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For Immediate Release

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David Stuempfle Pottery - a fusion of American clay, and Asian influences

Seagrove, NC – As you drive down the road to David Stuempfle's studio, you feel as if you have stepped back in time. There are several beautiful wooden structures off in the distance, and you are separated from them by a gorgeous open meadow. As you approach the structures, you can hear birds singing, bugs humming, and you can instantly feel the pressures of life fade away....so pleasant, and then you see his work. Absolutely amazing. His pots can be from the size to sit on a table to be as big as three feet in diameter! Just trying to imagine hoisting them into his kiln is truly a feat of engineering.

A native of Gettysburg, PA David has been on a life long journey studying the art of pottery which has taken him from an apprenticeship in Tennessee, as a journeyman potter in many different shops including Jugtown Pottery, to where he is currently located at 1224 Dover Church Road in Seagrove. During his journeyman years, he would work at each shop for a year or two, learning different aspects of what it means to be a potter. While working at Jugtown Pottery, David decided to stay in the region because he liked the community of potters. In 1990, he bought his land where his studio and kiln are now located, from Al McCanness, who was also a potter at Dover Pottery.

David has studied ceramic history, and was intrigued by the wood firing process and using local clays to make his pots. He was mainly attracted to working with what is known as 'Seagrove Saltware'. He has studied in Japan, Korea and Europe, in the ancient traditions of salt glazes. David has also worked with many people locally that have come to the region from overseas, in studying the idea of 'minimalism' in salt glazes and pottery. He digs his clay from the local area, and makes individual pieces with it. Some of his clay comes from the Mitchfield area, and he also gets some clay from Cameron and in Candor. He does not do a 'line' of pottery. Each piece is unique, and stands on its own.

He fires his wood kiln twice a year, and then sells his pots directly from his shop. He does not have a retail space. During the firing process, he fires his kiln for about six and a half days each time, to obtain the surface effects that he is looking for. The fire itself glazes the pottery. Ash from the fire forms the glaze on the clay. He will go through about fifteen bundles of wood over the time that the kiln is burning. The fire has to be constantly fed the wood in order to maintain the temperatures inside. His larger pots have to be lowered into the kiln (very carefully!!); by using king size beds sheets as a sling. David has a wonderful support group of friends that are potters and artists that come and help him with the loading and unloading of his kiln.

His next kiln opening and sale, will take place in the winter of 2009. Please check his web site, www.stuemplepottery.com, for the exact dates and times for his kiln openings, and to see examples of his incredible pottery. His shop is not open to the public, but you can also call him at (910) 464-2689 to arrange an appointment to view his work and his studio space.

For a listing of all of the members and the events presented by the Seagrove Area Potters Association (SAPA), please go to www.discoverseagrove.com. Explore America's largest community of working potters. Discover Seagrove.

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