



April 28, 2008

For Immediate Release

Contact: Claire Matthew info@matthewmarketing.com

Turn & Burn Pottery – a life long love affair

Seagrove, NC – David and Deborah Garner, the owners of Turn & Burn Pottery, located in Seagrove, North Carolina, have known each other since the second grade. According to David, “We were in a school play together, and we were both dressed as radishes. The play was about the Marriage of the Vegetables. Deborah wasn’t too happy to have to perform with me. She ran home crying, and told her mom that she had to hold hands with a red-headed boy”, he said with a hearty laugh. Through a turn of life events, they separated for a while, but are now married, and have two sons.

David’s potters’ roots go back to the early 1700’s, when his family came to America from Europe. He grew up in Asheboro, and both sides of his family now live in Seagrove. He has been a potter for 38 years, and for 25 of those years, he has used the same clay to create his pottery. It is blended in Pennsylvania, and is a combination of clays from North Carolina, Ohio, and Kentucky. In his early training, he apprenticed for a couple of years, went to school for a couple of years, and then was a journeyman going from shop to shop in the Seagrove area, doing production work. He has been in his current location for twenty four years. The building was the old Seagrove Lumber Yard.

He is best known for his salt glazed pots, and for his amber horse hair pottery. The horse hair is applied to the hot clay after it is fired, to achieve the unique look. It is quite well known amongst the Lakota Sioux tribe of Native Americans. David Garner makes all of his own glazes, and is always working on them, trying to perfect them.

He uses an electric kiln to bisquefire all of his pieces. He has two big wood fire kilns, which he uses for his salt glazes. One of them he fires every six weeks or so, and the other one he only fires once or twice a year. The wood fuel for it is very costly so it limits him to how many times a year he can fire it. David starts off using hard woods in the kiln, and then uses pine. He tops off the process with pitch-pine. It reduces the oxygen in the kiln, which then alters the glaze color.

There are forty steps to producing a piece of pottery, which David called ‘dog work’. “A well trained dog could do most of the steps in producing a pot”, he said again with a big laugh, “but one little mistake can ruin the piece”. It takes approximately six weeks from turning the wet clay, to arrive at the final product.

David's wife Deborah does all of the carving and painting on their pottery pieces. They are both Christians, and often use Biblical themes, and pictures of Angels on their trays and plates. On the bottom of each piece of his pottery, David inscribes either 1Cor:1:27, or John 1:5. Their Christian ministry does not stop there however. Each month, David and Deborah go to four different prisons in North Carolina. They go to try to teach, and help the prisoners grow in their faith. Since they began their prison ministry, one of the prisons has become a woman's prison. "Women now have the dubious distinction of being the fastest growing population entering prisons today", David said, with a definite sadness in his voice. "Most of the women in the prison have children too", he continued.

During the entire conversation he was turning pots on his wheel, creating beautiful objects from a handful of clay. "There is a continuing tradition of pottery here. It is the only place in the hemisphere like it. There is such a variety. The potters all have open studios which you won't find anywhere else. It is a big part of Seagrove".

Turn & Burn Pottery is open Monday through Saturday from 9am to 5pm. For more information, please call (336) 873-7381, or check out their website, www.turnandburnpottery.com.

For a listing of all the members and the events presented by the Seagrove Area Potters Association (SAPA), including the celebration of National Tourism Week, May 10th through May 18th, 2008, please go to www.discoverseagrove.com. Explore America's Largest Community of Working Potters. Discover Seagrove.

#####