

What’s happening with Nonviolent Cities?

The Nonviolent Cities Project is uniting communities around the country working to bring nonviolence to schools, buses, and everyone in their neighborhoods.

By RIVERA SUN

What an exciting time for the [Nonviolent Cities Project](#)! For years, [Pace e Bene](#) has fostered the vision of communities that promote nonviolence in schools, businesses, cultural events and more. We organize with local cities/towns to implement nonviolent solutions and alternatives to physical violence as well as systemic, structural, cultural and other forms of violence. From Nonviolent Carbondale, Illinois, to Nonviolent Springfield, Massachusetts, groups are working to transform their communities. Here’s what’s happening in this ever-expanding effort.

We’re welcoming new groups in Nonviolent Opelika, Alabama, and Nonviolent Rochester, New York. We’re celebrating inquiries from Salford, in the United Kingdom; Cleveland and Cleveland Heights, Ohio; Lakewood, Ohio; Gresham, Oregon and more. We are cheering on the amazing efforts of our long-time organizers and sharing their stories nationwide so their successes can show us all what’s possible.

In large and small ways, people are standing up to make a difference.

On a nationwide level, Pace e Bene’s article, “[The architecture of a nonviolent city](#),” led to several radio interviews, including one in India. Nonviolent Cities Project coordinator Rivera Sun spoke at the Shanti Sena Summit about how we’re collaborating with peace teams across the country to support Nonviolent Cities in training their communities in active bystander, de-escalation and violence prevention skills. Pace e Bene trainers offered

a six-week training in “Growing A Nonviolent Community” that introduced the concepts behind the Nonviolent Cities Project to both new people and long-time organizers. Nonviolent Austin, Morro Bay, Owensboro, Prescott, Little Rock, and Tiffin co-sponsored the [For Goodness Sake Music Festival](#) on Aug. 21 and raised funds for their work and the broader movement.

On the local level, here are some of the many exciting events, actions and organizing projects happening in Nonviolent Cities.

Nonviolent Opelika is a new addition to the project, led by Rev. Carolyn Morton. With her community, they organize to end gun violence, holding regular marches, vigils and rallies. They train the community in the teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, and even make T-shirts with nonviolence messaging. [Read more about them here](#).

Nonviolent Rochester is another newcomer to the Nonviolent Cities Project. Their efforts are organized by the staff of the [M.K. Gandhi Institute](#), which has a decades-long track record of infusing nonviolence throughout the city. They not only have conflict resolution trainings with thousands of local youth, they also put bus-sized nonviolence ads on the sides of public transit buses, on billboards, and put hundreds of nonviolence-promoting yard signs in people’s front lawns.

Twin Cities Nonviolent, working with [EMERGE](#) and [Nonviolent Peaceforce](#), trained a group of young, unarmed peacekeepers. Four of these peacekeepers now have steady jobs providing unarmed security and conflict resolution at the local Ascension Catholic School. At a Pace e Bene webinar on cop-free schools, they spoke about how they’re trying to expand the program. [Watch the](#)

[recording here](#).

Nonviolent Austin, Texas, held an online music festival last year — then they went on to help Pace e Bene/Campaign Nonviolence organize a nationwide and international virtual music festival all about nonviolence! They also hold weekly peace vigils, joined the March for Democracy with the Poor People’s Campaign, participated in a rally for voting rights, and organized cohorts to attend nonviolence trainings together.

Nonviolent Wilmington has trained more than 50 people using the “[Engaging Nonviolence](#)” curriculum. The workshops, which began in-person during January 2020, were interrupted by the pandemic, but resumed on Zoom in fall 2020. The online format proved to increase attendance throughout last winter and spring. Workshops and other activities will resume this fall under the auspices of Pacem in Terris. They have become a program of Delaware Pacem in Terris to continue this good work.

Nonviolent Morro Bay offered an

introductory training in June for people curious about how to get started with the Nonviolent Cities Project. [Watch the recording here](#). Their newest endeavor is collaborating with the Lumina Alliance to promote a booklet produced by young high school artists on how to end sexual violence. They are working to advance the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are planning to offer a full school curriculum to area schools about basic human rights.

Nonviolent Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is working with Peace Action Lancaster to get their city council to divest \$150 million worth of city funds from weapons and fossil fuels. They are also hosting an event on the moral injury of war on the International Day of Peace on Sept. 21.

Nonviolent Prescott, Arizona, launched an anti-racism effort and educational campaign to accompany the placement of a Harriet Tubman sculpture in their city.

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A Heartfelt THANK YOU!

We on the Peace/Life Center’s Board of Directors were deeply touched by the generosity of so many of you in responding to our July fund appeal. We told you we had to move from our office of 27 years to a new location in Modesto at 829 13th St., at the corner of 13th and I. We let you know the move would be expensive, especially in setting up the Center’s radio broadcasting studio for KCBP 95.5 FM at the Modesto Church of the Brethren. We reminded you that we were still active locally on two key issues of our time: Police Reform and Climate Change. But these and all our efforts would be mere



dreams without a community of people who share our vision and help pay our bills and fund our projects.

For your generous outpouring of financial support at a time of pressing need, we can’t thank you enough.

Sincerely,
Jocelyn Cooper
President, Modesto Peace/Life Center

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Can enlarge text to read more easily! Print out if desired!

To sign-up, send your email address to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org

If you do not have Adobe Reader, download it free from <http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>

Modesto needs a Police Review Commission with an Independent Police Auditor

A Civilian Review Committee composed of representatives from various community organizations, including the Modesto Peace/Life Center, has prepared specific proposal documents, modeled upon the City of Davis' successful police review process, which have been sent to each member of the Modesto City Council. Please contact your councilmember and urge support for a Civilian Police Review Board with an Independent Police Auditor To receive a copy of these documents, email Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org

A Community Forum on Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement for Modesto, with recognized experts on this issue, was held on February 27, 2021. Watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39G3jn10uHU>

Supported by the following groups: Modesto/Stanslaus NAACP, ACLU Stanislaus, Latino Community Roundtable, North Valley Labor Federation, Modesto Peace/Life Center, Faith in the Valley, Democratic Women's Club of Stanislaus, Valley Improvement Projects, Indivisible Stanislaus, Turlock Black Lives Matter Movement, Stanislaus & Tuolumne Central Labor Council, United Domestic Workers of America UDW/AFSCME 3930, Advocates for Justice, DSA Stanislaus, Modesto Church of the Brethren.

ACTION: Get your local organization to sign on to this effort. How? Email Jim Costello at jcostello@igc.org for information.

Follow closely "Forward Together"—An initiative focused on police-community relations started by the City of Modesto at <https://www.modestogov.com/forwardtogether>. And watch for news about Sheriff Dirkse's "Project Resolve."

MAPS offers free, informative, and engaging science programs

7:30 pm. Participate by logging on to an Internet Link: <https://www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/maps.php> to sign up for notification of the link.

For archived MAPS talks: <https://share.yosemite.edu/view.aspx?i=1E7L> 10/22 might be live in Sierra Hall 132

Fall 2021 MAPS Schedule

Friday, Oct. 22, 2021. Live or Zoom, TBD. **Dr. Evan Reed**, (Associate Professor of Materials and Engineering, Stanford Univ.) **Battery Technology: Today and in the Future.**

Evan Reed | Materials Computation and Theory Group (stanford.edu)

Evan Reed's Profile | Stanford Profiles

Evan Reed: How to discover a magic material - Bing video

Friday, Nov. 19, 2021. Dr. Steve Farmer. Zoom, with group meeting and free candy. **The Chemistry of Candy.** <http://www.acs-sacramento.org/strange-chemistry-with-steve-farmer/>

Friday, Dec. 10, 2021. Zoom/YouTube. **Dr. Margaret Turnbull** (Ph.D. Univ. of Arizona, SETI Inst., NASA Ames), discusses planetary systems capable of supporting life as we know it. She developed a *Catalog of Nearby Habitable Systems* for use in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence

A Public Conversation on Racism in Stanislaus County

In Solidarity: A Public Conversation on Racism in Stanislaus County will be held on Thursday, November 4th from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Redeemer Church, Downtown Modesto, at the corner of H and 9th St.

Be part of a community conversation to raise the collective awareness of racism and its realities in Stanislaus County.

This conversation is open to all, with the hope of bringing together different people of all races and backgrounds, and to begin exploring how each person can contribute toward creating a connected and diverse community.

Share your experience and hear those of your neighbors. This event is free and open to all - refreshments will be provided.

This event will be hosted by:

The Unincorporated (@unincorporatedvoice): A storytelling project of residents living in Stanislaus County meant to share conversations of people who live on the margins of society. **The Unincorporated** amplifies their voices to share how they envision a vibrant community and helps them vie for the changes they want to see in their neighborhoods.

209: Youth Empowerment (@209YouthEmpowerment): A nonprofit organization that creates positive and empowering experiences for youth and families by facilitating mental well-being conversations, creating civic engagement opportunities, and providing educational programming that inspires our youth to improve their communities.

ACTION: RSVP: to join us, please register at <http://bit.ly/stan-county> (the event is FREE)!

(SETI). Dr. Turnbull will briefly address the recent abundance of UFO news appearing on the popular media.

UA Astrobiologist Helps NASA Search for Life on Other Planets | University of Arizona News

Margaret Turnbull | SETI Institute Margaret Turnbull - Wikipedia

Do Any Exoplanets Have Intelligent Occupants? (SETIcon 2) - YouTube

MAPS is grateful to the MJC Foundation, SCOE, MJC, the MTA (Modesto Teachers Assn.) and the GVM for generous support.

Trans and Nonbinary Survivors SPEAK OUT!

FORGE and MenHealing are proud to announce the launch of **Voices of Healing: Trans and Nonbinary Survivors SPEAK OUT!** Our dynamic, collaborative team is enthusiastic to roll out this project and invite you in!

The SPEAK OUT is designed to support, uplift, and foster the resilience of trans and nonbinary survivors of sexual victimization using the power of story, narrative, movement, or other creative expression.

Ten applicants will be selected to be part of this engaging, skills-building, and community-enriching program to hone their stories and create powerful public moments of resilience.



Yokuts Sierra Club Meeting: "Nature Inspirations"

WHEN: Friday October 15, 7 PM

WHERE: College Ave. United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto

"Nature Inspirations"

Nature, wilderness, and wildlife are important and special to all of us. Please bring a natural object, something inspired by nature (artwork), a poem or other type of writing, that is important to you and inspires you to learn about and advocate for the environment. You may discuss/explain your item for 5-10 minutes.

Nature and the environment need our help more than ever. We hope that the items that you bring to share with us will capture our imagination and spur us to action.

Refreshments will be served. All members of the community are welcome. Contact Elaine with questions, vevado@yahoo.com.

Join SEYAA: Stanislaus Environmental Youth Activist Academy

10 weekly workshops targeted for Stanislaus youth who want to become activists for Environmental, Social and Climate Justice.

- Goal, Purpose, and Vision-Setting
- Thinking about Equity at Every Step of Your Campaign
- Time Management and Avoiding Burnout
- Researching Your Issue
- Contacting and Meeting with Elected Officials
- Root-Cause Analysis
- Power Analysis
- Campaign Planning and Tactics
- Fundraising

Writing Impactful Emails, Op-Eds, Blogs, and Press Releases & Public Speaking

Interest Form: <https://tinyurl.com/cjan-seyaa>

Trans and Nonbinary Survivors SPEAK OUT!



The SPEAK OUT will culminate with two live premieres for a national audience in late March/early April 2022.

More information at: <https://forge-forward.org/collections/trans-survivors-speak-out/>

In Memoriam: Pat Noda, A Life to Celebrate

September 6, 1920 – August 25, 2021

By Dan Onorato

Ed. Note: This tribute to Pat Noda was published in *Stanislaus Connections* in September 2020. We republish here in his memory.

In reflecting on the Peace/Life Center's 50 years of stay power, we're amazed: we've built a supportive community of committed peace activists, and we've been steadfast all these years in promoting peace, social and economic justice, and a sustainable future. We have a lot to be thankful for. And as an all-volunteer organization we have many people to thank. For the last five years at our Harvest Gathering celebrations in October, we've focused on thanking our volunteers. In this article I want to highlight one person. He's a long-time volunteer in our Peace/Life Community. He doesn't draw attention to himself, but in his own unassuming way he embodies unwavering conviction, heartfelt compassion, and generous service for others, especially for the disadvantaged. What's more, on September 6, he'll be 100 years old! So, read this as a way to join in saying,

**Happy 100th Birthday, Pat Noda!
The Modesto Peace/Life Center
appreciates you.
Thank you.**

Pat's a quiet man. Praise doesn't motivate him, and he doesn't seek the limelight. Social status or financial success aren't on his list of needs. He values, and has lived, a simple lifestyle. He has large, welcoming dark eyes and a warm, friendly smile. Over the years he's probably had to punch new holes in his one belt to hold up his pants. He's not into new clothes. He doesn't talk a lot but let him get started on topics like healthy eating or politics and his voice grows louder and more animated, with unabashed opinion—repeated in case you don't get his point.

Pat is the sixth of nine children. His parents came to the United States from Japan around the turn of the 20th century, his father, Shichiro Noda, to California in 1894 at age 19, his mother, Sachiko Yasuda, to West Virginia in 1904 at age 18. Protestant missionaries may have helped Sachiko to migrate



to America. Shichiro opened a laundry in Los Angeles and later worked as a foreman on the Union Pacific Railroad. Sachiko did housework for a judge and his family. After an arranged marriage in West Virginia in 1910, the couple moved to Livingston, California, where they rented a farm raising grapes and strawberries and started their family. They began their life together in poverty and, as Japanese Americans, faced a lot of prejudice. In 1914 Shichiro, who was educated and spoke English well, became the first manager of the Livingston Cooperative Society for the Yamato Colony of Japanese farmers. He held that position for 15 years. Later he set up a trucking business and worked out of San Luis Obispo. With her husband away, Sachiko took primary responsibility for the family farm and spent a lot of her time working their fields during the day and doing the laundry and cooking at night. As a Charter Member of the Livingston Church of Christ, she was as active in church activities as she could be. Meanwhile, the older children helped out raising the younger children.

Pat was born in 1920. He was named after the American revolutionary war patriot and orator Patrick Henry because Pat's father respected U.S. history and democracy. Pat's oldest brother Andrew was named after Andrew Jackson, another older brother Lafayette after the Marquise de Lafayette, his older sister Harriet after Harriet Tubman, and a younger brother Grant after Ulysses S. Grant. Early on Pat became interested in health that transformed into his life-long advocacy of healthy living. When my wife was recovering from cancer, Pat's letters to me included not only his best wishes for her but also his advice stressing the importance of a healthy diet. He even sent us a book on that topic. Pat's concern for others' well-being deepened the compassion and sense of personal responsibility to be of service to others that

were emphasized in the Methodist churches Pat and his family participated actively in.

In early 1942 soon after the United States entered World War II, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 that forcibly uprooted 120,000 Japanese Americans living on the West coast into what in many ways were concentration camps, euphemistically named "relocation camps." The Noda family was sent from the Merced Fair Grounds to the Amache Internment Camp near Granada, Colorado. But under a clause that allowed some interns to work or study in the Midwest or East (but not in the West), Pat and some of his siblings were able to leave. Pat went to Iowa where, possibly with financial assistance from a Quaker missionary, he got his B. A. from Iowa Central College. He then became a teacher/principal in a small school in Galt, Iowa, but left it when he decided to become a minister. He attended Princeton Divinity School and received his Divinity Degree at McCormick Divinity School. But after working in two churches, he concluded the ministry was not for him.

Pat's father died in early 1942. The land belonging to Japanese American farmers was saved from confiscation or sale by an arrangement made through their farm cooperatives to let a third party lease the land and take the proceeds as long as the owners were incarcerated. When the war ended, the farms were returned, and Sachiko moved back to Livingston. Pat returned to the Noda family farm in nearby Cortez where many Japanese Americans resettled. The family farm had several good years of grape harvest, Sachiko was able to have a new home built, and, after a brief period in the Bay Area, Pat returned to help take care of his mother before she died in 1959. Then Pat worked for years at Banquet Foods in Turlock.

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

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2022 Peace Essay Contest



"I have learned you are never too small to make a difference. You must take action. You must do the impossible. Because giving up is never an option."

Greta Thunberg

Winner of the 2019 International Children's Peace Prize



Division I (Grades 11-12) & Division II (Grades 9-10): 500-1000 words
Division III (Grades 7-8) & Division IV (Grades 5-6): 250-500 words

The August 2021 report from the United Nations says that the changes in climate to date have little parallel in human history. The impact of these changes on our planet is causing significant damage to its habitats and ecosystems. Ocean levels have risen 8 inches on average over the past century. Heat waves have become hotter and last much longer around the world. Wildfire weather has worsened across large areas of the globe. Bursts of extreme heat in the ocean – which can kill fish, seabirds and coral reefs – have doubled in frequency since the 1980's. (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1097362>)

While people and ecosystems around the globe are experiencing the results of these changes in our past climate patterns, certain populations will be especially vulnerable as the consequences of these changes impact their very existence. Due to the impact on food supplies, livelihoods, lands and health, peace among peoples around the world could be severely threatened as people struggle to survive.

When each of us embraces a deep reverence and gratitude for the earth that sustains us, we must also encourage others to do the same. "Inclusive and green economies, prosperity, cleaner air and better health are possible for all, if we respond to this crisis with solidarity and courage" says the UN Secretary-General António Guterres. (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1097362>)

The 2022 Peace Essay Contest invites you to study and learn about some of the environmental extremes we are experiencing around the world due to the changes in our climate. Especially take note of those whose lives are (or will be) negatively impacted by these changes.

In your essay*

- Identify and describe one of the negative environmental changes you studied.
- Explain who bears the consequences of the change and the effect it could have on their lives. For example, how does, or could, it affect their food supply, land, livelihoods or health?
- Tell what scientists believe has caused the negative change and what needs to happen to make it better or keep it from getting worse.
- Close by sharing your view about the importance of caring for our world and helping all people to live in a safe and sustainable way, there by promoting peace and well-being around the world.

*Please, write in your own words. Do not cut and paste or copy directly from source material.
 A very limited amount of directly quoted words may be used if cited properly.

See 2022 Peace Essay Rules and Submission Directions for complete information.

Deadline for Entries: November 15, 2021 Notification of Winners: Late February, 2022

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

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



Sundays at CBS

CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR is rolling out of the West and we're gonna make a stop at CBS bringing entertainment and sounds so pleasing to kick off SUNDAY AFTERNOON'S 30th SEASON at **Congregation Beth Shalom** on October 10th.

Acoustic, eclectic, electric for sure but wait a minute folks, there's so much more! Country, Folk, Cajun, Bluish, Rockers, Bluegrass...let's not forget Jewish! But hang on friends, I'm not though. Gotta lay a little somethin' extra on you.

Another plus I gotta be toutin', that's our newest band member: ALLEGRA BROUGHTON A singer and songwriter of great acclaim We had to sign her up 'cause her talent is INSANE! And just to add more icing on the cake, been a longtime comin,' but make no mistake, a tribute to STEVE EWERT is also on tap. You gotta be there, don't get any better than that!!! And if you're wondering where and when: CBS, October 10th, 3pm See you there!

Ticket options: visit <https://sundaysatcbs.com/>

Congregation Beth Shalom, 1705 Sherwood Ave., Modesto, CA 95350. 209.571.6060, info@cbsmodesto.org

Nonviolent Cities

from page 1

Nonviolent Owensboro, Kentucky, is introducing the concept of a "Nonviolent School" to their community, inspired by the work being done in public schools in Rhode Island by the Nonviolent Schools Project.

These stories show what the Nonviolent Cities Project is all about. In large and small ways, people are standing up to make a difference. They're collaborating with campaigns and groups across the country to end violence, promote change, and foster a world of nonviolence. If you're curious to learn more about the Nonviolent Cities Project, [check out our website here.](#)

This story was produced by [Campaign Nonviolence Rivera Sun](#): Rivera Sun is the editor of [Nonviolence News](#), the author of "The Dandelion Insurrection."

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Homeless: He's Baaaack — Louis X Returns

By ERIC CAINE, The Valley Citizen

No one with experience with local systems of care is ever surprised when a homeless person ends up back on the street after an emergency visit to a hospital or mental health facility. The widespread belief that “services” are available for poor people in need belies a harsh reality: For the neediest people, there is too often no realistic help — the few available options are inadequate or useless.

Want evidence? Look to the streets.

Some of the most vulnerable homeless people, like the late Alan Davis, the double-amputee who haunted downtown Modesto for years, are dead. Others, like Jimmy Young, are prone on sidewalks. Still others, like Louis X, are wheelchair-bound in a Modesto park after a few days in the hospital. And many, like Little Sherry Lopez, are dirt-bound in filthy camps along the freeway.

As we reported earlier this month, Modesto's Homeless Engagement and Response Team (HEART) put Louis X in an ambulance earlier this month, shortly after he'd been diagnosed with cellulitis. After a week in the hospital, Louis, whom HEART had evaluated as, “gravely disabled,” was back in the park where he'd been found. He had a new wheelchair and a pair of hospital booties.

When HEART sent Louis X to the hospital, the hope was that classifying him as “gravely disabled” would initiate a process that would place him in a system of care. At the time, Louis was badly soiled with his own waste and clearly unable to care for himself.

Ordinarily, hospitals release patients once they've been treated for a physical ailment. In cases when patients at a hospital or mental health facility have been referred for mental illness or disability, the patient is often evaluated in terms of “danger to oneself or others.”

The evaluation seldom includes any acknowledgement of the patient's history on the streets. It may include questions



like, “Do you have a place to go when released” and “Do you have frequent thoughts of suicide.”

Most homeless people — even the mentally ill and disabled — know that their options for care after release are limited to congregate living in a shelter, a for-profit board and care home, or a lockdown facility. The alternative is back to the streets among friends.

Not many people in any condition want to spend their remaining days sharing a room with three or four other people in a facility where the culinary highlight of the week is a boiled wiener from the odd lots section of the Dollar Store, with sides of soggy fries and wilted lettuce. Nor do they relish the idea of congregate living when it means arbitrary rules about coming and going, constant reminders of how lucky they are to be receiving charity despite their clear unworthiness, and bedding down amidst a cacophony of coughs, snores, and farts.

These unattractive options are the chief reasons many homeless people, “don't want help.” But in the case of the mentally ill and developmentally disabled, we too often allow them to be judges of their own self-sufficiency, despite abundant evidence they can't care for themselves. All they have to do to prove their fitness is answer a few simple questions. We value their ability to self-diagnose even while we discount their preferences for living with at least a small degree of dignity and autonomy.

These aren't people “falling through the cracks.” They're casualties trapped in an ever-spiraling black hole of “help” that inevitably tosses them back to the streets with the centrifugal force of a cosmic whirligig. The message is always loud and clear:

If you're poor, disabled, or sick and need help, you are sorely out of luck — unless you decide to accept what



amounts to self-imposed incarceration.

By far the most efficient and cost-effective way of getting homeless people off the streets — including the ill and disabled — is permitted camping. People who persist in returning to the streets from shelters and board and care homes will gladly stay in a tent, especially when it's in a camp of peers.

That was the case with almost 500 homeless people who occupied the Modesto Outdoor Emergency Shelter (MOES) before it was shut down late in 2019. Alan Davis, Sherry Lopez, and hundreds of other homeless people found comfort among friends and were served by a constant stream of volunteers and professionals who found it much easier to provide help when people in need were all in one place.

Despite evidence that MOES proved to be a cost-effective and humane way to reduce quality-of-life crimes resulting from homelessness, Stanislaus County and City of Modesto officials closed it down after opening a 180-bed low-barrier shelter in a building also occupied by the Salvation Army's homeless shelter. Today, cities around the state — including San Francisco and Sacramento — have designated “Safe Ground” locations for homeless camps and are even permitting tiered housing options such as Pallet Shelters, Tuff Sheds, and Conestoga Huts as proven methods of reducing the harms of homelessness.

After establishing one of the first successful homeless camps in the state, Modesto and Stanislaus County gave up on a strategy that has since proven to be the best practice for dealing with homelessness. The result is that more and more people, including the elderly, ill and disabled, are waking up in parks and on sidewalks — people like Louis X, a disabled veteran caught up in a system that no longer serves its purpose.

KCBP Community Radio Seeks Volunteers

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's Community Radio Station the “Voice of the Valley” KCBP 95.5 FM needs volunteers to help develop the following programs:

Children • Art • Poetry • News/Journalism
• Education • Health • Science • Social Justice • Multicultural • Music/All Genres

Other Opportunities: Underwriting • Fundraising/Event Committee • Community Outreach.

Contact Jocelyn Cooper,
KCBP Development
Director, (209) 422-0119
kcbpvolapp@gmail.com



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Transformative Workshops Bring MPD, Modesto Community Members Together

By TOM PORTWOOD

In the late 1980s, I worked in the Mayor's Office in Houston, Texas. One of my colleagues was a police officer named Alan who worked on the Mayor's security detail. Alan and I occasionally worked together on events or projects, and in listening to him over numerous lunchtimes, I began to understand the sacrifices police officers make to protect us. Alan was as community-minded as anyone I've ever known – spending weekends volunteering with agencies in the neighborhoods he had patrolled when he was a cop on the beat, coaching a Little League baseball team. If something needed to be done in the community, Alan was right there to pitch in. He told me that he had joined the police department because he wanted to help people.

I think Alan understood that Community had to be at the essence of everything he did as a police officer, that as a representative of law enforcement he couldn't be separated from the people he served.

To this day, Alan is the only law enforcement officer I have personally known. And for Modesto Community Advocate Michael Baldwin Sr, that broken connection between law enforcement and the rest of us *must* be repaired.

Mr. Baldwin has lived in Modesto for less than three years, and he is passionate about imparting to his new community one of the greatest lessons he learned during his time in prison: that Connection is everything, and without it, we are all lost. "Technology is a wonderful thing, he recently remarked. "But I think we've lost a lot of that person-to person communication and bonding that allows us to see each other as human beings. We've lost that human contact. We have to be intentional about bringing back real, heart-to-heart communication."

"The work that I'm doing with law enforcement is really challenging," Mr. Baldwin continued. "I am grateful that I have a checkered past, and I don't run from that. We are asking law enforcement officers to make a shift in the way they do things. I believe that in our city we have an excellent group of human beings – and I emphasize that – human beings – doing an impossible job. They show up quite often on the worst day of our lives - and then they have to go home and leave all that behind them, and that's impossible.

"I believe these men and women are trauma survivors who now need to learn that there's a broader perspective to every situation. I recently had a conversation with an officer about a fairly well-known video. We each had our position on what we perceived was happening in the situation recorded in that video, but the great thing was that we talked – and listened – long enough to be willing to surrender our positions and see the other side. He shared with me a perspective of a law enforcement officer, and I gave him the perspective of a Black man in the community. Because we were open – which we weren't at first – we wound up in the same place - that we were both right."

That exchange of ideas that he had with the officer about the video took place at the beginning of a series of workshops that Mr. Baldwin and his associates at MBS Consultants organized and facilitated for the Modesto Police Department and members of the city's African American community.

In fact, the **Cultural Relations and Community Engagement Coaching Series** proved to be an extraordinarily



productive, even transformative commitment of time for the participants. But, as Mr. Baldwin readily admits, it took a lot of work and many honest conversations to get to that point.

The workshops began on May 13th, less than a year after George Floyd's murder. His death and those of Stephon Clark, Breonna Taylor and others were frequently alluded to over the course of the intensive 19 multi-hour sessions. The conversations were often difficult and uncomfortable, but necessary, as the MBS consultants continually challenged participants to see things from a different point of view. Topics included Unconscious Bias, Sensitivity to Cultural Differences, and How Fear Can Affect Our Decision-Making, among others.

"The first six sessions, when we were only working with the 16 police officers enrolled in the program, were particularly challenging," relates Mr. Baldwin. "These were no ordinary officers, there were six sergeants, three lieutenants, an investigator, and six officers. Each of whom are leaders in their own right and responsible for the security of the city. And they were questioning me about the crimes I had committed and how I had the right to lead them in this workshop. But we talked through their concerns and began to build relationships. Slowly, perceptions were being expanded and in some cases destroyed. We built up a lot of mutual trust during those conversations."

By the time the invited members of the African American community joined in, the stage was set for real communication to begin happening, for skepticism to give way to dialogue.

Employing a number of strategies and techniques including role-playing and situational simulation, Mr. Baldwin and the MBS Consultants team created a safe space where the police officers and members of the community had ample time to speak and, more importantly, to listen to each other. Community members went on ride-along patrols in squad cars to witness that experience. They also went through stages of simulation training to test their reaction to situations officers face daily. Many of the police officers, in turn, participated in community events and visited incarcerated individuals at

Valley State Prison and later shared how they gained insight into the difficult life situations that often played a part in their succumbing to crime.

It soon became apparent to all the participants that real progress was being made, that barriers were being torn down. Sergeant Frank Inacio smiled when he related what had happened to him and his colleagues the week before on a dead-end street at Colorado and Roselawn.

"Last week I saw a group of kids playing basketball, and I told everyone in my unit to come over to this location, and they played a game of basketball with these kids. One of the parents came up to me and said in awe, 'I've never seen this before!' We're out here playing ball with uniforms on, so some of the things we've learned in this class are making an impact already."

"I realized coming in that this workshop was going to be productive, that it was something that needed to be done," remarked Michael Taylor, a Medical Social Worker. "We are going through a pandemic where people were sitting on line and having discussions behind computers. So having in-person face-face conversations on these important topics was something that was necessary. For me, I was willing to engage in authentic dialogue. I feel like that was done, I feel like people are putting their chips on the table and having real conversations. Originally, there was skepticism from everyone, not knowing how this was going to work. But over time, people just realized that there's more that connects us than separates us."

"I think it's been helpful just to hear different perspectives and actually just have the *time* to do it," Officer Jessica Davies noted. "You don't get that time in law enforcement because there are other things going on. But the time has been worth it. I've definitely made connections, exchanged phone numbers, with a couple of the community members and told them that they can call me day or night."

"I learned a lot about myself, my peers, and the police officers, said Austin Grant, who works for the State of California. "The program taught me how to have more



compassion for others. We all have stories, but listening to what some of the peers went through gave me clarity and reasoning as to why some feel the way they do about law enforcement. I myself can attest that I did not like law enforcement before I entered the coaching series. But once we met the officers participating in the workshops, they all wanted to change the narrative that law enforcement is in it for themselves and not for the citizens they are governed to protect. The Modesto Police Department wants to change the way our citizens see them and bring back heroism to the job.

“The exercise that stood out to me the most was when law enforcement had me and another classmate participate in a simulation,” Mr. Grant explained. “My classmate and I were armed with a fake pistol and Taser for the simulation. We received a call about an argument that was taking place in a home between a married couple. We were instructed to deescalate the situation by using tactics we had been taught by law enforcement. I had my mind made up before approaching the situation that I would not withdraw my pistol and use my Taser if necessary. When we approached the home and witnessed the couple arguing, a mother was nearby, pushing a stroller with her infant inside of it. As the couple argued, the wife suddenly took out a pistol. My classmate and I tried to authorize the wife to drop her weapon but within 20 seconds she had fired the gun, hitting the baby. My classmate and I were shocked and could not believe the outcome. It left me speechless and cold. That simulation hit home for me on why a police officer’s job is so difficult. That truly opened

my mind on how we can improve our living conditions in our city and beyond.”

Longtime Modesto resident Kim Wright spoke to what she felt was one of the greatest insights she took away from the workshops:

“When I’m driving by a police car now, I look because I want to see who is driving. Do I know them?” Ms. Wright explained. “I do not see them as officers now. I see them as human beings. I see them as part of my community, my social network. Policing is *what* they do, it’s not *who* they are. Who they are is a mother, a father, a brother, the volunteer dad down at the YMCA. In the end, we gotta have love. I love these people.”

Each of the participants remembers a moment that was particularly impactful for them. For Mr. Taylor, it was “seeing the younger officers engage. At the beginning of the program you’d see the older officers speaking a lot, but as we moved along the younger officers who had been typically quiet were engaging more, addressing questions that were a little hard to answer, where you didn’t want to put your feelings or opinions out there. But once people felt comfortable, we could have those conversations, and work through them.”

“This workshop will continue to have an impact on me,” reflected Sergeant Robert Gumm. “It has taught me that people just want to have a voice, and if you hear people out a lot of problems can be resolved. The workshop makes you slow down and think. I’ve always thought I had empathy toward people – I worked our homicide unit for eight years and that taught me empathy for the family members who had lost a loved one – but this program has made me realize that I need to have empathy for everyone out there, even for someone at a simple traffic stop.”

“I hope this was not just a one-hit wonder,” stated Mr. Grant. “There is a momentum that has built from these classes and they need to be heard around the state. Imagine the impact this could have on our cities. Law enforcement and community members can all break bread and dialogue about certain situations that take place in our communities. We could change the course of history.”

“I am so proud of what all the participants were able to accomplish over the two and a half months of these workshops,” Mr. Baldwin said. “The work they were doing was hard but vitally important. I would go so far as to say that lives could well have been saved because people took the time to listen and learn from each other.”

Mr. Baldwin and his energetic team at MBS Consultants are already laying the groundwork for additional workshops with the Modesto Police Department as well as other entities, and the project will be expanded to include all ethnicities. Mr. Baldwin’s vision, dedication, and work ethic are highly impressive – and the Valley and its residents are the lucky beneficiaries.

In Memoriam: Pat Noda, A Life to Celebrate

from page 3

After his retirement he was freer to pursue his passion to serve his community and be more involved in politics.

In 2010 he announced his candidacy for the Turlock City Council. Given his long-held value of serving those most in need, Pat’s platform was no surprise: he wanted to improve the public bus system and promised to have the city create a shelter for the rising numbers of people without protection from cold, rain, and sometimes hunger. Pat had been helping homeless people for years. He provided food and shelter for them in his home and gave them work in his large yard and garden so they could pay him. Years earlier when he was helping out with the family farm, he would drive to Los Angeles neighborhoods that had no access to fruits and vegetables and “sell” all he had. Often, he gave the food away. Pat’s campaign trail was unique: no longer a driver, Pat biked to the apartment complexes where many of the homeless sought some degree of shelter. He probably also leafleted at the Turlock Flea Market when he wasn’t working as a parking assistant there.

Pat wasn’t discouraged or deflated by his unsuccessful plunge into politics. He’d long been involved with the Modesto Peace/Life Center and enjoyed the activities and company of kindred spirits in our peace community. Pat’s good friends, Mark O’Bryan and Rose Rodríguez, often drove him to our events—the annual Pancake Breakfast each June, the Harvest Gathering in October, the Holiday Potluck Songfest at Alice’s and my home in December, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Commemoration in January-February. In 2013 he was proud to meet and shake hands with the late Congressman John Lewis, our MLK keynote speaker and a Civil Rights icon in the movement to promote nonviolent social change. For a number of years, Pat also enjoyed Peace Camp in the Sierra—the campfires and singing under the stars, the workshops, the camaraderie, and especially the “Talent-No Talent” show, where no talent trumps talent hands down, to the delight of all.

continued page 8



A 9-11 Journey

By JOHN MCCUTCHEON

John will be in concert in Modesto on Tuesday January 11, 2022, if safe

I can't help but remember that pre-festival Thursday twenty years ago. It was a mere two days after 9-11 and my trusty road manager, Tommy, and I were booked on, what-we-were-told, was the first flight out of the Charlotte airport. And, as luck would have it, it was a direct flight to Wichita. We were standing in the check-in line when the "CANCELLED" notice suddenly flashed next to our flight number. I called the festival, a half a continent away, and told them it didn't look like we were going to make it. Their response was, "Half our acts aren't going to be here. We've got thousands of folks who've been here for a week or two...without televisions...trying to digest what has happened. And they could really use some music."

I turned to Tommy and asked, "How do you feel about a drive?"

We had a twenty-two-hour drive and a Stage 2 set in twenty-four hours. Off we went.

It was a remarkable time to be driving through the purple mountain's majesty and the waving fields of grain, not a



plane in the sky, contemplating America and what we would be from this point on.

We arrived in time to splash some water in our faces, tune and set up, and mount Stage 2. People far as eye could see. I don't remember what I played, but I just tried to be as helpful and as open-hearted as I knew how to be. I needed to be there as much as anyone needed me to be there. I finished with "This Land Is Your Land."

It had been a long drive and an emotionally draining hour-long set. I closed my eyes as I sang, wrapped in the voices of those assembled thousands. When I opened my eyes mid-song, I saw a sight that would sustain me in the long months ahead. People were rising, extending their hands to help one another up, raising those arms high and singing with such camaraderie and defiance that I had to abandon my own singing. My sweet Winfield family, rising as one, helping one another, singing a song about Us. It was a metaphor for that time. A metaphor for this time.

We find out who we are when times are hard. We can be united, or we can be tribal. We can think only of ourselves or reach out to one another. The instinct is natural, but the choice summons our better angels. Who are we? Who do we want to be?

We had no control over what happened on that bright Tuesday morning two decades ago. We only had control over how we responded to it. The drive, I know, is a long one. But the rewards can be so sweet at journey's end.

Pat Noda, A Life to Celebrate

from page 7



Pat was at home in our peace community, perhaps because he came from a family that stood their ground, unafraid to live their convictions. One story about his father was that he left Japan because he was pacifist. Another was that he was the lone voice sensibly opposed to a project his village favored, so he left. Some of his brothers were also outspoken: one was a Christian Socialist; another was a pacifist Quaker. So, it isn't surprising that Pat had no qualms about passing out political literature or criticizing President Obama for being too conservative or distributing *Stanislaus Connections* in Turlock.

I think of Pat in many ways. But the one that for me lights

up the sky like 4th of July fireworks is his passing out our newspaper in Turlock. Such generosity stirs my soul. It merits celebration. For the last 20 or so years, Pat came to Modesto to get bundles of *Connections* and then returned to Turlock to distribute them. This small task, like so many in the Center, has import. Through our newspaper we reach out to a wider community, inspiring reflection, deeper understanding, and involvement in important issues. Consider also what Pat had to do. He didn't have a car. Each month his task took up the better part of a day. He'd call ahead of time to ask Shelly Scribner to put two bundles of our newspaper outside the Center's door. Then on pickup day he'd bike to Turlock's START bus station, attach his bike to the bus, and ride to Modesto, then bike to the Center. He'd repeat the routine back to Turlock and spend hours the following days placing *Connections* in local businesses or handing them out to passersby on the street. Eleven months each year (we don't publish in August). For nearly 20 years. A man in his 80s and 90s. On his bike. No matter the weather. Happy to help out.

That persevering, generous spirit is worth celebrating. Many others, like Pat, have done and do their part, big or small, to help the Center remain a vital voice and presence in our area. All deserve our praise and thanks. But only one is 100 years old!

And no one else has quite the twinkle in his eye when he smiles.

Happy Birthday, Pat!

P.S. Special thanks for the stories and information about Pat from his nieces and nephews and from Mark O'Bryan and Rose Rodríguez.

Be informed!

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Stella Beratlis – Dedicated Librarian, Fierce Poet-Activist

Stella Beratlis grew up in a Greek-American family in Pleasanton and later, in Modesto. Her first collection of poems, *Alkali Sink*, was published by Sixteen Rivers Press in 2015 and was nominated for the Northern California Book Awards. Her work has appeared in numerous journals as well as in the anthologies *The Place That Inhabits Us: Poems from the San Francisco Bay Watershed* and *California Fire and Water: A Climate Crisis Anthology*. She is coeditor of the collection *More Than Soil, More Than Sky: The Modesto Poets* (Quercus Review Press, 2011) and served as the poet laureate of Modesto from 2016 to 2020. Her poem “Patterson Pass” appears along with other poets’ work in a permanent Jenny Holzer installation at the San Francisco Transbay Terminal.



Beratlis has organized or co-organized several poetry readings in response to current events. Her first event was **Writers Resist**, part of a nationwide series of readings spearheaded by PEN America in response to the election of Donald Trump. **The Modesto Writers Resist** reading, organized with Elizabeth Hunt and Shany Vitti, took place at the Prospect Theatre in January 2017 to a full house. This was followed by **Words Have No Borders**, a reading in support of immigrants and refugees in 2019 and the **Words Worth Speaking** reading at MJC in February 2020.

This year, Beratlis was selected as an Outstanding Woman by the Stanislaus County Commission for Women along with her hero Hazel Houser, a local songwriter and musician who wrote country gospel and bluegrass hits in the 1950s and whose family still lives in this area. Beratlis’ latest poetry collection, framed by Houser’s lyrics, features poems about music, Central Valley landscapes, local histories, and loss. In 2017, her daughter—then 16 years old—was diagnosed with Hodgkin’s lymphoma. Many of the poems in *Dust Bowl Venus* are drawn from that experience as well.

Beratlis is a librarian at Modesto Junior College and hosts the monthly Second Tuesday reading series (normally at the Barkin’ Dog but currently on Zoom). When she’s not working, she spends her days walking her dog, collecting records, listening to music, proofreading restaurant menus, and enjoying time with loved ones.

Spacetime Curvature

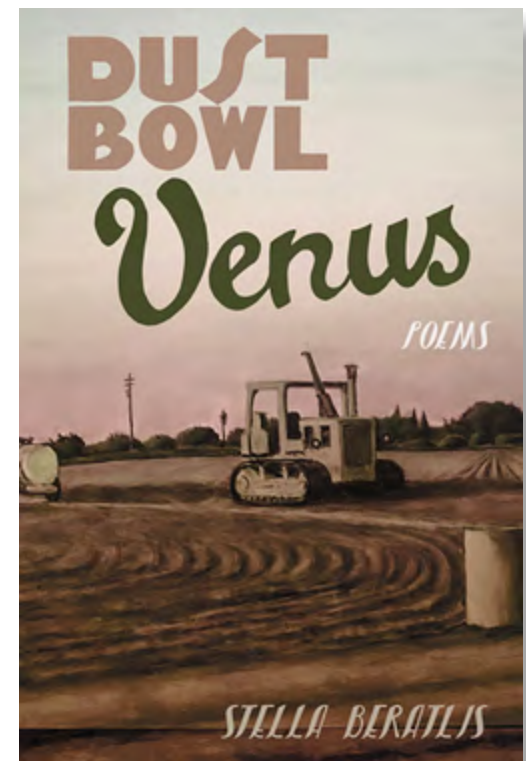
Scratch under the hardpan
turn over a shovelful of soil,
inhale. Obscured data lies in wait;
you will discover it. For years,
pay undue attention to the things this place is not:
the negative capability of valley,
the not-reaching after facts.
And then.
And then.
And then the Hotel Hughson is demolished.
We stand in the middle of J Street
watch masonry tumble in on itself
hot planet’s crushing pressure
a mushroom of dust plumes first into the sky
then freezes, snapshotting memory.
Remember where we are?
We live on a seasonal lake bed. We live in lowland regions
on dust bowl Venus.
In this valley, our forefathers are deserters:
landholders, railroad men,
Comstock plunderers.
Their secrets deposited inside the city’s darkest heart. A
drainage, a tule berm, a vernal pool.

Survey on Brooms and Broomcorn

A housewife sweeps floors,
dreams arrangements
in scuffs and drags,
articulates the pause
between verse and note.
Her body a neat broom,
whisking the floors of the Riverbank Club House, her feet
keeping continuous contact
with the scuffed boards
of the California Ball Room.
She herself is stitched
with four rows of waxed cotton,
guitar in hand, blunt-cut hair tips
of pure broomcorn. O Rhythm Guitar
O Harmony Duet
you delicate parlor broom:
Her heart has these contours
like beech, birch, other light wood —
turn it with gentle pressure;
Sand it and call it ordinary care.
Stain it; call it a song.

Oramil’s Dream

I am a founding father of this city,
which rediscovers itself every day
as new arrivals check in at the station, and children take
rations to their tents
then play under the bridge
watchful, waiting for the missionaries
to arrive with clothes and salvation, waiting for their
inheritance of sidewalk,
of median strip. I am a war deserter reviewing your appeal
for a doorway
rain gutter endowment of bedroom window a brick
fireplace bequest,
who changed my name
and never looked back,
who watches still my children huddled, carbonsmudge
eyes hardening to knives.
Even now I withhold
what always belonged to you.



Listen to The Voice of the Valley, 95.5FM

Listen to Local Programming on KCBP 95.5 FM, The Voice of the Valley or streaming on www.kcbpradio.org

NEW PROGRAMS:

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

Down on the Farm - topics important for our San Joaquin agriculture with organic farmer, Tom Willey - Saturdays, 6am & 8pm.

PROGRAMS: ***AREA 5150 UFO RADIO*** - Saturday night at Midnight.

Sounds Irish from County Wicklow - Saturdays, 7:00 p.m.

KeeHive - LaKiesha McDonald talks women who have overcome great odds. Mondays

& Wednesdays, 7:00am

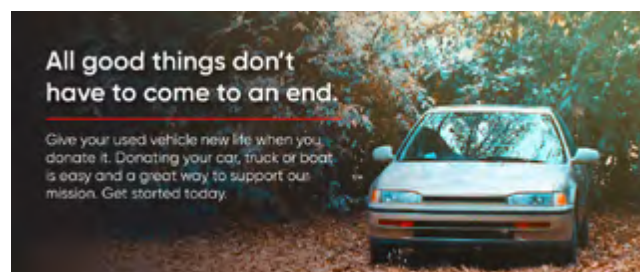
I-On-Modesto - John Griffin interviews local people who reveal their inspiring stories. Mondays & Fridays, 10 am and Wednesdays at 9 pm.

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

The Peril and the Promise with Pegasus - Wednesdays, 9:30

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pm; Saturdays, 2:30 pm; Listen here also: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp-peril>

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

Where We Were - Fascinating local history with Felton Daniels. Monday & Thursdays 9am. Friday 8:30pm; Sunday at 11:00am & 4:30 pm.

The Ralph Nader Hour - 4:00pm Saturdays.

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

Local Music

Modesto Area Music Awards with Middagh Goodwin - Mondays 5:00pm; Fridays 9:00pm & Saturdays 6:00pm.

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

This is SKA with Middagh Goodwin - Tuesdays, 9 pm; Fridays, 11pm; Sundays, 6 am.

Weekdays (Monday - Friday)

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

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

Attitude with Arne Arnesen - 3:00pm

Sojourner Truth - 4:00pm

Democracy Now! - 7:00pm.

Flashpoint Magazine - 10:00pm.

Children's Programming

Confetti Park - Saturdays 8:00am; & Sunday's 12:30pm.

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

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Would You Help Donate a Shower to a Homeless Person?

By REV. DEAN DODD

Through the good work of the Shower and Laundry Shuttles, we know that our services will never end homelessness and poverty, but we are working diligently to help change the face of homelessness!

Each shower and load of laundry helps to restore hope and dignity to someone hanging on the edge of despair.

Homelessness doesn't have to be hopelessness so long as an individual can maintain personal hygiene.

Our three mobile hygiene vehicles go to the people in need. We target our locations to go precisely where the need is greatest. No man, woman or child is ever denied a shower. We've even designed our buses with wheelchair lifts so that disabled persons can get clean. Each shower guest receives new socks, underwear and a hygiene kit to go.

Our success is based on two things: first, we love our guests and they know it; second, is because of donors like you. We can never thank you enough for your generous support.

Important Shuttle Facts:

Over 31,000 showers and counting. Each shower shuttle can provide up to 50 life-changing showers a day. Since our launch in 2016, we have provided over 31,000 showers!

Clean bodies need clean clothes! Our laundry shuttle launched in 2019. This unique service to our community provides up to 40 loads of clean, disinfected laundry a day for the working poor and homeless.

Restoring hope and dignity! It's amazing how a simple shower and clean laundry can change the person's outlook and attitude toward life. our work is all about re-humanizing an individual by helping to meet their most basic needs.

60+ hours of encouragement! Every week the shower and laundry shuttles help build trust, hope and offer practical encouragement to people who sometimes feel like giving up.

Giving to this service is as easy as One, Two, Three...

1. **Consider the need:** every week we hear about the overwhelming problem of homelessness and poverty in our area. Our hearts are touched but we are helpless to change the critical need. What can we do?

2. **Count the cost:** if we are willing to help address this mountain of poverty and homelessness, what are we willing to do? What are we willing to give? How can we make a difference together?

3. **Make a commitment:** No problem is ever solved by good intentions. we have to stop waiting for someone else to fix it. We have to step up and commit our time, energy and resources to help make a difference.

\$10 a month (the cost of a shower) is all it takes to give a life-changing shower to a homeless person. visit www.showershuttle.org to make your commitment.

Information: 236 S. Santa Cruz, Suite A, Modesto, CA 95354. (209) 496-4894, dean@showershuttle.org





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RSN: As War Keeps Poisoning Humanity, Organizing Continues to Be the Antidote

By **NORMAN SOLOMON** – Reader Supported News

Last weekend, U.S. corporate media continued a 20-year repetition compulsion to evade the central role of the USA in causing vast carnage and misery due to the so-called War on Terror. But millions of Americans fervently oppose the military-industrial complex and its extremely immoral nonstop warfare.

CodePink and Massachusetts Peace Action hosted a national webinar to mark the 20th anniversary of 9/11 – the day before Sunday's launch of the Cut the Pentagon campaign – and the resulting video includes more than 20 speakers who directly challenged the lethal orthodoxy of the warfare state. As part of the mix, here's the gist of what I had to say:

When we hear all the media coverage and retrospectives, we rarely hear – and certainly almost never in the mass media hear – that when people are killed, whether it's intentional or predictable, those are atrocities that are being financed by U.S. taxpayers. And so we hear about the evils of Al Qaeda and 9/11, and certainly those were evils, but we're not hearing about the predictable as well as the intentional deaths: the tens of thousands of civilians killed by U.S. airstrikes alone in the last two decades, and the injuries, and the terrorizing of people with drones and other U.S. weapons. We're hearing very little about that.

Part of the role of activists is to make those realities heard, make them heard loud and clear, as forcefully and as emphatically and as powerfully as possible. Activist roles can sometimes get blurred in terms of becoming conflated with the roles of some of the best members of Congress. When progressive legislators push for peace and social justice, they deserve our praise and our support. When they succumb to

the foreign-policy "Blob" – when they start to be more a representative of the establishment to the movements rather than a representative of the movements to the establishment – we've got a problem.

It's vital for progressive activists to be clear about what our goals are, and to be willing to challenge even our friends on Capitol Hill.

I'll give you a very recent example. Two leaders of anti-war forces in the House of Representatives, a couple of weeks ago, circulated a "Dear Colleague" message encouraging members of the House to sign a letter urging the chair of the House Armed Services Committee, Adam Smith, to stand firm behind President Biden's 1.6 percent increase in the Pentagon budget, over the budget that Trump had gotten the year before. The point of the letter was: Chairman Smith, we want you to defend the Biden budget's increase of 1.6 percent, against the budget that has just been approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee with a 3.3 percent increase.

That kind of letter moves the goalposts further and further to the liking of the military-industrial complex, to the liking of war profiteers, to the liking of the warfare state. And so when people we admire and support, in this case Rep. Mark Pocan and Rep. Barbara Lee, circulate such a Dear Colleague letter, there's a tendency for organizations to say: "Yeah, we're going to get behind you," we will respond affirmatively to the call to urge our members to urge their representatives in Congress to sign this letter. And what that creates is a jumping-off point that moves the frame of reference farther and farther into the militarism that we're trying to push back against. For that reason, my colleagues and I at RootsAction decided to decline an invitation to sign in support.

I bring up that episode because it's indicative of the pathways and the crossroads that we face to create momentum for a stronger and more effective peace and social justice movement. And it's replicated in many respects. When we're told it's not practical on Capitol Hill to urge a cutoff of military funding and assistance to all countries that violate human rights – and when we're told that Israel is off the table – it's not our job to internalize those limits that have been internalized by almost everyone in Congress, except for the Squad and a precious few others.

It's our job to speak not only truth *to* power but also *about* power. And to be clear and candid even when that means challenging some of our usual allies. And to organize.

At RootsAction, we've launched a site called Progressive Hub, as an activism tool to combine the need to know with the imperative to act.

It's not easy, to put it mildly, to go against the powerful flood of megamedia, of big money in politics, of the ways that issues are constantly framed by powerful elites. But in the long run, peace activism is essential for overcoming militarism. And organizing is what makes that possible.

Norman Solomon is the national director of RootsAction.org and the author of many books including War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death. He was a Bernie Sanders delegate from California to the 2016 and 2020 Democratic National Conventions. Solomon is the founder and executive director of the Institute for Public Accuracy.

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Artist Open Studios going ahead October 16-17

After two cancellations due to COVID conditions, the Stanislaus Artist Open Studio tour will resume on **October 16 and 17**. Though fewer artists are participating than normal, it promises to be a fun adventure to 24 locations in Turlock, Modesto and Oakdale. Most locations will be setting up outdoors, and masks are recommended for guests and artists alike.

FREE printed map booklets are available at Mistlin Gallery in Modesto, the Carnegie Art Center in Turlock, and most artist locations. An electronic version of the tour guide can be downloaded by signing up on the website at stanislausaos.com.

Four original art works won a "purchase prize" and are being given away in a drawing after the tour. The works, (at right) by Suzanne Staud, Jim Christiansen, Chella and Randy Crimmell were purchased by the Open Studio committee to be given away to tour guests. Drawing entry forms are available at each studio. The more you visit, the better your chances to win!

For additional information, visit stanislausAOS.com or email openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com.



**STANISLAUS ARTIST
OPEN STUDIO TOUR**
October 16 and 17
11 a.m. TO 5 p.m.



Carol Whiteside (1942-2021), Celebrating a life well-lived

October 17, 2021, 4:00-6:00pm, Mancini Bowl, Graceada Park, Modesto

Join us for an afternoon of celebration and reflection as we remember Carol Whiteside and her many friendships, accomplishments, and contributions to our community. We will have a brief program featuring select speakers, music, and a chance for those who have gathered to share a few memories.

Feel free to bring a picnic meal or snack. A tree planting ceremony (in the park) will follow the program.

Please plan to wear a mask at the event. For latest info (including possible cancellation) please scan the QR code.

For questions, contact Sue Siefkin: ssiefkin@gmail.com





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

SEPTEMBER 2021

CHECK WITH MEETING HOSTS. ONLINE MEETINGS MAY BE PLANNED.

Science Colloquium, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m., MJC via Zoom. To access the program, click <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmaymqgHqzxhsAa0RJmYwVg/>.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science): free MJC science programs. Watch past presentations at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2pMYnCos9w0xwd_51cw3Pg. Participate by logging on to an Internet Link: <https://www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/maps.php> to sign up for notification of the link. **Oct. 22**: Live or Zoom, TBD. Dr. Evan Reed, (Associate Professor of Materials and Engineering, Stanford Univ.) Battery Technology: Today and in the Future. See article, p.2.

VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON FILMS are available at the State Theatre! Visit <https://thestate.org/virtual-screenings/>. NOTE: The State is open with limited seating.

The Prospect Theatre has continuing offerings: Visit <https://prospecttheaterproject.org/2020-2021-season/>

6 WED: NO VIGIL in October.

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

9 SAT: 38th Annual Hispanic Education Conference. Check In: 8:00am, Conference Time: 8:30am - 11:30am. Register at: #38th HEC Registration Form. Info: <https://mjc.edu/student-services/sdncl/hec/>

10 SUN: Sundays at CBS returns: California Zephyr. Acoustic, Eclectic, Electric, Country, Folk, Cajun, Bluish, Rockers, Bluegrass. Tribute to Steve Ewert! Tickets: <https://sundaysatcbs.com/>. See article, p.4.

16-17 SAT/SUN: Stanislaus Artist Open Studio tour, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tour guide and information at stanislausAOS.com

17 SUN: Carol Whiteside Memorial. See article, page 11. Email Sue Siefkin for details: ssiefken@gmail.com

LOOKING AHEAD

November 4: In Solidarity: A Public Conversation on Racism in Stanislaus County will be held on Thursday, November 4th from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Redeemer Church, Downtown Modesto, at the corner of H and 9th St. RSVP: to join, register at <http://bit.ly/stan-county> (the event is FREE!)

Jan. 11: John McCutcheon returns to Modesto for Modesto Peace/Life Center Concert Benefit. More info: TBA

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

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

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

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

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

MONDAYS

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

Suicide Loss Support Group: Friends for Survival meets every third Monday at 7 pm. Details: Norm Andrews 209-345-0601, ndrews6863@charter.net.

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

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

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

TUESDAYS

Teen Tuesdays every week from June-August, 2-5 pm., Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St. Peer Support, Games & movies. Safe space for teens to socialize, work together on projects, and learn about LGBTQ history. Each week will be a little different as we want YOU (youths) to guide the direction this group will go!" Info: Maggie Strong, Political Activist Director/ GSA Liaison, mstrong@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; email: naacp.branch1048@gmail.com

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

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

Tuesday Evening Funstrummers Ukulele Jam. Songbooks provided. 6pm to 8pm, 1600 Carver Rd.,

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

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

PEACE LIFE CENTER BOARD MEETING, FIRST Thursdays, 82913th St., Modesto, 6:30 pm, 529-5750. Meetings on Zoom.

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.

Donation. 209-505-3216, www.Funstrummers.com.

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

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

WEDNESDAYS

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

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

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

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

THURSDAYS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Third Thursday Art Walk, downtown galleries open 5:00 - 8:00 p.m Follow the yellow balloons. <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

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

Valley Heartland Zen Group: every Thurs 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2310 Woodland Ave. Meditation. Newcomers welcome. Info: 535-6750 or <http://emptynestzendo.org>

Pagan Community Meeting, 1st Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

FRIDAYS

Overcoming Depression: Small group for men & women. Every Friday, 7:15 p.m. Cornerstone Community Church, 17900 Comconex Rd., Manteca (209) 825-1220.

Game Night and Potluck, third Friday of each month. For 21+ only. Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St., Suite 2, Modesto. 7 pm to 10 pm. Info: John Aguirre, (559) 280-3864; jpamodesto@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

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

SATURDAY

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

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

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

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

So Easy ~ So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabe Group. Potlucks, guest speakers, field trips, activist activities, movie nights, etc. Third Saturday of every month. Info: Kathy Haynes (209) 250-9961 or email 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
Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.