



stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER
PUBLICATION

SEPTEMBER, 2017
VOLUME XXVI, NO. 1

Radio Update: Now Webstreaming!

By **DAN ONORATO**

We are now continuously **STREAMING** at <http://kcbpradio.org/> which began on Saturday August 12. Jim Costello, Station Manager, pushed the button on our computer and we were off. A joyful celebration followed.

Our enthusiastic Programming Committee continues to create various offerings for broadcast. We are in the process of fine tuning our software so that actual broadcast times for various programs can be published. Stay tuned!

Our Operations Committee is working with our radio engineer to enter into an agreement to place our antenna on a tower just west of Patterson.

We now have over \$13,000 in our radio account! Thank you to our enthusiastic donors and volunteers!

Our community radio station, KCBP FM 95.5 will offer a lively and diverse blend of local programming highlighting important issues and events and spotlighting local talent in music and the arts.

Besides offering a wide range of music, we want to increase public awareness of issues important in our schools and local government and for diverse groups in our region. We'll air civil debates and discussions with city and county leaders and people active in the issues. We seek broad support and participation by various community groups and individuals who share our vision of a unique radio station that focuses on local issues, engaging entertainment, public service, and a commitment to improve our community.

To make this and the radio station happen, we need **YOUR HELP!** With equipment and technical assessments estimated to cost up to \$100,000, we need money. Besides generous donations from individuals and underwriting support from organizations and businesses, we need people who'd like to help with



fundraising. We also need people who want to create programs ranging from music to discussions of issues to public service announcements.

Anyone donating \$500 or more will become a Founding Member of KCBP FM. And when you volunteer your help, you'll have the satisfaction that you helped create a valued voice on radio that enriches our community and region.

ACTION: To volunteer your help in fundraising or programming, contact Sue Bower at suebower@prodigy.net. To donate, send your check to Dave Tucker, memo: Radio KCBP, at Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353. Or go <http://kcbpradio.org/> and click on Donate.

Silence Is Not An Option

By **TOM PORTWOOD**

"If you're not outraged, you're not paying attention." – Heather Heyer

The terrifying, tragic events in Charlottesville are not only a stark reminder that racism, intolerance, and bigotry are still thriving in our country, but that those cancers have metastasized anew in ugly, violent ways. The very fabric of our country is under attack from those who proudly drape themselves in the flags of Nazi Germany and the Confederacy, who angrily cry out "Blood and soil" while brandishing semi-automatics and baseball bats. Now is not a time for silence, not when the faces of hatred and murder are glaring out from television screens, not when the President of the United States fuels that hatred through his vile rhetoric and openly encourages and accommodates Neo-Nazis,

Ku Klux Klansmen, and other white supremacists - rather than unequivocally condemning them as anathema to America.

Now is the time to speak out, to take a stand alongside all of those who are targeted by the hatemongers and bullies. It's very telling that the Unite the Right riot broke out so near Thomas Jefferson's home at Monticello, where that founder led a rich, sumptuous life at the expense of African American slaves. Slavery and racism - and the violence and terrorism that always attend them - have poisoned our nation from the outset.

I was born in the Deep South, in the little Louisiana town of Ruston, where my father's work took our family for a short time. I suffered a stroke at birth and then a bout of

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SPLC releases campus guide to countering 'alt-right'

From the **Southern Poverty Law Center**

With college students returning to class, the SPLC has released a new guide that advises them on how to respond when speakers associated with the growing white nationalist, or "alt-right," movement, appear on campus.

In recent months, numerous campuses have been rocked by student protests sparked by the scheduled appearances of alt-right figures such as Richard Spencer and Milo Yiannopoulos.

The alt-right activity is part of a larger surge in campus organizing and recruitment by white nationalists. Now, the movement is seeking to capitalize on the publicity and momentum it gained amid its strong support of the Trump campaign.

Some of the recent protests, at Berkeley

and elsewhere, have attracted far-left activists known as anti-fascists and have turned violent, igniting a debate over freedom of speech on campus.

In its new publication – *The Alt-Right on Campus: What Students Need to Know* – the SPLC advises students to avoid direct confrontation with alt-right speakers and their supporters, many of whom are young white supremacists eager to engage in street fighting with students and anti-fascist protesters.

The guide is a project of the SPLC on Campus program, which currently has chapters at 30 colleges across the country.

"The rise of the alt-right has left many students deeply concerned about hate on

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

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

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

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

Community Nature Walk

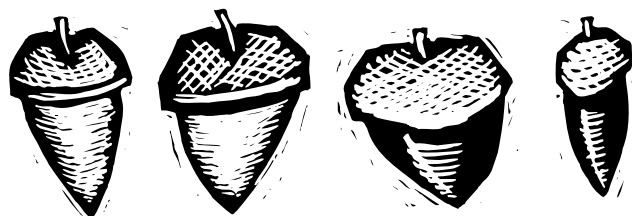
Saturday Sept. 23, 2017

9 AM - 11 AM

Dry Creek Park, Modesto

Join Audubon and Sierra Club members on a 2-mile walk through Dry Creek/East La Loma Park. We will explore and learn about the natural history of Dry Creek. Audubon members will share their knowledge of local birds. Sierra Club members will discuss the riparian habitat, plants, and cultural history. This walk will be geared to families and beginners.

All members of the community are invited to participate. Wear comfortable walking shoes, sun hat, and bring water. Binoculars will be helpful. We will depart promptly at 9 AM, from the "Scenic Oaks Office Park - Peggy Mensinger Trail" parking lot where Coffee Rd. "T's" into Scenic Dr. For more info., contact Elaine, 209-300-4253 or Ralph, sharks_hockey_maniac@yahoo.com



Presentation — "Population Growth"

Wednesday Sept. 20, 5:30-7:30 PM

Learn about population issues and network with other local activists at this event hosted by Population Connection and Yokuts Sierra Club's Committee for Sustainable World Population.

A short presentation will be given by Population Connection staff. Snacks will be provided and a no-host bar is available.

Stewart and Jasper Orchards Co. Store, 1700 McHenry Ave. (McHenry Village), Suite 58, Modesto.

RSVP to Elaine, vevado@yahoo.com, 209-300-4253.

Peace/Life Center looking for volunteers

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

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

No War 2017: War and the Environment

Voices for Creative Nonviolence is co-sponsoring an important conference in Washington, D.C. Co-coordinators Kathy Kelly and Brian Terrell are among the featured speakers.

Following the International Day of Peace, and in the tradition of No War 2016: Real Security Without Terrorism, this year's conference will focus on activism, including activist planning workshops, addressing how the antiwar and environmental movements can work together.

We encourage and can help you to hold similar events in other locations. *This event will be livestreamed so that others can watch it.*

WHO: Speakers include: Gar Smith whose forthcoming book is *The War and Environment Reader*, and Max Blumenthal, Kevin Zeese, Kathy Kelly, Brian Terrell, Ray McGovern, Jill Stein, Medea Benjamin and many others. Read speakers bios here.

WHERE: American University Katzen Art Center, 4400 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20016. How to get there. Lodging and rides board.

WHEN: Friday, Sept 22: 7-10 p.m.; Saturday, Sept 23: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday, Sept 24: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Click here to register (includes 2 catered vegan meals and a copy of the new 2017 edition of *A Global Security System: An Alternative to War*).

Visit <http://worldbeyondwar.org/nowar2017/>

International Day of Peace Prayer and Labyrinth Walk

By LUELLA COLE

Come to the Modesto Church of the Brethren's Labyrinth at 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto for a community prayer and labyrinth walk in observance of the International Day of Peace. September 21, 7:00 PM. All welcome!

Campus guide to countering 'alt-right'

campus and asking what they can do to make a difference," said Lecia Brooks, SPLC director of outreach. "This guide provides answers. It not only shows students how to respond to a possible alt-right event, but how to inoculate your campus against such extremism before these speakers appear on campus." The guide also explains the racist ideology of the alt-right and profiles its leaders.

Public universities that have a policy allowing student groups to host outside speakers cannot legally bar alt-right speakers except under the most extreme circumstances. The SPLC urges students to hold alternative events that celebrate diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness. In addition, they should speak out against hate and encourage university administrators to issue statements condemning the views of alt-right speakers.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County Presents Battle of the Paddles and Haunted McHenry Museum

By VERONICA JACUINDE

On Friday, October 6th, the 4th Annual Battle of the Paddles will take place at the Modesto Centre Plaza. This **exclusively for adults** event promises to be an exciting evening of delicious hors d'oeuvres, refreshing cocktails, cool music and of course, an epic battle for the best ping pong player.

For one special night, BGCSTAN will unleash a level of game room fun typically reserved for their Club members. Recreating the Club atmosphere that kids love so much, adding food and beverages that grown ups crave, the stage is set for business sponsored teams to go head to head against each other on the ping pong table for championship bragging rights! This casual evening will rejuvenate the child in you while raising important funds for the non-profit organization that currently serves over 1200 local youth.

If you are looking for a **fun, family friendly event** to celebrate **Halloween**, then the Boys & Girls Clubs' Haunted McHenry Museum is for you. The event takes place at the historic McHenry Museum on **October 26th, 27th and 28th**. Tickets are \$5 and children under 5 are free.

Offering fun, but not too much fright, the event is designed for children ages 5 to 12 and their families. The celebration will feature seven themed rooms, Halloween crafts, face painting, and a variety of games for kids in the Arcade. Guests are encouraged to come dressed in their favorite costumes.

Live character actors provided by Kit Fox Trolley will reenact spooky but not scary theatrical scenes. They will also serve as guides taking guests from room to room on a colorful and deviously delightful tour where they will experience some of their favorite Halloween characters. This will be an evening of "Scooby Doo" fun and games not "Friday



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SPLC President Richard Cohen testified in June before the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary about the obligation of universities to uphold not only the First Amendment rights of controversial speakers but to speak out against hate and bigotry.

"We need to fight speech that threatens our nation's democratic values with speech that upholds them," Cohen said in his oral testimony. "It's an obligation that university officials have and one that everyone in public life, starting with the president, has as well."

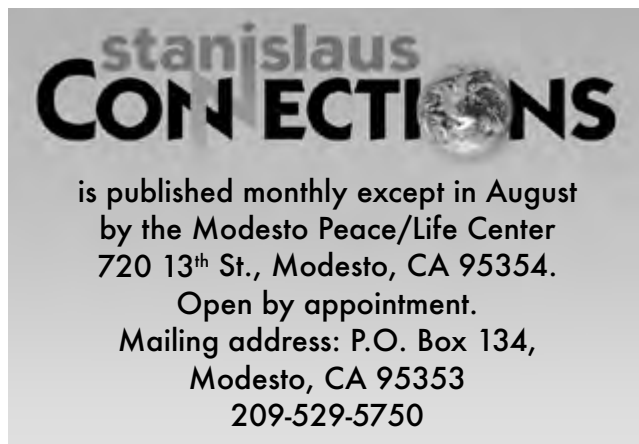
Download the guide at https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/soc_alt-right_campus_guide_2017_web.pdf

From <https://www.splcenter.org/news/2017/08/10/splc-releases-campus-guide-countering-%E2%80%98alt-right%E2%80%99>



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ACTION: To register your child download an application at www.BGCStan.org or pick one up at the administrative office at 422 McHenry Ave., Modesto. Call (209) 222-5826 for more information.



Throughout United States history, millions of people around the world have left their homelands for a chance to start a new life in this country—and they continue to come here to this day. People who come to live in a new country are called immigrants.



Download: flyers / entry forms / submission rules <http://peaceessaycontest.weebly.com>
View information: www.stanislausconnections.org OR www.facebook.com/PeaceEssayContest
Email questions to: peaceessay@juno.com

2018 Peace Essay Contest

Rules & Submission Directions

1. The Peace Essay Contest is open to all fifth through twelfth grade students who are residents of Stanislaus County or attend any public, private, or home school in Stanislaus County.
2. Submit one copy of your essay. Essays in Division I & II must be typewritten, double spaced. Essays in Divisions III & IV must be either typewritten or written in dark ink, double spaced, using one side of white paper 8 1/2 x 11 inches. Number the pages consecutively. Your essay must be of a quality to photocopy legibly. **YOUR NAME OR IDENTIFYING INFORMATION SHOULD NOT BE ANYWHERE ON OR IN THE ESSAY.**
3. Give your essay a title. Place it on the first page where you begin your essay. **DO NOT** use a separate title or cover page.
4. Print & complete the Entry Form and attach to the front of your essay (the form may be found at: <http://peaceessaycontest.weebly.com> OR www.stanislausconnections.org OR email peaceessay@juno.com).
5. Cite any quotations, borrowed ideas, and facts that are not general knowledge. If you are uncertain about plagiarism, ask your teacher.
6. You must do your own work. However, you may ask a teacher, parent, or friend for constructive criticism.
7. The Modesto Peace/Life Center reserves the right to reprint entries. Entries will not be returned.
8. Entries may be delivered to **the Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto, from 2pm-5pm November 15 - 16 - 17, 2017.** You may also mail all entries, postmarked no later than November 17, 2017 to:

**2017 Peace Essay Contest
Modesto Peace/Life Center
P.O. Box 134
Modesto, CA 95353-0134**

Judging

A distinguished group of local writers, educators, and peacemakers will judge the essays. Judging guidelines (in order of weight) include:

1. **Content**
 - A. Does the essay demonstrate concern for establishing a more peaceful world?
 - B. Has the writer used relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples to fully develop their ideas?
 - C. Does the essay address the given topic?
2. **Style**
 - A. Is the essay original and interesting?
 - B. Did the student establish and maintain a formal writing style?
 - C. Does the voice of the writer come through?
3. **Clarity of Expression**
 - A. Does the narrative have a distinguishable introduction and conclusion? Is the narrative well organized with clear transitions from one idea to the next?
 - B. Are each of the requested points of the narrative included?
 - C. Are the ideas clearly stated with factual support?
4. **Mechanics**
 - A. Has the writer attempted to use appropriate transitions, precise language, and an engaging narrative style?
 - B. Are grammar, spelling, and punctuation reasonably correct?
 - C. Does the author cite all quotations, borrowed ideas, and facts that are not general knowledge?
 - D. Does the essay stay within the word limit?

First, Second, and Third prizes will be awarded in each of the four divisions which have at least 15 entries. In the event that fewer than 15 entries are entered in any one division, all prizes may or may not be awarded in that division at the discretion of the judging panel. Up to 3 Honorable Mentions may be awarded in each division. Group entries (more than one author) are welcome; however, a student may only enter one essay.

The writer of the best essay in a division from a school which has ten or more entries in that division will be honored as the school winner. All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation.

Notification of Winners

In late February 2018, winners will be notified through the student's teacher. Prizes will be presented at an Awards Reception in the spring. All participants, teachers, judges, and sponsors will be invited as guests of honor.

2018 Peace Essay Committee: Indira Clark, Steve Collins, Nancy Haskett, Peggy Hoover, Linda Lagace, Deborah Roberts, Sandy Sample, Shelly Scribner, Jann Spallina and David Tucker
This **31st Annual Peace Essay Contest** is a project of the Modesto Peace/Life Center (209) 529-5750 and is co-sponsored by: **Department of Literature and Language Arts, Modesto Junior College**

Green Tips: How Air Pollution Harms Your Body

Submitted by TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Air pollution can cause serious health problems. Rarely, it can even kill people — and we're not exaggerating. That's why we care so much about the laws that protect us from air pollution.

Air pollution can be made of tiny particles or gases, and these get into your body when you breathe. Different types of air pollution do different things inside your body. Air pollution can directly irritate the eyes, nose, and throat, before it even gets into the lungs. It can cause runny nose, itchy eyes, and scratchy throat.

LUNGS

When you breathe in, air moves through your nose or mouth, down your throat into your trachea, and then into your lungs. Pollution can irritate the airways. When that happens, muscles around the bronchi get tight; the lining of the bronchi swell; and the bronchi produce excess mucous. When the airways are constricted, it becomes hard to breathe. That's what happens during an asthma attack.

Air pollution makes infections worse and makes the lungs more susceptible to getting infections in the first place. Pollution causes your airways to narrow, decreasing airflow, and amps up the production of mucous. It also may prevent the lungs from effectively filtering bacteria and viruses.

Some air pollution causes lung cancer. Diesel exhaust, from trucks and cars, is a known human carcinogen. Some pollutants are gases. They come into the lungs easily, just like oxygen in the air. These gases pass directly from the alveoli in the lungs into the blood stream, just like oxygen does.

HEART

Air pollution gets into your blood and affects your heart. Air pollution can cause changes in the system that controls how your heart beats. This can cause the heartbeat to become irregular (an arrhythmia).

A narrowing in the blood vessels of the heart from cholesterol is called plaque. When the heartbeat becomes irregular, that can cause plaque to break off the wall of the blood vessel and block blood flow. This causes a heart attack. When air pollution passes from your lungs into your blood, it can also cause inflammation throughout your body. Being in a state of systemic inflammation causes the blood vessels to become narrow. This decreases blood flow. The inflammation can also loosen plaque in the circulatory system or cause a blood clot to form — both of which can trigger a heart attack.

CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY

Children are especially vulnerable to air pollution. Children breathe faster than adults, so they are exposed to more air pollution than adults. They exercise more and spend more time outside than adults, which means that they breathe more outdoor air pollution. Children's lungs are still developing, and developing lungs are more sensitive to pollution than fully formed lungs.

And the elderly are vulnerable too. As people age, their bodies are less able to compensate for the effects of pollution. The elderly are more likely to have other diseases and conditions, such as heart disease or emphysema, that can be aggravated by air pollution.

Take action help protect children and families from air pollution.

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Rivers of Birds, Forests of Tules: Central Valley Nature and Culture in Season

By LILLIAN VALLEE

79. Who Needs a Garden, Part Two: The Unfolding

“To work our way towards a shared and living language once again,” writes Christopher Alexander, “we must first learn how to discover patterns which are deep, and capable of generating life.” In his eminently readable book on architectural theories and resistance to them, *The Timeless Way of Building*, Alexander writes about how the character of buildings and towns derives from patterns of events that keep on happening there. In a town, this might include the round of seasons (migrating cranes in the fall), the ways in which people produce their food, cultural events such as poetry readings or architectural festivals, celebrations of holidays (parades) or harvests (garlic, asparagus, walnuts, or peaches). I was particularly taken recently by a story about the little town of Idyllwild in the San Jacinto Mountains above Palm Springs which for the last seven years has held a Lemon Lily Festival linked to “education, celebration, and restoration of the [rare] lemon lily” in its original habitat.

Shadowing cultural richness, and sometimes profoundly undermining it, is the pattern of what we look at everyday: the homeless and their towering shopping baskets of belongings; the writhing, agonized addicts we drive by more and more frequently; areas of grinding poverty and neglect; the vandalism or theft or violence we might be subjected to. I have been thinking a lot about this tension between the beauty and order and conviviality we crave, and the debilitating reality and scale of the problems we face here in the Modesto and Stanislaus County, and how this tension has played out in patterns unfolding in the La Loma Native Plant Community Garden at the end of my street.



The immediate impact of replacing a two-acre strip of noxious weeds with thirty-four valley oak saplings, bunchgrasses and herbaceous understory plants--such as mugwort, grindelia, and goldenrod--native to the Central Valley and California was that the garden was suddenly visited by a diversity of birds, bees, dragon- and damselflies unconcerned with the immaturity of the plants. They recognized these trees, these plants, these sources of nectar and seed. The grasses we managed to get into the ground before the last rains and close to developing drip irrigation emitters exploded into light-catching awns reminding us what valley grasslands must have looked like on larger scale. And in strolled the neighbors: mothers and dads with toddlers or babies, older folks slowly recovering from surgeries, individuals walking dogs, and young people asking about what was going on here.

We are honoring the usual reasons for establishing low-water, drought-tolerant landscapes: monocultural lawns are a forty-billion-dollar industry pumping herbicides and

pesticides into our yards and waterways for the sake of a cultural norm that has outlived its day and origin. It has been calculated that turf grasses in arid regions require 200 gallons of water or more, per person, per day. What we found out from talking to the folks out for a stroll or even from those who drove up in cars and on motorcycles to shower us with blessings or thanks was how happy they were to have a garden here. They could walk a strip they had avoided. They could see for themselves the beauty and utility of native plants and learn something. They were prompted by the unfolding garden to contribute generously in whatever way they could: there was an outpouring of small and big kindnesses. Some residents close by watered before the irrigation system was complete, spread mountains of mulch or weeded; others donated plans, blueprints, mulch, plants, trees, rocks, irrigation supplies and even vintage wrought iron umbrellas; Eagle Scout Jacob Kubik built, over the course of months and with the help of his dad and fellow scouts, two stunning bulletin boards for both ends of the garden; our local Girl Scout troop is working on a Little Library for the garden that will specialize in children's books; one man planted a Cinderella pumpkin in the Raindrop, the current name for the children's section of the garden, and another brought milkweed plants he had grown to feed Monarch butterflies he regularly hatched and released. Photographers came to take pictures of the blooms. Almost everyone mentioned beauty. We realized that we had created a “third space,” neither home nor work but a place in which people could meet without expectation or obligation. This is the pattern the garden set in motion: a constant stream of giving, visible and invisible.

Not that the garden doesn't have its detractors, protesting bulletin boards, a bean teepee in the children's garden or benches people could sit on to savor the vistas. Yes, the naysayers are still out there like the little evil genie with a pointed hat in Russell Hoban's children's book *La Corona and the Tin Frog*. Just when the toys think he is vanquished, he promises to return: “Not everyone can be nice,” he says. But even the naysayers have been spotted carrying their wine glasses and strolling down the garden path some evenings.

Luckily our fearless leader, the indefatigable Rhonda Allen, leaves her house every morning with cape flying, and, as is the wont of wonder women everywhere, is capable of deflecting bullets of negativity with her wrists, tempered by early morning watering, weed pulling, and rock hauling. If what Elaine Scarry writes is true, that beauty prepares us to undertake some great labor, Rhonda is our totem resident, moving steadily between the beauty she is creating in the garden and her fierce advocacy for NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, to ease the root cause of so much homelessness and drug use. If we could copy Rhonda's pattern of creativity and labor in the garden paired to commitment to problem-solving (city-, county- and statewide), our neighborhoods and our lives would take on a profound, life-generating character and vitality.

ACTION: To join the list of volunteers or contributors, please contact Rhonda Allen: rhondasaddress@sbcglobal.net or (209) 567-2167.

Sources: Christopher Alexander, *The Timeless Way of Building*; Elizabeth Kolbert, “Turf War”; and Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*.

Peace Life/Center ID Project

Free/Low-cost ID and/or Birth Certificate Application Assistance

Volunteers ready to assist!

Call 209-222-8624 to set an appointment!

Modesto Peace/Life Center
720 13th, Modesto, CA 95354

MODESTO PEACE/LIFE CENTER

NEW MODESTO RADIO STATION COMING SOON!

The Modesto Peace/Life Center has been granted a full power radio station license and needs YOUR help!

- ⇒ Donations, Donations, Donations!
- ⇒ Feedback on future programming from YOU!
- ⇒ Volunteers with radio backgrounds & experience
- ⇒ Local Music, Arts and Entertainment connections
- ⇒ Community partners

To get involved or learn more about the new station, contact James Costello, (209) 402-9191 or jcostello@igc.org. You can donate by sending your check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353 with “Radio Station” in the memo. You can also donate online at <http://peacelifecenter.org>

Living Revolution: A manual for a new era of direct action

By **GEORGE LAKEY**

Movement manuals can be useful. Marty Oppenheimer and I found that out in 1964 when civil rights leaders were too busy to write a manual but wanted one. We wrote “A Manual for Direct Action” just in time for Mississippi Freedom Summer. Bayard Rustin wrote the forward. Some organizers in the South told me jokingly that it was their “first aid handbook — what to do until Dr. King comes.” It was also picked up by the growing movement against the Vietnam War.

For the past year I’ve been book touring to over 60 cities and towns across the United States and have been asked repeatedly for a direct action manual that addresses challenges we face now. The requests come from people concerned about a variety of issues. While each situation is in some ways unique, organizers in multiple movements face some similar problems in both organization and action.

What follows is a different manual from the one we put out over 50 years ago. Then, movements operated in a robust empire that was used to winning its wars. The government was fairly stable and held great legitimacy in the eyes of the majority.

Most organizers chose not to address deeper questions of class conflict and the role of the major parties in doing the will of the 1 percent. Racial and economic injustice and even the war could be presented mainly as problems to be solved by a government that was willing to solve problems.

Now, the U.S. empire is faltering and the legitimacy of governing structures is shredding. Economic inequality skyrockets and both major parties are caught in their own versions of society-wide polarization.

Organizers need movement-building approaches that don’t ignore what animated many of the supporters of both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump: a demand for major rather than incrementalist change. On the other hand, movements will also need the many who still hope against hope that the middle school civics textbooks are right: The American way to change is through movements for very limited reform.

Today’s believers in limited reform can be tomorrow’s cheerleaders for major change if we craft a relationship with them while the empire continues to unravel and politicians’ credibility declines. All this means that to build a movement that seeks to force change requires fancier dancing than “back in the day.”

One thing is easier now: to create virtually instant mass protests, as was done by the admirable Women’s March the day after Trump’s inauguration. If one-off protests could produce major changes in society we would simply focus on that, but I know of no country that has undergone major change (including ours) through one-off protests. Contesting with opponents to win major demands requires more staying power than protests provide. One-off protests do not comprise a strategy, they are simply a repetitive tactic.

Fortunately, we can learn something about strategy from the U.S. civil rights movement. What did work for them in facing an almost overwhelming array of forces was a particular technique known as the escalating nonviolent direct action

campaign. Some might call the technique an art form instead, because effective campaigning is more than mechanical.

Since that 1955-65 decade we’ve learned much more about how powerful campaigns build powerful movements leading to major change. Some of those lessons are here.

Name this political moment. Acknowledge that the United States has not seen this degree of political polarization in half a century. Polarization shakes things up. Shake-up means increased opportunity for positive change, as demonstrated in many historical situations. Starting an initiative

Contesting with opponents to win major demands requires more staying power than protests provide. One-off protests do not comprise a strategy, they are simply a repetitive tactic.

while running scared of polarization will lead to many strategic and organizational mistakes, because fear ignores the opportunity given by polarization. One way to correct such fear is by encouraging those you’re talking with to see your initiative in a larger strategic framework. That’s what Swedes and Norwegians did a century ago, when they decided to abandon an economy that was failing them in favor of one that now stands as one of the most successful models for delivering equality. What kind of strategic framework might Americans follow? Here is one example.

Clarify with your co-initiators specifically why you’ve chosen to build a direct action campaign. Even veteran activists may not see the difference between protests and campaigns; neither schools nor mass media bother to enlighten Americans about the craft of direct action campaigning. This article explains advantages of campaigns.

Assemble the core members of your campaigning group. The people you draw together to start your campaign hugely influence your chance of success. Simply putting out a call and assuming that whoever shows up is the winning combination is a recipe for disappointment. It’s fine to make the general call, but ahead of time make sure that you have the ingredients for a strong group that is up for the task. This article explains how to do that.

Some people might want to join because of pre-existing

Historically, movements that have pulled off macro-level major change have usually started with campaigns with more short-run goals...

friendships, but direct action campaigning isn’t actually their best contribution to the cause. To sort that out and prevent later disappointment, it helps to study Bill Moyer’s “Four Roles of Social Activism.” Here are some additional tips you can use initially and later, as well.

Be aware of the need for a larger vision. There is debate about how important it is to “front-load” the vision, beginning with an educational process that gains unity. I’ve seen groups

WAGING NONVIOLENCE
PEOPLE-POWERED NEWS & ANALYSIS

derail themselves by becoming study groups, forgetting that we also “learn by doing.” So, depending on the group, it may make sense to discuss vision one-on-one and in more gradual ways.

Consider the people you are reaching to and what they need most urgently: to launch their campaign and make progress, experiencing political discussion along the way while they are countering their despair through action, or to do educational work ahead of the first action. Either way, a new and valuable resource for vision work is the “Vision for Black Lives,” a product of the Movement for Black Lives.

Choose your issue. The issue needs to be one that people care a lot about and has something about it you can win on. Winning matters in the current context because so many people feel hopeless and helpless these days. That psychological ambivalence limits our ability to make a difference. Most people therefore need a win to develop self-confidence and be able to access fully their own power.

Historically, movements that have pulled off macro-level major change have usually started with campaigns with more short-run goals, such as black students demanding a cup of coffee.

My analysis of the U.S. peace movement is sobering, but offers a valuable lesson about how to choose the issue. Many people care deeply about peace – the cumulative suffering associated with war is enormous, not to mention the use of militarism to tax working- and middle-class people to benefit the owners of the military-industrial complex. A majority of Americans, after the initial hype dies down, usually opposes whatever war the United States is fighting, but the peace movement rarely knows how to use that fact for mobilizing.

So how to mobilize people to build the movement? Larry Scott successfully confronted that question in the 1950s when the nuclear arms race was spiraling out of control. Some of his peace activist friends wanted to campaign against nuclear weapons, but Scott knew such a campaign would not only lose but also, in the long run, discourage peace advocates. He therefore initiated a campaign against atmospheric nuclear testing, which, highlighted by nonviolent direct action, gained enough traction to force President Kennedy to the negotiating table with Soviet Premier Khrushchev.

The campaign won its demand, propelling into action a whole new generation of activists and putting the arms race on the larger public agenda. Other peace organizers went back to tackling the unwinnable, and the peace movement went into decline. Fortunately, some organizers “got” the strategy lesson of winning the atmospheric nuclear testing treaty and went on to win victories for other winnable demands.

Sometimes it pays to frame the issue as defense of a widely-shared value, like fresh water (as in the case of Standing

continued next page

Living revolution

continued

Rock), but it's important to remember the folk wisdom that "the best defense is an offense." To walk your group through the complexity of a framing that is different from your strategy, read this article.

Double-check to see if this issue is really viable. Sometimes the power-holders try to stop campaigns before they start by claiming that something is a "done deal" – when the deal could actually be reversed. In this article you'll find both a local and a national example where the power-holders' claim was wrong, and the campaigners gained a victory.

At other times you might conclude that you might win but are more likely to lose. You might still want to initiate the campaign because of the larger strategic context. An example of this can be found in the fight against nuclear power plants in the United States. While a number of local campaigns failed to prevent their reactor from being built, enough other campaigns did win, thereby enabling the movement, as a whole, to force a moratorium on nuclear power. The nuclear industry's goal of a thousand nuclear plants was foiled, thanks to the grassroots movement.

Analyze the target carefully. The "target" is the decider who can yield to your demand, for example a bank's CEO and board executive committee that decides whether to stop financing a pipeline. Who is the decider when it comes to police shooting unarmed suspects with impunity? What will your campaigners need to do to get change? To answer these questions it is helpful to understand the different pathways to success: conversion, coercion, accommodation and disintegration. You'll also want to know how small groups can become bigger than the sum of their parts.

Track your key allies, opponents and "neutrals." Here's a participatory tool – called the "Spectrum of Allies" – that your growing group can use at six-month intervals. Knowing where your allies, opponents and neutrals stand will help

you choose tactics that appeal to the various interests, needs and cultural inclinations of the groups you need to shift to your side.

As your campaign implements its series of actions, make strategic choices that move you forward. The strategy debates you have in your group may be helped by bringing in a friendly outsider with facilitation skills, and exposing your group to concrete examples of strategic turning points in other campaigns. Mark and Paul Engler offer such examples in their book "This Is An Uprising," which forwards a new approach to organizing called "momentum." In short, they propose a craft that makes the best of two great traditions — mass protest and community/labor organizing.

Since nonviolence is sometimes used as ritual or conflict-avoidance, shouldn't we be open to "diversity of tactics?" This question continues to be debated in some American groups. One consideration is whether you believe your campaign needs to include larger numbers. For a deeper analysis of this question, read this article comparing two different choices on property destruction made by the same movement in two different countries.

What if you get attacked? I expect polarization to get worse in the United States, so even if violent attack on your group might be unlikely, preparation might be useful. This article offers five things you can do about violence. Some Americans worry about a larger trend toward fascism – even a dictatorship on a national level. This article, based on empirical historical research, responds to that worry.

Training and leadership development can make your campaign more effective. In addition to the brief trainings useful in preparing for each of your campaign's actions, empowerment happens through these methods. And because people learn by doing, a method known as core teams can help with leadership development. Your group's decision-making also gets easier if your members learn the practices of joining and differentiating.

Your organizational culture matters for your short-run success and for the movement's wider goals. Handling rank and privilege can influence solidarity. This article abandons one-size-fits-all anti-oppression rules, and suggests more subtle guidance to behaviors that work.

Evidence is also accumulating that professional middle-class activists often bring baggage to their groups that is better left at the door. Consider "direct education" trainings that are conflict-friendly.

The big picture will continue to influence your chances for success. Two ways you can improve those chances are by making your campaign or movement more militant and by creating greater local-national synergy.

Additional resources

Daniel Hunter's action manual "Building a Movement to

End the New Jim Crow" is a fine resource for tactics. It is a companion to Michelle Alexander's book "The New Jim Crow."

The Global Nonviolent Action Database includes over 1,400 direct action campaigns drawn from almost 200 countries, covering a wide variety of issues. By using the "advanced search" function you can find other campaigns that have fought on a similar issue or faced a similar opponent, or campaigns that used methods of action you are considering, or campaigns that won or lost while dealing with similar opponents. Each case includes a narrative that shows the ebb and flow of the conflict, as well as the data points you want to check out.

George Lakey co-founded Earth Quaker Action Group which just won its five-year campaign to force a major U.S. bank to give up financing mountaintop removal coal mining. Among many other books and articles, he is author of "Strategizing for a Living Revolution" in David Solnit's book Globalize Liberation (City Lights, 2004). His first arrest was for a civil rights sit-in and most recent was with Earth Quaker Action Team while protesting mountain top removal coal mining.

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Original article at <https://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/manual-new-era-direct-action/>



Hiroshima and Nagasaki remembered

On Sunday, August 6, 2017, seven people gathered at the Tuolumne River to remember the victims of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. They were: Dan Onorato, Indira Clark, Sandy Sample, Tom & Alfa Broderick, Harkaman Ghag and James Costello.

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The long and winding road to equality in an era of guns and race

By **BRUCE E JONES**

On July 7, the vile assassination in Dallas of five law enforcement officers, plus more wounded, took attention away from the earlier, by a few days, despicable and wrongful death-by-cops of two black men involved in peaceful acts (selling CDs and driving a car) in very different states. Once again we can expect political debate over promiscuous use of guns to be neutralized by National Rifle Association and GOP politics.

Since guns and racism continue to rule, new emphasis must be on changes to human and institutional practices. The anger of the black population over the great divide of treatment between people of color and the white population is fully justified by protest that is *peaceful but bold*.

America must enable people of color to trust they are a valued part of the larger community. Trust requires visible progress to define and implement solutions to this massive divide that goes far beyond policing ... *but starts there*. We must turn a national SWAT mentality into one of cooperative community assistance where black and brown communities do not fear the approach of police cars. And, certainly, it is a two-way street where officers entering minority neighborhoods can feel welcomed, not threatened.

That will only happen with programs that put police into a positive presence in all communities. Ironically, sadly, Dallas suffered some consequences of the great divide, in spite of its PD having been a leader in commendable reform.

What do we need for improved cop-community progress? An easy start is more ride-alongs with minority youth spending some hours in the passenger seat – not the cage – of a squad car, followed up by contacts with those who reveal a need for assistance. Seeking to make better use of existing resources, it would be feasible to launch a much larger national investment in police/sheriff-sponsored youth summer camps with programs teaching life skills and counseling to help young people identify and develop their often hidden talents and aspirations.

This is an opportunity to make a pitch for a positive program of education and character development, a California experiment of alternate incarceration in “refined boot camps” for non-violent offenders (mostly with drug violations). This somewhat misleading label encompasses a challenging work and schooling camp in a military-light environment that lasts several weeks to a couple months. These camps have included GED completion, physical conditioning, development of work skills, and attitude adjustment. In 1995, after a year of research and many field inspections, I wrote for the California Little Hoover Commission, a 134-page review, entitled *Boot Camps: An Evolving Alternative to Traditional Prisons*. We noted that success of any training program depends on what happens immediately after graduation, which means providing continuing assistance and job-skills training at a location removed from negative input by neighborhood “homies.” Download a copy of this report at <http://www.lhc.ca.gov/studies/128/report128.pdf>

One more proposal for investments. Every police and

sheriff department should be federally funded to host, coordinate and manage “*help centers*” in low-income neighborhoods, where the poor can get healthful food and child care along with life- and work-skills assistance. Uniformed law officers would be highly visible in a secure center as servers and advisors. This clearinghouse could be coordinated with summer camps and many private-sector programs. Of course there always are drawbacks. The very impressive Dallas chief of police, David Brown, observed on July 11 that too often communities pivot away from difficult social issues by putting their management on already over-loaded law enforcement agencies. Managing the homeless is an example. But a higher level of funding will improve public safety and the well-being of major sectors of society.

Back to basics. The human psychology around weapons is an even more complicated issue. Law enforcement and the military both need to watch out for personnel demonstrating a swagger and arrogance that is often generated by the power of being armed. In Vietnam, we called it “The John Wayne Syndrome,” while today’s troops have labeled weapon-fueled belligerence as “The Rambo Syndrome.” Guns have a way of turning normal people into idiots. Bullies with guns must be controlled.

On the other hand, a positive attitude goes far. Some years ago as a tourist visiting Oakland’s central market, my friends asked two officers in their squad car where a wine venue was located. They piled the three of us into the rear seat and drove us there. Taxi service is not in any PD work description, but the gesture left us with a warm regard for these ambassadors.

One more example: In Modesto, which has an effective law enforcement community, I watched from a downtown store window as two officers exited their vehicle. The senior officer embarked on their foot patrol with a stern, almost grimacing, face. The second, a younger officer, saw me, grinned, and waved.

Large investments and significant efforts are needed to upgrade our national response, but the little things always count, as well.

Bruce E Jones is a free-lance writer with more than 20-years service in California government, including time as a consultant to the Little Hoover Commission, formally known as the Milton Marks Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy. He has also worked as a jobs/life-skills counselor with military veterans.

Reach the author at brucejones424@msn.com



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Silence

from page 1

double pneumonia two months later. I was later told I nearly died each time, but the small-town doctors saved my life. Because of that, I always held a special, unquestioning affection for the little town. When I asked about Ruston, my mother spoke of the townspeople’s many kindnesses, remembered that the young couple who lived next door became a part of our family for a time. Then, about a year ago, I researched some of Ruston’s history and discovered to my deep dismay that a lynching had occurred there some eleven years before I was born.

That year, in 1938, a young African American man was killed by a mob from Ruston for allegedly killing a white man and assaulting a white woman. The newspaper accounts of the day are brief but gruesomely vivid in their brevity. *The New York Times* reported that “a 19-year old named R.C. Williams was accused of killing a white man and assaulting a white woman. A crowd captured the young man and tortured him with hot pokers before hanging him from a tree. A grand jury ruled that there was insufficient evidence to press charges against any of the perpetrators.” That the killers of this young man went free speaks to the systemic evil that choked off justice in the Jim Crow South.

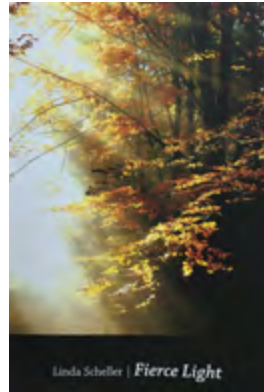
From these simple, stark details the tragic tableau of a nation sundered by hatred and bigotry emerges, a lesson we have thus far failed to heed. Then, as now, Ruston served as the seat of government for Lincoln Parish and was home to Louisiana Tech University. It was a small college town, the hub of several connecting railroads which together served not only northwestern Louisiana but that region still known as the Ark – La -Tex. It was a parish in the Deep South named after the President who had written the Emancipation Proclamation. It grew peaches in the summertime and was blessed by deep piney woods and a beautiful lake on the outskirts of town that caught the sun’s dying rays in its waters. But in 1938 Ruston forever etched its name in shame. But Ruston was not alone.

In a 2015 report, the Equal Justice Initiative estimated that almost four thousand African-Americans were lynched by white people in twelve Southern states from 1877 to 1950. That’s four thousand families shattered beyond repair to maintain the brutal system of repression of one race over another. Poet Melchor Sahagun, refers to these and other acts of hatred and racism as “White Toxicity” and, upon reflection, I would have to agree with him. How else can the terror perpetrated by white people against their fellow human beings be explained but with the realization our “whiteness,” has warped and disfigured our humanity, that the legacy of our nation bears the weight of five centuries of an occupation punctuated by enslavement, genocide, and repression.

I have to ask myself. What if I had grown up in the Ruston of the 1950s and 1960s, steeped, as it undoubtedly was, in the traditions of the Old South – in the notion of the grandeur of the Lost Cause, the fiction that the Confederacy was noble at its core, that the emerging Civil Rights movement was a hotbed of outside Communist agitators? Could I have resisted the pervasive arguments and justifications of the existing white social order? Would I have tried to justify, in any way, the attacks on Freedom Marchers in Selma, Alabama, or the

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Poems from Fierce Light by Linda Scheller



I was born in upstate New York and lived there until the age of 19. In the 1970's I moved to Modesto where my activism and community involvement were galvanized. I read *Ms.* and *The Nation*, wrote and performed activist theater and music, spoke at school board meetings against censorship and the cutting of crucial student services, attended Peace Camp with my children, coached youth soccer and science teams, taught and submitted hundreds of student essays on topics including the environment and human rights, and participated in numerous vigils and demonstrations for peace and justice.

I earned a BA in English and drama at CSU Stanislaus along with a multiple subject teaching credential. I became a public elementary school teacher, and the profession was a perfect fit for me. Many of my students struggled with extreme adversity, and I learned much from the community and the experiences we shared. As I witnessed the effects of poverty, violence, xenophobia, and racism on my students' lives, I read widely and wrote in an effort to not merely comprehend the origins and effects of deprivation and injustice, but more importantly, to be a force for change.

More than any other defining feature, I am a writer. My poetry and plays have been published in nearly 50 journals and anthologies including *Notre Dame Review*, *TapJoe*, *Hawaii Pacific Review*, *In the Grove*, *Plays*, *Homestead Review*, *Poetry East*, and *More Than Soil, More Than Sky*. Three years ago I was seeking the arc for a book when my class of fifth graders insisted that a "girl" couldn't be president because "only men can do important things." I began researching women from world history and culture who were scientists, doctors, leaders, and agitators. As I read about their courage, perseverance, and accomplishments, I wrote persona poems illuminating 36 of these great women including Harriet Tubman, Empress Theodora, Julia Morgan, Tsuyako Kitashima, and Huda Shaarawi.

FutureCycle Press published my book, *Fierce Light*, in April 2017. My poetry collection is available in print and digital editions from Amazon and the publisher. This year I also retired from teaching and now volunteer as a teacher of writing and as a programmer with the Peace/Life Center's new radio station, KCBP. I travel the valley giving poetry readings and interviews in the hopes that *Fierce Light* will educate, inspire, and catalyze others to work for a better world.

Aperture

Dorothea Lange (1895-1965)

I rambled into it. A journey
With my instincts to guide me,
A New Deal opportunity with Roy
Watching over us. The file grew
As the earth under people crumbled,
Heaving families from their homes
And shaking them off their farms.

The Resettlement Administration
Sent us out. It was hard but exciting.
Nobody told us what to do or how.
I was married with five children,
But I never quit. I looked for people
In trouble, first the Depression, later
The migrants, tenant farmers, evacuees.
I jotted down exactly what they said,
Photographed what I saw. I believe
It's important to really look around.
I can almost see what's happening
Behind my own head, 180 degrees.

I decided on photography when I was
Just a kid. Walking on Fifth Avenue,
I saw a display, went in, and got a job.
I learned how to develop negatives
From an old itinerant photographer.
He helped me put together a dark room
In the empty chicken coop. In a few years
I left home, went west. In San Francisco
I had my own business. Portrait photography.
But even so, I longed to do something else,
Something broader. Something important.

I began to photograph people in the streets.
Breadlines, demonstrations, transience, strikes.
Thousands of families streamed into California.
The government hired us to document the crisis.
I drove to the migrant camps and took my time.
To break the ice, I'd ask for directions, then
Talked about my life, told them everything
About my work, how the administration
Was aware of their troubles, interested,
Wanted the rest of the country to know.

I gave them all my attention.
Sitting in the dirt under an oak tree,
Drinking a cup of water in the shade,
Children would scoot in beside me
And poke at the lens, and of course,
I never said don't. Why would I?
The camera's part of my body.
A third eye. A second heart.
And what I saw in the camps,
In the fields, on the dusty roads
Ahead and behind me,
All around, was courage.

The White Rose

Sophie Scholl (1921-1943)

We walked through darkness on narrow paths.
The meadow after woods was exultant with flowers.

Ja, Mutti, I remember Jesus.
So must you.

Wherever they burn books, they will also
In the end burn human beings, said Heine.

Our nation stands at the edge, silent.
The abyss writhes with endless shame.

Ach, Mutti, those few little years.

We bid the people resist, stop the murders,
End the war.

If speaking truth is treason,
Then our guilt is balefire.

Someone had to make a start.

The war is already lost, but
God's Scourge demands my head.

What does my death matter?

The leaflets fluttered like white birds
In the quiet atrium.

Murky black lake.
I dive,
Expecting to rise.

The sun still shines.



Operation 9-2-99 clean-up participants remove 5 tons of garbage

By CHRIS GUPTILL

I would like to thank everyone who participated in our latest river cleanup on August 12th. This was our 31st cleanup event and we were able to completely clean the entire south bank of the river the 9th St. Bridge to HWY 99. This area is free of shopping carts, tires, illegal encampments, styro-foam, plastic, and garbage. [Check out the totals](#) from our 31 cleanups here. Here is a map of the [Dry Creek and Tuolumne Riverside Trails](#) that runs along this stretch of park, creek, and river for hiking, biking, riding, and paddling. It is a great place to recreate both in and along the Tuolumne River and we are very close to restoring the 5 miles of trail damaged due to the high river flows. There are numerous trails in Gateway Park that you can run, ride, or walk as well.

Saturday's 30 volunteers did an outstanding job of returning this entire area to a state the community can be proud of and can recreate along. We had huge effort from students with Project YES in Ceres as well as many returning veteran volunteers. In all we removed 15 shopping carts, 10 tires, 1 illegally abandoned motor home, 1 piano, completely filled a 40 cubic yard dumpster and removed 5 tons of material from the riverbank and along Zeff and River Rd. where unfortunately illegal dumping is the number one problem.

Special thanks to Captain Phil McKay with Fish and

Wildlife, Duane Becker for the garbage bags, gloves, trash grabbers, and his truck driving crew, Modesto City Parks Department for providing the restroom, The Sheriff's Department for providing the dumpster, Dustin Pack with Project YES, Edgar Garibay with the Tuolumne River Trust, Vicki Rice with the City of Modesto for recycling the tires, Mike McCormick with Pepsi for providing beverages, and Del Ambris with Cost Less Foods who helped recycle the shopping carts. Another true community effort. Here are a few [photos from before and during](#) the cleanup.

We have a lot more work to do and we need as many volunteers and partners as we can get. Spread the word via social media. Tell a friend, a family member, a church or club or team member, a neighbor, or a co-worker that we need them. Direct them to the website at <http://tinyurl.com/operation9-2-99> Have them sign up on the form to receive reminders via e-mail. I hope to see people at our **Saturday, September 9th** cleanup as we continue to combat blight in our parks, waterways, and open spaces.

Check out the details on the website or the links below to see the difference we are making.

Website - <http://tinyurl.com/operation9-2-99>

If you are interested, join or donate to our partner the [Tuolumne River Trust](#) [here](#).

Silence is not an option

from page 8

murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner in Mississippi in 1964?

Of course, I'd like to think I would have acted against the daily drumming of hatred and racism in town; that I would have rebelled at the reality that there were separate bathrooms and drinking fountains and backs of buses for African Americans; that I would have stood up for the bullied and harassed when I witnessed the wink-and-a-nod jokes that denigrated African Americans; in short, that I would have outright rejected the prevailing belief espoused by the white leaders of the community that not only was it perfectly equitable and right to divide society and people in that manner, but that it was the Christian, God-ordained thing to do. But I wonder if I would have been strong enough, independent-minded enough, to have done so.

The pernicious nature of Jim Crow apartheid was that it created a framework where white people of supposedly good conscience could be absolved of any feelings of guilt as their neighbors and, all too often their law enforcement officers, ran roughshod over the lives of African Americans. When I lived in Houston, Texas and worked on getting funding for HIV/AIDS services in the early years of the epidemic, one of the more articulate activists of the day often cried out that "Silence Equals Death." And so it was in the South as well, and in so many towns across the nation during the Jim Crow era. The silence of so many white people of standing— the judges, teachers, shopkeepers, farmers, ministers, and doctors in every town and city in the South— created an atmosphere of acquiescence that provided cover to the viciousness and violence by white mobs as they murdered thousands of African Americans in the name of justice. Silence equaled complicity

in these horrific crimes, just as it did in Nazi Germany.

One of the pretexts for the Unite the Right march on August 12th was to protest the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee from Emancipation Park in Charlottesville. Earlier this year, Mayor Mitch Landrieu of New Orleans eloquently answered those who would prefer to glory in the deeds of slave-owners and traitors. Addressing the removal of statues of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis from public spaces there in the Crescent City, Landrieu said, "... it immediately begs the questions: why there are no slave ship monuments, no prominent markers on public land to remember the lynchings or the slave blocks; nothing to remember this long chapter of our lives; the pain, the sacrifice, the shame ..."

The absence of a prominent memorial for R.C. Williams and the fact that all we know of him is the manner and means of his death are not only shameful and tragic, but unforgivable. R.C.'s thoughts, fears, passions, longings, were never recorded, certainly not by those who murdered him. For R.C. and the untold thousands of others who have died at the hands of white supremacists, for Heather Heyer, who was killed while peacefully protesting against the iron fists and bloody instincts of white supremacists four generations later, but also for ourselves and for our country, we must never be silent again. I choose to believe that the strong, resilient voices of people of compassion and caring will instead ring out, giving new vigor to the hope so beautifully expressed by Martin Luther King, Jr. in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech:

"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism... Unconditional love will have the final word."

The author, local poet and writer, lives in Modesto.

WOW Film Fest 2017: Uniting women through the medium of film

The Women of The West Film Festival returns to the State Theatre on Saturday, September 16 for its third year. Mothers, daughters, wives and women of every stripe are invited to attend. This evening of food, film and friendship is dedicated to telling women's stories, shedding light on their collective concerns, and empowering them through the dynamic medium of film.

The evening opens with a buffet featuring foods from around the world and a no-host bar at 5:30 p.m., followed by a short-film program, and the introduction of this year's keynote ~ the Mighty "Ruthie" Bolton ~ prior to the screening of the inspirational documentary Mighty Ruthie. Bolton is a Women's National Basketball Association legend, an Olympic gold medalist, author, actress and domestic violence survivor.

WOW, the first film festival of its kind in California, provides a platform for women to give voice to their unique, cinematic perspectives.

Admission: \$15. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/959>

"War makes murderers out of otherwise decent people. All wars, and all decent people."

— Benjamin Ferencz, age 97, last living Nuremberg prosecutor. 60 Minutes CBS-TV News, 07 May 2017. <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-the-last-nuremberg-prosecutor-alive-wants-the-world-to-know/>

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Why joy is the perfect resistance to a politics of fear

By JANEY STEPHENSON

This article was first published by [openDemocracy](#).

When you hear the words ‘anti fascist rally,’ what do you visualize? An angry crowd with placards, old hippies holding banners with clichés about love, or maybe those rowdy anarchists in black balaclavas?

What about young women and non-binary people gleefully dancing to grime music that’s blasting out of portable speakers? Well, that’s precisely what a [recent anti-fascist rally in south London looked like](#).

It’s a perfect example of how collective joy can become powerfully subversive.

When the far-right “pro-British” [South East Alliance](#) came to Croydon in south London to hold an “anti-immigrant, anti-Islam” rally, they were interrupted with an unexpected weapon: joy. A big crowd of young activists, predominantly from direct action groups like [Sisters Uncut](#) and [Black Lives Matter UK](#), [danced joyfully right in front of them, guarded by a line of police](#). It might seem like an unexpected tactic, but logically it makes perfect sense, both to the individuals involved and to the political goals of these groups.

Where fascism aims to instill fear, joy is the perfect resistance. To laugh in the face of fear is possibly the bravest act, which is why [Saffiyah Khan](#) became an instant hero in the United Kingdom when she smiled at fascist thugs from the far-right, racist movement [English Defence League](#) — who began harassing Muslim women in her hometown. Two core tenets of fascism are fierce racism and rampant sexism, and with that in mind, anti-fascist resistance doesn’t get more powerful than women and non-binary people of color collectively, loudly and happily dancing together in the streets.

Dance as protest

Dance as protest is not unique to Croydon. In April, LGBTQ activists in the United States held a [“queer dance party”](#) outside Vice President Mike Pence’s home to protest his homophobic policy positions. The global One Billion Rising movement, which aims to end violence against women, is centered on [women dancing together](#) on the same day in countries throughout the world. Sisters Uncut are renowned for collective dancing at their demonstrations against cuts to domestic violence services proposed or enacted by the U.K. government.

Their [spontaneous, collective dancing](#) is described by activist Sur Este as “a fuck you to the powers that be.” She says that dance is both a way to reclaim public space and a way to let go: “When I dance surrounded by cops, or fascists, or when I am trying to make a point about something horrible that is happening, I feel powerful... We are still here and we are still dancing.”

Naatasha Mumbi, who also attended the Croydon protest, recalls the inspirational [student protests that took place in South Africa](#) in 2016 as part of the “Rhodes Must Fall” movement.

“The front lines were bringing full-on coordinated dance moves, and what a disarming and radical act it was in the face of state violence,” Mumbi said. “It made my heart pound. Facing up to fascists with the full force of bangin’ grime beats, and putting our bodies on the line together in rhythm, is how I channeled what I saw from South African protests.”

Liberation movements have a long history of communal dance. The writer Barbara Ehrenreich has documented

the history of collective joy in her book “[Dancing In The Streets](#).” She argues that collective and ecstatic dancing is a nearly universal “biotechnology” for binding groups together. Physical movement — a powerful escalation of typical protest chanting — not only releases emotion, it also creates bonding, trust and equality, dissolving hierarchy and increasing a sense of community.

What’s more, it’s actually essential to our survival. Our species, homo sapiens, has outlived all other human species because of our ability to co-ordinate with others in groups. Historically, groups who could hold themselves together through dance and other methods would have enjoyed an advantage over more weakly-bonded groups.

In his book [The Righteous Mind](#), social psychologist Jonathan Haidt describes the innate craving that people have to belong to a greater whole; to “transcend self-interest and lose ourselves (temporarily and ecstatically) in something larger than ourselves.” Haidt calls the ability to do this the “hive switch,” which makes groups more cohesive and more successful in relation to others.

This switch can be activated at football matches and raves, through the use of hallucinogens like LSD, and even in choral singing or military drills. It has its roots in biology, since all of these activities release the “hug hormone” [oxytocin](#) which promotes social bonding. On an undeniably physical level, collective dancing has the power to generate a deep sense of elation, but at what point does collective joy become subversive?

When pleasure becomes subversion

Within the context of capitalism, collective joy through dancing and other forms of expression is already subversive. Back in 1905, the German sociologist Max Weber warned of an “unprecedented inner loneliness of the single individual” that accompanied the “spirit” of modern capitalism. In a capitalist society founded on competition, privatization and small family units, collective joy — as opposed to individual happiness — signals both personal resilience and political rebellion. The very act of relishing in a shared connection is a triumph in a society that seeks to divide us.

The subversive power of collective joy is maximized when it occurs in public, politicised spaces as an affirmation of collective identity. Joy can score cultural and political goals in the name of liberation because it simultaneously serves an individual and a broader, political purpose. Many group activities are carried out in the pursuit of hedonist escapism, or in order to forget ourselves. However, when collective joy erupts in pursuit of defiantly reinforcing your very existence — especially in the face of those who seek to erase you — it has the power to subvert authority and release suppressed rage whilst connecting us to each other, and reinforcing a sense of group safety.

There’s no better example of this process in action than [Dabke dancing](#). Dabke is the traditional folkloric dance of Palestine, supposedly originating as a fertility rite where people stamped their feet on the ground. It is most commonly danced at wedding celebrations, but it can also be found in [flash mobs](#) on the streets of Gaza, as well as in [BDS protests](#) in New York.

Saeed Suliman, a Dabke teacher from the West Bank, told me that Dabke dancing is an “important weapon in the cultural resistance of Palestinians.” He then went on to say: “After

the Zionists stole our land and named it Israel, our national identity was no longer recognized. We only had Palestinian culture to identify ourselves by, and Dabke dancing shows our roots to the land that has been stolen from us. Dabke is a way to fight against our extermination by reinforcing our identity, energy and pride as a people.”

Our next steps

Right now we face a hostile world order that’s rapidly shifting to the right. The United Kingdom and the United States, supposedly bastions of democracy, both have leaders who ran for election with pledges to [remove human rights and build walls](#); and who [aggressively scapegoat migrants and valorize the military](#). Bearing in mind the [14 characteristics of fascism](#) established by political scientist Lawrence Britt, these measures signal that there are even bigger battles to come.

But the fight-back need not be joyless. Holding onto and centering joy is a vital tactic for personal and group resilience, as well as political resistance to an agenda that seeks to enforce hierarchy and division through mass fear. Authoritarianism is directly incompatible with collective joy; it demands fear, obedience, hierarchy and an obsession with security and preparation for war. The unexpected, spontaneous and pleasantly disruptive nature of collective joy takes people off guard and is one of the great equalizers of social and political struggle.

“If I can’t dance, I don’t want to be in your revolution” as Emma Goldman, the Russian feminist anarchist, [once famously said](#). We’d do well to take her words literally. Movement builds movements.

Janey Stephenson, a campaigner and filmmaker, is passionate about ending violence against women and tweets @rebeljelly. <https://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/joy-resistance-politics-fear-fascism/>

A Celebration of Ignorance?

“I have a foreboding of an America in my children’s or grandchildren’s time--when the United States is a service and information economy; when nearly all the key manufacturing industries have slipped away to other countries; when awesome technological powers are in the hands of a very few, and no one representing the public interest can even grasp the issues; when the people have lost the ability to set their own agendas or knowledgeably question those in authority; when clutching our crystals and nervously consulting our horoscopes, our critical faculties in decline, unable to distinguish between what feels good and what’s true, we slide, almost without noticing back into superstition and darkness. The dumbing down of America is most evident in the slow decay of substantive content in the enormously influential media, the 30-second sound bites (now down to 10 seconds or less), lowest common denominator programming, credulous presentations on pseudoscience and superstition, but especially a kind of celebration of ignorance.”

— Carl Sagan



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

Stockton

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

SEPTEMBER

6 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL: Immigration. McHenry & J St., 4:30-5:30 pm.

8 FRI: Presenting fretless bass icon Michael Manring and Mark Lemaire's sparkling acoustic guitar for a unique evening under the moon. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFOPzYAaVpQ&feature=youtu.be>. \$20 per person. Bring folding chair or blanket. Burgers provided; feel free to bring beverages/something to share. Gate: 6:30 pm, music 7:30 pm. If you need the address, email cvanempel@gmail.com; Mark Lemaire www.marklemaire.com

9 SAT: Operation 9-2-99 Clean-Up. Phase 4 South Bank Cleanup All Reaches. 8 am to 11 am. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/operation9-2-99>

16 SAT: The State Theatre presents **Women of the West Film Festival**. Doors/buffet, 5:30 pm. Films, 6:30 pm. 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/897>

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

17 SUN: The Modesto Film Society and The State Theatre presents Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*. 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/897>. Become a member of the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/membership>

20 WED: Presentation: **"Population Growth."** Hosted by Population Connection and Yokuts Sierra Club's Committee for Sustainable World Population. Stewart and Jasper Orchards Co. Store, 1700 McHenry Ave. (McHenry Village), Suite 58, Modesto. RSVP to Elaine, vevado@yahoo.com, 209-300-4253.

20 WED: Film Night at the Center: TBA, 6:30 pm. at the Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Discussion will follow.

21 THURS: International Day of Peace Prayer and Labyrinth Walk. Modesto Church of the Brethren's Labyrinth at 2301 Woodland Ave. Community prayer and labyrinth walk in observance of the International Day of Peace. All welcome 7:00 PM!

23 SAT: Join Audubon and Yokuts Sierra Clubs for a **2-mile walk through Dry Creek/East La Loma Park**. Explore and learn about the natural history of Dry Creek. Birds, riparian habitat, plants and cultural history will be discussed. Depart promptly at 9 am, from the "Scenic Oaks Office Park - Peggy Mensinger Trail" parking lot where Coffee Rd. "T's" into Scenic Dr. Info: Elaine, 209-300-4253 or Ralph, sharks_hockey_maniac@yahoo.com. See article this issue.

LOOKING AHEAD

Friday, October 6: 4th Annual Battle of the Paddles. Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County. See article this issue.

Thursday-Saturday, October 26-28: Boys & Girls Clubs' Haunted McHenry Museum. See article this issue.

Tuesday, January 9, 2018: Annual John McCutcheon Concert. Details to follow.

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.

Weekly insight meditation and dharma talk, 9:00 am-10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (in the UUFSC sanctuary). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com

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

MONDAYS

StanCounty Radical Mental Health: a peer facilitated support group open to people living with mental health issues. Mondays, 7 pm at the Modesto Peace/Life Center 720 13th St., Modesto. We strive to create a safe, non-judgmental space. Information: email stancountyrmh@gmail.com or contact Sue at 209-247-4659.

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

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

TUESDAYS

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

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

Ukulele Jam led by Lorrie Freitas. 6 p.m. Songbooks provided. Telle Classrooms Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver, Modesto. Donation. Info: 209-505-3216. www.Funstrummers.com

Weekly insight meditation and dharma talk, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC parking lot). Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: insightmeditationcentralvalley@gmail.com

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

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), 4:30-5:30 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.

WEDNESDAYS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Transgender Support Group, 2nd & 4th Wed., 7:30 to 9 pm. Info: (209) 338-0855. Email info@stanpride.org , or tgsupport@stanpride.org

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

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

THURSDAYS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Funstrummers Ukulele Band every Friday, 9:15 am-noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Donation. Info: 209-505-3216; www.Funstrummers.com

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

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

Sierra Club: Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 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

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

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. nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

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.