



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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California's poorest households pay the largest share of income in state and local taxes

Even with income increasingly concentrated among the very wealthy, lowest-income households pay a greater share than highest-income Californians

SACRAMENTO - A new report released in advance of Tax Day - April 15 - by the California Budget Project (CBP) shows that the state's lowest-income households pay a disproportionate share of their incomes in state and local taxes - especially compared to the wealthiest households.

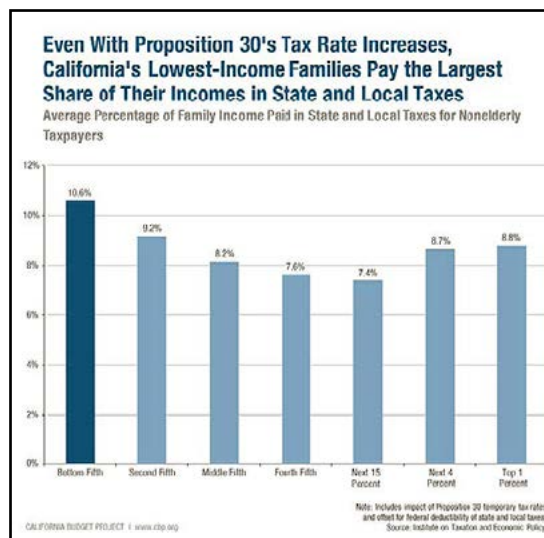
Who Pays Taxes in California shows that nonelderly California households in the bottom fifth of the state in terms of income - who earn an average of **\$13,000 a year** - pay an **estimated 10.6 percent** of their incomes in state and local taxes. This is a greater share than is paid by any other segment of the state's households and is also notably higher than the share for the state's wealthiest residents. The top 1 percent in California, with an average income of **\$1.6 million a year**, pay an **estimated 8.8 percent** of their incomes on state and local taxes - or **nearly two full percentage points less than the poorest Californians**.

These figures account for the tax increases implemented by Proposition 30 of 2012, which were largely targeted to the wealthiest residents. These data were provided by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy.

"Having California's wealthiest contribute a smaller share of income than the poorest is a case of upside-down tax policy," said Chris Hoene, CBP executive director. "Our state needs a tax system that raises revenues fairly and effectively - and this means making sure that families contribute based on their ability to pay."

The CBP's new report also indicates that:

- California's poorest households are paying the most in state and local taxes even as income is increasingly concentrated at the very top. Between 1987 and 2011 (the most recent year for which data are available), the average annual income of California's top 1 percent increased by more than 75 percent, after adjusting for inflation, even while the bottom four-fifths of Californians had a decline in average income. As a result, the share of income going to the top 1 percent grew by more than half between 1987 and 2011 - going from 13 percent to 21 percent.
- Targeted state policies could create a fairer tax system and foster greater economic security for California's low-income families. State policymakers could take specific steps to provide a financial boost to low-income families and ensure that contributions to state and local taxes better reflect individuals' and families' ability to pay. For example:
- State policies could better target existing tax credits to low-income households by making credits that could especially benefit them (e.g., the Child and Dependent Care Expenses Credit) refundable, meaning they could be claimed even if their incomes are so low that they don't owe income tax.
- California could create a state earned income tax credit (EITC) that extends the federal EITC already in place, thereby



providing a financial boost for eligible low-income workers and their families.

"With the right kinds of policies, California can choose to have a tax system that truly reflects the underlying economic reality and is part of a broader effort to help families climb the income ladder," Hoene said.

Who Pays Taxes in California is available online at the CBP's website, www.cbpp.org. Contact: Steven Bliss: (916) 444-0500, ext. 208 M; (415) 271-8180; sbliss@cbpp.org.

The California Budget Project (CBP) engages in independent fiscal and policy analysis and public education with the goal of improving public policies affecting the economic and social well-being of low- and middle-income Californians. Support for the CBP comes from foundation grants, subscriptions, and individual contributions. Please visit the CBP's website at www.cbpp.org.

The Solar-Powered Pump system that could bring clean water to the 800 million people without it

By BRANDON BAKER, EcoWatch

Reposted with permission from EcoWatch

An Austrian company hopes to play a large role in ending the water crisis with a technology powered by renewable energy.

Pumpmakers created the NSP Solar Pump system with hopes of bringing clean and safe drinking water to the nearly 800 million people around the world without it. The United Nations estimates that 6 to 8 million people die each year from water-related diseases. That's equal to about 10,000 deaths per day, with most under age 5.

"There are two main obstacles faced by the communities in this crisis—either communities have no access to clean drinking water at all or they have to rely on water pump systems that require a lot of maintenance, which in many cases is simply not available locally," Dr. Birgit Stuck, field researcher for Pumpmakers, said in a promotional video.

Pumpmakers' inexpensive system incurs no running costs while using solar energy to pump water from as deep as 300 feet, even on cloudy days. The company, which began working on the project in 2011, used "maintenance-free" materials to make it easy

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32nd Annual Peace Camp June 27, 28, and 29, 2014

Camp Peaceful Pines
near Pinecrest, California



Registration Form

Early Registration Deadline: **June 1, 2014**

Adults (age 19 and older)

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

Total x \$80 \$ _____

Youth (ages 4 -18)

1. _____ Age _____ 2. _____ Age _____
3. _____ Age _____ 4. _____ Age _____

Total x \$60 \$ _____

Child (ages 3 & under FREE)

1. _____ Age _____ 2. _____ Age _____

Early registration by June 1: subtract \$10 per person = \$ _____

Voluntary Donation to provide a camper scholarship = \$ _____

GRAND TOTAL = \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353-0134

There is an additional \$15 fee for each person coming to camp without a pre-registration.

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

☐ I need vegetarian meals.

☐ I have a special need for a cabin assignment: _____

☐ I can offer a ride Friday/Saturday. ☐ I need a ride Friday/Saturday

Parent authorization for minor children (must be signed if applicable)

I give permission for decisions to be made in my absence about the need for medical care. I give permission for my child to be treated by a physician or hospital in case of an emergency. I understand and agree that the Modesto Peace/Life Center is not responsible for my child/children. I will not hold the Modesto Peace/Life Center, its officers or leaders liable for medical aid rendered.

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

Note: If adults bring children not their own, the parent/legal guardian of those children must complete and sign a separate parent authorization.

For camp information and scholarship availability:

Call Ken Schroeder, (209) 569-0321.

Have a great time at Peace Camp!

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

Come to Peace Camp in the Sierra, June 27-29 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108. We 'll have workshops, hikes, campfires, singing, talent show, children's activities, crafts, recreation, fresh air in a mountain setting, and stimulating people of all ages.

Julia Stephens of the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC) will lead a workshop on the **state of the Sierra**. **Scott Gifford** returns to lead us in singing, give a performance for the children and give a workshop for ukulele. **Tim Smart** will guide us through the night sky on a star walk. **Rob Brittain** will lead teen activities.

Guadalupe Martinez's workshop on environmental justice will not take place. Lupe has to be in Washington for work at that time. A replacement workshop will be scheduled.

Friday offers a long hike with hikers carpooling from Modesto early in the morning, spending the day hiking and arriving at camp in time for dinner. Hike leaders are **John Lucas** and **Mike Chiavetta**. Short hikes will also be available over the weekend.

At the 6,200-foot elevation in the Stanislaus National Forest near the Clark Fork of the Stanislaus River, Camp Peaceful Pines is a beautiful setting for Peace Camp. Camp Peaceful Pines features kitchen and bathroom facilities, rustic cabins and platform tents and a cabin for those with special needs. Depending on the number of campers, cabins may be shared. Campers share in meal preparation, cleanup, and other work. Families and individuals are welcome.

The \$80 fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Young people 18 and under are \$60. Ages 3 and under free. Minors need to be accompanied by an adult. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Campers may arrive after 2:00pm on Friday. The camp opens with supper at 6:00pm on Friday and closes after the morning workshop on Sunday. Directions and other information will be provided to participants before camp.

Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-569-0321, kschroeder70@yahoo.com

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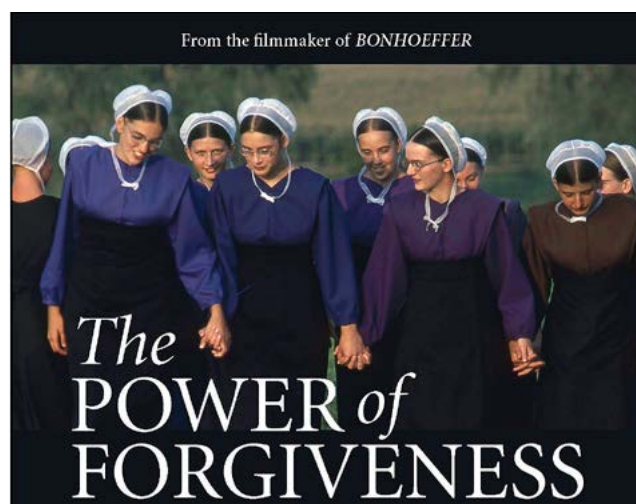
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209-529-5750.

Film Night June 18: *The Power of Forgiveness*



Visit <http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com>

On the third Wednesday, June 18th, Film Night will present *The Power of Forgiveness*, which explores the last 20 years of research that reveals how forgiveness can transform a person's life.

From Northern Ireland to Ground Zero to the Amish countryside, the film features Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh, best selling authors Thomas Moore and Marianne Williamson, and others.

The film also explores the role forgiveness holds in various faiths traditions. It provides an honest look at the intensity of anger and grief that human nature is heir to. We see in the film that there are transgressions people find themselves unwilling or unable to forgive. Through character-driven stories the film shows the role forgiveness can play in alleviating anger and grief and the physical, mental and spiritual benefits that come with it.

A discussion will follow. Mark your calendar now!

International Delegation on Indigenous Rights finds substantial progress and serious challenges

From Nicanet

[Ed. note: The Modesto Peace/Life Center's own Shelly Scribner was a member of this delegation. She represented the Modesto, California-Somoto, Nicaragua Sister City Project.]

Executive Summary

A delegation from the Nicaragua Network based in the United States and with 35 years in solidarity with Nicaragua, from March 16 to 25, visited the indigenous territories of the North Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAN) of Nicaragua to investigate the situation of the rights of the indigenous to their own land and resources and to health care and education.

Under the current government, Nicaragua has advanced more than any other country in the recognition of the rights of the indigenous to their land. Four of the five stages of demarcation and titling of indigenous lands in the RAAN under Law 445 have been completed. The fifth state, the legal removal of illegal colonizers from titled indigenous land and the prevention of further land invasions has barely begun. One of the principal goals of the delegation was to learn about the threat these invaders presented to the UNESCO-recognized Bosawas Biosphere Nature Reserve, which is defended by the indigenous Mayangna.

The treasurer of the Mayangna Tuahka Indigenous Territorial Government, Roberto Johnny, told the group from the Nicaragua Network, "We have so many problems with the advance of the agricultural frontier, but when we present our complaints to the government in Managua, they have no answer."

The group saw as positive the process used by the Indigenous Territorial Government of the Mayangna Sauni As who, with an order from the judge and a team from the National Police and the Ecological Battalion of the Army, captured and jailed several men who were selling land illegally, but this needs to happen more often. There are not enough Ecological Battalions in the Army to protect the Bosawas Reserve and the resources of the indigenous from these invaders.



The indigenous leaders protested the environmental degradation of their lands noting that the Bosawas was especially threatened. The leaders told the group that by clearing these forests, the invaders were destroying the lungs of Central America. They also stated that many rivers were polluted by chemicals from gold mining.

The delegation saw another problem: In many communities there was a health center but there was no money to pay the nurse and no medicine. And there was no way to transport seriously ill patients to the closest hospital. At the same time that modern medicines are lacking, the knowledge of traditional natural medicines is being lost because of the lack of policies to promote the continued development of that medicine.

In the case of bilingual, intercultural education, the delegation noted that it functioned well in several communities that they visited although community residents said that the textbooks needed to be brought up to date. The government now provides Saturday high school classes for the indigenous communities. While seeing this as positive, the communities are anxious to have secondary schools with classes every day in order to properly educate their youth.

In summary, delegation members found that all of the positive work of the demarcation and titling under Law 445 is being threatened by the invasion of colonizers from other parts of Nicaragua and they reiterated the petition of the Indigenous Territorial Governments that the central government invest more resources in resolving this problem.

To read the complete report, visit <http://www.nicanet.org/images/report-march-2014-delegation.pdf>

Sudden descent into homelessness

By JOSH ESTEVES

Many people live unaware that they are on verge of homelessness. It is easy to think that only those in poverty need to worry. However, a large portion of the population lives paycheck to paycheck and struggle to make ends meet. How long could you last if you lost your primary source of income? For Brenda, it was seven months.

Brenda didn't focus on a career and chose to raise her family instead. Her husband worked while she stayed home with their kids. They didn't have a lot, but they got by. Her kids grew into adults and life was progressing as planned when the unexpected happened. Brenda's husband died. In her forties with no job history and suffering from the grief of losing her husband, Brenda struggled to get by. She sought help from the usual programs. Without small kids at home or any income to prove she could take care of herself, she didn't qualify. She slipped through the cracks. She lost her home, and has been homeless since.

According to the HUD Point-In-Time Homeless Count, Stanislaus County had a homeless population of 1434 in 2011. At less than half of one percent of the population that may not seem too bad. However, Brenda's story shows us how easy it is for someone living near or even just above the poverty line to become homeless. In a county where roughly one in five residents lives below the poverty level, we must remain vigilant to ensure that thousands more don't end up homeless.

There are several local organizations that aid the homeless in Stanislaus County. **Family Promise** helps homeless families with children and can be reached at: (209) 549-9454. **Community Housing Shelter Services** can be contacted at: (209) 527-0444. There are two shelters for individual men and women, the **Modesto Salvation Army** (209) 523-7577, and the **Modesto Gospel Mission** (209) 529-8259. For aid with transitional housing you can contact the **Community Housing and Shelter of Stanislaus County** at: (209) 574-1151. **Turning Point** offers help for mentally disabled homeless individuals and can be reached at: (209) 529-8519.

To learn more about Brenda and to see the video of her story go to: <http://vimeo.com/96059598>



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Eggshells & Beer

By JENIFER WEST

Sounds like a hangover cure, or some newfangled recipe for clarifying (and fortifying!) chicken stock, but, as most gardeners will probably know, they're actually a weapons of war.

The war on snails & slugs, that is.

Last winter, due to these nefarious nocturnal visitors, we had virtually no garden. It was hard not to envy a friend whose lovely garden featured every delectable edible that I'd planted in my own yard and watched sprout with great hope, only to find mown down practically the moment it poked up its tender green head. True, I *could* have donned a "headlamp" and gone on some after-hours sorties (I actually did, half-heartedly, a time or two), feeding the "spoils" to the ladies who inhabit our chicken pen, but, well, it was cold, and I'd been working all day... So the blasted little mollusks won that battle.

But, thanks to these weapons of slimy-creature destruction, they will *not* win the war!

We did consider turning "the girls" loose in the garden. While that would probably have had a serious impact on the slithery enemy, our feathered friends lack the ability to discern "good plants" from others, and they love tender seedlings, so the very plants we were trying to protect would most likely have become casualties anyway. That, and they aren't yet

on a first-name basis with the feline or canine members of our family, so it would have been more trouble than it was worth, all the way around.

After losing a few things to the enemy early this spring, I armed myself with a little knowledge (and an accumulation of shells from more than a few egg-based meals). Admittedly, I lost the first skirmish – didn't grind them finely enough, so the slippery little devils just glided a little more slowly over them, and on to the tender young seedlings. So we lost that battle, and the mollusks enjoyed the spoils of war: Tender and delicious pea, spinach, lettuce and pepper seedlings. Still, all was not lost – the bits of eggshells provide much-needed calcium to the soil.

The second time, however, a coffee grinder turned the tides. A fairly thick ring of finely ground eggshells around the leaf line of each seedling did the trick. Donning the afore-



mentioned headlamp (and looking ridiculous, it's true, but vanity is a small sacrifice to pay for victory), I crept out to the garden under cover of darkness. And watched with wicked delight, as a rather sizable slug attempted to cross the barrier. It turned to this side, and then that, then this again, attempting to get around the sharp bits of the prickly fortress. Finally, satisfied the barrier was effective, I snatched the slimy creature up and tossed it into a bucket with the others as a treat for our chicken friends. It was still necessary to venture out several nights in a row, headlight affixed, and scoop up quite a few of the little commandos heading out on their nocturnal raids. (And remains so occasionally, until new seedlings are estab-



lished, or if there is damage in a particular area.)

Several days (and nights) on, and even after a rainstorm, the damage was still minimal.

However, one does not take chances when waging war, so the next weapon to be deployed was beer. Beer traps, to be exact. The idea of collecting the bodies of slimy mollusks that had died in a drunken stupor didn't do a thing for me, which is why I went the eggshell route first. However, the inevitable time came when, after broadcast seeding lettuce and carrots, the eggshell method simply became impractical.

Beer traps to the rescue!

A few shallow jars, 2/3 full of beer and sunken into the planter boxes, were the next weapons deployed. The idea is to lure the enemy with the irresistible aroma of the beer, then entrap them in the jars, out of which they'd be unable to slither. (It felt a bit like sending lovely young things, bearing gifts of whiskey and gin, to "visit" the other side, but I digress...) The beer traps were effective, although somewhat less so than the eggshell barriers. But still worth doing, as we have tiny lettuce and carrot seedlings starting to make their way into the world.

And there are other tactics one can use in the never-ending war on snails and slugs. Watering early in the day, for example, gives the soil surface time to dry out, making it more difficult for the slimy critters to maneuver to your prized lettuce at night. Another trick is surrounding things the mollusks particularly enjoy with things they don't. Not 100% effective (particularly if not planted thickly enough), but at least we actually got to enjoy a few heads of lettuce this spring, grown in a fortress of onions.

And so it is, with weapons of eggshells and beer, plus a few tactical maneuvers, that we've won the battles with the mollusks – and, as the fruits of our garden evidence, so far at least, we're holding our own in the war.

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Modesto Chapter
Parents, Families, and
Friends of Lesbians
and Gays

Water pump

from page 1

to construct and use.

While the solar pumps have been providing clean water for the people of Ndzofoine, a remote village in Mozambique, since 2012, Pumpmakers now envisions people and other companies strengthening their own local economies by providing the systems to their communities. Most of the components for the pump can be manufactured locally. Once Pumpmakers latest round of crowdfunding is complete, the company will be able to offer some of the hard-to-find components on its website, like the gear unit.

About 800 people in Ndzofoine get clean water from the pump with a capacity of up to 5,000 liters that are pumped from a depth of 262 feet each day.

"Our goal is to establish www.Pumpmakers.com as the platform that connects local pumpmakers with underserved communities and with organizations such as NGOs and private supporters," according to the company video.



"With the power of the crowd, we can create a meaningful tool to prevent the shortages of water and poverty worldwide."

<http://ecowatch.com/2014/05/20/solar-pump-clean-water/>

Palm Oil, Deforestation, and the Fast Food Industry: Would you like a side of forests with that?

By Calen May-Tobin, policy analyst, Tropical Forest and Climate Initiative, Union of Concerned Scientists

I travel a lot for my job and after long days on the road the one thing that gets me through is constancy. I pack basically the same clothes for every trip and try to keep up the same workout routine, but the one place it's hard to keep things constant is in what I eat. While trying new foods is part of the adventure of travel, sometimes when I'm hot and tired from a few days or weeks in a country thousands of miles from home all I want is something familiar. At times like that, I turn to American fast food and take comfort in McDonald's golden arches, the cooling taste of a Coke ICEE from Burger King, or the morning rush of a frosted doughnut and sugar-spiked

iced coffee from Dunkin' Donuts. These aren't my proudest moments, but for all of the criticisms of fast food, the comfort of constancy is its major strength. Whether I'm in



Kuala Lumpur or Kansas City, Auckland or Austin, I can step through those doors and taste a little piece of home.

Unfortunately, while fast food might mean home to me, for the countless plant and animal species that call the rainforest their home and for our global climate, major fast food companies are anything but comforting. **That's because many of their ingredients, including beef and palm oil, are driving deforestation throughout the tropics.**

Of forests and fries

The fast food industry is no stranger to deforestation. I remember in high school back in the 90s hearing about beef in fast food hamburgers destroying the Amazon. While the fast food/beef connection has been publicized for years, it's only recently that attention has been drawn to these companies'

demand for palm oil and the deforestation it causes. In our report *Donuts, Deodorant, Deforestation*, UCS was one of the first groups to highlight how little the fast food sector as a whole has done to address palm-driven deforestation. Of the ten companies we scored, only four had palm oil commitments, and of those only two, McDonald's and Subway, had strong enough policies to receive scores.

Since the release of the scorecard we have seen a wave of companies in the packaged food and personal care sectors release or update their palm oil commitments, but no new commitments from any fast food companies. However, due to pressure from groups like UCS and individual consumers, two companies, McDonald's and Dunkin' Brands, seem poised to strengthen their commitments. They just need a little push.

Big Mac attack

McDonald's scored a whopping (big mac-ing?) 21 points out of 100, falling well short of what could be considered a "strong commitment." Since then, McDonald's released its annual sustainability report, which highlights its commitment that by 2020 100% of its palm oil purchases will be Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) certified. As I've pointed out a number of times on this blog, while RSPO palm oil is better than business as usual, it still leaves a lot of forests and peatlands unprotected. Further, most companies making deforestation-free commitments are pledging to do so by 2015, so McDonald's commitment isn't just weak, it's also five years late. McDonald's was the target of a Greenpeace campaign a number of years ago about soy-driven deforestation in Brazil, so it is no stranger to the issue of tropical deforestation. But so far the company has seemed reluctant to go beyond the RSPO and address all palm-driven deforestation in their supply chain.

America runs on Dunkin', not deforestation

Dunkin' Donuts has also committed to source 100% RSPO palm by 2020, but its parent company Dunkin' Brands has no policy to cover its other brand, Baskin-Robbins. Dunkin' Donuts, further, currently supports a "moratorium on palm expansion in rainforests and peatlands." While this nominally recognizes the importance of these ecosystems, it makes no permanent commitment to their protection. Dunkin' Brands



leadership is already well aware of the palm oil issue, and they seem poised to release a stronger policy, but that is by no means a sure bet.

Taking action

Thousands of UCS supporters have already weighed in to let companies like McDonald's and Dunkin' Brands know that they expect more out of their favorite brands. Earlier this month, activists held a demonstration outside of the Dunkin' Brands annual shareholding meeting demanding that it adopt a strong palm purchasing policy. In addition, over a hundred thousand e-mails and letters have been sent to both Dunkin' and McDonald's leadership and management. But with McDonald's annual shareholder meeting taking place May 22 and Dunkin' higher-ups working on a policy, both companies need to continue to hear from consumers.

So whether you're grabbing a Dunkin' donut before your flight, a Big Mac on a long road trip, or just a cup of coffee on the way to work, take a second to send these companies a message letting them know that you do not want a side of forests with your meal.

For more information about how the fast food sector performed visit www.ucsusa.org/palmoilscorecard

Calen May-Tobin is a lead analyst with the Tropical Forest and Climate Initiative and conducts research on palm-related deforestation and how to reduce the land-use carbon footprint of the palm oil industry. He holds a Master's degree in ecology from the University of California, Irvine. See Calen's full bio at <http://www.ucsusa.org/about/staff/staff/calen-may-tobin.html>

From: <http://blog.ucsusa.org/palm-oil-deforestation-and-the-fast-food-industry-would-you-like-a-side-of-forests-with-that-543>



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The Post-Constitutional Era

By CHRIS HEDGES

The U.S. Supreme Court decision to refuse to hear our case concerning Section 1021(b)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which permits the military to seize U.S. citizens and hold them indefinitely in military detention centers without due process, means that this provision will continue to be law. It means the nation has entered a post-constitutional era. It means that extraordinary rendition of U.S. citizens on U.S. soil by our government is legal. It means that the courts, like the legislative and executive branches of government, exclusively serve corporate power—one of the core definitions of fascism. It means that the internal mechanisms of state are so corrupted and subservient to corporate power that there is no hope of reform or protection for citizens under our most basic constitutional rights. It means that the consent of the governed—a poll by OpenCongress.com showed that this provision had a 98 percent disapproval rating—is a cruel joke. And it means that if we do not rapidly build militant mass movements to overthrow corporate tyranny, including breaking the back of the two-party duopoly that is the mask of corporate power, we will lose our liberty.

“In declining to hear the case *Hedges v. Obama* and declining to review the NDAA, the Supreme Court has turned its back on precedent dating back to the Civil War era that holds that the military cannot police the streets of America,” said attorney Carl Mayer, who along with Bruce Afran devoted countless unpaid hours to the suit. “This is a major blow to civil liberties. It gives the green light to the military to detain people without trial or counsel in military installations, including secret installations abroad. There is little left of judicial review of presidential action during wartime.”

Afran, Mayer and I brought the case to the U.S. Southern District Court of New York in January 2012. I was later joined by co-plaintiffs Noam Chomsky, Daniel Ellsberg, journalist [Alexa O’Brien](#), RevolutionTruth founder [Tangerine Bolen](#), Icelandic parliamentarian [Birgitta Jonsdottir](#) and Occupy London activist [Kai Wargalla](#).

Later in 2012 U.S. District Judge Katherine B. Forrest declared Section 1021(b)(2) unconstitutional. The Obama administration not only appealed—we expected it to appeal—but demanded that the law be immediately put back into effect until the appeal was heard. Forrest, displaying the same judicial courage she showed with her ruling, refused to do this.

The government swiftly went to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit. It asked, in the name of national security, that the court stay the district court’s injunction until the government’s appeal could be heard. The 2nd Circuit agreed. The law went back on the books. My lawyers and I surmised that this was because the administration was already using the law to detain U.S. citizens in black sites, most likely dual citizens with roots in countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia and Yemen. The administration would have been in contempt of court if Forrest’s ruling was allowed to stand while the federal authorities detained U.S. citizens under the statute. Government attorneys, when asked by Judge Forrest, refused to say whether or not the government was already

using the law, buttressing our suspicion that it was in use.

The 2nd Circuit overturned Forrest’s ruling last July in a decision that did not force it to rule on the actual constitutionality of Section 1021(b)(2). It cited the Supreme Court ruling in *Clapper v. Amnesty International*, another case in which I was one of the plaintiffs, to say that I had no standing, or right, to bring the NDAA case to court. *Clapper v. Amnesty International* challenged the secret wiretapping of U.S. citizens under the FISA Amendments Act of 2008. The Supreme Court had ruled in *Clapper* that our concern about government surveillance was “speculation.” It said we were required to prove to the court that the FISA Act would be used to monitor those we interviewed. The court knew, of course, that the government does not disclose whom it is monitoring. It knew we could never offer proof. The leaks by Edward Snowden, which came out after the Supreme Court ruling, showed that the government was monitoring us all, along

“This is a major blow to civil liberties. It gives the green light to the military to detain people without trial or counsel in military installations, including secret installations abroad. There is little left of judicial review of presidential action during wartime.”

with those we interviewed. The 2nd Circuit used the spurious Supreme Court ruling to make its own spurious ruling. It said that because we could not show that the indefinite-detention law was about to be used against us, just as we could not prove government monitoring of our communications, we could not challenge the law. It was a dirty game of judicial avoidance on two egregious violations of the Constitution.

In refusing to hear our lawsuit the courts have overturned nearly 150 years of case law that repeatedly holds that the military has no jurisdiction over civilians. Now, a U.S. citizen charged by the government with “substantially supporting” al-Qaida, the Taliban or those in the nebulous category of “associated forces”—some of the language of Section 1021(b)(2)—is lawfully subject to extraordinary rendition on U.S. soil. And those seized and placed in military jails can be kept there until “the end of hostilities.”

Judge Forrest, in her 112-page ruling against the section, noted that under this provision of the NDAA whole categories of Americans could be subject to seizure by the military. These might include Muslims, activists, Black Bloc members and any other Americans labeled as domestic terrorists by the state. Forrest wrote that Section 1021(b)(2) echoed the 1944 Supreme Court ruling in *Korematsu v. United States*, which supported the government’s use of the military to detain 110,000 Japanese-Americans in internment camps without due process during World War II.

Of the refusal to hear our lawsuit, Afran said, “The

Supreme Court has left in place a statute that further erodes basic respect for constitutional liberties, that weakens free speech and will chill the willingness of Americans to exercise their 1st Amendment rights, already in severe decline in this country.”

The goals of corporate capitalism are increasingly indistinguishable from the goals of the state. The political and economic systems are subservient to corporate profit. Debate between conventional liberals and conservatives has been replaced by empty political theater and spectacle. Corporations, no matter which politicians are in office, loot the Treasury, escape taxation, push down wages, break unions, dismantle civil society, gut regulation and legal oversight, control information, prosecute endless war and dismantle public institutions and programs that include schools, welfare and Social Security. And elected officials, enriched through our form of legalized corporate bribery, have no intention of halting the process.

The government, by ignoring the rights and needs of ordinary citizens, is jeopardizing its legitimacy. This is dangerous. When a citizenry no longer feels that it can find justice within the organs of power, when it feels that the organs of power are the enemies of freedom and economic advancement, it makes war on those organs. Those of us who are condemned as radicals, idealists and dreamers call for basic reforms that, if enacted, will make peaceful reform possible. But corporate capitalists, now unchecked by state power and dismissive of the popular will, do not see the fires they are igniting. The Supreme Court ruling on our challenge is one more signpost on the road to dystopia.

It is capitalism, not government, that is the problem. The fusion of corporate and state power means that government is broken. It is little more than a protection racket for Wall Street. And it is our job to wrest government back. This will come only through the building of mass movements.

“It is futile to be ‘anti-Fascist’ while attempting to preserve capitalism,” George Orwell wrote. “Fascism after all is only a development of capitalism, and the mildest democracy, so-called, is liable to turn into Fascism.”

Our corporate masters will not of their own volition curb their appetite for profits. Human misery and the deadly assault on the ecosystem are good for business. These masters have set in place laws that, when we rise up—and they expect us to rise up—will permit the state to herd us like sheep into military detention camps. Section 1021(b)(2) is but one piece of the legal tyranny now in place to ensure total corporate control. The corporate state also oversees the most pervasive security and surveillance apparatus in human history. It can order the assassination of U.S. citizens. It has abolished habeas corpus. It uses secret evidence to imprison dissidents, such as the Palestinian academic Mazen Al-Najjar. It employs the Espionage Act to criminalize those who expose abuses of power. A ruling elite that accrues for itself this kind of total power, history has shown, eventually uses it.

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Random Acts of Outrage

By JOHN MCCUTCHEON

As a Georgia resident I watched with particular interest as House Bill 60, dubbed the “Guns Everywhere Act” made it’s way through the state legislature. During the signing ceremony, Governor Deal said, “The 2nd Amendment should be in the forefront of our minds.” Armed with that admonition (no pun intended!) I asked five different self-described “constitutionalists” if they could recite the 2nd Amendment. After all, it is the shortest one, a single sentence long. Not one person could. So, for the pleasure of the reading audience, here it is:

A well-regulated Militia, being necessary for the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.

Back when I was in grade school we spent what seemed like eternities diagramming sentences. I actually got to be pretty good. But I’ll be darned if I could tackle this one. And besides grammar, there’s intent! Historically, there are lots of problems in translating the Founders’ intent into today’s world. Many historians claim the “well-regulated Militia” reflected the Founders aversion to creating a standing army, one that



would have to be paid, housed, and fed during peacetime and in war. The War of 1812 kinda took care of that. (Oh say, can you see?) And I doubt they had any idea, back in the day of muskets and squirrel rifles, how many rounds one could squeeze off in 2014. Nor did they imagine that “Arms” could

range from handguns to thermonuclear devices. I doubt anyone would advocate that the Amendment covers nukes, but where is the line? It has to be enumerated somewhere and does that limitation amount to “infringement?” And what about the “well-regulated” element? It’s a rabbit hole, a tar baby, and an enigma all wrapped into one giant

litigious mess. Arguing it is a fool’s errand, but there seem to be plenty willing to jump in.

But back to Georgia. Here are a few salient features of HB 60 that bear consideration:

- Guns can now be carried into any government building, including courthouses, that lacks security guards or scanning equipment at the door. Except the State Capitol, where this bill was birthed. Lots of security there.
- Guns can now be brought into churches unless specifically banned. A new twist on “God forbid!” Or Prince of Piece.
- Guns can now be brought into airports. Airports.

- Guns can be brought into bars. Firearms and alcohol... what could possibly go wrong?
- Convicted felons can use firearms to defend themselves under Georgia’s “Stand Your Ground” law. Will there be questions asked as to how a convicted felon happened to have a gun in the first place?
- While you must have a permit to carry a concealed weapon it is illegal for a police officer to ask to see the permit unless you are caught in an illegal act. Kinda late?
- And, just to make sure all those hunters and sportsmen don’t feel left out of all this 2nd Amendment stuff, it is now legal to use silencers on hunting rifles. Yes, you read that right: silencers on hunting rifles.

Unless and until gun owners and sportsmen who understand that sensible regulation of firearms is not tantamount to the government taking your guns away from you step up and speak out, then only the crazies will dominate the debate. (NOTE: the government is not going to take your guns away from you... it ain’t gonna happen.) If there were as much interest in preventing the next horrific attack as there is in simply muddying the waters with indignant, paranoid fantasies, we’d make at least a little progress. But maybe that’s too much to ask. In the meantime, don’t text in the movies, don’t play your music too loud, don’t go out for Skittles wearing a hoody, and I’d pretty much steer clear of bars in Georgia. Don’t want to get “infringed,” if you know what I mean.

Violence Policy Center Backgrounder on Pistols Used in Isla Vista Shooting

From the Violence Policy Center

WASHINGTON - May 27 - The killer in the Isla Vista shooting on May 23, 2014 owned three 9mm semiautomatic handguns, including two Sig Sauer P226 pistols and one Glock 34 pistol. Semiautomatic weapons are the type of firearm most commonly used in mass shootings.

Below are important facts about the pistols used in the Isla Vista shooting, the manufacturers who made them, and the financial links between these two manufacturers and the National Rifle Association. Experts from the Violence Policy Center (VPC) are available if reporters need additional information.

Josh Sugarmann, executive director of the Violence Policy Center, states: “The tragedy in Isla Vista is just the latest example of the human price paid on a daily basis for an unregulated gun industry that has embraced ever-increasing lethality as the way to make a profit. The gun industry is marketing weapons originally designed for military and law enforcement to the civilian population. Its financial beneficiaries in the NRA then fight to stop any and all effective gun violence prevention policies. The rest of us are caught in the crossfire when these weapons are used in mass shootings.”

Key facts on the guns used in Isla Vista:

The Austrian Glock 34 pistol has an extended barrel for greater accuracy. Glock pistols are frequently used by mass shooters, as explained in this 2011 VPC backgrounder *The Glock Pistol: A Favorite of Mass Shooters*.

The gun industry is marketing weapons originally designed for military and law enforcement to the civilian population.

Elliot Rodger, the Isla Vista shooter, wrote in his manifesto: “I had already done some research on handguns, and I decided to purchase the Glock 34 semiautomatic pistol, an efficient and highly accurate weapon. I signed all of the papers and was told that my pickup day was in mid-December.”

The shooter also owned two Swiss Sig Sauer P226 pistols. Rodger wrote that the Sig was “more efficient” than the Glock.

Both Sig Sauer and Glock are “Corporate Partners” of the National Rifle Association. As detailed in the VPC’s 2013 study *Blood Money II: How Gun Industry Dollars Fund the NRA*, since 2005, Glock has given between \$250,000 and \$499,999 to the NRA (the range is due to the giving levels defined within the NRA’s “Corporate Partners Program”).

Most recently, at the NRA’s annual meeting in April 2014, the NRA displayed a “big check” from Glock to the organization for \$50,000.

Sig Sauer is a “Contributing Sponsor” to the online “channel” of the NRA’s Life of Duty program, which targets

military and law enforcement. The company has contributed between \$25,000 and \$49,999 to the NRA.

Semiautomatic firearms are the type most commonly used in mass shootings. Semiautomatic pistols fire one round each time the trigger is pulled and automatically reload after each shot. The guns use detachable ammunition magazines that allow the shooter to quickly reload after emptying a magazine. The Isla Vista shooter used 10-round magazines — the highest capacity legally available in California. All three guns were purchased legally from California gun dealers.

Semiautomatic pistols were not widely available in the civilian market until the mid-1980s, when gun manufacturers began implementing a strategy to market militarized firearms to combat lagging sales. Until the late 1980s, revolvers were the most common handguns. For more details, see the 2011 VPC study *The Militarization of the U.S. Civilian Firearms Market*.

Rodger also wrote in his manifesto: “After I picked up the handgun, I brought it back to my room and felt a new sense of power. I was now armed. Who’s the alpha male now, b*****s?”

The Violence Policy Center is a national tax-exempt educational organization working for a safer America through research, investigation, analysis, and advocacy. The VPC provides information to policymakers, journalists, organizations, advocates, and the general public. Visit <http://www.vpc.org>

Modesto has Grand Prize Winner in the 88th Ina Coolbrith Poetry Contest

By RICHARD ANDERSON

April was National Poetry Month and the writers from the Modesto Branch of NLAPW were showered in awards in recent local, regional, state and national contests.

In the Biennial Letters Contest for 2014, Lynn M. Hansen received 3 first place awards for writing: 1st Place in the Normal E. and Marjorie J. Roller Award for her prose piece *Arribada*, 1st Place in the Marion Doyle Poetry Award for her poem *Sea of Grass, Remembering Margaret*, 1st Place in the Catherine Cushman Leach Poetry Award for her poem *Winter Ballerinas* and an Honorable Mention in the Helen Sutton Booth Memorial Poetry Award for her poem *Coso Petroglyphs* and an Honorable Mention in the Della Crowder Miller Poetry Award for her poem *Sea Lanterns*.

Cleo Griffith received a 2nd Place award in the Elizabeth M. Campbell Poetry Award for her poem *Sometimes in Daylight* and a 3rd Place award in the Catherine Cushman Leach Poetry Award for *Portrait of My Mother*.

Nancy Haskett received a 2nd Place award in the Helen Sutton Booth National Memorial Poetry Award for her poem *Shadows and Reflections*. Louise Kantro received a 3rd Place award in the Flash Fiction category for her prose piece *A Turn of Luck*.

Awards also rained down from state and regional contests as well. Lynn M. Hansen received the **GRAND PRIZE at the 88th Annual Ina Coolbrith Poets' Dinner** for her poem *Coso Petroglyphs* and an Honorable Mention for her poem



Winners (R-L) Cleo Griffith, Linda Gordon Sawyer, Lynn M. Hansen, Louise Kantro, Linda Marie Prather (ICC Poets' Dinner)

Conversacion de Sobremesa (Table Talk). In the same contest, Louise Kantro received a 1st Place award for her poem *Shattered Glass*, Linda Gordon Sawyer received a 2nd Place award for her poem *Drifting Through Spain*, Cleo Griffith received a 3rd Place award for her poem *The Forever Metaphor* and Linda Marie Prather received a 3rd Place award for her poem *Dry Creek, June 19, 2013*.

Awards received by Modesto Branch Pen Women in the California Federation of Chaparral Poets Annual Poetry Contest included Nancy Haskett who received a 1st Place

award for her poem *The Remains* and an Honorable Mention for her poem *At the Edge*, Linda Marie Prather received 1st Place for her poem *The First Time*, Lynn M. Hansen received a 2nd place award for her poem *Death Valley Celebration* and a 3rd Place for her poem *Card Game*, Roberta Bearden received a 2nd Place for her poem *Lightning*, Cleo Griffith received a 3rd Place for her poem *Radiant Orchid*, a 3rd Place for her poem *The lightest Feather* and Honorable Mention for her three poems *Dazzled*, *Symmetrophobia Says it All*, *Saturday Auction That Happens Whenever*, and Louise Kantro received and Honorable Mention for her poem *The Test*.

Turning to the Los Angeles Book Festival Competition, The Dragonfly Press publication, *THE CALL: AN ANTHOLOGY OF WOMEN'S WRITING*, edited by Modesto Pen Woman Calder Lowe won Runner-Up Status in the Anthology/ Compilation category and her collection of poetry and short stories *Holding the Light in Your Arms* published by Jacaranda Press won an Honorable Mention in the 2014 Los Angeles Book Festival Competition. At the same festival, Kathie Isaac-Luke's poetry collection *Chrysalides* was runner-up in the poetry category.

At the local level the following Modesto Pen Women were chosen for the 2014 Poets' Corner Awards sponsored by the City of Modesto: Lynn M. Hansen, Cleo Griffith, Louise Kantro, Roberta Bearden, Linda Marie Prather, and Nancy Haskett.

Congratulations to Modesto Chapter Pen Women.

[Ed. Note: Due to a printing error, the following poems were truncated in last month's *Stanislaus Connections*. They are reprinted here. Lynn Hansen's award winning essay, *Arribada* was also incomplete. To read her full essay go to p.4 of the May issue at <http://www.stanislausconnections.org/connections%20May14.pdf>

Shadows and Reflections

My mother's face and voice,
once as familiar
as my own signature
or the soothing sound of rain,
have become mere memories yellowed with age,
like lace and appliques on the gown
she sewed for my wedding,
dimmed like old photographs
no longer vibrant with color,
her aspects eluding me even as
I run my fingers down the surface
of an oil painting,
searching for the softness of her hand
that created it.

Today, in this year that divides
exactly
our thirty-two years together
from thirty-two years apart,
I look for traces of her in my own reflection,
catching a glimpse, sometimes,
in the gray of my hair,

the slight swell of my belly,
but more often seeing shadows of my father
in the set of my jaw
the turn of my mouth,
and I worry she is lost to me
until I find her again,
just for a moment

in my daughter's smile

— Nancy Haskett (Poem won 2nd place prize in the recent Pen Women Biennial Contest)

Stage Mother

My son made his debut in the post office today.
His feet tapping to some unknown musical command.
His body swaying, and bobbing and weaving a spell
around me
so magical I could see Fred Astaire, Bo Jangles, and
Gene Kelly merge into one kinetic blur. But lest I forget
the most important thing — that boy's pure, rat-a-tat-
tapping and razzmatazzing joy suffused me, overcame me,
moved me with all its jazz, and delivered me first-class,
signed, and certifiably sealed, straight to love's door,
where we are all treated to an encore performance.

— Calder Lowe (Published in a recent holiday anthology
entitled *SPIRIT, PEACE AND JOY* by the Pen Women
Press)

Garden Walk

for Colin

When we see one or two stars
inside the ice ring surrounding
the usually full moon, we both know
rain the next day or the day after
and invent just once more a countryside
that waits only for us.

It is from the one bad season of sky
coming in from another place, unknown
and resting here as fog, so that
I will imagine once again a simple hunger
for water and the straw old-lady-hat
you wore all that season, waiting
waiting for your second born,
watering the summer crocus
with all the proper schooling
and grace of a bird, a Great Blue Heron
or California Sandhill Crane, giving shade
as you walked the gravel path of our garden.

Now I have reached the half almond
woodpile in the almost dark, to cover
these ripened loaves from the coming rain.

Barefooted, two sons run ahead
scattering yellow muster-weed blossoms
with their sticks.

— Gordon Preston
The Missouri Review Vol. XI #2

This Valley

Through the valley's haze one sees
the smear of houses, the strip malls
clustered on the sides of 99, the mass
of traffic on the freeway, speeding
past this fertile earth, the soil and seed
now capped by concrete parking lots.
Small wonder that our children feed
on megaplex dreams, a feast of awesome
action heroes, serial killers and the casual
cruelty of ingenious machines. No wonder
that they seek miracles more complex
than the green weeds pushing through
small cracks in the sidewalk or the white
buds on the trees in the spring. Tilling
the earth, my Irish friend once said, is like
taking the sacrament, and when we work
the ground, turn the soil and ready the seed,
we slow our fall from grace.

Walking the Urban Trail

This early summer sun has browned
the native grasses, turned them pale yellow.
The seed pods sway in the wind on slender
stalks, and the green force is almost gone.
But there are secrets here that only a slow
eye can see: a ceanothus crouched among
the brown foxtails, a blue so piercing that
it almost blinds.

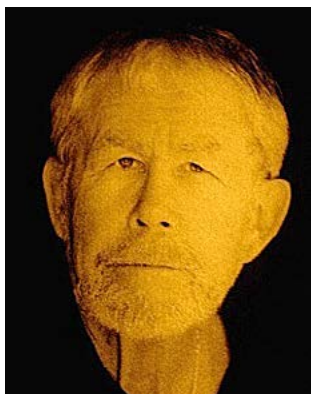
While I walk the trail, indifferent drivers
pass the wealth that lies beside the road.
Rushing, hurrying in their cars, they have
business to do, money to make, places to go.

Paul Neumann: On "the quiet life force of the valley"

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Paul Neumann, retired Modesto Junior College English professor, shares from his second book of poetry, *This Valley: New and Selected poems - 2003-2013*, an art that is "so subtle that [it] become[s] a kind of invisible glass though which the reader seems to be looking into the poet's innermost being...From Neumann's perspective, life flows from and through nature..." Bernard Morris.

Fellow Central Valley poet Lee Herrick says Neumann's poems, "are tender and wise, humble and celebratory" from the perspective of "a father, husband, son and friend who chronicles human



No time for black-eyes susans rising up from
the tawny grass, no time for the burst of lupine
spread like wine stains in the tangle. These
mysteries will never slow them.

Soter

In the green time, in spring,
in the valley, those who would
seek the savior will find Him
in the fields where the water
rushes in to soften the earth
and dark clods are disgorged
by the churning of the plow.
At rest from his work, the
farmer kneels in the furrows,
fingers the soil and knows
his land, knows there is no
miracle more sacred than
the rise of seeds through
the soil to the air, the growth
of green leaves on the trees,
the promise of blossoms, the
radiant mystery of the land
in deep bloom, random and wild.



relationships and a life well-lived in California's Central Valley and on its Central Coast."

Paul, who grew up on the Central Coast, has lived in Modesto for more than 40 years. He advocated for student success during his three terms as a Modesto City Schools trustee, and for "increasing the number of district students who complete vocational and academic programs," during his two terms as a Yosemite Junior College District trustee, twenty years in total.

"I have been writing hard for the past fifteen years", he says, and have "been called by a need to celebrate the life of the soil and the lives of the people who work the ground. Here in the valley the call is more subtle and demands more of us. That...has been the burden of the my work—to point the way, to celebrate what is so often hidden—the quiet life force of the valley."

Paul Neumann's book is available at Amazon and from the author at neumannpaul@hotmail.com

California Dreaming

Walking up the yellow hills in twilight,
tawny grasses rippling at the road edge,
I move through the last part of the valley
left to itself and not brought to ruin.
A few cows browsing on the sloping hills,
birdsong drifting in a scatter of oak trees,
field mice foraging in the fading light.
And why have I come here? Where else to turn
in this muddled California fantasy but to
Del Puerto canyon? The hawk sails in a thermal;
the snake stalks the field mouse and strikes.

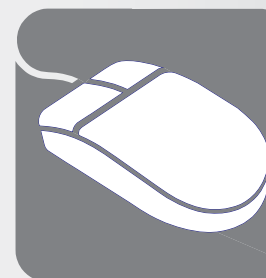
Below, the oven of a Central Valley summer,
heat rising off the asphalt, a stifling haze
that blurs I-5, McDonald's and the mega-station
where the drivers gas and use the rest room,
super-size a soda then hit the on-ramp.
They're hurrying toward the fantasy of Vegas,
the delusion of cruise ships or an air-conditioned
shopping mall, the intoxication of perm sites,
the drunken violence of a party crowd, the cruel
luxury of indolence and entitlement. Up here,
above Del Puerto, god light rests with the hawk.

Jack Tone Road

Driving through the last of this great valley,
I know that saving grace is in the soil, wet
clods of dense earth turned up by a tractor,
on farms which have been worked for generations,
family farms, we used to call them, before
high yields grew more alluring than husbandry.

There's a barn by the side of the road, crouched
in a field gone fallow, dusty brown planks now
weathered and worn, slumped over with age,
in a place where valley oaks once grew and now
give ground to parking lots and other pavement.
The barn survives in the seepage of tract homes.

Further on, near the city, the road widens and
the first strip mall materializes. Then another.
They say that the old are reluctant to change,
and perhaps so. I know only that now I turn north,
drive back up Jack Tone Road, unwilling to let go
Just yet.



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Green Tips for a Green Planet: To be a conservationist is to think of planet earth as a valuable work of art

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Being green, like most world views, is a state of mind. Consider the following food for thought **and action**:

The Online Etymology Dictionary lists Conservative and Conservationist under the same etymology:

conserve (v.) late 14c., from Old French *conserver* (9c.), from Latin *conservare* “to keep, preserve, keep intact, guard,” from *com-*, intensive prefix (see *com-*), + *servare* “keep watch, maintain” (see *observe*). Related: *Conserved*; *conserving*. As a noun (often *conserves*) from late 14c.

conservative (adj.) late 14c., *conservatyf*, from Middle French *conservatif*, from Late Latin *conservativus*, from Latin *conservatus*, past participle of *conservare* (see *conserve*).

Keeping in mind that these two words have the same roots, take a look at the following meanings of conservative and conserve from *The New Oxford American Dictionary*:

conservative

- noun: a person who **is** averse to change and holds to traditional values and attitudes, typically in relation to politics, religion
- adjective: holding to traditional attitudes and values and cautious about change or innovation, typically in relation to politics or religion

conserve

- verb: protect (something, esp. an environmentally or culturally important place or thing) from harm or destruction: *the funds raised will help conserve endangered meadows.*

- prevent the wasteful or harmful overuse of (a resource): *industry should conserve more water.*

Following these etymological and definition threads, being green would allow for a liberal world view:

Liberal: (adj.) open to new behavior or opinions and willing to discard traditional values:

- favorable to or respectful of individual rights and freedoms:
- (in a political context) favoring maximum individual liberty in political and social reform:

Ultimately the definitions above lead to the positive actions of the noun:

Conservation (noun)

- the act of conserving; prevention of injury, decay, waste, or loss; preservation: conservation of wildlife; conservation of human rights.
- official supervision of rivers, forests, and other natural resources in order to preserve and protect them through prudent management.
- a district, river, forest, etc., under such supervision.
- the careful utilization of a natural resource in order to prevent depletion.
- the restoration and preservation of works of art.

Green Tips conclusion: Consider planet earth a work of art, and pledge to incorporate conservationism into your daily world view.

Humanity Needs You To Join The Other 1%

From the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Less than one percent of the American population was actively involved in the women's and civil rights movements. Less than one percent of the global population was actively involved in movements that created a worldwide paradigm shift in human thinking, such as the movement to abolish state-sanctioned slavery.

But that one percent must be well-trained. They must be strategic and creative. Just as soldiers are given excellent training in waging war, citizens must be given excellent training in waging peace. Creating positive change in the world today is an extreme underdog struggle, so learning waging

peace skills is more important than ever before.

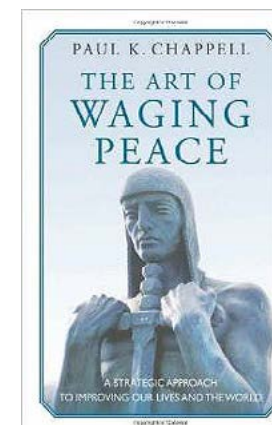
Opinion without action makes no impact, and positive change does not happen by itself. We must make it happen. Humanity needs you to join the other 1 percent. Focusing on Peace Leadership the form of leadership practiced by Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. this five-day course for educators, students, activists, and

concerned citizens will give you nonviolence training and practical life skills to wage peace in your personal life, your community, and around the world.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation offers a **five-day Peace Leadership Course** in Santa Barbara from July 20-26, 2014. Peace leadership skills are life skills, and this course empowers individuals to wage peace in their personal lives, community, and the world.

For the five-day course curriculum for testimonials, for a flier for the five-day NAPF Peace Leadership Summer Course, visit <http://www.wagingpeace.org/programs/peace-leadership/>

To apply for the five-day NAPF Peace Leadership Summer Course, visit <http://www.wagingpeace.org/programs/peace-leadership/courses/apply/>



Summer Solstice Celebration benefits Waldorf methods school

By LISA RENNER

Parents trying to start Modesto's first Waldorf methods charter school are presenting a Summer Solstice Celebration fundraiser Sunday June 22 in downtown Modesto.


The event runs from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Concetta Restaurant, 1205 J St., Modesto. Tickets are \$25 per person and include appetizers plus two drink tickets. The festivities include live music and a silent auction.

The event benefits Manzanita Charter School, a free public school that plans to open with two kindergartens, a first grade and a second grade in fall 2015 in Modesto. The school will add a grade each year until it reaches grade 8 and will be operated by the nonprofit Foundations Public Schools,

which runs the Waldorf methods Green Valley Charter School in Los Banos.

Waldorf education is based on the ideas of Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner. The approach emphasizes the use of the imagination, integrates practical, artistic and conceptual elements and educates the whole child – head (academics), heart (social responsibility) and hands (the arts). The first Waldorf school opened in 1919 in Germany and there are now 1,000 schools worldwide.

ACTION: For tickets and information, please see www.foundationpublicschools.org, email manzanitacharter@foundationpublicschools.org or call (209) 222-8439.



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What is really going on with Climate Change?

By JAMES COSTELLO

Many of you may have noticed the spate of letters to *The Modesto Bee* about climate change. One letter stated, "As of yet, there has been no cause and effect established that directly links greenhouse gases and the heating of the atmosphere."

This statement struck me as odd. Didn't we learn about the Greenhouse Effect many years ago in biology class? [46 years ago in my case.] Was it not the fact that carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases" trapped heat and warmed the planet?

I immediately turned to my constant companion, Mr. Google, and asked the question, "What is the link between climate change and CO2?"

Wouldn't you know it? The answer popped up instantly at <http://www.skepticalscience.com/empirical-evidence-for-co2-enhanced-greenhouse-effect-intermediate.htm>

As it turns out, the letter writer is NOT correct. There is not only definite scientific proof directly linking global warming to increased CO2, there are mountains of scientific evidence establishing that fact. The results are available at a very neat website

called "Skeptical Science." And yes, there is an App for that available from the iTunes store. I immediately downloaded it.

This marvelous website is entirely dedicated to presenting and explaining the non-political, non-partisan, non-socialistic,

non-conspiratorial scientific evidence for Climate Change and is run by (drumroll)... (wait for it), scientists! who are apparently not getting rich in running it. Skeptical Science explains:

The goal of Skeptical Science is to explain what peer-reviewed science has to say about global warming. When you peruse the many arguments of global warming skeptics, a pattern emerges. Skeptic arguments tend to focus on narrow pieces of the puzzle while neglecting the broader picture. For example, focus on Climategate emails neglects the full weight of scientific evidence for man-made global warming. Concentrating on a few growing glaciers ignores the world wide trend of accelerating glacier shrinkage. Claims of global cooling fail to realise the planet as a whole is still accumulating heat. This website presents the broader picture by explaining the peer reviewed scientific literature.

Often, the reason for disbelieving in man-made global warming seem to be political rather than scientific. E.g. - "it's all a liberal plot to spread socialism and destroy capitalism". As one person put it, "the cheerleaders for doing something about global warming seem to be largely the cheerleaders for many causes of which I disapprove". However, what is causing global warming is a purely scientific question. Skeptical Science removes the politics from the debate by concentrating solely on the science.

The science is concisely presented under three categories;

97 out of 100 climate experts agree humans are causing global warming



Doran et al 2009, Andersson et al 2010

<http://sks.to/consensus>

Basic, Intermediate, Advanced. In addition, there is a blog where questions about the research results are asked and answered. Finally, there is a comprehensive list of all the current myths proffered around the subject with answers to each of them.

Check out this "all you ever wanted to know" website about Climate Change.

Visit <http://www.skepticalscience.com>

Read *The Modesto Bee* letter(s) here: <http://www.modbee.com/2014/05/25/3356787/chris-shivley-climate-science.htm?sp=/99/1641/1646/#storylink=cpy>

Dennett Dam removal effort

From the Tuolumne River Trust

Dennett Dam no longer serves a function, and has been an in-stream partial barrier to fish passage for over 60 years. It has also been a navigation hazard to recreational boating through Modesto due to the powerful hydraulic forces associ-

ated with the concentrated overflow near the middle of the dam. This project will greatly improve safety for swimmers, boaters, and anglers who are currently at high risk near the dam, which has tragically been the site of three drowning deaths within the last five years, including two children.

Originally built in the 1930s to create a seasonal recreational lake, Dennett Dam partially failed during high flows within a decade of its completion. The Tuolumne River Trust's involvement has been not only building public, governmental and agency support for its removal, but also pursuing funding for the necessary planning, engineering, environmental studies, and construction necessary for removal. The Trust ultimately seeks to restore the river channel and enhance the surrounding landscape, resulting in a vastly improved native riparian habitat and recreational experience.

Complete removal of Dennett Dam would support extensive coordinated restoration efforts on the Tuolumne, which historically had the largest fall Chinook runs in the San Joaquin River system, by facilitating upstream access during the fall to prime salmon and steelhead spawning gravels between Basso Bridge and Old La Grange Dam (visible on our canoe trips), as well as downstream outmigration during spring high flows. Dam removal would also eliminate conditions conducive to native and non-native predator species that likely feed on outmigrating juvenile salmonids.

With the dam removed, Chinook salmon, steelhead, pacific lamprey, and river lamprey will have unimpeded access to

37 miles of upstream habitat. Central Valley steelhead is an anadromous fish listed under both the State and Federal Endangered Species Act, and Central Valley fall-run Chinook salmon and Pacific lamprey are anadromous species of concern or candidates for listing.

The dam is located just west of the 9th Street Bridge in Gateway Park (Modesto), which is part of the Tuolumne River Regional Park (TRRP). The Trust has supported development of TRRP and its associated trail system as part of the overall economic redevelopment of this Central Valley town. When completed the Tuolumne and Dry Creek trail system will stretch over 16 miles of scenic riverfront, providing Modesto with a fantastic amenity to its quality of life.

Removal would also complement efforts by the Tuolumne River Coalition to complete the Lower Tuolumne River Parkway, a mosaic of 25 park and habitat projects along the 52 miles of the Lower Tuolumne, and support development of a planned boat trail through this portion of the river.

To learn more about the Tuolumne River Trust's efforts to remove Dennett Dam, please contact the Tuolumne River Trust at (415) 882-7252 or (209) 236-0330.

Click here to view the Bay Area's KTVU coverage of this effort.

Click here to view an article in the Modesto Bee.

Visit <http://www.tuolumne.org/content/article.php/20100608124248155>

Stanislaus CONNECTIONS, published by the non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center, has promoted non-violent social change since 1971. Opinions expressed DO NOT necessarily reflect those of the Center or Editorial Committee. We welcome pertinent, signed articles, 800-1000 words or less, and letters with address, phone number. DEADLINE: 10th of the Month PRECEDING the next issue. Send articles and ads to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org. Submit PHOTOS as high-resolution JPEGs; ADS as PDF files.

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

ACTIONS FOR PEACE Sonora - Stockton

SONORA: Contact Alice at lewisalice090@gmail.com

PEACE AND JUSTICE NETWORK OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY (<http://www.pjnsjc.org>). Info: James Walsh, jwprod1956@clearwire.net

JUNE

June 2-7 and June 16-21: Modesto Sound's Summer 2014 Recording Arts Camp. Visit <http://www.modestosound.com>

June 9-13: Creation Station, the Gallo Center's summer camp for children. Visit <http://www.galloarts.org/Promos/WhatsNew01.aspx>

18 WED: "Film Night at the Center": *The Power of Forgiveness*, explores the last 20 years of research that reveals how forgiveness can transform a person's life. See article, page 3.

22 SUN: Summer Solstice Celebration benefit for Manzanita Charter School, a Waldorf school. 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Concetta Restaurant, 1205 J St., Modesto. Tickets: \$25 per person. Festivities include live music, silent auction. Tickets and information, see www.foundationspublicschools.org, email manzanitacharter@foundationspublicschools.org or (209) 222-8439.

24 TUES: Celebrating Mission: Stories about Palestine with United Methodist Missionary Liaison Janet Lahr Lewis. Stories about the work of churches and peacemakers in Palestine. 5:30 PM, soup and sandwiches. RSVP gwfearn@mac.com or 464-2246. 6 PM Fireside Room in Knoles Bldg., Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave. Stockton. Sponsored by Stockton Israel/Palestine Peace Group, 510-910-1586.

27-29 FRI-SUN: MPLC's Annual Peace Camp in the Sierras. See article, REGISTRATION form, on page 2.

27 FRI: Funstrummers: a morning of learning from, playing with and listening to Cali Rose and Craig Brandau. Workshop on Latin music with fingerpicking and strums for beginners and intermediates. Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto, CA. Price: \$20. Info: 209-505-3216;

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Sunday 10:00 am, Kaiser CDRP, 1789 W Yosemite Ave, Manteca. Support group for people living free of alcohol and drugs. Each person creates an individualized recovery program. We avoid discussion of religious or political opinions so our meetings can focus on sobriety skills. 526-4854, <http://goldendrippings.com/lifering/>

Weekly mindfulness meditation and dharma talk. 12:30-2:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <http://imcv.org/>

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Sunday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto.

MONDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Morning Mtg. Monday 7:00 am. Deva Cafe, 1202 J St, Modesto.

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Women's Mtg. Monday 6:30 pm, private home, 1905 Kienitz Ave, Modesto. Bonnie, 324-7095.

OCCUPY MODESTO: General Assembly meets every other Monday, 5:00 - 6:30 pm at Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St. All interested members of the 99% are welcome. Meetings: 2/17, 3/3, 3/17 etc. Info: Nancy, 545-1375.

TUESDAYS

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

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Tuesday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. 526-4854

Ukulele class/play-a-long led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in song-books provided. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver, Modesto. Donation accepted. Info: 505-3216. www.funstrummers.com

Weekly mindfulness meditation and dharma talk. 6:30-8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori for more information at 209-343-2748 or see <http://imcv.org/>

PFLAG Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays support group. 7 pm, 566-2468. First and third Tuesdays. Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto, <http://www.pflagmodesto.org>

PFLAG Merced, Second Tuesday, Merced United Methodist Church, 899 Yosemite Park Way, Merced. 7 pm. Info: 341-2122, <http://s444531532.onlinehome.us>

PFLAG Sonora/Mother Lode, third Tuesdays of January, April, July, and October, 6:30 to 8 pm, Tuolumne County Library Community Room, 480 Greenley Rd., Sonora, Info: 533-1665. Info@pflagsonora.org, www.pflagsonora.org

ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS, Every

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), (NOTE TIME), 5:00-6:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

MEDIA: Listen to local Valley Community Radio KQRP 104.9 FM, <http://www.kqrp.com>

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

MEDIA COMMITTEE of Peace Life Center. Meetings TBA. Call John Lucas, 527-7634.

CONNECTIONS EDITORIAL MEETINGS: Info: 537-7818, jcostello@igc.org

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

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

WEDNESDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Wednesday 6:30 pm, Reynolds Room, 1700 McHenry Village Way, Modesto. Back of McHenry Village across from the Memorial Health and Education Center. Meeting offering support for people in relationships with people wrestling with addiction.

Modesto Folk Dancers: All levels welcome. Raube Hall, Ceres (call for address), 578-5551.

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.

PFLAG Oakdale, third Wednesdays, Golden Oaks Conf. Room, Oak Valley Medical Bldg., 1425 West H St., Oakdale, 7 pm. Info: flagoakdale@dishmail.net

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: Stan, 549-7770, stanhopecunningham@yahoo.com or Anne, 521-6977.

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS GROUPS: 2nd Wed., 252 Magnolia, Manteca.

THURSDAYS

Latino Community Roundtable (LCR) meets on the second Thursday of each month at Noon at Bel Piatto Italian Cucina, 1000 Kansas Ave., Modesto, CA. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

CVAN (Central Valley Action Network) 3rd Thursday, 7-8:15 pm, Peace/Life Center 720 13th St. Contact: Jocelyn at jocelyncooper@gmail.com or 510-467-2877 or 209-312-9413

The Book Group, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 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>

NAACP. King-Kennedy Center, 601 S M.L. King Dr., Modesto, 7 pm, 3rd Thursdays. 549-1991.

ART GALLERY WALK, downtown Modesto, third Thurs., 5:30 to 8:30 pm. Info: <http://www.modesto-artwalk.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

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Friday 6:30 pm. Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. Every first Friday we alternate between a LifeRing & 12 Step speaker with a discussion following.

Funstrummer Ukulele Band every Friday, from 9:15 am until noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Info: 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. 7-9:30 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: 549-9155. Visit <http://motherlode.sierra-club.org/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

MUJERES LATINAS, last Friday, lunch meetings, Info: Cristina Villego, 549-1831.

HISPANIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, 1st & 3rd Fridays at 7:00 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Other meetings at Terrace Cafe, Double Tree Hotel. Info: Yamilet Valladolid, 523-2860.

SATURDAY

So Easy ~ So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabee potluck/meeting every third Saturday of the month, 11:30 AM- 1:30 PM. Info: Kathy or Chris, 209-529-5360; email kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com

SERRV: Saturdays, 10 - Noon and after church Sundays or by appointment. Call Mary, 522-6497 or 523-5178. Gifts from developing countries. Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland, Rm. #4, Modesto.

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. For up to date information, visit www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm