



# Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO  
PEACE/LIFE  
CENTER  
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## Community/Unity in Challenging Times

By SUE BOWER, LCSW, Modesto Peace/Life Center, Co-Organizer, Community/Unity Rally

There is no doubt that we are living in challenging times. A corrosive spirit of divisiveness and rancor permeates both our national discourse and our local communities. Many people feel alienated, that their voices are not heard or validated. For this reason, it is incumbent on all of us who live in the Central Valley to come together in unity, as neighbors supporting neighbors, to celebrate the great strengths of our diverse communities.

By example, we need to find what brings us together in terms of shared values that we can all support and champion.

By example, we need to give voice & support to those in our communities who are experiencing inequality or denial of equal justice.



By example, we need to stand for American values of peace, freedom, civil rights and social justice for all who make the Central Valley their home.

**Community Unity Rally**  
**Tuesday, June 20, 5:30-7:00PM**  
**Mancini Bowl**  
**Graceada Park, Modesto**

"This is our opportunity to unite all the diverse ethnicities in our community to create positive change", states Jocelyn Cooper, of the Modesto Peace/Life Center (MPLC) & co-organizer of the Community/Unity Rally. Sponsor, partner & supporter organizations are joining with the MPLC, which is hosting the Rally, consistent with MPLC's mission of

**We need to give voice & support to those in our communities who are experiencing inequality or denial of equal justice.**

"working to nurture a "Beloved Community" in which people of all races, nationalities, religious beliefs, and genders live in harmony to create a more peaceful, just, and environmentally healthy world." Speakers will address issues impacting on our community members including: Refugees, Immigration, Freedom of Religion, Civil Rights, Social Justice. The Peace/Life Center is proud to host this event to unite community members, neighbor to neighbor, for the betterment of all. "One of the marvelous things about community is that it enables us to welcome and help people in a way we couldn't as individuals. When we pool our strength and share the work and responsibility, we can welcome many people, even those in deep distress, and perhaps help them find self-confidence and inner healing."

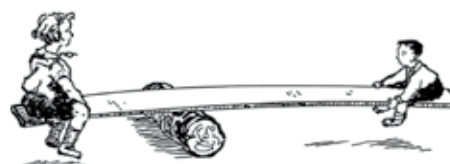
— Jean Vanier, Community And Growth

"A community is democratic only when the humblest and weakest person can enjoy the highest civil, economic, and social rights that the biggest and most powerful possess."

— A. Philip Randolph

We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and our own.

— César Chávez



By W.Y. ALICE CHAN

In 2011, my Father passed away suddenly at the age of 59. He was healthy for the most part, so everyone was shocked at the quick and severe loss that followed. His absence was devastating but my faith brought an overwhelming and indescribable peace that helped me overcome the despair. I realized then, more than ever, how important my faith was to me.

Having experienced such a tremendous change, I became keenly aware of the role others' beliefs (be it religious or non-religious) played in their life. Although I did hold the same beliefs as some of my colleagues, friends, and students, I had a new degree of respect and appreciation for others' religious and non-religious identities. Everyone had come to their beliefs from various life experiences and their decision to affiliate or not affiliate with a belief was deeply rooted in personal events or reflections like mine.

Naturally, I was troubled when my own students struggled through bullying based on their religious or perceived religious identity. Among a group of four Muslim girls, three had bullied one because they felt that she prayed or read the Qur'an more than they did. As a result, the bullied girl often segregated herself and rarely participated in class discussions. Her demeanor was distinct from other students' in the class. In the same class, another student was bullied based on a mix of racial, cultural and perceived religious differ-

continued page 8

## 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pancake Breakfast

**Sunday June 4, 2017**

**8:00 a.m. — Noon**

*Benefit for  
the Modesto Peace/Life Center*

Modesto Church of the Brethren  
2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto



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### INSIDE CONNECTIONS

PEACE CAMP . . . . .	2
PEACE CENTER . . . . .	3
LIVING LIGHTLY . . . . .	4
BRIGHTER FUTURE . . . . .	5

ACA SAVES LIVES . . . . .	6
LOSING 20 YEARS . . . . .	7
BY TRUTH . . . . .	8
GREEN TIPS . . . . .	10
VEGETARIANS . . . . .	11



## Celebrate Juneteenth!

*"A celebration of African American History, Cultural Bridges & Family Values."*

Program starts with a talent showcase on Friday, June 16th, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday's program begins at 11:00 a.m. and includes presentations by guest speakers, inspirational gospel singers, D.J. music, cultural performances, demonstrations, educational exhibits, community resource information booths, book giveaways, basketball tournament, children's activities and bounce houses.

FREE. Info or to reserve a vendor booth call, Deborah Sullivan (209) 568-3643.

## Kids as Peacemakers: Peace Week

Sponsored by Modesto Church of the Brethren with curriculum drawn from On Earth Peace.

June 19th - 23rd, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Grades K-6th. Cost: \$15.00/child or \$35.00/family. 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto.

To register call the church office at 209-523-1438.

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Norman Rostad

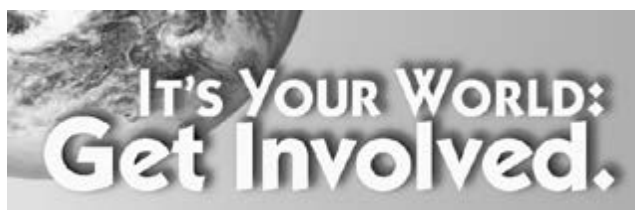
April 13, 1939 - May 6, 2017

A memorial will be held on Saturday, June 3 at 2 p.m. at the College Avenue UCC, Orangeburg & College Ave., Modesto.

#### Phyllis Harvey

Died May 19, 2017, age 95

A memorial will be held at noon, Thursday, June 8 at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto.



## 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, one day or more per week, or ongoing commitment.

For more information, contact our volunteer/outreach coordinators: Susan Bower or Jocelyn Cooper at the Peace Life Center [\(209\) 529-5750](tel:2095295750).

## Register now for Peace Camp!

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's 35th annual Peace Camp in the Sierra will take place on June 23-25 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108. We'll enjoy a week-end of workshops, good food, campfires, hiking led by Reo Maynard, singing led by Scott Gifford, tie dye with Deborah Bernal (bring your own white shirt), crafts, talent show, star walk with Tim Smart, Tai Chi with Leng Nou, recreation in a beautiful mountain setting. Families and individuals of all ages are welcome. **Register by June 5 for a discount.**

This year we will explore the theme of the creative arts and social consciousness. Artist and muralist Barbara Carrasco from Los Angeles will present a workshop. Barbara is a key figure in the Chicana/o art movement. She is known for creating large banners for the United Farm Workers and César Chávez and for creating the art print, "Dolores", the iconic image of Dolores Huerta. Musician Patty Castillo Davis of Ceres will present a workshop and performance. She is a well-know regional artist who has won the Best Singer Songwriter award at the Modesto Area Music Awards.


Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Road off Hwy. 108 in the Stanislaus National Forest is the venue for Peace Camp. Camp Peaceful Pines features kitchen and bathroom facilities, rustic cabins and platform tents and a cabin for those with special needs. Electricity is provided by a generator that is turned off at night. Depending on the number of campers, cabins may be shared. Campers share in meal preparation, cleanup, and other work.

The camp fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Adults are \$80 before June 5 and \$85 after June 5.

Young people 18 and under are \$60 before June 6 and \$65 after June 6. Ages 3 and under free. Minors under 18 need to be accompanied by an adult. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Donations for scholarships are appreciated. The camp opens with supper at 6:00pm on Friday and closes after the morning workshop on Sunday. Directions and other information will be provided to participants before camp.

**Registration forms** are available online at [www.stanislausconnections.org](http://www.stanislausconnections.org) and [www.peacelifecenter.org](http://www.peacelifecenter.org)

Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-480-4576, [kschroeder70@yahoo.com](mailto:kschroeder70@yahoo.com)



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## From Harm to Home: International Rescue Committee support refugees seeking the American Dream in the Central Valley

By **SUSAN BOWER, LCSW**

The International Rescue Committee is a world-wide organization which works in 25 U.S. cities across the country helping refugees rebuild their lives as productive and engaged members of their new communities. Forced to flee their home countries due to persecution or conflict, they have survived against incredible odds and often years in camps or temporary settlements. With little more than their dignity, hope and determination, they arrive in an unfamiliar country and an unknown future, seeking the American Dream.

The Brookings Institute completed an analysis recently on metropolitan areas of the country with the highest shares of residents from the "banned countries" of President Trump's Executive Orders, 2011 - 2015.

The Modesto metropolitan area was second only to Detroit, Michigan of residents from the "banned countries" per 1,000 population-14.9 for Modesto area versus 15.0 for Detroit.

*Source: Brookings analysis of 2011-2015 5-year American Community Survey data.*

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has offices in Turlock and Modesto which provide opportunities for refugees to thrive in America. Among their many programs offered are Resettlement Support, Employment Coaching Support, English as a Second Language and Health Access Support.

For community members interested in volunteer opportunities to support and welcome our newest neighbors, please contact Jonathan Partridge, Volunteer & Donations Coordinator at 209-238-3011. Visit <https://www.rescue.org/announcement/how-volunteer-turlockmodesto>

The IRC depends on the generosity of the local community to meet the needs of new refugees in Stanislaus County. Current donation needs include gift cards for local grocery stores & Target, bus passes and bicycles.



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Modesto, CA 95350

## Peace Center radio needs your help!

By **DAN ONORATO**

It's official! We are KCBP 95.5 FM! But we are not on the air... yet!

Our community radio station, FM KCBP will offer a lively and diverse blend of local programming highlighting important issues and events and spotlighting local talent in music and the arts. Besides offering a wide range of music, selected by local DJs, we want to increase public awareness of issues important in our schools and local government and for diverse groups in our region. We'll achieve this by airing civil debates and discussions with city and county leaders and people active in the issues. We seek broad support and participation by various community groups and individuals who share our vision of a unique radio station that focuses on local issues, engaging entertainment, public service, and a commitment to improve our community.

We plan to web stream this June. To make this and the radio station happen, we need YOUR HELP! With equipment and technical assessments costing over \$40,000, we need money. Besides generous donations from individuals and underwriting support from organizations and businesses, we need people who'd like to help with fundraising. We also need people who want to create programs ranging from music to discussions of issues to public service announcements.

Anyone donating \$500 or more will become a Founding Member of KCBP FM. And when you volunteer your help, you'll have the satisfaction that you helped create a valued voice on radio that enriches our community and region.

**ACTION:** To volunteer your help in fundraising or programming, contact Sue Bower at [suebower@prodigy.net](mailto:suebower@prodigy.net). To donate, send your check to Dave Tucker, memo: Radio KCBP, at Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353. Or go the the Center's website at [peacelifecenter.org](http://peacelifecenter.org) and on the Home Page click on Donate, on the right. Thank you!



### NEW MODESTO RADIO STATION COMING SOON!

The Modesto Peace/Life Center has been granted a full power radio station license and needs YOUR help!

- ⇒ Donations, Donations, Donations!
- ⇒ Feedback on future programming from YOU!
- ⇒ Volunteers with radio backgrounds & experience
- ⇒ Local Music, Arts and Entertainment connections
- ⇒ Community partners

To get involved or learn more about the new station, contact James Costello, (209) 402-9191 or [jcostello@igc.org](mailto: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>



## Homeless Veterans

Division IV – 1st Place Peace Essay Contest

Jason Fritz

Hart Ransom Academy Charter

In 2013 there were a total of 87 homeless veterans in Stanislaus County (Point). Homelessness can affect cities, towns, and their residents. Mental illness, job loss and drug use are some of the reasons for homelessness. Helping homeless veterans can lower the number of homeless people in Stanislaus County. I feel useful when I help my dad with his landscaping business, so I want to help veterans feel helpful while helping people. There should not be any veterans that are homeless in Stanislaus County. One obstacle that veterans face is mental illness (Homeless). At night when they are home, they can have horrible nightmares about

what they have gone through. Loud booms and cracks make them remember bombs and gunshots. Veterans have hard lives when they return home because they have to get used to civilian life. Mental illness can be treated. I would find doctors that specialized in mental illness in Stanislaus County. The VA Palo Alto Health Care System at 1225 Oakdale Road in Modesto, California specializes in housing and illness. Many times, when veterans are ill it is hard for them to find a job.

One way I would help the homeless veterans to get off the street would be to start a business. I would start a landscaping business that would hire homeless veterans. The job would help residents with lawn care needs and the veterans would earn money to buy what they need. I would train them to use the lawnmower, blowers and weed eaters. Some veterans would do the mowing while the veterans who cannot do the physical work would do the taxes, invoices, and bills.

The business would also give them a chance to start their lives again. It would allow them to work together and learn new skills. Once they start working, they focus on getting off the streets. They will never forget what they saw, but I would help them find treatments and a home. They will learn new skills and get off the streets. With the skills the veterans learn, they could start their own businesses. Hopefully, they could help other veterans to get off the streets.

Helping homeless veterans can help them to find a better life and get them off the streets. We need to be working with veterans with mental illness, so they do not have to be homeless. By giving them the help they need, they could have jobs and a house. Our veterans have helped us, so we need to help them. Every veteran in Stanislaus County should be given a chance to find their own peace and have a place to call home.

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# West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative bids farewell to longtime Executive Director, Cleopathia Moore-Bell

By VERONICA JACUINDE

*Cleopathia Moore-Bell played a critical role in the development and empowerment of the West Modesto community through partnerships and innovative programming.*

May 25, 2017 – Modesto, CA. After twenty-six years, the Executive Director and founding member of the



West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative, Mrs. Cleopathia Moore-Bell, is retiring from her position leaving behind a legacy of community activism and advocacy. A fierce proponent of social justice, she helped shape and improve the landscape of West

Modesto implementing programs and partnerships that uplifted and empowered the local community. A vibrant and jovial woman, she brought much life and positivity to the collaborative and will be missed dearly by all those that had the pleasure of working with her and along side her in her mission to eradicate inequality and injustice in her community.

Mrs. Moore-Bell played a pivotal role in the development of the West Modesto community building bridges and paving the way for a brighter future for residents living in that economically and educationally challenged community. Among the many strategic partnerships she helped put in place was establishing the Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County's West Modesto facility. With her support the West Modesto Club opened it's doors in 2013 and now serves over 400 youth from the local community. This is just one

of many alliances she helped form leveraging resources and building committees to oversee the successful implementation of such initiatives.

Lincoln Ellis, Chief Professional Officer for Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County shares, "Without the support of Mrs. Moore-Bell I do not think we would have established our West Modesto Club. It was because of her belief in bringing youth development services to local youth and through her hard work advocating for youth and their families that we were able to open our club in partnership with the West Modesto Collaborative."

As Executive Director of the West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative, she oversaw a myriad of programs that brought together other key members of the community including government agencies, non-profits and individuals who were equally as passionate about health, education and equality for those in West Modesto. Her experience in health care spans over forty years with the last thirty years serving the county in various positions of leadership. Mrs. Moore-Bell has dedicated her life to public service, where she served as Associate Director of Health Services Agency/Director of the Public Health Department. She is also credited with founding the West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative where she served as Executive Director.

Mrs. Moore-Bell has been recognized with many awards such as "Outstanding Woman of the Year" by the Stanislaus County Commission for Women and is a recipient of the "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the California Public Health Association. Among her many accomplishments, she

earned a Master of Public Administration degree from Golden Gate University and holds a Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) from Sacramento State College.

Mrs. Moore-Bell leaves behind her passion and vision for a vibrant, safe and economically thriving community. She states, "I leave with confidence that the staff and new Director will advance services to the next level. They all possess the "vision" and passion for a better quality of life for children and families in West Modesto."

She continues, "my heart and soul were revived through the work of West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative and community. I have enjoyed every minute of it. The wonderful friendships I have built over the years are something I will forever cherish. I will miss my community but I leave knowing that I answered the call. The future is bright for West Modesto and I am excited for what it holds through the many partnerships and alliances I've helped put in place. There is much work to do but I am confident that this team, that held me up, is strong and will succeed."

After years of dedicated service to the West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative, Mrs. Moore-Bell will celebrate her golden years in Texas. She has inspired many people and will be remembered dearly for the many contributions she made to improve the lives of those in her community.

For more information about the West Modesto King/Kennedy Neighborhood Collaborative call (209) 522-6902 or go online at [www.westmodestocollaborative.com](http://www.westmodestocollaborative.com). For press related inquiries, including interviews with Mrs. Moore-Bell, contact Veronica Jacuinde at (310) 508-1896 or email [vjacuinde@bgcstan.org](mailto:vjacuinde@bgcstan.org).

## "We Are Not the Last": An Art installation Revealing the Intricacies of Movement of Peoples through the United States from 1492 through Today

The show runs from **July 11, to August 18, 2017** at the Mistlin Gallery, 1015 J St, Modesto and was created by artists Laura Stokes, Juan Rodriguez, and Jim Abuan.

The forced movement of peoples across geographical locations for reasons of war, famine, economic disruption and cultural predation are timeless and have occurred in virtually

all societies and locations. The migration/immigration history of the United States is complex and has affected many cultures in numerous geographical locations around the world.

**This art installation ties together the many common threads of movements of peoples in our nation's past and present and possible futures.** Slavery in colonial times, European immigration in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Asian immigration in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Hispanic migrations and immigrations over the history of the United States, and Middle Eastern immigrations in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries will be included, as well as other topics of current interest such as the military industrial complex and the impending famine disasters.

The intent of the installation is to provoke discussion and provide new information, emotional connection, and insight on this subject through the medium of art. Mural graffiti art, pastel and charcoal images, mixed media, and 3-D objects lead the viewer through the installation. Many of the visual images will be disturbing.

Visit <http://ccaagallery.org/> for more information about the show, membership opportunities and art classes.



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# Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County: Building a Brighter Future for Local Youth

By VERONICA JACUINDE

In the United States there are many organizations that cater to the needs of youth but perhaps no other organization has done so much to impact the lives of young children, and therefore our communities, than the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Founded in 1860, the non-profit organization serves 4 million members, ages 6-18, with 4,300 clubs across the nation. Locally, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County (BGCSTAN) was launched in 2013 and now reaches 1000 young people.

With an emphasis on innovative after-school and enrichment programs, the mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. No doubt they are accomplishing this when 96% of members expect to graduate from high school and 9 out of 10 expect to attend college. Results are achieved through programs focused in 5 key areas, including: character and leadership development, education and career development, health and life skills, the arts and sports, and fitness and recreation.

Chief Professional Officer, Lincoln Ellis, explains, "Great Futures Start Here is our motto and we certainly prepare our members for success by giving them the confidence to pursue their dreams and equipping them with the tools to do so." He adds, "we expand their horizons with field trips, guest speakers and hands on learning like our robotics program where youth learn the latest in technology and science." He continues, "more importantly, we teach leadership skills and provide vital information to help members make healthy decisions in all aspects of their lives."

Currently there are 4 locations in Modesto: C.F. Brown Elementary and Sylvan Elementary, both serve students from those schools ages 6-10; Somerset Middle School which serves students from that school ages 11-14; and the latest facility, the West Modesto Club open to all students within Stanislaus County ages 6-18. The clubs provide a safe environment for members to learn and have fun while building



relationships with caring adult mentors that encourage and help them overcome obstacles. With membership fees of \$10 a year, per child, the BGCSTAN strives to reach as many young people as possible.

This summer BGCSTAN offers "Brain Gain Summer Camp." The 9-week day camp, from May 30<sup>th</sup> to July 29<sup>th</sup>, will run Monday through Friday from 7am to 6pm at Somerset Middle School. Open to any student, age 6-18, the cost is \$80 a week and includes breakfast, lunch and snack.

Roxanne Bernal, camp organizer, states, "many kids are without supervision during the summer and others do not have access to extracurricular activities. We fill this crucial void by offering young people the chance to keep learning while having fun throughout the summer break." For their West Modesto club they offer a **mid-day summer program** for ages 6-18 with many of the same features as the "Brain Gain" program.

This year BGCSTAN partners with the Greater Yosemite Council of Boys Scouts of America to enhance the "Brain Gain" experience. For an additional \$75, a two-day overnight outing at Camp McConnell will be offered. Campers will enjoy swimming, archery, fishing, outdoor cooking, hiking, astronomy, sports and more. For many of the club members, it will be their first time camping and participating in these types of activities. This is just another way that the

BGCSTAN, through their unique programming and dedicated staff, supplement traditional school based education to open new doors of opportunity for their members.

Special events throughout the year help to raise much-needed funds so that the BGCSTAN can continue to serve as many young people as possible. Board member Laura Ward recently spearheaded the "Stanislaus' Rib Cook Off" fundraiser, which pitted the Modesto Police Officers against the Modesto Fire Fighters for a friendly competition for the best ribs and best chili. She shares, "it was a fun way to engage the community while providing a platform to showcase the important work the BGCSTAN does to build a brighter future for our youth."

Upcoming fundraising events include "Battle of the Paddle" to take place October 6<sup>th</sup> at the Modesto Centre Plaza and their annual "Haunted Museum" in October to take place at the historical McHenry Museum. All proceeds benefit the clubs and sponsorships are available.

There are also other ways to support the BGCSTAN like their Vision 20/20 Friends Club where individuals can commit to donate a monthly amount throughout the year. In addition, supporters can serve as volunteers once they pass a background check.

For more information about the Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County and how you can join the movement to empower and inspire youth, visit [www.BGCStan.org](http://www.BGCStan.org) or call (209) 222-5826.

## ART CLASSES FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN

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# The ACA saved my life

By **CARRIE ANNE CASTILLO,**  
**Our Revolution Turlock**

I feel like politics has really changed over the course of my lifetime. I really feel like the GOP, those who voted to repeal the ACA, they used to care about me. They cared about me so much, when I was young.

And then I was born.

They were like, “GET A JOB BABY! PULL YOURSELF UP BY YOUR BOOTY STRAPS!”

Like many of you here tonight, I was born imperfect. I was born with a pre-existing condition.

I was born with a major kidney defect that would have been fatal without surgery. While I’ve mostly recovered from that particular condition, I’ve dealt with a host of medical issues my whole life. Growing up I was in and out of doctor’s offices, constantly ill, and on nonstop rounds of antibiotics. I’ve had multiple surgeries and countless tests and procedures.

Currently, my most serious and expensive condition started when I was diagnosed with Crohn’s Disease and Ulcerative Colitis, over thirteen years ago. (Crohn’s and UC are separate conditions, and often lumped together. Usually people get one or the other. I developed both. I’m an overachiever!)

Crohn’s is an autoimmune disease, which means it happens due to factors that are not entirely understood, but generally thought to be both genetic and triggered by an element in the environment. The immune system attacks its own body, starting with the digestive tract.

Crohn’s also causes rampant inflammation that starts in the GI tract but can travel throughout the body. I have struggled with peripheral symptoms including wounds on my skin, eye problems, migraines, and debilitating fatigue and arthritis.

The treatment itself is also very risky. Every other week, I give myself injections in my stomach that kill off my immune system. While it helps control my Crohn’s disease, not having a fully functioning immune system makes me vulnerable to infection and even death. It happens. I also spent the last two years on steroids to keep me well enough to stay out of the hospital, but that also has serious side effects: among other things, steroids weaken the bones and cause early onset osteoporosis.

I have had this disease for well over a decade, and the only way to keep it under control is with a faithful regimen of pills and the incredibly expensive injections I need every two weeks to function. (And Yes, if you are wondering if I’ve tried that incredible new treatment or that miracle pill or one special diet—It’s been thirteen years. I’ve tried it. I’ve tried it all. I still have Crohn’s disease!)

The truth is this: I cannot survive with any quality of life without my medications and injections.

In addition to the injections (\$5,000 a month), and all the prescriptions I take monthly (eight of them—I can’t even guess how much that would be), I have to see a GI specialist several times a year, depending on health. I have to endure regular and very expensive tests, and biopsies, and bloodwork.

I have to see an eye specialist to keep from going blind. And a rheumatologist, to keep the arthritis from damaging

my joints. And a regular physician because I frequently get respiratory infections and cold viruses, no matter how often I wash or wear a mask, due to my lack of functioning immune system (and my two wonderful, germ-infested children).



I frequently use a cane now. I am disabled now.

I am a walking, talking, alphabetical list of pre-existing conditions.

TrumpCare relies on Health Savings Accounts and High Risk Pools, which is a bullshit way of saying, “I guess you just have to stop buying those 8 iPhones a month!”

When someone struggles with illness, it doesn’t affect only them. It affects the whole family, and the effects continue to ripple outward into the community.

When the ACA passed, I cried with relief and happiness. I remember rocking my then baby daughter to sleep that night and trying to cry as quietly as possible while reading the news. I remember writing, “Thank you, Mr. President. You may have just saved my life!”

I had no idea then that I would need it. My husband and I both worked comfortable jobs and we had our pick of good insurance, but when you’ve had serious health problems your whole life, you are constantly aware of how much you have to lose. And we did lose it.

After the election, when it became clear that Trump would be our next President, I broke down. I felt I could see the future and all the things we had fought so hard for, slipping away. When I recovered from that shock, I made a vow I would do everything in my power to fight for healthcare—to fight the changes Trump would bring. I vowed that I would make it personal.

I wasn’t just going to be an activist. I was going to haunt Jeff Denham.

And anyone else who tried to take away basic human rights. I was going to fight for the names and the faces of the human beings who would unnecessarily suffer and die from that vote.

Jeff Denham turned his back on us. But I won’t.

The ACA is why I’m here today. Literally, I am here because the ACA gave me access to life-saving treatment while my husband was laid off. It also saved my children, because without the ACA we would have lost our house and suffered financial ruin that would have affected the rest of their lives. But it’s also the reason I became an activist, got involved, and am sharing story with you.

The ACA is deeply flawed, but it showed us that change, real and drastic change, is possible. Because of the ACA we know that we can push for an even more dramatic change in healthcare that will open up the door for less expensive healthcare for everybody. For Every Body.

In our nation, with all its wealth and technology, resources and education, it is shameful that anyone should have to suffer without healthcare.

Healthcare is a human right.

## Statement on President Trump’s Budget

By **Senator Kamala Harris**

“At its core, this budget is a cruel betrayal of the middle class and threatens our ability to ensure basic public safety, public health, and public education. This budget makes clear the values of this Administration: it prioritizes those at the top, while leaving working families and the middle class high and dry.

“It reduces taxes for the wealthiest Americans while taking away Social Security for disabled Americans and tax credits for families with children. It gives corporations tax breaks while eliminating resources for students trying to pay for college. It spends billions of dollars on a wall that won’t work, while cutting access to health care and initiatives to cure cancer.

“I will stand up, speak out, and fight against this budget at every turn just as I will fight against this Administration’s efforts to strip health care from millions. We are better than this.”

### Budget Impact on California:

- Eliminates federal funding for **51 community action programs** in California that provide thousands of low-income Californians emergency food, shelter, heating assistance, transportation and health care.

- Reduces ‘Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act’ funding by more than **\$1.3 billion** – resulting in more than **436,000 Californians** potentially losing access to job training and employment services.

- Cuts **\$357 million in Community Development Block Grants that provide California funding** for affordable housing, transportation, and economic development.

- Makes college more expensive by eliminating grants to over **201,000 California students** through the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant program.

- Kicks **132,700 students in California** off after-school programs by eliminating the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.

- Eliminates the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program which provides heating, cooling, or weatherization assistance to **219,000 California families**.

- Denies assistance to **23,400 California families** for affordable housing which would put them at immediate risk of eviction and homelessness by slashing federal rental assistance programs, including Section 8 housing vouchers.

- Ends the federal funding that the airports in **Crescent City, El Centro, Merced, and Visalia** receive under the Essential Air Service program to ensure that smaller, underserved communities have commercial air service.

- Cuts Head Start by **\$101 million in California**, which would throw **11,030 children** off high-quality child care and early education.

- Eliminates the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Training program.

[Ed. Note: for a detailed analysis, see the report of the California Policy and Budget Center at <http://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/new-federal-analysis-estimates-house-republicans-american-health-care-act-increase-number-uninsured-23-million/>

# Activism and the ACA

By DENISE C. HUNT, RN, MFT

For just about forty years, I worked in the public mental health and alcohol and drug system. As I worked through the years and gained in education and training, I learned more and more about living with a serious mental illness or serious substance use problem, and I formed relationships over time with many people who lived with very difficult illnesses. I was privileged to be a part of the public system at a time when people living with a serious mental illness began empowering themselves as consumers in a system based on a traditional healthcare model that had poorly served them for many years. What was added to the public system through this consumer empowerment is the sense that despite the severity of one's illness, and despite the problems that affect one's ability to successfully maneuver through going to school, getting a job, leaving home, establishing relationships and families, despite all of that, we all just basically want the same things. A place to live, something rewarding to do, and some positive relationships with others. We want to be defined as members of our community, not by any illness we may have.

Take a moment and quiet your thoughts. Now think about where you were and what were you doing 20 years ago, in 1997.

Now move forward to today. In those 20 years, you may have gone through different living situations, finishing school, various jobs, relationships, maybe starting a family, being in

the military, coming to a new country to live, maybe having some difficult life experiences... A lot happened during those 20 years.

Here's some information from Dr. Peter Weider, Professor of Psychiatry at University of Illinois Medical Center, whose work focuses on improving outcomes and reducing side effects and complications for people living with serious mental illness: In the US, "...in the general population our life expectancy is about 80 years (77.4 years for men, and 82.2 years for women.) This is a stunning improvement in life expectancy since back in the 1970's when life expectancies were almost a full decade shorter. The rapid and profound decrease in smoking is probably the single most

important factor in this improvement.

Certain groups don't share this good fortune. Black Americans live about 5 fewer years than whites. But one group suffers by far the most – with an average of 20 years of reduced life, in the ballpark of the life expectancy in Rwanda or Afghanistan. Who's dying so young? People with HIV? Cancer? Or maybe severe asthma or heart disease. "None of these. It's people living with a serious mental illness – like schizophrenia or severe bipolar disorder.

Go back to where you were 20 years ago. Imagine losing all of that. Imagine losing your next 20 years.

The causes of death for these folks are actually very similar to the causes of death in the general population, but it happens on average 20 years earlier. They often die from treatable diseases: diabetes, heart disease, smoking-related illnesses.

There are several reasons for this: People who live with serious mental illness are less likely to be in a position to take good care of themselves. They may smoke more heavily, not exercise regularly, and have more difficulty than others in negotiating their way through a complicated health care system for appointments, or act as their own advocates and seek follow-up care. Their primary care physicians aren't necessarily trained well in terms of combining treatment for

significant health problems along with mental illness. In general, it's far more difficult for someone living with a serious mental illness to access good, comprehensive medical care.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was starting to make this easier. It was easier to get onto Medi-Cal if your income was low. There was a sharp decrease in the number of adults who are uninsured all over the country. Clinics could get reimbursement for care and expanded their services, so they were more willing to set appointments for you. You could get to the doctor regularly because you didn't have to make a hard choice between paying for services or medication or paying for rent or food or clothes for your family. You had preventative care at no cost, and if you were fortunate enough to have a job that kept you above subsistence level, you could get mental health or substance abuse services paid for through your health insurance. All of that is in danger of being taken away from people who are the most vulnerable in our country.

I've thought a lot about what made me want to become politically active. I'm very fortunate. I have a home, I have an income, I have friends and feel as though I'm part of my community. I can afford to pay for health insurance and I'm only a year away from Medicare.

I also have preexisting conditions and a few things to worry about – I've been diagnosed with arthritis, hypertension, depression, and Parkinson's disease. Not a complete list, but those are the high points. I have enough going on that health insurance companies, if they could, would run the other way if I were to want to sign up for benefits anew, outside of the protections provided by

**Because of my health situation I've taken the time to understand what changing the ACA means. It is horrifying to me to think about not being able to find health care.**

the ACA. Because of my health situation I've taken the time to understand what changing the ACA means. It is horrifying to me to think about not being able to find health care in the future simply because I have a serious, progressive, debilitating illness that's so far incurable. I probably won't suffer much from the changes being promulgated by Jeff Denham and his friends. I have access to affordable medical care, as much as I need. This just isn't so for so, so many people that I know – people who are living with severe and persistent medical conditions that affect and threaten their wellbeing and their very lives. People who are at real risk of losing 20 years of their lives because they struggle to get access to affordable health care. In the richest nation in the world.

I can't stand by and let them lose what ground they've gained. The decimation of social and health programs in this country is wrong, wrong, WRONG, and has got to stop. Being active in this resistance is the only place I can possibly be, now.

**Who's dying so young? It's people living with a serious mental illness – like schizophrenia or severe bipolar disorder.**

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**IF NOT YOU  
Then Who?**



## NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER

*"Not by might nor by power, but by spirit." – Zechariah 4:6*  
*"Sí se puede." – Delores Huerta and César Chávez*

In this season of Fascist thuggery and Big Lies  
Come the marchers  
Taking to the boulevards and Main Streets  
Swarming on side streets and river walks  
Resistors with muddied boots and worn-out tennis shoes  
Some muscling wheelchairs by grit and gut  
Some slumped over walkers or slowed by disease  
But all committed to the fight  
Marching over cobblestones and potholes and ruptured  
sidewalks  
Marching against hatred and racism, against sexism and  
oppression  
Calling out indifference and intolerance and injustice  
Standing up to bullies and thugs and the Big Lie  
Teachers and architects marching, store clerks and bus  
drivers and farm workers  
Park Rangers and heath care workers  
Community volunteers and caregivers  
Poets and writers, musicians and librarians  
Veterans and fire fighters

Across the world, marching  
Singing, organizing, envisioning  
United in purpose  
Not by might nor by power  
But by reason and wisdom and caring  
*Sí se puede*

Surging like rivers, come the marchers  
Down the *Champs-Élysées* and Spring Street  
By Buffalo Bayou and Down Under  
Along *Copacabana* and Venice Beach  
In San Francisco and New York  
In Paris and Stockholm and in California's Great Valley  
In London and Lisbon and Fort Worth  
In Berlin and Antarctica and Mexico City  
Marching, not in lock step but shoulder to shoulder  
Not for might nor for power  
But for compassion, for empathy and love  
Men and women and children  
The sick and healthy, uncles and grandmothers and the  
chatty neighbor across the street  
Marching for Equal Rights for Women and for  
Immigrants, for Science and Refugees  
Marching for Standing Rock and Black Lives Matter  
For justice and common decency

Christians and Muslims and Jews marching  
Atheists and Buddhists and Sikhs  
Marching together for we have everything to lose  
Marching for our sons and for our daughters  
For the voiceless and despairing everywhere  
Waving banners and pennants for Planned Parenthood  
and the ACLU  
Proudly unfurling rainbow flags to the morning breeze,  
donning pink caps and mufflers  
Armies of strangers massing on street corners, fists  
knotted, pumping the air  
Shouting in joy for democracy and equality  
For the simple act of embracing our shared humanity  
Because we can only do this if we do it together

Strangers no more for the quickened step  
And the common cause  
Shouting not in anger but for truth  
Not with might nor with power  
But with truth

*Sí se puede, Sí se puede*  
*Sí se puede*

— Tom Portwood

## Modesto's 'hidden gem' is part of a solution

from page 1

ences. Sadly, this form of bullying based on belief continues to happen in North American classrooms.

American reports from 2014-2016 document the prevalence of religious bullying. Now, 1 in 3 Sikh and Hindu students are bullied for their beliefs in the US. In California, 1 in 2 Muslim students are bullied. Although less reported, media sources also share stories of non-religious and Christian students who are bullied for their beliefs as well.

Religious bullying, which happens within religious groups, across religious groups, and between those who are religious and non-religious, holds long-term detrimental effects for individuals who are bullied, those who do the bullying, and those who witness bullying. Like other forms of bullying, religious bullying can lead to psychological, emotional, and physical effects. This includes lower self-esteem, poor mental health, depression, social anxiety, sluggishness, difficulty sleeping, poor appetite, increased likelihood of suffering self-injury or injury caused by others, inattentiveness, poor academic performance, truancy, alcohol and drug use, suicidal ideation, and suicide. Problematically, teachers often overlook and misunderstand religious bullying. Therefore, we need to understand clearly that religious bullying occurs when a religious or non-religiously person **intentionally** degrades another person emotionally, mentally, or physically based on the bullied individual's religious or religiously unaffiliated identity. It creates a **power imbalance** between the parties; the power imbalance is crucial as it can lead people to think less of themselves and cause harmfulness into adulthood.

**Unique in all of the US, the WGWR course is the only world religions course in an American public school that is required for high school graduation.**

In my search for a solution, I came across the Modesto City School's 9th Grade World Geography and World Religions (WGWR) course. This hidden gem has given me an answer.

Unique in all of the US, the WGWR course is the only world religions course in an American public school that is required for high school graduation. In all other high schools, world religions courses are electives. In the WGWR course, students are taught nine weeks of world geography followed by nine weeks of world religions. The seven local teachers

who created this course in 2000, one being Yvonne Taylor, thoughtfully designed and developed the course to offer students more education on subjects that would equip them for social science courses later in high school. As an introductory course to world religions, teachers first discuss the First Amendment, the separation of church and state, Roger Williams, and the rights, respect, and responsibilities of all Americans. Then, students are taught

about Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism, where each religion is equally allocated one week.

In my Ph.D. research on this course and the potential link it may have to religious bullying, I found that the course has successfully transformed attitudes of some students towards those who have different beliefs. One grade 11 student said, "I really enjoyed learning about what other people believe because I think it's interesting and helps me understand my peers." Although I cannot make a direct connection to say that the WGWR course stops religious bullying, it has the ability to change student attitudes positively, which can be a precursor to preventing religious bullying altogether.

While this course offers substantial lessons for the rest

of the US, religious bullying does still occur in Modesto and Stanislaus County. Among 50 student surveys, 18% of students said they had "somewhat", "yes", or "very much" knew of or had seen instances of religious bullying but did not report it. This is concerning on two levels: 1) religious bullying occurs for some despite the success of the course for others, and 2) students are not comfortable in reporting religious bullying when it occurs.

There are two solutions to these concerns: 1) Society must learn more about world religions and non-religious beliefs. When adults in society understand others, students are able to do the same and be supported in their efforts to respect others. 2) Students are afraid to report religious bullying when it comes from some teachers and adults in their school or community. So, adults must foster healthy relationships with students so that they feel welcomed to report such instances to them.

Religious bullying needs to stop. As a society, we must learn to recognize religious bullying, respond to it appropriately, and find ways to stop it from happening. Thankfully, Modesto's "hidden gem" has given Modesto a head start from other US communities. (In July 2016, the California Department of Education even included the course structure into the State's recommended History and Social Sciences Framework!) So, as a community member, I encourage you all to take pride in its success, support its growth, and protect it for years to come. Shout it loud and clear. I know I will.

*The author is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University.*

*An article and a video featuring the author's recent Modesto visit can be found at <http://www.modbee.com/news/local/education/article146207914.html> and <http://www.modbee.com/news/local/education/article146172929.html>*



## Prayer for You, On the Way to Wherever You're Going

While you're on your way to wherever you are going,  
make time for interesting civic slogans,  
kind tones of voice from your offspring,  
and tender pork chops at dinner, as you wait  
for those children to grow;

and on your way, don't forget  
to wave at the passing cars, the '62 Rambler Ambassadors,  
the '57 Chevy Impalas—lowered or not—the '49 Chevy pickup  
with the two-tone paint job and its wine press in the wood-slat bed  
on which you chipped your front tooth;

meanwhile, on your way to being an adult in Modesto,  
don't forget to stand at the side of the street  
watching the veterans parade by,  
the group ever-smaller year by passing year—  
and to think about what that means;

and on the way to wherever your route ends, remember  
the urban forestry division and its cherry-pickers taking crews up high,  
clearing out the mistletoe taking hold in your soul. It roots  
to your higher self, takes in your exhalations  
and thrives.

And on the way to wherever you are going,  
don't forget to design the official flag of your being.  
Do it with your own brand of thinking, all of the  
small sadnesses mixed with triumph, your flag waving  
in the same air that we breathe, here in Modesto —

And while you are on the way  
to wherever you are going, bless each face you meet,  
the creases at the bottom corners of both eyes; bless  
the line of the lips where they meet. Curve your own mouth  
into a shape, a symbol, the flag of this singular moment,

when you meet your neighbors at every corner — in the Virginia Corridor,  
in Dry Creek. You are here in this moment, you fill it, are filled;  
you are firmly twined around the tree trunk of time. And so, on the way  
to wherever you are going, you find yourself always arriving here, where you are:  
inside this frame, and this frame, and this frame.

— Stella Beratlis

*Note: I recall that when my family and I moved here from the Bay Area in the late 70s, Modesto's slogan (perhaps a Chamber of Commerce-created slogan) seemed to be a phrase along the lines of Modesto: We're on the Way to Where You're Going. In this poem, I work with that slogan, which might be true only in my memory's imagination. As an adult who has now lived in Modesto for the past 21 years after leaving "for good" back in my college days, I'm fascinated by the idea of a city—any city, really, but especially one's hometown—as both a transitory and a permanent place, a place where one projects one's own desires, regrets, and hopes.*

## 1302 Nineteenth

She holds a matchbook, a composition book,  
and a transit map to the underground tunnels  
of her original city, its dimly-lit corridors

subject to flooding, to the enclosed  
staircase with a landing and right turn  
halfway to the top level to the threshold  
where she finds the black kitten  
cold to the mattress in the corner where she rests  
after an abortion waiting for appetite

to return. The map fails to mark the exact moment  
the space shuttle explodes—  
the radio broadcast  
the sudden awakening  
the way one boy works  
his way off the floor and onto her body

their change in elevation forcing dams  
to overspill: they are on the highest floors.  
So many times she ascends,  
Old Crow bottle in coat pocket a question  
mark in the air where she drinks vodka  
with record store guy

where she is pregnant where she  
falls on wet sidewalk ripping her tights. I am telling you  
where fallout shelters are located  
where he is asked to leave the car when he says *but*  
*I want our baby* and are you kidding me  
because this is the place

where she breaks a glass every day  
they slip from her outstretched hands,  
it seems, onto the hard floor,  
the incidents recorded faithfully  
in a notebook of broken things  
and even when he tells her

*You are such a cunt* it doesn't register  
as much as glass shards do  
on hard linoleum floor,  
where wavy lines mark  
shifting borders of this new country,  
those penciled shapes on paper.



**Stella Beratlis is Poet Laureate of Modesto.**

# Science and the New Administration

*Ed. Note: the following explains what Student Pugwash USA is:*

**Our Vision:** Student Pugwash USA (SPUSA) delivers high quality methods for engaging students and young professionals in the United States in the ethical, policy, and societal dimensions of science and technology. These methods have two primary outcomes: to educate students and young professionals on these issues, and to grow and consolidate a network of students and young professionals seeking to shape this area.

**Our Mission:** To empower and equip students and young professionals to identify, critically analyze, and shape the ethical, policy, and societal dimensions of science and technology.

Interested readers can find more information and join SPUSA by visiting [http://www.spusa.org/forms/join\\_mailing.html](http://www.spusa.org/forms/join_mailing.html)

Dear SPUSA Alumnus:

The world after January 20th is not what many of us expected it to be in early November. The election of Donald Trump puts America on several paths that are unprecedented in modern American history. Regardless of whom you supported in this election, this transition of power has exhibited features that conflict with SPUSA values, including: a lack of civil discourse in the political sphere of the kind that we pride in our SPUSA discussion-based model; a lack of prioritization of ethics and social responsibility in the public sphere; a lack of respect for people from diverse backgrounds; and a disregard for evidence-based thought.

None of these are new threats in politics and policy, but I believe their breadth and depth is.

Although I am a member of SPUSA's Board of Directors, I am writing today as a concerned alumnus. **I am writing to ask how the breakdown in these norms should affect SPUSA's activities going forward.** Our mission, recently updated, is to empower and equip students and young professionals to identify, critically analyze, and shape the ethical, policy, and societal dimensions of science and technology. However, this mission requires certain prerequisites to be universally accepted, and not be matters for partisan debate.

Science benefits from an apolitical driver behind the direction of research and the allocation of resources-without predetermined conclusions selecting the areas of research which will be allowed to proceed-as well as a robust discussion on the societal benefits and ethics of research. It requires an appreciation and understanding of the scientific method, a comprehension by people in power of the value of scholarly research over anecdote and emotion, and a collective realization that science and technology have been a fundamental aspect of what we now consider to be modern civilization and quality of life.

Education, likewise, should also aspire to be universal in outreach, available across all classes and divisions in society, and to teach certain values which are fundamental and necessary. By "values" I do not mean any particular political issue which has been debated in recent decades; I mean the understanding that education in and of itself is a social good,

**It requires an appreciation and understanding of the scientific method, a comprehension by people in power of the value of scholarly research over anecdote and emotion, and a collective realization that science and technology have been a fundamental aspect of what we now consider to be modern civilization and quality of life.**

and provides the bare essentials for functioning in a modern economy and democracy.

Both of these principles are under attack. Furthermore, the very notion that we should use evidence and reality-based assessments of the world around us is likewise crumbling, in an era when the Internet makes it simple to live in a post-truth bubble which promotes confirmation bias and rejects all information that might induce cognitive dissonance.

SPUSA has historically inherited its parent organization's interest in the continued survival of humanity, especially against the threats of climate change and nuclear Armageddon. It is my opinion that human survival is a nonpartisan issue. Insofar as one party or another tries to make it one, I believe that a nonpartisan organization need not retreat from any topic that is suddenly deemed partisan, when those topics are so fundamental. Likewise, I consider it foolish for an organization to continue to work on particular issues when the fundamental requirements allowing those issues to be relevant are being undermined.

I want to hear back from you, and I want to hear your thoughts on two topics:

1) what should the role of SPUSA be in the current administration? How should we respond and stay relevant during the coming changes to American governance and society? And what role would you like to play in such efforts?

2) what are you doing outside of Student Pugwash, in your own nonprofits and communities, about this? These could be activities related to SPUSA's mission, or work that has nothing to do with us at all. I want to hear about it.



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

I want to compile what's already being done by SPUSA alumni and help you to build a network-which has always been a fundamental SPUSA goal-to coordinate with each other. But in my role as a Board member, I want to take back your ideas to the Board and see if we can come to consensus on how this should affect our future activities, so we can be more relevant and more effective.

However this proceeds, my goal is to find out what you are doing, what you want to do, and how best to make that happen. SPUSA alumni have been among the most motivated, most activated, and most interesting people I have had the luxury to know in my work. We are at a critical moment in history, which is already inspiring organizational activities elsewhere on a massive scale. What would you like to do together?

Best, Jeff Porten

## Stanislaus Connections needs YOU!



At over 90 years old, Pat Noda is our oldest, dedicated *Stanislaus Connections* distributor. Won't you join him?

We need volunteer distributors to place our informative newspaper in places of business around Modesto and the County. If you know of a store that might be receptive to our publication where you could deliver copies each month, contact Jim Costello, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

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# A Universal Ethic for all Mankind

By **VASU MURTY**

"I have since an early age abjured the use of meat, and the time will come when men will look upon the murder of animals as they look upon the murder of man," is a quote attributed to Leonardo Da Vinci. Ethical considerations moved Benjamin Franklin, who became a vegetarian at age sixteen. Franklin noted "greater progress from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension." In his autobiographical writings, he called flesh-eating "unprovoked murder."

The poet Shelley was a committed vegetarian. In his essay, "A Vindication of Natural Diet," he wrote, "Let the advocate of animal food... tear a living lamb with his teeth and, plunging his head into its vitals, slake his thirst with the steaming blood... Then, and only then only, would he be consistent." Shelley's interest in vegetarianism began when he was a student at Oxford, and he and his wife Harriet took up the diet soon after their marriage. In a letter dated March 14, 1812, his wife wrote to a friend, "We have foresworn meat and adopted the Pythagorean system." Shelley, in his poem "Queen Mab," described a world where humans do not kill animals for food.

"The vegetarian movement," wrote Tolstoy, "ought to fill with gladness the souls of all those who have at their heart the realization of God's Kingdom on earth."

"I have no doubt," wrote Henry David Thoreau, "that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off the eating of animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized."

**"Animals are my friends... and I don't eat my friends."  
— George Bernard Shaw**

Mohandas Gandhi wrote: "It is necessary to correct the error that vegetarianism has made us weak in mind, or passive or inert in action. I do not regard flesh-food as necessary at any stage." Gandhi wrote several books in which he discussed vegetarianism. His own daily diet included wheat sprouts, almond paste, greens, lemons, and honey. He founded Tolstoy Farm, a community based on vegetarian principles.

In his *Moral Basis of Vegetarianism*, Gandhi wrote: "I hold flesh-food to be unsuited to our species. We err in copying the lower animal world if we claim we are superior to it."

Gandhi felt the ethical principles are a stronger support for a lifelong commitment to vegetarianism than reasons of health: "I do feel," he stated, "that spiritual progress does demand at some stage that we should cease to kill our fellow creatures for the satisfaction of our bodily wants."

"...the whole point of life is to harmonize with everything, every aspect of creation. That means down to not killing the flies, eating the meat, killing people or chopping the trees down."

—George Harrison

Describing his reaction to a visit to a slaughterhouse, Canadian tennis champion Peter Burwash wrote in *A Vegetarian Primer*: "I'm no shrinking violet. I played hockey until half of my teeth were knocked down my throat. And I'm extremely competitive on a tennis court... But that experience at the slaughterhouse overwhelmed me. When I walked out of there, I knew I would never again harm an animal. I knew all the physiological, economic, and ecological arguments supporting vegetarianism, but it was firsthand experience of man's cruelty to animals that laid the real groundwork for my commitment to vegetarianism."

"If you could feel or see the suffering, you wouldn't think twice. Give back life. Don't eat meat."

—Kim Basinger

"The meat industry spends hundred of millions of dollars lying to the public about their product. But no amount of false propaganda can sanitize meat... a living nightmare for animals."

—Chrissie Hynde

Like pacifists and/or pro-lifers, vegetarianism in itself is merely **an ethic**, and *not a religion*. As an ethic, vegetarianism has attracted some of the greatest figures in history.

The Table of Contents to Rynn Berry's 1993 book, *Famous Vegetarians and Their Favorite Recipes: Lives & Lore from Buddha to the Beatles* lists:

*Pythagoras*: "An ancient Greek religious teacher." *Gautama the Buddha*: "An ancient Indian savant and religious teacher." *Mahavira*: "The historical founder of the world's oldest vegetarian religion—the Jains of India." *Plato (and Socrates)*: "Pythagorean philosophers... founders of the Western philosophical tradition." *Plutarch*: "An ancient essayist and biographer, famous for his *Lives* of notable Greeks and Romans."

*Leonardo da Vinci*: "Italian Renaissance man; Leonardo is one of Western Civilization's greatest geniuses." *Percy Shelley*: "Scientist, classicist, aesthete. Shelley was probably the most gifted English Romantic poet." *Count Leo Tolstoy*:

"Nineteenth century Russian author..." *Annie Besant*: "Nineteenth century English social reformer and spiritual leader... at once a feminist, a labor leader, a theosophist, a freethinker, a devoted mother and a founder of the planned parenthood movement. She is one of the most remarkable women of modern times."

*Mohandas Gandhi*: "Indian civic and spiritual leader; inventor of the hunger strike; architect of Indian independence; father of modern India." *George Bernard Shaw*: "Celebrated wit; peerless music and drama critic..." *Bronson Alcott*: "American transcendentalist philosopher; father of Louisa May Alcott; founder of the first vegetarian commune, Fruitlands." *Adventist physician Dr. John Harvey Kellogg*: "World-class surgeon, pioneering nutritionist, and food inventor extraordinaire. Kellogg invented peanut butter, flaked cereals, and the first meat substitutes made from nuts and grains." *Henry Salt*: "Venerable figure in the vegetarian movement; author of such vegetarian classics as *Seventy Years Among the Savages*, and *Animal Rights*."

*Frances Moore Lappe*: "Author of *Diet for a Small Planet*, Lappe's two million copy 1971 bestseller put vegetarianism on the map, and awakened Westerners to the nutritional and economic benefits of a vegetarian diet." Isaac Bashevis Singer and Malcolm Muggeridge... first major literary figures in the West to turn vegetarian since Tolstoy. *Brigid Brophy*: "Noted for her formidable intellect,... English novelist, biographer, and critic of the first rank. She is the first major woman novelist to become a vegetarian."

*People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)*: 501 Front Street, Norfolk, VA 23510 (757) 622-PETA

Reach the author at [vasumurti@netscape.net](mailto:vasumurti@netscape.net)



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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.*

## Stockton

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

## JUNE

**3 SAT: Car, Truck, Motorcycle Show.** Benefit for Boyd & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County. Somerset Junior High, 1037 Floyd Ave., Modesto. \$15 Pre-registration; \$20 at the show. 9 am to 2 pm. Call 209-613-3455; [ealvarez@bgcstan.org](mailto:ealvarez@bgcstan.org)

**3 SAT: The State Theatre presents American Graffiti.** And get your root beer floats! 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/458>

**4 SUN: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast,** Modesto Church of the Brethren. See ad, front page.

**7 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL:** Living Wage. McHenry & J St., 4:30-5:30 pm.

**9 FRI: Peace Vigil at Livermore Lab.** Conducted by members of the Catholic Worker movement under the leadership of Chelsea and Marcus Page. All welcome at the West Gate, corner of Vasco Rd. and Westgate Dr., Livermore. Info: (505) 379-6942.

**16 - 17 FRI - SAT: Celebrate Juneteenth.** “A celebration of African American History, Cultural Bridges & Family Values.” Program starts with a talent showcase on Friday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday’s program begins at 11:00 a.m. and includes a presentations by guest speakers, inspirational gospel singers, D.J. music, cultural performances, demonstrations, educational exhibits, community resource information booths, book giveaways, basketball tournament, children’s activities and bounce houses. FREE. Info or to reserve a vendor booth call, Deborah Sullivan (209) 568-3643.

**17 SAT: MoPRIDE presents “Pride in the Park 2017”** Drag performances, Beer Garden, Main Stage Entertainment, Kids’ Zone, Vendors and More! \$5 admission. Kids 10 years of age and younger free. Parental Advisory after 6pm (Strong Language). 1 pm to 8 pm, John Thurman Field, 601 Neece Dr., Modesto. Info: [info@mopride.org](mailto:info@mopride.org), 209-372-3056. Visit the Peace Center’s booth!

**18 SUN: The Modesto Film Society** presents *Giant*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/731>

**19 - 23: MON - FRI: Kids as Peacemakers: Peace Week.** Sponsored by Modesto Church of the Brethren with curriculum drawn from *On Earth Peace*. 9:00AM -12:PM. Grades K-6th. Cost: 15.00 per child or 35.00 for a family. To register call 209 523-1438.

**20 TUES: Community Unity Rally.** Mancini Bowl, Graceada Park. Speakers address issues impacting on our community members including: Refugees, Immigration, Freedom of Religion, Civil Rights, Social Justice. 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. See article p. 1.

**21 WED: Film Night** at the Center: There is no film this month.

**23-25 FRI - SUN: Peace Camp in the Sierra,** Camp Peaceful Pines, Clark Fork Rd. See article this issue.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Sunday August 6: Modesto Peace/Life Center’s Annual Hiroshima Remembrance and Potluck,** Legion Park, Modesto, 6:00 PM. Bring food, drinks to share as we converse and rededicate ourselves to reversing the efforts to rebuild and proliferate nuclear weapons. Bring your own table service. Evening concludes with a candlelight vigil on the banks of the Tuolumne River.

**Wednesday August 9: March for Nuclear Abolition & Global Survival.** No Nukes! No Walls! No Wars! No Warming! 8 am, Livermore Lab, corner of Vasco & Patterson Pass Rds. More information: 925.443.7148 or 510.839.5877.

## 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](mailto:modestovineyard@gmail.com); All Welcome.

**Weekly insight meditation** and dharma talk, 9:00 am-10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (in the UUFSC sanctuary). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: [insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com](mailto: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 [stancountyrmh@gmail.com](mailto:stancountyrmh@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](mailto: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](mailto:Tiamonica64@gmail.com) or Susan J, [Susanthe poet@gmail.com](mailto:Susanthe poet@gmail.com)

### TUESDAYS

**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.

**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 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), 4:30-5:30 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](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

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

Modesto. Donation accepted. Info: 505-3216. [www.funstrummers.com](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:mercedboard@gaycentralvalley.org) – 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. [www.mercedlgbtcenter.org](http://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](mailto:info@stanpride.org) , or [tgsupport@stanpride.org](mailto: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, [jpmadesto@gmail.com](mailto:jpmadesto@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](http://www.StanislausGreenTeam.com)

**Third Thursday Art 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](mailto:RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com)

**The Book Group,** First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 pm. Info: [mzjurkovic@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

**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](http://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](mailto: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. nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

**DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS:** Tenth of each month. Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to Jim Costello, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org) Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.