



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable future

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John McCutcheon performs live-streaming concert Jan. 9 to benefit Modesto Peace/Life Center

Six-time Grammy nominated folk musician John McCutcheon has been performing a yearly benefit concert for the Peace/Life Center for nearly 20 years. This year the concert will be streaming on Saturday, January 9 at 4PM Pacific Standard Time. Johnny Cash called John McCutcheon “the most impressive instrumentalist I’ve ever heard.” John is a master of the guitar, banjo, hammer dulcimer, piano, autoharp and fiddle.

John: “Every January for over thirty years I’ve been touring in California. It’s a family reunion, a gathering

of the tribe, a post-holiday celebration, an annual check-in... and a restorative joy for me. I couldn’t imagine missing this year. Especially this year. I’ve been writing up a storm, so there’ll be loads of new songs and stories, plus plenty of old favorites. We’re gathering the presenting partners who’ve sponsored me all these years so that they could benefit from these live-streaming concerts, as well. *So please, buy your ticket(s) here since a portion of every ticket sold will help to support the Modesto Peace/Life Center.* <https://boxoffice.mandolin.com/collections/john-mccutcheon/products/john-mccutcheons-virtual-left-coast-tour-part-1-19?rfsn=4834484.4f8af3>

That way some of the bounty will remain in your community. It’s some of the best kind of recycling. Thanks for adapting to this New Abnormal. See you soon...and see you, in person in 2022!

Tickets available at price points to include all guests! Pay what you can.

General Admission: \$20

Family/Household: \$30

Student Pricing: \$10

Unemployed/Laid Off Pricing: \$5

Once you buy a ticket, you will need to set up your own account with Mandolin (the live-stream platform that is hosting the concert). You are encouraged to set up that account as soon as you receive your electronic ticket. That will make it easy to log into the concert on the day of the show.

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



Immigrant Rights Groups Welcome Mayorkas for DHS Secretary

The former director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services was a key architect of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program and also expanded fee waivers for naturalization and immigration applications.

By Kenny Stancil, staff writer, Common Dreams

Immigrant rights defenders were encouraged by President-elect Joe Biden’s Monday nomination of Alejandro Mayorkas for Secretary of Homeland Security and expressed hope that the first Latino and immigrant to lead the department will implement humane immigration policies to reverse the damage inflicted by President Donald Trump.

Arturo Vargas, CEO of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), said that “Mayorkas’ keen knowledge of our immigration policies and procedures, as well as his commitment to a fair immigration system, makes him exceptionally qualified.”

Citing his work at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Vargas pointed out that “in addition to his tireless work to make naturalization accessible and affordable, Mayorkas oversaw the building and implementation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program,” which Trump has attempted to dismantle.

“His work at USCIS also included promoting the importance of working with stakeholders and community organizations,” Vargas added, “where he created the Office of Public Engagement, helping promote and strengthen those relationships.”

Adding to the chorus of approval for Mayorkas was Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-Texas), chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Castro said the CHC is eager to work with the nominee to “treat immigrants with dignity and respect.”

“A dedicated public servant and Cuban immigrant, Alejandro Mayorkas is a fantastic choice to lead DHS,” Castro said. “After the cruelty and devastation wrought by the Trump

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A life Line for Seniors

For over 45 years, Friendship Line California has been a vital lifeline for people aged 60+ years and adults living with disabilities to connect with a caring, compassionate voice ready to listen and provide emotional support.

As the nation's only accredited hotline of its kind, the need for this service has increased with the onset of COVID-19 and the host of emotional well-being issues related to social isolation. Now, thanks to a new partnership with The California Department of Aging, we can support all older Californians who may benefit from a friendly conversation.

To watch a video visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BwVkgA40>

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CONNECTIONS
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Groups Welcome Mayorkas for DHS Secretary

administration, Mayorkas has a mandate to overhaul DHS."

"As the former deputy secretary of DHS and lead implementer of DACA," Castro added, "he has the necessary experience to bring about much needed reforms."

NALEO and CHC's positive assessments of Mayorkas were mirrored by the leaders of numerous immigrant right organizations.

"Welcomed news," tweeted Greisa Martínez Rosas, executive director of United We Dream.

Nicole Melaku, executive director of the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), said that her organization finds the nomination of Mayorkas encouraging.

"DHS is in dire need of a course correction," Melaku noted, "and we welcome its transition from an enforcement-focused agency to one that prioritizes eliminating barriers in order to achieve greater immigrant and refugee inclusion in our country."

The NPNA "look[s] forward to working with Secretary Mayorkas and the Biden administration to move our country forward, make immediate and urgently needed changes to federal immigration policy, and bring into focus a new vision for how this country treats immigrant and refugee communities," she added.

Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center (NILC), said that "we are thrilled with... [the] historic selection," which she called "an exemplary choice that will not only serve our next president and the American people well, but also sends a strong signal to immigrant communities that the Biden administration fully

MJC Science Colloquium December 2020 Schedule

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

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

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



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intends to follow through on their commitment to undo the harms of the Trump administration."

Hincapié described Mayorkas as "someone who will listen to the voices of immigrant communities and will remain responsive to their concerns."

"Mayorkas has a deep understanding of the complex immigration laws and policies impacting the country," Hincapié added. "He is compassionate, fair, and deeply committed to restoring due process to our system."

RAICES, an immigration legal services nonprofit, expressed hope that Mayorkas will "change the direction of DHS once and for all."

Acknowledging the "crucial role" that he played in creating DACA, the organization "look[s] forward to the immediate expansion of the program and the dismantling of the detention and deportation machine that was created under Obama and expanded by Trump."

DHS "was built in the wake of 9/11 to protect the U.S. from terrorists," RAICES noted, "only for it to now be used to terrorize immigrants."

In order for the Biden administration to "immediately change course," the group called for "eliminating the 'good vs bad immigrant' narrative."

RAICES also advocated for "dismantling rogue agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection in order to prevent further human rights abuses at the border and the interior of the country."

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Prospect Theater's Play Reading Project Presents *Dutchman* by Amiri Baraka

WHAT: PTP's Play-Reading Project focuses on reading, hearing, and discussing unique theater works. We fondly refer to this as our "book club for theater lovers," due to the captivating discussion session that follows each play.

The *Dutchman*: Strangers meet on a subway train in Baraka's political allegory of black and white relations. Tickets: \$10. Purchase by visiting prospecttheaterproject.org.

WHEN: December 5, 2020 (Performance - Streaming available for 24-hours) and December 6, 2020 (Talk-back - Streaming live at 4:00 p.m.)

WHERE: Streaming Online

WHO: For over twenty years, Prospect Theater Project has promoted community growth by presenting insightful and innovative works of theater in a uniquely intimate performance space.

A Christmas Memory By Truman Capote.

WHEN: December 12, 2020, Streaming

Truman Capote's short story was originally published in *Mademoiselle* magazine in 1956. PTP

Radio Cavalcade has adapted it for our annual holiday presentation. Largely autobiographical, Capote's 7-year-old narrator recounts memories of Christmas activities involving himself and an elderly cousin and details country life and friendship as well as loneliness and loss.



More Info: visit prospecttheaterproject.org or call (209) 549-9341. **Contact:** Sarah Aaronson, Prospect Theater Project Board Member, sarah@irmevents.com

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Among Neighbors

By TOM PORTWOOD

I wrote the following short piece five days after the presidential election in 2016, and it appeared in the December issue of Stanislaus Connections that year. While this year's traumas and challenges have revealed Americans are now more divided than ever, if we are ever going to tackle the huge problems and injustices we face as a country we must embrace the gift that we are living among neighbors, that change will only occur if we work within our communities to make it happen.

I took a walk around my neighborhood this afternoon, a typical Sunday in so many ways. In a nearby park, a young mother was watching three or four kids yelling among themselves as they ran around a fake boulder embedded in sand by the swings. A baby was halfheartedly toying with a rattle in a stroller by the mother's side. The mother wore a hijab, nodded and smiled at me as she pushed the stroller by the bench where I sat reading a book.

A few minutes later, a slight breeze fluttered the branches in a stand of ash trees as I walked across the park's wide grassy field. Across the street, a man and his wife were clipping hedges alongside their driveway, their neighbor two houses down was mowing his lawn. Two kids bicycled by, their tires describing great, lazy arcs across the road. An elderly man nodded at me as I walked along Rumble. Having had its landscaping recently freshened up, the elementary school next to the park looked better than it had in years.

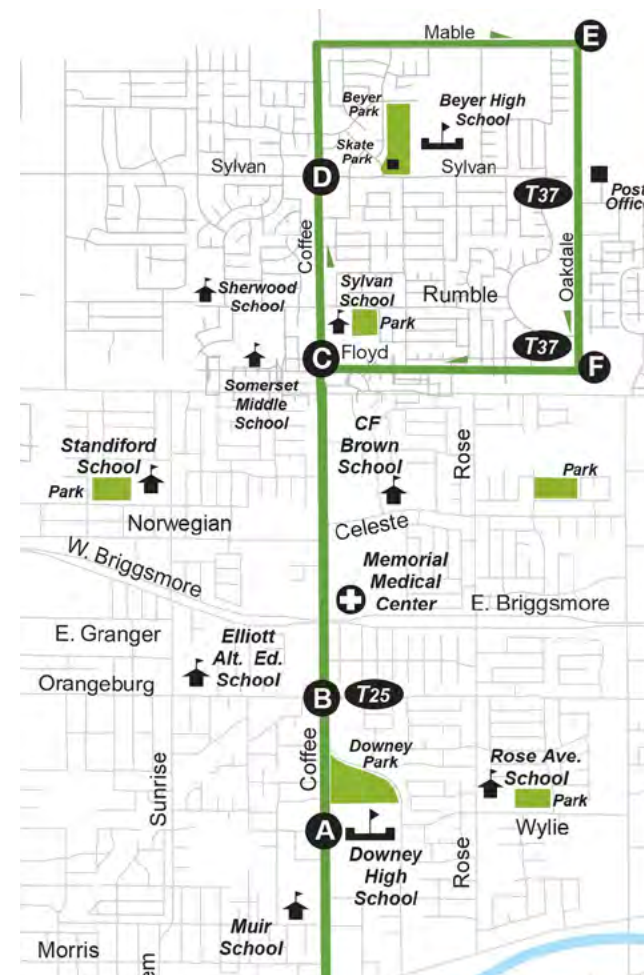
As I turned the corner onto Coffee, I saw another elderly man, someone I recognized. The fellow was pushing a shopping cart crammed with plastic bottles and aluminum cans – working his heart out on this day of rest for a couple of extra dollars. We stopped and chatted for a few minutes – we've passed each other on the street many times over the last several months. His name is Armando. Like me, Armando has problems with his back. We chatted about that, joked

about getting old and getting by. Unlike me, Armando toils hard every day to get by, courageously, under a hot sun or drenched by rain. Here on the street we are neighbors. We shake hands in parting, as neighbors do.

Communities are where we find them, where we look for them, if we look for them. Three times a week, I catch the 32 bus around noon to go to the downtown library where I do a little volunteer tutoring. At that hour, the bus riders are mostly regulars, mostly, like me, a little older, a little weakened by disease or injury or chronic health problems. Most of us require a little hardware to help us get around – motorized wheelchairs, walkers, oxygen tanks, or, like me, one of the luckier ones, a walking cane. Occasionally, a caregiver will board the bus with a rider who is more acutely ill and accompany her client to his destination. And there's a smattering of younger riders, too – young moms with wide-eyes toddlers in tow, grandchildren off on an adventure to a downtown park with a doting grandmother. But many board the bus, greying, missing an arm or a leg, or both legs. Always smiling, always cheerfully nodding at the rest of us, at familiar faces. The bus stops and picks up passengers at Marple Manor, the Senior Center, Ralston Towers, deposits many of the riders at Memorial Hospital, Sutter Gould, and the various health services on Scenic Drive. For most of the riders, negotiating through the physical challenges of the day will be strenuous, at best. But on the bus they briskly chat among themselves, rarely knowing each other's names, but sharing a moment or two about the weather, or how reassuring it is to see so many kids racing across the playground as the bus trundles by an elementary school. The bus driver often chimes in, takes special care with every passenger who needs assistance. If someone drops a package, or has trouble pulling the cord to signal a stop, other riders help out. The sense of community on that bus, of real warmth and graciousness and caring for the other fellow, is visceral. It's a ride I always

look forward to.

In a way, we are all riders on that bus. All of us must look out for each other, especially now. We are the community we are all searching for. It's right here. Right now – for we are always among neighbors.



New Arts Magazine for Fun and Family

By LINDA KNOLL

The concept for *StArt Magazine* is simple. We want to showcase artists and art programs that are happening right here in our community – Stanislaus County – in a fun and family friendly format. A vibrant community includes access to the arts for all families. The bilingual magazine is committed to highlighting a diverse range of people and stories. And we're offering a "buy one - give one" purchase option which will help reach families in underserved areas.

The first issue in print and digital format, buy one/give one options and year long subscriptions are available at lindaknollart.com/start-magazine.

Linda Knoll and Betty Gay, both designers and art teachers, teamed up to create a beautiful magazine about the arts that is accessible to young kids, but exciting enough for adults to appreciate right alongside them. We procure content



from our local arts organizations, and also from students that we teach and people young and old who are active in the arts community. Children are encouraged to submit pictures and stories about their artistic endeavors.

The premier issue, *Arts at Home*, features projects that can be done at home, as well as stories about a variety of arts and artists in the community. Future issues will include themes on Peace (January), STEAM (combining science and art in April), and Social Emotional Learning (June).

As a bonus, each issue will feature a community service project. Our first issue includes a stamped, blank postcard tucked inside. Kids are encouraged to make a picture on one side and write a note of encouragement to someone they appreciate for their commitment and hard work to keep us safe in these crazy times.

We hope you'll join us on this journey to share the arts with Stanislaus families!

To submit stories, art or ideas on these topics, email Linda at llknoll@gmail.com



2021 Peace Essay Contest

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

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



Division I (Grades 11-12) & Division II (Grades 9-10): 500-1000 words

Division III (Grades 7-8) & Division IV (Grades 5-6): 250-500 words

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

World Says No to War on Yemen

From Voices For Creative Nonviolence

Since 2015, the Saudi-led bombing and blockade of Yemen have killed tens of thousands of people and devastated the country. The U.N. calls this the largest humanitarian crisis on Earth. Half the country's people are on the brink of famine, the country has the world's worst cholera outbreak in modern history, and now Yemen has one of the very worst COVID death rates in the world: It kills 1 in 4 people it infects. The pandemic, along with withdrawal of aid, is pushing more people into acute hunger.

And yet Saudi Arabia is escalating its war and tightening its blockade.

The war is only possible because Western countries — and the United States and Britain in particular — continue to arm Saudi Arabia and provide military, political and logistical support for the war. The Western powers are active participants and have the power to stop the world's most acute human crisis.



The disaster in Yemen is man-made. It is caused by the war and blockade. It can be ended.

People and organizations from the U.S., Britain, Canada, France, Italy, and across the world, are coming together to call for an end to the war in Yemen and solidarity with the people of Yemen. We demand that right now our governments:

Stop foreign aggression on Yemen.

Stop weapons and war support for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Lift the blockade on Yemen and open all land and sea ports.

Restore and expand humanitarian aid for the people of Yemen.

We call on people around the world to protest the war on January 25, 2021, just days after the U.S. presidential inauguration and the day before Saudi Arabia's 'Davos in the Desert' Future Investment Initiative.

We ask individuals and organizations everywhere to call for protests — with masks and other safety precautions — in their towns and cities on that day and make clear that the WORLD SAYS NO TO WAR ON YEMEN.

Please add your organization's name to this statement. For more information, please contact national@actioncorps.org.

Stop the War Coalition (UK)

Action Corps (US)

Yemeni Alliance Committee (US)

Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation (US)

CODEPINK (US)

Just Foreign Policy (US)

Voices for Creative Nonviolence

Can We Live Up to James Baldwin's Hope for a Multiracial Democracy?

By RUTH TERRY

"Unprecedented" in recent years has become sloppy shorthand for "that which White America did not see coming." Trump's 2016 presidential win. Inequalities exposed by the pandemic. Black Lives Matter uprisings. "The times" in which we live. White people seem to have a limitless capacity to be surprised by things that history reveals have all manner of precedent.

Begin Again by Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. (Crown, 2020), uses the writer James Baldwin's life and later works to illuminate those precedents and suggest a way forward in spite of them. Glaude refers to our current situation as the "after times," akin to the periods of White betrayal and Black disillusionment that followed both Reconstruction and the civil rights movement. He looks to Baldwin for lessons on how to respond to the after times without succumbing to despair, and on how to keep faith that all of us (including White people) can be better.

Begin Again is a sermon that uses Baldwin's words as its sacred text. Don't worry if, like me, you aren't particularly well versed in Baldwin. Glaude, who has a Ph.D. in religion, performs exegesis right on the page, grounding lengthy excerpts from Baldwin's later works, like *No Name in the Street*, as well as unpublished manuscripts, interviews, and correspondence in historical context, which makes the book easy to follow.

Glaude, a superb educator, starts by explaining "the lie ... a broad and powerful architecture of false assumptions" that protects America's core paradox: In a country founded on ideals of freedom and equality, White people's lives matter more than anyone else's. The lie is a malevolent deity that continuously adapts to prioritize Whiteness. Glaude toggles between Baldwin's timeline and our own, revealing the lie's many insidious aspects.

Some were entirely new to me. I knew nothing about the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which helped militarize local police departments and was a response to "white fear over the perceived threat of black violence"—a threat personified by armed Black Panthers who had recently occupied the California legislature. (I couldn't help but think of White people who did something similar in Michigan in 2020 because they were asked to wear masks—with zero repercussions.) *Begin Again* even revealed my complicity in the lie. For example, I willingly bought into the triumphalist narrative that Obama's presidency was the culmination of the civil rights and Black freedom movements. According to Glaude, both movements collapsed.

Glaude—like Baldwin—is most concerned with bearing

witness and disrupting the lie, all the while keeping faith that America can be better. We must embrace radical honesty, individually and collectively, and examine how the lie has led us to our current after times.

I was there for that for the first few chapters. Then I started to feel resentful that Glaude was talking to me—and not specifically to the White liberals that he and Baldwin confess their disillusionment with. Black Americans have always told the truth about the lie, even when we have internalized racism or were simply unaware of buried historical facts. From the scars on the backs of the enslaved to the results of our DNA tests, even our bodies have told the truth of White violence against us.

In these post-Obama, post-George-Floyd, mid-pandemic "after times," Black people continue to tell the truth. And we are exhausted and traumatized by it. On social media, we bear witness to discrimination and brutality practically in real time.

"We must tell the truth till we can no longer bear it," Baldwin said in a speech at Howard University. But what happens when we can no longer bear it? When is it White Americans' turn to pick up that cross?

Begin Again doesn't answer those questions, but it does depict the personal toll the witness-bearing and truth-telling took on Baldwin: rage, attempted suicide, substance use. Baldwin doggedly clung to his vision of a "New Jerusalem," and it cost him dearly. Glaude gleans inspiration from this unswerving devotion. But I struggle with my mental health, and I found Baldwin's later life to be a cautionary tale.

At some point uncovering and retelling violence against Black people over and over again just feels like a masochistic deep dive into collective trauma, and I am careful about crossing that line. So when, in chapter six, Glaude discusses a series of brutal murders that took place in Mississippi—one subject of a documentary that followed Baldwin and his brother, David, on a tour of the South—I skimmed the pages rather than let the tortured images penetrate.

Baldwin made space to process his after times by becoming a "transatlantic commuter," who split his time between three of the world's most beautiful and culturally significant cities: New York, Paris, and Istanbul. Even those who are "armed with American passports" and, like Baldwin and me, enjoy the immense

privilege of living outside of the United States are unlikely to find that it affords the same distance as it did in Baldwin's day. Social media keeps you tethered to the reality of American racism, and every country has its own persecuted minorities. Before you Blaxit, know that your expat community is more likely to be composed of international corporate execs and



Photo: ©Allan Warren

even a Trump supporter or two than the intellectual and creative cadre that helped Baldwin process and cope with America's sins. Of course, most Black Americans can't just move overseas, especially not now. I felt Glaude's prescription for them to create distance from racism by leaning into love and family fell a little short.

Begin Again opened with Baldwin, Glaude, and me all in a similar headspace, grappling with "profound disillusionment." As the book unfolded, I began to see Baldwin as America's prophet, despised in his own land by the end, with his vision of New Jerusalem lighting him from within. Glaude emerged as a more pastoral figure, rallying a wayward flock back to the path of moral courage. I remained as cynical and disillusioned as I was on page one.

Though he agrees with a defining message in Baldwin's later works that we should no longer invest ourselves in "saving the souls of white people," Glaude does not condemn White people or admonish them to save themselves. He never answers his own question: "What do you do when this glimmer of hope fades, and you are left with the belief that white people will never change—that the country, no matter what we do, will remain basically the same?"

I wanted more fire and brimstone. Glaude calls all Americans to tell the truth and imagine a better America. But I'm unwilling to continue mining our violent history for more evidence of a truth that I hold to be self-evident: In America, White lives matter more than mine does. So when Glaude writes, "a moral reckoning is upon us, and we have to decide, once and for all, whether or not we will truly be a multiracial democracy," I can't help but think so-called White allies are the ones who need to decide.

To make these after times different from the ones Baldwin lived through, White people need to reimagine their Whiteness and their wokeness and how they perform both. Now *that* would be unprecedented.

From *Yes Magazine*



Leng Power: Award-Winning Community Advocate & Volunteer

By TOM PORTWOOD

The country of Thailand is over eight thousand miles away from the Central Valley, just about a third of the way across the globe, but that's where this inspiring Central Valley success story begins. The Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia had fallen the year before, leaving in its wake a legacy of terror and genocide. But as volatile and traumatic as the situation must have been for thousands of refugees displaced by all the turmoil, it was a time of new beginnings for many, a time of hope.

"I was born in Khao - I - Dang, along the Thai/Cambodian border," recalled longtime Community Advocate and Volunteer Leng Power. "Actually, a lot of people my age from Southeast Asia have a connection in some way to that camp - either they were born there themselves, or their siblings or other family members were. My father, mother, and my three older siblings had gone through the Khmer Rouge era. When you are fleeing with your family for safety, you have very little means, so the hardships are very real."

After spending nearly three years in Khao - I - Dang and other resettlement camps, Ms. Power and her family received the news that they had been sponsored to come to the United States. The year was 1983. Landing first in Washington state, "We knew some family friends who had resettled in the

doesn't matter what you study, or where you study, it's just important to continue your studies.' We are Buddhists, and along with that philosophy is the emphasis on self-growth and learning, the continuous striving to become better versions of yourself."

"The Cambodian community is very communal, and so people rely on one another for what they need," Ms. Power continued. "Once he learned how to drive himself, my dad would not only offer to drive but also teach others in the Cambodian community how to drive. With driving comes some independence and the ability to go out and look for work, or take your family to appointments. He and my mother always had that resilient

spirit. He would often talk about relying on that spirit in labor camps while he was in Cambodia during the Pol Pot era. He would say as long as he saw the stars at night and the sun during the day there was always hope for a better day."

In the following years, Ms. Power and her five siblings would lose their beloved mother, but the optimistic spirit and commitment of giving to others that she and her husband had imbued in their children would continue to thrive as each of the six siblings became professionals working in the Valley for the betterment of the community.

"We saw ourselves as part of a collective whole and wanted to help one another - not only within our family unit, but to reach out to those who didn't have the information or the resources beyond our community - those who were disenfranchised by systemic oppression. That absolutely inspired our work," Ms. Power noted. "I will probably never know the hardships my parents had to endure, so I owe so much to them. They were my teachers - my very first teachers in life - and all my work is a testament to their teaching and their spirit."

In addition to her job with a local governmental agency, Ms. Power spends much of her spare time volunteering in the community. She currently sits on the Salida Municipal Advisory Council serving as its Vice-Chair. And She is also a Senior Fellow with the Great Valley Chapter of the American Leadership Forum. "One of the projects we initiated recently with the Forum was an exploration of unconscious bias and how that shows up in our work and within systems. It entails having very difficult conversations with one another about what we can do to bring about change. This is very important work, and near and dear to my heart." Always remembering her roots, she's a lifelong member of the Modesto Cambodian Buddhist Society and works with others Society members on

cultural preservation efforts.

For the past many years, Ms. Power has also played a key role with the Modesto Peace/Life Center, serving for a time



Central Valley, so that's where we found ourselves a short while later and that's where we've been ever since."

Ms. Power's earliest memories tell a poignant tale of a tightknit family's courage and strength in adapting to a new country. "I remember us working very hard to make ends meet," she explained. "My parents spent time picking strawberries and other produce in the fields. I was very young at the time, but I have a teeny-tiny recollection of going with them. I'm pretty sure I wasn't very helpful, but because everyone was out there; I had to come along. So, we had that experience of poverty and trying to get your footing under you, of making sure you can provide for your family."

But Ms. Power also remembers that both her mother and father were fierce advocates for their children, finding Section 8 housing in a Modesto neighborhood where good schools were located, instilling in them the value of education. "One of the things my parents always told us kids was: 'It

as its President and working on several of its special projects, including the start-up of the KCBP radio station and the Modesto Homeless Documentary Project.

"When we started the documentary project, we didn't realize it was going to be a five-year effort," Ms. Power said. "But I think that became a good thing because, as we were collecting the stories, the broader community was also realizing that homelessness was such a crucial issue. A lot of the work in enhancing and strengthening the system of care was happening alongside our work. We finished the documentary in late 2017 and began our screenings in early 2018. By that time, there was a focus on prevention and a low-barrier shelter, and creating the access center we have in our community now. It was good for the community to see some of those stories of people experiencing the hardships of homelessness while they were working to address the issue community-wide."

A 2019 honoree, Ms. Power was named one of Stanislaus County's Outstanding Women and was "very humbled and grateful" to receive the award because "it was focused on my work on the homeless issue and it was a wonderful opportunity to explain to community members that while much work is being done, there's still so much more work that needs to be done."

Three and a half decades after she watched her mother and father selflessly toil in Central Valley fields for their small family, Leng Power's dedication to our community has never been greater. "At the core, we all want belonging and happiness," she reflected. "What we do with our time is very important. My mother is no longer with us, but I want to hold the guiding force of her life beside me, honoring her - all the while building something for my daughters."

When celebrating Gandhi let's celebrate what we share in common with him

Gandhi represents the capacity that all of us have to examine ourselves in relation to others and the world around us.

By STEPHANIE VAN HOOK

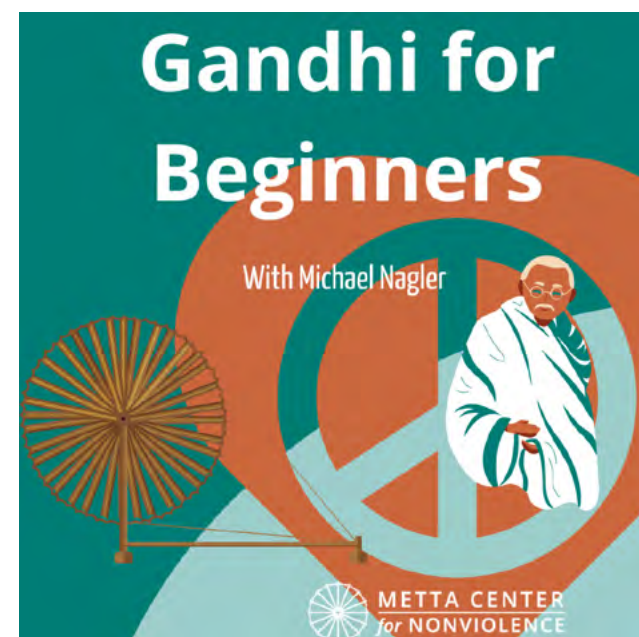
I didn't learn about Gandhi until I was in graduate school. I joined a Master's program in Conflict Resolution at Portland State, after spending two years in the United States Peace Corps (Benin 2005-2007). Nothing in my education before then, nothing in my upbringing in the Shenandoah Valley, rural Virginia, mentioned him. When I was in the Peace Corps, someone had left a reproduction of Margaret Bourke-White's portrait of him on the spinning wheel in my house in a village in rural northern Benin, and I had that on my wall. I recognized him, of course, his stature, his work for peace, but if pressed for any aspect of his life or work, I would have struggled to come up with anything that resembles something accurate about his life or about nonviolence really. I imagine it's like that for many people.

Later, as I took up an interest in Gandhi studies, I read around in Joan Bondurant's "Conquest of Violence," in various other books that compiled quotes from the Mahatma. I even toyed with the idea of focusing on "Gandhian Philosophy" for my graduate research (which makes me laugh now because Gandhi's way of life was never a philosophy. It's a course of deliberate action). It was missing something. I wanted to know about the person, about myself ultimately. I knew he represented that search in some way.

It wasn't until I began connecting with the work of the Metta Center for Nonviolence that Gandhi took on an even wider dimension. My friends and I began simplifying our lives. We took up meditation. We cut out as much consumerism as we could. We sought more communal structures, more humane ways of engaging with the earth and each other. It came on fast. I wanted to learn and put into practice a form of self-transformation that expressed itself spiritually and politically. If I had been alive in Gandhi's time, I would have wanted to go to join his experiments in India — I have not the shadow of a doubt!

Michael Nagler told me that something similar happened to him. Gandhi was so far away, so out of reach for someone growing up in Brooklyn, New York. It wasn't until he met his spiritual teacher, Sri Eknath Easwaran, that Gandhi became "more accessible" and "greater" than he had even imagined. Later, when I worked as a pre-school teacher in a Montessori classroom, I had three to six-year-olds who could describe "civil disobedience" and knew about how Gandhi transformed his anger into power. (I wrote my book *Gandhi Searches for Truth: A Practical Biography for Children*, inspired by those children's interest in him as they learned about nonviolence from me and my co-teacher.)

What I understand now is that the greatness in Gandhi has to do with what we share in common with him. That he represents for us the capacity that all of us have to examine ourselves in relation to others and the world around us, to examine the quality of our thinking, our capacity for depth into the very heart of matters, while drawing upon a force of



life, which he also referred to as Truth, and Love. To think deeply and to act with confidence and conviction when grounded in a higher image of who we are.

On Gandhi's birthday, Oct. 2, he wanted people in the movement not to make it about him, but about the work of nonviolence. He called it the "spinning wheel birthday," or Charkha Jayanti. The United Nations has designated it as the International Day of Nonviolence.

I invite you to join us at Metta in the work of nonviolence and upholding Gandhi's legacy by learning about some of the key concepts and ideals that shaped Gandhi's life. At Metta, we created a series called "*Gandhi for Beginners*" — 24 short audio talks that address questions like "What is Satyagraha?" or "What were Gandhi's rules of fasting?" or "Who were some of Gandhi's influences?"

Happy Charkha Jayanti.

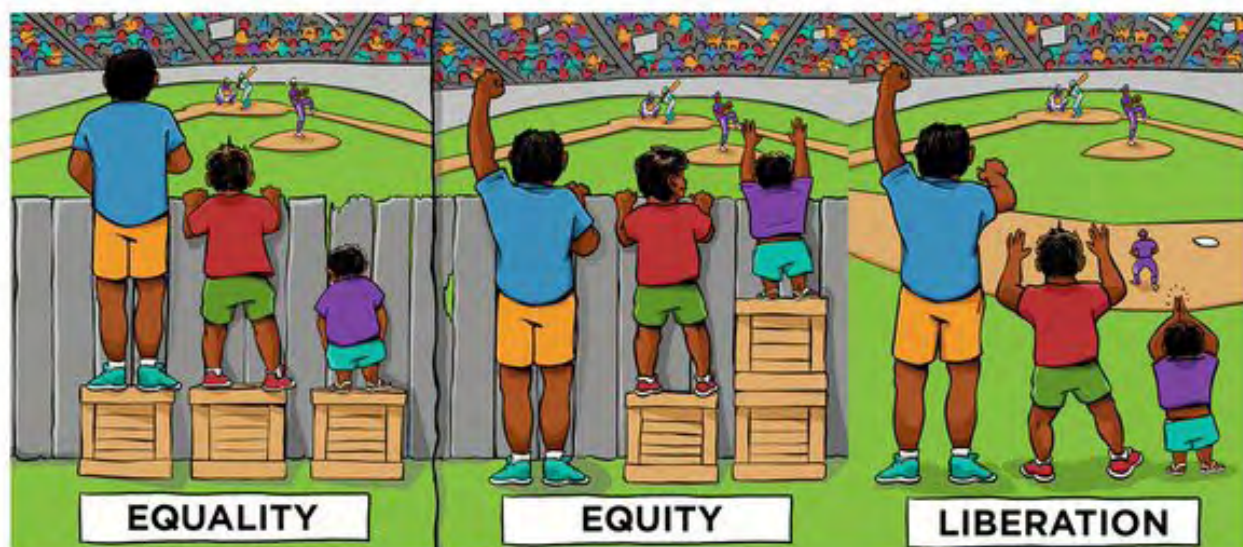
This story was produced by Metta Center for Nonviolence

Stephanie Van Hook is Executive Director of the Metta Center for Nonviolence in Petaluma, California and author of *Gandhi Searches for Truth: A Practical Biography for Children*, and co-author of "Nonviolence Daily" with Michael Nagler. Reach her with questions and new ideas (or persistent old ones) at: stephanie@mettacenter.org



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Walking the long road from law to justice with the Kings Bay Plowshares

After a protracted legal odyssey, the Kings Bay Plowshares continue to preach disarmament while preparing for their coming prison witness.

By PAUL MAGNO

For the past two-and-a-half years it has been my privilege to support the Kings Bay Plowshares. They are seven disarmament activists who entered the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia by night on April 4, 2018 — the anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s martyrdom — to confront the Trident nuclear weapon system and engage in an act of disarmament. The seven poured human blood on signs and missile models, unfurled peace banners and used household tools to begin symbolic disarmament of Trident, a submarine based first strike nuclear missile, termed by the Navy as a “strategic” weapon.

The seven have subsequently been charged and convicted in a jury trial of three felonies and a misdemeanor in federal court. All but one have been sentenced, to date, some as recently as last week by Federal Judge Lisa Godbey Wood in Brunswick, Georgia. Their legal odyssey has been protracted, in part by important legal proceedings and in part by the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

My invitation to walk with these peacemakers came in 2018 as an outgrowth of longstanding personal friendships with each of them. It also came as a result of my own experience and commitment to explaining and supporting the basic idea of these Plowshares actions, as they have proliferated a hundred-fold since 1980.

Patrick O'Neill, a participant in the Kings Bay action, and I were involved together with six others in the 1984 Pershing Plowshares action at Martin Marietta (now Martin Lockheed) in Orlando, Florida. I also served as a primary support person for the three Transform Now Plowshares activists who similarly acted at the Y12 nuclear weapons facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee in 2012. They won a federal appeal of their sabotage conviction and were released from prison after two years.

The Kings Bay Plowshares, from the outset of their 2018 action, placed it in the context of nonviolent resistance compelled by conscience, as all the Plowshares actions are. They understand it as rooted in the powerful nonviolent vision of Martin Luther King Jr., who decried the triple evils of racism, militarism and capitalism. King proclaimed, “our only hope lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism and militarism.”



The Kings Bay Plowshares 7, from left to right: Mark Colville, Martha Hennessy, Clare Grady, Patrick O'Neill, Liz McAllister, Steve Kelly and Carmen Trotta. (Twitter/KingsBayPlowshares7)

At the sentencing of the defendants in June, October and November, Judge Wood made a great deal of the issue of acceptance of responsibility for their actions. She spoke to each of the activists about the need to follow the law and not to pick and choose which laws one would follow. In this, she was giving voice to the recommendations of the pre-sentencing report and the prosecution led by the U.S. attorney's office. In addition, she accepted the prosecution's argument that they had in the course of their action precipitated “the risk of death,” which was a novel element never asserted before in such a case. But that served to increase their legal liability and procedurally required imprisonment rather than lesser punishment such as home confinement.

The veneer of reasonability that Judge Wood attempts to impart is exposed as a lie, however, if we resist the amnesia

the whole point of their entry onto the base was an attempt to unveil Trident as illegal and immoral for its intended purpose — to threaten and — when launched — to destroy hundreds of millions of human lives.

that is necessary for her and the prosecution to make these claims with a straight face. A verse of scripture (Mark 8:18) offers pertinent perspective here: “Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?”

These defendants have never denied that they entered the Kings Bay Naval Base on April 4, 2018 to confront the Trident nuclear weapon system. They signed a statement of conscience to that effect and used video equipment to

memorialize their act of disarmament. In fact, the whole point of their entry onto the base was an attempt to unveil Trident as illegal and immoral for its intended purpose — to threaten and — when launched — to destroy hundreds of millions of human lives. They carried banners denouncing Trident as “illegal and immoral” and as “omnicide.” Their indictment of the government, the Pentagon and the Kings Bay base specifically invoked the Nuremberg Principles, which were established after World War II to hold Nazis accountable for horrors shocking to the conscience.

They have used that message in the courtroom during the pretrial proceedings and at trial through their arguments and testimony. They persisted despite objections and restrictions that prevented a trial jury from hearing much of their claim that it is Trident and the legal apologia for it that is the great underlying crime leading to their action.

Bluntly put, it is our legal system that is deeply afflicted by the blindness and deafness described by the Gospel of Mark. This malady was on display again at the sentencing of the Kings Bay Plowshares defendants. The court has ignored the trial record and its own findings, recognizing a prima facie case that the seven acted from sincerely held religious beliefs consistent with their Catholic faith and acknowledging the “sacramental and prophetic action of denuclearizing.” The court acknowledged that fact in a lengthy pretrial ruling on defense of the action under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, or RFRA. However, it found that a compelling government interest in national security was even more important than the exercise of religious freedom.

Liz McAllister, in pretrial testimony concerning the relevance of RFRA, reprised her longstanding thesis that there is a state religion of nuclearism complete with all the

POET: FLORA CARTER

Flora Carter lives in Turlock, California, and teaches humanities at Modesto Junior College. Her background is in art history and interdisciplinary studies. Flora lived and worked in Germany, the Washington, D.C. area, and Colorado before settling with her family in the Central Valley. While teaching at CSU Stanislaus, she studied creative writing. Her poetic narratives and observations often reflect on nature, the diversity of human experience and outlooks, art, and the world. Flora is a member of MoSt and Licensed Fools poetry groups, the Carnegie Arts Center, and a long-lived book group. Her poems and stories have appeared in *Penumbra*, Mistlin Gallery's catalog, *Collision V* (2018), and other publications. Travel, teaching, taking photos, reading, surprise encounters, music, adversity – all inspire.



Pomegranates

Struggling to cut them, I'd forgotten after a year, how tedious the process to separate the peel from delicate arils and arils from peel, and how ripe the polished rubies looked, sprouting from their spongy beds.

Only when I could find and lift an edge would the sacs of tissue wrap – fibrous, veined, and stretchy – release their hold on families of bright, lung-like clusters.

Disturbing, sawing through the shiny outer skin, and startling, when the pale body lay split, to see how juice from a few torn capsules could spread in such heart-blood abundance.

I let the dark liquid stain my fingers as I picked the arils from fleshy pockets, which had so efficiently used every space to produce as many offspring as it could.

What I Imagine - Story 1

On the chilly Sunday of January first, 2017, I was heading toward a nearby park for a brisk afternoon walk, when I heard the sound of Middle Eastern music, played very loudly, at some picnic tables at the far end.

As I came nearer I could see a row of round, middle-aged women, sitting close to one another, in brown and grey clothing and dark head scarves.

They were quietly watching a loose string of six men dancing together from side to side on the balls of their feet, their arms around each other's shoulders, a man waving a white handkerchief at one end while they all sang joyfully with the recording at the top of their lungs. Their energy made me smile, and worry - what if the people in the houses across the street complained, and the police car I saw prowling would stop here and shut them down?

But for the moment, all was well, the men so happy, their wives sometimes clapping with them from the bench, their daughters' heads covered, but dressed colorfully, a few small grandchildren playing. Continuing on my walk, I noticed a young man with a beribboned box, his toddler in hand, hurrying across the street, probably on the way to the party. I'd intended to cross the street myself, but liking the music, I started another round around the park. Someone called out behind me - it was the young man - who as I turned, called out again, to me, "Happy New Year!" in heavily accented American. I waved, and called back, wishing him the same.

When I reached the end of the park where the party was, this time, it was as if the young man and his child had given me permission: I walked off the sidewalk on the grass to watch the dancing for a little bit, from a distance, and to wish whomever I met a Happy New Year.

A woman from the group gestured for me to come over. She introduced me to a few young women in dark pants, colorful coats and head scarves, who shyly said hello. They made a plate of treats for me, explaining the names of what they placed there. I told them what I did, and another pair of girls in more casual Western clothes, came by to chat. One was attending high school across the street, the other, my community college.

When I asked, the woman who had invited me over explained that the songs were in Arabic and that the group was part of a local Syrian community. Some of us have lived here for a few years, she said, but three of the dancing men just arrived only two or three months ago. The community had put the party together to help them over their homesickness and to make them feel welcome. I wondered why the women were not dancing too, forgetting that it is not the custom for traditional Muslim women dance publicly. I had stepped in it, a bit, but was so joyful to be part of the celebration for a while - to have approached, to be invited, and offered hospitality on the first day of the year.

What I imagine - Story 2

I grew up listening to and reading writings with a message - the Bible, folk and fairy tales, myths and legends, Dickens, *Oz*, and *Time Magazine*. They mixed in my child's mind with the stories my mother told me while she stirred her breakfast tea - about her growing up in Holland in the hotel her father built and that her mother ran, and, in the same decade I was born, how her parents had helped dozens of individuals and families elude Nazi hunters to escape to safer lands. I was eight when we flew across the ocean to visit our grandparents for the first time. While there, I unthinkingly showed the daughter of a visiting friend the secret, closet-like room my grandfather had constructed on the staircase landing for unregistered "guests" to hide in if there was a sudden visit from the Gestapo.

The war was long over in my child's mind, but, for them, what if it happened again? My grandmother was very upset with me; my grandfather was never told. Don't worry, the hiding place is no longer in danger of discovery.

It was destroyed when the hotel was torn down to make way for a blocky retirement home. And their precious wooded land I had played in with sandy depressions from the impact of bombs, was sold, subdivided, and bull-dozed into spacious plots for fancy estates. On my father's side, in America, my great aunts sponsored war refugees - composers and musicians, mostly - helped them emigrate here, and found them homes

and work. As for my father, I saw his picture on the front page of the *New York Times*, above the story of how he stood up to Senator Joe McCarthy, when he was ordered to testify at a session of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Awed and proud as I have been to be offspring to such brave people, I must also say that I was secretly pretty certain I would not be as courageous as my parents and relatives had been.

What I imagine - story 3

Unless we've had lots of practice, they say, we won't know how we ourselves will react to a crisis, until the time comes. A film critic whom I used to love to read, wrote about a moment that continued to haunt her. One day (years before cell phones and street cameras), while walking on an errand down a brownstone-lined street, she glanced across and happened to see a man pouring a can of soda on a little boy's head. He saw her looking, and kept on pouring. She wanted to rush over, but to do, or to say, what? Would her protest be taken out on the child? She ended up looking away and walking on.

Here are my last pair of stories and thoughts:

During the mid '60s, I attended a university in upstate New York and lived in a dorm. I was startled when a student down the hall told me, because I was white and she was black, I would never understand the life she experienced, thus friendship between us was impossible.

Around that time, I went to see the great, young soul singer, Aretha Franklin, in concert. Her singing was glorious, but part way in, some white boys in the audience heckled and insulted her, making her cry, and the show closed early.

These joyful and painful encounters help make me understand something about the long-range impact of small and large injustices, and how deeply they can wound, scar, and divide us. What our country is birthing, and what will emerge, is not clear.

Mythologists say, the wounds we carry can be our calls to heroic adventure. Let us learn from our individual experiences and use our collective moments to speak, converse openly, celebrate moments of grace, and act intelligently to overcome forces that would alienate us from one another.



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Walking the long road from law to justice continued from page 8

elements of a religion — including deities and high priests — that compels allegiance. It prohibits dissent and exercise of religious faith contrary to nuclearism, including exercise of conscience, nonviolence and justice. As the court affirmed, nuclear idols are primary under the law. Her full exposition of this argument can be found in her book, written with her late husband Philip Berrigan, *The Times Discipline: The Beatitudes and Nuclear Resistance*.

Rev. Steve Kelly, on the eve of his sentencing, declared himself “a political prisoner of conscience for Christ,” pledging not to comply with any terms of release the court may impose on him, adding that “In conscience, I can't let any court order or threaten to restrict me from imitation of the Good Shepherd, Jesus, when he placed himself, laying down his life between the wolf, the thief and the flock. In this case, the wolf is the Trident aimed at millions and the thief is the larceny from the poor predicted by Eisenhower in his Oval Office departure.”

Clare Grady offered a powerful presentation of 12 points of personal meditation, and encouraged listening to women, confronting and resisting Trident and the triple evils as fidelity to God and to higher law. She said to Judge Wood, “I believe it is a Christian calling to withdraw consent, interrupt our consent, from killing in our name. To do so is an act of love, an act of justice, a sacred act that brings us into right relationship with God and neighbor. This is what brings me before this court today for sentencing.”

Martha Hennessy presented four character witnesses and then addressed the court, “I stand here as a result of my conviction that calls me to point out that nuclear weapons are illegal ... I am attempting to help transform the fundamental values of public life. I am willing to suffer for the common good and for our sin of not loving our brothers and sisters, a condition that leads to war ... I have no criminal intent; I want to help prevent another nuclear holocaust. The spirit of the

law contained in international treaties for disarmament is very clear, to prevent mass murder on an incomprehensible scale.”

She closed her heartfelt sentencing allocution by saying, “In these times of dire economic conditions for millions of U.S. citizens we can no longer afford this military machine, and must work to save our society's soul from the seductions of empire. Our manifesto is the Sermon on the Mount.”

To date, six of the activists have been sentenced. In June, Liz McAlister was sentenced to time served, given the 17 months she had spent in pretrial detention at Glynn County Jail in Georgia.

In October, Steve Kelly was sentenced to 33 months imprisonment, roughly time served. He had been detained from the day of the action until sentencing, which is almost 30 months. He still remains at Glynn County Jail, awaiting transport by U.S. marshalls to Tacoma, Washington, to answer a federal warrant from a previous Plowshares action. Patrick O'Neill was sentenced to 14 months in prison and is due to report in mid-January to begin that sentence.

In November, Carmen Trotta was sentenced to 14 months imprisonment; he expects to begin his sentence in December. Clare Grady was sentenced to 12 months and expects to begin her sentence in February. Martha Hennessy was sentenced to 10 months and expects to begin her sentence in December.

The final defendant, Mark Colville, is scheduled to face Judge Wood for sentencing on Dec. 18.

A line from the song “I Had No Right” by Dar Williams reverberates in my head as I think of the spirit the Kings Bay Plowshares embody with their action, courtroom presence and coming prison witness: “It's a long road from law to justice.”

This story was produced by [Fellowship of Reconciliation](http://FellowshipofReconciliation)

Paul Magno resides at the Jonah House community in Baltimore, MD and is a member of FOR's National Council.



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Local Cannabis Industry Leader Supports Educational Opportunities for Underserved Youth

By **VERONICA JACUINDE**

The legalization of cannabis in California has ushered in a new wave of philanthropists who are investing in social causes many think our government has failed to adequately fund. An example of a local cannabis business that is supporting critical issues like education is the Modesto Cannabis Collective (MCC) who recently donated a shuttle bus to local social justice nonprofit, Advocates for Justice.

“We care about empowering local youth and Advocates for Justice (AFJ) is aligned with that mission. Together we can serve many more youth from underserved communities like those in West and South Modesto,” said Deanna Vasquez Garcia, owner of the Modesto Cannabis Collective and Riverbank Cannabis Collective. “This is a strategic partnership that will help raise awareness and much needed support for Advocates for Justice.”

AFJ works to motivate, inspire and empower local students to achieve academic excellence and make positive

contributions at school, in the community and to the world. AFJ founder, Jacq Wilson, says, “At AFJ children are our priority. We are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring our children succeed at home, in school and in life.” He adds, “We zealously fight to protect and defend their rights. We are devoted to ensuring justice for children and their families.” He continues, “AFJ firmly believes that education is the path to freedom, success and greatness.”

“Every child deserves the right to dream. AFJ provides the inspiration needed to ignite and light a fire in the heart of our local youth,” said Mrs. Vasquez Garcia. “We are proud to support such a wonderful organization that is making a positive impact on the students of our community.”

Apart from supporting local nonprofits, businesses like MCC are also creating new jobs and providing many from the community with an opportunity for consistent, quality, well-paid and meaningful work experience.

Haylee White, an MCC employee said, “I love that I am

able to help people while at the same time playing a role in an industry that is revolutionizing the way we approach our health and wellness.”

While others are scrambling to stay open during the corona virus pandemic, businesses like MCC are open 7 days a week to serve the community. “As MCC continues to grow we will stay committed to our continued support of those organizations like Advocates for Justice that are making a real difference in the lives of young people from our community,” said Mrs. Vasquez Garcia.

MCC is located at 439 Maze Blvd., Modesto. Find them on Facebook at Modesto Cannabis Collective or visit www.ModestoCannabisCo.com. For information on supporting the non-profit Advocates for Justice, contact Jacq Wilson, (415) 608-9579, or visit their website at www.advocates4justice209.com. For media inquiries contact La Luz Public Relations at veronicajacuinde@gmail.com.

Conviction of SOA grad for Jesuit massacre in El Salvador

From **SOA Watch**

On Friday, September 11, 2020, a [Spanish court convicted SOA graduate Inocente Montano](#), a former Army Colonel and Minister of Security in El Salvador, for the November 1989 murders of five Spanish Jesuit priests — Ignacio Ellacuría, Ignacio Martín-Baró, Amando López, Segundo Montes, and Juan Ramón Moreno — who were murdered along with Celina and Elba Ramos and Salvadoran Jesuit Joaquín López at the Jesuit-run University of Central America (UCA) in San Salvador. (The Spanish court could only convict for the murders of the Spanish citizens.)

After 30 years, this is an important step towards holding the highest levels of the Armed Forces accountable for the [November 1989 massacre](#) at the UCA. However, many more steps towards justice remain to be taken. Montano was part of **a group of high-level military officers** — [including several other SOA graduates](#) — who gave the order to ‘eliminate’ Jesuit Ignacio Ellacuría, rector of the UCA, for his leadership in working to broker a peace agreement to end the war in El Salvador. No other members of the military high command have been prosecuted for ordering and planning the massacre. El Salvador refused to extradite members of the military high command to Spain (Col. Montano was extradited from the U.S.) and there has yet to be a trial of the intellectual authors in El Salvador itself.

Furthermore, the U.S. government in general, and the SOA-WHINSEC in particular, have never been held accountable for their role in training and empowering members of the military leadership who ordered the murders at the UCA as well as numerous members of the Atlacatl Battalion — a counter-insurgency battalion created at the SOA — who carried out the massacre.

We leave you with the reaction of the Jesuit’s University of Central America (UCA) in response to the conviction:

“1. The UCA has always wanted and continues to want the trial for the intellectual authorship of the massacre of the Jesuits and their two collaborators to be carried out in El Salvador. The process opened in Spain by the relatives of the Jesuits has a subsidiary value in favor of the Salvadoran justice. This trial, whose public hearings could be followed from anywhere in the world, made it very clear the seriousness with which the Spanish justice system took the case and the full procedural guarantees that the defendant had.

2. Although the conviction of Col. Montano is very important to advance justice in the case, and even more important in for its extraordinary service to the truth. Through the evidence and the testimonies presented, the system of cover-ups and impunity of the Armed Forces, and in some ways, the Salvadoran state, in the face of the extremely grave violation of human rights committed during the civil war has been made clear.

3. The case in the National Court of Spain clearly shows that the Armed Forces, and in particular the Military Academy class of 1966, better known as “La Tandon”, functioned as a criminal machine for serious attacks against Salvadoran population and the rule of law, making use of power that goes beyond the functions granted to the military by the Constitution. As long as the Armed Forces do not ask for forgiveness at the institutional level for serious crimes committed in the past and do not cooperate with justice by opening their archives, it can hardly be considered a democratic institution that respects human rights.

4. The resolution of the trial in Spain will help both the national conscience and the Salvadoran judicial system to take real steps in favor of truth and justice, not only in this case, but also in all those related to serious violations of human rights. The State in general and the justice system in particular must

be aware of and responsible for their constitutional powers: Article 1 of the Constitution mandates them to ensure the achievement of justice, legal security and the common good.

5. Judicial convictions for homicide or terrorism are never cause for joy. They express the sad reality of a moment in history and the worst of the human condition, its ability to gravely offend life and break with the brotherhood to which we are all called. But they are a formal, legal and democratic recognition of the truth, and an encouragement and a guarantee of non-repetition of these inhuman acts.

6. The judicial resolution of a crime against humanity is a means that allows progress towards the ideal that the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) expressed from the first moment that the massacre occurred at the University: the path of reparation passes through knowledge of the truth, the practice of justice and forgiveness. The continuation of the judicial process in El Salvador, already initiated, but maliciously stopped, to determine who were the intellectual authors of the horrendous crime, is a debt of justice, and should not wait any longer.

7. The UCA will continue working with hope and enthusiasm to contribute to a new reality where love, reconciliation and justice are essential values.”

Celina Ramos, ¡Presente!

Elba Ramos, ¡Presente!

Ignacio Ellacuría, ¡Presente!

Ignacio Martín-Baró, ¡Presente!

Amando López, ¡Presente!

Joaquín López y López, ¡Presente!

Segundo Montes, ¡Presente!

Juan Ramón Moreno, ¡Presente!



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

NOVEMBER 2020

CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.

Science Colloquium, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., MJC via Zoom. To access the program, click <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmaymqgHqzxhsAa0RJmYwVg/>. When the live program appears, click on it. **Dec. 2:** Tom Crain, NASA Ambassador. Here Comes the Sun. More information in this issue.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science): free science programs. Live presentations via Zoom. Link provided before each talk on the MAPS website a few days of the presentation. 7:30 pm, Link to Zoom: <https://modestoscience.wordpress.com/schedule/>. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VF-q-egRrQk>.

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

Expose Yourself to Art, Sundays, Dec. 6, 13, 20, virtual artist talks from CCAA/ Mistlin Gallery. 2:00 p.m. https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLoV9G-8h_5RuB-Xaw7CvAm204T8X9q8L-

2 WED: VIGIL: NO VIGIL in DECEMBER.

3 THURS: Peace/Life Center ZOOM Board Meeting, 6:30 pm. Email Jim Costello for login information, jcostello@igc.org

4 FRI. Dutchman at the Prospect Theater. See p.2.

12 SAT: A Christmas Memory at the Prospect Theater. See p.2.

15 TUES: Students: Last day to enter the **Peace Essay Contest**. See p. 4.

LOOKING AHEAD

John McCutcheon Online Concert on January 9. Details See p. 1 on how to attend and support the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

MLK Commemoration in February. TBA.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

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

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

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

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

MONDAYS

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

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

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

Walk with Me, a women's primary infertility support group and Bible study. 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm the first and third Mondays of each month (September only meeting 9/15/14 due to Labor Day). Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

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

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@mopr.org, 209-284-0999.

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

NAACP Meeting. King-Kennedy Center, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30 pm. 209-645-1909; email: naacp.branch1048@gmail.com

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

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

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

IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and dharma talk, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely, donations welcome. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: info@imcv.org

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

WEDNESDAYS

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

Merced LGBT Community Center offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on site

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

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

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

MEDIA COMMITTEE of Peace/Life Center. Meetings TBA.

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

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; jpmamodesto@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

Hispanic Leadership Council, 3rd Fridays at noon, 1314 H St., Modesto 95354. Questions? Yamilet Valladolid, yamiletv@hotmail.com

SATURDAY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: merced-board@gaycentralvalley.org – 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. www.mercedlgbtcenter.org

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

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

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

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

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

THURSDAYS

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

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

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

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

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

Green Team educational meetings the 3rd Thursday of each month, 10 to 11 am, Kirk Lindsey Center, 1020 10th St. Plaza, Suite 102, Modesto. www.StanislausGreenTeam.com

Third Thursday Art Walk, Postponed until further notice. <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

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

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.