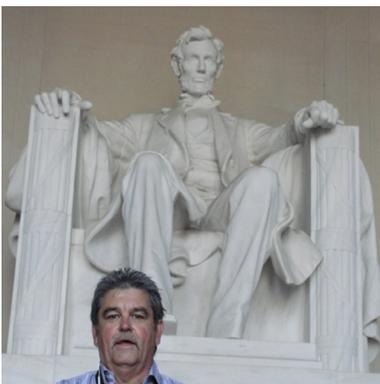


*“Building a Healthier Community through Personal and Professional Example”  
Peer Recovery Art Project is our continuous campaign to end stigma, revitalize downtown areas, while implementing new strategies for an all-inclusive and, therefore, healthier community.*

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*John Black at Lincoln Memorial*

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER NOTES**

Got Art?? If so, join Peer Recovery Art Project’s community inclusion movement. Find yourself showing more of your art, viewing more work of other artists, building

relationships with like-minded people and simultaneously listening to very talented musicians performing live. All this and more await those who want to be part of our caring community service arts organization.

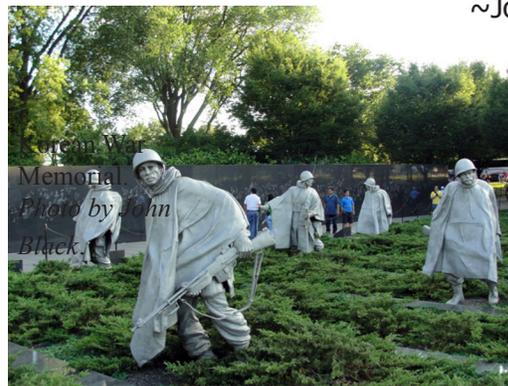
Inclusion is not enough! Often people can feel like outsiders even when in a crowd. PRAP wants to help our community become a welcoming place where each one of us develops our own individual sense of “belonging”.

That brings us to the biz at hand. So much has been happening lately!! First, Peer Recovery Art Project answered a Stanislaus County Request for Proposals and was chosen by Behavioral Health and Recovery Services to develop and operate our new “Arts for Freedom” program with Mental Health Services Act Innovations dollars. Then, as a result of my State of California advocacy, I had the pleasure of attending the SAMHSA\* Olmstead and Block Grant Technical Conference in Washington, DC. As I toured the war memorials in our capitol city, I was reminded that “freedom is NOT free”. Peer Recovery Art Project’s new Arts for Freedom program did not come without heavy costs to its founding members and supporters, both past and present. Some PRAP supporters moved on to better their lives. Some artists went their separate ways and

others passed on. Through all of this, PRAP’s purpose and foundation were not shaken and our passion for belonging did not falter. Yes, PRAP’s Arts for Freedom program will soon be a reality but not without some obstacles in our quest for organizational maturity. Our past experience has resulted in an increased determination to belong in our community’s arts movement.

As you look over this edition of PRAP’s monthly newsletter, I hope you enjoy the photographs from my Washington, DC trip. Remember, there is some really exciting energy in our organization and we believe it is infectious. Catch the wave and ride upward to your highest potential as a community member who helps ensure this town is a place in which we ALL belong. “Persona non grata?” Absolutely not! Artists, Peer Recovery Art Project and our new Arts for Freedom Gallery have a place for YOU!

~John Black, CEO



*Korean War Memorial Photo by John Black*

*Korean War Memorial. Photo by John Black.*

.....  
**MODESTO’S THIRD THURSDAY ART WALK - a great opportunity for all the family to enjoy art in downtown. July 21st, 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

**See page 3 for the article about the Village Sun Catchers annual show, July 21st. Free and open to the public.**



## MODESTO BLUES ART & MUSIC FESTIVAL

By Betty Barnes

A special “**THANK YOU**” to the entire group of artists who showed their work at the Modesto Blues Art & Music Festival held Saturday, June 25th! The art show and music resulted in the best show yet, with a total of 165 pieces of art and 16 different artists. Artists showing at the event included Tammi, Michael, Patricia, Monica, Mark, Scott, Shastiana, Shellie, Nathan, James, Keena, Matt, Nadia, and three anonymous artists. Special welcome to new artists at this event- Nathan Heselfon from Stockton and Patricia Demello who just moved to the Modesto area.

Upon our arrival at Seasons Multicultural Center on McHenry Avenue, it was hard for me and Michael Anderson (PRAP’s Art Director) to imagine the enormous size of the facility. There was an outdoor entrance to the large patio area, a huge ballroom, a lengthy hallway leading to a comfortable bar with outstanding dance area, as well as the outdoor patio with food and bar areas.

The most memorable part of the Festival for me was receiving ten minutes of official instructions from John Black to place art *throughout* the wonderful Seasons facility. I looked at Michael and thought to myself, “John must have lost his noodle, thinking that Michael and I can unload a truck packed with art and display it in an orderly fashion!” Well, with the help of JB’s set-up and take-down crew (which deserves an extra “**Thank You**” for a job well done!) we got it done. Each artist was assigned a particular area in which to set up. After finishing the main building area, we moved outdoors to the patio, dancing to Blues music while completing set-up of our displays.

While attendees enjoyed the music, Peer Recovery Art Project provided an on-site art station for children and an artist creativity area where at least five artists showed their emotional and wellness artistic talents for the audience. Matt and Nadia both bopped to the music as they painted on their current artwork. “Painting is all about observa-

tion,” said painter Nadia. “The process involves thinking abstractly—even if you’re painting traditionally—not looking at the objects themselves but observing how light, atmosphere, value, color, edges, and temperature work together to give an object its form. If you’re thoughtful about all of the above, a painting will emerge, and a two-dimensional surface will become three dimensional.” I sincerely appreciate all the artists and their hard work preparing for and participating in this year’s Modesto Blues Art & Music Festival!



*Second Tradition band entertains enthusiastic audience outdoors at Seasons Multicultural Event Center, Saturday, June 25.*

## WHY I PLAY GUITAR

By Phillip Cisneros

First of all, I guess I play guitar because it’s in my genetics but there are other reasons as well. One reason is because the guitar is a very beautiful instrument and I can make a very beautiful, crisp, clear sound. The guitar is versatile. Also it gives me an outlet to express myself and my emotion. The guitar seems to have a very soothing effect on people depending on what is being played. Each person has his own unique perception and can cheer you up. When I mess with my guitar I forget my problems and troubles. I’m very particular about what I play. I do not approve of all songs and music. I just like beautiful good music. If some band writes a song and I cannot help liking part of it, it does not mean I approve of the band’s behavior, its music or the lyrics of the song. I think music does not have to be loud or evil to make you feel good. As for stars, I don’t want to be an idol. I just want another side of me to have fun.



## WE NOW HAVE A CHANCE

By Lily Smith 1-08-10

When something in your head goes wrong,  
 Just start to think of your favorite song,  
 If negative thoughts get inside your mind,  
 Try something you enjoy to find.  
 Stay positive and you'll be glad,  
 Life is too short for us to live sad.

Are you living your life alone and blue?

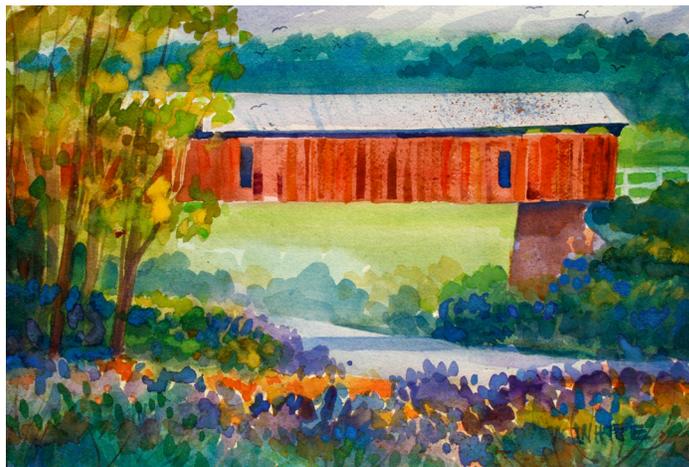
Do you wonder to yourself what can you do?

This is not life the way you wish it to be,  
 But be glad you now have the chance for Recovery.  
 For those with depression I hope and someday see,  
 Them living their lives happy and free.

From the changes in the system that they have done,  
 Part of the battles in our lives we have now won.  
 Die to the changes for our Peers we have today,  
 A better life for us and hope now I say.  
 We now have a chance so let us use it well,  
 Work on Recovery and please do not fail.



From the Smithsonian art collection. Photo by John Black.



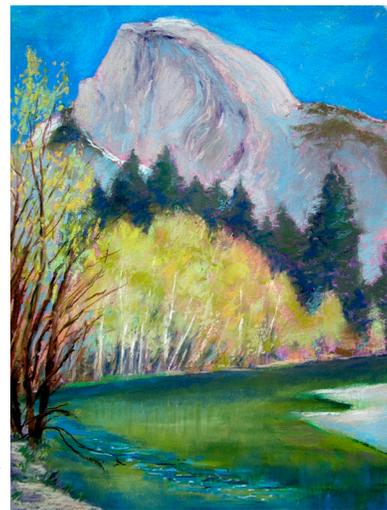
## VALLEY SUN CATCHERS “EN PLEIN AIR” SHOW

Mistlin Gallery, July 20 to August 13, 2011

The Central California Art Association at the Mistlin Gallery is hosting “En Plein Air” July 20 to August 13. Members of the Valley Sun Catchers will display paintings done on location. Reception is Third Thursday Art Walk, July 21, from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Music and refreshments are provided, free to the public. Mistlin Gallery hours are Tuesday to Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, noon to 4:00 p.m. Mistlin Gallery is located at 1015 J Street, Modesto. Phone: 209-529-3369. Email: ccaagallery@gmail.com.

The Valley Sun Catcher group is based in Modesto but has members from the Central Valley region. The artists paint outside to capture the light and atmosphere of a location. The Impressionist artist Monet said to paint “the exact color and shape until it gives you your own naïve impression of the scene before you.” Plein air artists base their work on field studies and artistic perceptions rather than the pixels of photography.



Plein Air work shown at top: “Spring at Knights Ferry Bridge” by Virginia White. At bottom right: “Spring Green” by Barbara Beaudreau.



The nation's capitol. *Photo by John Black.*

*Stuff to know about . . .*

### THE OLMSTEAD DECISION

On June 22, 1999, the United States Supreme Court held in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that the unnecessary segregation of individuals with disabilities in institutions may constitute discrimination based on disability. The court ruled that the Americans with Disabilities Act may require states to provide community-based services rather than institutional placements for individuals with disabilities.

In a 6-3 opinion written by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the court affirmed a ruling by the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, saying that "unjustified isolation of individuals with disabilities is properly regarded as discrimination based on disability."



### NEW PATTERSON SKATE PARK OPENING SOON!

Peer Recovery Art Project and the Patterson Youth Advisory Commission have been working on a Rotation Mural Project at the park. Stay tuned for more developments!

#### PEER RECOVERY ART PROJECT, INC. EXECUTIVE BOARD

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Keena Wells, Lead Artist

Betty Barnes & Debra Delash, PR, Fundraising

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