

# KILN' TIME



MARCH - APRIL 2025

THE OFFICIAL CLAY ARTS GUILD NEWSLETTER

## Important dates

March 30: Spring session begins

April 4: Photo submissions due to Brandon for entry in CCACA  
(Read more on last page)

April 9: Summer Classes go on view

April 25-26 CCACA Conference

April 26 Final day to pick up winter session work

April 30: Summer Registration at noon

May 3-4: Mother's Day Sale at Civic Arts Studio

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- MoW Makers Event
- Monstertopia!
- Soda Kiln photos
- Meet Ruth Mannion
- How some of us got started in clay
- How to enter your work in the CCACA Conference
- Fall Class Schedule

**THE CLAY ARTS  
GUILD SPRING  
SALE IS ON!  
May 3 & 4, 2025  
10 am to 3 pm  
Both Days**



**Clay Arts Guild Spring  
Pottery Sale!**

**1365 Civic Drive**  
Civic Park, Walnut Creek  
<<http://www.wcClayArtsGuild.com>>



We will be holding the CAG Spring Pottery Sale this year on the weekend before Mother's Day. It will be held in the studio from 10 am to 3 pm both days with a \$15 and under table available. This is the perfect time to purchase a one-of-a-kind gift for that special person! Please share this information with your friends and the community. *Hope to see you there!*

## MEMBERS of the BOARD

**President: Pat Alger**

**Vice President:  
Erika Goldstein**

**Financial Officer:  
Bill Schaaf**

**Secretary: Julie Dandliker**

**Sales Events: Pat Alger**

**Social Events: OPEN**

**Social Media:  
Facebook & Instagram:  
Nicole Collins**

**Hospitality: Bette Sindzinski**

**Monitors: Erika Goldstein**

**Newsletter Coordinator:  
Marina Xavier**

**Newsletter Editor:  
Mary Leigh Miller**

**Curator: Florence McAuley**

**Website & Data Base Manager:  
Kathy Nicholson**

**Web Master: Brad Krebs**

**Meals On Wheels:  
Barbara Moreland**

**Why have we removed  
committee members'  
emails?**

**Recently many CAG  
members received  
spam emails. We  
believe that they were  
possibly culled from  
this newsletter listing  
as well as articles that  
contained an email.**

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

## Message from Our Prez ...



Welcome to spring! We have many fun events planned for this year and we hope you can join us.

CAG Pottery Sale is May 3-4 this year. It will be held in the studio on Saturday and Sunday from 10am-3pm. Bring your friends and family to come see all the wonderful pottery created at the studio!

The Studio will be closed for Walnut Creek Art and Wine Festival May 30-June 1. The festival includes handmade crafts and art, wine, microbrews, food, and a kids zone. We may have an opportunity to participate. Stay tuned for more details.

All CAG members are invited to our Annual CAG Board meeting in June. We will vote on board members as well as the budget for the upcoming year. Watch for an email with all the information.

We will be holding our Annual Chili Bowl Fundraiser again this year in November. Please consider volunteering; it is a great opportunity to try selling some of your work at a smaller sale than our Spring sale.

CAG joined forces with the preschool at community arts and had a most fabulous collaboration of creativity. Read all about on the next page.

An enormous thank you to Marian and Glenn Farrell who donated over \$6,000 in studio equipment to our fabulous community! Marian and Glenn started their ceramic journey in our studio and wanted to give back to us as they are moving on to other ventures! Brandon met with them and gave them a tour of the studio (as they have not been taking classes for a while) and they mused about the fabulous times they had in our community and the great experiences they had with our teaching artists! Amongst other items you will see that they have donated a slab roller which has been already placed in the studio, a wheel and several ware carts. We are all so GRATEFUL for their generosity!

*Pat Alger*

**PLEASE NOTE THAT on the FOLLOWING DAYS  
CLASSES and OPEN STUDIO WILL BE CANCELED:**

- Saturday and Sunday, May 3 and 4: CAG Spring Sale
- Monday, May 26: Memorial Day
- Friday - Sunday, May 30, 31, June 1: Art and Wine Festival

# Meals on Wheels Makers Event

By Barbara Moreland

CAG kicked off the new year with a fun and very productive Makers Event for Meals on Wheels (MoW) on February 13th. Over 20 studio members joined in making more than 120 small functional pieces for participants in MoW programs. Nicole Collins demonstrated some great hand building tips and tricks. Attendees enjoyed delicious savory treats made by Micheal Kessler (Erika Goldstein's husband) while chatting with new and old studio friends.



Please consider joining in the fun for our next Makers Event to glaze the pieces. Watch for emails and sign-ups in the studio. Thanks for your support of this important community program.



# MONSTERS PART 2

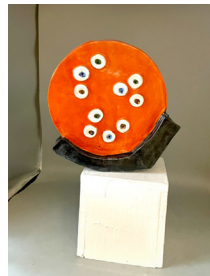
By Erika Goldstein



CAG joined forces with the preschool at community arts and had a most fabulous collaboration of creativity. The students in the class (4 year olds) created monsters with construction paper, and their fabulous teachers, Kristin Birdwell and Bobbie Ireland, asked us to make a 3-D sculpture out of clay for each child's work.

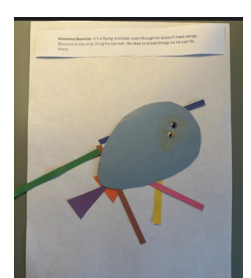
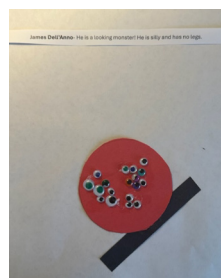


There will be several exhibits and shows displaying all of the child's art and our potter's creations throughout the spring and summer; ending in a display at City Hall which we are sure will give the kids (and our big kids who created) a big thrill! Join us for the reception at the Shadelands Art Center on April 16.



Thank you to everyone who was able to jump into this great joint venture! To the left are a small sample of the creations that have been finished and below are the children's art. Can you tell which goes with which?

**Youth Art Show Reception**  
**Wednesday, April 16, 2025 4:30 - 5:30 pm**  
**Shadelands Art Center**  
**111 N. Wiget Lane, Walnut Creek**



# THE NEW STUDIO SODA KILN

By Wendy Schmidt



Early this year, Brandon Lipe generously offered all CAG members a unique soda firing opportunity. During soda firing, sodium bicarbonate (baking soda) and water are introduced into the kiln around 2300F and the soda vapor combines with clay to form a unique glaze. Many members took advantage of the soda kiln firings and educational discussions Brandon hosted as he unloaded the kiln. While unloading the kiln, Brandon provided his insights on the outcome of each piece based upon surface treatment materials, clay body and position within the kiln. Pieces that leveraged the specially designed soda slips and glazes yielded the most unique results and surface variations.

Brandon shared the importance of thoughtful surface treatment, encouraged students to embrace the asymmetrical variation created by the kiln's atmosphere and awareness that each firing of the kiln will result in different results. Lastly, remember to attach wadding directly to bisque/ untreated surface! A special thank you to Brandon for this hands-on learning opportunity as our studio kicks-off a new soda firing chapter.



# Meet Your Monitor, THE FABULOUS RUTH MANNION!

By Erika Goldstein

It was my pleasure to interview **Ruth Mannion** who monitors on Tuesday mornings at 8:30.



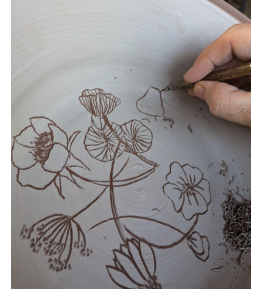
Ruth is the oldest of seven children! She moved a lot when she was a kid, but her favorite landing spot with her family was San Luis Obispo. She felt the central coast is just so very magical and the access to the beaches was the best!

After Ruth met her husband, they created a family made up of four kids, one dog, two cats, eight chickens and a hive of bees (she calls her queen bees the lovely ladies). She also has a most beloved garden. While she loves planting fruits, veggies, plants, flowers her current devotion is to her drought tolerant largely native front yard. She moved to Concord, CA in 2011 and this is the longest she has ever lived in one place.

Ruth has always loved ceramics! She took a class in high school and then in college at BYU she was a theater and design major. She has always loved creating 3D art. She joined our studio in 2017 where she started off hand building and then slowly moved to the wheel where she feels she has become more and more competent. She is so thrilled to be able to go back and forth between the wheel and those hand-building tables.



Ruth loves natural forms, and she is currently experimenting with a lot of slip trailing and carving. She loves our community and is thrilled to see that people are so passionate about the art of creating and how there is no age limit to those who create!



I asked her to choose between two words and her answers are underlined:

- Stoneware or Porcelain;
- Underglaze or Overglaze
- Early Open studio or Late Open Studio;
- Fudge or Ice Cream
- Popcorn or Pretzels;
- Rain or sun  
(she picked spring sun and summer rain;)
- Coffee or Tea (herbal)

Here are some of her fabulous creations! Enjoy them and give her a big hello should you see her around the studio or pop into the open studio she is covering!



# QUESTION of the QUARTER

## How Did You Start at Walnut Creek Civic Arts Doing Ceramics?

By Marina Xavier

### **Mary Ellen Brownell:**

Years before I even moved here, I heard about the Walnut Creek studio at a Zen retreat. A fellow participant in the retreat told me about Walnut Creek. I started taking Ed's class because I was working on my house and wanted to make some decorative tiles. Loved it.

**10 years strong**

### **Ellen Sachtschale:**

I moved here in 1998. Someone from North Carolina told me about the Walnut Creek studio. One day I came to the studio to check it out, while my kids were playing in the playground. I found it to be a beautiful setting and an amazing studio.

**25 years strong**

### **Merry Dalcino:**

I came with my sister in the 90's because she encouraged me to join her while she took a class. Then when I retired in 2008, I started taking classes regularly the very next day!

**29 years strong**

### **Emily Campbell (Merry's sister):**

I was taking classes at Laney College. My art teacher said that I would improve my drawing skills if I took a clay class. They did not offer clay at Laney, so I took a class here in Walnut Creek.

**31 years strong**

### **Gary Gratz:**

I had done ceramics in high school. Forty years later after retirement, I decided to do something creative. My wife's parents live in Walnut Creek. I was over at their house and I saw the flyer. My father-in-law had taken classes in the late 90's and his pieces were all over their house. I am an industrial engineer and work with all kinds of materials. Getting back to my creative side using clay is great.

**2 years strong**

### **Barbara Moreland:**

My story is a little interesting in that I started in high school, then I took a class in college. Life got in the way. I took one class. Then ten years later I took another class just to see if I could. I could! Then after I retired I have been taking classes ever since.

**12+ years strong**

### **Millie Robinson:**

Ann Henderson has been my neighbor since 1964. She was always on me to take a class at the Civic Arts. So when I retired, I finally decided to take her up on that.

**10 years strong**

### **Donna Cowan:**

I saw the flyer from Pleasant Hill where I was taking a slip mold and hand building class. I came to Walnut Creek to take the Raku class.

**14 years strong**

**Mimi Wild:** (y'all read this with a southern Louisiana twang):

I have a degree in art but not ceramics. My kids were driving me crazy, so I told John I was going to take a clay class which meant he had to babysit. That was in the mid 70's. When I was here in CA I happened to be wandering in Civic Park and I noticed pottery on the sidewalk outside this building. I ventured in, and I said "Aha!"

**44 years strong**

### **Katie Derrah:**

Art runs in my family. My uncle was a special inspiration to me. When he passed, I wanted to do something that would connect me to him. It's a great community here.

**2 years strong**

**What is your story? Let Marina know!**

# SATURDAY, MARCH 15 FAMILY ART DAY



Give a kid a small ball of clay and magic happens! That's part of what Family Day out at Shadelands is all about. Bill Schaaf, Jackie Gerry, Betty Wang and Mary Leigh Miller spent several hours in the children's art room supervising a lot of creativity. The parents were on hand, hovering over their kids to give some guidance, but mostly the end results (which many of them took home) were special objects (lots of snakes and little bowls!) that they made themselves.

## Line up of Spring Classes & Open Studio Times MARCH 30 ~ JUNE 7, 2025

Winter 23	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
8:30 AM	Open Studio 8:30-11:30 <small>*No O.S 5/4, 6/1</small>	HB 1 8:30 - 11:30 E. Sachtshale <small>*No Class 5/26</small>	Open Studio 8:30-11:30	Open Studio 8:30 - 11:30	Glaze Mixing 8:30-11:30 Brad / Karen	Soda 8:30 - 11:30 B. Lipe <small>*No Class 5/30</small>	Raku 8:30 - 11:30 J.Newton <small>*No Class 5/3,5/31</small>
12:00 PM	Handmade Tile 12:00 - 3:00 E. Blackburn <small>*No Class 5/4, 6/1</small>	Lantern Workshop 12:00 - 3:00 L.Jensen <small>*No Class 5/26</small>	Sculpture 1 12:00 - 3:00 C.Fortin	Wheel 1 12:00 - 3:00 C.Fortin	HB 2 12:00 - 3:00 E. Sachtshale	Wheel 1 12:00-3:00 A. Henderson <small>*No Class 5/30</small>	Open Studio 12:00-3:00 <small>*No O.S 5/3,5/31</small>
3:30 PM	Open Studio 3:30-6:30 <small>*No O.S 5/4, 6/1</small>	HB 1 3:30 - 6:30 E. Blackburn <small>*No Class 5/26</small>	Open Studio 3:30-6:30	Wheel 1 3:30 - 6:30 C.Fortin	Extruder 3:30 - 6:30 K.Jensen	Open Studio 3:30 - 6:30 <small>*No Class 5/30</small>	Open Studio 3:30 - 6:30 <small>*No O.S 5/3,5/31</small>
7:00 PM		Wheel 1 7:00 - 10:00 K.Becker <small>*No Class 5/26</small>	Wheel 2 7:00 - 10:00 B. Kark	HB 1 7:00 - 10:00 E. Sachtshale	Teen 7:00 - 9:00	Wheel 2 7-10pm K. Becker <small>*No Class 5/30</small>	



## More from Brandon

Please see below the expectations of exhibiting student artists:

### CCACA Conference

On April 25th – 26th, the John Natsoulas Gallery will be hosting the California Conference for the Advancement of Ceramic Arts (CCACA) CCACA in downtown Davis, CA. CCACA Our studio has a long history of exhibiting our ceramic artworks alongside 35+ other art centers, universities and colleges. There will be six artists demoing over the two days. We'll have a designated space and it's a great opportunity to showcase what we do here in our studio. It's also a great opportunity to see what other studios are making and to bridge the gap with our California neighbors.

I am inviting all student artists to submit up to three pieces to be considered and juried in this year's exhibition; the work doesn't have to be made this quarter but within the last two years. The jury process will happen online via email. You can submit three images (jpg or pdf format) to my email address [lipe@communityarts.org](mailto:lipe@communityarts.org) subject: CCACA). Each image must have your name, title of piece, year made, price or NFS (not for sale), and any other info that helps explain the work. I would like a majority of the work to be for sale. The jpegs/images of the work don't have to be professionally documented; they just need to be clear enough so we can see some details and over-all form of the work.

**SUBMISSIONS OF IMAGES ARE DUE TO ME BY APRIL 4th.** Once the pieces are selected, the student artists will be notified via email. Selections will be made, and students will be notified by April 7th.

1. Student artist work that is selected must be well packaged (wrapped) and boxed with name on box.
2. Wrapped and boxed work must be delivered by 5pm on April 18th (you can leave the work with your instructor or me to place in the office).
3. Each student artist will be required to help with the show. When showing up for your shift, arrive 15-30 minutes early to allow for parking. We will need volunteers to keep an eye on our exhibition; (Fri, Sat,) Each student artist will have two shifts (each shift is 2 hours) --- subject to change based on how many student artists attend the show. Times and signups will be posted as we get closer to the conference.
4. Student artists do not have to pay for the conference, other student exhibitions, including ours, are always free to the public. However, access to the lectures, panel discussions and demonstrations are only for paid attendees. I encourage many of you to attend the lectures and demos. Day and Multiday passes are available for purchase.
5. Work does sell; patrons who buy something must have a check or exact cash. They can pick up the work at 4pm, Saturday April 29th, after the show.
6. There is no insurance on the work exhibited; we have had no issues in the past: someone is always at the space during the day and the building is locked after business hours.