

Modesto Safe Ground Homeless Vision

Modesto City Councilmembers Eric Alvarez, Nick Bavaro and Chris Ricci

September 1, 2023

What is Safe Ground:

Safe Ground pilot program is a housing referral focused program that provides a secure location for people currently experiencing homelessness in Modesto. This model reduces the negative impacts and public health and safety concerns of unregulated encampments on local businesses and residents by providing basic services such as portable toilets, mobile showers, and trash disposal bins in addition to case management, service referrals and housing placements. Each Safe Ground participant is provided with a shelter unit and a cot, two meals a day, snacks and bottled water. Meals, snacks and bottled water will be provided by non-profit organizations who feed the homeless and coordinated through the site service provider.

Safe Ground Location:

Safe Ground pilot program location needs to be in an area that's least disruptive to businesses and residents and where services are readily available. Safe Ground will be secured with a fence with two entry areas with private security in city- and county- approved locations.

How Many Homeless Will Safe Ground Hold:

The temporary Safe Ground pilot program capacity will be determined by site availability.

Safe Ground Rules:

Safe Ground pilot program is not a permanent destination, and all participants work with a case manager towards exiting to transitional or permanent housing as it becomes available. Participants' expectations are to maintain a safe environment where

everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Safe Ground pilot program follows a low-barrier, harm-reduction model to be as inclusive as possible. Weapons, drugs and alcohol are not allowed onsite. Participants found with drugs or alcohol will be asked to dispose of the items or take them offsite. Campfires or BBQ equipment are not permitted on the Safe Ground pilot program. Participants may bring minimal items that will fit inside their unit. Additional storage of belongings is available as capacity allows.

Admission Process:

Safe Ground pilot program is designed to be as low-barrier as possible while maintaining the safety of all participants and personnel. Couples and single adults 18 years of age and older are eligible for Safe Ground. Admission to Safe Ground will be determined by qualified staff and volunteers on the ground and will be behavioral based and predicated on potential for movement forward. While pets are accommodated at the temporary Safe Ground pilot site, the number of license pets is limited to one per participant.

Admission Criteria:

To be eligible, the person must be willing to work towards a transitional housing plan and be able to start managing their activities of daily living such as helping keep the site neat, orderly and peaceful. The selection approval process must go through the service provider with the recommendations of at least three local homeless advocates/professionals. Vehicle and RV parking is not available in the Safe Ground pilot program location.

Amenities and Services at Safe Ground:

- Safe Camp participants will be provided with a shelter unit (tent, pallet, or similar).

- Participants can bring minimal possessions that fit within their unit.
- Staffing and private security (non-MPD) personnel are on site 24 hours per day.
- Shaded area with tables, benches and cooling are available.
- Portable toilets, showers, and trash disposal bins are provided.
- Charging stations for electronic devices in designated area.

- Meals, snacks, beverages and bottled water provided by non-profit organizations.

Safe Ground Resources:

Stanislaus County and other entities will provide financial resources and the City of Modesto will provide city property for Safe Ground pilot program. Requests for Proposals will be issued for service providers; Modesto's City Manager and Stanislaus County's CEO will recommend service providers to their elected body for approval.

Mural is complete!



Here is the mural at the Modesto Peace/Life Center office, 829 13th St. at I St.! Artist Joel Aguilar completed it on September 16, Mexican Independence Day.

We are 2/3 of the way to our goal of \$3000 to pay for the mural. You can be part of this exciting project by donating at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/justice-mural-fundraiser>
Donations of any amount are appreciated.

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An opportunity: The **California Audio Roots Project (CARP)** is designed to involve community members in recording stories, poems, and songs about their lives and living in California. The upcoming season is focused on social justice and community engagement.

Modesto Sound is looking for people to interview and will pay interviewees \$150. The interviews are playing on KCBP 95.5 FM and are archived on Sound Cloud, Spotify, etc.

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Modesto Junior College Science Colloquium: Fall 2023 Speakers

Wednesdays 3:15-4:15 pm, Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus, Parking Free. (Recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube.)

Oct. 4: Dr. Jamie DeRollo, Head Athletic Trainer/Faculty. *Environmental Considerations in Sport*

When participating in sports or playing outside, there are environmental considerations to take into consideration. Topics covered include exertional heat illness (EHI), dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, exertional heat stroke (EHS), exertional hyponatremia, cold-related injuries, and lightning safety.

Oct. 18: Carlo Vasquez, Health Educator, Stanislaus County Health Services Agency. *Contagions in Your Community.* Water, Wealth, Contentment, Disease? Learn more about Valley Fever, West Nile Virus, and Congenital Syphilis, and Stanislaus County's unique conditions that help make them especially common.

Nov. 1: Andrew Hayes, Anthropology Professor, MJC Medical Anthropology. Learn what medical anthropology is and how it helps epidemiologists understand health situations like Covid and Mpox.

Nov. 15: Diedre J. J. Bush, NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador. *NASA's Role in Advancing Climate Change Science.* NASA is developing the Earth Science Observatory [ESO] to provide critical data on climate change, including severe weather, wildfires, and global food production. The core of ESO will focus on five areas: Aerosols; Cloud, Convection, and Precipitation; Mass Change; Surface Biology and Geology; and Surface Deformation and Change. The presentation will describe the real-world applications of this research.

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



The **Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS)** lecture series fosters science education in our community for youths through adults. Once a month during the academic year, MAPS offers stimulating free science programming, bringing educators and local citizens into contact with scientists and mind-expanding ideas.

Fall 2023 Schedule

Presentations will be held LIVE in the MJC West Campus Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, October 27: Dr. Justin Siegel and Ashley Vater, UC Davis, talk about modified enzymes, protein modeling, and "crowdsourcing" their research to undergraduates. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2022.908936/full>

Friday, November 17: Elizabeth (Liz) McInnes. "Encountering Breast Cancer."

Friday, December 1: Ari Friedlaender, Ph.D., UC Santa Cruz Principal Investigator, Biotelemetry and Behavioral Ecology Laboratory. "Whales." <https://btbel.pbsci.ucsc.edu/people/principal-investigator/>

MAPS receives funding and support from Modesto Junior College, MJC Foundation, Stanislaus County Office of Education, Modesto Teachers Association, Great Valley Museum. To make a fully tax-deductible donation in support of MAPS, please click [here](#) and select Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS) under "My donation is for..."

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Connections is published monthly except in August by the Modesto Peace/Life Center

829 13th St., Modesto, CA 95354

Open by appointment.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 134,
Modesto, CA 95353

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Councilmembers Propose Homeless Management Action Plan

By **ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen**

Three Modesto City Councilmembers have submitted a “Safe Ground Homeless Vision” to City Manager Joe Lopez, Mayor Sue Zwahlen, and fellow Councilmembers Rosa Escutia-Braaton, Jeremiah Williams, and David Wright. Brief and pragmatic, the plan is intended to reduce, “impacts and public health and safety concerns of unregulated encampments on local businesses and residents.”

“We need to get people off our streets and sidewalks, out of our parks, and away from our riverbanks and canals,” said Councilmember Nick Bavaro when asked about the plan. “I receive emails and phone calls every day about homeless people in my district. The problem is that even when they’re chased away, they have nowhere to go.”

That fundamental fact — that homeless people have nowhere to go — has been the driving force in California’s failure to manage its growing homeless population, as sweeps and law enforcement have proven futile despite the expenditure of billions of dollars.

[A current case illustrating the problem](#) is playing out in San Joaquin County near Stockton, where \$11.2 million will move only “56 to 72” residents of the county’s largest homeless encampment into permanent housing. Known as the “Interchange Complex,” the encampment has been home to anywhere between 200 and 500 people as numbers fluctuate due to factors like Covid and shelter availability.

Residents of Stockton who have lived with the encampment and its attendant problems for years were disappointed to learn that even the \$11.2 million state grant will do little to reduce the numbers of homeless people squatting in the encampment that surrounds the crosstown freeway and Highway 5 overpass. Though \$9 million of the total is intended for housing, that



money buys only around 20 median-priced homes in San Joaquin County.

Even though the \$9 million will be applied to multi-unit housing rather than median-priced homes, even multi-unit studios and apartments cost out in the hundreds of thousands of dollars per unit. Elected leaders in Modesto and Stanislaus County are well aware of such costs. City and county officials followed the approval of [\\$4.1 million in capital costs for 14 units](#) for low-income youth with support for another project that would provide [54 units for \\$23.2 million](#). Both projects are near downtown Modesto, less than a mile from one another. Initial costs don’t include funding for management.

State and local leaders have known for years that housing shortages, environmental impediments, and prohibitive costs prevent getting homeless people off the streets, yet they’ve almost never chosen alternative measures like permitted encampments and transitional housing and shelter options. Comparing costs between options like permitted camp and shelter sites and Modesto’s and Stockton’s multi-million-dollar expenditures should offer object lessons for elected officials throughout the state.

After losing a lawsuit brought on by an illegal sweep of a local homeless encampment, the City of Chico purchased 177 Pallet Shelters for \$1.7 million. [A year later](#), only eleven people have moved from the Pallets to permanent housing, despite the desires of many to move on — there simply isn’t enough traditional housing available. Meanwhile, only 15 shelters are unoccupied and 162 people are off the streets who would otherwise be living in parks, sleeping on sidewalks or behind stores, or hiding in alleys and other out-of-the-way places. The cost for keeping those 162 people on safe and secure ground is far less than providing 14 units in a Modesto building that will incur additional costs for management and upkeep.

Modesto City Councilmembers Eric Alvarez, Nick Bavaro and Chris Ricci have chosen to tackle the hard facts about homelessness with a plan that would get homeless people onto safe ground and reduce the harmful effects of their presence on local homeowners and businesses. More people would be off the streets and costs for sheltering them in tents and Pallet-like structures would be a tiny fraction of those associated with traditional housing options. Most importantly, they would be off the streets in weeks, not years.

“We can’t end homelessness any time soon, but we can do a better job of managing it,” said Councilmember Bavaro in support of the Modesto Safe Ground Homeless Vision.

Leaders statewide should be watching and listening. Traditional housing and shelter options are too costly and too far into the future. Homeless people need help now and so do those whose quality of life is diminished by their presence in local neighborhoods and business places. Sweeps and law enforcement don’t work. It’s time for pragmatic, humane and cost-effective management of homelessness. The [Modesto Safe Ground Homeless Vision](#) offers a way forward.

Housing Inequity Series Featuring Author Leah Rothstein of Just Action at MJC

A series of free events open to the public, ***Housing Inequity: Past, Present, and What You Can Do***, will be held at Modesto Junior College (MJC) this fall.

The series will kick off with a September 28th film screening of the PBS documentary *Owned: A Tale of Two Americas*, which examines the nation’s recent history of redlining and housing with a panel discussion to follow.

In October, the series will pivot to local housing equity issues featuring four Monday events covering topics such as local leaders on our current housing crisis, housing and environmental justice, recent research on local redlining by MJC students, and stories of housing segregation in the Valley.

In November, community book discussions will be held at MJC and at local libraries. The series will culminate in a November 16th discussion with nationally noted author Leah Rothstein on her recent book *Just Action: How to Challenge Segregation Enacted Under the Color of Law*, which references Modesto’s history of restrictive housing covenants.

The events will examine, at both the national and local level, the causes of housing segregation and inequities and what can be done to create accessible, quality, low-income housing throughout Stanislaus County.

About the Housing Inequity Series

The *Fall 2023 Housing Inequity* series is organized by MJC’s *Civic Engagement Project*, the School of Behavioral and Social Science’s *Democracy in the Public Space*, the Library & Learning Center, and the UMOJA Program. *

Community partnerships include the Stanislaus County Library and NAACP Modesto/Stanislaus.

Leah Rothstein is co-author, with Richard Rothstein, of *Just Action*, a sequel to *The Color of Law*. Ms. Rothstein has a Master of Public Policy Degree from the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley. Her expertise in housing policy stems from more than two decades of experience as a consultant to affordable housing developers and local governments and as a community and union organizer.

Fall 2023 Housing Inequity Events at Modesto Junior College

Monday, October 9, 1 p.m., Forum 110, MJC East Campus - Our Housing Crises: Local Leaders Weigh In - A Panel Discussion

- Kristen Doud, Deputy Director, Stanislaus County Planning Dept.
- Joe Duran, Executive Director and CFO, Stanislaus Equity Partners,
- Jessica Hill, Interim Director of Community and Economic Development, City of Modesto
- Carol Ornelas, CEO, Visionary Home Builders of California, Inc.)

Monday, October 16, 1 p.m., Forum 110, MJC East Campus - Local Housing & Environmental Justice - Lecture

- Bianca Lopez, Project Director, Valley Improvement Projects

Monday, October 23, 1 p.m., Forum 110, MJC East Campus - Housing Segregation: A Local History - Presentation by Local History Project Interns, Modesto

Junior College

- Kiarra Dixon, Calvin Douglas, Alex Hamiel, Samantha Ho, Brianna Leigh, Robin Siefkin, Jaime Venegas

Monday, October 30, 1 p.m., Forum 110, MJC East Campus - *The Color of Law*: Real-World Stories of Real Estate Discrimination - Panel Discussion

- Lionel Akpovi, Broker, Redwood Real Estate Group
- Chandra Howard, Professor of English & UMOJA Elder, Modesto Junior College
- Marvin Jackson, Professor of History & UMOJA Elder, Modesto Junior College
- Dejeuné M. Shelton, Director of Career Services & UMOJA Elder, Modesto Junior College

Saturday, November 8, and Wednesdays, November 4 & 15 - *Just Action*: Book Discussions

- 11/4 @ 11:00 a.m. | Salida Public Library | 4835 Sisk Rd., Salida
- 11/8 @ 6:00 p.m. | Turlock Public Library | 550 N. Minaret Ave., Turlock
- 11/15 @ Noon | Learning & Library Center | MJC East Campus

Thursday, November 16, 7 p.m., Sierra Hall 132, MJC West Campus - *Just Action: How to Challenge Segregation Enacted Under the Color of Law* An Evening with Leah Rothstein

*UMOJA (A Kiswahili word meaning unity) is a community and critical resource dedicated to enhancing the cultural and educational experiences of African Americans and other students.

Seek More at Sycamore Grove Park

By **ELAINE GORMAN**

Driving west on I-580, the subdivisions and orchards faded away, and the golden hills of Altamont Pass appeared. This unusually mild summer day, cool and cloudy, provided the perfect opportunity for a hike at Sycamore Grove Park, part of the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPd).

After parking at the Wetmore Rd. entrance, and paying our \$5 parking fee, Charlene, Paul, and I headed over to the kiosk to look at the large map. The “Lost and Found” tree displayed several items. The Ranger Station was open, so I stopped in to pick up a trail map and chat with the Ranger. We picked out an 8-mile route and headed out on the paved main Arroyo del Valle Regional Trail. There are over 15 miles of trails in the park (mostly graveled), with many well-marked intersections.

This area is the home of the indigenous Ohlone people. Beginning in the 1700s, Spanish and Mexican expeditions explored this area, and missionaries and settlers began to displace the original inhabitants. The Gold Rush brought ranchers and farmers to the region. In 1881, Julius P. Smith built a winery and founded Olivina Ranch on this land. The remnants of the winery are still on site, along with 100+ year-old olive trees. LARPd established Sycamore Park in 1974.

Being late summer, the grasses were brown but the trees and shrubs were green. Sycamore Creek still had plenty of water, and damage on trails due to winter 2023 storms is evident. The large, multi-stemmed sycamores dominate the views, and my eyes are immediately attracted to the mottled grey and white bark, star-shaped leaves, and twisty branches.

After about 1/2 mile, we turned right at Walnut Trail to walk along the native Californian black walnut lane. Many of the trees have died but are still an important part of the ecosystem. Legions of acorn woodpeckers use the trees as their granary, and trees contain thousands of holes.

We crossed the Winery Loop Trail and began a short/steep section on the Wagon Road Trail. Thus we started our 3-mile loop, passing under large power towers. After about 1/2 mile, we reached Cattail Pond, a small pond ringed by willows and cattails. We looked for water birds and turtles, but none appeared.

We turned right at the Valley View Loop to reach the high point of the trail at 925 feet elevation. Looking northeast, we identified Brushy Peak, Morgan Territory, and Mt. Diablo. We

also had a good view of the nearby Veterans Administration Hospital. Reaching the Wagon Road Trail, we stopped at a bench for a water break and to ponder the history of a pair of palm trees. Turning right, we soon walked downhill among the olive trees.

Completing the loop, we turned right at the Winery Trail and spent a few minutes checking out the architecture of the old winery. It is now a home to wildlife and climbing vines. A pair of deer watched us from the tall grass. After about another 1/2 mile, we met up with the Arroyo Del Valle Trail, and turned right. We passed a modern olive orchard on the right, and a neglected almond orchard on the left. As we



approached the terminus at the Arroyo Road parking lot, the forest of sycamores, oaks, and cottonwoods closed in. We passed a gate advertising olive oil tasting (every third Sunday) and the overpass to the VA Hospital.

We found a picnic table in the shade and dove into our lunches. The parking lot was full and many people were hiking, biking, walking dogs, and enjoying the beautiful day. On previous visits to the park, I have crossed the road to Wente Vineyards and Winery to enjoy a glass of wine or partake in wine tasting.

Retracing our steps back on the Arroyo Del Valle Trail, we turned right on the Sycamore Trail to complete the 2.5-mile loop back to our vehicles. We walked by acres of vineyards, noting the several owl boxes amidst the vines.

While late summer at Sycamore Grove Park offered a

sparse display of wildflowers, the sun sautéed aromas of the ripening elderberry and Toyon berries, black walnuts; and sycamore pods provided rich fragrances, color, and interest. This time of year offers a bounty for the local wildlife, as was evident in the dozens of piles of scat deposited along the trails.

Back at the parking lot, we cheered the day and reflected on our sensory experiences in this beautiful area of Central California.

<https://www.larpd.org/sycamore-grove-park>

Getting There — From Modesto: Go north on Highway 99. Turn west on 120, and continue west on 205, and then west on 580. Take First St./Springtown Blvd./Exit 54, turn left toward Livermore. Follow First St. through downtown; pay attention! Make a “soft” left onto Holmes St. Turn left at Wetmore Rd., then right into the Sycamore Grove parking lot.



US High Schoolers Launch Green New Deal for 'Our Schools and Our Futures'

"Public schools belong to us, and we know we deserve better," said a Sunrise Movement organizer and the youngest school board member in Idaho.

By [OLIVIA ROSANE](#), [Common Dreams](#)

In the face of right-wing attacks on public schools—including climate education—more than 50 high schools nationwide launched the Green New Deals for Schools campaign Monday.

The campaign, organized by the youth-led [Sunrise Movement](#), is demanding that school boards and districts act to provide buildings powered with renewable energy; free, healthy, local, and sustainable meals; support for finding well-paying, unionized green careers; plans for extreme weather events; and instruction about the climate crisis.

"The Republican Party knows that they don't have the youth vote," Aster Chau, who organizes for [Green New Deal](#) for Schools while attending the Academy at Palumbo in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, [said](#) in a statement. "They've spent the last few years antagonizing students and teachers—eroding trust in public education—in order to distract from all of the problems they've created in our society. Today, we say no more—these are our schools and our futures."

The push comes as lawmakers in Republican-controlled states have increasingly attempted to mandate what can be taught in the classroom. In Georgia, for example, a "divisive concepts" law [prohibits](#) teachers from discussing nine race-related topics. This would include the unequal impacts of the climate crisis, [The Guardian pointed out](#), and has had an overall chilling effect on educators' willingness to raise political issues in the classroom.

"We don't learn about climate change at all," 16-year-old Summer Mathis, who studies at North Cobb High School in Kennesaw, Georgia, told [The Guardian](#).

In Texas, meanwhile, education officials are imposing their views on climate science textbooks, and in Idaho there is an ongoing dispute over whether or not the climate crisis

can be included in the curriculum at all. Florida under Gov. [Ron DeSantis](#) has [approved](#) the use of PragerU Kids materials, which include climate-denying and pro-fossil fuel talking points.

Beyond curriculum building, there are many things that schools in all states can do to better prepare for and fight the climate crisis.

Currently, public elementary, middle, and high schools use around 9% of the energy consumed by commercial buildings in the U.S., Lisa Hoyos, the national climate strategy director for the League of Conservation Voters, [wrote](#) in an op-ed for [The Progressive Friday](#). Switching them all to renewable energy would have the same impact as removing 18 coal plants from the grid.

Schools can also do more to prepare for extreme weather events. In Philadelphia, for example, Chau started school during a heatwave in a building that lacked air conditioning, they told [The Guardian](#).

"Being a youth right now is really scary," Chau said. "It's really scary knowing that I'm underage, and can't vote to elect the people making these big decisions about our futures, not having a say in that."

The new campaign is partly a way to change that.

"For too long, students have been left out of the decision-



Young organizers hold up a banner celebrating the "Green New Deal for Schools Summer Camp 2023." (Photo: Sunrise Movement)

making spaces within our schools," Shiva Rajbhandari, a Sunrise Movement organizer who is also the youngest school board member in Idaho, said in a statement. "Students are the most important constituents of our school boards, and they deserve to call the shots for their own education. Public schools belong to us, and we know we deserve better."

The campaign comes out of a camp that the Sunrise Movement ran this summer to train hundreds of high school students to advocate for themselves and their communities.

The young people have older allies as well. This week Rep. [Jamaal Bowman](#) (D-N.Y.) and Sen. [Ed Markey](#) (D-Mass) will [reintroduce](#) their [Green New Deal for Public Schools Act](#) with hundreds of students present, according to [The Guardian](#).

"Our generation is on the frontlines of this fight," 17-year-old campaign leader Adah Crandall said in a statement, "and it's time for our school districts to take real action."

Licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0). [OLIVIA ROSANE](#) is a staff writer for [Common Dreams](#).

CEO Pay Slightly Declined in 2022 But Has Soared 1,209.2% Since 1978 Compared with a 15.3% Rise in Typical Workers' Pay

By [JOSH BIVENS](#) and [JORI KANDRA](#), [The Economic Policy Institute](#)

Overview: [Read the Report](#)

Summary: CEO pay dipped in 2022 but remains enormous compared with the pay of other workers. CEOs are granted massive compensation packages by corporate boards because of their bargaining power, not because of their skills. CEOs' exorbitant payouts have far outpaced the pay of typical workers over decades.

Key findings: CEO pay is linked strongly to the stock market—and market declines in 2022 led to an uncharacteristic dip in CEO pay.

Cumulatively, however, from 1978–2022, top CEO compensation shot up 1,209.2% compared with a 15.3% increase in a typical worker's compensation.

In 2022, CEOs were paid 344 times as much as a typical worker in contrast to 1965 when they were paid 21 times as much as a typical worker.

To illustrate just how distorted CEO pay increases have gotten: In 2021, CEOs made nearly eight times as much as the top 0.1% of wage earners in the U.S.

Why this matters: Exorbitant CEO pay is not just a symbolic issue—it has contributed to rising inequality.

CEOs are getting paid more because of their leverage over corporate boards, not because of contributions they make to their firms.

Escalating CEO pay in recent decades has likely pulled up the pay of other top earners. This concentration of earnings at the top leaves fewer gains for ordinary workers.

How to fix it: Policies that limit CEOs' ability to collude with corporate boards to extract excessive compensation

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are needed to prevent the U.S. from becoming a winner-take-all society. These policies could include reinstating higher income tax rates at the very top, using tax policy to incentivize lower CEO pay, allowing shareholders to vote on CEO compensation, and using antitrust enforcement and regulation to rein in the market power of the largest firms.

[EPI](#) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that researches the impact of economic trends and policies on working people in the United States. EPI's research helps policymakers, opinion leaders, advocates, journalists, and the public understand the bread-and-butter issues affecting ordinary Americans.

Be informed!

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

What is the Message of J. Robert Oppenheimer?

By LORIN PETERS

Ed note: Dan Onorato and I found retired physicist Lorin Peters sitting across from the gate to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory on the day that [Tri-Valley CAREs](#) held its annual Hiroshima remembrance. This year, the group held a memorial for Daniel Ellsberg, a staunch anti-nuclear weapons advocate who had recently died and often spoke at this event.

Mr. Peter's father helped separate the isotopes dropped on Hiroshima. As a dedicated opponent of nuclear weapons, he sits each week at a BART station in San Leandro with a sign that asks questions to the people passing by. He wants them to think.

"I sit with a question about nuclear deterrence, war probabilities, nuclear winter, rationales, or alternatives to war, on a large sign board which changes each week. I invite passing travelers to answer and/or to dialog. I offer everyone who reads my question a printed copy of my concerns which change each month.... I have several extended conversations each day. (My father helped separate the isotopes dropped on Hiroshima..."

Question 15: What was Oppenheimer's vision of how to deal with nuclear weapons?

Oppenheimer clearly saw the danger of an arms race with kiloton and megaton-yield weapons. Deterrence promotes more violent weapons and mistrust and is inherently unstable and risky (think about Cuba or Ukraine). So, he proposed that no nation be allowed to have nuclear weapons, and that only the United Nations (or similar body) might possess a small number under international control (presumably with a system of challenges and inspections for verification).

Q16: Why was Oppenheimer's security clearance revoked?

Possessing nuclear weapons gave (and still gives) the US strong domination over world affairs. Daniel Ellsberg discusses 25 historical cases where the US threatened other nations with our nuclear weapons.¹ In other words, the US was already behaving as an empire. Most Americans were (and still are) unaware of this imperial behavior. Oppenheimer probably saw through it. In any case, he thought it wiser to relinquish our power than to risk a nuclear war. Because he was highly respected and influential, he represented a direct challenge to our imperial establishment, which responded by trying to discredit him.

Q17: Will Oppenheimer's vision work?

Several nuclear nations have offered, at various times, to abolish their nuclear weapons if all the other nuclear nations would do the same. But US culture values freedom more highly. Our American elite believe freedom includes the freedom to dominate and exploit other people, and other nations. Because our nuclear weapons are what empowers our domination of the world, our elite will be very unlikely to agree to any reduction in their power. So Oppenheimer's vision of a world of free and equal states will encounter more resistance in the US than in other nations.

Q18: How can we make Oppenheimer's vision work?

Wealthy Americans believe their money is what "saves" them. Therefore, they are willing to risk everything to make money. That is why they gamble with our nuclear weapons to maintain their power and domination. The US has always rejected any "No First Use" policy and continues to design and build first-strike weapons.

Many wealthy Americans claim to follow Jesus of Nazareth. But he taught that his kingdom is reserved for the poor in spirit. What is "poor in spirit?" Clearly, it is not worship of money. For me, it has come to mean detachment

from money. That is what Jesus told the rich young ruler who wanted to join him. It means living as simply as possible - think of St Francis. Global income per person averages about 18,000 dollars. So that may be the appropriate and sustainable lifestyle for followers of this Prophet.

Our other option is continuing to worship money. Continue to risk nuclear war. Martin Hellman, a senior nuclear risk analyst for the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), wrote, "Continuing possession of nuclear weapons makes nuclear war inevitable."²

¹ *The Doomsday Machine*, pp 319-322.

² "Rethinking National Security," FAS, 2019 May.

Nuclear war will result in death by heat, blast, firestorm, and/or radiation, of roughly one-hundred-million people. But the smoke from a thousand burning cities will rise into the stratosphere where it will block much of our sunlight for a decade or so. Temperatures will drop to winter levels. Crops will not mature during this endless 'nuclear winter.' This 'nuclear famine' will kill five or six billion. 99% of Americans will not survive.³

For those who do survive, our economy will collapse - no food, no running water, no fuel, little electricity, no jobs, no paper money, no medicine, very few doctors and nurses, little internet, lots of misinformation, farming by oxen, travel by foot, a few horses, few if any charging stations, but possibly wood-burning automobiles⁴ or trains. Daniel Ellsberg estimated that it would take 1,000 years to rebuild civilization.




But that is not the end of humanity. The Christian Prophet also said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The arrogant apparently miscalculated the risks of war. Perhaps we will finally learn to live in beloved community, where everyone shares everything and takes care of everyone else. That will be the Prophet's heaven on earth. All it requires is meekness, humility, gentleness, what we now call 'nonviolence.'

The night before his assassination, Martin Luther King said, "The choice before us is no longer violence or nonviolence. It's nonviolence or non-existence." Which is your choice?

Lorin Peters lorinpeters@yahoo.com

³ "Nuclear Famine," International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, 2022 Aug 15, page 15.

⁴ The first cars that ventured into remote Thai villages in 1945 were wood-burning. There were no gas stations.



SAVE THE DATE
Thursday, OCT. 5, 2023

Benefit for: Martin Luther King Jr. Committee

Murphys Creek Theater
Preview Night
Reception begins at 6 p.m.
Play, THE MOORS, begins at 7 p.m.
Tickets \$30 (includes reception)

Start your Halloween festivities early and bring the whole family to this spooky, dark comedy!

The Moors is a dark comedy about love, desperation, and visibility. A hapless governess is lured to a remote corner of the bleak Yorkshire moors under the pretense that she care for a newborn child. She discovers only two sisters, dreaming of love and power, and a dog living in a house that creaks with creepy mysteries. The governess' arrival sets all three on a strange and dangerous path. Inspired by the letters of Charlotte Bronte, this dark comedy written by award-winning American Playwright Jen Silverman is an homage to the Brontes and a gothic pastiche in one.

CESAR CHAVEZ COMMUNITY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE



INDOOR MERCADO

LATINO BUSINESS & COMMUNITY EXPO
Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2023 | 5:00-9:00pm
Red Event Center @921 8th Street, Modesto
FOOD | MUSIC | FAMILY | COMMUNITY

Admission: \$5.00 | Children \$1.00
Sponsored By:

1st Choice Legal Assistance, Modesto
Farmers Insurance, Owner/Agent David Gonzales, Patterson
Quey's Artesanias, Modesto
Red Event Center, Modesto
To Become a Sponsor or More Information Call or Text (209) 305-2664

Stanislaus Sheriff Supports Safe Sleeping for Homeless

By **ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen**

During an early September [interview with the Modesto Bee](#), Stanislaus County Sheriff Jeff Dirkse voiced strong support for safe camping for homeless people.

“(With safe camping), outreach folks can actually solve problems because we’re condensing them into camps where they can interact with them” said Dirkse.

“So, yeah, I fully support it — it’s a necessary step. Nimbysism will be huge. No one wants them (nearby) and I do understand that; I wouldn’t want them in my neighborhood, either. But we have to acknowledge that what we’re doing now is not working. You put them in a house (with no support), in 12 months the house is going to be destroyed and they’re homeless again. They need mental health assistance and they need addiction treatment and a far more robust conservatorship program.”

In supporting safe camping, Dirkse has joined a growing contingent of local officials in support of better management for Stanislaus County’s growing homeless population. By far the greatest concentration of unhoused people in the county is in the City of Modesto, where three city councilmembers have proposed a safe sleeping plan that would get homeless people off the streets and onto safe ground.

Modesto City Councilmembers Chris Ricci, Eric Alvarez and Nick Bavaro recently presented their Modesto Safe Ground Homeless Vision to City Manager Joe Lopez and asked that it be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. Councilmember [Jeremiah Williams has voiced support for safe camping](#) as long as management of sleeping sites is contracted out to qualified service providers.

At the county level, Supervisors Channce Condit and Mani



Nick Bavaro at unsafe camp. Photo: Eric Caine.

Grewal recently acknowledged the need for safe ground for homeless people. During a late June meeting with the Modesto Citizens’ Action Group (MoCag), [Grewal said that](#), “Having a safe place to sleep is a fundamental human right.” He added that, “If we don’t address this situation, we’re not only failing ourselves, we’re failing our community,”

The plan by Councilmembers Alvarez, Bavaro and Ricci “reduces the negative impacts and public health and safety concerns of unregulated encampments on local businesses and residents by providing basic services such as portable toilets, mobile showers, and trash disposal bins in addition to case management, service referrals and housing placements.”

Opponents to safe ground for homeless people have argued that permitted encampments attract people from out of the region, but voluminous evidence has shown again and

again such concerns are groundless. In any case, under the guidelines of the Modesto Safe Ground Homeless Vision, admission to permitted campsites would be, “determined by qualified staff and volunteers on the ground and will be behavioral based and predicated on potential for movement forward.”

In Modesto, local homeless people are well-known by volunteers and outreach workers. Outsiders are easily identified as are those who prey on the weak and vulnerable. Concerns about people coming from outside the region to access safe campsites have no basis in evidence or experience.

For Modesto City Councilmember Nick Bavaro and other officials who support safe ground, homelessness is a daily management problem. Recent assaults on homeless people in Bavaro’s District 4 are just one more of the escalating problems Bavaro must deal with as new campsites spring up almost as fast as the old ones are ordered torn down. Like Sheriff Dirkse, Bavaro is tired of seeing homeless people moved from one place to another as camp sweeps ultimately end in futility.

“It’s a frustrating game of Whac-A-Mole,” [said Sheriff Dirkse](#). “You deal with it, some may go to jail and it pops up somewhere else. (Safe camping) doesn’t get them out of it but gives them a spot to be homeless for now and it’s not in your backyard or your business or your alley.”

With overwhelming evidence showing that homelessness in California is due less to drugs and behavior than to housing costs, safe ground isn’t just the most pragmatic tactic for managing homelessness, it’s also the most humane. As Supervisor Grewal said, “Having a safe place to sleep is a fundamental human right.”

Who the Heck is the “Modesto Citizen Action Group”?

By **RICHARD ANDERSON**

Maybe you have heard of this group—the Modesto Citizen Action Group (MoCag).

Formed in March this year, our goal was to form a voting constituency to make Modesto provide better for the hundreds of “people experiencing homelessness” who are still roaming our streets and alleys and being chased around by repeated “sweeps.” That number is now estimated as about 441 by the 2023 Point in Time Count.

Our focus has been to create a plan to shelter perhaps 40 people at the south end of 10th Street, adjacent to the Berberian Salvation Army.

Our initial group included Modesto Peace/Life Center members Jim Costello, Frank Ploof, John Frailing, John Lucas, Eric Caine, and Richard Anderson.

[SHARE](#) members Steve Finch and Lynelle Solomon have joined, as have Jim Stokes, Derek Castle, and Diane Kroeze.

In the last 6 months, members have interviewed each City Council person, Mayor Sue Zwahlen, City Manager Joe Lopez, and our Planning Department’s Jessica Hill. We have created a detailed plan for a Safe Sleeping project at the south end of 10th Street, in the lower right of the Google Maps photo.

We have also met with each Stanislaus County Supervisor about establishing this site or others.

The City has scheduled a public event on Oct. 20 to allow public input on this issue. Time and place are still to be determined.

Recently, Modesto and our County have created the Low Barrier Shelter for unsheltered people who have Partners, Pets, or Possessions that prevent them from entering traditional shelters like the Gospel Mission or the Salvation Army.

Modesto has also attracted many millions of dollars to build several hundred subsidized housing units such as Kansas House, Archway Commons, and James Street. Vine Street and others are under construction. Yet all these forms of shelter and assisted rent programs leave our 441 unsheltered and unhoused.

Many people cannot or will not go into shelters. This photo is an example of just one reason some people remain unsheltered.

He has two dogs.

However, they both would not add up to the weight of a German Shepherd, which keeps him out on the streets.

Many of our unsheltered consider their pets essential to their lives.

The October meetings of the MoCAG are at 4:30 -5:30 on Oct. 11 and Oct. 25, at the Peace/Life Center, 829 13th St., Modesto.



MoSt's Poetry Everywhere Initiative: 50+ School Libraries...and Counting

By TOM PORTWOOD

As the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center prepared to celebrate its 10th anniversary, members of its all-volunteer board of directors once again fanned out across the wide expanses of Stanislaus County, the backs of their vehicles loaded with high-quality sets of poetry books destined for elementary school libraries.

Over the next few days, students in ten different schools would have access to beautiful, brand-new poetry books – twenty in each diverse set – with the hopes that the words and images printed within those books might bring moments of joy or a sudden leap of new knowledge for each of them in unique ways.

“We started the *Poetry Everywhere* Initiative about six years ago,” explained MoSt Board President Gillian Wegener. “It really is a joyous project for MoSt because we know these books will be available to students in their school libraries for many years to come.”

“And this is just the latest round. We’ve donated collections of poetry books to 57 elementary schools and the library at juvenile hall, and we’re not done yet! But we couldn’t do any of this without our members and donors – so a big thank you to all of them! Poetry makes the world a better place and so do you!”



Award-Winning Poet Susan Rich To Facilitate MoSt Fall Workshop Working the Surreal and the Very Difficult Real

Saturday, October 21, 2023

“*Journeys don’t happen in straight lines.*” – Susan Rich

The Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center is very pleased to announce that the award-winning Seattle poet Susan Rich will facilitate a special Zoom workshop on Saturday, October 21st, from 10 am to 12:45 pm. The event will also feature Stanislaus County Youth Poet Laureate Faith Delgado, who will be reading one of her outstanding poems at the beginning of the program.

Ms. Rich has authored seven books including *Blue Atlas* (forthcoming in April, Red Hen Press) as well as *Gallery of Postcards and Maps: New and Selected Poems*, *Cloud Pharmacy*, *The Alchemist’s Kitchen*, *Cures Include Travel* and *The Cartographer’s Tongue/Poems of the World*.

Her poetry has been translated into Bosnian and Slovenian and she’s earned awards from the Fulbright Foundation, PEN USA, Peace Corps Writers and the Times Literary Supplement (London). Poems appear in *Harvard Review*, *New England Review*, *O Magazine*, and *The Slowdown*, among other places.

She is co-editor of *Demystifying the Manuscript: Creating a Book of Poems*. Susan teaches at Highline College and directs *Poets on the Coast: A Writing Retreat for Women*. Visit her at <http://poetsusanrich.com>



Schedule for the Day

10:00 Welcome and poem by Faith Delgado, Youth Poet Laureate, Stanislaus County
10:15-11:15 Workshop
11:15-11:20 Short Break
11:20- 12:20 Workshop
12:25 – 12:45 Reading by Susan Rich
12:45 Workshop ends.

A registration form will be available on the MoSt website (www.mostpoetry.org), with registration fees set at \$20.00 for each participant. We hope to see you on Zoom on the 21st!!!



StArt is currently taking a break. Individual back issues are available at lindaknollart.com

Poetry Fall Workshop with Susan Rich *Writing the Surreal and the Very Difficult Real*

Sponsored by: Modesto Stanislaus Poetry Center
Come generate poetry at an online event

Saturday, October 21, 2023

10:00am -12:45pm

Tickets: \$20.00

Register on Eventbrite
at mostpoetry.org

“journeys don’t happen
in straight lines”
Susan Rich





Arborist / Abortionist

Procured by anxious relatives
who demanded

a disappearing trick—

prepaid like a surcharge
for yard work done in the off-season:

his steel tool severing

a quirk of a tree limb,
attached to the nub of a stubborn bud;

he didn't question
how I appeared,

transplanted into his waiting room—

never inquired as to the coauthor
of my infinitesimal text—

although he'd memorized its map,

extracted the troublesome little branch
that obscured the golden overlook,

and restored the river view.

Susan Rich
forthcoming in Blue Atlas, Red Hen
Press, 2024

Safed Palmist

According to the Kabala, the way
palmistry works is that when a soul
is garbed in a body, it becomes
imprinted there, particularly on the hands.

I bought a rabbi one hot afternoon.
His floor replete with Bar Mitzvah boys
asleep;

a library of boys in wrinkled shirts,
their rinds of oranges strewn like spiral
ghosts.

Then he took my hand, startled by what he
saw.

In Hebrew lines that sprung like
pomegranate seeds—

my life in proverbs, old language,
unadorned:
please, do not leave yourself again.

The temperature created mirages in the air
which shimmered like water, like waves,
like tears,

as my translator looked on, then looked
away.
I watched a younger self dissolve; forgave

her lies, her dalliances, her earthbound skirt
of need as his wife sang half notes
undisturbed,

a violet flavored lozenge on the porch.
Then he found my heart line, touched the
break—

Safed, Israel

Susan Rich
Originally published in Quiddity.

Shadowboxing

That night the air stank, the stars obscured
behind wild horses
of clouds. We walked on cobblestones on
the edge of something

I could not name: new land of unalterable
decisions
like a retinue of assassins coming right for
me, who kept coming

in a bad dream that dissolved like a black
and white movie, the dark
mouth enveloping the entire screen. *The*
End. Then the aftermath

like a heroin addict waking up in the
overgrowth of a river path,
no longer young. There are nights that
pummel your life, chart

an alternate course unasked for and
colorless—the way it was
the first time you encountered the one
ready to eat out your heart—

an innocent remark – a joke about ocelots
or the weeds of purple carrots.
That night I was caught in a before and
after, an unsayable horror film

of half-lives as we hipswayed and grunted
along the Seine.
When someone passed us, their teeth shone
like those of a vampire

happy with the waste of the world. Ready
to drink it in. My body
was four months pregnant, crossing over to
a nightmared path

of no return. But isn't this the truth of
every moment?
To revise our lives into the *I belong*—to
this tribe of the unreliable

narrators, luminous in our stories and in
our squalor.

Published on Academy of American
Poetry, Poem-a-Day and forthcoming
in Blue Atlas, Red Hen Press, 2024

In Praise of Anger

It has taken so long to find you,
years of squirreling your shadow
back under the bed. And now,

you are here beside me, head
on the pillow, no longer denied.
I spit, sing, state my case—

and the roof does not fly off, the cellar
door remains well hinged. Anger
arcs into prisms, like a starlight

scope on a cool summer night.
Suddenly, I throw the oak tree at it
with ease, flip each ex-lover, the entire

neighborhood—the man next door who
shoots
the sunrise, the tree cutter, the cat killer.
I take my anger out of the box and tap it

like a prayer wheel, run its messages along
the rim of the world, without regret—
love it like a child's spinning top.

Forthcoming in Blue Atlas, Red Hen
Press, April 2024



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

Streaming on www.kcbpradio.org

PSAs in English and Spanish produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Confetti Park - Music, stories New Orleans style, Saturdays at 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

PROGRAMS

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.

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

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

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

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 – Tuesdays. Interviews and panels focus on issues that affect people of color.

Democracy Now! - 7:00 am, Monday thru Friday. Reporting by veteran journalists Amy Goodman & Juan Gonzalez.

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

Alternative Radio – 4:00 pm, Mondays. Interviews with prominent political and social people.

Julian Taylor's Jukebox – 4:00 pm, Thursdays and Fridays. Eclectic, contemporary music.

Nuestra Música – 4:00 pm, Tuesdays. Eclectic, Latin-flavored music with a beat!

LOCALLY PRODUCED 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 - Jasmine Corena and Likhi Rivas. Engage, Educate, and Advocate on behalf of the West Modesto Community. Showcases Voices of the West Modesto Community – Wednesdays, 7 pm.

AREA 5150 UFO RADIO – Spooky music & sounds out of this world, Friday night, 11:00 pm.

Bucks Stallion's Radio Transmission Emporium – Cyber Acoustic Music - Saturdays, 12:00 am, Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m.

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.

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

Sunday Cruisin' with your host, DeeJay Rig! Oldies hits from 1959 to 1999 – Sundays, 5:00 p.m.

Faithful Fridays – inspirational music and thoughts – Fridays, 7:00 p.m.

Why Not Nice? - Showcases unique music from unique cultures and thinkers worldwide, focusing on world/academic/jazz and roots music – Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.

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.

Penny Bloods – Fun, Victorian melodrama radio plays, often performed by local actors, written by Arnold Anthony Schmidt, CSU, Stanislaus. As scheduled.

PSAs in English and Spanish produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

LISTEN TO OUR MUSIC PLAYLISTS AT SPINITRON

<https://spinitron.com/KCBP/calendar>

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.



Remembering Kid Guitar: Modesto's Street Music Legend

By **Justin Pickering Smith**

Nestled in the heart of California's Central Valley, the city of Modesto boasts a rich tapestry of culture and history. Among its many unique characters and local legends, one name stands out – Kid Guitar, whose real name was Kevin Miranda. He was a legendary figure in Modesto, known for his daily busking and his deep passion for music and the local community. For years, if you drove down McHenry Avenue, you would likely spot him strumming his guitar on a street corner, his presence as iconic as the notes he played.

A Musical Journey Begins

Kid Guitar's journey into the world of street music was one born out of pure love for the art form. He was an individual who believed in the power of music to bring people together and spread joy. Armed with his trusty guitar and an infectious enthusiasm for music, Kevin took to the streets of Modesto to share his passion with anyone who would listen.

The Iconic White Van

One cannot mention Kid Guitar without recalling his unmistakable white van, adorned with a myriad of informational papers taped to its sides. It was a rolling testament to his relentless pursuit of music and community. The van served as both his mobile stage and a canvas upon which he shared his vision for the local music scene. Passersby would often stop to read the notes, flyers, and advertisements that covered every inch of the van. It was a testament to Kid Guitar's unyielding dedication to his craft and his desire to connect with fellow musicians.

The Search for Bikini Musicians

Kid Guitar was not just about playing music; he was also on a mission to unite musicians and inspire collaboration. One of his most famous initiatives was his quest to find "female bikini musicians." This unique and somewhat unconventional approach to forming a band certainly caught the attention of many, but it was a testament to his unorthodox and colorful character. Through this playful and quirky pursuit, he

encouraged aspiring musicians to break barriers and embrace their unique identities.

A Beacon of Community Spirit

Beyond his musical talents and eccentricities, Kid Guitar was a beloved figure in the Modesto community. He was a symbol of unity and a reminder that music has the power to transcend boundaries. His daily performances on McHenry Avenue became a part of the city's cultural fabric, bringing people from all walks of life together to enjoy the magic of live music.

Kevin Miranda's passion for music and his community made him an enduring presence in Modesto's collective memory. He was a testament to the idea that music is not just a form of entertainment but a powerful force for bringing people together and fostering a sense of belonging.

A Legacy Lives On

Sadly, Kevin Miranda, aka Kid Guitar, passed away, but his legacy continues to resonate with those who had the privilege of hearing his music and experiencing his unique spirit. He may have been a street musician, but he was also a true Modesto icon – a symbol of artistic expression and conspiracy community engagement.

As the years go by, the memory of Kid Guitar continues to inspire local musicians and remind us all of the importance of pursuing our passions with unwavering dedication. Modesto will always remember Kid Guitar, the man who turned street corners into stages and whose love for music knew no bounds. His music may have faded into the breeze, but his spirit lives on in the heart of Modesto, a reminder that music has the power to unite, uplift, and bring joy to us all.

A very special radio tribute show dedicated to a true Modesto legend – Kid Guitar, an hour of remembrance, takes listeners on a journey through Kid Guitar's musical legacy, from his unforgettable street performances to his heartwarming conspiracy theories, can be found here:

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/buckstallion/cyber-stallion-76-rip-kid-guitar>



calendar



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

october 2023

The **Kruse Lucas Art Gallery** welcomes plein air artist Vince Walsh for the months of September, October, and November. The gallery is located at 525 Tully Rd., Modesto and is open Monday-Friday, 9 am -5 pm, except holidays. 209-529-9111.

MJC Science Colloquium Fall 2024 Schedule. Wednesdays 3:15-4:15 pm, Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus, Parking Free. (Recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube.) **Oct. 4: Dr. Jamie DeRollo**, Head Athletic Trainer/Faculty. Environmental Considerations in Sport. When participating in sports or playing outside, there are environmental considerations to take into consideration. Topics covered include exertional heat illness (EHI), dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, exertional heat stroke (EHS), exertional hyponatremia, cold-related injuries, and lightning safety. **Oct. 18: Carlo Vasquez**, Health Educator, Stanislaus County Health Services Agency. Contagions in Your Community. Water, Wealth, Contentment, Disease? Learn more about Valley Fever, West Nile Virus, and Congenital Syphilis, and Stanislaus County's unique conditions that help make them especially common.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science: Free MJC science programs. on Fridays in MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 pm. **Friday, October 27: Dr. Justin Siegel and Ashley Vater**, UC Davis, talk about modified enzymes, protein modeling, and "crowdsourcing" their research to undergraduates. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2022.908936/full>

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

4 WED: VIGIL: HOMELESSNESS: SAFE SLEEPING. at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), 4:30-5:30 pm. Call the Center for info: 209-529-5750 or email jcostello@igc.org

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

11 WED: Indoor Mercado-Latino Business & Community Expo, Red Event Center, 921 8th St., Modesto. Admission \$5:00; Children \$1.00. Food, music. 5:00 – 9:00 pm.

15 SUN: The State Theatre and Modesto Film Society presents *North By Northwest*, 2 pm. Join the State Theatre. Have fun, get perks, and support Modesto's historic non-profit theatre. Visit <https://thestate.org/films/north-by-northwest-102023/>

LOOKING AHEAD

Harvest Gathering this Fall. TBA.

Tuesday, January 9, 2024: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Benefit: **John McCutcheon Concert**, Modesto Church of the Brethren. More soon.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

D&D Champions Group, Noon. Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, 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.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County meets in person and on Zoom every Sunday at 10:30 am at 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Info: 209-788-3720; www.stanuu.org

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

Unity of Modesto meets in person every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. at 2467 Veneman, Modesto. Information: 209-578-5433

MONDAYS

Queer Cuts, last Monday of the month, 10 a.m., Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto, 209-408-8848.

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter meets on the second Mondays at 7:00 pm at 2201 Morill Rd., Riverbank. 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: tcfmolestoriverbank@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.

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.

TUESDAYS

Women's Support Group for Women 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+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto (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.

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; For ZOOM link, visit <https://www.naacpmolestostanislaus.org/> 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

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILS: Held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), 4:30-5:30 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THURSDAYS

LGBTQ+ Senior (age +55) Coffee Club Every Thursday @ 1 pm. Weekly social group to provide connectedness and community inclusion for LGBTQ+ Senior Citizens. Refreshments, snacks provided. Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

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

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

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

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

3rd Thursday Art Walk, Downtown Modesto, art galleries open – take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-8 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 529-3369, www.modestoartwalk.com

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

Pagan Community Meeting, 1st Thursday, Cafe Amore,

3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

Trans Support Group, 1 pm, Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

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. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mej3gD0ZD40&list=LLB8Y19zZg660qHCXGoC6ojQ&index=1>

Latino Emergency Council (LEC) 3rd Fridays, 8:15 a.m., El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Lynnette Lucaccini, (209) 338-5700 lluc@elconcilio.org.

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.

SATURDAY

First and Third Saturdays - **Gay Men's Group**, 1 pm. Positive Support Group for folks living with HIV, 12 pm. All at Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

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

Free Community Drum Circle every third Saturday, 11 am to 12:00 pm, Gallo Center for the Arts, 10th & I 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

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.