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the study of different types of glazes, colorful shiny coatings, and the effects that they have on various types of clay during the firing stage.

"I have a passion about bringing clay to other people. The more they get enthused, it spreads like a fire," said Don Seymour, president, founder and owner of Clayscapes, 1003 W. Fayette St. Seymour's interest in clay began in 1978 while he was in high school; in 1983 he received a bachelor's degree in Ceramics and Sculpture from SUNY Fredonia.

He spent years in research and retail jobs, including 10 years selling furniture, before quitting in 1996 to pursue a career in pottery. In 2003, Seymour bought Laguna Clay, a clay distribution company, and renamed it Clayscapes Pottery. Since then, Seymour reported, his company sells an average of 75 tons of clay a month, much of it to local schools and Syracuse University and Onondaga Community College.

"Too many people go through life just discontent, working a job just to pay bills. You can't go through life unhappy. It's too short. {You've} got to bring joy to the world," said Seymour of the transition from

his previous jobs to his pottery business. In addition, Seymour's respect for clay is profound. "Clay comes from the earth. Without the earth, we don't live. You want to breathe life into that clay, giving it shape and form. {It's} freedom of expression."

He's got big plans for Clayscapes as well. He wants to increase enrollment in his pottery classes and add seminars on the history of pottery to the curriculum. Seymour also plans to expand Clayscapes' gallery so that more students and artists can display and sell their work.

Seymour makes sure he contributes to community causes through his pottery business. One event is Empty Bowls, a soup dinner for which his students make ceramic bowls. Proceeds from the event are donated to New York food pantries. In addition, Clayscapes sponsors the Feats of Clay contest for high schools in the Syracuse area. The company donates 2,000 pounds of clay in addition to the prize money. This year's contest will be held Friday, May 9, at East Syracuse-Minoa High School.

Beginner classes at Clayscapes Pottery are \$265 and include 50 pounds of clay, glazes and studio time. The classes meet for 10 weeks, either weekly or Mondays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. or 5:30 to 8 p.m. For more information, call 424-6868.

—Nichole Nichols

Potters' Yield

There is a certain warmth that radiates as you step into the Clayscapes pottery studio. Student potters' work lines the walls, some perfectly manicured and molded and others reflecting perhaps a beginner's early attempts at commanding the clay. Yet as the potters continue their work the realization comes that the warmth is the pride and love that they throw into the beautiful ceramic pieces they create.

"The best part is opening up the kiln with your glaze stuffed in it. It's like Christmas. You never really know what the kiln gods are going to give you," said Kelly Barone, a former administrator for Solvay Free Union School District who has taken classes at Clayscapes for 3½ years and devotes herself to the art full time.

Barone said the best things about classes at Clayscapes are that students can proceed at their own pace and work on projects of their choosing. "Really you can do anything you want to do. I'm advanced now, so I'm working on glaze chemistry, but there are slots for beginners," said Barone. Glaze chemistry is



MICHAEL DAVIS PHOTO

All in a clay's work: Students at Clayscapes Pottery use the wheel to throw their creations before firing them in the kiln.