



# Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable future

A MODESTO  
PEACE/LIFE  
CENTER  
PUBLICATION

NOVEMBER, 2020  
VOLUME XXIX, NO. 3

## Hate is heavy. It is not ours. It is not us.

By **LENG POWER**, Modesto Peace/Life Center board member and past president

When I was in the fourth grade, after being in this country for nearly seven years, our family learned about the KKK. It wasn't through a history lesson in school but rather by how most new immigrant communities learn about their surroundings, from various group members' own experiences with the wider world.

My parents were not naive to the idea of racism but this organized group seemed far more dangerous and official. Our family at the time was fleeing a genocidal government regime. Trauma and stress seemed to always be in the background of our resettled lives. I only caught bits of what was being shared among the adults; men dressed in white who believed in white supremacy and used that belief to harm and kill people. I remember crying myself to sleep feeling so heartbroken for my parents whose sense of safety was again pierced.

For a while after, a small part of me was also fearful that the men in white would slip through my window while I was sleeping (my 9-year old imagination never let me wonder what would happen beyond that point). But life went on and other than the occasional "go back home" sentiments, the men in white only lived in my distant fears.

Every adult I trusted in my world outside of my family offered assurance that those ideas had no place in our community. My beloved teachers, our dear neighbors, my friends' parents, friendly strangers. Their expressions of love along with my parent's unconditional resiliency created a world in which the light was so bright, it illuminated all the fear that hides behind hate.

I offer this memory now as we rightfully rage at the national prominence given to divisive ideology.

Hate is heavy. It is not ours. It is not us.



## Information That Comes from An Official Source Is Not Necessarily Factual. Verify What You Hear and Read

[POLITIFACT](#) is a fact-checking website that verifies elected officials' statements.

[FactCheck.Org](#) aims to reduce the level of deception in U.S. politics.

[Google Fact-Check Explorer](#) can tell you if a fact or claim has been investigated by a fact-checking organization.

Assume What You See on Social Media Will Need to Be Verified

FactCheck.Org has a "misinformation directory" organized alphabetically of websites that have published misleading information. [The Daily Dot](#) put together a list of fake websites that appeared on Facebook.

Have some fun with this [Bad News Game](#) and see how many "followers" you pick up along the way.

### Check Up on The Author

Reputable news organizations use bylines to identify who reported and wrote the story. Reporters often have bios at the end of a story.

[NewsGuard](#) offers trust ratings for a majority of news sites. It even has a plugin for your browser.

### Go Straight to The Source

Many public agencies have statistics, proposals and projects publicly available.

### It's Not Just Words. Photos and Videos Are Being Manipulated

Take this [Spot the Deepfake Quiz](#) and see if you can effectively identify what's real and what is not.

## The Wisdom of Patterson's Pioneering PhD: Dr. Pearl Alice Marsh

By **ERIC CAINE**, *The Valley Citizen*

With a master's degree in Public Health and a PhD in Political Science, Pearl Alice Marsh is one of our most learned Valley citizens. A pioneer and trailblazer all her life, she was the first African-American female to achieve a PhD in Berkeley's Political Science Department.

She is retired in the city of Patterson after a decades-long service in the United States Congress in Washington D.C. Her father was a logger in Wallowa, Oregon before moving the family to Grass Valley in California. At 73, Dr. Marsh is still exercising her political citizenship through local activism. In addition to her many other accomplishments, she may be one

### Subscribe to Fact-Checking Newsletters & Podcasts

Get Smart About News is a weekly newsletter that "shares the latest examples of misinformation. [Subscribe here.](#)

The Poynter Institute runs Factually, an accountability journalism and fact-checking newsletter. [Sign up here](#)

The "Is That a Fact?" podcast addresses the impact of disinformation on American democracy. [The 10-episode podcast is here.](#)

NPR has an archive of its fact-checking audio stories [here.](#)

### Report Fake News on Social Media

You can also join the fight against falsehoods in your feeds. On Twitter, users can report a tweet for being "misleading about a political election or other civic event." [Instructions here.](#) Facebook has said it is taking steps to reduce voter interference.

[You can read more here.](#)

### Key Deadlines and Voter Resources For 2020 Election

Oct. 31: In-person voting begins

Nov. 3: Election Day

Nov. 3: Absentee/mail-in ballot postmarked by date

### Voter Information

Check your voter status: [voterstatus.sos.ca.gov](#)

How to vote by mail: [www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/vote-mail#apply](#)

Track your mail-in ballot: [california.ballottrax.net/voter](#)

of a tiny few people worldwide who somehow manages to look distinguished and regal while wearing a tie-dyed shirt.

**VC: There's a photo of you at a class reunion and you are the only black person in the picture. Were you always the only black person in class in grammar through high school, or were there others?**

From my first grade until graduation from high school, my brothers, sister and I were the only African-American children in our schools. My father was a log cutter and, as my mother would say, "we have to live where the trees are."

continued page 8

### INSIDE CONNECTIONS

PROPOSITION GUIDE. . . . . 2

RBG - REST IN PEACE . . . . . 3

PEACE ESSAY CONTEST . . . . . 4

SAVING THE EARTH . . . . . 5

A COUP? IN AMERICA? . . . . . 6-7

GATHERING OF VOICES. . . . . 8-9

RADIO-POETRY-THEATER . . . . . 10

EROSION. . . . . 11

## READERS! Sign-up for our e-edition!

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

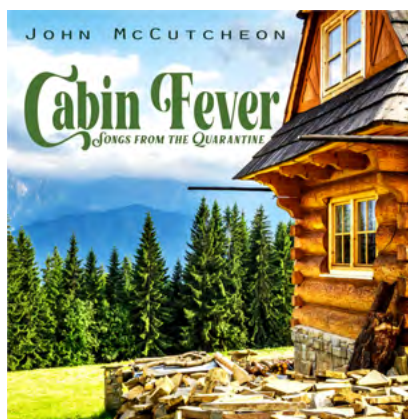
### Can enlarge text to read more easily! Print out if desired!

To sign-up, send your email address to Jim Costello, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

If you do not have Adobe Reader, download it free from <http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>

## "Cabin Fever": John McCutcheon's new "pay-what-you-will" album

John returned from his Australian tour on March 16th and immediately went into a self-imposed quarantine. Hermited away at his north Georgia cabin, he spent his days reading, writing, and trying to use his time creatively. One of



the results of that time is a collection of songs written during and about the Quarantine and the times around it. From the funny to the heartfelt, John ruminates on love at a distance, the national mood, those on the front lines of the fight against

COVID-19, those forgotten, what happens after all this, and even the surprising resurgence of the bean. With his keen eye for the great within the small, his captivating storytelling, and his ability to go for the funny bone and the heart at once, it is vintage McCutcheon.

This is a web-site-only release and is only available as a downloadable album. Get it here: <https://www.folkmusic.com/store/p295/CabinFever.html>

This is a pay-what-you-will album. Knowing that there are many who've lost their jobs and their incomes, as well as many who are economically unphased by this current situation, please...help yourself to the music if you cannot afford to buy it, but please be generous if you can. It's entirely up to you.

You have 2 options for downloading this album.

1) **Mp3 files.** These are smaller files, more quickly downloaded, and take up less space on your devices. This is what almost all downloads are from everywhere.

2) **Wav files.** These are larger, full-range audio files, like you would get on a CD. They'll take longer to download and will take up more space. These are rarely offered as download files.

So why offer both formats? John works hard to get his albums sounding great and the compression used on mp3 files erases much of the fine tuning. John hates mp3's. Most musicians do. Yeah, we know it's kinda snobbish, but ears are what a musician is paid for, huh?

If you don't want to choose, you can have both. Listen to the mp3's on your mobile devices and burn a CD with the wav files for the total listening experience. With John's compliments.

Thanks for your interest, thanks for being careful, and thanks for helping us all get through this with our souls intact.



**Save The Date:**  
**24th annual Interfaith Thanksgiving**  
**Sunday, November 22nd 5 pm**

This year, at this time of physical distancing, you are invited to join us on-line for the screening of a brand new locally produced video featuring many people in our local area giving thanks within different faiths, ethnic groups, community leadership roles, musicians, etc.

Bring your own popcorn!

Please join us and be prepared to be inspired!

<https://www.facebook.com/stanislausinterfaith/>

<http://www.stanislausinterfaith.org>

## MJC Science Colloquium Modified Fall 2020 Schedule

Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15pm, MJC via Zoom. To access programs, click <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmaymqgHqzxhsAa0RJmYwVg/>. When the live program appears, click on it.

**Nov. 4:** Tania Barjesteh, RN, BSN, Doctors Hospital. *Nursing in Zambia and the Experience of Serving Those in Need.* Tania received her RN through MJC's nursing program and her BSN through Grand Canyon University. She has been a nurse for almost 4 years. She spent a week working in various rural clinics in Zambia and will discuss her experience.

**Nov. 18:** Andy Foster, COO, Aemetis Biogas LLC. *California Cow Power 2021.* This presentation examines the network of 25-30 Dairy Digesters that exist in Stanislaus County. Some GHG Emissions (biogas) can be transferred to the Aemetis Advanced Fuels Keyes Ethanol Plant where it can then be upgraded to Biomethane. Biomethane (RNG) is sold to heavy-duty truck fleets in California displacing diesel and reducing the carbon footprint of dairy and transportation industries.



**Dec. 2:** Tom Crain, NASA Ambassador. *Here Comes the Sun.* 4.5 billion years ago our Sun ignited when a super-condensed and super-hot mass of gas reached the pressure and temperature at which hydrogen atoms fuse. The Sun has a life cycle with various stages. Right now, the Sun is enjoying its middle age. Later, the Sun will expand, then contract and finally become what is called a white dwarf.

**Science Colloquium Committee:** Richard Anderson, Dan Chase, Arnold Chavez, Jill Cross, Teri Curtis, Denise Godbout-Avant, Troy Gravatt, Deborah Martin, Elizabeth McInnes.

## Modesto Sound Announces Its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraiser Event

Modesto Sound is honored to invite the public to join us for this awesome event! Mark your calendars for November 21<sup>st</sup> from 5-7 p.m.

We will be streaming on YouTube-Modesto Sound. There will be live music with various artists that will please your ears. There will be a fun raffle. You could win a 12-string guitar, among other things. Come join us and support our youth music programs. The place to be on November 21<sup>st</sup> from 5-7 p.m. is YouTube-Modesto Sound! See you there!

Information: contact Janet at (209) 573-0533, or [jmodestosound@gmail.com](mailto:jmodestosound@gmail.com) or visit [www.modestosound.org](http://www.modestosound.org). We are also on Facebook.



*15th Annual Fundraiser*

NOVEMBER 21ST

5-7pm

Featuring live music with various artists

**Streaming on Youtube at Modesto Sound**

Help support Modesto Sound's youth music programs while you enjoy great music and a fun raffle!!!

**FOR MORE INFO**

**(209)573-0533**



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

**MRB** MICHAEL R. BAUDLER  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

[mb@modestocpas.com](mailto:mb@modestocpas.com)

TELEPHONE  
(209) 575-2653 ext 303

FACSIMILE  
(209) 575-0629

**Michael R. Baudler, CPA**

1120 14TH STREET, SUITE 2  
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95354



# Ending Racism

## From the Network of Spiritual Progressives

As an organization that welcomes and includes people of all races, religions and ethnic groups, we will challenge and undo ongoing institutional racism that permeates our society at all levels.

Our anti-racist program includes creating an educational system and transforming media and the legal system so that undermining racist ideas and practices becomes a central goal. We will provide material support and champion those institutions and social practices that are most successful at fostering respect and caring for previous targets of racism. And we will foster education and public policies that help people understand how and why racism exists, and why solidarity with Black and Brown peoples, and all other groups that have been systematically excluded, marginalized, and violently targeted, actually serves to embody their higher interests and values.

If we want a loving and caring society that truly values the lives of Black and Brown peoples, we need to recognize and come to terms with how our country was founded and the impact of the past policies on the present. We also need to acknowledge and transform present day policies and practices that are discriminatory. The issues addressed in this platform – a Path to a World of Love and Justice – are all relevant to the issue of institutional and individual racism in our society. Without a fundamental challenge to the economic and political practices of capitalist society there will always be some groups left out or left far behind, and those people will be encouraged to find a scapegoat in some “other,” so it is unlikely that racism can be eliminated without this larger change. But, on their own, the policies we’ve suggested in the previous sections of our program and even the emergence of a powerful transformative movement aimed at the goals of the New Bottom Line are insufficient to address the harm and trauma with which Black and Brown peoples live.

We are witnessing at this time in history a continuation of the pervasive fear of black bodies and a denial that black

**If we want a loving and caring society that truly values the lives of Black and Brown peoples, we need to recognize and come to terms with how our country was founded and the impact of the past policies on the present.**

lives matter. This is coupled with a rise of white terrorist and hate groups that no political party challenges and the impotence of the news media and police to unveil the existence of underground hate groups that are becoming more visible and vocal. Today, blatant racism and violence, particularly against African Americans, Native Americans and Hispanic Americans, are manifesting in the form of extrajudicial police violence and killings, a school-to-prison pipeline that has resulted in more African American people in jails than were enslaved in the past in our country, the dumping of toxic waste and chemicals in communities where Black, Brown and low-income and poor people live, unequal educational opportunities beginning before children even start kindergarten and so much more.

Manifest destiny and American exceptionalism justified the genocide of Native Americans and now deaden protest against present racist policies that keep Native Americans on reservations. These principles still inform and drive domestic and foreign U.S. policy resulting in oppression and violence at home and abroad. America’s ruling elite continues to use war to expand territory, to gain access to resources, and to increase its power. The military industrial complex leads to profits for private industry at the expense of the safety and welfare of Black and Brown communities at home and abroad.

Racism, however, is not only a structural problem built into the economic, political, and cultural heritage of our societal institutions, but also a psychological issue. It becomes particularly prominent when large numbers of people are alienated and in pain because they feel “dissed” by the society in which they live. They experience this pain because they buy into the ideology of the competitive marketplace with its insistence that we live in a meritocracy in which we “create our own reality” and hence we have no one to blame for the pain in our lives but ourselves. The resulting painful self-

blaming is often dealt with through alcoholism, drug abuse, or other forms of addiction, but the pain remains.

In response to that pain, reactionary movements or leaders come forward and tell people that the reason for their pain is because of some “Other” (primarily African Americans or Hispanics, but also refugees of every sort, Muslims, LGBTQ people, Jews, or even all liberals or progressives). As *Tikkun* editor-at-large Peter Gabel puts it, racism and other forms of “othering” allow people to develop a “false self” in which they imagine themselves as worthy and powerful through seeing themselves as members of an idealized “white race” that provides them with a substitute sense of worth and value covering over their inner emptiness and sense of valuelessness. Yet because this sense of collective value is what Gabel calls “false” or imaginary, many people feel constantly under attack from an imaginary demonized “other” which in the historic context of the U.S. is African American people, Hispanics, Muslims or other refugees who they imagine are “taking over” and trying to recreate their experience of humiliation. To undo this dynamic will take fundamental transformations in the way we organize our society so that people no longer feel humiliated. To move in this direction, we will need millions of people to be trained in empathic communication so they can help others dismantle their inner self-blaming, recognize that their alienation is caused by the values and daily operations of the competitive marketplace, and mobilize people to change that economic system.

Institutional racism is maintained also by the largely unconscious assumption of white supremacy that is internalized by white people in a white dominant society.

Overcoming the racism embedded in U.S. educational, legal, and other systems requires white people to actively

continued page 10

## Fifty years but no party?

By DAN ONORATO

The Peace/Life Center started 2020 with a full slate of events, each to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year.

In January John McCutcheon was first, a quintessential

magician of music and story-telling who inspires us to keep on keeping on. In February Dr. Harry Edwards keynoted our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration with his rousing and insightful talk on “Sports in the Struggle for Freedom and Justice.” We also honored community activist Frank Ploof with our MLK Legacy Award for his unassuming and steadfast advocacy for homeless individuals in our area.

Then in March . . . in March . . . the Pandemic turned our plans topsy turvy. The Peace Essay Awards Ceremony became virtual and we had to let go the rest of our plans—among them, in April, our Wheelchair Basketball “Competition” at MJC with the Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Team and our youth-led March for Climate Justice on Earth Day; in June, our annual Pancake Breakfast and Peace Camp in the Sierra; and then in October our festive Peace/Life Community Gala celebration to cheer our 50 Years and share our renewed vision. Two other cancellations now cap the list: our annual Harvest Gathering in November and our Holiday Potluck and

Songfest in December.

The Pandemic and political upheaval we live in will not last forever. We will celebrate, and when we do, we’ll have much to be thankful for. We in the Modesto Peace/Life Center have done a lot. We’ve been actively involved in many of the most pressing issues of this last half century. We have a newspaper, *Stanislaus Connections* and a new community radio station, KCBP 95.5 FM, with great potential. We nurture and promote a vision that another world is possible. We can turn swords into plowshares, create a more just society and world, treat all people equally and fairly, and respect rather than exploit and destroy our environment and planet.

In doing all this over 50 years we’ve created a community bound together by shared values and generous, determined commitment to make our vision concrete and real. And we reinforce one another in kindness and friendship.

What a rich bounty to be thankful for and celebrate! May we all stay well.





## 2021 Peace Essay Contest

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead, Anthropologist  
Recipient of the Planetary Citizen of the Year Award, 1978.



**Division I (Grades 11-12) & Division II (Grades 9-10): 500-1000 words**  
**Division III (Grades 7-8) & Division IV (Grades 5-6): 250-500 words**

Regardless of whether you agree with others on the specifics of the challenges that the American people are facing, we can all agree that 2020 has been an unusual year. When life is bewildering, it is easy to fall into despair over the many things that seem wrong and hard to deal with. We forget that in spite of all the confusion and hardships, many people continue to be dedicated to peacefully making our world a better place for all who inhabit it.

It is a big task. One of the ways this is accomplished is by working with, or supporting, an organization dedicated to a particular concern. In spite of the restrictions of the Covid19 pandemic, many of these organizations have found innovative ways to keep working--adapting and changing their approach--in order to continue to be effective. Their constructive contributions offer hope that we, as Americans and as global citizens, can move through this difficult time and into a brighter future.

The 2021 Peace Essay Contest invites you to think about the needs in our world today. Then find out about a local, national or international organization that is working to meet one of those needs. In your essay,\*

- Describe a need that exists in our world today.
- Introduce an organization you found that is working to address that issue and describe how they are going about it.
- Explain why you think their work is important.
- Tell how you think the accomplishments of this organization promote peace and well-being for our world.

\*Please write in your own words. Do not cut and paste or copy directly from source material.

A very limited amount of directly quoted words may be used if cited properly.

See **2021 Peace Essay Rules and Submission Directions** for complete information.

**Deadline for Entries: DECEMBER 15, 2020    Notification of Winners: Late March, 2021**

AWARDS	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	Honorable Mention
Division I and II	\$300	\$200	\$100	\$50
Division III and IV	\$150	\$100	\$50	\$25

Download the flyers/instructions at <http://peaceessaycontest.weebly.com/> Email questions to: [peaceessay20@gmail.com](mailto:peaceessay20@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Arts Events

From 2020 Arts Modesto, A Collaboration

### *An Iliad* at the Prospect Theatre

Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare

November 19-29, Streaming

*AN ILIAD* is a modern-day retelling of Homer's classic. Poetry and humor, the ancient tale of the Trojan War and the modern world collide in this captivating theatrical experience. The setting is simple: the empty theater. The time is now: the present moment. The lone figure onstage is a storyteller—possibly Homer, possibly one of the many bards who followed in his footsteps. He is fated to tell this story throughout history.



Ticket Link: [https://prospect.vbotickets.com/event/An\\_Iliad\\_Streaming/46054](https://prospect.vbotickets.com/event/An_Iliad_Streaming/46054)

### MoSt Poetry Readings

The Second Tuesday Poetry reading series continues on November 10 at 7:00. Aided Medina will be reading, so you don't want to miss this. On Wednesday, November 18 at 6:30, we'll be hosting our quarterly MoSt Poetry Book Club, this time reading the collected poems of Dylan Thomas.

Contact Vicki Salinas at the library if you'd like to borrow a copy of this book ([vasalinas@stanlibrary.org](mailto:vasalinas@stanlibrary.org)). The Zoom links for both these events will be on the MoSt Facebook page and on the MoSt website ([mostpoetry.org](http://mostpoetry.org)) after the first of November.

### Modesto Unplugged

A few of you reached out about our Dirty Cello concert, which was pushed back to December 11 (Fri.) at 8 PM. Music is still happening at Moon & Sixpence Music And Art House on a limited scale, with spaced-out seating limited to 25 people.

**Sunday 11/15** at 3 PM, it's a matinee with Us4Love featuring one of the cutest musical couples in town, Tyler & Christina Bates, plus Andru Vigil on guitar. In 2018 the band won Best Original Composition at the Valley Talent Project and were twice nominated for a MAMA. This is sweet local folk-pop to fall in love with.

**Saturday 11/28** at 7:30 PM, we're welcoming back the opulent and operatic Ellie Barton, who appeared onstage at Moon & Sixpence last December at our Christmas program collaboration with Opera Modesto. Around this time last year she made her professional opera debut in 'Rigoletto' at the Gallo Center; and this summer Modesto Unplugged sponsored her tuition for the Summer Opera Institute. Ellie knows how to put on a richly textured program with everything from opera numbers to pop songs and has a good team of musicians joining her for the evening.

Each concert is \$5 (cash only) and doors open half an hour before showtime. Find Moon & Sixpence at 500 9th St. between E & F, just to the left of Stonehenge. Reserve seats at [modestounplugged@yahoo.com](mailto:modestounplugged@yahoo.com) or 209-543-5306.



# A Texas teen might just have found the pathway to a COVID-19 cure

By **AYSHA QAMAR**, Daily Kos Staff

As cases of the novel coronavirus increase nationwide, scientists and researchers are working day and night to develop a vaccine or possible cure, but they aren't the only ones. While most young teens are dreading online classes and spending a lot of time on social media, one Texas eighth grader has been working on developing a possible cure for COVID-19. You read that right, a 14-year-old who hasn't even graduated from middle school just won an award of \$25,000 for research related to a potential cure for COVID-19.

Indian American Anika Chebrolu, from Frisco, Texas, won the prestigious 3M Young Scientist Challenge for her efforts to develop a novel antiviral drug as a cure for the

coronavirus pandemic. According to the [3M Young Scientist Challenge website](#), Chebrolu did this by using an in-silico methodology to develop a lead molecule that selectively binds to the Spike protein on the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The challenge created by 3M in partnership with Discovery Communications aspires to create a new generation of problem-solvers by encouraging students in grades 5-8 to share their discoveries.

"I developed this molecule that can bind to a certain protein on the SARS-CoV-2 virus. This protein by binding to it will stop the function of the protein" said Chebrolu, who hopes to one day be a medical researcher and professor. She used a number of computer programs to identify how and where the molecule would bind to the virus.

**"I developed this molecule that can bind to a certain protein on the SARS-CoV-2 virus. This protein by binding to it will stop the function of the protein"**

Under the guidance of 3M Scientist Dr. Mahfuza Ali, another woman of color, Chebrolu was able to perfect her ideas through the scientific method. Chebrolu gained the opportunity to work with Dr. Ali after being awarded an exclusive mentorship for being one of the 10 finalists of the challenge. "With the help of my mentor Dr. Mahfuza Ali, I switched topics and targeted the SARS-CoV-2 virus because of the immense impact it's made in the world in less than a year," Chebrolu [said in an interview](#) with Judy Shaw, of the New York Stock Exchange.

Chebrolu's drive and potential for finding a cure impressed not only Dr. Ali, who called her enthusiasm and tenacity "amazing," but also Dr. Cindy Moss, a judge for the challenge. Chebrolu said she was inspired to find potential cures to viruses after learning about the [1918 flu pandemic](#) and finding out how many people die every year in the United States despite annual vaccinations and anti-influenza drugs on the market.

"Anika has an inquisitive mind and used her curiosity to ask questions about a vaccine for COVID-19," Moss told [CNN](#). "Her work was comprehensive and examined numerous databases. She also developed an understanding of the innovation process and is a masterful communicator. Her willingness to use her time and talent to help make the world a better place gives us all hope."

Upon winning the award, the young scientist told [CNN](#) that her research and discovered method "reflects [the] collective hopes to end this pandemic" as individuals like herself hope to go back to their normal lives and that while winning this award is an honor, her work is not done.

When asked about the reward money and what she plans to do with it, [Chebrolu said](#) that she will contribute some of it toward a nonprofit she created called "Academy Aid," which helps other young students pursue STEM research. The rest of the money, she explained, would be used to continue her research in creating an effective anti-viral drug.

But of course, while passionate about science Chebrolu does find time to live a "normal" life like other teens. The 14-year-old also partakes in classical Indian dance and other forms of art. As a role model in the community, Chebrolu's achievement is not only making headlines but is being added to the list of successful South Asians brown parents love to compare their children to. Her discovery and success is a win for not only Indian Americans but other minorities who are working to dismantle the model minority myth in addition to [representation of youth](#) in science.

Edited. Read the complete article [here](#).

## Check Before You Burn program begins amid wildfire season

Valley residents should prepare for immediate curtailments

*From the San Joaquin Valley Pollution Control District*

November 1 marks the beginning of the District's Check Before You Burn program, reminding Valley residents that their cooperation is essential in protecting public health and improving wintertime air quality.

As the program kicks off amid the worst wildfire season in California history and fires continue to impact Valley air quality, residents should expect curtailments to begin November 1st in most Valley counties.

"It's been a very challenging summer and fall because of wildfires all over the state, with several still burning. We're asking San Joaquin Valley residents to continue the cooperation that made last winter the cleanest on record," said District Chief Communications Officer, Jaime Holt. "Unlike wildfires, we have control over how we choose to heat our homes. It is critical to public health that we do not add to the unhealthy air quality created by wildfires," She added.

Check Before You Burn runs from November 1 through the end of February every year, protecting public health through the reduction of harmful PM 2.5 (particulate matter 2.5 microns and smaller) emissions from residential wood smoke. During that time, the District releases a daily, county-

by-county wood burning declaration based on the air quality forecast.

Residential wood burning is one of the Valley's largest sources of wintertime PM 2.5 emissions and shown to have a direct effect on neighborhood air quality. Members of all Valley communities are urged to heat their homes by means other than burning wood whenever possible and continue the trend of wintertime air quality improvement experienced in recent years.

Daily burn information is available by visiting [checkbeforeyouburn.org](#), by calling 1-800-SMOG INFO (766-4463), or by downloading the free "Valley Air" app on your mobile device. In addition, residents are invited to sign up for daily email wood-burning notifications by clicking [here](#). There are three curtailment levels:

Curtailments do not apply to natural gas devices. Residences in areas with no natural gas service or where wood burning is the sole source of heat are exempt. Areas where propane tanks are used are considered to be without natural gas service. Outdoor wood burning devices at all residences are still subject to daily restrictions, regardless of exemption status.

Residents with EPA Certified wood and pellet-fueled devices may register them with the Valley Air District in order to use them on "No Burning Unless Registered" days. Find out how to register by visiting: [www.valleyair.org/CBYBregistration](#).

Valley residents are encouraged to participate in the Burn Cleaner incentive program and receive as much as \$3,000 to upgrade from older, higher-polluting wood stoves and open-hearth fireplaces to EPA Certified wood, pellet or natural gas inserts and free-standing stoves. To participate in this program please visit [www.valleyair.org/burncleaner](#).



stanislaus  
**CONNECTIONS**

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

Open by appointment.

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



# Lindsey Bird – Award-Winning Educator, Advocate

By TOM PORTWOOD

When Language Institute Co-Founder Lindsey Bird decided to leave her fledgling career as a banker to become a teacher in her hometown of Modesto, she could not have imagined the profound impact that decision would ultimately have on the lives of the students who would enter her classroom. She only knew she wanted to make a difference.

But within a few short years, Ms. Bird would find her calling as a fierce advocate for the hundreds of refugee and asylum-seeking students who made their way into the Language Institute at Grace Davis High School. Along the way, she also became a champion for equitable education for all, and the Language Institute would be recognized nationally for its innovative and student-centered approach to English Learner education.

“I wanted to be part of the solution – and I very quickly realized that money wasn’t why I got my degree –I needed to have more of a purpose,” Ms. Bird recently recalled of her change in careers. “I felt like being a teacher and having a heart for transformation and social justice was the perfect way I could give back to my home town.”

A graduate of Thomas Downey High School, Ms. Bird showed an early penchant for leadership, becoming Student Body President in her senior year and a student representative to the Board of Education. While growing up, she was influenced by “many, many teachers on my mother’s side of the family who I always looked up to. I was actually very good friends with my government econ teacher. Even though he and I were not politically aligned, we were still dear friends. He was the one who suggested that I pursue Social Science in college, saying that if I had that degree I could teach any subject. I’m so glad he gave me that advice.”

Applying for a teaching position with Modesto City Schools in 2004, “I was very fortunate because that particular year they were filling only one Social Science vacancy, which was at Grace Davis High School. I had done my student teaching at Grace Davis so I was doubly lucky because I had already established relationships and a sense of trust with the staff there.”

In that first school year, Ms. Bird was assigned to the English Learners section as a History teacher, and it instantly “became a real passion for me. I knew that teaching was right where I was supposed to be at that moment.”

But, much to her dismay, she soon discovered “that not only were English Learning students being set up *not* to reach their full potential, but I was questioning myself on how, as a teacher, I could meet the unique and very specific needs of such a diverse group of kids. The only thing these students had in common was that they were all learning English. Some of the kids had been in the school system since kindergarten while others had just arrived as refugees.”

Seizing upon that discovery as a call to action, Ms. Bird began fighting for the students who filed into her classroom every day. She recognized their immense potential but saw, too, that they “faced a lot of barriers beyond just limited language skills and education. Sometimes education can be



the soft bigotry of low expectations.”

Passionate to confront that bigotry at every turn, she joined a district-wide committee of classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators that examined a wealth of data about the English Learner program. “What we wanted to do was to get the students the skills and the tools and the content they needed to climb that steep mountain to their ultimate goal, whatever that might be. We wanted an equality of outcome.”

Thus was born the Language Institute, which focused on the immigrant/refugee students who were moving to Modesto with their families in increasing numbers, seeking a new home and a fresh start in our community.

During the decade Ms. Bird worked there, the Language Institute served students from over 42 countries. “There were so many students who arrived with high levels of competency in a number of subjects,” she related. “For example, we had a young lady from China who was in the Beginning-level English class and still learning the alphabet, but we simultaneously had her enrolled in AP Calculus because her math skills were off the chart. Every student was given a schedule and a graduation plan, based on their unique skills and abilities.”

“But we also had students who had never been to school in their entire life,” Ms. Bird continued. “I even had to teach some students how to hold a pencil. As we moved forward through the years, we started to receive refugees from Afghanistan and Syria and Yemen. It was really mind-blowing to see that our community – the town that I grew up in – had become this mirror of world events. I had a map

in my classroom where the students could put a pin in their country of origin, so when new kids came into the class and didn’t know the language they at least had a visual that they were not alone. It was really good for students to connect in that way.”

Knowing they could never afford to be complacent, Ms. Bird and her colleagues kept making improvements to the Language Institute, “... listening, learning, and retooling as we went along. We really hit our stride with the Language Institute in 2014 in terms of student success – all of the kids were going on to higher learning, students were winning national awards, and teachers were winning professional awards. And the program was receiving national recognition and was even featured on *Nightline* in 2016. We really made it our mission to take our practices and make them into policy.”

Unfortunately, by 2018, Ms. Bird saw that the policies being put in place were doing just the opposite, “stripping away the tools of equity we had been relying on over the years. When we saw that happening, it was a very sad moment for us. If we’re going to be a community where a lot of immigrants and refugees are joining us every year, it’s in our community’s best interest to make sure that these new residents are educated and literate and confident.”

Faced with what she believed was the watered-down remnant of the Language Institute, Ms. Bird resigned and left the district in May 2020, as determined as ever to stand up for the immigrant and asylum-seeking population in our area.

So, during the summer, she started her own consulting firm. “I wanted to take what I *do* know about my experience with the Language Institute and all the things we learned those ten years and offer it to schools and districts who have the political will and the desire to better serve their newcomer students. I’m really anxious to begin diving in and doing that work,” she explained.

“When we think of college readiness, we often ask the question, ‘Are students ready?’ What we need to be asking instead is ‘Are our community colleges student-ready? What do we need to do to meet a variety of needs and lift them up?’ When we do that, it’ll be a more inclusive and welcoming place. I truly believe that only through equitable education will we be able to transform this valley.”

“Anyone who has ever had the privilege of meeting these students just falls in love with them,” Ms. Bird enthused when describing her former students. “These kids are so respectful of teachers and very traditional in the way they interact with adults – and yet, we wanted to empower them, too. And there are so many success stories. I love that so many of our students not only are inspired to go on to college, but that many of them are getting into the education field, some right here in Stanislaus County. Of course, that’s great – they’ll be able to change lives forever. I’m still in touch with these students, and they’re all role models in their communities.”

**Editor’s Note:** Listen to an KCBP Radio interview with Lindsey Bird by Leah Hassett on Women of the Valley at <https://anchor.fm/kcbpwotv/episodes/Women-of-the-Valley-Episode-18-Lindsey-Bird-ekfk9b>



# America Is Not a Democracy, But We Must Become One

DAVID KORTEN

A few days ago, I shared with [YES!](#) Executive Editor Zenobia Jeffries Warfield an insight that felt both fresh and important: “I’m coming to the conclusion that the United States has never been a democracy.” This insight was sparked by my reflection on the testimony of Judge Amy Coney Barrett during the Senate hearing on her nomination for the Supreme Court.

Zenobia replied, “David, you’re not alone in your conclusion; it’s a refrain I’ve heard in my immediate and extended communities most of my life.”

Zenobia and I are products of very different life experiences. She is a Black woman. I am a White man. I was raised to believe in the great American myth. She grew up with the truth closer at hand.

Our exchange reminded me of my own very human capacity for enduring fealty to myths we know to be untrue.

## I’m coming to the conclusion that the United States has never been a democracy.

During the Vietnam War, I served as an Air Force captain lecturing pilots who were headed to Vietnam to bomb an enemy that blended indistinguishably with the South Vietnamese civilians. I was very aware that while we claimed we went to Vietnam to protect the South Vietnamese people, we were doing a lousy job. In truth, I was quite aware that we were there to support a corrupt and often cruel dictator in South Vietnam because North Vietnam was communist and posed a threat to capitalism in Asia.

I also spent more than two decades in Africa, Latin America, and Asia on a mission to end poverty. In all these places, I was a regular witness to U.S. initiatives that oppressed the poor and secured the interests of the rich and powerful. And I have for years written about how corporate interests intentionally and systematically undermine democracy.

Yet despite these experiences, I still basically accepted the idea that the United States was founded as a democracy and was on a mission to democratize the world. For years, when I heard Republicans claim that the United States is a republic, not a democracy, I dismissed them for playing deceptive word games to delegitimize their political opposition.

The Senate hearings on the appointment of Barrett jolted my understanding. While Barrett evaded most questions, she was strikingly clear on one point: she is an originalist. She said that term means, “[I interpret the Constitution as a law](#), and that I interpret its text as text, and I understand it to have the meaning that it had at the time people ratified it. So that meaning doesn’t change over time and it is not up to me to update it or infuse my policy views into it.”

## The flaws of republican government from the perspective of democracy are all too evident.

Her position sounds reasonable on its face. But with a little thought it becomes evident that the implications are far-reaching. We have changed a lot since the Constitution was ratified in 1788 and subsequently amended 27 times. The 10 amendments known as the Bill of Rights were ratified in 1791 in response to a popular demand that the rights of the people must be recognized. But who are the people to whom these rights apply? That was left unclear, but in practice, the much-celebrated Bill of Rights applied only to a favored few.

Are any amendments valid if they conflict with the intention of the original founders? Is there a connection between originalism and the distinction Republicans make between a republic and a democracy?

When the U.S. was founded, U.S. senators were not chosen by the people, but rather by their state legislatures. It was the 17th amendment that enabled the people of each state to directly elect their senators. To this day, the president and vice president are not chosen by the people, but rather by the representatives to the Electoral College.

With limited exceptions, the Americans in the new republic granted a right to vote by the individual states were White male property owners. Slavery remained legal. Native Americans were denied citizenship (until 1924). The word “democracy” never appears in the U.S. Constitution or any of its amendments, but the word “republican” does. Article 4, Section IV states, “The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government...”

Launching the United States as an inclusive democracy following the American Revolution was never a viable option for the founders. Much of the new nation’s economy depended on the labor of enslaved Africans, and every bit of the land on which it rested was stolen from Indigenous people.

Now, consider the implications for Judge Barrett if she were consistent in her fealty to her originalist judicial philosophy. In the late 18th century, law and practice required a woman to cede control of her property to her husband at the time of marriage, and no woman had the option of becoming a lawyer, let alone a judge. The Constitution did nothing to change that status quo.

## We must learn to organize as a democracy of all the people, by all the people and for all the people all the time.

So, it would seem Judge Amy Coney Barrett’s “originalism” takes a few liberties with the original intent of the framers, at least when it comes to her personal and political interests.

The flaws of republican government from the perspective of democracy are all too evident. The Electoral College has given us five presidents who lost the popular vote, two of them in the past 20 years. The Senate gives disproportionate power to a political minority from states with small populations, allowing their senators to block legislation and judicial appointments favored by the political majority. Of

the three branches of government, a Supreme Court of nine unelected judges appointed for life is empowered to overturn and rewrite any law put forward by the elected members of the other two branches and to overrule decisions by elected judges in state courts.

Although we have consistently moved toward becoming more of a democracy since 1787, Republicans are right: We are not a democracy. And the Republican Party appears to be dedicated to assuring that we never become one.

By contrast, the Democratic Party has in recent years prioritized empowering women and racial minorities and moving toward more direct power by the people. But its leaders, like those of the Republican Party, are ultimately beholden to wealthy donors. Originalist members of the Supreme Court, with the Citizens United decision, have strengthened the power of such donors by giving them the right to give campaigns an unlimited amount of money.

That we are not a democracy is a harsh reality we must recognize, confront, and change—irrespective of what the founders did or did not intend.

The world of 2020 bears little resemblance to that of the newly formed nation of 13 former British colonies with a population of some 2.5 million people, mostly living on farms, whose only means of communication over long distances was via horses and sailing ships. If we are to have hope of a human future, we must together make choices consistent with the needs and opportunities available to not just a nation of 320 million, but a global population of 7.8 billion people now connected by instant electronic communication networks.

We are confronted by an existential crisis of collapsing environmental systems, social tensions born of extreme inequality, and failing institutional legitimacy. In such times of instability, many among us are prone to turn to the assurance of religious dogma, political ideology, and authoritarian demagogues. But such rigidity cannot solve our current systemic failures. Our future depends on our joining together to bring forth a new civilization that is truly democratic in ways that go far beyond periodic elections to choose among candidates offered by competing elite political factions.

Given the challenges now before us, we must learn to organize as a democracy of all the people, by all the people and for all the people all the time. Such deep democracy will require crafting a shared vision of possibility, grounded in our reality as the people of a finite, interdependent, living Earth. It will require the leadership of many millions of people possessed of a deep and shared commitment to a world that works for all.

**DAVID KORTEN** is co-founder of YES! Media, president of the Living Economies Forum, a member of the Club of Rome, and the author of influential books, including “When Corporations Rule the World” and “Change the Story, Change the Future: A Living Economy for a Living Earth.” His work builds on lessons from the 21 years he and his wife, Fran, lived and worked in Africa, Asia, and Latin America on a quest to end global poverty.

# The Wisdom of Patterson's Pioneering PhD: Dr. Pearl Alice Marsh

from page 1

Though we were the only African-American kids in our school, we were fortunate to have plenty of friends. But this is America. There also were racists in the towns and they taught their kids how to be little racists. Fortunately for us, our parents taught us from a very early age how to deal with racists – don't be intimidated and strike back verbally, though once in the first grade I did throw a little boy under his desk for calling me the N-word. When I explained to the teacher, she just told me not to do it again.

**VC: You were the first Black female to achieve a PhD in Political Science at UC Berkeley. How many Black people were in your graduate classes? How difficult was it to achieve that degree?**

While Berkeley had a great reputation for being a radical school based in large part on the Free Speech Movement in the 1960s, the Political Science Department was not the same. Particularly, the American Politics faculty members were notoriously hostile to anything they perceived to be, "affirmative action," whether it was or not.

When I entered, there were two African Americans and two Hispanic students in my class. We would play our version of a parlor game by identifying what percentage of the minority students we each were. I could claim to be, "50% of the Black students and 100% of the Black women," and my friend Andres Jimenez was, "50% of the Hispanic students and 25% of the minority students." There was much irony in our humor.

Out of the four of us, I believe Andres and I completed the doctoral program. It wasn't the academic rigor that eliminated minority students who came after us, it was the intellectual isolation. I remember a professor in International Relations introducing the game of "chicken" to explain the balance of power theory. A student was from Los Angeles and weighed in with a "local" metaphor – drag racing – that didn't comport with his theory. The professor was outraged, humiliated her, and she was gone at the end of the semester.

I navigated my way to supportive faculty members inside and outside of the department and a network of friends and survived. I also got involved in the City of Berkeley's "foreign policy," which helped bolster my confidence and fine-tuned my politics through those years.

Lastly, I was raised to never give up and that I was as smart and as good as or better than the next [white] person. So, there was no way I wasn't going to complete my doctorate and dishonor my parents' teaching.

**VC: You have a philosophy you call "pragmatic pessimism." Can you give us the short version of that philosophy and explain how it developed?**

As a Progressive Democratic policy wonk, I've always been what Jennifer Szalai recently described as a, "cold-eyed realist," with a, "stubborn moral purpose." Within the broader progressive movement, there are some who provide moral and ideological clarity to guide a progressive agenda. On the other end, there are those who have to translate those ideals into public sector practice or policy and legislation. The latter often means compromise that gets one in trouble with idealists.

"Pragmatic pessimism" relies heavily on close allies who maintain a clear moral purpose. While "pessimism" can be debilitating, "pragmatism" is solution driven and values the accumulation of what appear to be short-term gains that fall short of the ideal.

I think being an elected official is the strongest test of that polarity between "realism" and "moral purpose" and "pragmatism" and "pessimism." And having to be pragmatic often keeps one perched

on the knife's edge with constituents.

**VC: After working in Washington DC and traveling to foreign countries, you settled in Patterson. What brought you to the Valley?**

I retired from my Congressional career and wanted to come home to California. My old community, of course, was Berkeley, but my sister had retired and moved from San Jose to Patterson and was alone. So, I chose to move out here to be near her.

I will confess, finding "purpose" in Patterson took a while. I went from one of the world's power centers, the U.S. Congress, to a pretty isolated reality. And I was used to progressive politics in Berkeley and not quite prepared for the conservative environment in Stanislaus County.

But I believe in "finding a purpose" wherever and I found two: First, I began aggregating decades of writing, family history and genealogy and started organizing the "legacy chapter" of my life. Second, I joined the Josh Harder campaign and learned a lot about local politics and progressive activism in the area and made new friends. The rest is history.

**VC: What have been some of your most exciting and rewarding assignments?**

There are two signature assignments I was blessed with as a Democratic Congressional staff member in Washington, D.C. The

first was an opportunity to write legislation to preserve and make available electronically to the public the post-Civil War Freedmen's Bureau Records that made previously inaccessible historical records accessible online. The second assignment was writing the original \$15 billion bill, called "PEPFAR," to fund the U.S. global HIV/AIDS initiative, targeting 15 African countries. That bill is responsible for saving millions of lives globally. While working closely in partnership with the AIDS advocacy community, we produced a great bill.

**VC: You seem always willing to volunteer and serve, no matter how humble the task. Is that part of your personality or something you have learned along the way?**

I have certainly been in high positions, even meeting face-to-face with African heads of state and high powered international dignitaries in Washington. But I think there is power in humility. One of a handful of books that guided my political development was Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, a teaching theory that relies on a critical thinking partnership between teachers and students. At any one time, one is either the teacher or student. I highly recommend that book to political organizers.

I believe in passing the torch. At this stage of my life, I need no accolades or prominent position to feel significant. And there's nothing more exciting than the energy and activism of young people. I do enjoy social media and am very active on Facebook. So now, it's "check book" activism for me while I enjoy the legacy phase of my life.

**VC: What advice do you have for young people who might be discouraged by our lack of progress on social and economic issues?**

I would tell young people their anxiety is warranted. The current crises of race, stalled aspirations for both youths of color and white youth, the obscene wealth gap, environmental degradation, student debt and uncertain job future, are quite frightening.

But I would also say, turn that sense of discouragement and despondency into positive impatience and action. Frederick Douglass said, "power conceded nothing without a fight, it never did and it

never will." Sometimes change comes in leaps and bounds and other times it's scratched out inch by inch. To paraphrase Nelson Mandela, "Change is always impossible until it happens."

**VC: You mentioned being inspired by the work of Paulo Freire. What other writers have inspired you and informed your worldview?**

There are too many books and authors to count. Of course, being an activist from the 60s, I cut my teeth on *Rules for Radicals*, by Saul Alinsky. James Baldwin's, *The Fire Next Time*, examined for me the enduring conundrum of racial tension while inspiring the need to embrace and create change.

Lastly, for a somewhat wry reflection on the 1960s, Thomas Wolfe's, *Radical Chic and Mau-Mauing the Flack Catcher*, offered a farcical critique of the 60s movement just to lighten things up. Even in the worst times, you have to be able to laugh.

**VC: What is the title of the most recent book you've read?**

I'm actually reading three books right now (book clubs): *Fledgling*, an African-American vampire tale by Octavia Butler, and, *Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own*, by Eddie Glaude, Jr., and, *How to Be An Anti-Racist*, by Ibram X. Kendi, the latter two for obvious reasons, given the times.

**VC: In an era of identity politics and linguistic dislocation, Dr. Marsh has developed her own unique term to describe her evolving American identity. She discussed what she means in a recent Facebook post:**

I'm thinking about the beginnings of my life in Oregon where, as a little black girl, while southern African-American was at the center of my being, all the cultures of my neighbors seeped in — southern white, German immigrant, white Cajun, all religions, etc.

In moments of social, cultural, and political turmoil, language itself is thrown into upheaval. In terms of race relations, since my African-American childhood in the 1950s until now, I have witnessed and experienced the language debate from "melting pot" to "integration" to "color blind" to "assimilation" to "multicultural" to "intersectional." So as a placeholder, I'm using, "intercultural," which to me personally means that my life is a mélange of all of the cultures that have swirled about and through my life. Intersectional doesn't work for me, as I understand it.

To me, for the moment, it's an organic experience, not an intellectual construct, so I can tell you what it feels like. My experience of becoming the "American" I am today has been the result of an "intercultural" process. And what do I mean? I think I mean the following:

While my overwhelmingly dominant cultural identity is African-American rooted in my southern slave ancestry, my contact with other American cultures has helped shape who I am today (My *Ubuntu*). This hasn't been a process of choice, as it's been a process of osmosis — the constant social and cultural interactions with others unlike me.

To simplify for myself, I take and paraphrase the biological definition of osmosis —

*"the organic process by which aspects of different cultures brought to America pass through the original existential being of each American thus creating within each generation a new, slightly recast being of the original."*

I use this term to help me understand the newness of the cross-cultural participation in the anti-police violence and anti-white supremacy movement in cities and towns across our country.

For the moment, the word "intercultural," as I've defined it, best describes what I observe of millennials and Gen-Z activists and, indeed, the global movement supporting the Black Lives Matter protests.

Can we trust the new movement more than previous iterations of our common struggle to overcome white supremacy and patriarchy?

I'm hopeful!





## Quarantine Haiku: Tiny Prayers

*April 1, 2020 Wednesday*

Before this day's storm  
Inspired to be grateful  
If you care, stay home  
#StayHomeSaveLives

*April 2, 2020 Thursday*

April ushers Spring  
With sweet birdsong and new growth,  
Dripping in virus  
#FindHopeToday

*April 3, 2020 Friday*

On this cool morning  
Delicious hug memories  
Warms my lonely bones  
#PleaseStayHome

*April 4, 2020 Saturday*

In the dark chaos  
Cherish today's happiness  
Little pearls of light  
#AintNoSunshine #LeanOnMe

*April 6, 2020 Monday*

After the rain stops  
New hope does its best to heal  
Disappointed air  
#PrayForPeace

*April 8, 2020 Wednesday*

Last night the pink moon  
Saturated my dreams with  
Strawberry angels  
#AngelFromMontgomery

*April 12, 2020 Sunday*

Altered Easter day  
The soft blush of my love's hands  
Holds the sweetest things  
#StayHomeAndRest

*April 13, 2020 Monday*

Introspected rest  
Bear dreams of lessons to teach  
It's good medicine  
#BearMedicine

*April 14, 2020 Tuesday*

Above the false fray  
Sitting quietly in truth  
Science only whispers  
#ListenToScience

*April 17, 2020 Friday*

Facts cancel out fear  
Truth always floats to the top  
Like tiny prayers  
#Fearless #FearLess

*April 18, 2020 Saturday*

When poets gather  
On the dim branches of now  
Their songs light the dark  
#StayHomeAndWrite

*April 19, 2020 Sunday*

At the store today  
Mikey, the bagger, says he  
Likes one cart better  
#1CartOnlyPlease #Don'tHoard

*April 20, 2020 Monday*

Sometimes my voice feels  
Like neglected barbed wire  
Sticking in my throat  
#SpeakYourTruth #StayHomePlease

*April 21, 2020 Tuesday*

Fruit will rot on trees  
Vegetables will shrivel-up  
When you ship them home  
#Don'tBlockImmigration  
#NoBordersNoWalls

*April 22, 2020 Wednesday*

After destruction  
After the sea dries, air fails  
Earth will remember  
#LoveYourMother  
#SaveTheEnvironment

*April 23, 2020 Thursday*

Without La Raza  
Without palabras verdad  
The angels will weep  
#Inclusion #SanctuaryCali

*April 24, 2020 Friday*

As the morning blooms  
Another day like a bruise  
The broken wind sobs  
#HealWithin

*April 26, 2020 Sunday*

On this starry night  
Stumming strings by the moonlight  
Grateful for this peace  
#HealWithout #Offering

*April 27, 2020 Monday*

Slender silver light  
Sliver of moon clarity  
Light In my cupped hands  
#ReceiveGracefully

*April 28, 2020 Tuesday*

When poets gather  
On the shaky ground of now  
What a precious gift  
#SingWriteRecover

*April 29, 2020 Wednesday*

Virus reminds us  
That we are fragile beings  
Hold hearts carefully  
#AbsoluteTruth

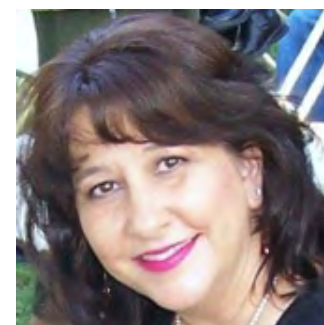
*April 30, 2020 Thursday*

This morning I write  
I reach inward to find strength  
Pull poems from my heart  
#Give #Receive #Unite



## POET: Teri Marquis Gartner

Teri is a credentialed English teacher, craft artist, and creative writer. She has organized poetry readings and taught writing workshops all over California. She has been a Poet Teacher and acted as an Area Coordinator for California Poets in The Schools and taught poetry for The William James Association/Arts in Corrections Program. Currently, she is a private writing tutor working, mostly, with English Language Learner adults in preparation for passing the CBEST essay tests.



## How to Become a Light Being

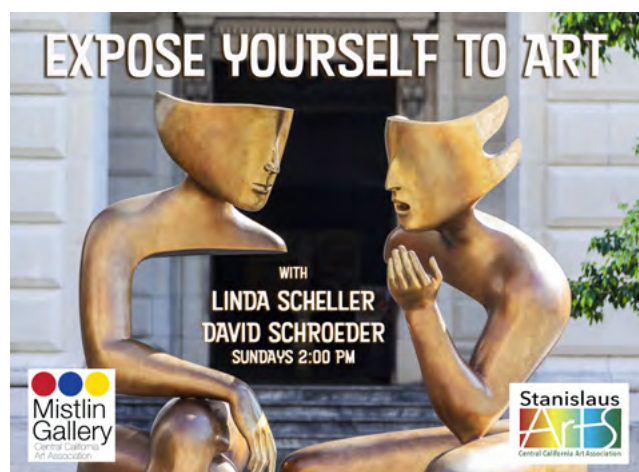
*Thank you Tina Arnopole Driskill  
For being a true North star*

As the palpable air is thick with  
virus and racism and fire,  
you must become a light being.  
To become a light being,  
remove your hands from the embers,  
lay them against the sky.  
Remove the brittle ego from your tongue,  
press it against the truth.  
Remove your paper-thin skin,  
turn it inside out until it is as thick as love.  
You must not breathe in the ashy remnants  
and shiny bones of death,  
but carry the jagged evils of original sins  
to lay at the water's edge.  
You must close your ears against  
the howling wind of discord,  
the broken prayers cutting into your faith.  
To become a light being,  
you must refuse to let go of hope.  
To become a light being,  
you must let it all go.  
Release your privileged perfection,  
your convoluted obligation,  
the fierce stubbornness of fear.  
As the world is broken and engulfed in hate,  
remove the thorn from the weeping wound of your heart  
and dance for rain.

Let hope rise up from the wreckage  
and say to yourself,  
Rest well.  
You have done your best, today.

**There are two ways of spreading light: to be  
the candle or the mirror that reflects it."**

**-Edith Wharton**



## Expose Yourself (To Art) Online

Expose Yourself (To Art) is a series of virtual talks and interviews with local artists conducted by David Schroeder and Linda Scheller and hosted by Modesto's Mistlin Gallery, Sundays at 2:00 p.m. Upcoming programs with David Chapman 11/8, Sam Pierstorff 11/15, and more.

The program can be viewed live on Facebook and YouTube. If you can't tune in on Sunday, recordings will be available afterwards in both places

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ccartassn>

YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/feed/my\\_videos](https://www.youtube.com/feed/my_videos)

Past speakers have included painter Nicole Slater, Jack Souza – founder of Prospect Theater Project, Rene Daveluy – artistic director of Central West Ballet, and Sandra Veneman – co-owner of the Chartreuse Muse Art Gallery.

Here's the link to a recent interview with author Ken White: YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=567qv6uP6f4>

## Listen to Local Programming at KCBP 95.5 FM

### Alert: Chris Murphy is coming to KCBP! Stay tuned!

Arts of the San Joaquin Valley - Mondays, 8:00pm; Tuesdays 9:00 am & Wednesdays 8:00 pm. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp> and on Spotify

Women of the Valley - 8:00pm Tuesdays & Thursdays & Wednesdays 9:00am. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbpwotv> and on Spotify.

The Peril and the Promise - Wednesdays 9:30 pm; Saturdays 2:30 pm; Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp-peril>  
Modesto Sound - California Audio Roots Project (CARP) - Wednesdays 11:30am, & Sundays 11:00am & 5:30pm  
Modesto Area Music Show – Mondays 5:00pm Fridays 9:00pm & Saturdays 6:00pm

Where We Were – Fascinating local history with Felton Daniels. Monday & Thursdays 9am. Friday 8:30pm; Sunday at 11:00am.

Freak Radio with Christian E. Boyett, 6pm Thursdays. Replays Saturdays, 9pm & Tuesdays 11pm.

The Ralph Nader Hour – 4:00pm Saturdays

Explorations – Science with Dr. Michio Kaku – 9:00am Sundays.

Weekdays (Monday - Friday)

Democracy Now! - 7:00pm.

Flashpoint Magazine - 10:00pm.

Children's Programming

Confetti Park - Saturday's 8:00am; & Sunday's 12:30pm.

The Children's Hour - Sunday's 3:00pm.

Find a complete programming schedule on our website, [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org)



What programming do you like or would like to hear? Contact us at [programming@kcbpradio.org](mailto:programming@kcbpradio.org) or call (209) 353-3066. Help put community into community radio! Interested in being part of our Community Advisory Board? Contact [operations@kcbpradio.org](mailto:operations@kcbpradio.org) or call (209) 353-3066.

We can't do it without you. Please support us! Donate at <https://kcbpradio.networkforgood.com/>

## Women of the Valley...

New Episode featuring



### Haven Women's Center of Stanislaus

Don't miss host Linda Scheller interviewing Haven staff members about serving survivors of sexual abuse, domestic violence and human trafficking, and about the challenges of COVID-19.

Tune your radio to 95.5 FM or Listen at [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org) Tuesdays & Thursdays 8 p.m., Wednesdays 9 a.m.

## Ending racism

continued from page 3

commit to becoming aware of the white supremacy that permeates their lives, exposing it, understanding how it diminishes the humanity of white people, and seeking to undo it. At the same time, we do not wish to participate in a general demeaning of white people in this society or to ignore the ways in which their lives have been negatively impacted by living in a society that uses racism to pit groups against one another. We refuse to perpetuate divisions based on race, class, gender, or ethnicity while recognizing that unity amongst all peoples cannot be fully achieved without dismantling racism. The vision we put forth in this entire document is one that would elevate all peoples. That requires not only a change in consciousness, but also a fundamental transformation of our economic and political system.

Yet the transformation needed cannot be achieved by attempting to recreate socialist forms that address economic equality but miss the deeper transformations in how we relate to each other, to the Earth, and to our own inner development as loving and caring human beings. To address these systemic problems, we believe we need a New Bottom Line as discussed above so that all our institutions are determined "successful" based on whether they prioritize the well-being

and needs of the people who live in our country and the world and the planet itself, rather than whether they maximize money and power. And, in addition, we need to engage in specific activities and adopt particular policies that address the problems that constitute or unconsciously perpetuate racism.

Among the steps a loving and caring society will take:

1. Reparations for slavery and the past destruction of Native American populations.
2. A guaranteed income for every adult in this society sufficient to pay for healthy food, housing in healthy living conditions, clothing, energy bills and transportation, and a 'living wage' for all working people.
3. Global and Domestic Marshall Plan that re-directs monies from our Gross Domestic Product to communities that have suffered from unfair distribution of resources and wages, including White, Black and Brown working-class people in the U.S. and around the world, and also "undocumented" workers and all migrant laborers who work in our fields, hotels, etc. who have then been deported to their native lands, separating and devastating families.
4. Equal funding for all public and private childcare centers,

preschools and schools no matter where they are located in the U.S. or the income level of the families that are served by those schools. If wealthier parents are allowed to provide better schooling, better paid teachers, more options for study and for individualized attention at the schools which their children attend, their children will inevitably have greater resources than those who have gone to less funded schools. If parents know that the schools serving the poorest communities set the standards for what their own children will be offered in public and private schools, they will have a stronger incentive to make sure that all schools have these same benefits that are now primarily available to school districts with higher incomes and private schools partially financed by wealthy parents.

5. Higher level salaries for teachers who teach in communities with lower average incomes than the wealthier communities to ensure that all schools have highly qualified teachers.
6. Required courses at every level from 4<sup>th</sup> grade through college that explain to students the legacy of slavery,

continued next page



## Ending racism

continued from page 10

discrimination, classism, sexism and homophobia and their ongoing impact on the lives of all of us today. Such courses will teach techniques to address racism, empathic communication, and insights that help in overcoming racism.

7. Media must dedicate at least one quarter of their prime time viewing to shows that aim to creatively challenging racist practices, prejudice and biases.
8. Create a truth and reconciliation commission to generate a highly visible public tribunal to put our country on a path toward truly facing and healing the legacy of slavery and the treatment and slaughter of Native Americans, and the ongoing discrimination we see today.
9. To help ensure that schools become learning environments for all children rather than school-to-prison pipelines for some, we support the adoption of restorative justice as a primary form of response to wrongdoing in schools and in the criminal justice system as a whole.
10. Fully-funded transitional programs for jobs, education and housing for people being released from prison.
11. In recognition that many police departments have racially-biased policing that results in the loss of liberty and life for black and brown peoples all over this country, every community that has a police force which has faced significant numbers of complaints about systematic abuse or profiling of African Americans or other minority groups must establish a citizen oversight board that can investigate police activities, including killings, arrests, and the like, and make decisions regarding the policies, practices, prosecution and hiring of police officers for whom there is probable cause to believe that they violated the civil rights of people within their jurisdiction.
12. Mandatory training for police officers in anti-racism, bias and prejudice and comprehensive screening and vetting of applicants to help ensure that police officers

## Manifest destiny and American exceptionalism justified the genocide of Native Americans and now deaden protest against present racist policies that keep Native Americans on reservations. These principles still inform and drive domestic and foreign U.S. policy resulting in oppression and violence at home and abroad.

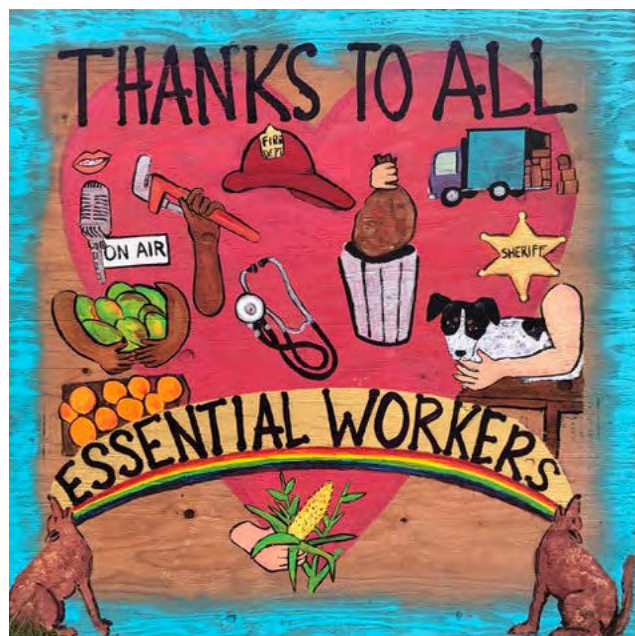
are fully qualified to protect and serve the entire community. Mandatory training in de-escalation and nonviolent responses when conducting stops and arrests.

13. All surveillance equipment that police departments request must be reviewed by a citizen board that includes members of the communities that are and will be impacted. If body cameras are used, any recordings from those cameras must be made available to family and community members when an officer's actions are in question.
14. A wholesale rethinking of policing including demilitarizing of police forces, reducing and eventually eliminating higher levels of surveillance, and creating more transparency, accountability and transformative and restorative policing and justice models.
15. Full-access guarantees and protections of the right to vote for all citizens through universal voting registration, automatic voting registration, pre-registration for 16-year-olds, same-day voter registration, voting day holidays, enfranchisement of formerly and currently incarcerated people, and a ban on any disenfranchisement laws.
16. A path to citizenship for all undocumented people.
17. In recognition that poor and disempowered communities often bear the brunt of environmental devastation and destruction, we promote the Environmental and Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (as discussed in number 3, C above) that, among other things, mandates that all corporations with incomes of greater

than \$50 million a year have to prove, once every five years, a satisfactory history of environmental and social justice to a jury of ordinary citizens who can hear testimony from people throughout the world who are impacted by that corporations practices.

**CONTRAST: LIBERAL AGENDA:** Liberal politicians rarely speak about Institutionalized and systemic racism. Instead, liberals tend to blame racism on individual bad apples, failing to acknowledge the legacy of slavery and discrimination that still pervades our schools, housing opportunities, political system, police force, criminal justice system and the like. Or they promise to provide equal opportunity in the capitalist marketplace without acknowledging how the psychic wounds of the past, and the fundamental wealth and income inequalities of the past and present shape what financial base there is to start new businesses, make investments, qualify for loans at low interest rates, provide quality education for their children, or feel safe from arbitrary arrest or even murder from police. To add insult to injury, when liberals reluctantly pay lip service to anti-discriminatory policies and actions, they simultaneously speak about the need for African Americans (and other people of color) to address their shortcomings and faults, blaming them for the struggles they face that are in fact largely a product of the foundation on which our country was founded as well as the ongoing policies and behavior of our police, educators, politicians, media, etc.

**CONTRAST: CONSERVATIVE AGENDA:** Conservatives blame the struggles that Black and Brown peoples face as their own shortcomings and completely fail to acknowledge any institutionalized racism in our society. In addition, they actively promote policies that do and would undermine and directly overturn efforts made and laws passed during the Civil Rights era that began to address systemic racism. They also insist that all legacies of the past will magically be healed if the society expands its production and consumption of goods, which they believe will happen by reducing taxes on the wealthy who will then feel impelled to expand their investments in companies that will hire the previously unemployed. (Ignoring all the times that this approach has failed to significantly change the situation of Black and Brown peoples, but rather has only further enriched the wealthy and deepened the gap between the one percent (1%) of highest income and wealth recipients and the rest of the population in the U.S., U.K., Israel, and wherever else these policies have been implemented).



Art by Vickisa, Point Reyes Station, CA.

**StArt**  
Stanislaus Art Magazine  
an Arts Magazine for Kids and Families  
Subscribe at [lindaknollart.com/start-magazine](http://lindaknollart.com/start-magazine)

**KD UR** LAW OFFICES OF  
KELLY, DUARTE, URSTOEGER & RUBLE, LLP

Sharon E. Kelly  
Jeffrey R. Duarte  
Markus R. Urstoege  
Megan E. Ruble

1600 G St  
Suite 203  
P.O. Box 0142  
Modesto, CA

Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability Attorneys  
Know your rights  
Call today (209) 521-2552





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

## NOVEMBER 2020

**CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.**

**Science Colloquium**, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., MJC via Zoom. To access the program, click <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmaymqgHqzxhsAa0RjMvYwVg/>. When the live program appears, click on it. **Nov. 4:** Tania Barjesteh, RN, BSN, Doctors Hospital. Nursing in Zambia and the Experience of Serving Those in Need. **Nov. 18:** Andy Foster, COO, Aemetis Biogas LLC. California Cow Power 2021. **Dec. 2:** Tom Crain, NASA Ambassador. Here Comes the Sun. More information in this issue, p 2.

**MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science):** free science programs. Live presentations via Zoom. Link provided before each talk on the MAPS website a few days of the presentation. 7:30 pm, Link to Zoom: <https://modestoscience.wordpress.com/schedule/>. Friday, **November 13:** 7:30 pm. Primatologist, Jennifer Danzy Cramer, Ph.D. "Shifting Primatology Research to Meet Community Needs." Dr. Cramer discusses how her science and research background led her from studying the behavior of primates to more applied, community-led projects focused on health and conservation.

**VIRTUAL FILMS** are available at the State Theatre! Visit <https://thestate.org/virtual-screenings/>

**4 WED: VIGIL:** NO VIGIL in NOVEMBER.

**5 THURS: Peace/Life Center ZOOM Board Meeting**, 6:30 pm. Email Jim Costello for login information, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

**21 SAT: Modesto Sound's 15th Annual Fundraiser** Event streaming on YouTube-Modesto Sound. Live music, fun raffle. Win a 12-string guitar. Join us, support our youth music programs. 5-7 p.m. Info: Janet, (209) 573-0533, or [jmodestosound@gmail.com](mailto:jmodestosound@gmail.com) or visit [www.modestosound.org](http://www.modestosound.org). We are on Facebook.

**22 SUN: Stanislaus Interfaith Council 24th Annual Thanksgiving Online Event** 5 pm. All Welcome! Visit [https://www.facebook.com/events/775888129921701?active\\_tab=about](https://www.facebook.com/events/775888129921701?active_tab=about)

**ARTS EVENTS IN NOVEMBER.** See p. 4 and 10.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**John McCutcheon** Online Concert in January. TBA.

**MLK Commemoration** in February. TBA.

## REGULAR MEETINGS

### SUNDAYS

**Village Dancers** are not dancing in person but have a Zoom class, every Sunday 3:00-5:00 PM (PST). Lessons and reviews every week are given in international folk dances and are led by different teachers from around the Valley. People from England to Taiwan, New Hampshire to Oregon, Arizona to Denair join us each week to exercise in their own homes to interesting music. Email Judy at [JudyKropp40@gmail.com](mailto:JudyKropp40@gmail.com) to receive the Zoom number and password.

**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.

**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](mailto:info@imcv.org)

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

### MONDAYS

**The Compassionate Friends**, Modesto/Riverbank Chapter is meeting by Zoom on the 2nd Mondy at 7p.m. Bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings are invited to participate in their support group for families whose children have died at any age, from any cause. Call 209-622-6786 or email for details: [tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com); <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

**Suicide Loss Support Group:** Friends for Survival meets every third Monday at 7 pm. Details: Norm Andrews 209-345-0601, [nandrews6863@charter.net](mailto: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](mailto:WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com) or call 209.577.1604.

**Silver & Gold Support group** for our senior LGBT communities' unique concerns and experiences. A group that will understand and accept you where you are. For LGBT folks over 50 yrs. old. Every Monday at 3 pm to 4 pm at various locations in Modesto. Info: Steven Cullen/Facilitator. Cell/text - (559) 799-0464. Email: [stevencullen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stevencullen@sbcglobal.net)

### TUESDAYS

**Teen Tuesdays** every week from June-August, 2-5 pm., Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St. Peer Support, Games & movies. Safe space for teens to socialize, work together on projects, and learn about LGBTQ history. Each week will be a little different as we want YOU (youths) to guide the direction this group will go!" Info: Maggie Strong, Political Activist Director/ GSA Liaison, [mstrong@mopride.org](mailto:mstrong@mopride.org), 209-284-0999.

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

**NAACP Meeting**, King-Kennedy Center, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30 pm. 209-645-1909; email: [naacp.branch1048@gmail.com](mailto: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/24765549018387/>

**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](http://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](mailto:info@imcv.org)

## MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

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

**PEACE LIFE CENTER BOARD MEETING**, FIRST Thursdays, 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.

**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: [merced-board@gaycentralvalley.org](mailto:merced-board@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/>

**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

**CA10 Progressive Coalition Monthly Meeting**, third Thursdays. Inclusive group of progressive activists to share resources, ideas, and information in order to support all the great organizing work happening in the Valley! Feel free to invite trusted allies. Meet-up and social hour: 5:30 pm-6:30 pm. Meeting: 6:30 pm-8:00 pm. Follow group on Facebook. Info: Tim Robertson, [tim@nvlf.org](mailto:tim@nvlf.org)

**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](http://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.

**LGBTQ+ Collaborative Meetings** are on the 2nd Thursday of the month, unless noted. Evening meeting, 1pm to 2 pm, Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St., Suite 2, Modesto, CA. Information: John Aguirre at cell/text - (559) 280-3864/ e-mail: [jpamodesto@gmail.com](mailto:jpamodesto@gmail.com)

**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**, Postponed until further notice. <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](mailto:mzjurkovic@gmail.com)

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

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

### FRIDAYS

**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](mailto: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](http://www.Funstrummers.com).

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

**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](mailto:yamiletv@hotmail.com)

### SATURDAY

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

**Free Community Drum Circle** every third Saturday, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 [kathyhaynesSES@gmail.com](mailto:kathyhaynesSES@gmail.com)

### 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.