



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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GET YOUR TICKETS! John McCutcheon returns to Modesto January 10

By KEN SCHROEDER

Six-time Grammy nominated folk musician John McCutcheon performs in his 15th benefit concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center on Tuesday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Johnny Cash called him “the most impressive instrumentalist I’ve ever heard.” John plays the guitar, banjo, hammer dulcimer, piano autoharp and fiddle.

His socially and politically conscious songs inspire us, his songs about family and everyday life move us and his wicked sense of humor entertains us. Beyond entertainment, his concerts bring us together in a sense of community and shared values.

“This is our charge: to answer ugliness with beauty, hatred with love, despair with hope, isolation with openness.”

— John McCutcheon

In the face of the recent torrent of aggression, hate, greed and confusion, come together in a supportive community of shared values at the John McCutcheon Concert on Tuesday, Jan. 10.

Tickets are \$23 in advance, \$26 at the door and youth 18 and under are \$10. Online tickets sales are at <http://mccutcheonmodesto.eventbrite.com>. Groups of 10 or more get tickets at a discount of \$5 less per ticket. Tickets can be purchased in person by check or cash at the Brethren Church, 2301 Woodland Ave., 523-1438 or at Beads of Contentment, 1028 J St., Modesto, 523-6335.

For information, contact Ken Schroeder 209-480-4576.

Sponsor the John McCutcheon concert

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

Autoharp — \$40 *One ticket*

Guitar — \$75 *Two tickets*

Banjo — \$150 *Four tickets*

Piano — \$300 *Eight tickets*

Hammer Dulcimer — \$500 *Sixteen tickets*



To sponsor, contact Michael Jurkovic, 209-614-1573, mzjurkovic@gmail.com

You can dedicate your sponsorship to another. Specify how you would like the dedication to appear in the program (such as “In Honor of ...” or “To the Memory of ...”) The non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization.

Modesto Writers join nationwide effort to “Re-Inaugurate” Democracy

By STELLA BERATLIS

A recent Facebook post unleashed a nationwide movement of writers organizing and promoting independent “Writers Resist” events to reclaim democracy planned for January 15, 2017.

The flagship Writers Resist event, founded by poet Erin Bilieu and co-sponsored by PEN America, will feature famous literary figures braving January weather on the steps of the Public Library in New York City to read historic and contemporary writings on the ideals of democracy and free expression. Additional Writers Resist events are being held in Boston, Los Angeles, Oakland, Austin, Portland, Omaha, Seattle, London, Zurich, Hong Kong, and many more cities.

Locally, the City of Modesto’s poet laureate, Stella Beratlis—along with writer Shanyn Vitti Avila and poet Elizabeth Sousa—is organizing “Writers Resist: Modesto” in response to concern during the recent presidential campaign over public cynicism, disdain for truthfulness, and the unleashing of hatred and bigotry. Beratlis, a longtime member of the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County, wanted to present an event which

might galvanize Modesto audiences to become active in the civic life of the community, support nonprofits that address social justice issues, and network with like-minded people while having fun.

Twenty-five readers, including Lillian Vallee, Manny Moreno, Trudy Wischemann, Sam Pierstorff, Flora Carter, Paula Treick DeBoard, Aishah Saleh, Nancy Maya, Chad Sokolovsky, Optimism One, and many others are scheduled to read their own work plus selections from the Constitution and from diverse voices addressing the ideals of democracy and free expression.

The Modesto event, free and open to the public, will be held at the Prospect Theater, 1214 K St. in downtown Modesto on Sunday, January 15, starting at 6:30 pm. *Organizers will be raising funds at the event to support the work of the Modesto Peace/Life Center, specifically to help underwrite its planned radio station.*

Writers and interested public who want to attend can visit www.writersresist.org for a list of cities holding readings. To contact local organizers, please write to writersresist-modesto@gmail.com or call 209-613-9283.

Four Ways to Look at Standing Rock: An Indigenous Perspective

By KAYLA DEVAULT

A couple of weeks ago, as I stood before climate scientists, advocates, and world policy leaders at the COP22 in Morocco, I felt the increased importance of my message as climate denier Donald Trump was voted into office. My perspective as a young Native woman living on the Navajo reservation and studying both renewable energy engineering and Diné studies had earned me an appointment to the NEJAC/EPA Youth Perspectives

on Climate Working Group as well as to the SustainUs Youth Delegation attending the November climate talks in Marrakech.

I was there to bring Standing Rock to the world climate talks.

Rarely do so many nations come together in one space for a shared purpose.

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Kitchen Korner helps the formerly homeless with kitchen items

By SANDY SAMPLE

Not many homeless folk 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 plates, bowls, coffee mugs and serving dishes, but we especially need pots and pans (with lids), toasters, blenders, crockpots, toaster ovens, scrubbers, potholders and dishtowels etc. Our storage space is limited, so please don't donate everything from Grandma's kitchen at once.



ACTION: To donate 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.

Sonora's Annual MLK Birthday Celebration on Jan. 15

Sonora's Annual MLK Birthday Celebration will be held on Sunday January 15, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. at the Sonora High School Auditorium, 430 N. Washington. Dr. Mimi Kim will speak on Transformative Justice.

Widely recognized speaker, author, teacher and consultant, Dr. Kim brings expertise which extends broadly through the areas of non-violence, sexual assault, domestic violence and community health.

She is an Assistant Professor at California State University, Long Beach, and founder of the Oakland based TORCH program (Training and Organizing Resources for Community Health). Dr. Kim is also the founder of INCITE and Creative Interventions. Her current activities focus on building capacity for grassroots social justice organizations to make community-based transformative justice and accountability real possibilities.

Transformative justice is a general strategy for responding non-violently to conflicts. It is concerned with the root causes of community problems. A transformative justice approach seeks to change the conditions that create, maintain and support oppression or exploitation. It takes the principles and practices of restorative justice beyond the criminal justice system and into the community. It treats an offense as a relational and educational opportunity for victims, offenders and the affected community. Transformative justice uses a holistic approach, looking not just at crime, but at the causes of crime, as it seeks healing and peacemaking.

Dr. Kim will bring to our podium a long history of advocacy and activism aimed at creating collective responses to interpersonal violence in communities across the country.

There will be music and winners of the 2016 MLK essay contest.

Patty Castillo Davis and Compadres celebrate women at Sunday Afternoons at CBS

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Patty Castillo Davis, a multi-genre singer/songwriter and MAMA Award winner, brings a group of equally talented women singers to celebrate women at Sunday Afternoons at CBS 3 pm January 22, 1705 Sherwood Ave., Modesto.

She and the **Patty Castillo Davis Band** will honor women and their role in positively impacting lives, fostering community, and promoting global stewardship with songs from around the world about equality, peace, war, love, loss, family, women's rights, and immigration.

Patty, a Music Liturgist/Cantor at Modesto's St. Joseph Catholic Church, has opened for such diverse super stars as Los Lonely Boys, Beth Hart, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Dwight Yoakum, Dave Mason and Jimmie Vaughn. Her experience and repertoire in English, Spanish, Latin, Italian and Portuguese

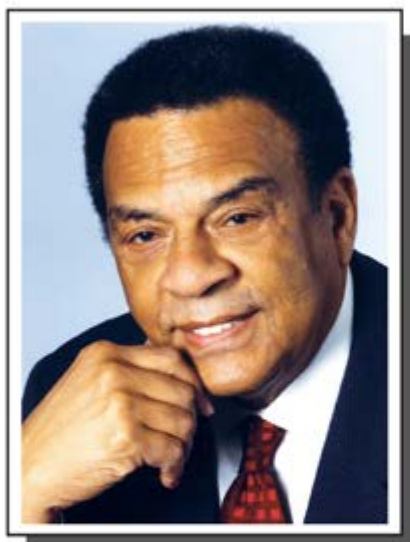
worship music took her to the Vatican and an audience with His Holiness, Pope John Paul II in Roma Italy. Her original compositions have been synced with television, film and local advertising projects, and Los Angeles

and Nashville publishing communities have expressed interest in her songwriting repertoire.

ACTION: Tickets for this concert, as well as the Valentine Concert and 2nd Annual Valentine Tea (a sell out last season) on February 12 and the Genticorum concert on March 19, are available through the CBS office weekdays from 9 am to 1 pm (571-6060), through brownpapertickets.com, or at the door. www.sundaysatcbs.com



Speaker: Civil Rights pioneer: ANDREW YOUNG



SATURDAY, February, 4 2017

23rd Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration

Performing Arts & Media Center
Modesto Junior College, East Campus
435 College Ave., Modesto

- 6:00 p.m. - Doors Open
- 7:00 p.m. - Free program

— Sponsors —



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City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Dept.; Modesto Junior College; Modesto Peace/Life Center; California State University, Stanislaus; Associated Students of Modesto Junior College; Rockwell, Kelly & Duarte, LLP; Central Valley Democratic Club; College Avenue Congregational Church. *Sponsors needed. Email jcostello@igc.org*

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Volunteers ready to assist!

Call 209-222-8624 to set an appointment!

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



Volunteers Needed for Modesto High School's Day of Respect

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

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

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

Americans would not be who we are today had it not been for the contributions that were made, often at the ultimate cost, by people of African ancestry. With a story so big and vast, how is it possible to tell it? Sankofa Theatre Company will take you on that journey with "Colored People's Time."

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

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

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

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



Workshop on Restorative Communication in Times of Conflict to be offered on Feb. 25th

By LORI WONG

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

Conflict and stress are regular features in almost everyone's life. This free event will guide participants through a day of mindfulness exercises, training in non violent and restorative communication, and opportunity for discussion & practice.

Participants will be empowered to more effectively resolve and manage conflicts in their own life, as well as how to be effective ambassadors for change in their larger communities.

Learn how to:

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

Participants should bring their own lunch or something to share. This event is offered at no charge to promote the spread of peaceful resolutions to conflict. Participants may make a suggested donation of \$20-\$50 to support the teaching if they so choose. No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

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

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

Ryan is passionate about the transformational power that employing Youth Development and Restorative Justice principles and frameworks can have on our classrooms and communities, and strongly believes that all parents, teachers, and community leaders deserve access to the highest caliber of professional development and support, regardless of location, background, or resources.

Stella Beratlis' Fundraiser – Writers Resist: Modesto Supporting Peace/Life Center & Community Radio

As an erstwhile deejay at community radio station KDVS in Davis, I know how important it is for communities to have independently-run media for public affairs, news, and music. From the standpoints of intellectual freedom and community engagement, community radio is essential: it's a democratic form of media; it allows us to hear music and programs we would never otherwise have a chance to enjoy; and when it's done right, it engages the imagination. I'm excited to help the Modesto Peace/Life Center's new radio project find a group of supporters and potential volunteers.

About the station: the Modesto Peace/Life Center just got its construction permit last year in August to build a full-power FM radio station. They are first planning web

streaming to help get the word out that they are creating a radio station.

They don't have the equipment to do this yet, so that's where we come in!

ACTION: To help, go here: <https://www.crowdrise.com/writersresistmodesto>

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Thrifty (Thermal) Cooking for Two

By JENIFER WEST

This writer has mentioned thermal cookers before, and is delighted to recommend them again, as energy-saving ‘appliances’. For those unfamiliar with these wonder devices, they work by retaining heat – food is first brought to boil for a few minutes, and is then placed in the thermal cooker to finish cooking over the next several hours. (Kind of like a cordless crock pot.)

Because thermal cookers require liquid in the dish being cooked, it’s easy to assume they’re only useful for soups, beans, or dishes with a sauce of some kind. The other challenge, particularly for small households, is in filling them up adequately. Air is the enemy of thermal cooking – a thermal cooker must be at least 75% full for it to work properly. The smallest cooking pot in either of the two thermal cookers we own is 3 liters – way more food than it makes sense to cook, for the two of us.

Using containers to cook in them solves both problems at once. In fact, many kinds of food can be cooked in a container in a thermal cooker – including things like ‘roast’ beef and potatoes, and even breads and muffins. Wide-mouth, pint-sized canning jars make good cooking vessels.

Another big advantage of using containers to thermal cook small amounts of food is flexibility – especially useful in households with varying culinary preferences. If someone doesn’t enjoy or is allergic to onions, for example, it’s easy to leave them out of his or her portion. And since individual portions can be cooked, there is very little waste.



Yet, while cooking in canning jars works well for lots of foods, it has its limitations. Pork chops, for example, certainly wouldn’t work. Fortunately, there is another type of container that works well – so well, in fact, that it’s used in a lot of high-end hotels and restaurants: food-grade plastic cooking bags. The technical term for it is sous vide (“sue veed”), and you can even buy special vacuum sealers and water bath ‘ovens’ for it. The sous vide method can be used for cooking just about any food – it’s even used for things like steak! Once cooked, food can be browned briefly in a pan, or put under the broiler for a minute or two, if needed.

If you have a vacuum sealer, translating the sous vide concept to thermal cooking makes it easy to prepare individual servings of food ahead of time, and refrigerate or freeze until it’s needed. It can later be reheated or cooked in the thermal cooker. Some foods, like potatoes and other root vegetables, rice, and beans, are better if cooked before freezing, while others, like meat, can be prepped and frozen raw. (The boiling time will need to be extended for any food that is cooked or reheated from frozen.)

As an environmentally- and health-conscious person, I struggled at first with the idea of cooking in plastic bags, particularly in individual portions. However, the food-grade plastic bags available now are supposed to be free of phthalates, BPA’s, and other toxic components. And, as this method of cooking can virtually eliminate waste, I believe the benefits for our household are worth the cost.

Thermal cookers make great traveling companions – food can be prepped at home and cooked or reheated on the road. Dinner on our recent trip included ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, and Waldorf salad. Everything was cooked at home and frozen in individual portions (except for the salad). It was sooooo easy to toss everything into the thermal cooking pot with some water, let it simmer for a bit, then stick the pot into the thermal cooker. When we got back from the beach, hungry, putting dinner on the table was as easy as opening the cooker, snipping open the bags, and emptying the contents onto our plates. No muss, no fuss – just good, healthy, home-cooked food. And we didn’t spend the \$60 or more that a dinner on the Coast would typically cost.

Breakfasts and lunches were easy, too. Breakfast consisted of potatoes, cooked ahead and reheated the night before, and omelets, cooked in pouches. Bacon, solar-cooked at home, rounded off the meal. Hot, homemade cream of broccoli soup and clam chowder were welcome in the middle of the day, after a long walk on the beach. I figure we saved at least \$100, by prepping food at home and cooking / reheating it on the road.

Using a thermal cooker at home, whether cooking for one, two, or a crowd, can make life easier, while conserving resources and saving money. Using a thermal cooker on the road can make traveling easier, healthier, and less expensive. Is it time for you to invest in one of these cooking wonders?

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To get involved or learn more about the new station, contact James Costello, (209) 402-9191 or jcostello@igc.org. You can donate by sending your check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353 with "Radio Station" in the memo. You can also donate online at <http://peacelifecenter.org>

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Rivers of Words, Forests of Tules: Central Valley Nature and Culture in Season

By LILLIAN VALLEE

77. Who Needs a Garden?

At the north end of my street, North Conejo Avenue, is a 956-by-60-foot strip of bare ground along Encina Avenue, across from a dozen newer La Loma homes built in the nineties and later, after the walnut orchard on the corner was sold. Some of us who have lived in the neighborhood a while have long harbored the fantasy of planting an oak and bunchgrass meadow on that bare ground to mimic what must have been a pre-agricultural oak savanna, located on a terrace above the flood plain of Dry Creek, a tributary of the Tuolumne River.

The land, once owned by MID, has now passed to the City of Modesto, with a narrow strip belonging to a private owner. Both the City and the private owner are open to restoring the site to a native plant community garden which, in addition to beautifying what has been a barren, weed-infested strip of land sometimes used to dump prunings or trash, would model water-wise native plant use (little or no water after the rainy season, no artificial fertilizers, no insecticides). Valley Oaks would constitute the backbone of a design consisting mainly of native trees, shrubs and annuals which would restore native pollinator-plant as well as plant-bird relationships, and could be used as an educational tool for La Loma Junior High students (the land is a crosswalk away from the school entrance) and perhaps even as the destination for a day hike for Wilson Elementary students.

A native plant garden is more than just a response to drought, however, or even habitat restoration, as those who



cultivate native species soon learn. No one writes about this with greater eloquence than Judith Lowry in her California gardening classics, *Gardening with a Wild Heart* and *The Landscaping Ideas of Jays*. "...[G]rowing local species is a way to have our gardens sing their unique, regional song," she writes. They restore our sense of place and sharpen regional literacy.

At the eastern end of the strip, the La Loma Grace Church has successfully installed and maintained a small community vegetable garden for the last several years. Anyone who needed fresh tomatoes or corn or squash was free to harvest them. And the Calvary Baptist Church recently hosted the California Native Plant Society's fall sale, at which La Loma residents bought native plants, many of which were donated to the new project. What may be even more exciting about the native plant garden is the link it would provide between the foods Californians now eat and those they once ate: "The fourth phase in our becoming native to this place, incorporating native foods into our diet," writes Lowry, "is gaining interest; we call it 'the real California cuisine.'" Balanocultures [acorn-eating cultures], are among the oldest on the planet and we are fortunate to have access to California Indians who still consume acorns and many other native plant seeds, corms, and greens. In learning about native plants, we come to understand multiple strategies of survival and

the relationship between gardening and wildland preservation as well as how to avoid the kind of ignorance that chopped down a lovely grove of drought-deciduous buckeyes along Dry Creek because someone thought they were dead). The La Loma neighborhood garden, therefore could also provide a reverent link between Modesto's urban culture and the land management practices of California's indigenous peoples.

The La Loma Community Garden dream has found a most devoted and tireless champion in Rhonda Allen, a resident and community activist and artist, who has been indefatigable in rounding up donations of materials and machines to get the project underway as the City works on a Memorandum of Understanding to work out concerns about liability and maintenance. She has weeded, raked, hauled, organized and attended meetings at which she has presented a vision for the garden that is galvanizing. Local schools, businesses and organizations have donated their labor, time, trucks, mulch, rocks, plants and irrigation supplies (to establish plants) at Rhonda's urging. The unglamorous field work of weeding, digging, spreading mulch, arranging rocks, and removing trash has not been a magnet for volunteers except for a few stalwarts. Folks who could contribute materials or a few hours of work would be most welcome.

A project of this scale requires a vital imagination and persistence, not just to overcome the naysayers--the people whose fear of vandals or the sleeping homeless prevents them from imagining something better than a vacant strip—but to outlast the delays of bureaucratic red tape. A garden is a powerfully transforming series of small actions; a communal investment in respect, generosity, and kindness; and a unifying language cutting across age, income, and culture. A garden is a hopeful, convivial and even healing enterprise, especially when "the darkness around us is deep."

ACTION: To join the list of volunteers, please contact Rhonda Allen: rhondasaddress@sbcglobal.net or (209) 567-2167.

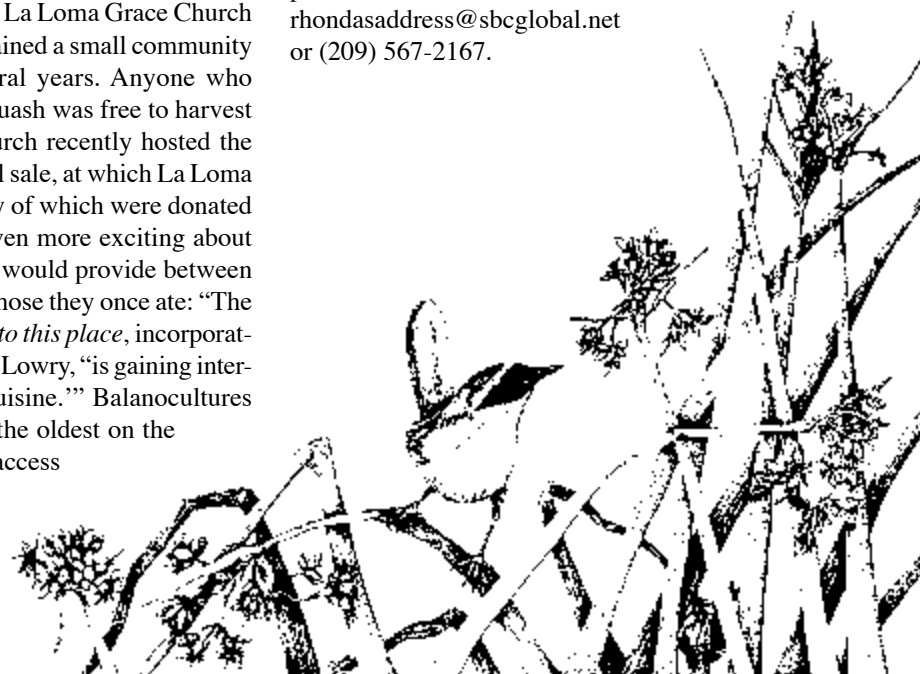


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Swarming: How the Movement of Movements Rolls

By RIVERA SUN, author of *The Dandelion Insurrection*

The word you're looking for is *swarming*. The people are rising, resisting, changing, growing, evolving . . . and as they do, they're swarming like bees or birds in the hundreds, thousands, millions. They're coming together to stop pipelines, then dispersing and reassembling in a different configuration to speak up and say that Black Lives Matter. They stream off in a thousand directions and then reappear at the gates of Monsanto to protest GMOs. They fly together for LGBTQ rights; they veer off and then show up for peace and ending wars.

We are the Movement of Movements . . . and this is how we roll. We are hundreds of movements and thousands of campaigns, groups, and organizations. We are millions of individuals. We are both protest activists and community builders. We build new systems and launch constructive programs. We blockade, boycott, and strike. Nonviolent actions are the tools we use; creative resistance is our hallmark. We show up, again and again, seeing that all the issues are connected, and that our movements are interconnected as well.

Swarming is a vitally important concept to know in order to perceive how the Movement of Movements operates. Without this understanding in mind, it's easy to miss the forest for the trees, and it's easy to miss the Movement of Movements amidst the hundreds of actions. Each time one of the campaigns breaks through the corporatized media, or flares up in protest in a visible and dramatic way, it's common for people to think of that event in isolation, as a singular occurrence coming out of nowhere. But the foundation of today is the long history of the past, and the culture of resistance, persistence, and active nonviolence that has been taught from one generation to the next. There are people in the Movement of Movements who are as old as Grace Lee Boggs, who died just a few years ago at the age of 100; and there are people in the Movement of Movements who are as young as the children yet-to-come, the ones we carry in our hearts, the possibility of the future that motivates us into action.

We are here, there, and everywhere. We are *swarming* the edifices of empire and domination, corruption, racism, sexism, destruction, war, injustice, oppression, and greed. The US military has spent decades and millions of dollars trying to use the principles of swarming in its operations, but it is the Movement of Movements that is beginning to actualize swarming's hidden potential. We are many; they are few. This basic equation underscores why the Movement of Movements

actualizes swarming principles so well. There are millions of us. We are networked in complex patterns of hard-to-codify (and hard to suppress) interconnected systems.

But even within the Movement of Movements, we would be stronger if we saw what we, ourselves, are doing. Swarming is such an overlooked, underutilized, essential understanding for the complex field of our overlapping movements, that I even wrote about it in my popular novel, *The Dandelion Insurrection*, to try to seed greater awareness of the potential of our strength in this regard.

The Dandelion Insurrection used the example of the murmurations of starlings or swallows to convey the idea of swarming. This real-life example is one of nature's most

**Nonviolent actions are the tools
we use; creative resistance
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intriguing uses of collective nonviolent action. When a hawk attacks the nests of the small birds, they rise up together and use a swarming effect called a murmuration to drive the hawk away without suffering harm to themselves or causing harm to the hawk. Like us, the birds are small in comparison to the power of their opposition. And like the Movement of Movements, they use their greater numbers and organized, strategic action to hold back the dangerous attacks of a predator.

Brilliant . . . and highly applicable to our situation There are 320 million US citizens. As the saying goes, they can't stop all of us. In *The Dandelion Insurrection*, the characters reframe their perception of the struggle (as we could also do) from the feeling of being lonely heroes facing a massive

dragon of a hidden corporate dictatorship to seeing that:

"We're not resisting them . . . they're resisting us! They may be an absurdly powerful group, but they're tiny compared to the forces of the Dandelion Insurrection. We're not a handful of radicals. We're all of Life itself! We are the ivy crawling up the buildings, the moss breaking down the bricks, and the dandelions shooting up in the sidewalks. We're as vast as the planet and as microscopic as infectious disease." –from The Dandelion Insurrection.

In the Movement of Movements, we, too, are the ivy scaling the bricks, the dandelions shooting up through the cracks, and the birds swarming the hawk. And, we could get better at this. We could become wildly skillful at swarming and self-organizing and acting strategically.

As we race into action for racial justice, climate justice, water protection, peace, trade justice, economic justice, pro-democracy struggles, and so much more; the question posed to all of us is how do we stop running around like chickens with our heads cut off. How do we start flying like smart, aware, and active starlings in this beautiful, massive murmuration of the Movement of Movements?

First, we have to embrace the complexity. The movements are profuse, abundant, fertile, overwhelming, wild, unpredictable, busy, and prolific. That's life, folks. That's what a complex living system of change emerging naturally with the challenges of the times looks like in action. That's what millions of people, thousands of actions, and hundreds of movements organizing in a non-hierarchical, self-organizing swarm looks like. It ought to be intimately familiar to humanity by now, since these kinds of living systems are the basis of all life on Earth. However, millennia of dominator culture with violently enforced ideologies of separation have left us believing that we must fear, tame, and try to control this wildly complex system of change.

The first step in fomenting an awake and aware, strategic and skillful Movement of Movements is to help each other surrender to being a part of – not in charge of – this complex, living systems of nonviolent movements for change. We need to learn to watch the flow of the Movement of Movements like

continued next page



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How the Movement of Movements Rolls

... from page 6

sages observing the Tao, looking for the wise and strategic ways to show up and support the pivot points of change. We have to listen for those little voices in our heads that freak out over the seemingly unorganized chaos of it all. Does it drive you crazy that there's not "one great leader" commanding this massive army? Check! There's that dominator ideology showing up again – it's what got us into this mess, so let's let it go and try something more effective. Do you keep insisting that, "we have to unite everybody under one umbrella, or get them all working for one platform"? There it is again. Get quiet for a moment and *listen* to what the people in the Movement of Movements are saying. We're not speaking in one voice, or reciting one script together. We're singing, in chorus, in harmony, in many parts, for many things. Our message is complex and multi-layered. We have complex goals and objectives. That's okay. We're up against a massive systemic crisis. There are no silver bullet solutions.

We're evolving toward something new and different, and – like any ecosystem in a process of change – we're making millions of shifts and choices. The birds are growing longer feathers; the fish are bumping up against the shore and sprouting legs; the plants are putting down deeper roots; the wooly mammoths are shedding fur and their hides are turning grey. Every person and strand of the Movement of Movements is making one of these essential ecosystems shifts as we evolve together. Every part of the whole has a role to play . . . and we don't need to "unite" because we're already interconnected, overlapping and adapting to one another as we change. Trust us. We've got this like the Earth has got evolution. Since the dawn of humanity's existence, we've been doing this. It's only in the past couple thousand years that some of us have forgotten what this process is all about.

Perhaps the most hopeful sign that humanity might survive its current existential crisis is the emergence of this powerful Movement of Movements. And, if we can stop fighting our nature, and learn to nurture our complexity, grow our collaborative strategies, and foster our ability to swarm in wise and beautiful ways, then we stand a chance of creating the massive systemic change that we need.

Here are a few steps each one of us can take toward that potential:

Learn to fly. Like the starlings or swallows, if we want to swarm or murmurate, we need to stretch our wings a little. Study nonviolent action, strategy, and organizing.

Practice. Don't wait for a hawk to arrive to see if the hatchlings can fly. Get into the sky. Start a local action group. Train together. And then organize solidarity actions with what's going on in the Movement of Movements.

Get connected. Learn to see the Movement of Movements by following movement news. Join some email lists for groups that are using nonviolent action to address social justice issues. Subscribe to alternative journals, such as

**There are millions of us. We
are networked in complex
patterns of hard-to-codify
(and hard to suppress)
interconnected systems.**

Popular Resistance's Daily Digest, which is a great source of information about what's going on in the movements.

Understand your role. We're not always the lead bird in the flock. Notice what role you play in each strand of the Movement of Movements. Are you a supporter, donor, follower, organizers, uplifter, trainer, or one of the many leaders in this leaderful Movement of Movements. Each role is essential to the success of the whole. Honor them. Share the roles. Do your best in each capacity.

See the swarm. Perceiving the fluid motions of a swarming living system of change requires training our eyes and minds to see it. Follow the movement news and look for how the movements overlap, connect, support, and advance one another collectively. Notice when you start thinking of protests or actions as isolated incidences. Challenge that perception, and replace it with an understanding of how swarming works. Observe how people, groups, and organizations in the Movement of Movements gather, disperse, and reassemble as we work on the interconnected issues.

Spread the idea of the Movement of Movements. Awareness is powerful. When we know what we're doing, we can grow even more skillful at doing it. Share these ideas of the Movement of Movements with your friends and col-

leagues, talk about it. Explore how the movements overlap and interconnect. Discuss how the concepts of swarming can become guiding principles for how you show up or move into action in these times.

Remember, if the presence of a powerful, swarming Movement of Movements is the saving grace of humanity on this planet . . . then helping to nurture a wise, strategic and self-aware living system of change is one of the most important actions you can do today to help us all in these times.

Author/Activist Rivera Sun, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is the author of The Dandelion Insurrection, Billionaire Buddha and Steam Drills, Treadmills, and Shooting Stars, the cohost of Love (and Revolution) Radio, and the co-initiator of Live Share Grow: A Movement for the 100%. She is a trainer and social media coordinator for Campaign Nonviolence and Pace e Bene. Sun attended the James Lawson Institute on Strategic Nonviolent Resistance in 2014 and her essays on social justice movements appear in Counterpunch, Truthout and Popular Resistance. www.riverasun.com

<http://www.riverasun.com/swarming-how-the-movement-of-movements-rolls/#comments>

Never despair

By STEPHANIE VanHOOK

**"Man's nature is not essentially evil.
Brute nature has been known to yield
to the influence of love. You must
never despair of human nature."**

~ Gandhi, *Harijan*, November 1938

The 1930s were not a very hopeful time in the history of world politics, yet here we have Gandhi echoing across the years with a clarion call of hope: do not despair of human nature. People may be obstinate; people may be unkind; people may be downright cruel; but that's not the whole story. People can change. People can exhibit extraordinary selflessness. People can still love even in the face of the most challenging circumstances, with a fierce, unrelenting love that can stop pipelines and wars. But this love is not a soft, sweet love. It's the kind of love that resists, and protects, and draws out the highest powers—real power—in people. In a word: nonviolence.

From the Daily Metta, <http://mettacenter.org/daily-metta/never-despair/>



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Dear Syrian Refugees,

You are welcome in my home.
Not everyone welcomes you,
not in their country, not in their city,
not on the streets where they walk their dogs,
stopping only to let them urinate on trees.
These are sacred lands, they say,
and your hands are dirty. But my porch light
is always on. My door is always open.
I have a futon in the front room
and a bookcase full of poetry
from Levine to Rumi if you get bored.
And there are picture books too,
leftover from my children
who have graduated
to bigger words
like *scared*,
like *starving*,
like *survival*.
My 7-year-old son has a bunk bed.
He says you can have the bottom
because he likes the top. It makes him
feel like an airplane pilot every night
when he climbs into the cockpit of his bed
where his dreams take flight.
He's even set aside stuffed animals
for your sons and daughters who might
want to cuddle something more than fear
and the heartbreaking chill of despair.
Our house is warm. I know
the oceans you've crossed
have been cold. Rain and winter
have beaten your bodies down,
but still you have the strength
to keep your spirits up and moving.
When you get to my house, there will be rest.
There will be hot tea and dinner.
There will be laughter.
There will be safety.
You will be home.
At least, I hope it will feel that way
if only for a moment.

— Sam Pierstorff

Follow Sam Pierstorff on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/sampierstorff

Freeing your Life with Words: a workshop with Susan Wooldridge

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



Susan will first talk about her journals and her own writing process, including the "fourth genre" where categories-prose, poetry, fiction and non-fiction blend. Then participants will gather (and steal) words from a scattering of books and create a group "word pool." Inner peace, joy and freedom will be the focus.

Through play attendees will begin to listen within to their deepest and most mysterious voice, delving into what soul says, heart says, mind says, water says, our town says as they write about who they are, where they come from and where they're going. Along the way they will explore imagery, close observation, metaphor and "dream sense" immersed in what poet Ann Waldman calls "goofy profundity."

Susan may introduce the writing of poem/prose invocations, asking objects to bring poets the qualities they need. The workshop also may include guided imagery to take poets to our childhood home, become an object in the center of the house and write from within the object or she may have

folks meet with their shadows and write from a poem, often a moving and transformational experience. Another option may be to spin out midsummer night's dream love poems to themselves, to another, to a tree, a child, or the universe.

The day will draw on opposites, noun/verbs, imagery and wholeness. Treasure will spiral forth from our imaginations as our work/play guides.

Both laughter and tears will be welcome. Sharing work is always optional.

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

Comments on Susan's workshops:

Exhilarating, playful and profound. Opens a tremendous creative frontier for people. --Kathlyn Hendricks, author of *Conscious Loving* and *The Conscious Heart*.

I didn't want to say goodbye to that day. -William, SED 5th grader, Chico.

Susan doesn't teach poetry so much as unlock it. Her teaching itself is poetry. -Amy Tullius, Poetry and the Piano Workshop

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

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

Susan Wooldridge: poet, writer



Susan has held workshops on creative language and process with thousands of adults, teachers and children including a series of workshops in rural California libraries sponsored by Poets & Writers Org. and UCLA's Center for the Book. Her workshops have been featured in *Poets and Writers* magazine.

Her book, *poemcrazy: freeing your life with words*, published in 1996 by Clarkson Potter/Random House, is in its 27th printing. Anne Lamott writes, "This is a wonderful book—smart, wide-eyed, joyful, helpful, inspiring. You're going to love it, and love writing poetry more for having read it."

Susan's other publications include a chapbook of poems, *Bathing with Ants* and *Foolsgold: Making Something from Nothing (and Freeing Your Creative Process)*. Both *poemcrazy* and *Foolsgold* were Quality Paperback Book selections.

She has a B.A. in anthropology from Barnard College and an interdisciplinary masters in art and writing from CSU, Chico.

Susan is writing a book about land and language from her hilltop office in The Bolt, a "canned ham" vintage trailer. She lives in a co-housing village in Chico, California, at the edge of Bidwell Park (or Sherwood Forest), where Errol Flynn's *Robin Hood* was filmed.

Check out Susan's website, www.susanwooldridge.com

An Interview with the Baal Shem Tov (Jewish Mystic, 1700s)

Well, the spinning began early.
 My feet took me to the trees
 and circling a tree led to spinning.
 Next I climbed.
 I *knew* the moment I hung by my knees
 and saw roots in the sky.
 Blue ground speaking.
 Yes, my mother let me do these things.
 It's the safety of a large family.
 Lost in the folds I slipped out
 and I'm still slipping.
 No, that began when I was seven.
 From earth and sky both
 the voice came and took me.
 Joy.
 No, there were no toothbrushes.
 I used foxtails to clean my teeth.
 Yes, I wore robes, no underpants,
 we had no elastic.
 Of course I wandered.
 Why would I stay in one place?
 I followed my feet and soon other feet
 followed mine. That was lovely,
 we all sat in oak trees
 and sang and listened.
 Wine?
 Yes, my dear, a little wine.
 Don't you love the grapes?
 Where can love take you?
 Me, it was uphill
 in a circle at the top for a time
 and then down.
 Yes, sometimes I got cold
 but I always dried out in the morning.
 Heavens, I can't tell you that, dear.
 That you must discover for yourself.
 Though you may want to climb a tree
 (with drawers beneath your gown)
 and hang by your knees.

(published in Bathing with Ants, Bear Star Press)

Heading Home

in a late night spring storm
 that flat northeast glow
 becomes my town
 bidding me home like a lantern
 hushed little midnight sunset
 blushing bedroom eyes
 low and sweet like a rain song

Bayliss Blue Gum, Ord Ferry, River Road,
 shiny night paths home where clouds

rush like smoky fields on fire
 and the Dayton sheriff's car pokes out
 an alligator snout
 to slow down trespassers like me.
 Mother's Four Corners naps
 near silhouettes of night trees
 like tall thoughts brewing
 in patches of Tule fog in the glow
 of my electrical rose quartz city
 where lights click out one by one
 and we slip to sleep unaware
 we are each bathed
 in our own radiance.

Today by the Creek I Pretend I'm the Dalai Lama

Today by the creek I pretend I'm the Dalai Lama. I don't
 know enough to get it wrong. The robes saffron, golden.
 The smile, serene, the walk, feline, Persian, with a hint of
 bobcat.

My breath comes from the belly, sanctifies plants that sway
 on the out-breath, spring seeds released by my presence.
 My imagined sandals lined in black cotton tread lightly.
 People smile, Namaste, bow with tears in their eyes.

As Dalai Lama I eat lightly. I forego coffee, share my
 morning oatmeal, split my chocolate enviro-mint with
 Rose at Chico Natural Foods. I bestow smile after smile,
 hands raised in blessing. I feel the sun bless my eyelids,
 the frog bless my ears, a twang on the base fiddle, a strum
 on the steel guitar. I notice small beetles spinning as they
 mate, tail ends merged in bug ecstasy. And as Lama,
 celibate as a leaf, myself, I smile at them.

One water strider jots back and forth nearby, wondering,
 no doubt, is it he? Is it really he? Our neutral, kind,
 enlightened Dalai Lama? The Kingfisher asks, and other
 birds, I can hear it in their calls--Is it he? Is it he? Is it she?
 Is it she? She she she she chi chi chi..... I bow my head in
 gratitude toward the pill bug in my leg's shadow. I love it
 unconditionally. I love being Dalai Lama. I can't wait for
 night with Dalai Lama dreams. On my knee one of those
 beetles with orange eyes and black wings is stretching in a
 bug yoga of oblation, antennae atwirl, wings open in sun
 salutation in honor of my presence. And as Dalai Lama I
 am one with it.

For today, just today, as Dalai Lama, I declare it. In spite
 of everything, in spite of blood on hard cement, villages in
 flames, in spite of hunger and fear, I declare it, I declare it,
 I am Dalai Lama, today, here by the creek, and all is well.

Everything Breaks

Waves show us
 ice shows us
 finger nails toe
 nails bridges quake
 and break necklaces
 snap and pearls roll
 to corners
 where ants
 carry crumbs to tumbling
 hills, tunnels, clouds
 break hearts
 and roofs collapse, tornadoes,
 floods, sudden winds
 at night sweep under
 our doors breaking
 all we've ever
 held
 together

(from Bathing with Ants, Bear Star Press)

Camouflage

If the earth could hide
 clouds cover oceans
 valleys disguise themselves
 like lizards flattened and changing
 on changing leaves
 with flowers
 like hearts
 wilting
 milkweed's white
 blood pulsing
 and the earth so still
 like a white rabbit
 in new snow
 just breathing

The Blind Tour Guide

taps across Puerto Rico until the red
 tip of the white cane hits ocean.
 Here, he declares, we have a beach.
 I'm on the blind tour.
 It's been going on forever.
 Tomorrow in Venezuela we'll walk
 into buildings, sing in espanol and dance
 till we bump in the dark.
 We shut our eyes
 and hold the coattails of our blind
 guide, sure as a compass,
 striding into jungle,

never grazing one winged bug.

Green Tips for a Green Planet: Batteries – Disposable or Rechargeable?

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

The holiday season has come and gone, and now most everyone is in possession of a new and/or ongoing store of electronic devices in need of batteries.

Rechargeable batteries cost up to 10 times more than non-rechargeable alkaline batteries, but can be charged up to 100 times making them the most environmentally friendly and cost-effective battery choice for constantly used energy grabber devices, while low-drain devices can use money-saving disposable batteries, which can be recycled through county hazardous waste recycling programs.

Some devices, like video game controllers, get continuous use and go through batteries quickly. Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, though initially more expensive to buy, may be

most cost-effective in the long run for these devices. At the same time disposable batteries might be kinder on the pocket book for low-drain products like remote controls, wall and table clocks, and smoke detectors.

It has been suggested that keeping a record of how many batteries one uses for a few months will help determine which type is most green and cost-effective for each device.

Cautions for battery use and disposal:

1. Use only the correct manufacturer recommended size for the each device.



2. Keep batteries in their original packaging at room temperature in a dry place until ready to use.

3. Recycle used batteries through the county hazardous waste recycling program.

4. Never recharge a non-rechargeable battery, as it could overheat and leak. If a lithium-ion battery is overheating, hissing or bulging, immediately move the device away from any combustible materials and onto a non-combustible surface or outdoors. Water is not effective if it catches fire, but a foam extinguisher can be used in a well ventilated area.

Four Ways to Look at Standing Rock: An Indigenous Perspective

. . . from page 1

Watching the events at Standing Rock unfurl over the past year, I felt compelled to ask our Navajo leadership to divest from oil, coal, and uranium and instead invest in the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's fight against the Dakota Access pipeline. Eventually they did. Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye announced a formal stance of solidarity and traveled to Cannon Ball, North Dakota, to plant the Navajo Nation flag there. A week later, I stood on the front lines of #NoDAPL while energy company employees hit us with pepper spray and threatened us with attack dogs. I found everything dear to me, suddenly, at the heart of this battle—fought by people from the four corners of the world.

Which brings me to the significance of counting by four. To understand Standing Rock, you must remove the Western lens and adopt a holistic, indigenous perspective of the world.

BUMP bump bump bump. BUMP bump bump bump. The rhythm of the powwow drum, the heartbeat of life, beats in a sequence of fours. It celebrates the ebb and flow of the natural world. The rhythm falters only during the Honor Beats, when a Jingle Dress dancer raises her fan to catch the spirit of the drums. Rarely do so many nations come together in one space for a shared purpose. It is a gathering where commonalities are celebrated, such as the sacredness of the eagle feather and the direness of maintaining balance in the world. Certain concepts—holistic methodologies, the value of ceremony and language, the religious significance of certain landmarks, the beliefs of interconnectedness and interdependence—put indigenous groups in stark contrast with Western thinking.

This similarly has been the exception of Standing Rock.

And, just as the powwow rhythm carries four beats, an overwhelming number of indigenous communities count various elements of their lives in fours. The medicine wheel of Native culture represents the four directions. There are the four elements, which build all life and the four seasons that govern time.

Where I live in the Navajo Nation, the culture is steeped in fours. Dinébikéyah, the land given to the Diné (Navajo) by the Holy People, falls between four sacred mountains. The day is broken into four phases, which correlate to the four stages of life and the four steps that govern life in Navajo

To understand Standing Rock, you must remove the Western lens and adopt a holistic, indigenous perspective of the world.

philosophy: Nitsakees (Thinking), Nahat'a (Planning), Iina (Living), and Sihasin (Reflection, which provides hope and assurance). Each Navajo has four clans that constitute his or her identity.

The beauty of using fours, to define so many aspects of life, is that we are forced to see the holistic picture.

The beauty of using fours, to define so many aspects of life, is that we are forced to see the holistic picture. Without this bigger picture, we lose sight of the interconnectedness of humans to nature and to each other. The intricacy of this worldview is captured in the traditional Navajo home, the *hooghan* or hogan. It represents the entirety of life as a Navajo: its four pillars symbolizing the four sacred mountains. Its doorway faces the east, a fire at the heart. Within the hogan, you are cradled between Mother Earth and Father Sky (visible through the smoke hole in the ceiling). This same smoke hole allows the sun to pass through. It traces a clockwise path on the walls called *sha bikego*, or “sunwise.” This direction is used in every ceremony and every meeting. When the sun reaches the northern wall, this symbolizes winter; when it strikes the fire, it's time to plant. The northern star, above the hogan, is the symbolic fire in the sky around which the First Man and First Woman constellations rotate.

Everything in Navajo philosophy is related to the concept of balance, and even groups of fours balance one another. These are pairs rather than opposites, and maintains what Navajos call *hózhó*, a sort of harmony the universe relies on. The other key concept is *k'é*, or your relations. These could be your siblings, your clan relatives, your tribe, or even your

belonging among all creations on this shared planet.

To me, conversations of *hózhó* and *k'é* are crucial to global talks of sustainability. We cannot address how climate change will affect our futures if we do not acknowledge the need for both balance and our fellow beings. The concepts may be of Navajo origin, but they embody the holistic viewpoint of many indigenous communities.

What does this view have to do with the climate? To achieve sustainability in any society, we must ensure the protection of four areas of community well-being:

Environmental: We are all made of water. We all breathe air. We cannot change our dependency on the four elements or the fact that they create us; therefore, we must protect our environment.

Economic: No community can operate without an adequate and fair economy. Furthermore, the diversity and adaptability of an economy are key to its survival.

Social: Our relationships to one another ensure the well-being of us as individuals and as societies. Our communities thrive when we have mutual respect, safety, and room for personal growth.

Cultural: Identity is a critical part of community sustainability, and it is often left out of the greater picture. This is a crucial issue when indigenous communities attempt to assert their sovereign authority and are faced with infringement of their cultural freedoms and rights which, without, would destroy the ability to maintain harmony.

So this is what I had to say to the climate justice world two weeks ago. Standing Rock requires us not to forget that fourth piece: cultural identity.

There are the four elements, which build all life and the four seasons that govern time.

continued next page

Standing Rock requires us not to forget that fourth piece: cultural identity.

When we have global conversations about loss and damage, we cannot simply tick off the population counts for displaced people or the dollar figures for economic impact or infrastructure damage. This is watching disorder through a Western lens. Instead, we must analyze the loss and damage done to a way of life, to the sustainability of an entire identity of people. The United Nations may have a definition for poverty, but to be impoverished does not always equate to having no financial leverage. Hardships come in many forms.

Jon Eagle Sr., the tribal historic preservation officer for the Standing Rock Sioux, recounts the struggle of his ancestors through his tribe's winter records. Their lives were extraordinarily difficult, but the definition of what they consider true hardships provides important context. Not surprisingly, the traditional Lakota people define four hardships in life:

To hear an orphan cry, as it was a terrible sound.

To lose a child, an indescribable pain.

To lose your mother.

To not know where your warriors fell.

With this reference point, consider Energy Transfer's decision to desecrate sacred sites and destroy graves of warriors and other ancestors. It is forcing cultural damage on the Lakota people.

I want to make sure the world's youth hear an indigenous perspective on sustainability and comprehend how the need to protect our cultural identity and exercise our tribal sovereignty in the DAPL fight impacts our survival as nations.

Because we are still learning how to erase the colonization of our own minds to really see the cultural implications of our so-called "infrastructure projects," perhaps it is easier to identify straightforward acts of environmental racism, such as placing a refining factory within an impoverished community. Perhaps we can more easily oppose using cheap labor as a country's leading export or stand up for the rights of a particular sex, gender, or religion.

And perhaps that is why, on Sept. 3, the water protectors who watched Dakota Access workers destroy the graves of their ancestors, continued to pray for and forgive the ignorance of those committing the crimes against them.

"These people in our history, they were our heroes," explains Jon Eagle Sr. in National Trust for Historic Preservation's Standing Rock Preservation Leadership Forum, as he described the ancestral burial sites that EnergyTransfer destroyed. "I don't think the mainstream society understands that." Our cultural lenses prevent many of us from realizing that.

As I told the COP22 audiences, the battle at Standing Rock symbolizes the greater battle we all face: The assurance of cultural well-being and sustainability as a global community while combating the short-term visions and greed of corporations. We must remember the importance of *hózhó*—balance—and that we, as beings of the Five Fingered Clan, are connected as *k'é*—relatives. We are made of the same four elements, and we share the same finite resources. As my mother says: "We may be coming from all four directions, but we all come from the same neighborhood—the earth."

From *YES Magazine*, <http://www.yesmagazine.org/@also-by?author=Kayla+DeVault>

Fish Can't Feed the World

By VASU MURTY

According to a national Vegetarian Resource Group Poll conducted by Harris Interactive, nearly fifteen percent of Americans say they never eat fish or seafood.

Fish cannot feed the world! The Pacific sardine lives along the coasts of North America from Alaska to southern California.

Sardines, once a major part of the California fishing industry, are now considered to be "commercially extinct." Another species classified as "commercially extinct" is the New England haddock. Ecologists have also been concerned about the significant reduction in finfish, the Atlantic Bluefin tuna, Lake Erie cisco, and blackfins that inhabit Lakes Huron and Michigan.

Over 200,000 porpoises are killed every year by fishermen seeking tuna in the Pacific. Sea turtles are similarly killed in Caribbean shrimp operations.

Half of all fresh water worldwide is used for thirsty livestock. Producing eight ounces of beef requires an unimaginable 25,000 liters of water, or the water necessary for one pound of steak equals the water consumption of the average household for a year.

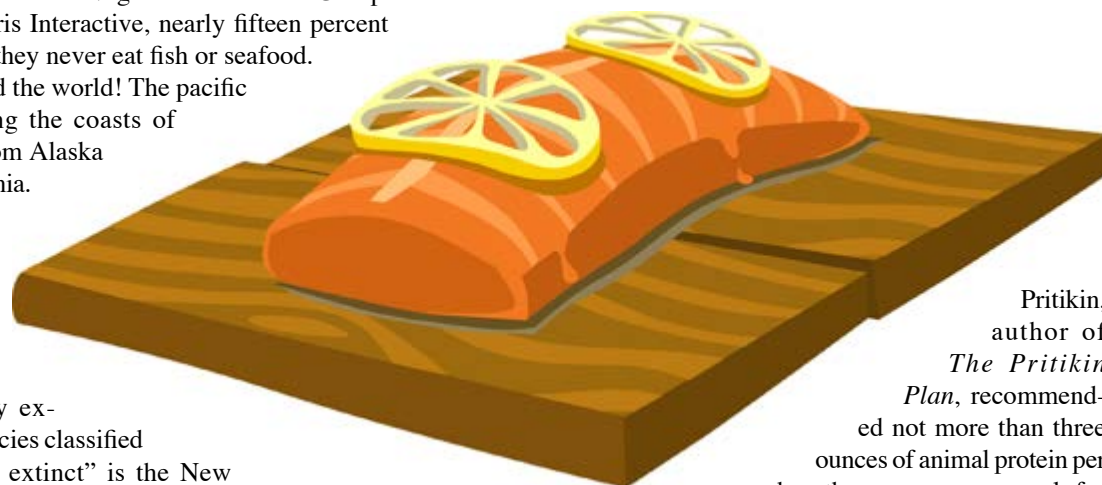
Factory farm pollution is the primary source of damage to coastal waters in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Scientists report that over sixty percent of the coastal waters in the United States are moderately to severely degraded from factory farm nutrient pollution. This pollution creates oxygen-depleted dead zones, which are huge areas of ocean devoid of aquatic life.

The World Conservation Union lists over one thousand different fish species that are threatened or endangered. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimate, over sixty percent of the world's fish species are either fully exploited or depleted. Commercial fish populations of cod, hake, haddock, and flounder have fallen by as much as 95 percent in the north Atlantic.

It makes sense to eat lower on the food chain!

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

The American Dietetic Association reports that throughout history, the human race has lived on "vegetarian or near vegetarian diets," and meat has traditionally been a luxury. Studies show the healthiest human populations on the globe (the Hunzas of Pakistan, the Vilacambians of Ecuador, the Abhikians of the former USSR) live almost entirely on plant foods—useful data, given our skyrocketing healthcare costs. Nathan



Pritikin, author of *The Pritikin Plan*, recommended not more than three ounces of animal protein per day; three ounces per week for his patients who had already suffered a heart attack.

In *A Vegetarian Sourcebook*, author Keith Akers

observes:

"Much has been made over the virtues of chicken and fish in comparison to red meats such as beef and pork. It has been said that eating chicken and fish will aid in the prevention of heart disease, because these meats are relatively lower in fat and contain more unsaturated than saturated fat, thus helping to lower cholesterol levels. Unfortunately, these claims are not supported by the evidence. Studies in which human volunteers switched from diets including beef and eggs, to one including fish and chicken showed that serum cholesterol levels were *not* appreciably lowered by switching to chicken and fish.

"And an examination of the nutritional data suggests an explanation: while it is true that chicken and fish contain less fat than beef, it is also true that chicken and fish contain about twice as much cholesterol per calorie as does beef. Indeed, some seafoods (such as crab, shrimp, and lobster) are exceptionally high in cholesterol content.

"All of these diverse theories have roughly the same dietary implications. Meat is high in cholesterol, saturated fat, and total fat. Plant foods, by contrast, are usually low in saturated fat and total fat, and contain zero cholesterol. Vegetarians have lower levels of serum cholesterol than do meat-eaters, with total vegetarians (vegans) having the lowest levels of all."

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

ACTIONS FOR PEACE

Stockton

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

JANUARY

MJC Spring Science Colloquium, Science Community Center, Room 115, West Campus, 3 pm - 4 p.m. Contact: Teri Curtis (209) 575-6775 curtis@mjc.edu. TBA.

MJC Positive People Speaker Series: presentations by local community members who have overcome challenges and obstacles to achieve their goals. Thursdays at 6 pm. Mary Stuart Rogers Student Learning Center, West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., Modesto. Campus parking is \$2. Info: (209) 575-6700. February 2: John Ervin II, founder of Project Uplift. February 16: Demetrius Snaer, MJC professor and Men's Cross Country coach. March 16: Tamara Mena, motivational speaker and spokesperson. April 6: The Honorable Rubén Villalobos, Stanislaus County Superior Court judge.

Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS) free public programs. 7:30 p.m., MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall, Rm. 132.

1 SUN: New Year's Labyrinth Peace Walk, Front yard, noon, College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto.

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

10 TUES: Annual John McCutcheon Concert. See front page, this issue, for time, ticket and sponsorship information.

15 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents *Apollo 13*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/726>

15 SUN: Annual MLK Birthday Celebration features Dr. Mimi Kim speaking on "Restorative Justice." 2 pm, Sonora High School auditorium. Music and winners of the 2016 MLK essay contest.

15 SUN: "Writer's Resist." Poets read for democracy, and as a fundraiser for the Modesto Peace/Life Center radio project. FREE. 6:30 pm at the Prospect Theatre, 1214 K. St., Modesto. See article, front page.

22 SUN: Sunday Afternoons at CBS celebrate its 25th Anniversary Season. The season continues with Patty Castillo Davis. All concerts held at 1705 Sherwood Ave. at 3 pm. Tickets available through the CBS office and at the door. Learn more at sundaysatcbs.com. See article, this issue.

LOOKING AHEAD

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

Thursday, February 9: A Community Forum: a panel of community leaders speak to the needs of our

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

February 17-19: The Gallo Center and Sankofa Theatre Company, celebrates Black History Month with the presentation of Leslie Lee's absorbing full-length play, *"Colored People's Time."* See article, this issue.

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

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

March 17: Peace Essay Contest Awards ceremony, Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, MJC West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., 7 pm.

Sunday, June 4: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast, Modesto Church of the Brethren.

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

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.

Weekly insight meditation and dharma talk, 9:00 am-10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com

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

MONDAYS

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 stancountyrnmh@gmail.com or contact Sue at 209-247-4659.

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, SusanthePoet@gmail.com

TUESDAYS

Pagan Family Social, third Tuesdays, Golden Corral, 3737 McHenry Ave, Modesto, 6:00 pm. Info: 569-0816. All

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

MEDIA: Listen to local Valley Community Radio KQRP 104.9 FM, <http://www.kqrp.com>

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

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

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

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

newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

Ukulele class/play-a-long led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in songbooks provided. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver, Modesto. Donation accepted. Info: 505-3216. www.funstrummers.com

Weekly Insight Meditation And Dharma Talk, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com

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: merced-board@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/>

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

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

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

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

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

THURSDAYS

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. Meeting dates: Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 17, Dec. 15: No meeting/ Winter Mixer. 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 Gallery Walk, Downtown Modesto, downtown art galleries open--take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-8 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

Latino Community Roundtable (LCR) meets on the second

Thursday of each month at Noon at the Red Event Center, 921 8th St., Modesto. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

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

NAACP. King-Kennedy Center, 601 S M.L. King Dr., Modesto, 7 pm, 3rd Thursdays. 549-1991.

Art Gallery Walk, downtown Modesto, third Thurs., 5:30 to 9 pm. Info: <http://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 Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

Funstrummer Ukulele Band every Friday, from 9:15 am until noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Info: 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: 549-9155. 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, 1st & 3rd Fridays at 7:00 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Other meetings at Terrace Cafe, Double Tree Hotel. Info: Yamilet Valladolid, 523-2860.

SATURDAY

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 kathyhaynesSESG@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.

1st Saturday Stories and Art: A chance for the whole family to make art inspired by children's books. Mistlin Gallery, 1st Saturday of each month, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. 1015 J Street. <http://ccaagallery.org>

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. For up to date information, visit www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm