



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER
PUBLICATION

FEBRUARY, 2018
VOLUME XXVI, NO. 6

King's spirit alive and shoutin'

By **DAN ONORATO**

Martin would have smiled gratefully. He might even have laughed to avoid crying in joy. From his panorama on the mountain top, he was present at the 24th annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration at the Modesto Junior College Media and Performing Arts Center on Saturday, January 20. Along with the huge crowd, Martin was there in the person and spirit of keynote speaker Dolores Huerta. When Dolores entered the spotlight on center stage, he joined the rousing applause welcoming this national treasure, an 87-year old woman who walks with the vigor of someone 30 years younger, and talks with the warmth, wit, and wisdom of someone who knows sacrifice, struggle, and the power of focused determination. Martin felt the magic in the packed auditorium's buzzing air, the magic of hearts and minds melding together to listen, learn, and be inspired to renew the long trek to the promised land of equality, social and economic justice, and peace.

Yes, Martin was there—in the lives and commitment of two brothers, both attorneys,



Jacq M. and Jacque Wilson, recipients of the 2018 Martin Luther King Legacy Award. Modesto natives now living in the Bay Area, they return one or two days a week to their home town to help children succeed in school, home, and life. They use their legal skills to reduce suspensions and expulsions in Modesto City Schools, eliminate disparities in education, and put an end to the school-to-prison pipeline in our community. They

continued page 10

MODESTO PEACE/LIFE CENTER ANNUAL MEETING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2018 • 720 13th ST., MODESTO

- 8:30 AM — Coffee and Conversation
9:00 AM — Business Meeting:
• Financial Report
• Committee Reports
• Nomination of Board Members
— Discussion:
• Action plans, ideas and strategies
12:00 PM — Adjournment

For 47 years the Modesto Peace/Life Center has been a meeting place for people concerned about peace, justice, equality, a sustainable environment, education and working for a more peaceful community and world. Join us!

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

LOCAL 2
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT..... 3
LIVING LIGHTLY 4
IMPRISONMENT 5

WALKING THE WALK 6
GOOSE MUSIC 7
POETRY FESTIVAL..... 8
THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY 10
CIVIC DIALOGUE..... 11

Gillian Wegener, former Poet Laureate of Modesto, wrote this poem for the Women's March held on January 20, 2018. Over 1200 people attended.

Ghazal for My Sisters

I open my hands to you, because after all
we are all sisters
Differences don't matter, the patterns of our
days, our languages, do they, sisters?

What matters are our dreams, our intellects,
the thousand ideas flung forward
Into minds ready for a more just world, a
more equal world for our brothers and our
sisters.

We live in a place that others speed through
without seeing, but we are here.
We stop, we look, and when something
needs to be changed, we turn to our sisters.

And yes, we've heard the voices behind us
— that it can't be done, that it's been tried
That it failed, that it can't change, that girls
can't, that it's too hard. We know better,
sisters.

We are singers, students, teachers,
mediators, activists, organizers, advocates,
listeners, fundraisers, scientists, poets,
daughters, wives, mothers, friends, sisters.

But it isn't just us in the world: Brothers,
we open our hands to you too. This wide
world
rests on all our shoulders, and we're
stronger as a community of brothers and
sisters.

One at a time, our voices come together for
change, so we move forward together.
We work, we put our backs and hearts into



it, all the time watched by our younger
sisters.

We live in a world made of stardust and
ash, stitched together with threads of
memory
And loss, punctuated with the calls of
gunfire and birds. What will we add,
sisters?

We've often had our ways paved for us,
so many brave women who have held the
candles
So we could see through the dark, so many
who have loved us, so many previous
sisters.

And we will march. We will raise our
voices until they hear our voices.
We will no longer be ladylike!
We will no longer give in, step aside, lay
down, keep quiet. We will no longer keep
quiet, sisters!

And now, here, we stand together, hands
open, the long spring and summer ahead.
There's work to do and we're ready. The
days will warm, sisters. Our world needs
us!

Our world awaits!

Gillian Wegener

READERS! Sign-up for our e-edition!

Get the latest e-edition of Stanislaus Connections delivered right into your email box!

Can enlarge text to read more easily! Print out if desired!

To sign-up, send your email address to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org
If you do not have Adobe Reader, download it free from <http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>

Modesto Peace/Life Center's ID Project needs your help

By JOHN LUCAS

Having identification is something most of us take for granted. The value an ID is very important to people experiencing homelessness and the poor. Identification is necessary to acquire jobs, apply for services, obtaining public supported housing, and cashing checks, and the list goes on.

The ID the Project is in its third year. During this time, it has provided over 200 free and affordable IDs for the poor and homeless in this area. A California ID cost \$29 and birth certificates vary from county to county in California (\$28-\$34), state to state, and territories. For poor people on tight budgets this is difficult to pay. We help many homeless people who don't qualify for free California ID or California birth certificate or out-of-state birth certificates. We've help others in all types of situations obtain the document/documents that they need.



We are now running low on money and estimate we have enough to operate for the next 5 to 6 months at our current level. That's why I'm writing this article in the hope that we can continue this project with your support.

ACTION: Please send a tax-deductible check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, PO Box 134, Modesto 95353. On the check in the memo section write "ID Project." You can also donate online by going to peacelifecenter.org. In message write "ID Project." This will direct donations to our account. For more information call John, 209-765-3813.

Kitchen Korner helps the formerly homeless with kitchen items

By SANDY SAMPLE

Not many homeless folks have been able to find housing lately, but for those who are fortunate enough to have located housing, Kitchen Korner at the Peace/Life Center is able to help supply needed kitchen items. Currently we have a good supply of many kitchen items

ACTION: If you need kitchen items, call Sandy Sample at 523-8445 or Shelly Scribner at 521-6304 to arrange a time to meet at the Center. To donate money we can use to purchase items most in demand at thrift stores, mail a check payable to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95350, marked for Kitchen Korner.



Modesto Library needs books for Annual Used Book Sale



The Friends of the Modesto Library (FOML) is now collecting books for its annual Used Book Sale. FOML promotes goodwill and support for the library. As a nonprofit, the organization provides volunteer support for the programs and services provided by the Modesto Library. Funds raised by the book sale are used to enhance programs like Story Time and other Children's programs. The Friends do not accept textbooks, encyclopedias or damaged books. The public may deliver books for the book sale to the Modesto Library, mark the bag or box "Friends Book Sale." For information or to schedule a pickup of donations, call Pat at 209-985-7156. <http://modestolibraryfriends.org/>

Student Voices Campaign Video Competition

The Student Voices Campaign, a video competition sponsored by the California Alliance for Arts Education, asks students to consider the question, "Why the Arts Matter?" This statewide, annual video competition provides a creative way for students in grades 7 through 12 to impact school policymaking and make their voices heard. Students create

Still time to see "Church & State" on MJC stage

Modesto Junior College's Arts, Humanities and Communications Division continues to stage *Church & State* on February 2-3 at 7 p.m. and February 4 at 2 p.m. in Room 222 of the Performing and Media Arts Center on East Campus, 435 College Avenue, Modesto.

Church & State, written by Jason Odell Williams, is a timely play about faith, politics, and the power of social media.

Tickets: \$11 general admission; \$9 for students and seniors. Available online at <http://mjc.tix.com> and at the MJC Box Office, open Tuesday through Friday, 12 noon to 5 p.m., or call (209) 575-6776 during these hours. Tickets are also available at the door 90 minutes before show time.

a short video, two minutes or less, that shows a meaningful, compelling story of why the arts matter to you, someone you know, and/or to the school or community.

For more information and submission requirements visit www.studentvoicescampaign.org. Deadline for submissions is March 1, 2018.

More photos from Jan. 20 Women's March



Peace/Life Center looking for volunteers

The Modesto Peace/Life Center needs volunteers to assist with projects, events, our radio project (radio knowledge, skills needed), fundraising, and administrative activities. No experience necessary. Experience in social media, Word, Excel, or other special skills are desired for some volunteer positions. We need volunteers for a few hours per week, or an ongoing commitment.

For more information, contact our volunteer/outreach coordinators: Susan Bower or Jocelyn Cooper at the Peace Life Center (209) 529-5750.



Civic Engagement Project's Spring 2018 Film & Lecture Series

Thursday Nights, Forum 110, 7pm, Modesto Junior College East Campus, 435 College Ave.

Open to the Public, Free of Charge.

Dreamers and DACA – February 15: In recent years, there have been efforts at immigration reform in America, such as the DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). However, the DREAM Act failed to pass in Congress, and DACA has been rescinded--though that rescission has been met with legal challenges in courts. So where are we now, and what support is available to today's undocumented students?

Free Speech and Hate Speech: A Panel Discussion with Experts – March 1: Presentations on free speech and hate speech by constitutional scholar Dr. Stephen Routh from the Political Science Department at CSU Stanislaus, MJC history professors Curtis Martin and Al Smith, and MJC Professor of Human Services, Dr. Cheryl Williams-Jackson. The panelists will focus on the legal status of speech, the historical context of speech, moral issues surrounding hate speech, how different nation-states handle speech issues, and how

targeted groups can best respond to protected speech that they experience as hateful.

Homeless in Modesto – March 22: The 2017 Stanislaus homeless count tallied 1,661 people (including 243 children), and last year approximately 40 homeless people died in our county. *Homeless in Modesto* puts a face to some of our homeless, showcases some community groups helping them, examines some root causes, and indicates ways residents can help address this complex and costly issue. Following the one-hour film will be a panel discussion with a homeless man now housed, a representative of a local homeless helping agency, and the film team.

Dolores – April 12: Many consider Dolores Huerta to be a very important, yet often overlooked, activist in American history. Alongside Cesar Chavez, Huerta fought tirelessly for migrant workers, and later she turned her attention to immigrants, women, minorities, and other marginalized groups. This documentary provides an intimate look at Dolores Huerta and reveals the personal sacrifices that can come with committing one's life to a cause.

IN MEMORIAM

Nancy Elizabeth Bupp
January 12, 1948 - January 9, 2018

*A Memorial will be held
Saturday, February 10, 2:00 p.m.
at the
Modesto Church of the Brethren
2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto*

World's Confidence in U.S. leadership reaches a new low

A new Gallup poll shows that worldwide approval of U.S. leadership has collapsed; the United States now ranks below China. The global survey, which included data from 134 countries, showed a decrease in approval of the United States from 48 percent under President Obama to just 30 percent under Donald Trump — the lowest level Gallup has recorded since beginning its global leadership poll more than ten years ago.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/18/us-leadership-world-confidence-poll>

Opening February 23rd at Prospect Theater Project: Christopher Durang's Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike

By LAURA DICKINSON-TURNER

You don't have to have read or seen any Chekhov to immediately fall in love with the characters in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, but if you have, you might fall head over heels. Christopher Durang's comedy isn't an adaptation or even a parody of Chekhov; instead, Durang has extracted the essences of Chekhov's characters and themes and distilled them into a heady, intoxicating, utterly delightful draught that one wants to drink again and again.

When your parents are professors and avid theatre lovers, you find yourselves named after Chekov characters. If you're Masha, you leave the nest to become a famous actress (albeit famous for the film *Sexy Killer* and its five sequels). If you're Vanya and Sonia, you stay behind to take care of your professor parents in their dotage and dementia, until they die and you are left with just each other and the house for company,



while Masha pays the bills from afar.

The play opens with Vanya and Sonia at home, alternatively throwing coffee cups and asking existential questions. This is soon interrupted by Masha suddenly descending upon them after a long absence, with her much-younger (and much-too-handsome for his own good) boy-toy Spike in tow. Masha has been invited to a party by a local wealthy couple, and she has decided to take pity on her reclusive siblings and invite them along. In return, she gets to show off her boyfriend and delight in Sonia's jealousy and melancholy. Meanwhile, Vanya, always content to be the observer, is thrilled to observe the lovely lines of Spike's form. Spike is just thrilled to be the youngest, handsomest person in the room...in any room.

The four characters are joined throughout the play by two others: Cassandra, a cleaning woman who works for Vanya and Sonia (and who, like her namesake, has prophetic visions), and Nina, a beautiful young aspiring actress who is visiting her aunt and uncle next door. In Durang's skillful hands, these two women are catalyzing agents whose presence

shifts the Chekhovian balance of things and helps set wheels in motion for a series of satisfying plot twists.

Directing a comedy takes a certain balance of guidance, creation of physical gags, and staying the heck outta the actors' way, so they can find the nuance and timing. Thankfully, Prospect has the comedic chops of Katherine Zagone at the helm of this ship, whose direction of last season's *The 39 Steps* was the perfect warm up to this play. Along with solid direction, an ensemble comedy requires a cast ready to jump in full force: PTP favorites David Barbaree and Kathleen Ennis play Vanya and Masha, with Jill Taylor as Sonia, Joshua Palafox as Spike, Delawna McKinney as Cassandra, and Maricella Monterrubio as Nina.

Prospect is excited to announce that the set design for *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* will be done by Dirk Durossette, a respected scenic designer who currently works with several companies in the Philadelphia area, including the Philadelphia Opera. Dirk's designs have been seen throughout the United States, and garnered him a Barrymore Nomination for his work on *Skylight* with Lantern Theater.

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike opens Friday, February 23rd and runs until Sunday, March 11th. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. There is one Thursday evening performance on March 8th. Tickets are \$20 general admission and \$10 student. Audiences may join us immediately following the closing matinee for a free talkback session with cast and crew. Tickets in advance at www.prospecttheaterproject.org or call/visit the box office or email ptp.modesto@gmail.com. Box office phone number: (209) 549-9341. The Prospect Theater Project is located at 1214 K St., Modesto.

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

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

Open by appointment.

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

Green Tips for a Green Planet: Make Mother Earth Your Valentine

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

When we think of February most of us think of Valentine's Day (and dead Presidents). One of the earliest symbols of Valentine's day is Cupid, the Roman god of love, and there are numerous theories about its origin starting in Roman times with the Feast of Lupercalia and coming forward to AD 496 when Saint Pope Gelasius I declared February 14 as Valentine's Day, a saint day that celebrated several early Christian martyrs named Valentine.

In modern times the day is given to worshipping the gods of consumerism with cards, romantic dinners, jewelry and other romantic gifts, chocolates, and loving intimacy. Happily, you can give and receive all these special gifts of love without feeling guilty about your carbon foot print.

Flowers are given most often, and flowering live plants are the best. Not only do they provide loving memories for years to come, but they offer an atmospheric exchange to help keep the air breathable. Try to avoid cut flowers, which are notorious for awful labor conditions, including child labor, and excessive chemical and water use, not to mention non-recyclable clear plastic wrapping.

That romantic candle-lit dinner can be vegan; and use the nice china and silver. No need for paper or plastic disposables. Use unscented natural candles, such as bees wax or soy wax, rather than paraffin. The wine can be organic or display the Rainforest Alliance seal, and the chocolates can be Fair Trade from ethically grown and harvested organically sustainable farms throughout the globe. Remember to gift those chocolates in a reusable decorative container.

When it comes to the cards, start at home with recycled materials (broken jewelry baubles and beads, pressed flowers, fabric scraps, packaging cardboard and scrap paper, pictures from old magazines, and all the shiny and bling your imagination can conjure). Those cards will be especially appreciated, and E-Cards are a definite no-waste choice

And speaking of lovers...dare we? Have you heard of ethical underwear companies, some of which sell lovely lingerie? And don't forget those luxurious essential oils for massages and relaxing with the help of room scenting essential oil diffusers.

Consider no-waste gifts like bars of handmade soap, homemade body lotions, organic coffee beans, hand-knitted scarves, homemade raspberry or other Valentine red jams, homemade "nutella" style chocolate spreads, ethical jewelry like handmade newspaper and magazine beaded necklaces and bracelets (especially those made by third world country artisans), and homemade "I Owe You" gift certificates. Edible heart-shaped or heart-decorated cookies and cakes are always a delight for friends and lovers.

Finally, follow your heart as you allow your imagination and creativity to show your appreciation for those you love and admire.



"Listening Across Differences and Speaking to be Heard"

The Unify Stanislaus Interfaith Alliance cordially invites you to our free upcoming community-wide training workshop: "Listening Across Differences and Speaking to be Heard"

Spend the afternoon getting to know and connecting with members of different faith communities while learning and practicing effective listening and speaking skills that will help us connect across divides and differences.

This exciting community event will be led and facilitated by Kathy Simon, Ph.D.

Date: Saturday, February 10, 2018, 2:30-6:00 PM (Optional dinner to follow).

Location: St Paul's Episcopal Church; Parish Hall, 1528 Oakdale Rd., Modesto. The Parish Hall is located on a side street, St. Paul's Way, which is located behind the church building.

Workshop Schedule and Description:

2:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Registration, Music and Snacks

3:00 p.m. Interfaith Invocation

3:05 p.m.- 6:00 p.m. Through engaging demonstrations and practice, you will learn new skills

of listening empathically and deeply in a way that cultivates connection and conversation even when people express views and opinions that you might not agree with.

This workshop will also teach you skills of how to speak in a way that is more likely to have you be heard. Since the goal of this gathering is to promote connection across differences, practice will be done in small groups that are made up of people from different faith communities.

6:00 p.m. Optional community dinner. If you wish, please stay and break bread with your new friends, taking the opportunity to practice the new listening and speaking skills you have just learned. If

you do plan on staying for dinner, please bring a VEGETARIAN appetizer, salad or dessert dish to share.

This workshop is offered as part of Unify Stanislaus' commitment to:

- Cultivating opportunities of sharing different faith communities' unique heritage, religion and culture in order to counter suspicion and hate with acceptance and respect

- Providing a platform to work towards combating discrimination and creating safety for all residents of Stanislaus County.

Facilitator:

In her private practice, Kathy Simon, PhD, helps couples, parents and individuals sort out conflicts and practice skills for listening deeply, getting heard, and reconnecting. Kathy works with teachers, schools and other organizations to improve collaboration and creative problem-solving. Kathy's work is based on Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication (NVC), and also draws from her own 18-year marriage, life as a parent, and years as a teacher and teacher educator. Kathy has been practicing NVC for more than 20 years and teaches Nonviolent Communication through Bay NVC's nine month long "Immersion Program."

Kathy holds a B.A. in English and Hebrew Literature and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Teacher Education. A former high school English and drama teacher, Kathy taught student teachers at Stanford University and co-directed the Coalition of Essential Schools, a national school-reform organization.

Kathy is the author and co-author of several books including *Moral Questions in the Classroom* and *Teaching as Inquiry*. Kathy is a certified trainer with the international Center for Nonviolent Communication.

Alliance Members: Congregation Beth Shalom, Modesto; Faith in the Valley: Stanislaus Hindu Temple of Modesto; Insight Meditation Central Valley; Islamic Center of Modesto; Modesto Central Seventh Day Adventist Church; Stanislaus Asian American Community Resource (SAACR); St Frances of Rome Church, Riverbank; St Paul's Episcopal Church, Modesto; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County; Vietnamese Buddhist Center (Buddhist Center); Bend the Arc- A Jewish Partnership for Justice.

Information: contact: Na'ama Firestone, namki@sbc-global.net

LAW OFFICES OF

ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE, LLP

1600 G Street
Suite 203

DAVID N. ROCKWELL
SHARON E. KELLY
JEFFREY DUARTE
MARKUS URSTOEGER
Attorneys/Abogados

P.O. Box 0142
Modesto, CA
95353-0142
(209) 521-2552
FAX (209) 526-7898

The Law Office of
PATRICIA MELUGIN COUSINS
Attorney At Law

P.O. Box 520
Ceres, CA 95307

Phone: (209) 538-9795
FAX: (209) 538-0227

Email: pmcousins@aim.com

Be informed!

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

After 16 Years without trial, Guantánamo inmates and rights groups demand end to 'Unconscionable' Imprisonment

By JULIA CONLEY, staff writer, Common Dreams

Eleven Guantánamo Bay inmates filed a petition in a federal court on Thursday—the 16th anniversary of the arrival of the first prisoners who were captured in the United States' "War on Terror"—demanding their release from the prison.

The prisoners argued that President Donald Trump's pledge to keep them there indefinitely is unconstitutional and is based on his "suspicion of and antipathy toward Muslims."

"Given President Donald Trump's proclamation against releasing any petitioners—driven by executive hubris and raw animus rather than by reason or deliberative national security concerns—these petitioners may never leave Guantánamo alive, absent judicial intervention," reads the petition.

The president has said that unlike former President Barack Obama, he has no plans to release any of the 41 prisoners in the facility, despite the Constitution's due process clause prohibiting indefinite detention. He has characterized all the inmates as "extremely dangerous people" despite the fact that some of them have been cleared for release and more than two dozen have never been charged with any crime.

The inmates note that even the Authorization to Use Military Force (AUMF), in which Congress granted the government the right to "use all necessary and appropriate force" to defeat the persons or groups behind the September 11, 2001 attacks, including imprisonment, does not support indefinite detainment.

Even if the court were to assume Petitioners were all captured in similar circumstances—and they were not—the limited purpose for which the laws of war may have authorized their detention at Guantánamo to prevent return to the



Challenging their detention, prisoners argue Trump's pledge to keep them there indefinitely is unconstitutional and based on his "suspicion of and antipathy toward Muslims."

battlefield, has long since faded more than 15 years after their capture. The conflict against the core Al Qaeda organization in connection with which they were captured has ended and been taken over by disparate battles involving new groups. The battlefields in which they were captured, if any, are no more, thus dissolving the only legitimate purpose of their detention.

A number of human rights organizations joined in the call for the inmates' release, demanding that Guantánamo Bay be closed.

"It is shocking that 16 years after the Guantánamo prison was opened, the United States still maintains a center to detain prisoners indefinitely without charge or trial. Some of the 41 remaining detainees have been cleared for transfer for years," said Daphne Eviatar, director of security with human rights at Amnesty International USA, in a statement. "The laws of war never envisioned the sort of endless conflict the U.S. government is waging. The Guantánamo detainees must either be charged and transferred to the United States for fair trials, or sent home or to another country where they'll be safe. To continue to imprison these men, many of whom the U.S. also tortured, is unconscionable."

The civil rights group Reprieve, which represents some of the prisoners being held in the prison, added that even U.S. officials have acknowledged that inmates are being held there based on faulty intelligence and forced "confessions."

"The U.S. has had 16 years to build a case against these men, and yet 28 of 41 prisoners are held without charge or a trial of any kind—a shocking violation of America's founding principles," said Shelby Sullivan-Bennis, an attorney with

the group. "If the president won't close Guantánamo, then the other branches of government must take action instead to finally restore the rule of law."

In London, human rights activists with the London Guantánamo campaign held a candlelight vigil outside the U.S. embassy in honor of the 41 men being held in the prison. The group noted that the continued operation of Guantánamo Bay sends a message from the U.S. about indefinite detention as an acceptable practice.

"The rights-violating practices surrounding Guantánamo are now a model for the detention and incarceration policies of the U.S. and other states," said Aisha Maniar in a statement. "Plans to expand immigration detention for undocumented migrants and the deplorable conditions in such facilities are connected to Guantánamo's origins and existence...It is the failure of the international community, and not just of the U.S., to act to close Guantánamo that has helped to legitimize this status quo."

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2018/01/11/>

Take Action for Peace on the Korean Peninsula

From the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

"THIS IS NOT A DRILL." Fortunately for humanity and the people of Hawaii, those five words were part of a false alarm warning of an incoming ballistic missile attack. But with tensions between the U.S. and North Korea higher than they've been in decades, we must act now to reduce the dangers and achieve a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Here are three things that you can do right now to help:

Tell your senators and representative to **co-sponsor legislation** that would prevent a military strike against North Korea without congressional authorization. These bills, H.R.4837 and S.2016, urgently need more co-sponsors. [Click here](#) to encourage your elected officials to join this common sense legislation.

Sign the People's Peace Treaty with North Korea. The Korean War ended in 1953 with an Armistice Agreement. Today, 65 years later, there is still no peace treaty. [Sign the People's Peace Treaty](#) as your personal declaration of peace!

Support the Olympic Truce. From Ancient Greece to today, the Olympic Truce has aimed to ensure safe passage for athletes and spectators during the Olympic Games. As the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea, draw near, we must ensure that peace prevails on the Korean Peninsula. We encourage you to gather with friends over the next couple of weeks and watch the film "[Games of Their Lives](#)," about the 1966 North Korean World Cup soccer team and the unifying power of sports.

Recently, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved their Doomsday Clock up to two minutes until midnight. We all must act to bring humanity back from the brink.

<http://www.wagingpeace.org/>

Work with Musicians!
Learn Job Skills!
Join us at The Job Circle.

Audio Technician Course
 * LIVE Sound
 * Recording Bands
 * Producing, Mastering
 * Electronics, ProTools
Hands-On Learning

Modesto Sound LIVE
 Recording | LIVE Sound
 Education

New classes every 8 weeks.
Space is limited, call now!

ModestoSound.org
209-573-0533

B&F

MICHAEL R. BAUDLER, CPA
DONNA E. FLANDERS, CPA

Office (209) 575-2653
 Fax (209) 575-0629

e-mail b_f@modestocpas.com
 1120 14th Street, Suite 2
 Modesto, CA 95350

Walking the Walk, However You Can

By Elizabeth Sholes, Director of Public Policy, California Council of Churches

I always tried to pay attention to Albert Einstein's sarcastic comment, "I love humanity. It's people I can't stand!"

For years I've heard people sneer at those of us who do social justice work saying that is precisely what we do – ignore the people. Then they add (as if they were experts) that if we *really* knew the people for whom we advocated, we'd hate them. The final kicker is, if we're working to find solutions to homelessness, the opposition will snarl, "So how many drifters have you taken into *your* house?"

Well, now I can answer that last question: twenty-two. Plus, three dogs and one cat. Oh yes, a toad that lives in an aquarium. Some stayed inside temporarily, some lived on either the front porch (the police asked us not to do that) or in the backyard in a sheltered gazebo or the garage. Others came to dinner for the holidays and still others come over to visit and share food.

Do I like all of them? Yes, actually, I do. Even Speedy. Speedy is pretty hapless because he has no idea how to be polite. I've given up doing much more than feeding him because the biggest success I've had in five years is to make him stop saying, "Yo!" Mama!" when he sees me. That's all I'll ever get from him. It's enough.

We are not called to like everyone who deserves help. I freely admit I do judge some actions more than others. I don't interact with people who hold arguments with other people I can't see. I don't tolerate drug use at my home ever, and I do push sobriety where I can.

My one demand is that, over a period of time, they get signed up for the programs we have, as advocates, fought tooth and nail to obtain for them – food stamps, health care, basic minimal income. If I'm giving out money, they need to make that effort so I can give out less. I agree with folksy, progressive radio commentator, Jim Hightower: "Money's like manure, he said. "You gotta spread it around." When people have basic benefits, my own fertilizer goes further.

This all started with a very simple act – I let homeless people use our address for their mail. This is life altering for them since with an address for their mail they know when they have to update their records, know they have benefits at all, and prevent loss as reporting changes occur. We get our own first class mail at a PO Box anyway, but it was such a simple thing and has made an enormous difference for all those people.

Having protection from the vagaries of both homelessness and being out of touch has made a difference. A lot of them are Vietnam vets, have worked, and are too old to find employment anymore. A few have disability income finally, one is on Social Security, and others have applied. The cat lived on a harness and leash for two years to keep him safe, and now he and his owner have their own small apartment because they regularized their social service contacts via our address. We are thrilled for them both. Others have gone home to family, and still others have VA or HUD housing. All of this happened because they had an address.

I come by this outreach honorably. During the Depression years, my grandmother fed "hoboes and bums" in the backyard in exchange for some work. At some point one of them

"So how many drifters have you taken into *your* house?"

Well, now, I can answer that last question: twenty-two. Plus, three dogs and one cat.

carved a simple figure on the gate – a curled up cat – telling other such men that "a kind-hearted woman lives here." Well I don't have the sign, but everyone knows who we are, including the police who look away because our corner of the universe is calm, peaceful, and clean. Our neighbors love the men living in the backyard and hire them for weekly clean up and small jobs.

I can walk my extended neighborhood and see people I don't know who know who I am. When I had a medical crisis (that turned out to be nothing but was temporarily very painful) I was surrounded by care from everyone we'd helped. We are a community. I consider them my friends. I'm afraid of no one because no one would let anything happen to me.

Obviously, what helps this along is that there is a public bathroom a block away that is open 24/7. I don't think I have a solution for that where such things don't exist. But I'd probably rent a porta-potty or buy a compost toilet – it's really not too much to do.

But if I did nothing more than make sandwiches and hot soup or cold drinks depending on the weather, just sharing our front porch mailbox would, to them, have been enough. We morphed into the living situations. It's not for everyone, but it works for us. There are, however, totally possible solutions we can offer.

How life changing would it be if churches put up cubbies with numbers that become "apartments" in the public records to give homeless people an address they can access during business hours? They would keep their social services, have a contact if they got ill, and otherwise just make stability in a small way where otherwise the system rolls over those who are already just barely scraping by?

How hard is it to put out a water station and plastic cups (plus a waste basket) in the heat of summer days? How hard is it to have "cup o' noodles" and insulated cups for cold weather?

Homeless people give back. Recently an entire field got cleaned up because a friend who leaves home baked goodies for the people who camp there got harmed. She does cat rescue work, leaves food bins to make it easier, and those bins got stolen. She got REALLY mad and took them back forcefully from the new homeless man who'd taken them. The other homeless people who saw what happened rallied

around, drove the thief away, and then cleaned up every inch of the mess he (mostly) had made. She was amazed. I told her – they did this for you. They know what good you do for animals and for them, and they wouldn't tolerate the decay of their fragile community stability that teeters on the kindnesses you show them.

I am adamant no one needs to repay me, but they DO have to "pay it forward" to others in harm's way. They do that – I've seen it repeatedly. But they also bring me presents. I have a gorgeous scarf one gave me, bracelets, a bird feeder- things they found, nice things they salvaged – to say thanks. I treasure them. And no – these things aren't stolen. You'd be appalled at what people throw away. The homeless are masters of finding and salvaging what others merely toss.

They are smart, funny, kind, and engaging. Yes, some have mental health issues, now with Medi-Cal largely under control. Some have records, freely disclosed and, from me, not judged. They work hard both at keeping body and soul together and keeping our neighborhood clean and crime free. Being poor is the hardest work there is, and they put their shoulders to the wheel, day after day.

Arrests for illegal camping are almost non-existent in our area because if they are rousted, they can temporarily leave their things in the backyard while they move their sites. Nothing is more stupid than the 'cat and mouse' ticketing of homeless for sleeping outside and making them move their stuff, then ticketing them if they can't. Then comes the warrants for their failure to appear (they have no transportation to court or work details), then jailing them for 3 days only to have the cycle repeat. Just giving them a place to store things while they relocate has cut down on the cycle and let them get legally placed.

One woman a block over – I dislike her far too much to consider her a neighbor – hates the homeless. She has made as many as 52 calls in one night to the police claiming one man – ONE – was doing terrible things in the alley by her house. These are all lies. Why isn't she cited for false police reports? She's a homeowner. That's why. When my homeless friend asked her why she was so angry with him (he had permission to sleep several houses down from her) she said, "Because I'm a CHRISTIAN!"

Seriously. She said that.

She has called the police on us, to no avail, for giving access to our own property. She has filed complaints that we are messy and lowering property values (thanks to the homeless men, our house is lovely – neat, trimmed, clean, raked.) So, her brand of "Christianity" does not prevail, thank goodness. I see her peeking down my driveway from time to time, so I recently put a sign in the front window, "Matthew 25:40 Lives Here." For some reason she hasn't been by since. Wonder why...

"As ye have done to the least of these..." That is the crux of what faith teaches me. No rules, no ritual, no rites will matter so much as that one directive. Walking the walk on whatever level you can is all we are asked to do. It's amazingly simple to find a way to be kind. And guess what? You get back friends. Who knew?

<http://www.calchurches.org/ccs-blog/walking-the-walk-however-you-can>



Listen to Their Music: Return of the Aleutian Cackling Geese

By LYNN M. HANSEN

Each autumn, Pacific Flyway skies over California's Great Central Valley fill with clouds and voices of migrating waterfowl. If you are outside you will likely hear an overhead chorus of warbling lesser sand hill cranes, nasal honking of snow geese, the tenor sounds of a multitude of the large bodied Canada goose mixed with the high pitched alto cackling of small Aleutian cackling geese (*Branta hutchinsii leucopareia*). It wasn't always this way.

During the early part of the twentieth century, the famous ornithologist, Rollo Beck, began regional documentation of avian diversity by collecting specimens for museums from many parts of the world including the Central Valley of California. Based on his 1927 survey, he reported an abundance of Aleutian cackling geese during fall and winter months in the Los Baños area of Central California. However, by 1974 these small cackling geese were on the verge of extinction and were one of the first birds designated as endangered in 1967 under the newly created Endangered Species Act. Why had the Aleutian cackling goose population declined to such a low level?

The Aleutian Island arc offshore of Alaska, a chain of fourteen large volcanic islands and fifty smaller ones, has long been known as a breeding site for many different species of sea birds and waterfowl. Aleutian cackling geese were among the tundra nesting species relying on the short grasses present on these isolated islands during spring and summer. In the 1700s Russia owned Alaska and found these islands an ideal place for cultivating arctic foxes for their fur. Foxes were dropped off on the islands, left to breed and feed on nesting birds, their eggs and their young. Ground nesting birds were easy targets of their predation, while cliff nesting seabirds were not vulnerable due to the inaccessibility of their nests. Except for a few breeding pairs of foxes left to continue reproducing, most of the foxes were then harvested and sold in the very lucrative fur trade market. After the



PHOTO: Garry Hayes

Americans purchased Alaska from the Russians in 1867, this same practice of fur trade continued into the 1930s when the market finally collapsed. By 1974 it was estimated that there were approximately 800 Aleutian cackling geese remaining of what was once a thriving population.

Alarmed by their dwindling numbers, US Fish and Wildlife biologists began searching for remnants of this population on islands of the Aleutian chain. U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologist Robert "Sea Otter" Jones, whose sailing expertise with dories along the rugged coastal Aleutian Islands was legendary as well as his passion for the survival of these birds, began the search. Because steep rocky Buldir Island of the Aleutian chain was difficult to access, foxes had not been released there and Jones thought an isolated population of cackling geese might still be present. Jones began his search there. His hunch was right and to his delight, he discovered a small population of cackling geese. Later, remnant populations were also discovered on two other Aleutian Islands. It was now possible to develop a recovery plan.

Biologists recognized that in order to rescue the Aleutian goose population from extinction, they must first remove the foxes, and second, study the biology of these birds in order to properly manage their recovery. Many of the former island nesting grounds for Aleutian geese had fox populations. Beginning in 1974, foxes were systematically removed from islands by hunting and trapping. At least forty islands made free of foxes became potential nesting sites once again for the Aleutian geese. By 2006, eleven islands had thriving Aleutian cackling goose populations.

The next step in the recovery process was to unveil the biology of this species.

Where did they go when they left Buldir Island? What habitat did they require on their migration south during the fall and winter months? How far would they migrate south? Would it be possible to reintroduce breeding pairs back onto Aleutian Islands formerly occupied by this species? To answer these questions, Humboldt University professor Dr. Paul Springer and his graduate student Dennis Woolington plus a cadre of other graduate students took up the task.

In the summer of 1975, Dennis and his team landed on Buldir Island and began banding the geese with metal leg bands and blue neck collars. Birders could distinguish Aleutian cackling geese from the Canada goose because of their smaller size and white neck ring with black feathering at the bottom of the ring. They would further know that the geese they were observing were Aleutian cackling geese from Buldir Island because of the unique blue collars or colored leg bands. Scientists were then able to document the Aleutian cackling goose migration pattern as well as feeding habits. This summer project was followed by a winter banding program.

The investigation revealed that the Aleutian geese begin their 3,000-mile migration South along the Pacific Flyway in late September or early October. The first leg of the journey is a non-stop 2,000-mile herculean flight across open-ocean from Buldir Island to their first stop on Castle Rock off shore of Arcata, in Northern California. Flying at speeds of about 40 miles per hour, they encounter strong winds and treacherous weather that saps much of their stored energy. Castle Rock, isolated from the mainland and a resting stop safe from predators, offers a grassy slope for grazing on top. In addition, located ¾ of a mile on shore, abundant fields of short grass typical of the local Arcata dairy country provide additional grazing resources for the geese. After a resting and refueling period, the birds then fly to the Sacramento Valley, feeding in fields along the way. Their final destination is Faith Ranch (now owned by the Gallo family) located outside of Modesto, California. In the early days of the study, the entire Aleutian cackling goose population spent their winters on Faith Ranch before making their return journey to the Buldir Island.

Once the migratory pathway became known, a recovery plan involving cooperation between farmers, Fish and Game officials from four states, US Fish and Wildlife Service and conservationists was established. One of the first goals was to reintroduce breeding pairs of Aleutian geese onto islands they had formerly occupied. This effort was largely unsuccessful until they transferred goslings before they fledged. By doing this, the young recognized the new surroundings as home and would successfully return to that island and breed.

A second issue encountered in managing this species was how to mitigate the damage to farmers' fields along the Northern California Coast, especially in Del Norte County. According to Blake Alexandre of Alexandre Ecodairy Farms, once the geese population began to recover in numbers, crop damage became a serious problem for local farmers. Aleutian geese require short grass, the same as that grazed by dairy cattle. It was estimated that thirty-five geese consume as much grass as one cow, so if the population of geese was under seven thousand animals, the economic impact was

continued page 8

Chefs of New York
ITALIAN CUISINE FROM OLD FAMILY RECIPES

2307 Oakdale Rd., Modesto
209-551-0163

1325 J St., Downtown Modesto
209-857-5102

Open 7 Day a Week!
www.ChefsOfNewYork.com
Follow us on Facebook!
@chefsofnewyork

FM 93.3
KPHD
Independent Radio for Independent Minds

6th Annual Poetry Festival Saturday, February 3 feature this month's poet

The 6th Annual Poetry Festival sponsored by MoSt Poetry, the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center, features a workshop, luncheon and poetry contest with special guest poet, **William O'Daly**, workshop leader on Saturday, February 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale, Rd., Modesto.

William O'Daly has translated (from the original Spanish) nine books of poetry by the late Pablo Neruda, Chile's Nobel Laureate, all published by Copper Canyon Press. He was a 2006 Quill Award finalist for his translation of Neruda's *Still Another Day*.



O'Daly's own collection of poems, *Water Ways*, with prose and photographs by J.S. Graustein, was published by Folded Word Press in March 2017. *Yarrow and Smoke*, will arrive next year. His chapbooks include *The Whale in the Web* (Copper Canyon) and *The Road to Isla Negra* (Folded Word).

O'Daly is a National Endowment for the Arts Fellow. A resident of Auburn, CA, he was recently received two awards from the State of California for his work on the California Water Plan.

Participants are encouraged to pre-register but may register at the door. Doors open 9 a.m. Questions? Email info@most-poetry.org. Poetry Contest questions? Email Karen Hansis Baker at rkb2516@gmail.com.



Sankofa Theatre Company presents "Coretta: The One-woman Stage Play" Saturday, February 10

Join the renowned theater company Sankofa at the State Theatre for a family event in recognition of Black History Month. The Steve Harvey National Winner singer, songwriter, producer, actress and director Dee Dee Simon is staging "Coretta: The One-woman Stage Play" starring Kimberly Smith Chatman who magnificently brings the life of Coretta Scott King alive for audiences who will marvel at Coretta's courage, beauty and brilliance. Who was Coretta Scott King? What was it like being married to Martin Luther King? How did she deal with his untimely death? By spending an evening with Ms. Chatman, you are sure to fall in love with Coretta Scott King. The show is a benefit for participating Modesto BSU Clubs.

For more information contact Sankofa, 209-683-9049. Sankofa Theatre Company develops and promotes the cultivation of African American history, life and culture through the performing arts.

Doors at 6; show at 7 p.m. Tickets: \$12, \$18 and \$22. State Theatre of Modesto, Inc. | 1307 J St. | Modesto, CA 95354; Box Office (209) 527-4697 shows@thestate.org <http://ww2.thestate.org/calendar/event/1033>

Cackling Geese

from page 7

little. But when the population of geese grew to thirty and then sixty thousand, it could cost upwards of two hundred thousand dollars of economic loss each season. Because the geese were designated an endangered species, hazing and hunting were not permitted. It began to look as if the recovery of the Aleutian geese was on a collision course with private property owners.

Blake Alexandre and other farmers in the area decided to form a working group with USFSW, California Fish and Game and conservationists. An agreement between the members was devised such that under a conservation easement, Alexandre could farm state owned land adjacent to his property and grow grasses suitable for cattle forage as well as goose habitat. During the fall and winter, geese could graze on the grasslands provided by the labor of Alexandre Ecodairy Farms in trade for the use of this same grazing land by the farmer when the geese had migrated to their nesting grounds. Also included in the agreement was the fact that hazing of the geese by the farmers using 4-wheelers and loud noises to drive the geese onto the state-owned grasslands was permitted. This same easement arrangement was granted to farmers of the Faith Ranch near Modesto, California.

As a result of eradication of arctic foxes from Aleutian Island breeding sites, in combination with establishment of conservation easements with private property owners, geese have now swelled from a mere 800 to over 150,000 spread out along the North Pacific Coast from southern Oregon to Humboldt County. Aleutian geese are no longer listed as Endangered. In 2001, their population was robust enough to resume hunting as a tool to keep the population in balance with their habitat resources, a success story of cooperation between various stakeholders. Once again the autumnal skies of the Central Valley of California fill with cries of Aleutian cackling geese: music to our ears.

Positive People speak at Modesto Junior College

The Modesto Junior College Office of Campus Life and Student Learning presents the Positive People Speaker Series for spring 2018, featuring presentations by local community members who have overcome challenges and obstacles to achieve their goals. The campus and community are invited to come hear these stories of inspiration and motivation. The free presentations are held on Thursdays at 6 p.m. in the Mary Stuart Rogers Student Learning Center on West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Avenue, Modesto.

The 2018 series offers the following five encouraging personal stories:

February 8 – Jorge Perez, Modesto High School counselor, was born in Salinas, California to migrant farmworker parents who left Mexico in the early 1970s in search of a better life. His parents taught him the values of hard work, respect, and the importance of education, despite living in a poor, gang-prone, and disadvantaged community. Perez will share his story, from experience turning to gangs and other dangerous behaviors, to his pursuit of high education, and becoming a role model to many local youths.

March 8 – Joanna Murillo-Beaver, Modesto City Schools medical procedure specialist and licensed vocational nurse, was the all-American girl living the all-American dream growing up. She was a happy and popular cheerleader, she had many friends, and was an outstanding student. Everything in life was on track and proceeding how she had planned. Her life then took a traumatic turn after a night of celebrating left her in the hospital and landed her in jail. Murillo-Beaver will share her inspiring real-life story of how she overcame these obstacles to achieve her dreams.

March 22 – Yamilet Valladolid, community health clinic manager, has lived in the Central Valley all her life. Her parents immigrated from the State of Jalisco in Mexico to the U.S. when they were newlyweds to be able to have a family and offer opportunities to their children. Valladolid always knew she wanted to go to college but did not know anyone in her circle who had graduated beyond high school. Valladolid will recount her journey as she faced challenges in life while pursuing her education and becoming a community leader.

April 12 – Emmanuel Escamilla, Code X program

founder, grew up on the south side of Modesto and studied at Modesto Junior College. He went on to graduate from University of California, Berkeley and is currently a graduate student at Harvard University. Since the founding of CodeX, he has been recognized as a McNair Scholar, Harvard Innovation Lab Fellow, Forbes Under 30 Scholar, and has won the Westly Prize for Young Innovators in California.

Information: contact the Office of Campus Life and Student Learning, (209) 575-6700.



Look for
CONNECTIONS
online at:
<http://stanislausconnections.org/>



POET: William O'Daly

William O'Daly has translated eight books of the late-career and posthumous poetry of Chilean Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda, and most recently Neruda's first volume, *Book of Twilight* — all published by Copper Canyon Press. His chapbooks of poems include *The Whale in the Web*, published by Copper Canyon, as well as *The Road to Isla Negra* and *Water Ways* (a collaboration with JS Graustein), both published by Folded Word Press. *Yarrow and Smoke*, another chapbook of poems, is forthcoming from Folded Word in spring, 2018. A National Endowment for the Arts Fellow, William was a finalist for the 2006 Quill Award in Poetry and was profiled by Mike Leonard for *The Today Show*. He has received national and regional honors for literary editing and instructional design and was a national board member of Poets Against War. Most recently he was recognized by the State of California for his work on the California Water Plan. <http://williamodaly.com>

The Road to Isla Negra

...an homage to Pablo Neruda

We live twice on the road to Isla Negra—
once in our dreams and once in our shoes.
Scent of the waves, a patch of open sky,
the innocent walking single file,
the cruel learning slowly—
toward which victory, what defeat?
The poet returns to us, to the world,
to the bell hanging in the back yard
at the starry door of the sea. He rings
for the neighbors and the exiles to join him,
and soon they arrive. Sitting in the small boat
anchored in gravel, they sail into the horizon,
toasting to pain and to joy, multiplying hope.

~William O'Daly

[Excerpted from *The Road to Isla Negra*, published by Folded Word Press, 2015.]

In the Gardens of the Fishermen

I walk down the cobble streets of the old port
to the edge of the eastern sea, composed, made up
of history, of calling. I ask for the touch of wing,
for the kiss of wave, for some sound of what I am.
Pebbles and shells settle in the implacable sand,
in the open mouth. The complacency of kelp
speaks of the restless serenity of the petrel,
of the spell of red dusk and the spume.
The lapping of hope is more than a breaking,
and surely love is more than rescue or an angel
The wind's ragged cry rises and the white aster
blooms again in the gardens of the fishermen.
Under the sway of meteor and tide,
I huddle near a dead gull among the rocks.
Eternity settles like frost over my feet.
The time has come to light the bonfire.
Shall we find a way to sustain the terror
and be content with our reward?
Shall we rub ash on our forehead
and ride the gray whale to the depths?
I claim it all, and in me the clam evolves,
closes and opens, and lets go its voice
like the first kiss, like the first wound.
For a time, the old soul is the horizon.

~ William O'Daly

[Excerpted from *Water Ways* (a collaboration of poetry, prose, and photos with JS Graustein), published by Folded Word Press, 2017.]

Heron Dances Over the World

I watch you dance. No one is watching,
even you're not watching
as you spread your black tattered wings
and step among the colors of the physical world—
spindly legs conjure the symbol for infinity
in red earth, in fresh blue snow and white mist.
Endangered islands bloom, the wetland fills
with mountain shadow. In a parallel universe
your reflection moves to its inner calling,
to folded granite, music of the waterfall.
You live as hidden origami, with creases
and abandon, in intricate patterns that resist
the receding shore. You circle like an equation
neither eyes nor lips can touch—motion can't be solved
or written on the tongue. You do not stop to preen
among the battered dunes.

Your cry wrings iron

from irony, recalls the silent bells, laments the love
I've forgotten. You breathe closer to the swaying aspen
than to the orphaned moon and the tide's pull.
In this dance you are born again, create like a beetle
your own being. You are possibility.

~ William O'Daly

[Published in *Life and Legends*, Inaugural Issue, Summer 2014; and in *Sacramento Voices*, Cold River Press (anthology), 2014.]

I Had Not Seen It

I had not seen it and our steps
sounded together.
I never heard its voice and my voice was
filling the world.
And it was a sunny day and my joy
didn't fit within me.
I felt the anguish of carrying the new
solitude of the dusk.
I felt it next to me, burning arms,
clean, bleeding, pure.
And my pain, in the black night,
entered its heart.
And we go together.

~ Pablo Neruda

[Excerpted from *Book of Twilight*, translated by William O'Daly and published by Copper Canyon Press, 2017.]

Peace Life/Center ID Project

**Free/Low-cost ID and/or
Birth Certificate Application
Assistance**

Volunteers ready to assist!

Call 209-222-8624 to set an appointment!

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

MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER



King's spirit alive and shoutin'

from page 1

believe in giving back. As one of them said on accepting the award, "Life isn't just about making an income; it's about making an impact. . . What's most important is love and service to others." His twin, almost dancing in place he was so excited to be given an award with Dr. King's name on it, exclaimed for both of them, "This is like winning the Grammy, but ten times better!"

Oh yes, Martin was stirred by the gospel music of The Ware Family Singers. Their singing was soul magic. The kind of magic that links us with the suffering and the faith-filled tenacity of all the courageous African American people who struggled so long to be free and equal and continue that struggle. The kind of magic that inspires, sustains, and motivates us.

And yes, Martin was there—in the artfully crafted video collage created by videographer Wes Page that showed Dolores from her 20s to now, always out front in her vision, her grit, and her unflappable leadership.

And yes, oh yes, Martin rose to his feet, with Coretta and all 800 of us, to welcome this amazing woman who grew up in Stockton and became for the country a national icon, but for us a local Central Valley heroine. Recipient of numerous awards, including the Eleanor Roosevelt Human rights award in 1998 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012, the highest civilian award in America, Dolores is unpretentious and down to earth. She likes to get to the point. "Well," she started, "here we are, in the United States of America! Dramatic pause. Wry smile. "What happened?"

We appreciated the irony of her question. But answering it wasn't her focus. Disturbing contemporary issues in the Central Valley were. "We have some of the same realities as in the South," she began. "We, too, have systems of oppression" that need to be transformed. "Since 1955 we have had only two universities built in the Central Valley, while 18 or 19 prisons have been constructed here. It takes more money to send someone to jail than it does to send them to Yale." Also, "40% of the school districts with the highest rates of suspension and expulsion in the state are in the Central Valley."

In the marrow of her bones, Dolores is a fearless organizer and visionary: "We have to dismantle the systems of oppression here and elect representatives to sit on school boards and city councils to change this system." "Starting in kindergarten, we also need to have our students study the history and the many contributions to our society made by native Americans, African slaves and African Americans, Mexicans, Chinese, Filipinos, and others. We need to teach about people like Emmet Till and César Chávez and leaders in the labor movement." Dolores quotes Thomas Jefferson, "If we don't have an educated citizenry, the country will be ruled by the greedy and the powerful."

Dolores recounted her visit to Standing Rock last year where she witnessed first-hand the ethic of sharing among indigenous people. "In the cold of winter and with limited water and firewood, everyone was taking care of one another." She contrasted their concern for the community with a reality in Kern County, where she lives in Bakersfield. The county produces 64% of the oil from California, yet many people there are poor and homeless. At the national level, 1% of the people owns 50% of the nation's wealth. "There's something wrong with that picture."

An effective organizer offers solutions. True to her passionate commitment for social change, she urged all of us, especially young people: "When you finish school, go back and stay in your community and do the work that needs to be done. . . We have the numbers, the votes, but we have to do the work of organizing to get the vote out." "And if you have children, take them with you so they get involved in the movement."

Dolores spent over 50 years as a labor leader and community organizer. With César Chávez she co-founded the United Farm Workers Union, served as its vice-president, and played a major role in many of the union's accomplishments. Her main focus now is with her Dolores Huerta Foundation. The DHF trains organizers to register and educate voters, advocate for educational reform, bring about infrastructure improvements in low-income communities, advocate for greater equality for the LGBT community, and create strong leadership development.

Dolores ended her talk by underscoring her rallying cry that we get involved. "We have to believe we have the power to make things happen, like health care for all. We who do believe have to help others realize their power. And we have to work together. *Sí, se puede!* (Yes, we can!) With a chuckle, she shared the three main tasks of all activists each morning: 1) wash your face; 2) brush your teeth; and 3) call your Congress person. "Women, people of color, white people of conscience—we are the majority. Let's get out the vote!"

In this conflicted time in our country, she acknowledged the difficulty of believing we can transform our increasingly dysfunctional, fractured, and unfair system. But she shared a line from Chilean poet Pablo Neruda worth remembering: "They can cut down all the flowers but they can't hold back the Spring." So "we have to be the gardeners!"

During her whole 45-minute presentation, Dolores remained standing, though a comfortable chair had been set out for her to talk from. She showed no sign of fatigue. If anything, she was as animated at the end as she was when she started. "What keeps you so full of energy?" someone asked. She didn't hesitate, "I like dancing!"

She didn't dance for us, but she had us shout a long-time union organizer's routine: "I'll ask and all of you answer, but as loud as you can! OK."

"Who's got the power?"

WE'VE GOT THE POWER!

"What kind of power?"

PEOPLE POWER!

When we did it a second time, I've never heard so many people shouting all together so loudly and with such enthusiasm. The walls shook. And in that community-building magic, we felt connected as brothers and sisters, more committed to help bend the arc of the moral universe toward justice. Martin smiled. On Dolores. On all of us. With this faith, he hugged Coretta and prayed, with this faith we shall overcome.

ACTION: To learn more about the Dolores Huerta Foundation, or to donate to its social justice network, contact www.doloreshuerta.org. To learn more about Advocates for Justice, the non-profit group started by the Jacq and Jacques Wilson, contact <http://www.advocates4justice209.org> or www.facebook.com/advocatesforjustice209.

"Life isn't just about making an income; it's about making an impact."



Failure to extend legal protection for California's "Dreamers" could have serious economic and fiscal consequences

Across the US, around 700,000 immigrants who were brought to our country as children have temporary legal status through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Yet, their situation is now highly uncertain in light of President Trump's move to rescind DACA protections effective March 5, 2018, unless Congress acts to maintain them. Meanwhile, the current funding extension for the federal government is set to expire tomorrow, and DACA supporters in Congress have been attempting to use this deadline, which may need bipartisan action to address, as an opportunity to seek a deal to preserve DACA protections.

A new post from the California Budget & Policy Center's Amy Rose and Sara Kimberlin looks at the importance of "Dreamers" to California's communities and economy and discusses how failure to extend DACA protections would harm our state and our nation.

Socialism Improved America

By VASU MURTY

Few conservatives acknowledge that both the right *and the left* are necessary in American politics.

The following programs and services are just some of those made possible only through government: Military and Defense; Highways / Roads and Bridges; Public Libraries; Police and Fire Departments; Postal Service; Student Loans and Grants; Trash Collection and Public Landfills; Farm Subsidies; the FBI and the CIA; the Environmental Protection Agency; Social Security; Public Schools; Jail and Prison System; Corporate/Business Subsidies; Public Parks and Recreation; Food Stamps and Medicaid and many more.

Few conservatives acknowledge that both the right *and the left* are necessary in American politics. Government regulation is as necessary to a prosperous society as is free enterprise! Ronald Reagan's espousal of the free market in 1980 was extreme. When told about the possibility of Chrysler going bankrupt, he asked in response: "What's wrong with bankruptcy?" Chrysler went from near bankruptcy to success during the 1980s, prompting Chrysler CEO Lee Iacocca to write his autobiography. Someone on the political left commented that Chrysler's comeback was due to the government stepping in, and that Lee Iacocca's autobiography was not as much an ode to capitalism as it was to government intervention in the marketplace.

Progressive political pundit Thom Hartmann eloquently writes about the programs and services we take for granted that are a result of the public sphere. A balance is needed

between the two extremes of 19th century laissez-faire capitalism vs Marxism (which was discredited with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc).

Again, government regulation is as necessary to a prosperous society as is free enterprise. Without the Clean Air Act, we would be breathing dirty air emissions from power plants; we would be drinking impure water. Without government regulation, medicines with fatal side effects could not be pulled off shelves and toys with lead poison would still be on the market. Government regulation affects our housing safety, our food quality, our driving safety (through speed limit and safety belt laws). As we live in a civilized society, government serves as a mediator and enforcer as no individual can do.

Gun control advocates argue along these lines: the freedom of owning a gun has nothing to do with gun regulation. Anyone can own a car, but they still need to register their vehicle and be licensed to drive. Everyone is free to own a home, but they still have to observe zoning regulation and fire safety requirements. Sensible gun laws govern manufacturing standards, product safety, and access by minors and criminals. Sensible gun laws govern the safety of our streets, our schools, and our homes. In 2004, guns were used to kill 5 people in New Zealand, 37 in Sweden, 56 in Australia, 73 in England and Wales, 184 in Canada, and 11,344 in the United States. God bless America.

An editorial in the school newspaper at San Diego State University in the late 1980s commented that the American Left has always looked to Sweden as an economic model. Back then, I personally would have preferred New Zealand (an ecologically stable, nuclear-free zone, which protected unborn children). But I doubt if either country (or even Canada, with its multicultural and multilingual policies,

which went metric and passed universal health care decades ago) is an applicable model for a nation as vast and populous as the United States...

...The American Empire is how Washington DC investigative journalist William Blum describes the United States in *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Remaining Superpower* (Common Courage Press, 2000).

And considering the fact that in this country the burden of taxes falls squarely on the middle class, I think it's reasonable to demand the wealthy, corporations, etc. pay their fair share! Bernie Sanders notes the sad irony of "*the United States of America, the wealthiest country in the history of the world, having a crumbling infrastructure with roads, bridges, water systems, wastewater plants, airports, rail, levees and dams falling apart...*"

Apart from laissez-faire capitalism allowing corporations to go bankrupt and resulting in mass unemployment, the laissez-faire capitalism of the 19th century is espoused today by *libertarians*. There is a certain philosophical consistency in being laissez-faire on both social as well as economic issues, but I personally find the libertarian position distasteful because it would abolish programs and services many of us take for granted (see above).

My dear friend Rose Evans (1928 - 2015), editor and publisher of *Harmony: Voices for a Just Future*, a peace and justice periodical on the religious left, once cited the example of libertarians wanting to abolish public education as an example of how extremist a political philosophy it really is!

So, let's have a serious discussion about socialism in America.

vasumurti@netscape.net

California Audio Roots Project (CARP) Reveals Storytelling is Still Popular

By BRENDA FRANCIS

Modesto Sound is excited to announce a successful start to its latest local community audio outreach program called the California Audio Roots Project (CARP) whose goal is to create local media content to distribute to radio stations and other outlets with the participation of local everyday citizens. Area supporters include newspapers and radio stations, Friends of the Public Library, the Mary Stuart Rogers Foundation, and the Bright Family Foundation. A grant through the California Arts Council, called the Arts & Public Media grant, helped jump-start the project with an initial grant. As of January 10, 2018, five thirty-minute shows have been completed at Modesto Sound's recording studio; in the shows, each participant is sharing their story, one has music, and one includes a poem. Lucky Lew and Stella Beratlis are show producers. The participation thus far indicates that storytelling is an appealing opportunity for local people.

The mission of the project is to encourage people to come to the studio and record their experiences of living in California and their life stories, through music, poetry and storytelling. Modesto Sound is fully equipped to record music and has been doing so since 2005 when it first opened in the house of audio engineer and entrepreneur Brenda Francis. Today, after over ten years of community service, including teaching and facilities at local high schools, Modesto Sound has grown into a non-profit one-stop educational facility, in a public media building off of Yosemite Boulevard, that

provides both recording and live sound services.

Early publicity regarding the Project advertised that the time commitment required several days. However, Modesto Sound has found that project participation can be flexible on days and times. Furthermore, the project is also mobile and can accommodate for people that cannot make it to the studio by coming to them. Grants and donations for CARP are earmarked to reach out to low-income participants; thus, these participants are given priority in project participation, but all members of the community are welcome to inquire about the chance to share their story.

Mark your calendars to attend our free showcasing of completed shows, including the attendance of media representatives, producers, engineers, and participants of the project to be held Saturday, June 23, 2018, from 2 p.m.-4 p.m. at the Stanislaus County Library in downtown Modesto. Come mingle, enjoy refreshments, hear the stories from CARP participants, and more!

ACTION: To listen to completed shows right now, please visit modestosound.org. Modesto Sound welcomes new sponsors to become involved, to partner with us in assuring that everyone who wants to participate in the California Audio Roots Project will have the opportunity to do so! For information on participating in the project, call Program Director Janet Seay, 209-573-0533 or email Modesto Sound staff at studio@modestosound.org.



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

Stockton

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

FEBRUARY

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science) presents free, informative, engaging, inspiring community science programs. Fridays, 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 (*except where noted). **Feb. 23:** Dr. M Jackson, “The Secret Lives of Icelandic Glaciers.” National Geographic Explorer and TEDx speaker. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4R5-y0Dc1s>. **March 16:** Dr. Lori Silverstein, FDA process for approval of new drugs. ***April 6:** MJC East Campus Auditorium, A Family Science (all ages) Presentation, TED speaker, Dr. Puragra (Raja) GuhaThakurta, UCSC and Lick Observatory, “Our Place in the Cosmos.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0WTzVNB2g4>

MJC Spring Science Colloquium: 3:15pm – 4:15 p.m. Contact Teri Curtis (209) 575-6775, curtist@mjc.edu. **Jan 31:** Erin Loury, FishBio, Fish Biologist, Fisheries Research, Monitoring, and Conservation: From Central Valley Salmon to Mekong Giant Catfish. **Feb. 7:** James Hopf, Energies for the Future (tba).

January 30 – March 2: Collision V: Foto Modesto II features photographer QT Luong known for being the first to photograph all 59 US National Parks—in large format. He is featured in the film The National Parks: America’s Best Idea, by Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan. Visit terragalleria.com. Info. on other Foto Modesto venues at FotoModesto.com. Mistlin Gallery, 209-529-3369; 1015 J St., Modesto. information@ccaagallery.org

7 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL: What Do You Stand For McHenry & J St., 4:00-5:00 pm.

10 SAT: The State Theatre presents “*Coretta: The One-woman Stage Play*”. 1307 J. St., 7:00 pm. Visit <http://ww2.thestate.org/calendar/event/1033>. Become a member of the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/membership>

11: SUN Afternoons at CBS: Our Valentine tradition goes Cabaret when Christine Capsuto commands the stage with her effortless dramatic vocal prowess, quirky humor, and graceful poise. Our special Valentine Tea event and the performance are included with a season subscription; otherwise, there is a special \$35 single ticket price for this event. All concerts held at 1705 Sherwood Ave. at 3 pm. Tickets at the CBS office and at the door. Single Tickets (with the exception of Feb.): \$25/Adults; \$20/Seniors & Students; \$10 children. Call (209) 571-6060 for tickets or info. More at sundaysatcbs.com

18 SUN: The Modesto Film Society and The State Theatre presents *The Blues Brothers*. 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://ww2.thestate.org/calendar/event/902>. Become a member of the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/membership>

24 SAT: The Modesto Peace/Life Center’s Annual Meeting, 8:30 am to noon. 720 13th St. Modesto. All welcome.

LOOKING AHEAD

March 2: Peace Essay Contest Awards Ceremony, Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, MJC West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., Modesto. 7:00 pm.

March 17: Insight Meditation Central Valley presents A Daylong with Kevin Griffin: Living Kindness: Buddhist

Teachings for a Troubled World. 10:00 am to 4:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Info: information visit <https://tinyurl.com/imcv-kevin-griffin>

April 26: Film “Fun” Raiser for DKG Epsilon Nu Chapter, *Singin’ In The Rain*. State Theatre (1307 J St. Modesto). 5:30 pm with Wine, Appetizers, Raffle Items. 7:00 Film. Donation: \$25.00. Benefits: Education Foundation of Stanislaus County, MJC Scholarships, Library Books, Great Valley Museum. Tickets at dkg-modesto@gmail.com or contact Gloria (209) 545-0883.

June 3: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast, Modesto Church of the Brethren.

June 22-24: Peace Camp in the Sierra, Camp Peaceful Pines, Clark Fork Rd.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

Modesto Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 10:00 am at the MODSPOT, 1220 J St. Call or text 209-232-1932, email modestovineyard@gmail.com: All Welcome.

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. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: info@imcv.org

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

MONDAYS

Monday Morning Funstrummers Beginner Ukulele Lessons. Modesto Senior Center. 10:45am to Noon. Free Scenic and Bodem.

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

StanCounty Radical Mental Health: a peer facilitated support group open to people living with mental health issues. Mondays, 7 pm at the Modesto Peace/Life Center 720 13th St., Modesto. We strive to create a safe, non-judgmental space. Information: email stancountrmh@gmail.com or contact Brian Robinson at 209-302-4096.

Walk With Me, a women’s primary infertility support group and Bible study. 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm the first and third Mondays of each month (September only meeting 9/15/14 due to Labor Day). Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

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

TUESDAYS

NAACP Meeting. Christ Unity Baptist Church, 601 ‘L’ St., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 7 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.

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILs: held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), (NOTE TIME), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

MEDIA: Listen to Peace/Life Center radio, KCBP 95.5 FM streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org> (not on the air yet)

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

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

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

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

Songbooks provided. 6pm to 8pm. 1600 Carver Road, 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

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/>

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

LGBT 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

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

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

THURSDAYS

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

LGBTQA Collaborative Meetings 4th Thursdays. Agendas are the same for each meeting. Lunch meeting: Peer Recovery Art Center, 1222 J St, Modesto, Noon to 1:30 pm. Dinner meetings: Stanislaus BHRS – Redwood Room, 800 Scenic Dr., Modesto, CA 95354, 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Dedicated to promoting well-being in the LGBTQA community. John Aguirre, jpamodesto@gmail.com. 559-280-3864.

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

Third Thursday Art Walk, Downtown Modesto, downtown art galleries open – take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

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

The Book Group, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 – 5:00

pm. Info: mzjurkovic@gmail.com

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

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

Pagan Community Meeting, 1st Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

Game Night and Potluck, third Friday of each month. For 21+ only. Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St., Suite 2, Modesto. 7 pm to 10 pm. Info: John Aguirre, (559) 280-3864; jpamodesto@gmail.com

Friday Morning Funstrummers Band Rehearsal. Donation 9:15am to Noon. College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. 209-505-3216, www.Funstrummers.com.

Latino Emergency Council (LEC) 3rd Fridays, 8:15 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Dale Butler, 522-8537.

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

Sierra Club: Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 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

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

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

So Easy ~ So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabe Group. Potlucks, guest speakers, field trips, activist activities, movie nights, etc. Third Saturday of every month. Info: Kathy Haynes (209) 250-9961 or email kathyhaynesSES@gmail.com

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

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.