



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER
PUBLICATION

DECEMBER, 2016
VOLUME XXV, NO. 4

Need community? John McCutcheon returns to Modesto January 10

By KEN SCHROEDER

Six-time Grammy nominated folk musician John McCutcheon performs in his 15th benefit concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center on Tuesday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Johnny Cash called him “the most impressive instrumentalist I’ve ever heard.” John plays the guitar, banjo, hammer dulcimer, piano autoharp and fiddle. His socially and politically conscious songs inspire us, his songs about family and everyday life move us and his wicked sense of humor entertains us. Beyond entertainment, his concerts bring us together in a sense of community and shared values.

John’s latest (and 38th!) album, *Trolling for Dreams*, is due to be released January 3rd. He says, “This entire project was a joy to make. Many of the songs were ones that simply didn’t fit on previous recordings and patiently waited until they met their matches here. The musicians played out of their minds... And the songs are some of the best, I think, I’ve ever brought into a studio. There are songs that pay tribute to some of my friends and mentors, songs about that moment of conversion (a favorite topic!), songs about love old and new (my absolute favorite topic!), a song about a road trip with my father after I busted him out of his Alzheimer’s facility, a song about songs, and even a song I wrote awaiting my biopsy this past January. Go figure... all of life as a palette. And, yes, there’s even a song inspired by this election, though it’s decidedly not what you’d expect.”

Tickets are \$23 in advance, \$26 at the door and youth 18 and under are \$10. Online



tickets sales are at <http://mccutcheonmodesto.eventbrite.com>. Groups of 10 or more get tickets at a discount of \$5 less per ticket. Tickets can be purchased in person by check or cash at the Brethren Church, 2301 Woodland Ave., 523-1438 or at Beads of Contentment, 1028 J St., Modesto, 523-6335.

For information, contact Ken Schroeder 209-480-4576.

You can sponsor the John McCutcheon concert

Please consider becoming a sponsor of the concert. You will receive tickets to the concert, your name in the program, and reserved seating. Five levels of sponsorship are available:

Autoharp — \$40 *One* ticket
Guitar — \$75 *Two* tickets

Banjo — \$150 *Four* tickets

Piano — \$300 *Eight* tickets

Hammer Dulcimer — \$500 *Sixteen* tickets

For information on sponsorships, contact Michael Jurkovic, 209-614-1573, mzjurkovic@gmail.com

You can dedicate your sponsorship to another. Specify how you would like the dedication to appear in the program (such as “In Honor of ...” or “To the Memory of ...”) The non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization.

10 reasons to attend the John McCutcheon concert:

- 1 John is a 6-time Grammy nominated folk musician
- 2 ...an engaging story-teller
- 3 ...a songwriter, folklorist, artist, producer, writer, activist and teacher
- 4 ...a funny and sharp political commentator
- 5 ...a master of 7 instruments, including the hammer dulcimer
- 6 You will be entertained, moved and inspired
- 7 ...be in a large supportive group just before Inauguration Day
- 8 ...be supporting the work of the Modesto Peace/Life Center
- 9 ...be with others who share values for peace and justice
- 10 ...be able to hear new songs and old favorites

10 Ways to Cope With What Just Happened

By FRAN KORTEN

Here are three: Make room for your grief, be with friends, and don’t dismiss the people who voted for Donald Trump.

As did many of you, I watched Tuesday night’s returns with a mix of horror and fear. Fear for our warming planet, for our sense of decency, for our future. Those feelings are real and justified, so we should all take the moments we need to understand what has just happened. And then? There is much to be done.

Here are 10 things I will do to ready myself for what lies ahead. You may find them helpful, too.

1. Ground yourself. Breathe deeply. Go to a favorite spot in nature and really be there. Meditate. Find a favorite poem, reading, religious passage that has helped you before and read it quietly.
2. Allow the grief. Don’t suppress your feelings of fear, dread, anger, grief. Just allow them. But don’t wallow there; move on when you’re ready. And allow other feelings to arise, too—they may surprise you.
3. Be with friends. This is a time for community. Share your feelings, your insights, your fears—and, especially, your hopes. Hug a lot.
4. Take a media break. Keep up with the news, but turn off the endless rehashing of painful stuff that you already know.
5. Take care of the children. Yours, neighbors’, grandchildren. They will sense your

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Learn Live Sound Audio Class

By BRENDA FRANCIS

7 week Audio Technician training meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 4-7pm at Modesto Sound on Yosemite & Santa Barbara Avenue. *The next class starts Tuesday January 3, 2017.*

Classes taught by: *Lucky Lew, Producer & Teacher and Mark Oesau, Audio Engineer.* Learn skills that are useful at any job such as verbal and written communication, teamwork, general job etiquette, plus skills specific to the audio industry. Previous graduates often mentor new students which is why the program is known as The Job Circle. Participants in this class earn an Audio Technician Certificate.

The cost for this 7 week program is \$200 and there are scholarships available for students from low income families.

For more information on this fun and informative class, visit modestosound.org or call 573-0533.



Alliance for Global Justice Announces 2017 Delegations!

In 2017 The Alliance for Global Justice is leading delegations to Nicaragua, Honduras, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Paraguay and Bolivia looking at Eco Solidarity, Inequality and Food Security, LGBTQ Rights, the Afro-Venezuelan Community, Prison Imperialism.

Learn More About AFGJ's 2017 Delegations

Download the Flyer

Which delegation will you join? Tell us @ delegations@afgj.org

Visit <http://afgj.org/>

Volunteer to help people get low cost ID and/or birth certificates

There will be a training for the Modesto Peace/Life Center's ID Project on Wednesday December 7 at 5:30 p.m. at the Peace Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Hope you can attend.

More information: Frank Ploof, mbeguy@gmail.com



National Day of Action with Standing Rock

On November 15 a crowd of about 100 in Knight's Ferry CA, near Modesto, joined others in cities like San Francisco, Philadelphia and Phoenix in a National Day of Action to demonstrate solidarity with Standing Rock. A coalition of native people and supporters are trying to protect their water

by stopping the controversial Dakota Access pipeline. The actions targeted the Army Corps of Engineers, asking the Corps to deny a permit to build a portion of the oil pipeline near the Standing Rock Sioux's reservation.

— Ken Schroeder

SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, February 4, 2017: 23rd Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration with Andrew Young, 7:00 p.m., Modesto Junior College Performing and Media Arts Center, East Campus. FREE.

Peace Life/Center ID Project Free/Low-cost ID and/or Birth Certificate Application Assistance

Volunteers ready to assist!

Call 209-222-8624 to set an appointment!

Modesto Peace/Life Center
720 13th, Modesto, CA 95354



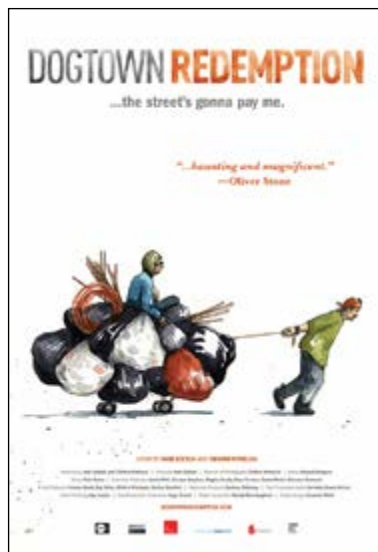
MPLC Film Series and Journey for Justice Presents: *Dogtown Redemption*

In partnership with Journey for Justice, Merced, the Modesto Peace/Life Center will be showing *Dogtown Redemption*, a 2015 Amir Soltani film about homeless recyclable collectors who scrape by, doing the best they can every day.

We will be showing the film on Wednesday, December 14th at 6:30 PM at our Center, 720 13th St., and we welcome everyone who is interested to attend!

Questions? Contact Joseph Homer at 209-681-3596 or jhomer42@gmail.com

Visit <http://www.dogtownredemption.com/>



IN MEMORIAM

Margery W. Fletcher

January 8, 1943 – October 12, 2016
Long time Peace Center supporter

Clarence Anthony Edwards

November 16, 1926 - November 13, 2016
Distributed Stanislaus Connections for many years

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

is published monthly except in August
by the **Modesto Peace/Life Center**
720 13th St., Modesto, CA 95354.

Open by appointment.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 134,
Modesto, CA 95353
209-529-5750.

The Giving Tuesday campaign can help the Peace/Life Center

The international #Giving Tuesday campaign is the non-profit version of Black Friday and Cyber Monday to optimize holiday spending (sounds bad I know).

Consider the Modesto Peace/Life Center for your Giving Tuesday gift. While the actual Giving Tuesday has passed, you can give on any Tuesday (or any day for that matter).

Supporting the Peace Center means helping school children explore the ideas of peacebuilding through our annual Peace Essay Contest. It means providing low income or homeless community members access to IDs so they may access vital services through our ID Project. It means allowing our doors to stay open so that our space can be made available

#GIVING
TUESDAY

to community groups who's mission is to advocate and organize around issues that raise our collective awareness towards action.

It means supporting community dialogue around social justice issues through our free monthly film night and through our lending library. It means supporting this very paper, Stanislaus Connections!

Look for us online at www.peacelifecenter.org and click on the "Donate" button. Or send a donation to PO Box 134 Modesto, CA 95353.

Will you help Rudolph visit the Peace/Life Center?

By **DAN ONORATO**

Christmas is coming but there's no fat goose at the Modesto Peace/Life Center. Matter of fact, there's no goose at all. Y'see, we're lean, to say it so it doesn't sound so bad. But it is bad. Our budget shows a car lurching down the highway in reverse. For the past three years we've spent more than we've received in revenue. This last year, nearly \$4,000 more. At this rate, the car will go kaput in 7 years. And our long local history in the pursuit of peace and justice will be history. I'm not making this up.

But we can change this. Isn't this the season when a jolly large Santa somehow fits down thousands of narrow chimneys? A season of wonders and small miracles? Wouldn't you like to help get the car moving the way it needs to, at least in the right gear? Wouldn't you like to be one of our Santas?

Yes, we need a sleigh full of Santa gifts, little and big, the bigger the better so we can shift from going backward to forward. We sent out a fund appeal letter recently, and we sincerely thank all who've donated. Now, for those of you who put our appeal in the "maybe" pile of mounting year-end fund appeals, please visit that pile again. It's messing up your desk. Reduce it by sending your gift in Rudolph's modern sleigh called the U.S. Postal Service to P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353. Or, if you're technologically inclined,

go to our website (peacelifecenter.org) and send it through PayPal by clicking on "Donate." Do it now so you don't forget. In advance, as the Irish say, ten thousand thanks.

Money isn't all we need. We need volunteers of all ages willing to help with specific tasks:

- * distributing *Connections* downtown and to new businesses
- * finding businesses that will run paying ads in *Stanislaus Connections*
- * helping with the John McCutcheon Concert in January
- * planning an event that will attract young people to our work
- * staffing our informational table at Earth Day or MoPride in Graceada Park
- * writing for *Stanislaus Connections*
- * helping us plan or fund-raise for our upcoming FM radio station

That's seven things you might help with. There are many more. But 7's a winning number. And winning for everybody is what Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanza, and the Holiday Season are about. After all, in giving we receive. Just pick one. That makes us all Santas. And it keeps Rudolph on the move.

A very happy and peaceful Holiday Season to all.

The Peace Center Celebrates the Holiday Season

Feast, sing, and bring a book, Friday, December 9

By **DAN ONORATO**

Do you find yourself braced for a long, cold winter? Do you need the companionship of kindred spirits who refuse to lose heart? Want to enjoy some great food and hearty singing while also extending your holiday generosity to others? If that's yes times three, mark your calendar now for the Peace/Life Center's annual **Holiday Potluck Songfest on Friday, December 9, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm** at Alice and Dan Onorato's home at 1532 Vernon Avenue in Modesto.

It's a potluck so bring your favorite dish and a beverage to share. After feasting we'll sing with gusto—not just holiday songs but folk and pop favorites, with minstrel John Poat,

lead singer of the local band Wooden Nickel, coaxing our voices to soar in gleeful abandon.

And don't forget to bring a new book or two for K- 6th grade children at Wilson Elementary School. Many of the families and households of students there are low-income and don't have many books. So each year at this event, we try to gather as many new books as gifts that teacher Jana Chiavetta and her colleagues can give the children. Don't wrap the book(s) you bring. That way the teachers can give the right reading level to each student.

The evening promises savory culinary delights and frolicking music in the company of some of the best people this side of the Sierra Nevada. And with donating the books, we'll do a little good.

Come one and all.

A Group of Thoughtful, Committed Citizens...

By JENIFER WEST

Neither the fog nor the chill in the air on a recent Saturday morning could dampen the spirits of the 300 or so people gathered in what was until recently a park overrun with weeds and so pocked by squirrel holes that kids couldn't run over it without risking broken bones. Gangs had taken over the area; vandals had burned out the bathrooms.

Fairview Park was abandoned.

But that was about to change. Stanislaus County Supervisor Jim DeMartini had the ground leveled. And the army of volunteers, colorful in orange "KP Cares" t-shirts and purple "KaBOOM!" vests, was ready to rebuild the park, giving neighborhood families a safe place to play, work out, and socialize.

The event, the third sponsored in the Central Valley this year by Kaiser Permanente, was the result of coordinated efforts by the Stanislaus County Police Activities League (PAL), the Stanislaus County Parks & Recreation Department, and the neighborhood group, Manos Unidas. Deborah Friberg, Senior Advisor for Kaiser Permanente, said the program, offered by KaBOOM!, aligns perfectly with the company's emphasis on community and health, and shows the positive impact groups working together can have. KaBOOM! is national nonprofit that helps bring parks to underserved areas.

KaBOOM!, which has focused on the importance of play in childhood since 1996, has provided play structures in impoverished areas, improving the lives of over 8 million children. Communities served must contribute a percentage of the equipment cost. Neighborhood children help design their new playground, and the community takes responsibility for the build (completed in a single day), along with the park's maintenance. This model has proven effective in preventing vandalism and destruction of park property. The lead time between community input and the build is remarkably short: two months after the design day, the community was assembling and installing it.

When Stanislaus County Police Activities League (PAL) Executive Director Alfredo Guerra was contacted by KaBOOM!, he recognized a great opportunity for PAL to plant another seed in an area where they had provided an after school recreation program in the 1990s. Mr. Guerra contacted Manos Unidas, who had been doing good work in the community. Manos Unidas immediately began fundraising and the required 10% of the equipment cost was quickly raised, thanks to a business that supports PAL and believed this would a great project to invest in.

The nonprofit Police Activities League, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2017, provides after school programs at Fairview School, adjacent to the park. PAL currently serves about 2,500 at-risk kids, through various programs at 23 sites in Stanislaus County. "PAL kids" get help with their homework; enjoy fun, safe, supervised ac-

tivities; and can participate in several different sports. (On this Saturday, flag football, soccer, and first aid/CPR training were all occurring at other locations at the same time as the Fairview Park build.) The program, one of the largest PAL programs in the nation, is sponsored by the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, and is focused on keeping at-risk kids involved in activities that strengthen their minds and bodies, boost self-esteem, and build leadership skills—improving lives and reducing the possibility of gang and other crime involvement in the process.

For Elizabeth Morales of Manos Unidas, the community group dedicated to making the area a better and safer place to live, the park is the result of 7 years hard work: As the first president of the group, she has participated in a lot of cleanup projects, and has worked to reduce gang activity in the area. Local churches are now involved, and there is a spin-off group: South Modesto Youth Leadership (SMYL, "Smile"):

Teenagers who mentor the younger kids, making sure they have time to play, and that they also learn about the importance of volunteer work.

Modesto Mayor Ted Brandvold called the project "a perfect example of what makes a community great," emphasizing the positive impact such a collaborative effort can have. City Council Member Jenny Kenoyer echoed that sentiment, even reading a portion of her address in Spanish. Stanislaus County Parks & Recreation Director Merry Mayhew called the project "amazing!"

Ron West, who has served on both the Stanislaus County PAL Board and the Stanislaus County Parks Commission for about 20 years, observed that the project was "the perfect example of the powerfully positive results of cooperation between the neighborhoods, the various agencies and the nonprofits."

The kids are thrilled to be getting their new park. Alberto, 11, said they'd been waiting for 8 years, and "we finally got our dream!" Eliseo, 9, agreed, saying "We're finally getting

KaBOOM! has provided play structures in impoverished areas, improving the lives of over 8 million children.



The kids are thrilled to be getting their new park. Alberto, 11, said they'd been waiting for 8 years, and "we finally got our dream!"

a park!" Christopher, 12, said it was going to be "awesome!" And Roman, also 11, expected it to be "big, and fantastic!"


Rudy Conway, retired firefighter and lifelong area resident, was pleased to see time and money invested in the area. "You gotta be the squeaky wheel," he said, referring to the community's successful efforts to clean up the area and renovate the park.

While the playground project has had a huge impact, the crowd hooted and hollered when Stanislaus County Parks & Recreation grant writer Cathy Gomez announced an additional \$335,000 in grant money to finish the park. Those funds will rebuild the bathrooms to ADA standards; and provide benches, an adult workout area, and shade structures, among other amenities.

A few days after the project was completed, West spoke to a father whose 6-year-old son was busily trying out the new equipment. The family has lived within sight of the park for about 5 years, and the dad told West that this was the first time he had allowed his child to visit the park.

In the words of Margaret Meade: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Visit KaBOOM! at <https://kaboom.org/>



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NEW MODESTO RADIO STATION COMING SOON!

The Modesto Peace/Life Center has been granted a full power radio station license and needs YOUR help!

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- ⇒ Feedback on future programming from YOU!
- ⇒ Volunteers with radio backgrounds & experience
- ⇒ Local Music, Arts and Entertainment connections
- ⇒ Community partners

To get involved or learn more about the new station, contact James Costello, (209) 402-9191 or jcostello@igc.org. You can donate by sending your check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353 with "Radio Station" in the memo. You can also donate online at <http://peacelifecenter.org>





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Stanislaus Family Justice Center of Modesto Desperately Needs Your Help This Holiday Season

By TASHA WILLIAMS

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/tashaalwaysmiles>

Your “Caring Heart Donation” Truly Matters

The Stanislaus Family Justice Center (SFJC), of Modesto, California offers victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse and human trafficking a path to safety and hope through compassion and coordinated services. SFJC is always looking for ways to support their clients and during the holidays each year, they depend upon the Modesto community for assistance.

December is an emotionally and financially draining month for most of us. However, for the clients of SFJC and their families, it can sometimes be unbearable. Yet, year after year, the employees of SFJC have witnessed heavy hearts turn into smiling faces! These smiles don't just happen on their own. They occur due to the citizens of Modesto who give “Caring Heart Donations” to each of these families in need.

Once again, SFJC is asking the Central Valley to rally around these families in order to help them enjoy a Happy Holiday Season. Without your generous donations, some families may go without. Your donations are crucial to the “Heart Healing” process that their clients go through.

Stanislaus Family Justice Center values the families they work with and recognizes the client's need to experience some sort of relief during this Holiday Season. Search deep within your mind and touch the warmth within your own heart, so that you may find a way to extend your financial donation towards helping their clients this Season. Donations are being accepted in the form of cash, check or credit card.



WARNING: Abusers can track your computer activity. If you are in danger, please call 911 or the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE). And consider using a safer computer such as one from the library or a friend's house.

STANISLAUS *Family* JUSTICE CENTER

Holiday Gifts

Stanislaus Family Justice Center greatly appreciates your financial donations but please note that In-kind Donations are also accepted. This year, SFJC made changes:

SFJC is preparing a special joy-filled Holiday Store with lots of goodies inside the store to be available to their clients and their families. If you can help, the store needs toys, underwear, socks, tennis shoes and pajamas for children of all ages and sizes. For the adults, they request pajamas, socks, skin care, beauty products, and toiletries. For more information, or to schedule a time to drop off your donated items, please contact Arleen Hernandez at ahernandez@stanislausfamilyjustice.org and she will respond at her earliest convenience. **Donations for “The Holiday Store” are due by DECEMBER 14, 2016 and can be delivered to 1625 I St., Modesto.**

The Holidays will also be celebrated at “The Cricket's House,” the home of SFJC's, Art Restores Kids, (ARK), Outreach Program and Camp Hope. The Cricket's House Holiday Celebration will include campers from the ages of 7-14. SFJC sent 96 children to camp and that's GREAT but there are still 30 other children who are a part of this weekly outreach program. They too are in need. Any donation you can give will help and SFJC will make **ALL donations work!** If you are in need of donation ideas, please contact Cindy Schneider at (209) 312-9991 or via email at cschneider@stanislausfamilyjustice.org and she will respond at her earliest convenience. **Donations for “Happy Holidays At Cricket's” are due by 12/19/16. Please deliver the items to**

The Cricket's House, 133 Downey Ave., Modesto.

Stanislaus Family Justice Center also provides an **Adopt-A-Child and/or Adopt-A-Sibling-Set** through The Cricket's House. This is your opportunity to give tremendously to a family in need! SFJC provides a Wish List prepared by a specific family. You will have their individual preferences such as their favorite colors, foods, family clothing sizes, and their children's favorite action heroes. Donations in this area are extremely touching as you will be an intricate part of answering their Holiday dreams this year! You will bless an ENTIRE family during one of the most difficult times of the year. If this sort of donation is a better fit for you and your family, please contact Cindy Schneider at (209) 312-9991 or via email at cschneider@stanislausfamilyjustice.org and she will respond at her earliest convenience. **Donations for “Adopt-A-Child and/or Adopt-A-Sibling-Set” are due by 12/20/16. Please deliver the items to The Cricket's House, 133 Downey Ave., Modesto.**

PLEASE REMEMBER – If you place an order through Amazon, please start with AmazonSmile. Choose the Stanislaus Family Justice Center as your charity and we will receive 0.5% of your order!

The Stanislaus Family Justice Center thanks the citizens of Modesto in advance for your donations and for bringing positive changes to our community. Each donation made, will assist in making this Holiday Season a very special one for the lives of their clients. Visit <https://www.stanislausfamilyjustice.org/>

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10 ways to cope with what just happened

... from page 1

5. fear, and the very young won't understand it. Reassure them that they are safe.
6. Reach out to anyone threatened. There are people who are especially afraid: immigrants, Muslims, Blacks, Latinos. Speak up and show solidarity.
7. Don't dismiss the Trump voters. Remember that many of his supporters voted from a place of anger and despair about many of the same things for which you feel anger and despair: all the wealth going to the already wealthy, corporations getting all the breaks while everyone else feels stifled, political power wielded by the very rich.
8. Think local. I'll bet on Tuesday night there was something (maybe many things) on your local ballot to celebrate. Embrace them. And find the many ways in addition to electoral politics to make change in your community, your town, your state.

9. Take care of yourself. Yes, eat some comfort food—but then take those walks, do those yoga stretches. The whole world needs your energy, your health, your vision. There is much to be done.

10. Take the long view. Martin Luther King's words can hold us: “The long arc of history bends toward justice.”

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Ed. Note: listen to “This Land is Your Land” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ifbleDsSsI>

And “Streets of Sarajevo”: <http://www.folkmusic.com/mp3/post-election-medicine-street-sarajevo>

John McCutcheon: “We’re about to find out who we are

Well, then.

Sorry, I can’t offer any conciliation about Tuesday night. What we learned is that not only are we divided from one another, but that we are insulated from one another, as well. No one saw this coming. Not the left, not the right, not the center, the media, nobody. Anger, angst, fear, distrust, hardly the stuff of positive choice, was the operative engine. When no one sees something coming, they’re also not prepared to answer, “What’s next?” So let’s do a little unpacking...

I’ll make no secret of it, I am horrified that Donald Trump got elected. Maya Angelou said, “When someone tells you who they are, believe them.” And Trump told us, repeatedly, that he is a racist, bigoted, misogynistic, remarkably thin-skinned narcissist, utterly unqualified for the job he now has. That’s him. His followers are not those things. Sure, some of his voters are assholes. Some of Hillary’s are, as well. But many of them had simply given up believing they mattered to the people in power.

The American working class, of all races, has been marginalized and ignored for generations now. They’ve gone from fueling the WWII war effort (in the factories and on the battlefield), to building this nation, to globalization, to being technologized out of their livelihoods. Production is up, wages are down. The recovery’s numbers mean nothing to someone who cannot recover their job because their employer (with the government’s blessing or non-intervention) sent it overseas or a machine now performs it. They have been invisible non-factors in elections for years now.

Then along comes a Bernie Sanders and speaks to their concerns, talks to them as though they matter, as though they exist, and suddenly no one cares that he’s a “socialist” and they vote for him. Right along with the Millennials that have,

likewise, been ignored. Along comes a Donald Trump who outright lies to them... “I’ll bring coal back,” for instance... and they know they’re being lied to (hell, the coal companies know it’s a lie) and they vote for him. They’re not stupid, they’re tired of being ignored. Maybe it’s misplaced hope, but hope dies last, to quote Studs Terkel.

But there’s something else going on here and we’re all a victim of it. The constant chatter of “politics” in the media has marginalized us all. The only thing covered is what happens in the upper atmosphere of political discourse. This is the strata that the average person, you and I, have almost no interaction with or influence over. We’ve all been wrapped up in what the *Washington Post* used to call “Beltway Syndrome,” thinking everything begins and ends in Washington, DC. We become mere consumers of news about things we cannot affect. So we become frustrated and angry. And that makes us feel even more marginalized. And more frustrated and angry, all of us. And, thus, the table is set for 2016.

If the only news you get is on the national and international scene, you’re going to end up discouraged and hopeless. But I have seen too many people doing too many good things at the local level...regardless of who is in power...to allow myself the luxury of despair.

The 24-hour news channels are a failed experiment, all of them. Fox, CNN, MSNBC, the late Air America, etc. They all play by the same rules, offering selective reporting, pre-packaged opinions, knee-jerk decision making, and, worse, ignoring local and locally-originated news. Everything is binary: us vs. them, good vs. bad, left vs. right. It’s toxic to our democracy, it’s toxic to our

souls. It tribalizes us, emphasizes our differences, and, in an election like this, thrives on controversy and disaster. “If it bleeds, it leads.” Come on people, we’re not talking Walter Cronkite here. This is Capitalism 101, each “news outlet” is a business, not a public service. It is “trickle-down” politics and we have been suckered into this and only we can break the habit, refocus, and remember that our nation begins with our neighborhoods and communities. [See Tom Portwood’s article]

What do we do now? I keep going back to my friend Vedran Smailovic, who’s birthday is tomorrow. Vedran is the person who became known as the “Cellist of Sarajevo” during the Balkan war, a quarter century ago. Following a bombing at a bakery in which twenty-two people died, he showed up for twenty-two days in a row, at the precise hour of the attack, and played *Albinoni’s Adagio in Gm*, one of the few pieces of music salvaged from the Saxon State Library after the fire-bombing of Dresden. He played one day for each of those victims, for each of their families. He played amidst sniper fire and war. He bore witness. He showed up. He personified the quote from Leonard Bernstein that hangs over my desk,

“This will be our reply to violence:

*to make music more intensely, more beautifully,
more devotedly than ever before.”*

This is our charge: to answer ugliness with beauty, hatred with love, despair with hope, isolation with openness. We learned it in Sunday school and in our homes. We celebrate it in our heroes. Now is the time to become our own heroes.

Now is the time to become our own heroes.

So have a good cry, a stiff drink, a howl at the moon. Then roll up your sleeves and let’s get back to work. It’s entirely up to us: we’re about to find out who we are.

Solidarity Rally at CSUS

Hundreds gathered on November 16 at the Turlock campus of California State University, Stanislaus in a post-election rally of students, faculty and community members. The student-led event offered support for people of color, for women’s rights, LGBTQ rights, and quality education and stated the need to organize to fight racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia and xenophobia.

— Ken Schroeder



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America Must Allow Its Heart to Break Before It Can Heal: We must acknowledge within our community the frustrations we all share, and then move forward together.

By SIMONE CAMPBELL

My heart aches for the division and anguish revealed in our November election. The fabric of our society is indeed torn and I wonder, can we find a way back together?

We must seek out a contemplative space of quiet and reflection, where we can let the pain of our people break our hearts further. It is from this broken-hearted place that we can begin to heal and let the new emerge.

As I traveled around the country in advance of the election, I heard stories from so many people. Among them were two white middle-aged men who were avid Trump supporters. They felt that though they had worked hard, they had not prospered the way they expected to. They also saw that their children were having even more difficulty than they were. These men feel betrayed by the “American Dream,” and if you scratch the surface, a bit ashamed that they have not “measured up.” It now seems this shame fueled a blazing anger that is at the heart of Trump’s electoral victory — but the anger is misdirected, and it will become increasingly toxic unless we can find a way to engage in conversation across the political chasm.

This anger and vulnerability is the result of an economy shaped by “trickle-down economics,” which privileges the already wealthy at the expense of those in the middle and at the bottom. These Republican policies betrayed our people. But rather than holding the politicians who passed these policies accountable, or turning their blame to the people who voted these politicians into office, some Americans instead

blame the “other” — immigrants, women, people of color, Democrats.

A corollary of trickle-down policy, hyperindividualism, causes people to feel alone and unsupported. As a result, individuals have become frantic (and ferocious) in their efforts to protect their families. This includes hate speech. Many feel betrayed by the economy and react in what they would call “self-defense.” I see this anger prompting the denigration of others who are also vulnerable.

This is not a time for “business as usual.” Everyone has his or her part to play to *do something*. Our first act, I believe, must be to engage with our communities to touch the pain and anguish of this moment. We need to weep together, but we also need to find the courage to face the deeper truth together: We all share similar frustrations, including those who voted for Mr. Trump. We must seek out a contemplative space of quiet and reflection, where we can let the pain of our people break our hearts further. It is from this broken-hearted place that we can begin to heal and let the new emerge.

I am overwhelmed by the task ahead. I have to confess that Mr. Trump’s denigration of women and his boasts about his predatory practices stirred up my personal experience of sexual assault from years ago. It reminds me that preying on one makes us all vulnerable. But I know from dealing with that prior experience that the only way forward is to bring our truths out into the light. Wrestling with painful realities in our communities is the only way we can reweave the fabric

of our society.

May we have the courage to face this moment with attentive listening. May we have the courage to listen to the stories of people around us and strive to understand “the other.” Then maybe we might come to know the deeper truth in the words that Pope Francis said when he spoke before Congress in September 2015:

A nation can be considered great when it defends liberty as Lincoln did, when it fosters a culture which enables people to “dream” of full rights for all their brothers and sisters, as Martin Luther King sought to do; when it strives for justice and the cause of the oppressed as Dorothy Day did by her tireless work, and the fruit of a faith which becomes dialogue and sows peace in the contemplative style of Thomas Merton.

Sister Simone Campbell is executive director of the Catholic social justice lobby NETWORK and leader of “Nuns on the Bus,” a tour featuring a group of nuns drawing attention to the impact Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan’s budget plan would have on the poor.

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<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2016/11/15/america-must-allow-its-heart-break-it-can-heal>

Among Neighbors

By TOM PORTWOOD

I took a walk around my neighborhood this afternoon, a typical Sunday in so many ways. In a nearby park, a young mother was watching three or four kids yelling among themselves as they ran around a fake boulder embedded in sand by the swings. A baby was halfheartedly toying with a rattle in a stroller by the mother’s side. The mother wore a hijab, nodded and smiled at me as she pushed the stroller by the bench where I sat reading a book.

A few minutes later, a slight breeze fluttered the branches in a stand of ash trees as I walked across the park’s wide grassy field. Across the street, a man and his wife were clipping hedges alongside their driveway, their neighbor two houses down was mowing his lawn. Two kids bicycled by, their tires describing great, lazy arcs across the road. An elderly man nodded at me as I walked along Rumble. Having had its landscaping recently freshened up, the elementary school next to the park looked better than it had in years.

As I turned the corner onto Coffee Rd., I saw another elderly man, someone I recognized. The fellow was pushing a shopping cart crammed with plastic bottles and aluminum cans — working his heart out on this day of rest for a couple of extra dollars. We stopped and chatted for a few minutes

— we’ve passed each other on the street many times over the last several months. His name is Armando. Like me, Armando has problems with his back. We chatted about that, joked about getting old and getting by. Unlike me, Armando toils hard every day to get by, courageously, under a hot sun or drenched by rain. Here on the street we are neighbors. We shake hands in parting, as neighbors do.

Communities are where we find them, where we look for them, if we look for them. Three times a week, I catch the 32 bus around noon to go to the downtown library where I do a little volunteer tutoring. At that hour, the bus riders are mostly regulars, mostly, like me, a little older, a little weakened by disease or injury or chronic health problems. Most of us require a little hardware to help us get around — motorized wheelchairs, walkers, oxygen tanks, or, like me, one of the luckier ones, a walking cane. Occasionally, a caregiver will board the bus with a rider who is more acutely ill and accompany her client to his destination. And there’s a smattering of younger riders, too — young moms with wide-eyed toddlers in tow, grandchildren off on an adventure to a downtown park with a doting grandmother. But many board the bus, greying, missing an arm or a leg, or both legs. Always smiling, always cheerfully nodding at the rest of us, at familiar faces.

The bus stops and picks up passengers at Marple Manor, the Senior Center, Ralston Towers, deposits many of the riders at Memorial Hospital, Sutter Gould, and the various health services on Scenic Drive. For most of the riders, negotiating through the physical challenges of the day will be strenuous, at best. But on the bus they briskly chat among themselves, rarely knowing each other’s names, but sharing a moment or two about the weather, or how reassuring it is to see so many kids racing across the playground as the bus trundles by an elementary school. The bus driver often chimes in, takes special care with every passenger who needs assistance. If someone drops a package, or has trouble pulling the cord to signal a stop, other riders help out. The sense of community on that bus, of real warmth and graciousness and caring for the other fellow, is visceral. It’s a ride I always look forward to.

In a way, we are all riders on that bus. All of us must look out for each other, especially now. We are the community we are all searching for. It’s right here. Right now — for we are always among neighbors.

Write Obama: Clemency for Edward Snowden

By DAN ONORATO

In mid 2013, National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden leaked a large number of classified documents revealing a massive secret and illegal NSA surveillance program of millions of American citizens, Internet companies, and foreign governments. As Laura Poitras's Academy Award winning documentary *Citizen Four* clearly shows, Snowden is no wacko crazy bent on harming America or U.S. security. He saw an abuse of governmental power that needed to be exposed and stopped. In a democracy we have a right and a need to know. The Obama Administration came down heavy on him. He was charged with three felonies: theft of government property, unauthorized communication of national defense information, and willful communication of classified intelligence information to an unauthorized person. The last two charges were brought under the Espionage Act of 1917, a federal law that criminalizes and punishes spying. Each charge carries a maximum prison sentence of 10 years.

This year Snowden, who's been in exile in Russia for three years, wrote President Obama asking for a pardon. The American Civil Liberties Union and Amnesty International turned that request into a national campaign. Though it's not likely Obama will respond favorably, President-Elect Trump would most likely scorn that petition. During his campaign Trump called Snowden "a bad guy" who deserved to be "executed." The clock is running out to raise the pressure on Obama to act.

If, like me, you respect Edward Snowden for his courage, integrity, and generosity in putting principle and the good of our society before his own well-being and security, and if you see him not as a criminal but as a patriotic and necessary whistleblower, please write Obama on Snowden's behalf.

What follows are the key arguments.

Stewart Baker, former general counsel of the NSA, slams Snowden: "... the massive flood unleashed by Snowden has been used for one purpose only — to harm U.S. intelligence and national interests by exposing perfectly legitimate intelligence sources and methods." But social critic Noam Chomsky counters: "... initial claims about prevention of terrorist actions collapsed under investigation, and no credible case has been made that the massive invasion of privacy, arguably in violation of constitutional rights, is warranted. Snowden made every effort to follow established procedures for bringing this crucial information to the general public. When these failed, he took the courageous and honorable step of transmitting the information through the medium of careful and highly reliable and experienced journalists, who, along with him, carefully vetted the material to ensure that no possible harm would be caused to individuals or to security."

The clock is running out to raise the pressure on Obama to act.



Mark Udall, former U.S. senator for Colorado and member of the select committee on intelligence, doesn't believe the President should pardon Snowden: "Snowden broke an oath he willingly took to protect our national security and classified secrets." To this argument, Karen Greenberg, Director of the Center on National Security at Fordham University, states that Snowden's "revelations were the tidal wave the nation needed to change its ways. The importance of what he did for the country outweighs the law that he violated..." Harvard Law Professor Lawrence Lessig adds: "Whistleblowing is an essential part of the architecture of checking government power. We've recognized the importance of whistleblowers in the past [think Daniel Ellsberg's leaking The Pentagon Papers and W. Mark Felt's role as "Deep Throat" in Watergate],

and it's entirely appropriate that Obama now recognizes the role that Snowden played in America in exposing the way in which extraordinary power was abused." Executive Director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation Cindy Cohn underlines this point about the beneficial effects of Snowden's act of conscience: "The leaks caused a sea change in policy and secrecy related to government spying that led to the first piece of legislation to rein in the NSA in over 30 years, reform to the secret FISA court, and significant, long-overdue public releases of critical information by the government about its spying on innocent Americans as well as millions of others around the world."

Mark Udall concedes that one "can make the case that [Snowden] did our nation a service," but he adds, "that is why I believe he should return to the United States to make that argument in court and to the public." Daniel Ellsberg retorts, "Were the government to have any evidence that Snowden revealed information

that should have been protected, I think he should be judged by a jury. ... But there has to be a public interest defense, which doesn't exist in U.S. law," unless the Espionage Act were changed to permit that public interest defense. In short, Snowden in court would be prevented from arguing that he acted on behalf of our democracy and to defend civil rights.

Secretary-general of Amnesty International Salil Shetty underscores the centrality of Snowden's acting for the larger public good: "Edward Snowden clearly acted in the public interest. He sparked one of the most important debates about government surveillance in decades, and brought about a global movement in defense of privacy in the digital age. Punishing him for this sends out the dangerous message that those who witness human rights violations behind closed doors should not speak out."

President-elect Trump's inflammatory statements during

So now is not the time to be quiet in the face of reckless excess. Edward Snowden acted for all of us. Please speak up for him.

his campaign have many of us, who value the human rights of all people, on edge. So now is not the time to be quiet in the face of reckless excess. Edward Snowden acted for all of us. Please speak up for him. While there's still time and some chance, urge Obama to grant him clemency.

ACTION: To email the President go online at www.whitehouse.gov/contact. To call with your message: 202 456-1111. To mail a letter, the address is: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500.



Most of the quotations in this article were taken from Ed Pilkington's article in *The Guardian* entitled "Edward Snowden" (Sept. 14, 2016).

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I can see clearly, for years I could not see far away.
We woman think we can see clearly....without knowledge,
we can be in one big fog.
Take advantage. Take advantage of the lost soul. Take
advantage of loving and touching.
Only like fine sand in one's hands it drips away into the
wide surge of the ocean's floor.
Lies, false promises and stories of sparkling stars and
bubbling champagne of the heart.
Flutters of possibilities float amidst the aortas of two
hearts. Two lovers that must part as their
lenses were too mucked up see clearly. A loss of
possibility,
of seeing a future brought to a halt
by ones own blindness of the heart.

— Susan Levy

Modesto/Stanislaus Poetry Center Festival 2017

Susan Wooldridge, poet, author and workshop leader, will be the featured poet at the 5th Annual MoSt Poetry Center Festival Feb. 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Oakdale Road and St. Paul's Way Modesto The day will include workshops facilitated by Wooldridge readings, and a luncheon! The 2017 poetry contest details are below. click here to download the registration form

Poetry Contest:

Categories

1. Across the Generations 2. Rivers and Streams 3. Fault Lines 4. Polarities/Attractions

Prizes in each Category

First Place: \$30 Second Place: \$20 Third Place: \$10 plus Two Honorable Mention Certificates

Guidelines

Entrants* may enter one poem in any or all categories (up to four poems, total). Please submit two copies of each poem, one with your name and address in the upper left corner, and one with no name or address. Type the category in the upper right corner of both copies. No prize-winning poems from previous MoSt contests may be entered, but "Honorable Mentions" from past years will be accepted. Winners will be announced at the Festival on February 4, and invited to read their poems. Winners will also be listed after the Festival at www.mostpoetry.org.

For questions about the contest, or to reserve table space for the sale of books and broadsides, email Louise Kantro at kantro@sbcglobal.net. Submissions to the poetry contest must be postmarked by the CONTEST DEADLINE: JANUARY 11, 2017.

*MoSt Poetry Center Board Members and Festival Committee Members are not eligible to enter the contest.

Stuck

Stuck in the middle with you
Was a line in a 70's song.
Who knew that those stuck in the middle
Could so easily be strung along?
Seagulls took flight on the beaches
That licked oceans on either coast,
But the freedom to fly, discern and to think
Eluded those we needed the most.
Counting hands raised transcended the vote;
Keep them high and over your heads.
Don't worry too much, they won't take your guns,
But spiritually we'll all be dead.
In a decade or two, we'll all be gone,
But those seats on the Court will be stalled
For years and years and years and years
After Roe vs. Wade has been killed.
My children and theirs lost on Tuesday;
I voted for their tomorrow.
On Monday, a whole week later,
I'm still licking wounds in my sorrow.
My daughter is stockpiling IUDs;
My son's marrying his partner tonight.
They can't risk being told, "We're sorry,
You've lost every last human right."
My cousin is packing her suitcase,
To Baja she travels real soon.
"It's only down south," you tell her;
Her family could be on the moon.
The bricks and the mortar are ready;
They're now "only" building a fence.
That's what they'll post till Trump's tired
And hands the baton to Mike Pence.

— Andra Greenwald, 11-14-16

Trust Me

Will you support me this time?
As in the past
your present state of mind has left me
right on the doorstep
wondering where to wander
in this union
of red versus blue.
Your red is my blue
my blue is your red;
both flowing from veins bulging,
No, bursting from the contrast
between us.
Causing blindness to escape
from our sight
so we won't see
the gun pointed at you or me!

Will you support me
if I tell you

what you want to hear
just to keep you near?

Wasabi say?
Too hot for the mix?
I'm well hidden
in my bowl of tricks.
Trust me!
Wasabi do?

— C. Barstad 11-14-16

Deception

Half a nation
Isolated, afraid
Looking for the American
Dream, expecting instant
Returns, seduced like
Rich lonely widows
Open to False Casanovas
Lifetimes spent in blind
Teenage allegiance to feeling
Good or feeling no pain.
In believing others
Just because...
In unquestioning acceptance
Of a pulpit Lothario or a
Wealthy Santa Claus
So unfamiliar with themselves,
So vulnerable
So willing to lie down
With a well dressed, smooth
Sounding roué, to set aside
Trust for tupence and a
Brief chance to smile

— Tina Arnopole Driskill

I Got the Voting Man's Blues (read in rap)

I got the voting man's blues. I can not believe its not true
when to wake up knowing the voting man's blues.
No red or blue can bring out the tones of the blues as
presidents and congressmen and senators are here and
soon to be gone.
But I have the voting man's blues.
Climate change cannot be real. Abortion rights, bigotry
and racism, and bullying seems to be what helps me to
have that voting man's blues.
The future is now...not knowing of war and stability
under pressure makes me moan the voting man's blues.

— Susan Levy



Green Tips for a Green Planet: The Wisdom of Janusz Korczak

By TINA ARNOPOPLE DRISKILL

I am not here to be loved and admired,

But to act and love.

It is not the duty of people to help me,

But it is my duty to look after the world,

And the people in it.

— Janusz Korczak (1878–1942)

“We plunder the mountains, cut down trees, and exterminate the animals. More and more the forests and marshes are being replaced by buildings. We are planting human beings in ever new territories.

“We have subjugated the world and have made use of the iron and the animals; we have enslaved other races, and we have organized international relations in a cursory way and appeased the masses. Injustice and ill treatment prevail.

“We do not really consider childhood worries and apprehensions as very serious matters.

Any child is an unequivocal democrat and does not recognize hierarchies. Whether it is another child’s hunger or the agony of a tormented animal, it causes him pain. Dogs, birds, butterflies, and flowers are equally close to his heart, and he feels kinship with each pebble and shell. He does not believe that only humans have souls.”

“We all are brothers and sisters, children of the same earth. We have been preceded by generations that shared a common destiny for good and evil -- one long common path. We get light from the same sun, and our crops are destroyed by the same hail. The same earth covers the bones of our forefathers. We have known more sorrow than joy, more tears than laughter, and neither you nor we bear the blame for this. Let us all work together, let us educate ourselves together.”

The inspiration of Korczak

Korczak, was born Henryk Goldszmit in Warsaw on July 22, 1878, a descendant of educated assimilated Polish Jews raised well-to-do, then pre-WWI circumstances forced them into one of the city’s poorest districts.

At an early age he was a gifted writer and at 20 took top honors in Poland’s prestigious Paderewsky literary competition. Contest rules required he take a pseudonym, so he opened the historical novel sitting next to him and took on the name of its hero, Janasz Korczak. A type-setter mistakenly changed it to Janusz.

Torn between writing and medicine as a career, he chose medicine saying, “Writing is only words. Medicine is deeds.” Ultimately he combined both in his desire to help others, especially the sick and the poor.

He wrote about his experiences working with the disadvantaged and children, leaving the world much wisdom.

About education he wrote, “If you want to reform the world, you must reform education.”

After experiencing the suffering and injustices of war as a doctor with the Russian Army during the Russo-Japanese War



he lamented, “War is an abomination. Especially because no one reports how many children are hungry, ill treated, and left without protection. Before a nation goes to war it should stop to think of the innocent children who will be injured, killed, or orphaned. No cause, no war is worth depriving children of their natural right to happiness. One must think first of the child before making revolutions.”

After finishing medical school and another tour as a doctor with the Russian Army in WWI, he opened two orphanages, one for Jewish children where he lived in the attic until his death and later one for Catholic children. He also became an esteemed lecturer and aired radio talks on children and childcare.

The Jewish orphanage was forced to move into the Warsaw Ghetto, where he devoted his life to caring for and teaching the children. Though he too was ill and starving, he threw a sack over his back and became “a beggar for the most helpless,” seeking food and medicine for them daily. When his Aryan friends asked him to save his own life, he answered, “You wouldn’t abandon your own child in sickness, misfortune, or danger, would you? So how can I leave two hundred children now!”

In his book, *Ghetto Diary*, he wrote, “I am angry with nobody. I do not wish anybody evil. I am unable to do so. I do not know how one can do it.” His words are the lesson for our times.

On August 5, 1942 he led his two hundred children, head held high, calmly and orderly through the streets of Warsaw to the train station, as they carried the green with white blossoms and blue Star of David flag he had designed for the orphanage. Their final destination, Treblinka.

The Polish writer and journalist, Marek Jaworski, wrote: “The bodies of Janusz Korczak and his children were burned. All that is left of them is a handful of ashes and clouds of smoke, which the wind has scattered to the four corners... However, with this smoke Korczak’s ideas circulate around the world—ideas which nothing can destroy or consign to oblivion now.”

Lillian Vallee, accomplished poet, writer, and translator of Polish literature, wrote when asked of her knowledge of Korczak, “You could not have found a more worthy person to share with the world. It gives me joy to know his words outlasted the abysmal circumstances of their incubation. He was one of those truly good and heroic humans.”

Loving Every Child: Wisdom for Parents. The words of Janusz Korczak. Edited by Sandra Joseph, Forwarded by Ari L. Goldman. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill 2007.

Originally published in 1999 in Great Britain as *Voice for the Child: The Inspirational Words of Janusz Korczak* by Thorsons as an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

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The Next Step in Social Progress

By VASU MURTY

Animal rights should not be solely aligned with a particular political party. Neither should they be tied to a particular religion. The International Network for Religion and Animals (INRA) was founded in 1985. Since then, dozens of books have been written on animals and Christianity. As I told Dr. Richard Schwartz (author, *Judaism and Vegetarianism*) via email in 1997: arguing as some Christians do that animal rights and vegetarianism are solely “Jewish” concerns is like saying, “It’s only wrong to own a slave if you’re a Quaker.” No. Suffering and injustice concern us all. Like the abolition of slavery, animal rights and vegetarianism are social and moral progress for all mankind, including atheists and agnostics.

Richard agreed with me that churches should have animal issues at the top of their agenda as well. Catholic Concern for Animals and some progressive churches (Episcopal, Methodist, Quaker, Unitarian) have shown interest in animal rights issues. The Baha’i faith endorses vegetarianism, and the Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism) all teach *ahimsa*, or nonviolence towards humans and animals alike, to the point of vegetarianism.

You’d think the unborn-right-to-lifers would immediately understand the animal-right-to-lifers! Talk of a vegetarian future is usually met with an anti-Semitic yawn from conservative Christians, recalling Woody Allen’s 1973 movie, *Sleeper*: a natural foods faddist goes into suspended animation, and wakes up two hundred years later to find that what he thought would become the wave of the future, didn’t happen. I’ve thought of a vegetarian future along the lines of a future of electric cars: *a real possibility!*

Food expert Frances Moore Lappe, author of the bestseller *Diet for a Small Planet*, once said in a television interview that we should look at a piece of steak as if it were a Cadillac. “What I mean,” she explained, “is that we in America are hooked on gas-guzzling automobiles because of the illusion of cheap petroleum. Likewise, we got hooked on a grain-fed, meat-centered diet because of the illusion of cheap grain.” Ronald J. Sider of Evangelicals for Social Action, in his 1977 book, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, pointed out that 220 million Americans were eating enough food (largely because of the high consumption of grain fed to livestock) to feed over one billion people in the poorer countries.

The Worldwatch Institute has released a remarkable report entitled *Taking Stock: Animal Farming and the Environment*, which lists nation after nation where food deprivation has followed the switch from a grain-based diet to a meat-based one. Most of the nations importing grain from the United States were once self-sufficient in grain. The main reason they aren’t is the rise in meat production and consumption.

In country after country the pattern is repeated. Livestock industries are consuming feed to such an extent that now almost all Third World nations must import grain. Seventy-five percent of Third World imports of corn, barley, sorghum, and oats are fed to animals, not to people. In country after country, the demand for meat among the rich is squeezing

“...we in America are hooked on gas-guzzling automobiles because of the illusion of cheap petroleum. Likewise, we got hooked on a grain-fed, meat-centered diet because of the illusion of cheap grain.”

out staple production for the poor. Oxfam similarly estimates that in Mexico, eighty percent of the children in rural areas are undernourished, yet the livestock are fed more grain than the human population eats! The livestock are exported of course, to satisfy the developed nations’ craving for cheap hamburgers. Many of us believe that hunger exists because there’s not enough food to go around. But as Frances Moore Lappe and her anti-hunger organization Food First! have shown, the real cause of hunger is a scarcity of justice, not a scarcity of food.

One-third of all raw materials in the U.S. are consumed by the livestock industry and it takes thrice the fossil fuel energy to produce meat than it does to produce plant foods. A report on the energy crisis in *Scientific American* warned: “The trends in meat consumption and energy consumption are on a collision course.” According to Greenpeace, over 260 million acres of U.S. forest have been cleared to grow grain for livestock. Farmed animals produce an estimated 1.4 billion tons of fecal waste each year in the U.S. Much of this untreated waste pollutes the land and water.

According to the United Nations report, *Livestock’s Long Shadow*, raising chickens, turkeys, pigs, and other animals for food causes more greenhouse gas emissions than all the cars, trucks and other forms of transportation combined. Researchers from the University of Chicago similarly concluded that a vegetarian diet is the most energy efficient, and the average American does more to reduce global warming emissions by not eating animal products than by switching to a hybrid car.

Livestock production affects a startling 70 to 85 percent of the land area of the United States, United Kingdom, and the European Union. That includes the public and private rangeland used for grazing, as well as the land used to produce the crops that feed the animals. By comparison, urbanization only affects three percent of the United States land area, slightly larger for the European Union and the United Kingdom. Meat production consumes the world’s land resources.

According to the United Nations, raising animals for food (including land used for grazing and land used to grow feed crops) now uses a staggering thirty percent of the Earth’s land mass. And a staggering 51 percent or more of global greenhouse-gas emissions are caused by animal agriculture, according to a report published by the Worldwatch Institute!

With a world population now at seven billion, colonizing space is not a realistic solution to the pressures of overpopu-

lation and armed conflict over dwindling resources on earth. Nor will it directly address the threat of global warming; global hunger; nor the energy, environmental, population and water crises. According to the Nuclear Information and Resource Service, moving from fossil fuel to nuclear power on a global level would require building a new reactor every one to three days for the next forty years, at a cost of \$200 billion per year. This would result in 300,000 tons of radioactive waste in the United States alone. A vegan economy would be easier to implement. On a vegan diet, the world could easily support a population several times its present size. The world’s cattle alone consume enough to feed over 8.7 billion people.

Science shows that going vegan is one of the most effective ways to fight climate change as well as one of the most powerful steps that you can take to make your life greener and healthier. It alleviates pressure on the world’s precious resources, helps tackle climate change and world hunger, and radically decreases your own risk of developing life-threatening diseases. And don’t forget that it saves the lives of animals, too!

Some find it easier to be vegan on certain days of the week as a way to transition to being completely vegan. Sir Paul McCartney endorses a “Meatless Mondays” campaign. In 2011, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors signed a VegDay Resolution encouraging a plant-based diet on Mondays. They point out that if everyone in San Francisco went veg one day per week, it would save 37,000,000 lbs. of greenhouse gas emissions. That is the equivalent of taking 123,822 cars off the streets of San Francisco!

peta2 is now the largest youth movement of any social change organization in the world. peta2 has 267,000 friends on MySpace and 91,000 Facebook fans. Several years ago, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) was the top-ranked charity when a poll asked teenagers what nonprofit group they would most want to work for. PETA won by more than a two to one margin over the second place finisher, The American Red Cross, with more votes than the Red Cross and Habitat for Humanity combined.

Keith Akers concludes in *A Vegetarian Sourcebook*:

“In the long run, we are all going to be vegetarians. Doubtless through further exploitation of the environment, we can prolong the period in our history in which we think it is necessary to kill animals for food. But the ecological limitations of this procedure will soon make manifest to all that a vegetarian economy is both necessary and desirable.

“Only a small minority of the world’s citizens will ever be able to consume meat at current American levels: the resources to support a more intensive livestock agriculture simply don’t exist. To continue to maintain a meat economy can only make matters increasingly difficult for everyone, and can only adversely affect the goals of health for everyone and world peace.”

Reach the author at vasumurti@aim.com



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

ACTIONS FOR PEACE

Stockton

PEACE AND JUSTICE NETWORK OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY (<http://www.pjnsjc.org>). Info: James Walsh, jwprod1956@clearwire.net

NOVEMBER

MJC Fall Science Colloquium, Science Community Center, Room 115, West Campus, 3 pm - 4 p.m. Contact: Teri Curtis (209) 575-6775 curtist@mjc.edu.
Nov. 30: Bobby Hutchinson, MJC Professor, "World AIDS Day." <https://www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/colloquium.php>

DECEMBER

MJC Positive People Speaker Series: presentations by local community members who have overcome challenges and obstacles to achieve their goals. Thursdays at 6 pm. Mary Stuart Rogers Student Learning Center, West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., Modesto. Campus parking is \$2. Info: (209) 575-6700. December 1: Joanna Murillo-Beaver, LVN. February 2: John Ervin II, founder of Project Uplift. February 16: Demitrius Snaer, MJC professor and Men's Cross Country coach. March 16: Tamara Mena, motivational speaker and spokesperson. April 6: The Honorable Ruben Villalobos, Stanislaus County Superior Court judge.

Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS) free public programs. 7:30 p.m., MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall, Rm. 132. Dec. 2: "Fusion: Building a Miniature Star on Earth." Dr. Tammy Ma is an experimental physicist at the National Ignition Facility at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory where rapid progress is being made in the quest for sustained thermonuclear fusion.

7 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL. Homelessness. McHenry & J St., 4:00-5:00 pm. Note NEW TIME.

9 FRI: Annual Holiday Potluck Song Fest. Celebrate our Peace community at the Onorato's, 1532 Vernon Ave., Modesto. Bring your favorite dish and beverage to share, your merry Holiday spirit, and your eagerness to sing. 6 to 9 pm. Bring an unwrapped children's book (K-6). See article this issue.

10 SAT: Studio V Pilates presents The ILL LIST 12: A Poetry Slam Invitational. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 7:30 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/761>.

11 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents *The Wizard of Oz*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/724>.

14 WED: Film Night at the Center: *Dogtown Redemption*. 6:30 pm. at the Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Discussion follows. See article, this issue.

24-25 SAT-SUN: Christmas Eve Special Services: 5:30 pm, Family/Children's Services. 9:00 pm Candlelight and Communion Service. Christmas Day: December 25, 9:30 Communion Service. Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, January 1: Noon. New Year's Labyrinth Peace Walk. Front yard, College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto.

Tuesday, January 10: Annual John McCutcheon Concert. See front page, this issue, for time, ticket and sponsorship information.

Sunday, January 15: Annual MLK Birthday Celebration will feature Dr. Mimi Kim speaking on "Restorative Justice." 2 pm, Sonora High School auditorium. Music and winners of the 2016 MLK essay contest.

Sunday, January 22: Sunday Afternoons at CBS celebrate its 25th Anniversary Season. The season continues with Patty Castillo Davis. All concerts held at 1705 Sherwood Ave. at 3 pm. Tickets available through the CBS office and at the door. Learn more at sundaysatcbs.com

Saturday, February 4: 23rd Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration. Keynote speaker Andrew Young. Media & Performing Arts Center, MJC. 7-9 pm. FREE.

March 17: Peace Essay Contest Awards ceremony, Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, MJC West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., 7 pm.

Sunday, June 4: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast, Modesto Church of the Brethren.

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.

Weekly insight meditation and dharma talk, 9:00 am-10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com

Food Addicts Anonymous In Recovery. Sundays 6:30 pm, 2467 Veneman Ave. Modesto. Info: Emily M., 209 480-8247.

MONDAYS

StanCounty Radical Mental Health: a peer facilitated support group open to people living with mental health issues. Mondays, 7 pm at the Modesto Peace/Life Center 720 13th St., Modesto. We strive to create a safe, non-judgmental space. Information: email stancountyrmh@gmail.com or contact Sue at 209-247-4659.

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 (September only meeting 9/15/14 due to Labor Day). Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

Silver & Gold Support Group 50+ years of age. Ongoing support group for mental health and wellness to meet the needs of the mature Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. Every Monday 3:00-4:00 pm. Community-Hope-Recovery, 305 Downey Ave. Modesto. Info: Monica O, Tiamonica64@gmail.com or Susan J, SusanthePoet@gmail.com

TUESDAYS

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.

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), (NOTE TIME), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

MEDIA: Listen to local Valley Community Radio KQRP 104.9 FM, <http://www.kqrp.com>

PEACE LIFE CENTER BOARD MEETING, FIRST Thursdays, 720 13th St., Modesto, 6:30 pm, 529-5750.

MEDIA COMMITTEE of Peace Life Center. Meetings TBA. Call John Lucas, 527-7634.

CONNECTIONS EDITORIAL MEETINGS: Info: 537-7818, jcostello@igc.org

PEACE/LIFE CENTER MODESTO, 720 13th St. Call 529-5750. We'll get back to you with current info on activities.

Ukulele class/play-a-long led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in songbooks provided. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver, Modesto. Donation accepted. Info: 505-3216. www.funstrummers.com

Weekly Insight Meditation And Dharma Talk, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com

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

WEDNESDAYS

Ongoing meditation class based on Qi Gong Principals. Practice a 3 Step Guided Meditation Process I have been 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: merced-board@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/>

Unity Tai Ji Qi Gong (A Journey Within) - First United Methodist Church Multipurpose Rm - 6 pm - Wednesdays - free-will offering. Michele, 209 602-3162.

Modesto Folk Dancers All levels welcome. Raube Hall, Ceres (call for address), 480-0387.

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 tgssupport@stanpride.org

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

Compassionate Friends Groups, 2nd Wed., 252 Magnolia, Manteca.

THURSDAYS

LGBTQA Collaborative Meetings 4th Thursdays. Agendas are the same for each meeting. Lunch meeting: Peer Recovery Art Center, 1222 J St, Modesto, Noon to 1:30 pm. Dinner meetings: Stanislaus BHRS - Redwood Room, 800 Scenic Dr., Modesto, CA 95354, 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Meeting dates: Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 17, Dec. 15: No meeting/ Winter Mixer. Dedicated to promoting well-being in the LGBTQA community. John Aguirre, jpamodesto@gmail.com, 559-280-3864.

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. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction. Jana Lynn Community Rm., 500 N. 9th St., Modesto. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. FREE (donations accepted). Info: email RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com

Latino Community Roundtable (LCR) meets on the second Thursday of each month at Noon at the Red Event Center,

921 8th St., Modesto. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

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

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter. 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact: Joanna Rose-Murray, 209-484-8276, jrmcompassionate@gmail.com, <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

NAACP. King-Kennedy Center, 601 S M.L. King Dr., Modesto, 7 pm, 3rd Thursdays. 549-1991.

Art Gallery Walk, downtown Modesto, third Thurs., 5:30 to 9 pm. Info: <http://www.modestoartwalk.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

Funstrummer Ukulele Band every Friday, from 9:15 am until noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Info: 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.

Village Dancers: Dances from Balkans, Europe, USA and more. Fridays, Carnegie Arts Center, 250 N. Broadway, Turlock. 7:30-9:30 pm, \$5 (students free). Info: call Judy, 209-480-0387.

Sierra Club: Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 549-9155. 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, 1st & 3rd Fridays at 7:00 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Other meetings at Terrace Cafe, Double Tree Hotel. Info: Yamillet Valladolid, 523-2860.

SATURDAY

Citizens' Climate Lobby, Modesto Chapter, meets every first Saturday, 10:30 a.m., 937 Oxford Way, Modesto. Questions: Call Kathy, 523-5907.

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 kathyhaynesESG@gmail.com

SERRV: Saturdays, 10 - Noon and after church Sundays or by appointment. Call Mary, 522-6497 or 523-5178. Gifts from developing countries. Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland, Rm. #4, Modesto.

1st Saturday Stories and Art: A chance for the whole family to make art inspired by children's books. Mistlin Gallery, 1st Saturday of each month, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. 1015 J Street. <http://ccaagallery.org>

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. For up to date information, visit www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm