

Don't Miss John McCutcheon's 20th Benefit Concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center, January 10

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

Six-time Grammy-nominated folk musician John McCutcheon performs in his 20th benefit concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 7:00 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 is a master of the guitar, banjo, hammer dulcimer, piano, autoharp, and fiddle. Our concerts with John have been a celebration of community, with lots of energy between performer and audience. His socially and politically conscious songs inspire us, his songs about family and everyday life move us and his sense of humor entertains us. John's latest and 43rd album is *Leap!*



Online tickets are available at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/john-mccutcheon-concert-tickets-461528372787?aff=ebds_sbcategorybrowse

In-person tickets are available at Intrinsic Elements (1214 J St., Modesto, 209-409-8510) by cash or check for \$25, or at the door for \$28.

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

Autoharp \$50 One ticket,

Guitar \$100 Two tickets,

Banjo \$175 Four tickets,

Piano \$300 Eight tickets,

Hammer Dulcimer \$500 Sixteen tickets.

You may send your sponsorship donation check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, PO Box 134, Modesto CA 95353. Please write "concert sponsor" in the memo on the check.

You may also buy your sponsorship at the Eventbrite site.

For more info, contact Ken Schroeder at kschroeder70@yahoo.com or 209-480-4576. Let Ken know if you would like a dedication to appear in the program (such as "In Honor of" or "In Memory of")

The Modesto Peace/Life Center is a tax-exempt organization under the IRS code section 501(c)(3), EIN #94-2800825. COVID precautions may be in effect depending on conditions.

Stanislaus County Commission for Women Seeks Nominees for the 2023 Outstanding Women Awards

The Stanislaus County Commission for Women (SCCW) is seeking nominees for the 2023 Outstanding Women Awards in the following categories:

Outstanding Woman.

Outstanding Young Woman (Must be a graduating high school senior or current post-secondary student, age 24 or younger).

Woman of History (Posthumous Honor).

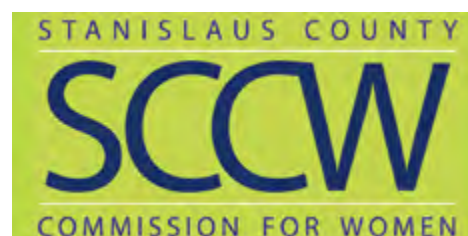
Woman Living Pioneer (Achievements pre-dated SCCW).

The purpose of the Annual Outstanding Women Awards is to honor women who have demonstrated exemplary service to our com-

munity as it relates to the objectives of the Stanislaus County Commission for Women.

Objectives

- To promote issues that concern women of all ages, ethnicities, sexual orientations, economic backgrounds, and beliefs.
- To promote within women the knowledge of their strengths and resources and to support women in the pursuit of their individual choices.
- To validate and celebrate the achievements of women collectively and individually throughout Stanislaus County.
- To support legislation and programs that



address the needs of all women and children.

To submit a nomination, please download the nomination form found at www.StanislausWomen.net

Nominations must be mailed (postmarked no later than December 20, 2022) or emailed to SCCforWomen@gmail.com, arriving by December 20, 2022.

The 44th Annual Outstanding Women Awards will be held on Saturday, March 25, 2023.

ACTION: For more information, email: SCCforWomen@gmail.com or call Jane Manley, at 209/523-9083.



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MoSt's Poetry Everywhere Initiative: Getting Poetry Books to Schoolkids

By TOM PORTWOOD

In the nearly ten-year history of the Modesto-Stanislus Poetry Center (MoSt) it has taken on few projects more ambitious than donating sets of brand-new poetry books to every public school in the county. But that's exactly what MoSt adopted as a goal about five years ago and has been working to achieve ever since.

"As a small nonprofit, our *Poetry Everywhere Initiative* is a multi-year project, but so far we have donated books to 47 elementary schools and the library at juvenile hall," explained MoSt board President Gillian Wegener.

The books chosen for the program offer a rich and diverse sampling of poetry for younger readers.

"There are no strings attached to this donation," Ms. Wegener continued. "We believe in the power of poetry to change lives, and we want to share that in all ways possible. By

donating books to every school – beginning with elementary schools, we hope that poetry will reach even our youngest community members and help them see the joy and wonder alive in that art form." Although the pandemic necessitated an interruption in the program for two years, MoSt redoubled its efforts this year, donating poetry books to 8 schools in the spring and to another 10 schools in November. Altogether, MoSt donated 330 books through the *Poetry Everywhere Initiative* in 2022 alone.



Growing our awareness to create a better world together: Community Conversations about Gen Z and LGBTQ+

By ARI KENNEY, UUFSC

Topics like gender, sexuality, and identity can be confusing. Many of us want to support the young people in our lives, but we don't fully understand what they're talking about.

We invite you to join the Unitarian Universalist Church in Modesto for two community conversations with Ari Kenney (they, them), a local LGBTQ+ educator who works in consumer research at E&J Gallo Winery. If you've ever wondered: "What do all these new identity terms mean?" "Why are there so many LGBTQ+ young people these days?" or "What's the difference between gender and sexuality?" this is the place for you to ask. All attendees who attend these non-judgmental, candid conversations will receive an informational packet.

California Set to Become World's 4th Largest Economy. Who is Left Out?

By MAURICIO TORRES, JR.,
California Budget & Policy Center

California is set to become the world's 4th largest economy — larger than Germany and the United Kingdom if the state were an independent nation. This strong economy should ensure that every resident has a roof over their head, access to food and clean drinking water, the opportunity to get a higher education, and a robust safety net to fall on when things get tough.

"Ensuring all Californians have the resources they need to afford food, housing, child care, and meet all of their basic needs should be our state's real measure of economic success."

Yet, despite California becoming the world's 4th largest economy, too many Californians are left out of our state's economic success. As leaders celebrate California's strong economy, we have to remember those that are continuously shut out from accessing our state's wealth, and we must take collective action to create an inclusive economy.

This fall about 2 in 3 California households with incomes under \$35,000 had trouble affording basic needs like housing, groceries, and diapers. For Black, Latinx, and other Californians of color, the challenge is often greater. This is a result of historical and continued policies that create and exacerbate racism and discrimination across our state, creating disparities in earnings, well-being, and wealth building.

As inflation and high housing costs continue to take a toll on Californians, state leaders must ensure that our public policies create an economy that benefits every Californian, not just corporations and those at the top.

One way California can help distribute our state's great wealth is by strengthening existing tax credits like the California Earned Income Tax Credit, commonly known as the CalEITC, which puts cash into the pockets of California workers, their families, and young working adults with low incomes.

Cash supports like the CalEITC are an efficient way to distribute resources and help respect the dignity and autonomy of families, by allowing them to choose the best way to spend their resources and address their most pressing needs.



California Budget
& Policy Center

State leaders can also help families and individuals with low incomes by using the

state's economic success to:

boost investments in in safe and affordable housing
eliminate the high cost of subsidized child care fees
strengthen the safety net so no family lives in deep poverty.

Ensuring all Californians — from different races, backgrounds, and places — have the resources they need to afford food, housing, child care, and meet all of their basic needs should be our state's real measure of economic success.

From the California Budget & Policy Center, 1107 9th St., Suite 310, Sacramento, CA 95814

Senior Law Project Receives Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Grant

New program provides no-cost legal services to older adults in Stanislaus and Merced Counties

The Senior Law Project (SLP), headquartered in Modesto, California, has received a grant from the California State Bar that will enable the SLP to provide no-cost legal services to older adults facing mortgage foreclosure.

SLP's Foreclosure Prevention Program (FPP) is headed by Modesto attorney Lisa Battista, who brings 30 years of broad-based litigation experience and a recent focus on helping low-income residents with housing-related problems.

"Home ownership provides residents with long-term financial, mental and physical security, allows families to build intergenerational wealth, and helps to stabilize communities," says Battista. "Our goal is to help low-income and vulnerable seniors to overcome legal and financial challenges and remain in their homes."

The FPP is accepting clients now. Clients must be aged 60 or older and based in Stanislaus or Merced Counties. All our services are provided at no cost. Services include:

- Reviewing contracts and reverse mortgage applications.
- Advising seniors of their legal rights.
- Helping to identify options for loan repayment or modification.
- Assisting seniors in obtaining financial assistance.
- Negotiating with loan servicers, government entities, and tax authorities; and
- Litigation.

Our priority is serving low-income seniors, seniors who are socially isolated, those with limited English language fluency, communities of color, and seniors who have been targeted by scams.

FPP staff are available to make informational presentations to groups of all sizes about foreclosure prevention options in Stanislaus and Merced Counties. Seniors who are or might be facing foreclosure are invited.

For information call (209) 577-3814.

Senior Advocacy Network/Senior Law Project, A non-profit corporation, 821 13th St., Suite A Modesto, CA 95354

If We Lose Empathy, We Lose Everything

By **TOM PORTWOOD**

Hate is on the rise – again – in America, where it always seems to find fertile soil to grow and spread insidiously across the land. In a study published in August 2022, the Voice of America reported that “U.S. hate crimes have been on the rise in recent years, driven by factors ranging from a surge in anti-Asian sentiments during the COVID-19 pandemic to anti-Black animus in reaction to racial justice protests that broke out across America in 2020 after the killing of African American George Floyd while in police custody. If the increases seen so far this year hold, it would mark the fourth consecutive year in which hate crimes have risen in the United States.”

If more evidence was needed that hate has once more taken on epidemic proportions, you need not look far to see that virulent anti-Semitism has raised its ugly head again and that crimes against the LGBTQ community have spiked dramatically since 2019, the tragic murder of five young people at the Club Q in Colorado Springs on the eve of the Transgender Day of Remembrance being just the latest manifestation.

Vicious, politically motivated vitriol, fear-mongering, and racist and/or homophobic and Islamophobic rhetoric spewed across social media – and all too often sprinkled like poison into the speeches of some politicians – is undermining not only our sense of civility but eating away as well at our basic human instinct for empathy, for looking out for the other guy. When we lose empathy, we lose everything.

I was sitting out front by my apartment the other day, putting a book down as dusk began to gather when I saw my neighbor Sally turn the far corner on the other side of the pond, walking with her floppy-eared fluffy white dog, gripping her walker as she struggled for breath, a cannula attached to her nose, an oxygen container resting on the seat of her walker. We waved hello to each other, as we do every day.

Sally was on a mission, delivering the mail to another neighbor of ours, Madge, who has been battling cancer again this year. At eighty-eight, it takes Sally a good fifteen minutes to traverse the three hundred steps to the mailboxes and the maybe four hundred steps more before arriving at Madge's doorstep.

There is much for her dog Bentley to explore along the way, so this is naturally part of Sally's daily journey – the give and take, the push and pull, between the two of them, though Bentley senses and is always responsive to Sally's needs for



Image: Ilmars Zvirgds (Pixabay).

him to slow down or not wander too far off into the bushes.

Some days are harder than others for Sally, if the breathing is hard to come by – even with oxygen flowing from the portable pump – but Sally perseveres, even as temperatures plummet and her lungs grow more tired with each step. I've offered to help a few times, but Sally just smiles and gently turns me down – and continues on down the walkway. This is her job, and she's determined to see it out each and every day. There is nobility in Sally's daily mission to her friend Madge, a generosity of spirit that could easily go unnoticed for of its very selflessness.

It's about the caring – as best we can, for as long as we can. That's the example that Sally is setting before us – one neighbor extending a helping hand to another, showing up for friends regardless of how poorly she may feel much of the time.

I take the bus several times a week and witness people helping each other out all the time. Usually, they are complete strangers to one another: one guy waiting for a bus may need a couple of bucks to get a ride to downtown, so another guy, waiting for the same bus, and bundled up against the cold of the afternoon, scrounges in his pockets for the fare and wordlessly gives the first guy the money. The two men nod at each other, shake hands. Maybe they'll see each other again, maybe not. But on this occasion, they're sharing the same damp, uncomfortable metal bench by a bus stop on McHenry Avenue and a sense of real camaraderie begins to flow between them. Pretty soon they're talking up a storm, like a couple of old buddies. Empathy – it goes a long way.

A couple of weeks back, a middle-aged woman boarded the 32 Mable Avenue bus at the corner of Floyd and Coffee

December MAPS program

MAPS offers free, informative, and engaging community science programs. Approximately monthly on Fridays in MJC West Campus Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 pm (also at 4 pm on 9/30/22).



Friday, Dec. 9: Dr. Jim DeKloe, Professor of Biological Sciences and Biotechnology, serves as the director and founder of the Industrial Biotechnology program at Solano College. Microbes, Medicine, and Money: Biomufacturing in the 21st Century. An introduction to the field of biomufacturing, a description of the national state of training in biotechnology and biomufacturing, <http://www.solano.edu/biotech/educators.html>

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

toting a Jack-in-the-Box bag in one hand. As she walked past me to a seat in the next aisle down, the pungent smell of oniony hamburgers wafted through the air. As soon as she sat down, the woman immediately struck up a conversation with an older gentleman sitting in the seat behind her. The fellow was wearing threadbare clothes and had a tired, forlorn look about him. A plastic bag stuffed with clothes and a jumble of misshapen objects was bulging out on the seat beside him.

Not a minute had gone by before I heard the woman chatting brightly with the man, who seemed visibly moved that someone was talking to him. By the time we got to the corner of Coffee and Sylvan, the woman had handed the fellow one of her hamburgers. Moments like this happen more frequently than you might expect. There's a lot of pain and hunger on the streets, but more often than not, you'll find

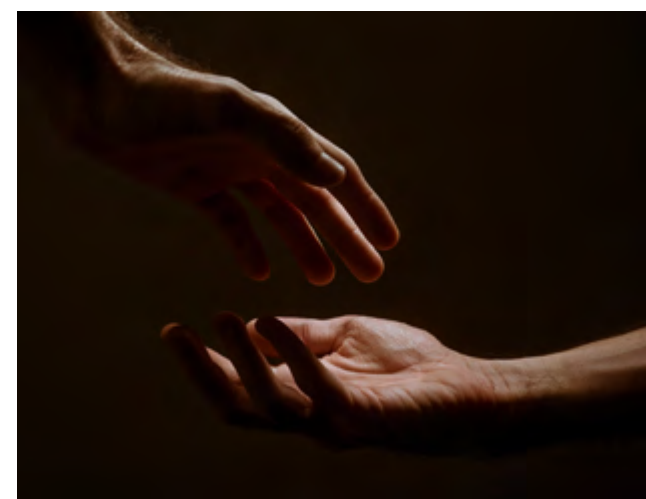


Image: Jackson David (Pixabay).

people with empathy doing what they can to help somebody out. Sometimes it seems as if those who have the least available resources have the strongest instinct to give.

Sally's walks around the grounds of our complex will invariably take her by my own apartment, where she'll stop and rest for a few minutes while Bentley coaxes a couple of kibbles out of the palm of my hand. Sally and I will visit for a few minutes. She'll often ask me if I need anything from the store the next time she goes out. Sally has led a long, full life and even now – at an age when many might begin withdrawing from the world – remains focused on helping others.

Empathy – the human spirit craves it, thirsts for it. Love can't exist without it. We can't afford to fritter it away or allow the purveyors of hate to hold sway.

It's up to each of us, then – as it always is.



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and a **sustainable future**

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Homeless? Gavin Newsom Passes the Buck

By **ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen**

California Governor Gavin Newsom's presidential ambitions hinge as much on appearances as they do realities, and the unsightly presence of homeless people throughout California is a reality he can't make disappear. Born of desperation fostered by the futility of his own efforts to eliminate homelessness, Newsom has decided to blame California's mayors for his own failure to understand the fundamental nature of a humanitarian emergency that grows worse by the day.

Early this month, Newsom announced he would withhold \$1 billion in homeless funding until local governments produce better plans for reducing the number of people living on the streets and in the dirt. He couldn't have offered a better illustration of his failure to comprehend the problem when he said,

It's a crisis. Act like it. Everybody step up. I'm not the mayor. You want me to come in? I'll do the job. I'll do it. Happily. I've been going into cities cleaning up encampments. Has anyone gotten the hint? If someone did that to me when I was mayor, I'd be like, 'OK, I got it.'

The governor apparently doesn't realize that many cities and counties have been "cleaning up encampments" for years, only to have the campers relocate to a nearby site, where they wait to repeat the relocation merry-go-round. Newsom seems unable to learn from these failures; instead, he wants more of the same.

This reality — the fact that homeless people have nowhere to go — has been apparent almost since homeless numbers became too visible to ignore. Nonetheless, "cleanups," better known as "sweeps," have been the only consistent tactic that state has offered in response to homelessness since the problem emerged over a decade ago.

A failed formula for futility, sweeps are often conducted with great fanfare. The latest efforts — touted with much preening and chest puffing by Newsom himself — have been by Caltrans along property that borders the state's highways.

The effect of these sweeps is to move homeless people into the very cities Newsom claims are failing on homelessness. The mayors of those cities, taking cues from the governor himself, then sweep the relocated camps, whereupon the campers move back to the Caltrans sites. It's a circle of futility. Nonetheless, state and local leaders repeat it year after year, in extravagant displays of wasted dollars.



Caltrans sweep near Modesto, 2021

The simple facts of homeless require tremendous exertions

of will to deny, but state and local leaders have been up to the task. Among these hard but simple facts are the following:

- A large percentage of homeless people are mentally ill. We lack sufficient facilities for housing and treatment of the mentally ill.
- Large numbers of homeless people are on permanent disability. Their disability incomes are too low to afford housing of any kind, even if it were available. It is not.
- We lack affordable housing for many of our working poor and it will be years before we have enough.
- We also lack transitional housing options for people waiting for traditional housing in the form of apartments or boarding homes. Many of these people are currently living in vehicles.
- Drug addiction is a health problem we are unprepared to treat. We lack social workers, treatment facilities, and health professionals sufficient to the demand.
- Congregate shelters were meant for short-term stays. They are an obsolete option for today's long-term homeless needs and, in any case, there aren't enough such shelters for the numbers of people who could benefit from using them.
- Virtually every city and county in the state is in routine violation of the 9th Circuit Appeals Court ruling that prohibiting camping in public spaces is illegal when insufficient shelter is available. In fact, homeless numbers everywhere are far greater than shelter capacity.

The only aspect of homelessness Gavin Newsom seems able to understand is that it is indeed "a crisis." What he fails to comprehend is that it's a humanitarian crisis featuring fellow citizens in dire need.



Home is a car, Modesto, 2021

Ordinarily, the first tactic in any crisis is harm reduction. Among the multiple harms of homelessness, the most damaging are to homeless people themselves. State and local leaders fail to recognize these harms.

Depriving the mentally ill, the sick, the disabled, and the traumatized the most rudimentary of civilized comforts — toilets, running water, a secure place to lay their heads — violates fundamental standards of decency, especially when cost-effective remedies for harm reduction are readily available. Forcing people in need to live in the dirt and on the streets also adds to their illness in the form of extreme stress, poor

nutrition and hygiene, and increased use of dangerous drugs.

One of the few cases when local authorities supported significant harm reduction for homelessness occurred in Stanislaus County after the 2018 ruling by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals permitted camping in public spaces whenever homeless numbers exceeded available shelter beds. Almost immediately after that ruling, when tents started appearing in some of the county's most popular city parks, Stanislaus County permitted camping in Beard Brook Park, a seldom-used park in the City of Modesto's industrial district.



Beard Brook Village, Modesto, 2019

Renamed "Beard Brook Village," the number of campers in Beard Brook Park soon rose to over 300. Early in 2019, the encampment was moved to a nearby site under Modesto's 9th Street Bridge.

Officially named the "Modesto Outdoor Emergency Shelter (MOES), campers were provided with Porta-Potties, running water, and officially sanctioned security at an estimated total cost of \$13 per person per day. Numbers of camp residents soared to almost 500.

Numbers of quality-of-life crimes went down. City of Modesto Spokesman Thomas Reeves cited, "a direct correlation between allowing for our homeless individuals to go into one location and the calls for service and the quality-of-life crimes that we would otherwise experience in other parts of the city go down."

At MOES, on-site service providers found it is far easier to assess needs and provide help for camp residents than for people at scattered campsites around the region. Volunteers and charitable organizations came to the same realization. It also became apparent that there were far fewer services available than there was need-driven demand, even though "Stanislaus County provided 3,100 services and transitioned 25 families to homes" during the short time MOES was open.

Modesto Outdoor Emergency Shelter (MOES) 2019

MOES was closed in December of 2019, less than a year after it opened. City and county officials touted the opening of a 182-bed low-barrier shelter as the new alternative to permitted camping. Under the ruling of the Ninth Circuit Court, the discrepancy in numbers — 182 beds and almost 500 homeless campers — should have led to permitted camping for those who couldn't get into the new facility. It didn't.

Instead, Stanislaus County and the City of Modesto began a game of ignoring the spirit of the law while pretending to follow the letter of the law. They arranged to have at least five beds perpetually available, secure in the knowledge that homeless people lack the will and resources to challenge authorities on matters of law and justice.

According to Reeves, “We’ve been making it very clear since the beginning of this issue over a year ago...we are not going to criminalize homelessness, but there will be accountability for the negative impacts of vagrancy-related issues in town.”

Since that 2019 statement, homeless numbers in Modesto and nearby have risen dramatically. The primary tactic for “reducing” homelessness has remained periodic sweeps of homeless camps.

As for “accountability,” the Final Report of the 2022 Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury on homelessness found that “accountability is lacking,” not for people experiencing homelessness, but for failed efforts by Stanislaus County to mitigate its “negative impacts,” despite the, “significant dollars spent.”

Like Gavin Newsom, local authorities throughout California prefer to avoid the hard facts of homelessness. Instead, they’re content to waste taxpayer dollars in futile attempts to sweep homelessness under the rug through an endless routine of “cleanups” that achieve nothing more than moving people in dire straits from one location to another.

Instead of providing sick and needy people cost-effective



necessities of safety, running water and toilets at permitted campsites, California’s leaders have chosen to treat them like refuse, and seem surprised when they don’t just go away.

Nowhere to go, Modesto, 2022

Today’s humanitarian crisis of homelessness is as much due to hard hearts and closed minds as it is to a multitude of other causes, none of which will be remedied for years. Meanwhile, billions of dollars continue to be wasted in fruitless attempts to wish the problem away.

When the governor passes the buck, everyone passes the buck.

Be informed!

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



Low-Wealth Voters Made the Key Difference in Midterms

If you need more than a minimum wage, go vote. If you need to decide between paying for rent or medications, go vote. If you still don’t have decent health care or potable water, go vote.

By SHAILLY GUPTA BARNES, Common Dreams

The midterm elections confirmed that in many ways, we are a nation divided. But maybe not as divided as we seem.

Voters may be split on their partisan preferences. But in ballot initiatives, voters across the political spectrum ushered in a wave of significant changes. They hiked the minimum wage in Nebraska, expanded Medicaid in South Dakota, capped medical debt in Arizona, and protected abortion rights not only in Michigan, California, and Vermont but also in the redder states of Kentucky and Montana.

These issues cross party lines. The common thread is that the people most impacted by them are poor — a voting bloc that demands attention like never before.

In 2009, I went to West Virginia for a week-long school for poor and low-income organizations and leaders. There were 150 people there from over 40 organizations across the country. I met organizers, media-makers, cultural workers, faith leaders, scholars, and advocates of every stripe, united by their desire to raise wages, make housing more affordable, ensure clean water for all, and more. It was a remarkable experience.

At the time, the Great Recession had been declared officially over — but nearly every person there was still reeling from its effects. A decade later, we realized the true extent of that hardship when Souls of Poor Folk report found that in the wealthiest country in the world, 140 million people were poor or low-income.

As the Policy Director of the Poor People’s Campaign and the Kairos Center, I spend most of my time thinking about these 140 million people. Among them are our parents and children, friends, neighbors, and people who touch our lives every day.

We seldom hear about poverty in elections. But poor people vote. In 2020, one-third of all votes were cast by poor or low-income people — a figure that rose even higher in some battleground states in the South and Midwest. In all, 50 mil-

lion low-income people voted in that election.

Numbers like these can make all the difference. That’s why the Poor People’s Campaign reached out to over 6 million poor and low-income eligible voters in the lead up to this year’s midterms. Our bilingual voter drive engaged nearly 1,000 volunteers, who together contacted 1 in every 43 eligible voters.

This was no partisan affair. When some Trump voters asked why we were bothering to reach out to them, our answer was simple: We don’t endorse or oppose any party. We just want to make sure that you vote.

If you need more than a minimum wage, go vote. If you need to decide between paying for rent or medications, go vote. If you still don’t have decent health care or potable water, go vote.

That’s why I wasn’t surprised when many of these issues won in the midterms, even in so-called “red” states: These are the living politics that tens of millions of people actually want and need.

Over these past few weeks, I have been thinking about that 2009 meeting in West Virginia. Although elections are the most visible battleground, democracy is also fought for and built in those meetings, with people who are tired of being left out of the decisions that impact their lives. These are the spaces where visions for living wages, health care, housing, and more begin to take shape.

Nijmie Dzurinko was at that meeting. Nijmie, an Indigenous and Black woman born in poverty, has been organizing in Pennsylvania for over 20 years. At a rally this year, she called for “a mass, politically independent force of poor and dispossessed people” in every community in this country.

“If we build a space for 140 million people,” she said, “we can not only impact elections — we can change what is politically possible.”

Whether we hear about poverty in our elections or not, that community is coming together.

<https://www.commondreams.org/views/2022/11/17/low-wealth-voters-made-key-difference-midterms>

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The "US and the Holocaust" Series Panel – Remarks by CSU Stanislaus President Dr. Ellen Junn

Sunday, October 30, 2022, 2 p.m., Congregation Beth Shalom, Modesto

Good afternoon and thank you, Rabbi Shalom Bochner for assembling this very distinguished panel.

Rabbi Chaim Singer-Frankes, thank you for sharing your fascinating personal and powerful professional experiences and your expertise as the former archivist of the Shoah Foundation. Your articulate and passionate presentation was cogent and compelling.

To Stan State's very own distinguished professor of history—Dr. Bret Carroll; thank you for your expertise as a historian and your commitment to equity and justice. Your potent insights, historical knowledge, skilled analysis, and very personal reflections were invaluable in helping to frame and advance our deeper and more nuanced understanding of the Holocaust.

On behalf of Stanislaus State University, I am humbled and want to thank you for inviting me to provide a few closing remarks for today's event.

Let me begin by honoring Rabbi Bochner for your pre-scient commitment in organizing and hosting this event here at Congregation Beth Shalom. As you told me, memories of the Holocaust are deeply evocative and painful for you as you reflected on your own family's history. Yet, you had the vision, courage and conviction to host this critically important discussion so that your congregation, the Jewish community, and others in our Central Valley will learn more about America's role in the Holocaust and to discuss and better understand these complex issues. This is all the more important, especially in the face of Holocaust deniers, because as a community, we must ALL continue to work proactively to never forget and also help others to never forget the Holocaust in order to uphold core principles of humanity, dignity, and acceptance for Jews and indeed for all humans.

I want to preface my remarks by saying that although I am not a trained historian, my doctoral training is in the field of cognitive and developmental psychology. In my closing remarks, I want to make three points:

I. First, the **IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING HOLOCAUST MEMORIES ALIVE.**

By this, I mean that we need to **understand the power of personalizing and humanizing historical facts and truths.**

History is often defined as the "*study of past societal or human events.*" History can also be defined as "*telling a story that summarizes past historical events.*" As part of our educational system in the US, we all took history classes in high school and in college.

Now think back for a moment and ask yourself-- WHEN DID YOU *FIRST* LEARN OR HEAR ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST?

Ask yourself DID YOU, *first* hear about the Holocaust growing up **from your parents or other family members?**

If not from your parents, did you *first* hear about the Holocaust in one of your classes in **high school?** Or in **college?** Or **after you graduated from college?**

Why am I asking you this question? Because if we are never to forget the horrors of the Holocaust, as a nation, we



must all first be taught about this heinous historical period of time. Furthermore, speaking as a cognitive and developmental psychologist, we know that parents are the first teachers of their children. If parents share their own personal histories and stories—both the happy, *as well as the challenging memories*, these stories become part of the ethos of the family that often forms the foundation for their children's memories, who then can in turn make these personalized stories, jump off the pages of history books to come alive, and thereby pass on powerful connections and memories for many future generations to come.

It would be interesting to know the variation in how many of you in the audience may have had different experiences of HOW and WHEN you first heard of, or formally learned, about the Holocaust. This variation actually should not be surprising since the authors of our history books lived and wrote during different time periods, and many authors intentionally and selectively omitted or sanitized American history for what they perceived to be their audience—the "young, vulnerable or minds of children" who should not be traumatized and whom they perceived as not capable of fully understanding the complexities of tragic historical events.

Two quick personal examples—first, I want to mention that my husband, Dr. Allan Greenberg, who is here today, is a retired physicist who also is Jewish. He had already watched Ken Burns' documentary even before Rabbi Bochner spoke to me about this event. We have discussed Ken's documentary numerous times, and he has reflected on his own family's history, realizing now that he was born in Long Island during

a time when American newspapers were starting to report that Hitler had already begun murdering millions of Jews. He knew that his Jewish parents were born and raised in the US, having had their families immigrate to America two and three generations earlier. He has tried to recall if his parents ever mentioned the Holocaust directly to him, and he recounted that he did not remember that they ever discussed this with him as a young boy or growing up in high school, though he did remember meeting or hearing of relatives whom he was told had moved to Argentina to escape the Nazis.

This too should not be surprising because most parents do not want to share their own most painful experiences and personal histories of tragedies with their young children. Instead, most parents try to shield and protect their children. They work hard to create a better, more normalized life, and cope by repressing and not sharing these harsher truths with their children.

Another relevant personal example comes from my own family. My parents were born and raised in South Korea and immigrated to the US in the mid-1950s. Although I was born in the US, as a child, I and my family were often misperceived to be Japanese. And growing up in the deep South and the Midwest in the 1960s, we were often accosted and verbally attacked by white Americans with epithets such as, "Dirty Japs—go home!" because they remembered the attack on Pearl Harbor. Just as in my husband's family, my parents never discussed these frightening encounters with us as young children, and just as Allan experienced, I never learned about the enforced internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans as part of the US's involvement in World War II. In fact, I never learned that all people of Japanese descent in California had been interned until I first came to this great state as a young professor in 1986!

The point here is that if we want to keep the memories of the Holocaust alive in the minds of Americans and others around the world, we must personalize these memories, talk with and teach our children in developmentally appropriate ways to help the next generation understand the basic facts about the Holocaust.

While there are numerous past acclaimed films and books about the Holocaust, I especially commend and thank Burns, Novick, and Botstein for directing and producing this powerful film NOW in order to educate our newest generation of students and, especially during these troubled times, to help preserve and understand the complex role that America played during the Holocaust.

At the same time, I urge **EACH** of you not to turn away from the painful memories of the Holocaust. Try not to succumb to Holocaust fatigue. I ask you tonight to do what you can to find out more about HOW the Holocaust might have affected you, your family and others, and I urge you to keep these stories alive in your families—*please talk to your children and grandchildren and to others* so these more personalized stories and truths of the Holocaust will always be remembered with searing impact. Together, we must build unassailable, enduring memories of the truths about the Holocaust to counter the dangerous rhetoric of

the growing number of Holocaust deniers and the perilous impact of social media misinformation. Witness the shocking potentially deadly assault of Paul Pelosi by a dangerous anti-Semite attacker fueled by lies on social media.

(2) Coming to Grips with America's More Ignominious, Shameful History.

If we can recognize the sobering recurrent and contradictory themes in our nation's checkered past history—we might learn how to combat these troubling recurring themes of racism, white supremacy, genocide, enforced slavery, omission, sanitization, and indifference.

I agree when Ken Burns who said, *"I will never work on a more important film in my life. I've worked on many films that I think are important. I'm working on others today. But this one gathers the threads of all of these things that we would rather conveniently sweep under the rug. People say history repeats itself. It doesn't. Twain is supposed to have said history doesn't repeat itself but it rhymes. That's closer to the truth, I think. Racism, antisemitism, nativism, anti-immigrant sentiment, they are consistent throughout our history. We have a responsibility to tell these stories—the bad, as we are discussing here, but also the good. You cannot separate them."*

Typically, historical accounts of these forms of discrimination and racism focus on analyzing one movement in history at a time. We never see them presented as a totality that spans over 246 years of American history. What makes this series so starkly surprising and compelling to me is that Burns and his team force us to see that all of these historical negative threads have been part of the fabric or stream of American history *since our nation's founding*. For example, the tenet that "all men are created equal" clearly did not apply to Black men and certainly did not include women. And more chillingly, Burns reveals how Hitler studied America's history of genocide and isolation of Native Americans, enactment of racist laws, strong anti-Semitism sentiments and policies, and anti-immigration laws from our own history book and used these American examples to build and justify their own Nazis strategies and laws against the Jews in the early days of his regime.

Moreover, these movements in the US were led by some of our most venerable leaders and heroes like Henry Ford, Charles Lindbergh, and others, and not by some other "demonic" characters. They are "us"—and these themes still are here with us today. This recognition compels us to use a more critical lens to view ourselves, our past, and our future. We like to tout ourselves as an exceptional nation, a land of opportunity, justice, freedom, and equality—and that causes us to conveniently forget our unsavory past histories, to minimize, omit, compartmentalize, or sanitize.

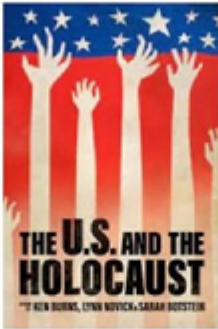
The conclusion is that we need to take off our rose-colored glasses and squarely face our nation's negative, darker themes, so we can stay ever more vigilant to not repeat these past actions.

Historian Deborah Lipstadt, the great Holocaust scholar, has said *"that the time to stop a Holocaust is before it starts. We accomplish this by telling the unvarnished truth of our past. And we must never forget."*

Finally, with this all this new and sobering awareness, what can we do to help promote the good and positive qualities of our lofty American vision? This brings me to the third point for a call to action.

(3) Call to Action by Committing to Making Personal,

Please join Congregation Beth Shalom - The Center for Jewish Life
for an important panel discussion of:



"The US and the Holocaust"

Sunday, October 30, 2pm, Congregation Beth Shalom
1705 Sherwood Avenue, Modesto


Speakers will include:

Rabbi Chaim Singer-Frankes, former archivist at
Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation

Dr. Professor Bret Carroll, History Department, CSU Stanislaus

Moderator: Rabbi Shalom Bochner, Congregation Beth Shalom

Closing Remarks: Dr. Ellen N. Junn, President,
California State University, Stanislaus



Positive Change: Personally commit to positive and enduring change BY UPHOLDING AND PARTICIPATING IN THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY vs. authoritarian rule, and by resisting vilification or "othering" to instead champion and advocate to support universal principles of human dignity and self-actualization.

Even more alarming today is to see these same negative past tendencies resurfacing in our daily news across our nation and now across the world. Witness our recent American political landscape showing a rise of fascism, and unlawful assaults on American democracy, whether it emanated from the Oval Office after the prior presidential election, to the Jan 6th storming of the Capitol — these events possess unnerving parallels to the past. Racism, anti-Semitism, nativism, anti-immigrant sentiment, and blatantly attacking the fundamental processes necessary for a democracy.

As co-director Sarah Botstein has said: *"We're witnessing the fragility of democratic civilization all over the world, not just here. And why is that? I don't have an answer for it, but the echoes, relevance and the stakes are different from when we started. We started to make the film in 2015. The 2016 election hadn't happened. Charlottesville hadn't happened. The shootings at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh and at the supermarket in Buffalo hadn't happened. January 6th hadn't happened. Ukraine hadn't happened."*

So what can we do to take action—what can you do? What can I do? What should others do? I would suggest three steps:

(1) First, DO NOT FEEL POWERLESS. Psychological research and theory suggest that we should not succumb to "learned helplessness"—you should know that each person can exercise effective individual and local actions with others.

Believe as Margaret Mead has said, *"Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has."*

(2) Stand up to support the core principles of democracy. What does this mean?

Let me add another relevant personal family story. My father was fervent and passionate in his belief in the transformative power of democracy—and *especially for American democracy*. He knew he wanted to leave South Korea to come to America to study political science, which he did, and later sent for my mother to join him when he was completing his doctorate in international relations in order to become a professor in the US.

I have vivid memories of him actually lecturing to me as a young school-age girl in our living room (which denoted how serious he was because back then, our living room was reserved only for adults, not for children in our family).

He told me that there were 3 things he felt were the most important things in life: (1) choosing to have a family and raise children: (2) making sure to educate one's children to the highest levels possible; and (3) raising one's children and family in a democracy like America. He believed in the ultimate power of a society and a nation that is founded on a government that is based on the core principle of a true democracy

So why is true democracy so important and powerful for a nation and its people? What does it mean to support and live in a democracy and what does this mean for you, for me, for others?

It means protecting and supporting the fundamental core principles of democracy:

Citizen participation – "We the people"

Equality for all as a foundational premise

Government that is accountable and transparent

Abiding by the rule of law

Access to regular free and fair elections; accepting the results of elections with a successful and peaceful transfer of power

Supporting a multi-party system

Control of the abuse of power

Economic freedom

Upholding human rights

It means, that you and all of us have profound civic responsibilities to protect our fragile democracy. We need to push back against the dangers of governing by autocracy—witness Russia and Ukraine, China and Taiwan, and North Korea.

What can you do to protect and engage in our democracy? Take action to be more informed. Exercise your right to vote—including the upcoming election on Nov 8!

Communicate with your elected officials.

Support a strong and free press and participate in our democracy as engaged citizens.

Stand up against discrimination, racism, and inequities.

(3) Whenever possible, resist vilification or "othering" those with whom you disagree.

Changing hearts and minds, requires rising above hurling accusations and dehumanizing others. Though in today's polarized, partisan political environment it sometimes seems impossible to foster constructive dialogue by trying to demonstrate a level of respect and professionalism, being open to listening, and finding common ground to get to the business

continued page 10

MoSt to host 11th Annual Poetry Festival

February 4, 2023

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt) will host the 11th Annual Poetry Festival on February 4, 2023, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale Road, Modesto, California. The event will run from 9 am to 1:30 pm.



Facilitated by Amanda Moore, an awarded-winning, nationally recognized poet from the Bay Area, attendees will be led through a program titled *At the Starting Line, A Workshop on Poetic Opening*,

which promises to be very helpful for both new and experienced poets.

Tickets (\$40 each) for the event will soon be available through Eventbrite; a link will be provided on the MoSt website www.mostpoetry.org). **Attendance is limited to the first 44 people who purchase tickets.** Coffee, tea, and table snacks will be provided, and attendees are welcome to bring their own lunch. As in the past, the festival will include an author's table and camaraderie with poets and poetry aficionados from throughout Northern California.

In this month's A Gathering of Voices, eight fine poets each share a poem pleading for peace, social justice, or a sustainable environment, or a poem celebrating a moment where one of these goals was realized or seemed within reach.

Sonnet For A Cenotaph

In Hiroshima rests a Cenotaph,
A peace memorial built beside a pond
No bodies lie beneath the village path
As all were blown into the great beyond

When our Atomic bomb erased the square
The lives of all the people disappeared
Nearby Sadako folded cranes in prayer
Today her cranes remain and are revered

But where on earth does travesty exist
With no memorial to bring to mind?
Perhaps Celilo Falls can be dismissed
The dam that drowned it is not now maligned.

Though underneath the dam a culture lies
No cenotaph to Natives authorized.

(The Dalles Dam on the Columbia River, Oregon, 2005)

Lynn Hansen

Yesterday

No rain, not today, not yesterday, not tomorrow.
Snow, that a month ago was well above normal
has now melted. The run-off is not enough to fill
reservoirs.

Every year it seems hotter and drier. Yet builders
still do not build multi-family housing where
poor people can live in their neighborhoods.

It's money. Something unattainable in the air
causing discord in our lives. Only the rich can
afford to buy a home and only the rich rule
what happens in our lives.

Yesterday seems so simple, yet we can't go
back. Too much has changed, too much to fix.

Roberta Bearden

NPR Reports

Russian tanks
roll across deserted roads,
grandmothers make Molotov cocktails
as I drive to Target.
A journalist in Kyiv
interviews a lawyer
who has never shot a gun
or thought he could
until now
as I drive to the postal center.

In Kherson,
families hide in parking garages,
a mother cries,
a dog barks,
as I head to the grocery store

while Ukraine bleeds out.

Nancy Haskett

Lost and Found

Next time you'll notice them –
She, a cross legged Buddha praying, wearing
red and gray – combing the beach. Her left
hand grasping a stick, moving side to side,
pendulum of a clock sweeping seconds.

Clad in black and gray, wearing glasses,
He rests on his side, a sea lion lolling in the surf.
His right hand washes over sand in long slow arcs
like a Rainbird sprinkler. He rises to hands and knees;
continues oscillating motion, as if conducting music.

They gather tiny shells, smooth pebbles,
bits of worn colored glass. Small treasures –
like the simple pleasures of their fifty year marriage:
unnumbered hours together, laughter with family
and friends, sharing sun, sand and sea.

What brought them here this April morning
where clouds slip across blue,
dew clings to tattered spider webs like beads
of mercury and succulent ice plants edge
the winding path to the beach?

Lost in the familiar, she sighs,
"I could stay here forever."
They rise slowly, leave hand in hand.
Each carries a bag.
Sure of what they found.
Unaware what *they* left behind.

Tom Myers

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“Bettering the Race” or A Prayer for Brown Children

My brother asks me about the brownness
of my subjects.

These are not caricatures.

These are familiar characters I’ve put
to ink.

Faces sprouting from memory; family
long forgotten.

As brown as me. As brown as him.

I ask him, “Are my hands not brown?”

Have you heard the phrase,

“Mejorando la raza?”

Green eyes are praised

but my aunt’s clay skin was buried
in insults.

My grandfather called her “Mi niña fea.”

I look at my hands and reach for adobe
and red mud.

I search my pillows and sheets for
riverbeds.

I dig for the clay of creation.

I remember the breath that formed me.

How is the breath of life

less beautiful in my brown chest?

I pray for the children that come after me.

Presumen tus narices Maya.

I pray you don’t look at family photos

And wish they were paler.

Sink your teeth into your brown past.

Seek it. Set fire to the underbrush

That enveloped you, the idea that

Only whiteness blooms.

Brown babies, you are beautiful.

Cristina Sandoval

When We Were White

When we were white, we
could receive service in a
strange restaurant without
waiting. We could cash a
check or open a bank
account without being
accused of fraud. We
weren’t made to lay face
down on asphalt, ever.
We got paid a dollar for
a dollar’s work. Our dad
wasn’t in prison. We had
enough to eat. College
meant more than just
playing football. We
could eat watermelon
—and no one laughed.

Ed Bearden

A Rebuttal

Sir, I have not given much.
Just a writer. The poetry is
on the floor, the piano has
left the room, the keys are
on the windows knocking
their little sounds. Do you
think that your bullets will
kill them?

The windows may break.
The afternoons might hole
up into the cover of the moon.
Hubris may flower, but it
too must die – I will not lie
if I claim you are insufferable.
I will not lie if I claim the
sky is as red as it ever was
yellow.

You will go. You will be
gone soon enough. All the
instruments will crawl out
from hiding. We’ll have a
band, and cake. There will
be laughter—heavy bagfuls
of laughter.

Zaid Shlah

Abundance and Opportunity

Here we have an abundance of peaches, with their soft fuzz, an abundance of fuzz.
Here we have an abundance of luck, of love, of well-loved dogs, of men in suspenders.
We have an abundance of blue sky, and on some days, an abundance of clouds –
angel-friendly clouds, yes harps, yes wings, an abundance of sun
streaming through honey-colored and that smooth and sweet and warm.
Here we have an abundance of rivers, though not an abundance of water –
our rivers run high and run dry, run trickle or run thunder. You know
the what and when of that cyclical unmystery. We have an abundance
of sidewalks and zucchini, an abundance of winter fog and work boots,
an abundance of work boots under beds and on back porches, an abundance
of alarm clocks, and on Friday afternoons both an abundance of exhaustion
and an abundance of anticipation, the whole weekend, abundant time, ahead.
Here we have an abundance of cows in their unintentional cowness, the lowing
of them, the way one always manages to find the high point in the dairy yard.
We have an abundance of milk, of cheese, of ice creams, an abundance of moonrises
though not of the best kind where the orange moon, abundant all on its amber own,
rises huge over the town, making us all feel like a part of the abundant cosmos.
Here we have an abundance of people with an abundance of opinions –
agreeing and not, an abundance of grace and empathy at hand, in our hands.
Here we have an abundance of cars, the minivan kind, the graffiti kind, the pick-up kind,
the low rider, the hybrid, the beat-up, this kind and that kind all humming on the streets
waiting for the lights to freshen up and turn green and move us into the abundance
of tree-lined shade which, in our abundance of triple-digit days, is a generous measure
of comfort for body and soul. Here we have an abundance of tomatoes, of plums,
of onions, of good food grown from good earth, an abundance of houseflies trying
just to live their fly-lives as they know best, an abundance of ash trees, of sycamore,
of Chinese pistache, of vim, of vigor, of hope for a wild and wily future with room
for all, room even for the abundant masses without rooms of their own, even for
those who need abundant measures of changes and chances, even
for those who need an abundance of compassion, of luck and of love. We have
stories and books and poems and pages and words and words, all abundant.
Here we have an abundance of music in our throats and music in our plazas.
We have an abundance of good nature and good intention, an abundance of olives,
an abundance of dust, an abundance of hope. We have hope abundantly
in our pockets and in the crooks of our elbows, in the spaces between
the library books, between conversations, in the dresser drawers with the suspenders,
in the rapt gazes of children, with their abundant curiosity
and demands for explanations. Their eyes are on us, watching to see
what we’ll do with our abundant luck and our abundant love
and our abundant will to make their world, our world, abundantly better.

Gillian Wegener



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

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CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: 17: Saturday, December 17:
“That Old Holiday Spirit....” An Original Radio Play by
 Arnold Anthony Schmidt. 7:00 pm.

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

PROGRAMS

NEW: *Sports Talk Modesto* - Join Jay Freeda and Jimmie Menezes on your way home to catch

up on everything happening in the sports world. – Thursdays, 5 pm.

NEW: *Vib'n with the West Modesto Collaborative* - Karlha Davies and Jasmine Corena Engage, Educate and Advocate on behalf of the West Modesto Community and showcase the Voices of the West Modesto Community – Thursdays, 7 pm.

Ukraine 2.4.2 - a collaboration between Anne Levine, WOMR, the Pacifica Network, and Kraina FM, a 26-city radio network in Ukraine that arranges weekly cutting-edge and exclusive interviews with key people in Ukraine – Thursdays, 10:00 am.

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, 10:00 pm.

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

Bucks Stallion's Radio Transmission Emporium - Cyber Music - Sundays, 1:00 am, Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m.



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

AREA 5150 UFO RADIO – Saturday night at Midnight.

LOCALLY PRODUCED PROGRAMS

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 and Laura Stokes - Mondays, 8:00 pm; Tuesdays 9:00 am & Wednesdays 8:00 pm. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp> and on Spotify

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

People Not Profit - with Pegasus - Wednesdays, 9:30 pm; Saturdays, 2:30 pm; Formerly *Peril and the Promise*. Listen here also: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp-peril>.

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

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

Local Music Programs

Mars Radio – Hip-Hop Show - Music, interviews from local & regional artists - Fridays, 8:00 pm. A new, second show plays on Saturday nights at 8:00 pm, with a third at 8:00 pm Sunday.

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

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

This is SKA with Middagh Goodwin - Tuesdays, 9 pm; Fridays, 11 pm; Sundays, 5 am to 7 am.

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

Weekdays (Monday - Friday)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Children's Programming

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

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

Science

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

Big Picture Science - 1:00 pm Sundays

Planetary Radio – 2:30 pm Sundays

Got Science – 4:00 pm Sundays

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

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Holocaust from page 7

of solving problems mutually. However, if we can always focus on supporting, committing to, and upholding the value of universal principles of human dignity and actualization, we may have a chance to break this cycle of dissension.

Events like this one represent beautiful acts of building community and greater understanding and illustrate the power of an engaged citizenry within a robust democracy. So, I celebrate each and every one of you for keeping our democracy alive and well by being here at this event today!

To sum up my original three points:

(1) First, you can and should continue to recognize the importance of keeping memories of the Holocaust alive, by personalizing and humanizing historical facts and truths about the Holocaust and talking with your own families and others so they pass on these memories.

(2) Second, recognize and stand up against America's recurring negative themes of racism, white supremacy, genocide, forced slavery, anti-Semitism, sanitization, and indifference so we never make these same mistakes again.

(3) Finally, consider a **CALL TO ACTION BY COMMITTING YOURSELF TO MAKING PERSONAL, POSITIVE CHANGE** by upholding core principles of democracy that support equity, justice, and universal principles of human dignity and self-actualization.

Thank you again to Rabbi Bochner, our esteemed panelists, and to all of you for joining us to engage in this wonderful conversation today as we work to move forward in supporting a more just, equitable, diverse, inclusive, and welcoming American democracy.

Slightly edited by permission of the author.



Ideas of the future

By VASU MURTY

"And there are ideas of the future, of which some are already approaching realization and are obliging people to change their way of life and to struggle against the former ways: such ideas in our world as those of freeing the laborers, of giving equality to women, of ceasing to use flesh-food, and so on." -- Count Leo Tolstoy

"The world has enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed." -- Mohandas Gandhi

Humans are suited for a plant-based diet but can adapt to flesh-eating if our survival depends on it. According to the American Dietetic Association, "most of mankind for most of human history has lived on vegetarian or near vegetarian diets." Meat has traditionally been a luxury which few could afford.

How did agriculture arise? One theory, by Mark Nathan Cohen in his book *The Food Crisis in Prehistory* is startlingly simple: agriculture developed because the world was overpopulated. Relative to the existing hunter-gatherer technology, the environment was incapable of supporting the existing population.

"It seems odd at first to think of the world as being overpopulated when the population was only a fraction of what it is today or to think of the world as environmentally exhausted, when it was more fertile then than it is now" observes author Keith Akers in *A Vegetarian Sourcebook*. But we must remember that the hunter-gatherer technology is extremely inefficient with respect to land resources. It is estimated that each of the Kung bushmen (a modern hunter-gatherer society) requires over ten square kilometers of land -- more than

2,500 acres. At this rate of land use, the world could hardly have supported more than a few million hunter-gatherers."

Humanity is once again at a crossroads. The real issue isn't overpopulation but overconsumption: our meat-centered diet. As pointed out by Canadian tennis champion and health and wellness expert Peter Burwash in *A Vegetarian Primer*, the world population has long since passed the point at which everyone could be comfortably fed on a meat-centered diet, so it makes sense to eat lower on the food chain: an idea popularized by Frances Moore Lappe, in her bestseller, *Diet for a Small Planet*. As vegan author John Robbins points out in *Diet for a New America*, the world's cattle alone consume enough to feed over 8.7 billion humans.

Nor can fish provide any help in alleviating global hunger. There are signs that the fishing industry (which is quite energy-intensive) has already overfished the oceans in several areas. And fish could never play a major role in the world's diet anyway: the entire global fish catch of the world, if divided among all the world's inhabitants would amount to only a few ounces of fish per person per week. Fish are now being "factory farmed." Fish are sentient beings, able to feel and experience pain, stress, and anxiety.

Keith Akers writes: "Some vegetarians may be somewhat offended to find that dairy products and eggs are part of the problem." The arguments that convince meat-eaters to go vegetarian (ecological, economic, energy, environmental, ethical, health and nutrition) can be taken a step farther and convince meat-eaters and vegetarians to go vegan. In the Central Valley of California, cows generate the same amount of fecal waste as a city of 21 million people, much of which goes untreated and pollutes waterways. Dairy products, like other animal products, are obtained through modern agribusi-

ness and factory farming, and the issues of animal cruelty, the health hazards caused by eating higher rather than lower on the food chain, as well as the energy and environmental concerns are not avoided by switching from one commercially produced animal product to another.

According to *World Watch*: "The human appetite for animal flesh is a driving force behind virtually every major category of environmental damage now threatening the human future -- deforestation, topsoil erosion, freshwater scarcity, air and water pollution, climate change, biodiversity loss, social injustice, the destabilization of communities and the spread of disease."

Mac McDaniel writes: "We're looking at a global food crisis by 2050 and we're trying to George Lucas our way out of it with prototypes, science fiction, and undeveloped technology. With any discussion of food shortages, the 800 lb. gorilla in the room is animal agriculture. (Nearly 75) percent of all agricultural land is used to raise livestock, and a third of land used for growing crops is used for growing feed for livestock. It doesn't take a scientist to see the common sense that feeding plants to animals, and then eating the animals, is a horribly inefficient way to produce food."

Peter Singer similarly concludes: "Environmentalists are increasingly recognizing that the choice of what we eat is an environmental issue. Animals raised in sheds or on feedlots eat grains or soybeans. To convert eight or nine kilos of grain protein into a single kilo of animal protein wastes land, energy, and water. On a crowded planet with a growing human population, that is a luxury that we are becoming increasingly unable to afford. Intensive animal production is a heavy user of fossil fuels and a major source of pollution of both air and water. It releases large quantities of methane and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. We are risking unpredictable changes to the climate of our planet for the sake of more hamburgers. A diet heavy in animal products, catered to by intensive animal production, is a disaster for animals, the environment, and the health of those who eat it."

The world population is now eight billion and is expected to be ten billion by the middle of the 21st century. Bruce Friedrich of the Good Food Institute, formerly with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) -- his activism nurtured through service in the Catholic Worker community -- is convinced the future is plant-based.

Even if shifting to a plant-based diet isn't enough to stave off overpopulation, in light of the data showing the depletion of energy, food, fresh water, land space, raw materials and resources as well as the heavy contribution to air and water pollution, deforestation, and global warming caused by a meat-centered diet, how do proponents of population control -- warning about overpopulation consuming the world's resources -- justify consuming animal products?



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calendar

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

december 2022

CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.

MJC Science Colloquium Fall 2022 Schedule. Wednesdays 3:15 - 4:15 pm. in Science Community Center, Room 115, West Campus. Talks will also be recorded for the Science Colloquium's YouTube site for later viewing. Back in the spring.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science): free MJC science programs. on Fridays in MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 pm. **Friday, Dec. 9:** Dr. Jim DeKloe, Professor of Biological Sciences and Biotechnology and director of the Industrial Biotechnology program at Solano College. Microbes, Medicine, and Money: Biomanufacturing in the 21st Century. An introduction to the field of biomanufacturing, a description of the national state of training in biotechnology and biomanufacturing, <http://www.solano.edu/biotech/educators.html>

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

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

3 SUN: The State Theatre and the Modesto Film Society present *Trading Places*. Join the State Theatre. Have fun, get perks, support Modesto's historic non-profit theatre. Visit <https://thestate.org/films/trading-places-122022/>

7 WED: VIGIL: SAVING OUR DEMOCRACY 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm, McHenry & J. St., Modesto.

17: SAT: "That Old Holiday Spirit...." An Original Radio Play by Arnold Anthony Schmidt. KCBP Radio 95.5 FM, 7:00 pm. Streaming on www.kcbpradio.org

LOOKING AHEAD

January 10: Annual **John McCutcheon** Concert.

February 4: Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt) will host the 11th **Annual Poetry Festival**, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale Road, Modesto, California. 9 am to 1:30 pm. See article, this issue.

February 25: 29th Annual **MLK Commemoration**. Details TBA.

Golden State Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team Benefit Game for KCBP Radio. TBA.

June 2-4: **Peace Camp** returns!

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

Dungeons and Dragons, Noon. Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative and Resource Center, 1202 H St., Modesto.

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. All are welcome. For more information, please email charlie@imcv.org. Our mailing address is IMCV, P.O. Box 579564, Modesto, CA 95357.

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

MONDAYS

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter is meeting by Zoom on the second Mondays at 7:00pm. 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.

ONGOING 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

Womxn's 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 1 pm-2 pm 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

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.

First Tuesday - LGBTQ+ Ages 12-14, 5-7 pm activities and support. Second Tuesday- LGBTQ+ Ages 15-17, 5-7 pm activities and support. Third Tuesday-Friends and Family, 5-7 pm Discussion and emotional support. All at Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative and Resource Center, 1202 H St., Modesto.

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

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](https://www.instagram.com/thegapmodesto)

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

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), 4:30-5:30 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.

FRIDAYS

Friday 7:30-9:30 pm (Sept thru May) **International Folk Dancing** with Village Dancers, Carnegie Art Center, 250 N. Broadway, Turlock \$7. No experience or partner needed. 209-480-0387 for info.

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

Funstrummers: A Fun-loving Ukulele group gets together live to practice and play. Play along with us or work up to playing out in gigs. Friday mornings, 10am to Noon at the Telle Classrooms, Trinity Presbyterian, 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto.

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

First and Third Saturdays - **Gay Men's Group**, Noon-2 pm. Positive Support Group for folks living with HIV. All at Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

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.