



# stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO  
PEACE/LIFE  
CENTER  
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## Peer Recovery Art Project: Collaborating for a Healthier Community

An interview by Tom Portwood

Community-based organizations are constantly seeking innovative ways to make a difference in the lives of the clients they serve and for the people in the towns, cities, and neighborhoods where those agencies are located. Peer Recovery Art Project, Inc., has definitely employed a highly innovative approach in its mission to not only end the stigma of mental illness, but to revitalize downtown areas while building toward a healthier, all-inclusive community.

"Peer Recovery Art Project started as a project amongst mental health clients, and one of the things we recognized early on was there was no involvement for those of us who had mental health challenges," founder and CEO John Black recently said of the agency's beginnings. "There was no way to connect with each other except through a clinic or a center."

"Before Peer Recovery Art Project was started there was no place where people could go to celebrate their gifts rather than their diagnosis," Mr. Black continued. "So it was born out of necessity. I'm involved in this project because I was drafted – I had a mental health issue myself, and one of the ways I got better was to do things for the community. I've been in treatment and therapy, but there still has to be more than that. There has to be peer support, mutual aid – ways to connect people from treatment back into their natural communities. But it always seemed to run short of that. In nature, if you have a pool, and you stop water from going into the pool, it will get stagnant and the fish will die. The same metaphor applies to people – if you have a program that treats people to get better, but once they get better they have no way to connect or grow as individuals, or go into business, or get loans, then where do they go? They circle around and go back



PeerRecoveryArtProject

into treatment or the hospital. It's hard for people to get connected once they've been disconnected." Mr. Black points with pride at the evolving nature of the agency. "We began as a street team, helping to produce fairs and festivals, and then in 2009, we won an Elli Lilly grant award for Innovation in Community Development, so we formed a nonprofit, and for a time were located in a building at the corner of J and 13<sup>th</sup> in downtown Modesto. That grant was highly successful – we showcased artwork in that space, held poetry events. And we started the first Day of the Dead event, provided the venue for the Cambodian New Year celebration, and several rock music festivals. We did lots of good things, and always connected to the community and our partners. One of our partners, Project Yes, is still located at that site."

Currently, Peer Recovery Art Project's small part-time staff and corps of volunteers find themselves returning to many of the activities they first worked on in the community years ago. "We're going back to our roots," reflected Mr. Black. "We believe in the art of living – to sustain your health, your wealth, and your vitality as long as you can." Toward that goal, Peer Recovery Art Project currently offers an eclectic set of services, including consulting and partnering with other nonprofit community agencies; serving as event planners and promoters; and providing health coach services to those with mental health issues.

"Artwork is displayed everywhere we go, and we're beginning to do concerts and

continued page 8

The Modesto Peace/Life Center invites you to

## A Harvest Gathering Fundraiser for the Peace Essay Contest

Friday, November 1, 2019 | 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
at the home of John Frailing & Maria Arevalo  
1125 Edgebrook Dr., Modesto



Enjoy:

Delicious Hors d'oeuvres | Good Wines | Special Coffees & Teas

Suggested Donation: \$20 per person  
Casual attire

## Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team returns to Modesto!

Join the Modesto Peace/Life Center as the professional Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team returns to Modesto to fund raise for KCBP 95.5 FM, your community radio station, at Enochs High School Gym, 3201 Sylvan Ave., Modesto on Saturday, October 26 at 3:00 p.m.

This exciting, fun game features the Golden State Warriors playing against participating audience members and a VIP guest! There will be a silent and live auction, raffle, entertainment and much more.

**TICKETS:** \$20 per person: \$10/ Students, Seniors and Disabled at [kcbpradio.org](http://kcbpradio.org)

For more information, contact Jocelyn Cooper (209) 232-5845.

Support your local community radio!

**benefit**  
basketball game

**OCTOBER 26TH**  
3PM @ ENOCHS HS

Tickets: [kcbpradio.org](http://kcbpradio.org)  
At the Door or 209 232 5845  
\$20/pp - \$10/Students, Seniors and Disabled

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### 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/>



## Holiday gift bags for Women's Prison

By DAVID HETLAND

The Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla is the largest female prison in the United States with nearly 2800 inmates, including the only State of California death row.

The Inmate Family Council, an officially sanctioned group of volunteers advocates on behalf of their loved ones and distributes gift bags to the more than 2700 inmates during the winter holiday season. This requires an ongoing, year-round effort on the part of many local caring individuals and organizations to gather appropriate items.

You can help by collecting travel/sample sizes of the following: soap, shampoo, conditioner, skin/body lotion, toothpaste and tissue. There's also a need for adult size toothbrushes (individually wrapped), full size wood pencils with erasers, and unused greeting cards with envelopes.

Donated items may be brought to the Peace/Life Center Office, 720 13<sup>th</sup> St., Modesto (call ahead to make sure the Office is open). For more information, contact Shelly, [shellys833@aol.com](mailto:shellys833@aol.com), (209-521-6304) or Dave (209-388-1608).

## Dia de Los Muertos Celebration

Dia de Los Muertos is celebrating its 4th annual celebration on Saturday, October 19, 2019. This celebration is possible through the generous donations from the community and individuals. Dia de Los Muertos is 100% free to the community and provides many activities for children, Ballet Folklorico, musical entertainment and more.

To donate to the event, send your donation to AGIF, 1220 I St., Modesto, CA 95354. The community and American GI Forum thanks you for your continued support.

## CCJ Needs Your Voice

The Council of Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health (CCJBH) is conducting community engagement activities in locations through-out the state to elicit information from individuals with Lived Experience in the intersection of the criminal justice and behavioral health systems.

The goal is to gather input related to personal experiences, current needs, and best practices of programs and policies that work in this intersection. CCJBH is seeking participation from diverse populations including consumers, family members, and professionals to provide their first-hand perspectives.

This community engagement event will provide the information necessary to develop a funding opportunity for organizations to apply that can help reduce the incarceration of individuals with behavioral health challenges.

### Who Should Attend?

- Individuals with Lived Experience in the Intersection of Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health
- Family and Consumer Groups
- Regional Reentry Partnership Members
- Government and Nonprofit Partners working to Improve Social, Health and Public Safety Outcomes
- Mental Health, Substance Use, and Community Correctional Providers
- Groups Working to Reduce Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Disparities
- Organizations of Individuals who are or have been Justice-Involved
- Justice Providers/Officers of the Court

**Registration link: Fresno, 10/22/19 9:00am-12:00pm**  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ccjbh-needs-your-voice-fresno-tickets-71212046147>

Questions? Contact [catherine.hickinbotham@cdcr.ca.gov](mailto:catherine.hickinbotham@cdcr.ca.gov)

## Health Well's Cancer-Related Behavioral Health Fund

Submitted by JOHN AGUIRRE

Health Well's Cancer-Related Behavioral Health Fund assists individuals in need of cancer-related behavioral health treatments by providing financial assistance to individuals with a diagnosis of cancer to help with cost-shares for covered services prescribed by behavioral health providers (psychiatrists, psychologists and licensed social workers).

Visit <https://www.healthwellfoundation.org/fund/cancer-related-behavioral-health/>

### NOTICE

There will not be a November issue of Connections

### IN MEMORIAM

#### Nancy Formella

Former Spanish teacher, Long-time Modesto Peace/Life Center Activist, Member of Occupy, Vigil Planner

#### Daniel F. Pollock

April 16, 1939 – August 12, 2019  
(See remembrance by Dan Onorato)

### Peace/Life Center looking for volunteers

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

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





Dan Pollock was co-manager of the Dixon New Mexico Farmers Market

# Dan Pollock: April 16, 1939–August 12, 2019

By DAN ONORATO

Daniel Pollock, an active and much-loved member of the Modesto Peace/Life Center community who had lived, with his family, for 13 years in Modesto, died on August 12 at his home in Dixon, New Mexico, of complications due to Parkinson’s Disease.

With Cliff Humphrey of Ecology Action and Sam Tyson of the Center, Dan co-founded Stanislaus Safe Energy in 1973 to oppose the construction of a nuclear power plant PG&E was considering in the eastern part of our county. He helped lead the Center’s effort to promote energy conservation and clean, sustainable alternatives to the nuclear option. The Energy Research Group led by Bill Wilson remodeled a portion of Dan’s home to build the county’s first passive solar green house.

When headlines began to cover the Khmer Rouge’s genocide against their fellow Cambodians in 1975, Dan initiated a letter writing campaign to *The Modesto Bee* to urge more in-depth reporting and explain how people might help.

He was also active in supporting the long struggle of César Chávez and Dolores Huerta’s grape strike to help the United Farm Workers create a successful workers’ union.

Dan was widely known and appreciated as a teacher of organic gardening. He taught many of us how to compost and use alternatives to insecticides. But with his contagious love of nature and the land, Dan also inspired a practical love of the soil and an appreciation of our earth and our environment.

At the core of Dan’s person was a gentle kindness, a generous caring, a warm, welcoming, inquisitive spirit, and an endearing laughter and enthusiasm. Dan was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and relative. And for those of us who were fortunate to know him well, he was a true friend.

We’re holding a special memorial to celebrate Dan’s life and legacy on Saturday, October 5, at 3:00 p.m., followed by a potluck feast. The memorial will take place at the home of Alice and Dan Onorato, 1532 Vernon Ave., Modesto. Dan’s wife Barbara and some of his children will be with us. We’ll share stories and reflections, play music Dan really liked, and enjoy a lively potluck meal together. Those who plan to attend the gathering are asked to bring a favorite dish and a beverage to share. Also, those who would like to can donate in Dan’s memory to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353.

Be informed!

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



## 2020 Peace Essay Contest Heroes of Peace

*“It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it.  
And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.”*  
Eleanor Roosevelt

Peace is understood to mean not only an absence of hostilities or war, but also a state of harmony and justice existing between people, groups or nations. All over the globe and throughout history, there have been people who have steadily worked for peace and justice through non-violent and non-military means. They have worked alone and sometimes joined with others, often working behind the scenes. These people are the rarely recognized heroes of peace.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi or Mother Teresa are examples of well known peacemakers. However, there are many people whose peacemaking efforts are not widely recognized. The experiences of these unheralded peacemakers are sometimes told in songs and stories, but seldom make the history books.

The 2020 Peace Essay Contest challenges you to find and bring recognition to one of these lesser-known heroes of peace. You may find them in your family or neighborhood, in your community or nation, or in places all over the globe. They may have lived in the past or might be living today. They may have used ideas, words, pens, music, shovels, diplomacy, technology or a variety of other common or unusual tools to build peace between people, groups or nations. The focus of each person’s work may differ, but common to all peacemakers is a commitment to using non-violent principles and actions to nurture and encourage positive relationships among people resulting in a more peaceful world, locally and beyond.

**Division I (grades 11-12) and Division II (grades 9 - 10)    500-1000 Words**  
**Division III (grades 7-8) and Division IV (grades 5-6)    250-500 Words**

By talking with others and/or researching, find and write, in your own words, about a lesser known person who has worked for peace and justice through non-violent and non-military means. This person may have lived in the past or is living today. He or she may be from your local community or from anywhere around the globe, working to make our world a more fair and peaceful place.

In your essay:

- Describe who the person is/was and how he/she has worked for peace and justice.
- Explain why this person’s actions are an important contribution to building a more peaceful and just world.
- Tell how the work of this person might inspire you to also find ways to work for a more peaceful and just world.

Print your word count at the end of the text of your essay. Then show Works Cited for any quotations, borrowed ideas and facts that are not general knowledge. (The title and citations are not included in the word count.) If you are uncertain about plagiarism, ask your teacher. Further suggestions on using citations are included in the submission details and at <http://peaceessaycontest.weebly.com/>. See complete rules on backside of this flyer.

**Deadline for Entries: November 22, 2019    Notification of Winners: Late February, 2020**

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

View, download/print the flyers and entry form at <http://peaceessaycontest.weebly.com/> or [www.stanislausconnections.org](http://www.stanislausconnections.org)



Peace Essay Contest 2020 Rules & Submission Directions

1. The Peace Essay Contest is open to all fifth through twelfth grade students who live in Stanislaus County or attend any public, private, or home school in Stanislaus County.
2. Submit one copy of your essay. Essays in Division I & II must be typewritten, double spaced. Essays in Divisions III & IV must be either typewritten or written in dark ink, double spaced, using one side of white paper 8 1/2 x 11 inches. Number the pages consecutively. Your essay must be of a quality to photocopy legibly. Your name/identifying information should not be anywhere on or in the essay.
3. Give your essay a title. Place it on the first page where you begin your essay. Do not use a separate title or cover page.
4. **IMPORTANT:** Place the word count at the end of your essay. Essays that are 25 words more than the directed word count will not be considered for judging.
5. Print & complete the Entry Form and staple to the front of your essay. Forms may be found at: <http://peaceessaycontest.weebly.com> OR [www.stanislausconnections.org](http://www.stanislausconnections.org) OR [peaceessay20@gmail.com](mailto:peaceessay20@gmail.com).
6. Refer to your source for any quotations, borrowed ideas, and facts that are not general knowledge by placing the name of the source in parentheses in the text of your essay, AND by creating a bibliography listing the authors of books, location of articles or addresses of websites you used to get your information. Do not base your entire essay on one source. Suggestions about how to choose reliable internet sources and correctly cite them are included in the weebly essay web site mentioned above.
7. You must do your own work. However, you may ask a teacher, parent, or friend for constructive criticism.
8. The Modesto Peace/Life Center reserves the right to reprint entries. Entries will not be returned.
9. Entries may be delivered to the **Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto, from 2pm-5pm on November 20 - 21 - 22, 2019.** You may also mail all entries, postmarked no later than **November 22, 2019** to:

**2019 Peace Essay Contest  
Modesto Peace/Life Center  
P.O. Box 134  
Modesto, CA 95353-0134**

**JUDGING**

**IMPORTANT:** Essays that are 25 words over the directed word count will not be considered for judging.

A distinguished group of local writers, educators, and peacemakers will judge the essays. Judging guidelines (in order of weight) include:

1. **Content**
  - A. Does the essay clearly address the assigned topic?
  - B. Does the essay show that the student researched their category and/or specific area of concern?
  - C. Has the writer used relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples to fully develop their ideas?
2. **Style**
  - A. Is the essay original and interesting?
  - B. Does the voice of the writer come through?
3. **Clarity of Expression**
  - A. Does the essay have a distinguishable introduction and conclusion? Is it well organized with clear transitions from one idea to the next?
  - B. Are the ideas clearly stated with factual support?
4. **Mechanics**
  - A. Has the writer attempted to use appropriate transitions, precise language, and an engaging style?
  - B. Are grammar, spelling, and punctuation reasonably correct?
  - C. Does the author cite all quotations, borrowed ideas, and facts that are not general knowledge? Is the source of information listed in the essay itself and in a bibliography at the end of the essay?

First, Second, and Third prizes will be awarded in each of the four divisions which have at least 15 entries. In the event that there are fewer than 15 entries in any one division, all prizes may or may not be awarded in that division at the discretion of the judging panel. Up to 3 Honorable Mentions may be awarded in each division. Group entries (more than one author) are welcome; however, a student may only enter one essay.

The writer of the best essay in a division from a school which has ten or more entries in that division will be honored as the school winner. All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation.

**Notification of Winners**

In February, 2020, winners will be notified through the student's teacher. Prizes will be presented at an Awards Reception on April 3, 2020. All participants, teachers, judges, and sponsors will be invited as guests of honor.

**2020 Peace Essay Committee:**

Indira Clark, Peggy Hoover, Linda Lagace, Colleen Norby, Deborah Roberts,  
Sandy Sample, Shelly Scribner and David Tucker

This 33rd **Annual Peace Essay Contest** is a project of the Modesto Peace/Life Center (209) 529-5750 and is co-sponsored by the Department of Literature and Language Arts, Modesto Junior College



**Science Colloquium Fall '19**

Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., Science Community Center, Rm. 115, MJC West Campus

Free; \$2 campus parking fee.

**Sept. 25:** Erynn Lucas, MJC Microbiology Professor: *Plagues: Then and Now*. Infectious disease outbreaks have ravaged the planet throughout the ages inevitably shaping history: ending wars, starting wars and decimating populations. Let's take a look at some of those events and talk about future potential outbreaks.

**Oct. 2:** Kent Reeves, Wildlife Biologist: *Rancher to Rancher: Using Livestock to Regenerate California Grasslands*. Provides an overview of how to use livestock to regenerate ecosystem function in California grasslands by mimicking historic grazing regimes of native ungulates. Kent will describe the Rancher to Rancher Network, the history of its development and the progress of R2R throughout California since 2013.

**Oct. 09:** Vicki Rice, Modesto Recycling Coordinator: *Organics Recycling & Modesto City Program*. What is happening in the global recycling market, commercial recycling laws affecting businesses in California and how does it relate to Modesto? Ms. Rice will highlight what recycling programs Modesto offers its residents and what we are doing to combat illegal dumping and residential green can contamination.

**Oct. 16:** Kevin Rice, Ph.D., UC Davis: *All Marine Creatures Great and Small: Whale Sharks to Pigmy Seahorses*. The marine environments of the Philippine archipelago are one of the planet's premier biodiversity hotspots, and the coral reef systems of this island nation have yet to experience significant episodes of coral bleaching or die-off. Using both still photography and video imagery, we will experience "close encounters" with weird and wonderful creatures that inhabit this underwater realm.

**Oct. 23:** Anne Schellman, UCCE Master Gardner Coordinator, Stanislaus County: *The Good, the Bad, and the "Bugly."* Insects are often labeled as "good" or "bad." This presentation challenges this stereotype. Come discover the important roles that insects play in the world and see a collection of insects you might find in your own backyard.

**Oct. 30:** Tom Crain, NASA Ambassador: *Telescopes Across the Electromagnetic Spectrum*.

Modern telescopes range over the entire electromagnetic spectrum. Presentation includes examples of telescopes from radio to gamma ray, with explanations and images.

**Nov. 6:** Denise Godbout-Avant, Great Valley Museum Docent: *Sounds of Silence: Hearing Impairments and Solutions* will be discussed. Denise will also talk about her journey being profoundly deaf from birth and receiving cochlear implants. A sign language interpreter will be provided.

**Nov. 13:** Jim Hopf, Ret. Nuclear Scientist: *Nuclear Power Needs to be Part of Our Nation's Carbon Policies*. Mr. Hopf will explain nuclear power's important role in reducing CO2 emissions, and discuss policy changes that will be necessary to prevent nuclear plant closures. Closure of a significant number of nuclear plants will neutralize the global warming benefits of renewable energy, resulting in little to no progress on reducing power-sector CO2 emissions.

**Nov. 20:** Bobby Hutchison, MJC Behavioral Scientist: *World AIDS Day: An Update*. Nearly 40 years ago AIDS was an inevitable death sentence. Despite billions on research, no vaccine has yet been created but with powerful drugs it is now a "chronic disease." Millions have died from AIDS yet two have been cured. What is AIDS' future?

# KCBP Radio's First Live Broadcast, the "Voice of the Valley"

By FELTON DANIELS

Ed note: KCBP 95.5 FM, your new community, non-profit radio station, aired its first live-broadcast on Saturday, August 17, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The party-like festivities were highlighted by music, interviews and, of course, food! Felton Daniels, one of our dedicated volunteers, broadcast the following remarks.

This is Felton Daniels for 95.5 FM, KCBP Community Radio coming to you from downtown Modesto on this historic and exciting occasion when we are broadcasting to you live for the very first time. I feel extremely honored to be a part of this moment in history. Many people have worked very hard to get this station up and running and it is to their credit that we are live today.

You may be asking, "Why community radio?" Why would any group go to the trouble and the expense in this day and age to start such an enterprise in the first place?

In thinking about that question, I focused on the word "community." Community suggests a group of people who care about each other, care about care, if you will. It is about a group of people who want life to be full and rich and as peaceful as possible for all of those around. It is a bit of a dream. It is partly utopia. It is also thinking about making reality better. It is also about connecting and sharing.

Community Radio here in our broadcast area may prove to serve the community in a way that was never dreamt of before. I am thinking of the troubled newspaper industry. Our own local newspaper that has served us well for years appears to be losing subscribers and advertisers. *The Modesto Bee* announced recently that they will no longer be printing a Saturday paper. Other papers have closed. Unfortunately, it feels like this could happen to the *Bee*. Many people do not seem to care about the possible loss of the paper. But it provides a great service to all of us in our community. It reports daily on government and business activities as well as crime trends and other significant happenings that would not be brought into the community's awareness, if it no longer existed. This would be a terrible loss to our community.

Not that I am in any way supporting the closing of the *Bee* but, if that should happen in the future, KCBP Community Radio, might well be in the position to take up some of the slack left by the loss of the daily newspaper. Just how broad might our coverage become? Just what role might we play in the future? Who knows? We are starting today. Where will



the dream take us? Only time, creativity and maybe a little reality will tell.

Today is our first day to broadcast to you live. Tomorrow we may be a major provider of important information in our community. As has been said for years on radio, "stay tuned."

This is Felton Daniels for 95.5 FM KCBP Community Radio, coming to you live.

[Slightly edited for publication.]

## Learn about the History of the Airport District

From the McHenry Museum

Dr. Talitha Agan reviews the "History of Modesto's Airport District" on Saturday October 12 at 2:00 p.m. at the McHenry Museum, 1402 I St., Modesto. Dr. Agan, a Modesto native, is a Society Director, and an adjunct History Professor at Modesto Junior College.

Her research into how the Airport District evolved focuses on the environmental and social aspects of this settlement. Learn how the "Dust Bowl" refugees migrated to this area, leading to the Airport District development.

Don't miss this insightful presentation.

**Information:** (209) 495-4620, Email: [museum@mchenrymuseum.org](mailto:museum@mchenrymuseum.org); <https://www.mchenrymuseum.org/>



Photo: Pinterest

# The Haunted Museum returns: Join us for a spooky good time!

By VERONICA JACUINDE

If you are looking for a fun, family-friendly event to celebrate Halloween, then the Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County's Haunted Museum is for you. The event will take place at the historic McHenry Museum on Friday, October 25th and Saturday, 26th. Tickets are \$5 per person and children under 5 are free.

Offering fun, but not too much fright, the event is designed for children ages 5 to 12 and their families. The celebration will feature seven themed rooms, Halloween crafts, face painting, and a variety of games for kids in the arcade. Guests are encouraged to come dressed in their favorite costumes.

Kit Fox Trolley, a non-profit group that creates unique fundraising events, will guide visitors through the museum. Guests will go from room to room on a colorful and delightful tour where they will experience some of their favorite Halloween characters. This will be an evening of "Scooby Doo" fun and games, not "Friday the 13th" terror, with plenty of laughs and candy too!

Dave Gianelli, Club board member says, "Expect to be entertained with kid friendly spooky characters that will have you laughing and scared at the same time."

Purchase tickets at [www.bgctanislus.org](http://www.bgctanislus.org) or in person at all F&M Bank locations in Modesto, and the McHenry Museum located at 1402 I St. For more information call Veronica Jacuinde at (310) 508-1896 or email Denise Goodell at [dgoodell@fmbonline.com](mailto:dgoodell@fmbonline.com). At the Boys & Girls Club Great Futures Start Here. Visit [www.bgctanislus.org](http://www.bgctanislus.org) to make your donation to support our kids.

## MJC Civic Engagement Film & Lecture Series

Events are free & open to the public, 7-9 p.m. Thursday nights in Forum 110, MJC East Campus, 435 College Ave., Modesto.

**OCT 24 – Healing Justice:** explores the history and impact of the current justice system on communities of color. By focusing on issues of personal, interpersonal, community, and generational trauma, the film addresses the school-to-prison pipeline, the need for comprehensive criminal justice reform, and the importance of healing and restorative practices in a variety of community sectors.

**NOV 7 – Heath Flora, California State Assembly Member:** Heath Flora (R) represents the 12th district—portions of both San Joaquin and Stanislaus County, including parts of Modesto and neighboring cities such as Riverbank, Oakdale, Escalon, Turlock, Manteca, and more. Come hear him speak and let him know your thoughts on local issues that matter to you.

**NOV 21 – Personal Statement:** follows high school seniors trying to beat the odds by becoming the very resource they wish were more widely available: college counselors. The film focuses on the impact of peer counselors and the challenges of students attempting to navigate their way through the unfamiliar terrain of the college admissions process and beyond.

stanislaus  
CONNECTIONS

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209-529-5750



# How movements build strength through training

By **GEORGE LAKEY**

*Training for movements is not unlike training for athletic competition: Pain is inevitable. It's the conditioning of mind, body and heart that makes winning possible*

It's no accident that much of the leadership of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC, came from the Nashville, Tennessee sit-in campaign — and that SNCC's young people were frequently pace-setters in the civil rights movement. We can even now watch a [short film documenting the process](#): the careful, step-by-step training workshops led by the Rev. James Lawson for black students.

A similar under-the-radar training process preceded the overthrow of dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines in 1986. That struggle gave us a new term for nonviolent struggle: "people power." A violent insurgency had been going on for years in the Philippines, but Marcos — with the help of the United States — had been able to contain it. He was not, however, able to hold back a nonviolent direct-action campaign and was ultimately forced to flee to the haven of the United States.

It's not that movements can't win without building in a training dimension. The [Global Nonviolent Action Database](#) includes successful direct-action campaigns dating from times before training, as we know it, had been invented. Even then, however, innovative leaders sometimes developed an equivalent when they knew they were facing a tough opponent.

Who was Badshah Khan?

One such example is Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a leader from what is now Afghanistan and Pakistan, who wanted to free his Pathan people from the British Empire. From watching Gandhi's "experiments with truth" in the region south of him, he could see the potential of nonviolent struggle even when the British troops came down hard on Indian Hindus. He could expect that the British would be even more violent against Muslims like himself. There are, after all, shades of racism and prejudice.

So he organized marching drills for his nonviolent army, who he called the Khudai Khidmatgar, or Servants of God. Although it wasn't like the role-playing that Rev. Lawson later used, it probably helped bolster their confidence and solidarity in two ways. First, the strenuous marching helped strengthen their ability to withstand violence. Second, it enabled them to practice their unity and commitment to nonviolence — which in turn would reduce, though certainly not eliminate, the level of violence levied against them.

And so it proved to be. A British journalist reported harsher repression used against the Pathans than the Hindus — "wholesale shootings and hangings." Nevertheless, the nonviolent movement stayed the course, and the British retreated. Gandhi later praised the Pathans' role in helping to throw out the mightiest empire the world had ever known.

## People of color and the choice of nonviolent struggle

One function of training is revealed by these examples: It reduces the effectiveness of violent repression from the opponent.

In this article, I intentionally cite campaigns by people of

color. The Global Nonviolent Action Database tells hundreds of stories of wins by peoples of color. One reason people of color so frequently choose nonviolent confrontation is that it offers that chance to win, while also lowering the amount of violence from the opponent — as compared to what happens when violent means are chosen.

The database has a searchable field showing whether the opponent uses violence to try to shut down the campaign. Although there are cases in which opponents don't use violence, it does show up frequently. Training helps campaigners get ready for the possibility, and one problem that's tackled in training is the problem of fear.

In struggles between people of color and white opponents,

the people of color often have a history of white violence against them, giving them every reason to bring to their campaign a level of fear. The sit-in organizers of the civil rights movement had to take that into account.

Danny Glover's excellent film "Freedom Song" shows graphically how SNCC's training worked to support young people to face the near-certainty of white violence with the expectation of winning and the ability to handle the pain that may accompany the struggle. It's not unlike people who train for athletic competition: Pain is inevitable, and it's the conditioning of mind, body and heart that makes winning possible.

To my surprise I got a personal glimpse of this on a trolley ride in downtown Philadelphia many years ago, when my son was 12 years old. I started a conversation with a man on the seat beside us. He, warming to my black son, said, "You know, when I was your age I did the best thing I ever did in my life!"

Peter leaned in, his eyes intent on the man's. "I'm from Birmingham," he continued, "and I was in the children's march with Dr. King! That was some heavy shit, man. One day firefighters came along with the police and got out their hoses and shot water at us to stop our march."

The man chuckled when he saw Peter hold his breath.

"Yeah, they got me. That water just knocked me off my feet. You've never seen anything like it. All of us just got knocked over. Well, the hoses didn't get *everybody* — they started singing 'Ain't gonna let nobody turn us around!'"

"But some of us were hurting and most of us were soaked. So you know what? The next day we did come back — even more of us kids, and some grown-ups there, too."

Peter looked at me to see if he should believe this fantastical tale. I nodded, realizing that we were hearing one of the most dramatic stories of the civil rights movement.

"Were you hurt?" Peter asked.

"Nah, just some bruises," the man said. "We just came back the next day, even though now we knew what was goin' down, and some of our parents said no but we did anyway. You know, going down singing that song about not being turned around."

"Did you get any training before you started your day's march?" I asked the man.

"Yeah, we had to have that, because we met first at the Baptist church, and Jim Bevel and other grown-ups trained us to be nonviolent no matter what happens — police dogs or whatever."

He smiled proudly. "We were brave, man, and I'll remember those songs forever. Shit, we won that battle!"

Glancing up, the man saw his stop was coming, jumped up, gave my son another smile, and gave us a wave as he got off the trolley.

I finished the story for Peter: The young people won that particular battle in the 1963 Birmingham campaign because the day came when police commissioner "Bull" Connor ordered the firefighters to turn on the hoses — and the men refused.

The white economic elite began to negotiate with the campaign leadership and forced politicians to make an agreement. Birmingham, Alabama, in the heart of the confederacy, began to desegregate.

## A new training workshop for this political moment

The struggles for justice in many countries are facing critical political situations that require additional skills — more than just the kind of *tactical* training discussed here so far. Those struggles also need *organizational* training, which shows how to build effective, diverse, leaderful groups and grow the kinds networks and coalitions that can scale up. In societies that are polarizing, such as the United States and Britain, these skills are especially useful because movements can grow rapidly under these circumstances. One organizing resource in this area is something I co-authored with Berit Lakey and others, called "[Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership: A Guide to Organizations in Changing Times](#)."

Along with organizing skills and tactical strength, we need the ability to strategize for nonviolent direct-action campaigning. After all, successful nonviolent movements

generally use campaign technology to win. The Global Nonviolent Action Database is based on campaigns, along with books like "[This Is an Uprising](#)" by Mark Engler and Paul Engler, and "[Why Civil Resistance Works](#)" by Erica Chenoweth and

Maria J. Stephan.

Many well-informed people who participate in protests, however, have no idea that there is such a thing as direct-action campaign technology — let alone that winning depends on understanding and using that technology well. This means vast reservoirs of energy and talent aren't being fully used.

When I woke up to this realization, I invented a new, brief training that introduces people to campaign technology. I've tested it 15 times, on both coasts and the Midwest, with people active in racial and economic justice, climate, immigrant rights, affordable housing, indigenous rights, healthcare and other issues.

People reported more clarity and increased ability to see the possibility of positive change. They especially appreciated the easy-to-remember framework for formulating a winning campaign, and that it made strategizing more accessible. Some found that the workshop put them more fully in touch with their own strength and power.

I've decided to turn this training over to those who can

## Successful nonviolent movements generally use campaign technology to win.

# Bringing Hope and Healing to Children, Youth, and their Families

## An interview by Tom Portwood

“Not a lot of people know what foster care is,” Cynthia Buenrostro recently lamented. “They’re interested, but it’s not something that’s talked about.” As the newly appointed Community Outreach Specialist for **Parents by Choice**, a community-based organization that merged with the locally-operated Safe Harbor Family Services organization in 2018, Ms. Buenrostro’s personal goal “to educate people about foster care so that more homes in our community can provide a loving and stable environment for our foster kids.” While **Parents by Choice** is new to Stanislaus County, it has been providing foster care, transitional housing, adoptive and other services in the Stockton area since 2006.

Getting the word out about the foster care system in this country is definitely in order. “Many of America’s child welfare systems are badly broken — and children can suffer serious harm as a result. Some will be separated from their siblings. Others will be bounced from one foster care placement to another, never knowing when their lives will be uprooted next. Too many will be further abused in systems that are supposed to protect them. And instead of being safely reunified with their families — or moved quickly into adoptive homes — many will languish for years in foster homes or institutions,” states the advocacy nonprofit **Children’s Rights** on its website. **Children’s Rights** goes on to estimate that there are nearly 443,000 children in foster care across the country. Indeed, as Ms. Buenrostro pointed out, “there are over 800 children in Stanislaus County alone who need a home.”

**Parents by Choice** came into being to address the needs of all those children left so often adrift in foster care. “Tony Yadon, our Executive Director, started the agency because he had a vision to make kids the big deal, focusing on doing special things for the youths,” Ms. Buenrostro recounted. “In the midst of that, he also started providing licensed adoption services.” During the ensuing thirteen years, **Parents by Choice** continued to add services and following the merger with Safe Harbor Family Services, opened its offices in Modesto. Today, the organization provides a number of programs and support services crucial to the well-being of foster youth and the foster moms and dads who take care of them:

- Foster Care - For those wishing to become foster parents, the process includes attending a foster care orientation; submitting a formal application; attending two pre-approval trainings; completing the home study process; and completing the Mandated Reporter training
- Transitional Housing for Youth 18 to 21 years of age – This program currently has 8 two-bedroom apartments, so up to 16 youths can live in these units free of charge while they work to establish themselves in the community. Participants must be either employed or attending school.
- The Positive Parenting Program - Offers parenting groups designed to reduce stress and improve the atmosphere in foster homes
- Supervised Visitation – This program provides an unbiased, child-friendly venue for families. Visit rooms are equipped with comfortable furniture, games and toys for

parents to use to strengthen the bond with their children.

“We focus on reuniting foster youth with their birth parents, unless that is not possible. Most of the children we help come from a situation where they are being neglected or where there is some type of drug or alcohol abuse by the parent,” Ms. Buenrostro explained. “Some of the youths have more behavioral issues than others because of the extreme trauma they’ve experienced.” She shared her hope that people in Modesto and Stanislaus County will step up and help these “sweet kids.” “I would say that our biggest need for volunteers is foster parents,” Ms. Buenrostro stated. “What we are looking for in a foster parent is someone who is patient, someone who has a passion for helping the child, and is loving and caring. Other than that, we’re always looking for volunteers to support our programs as mentors, to speak with youth about their (the volunteer’s) vocation and to provide hands-on support at family events. We also need help with providing Christmas presents for children and youth!”

Sometimes, the connection made between a foster child and his or her foster parents blossoms into something far more lasting. “Sometimes foster parents do get to adopt these children, if the biological parents can’t get them back, for whatever reason,” Ms. Buenrostro related.

Ms. Buenrostro’s commitment to foster youths and their families is deeply rooted in her own courageous, life-affirming journey. “I was a foster youth myself,” she shared. “I was removed from my mom when I was fifteen years old and was placed into a shelter. I dealt with some abuse from my mom’s boyfriend at the time. It was a little rough. I jumped around from a foster home to a shelter, kind of back and forth for a couple of years. I didn’t have the greatest experience going through that. That ties into what I do here with **Parents by Choice**, because we do need to find good foster parents. It’s all about making that connection.”

Happily, even while she endured that chaotic period in her life, Ms. Buenrostro did cross paths with one person who made all the difference in the world. “Towards the end of my time in foster care, they found me a new foster home and that foster mom changed my life completely. She would cook with me – really, she would do everything that a normal mom would do. I became super close to her. I don’t believe I would be where I am now had she not come into my life. I don’t believe I would be the type of mother I am. When I told her I started working for **Parents by Choice** she was so happy. I do keep in contact with her. We don’t stay in constant contact, but she’s still there for me.”

As **Parents by Choice** gains a foothold in Stanislaus County, Ms. Buenrostro is looking not to the past, but the future. “Stockton’s a little more established than what we have going on here, but we’re hoping to provide a lot more for Modesto in the future. I’m very excited!”

**For more information** about the programs and services available through Parents by Choice, contact the office at 2937 Veneman Ave # B250, Modesto, California 95356 Phone: (209) 491-5400. <https://parentsbychoice.net/> Volunteers are always needed. Parents by Choice is accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

## Movements

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help spread it further. Two educational centers — Pendle Hill (near Philadelphia) and The Resource Center for Nonviolence (in Santa Cruz, California) — are now sponsoring workshops that train other experienced facilitators to lead my training.

### Successful movements have a learning curve

As far as I can tell from six decades of studying and participating in movements, the most successful ones excel in learning from their unfolding experience. Those that value empowerment of their participants like to find ways to build the learning curve of the “troops on the ground.”

In the 1930s, training resources in the United States included the Brookwood Labor College. The Highlander Research and Education Center came along around that time and continues today. In the ‘60s new ones appeared, including the Martin Luther King School for Social Change, where I once taught. Now there are still more, including Momentum, Wildfire and Training for Change. At a time when even movement media soak us in bad news, it’s all the more important that we remember to build our resilience and keep on learning.

### George Lakey

George Lakey has been active in direct action campaigns for six decades. Recently retired from Swarthmore College, he has facilitated 1,500 workshops on five continents and led activist projects on local, national and international levels -- most recently with Earth Quaker Action Team. Among many other works, he is author of “Strategizing for a Living Revolution” in David Solnit’s book *Globalize Liberation* (City Lights, 2004). His 2016 book is “Viking Economics,” and in December 2018 Melville House released “How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning.”

### Love Music?

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

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

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

**Since 2005 Modesto Sound**

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

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


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

**Why**

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

**More Information**

209-573-0533    [janet@modestosound.org](mailto:janet@modestosound.org)



**Modesto Sound LIVE**  
Recording / LIVE Sound Education



## Your Library Friends Events

### *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*: Book Discussion & Film at the State

Book lovers and film fans agree that Betty Smith's American novel, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, is a beloved classic in print and on the big screen. On Tuesday, October 1, The Friends of the Modesto Library will host a book discussion, moderated by Stella Berattis, Modesto's poet laureate, followed by the showing of the 1945 film starring Dorothy McGuire.

There is a lot of buzz around *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, with fans recently celebrating the 75th anniversary of both the book (1943) and the film (1945). Book clubs are rereading "Tree" with new eyes in light of its relevant topics including class, gender and race/ethnicity in America.

A portion of ticket sales will go to Friends of the Modesto Library to benefit programs at the Modesto Library. Doors open at 6 p.m. Book discussion begins at 6:30 p.m. Tickets: visit the State Theatre Box Office at 1307 J. St. or purchase them [online](#).

### Barnes & Noble Bookfair to Benefit Friends of the Modesto Library

You've probably been hearing a lot of "Jane" talk lately. Jane Austen that is. On Saturday, October 19, the Friends will host a Bookfair at Barnes & Noble in Modesto. A portion of every sale goes to Friends of the Modesto Library.

Members of the Becoming Jane Austen Book Club will be on hand in regency costume, and Opera Modesto singers will perform selections from "Mansfield Park," the two-act opera coming to Modesto in January. The Bookfair continues online through Oct. 25. Just remember to use promo code 12543781 when you make your purchase.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer to assist at the registration table from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at the annual Teens Craft Fair at the Library on Saturday, Oct. 12. Contact Librarian Christin Hutsell, [chutsell@stanlibrary.org](mailto:chutsell@stanlibrary.org).

Twenty volunteer tutors are needed immediately to work with children in the new, Friends-sponsored reading program, KidsQuest, designed to help children with dyslexia. NO TEACHING EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED. Volunteers will be trained in both the Barton method and Structured Word Inquiry. Tutors must submit to a background check and LiveScan fingerprinting, for which there is a nominal fee. Tutors commit to twice-weekly, one-hour sessions for a minimum of three months. To volunteer, call (209) 672-6641 or visit [www.lqslc.com/kidsquest](http://www.lqslc.com/kidsquest).

## Peer Recovery Art Project

from page 1

festivals again, all under our name, with partners," Mr. Black explained. "We don't do anything ourselves unless we can collaborate with others. And the door is wide open for collaboration. Not too long ago we worked one week at Music on the Plaza and I think we had 20 artists set up their work for that event. We never charge the artists for setting up. We want to be seen as first-class citizens of the community because that's what we are. And we also mentor people who want to be a part of the mental health workforce and serve as consultants to groups who may need assistance in forming their own nonprofits. Also, we are health coaches, because we know that people who have mental health challenges often die 25 years before their time, because of the medicines that slow them down, and cause heart attacks and obesity."

"Recently, we were fortunate enough to secure the Census contract for the homeless and the LGBTQ population in our community," noted Mr. Black. "It's important that everyone be counted. We're starting right now on that project. We did our first presentation at the Gospel Mission last week. El Concilio is the parent contractor on this project." Also, on October 8<sup>th</sup>, Peer Recovery Art Project will be facilitating a Clients and Consumers Stakeholder Engagement Community Listening Session for the California Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission. The session will be held at Modesto Gospel Mission, 1400 Yosemite Boulevard, from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., and is being convened to hear from community members about specific mental health services, and the support needs of clients and consumers of those services.

"People come to us because we have a stellar reputation and have worked on countless projects in the past and have all the necessary expertise and insurances," Mr. Black said in summing up Peer Recovery Art Project's work in our community. "We adhere to three guiding principles – Less is More; the Power of Consistency; and Collaboration. It's all about mutual aid. You have to be able to give more than you get. The mental health movement is a civil rights movement. Not everybody needs to be vocal about it, but behind the scenes you can make a big difference. How can we be of service? That's always our first question. There's got to be room at the table for us so that our voices can be heard."

To find out more about the services offered by Peer Recovery Art Project, Incorporated, please call them at (209) 985-0467, or email them at [peerrecoveryart@yahoo.com](mailto:peerrecoveryart@yahoo.com), or visit their website at [www.peerrecoveryartproject.org](http://www.peerrecoveryartproject.org). Volunteers are always needed.

## Listening

Car backed in for fire safety  
DOWNLOAD gear  
Trunk slammed closed  
Remote- Click! All doors locked

Crunching footsteps,  
Snapping brittle twigs  
Cabin door squeaking open  
then slowly yawning closed.

Backpack and sleeping bag  
Tossed on the cot  
Water battle flipped open  
Followed by a bubble plug sip.

Marker cap snapped back on  
After signing up for chores.  
Sign out sheets rustling in the wind  
On the clipboard

Garbage can lid  
scraping open and  
banging closed.  
Bell ringing.  
Come gather in a circle

Four laughing children  
Rattling over the dirt  
in a large wagon

Announcements.  
A song.  
Dinner is served

The creak  
of the dining hall door opening  
Glad greetings of those  
Not seen since last year

Melamine plates knocking  
Against rustic wooden tables  
As hustled off  
To the serving line.

Echoes of memories  
Shared while waiting in line  
To the beat of serving trays and pots  
Clanging in the kitchen

The collapse of burning logs  
Sending sparks up from the fire.  
"Take a knee boys"  
when close to the campfire

Blow out the flaming marshmallows.  
The crunch and squish  
Of graham cracker s'mores  
Wow! It's my new favorite!

Ukulele's strumming, mandolin solo,  
Guitars and dulcimer playing  
Voices singing old songs

Songs arranged alphabetically,  
on page 10, 11, or 1  
Voices joined together in harmony  
Of connection, if not musical key

Flashlights dancing out to the meadow.  
FACTS of dormant night vision  
Revealing invisibly dim light,  
following 30 minutes of adjustment.

Quotes of philosophers, scientists.  
Mythical stories from ancient  
Civilizations against the backdrop  
Of a mystically filled starry sky.

De Colores Tie dye  
Hiking Country Roads  
Chores are done working together  
Collaborating, sharing, problem solving

Connections form sharing,  
views, excitements, struggles,  
memories and events  
Flowing into understanding and  
EMPATHY

Stories and ideas join together  
Into a greater whole  
Composed, as the voice of each and  
every one  
Is included, supported and respected.

Sharing  
The diversity  
Of each individual's own unique  
Experiences and perspectives.

Thus, with patience,  
Tolerance of difference  
Perhaps with some internal discomfort,  
from the experience being

Unknown,  
Different,  
Foreign  
Or seemingly incorrect

With ever deepening listening  
Into the collective resonance  
Of a group held  
Open space

An organic community  
Is GENERATED,  
Promoting new vision,  
Expanding universes,

Creative growth  
And inclusive peace.

Tecla Garcia  
6/29/2019  
At Camp Peaceful Pines Peace Camp





## POET: Linda Scheller

Linda Scheller taught grades 4-6 in Ceres for 36 years before her retirement in 2017. That same year FutureCycle Press published her book *Fierce Light*, a collection of persona poems in the voices of 36 notable women. An active member of both MoSt Poetry Center and the National League of American Pen Women, her writing has been published in many journals and anthologies. She co-produces "Arts of the San Joaquin Valley" and "Women of the Valley" on KCBP community radio. Her website is [www.lindascheller.com](http://www.lindascheller.com)



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## Estanislao

Between the Stanislaus County Superior Court  
and the Hall of Records, Estanislao steps forward  
toward the intersection of 11<sup>th</sup> and I. Pedestalled  
and fenced, the insurgent alcalde's limbs and face  
catch shadows in bronze as sleek as manzanita  
while behind his back, lawyers vie for white justice,  
that pliable, heavy justice mined from stolen lives.

Soldiers caught and missionized the Yokut people,  
swapping their land for toil, their joy for captivity,  
their freedom for the promise of eternal ease, postponed.  
Estanislao ate the padres' doctrine and drank their prayers.  
He administered their justice to his people until  
the padre's cruelty drove their faith from his heart.  
Estanislao gathered his people and led them east.  
General Vallejo followed them and they fought,  
killed many soldiers, and chased the survivors west.

Estanislao dreamed of Abraham beside the flames  
binding his son as sacrifice to the padres' god,  
and when he woke, the manzanitas whispered his sins.  
Estanislao left his people, returned to the mission,  
knelt, and confessed. He bound his heart with shadows  
and ripped it from his chest, placing it in the padres' fire.

Is he honored here in bronze as a leader of warriors  
or as the penitent savage who chose subjugation?  
Estanislao steps forward and raises one arm,  
palm open in greeting, warning, surrender, attack.  
At his feet, Modesto's homeless crouch in reeking dirt  
and whisper riddles into their tattered plastic bags.

## rapunzel

my mother said they took my son *a blue-eyed blonde*  
she would die and  
they said that *he was young enough for* she begged  
my father he needed  
*a new family* to climb the wall a shot *redistribution*  
for she must have rampion  
i never saw him again

mid-theft they put me in a cell *i had to work* a  
witch stepped from the shadows  
my children were led away *for the komandant* who  
claimed the unborn child  
an agent raped me *his wife hated me for* i was  
relinquished at birth and he said  
*i must bear his child* raised in a cottage that crawled  
with toads if i screamed  
*she beat me* swirling steam from the cauldron worse  
would follow

*he leers* billowing up and i don't know where  
*heaven help me*  
trickling down they took my children

my daughter was eight when the moon began to  
influence my body  
*i was sent to germany* when we tried to get back the  
witch locked me in a tower  
*relocated* to america without stairs or door *against*  
*my will*  
we'd been deported twice a day she climbs *they said*  
everything was very bad  
deposits food and water *many were shot* blood  
everywhere on the floor  
*disease* and hunger she climbs back down *others*  
*disappeared*  
the river was high i draw up my hair *now* we were  
desperate  
i watch the clouds *exterminated* the boat capsized  
the birds *my god*  
she couldn't swim regard me with pity

i sit near the window and i thought we'd get across  
*the border meant safety but*  
listen they caught us *on the road* roosters crow and  
they sent us back *my son was conscripted and then* at  
night an owl calls  
they killed him *shot for refusing to fight* cold stars  
glitter at point blank range  
*i weep* and sometimes i dream my daughters dare not  
go out *shells rain down*  
two children play and they're hungry *the wounded are*  
*everywhere*  
a man without eyes stumbles forth we have no food  
*we have lost* the braid  
oh my son *all hope* falls writhing to the ground

This braided poem is a synthesis of three narratives: in  
normal typeface, my retelling of an old fairy tale; in italics,  
Eastern European women during the Nazi occupation of  
the 1930s and 40s; and in bold, four Central American  
women at the United States of America's southern border.

# Water Myths of the San Joaquin Valley

By ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen

Among the more persistent myths about water in the San Joaquin Valley, none is more durable than the canard that water shortages and land subsidence have been caused by, “an innumerable myriad of Endangered Species Act-related laws, mandates, opinions, rulings and settlements.” This latest addition to the catalogue of misinformation comes from Kristi Diener, in an OP/ED for the *Modesto and Fresno Bee* newspapers.

Diener, like everyone else who attempts to blame water shortages and subsidence on a “regulatory drought” runs into a logical *cul-de-sac* when she has to admit that “subsidence did not begin in 2014’s drought. It was an issue at least a century before.”

But if, as Diener says, environmental regulations are just a little over “two-and-a-half decades” in effect, what could have caused subsidence prior to the punitive effects of regulation?

The answer is simple: Overdrafting groundwater caused the subsidence. Who overdrafted the groundwater? Farmers and ranchers. Nothing complex here, but apologists for overuse of public resources really don’t like simple and obvious answers— that’s why they’re always trying to find ways around them.

Diener rightly argues that using surface water is far preferable to pumping groundwater, but wrongly concludes that reductions in surface water allocations for Valley farmers have left farmers with no choice but to pump groundwater. Fact is, farmers in the southern San Joaquin Valley have been overdrafting groundwater since they drained Tulare Lake, at one time the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi—they’ve been overdrafting groundwater since they used up the Kern and San Joaquin Rivers decades ago.

Diener writes that reduced allocations have been due to regulatory barriers without pointing out the allocations to farmers from the Central Valley Project and State Water project are based on **contractual rights**.

Contractual rights, also known as, “paper water,” are distinguished from “appropriative rights,” which are rights bestowed by the state decades back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Appropriative rights, most often designated as pre- or post-1914, carry far more legal authority than contractual rights because the contractual rights specify that allocations are based on yearly abundance and the state or federal government’s discretion.

Anyone with even a cursory knowledge of the history of irrigated agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley is familiar with the iconic photograph of USGS scientist Joe Poland showing the degree of land subsidence near Mendota from 1925 to 1977, well before effects from the Endangered Species Act could have affected water use in the Valley.

Diener claims that without water from northern California, farmers have been “forced” to pump groundwater. Fact is, they were “forced” to pump groundwater well before they started begging state and federal governments for even more water from up north, though “forced” is hardly an appropriate term when discussing the calculated risks all businesspeople

must make before investing time and money.

Diverting water from the Central Valley’s major rivers, especially the Sacramento and San Joaquin, has wreaked environmental destruction in the San Joaquin Delta, decimated salmon runs, negatively impacted California fisheries, and had devastating effects on wetlands and wildlife throughout the Valley. In many places, intensive irrigation has also poisoned the soil, most notably in the scandalous case of the Kesterson National Wildlife Refuge.

According to Mark Arax in *The Dreamt Land*, farmers have increased irrigated acreage during every drought since the 1920s. Even during the drought of 2014-15, agribusinesses like Kern County’s Paramount Farms added over 70,000 acres of farmland to their already extensive holdings of pistachios, almonds and walnuts.

Adding acres of farmland and then begging the government for a water fix isn’t much different from speculating on a widget boom and then asking the government to buy up your overproduction. No one has ever forced farmers to pump groundwater. Instead, they’ve kept adding irrigated acreage whenever they could because they figured they could count on government bailing them out.

It’s almost as though they think we’re a socialist economy.

For comments to this article, visit <https://thevalleycitizen.com/water-myths-of-the-san-joaquin-valley/#comments>



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Email: [pmcousins@aim.com](mailto:pmcousins@aim.com)

## SAVE THE DATE: MoSt hosts 8th Annual Poetry Festival

The Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt) will host its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Poetry Festival on Saturday February 1, 2020 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, facilitated by two of our region’s outstanding poets – former Fresno Poet Laureate Lee Herrick, and Camille Norton, who has taught at the University of the Pacific in Stockton.

The festival features a poetry contest open to attendees of the day-long workshop. The 2020 contest categories include:

- The Graceful Stumble
- Handling Earth with Care
- Notre Dame
- Following a Thread

Flyer and registration forms for the festival and contest will soon be available on the MoSt website ([www.mostpoetry.org](http://www.mostpoetry.org)). **Contest deadline is January 11, 2020.** Registration fees (\$35, \$30 for MoST members, or \$10 for high school/college students, include the contest, morning and afternoon workshops, a delicious luncheon, an author’s table, and fellowship with poets and poetry aficionados from throughout Northern California.

Submit entries by mail to the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center, PO Box 578940, Modesto, California, 95357; [info@mostpoetry.org](mailto:info@mostpoetry.org)

**MoSt  
POETRY**

Modesto-Stanislaus  
Poetry Center

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# Homeless: "It's different these days."

By **ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen**

*Many believe today's system of care and recovery for homeless people is antiquated and inadequate. For the most part, they're right. Nevertheless, some people just need an intervention and chance to get back on their feet, especially those with income and a place to go. Efrén Torres is one such person.*

Efrén Torres had been clean for three years when he lost his wife in a tragic automobile accident in 2015. He's sixty-four years old.

"That's when I started using again," he says. "It's one thing when someone is fighting cancer and you kind of know what to expect. But when the coroner calls and tells you your wife is dead and you've been thinking she'll be home soon, it's really rough."

At the time, Torres, though he was born in El Paso, Texas, had spent most of his life in the Bay Area.

"We lived in San Leandro. I was really a product of the sixties. We used all kinds of drugs. We'd take LSD and go to the Fillmore Auditorium. Later, when the AIDS epidemic began, I got really scared because many times people shared needles. But I was lucky. I never even went to the hospital except one time for a hernia."

Torres says one difference between young people today and those in his time is work.

"I always worked. I worked twenty-two years for Georgia-Pacific. We made paper, huge rolls of it, and other things. I also worked for another company as a lab tech. My father was a Teamster and I was a Teamster. We both made good money. In those days we had factory jobs. You don't have factory jobs these days."

Even though he did two prison terms for drug related crimes, Torres says he could get hired because people knew he was a good worker. "I could walk down one street in those days and fill out three job applications. And I could get someone who knew me to speak up for me."

Torres says he's used almost every drug possible, but methamphetamine was what he used most often when working. "Lots of people who worked used meth, especially truck drivers. But I was always scared to miss work. I was even scared to be late. So the meth didn't keep me from working, and that's why I have an income now. I have a pension and SSI."

Torres lost his Bay Area residence after his wife died and he went back on drugs.

"It got so I couldn't afford to live in the Bay Area any longer, so my daughter told me to come to the Valley. I got to Modesto and I saw that arch and I remembered it from all the Scott Peterson stories. Then I found a nice place I could afford on Fresno Avenue on the west side."

But drug use was once again Torres' downfall.

"I was using and started letting too many people in. The landlord told me he didn't like the situation, and he evicted me. I don't really blame him."

It's not uncommon for drug users who have income and lodging to attract predators, grifters, and couch surfers. Even though Torres had used drugs most of his life, jobs and family had kept him in the mainstream. Even his prison sentences hadn't condemned him to permanent exile. But once evicted, he found he couldn't find another place to live.

"Even though I had income, people would say they didn't want to take a chance on me because I had been evicted. And some places found out I had a record, and they really wouldn't rent to me. I was shocked. I just had never been in



such a situation. This has been a real humbling experience."

One of the few places that would take Torres was the notorious Budgetel (formerly the Vagabond Inn), on McHenry Avenue in Modesto.

"It was named the 'Budgetel,' but everyone still called it the Vagabond. I really felt bad there. Black tar heroin was everywhere, especially around the young people. I felt so bad for them and tried to talk to them, but I was using heroin myself. It got really bad."

Torres found himself on the streets even before the Budgetel was shut down by order of the City of Modesto.

"I was sleeping behind buildings on McHenry Avenue or next to friends with camps alongside the freeway even though I had income. It just

happened all at once."

Torres was beginning to think he had no way out when he got a break from an outreach worker who put him in a county-maintained halfway house.

"I was telling my story and the next thing I know people are praying for me. They got me over to the Modesto Gospel Mission and Chaplain Steve got me into a program. I didn't sleep for six days and nights. It was really hard but I kicked heroin. Chaplain Steve really got me into the right place."

Because he has income, Torres is able to work with the local Housing Authority. He's certain he'll have a permanent place to live soon.

"They're really organized. They've got all my information, and they're going to find a place that will take me. I should be on my own soon."

Unlike many homeless people, Torres never lost any of his identification. He's got his Social Security Card, Driver's License, and other ID. He's got sufficient income to afford

housing. His situation, difficult as it is, is far easier to address than the problems of the vast number of homeless people staying on the streets or at Modesto's Outdoor Emergency Shelter (MOES).

"I was shocked when I came here (MOES) to visit a friend," said Torres. "This can't be a permanent situation. A lot of people here aren't going to get better. There's a lot of mental health problems. I see people fighting their personal demons. They need their meds. You can tell just by watching them."

Torres says that even when he was in prison, he always tried to steer younger people in the right direction.

"I'd see the younger guys strutting around, lifting weights and trying to be tough, and I'd tell them that the really tough guy is the one who makes it outside. I knew most didn't listen, but I thought if I got through to just one guy, maybe it would make a difference."

Torres says he's always worried about younger people, and he's proud his daughter has succeeded with a good education and master's degree.

"It's different these days," he says. "We came out of the sixties and we used drugs, but we could work. I always felt good when I had a job and could work hard and make good money. It made me feel good. It's different these days."

**WEST MODESTO**  
Community Collaborative

## West Modesto Sock Hop

October 4, 2019  
DoubleTree Hotel from 6 pm to 11 pm  
Modesto, California

**Price of tickets: \$65 single and \$130 couple**

Sponsorships Available  
50's-60's music | Live and silent auction  
Tickets can be purchased at  
**West Modesto Community Collaborative Office**  
601 S. Martin Luther King Dr. Modesto, California 95351  
209-522-6902

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# 12 CALENDAR

## OCTOBER 2019

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

**Science Colloquium, Fall 2019**, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., Science Community Center, Rm. 115, MJC West Campus. Free; \$2 parking fee. See article, this issue.

**MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science)**. Free, engaging community science programs. Fridays, 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132. **Sept. 27:** Brandon Wood, LLNL, Heading Towards a Hydrogen-Powered Future. <https://qsg.llnl.gov/Site/BrandonWood.html>. **\*Oct. 25:** West Campus MSR Student Center. Shahir Masri, U.C. Irvine, Elevating the Climate Conversation Beyond Debate, Disperses 50 misunderstandings about climate change. <https://www.shahirmasri.com/>. **Nov. 22:** Robert McGrew, M.D., The Overwhelming Importance of Vaccinations for Public Health. Many have forgotten the lethal pandemics of Plague, Smallpox, Measles and others that killed millions before vaccinations against them were developed. Short movie about the measles vaccine. Discusses the dangerous gamble when unvaccinated. Explains myth that vaccines cause autism. **Dec. 6:** Paul E. Lenze, Jr., Northern Ariz. Univ., Syrian Forced Migration & Public Health in the European Union. More than 400,000 people killed, millions displaced during the Syrian Civil War. Examines causes of the War and impact of migration on public health in the Middle East and Europe. “Excellence in Teaching Award” winner!

**2 WED: VIGIL:** Justice at the Border, McHenry & J St., 4:30-5:30 pm.

**4 FRI: West Modesto Sock Hop**, DoubleTree Hotel, 6 pm to 11 pm. 50’s and 60’s music. Live & Silent Auction. Tickets: \$65 single; 130, couple. Purchase at West Modesto Community Collaborative, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto, 209-522-6902.

**5 SAT: Memorial to Celebrate the life of Dan Pollock**, at the home of Dan and Mary Alice Onorato, 1532 Vernon, Modesto, 3:00 pm. We’ll share our memories, reflections, play some music Dan really liked, and enjoy a lively potluck meal together. 209-526-5436.

**8 TUES: Clients & Consumers Stakeholder Engagement Community Listening Session**. Hear from community members about mental health services and support needs of client & consumer population. 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Modesto Gospel Mission, 1400 Yosemite Blvd., Modesto. (See Peer Recovery article, this issue.)

**12 SAT: History of the Airport District** presented by Dr. Talitha Agan, adjunct Professor of History, Modesto Junior College, 2:00 pm. McHenry Museum. Info: (209) 495-4620, Email: [museum@mchenrymuseum.org](mailto:museum@mchenrymuseum.org); <https://www.mchenrymuseum.org/>

**12 SAT: The Craig Courtney Choral Festival Concert** conducted by composer Craig Courtney featuring sacred choral anthems. Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto, 4:00 pm. FREE concert, a musical gift to the community. 209-527-7354.

**19 SAT: Dia de Los Muertos Modesto**. Art, music, parade. 11 am – 8 pm, 1010 10th St., Modesto. FREE. Visit Facebook for info.

**20 SUN: The Modesto Film Society** presents Bela Lugosi in *Dracula* (1931). The State Theatre, 1307 J. St., Modesto, 2:00 pm. <https://thestate.org/movies/dracula/>. Join the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/Membership>. **SPECIAL TREAT:** At 1:30 pm, for the State Theatre’s “Page to Screen” Book Club, Stanislaus State Professor Arnold Anthony Schmidt will discuss Bram Stoker’s novel and introduce the film.

**20 SUN: OKTOBERFEST**, 4pm - 7pm, the Gene



Bianchi Community Center, 110 S. 2nd Ave., Oakdale. A tasty German dinner, beer tasting, live Oktoberfest music, and auction. Advance tickets: \$30; \$40. Info: contact Tena McLane-Ceja, 209-247-2752. Sponsored by AAUW Oakdale, Riverbank and Escalon Branch.

**26 SAT: 2nd Annual Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Game**. Enochs High School, 3201 Sylvan Ave., Modesto. TICKETS: \$20.00 per person; \$10.00 for Students, Seniors, Disabled. Tickets online at [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org) or call Jocelyn Cooper, 209-232-5845. Tickets also at the door. Proceeds support your community radio station, KCBP 95.5 FM, a project of the non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Friday Nov. 1: Harvest Gathering** fundraiser for Peace Essay Contest. See front page, this issue.

**Sunday Nov. 17: Sundays at CBS:** Hot Club Faux Gitane. An acoustic swing band like no other! Inventive arrangements of Gypsy repertoire plus originals, jazz standards, and hints of Klezmer. Congregation Beth Shalom 3:00 pm. 1705 Sherwood Ave., Modesto, CA 95350. Season tickets: \$125/Adults, \$115/Seniors & Students. Single Tickets \$25/Adults; \$20/Seniors & Students; \$10 children. Tickets: call (209) 571-6060. Or order online via Brown Paper Tickets.

**January 2020: John McCutcheon** Concert. TBA.

**February 1, 2020: 8th Annual Poetry Festival**, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, facilitated by two outstanding poets – former Fresno Poet Laureate Lee Herrick, and Camille Norton. Flyer, registration forms will be available at [www.mostpoetry.org](http://www.mostpoetry.org). Contest deadline: January 11, 2020; [info@mostpoetry.org](mailto:info@mostpoetry.org)

## REGULAR MEETINGS

### SUNDAYS

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

**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. Come to 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 the various locations in Modesto. Information: 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.

## MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

**MEDIA:** Listen to **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.

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

**NAACP Meeting**. Christ Unity Baptist Church, 601 ‘L’ St., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 7 pm. 209-645-1909; email: [naacp.branch1048@gmail.com](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/247655549018387/>

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

**Tuesday Evening Funstrummers** Ukulele Jam. Songbooks provided. 6pm to 8pm, 1600 Carver Rd., Donation. 209-505-3216, [www.Funstrummers.com](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 UUWSC 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)

**Adult Children Of Alcoholics**, Every Tuesday, 7 pm at 1320 L St., (Christ Unity Baptist Church). Info: Jeff, 527-2469.

### WEDNESDAYS

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

**Merced LGBT Community Center** offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on site Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: [mercedboard@gay-centralvalley.org](mailto:mercedboard@gay-centralvalley.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/>

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

**GLBT Questioning Teen Support Group** (14-19 years old). 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, College Ave. Congregational Church, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. 7 – 9 pm. Safe, friendly, confidential. This is a secular, non-religious group. Info: call 524-0983.

**Transgender Support Group**, 2nd & 4th Wed., 7:30 to 9 pm. Info: (209) 338-0855. Email [info@stanpride.org](mailto:info@stanpride.org), or [tgsupport@stanpride.org](mailto:tgsupport@stanpride.org)

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

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

### THURSDAYS

**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@nvl.org](mailto:tim@nvl.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 UUWSC). 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**, Downtown Modesto art galleries open – take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-9 pm every third Thursday. <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)

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

**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.

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

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

**Mujeres Latinas**, last Friday, lunch meetings, Info: Cristina Villego, 549-1831.

**Hispanic Leadership Council**, 3rd Fridays at noon, 1314 H St., Modesto 95354. Questions? Yamilet Valladolid, [yamiletv@hotmail.com](mailto:yamiletv@hotmail.com)

### SATURDAY

**2-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 UUFC 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 [kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com](mailto:kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com)