



Dispatches from the War Zone: A new book on homelessness in Fresno, California

By MIKE RHODES

Did the City of Fresno really use federal money intended to help the poor and bulldoze homeless shelters with it? Why was it necessary for a federal judge to order the city to stop violating homeless people's constitutional rights? And how many homeless people have died prematurely as a result of government officials' violent, corrupt and illegal conduct?

The publication of my new book in February 2016 is the culmination of more than a decade of reporting on the homeless issue in Fresno, mostly for the Community Alliance newspaper. Much of the information comes from articles previously published, but a significant amount is new and is from California Public Records Act requests, recent interviews and research.

You will read about the relentless attacks against the homeless in this city, the fightback

that has taken place and what needs to be done to end homelessness. This book takes all of the fragmented pieces of the story and combines them into a narrative that gives a complete picture of the drama that took place in Fresno over the last 14 years.

The perspective in *Dispatches from the War Zone: Homelessness in Fresno 2002-2015* comes from my experience as an independent investigative journalist. I make no apologies for standing with the homeless, who are possibly the most discriminated group of people in this city, state and country.

My bias on behalf of the homeless is obvious and has often put me in conflict with government officials, the police and many of the social service agencies that maintain business as usual. Unlike the mainstream media, this reporting does not depend on developing and nurturing good relations with

the power brokers in this community. Many of the articles written have angered the power elite and because of that, getting information from them has been challenging.

If you are a reporter for the mainstream media and you don't tell the story the ruling elite in Fresno wants you to tell, they will cut off your access. If your job depends on access to high government officials and business leaders and they blacklist you, then you are out of a job. This has happened to more than one aspiring journalist in this town.

If you are going to write and publish a book like this you have to have independence. That independence gives you the freedom to tell the truth that some people don't want you to know about. Being an independent journalist doesn't have a lot of perks, but you are able to tell the truth and make the powerful uncomfortable.

I have also been an activist in support of homeless people's rights. This too makes my perspective in telling the story about the homeless in Fresno different from just about anything else you are likely to read. Actually, there are no other comprehensive books about the homeless in Fresno during this time period, so this account is definitely unique. Being a supporter of homeless people's rights and working within numerous groups to defend those rights brings an inside view of what this grassroots struggle looks like. It is an honor and a privilege to share that perspective with you.

Getting to know homeless people as co-workers, friends and allies has been one of the most rewarding parts of the experience. Although I have never been homeless myself, I did get to know many homeless people well.



There is a collective and collaborative nature that comes with living on the street. People share what they have. They know and talk to their neighbors every day. My hope is that by giving homeless people a voice in this book, readers will get to know and understand that they are someone's mother, father, brother or sister.

Somewhere in the back of our minds we all know that if circumstances had been different, if we had a serious health problem, a job loss, mental illness or an untreated addiction, that we too could be homeless. We need to treat the homeless like we would like to be treated if we found ourselves on the street with nowhere to sleep.

It is clear to me that homelessness is a manifestation of a political and economic system that is not meeting people's needs. Understanding that landscape of the shredded social fabric of this city will make you better prepared to envision and implement the changes needed to transform your city into the

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You are invited to attend the 2016 Peace Essay Contest Awards Reception

Friday, March 18, 7:00 p.m.

MJC West Campus

Mary Stuart Rogers Student Learning Center

MC: Rev Darcy Baxter, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

All participants, teachers, sponsors, screeners and judges are invited as guests of honor. The public is welcome. Contest winners have been notified by their teachers. If you are unable to attend, all certificates and prizes not picked up that evening will be sent to the teachers for distribution.

The 2016 Peace Essay Contest is co-sponsored by The Modesto Peace/Life Center and the Division of Literature & Language Arts, Modesto Junior College

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Peace Camp coming June 24-26

By KEN SCHROEDER

Join us for the Modesto Peace/Life Center's 34th annual Peace Camp in the Sierra, June 24-26 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108, about 100 miles east of Modesto. We'll enjoy a weekend of workshops, good food, hikes, campfires, singing, crafts, recreation, and stimulating people of all ages in a beautiful mountain setting.

Lori Wong will return to lead us in our workshops, which will explore the following questions: How do we live out our values for peace, nonviolence and compassion with each other? How do we develop self-awareness and communication skills in order to advocate for our peace values in the world?

At Peace Camp we try to "be the change we wish to see in the world." During our weekend together we will explore our intentions and to practice what it looks like to embody peace as we interact with each other. In the wider world, especially during the election campaigns and at times of crisis, there is

a great deal of intense emotion and reaction. We can learn, practice and experience ways to respond in a nonviolent and compassionate manner. The workshops may include writing, reflection, and experiential exercises to develop and build these skills.

Lori Wong is a Stanford-certified Compassion Cultivation Training™ (CCT) teacher, trained through Stanford University's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education. Lori is also the founding teacher of Insight Meditation Central Valley, a graduate of Spirit Rock's Community Dharma Leader program, a board member of Sati Center for Buddhist Studies, a former volunteer for the Buddhist Pathways Prison Project, and has been offering mindfulness and dharma teachings in the Central Valley since 2009.

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 and 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 camp fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Adults are \$75 before May 1, \$80 before June 6 and \$85 after June 6. Young people 18 and under are \$55 before May 1, \$60 before June 6 and \$65 after June 6. Ages 3 and under free. Minors under 18 need to be accompanied by an adult. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Donations for scholarships are appreciated. Campers may arrive after 2:00 p.m. on Friday. The camp opens with supper at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and closes after the morning workshop on Sunday. Directions and other information will be provided to participants before camp.

Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-480-4576.

Homeless book

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great community it can be. A city where all people are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Dispatches from the War Zone is available online from Amazon or you can send \$20 (which includes shipping and handling) to me at: Mike Rhodes, P.O. Box 5706, Fresno CA 93755.

Mike Rhodes is a journalist in Fresno, California. Contact him at mikerhodes@comcast.net.

Dispatches from the War Zone

"For years I've been telling anyone who'd listen that Mike Rhodes is the best reporter in America when it comes to covering homelessness. He knows homeless hangouts the way a crime reporter knows the police station, and he knows the homeless better than a sports reporter knows a baseball team. Above all, he reports on homeless people like they're simply people, with legitimate needs and concerns. On these pages you'll read the real nitty story that will tell you why you don't want to be homeless in America, and why nobody else should be either."

- Jeremy Alderson, Director of the nationally broadcast Homelessness Marathon radio show.

New, Union-sponsored activist training offered

By TIM ROBERTSON, North Valley Labor Federation

In the Summer of 2014, the North Valley Labor Federation, along with its CLCs, hosted the first-of-its-kind Training to Educate and Activate Membership (TEAM) Program in Stockton, Modesto, and Merced. (Read the write up in the CLF's Labor's Edge blog here.)

The program, which featured three weekly training sessions in each location and a combined graduation, saw 35 new activists trained to build political power for working people. Many participants are now among our best activists, campaigners, delegates, and even officers of the CLCs and NVLFF!

Now, as we approach another pivotal election year, we're bringing back the program to identify, train, and activate a new round of members to stand with working people to build power in the Valley. (Sign Up Here!)

Beginning April 12 in Stockton (April 13 in Modesto and April 14 in Merced), new activists from dozens of unions will join to become the next generation of NVLFF activists, TEAM 2.0! If you, or any of your fellow members, staff, coworkers and leaders are interested in politics, or want to learn how unions build power for all working people, sign up and share the link with others.

Previous TEAM participants are also welcome, as much of the information will be updated. For more information, you can check out these documents:

Program Overview and RSVP Form

California Labor Federation Blog with Testimonials TEAM 2.0 Training Schedule

Online RSVP Form

As working people continue to stand together, we're building power in the Valley every day. As this year's elections approach, we have another opportunity to improve the lives of working families. If you'd like to see how this works, this program is a great place to start. (RSVP by clicking Here)

SAVE THE DATE: Friends of the Modesto Library Used Book Sale

WHEN: Saturday, May 7, 2016. 8a-3p

WHERE: Modesto Stanislaus County Library East Portico, 1500 I St.

PRICES: \$1 hardbound, 50 cents paperback.

Donations accepted until mid-April.

CONTACT: Clare Noonan, 522-5054, clarenoo@gmail.com

In Memoriam

JOE DELL

July 25, 1920 – February 8, 2016

MARGARET STURTEVANT

July 2, 1919 – January 9, 2016

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City Council of Modesto Passes Resolution in Support of a National Revenue-Neutral Carbon Fee and Dividend

MODESTO, Calif.--Feb. 2, 2016--On Tuesday night the city council of Modesto passed a resolution in support of the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) (www.citizensclimatelobby.org) fully-rebated fee on carbon.

The resolution, introduced by the Modesto CCL chapter is the first of its kind in California's Central Valley, and the second in California. The resolution calls on Congressman Jeff Denham to support the measure on a national level especially since it supports the city's strategic initiative to provide vibrant infrastructure and a sustainable environment.

By assessing a steadily increasing fee at the point of fossil fuel extraction and automatically rebating the fee each month to every American household, three important benefits ensue: a) renewable energy is increasingly cheaper relative to carbon-based energy thus stimulating more private investment in renewable energy and a rapid reduction of CO₂; b) for two-thirds of American households their rebate will outweigh cost increases from the fee on carbon, and c) the Stanislaus county economy will grow as monthly rebates are spent locally.

Reducing fuel emissions will also improve Stanislaus county's air quality, currently 4th worst in the nation. Nationwide the revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend program will produce over 2.8 million jobs and add \$70-90 billion to the GDP over 20 years according to an independent 2014 study by Regional Economic Modeling, Inc., touted among the best economic modeling firms by the Wall Street Journal.

"The science of human-caused global warming is clear,"

said Jerry Jackman, chair of the local CCL chapter. "This resolution shows Modesto's leaders endorsing a practical path to lessen the many harmful effects of carbon pollution."

Dozens of supporters showed up Tuesday night to support the measure. Three Modesto Jr. College students and Modesto CCL members, Alexandra Golikov, Jody Strait, and Joseph Suratt, presented to the city council in support of the resolution. Others from the CCL who presented or answered questions from council members were MJC professor of philosophy, Bill Anelli; retired MJC professor of microbiology, Richard Anderson; Kathy Conrotto, Des Orsinelli, and chair Jerry Jackman.

The presentations addressed the negative impacts of climate change on our agricultural economy, local asthma, and our "frozen reservoir," the Sierra snowpack; it demonstrated, per the REMI, Inc. study, how the measure's "win-win" approach rapidly reduces CO₂ more quickly than alternatives such as carbon cap and trade programs by using the free-market instead of government regulations or government control.

The resolution was decided 4-3 with council members Tony Madrigal, Kristi Ah You, Jenny Kenoyer, and Mayor Garrad Marsh voting in favor.

The CCL advisory board includes notables such as George Shultz of the Hoover Institute and former secretary under President Reagan; James Hansen, formerly lead NASA climate scientist; Rear Admiral (ret.) David Titley; and Texas Tech atmospheric scientist Katharine Hayhoe.

The CCL's free market proposal is part of a growing trend toward bipartisan cooperation on climate change. Recently a bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus was formed, co-chaired by Rep. Carlos Curbelo (R-FL) and Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL). In 2015 eleven Republicans signed on to Rep. Chris Gibson's (R-NY) resolution (H. Res 424) calling for action on climate change.

About Citizens' Climate Lobby

Citizens' Climate Lobby is a non-profit, non-partisan, grassroots advocacy organization focused on national policies to address climate change. In order to generate the political will necessary for passage of our Carbon Fee and Dividend proposal we train and support volunteers to engage elected officials, the media and the public.

ACTION: Contact one of the CCL Modesto members below to learn about our national and local plans about the national Carbon Fee and Dividend."

CONTACT: Jerry Jackman, Modesto Citizens' Climate Lobby group leader, 209-577-5616 (h), 209-607-3028 (c) or jjackmanster@gmail.com or Bill Anelli, CCL member, 209-214-7007 or philosopherbill@gmail.com or Richard Anderson, CCL member, 209-529-5182 or andersonr@mjc.edu or Kathy Conrotto, CCL member, 209-523-5907 or kobrien99@sbcglobal.net

Visit CCL at <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/>

MODESTO CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 2016-?

A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE NATIONAL REVENUE-NEUTRAL CARBON FEE AND DIVIDEND PROGRAM

WHEREAS, having determined that the Carbon Fee and Dividend legislative principles proposed by the non-partisan Citizens Climate Lobby, attached hereto as Appendix A, would provide an efficient approach to shifting the incentives that keep the United States reliant on fossil fuel energy and would, thereby, help support the rapid deployment of cleaner energy alternatives; and

WHEREAS, having determined that this approach would be fair to everyone and would protect middle and low income households by providing them with a dividend (also known as a rebate) that, on average, would be higher than the increased costs for energy for two-thirds of all households (specifically the lowest income two-thirds) during the transition to cleaner energy; and

WHEREAS, per the non-partisan study by Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI), this approach would ensure a substantial increase in private investment in cleaner energy options because they will become significantly less expensive relative to fossil fuels within a known time frame; and

WHEREAS, the City continues to experience high unemployment and struggles with economic development of businesses within the City limits, and

WHEREAS, this approach would encourage consumers and businesses to keep their carbon footprint smaller while still ensuring that all households would be able afford the energy they need during the transition to cleaner energy; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to respond to these challenges with a business minded focus, and

WHEREAS, having determined that early adoption of the National Revenue Neutral Carbon Fee and Dividend Legislation in the United States would grow our economy, add nearly two million jobs, help make us a world leader in cleaner-energy technology, and help establish the United States as a leader in future global climate negotiations; and

WHEREAS, the national revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend has already garnered widespread support from Republicans as well as Democrats as evidenced by recent op-eds and public statements in 2015 by prominent Republicans.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Modesto that the City Council requests that the United States Congress immediately enact legislation and the United States President sign into law a national revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend program, as provided for in Appendix A, in order to protect the economy and the climate for future generations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Modesto directs the Mayor to send a letter no later than 30 days after passage of this Resolution by the Modesto City Council to all Mayors and City Councils, County Boards of Supervisors, School Boards, and State and Federal legislators in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Merced Counties, the Governor of California, and the Stanislaus Council of Governments urging support for a National Revenue Neutral Fee and Dividend Act and urging them to adopt a resolution in Favor of National Revenue-Neutral National Carbon Fee and Dividend Legislation.

The foregoing resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Modesto held on the 2nd day of February, 2016, by Councilmember Ah You, who moved its adoption, which motion being duly seconded by Councilmember Madrigal, was upon roll call carried and the resolution adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers: Ah You, Kenoyer, Madrigal, Mayor Marsh

NOES: Councilmembers: Grewal, Ridenour, Zoslocki

ABSENT: Councilmembers: None

ATTEST: STEPHANIE LOPEZ, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By: ADAM U. LINDGREN, City Attorney

24th ANNUAL Ecumenical Choir Concert to benefit



When: Sunday, March 6th, at 4:00pm

**Where: First United Methodist Church
16th and I Streets in Modesto**

The concert is free to attend. A free-will offering will be taken during the concert with the entire collection to benefit Habitat for Humanity in Stanislaus County. This year's concert conductor is Wendy Warner. We hope to see you there!

Still Getting a Charge...

By JENIFER WEST

It's been just about a year since we brought home our new, all-electric Kia Soul, so it seems a good time for a report. From the first test drive, the Kia has been a joy to drive. So quiet that the manufacturer installed chimes that sound both when the vehicle is backing up and when it's traveling less than 5 miles per hour. And it doesn't 'idle' at stoplights or stop signs – it turns itself off, and is completely silent. It's actually possible to forget the vehicle is running, although if you get out and take the keys with you, it chimes loudly to let you know. It's very well designed, and as comfortable as a vehicle can possibly be – right down to the seats with on-demand heating or cooling, and the steering wheel that heats up at the touch of a button.

As with all affordable electric cars on the market at the time, the range (number of miles that can be driven on a full charge) has definitely been a limitation. An 80-mile (round) trip is just within its limit, although I feel more secure visiting a charging station before heading back home. That's another consideration: The current scarcity of local charging stations. They're all over the Bay Area, of course, and there are more of them in our area as time goes by, but it's still necessary to plan trips around the possibility of needing to visit one – and plan in the time a quick zap might take. The good news, at this point in time, is that most charging stations allow one to 'top off the tank' for free. (If you're in a hurry, there are stations that offer a faster charge, usually for a fairly nominal fee. They're set up to accept a card you can link to a credit or debit account; the Kia came with one.) And it's been a while since the range on a full charge has registered anywhere near the 113 it started out with. It's due for a checkup next month; hopefully the dealership service folks can shed some light on that.

Which is another slight inconvenience – the distance to a dealership that can work on it – even for its basic regular maintenance. I just think of it as a 'free' day – there's a shuttle to a nearby shopping center – what writer wouldn't want to take advantage of the excuse to spend an hour or two prowling the shelves of Barnes & Noble? Interestingly, the service doesn't include changing the



oil – the vehicle doesn't have any. Tire rotation, however, is critical. In fact, neglecting it can void the car's tire warranty – and of course, the cars require special ones.

Another curious thing is how little the folks at the dealership seem to know about its workings – at least the ones in the front. Whenever they're asked questions, they defer to the service crew, whom the vehicle owner doesn't generally see. No doubt they have the training to do whatever maintenance is required and make any necessary repairs, but because the technology is still so new, the general knowledge hasn't filtered through to the folks up front.

The electric car market continues to heat up, as manufacturers offer vehicles with increasing range (Chevy mentioned the 200-mile range of one of its new models almost in passing – something unheard of in its price range even a year ago!), and consumer demand increasing. The electric vehicles currently on the market: BMW i3 (range of 81 miles), Chevrolet Spark EV (82 miles), Fiat 500e (84 miles), Ford Focus Electric (76 miles), Mercedes B-Class Electric Drive (85 miles), Mitsubishi iMiEV (62 miles), Nissan Leaf (107 miles), Smart Electric Drive (68 miles), Tesla Model S (265 miles), Tesla Model X (250 miles), Volkswagen E-Golf (83 miles). (The advertised range for the Kia is currently 93 miles – still better than most of the other electrics out there, but slightly less than the Nissan Leaf). And both Chevrolet and Tesla have announced plans to offer an

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affordable electric vehicle in the near future. The Chevrolet Bolt, which the company has said will offer a range of 200 miles, is due out in late 2016. The Tesla Model 3, currently in the planning stages, will also offer a 200-mile range, and will be priced in the same range as most of the other affordable electric vehicles currently on the market. Tesla has a long way to go, however, before the Model 3 will actually hit the market.

Although the price of gas is currently down, for the environmentally-conscious, or even those who just want a nice, quiet ride, electric cars are increasingly becoming the vehicle of choice.



Local Public Radio
FM 104.9
www.ValleyMedia.Org
Local Bands, Real News

stanislaus CONNECTIONS

is published monthly except in August
by the **Modesto Peace/Life Center**
720 13th St., Modesto, CA 95354.
Open by appointment.
Mailing address: P.O. Box 134,
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1120 14th Street, Suite 2
Modesto, CA 95350

HELP create a new FM radio station in our region!

The Federal Communications Commission has granted the Modesto Peace/Life Center a license for a full power FM radio station that will broadcast throughout Stanislaus County and beyond. We have two and a half years to get the station on air. It will cost at up to \$100,000.

We want this to be a community-driven station. We need your help. We need:

DONATIONS!

- the expertise of people with experience and skill in radio technology, broadcasting, marketing, and programing;
- people who can envision how we might best highlight the diverse issues that affect us in our area;
- people with a pulse on the local music and arts scenes;
- businesses willing to underwrite our program-ming;
- people with creative ideas and suggestions; and
- enthusiastic people throughout our community who will donate generously toward making this dream a reality.



To help, please contact James Costello, 209-402-9191, or jcostello@igc.org.

To donate, send your check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353. Write "Radio Station" in the Memo. For Paypal online, go to <http://peacelifecenter.org/>. Click on "Support us: Donate." The Center is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization; donations are tax-deductible.

FM 95.5 Mission Statement

On Community Radio, FM 95.5, The Modesto Peace/Life Center will promote peace, social justice, and a sustainable environment through nonviolent change. We'll focus on regional issues and local talent, with a lively blend of multicultural music and the arts. We invite broad participation from community groups and local citizens to help us inform, entertain, and stimulate interest and involvement in the betterment of our community.

Peace/Life Center Film Night Presents: The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975

Following Black History month, the Modesto Peace/Life Center will feature *The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975*, "found footage"-based documentary that combines various clips in a mixtape-like fashion to give the viewer a feel of the key themes, players and motivations of the movement.

THE BLACK POWER MIXTAPE 1967-1975 mobilizes a treasure trove of 16mm material shot by Swedish journalists who came to the US drawn by stories of urban unrest and revolution. Gaining access to many of the leaders of the Black Power Movement—Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale, Angela Davis and Eldridge Cleaver among them—the filmmakers captured them in intimate moments and remarkably unguarded interviews. Thirty years later, this lush collection was found languishing in the basement of Swedish Television. Director Göran Olsson and co-producer Danny Glover bring this footage to light in a mosaic of images, music and narration chronicling the evolution one of

our nation's most indelible turning points, the Black Power movement. Music by Questlove and Om'Mas Keith, and commentary from prominent African-American artists and activists who were influenced by the struggle — including Erykah Badu, Martin Luther King, Jr., Harry Belafonte, Talib Kweli, and Melvin Van Peebles — give the historical footage a fresh, contemporary resonance and makes the film an exhilarating, unprecedented account of an American revolution.

The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975 challenges us to return to the movement and even gives us perspective to think about its relationship to living racial justice efforts today.

Visit <http://www.ifcfilms.com/films/the-black-power-mixtape>

The film shows at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 16 at the Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Discussion will follow.

Civic Engagement Project's Spring 2016 Film & Lecture Series

Thursday Nights, Forum 110, 7PM, MJC East Campus, 435 College Ave. Modesto.

Open to the Public Free of Charge

Merchants of Doubt — Mar 10: Merchants of Doubt argues that public response to topics such as smoking and climate change is hampered not by scientific disagreement so much as by the influential power of a small group of paid spokespersons who call science into question for financial gain.

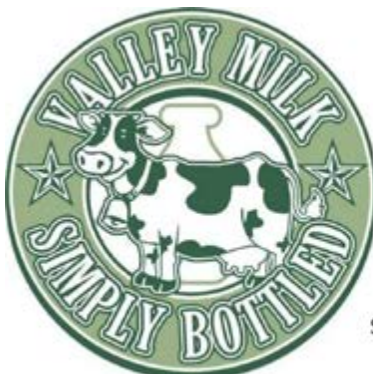
First Generation — Mar 17: This film follows the lives of four California high school students as they aim to be the first in their families to attend college. In their pursuit of higher education, these students strive to break free from the

cycle of income inequality and serve to inspire their families and communities.

Black in America: A Continuing Conversation — Mar 31: This conversation continues last semester's discussion about the difficulties faced by young African-American men, especially given the growing tensions in today's society between the police and communities of color.

The Burden — Apr 14: This documentary claims that America's dependence on fossil fuels not only threatens our environment and our economy but also endangers our armed forces and our national security. The film also suggests that we need to embrace clean energy solutions if America is to continue as a global leader in the twenty-first century.

<https://www.mjc.edu/president/cep/filmandlecture.php>



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Peace Can Begin With Violence

First Place - Division I

Christopher Pack

Whitmore Charter School

A car was chased down the road by two police cars. The police fired shots, the driver was killed, and the car went out of control, mowing down a young mother with her three children. Witnessing this tragedy was the impetus for Betty Williams to actively pursue peace and an end to the violence in her country of Northern Ireland. She was an ordinary citizen, not uniquely qualified, who determined that the violence had to end.

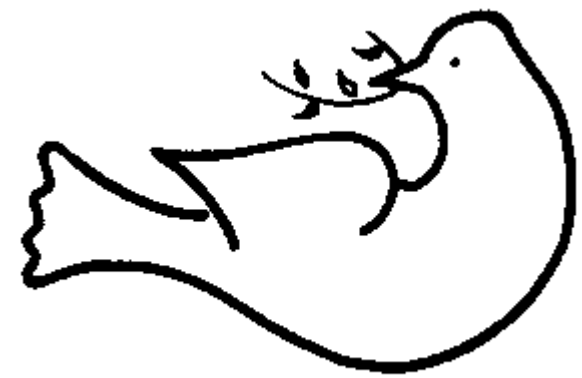
Ireland's long history of over 800 years of conflict between Catholics and Protestants within its borders has created a culture of violence. The Catholics, who have long desired to be an independent nation, fought against the Protestants, who desired to remain loyal to their association with Britain as a part of the Commonwealth. In the late 1960's, violence again erupted between the nationalist, Catholic minority and the Protestant majority who were loyal to the British. Williams was personally impacted by the violence as she had lost two cousins, one to the Protestants and one to the Catholics, in the war.

In 1976, during this time of violence referred to as "The Troubles", Betty Williams witnessed the scene that resulted in the death of three children and seriously wounded their mother. This sight was too much to bear and Williams believed that something must be done to stop the violence. Rather than thinking that she was powerless to make any change because she was an ordinary citizen, she decided to act. Williams was joined by Mairead Corrigan, the children's aunt, in calling for an end to the violence. Williams organized a march in which she invited Protestant and Catholic women to march to the grave-site of the children to demonstrate that the violence must end. Going up against the Irish Republican Army was dangerous and took courage, but Williams was willing to take risks to do what she could to stop the killing. The deaths of the children and subsequent demonstrations brought worldwide attention to the problem of violence in Northern Ireland.

Williams and Corrigan realized that they needed an organization to help them successfully change Northern Ireland into a community that would not promote or tolerate violence. They, with journalist Ciaran McKeown, formed an organization known as the Community of Peace People. Together, they were able to quickly take action and "Within one week of their first meeting, these three people who had not previously known each other had led two demonstrations, prepared a Declaration of Peace, and laid out a plan for a series of marches" (Stiehm 71). The Declaration of Peace was read at the beginning of every demonstration to make sure that the focus was on an end to violence and promoting peace rather than being political in any way.

The work of the Community of Peace People to end violence was not well received by everyone in Northern Ireland. Betty Williams said, "Nonviolence is not a thing that comes easily. You have to learn how to be nonviolent", so she worked to teach and promote nonviolence (Betty Williams Quotes). Ironically, as Williams promoted nonviolence she was criticized, accused, and threatened. The marches and demonstrations often met resistance in the form of stoning and other violence. The majority of the people of Ireland appeared to want peace, but had different ideas of how that peace should be achieved. The Community of Peace People's website states that, "The People of Northern Ireland showed their great desire for peace, when thousands marched throughout Northern Ireland - and in the South. Within the first 6 months there was a 70 percent drop in the rate of violence, and things would never return to the terrible rate of death and destruction experienced in 1976 when it looked like the community was spiraling into all out civil conflict". It took until 1998 for there to be an official end to the violence between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland; the Community of Peace People had a tremendous impact on working for that peace.

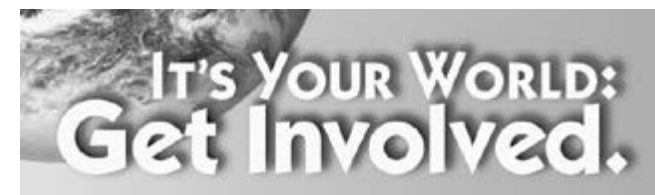
Betty Williams is an example to all of us of how we can prevent or work to end violence even if we are just an ordinary citizen. She shows that you do not need to be a political leader or a famous person to start a movement for peace. Although Williams did not remain with the Community of Peace People, the organization she founded continues to work for nonviolence and peace in Ireland. She went on to devote her life to working for the benefit of children around the world. This too should be an inspiration to all of how we can help the lives of others throughout our life. We cannot obtain peace



just by talking about it, instead we must actively pursue peace, as Williams said, "There's no use talking about the problem unless you talk about the solution" (Betty Williams Quotes)

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2016 Stanislaus Artist Open Studio Tour
Sat., April 23, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sun., April 24, noon - 5 p.m.
Free Preview Event
Friday, April 15 and Saturday April 16
6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Gallo Center for the Arts, 10th and I Streets, Modesto
Enter to win one of six \$200 gift certificates good for the purchase of art from a participating artist. Drawings will be held on Saturday, April 16 at our preview event, and Thursday, April 21 at Modesto 3rd Thursday Art Walk. Enter to win at the preview event, or online at stanislausAOS.eventbrite.com

2016 Peace Essay Contest Winners, Finalists and School Winners

| Division I (grades 11 & 12) | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Name | Award | School |
| Christopher Pack | First Place & SW* | Whitmore Charter School |
| Heidi Ekstrum | Second Place | Whitmore Charter School |
| Makayla Lawrence | Third Place & SW* | Ceres High School |
| Ronnie Rose | Hon. Mention & SW* | Modesto High School |
| Marshala Iverson | Honorable Mention | Modesto High School |
| Gursavan Khatkar | Honorable Mention | Ceres High School |
| Cica Akpovi | Finalist | Modesto High School |
| Alessa Barajas | Finalist | Modesto High School |
| Eva Borden | Finalist | Ceres High School |
| Katherine De Anda | Finalist | Whitmore Charter School |
| Abigail Fletcher | Finalist | Whitmore Charter School |
| Jordan Hoxie | Finalist | Whitmore Charter School |
| Tera Lovelady | Finalist & SW* | Hughson High School |
| Promyse Moore | Finalist | Modesto High School |
| Martin Pizano | Finalist | Modesto High School |
| Karla Schmidt | Finalist | Ceres High School |
| David Toepfer | Finalist | Whitmore Charter School |
| Sarah Truxton | Finalist | Central Catholic High Sch |
| Madison Zamaroni | Finalist | Ceres High School |
| Teagan Zuniga | Finalist | Hughson High School |
| Tyler Benedict | School Winner | Joseph A. Gregori High Sch |
| Kelsey Songer | School Winner | Oakdale Charter High Sch |
| Charity Vasquez | Special Recognition | Valley Charter High School |

| Division II (grades 9 & 10) | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Name | Award | School |
| Abigail Sloan | First Place | Independent Home School |
| Ariel Coria | Second Place (tie) | Ceres High School |
| Jorge Trujillo | Second Place (tie) & SW* | Central Valley High School |
| Leslie Alfonso | Honorable Mention | Central Valley High School |
| Qi Lan Li | Honorable Mention & SW* | Peter Johansen High School |
| Nayeli Arana | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Allen Benjamin | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |
| Yvette Calderon | Finalist & SW* | Riverbank High School |
| Lupita Carranza | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Julissa Cuevas Cano | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |
| Jackelyn Diaz | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Aman Dosanjh | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Erika Gomez | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |
| Seth Juarez | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |
| Tanveer Kaur | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Jaime Zamora Magana | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |
| Areline Naranjo-Barrera | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Daniel Rodriguez | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |
| Kayla Walker | Finalist | Central Valley High School |
| Julieta Zavala | Finalist | Peter Johansen High School |

SW* = School Winner; School winners are recognized for the top essay from each school that has submitted 10 or more essays in the Division.

| Division III (grades 7 & 8) | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Name | Award | School |
| Aven Cheek | First Place & SW* | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Iris Gutierrez | Second Place & SW* | Cesar Chavez Jr High School |
| Sophie Orlando | Third Place | Roosevelt Junior High School |
| Lyla Patel | Hon. Mention & SW* | Prescott Junior High School |
| Kylea Coston | Honorable Mention | Independent Home School |
| Averie Hardy | Honorable Mention | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Alyssa Castano | Finalist & SW* | Oakdale Junior High School |
| Kylie Duffy | Finalist & SW* | Turlock Junior High School |
| Ben Fichtenkort | Finalist & SW* | Our Lady of Fatima School |
| Gohara Abdo | Finalist | Cesar Chavez Jr High School |
| Safa Alfareh | Finalist | Cesar Chavez Jr High School |
| Reza Banankhah | Finalist | Private Instruction |
| Jolie Benedict | Finalist | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Jacob Christopher | Finalist | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Andrea Fierro | Finalist | Our Lady of Fatima School |
| Drake Jimenez | Finalist | Our Lady of Fatima School |
| Karla Paniagua | Finalist | Cesar Chavez Jr High School |
| Shannon Paulson | Finalist | Prescott Junior High School |
| Payton Potter | Finalist | Our Lady of Fatima School |
| Patric Senesom | Finalist | Cesar Chavez Jr High School |
| Vi Chau | School Winner | Daniel J. Savage Middle Sch |

| Division IV (grades 5 & 6) | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Name | Award | School |
| Ian Baker | First Place & SW* | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Rana Banankhah | Second Place | Private Instruction |
| McKenna Taylor | Third Place & SW* | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Roxy Carbajal | Honorable Mention | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Aiden Hervey | Honorable Mention | Hart Ransom Acad Chrtr Sch |
| Valene Perillo | Hon. Mention & SW* | Whitmore Charter School |
| Bronson Burrow | Finalist | Whitmore Charter School |
| Greg Delgadillo | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Isabella Edward | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Dalyce Farnon | Finalist & SW | John Fremont Open Plan |
| Elle Hillar | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| D'Anna Jennings | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Dawood Khan | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Anycia Krigbaum | Finalist | Caswell Elementary School |
| Nithya Medam | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Abby Nancett | Finalist | John Fremont Open Plan |
| Priyanka Pal | Finalist | Lakewood Elementary School |
| Christina Pappas | Finalist | Daniel J. Savage Middle School |
| Javier Torres | Finalist | Caswell Elementary School |
| Danielle Vu | Finalist | Daniel J. Savage Middle School |
| Hadynn Field | School Winner | Adkison Elementary School |
| Vidhee Patel | School Winner | Agnes M. Baptist Elemntary Sch |
| Nathalia Trujillo | School Winner | Coleman F. Brown Elem School |
| Cameron Crutcher | School Winner | Sacred Heart Elem, Turlock |

SW* = School Winner; School winners are recognized for the top essay from each school that has submitted 10 or more essays for the Division

The Kochs Are Ghostwriting America's Story

Progressives need to fight back with their own "metanarrative" against the tall tales of the right wing.

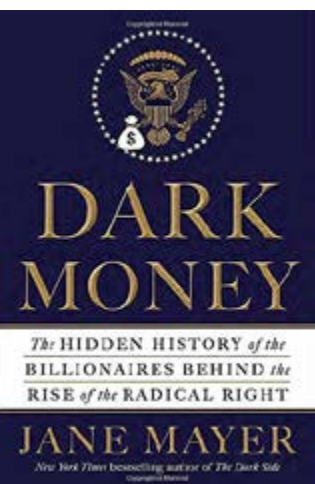
By MICHAEL WINSHIP

Gather round for the word of the day: metanarrative. Definitions vary but let's say it's one big narrative that connects the meaning of events to a belief thought to be an essential truth, the storytelling equivalent of the unified field theory in physics.

Now use it to define what's being done to America today — our Big Story. Journalist and activist Naomi Klein did just that a couple of weeks ago when she and I talked at Finger Lakes Community College in upstate New York about the Koch brothers' resistance to the reality of climate change. <http://billmoyers.com/story/naomi-klein-climate-change-not-just-about-things-getting-hotter-its-about-things-getting-meaner/>

"...The Charles Koch metanarrative — and he's said it explicitly — is that he is challenging collectivism, he is challenging the idea that when people get together they can do good," she said. "And he is putting forward the worldview that we're all very familiar with that if you free the individual to pursue their self-interest that will actually benefit the majority. So you need to attack everything that is collective, whether it's labor rights or whether it's public health care or whether it's regulatory action. All of this falls under the metanarrative of an attack on collectivism."

In other words, Koch and his brother David and the extraordinary machine they have built in cahoots with fellow billionaires and others, have spent hundreds and hundreds of millions to get their way — "the great wealth grab" in the words of Richard Eskow — all part of one long story told in pursuit of a specific end: to make the needs of the very, very few our nation's top priority and to thwart or destroy any group effort among the poor and middle class to do or say otherwise.



The Kochs have spun their tale with a singular, laser-like focus, carefully taking their time to make sure they get it right. Jane Mayer, author of *Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right*, recently wrote in Politico Magazine that "Charles Koch might claim that his entry into politics is new, but from its secrecy to its methods of courting donors and recruiting students, the

blueprint for the vast and powerful Koch donor network that we see today was drafted four decades ago."

Mayer reviewed papers — including one written by Charles Koch himself — presented at a Koch-sponsored

And so we see their creation of ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council posing as a non-profit while entertaining state legislators and plying them with templates for laws that favor restrictions on voter eligibility, public sector unions and the minimum wage while supporting freedom for the gun lobby and deregulation.

Center for Libertarian Studies conference in 1976 and concludes, "...It's not hard to recognize the Koch political movement we see today — a vast and complex network of donors, think tanks and academic programs largely cloaked in secrecy and presented as philanthropy, leaving almost no money trail that the public can trace. And it's these techniques Charles first championed decades ago that helped build his political faction — one so powerful that it turned fringe ideas William F. Buckley once dismissed as 'Anarcho-Totalitarianism' into a private political machine that grew to rival the Republican Party itself."

And so we see their creation of ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council posing as a non-profit while entertaining state legislators and plying them with templates for laws that favor restrictions on voter eligibility, public sector unions and the minimum wage while supporting freedom for the gun lobby and deregulation. The Kochs shower cash on candidates and elected officials who do the bidding of the right, fund programs at historically black colleges and universities that preach free-market economics and deregulation, bankroll the Libre Initiative that hands out holiday turkeys and Easter baskets to Latino families while, in its own words, "informing the U.S. Hispanic community about the benefits of a constitutionally limited government, property rights, rule of law, sound money supply and free enterprise through a variety of community events, research and policy initiatives that protect our economic freedom."

As Naomi Klein said during our conversation, "The Koch brothers set out to change the values, to change the core ideas that people believed in. And there is no progressive equivalent of taking ideas seriously." She then asked, "So what is the progressive metanarrative? Who funds it? Who is working on changing ideas that can say, 'Actually, when we pool our resources, when we work together, we can do more and better than when we only act as individuals.' I don't think we value that."

In fact, there is a progressive metanarrative, one that needs to be valued and not obscured by arguments over who is or is not sufficiently progressive or who did what to whom and when. The metanarrative's lead has been buried in divisiveness, by trolling from every side and by despicable, old-

fashioned redbaiting. What's more, goals and purposes have been diffused with a scattershot approach when we should be vectoring in on what really counts.

The progressive metanarrative is the opposite of the fight against collectivism: it's the struggle against inequality. The Harvard Gazette reports, "Though the wealthiest 20 percent earned nearly half of all wages in 2014, they have more than 80 percent of the wealth. The wealth of the poorest 20 percent, as measured by net worth, is actually negative. If they sell all they own, they'll still be in debt."

Labor organizer and Harvard Kennedy School lecturer Marshall Ganz tells the Gazette, "I think the galloping inequality in this country results from poor political choices. There was nothing inevitable, nothing global. We made a series of political choices... that set us on this path." He continues, "Inequality, it's not just about wealth, it's about power. It isn't just that somebody has some yachts, it's the effect on democracy... I think we're in a really scary place."

But it's not a place from which escape is impossible.

To make our metanarrative come true, we must embrace both community and government that effectively can protect and provide for all. In a 2014 article at the ideas.ted.com website, philosopher T.M. Scanlon wrote, "No one has reason to accept a scheme of cooperation that places their lives under the control of others, that deprives them of meaningful political participation, that deprives their children of the opportunity to qualify for better jobs, and that deprives them of a share of the wealth they help to produce... The holdings of the rich are not legitimate if they are acquired through competition from which others are excluded, and made possible by laws that are shaped by the rich for the benefit of the rich. In these ways, economic inequality can undermine the conditions of its own legitimacy."

And so it can, if progressives work together, mobilize, dare to take risks and keep the faith in the face of cynicism and weary resignation. Such a metanarrative could have a different — and happy — ending.

Michael Winship, senior writing fellow at Demos and president of the Writers Guild of America-East, was senior writer for Moyers & Company and Bill Moyers' Journal and is senior writer of BillMoyers.com.

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<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2016/02/09/kochs-are-ghostwriting-americas-story>

"Inequality, it's not just about wealth, it's about power. It isn't just that somebody has some yachts, it's the effect on democracy... I think we're in a really scary place."

A Gathering of Voices In Honor of Women's History Month: The Society of Cleo Poets - Cleo Griffiths and Cleo Kocal

Cleo Griffith (CG) and Cleo Kocol (CK) met at an annual poetry conference, the first CK had attended. CG saw CK's name on the list and the rest is history. They collaborated on chapbooks, calling themselves The Society of Cleo Poets, and continue respect the others' work and applaud their various successes.

Cleo Griffith was Chair of the Editorial Board of *Song of the San Joaquin* for twelve years, and remains on the Board. She has been published in: *POEM*, *Cider Press Review*, *Iodine*, *Main Street Rag*, *More Than Soil*, *More Than Sky: The Modesto Poets*, *the Aurean*, *The Furnace Review*, *The Lyric*, *Tiger's Eye*, *Time of Singing* and others. She is a member of the Modesto Branch of the National League of American Pen Women, MoSt, and MeterMaids.

Cleo Kocol has recently written her memoir, *The Last Aloha*, and has several novels on Amazon.com. Her most recent foray into the writing scene was her play, "My Thomas Jefferson" which premiered in Sun City, Roseville, where she lives, to high praise. It is scheduled next at the Reason Center in Sacramento. During the 1980's she wrote and presented one woman, many character plays throughout the United States, including Alaska. This year she will be one of the judges for the Friends of the Library Poetry Contest in Roseville.



The Women Who Share

We are the keepers of magic,
we remind each other to see
the special light in the top of an ocean wave,
to hear the optimistic note
in the mockingbird's repertoire.
We are the keepers who share.

We are the seekers of magic.
Over all the world we indulge our senses,
know that the common wonder
of tiny flowers across the sprawl of discovered plains
convince us more that
men must seek less conquest.

We are the makers of magic,
inventors without patents, we place the paper moon
in our cardboard sky because it feels right
and we light it with what shines within us --
the source of magic we make understood
and enlarged upon.

We are the magic: we share its forms:
concrete or mystical, with laughter, sympathy, empathy,
will never abandon the art forms of our meaning,
each of us so in love with each other
we continue to see the colors, make and share the music,
and hand to each other the shape of hope.

— Cleo Griffith

ROULETTE ROUNDS

of a Working Class Woman
At the Best Western breakfast
buffet, her jeans look as good
as any she sees; her hair is neat,
her hands are clean. A city girl,
she eats three small
quiche, Raisin Bran,
hotcakes, yogurt, an
apple and a pear. Drinks
coffee laced with sugar
and cream, enough calories
to last through her day.
Tomorrow she will "patronize" the
Hilton, then the Hyatt, Vagabond and
Holiday Inn. On minimum wage, that's
how she's managed to survive, to subsist.
(So far no one has asked to see
her room key.)
With one ear cocked to the sounds,
smells and attitude of the street, she
sleeps in her still-running chariot,
a window-tinted, vintage cabriolet.
Second hand newspapers say the

economy is up, but she almost
"busts a gut" laughing at that.
Decent jobs were all in the past.
Weekends she visits art galleries
that offer canapés and champagne,
and sleeps easier on a stomach full
of cheese puffs and bubbly.
And then the routine starts again, with
no time to think of her country cousins
who are gallantly trying to live off the land.

— Cleo Fellers Kocol

Revelations From the Future to a Woman Who Will Not be There

Languages have melded, what differences remain
with friends in more isolated areas, are quickly interpreted
by the
Internationspeak included in all communication devices.
This is, of course, an invention of one of the most
influential of the many women geniuses born in the
21st century. Even the sound of language is softer,
reflects its feminine slant toward peace and harmony.
There are no explosive shouts or highly punctuated
blasphemies --
the "cuteness" of swear words by women has run its
course.

Humor still abounds, kind -- occasionally self-deprecating,
life and the world always full of surprises, even now.
Our children understand the opposition to power struggles,
King of the Hill is only a child's game.
Swans and eagles remain as symbols,
slightly changed -- the swan's wings wider, the eagle
less a warrior. Conversations are laced with hope,
fewer and fewer greedy shadow-mongers find converts.
Equalities mark the many patterns among the world life-
styles.
And where we many artists gather there is a tendency
toward producing new experiences with which to express
love.

— Cleo Griffith

Dancing Poetry Festival is accepting entries

By CLEO GRIFFITH

The Dancing Poetry Festival is accepting entries through May 15, \$5 per poem or 3 poems for \$10.

2 copies each poem, one with name, address, phone, email, the other with no ID. Any subject, any form, 40 line limit, suitable for a general audience.

Send to: Judy Hardin Cheung, Contest Chair
704 Brigham Ave
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Make your check out to: Artists Embassy International.
3 grand prizes: \$100 each, 6 first prizes: 50 each, 12 second prizes: 25 each, 30 third prizes: 10 each

Grand Prizes danced and videotaped, all winners invited to read at the podium.

Last year's winners included local poets Nancee Maya, First Prize, and Lynn Hansen, Third Prize!

All the information is at www.dancingpoetry.com



Green Tips for a Green Planet: Moms Clean Air Force

Join 600,000 Moms and Dads – “Sometimes being a good mom or dad means being an active citizen”

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

“Moms Clean Air Force, a special project of [the] Environmental Defense Fund, is a community of moms and dads united against air pollution – including the urgent crisis of our changing climate – to protect our children’s health.

We arm members with reliable information and solutions through online resources, articles, action tools and on-the-ground events.”

“Moms [and Dads] will do everything they can to keep [our] children safe and sound. We look for the healthiest

foods we can afford; we avoid toxic chemicals in our products. But there are some things we simply can’t buy. Clean air is one. We need job-creating regulations to assure that our children have clean air right now, and for their future.”



The group has joined alongside some of the most respected medical organizations, including the American Lung Association, American Medical Association, American Heart Association, American Academy of Pediatricians and the American Nurses Association to fight against politicians in Congress encouraged by irresponsible corporations and lobbyists for polluters to gut the Clean Air Act and dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency.

“Moms [and dads] have passion and power — an unbeatable combination. We are harnessing the strength of mother [father] love to fight back against polluters.

Moms[and dads] are uniting to come out in strength for our kids’ right to clean air — just as our parents fought for us, forty years ago, to get the Clean Air Act signed into law by President Richard Nixon. Moms Clean Air Force is non-partisan—because clean air should be more important than politics.”



ACTION: “At Moms Clean Air Force, we believe in Naptime Activism. With our online action center, we make it easy and fast for busy parents to make their voices heard—while baby naps

[or is away at school]. On our website we post everything for parents to understand what is at stake: nothing less than the health of our children, as well as future generations. Air pollution isn’t just dirty. It is toxic. We show you how pollution connects to disease.”

Go to www.momscleanairforce.org to learn how you can help our children and learn more about such issues as the Clean Air Act• Clean Energy• Climate Disruption• Coal• Asthma• Heart Health• Mercury• Natural Gas• Smog• Social justice• Toxic Chemicals• Traffic Pollution• Weather.

Our children can’t fight for themselves. We have to fight for them.



Garrad Marsh, Mayor
City of Modesto
1010 Tenth Street, Suite 6200
Modesto, CA 95354
gmarsh@modestogov.com

February 18, 2016

Dear Community Leader:

The City of Modesto has adopted a resolution supporting the National Revenue Neutral Carbon Fee and Dividend Program and the legislative principles proposed by the non-partisan Citizens Climate Lobby which we believe would provide an efficient approach to shifting the incentives that keep the United States reliant on fossil fuel energy and would, thereby, help support the rapid deployment of cleaner energy alternatives.

The City of Modesto continues to experience high unemployment and struggles with economic development. We believe this approach would encourage consumers and businesses to keep their carbon footprint smaller while still ensuring all households would be able to afford the energy they need during the transition to cleaner energy for future generations.

This approach would be fair to everyone and would protect middle and low income households by providing them with a dividend (rebate) that, on average, would be higher than the increased costs for energy for two-thirds of all households (specifically the lowest income two-thirds) during the transition to cleaner energy.

According to the non-partisan study by Regional Economic Models, Inc. this approach would ensure a substantial increase in private investment in cleaner energy options because they will become significantly less costly relative to fossil fuels within a known time frame.

In addition to the ongoing drought, the San Joaquin Valley will continue to incur many economic, environmental, health-related and agricultural costs associated with the rising symptoms of climate change - worsening air quality, reduced crop yields, increasing average temperatures, and exacerbated insect-borne pathogen rates as well other effects to our water supply are likely to result if we fail to take appropriate action.

On behalf of the City of Modesto, I strongly encourage you to help send a message to Congress supporting the National Revenue Neutral Carbon Fee and Dividend Program and adopting a resolution supporting their efforts towards cleaner energy in the San Joaquin Valley. If you would like additional information, please feel free to contact Councilmember Tony Madrigal at 579-4776 or tmadrigal@modestogov.com.

Sincerely,

Garrad Marsh
GARRAD MARSH, Mayor

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

Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request for Nuclear Weapons Programs - Blog #3

By MARYLIA KELLEY

Budget Favors Provocative New Warhead Development

The DOE budget request for nuclear weapons activities reveals the policy direction that President Obama wants to hand over to his successor. That trajectory is not merely in conflict with Obama's 2009 "Prague speech" pledging leadership toward a world free of nuclear weapons. It's an outright repudiation. Instead, it increases spending to "improve" nuclear war-fighting capabilities.

Make no mistake. The FY 2017 budget request is a down payment on \$1 trillion in upgrades to U.S. nuclear weapons over the next thirty years. While much of that spending will be in the Pentagon for new submarines and planes, its driving force is found in the DOE budget request, which contains the funding for the new U.S. nuclear bombs and bomb plants.

Here are some "top line" numbers from the DOE National Nuclear Security Administration's FY 2017 budget request for nuclear weapons.

The FY 2017 request for Atomic Energy Defense Activities is nearly \$19 billion, up slightly from FY 2016. Of that, the request for Nuclear Weapons Activities is \$9.24 billion, up nearly \$400 million (or 4.5%) from the lavish \$8.84 billion that Congress appropriated for these activities in FY 2016 (See DOE NNSA Budget Request, Volume 1, page 1).

In the "outyear" plans, the Nuclear Weapons Activities budget is slated to continue rising each year, reaching more than \$10.5 billion in FY 2021 (page 3).

In contrast, the Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation request is reduced in the FY 2017 request, from just over \$1.9 billion (FY 2016 enacted) to \$1.8 billion. Part of that decrease is a welcome termination of the plutonium MOX plant at the Savannah River Site (see blog #1). However, the overall paucity of this budget line demonstrates the continuing dominance of "weapons activities" (e.g., new nuclear weapons development) over "nonproliferation." The difference is more than five-fold (page 1).

Within the Nuclear Weapons Activities budget, there is a major increase requested for the development of a new Long-Range Stand Off (LRSO) warhead, also referred to as the W80-4 Life Extension Program, which will be done primarily at Livermore Lab.

In FY 2015, the LRSO warhead development began at Livermore with \$9 million. That rose to \$195 million in FY 2016 and the LRSO warhead development now stands at \$220.25 million in the FY 2017 request, an increase of more than \$25 million (page 61). While the LRSO warhead "will ramp up at a slower pace than planned" (page 57), its budget will skyrocket, increasing to more than \$636 million by FY 2021 (page 77).

The W80-4 LRSO warhead's first production unit is scheduled for 2025, but the Budget Request's outyear plans only

Make no mistake. The FY 2017 budget request is a down payment on \$1 trillion in upgrades to U.S. nuclear weapons over the next thirty years.

extend 5-years from the present (to FY 2021). The estimated cost of both the new W80-4 LRSO warhead and the new air-launched cruise missile that the W80-4 would sit atop comes in at around \$30 billion.

It is also instructive to look at the sheer number of new nuclear weapons development projects that the DOE NNSA has in the works.

The FY 2017 funding request includes: the B61-12 Life Extension Program (\$616 million), the W76 Life Extension Program (\$222.88 million), and the W88 Alteration (\$281 million), all in the Directed Stockpile Work budget line. The total for these life extensions and major alterations in the request is \$1.34 billion. Directly below that on page 76 is an additional set of budget lines with an additional \$443 million-plus for Stockpile Systems.

The FY 2017 budget request also contains \$575 million for a new bomb plant for uranium "secondaries" - the H-bomb part of nuclear weapons - at Y-12 in TN called the Uranium Processing Facility (page 253).

The request also moves ahead with a "modular" approach to building a new plutonium bomb plant at Los Alamos Lab in NM. However, it stops shy of putting certain specifics in place, such as mandating underground production facilities. The request does include Plutonium Sustainment activities totaling nearly \$185 million, which is up more than \$10 million from last year (page 115). And, the budget request continues all of the plutonium activities on the trajectory toward production at Los Alamos Lab of 10 war reserve plutonium bomb cores in FY 2024, 20 war reserve bomb cores in FY 2025 and 30 war reserve bomb cores in FY 2026 (page 109).

Both the Uranium Processing Facility and the new facility to boost production of plutonium bomb cores (also called plutonium pits) are directly related to the development of new U.S. nuclear weapons. Thus, we will seek to rein in the new bombs and bomb plants simultaneously.

Note: We at Tri-Valley CAREs are continuing a deep dive into the FY 2017 budget request for nuclear weapons. Check our website for blog #4 on the National Ignition Facility, to be followed by blog #5 on cleanup and other activities. Plus, our next edition of Citizen's Watch will include additional budget analysis and related action alerts. Stay tuned! Join us!

Tri-Valley CAREs • 2582 Old First Street • Livermore, CA 94550 • Phone (925) 443-7148 • Fax (925) 443-0177. <http://www.trivalleycares.org/>

Politics of Fear Devouring Human Rights Worldwide

New Human Rights Watch report details escalating crises and the rollback of human rights around the world

By NADIA PRUPIS, staff writer

The politics of fear has consumed the world.

Fear of terrorism and fear of refugees, which have grown alongside ongoing global conflicts, fueled many of the biggest human rights developments — and failings — worldwide in 2015, including in the U.S. and Europe, according to a new report released Wednesday by Human Rights Watch (HRW).

The influx of refugees fleeing violence, war, and poverty at home prompted numerous Western governments to restrict borders and roll back human rights within their own countries in "misguided efforts to protect their security," the report (pdf) states. Meanwhile, authoritarian governments in conflict zones embarked on "the most intense crackdown on independent groups in recent times."

Together, these policies have created a climate in which all citizens are at risk.

"Fear of terrorist attacks and mass refugee flows are driving many Western governments to roll back human rights protections," HRW's executive director Kenneth Roth wrote in his keynote essay introducing the group's 26th annual human rights review. "These backward steps threaten the rights of all without any demonstrated effectiveness in protecting ordinary people."

Roth explained:

Fear stood behind many of the big human rights developments of the past year. Fear of being killed or tortured in Syria and other zones of conflict and repression drove millions from their homes. Fear of what an influx of asylum seekers could mean for their societies led many governments in Europe and elsewhere to close the gates. Fear of mounting terrorist attacks moved some political leaders to curtail rights and scapegoat refugees or Muslims. And fear of their people holding them to account led various autocrats to pursue an unprecedented global crackdown on the ability of those people to band together and make their voices heard.

In the U.S. and Europe, xenophobia became mainstream, creating a "currency" of "blatant Islamophobia and shameless demonizing of refugees," Roth said.

The report details the ongoing human rights abuses in 90 countries total, as well as the responses of bodies like the United Nations and other international advocacy organizations.

Despite these ongoing crises, the report highlights the tangible progress made by intrepid activists and organizations, such as the democratic elections in Myanmar that brought human rights leader Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy to power in November, or the legalization of same-sex marriage in the U.S., Ireland, and Mexico.

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From <http://www.commondreams.org/news/2016/01/27/politics-fear-devouring-human-rights-worldwide>



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

MARCH

ONGOING: Modesto Area Partners in Science, Fridays, 7:30 pm, Sierra Hall 132, MJC West Campus except where noted; <http://murov.info/MAPS-spring.pdf>. **March 25:** *Can Desalination Solve California's Water Problems?* Tom Luster, California Coastal Commission; <http://murov.info/luster.pdf>. **April 15:** *Everything You Wanted to Know about Climate Change But Were Afraid to Ask*. Daniel Kammen (UCB) and Linda Rudolph (Public Health Institute), <http://murov.info/climate.pdf>. 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm, MJC West Campus, Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center.

MJC SCIENCE COLLOQUIUM, 3 to 4 p.m. Wednesdays, Science 115, West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave. FREE. Campus parking: \$2.00. **Mar 2:** Bobby Hutchison, MJC Biologist, "Our Viral Planet: Evolution and Biodiversity of Viruses." **Mar 9:** "MJC Zoology Students: How are animals around the world faring?" **Mar 16:** Shawn Jenkins, MS Athletic Trainer and Strength and Conditioning Specialist, "Fast Food and Your Health." **Mar 23:** Michael Kennedy, "China: The Three Gorges Dam & other environmental impacts." **Mar 30:** Jim and Kathy Clarke, "Mono Lake: the Past; the Present and the Future." **April 6:** Jim Youngblom, Ph.D., CSU Stanislaus, "CRISPR: A Tool for Genome Editing." **Apr 13:** Guy Van Cleave, YCCD Biologist (Ret) "The Baja Experience: Just as Powerful As Ever!"

2 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL on Homelessness. McHenry & J St., 4:00-5:00 pm

6 SUN: Congregation Beth Shalom host a showing of the Oscar-nominated film, *Son of Saul* at the State Theatre at 6 pm. <http://thestate.org/calendar/event/678>. CBS will sell tickets in advance. They will also have an allotment of free tickets for students. For more information, contact Doug Highiet. <http://www.cbsmodesto.org/board-of-directors.html>

6 SUN: Sunday Afternoons at CBS presents *Golden Bough* traditional music of the seven Celtic nations. 3 pm 1705 Sherwood Ave., Modesto. Tickets: \$25/Adults; \$20/Seniors & Students; \$7 children. Call (209) 571-6060. Visit <http://sundaysatcbs.com/>

6 SUN: Habitat Concert, First United Methodist Church, 4 pm. FREE. See Ad

16 WED: Film Night at the Center: *The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975*. 6:30 pm. at the Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Discussion will follow. See article, this issue.

18: FRI: Peace Essay Contest Awards Reception, Mary Stuart Rodgers Student Center, MJC West Campus, 7 PM. Rev. Darcy Baxter, Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County will MC.

LOOKING AHEAD

May 5 and 6: Fundraiser for the Haven Women's Center of Stanislaus County. THE SIRENS - a play by Darrah Cloud, 7:30 p.m. Gallo Arts Center Foster Family Theatre. Tickets start at \$10.00 and available at <http://tickets.galloarts.org>

May 7: Friends of the Modesto Library Used Book Sale. Modesto Library East Portico, 1500 I St. \$1 hardbound, 50 cents paperback. Donations accepted until mid-April. CONTACT: Clare Noonan, 522-5054, clarenoo@gmail.com

June 23-26: 34th annual Peace Camp in the Sierra. See article this issue

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.

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Sunday 10:00 am, Kaiser CDRP, 1789 W Yosemite Ave, Manteca. LifeRing Secular Recovery: Support group for people who choose to live free of alcohol and other addictive substances. We avoid discussion of politics and religion in our meetings so each person can focus on building their personal sobriety recovery plan. (209) 591-8741, www.liferingmodesto.org

Weekly mindfulness meditation and dharma talk, 9:00 am-10:30 am, 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/>

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

MONDAYS

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.

TUESDAYS

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.

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Tuesday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. 591-8741.

Ukulele class/play-a-long led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in songbooks pro-

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), 4:00-5:00 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. **NOTE: March mtg. will be held on Thursday, March 10.**

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.

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

WEDNESDAYS

Merced LGBT Community Center offers a variety of monthly meetings and written materials. Volunteers, on site Wed-Fri, offer support. Ph: 209-626-5551. Email: mercedboard@gaycentralvalley.org – 1744 G St. Suite H, Merced, CA. www.mercedlgbtcenter.org

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

Unity Tai Ji Qi Gong (A Journey Within) - First United Methodist Church Multipurpose Rm - 6 pm - Wednesdays - freewill offering. Michele, 209 602-3162.

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Wednesdays 6:30 p.m., Center for Human Services Building, 1700 McHenry Way, Room 12 Modesto.

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

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

THURSDAYS

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. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction. Jana Lynn Community Rm., 500 N. 9th St., Modesto. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. FREE (donations accepted). Info: email RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com

Latino Community Roundtable (LCR) meets on the second Thursday of each month at Noon at the Red Event Center, 921 8th St., Modesto. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

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.

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

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. 7:30-9:30 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: 549-9155. 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: 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

Citizens' Climate Lobby, Modesto Chapter, meets every first Saturday, 10:30 a.m., 937 Oxford Way, Modesto. Questions: Call Kathy, 523-5907.

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

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