



Robin Dreyer

*This glassblowing trophy, which began life as a pool trophy, was presented to champion glass instructor Michael Schunke by his students at the end of an excellent summer class.*

**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 e-mail to the Penland Line at this address: [publications@penland.org](mailto:publications@penland.org).

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**Letter from the Director**

Penland's board just concluded an exhilarating fall meeting kicked off by one of Paulus Berensohn's unique blessings. Paulus reminded us that we were meeting for the last time in one millennium and making plans for a new one. He held up our organizational chart, which looks like a four-lobed lung with many interconnecting lines. It reminded him of a book he was reading on systems theory which casts today as a time for interrelatedness to replace traditional hierarchy. He also spoke of Penland as a place to "learn slow" in a world which is moving faster and faster, a place to remain connected to our hands and to the time that craftsmanship requires.

Our programs during the past six months have been outstanding. Imaginative objects and ideas have been generated in classes ranging from Kente weaving with Luberta Mays to hat-making with Jean Hicks to hand-forged kitchenware with Jim Cooper. Special workshops were held on the business of craft in cooperation with Mayland Community College, on protecting the earth with Louise Todd Cope, and on using our imagination to make July 4th costumes with Mr. Imagination. Visiting artists like Mel Chin and Judith Shea have provided additional stimulation and fresh perspectives for students.

The Penland Gallery mounted nine instructor exhibitions and five special exhibitions during its eight-month season. We've had over twelve thousand visitors to the gallery as of mid-October and have conducted dozens of tours. The gallery now fills the first floor of Horner and includes a reading resource room with new books and seating made possible through the Windgate Charitable Foundation.

Outreach to Mitchell County schools has grown to include an entire grade level in elementary and middle schools. This means that we will work with each student in Mitchell County several times as they advance from school to school. One highlight of the program: forty-five seventh-graders from Bowman Middle School made books to hold the poetry they had been working on as part of a Young Author's program. Their completed books were exhibited at the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English.

We are working to diversify Penland's student and instructor networks. Focusing on ways to strengthen our communication with the African American community, the staff met with Ce Scott, an artist and director of education at the new Tryon Center in Charlotte, and Harriett Green, visual arts director of the South Carolina Arts Commission. We had a full day of lively discussions and strong suggestions. One of these resulted in a grant from the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation to extend our higher education partnership program to nine historically black universities for summer 2000. These institutions will each select a student to attend Penland and provide \$600 toward the cost of that student's class at Penland. They will receive a full scholarship, materials, and travel stipend.

We have several major construction projects underway. The renovation of Ridgeway is moving forward with a \$94,000 grant from the Janirve Foundation. The new iron studio, a maintenance facility, and three parking lots are also under construction. As old walls were removed in Ridgeway, interesting bits of history were revealed. We found a carefully whittled switch (hidden with equal care) in the rafters and uncovered a piece of wall board signed Virgil Boyd, 1936. We have been busy with repairs to the resident artist studios and apartments, fertilizing and liming the pasture, constructing new well houses, repairing septic systems, and painting the exterior of Heaven's Above. With the support of the Chapman family we removed the old trailer that sat for years at the entrance to the core campus. Five Horner Hall bathrooms were painted by Ed and Barbara Streeter, former students whose property was damaged by Hurricane Floyd—their work was a trade for room and board while their studio was being repaired.

New Department of Transportation signs for Penland School out on Highways 226 and 19E have made it easier for students and visitors to find us. And 700 new bulbs have been planted throughout campus. We are looking forward to seeing many of you in classes or at special events next spring when those bulbs pop out of the ground.

—Jean McLaughlin



Ann Hawthorne

*Mitchell County blacksmith Bea Hensley playing anvil music at the groundbreaking for Penland's new iron studio. (See page 8.) Bea is a traditional blacksmith who has received the North Carolina Folk Heritage Award and a National Heritage Fellowship.*