

Pennsylvania Potters Respond to Humanitarian Crises



Moscow Clayworks, located in Moscow, PA just southeast of Scranton, is a community-based gallery for ceramic art that supports humanitarian projects. With the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Moscow's director Frank Goryl is responding to immediate needs in this ravaged island nation with his Haitian Clayworks Project, opening on October 10 at their 223 N. Main Street studio. Goryl and his family will travel to Haiti to collect the works of several Haitian potters, which

they hope to purchase with sponsorship funding. This first step of the project will benefit each individual artist and the local Haitian economy. The opening reception in Pennsylvania will then feature a silent auction of the artworks. The proceeds will be used to purchase ceramic water filters, which will be distributed back to Haitian communities. Almost two years after the earthquake, many residents still do not have access to drinkable water.

Ceramic water filters are simple cone-shaped pots that are easily made from readily available materials. One filter can purify a liter and a half of water in an hour, simply by placing the ceramic filter over a 5-gallon bucket and letting the water filter through. This "gravity filtration" system traps bacteria and protozoa, while the purified water flows through the small pores in the clay filter. Globally, UNICEF and the Water Sanitation Program (WSP) have helped to build three factories in Cambodia that manufacture over 5,000 filters a month. Similar factories produce the filters in Caribbean countries.

Dick Wukich is a Pittsburgh potter who has been working on this important humanitarian project in Haiti for several years. Wukich has worked with FilterPure Inc., a non-profit organization that operates ceramic filter production plants in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Wukich is a passionate advocate for this simple technology that can make such a huge difference in the quality of life in third world nations. While a professor at Slippery Rock University, he involved his art students in the project. He also founded a program at the Braddock Public Library, where local students and community members learn basic pottery technique and how to make the water filters. Jeff Schwarz, one of Wukich's former students, worked with him to set up the basement studio at the library. The Braddock project has a two-pronged thrust, addressing both the needs of the economically depressed Braddock community and the water needs of Haitians. Wukich envisions a community outreach effort that uses the arts to inspire young people's creativity, expand their outlooks, and solve real-life global problems.



Moscow Studios

Haitian Clayworks Project Opening Reception

Monday, October 10, 2011
5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

223 N. Main St. □
Moscow, PA. 18444 □

570-357-1627

For more information, or to make a
contribution, visit:

www.moscowclayworks.com
moscowclayworks@gmail.com

Learn more about water filters, at:

https://www.wsp.org/wsp/sites/wsp.org/files/publications/926200724252_eap_cambodia_filter.pdf

Read more about Wukich's work at the Braddock Library, at:

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/pittsburgh/print_666185.html and

http://www.51voa.com/VOA_Special_English/Development_Report_32236.html