

Studio Newsletter

September 20, 2009

Volume 4, Issue 9

Special points of interest:

- Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, Oct 1, at 7:00 p.m. in the Studio
- Barb Throne was the September mystery potter
- The studio's display case has been updated

Contest of the Month ~ September Meeting

Five potters at the September meeting correctly guessed the identity of the Mystery Potter. Barbara Baker was the lucky person to win the draw from these five and won the Sherrill Mud Tools cut-off wire. The Mystery Potter was Barb Throne, who nearly electrocuted herself changing light bulbs on the back porch.



September Meeting Minutes ~ Barbara Baker

Barbara Throne brought the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

President's Report:

- Last month's minutes were approved as published
- The cone 6 reduction firing (in the Randy Brodnax kiln) did not turn out as expected. Some of the pieces did not reach cone 6 temperature.
- Do not throw away pieces that are chipped or are not up to your expectations. Instead, use them to test new glazes.
- Barbara Throne and Bobby Darr replaced the element in kiln #2 and the relay in kiln #1. Wayne replaced a fuse in the electrical outlet.

Secretary's Report:

- Our petty cash fund has a balance of \$117.71.
- Barbara Baker will purchase some metal cans for the raku firing and a bin to store plastic.

Publicity Report:

The display case in the main clubhouse has been updated with the pieces from the mini show.

Pottery in the Park (PIP):

- Those present at the September meeting stamped and labeled 1300 postcards.
- Sharon has e-mailed a .jpeg file of the postcard. Please use it to send to all your e-mail/Facebook buddies.
- We have 12 people signed up so far for PIP volunteers; 4 for the newbie

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September Meeting Minutes (cont'd)

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table and 8 for the pavilions.

- Kay needs help sending out news releases for PIP.
- We'll have a studio clean-up day Saturday, October 3, starting at noon.
- Meet at the studio Friday night, October 9, to bring in tables and shelving, help newbies with pricing, and general things that need to be done to get ready for the big day.
- Volunteer positions—
 - Raku Yard — 2 people per shift
 - Raku Glaze Table — 2 people per shift
 - Demos — Wheel and Hand Building
 - Studio Table
 - Recruit friends to help
 - Hang up flyers, and post signs the night before the event.

Pot Draw:

We used two of Don Hudnall's bowls for the pot draw since Orbry could not attend the meeting. Orbry will bring a piece for the October meeting's pot draw.

Test Tiles by Linda Arbuckle; Ref *Arbuckle CERAMICS Handouts and Resources*; web site: http://lindaarbuckle.com/arbuckle_handouts.html

Making accurate glaze tests is a good investment of time. You learn how materials work, and have a visual record for future use. There are many ways to make test tiles: thrown rings with a flange, cut into sections (these take up more room for storage or mounting, but are self-standing in the kiln), extruded tiles (a die is made to extrude a tile or self-standing shape), or slab tiles. Using slip on the test tiles gives you more information than using your clay body alone. Due to the interaction of fluxes and colorants, not all clear glazes, for example, are alike, and using the glaze over a range of slip colors helps you find the best glaze for your use.

Make test tiles NOW for future use! It's a good idea to have a stock of bisqued tiles on hand for glaze testing. Use the appropriate clay body. A standard size of 2" x 4" is handy. Make horizontal stripes of shop slips, leaving a space or spaces to view the glaze result over bare clay, too. If you don't use shop slips, it helps to label slip colors. Put the shop leatherhard slips on in the same order each time. Alphabetical is convenient. Note in your sketch book which slips you used. Put an

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Studio Calendar

- October—Finalize duties for PIP
- 10/3—Studio Clean-Up, noon to 3:00
- 10/10—PIP set up starts at 8:00 am
- 10/11 PIP set up starts at 9:00 am
- November—TBA
- December—Christmas Party

Test Tiles by Linda Arbuckle (cont'd)

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incised line 3" from the bottom of the tile. This will be where the glaze stops, making a definite gauge of how runny your test glaze is. It is helpful to make a hole for mounting/hanging test tiles. Remember, the holes shrink during drying and firing, and if you want to mount these on a nail later, you have to make them bigger than the desired result to allow for shrinkage. Make an incised texture to test for glazes that break or pool (A fork is handy for this. Don't use a pin tool: lines are too small.).

Use iron oxide and water with a small brush to label the glaze recipe on the back of the tile. *So often* someone finds a tile interesting and owner can't locate the recipe notebook. **PUT THE GLAZE INFORMATION ON THE BACK OF THE TILE!** If you are firing in a gas kiln in reduction, it is very helpful to have 2 tiles in the kiln, one top and one toward the bottom to give you a better gauge of optimum heat and reduction, which usually vary some in gas firing. Mark the tiles Top and Bottom. After you have done this, wax the tile back and the bottom 1/4 inch up to the incised line.

If you plan to apply the glaze to your pots by dipping, dip your tile. Dip the entire tile. Wait a moment until all the liquid dries. Dip the right half a second time. If you have insufficient glaze to dip, brush. This will give you regular/thick application tests, and will show how much the glaze moves in firing.

Fire the tiles upright, propped against a brick!!! You will need to know if the glaze pools, striates, mottles, or is runny. If you leave tiles for someone else to get in their kiln, make sure you leave a note specifying upright firing. Firing the glaze flat will only give you partial information (i.e., what the glaze looks like on flat tiles, not on vertical surfaces).

Glaze testing is a great adventure! Every kiln should have a test or two in it!



A GREAT EVENT TO PUT ON YOUR SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER by Carole Standridge Photographs by Kay Bernier

If you never do anything else to promote your clay experience, you **MUST** schedule time to attend the Texas Clay Festival in Gruene (pronounced "green), Texas (about 234 miles from Fort Worth) on October 24-25. It is a two-day event that cannot be adequately described with words – you just need to **experience** it. It's akin to a gigantic smorgasbord of potters, pottery and demonstrations. You probably have heard someone mention it, but did not give it a lot of thought. Think again. You'll not regret going.



Since this event was established - some 17 years ago - every time I heard a report about how wonderful it is, I have wanted to attend, but some thing or another always kept me from going. Last year I had determined to go no matter what and Barbara Baker asked if I wanted to join her and Kay Bernier instead of driving down on my own. I jumped at the chance, and I'll try never to miss another one.

Our trip was just amazing fun from the time we left Barbara's house on Friday about 2 PM until we returned on late Sunday evening. We stopped in Salado (about 135 miles from Fort Worth) because I mentioned there were wonderful pottery shops there. Well, the only mistake we made was getting there at that time of the day because they roll up the sidewalks at 5 PM, and we had not seen all of it yet; in fact, we had to scurry through the remainder of the store we were in very reluctantly. This year we plan on being a bit smarter by leaving Barbara's house around 10 AM thereby arriving in Salado about noon; take in all the shops we can (especially the wonderful Christmas store that is just packed with specialty items and decorated trees of every shape, color, size), then eat at the famous Stagecoach Inn. We will arrive at our hotel in New Braunfels late evening. We will stay Friday night and Saturday, returning on Sunday (making the absolute must stop at the bakery in West, Texas to bring home some kolache and other goodies). We'll be up early each morning to breakfast and then on to Gruene to check out the exhibits a bit before going to the first demonstration of the day.

Have we whetted your appetite yet! Hope so...keep reading.

So, if any of you want to caravan down with us, let us know and we'll show you the ropes – or meet up with you on Saturday or Sunday morning. Be sure to take plenty of film (or digital camera), several pencils, a notebook and wear good walking shoes. There are many very good restaurants in the area, and lunch or dinner at The Gristmill is another must - great food, great service and plenty of ambiance. And, it's a short walk from the festival grounds.

For more information take time to go to the festival's website: www.texasclayfestival.com. You will find links to select. Click on Artist to learn about each exhibitor; click on Demos for the schedule; click on Gallery to see a slideshow of exhibits from years past.



You will notice that many of the artists in our last two summer workshops at the Studio will be exhibitors/demonstrators; but also note that not all the exhibitors will do a demonstration, so make time to visit all the booths. And, it's important that you schedule your timing very carefully so that you can see as many of the demonstrations as possible.

There are two locations having demos at the same time for one hour, and the other two locations start one half hour later. We found that to get the maximum coverage and see as many demonstrations as possible that the three of us needed to split up and go to different demos rather than attending the same one - then compare notes later. It sounds complicated, but you soon learn the ropes.

Hope to run into all of you there, as that is also a very fun part – seeing our pottery friends as well as making new ones.

So. Make your plans to go for one day or both days, and the extra day for other sightseeing if possible. If you only go for one day it will be worth the drive. **AND**, be sure to ask Barbara Throne how to **crash** the artists' Sunday morning breakfast and church service.



Event Notices

LMRA Studio's Pottery in the Park, Oct 10—11. This will be the 8th annual pottery sale featuring the work of over 20 amateur and professional potters at the Lockheed Martin Recreation Area, 3400 Bryant Irvin Road, Fort Worth. Admission is free. The studio potters will sell bisque pottery for visitors to glaze for the raku firings that are done all day on both days of the sale. For details see page 5 and visit the Potters Studio web site: <http://lmrapotterystudio.com/>

Texas Clay Festival, Oct 24—25. Admission is free to all festival events. The 17th annual Texas Clay Festival will

be held in the Gruene Historical District of New Braunfels featuring the work of over 60 Texas potters and clay artists. This annual festival offers the opportunity to view and purchase a wide variety of pottery ranging from traditional to sculptural created by the top clay artists in the state. Take this unique opportunity to watch and learn from the demonstrations that are held in four tents throughout both days. There is something for everyone from forming on the potters wheel to hand-building to raku firing. Visit Texas Clay Festival's web site for details: <http://texasclayfestival.com/home.html>

Coming Events

- LMRA Pottery in the Park
- Texas Clay Festival in Gruene



Texas Clay Festival 2008



