

Art Auction Helps Feed Area's Hungry

By Sue G. Collins, Special Writer Saline Reporter published: May 18, 2006

Original artworks cover every surface and lie in neat stacks and wait in tiered racks at Saline Picture Frame Company, the bright site for this year's Circle of Art, the second annual fund-raiser for Food Gatherers by collaborating local artists.

More than 300 paintings, sculptures, glass works, baskets, ceramics and photographs are already attracting silent bids as the artists and supporters wander through the gallery in anticipation of the May 21 party when the auction reaches fever pitch.

"This is a fun time for all of us at the shop – a lot of ooing and aahing as donations are dropped off. We are again amazed at the open-hearted generosity of the artists bringing in work – no donor fatigue here," exclaimed Peter Bowe, who owns Saline Picture Frame Co. with wife Mary and sister Sara.

"Early bids have already passed \$1,000 – enough to support about 4,800 meals, two weeks of fuel, or over six months of grocery bags for Food Gatherers. Way to go!" Bowe cheered.

"Circle of Art is a unique opportunity for absolutely anyone to go home with an original piece of very high-caliber art. Bids start at \$10. Also, this is an excellent way for established artists and emerging artists to find a new audience." said Mary Bowe, who was among the crew that helped Saline artist Valerie Mann organize last year's party, which raised \$10,500 for Food Gatherers.

The motto for the event is "Lots of little works of art to benefit a big cause." Each one-of-a-kind piece is smaller than 9x12."

Food Gatherers exists to alleviate hunger and addresses its causes in our community by reducing food waste through the rescue and distribution of perishable and non perishable food, coordinating with other hunger relief providers, educating the public about hunger, and developing new food resources. Twenty-seven weekly routes connect businesses and organizations that have too much food to people who don't have enough – more than 300 local donors during the course of a year including many in Saline.

"Their needs are up and resources are down," explained Peter Bowe. "We're just the facilitator here. The artists are amazing and come from all over – California, New Mexico, Venezuela. And most of them will show up for the party on May 21 to bid against each other, meet the community supporters and buy someone else's work to take home. It's a really high-energy event and everyone is most welcome."

All the artwork in the auction can be viewed and bid on, Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Thursday until 7 p.m. and Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. For questions, call 429-3352 or go to www.salinepictureframe.com. The highest silent bidder does not need to be present to win.

