

Community Leader, Michael Baldwin, to speak at MLK Commemoration



By JAMES COSTELLO

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration invites you to attend the 29th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration on Saturday, February 25, 2023. Community leader and activist Michael Baldwin will speak at Modesto Junior College's Performing Arts & Media Center, 435 College Ave. at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. This event is free to the public.

Michael Baldwin is a member of Faith in

the Valley's Board of Directors and resides in Stanislaus County. In 2018, after serving 26 years of a double-life sentence, Michael settled in Modesto to use his life experience to bring healing and understanding to the traumatized and the marginalized, to bring equity to the community, to redefine justice, and to mend broken relationships. He soon started MBS Consultants, founded the nonprofit Legacy Alliance Outreach, and became a sought-after community advocate, educator, and paralegal. Mr. Baldwin was a co-leader of Modesto's Forward Together Working Group on police oversight whose recommendations were recently adopted by the Modesto City Council.

Earlier at 4:00 p.m., students are invited to meet with Michael Baldwin in the Modesto Junior College Little Theater.

ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORS at press time: Modesto Peace/Life Center; Modesto Junior College; California State University, Stanislaus; Modesto Teachers Assoc.; Turlock Teachers Assoc., California Teachers Assoc.; NAACP.

IN MEMORIAM

Tyre Nichols

JUNE 5, 1993 - JANUARY 10, 2023

Mr. Nichol's photography and thoughts can be found here:

<https://thiscaliforniakid2.wixsite.com/tnicholsphotography>

On January 10, 2023, Tyre Nichols died three days after a traffic stop by Memphis Police Department officers. The Memphis Police Department initially stated on January 8 that the traffic stop of Nichols was due to reckless driving. But later, on January 27, the Memphis police chief stated that footage showed no evidence of probable cause for the traffic stop.

Accused: Tadarrius Bean, Demetrius Haley, Emmitt Martin III, Desmond Mills Jr, Justin Smith.

Charges: Second-degree murder, Aggravated assault, Aggravated kidnapping (2 counts), Official misconduct (2 counts), Official oppression.



Black Woman's Tears, Melodic Thoughts, KDSigman Gallery, Modesto

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<http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>

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Modesto Junior College Science Colloquium - Spring 2023 Speakers

Wednesdays 3:15 - 4:15 pm

(recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube) Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus. Parking permit needed.

Feb. 15: Gilbert Blue Feather Rosas, Director II- Sustainability & Adaptation

Modesto City Schools: **Sustainability Initiatives in K12 Education and Green Career Path Options.** Sustainability departments are new to K12 Education. The importance and various types of sustainability initiatives developed at Modesto City Schools will be discussed. Mr. Rosa will also review his experiences with electric school bus fleet conversion and record-setting deployments at local school districts.

Feb. 22: Wakoli Wekesa, Ph.D., Entomologist & Manager, East Side Mosquito Abatement District.

Mosquito Control: What We Do and Why. Last Fall, there was a significant population rise of *Aedes aegypti*. Dr. Wekesa will explain the entomology of the local mosquitos, the diseases they can communicate, and how the District protects us from them.

Committee: Daniel Chase, Jill Cross, Elizabeth McInnes, Denise Godbout-Avant, Troy Gravatt, Deborah Martin, Michael Shirley, Catherine Tripp.

Coffee, Tea, & Conversation at the Modesto Peace/Life Center

Join us for coffee, tea, and conversation on

Saturday, Feb. 18

from 10:30 a.m. to Noon

at the Modesto Peace/Life Center
829 13th St., at the corner of I St.



Yokuts Group Sierra Club 2023 Scholarship for Students

The Yokuts Group Sierra Club \$1000 Scholarship for 2023 is now open for applications to students who will be attending any accredited Community/Junior College or University in Fall 2023. These students must currently be enrolled in either a Stanislaus County High School or a Stanislaus County Community/Junior College or University.

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

Please see the Yokuts Group Sierra Club Instagram, Facebook, and website pages for additional information about this scholarship.

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

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

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

ACTION: For more information, contact Laura Stokes: LauraHerdingCatsLLC@gmail.com, or call (206) 371-4853 (Seattle Area Code).



Yokuts Group/Mother Lode Chapter/California Sierra Club presents

A Journey into the Wilderness of parts of the Western U.S.

With Jeff Olson

7:00 p.m. on Friday, February 17, 2023, at the Fellowship Hall in the College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto, CA. Admission is free.

Jeff is a retired police officer and attorney. Yet his passion has always been the wilderness. He began backpacking when his son was a Boy Scout. They backpacked in the Sierra and in New Mexico at the Boy Scout's Philmont Scout Ranch where they hoofed 60 miles over 10 days.

When he retired in 2016, he found time to continue his wilderness adventures. He does so primarily backpacking with the Sierra Club. He has participated in Sierra Club's National trips in the Sierra and mountain ranges in Utah, Montana, and Alaska. He is a backpacking leader with the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club. He focuses on introducing backpacking to those interested in getting out into the wilderness for the first time.



MAPS: Free, Informative, Engaging Community Science Programs

Approximately monthly on Fridays MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132, 7:30 pm

Friday, Feb. 24: MJC East Campus Auditorium, **FAMILY SCIENCE show for people of all ages.** Frank Cascarano and David Marasco of Foothill College present a series of exciting physics demonstrations. <http://www.thephysicsshow.com/>



Friday, March 24: Dr. Jeanette Pirlo, Assistant Professor of Evolutionary Biology, CSU Stanislaus. **Stompin' Through the Marshes: A Look at Gomphotheres from North-Central Florida.**



Jeanette studies a group of extinct elephant relatives, Gomphotheres and Mastodons. Her research focuses on the extinct megaherbivore

ecology of the American continents and the reconstruction of paleoecosystems.

<https://timescavengers.blog/2018/02/26/jeanette-pirlo-paleontologist-and-marine-biologist/>

MAPS is grateful to MJC, the MJC Foundation, Stanislaus County Office of Education, Modesto Teachers Assn., the Great Valley Museum, and the Stanislaus County Library for support.

Dr. Pirlo's advice for future paleontologists.

"Paleontology explains life as we know it. To understand modern and future ecosystems, we must look to paleo-systems as baselines to see how things have changed or may potentially change."



MODESTO PEACE/LIFE CENTER

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable future

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Riding the "S"

By TOM PORTWOOD

An icy wind buffeted mushrooming rainclouds in early January as two men sat in wheelchairs by a bus stop on Oakdale Road in Modesto, waiting for the 32 bus that was running late, all the buses that afternoon likely slowed by the atmospheric river that had swept across the Valley that day. One of the men was clothed in jeans and bright yellow pajama tops, with an army-green blanket wrapped around his shoulders and over a good part of his pale, sunken face. He had just wheeled himself off the 37 bus and seemed a bit confused; he glanced cautiously about the landscape as if to make sure he had gotten off at the right stop. He looked like someone who was still recovering from a serious illness and in a perfect world should have been in the warmth of his own home and bed – that is, *if* he had a home to go to. But here he was, not fully dressed, and out in stormy winter weather.

The fellow sitting in the other wheelchair (who was decidedly younger and stronger looking), instinctively sensing he needed to look after this apparently sick man, muscled his chair over to where the latter sat drooping in his chair and assured him that if there was space for only one wheelchair on the 32 bus when it finally came, he would hang back and wait for the next bus. "Thanks, bro..." the sick man meekly whispered. "Not a problem... we're in same boat, right?" As it turned out, when the bus arrived, there, fortunately, was room for them both. But the fellow who volunteered to stay out in the elements as more storm clouds gathered had no way of knowing that when he offered to help. He just knew he had to do the right thing.

That moment with those two men waiting for a bus in the rain tells you a lot about the gracious community of passengers who daily board the County's public transportation system.

The roots of Stanislaus County's current public transportation system go back to 1911 when the city of Modesto sported its own trolley car lines.

Over the past century, both the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County have seen the public transit system grow and evolve through several iterations. Most recently, The Stanislaus Regional Transit Authority (or "S") was formed in July 2021 when the Modesto Area Express (or MAX) merged with Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT).

Even before the merger, MAX provided some two and half million rides annually, and I personally accounted for a few hundred of those rides each year since I use the system five or six times a week, counting on the system – as so many others do – for a plethora of needs, including getting to and from grocery shopping, medical appointments, the library, a bunch of other things.

Due to a seizure disorder that cropped up when I was a kid – something that has never been fully resolved - I have largely relied on public transportation for much of my adult life. And while not driving has continually presented challenges and barriers that are sometimes difficult to negotiate around, I've reached a point in my life where I realize how lucky I am because I love

the window - riding the bus to Walmart because they can't afford a car and are likely just a paycheck or two away from being homeless.

And then there are the poignant reminders of those who are currently living on the street. This past summer, a shopping cart was left abandoned by the bus stop outside of my apartment complex, jammed with clothing and bits and pieces of junk. My guess is that the person who was wheeling this cart down the road needed to take the bus, and the bus driver wouldn't allow that cart on the bus. The truth is that so many of our neighbors live on or near the edge every day and in every way.

I was waiting for a bus one day four years ago when a woman sitting on the bench beside me confided that she had just been evicted from her apartment and had nowhere to go. She wasn't looking for help as I recall – she just needed a moment to unburden herself from the pain she was feeling, to think out loud as I listened to her. When the bus arrived, she stayed behind, saying she wanted to sit and be by herself a little longer. She told me to take care, all the while exuding a quiet dignity and strength of character that would be difficult for many of us to match.

Another time, again as we waited for a bus, a man shared with me that his ex-wife was sick with ovarian cancer, but he'd been able to see her every day that week because the bus system was having one of its "No Fare" months. He told me he had to watch every dime he spent, and that he couldn't even run the air conditioner because it cost too much and, of course, he had to take care

of the kids no matter what. And yes, he added, he still loved his ex-wife and worshipped the ground she walked on.

If you take the bus often enough, you'll have your heart broken but you'll also find cause to celebrate the triumph of basic human kindness - how passing strangers can care for one another and become something of a real community.

That community includes the bus drivers, many of whom can set the tone for the entire ride. One driver, who's always in a jovial mood, serenades his passengers with Broadway show tunes, often inserting lyrics about Modesto that he makes up along the way while driving - for example, breaking into a few off-the-cuff bars of "Hello Modesto" to the tune of "Hello Dolly." He's a big favorite among riders.

For that driver, it's another way for him to connect with his passengers, knowing – as he does - just how difficult many of their circumstances are once they exit his bus. Because on the "S" –as in life – we're all in it together. Ride R



taking the bus, which allows me to be out *with and among* people in a way that would be impossible if I were behind the wheel of a car.

Like the Stanislaus Public Library and the public school system, the bus system is one of those institutions that acts as a kind of glue, binding the community together by providing an essential service – but, again, like the library and the public school system - it often goes completely unnoticed by those who don't use it.

But if you use the bus system with any frequency, you'll soon discover that many people daily face down hardships with remarkable grace and aplomb – seniors in wheelchairs or using walkers struggling just to get on board the bus, but managing to do so with a big smile and a cheerful hello to the bus driver; patients, still clutching their discharge papers and sometimes still looking a little dazed and groggy when the bus heaves to a stop to pick them up in front of the hospital on Coffee Road, but graciously thanking the driver for assisting them to get situated on the bus; the disconcerting sight of seeing a thirteen or fourteen-year-old child shepherding a parent, seemingly acting as the adult in the family dynamic, but still courageously rising to the occasion; a family of five – including two three-year olds who keep squirming in their seats to peer in wonderment at the world on the other side of



NAACP Modesto/ Stanislaus presents

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY TOWN HALL on RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Patterson CA. Feb. 11, 2023, 3:30 pm -5:30 pm. Panel discussion followed by a community reception.

Panelists include representatives from the FBI, DOJ, Office of Civil Rights, and/or local civil rights organizations

CHANGE IN THE CULTURE RALLY ON POLICE REFORM

Sat. Feb 18, 2023, 11:00 am
- 4:00 pm, 1010th Street Plaza
between Fuzio's and City Hall.

Open To The Public. Sponsored by local community organizations. Call the NAACP Modesto/Stanslaus (209) 896-9196 to register your group. Social Justice informational tables are welcome.

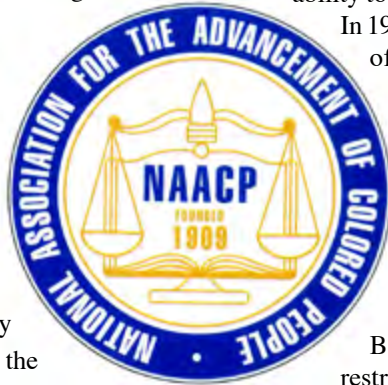
NAACP GENERAL MEETING, Feb. 21, 2023,
6:30 pm - 8:00 pm.

Special Presentation: How To Respond to Housing Discrimination.

Presented by PROJECT SENTINEL. Free and open to the public. (209) 896-9196.

Martin Luther King, Jr. COMMEMORATION

Sat. Feb. 25, 2023, MJC Auditorium, 435 College Ave.
Keynote Speaker: Michael Baldwin. 7 pm. Free, open to the public.



California Association of Realtors Apologizes for Discrimination

At last, after decades of silence, the California Association of Realtors is apologizing for its role in promoting our state's racist housing policies. According to an October 22, 2022 AP article* in the *Manteca Bulletin*, leaders of several real estate organizations gathered at a press conference Friday, October 21, 2022 to focus on next steps to correct years of discriminatory acts that segregated our cities, reduced the ability to build affordable housing, and promoted redlining.

In 1964, the association attempted to prevent the passage of the Rumford Fair Housing Act that removed discriminatory practices in housing.

Evidence of racism in housing is reflected in the Modesto area. In his September 8, 2019 article, *Modesto Bee's* opinion page editor Garth Stapley reported details of Modesto's racially restrictive housing policies. Over half of the subdivisions in the Modesto area contained restrictions on their deeds that prevented people of color, especially Black people, from purchasing homes. Many restrictions read as follows: "Occupants must be white or Caucasian: no Negroes, Mexicans, Hindus, Filipinos."

Thanks to the Fair Housing Act of 1968, discriminatory practices became illegal. Even today, however, some Black home appraisals increase when evidence of a Black family's presence is eliminated.

Past discriminatory practices have prevented people of color, primarily Black people, from home ownership. As a result, they have found it difficult to build generational wealth. Black people have only 10% of the wealth of white people. The disparity is largely due to home ownership. If a person can't buy a house, he or she can't sell it to buy a bigger house and can't leave it to the next generation.

Before I applaud the California Association of Realtors' apology, I will await its next steps.

Sharon Froba

Wendy Byrd

NAACP Modesto/Stanslaus Housing Chair
President

Ed Note: Find the AP article at <https://apnews.com/article/ahmaud-arbery-california-race-and-ethnicity-racial-injustice-business-fl1461688d4ded7424792cf08a787e9f>

Modesto Council Takes Action on Forward Together Recommendations

On Tuesday, December 13, 2022, the Modesto City Council approved the creation of a Community Police Review Board (CPRB) and authorized the preparation of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an Independent Police Auditor (IPA).

The CPRB's goals will be to increase transparency, build trust, and foster stronger relationships between Modesto Police Department and those they serve. The Modesto Community Police Review Board has been established, under the authority of the City Council, to continue to improve police-community relationships, expand the public's ability to provide feedback on police accountability, allow for greater civic engagement, and further increased awareness of police services and operations. The new board will hold monthly public meetings which are anticipated to begin in May 2023 once the recruitment and appointment processes have been completed.

The CPRB will review the Independent Police Auditor's annual report and analysis of critical incidents, receive timely notifications of major incidents, review police practices and

policies, and serve as an advisory body. The CPRB will be comprised of nine City of Modesto residents who represent the diverse community we serve.

The role of the IPA will be to offer an independent assessment of the police practices, procedures, and responses to critical incidents, uses of force, and misconduct investigations. The IPA will issue periodic reports that describe this assessment and offer recommendations for systemic improvements. The IPA will serve as a police practices adviser to the CPRB and will provide training and work closely with the board to receive community feedback and complaints regarding the Modesto Police Department.

The creation of the CPRB and IPA is the culmination of the efforts and final recommendations of the Forward Together Working Group which was initiated during the summer of 2021. The Forward Together Initiative was catalyzed as a response to calls for police reform intensifying across the country and at our local level.

A message from the Chief

The video footage released today out of Memphis is gut wrenching. I, like many in the world tonight, am at a loss for words about what I saw in those four videos. The words that I have been able to muster are shocking and heart breaking. The actions of the five former Memphis officers do not reflect the oath we take nor the high standards, professionalism and ethics that are the backbone of our duty to our community.

In each Chief's interview I do for Police Officer Recruits, I tell them that I expect two things from them. The first is to give their one hundred percent - knowing that not everyone can be Officer of the Year and that each individual brings different strengths to the team - the expectation is that they are giving one hundred percent to the job and our community each day they come to work. The second is that they treat every member of the public like they would want their family treated. While it is true that there are times in police work where uses of force are necessary, there is an equal necessity to treat each person we come into contact with, suspect or otherwise, with dignity and respect. What we witnessed today in these videos is not how your Modesto Police Officers are trained to treat anyone.

I extend my deepest condolences to the family of Tyre Nichols and the Memphis community.

Chief Brandon Gillespie



Homeless — Where Your Money Goes, Part I: The Black Hole of Rehab

By **ERIC CAINE**, [The Valley Citizen](#)

No one should have been surprised when the [Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury](#) found that local attempts to manage homelessness lacked focus, accountability, and positive results, despite the expenditure of millions of dollars. Like efforts to reduce homelessness most everywhere, Stanislaus County's bewildering array of nonprofits, government agencies, and volunteer efforts fails for many reasons, but among the most common is the mistaken notion that rehabilitation should be the first option for people experiencing homelessness.

By far the most popular success narrative about homelessness, the rehab and recovery narrative almost always involves a former drug user finding God, quitting drugs, and joining the workforce as a productive member of mainstream society. Unfortunately, the recovery narrative is only one of many misleading anecdotes about homelessness.

In fact, the number of homeless people who truly benefit from quitting drugs during rehab is astonishingly small for a simple reason: Once they quit, they are almost invariably back on the streets.

The fundamental truth about homelessness is not that homeless people are homeless because they use drugs; if that were true, there would be far more homeless people everywhere than there are now. Celebrity addicts like Rush Limbaugh, Robert Downey Jr., and Drew Barrymore not only never became homeless, they continued to earn fortunes while addicted.

Most homeless people don't acquire housing and jobs when they quit using drugs for a simple reason: There isn't enough affordable housing and there aren't enough jobs that pay living wages, especially for people who've been homeless for more than a few weeks or months.

Those simple realities — lack of housing and jobs that pay living wages — are far more significant factors in homelessness than drug use. Nonetheless, the rehab and recovery narrative is so dominant that it gets in the way of more effective tactics for managing homelessness.

Again, Stanislaus County offers an illustrative example of what likely happens in many other places. The county's drug treatment center — Stanislaus Recovery Center (SRC) — is not only understaffed; there have been repeated drug overdoses on site.

And even when patients successfully complete the SRC program, their long-term recovery from drug dependency hinges on what happens after they exit the treatment center. If they exit into homelessness, they almost always resume using drugs, sometimes within a day or two. The same scenario is true for homeless people who are treated for mental illness. In most cases, treatment is thwarted when patients return to the streets.

Thus, money spent on treating homeless people for drug use or mental illness is money better spent providing them safe and secure lodging, even when the lodging is in the form of a tent or tarp on safe ground. Recovery from drug abuse doesn't happen in a few days or even a few months. Effective

treatment is expensive, ongoing, and dependent on a stable and secure environment once treatment ends. Except in the rarest of cases, these necessities for recovery aren't available for people experiencing homelessness.

In fact, if every homeless person in California were to quit using drugs tomorrow, the vast majority would still be homeless, not only tomorrow, but the next day, the next week, and many months thereafter.

Yes, there are cases when a homeless person enters treatment, stops using drugs, finds work and housing, and lives happily thereafter. Such cases, however, are rare. Presenting them as commonplace examples results in a tremendous waste of resources and contributes significantly to our ongoing failure to reduce the manifold harms of homelessness. Resources spent on rehab too often lead homeless people right back to the streets.



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Coming Home

By A.J.

With the new year, a new chapter: working downtown, in my hometown, again. It's a bit nostalgic, coming to work every day in literally the same building where I worked during some pretty impactful years so long ago.

I love working again in a place that, after so many years in a smaller town, seems like a big city, as much as I love living in the small town where we've long since made a life.

I truly feel that I've come home. Walking around downtown stirs up so many memories, sometimes I almost expect to catch a glimpse of my younger self, head down, scurrying by.

At times I think I do catch sight of that young woman in the next generation of women working around me. I hope my experience will be of benefit to them in some way. I've certainly made my share of mistakes, back then and since. But I'm finally learning to stop letting them hold me back. I focus instead on trying to find a way to do a little good in the world.

Strolling among the familiar buildings, I realized how much I've missed the place.

Out walking one day, I wandered through the first floor of what is now the McHenry Museum. It's located in the beautiful building that originally housed the town's Library, at 14th and I, and is open from 12 to 4 p.m., Fridays through Sundays. If you haven't been recently, it's well worth the trip – and it's free.

While it's good that they saved the building, and it's hard to imagine a more appropriate use, I always find walking into that lovely old edifice to be a little bittersweet.

Long gone are the files of solid wood that held the card catalogs.

Absent, too, is the smell of old books – magical creations that could catch you up and transport you to places unimagined; characters so well drawn that you could hear them speaking in your head. I heard them in my mother's voice early on. Reading aloud, she brought every character to life. My mother could literally breathe life into a story.

We loved reading because she loved to read to us.

Even years after she was gone, I could still hear her in my mind, cadence changing from character to character, voice rising and falling, breathlessly building excitement and suspense.

I suppose I love the Old Library building because I so strongly associate it with her. The building, dedicated in 1912, was constructed in the days of true craftsmanship. The books carved and sculpted into the building, mute reminders of its origins, remain proof that it was, from the beginning, intended to be a library. And until the town outgrew it, it served that function well.

That building has a soul.

It was sad but inevitable when the community outgrew the charming old girl. (The "new" Library was dedicated in 1971.)

While the new building seemed ultra-modern and pretty cool at the time, and full of possibilities that

Walking around downtown stirs up so many memories, sometimes I almost expect to catch a glimpse of my younger self, head down, scurrying by.



the Old Library just couldn't offer, it was also an unfortunate consequence of the growth of the community. It's not that it wasn't needed and wasn't well-designed for its purpose. It just isn't the Old Library.

But long before the New Library was ever dreamed of, my mother took us to the haven we all found in the Old one. We loved it because she did. Located "downtown" as it was, it was always a treat to be shepherded into the car and driven there for a morning or afternoon.

You could get to the Children's Section by walking through the Adult Section upstairs, but we almost never did. We much preferred the ornate stairway that still exists on the I Street side of the building (although it's currently blocked off). Mom walked us straight down those stairs to the basement, where the children's books were kept.

She always seemed just a little impatient for us to be settled with a book or focused on the search for one, so she could get upstairs to the rows and rows of books for readers with adult interests and reading ability.

In the basement, the Children's Section was always refreshingly cool in the heat of the summer and a welcoming place to sit with a book when it was cold outside – especially if it was raining.

The Old Library was one of the best places in the world. My mother left us there, immersed in stories, to enjoy the treasures on the shelves upstairs herself. The worst that could happen was that you might come home with a book you didn't really enjoy. And it was always such a disappointment to get home and realize that, even after a lot of careful consideration, you'd wasted one of your precious four choices on a book that turned out to be a disappointment.

On a really good day, you might find out about a new book by a favorite author, or at least one you hadn't yet read. You might not always like the other ones quite as much as the first, but that was part of life too.

My mother made use of the Library and taught us to do the same. I loved that place early on because of the many books filled with wonderful stories, and later because that was where you could learn anything you wanted to know – sometimes stuff you didn't even know that you wanted to know.

This was all long before the advent of YouTube. To learn about something, you went to the Library and thumbed through little index cards to find the books most likely to hold the information you needed.

The cards were arranged alphabetically by subject, and





listed the names of the books, along with their designations in the Dewey Decimal System. They were sometimes marked with date stamps from when the books had been checked out.

Before computers, library books had little pockets or envelopes made of card stock or heavy paper glued into one of the inside covers. When the book was checked out, its index card was stamped with the date the book was due and placed in the pocket before the book was handed back to the borrower.

The index card of a good book was invariably marked up with date stamps, and an inside cover festooned with them meant that the book, and probably even the author, was almost sure to become a favorite.

I Agree with You

By VASU MURTY

You argued: “As you know, many vegetable farms kill small rodents and other mammals in order to obtain vegetables. Funny, I haven’t heard you complain about that. Consistent ethics?” You’re incorrect. I’ve stated elsewhere:

“Raising animals for food, even raising animals for animal by-products like milk and eggs, means wasting valuable acreage because the animals themselves are raised on plant food! If we eat lower on the food chain, fewer resources are required to feed everyone, which means less agricultural acreage, etc., which means fewer rodents and insects are killed when fields are plowed for farming, etc. Fewer plants are killed, too. If you carry this argument to its logical conclusion, a **vegan** diet is the least violent because it requires one-third less acreage than a lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet and twenty times less acreage than a meat-centered diet.”

I’ve also said elsewhere that a return to organic farming is a direct response to the moral issue of unnecessarily killing insects.

And although the change undoubtedly made life easier, I recall being a little saddened the first time I went into the New Library and found that the wooden files holding the index cards were gone. Computer systems were more cumbersome then, but still much easier for most people to manage than the antiquated and, until you got it, confusing Dewey Decimal System.

Yet, the system was the magic key to the Library: a non-fiction book’s Dewey Decimal System number led you to its exact location on the shelf. And part of the fun of looking for a particular book was the possibility of discovering others of interest around it. The only problem was that there were often a lot of other good ones, shelved with the one you were specifically looking for.

When Mom finally came to round us up so we could

check out our books, I often had a hard time winnowing mine down. I invariably arrived at the check-out desk loaded down with almost as many as I could carry, postponing the weighty decision between two that looked really good until the last possible second, hoping this would be the day the clerk wouldn’t notice if there was an extra...

So, it turns out I’ve come home to start a new career and, with it, a new chapter. And I’m so grateful to be here. There are a surprising number of us starting new careers later in life, and we come to the new adventure armed with the experience of working and living a lot of years.

Hopefully, we also bring strength born of forgiving ourselves for our past mistakes, as well as the will to move forward and, day by day, do whatever good we can in the world.



You also argued: “Of course, if we buy clothing or appliances and we find they mistreat their employees, then we should not buy their products either. You would have more credibility if you also called for the ethical treatment of human beings when obtaining clothing and other articles.”

I agree with you. You’re taking note of what past president of Feminists For Life, Quaker pacifist, and vegan psychology professor Rachel MacNair refers to as “movement connections” -- animal activists finding common ground or forging an alliance with related causes or related movements. As early as 1975, Peter Singer wrote in *Animal Liberation*: “The environmental movement... has led people to think about our relations with other animals that seem impossible only a decade ago. To date, environmentalists have been more concerned with wildlife and endangered species than with animals in general, but it is not too big a jump from the thought that it is wrong to treat whales as giant vessels filled with oil and blubber to the thought that it is wrong to treat (animals) as machines for converting grains to flesh.”

In the late 1980s, *Vegetarian Times* reported that animal rights activists were linking the animal rights movement to the civil rights movement and the women’s movement. In 1994, my friend Ruth Enero, a Catholic peace activist whom I very much respect, attended an animal rights festival in Los Gatos, California. Ruth told me she attended some of the lectures and heard animal activists discussing forging an alliance with activists involved with the plight of migrant farm workers. Lauren Ornelas of the Food Empowerment Project, based here in the San Francisco Bay Area, campaigns on behalf of children of migrant farm workers and is involved with the animal rights movement forging an alliance with the fair-trade movement: which opposes child labor, sweatshops, etc.

Animals are like children. It isn’t too big a jump from the thought that it’s wrong to purchase products involving child labor and sweatshops to the thought that it is wrong to purchase products that involve the suffering and death of animals. Recently, Lauren Ornelas and her organization, the Food Empowerment Project, have been siding with striking employees at Amy’s vegetarian fast-food restaurant as well.

Aileen Jaffa Memorial Youth Poetry Contest 2023 is Open for Submissions

By LYNN M. HANSEN, Contest Chair: National League of American Pen Women & MoSt Poetry Center

In October of 1982, the Poets' Corner Chapter of the California Federation of Chaparral Poets received its charter and became known as the "poetry center" of the San Joaquin region, later renamed as The Poets of the San Joaquin. Among the charter members was Aileen Jaffa, poet, artist, sculptor, and retired agricultural reference librarian at UC Berkeley for 34 years. Author of over 3,000 poems, in 1984, she was the President of the Poets of the San Joaquin, past President of the Piedmont/Oakland Branch of the National League of American Pen Women, and prolific writer.

Aileen Jaffa is said to have composed her first poem at age 2 years, nine months, and her mother wrote it down. It is in this spirit of encouraging young writers and to remember poet Aileen Jaffa, the Modesto/Stanslaus Poetry Center, in collaboration with the National Association of American Pen Women (NLAPW), Modesto Chapter, sponsors a youth poetry contest, The Aileen Jaffa Young Poets Contest, each spring.

Guidelines

Any student enrolled in a Stanislaus County school, grades K through 12, is eligible to submit up to 3 entries, at \$1 per entry. Each entry, except for typing, must be the original creative work of the student.

Poems will be judged by adult poets who are knowledgeable about young people's work. Any poem that shows evidence

of plagiarism will be disqualified. Poems may be in any style but no longer than 24 lines. **No simultaneous submissions** of poems to Poets' Corner or other contests. Two copies of each poem must be submitted: one copy should contain the title and poem but no identification of the author. The other copy should contain the student's name and a copy of the entry form below, and the \$1 entry fee.

Poems submitted will be placed in categories according to the student's year in school: 1. Grades K-3; 2. Grades 4-6; 3. Grades 7-9; 4. Grades 10-12.

First, Second and Third place winners in each category will receive cash awards from the contest sponsors. Prizes are First place \$25, Second Place \$15, Third Place \$10. In addition, the Modesto Chapter of NLAPW will award a \$60 Aileen Jaffa Outstanding Poem award in each of two combined categories: Categories 1 and 2, and categories 3 and 4.

The **deadline for submissions is April 3, 2023**. Winners of the contest are invited to present their work at the Carnegie Arts Center, 250 N Broadway, Turlock at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 13 2023.

Find the entry form at <https://www.mostpoetry.org/contests/jaffa/>. Submit entries by mail to MoSt Poetry, P.O. Box 578940, Modesto, California 95357. Information: info@mostpoetry.org

Check Out Uncaged Art at Picasso's Deli

By BOB BARZAN

"Uncaged Art is a joyful expression of the human spirit under terrible conditions", says Modesto Art Museum curator Bob Barzan speaking of drawings and paintings created by children between the ages of 13 and 17 incarcerated in the Tornillo Detention Center in Texas.

The art will be exhibited at Picasso's Gourmet Deli, 963 10th Street, at J, February 3 to March 3, 2023, Monday through Friday, 7 am to 3 pm. The exhibit is sponsored by the Modesto Art Museum.

The artists, from Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and other countries, were among 6,000 teenagers held in the Tornillo Children's Detention center and other sites between June 2018 and January 2019. The teens lived in tents, often for months, separated from their families with no idea when they might be released.

A group of local teachers working at the camp invited the children to create works of art, instructing them to think of their home communities. When the Tornillo Center was dismantled in January 2019, Father Rafael Garcia didn't want the art to be thrown away and forgotten. From the art he saved, this small traveling exhibit representing hundreds



of drawings and paintings created at the camp, was organized by the Immigration Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin - www.sjraise.org.

Exhibit web address: <https://modestoartmuseum.org/uncaged-art/>. Information: contact: Bob Barzan 209-303-3065.



Award-Winning Poet Amanda Moore Facilitates 11th Annual MoSt Poetry Festival

Modesto-Stanslaus 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.

Ms. Moore's debut collection of poetry, *Requeening*, was selected for the 2020 National Poetry Series by Ocean Vuong and published by HarperCollins/Ecco in October 2021. Her poems have appeared in journals and anthologies including *Best New Poets*, *ZZYZVA*, *Catapult*, *Ploughshares*, *LitHub*, and *Mamas and Papas: On the Sublime and Heartbreaking Art of Parenting*, and her essays have appeared in *The Baltimore Review*, *Hippocampus Magazine*, and on the University of Arizona Poetry Center's blog. She is the recipient of writing awards, residencies, and fellowships from The Brown Handler Residency, In Cahoots, The Writers Grotto, The Writing Salon, Brush Creek Arts Foundation, and The Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts.

Tickets (\$40 each) at Eventbrite: <https://most2023fest.eventbrite.com>. More information at <https://www.mostpoetry.org/>. **Attendance is limited to the first 44 people who purchase tickets.** Coffee, tea, and table snacks will be provided. Attendees are welcome to bring their own lunch. The festival will include an author's table and camaraderie with poets and poetry aficionados from throughout Northern California.

KCBP Community Radio Seeks Volunteers

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

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

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

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



Be informed!

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

Trust the hours - A Cento

What is the moment in evening light
when everything softens,

I am living, I remember you

I love the white moon circles
and purple halos,
on a plate as the salt sweats them.

Trust the hours. Haven't they
carried you everywhere, up to now?

I believe Icarus was not failing as he fell
but was just coming to the end of his triumph.

I am desperate for you
to love the world because I brought you here.

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,

There is no accounting for happiness
or the way it turns up.

The roses admit they don't know why they bloom
But they do

Lines from:
Lee Herrick, Scar and Flower
Happiness, Jane Kenyon
David Wagoner, Lost
Maggie Smith, First Fall
Jack Gilbert, Failing and Flying
Galway Kinnel, Wait
Peter Balakian, Eggplant
Marie Howe, What the living do

Janette Jameson
January 2023



Refuge on Beckwith road

Geese snake grey welkin
searching for repose in harvested fields;
their white bodies cluster as one.
Aspirations rise when flight
bursts one more time
upwards like snow
in a honking surge.
Cranes tuck in flight feathers,
their stately form disappears.
Orange globe sets behind blue mountains,
and then winks to close.
Coyotes chant to an envelope
of dusk and darkness.
Cold settles on my hands and face,
crescent moon glistens.

Your absence does not fly
it remains caged in ribs.
I wonder, will I
feel your breath again.

On my return drive
car lights illuminate puddles of rain.
Trees sparkle their Christmas lights.
Freight train rumbles down tracks;
a horn crackles stillness.

Janette Jameson



Janette Jameson:
A Thoughtful Set of
Poems for Winter

I am a retired social worker, married to a retired art teacher. My two young adult daughters are developing careers in education and art. I have lived in Modesto for the last 28 years, still looking for home, perhaps by an oak tree. I am a member of the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center Board and enjoy the challenge of Poetry on the Spot during ModShop. My poems are a response to questions, changes in nature, and our mercurial humanity. I am a student of poetry and continue to learn, especially from Padraig O'Tuama in his podcast, "Poetry Unbound."

When big scarries come:

Say
your full name
and repeat over
and over again.

Breathe
in feather clouds
after grey sky
changes to blue.

Picture
hummingbird her blue
green wings wave
faster than a heartbeat.

Imagine
running on sand,
waves crashing
and foam touches your toes.

Hear
the sounds of your name
repeat them over
and over again.

Carry
this globe of might
so your worries will know
there is always light.

When slimy monster is gone
we will put on grasshopper
legs and jump as high
as the oak tree.

I hear your name
and will repeat
wonderful over
and over again.

Janette Jameson

*This poem is dedicated to small children in harm's
way with no way out.*

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

Streaming on www.kcbpradio.org

PSAs in English and Spanish broadcast multiple times a day, produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

PROGRAMS

Sports Talk Modesto - Join Jay Freeda and Jimmie Menezes. Snappy banter to catch up on everything happening in the sports world. - Thursdays, 5 pm.

Vib'n with the West Modesto Collaborative - Karlha Davies and Jasmine Corena. Engage, Educate and Advocate on behalf of the West Modesto Community. Showcases Voices of the West Modesto Community - Wednesdays, 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 and former Modestan, Paul Vogelzang - Fridays, 2:00 pm, Saturdays, 12:30 pm.

Bucks Stallion's Radio Transmission Emporium - Cyber Acoustic Music - Saturdays, 12:00 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 - Spooky music & sounds out of this world, Friday night, 11:00 pm.

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 and Laura Stokes - 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.

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, and International.*

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 journalists Amy Goodman & Juan Gonzalez.

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

Children's Programming

Confetti Park - Music, stories New Orleans style, Saturdays 8:00 am; & Sunday's 12:30 pm.

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

Science

Radio Ecoshock - the latest scientific information on Climate Change - Saturdays, 9:00 am.

Explorations - Science explained 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

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY RADIO STATION: Donate here: <https://kcbpradio.org/donate/> Please consider a recurring monthly donation.



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OF
GENE PALSGROVE

August 10, 1923 -
November 25, 2019

From Kathy Tellin, daughter

Donate Your Vehicle to KCBP Radio: It's a Win-Win Solution

Have you considered donating a vehicle to KCBP Radio? Not only will you cruise past the hassles altogether, but you'll make a lasting impact.

1. It's easy and the pick-up is free!
2. The proceeds from the sale of your vehicle will help us continue to provide community programs to you!
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To donate, call (855) 500-7433, or submit the secure online form at <https://careasy.org/KCBP>. We accept all types of vehicles that meet the following basic requirements: Vehicle has a clear title, is in one piece, is accessible for safe towing, does not need to be running.

'Our Future Is Public': Santiago Declaration Envisions End of Neoliberalism Death Spiral

A new manifesto calls for building “a sustainable social pact for the 21st century” in which “our rights are guaranteed, not based on our ability to pay, or on whether a system produces profit, but on whether it enables all of us to live well together in peace and equality.”

By **KENNY STANCIL, Common Dreams**

An international coalition made up of more than 200 trade unions and progressive advocacy groups on Thursday published the Santiago Declaration, a manifesto for “a complete overhaul of our global economic system.”

The undeniably anti-neoliberal document proclaiming that “our future is public” is the product of a meeting held in Chile—the “laboratory of neoliberalism” where Milton Friedman and his University of Chicago acolytes’ upwardly redistributive economic model was first imposed at gunpoint by Gen. Augusto Pinochet’s military junta.

From November 29 to December 2, more than 1,000 organizers from over 100 countries gathered in Santiago and virtually to germinate a left-wing movement against “the dominant paradigm of growth, privatization, and commodification.”

“Who owns our resources and our services is fundamental. A public future means ensuring that everything essential to dignified lives is out of private control.”

“We are at a critical juncture,” the manifesto begins. “At a time when the world faces a series of crises, from the environmental emergency to hunger and deepening inequalities, increasing armed conflicts, pandemics, rising extremism, and escalating inflation, a collective response is growing.”

“Hundreds of organizations across socioeconomic justice and public services sectors—from education and health services, to care, energy, food, housing, water, transportation, and social protection—are coming together to address the harmful effects of commercializing public services, to reclaim democratic public control, and to reimagine a truly equal and human rights-oriented economy that works for people and the planet,” reads the document. “We demand universal access to quality, gender-transformative, and equitable public services as the foundation of a fair and just society.”

The Santiago Declaration continues:

The commercialization and privatization of public services and the commodification of all aspects of life have driven growing inequalities and entrenched power disparities, giving prominence to profit and corruption over people’s rights and ecological and social well-being. It adversely affects workers, service users, and communities, with the costs and damages falling disproportionately on those who have historically been exploited.

The devaluation of public service workers’ social status, the worsening of their working conditions, and attacks against their unions are some of the most worrying regressions of our times and a threat to our collective spaces. This is deeply linked with the patriarchal organization of society, where

women as workers and careers are undervalued and absorb social and economic shocks. They are the first to suffer from public sector cuts, losing access to services and opportunities for decent work, and facing a rising burden of unpaid care work.

Austerity cuts in public sector budgets and wage bills are driven by an ideological mindset entrenched in the International Monetary Fund and many ministries of finance that serve the interests of corporations over people, perpetuating dependencies and unsustainable debts. Unfair tax rules, nationally and internationally, enable vast inequalities in the accumulation and concentration of income, wealth, and power within and between countries. The financialization of a wide range of public actions and decisions hands over power to shareholders and undermines democracy.

Against the heavily privatized status quo, “we commit to continue building an intersectional movement for a future that is public,” the document says. “One where our rights are guaranteed, not based on our ability to pay, or on whether a system produces profit, but on whether it enables all of us to live well together in peace and equality: our buen vivir.”

According to Global Justice Now, the Transnational Institute, and other signatories, the creation of an egalitarian and sustainable society hinges on ensuring universal access to life-sustaining public goods delivered by highly valued workers.

“We need to take back control of decision-making processes and institutions from the current forms of corporate capture to be able to decide for what, for whom, and how we provide.”

“Who owns our resources and our services is fundamental,” the manifesto argues. “A public future means ensuring that everything essential to dignified lives is out of private control, and under decolonial forms of collective, transparent, and democratic control.”

As the Santiago Declaration explains:

A future that is public also means creating the conditions for enabling alternative production systems, including the prioritization of agroecology as an essential component of food sovereignty. To that end, we need to take back control of decision-making processes and institutions from the current forms of corporate capture to be able to decide for what, for whom, and how we provide, manage, and collectively own resources and public services.

The public future will not be possible without taking bold collective national action for ambitious, gender-transformative, and progressive fiscal and economic reforms, to massively expand financing of universal public services. These reforms must be complemented by major shifts in the international public finance architecture, including transformations in tax, debt, and trade governance.

Democratizing economic governance towards truly multilateral processes is critical to overhaul the power of dominant neoliberal organizations and reorient national and international financial institutions away from the racial, patriarchal, and colonial patterns of capitalism and towards socioeconomic justice, ecological sustainability, human rights, and public services. It is equally essential to enforce

the climate and ecological debt of the Global North, to carry out an expedited reduction of energy and material resource use by wealthy economies, to hold big polluters liable for their generations-long infractions, to accelerate the phasing-out of fossil fuels, and to prioritize finance system change.

The call to build “a sustainable social pact for the 21st century,” the coalition observes, “follows years of growing mobilization around the world.”

It also comes as a complimentary alliance convened by Progressive International meets in Havana, Cuba to map out an emancipatory “new international economic order.”

During Friday’s opening session, former Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis called for the establishment of a movement capable of dismantling “the existing, exploitative, catastrophically extractive imperialist international economic order so as to build a new one in its place... in which people and planet can breathe, live, and prosper together.”

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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.

february 2023

CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.

MJC Science Colloquium Wednesdays 3:15 - 4:15 pm (recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube). Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus. Parking permit needed. **Feb. 15:** Gilbert Blue Feather Rosas, Director II- Sustainability & Adaptation, Modesto City Schools: Sustainability Initiatives in K12 Education and Green Career Path Options. **Feb. 22:** Wakoli Wekesa, Ph.D., Entomologist & Manager, East Side Mosquito Abatement District. Mosquito Control: What We Do and Why.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science): free MJC science programs. on Fridays in MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 pm. **Friday, Feb. 24:** MJC East Campus Auditorium, FAMILY SCIENCE show for people of all ages. Frank Cascarano and David Marasco of Foothill College present a series of exciting physics demonstrations. <http://www.thephysicsshow.com/>

The Prospect Theatre has continuing offerings: Visit <https://prospecttheaterproject.org/2022-2023-season/>

1 WED: VIGIL: TYRE NICHOLS, 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, McHenry & J. St., Modesto.

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

4 SAT: Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt) hosts the 11th Annual Poetry Festival, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale Rd., Modesto. 9 am to 1:30 pm. See article p. 8.

11 FRI: 22nd Annual Grace Lieberman, David Bradford, Aggie Anker **Valentine Concert featuring Golden Bough & Valentine Sweets & Eats.** Congregation Beth Shalom, 7 pm. Tickets: www.cbsmoesto.org/concert-series.

19 SUN: The State Theatre and Modesto Film Society present *Devil in a Blue Dress*. 2 pm. Join the State Theatre. Have fun, get perks, support Modesto's historic non-profit theatre. Visit <https://thestate.org/films/devil-in-a-blue-dress-022023/>

25 SAT: 29th Annual MLK Commemoration. Keynote speaker: Michael Baldwin. Modesto Junior College. Doors open at 6 pm. FREE. See article, front page.

LOOKING AHEAD

June 23-25: 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

Womxns Support Group for Womxn in all stages of life. Join us in a safe and judgment free environment where you can give and receive support for the many issues that we struggle with as Womxn. Every Tuesday from 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

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

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

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

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

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

TransForward Group meets at the Queen Bean every Saturday at 1 pm. 18+. Info: 209-408-8848.

First and Third Saturdays - **Gay Men's Group**, Noon. First and Third Saturdays- 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 UUFC 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 kathyhaynesESG@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.