



Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER
PUBLICATION

MAY, 2019
VOLUME XXVII, NO. 9

Pilgrimage of Hope raises awareness for Central Valley immigrants

San Joaquin pilgrims to reach Sacramento May 20, Day of the Immigrant

By **PAT MCCAUGHAN**

[Episcopal News Service] Roberta Murrieta-May intends to walk at least part of the 173 miles from Fresno to Sacramento, California, because more people — especially undocumented immigrants and asylum-seekers — need hope.

The Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin's May 4-20 Pilgrimage of Hope "is a very honorable thing to do, with all the people in our culture today who don't care about immigrants," said Murrieta-May.

Murrieta-May, 54, learned of the pilgrimage on April 10 while visiting the food bank at St. James Cathedral in Fresno, across the street from her home.

"All of us are immigrants, or related to immigrants," she said in a telephone interview with Episcopal News Service. Noting that most people in this country are descended from immigrants, she said, "More people need to care about those who are coming here because of danger, because of fear. We need to raise awareness about them."

San Joaquin Bishop David Rice said the pilgrimage, a march to raise awareness about the plight of undocumented persons and refugees, will begin May 4 after a celebration of the Eucharist and a blessing at St. James Cathedral in Fresno.

From there, pilgrims will walk north approximately 17 miles per day, until they reach Sacramento, the state capital, on May 20, and join with other activists and faith groups in observance of California's Immigrant Day of Action.

"I'll be walking every day and every mile," said Rice. "It's going to be a lovely outward and visible sign of what we believe. It is not only making a visible statement about what we believe and to whom we belong, but it is also about raising awareness, not only for our larger context, but raising awareness within it, too."

California's Central Valley produces



San Joaquin Bishop David Rice, left, the Rev. Anna Carmichael, the diocese's canon to the ordinary, center, and the Rev. Nancy Key, deacon, right, take part in a Prayer of Vision, Witness and Justice in July 2018. Photo: Cindy Smith/Diocese of San Joaquin

over a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of its fruits and nuts, attracting undocumented farm labor.

Rice said there are approximately 2.8 million undocumented immigrants in California, more than any other state.

For those who are seeking a pathway to citizenship, it "is expensive, it is time-intensive and results in people living in constant fear of deportation or detention," Rice said.

He added, "When we become aware of what is going on in our larger context, when we hear the voices of the other, if we don't respond, then we are complicit in the systems that form those voices."

Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Episcopal congregations will offer hospitality and lodging to pilgrims along the way.... Rice hopes "others will join us."

The Rev. Terrance Goodpasture, a deacon at the Fresno cathedral and a pilgrimage organizer, said he expects partners such as Faith in the Valley to participate in the walk. Faith in the Valley, a Central California grassroots

continued page 8

Erring on the Side of Yes

An interview By **TOM PORTWOOD**

In a region known for growing much of the abundant produce that graces dinner tables across the nation, the harsh reality of hunger cruelly looms over the lives of thousands of Stanislaus County residents. That unsettling fact should make us all not only very uncomfortable but also spur us on to help alleviate this chronic, decades-old crisis. And it is a crisis.

Indeed, approximately one in six of our fellow residents live in poverty, requiring food stamps and other SNAP assistance to help keep food on the table. (U.S. Census estimated statistics, 2017). That many of our neighbors may often go to bed hungry has been the driving concern of Interfaith Ministries of Greater Modesto since its inception fifty years ago.

"In the late sixties, a group of local congregations saw a need for basic services in our community, such as food and clothing, greater than what they could provide from each of their individual food pantries," recently recounted David Rogers, the Communications Director at Interfaith. "Many communities of faith were involved in this effort. Interfaith truly is inter-faith."

"Interfaith was set up as a food pantry and it's still our number one program, which we call Feed Modesto," continued Mr. Rogers. "We act as a food distribution center for 70 to 80 coalition members (congregations, other local non-profits), as well as provide direct services to about 60,000 individuals yearly. We are low-barrier. People don't have to jump through a lot of hoops to get the help they need. It's important for people to realize that if you have to make a decision on whether to pay rent or buy food, there are options for you. You can come here and get enough groceries to get you through the rest of the month, so that you can pay rent, so that you

continued page 8

44th Annual Pancake Breakfast

Sunday June 9, 2019

8:00 a.m. — Noon

Benefit for
the Modesto Peace/Life Center

Modesto Church of the Brethren
2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto



All-Star Favorites

- Blueberry • Buttermilk •
- Scotch Oaties •

Fresh fruit salad
Excellent coffees, teas, juices
Fresh granola, yogurt

- Every order served hot!
- Visit with fellow breakfasters.

Adults: \$10, Children: \$5

SILENT AUCTION TO SUPPORT
KCBP 95.5 FM COMMUNITY RADIO!

The Church of the Brethren has graciously
donated the use of its facility.

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

PEACE CAMP	2
PEACE ESSAY WINNER.	3
YOUTH	4
GREEN TIPS	5
UNIONS/ORGANIZING	6-7

SERVING OTHERS	8
GATHERING OF VOICES.	9
PUBLIC INTEREST	10
SEVEN LIVES	11
CALENDAR	12

READERS!

Sign-up for our e-edition!

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

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

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



37th Annual Peace Camp June 28, 29, and 30, 2019

Camp Peaceful Pines
near Pinecrest, California

Registration Form



Adults \$75 before May 1; \$80 before June 4; \$85 after June 4

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

Total \$ _____

Youth (ages 4 -18) \$55 before May 1; \$60 before June 4; \$65 after June 4

1. _____ Age _____ 2. _____ Age _____
3. _____ Age _____ 4. _____ Age _____

Total \$ _____

Child (ages 3 & under FREE)

1. _____ Age _____ 2. _____ Age _____

Voluntary Donation to provide a camper scholarship = \$ _____

GRAND TOTAL = \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353-0134

There is an additional \$15 fee for each person coming to camp without a pre-registration.

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

MEALS: ☐ Vegetarian ☐ Vegan ☐ Gluten-free Other dietary needs: _____

☐ I have a special need for a cabin assignment: _____

☐ I can offer a ride Friday/Saturday. ☐ I need a ride Friday/Saturday

Parent authorization for minor children

I give permission for decisions to be made in my absence about the need for medical care. I give permission for my child to be treated by a physician or hospital in case of an emergency. I understand and agree that the Modesto Peace/Life Center is not responsible for my child/children. I will not hold the Modesto Peace/Life Center, its officers or leaders liable for medical aid rendered.

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

I authorize the Modesto Peace/Life Center to photograph and/or videotape my child, and reproduce my child's photographs and videotapes for publicity and/or educational/promotional purposes related to Peace Camp.

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

Note: If adults bring children not their own, the parent/legal guardian of those children must complete and sign a separate parent authorization. Minors must be accompanied by an adult.

37th Annual Peace Camp, June 28-30

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's 37th Annual Peace Camp in the Sierra will take place on June 28-30 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108. We'll enjoy a weekend of workshops, good food, hikes, singing, crafts, talent show, recreation, and stimulating people of all ages in a beautiful mountain setting. Families and individuals are welcome. Register early for a discount.

Leng Nou will present the Saturday workshop, "Courageous Conversations." The art of civil discourse is quickly fading, and we need more practitioners with this skill set if we want to effectively build community. Participants will explore the dynamics of a conversation and learn skills to help build their capacity to engage in difficult conversations ranging from political, social, and cultural issues. Participants will learn how developing curiosity and nurturing deep listening skills are practical ways to breach the polarizing rifts in our society.

Leng Nou, is a mindfulness practitioner and draws upon her experience as an American Leadership Forum Senior Fellow as well as her time with the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Road off Hwy. 108 in the Stanislaus National Forest features kitchen and bathroom facilities, rustic cabins, platform tents and a cabin for those with special needs. 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 4 and \$85 after June 4. Young people 18 and under are \$60 before June 4 and \$65 after June 4. Ages 3 and under free. Minors under 18 need to be accompanied by an adult. Partial scholarships and day rates are available. Donations for scholarships are appreciated. The camp opens with supper at 6:00 p.m. 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 and www.peacelifecenter.org to download and mailed. The online registration payment option can be done by searching for "Peace Camp 2019" at www.brownpapertickets.com. There will be a wait list if registration becomes full.

Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-480-4576, kschroeder70@yahoo.com

Peace/Life Center looking for volunteers

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

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

New Rotary Club chartered in Modesto

By MICHAEL GAFFNEY

The civic scene in Modesto may have changed forever. While service club memberships have suffered from a downward trend across the globe for the past two decades, 30 charter members are on course to double in the next 90 days. The new Rotary Club of ModestoFLEX is active and already beating the odds.



"Fewer meetings, more family involvement emphasized."

"We're thrilled to have officially chartered earlier this year," said Eugene Awuah who serves as the club's first President and leads Rotary membership growth efforts in the Central Valley and Mother Lode. "What was once a dream is now reality. We are living the dream and want to share this flexible and fun experience with you and your family."

Most traditional Rotary clubs world-wide hold weekly adults-only meetings during business hours with firm attendance requirements and mandated meals. ModestoFLEX marries the same Rotary principles and benefits with a more flexible and less costly format. "We keep the cost and time commitment down to appeal to families who may have hesitated becoming Rotarians in the past," says Public Image Chair Michael Gaffney. "Achieving work life-balance is a real problem. Setting aside time to give back to the community is challenging for many families. The FLEX concept is proving to be the solution. My wife Victoria and I each hold a leadership role on the board and take our four-year-old son Connor to the meetings. Instilling Rotary's solid values and morals in him is very important to us."

The club's enthusiastic, diverse, and growing membership has quickly fostered a very positive club culture that promotes a warm, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all who value family, life-long friendships, and a hands-on approach to Rotary service. "I've been searching for a place to develop my leadership skills while pursuing my passion for financial literacy. ModestoFLEX provides me with both," says young business professional Cecilia Rosales who is proud to be the club's President-Elect.

An array of affordable membership levels is available including: Individual, Single Family, Couples Family, Small Business, Corporate, and Young Business Professionals. "The FLEX concept provides me with a vehicle to do something about homelessness in our community, an issue that needs our immediate attention," says big-hearted but time-challenged local business owner Dory Tucker, who recently launched The Hopeful Garden Project that focuses on homeless mitigation.

ModestoFLEX meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at rotating locations including members' places of work. The second meeting is also flexible with dates and times agreed to by members ahead of time based on their work and family schedules.

ACTION: To learn more about the Rotary Club of ModestoFLEX or attend an upcoming event, contact Michael Loschke, 209-988-2000 or visit www.facebook.com/modestoflexrotary.



Peace Essay Contest: Div. III 1st Place Winner

By Stella Whitler

Hart Ransom Academy Charter

Teacher: Susan Janis



Home

I was born in Modesto California, and what makes me glad to live in California is that it is my home.

From my wonderful school and church community, to the beautiful art plastered all over the city, it is my home and I would not change it for the world. However, a sad reality for many Californians is that they have no home. The homeless population is roughly 114,000 in California. There are too many people uncared for, unloved, tired, hungry, and not being able to feel at home.

D.J. Jaffe mentions in his book *Insane Consequences* that "At minimum, 25 percent of the American homeless—140,000 individuals—were seriously mentally ill at any given point in time". At twenty-five percent, mental illness is an immense part of the homeless population and not funding certain organizations that help the mentally ill and help the homeless only exacerbates the situation.

The homeless in California have poor access to health care and mental health facilities. The mental health facilities that were funded by the Kennedy administration in the 1960s were closed without an alternative solution. In the early 1980s, President Reagan discarded a law that provided services for the mentally ill. These two occurrences are a factor in why we have seen an increase in homelessness in the past three decades. If we want to provide an in-depth solution, we have to look at better funding for mental health services.

The basic needs of any human being are food, shelter, water, and clothing. If the state government does not address those needs for the homeless of California, a feeling of fear, desperation, and anxiety only increases. Imagine if someone did not know where they are going to sleep the next night or where their next meal will come from, or how they will survive the winter. Let's say someone is walking outside; it is so cold that all they want to do is get inside into the warmth of a home. The homeless feel that every day in the winter, but they cannot go inside because they do not have a home. They do not have heaters for the winter or air conditioners for the summer. They have to figure out how to survive by themselves and sometimes they do not survive.

If the homeless were able to know and understand what is available to them, it would provide more opportunities to get them off the streets. It would also be beneficial to our community to have safer and cleaner parks and downtown areas. It is important to look at the homeless crisis in California from all different angles and not just patch certain issues. If we all work together to make a group, organization, or a community to cover every angle on homelessness and mental illness, maybe the homeless and mentally ill can feel at home just as much as I do.

Bibliography

Amadeo, Kimberly. "Causes of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis." *The Balance*, 25 Oct. 2018, www.thebalance.com/what-caused-2008-global-financial-crisis-3306176

Curwen, Thomas. "With an Epidemic of Mental Illness on the Streets, Counties Struggle to Spend Huge Cash Reserves." *Los Angeles Times*, 19 Aug. 2018, www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-mhsa-unspent-balance-20180819-story.html

Gates, Laura. "JFK's Legacy of Community-Based Care." *JFK's Legacy of Community-Based Care SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*, 3 Mar. 2016, <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/jfk%E2%80%99s-legacy-community-based-care>.

Holzer, Hannah. "California Needs More Mental Health Professionals - and the Shortage Will Get Worse, Experts Say." *Sacbee, The Sacramento Bee*, 11 July 2018, <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/health-and-medicine/article-214019489.html>.

Jaffe, D. J. *Insane Consequences: How the Mental Health Industry Fails the Mentally Ill*. Prometheus Books, 2017.

Matier, Phil, and Andy Ross. "Fewer Tents on SF Streets, but Drugs, Feces, Mental Health Still Big Problems." *SFChronicle.com, San Francisco Chronicle*, 8 Aug. 2018, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/matier-ross/article/Fewer-tents-on-SF-streets-but-drugs-feces-13139181.php>

Medina, Jennifer. "California Today: State's Homeless Population Drives National Increase." *The New York Times, The New York Times*, 21 Dec. 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/21/us/california-today-states-homeless-population-drives-national-increase.html>

Roberts, Joel John. "Did Reagan's Crazy Mental Health Policies Cause Today's Homelessness? - Poverty Insights." *Poverty Insights Did Reagans Crazy Mental Health Policies Cause Today's Homelessness Comments*, 14 Oct. 2013, <http://www.povertyinsights.org/2013/10/14/did-reagans-crazy-mental-health-policies-cause-todays-homelessness/>

"Kitchen Korner" needs small kitchen items for the homeless

By Shelly Scribner & Sandy Sample

The Peace/Life Center's Homeless Project's "Kitchen Corner" urgently needs donations of SMALL gently-used kitchen items.

We're especially in need of pots and pans, and silverware.

ACTION: Call Sandy (209) 523-8445, Shelly (209) 521-6304, to arrange a time to meet you at the Peace/Life Center to receive your items and give you a receipt.



Children's Moral Power Can Challenge Corporate Power on Climate Crisis

Students taking to the streets and taking on legislators will advance the fight for a safer planet and a more just society.

By Ralph Nader, Common Dreams

The famous anthropologist, Margaret Mead, once said to me that children have a distinct moral authority to change some of their parents' habits or opinions. She gave use of seat belts and smoking cigarettes as examples.

Indeed, most of us know instances when sons and daughters have looked into the eyes of their fathers and mothers and urged them to wear their seatbelts or stop smoking. They say in their own plaintive way that they want mommy and daddy around for them. Many mothers and fathers have had such experiences.

The rising tide of worldwide protests in recent months by young students cutting classes to shake up their elders should be a wakeup call and a sign of more activism on the horizon.

Many parents and corporate executives are doing slow motion dances round global climate disruptions, despite the brutally visual and scientific evidence of our climate crisis. The rising tide of worldwide protests in recent months by young students cutting classes to shake up their elders should be a wakeup call and a sign of more activism on the horizon. Earth Day on April 22nd should give them another visible platform.

Last year the Global Youth Climate Strike manifested itself in Sweden, where it was started by a then fifteen-year old teenager, Greta Thunberg. Every Friday she stood in silent protest outside the historic Swedish Parliament in Stockholm.

On March 15, an estimated 150,000 European students left school to protest. In Sweden, Germany, France, Britain, and other countries, these youngsters admonished adults, who have the power to urgently diminish greenhouse gases by cutting the use of coal, oil, and gas, and expanding the use of renewables and energy conservation.

In India, demonstrations were about the suffocating air pollution. In South Africa, protestors spoke about the worsening droughts.

At a rally in Washington, DC, eight-year old Havana Chapman-Edwards told protestors at the U.S. Capitol: "Today we are telling the truth and we do not take no for an answer," according to the New York Times.

Protestors already see the truth in the South Pacific's rising sea levels and the Arctic Circle's melting ice.

These youngsters can argue their case with facts and figures, with stories of record-setting fires, floods, tornados, and hurricanes and species extinctions. But they are viscerally feeling the impact of climate crisis and fearing for their lives before reaching middle age.

As University of Maryland Professor Dana Fisher told the Times, children are afraid of the tumultuous world they will inherit. Their elders are not protecting them.

The people of our tormented Planet must pull together as if there was an impending invasion from Mars.

Greta, the emerging spokesperson for this escalating youth agitation put it wisely: "There is a crisis in front of us that



Greta Thunberg – Swedish climate change activist.
Photo: Jan Ainali

we will have to live with for all our lives, our children, our grandchildren, and all future generations." The movement has much more room to grow, but we are depending on them developing a strong, organized voice, while retaining their individual spontaneity.

Not surprisingly, climate deniers took to social media to falsely declare that environmental groups were using the students. In fact, this outburst was quite commendably a result of students taking what they've learned seriously.

In England, students are insisting their government declare a state of emergency to highlight the severity of the threat. They want more material on global warming in their national school curriculum.

Some teachers and principals in the U.K. don't like students missing classes and are trying to block or penalize those who do. But many school leaders are approving such brief intermissions to help save the planet. Sixteen-year old Bonnie Morely decried the politicians for being "asleep at the wheel. We have to wake them up and I think thousands of kids on the streets will do just that."

How about millions of them! Their numbers are growing, with some demonstrations reaching tens of thousands. In France, over 2 million students signed petitions. Some politicians are chiding them about the costs of their demands, as if energy pollution and toxic waste are not costly to people, as if the costs of violent weather patterns aren't costing huge sums of money and lives already.

In Brussels, Belgium, 18-year old Liam pointed to "a growing momentum," but he told a Times reporter maybe it should become more disruptive to attain more attention. "Maybe we should change the timing of the protests to rush hour."

Fortunately, the urgent pathways to be pursued are full of favorable economic efficiencies and good jobs.

The youngsters understand the problem and want solutions now to counter the current omniscidal lethargy. Although some companies get it—such as the sterling Patagonia and Interface corporations in the U.S.—most large companies either are resisting, engaging in "greenwashing" lip service, or taking the smallest of steps for public relations purposes.

The people of our tormented Planet must pull together as if there was an impending invasion from Mars. Fortunately, the urgent pathways to be pursued are full of favorable economic efficiencies and good jobs. Think of solar energy installations, weatherizing homes and other buildings, modern public transportation, grants to speed up climate chaos mitigation, and economies moving to net or even negative carbon impact. The known remedial technology is far ahead of its mandated applications by sluggish legislators and their myopic corporate paymasters.

Children can and do communicate with each other often and freely around their community, country, and globe. The faster trivial text messages are replaced by texts calling for a relentless call to action, the better. Students taking to the streets and taking on legislators will advance the fight for a safer planet and a more just society.

Stay tuned! This is only the beginning of the world's children raising adults to a maturity that faces the awful, onrushing realities.

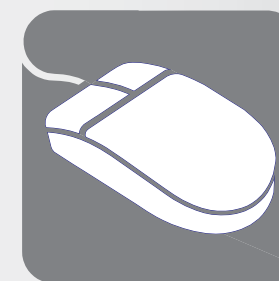
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License

The 4 Best Wheelchair Accessible Trails in U.S. National Parks

They are located in: Sequoia, Zion, Grand Canyon and Everglades National Parks.

Find out more from the travel section of the *National Geographic*.

[Sign Up for National Geographic Newsletters.](#)



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

What programs you
would like to hear on your
Community Radio Station?

Visit www.KCBPradio.org or call
(209) 353-3066



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

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



New classes every 8 weeks. Space is limited, call now! ModestoSound.org 209-573-0533

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

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

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

SHAMELESS and BLAMELESS Luncheon

Paul Golden, M.D., author and renowned speaker's heartfelt story of his experiences with bipolar disease touches and inspires audiences.

Mrs. Lynn Padlo, Leader, Teacher and former Executive Director of NAMI, Stanislaus and of the documentary "Madness Revealed," tells the stories of six individuals with mental health disease and their journey to recovery.

When: Thursday, May 9, 2019

Time: 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM

Where: West Modesto Community Collaborative, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto

Cost: \$25.00

Tickets: Click [HERE](#).

Information: Marnye Henry,
209-409-6006, mhenry@westmodestocollaborative.com



The **YOKUTS GROUP**
Stanislaus County, California

Community Nature Walk

WHEN: Saturday, May 18; 9 AM - 11 AM

WHERE: Hughson Arboretum and Garden, Hughson

Join Audubon and Sierra Club members on a 1-mile walk at the lovely and unique Hughson Arboretum and Garden in Hughson. We will stroll through the grounds with a trail guide and learn about the hundreds of plants that are grown there and look for local birds. Audubon members will share their knowledge of avian life. Sierra Club members will discuss natural history. This walk will be geared to families and beginners.

Started in 1994 by Hughson resident Margaret Sturtevant and her family, the arboretum is a secret gem of Stanislaus County. There are oaks, pines, coastal habitat, desert habitat, historic trees, and more.

Bring sun hat/sunscreen, walking shoes, binoculars (recommended), jacket, water, and a snack. All members of the community are invited to participate.

The arboretum is located at [2490 Euclid Ave.](http://2490EuclidAve.com), Hughson, just east of Hughson High School on Whitmore Ave. Parking is available on the grounds off Euclid Ave.

<http://hughsonarbor.org/home/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011187138188>

Rain cancels. For more info., contact Elaine, 209-300-4253 or Ralph, sharks_hockey_maniac@yahoo.com.

Green Tips for A Green Planet: Saving the world starts with YOU!

By **TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL**

Headlines recently sounded global alarms:

- Fort nine pounds of plastic and other garbage (garbage bags, fishing nets, tubes, a bag of washing liquid with identifiable brand and bar code and other no longer identifiable items) were found in the carcass of a pregnant sperm whale that washed ashore in Sardinia, Italy.
- A young whale was found dead in the Philippines with 88 pounds of plastic bags in its stomach.
- A huge island of plastics as large across and deep as the state of Texas floats in the Pacific Ocean.
- Raging fires destroy homes, forests and lives due to drought conditions.
- Toxic chemicals float through our air and water and affect our food sources.

The list goes on and on, AND THERE IS HOPE! It is YOU!

Yes, you are responsible for making this world sustainable for your life. If each one of us takes on the responsibility to be aware and save the human race one mindful act at a time, then together we build hope for a sustainable future.

It is as simple as:

- **Refuse** (single use plastics, unnecessary paper, styrofoam containers, etc.)
- **Reduce** (use of non-sustainable items)
- **Reuse** (re-purpose what you have; reuse bags, dishes, tableware, and be creative with myriads of other items)
- **Recycle** (only what you are unable to refuse, reduce or reuse)

In religious writings there is mention that "if one saves a single life, it is as if one has saved the whole world." Expect nothing from others. Expect everything you can reasonably do from yourself.

Silent Auction items needed for Pancake Breakfast

There will be a silent auction at the Peace/Life Center's annual Pancake Breakfast on June 9 to raise funds for our new community radio station, KCBP 95.5 FM.

We need your help. If you know any local artists willing to donate their work for the auction, please have them contact Jocelyn Cooper by email at jocelyncooper2012@gmail.com.

We need paintings, sculpture, photography, pottery, knitting, quilting and more. The artist will need to provide the value of their donated work.

Little Big Union joins the movement to transform fast food

By Shane Burley, Waging Nonviolence

Using “solidarity union” tactics, workers at a popular Portland burger chain have launched a union to fight for their basic labor rights.

On a sunny Saturday morning, a crowd was starting to overwhelm the popular Couch St. Park in a high-rent Northwest Portland neighborhood, coalescing around a series of makeshift tables filled with union signs and shirts. With no public announcement, and no previous public campaign branding, the workers at the popular Portland burger chain Little Big Burgers had managed to draw a large crowd of supporters on March 16 for what was going to be the first labor action of their unionization campaign. The workers were not alone. They were also joined by a large contingent of Burgerville Workers Union workers who had blazed the trail that the Little Big Union was about to join them on.

“The purpose of today’s action is to announce the union and to state that we’re here and that we are going to be fighting to make sure our basic labor rights are met,” said Gerry West, a Little Big Union worker for the last year. “We’re presenting a letter to our bosses asking to them to recognize the union and to go into negotiations with us, and we hope they do so.”

After a series of speeches from Little Big Union workers and local labor organizations like the Portland Jobs With Justice, the workers led a march through the streets to the popular Little Big Burger location on NW 23rd Avenue. The crowd surrounded the location, chanting and arranging a moving picket line, while management decided to close their door rather than address the contingent of workers.

The workers at Little Big Burger, and the larger campaign of the Portland IWW — a radical labor union known for its direct-action approach — to organize fast food, did not happen in a vacuum.

Fighting for ourselves

The “Fight for \$15” campaign — started by workers at McDonald’s and Wendy’s, with the support of the Service Employees International Union — has sparked a near revolution in the fast food industry over the last seven years. Low-wage, high-turnover jobs like fast food have been a difficult proposition for labor unions since building up organizing committees at restaurants is difficult, they require significant resources and have corporate owners that are intent on crushing unionization attempts. The Fight for \$15 rested on a mass organizing campaign that relied on public action and support, often through visible actions and public relations. Over time, the fight shifted to being a successful minimum wage battle across the country, and their efforts to unionize have largely been absent.

The IWW instead uses a different model: workers organizing each other, shop to shop, rather than relying on large institutional resources and budgets. What Burgerville workers did with the IWW was take their time, build up strong bonds with workers, win victories and develop community support. Now Burgerville has just won its fourth National Labor Relations Board, or NLRB, election — meaning four shops are bargaining their first contract together — and they are helping Little Big Burger workers step up and go public as well.

Little big problems

While Little Big Burger has portrayed itself as a local Portland favorite, it was sold off by founder Micah Camden

“The purpose of today’s action is to announce the union and to state that we’re here and that we are going to be fighting to make sure our basic labor rights are met.”

in 2017 to the North Carolina-based company Chanticleer Holdings. It has now grown rapidly in Texas, Washington and North Carolina, giving the potential of mass unionization more significance since it could affect a nationwide chain.

After the sale of the company, workers say they began seeing some of the same issues that many low-wage service workers do: bad wages, absent benefits, difficult scheduling and unsafe working conditions.

“Management allows equipment to break and doesn’t replace it,” West said. “They promise people hours that they can’t provide and then cut them constantly to make labor costs as low as possible. They are basically creating an atmosphere that encourages atomization and division.”

The organizing drive was focused on tangible issues that workers were facing day to day.

The wages are so low that employees are rarely making enough to rent an apartment in Portland’s increasingly volatile rental market. Right now, workers are paid minimum wage, \$11.25 per hour, plus tips. West reported that he makes about \$1,300 a month at his position. The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Portland is currently \$1,640.

“[I am living] far below the poverty line, but they sell this as a job that we should be bending over backwards to keep,” West said.

Workers report chronic understaffing, particularly during the lunch and dinner periods when they are slammed by a loyal customer base. Workers also allege that sick time, which employers must provide in Oregon, is a mirage since they are required to find someone to cover their shift if they need the time off to recover. If they cannot find someone they are required to come in or face discipline, which is problematic given how communicable illness can be spread through food preparation.

The staff began meeting in 2018 to discuss the issues they were facing and what they could do about it. The organizing drive was not focused solely on campaigning for official union recognition, but instead they have worked on tangible issues that workers were facing day to day.

“[We were] getting our schedules only two days, sometimes one day, before we work,” said Cameron Crowell, who has been working at Little Big Burger for about two years. “A group of workers started talking about how we could change that. So we wrote a letter and everyone in my store signed the letter. We showed our manager, asking them to give us schedules a week in advance, and that really kicked things off for us.”

Management conceded the scheduling demand, allowing workers to have their schedules two weeks in advance. Union members have organized confrontations with managers at four Little Big Burger restaurants asking them to respect workers, and even won no slip mats for their worksite.

“Speaking with coworkers about how we can better fulfill

our lives together has been really a life-changing thing for me,” Crowell said.

Fast food solidarity

The Burgerville Workers Union changed the playing field for directly democratic labor unions in Portland, and across the country, when they went public in April 2016. Their campaign used “solidarity union” tactics of organizing workers before going for standard union legal mechanisms like NLRB recognition. Over two years they arranged public “marches on the boss” to deliver worker demands, pickets, strikes, and finally a Burgerville boycott, all of which culminated in five Burgerville locations going union in individual NLRB elections.

Their strategy, of building bonds between workers and with the community — all of which require time and passion more than money — proved to be a winning one. After they proved unionizing these fast food locations was possible, even though large labor unions had been unable to see it through, it served as an inspiration to the workers of Little Big Burger. The experience that the Burgerville Workers Union had in

The “Fight for \$15” campaign — started by workers at McDonald’s and Wendy’s, with the support of the Service Employees International Union — has sparked a near revolution in the fast food industry over the last seven years.

doing this kind of organizing, particularly since it was a very similar workplace, allowed for workers to share training and skills in a way that prepared them to launch a public campaign even more efficiently.

“We actually have gleaned a lot of advice from the Burgerville workers, and they consider our campaign an extension of their campaign,” said Isabel Crosby, a supporter of the Little Big Union who organizes on their Solidarity Committee.

Little Big Burger presents challenges that Burgerville did not, especially given that they are now owned by a large conglomerate that is not based in the region. “We don’t expect them to be as nice as Burgerville because they don’t have this nice local reputation to uphold,” Crosby said.

The union marches on

The union has asked Chanticleer Holdings to “voluntarily recognize” the union, but the company declined to do so, and said in a statement that they wanted a “fair, secret ballot election.” This means that workers will have to file for a union election with the NLRB or continue with shop-floor organizing without the benefit of recognition and a collective bargaining agreement.

Workers have now issued a series of public demands of Little Big Burger, including a \$5 per hour raise, paid time off, benefits, safe workplace conditions, holiday pay, trans-

Little Big Union continued

parency around hiring and firing, and for Little Big Burger to become a “sanctuary workplace” that refuses to work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Right now, workers at the NW 23rd Avenue location say they have an overwhelming majority of workers in support of the union, and they are organizing at five other locations that may go public in the near future. Shortly after the public action announcing the formation of the Little Big Union, workers allege that management removed union posters from the break room. Management later said this was because of their “no solicitation” policy and insisted that they were not anti-union, though decisions like this could be cited as grounds for Unfair Labor Practice complaints.

Shortly after this happened the Little Big Union put out a public statement saying they are “disappointed that the corporate executives of Chanticleer Holdings and Little Big Burger regional managers have chosen to ignore our basic request to not disparage their workers or engage in union busting.” Little Big Burger relented on their policy, but workers report that a manager said, “unions cost too much.”

This behavior from Little Big Burger came shortly after Burgerville posted anti-union flyers on public boards at their restaurants in what workers allege is an attempt to dissuade further restaurants from voting in the Burgerville Workers Union.

If the Burgerville Workers Union campaign is any indication, the Little Big Union will need to build steam over the next several months. This could mean eventually filing for an NLRB election, or it could simply be building numbers and power in their shops to continue to pressure management and the parent company for reforms.

The strategy, as Burgerville has shown, is successful when the workers’ needs and workplace connections drive the campaign. As the Little Big Union continues to grow it will likely continue to focus on the personal bonds that are necessary when doing this long-game kind of democratic unionism. This is the model that the IWW was founded on and why it seems to be growing in conditions that have been so tough for labor in the past.

“To see the IWW come back in force and tackle this problem of organizing workplaces that have not been able to be organized before, which was always the IWW’s strong suit, is incredible,” said West.

Shane Burley, a writer and filmmaker based in Portland, Oregon, is the author of *Fascism Today: What It Is and How to End It* (AK Press). His work has appeared in *Jacobin*, *AlterNet*, *In These Times*, *Political Research Associates*, *Waging Nonviolence*, *Labor Notes*, *ThinkProgress*, *ROAR Magazine* and *Upping the Anti*. Follow him on Twitter: @shane_burley1

LAW OFFICES OF

ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE, LLP

1600 G Street
Suite 203

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

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

Homeless: 20+ years on the streets

By ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen



Kenneth “Pops” Yarber became homeless in 1995, not long after a brain aneurysm put him in a wheelchair. Suddenly, he was forty years old and on disability.

Not long afterward, the bank foreclosed on his house on 4th Street in Modesto, and he began bouncing from the streets to short stays with friends and relatives. A few years later, Pops was convicted of passing bad checks and using stolen credit cards. He spent a couple of years in prison.

“I was just trying to survive,” he said recently. “After I got out I failed to report to parole and they took away my Social Security.”

When he was able to work, Pops installed telephone and television cables. On disability, his income of just under \$1000 a month wasn’t enough for rent and basic necessities, so he hit the streets. Most of the time he could be found on I Street in downtown Modesto, between 7th and 8th Streets, along with his long-time friend Alfie.

Alfie’s also in a wheel chair. “He was born in Modesto and he never left,” said Pops. “He got hit by a drunk driver and dragged, so he lost his leg. He was out there fifty years.”

Pops and Alfie got off the streets just a few days ago, when Modesto Police Sergeant Mike Hammond used a little cop leverage on them. Pops had begun having minor seizures and Hammond laid down the law.

“Mike said he wasn’t going to let me stay out there no more,” said Pops. “He said he was tired of busting me and giving me warrants and I better get in while there was a place for me, so I came out here.”

“Here” is the Modesto Outdoor Emergency Shelter (MOES) under Modesto’s 9th Street Bridge. Pops had only been in his tent a day or two when a fire broke out just two tents away.

“I didn’t even know there was a fire,” said Pops, “but there was fifteen people outside my tent ready to help me get out. That felt good.”

Despite the fire, Pops says he already feels better and more relaxed, in part because there are so many people around willing to help. He said that being outside was hard, especially when authorities confiscated his belongings.

“We slept in doorways and we always had to be alert. We got cold and wet a lot of times,” he said. “Sometimes they’d come along and take all we had, blankets and everything.”

Pops said he never got beaten up or robbed because other homeless people watched out for him, but the worst part of being outside was being in a wheelchair.

“One time a guy came along and pushed a shopping cart into my chair, then ran off down the alley shouting and cussing at me,” said Pops. He said that was just one of many times he spilled out of his wheelchair and scraped his hands on the sidewalk.

“Sometimes the brakes grab and I’ll fall out,” he said. Because he’s landed so often on concrete or asphalt, Pops’ hands are constantly scraped and scabbed over.

Pops said he tried methamphetamine years ago but got tired of it. “A lot of people out there use it,” he said, “but I don’t like it.” Pops prefers marijuana to calm him down when on the streets, where the constant state of alert makes it hard to relax.



Pops has a son who has been clean and sober for almost ten years and has his own business. “He won’t even come out here,” he said. “He doesn’t want to be around anyone who might be using. That’s the best way he has to stay clean.”

Pops is hoping he’ll be able to move in with his granddaughter sometime soon. She’s expecting a baby and he’d love the opportunity to help take care of the newborn.

Meanwhile, he’s been able to connect with a lot of people he’s known from so many years on the streets, where he became almost a local landmark. And even though he was out there so long, he doesn’t miss I Street very much. In fact, he’s really glad Sergeant Hammond pushed him to come in.

“It’s better here,” said Pops, on the way into his new tent. “It’s a lot better.”




**Modesto Sound proudly presents
the California Audio Roots Project!**

Sponsors and partners include:









Local Public Radio
104.9
FM
The Best Local Bands
www.KGIG.Org

93.3
FM
KPHD
Independent Radio For Independent Minds



Erring on the Side of "Yes"

from page 1



don't get an eviction notice and fall into that cycle of homelessness." This strong emphasis on accessibility of services is carried across all of Interfaith Ministries' programs for low-income residents of Stanislaus County. Those programs include:

Feed Modesto Pantry

Provides a 3 to 5-day supply of healthy food.
M-F, 8:30—11:30 AM.

Eligible clients may receive services once per month.

Free Mobile Farmers Market

Provides fresh produce to areas designated as food deserts.
10—11 AM.

- Fourth Monday - Empire Elementary.
- Fourth Tuesday - Housing Authority.
- Fourth Thursday - Orville Wright Elementary School.
- Fourth Friday - Franklin Elementary School.

Clients will be asked to self-identify as low-income. ID not required.

Homebound Delivery

Homebound, ambulatory seniors or otherwise disabled individuals may be eligible to receive a 5-day supply of food staples delivered to their homes each month. Includes Wellness checks and promotes crucial social interaction for seniors.

First through Fourth Wednesday. Clients must submit an application.

M—F, 8:30 AM—12:30 PM

Clothes Closet

Clients receive up to 20 items of clothes per member of household present, up to once per month. Free of charge.

M-Th, 1-4 PM.

Clients will be asked to self-identify as low income and provide a form of identification.

First Tuesday Outreach

Clients will receive a haircut from a licensed volunteer hairdresser after showering with the agency's partners at the Cleansing Hope Shower Shuttle in the Gospel Mission Parking lot across the street. They are invited to then visit the Clothing Closet.

Hairdressers please email executiveassistant@interfaith-modesto.org to get involved.

Every first Tuesday 10 AM– 2 PM.

Clients must have first showered at the Shower Shuttle.

Free Fitness Fridays

Visit us on Facebook for weekly info on times and classes. Fitness instructors, please email executiveassistant@interfaith-modesto.org to get involved.

Every Friday afternoon.

Clients must be physically able to safely exercise and sign a liability release.

Crickets Hope

An individualized, strength-based prevention and healing program for children affected by trauma.

Body Positive and Intuitive Eating Support

This confidential support group will deal with body image, intuitive eating and movement and disordered eating.

All of these programs are designed to make the experience

of the people accessing services at Interfaith a dignified and hopeful one. "We want people to know it's ok to ask for help, because we all need help," Mr. Rogers explained.

With a staff of only seven employees, Interfaith relies on a cadre of dedicated volunteers to make all of its program work. More volunteers are always needed, especially as the agency looks to expanding its capacity to serve the community.

"Even if you don't have a lot of money to donate, we can always use the help. If you're a hair stylist, a musician or a physician, or an electrician, we could use your skills," Mr. Rogers noted.

"One of my favorite stories happened on the second day I started working here, when this fellow, who was just standing there in the parking lot, gave me seventeen cents. That seventeen cents meant so much because he didn't have a lot - yet he felt compelled enough by our mission to give. I'll never forget that.

"Then there's singer/songwriter Patty Castillo Davis, who spearheads a huge coat drive every year around the holidays, putting barrels up all over town for the Clothes Closet.

"And then there are our corporate partners like Winco, Trader Joe's, and O'Brien's, which donate directly to us

Pilgrimage of Hope

from page 1

advocacy organization, is part of PICO California, the largest faith-based community organizing network in the state, with more than 485 congregational members.

Some pilgrims will join for part of the walk; others will complete the entire 173 miles, he said. The pilgrims will pause at regular intervals for prayer; those who are unable to physically join the walk can pray along as well, with a booklet available for purchase on the pilgrimage website. Cost of the booklet is \$10; any funds raised will go toward aiding the undocumented.

The idea for the pilgrimage began to take shape in 2017, after delegates to the 58th annual diocesan convention passed a resolution to form an immigration task force, which was primarily focused on education and advocacy issues, said the Rev. Anna Carmichael, the diocese's canon to the ordinary.

"We wanted people in our pews to understand what our neighbors were going through and how we could be a resource for our neighbors," Carmichael said. "For us, this isn't political, it's responding to the call to love your neighbor as yourself.

"We started to build energy around immigration issues in the Central Valley."

Then came Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's November 2018 revival. Its theme, "Called to Be a Safe Place for All of God's People," emphasized a bold, inclusive vision of faith and love.

"We focused on immigration issues and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)," she said, adding that the revival included a prayer walk around the cathedral's Fresno neighborhood.

Other consultations followed, with the Rev. Anthony Guillén, Episcopal Church missionary for Latino/Hispanic ministries, and with the neighboring Los Angeles diocese's Episcopal Sacred Resistance Task Force on Immigration.

Meanwhile, San Joaquin's immigration task force had morphed into SJRAISE — San Joaquin Refugee and Immigration Support for Empowerment, and at an Advent conference, clergy and lay leaders began to dream of a pilgrimage.

"One where we, along with other faith communities and friends, would walk the diocese, engaging in formation and prayer along the way, regarding the needs and concerns of our immigrant brothers and sisters," Carmichael said.

"That first day, we're going to walk about 17 miles, and that will get us just outside Fresno," she said. "It's important,

in support of the Mobile Farmer's Market. They're huge supporters. They are wonderful to work with. We also work with local farmers and citizens and if they have extra fruit or vegetables, we will go and pick up from them."

"I just feel that life is too short not to give back, not to put other people in front of you," Mr. Rogers fervently believes, having begun working at Interfaith Ministries only a few months ago. "I feel that if we all did that, it would be a completely different world to live in, a better world. I see the best in people here. I see that fellow who gave those seventeen precious cents, the professionals who want to spend their Wednesday lunches doing something for others. I see all this wonderful side of humanity — the giving, the caring. To be in the middle of all that is a humbling experience. Interfaith Ministries is here to serve and that's always our top priority. We will always err on the side of Yes."

CALL TO ACTION: To find out more about the programs, services, and volunteer opportunities available at Interfaith Ministries of Greater Modesto, call (209) 572-3117, or visit their website, <https://interfaithmodesto.org/>, or email drogers@interfaithmodesto.org. Their offices are located at 120 Kerr Ave., Modesto 95354.



because this is our best attempt to make a visible and faithful expression of how we feel God is calling us. It is not meant to be political grandstanding," she said.

"This is ultimately about calling for justice so that we can fully live into our Baptismal Covenant of respecting the dignity of every human being. I see this as quite possibly one of the most important things this diocese has done since its resurrection."

"If we don't stand with those who are being penalized and marginalized, just because of where they were born, just because they don't have the same kind of documentation [as I do] because I was born here, what are we all about? What is the point of proclaiming to be followers of Jesus if we aren't living into that call?

"It would almost make me feel hypocritical as a person of faith not to stand with those who are being marginalized and persecuted," Carmichael said.

Once the pilgrims arrive in Sacramento, Rice said they aim to engage with legislators and lawmakers concerning a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants and asylum-seekers.

"This is about addressing a system that needs to be reformed," added Rice, who in 2015 led a bicycle [Tour Against Trafficking](#) to raise awareness about human trafficking.

"We are painfully aware that it is easy for politicians and for the faith community to say we're praying for them and to let those simply be words. We need this. God needs this to be more than words. We are endeavoring to ensure that those words are about action."

— The Rev. Pat McCaughan is a correspondent for the *Episcopal News Service*. [slightly edited.]



Poet: Josslyn Turner

Josslyn Turner is a transgender poet, writer, and abstract artist. She is currently an English Major at Modesto Junior College with a goal to earn a BA in English and an MFA in poetry. Her poems have won 3rd and 2nd places respectively in MJC's *Celebration of the Humanities*. Other works have appeared in *South 85*, *Across & Through*, *Penumbra*, and *Voice of Eve*. She lives in Waterford, California where she crashes on her mother's couch and co-parents two boys.



Don't Go Too Far

I shake off the last drops of urine.
The bathroom door swings
open. Stone-faced parents let the policeman
in before I can flush and wash
my hands like they taught me. His leather
boots
creak as he comes toward me,
sits next to me
on the edge of the tub.
I stare at the backs of my small hands.
My teeth feel as if they will splinter
in my parched mouth.

Am I in trouble?

For riding my bike to the school
after my mother told me not to go that far?
For liking the colorful drawings
of little boys in superhero costumes
only above the waist?
He asks about the man at the school, his
voice
soft on my seven-year-old ears. I give him
only silence. He stands, tells my parents,
*I'll come back
when he's ready to talk.*

When he is gone, I run to the couch.
I want to disappear inside the cushions.
My older sister asks the same questions.
Her voice grates against my ears. I burst
out the answers as if I'm on a game show
in which the prizes are silence and solitude.

It is Saturday. My friend and I rode our
bikes
to Fremont Elementary. A man in mirror
sunglasses
swung his metal detector over shaded sand.
He said he was an artist
and showed us his cartoons—
his intentions hidden
in blues,
reds,
and yellows.

Philip's knee started to bleed
from the scab he'd picked at all day.
He told Philip to use his own underwear
to wipe the blood. I saw fear on Philip's
face—
his eyes and mouth wide. I watched the
man,
tanned skin and black-stubbed face.
He leaned against his ten-speed bike,
his back turned, pretending
not to look. I shook my head,
a silent plea to Philip:
Let's get out of here.

After that day, no one spoke
of the man again.

To Be

I was six when I sneaked
into my sister's bedroom, searching
for something that would help me
smell like the girls in my first-grade
class—
warm vanilla or Japanese blossoms.
But she was a tomboy, and had nothing
of the kind. What I did find
was a stick of deodorant,
standing on top of the dark wooden dresser
with *Lady* printed on the label.
I rubbed the cold, sleek stick
under my arms, but I still wished
I was a girl.

haiku #9

water droplet gleams
falls from the sagging leaf
a tear for a friend.

Here in this Apartment

Here in my mother's single-floor apartment
I found refuge after depression buried me
twelve miles away in a rented room.

It was in this apartment when I told her
that I thought about stopping on the train
tracks before the arms came down. All I
wanted

then was to disappear through sleep or
death.

Now, I am here after losing my 12x12
space
and the cayenne-red Altima. There is

nowhere else I can go. My books
are tucked away in cardboard boxes
under the side window. I keep a small pile

of clothes for the week, next to the couch
on which I sleep, where I dream
of having my life again

Coping with Depression

Morning light,
like aged ribbons through the blinds,
rouses me before the clock. I fight
the urge to hide my eyes and drift
back into the dream like the days before.

I get out of bed, and head to the bathroom.
In the mirror, I sneer at the stubble
peppered on my face
like grains of sand. I remember my baby's
grin
when he explored it with curious hands.

I still shave to sustain my feminine
features,
though I do not look passable to those
who will not see me. After three years
on hormones, I can say I like my soft skin,
and 12-year-old breasts.

A hot shower, the first in four days,
awakens my brain and my bones.
After a morning ritual of coffee, a bagel,
and some poetry, I'm ready to feel the sky.

Connections readers: Check out *The Valley Citizen*!

By JAMES COSTELLO

If you avidly read *Stanislaus Connections* (I hope), you will notice that we frequently run articles from *The Valley Citizen* written by Eric Caine, Bruce Frohman and others. Why? Not only is the writing top notch, the coverage of local issues, especially those dealing with the Valley's water, and homelessness, is thorough, in-depth and often, unique.

Several years ago, *Connections* reprinted Eric Caine's six-part web series on the County's homeless people. Nowhere else but from *The Valley Citizen* could you read such a needed, detailed study of a segment of our local population. It is *Connections*' intention to present local writing detailing local issues that you will not find in mainstream publications. *The Valley Citizen* offers such writing.

You can subscribe free to *The Valley Citizen* by visiting its redesigned website where you will find many articles with a local focus. <https://thevalleycitizen.com>

More about The Valley Citizen

By ERIC CAINE

The Valley Citizen is dedicated to the memory of John Michael Flint (his image is on our masthead).

John Flint was a confirmed libertarian and most likely would have disagreed with a lot of what we've written and will continue to write. But I know he would have liked our local focus and ongoing attempts to be as informed and factual as possible.

John and I were fellow Community Columnists for the

Modesto Bee for well over a decade, and we met often, usually on a weekly basis. John followed local politics with a keen interest and an almost photographic memory. He was a wonderful raconteur and conversationalist, and especially loved talking about local news.

From the very beginning of his tenure as a Community Columnist, John was by far the most popular local writer on the *Bee*'s Opinion Page. He was witty, informed, and well-read. Most of all, he cared.

John would have lamented the decline in journalism we're seeing today, and most especially the decline in local journalism. He believed firmly that democracy depends on an informed citizenry. He took on the responsibility of being informed by reading, attending city council meetings and supervisors' meetings, and generally discharging what he saw as his civic duty as diligently as he could.

"Civic," or "public" journalism is journalism that attempts to both inform and engage. We're committed to writing about issues of local interest in hopes of engaging valley citizens in the ongoing project of government of, by, and for the people. We think an essential element in that project is local journalism, and we hope to keep local journalism alive through these dark days. We see better days ahead.

But we also see that the future of local journalism is most likely through subscription and community support. Subscriptions to *The Valley Citizen* are free, but we gladly accept donations. We want to grow and we'll need your help.

Celebrating 50 years of Jewish Food and Culture in Modesto

On Sunday, May 5th From 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at 1705 Sherwood Ave. Modesto, Congregation Beth Shalom will celebrate 50 years of Jewish Food and Culture with Café Shalom. All adult event tickets will be entered into a drawing with an opportunity to purchase additional tickets to win the \$5000 gift certificate!

Each ticket includes a full lunch of Bagels and Lox with cream cheese and sliced vegetables, a generous portion of "Anne's Famous Kugel," locally grown strawberries, and our famous Salsa Verde and Pico de Gallo with chips made by Beth Shalom member Israel Ceja. Pita chips, hummus, orange juice and coffee included.

Tickets: \$18 for adults in advance or \$20 at the door. \$10 for those ages 5 to 12 in advance, and at the door. Under five are free. Purchase tickets at <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4202140>, or through the CBS's office.

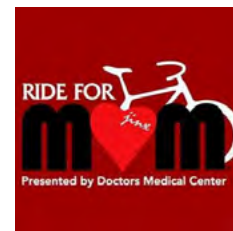


Ride For Mom Returns for 8th Year

Funds Raised Benefit Local Non-Profits

By VERONICA JACUINDE

Hundreds of cyclists will gather on Saturday, May 11th for the Ride for Mom® (RFM) family and charity cycling celebration. The eight annual event brings together cycling enthusiasts for a fun day promoting healthy lifestyles while raising funds for several local non-profit agencies. The event features 10, 35, and 77-mile rides with fully supported rest stops, SAG and lunch.



Ride for Mom founder, Robert Fores, shares, "Last year we surpassed our number of participants from previous years with almost 500 cyclists participating." He adds, "In addition to providing a memorable day of cycling, since our inception we have raised over \$70,000 for local non-profits that also focus on improving the health of the community."

Ride for Mom was created as a tribute to Robert Fores' mother who passed away from cancer. He says, "every year we host this event the day before Mother's Day to honor my mother and all those others that have been afflicted with this terrible disease." With the purpose to encourage "BE ACTIVE, EAT HEALTHY AND LIVE BETTER," RFM has grown into a community event that unites and inspires others to embrace this philosophy.

Doctors Medical Center (DMC) is the presenting sponsor. Robert Fores says, "Their support is crucial in our continued effort to elevate the viability of the event and is deeply appreciated because with their help, we have raised a significant amount of money." Ride for Mom, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is an all-volunteer effort organized by a dedicated team of passionate individuals.

To participate, volunteer, and/or sponsor or donate, visit www.rideformom.com, www.facebook.com/rideformom, or e-mail Ride for Mom at info@rideformom.com. Media inquiries: Veronica Jacuinde, (310) 508-1896.

Unleashing the Brilliance of Women in Leadership

Modesto Centre Plaza will be home to the 2019 Women's Leadership Conference: "Unleashing the Brilliance of Women in Leadership," May 25th 2019, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Speakers and breakout sessions include: Education, Entrepreneurship, Equality, Careers, Community Involvement, Finance, Small Business, Start Ups, Re-Entering the Workforce, Politics, Mental Health, and more. In addition, participants will have full access to business and community service exhibits. Event ticket includes speakers, tradeshow, break-out sessions, handouts and continental breakfast and luncheon. For ticket purchase or more information, go to www.wlcnorcal.com. A portion of the proceeds from this event are earmarked for 500 Backpacks for Children with Autism delivered to the Modesto City Schools Special Education Program (www.chalkwild.com) For more information, contact ChiChi Nnodim-Jack at chijack@pacbell.net or 209-485-2820.


MistlinGallery
Central California Art Association
June 8 – Christine Capsuto-Shulman in our
2nd Grace Lieberman Cabaret Concert
1015 J Street, Modesto • (209) 529-3369
Tues. - Thurs. 11:30-5, Fri. 11:30-8, Saturday 12-4
www.ccaagallery.org

Spring Tea
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
1528 Oakdale Rd. Modesto
Keynote Speaker Eric Goossens
Project Manager, Habitat for Humanity
Saturday, May 4, 2019 - 11:00 to 2:00. Tickets:
\$25; Table for 8: \$160. Call 209-522-3267

Community Hospice Celebrates 40 Years

By KRISTIN MOSTOWSKI, Director of Public Relations

WHAT: Community Hospice Foundation is pleased to host their 18th Annual Gala in celebration of Community Hospice's 40 Year Anniversary. More than 600 local community members will gather at the home of Dr. Wes and Heidi Kinzie for a delightful evening featuring a Silent and Live Auction, raffle, live entertainment, a plated dinner by Greens. Events, drinks and dancing.

Several local community members will be recognized for their contributions and dedication to Community Hospice receiving the John and June Rogers Philanthropic Award, Julio R. and Aileen Gallo Leadership Award and Harold A. Peterson, III Heart of Hospice Award.

All event proceeds will benefit the patients, families and programs of Community Hospice.

WHEN: Saturday, May 18, 2019

- Cocktails, Hors D'oeuvres Reception and Silent Auction: 5:00 p.m.
- Dinner and Program: 7:00 p.m.
- Live Auction: 8:00 p.m.
- Dancing: 9:00 p.m.

WHERE: The home of Dr. Wes and Heidi Kinzie in Modesto.

WHO: Community Hospice is the largest and oldest nonprofit hospice agency in the Central Valley. For the past 40 years, Community Hospice has cared for thousands of friends and neighbors offering compassionate and quality care, education and support to patients and families, regardless of ability to pay. Care extends to over 2000 patients each year in private homes, skilled nursing facilities, retirement communities and at the 16-bed inpatient Community Hospice Alexander Cohen Hospice House. Community Hospice also provides grief support services to anyone in the community. For additional information regarding Community Hospice programs and services, visit hospiceheart.org or call 209.578.6300

More Info: For more information regarding this event, visit <http://www.give.hospiceheart.org/> or call the Community Hospice Foundation, 209.578.6370.



Broadway Comes to Modesto May 11th

By VERONICA JACUINDE

Experience a piece of Broadway with "7 Women 7 Stools" where incredible stories merge with incredible voices. A raw journey through the lives of seven very different women, it tells the story of their struggles, their feelings, their pain, while watching them overcome every imaginable obstacle. This inspirational and uplifting production comes to the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel on Saturday, May 11th for two special performances with a 2 p.m. matinee and a 6 p.m. dinner show. Presented



across the country, the musical has sold out in Portland, Seattle, Anchorage, Oakland and Berkeley. A 4-piece electrifying band sets the tempo and quickly moves along the monologues and phenomenal singing as actresses dressed in beautifully designed costumes deliver unforgettable performances. A diverse, outstanding cast includes Sara Martinez of BET's *Sunday's Best* delivering a special rendition of *Amazing Grace* in English and Spanish, along with Amber Sauer, a backup singer for Natalie Cole and a recent contestant on NBC's *The Voice*.

Written, directed and produced by critically acclaimed artist, Delilah Rashell, her productions have played to over 1.5 million people across the United States and the Virgin Islands. Ms. Rashell has worked alongside famed Hollywood director Tyler Perry and served as national tour promoter for Bishop T.D. Jakes.

"The women tell stories that reach all walks of life with glorious outcomes and a boost to keep hope alive. My purpose is to strengthen the hands of women around the globe so that the world may be a better place," says Ms. Rashell.

"This play is both spiritually and emotionally healing for women of all races who have faced adverse circumstances or difficult life challenges. It makes a great gift for Mother's Day and is a fantastic way to celebrate all women on this special occasion," says Wendy Byrd, President of the Modesto/Stanislaus Branch of the NAACP, a sponsor of the play. The Modesto Women's Auxiliary and the Modesto Clergy Network are also sponsoring.

This Mother's Day give a gift she will never forget with a performance that will nourish your soul and lift your spirit. Purchase tickets at www.EventBrite.com for \$40 for the matinee performance and \$65 for the dinner show. For questions or media inquiries, contact Veronica Jacuinde, (310) 508-1896.



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

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

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



The Law Office of
PATRICIA MELUGIN COUSINS
Attorney At Law

P.O. Box 520
Ceres, CA 95307

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

Email: pmcousins@aim.com

VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR OUR BOARD

**Modesto Sound offers Recording for Bands
Music Technology Camps for ages 8-17
Audio Technology Classes for Teens & Adults**



Recording | Live Sound | Education | Fun!
209-573-0533 Visit on-line at ModestoSound.org

Love Music?

**Want to help kids in your community
grow and prosper through music?**

At Modesto Sound we empower youth with real-world job skills to create music and artistic media.

Consider joining our monthly board meetings where decisions are made on things such as the best way to serve the community with grants received from the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council.

Since 2005 Modesto Sound

- Recorded 685 artists
- Trained 248 youth on audio and job skills
- Held hundreds of concerts

Where: Media Building on the corner of Santa Barbara and Yosemite Boulevard (110 Santa Barbara Avenue, Modesto)

When: The second Tuesday of every month 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Get a warm welcome from Janet Seay, Executive Director of Modesto Sound, who welcomes your ideas! No RSVP required. It's OK to just show up.

Why

- Network in the music industry
- Great for the resume
- Help others

More Information

209-573-0533 janet@modestosound.org





MAY 2019

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

1 WED: VIGIL: Immigration. McHenry & J St., NOTE: new time. 4:30-5:30 pm.

4 SAT: Spring Tea. Keynote Speaker Eric Goossens, Project Manager, Habitat for Humanity. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale Rd. Modesto, 11:00 to 2:00. Tickets: \$25; Table for 8: \$160. Call 209-522-3267.

4 SAT: Pilgrimage of Hope begins in Fresno. See article, this issue.

5 SUN: Café Shalom: Congregation Beth Shalom celebrates 50 years of Jewish Food and Culture. 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at 1705 Sherwood Ave. Modesto. Purchase tickets at <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4202140>.

9 THURS: West Modesto Community Collaborative: "SHAMELESS and BLAMELESS Luncheon" featuring Paul Golden, M.D. See article, this issue.

11 SAT: Ride for Mom. See article, this issue.

14 TUES: Modesto Sound Board Meeting, 110 Santa Barbara Ave., (at Yosemite Blvd.) Modesto. 7 pm – 8:15 pm.

18 SAT: Mother Lode Chapter, Sierra Club Annual Awards Banquet. Antiquite Maison Proeve, 2114 P. St., Sacramento. Auction, raffle. 5:00 – 8:30 pm. Tickets here. To donate auction items, contact Betsy Weiland, flweiland@yahoo.com.

19 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents The Big Sleep. 1307 J. St., Modesto. 2:00 pm. Join the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/Membership>

19 SUN: Modesto Porchfest. Grassroots event is held on porches in La Loma, College, and Downtown neighborhoods. Performances from local musicians. Walk, bike, or drive your way around town and experience the radical generosity of your friends and neighbors. 12- 5 pm. Info: visit <http://www.modestoporchfest.com/>

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday June 9: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast. Modesto Church of the Brethren. 8 am – Noon.

Friday-Sunday, June 28-30-Peace Camp in the Sierra. Registration form on p. 2.

Saturday September 21: Modesto Sound Annual Fundraiser. Music, Food, & Networking. Gianelli's, 602 Northgate Dr., Modesto. 5-8 pm. To donate auction items, get tickets, or find out more, visit modestosound.org, call 209-573-0533 or email studio@modestosound.org.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

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

IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and dharma talk, 8:45 am - 10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely, donations welcome. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: info@imcv.org

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

MONDAYS

Suicide Loss Support Group: Friends for Survival meets every third Monday at 7 pm. Details: Norm Andrews 209-345-0601, nandrews6863@charter.net.

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

Walk with Me, a women's primary infertility support group and Bible study. 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm the first and third Mondays of each month (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

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

NAACP Meeting. Christ Unity Baptist Church, 601 'L' St., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 7 pm. 209-645-1909; email: naacp.branch1048@gmail.com

Exploring Whiteness & Showing Up for Racial Justice Meetings, Fourth Tuesday, monthly 7:00 p.m., Central Grace Hmong Alliance Church, 918 Sierra Dr., Modesto. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/247655549018387/>

Pagan Family Social, third Tuesdays, Golden Corral, 3737 McHenry Ave, Modesto, 6:00 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

Tuesday Evening Funstrummers Ukulele Jam. Songbooks provided. 6pm to 8pm, 1600 Carver Rd., Donation. 209-505-3216, www.funstrummers.com.

IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and dharma talk, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely, donations welcome. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: info@imcv.org **ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS**, Every Tuesday, 7 pm at 1320 L St., (Christ Unity Baptist Church). Info: Jeff, 527-2469.

WEDNESDAYS

Ongoing meditation class based on Qi Gong Principals. Practice a 3 Step Guided Meditation Process I have been doing for over a decade. Fun and Easy. JOIN ME! Donations accepted but optional. Call 209.495.6608 or email Orlando Arreygue, CMT RYT, orlando@arreygue.com

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

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

MEDIA: Listen to Peace/Life Center radio, KCBP 95.5 FM streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org> and at 95.5 FM, 2 pm to 2 am.

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

MEDIA COMMITTEE of Peace/Life Center. Meetings TBA.

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

H, Merced, CA. www.mercedlgbtcenter.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

The Book Group, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 – 5:00 pm. Info: mzjurkovic@gmail.com

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

VALLEY HEARTLAND ZEN GROUP: every Thurs 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2310 Woodland Ave. Meditation. Newcomers welcome. Info:

535-6750 or <http://emptynestzendo.org>

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

FRIDAYS

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

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

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

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

SIERRA CLUB: Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 300-4253. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

MUJERES LATINAS, last Friday, lunch meetings, Info: Cristina Villego, 549-1831.

HISPANIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, 3rd Fridays at noon, 1314 H St., Modesto 95354. Questions? Yamilet Valladolid, yamiletv@hotmail.com

SATURDAY

Free Community Drum Circle every third Saturday, 3 pm, Deva Café, 1202 J. St., Modesto. No experience or drums necessary to participate. All levels welcome. <https://drum-love.com/>

Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction. @Friends Coming of Age., 1203 Tully Rd., Ste. B., Modesto. Saturdays 8-9 am. FREE (donations accepted). Info: RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com

Divine Feminine Gathering. Join us for a time of ritual, song and conversation as women come together to celebrate one another and the Divine among us and within us. 3rd Saturday of the month, 3:30-5:00 p.m. Stockton, CA. Contact Rev. Erin King, 209-815-0763, orkingenne@gmail.com

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

DEADLINE to submit articles to

CONNECTIONS: Tenth of each month.

Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org
Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.