



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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Our Gun laws have failed us!

By ISABEL GARCIA

[This speech was delivered at the Women's March on January 19, 2019. It is slightly edited for publication.]

My name is Isabel Garcia and I am a senior at Enochs. Nearly a year ago, the killing of 17 high school kids at Parkland High School in Florida, sparked a movement. A movement of young people, and young women like me to mobilize and take action to try and do something anything, that might help to make a difference and end gun violence.

Last year, I co-organized a March for Our Lives and the National School Walkout here in Modesto with my friend Sophia Potochnik who is here today. The March for Our Lives and today's Women's March is aligned in a very fundamental way. ALL Women have the right to live a life free of violence against them and GUNS stand in that way. Today I am here representing March for Our Lives and to tell a story of a young woman named Zina Daniel.

Like many women in this country who have suffered from domestic abuse, a young woman by the name of Zina Daniel, endured years of escalating attacks from her husband. He threatened to kill her if she tried to leave him or even contact the police. She sought out a restraining order, which under federal law, prohibited him from buying or possessing firearms. Not but two days later, her husband exploited one of the many loopholes in our nation's guns laws and purchased a gun from an unlicensed seller on the website Armlist.com. No background check. No mental health check. Nothing but an address and a credit card. Three days later Zina was dead. Her husband killed Zina while at work, along with two of her coworkers.

Today, I am here to represent Zina, and the many women who endure beatings and abuse



only to be shot down by their intimate partner. Bright, strong women, who often have children to care for, parents who loved them, friends who cared for them. Today, I am here to represent these women, whose names do not make the front page or headlining news. Whose names become a number in a sea of escalating statistics. Today I continue to say, "Enough."

The laws that were supposed to protect Zina failed her instead. Laws that, in theory, were supposed to keep her husband from obtaining a gun. Laws that, in reality, are poorly enforced and poorly defined. Unlicensed gun sellers, on and off line, are putting profit before people, and our leaders in power have yet to do anything about it.

Ladies, we live in one of the most dangerous places when it comes to gun violence. American women are 11 times more likely to be murdered with guns compared to any other developed nation; 11 times. And research done by Everytown Town For Gun Safety shows that between 2009 and 2014, 54% of mass shootings in America were related to domestic or family violence. These mass shootings don't just kill women, they also kill children. 86% of children killed in mass shootings died as a result of domestic

or family violence. 86%. Often times, I can't even believe these statistics are real because they are UNREAL.

America's weak gun laws failed Zina. America's weak gun laws failed the 20, 6 and 7-year old children who were just learning how to read and write in Sandy Hook Elementary School. America's weak gun laws failed the 17 people whose lives were cut short at Parkland high School. America's weak gun laws failed 58 adults in Las Vegas thinking they were going to enjoy concert that night. America's weak gun laws failed the 49 people who thought they were going to spend the evening dancing the night away. America's weak gun laws failed the, on average, 50 women EACH MONTH, who are shot and killed by their intimate partner. But America's weak gun laws didn't just fail all these people no, they failed their mothers, they failed their fathers, they failed their brothers and sisters, they failed their grandmothers and grandfathers, they failed their friends and the communities that loved them. THEY. FAILED. US.

I am here today to PROCLAIM that the generation of mass shootings, MY generation, is coming. My generation is FULL of nasty women who are not afraid to participate and lead government that has always been ruled by men. My generation is willing to FIGHT to take the guns away from people who shouldn't have them, in order to save the lives of our sisters and brothers and CHILDREN. My generation is ready to VOTE AND VOTE ... AND VOTE AGAIN until mass shootings and gun violence are no longer in our headline news. My generation will succeed because WE are of a long line of women who are STRONG women who are BRAVE women who ENDURE.

Community Radio Station Update

By JAMES COSTELLO, KCBP 95.5 FM
General Manager



Our antenna has arrived from Pennsylvania and an electric fence has been installed. It seems cows like to chew on air conditioner insulation! By this time next month, we should be broadcasting at 6kw from 810 feet all over the valley.

KCBP 95.5 FM, now broadcasts at low-power from 2:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. and web streams at www.kcbpradio.org 24 hours a day. Take a listen and let us know what you think!

To truly serve the community, we need volunteers with and without radio experience to help program local shows, music, poetry, plays and discuss current issues and events. We also need donors and businesses to underwrite our programs.

ACTION: to volunteer, contact Outreach Coordinator Jocelyn Cooper at the Peace/Life Center (209) 529-5750, or email jocelyncooper2012@gmail.com. To donate, send your check to Dave Tucker, memo: "Radio KCBP" at Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353. Or go the KCBP Radio website at <http://kcbpradio.org/> and click on the Donate button.



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READERS!

Sign-up for our e-edition!

Get the latest e-edition of Stanislaus Connections delivered right into your email box!

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/>

MJC Civic Engagement: Spring 2019 Series

The Civic Engagement Project's Film and Lecture Series provides students and members of the community the opportunity to engage in topics of social interest through the screening of thoughtful movies and by presenting knowledgeable speakers. Each film will be followed by a discussion with guest speakers or panelists.



Get in the Way: The Journey of John Lewis | Feb. 28:

Follow the life journey of civil rights activist John Lewis, currently serving his seventeenth term in the House of Representatives and often referred to today as the "conscience of Congress." Winner of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Lewis led the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in sit-ins, freedom rides, and the March from Selma, and he was the youngest person to speak at the March on Washington during the Civil Rights Movement.

RBG | Mar. 28:

RBG is a biographical depiction of an unexpected pop culture icon, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Her education, career as a law professor, and eventual appointment to the Supreme Court are all chronicled in the film which focuses on Ginsburg's support for women's rights and her lifelong efforts against gender discrimination.

WHEN: Thursday evenings, 7 PM to 9 PM

WHERE: Forum Building Rm. 110 (located on MJC's East Campus).

COST: FREE and open to the public.

Questions? Contact Jason Wohlstadter, English Professor, 209.575.6180 wohlstadterj@mjc.edu or Elizabeth McInnes, Biology, 209.575.6299 mcinnese@mjc.edu

John McCutcheon benefit concert a success thanks to you!

By KEN SCHROEDER

The John McCutcheon Benefit Concert on Jan. 15 was a rousing success, with great music and stories, energy flowing between the performer and the audience and a tidy sum of funds raised to support the work of the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

Many of John's songs were from his new CD celebrating Pete Seeger. He shared with us that he was introduced to folk music watching the 1963 March on Washington on TV with his mother. The first folk concert he attended in his youth featured Pete Seeger. He said at that time his understanding was that a concert was about showing off, but this was about community and what we can accomplish together. In the second half of our concert, after all singing together, John said, "See what it feels like when we are in concert with each other?" A metaphor for our times.

Many thanks to those who attended, worked on the planning, made copies, sent out the mailer, hosted meetings, coordinated sponsorships, sold tickets, made announcements, put up posters, coordinated the tech work, set up the sound, moved chairs and the piano, baked cookies, staffed the intermission refreshments, handed out programs and collected tickets, staff the door ticket sales, sold CD's and books, staffed the Peace/Life table, emceed, coordinated volunteers, made donations, set up lodging and food, promoted the concert by email and social media, drove long distances to attend, showed people where to park, handled finances, cleaned up after the concert, sang along, laughed, cried and brought energy to the event.

Thanks to Mark and Cindy Lemaire for opening the

concert, to the Church of the Brethren for hosting us for 17 years and selling tickets; to Intrinsic Elements for being a ticket venue, to the Doubletree Hotel for donating lodging, and to KCBP Community Radio 95.5FM for the interview with John.

Friends of Salida Library Book Sale

The Friends of Salida Library will be having their annual Used Book Sale on Friday, March 8th, 10 am-5 pm and Saturday March 9th, 10 am-3 pm. Hardback books are \$1.00, paperbacks \$.50.

Our non-fiction categories this year include: Cookbooks, Health/Beauty, Religious/Spiritual, Poetry & Plays, Educational (all levels), Foreign Languages, Military, Music, Crafts & Arts, Magazines, Media (VHS, CD, DVD, Records, Tapes), Dictionaries & Thesauri, Biographies, Chess, Finances, Gardening, Science Fiction, Genealogy and Vintage/Antique books.

Our paperback fiction includes Westerns, Romance and general. This year our hardback fiction will be in generic alpha order, i.e., all the "A's" in one area, by Author's last name, and we have children's books. Mark your calendar and plan to join us!



Come & Hear DR. MICHAEL ERIC DYSON!



Author, Teacher, Activist

SATURDAY, March 30, 2019

**25th Annual
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Commemoration**

Performing Arts & Media Center
Modesto Junior College, East Campus
435 College Ave., Modesto

- 6:00 p.m. - Doors Open
- 7:00 p.m. - Free program

—Sponsors—



City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Dept.; Modesto Junior College; Modesto Peace/Life Center; California State University, Stanislaus; Associated Students of Modesto Junior College; Modesto Teachers Association; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); Ed Fitzpatrick, Valley Lexus. *Free Community Event. Sponsors needed!* Contact Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org to donate or co-sponsor.

Peace/Life Center looking for volunteers

The Modesto Peace/Life Center needs volunteers to assist with projects, events, our radio project (radio knowledge, skills needed), fundraising, and administrative activities. No experience necessary. Experience in social media, Word, Excel, or other special skills are desired for some volunteer positions. We need volunteers for a few hours per week, or an ongoing commitment.

For more information, contact our volunteer/outreach coordinators: Susan Bower or Jocelyn Cooper at the Peace Life Center (209) 529-5750.

Villanelle Against Silence and Not-Knowing

By **STELLA BERATLIS**

The Women's March is about more than misogyny. It's about oppression that cuts across many axes of power--gender, race, class, age, citizenship, and more. As our city's Poet Laureate, I decided that the poem I was writing for today had to engage with the idea of intersectionality--because feminism, according to bell hooks,

is a blueprint for everyone regardless of gender, race, or sexuality--and feminism has, unfortunately, historically excluded women of color from the struggle. This poem addresses us white women, who benefit from institutionalized whiteness, and it is intended to challenge us and be a call to support our *comadres* and sisters-in-arms of color. In the words of Emmeline Pankhurst, noted early British women's rights activist: "I don't intend that you should be pleased."

This poem is a villanelle, a 19-line poem made up of 4 tercets and one final quatrain. Villanelles also feature 2 refrains. In my poem, the first refrain, "There's a list of reasons in my bag, a thing that I don't know" (and variations of that) is based on a line by Raquel Salas Rivera from her poem "I fight with my girlfriend because the fascists want me dead." The second refrain, "There's a violence that we swallow and try to make our own," is inspired to a passage from Audre Lord's essay, "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action."



Villanelle Against Silence and Not-Knowing

after **Raquel Salas Rivera & Audre Lord**

There's a list of reasons in my bag, a thing that I don't know.
My house is an enemy of the people, look into its windows,
its face,
there's a violence that we swallow and try to make our own.

The true north star of justice oscillates and shifts,
What do we call this city on the hill, where's the map of
this place?
Check the reasons in my bag, that thing that I can't know.

Are you listening to the voices? Here: take this gift-
the anger of non-White women, whom the world casually
erases
by the violence that we swallow and try to make our own.

In the commonwealth of cruelty, white tears when we are
miffed,
then cognitive dissonance of state violence, enforced by
trauma and shame.

For reference: see the reasons in your bag, the terror you
don't know.

When we talk of women's rights, the language slides, see
it drift-
but your feminism is nothing if it does nothing less than
embrace
all those beaten by the rocks that we have swallowed and
tried to make our own.

Therefore, resolved: feel the anger; let it fuel ferocity. The hiss
of oppression in the synapses, a relentless memory trace;
see the list of reasons in my bag, name that thing that I don't
know-
Fight the tyrannies I swallow and try to make my own.

— *Stella Beratlis*
Modesto Women's March
January 19, 2019

Stanislaus County Caregiver Resource Fair, March 30th

Hosted by Community Hospice and Stanislaus County Aging & Veteran Services, the 3rd Annual Stanislaus County Caregiver Resource Fair will be held at the Stanislaus Veterans Center on Saturday, March 30, 2019 from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., featuring a free continental breakfast, community vendors, health screenings, opportunity prizes, and education workshops including three speakers, all free of charge.

For the past two years, this annual event has received outstanding support from the Stanislaus County community, allowing us to continue to provide caregivers and the general community with the opportunity to participate in educational workshops and to consult and de-stress with professionals and peers. Our vision is to not only attempt to reduce the overwhelming stresses and pressures that accompany being a caregiver but to also provide the opportunity for leaders in the community to network and build relationships and solutions to common barriers that caregivers face. The fair is tailored to caregivers but seniors and others in the community may find support at the fair as well. We hope to see you there!

About Stanislaus Caregiver Resource Fair: "The Stanislaus Caregiver Resource Fair's mission is to provide a 'one stop shop' means of support and empowerment to all caregivers in the community."

About Community Hospice, Inc.: "Community Hospice provides compassionate and quality care, education and support to patients and their families, regardless of ability to pay. Their vision is to affirm the cycle of life by enhancing the quality of living for individuals and their families at the end of life."

About Stanislaus County Area Agency on Aging: "The mission of the Stanislaus County Department of Aging and Veterans Services is to "Help Seniors and Veterans obtain services and benefits they need to live secure, healthy, independent lives."

Contacts: Krystal Irwin, Event Coordinator, CaregiverResourceFair@gmail.com, 949.878.2924

Kristin Mostowski, Director of Public Relations, Community Hospice, kristin.mostowski@hospiceheart.org

Linda Lowe, Planner, Stanislaus Aging & Veteran Services, lowel@stancounty.com

Website: <https://stancaregiverfair.wixsite.com/3rdannual>

3rd Annual
Stanislaus County
Caregiver Resource Fair

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The Modesto Peace/Life Center congratulates its Board Member

LENG NOU

on her being chosen as an
Outstanding Woman of Stanislaus County



Best of the Best photo exhibit at the Mistlin

The *Best of the Best* photo exhibit, a fotoMODESTO event, will be on display at Mistlin Gallery from February 5 through March 1, 2019. Area photographers were asked to submit a small portfolio of their best work. Twenty-eight of the judged top entries were invited to display their work in the *Best of the Best* show. The photographers, as well as their work, will be the focus of the exhibit. It will be an opportunity for the public to meet and discover the people behind the camera.

Reception for artists: Thursday, February 21, 2019, 6:00 – 9:00 pm. during 3rd Thursday Art Walk.

Best of the Best is a fotoMODESTO event. fotoMODESTO was formed in 2017 by David Schroeder, Edward Mendes, and John Wynn to celebrate the art of photography. In the previous two years, photo exhibits were on display throughout Modesto. This year it was decided to focus on the photographers in one place – Mistlin Gallery. There will be additional fotoMODESTO exhibits throughout the year at different locations.

fotoMODESTO is sponsored by Focus On..., a 501 (c)3 non-profit corporation.

Information: contact David Schroeder, schroederdavid64@mail.com, 209 402-6092.

Regular Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Saturday, 12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m. 1015 J St., Modesto. 209-529-3369. <https://ccaagallery.org/>

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ModestoSound.org
209-573-0533

Interfaith Ministries to Host Second Annual Feast for the Eyes

By VERONICA JACUINDE

Interfaith Ministries of Greater Modesto (IFM) will host their second annual *Feast for the Eyes* on February 23, 2019 at The Century in downtown Modesto. Presented by Modesto Subaru, this year's theme is "Rhapsody in Blue" inspired by jazz, the art deco aesthetic, and blue color palettes. It will be an evening of sumptuous décor, eye-catching fashion, exquisitely prepared food, signature cocktails and live entertainment. All funds raised will benefit their *Feed Modesto* program. Sponsorships are available now for this unique community event.

Founded over 40 years ago, Interfaith Ministries works as a caring and sharing group of faith-based congregations, organizations and individuals that help those in the greater Modesto area who need food, clothing and other humanitarian services. IFM serves the equivalent of close to 2 million meals a year to the neediest in the local community where over 20% of the population live below the poverty line which includes more than 36,000 children.

Interfaith Ministries' *Feed Modesto* program provides services to needy individuals and families through their food pantry and home delivery services.

ACTION: Become a sponsor. Various levels are available. Contact David Rogers, Communications Director, at (209) 572-3117 or drogers@interfaithmodesto.org. For media inquiries contact Veronica Jacuinde at (310) 508-1896 or veronicajacuinde@gmail.com.



Spring Vegetable Gardening Class on February 7, 2019!

By ANNE SCHELLMAN

The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) and Master Gardeners of Stanislaus County are holding a free Spring Gardening Class on Thursday, February 7, 2019 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at the Agriculture Center on 3800 Cornucopia Way in Modesto at Harvest Hall, Rooms D&E.

Come learn which vegetables to plant and when to start seeds indoors for spring planting. Examples of vegetables we will talk about include:

- Beets
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Peppers
- Tomatoes

...and many more! This class is free, but please visit <http://ucanr.edu/spring2019> or call Anne Schellman at (209) 525-6862 to sign up. Space is limited, so please reserve your seat today.

This family-friendly class is open to everyone. Participants will receive free seeds (while supplies last). There is plenty of parking around Harvest Hall, but please come early if you've never been to our site. There will be signs to direct you to the classroom.

If you aren't already, please follow us on Facebook or Twitter @UCCEMGStanislaus.



Young@Art Student Show, March 5-30 at the Mistlin Gallery

Area students from age 0-18 are eligible to enter this annual show, divided into categories by age and media – either 2D or 3D works. The show is judged for awards by local art teachers, and prizes will be given for each category. Parents, caregivers, teachers and students themselves can enter works.

The closing reception and awards ceremony will take place on Saturday, March 30 at 2:00 p.m. Download Young@Art 2019 Call for Entries at: https://ccaagallery.org/young_at_art/

Regular Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Saturday, 12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m. 1015 J St., Modesto. 209-529-3369. <https://ccaagallery.org/>

Be informed!

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

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A story to share

By KELLI OTT

Had a funny, not funny experience yesterday and it really stuck with me. Allow me to share ...

An impromptu dinner meeting was planned with a friend for after work yesterday. Because of the timing of the arrangements, I hadn't brought a change of clothes and had only my work attire.

I dress to keep warm and dry at [Cleansing Hope Shower Shuttle](#) and wear a

ball cap to protect my eyes from both rain and sun. I use a backpack instead of a purse...I always have. And my absolute favorite jacket is an old military one. So that's what I was wearing as I entered the downtown restaurant where I was meeting my friend. It was 5:30 and the restaurant was nearly full. There were business people, couples grabbing a bite before seeing a movie or a performance at the theater, and one of the local running clubs had also gathered in running shorts and gear for a pre-run snack. I was clearly NOT inappropriately dressed for this restaurant.

I was the only one waiting to be helped but the maître d' was busy so I waited patiently. Another woman came in in a business suit, and then another. We were all clearly waiting for others to join us. The maître d' glanced at business suit and the third woman and completely ignored me. It was if I was invisible. Now granted, I WAS wearing camo colors, but I promise you, I hadn't blended into the background! Business suit was offered a table though she knew she came in after I did. Third woman was offered a seat as well, but she was polite enough to let him know I had entered first. He HAD to acknowledge me at that point, and I smiled politely and told him I'd wait for my friend.

Long story short, I realized that my attire was similar to how many homeless people dress. Jeans, boots, old jacket, backpack...and I was not going to be acknowledged in hopes that I would just go away. Eventually, my friend came in and we were given a table and had a most enjoyable meal. And I was treated with respect by the man, once he realized I was actually a paying customer. But here's the rub...why was I marginalized without being given the same opportunity as everyone else? Because of how I was dressed? Because of past history of others who may have given this maître d' a difficult time? Because of pre-existing company rules that I knew nothing about? And how can a person receive the same opportunities as everyone else if there is such prejudice already in place before they even walk through the door?

This didn't rock me or make me want to shrink away. I'm not in a fragile place, emotionally or physically, thank You LORD! But if I had been, it would have hurt. I may have left, even if I had the money to pay for my meal. I certainly would have cried tears at the indifference I was shown.

How can my homeless friends (some of whom I consider family) ever climb out of the hole they're in if they're never



given a chance? If they're met with angry stares, or stereotyped because of their attire? Passed over like I was, when someone else better dressed or with the right look comes in?

I don't know the answer to these questions. But as you and I breeze through life, being accepted and acknowledged without even trying, I ask you to think about it. Remember that there are those right here in our hometown who are living on the edges of society, not because of what they've done or who they are, but because they are ignored before they even open their mouths. I hear it all the time..."they could get out of their situations if they'd only apply themselves!" Except, what if they can't? What if, as soon as they walk into a place, maybe to apply for a job, and the only thing they have to wear is jeans and boots and an old jacket...what if they're ignored? Overlooked? Marginalized? How does one overcome that kind of prejudice?

Heavy sigh. Never stop praying, dear friends. Never stop praying.

showershuttle.com

Pity the Nation

... after Kahlil Gibran

Pity the nation whose people are sheep,
and whose shepherds mislead them.
Pity the nation whose leaders are liars, whose sages are silenced,
and whose bigots haunt the airwaves.
Pity the nation that raises not its voice,
except to praise conquerors and acclaim the bully as hero
and aims to rule the world with force and by torture.
Pity the nation that knows no other language but its own
and no other culture but its own.
Pity the nation whose breath is money
and sleeps the sleep of the too well fed.
Pity the nation — oh, pity the people who allow their
rights to erode
and their freedoms to be washed away.
My country, tears of thee, sweet land of liberty."

—Lawrence Ferlinghetti, 2007

Mr. Ferlinghetti reads his poem on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpQhO35P5W8>

Dear Mother
be our Valentine?
your nurturing heart and
mountains, valleys, deserts, oceans, lakes, rivers,
streams, forests, glaciers, hot springs, molten
centered warmth. We love you for your
partnership with the Sun the Moon, and the
stars. We respect you through mindfulness
in thought, word, and deed. We
promise to sustain you each
day with gratitude
and
Love.

—Tina Arnopole Driskill


MistlinGallery
Central California Art Association

February: Foto Modesto - Best of the Best
March: Young@Art Student Exhibition

1015 J Street, Modesto • (209) 529-3369
Tues. - Thurs. 11:30-5, Fri. 11:30-8, Saturday 12-4
www.ccaagallery.org

Love Music?

**Want to help kids in your community
grow and prosper through music?**

At Modesto Sound we empower youth with real-world job skills
to create music and artistic media.

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on things such as the best way to serve the community with grants
received from the National Endowment for the Arts and
the California Arts Council.

Since 2005 Modesto Sound

- Recorded 685 artists
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- Held hundreds of concerts

Where: Media Building on the corner of Santa Barbara
and Yosemite Boulevard (110 Santa Barbara Avenue, Modesto)

When: The second Tuesday of every month 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Get a warm
welcome from Janet Seay, Executive Director of Modesto Sound,
who welcomes your ideas! No RSVP required. It's OK to just show up.

Why

- Network in the music industry
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- Help others

More Information

209-573-0533 janet@modestosound.org

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The Part About MLK White People Don't Like to Talk About

Dr. King was widely disliked for his message of liberation for oppressed people in this country—Black people, Brown people, Native people, all poor people.

By ZENOBIA JEFFRIES WARFIELD

"A lie cannot live." —Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"...at least not forever." —Zenobia Jeffries Warfield

At the time of his death, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the most reviled men in the United States. Today, we remember him as the beloved Dr. King, and many of us refer to him as such.

But as we read mainstream articles and hear reports and speeches about how far we've come on this federal holiday honoring him, it is important that we remember some of the most hateful things that have been said about Dr. King and what he stood for by leaders of and in this country—Black and White—then and now. Why? Many of the conditions that he marched, boycotted, and spoke out against still exist today—racism, materialism, militarism. We celebrate him now, even while condemning today's activists the same way Dr. King was condemned 60 years ago.

Some regarded him as "too passive" for his position on nonviolent action. Others, "too radical," for his stance against racism and oppression.

Dr. King was widely disliked for his message of liberation for oppressed people in this country—Black people, Brown people, Native people, all poor people. The year he died, nearly 75 percent of American people disapproved of him, according to a 1968 poll.

His contemporary Malcolm X said that "ignorance of each other is what has made unity impossible. Therefore, we need enlightenment. We need more light about each other. Light creates understanding, understanding creates love, love creates patience, and patience creates unity. Once we have more knowledge about each other, we will stop condemning each other and a united front will be brought about."

It's true. The sanitizing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. along with the message of equality he was preaching, the uphill battle he was fighting, is doing more harm than good to today's movement for Black Lives and other modern freedom fighters.

I understand the temptation. We are a country led by a

The year [Dr. King] died, nearly 75 percent of American people disapproved of him, according to a 1968 poll.

racist, misogynist, xenophobic, bigoted bully. Donald Trump is the modern version one of those White men, spitting and shoving and kicking the civil rights activists of Dr. King's era.

There are people who cringe at the thought of this and wish we could all just focus on the progress, the good of Dr. King and his message, the good of the civil rights movement, the good of today's movements that are demanding justice for Black men, women, and children killed by police, proclaiming

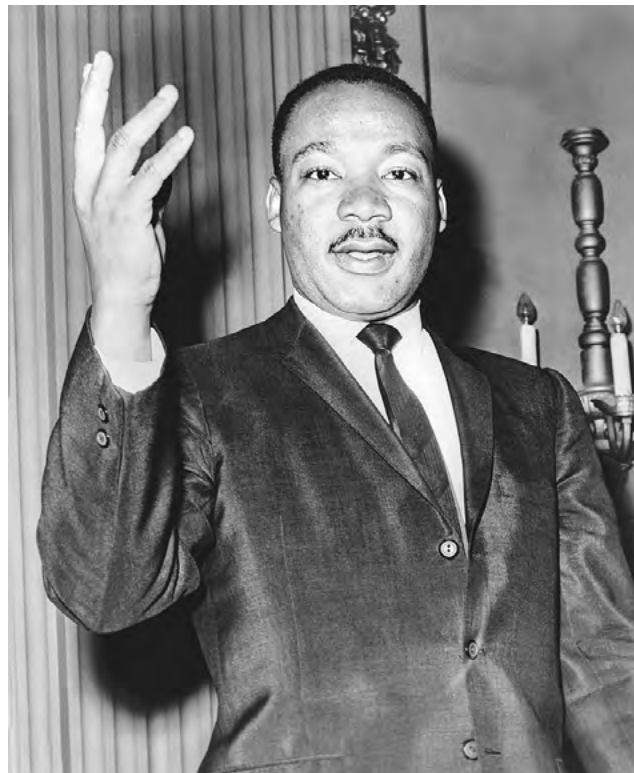


Photo: Dick DeMarsico, World Telegram staff photographer

The sanitizing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. along with the message of equality he was preaching, the uphill battle he was fighting, is doing more harm than good to today's movement for Black Lives and other modern freedom fighters.

that Black Lives Matter; justice for women in the #timesup movement, girls and women of the #metoo and #muterkelly and missing and murdered Indigenous women movement; immigrants; justice for Indigenous peoples of this land in movements like Standing Rock; justice for trans, binary, and gender-nonconforming people.

It's a problematically romantic and often White vision of Dr. King as the Moses who led his people to freedom. It's the discomfort of privilege and the resulting cognitive dissonance that make folks avoid the pain and anger still brewing in oppressed communities. They cannot see how ineffective are their attempts at building bridges—that are still burning.

There's a saying in some Black church communities about folks like this, "Everybody wanna go to heaven, but don't nobody wanna die."

Even Dr. King saw this tendency of White people to too quickly and with too much relief declare success and head home smiling. In his famous Letter from a Birmingham Jail, he wrote:

"First, I must confess that over the past few years I have

been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of

His point was to charge them to get out of their feelings and focus on—not the good but the fight at hand: the threat to justice everywhere.

tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: 'I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action'; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a 'more convenient season.' Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will."

I don't believe Dr. King's intent was to make these folks feel bad, in fact, I'm sure he wasn't thinking about their feelings at all. I believe his point was to charge them to get out of their feelings and focus on—not the good but the fight at hand: the threat to justice everywhere.

This means confronting and questioning with courage and confidence all the lies we've been told about the history of this country. Even the lies about Dr. King's successes.

This means pulling back the veil on the atrocities committed by the "forefathers" and subsequent leaders of this country: the genocide of Indigenous people, the enslavement and torture of African people, the plunder and terrorization of Black men, women, and children, the internment of Japanese people, the suppression of women's votes and voices, the mass incarceration of Black and Brown people.

This means not just apologizing for slavery, but doing something to repair the harm caused by it that persists to this day.

"Dr. King understood," political activist and North Carolina NAACP leader the Rev. Dr. William Barber points out in a recent article, "that whenever we compromise with a lie about who people are, we empower the political forces that have exploited our nation's divisions to cling to power."

Hence, the Trump presidency.

If we want this country to be great—for the first time ever—and to live up to the racial justice work of Dr. King and so many others, we can start by telling the truth.

And here's the truth: Dr. King's work is not done. Those of us who continue to press forward for the liberation of all oppressed people celebrate him in the work we do daily.

Zenobia Jeffries Warfield wrote this article for *YES! Magazine*. Zenobia is the racial justice associate editor. Follow her on Twitter @ZenobiaJeffries.

World Relief: The Great Convener of Hope

An Interview by TOM PORTWOOD

With millions of people currently fleeing armed conflict, oppression, or upheaval across many regions of the world, we as a nation are challenged by an enormous humanitarian crisis whose reverberations are likely to be felt for many decades to come.

Indeed, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees recently stated that “an unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have been forced from home. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18, as well as 3.1 million asylum seekers. There are also an estimated 10 million stateless people who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement.”

In the face of this unfolding disaster, however, the current administration is choosing to severely limit the number of refugees allowed into this country. The BBC reported in September 2018 that the United States will cap the number of refugees allowed in 2019 at a near record low of 30,000. By comparison, 84,995 refugees were allowed into the United States in 2016.

Andrew Timbie, World Relief’s Divisional Director, re-

“Are we going to give in to the rhetoric? Are we going to be divided, or are we going to build this community together for the future of our children, to build a better society based on commonality?”

cently visited the Modesto office and briefly touched on the impact of these new policies: “Since the 1970s and 1980s, we’ve enjoyed a very strong private-public partnership with the United States government. It’s been a bipartisan, really non-partisan ongoing humanitarian effort, so when the new administration came in, it sort of felt like the rug had been pulled out from beneath our feet – not just for World Relief, but other organizations which provide these services.”

In spite of the administration’s stance on refugees and immigration, World Relief remains steadfast in its mission of caring. “The population is still there that needs to be served,” states Vincent Salazar, who just began working with the organization. “Are we going to give in to the rhetoric? Are we going to be divided, or are we going to build this community together for the future of our children, to build a better society based on commonality?”

World Relief has been operating in this area for about twenty years. “World Relief as an organization has been around since the 1940s. It was really birthed out of churches in the Northeast,” explained Mr. Timbie. “It came about as a localized church response to the ending of World War II, after the people of Europe had been left in disarray by the all

the devastation. Eventually, it formalized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency and moved beyond its initial wartime efforts to addressing humanitarian disasters. In the 1970s, it launched its U.S.-based efforts, primarily as a response to the refugees fleeing Vietnam and other countries in Southeast Asia.”

Locally, World Relief Modesto works closely with

“The biggest barrier refugees and many foreign-born residents face is that they don’t know how to navigate in our community.”

churches, volunteers, and through its other strong partnerships to ensure its clients have ample access to a wide array of services, including:

- Low-cost legal assistance, including naturalization services; adjustment of status; Green Card applications; Travel documents, and more.
- Refugee Resettlement, including safe, affordable housing and rental assistance; furniture and basic household items; climate appropriate clothing; translation services; job readiness training; and ESL classes, among others.
- Youth Mentoring Volunteer Services.

“Over twenty years ago, a number of churches in this area wanted to organize to help refugees, so they invited World Relief to open an office in the Modesto area, primarily helping refugees through the private-public partnership with the United States government.” Mr. Timbie relates. “Through this office, we are able to place refugees in this community. This is a great place for people to rebuild their lives.”

“The biggest barrier refugees and many foreign-born residents face is that they don’t know how to navigate in our community,” noted Mr. Timbie. “Refugees don’t come in with a job; they don’t come in with established credit. Housing often requires a credit check. If you don’t have access to those things, especially as an adult, your chances of succeeding in this country are very limited. Also, a lot of immigrants are facing chronic health concerns. Some of our clients have been refugees for twenty years, so often they have severe health problems. When you are forced to flee your home, you can be in the land of “in-between” for a long time, without work or money and dependent upon the United Nations or other agencies for food. Of course, the conditions in many of these camps are pretty bad as well. So often refugees face the situation of moving from trauma to trauma and resettling in the United States is almost like a third trauma. Their level of trust is pretty low.”

“Having to go into our society and our capitalist-based economy requires a very different mindset,” he continued. “We secure housing for them upon their arrival, or soon thereafter, and help them onward from there.” Typically, it takes a refugee family “about a year” to gain a foothold on

becoming independent in this country.

As a faith-based organization, World Relief “provides our clients with relationships in the community. Our job is to convene and facilitate collaboration between immigrants and the receiving community,” Mr. Timbie explained. “For example, we have partnered with Modesto Junior College and local churches and volunteers to hold English classes in those churches for those unable to attend ESL classes otherwise. There’s also a great opportunity for volunteers to informally help clients with conversational English, or to “adopt” a refugee family and help them become acclimated to our area. We are here to support the needs of refugees and other vulnerable immigrants, to be that convener between our clients and the wider community. Our goal is to integrate the immigrant community better into the Modesto community to benefit both.”

So often refugees face the situation of moving from trauma to trauma and resettling in the United States is almost like a third trauma. Their level of trust is pretty low.”

In addition to its extensive refugee programs, World Relief “is one the largest provider of immigration services in the area. This region has historically been very dependent upon immigrants for its economic success. We offer Green Card assistance, DACA, family reunification, any number of programs. Roughly between 15 to 20% of the area’s residents are non-citizens. The goal is to help these immigrants become integrated into our community so that they can thrive.”



ACTION: To find out more about World Relief Modesto and its programs and services, contact it at 1401 F St., Modesto, California, 95354; (209) 491-2712, <https://worldreliefmodesto.org/>.

Additional volunteers are always needed.



Community Hospice Celebrates 40-Year Anniversary

Community Hospice, a nonprofit hospice provider caring for those facing a serious/life-limiting illness, has reached a milestone of 40 years, becoming the oldest and largest nonprofit hospice provider in the Central Valley. From its small, 1979 beginnings in a church basement in Modesto, CA, Community Hospice has grown to meet the needs of our surrounding communities providing support and services in multiple counties, including; Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Merced, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuolumne, and parts of Contra Costa, Sacramento, Alameda and Santa Clara.

What began as a dream and desire to celebrate and enhance the lives of friends and neighbors facing a life-limiting illness, became a reality and has continued to grow to meet the ever-changing needs of our communities. Over the course of 40 years, Community Hospice has offered end-of-life hospice care, and has developed additional programs, including; palliative care for those facing a serious illness (not hospice),

pediatric care programs, grief support services to anyone in the community that has experienced a loss, children's school-based grief support, Camp Erin® of the Central Valley and community crisis response. The organization also has the Alexander Cohen Hospice House, a 16 private patient room inpatient hospice facility, a robust education program, Durable Medical Equipment Division, seven Hope Chest Thrift Stores and a Logistics Processing Center. Today, Community Hospice cares for over 3,000 community residents each year through various programs.

"As we celebrate our 40 year-anniversary, we are filled with gratitude for all those that have been a part of our organization," said C. DeSha McLeod, President/CEO Community Hospice. "Our organization has grown tremendously throughout the years and we are excited for the future and are honored to care for our community members in their time of need."

What began as an all-volunteer organization has evolved to nearly 300 employees and over 550 volunteers that work together to support the mission of the organization.

"Community Hospice is fortunate to have compassionate

and dedicated staff members and volunteers that are committed to enhancing quality of life for our friends and neighbors," said McLeod, "It is because of them, our donors and many others we are able to fulfill our mission of providing compassionate and quality care, education and support, regardless of ability to pay."

Community Hospice looks forward to providing the same compassionate and quality care and support they have provided throughout the years and will continue to expand their programs as the community demands. McLeod said, "Community Hospice has the same dream and desire today our founders had, to celebrate and enhance the lives of our friends and neighbors as they face life changing challenges. As we look towards the next 40 years, we promise to continue to meet the evolving needs of our community with love, hope and compassion, just as we have the past 40 years."

To learn more about Community Hospice programs and services or to learn how you can get involved, visit hospiceheart.org or call 209.578.6300 or visit hospiceheart.org.



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

Laughter Yoga classes offered

By NICOLE OTTMAN

History of Laughter Yoga

Laughter yoga is a unique form of exercise developed in 1995 by a medical doctor in India named Dr. Madan Kataria. He was writing an article called "Laughter is the Best Medicine". His conclusion after doing the research is that laughter really is the best medicine. He wanted to prescribe 20 minutes of sustained hearty laughter to all of his patients. While thinking about how to get his patients to do that he came up with the idea of laughter clubs. He started the first club at a park in Mumbai India with his wife and 3 friends. After a week there were 50 people laughing together. Now there are thousands of laughter clubs all around the world.

What happens at a Laughter Yoga Session?

Laughter sessions usually begin with stretching and breathing. This is an important form of exercise to warm up the body. Then we do laughter exercises that stimulate laughter. We invite laughers to participate with a sense of childlike playfulness. Kids don't have to use their intellect to decide if something is funny. That is why they laugh so much more than adults. We don't use jokes or comedy, you don't have to be in a happy mood and you don't have to have a sense of humor. It is a scientific fact that you get the same health benefits from fake or simulated laughter that you get from genuine laughter. And it is also a scientific fact that laughter is contagious, so once you start doing the laughter exercises natural spontaneous laughter usually erupts. We end a laughter session with sitting and/or lying down laughter. This is the time to just laugh for no reason and let yourself have a cathartic release. And after the laughter it is time for relaxation, a time for your body to integrate the benefits of the laughter practice. The mission of Laughter Yoga is world peace, health and harmony through laughter, so we close by sending joy to the world.

Therapeutic Benefits of Laughter

- Increases oxygen supply
- Removes negative effects of stress
- Improves Self Confidence
- Boosts your immune system
- Increases longevity (people who laugh live longer)
- Helps fight disease
- Circulates lymph fluid
- Reduces inflammation
- Increases tolerance to pain
- Exercises your abdominal muscles
- Enhances flexibility of various joints
- Improves relationships
- Produces endorphins (natural pain killers)
- Lowers blood pressure
- Aides digestion
- Raises good cholesterol
- Releases serotonin (a natural antidepressant)
- Lowers risk of cardiovascular disease
- Improves academic achievement
- Promotes kindness & compassion

Try a Laughter Yoga session in Modesto. Offered by Nicole Ottman, Transformational Therapist and Laughter Yoga Leader. 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.

The cost is \$15.00 per class. No "traditional" yoga poses will be performed, so no need for experience or a mat. All ages welcome. Just an open attitude is all you need.

ACTION: For information and to register call or text Nicole, 209-765-8006 or visit www.nicoleottman.com

Laughter Yoga
Laugh Yourself Healthy



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Evan Wright

Evan Wright is a spoken word poet and musician from Turlock, California. He has been writing and performing since the age of fifteen. He hopes to spread knowledge and empathy through his poetry. Earlier this year, Evan's gripping poem, "Dear Black Boy" won first place in the 2nd Annual MoSt Chapbook Contest for poets 16 to 25 years old.

Dear Black Boy,

You are a miracle, you are a revolution
waiting to erupt.
But one day they will come for you, they
will rip your tongue out
and demand that you speak.

They will take your black from you, tell
you that they don't see color
that you are no different. Then, they will
tell you to go back to Africa.
They will make traffic stops feel more like
Judgement Day.

They will move your family reunions from
parks to prisons.
They will move your home from the Bay
Area to the Valley.
They will put you in schools where none of
your classmates look like you.
They will take your music and act like they

invented it, act like blues
wasn't slave vernacular, like it wasn't
ululations uttered through melancholy
melody
delineating suffering.

They will teach you that to be black is to
be criminal to be violent
They will teach you that black is
something to be feared that you are
something to be feared

Teach you that the police will
Protect you, unless you look like suspect,
like criminal, like perpetrator
Unless you look dark, as if the night had
swallowed you
Unless you look threatening, look
dangerous.

Unless you look at them and see Jim Crow,
because they would not hesitate to silence the
Nat Turner in you so move slow.
Do not give them a reason to bury you,
because they already think that they are
above you.
But do not mistake your compliance for
defeat, because one wrong move
could turn you into a martyr for a cause
that you never intended to die for

They would not let you get out of the
cradle before putting you in the grave.
To them you are subhuman, they will turn
you into a man before you ever get to be a
child
and call you boy far beyond your
childhood.

They will make you want to be violent,
want to be criminal, want to show them
that
you have teeth. But you must stop, and
realize that it would not take a miracle
to move them. It would not take a miracle
to educate them on the social injustice that
this
country was founded on, it would not take
a miracle for them to realize that you are
human too.
And even when they try to take this from
you, strip you of your humanity as if it
were a privilege
You must remember, that you, are a
miracle.

How to Take a Life

First, you must enroll in the academy,
there we will teach you to use your eyes
to turn men into monsters,

teach you to use guns to solve your
problems

We will teach you that guns will protect
you better
than a bullet proof vest will, teach you to
use bullets
to turn men into numbers, statistics, to
calculate your hate

We will teach you that there are no
consequences to your actions,
teach you a million ways to blur the lines,
until wrong becomes right
until day becomes night until might makes
right, and, until you take your first life.

But before that, we have to teach you to
who is allowed
to roam the streets after dark, teach you
which people are
allowed to drive cars better than yours,
who's allowed to look you in the eyes
teach you which people to respect and
teach you who to protect

But before you get your first kill,
you must see someone else get away with
it,
this will teach you how much power
you truly have, teach you how close
you and God truly are, this will teach you
to steal the air from
a man's lungs, then convince everyone
even yourself that it was his fault

And after you take your first life, you may
feel sorry for what you have done
but not sorry enough to accept your
punishment.no,
because we taught you better than that,
at the police academy.

Simon Says

Simon says, "stop the car!"
Simon says, "exit the vehicle with your
hands up!"
Simon sees a gun in your empty hands
Simon feels threatened

But Simon doesn't see you shaking in your
skin
Simon sees you as a vulture see a carcass
Simon sees you as a carcass
No Simon sees you as targets

Simon says that, "you fit a description."
But, Simon flies a flag of hate
blown by a wind of malicious intentions
Simon's hateful flag says, "I wish you

would test me,
because I just killed Oscar Grant and got
away with it
and if I took you no one would even miss
you!"

Simon says, "show me your identification!"
and as you reach for it a car backfires,
No a police pistol fires,
propels a bullet through your heart
so quick that you didn't even get a chance
to
apologize to your mother for not being able
to stay safe,
And as your soul finds its way to the
golden gates.
Simon says, "it was an accident"
Simon says, "He saw a gun, he felt
threatened"
Simon says, "That's what he was trained to
do" the judge says, "Simon is innocent"
And the people say, "That's justice"

Everyone gets what they deserve, right?
You get to join brothers,
Trayvon Martin, Oscar Grant, Tamir Rice,
Shawn Bell, and Eric Garner,
in an early grave
Simon gets to live the life that he stole
from you
Simon accepts a freedom that he should
feel sorry for taking.

As your family surrounds your casket
to take one last look at your brown body
before it is lowered into the remorseless
earth.
Simon wakes up,
Simon kisses his wife good morning,
Simon takes his kids to school,
Simon goes to work.

Simon still carries a gun stained with your
blood
Simon still wears a badge that protects him
from the law that he is supposed to enforce
Simon still flies that flag of hate
and now its planted in our grave
and it didn't cry at your funeral
but celebrated at your wake

Now your mother has to accept that you
will never again be awake.
And your little brother
has to learn at an age much too young,
how to coax himself back to sleep at night,
when the nightmare of your reality
interrupts the dream for his future.
And Simon lives happily ever after.



Demand Critical Congressional Hearings— Long Overdue, Avoided or Blocked

We need these Congressional hearings to make up for the years of deliberate inaction and avoidance

By **RALPH NADER**

Earlier this month I wrote a column listing twelve major redirections or reforms that most people want for our country (see: “It’s Your Congress, People!” Make it work for you!). All of which require action by Congress—the gate-keeper. Now Congress must hold informative and investigative public hearings to inform the media and to alert and empower the people.

The U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) explains a Congressional Hearing as follows:

“A hearing is a meeting or session of a Senate, House, joint, or special committee of Congress, usually open to the public, to obtain information and opinions on proposed legislation, conduct an investigation, or evaluate/oversee the activities of a government department or the implementation of a Federal law. In addition, hearings may also be purely exploratory in nature, providing testimony and data about topics of current interest.”

Here are my suggestions for a dozen long-overdue hearings in the House of Representatives, now run by the Democrats:

Hearings on the corporate crime wave, which is often reported by the mass media. Yet Congress, marinated in corporate campaign cash, has ignored, if not aided and abetted, corporate criminals for many years. Hearings on corporate crime, fraud, and abuse must be a top priority (see more at corporatecrimereporter.com).

Hearings on the causes of poverty – e.g. the frozen minimum wage, tens of millions uninsured or underinsured for health care, unaffordable housing, criminal justice reform, and low utilization of tort law. These hearings will address public outrage about how our rich country treats the poor among us.

Hearings on the need to fund the small Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) to provide in-house advice to Congress about big technological/scientific decisions – whether the boondoggle ballistic missile defense, electromagnetic or cyber-attacks, driverless car hype, runaway artificial intelligence, nanotech, biotech (see: *Why The Future Doesn’t Need Us*) and many other unassessed innovations – are key.

Hearings on the overwhelming tilt into speculation, rather than investment, by the financial markets (e.g. Wall Street). The focus on speculation can cause grossly unproductive investments in the form of stock buybacks and off-the-charts executive compensation, which weaken the economy and keep shareholders (who are not allowed to vote on such decisions by their own overpaid hired managers) powerless. These matters need Congressional Review.

Hearings on consumer protection – the myriad of recent controls and manipulation of consumers and their spending, savings and credit, along with the first real investigation of contract fine-print servitude or peonage. All topics neglected by Congressional Committees.

Hearings on fundamental reform of our tax laws. Aggressively examining our tax laws’ perverse incentives, unjust escapes, privileges and immunities, and estimated (by the IRS) \$400 billion a year of uncollected tax revenue will

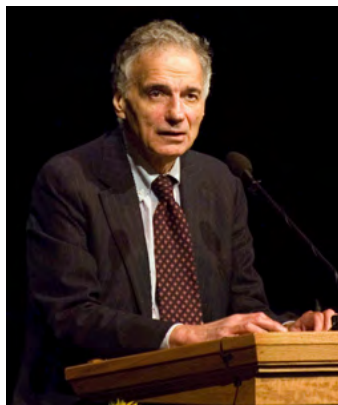


PHOTO: Don LaVange

enlighten taxpayers and members of Congress. A hearing on this is long overdue.

Hearings reviewing and evaluating our failed military and foreign policies – their costs, their boomerangs, and their unlawful violent impact on innocent peoples and communities abroad are vital.

Hearings on the planet’s environmental disruptions from the climate crisis to water usage, to soil erosion, deforestation, and the oceans’ pollution and deoxygenation could increase grassroots action.

Hearings on electoral reforms – dealing with campaign finance corruption to gerrymandering, to voter repression, ballot access obstruction, unequal treatments, and more might really help to “drain the swamp.”

Hearings on needed and unneeded government-funded and operated projects, including varieties of infrastructure or public works and how to make them more efficient and clean will make the case for rebuilding our communities.

Hearings on shifts of power from the few to the many, so long denied and abused will help empower the people to more easily band together as workers, consumers, small taxpayers, voters, litigants and as audiences of the public airwaves and cable channels.

Hearings on the benefits of opening up an increasingly closed Congress, with concentrated power in the four leaders of the House and Senate at the expense of committee and subcommittee chairs as well as individual members. Doing so will help make Congress more accountable for the people. When Congress cuts budgets for Committees and advisory institutions, such as the Congressional Research Service and the GAO, it becomes more reliant on corporate lobbyists. These lobbyists work as Congressional staffers before they return to their corrupt influence peddling (the so-called K Street crowd). See: “Why is Congress so dumb?” by Congressman Bill Pascrell in the *Washington Post*. It also needs to be emphasized that routine Appropriations hearings in both House and Senate must step up mightily to exercise far bolder their supervision of Executive branch departments and agencies. (The Senate’s confirmation hearings on nominated judges and high officials must also be far more rigorous and open to more witnesses to testify).

There you have it—people, citizens, voters, students and teachers. We need these and other such Congressional hearings to make up for the years of deliberate inaction and avoidance. Send your Senators and Representative your suggestions and the above list. Demand more production from their \$5 billion a year Congressional budget.

United States Capitol switchboard: 202-224-3121.

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Trade deficit with China has led to a loss of 3.4 million U.S. jobs

From the Economic Policy Institute

In a new analysis, EPI Senior Economist Robert E. Scott and Research Assistant Zane Mokhiber [show that the growing goods trade deficit with China cost 3.4 million U.S. jobs between 2001 and 2017](#). Losses occurred in all 50 states and in every congressional district, with job losses in the hardest-hit states—including New Hampshire, Oregon, California, Minnesota, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, Wisconsin, and Texas—ranging from 2.57 percent to 3.55 percent of total state employment.

“The U.S.–China trade relationship needs to undergo a fundamental change,” said Scott. “Addressing unfair trade, weak labor, and environmental standards in China, and, especially, ending currency manipulation and misalignment should be our top trade and economic priorities with regard to China.”

Supporters of China’s entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001 claimed that the move would create jobs and increase U.S. exports to China. However, China has continued to engage in unfair trade practices, which have limited the growth of U.S. exports. Meanwhile, growth in outsourcing by multinational companies has created a flood of Chinese imports into the United States, leading to rapidly growing trade deficits and corresponding job loss. The U.S. trade deficit with China has increased annually by \$18.3 billion, or 9.9 percent, on average since 2001. Overall, the U.S. goods trade deficit with China has grown by \$292.2 billion, to \$375.2 billion in 2017.

Scott and Mokhiber calculate the impacts of the trade deficit with China using a standard input-output model including 205 U.S. industries, which estimates the direct and indirect labor requirements of producing output in a given domestic industry.

Job losses have occurred throughout the country and in every industry, but were concentrated in manufacturing, including sectors in which the United States has traditionally held a competitive advantage. 2.5 million jobs, nearly three-fourths of the total jobs lost, were in manufacturing. Global trade in advanced technology products is dominated by China. Between 2001 and 2017, the trade deficit in the computer and electronic parts industry grew the most—leading to the loss of 1.2 million jobs, 36.0 percent of total job losses.

“Trade with China has redistributed vastly more income from working Americans to those at the top, than it has created through any increases in economic efficiency,” said Scott. “The first priority for American trade and financial policy should be to eliminate the soaring trade deficits we have with China and other countries with persistent, global trade surpluses, by lowering the value of the dollar through currency realignment.”

The impact of the trade deficit with China is not limited to direct job losses. Competition with low-wage countries drives down wages and reduces bargaining power for millions of workers throughout the U.S. economy. Scott and Mokhiber find that trade with low-wage countries like China is largely responsible for reducing wages by nearly \$2,000 per worker per year, for all of the 100 million non-college-educated workers in the United States. Most of that income was redistributed to corporations and to workers with college degrees at the top of the income distribution.

The Long, Brutal U.S. War on Children in the Middle East

By KATHY KELLY

On November 28, sixty-three U.S. Senators [voted](#) in favor of holding a floor debate on a resolution calling for an end to direct U.S. Armed Forces involvement in the Saudi-UAE coalition-led war on Yemen. Describing the vote as a rebuke to Saudi Arabia and the Trump Administration, [AP reported](#) on Senate dissatisfaction over the administration's response to Saudi Arabia's brutal killing of Jamal Khashoggi last month. Just before the Senate vote, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo [called](#) current objections to U.S. relations with Saudi Arabia "Capitol Hill caterwauling and media pile-on."

The "caterwaul" on Capitol Hill reflects years of determined effort by grassroots groups to end U.S. involvement in war on Yemen, fed by mounting international outrage at the last three years of war that have caused the deaths of an estimated [85,000](#) Yemeni children under age five.

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How might we understand what it would mean in the United States for fourteen million people in our country to starve? You would have to combine the populations of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, and imagine these cities empty of all but the painfully and slowly dying, to get a glimpse into the suffering in Yemen, where *one of every two*

persons [faces](#) starvation.

Antiwar activists have persistently challenged elected representatives to acknowledge and end the horrible consequences of modern warfare in Yemen where entire neighborhoods have been bombed, displacing millions of people; daily aerial attacks have directly targeted Yemen's infrastructure, preventing delivery of food, safe water, fuel, and funds. The war crushes people through aerial bombing and on-the-ground fighting as well as an insidious economic war.

Yemenis are [strangled](#) by import restrictions and blockades, causing non-payment of government salaries, inflation, job losses, and declining or disappearing incomes. Even when food is available, ordinary Yemenis cannot afford it.

Starvation is being used as a weapon of war—by Saudi Arabia, by the United Arab Emirates, and by the superpower patrons including the United States that arm and manipulate both countries.

During the thirteen years of economic sanctions against Iraq—those years between the Gulf War and the devastating U.S.-led "Shock and Awe" war that followed—I joined U.S. and U.K. activists traveling to Iraq in public defiance of the economic sanctions.

We aimed to resist U.S.- and U.K.-driven policies that weakened the Iraqi regime's opposition more than they weakened Saddam Hussein. Ostensibly democratic leaders were ready to achieve their aims by brutally sacrificing children under age five. The children died first by the hundreds, then by the thousands and [eventually](#) by the hundreds of thousands. Sitting in a Baghdad pediatric ward,



people opposed the 2003 Shock and Awe war.

Still the abusive and greedy policies continue. The U.S. and its allies built up permanent warfare states to secure consistent exploitation of resources outside their own territories.

During and after the Arab Spring, numerous Yemenis [resisted](#) dangerously unfair austerity measures that the Gulf Cooperation Council and the U.S. insisted they must accept. Professor Isa [Blumi](#), who notes that generations of Yemeni fighters have refused to acquiesce to foreign invasion and intervention, presents evidence that Saudi Arabia and the UAE now orchestrate war on Yemen to advance their own financial interests.

In the case of Saudi Arabia, Blumi states that although Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman wants to author an IPO (Initial Public Offering), for the Saudi state oil company, Aramco, no major investors would likely participate. Investment firms know the Saudis pay cash for their imports, including billions of dollars' worth of weaponry, because they are depleting resources within their own territory. This, in part, explains the desperate efforts to take over Yemen's offshore oil reserves and other strategic assets.

Recent polls [indicate](#) that most Americans don't favor U.S. war on Yemen. Surely, our security is not enhanced if the U.S. continues to structure its foreign policy on fear, prejudice, greed, and overwhelming military force. The movements that pressured the U.S. Senate to reject current U.S. foreign policy regarding Saudi Arabia and its war on Yemen will continue raising voices. Collectively, we'll work toward raising the lament, pressuring the media and civil society to insist that slaughtering children will never solve problems. **Kathy Kelly** (kathy@vcnv.org) co-coordinates *Voices for Creative Nonviolence* (www.vcnv.org)

(First published on the website of [The Progressive magazine](#))

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I heard a delegation member, a young nurse from the U.K., begin to absorb the cruelty inflicted on mothers and children.

"I think I understand," murmured Martin Thomas, "It's a death row for infants." Children gasped their last breaths while their parents suffered a pile-up of anguish, wave after wave. We should remain haunted by those children's short lives.

Iraq's children died amid an eerie and menacing silence on the part of mainstream media and most elected U.S. officials. No caterwauling was heard on Capitol Hill.

But, worldwide, people began to know that children were paying the price of abysmally failed policies, and millions of



FEBRUARY 2019

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

MJC Science Colloquium Schedule, Spring 2019, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 pm Science Community Center, Rm 115, MJC West Campus. Temporary Parking Permits can be purchased for \$2 from dispensers located near MJC West Campus entrances. **Feb. 6:** Lauren Shiebelhut, Postdoctorate Researcher, UC Merced: Mass Mortalities in Marine Species. **Feb. 13:** Andrew Gardner, Professor of Biological Sciences, CSU Stanislaus: Darwin's Study "On the Various Contrivances by Which British and Foreign Orchids Are Pollinated" (A Darwin Day talk). **Feb. 20:** Peggy Hauselt, Professor of Geography, CSU Stanislaus State: Sustainable Agriculture. **Feb. 27:** Marty Lanser, Blind since shortly after birth: Against All Odds.

MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science). Free, informative, engaging community science programs. 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132. **Feb. 22:** Paul E. Lenze, Jr., Northern Arizona Univ. Syrian Forced Migration & Public Health in the European Union. Examines causes of the Syrian Civil War and the impact of migration on public health in the Middle East and Europe. <https://nau.edu/pia/nau-faculty/>. **March 22:** Steven Murov, <http://murov.info>, Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, MJC. Periodic Table Milestones and Real and Fake Elements. <http://murov.info/timelines.htm>. **April 12:** Dr. Jonathan Fortney, UC Santa Cruz. The Kepler Mission: Exotic Solar Systems on the Path to Earth-Like Planets. Insights from the mission and the future of planetary research. <http://www.ucolick.org/~jfortney/>

6 WED: VIGIL: Homelessness. McHenry & J St., 4:00-5:00 pm.

17 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents Harold and Maude 1307 J. St., Modesto. 2:00 pm. Join the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/Membership>

23 SAT: Inter Faith Ministries hosts Second Annual Feast for the Eyes. At the Century, downtown Modesto. Theme: "Rhapsody in Blue." See article, this issue.

28 THURS: MJC Civic Engagement Series presents Get in the Way: The Journey of John Lewis. East Campus, 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm, Rm Forum 110.

LOOKING AHEAD

Wednesday March 6: Equity on the Mall 2019. San Joaquin Valley voices matter! Thousands of community members from nine San Joaquin Valley counties will converge on the most powerful platform in California, our State Capitol Mall. Equity on the Mall is a day to empower the Valley, educate

elected officials, and rise together to make positive change in the San Joaquin Valley. 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Register today for this free day of action at equityonthemall.org

Friday March 8: Peace Essay Contest Awards Ceremony. Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, MJC West Campus. 7 pm.

Saturday March 30: 3rd Annual Stanislaus County Caregiver Resource Fair. Stanislaus Veterans Center on Saturday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm, free continental breakfast, community vendors, health screenings, opportunity prizes, and education workshops, three speakers, free of charge.

Saturday March 30: 25th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration. Speaker, Dr. Michael Eric Dyson.

Sunday June 9: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast. Modesto Church of the Brethren.

June 28-30-Peace Camp in the Sierra.

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

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

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

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

Silver & Gold Support Group 50+ years of age. Ongoing support group for mental health and wellness to meet the needs of the mature Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community. Every Monday 3:00-4:00 pm, Community-Hope-Recovery, 305 Downey Ave. Modesto. Info: Monica O, Tiamonica64@gmail.com or Susan J, SusanthePoet@gmail.com

TUESDAYS

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. Christ Unity Baptist Church, 601 'L' St., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 7 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.

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 Peace/Life Center radio, KCBP 95.5 FM streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org> and at 95.5 FM, 2:00 pm to 2 am.

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

MEDIA COMMITTEE of Peace/Life Center. Meetings TBA.

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

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

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

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

WEDNESDAYS

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

Merced LGBT Community Center offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on site Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: mercedboard@gay-centralvalley.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/>

Modesto Folk Dancers. All levels welcome. Raube Hall, Ceres (call for address), 480-0387.

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

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.

LGBTQA Collaborative Meetings 4th Thursdays. Agendas are the same for each meeting. Lunch meeting: Peer Recovery Art Center, 1222 J St, Modesto, Noon to 1:30 pm. Dinner meetings: **Stanislaus BHRS** – Redwood Room, 800 Scenic Dr., Modesto, CA 95354, 5:30 pm to 7 pm. Meeting dates: Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 17, Dec. 15: No meeting/ Winter Mixer. Dedicated to promoting well-being in the LGBTQA community. John Aguirre, jpamodesto@gmail.com, 559-280-3864.

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 Gallery Walk, Downtown Modesto, downtown art galleries open--take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-8 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

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

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter. 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact: Joanna Rose-Murray, 209-484-8276, jrmcompassionate@gmail.com, <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

ART GALLERY WALK, downtown Modesto, third Thurs., 6:30 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

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.

VILLAGE DANCERS: Dances from Balkans, Europe, USA and more. Fridays, Carnegie Arts Center, 250 N. Broadway, Turlock. 7:30-9:30 pm, \$5 (students free). Info: call Judy, 209-480-0387.

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

Indivisible Stanislaus 2.0 will hold a demonstration every fourth Saturday until the November election at McHenry and Briggsmore Aves., Modesto from Noon to 1:00 pm. All resistance groups invited. Please bring signs regarding the upcoming District 10 election. Info: June Mills, 209-765-5029, millsjunem@sbcglobal.net

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.