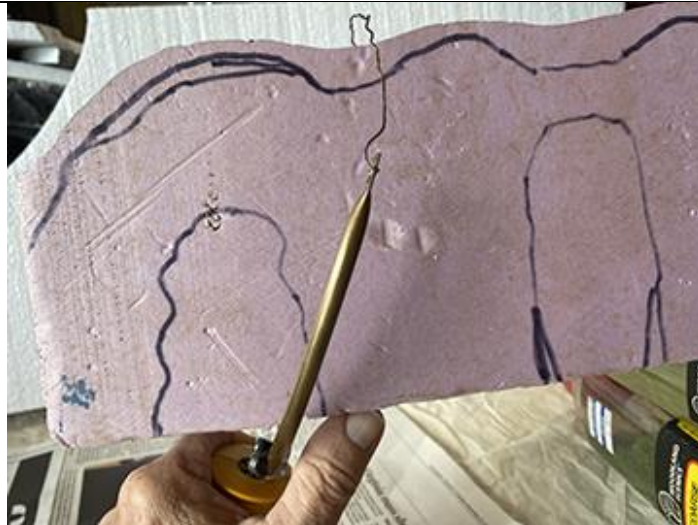
Directly below the cascade will be the riverside glen of the Frog Witch. The pond will have lily pads where the former princes that have been turned into frogs will live. The pond itself was painted blue and then covered in silicone after the paint dried. I applied several beads of silicone across the pond and then spread them using the putty knife. I spread the silicone working from the place where the cascade would enter the pond down to the end where the waterfall that has not yet been made will be placed. To obtain the texture shown on the pond surface I just lifted the blade of the putty knife at the end of each stroke to provide a ripple on the water surface.





### **Making the Lower Falls to Joe's Swamp**

The Lower Falls forms the connection between the Frog Pond and Joe's Swamp. I used a 2 inch thick piece of Styrofoam carved with my HOTWIRE SCULPTING TOOL to make the rock background for the falls. The image below shows the outline of the falls being cut. The two outlined areas along the bottom edge form what will be an entrance way to the cave where Joe lives and also where the water from the falls will flow down the rock.



Once the falls was rough cut I used the Hot Wire Sculpting tool to turn the face of the falls into a rocky surface and then spray painted the entire piece.



Once the lower falls was cut out and sculpted and painted I started applying the silicone to the falls. In the same manner as used for the cascade I applied silicone to the spot where the falls would tumble over the rock at the top of the falls. As the silicone began to get stiff I used the tip of the putty knife to make a few strands of water to blend into the lower falls. (see below)





The reason for the two holes in the waterfall is because I want to back light the falls with a blue light. The lefthand hole will be an entrance to Joe's cave while the hole on the right will be the actual falls. To make the falling water without attaching it to Styrofoam I made the water on a piece of glass in the same manner as I created the cascade.. After measuring the falls to determine the correct size and shape I drew the falls' shape on a piece of paper using a Sharpie pen. Then I placed a piece of glass on top of the drawing. In this way I would be able to see exactly the shape and size of the water I would need for the falls.



I took a paper towel, sprayed with WD-40, to wipe the surface of the glass with a coating of WD-40 to help keep the silicone from sticking to the glass. I then placed some silicone on the glass and used the putty knife to stroke, lift and shape the silicone into the falls. When the silicone began to set up and get hard I used a knife blade to slowly peel the silicone from the glass. This is a messy process because of the thickness of the silicone, so just go slow and be careful. I used a floral pin to hang the silicone in the air until it finished drying. Below you can see the finished water against a black background so you can see the detail in the water.



The surface of the Frog Witch pond I painted blue so the lily pads would stand out. The water below the waterfall we just made will fall into a dark and spooky swamp with alligators and swamp creatures roaming about. Therefore I painted Joe's swamp light green with hints of brown. I then applied the silicone in the same manner as I did the frog pond but this time I kept the silicone mostly free from ripples in the water. (see below)





Next I used the Hot Wire Sculpting tool to make a small rocky beach at the base of the falls.



I then painted the beach Styrofoam and poured brown Woodland Scenics Fine Ballast over the wet paint. This created the appearance of either a sandy beach or a beach covered with pebbles. When the display is finally set up I'll place two or three small stones on the beach to look like they have fallen from the rocky face of the falls.





Finally, using a piece of glass I used silicone to make a small cascade to take the runoff water from Joe's Swamp into the channel that will run under the covered bridge I showed in a previous article. The channel will run to the lighthouse that be will on the far right edge of the display. The final cascade is shown below.



Joe's assembled swamp is shown below.





Now that we have created the waterway to go with the Witches' Glen the center portion of the village is complete and ready for set up. The following images will show this entire landscaped section. There are 4 basic parts and when assembled they are 39 inches from back to front. I have not included any houses for these pictures since all the houses are in North Carolina and the Styrofoam was all designed and cut and painted in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. All is now ready for transport the North Carolina.

Starting from the back we have the set up for the Kettle Witch House and the main waterfall that will have real water tumbling over the falls.



The next section will be the pond of the Frog Witch and her lily pads.





The final section is the waterfall and Joe's Swamp. At the bottom of this section is the styrofoam apron that runs across the entire front edge of the display. The gray rocks are the actually front edge of the entire display.



Shown below is a view taken with Broom Cam, small video camera attached to Circe's broom handle as she flies over the village.





The covered bridge will be at the end of the black cobble stone road at the bottom right and the Aurora with lights will sit behind the gray mountain at the back.

I hope you learned a bit about making water for village displays and perhaps you will give it a try in your own displays. In the next article we will be making cobble stone roads and constructing platforms for supporting the Witches's pub and Flight school.

As always, if you have questions please contact me at [treadwl@comcast.net](mailto:treadwl@comcast.net)



Halloween is just over 100 days away.  
Plenty of time to construct a Village!!