

Pine Tree Potters get ready for Spring sale



By Brock Weir

Artists always put their work on a pedestal, but Aurora's Pine Tree Potters Guild is upping the ante for their annual Spring Sale, which gets underway this Thursday at the Aurora Cultural Centre.

A mainstay on the local arts scene, which has been holding spring and fall sales since the late 1970s, the Potters are jazzing things up, featuring a sculptural display for the very first time, which includes wall hangings.

‘Typically, everything has just been on the tables,’ says Guild member Cathy Harris. ‘The idea came from one of our members just to keep it new, fresh and interesting for the community. After all, it can't be the same old every time.’

Artists are busily putting the finishing touches on their pieces – ranging from those wall hangings to cups and saucers – ahead of their set-up at the Cultural Centre this Wednesday, where their work will be juried professionally before it is given the thumbs-up for sale.

‘If they are cracked or chipped, crazed, or have any sharp edges, they won't be put in – that is how we keep it a high quality show,’ says Ms. Harris. ‘It has to have a smooth bottom. If it is a functional piece, it has to function as intended. If it is a teapot, it has to pour properly with no bubbles coming out of the spout – and hopefully no drips! Each teapot or pitcher will have water put into it and the juror will pour it into another cup to make sure.’

If the spout is too narrow, the liquid is likely to come out in ‘gurgles’ and if it misses the quality mark, it misses the show. Such jurors, says Ms. Harris, always look at the technical rather than artistic side of things as beauty and art is always in the eye of the beholder. Nevertheless, having the show juried ensures the quality of the overall show and that is what keeps people coming back year after year, she says.

‘Our shows are such high quality work – and it shows,’ she says. ‘There are guilds and pottery shows all over Southern Ontario and I have heard time and time again what high quality Pine Tree Potters puts out, and I am proud of that. When we bring new members in, we teach them how to finish their work properly so it will pass. Sometimes when a new member starts doing things they get very intimidated and they are nervous about putting something in the sale, but we encourage them to put things in because it is exciting for them to have their work shown.’

Of course, it is also exciting for them to make a sale.

The Pine Tree Potters Spring Sale opens this Thursday, April 28, running through Sunday, May 1 at the Aurora Cultural Centre. It will be open Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 905-727-1278.