



Dana Moore

*These are the incredibly patient models who loaned us their hands for a very long time while we made the cover photograph for the Concentration class flyer.*

**PENLAND LINE**

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The Penland Line is published twice a year to communicate thoughts about the programs, people, and philosophy of Penland and to keep in touch with several groups of people at once: craftspeople and friends living nearby, instructors, donors, and Penland Friends. We invite you to share your news, opinions, and/or photographs with us. And please let us know what you think of the Penland Line. You can send email to this address: [publications@penland.org](mailto:publications@penland.org).

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**A Letter from the Director**

As often as I have read the *Penland Line* over the years, I never imagined myself writing to you as director. Thus far, the experience has far exceeded my wildest dreams. My thanks go to each of you who has written or sent messages of goodwill. Every comment is being heard and registered down deep. From gardener Priscilla Johnson's note about breathing, written on paper made from coffee grounds and compost, to trustee Laurel Radley's message about her aunt Lucy Morgan's attitude towards change and her love of Penland's people, these letters have set a tone for me that emphasizes creativity and community.

So much has happened each day since I arrived that I would like to extend a bit of the energy and news of summer at Penland. There have been firefly displays in the pasture at dusk that rival ice crystals in the snow on a sunny day. In keeping with old Penland theatrical traditions, children at Kid's Camp, taught by Core student Caverly Morgan, wrote and performed a play entitled *The Mistake*. Arkansan performance artist Maxine Caufield arrived unexpectedly with her feed truck installed with photographs, sound recordings, feed, and objects depicting stories of her Ozark Mountain heritage. A new game, *batminton*, was invented by night watchman Jim Hardin as the perfect, gentle way to remove bats from the dormitories. Nick Cave's surface design class created an installation in the Dye Shed that evoked memory and secret messages. Instructor Jay Burnham-Kidwell, whose work is informed by his years in Vietnam, made a weed eater from an automatic weapon during a demonstration in the iron studio. Great work is on display at the gallery and the community turns out in force for openings. The Science in the Studios project is connecting Penland artists with curriculum writers at Appalachian State University and teachers at Mitchell High School.

Strategic planning and campus planning have been central to my work. The staff and board are studying current programs, services, operations, and communications to retool or redirect our work as necessary. We are in the earliest stages of developing a campus master plan with architect Edwin F. Harris. Respect for historic preservation, craftsmanship, and what Harris calls Penland's history of "reasonable disorder" are in the forefront of our minds.

We have engaged Bill Wescott, an Asheville-based historic preservation engineer, to work with a group of community volunteers on the historic restoration of the circa 1840 Dye Shed. Renovation of Ridgeway's first floor is underway with support from the J.W. and A.H. Hanes Foundation, the Cannon Foundation, and the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. Ridgeway's main room will continue to be a multi-purpose space and the home of Penland's educational outreach programs. A new climate-controlled archives room is being created in Ridgeway for the safe storage and use of Penland's archival materials. Feet Williams, our facilities director, is approaching all of our renovation and construction projects with the same careful craftsmanship that artists bring to the studio.

Although the outcome is uncertain, we have approached our legislative delegation about a special appropriation towards Penland's capital construction and renovation needs. Estimates for renovations or new construction needed at Penland currently exceed \$4.5 million with a new iron studio as the first priority for additional construction. The new studio will accommodate sculpture, fabrication, and casting as well as forging. The Meyer Family Foundation has just awarded Penland a challenge grant of \$150,000 towards the iron studio's \$500,000 budget, which includes site preparation, equipment, and landscaping as well as construction.

Classes are full (of students and ideas); session scholarship auctions are lively and yield thousands of dollars for future student scholarships; there is the incredible synergy of Penland at work in every moment. Come see us!

—Jean McLaughlin



Robin Dreyer/Bea Nettles

*Penland staff and neighbors gathered just before summer classes began to honor Donna Jean Dreyer's second retirement. Donna Jean, who previously worked at Penland from 1986 to 1995, led the school through a productive year of transition. She is sitting (at the very center of this photograph) on a bench which was designed and built by Penland Resident Hoss Haley. It incorporates an etched copper plaque (made by studio coordinator Stacey Lane) thanking Donna Jean for her work. She was also presented with a hand-bound book (designed and assembled by former studio coordinator Eileen Wallace) which contained pages with messages and decorations from staff members and friends. Donna Jean and her husband Bill are enjoying a relaxed summer in Celo, but we have her number if we need it.*