

2010 SHERPA AWARD WINNERS

TOMI MELSON

Since 1974, this craftsartist has been a major presence not only within our organization, but throughout the arts community in Winston-Salem. Known to all as a Proselytizer for Piedmont Craftsmen, Tomi Melson is a prime example of the Sherpa ethic – always willing to take on any task asked of her and volunteering to shoulder more than her fair share. (Sidenote: Tomi would actually call herself something else not fit in polite company!) Tomi helped guide our organization both as a volunteer and as CEO – seeing Piedmont Craftsmen through the transition to our location in the heart of the arts district. A big proponent of PCI's educational programs, Tomi has played key roles in organizing and executing exhibitions of our members works in venues near and far. With all the zeal of true believer, and with her big heart and bigger smile, Tomi continues to bring new converts into the fold and make substantial contributions to the organization, for which we are all grateful.

GAIL CITRON

In the non-profit world, there are volunteers and there are VOLUNTEERS. The kind who will not only sit on a committee or two, but will also attend to the often mundane tasks of addressing envelopes, organizing other volunteers, and showing up for all our events. Gail Citron is an “all caps” volunteer. Starting in the early 80's, Gail has been a regular member of our Board of Trustees – rolling off each time her term expires, herself off, and coming back for more. Amazingly unflappable and with quiet determination, Gail works behind the scenes greasing the wheels of any project with which she is involved. Gail has been a constant presence at our annual Fair and is unabashed about her love of this event. It is, as she says, “my favorite weekend of the year”. We hope that Gail's love affair with Piedmont Craftsmen will continue to burn bright in the years ahead.

BJ Buckland

What can you say about someone who loves an organization so much that she moves right down the street to be in closer proximity? We think BJ Buckland is both a Sherpa and a Pioneer. BJ doesn't just talk the talk, she walks the walk. A long time collector of our members' works, BJ has been volunteering in a variety of capacities for a dozen years. As she tells it, it's all Billy McClain's fault – he dragged her to PCI and she has never looked back. BJ has served on the Executive Committee for 4 years (at least) and in that time was Chair of the Board of Trustees for two terms. In addition to her many Board responsibilities, BJ can be found with painting pedestals like a pro, stuffing and addressing envelopes, participating in all our fund-raising events. And she and Mike have also generously opened their art-filled home in Trader's Row to us on numerous occasions. BJ has been our ambassador throughout the community and has graciously offered to take a leadership role in the celebration of Piedmont Craftsmen's 50th Anniversary Celebration. And with the award that bears her stamp, we thank BJ for her countless contributions to PCI.

Annie Van Every

Although this craftsartist's history with Piedmont Craftsmen doesn't quite span a decade, Annie Van Every has served the organization since she was juried in as an exhibiting member in 2002. Straddling two levels of involvement, as an exhibiting member and a member of the Board of Trustees, Annie has

brought her artistic sensibilities to her work with our off-site exhibitions and has offered her time and expertise to many of the projects undertaken by the Board of Trustees. If you know anything about Annie's pottery, you will see her attention to detail in full evidence – an attention to detail that she also brought to her tasks on the Board. Annie acted as spokesperson for our exhibiting members with a clear and thoughtful voice – keeping her fellow artists always top of mind. This year Annie rolls off the Board of Trustees and we will miss her and her contributions to our monthly meetings and our many organizational activities. But we expect she will continue to offer us her insights as we move forward into the future.