

“99% Spring” training event April 14 in Modesto

By KEN SCHROEDER

We're at a crossroads as a country. In recent years, millions have lost their jobs, homes have been foreclosed, and an unconscionable number of children live in poverty. It's time to reclaim our democracy. It's time for a 99% Spring. In Modesto on Saturday, April 14, we will gather for a 99% Spring action training at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., west of Carpenter Rd. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. with coffee, tea and light food. Sessions begin at 9:00 a.m.

We inherit a history of everyday people shaping the direction of our country by standing up for their own dignity and community. From the seamstress in Alabama who launched a bus boycott, to the workers in Flint, Michigan, who occupied their plant to form a union, to the women in New York who took to the streets en masse to demand the right to vote. Inspired by Occupy Wall Street and the fight for workers in Madison, Wisconsin, the 99% will rise up this spring. In the span of one week, from April 9 to 15,

100,000 people will be trained to tell the story of what happened to our economy, learn the history of nonviolent direct action, and use that knowledge to take action on our own campaigns to win change. As of mid-March well over 600 gatherings were scheduled to occur that week across the nation.

Our training sessions will address:

The economy. We will tell the story of our current economy: how we got here, who is responsible and what we can do about it. We will talk about what a new economic vision could look like that represents the values of the 99%.

Non-violent direct action. Knowing our movement history will help us tell the current story of the 99%. There is no better way to take action then by learning what social justice movements have done in the past. We have a rich history to draw from that can guide us as we take action this spring.

Take action. We'll learn how to take action

BANK SETTLEMENT. cont. p. 8

by developing and preparing for tactics that will help build our movement's power. We will then use this information to take action on our own campaigns to win change.

Will you join us? Register to attend by emailing kschroeder70@yahoo.com or by calling the Modesto Peace/Life Center at

Alliance, MoveOn.org Civic Action, Service Employees International Union, Rebuild the Dream, UNITE-HERE, Greenpeace, Institute for Policy Studies, PICO National Network, United Steel Workers, Communications Workers of America, United States Student Association, Rainforest Action Network,

THE 99% SPRING

529-5750. This 99% event is a joint effort of Occupy Modesto and the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

More info at www.the99spring.com

A partial list of organizations calling for a 99% Spring: Jobs With Justice, United Auto Workers, National Domestic Workers

American Federation of Teachers, Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, Progressive Democrats of America, Change to Win, United Electrical Workers Union, Students Against Sweatshops, Presente.org, Modesto Peace/Life Center, Occupy Modesto.

In Afghanistan We Can Offer So Many Apologies

By REP. RAUL M. GIJALVA
and MICHAEL SHANK
March 13, 2012

Burning Korans and urinating on dead bodies is, without question, bad diplomacy in Afghanistan, but by themselves these latest episodes did nothing to make us reconsider our timetable for leaving. We had plenty of good reasons already to withdraw. It is the recent killing of 16 unarmed civilians that is emerging as the tipping point. A foreign army, no matter the reason it came or why it stays, can offer a long-suffering population only so many apologies. We are no longer welcome in Afghanistan, and we are going to have to leave. The only questions now are how soon and on what terms.

Nearly two dozen U.S. senators and nearly 90 members of the House of Representatives are calling for an expedited withdrawal ahead of NATO's May meeting in Chicago. A majority of Americans, according to the latest Post/ABC poll, want troops out as soon as

possible. The days of a supposed national consensus on staying the course are long over. As we enter our 11th year of engagement in Afghanistan, the latest diplomatic unrest has inspired thousands of Afghan employees on the U.S. payroll at Bagram Airfield to protest.

APOLOGIES. cont. p. 8

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

PEACE CAMP	2
PEACE ESSAY CONTEST	3
LIVING LIGHTLY	4
GREEN TIPS	5

MILITARY AID TO ISRAEL	6
DEATH AND PUBLIC RELATIONS	7
GATHERING OF VOICES	9
SCHOOL GARDENS	10
POTPOURRI	11

City of Modesto • 23rd Annual

Earth Day in the Park
Graceada Park

Needham & Sycamore, Modesto
Saturday April 16, 10 AM - 5 PM

Visit the Peace
Center's booth

30th Annual Peace Camp June 22, 23, and 24, 2012



Camp Peaceful Pines
near Pinecrest, California



Registration Form

Early Registration Deadline: **June 3, 2012**

Adults (age 19 and older)

1. _____ Address: _____
2. _____ City/State: _____ Zip _____
3. _____ Phone#: _____
4. _____ Email: _____

Total x \$80 ----- \$ _____

Youth (ages 4 -18)

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

Total x \$60 ----- \$ _____

Infant (ages 0 - 3) _____ Age _____ **NO CHARGE**

Early registration discount by June 3: subtract \$10 per person _____ (-) \$ _____

I need vegetarian meals _____ Voluntary Donation for scholarships \$ _____

Special Health needs, allergies, etc. _____

Special needs for cabin assignment: _____

I can offer/need a ride Friday _____ Saturday _____

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

**There is an additional \$15 fee for each person
who comes to camp without pre-registration.**

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

Parent authorization for minor children (must be signed if applicable)

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

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

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

For camp information and scholarship availability:
Call Ken Schroeder, (209) 569-0321.

Celebrate at Peace Camp's 30th reunion!

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

Mark your calendar for Peace Camp on June 22-24 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108 in the Sierras past Pinecrest. For this 30th annual camp we're putting out the call for past campers to join us in a reunion.

What do we look forward to? Stimulating workshops, great food, hikes, campfires, singing, talent show, children's activities, crafts, table tennis, horseshoes, tetherball and other recreation, fresh air in a mountain setting, the wind in the pines and cedars, the starry night, the labyrinth, and creative and committed people of all ages.

Solange Altman will facilitate our workshop on immigration. Solange is a Modesto attorney who has worked in immigration law since 1995, focusing on family immigration and deportation defense. Prior to that, she worked with California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), a nonprofit legal services program that strives for economic justice and human rights on behalf of California's rural poor. Solange and her parents emigrated from Brazil when she was a young child. She and her family have been regulars at Peace Camp for 22 years.

At the 6,200-foot elevation in the Stanislaus National Forest near the Clark Fork of the Stanislaus River, Camp Peaceful Pines is located about 25 miles above Pinecrest off Hwy. 108. Surrounded by tall peaks, the camp is set in the forest with a creek running through it. Sunrise Rock, with views of the river valley, is a short hike from camp.

The camp features kitchen and bathroom facilities, rustic cabins and platform tents and a cabin for those with special needs. Depending on the number of campers, cabins may be shared. Campers share in meal preparation, cleanup, and other work. Families and individuals are welcome.

The \$80 fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Young people are \$60. Early registration, before June 3rd, entitles registrants to a \$10.00 per person discount. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Registration forms are available in this issue or at www.stanislausconnections.org, where they can be printed and mailed.

Campers may arrive any time after 2:00 p.m. on Friday. The camp opens with supper at 6 p.m. on Friday and closes at noon on Sunday. Directions and other information will be mailed to participants before camp.

Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-569-0321, kschroeder70@yahoo.com

Peace Camp is organized by the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

ANDERSON
CUSTOM FRAMING GALLERY

Carl E. Anderson
Gallery Director
CERTIFIED PICTURE FRAMER®

1323 J Street • Modesto, CA 95354 • 209.579.9913 • Fax 209.579.9914
www.anderson-gallery.com

The 2012 Peace Essay Contest

By **INDIRA CLARK**

The 25th Peace Essay Contest invited 4th-8th grade students to reflect on their own experience observing on verbal bullying. Grades 9-10 focused cyberbullying. Division I entries from 11th and 12th graders, explored the use of social media and technology to promote a particular point of view or agenda.

There were 767 qualifying entries from public and private schools throughout Stanislaus County. *Stanislaus Connections* is publishing each of the winning essays.



2012 Peace Essay Committee: Margaret Barker, Indira Clark, Pam Franklin, Elaine Gorman, Linda Legace, Deborah Roberts, Sandy Sample, Shelly Scribner, David Tucker.

Sponsored by the Modesto Peace/Life Center, and co-sponsored by the Modesto Junior College Department of Literature and Language Arts

Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Costs money for electronics, printing, postage.

☐ Send me CONNECTIONS. Here's my \$25 DONATION.

☐ Keep sending me CONNECTIONS.

☐ I am enclosing an extra tax-deductible donation for Modesto Peace/Life Center

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

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

Open by appointment.

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

CONNECTIONS is available for
a suggested donation of \$25.00/yr.

Cyber-Bullying and Its Effects

Division II, First Place Winning Essay

Sebian Cristobal Martinez-Escobar

Modesto High School ~ Ms. Bannholzer

Technology is amazing—through the last two hundred years, we have found ways to artificially increase the life of the human heart, shorten vast distances by flying through the air, and send large bundles of information around the world in but seconds. The human race has reached heights with nothing but our wit and cunning that our Neanderthal ancestry and orangutan cousins could have never even thought of in the past, but yet we hinder ourselves and our potential with one constant from our primitive heritage. We still fight each other. We still engage in that primal struggle for supremacy over our fellow man. The bright lights of many fine young men and women have been unjustly snuffed out by this urge, this desire for our enemies' blood. This hunger translates into nearly every scenario—manifested in the schoolyards by bullies, in the international level by war, and in the burgeoning fields of technology (mainly social networking sites) by cyber-bullying. And despite the severity and horrors of the many types of conflict we search for by our nature, cyber-bullying is a new and mostly underrepresented form of bullying that is particularly dangerous. Cyber-bullying is especially damaging due to the emotional battery of the victim combined with the anonymousness of the bully, and can be done by everyone—it appeals to the urge for supremacy for everyone, so it's not just the big and strong being the perpetrators anymore.

Social Networking as a whole is not all together negative, even though it is one of the hotspots of cyber-bullying. Personally, I have not been permitted to use social networking, but a large number of my acquaintances and peers have been on sites such as Facebook and MySpace, so I have experienced the pros and cons vicariously. The major pro that social networking brings to the table is that it does exactly as advertised—it helps you network. That means that you connect with friends and family through the Internet, which incredibly shortens the distances between two people. Joe Smith can use his phone to update his status in Britain, and his brother John Smith can read and comment on it mere seconds after Joe writes it. Another pro is the professional aspect—if one owns a small business or even a big business, one can advertise one's company for absolutely free. Updates and news about the company and what happens to it will be sent to anyone who cares enough to simply click the "like" button. Also, planning events becomes incredibly easy. Instead of spending up to \$2 of your money on invitations, one can simply post an "event" on one's preferred social networking site and just click on the faces of the presumably respectable friends that one wishes to join in the "event" that was previously set loose into the wildernesses of the Internet. Social Networking is generally a very positive thing, or at least when it is used appropriately.

However, social networking can be used for cyber-bullying or other inappropriate activities. For example, the infamous "Star Wars Kid" incident was, while technically not cyber-bullying on a social media site, a pertinent and severe case of cyber-bullying. A young teenager from Quebec, Ghyslain

Raza, was having a little fun in front of a video camera and decided to film himself reenacting a scene from a Star Wars movie while alone. Four of his student peers found this video and passed it around school, showing it to almost everyone in the school before a student decided to digitalize the tape and start emailing it. The video now has over one billion views (which is particularly impressive considering that 900 million of the views were before the dawn of YouTube) and has been parodied numerous times by shows such as *Arrested Development* (where George Michael, one of the main characters, did a similar tape that was mentioned numerous times throughout the story), *Teen Titans*, *Southpark*, *American Dad*, and was even referenced by Weird Al Yankovic's "White and Nerdy" music video. However, the popularity of this video sent Ghyslain Raza into a spiral of depression caused by the humiliation that the video brought upon him. He dropped out of school and needed to see a psychiatrist for to aid in the treatment of the multiple self-esteem problems that the video brought him. Ghyslain Raza and his family eventually sued the students mainly responsible for the video's distribution. This was a very horrifying example of fame gone wrong. Because of the four teenagers who distributed the video, Ghyslain Raza was harassed and victimized for the rest of his life.

The ways that people live and treat each other on the numerous social networking sites that there is reflects their attitudes and behaviors in real life. If someone gets beleaguered on MySpace, Twitter, or Facebook, it can lead to a paranoia and fear about the world—especially if the person harassing the victim uses the web to remain anonymous. It is equitable to an invisible bully, with harsh words and threats coming in from all sides until the victim is completely broken down and finds his/herself always afraid. Social Networking and cyber-bullying are definite proof that, despite old schoolyard proverbs saying otherwise, names can hurt just as bad as sticks and stones do.

One can help create a better, more peaceful world by helping to raise awareness about this obscure (and yet just as damaging) type of bullying that is going on in social networking sites everywhere. Many teenagers do not realize just how powerful words are, and so they use them haphazardly—insulting and calling names to people while hidden behind the special kind of impersonal environment that the Internet provides. However, if one were to remind them that even though they are not inflicting actual harm upon another person, they are still bullying a living, breathing human being that has the same wants and needs as any other person on this earth, I believe that cyber-bullying will stop. Once people get in touch with the human element behind their LCD monitors, cyber-bullying may become a thing of the past.

Citations

Axon, Samuel. "Star Wars Kid: Where Is He Now?" Mashable. Adam Ostrow. June 3, 2010. November 10, 2011. < <http://mashable.com/2010/06/03/star-wars-kid> >

(Author Not Given) "Star Wars Kid Files Lawsuit" Wired. Chris Anderson. July 3, 2003. November 11, 2011. < <http://www.wired.com/culture/lifestyle/news/2003/07/59757> >

Ancient craft for our time

By JENIFER WEST

I've been working hard to save money on food, and learning to preserve things in season. We have a year-round garden, and I've learned to bottle, freeze and dry most things. But one area I hadn't investigated, until recently, was the ancient art of lacto-fermentation – pickling. Ironical, since this was undoubtedly the first method of food preservation ever used. So one of the things that excited me about our new house was the basement. When I first saw it, I envisioned it full of pumpkins, onions, potatoes and crocks of pickles of varying description. Unfortunately, it's turned out to be a little too warm for a root cellar, but it's an excellent place to stow things for long-term storage.

And it's worked out great for pickling. I love sauerkraut, and have always been intrigued by the idea of making it from scratch. But one of the things that's held me back is my grandmother's childhood story of the dog knocking over the crock of 'kraut fermenting under the front steps. The aroma must have been quite impressive, as Grandma's over 90 and still remembers it vividly!

So being ready to try making sauerkraut but having no suitable container, I logged on to my favorite online retailer, and ran a search for "pickling crock". Who'da thunk there'd be such differences in something so seemingly simple? But there are. Having learned, many times over, that there really is no substitute for the proper tool for the task at hand, I opted for the top-of-the-line job from a German company called Harsch Gairtopf. (Schmitt sells one that appears to be identical, for slightly less.) It has a "water seal", which keeps the aroma in and "bad bugs" out. Cost a pretty penny, but it works so well that I'll be ordering another. (You can use any container with a mouth large enough to put a weight on top of the fermenting food, and cover it with plastic wrap, if you want to try this without investing a lot – some people use a food grade plastic bucket with a plate and a sealed bag of water or clean rock to keep the pickling food submerged in the brine. Just be aware you'll get a growth of harmless mold on top that must be skimmed off frequently.)

Fermented foods are a very good idea. They are raw, living foods – alive with microorganisms that promote good digestive health, for one thing. They are particularly good for anyone who's taken a course of antibiotics, or suffers from any digestive challenge. Further, fermented foods are easier to digest than their unfermented counterparts.

The fermentation process simultaneously enhances nutrients, particularly B vitamins, and activates enzymes. Enzymes "unlock" the nutrients in foods, thereby improving



their absorption – and the typical American diet of processed foods is severely lacking in them. Our bodies evolved on a mostly raw diet, with some fermented foods thrown in for good measure, and that's naturally how they function best. Most other cultures consume fermented foods on a regular basis. We Americans do, too (yogurt, cheese, even bread), but they don't offer anything like the wealth of health benefits of naturally fermented foods like pickled veggies and sauerkraut. Consuming fermented foods also supports the immune system, reduces one's chances of developing cancer, helps lower "bad" cholesterol, can help reduce the risk of diabetes, and contributes to overall good health.

To sweeten the deal (so to speak), you can "pickle" pretty much any crunchy veggie, and even some fruits – which means you can preserve garden "proceeds" that might otherwise go to waste. And it's suitable for things that might not be all that appealing canned, frozen or dried (broccoli and Brussels sprouts, for example). So it really is an important piece of the food storage puzzle, as well.

Admittedly, there was a bit of a learning curve with the crock. The water lock, it seems, causes the crock to function like a barometer, and the weather changed while the first batch was fermenting, so I kept adding water – not realizing it was getting sucked up into the crock, simultaneously diluting the salt ratio to a level below that necessary to prevent spoilage and introducing "bad bugs" into the mix. Yuck! Undaunted, I tried again, carefully watching both the weather and the crock, and tasting the mixture daily. Success!

Next I tried a "dill crock", patterned after the one described by Euell Gibbons of Stalking the Wild Asparagus fame. I layered in dill and a little garlic, then Brussels sprouts, sweet peppers, green onions, a beet or two, carrots, bulb onions... A final layer of dill and garlic, a "half sour" brine (about 5% salt), and let it ferment. A week & a half later – wow! They were good enough to share at work! (Next time, I won't put in any red beets – just one or two small ones colored the entire crock a lovely fuchsia. Pretty to look at, but at least one coworker had to close her eyes in order to eat the electric pink veggies!)

Another cool thing about pickling is that it can be done at any time of the year, and with virtually any crunchy veggie, or mix of veggies, and even fruit, in danger of going south. So along with creating foods that are incredibly good for us, the pickling crock really has become another weapon in my arsenal against waste. It really is an ancient craft well worth learning in our day.

Gardener's Note: Plant now: Zucchini and other squash, cantaloupe, corn, watermelon, beans, and cucumbers. And be sure to add compost and other amendments to feed the soil that's feeding you.

LAW OFFICES OF

FRAILING, ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE

1600 G Street
Suite 203

DAVID N. ROCKWELL
SHARON E. KELLY
JEFFREY DUARTE
COSIMO G. AIELLO
Attorneys/Abogados

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

106^{FM}

Local Bands. Real News.

ValleyMedia.org

CHEFS OF NEW YORK

The finest PIZZA & PASTA in town!

Open 7 Days a Week

www.ChefsOfNewYork.com

2307 Oakdale Rd., Modesto, CA 95355

p (209) 551-0163

f (209) 551-0330

E. F. CASH - DUDLEY

CERTIFIED SPECIALIST IN FAMILY LAW
THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

**CASH - DUDLEY
SPEILLER & TORRES**

PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

518 THIRTEENTH STREET • MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95354
TELEPHONE (209) 526 - 1533 • FACSIMILE: (209) 526 - 1711
WWW.CDSTLAW.COM

MICHAEL R. BAUDLER, CPA

DONNA E. FLANDERS, CPA

Office (209) 575-2653

Fax (209) 575-0629

e-mail b_f@modestocpas.com

1120 14th Street, Suite 2

Modesto, CA 95350

Report from Occupy Olympia Social Forum

By SHELLY SCRIBNER

Occupiers from all over the United States came to Olympia, Washington on Feb. 18-19, 2012 for the **Occupy Solidarity Social Forum**. The forum was organized by the Alliance for Global Justice.(AFGJ), Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Olympia. I attended with a friend from Modesto.

There were about 350 to 400 people there. Workshops on many topics were held. People came from Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Oakland. They came by car, plane, and about 40 people came on the train from L.A. A wonderful weekend was had by all. It was very exciting to meet others that are in the occupy movement. Young and old of all ages attended. Some of the workshops were historical, others current For a complete list of Forum events, see <http://occupyolympia.org/occupy-solidarity-social-forum-this-weekend/>

All the people we met were friendly. I don't know how many times I heard from people about the new documentary *Thrive*. I have a copy of it and would like others to see it. Perhaps at the Peace Center.*

We heard David Korten, co-founder of *YES Magazine* speak. Another speaker was Dora Rainey, the 84 year old woman who was pepper sprayed at an occupy event in Seattle. Mark Taylor Canfield writes:

"Korten is the author of several books including, *When Corporations Rule The World*. "It appears that the occupy movement is now moving into a new phase of holding activities like this where we can get together to educate ourselves about the deeper social and economic issues and their solutions," Korten told the audience. "This is a conversation that we need to continue to expand on a national and global scale." **

On the last night were treated to Musical Revolutionaries in Concert which included Jim Page, Danny Kelly, David Rovics. I was very glad to meet all the people and hear about what they are doing.

* *THRIVE* is an unconventional documentary that lifts the veil on what's REALLY going on in our world by following the money upstream – uncovering the global consolidation of power in nearly every aspect of our lives. Weaving together breakthroughs in science, consciousness and activism, *THRIVE* offers real solutions, empowering us with unprecedented and bold strategies for reclaiming our lives and our future. Visit <http://www.thrivemovement.com/>

** Read complete article at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-taylorcanfield/post_3012_b_1292141.html

Green Tips for a Green Planet

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Green Spring Cleaning "Solutions for Sustainable Living" from eartheasy

(Editor's note: *eartheasy* encourages the sharing of this thorough listing of green cleaning options.)

Today's modern home is loaded with toxic and polluting substances designed to "make domestic life easier." The cost of these commercial, chemical-based products can be high — long-term health concerns for the family, and environmental pollution caused by their manufacture and disposal. In the US, for example, 1 in 3 people suffer from allergies, asthma, sinusitis or bronchitis (US National Center for Health Statistics). Treatment for these conditions should include reducing synthetic chemicals in the home environment.

For many home-cleaning chores, you can make your own cleaning products using the formulas listed below. A growing number of commercial non-toxic home cleaning products are also available, as healthier and environmentally responsible alternatives. Your use of these products helps promote the growth of green businesses which contribute to a sustainable economy.

There are many inexpensive, easy-to-use natural alternatives which can safely be used in place of commercial household products. Here is a list of common, environmentally safe products which can be used alone or in combination for a wealth of household applications.

- **Baking Soda** - cleans, deodorizes, softens water, scours.
- **Soap** - unscented soap in liquid form, flakes, powders or bars is biodegradable and will clean just about anything. Avoid using soaps which contain petroleum distillates.
- **Lemon** - one of the strongest food-acids, effective against most household bacteria.
- **Borax** - (sodium borate) cleans, deodorizes, disinfects, softens water, cleans wallpaper, painted walls and floors.
- **White Vinegar** - cuts grease, removes mildew, odors, some stains and wax build-up.
- **Washing Soda** - or SAL Soda is sodium carbonate decahydrate, a mineral. Washing soda cuts grease, removes stains, softens water, cleans wall, tiles, sinks and tubs. Use care, as washing soda can irritate mucous membranes. Do not use on aluminum.
- **Isopropyl Alcohol** - is an excellent disinfectant. (It has been suggested to replace this with ethanol or 100 proof alcohol in solution with water. There is some indication that isopropyl alcohol buildup contributes to illness in the body. See <http://drclark.ch/g>
- **Cornstarch** - can be used to clean windows, polish furniture, shampoo carpets and rugs.
- **Citrus Solvent** - cleans paint brushes, oil and grease, some stains. (Citrus solvent may cause skin, lung or eye irritations for people with multiple chemical sensitivities.)

Combinations of the above basic products can provide less harmful substitutions for many commercial home products.

In most cases, they're also less expensive. Always use caution with any new product in your home. Make sure to keep all homemade formulas well-labeled and out of the reach of children.

Here is a recipe for all purpose cleaner and reusable microfiber cloths (An in-depth listing of recipes for home-made cleaning alternative solutions will be included in the May Green Tips):

All-Purpose Cleaner: Mix 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/4 cup baking soda (or 2 teaspoons borax) into 1/2 gallon (2 liters) water. Store and keep. Use for removal of water deposit stains on shower stall panels, bathroom chrome fixtures, windows, bathroom mirrors, etc.

Another alternative is microfiber cloths, which lift off dirt, grease and dust without the need for cleaning chemicals, because they are formulated to penetrate and trap dirt. A good quality cloth can last for several years.

Healthy Home Cleaning Habits

Exchange Indoor Air

Many modern homes are so tight there's little new air coming in. Open the windows from time to time or run any installed exhaust fans. In cold weather, the most efficient way to exchange room air is to open the room wide - windows and doors, and let fresh air in quickly for about 5 minutes. The furnishings in the room, and the walls, act as 'heat sinks', and by exchanging air quickly, this heat is retained.

Minimize Dust

Remove clutter which collects dust, such as old newspapers and magazines. Try to initiate a 'no-shoes-indoors' policy. If you're building or remodeling a home, consider a central vacuum system; this eliminates the fine dust which portable vacuum cleaners recirculate.

Use Cellulose Sponges

Most household sponges are made of polyester or plastic which are slow to break down in landfills, and many are treated with triclosan, a chemical that can produce chloroform (a suspected carcinogen) when it interacts with the chlorine found in tap water. Instead try cellulose sponges, available at natural foods stores, which are biodegradable and will soak up spills faster since they're naturally more absorbent.

Keep Bedrooms Clean

Most time at home is spent in the bedrooms. Keep pets out of these rooms, especially if they spend time outdoors.

Use Gentle Cleaning Products

Of the various commercial home cleaning products, drain cleaners, toilet bowl cleaners and oven cleaners are the most toxic. Use the formulas described above or purchase 'green' commercial alternatives. Avoid products containing ammonia or chlorine, or petroleum-based chemicals; these contribute to respiratory irritation, headaches and other complaints.

Clean from the Top Down

When house cleaning, save the floor or carpet for last. Allow time for the dust to settle before vacuum



Modesto Homeopathy
Elise Osner, C Hom
1015 12th St., Suite 4
Modesto, CA 95350

209-527-4420
209-988-7883
eosner@ainet.com

U.S. Military Aid to Israel: Policy Implications & Options

By JOSH RUEBNER

National Advocacy Director, US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 1949 to 2008, the U.S. government provided Israel more than \$103.6 billion of total official aid, making it the largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance in the post-World War II era. In 2007, the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding providing for \$30 billion of U.S. military aid from 2009 to 2018. Between FY2000 and 2009, the United States gave Israel \$24.1 billion of military aid. With this taxpayer money, the United States licensed, paid for and delivered more than 670 million weapons and related equipment to Israel, including almost 500 categories of weapons. During roughly the same period (September 29, 2000, to December 31, 2009), Israel killed at least 2,969 unarmed Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip. Often Israel killed these Palestinians with many of the types of weapons provided with U.S. military aid.

This paper presents case studies of how U.S.-supplied tear gas, bulldozers and white phosphorus were used by Israel to commit human rights abuses of Palestinians. Israel also employed U.S. weapons to commit additional human rights abuses of Palestinians, including, but not limited to,

ever-expanding amounts of military aid to Israel function as a disincentive for Israel to take seriously U.S. foreign policy objectives

the injuring of tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians since 2000, the deliberate destruction of Palestinian civilian infrastructure, the denial of Palestinians' right to freedom of movement, and the construction of Israeli settlements on expropriated Palestinian land.

Strong evidence exists showing that Israel's misuse of U.S. weapons to commit human rights abuses of Palestinians in furtherance of its 44-year military occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip violates U.S. laws, including the Foreign Assistance Act and Arms Export Control Act. In the past, numerous countries, including Israel, have had U.S. foreign assistance programs withheld, conditioned, or cut off for violating these laws. Despite the State Department investigating or being asked to investigate by Congress Israel's potential violations of these laws at

least five times since 2000, it has not once publicly informed Congress that a violation of these laws occurred. Israel should not be held to a different standard than other countries, and this situation should be addressed without fail.

In addition to these legal implications, ever-expanding amounts of military aid to Israel function as a disincentive for Israel to take seriously U.S. foreign policy objectives. They also crowd out other budgetary priorities for unmet domestic needs in a time of economic crisis, have a diminishing strategic rationale, and are being challenged by more Israelis who worry about the strategic, economic, and political ramifications of relying on U.S. military aid.

As a step toward ending U.S. military aid to Israel, this paper concludes with specific policy recommendations for Congress and the President to condition U.S. military aid to Israel to achieve stated U.S. policy goals of freezing settlement growth, easing the blockade of the Gaza Strip, ending the human rights abuses associated with Israel's military occupation of the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip, and establishing a just and lasting Israeli-Palestinian peace.

For the complete report, visit <http://www.endtheoccupation.org/section.php?id=400>

Too many wars, too few U.S. soldiers

"Lord Moran concluded in his classic work about combat stress in World War I, "Anatomy of Courage," that the reservoir of courage begins to empty after the first shot is fired.

"The horrors of intimate killing, along with other factors such as fatigue, thirst, hunger, isolation, fear of the unknown



and the sight of dead and maimed comrades, all start a process of moral atrophy that cannot be reversed.

Moran rightfully

concludes that nothing short of permanent withdrawal from the line will bring soldiers back to normalcy.

"The media are trying to make some association between the recent shooting and the Army's inability to treat post-

traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. But I think Moran had it more right; the real institutional culprit is the decade-long exploitation and cynical overuse of one of our most precious and irreplaceable national assets: our close combat soldiers and Marines. If someone just after Sept. 11 had told me that a very small Army and Marine Corps would fight a 10-year set of close-combat engagements in two wars and still remain intact, I would have called them crazy. Well, we've done just that, haven't we? But at what cost to the few who have borne an enormously disproportionate share of emotional stress?"

— Robert H. Scales, retired U.S. Army major general and former commandant of the Army War College.

Read the complete article at http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-cost-of-us-soldiers-fighting-battles-endlessly/2012/03/13/gIQA1ouKAS_story.html

Peace Panel Project coming to MJC

Modesto Junior College has confirmed Wednesday 4/4/12 for the next exhibit of the Peace Panel Project. You will enjoy the evolution of the exhibit. All the new panels have "What You Can Do", spots on the bottom. Positive action language, how you can positively affect the issue. We just finished a mini exhibit at the Sabeel Conference in Sacramento.

Looking forward to standing with you at your Peace Vigil that afternoon. 4/4/12.

Check out the blog for more: www.PeacePanelProject-Chico.blogspot.com

Charles and Sally Withuhn, Peace Panel Project, 530-343-2543



PEACE PANEL PROJECT

Printed and Designed by Signs & Graphics Design



American InfoMetrics, Inc.



Global, shmoba. . . we're local!

INTERNET ACCESS

Web Design & Hosting • Programming
Database • Consulting • Security
Development • E-Commerce Solutions
Corporate Services • T1 • DSL
Network Specialists

Professional Internet Solutions

Since 1994

www.ainet.com

sales@ainet.com

(209) 551.6226

Kathy Kelly on the killings in Afghanistan

Kathy Kelly of Voices for Creative Nonviolence is just back from Afghanistan. She was recently on “Democracy Now!” along with a representative from the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers.

She said: “President Obama and U.S. military brass are depicting a U.S. soldier killing 16 Afghan civilians as an exceptional event. But in fact, this tragedy reflects and encapsulates the U.S. war of choice in Afghanistan. Groups of U.S. soldiers have been breaking into Afghan homes and killing people, without cause or provocation, for the last 11 years. Civilians have been afflicted by aerial bombing by helicopter gunships, drone surveillance and attacks, and night raids.

“In the recent past, Afghan civilians have been appalled and agitated by news of U.S. soldiers that went on killing sprees, cutting off body parts of their victims to save as war trophies. They’ve been repulsed by photos of U.S. soldiers urinating on the corpses of Afghans whom they have killed. The burning of the Quran further enraged civilians. One of the greatest factors contributing to public dismay and hostility towards the foreign forces is the practice of night raids. As many as 40 of these raids happen around the country on some nights, and the U.S. military reports an average of 10 a night. U.S. /NATO soldiers burst into people’s homes and attack people in their sleep.

“The U.S. wants the Karzai government to sign a Strategic Protection Agreement that will allow U.S./NATO forces to stay in Afghanistan until 2024 and possibly beyond. This agreement will very likely frustrate possibilities for a negotiated settlement since Taliban forces have repeatedly stated their demand that all foreign troops leave Afghanistan. The Strategic Protection Agreement has never been presented to the Afghan Members of Parliament for their consideration. No one in the U.S. or Karzai government seems concerned about how ordinary Afghans might view the Strategic protection Agreement.

“Arguably, people in Afghanistan are looking for ways to vent long-suppressed anger over having their future dictated by their invaders and occupiers.”

Kelly recently wrote the piece “The Ghost and the Machine: Drone Warfare and Accountability” along with the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers <http://www.commondreams.org/view/2012/02/29-2>

Also see from the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers: “2 Million Candles to End the Afghan War” <http://vcnv.org/2-million-candles-to-end-the-afghan-war>

See by Anand Gopal “Night Raids, Hidden Detention Centers, the ‘Black Jail,’ and the Dogs of War in Afghanistan.” <http://www.tomdispatch.com/archive/175197>

Kathy Kelly can be reached at kathy.vcnv@gmail.com, <http://vcnv.org>

For more information, contact at the Institute for Public Accuracy: Sam Husseini, (202) 347-0020; or David Zupan, (541) 484-9167

Death and public relations

By ROBERT KOEHLER

The killer was in his fourth deployment. He walked from his base to one village, then another, leaving behind the lunacy and spiritual wreckage of American foreign policy. Then he walked back to his base and calmly turned himself in.

I’ve been staring at the words for hours now:

“This terrible incident does not change our steadfast dedication to protecting the Afghan people and to doing everything we can to build a strong and stable Afghanistan.” — Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and their entire community.” — deputy American ambassador to Afghanistan, James B. Cunningham

The words are meant to soften this PR disaster, to muffle the cries of the survivors.

“And obviously what happened this weekend was absolutely tragic and heartbreaking. But when you look at what hundreds of thousands of our military personnel have achieved under enormous strain, you can’t help but be proud generally.” — President Barack Obama

But all they do is cascade like an avalanche of sludge down from the highest reaches of American empire. The 24-7 news media report that villagers are “angry” and the “already strained relationship between Washington and Kabul” has been “inflamed.” And 16 villagers in the Panjwayi district of Kandahar province — nine of them children — are shot dead in their homes, many while sleeping, their deaths blending into the thousands, the millions, of Afghans and Iraqis slaughtered, displaced, starving and poisoned, mostly anonymously, in the 11 years of the “war on terror,” the war on sanity and innocence.

These 16 deaths stand out, eliciting searing headlines and bland, Hallmark-greeting-card apologies from on high, because they were perpetrated by an insane man in a soldier’s uniform, acting on strictly internal orders. They were sensational: the work of another lone-nut gunman. This is what grabs the headlines.

But the horror most people feel at these particular murders is not a function of their lone-nuttiness but just the opposite. At some deep level, the terror gnaws at us: These murders are not simply the result of national policy. They are national policy, in all its cruel, exploitative lunacy.

This is the emperor with no clothes.

The soldier who killed the villagers acting on his own warped orders was part of the human wreckage of the empire he served. Before deploying to Afghanistan in December, he served three tours in Iraq, which almost certainly means he had PTSD — cancer of the spirit — and it was in the process of eating him alive.

His home base, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, near Tacoma, Wash., was designated the most troubled outpost in the U.S. military by Stars and Stripes, the independent military newspaper, because of its horrific suicide rate — over 20 in the last two years — and because of other convicted killers who were stationed there, most notoriously the four members of “the kill team” who hunted random Afghans for sport and wore body parts as trophies. They were convicted in 2010.

But the most telling scandal to hit the base, hoisting the

most glaring red flag, is the one about the overturned PTSD diagnoses. Since 2007, according to the Washington Post, about 300 such diagnoses have been incorrectly downgraded at the base medical center to lesser conditions, allowing those soldiers to be redeployed and relieving the military of responsibility for treatment and long-term care. The situation caused such an uproar that the Army Medical Command opened an investigation last month and the head of the medical center was placed on administrative leave. My guess is that this is just the tip of the iceberg.

American geo-policy is a self-perpetuating system that values human life as much as it values local and global ecosystems, which is to say, not at all. It cynically uses up the men and women who serve it militarily, then discards them as easily as it turns civilians into collateral damage in strategic bombing runs.

And PTSD is a tedious nuisance to the military high command. Vets have been complaining for years that they can’t get proper treatment for their psychological and spiritual wounds. In the documentary *On the Bridge*, which I wrote about last week, ex-Marine Ryan Endicott put it this way:

“You go to the chaplain, who tells you Jesus will save your soul if you accept him. Then you see the wizard — the battalion psychiatrist. He medicates you and gets you out the door. That’s it. I never had anyone to talk to. When I did try to talk, I was told to take more medication.”

The military-industrial machine, the engine of empire, is the ultimate debaser of human life. It spews death and public relations at an almost equal rate, and mostly the death blends into the PR and becomes regrettable, even tragic, but always necessary, always for the greater good.

Meanwhile, the spiritual cancer of PTSD is spreading. It’s as much American policy as the occupation of resource-rich and strategically useful nations.

Robert Koehler is an award-winning, Chicago-based journalist and nationally syndicated writer. His new book, *Courage Grows Strong at the Wound* (Xenos Press) is now available.

Contact him at koehlercw@gmail.com

From <http://vcnv.org/>

**AMERICAN
LUMBER Co.**
Since 1923

Buy
American

Lumber Yard

Window & Door

*The full
service*

With a

Showroom

1231 9th St, Modesto
209 578 5200 fax 578 1528
M - F 7am -5pm, Sat 8am -12pm

**online
store**
**www.
4X6.com**

Join the Christian Peacemaker Corps before May 1, 2012

Does CPT's style of peacemaking, confronting injustice, and undoing oppressions work fit with yours? Is now the time to take the next step and join the Peacemaker Corps? If so, send your application to join the CPT Corps before May 1, 2012 for participation in CPT's July-August Peacemaker Training in Chicago July 13 - August 13, 2012.

Applying now will make it possible to notify those accepted for training in plenty of time to make travel arrangements. You will find the application at <http://www.cpt.org/participate/peacemaker/apply>

We are committed to anti-oppression work both in and out of CPT, and we seek others also interested in this work. We seek applicants available for stipend-eligible service, as well as reservists. For more information, email Adriana Cabrera-Velasquez, personnel coordinator, at personnel@cpt.org.

Visit <http://cpt.org/>

WWW.PEACELIFECENTER.ORG



**SUPPORT.
ADVOCACY.
LOVE.**

For more information on meetings, our programs, and ways you can give back to the LGBT community, visit www.pflagmodesto.org

**Confidential Helpline
(209) 566-2468**



Modesto Chapter
Parents, Families, and
Friends of Lesbians
and Gays

Apologies

This is significant and unprecedented — and unfortunate — but it is not a surprise. The Koran burning and the recent tragic shootings merely allowed a white-hot pot of frustration finally to boil over.

What's the real issue, then?

Simple: U.S. strategy failed in the past, is failing now, and will likely fail in the future. On strategy, cost, accountability, and perception, we continue to miss the mark.

On strategy, the Pentagon has pursued new policies in two- to three-year spurts, each time under different, equally optimistic leadership. First, immediately after the invasion, they aided and abetted warlords and corrupt officials in Afghanistan — essentially anyone who would help the U.S. agenda, no matter how much blood was on their hands. Then they tried bolstering Kabul and the central state, figuring that legal and licit state-building was wiser. Now they've given that up and are experimenting with pilot projects like propping up locals with munitions and monies and calling them the Afghan Local Police, a nonofficial title. This latest strategy comes with incredible risk. Flooding villages with financial bribes and bombs is likely to backfire and create more civil war.

Those arms will eventually be used against us (see our similar strategy in Iraq). That attacks on U.S. troops rose substantially in recent years is a reflection of how NATO and the United States have focused their efforts. By primarily pursuing military options for the last 10 years, we failed to improve Afghanistan's socioeconomic security, be it through better trade, more jobs, functional markets, schools with teachers, or hospitals with doctors and medicine. For a lot less money, we could have helped Afghanistan solve important quality-of-life problems. Only 27 percent of Afghans have access to safe drinking water, 5 percent to adequate sanitation and 30 percent to electricity. These are devastating realities in light of the hundreds of billions of dollars America has already spent on the country.

from page 1

The more than \$325 million we still spend every single day we remain in Afghanistan, or \$120 billion yearly, makes this oversight even more appalling. Keep in mind that America borrows this money. In fact, this war is entirely debt-funded. Politicos in Washington concerned about our burgeoning deficit or our rising debt ceiling would be wise to trim here first.

On accountability, Afghanistan has become a sea of untraceable taxpayer dollars.

As an example of the corruption involved and the U.S. officials getting rich off this war, scan the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction latest quarterly report from January: one U.S. Army sergeant pled guilty to conspiracy to commit fraud and theft of approximately \$210,000 in government property, while a captain in the Army National Guard was sentenced to 15 months in prison for receiving bribes from military contractors in return for the award of Defense Department contracts during his deployment to Bagram Airfield. These are just two samples from a long report detailing U.S. fraud, waste, and abuse. No wonder the Afghan employees at Bagram are protesting. They see the U.S. corruption all around them.

On perception, the United States is about as far from winning Afghan hearts and minds as we have ever been. The U.S. military continues night house raids and drone and air strikes, which Afghans at all levels of society vehemently protest. The only strategic thing about these raids and strikes is their ability to spark anger and backlash. A majority of Afghans, according to Asia Foundation's latest poll, fear for their personal safety, hardly something for the Pentagon to write home about after a decade of war.

Going forward, what should America do besides promptly reduce its military footprint? In Asia Foundation's poll, an overwhelming 82 percent of Afghans supported the government's attempts to address the security situation through negotiation and reconciliation with armed opposition. America's recent support for this must continue. It's the only hope for political stability.

If some U.S. policymakers do not want to leave Afghanistan in shambles while drawing down our military, then we suggest allocating at least one month's worth of existing funding, or \$10 billion, for one of the few national development programs that has been effective in rebuilding Afghanistan these last ten years. This \$10 billion would not only fund the National Solidarity Program and its Community Development Councils for the next decade, but also allow them to significantly scale up their laudable reconstruction and stabilization efforts.

Washington must understand the fact that one or two or 10 more years at war won't bring "success" as we were originally sold it. We've been it at it nearly 11 years to no avail. It is time to stop this madness and bring the troops home.

From Voices For Creative Nonviolence, <http://vcnv.org/>



Anything you can do

Two Can Do
for you

Personal
Services

Noel Russell
(209) 524-2314

Two Can Do Time Savers

errands run • bookkeeping done
home management services
information gathering • special occasions

Castigated Beauties

Creative beauty held down
By the darkness of
your hand
I've been bound and gagged
held hostage
the old ways defining
a women's value
as property duty surrender

My voice has been removed
In its place your hands have
choked sweet words from
my heart

My smile
no longer allowed to shine
has been replaced
by the brutality and harsh reality
of black and blue
now turning a putrid orange yellow

My eyes no longer shine
with laughter or
an invitation to dance
They are sunken and frightened
hollow of the womanly happiness
my spirit used to possess

Reaching for hope from within
the hidden chambers of my heart
I find instead bile bitterness
Violence and despair
My womanly shell now a rusted vessel
chipped and dented
no longer able to hold a single
jeweled tear

Hidden Inner Child

Shadows blister the mirrored pain hidden
by the soldiers of my mind.
The inner child searches,
bewildered with questions of why?

Mitigated stirrings purge the locked
recesses of my brain.
A wounded and bleeding heart marches on
amputated by longing thoughts of
innocent indulgences long forgotten.

Emotions snap to attention.
My mind is held united by the sanity
of a gilded cord,
pardoned by the soldiers' guarded attention
to repressed memories.



Glass Eyes

Painted broken beauty hides
the truth that lingers deep within her eyes,
now glass eggs of misery.

Chaos swirls at the base of the brain.
Thin streams of a psychedelic high
entangled by tentacles of moss
smuggle the innocence that lingers
deep in the recessed caverns.

Filthy in her misery,
creeping ivy fingerlings entrap her mind.
Inebriated lies manipulate the
inner pain that sways her decisions.

Darkness overcomes her senses
Now filled with regret.
She loses direction,
Disappears in embraced neediness.

False stares of a lipstick painted smile
cloak the bitter consequences
lost in the flicker of a fan's shadow.

Holding wadded bills left tainted by sweaty hands,
she pushes away whispered tears sealed in a box,
guardians of milky secrets strangled in the muted
exchange...
Denial the unspoken language.

Kathleen Wright

I am resilient and greet people with a welcoming smile. I'm passionate about not allowing life's circumstances to define who I am. I am a mother of three grown children and a grandmother of two amazing grandsons. I hold an AA in English studies and am currently pursuing a BA in creative writing from San Francisco State University.

After leaving a marriage of 18 years, I experienced a renewed energy and vigor, and my innate desire to express life's sensory impression in poetic form began my journey into the creative writing world.

As a survivor of domestic violence and abuse, I believe it's important to bring the topics of abuse, violence and submission to fear into mainstream consciousness. As a facilitator of a women's recovery group, I learned much from listening to the other women's struggles and victories and from sharing my story of survival with them. Whether the pain of abuse was in childhood or as an adult, the cohesive themes of the group were the betrayal of trust, the loss of safety and the broken inner pain

that comes from the belief in one's loss of value.

I believe every person deserves to be heard and possesses a desire for peace, serenity, safety and love. I am honored that my poems have found a place where they can speak clearly and bring attention and light to the pain that can encapsulate a person's beauty and tear at their very being. My written works have appeared in the MeterMaid Anthology 2009, Serendipity Poets of Cheyenne's Journal 2010, "More than Soil, More than Sky" 2011 and in the "High Plains Register" published by Laramie County Community College of Cheyenne, Wyoming 2012. I am currently working on my first book of poetry, "Of Sand and Paper", as well as two children's books. Turning now to another chapter of my life, I hope to inspire and encourage choices through my poetry that in some way instill a sense that life can move forward in positive freeing happiness.



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

School Gardens: Fertile Soil for Learning

By LYNN M. HANSEN

What does restaurateur Alice Waters, UC Professor Emeritus of Zoology, Dr. Robert Stebbins and 2nd Grade Teacher Janet Wheeler at Julien Elementary School in Turlock have in common? They all know that school gardens offer students more than vegetables. Wanting to see a day in the life of a school garden, I decided to visit the campus of Julien Elementary School, where teacher Janet Wheeler is the School Garden Coordinator.

The garden at Julien Elementary includes 10 raised beds, one long rock-lined native plant garden bed along the fence and a central Scent and Spice garden. Theme gardens are often planted in the raised beds such as the Peter Rabbit Garden, the Salsa Garden, The Three Sisters Garden, the Pioneer Garden (to grow Hollyhocks and collect seeds) and the Habitat Garden. In the fall season they planted an ancient garden with wheat and other ancient foods. Some beds had newly emerged seedlings or were empty of plants since old

included turnips, sugar snap peas, beets, and radishes and the beds were sectioned off so each student had their own crop to monitor.

At another station, students gathered around Mrs. Wheeler and marked off a small section of the native garden (a square foot garden). Students became scientists using their observation skills and recorded in their Nature Notebook the plants found there, the type of soil (dry or moist, rocky or sandy) and any animal life within the small space. This activity will be repeated frequently over the next two months to note changes in the square foot of the native plant ecosystem.

At another raised planting bed, a pair of students supervised by mentors from CSU Stanislaus, Cynthia Camacho and Tommy Her, worked together with their mentees planting seeds for a winter garden. Kale, radishes, lettuce, broccoli, turnips, beets, carrots were just a few of the plants chosen by the students to sow in the still warm soil. Both student mentors said that the gardening experience opens students up to conversation and helps them overcome some of problems they have working with others. Growing plants also allows students to study the life cycle of a plant they choose and learn the function of each part of the plant body (other state science standards).

The fifth station was held in the classroom with a parent volunteer where students worked on drawings and reports on the life cycles of insects or worms found in their worm bin or ladybug beetles who were attracted by an aphid infestation on the sunflower plant this year and came to their garden in large numbers. At the fifteen-minute signal, students moved from one group to the next until all five stations were experienced by two classes of 2nd grade students.



crops had been removed and the soil was ready for the next garden. Watchman over the entire enterprise is Pajaro Grande, a scarecrow created by the students.

When I visited the garden, it was buzzing with student activity. Second grade students were rotating through six different activity stations. One group met at a table in the garden with parent volunteer, Melanie Boothby, who facilitated a taste test of three different kinds of pears, a seasonal fruit (not grown in the garden). Tasting fruits and vegetables illustrates state science standard on senses. Students labeled a diagram of the pear parts, learning new vocabulary words. Mrs. Boothby shared that students often do not know where their food comes from and when they grow their own crops in the garden they have a new understanding of what it takes to bring food to the table. Students also are more likely to taste new foods that they grow, so the garden forms the basis for learning healthy eating habits.

At a second station supervised by Grandma Peggy Cherry, students were measuring and recording the growth of their plants using large rulers with inches as well as centimeter scales, thus augmenting their math lessons. Their plants



Thanks to efforts of Janet Wheeler, her Julien colleagues, volunteers and donations from local businesses, what began as a small square garden plot outside a classroom has grown into a convenient outdoor education classroom where nature is the teacher.

ACTION: Donate to your local school garden: time and resources

To start a school garden check out these resources:

1. Healthy Schools Initiative <http://www.myhealthyschool.com/gardens/resources.php>
2. Ca.Gov Recycle <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/education/Gardens/default.htm>
3. Create and Sustain California School Gardens <http://www.csgn.org/index.php>

To buy Native Plants:

1. Check out UC Davis Arboretum sales events Saturday April 14 & Saturday May 19 http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plant_sales_and_nursery.aspx
2. Look for the California Native Plant Society, North San Joaquin Chapter Native
3. Plant Sale this Fall at the Great Valley Museum, Modesto, California.



Selective Consignments

EVERYTHING FROM A TO Z
LET US SELL IT FOR YOU!

1325 McHenry Ave Darla Turner, Owner
Modesto, 95350 209 / 572-3376
M - F 10AM - 5PM ~ SAT 10AM - 4PM

Seminar on Socialist Renewal and the Capitalist Crisis

You are invited to a historic exchange with leading Cuban thinkers this June in Havana. A Cuban-North American Exchange in Havana, Cuba, June 18-22, 2012

Part I: SOCIALIST RENEWAL: Cuba's Economic Reforms, Latin America Moves Left: 21st Century Socialism, Protagonism and Participation, Endogenous Development, Solidarity Economy.

Part II: CAPITALIST CRISIS: Overaccumulation, Crisis and Stagnation, Corporate Globalization, Financialization, Exhaustion of Neoliberalism, Other topics.

Group activities prior to the Seminar: people-to-people contact including visits to cooperatives, urban gardens, community development projects, social research centers, and educational and medical institutions.

Estimated cost for the entire program, June 11 through 23, 2012 is \$1500 plus airfare. This includes 12 nights in a shared room in Hotel Vedado with breakfast, translation, transportation and group activities.

Sponsor: Center for Global Justice (a project of Radical Philosophy Association), and Facultad de Filosofia e Historia, Universidad de la Habana, Instituto de Filosofia, and Sociedad Cubana de Investigaciones Filosoficas.

For information, contact cuba@globaljusticecenter.org, or visit <http://www.globaljusticecenter.org/>

Stanislaus **CONNECTIONS**, published by the non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center, has promoted non-violent social change since 1971. Opinions expressed DO NOT necessarily reflect those of the Center or Editorial Committee. **CONNECTIONS** encourages free speech to serve truth and build a more just, compassionate, peaceful and environmentally healthy community and world. We welcome pertinent, signed articles to 800-1000 words or less, and letters with address, phone number. We edit for length, taste, error and libel. DEADLINE: 10th of the Month PRECEDING the next issue. Send articles and ads by email to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org.

Photos and ADS should be submitted as high-resolution JPG, TIFF or PDF files.

EDITOR: Jim Costello

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Jim Costello, Luella Cole, Tina Driskill, Myrtle Osner

LAYOUT EDITOR: Linda Knoll

ADVERTISING: (vacant)

ONLINE EDITION: George Osner

DISTRIBUTION: Edna Binner, Jim Costello, Jim Ingols, Sylvan Bupp, Luella Cole, David Rockwell, Noel Russell, Tina Driskill, Alice Hoaglund, Susan Burch, Dan Onorato, Dorothy Griggs, Shelly Scribner, others.

ADS must be consistent with Peace/Life Center tenets. We do not accept ads for candidates for public office or for liquor. Advertisers do not necessarily support Peace/Life Center views nor does the Center endorse advertised products or services. To ADVERTISE, email Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org

Rights Action/Alliance for Global Justice Honduras Delegation

The Coup vs. Democracy: Struggle of the Popular Movements, May 19-28, 2012

Since the June 2009 military coup, large landowners in the fertile Aguan Valley of Northern Honduras have used the military, police, and private security guards, to terrorize villages and expand their lucrative African palm plantations. Canadian and US transnational corporations are pushing mining and tourist projects that displace Garifuna and other indigenous communities. Popular Movements are targets for assassination and repression. But unions, teachers, campesino organizations, students, artists, the LGBTQ community and others are unified as never before.

Honduras today is a study of terrible violence and repression under a coup-spawned government supported by the United States and Canada. But it is also a study of courage and organizing by a unified, nonviolent citizens' movement to restore democracy and re-found the State based on economic justice and sustainable development.

Join Rights Action's Karen Spring, whose experience accompanying the Honduras Resistance, especially the campesino movement, which is the primary target of repression, is unparalleled. Karen has led many delegations of US and Canadians. She will lead the delegation to meetings with the top Resistance leaders and with the most humble of campesino farmers.

It will focus on the threats of mining, tourist development, and African Palm monoculture export agriculture, as well as the neoliberal threats to public health and education and political repression of the nonviolent resistance to the coup. It will also focus on community-based and sustainable alternatives promoted by the popular movements, and upon the National Front of Popular Resistance (FNRP), a broad-based non-violent movement for democracy that comprises every sector of Honduran civil society.

The \$850 delegation fee covers two meals a day, hotel (double occupancy), translation, and in-country transportation. The fee does not cover international airfare. For an application, send an email to AFGJ@AFGJ.org

People who might consider becoming long-term human rights accompaniers are encouraged to participate in this delegation.

Rights Action www.rightsaction.org; Alliance for Global Justice <http://AFGJ.org>



VISIT MY STUDIO APRIL 14-15

**FINE ART &
GRAPHIC DESIGN**

Linda Knoll

phone: 209.247.2626

<http://web.me.com/llknoll>

email: llknoll@sbcglobal.net

Stanislaus Artists Open Studio Tour

The Stanislaus Artists Open Studio Tour is on April 14 and 15, 2012. Each tour map booklet includes an entry form for a drawing. Winners will receive one of five original art pieces produced by tour participants.

The purchase prize award winners comprise five original works of art to be given away in the drawing: Mary O. Bucknam's watercolor "Winding River, Wyoming"; Don Hall's Raku "Aloha Vessel #1"; Claudia Silva-Doo's, multi media "Bird with Pomegranate"; Linda Knoll's watercolor "Innertubes"; and Chella's oil on canvas "North Parker Ranch, Hawaii."



Maps will be available during an April 12 preview show at Modesto's Gallo Center for the Arts, in the lobby from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The preview is free to the public. Most of the 73 participating artists will be on hand with a sampling of art to be shown during the weekend event.

Map booklets are available from the official web site <http://stanislausaos.wordpress.com> via pay pal small postage fee, or by email at openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com or by calling 209-222-TOUR. Maps are \$10 for adults, children under 18 free.

For other booklet sale locations, visit: <http://stanislausaos.wordpress.com>

