

**“Building a Healthier Community through Personal and Professional Example”**  
*Peer Recovery Art Project is our continuous campaign to end stigma, revitalize downtown areas, while implementing new strategies for an all-inclusive and, therefore, healthier community.*

Volume 4 Issue 1

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## EXECUTIVE OFFICER NOTES

There is a reason for every season; a time to live and a time to love. It is time for Peer Recovery Art Project to share our gift with you! We are announcing the opening of our new downtown gallery, home of the Arts for Freedom program.

This is a season of growth for Peer Recovery Art Project. The home of the Arts for Freedom program is easily located at the corner of 13th and J Streets. The gallery is fully operational and open three days a week so come down and meet our customer service representatives, Betty, Monica, Suzanne, and other community volunteers. (Find more gallery information on pages 2-3.)

Peer Recovery Art Project welcomed 84 people who came by to check us out during January's Art Walk! I'm really proud of the team who made the gallery ready in time for the event! I am even more proud that we had 84 visitors! I am humbled by the community's kind response to our Arts for Freedom learning experiment! (See Betty Barnes' article about Art Walk on page 3.)

An amazing artist pool is coming alive inside Peer Recovery Art Project. Our community custom-painted over 200 bowls for the Second Harvest Food Bank's Empty Bowl benefit. More than 80 community members took part on paint day, ranging in age from 3 to 75 years and representing diverse socioeconomic and ethnic communities. We sincerely thank Second Harvest for the honor to serve and our downtown partners for donating bowls. (More details about the event are in the article at right.)

Pay us a visit next time you're downtown. Join us on our journey of learning and enjoy the J Street vibe that's so alive in the heart of downtown Modesto!

~John Black, CEO



## ARTISTS HELP FOOD BANK

On the afternoon of Saturday, January 14, a roomful of dedicated artists gathered to paint. Bringing their brushes and paints, the artists painted over 200 donated bowls in support of the Second Harvest Food Bank Empty Bowl Benefit.

John Black and the new Arts for Freedom program were called upon by Second Harvest Food Bank to help with the first paint-a-bowl event held in our community. John, in turn, called on his dedicated volunteers to gather bowls and ready the gallery for its first public event.

The Empty Bowls idea, born in 1990 by John Hartom and his Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, high school students, was a way to support a food drive. The idea caught on and, over the past decade, Empty Bowls events have been held across the U.S., Canada, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

On Thursday, February 23, Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin & Stanislaus Counties will host its first annual Empty Bowls Benefit at the Arbor Theatre in Modesto Centre Plaza. Following a simple meal of soup, salad and bread, attendees may take home a beautiful hand painted bowl as a reminder that the purpose of the meal is to help feed the hungry in our community.

## ARTS FOR FREEDOM GALLERY OPENS

*In the heart of Downtown Modesto's art scene*

The nonprofit Peer Recovery Art Project (PRAP), whose mission is to build a healthier community in downtown Modesto, was started three years ago and is now being taken to a new level through its Arts for Freedom program. Funded by Stanislaus County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, this new learning experience will see if the well being of the whole city can be improved by being of service in the community through arts and music.

Well-known local artists such as Jordi Camps from Picasso's Deli & Art, Mark Bixby and Keena Wells show their work in the new gallery in addition to Keith, a sculptor, and all of the entrants in the recent Elliott High School art contest. Modesto Artists Meetup has rotating space in the gallery and is already on the calendar to use the gallery's meeting space for its regular monthly gathering.

In the planning stages are partnerships with the State Theatre, the Downtown Improvement District, the Modesto Tourism and Convention Board, and Off the Air Productions. Through the vehicle of art and music, Arts for Freedom will reach and empower otherwise underserved and isolated individuals by connecting them with a variety of community-oriented projects.

A very small staff of part-time employees keeps Arts for Freedom going. Painting, decorating, hanging art and most of the other work in the gallery are done by volunteers, giving back to their community. Incentives are offered to cover transportation and wear and tear on personal vehicles.

John Black and his volunteers adhere to the philosophy, "You are the change you want to see." According to Black, "We believe that each community member is responsible for helping make the community healthy. By acting as if we are the ones that can make the change happen, we CAN make it happen."

Every local artist that wants to be a part of this new gallery IS part of it. Special shows are organized every month. All media are welcome. Opportunities for musicians and spoken word artists are in the works.

Artwork is for sale on a consignment basis. Each artist signs a contract and 70% of the money goes directly to the artist. There is no cost to visit the gallery or to an artist for showing his work.

Anyone of any age is welcomed to the Arts for Freedom gallery. If you want to be involved, come down to the gallery or contact gallery staff to request an "Artist Interest in Showing" form.

The Arts for Freedom gallery is located at the corner of 13<sup>th</sup> and J Streets in downtown Modesto. Hours are Thursday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and 9 to 9 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Art Walk nights.



Arts for Freedom is sponsored by Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors and Stanislaus Behavioral Health and Recovery Services

Peer Recovery Art Project, home of the ARTS FOR FREEDOM GALLERY is located at:

1222 J Street, Modesto CA

Email, call or text:

[Peerrecoveryart@yahoo.com](mailto:Peerrecoveryart@yahoo.com)

(209) 581-1695

Open Thursday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Art Walk nights, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Find us at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> and J Streets between the State Theatre and Crow Trading; right next door to the Camera Center.

**SPONSOR A VISUAL ARTIST FUNDRAISER begins February 24**

**The new PATTERSON YOUTH CENTER was opened February 2nd and PRAP was there! Watch for a full report in the March edition of *Renaissance*.**

It's a wonderful world when artists and friends can come together, show their Art for FREE, pay NO admission fees to view the Art, and hear music for no charge - all to bring awareness to the American Heart Association at our second Women of the Arts for Healthy Hearts. Thursday, February 16 (Art Walk night) at both Barkin' Dog Grill and Peer Recovery Art Project Gallery, home of the Arts for Freedom program.



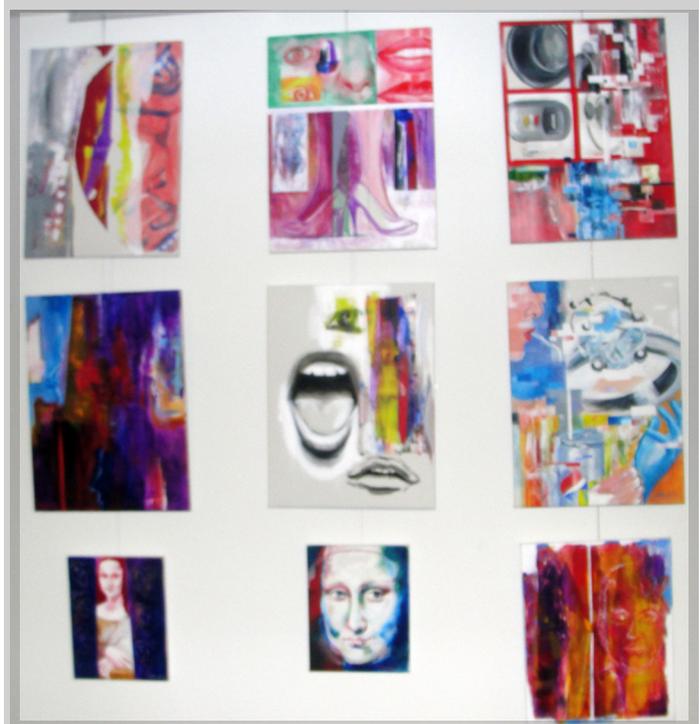
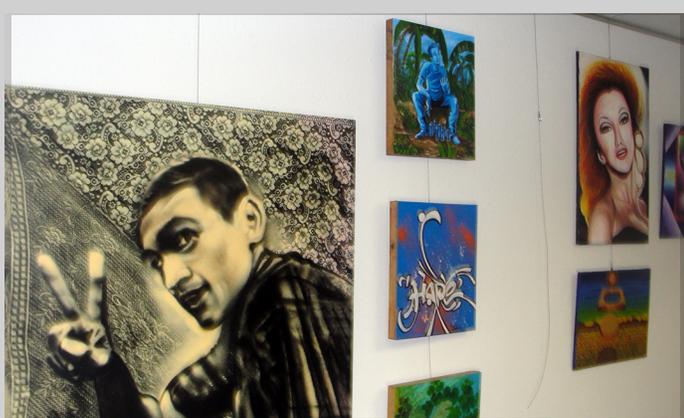
*Come in and meet the friendly, efficient staff at the Arts for Freedom gallery, from left to right: Monica, Suzanne, Betty, and Nancy. Not pictured, Randy, maintenance.*

## January's Art Walk

*By Betty Barnes*

The January 19 Third Thursday Art Walk was outstanding although the weather was rainy and not that many people were out downtown. Six new artists expressed interest in exhibiting with Peer Recovery Art Project. One was the high school student who won Best of Show at Mistlin Gallery's Young Masters Art Show this week. One of the three-year-olds at my child care center won Second Place in that show. The show, featuring young artists from pre-school through high school, is open for public viewing through February 11.

PRAP has three new artists with very diverse backgrounds. Ranging in age from young to not-so-young they are all going to be really good friends. Their artwork is exceptionally good quality!



*On the walls of the Arts for Freedom gallery you will see works by local artists James Abaun, Mark Bixby, Jordi Camps, Aaron Vickery (aka Fasm), Keena Wells, and others.*

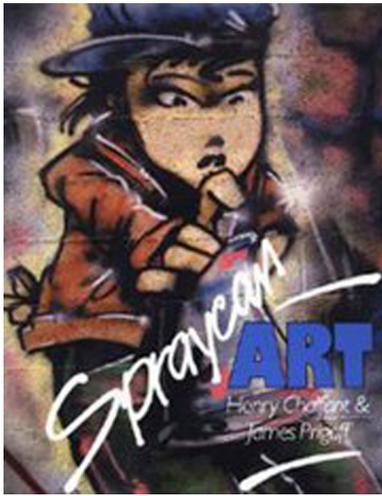


### Modesto Artist Meetup

February 15 at the new Arts for Freedom Gallery starting at 6 p.m. The assignment is to create a work of art and bring it to share! Anything goes... Express yourself...

**eArtsNews.com**  
 Your "Arts and Entertainment" Guide  
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Check out John Griswold's monthly calendar - a great place to find out what's going on in music, theatre, film, literature, exhibits, dance, education, and festival events!



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**“The History of Graffiti,” a lecture by Jim Prigoff,  
photographer/author/lecturer**

*Wednesday, April 4. State Theatre Gala Event. 6-9 p.m. \$5.00*

James Prigoff is an author, photographer and lecturer on the subject of world-wide urban murals. He is one of the most important photographers of aerosol art on the international scene. He started worldwide documentation of murals in the late 1960s which lead him to compile one of the most extensive collections of aerosol art and graffiti in the world. James co-authored the book Spraycan Art with photographer Henry Chalfant in 1987 and is widely respected within the international aerosol art community.

Peer Recovery Art Project is connected to James Prigoff through his family members who have been very supportive of John Black in his position within a statewide advocacy group. The family's generosity in sharing their father's life's passion with PRAP speaks volumes to the premise that *life is all about building relationships*. Building a healthier community through art and music begins with creating a welcoming atmosphere where *everyone* feels they belong.

Please join Peer Recovery Art Project, home of the Arts for Freedom program, in welcoming James Prigoff, the artist, the father, and our friend, while enjoying the amazing story he will share about his life's work.

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