

Morgan Haydock: One of 2022's Outstanding Young Women

The SCCW Board of Directors proudly presents the 2022 Outstanding Young Women of Stanislaus County. This year's focus was on young women who have demonstrated exceptional involvement in activities focused on a concern for women in the Stanislaus County community. Outstanding Young Women were nominated for demonstrating leadership, being involved in extra-curricular activities that positively impact girls and women, overcoming hardship to inspire others, and possessing unique qualities that make them exceptional. The awardees represent a diverse group of young women who are advocating for youth empowerment, reproductive rights, access to health care, and action on climate policy.



They have raised funds for local nonprofits, started new clubs to mentor young girls, and mobilized students to clean up our rivers.

The young women will receive a scholarship. The Modesto Library currently displays all the Outstanding Women posters since 1980.

Morgan Haydock is a biology major at Modesto Junior College and plans to transfer to UC Davis. She worked with Valley Improvement Project and Modesto Peace/Life Center to start Climate Justice Action Now, which involves junior high and elementary school youth in combatting climate

change. She volunteered for the Stanislaus Sustainable Communities Coalition to

contribute to rewriting Modesto's general plan. Morgan also volunteered with the Josh Harder campaign. She works as an intern at MJC's Great Valley Museum.

She is concerned about threats to women's reproductive rights. She also notes that women are still underrepresented in STEM professions and thinks it is important that women have the support and access they need to thrive in scientific careers.

Her ultimate educational goal is to earn a Ph.D. in cellular biology and work in the field of scientific research and public understanding of the world we live in, such as at a museum, focusing on making scientific knowledge accessible to the public.

Rana Banankhah is a Modesto High senior and the Interhigh Student Voice Council president. She serves as the student

member of Modesto City Schools' Board of Education and for the California State Board of Education. Her interest in engineering led her to develop an app to recycle plastic waste into 3D printer filament. She also advocated to restore the Modesto Youth Commission and testified at the state level for legislative issues affecting youth health.

Rana believes that important issues affecting women are the lack of education in many countries and the need for financial literacy education. She thinks our society needs to do more to empower young women to have a strong voice so that more women can advocate for themselves and others.

She plans to attend Stanford to major in public policy and aspires to enter politics or

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We must turn solidarity with Ukraine into the new normal for all refugees

The global North's unprecedented support for Ukrainians has revealed double standards. But it's also an opportunity to extend such solidarity to everyone.

By **NICOLAS HAERINGER**

This article was originally published on [Waging Nonviolence](#).

Since Russia started its war on Ukraine, we've seen a tremendous outpouring of solidarity with Ukrainians. People have made [online donations to the Ukrainian army](#), Europe has welcomed refugees with open arms and [free trains](#), western countries have united in their imposition of sanctions on Russia and discussed [ridding themselves of its oil and gas](#).

Such support is truly unprecedented. Can you imagine mass donations to the armed resistance of another group of people under attack, like the Palestinians? They would immediately be called a terrorist. Meanwhile,

Europeans helping refugees from Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Libya, and elsewhere are [accused of human trafficking](#). There's also no head of state daring enough to denounce the genocide of the Uyghurs by China, nor any government refusing to buy Saudi oil in protest of the war on Yemen.

This is why some have argued that the war on Ukraine is exposing the global North's blindspots, double standards and outright racism. In short, our solidarity seems to be conditioned on the affected people being white and Christian.

Yet, by focusing on these double standards, we're missing an important strategic dimension: Precedents like this outpouring of Ukrainian support and solidarity are one of the most powerful ways to create change. As unfair as it may seem, welcoming the precedent and showing that it is possible to break with business as usual — rather than

only denouncing the blindspots — is a first step toward making the precedent the new normal.

Breaking with business as usual

Social movements — or any organized effort towards social transformation and collective emancipation — usually have three different goals. First, they can aim to set precedents, open new possibilities and shift lines (ideally beyond just “the narrative”). Their role, here, is to achieve “cultural” change, ensuring the *zeitgeist* continues shaping that which appeared impossible, unnecessary, or unreasonable into what's possible, necessary and reasonable.

Movements can also aim to turn these precedents (and any other demand) into the “new normal,” making sure the changes happening in people's minds are turned into

policies, norms, habits, etc.

Finally, movements can aim to fight against any backlash or attempt by the state or institutions to destroy something movements have achieved — like pensions or workers' rights. These are called “defensive” struggles.

Over the past few weeks, we've seen the line between what's unrealistic and what's possible shift very rapidly. To name just a few examples, we've seen:

- refugees being genuinely welcomed, unconditionally
- the assets of billionaires frozen and seized, as well as unprecedented international cooperation to take control over the interests of Russian billionaires
- a “rogue” state disconnected from the global financial system

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Annual Used Book Sale Slated for May at Modesto Library

Mark your calendar for Saturday, May 7 – the annual FOML Used Book Sale at the Modesto Library. Event Chair Pat Glatke has announced that used book donations are now being accepted. Call (209) 985-7156 to arrange to drop off your books. Or, take them to the Modesto Library in boxes or bags clearly marked MODESTO FRIENDS USED BOOK SALE.

As always, volunteers are needed to sort books prior to the sale and to work at the event. Contact Marilyn Drew, WalkingMD@pacbell.net, to volunteer.



Help the Peace Center: Attend the John McCutcheon Concerts

By KEN SCHROEDER

The third in a series of live stream John McCutcheon concerts to benefit the Modesto Peace/Life Center. On Sunday, April 3 at 4:00 PM Pacific time, John will be joined by three of his favorite songwriters (Darrell Scott, Beth Nielsen Chapman, and Crys Matthews) for a round-robin of amazing songs. These writers will talk about the songs, their writing process, and how they bring what's inside, outside.

Darrell Scott: <https://www.darrellscott.com/>

Beth Nielsen Chapman: <https://bethnielsenchapman.com/>

Crys Matthews: <https://www.crysmatthews.com/>

Single concert ticket prices are \$20 single ticket; \$30 family/household; \$10 student; \$5 unemployed; \$50 music supporter. The Modesto Peace/Life Center gets a share of ticket sales. Tickets and info here <https://boxoffice.mandolin.com/products/john-mccutcheon-songwriters-in-the-round-livestream-ticket>



It is Always time for LOVE and New Beginnings

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

"Give Yourself to Love"

Sunday Afternoons at CBS is forwarding our annual Grace Lieberman Valentine Concert and David Bradford Tea to April 3rd at Congregation Beth Shalom in Modesto at 1705 Sherwood Avenue.

The exquisite voice of Liisa Davila will guide the audience through several genres of love songs to give your heart to love, as we focus upon the broader meanings of LOVE here and across the world in these challenging times. She will be accompanied on piano by her husband, Mark Davila, and Jordan Williams, Fresno guitarist, collaborator, and music director. Liisa's daughter, Isabella Davila, will join her mom in a duet.

The musical Valentine treats will include Broadway Musical Theater, Oldies but Goodies Jazz Standards, Guitar love Serenades, and beautiful Opera selections from Carmen and La Boheme interspersed with some fun-filled sing-alongs.

A native of Stockton, Ms. Davila considers her "top job" to be that of Mom to her daughter and three sons. She earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Vocal Performance from California State University Sacramento and has performed nationally and internationally as a soloist with symphonies, chorales, and opera companies.

Her award-winning career has included performances at the Lincoln Center in New York City, as well as appearances in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and participation in the Greek Opera Studio on the Island of Syros in Greece.

She is the Assistant Conductor and Chorus Director for Opera Modesto and has won numerous awards from various music competitions and following her operatic conducting debut leading the "Readers" performances of Opera Modesto's Mansfield Park in 2020. Notably, Maestra Liisa won over 50 awards, including the Best Conductor Award from the Milano [Italy] International Film Festival for the Opera Modesto film, The Race.

Her love of working with children has led her to her newest adventure as a substitute teacher.

An afternoon tea will accompany the cabaret-style concert featuring scones, tea sandwiches, pastries, chocolates, and a variety of teas. Purchase tickets through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/valentine-concert-tea-tickets-262042013717> or by calling the CBS office at 209 571-6060. Learn more at <https://www.cbsmodesto.org/concert-series.html> or on our Sunday Afternoons at CBS Facebook page.

April MAPS Program

MAPS offers free, informative, and engaging community science programs, 7:30 pm. Participate by logging on to an Internet Link: <https://www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/maps.php> to sign up for notification of the link.

For archived MAPS talks: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLL81u2WuJbe6joR9r56Bif8UIXFdRXNxe>

April 22: Paleoanthropologist excavations of Homo naledi in the Rising Star Cave: Dr. Marina Elliott is a biological anthropologist, interested in the Human Journey – how, why, and when humans became who we are today. In 2013 she became one of six "Underground Astronauts" on the Rising Star Expedition, which led to the naming of a new hominin species, Homo naledi.



Discovered deep in a cave in the Cradle of Humankind in September 2013, Homo naledi is one of the newest members of the human family. In just 8 years it has become one of the largest assemblages of fossil hominins in the world and is notable for the unprecedented quality and completeness of the remains. [Marina Elliott - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marina_Elliott), [How Finding This Human Ancestor Is Making Us Rethink Our Origins | Nat Geo Live](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/04/22/homo-naledi-making-us-rethink-our-origins/). Presentation by ZOOM

MAPS is grateful to the MJC Foundation, SCOE, MJC, the MTA (Modesto Teachers Assn.) and the GVM for generous support.

Yokuts Group Sierra Club 2022 Scholarship for MJC and CSUS Students

The Yokuts Group Sierra Club \$1000 Scholarship for 2022 is now open for applications for students attending Modesto Junior College or Stanislaus State University.

The application shall include a short essay of the applicant's classwork and activities related to environmental stewardship.

Application documents must be received by the Yokuts Group, Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club via U.S. Mail (P.O. Box 855, Modesto, CA 95353) or email (ayyoungbooks2@gmail.com) by April 15, 2022. If sent by the U.S. Mail, it must be postmarked by April 15, 2022.

See the Yokuts Group Sierra Club Instagram, Facebook, and website pages for the specific application requirements for this scholarship.


<https://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts>

<https://www.instagram.com/yokutssierraclub/>

<https://www.facebook.com/YokutsSierraClub>

Information: contact Elaine Gorman, vevado@yahoo.com





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and a **sustainable future**

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Dr. Richard Anderson: A True Pillar of the Community

By TOM PORTWOOD

One of the Valley's great community leaders, Dr. Richard Anderson took an often-adventurous path in life prior to arriving as a Professor of Microbiology at Modesto Junior College in 1989. Along the way, he experienced things that helped shape the dedicated and caring activist he is today.

Not surprisingly, he has always worked fiercely as an advocate for a wide array of worthy causes – from fighting for social justice in the Santa Barbara of the late sixties and early seventies to teaming with others on the Modesto Homeless Documentary Project - and continues to do so well into his retirement years.

And early on, Dr. Anderson learned the value of looking for lessons in every situation.

"I was born in Des Moines Iowa, in 1944, but we moved to California when I was four, so I am basically a Californian," Dr. Anderson recently recounted. "We went to a literalist Christian church. Attending that church has been a problem for me as well as a blessing. But I did learn good lessons from that experience – that we should love others as we love ourselves and that we have a responsibility to make this world a good place."

From an early age, Richard was fascinated by science, and enrolled at the University of Southern California with the intent of becoming a medical missionary. Upon graduation, though, he was still searching for what he wanted to do with his life.

Staying on at USC for graduate studies, he "analyzed the feeding habits of fish, Lanternfish. Every day these fish migrate 300 meters down into the dark because they have to escape predators, and at nighttime they all come up again and start feeding on the plankton that's been growing during the day. By studying these fish, I was able to earn a master's degree."

His intensive postgraduate studies next took him to the campus of the University of California at Santa Barbara, where he pursued his Ph.D. by using an electron microscope to study how plants move sugars from leaf to root. "But something else happened at UCSB in those years," he pointed out. "The Revolutions of the Sixties were happening – the Environmental Revolution, the Black Revolution, the Brown Revolution, the Women's Revolution, and the Gays were beginning to come out. It was an exciting time." It was during this time that Richard became more of a Progressive, someone willing to stand up for social justice."

"I completed my doctoral exams early in 1970," Dr. Anderson continued. "But I had no job. So I bought a restaurant for about \$1,500. I learned another lesson - which is that running a small restaurant is really, really hard work, and takes up all your time seven days a week all day."

In a sense, Richard had two separate restaurants. "I had a Gay coffee house which was open later at night. We served pie, ice cream, tea, and coffee. But we also had a restaurant open in the evenings, to serve food – brown rice with vegetables, and salad – you could get that for 99 cents. The specials were \$1.10. The food was very simple, such as beef Stroganoff made with ground beef. I did that for a year. It was common for the food take to be all of \$30 to \$35 a night!"

The next turn in the career path took Dr. Anderson to La



Mesa, California, where he taught full-time for a year at Grossmont College. Eventually, though, due to budget cuts and policy changes, he worked on a part-time basis for a few years before losing his position to a young woman.

"The school did the right thing," he generously recalled. "This was the era of the Women's Revolution. They needed to have youth, and they needed to have a woman!"

Undaunted by the loss of a job, and "excited by an opportunity to go to Belize with seven people to live there, and grow food," he set out on his next great adventure – living off the land, far away from the United States and its consumer society.

"The atmosphere in Belize was completely relaxed," he related. He loved the country and its people but found "I learned that not only was I not strong enough to make it on my own, but I really learned an appreciation for water. If you don't have water, you don't have life. I owned a Mayan-dug well maybe a thousand feet away down a gentle slope on the property where I lived – so I'd go down there with a yoke and two buckets and trudge back up that hill with the water. So this notion of turning on a tap for water and wasting it when we forget to turn it off – no, that experience made me into a water conservation fanatic. I learned many other lessons, too, including that I could not live in a non-technological society. I came back to the States to start up a new life."

Landing back in California in 1980, Dr. Anderson studied for a time to become a nurse, pursuing an LVN degree at Columbia College, but eventually started teaching at the school since, with his Ph.D., "I could teach any biology class they wanted to assign to me."

In the late 1980s, he again returned to school to learn microbiology at UC Davis.

"That really enhanced my life because now I could teach a broad range of subjects - microbiology, anatomy, physiology, and general biology. In 1989 I was hired at MJC, which was even better because I specialized in microbiology. I was able to make a film about the germ theory of disease on a Sabbatical leave," he mused. "In addition to getting the job, a couple of years later I married one of the biologists on the committee who had hired me - Lynn Hansen," he added chuckling. "That really changed everything for me!"

In the ensuing thirty years, Richard and his wife Lynn have traveled extensively, including to such far-flung destinations as the Galapagos Islands, the Antarctic, Tanzania, and Midway Island.



Following his retirement from MJC in 2009, Dr. Anderson redoubled his efforts in the community where he had taught and made a home with Ms. Hansen. This led to The Modesto Homeless Documentary Project.

"I spent most of my life in the Ivory Tower of academia so I felt the need to try to learn what's going on outside," he explained. "There is such a homeless problem here. I hooked up with Frank Ploof, Leng Power, John Lucas, and Eric Caine, and we made a documentary on the homeless in Modesto up until 2018." It's at: <https://youtu.be/PHauVTGXQsE>

"It's sort of a historical document because, in the fall of 2018, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals passed a ruling on the Boise case that says you cannot cite people for camping in public unless there is enough sheltering available in that community. There are no metropolitan communities that have enough sheltering, and so that ruling caused the big changes that we've seen in Modesto. We are now making a new movie that updates our area's responses to the issue over the last few years. What our area has done in response is really quite complex. I know we're not doing enough. More people are being added to the ranks of the homeless every year by all these powerful economic forces. I also want to complete my other video, which is called *Here and Now: Local Climate Change Impacts*."

Dr. Anderson contributes impressively in other ways as well. With his video equipment in hand, he's documented a plethora of local events, including poetry readings, candidate forums, and political rallies and marches. He's interviewed numerous religious leaders and scientists and documented their thoughts on video.

He's been a member of the League of Women Voters for many years and has long served as a volunteer for the Modesto Peace/Life Center. Recently, he and Ms. Hansen have been helping a family from Syria get established here in Modesto.

"I've learned a lot about Modesto and the Valley since I've been here, and met many wonderful people," he reflected when asked about the Valley. "Yes, we have our problems. But this is a very kind group of people that I know and with whom I work. It's a welcoming place, in a way. Of course, a lot of it is having met Lynn and married her and becoming integrated into the community. That has really opened my eyes to all kinds of wonderful people. I'm just trying to help build that community that we all want to live in."

2021-2022 Peace Essay Contest Finalists

Division I (grades 11 & 12)

Award	Name	School	Teacher
First	Ethan Tornberg	James Enochs HS	Hallsteinsson, Andy
Second	Sydney Tohara	Oakdale Charter	Jessica Menefee
3rd & SW	Madalynn Kuprienko	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Alexandro Aguilar	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Isheah Al Sumairi	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Brianna Ceja	Modesto HS	Jacquemin, Heather
Finalist	Elena Fisher	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Seth Harcrow	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Isabella Holmes	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Calvin Hunter	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Ethan Jones	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Conner La Rosa	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Luke Mountain	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Xavier Pabon	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Cierra Perez	Petersen Altrn Cntr	Demitria Etchegary
Finalist	Ella Peterson	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Nancy Munoz Rodriguez	Modesto HS	Jacquemin, Heather
Finalist	David Romero	Hughson HS	Ruelas, Karalee
Finalist	Jasmine Valencia	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Wyatt Wright	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells

Division II (grades 9 & 10)

Award	Name	School	Teacher
First	Trexler Porter	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Second	Athena Envieh	John H. Pitman HS	Jeans, Katherine
Third	Kaitlyn Greene	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Asma Al Sumairi	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Jonathan Birmingham	Oakdale Charter	Jessica Menefee
Finalist	Iris Cortez	Oakdale Charter	Jessica Menefee
Finalist	Zoie Fischer	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Melody Hughes	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Hazel Hunter	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells
Finalist	Wyatt Jones	Oakdale Charter	Tim Parola
Finalist	Jaeden Mendez	Oakdale Charter	Tim Parola
Finalist	Sumer Pannu	Modesto HS	Pereira, Jennifer
Finalist	Leif Ryun	Oakdale Charter	Jeannette Ves'sells

HM = Hon Men = Honorable Mention

*SW = Sch Winner = School Winner, recognized for the top essay from a school that has submitted 10 or more essays in the Division

Send Any name spelling corrections to david.tucker@stanfordalumni.org

Division III (grades 7 & 8)

Award	Name	School	Teacher
First & SW	Rachel Warter	Prescott Junior High	Gorton, Jennifer
2nd & SW	Joseph Hajjar	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Third	Sophie Benham	Hickman Charter Elem	T Kline/B Bergthold
HM & SW	Ava-Maria Leijten	Oakdale Jr HS	Hawksworth, Dee
Hon Men	Akhil Patel	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Hon Men	Deetya Thogarucheti	Prescott Junior High	Gorton, Jennifer
Finalist	Avery Barcelos	Oakdale Jr HS	Hawksworth, Dee
Finalist	Elazar Bengochea	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Aneel Brar	Prescott Junior High	Tobin, Maia
Finalist	Zoe Byron	Oakdale Jr HS	Hawksworth, Dee
Finalist	Jedidiah Chen	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Daniela Duarte	Oakdale Jr HS	Hawksworth, Dee
Finalist	Avery Gleason	Oakdale Jr HS	Hawksworth, Dee
Finalist	Julia Hartley	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Hasan Modan	Prescott Junior High	Gorton, Jennifer
Finalist	Sergio Mosqueda	Oakdale Jr HS	Hawksworth, Dee
Finalist	Olivia Piazza	Gratton Elem	Rexann Casteel
Finalist	Derek Sun	Prescott Junior High	Gorton, Jennifer
Finalist	Aidan Suntra	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Emmalee Vang	Prescott Junior High	Gorton, Jennifer
Sch Winner	Mirella Fregoso Torres	Yolo MS	K Santor/B Decator

Division IV (grades 5 & 6)

Award	Name	School	Teacher
First	Nathan Robinson	Sonoma Elem	Grgich, Gina
2nd & SW	Alivia Morris	John Fremont Elem	Arnold, Doren
Third	Atticus Broglio	John Fremont Elem	Arnold, Doren
HM & SW	Sfirling Soelberg	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Hon Men	Santiago Pinedo	Sonoma Elem	Grgich, Gina
Hon Men	Kenna Middleton	Lakewood Elem	Otilia Anderson
Finalist	Shijoon Alshami	Bernard Hughes Elem	Katherine Chong
Finalist	Vivianna Barron-Robles	Sonoma Elem	Grgich, Gina
Finalist	Gia Brown	John Fremont Elem	Hanzel-Sello, Levi
Finalist	Audrey Brown	John Fremont Elem	Arnold, Doren
Finalist	Ilana Cohen	Sonoma Elem	Grgich, Gina
Finalist	Rajveer Dhillon	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist	Sloane Dingeldein	Hickman Charter Elem	T Kline/B Bergthold
Finalist	Giles Doud	John Fremont Elem	Arnold, Doren
Finalist	Elijah Elkins	John Fremont Elem	Hanzel-Sello, Levi
Finalist	Charles Griffith	John Fremont Elem	Hanzel-Sello, Levi
Finalist	Advin Li	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Nathan Paul	John Fremont Elem	Arnold, Doren
Finalist	Sooraj Toor	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist	Susan Wong	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David

The 35th Annual Peace Essay Contest is a project of the

Modesto Peace/Life Center, 829 13th Street, Modesto 529-5750 peaceessay20@gmail.com

Co-sponsored by the Modesto Junior College Department of Literature and Language Arts

First Place, Division I 2022 Peace Essay Contest

Ethan Tornberg

James Enochs High School, Teacher: Andy Hallsteinsson

The Withering Fields

Driving through California's Central Valley, the obvious dryness in a land known for its rich agriculture growth, is apparent. While politicians in California and the Central Valley have tried to solve this climate issue, our water supply continues to diminish at astronomical rates like never before. Drought is a serious climate issue that has the greatest impact on people living in the Central Valley.

According to the most recent Spring 2019 Annual Ground Water Report, published by the San Joaquin Flood Control and Water Conservation District, 12 of the 26 county wells saw a decreasing trend in groundwater levels while only 5 saw an increase in this trend. With the water supply threatened, farmers in the Central Valley have had to adapt to the changes or face their crops not surviving the harsh dryness. If progress is not made in slowing the effects of climate change in the region, an area known for producing over 25% of the nation's food supply according to Business Insider, then not just California, but all of the United States could face a food crisis.

A food crisis would have a major negative impact on the health of the American population and on the livelihoods of farmers and small businesses who depend on agriculture in the Central Valley. The New York Times author, Henry Fountain, reports that scientists examining the drought crisis in California attribute "climate change, in the form of warming temperatures and shifts in precipitation" (Fountain), as the catalyst for these harmful conditions. As scientists look at mitigating the impacts of the drought on California and America, they must also examine the impacts of climate change on it. Accelerating the already severe situation of drought is creating an increasingly difficult situation for the producers of the world's foods. Climate change must be mitigated and adapted to by agriculture producers in order

to maintain food production for the country.

The greatest impact we can have on climate change and the drought is conserving the vital water resources we currently have. While the Central Valley is well known for its production of nuts like almonds, pistachios, and walnuts, the impact these crops have on our water supply is great. An info-graphic, published in a Business Insider article analyzing the amount of water needed to grow various California crops, shows the extent to which these drought intolerant crops are harming efforts to curb climate change and the drought in California. The average pistachio takes 0.75 gallons of water to grow, an almond requires an average of 1.1 gallons of water each, and the average walnut takes upwards of 4.9 gallons of water each. With such a large amount of water being used for such a small yield of sustenance, the current agriculture system in California needs to drastically shift its current practices to sustain production for the long term. Possible solutions include utilizing drought-resistant or tolerant plants and crops that would sustain the population through harsh times, as well as utilizing conservation techniques. Conservation is key to preserving the livelihoods of so many that depend on the food supply produced by California farmers.

In the end, we only have one life and one world. The impact we currently have on the Earth will last forever. By taking steps now, to mitigate the effects of climate change and the drought impacting so many in California and the Central Valley, we can have a long-lasting impact beyond ourselves. When we look forward with the hope of creating a sustainable future, it starts with us now. Coming together to fight against this threat works to create peace among humanity, working for the well-being of everyone, and preserving the only planet we have.

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DIALOGUE: Reflections

By MARY ANN REYNOLDS

In the March issue of *Stanislaus Connections*, two articles highlighted different approaches to nuclear escalation. One was to restrict investments in companies producing nuclear weapons. The other was information on a course about the power of non-violence in addressing political and social conflicts. I found both very interesting and certainly very different approaches.

I've been very concerned about the enormous danger of nuclear weapons since the Cuban missile crisis in the 1960s. I was relieved when in 1968 The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was agreed on. I was even more relieved when The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed in 1996.

Applications for the Beloved Community Leadership Academy now available

The Beloved Community Leadership Academy (BCLA) is the premier youth program of The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change (The King Center).

Our Leadership Academy is a unique virtual experience geared towards our youth and young adults ages 13–18 who have an interest in nonviolence, technology, innovation, business, and entrepreneurship.

The Beloved Community Leadership Academy is committed to developing the next generation of compassionate, courageous, and conscientious, nonviolent leaders to solve pressing world issues.

Interested in nominating a scholar?

Educators may nominate students for the academy. All enrolled students will receive a scholarship towards the tuition cost.* Visit our [website](#) to learn more and share with your various networks!

Scholars MUST complete and submit their applications by May 1. Please email us at leadershipacademy@thekingcenter.org if you have any additional questions, comments, or concerns.

Modesto Pollinator Festival

Where: La Loma Native Garden, 1805 Encina Ave., Modesto

When: Saturday, April 9, 2022, 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

The La Loma Neighborhood, the City of Modesto and Modesto Subaru will sponsor the Second Annual Pollinator Festival at the La Loma Native Garden on Saturday, April 9th, 2022, 10:00- 2:00 p.m.

This free family event will have many educational booths as well as fun activities for kids, such as a children's pollinator costume parade at 10:00 a.m. (dress as a ladybug, butterfly, etc.) and face painting for kids at 11:00 a.m.

This year we will have a new monarch group. See the flier in this edition of the Valley Habitat for more details.

Questions? Email La Loma Native Garden Coordinator Rhonda Allen at rhondasaddress@sbcglobal.net. Our website is <https://sites.google.com/prod/view/lalomanativegarden>

But when President Vladimir Putin ordered, a week after the Ukraine invasion, Russian nuclear forces to high alert, I realized a nuclear war was still an unconscionable possibility. I agree with President Biden's response: "A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

We certainly live in uncertain times. In addition to the present nuclear threat, we also have the alarming consequences of climate change. The latest UN report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), over-shadowed by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, was yet another urgent and alarming wake-up call.

ACTION: Readers: Any thoughts on these or other issues? Send them to jcostello@igc.org

KCBP Community Radio Seeks Volunteers

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's Community Radio Station the "Voice of the Valley" KCBP 95.5 FM needs volunteers to help develop the following programs:

Children • Art • Poetry • News/Journalism
• Education • Health • Science • Social Justice • Multicultural • Music/All Genres

Other Opportunities: Underwriting
• Fundraising/Event Committee • Community Outreach

Contact Jocelyn Cooper,
KCBP Development
Director, (209) 422-0119
kcbpvolapp@gmail.com



I Have a Message for My Russian Friends

By **ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER**

I have a message for my Russian friends, and for the Russian soldiers serving in Ukraine: There are things going on in the world that have been kept from you, terrible things that you should know about. But before I tell you about the harsh realities, let me tell you about the Russian who became my hero.

In 1961, when I was 14 years old, I had the chance to attend the World Weightlifting Championships in Vienna. Yury Petrovich Vlasov won the world championship title, becoming the first human being to lift 200 kilograms over his head. Somehow, a friend of mine got me backstage. All of a sudden, a 14-year-old boy was standing in front of the strongest man in the world. I couldn't believe it. He reached out to shake my hand. I still had a boy's hand. He had this powerful man's hand that swallowed mine, but he was kind. And he smiled at me.

I never forgot that day. I went home and put his photo above my bed. It inspired me when I started lifting weights, but it angered my father. He didn't like Russians, because of his experience in the Second World War, when he was injured in Leningrad. (The Nazi army that he was part of did vicious harm to that great city and to its brave people.) My father told me to take Petrovich's picture down, and to find a German or Austrian hero. But I did not take the photograph down, because it didn't matter to me what flag he carried.

Years later, I was in Moscow to film *Red Heat*, the first American movie allowed to film in Red Square. Yury and I spent the whole day together. He was so thoughtful, so kind, so smart, and very giving. He gave me a blue coffee cup that I still use every morning.

The reason I'm telling you all of this is that ever since I was 14 years old, I've had nothing but affection and respect for the people of Russia. The strength and the heart of the Russian people have always inspired me. That is why I hope that you will let me tell you the truth about the war in Ukraine. No one likes to hear something critical of their government. I understand that. But as a longtime friend of the Russian people, I hope that you will hear what I have to say.

I spoke to the American people this way last year on January 6, when a wild crowd was storming the U.S. Capitol trying to overthrow our government. There are moments that are so wrong that we have to speak up.

I know that your government has told you this is a war to de-Nazify Ukraine. This is not true. De-Nazify Ukraine? It is a country with a Jewish president—a Jewish president, I might add, whose grandfather's three brothers were all murdered by the Nazis. Ukraine did not start this war. Neither did nationalists or Nazis. Those in power in the Kremlin started this war; this is not the Russian people's war.

Let me tell you what you should know. One hundred forty-one nations at the United Nations voted that Russia was the

aggressor and called for it to remove its troops immediately. Only four countries in the entire world voted with Russia. That is a fact. The world has turned against Russia because of its actions in Ukraine. Whole city blocks have been flattened by Russian artillery and bombs, including a children's hospital and a maternity hospital. Three million Ukrainian refugees, mainly women, children, and the elderly, have already fled the country, and many more now seek to get out. It is a humanitarian crisis. Russia, because of its brutality, is now isolated from the society of nations.

You're also not being told the truth about the consequences of this war for Russia itself. I regret to tell you that thousands of Russian soldiers have been killed. They've been caught between Ukrainians fighting for their homeland and the Russian leadership fighting for conquest. Massive amounts of Russian equipment have been destroyed or abandoned. The destruction that Russian bombs are raining down upon innocent civilians has so outraged the world that the strongest global economic sanctions ever enacted have been imposed on the country. Those who don't deserve it on both sides of the war will suffer.

The Russian government has lied not only to its citizens, but also to its soldiers. Some of the soldiers were

told they were going to fight the Nazis. Some were told that the Ukrainian people would greet them like heroes. Some were told that they were simply going on exercises—they didn't even know that they were going into war. And some were told that they were there to protect ethnic Russians in Ukraine. None of this was true. Russian soldiers have faced fierce resistance from the Ukrainians who want to protect their families.

When I see babies being pulled out of ruins, I feel like I'm watching a documentary about the horrors of the Second World War, not the news of today. When my father arrived in Leningrad, he was all pumped up on the lies of his government. When he left Leningrad, he was broken physically and mentally. He spent the rest of his life in pain: pain from a broken back, pain from the shrapnel that always reminded him of those terrible years, pain from the guilt that he felt.

Russian soldiers already know much of this truth. You've seen it with your own eyes. I don't want you to be broken like my father. This is not a war to defend Russia like your grandfathers and your great-grandfathers fought. This is an illegal war. Your lives, your limbs, and your futures are being sacrificed for a senseless war, condemned by the entire world. Remember that 11 million Russians have family connections to Ukraine. With every bullet that you shoot, you shoot a brother or a sister. Every bomb and every shell that falls is falling not on an enemy, but on a school or a hospital or a home.

I don't think the Russian people are aware that such things

are happening. So I urge the Russian people and the Russian soldiers in Ukraine to understand the propaganda and the disinformation that you are being told. I ask you to help me spread the truth so that your fellow Russians will know the human catastrophe that is happening in Ukraine. To President Putin, I say: You started this war. You're leading this war. You can stop this war now.

And to the Russians who have been protesting on the streets against the invasion of Ukraine: The world has seen your bravery. We know that you have suffered the consequences of your courage. You have been arrested. You have been jailed and you've been beaten. You are my new heroes. You have the strength of Yury Petrovich Vlasov. You have the true heart of Russia.

[Arnold Schwarzenegger](#) was the 38th governor of California.

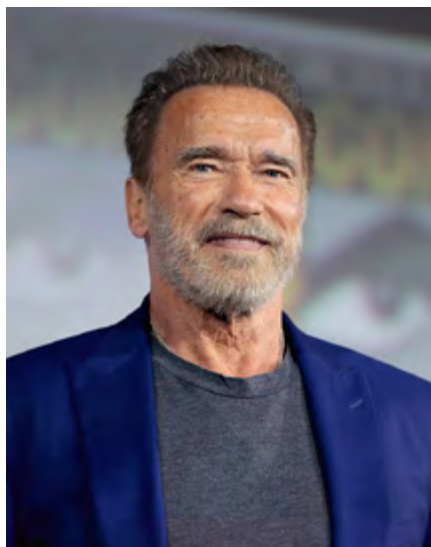


PHOTO: Gage Skidmore



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5 Ways to Support Courageous Nonviolent Resistance in Ukraine

Government and civil society can take immediate action to break the dynamic of violence and build a more sustainable just peace in Ukraine.

By **ELI S. MCCARTHY**

This article was originally published on [Waging Nonviolence](#).

The war in Ukraine is a human and ecological catastrophe. We have failed to create the social conditions for the prevention of large-scale violence. We have failed to escape the cycle of threats, blame and retribution that escalates hostility and distrust. We have failed to acknowledge the relevant [root causes and responsibility for harm](#) from key stakeholders. We have failed to engage in diplomacy that prioritizes the dignity and human needs of the key stakeholders, with a willingness to compromise, and a focus on saving lives. We have failed to adequately train people in nonviolent conflict, resistance and civilian-based defense. We cannot afford to make these mistakes again.

Yet, despite all these failures, there are still signs of hope. A variety of creative, courageous, nonviolent ways of resistance are being activated and could be scaled up by Ukrainians and others.

Ukrainians have been [blocking convoys](#) and tanks, and [standing their ground](#) even with warning shots fired in [multiple towns](#). In [Berdiansk](#) and [Kulykivka](#) people organized peace rallies and convinced the Russian military to get out. Hundreds [protested the abduction](#) of a mayor, and there have been [protests in Kherson](#) against becoming a breakaway state. Ukrainians have fraternized with Russian soldiers to [lower their morale](#) and [stimulate defections](#). There's been humanitarian assistance (with [Orthodox priests](#) stepping up as escorts) and caring for displaced persons by the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders.

Russians have participated in numerous antiwar protests, and around 15,000 have been arrested. Journalists have [interrupted](#) and [resigned from state TV](#). [Nearly 100,000 Russians](#) from a variety of sectors have signed petitions to end the war. Russians from all parts of society have spoken out against the war — from members of the [military](#) and connected to the [foreign ministry](#) to members of the [Russian oil industry and billionaires](#), as well as nearly 300 Russian [Orthodox clerics](#). Meanwhile, over 100 [soldiers have refused](#) to take part.

Forms of nonviolent resistance through external support include the outpouring of public statements by key

political leaders, as well as reducing the flow of money to the aggressor — via freezing bank accounts, reducing [online media monetization](#), reducing trade, reducing use of Russian fossil fuels and [blocking ships](#) of Russian goods. Other forms include supporting the antiwar protesters in Russia, [disrupting the technology systems](#) of the aggressor and [interrupting disinformation](#). Another critical form has been coalition building, activating key civil society leaders (including athletes, religious figures and those in the business community), and extensive humanitarian assistance along with caring for refugees.

There have been some moments where key stakeholders, including Russians, have been re-humanized by using labels and narratives that communicate complexity, potential transformation and common humanity. More could be done to help shift away from retributive justice and toward restorative justice, along with acknowledging responsibility for harm. There has been some sharing of educational material about [nonviolent civilian-based defense](#) and advocating our governments to [resource and amplify nonviolent activism](#) in Ukraine. Additionally, some religious leaders and others have amplified these stories of nonviolence, challenged the [theological ideology](#) supporting war, as well as challenged the [role of racism](#) and white supremacy in the conflict. Another critical practice some have offered is fasting or praying for Ukrainians as well as adversaries.

In the *Washington Post*, Harvard University professor Erica Chenoweth [explained](#) that research “suggests it’s also important not to underestimate how nonviolent resistance can delay or minimize killing, begin to shift the political landscape and deter future aggression.”

Below are five immediate action steps civil society, as well as Congress members and the White House, can take to move toward breaking the cycle of violence and ending the war.

1. The courageous and creative actions of nonviolent resistance being done in Ukraine, Russia and elsewhere should be amplified. Like the Alliance for Peacebuilding has done, help can be offered to [establish coordination hubs](#) to provide diplomatic, legal and material assistance for such persons as well as call for others to provide resources for these civil society leaders and activists. This will lend concrete solidarity towards dynamics of nonviolent resistance that are twice as effective and [10 times more likely to lead to durable democracy](#).

2. Donors, governments and multilateral institutions can step up their support for unarmed civilian protection to nonviolently protect civilians. Unarmed civilian protection, or UCP, is an evidence-based strategy for the nonviolent direct protection of civilians, the reduction of localized violence, and the development of local peace infrastructures in which unarmed, trained civilians work alongside local civil society

in violent conflicts. Congress directed the Secretary of State, in consultation with the USAID Administrator, to provide funds for UCP in its Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022.

3. All stakeholders, including adversaries, need to be re-humanized. This is done through the language, labels and narratives you choose to use. Although difficult, we must avoid labels such as calling persons or groups “evil,” “diabolical,” “irrational,” “thugs” or “monsters.” This doesn’t mean we agree with or justify their actions. Yet, the more we dehumanize others, the more we escalate, narrow our imagination and enable dynamics of violence.

4. Ukrainian President Zelensky should be encouraged to sign a phase one agreement with Russia to end the war. This will create space for more insightful thinking about how to address root causes and seek a more sustainable just peace. We know Russian leadership is responsible for their invasion. Yet, we have more influence on Zelensky at this point to take the moral high ground. For instance, a neutral Ukraine is [likely worth it](#) to save thousands of lives, at minimum.

5. A wave of strategic delegations or a humanitarian airlift into Ukraine to generate time and space, or peace zones, for interrupting hostilities should be considered. For example, this could include one or multiple allied countries landing huge cargo planes full of medicine and food in Ukraine. Top government (and maybe religious or other) officials would be on board. Cargo planes are not offensive fighter jets. The U.S. executed exactly such a humanitarian airlift when Putin invaded Georgia in 2008, which [significantly contributed](#) to the end of those hostilities.

Active nonviolence is not about condemning or judging people who lean toward violent resistance in really difficult situations like the one Ukrainians face. It affirms and admires their willingness to take a stand against injustice rather than to be passive. Active nonviolence is primarily about accompaniment, which can be — and is being done — in a variety of creative, courageous, nonviolent ways by Ukrainians and others.

Drawing on a [just peace framework](#) helps us to better see these nonviolent possibilities and invites us further in their direction. It also helps us to see that violent action routinely escalates hostility, dehumanization and harm, and it creates other cycles of longer-term trauma and violence. More people could die in this dynamic. For example, Russia is now bombing more civilian areas. In turn, a just peace framework would also help us to focus on how we can break the dynamic of violence and build a more sustainable just peace. Let’s seriously consider these five steps and find a way to break free from the habits of war.

[Eli S. McCarthy](#), Ph.D. is a professor at Georgetown University in Justice and Peace Studies. Since 2012, he has been engaged in federal policy advocacy with a particular focus on peacebuilding, nonviolence and just peace with his most recent book: *A Just Peace Ethic Primer: Building Sustainable Peace and Breaking Cycles of Violence* (2020).

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MRB MICHAEL R. BAUDLER

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

mb@modestocpas.com

Michael R. Baudler, CPA

TELEPHONE
(209) 575-2653 ext 303

FACSIMILE
(209) 575-0629

1120 14TH STREET, SUITE 2
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95354

Be informed!

Read the Valley Citizen at
<http://thevalleycitizen.com>

April is National Poetry Month, and we have poetry for you!

Join us for an IN-PERSON reading at the Carnegie Arts Center in Turlock! Lara Gualarte will be sharing poems of her Portuguese heritage in conjunction with the Carnegie's current exhibit Festa: A Celebration of Portuguese Faith & Culture. Sara Coito will also be reading. April 2, 2:00 pm at the Carnegie Arts Center in Turlock.




Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center presents Second Tuesday Poetry, featuring the poetry of Mexican poet Ulalume González de León from *Plagiarisms/ Plagios Vol. 2* with translators Terry Ehret & Nancy J. Morales and guest poet-translators William O'Daly and Mary Crow.

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2022, AT 7 PM. RSVP for Zoom link. Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/84227363883?pwd=QzdqUmVzOVFUaDFmOEIkbVF4a3d0Zz09>

The MoSt Poetry Book Club will continue in April with a discussion of Amanda Moore's book *Requeening* (Ecco Press, 2021). Copies can be borrowed at the reference desk of the downtown Modesto library. The Book Club will meet IN PERSON on Monday, April 18 at 6:30 in the MakerSpace room. We hope to see you there!

The Modesto Library and MoSt will resend a Zoom reading called Many Voices, One Community, April 28, 7:00 pm. Join us at this Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84227363883?pwd=QzdqUmVzOVFUaDFmOEIkbVF4a3d0Zz09> Meeting ID: 842 2736 3883. Passcode: poetry.



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Worse Than War

Genocide doesn't just happen. Genocide is planned, orchestrated, dreamed even, by a single person, a man, or a few men at the top, the pinnacle of power, where these few or the single one decide an entire people are in the way and must be discarded, removed, like bridges over rivers in war, like sludge.

It was that way in Turkey, in Russia, in America, in Germany, where eight million went to the ovens, leaving just their shoes and hair. Hair that could not be wasted. Not in a time of genocide. You could waste intelligence or experience or education, but not hair. In a time of genocide every hair is saved, used in coats or rugs or mixed in clay to make bricks for buildings.

Buildings that will never be seen, or lived in by those who have sent their hair in their place. The Turks sent one-million Armenians to painful and wretched deaths. Deaths that barely made a wave on the seas of the world, barely heard in places of power.

But in the quiet parlors of Chicago, of Fresno, of Jacksonville, they are remembered, remembered by those who are dismayed. Dismayed that no one seems to know what happened to one-million people. Stalin killed eight-million of his countrymen although the word country could be erased as could the word men. For when genocide happens, it always happens to those different ones, those others who are not like us, those who don't belong. Those who threaten us.

In Cambodia, Pol Pot, a man with a dream, killed one-million seven hundred thousand men, women, and children. Herded those different ones, those others into the killing fields. A place that held the secret to the motivation of an entire workforce. No theory X. No theory Y. No reward for work well done. It was just a small portable guillotine, prominent and gleaming for all to see, marvel at its efficiency. A place where two or three were rescued, relieved from the hard work of the fields and executed in a manner that was humane. Humane compared to Darfur or Rwanda, to Guatemala or Bosnia. They say a human head remains alive a minute

or so after the sudden slick silver sharp slice of a guillotine. Leaving behind a body still trying to breath, to protest, legs moving as if to run, to escape, while the no longer breathing head rolls across bumpy ground, eyes registering only that which appears and reappears and reappears again as the head rolls, stopping at the bottom of a small levy where excited soldiers (passing time as they wait) begin a hurried game of soccer. Wait, while a second alien is chosen: an outsider, a stranger, the devil in their midst is brought out of the field where only moments before they had been diligent, working, pretending the guillotine had not been seen, or the rolling head or the impromptu soccer game.

It is not the guillotine that is feared. Dread comes from not knowing why a particular person was chosen for its use, for death. Never knowing that randomness was always a part of the plan. Randomness alone will ensure compliance, guarantee passivity, enforce fear. Randomness is only a part of the horror. In Bosnia, men and women were isolated.

The men killed and the women sent to camps to be raped and raped again until they became pregnant. Muslim women carrying Christian babies. Babies sometimes killed at birth by their mother's. Ethnic cleansing it was called, but that's just its first name. Its middle name is torture and its last name is genocide. Not war, but a plan – hatched behind the dead eyes of a smart, cold calculating man, a Hitler or a Milošević or a Radovan Karadžić. In Rwanda eight hundred thousand Tutsi died in one hundred days. This was not sudden. A meteor didn't simply show up unannounced and strike them dead. The dead were first vilified, isolated, pushed aside.

These things were planned and carried out in efficient and inexpensive ways. The mass rape of Tutsi women by HIV infected men. Death does not need sophisticated technology. Death only needs a machete. In Rwanda, drumming became a call to killing. The drums bringing the Hutu from their beds, bringing a sense of excitement so the killing could begin. Tutsi hiding in the mountains, Tutsi who were unarmed and hungry. Tutsi children with large frightened eyes. Large and frightened because the eyes of their mothers were large

and frightened. In their approach, the Hutu hunters, with their machetes became gods, and if someone didn't resist, didn't fight back, they might kill them straight away. But if they resisted, if they ran fast and hard and made their killers run hard and fast, made their killers run until they were out of breath, run until sport became work.

Then, when they were caught, these gods with machetes could justify pain, justify suffering, justify torture for the crime of wanting to stay alive. A way to extract payment for the day's hard work.

Cruelty is the gear of genocide.

A well-prepared people, prodded by careful preparation: mental preparation, intellectual preparation – for even genocide must make a kind of sense. An efficiently prepared populace will heft a machete and find that flesh is not a tree. Find that flesh is soft and yielding and if a person wished, several cuts could be made when a single slice would do. So torture becomes a part of the game, the sport of genocide. For these others have been groomed for death by a careful man, a man with a lust for power.

A man with a dream.

Looking from the windows of powerful offices they dream the deaths of Mayans, of Armenians, of Jews, of Indians. Dream the deaths of those who are not really human. Those who are not like us. For years it was preached, the danger of having such people in our midst. And after years of preparation, the people who matter, know and understand, believe with all their hearts and souls that these acts, this beheading, this rape, this one placed alive in a stack of old tires and set afire, deserved what they got. Deserved — because they had the unlimited bad luck to be standing quietly in the street, bent over tending crops, or sleeping peacefully when a single man decided the time was right, that everyone knew how dangerous those others are. Declared the Mayans a danger to progress, and therefore a danger to us all. Know that the educated classes' have conspired against the common man. Know that Jews do not deserve to own property.

After years of preparation the military is made ready to kill, to rape, to plunder. To take possession of all those things this one man has said, rightfully belong to them and not those others, has granted official permission for primal feelings. Has said that genocide is the only logical path as the military has no trouble raping and impregnating thirty thousand Bosnian

women. Moving those others on to smaller and smaller patches of ground. Nine million Native Americans died from savage colonial conflict. A reservation with few amenities and no hope. And while these lessons are ignored by most – where, after all, is Rwanda, the killing fields? What is a gulag or a reservation? But there is that one who has been watching, listening, learning. One who has been paying attention. Who is already preparing his people, developing logical arguments, finding ways to fund the military, making sudden killing seem spontaneous and natural. One million Armenians died, two million Cambodians, one-hundred thousand Mayans, thirty million Chinese, six million Jews, nine million Native Americans.

And in just three months, eight hundred thousand Tutsi. It's simple. The soil has been prepared by repetition, watered by lies and disenfranchisement, fertilized by hate. Believing their very souls are threatened, striking first becomes the only reasonable thing to do. This is the time for weeding. In times of mass hysteria, zeal and passion, no one is accountable.

Never again we say, never again, never again. But on the borders of California, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, a new petition is made, an edict issued, and a prepared people sigh... It's about time.

Removing an Eyeball From a Corpse

First – you must strive to make all things sterile. You must, because this is not an eye to be played with batted about or thumbed across a circle as a marble might. You wear your special clothes: mask, little cap to keep the stray hair out, plastic apron and gloves – your guardians. After that... you begin. Tiny-bladed knives sharp as glass, edge their way around the eye, now sheltered in sterile drapery, behind which the face, with its hollow cheeks and blanched nose has disappeared. You ignore those non-essentials, move them into the margins of memory, release them to darken, fade within the strong concentration



Ed Bearden: Powerful Words from the Former Poet Laureate

Ed Bearden has been a part of poetry in the Valley since the early days of Stanislaus State University where, in 1965, he was editor of the *Sentinel*, the literary magazine for the college. He dropped out of the poetry scene for twenty years while he pursued a career in public social service. He later served as president of the California Federation of Chaparral Poets and in 2008 was appointed Modesto's 5th poet laureate. The powerful poem, "Worse than War" found in today's *Stanislaus Connections* can be found in his recent 2020 collection, *Removing an Eyeball From a Corpse*.

With the Russian invasion of Ukraine becoming more brutal with each passing day, the poem's timeless message is more relevant than ever. The two other poems appearing below are from the same publication.

of your mission. Somewhere out there, far from this chilled basement morgue, someone is going blind while they wait, for you to finish.

The Truth

Late,
as I sat
read poetry
but stopped
after a few lines.

Stopped, because
at once, I knew to cry.

Not
wet tears
but dry ones,
that hide so well
behind the eyes,
only to be seen
on the skin of the face
as if a punch
has been received.



Selected Programs on KCBP 95.5 FM, The Voice of the Valley

Streaming on www.kcbpradio.org

PSAs in English and Spanish broadcast multiple times a day about Covid-19 vaccination, produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

NEW PROGRAMS:

Beethoven to Bernstein - Classical music ranging from Beethoven to Bernstein. Big hits from well-renown composers - Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Strauss, Ravel, Copland - and many more, mostly in the form of orchestral, chamber, and piano music - Saturdays, 10:00pm.

The Not Old - Better Show - fascinating, high-energy program of big-name guests, inspiring role models, interesting topics, with entertaining host, Paul Vogelzang - Fridays, 2:00pm, Saturdays, 12:30 pm.

Mars Radio - Hip-Hop Show - Music, interviews from local & regional artists - Fridays, 8:00pm

Bucks Stallion's Radio Transmission Emporium - Cyber Music - Sundays, 1:00 am

I'll Take You There - A musical journey with Modesto's El Comandante - Saturday, 5:00pm; Sundays, 9:00pm.

Down on the Farm - topics important for our San Joaquin agriculture with Madera organic farmer, Tom Willey - Saturdays, 6am & 8pm.

AREA 5150 UFO RADIO - Saturday night at Midnight.

LOCALLY PRODUCED PROGRAMS:

KeeHive - LaKiesha McDonald talks with men and women who have overcome great odds. Mondays & Wednesdays, 7:00am

I-On-Modesto - John Griffin interviews local people who reveal their inspiring stories. Mondays & Fridays, 10 am and Wednesdays at 9 pm.

Arts of the San Joaquin Valley with Linda Scheller - Mondays, 8:00pm; Tuesdays 9:00 am & Wednesdays 8:00

SHARE Presents: A Compelling Local Story: Benign Neglect

Michael Estrada teaches at a Bay Area community college. He is, also, the son of a mother with an untreated serious mental illness. For the last two years of her life, while they lived together in Modesto, CA., he was her caregiver. His documentary film, *Benevolent Neglect*, honors his mom's memory and chronicles his family's struggle to try and get the help they desperately needed for her.

"It is a painful reminder that we are not doing enough to avoid what Estrada notes is "much sorrow, needless suffering, and preventable deaths." - Pete Early

Showtime: Thursday May. 26, 2022 at the State Theatre, 1307 J St., Modesto, CA 95354.

Doors open at 5:30 PM with a reception and light snacks. Film at 6:30 PM.

A panel discussion follows.

Watch the trailer at <https://youtu.be/ta08Lo3ULqo>

Tickets [here](#)

Come and learn how you can help your community deal with the serious homeless crisis.

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Women of the Valley with Linda Scheller and Leah Hassett - 8:00pm Tuesdays & Thursdays & Wednesdays, 9:00am. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbpwotv> and on Spotify.

The Peril and the Promise with Pegasus - Wednesdays, 9:30 pm; Saturdays, 2:30 p m ; Listen here also: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp-peril>. Recent show focuses on Project Censored.

Modesto Sound - California Audio Roots Project (CARP) - Wednesdays 11:30am, & Sundays 11:00am & 5:30pm.

Where We Were - Fascinating local history with Felton Daniels. Monday & Thursdays 9am. Friday 8:30pm; Sunday at 11:00am & 4:30 pm.

Local Music Programs

Modesto Area Music Awards (MAMA) with Middagh Goodwin - Mondays 5:00pm; Fridays 9:00pm & Saturdays 6:00pm.

Freak Radio with Christian E. Boyett, 6pm Thursdays. Replays Saturdays, 9pm & Tuesdays 11pm.

This is SKA with Middagh Goodwin - Tuesdays, 9 pm; Fridays, 11pm; Sundays, 6 am.

I'll Take You There - A musical journey with Modesto's El Comandante - Saturday, 5:00pm; Sundays, 9:00pm.



Weekdays (Monday - Friday)

Various musical programs during the noon hour: *Oldies, Jazz, Old Piano.*

Sounds Irish Music from County Wicklow - Saturdays, 7:00 p.m.

Dead Air - Hear the Grateful Dead with Corey Daniels. Fridays, 6pm; Saturdays, 3 pm

Attitude with Arne Arnesen - 3:00pm. Political and social issues.

Sojourner Truth - 4:00pm. Interviews, panels focusing on issues that affect people of color.

Democracy Now! - 7:00pm. Reporting by veteran journalist Amy Goodman.

Flashpoint Magazine - 10:00pm. Politics, social issues, from KQED's Dennis Bernstein.

Children's Programming:

Confetti Park - Saturdays 8:00am; & Sunday's 12:30pm.

The Children's Hour - Sundays 3:00pm.

Science:

Explorations - Science with Dr. Michio Kaku - 9:00am Sundays.

Big Picture Science - 1:00pm Sundays

Planetary Radio - 2:30pm Sundays

Got Science - 4:00 pm Sundays

Find a complete programming schedule on our website, www.kcbpradio.org

Merced Queer Film Festival May 19th to May 22nd

Festival Planners Seek to Impact Local Culture Through Cinema

Local organizations, Merced Pride Center (Managing Organization), Workshop 44 (Artistic Management), Central California LGBTQIA+/2S Collaborative, and the Merced County Arts Council/Multicultural Arts Center have joined forces to bring Merced this groundbreaking, 4-day event.

Festival Co-Directors Robert Jerome Pagan (An American Posada, The Last Gasp) and Jennifer McQueen (executive directors of Workshop 44 and the Merced Pride Center respectively), are joined by Outreach Director, Adam Lane (LGBTQIA+/2S Collaborative), and Colton Dennis (MCAC), to bring this inaugural event to life.

Upwards of 70 feature-length and short films either created by or reflective of the LGBTQIA+ community will be screened and presented at multiple locations throughout Merced, including the Merced Multicultural Arts Center, Merced Theatre, Applegate Park, and multiple business locations downtown. Film submissions will be rated in advance by the official MQFF judging panel, determining which films will go on to be showcased at the festival's main event on Sunday.

Films of any length and genre may be submitted. Categories for award consideration include Best Queer Feature Film (45 mins), Best Queer Long-Short Film (10-40 minutes), Best Central Valley Queer Film, Best International Queer Feature (45 minutes+), Best International Queer Long Short, Best Queer Animated Feature and Short, Best Queer Family Film,

Best Queer Microshort, Best Queer Documentary, Best Queer Music Video and Best Queer TV Series/Pilot, amongst others.

Submit films at <https://filmfreeway.com/MercedQueerFilmFestival>. Submissions are free until March 15th, with an inclusive fee of \$20 required after.

By bringing the art of modern cinema to Merced in such a dynamic way, event planners intend to impact local culture by increasing visibility and awareness of the queer community while providing a rich foundation for future queer artists and filmmakers to thrive.

Questions or want to get involved? Email mercedqueerfilmfest@gmail.com

Gardening with Drought Tolerant and Native Plants

When: Friday, April 15, 2022, 7:00 P.M.

Have you ever dreamed of ripping the grass out of your front yard?

Join Sandra Wilson as she shares her journey to replace a hardscrabble yard with drought-tolerant and native plants. She will share her experience with you - the good, the bad, and the ugly. Today, she has a yard full of flowers, bees, and birds and enjoys it much more than the old lawn. She no longer must mow, saves money on water, and doesn't worry about drought restrictions.

To attend this Zoom format program, email Yokuts Sierra Club Chair, Anita Young, at ayyoungbooks2@gmail.com any time the week before and she will send you the link.

2022's Outstanding Young Women

from page 1

work as an attorney.

Jasmine Cisneros is a Turlock High senior, taking AP and MJC classes. She is president of the Progressive Students Club, vice president of Interact, and reported for the Health Occupation Students of America about social inequities in healthcare. She has worked throughout high school in customer service, using her bilingual skills to help those who do not speak English. She is proud to be a young Mexican American woman, raised to believe in herself, work hard, and be a proactive citizen.

Jasmine believes that women experience barriers to receiving proper healthcare, education, nutrition, career, and financial opportunities, often having to balance a career and parenting, and that society needs to work together to solve these issues.

She plans to attend a UC campus and major in chemistry, then go to medical school to become an OBGYN, and believes it is important to increase the number of Latinas with graduate degrees.

Divya Katyal is a senior at Modesto High with extensive volunteer experience. She raised funds for numerous organizations, provided art therapy classes at the Boys & Girls Club, Maddux Youth Center, and the Red Shield Center, where she also taught app development and website design. She serves as the president of MHS Dance Production and mentors younger dancers. She has won first place awards in Science Olympiad and in the Congressional App Challenge.

Divya is a strong advocate for the voices of minority

groups who face barriers like gender stereotypes, limited female role models, and male-dominated cultures in the STEM field, and that it is imperative to welcome diverse people and perspectives into STEM education.

She plans to study computer science in college and use technology to help address the systemic barriers that prevent access to equitable opportunities in STEM, plus provide innovative tools for

disadvantaged communities. Her experiences growing up in the Central Valley have shaped her outlook on equity and inclusion. She wants to return here after college and share her knowledge.

Madeline Van Diepen Downey senior Madeline Van Diepen is president of the school's Future Business Leaders of America and the Environmental Club. She also is a lifetime CSF member, played water polo and basketball, and was on the swim team. She mobilized students to pick up trash along the Tuolumne River and created a food and gift donation program for unhoused students at Downey, many of whom have young children. She also challenged authority figures to provide alternative transportation plans for sports teams during a time of considerable Covid-19 exposure.

She has become more aware of the struggles women face daily, including access to equal opportunities, reproductive and healthcare rights, motherhood, and harassment which stem from a patriarchal society. Madeline believes having more females in decision making positions, especially women of color, will benefit all of society, because women "are

attuned to the unique challenges and demands in the modern world and will lead with empathy and compassion."

She plans to attend a four-year university to study business and pursue a career in the financial sector, to work for change and equality in that setting.

Makeila Wilson, an Enochs High senior, is the founder and president of Women in Gold, a club that teaches girls how to take on leadership roles. She is also vice president of the Mentorship Club, helping younger high school students achieve academic and social success. She played varsity basketball, participated in speech and debate, maintains a 4.1 GPA, and works 30 hours a week.

She attributes her strength and perseverance to her mother, who provided Makeila and her sister with an example of a strong and independent woman. She believes that despite immense progress made regarding women's positions in society, sexism and inequality remain. The Women in Gold club encourages conversation among young women about negative stereotyping and labels, "...how uncomfortable we sometimes feel in our own skin (being too fat, too skinny, too bossy, not pretty enough, etc.) We need to steer away from harmful labels and start embracing them. Maybe being "too bossy" is a good thing -- it's a woman who is assertive, organized, and passionate."

Makelia plans to attend either UC San Diego, Barnard, or Boston University to study urban design and sustainability. Her goal is to reimagine communities and neighborhoods as spaces where everyone can feel safe and welcome.

We must turn solidarity with Ukraine into the new normal for all refugees

from page 1

- states proactively divesting from fossil fuels
- an unprecedented sports, culture and economic boycott
- a giant shift in our energy system, with major countries genuinely considering the possibility of phasing out Russian oil and gas.

Interestingly, and somewhat counterintuitively, these shifts have not been the result of a big social mobilization. They actually came about before social movements were able to mainstream the aspirational demands that underlined them. For organizers and activists, this is surely an odd moment. What's more, these shifts have come after two years of a global pandemic, during which we've seen states in the Global North do even more of what we were previously told was impossible. Things like:

- shifting billions to support public services
- relocalizing some strategic production sectors
- recognizing the importance of "frontline" workers, such as the role of health care professionals in our societies
- massive redistributive policies to support those who lost their jobs or income during the lockdown.

While none of these actions means wealthier countries are suddenly more caring and less racist, they do show that a future of care, solidarity and justice is possible — if only because the precedent has been set. Welcoming refugees and offering hospitality can no longer be called risky or unreasonable.

There are alternatives

It's important for us to seize the moment and understand the full implications of this situation. We have a responsibility to extend these precedents — make them permanent, rather than temporary — and work to expand them so that all refugees are covered, not "just" the ones European or North American states are keen to welcome. Ultimately, these precedents need to be anchored by an emancipatory framework (i.e., no policing of borders, no repression of solidarity).

We can begin this process by supporting the precedents now being set. We should welcome the fact that states are opening the borders to Ukrainian refugees and make sure that this will apply to anyone forced to leave their country. Moreover, activists and organizers are no strangers to these changes. Only a few weeks ago, Poland was building a wall at its border, and migrants from Ukraine were not treated much better than any other migrant. If states have completely changed their approach, it's surely because of the war — but also because there was a broad cultural consensus to support the victims of the war. We could, and should, celebrate this as a success for those fighting for the freedom of movement and against the policing of borders.

Rather than argue over how differently some of us are supporting people based on where they come from, we should argue over the strategies needed to move from "Ukrainian refugees welcome" to "all refugees welcome" and "freedom of movement." How can we make sure that the war on

Ukraine will not only lead us toward an actual phase out from Russian coal, gas and oil, but from all fossil fuels more generally, wherever they're extracted?

The latest developments have proven — loud and clear — that the lack of ambition, the absence of policies of solidarity and hospitality, can be overcome. The ongoing solidarity with Ukrainian refugees reveals not only the existence of double standards, but the lies of our world leaders. Decisions to support the Ukrainian people and target Russian interests show that anyone saying "there's no alternative," "we can't welcome all refugees," "we can't tax billionaires because it's too complex" or "it's not possible to divest from fossil fuels" is actually lying, for the sake of defending their own personal interests.

We've seen that there are, in fact, alternatives — and that another world is, indeed, possible. It is only a matter of political will. We can turn concrete acts of solidarity into the new norm so that there might, eventually, be hope in the dark.

[Nicolas Haeringer](#) is working at 350.org, where he coordinates partners engagement and works on global mobilizations. Based in France, he's been involved in the global and climate justice movements for the last 20 years and has written on strategies for social transformation for two decades.

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calendar



april 2022

Help keep our readers informed. We urge people participating in an event to write about it and send their story to Connections.

CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.

Science Colloquium, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., MJC via Zoom. To access the program, click <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmaymqgHqzxhsAa0RJmYwVg/>. **April 26:** Jared Deyarmin, MS, PrognomiQ INC. **Early Disease Detection and Health Monitoring in Blood:** The Next Generation of Diagnostics and Disease Progression in Health Care. This presentation will cover current challenges with diagnostics and health monitoring, how ‘omics’ is changing how disease diagnostics, how disease is understood, and how we are getting closer to novel treatment plans on an individual basis.

MAPS April 22: Paleoanthropologist excavations of Homo naledi in the Rising Star Cave: Dr. Marina Elliott is a biological anthropologist, interested in the Human Journey – how, why, and when humans became who we are today. See p.2 for link and details.

The State Theatre is open! Visit <https://thestate.org/2021/10/new-website/>.

The Prospect Theatre has continuing offerings: Visit <https://prospecttheaterproject.org/2021-2022-season/>

1 FRI: Peace Essay Contest Ceremony, 7:00 pm at the Mary Stuart Rodgers Student Center, West Campus, MJC. MC: Stella Beratlis, former Modesto Poet Laureate and MJC Librarian. Awards presentation: Leng Nou.

3 SUN: John McCutcheon Concert on Mandolin. See p. 2 for information.

3 SUN: Sunday Afternoons at CBS: Annual Grace Lieberman Valentine Concert and David Bradford Tea, Congregation Beth Shalom, 1705 Sherwood Ave. Details: see article, this issue.

6WED: VIGIL: UKRAINE DEFEND DEMOCRACY. 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, McHenry & J. St.

7 THURS: Peace/Life Center ZOOM Monthly Board Meeting, 6:30 pm. Email jcostello@igc.org for login.

9 SAT: Modesto Pollinator Festival. La Loma Native Garden, 1805 Encina Ave., Modesto, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

22 FRI: Earth Day. <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2022/>

23-24 SAT/SUN: Artist Open Studio Tour. Maps at stanislausAOS.com

looking ahead

Thursday, May. 26: SHARE Presents: A Compelling Local Story: Benign Neglect, the State Theatre, 1307 J St., Modesto. Watch the trailer at <https://youtu.be/ta08Lo3ULqo>.

regular meetings

SUNDAYS

Modesto Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 10:00 am at the MODSPOT, 1220 J St. Call or text 209-232-1932, email modestovineyard@gmail.com; All Welcome.

IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and dharma talk, 8:45 am - 10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely, donations welcome. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: info@imcv.org Food Addicts Anonymous in Recovery. Sundays 6:30 pm, 2467 Veneman Ave. Modesto. Info: Emily M., 209 480-8247.

Village Dancers are not dancing in person but have a Zoom class, every Sunday 3:00-5:00 PM (PST). Lessons and reviews every week are given in international folk dances and are led by different teachers from around the Valley. People

from England to Taiwan, New Hampshire to Oregon, Arizona to Denair join us each week to exercise in their own homes to interesting music. Email Judy at JudyKropp40@gmail.com to receive the Zoom number and password.

MONDAYS

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter is meeting by Zoom on the second Mondays at 7:00 pm. Bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings are invited to participate in this support group for families whose children have died at any age, from any cause. Call 209-622-6786 or email for details: tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com; <https://www.modestoriverbanktcf.org/>

Suicide Loss Support Group: Friends for Survival meets every third Monday at 7 pm. Details: Norm Andrews 209-345-0601, nandrews6863@charter.net.

Monday Morning Funstrummers Beginner Ukulele Lessons. Modesto Senior Center. 10:45am to Noon. Free Scenic and Bodem.

Walk with Me, a women’s primary infertility support group and Bible study. 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm the first and third Mondays of each month. Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

Silver & Gold Support Group for mental health and wellness. Catering to the needs of the LGBTQ+ Community. (Age +55). Every Monday 1pm-3pm at the Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D Modesto. Contact Kellie Johnson, 209.918.0271 or Sandra Vidor, 209.859.4299.

TUESDAYS

Climate Action Justice Network-Stanislaus meets the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Link-<https://tinyurl.com/CJAN-FirstTuesday>

Teen Tuesdays every week from June-August, 2-5 pm., Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St. Peer Support, Games & movies. Safe space for teens to socialize, work together on projects, and learn about LGBTQ history. Each week will be a little different as we want YOU (youths) to guide the direction this group will go!” Info: Maggie Strong, Political Activist Director/ GSA Liaison, mstrong@mopride.org, 209-284-0999.

Attention Veterans: Join us for Free Coffee & Donuts Meet & Greet at the Stanislaus Veterans Center, 3500 Coffee Rd., Modesto, Suite 15, 7 am – 11 am

NAACP Meeting. King-Kennedy Center, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30 pm. 209-645-1909; email: naacp.branch1048@gmail.com

Exploring Whiteness & Showing Up for Racial Justice Meetings, Fourth Tuesday, monthly 7:00 p.m., Central Grace Hmong Alliance Church, 918 Sierra Dr., Modesto. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/247655549018387/>

Pagan Family Social, third Tuesdays, Golden Corral, 3737 McHenry Ave, Modesto, 6:00 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

Tuesday Evening Funstrummers Ukulele Jam. Songbooks provided. 6pm to 8pm, 1600 Carver Rd., Donation. 209-505-3216, www.funstrummers.com.

IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and dharma talk, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely, donations welcome. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: info@imcv.org

Adult Children Of Alcoholics, Every Tuesday, 7 pm at 1320 L St., (Christ Unity Baptist Church). Info: Jeff, 527-2469.

WEDNESDAYS

Womxns Support Group for Womxn in all stages of life. Join us in a safe and judgment free environment where you can give and receive support for the many issues that we struggle with as Womxn. Every Tuesday from 1pm-2pm at the Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D, Modesto CA (Ages +18). Contact Sandra Vidor-209.652.3961 or Kellie Johnson 209.918.0271

The GAP. A place of support for Christian parents of LGBTQ+ or questioning kids every Wednesday 6:30pm at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church 1528 Oakdale Rd. Instagram: Thegapmodesto

Ongoing meditation class based on Qi Gong Principals. Practice a 3 Step Guided Meditation Process I have been

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILS: Held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

MEDIA: Listen to **KCBP 95.5 FM** Community Radio, the “Voice of the Valley” also streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org>

PEACE LIFE CENTER BOARD MEETING, FIRST Thursdays, 829 13th St., Modesto, 6:30 pm, 529-5750. Meetings on Zoom. Email Jim Costello for login information, jcostello@igc.org

PEACE/LIFE CENTER MODESTO, 829 13th St. Call 529-5750. We’ll get back to you with current info on activities. NOTE THE CENTER’S NEW ADDRESS.

doing for over a decade. Fun and Easy. JOIN ME! Donations accepted but optional. Call 209.495.6608 or email Orlando Arreygue, CMT RYT, orlando@arreygue.com

Merced LGBT Community Center offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on site Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: mercedboard@gaycentralvalley.org – 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. www.mercedlgbtcenter.org

Merced Full Spectrum meets the second Wednesday of every month, 6 p.m. 1744 G St., Suite H, Merced <http://www.lgbtmerced.org/> Merced Full Spectrum is a division of Gay Central Valley, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

GLBT Questioning Teen Support Group (14-19 years old). 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, College Ave. Congregational Church, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. 7 – 9 pm. Safe, friendly, confidential. This is a secular, non-religious group. Info: call 524-0983.

Transgender Support Group, 2nd & 4th Wed., 7:30 to 9 pm. Info: (209) 338-0855. Email info@stanpride.org, or tgsupport@stanpride.org

Mindful Meditation: Modesto Almond Blossom Sangha, 7 - 9 pm. Info: Anne, 521-6977.

THURSDAYS

Can We Talk... LGBTQ+ Senior (age +55) Coffee Meet up! Every Thursday @ 1pm at Queen Bean, 1126 14th St., Modesto. Weekly social group to provide connectedness and community inclusion for LGBTQ+ Senior Citizens. Refreshments, snacks provided. Contact Steven Cullen, 559.799.0464.

CA10 Progressive Coalition Monthly Meeting, third Thursdays. Inclusive group of progressive activists to share resources, ideas, and information in order to support all the great organizing work happening in the Valley! Feel free to invite trusted allies. Meet-up and social hour: 5:30 pm-6:30 pm. Meeting: 6:30 pm-8:00 pm. Follow group on Facebook. Info: Tim Robertson, tim@nvlf.org

Laughter Yoga, Every other Thursday at The Bird’s Nest, 422 15th St., Modesto. The dates are February & March 7th & 21st, April 4th & 18th, May 2nd & 16th. 5:30pm-6:30pm. \$15.00 per class. To register, call or text Nicole, 209-765-8006 or visit www.nicoleottman.com

Attention Veterans: Join us for Free Coffee & Donuts Meet & Greet at the Stanislaus Veterans Center, 3500 Coffee Rd., Modesto, Suite 15, 7 am – 11 am

IMCV Grupo de Meditación en Español, cada semana 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (edificio trasero al final del estacionamiento este de UUFSC). Ofrecido libremente, las donaciones son bienvenidas. Info: Contacto Vanessa, 209-408-6172.

LGBTQ+ Collaborative Meetings are on the 2nd Thursday of the month, unless noted. Evening meeting, 1pm to 2 pm, Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St., Suite 2, Modesto, CA. Information: John Aguirre at cell/text - (559) 280-3864/ e-mail: jpamodesto@gmail.com

Green Team educational meetings the 3rd Thursday of each month, 10 to 11 am, Kirk Lindsey Center, 1020 10th St. Plaza, Suite 102, Modesto. www.StanislausGreenTeam.com

Third Thursday Art Walk, Downtown Modesto, downtown art galleries open – take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-8 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 209-529-3369, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

The Book Group, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 – 5:00 pm. Info: mzjurkovic@gmail.com

Valley Heartland Zen Group: every Thurs 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2310 Woodland Ave. Meditation. Newcomers welcome. Info: 535-6750 or <http://emptynestzendo.org>

Pagan Community Meeting, 1st Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

OUT on a Friday Night, a social and discussion group designed for individuals who identify as transgender, Non-Binary, or any identity on the transgender spectrum. Every Friday at 6:00pm at the Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative 1202 H St., Suite D, Modesto CA. (Ages +18). Contact Katalina Zambrano: 209-412-5436.

Overcoming Depression: small group for men & women. Every Friday, 7:15 pm. Cornerstone Community Church, 17900 Comconex Rd, Manteca, CA 95366, (209) 825-1220.

Friday Morning Funstrummers Band Rehearsal. Donation 9:15am to Noon. College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. 209-505-3216, www.funstrummers.com.

Latino Emergency Council (LEC) 3rd Fridays, 8:15 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Dale Butler, 522-8537.

Sierra Club: Yokuts Group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 300-4253. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

Mujeres Latinas, last Friday, lunch meetings, Info: Cristina Villego, 549-1831.

Hispanic Leadership Council, 3rd Fridays at noon, 1314 H St., Modesto 95354. Questions? Yamilet Valladolid, yamiletv@hotmail.com

SATURDAY

New HIV support group: +NET Peer Support Group meets at the LGBTQ+ Advocacy Center, every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from 12-1pm. Focuses on supporting individuals with their struggles regarding HIV and AIDS. Providing information about community resources, promoting wellness with an emphasis on LIVING! Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D, Modesto. Contact Vincent, 209.505.2863.

12-Step/Buddhist Meeting starts with a 30-minute meditation and then open discussion. Held monthly every second Saturday, 4:30 to 6:00 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto at the UUFSC in Sarana (small building, rear of the east parking lot). Freely-offered donations welcome. Information: 209 606 7214.

Free Community Drum Circle every third Saturday, 3 pm, Deva Café, 1202 J. St., Modesto. No experience or drums necessary to participate. All levels welcome. <https://drum-love.com/>

Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction. @Friends Coming of Age., 1203 Tully Rd., Ste. B., Modesto. Saturdays 8-9 am. FREE (donations accepted). Info: RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com

Divine Feminine Gathering. Join us for a time of ritual, song and conversation as women come together to celebrate one another and the Divine among us and within us. 3rd Saturday of the month, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Stockton, CA. Contact Rev. Erin King, 209-815-0763, orkingenne@gmail.com

So Easy ~ So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabe Group. Potlucks, guest speakers, field trips, activist activities, movie nights, etc. Third Saturday of every month. Info: Kathy Haynes (209) 250-9961 or email kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com

DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS: Tenth of each month.

Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org
Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.