



# stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO  
PEACE/LIFE  
CENTER  
PUBLICATION

SEPTEMBER, 2019  
VOLUME XXVIII, NO. 1

## National Alliance on Mental Illness: Ending the Silence with Courage and Advocacy

An interview by TOM PORTWOOD

In an age of instant information, one would think that society's ancient stigma against people who suffer from mental illness would have melted away by now – that with the wealth of knowledge on the subject available at our fingertips, we would have become more open and accepting in the way we respond to people who are experiencing mental health issues. Sadly, a deadening silence is often the response.

The nonprofit group, Mental Health America, estimated in 2015 that there were some 44 million adults who had mental health problems, so the silence has become a pandemic affecting millions of families. "A lot of people are going through mental illness, and sometimes they don't know what they're going through - they don't recognize the symptoms. Or, when they do know what it is, they don't feel comfortable in talking about it," explains Rhonda Allen, a strong local advocate for the seriously mentally ill and their families, and a member of the Stanislaus County chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). "Sometimes even doctors don't recognize the symptoms of mental illness in their patients. People shouldn't be afraid to reach out and ask questions. People aren't afraid now to talk about cancer or heart disease, but there's still a stigma about mental illness." This deep-seated fear of even speaking about mental illness can be very damaging for families and their loved ones who are experiencing some of the symptoms of mental illness. That's essentially why NAMI was founded. "NAMI's been around since 1979," Ms. Allen further explains. "It's a grassroots organization started by family members who felt the need to give support to loved ones who

had a mental illness. It's nationwide - in all fifty states - and actually we have chapters in other countries as well. NAMI Stanislaus is comprised of a volunteer board which meets once a month. We organize classes and support groups. We have speakers who we train to go out into the community. That's a big part of what we do."

The NAMI Stanislaus support groups typically meet once a week, in a meeting room down the hall from the chapter's small office. "The intent of the groups is for the participants to bond, so that they do have someone to talk to," Ms. Allen relates. "Family members want to share what their loved one is going through, and they want to know what this or that situation means, and what they should do about it. A lot of times they want to talk about medications and what's working or what hasn't worked. All kinds of things come up in these groups. Having a loved one experience mental illness is an extremely stressful situation for everyone in the family." NAMI Stanislaus offers a variety of classes and programs for the residents of our communities:

- Support Groups for families and individuals impacted by mental health issues.
- Ending the Silence – A program to lessen stigma and raise awareness about mental illness among teenagers.
- Family-To-Family Classes – For family members, partners, or friends of a person who has mental illness; a 12-week commitment.
- Peer-to-Peer Classes – A ten-week class that can help people to deal with their mental illness and maintain their recovery.

continued page 11

### INSIDE CONNECTIONS

HELPING OUT . . . . .	2
PEACE ESSAY CONTEST . . . . .	3
PEACE ESSAY CONTEST . . . . .	4
WILDLIFE . . . . .	5
PARKLAND . . . . .	6

FAMILIA LATINA . . . . .	7
JOURNALISM . . . . .	8
GATHERING OF VOICES . . . . .	9
ACT LOCALLY . . . . .	10
WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN . . . . .	11
CALENDAR . . . . .	12



## Help raise funds for children's library programs

By PAT PORTWOOD

The Stanislaus Library Foundation hosts its annual fundraising gala on September 14, with special guest speaker Michael Lella, whose father, Pino Lella, now 92, is the subject of the novel, *Beneath a Scarlet Sky*. All proceeds will benefit children's programs at the library's 13 branches countywide, including the Summer Reading program, which serves more than 11,000 school-age children each year.

*Beneath A Scarlet Sky* is based on the true story of one of World War II's forgotten heroes, Pino Lella. It is the triumphant and epic tale of this young man's incredible courage and resilience during one of history's darkest hours. Michael Lella will provide attendees

continued page 2

## Poverty Under the New Public Charge Rule

From the California Budget & Policy Center

By now, the consequences of the Trump Administration's recently announced "public charge" rule are known: thousands more families working to build a better future for themselves and our state will instead live in poverty.

Understanding the depth of harm for California's immigrants and potential economic loss are imperative as state leaders and advocates pursue legal action and work to protect the socioeconomic well-being of families today and for future generations.

Read the [Budget Center's latest report](#) by Sara Kimberlin and Adriana Ramos-Yamamoto that explains how the public charge rule may lead to:

- 165,000 more Californians pushed into poverty and 115,000 more pushed into deep poverty as they are likely to avoid receiving the CalFresh food assistance and housing subsidies they need.
- 461,000 people living in poverty after disenrolling from public supports out of fear and the well-established "chilling effect" of recent federal executive actions.
- California losing out on \$1.67 billion in federal benefits that helps the state's economy. Visit the California Budget & Policy Center at <https://calbudgetcenter.org/>

### 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/>

## Library fundraiser

from page 1



Stanislaus  
County  
Library  
Foundation

with a unique perspective on his father's life as well as how he was able to help the book's author, Mark Sullivan, craft the compelling story.

"The Gala is the Foundation's primary annual fundraiser," said Board Chair Jane Manley. "Funds raised this evening will provide for the Stanislaus Library Foundation's continued emphasis on a collaborative effort to improve literacy for all, by providing children and teen reading programs, the expansion for the library's electronic mobile resources, including eBooks, and eMagazines, and its growing Youth Outreach Services."

Event co-chair Carol Shour said, "Guests will enjoy a sumptuous meal and an elegant evening in a lovely, intimate garden setting."

The evening includes a silent auction for a half-dozen high-value items, as well as a special effort to raise money to refresh the children's book collections at all library branches. A limited number of tickets, at \$140 each, are available. For tickets call (209) 634-3592 or (209) 523-9083. Additional information is available at [www.stanislauslibrary-foundation.org](http://www.stanislauslibrary-foundation.org).

Event sponsors include TSM Insurance, Beard Land Development, Mocse Credit Union, McHenry Bowl, Cardoza Family Foundation, E. & J. Gallo Winery, Crawford Financial Planning, *The Modesto Bee* and others.

Established in 1994, the Stanislaus Library Foundation raises funds to support key library programs, increasing awareness, and advocating for a vital library. The Foundation supports the Summer Reading Program for children and teens, which keeps more than 11,000 youngsters reading during the summer. The Foundation also supports the Teen Book Club for youths in the county's juvenile detention system, and the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program.

## 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 who advocate on behalf of their loved ones, 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 caring individuals and organizations throughout the local area to gather appropriate items.

Your help is needed 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)



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

## Modesto Writers' Block 2019, Sept. 7

Barnes & Noble will host its first annual Modesto Book Fair on Saturday, September 7th from Noon to 5:00 p.m. at 3501 McHenry Ave., Suite E, Modesto. This inaugural event includes panels, readings, and book signings.

The two panels will be "The Creative Process" and "Publishing Do's and Don'ts." The reading genres will include fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and children's books.



Modesto-Stanislaus  
Poetry Center

Some of the featured speakers include Signe Darpinian, Jeff Jardine, Paula Treick DeBoard, Claudia Newcorn, Linda Knoll, Stella Beratlis, Gillian Wegener, others.

Barnes & Noble and the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoST) will also be partnering for a Bookfair Fundraiser. Mention the Bookfair or use the ID 12545562 on September 7th and a percentage of the profits from your purchase will go back to MoST.

Information: contact Alisa O'Donnell, Barnes & Noble, (209) 521-1118, [CRM2805@bn.com](mailto:CRM2805@bn.com), Paula Treick DeBoard, [paula.deboard@gmail.com](mailto:paula.deboard@gmail.com), or Tom Myers, 524-3065, [taj1434@sbcglobal.net](mailto:taj1434@sbcglobal.net). Or visit the Modesto Barnes & Noble website.

We look forward to sharing this community of talented writers.



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

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

e-mail [b\\_f@modestocpas.com](mailto:b_f@modestocpas.com)  
1120 14th Street, Suite 2  
Modesto, CA 95350



**Saturday, October 26, 2019**

**Enoch's High School Gym  
3201 Sylvan Ave.**

**3:00 - 5:00 PM**



- Exciting wheelchair basketball!
- Audience participation against professionals
- Live auction, silent auction, raffle, VIP guest

**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 available at the door.

*Sponsored by the NBA Golden State Warriors & Modesto Peace/Life Center*

*Proceeds support your community radio station KCBP 95.5 FM,  
a project of the non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center*

## 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.



# Sinking to another level

By DEBBIE MILLER

Are we sinking to another level of horrific treatment of people of color? Or is this more of the same?

The recent stories about what can only be described as human rights abuses at the southern border of the US are horrifying. I, as well as many others, am deeply disturbed by the reports of conditions that seem almost unbelievable.

I was reading some old material from my days as an organizer with the United Farm Workers. I came across the accounts of children as young as four and five working in the fields in the days before Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and others began the farmworkers union. I was reminded of the lack of toilets in the fields. Women were forced to look for a spot to relieve themselves out of the sight of crew bosses. Many women were sexually assaulted by these same bosses. Parents earned so little that their children went to bed hungry. The lucky families slept in dilapidated migrant shacks, often with no electricity or running water. The less lucky slept under trees in orchards and, some, even in caves. Often there was no drinking water provided to those picking crops in the hot and dusty fields, often miles from the nearest town.

These stories could be ripped out of today's headlines. Some currently detained migrants are being denied water or told to drink out of toilets.

So, what can we do?

First, we need to understand what is happening by educating ourselves. What is the common theme here? It is a belief that people with brown or black skin are not really people? How else can one explain the treatment of farmworkers over many decades and of the migrants currently at the border? It's racism, pure and simple, or impure and obscene. Systemic racism is at the core of our country's history, from the genocide of Native peoples, to the enslavement of African peoples, to the internment of the Japanese, as well as the treatment of brown, Black, and Filipino farmworkers, to the present-day detention of migrants in cages and concentration camps.

Second, we need to take action in whatever way is fitting and possible for us. People across the United States, Canada, and in several European countries, boycotted grapes for years in the 1960s and 1970s to support union organizing of farmworkers. Churches, unions, students, consumers, celebrities, and sympathetic politicians (think Robert F. Kennedy) of all races and economic levels joined together. They signed petitions, wrote letters, made phone calls, donated time and money, rallied, marched, boycotted, and voted. Their non-violent economic and political action improved the working conditions of farmworkers.

United action worked then. It can work now.



## 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)

**Be informed!**

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

## 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



## How to determine if a news source is reputable

### From the UC Merced Library

Professor Melissa Zimdars' "[False, Misleading, Clickbait-y, and/or Satirical 'News' Sources](#)" resource; some examples are added to Zimdars' resource.

**Avoid websites that end in "lo" ex: Newslo.** These sites take pieces of accurate information and then packaging that information with other false or misleading "facts" (sometimes for the purposes of satire or comedy). Example: Newslo also using URL [politicot.com](http://politicot.com) (similar to a legitimate news site)

**Watch out for websites that end in ".com.co"** as they are often fake versions of real news sources. Example: [abcnews.com.co](http://abcnews.com.co).

**Watch out if known/reputable news sites are not also reporting on the story.** Sometimes lack of coverage is the result of corporate media bias and other factors, but there should typically be more than one source reporting on a topic or event.

**Odd domain names** generally equal odd and rarely truthful news.

**Lack of author attribution** may, but not always, signify that the news story is suspect and requires verification.

Some news organizations are also letting **bloggers post under the banner of particular news brands**; however, many of these posts do not go through the same editing process (ex: BuzzFeed Community Posts, Kinja blogs, Forbes blogs).

Check the "About Us" tab on websites or look up the website on Snopes or Wikipedia for **more information about the source**.

**Bad web design and use of ALL CAPS** can also be a sign that the source you're looking at should be verified and/or read in conjunction with other sources. [Example: Drudge Report](#)

**If the story makes you REALLY ANGRY** it's probably a good idea to keep reading about the topic via other sources to make sure the story you read wasn't purposefully trying to make you angry (with potentially misleading or false information) in order to generate shares and ad revenue.

If the website you're reading **encourages you to DOX individuals**, it's unlikely to be a legitimate source of news. DOX refers to publishing an individual's personal information with the intent of causing harm.

It's always best to **read multiple sources** of information to get a variety of viewpoints and media frames. Some sources not yet included in this list (although their practices at times may qualify them for addition), such as *The Daily Kos*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Fox News*, vacillate between providing important, legitimate, problematic, and/or hyperbolic news coverage, requiring readers and viewers to verify and contextualize information with other sources.

© 2016 by Melissa Zimdars, assistant professor of communication & media, Merrimack College.

<http://libguides.ucmerced.edu/news/reputable>



# A New Tyranny of the Minority Threatens Wildlife and Nature

By ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen

*But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. Job: 12:7*

It's only in the last few years that Bald Eagles have returned from a long absence to nest in the foothills and around the lakes and reservoirs of the northern San Joaquin Valley. Increasingly common, sightings of our majestic national symbol still fill people with admiration and awe; it's easy to forget how close the eagles came to extinction—the once widespread raptors almost disappeared from the lower forty-eight states only a few decades ago.

Bald Eagles were placed on the endangered species list in 1973, at the same time as the passage of the Endangered Species Act. Their decline was traced to reproductive failure caused by a residue from DDT. Once DDT was banned, the eagles began a long period of recovery.

In part because of successful efforts with popular birds like the Bald Eagle, and despite a decades-long, multi-million-dollar effort to repeal it, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has remained one of the most popular government programs ever established. When it was passed, bipartisan support for the ESA was overwhelming; the vote in Congress was 482-12 in favor of saving our nation's threatened wildlife heritage.

More recently, conservation reports reveal public support for the ESA has remained as high as 80% throughout the almost fifty years of its existence. In addition to the Bald Eagle, the ESA has protected over 2300 species, subspecies and distinct populations since enactment.

One of the most successful recoveries has been in Stanislaus County, where the formerly endangered Aleutian Canada Goose recovered from a low of under six-hundred individuals in the 1980s to a population now estimated at almost 200,000.

A close relative of the diminutive Cackling Goose, and most easily distinguished by the white collar at the base of its neck, Aleutian Geese were threatened both by predatory Arctic Foxes on their northern nesting grounds in the Aleutian Islands and proposed development on their wintering grounds.

The foxes were introduced to the Aleutian Islands by Russian fur traders. Aleutian Goose wintering grounds in the 1980s were almost solely limited to farm and ranchlands between the confluences of the Tuolumne, San Joaquin and Stanislaus Rivers in western Stanislaus County.

Though the wintering grounds were ultimately saved by a remarkable effort involving the National Audubon Society, private landowners, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the major factor in their protection was the Endangered Species Act; it provided legal justification for protecting the birds' habitat. With their wintering grounds safe, the geese began a steady recovery when the last of the Arctic Foxes were removed from their nesting grounds.

Today, the spectacular overflights of wintering Aleutian Geese have been joined by a multitude of other species, including Snow and Ross's Geese, Canada Geese, and White-fronted Geese, as well as numerous species of ducks. The waterfowl are attracted to the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge, which was established to provide habitat for the endangered Geese and associated wildlife.

In addition to protection afforded by the Endangered Species Act, Bald Eagles and Aleutian Geese until recently were protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Now, both the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Endangered Species Act have been undermined by revisions ordered by the Trump administration. Essentially a gutting of both acts, the revisions mark a tragic come-down for a party once proud to claim the legacy of Republican Theodore Roosevelt.

Roosevelt helped establish 230 million acres of public lands during his presidency, including 150 million acres of national forest. Under Trump, the nation's public heritage is under an unprecedented assault, as more and more public lands have been opened up for exploitation by private enterprise, especially the fossil fuel industry.

But the new Republican Party isn't just assaulting America's public heritage, it's also attacking science and democratic principles. Government science reports on topics ranging from climate change to adverse effects of drilling for oil in the Arctic have been suppressed, censored, redacted and revised under Trump. Even a ban on chlorpyrifos, a pesticide shown conclusively to retard brain development in young children, was lifted by the EPA after pressure from the chemicals industry.\*

Revisions to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Endangered Species Act aren't just about wildlife. They're also about lifting restrictions on the wholesale destruction of public lands. They're about drilling and fracking and poisoning the environment.

Few places in the United States are as vulnerable to destructive exploitation as California's San Joaquin Valley. The U.S. Geological Survey has written that the Valley contains, "one of the single largest alterations of the land surface attributed to humankind." Over 5,200 square miles of irrigation land have subsided at least a foot since the introduction of irrigated farming; some places have subsided well over twenty feet.

Over 95% of the Valley's native wetlands and riparian forests, the kinds of places that harbor wintering ducks, geese, and swans, have already been lost to urban and agricultural development. Imagine what could happen to the remainder without the protection of the ESA and MBTA.

Fortunately, California state authorities are pushing back against the assault on wildlife. In addition to joining other states in litigation against changes to federal protection for migratory birds and endangered species, California legislators have established new state guidelines that preserve the spirit and purpose of the MBTA.

But even with resistance from the state, the Valley continues to face threats of environmental degradation posed by the Trump administration. Last fall, federal officials began attempts to open 1.6 million California acres for drilling and fracking, with much of that acreage located in the southern San Joaquin Valley.

Fracking can contaminate groundwater and increase the probability of earthquakes, while continued use of fossil fuels threatens to accelerate climate change, already coming on

almost too fast to reverse.

None of this matters to the new Party of Trump, but when the history of the Trump era is written, it will note that among the most singular achievements of a president who lost the popular vote has been his ability to enact and enforce policies the vast majority of U.S. citizens oppose. In attacking the nation's natural resources and native wildlife, the Trump administration has established a new tyranny of the minority—not just a threat to nature itself, but to majority rule, a fundamental tenet of democratic societies everywhere.

*"Every time we turn our heads the other way when we see the law flouted, when we tolerate what we know to be wrong, when we close our eyes and ears to the corrupt because we are too busy or too frightened, when we fail to speak up and speak out, we strike a blow against freedom and decency and justice."* Robert F. Kennedy

\*The State of California has extended the ban on Chlorpyrifos.



Photo: Roy Lowe/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Public Domain



Photo: Andy Morffew, CC By 2.0

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



# Meet the Parkland father keeping his son's message alive through art

By LORETTA GRACEFFO

Joaquin Oliver loved basketball, the music of Frank Ocean and his family. On February 14, 2018, only a few months before he was supposed to graduate high school, he was shot down with an AR-15 in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas massacre. He was 17 years old.

The massacre became a turning point for the gun control movement, sparking conversations on bump stocks, background checks, and eliminating NRA money from politics. It also ignited nationwide school walkouts and the March for Our Lives, which became the largest youth-led demonstration in U.S. history, drawing nearly 1.2 million people from across the country.

Before the shooting, Joaquin's father, Manuel Oliver, was an artist who had immigrated from Venezuela to pursue a safer life for his family. Today, Manuel is dedicated to exposing NRA corruption, empowering young activists and honoring Joaquin, who he says was not only his son but his best friend.

Since Joaquin's death, Manuel has traveled across America with his organization, Change the Ref, to continue the conversation on gun violence through urban art. The organization, founded by him and his wife Patricia, takes its name from a conversation Manuel had with his son shortly before his death. After a referee made an unfair call during a basketball game, Joaquin told Manuel, who coached his team, that they would not be able to win unless they "changed the ref."

To date, Manuel has created 30 murals — what he calls "graphic activism" — in cities devastated by gun violence, from Chicago to El Paso. He's celebrated what should have been Joaquin's 18th birthday by leading protesters in singing "Happy Birthday" outside the NRA headquarters. He's also made headlines for putting a bulletproof vest on Wall Street's famous "Fearless Girl" statue, and for 3D-printing sculptures of children cowering under desks, hiding from a school shooter. More recently, he's produced a one-man show about his son's life, called "Guac: My Son, My Hero." The show will be debuting at the Colony Theater in Miami Beach on Sept. 20 before going on a national tour.

**The organization you and your wife started, Change the Ref, is known for using unconventional methods to get your point across. How do you approach spreading your message, and why do you think it's effective?**

I try to do things that haven't been tried yet. Our methods are nontraditional, because I've seen traditional methods failing. We've had a blue Senate, we've had a blue house in Congress, and we didn't see those results. Relying on politicians isn't always the answer. Politicians will always tell you what you want to hear, but not necessarily what they're going to do.

A 3-D printed statue of Joaquin created to protest 3-D printed guns. (WNV/Change The Ref)



**"Well, you have to understand that this is my job. I'm trying to save your kid. Because it's too late for me to save my kid."**

The only thing I know how to do is art, which also happens to be a nontraditional way of hitting this, because I haven't seen it before. I've seen it before from artists, but not from fathers of victims. So we have a way to impact people in a legit way. What we do is often more social than political. I really believe in social movements as a way to change our problem from the roots.

We did it with the tobacco industry. That, more than a political decision, was a community decision. A civil decision. We found it disgusting, and now you don't see the tobacco lobby showing their power over politicians. I think that the NRA and the gun lobby are going towards the same destiny that the tobacco industry had. But the only way to do that is with the right message — very disruptive, very nontraditional, and sometimes uncomfortable for some people.

**Because of your murals, there are thousands of people across America who feel like they know Joaquin. Why is it important to portray Joaquin's personality through your art?**

My first role here is to be Joaquin's dad. This is not about people knowing about me, I don't give a shit about people knowing me. I try to make sure people know all the elements that made my son such a great person. Joaquin was a natural born activist before the shooting. We had amazing conversations about civil rights and social issues and injustice. He was very concerned about gun violence. Really concerned. The sad part was that he was murdered. He became a target. We cannot have that powerful voice with us anymore, unless we do what we're doing. I'm here to share his message, in the most rapid way, to everybody. We work together in this, me and Joaquin. This is more his statement than my art.

By knowing about Joaquin, you will understand that a nice, beautiful person was shot down in the most unfair way that you could ever imagine. Inside his school, walking as

a student, making sure that he had a good education, being happy on Valentine's Day, giving flowers to his girlfriend. He had a coffee that morning with his dad. So I can make sure people know all that.

**One of your most powerful murals was painted on the US-Mexico border. What was your experience creating that mural, and why did you decide to make a mural there?**

Everyone was talking about building a wall, so we went to Tijuana, Mexico. And we wrote on the border wall, next

to Joaquin's image, "Del otro lado tambien matan a nuestros hijos," [which means, "On the other side, they also murder our kids."]

Manuel Oliver with his mural on the U.S.-Mexico border. (Twitter/Manuel Ayala)

I was trying to put together two things that really affect me. One is gun violence, because I lost my son. And the other one is the way people treat immigrants like me and my son and my wife. Those two things motivated me to do whatever it takes to make a statement.

I remember the border patrol on the American side wondering what I was doing, because they cannot access the other side. Now, when I go out of the country and then back, they ask me a lot of questions. I had a nice conversation with an immigration officer who said, "You understand that I have to ask you questions, because you were actually painting on a property of the United States government, and this is my job."

I told him, "Well, you have to understand that this is my job. I'm trying to save your kid. Because it's too late for me to save my kid." And that always ends in a handshake, or a "keep on doing what you're doing." I really find a lot of support. You'd be surprised where the support is coming from.

**Your latest project is an interactive one-man show called "Guac: My Son, My Hero" that tells the story — equal parts joyful and devastating — of your family and your son's life. How have you approached theater as a tool to advocate for social justice?**

The murals, they involve public speaking. So I understand that you have to have an active presence with communities to let them know what's going on. It's a really powerful way of approaching the problem. Theater is just another tool to empower and make the message even more accessible to people. In a way, I'm entertaining people, and I'm fine with that, because while I'm entertaining you, I'm also letting you know what's going on.

Making the show interactive wasn't a decision, it was something I discovered through doing different events. It is a natural feeling, in all of us, to want to be a part of things. We want to be there in the first row, and we want to hang out



# Querida Familia Latina

Over 200 actors, activists, civil rights and labor leaders, business people and other Latinx leaders have signed on to demonstrate our love for the Latinx community and our country. This letter was written and organized by America Ferrera, Diane Guerrero, Eva Longoria, Alex Martinez, Kondracke, Mónica Ramírez and Olga Segura.

If you are feeling terrified, heartbroken and defeated by the barrage of attacks on our community, you are not alone.

We have been smeared by political rhetoric and murdered in violent hate crimes.

We have been separated from our families and have watched our children caged.

We have been targeted with mass shootings and mass

ICE raids meant to terrify us, squash our hope, and break our spirits.

But, we will not be broken. We will not be silenced. We will continue to denounce any hateful and inhumane treatment of our community. We will demand dignity and justice.

Though real pain and fear are sweeping through our communities, we remain powerful.

The indignities and cruelty we have endured will never change the truth that the contributions we make to this country are invaluable. Our humanity must be respected. And, we won't stop organizing for ourselves, our children, and for the soul of this nation.

To our allies who feel our community's pain, we need you. We cannot make change without your voices and action. We call on you to speak out loudly against hate, to contribute your resources to organizations that support our community, and to hold our leaders accountable.

We ask you to join us in building a better country where we are all safe and valued.

May we turn this time of despair into a time of action. May our love for one another be the guiding light in these dark times.

With our deepest love,

America Ferrera

Diane Guerrero

Eva Longoria, and over 200 signers.

Sponsored by the Querida Familia Latinx Leaders and Allies | For more information, visit [www.queridafamilialetter.org](http://www.queridafamilialetter.org) or contact [queridafamilialetter@gmail.com](mailto:queridafamilialetter@gmail.com)



## Parkland father

from page 6

with whoever is taking the lead. I love that interaction with people, the mutual feeling of supporting each other.

I also want people to see that there's another side in all this, which is way more important than being mad and not being part of the solution — that is remembering how great the victims were, how wonderful their lives were and how much we miss them. Joaquin danced and laughed all day long, and he deserves to be remembered and honored and supported in a happy way. A lot of people will identify with that. A lot of viewers of the play will see themselves. You'll probably be thinking that it could happen to you at some point, so you better be part of the solution.

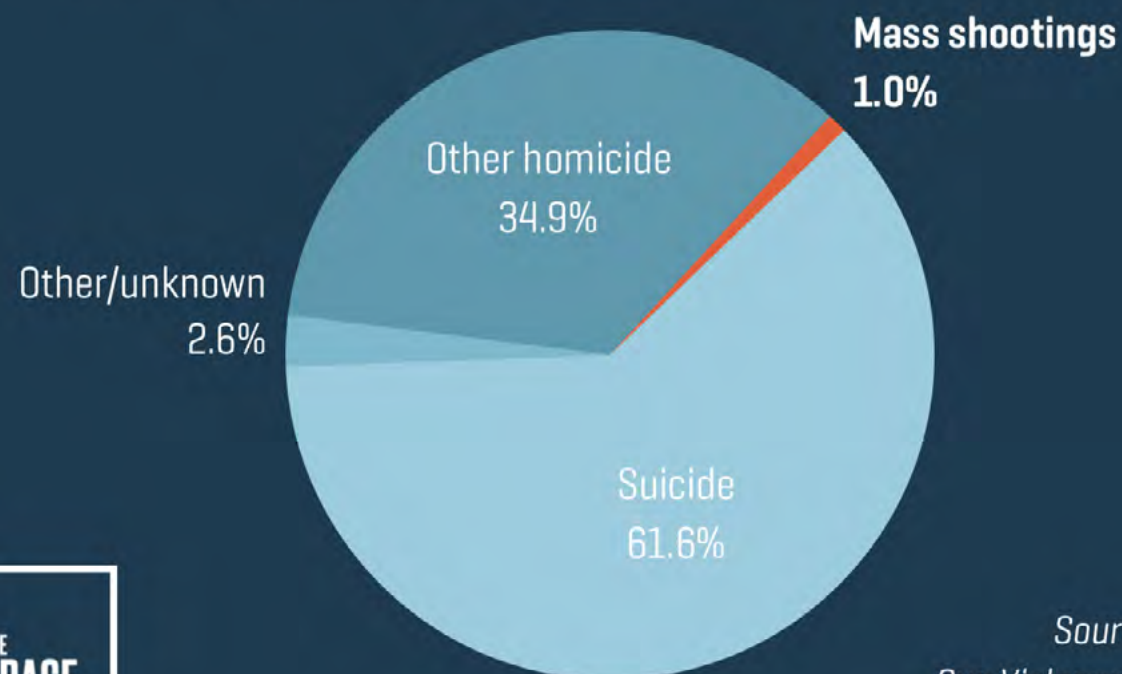
*Loretta Graceffo is a writer, artist and activist from New Jersey. She currently attends Saint Peter's University.*

<https://wagingnonviolence.org/2019/08/meet-parkland-father-keeping-his-sons-message-alive-through-art/>

Our methods are nontraditional,  
because I've seen traditional  
methods failing. We've had a blue  
Senate, we've had a blue house in  
Congress, and we didn't see those  
results. Relying on politicians isn't  
always the answer.

## ONLY 1% OF GUN DEATHS HAPPEN IN MASS SHOOTINGS

Numbers reflect gun deaths between 2013 and 2016. Mass shooting deaths were counted by Gun Violence Archive. Other causes of death are from the CDC.



Source: CDC,  
Gun Violence Archive



### 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)





# On the Public Record is just too good

By ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen

Sometimes it's easy to forget how little most of us really know about water in the San Joaquin Valley. And even when we do know just a little, it's even easier for what little we know to be submerged in the flood of mis- and disinformation that fills most of our media most of the time.

For those reasons and more, insiders who follow western water news closely rely on *Maven's Notebook*, a masterly aggregation of everything relevant to water compiled by Chris Austin, better known as The Maven.

And the real hard core water zealots, those for whom water news ranks above sports, politics, celebrity gossip and even gory crime, never fail to scan their mailboxes closely for a post from the mystery author who, too infrequently, posts in *On the Public Record* (OtPR).

Self-described as, "a low-level civil servant who reads reports," the author responsible for OtPR quite wisely prefers to remain anonymous, or, in his or her own words, "pseudonymous, distinct from the other anonymice" (sic). He or she adds, and this is crucial:

*"I don't want to meet the influential names in the field nor sit in important meetings. If I met them, I would probably like them and lose my ability to call them terrible things. We all know how important that is to me."*

Calling powerful people, "terrible things," is one of the most burdensome obligations of journalists everywhere, at least those for whom, "speaking truth to power," is a firm directive. And given how much evasion, equivocation, misdirection and outright lying flows from the mouths of powerful people when they're talking about water, it's no wonder anyone pursuing the truth manages so frequently to be perched on the horns of a dilemma.

On the one hand, one wishes to be civil, fair, and objective. On the other, when, after observing, smelling, and consulting with experts in the field one is confronted with what is obviously a pile of horseshit that's been described as rose petals steeped in Napoleon Cognac, how does one go about correcting the record without offense?

It's a problem our local journalists too often address with the attractive but duplicitous "both sides" approach. The "both sides" directive demands one give as much credence to what one knows are lies and falsehoods as one does the truth. So if one is told that the stink of odoriferous equine

waste is actually the sweet perfume of roses and fine liquor, the easy way out is to treat the story as, "he said, they said."

But if the journalist happens to be our mystery, "low-level civil servant," we get treated to the truth in the form of deeply learned commentary enriched by generous portions of wit and profanity. And this is someone who actually knows how and when to cuss.

The effect isn't just educational and entertaining, it's bracing. It's like seeing clearly after a long bout of fuzzy vision and eye floaters.

And just when everyone thought s/he might have retired for good, our OtPR person resurfaced, probably because things got so false, foul and putrid, good conscience demanded a correction—and who better to provide it than someone who really, really knows water.

OtPR was revived a few months back, likely in response to the grim prospects of dealing with climate change without a plan. But OtPR really got up to speed more recently, about the time the *Friant Water Authority* began pushing what it calls the, "San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint."

The Blueprint appears to be yet another in a long line of attempts to deny the water deficit—some 3 to 5 million-acre feet—that has resulted from overdrafting groundwater in the San Joaquin Valley, especially from Merced south. The denial is necessary in order to delay as long as possible following the 500,000+ irrigated acres we **must** retire if we're to even begin to achieve sustainable water use, especially given the effects of climate change and population growth.

There's really no way to do justice to OtPR's cutting review of the Blueprint, and there's more below that. Especially don't miss the August 8 post, which includes much-justified hilarity at the likelihood Westlands Water District will lose the money it put into attempts to promote Jerry Brown's Twin Tunnels. It's just too good.

Above the August 8 post, the August 15 post recounts Devin Nunes' purchase of an estimated 100 square feet of farmland. It's another "too good" post. The absentee congressman who turned out to be a fake farmer has generated much amusement on Twitter and elsewhere, but OtPR turns flogging Devin Nunes into performance art.

But don't take my word for it. Go to *On the Public Record*, read it all the way down, and rejoice. It really is too good. Just too, too good.

# Odilia Galván Rodríguez reads her poetry, September 13th

By GILLIAN WEGENER

Odilia Galván Rodríguez will read her poetry at the College Avenue United Church of Christ Church on September 13 at 7:00 p.m.

Galván Rodríguez is a poet, writer, editor, publisher, and social justice activist, the author of six volumes of poetry. Her latest is *The Color of Light*, FlowerSong Books, 2019.

She is a long-time community organizer and volunteer and has been the editor for Matrix Women's News Magazine, Community Mural's Magazine and Tricontinental Magazine in Havana, Cuba. She currently edits two journals; Cloud Women's Quarterly and Anacua Literary Arts.

Galván Rodríguez co-founded the Facebook page "Poets Responding," and co-authored the groundbreaking, award winning anthology, *Poetry of Resistance: Voices for Social Justice*, University of Arizona Press. Her poetry and writings have appeared in numerous anthologies, and literary journals. She is a practitioner of Indigenous Spiritual and Healing Traditions and strives to live a simple life based on the indigenous worldview of her ancestors.

We welcome all to this free event sponsored by the Modesto Peace/Life Center and Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center.



## 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

## Black women worked 233 extra days in 2019 to earn the same as white men in 2018

Source: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2018

#BlackWomenCantWait  
#BlackWomensEqualPay

TIME'S  
UP



## Poet Sheila D. Landre

Sheila D. Landre is a retired teacher, poet, minister, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother who has been performing her work in public since 1995 at coffee houses, book stores, such as Sacramento's Luna's Art Café, the J-Street Café, Queen Bean, and on stage at the State Theatre, The Prospect Theatre Project in Modesto, Stockton's Haggin Museum, and the Carnegie Center in Turlock.



Her work has appeared frequently in Penumbra (the literary magazine of California State University Stanislaus), iZam Bomba!, TalkArt, Song of the San Joaquin, Connections, and other northern California publications. She is a long-time member of the Licensed Fools writing group.



## Define Your Terms

Before we can have a conversation,  
tell me what you mean by "conversation".  
Do you mean debate, one-sided lecture,  
condescending mansplanation,  
or 50/50 exchange of ideas  
about a mutually agreed upon topic?

Before we discuss the Meaning of Life,  
tell me what you think "Life" is.  
When does it begin and end and  
why do you think that's so?  
Is any life worth more than others and  
how are we to know for certain?  
When this one Lifespan is over,  
will we come back to live again?  
Is there only one good way to live or  
are there more?  
Do you know more than God?

If you want to know if I believe in God,  
please explain which God you mean—  
unfathomable, universal Force of Nature,  
omnipotent and omniscient, or  
bearded White Guy in robe on cloud or  
Unconditional Love?

## Inquisition

Christians of a certain era  
in vast portions of then-known land  
hunted down heretics who did not believe  
in Jesus Christ or who broke  
any of their own human rules.  
Infidels were tortured, killed  
if they did not change un-Catholic ways.  
That was centuries ago when  
Christianity was the law and  
kings and queens enforced it.  
The Inquisition's over now.  
They don't do that anymore.

In the still Dark Ages  
independent women with survival skills,  
healing powers, cats in their cottages,  
and possessions of their own  
were hunted down, accused  
of being vessels of a Devil their accusers  
had imagined into being.  
They burned the "witches" at the stake.  
But there were no witches.  
Innocents were murdered shamefully  
when murderers had  
the church's law behind them.  
Let's never do that again.

A Massachusetts village had quite a scare when  
young girls spread wild, hysterical tales of  
flying through windows, casting spells,  
causing death and illness, haunting dreams,  
dancing winter moonlight dances  
with that same old imagined Devil.  
Nineteen women hanged and  
one man was pressed to death  
before anyone spoke sanely at a time  
when the Bible drove the law.  
They called that a "witch hunt" too,  
but there were no witches.  
No one should have believed such nonsense.

These are modern times and this is  
a smart, young country with a Constitution.  
Congress shall make no law respecting  
an establishment of religion, or  
prohibiting the free exercise thereof.  
There is no state religion here and there never will be.  
The framers of that document learned from  
history and said, "We won't do that again."  
And yet—

Today some hold that their own beliefs,  
religious or otherwise, Christian or otherwise,  
should take precedent over those of others.  
No one should have a choice, they say.  
Compulsory birth of unwanted children required,  
no matter how or if the parents tried prevention,  
or who or what the father is,

or what the circumstances of conception,  
rape or incest or fetal deformity, or  
degree of mortal danger to the mother.

They would change existing law  
so that all female bodies able to bear children  
would be forced to procreate by the beliefs of a few.

There would be inquisitions, witch hunts,  
incarceration, chaos in the courts,  
death to non-believers.  
There would be unwanted children,  
many born into poverty, abuse, or neglect.  
No guarantee of loving parents.  
No guarantee of help to grow and learn.

And abortion would continue as it always has.  
Laws would not prevent it.  
Personal beliefs would not curtail it.

Only knowledge of  
truth, justice, liberty,  
and birth control  
has any power at all.

## Organ Donor

It's right here on my license.  
I'm qualified to drive.  
I passed the tests, written and practical.  
I'm way past old enough.  
Born here. Live here. Vote here.  
My eyes and hair match the picture.  
I can parallel park like nobody's business

And I'm an organ donor.  
I signed the paper. It says so right here.  
When I'm done with my body parts,  
some desperate recipient can give it a go.  
Liver and kidneys are working quite well.  
Non-smoker. Lungs are good.  
Heart works predictably, always on time,  
but don't even look for a gall bladder.  
That went years ago.  
They're all the original parts, and I get to choose  
what, if anything, happens to them.  
It says so right here.

If a barely fertilized, possible somebody  
wants to gestate in my uterus,  
it would also need my permission.  
If it wants to endanger my health and my life,  
bend me all out of shape, take a chance on  
giving me a life-long job I can't handle,  
stress I can't take, time I don't want to give,  
burdens you can't even imagine a person could bear,  
I can say No, I choose not to use my body that way.  
Nobody gave me a test to see if I'm qualified.  
I can tell if I'm not. I choose to avoid all that drama,  
and you must do all you can to leave my uterus to me.

## World BEYOND War

World BEYOND War is a global, grassroots, people-powered movement for peace. The organization provides the platform, tools, and resources for education, advocacy, and movement-building to advance strategies to demilitarize, manage conflict nonviolently, and cultivate a culture of peace.

World BEYOND War is unique because it unites the efforts of people and organizations who want to end all war in all countries. To help obtain the organization's vision of having a chapter in every country around the world, they need your help!

Starting a chapter allows you to help spread a message of nonviolence, support the work of World BEYOND War, and interact with your community in a meaningful way. For more information on the benefits of starting a chapter, what the role entails, and other ways you can get involved, please click this [link](#).

NoWar2019 Pathways to Peace – Limerick, Ireland October 5-6

World BEYOND War's Fourth Annual Global Conference on the abolition of war will be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 5th and 6th, in Limerick, Ireland, and include a rally on the 6th at Shannon Airport, where U.S. military forces routinely pass through in violation of Irish neutrality and of laws against war.

We'll be marking the completion of the 18th year of the endless war on Afghanistan, as well as the 150th birthday of Mohandas Gandhi.

See list of [2019 speakers](#).

You can read about and watch videos of past conferences here: [2018 Toronto](#), [2017 Washington](#), [2016 Washington](#).

**Location:** [Great National South Court Hotel](#)

**Address:** Raheen Roundabout, Raheen, Limerick, V94 E77X, Ireland. [Google map](#).

**Timing:** 9 to 6:30 Saturday October 5th, and 9 to 2:30 Sunday October 6th, followed by 3:00 to 5:00 rally and tour at Shannon Airport.

Shannon Airport Address: M3XP+V4 Lismaclean, County Clare, Ireland. [Google map](#).



### LAW OFFICES OF ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE, LLP

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

1600 G Street  
Suite 203  
P.O. Box 0142  
Modesto, CA  
95353-0142  
(209) 521-2552  
FAX (209) 526-7898

## Tuolumne River Film Festival 2019

On Saturday, September 7th, join us for a night of fun and films at the Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center, 555 Middlefield Rd., Atherton CA 94027, to celebrate the Tuolumne River and the culture that flows from it!



This year's festival will feature short films from the Wild and Scenic Film Festival, the International Ocean Film Festival, live music, and much more! In addition to films, we are excited to welcome the singer Dominique Gomez into the film fest family!

As one of the freshest spaces to come out of the San Francisco music scene, **Dominique Gomez** blends soulful grit with classic folk. The Colombian-American singer songwriter's passion for writing gleams through her lyrics, highlighting hopefulness for the power of community within the environmental movement. You don't want to miss this opportunity to hear her.

The evening will begin with music and mingling at 6:30 p.m., with the films starting at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased [online](#) for just \$10, or you can buy tickets at the door for \$15.



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

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



New classes every 8 weeks.  
Space is limited, call now!

ModestoSound.org  
209-573-0533

MistlinGallery  
Central California Art Association

Autumn Art Festival – Through Oct. 4

1015 J Street, Modesto • (209) 529-3369  
Tues. - Thurs. 11:30-5, Fri. 11:30-8, Saturday 12-4  
[www.ccaagallery.org](#)

# SAVE

*the*

# ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT



CREDO



## NAMI

from page 1



Stanislaus

• In Our Own Voice – Trained presenters offer a powerful anti-stigma tool that can change hearts, minds, and attitudes about mental illness.

• Crisis Intervention Training – A 40-hour required course for local law enforcement officers, invaluable training for officers for officers encountering individuals who may have mental health issues.

“I think it’s important for the community to know that these services are available and they are all free, and that people who need help can call us,” Ms. Allen emphasizes. “Sometimes we need to refer to other community agencies, depending upon the need. NAMI focuses on helping the severely mentally ill. We do need more mental illness awareness and education.”

NAMI Stanislaus has also taken an active role in advocating for the Assisted Outpatient Treatment, or AOT, which is court-ordered treatment for individuals who are severely mentally ill who may not recognize their need to seek treatment. “I have taken on an advocacy role because there is such a need, especially for those living on the street and AOT is a step, but it’s just one of the things we need to do,” Ms. Allen suggests. “I have a personal passion to just be an advocate and it’s so positive that people are speaking up to change the status quo, to work on getting more mental health services to those living on the street. As it stands now, they’re usually in jail before they get any help and, even then, they’re out in a day or two. We do not have enough programs in place that deal with involuntary treatment. With AOT, individuals can still have their civil rights and can freely live in the community. Since AOT is a full-service program, individuals have access to transportation, shelter, counseling, therapy, and other services they may need. We should not be criminalizing people who have a mental health issue. We need to help them because it’s the human thing to do. We’ve already had over 100 referrals since AOT started in Stanislaus County in late October last year. It’s a really positive development.”

Now celebrating its 40th anniversary, NAMI Stanislaus is justifiably proud of the positive impact it’s had on the lives of those people it has served. “We do have a lot of success stories,” Ms. Allen maintains. “Many of the people come into the support groups and they want to connect with someone for help, they often become healthy enough and successful enough to be able to be trained to become speakers, or to run groups. We are really excited about that – that recovery is possible, and that once they are well, they can be a part of helping others.”

**ACTION:** To learn more about the National Alliance on Mental Illness Stanislaus, and its programs and services, please call their office at (209) 558-4355, located at 500 North 9th St., Modesto, California 95350. NAMI Stanislaus could use support through donations and is always looking for volunteers. Visit its website at <https://namistanislaus.org/>



## Had Trump not been elected...

By STEVEN FAULKNER

*Had Trump not been elected:*

- James Comey would be the FBI director and The Mueller Report would have never happened. I repeat....it would have NEVER EVEN HAPPENED.
- Brett Kavanaugh would have never even been a nominee.
- There would be transcripts of every meeting with Putin.
- There would be no family separations. Asylum seekers would still be given a hearing in court without being held for extended periods in for-profit detention centers while awaiting their court date; all of their families would have remained intact, and the estimated 1,500 kids indefinitely displaced from their parents would still be with their families.
- The Iran nuclear deal would still be in place thus eliminating the entire recent confrontation with Iran.
- The Saudi murder of Jamal Khashoggi would have been roundly condemned, and the billions in U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia that congress voted to condemn would certainly not be moving forward. The United States would still lead the way on human rights and support for emerging democracies around the world. Condemnation of ruthless authoritarians like Mohammad Bin Salman Al Saud, or Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte would still be a no brainer for an American head of state.
- DACA would still be the law of the land thus protecting those children brought to America without any choice or say in the matter.
- We would still be a leader when it comes to the Paris Climate Accord and the much-needed push to transition to renewable energy sources in the collectively necessary fight to stem the tide of climate change.
- Russia’s interference in the 2016 elections would have been acknowledged and condemned. Proposals would have been immediately put forth to protect our electoral processes and integrity. Laws would have been passed to ensure that USA campaigns could not look the other way when foreign intelligence agencies intervene on their behalf.
- The Supreme Court nominees would have been more moderate. Thus, rulings that clear the way for hyper-partisan Gerrymandering, and many other rulings by the conservative majority would have been avoided.

- The Republican Tax Plan would have never passed, and thus corporations and the wealthiest Americans would be paying their fair share. The national deficit would have continued to decrease rather than increase.
- There would be no tariffs and therefore no bailouts would have been necessary for our nation’s farmers.
- Our relationship with NATO Allies would still be strong and there would not be any concern from them about sharing intelligence.
- No American President would have ever referred to the American Press as ‘the enemy of the people.’
- We would be able to view our President’s full tax disclosures.
- Our sitting President would not have paid off a porn star and a Playboy Playmate, nor would the sitting President have intentionally hidden advanced business plans to build a luxury hotel in the country who waged an intelligence campaign to interfere in our elections.
- We would have actual appointed heads of government agencies, not the easily controllable ‘acting’ heads Trump has installed in many federal agencies. Betsy Devos, Bill Barr, Nick Mulvany, Wilbur Ross, Rick Perry, Alex Azar, Ben Carson, Alexander Acosta, and a whole slew of swamp creatures who allow private money interests and special interests to dictate public policy in different agencies would have been powerless on the sidelines.
- The Environmental Protection Agency would not be led by a former Coal Industry Lobbyist.
- LGBTQ Rights would still be staunchly protected.
- Transgender folks would be able to serve in the military.
- Obama era Justice Department initiatives aimed at curbing bad behavior in troubled police departments would still be intact.
- There would never have been a ‘Muslim Ban.’
- Environmental regulations would still be strong and likely getting even more stringent.
- An undisclosed amount of much needed funding would not have been taken from our National Parks to fund a Trump speech on July 4th, nor would a President have ordered all other expenditures of our hard-earned tax dollars to be kept secret from us.

And the list goes on and on...

*The Law Office of*  
**PATRICIA MELUGIN COUSINS**  
Attorney At Law

P.O. Box 520  
Ceres, CA 95307

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

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

**FM 93.3**  
**KPHD**

Independent Radio for Independent Minds



## SEPTEMBER 2019

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

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

**7 SAT: Tuolumne River Film Festival:** Film - Music - Art – Action. Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center, 555 Middlefield Rd., Atherton CA 94027. 6:30 pm. See article this issue.

**8 SUN: Sundays at CBS:** Brothers Michael and Peter Ronstadt present a fresh take on the traditional Southwestern and Mexican songs of their aunt Linda and the Ronstadt family's heritage, along with innovative originals mining the treasure of roots music brought to the community by Congregation Beth Shalom 3:00 pm. Concert includes delicious baked goods, tea and coffee, surprises. 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.

**13 FRI: Odilia Galván Rodríguez** reads her poetry at College Avenue UCC. 7:00 pm. Free. See article, this issue.

**14 SAT: Jacob Meyers Park Ride-Run-Hike Trail Fundraiser**, 5-9 pm, Brenda Athletic Club, 200 Norwegian Ave., Modesto. \$7 Adult; \$5 children under 12. Swimming Pool, Volleyball, Live Music, Potluck buffet and BBQ chicken, \$5 Wine and Beer tasting. \$1 raffle tickets for fabulous prizes. The proposed trail will add 5 miles of hike-bike trails to the Jacob Meyers park system. Sponsored by Friends of Jacob Meyers Park, Riverbank.

**15 SUN: The Modesto Film Society** presents Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. The State Theatre, 1307 J. St., Modesto. 2:00 pm. <https://thestate.org/movies/vertigo/>. Join the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/Membership>

**21 SAT: Modesto Sound Annual Fundraiser.** Music, Food, & Networking. Gianelli's, 602 Northgate Dr., Modesto. 5-8 pm. To donate silent auction items, get tickets, or find out more, visit [modestosound.org](http://modestosound.org), call 209-573-0533 or email [studio@modestosound.org](mailto:studio@modestosound.org)

**21 SAT: Massive Giveaway.** Groceries, Home Goods, Clothes. Snow Cones, BBQ. Mellis Park, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto. 12 to 4 pm. Free. Sponsored by the West Modesto Community Collaborative, Star of David Community Church and Firehouse.

**22 SUN: The State Theatre and the Latino Film Series** present, *Stand and Deliver* 1307 J. St., Modesto. 2:00 pm. <https://thestate.org/movies/stand-and-deliver/> Join the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/Membership>

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Friday, October 4: 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.

**Sunday, October 20: OKTOBERFEST**, 4pm - 7pm at the Gene Bianchi Community Center, 110 S. 2nd Ave., Oakdale. Ooompapa, a tasty German dinner, beer tasting, live Oktoberfest music, and an auction. Advance tickets: \$30; \$40. Info: contact Tena McLane-Ceja, 209-247-2752. Sponsored by AAUW Oakdale, Riverbank and Escalon Branch.

## 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 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

**Suicide Loss Support Group:** Friends for Survival meets every third Monday at 7 pm. Details: Norm Andrews 209-345-0601, [ndrews6863@charter.net](mailto:ndrews6863@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** 50+ years of age. Ongoing support group for mental health and wellness to meet the needs of the mature Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. Every Monday 3:00 - 4:00 pm, Community-Hope-Recovery, 305 Downey Ave. Modesto. Info: Monica O, [Tiamonica64@gmail.com](mailto:Tiamonica64@gmail.com) or Susan J, [SusanthePoet@gmail.com](mailto:SusanthePoet@gmail.com)

### 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.** 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 UUFSC east parking lot). Offered

## 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.

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@gaycentralvalley.org](mailto:mercedboard@gaycentralvalley.org) – 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. [www.mercedlgbtcenter.org](http://www.mercedlgbtcenter.org)

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

**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

**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.

**LGBTQA Collaborative Meetings** 4th Thursdays. Agendas are the same for each meeting. Lunch meeting: Peer Recovery Art Center, 1222 J St, Modesto, Noon to 1:30 pm. Dinner meetings: Stanislaus BHRS – Redwood Room, 800 Scenic Dr., Modesto, CA 95354, 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Meeting dates: Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 17, Dec. 15: No meeting/ Winter Mixer. Dedicated to promoting well-being in the LGBTQA community. John Aguirre, [jpamodesto@gmail.com](mailto:jpamodesto@gmail.com), 559-280-3864.

**Green Team educational meetings** the 3rd Thursday of each month, 10 to 11 am, Kirk Lindsey Center, 1020 10th St. Plaza, Suite 102, Modesto. [www.StanislausGreenTeam.com](http://www.StanislausGreenTeam.com)

**Third Thursday Art Walk**, Downtown Modesto, downtown art galleries open – take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

**The Book Group**, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 – 5:00 pm. Info: [mzjurkovic@gmail.com](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:YamiletValladolid.yamiletv@hotmail.com)

### SATURDAY

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

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

### DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS: Tenth of each month.

Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to [Jim.Costello@igc.org](mailto:Jim.Costello@igc.org)  
Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.