



Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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Advocates for Justice to receive the Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy Award

By JAMES COSTELLO

Attorneys Jacq M. Wilson and his twin brother, Jacque, will be awarded the Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Award for their service to the community on Saturday, January 20, 2018 at the 24th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration at which Delores

Huerta will speak at 7 p.m. at Modesto Junior College's Performing Arts and Media Center at 435 College Ave., Modesto.

In 2006, Jacq and Jacque Wilson started the Advocates for Justice (AFJ) program to provide Pro Bono Legal representation and assistance. AFJ fights for social, economic

& criminal justice. Its mission is to advocate, educate and empower our community to greatness. AFJ accomplishes its mission through impact advocacy and litigation. AFJ aspires to motivate, inspire, and empower our students to achieve academic excellence and make positive contributions at school,

in their communities, and world. AFJ offers research and evidence based creative solutions to fix and correct school discipline problems, decrease dropout rates and increase academic achievement and graduation rates

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John McCutcheon: the Best Thing About January in Modesto

By KEN SCHROEDER

Six-time Grammy-nominated folk musician John McCutcheon performs in his 16th benefit concert for the Modesto Peace/Life Center on Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave. Johnny Cash called him "the most impressive instrumentalist I've ever heard." John plays the guitar, banjo, hammer dulcimer, piano, autoharp and fiddle.

of course, is Groundhog Day: my thirty-something-th annual Left Coast Tour. It's down-right Pavlovian at this point. "If it's January, it must be time for McCutcheon." It's a lovely tradition and I'm eager to visit halls-full of audiences that feel more like family than fans. I'll be doing lots of material from **Ghost Light**, at the same time that the **Trolling for Dreams** songs still feel surprisingly fresh... In the meantime, though, there

are small victories to celebrate, buffoonery to lampoon, fiddle tunes to be played, and stages in towns across the world to mount for a few, blest hours each night. May we meet there soon! See you in the New Year."

John is also an author. He shares, "*Flowers for Sarajevo*, my latest picture book, has been generously

honored this year. Both *School Library Journal* and *Kirkus* give the book starred reviews, we've gotten lovely mentions and reviews in loads of other places and *Parents Choice* gave it their coveted Gold award. During their end-of-year roundups, both *Kirkus* and the *New York Public Library* placed *Sarajevo* on their "Best of 2017" lists... This is a book that, like *Christmas in the Trenches*, began as a song that told an

historical story. And, like *Christmas*, it was a story that I thought kids should grow up knowing. Stories are those clues into who and what we are. We tell them both to discover and remind ourselves of whom we might be and become. Especially in this time, rife with ugliness and violence of all sorts, stories like this might give additional tools to our children as they learn to navigate the rocky shoals of this world."

Concert tickets are \$23 in advance, \$26 at the door and youth 18 and under are \$10. Online tickets sales are at <http://mccutcheonmodesto2018.eventbrite.com>. Purchase in person by check or cash at the Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., 209/523-1438.

John's website is www.folkmusic.com

You can sponsor the John McCutcheon concert. Please consider becoming a sponsor of the concert. You will receive tickets to the concert, your name in the program, and reserved seating. Five levels of sponsorship are available:

Autoharp — \$40 **One** ticket

Guitar — \$75 **Two** tickets

Banjo — \$150 **Four** tickets

Piano — \$300 **Eight** tickets

Hammer Dulcimer — \$500 **Sixteen** tickets,

For information on sponsorships contact Joseph Homer, 209/681-3596 or Jhomer42@gmail.com. For concert information contact Ken Schroeder 209/480-4576.

Labor activist Dolores Huerta will speak at the 24th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration

By JAMES COSTELLO

Labor leader Dolores Huerta will to speak at the free 24th Annual Martin Luther King, Commemoration on Saturday, January 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Modesto Junior College's Performance and Media Center on East Campus, 435 College Ave., Modesto.

There will be a public reception for Ms. Huerta at the West Modesto King-Kennedy Center, 601 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. at 5:00 p.m. Students will meet with her there at 4:00 p.m. (All students are welcome!)

Dolores Huerta is president and Founder of the Dolores Huerta Foundation and co-founder of the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) with César Chávez and Philip Vera Cruz.

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Local favorite Patty Castillo Davis, three-time Modesto Area Music Award (MAMA) winning singer/songwriter, will open the concert. She has opened for Los Lonely Boys, Dwight Yoakum, Beth Hart, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Dave Mason, and Jimmie Vaughn. Her Americana Bluesy Folk music reflects social issues, hope and love.

John's latest (and 39th) album, **Ghost Light**, was just released. John says "January,



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The State Theatre presents: A Club for Avid Readers: *Dr. Zhivago*, Tuesday January 9

The second gathering of readers for the State Theatre Books, Films and Friends book club will see and discuss *Dr. Zhivago*, an epic based on the Nobel Prize-winning novel by Boris Pasternak.

Doctor Zhivago covers the years prior to, during, and after the Russian Revolution, as seen through the eyes of poet and doctor Yuri Zhivago (Omar Sharif). At the heart of the story is his affair with beautiful Lara Guishar (Julie Christie), who has been having an affair with her mother's lover, Victor Komarovskiy (Rod Steiger), an unscrupulous businessman. Yuri, however, ends up marrying his cousin Tonya (Geraldine Chaplin). But when he and Lara meet again years later, the spark of love reignites. Moderator to be announced. The State Cafe will be open for espresso drinks, wine and beer, cocktails, light food and desserts. (PG-13~1965) 3 Hrs. 20 Min.

Doors at 5:30; discussion at 6; film at 6:30 p.m. Admission: \$8 <http://ww2.thestate.org/calendar/event/985>

Dolores Huerta

from page 1

Dolores Huerta is a labor leader and community organizer. She has worked for civil rights and social justice for over 50 years. In addition to co-founding the UFW union, she served as its vice-president and has played a critical role in many of the union's accomplishments for four decades.

In 2002, she received the Puffin/Nation \$100,000 prize for Creative Citizenship which she used to establish the Dolores Huerta Foundation (DHF). DHF is connecting groundbreaking community-based organizing to state and national movements to register and educate voters; advocate for education reform; bring about infrastructure improvements in low-income communities; advocate for greater equality for the LGBT community; and create strong leadership development.

She has received numerous awards: among them The Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award from President Bill Clinton in 1998. In 2012 President Barack Obama bestowed upon Dolores the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States.

The event is free; however, we depend solely on donations of money or services from co-sponsors, caring groups, businesses, and individuals. *Will you help us bring Dolores Huerta to our community?*

ACTION: Make your tax-deductible check payable to "Modesto Peace Life Center-MLK." Send it to Jim Costello, 1849 Richard Way, Ceres, CA 95307-4504. The Peace/Life Center is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization; EIN #94-2800825. Information: jcostello@igc.org

SPONSORS at press time: City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Dept.; Modesto Junior College; Associated Students of Modesto Junior College (ASMJC); Modesto Peace/Life Center; CSU, Stanislaus; Rockwell, Kelly, & Duarte, LLP; College Avenue United Church of Christ; Ed Fitzpatrick, Valley Lexus; Modesto Teachers Association; Moose Federal Credit Union; DoubleTree by Hilton Modesto; Democratic Women's Club of Stanislaus County; Central Valley Democratic Club, Project Uplift; Modesto Irrigation District.

"THANK YOU TO ALL WHO RESPONDED TO OUR FALL FUNDRAISING APPEAL IN 2017!"

We were so close to our goal of raising \$4000, and the proceeds will all be going to local, Modesto Peace/Life Center programs that occur throughout the year.

It is great to be a part of the peace movement and to be a part of doing the good work with you!

Thanks again!

Modesto Peace/Life Center

Holiday Gift Bags needed for Prison inmates

By DAVID HETLAND

More than a hundred volunteers, representing 18 different church, student, and community organizations, recently gathered in Merced to assemble gift packets for the 3800 inmates at the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, one of the largest concentration of female prisoners in the nation. The prison's Inmate Family Council, an advisory committee of family members and loved ones of inmates, is appreciative of the ongoing support of Modesto Peace/Life Center members who faithfully collect "goodies" throughout the year for the gift bags. These include travel/sample sizes of soap, shampoo, conditioner, skin/body lotion, toothpaste, tissue, as well as individually wrapped toothbrushes, combs (no rat tail), small notepads, and unused greeting cards with envelopes.

In early December, more than 3000 of these gift bags were distributed to prison inmates. Eighty volunteers in the Fresno area filled large Ziploc bags with greeting cards, hygiene products, writing materials, and snacks, including items collected through the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

The project's sponsor, an advisory board made up of family members and loved ones of inmates, is grateful for the Peace Center's effort that extends throughout the year. For many of the inmates, these small tokens of love and concern are the only remembrance they receive during the holidays.

ACTION: Please continue to collect the needed products and bring them to the Modesto Peace/Life Center office, 720 13th St., Modesto (call ahead to ensure the office is open). For more information, contact Shelly (209-521-6304) or Dave (209-388-1608).

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.

SPRING: Modesto Area Partners in Science (MAPS) at MJC

MAPS presents free, informative, engaging, inspiring community science programs. Fridays, 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132 (*except where noted).

Jan. 26: Dr. Ari Martinez, National Geographic Explorer. "*Fear and food in the Amazon: understanding how and why birds eavesdrop on each other in the rainforest.*" Ari will discuss how neo-tropical birds communicate across species and the information gained about food and predators. <http://arimartinez043.wixsite.com/birds>.

Feb. 23: Dr. M Jackson, "*The Secret Lives of Icelandic Glaciers.*" National Geographic Explorer and TEDx speaker. M has spent years researching glaciers and climate change. She explains what glaciers are, why they matter to people and landscape, and how understanding the individuality and interconnections of people and ice is critical to engaging with climate change today. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4R5-y0Dc1s>.

March 16: Dr. Lori Silverstein, *FDA process for approval of new drugs.*

***April 6:** MJC East Campus Auditorium, A Family Science (all ages) Presentation, TED speaker, Dr. Puragra (Raja) GuhaThakurta, UCSC and Lick Observatory, "*Our Place in the Cosmos.*" Raja uses the latest astronomical images, animations, videos to illustrate how the very material that human beings and other life forms are made of was once synthesized inside the Sun's ancestral stars. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0WTzVNB2g4>



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"Church & State" debuts in Modesto on MJC stage

Modesto Junior College's Arts, Humanities and Communications Division is staging *Church & State* on January 25-27 and February 2-3 at 7 p.m. and February 4 at 2 p.m. in Room 222 of the Performing and Media Arts Center on East Campus, 435 College Avenue, Modesto.

Church & State, written by Jason Odell Williams, is a timely play about faith, politics, and the power of social media. This dramedy is a witty, thought-provoking look at the politics of religion and gun control, and the danger and power in telling the unfiltered truth.

Set three days before Election Day, incumbent U. S. Republican Senator Charles Whitmore is up for re-election in North Carolina. Polls put him in a dead heat with his opponent until an indiscrete remark to a blogger on guns and God suddenly puts him in a risky political situation.

Williams states in an author's note of June 2016, that the idea for the play began with the massacre at Virginia Tech in 2007, followed by the shooting of U. S. Representative Gabby Giffords and 18 others in 2011, which was followed by a barrage of other mass shootings. He dedicated *Church & State* to the Virginia Tech, Tucson and Newtown tragedies.

The play begins just after a school shooting in Raleigh, Senator Whitmore's hometown, a tragedy that traumatized the community and the Senator who visited the school site immediately after the shooting. Though his TV ads still pro-

moted him as a protector of Americans' Second Amendment Rights, he now has doubts about his stance on guns— and experiences a crisis of faith.

"I hope this play raises questions, sparks debate, makes people laugh and cry," states Jim Johnson, production director and actor playing Senator Whitmore. "And of course, I hope it moves people in some way. Perhaps enough to take action with their voice and vote, and bump the needle ever so slightly in the conversation about gun violence."

Other cast members include Charlene West as Sara Whitmore, Kimberly Ogden as Alex Klein, and Trey Augustus as Tom/Marshall/Security Guy.

A review by the *Beachcomber Newspaper* proclaims, "When a play is performed that touches our emotions while broaching the struggles of our era, it becomes a sort of prayer. So, it is with the marvelous new play by Jason Odell Williams, 'Church & State.' ...You'll laugh knowingly at familiar political and interpersonal tropes, cry helplessly for the seemingly irresolvable issues facing our nation and our world, and possibly think and dialogue deeply subsequent to this profound experience in the theater -- and perhaps even pray."

Tickets are \$11 general admission and \$9 for students and seniors, and are available online at <http://mjc.tix.com> and at the MJC Box Office, open Tuesday through Friday, 12 noon to 5 p.m., or by phoning (209) 575-6776 during these hours. Tickets are also available at the door beginning 90 minutes prior to show time.

A SPECIAL MEMORY

We remember the Harvey Family who gave a generous donation to the Modesto Peace/Life Center in memory of Phyllis Harvey. Phyllis was truly dedicated to the causes of Peace and Justice. Her memory serves as an enduring example for us all.

— The Board of the Modesto Peace/Life Center

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2018 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration in Sonora

By KATHLEEN MALLOY

Martin Luther King, Jr. helped change the course of history. As we celebrate his legacy, we are reminded of just how true his words remain today: "Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom." Justice, freedom, love, and respect for all are not inevitable. The world needs your help to make it so.



The Motherlode Martin Luther King Jr. Committee has been presenting free programs in our community for 23 years. Each January the committee presents a speaker whose ideals and work embody and emulate the life work of Dr. King. This year, the keynote speaker for the annual celebration is **Carmen Perez**, national co-chair of the 2017 Women's March. She will speak in Sonora on Sunday, January 14, 2018, to celebrate Dr. King's birthday.

Ms. Perez has been fighting for justice throughout the world for over 20 years. She is the co-founder of Justice League NYC and founder of Justice League CA. In 2010, Carmen Perez became the Executive Director of The Gathering for Justice, founded in 2005 by Harry Belafonte. From its inception, The Gathering for Justice has provided a safe environment for dialogue between generations of activists, community members, formerly-incarcerated individuals, gang members, and academics from all communities and cultures.

Carmen Perez was the National Co-Chair of the January 2017, Women's March which drew over 5 million people across the globe. They marched to resist hatred and bigotry, and to affirm the rights of women of all identities. Ms. Perez has been a featured speaker at various universities including Harvard, Columbia and UC Santa Cruz. She received the *Justice, Peace, and Freedom Award* at the 2016 AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Civil and Human Rights Awards. In 2017 Ms. Perez was named one of Fortune's *Top 50 World Leaders* and one of TIME's most influential people.

Along with Ms. Perez, the celebration will feature The Pine Cone Singers with Dennis Brown, vocalist Michelle Allison, the Sierra Waldorf Choir, Student Essay Contest winners, Imam Ahmad Kayello from the Modesto Islamic Center, and a free reception after the event.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Please join us for this thoughtful event where we can all learn how to better create the Beloved Community that Dr. King espoused. www.motherlodemlk.org. Like us on Facebook.

Motherlode Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration, Sunday, January 14, 2018, 2 p.m., Sonora High School Auditorium, 480 N. Washington St., Sonora. FREE!

Modesto Junior College Arts, Humanities & Communications Division presents

CHURCH & STATE

A play about the politics of God and guns by Jason Odell Williams

January
25, 26, 27, with last at 10:00 p.m.

February
2, 3, 4 at 7:00 p.m.
4, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

Jim Johnson Charlene West Kimberly Ogden Trey Augustus

MJC Performing Arts Building Television Studio

Tickets: \$11 General / \$9 Students and Seniors
Box Office Phone #: (209) 575-6776 Hours: Tues-Fri Noon-5:00pm
Online: mjc.tix.com

California Citrus are under threat from citrus psyllid

By ANNE of GREEN GARDENS

A devastating disease is killing citrus trees in Florida, Texas and California at an alarming rate—it's called "citrus greening," or Huanglongbing Disease (HLB). The disease is fatal to citrus such as lemon, lime, orange, grapefruit, and pomelo, as well as relatives such as kumquat and calamondin. Host plants include close relatives such as Orange Jessamine and Indian curry leaf.

HLB is carried by an insect called the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), which is very tiny, about the size of a gnat. If ACP is carrying the disease, it can transmit it from plant to plant while feeding. In most cases, whenever ACP is found, the disease is discovered within 5 years. Once a tree has HLB disease, there is no known cure; destroying the trees is the only option.

ACP has been found in 26 of California's 58 counties including: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Monterey, Orange, Placer, Riverside, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Solano, Stanislaus, Tulare, Ventura, and Yolo.

How to Help

So, what can you do to help? When you purchase citrus trees for your landscape, shop at local nursery and garden



centers. Never bring citrus from out of the area, which is against the law. For a list of quarantined areas, visit http://ucanr.edu/sites/ACP/Distribution_of_ACP_in_California/

If you like your friend's orange tree variety but they live in

another state, or a faraway county, don't take wood from their tree to use for budding and grafting. Instead, find someone local with a tree.

In your landscape, be on the lookout for the psyllid. The nymphs prefer the soft, new succulent leaves. The psyllid has tell-tale markings and a distinctive raised rear end and tubules. For more detailed information about ACP/HLB at www.SaveOurCitrus.org

If you think your tree has the psyllid, call the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Hotline immediately at 1-800-491-1899.



Community Nature Walk

Saturday January 13, 2018

9 AM - 11 AM

Tuolumne River Regional Park, Modesto

Join Audubon and Sierra Club members on a 2-mile walk through Tuolumne River Regional Park. We will explore and learn about the natural history of the Tuolumne River. 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, jackets, and bring water. Binoculars will be helpful. We will depart promptly at 9 AM, from the first parking lot at Tuolumne River Regional Park, 1200 Tioga Dr., Modesto, 95354. To get to the parking lot, go south on So. Santa Cruz from Yosemite Blvd. (Highway 132). Turn left at Legion Park Dr. Turn left at Tioga Dr., take first right into parking lot.

Rain cancels. For more info., contact Elaine, 209-300-4253 or Ralph, sharks_hockey_maniac@yahoo.com.

Speaker: Labor Leader DOLORES HUERTA



SATURDAY, January 20, 2018

24th Annual
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Commemoration

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

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

—Sponsors—



California State University | Stanislaus

City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Dept.; Modesto Junior College; Modesto Peace/Life Center; California State University, Stanislaus; Associated Students of Modesto Junior College; Rockwell, Kelly & Duarte, LLP; Ed Fitzpatrick, Valley Lexus; College Avenue United Church of Christ; Central Valley Democratic Club; Project Uplift; Moese Credit Union; Democratic Women's Club of Stanislaus County; Modesto Irrigation District; DoubleTree by Hilton Modesto. *Sponsors needed. Email jcostello@igc.org*

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Be informed!

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

CARP Makes a Splash into the Media World

By BRENDA FRANCIS

There is a new media program in the Valley called the California Audio Roots Project (CARP). This California Arts Council-supported program seeks poets, musicians, and storytellers from low-income families to share their personal stories through their chosen field of audio art. These stories will be recorded and aired on public radio, streamed via podcasts, and put onto a CD for to share with friends and family.

Modesto Sound, a non-profit, serving area towns and people of all ages, had applied for scholarship grants for youth job training and music camp. Modesto Sound also wanted to produce more radio shows. CARP won a grant in the radio category and is being supported by grants, including one from the California Arts Council, and one from the local Mary Stuart Rogers Foundation.

With the guidance and professionalism of Modesto Poet Laureate and librarian, Stella Beratlis, and Audio Engineers Lucky Lew, Mark Oesau and Blake Boetto, small groups of up to eight people are recording their life stories and experiences of living in California through music, poetry and storytelling. In June of 2018, a free, public showcase of these stories will be held at the Stanislaus County Library. Because of sponsorships to cover costs for the underserved population, low-income residents are given priority.

Blake Boetto, one of the audio engineers hard at work on CARP's very first few sessions reported, "Rather than working exclusively with people who make music, we've been bringing in people of all sorts to the studio to be recorded. Some music has been making it in to the microphone, sure, but there are also stories, poetry, and even a few sounds that don't belong to any aforementioned category.



Blake Boetto teaching students music composition at Modesto Sound's annual Recording Arts Camp

"Recording different mediums naturally requires different ways of approaching the recording process, and I am learning all sorts of new ways to stick a microphone in front of someone. There's more planning, but also more waiting and listening. My favorite part, however, has been the result of [working with] our limited staff here at Modesto Sound."

The CARP project got its roots back in 2007 when Modesto Sound recorded its first audio interview for radio and podcast play. The radio show was inspired by a Modesto Sound compilation CD of twelve local teen bands' songs. Members of the twelve bands were interviewed while showcasing their songs and there was enough material to create three one-hour episodes which became a radio staple for KGIG 104.9FM, podcasts on Modesto Sound's website, and were uploaded to www.Radio4all.net for radio play around the nation.

Over the next ten years, over 100 audio shows were produced with material from singer/songwriters, poets, teen groups, interviews of audio industry professionals, government officials, unsung heroes and more.

Often, when people called to help Modesto Sound in some way, they were told, "A good way to get to know us, and us to know you, is to visit the studio and be interviewed by our group of interns for a radio show." Modesto Sound feels that hearing all the different voices, creative interview angles, and stories from people from all walks of life is a rewarding experience, one that is worth sharing.

CARP's organizational partners include Stanislaus County Library, Modesto Peace/Life Center, Valley Media, and Friends of the Modesto Library.

For more information, call Janet Seay, Project Director, 209-573-0533, or visit modestosound.com/radio

Ed note: Hopefully, our own www.KCBPradio.org will be streaming these productions and broadcasting them once on the air.

Stella Beratlis: The California Audio Roots Project

Stella Beratlis, Co-Producer of the California Audio Roots Project, is the current Poet Laureate for the City of Modesto and a librarian and teacher. Stella has an MA in English Literature from Arizona State University. In her work as an English instructor at Modesto Junior College, she has facilitated students working in pairs, small groups, and entire classes to produce critical, expository, and creative writing pieces. She earned her MLIS from San Jose State University.



California Audio Roots Project

California Audio Roots Project invites you to record your music, stories & poetry about California! Get featured on a CD, radio airplay, and podcast.

- Producers Lucky Lew & Stella Beratlis.
- Engineers Mark Oesau & Blake Boetto.
- Must be a low income resident to participate.
- Program is FREE.
- Public showcase June 2018 at the library.
- New session every 3 weeks.
- Physically accessible to all--ask for details.
- Space is limited to 8 people per session.

Sign up and find out more by calling Project Director Janet Seay 209-573-0533 modestosound.org

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Faces of the Homeless: Rosario

By ERIC CAINE, *The Valley Citizen*, November 2, 2016

"I like being out in the open where everybody can see I'm not doing anything wrong," says Rosario Quintana. "I don't do drugs or alcohol and I don't leave a mess. I keep all my stuff packed up."

Despite her good intentions, Rosario's presence on public streets in Modesto and Turlock has gotten her arrested at least two or three times a year during the four years she's been homeless. She's been cited and arrested for such things as "possession of a shopping cart," violations of park curfews, violations of Modesto's anti-camping ordinances, battery on a police officer (dismissed), and battery on a medical technician (dismissed).

Her troubles seem to have begun during a period she describes as, "extremely hectic," around five years ago.

"I was having trouble sleeping and my family said I needed to get some help," she says. "I said ok, and they took me out to behavioral health. They thought I was doing drugs or something, but the nurse at behavioral health thought I was fine and said I should go home and rest."

It's easy to imagine Rosario enduring a "hectic" life for many years prior to hitting the streets. When she was three years old, her parents went to Mexico and never returned. Rosario and her siblings stayed with friends and began a series of moves in and around Modesto.

Rosario was thirteen years old and attending Modesto High School when she became pregnant with her first child. She went on to have three more children, attending school only sporadically.

Rosario says she was employed by JC Penney at Modesto's Vintage Faire Mall from 1989 through 1994, but found it too hard to balance work and family. "They said they couldn't keep adjusting my schedule, so I decided I had to put my kids first," she says.

Rosario is vague about exactly how and why she became homeless. She will say, "I'm okay, but I just have some things to work out."

She had her first brush with the law in 2013, when she was charged with harassment of an adult male. The case was dismissed for lack of prosecution. In January of 2014, she was charged with domestic violence involving a child. That case was apparently never adjudicated.

Since then, Rosario's "crimes" have been the typical homeless person's laundry list of shopping cart and camping violations. Her last stint in jail lasted two months and featured the usual mental health assessment. The judge decided she didn't need help.

Rosario is extremely articulate and well-spoken, and like the nurse at behavioral health, most judges deem her mentally fit. At least she seems that way in a courtroom. On the street, with boxes and belongings strewn around her, she looks much more like someone who's washed ashore in a strange land with no place to go.

The county's homeless outreach officers, who've interviewed her several times, think Rosario's is yet another case of *anosognosia*, a clinical term used to describe mentally ill people who think they are okay. Though she sounds perfectly rational and remarkably well-adjusted to a future of living on



the streets, her lack of concern raises a red flag.

When asked whether she'd like to live inside, she says she'd like a small studio if she could get one. "Last year a man said there was a waitress job," she says, "but I wasn't ready." For a moment, her eyes fill with tears. "I can still work," says Rosario. "I know I can still work."

Today's regulations against forced assistance for the mentally ill make it very difficult to assess and help homeless people like Rosario. And the widespread occurrence of anosognosia both impedes assistance and contributes to the myth that homeless people don't want help. That leaves jail as society's default treatment option.

"This will be my fourth winter," says Rosario when asked whether she's worried about the cold. "I move around a lot and walk most of the night. October was pretty warm."

Though her shoes and socks are wet from the recent rains, and she has red sores on her heels, Rosario seems remarkably composed and at ease. "I've got some food and blankets," she says. "I'll be ok."

Faces of the Homeless: Rosario, "Just Checking In"

By ERIC CAINE, *The Valley Citizen*

Those few Valley citizens who get to know homeless people by name always notice when they're missing. Rosario Quintana goes missing frequently, but because she's almost always very visible, word gets around among people who know her whenever she turns up, which could be anywhere from Riverbank to Modesto and points beyond. [Rosario is most likely in her 40s.]

In the late fall of 2015, Rosario was seen on Oakdale Road, south of Briggsmore Avenue. She had her belongings in cardboard boxes—a lot of boxes. At the time, Rosario steadfastly refused offers of help, including transportation to one of the local shelters, because, "I've got to watch my stuff."

One day, in the dead of winter, Rosario was gone. In a few weeks, she was seen again on Ninth Street in Modesto, a few blocks south of the train station. Then she turned up on Mitchell Road in Ceres.

After that, there were few reports until late fall of 2016, when Rosario was seen near the intersection of Briggsmore



Avenue and McHenry Boulevard, in Modesto. As always, she seemed cheerful and upbeat, accepting offers of food and warm clothing, but refusing assistance to go to a shelter.

County outreach workers who talked with Rosario offered a tentative diagnosis of *anosognosia*, a condition characterized by the belief that one is perfectly sane when in fact mentally ill. At the time, Rosario spoke of family problems and estrangement from her loved ones, and said she makes herself visible so people can see she's not using drugs. [See accompanying article.]

Last week, Rosario turned up at the Modesto Farmer's Market, sitting on one of the walls of the county

library. She was wearing a nice tweed coat and had acquired some quality luggage, but still had enough baggage to make one wonder how she managed to move everything during her frequent wanderings.

Rosario said she had visited Riverbank and even Merced over the last few months, and still seemed cheerful and positive. She had been to Modesto Junior College in search of

classes and said she would soon be working on her GED at a local learning center.

Even though she appears in good health, Rosario's feet have taken a tremendous beating, probably because of the effort she makes to move all her belongings from place to place during her rambles. Apparently, her only breaks from living on the street are when she's in jail for the usual homeless people's "crimes" of camping and loitering.

Currently only a few short blocks away from the county's new Homeless Outreach and Engagement Center, it's highly unlikely Rosario will ever approach it voluntarily. And even if she were to seek help, her immediate need is shelter—exactly what sixteen or seventeen hundred other people need here in Stanislaus County, and won't be getting anytime soon, given the lack of funding and political will for a "Housing First" approach to homelessness.

Just one among over a hundred-thousand homeless people in California, Rosario will very likely be on the streets again next winter, assuming she survives this one—just another stranded soul in the country some still call, "the greatest nation on earth."

Eric Caine formerly taught in the Humanities Department at Merced College. He was an original Community Columnist at *The Modesto Bee*, and wrote for *The Bee* for over twelve years.

Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Support a Family in California?

From the California Budget & Policy Center. Despite strong economic growth and declining unemployment in California in recent years, many households across the state still face significant challenges in affording basic expenses, according to a new analysis from the California Budget & Policy Center.

In addition, the report underscores the key role that public supports play in helping families afford the basics and highlights the importance of increasing these types of supports, even as federal policymakers are on the verge of passing tax and budget policies that would significantly scale them back.

Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Support a Family in California? shows that statewide, on average, a family of four with two working parents needs annual earnings of \$75,952 to afford a basic family budget. (The family budgets in this analysis estimate the amount of income that households would need to cover basic expenses through earnings only, without publicly funded benefits or supports.)

The report also finds that basic annual expenses in California average \$59,338 for a two-parent family with one parent working, \$65,865 for single-parent family, and \$27,878 for a single adult. All family types, except for single adult, assume one preschool-aged child and one school-aged child.

Along with providing statewide averages, Making Ends Meet estimates basic household budgets – across the four family types – for every one of California’s 58 counties. For instance, this analysis shows that for a family of four with two working parents, a basic annual family budget ranges from a high of \$110,984 in San Francisco County to a low of \$55,032 in Modoc County.

County-level figures provide detailed, up-to-date information on the cost of living in different parts of the state, and thereby allow for a greater understanding of the types of financial challenges facing many Californians today.

Making Ends Meet features an interactive data visualization, accompanying report, and Fact Sheets for every California county.



California Budget & Policy Center

Making Ends Meet

Stanislaus County

Monthly Family Budget

Expenses Per Month and as a Percentage of Budget

This budget represents the total income required to cover a family's basic needs in this county through earnings only, without government benefits or supports.

	Single Adult	Single-Parent Family	Two-Parent Family (One Working)	Two-Working-Parent Family
Housing and Utilities	\$652 37.5%	\$938 21.1%	\$938 23.1%	\$938 17.9%
Food	\$268 15.4%	\$577 13.0%	\$773 19.0%	\$773 14.7%
Child Care	\$0 0%	\$1,113 25.1%	\$276 6.8%	\$1,113 21.2%
Health Care (Employer-Based)	\$156 9.0%	\$588 13.2%	\$613 15.1%	\$613 11.7%
Transportation	\$243 14.0%	\$349 7.9%	\$349 8.6%	\$454 8.6%
Miscellaneous	\$361 20.8%	\$463 10.4%	\$787 19.4%	\$787 15.0%
Taxes	\$216 12.4%	\$410 9.2%	\$324 8.0%	\$571 10.9%
MONTHLY TOTAL	\$1,740	\$4,439	\$4,060	\$5,249
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$20,876	\$53,273	\$48,726	\$62,987
Monthly Total With Unsubsidized Marketplace Health Care	\$2,071	\$4,344	\$4,259	\$5,455
Annual Total With Unsubsidized Marketplace Health Care	\$24,857	\$52,128	\$51,113	\$65,457

Note: All family types except "single adult" are assumed to have two children, one preschool-aged and one school-aged. Main budget totals include health care costs with employer-based health insurance, while totals with unsubsidized marketplace health care include health care costs with unsubsidized health insurance purchased on the individual marketplace (Covered California). Amounts correspond to calendar year 2017. Numbers and percentages may not sum due to rounding. For methodology details, see the full 2017 Making Ends Meet report.

This estimated family budget is from the California Budget & Policy Center report, Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost to Support a Family in California? (December 2017).

Visit calbudgetcenter.org/MakingEndsMeet.

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Announcing the 6th Annual Poetry Festival

The 6th Annual Poetry Festival sponsored by MoSt Poetry, the Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center, will feature a workshop, luncheon and poetry contest with special guest poet, William O'Daly, author and workshop leader. The event will be held on Saturday, February 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1528 Oakdale, Rd., Modesto.

William O'Daly has translated (from the original Spanish) nine books of poetry by the late Pablo Neruda, Chile's Nobel Laureate, all published by Copper Canyon Press. While a 2006 Quill Award finalist for his translation of Neruda's *Still Another Day*, he was profiled by Mike Leonard for NBC's *The Today Show*.

O'Daly's own collection of poems, *Water Ways*, with additional prose and photographs by J.S. Graustein, was published by Folded Word Press in March 2017. The same publisher will release another book of O'Daly's poems, *Yarrow and Smoke*, next year. His chapbooks include *The Whale in the Web* (Copper Canyon) and *The Road to Isla Negra* (Folded Word).

Currently a National Endowment for the Arts Fellow, his

poems, translations, essays and reviews appear widely in national and international journals and anthologies. A resident of

Auburn, CA, he was recently recognized with two awards by the State of California for his work on the California Water Plan.

Download the registration form and poetry contest entry form at [http://www.mostpoetry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2018_](http://www.mostpoetry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/2018_MoStContest_bw.pdf)

MoStContest_bw.pdf. **Deadline for the contest is January 11, 2018.**

Participants are encouraged to pre-register, but may register at the door. Doors open 9 am. For questions email info@mostpoetry.org. For questions concerning the poetry contest email Karen Hansis Baker at rkb2516@gmail.com



POET: Gillian Wegener

Gillian Wegener is the author of two collections of poetry *The Opposite of Clairvoyance* (2008) and *This Sweet Haphazard* (2017), both from Sixteen Rivers Press. A former poet laureate for the City of Modesto, Wegener is a founding member of Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center (MoSt), host of a long-running poetry reading series at the Barkin' Dog Grill, and a volunteer at juvenile hall where she teaches creative writing. Wegener lives in Modesto with her husband and daughter.



Homeless: Dream Home

The kid lives out at the reservoir in a tent. Each day, every day, his mom heads to her job, and he's off to school where no one knows the situation.

Keep it quiet, keep it neat.
Work hard, be polite.

The kid, brilliant, does his homework in the library after school most days and never misses a due date.
No one guesses a thing.

Keep it quiet, work hard.
Maybe someday get ahead.

At night, by the campfire, he reads library books or draws detailed sketches of cottonwoods and starlings and wide expanses of lake water, or sometimes, immaculate neighborhoods with dozens of homes on winding streets, the trees spaced to reveal his own face looking out a window of each penciled dream.



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

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February • Collision V, Foto Modesto
March • Young@Art Student Exhibition

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www.ccaagallery.org

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Assistance**

Volunteers ready to assist!

Call 209-222-8624 to set an appointment!

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



Homeless: Blanket

They stand on the corner
with a sign:

*Wanted: Blanket, please.
We're cold.*
Someone pulls over
and gives them
a sleeping bag.
It's something.
It's not enough.

The moon's the color of ice.

Homeless: Kindness

The gas station is cramped
with cars and people. Homeless
men pushing in against the wall
and its two feet of shade.
A woman gasses up. Uncomfortable,
hurrying, she fumbles the nozzle,
forgets to cap the tank.

Someone knocks on her window:
one of the men, John Deere cap pulled low.
I got it ma'am, he says, and screws on the cap.
Too hectic here today, I know, he says,
and heads back to the shade.

Homeless: Love

He doesn't have much to give,
but every night builds her
a blue tarp lean-to,
taking it down again
every morning.
He's awake most nights
listening to her breathe.
She's awake most days.
Afternoons, he sleeps on a bus stop bench,
head in her lap.
There's a little shade here.
There's the breeze of passing cars.
She rubs his temple,
round and round.
When the bus comes,
she waves it on.
Just now, they have nowhere
else to be than here.

Homeless: Overheard

*The homeless wouldn't be so bad
if they didn't make such a mess.*

And I think about this statement for days,
if the people, finding themselves homeless,
might be coaxed into packing
their hard-won food into plasticware
with snap-on lids, if they might smooth
and fold their clothes, however dirty,
whether they might pack their carts
with their every possession
in a more seemly manner. And what about
lessons in deportment for the homeless,
all the women and men, all the children,
learning about the dangers of littering,
of sanitation and hygiene, of gratitude
for all they are given in the face
of all they don't have. The homeless
would be tolerable if they kept themselves
cleaner,
tidied up their environs each morning,
threw away everything they don't need.
Then they wouldn't be so bad.
Then they'd be more invisible
and that, she meant, would be just fine.

Homeless: Solitaire

Sick of the game
but it passes the time:
the jack on the queen,
the four on the five.
Funny how a guy can
spend the day playing cards,
watching the shadows
of the sycamores shift
from long to short to long,
losing to no one again, but
playing again anyway just in case
the win is in the next hand.

Homeless: Reaction (found poem)

I don't feel safe –
we're being overrun –
the park, the streets – mostly
drug-using, mostly
vagrants, mostly
thieves. Daily they patrol
my neighborhood, looking
for god-knows-what.
I don't feel safe.
I can hardly go to the store
without being hit up for money.
I see them in the streets.
I've had it. This park
should be a place for all,
not a homeless/vagrant/thieves
encampment. I don't feel safe
bringing my family to the park
anymore. Homeless don't belong
here and nothing's being
done about it.

Homeless: The Plastic Bag Man

The plastic bags are wrapped
around his arms and legs
like armour, like they'll fend off
a world that just doesn't get it.
He sees the faces in the car windows,
watching. He sees how they look
and grimace and look away.
He's got no use for them either,
so it's mutual. Years pass.
There's January, here's July.
It doesn't matter how cold,
how hot it gets. The black plastic stays,
wrapped round and round
with duct tape. The world didn't
protect him from a single thing,
but he doesn't complain.
There's a grassy patch
and shade at the corner.
More bags are easy to find.

Homeless: The most I can do...

for B.

Angela has no street address, but
she does have a black mesh dress,
mascara, and a bike trailer
filled with her life, past and
mostly present. It's another hot Sunday
in another hot summer, and
the bread lady's come with her sandwiches.

Angela says, *The most I can do for my
friend
is simply be his friend.*

That's Thoreau. She eats her sandwich,
swishes away a fly.
She knows the quote from a calendar
she once had when the date
mattered more than it does now.

Now she tells this to the bread lady,
licks jam and crumb from a fingertip.

Of all the quotes, this one's her favorite.
She says
she writes it on restroom walls whenever
she can
because, *you know, ain't no one
who couldn't use the reminder.*

Homeless: Precious

The backpack has a broken zipper,
and one side is torn,
but that front pocket is sacred.
In there, she keeps three photos
in a clean plastic produce bag:
one of her mother,
one of her son,
and one of the place
she wants to call home
the next time she's lucky enough
to call some place home.

Green Tips for a Green Planet: Making a case for putting the EARTH FIRST

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

We are activists...hear us Roar...loudly, and rightly so, if innocent people are abused, tortured or worse.

We are up in arms against war, and take sides against the latest national and global political abusers of civil and personal rights and injustices.

We rally around the flag against taxes of all kinds, and often vote NO, even when those taxes support our best interests.

Yet when it comes to take action, be up in arms, vote at the polls...we put our home, Planet Earth, at the bottom of the list. Now is the time to come to the aid of all humans and all beings...IT'S LONG PAST TIME TO "HONOR OUR MOTHER" by PUTTING OURSELVES AND OUR PLANETARY HOME FIRST.

All humans are dependent upon clean air, fresh water, and sustainable agriculture and industrial practices...and upon each other to be stewards of a green planet. Yes, we do not dominate...we are at the bottom of the food chain and we must be codependent upon each other to come together and heed the wake-up call tweeted around the world each and every day by those who choose a world solely based upon

personal gain and denial of long proven scientific research.

Legions of Americans are raising their voices and opening to an awareness that we can be "mad as hell, and we won't take it anymore." The deafening loudness of this wake-up call brings renewal and countless opportunities to get in the boat together, work in unison, cry out against all the national and global injustices, and row toward a sustainable shore.

We can allow the village to rebuild and coexist by adding our voices, one person, one family at a time, to the limitless number of voices who can give time and money to putting Mother Earth and all her inhabitants FIRST. "Think globally, Act locally...chase an organization or more that supports a need closest to your heart strings, whether they be endangered species, habitat preservation, environmental education... Wikipedia lists hundreds nationally and around the world.

I support The Heifer Project, because it teaches sustainability and self sufficiency throughout the world. I also have much respect for the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and the Moms' Air Force.

The Modesto Peace/Life Center can provide opportunities and information locally. There are local groups like the Sierra



You are
the change you
want to see in the
World...

Club and Audubon Society. *Stanislaus Connections* lists numerous groups in our monthly calendar, including Citizen's Climate Lobby, Green Team educational meetings, Modesto Area Partners in Science talks, and Operation 9-2-99 riparian cleanup excursions.

Go beyond the daily commitment to reduce, reuse, THEN recycle. Commit to spreading awareness by walking your talk. Make your voice heard loud and clear by voting in each and every election. Call your congressional representatives, and let out the famous movie cry, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more".

Then get in the boat with others; support yourself and your village by rowing toward a sustainable shore!

Advocates for Justice receive award

from page 1

for all students. AFJ's Mentor Program provides: (1) mentors, (2) educational activities and student events, 3) leadership training, 4) community service and (5) a suspension and expulsion advocacy.

In 2013/2014, AFJ's Mentor Program was formed to substantially reduce suspensions and expulsions in Modesto City Schools (MCS), to eliminate disparities in education, and to put an end to the school-to-prison pipeline in our community.

Jacque Wilson attended Modesto City Schools and graduated from Modesto High School in 1992. He attended Modesto Junior College and California State University Stanislaus (CSUS) where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice. Jacque graduated from Golden Gate University School of Law with a Juris Doctorate Degree.

Following law school, Jacque worked for the Alameda Public Defender's Office, the Mendocino Public Defender's Office, and, for the past 13 years, for the San Francisco Public Defender's Office as a deputy public defender. Jacque has tried over 50 cases to verdict ranging from misdemeanor to life cases. Currently he is assigned to the Felony Division.

Jacq M. Wilson, a Dean's Medalist and a McNair Scholar, graduated from California State University, Fresno State magna cum laude in 1996 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminology. Jacq Wilson received his Juris Doctorate in 1999 from University of California, Hastings College of Law, and he has been an integral part of the law firm for more than sixteen (16) years.

A personal injury attorney, Jacq M. Wilson concentrates in litigation on behalf of injury victims in bodily injury claims, including, but not limited to, wrongful death, auto and motorcycle injuries, dog bites, slip and fall accidents, and children



injuries. He has devoted his career to helping accident victims when they have been injured, harmed or inconvenienced by the negligence of others.

In 2009, Jacq received the NAACP, Stanislaus County Branch, Human & Civil rights Certificate of Recognition Award. In 2015, Jacq received the Delta Iota Iota 2015 Citizen of the Year award. In 2018, Jacq will receive the "The Your Dream Award" from the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights.

Visit Advocates for Justice at <http://www.advocates4justice209.org/>



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

If they tell me they want war instead of peace, I don't say they're naive, I say they're stupid. Stupid to an incredible degree to send young people out to kill other young people they don't even know. . ."

— 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/>

DoMo Discount Days Offers 20% Savings and More Downtown Modesto Entertainment and Services

The Downtown Modesto Partnership (DoMo) is teaming up with prominent downtown businesses to offer 20% discounts on dining, entertainment and more.

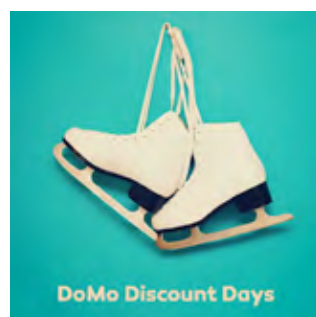
The seasonal program is called DoMo Discount Days. Every Tuesday through Jan. 16th, participating downtown businesses will offer great deals on dining, popular theater and show tickets, ice-skating and much more. This program is anchored by the following businesses:

- Modesto On Ice (\$10 skating for children and adults, every session)
- Brenden Theatres (\$6 movies all day, except “Star Wars”)
- State Theatre (State Theatre 20% off tickets to movies showing at 6 p.m. or later)
- Gallo Center for the Arts (20% off specified show tickets purchased Tuesdays with discount codes)
- California Beauty College (40% off any one service)
- Intrinsic Elements (20% off entire purchase, except sale items and consignment)
- Ralston’s Goat (20% off entire menu, except alcohol)
- Barkin’ Dog Grill (20% off entire tab)
- Tresetti’s World Caffé (20% off gourmet burgers, World Caffé gumbo, roasted garlic and brie, and sliders for the kids)
- St. Stan’s Brewing Co. (20% off Full Gauntlet Taster Sampler (except aged bourbon porter) and one food menu item)
- Churchkey (20% off pizzas)

“This is a great opportunity to enjoy and experience downtown Modesto at a generous discount,” says Stephanie Burtch, Downtown Modesto Partnership’s Interim Marketing and Events Manager. She adds, “Modesto On Ice is a wonderful addition to downtown and we are happy to celebrate this season bringing much joy and excitement to the community.”

The DoMo Partnership was formed as a nonprofit in September 2015 to enhance downtown guest experience and bring renewed attention to the many positive things happening in downtown Modesto. It describes the downtown one square mile as an area of “endless possibility” and the “heartbeat” of the city where culture, cuisine and community connect in a “comfortable cosmopolitan” atmosphere.

Information: visit www.domopartnership.org. Or contact Josh Bridegroom, CEO, Downtown Modesto Partnership, josh@domopartnership.org, (209) 303-0411



5 Tips for Civic Dialogue in an Online World

By DR. CARA BERG POWERS

During the holiday season, we often find ourselves sitting across our family members, trying to keep our conversations civil and polite, particularly when politics surface. It's important to remember the same type of civil discourse is needed at the virtual table. Here are five tips for civic dialogue that we can all keep in mind for ourselves—and the young people around us who are growing up in a social media landscape.

I was of the first generation in my family to grow up with the Internet at home as a tween and teen. Granted, we had Prodigy and AOL, and I had to make sure no one was on the phone to get my weekly *Baby Sitter's Club* story. Still, one thing that was true then remains true now: as a teen, I was a lot savvier about online spaces than my dad. In fact, my dad relied on me to get our AOL set up when we got our first computer. So, it may surprise you when I tell you that kids today—despite being born into the age of social media and interconnectedness—can be terrible at navigating this digital landscape.

The fact is, even as adults, in this politically charged climate, we can all probably think of a time when we've said something to someone online without considering that another human being was reading those words, targeted at them. That's why it's important for us to acknowledge that communicating online can be confusing for young people.

Middle and high school is not just where they learn about the world, it's where they learn about themselves and one another. So how can educators teach young people about civic dialogue in an online world—a world that is hard to monitor—so they can learn to have productive and thoughtful conversations, even when they disagree on something?

Use these five tips for positive online engagement for yourself and the young people in your life:

THINK before you speak.

Use these five questions before you respond online. I'm not sure there's anything that couldn't be made a little bit more loving and intentional with simple adherence to this brief checklist:

- Is it True?
- Is it Helpful?
- Is it Inspiring?
- Is it Necessary?
- Is it Kind?

In the world of social media, especially when we find ourselves in conversations with people with mutual friends, but whom we don't know, it can be so easy to break some of these rules. Help your students be thoughtful about the space they take up both inside the classroom and in the digital world.

Imagine you are speaking to a real person.

Everything I said above. But if you need an even quicker gut check, and five questions is too many, just ask yourself one: Would I be a jerk if I said this to someone's face? If the answer is yes, remind yourself there is a real person on the other end of that computer screen.

Take a beat, or do nothing.

Take a moment and be silent. If you are feeling incredibly passionate, especially in an angry way about an issue, don't respond right away (this works for emails too!). Wait until you're calm and then collect your thoughts before sharing them. And sometimes, it's okay to not respond at all. You actually do not need to comment on every article, snap, video, or meme you see online. You don't even have to react!

Listen/read to understand, not to respond.

One of the drawbacks to this wonderful world in which we are all content creators is that we're all content creators. Have you ever found yourself in a conversation where you hear one sentence someone says and then you're not even listening to the rest? You're just waiting for them to finish so that you can respond? This happens *a lot* online, especially with people skimming quickly and often times just reading a headline. Just as you know it would be better to listen for understanding, read for comprehension. Take that beat, and then respond. Or don't.

Take it outside.

Take it outside into the real world. If something feels very personal, or heated, or challenging, ask a person if you can talk face to face about it. It can be so easy to shout angry things at each other through our computers and mobile devices. But that's not what helps us build empathy, solidarity, and collective action toward a better world. And isn't that the brave, empathic youth we're trying to develop? We need to continue doing the hard work of developing excellent in person communication skills. Teach workshops about body language, conflict resolution, difficult conversations, and cultural responsiveness. It will carry through to how your students interact online.

I have some great news for you: you don't have to reinvent the wheel. There are some excellent online resources for online courses, activities, and tools you can bring into your classroom, or into your home if you're a parent. One favorite of mine is *CyberWise*, whose tagline is “No Grownup Left Behind.” On their easily navigable site, you can find online modules, PDF tip sheets, and activities for school and home.

Want more tips on civil discourse? Explore our guide, “*Fostering Civil Discourse: A Guide for Classroom Conversations*” for strategies, tips and resources on creating a safe and reflective classroom.

Dr. Cara Berg Powers, Ed.D. is the Executive Director of the Transformative Culture Project, which uses arts and culture as tools for social and economic equity through careers, works with classrooms and communities to create new opportunities for artists to build economic and social power through their art.

<http://facingtoday.facinghistory.org/5-tips-for-civic-dialogue-in-an-online-world-0>



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

JANUARY

MJC Spring Science Colloquium, Science Community Center, Room 115, West Campus, 3:15pm – 4:15 p.m. Contact: Teri Curtis (209) 575-6775, curtis@mjc.edu. **Jan. 24:** Deborah Laffranchini, Autism (tba). **Jan 31:** Erin Loury, FishBio, Fish Biologist, Fisheries Research, Monitoring, and Conservation: From Central Valley Salmon to Mekong Giant Catfish. **Feb. 7:** James Hopf, Energies for the Future (tba).

2 TUES – 26 FRI: Abstracts, Figures & Impressions. Third Thursday Art Walk: January 18. Featured Artist of the Month: Jim Christiansen. Mistlin Gallery, 209-529-3369; 1015 J St., Modesto. Information at ccaagallery.org

3 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL. McHenry & J St., 4:00-5:00 pm. (Note new time).

9 TUES: Annual John McCutcheon Concert. See article, front page.

9 TUES: The State Theatre presents A Club for Avid Readers *Dr. Zhivago*. 1307 J. St., 5:30 pm. Visit <http://ww2.thestate.org/calendar/event/985>. Become a member of the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/membership>

13 SAT: Community Nature Walk: Tuolumne River Regional Park. Sponsored by the Audubon and Sierra Club. 9 am to 11 am. Rain cancels. Info: Elaine, 209-300-4253 or Ralph, sharks_hockey_maniac@yahoo.com. See article, this issue.

14: SUN Afternoons at CBS: Matt Eakle, best known as the flutist in the David Grisman Quintet, returns with his band. All concerts held at 1705 Sherwood Ave. at 3 pm. Tickets available through the CBS office and at the door. Single Tickets (with the exception of Feb.): \$25/Adults; \$20/Seniors & Students; \$10 children. Call (209) 571-6060 for tickets or info. Learn more at sundaysatcbs.com

20 SAT: Dolores Huerta speaks at the 24th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration. Modesto Junior College Auditorium. 7 pm. FREE. See article this issue.

21 SUN: The Modesto Film Society and The State Theatre presents *The Hustler*. 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://ww2.thestate.org/calendar/event/901>. Become a member of the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/membership>

27 SAT: The West Modesto Community Collaborative's First Annual Crab Feed. Crab, tri-tip, no host bar, music, live and silent auction, raffle. Doors open 5:30 PM. Dinner 6:30 PM. Tickets \$45 each. Get them early! Only 300 will be sold. Veterans Foundation Event Hall, 3500 Coffee Rd., Suite 15, Modesto. Call 209-522-6902 or, email adminassist@westmodestocollaborative.com

LOOKING AHEAD

Saturday February 24: The Modesto Peace/Life Center's Annual Meeting, 8:30 am to noon.

Friday March 2: Peace Essay Contest Awards

Ceremony, Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, MJC West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave., Modesto. 7:00 pm.

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

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

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/>

NAACP Meeting: Christ Unity Baptist Church, 601 L St., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. 209-645-1909, email naacp.branch1048@gmail.com

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), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

MEDIA: Listen to Peace/Life Center radio, KCBP 95.5 FM streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org> (not on the air yet)

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/>

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>

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: 300-4253. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

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

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

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.