

# KILN' TIME



SEPTEMBER 2022

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

## HAVE YOU REJOINED CAG?

- CAG membership is on an annual basis from August 1 to July 30.
- Annual dues are prorated if you join in subsequent quarters.
- You can join or renew your membership online using a credit card.

<https://wcclayartsguild.com/membership>

or scan this QR code



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE!

September Sale Wrap-up  
Page 2

How to Be Naked  
When You Raku!  
Page 3

• CAG's Charity Projects  
Page 4

Brandon Lipe at the Wheel  
Page 5

A Tribute to Jean Calicura  
Page 6

## MEET OUR NEW STUDIO MANAGER ~ BRANDON LIPE

*Interviewed by Mary Leigh Miller*



I asked our new studio manager, Brandon Lipe to tell us a little bit about himself and his work. Brandon was born in North Dakota, but grew up mostly down by Palm Springs. "I started out going to school for graphic design and learned that it was not for me," he said. "So when I started skipping graphic design to go to ceramics open studio, I figured it was time to make the switch." After attending Cal State Fullerton for undergrad, he went on to Edinboro University of Pennsylvania for his masters in ceramics. Brandon was working at a community arts ceramic studio, very similar to here, in Roswell, Georgia when he decided to apply for the position here.

I asked him what excites him most about working in clay? "I like the endless possibilities that you can produce with your hands and imagination," he told me. "I am also really into atmospheric firing and the unpredictabilities that it brings." He went on to say that he makes mostly wheel thrown pots that he alters in some way to make them asymmetric.



What plans does Brandon have for our studio? "Currently we are working on a test tile wall to show all the possibilities with our current glazes," he says. Besides that, he is in the processes of getting a visiting artist for November and working on bringing back some of the fun things our studio did pre-pandemic. 🖐️

*Turn to page 5 to read about a recent Master Potter workshop that Brandon held in August.*

## MEMBERS of the BOARD

President: Pat Alger  
patalger08@gmail.com

Vice President  
Mary Ellen Brownell  
bbmebb@mac.com

Financial Officer:  
Bill Schaaf  
billschaaf13@comcast.net

Secretary: Julie Dandliker  
juhenders@yahoo.com

Membership: OPEN

Librarian: Millie Robinson  
millie.robinson@comcast.net

Social Media:  
Facebook & Instagram:  
Nicole Collins  
nicolelanguage@aol.com

Hospitality: OPEN

Monitors: Erika Goldstein  
ebgoldstein@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor:  
Mary Leigh Miller  
mlmiller602@gmail.com

Curator: Florence McAuley  
fbmcauley@comcast.net

Data Base Manager:  
Gary Guglielmino  
garyg@astound.net

Web Master: Brad Krebs  
bradkrebs@berkeley.edu CAG

Website: Kathy Nicholson  
kathy.nicholson310@gmail.com

Educational/Social Event Coord:  
OPEN

Community Outreach:  
Bette Sindzinski  
bettesindzinski@hotmail.com

Empty Bowls: Mona Moxley  
monamoxley@yahoo.com

Visit our website:  
**[www.wcclayartsguild.com](http://www.wcclayartsguild.com)**  
See the latest *Kiln' Times*  
in full color!



## Message from Our Prez ...

Welcome back to the studio for Fall Session! It has been so nice to have Open Studio "open" and it has been wonderful to see so many people that we have missed for the past few years. We are charging full steam ahead with a new Studio Manager (Welcome, Brandon) and had our first indoor Pottery Sale in the studio since 2019.

Our fall pottery sale was held on Labor Day weekend this year. Unfortunately it coincided with the last heat wave of the summer, but with an extra swamp cooler and lots of fans we were able to keep the studio comfortable for everyone. We had a wonderful mixture of functional and decorative pieces for sale and even had a large display of planters with a variety of succulents for customers to choose from. We had 19 members participate in the sale and we sold a total of 236 pieces. Total sales for the two days was just over \$5,000 and we brought in \$1,539 for CAG scholarships and new studio equipment.

Brandon and Karen have been working hard over the break to make all new glaze test samples that will be mounted on the wall in the glazing area. We also have a few new glazes, so check them out when you have a chance.



Stay tuned for more information about the upcoming Visting Artist event and other fun CAG activities.

*pat Alger*



*Photos by Nicole Collins*



# NAKED RAKU FIRING

by Kate Chenok

A couple of us recently attended the *Fast Fire Pot-tree* workshop led by Don Ellis and Randy Broadnax each summer at Sierra Nevada College. We were happy to be re-introduced to “naked raku” or “slip resist raku,” and look forward to doing more of these firings here.

This approach starts with a bisqued (and ideally terra sigged) pot. (Side note: Don and Randy recommend bisquing only to cone 08 for better results in alternative firings.) A very thick slip is applied (by dipping and pouring) to the outside of the pot.

The pot is then fired to 1450 degrees F, removed, placed in a metal can (like regular raku) with woodchips and newspaper and covered with a wet towel or lid.

The slip will begin to crack while the pot is in the kiln, the smoke produced from the woodchips and newspaper in the covered can will infuse the pot, going through the cracks to make a wonderful pattern on the surface of the pot. After the smoking process is completed, you remove any remaining slip using a rib or credit card, and you have a pot with great crackle patterns on the surface!

This article, from Ceramic Arts Network, describes the process in more detail.

<https://ceramicartsnetwork.org/daily/article/Pop-Goes-the-Slip-Charlie-and-Linda-Riggs-Naked-Raku-Technique>

The slip recipe used by Ellis and Broadnax in our workshop was:

500 grams Hawthorne Bond clay
300 grams EPK
200 grams Silica
<hr/> 1000 grams

There are similar recipes on Glazy ([www.glazy.org](http://www.glazy.org)) in the article by Charlie and Linda Riggs (above).

## Summary of steps:

1. Mix slip (to thick consistency, like cake batter)
2. Dip pot in water to wet it
3. Dip pot in slip
4. Without allowing it to dry, dip pot into slip again
5. If desired, pour additional slip around the rim and allow it to drip down the sides, shake to get it to make drip patterns if desired
6. Wipe bottom (extra slip will peel off, so doesn't need to be cleaned as well as it would if you were glazing it)
7. Place in kiln while wet, fire right away (e.g., don't wait for slip to dry)

After firing, the pot can be sprayed with clear enamel (like Rustoleum) – either gloss or semi matte – with UV protection, or rubbed with auto wax and buffed to a shine. 🙌

**Pot after being smoked, but before having slip removed.**



# Report on Two Charities that Clay Arts Guild Supports

## EMPTY BOWLS

by Mona Moxley



In July, we completed our Empty Bowls Project 2021-2022 for the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. This is a major fund raising event for the Food Bank, and helps to provide thousands of meals for the community. During the event, which is scheduled for 10/9 this year, folks choose a bowl and then it is filled with soup. If you are interested in attending, go to the Food Bank website to purchase a ticket.

Each year, our community makes and donates around 200 bowls for the project. This year, we completed 240 bowls!

Throughout the year, we will have several events for folks to come together for an afternoon to make and trim bowls. Watch for notices about the next Empty Bowls events. Additionally, many individuals donate bowls that they have made. If you have bowls you would like to donate, there is a box waiting in the library.

In addition to bowls, the Food Bank accepts items for auction during the event. We are also accepting auction items for next year! A special shout out to Erika Goldstein who made and donated many lovely items to the auction.



## MEALS ON WHEELS

by Barbara Moreland

If you would like to donate small pieces (*cups, mugs, trinket dishes, vases*) please place them on the shelf in the library marked Meals on Wheels.

**Cheers!**  
**Barbara Moreland**  
**MoW Coordinator**



Meet Ray, a faithful participant at a local senior living apartment. He enjoys the class and loves to WIN!

Eileen Stephens, the program coordinator, gives each donated ceramic piece loving care as she decoratively wraps and adds coordinating items such as a tea bag to a mug or a postage stamp to one of Erika's handmade cards.

Much thanks to all who donate pieces to this worthy program. The artwork is treasured by the participants.







# BRANDON LIPE DEMO

by Nicole Collins

On August 17 afternoon, many of us enjoyed a wonderful demo by our new studio manager Brandon Lipe. Brandon is a natural teacher: thorough, organized, funny and encouraging.

He made three cups, two mugs, a bowl, and a lidded form. Starting with classic shapes, he went on to alter them using a variety of techniques and tools. The resulting forms are fluid, pillowy and filled with movement.

His goal is to create shapes that allow the glaze and/or wood ash to move, flow and pool.

This was the first Master Potter's Workshop in a long time, but truly a memorable one. A great perk, open and free to all CAG members. 🙌



## Special Mini Workshops Offered at the End of This Quarter

### POURING VESSELS

November 28 - December 12  
Three Mondays – noon-4 pm  
Ann Henderson

### BASICS of ATMOSPHERIC KILN FIRING

December 2 - 16  
Three Fridays – noon-3 pm  
Ken Becker

### WHEEL THROWING II

December 2 - 16  
Three Fridays – 8:30-11:30 am  
Ken Becker

### CREATIVE TOTEMS

December 6 - 8  
Three sessions – noon-4 pm  
Ellen Sachtschale

# A TRIBUTE to JEAN CALICURA

by Ann Henderson



When Jean Calicura died on August 6, the clay arts studio lost a dear friend, but the smiling, regal Jean will remain in the minds and hearts of those who knew and loved her. She was one of the few people still here over 30 years, and she was one of the first potters I met when I joined the studio.

Jean was friendly, welcoming, and helpful about studio rules. I was not a new potter and definitely not a particularly neat potter, thus I was struck by her tidiness and how neat and professional she always remained. Working with clay, trimming or glazing, her clothes were always spotless, her hair perfectly coifed, even her hands were clean. After she ate her lunch, which was usually a sandwich on home-baked bread (made by husband Rick), she would clean up any crumbs, put away her lunch bag and, from her purse, draw out red lipstick and a tiny mirror to carefully apply it, completing

the *stepping out of the pages of Vogue* look. She and Rick were married for 60 years.

Jean usually sat facing the front door at the same table by the lockers hand-building. Once she told me that when she first started potting, she planned to wheel-throw a twelve-piece set of dishes with plates, bowls, cups, saucers, but abandoned that idea quickly when she tried the wheel. Very precisely hand-made minimalist sculptures became her forte. She was never in a hurry and every piece she made was perfect, no rough edges, always sleek lines. She worked the clay into intricate sculptures that seemed impossible to stand, but managed to maneuver her creations into fluid, balanced objects of art.

The last few years, her projects became much simpler, spoon holders and trivets, but she never veered much from her minimalist approach in design. She also had a great sense of humor; even into her 90s she was always quick with a clever come-back. One of the drawings she used on her spoon holders often made me chuckle: it was a stylized cat face with very human looking eyes. Jean loved cats and had sculpted several over the years.

People currently in the studio may have heard her recently singing or humming 1940s songs when she was in the back glazing. She never talked much about it, but Jean, in her younger years, was a professional singer, having performed with the Harry James Orchestra at clubs in many of the western states, and later joined the Blackouts with Ken Murray, singing for several years at the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood.

The last couple of years Jean's daughter Gina took classes with her, helping her when needed. Both were students in most of my classes, and I, along with many other clay arts students, miss Jean considerably.

