

## Toxic pesticides are highly used near more than a dozen schools across Stanislaus County

By **BIANCA LOPEZ**,  
The Valley Improvement Projects

Late last month, the Valley Improvement Projects (VIP) in collaboration with the national non-profit *Environmental Working Group (EWG)*, released a [report](#) showing that in 2021, more than 6 million pounds of agricultural pesticides were applied throughout Stanislaus County of which over 20% or at least 1.3 million pounds was Telone, a fumigant pesticide considered carcinogenic.

Telone, also known as 1,3-Dichloropropene, was banned in California from 1990 to 1995, is banned in 34 countries, but not in the US and is used on a wide range of crops, notably almonds in the Valley and strawberries on the coast. 1,3-D can drift for miles at harmful levels. One of the highest levels ever recorded – at an elementary school in Shafter in 2020 – likely came from a 1,3-D application more

than 7 miles away according to the [California Department of Pesticide Regulation \(DPR\)](#).

Toxic Pesticides are applied to Stanislaus County fields near 123 schools, and Telone and many other toxic pesticides are highly used near over a dozen schools across the county. Students who attend these schools or live near where pesticides are highly applied, are among those who face higher health risk.

VIP, alongside many others across the state, is fighting for better protections at the state level. But we can't wait for new state legislature to protect our local community, especially if we have local power to implement local protective measures.

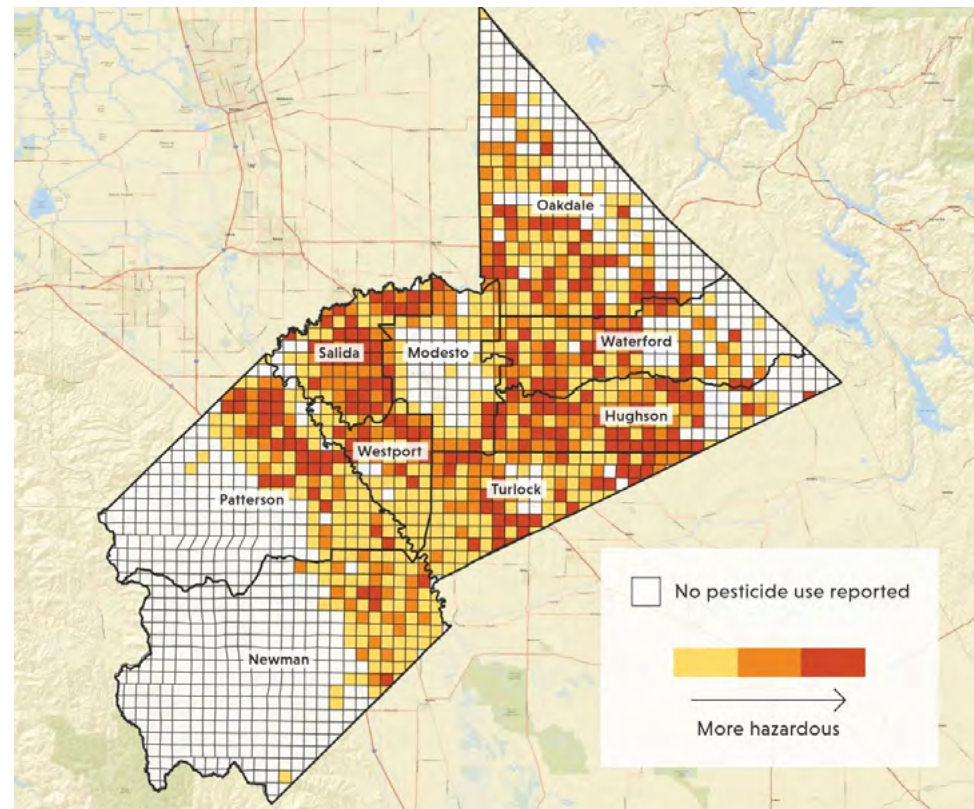
Currently, the law states that farmers within ¼ mile in distance from a school or daycare must inform schools, on a yearly basis, of all pesticides they expect to use, similar to the obligation of a school district to provide parents and staff at the beginning of the year with a list of pesticides that are likely to be applied on campus. These farmers that are within a ¼ mile are also restricted in the method, time, and date of certain applications.

The [Agricultural Commissioner \(AC\)](#) relies on the farmer to ensure that applications that are highly drift-prone, like Telone and other fumigants, are applied outside of that buffer zone, when children are not on campus.

Farmers are not obligated to label or mark their fields to identify where the ¼ mi starts or ends. Labeling fields to show buffer zones on fields is not state law, it's simply recommended by DPR. In Stanislaus, not many farmers practice this recommendation.

Should we wait till something bad happens? Or should we be preventative and do what is best for the health and safety of the children now?

Some farmers have good communication



with neighboring schools. But unless it's an obligation and not just a recommendation, we can't rely on farmers to do the right thing. We can help farmers ensure they will not expose children to toxic material by requiring them to confirm with the school district or school principal that children are not on campus at the actual date and time of the application.

Stanislaus is one of 4 [pesticide notification pilot programs](#) and the only one still in effect. We are asking for the AC to expand this program to the entire County. In addition, we would like them to upgrade their current system based on community input.

Web posting all Notices of Intent (NOI: notice of intent to apply restricted material that must be preapproved prior to application) will allow for the expansion of the notification project to the entire County.

We believe that increasing quick access

to NOIs for the County through web posting is within its capacity and will give all community members the opportunity to have advanced notice of, at least, proposed restricted material applications near them if they wish to have it, and without having to submit a public records request that can take 10 days or months to access, so we can take precautionary, protective measures.

[Sign our petition](#) and join our coalition to better protect the children of Stanislaus, farmworkers, and the people who live, learn, work, or play near farms. Please visit [our website's press release page](#) for the full report, fact sheet, and maps.

**ACTION:** Contact Bianca Lopez, Co-Founder of VIP,  
[valleyimprovementprojects@gmail.com](mailto:valleyimprovementprojects@gmail.com)

### MODESTO PEACE/LIFE CENTER ANNUAL MEETING Saturday, March 4, 2023

829 13th St., Modesto

9:00 AM — Coffee,  
Conversation

9:30 AM

— Business Meeting:

- Financial Report
- Committee Reports
- Nomination of Board Members

— Discussion:

- Action plans, ideas, and strategies

12:00 AM — Adjournment

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### READERS! Sign-up for our e-edition!

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



## MAPS: Free, Informative, Engaging Community Science Programs

Approximately monthly on Fridays MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132, 7:30 pm

**Friday, March 24:** Dr. Jeanette Pirlo, Assistant Professor of Evolutionary Biology, CSU Stanislaus. **Stompin' Through the Marshes: A Look at Gomphotheres from North-Central Florida.** Jeanette studies a group of extinct elephant relatives, Gomphotheres and Mastodons. Her research focuses on the extinct megaherbivore ecology of the American continents and the reconstruction of paleoecosystems.

<https://timescavengers.blog/2018/02/26/jeanette-pirlo-paleontologist-and-marine-biologist/>



### Dr. Pirlo's advice for future paleontologists.

"Paleontology explains **life as we know it**. To understand modern and future ecosystems, we must look to paleo-systems as baselines to see how things **have changed** or may **potentially change**."



MAPS is grateful to MJC, the MJC Foundation, Stanislaus County Office of Education, Modesto Teachers Assn., the Great Valley Museum, and the Stanislaus County Library for support.



## Yokuts Sierra Club & Audubon Club General Membership Meeting & Members' Slide Show

**Date:** Friday, March 17, 2023

**Time:** Socializing and Snacks: 6:45 p.m.

**Location:** Fellowship Hall, College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave, Modesto. Free Parking.

**Presentation:** 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.+

**Speaker:** General Membership of the Yokuts Group and the Audubon Club

**Topic:** Share The Secrets of Your Nature and Birding Adventures and Expeditions at the Members' Slide Show.

All Yokuts and Audubon members are invited to share pictures and videos of recent trips. Bring your files on a flash drive and limit presentations to 10 minutes. Community members are welcome to come and take a look to discover more about the Yokuts Group Sierra Club and the Stanislaus Audubon Society."

## Remembering the Holocaust: Our Nation, Our Region, Ourselves

Join us for a panel discussion to learn more about the Holocaust, and the US response to it, at a time of rising antisemitic discourse and violence in the U.S. The panel will feature three speakers. Q&A will follow the panel discussion.

Moderator: Dr. Ellen Junn, President, Stanislaus State

Panelists: Dr. Bret Carroll, History Professor, Stanislaus State - addressing the Shoah from a broad and national perspective.

Rabbi Shalom Bochner, Congregation Beth Shalom in Modesto - addressing the personal ('ourselves') perspective.

Elizabeth Igra, president of the Central Valley Holocaust Educators Network (CVHEN) - addressing the regional (Central Valley) perspective.

Questions: contact Brett Carroll ([bcarroll@csustan.edu](mailto:bcarroll@csustan.edu)). Please RSVP [here](#).



## Modesto Junior College Science Colloquium - Spring 2023 Speakers

Wednesdays 3:15 - 4:15 pm (recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube)

Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus. Parking permit needed.

**March 8:** Ed Laivo, Sales & Marketing, Burchell Nursery. **Rain Catchment Systems.**

All contributions to water conservation are valuable. The rooftop provides a vast area to collect precious winter rains, which is perfect for the garden. Simple applications for water collection for the home.

**March 22:** Daniel Chase, MJC Professor of Astronomy. **Observing the Universe Beyond Visible Light.** This talk will discuss the history of Infrared radiation from its discovery in 1800 by William Herschel to the current research being conducted by the James Webb Space Telescope.

**April 5:** Nicolas Tobin, MJC, Instructional Support Technician, Horticulture. **MJC Horticulture Program.** Learn about MJC's horticulture program and plant nursery, current plant trends, and what goes into developing new, successful plants.

Committee: Daniel Chase, Jill Cross, Elizabeth McInnes, Denise Godbout-Avant, Troy Gravatt, Deborah Martin, Michael Shirley, Catherine Tripp.



## Obama Foundation Seeks Scholarship Applicants

By VALERIE JARRETT, Chief Executive Officer, Obama Foundation

The Voyager Scholarship for Public Service includes:

- Up to \$50,000 in financial aid: Students will receive up to \$25,000 per year in "last dollar" financial aid for their **junior and senior years of college**.
- Summer Voyage: Students will receive a \$10,000 stipend and Airbnb credit to pursue a summer work-travel experience between their junior and senior year of college.
- Fall Summit: Each fall, students will be invited to a summit to help define and inspire their public service journey.
- Network of leaders: Throughout the program, students will be invited to an ongoing speaker series, giving them access to a network of leaders. This network of leaders will expose them to new areas of service and innovations happening in their fields. After graduation, they will join the Obama Foundation's global community, providing them with Foundation resources and programming.
- 10-year travel stipend: After graduation, Airbnb will provide the students with a \$2,000 Airbnb travel credit every year for 10 years, totaling \$20,000. This will allow students to continue to broaden their horizons and forge new connections throughout their public service careers.

**Applications close on Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 3:00 PM CT.** See application requirements at <https://www.obama.org/voyager-scholarship/>



at the Little Theater on MJC's East Campus



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and to the cause of  
Peace & Justice

## Stanislaus Arts Council will Support Arts and Artists with \$1.8 Million Grant Program

Stanislaus County Arts Council announces its participation in the Heartland Creative Corps program, a collaboration between Stanislaus, Merced, and Tuolumne Counties, administered by United Way of Merced County and funded through the California Arts Council's Creative Corps program. This is a grant program designed to provide funding to artists and art groups to create art projects relative to:

- Public health awareness messages to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Public awareness related to water and energy conservation, climate mitigation, and emergency preparedness, relief, and recovery.
- Civic engagement, including election participation.
- Social justice and community engagement.

The grant funding is intended to act as a job creation project, with 60% of all funding intended to be used as direct artist support and more specifically artist salaries. In addition, 20% of any grants can be used for materials and administration, including working/living space and all project supplies.

The goal is to provide grants to artists and groups that produce products that impact our region and increase the awareness and power of art within our communities. Artists, cultural workers, arts organizations, and social service organizations from any level of experience and discipline may apply for funding; however, priority will be given to projects developed by artists and organizations residing in or influencing communities within the bottom quartile of the Healthy Places Index (HPI). Funding will be tiered and prioritized based on the artist or organization's proximity to the targeted community. More information can be found at [www.healthyplacesindex.org](http://www.healthyplacesindex.org).

Applicants can access an online portal through April 15 with funding decisions to be made in May for Phase 1 and July for Phase 2. Projects must be completed no later than June 2024.

Individuals or organizations interested in applying for funding can visit [www.stanislausarts.org](http://www.stanislausarts.org) or [www.heartlandcreativecorps.org](http://www.heartlandcreativecorps.org). Direct questions to David Schroeder, Executive Director, Stanislaus Arts at [info@stanislausarts.org](mailto:info@stanislausarts.org)

**BOOK REVIEW**

## Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom By David W. Blight

By **TOM PORTWOOD**

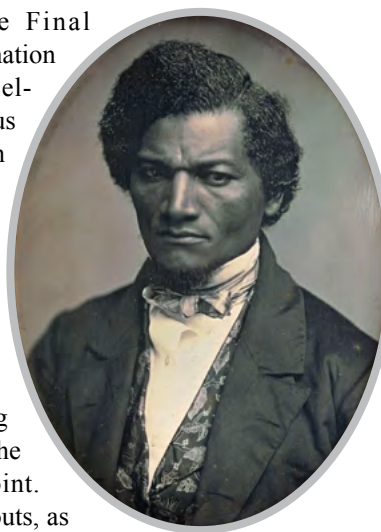
In his magisterial work on the life of Frederick Douglass (*Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*, Simon & Schuster, 2018), the historian David W. Blight movingly describes how, on the day President Abraham Lincoln signed the Final Emancipation Proclamation into law, Douglass celebrated the momentous event on Beacon Hill in a Boston church filled with abolitionists and former slaves. There was much rejoicing and music into the morning – as Blight portrays the scene – with Douglass giving a jubilant oration to the assembled at one point. But, as Blight points out, as a man who had fought against slavery for so long – first, to free himself, then to fight to free all those who were enslaved - Frederick Douglass knew that his work was not yet finished.

At 764 pages (not including Blight's meticulous notes), this beautifully written biography of one of our greatest Americans is laid before the reader as if it were a grand motion picture. Of course, the very elements of Douglass' extraordinarily consequential life are the stuff of great drama. In the acknowledgments Blight admits that he has spent much of his professional life studying and writing about the famous orator, abolitionist, newspaper editor, and lecturer. At many points throughout the book, Blight calls Douglass one of America's greatest prose poets and quotes generously from Douglass' brilliant and often stern and prophetic writings.

Exploring both the public and private sides of Frederick Douglass' life, Blight adroitly weaves the Great Orator's story in with the often-chaotic events and epochs that swept across America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including the Civil War and Reconstruction. While greatly admiring Douglass, Blight gives the reader an honest portrayal of a human being striving always to make America fulfill its promises. He slows how Frederick Douglass fought against injustice his entire life and was doing so on the day he died when he attended an event with Susan B. Anthony. Sadly, many of his most trenchant messages are as piercing as ever in the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

I highly recommend this excellent biography of a truly great individual.

*Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* is available at the Stanislaus County Public Library.



## YOUNG PEOPLE: Attend the International Youth Summit in Hiroshima ahead of the G7

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, ICAN, and the Center for Peace, and Hiroshima University (CPHU) will hold a summit for young people in the city from 25-27 April.

Young people will come to Hiroshima from around the world a few weeks before G7 leaders arrive.

*The purpose of the summit is for participants to hear directly from those who survived the devastation of the first-ever nuclear attack and increase their capacity and courage to demand a future free of nuclear weapons.*

The decision of the Japanese Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida, to host the G7 Summit in



Hiroshima, his home district, and focus the agenda on international peace and security will confront these leaders, who either command nuclear arsenals or endorse their use, with the reality of nuclear weapons and offers them the perfect opportunity to kickstart disarmament.

Over the past year, nuclear threats from Russia and North Korea have increased the risk that nuclear weapons could be used again, and the world faces the gravest danger of nuclear war since the 1980s. Considering this, last month, the Doomsday Clock was moved to the closest it has ever been to midnight by the [Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists](http://Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists).

Susi Snyder, ICAN's Program Coordinator said "the G7 come together to shape a better world and that cannot be done without advancing nuclear abolition. Young people deserve not to live in a world under constant nuclear threat, and the aim of building that world is what will bring them to Hiroshima. The G7 leaders must hear from civil society and the young people whose future they are meant to secure that nuclear weapons have no place in our future."

The youth summit program will include first-hand accounts of nuclear weapons survivors and the knowledge of renowned physicists, legal experts, political scientists, sociologists, and economists. Summit participants will engage in exchanges with Hiroshima University students and will hold a public event. They will announce the recommendations they've developed together for G7 leaders.

**Registration is open for the Hiroshima G7 Youth Summit to all young people** eager to advance efforts for a world without nuclear weapons. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet with survivors, visit Hiroshima, and connect with others in advance of the G7 summit. **Deadline to apply is March 6, 2023. Apply here:** [https://www.icanw.org/g7\\_youth\\_summit\\_registration](https://www.icanw.org/g7_youth_summit_registration).

**Information:** Alistair Burnett, [alistair@icanw.org](mailto:alistair@icanw.org), +44 7739 300168.

2017 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), is a coalition of non-governmental organizations in one hundred countries promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty. Visit: [www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org)

# Homeless — Where your Money goes Part II: The Black Hole of Law Enforcement

By **ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen**

California Governor Gavin Newsom's pledge to dedicate \$750 million of the state's 2023-2024 budget to sweeps of homeless camps is only the latest example of the extravagant waste of taxpayer dollars on futile tactics aimed at reducing homelessness. In all, the new budget will devote \$15.3 billion to homelessness, even though the state has already spent billions more, only to see a continual rise in numbers of people experiencing homelessness.

Most of the state's sweeps are conducted by Caltrans along the state's highways. By now, anyone even vaguely familiar with sweeps knows two things about them: (1) The people from the swept camps move into nearby cities and towns where they are chased around by local authorities and (2) After a few days, weeks, or months, the homeless camps are back again.

Sweeps fail because authorities have yet to learn that the most fundamental — and obvious — fact about homelessness is that homeless people have nowhere to go other than another location where they're not wanted. Governor Newsom, rather than acknowledge this reality, prefers throwing good money after bad.

Gavin Newsom is not alone in choosing to waste money on futile tactics for reducing homelessness. With a few exceptions, every city and county in the state follows his example: The default strategy for homelessness most everywhere is chasing people with nowhere to go from place to place and back again.

When the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury found in 2022 that local efforts to address homelessness failed despite the expenditure of millions of dollars, it decided not to delve into the specific tactics and deficiencies that led to failure. For anyone on the ground, one of the most obvious of those deficiencies results from using law enforcement as the preferred tool for managing homelessness.

Though authorities everywhere know homelessness is not a crime, they persist in criminalizing it because they prefer not to acknowledge that we lack sufficient housing for the destitute and disabled, we lack sufficient structure and staff for the mentally ill, we lack affordable housing for the working poor, and we lack transitional shelter for the elderly retirees whose fixed incomes aren't enough to pay for today's rental costs.

The City of Modesto offers a classic example. With a severe shortage of police officers and one of the worst records for traffic control in the state, Modesto spends a disproportionate share of its law enforcement dollars on homelessness.



If, for example, a mentally ill homeless person tosses a rock through a storefront window, the resulting chase and apprehension might involve three squad cars and officers, as well as a Community Service Officer and pickup truck. That's a wasteful diversion of resources for a case that likely wouldn't have happened had the homeless person had a place to stay. When the city permitted camping at the Modesto Outdoor Emergency Shelter in 2019, such quality of life crimes dropped dramatically.

In mid-December 2022, a woman in a wheelchair so severely disabled she couldn't sit up spent at least two days and three nights on a busy Modesto thoroughfare in cold weather, easily visible to passing motorists and police officers. People who inquired for help were told that the "CHAT" and "HEART" teams that deal with homeless people don't work on weekends.

The first Monday morning after being notified of the woman's plight, three squad cars, the CHAT cruiser, an ambulance, and a pickup truck showed up to remove the woman and her belongings from Modesto's mean streets, where sights of disabled homeless people have become more and more common. Sweeps and citations for loitering, vagrancy, and "refusal to leave" private property continue to be default options for getting homeless people out of sight, often even in cases of extreme mental or physical disability when such people should be in appropriate facilities for care and recovery.

In both instances, significant portions of Modesto's meager law enforcement resources were spent on cases that never should have come under the purview of law enforcement in the first place. When Judge Marsha Berzon of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that denying homeless people the right to sleep in public places without other options



amounted to "cruel and unusual punishment," she added:

*"The distressing homelessness problem...has grown into a crisis for many reasons, among them the cost of housing, the drying up of affordable care for people with mental illness, and the failure to provide adequate treatment for drug addiction. The crisis continued to burgeon while ordinances forbidding sleeping in public were on the books and sometimes enforced."*

Sweeps and law enforcement tactics do nothing to reduce the driving factors in rising homeless numbers nor do they get homeless people off the streets for any more than a few days or weeks. In fact, using police officers to fill the gaps in broken systems of care through repetitive acts of futility isn't just an extravagant waste of resources; it's demoralizing to everyone, most especially law enforcement officers who find themselves fulfilling the roles of social and health workers when they should be monitoring traffic and stopping crime. Nonetheless, state and local authorities, from the governor on down, continue to perpetuate failure after failure, year after year.

## Be informed!

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



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# The American Crisis of Trust — Let's Learn from Leading Democracies

Is it possible to turn the tide toward truthful exchange? Yes, if we take immediate responsibility as well as carefully embrace long-term strategies.

By **FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ**, *Common Dreams*

So, Donald Trump is back on social media. What a perfect moment to grapple with our nation's crisis of trust.

A 2022 Gallup poll found that less than 30 percent of us have “a great deal (or quite a lot) of confidence in U.S. institutions,” and that’s “as low as it has ever been.” Among 16 institutions tested, 11 registered decline. And the steepest drop? Trust in the presidency “fell off a cliff,” reported CNN. Eight in 10 of us believe our democracy is threatened.

On trust in government, we now rank 26th worldwide between Greece and Hungary.

Such findings are ominous, for the very bedrock of democracy is trust—including trust that political and economic rules are fair so that our voices are heard. And it’s hard to imagine many of us feel heard when wealth and income continue gushing to the top, generating economic inequality roughly on par with Haiti’s and more extreme than in 121 countries. Plus, most of us express reluctance to share our views for fear of offending others.

How many among us would choose this path?

At the same time we experience concentrated private power undermining our wellbeing, as, for example, fossil fuel giants use their vast profits to thwart action on our climate emergency.

All the above is made more threatening by the spreading disinformation disease. It pits citizens against each other and distracts us from focusing on underlying economic unfairness and undemocratic rules, including those suppressing the vote.

“Fake news” has been harming people for centuries, scholars tell us. But in today’s instant-info world, disinformation—a nice word for “lies”—is literally killing us. Four in ten Americans still believe the 2020 “stolen election” lie that triggered an unprecedented insurrection attempt and death.

If you are among this 40 percent, check out reporting by the Heritage Foundation. Considered a conservative center, it has long tracked voter fraud, and our analysis of its data reveals no significant problem.

Our legal system typically limits “freedom of speech” only in cases of libel and defamation—regardless of potential for wider social harm. If this interpretation holds, it is frightening: In November, for example, California lawyers defending doctors “spreading false information about Covid-19 vaccines and treatments” argued their clients’ free speech rights were being violated.

Around the world, however, a range of democratic nations are taking a nuanced, citizen-driven approach to combat disinformation.

To guard their citizens’ free speech rights as well as protect against dangerous lies, some are creating transparent public processes, which evolve in response to experience. In Crisis of Trust: How Can Democracies Protect Against Dangerous Lies, a report just released by Cambridge-based Small Planet Institute, we share highlights of five national efforts—New Zealand, Australia, Germany, France, and Sweden.

New Zealand’s approach seems especially useful, as it has been evolving over decades. Note that in the quality of its democracy the country ranks fourth worldwide, according to Freedom House, founded by Eleanor Roosevelt and colleagues in 1941. And the US? We come in a sad 62nd.

Since 1989 the New Zealand Broadcast Standards Authority (BSA) has offered a transparent, public platform in which citizens can flag what they believe to be dangerous disinformation. Hate speech is also covered, as the country strives to protect the interests of its Māori people. An inde-



Rrrowe, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

pendent board then investigates. If it deems the material both false and harmful, the offending media must be removed or corrected. Complaints and decisions are visible to all on the BSA website.

Overall, the agency appears to exercise caution, requiring removal or correction in response to about 7 percent of complaints. An example of the BSA’s action? A daytime entertainment program airing false Covid information was required to provide correct information in the same program

at a similar time of day.

Initiatives of several highly ranked democracies to counter disinformation reflect alarm not primarily about a single lie that could cause great harm—although our own “stolen election” lie certainly qualifies. Rather, they focus on the drip, drip, drip of false messages in our media-saturated lives.

So, is it possible to turn the tide toward truthful exchange? Yes, if we take immediate responsibility as well as carefully embrace long-term strategies.

We can each resist directly; and in taking on this challenge the Global Disinformation Index is a helpful tool. As a society we can learn from specific strategies of nations, such as those mentioned above, protecting freedom-of-speech while creating guardrails against disinformation’s poison. Long-term solutions, however, require our building a more accountable democracy generating greater economic and political equity so that Americans feel trust in government is warranted and are less susceptible to lies.

May the shock of registering our true standing, as well as inspiration and practical lessons from highly regarded democracies, motivate courageous action here.

Our work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0)

FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ is the author of nineteen books, beginning with the acclaimed “Diet for a Small Planet.” Recently she is the co-author, with Adam Eichen, of the new book, “Daring Democracy: Igniting Power, Meaning, and Connection for the America We Want.” She is co-founder of the Cambridge, Mass.-based Small Planet Institute.



**When:** Saturday, March 25, 2023

**Time:** 1:00pm-5:00pm

**Where:** Graceada Park  
Park Ave. Modesto Ca

We are also asking for donations to help fund this event and to cater lunch for free for all Impacted families

Sponsored by Justice For Trevor Foundation & Valley Improvement Projects

For more information contact Raydar7@gmail.com



A Vigil was held for Tyre Nichols on February 1 at McHenry Ave & J St.



# Outstanding Women 2023 Honorees

**Ana Andrade:** Patterson resident Ana Andrade is a tireless advocate for women and children in the work she does with Project Sentinel, a non-profit organization that assists individuals with housing discrimination, evictions, and rental issues. She also has worked as an advocate for young women with Invest in Me, providing them with self-empowerment and leadership skills. She presents to community organizations about tenant rights and advocates for housing policies to benefit immigrant families in our community. Ms. Andrade is a member of the Stanislaus Latino Giving Circle, investing in local Latino led non-profit groups that increase civic engagement in underserved communities. Her professional career includes working as a Deputy Probation Officer.

**Katie Barber:** Katie Barber is the co-founder of the Modesto Children's Museum, dedicating the last three years to establishing this world-class and valuable institution, which will expand education opportunities for children and families and plans to open in 2023. As president of the non-profit's board, Ms. Barber mobilized volunteers to raise funds and write grants to create a museum so that every child has access to all its activities, regardless of income, language, or ability. It will provide resources to educators as well as families, such as, parenting workshops and early childhood education services. In addition, she raised funds to refurbish the Graceada Park pool and splashpad in honor of her late son Ryan Barber, benefitting children throughout the community. She is also a member of Soroptimist International.

**Annie Benisch:** Annie Benisch grew up in Modesto and works at Boyett Petroleum. She directs the company's annual Make Dreams Real event, raising \$250,000 for distribution to children's causes in our community and chairing the grants committee to decide how to spend the money. Ms. Benisch participates in numerous community programs: DOMO Murals, Gallo Center for the Arts, and the Education Foundation of Stanislaus County. She was named the Most Outstanding New Member of Modesto Sunrise Rotary, where she chairs the social committee, helping with the Community Christmas Tree and Crab Feed. She supports Opera Modesto guest artists and Modesto Nuts season players by hosting them in her home. She was an active member of Omega Nu for several years and a member of the Almond Leadership program.

**Dina Brambila:** Turlock resident Dina Brambila believes every child should have the opportunity to live a healthy life and continually educates herself with the most recent information to better our community. She works for Modesto City Schools as Franklin Elementary's Healthy Start Administrator, developing support services to create a safe and healthy community. She serves as a board member for the Hispanic Leadership Council and Central Valley Hispanic Foundation, is a Soroptimist volunteer, and formerly was a board member of Mujeres Latinas of Stanislaus. Since 2019, Ms. Brambila has traveled to Uganda as a missionary volunteer, assisting physicians with medical services, teaching yoga classes and making mental health presentations for refugees.

**Maria Cortez:** Maria Cortez from Turlock is the Central Valley Regional Director for Able Works, a non-profit work-



Ana Andrade



Katie Barber



Annie Benisch



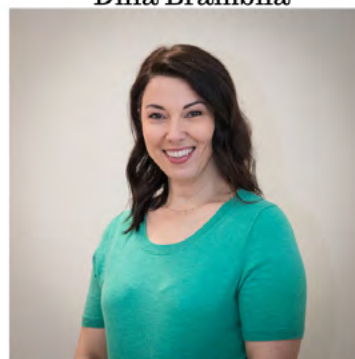
Dina Brambila



Maria Cortez



Jeani Ferrari



Chelsea Foy



Tahmirah Mecca



Shabnam Mujaddidi

ing for economic justice in Northern California. She has over 18 years of experience working with non-profit and leadership development organizations and has dedicated her career to serving youth and underserved communities. She serves as a board member for City Ministry Network and believes in empowering others to reach their goals. She works closely with its Latino Leadership Initiative to develop the next generation of compassionate, collaborative leaders in our community. Ms. Cortez is also a member of Love Stanislaus County's Community Advisory Committee and was named the 2021 Empowerment Woman of the year by Modesto Junior College.

**Jeani Ferrari:** Turlock resident Jeani Ferrari has a history of organizing and creating projects to better the entire community, including land use, the arts, Turlock library, and its downtown. In 1999, she started the non-profit Farmland Working Group to share information with the public about the loss of farmland, leading to the passage of Stanislaus County's Measure E, which protects agricultural land from

development. She served on the committee to redesign Turlock's Main Street, and later assisted with the establishment of the non-profit Turlock Certified Farmers Market. Ms. Ferrari was instrumental in remodeling the Carnegie Arts Center by raising funds and revitalizing the work after a serious fire. She also worked to add an oncology unit at Emanuel Medical Center and helped raise funds to create cardiovascular surgery suites there.

**Chelsea Foy:** Modestan Chelsea Foy is a founding board member of Modesto Children's Museum, serving as its chair of marketing and programming. Since 2019, the board has raised over \$8 million that will go directly towards improving the lives of children and families as they visit the museum and participate in its programs. Ms. Foy has dedicated herself to creative arts, including home décor, music, and drama, providing inspiration via her website and publications. After a career as a choral director and traveling musical theater performer, she has been active with Yes

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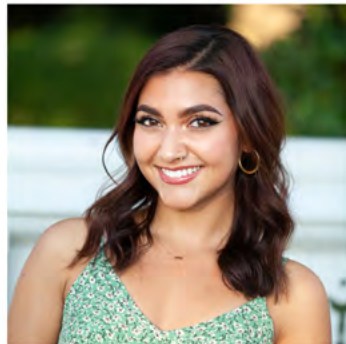


# 2023 Outstanding Young Women Honorees

## Outstanding Young Women Award Winners



Dhara Patel



Ameena Pierstorff



Hannah Sahota



Audrey Smallwood

**Dhara Patel:** Dhara Patel is a Modesto High senior in the International Baccalaureate program who is involved with many student activities, including Academic Decathlon and California Girls State. She is the student representative to Modesto City Schools' Board of Education, representing all 30,000 students in the district. She maintains a high GPA and participates in track and cross country. She also created the Stanislaus County Volunteer Outreach Program club,

**Hannah Sahota:** Hannah Sahota is a senior at Turlock High who is concerned with helping young girls gain access to math and science education. Inspired to study STEM herself by Dr. Viji Sundar, she was determined that the programs Dr. Sundar established did not disappear after her death, and so she founded Hannah's Project, securing partnerships and funding from AAUW and Dignity Health. The project sponsored a young student to attend math and science camp.

## Outstanding women honorees

from page 6

Company and the Downtown Modesto Partnership. She is also a member of Soroptimist International. In 2018, she was named Soroptimist of the Year and one of Modesto *Bee's* 20 Under 40 honorees.

**Tahmirah Mecca:** Tahmirah Mecca lives in Patterson and graduated from Invest in Me's first cohort in 2013. She returned to the organization as a volunteer and works to help women collaborate for their personal and professional advancement. One activity she facilitates is Love Notes, during which young women learn about establishing healthy relationships and developing the tools to navigate them. Ms. Mecca also helped to plan annual conferences, encouraging the participants to contribute to the program, providing them a voice and confidence in their leadership potential. As a first-generation college student, she serves as a model for girls and seeks a career in public policy to bring equitable resources

which organizes and funds volunteer opportunities. Ms. Patel is known as a student with integrity who will follow through and succeed. She thinks beyond her own life and experiences, looking for ways to help others.

**Ameena Pierstorff:** Enochs High senior Ameena Pierstorff is an outstanding student involved in extra-curricular and community volunteer opportunities. She is the school Photojournalism Editor and chief staff photographer for the yearbook, contributing to her school's winning many journalism awards. She is on the varsity swim team. Ms. Pierstorff volunteers by serving on Stanislaus County's Youth Empowerment Team and Modesto's Youth Commission, concerned with youth mental health and programs that impact young people in our community. She has volunteered in political campaigns and coached special needs youth for the Miracle League. Her goal is to pursue a degree in psychology and advocate for students who face mental health challenges.

In addition, she participates in Stanislaus County Office of Education's Leadership Academy, supports Birthday Cakes for Babies at Mercy Medical Center, and is the host of a radio show titled, "Empowerment and Equality." She is passionate about women's health issues and plans a career as an OB-GYN.

**Audrey Smallwood:** Senior Audrey Smallwood is a two-sport athlete who maintains excellent grades at Turlock High. She co-founded Kitchens for Change, a club dedicated to tackling food insecurity in the Turlock community. She worked with chefs and used her family's restaurant kitchen to make meals, plus raise over \$18,000 to provide food for needy families. At a young age, Ms. Smallwood participated in a Jessica's House grief support group and now serves as youth ambassador for its Healing Hearts Capital Campaign, which has raised almost \$7 million to build a new grief support center. She also volunteers as a group facilitator for children experiencing loss of a loved one and is inspired by her work there to someday lead a grief support center herself.

STANISLAUS COUNTY  
**SCCW**  
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

## 44th Annual Outstanding Women of Stanislaus County Awards Brunch

The Stanislaus County Commission for Women announces the recipients of the 2023 Outstanding Women Awards. Congratulations to these exceptional female leaders in our community. Join us in celebrating their many accomplishments on March 25th at our awards brunch.

10:00 a.m. No-Host Champagne Bar

10:30 a.m. Brunch

11:00 a.m. Program

Tickets are available from [Event Brite](#)

If you have questions regarding reservations for the brunch, please contact Amanda Hughes at [amandahughes80@gmail.com](mailto:amandahughes80@gmail.com)

# Gathering of Voices

A *Gathering of Voices* asked seven outstanding local poets for their thoughts as the nation and Stanislaus County again commemorate Women’s History Month. We are honored to share each of their unique voices:

## When Women Talk

There can be healing  
Each voice an ingredient  
Of a compound medicine  
That alleviates the irritants  
Diverts the pain  
By their words and by their presence  
In a group or one to one  
New tissue grows over wounds  
When women talk

***Karen Hansis Baker***  
Previously published in *A Circle of Voices*,  
Patient River Press, 2021

## SHE

She carries the DNA of slaves out of Egypt  
And of the high priestly sect of  
Jerusalem’s ancient Temples

Her tribal family wandered in the desert  
Were at the foot of Mt. Sinai when her forefathers  
Took gold jewelry from her foremothers to build a Golden Calf

They questioned the redemption of a Father who parted the Sea of Reeds  
Guided them with pillars of dark smoke cloud by day  
And fiery red-orange mirage by night

Her foremothers marched on steadfastly  
Followed without question  
Gathered their families to their loving breasts

A slave generation fell away  
As they zig zagged across a barren dessert  
Suffered the consequences of fear and doubt

Only their progeny  
Was allowed to enter  
The Promised Land

Generations of Israelites made pilgrimages  
To two Temples where the Father’s Laws  
Were kept in the Holy Ark of the Covenant

Fast forward to The Diaspora  
Her mothers and fathers forgot to remember

Suffered expulsions holocausts intellectual and cultural  
genocides

A new generation is on the horizon  
She creates her new role  
From A New Freedom

She no longer just obeys the fathers  
She takes on her wholeness  
Questions unclear or unjust male authority

She is comfortable with her femininity  
Is in coalition with all humans  
No matter their chosen pronoun identities

She counsels creates nurtures  
Builds brave futures  
Tears down restrictive walls

Marches side by side  
With all who care  
Who seek Infinite Love Connection

I join my ancient mothers and contemporary sisters  
Choose not to give energy to judgement denial conspiracy theories  
I choose to identify as I Me

***Tina Arnopole Driskill***  
*2-14-2023*

## Commentary – tina curiel-allen

I didn’t want to write this poem.  
I have too many things to say on the subject, and to too many people.  
I’ll tell you I looked my name up recently, it’s something I do periodically, to see what shows up. I found some 10+ arrests on the initial search. I didn’t even bother with aliases or convictions. Suffice it to say, court records will outlive us all.  
My fines followed me for over a decade, refusing the possibility of swift removal. Money has never come easy for my family, not enough funds to pull from. I was positive when I opened a bank account that my name would raise flags, I distinctly recall larceny charges that never resulted in convictions. Paranoia has always come easy for my family, we have too many examples to pull from. I resisted the urge to run when the woman walked away with my ID. There are things to take for granted, and things to not.

My mother would give you a list of reasons

I didn’t belong behind bars. Her ability to overlook fact and circumstance (evolving from a long line of co-dependency, addiction, and struggle) was remarkable and necessary for her at the time.  
She visited me every weekend, dutifully putting her hard earned money on my books. I have thanked her more times than I can count for her dedication.

My father knew better.  
His past was etched onto his skin while inside, like a predetermined fate for his offspring. He refused to see me while I was in there. The industrial strength cleaner, the process for visits, the armed guards, the controlled time and foods, they held too many memories for him. I don’t fault him for this.

They had hoped that a geographic, that homeownership in an agricultural town far from the city, would shield us. Afford their next generation a new life. But my blood, my inclinations, they told a different story. And institutional memory runs deep, history reaches out for us, past what we can see.

I think you expect me to apologize.  
For the goods that I stole, for the crimes I committed. That if I had to do it all again, my story wouldn’t involve jail. But the truth is: I’m not sorry.

I refuse to make it that easy for you. I didn’t build this system, made to house bodies so like my own. Those decisions were made long before I came into the picture.

My past has become experiential knowledge, not easily commodified. It is mine to own, to do with as I will. I share it collectively, with those that came before me, that haven’t left, and the inevitable future holders. It is armed with this awareness that I hold this pen, that I walk these streets, that I work for my community. Forgetting is not an option, and apologies are not for me to make.

## The Motto

**Water.**  
*1. The medium on which the wake lies*  
*2. A potential:* Elected when only 29 years old, Esto Broughton passed one of her first bills in 1919 which allowed irrigation districts to develop hydroelectric power, resulting in the Don Pedro Reservoir . The first invitation to jump in.

**Wealth.**  
*1. A critical step to freedom*  
*2. A battleground:* The Broughton Bills allowed wives to



gain control of an equal portion of a deceased husband's property and businesses. The Sacramento Bee described the implications to make the wife "practically a legal partner, with unrestricted power to hamper or ruin his business... however incapable, meddlesome or mischievous she might be." Others warned that "if the proposed legislation passes it will be necessary for a man to be as careful in choosing a wife as in selecting a business partner." A celebration of the ongoing meddler and the powerful wife.

#### Contentment.

1. *A state of flow after barriers to access are removed*
2. *A success beyond titles:* After four consecutive terms in the California State Assembly, Broughton joined the California Federation of Women's Clubs, various news publications, and then the Pasadena Playhouse. A never ending journey.

#### Health.

1. *A woman's right which is constantly under threat*
2. *An arena where every win counts:* Exactly 100 years ago, Broughton introduced a bill to prevent beverages with artificial additives from being labeled as juice. "Orange juice must be made of oranges, lemon juice must be made of lemons." Something to be savored.

#### Modesto.

1. *A mid-sized city in the Central Valley surrounded by agriculture*
2. *The birthplace and final residence of Esto Bates Broughton:* the first female lawyer in Stanislaus County, who was also one of the first four State assemblywoman to be elected in 1918. A sea of possibility in her wake; a glorious moment to honor.

#### Jenny Tang, Nov 2021

1. The Strangest Names In American Political History. <https://politicalstrangenames.blogspot.com/2016/07/esto-bates-broughton-1890-1956.html>
2. Greening of Paradise Valley - The First 100 Years of the Modesto Irrigation District. [https://www.mid.org/about/history/grnng\\_of\\_pvy-12.pdf](https://www.mid.org/about/history/grnng_of_pvy-12.pdf)
3. Esto Bates Broughton. <https://csfcdn.org/pdf/Bulletin119.pdf>
4. Women in Sacramento. <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/article/women-in-sacramento/>
5. Laws by Women, Laws about Women. <https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1458&context=chapman-law-review>
6. As of today, 12 states still allow some health care providers to refuse to provide contraception services. (<https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/refusing-provide-health-services>)
7. New Bills Presented for Passage. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SDI19210224.2.62&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-----1>  
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/190574912/esto-bates-broughton>

## Rachel Carson Paints the Sea

Rachel paints the ocean with words that flow through time, depth, breadth of mother of life—the sea—whose tides, currents and waves create a dance never-ending between earth and water. She speaks of sediment snowfall blanketing ocean floors in layers like gargantuan cake mixed of dead life forms, eroded soil, and rocks. Through her voice we view strange sea creatures who light the depths with their body lamps. We hear of squid who fly and land on vessels. We learn of mariners stranded when cold currents collide with warm, of deep sea canyons, volcanos that erupt to form islands, only to explode and sink under the waves.

See her rise here, a woman of vision, scientist of land and sea, immersed in life forms she loved—diatoms floating with fantastic shapes invisible to us, here bathed in thalo and cerulean, one a crocheted ballon, another like a ray with turtle back, the third phosphorescent Ferris wheel—all breadbasket of the sea, level one of the chain of life. See the reef with sessile sponges decked out in green, their convoluted bodies feeding in the tides. Coral polyps lift appendages of green gold, magenta, vermilion. Tiny fishes dart through this ecosystem flashing vermilion and yellow. Will they eat or be eaten? We think this profusion of life silent, but sea creature's voices make ghostly moans, shrieks, crackles, sizzles and snaps. The Sea around Us and Silent Spring teach the interdependent web of life.

We are not masters of creation,  
but beings among beings  
allowed to live for our time of wonder and awe.

#### Pat Egenberger



## The Guilt Lies on the Shoulders of the Government

Rosa May Billingham (1875-1953)

Post polio, she drove  
at the front of parades  
in the women's war,  
hiding stones with which  
to splinter windows.

She drove into policemen,  
ramming their legs  
with her tricycle  
tricolored  
purple, white, and green.

Jailed, force fed,  
and shackled in leg irons,  
she drove round the prison yard  
demanding by placard  
*Votes for Women.*

#### Linda Scheller

## Strange Villanelle for White Women Against Silence and Not-Knowing

*after Raquel Salas Rivera & Audre Lorde*

There's a list of reasons in my bag, things that I don't know—  
house with locked windows and immovable white space,  
a violence that we swallow, adopt, and make our own.

The true north star of justice oscillates and shifts,  
to what do we owe this pleasure, your massive edifice?  
My bag's been getting heavy with things I cannot know.

Are you listening to the voices? I'm glad you still have ears;  
your fear, I feel it welling, grief armies getting near. Effaced  
by what we've swallowed and freely made our own.

White body supremacy: Get nervous, watch towns burn down—  
When state violence is embodied, shame fuels the disgrace.  
For reference: see that patriarchy, the terror you don't know.

We talk of women's rights, but language slides, watch it drift—  
white lady feminism has got its own siloed refrain, tall cairns  
to mark the graves we swallow and retain.

*Now listen: strike you poison. Listen: strike you vein.*  
oppressive hiss in synapse, relentless memory trace.  
Name that thing that I don't know, say its fucking name,  
tyrannies we swallow and heedlessly acclaim.

#### Stella Berattis

*Modesto Women's March, January 19, 2019 (revised 2/14/23)*



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

## Streaming on [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org)

PSAs in English and Spanish broadcast multiple times a day, produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

### 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** - Karlha Davies and Jasmine Corena. Engage, Educate and Advocate on behalf of the West Modesto Community. Showcases Voices of the West Modesto Community - Wednesdays, 7 pm.

**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-renown 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.

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

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

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

## LOCALLY PRODUCED PROGRAMS

**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.

**People Not Profit** - with Pegasus Formerly *Peril and the Promise*. No new episodes. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp-peril>.

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

## Local Music Programs

**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.

## Weekdays (Monday - Friday)

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

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

**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. Interviews, panels focusing on issues that affect people of color.

**Democracy Now!** - 7:00 am.

Reporting by veteran journalists Amy Goodman & Juan Gonzalez.

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



## Children's Programming

**Confetti Park** - Music, stories New Orleans style, Saturdays 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.

**Find a complete programming schedule on our website, [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org)**

**PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY RADIO STATION: Donate** here: <https://kcbpradio.org/donate/> Please consider a recurring monthly donation.

# Plein Air Artist, Susan Rossmann's Work Showcased

Plein Air Artist Susan Rossmann's art will be featured at the Kruse Lucas Art Gallery, in March, April & May from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mondays - Fridays (holidays excepted) at 525 Tully Rd., Modesto. Info: 209-529-9111. *En plein air* (French for 'outdoors'), or *plein air* painting, is the act of painting outdoors.



## Subscribe for 2023!



a bilingual Arts Magazine for Kids and Families  
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# The Progenitor of Inequalities — Corporate Personhood vs. Human Beings

By **RALPH NADER**, *Common Dreams*

The word “inequality” is everywhere in the media. It usually refers either to race, gender, rich vs. poor, or other differences between human beings. Absent from the public debate is the biggest perpetrator of “inequality” against human beings—the corporate entity itself.

Ever since 1886 when a U.S. Supreme Court reporter, in a headnote for the Court’s opinion, wrote that corporations possessed equal rights under the Constitution, judges and corporatist legislators have equipped corporations with an arsenal of inequitable rights. (The Constitution makes no mention whatsoever of “corporation” or “company”).

How is that possible with the 14th Amendment mandating equal protection under the law? Because this central provision for our alleged rule of law didn’t take into account the contrivances of corporate lawyers, corporate judges, and corporate-indentured lawmakers.

Corporations that are created by state charters are deemed “artificial persons.” States like Delaware and Nevada have made a revenue business out of chartering corporations under permissive laws that concentrate power at the top of autocratic commercial hierarchies, leaving their shareholder-owners with very few options other than to sell. Since the early 1800s, states have chartered corporations giving their shareholders limited liability. The maximum they can lose is the amount of dollars invested in their company’s stocks or bonds. The modern history of corporate law is now aimed at maximizing the limited liability of the corporation itself.

The following twelve examples of inequality are shocking:

1. The corporate entity protects owners and shareholders from business debts and other liabilities. Yet, individual business owners are not personally shielded from business-related debts or liabilities.
2. Bankruptcy laws favor corporations mightily over individuals. Bankrupt corporations can cancel their labor union contracts, are free from lawsuit liabilities against them, and can even get judges to grant retention bonuses for the culpable executives so they can provide parties with their alleged historical memory. Then under Chapter 11 bankruptcy, the company, having shed its liabilities, can reorganize and be back in business. If it is a giant bankrupt company like General Motors was in 2009, its recreation can get many billions of taxpayer dollars because it is considered “too big to fail.” Compare all these privileges with an individual going bankrupt no matter how wealthy he or she may have been. No contest.
3. Under criminal laws, corporations have huge advantages. Unlike most individuals who commit serious crimes, corporations have lawyers who shield them with “no-prosecution” or “deferred prosecution” agreements instead of criminal penalties. Unlike individual criminals, corporations cannot be jailed, and are almost never executed (that is having their charter pulled and put out of business, unless they are small business crooks). Former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said the big banks may even be too big to be prosecuted. While the big corpora-

tions, having cost the lives of many people and sickened more, continue on their merry profiteering ways. In this category are the large drug, chemical, auto, oil, coal, and hospital chains.

4. Wrongfully injured people suing corporations under tort law find corporations can endlessly delay, with their insured or deductible legal expenses. Victims who are desperate for money to pay medical and other bills, cannot deduct their legal expenses and may not have insurance. Corporations can force low settlements because of their inequality of status and power.
5. Unequal taxation is a Niagara of inequality. The top federal tax rate for individuals is 37% and only 21% for corporations, before a plethora of loopholes. Why should an individual businessperson or any individual have to pay 37% and face an economic disadvantage vis-a-vis a competitor that only pays 21%? The baseless response is that there is a rational classification for this unfairness—nonsense.
6. Unlike individuals, corporations can create their own parents — (holding companies) for evasive purposes. They can also create hundreds of children (subsidiaries) to evade all kinds of law enforcement. The tax and non-regulatory haven of the Grand Cayman Islands has thousands of corporations “domiciled” there. One large building—Ugland House — “houses” 12,000 corporations. Real humans would be insufferably cramped if they attempted to quarter themselves with such inorganic efficiencies. Until the decision last month by the Third Circuit of Appeals, saying no to profitable Johnson & Johnson’s corporate lawyers, corporations could create a subsidiary and put in it all the pending lawsuits by injured consumers, declare the subsidiary bankrupt, and then leave the harmed plaintiffs with little recourse. This is called the “Texas two-step” a creation of corporate lawyers.
7. Corporations’ one-sided contracts requiring you to sign or click on, turn you into contract peons. Freedom of contract is gone. Your status is reduced to obeying the harsh impositions by banks, auto dealers, insurance companies, credit card companies, utilities, etc. Try to escape and go to a competitor. No dice. They all have the same restrictions, with minor variations. These long, inscrutable fine-print handcuffs require you to waive your right to go to court for a trial by a jury of your peers.
8. The antitrust laws, being little enforced over the years, have resulted in monopolies or shared monopolies, replete with manipulative powers that make a mockery out of an alleged free marketplace. How’s that for inequality—destroying the right to and benefits from a competitive market?
9. Corporations are given monopoly licenses by the FCC to control 24/7 what we own—the public airwaves. The radio and TV corporations get this bonanza free of charge along with the power to decide who gets on and who doesn’t. No individual could either have such a status or in any way challenge these license renewals made virtually automatic by the corporatized U.S. Federal Communications Commission.

10. Emanating from these inequalities, embedded in corporate-lobbied unequal laws, are the realities of raw economic, political, and cultural power that intimidate and coerce mere human mortals. Corporations are able to survive and thrive after horrendous overcharges, crimes, and casualties—the opioid and other drug companies, the vast toxic pollution of air, water, and food, the crimes of Wall Street, and the exploitation of workers’ health and economic well-being. Corporations continue, as they are not human, without feeling the sanctions of social shame, guilt, or ostracism. Mere humans have no such inherent escapes.

11. Other derivative political power allows corporations to strategically plan and control the lives of humans with algorithms and monopoly patents. They get away with direct marketing that exploits children and circumvents their parents’ authority, breaking long-held cultural barriers to mass gambling online, and continuing to discriminate against women and minorities, as workers and consumers.

12. The biggest prize of all for the uses of corporate-dominant inequality over real people is the control of the Congress, state legislatures, country boards, city councils, and elections along with the selection of judges. Their assemblage of ever larger entrenched legal and illegal inequalities produces a multiplier effect, achieving deeper inequalities as corporate control over capital, labor, technology and choice of jurisdictions here and abroad intensifies their privileges and immunities.

All these drives for maximum power and control are maturing the corporate state—as Wall Street and Washington merge. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in a formal message to Congress in 1938, called the control of government by private power “fascism.” In 1933 Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis wrote an opinion warning about big corporations becoming a “Frankenstein monster” in our midst.

So, all you fighters against inequality between people leap into the Big Leagues and confront the biggest progenitors of inequalities of all—giant corporations. Grab hold of the roots if you wish to prevent the bitter fruits. End cruel exploitation provided by these double standards.

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**RALPH NADER** is a consumer advocate. His new book is *Wrecking America: How Trump’s Lies and Lawbreaking Betray All*, (2020, co-authored with Mark Green).

**ACTION:** Listen to the “Ralph Nader Hour” every Saturday at 4:00 p.m. on your community radio station, KCBP 95.5 FM & streaming at [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org)





# calendar



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

## march 2023

CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.

**MJC Science Colloquium** Wednesdays 3:15 - 4:15 pm (recorded for later viewing on Science Colloquium YouTube). Science Community Center, Room 115, Modesto Junior College West Campus. Parking permit needed. **March 8:** *Ed Lavoie*, Sales & Marketing, Burchell Nursery. *Rain Catchment Systems*. All contributions to water conservation are valuable. The rooftop provides a vast area to collect precious winter rains which is perfect for the garden. We will cover some simple applications for water collection for the home. **March 22:** *Daniel Chase, MJC Professor of Astronomy*. Observing the Universe Beyond Visible Light. Will discuss the history of Infrared radiation from its discovery in 1800 by William Herschel to the current research being conducted by the James Webb Space Telescope. **April 5:** *Nicolas Tobin*, MJC, Instructional Support Technician, *MJC Horticulture Program*. Learn about MJC's horticulture program and plant nursery, current plant trends and what goes into developing new, successful plants.

**MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science):** free MJC science programs on Fridays in MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 at 7:30 pm. Friday, **March 24:** *Dr. Jeanette Pirlo, Assistant Professor of Evolutionary Biology*, CSU Stanislaus. *Stompin' Through the Marshes: A Look at Gomphotheres from North-Central Florida*. Jeanette studies a group of extinct elephant relatives, Gomphotheres and Mastodons. Her research focuses on the extinct megaherbivore ecology of the American continents and the reconstruction of paleoecosystems.

**March, April, May: Plein Air Artist Susan Rossmann's** art featured at the Kruse Lucas Art Gallery, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mondays - Fridays (holidays excepted), 525 Tully Rd., Modesto. Info: 209-529-9111.

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

**1 WED: VIGIL: REMEMBER UKRAINE**, 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, McHenry & J. St., Modesto.

**2 THURS: Peace/Life Center ZOOM** Monthly Board Meeting, 6:30 pm. Email [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org) for login.

**4 SAT: Modesto Peace/Life Center Annual Meeting**, 8:30 am. 829 13th St., Modesto.

**11 SAT: NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet & Community Service Awards.** Keynote speaker: Rev. Dr. Amos Cleophilus Brown, Sr. Modesto Centre Plaza, 1000 L. St., Modesto. 6:00 pm. Register here.

**15 WED: Remembering the Holocaust.** CSU, Stanislaus. 7:00 to 8:30 pm. RSVP here. See article this issue.

**18 SAT: The Luck of the Collaborative** Neighborhood Resource Fair: 10 am to 2 pm. 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr, Modesto. Snacks, entertainment, carnival games, and resources pertaining to careers, Covid-19 vaccines, and community organizations. Info: (209) 522-6902.

**19 SUN: MJC Music Dept** presents: Beth Shalom **Spring Serenade**. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mjc-music-department-presents-beth-shalom-spring-serenade-tickets-506665579387?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

**25 SAT: 44th Annual Outstanding Women** of Stanislaus County Awards Brunch. Tickets at Eventbrite. 10:00 am. Info: Amanda Hughes, [amandahughes80@gmail.com](mailto:amandahughes80@gmail.com)

**25 SAT: Impacted Families Unite** in Solidarity BBQ. Graceada Park, Needham & Sycamore, Modesto. 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Sponsored by the Justice for Trevor Foundation and Valley Improvement Projects. Speakers, booths. Info: [raydar7@gmail.com](mailto:raydar7@gmail.com)

**26 SUN:** The State Theatre and Modesto Film Society **Tender Mercies**. 2 pm. Join the State Theatre. Have fun, get perks, support Modesto's historic non-profit theatre. Visit <https://thestate.org/films/tender-mercies-032023/>

### LOOKING AHEAD

**June 23-25: Peace Camp** returns!

### REGULAR MEETINGS

#### SUNDAYS

**Dungeons and Dragons**, Noon. Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative and Resource Center, 1202 H St., Modesto.

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

**IMCV weekly Insight Meditation** and dharma talk, 8:45 am - 10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely; donations welcome. All are welcome. For more information, please email [charlie@imcv.org](mailto:charlie@imcv.org). Our mailing address is IMCV, P.O. Box 579564, Modesto, CA 95357.

**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 Area Chapter is meeting by Zoom on the second Mondays at 7:00pm. 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: [tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmodestoriverbank@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](mailto: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](mailto:WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com) or call 209.577.1604.

**ONGOING Silver & Gold Support Group** for mental health and wellness. Catering to the needs of the LGBTQ+ Community. (Age +55). Every Monday 1pm-3pm at the Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D Modesto. Contact Kellie Johnson, 209.918.0271 or Sandra Vidor, 209.859.4299.

#### TUESDAYS

**Womxns Support Group** for Womxn 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+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D, Modesto CA (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@moipride.org](mailto:mstrong@moipride.org), 209-284-0999.

**First Tuesday - LGBTQ+** Ages 12-14, 5-7 pm activities and support. Second Tuesday- LGBTQ+ Ages 15-17, 5-7 pm activities and support. Third Tuesday-Friends and Family, 5-7 pm Discussion and emotional support. All at Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative and Resource Center, 1202 H St., Modesto.

**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](mailto:naacp.branch1048@gmail.com)

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

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

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

## 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](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

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

3216, [www.Funstrummers.com](http://www.Funstrummers.com).

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

**ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS**, Every Tuesday, 7 pm at 1320 L St., (Christ Unity Baptist Church). Info: Jeff, 527-2469.

#### WEDNESDAYS

**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](mailto:orlando@arreygue.com)

**Merced LGBT Community Center** offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on-site Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: [mercedboard@gay-centralvalley.org](mailto:mercedboard@gay-centralvalley.org) - 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. [www.mercedlgbtcenter.org](http://www.mercedlgbtcenter.org)

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

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

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

**MINDFUL MEDITATION:** Modesto Almond Blossom Sangha, 7:30 - 9 pm. Info: Anne, 521-6977.

#### THURSDAYS

**Let's Talk Coffee.** LGBTQ+ Senior (age +55) Coffee Meet up! Every Thursday @ 1 pm at Queen Bean, 1126 14th St., Modesto. Weekly social group to provide connectedness and community inclusion for LGBTQ+ Senior Citizens. Refreshments, snacks provided. Contact Steven Cullen, 559.799.0464.

**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](mailto: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](http://www.nicoleottman.com)

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

**IMCV Grupo de Meditación en Español**, cada semana 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (edificio trasero al final del estacionamiento este de UUFSC). Ofrecido libremente, las donaciones son bienvenidas. Info: Contacto Vanessa, 209-480-6172.

**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](mailto: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](http://www.StanislausGreenTeam.com)

**3rd Thursday Art Walk**, downtown Modesto, third Thursdays, 5 to 8 pm. Info: <http://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 Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

#### FRIDAYS

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.

**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](mailto:yamiletv@hotmail.com)

#### SATURDAY

**TransForward Group** meets at the Queen Bean every Saturday at 1 pm. 18+. Info: 209-408-8848.

First and Third Saturdays - **Gay Men's Group**, Noon. First and Third Saturdays- Positive Support Group for folks living with HIV. All at Central California LGBTQ+ Collaborative, 1202 H St., Suite D, 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, 3 pm, Deva Café, 1202 J. St., Modesto. No experience or drums necessary to participate. All levels welcome. <https://drum-love.com/>

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

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

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

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

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