

Playing a Part in Penland's Future

The sound of construction has been filtering through my windows all spring and summer. Workers hammering, backhoes digging, and concrete trucks mixing. Projects are being completed all over campus, and it's all because of you. Over 1,300 members of the Penland community have responded to our invitation to participate in the *Preserve Penland* campaign. This \$8 million campaign for studio, housing and infrastructure improvements, scholarships, and operating support, is the largest fundraising effort the school has ever undertaken. It was launched with a bit of trepidation and a lot of optimism, and we are thrilled with your generous response!

This spring, we opened Dorm 54, named after its street address: 54 Dora's Trail. This is the first new building completed with funds from the campaign. Major renovation is underway in Radcliffe, next door to the new dorm. A completely gutted and reconfigured interior will provide housing with private rooms and baths. Life-safe-



Dorm 54, designed by architect Dail Dixon, was built with funds raised as part of the Preserve Penland campaign. The steel caps on the posts were designed and made by resident artist Marc Maiorana.

that is such an important part of the Penland experience.



This wood and steel bench, which sits on the porch of the new dorm, was designed and built by instructor Jim Cooper.

ty improvements have been made to Craft House, the Pines, and Horner. Doors now open out with new easy-to-use hardware, and we are working on new fire alarm and sprinkler systems. A design for a new wood studio is in process; a design has been completed for an accessible walkway connecting the Pines, Lily Loom, and Craft House. Planning is underway for a new studio for 2-D media, and for expansion and improvements to the gallery and the housing in Horner.

With your help we are making sure that the historic structures at Penland are preserved, that our studios are well constructed and well equipped, that our facility continues to provide the retreat environment

It has taken several years to get to this point. Penland's board of trustees launched the *Preserve Penland* campaign in January 2001 to begin to meet the needs outlined in the 1999 campus master plan. That plan identified over \$18 million of necessary capital improvements. That seemed like more than we could handle at one time, and the board wanted to build the school's endowment and strengthen annual giving as well. After careful consideration, the campaign goal was set at \$8 million: \$4.5 million to fund studio, housing, and infrastructure projects, \$500,000 for new endowed scholarship funds, and \$3 million in annual operating support.

Leadership gifts from board members established a strong foundation. Together, the board pledged over \$1 million to kick off the campaign. A campaign steering committee, composed of current and former trustees, has been leading the effort to contact friends of the school to share the *Preserve Penland* story. They reconnected with people who had been an important part of the school's history and developed relation-

ships with new friends. Because we wanted to reach as many people as possible, we also engaged a fundraising firm to help us with letters and phone calls.

Requests for support have been greeted with a heartwarming positive response. Rarely has anyone said no. Conversations and correspondence reflect how much people love Penland, and how the school has contributed to their lives. Students, instructors, and collectors all want to give something back. They want to help make the Penland experience available in the future.

Along the way we have been blessed with a few special gifts and opportunities. Staff, current and former core students and residents, and community members collaborated on a special event in April 2004 to honor Pearl Grindstaff, Penland's beloved baker, who has worked here longer than anyone else. A wonderful auction of donated art work raised over \$17,000 for the campaign. These funds will be used for ren-

ovations on Bascom House, a Penland building which was Pearl's childhood home. Elizabeth Brim created a stunningly beautiful iron smock to place over the door to The Pines kitchen officially designating it the Pearl Grindstaff Kitchen. Store manager Kat Conley and head chef John Renick, two of Pearl's closest friends on staff, spearheaded this project.

In June 2003, an anonymous donor presented Penland with a challenge. The donor would match gifts to the campaign, designated for capital needs, up to \$2 million. To qualify for the match, the gifts could be multi-year pledges, but had to be made by December 31, 2004 and paid in full by December 31, 2006. This challenge motivated and energized our steering committee, staff, and the larger Penland community. Individual contributors made new or increased gifts and pledges to the campaign in response to the challenge. Several major foundations have helped move us closer to meeting the goal.

From the \$2 million challenge to the \$25 contribution, every gift counts. It's important to have many gifts of varying sizes from many different people—it all adds up. Together we have raised \$1,675,986 toward the \$2 million challenge, with only \$324,014 left to meet our December 2004 deadline. And, we're close to meeting the total campaign goal as well, with \$159,341 remaining to be raised for endowed scholarships, and \$935,732 in annual support.

Thank you all, so much. Many have responded with a first gift to Penland. Others have made their most substantial gift to Penland. This overwhelming support is tangible evidence of the achievement of our mission—individual and artistic growth through craft.

—Barbara Benisch, Director of Development and Communications



Head chef John Renick and a large group of current and former Penland kitchen staff paid tribute to Penland's baker Pearl Grindstaff at a special auction and dessert party held in her honor.