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Dare for Democracy: Three Essential Steps

The Small Planet Institute has published an online guide to help people find a way to get involved.

By **FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ,**
ADAM EICHEN

Many Americans remain in shock and outrage, unable to grasp how a man who told bald-faced lies, who ridiculed and defamed others, and who boasted of sexual assault could yet ascend to the presidency of the United States.

To save the democracy we thought we had, we must take democracy to where it's never been.

Despair isn't an option; it's our greatest enemy. We know we must act more boldly than ever. To save the democracy we thought we had, we must take democracy to where it's never been.

Most of us find our courage through acting with others. So we at the Small Planet Institute are launching a *Field Guide to the Democracy Movement*. Together we can create a vibrant, bipartisan, multicultural "movement of movements." <http://www.fieldguidetodemocracy.org>

This Democracy Movement can mobilize people not just online, but face-to-face, creating personal bonds strong enough to carry out historic civic action. To protect and further our democratic institutions, this movement must have strong grass-roots and national coordination. Most importantly, it must be a movement that turns disillusionment and fear into the courage and resolve needed to tackle the deep, systemic roots of the crisis we now face.

And the great news? The pieces are already in place; they just aren't nearly as visible as they must be <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/>



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frances-moore-lappe/hello_3_b_8970150.html. To galvanize the millions more who want to act but can't see an entry point, our *Field Guide* offers plenty of options:

Democracy Initiative in 2013 did what no one thought possible: cementing a coalition of labor, environmental, racial justice and election-reform groups. Its almost 60 organizations already boast 30 million members — each remaining true to its issue passion by joining forces for systemic democratic reforms without which none can succeed.

Democracy Spring, a scrappy, grass-roots mobilization for democracy reforms (of which we're proud to have been part), in 2016 pulled off what's believed to be the largest act of civil disobedience on the Capitol steps in

history. Formed in 2015, Democracy Spring continues to engage in civil disobedience across the country to get money out of politics and to ensure voting rights for all.

Voting Rights Alliance, a critically timed alliance founded by politicians and civil society earlier this year, that's fighting to end once and for all the travesty of voter suppression in America. It's already staged numerous protests to pressure Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act.

Take Back Our Republic, a campaign finance reform effort founded by conservative Republican John Pudner, the mastermind of tea party Rep. Dave Brat's successful upset of then-House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) in 2014.

Success in the Democracy Movement — with human dignity as its foundation — requires addressing three aspects of American society that contributed to Donald Trump's victory.

1. Rejecting brutal capitalism

Much of Trump's support, we believe, flows from a sense of betrayal. For example, one-fifth of American men aged 20 to 65 had no paid employment last year. Their vulnerability to big but empty promises is surely easy to understand.

But to grasp and tackle the forces leading to Trump means naming and ending the assault on human dignity itself that's built into our peculiar form of capitalism.

A magical market ... succeeds, we're made to believe, by reducing everything possible to dollar exchange among consumers.

We refer to it as "brutal capitalism" to bring

Workshop on Restorative Communication in Times of Conflict

By **LORI WONG**

Insight Meditation Central Valley, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, and the Modesto Peace/Life Center are co-sponsoring a day-long workshop on Saturday, February 25, 2017 on "Restorative Communication in Times of Conflict" from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto in the church sanctuary. Ryan McCarthy, Executive Director of CALEAD from San Francisco will be teaching this workshop.

Conflict and stress are regular features in almost everyone's life. This free event will guide participants through a day of mindfulness exercises, training in non violent and restorative communication, and opportunity for discussion & practice. Participants will be empowered to more effectively resolve and manage conflicts in their own life, as well as how to be effective ambassadors for change in their larger communities.

Learn how to:

- Better navigate and de-escalate conflicts.
- Strengthen relationships with family, friends, and peers.
- Communicate with confidence under stress.
- Apply powerful language techniques that get results!

Participants should bring their own lunch or something to share. This event is offered

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If you do not have Adobe Reader, download it free from <http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>

Mark your calendars for April 29th, 2017: the People's Climate Mobilization

That's the date of the People's Climate Mobilization, a major march in Washington, D.C., when we will come together with hundreds of thousands of people to reject Trump's attack on our communities and climate, and push forward with our vision of a clean energy economy that works for all.

We believe that in this moment of division, turmoil, and fear, it's important to put forward an alternative vision that inspires and connects. If we don't put forward our own vision -- of an economy built on justice and powered by clean, renewable energy -- then we let fossil-fuel-soaked nationalism, xenophobia, and hatred win. We need to show that more people still believe in our shared vision for the future than in Donald Trump's.

That's where you come in: The only way this mobilization will work is if it's driven from the bottom up by people like you. **That's why we want to get you involved with the People's Climate Mobilization starting today -- whether you've helped organize a dozen marches before, or if you're a first-time participant.**

The People's Climate Mobilization is part of a larger strategy to push back on Trump's agenda of climate denial and fossil fuel expansion, and then double-down at the local level fighting fossil fuels and lifting up real climate solutions.

We'll need your energy, creativity, and leadership right where you live too -- to resist fossil fuel infrastructure projects and promote clean energy solutions in your own cities, towns, and states.

ACTION: more information at <https://peoplesclimate.org/>



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MJC Spring Science Colloquium

Held weekly at the Science Community Center, Rm. 115, West Campus, 3 pm - 4 p.m. Contact: Teri Curtis (209) 575-6775 curtis@mjc.edu.

Feb. 1: Brian Green, MJC Librarian "Life at the McMurdo Station, Antarctica."

Feb. 8: Darwin Day: Bobby Hutchison, MJC Psychology Professor, "How Evolution Unifies the Biological Sciences."

Feb. 15: Megan Layhee, Aquatic Biologist, Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center,

"Forest-wide stream monitoring in the Central Sierra Nevada."

Feb. 22: Anthony Presto, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, "How Clean is the Air We Breathe?"

March 1: Teri Curtis, MJC Biology Professor, "Success Stories from California's Channel Islands."

March 8: TBA.

March 15: Elizabeth McInnes, MJC Biology Professor, "An Update on Climate Change."

March 22: Debra Bolter, Ph.D., MJC Anthropology Professor, "What's new with *Homo naledi* and the Rising Star Cave, South Africa?"

March 29: TBA.

April 5: Richard Anderson, MJC Biology Professor Emeritus, "Earth's 6th Extinction... is Actually the 7th."

April 12: Earth Day Film - Title TBA

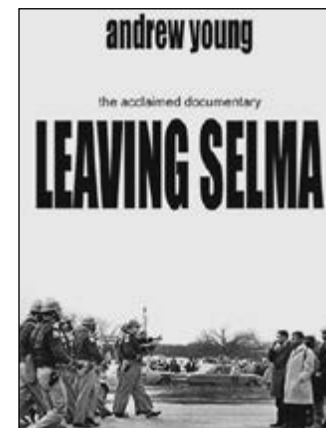
<http://www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/colloquium.php>

Film Night to honor Andrew Young and the Civil Rights Movement

To honor our speaker, Andrew Young, for the Martin Luther King Jr. Annual Commemoration, we will be screening *Leaving Selma*, a documentary film produced by Andrew Young about the march in Selma and the involved resistance to the endemic racism present there.

Please join us on Wednesday February 15, 2017 at 6:30 PM at the Modesto Peace/Life Center at 720 13th St. Modesto.

See the trailer at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYG-0LLJ7_M



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Civic Engagement Project's Spring 2017 Film & Lecture Series

Thursday Nights, Forum 110 (*Except Where Noted)

7PM, MJC East Campus, 435 College Ave.

Open to the Public Free of Charge

Resilience -- Feb. 23: Subtitled *The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope*, *Resilience* looks at studies that suggest adverse childhood experiences (such as emotional, physical, and sexual abuse) may contribute to major health problems in adulthood. The film especially focuses on pioneers in pediatrics, education, and social welfare that it sees as inspirational models of preventative medical care.

Beginning Again: Syrian Refugees Settle in Modesto -- Mar. 2: ABC World News with David Muir follows a Syrian refugee family on their journey from Syria, to Jordan, and finally to Modesto. See the episode, meet the family, hear from those involved in their resettlement, and join a discussion on a response to refugees in the community.

13th -- Mar. 9: Named after the 13th constitutional amendment, which abolished slavery "except as a punishment for crime," this film examines the history of race and the criminal justice system in the United States, arguing that slavery hasn't disappeared—it's transformed into a system of mass incarceration.

Marginalized in America: A Continuing Conversation

-- **Mar. 16:** * This event will be held in the Cafeteria in the Student Center, East Campus. This event builds on previous CEP events centered on continuing the dialogue on issues related to tensions between diverse communities and law enforcement. This event focuses on the historical criminalization of people of color emphasized in the film *13th* (shown on March 9th). Guest speakers will build on issues from that film and allow for audience discussion throughout the event in small groups with trained dialogue facilitators.

Before the Flood -- Apr. 6: *Before the Flood* follows Leonardo DiCaprio, a United Nations Messenger of Peace, as he travels the globe speaking with scientists, activists, and world leaders about climate change. The film focuses on how climate change affects the environment and what society can do about it.

Be informed!

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

Volunteers Needed for Modesto High School's Day of Respect

Modesto High School's **Fifteenth Annual Day of Respect** will take place **Wednesday, March 1, 2017**. The purpose of the school-wide event is to sensitize students to the effects of discrimination by having community volunteers tell their stories. Subject areas include bullying, race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, body image, disability, religion, and class. Presentations need not be long (fifteen minutes); they need not be formal (classroom setting). Volunteers who are able to remain at the school all day, 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., will be scheduled to speak in five classes. Those with limited time will cover fewer classes. Lunch and snacks will be provided. The only requirement is life experience.

Please call Sharon Froba at 209-521-7265 or email her at sfroba@comcast.net to sign up or to receive more information.

The Gallo Center and the Sankofa Theatre presents: "Colored People's Time"

If you enjoyed Sankofa's "Fences," "The Piano Lesson," "Looking Over the President's Shoulder" and "The Exonerated" at the Gallo Center, come see this presentation of Leslie Lee's absorbing full-length play. The story explores the majesty, courage, resilience and determination of Black Americans, from a group of slaves meeting in secret to discuss the Bible just before the Civil War, to a couple debating the Back-to-Africa movement during the Harlem Renaissance, to another couple resting their feet after marching in Montgomery.

The Gallo Center and Sankofa Theatre Company, celebrates Black History Month with this presentation of Leslie Lee's absorbing full-length play.

"The hero [in the play] is not a character, but the black spirit for survival - its guts, humor and tenaciousness." - *The New York Times*.

Play dates: Friday, 2/17/17, 7:30 PM; Saturday 2/18, 7:30 PM and Sunday, 2/19, 2:00 PM. Tickets at <http://tickets.galloarts.org/single/eventDetail.aspx?p=5572>

The 23rd Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration
Speaker: **Civil Rights Activist Andrew Young**



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2017

Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration

Modesto Junior College-East Campus

435 College Ave.

Performing Arts & Media Center

7:00 p.m. - FREE program

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Help us Stop Discrimination against Adults with Disabilities

By JENIFER WEST

Readers of this column may recall that A Certain Young Lady (who has a disability) came to live with us almost 6 years ago. We all grew a lot as she made the transition from teenager to young adult. Almost a year ago, she moved into an apartment with a roommate. Despite a few bumps, she has persevered, and is proud to live independently. It wouldn't be an overstatement to say that she is fiercely independent.

She would never have been able to achieve that independence without a 'sheltered workshop' program offered by Howard Training Center (HTC).

HTC, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, has assisted developmentally disabled adults in Stanislaus County for over 60 years to become as independent as possible, partly through sheltered workshop programs. These programs are designed to help adults with disabilities successfully transition into employment, as well as provide employment opportunities for those who are more severely challenged and therefore unable to be successful in a traditional work setting. Program participants are paid commensurate with their ability to perform tasks. This allows program participants (virtually all of whom receive Social Security and other benefits to meet their basic needs) to work and receive compensation. HTC has contracts to provide workers to various companies and government agencies.

Employment opportunities offered by HTC include food service, landscape/custodial, retail shipping/receiving, order picking and warehouse/warehouse maintenance. Wherever possible and appropriate, HTC's program participants ('consumers') are placed in community employment, with long-term supports as necessary. Consumers participate in jobs such as stockroom worker, retail clerk, manufacturing/production, janitorial and fast food.

Every human being has an innate need to do something productive; to contribute in some way to the functioning of his or her society, and to be compensated for it – we all have a basic need to work, and to be paid for it. For adults with disabilities, whose lives have generally been defined by their challenges, the opportunity to work has an immeasurably positive impact. And the loss of that opportunity would be beyond devastating.

Unfortunately, these sheltered workshops are now endangered by new legislation, which was intended to increase the number of developmentally disabled adults working in traditional employment settings (referred to as Competitive Integrated Employment, or CIE, in the new laws).

The problem is that they take an 'all or nothing' approach, which, if implemented according to the current schedule, will eliminate all sheltered workshops within a couple of years. This means that those who are unable to compete with others without disabilities will lose their jobs, and have *nowhere to go*. There was no 'safety net' provided in the new legislation. They will be forced to sit at home, or participate in day programs without the opportunity to work for compensation.

As it stands, *the legislation discriminates against a large section of the very population it was written to protect.*

Those working in programs offered by HTC are, understandably, very frightened of losing their jobs. HTC Executive



Director Carla Strong told concerned parents and guardians at a recent meeting regarding the new legislation that she found one program participant 'in tears, trying to read the Fair Labor Practice posters, terrified that she was going to lose her job'. During a mandatory 'counseling' session with a representative from the Department of Rehabilitation, one participant was crying so hard she had to be led out of the meeting. She had been so upset by the possibility of losing her job that she had been unable to inform her family of the upcoming change.

Forcing adults with developmental disabilities out of employment they love couldn't possibly have been the intended effect of this legislation.

Adults with the most severe disabilities will be hit the hardest by these upcoming changes. Many participate in a sheltered workshop program that includes tasks such as sorting donated clothing, relabeling products, and other simple, but necessary, tasks. Others participate in the food service program, which prepares food for the Senior Meals Program, among others.

Whittne, in the center of the photograph attached, works in the food service program. When she was very young,



Whittne's parents learned about HTC's food service program and actually relocated near the HTC facility so that, when she was old enough, she would be able to participate in it. According to Case Coordinator Veronica Tirre, Whittne is very excited about coming to work each day, and enjoys both the work itself and the social opportunities it provides, including working with some of her friends from school. The smile on her face says it all!

These changes will dramatically affect more than just the adults with disabilities who stand to lose their jobs.

But there's still a chance to change things, and we need your help.

Please contact your elected representatives to ask them to postpone the elimination of sheltered workshops until a solution that does not discriminate against adults with disabilities can be devised.

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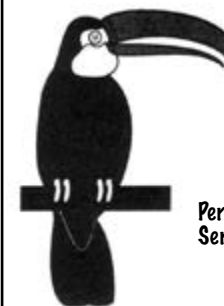
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How do we change the culture of hate, greed, and corruption?

By **RYAN MCCARTHY**

When I grew up in Texas, we were surrounded by hate. It came from our teachers, our leaders, our peers. From our public institutions, our politicians, our police officers.

From every corner of our lives, it seemed, you could feel it. Hatred against all those who were different, against those who did not belong. Against those who challenged the status quo or authority or religion. And we hated them back, passionately. Bitterly hated them for hating.

I continued hating, long after I left. Hated people for being ignorant, or petty, or cruel. Hated everyone and everything for just not making sense. That hate consumed me, broke me, and very nearly destroyed me.

It was in the ashes of that desolation of self that I met Frank the Monk in a tiny hostel kitchen in Ulaanbaatar, who first introduced me to the Dharma and mindfulness and the idea that you don't have to hate things or people just because they're not the way you want them to be.

That change can come not from a place of hatred and bitterness and judgment and otherness, but from a place of compassion and healing and a genuine desire to make the world a better place.

As I continued my work in education, I was introduced to the ideas of Social-Emotional Learning, Restorative Justice, and Non Violent Communication. Of the idea that like children, we are all hurting, are all vulnerable, and that we all do unskillful things. That if we want someone to change we must first inspire them to want to.

That in the same way you cannot hate or scream someone into knowing how to swim or ride a bike, we cannot through hate and violence teach others how to best care about us and our needs.

I came to find that if I wanted to change the systems of oppression and criminal justice which I had been fighting

...you don't have to hate things or people just because they're not the way you want them to be.

against my entire life, I ultimately needed to stop employing and thus perpetuating their methods.

Our nation is deeply hurting right now.

Technological change and corporate corruption of our political processes has enabled an ever shrinking number of oligarchs to impoverish an ever increasing number of people. People are scared, and they're angry, and they're looking for someone to blame.

Let us not feed into that hate. Let us not hate those who act or speak or believe differently than us. Let us inspire them to our way of thinking by showing them compassion and understanding. That even though we may disagree, we still value the humanity of our fellow Americans, that they might be more inspired to see the humanity of all people, regardless of their race or economic status or country of origin.

We will not change the culture in our society that enabled Donald Trump and his associated financial and corporate interests to take control of our government through more hate, as it was hate that got them there in the first place.

So the question remains, what do we then do? How do we change the culture of hate, greed, and corruption that currently threatens the very fabric of our democracy?

That is obviously a big question with no easy or single answer. But there's one thing that's clear to me which is

needed in our society right now it is the ability to resolve conflict with strength, with efficacy, and with non-violence. The skillsets of reducing hate.

To that end, I'm leading a daylong in Modesto on February 25th on mindfulness, Restorative Justice, and Non Violent Communication, to in some small way share the resources I have been fortunate enough to receive to better empower people at a local level to meet challenges in their lives and create positive change. (I'm offering the event free of charge to be accessible to the most people possible, so if you know anyone in the area I would be honored by their presence.)

I don't know what will ultimately fix this situation, but I do know that the solution must come from all of us doing what we can, as often as we can in whatever ways we can. To paraphrase Dr. King, "our lives begin to end the day we become silent and complacent about things that most matter."

"our lives begin to end the day we become silent and complacent about things that most matter."

I wanted to share one last quote that I have seen posted many times today, but it's a shame the full context is not often included:

"The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral; begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. So it goes.

Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

Workshop on Restorative Communication in Times of Conflict

... from page 1

at no charge to promote the spread of peaceful resolutions to conflict. Participants may make a suggested donation of \$20-\$50 to support the teaching if they so choose. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/restorative-communication-in-times-of-conflict-tickets-30326079119>. Priority admittance will be given to pre-registered attendees. Space is limited.

Ryan McCarthy, an experienced and dedicated educator, has trained thousands of teachers and youth workers across locations as diverse as Houston, New York, San Francisco, Palestine, and Beijing.

See accompanying article by Ryan McCarthy, above.



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Dare for Democracy: Three Essential Steps

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attention to the harms inexorably generated in an economy driven largely by a single rule: Go for what brings highest return to existing wealth. In such a deliberately fostered economy, especially since the 1970s, human agency in shaping the rules to protect basic fairness, healthy communities and our commons — whether oceans, soil or air — is perceived as interference in a magical marketplace (so named by former President Ronald Reagan).

A magical market works on its own *without us*. It succeeds, we're made to believe, by reducing everything possible to dollar exchange among consumers.

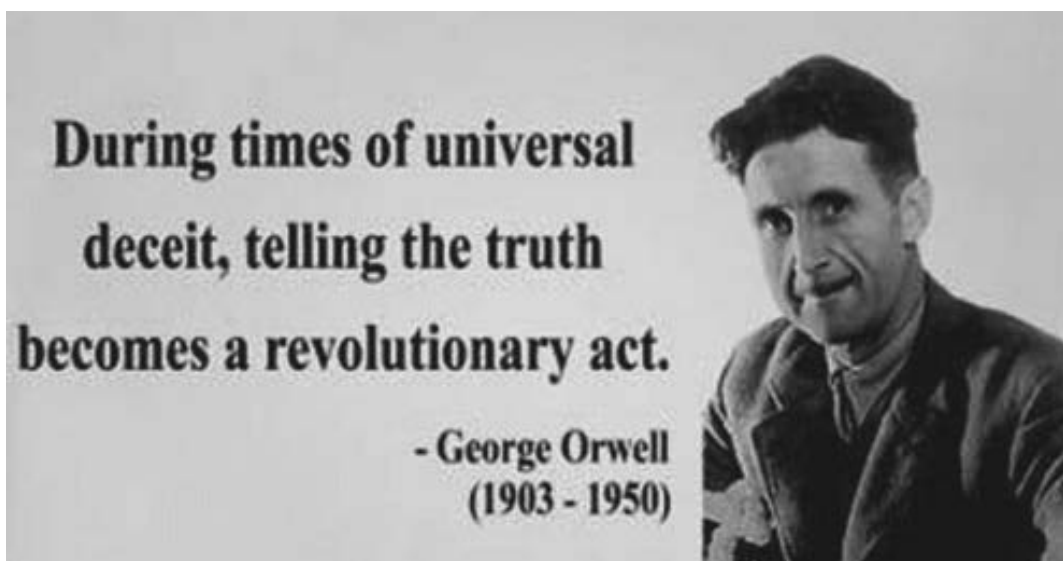
The "magical market" therefore magnifies whatever sells — and sex and violence sell. So it follows that entertainment, advertising, fashion and even newscasts become increasingly violent, shallow and sexualized. Note that in an earlier era, for example, Barbara Walters was forced to don a Playboy bunny outfit for an investigation she did on NBC News, but she did not have to double as a sex symbol as many contemporary female news anchors do today. Increasingly, the degrading message — one the president-elect made explicit during his campaign — is that a woman is only as worthy as her body is sexy.

Underneath it all is this dangerous logic: In an economy valuing highest rate of return above all, wealth accrues relentlessly to wealth. Thus, in an extreme expression of this logic, the United States has easily become the most economically unequal nation in the "advanced" world. (Note: Economic inequality correlates with numerous negative social outcomes, ranging from infant mortality to homicide rates, according to social epidemiologists Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett). Such concentrated wealth — with 20 Americans now controlling as much as half of all of us together — translates into political power. Thus, a telling study of policy outcomes during the '80s and '90s found virtually no correlation between the views of average Americans about what ought to be done and what law- and policymakers actually did. In a system that's drowning in campaign contributions by people who can write six- and seven-figure checks, outcomes not surprisingly mirror the views of the elite class.

Transforming brutal capitalism, with its multiple assaults on human dignity that contributed to Trump's election, requires democracy to be accountable not to monopolistic corporations but to us, the citizens. Such a democracy could open the door to an economy based on three values around which most Americans could rally: fairness, the protection of the nature of democracy, and the dignity of all.

A truly living democracy — benefiting and accountable to citizens — could, for example, maintain a minimum wage that is a livable wage, encourage unions and worker cooperatives giving everyone in a business a real voice, and spread

corporate "profit-sharing" with workers. Few Americans know this is precisely the official platform of the Democracy Party, which notes that such change "is linked to higher pay and productivity." Who knows? A real American democracy might even create a US version of Germany's century-old, successful Works Councils, giving workers a say in their firm's decisions.



2. Revaluing the role of government and reinstating government service as an honorable calling

A strong democracy requires reversing Republicans' long and fierce anti-democracy movement — highly coordinated since the infamous 1971 Lewis Powell memo, a detailed playbook for delegitimizing government and elevating corporate power. Powell, who later served as a Supreme Court Justice, no doubt helped to inspire Reagan's swipe at government in his first inaugural address: "Government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."

Beginning in the 1990s, Republican leaders including former House Speaker Newt Gingrich of Georgia and former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay of Texas fostered a take-no-prisoners approach to politics, captured in 1999 by David Horowitz's *The Art of Political War*. In it, compromise is treason and obstructionism is virtue. Most recently, Republicans have filibustered in an unprecedented fashion to bring Congress to a halt, pushing its approval rating to historical lows. All the while, Democrats failed to stand for a convincing alternative.

And it's all worked like a charm: Republican success in debasing Congress and hamstringing President Barack Obama then became the perfect setup for a bombastic self-promoter who claimed the mantle of outsider to a dysfunctional and rigged system.

3. Reclaiming citizens' power and pride

Too many — and we're guilty, too — have failed to grasp the strength of this anti-democracy movement and to fight its assault vigorously enough; for example, the war on voting

rights that continued insidiously after passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Then in 2013 the Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder* actually gutted the law, making it possible for 14 states to implement voter-ID laws in time for the 2016 election — including in swing states like Wisconsin and Ohio.

Too few of us appreciated this danger. Ari Berman, author of *Give Us the Ballot*, acknowledges that "[w]e'll never know how many people were kept from the polls by these restrictions." But, he notes, we do know that in Wisconsin Donald Trump's margin of victory was 27,000 votes, while 300,000 registered voters could not cast a ballot because they lacked required IDs, according to a federal court. Turnout in the state hit a 20-year low, falling by 52,000 in Milwaukee, "where 70 percent of the state's African-American population lives."

Berman adds that on Election Day, "there were 868 fewer polling places in states with a long history of voting discrimination, like Arizona, Texas and North Carolina." On average, blacks in 2012 waited twice as long as whites to vote. And, of course, the lower one's income, the greater the time-cost impediment to voting.

And voter suppression is but one example. According to political scientist Michael McDonald, voter turnout plummeted from 62 percent in 2008, the year Obama was first elected, to 42 percent in the following midterm elections. The result? Not enough citizens stayed engaged to build pressure for democratic reforms, and a solidly Republican Congress able to block the president at every turn. In allowing special interests to block reforms Obama demanded, we failed to protect the very people who later voted for Trump.

So we citizens must hold ourselves accountable, too. We helped to set the stage. But today it's a different world. Unprecedented shock and horror at steps Trump is now taking can motivate unprecedented action. As never before, the rise of a diverse, rewarding Democracy Movement is not only possible but essential. Whatever our specific issue-passion, it is urgent that we take to heart the essential lessons of the 2016 election and unite under the banner of democracy itself. Let's dare to act — together. Check out our *Field Guide* and join the noble — and, yes, exhilarating struggle to save our country.

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Frances Moore Lappé is the author of *EcoMind: Changing the Way We Think to Create the World We Want* (Nation Books) and 17 other books including the acclaimed *Diet for a Small Planet*. She is also a YES! contributing editor.

Adam Eichen is a member of the Democracy Matters Board of Directors and a Fellow at the Small Planet Institute, where he is working on a book on the Democracy Movement with founder Frances Moore Lappé. He served as the deputy communications director for Democracy Spring. Follow him on Twitter: @AdamEichen

Women's March Modesto-Unity Gathering: a great success

By **TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL**

According to the *Modesto Bee*, about 1000 men, women and children from all walks of life joined in a peaceful, patriotic gathering, the Women's March Modesto-Unity Gathering on Saturday, January 21 in support of "equal rights [for] all, regardless of...race, gender identity, and sexual orientation." **

The march, organized by The Progressive Voice <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1704598123190537/> and the Democratic Women's Club of Stanislaus County (<http://demwomensclub.blogspot.com>), took the first steps toward sounding a patriotic community voice in support of moving forward in a peaceful and just way to meet the challenges to basic human rights under threat by the current Washington administration.

ACTION: You too can get actively involved by connecting with the Modesto Peace/Life Center, The Progressive Voice or the Democratic Women's Club, among other activist groups throughout Stanislaus County. The Progressive Voice will be holding regular meetings at the Peace/Life Center to plan events through which all invested citizens can add their voices to helping maintain and advance progressive human rights. These will be posted online at <http://stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm> as they become available.

** <http://www.modbee.com/news/article128034159.html>



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STANISLAUS Artist Open Studio

SAVE THE DATE!

Tour the studios of
Stanislaus County artists
April 22 & 23
11a.m. - 5 p.m.

Look for information on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/StanislausAOS>
Email: openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com
Phone: 209-222-TOUR

An initiative of the
Stanislaus County Arts Council

Meryl Streep Speaks

The following is a transcript of Meryl Streep's speech at the 74th Golden Globes as she accepted the Cecil B. DeMille Award for lifetime achievement.

I love you all. You have to forgive me, I have lost my voice in screaming and lamentation this weekend and I have lost my mind sometime earlier this year so I have to read.

Thank you, Hollywood Foreign Press. Just to pick up on what Hugh Laurie said, you and all of us in this room really belong to the most vilified segments of American society right now. Think about it: Hollywood, foreigners and the press.

But who are we and, you know, what is Hollywood, anyway? It's just a bunch of people from other places. I was born and raised and educated in the public schools of New Jersey, Viola was born in a sharecropper's cabin in South Carolina, came up in Central Falls, R.I. Sarah Paulson was born in Florida, raised by a single mom in Brooklyn. Sarah Jessica Parker was one of seven or eight kids from Ohio, Amy Adams was born in Vicenza, Veneto, Italy and Natalie Portman was born in Jerusalem. Where are their birth certificates?

And the beautiful Ruth Negga was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, raised in London -- no, in Ireland, I do believe, and she's here nominated for playing a small-town girl from Virginia. Ryan Gosling, like all the nicest people, is Canadian. And Dev Patel was born in Kenya, raised in London and is here playing an Indian raised in Tasmania. So Hollywood is crawling with outsiders and foreigners and if we kick them all out, you'll have nothing to watch but football and mixed martial arts, which are not the arts.

They gave me three seconds to say this, so. An actor's only job is to enter the lives of people who are different from us and let you feel what that feels like. And there were many, many, many powerful performances this year that did exactly that, breathtaking, compassionate work.

But there was one performance this year that stunned me. It sank its hooks in my heart, not because it was good, it was -- there's nothing good about it. But it was effective and it did its job. It made its intended audience laugh and show their teeth.

It was that moment when the person asking to sit in the most respected seat in our country imitated a disabled reporter, someone he outranked in privilege and power and the capacity to fight back. It, it kind of broke my heart when I saw it and I still can't get it out my head because it wasn't in a movie. It was real life. And this instinct to humiliate when it's modeled by someone in the public platform, by someone powerful, it filters down into everybody's life because it kind of gives permission for other people to do the same thing.

Disrespect invites disrespect. Violence incites violence. When the powerful use their position to bully others, we all lose. OK, go on with that thing. OK, this brings me to the press. We need the principled press to hold power to account, to call them on the carpet for every outrage.

That's why our founders enshrined the press and its freedoms in our constitution. So I only ask the famously well-heeled Hollywood foreign press and all of us in our community to join me in supporting the Committee to Protect Journalists, 'cause we're going to need them going forward and they'll need us to safeguard the truth.

One more thing. Once when I was standing around the set one day, whining about something, we were going to work through supper or the long hours or whatever, Tommy Lee Jones said to me: "Isn't it such a privilege, Meryl, just to be an actor?" Yeah, it is. And we have to remind each other of the privilege and the responsibility of the act of empathy. We should be very proud of the work Hollywood honors here tonight.

As my, as my friend, the dear departed Princess Leia, said to me once: "Take your broken heart, make it into art."

Thank you, Foreign Press.

REMINDER: Freeing your Life with Words: a workshop with Susan Wooldridge

Join the MoSt (Modesto Stanislaus Poetry Center) 5th Annual Poetry Festival for a workshop that will make you feel excited about language and self-expression in both poetry and prose on Saturday, February 4, 2017 from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale Rd., Modesto.

Both laughter and tears are welcome. Sharing work is always optional.

SUPPLIES: Bring loose scratch paper and a pen you love. Color pens and/or color pencils optional.

More information: <http://www.mostpoetry.org/event/5th-annual-modesto-poetry-festival/>. Or email info@mostpoetry.org

Registration form at http://www.mostpoetry.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2017_MoSt_Form_Rvsd.pdf



You are invited to a Community Forum

Why?

Because we care about this community and desire to facilitate further education and dialogue regarding needs for support and service here.

When and where?

Thursday, February 9, 2017 • 7 PM to 8:30 PM
Modesto Church of the Brethren • 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto

Come Here A Panel of Community Leaders

SPEAK to the needs of our community, SHARE your questions and ideas,
ENJOY free cookies, coffee and cocoa following

Panelists

- Manmeet Grewal, Modesto City Councilman
- Terhesa Gamboa, Chair, Woodland West Community Neighborhood
- Adam Christiansen, Sheriff – corner, Stanislaus County
- Imam Ahmad Kayellow, Modesto Islamic Center
- Tamara Losinski, Executive Director, Family Promise

Please help us spread the word and come be part of the evening!
Questions? Call 209-523-1438; office@modcobb.org

A Matter of Lives

I read from paper to see wind;
to catch brown-barked trees being cut down clean--
like, they're not trying to build with us,
they just need what's underneath

I write with pen to see hand;
to catch movement or fists, to grab anyone they miss--
like, I don't know you, but let's share this
pit in our stomachs

I scream with voice to see nothing; to feel the
vibration from sounds but
their ammunition rounds the edges of my
face to meet another's--

Bystanders turned blood relatives;
witnesses to a family feud that dates back to
before our country had a name

I fight with words to stand
against attacks like courtroom doors--
like, these hands are gavels and
our chests hold these verdicts in contempt

Because we know politicians pay their rent
with divisiveness;
pile us into statistical punching bags
(poorly cut slices of environment)

They raze the fields and meadows and plant us in boxes
(where we won't grow)

Their shears cut well, we know

But we are sharper than blades
and deeper than graves
because
we remember how they beleaguered the
indigenous with bribes and blankets
like we won't forget how they litter our brothers
with bigotry and bullets--
the years take note of how powers have
tried to tear our peoples apart;
but they can't keep us divided--

So I'll take your hand
and we can know history is smiling on us
because
I'm not a praying man, but I will bow my head with you

To and Fro

With all the swaying I do,
I feel like a light post at the
mercy of the Trade Winds--
back and forth but either way,
I'm beaming

Attempting to illuminate,
but invisible behind the radiant -ahem-
excuse me, RADIOACTIVE glow

Like a flicked light switch versus a solar eclipse;
like the moon against a flashlight

Like the rattle of train tracks
challenging the aches in my back,
it's not a match to be won;

It's a shiner you aren't ready for;
a beacon coming from a migraine;

Expansion like fingers running across
countries of skin and failing every inch--

Shifting like a stomach unhinged,
I find myself shrinking discreetly to an
indistinct defeat,
feeling like a nickel on the rails that
should have been a bullet or
a tire on the coast that should have been a seagull--
shopping carts and trash in their now-natural habitat,
resting along the shoreline;
buried in the sand like syringe secrets

DID YOU KNOW:

If you hold a styrofoam cup to
your ear you can hear the
seventeen mile wide garbage patch in
the middle of the ocean--
it's beautiful

Picture egrets resting along
a landscape of smokestacks like
Thomas Kincaid on fumes

Because the suppliers will get us high
and teach everyone about
cover-ups

Because they mixed green with red and
left us with this awful color to paint with:
a lovely shade of oil with which we've blessed the waters;

On a journey across the face of the Earth,
on a mission to give her blemishes just like ours

Poet: Melchor Sahagun, III

Melchor Sahagun III, has been a performing poet and musician for fifteen years and is currently based in his hometown of Stockton where, as an executive board member of With Our Words Inc. (a youth-focused, literary nonprofit) he works with Stockton's inaugural poet laureate, Tama Brisbane, mentoring youth in creative writing and coaching Stockton's Youth Poetry Slam Team to the annual Brave New Voices Youth Poetry Festival.

As an Arts advocate, Melchor hosts and organizes events around California's Central Valley, promoting an appreciation of the Arts (YES! Capital A!) and their utilization in uplifting individuals and their communities. He likes cats, comic books, and music A LOT. He likes you a lot, too.



Green Tips for a Green Planet: A Valentine - Love Notes to Planet Earth

Submitted by **TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL**

Power of the Storm

I love the rain.
Some folks would
tire of it, yearn for the sun
I say, not a bit of it.
All in good time.

Forget about El Nino, La Nina,
all the predictions
THIS! is what we used to call winter
when I was growing up
In California's Central Valley.

When the Sierras sigh
under the weight of accumulated snow,
the rivers and creeks run wild,
the Tule fog socks in
and one barely sees an outstretched hand.

I love winter.
Inside.
A time for reflection and
creative endeavors.

I give myself over to the storm.
to its power, its beauty.
It fills my soul
I am overflowing.....

©Alan Arnopole 2017

This is what you shall do: love the earth and sun, and animals,
despise riches, give alms to every one that asks, stand up for
the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others,
hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and
indulgence towards the people, take off your hat to nothing
known or unknown, or to any man or number of men; go
freely with the powerful uneducated persons, and with the
young, and mothers, of families: read these leaves in the open
air every season of every year of your life: re-examine all
you have been told at school or church, or in any books, and
dismiss whatever insults your soul.

— Walt Whitman

Through the gift of this natural world, we are not meant to take
advantage and destroy, but we are invited to use and replenish.
— Mike Vitale

Flowers are the earth laughing.
— Ralph Waldo Emerson

The earth, the air, the land and the water are not an inheritance
from our fore fathers but on loan from our children. So we

have to handover to them at least as it was handed over to us.
— Hidreez Kunley

The earth is like a beautiful bride, who needs no man-made
jewels to heighten her loveliness.
— Unknown

Life, the gift of nature, Love, the gift of life, a Kiss, the gift
of Love
— Thomas S. Szasz

Love is a portion of the soul itself, and it is of the same nature
as the celestial breathing of the atmosphere of paradise.
— Victor Hugo

If a man walks in the woods for love of them half of each
day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer. But if he
spends his days as a speculator, shearing off those woods
and making the earth bald before her time, he is deemed an
industrious and enterprising citizen....
— Henry David Thoreau

It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to
the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know
of wonder and humility.
Rachel Carson

This rain and its tiny echoes make me want to write a story
about love or being lost.
Lee Herrick

High School students needed for summer exchanges with Japan and France

By **JULIA BOLTON MENSINGER**

Modesto Sister Cities International (MSCI) invites all
interested students to apply for 2017 summer exchanges to
Kurume, Japan (10 places) and Laval, France, (4 places).
Priority will be given to students who apply before April 1st.

We are looking for applicants (sophomores, juniors &
seniors (who will graduate in 2018) to be considered for:

A ten day exchange to Kurume, (South Island), from
late July through to early August. The Kurume students will
then arrive in Modesto in mid August for ten days. Modesto
students, who are accepted on the exchange, are expected to
host a Kurume student, for a reciprocal exchange experience.

A two week exchange to Laval, France, (also open to
college students) the end of June to the beginning of July, with
the French students here the second week in July through to
the first week of August. Modesto students, who are accepted
on the exchange, are expected to host a Laval student, for a
reciprocal exchange experience.

Cost of the program includes air travel expense (\$1400
estimate) and pocket money.

For more information and application forms please visit:
www.modestosistercities.com. For enquiries regarding the
Kurume exchange, contact Nancy Holmes, (Kurume com-
mittee VP) 765 9290.

For questions about Laval contact John Mensinger, (Laval
committee VP) 602 4515. Email MSCI at modesto.MSCI@gmail.com.



MJC Civic Engagement Project Presents

Beginning Again: Syrian Refugees Settle in Modesto

ABC World News with David Muir follows a Syrian refugee family on their journey from Syria,
to Jordan, and finally to **Modesto**. See the episode, meet the family, hear from those involved in
their resettlement, and join a discussion on a response to refugees in the community.

Thursday, March 2nd

7- 9 PM, MJC East Campus, Forum 110, 435 College Ave.

Open to the Public and Free of Charge

The nutritional data continues to mount

By **VASU MURTY**

From *The Pritikin Plan* (1982), to *The McDougall Plan* (1983), to *A Vegetarian Sourcebook* (1983), to John Robbins' Pulitzer Prize nominated *Diet for A New America* (1987), to *Vegan Nutrition: Pure and Simple* (1987), to *Vegan: The New Ethic of Eating* (1997), to *The China Study* (2005), to *Please Don't Eat the Animals* (2007), to the DVDs *Forks Over Knives* and *Vegucated* (2011), to the documentary *Plant Pure Nation* (2015), to *The Healthiest Diet on the Planet* (2016) from medical authorities like Dr. Steve Blake, Dr. Alan Goldhammer, Dr. Michael Greger, Dr. Michael Klaper, Dr. John McDougall, it is becoming increasingly clear that humans are suited for a plant-based diet; and the optimum human diet contains virtually no animal protein.

"Each year, the meat industrial complex abuses and butchers nearly nine billion cows, pigs, sheep, turkeys, chickens, and other innocent, feeling animals just for the enjoyment of consumers. Each year, nearly 1.5 million of these consumers are crippled and killed prematurely by heart failure, cancer, stroke, and other chronic diseases that have been linked conclusively with the consumption of these animals. Each year, millions of other animals are abused and sacrificed in a vain search for a 'magic pill' that would vanquish these largely self-inflicted diseases."

— Alex Hershaft, PhD, president, Farm Animal Reform Movement

When analyzing 8,300 deaths in the United States, United Kingdom, and Germany among 76,000 men and women in five different, large studies, researchers concluded that vegetarians have a 24 percent reduction in death from heart disease.

Similarly, in the famous *Oxford Vegetarian Study*, where six thousand vegetarians were compared with five thousand meat-eaters over nearly two decades, scientists found that the rate of death from heart disease was 28 percent lower in vegetarians than in meat-eaters.

One study analyzed eighty scientific studies in leading medical journals. The analysis found that vegetarians had lower blood pressure, and were less likely to suffer from

stroke, heart attack, and kidney failure.

A large German study of nearly two thousand vegetarians found that deaths from heart disease were reduced by over one-third, and that heart disease itself was far less than that of the general population.

Another large study examined the coronary artery disease risk of young adults ages eighteen to thirty and vegetarians were found to have much higher levels of cardiovascular fitness and a greatly reduced risk of heart disease.

"The process of gradual blocking of the coronary arteries begins not in adulthood but in childhood...and the main cause of this arteriosclerosis is the steadily increasing amount of fat in the American diet, particularly saturated animal fats such as those found in meat, chicken, milk and cheeses. If there was another disease that caused half a million deaths a year, you can be sure that the public would be acutely aware of the danger, and that the cure or prevention would be universally practiced."

— Dr. Benjamin Spock, author, *child expert*

"I don't understand why asking people to eat a well-balanced vegetarian diet is considered drastic, while it is medically conservative to cut people open and put them on powerful cholesterol-lowering drugs for the rest of their lives."

— Dr. Dean Ornish, author, *Reversing Heart Disease*

Stroke is the third leading cause of death behind heart disease and cancer. Vegetarians have a twenty to thirty percent reduced risk of having a stroke. Stroke, like heart disease, is associated with diets high in saturated fats, and the vegetarian diet is naturally low in these fats.

The *Oxford Vegetarian Study* found cancer mortality to be 39 percent lower among vegetarians when compared with meat-eaters. The European Prospective Investigation of Cancer found vegetarians suffer forty percent fewer cancers than the general population.

Studies have shown that decreasing a woman's animal fat intake can reduce the chances that she will die from breast cancer. A large-scale, long-term study in the Netherlands found a powerful connection between the amount of animal

fat consumed and the rate of prostate cancer. A review of a dozen studies found dietary fat strongly correlated with prostate cancer.

Ovarian, uterine, and endometrial cancers have all been shown to be strongly correlated to the amount of animal fat in one's diet, and vegetarian women have significantly lower rates of these cancers.

"The beef industry has contributed to more American deaths than all the wars of this century, all the natural disasters, and all automobile accidents combined."

— Dr. Neal Barnard, Executive Director, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

"Vegetarians have the best diet. They have the lowest rate of coronary disease of any group in the country. They have a fraction of our heart attack rate and they have only forty percent of our cancer rate."

— William Castelli, MD, Director, Framingham Heart Study

"Human beings are not natural carnivores. When we kill animals to eat them, they end up killing us because their flesh, which contains cholesterol and saturated fat, was never intended for human beings..."

— Dr. William Roberts, editor-in-chief, *American Journal of Cardiology*

If meat-eating were healthy would you eat it? Pro-lifers believing the unborn child has a right to life won't be swayed by studies showing abortion is safer than childbirth. Neither are animal advocates affected by debates whether animal products are healthier.

Les Brown of the Overseas Development Council calculates that if Americans reduced their meat consumption by only ten percent per year, it would free at least twelve million tons of grain for human consumption—or enough to feed sixty million people.

Contact the author at vasumurti@aim.com



Film: "The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia" to be shown at Petersen Event Center

Educators, literacy advocates and members of the public are invited to attend a free special presentation of the film, "The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia" at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 23 at the Petersen Event Center 720 12th St., downtown Modesto. The event is hosted by a group of partner agencies concerned with shining a light on dyslexia—a persistent problem with learning to read.

"This event will be of great benefit to educators, parents, and those struggling with a learning difference and should not be missed," said Karen Williams, Executive Director of Learning Quest which provides literacy and GED/HSE (High School Equivalency) instruction to adult learners. "It is also a timely topic in light of recently approved legislation (Assembly Bill 1369) which all school districts will soon need to address."

The acclaimed documentary, "The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia" provides accounts of the dyslexic experience from

children, experts, and leaders at the top of their fields to help us understand that dyslexia can be as great a gift as it sometimes is an obstacle. "It is estimated one in five children has a learning difference so many parents, educators, and affected individuals could benefit from this event and gain hope," said reading specialist and event organizer Helen Katotakis.

Following the film, Dr. Jeff Gilger, founder and director of UC Merced Alliance for Family and Child Health and Development, will answer questions and share insights he has gained in his years of study on the topic of dyslexia and learning differences. "Dyslexia is called a 'hidden disability or learning difference,' and this movie raises awareness of the quiet struggles, hard work, and potential achievements common in people with this condition," says Dr. Gilger. "Some in the audience will relate to the stories, and all will walk away better informed about dyslexia and appreciate the condition as a human difference more than a disability."

Eldon Rosenow, O.D., founder of Modesto's Great Valley Charter Academy, one of the event hosts, also lives with dyslexia. "As a dyslexic who has struggled through the academic and emotional challenges this condition causes, I am happy to see that 'The Big Picture' and California's new dyslexia bill are finally bringing public awareness to this misunderstood condition," he says.

The program is a joint effort by Learning Quest—Stanislaus Literacy Centers, SLD (Specific Learning Disability) Foundation funded by Mary Stuart Rogers Foundation, Great Valley Charter Academy, and Stanislaus County Office of Education.

Although the program is free and open to the public, seating is limited. To reserve seats, go to <https://thebigpicture-dyslexia.eventbrite.com> or contact Helen Katotakis at hkatotakis@lqslc.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

FEBRUARY

MJC Spring Science Colloquium, Science Community Center, Room 115, West Campus, 3 pm - 4 p.m. Contact: Teri Curtis (209) 575-6775 curtist@mjc.edu. **Feb. 1: Brian Green**, MJC Librarian “*Life at the McMurdo Station, Antarctica.*” **Feb. 8: Darwin Day: Bobby Hutchison**, MJC Psychology Professor, “*How Evolution Unifies the Biological Sciences.*” **Feb.15: Megan Layhee**, Aquatic Biologist, Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center, “*Forest-wide stream monitoring in the Central Sierra Nevada.*” **Feb. 22: Anthony Presto**, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, “*How Clean is the Air We Breathe?*” **March 1: Teri Curtis**, MJC Biology Professor, “*Success Stories from California’s Channel Islands.*”

MJC Positive People Speaker Series: presentations by local community members who overcame challenges to achieve their goals. **Thursdays, 6 pm**. Mary Stuart Rogers Student Learning Center, West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., Modesto. Campus parking is \$2. Info: (209) 575-6700. **February 2: John Ervin III**, founder, Project Uplift. **February 2: Demitrius Snaer**, MJC professo, Men’s Cross Country coach. **March 16: Tamara Mena**, motivational speaker and spokesperson. **April 6: The Honorable Rubén 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. TBA.

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

3-9 FRI-THURS: The State Theatre presents *Fences*. 1307 J. St., Modesto. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/836> for show times.

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

4 SAT: 5th Annual Poetry Festival workshop, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale Rd., Modesto. Info: <http://www.mostpoetry.org/event/5th-annual-modesto-poetry-festival/>

9 THURS: A Community Forum: a panel of community leaders speak to the needs of our com-

munity, 7:00 pm- 8:30 pm, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto.

11 SAT: Operation 9-2-99 cleanup. To volunteer, visit <https://sites.google.com/a/monet.k12.ca.us/gdhs-guptill-c/tuolumne-river-project>

12 SUN: Sunday Afternoons at CBS celebrating its 25th Anniversary Season presents Grace Lieberman & Friends. “Love is in the air at this concert,” says Grace Lieberman. “I look forward to it every year. I just love to give good talent a voice.” Tickets available at: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2775301>. Save time after the concert for our 2nd Annual Valentine Tea! It was sold out in 2016. Get your tickets at: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2775348> All concerts held at 1705 Sherwood Ave. at 3 pm. Learn more at sundaysatcbs.com

15 WED: Film Night at the Center: Andrew Young’s *Leaving Selma*. 6:30 pm. at the Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Discussion follows. See article, this issue.

17-19 FRI-SUN: The Gallo Center and Sankofa Theatre Company, celebrates Black History Month with the presentation of Leslie Lee’s absorbing play, “*Colored People’s Time.*” See article, this issue.

19 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents *Julia*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/727>

23 THURS: Film: “The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia.” Petersen Event Center, 720 12th St., Modesto, 7 p.m. Discussion will follow, with Dr. Jeff Gilger and Eldon Rosenow, OD. FREE. Seating limited. To reserve seats, go to <https://thebigpicture-dyslexia.eventbrite.com> or contact Helen Katotakis at hkatotakis@lqslc.com.

25 SAT: Stanislaus County, and the Modesto Peace/Life Center co-sponsor day-long workshop on “**Restorative Communication in Times of Conflict.**” 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Ryan McCarthy, Executive Director of CALEAD, San Francisco, teaches this workshop. See article, this issue.

LOOKING AHEAD

Wednesday March 1: 15th Annual Day of Respect, Modesto High School. Volunteers needed. Call Sharon Froba, 209-521-7265; email sfroba@comcast.net to sign up or to receive more information. See article. p. 3.

Thursday March 2: MJC Civic Engagement

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.

Project presents *Beginning Again: Syria: Refugees Settle in Modesto*. ABC World News with David Muir follows a Syrian refugee family on their journey from Syria, to Jordan, and finally to Modesto. See the episode, meet the family, hear from those involved in their resettlement. Join a discussion on a response to refugees in the community. 7- 9 PM, MJC East Campus, Forum 110, 435 College Ave. Free, all welcome.

Friday 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.

Friday-Sunday, June 23-25: Peace Camp in the Sierra, Camp Peaceful Pines, Clark Fork Rd.

ONGOING

THE JOB CIRCLE Modesto Sound offers Audio Technician training classes for those 13 and older. Work with musicians; hands-on learning Live Sound, Recording Bands, Producing, Mastering, Electronics, and Pro Tools. Call or email for more information and class times. Modesto Sound, 110 Santa Barbara Ave., Modesto. \$200 (limited scholarships available). 209-573-0533, studio@modestosound.org; ModestoSound.org

Prepare for virtually any natural disaster with the **Natural Disaster Preparedness Guide**: www.expertise.com/home-and-garden/home-preparation-for-natural-disasters

Complete **guide to support groups** at <http://www.friendsaregoodmedicine.com/pdf/FriendsDirectory.pdf>

Calculators for a sustainable environment: valuable website which contains car payment and car use calculators and links to many calculators to help people reduce their energy footprints. <http://www.carpaymentcalculator.net/calcs/environmental.php> Valley Improvement Project’s mission is to improve the quality of life of under-represented and marginalized residents of California’s Central

Valley. For ongoing events visit V.I.P. at <http://valleyimprovementprojects.org/about>. Email: valleyimprovementprojects@gmail.com Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ValleyImprovementProjects?ref=br_tf

GREAT VALLEY MUSEUM of Natural History: Classes for children. Museum exhibits and store open Tues. to Fri., 9 am to 4:30 pm. Info: 575-6196. Call for info about classes.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA ART ASSOCIATION AND MISTLIN GALLERY. Exhibits by regional artists, art classes for adults and children. 1015 J St. Open 11 to 5, Tues. through Sat. 529-3369. www.ccaagallery.org

A.R.T.S. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER: All things recycled free arts materials for teachers, scout leaders, childcare, artists for their projects. Open M - F 8 to 4:30, 917 Oakdale Rd. Modesto, Media Center behind Ross Store. Volunteers needed. Info: 567-4516.

CENTRAL VALLEY DEMOCRATIC CLUB. Monthly meetings: Modesto, Patterson, and Oakdale. For more information, call Neil Hudson at 847-0540.

CHILDRENS STORY HOURS Stanislaus County Library: Modesto, Wiggle Worms! Program for children age 2 and younger and their caregivers; combines age appropriate stories and movement activities that promote essential pre-reading skills. Mondays: 10:15 am & 11:15 am, Tuesdays, 11:15 am. Preschool StoryTime (children ages 3 - 6 years) Tuesdays: 6:15 pm; Wednesdays: 10:15 am. Cuentos en espanol-jueves, 6:15. Bilingual StoryTime/Cuentos bilingües – Saturdays 10:15 am. All Library branches have story hours. All branches closed Fridays. Info: http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/tk_kids_storytime.shtml#mod

Habitat for Humanity’s RE-STORE: used and new quality materials. Funds benefit homes built by Habitat in Stanislaus County. 630 Kearney Ave, Modesto. Mon-Sat., 9:00 AM - 6:00 pm. Closed Sunday. Visit <http://www.stanislaushabitat.org>

OCCUPY MODESTO: Action Info: Nancy, 545-1375.

VISIT www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm

for complete listings and up-to-date information

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.