



ANNETTE HOWELL TURNER  
**Center For The Arts**  
CELEBRATING THE ART IN LIFE

## Spring Into Art Show Press Kit

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PR Writing

April 28, 2009





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March 20, 2009

## **FACT SHEET- SPRING INTO ART SHOW**

### **Who**

The Turner Center for the Arts  
Tom Jones, director of operations

### **What**

Announcing the seventh annual Spring Into Art Show, fundraiser for the Grassroots afterschool program.

### **Where**

Turner Center for the Arts  
527 N. Patterson St.  
Valdosta, GA 31602

### **When**

The art show will be held from April 1 to May 31, 2009. The opening reception (free to the public) will be held on April 1, at 6 p.m.

### **Why**

Fundraiser for Grassroots. Ninety percent of profits from sales will go directly to the program.

### **Benefits**

More than 25 local artists will be featured in the show, as well as Grassroots student's artwork.

### **Quote**

"Since beginning the Spring Into Art Show, the Turner Center has raised more than \$27,000 for the Grassroots program," said Tom Jones, director of operations. "The Grassroots program has allowed more than 500 children have been moved by the arts, whether it be painting, pottery or jewelry making."

### **Background on Turner Center for the Arts**

It has been established in Valdosta for 36 years. The center is a non-profit organization that showcases the works of local artists as well as provides community classes such as painting, cooking and pottery.

### **Background on the Spring Into Art Show**

Started seven years ago as a fundraiser for the Grassroots program. It showcases artwork from children in the program, local school's art classes and regional artists.

### **INFORMATION CONTACT**

Merry Parker Whidby, vice-president of public relations and marketing  
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For Immediate Release

### Visualizing a New Life Through Art

VALDOSTA (March 29) – Seven years ago, Quinton Mueller was a mischievous seven-year-old child. With his father in jail and his mother on drugs, Mueller had to move in with his Aunt Sophie. Mueller was headed down a path of irresponsibility and delinquency—that is, until he entered the Grassroots afterschool program, at the Turner Center for the Arts.

After months of detention and reckless behavior, Mueller’s teacher, Anne Harvey, thought she was going to have to pull Mueller out of her class and send him to transition school.

Mueller was failing all of his subjects at Sallas Mahone Elementary School and was a regular in the principal’s office.

“Nothing seemed to work for Quinton,” said Tim English, principal of Sallas Mahone Elementary School. “And believe we tried everything from in-school suspension to detention and everything in between.”

Mueller started fights with his peers on a regular basis, vandalized the school gymnasium and was disrespectful to teachers and faculty members.

“I didn’t know what I was going to do with Quinton,” said Harvey. “I was talking to another teacher, Mrs. Keller, about the situation and she said she had the perfect solution.”

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## Visualizing

Two weeks later, Mueller entered Grassroots.

“For a little over the first three weeks, Quinton was doing his same old tricks again,” said Anthony Miller, director of Grassroots. “He was picking fights, braking art supplies and talking back to the instructors. We knew Quinton just needed a little love and a little attention.”

Miller began working with Mueller at each meeting. In the beginning of Mueller’s time at Grassroots, he would not even pick up a paint brush or participate in activities.

“One day, he [Quinton] finally picked up a marker and started scribbling as hard as he could until he broke the marker,” Miller said. “I think this helped him get out all his built up anger out of his system.”

Mueller is now 14 years old and is on the honor roll at Valdosta Middle School (VMS). The boy who was almost sent to transition school, is now quarterback of the VMS football team and president of the VMS art club.

“Grassroots really helped me,” Mueller said. “It helped me to get on the right path and straighten up. Art has let me find a way to express myself.”

Mueller’s artwork will be displayed in the seventh annual Spring Into Art show at the Turner Center. The show will be held from April 1, to May 31.

Grassroots has helped thousands of children like Mueller statewide. For more information and ways to volunteer, please contact the Turner Center for the Arts at (229) 247-ARTS.

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For Immediate Release

### Springing Into the Arts

VALDOSTA (March 20) – The Turner Center for the Arts is hosting its seventh annual Spring Into Art Show from April 1, to May 31, benefitting the center’s afterschool program, Grassroots.

Each of the five galleries at the Turner Center will be filled with artwork by more than 25 local artists and pieces created by children in Grassroots.

The opening reception will be held on April 1, at 6 p.m.

The Spring Into Art show is free to the public, but donations are greatly appreciated.

Each piece of artwork is for sale. Merchandise is available in the gift store as well.

“Ten percent of each piece sold will go back to artist,” said Tom Jones, director of operations for the Turner Center. “The rest of the profit is going directly to the Grassroots program. We’re estimating 50 more children joining the program in August, the largest increase since we started the program in 2001.”

More than 500 children have been involved in the program in the Lowndes County area. Each child expresses his or her creativity and individuality through visual art, music, and theater. A noticeable difference has been seen in their behavior and improved grades at school.

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## Springing Into the Arts

“We are very excited this year about the Spring Into Art show, said Merry Jo Kurrie, president of the Turner Center. “The show is bigger than ever this year and we hoping to raise even more money for Grassroots.”

The Grassroots program meets on Monday and Wednesday each week at the Turner Center. To find out more about the program, please contact Anthony Miller, director of Grassroots.

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Valdosta, GA 31602

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mpwhidby@turner.org

For Immediate Release

Valdosta Grassroots Goes Above and Beyond

VALDOSTA, Ga. (March 22) – The Georgia Council for the Arts has named the Turner Center for the Arts the “Outstanding Grassroots Chapter of the Year.”

Grassroots is an afterschool program that reaches children in the community who otherwise may not be exposed to the arts.

Since beginning the program in 2001, the Turner Center has helped more than 500 children.

“The Turner Center has completely taken Grassroots to a whole new level,” said Janice Green, president of the Georgia Council for the Arts. “They have reached out to so many children. The turn-around these children have made is an amazing thing to see.”

The Turner Center for the Arts conducted a study of last year’s Grassroots students. Out of 75 children, 63 showed improved behavior, 48 saw letter grade improvements and 27 became more involved at school.

“This is a really big honor and we couldn’t be more ecstatic,” said Anthony Miller, director of Grassroots at the Turner Center. “Really though, it’s the kids who should be awarded this honor. They are what make our program so great.”

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Above and Beyond

Grassroots programs combine visual art, music and theater to help children express individuality and creativity.

The Turner Center reaches out to elementary school students in the Lowndes County area.

###



Spring Into Art Show Kicks Off  
Whidby

:30  
10 lines  
Kill Date 5/31/09

The Turner Center for the Arts invites you to attend their seventh annual Spring Into Art show.

The show raises money for the Turner Center's afterschool program, Grassroots.

The Spring Into Art show begins on April first and last until May 31st. It is free to the public.

Donations are greatly appreciated.

Come out and support the works of local artists and children in Grassroots that are featured in the show! You won't want to miss this event!

Grassroots reaches out to children in Lowndes County who may not have the opportunity to otherwise be exposed to the arts.

All of the artwork will be for sale. Proceeds will benefit the Grassroots program.

(end)



Spring Into Art Show Kicks Off  
Whidby

:60  
15 lines  
Kill Date 5/31/09

The Turner Center for the Arts invites you to attend its seventh annual Spring Into Art show. The art show raises money for the Turner Center's afterschool program, Grassroots.

The Spring Into Art show begins on April first and last until May 31st. It is free to the public.

Donations are greatly appreciated.

The opening reception will be held on April first at 6 p.m.

Come out and support the works of local artists like Jim Touchton and Jenny Cowart. Artwork by children in Grassroots will also be featured in the show! You won't want to miss this event!

Grassroots reaches out to children in Lowndes County who otherwise may not have the chance to be exposed to the arts.

All of the artwork will be for sale. Proceeds will benefit the Grassroots program. Studies have shown great improvements in the behavior and grades of students in Grassroots.

(more)

Spring Into Art Show Kicks Off  
P.2

Children in the program range from ages five to ten years old. Activities include visual art,  
theatre and music.

For more information, please contact the Turner Center at (229) 247-A-R-T-S or e-mail them at  
info@turner.org.

(end)



Grassroots students receive their diplomas at the graduation ceremony at the Turner Center for the Arts, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2009. (VDT Photo/Mark Smith)



Jim Stevens receives first place in the 2-D category for his watercolor, "Picnic in the Park," from curator Jamie Gillian at the opening reception for the Spring Into Art Show, Wednesday, April 1, 2009. (VDT Photo/Ellen Sineath)



Students and volunteers making music together in a drum circle at the Turner Center for the Art's afterschool program, Grassroots, Monday, March 1, 2009.  
(VDT Photo/Abby Smith)



“How Do I Look?,” one of Jim Touchton’s paintings, featured in the Spring Into Art Show at the Turner Center for the Arts, Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2009. (VDT Photo/Bill Waugh)



Grassroots students hanging up their artwork for the Spring Into Art Show at the Turner Center for the Arts, Wednesday, March 20, 2009. (VDT Photo/Erin Smith)

## CALL TO ACTION



# Turner Center for the Arts Advocates No Child Without Art.

The Turner Center for the Arts wants to encourage every child in the Lowndes County area has an education in the arts. Creativity and art are vital areas of child development and communication.

We hope all children can be given the opportunity to practice art and are given the freedom to express themselves. Art should not be restricted to just being a painter, but should allow the child to create things, solve problem differently and contribute to society.

Ages five to six is an ideal time to develop creativity and artistry, because their logical thinking has not fully developed yet, but their fine motors skills are developing fast.

Every elementary school in Lowndes County does not offer an art education to children in kindergarten. Only 47 percent of children in our area receive some kind of art education at this age.

Many studies have been done in the past two decades regarding the importance of art and creativity in the development of children. Working extensively in visual arts with children the past eight years, Turner Center for the Arts have come to realize that art builds on several important skills in a child's development:

- **Encouraging creativity.** When scribbling on a sheet of paper or drawing a picture, a child is learning to communicate visually. The drawing might just be of a place or thing, or it could communicate what emotions the child is feeling. Mixing colors and learning how to use an art tool allows children to experiment and discover something new.
- **Increasing fine motor skill function.** Whether learning how to cut properly with scissors for the first time, figuring out how to draw an object or attempting to control a paintbrush's strokes, a child can learn intricate fine motor skills that will be vital in the future.
- **Developing problem-solving skills.** A child wants to draw a picture of a happy memory. He must decide what which materials to use or which color he or she wants to use. If the color they wish to use is not available, he or she must decide on another option. Art encourages basic and advanced problem-solving skills in a variety of ways.
- **Supporting self-expression.** Allowing a child to have an outlet, such as painting a picture, can help him or her deal with their emotions. The child is learning to portray visually what can not be said through their words or actions. Self-expression is an important human trait evident in the visual arts.

Some people feel art education is not important in child development. They think young children should be more focused on discipline and obedience. Restraining a child from his or her individuality can cause serious problems in the future. Studies have shown that children, who are restricted from playing and freedom of expression, are 55 percent more likely to be rebellious and misbehaved young adults.

“The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships, unlike much of the curriculum in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail,” according to Elliot Eisner, professor of education at Stanford University. “The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world.”

Turner Center for the Arts would like to enforce a “No Child without Art” policy in Lowndes County. This would entail enforcing each elementary school to provide art education to all students at the kindergarten level. We also want to encourage parents to let your children explore their artistic and creative talents at home.

It is usually the visual arts that communicate ideas better than words. Art has been used as therapy for many years. We want art to be incorporated into children’s everyday life.

Turner Center for the Arts pledges to work with the Valdosta City Council to provide art education to all children at the kindergarten level in our area. Help us get this policy in the works. Contact your local city councilmen today.



Mr. Dean Poling  
Assistant Editor  
Valdosta Daily Times  
201 N. Troup St.  
Valdosta, GA 31602

March 25, 2009

Dear Mr. Poling:

I am writing to inform you of the Turner Center for the Art's seventh annual Spring Into Art show, a fundraiser for the center's afterschool program, Grassroots. The opening reception will be held on April 1, at 6 p.m. and is open to the public.

More than 25 local artists, including Jim Touchton and Jenny Cowart, will be featured. Artwork done by children in Grassroots will also be displayed. Each piece of art will be for sale and prints will be available in the gift shop.

The Spring Into Art show is free to the public. Last year, more than 350 people from Lowndes County attended the opening reception and 527 visitors visited throughout the event.

Grassroots' purpose is to reach out to children in the community who otherwise may not be exposed to the arts. The program has benefited more than 500 children in our area since its beginning in 2001.

Please let me know if I can assist you with any further information.

Sincerely,

Merry Parker Whidby  
Turner Center for the Arts, vice-president of public relations and marketing



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Merry Parker Whidby

Dr. Brunner

April 28, 2009

Press Kit

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