



Give Us a Break!

Special hours announced for springtime visitors

We've been welcoming visitors from all over the United States for the past few weeks as winter and spring breaks offer student respites from the hard work of learning. This year's breaks have been especially welcome as some of the harshest weather in memory has swept across northern states. We at Earth & Fire have responded by increasing our operating hours to fit the tight and varied schedules of our visitors. For the next few weeks we'll open at 9 a.m. Monday through Friday and close at 8 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday and 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Saturday hours are 10-6 and Sunday we'll open at noon and close at 5. It's great to see special friends from all over North America and Europe. We hope their time in Naples will be filled with wonderful memories!

BUICK, LEXUS, BMW, TOYOTA, *PARAGON*...??? That was the lineup in the Earth & Fire parking lot on March 7th when the new high tech kiln we told you about recently appeared on a quiet Friday afternoon. The problem was no one told us it was arriving so soon. The manufacturer promised to give us four days notice when the new unit was crated and on its way. No one warned us that an industrious truck driver would set the 600 pound crate in our parking lot after only 36 hours. Our great friends at Midwest Homes rounded up five big strong guys, however, and they moved Irene, our old kiln, into the parking area and the new unit into our kiln room. We used a favorite web site called "Naples FreeCycle" to advertise the old kiln and magically, by 9 a.m. on Saturday, it had disappeared into the home of a new owner. After set up and testing we expect the new eight cubic foot, computer controlled kiln to be on line by next weekend.

SHOW AND TELL -- Before the end of March our Earth & Fire web site will include a new feature. Each week we'll choose some of the best work created by our visitors and include photos on the front page of the site. So, your efforts will be on display and you can share with friends. Also, all those hand prints and foot prints of new family members can be seen by friends and relatives around the world simply by accessing earthandfire-naples.com

LADIES NIGHT REDUX -- At the request of several long time Earth & Fire visitors we've rescheduled our Ladies Night (aka "Girls Night Out") to a Friday night event. The hours are the same, from 5 until 9 and Susan will continue to be your host. This week we'll be previewing new products and showing off some secrets about our new kiln and how it may change the future of Earth & Fire. As always, we'll have snacks to share and invite you to bring your favorite beverage.

NEW PROMOTIONS CAN SAVE YOU \$\$\$ -- Mondays and Tuesdays have traditionally seen the fewest visitors to our studio, so few that for a very long time, previous owners simply remained closed on either one or both of these days. We believe retailers in resort communities should be available whenever visitors appear. (The roots of this long standing philosophy can be traced to a sultry afternoon in August many years ago when Susan and I visited the Via Veneto in Rome and found nothing but locked doors!) So, here are a couple of reasons to plan your Earth & Fire visit early in the week:

Rainy Days & Mondays – Carpenter fans can hum while the rest of you show up on Monday (or any rainy weekday) and receive 15% off your total tab!

Tuesday Doubles – Bring a friend to Earth & Fire on Tuesday and you both paint for the price of one. You'll find the atmosphere less competitive and more relaxing than the tennis courts and thus far no one has complained about a painter's elbow.

(And no, you can't have both deals if it rains on Tuesday. If that happens we'll calculate your total using both methods and use the one that offers the greatest reduction.)

RECENT SUCCESS STORIES -- Earth & Fire recently played host to several organizations whose members filled our studio with creativity, fellowship, and the sounds of good times. These included the Steering Committee of the local chapter of Mothers of Preschoolers and members of Home-schoolers of Collier County. Susan also hosted a group of Cub Scouts who painted tiles and learned about the process of using clay to make useful and decorative items. If you're a member of a community group that is searching for interesting places to meet, give us a call. We can comfortably accommodate up to 35 people and will adjust our hours to meet your needs.

A PERSONAL NOTE OF PRIDE -- Congratulations to our daughter Megan and her team from North Naples Middle School for their recent success in the Odyssey of the Mind competition in Ft. Myers. The team will travel to Orlando on April 5 for the state competition with dreams of going on to national and world events in the future. This is Megan's fourth year as an Odyssey competitor and it's helped her explore new horizons, meet many new friends, and increase her confidence. If you have a child in a Collier County school where there's an Odyssey program, encourage participation. The results can be fantastic!

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT! – Call us, Susan or Patrick, at 261-6658 whenever you have a question or if we can help with your project, special event, or fund raiser. You can also e-mail us at paint-it@earthandfire-naples.com.