

# Fired Up Studios™

## Member Newsletter

Spring 2009

### Beth's Been Thinking...

Our goal has always been for our members and customers to leave Fired Up Studios in a better mood than when they arrived. We hope to make Fired Up Studios a fun and creative place that stands out from other ceramics and art centers in the Twin Cities. To that end we are trying some new ideas, and we hope that you find them both fun and useful.

#### FREE Workshop in February:

We want our members to have the opportunity to advance their clay skills in a manner that is both fun and informative. So, we are offering a FREE Workshop for our members run by Ernest Miller. He will be available to answer your questions about pottery on the following days and times:

- Saturday, Feb 07: 1 – 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, Feb 10: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Feb 17: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Feb 24: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

To participate in the workshop you must be a member of Fired Up Studios (you can be either a Studio or Firing member). All you need to do is show and bring your questions. You can come to all four sessions or just drop in for part of one. Ernest will be available to:

- Give you advice
- Critique your work
- Demonstrate new techniques
- Get tips on working with porcelain
- Answer questions about glazing
- Assign projects

Ernest Miller is a professional potter with over 10 years of experience, who teaches for Fired Up Studios and Minnetonka Center for the Arts. As a professional potter,

he specializes in throwing large, porcelain vessels. He also has expertise in slab and coil construction. You can find out more about Ernest and his work on his website: [www.ernestmiller.com](http://www.ernestmiller.com).

#### Earn a FREE Square of Firing in March:

Beth has teamed up with Bev's Wine Bar to provide you with an opportunity to save money on your firing charges. If you spend \$20 or more at Bev's during the month of March, you will receive 1 square foot of firing for FREE. This offer is good for the month of March only, and you must bring in your receipts to receive it.

Bev's Wine Bar is located at 250 Third Ave N in the warehouse district of Minneapolis, MN. With a wide selection of drinks including draft beers and wine, Bev's is a great spot to relax for Happy Hour or an after dinner drink.

#### New Contest for April and May:

We are trying to find creative ways to promote our gallery and to get our membership involved in helping to spread the word. We will be creating a coupon for \$5 off any gallery purchase made during April and May. All you need to do is forward the coupon to your friends and family, and ask them to put your name in the space provided so that you receive credit for the sale when it is used. The member who has the most coupons returned (minimum of 4 coupons) will get a \$50 credit on their account.

Please make sure that we have a current email address for you so that we can send you the coupon and a sample email for you to forward.

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### Holiday Sales Recap

Gallery sales were up slightly in November (about 5%), but bad weather for our Holiday Preview Party kept people away. Compared to 2007, the Friday evening event was down 45%. We still managed to raise enough money in our Silent Auction to buy a canoe for the Friends of the St. Croix River Canoes on Wheels program. December sales continued to be down (about 14%).

### Upcoming Holidays

Fired Up Studios Office and Gallery will be closed on Sunday, April 12 for Easter. We will also be closed on Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day. The glaze firing for the week of Memorial Day will be moved back one day to accommodate the office closure. Please check our website for the firing schedule.

## Gallery Themes

Even if you don't normally participate in our gallery, you are welcome to submit pieces for our monthly display themes.

The upcoming gallery display themes are:

- February: Valentine's Day inspired (red & white work) – Set-up by 02/05/09
- March: Pitchers and Pouring Vessels – Set-up by 03/05/09
- April: Blue Glazes – Set-up by 04/02/09
- May: Vases – Set-up by 05/07/09

You can also use this list of upcoming themes if you need an idea of what to make or an excuse to experiment and try something new.

## Gallery Pricing

We will do our best to identify the artist for any work sold, but we cannot promise that we will know who you are if there is no mark. Also, when people buy from the clearance shelves after hours, they just leave us the stickers. We don't see those pots and have no way of knowing who they belong to if there is no mark on the price tag.

Please make sure all your price stickers are clearly marked with your initials or some other identifying mark, and make sure to file a sample sticker with us for reference. Any work sold that does not have a clearly marked price sticker will become the property of Fired Up Studios.

## New Firing Charges

We are making a change to our policy regarding small "stuffers" (items less than 3" in their largest dimension). In small amounts these tiny items are great for filling in around pieces in the kiln. In larger quantities they become very time consuming to load.

**Effective Immediately:** We will charge extra if you have more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a square per firing of stuffers. We will charge \$1 per  $\frac{1}{4}$  square over the first  $\frac{1}{4}$  square of stuffers in addition to the regular square foot cost. For example, if you had  $\frac{1}{2}$  square of just stuffers the charge would be \$7 (\$6 for the  $\frac{1}{2}$  square + \$1 for the  $\frac{1}{4}$  square of stuffers). A full square of stuffers would be \$15 (\$12 per square + \$3 for a full square of stuffers).

All stuffers **MUST** be placed on the shelf (not on a wareboard or in a box). You can avoid the extra charge by placing the stuffers on a tray to be loaded as a single unit. Remember that trays are one use only items, must be bisque fired first, and are subject to extra charges if they are over 12" in size.

## Show Planning

We know that spring still feels like a long way off, but as you are planning for spring and summer sales events and shows, please make sure to allow enough time to get work through the kiln. Plan ahead and get your work done early.

And while you are planning, let us know your show schedule. We would love to add it to the calendar on our website.

## Studio Space Available

We currently have two shared studio spaces available. One space is with JoAnn Jacobs and is located on the main hallway, and the other is with Cara Hofreiter along the wall by the windows.

Shared studio spaces are \$175 per month. If you are interested, please let us know as soon as possible. They are available on a first come, first served basis.

If you are interested in a full studio space, please talk to us so we can make the necessary arrangements.

## Beyond Beginner Pottery Class

Our next session of Beyond Beginner Pottery will start Thursday, March 26. The last day to register for the class is, March 19. The class will once again be taught by Steve Hemingway and will meet each week for eight weeks on Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. Don't forget that Fired Up members receive a discount when taking the class. Members pay only \$125 instead of the \$230 cost for non-members.

## Date Night Becomes Clay Date

We are changing the name of our Date Night events to Clay Date. As we continue to review and modify these events to better meet our customers' expectations, they have changed from a romantic evening for two into a one night introduction to pottery class. We are hoping that the new name will better reflect the actual experience and appeal to a wider audience.

## Get listed on our website

Let us know about your website and upcoming events. We would love to have your shows listed on our website calendar and provide a link in our members section back to your website. If you are already listed on our site, now is a great time to update your information with a new photo, and to make sure that our contact information for you is current. Just send an email to [webmaster@firedupstudios.com](mailto:webmaster@firedupstudios.com) with your information and we will make sure it gets posted.

## Reminder: Don't Touch

We would like to remind our members not to touch other people's work. No one every breaks someone else's work on purpose, and accidents can be minimized by refraining from touching or picking up work that is not yours.

This is especially true of fragile green and bisque work. There is no reason why you should be touching someone else's work on the greenware rack. If there is not enough room to put your work on the racks, please talk to the person on duty to make room.

We understand that accidents can still happen. If you accidentally break something, let us know so we can call the member whose work was broken and minimize their distress. We promise not to tell them who did it.

## It's not easy being Green

We are continuing to look at ways to be more green in the office and studio. This includes looking at electronic options to cut down our paper usage. We will keep you informed as we find new solutions.

## Green tips

Spring is coming (no really, it will be here before you know it) and we know that many of our members are also avid gardeners. So this newsletters' green tips are for all you gardeners.

**Gardening without poison** – many successful gardeners create beautiful flowerbeds and productive vegetable plots without resorting to pesticides. Their tactics for suppressing pests include releasing predator insects, using mechanical methods like water sprays to knock of aphids and mites, setting sticky traps for whiteflies, and more. Lots of chemical-free solutions to pest problems are available at [www.gardensalive.com](http://www.gardensalive.com).

**Weedkillers** – there's no need to resort to commercial herbicides to get rid of weeds awakened by warmer spring weather. Squirt them with lemon juice or vinegar, or scald them with boiling water. (The toughest ones may need two applications.)