



## PLAYING WITH FIRE

Local craftsman and ceramic artist Jon Nibbe offers his kiln to MSU art students and other individuals who wish to learn about the wood firing process when completing their ceramic artwork. “I created the kiln in a way to bring in community and that is shown in the group of people who come and rotate shifts to support the fire,” Nibbe says. Wood firing uses dried and split wood logs as a fuel source rather than gas and propane, requiring constant attention for multiple days to maintain the fire in the kiln. Artworks are strategically positioned in the kiln to ensure maximum capacity. The process carefully increases the temperature to ensure a balanced firing rate and to not overheat its contents. A required temperature properly called “Cone 11,” or approximately 2,350-2,400 degrees Fahrenheit, is the maximum temperature necessary for this process. One of the final stages is called “reduction cooling,” which uses an addition of charcoal to draw out and reduce the heat. This stage ends with a cascade of sparks and flames before the final cooling off period.

Photos by DYLAN ENGEL • The Reporter