

There are nonmilitary alternatives to Israel’s war in Gaza

The assumption that war is the only way to create safety is wrong. There’s a range of nonviolent techniques that can still be used right now.

By **GEORGE LAKEY, Waging Nonviolence**

Israel and its allies have made a knee-jerk assumption that war is the only way to create safety and respond to the Oct. 7 massacre by Hamas. This assumption — which upholds violence as the only path forward — is commonly accepted by extremists on both sides of the conflict, as well as most leaders and institutions across the U.S. and Europe. What’s more: It’s completely wrong. I should know; I’ve studied and taught courses about nonviolent responses to terrorism for many years.

What I’ve learned is that it takes a failure of foresight to believe that an unprecedented bombing and ground campaign in Gaza can create safety — and a failure of imagination to believe it’s the only possible method. Conversely, nonmilitary techniques have, in numerous historical cases, reduced the threat of terror.

Drawing from these cases, I compiled a list of such techniques, which I shared in a 2015 article for Waging Nonviolence titled “[8 Ways to Defend Against Terror Nonviolently](#).” That article — published on the heels of a terrorist attack in France — is just as necessary today, which is why I’m republishing an edited version of it here. We all need to understand that there’s a wide range of options to generate safety beyond taking up arms.

One of my most popular courses at Swarthmore College focused on the challenge of how to defend against terrorism, nonviolently. Who knew that non-military techniques have, in actual historical cases, reduced the threat of terror?

I gathered for the students eight non-

military techniques that have worked for some country or other. The eight comprised the “toolbox” that the students had to work with. We didn’t spend time criticizing military counterterrorism because we were more interested in alternatives.

Each student chose a country somewhere in the world that is presently threatened by terrorism and, taking the role of a consultant to that country, devised from our nonviolent toolbox a strategy for defense.

Some students who assumed that military defense is crucial opened to a bigger perspective. They realized that, given the success some countries have had using just two or three of the tools, there is significant untapped potential: What if countries used

all of the tools together, with the resulting synergies? For me the question arose: Why couldn’t populations rely completely on the nonviolent toolbox for their defense against terror?

Here are the eight techniques:

1. Ally-building and the infrastructure of economic development

Poverty and terrorism are indirectly linked. Economic development can reduce recruits and gain allies, especially if development is done in a democratic way. The terrorism by Northern Ireland’s Irish Republican Army, for example, was strongly reduced by grassroots, job-creating, economic development.

2. Reducing cultural marginalization

As France, Britain, and other countries have learned, marginalizing a group within your population is not safe or sensible; terrorists grow under those conditions. This is also true on a global level. Much marginalizing is unintentional, but it can be reduced. “Freedom of the press,” for example, transforms into “provocation” when it further marginalizes a population that is already one-down, as are Muslims in France. When Anglophone Canada reduced its marginalization, it reduced the threat of terrorism from Quebec.

continued page 11

John McCutcheon Returns to Modesto

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

Six-time Grammy-nominated folk musician John McCutcheon performs in his twenty-first benefit concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto on Tuesday, January 9, 2024.

Johnny Cash called him “the most impressive instrumentalist I’ve ever heard.” John will perform

John is a master of the guitar, banjo, hammer dulcimer, piano, autoharp, and fiddle. His socially and politically conscious songs inspire us, his songs about family and everyday life move us, and his wicked sense of humor entertains us. John’s latest and 43rd album is *Together*, which was written and performed together with another folk legend, Tom Paxton.

In-person tickets are available at Intrinsic Elements (1214 J St., Modesto 209-409-8510) by cash or check for \$25, or at the door for \$28. New price for 30 years old and younger is \$10.

Online tickets are available at <https://mccutcheonmodesto2024.eventbrite.com>

Please consider becoming a sponsor. You will receive tickets to the concert, your name in the program, and reserved seating. Five levels of sponsorship are available:

- Autoharp** \$50 One ticket,
- Guitar** \$100 Two tickets,



Banjo \$175 Four tickets,
Piano \$300 Eight tickets,
Hammer Dulcimer \$500 Sixteen tickets.

You may send your sponsorship donation check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, PO Box 134, Modesto CA 95354. Please write “concert sponsor” in the memo on the check. You may also buy your sponsorship at [Eventbrite](https://eventbrite.com).

For more info, contact Ken Schroeder at kschroeder70@yahoo.com or 209-480-4576. Let Ken know if you would like a dedication to appear in the program (such as “In Honor of” or “In Memory of”).

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

LOCAL	2	LETTER TO MY FRIENDS	7
IN MEMORIAM	3	YOUTH POET LAUREATE	8
THE PROPHET	4	GATHERING OF VOICES	9
COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER	5	KCBP RADIO	10
REMEMBER DANIEL ELLSBERG	6	NUCLEAR WEAPONS FIGHTER	11

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If you do not have Adobe Reader, download it free from

<http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>

An opportunity: The **California Audio Roots Project (CARP)** is designed to involve community members in recording stories, poems, and songs about their lives and living in California. The upcoming season is focused on social justice and community engagement.

Modesto Sound is looking for people to interview and will pay interviewees \$150. The interviews are playing on KCBP 95.5 FM and are archived on Sound Cloud, Spotify, etc.

To participate, call 209-573-0533, or visit www.modestosound.com

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WITH THE

California Audio Roots Project

California Audio Roots Project (CARP) invites the 95354 area to share your poetry, stories & music about our community and social justice!



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Project Director: Janet Seay
Producer: Lucky Lew

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A Call to Our Community: Rise with Heart, Resilience, and Dignity

Dear Community and Devoted Readers of *Stanislaus Connections*,

My name is Karlha Arias-Davies, a GenXer, Star Wars aficionado, and fiercely proud first-generation Mexican American. As I begin my journey with *Stanislaus Connections*, my aim is clear: to infuse my deepest passions for community, corazón (heart), collaboration, and justice with this publication's longstanding mission, echoing the spirit of nonviolent change that legends like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and César Chávez lived for.

Growing up in Hughson, Turlock, Oakdale, Empire, and Modesto, I bore firsthand witness to the visceral sting of racism, discrimination, and exclusion. For countless first-generation children of undocumented immigrants, this tale of struggle and resistance rings all too familiar. Today, at 47, as an impassioned activist, my heart aches with the realization of how much remains unchanged, yet it also burns with the determination to be a catalyst for that very change.

Drawing strength from Emiliano Zapata's defiant stance, "I would rather die standing than live on my knees," and deeply moved by César Chávez's enduring legacy of resilience and his revolutionary cry, "Sí se Puede", I am steadfastly committed to the path of activism. I rise not only on the

unyielding shoulders of my ancestors but also with memories of the sweat and sacrifice of farmworkers, including my parents, who poured every ounce of their being under the unforgiving Californian sun.

In a world that often sought to shut doors, I've learned to build bridges. In spaces that doubted my voice, I've shouted louder. My endeavors across sectors—higher education, non-profits, NGOs, government, and businesses—have seen numerous battles, but they've also reinforced my commitment. I've faced leadership that neither resembled me nor understood my community's struggles. Yet, with each challenge, my resolve hardened, my connections grew stronger, and my vision of an equitable world crystallized.

With every word I pen for *Stanislaus Connections*, expect not just articles but raw, heartfelt appeals. Let's rally together, channeling the spirit of justice, resilience, and the unwavering belief that "Sí se Puede." We aim for nothing less than a Stanislaus County that stands united, inclusive, and just for all.

In deep solidarity and with unwavering conviction,
Karlha Arias-Davies

Practice courage and speak for an equitable and inclusive community,

Holiday Potluck Songfest Returns, December 9

By **DAN ONORATO**

You've wondered, "Will it come back?" You've waited, oh so patiently, through the pandemic. And wished, "Oh, c'mon!" So, Alice and I will open our home to bring back a Peace/Life Center community holiday tradition of scrumptious potluck specials and a merry evening of spirited singing. Start now. Let flow the magic of your culinary creativity. In your morning or evening shower, picture yourself a superstar. Gargle before entry. Then pretend you're Kenny Rogers, Carole King, or one of the Mamas and the Papas, and belt out some of your much-loved oldies but goodies and holiday favorites.



At the heart of our merriment will be the fun-loving folksinger-guitarist John Poat, whose enthusiasm and musical talent rouse even the most reserved person present to sing his or her heart out. And that's what this community songfest is all about—singing our hearts out and enjoying others as they too let go to the laughter and enchantment of being linked together in song. That linking is a form of peace-making. In our world that seems to be unraveling, we need more such singing and sharing.

We'll start at 5:30 on Saturday evening, December 9, and we'll end around 9:00. We live at 1532 Vernon Avenue in Modesto. Bring a dish to share and a beverage of your choice. If you bring food for vegetarians or vegans, please label it. Potluck around 6:00. Enjoy the tasty variety, enjoy the conversations with new and long-time friends, and sing

heartily. We look forward to being together.

P.S. In keeping with this event's tradition, please consider bringing one or more new and unwrapped books for children grades one through middle school. We'll donate them to a school and teacher, many of whose pupils may not have books in their homes. Thank you.

For more information, call 209-526-5436.



The **Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS)** lecture series fosters science education in our community for youths through adults. Once a month during the academic year, MAPS offers stimulating free science programming, bringing educators and local citizens into contact with scientists and mind-expanding ideas.

Fall 2023 Schedule

Presentations will be held LIVE in the MJC West Campus Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 1: Ari Friedlaender, Ph.D., UC Santa Cruz Principal Investigator, Biotelemetry and Behavioral Ecology Laboratory. "Whales." <https://btbel.pbsci.ucsc.edu/people/principal-investigator/>

MAPS receives funding and support from Modesto Junior College, MJC Foundation, Stanislaus County Office of Education, Modesto Teachers Association, Great Valley Museum. To make a fully tax-deductible donation in support of MAPS, please click [here](#) and select Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS) under "My donation is for..."



IN MEMORIAM**Pat Portwood**

October 1, 1946 - November 2, 2023

Yvonne A Allen

September 22, 1942 - October 28, 2023

Rosalynn Carter

August 18, 1927 - November 19, 2023

Former First Lady of the United States

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My Big Sister Pat

My dear sister Pat Portwood passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on November 2, 2023. Pat was a former teacher, principal, and district administrator for Modesto City Schools, and, as a volunteer, a strong advocate for the Stanislaus County library system, education, women, children, and many other causes. Hers was a life of meaning and impact. As busy as her schedule could get, she was always a wonderful sister.

By TOM PORTWOOD

She was born in Dermott, Arkansas. She was a Girl Scout in Rio De Janeiro, a Camp Counselor on Santa Catalina Island, and by high school was already so involved with activities that my brother Tim and I couldn't keep up with all the things she was doing. She lived in places as far flung as Miles City, Montana, and Bogotá Colombia, and began her teaching career in Southern California. But it was here in the great Central Valley where she and her beloved husband Ron would take root and find a place to call home.

Pat lived life to the fullest, appreciated every moment of it, and was a generous, loving, presence in this world. She was an often-mischievous instigator as a kid – and I have plenty of memories as proof – but I now think she was only honing her skills for the passionate, creative educator and community leader she would become. She was one of the most positive people I have ever known, always eager to embrace new ideas or undertake another project.

Pat never stopped believing that all good things were possible, so long as we kept working at it. Most of all, she believed in people, loved them with all her heart, hoped that we would all treat each other with kindness and compassion, and took great joy in being a part of this community. If you were genuine, it didn't take long to become Pat's friend.

She and Ron were perfect for each other, and the very last photograph Pat shared on Facebook was of the two of them embracing. Pat loved the California Coastline and walking along the beaches near Carmel or Jenner with Ron beside her, and oh, boy, did Pat love dogs! She loved Thanksgivings up

Remembering Yvonne Allen

A pioneer in the field of domestic violence prevention, Yvonne co-founded the Stanislaus County Refuge Center, which is now known as the Haven Women's Center. Her visionary leadership led to the establishment of one of the first battered women's shelters in the state of California, providing refuge and support to countless survivors of domestic violence.

Yvonne's contributions to the community were widely recognized. In 1980, she was named an Outstanding Woman of the Year in Stanislaus County, and she also served as the Past President of the Stanislaus County Commission for Women. Her dedication to these causes served as an inspiration for all who knew her.

Beyond her activism and professional achievements, Yvonne was an animal lover, an avid reader and a breast



at Monte Rio, and any time spent with family and friends.

When Pat was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2000, she met it head on, beat it back, and walked every Relay for Life after that with a deep sense of gratitude and a renewed relish for life. I think that gave her added impetus as she worked full bore for others and our community until the day she died.

She was big sister to my brother Tim and me across eight decades and two continents and was ever supportive and encouraging in everything we did, particularly these last many years after both our parents had passed. Pat was a force of nature for our family, for the many, many friends she and Ron cherished, and for the community she loved. I love her dearly and miss her terribly.

cancer survivor who continued to champion the cause of equality for all people. Her legacy will forever shine as a beacon of hope for those seeking justice, education and empowerment.

It is requested that all remembrances be sent to the Haven Women's Center in Modesto, CA, an organization that was so dear to Yvonne's heart. <https://www.havenstan.org/donate>.

Yvonne A. Allen's impact on her community will be remembered with deep gratitude and admiration and her memory will continue to inspire generations to come. She will be profoundly missed by her friends and all those whose lives she touched.

Excerpted from: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/modestobee/name/yvonne-allen-obituary?id=53569623>

The Prophet: One Century Later

By **MARK S HASKETT, Director**

InnerFaith Resources, Modesto

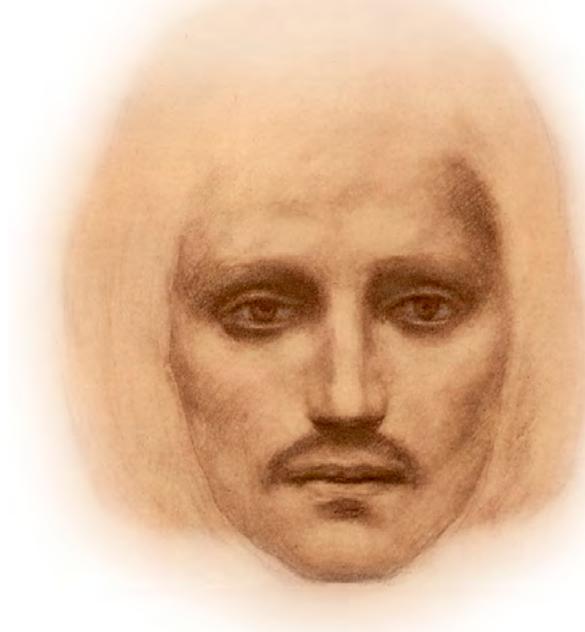
As I write these words, the Israeli Defense Forces continue to pummel the Gaza Strip in pursuit of their goal to rid that troubled enclave of Hamas terrorists. By the time this article appears, there's no telling whether that goal will have been achieved – or could ever have been achieved. Not to mention whether other bad actors the likes of Lebanon's Hezbollah will have been drawn into a wider war.

The inspiration for this article, ironically, is that a much-beloved book by one of Lebanon's native sons, entitled *The Prophet*, is now celebrating exactly 100 years since its initial publication in 1923. To septuagenarians like me who came of age during the 1960s, Khalil Gibran's beloved "counsels" on significant life issues from Love and Marriage to Work and Death, were practically required reading... perhaps more so than the textbooks our college professors assigned us. For a generation of youthful searchers facing conscription during the Viet Nam war – and caught up as we were in the turmoil sparked by a renewed quest for racial justice and a resurgent women's rights movement – *The Prophet* was a much-needed counterpoint to what we disparagingly called "The Establishment."

Still more ironic is that Gibran's book never took on some of the very topics that were most important to us at the time. War, for example... even as "The War to End All Wars" was fresh in the author's mind. Or the topic of racial equality... even as race riots had broken out in New York City only blocks from Gibran's art studio. Nor did he address gender and women's issues... even as women had successfully marched in the streets until Congress ratified our 19th Amendment.

Just this November, IF Books published my own answer to Gibran's seeming oversight, in the form of *The Lost Counsels of Almustafa the Prophet*. This new collection is based on my fictional premise that a trove of unpublished counsels deemed "too controversial" for the original book was discovered in Gibran's studio following his death, stored alongside a cache of intimate correspondence with his long-time mentor, Mary Haskell, which really was found there. In these *Lost Counsels*, Almustafa, Gibran's namesake prophet, confronts such incendiary issues as War and Peace, Male and Female, Race, Immigration, and even present-day concerns like the opioid crisis, climate change and financial scams like pyramid schemes and bitcoin. Of course, since I've attempted to duplicate the same scriptural language and poetic cadences Gibran employed, readers of *The Lost Counsels* must often read between the lines to grasp the message.

That kind of subtext messaging, it turns out, was the triumph of Gibran's original work, and why *The Prophet* has been a continuing best-seller since its publication, often second only to The Holy Bible during several of those years. Gibran himself has been heralded as the Twentieth



Century's most popular poet after William Shakespeare (for his collected plays), and China's Lao-Tzu (for his *Tao-te-Ching*). And just as those works were in large part lyrical rather than literal, *The Prophets* poetic passages have enabled readers to extract messages from its highly-quotable lines as if they were meant specifically for their own time and place.

Not coincidentally, this same literary flexibility may also explain the power and enduring popularity of all the world's sacred texts – that they embody a deeper wisdom than ordinary words can express, as well as hidden layers of meaning even those who wrote them may not have recognized. As one reviewer of *The Prophet* put it (speaking of its author), "His power came from some great reservoir of spiritual life else it could not have been so universal and so potent."

All of which has been both a boon and a bane throughout history. Passages from The Bible or Qur'an, for example, are frequently bandied about in support of whatever position

believers might wish to promote, despite their simultaneous claim that the text means exactly what it says. Back in The 60s, that decade's iconic flower children were quick to declare that The Prophet's advice to "Give of your bread, but eat not from the same loaf" essentially invited couples to enjoy the favors of multiple partners, even in marriage. The more contextually-fitting interpretation, however, was that couples should endeavor to develop their own distinctive talents and pursuits, and not devolve into mirror images of each other.

Nevertheless, as pliable as some of Gibran's prophetic pronouncements were, and as much as he or his publisher seemed unwilling to address certain contentious issues in print, many passages from *The Prophet* were audacious and even ground-breaking for a post-Victorian audience. "Your children are not your children," Gibran/Almustafa boldly proclaimed, "they are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself." The passage was, and still is, an unflinching critique of many overly possessive and controlling parents. In Gibran's counsel On Crime and Punishment, his assertion that "...the guilty is oftentimes the victim of the injured, and still more often the condemned is the burden bearer for the guiltless and the unblamed" is basically a plea for each of us to accept a greater measure of responsibility for those in our midst who commit crimes – including murderers and terrorists, presumably – and a corresponding challenge to overhaul our child-raising practices, social networks and systems of justice.

Finally, Gibran's concluding line in On Laws that "...you can muffle the drum ...you can loosen the strings of the lyre; but who shall command the skylark not to sing?" continues to summon his readers to embrace their inner divinity, and to go on living the "deeper song" that seeks to harmonize our collective lives – from Baptists to Buddhists, from Democrats to Republicans, from Palestinians to Israelis.

After a century in print, what could be a more timely, and more hopeful, message?

AAPCA 2023 Best Practices in Air Pollution Control Highlight Four Leading State and Local Air Agency Programs

The Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies ([AAPCA](#)) announced 2023 Best Practices in Air Pollution Control, recognizing exemplary air agency programs in Georgia, Oklahoma, Wyoming, and **San Joaquin Valley, California**. Designated annually, AAPCA's Best Practices in Air Pollution Control showcases groundbreaking technology, innovative practices, and exemplary operations in the field of air pollution control.

Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Healthy Air Living Schools Program –presented by Jaime Holt, Chief Communications Officer.

"State and local air agencies continue to be innovative in their work on the front lines of protecting air quality and public health," stated incoming AAPCA 2024 President Jason Meyers with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. "We were excited to learn more about these programs."

More on AAPCA's Best Practices in Air Pollution Control can be found in the [2023 call for nominations](#). All nominations undergo a rigorous review by the Association's Best Practices Committee and Board of Directors.

“Why should we have community media?”

By **CARL PRIDE, Community Media Advocate**

I was recently asked, “Why should we have community media?”

My response:

In this unique time in history, community media holds more relevance than ever, particularly in the context of today’s social movements. Yes, the internet provides a platform to broadcast messages to the masses. I, for instance, can reach out to my 2000 Facebook friends. However, when it comes to local issues or rallying support from my local community, I am limited to my contacts or specific interest groups.

Imagine a central hub exclusively for our community. Today, the conversation has evolved to how we, as a society, stay connected. How do schools engage with citizens beyond those with school-aged children? How does local government serve the community? How do we, the public, discuss local issues? How do we access alternative views on local topics?

In today’s world, a cable channel is just one avenue for message dissemination. It’s the founder of community media, with web video and social media platforms as its descendants. Community media is more than a channel; it’s a multifaceted entity that has evolved and expanded over time.

Consider community media as the hub of a wheel. Each spoke represents a different platform: the channel, the website, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, neighborhood apps, radio, and so on. Today, we have more ways to connect with our community than ever before. However, the sheer volume of information can make us feel less connected.

The Nutcracker returns once again to the Gallo Center

The Nutcracker returns once again to the Gallo Center for the Arts Dec. 8 through Dec. 17, presented by Central West Ballet. This favorite holiday tradition features 100 community children, beautiful backdrops, spirited party scenes, mesmerizing snowfall, and favorite characters like the Sugar Plum Fairy! Shop for unique Nutcracker gifts at the boutique in the lobby and purchase tickets for on-stage Sugar Plum Fairy parties after select matinees by calling 209-576-8957. Nutcracker in Jazz returns for one night only on 12/15 to jazz up your holiday - tickets for Nut/Jazz include a delicious post-performance reception of Nutcracker sweets and libations in the lobby. Tickets are available at galloarts.org. For more information, visit www.centralwestballet.org

Despite the information overload, the power of the message remains paramount. Alternative views, open forums, and community celebrations are what truly matter. We’ve divided this vast information into three or four parts: Government, Education, Public and News. Each serves a unique purpose and contributes to the overall strength of the community.

Staffing in community media is crucial, guiding content to the right places and liaising with community figures. They ensure government programming, collaborate with schools for innovative programs, and train the public to share their stories. Essentially, they’re the backbone of community media, propelling its mission forward.

Removing any part of this wheel leaves a void, potentially filled with unknowns. Isn’t it better to know that we’re doing everything in our power to create a cohesive community with forums to discuss our community’s needs? Community media, in all its forms, is the key to achieving this.

Let’s not let this unique time in history pass us by. Let’s seize the opportunity to strengthen our community ties and amplify our voices. Whether you’re an artist, a local government official, a teacher, or a concerned citizen, your voice matters. Use the community media platforms available to you. Share your thoughts, your art, your ideas. Engage in discussions about local issues. Listen to alternative views. Participate in community celebrations. Let’s keep the wheel of community media turning because together, we can create a stronger, more connected community. Remember, your voice has power. Use it!



Community Media

From [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_media).

Community media are any form of media that function in service of or by a community. It is the rise of all kinds of alternative, oppositional, participatory and collaborative media practices that have developed in the journalistic context of ‘community media,’ ‘we media,’ ‘citizens media,’ ‘grassroot journalism’ or any radical alternative to on and offline mainstream journalistic practices.^[1] In other words, it is having access to or creating local alternatives to mainstream broadcasting,^[2] like local community newspapers, radio stations, or magazines.^[3] Community Media aids in the process of building citizenship and raising social awareness. “Participation” and “access” are a large aspect in the rise of community media. Those who create media are being encouraged to involve themselves in providing a platform for others to express views. Community media is often given parameters when being defined by groups, but often challenges these boundaries with its broad yet narrow structure.^[4]

Definition

Community media are generally defined as a distinct sector of the media for their independence, base in civil society and provision of a social service as opposed to seeking profits.^{[5][6]} They serve as a third sector of the media apart from private and public media and are important in giving communities a platform to express their concerns for local issues, engaging in democratic debate and deliver a reliable access to information. However, there is no consensus on a definition as each region displays unique forms of community media. However community media is also [mass media](#) but it aims to a much smaller population unlike [mainstream media](#).



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mb@modestocpas.com

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(209) 575-2653 ext 303

FACSIMILE
(209) 575-0629

Michael R. Baudler, CPA

1120 14TH STREET, SUITE 2
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95354

Eulogy for My Father, Daniel Ellsberg

In the final days, his joy and gratitude were based on the hope that others would carry on the effort for a better, more peaceful future. I pray that his joy may be justified.

By **ROBERT ELLSBERG, Common Dreams**

Peacemaker and whistleblower [Daniel Ellsberg](#) died on June 16, 2023, four months after his diagnosis with inoperable pancreatic cancer. In March, he shared news of his prognosis with friends and supporters in the peace movement in [a letter](#) posted on Common Dreams. On October 22 his family hosted an online [Celebration of Life](#) which featured testimonials by his wife, Patricia, his children, Robert, Mary, and Michael, his grandchildren, and a wide range of friends, fellow peacemakers, and whistleblowers, including Edward Snowden, Jane Fonda, Barbra Streisand, Rev. John Dear, Norman Solomon, Rep. [Barbara Lee](#), Gov. Jerry Brown, Tom Reiffer, Richard Falk, and Randy Kehler. Dan's son Robert, the Publisher of Orbis Books, delivered this opening eulogy:

During a phone call in February, Dad mentioned—almost as a side note — “If I had a potentially serious condition, would you want to know about it?” I answered with words to the effect: Hell yes! Thus, I learned of a possible mass on his pancreas, which was later confirmed to be pancreatic cancer and was deemed inoperable. He was told he had three to six months to live. He lived for four.

I had known that Dad was never particularly worried or anxious about the prospect of his own death. Since surviving the car accident that killed his mother and sister when he was 15, I think he had always felt he was living on borrowed time. He admitted to me that this probably accounted for his ability to take risks that others might have feared—some of them, arguably reckless, such as driving through the countryside of Vietnam in his Triumph Spitfire. Others, like his willingness to risk life in prison for releasing the Pentagon Papers, served a higher purpose. That lack of fear was one of his superpowers.

Yet if the prospect of his own death did not concern him, he spent a lifetime warning against the prospect of mass death hovering over the earth. He stared into the heart of darkness, envisioning a scale of death for which most people have no adequate language or capacity to contemplate. In countless hours in his study, he scratched out thoughts about this danger on one of his yellow legal pads, trying to conceive of words or actions that could arouse humanity to avert the death of our species and the creatures we would take with us.

Compared with that prospect, he accepted his own demise with calm detachment, thus foregoing all the preliminary stages of grief that Elisabeth Kübler Russ famously outlined: denial, grief, bargaining, and depression.

What surprised us was something we would not have predicted: his evident happiness, or what my brother Michael termed “ebullience.”

This was not because he felt any optimism about the state of the world. “I am not generally an optimist,” he told me. “No,” I said, “you are generally a catastrophist.” In fact, he foresaw nothing but sadness and suffering for the future. In light of the dangers posed by the war in Ukraine, he said, “I feel I’m leaving just where I first came in.”

My father was capable of joy and laughter. Often our conversations were a sustained laugh fest. He saw the humor and absurdity in so many things. But none of us had

ever witnessed the sustained happiness and enjoyment of life that he showed in the three months following his diagnosis. How to explain what even he acknowledged was a mystery?

I think it came from the sense, as he confided to Patricia, that “a tremendous burden has been lifted from my shoulders.”

He had often spoken of his identification with the mythical seer Cassandra: who received the gift of seeing the future, but also the curse that no one would believe her. For most of his life, he had struggled with this dubious gift and the driven sense that he must find some way to make people see and act appropriately.

He believed that the danger facing humanity came not just from our technology and our policies but from the tragic defect that allowed so many humans not to identify with the sufferings and fate of others far away, not of their tribe.

He was not alone in his mission, and it gave him great joy to be around those he called his “tribe”—the peacemakers and resisters, the whistleblowers, the fellow prophets like Greta Thunberg—those he said who care about the others. It was that kind of deep empathy that had helped him turn against the war in Vietnam, whose people, he said, “had become as real to me as my own hands.”

And yet the burden of this responsibility definitely dimmed his capacity for sustained happiness—the feeling that somehow the fate of the world depended on him.

I tried at various times, with limited success, to lighten this burden. Using a sports metaphor that I knew was meaningless to him, I once told him that his job was not to get the ball across the goal line—just to move it down the field. Others would carry on.

It was a message he wanted and needed to believe. One time when he was feeling particularly down, I wrote him a letter saying, “Dad, you should never feel you have to do anything—give another interview, spend another night in jail, write another book. You helped end a war. And you set an example of heroic action for peace that will inspire and challenge generations to come. I couldn’t be prouder to be your son.”

After his death, I found that message taped to his computer.

I had the great privilege of working with him for two years on his book, *The Doomsday Machine*. He once told me that he would be happy if his book could prolong the survival of the planet for 43 seconds—the time between the release of the first atomic bomb and its detonation over Hiroshima. “Forgive me,” I told him, “if I hope to aim a little bit higher.”

In his last months, I believe it was given to him to raise his eyes and see a little higher—beyond the doomsday scenarios on his yellow legal pad: to sense that he had done what was given to him to accomplish; the rest was out of his hands. In a letter he sent to friends, he wrote, “I’ve always known that I work better under a deadline. It turns out that I live



better under a deadline!”

[That letter](#), which he posted in March, was a great step on his final journey. I believe it will stand as part of his legacy, a message about his own life, about what it means to be a responsible person, and the message of realism and encouragement he hoped to pass along.

His letter evoked an extraordinary response, and I think for the first time he realized how much he was loved. This came as a surprise: yes, people had told him he was admired—but loved?

[Ed. Note: Ellsberg’s letter is reprinted in this issue of *Connections*.]

The last time he left the house was for an outing we shared to Stinson Beach, one of his favorite places in the world. It was too cold to dip our toes in the water, but we lay on the sand, surrounded by seagulls and the sound of the surf. It reminded me that his horror at the dangers of nuclear war and climate change were fueled by his love for the earth—nature, the ocean, flowers, animals, children, music, poetry, beauty in all its forms, and what it would mean if we were never to see and enjoy these things again. We talked for hours.

Many of his interviewers, he said, wanted to talk about his “legacy.” He didn’t know exactly what that meant. But he told me that maybe this was his message: That you can’t know what you will accomplish, and you may not ever know the results of your actions—but the chance that you can make a difference is worth taking and at the end of the day that is a good way to use your life.

When we drove home, he told me, “This has been a marvelous day.”

That was his final gift to me, the memory of a marvelous day, the example of a marvelous life. To the extent that his joy and gratitude were based on the hope that others would carry on, I pray that his joy may be justified by the way we remember him and by the way we use our lives.

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Robert Ellsberg, editor-in-chief and publisher of Orbis Books, is the son of whistleblower and peace activist Daniel Ellsberg, who in 1971 made the Pentagon Papers public available to the American and global public.

Ed.Note: this article is slightly edited.

Living on a Deadline in the Nuclear Age. Some Personal News

My wish for you, my friends, is that at the end of your days you will feel as much joy and gratitude as I do now.

By **DANIEL ELLSBERG**

Mar 02, 2023, [Common Dreams](#)

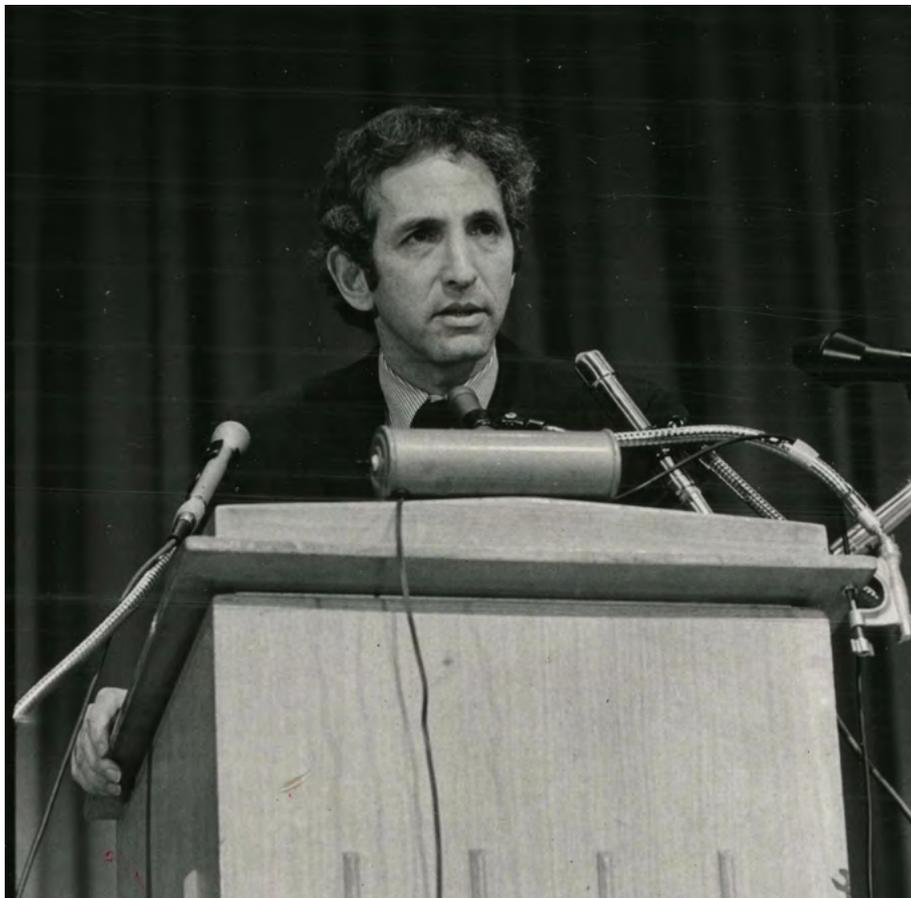
Dear friends and supporters,

I have difficult news to impart. On February 17, without much warning, I was diagnosed with inoperable pancreatic cancer on the basis of a CT scan and an MRI. (As is usual with pancreatic cancer—which has no early symptoms—it was found while looking for something else, relatively minor). I'm sorry to report to you that my doctors have given me three to six months to live. Of course, they emphasize that everyone's case is individual; it might be more, or less.

I have chosen not to do chemotherapy (which offers no promise) and I have assurance of great hospice care when needed. Please know: right now, I am not in any physical pain, and in fact, after my hip replacement surgery in late 2021, I feel better physically than I have in years! Moreover, my cardiologist has given me license to abandon my salt-free diet of the last six years. This has improved my quality of life dramatically: the pleasure of eating my former favorite foods! And my energy level is high. Since my diagnosis, I've done several interviews and webinars on Ukraine, nuclear weapons, and First Amendment issues, and I have two more scheduled this week.

As I just told my son Robert: he's long known (as my editor) that I work better under a deadline. It turns out that I live better under a deadline!

I feel lucky and grateful that I've had a wonderful life far beyond the proverbial three-score years and ten. (I'll be ninety-two on April 7th.) I feel the very same way about having a few months more to enjoy life with my wife and family, and in which to continue to pursue the urgent goal of working with others to avert nuclear war in Ukraine or Taiwan (or anywhere else). When I copied the Pentagon Papers in 1969, I had every reason to think I would be spending the rest of my life behind bars. It was a fate I would gladly have accepted if it meant hastening the end of the Vietnam War, unlikely as that seemed (and was). Yet in the end, that action—in ways I could not have foreseen, due to Nixon's illegal responses—did have an impact on shortening the war. In addition, thanks to Nixon's crimes, I



As I write, "modernization" of nuclear weapons is ongoing in all nine states that possess them (the US most of all).

was spared the imprisonment I expected, and I was able to spend the last fifty years with Patricia and my family, and with you, my friends.

What's more, I was able to devote those years to doing everything I could think of to alert the world to the perils of nuclear war and wrongful interventions: lobbying, lecturing, writing and joining with others in acts of protest and non-violent resistance.

I wish I could report greater success for our efforts. As I write, "modernization" of nuclear weapons is ongoing in all nine states that possess them (the US most of all). Russia is making monstrous threats to initiate nuclear war to maintain its control over Crimea and the Donbas—like the dozens of equally illegitimate first-use threats that the US government has made in the past to maintain its military presence in South Korea, Taiwan, South Vietnam, and (with the complicity of every member state then in NATO) West Berlin. The current risk of nuclear war, over Ukraine, is as great as the world has ever seen.

China and India are alone in declaring no-first-use policies. Leadership in the US, Russia, other nuclear weapons states, NATO and other US allies have yet to

**It is long past time — but not too late!
— for the world's publics at last to
challenge and resist the willed moral
blindness of their past and current
leaders.**

recognize that such threats of initiating nuclear war—let alone the plans, deployments and exercises meant to make them credible and more ready to be carried out—are and always have been immoral and insane: under any circumstances, for any reasons, by anyone or anywhere.

It is long past time—but not too late!—for the world's publics at last to challenge and resist the willed moral blindness of their past and current leaders. I will continue, as long as I'm able, to help these efforts. There's tons more to say about Ukraine and nuclear policy, of course, and you'll be hearing from me as long as I'm here.

As I look back on the last sixty years of my life, I think there is no greater cause to which I could have dedicated my efforts. For the last forty years we have known that nuclear war between the US and Russia would mean nuclear winter: more than a hundred million tons of smoke and soot from firestorms in cities set ablaze by either side, striking either first or second, would be lofted into the stratosphere where it would not rain out and would envelop the globe within days. That pall would block up to 70% of sunlight for years, destroying all harvests worldwide and causing death by starvation for most of the humans and other vertebrates on earth.

So far as I can find out, this scientific near-consensus has had virtually no effect on the Pentagon's nuclear war plans or US/NATO (or Russian) nuclear threats. (In a like case of disastrous willful denial by many officials, corporations and other Americans, scientists have known for over three decades that the catastrophic climate change now underway—mainly but not only from burning fossil fuels—is fully comparable to US-Russian nuclear war as another existential risk.) I'm happy to know that millions of people—including all those friends and comrades to whom I address this message!—have the wisdom, the dedication and the moral courage to carry on with these causes, and to work unceasingly for the survival of our planet and its creatures.

I'm enormously grateful to have had the privilege of knowing and working with such people, past and present. That's among the most treasured aspects of my very privileged and very lucky life. I want to thank you all for the love and support you have given me in so many ways. Your dedication, courage, and determination to act have inspired and sustained my own efforts. My wish for you is that at the end of your days you will feel as much joy and gratitude as I do now.

Love, Dan

Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center Announces Applications Open for 2024-2025 Youth Poet Laureate Position

The Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt Poetry), in partnership with the Stanislaus County Library, Stanislaus County Office of Education, and MJC's School of Language Arts and Education, is happy to announce the contest is open for 2024 Stanislaus County Youth Poet Laureate (YPL) program. Applications for the program, which brings Stanislaus County youth the opportunity to create positive change in their communities through activism and art, opened October 27, 2023, to students ages 15 to 19 who reside or attend schools in Stanislaus County.

The application period for the inaugural Stanislaus County YPL program closes on January 27, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. Youth interested in applying should submit a YPL Application. Included in that application is a request for a summary of civic and social engagement experience and a portfolio of three to five poems. Submission guidelines and an application are available on the [YPL webpage \(mostpoetry.org/contests/ypl\)](https://www.mostpoetry.org/contests/ypl). Applicants with questions may email Stella Beratlis at ypl@mostpoetry.org.

Submissions will be judged by a panel of local working poets and other selectors connected with our partner organizations. The selected Poet Laureate will receive a \$500 scholarship. Altogether, the YPL program will engage Stanislaus County youth in literary arts programming for one year, beginning June 2024 and ending in May 2025.

In addition to the scholarship, the YPL will be provided with the mentorship and resources needed to bring their community projects and vision of Stanislaus County's future to life. These resources will include access to MoSt Poetry's organizational infrastructure and board members as well as support from partnering community organizations and the local literary arts community. By the end of the program year in May 2025, the YPL will have made personal connections with organizations and individual partners throughout the region and will have had the opportunity to create a countywide literary initiative serving youth.

For more information, visit www.mostpoetry.org.

About the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center

The Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt Poetry) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in January 2013 by poet, educator, and Modesto poet laureate emeritus Gillian Wegener and a group of community-minded poets. MoSt Poetry's mission is to promote poetry throughout Stanislaus County and to promote Stanislaus County through poetry.

For more information about MoSt Poetry, visit www.mostpoetry.org. Follow us on social media to keep up with the latest news: [Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/MoStPoetry\)](https://www.facebook.com/MoStPoetry), [Twitter \(https://twitter.com/TheMoStPoetry\)](https://twitter.com/TheMoStPoetry), and [Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/mostpoetry\)](https://www.instagram.com/mostpoetry).



2024 Stanislaus County Youth Poet Laureate

This program celebrates youth voices that are committed to artistic excellence, civic engagement, and social impact.

The poet chosen to represent the voice of Stanislaus County youth will receive a \$500 honorarium and be asked to collaborate on workshops, initiatives, and similar programming to help promote the art of poetry (both written and performance) in Stanislaus County.



Applicants for the Youth Poet Laureate program submit an application and an artistic statement & biography

indicating civic engagement and leadership background along with original poems. A panel of judges critique this work on content, voice, and craft.

Leadership and performance are also considered in determining the young person who will represent our communities as Youth Poet Laureate.

mottled light

t'was early
December
as she'd
stepped off
a curb into
an icy puddle..

pollyanna
shrugged
and swore
crudely...

real life
events
were playing
up again,

and
not nicely or
in preference,
as
temperatures

in the low 30s
sometimes
made the light
of "hope" oddly
absent from
erstwhile
bright eyes,

whilst
the once
rosy red
of her cheeks
now rose to
a flushed,
deferred
anger...

removing
one, then
another
earring,

she
squared
off 'gainst
convention
that'd insisted
she appear plucky
and optimistic,

a truly false
nature she
knew was
simply bs...

damned
right she
was pissed;

these
were shadowy,
dark days,
with very little
redemptive

about them,

and her
classic, once
quite buoyant
schtick failed
now as salve,

with the
sharp ass
teeth of
circumstance
bearing down,

really,

just about to
toothily close
and bar the side
door that succor
came through
last time,

when suddenly
a familiar ray
of hope shone
through,

near perfectly
formed as
illuminate,

as
though central
casting had
called it in,

shining a
brilliant
hopefulness
down on
her once plight;

just long enough
for her to start
the car and
get the fuck
outta folks
expectations...

she knew
all along that
darkness is
sanctuary and
shaded light
is mottled

Kevin Walton

Poetry of Light in a Season of Darkness

Local poets share insightful and inspirational words to brighten the darkness in these darkest days of the year.

December Haiku

Rain soaks birdfeeder,
Wind scatters seeds in ivy
Mourning doves linger

Pink camellias bloom
Like tissue paper flowers
Petals packed tightly

Crimson red jelly,
Pomegranates yield their juice
Jewels on biscuits

Nancy Haskett

December Delights I

Today,
even a mundane trip
to the grocery store
brings unexpected pleasure:
fir, spruce, and pine trees for sale
in the parking lot,
their aroma so enticing
I linger beside my car,
taking deep breaths
of urban forest

Nancy Haskett

December Delights II

Tonight,
a ride through our neighborhood
is filled with lights pulsating to music,
scintillating crazily,
outlining window frames,
roofs and doors,
a manic celebration,
full of high energy and intensity.

My favorites are still
the large tear-shaped
bulbs that glimmer mutely
red, yellow, blue, green, white –
over-sized versions of the ones
that decorated our tree
when I was young,
the ones that glowed softly
after I turned off all the lamps,
sat in the living room
filled with anticipation.

Nancy Haskett

Dusk

Mourning doves on fence
Feathers puffed out to keep warm
Silent companions

Sunset sky on fire
Clouds like flamingo feathers
Pink and burnt orange

Early December
Super moon rises slowly
Lunar royalty

Nancy Haskett

When Winter Wakes

When Winter wakes,
she burrows into the windy space in my
belly,
and finds my weeping ribs sumptuous.
Her silent mouth engulfs me.
Blues and the cold twist together.
In this lonely hull, I shake with stars.

Friends appear in droves.
Their luminosity urges me out.
I fend off the shadows,
the collapsed state of my chest.
I acquiesce to their kind faces,
to the sugar in their embraces.
I expand with light,
from the ignition in their eyes.

Every Winter,
there is an impatient twinkle in every light
in the sky,
on the trees,
down the street,
in the hearts of children,
and mothers,
and the lonely
that wants so desperately to be
experienced.

This is how I know Earth has a flame,
that forever flourishes in deep darkness.

Cristina Sandoval

Season of Heavenly Light

Deep in December when the weather is
swirling.
The days go by swiftly and melt into night.
By the fire we'll nestle, red wine in our
vessels.
And bask in this season of heavenly light.

Forgetting the past year's travails and
disasters.
The gains and the losses we'll leave them
behind.
And remember the reason for this blessed
season.
Peace, joy and goodwill, the grandest
design.

It's not about presents.
That's not the essence.
It's all about sharing,
Not how much we spend.
It's the love that we're giving.
That makes life worth living.
And the greatest of blessings,
family and friends!

So, Deep in December when the weather is
swirling.
The days go by swiftly and melt into night.
By the fire we'll nestle, red wine in our
vessels.
And bask in this season of heavenly light.
And bask in this season of heavenly light!

Alan Arnopole © 2023



That feeling – a faint sense
You lost something
And can't remember what it is.
A closeness in the distance.

That feeling.
Pay attention.
Let it grow so big you feel
How badly all that seemed far
Has longed to be within.

Feel your unwholeness
Roll into this awareness
That you only know
A little piece of your soul.

How beautiful.

Lean in to that something missing.
A phantom limb. An imprint.
The holy afterglow of the radiance
That lit you into living.

Shira Michaela Avrahami

Happy to be here,
Secure within my borders, mostly.
Deadlines, confusion, overwhelm -
kept mostly at bay.
No need for violence here.
Everything, or enough things
seem reasonable.

I wonder how many people every day have
this?

And then every belief is upended.
The structured world
smashed to bits and
flushed into a sea of
heartbreak.

Sonya Sukalski 10/16/2023

Great Programs on KCBP 95.5 FM, The Voice of the Valley

Streaming on www.kcbpradio.org

PSAs in English and Spanish produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Confetti Park - Music, stories New Orleans style, Saturdays at 8:00 am; & Sunday's 12:30 pm.

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

SCIENCE

Radio Ecoshock – the latest scientific information on Climate Change – Saturdays, 9:00 am.

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

Big Picture Science - 1:00 pm Sundays.

Planetary Radio – 2:30 pm Sundays.

Got Science – 4:00 pm Sundays

PROGRAMS

Ukraine 2.4.2 - a collaboration between Anne Levine, WOMR, the Pacifica Network, and Kraina FM, a 26-city radio network in Ukraine that arranges weekly cutting-edge and exclusive interviews with key people in Ukraine – Thursdays, 10:00 am.

Beethoven to Bernstein - Classical music ranging from Beethoven to Bernstein. Big hits from well-known composers - Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Strauss, Ravel, Copland - and many more, mostly in the form of orchestral, chamber, and piano music - Saturdays, 10:00 pm.

The Not Old – Better Show - fascinating, high-energy program of big-name guests, inspiring role models, interesting topics, with entertaining host and former Modestan, Paul Vogelzang – Fridays, 2:00 pm, Saturdays, 12:30 pm.

Down on the Farm - topics important for our San Joaquin agriculture with Madera organic farmer Tom Willey - Saturdays, 6 am

Sounds Irish Music from County Wicklow - Saturdays, 7:00 pm.

Various musical programs during the noon hour: Oldies, Old Piano, and International.

Dead Air - Hear the Grateful Dead with Corey Daniels. Fridays, 6 pm; Saturdays, 3 pm.

Attitude with Arne Arnesen – 3:00 pm. Political and social issues.

Sojourner Truth - 4:00 pm – Tuesdays. Interviews and panels focus on issues that affect people of color.

Democracy Now! - 7:00 am, Monday thru Friday. Reporting by veteran journalists Amy Goodman & Juan Gonzalez.

Flashpoint Magazine - 10:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. Politics, social issues, from KQED's Dennis Bernstein.

Alternative Radio – 4:00 pm, Mondays. Interviews with prominent political and social people.

Julian Taylor's Jukebox – 4:00 pm, Thursdays and Fridays. Eclectic, contemporary music.

Nuestra Música – 4:00 pm, Tuesdays. Eclectic, Latin-flavored music with a beat!

LOCALLY PRODUCED PROGRAMS

Sports Talk Modesto - Join Jay Freeda and Jimmie Menezes. Snappy banter to catch up on everything happening in the sports world. – Thursdays, 5 pm.

Vib'n with the West Modesto Collaborative - Jasmine Corena and Likhi Rivas. Engage, Educate, and Advocate on behalf of the West Modesto Community. Showcases Voices of the West Modesto Community – Wednesdays, 7 pm.

AREA 5150 UFO RADIO – Spooky music & sounds out of this world, Friday night, 11:00 pm.

Bucks Stallion's Radio Transmission Emporium – Cyber Acoustic Music - Saturdays, 12:00 am, Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m.

I-On-Modesto - John Griffin interviews local people who reveal their inspiring stories. Mondays & Fridays, 10 am and Wednesdays at 9 pm.

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

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

Modesto Sound - California Audio Roots Project (CARP) - Wednesdays 11:30 am, & Sundays 11:00 am & 5:30 pm.

Sunday Cruisin' with your host, DeeJay Rig! Oldies hits from 1959 to 1999 – Sundays, 5:00 p.m.

Faithful Fridays – inspirational music and thoughts – Fridays, 7:00 p.m.

Why Not Nice? - Showcases unique music from unique cultures and thinkers worldwide, focusing on world/academic/jazz and roots music – Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.

Mars Radio – Hip-Hop Show - Music, interviews from local & regional artists - Fridays, 8:00 pm. A new, second show plays on Saturday nights at 8:00 pm, with a third at 8:00 pm Sunday.



Modesto Area Music Awards (MAMA) with Middagh Goodwin – Mondays 5:00 pm; Fridays 9:00 pm & Saturdays 6:00 pm.

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

This is SKA with Middagh Goodwin - Tuesdays, 9 pm; Fridays, 11 pm; Sundays, 5 am to 7 am.

I'll Take You There - A musical journey with Modesto's El Comandante - Saturday, 5:00 pm; Sundays, 9:00 pm.

Penny Bloods – Fun, Victorian melodrama radio plays, often performed by local actors, written by Arnold Anthony Schmidt, CSU, Stanislaus. As scheduled.

PSAs in English and Spanish produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

LISTEN TO OUR MUSIC PLAYLISTS AT SPINITRON

<https://spinitron.com/KCBP/calendar>

Find a complete programming schedule on our website, www.kcbpradio.org.

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY RADIO STATION: Donate here: <https://kcbpradio.org/donate/>

Please consider a recurring monthly donation.



Nonmilitary alternatives to Israel's war

from page 1

3. Nonviolent protest/campaigns among the defenders, plus unarmed civilian peacekeeping

Terrorism happens in a larger context and is therefore influenced by that context. Some terror campaigns have lapsed because they lost popular support. That's because terror's strategic use is often to gain attention, provoke a violent response and win more support in the broader population.

The rise and fall of support for terrorism is in turn influenced by social movements using people power, or nonviolent struggle. The U.S. civil rights movement [brilliantly handled](#) the Ku Klux Klan's threat to activists, most dangerous when there was no effective law enforcement to help. The nonviolent tactics reduced the KKK's appeal among white segregationists. Since the 1980s, pacifists and others have established an additional, promising tool: intentional and planned unarmed [civilian peacekeeping](#). (Check out [Peace Brigades International](#), for one example.)

4. Pro-conflict education and training

Ironically, terror often happens when a population tries to suppress conflicts instead of supporting their expression. A technique for reducing terror, therefore, is to spread a [pro-conflict attitude](#) and the nonviolent skills that support people waging conflict to give full voice to their grievances.

5. Post-terror recovery programs

Not all terror can be prevented any more than all crime can be prevented. Keep in mind that terrorists often have the goal of increasing polarization. Recovery programs can help prevent that polarization, the cycle of hawks on one side "arming" the hawks on the other side.

Recovery programs build resilience, so people don't go rigid with fear and create self-fulfilling prophecies. The leap forward in trauma counseling is relevant for this technique along with innovative rituals such as those the Norwegians used after the 2011 terrorist massacre there.

6. Police as peace officers: the infrastructure of norms and laws

Police work can become far more effective through the reduction of the social distance between police and the neighborhoods they serve. In some countries this requires re-conceptualization of the police from defenders of the property of the dominant group to genuine peace officers; witness the unarmed Icelandic police. Countries like the United States need to join the growing global infrastructure of human rights law reflected in the Land Mines Treaty and International Criminal Court, and accept accountability for their own officials who are probable war criminals.

7. Policy changes and the concept of reckless behavior

Governments sometimes make choices that invite — almost beg for — a terrorist response. Political scientist and sometime U.S. Air Force consultant Robert A. Pape [showed](#) in 2005 that the United States has repeatedly done this, often by putting troops on someone else's land. In his recent book *Cutting the Fuse*, he and James K. Feldman give concrete examples of governments reducing the terror threat by ending such reckless behavior. To protect themselves from

terror, citizens in all countries need to gain control of their own governments and force them to behave.

8. Negotiation

Governments often say, "We don't negotiate with terrorists," but when they say that, they are often lying. Governments have often [reduced or eliminated terrorism](#) through negotiation, and negotiation skills continue to grow in sophistication.

Realistic application of non-military defense against terror

At the request of a group of U.S. experts on counterterrorism, I described our Swarthmore work and especially the eight

The good news is that a number of these eight techniques can be applied by civil society, without waiting for governmental leadership that may never come.

techniques. The experts recognized that each of these tools have indeed been used in real-life situations in one place or another, with some degree of success. They also saw no problem, in principle, in devising a comprehensive strategy that would create synergies among the tools.

The problem they saw was persuading a government to take such a bold, innovative leap.

As an American, I can see the direct contradiction between, on the one hand, my government's huge effort to convince taxpayers that we desperately need our swollen military and, on the other, a new policy that mobilizes a different kind of power for genuine, human security. I understand that for my country and for some others as well, a [living revolution](#) might need to come first.

What I like about having an alternative, non-military defense in our back pocket, though, is that it speaks to the real need of my fellow citizens for security in a dangerous world. Psychologist Abraham Maslow long ago pointed out the fundamental human need for security. Analyzing and criticizing militarism, however brilliantly, doesn't actually enhance anyone's security. Imagining an alternative, as my students did, may give people the psychological space they need to put energy into something more life-giving.

Our role at the grassroots

The good news is that a number of these eight techniques can be applied by civil society, without waiting for governmental leadership that may never come. Two are no-brainers: Spread the skills and strategy of nonviolent protest, and teach a pro-conflict attitude.

The Black Lives Matter movement found many white people joining in on Black-initiated turf — that's a concrete example of reducing marginalization, a concept that generates dozens of creative moves by whoever happens to be mainstream (Christian, middle class, etc.). We can also initiate recovery programs after terror has erupted in our midst, as it did during the Boston Marathon.

Activists are used to launching campaigns to force the government to give up some of its reckless policies but may forget to frame activism that way. A scared public needs to know that activists hear the fear, and are on the side of safety.

By my count, these five of the eight tools can be used by people taking bottom-up initiatives to reduce the threat of terror. They might be incorporated by those who want to bring a holistic and positive approach to the fear that otherwise depresses and paralyzes. As usual, what helps others lightens the load for each one of us who takes that step.

*George Lakey has been active in direct action campaigns for over six decades. Recently retired from Swarthmore College, he was first arrested in the civil rights movement and most recently in the climate justice movement. He has facilitated 1,500 workshops on five continents and led activist projects on local, national, and international levels. His 10 books and many articles reflect his social research into change on community and societal levels. His newest book is the memoir *Dancing with History: A Life for Peace and Justice*.*



calendar

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

december 2023

The **Kruse Lucas Art Gallery** is located at 525 Tully Rd., Modesto and is open Monday-Friday, 9 am -5 pm, except holidays. 209-529-9111.

MJC Science Colloquium. Wednesdays 3:15-4:15 pm, Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus, Parking Free. (Recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube. Spring Schedule TBA.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science): Free MJC science programs. on Fridays in MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 pm. Presentations will be held LIVE in the MJC West Campus Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 p.m. Friday, December 1: Ari Friedlaender, Ph.D., UC Santa Cruz Principal Investigator, Biotelemetry and Behavioral Ecology Laboratory. "Whales." <https://btbel.pbsci.ucsc.edu/people/principal-investigator/>

The Prospect Theatre: 23/24 season has continuing offerings: Visit <https://prospecttheaterproject.org/2022-2023-season/>

6 WED: VIGIL: PEACE-ISRAEL-GAZA at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five Points), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 209-529-5750 or email jcostello@igc.org

7 THURS: Peace/Life Center ZOOM Monthly Board Meeting, 6:30 pm. Email jcostello@igc.org for login

8 FRI: The Nutcracker returns to the Gallo Center for the Arts, Dec. 8 - Dec. 17. **Nutcracker in Jazz** returns for one night only on 12/15 to jazz up your holiday. Tickets for Nut/Jazz include a delicious post-performance reception of Nutcracker sweets and libations in the lobby. Purchase tickets are at galloarts.org. Information: www.centralwestballet.org

9 SAT: Modesto Peace/Life Center Holiday Potluck Songfest Returns. See article p.2.

12 TUES: NAACP End of Year Gathering & Meeting 6:30 Tuesday at King Kennedy Center

20 WED: The State Theatre and Modesto Film Society presents 3 Godfathers, 2 pm. Join the State Theatre. Have fun, get perks, and support Modesto's historic non-profit theatre. Visit <https://thestate.org/films/3-godfathers-122023/>

LOOKING AHEAD

Tuesday, January 9, 2024: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Benefit: John McCutcheon Concert, Modesto Church of the Brethren. Tickets: see p.1.

February: Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration. TBA.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

D&D Champions Group, Noon. Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto.

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. All are welcome. For more information, please email charlie@imcv.org. Our mailing address is IMCV, P.O. Box 579564, Modesto, CA 95357.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County meets in person and on Zoom every Sunday at 10:30 am

at 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Info: 209-788-3720; www.stanuu.org

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

Unity of Modesto meets in person every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. at 2467 Veneman, Modesto. Information: 209-578-5433

MONDAYS

Queer Cuts, last Monday of the month, 10 a.m., Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto, 209-408-8848.

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter meets on the second Mondays at 7:00 pm at 2201 Morill Rd., Riverbank. Bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings are invited to participate in this support group for families whose children have died at any age, from any cause. Call 209-622-6786 or email for details: tcfmmodestoriverbank@gmail.com; <https://www.modestoriverbanktcf.org/>

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

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. Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

TUESDAYS

Women's Support Group for Women in all stages of life. Join us in a safe and judgment-free environment where you can give and receive support for the many issues that we struggle with as Womxn. Every Tuesday from 1 pm-2 pm at the Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto (Ages +18). Contact Sandra Vidor- 209.652.3961 or Kellie Johnson 209.918.0271.

Climate Action Justice Network-Stanislaus meets the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Link: <https://tinyurl.com/CJAN-FirstTuesday>

Teen Tuesdays every week from June-August, 2-5 pm., Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St. Peer Support, Games & movies. Safe space for teens to socialize, work together on projects, and learn about LGBTQ history. Each week will be a little different as we want YOU (youths) to guide the direction this group will go!" Info: Maggie Strong, Political Activist Director/ GSA Liaison, mstrong@mopride.org, 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; For ZOOM link, visit <https://www.naacpmolestostanislaus.org/> 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/24765549018387/>

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

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

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

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILS: Held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), 4:00-5:00 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, 829 13th St., Modesto, 6:30 pm, 529-5750. Meetings on Zoom. Email Jim Costello for login information, jcostello@igc.org

PEACE/LIFE CENTER MODESTO, 829 13th St. Call 529-5750. We'll get back to you with current info on activities.

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

WEDNESDAYS

Retired Public Employees Association. All seniors welcome! Meetings every third Wednesday. Denny's Restaurant, 1525 McHenry Ave. 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Call (209) 324-2060. Pay \$8.00 and order from the menu.

The GAP. A place of support for Christian parents of LGBTQ+ or questioning kids every Wednesday 6:30pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church 1528 Oakdale Rd. Instagram: Thegapmodesto

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 Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: mercedboard@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

THURSDAYS

LGBTQ+ Senior (age +55) Coffee Club Every Thursday @ 1 pm. Weekly social group to provide connectedness and community inclusion for LGBTQ+ Senior Citizens. Refreshments, snacks provided. Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

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.

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

3rd Thursday Art Walk, Downtown Modesto, art galleries open - take a walk and check out the local art

scene. 5-8 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 529-3369, www.modestoartwalk.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 Thursday, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

Trans Support Group, 1 pm, Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

Friday 7:30-9:30 pm (Sept thru May) **International Folk Dancing with Village Dancers,** Carnegie Art Center, 250 N. Broadway, Turlock \$7. No experience or partner needed. 209-480-0387 for info.

Overcoming Depression: small group for men & women. Every Friday, 7:15 pm. Cornerstone Community Church, 17900 Comconex Rd, Manteca, CA 95366, (209) 825-1220.

Funstrummers: A Fun-loving Ukulele group gets together live to practice and play. Play along with us or work up to playing out in gigs. Friday mornings, 10am to Noon at the Telle Classrooms, Trinity Presbyterian, 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mej3gD0ZD40&list=LLB8Y19zZg660qHCXGoC6ojQ&index=1>

Latino Emergency Council (LEC) 3rd Fridays, 8:15 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Lynnette Lucaccini, (209) 338-5700. lluc@elconcilio.org

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.

SATURDAY

First and Third Saturdays - **Gay Men's Group,** 1 pm. Positive Support Group for folks living with HIV, 12 pm. All at Central California LGBTQ+ Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

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, 11 am to 12:00 pm, Gallo Center for the Arts, 10th & I 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

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

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