

## You are invited to the Modesto Peace/Life Center's 30th Annual Peace Camp

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

You are invited to the Modesto Peace/Life Center's 30th Annual Peace Camp on June 22-24 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108 in the Sierras. If you are a family, you are welcome to all come. If you are single or a couple, you are welcome. If you are camp regular, you are welcome to return. If you have never come, you are

welcome to begin. If you have not come for a long time, you are welcome to join us for a reunion at this 30th camp.

We appreciate having these creative people as part of our camp experience:

**Homero Mejia** will co-present our workshop on immigration. He is the executive director for Congregations Building Community, a faith-based non-profit or-

ganization in Stanislaus County. He is a community organizer who has been working with immigrant communities on immigration issues like car impoundment policies locally and at the state level, secure communities, the California and federal Dream Acts, and comprehensive immigration reform. He grew up in Modesto, Ceres and Denair. Homero has an AA degree from MJC, a BA from

CSU Stanislaus and has completed leadership training with Sierra Health Foundation and USC.

**Solange Altman**, the other workshop co-presenter, is a Modesto attorney who works in immigration law, focusing on family immigration and deportation defense. She is am

Peace Camp. . . . . cont. p. 2

## Pledge of resistance to prevent war with Iran

By **ROBERT NAIMAN**

In the 1980s, during Reagan's war in Central America, there was a movement called the Pledge of Resistance. The basic idea was that you sign a pledge that if Reagan invades Nicaragua, you're willing to get arrested in mass civil disobedience. Of course, people involved in the Pledge of Resistance did not just sit around waiting for Reagan to invade Nicaragua to take action. They lobbied Congress to cut off funding for the US-organized Contra terrorists who were killing Nicaraguan civilians; they wrote let-

ters to the editor; they gave talks in church basements; they organized material aid to Nicaragua; they opposed Reagan's air war in El Salvador and US military aid to the death squad government there. The pledge was to "resist" US "intervention" in Central America by all the nonviolent means at our disposal, but the willingness to participate in mass arrests in the event of a US ground invasion was a fundamental animating idea.

We need a Pledge of Resistance now to prevent a war with Iran. If members of Congress know that if they refuse to pledge to vote

against war with Iran, their district offices are going to be occupied, that they and their staffs are going to be dogged at every public appearance, that their names are going to be mud in local media, support for another war will evaporate.

Moreover, a pledge to resist "all options are on the table" will allow local activists to force a national discussion which traditional, establishment media have so far largely excluded: the one in which proposed cuts in domestic spending and proposed military spending are examined on the same chalkboard, so everyone can see and discuss the trade-offs that are implicit in the choices that are being proposed. This dialogue will allow antiwar activists to pursue the holy grail of antiwar activism: connecting the cost of the endless war with cuts in domestic spending for human needs. The Pledge reads:

**If the United States applies increased sanctions, invades, bombs, sends combat troops or drones, or otherwise significantly escalates its intervention in Iran or the region directly or through support of its allies, I pledge to join with others to engage in acts of legal protest and/or nonviolent civil disobedience to prevent or halt the death and destruction which U.S. military actions would cause to the people of Iran, the Middle East, our communities at home, and the planet itself.**

Sign up for the Iran Pledge to withdraw all support for military action with Iran. See <http://www.iranpledge.org/>

Edited and revised from an article in *truthout* about cuts in Social Security - Pledge of Resistance by Robert Naiman.

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# 30th Annual Peace Camp June 22, 23, and 24, 2012



Camp Peaceful Pines  
near Pinecrest, California



## Registration Form

Early Registration Deadline: **June 3, 2012**

### Adults (age 19 and older)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Total x \$80 ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Youth (ages 4 -18)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Total x \$60 ----- \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Early registration discount by June 3: subtract \$10 per person \_\_\_\_\_ (-) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I need vegetarian meals \_\_\_\_\_ Voluntary Donation for scholarships \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Special Health needs, allergies, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs for cabin assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ **GRAND TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I can offer/need a ride Friday \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday \_\_\_\_\_

**There is an additional \$15 fee for each person who comes to camp without pre-registration.**

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

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

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

For camp information and scholarship availability:  
 Call Ken Schroeder, (209) 569-0321.

## Peace camp

from page 1

immigrant who moved to California from Brazil as a child.

**Deborah Roberts**, our camp cook, strives to prepare nourishing, enjoyable, real, whole food in a way that offers choices. She read this thought from a monastery and keeps it with her while preparing nourishment for friends and family. "Food is clearly a tool for peace. It's very hard to have thoughts of enemy when you share a meal with someone. When food is offered, when hospitality is offered, it is such a powerful gesture from the heart that it seems to counter war-like thoughts."

**Tim Smart** leads us again in a star walk. Tim was a professional naturalist for ten years in Ohio and California. During that time, his boyhood passion for the night sky blossomed into becoming a part-time astronomy instructor and author. Since moving to the Central Valley and switching to indoor education in 1988, Tim has missed his once intimate connection with the starry universe. Each summer at Peace Camp, he relishes his reconnection with the splendors of the heavens, together with the opportunity to share the beauty and history of the night sky with other nature lovers.

Our music man, **Scott Gifford**, was a teacher at Fremont Open Plan in Modesto for 20 years. Now retired in Sebastopol, he uses his guitar and ukulele to do classroom music for Young Imaginations, a San Rafael-based nonprofit which places dance and music teachers into schools. He loves finding & sharing great songs for kids and adults, and would like your help! If there's a favorite song that you'd like to sing around the campfire this year, let him know by email (scottgifford@sbcglobal.net), send a message via Facebook, or call (707) 888-5561. He'll get as many of your requests into the lineup as possible.

The \$80 camp fee covers program (workshops, recreation, hiking, campfires, talent show), food and lodging for the weekend. Young people 18 and under are \$60 and children under 3 are free. Early registration, before June 3rd, entitles registrants to a \$10.00 per person discount. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Registration forms are available in this issue or at [www.stanislausconnections.org](http://www.stanislausconnections.org) where they can be printed and mailed.

Campers may arrive any time after 2:00 p.m. on Friday. The camp opens with supper at 6:00 pm on Friday and closes at noon on Sunday. Directions and other information will be mailed to participants before camp. **Information:** Ken Schroeder, 209-569-0321, [kschroeder70@yahoo.com](mailto:kschroeder70@yahoo.com)

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## From the mouth of babes ...

By F C Sake

*Ed. Note: the author lives in Dillon, Montana.*

I recently wrote to a Montana Congressman essentially requesting a straight answer for his rational involving the support of an Obama candidate for a federal appointment. Read into this query the obvious sinecure political appointment for a previously defeated-for-office old Congressional buddy of the Congressman and Obama who campaigned (hold your laughter to the end of this piece) on a change and integrity return in Washington DC, this to essentially embezzle votes.

In return I received a stilted reply by an aide to this Congressional stranger, written obviously to the hoi polloi left behind once he had been elected some several years ago. While admittedly my missile to the Congressman was somewhat acerbic, the potted answer received back dodged the basic point of the letter. Thus a separate question arises from this believed simple exchange, at least from the initiator standpoint.

Using a jocular approach to a 21st Century reoccurring situation, inured in the observable hubris-laden Congressional approach to the hoi polloi, this commentary is complemented by an analogous story which begins ... *A stranger was seated next to a little girl on the airplane. After a few minutes of silence the stranger turned to her and said, "Let's talk. I've heard that flights go quicker if you strike up a conversation with your fellow passenger."*

When I wrote to this Congressman, I knew, unfortunately intuited since the Nixon tapes and Clinton's parsing dishonorable and irresponsible behavior, I would receive a canned vague "appropriate" politically correct answer. However, the query was sent with adult optimism for a clear, concise and truthful answer. Does hope spring eternal, not the nebulous word-smithed 2008 hope variety but a commonly expected definition from the 50's when honor and ethics were prevalent and an age well before these two words (honor/ethics) and hope were redefined for use by the 21st Century pols and their corporate sponsors. Alas hopes dashed, I received an arms-length response (perhaps even the writer knew it smelled) which in effective 'governmentese' did not provide any elucidation to the posed questions and statements. Ergo, this was a successful interaction ... that is from the government side and current ethic models.

Continuing with the analogous story... *The little girl, who had just opened her book, closed it slowly and said to the stranger, "What would you like to talk about?"* My communication, computer sent, had been written in clear terms and questions, formed in plain English and understandable to the general hoi polloi but as it turns out not a Congressman or a beleaguered aide responsible for responding to uncomfortable queries. I knew I would be treated as a malcontent due to the insensitive nature of the initial communication and words used, especially the word scofflaw to describe the Congressman's politic buddy. Scofflaw is defined as a contemptuous law violator which was an honest snapshot of the out-of-office politician who had in fact knowingly failed to pay taxes due for several years until a new sinecure became available.

The answer I received is best illustrated by the next line of the jape ... *The man with a hubris-laden smirk replied, "Oh, I don't know. How about nuclear power?"* After all I should be satisfied with any response, not expect an honest intelligent one. But during election years I would be asked to vote for a scofflaw-backing politician, is there logic in this picture? I should have known the Congressman was busy playing political gamesmanship to personally answer a tricky voter question during a non-election year, but hope springs eternal. This brings the little girl's response into this word-play... *"OK," she said. "That could be an interesting topic. But let me ask you a question first. A horse, a cow and a deer all eat the same stuff, essentially grass. Yet a deer excretes little pellets, while a cow turns out a flat patty, and a horse produces balls of dried grass, why do you suppose that is?"*

The stranger, a descriptor meaning a Congressman and his aide who were visibly surprised by the little girl's intelligence and unwanted perceptiveness, thought about this plain-worded question. *After some deliberation, they responded (they ... because the buck stops at the top not the aide), "Hmm, I have no idea."* This was essentially the gobbledygook (nonsensical) answer I received from the Congressional aide, something that read like a stale reused afterthought which should be accepted without further questioning. For who am I in a non-election year, just a hoi polloi who does not understand political courtesy and campaign contributions or scofflaw buddy support.

I did write back in a somewhat more acerbic fashion, in essence asking the aide if the answer received was due, in part, to his or her lack of their turn to use 'the balls' hanging in a Congressional community closet. These appendages often used in rotation as prescribed by fellow Congressmen

and Congresswomen in Washington DC. I added for the benefit of the aide I did not expect another reply (at least until asked for election support was not expressed), therefore no further communication was extended by the now offended or cannot be bothered hack to answer reasonably the initial communication. To this snub the denouement ... (defined with disdain for the Senator and his aide as the ... end/finish of the joke is appropriate)... *To which the little girl replies, "Do you really feel qualified to discuss nuclear power when you don't know sh\_?"* (Or will not answer truthfully or with clarity and as important will not listen to the concerns of the hoi polloi in their personal political and corporate largesse sponsored pursuits, writer added).

Ah ... clarity, this from the mouth of babes, certainly not side-stepping obfuscating politicians and their hacks as this same clarity was lacking, most probably purposefully intended, in the initial written communication process. Ah... to be removed from the hoi polloi. This is a Latin term defined as a word used commonly in derogatory fashion as a descriptor for the common people or masses. Those polloi perceived to be intelligently and socially below the royalty and intelligence of Washington DC polloi (including the Congressman and his aide).

Alas, after observing the face-saving and stop-gap measures for the current fiscal crisis resulting in a stimulus pork-laden and bonus-laden response from Congress and the Executive branches, unfortunately this voter knew the non-responsive answer before the asking. However I expected better from Montana pols, read straight shooters, not Orwellian 1984-speak, political correctness bullsh\_ers ... my bad.

*"Mankind will never see an end of trouble until lovers of wisdom come to hold political power, or the holders of power become lovers of wisdom."*

*Plato, The Republic*

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# “Motherhood” 101

BY JENIFER WEST

There has recently been an addition to our little family. But not, as most who know us might assume, of the canine or feline variety – we already have those bases covered nicely. This addition is definitely two-legged – we’ve taken in a cell phone-toting, backpack-wearing, teenaged college girl.

This young lady was born to someone dear to me, and has been in our lives a long time. It has been a privilege to watch her grow up, helping however we could along the way. She came into this world with a slight challenge, but has refused to let it prevent her from achieving. As a result, she was selected by her high school guidance counselor to receive the highest award the school can give, and it was a wonderful experience to see her sitting on the stage with the class valedictorian and others of that stripe.

And an interesting thing is happening. Although she’s been in my life for all of her 18 years, and though she’s spent many weekends with us, there’s been a change. Our “mother-daughter” relationship, though only weeks old, is profoundly affecting both of us. Aside from the occasional kitten or puppy, “motherhood” is an experience that this life has not, thus far, granted me. Yet, striving to see to it that she feels loved and well taken care of has connected me with parts of myself that I barely knew existed.

I’m learning the value of a well-timed mug of hot chocolate, for example. And the joy of sharing life’s simple pleasures – like the lovely flavor of freshly squeezed orange juice, the frost of a cold winter morning still dusting the fruit. And how satisfying, teaching someone else to grow food, and put it on the table! There was a memorable moment when she offered to clean out the fridge, and risked life and limb by attempting to toss out my sourdough starter. We later used it to make some nice homemade English muffins. Now that she understands its value, I’m confident the starter is safe.

I’m also learning, aided by memories long-buried, how to gently move someone along in the right direction. Putting her things away in her new room, for example. I remember how overwhelming it seemed to me, and how the stark reality of it made me homesick, when I first did such a thing. And how a female adult relative gently but firmly took over, thus

ensuring that all of the jeans ended up in the same drawer, and all of the socks found their way to their allotted space...

And there are other things that have surprised me. The clench of the heart, for example, caused by tears of someone you love. My dad once told me, “When your kid hurts, you hurt.” I think I’m beginning to understand what he meant.

And joy in someone else’s achievements. How amazing, to watch her march right up to the podium at church to tell her newly adopted “church family” who she is, that she has a slight disability, and that it won’t stop her from accomplishing what she believes she came to this earth to do.

I’ve also been channeling my mother, it seems, in helping her with her homework, by prompting without giving away the correct answer. Didn’t even remember that, but it came to me so instinctively that it could only have come from her.

The art, which my own mother seemed to understand instinctively, is in knowing when to offer a hug and encouraging words, when to ask a leading question, and when to issue a direct order.

There are so many things a young lady really does need. Unconditional love, for starters. And a good foundation (in more ways than one!) – we made a memorable visit to a certain specialty store, which she didn’t really think was necessary – and after which she texted all of her friends to encourage them to go there and “get fitted”. It’s amazing how far new, well-fitting “unmentionables” can go toward helping a girl feel good about herself!

There has also been the occasional bump and bruise – like when she called me at work, to let me know that she hurt her foot. Fortunately, it was only a bad sprain. I assured her that you’re not really living, if you never get banged up

a little. And I was delighted, when I found out how it had happened: In a rare moment home alone, she was dancing joyfully around the living room. Unfortunately, her foot landed wrong, netting her a “boot” and crutches, and us a hefty doctor bill. Ah, well, c’est la vie. At least she was doing something fun!!

Her life has not been without challenge, in many ways, yet she has overcome it all and is moving steadily forward. In high school, the usual worries (Am I pretty enough? Will people like me? Am I good enough?) were compounded by the understanding, and, ultimately, acceptance, of the fact that she is different from the other kids. She is different – but only a little, so it was hard to fit in with the kids in the “regular” classes, but she didn’t necessarily need to be in special ed classes for a lot of her subjects either. In college now, she’s in the process of coming to terms with who she

is. That process has been fostered, in part, by the writing of an essay, which she has asked that I share with our readers. [READ THIS ESSAY ON P. 5]

*(Gardener’s Note: If you hurry, you can still plant zucchini, cantaloupe and watermelon. And now is also the time to plant cucumbers, corn, beans and pumpkin.)*



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# Living well with a disability

By **ASHLEY**

People with disabilities face many problems in life. Many don't want to acknowledge that they're different for fear of rejection, and because of that fear, they hide from society. Yet there are those out there who are willing to acknowledge their disability and to move past the fear of being judged. We as a society need to be careful about judging others, especially those with disabilities. People with disabilities of all types face problems that the average person may not completely understand. Therefore, most people don't know how to respond to them.

One of the problems that people with disabilities face is acceptance. Most people have experienced rejection, but these individuals have to try even harder to be accepted for who they are. The old saying, "don't judge a book by its cover" certainly applies. People only notice the disabled aspect of a person instead of his or her character. I know what it's like to have a hard time being accepted, for I have autism, also known as NOSPDD; Not Otherwise Specified Pervasive Developmental Disorder, which is part of the autism spectrum.

I was only 4 years old when I was first diagnosed with this disorder, and I didn't want to accept it. It took me several years to adjust. Making friends in school was a huge challenge. When I thought I had made some friends and they asked why I was so quiet, I would tell them about my learning disability. The minute I told them, they ran away from me. Sometimes when I got upset, people would look at me like I was an alien. But I didn't let this disability control my life.

My high school years were especially hard because I was picked on constantly. I longed for a way to be with people like me. That's when I discovered the Special Olympics, which changed my perspective on disabilities. For years I thought being mentally disabled was a life sentence. But I wasn't the only one in my family diagnosed with a disabling condition. My sister's autism was noted when she was 14 months old. It is a huge struggle for me to be accepted because I am different than everyone else. Disabled people are perfectly capable of doing every thing everyone else does, but slightly differently (or in our own way).

Another challenge people with disabilities face is dependence on others. Most basic tasks such as cooking meals, hygiene, and running errands like grocery shopping require a little more assistance. My autistic sister, who lives in a care home, has trouble doing the most basic every day tasks. For example, I had to help her get ready for her day when she visited us on the weekends. She is limited in the number of things she can do at a time. She also has trouble preparing meals for herself. Although she is capable of doing certain things, she still needs assistance in some areas like academics. She is a very bright individual; however, she will never be able to live on her own and will require help throughout her entire life. My sister has no problem with asking for help with things, like opening a packet of ketchup. Even though she has problems understanding some things, she is still a very bright at understanding others. She is a wizard at puzzles. She can put together a 2,000 piece puzzle in 30 to

45 minutes! She even starts from the center of the puzzle and works her way out. She is also a very good reader. She may not be able to read a novel, but she can understand what she reads. She knows how to ask for something when she needs it by writing it out on a white board. She is also really great at figuring out technological things like video games and computers. We have a Wii system. I couldn't figure out how to play a game on it, but she figured out how to use the game and play it within 15 minutes! Even though she can do these things, she gets frustrated when she can't do things for herself.

People with disabilities often have very low self-esteem because of being rejected and judged. I know someone who is bipolar and has low self-esteem because of being mocked in school and put down by her family. I knew someone with a mental disability who was an ex gang member. He joined the gang because of low self-esteem. Being in the gang made him feel accepted. I too struggle with low self-esteem. When I know I'm failing a class I panic and feel that I'm not good enough to be in college, but I still push forward. I have a learning disability and have learned to accept it and move forward.

People with disabilities can overcome their limitations and accept themselves as they are, and accomplish things that will surprise themselves and others. People who have disabilities have been treated differently, but just because a person has a disability doesn't mean it's ok to treat them differently.

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# Marwan Barghouti and the Third Intifada: The New Mandela

By URI AVNERY

MARWAN BARGHOUTI has spoken up. After a long silence, he has sent a message from prison.

In Israeli ears, this message does not sound pleasant. But for Palestinians, and for Arabs in general, it makes sense.

His message may well become the new program of the Palestinian liberation movement.

I FIRST met Marwan in the heyday of post-Oslo optimism. He was emerging as a leader of the new Palestinian generation, the home-grown young activists, men and women, who had matured in the first Intifada.

He is a man of small physical stature and large personality. When I met him, he was already the leader of Tanzim (“organization”), the youth group of the Fatah movement.

The topic of our conversations then was the organization of demonstrations and other non-violent actions, based on close cooperation between the Palestinians and Israeli peace groups. The aim was peace between Israel and a new State of Palestine.

When the Oslo process died with the assassinations of Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, Marwan and his organization became targets. Successive Israeli leaders – Binyamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak and Ariel Sharon – decided to put an end to the two-state agenda. In the brutal “Defensive Shield operation (launched by Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, the new leader of the Kadima Party) the Palestinian Authority was attacked, its services destroyed and many of its activists arrested.

Marwan Barghouti was put on trial. It was alleged that, as the leader of Tanzim, he was responsible for several “terrorist” attacks in Israel. His trial was a mockery, resembling a Roman gladiatorial arena more than a judicial process. The hall was packed with howling rightists, presenting themselves as “victims of terrorism”. Members of Gush Shalom protested against the trial inside the court building but we were not allowed anywhere near the accused.

Marwan was sentenced to five life sentences. The picture of him raising his shackled hands above his head has become a Palestinian national icon. When I visited his family in Ramallah, it was hanging in the living room.

IN PRISON, Marwan Barghouti was immediately recognized as the leader of all Fatah prisoners. He is respected by Hamas activists as well. Together, the imprisoned leaders of Fatah and Hamas published several statements calling for Palestinian unity and reconciliation. These were widely distributed outside and received with admiration and respect.

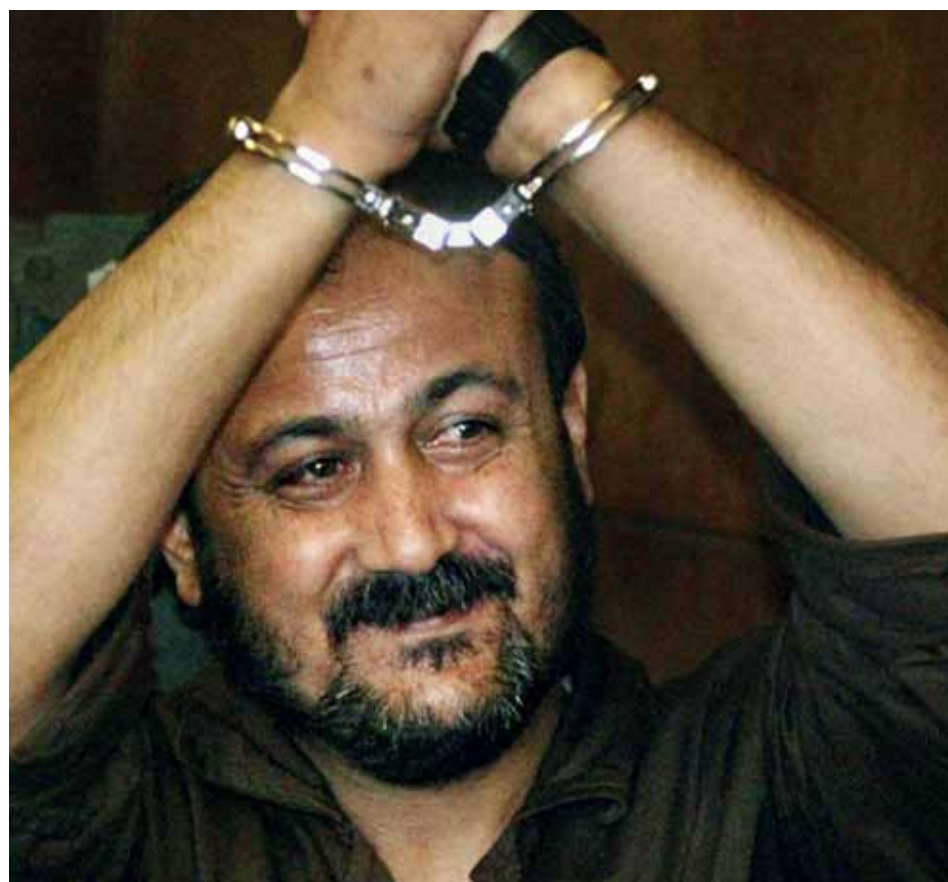
(Members of the extended Barghouti family, by the way, play a major role in Palestinian affairs across the entire spectrum from moderate to extremist. One of them is Mustapha Barghouti, a doctor who heads a moderate Palestinian party with many connections abroad, whom I regularly meet at demonstrations in Bilin and elsewhere. I once joked that we always cry when we see each other – from tear gas. The family has its roots in a group of villages north of Jerusalem.)

NOWADAYS, MARWAN Barghouti is considered the outstanding candidate for leader of Fatah and president of the Palestinian Authority after Mahmoud Abbas. He is one of the very few personalities around whom all Palestinians, Fatah as well as Hamas, can unite.

After the capture of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, when the prisoner exchange was discussed, Hamas put Marwan Barghouti on top of the list of Palestinian prisoners whose release it demanded. This was a very unusual gesture, since Marwan belonged to the rival – and reviled – faction.

The Israeli government struck Marwan from the list right away, and remained adamant. When Shalit was finally released, Marwan stayed in prison. Obviously he was considered more dangerous than hundreds of Hamas “terrorists” with “blood on their hands”.

Why?



**Marwan was sentenced to five life sentences. The picture of him raising his shackled hands above his head has become a Palestinian national icon.**

Cynics would say: because he wants peace. Because he sticks to the two-state solution. Because he can unify the Palestinian people for that purpose. All good reasons for a Netanyahu to keep him behind bars.

SO WHAT did Marwan tell his people this week?

Clearly, his attitude has hardened. So, one must assume, has the attitude of the Palestinian people at large.

He calls for a Third Intifada, a non-violent mass uprising in the spirit of the Arab Spring.

His manifesto is a clear rejection of the policy of Mahmoud Abbas, who maintains limited but all-important cooperation with the Israeli occupation authorities. Marwan calls for a total rupture of all forms of cooperation, whether economic, military or other.

A focal point of this cooperation is the day-to-day collaboration of the American-trained Palestinian security services with the Israeli occupation forces. This arrangement has effectively stopped violent Palestinian attacks in the occupied territories and in Israel proper. It guarantees, in practice, the security of the growing Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Marwan also calls for a total boycott of Israel, Israeli institutions and products in the Palestinian territories and throughout the world. Israeli products should disappear from West Bank shops, Palestinian products should be promoted.

At the same time, Marwan advocates an official end to

the charade called “peace negotiations”. This term, by the way, is never heard anymore in Israel. First it was replaced with “peace process”, then “political process”, and lately “the political matter”. The simple word “peace” has become taboo among rightists and most “leftists” alike. It’s political poison.

Marwan proposes to make the absence of peace negotiations official. No more international talk about “reviving the peace process”, no more rushing around of ridiculous people like Tony Blair, no more hollow announcements by Hillary Clinton and Catherine Ashton, no more empty declarations of the “Quartet”. Since the Israeli government clearly has abandoned the two-state solution – which it never really accepted in the first place – keeping up the pretense just harms the Palestinian struggle.

Instead of this hypocrisy, Marwan proposes to renew the battle in the UN. First, apply again to the Security Council for the acceptance of Palestine as a member state, challenging the US to use its solitary veto

openly against practically the whole world. After the expected rejection of the Palestinian request by the Council as a result of the veto, request a decision by the General Assembly, where the vast majority would vote in favor. Though this would not be binding, it would demonstrate that the freedom of Palestine enjoys the overwhelming support of the family of nations, and isolate Israel (and the US) even more.

Parallel to this course of action, Marwan insists on Palestinian unity, using his considerable moral force to put pressure on both Fatah and Hamas.

TO SUMMARIZE, Marwan Barghouti has given up all hope of achieving Palestinian freedom through cooperation with Israel, or even Israeli opposition forces. The Israeli peace



# On the brink: can non-violence bring Syria back?

By MICHAEL NAGLER and STEPHANIE VAN HOOK

Petaluma, California - When the Arab Spring was initiated by Mohammed Bouazizi's self-immolation last year in Tunisia, it ignited longings for freedom throughout the region; more than that, it took hold of the creative imaginations of non-violent activists and millions of dissatisfied individuals around the world. Has this hope ground to a halt with the violence in Syria?

Not necessarily.

We should remember that non-violence has strong roots in Islam, and Muslim-majority Syria is no exception. Like all great revelations, that of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) was based on a vision of human unity that forbade violence and stressed elements of non-violence as we know it.

Lessons from the Qur'an reflect the same teachings that inspired Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. from their respective traditions. The 103rd chapter in the Qur'an, *Al-Asr* states that those favoured by God "believe and do good works, and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to *sabr*" (103:3), which means endurance or patience and is one of the Arabic terms for non-violence.

In a well-known *hadith* (recorded actions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) the Prophet (pbuh), having declared that a Muslim must help not only a victim but also an oppressor, was asked by a puzzled companion: how should

we help an oppressor? The reply was, "by preventing him from oppressing".

These examples, among others, show that one need not go outside the Qur'an and hadith for the fundamental principles of non-violence. And these principles have surfaced continuously in the history of Muslim-majority countries. The 2010 book *Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization and Governance in the Middle East*, edited by Maria

Stephan, cited a growing number of examples even before Arab Spring, of which the partially successful Palestinian resistance movements are the best ones.

Syrian activist Bsher Said mentioned to us recently that the non-violent opposition was caught unaware when the uprising erupted a little over a year ago. However, some ingredients were present: there were cadres of young people in many Syrian cities who were taking up public work like cleaning up neighbourhoods, even though that sometimes drew unwelcome attention to them.

As with most things, non-violence works best when you know what you're doing, but you also need a willingness to suffer without bitterness, or worse if needed. This too is not wanting in Syria today.

Said and others who make up Freedom Days, an umbrella organisation for the uprising, have repeatedly risked their life

to promote political change non-violently. Pro-democracy activists in nearly every city of Syria are putting on plays, writing songs and sending up balloons filled with strips of paper with "freedom" written on them, which when shot at release the messages.

The ingredients have been and are still there for civic mobilisation that can be just as creative and even more concrete, extending the strikes and work stoppages that have already sent the message that the government and opposition must negotiate and find a path forward.

Historically, non-violent insurrections succeed when the international community recognises and supports the courageous struggle of actors on the ground. Organisations like Peace Brigades International and Nonviolent Peaceforce, to name just two, have been doing precisely this kind of unarmed civilian peacekeeping with remarkable small-scale successes in places like Colombia, South Sudan and Sri Lanka, which have situations comparable to that of Syria.

We, who are outside Syria looking in, must make knowledge of non-violence commonplace and support the institutions, like unarmed civilian peacekeeping, that practise it.

Michael Nagler is Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley and author of *The Search for a Nonviolent Future*. Stephanie Van Hook holds an MA in Conflict Resolution and is Executive Director of the Metta Center for Nonviolence (<http://www.mettacenter.org/>)

Source: Common Ground News Service (CGNews), 17 April 2012, [www.commongroundnews.org](http://www.commongroundnews.org)

**We should remember that non-violence has strong roots in Islam, and Muslim-majority Syria is no exception.**

from previous page

## The New Mandela

movement is not mentioned anymore. "Normalization" has become a dirty word.

These ideas are not new, but coming from the No. 1 Palestinian prisoner, the foremost candidate for the succession of Mahmoud Abbas, the hero of the Palestinian masses, it means a turn to a more militant course, both in substance and in tone.

Marwan remains peace oriented – as he made clear when, in a rare recent appearance in court, he called out to the Israeli journalists that he continues to support the two-state solution. He also remains committed to non-violent action, having come to the conclusion that the violent attacks of yesteryear harmed the Palestinian cause instead of furthering it.

He wants to call a halt to the gradual and unwilling slide of the Palestinian Authority into a Vichy-like collaboration, while the expansion of the Israeli "settlement enterprise" goes on undisturbed.

NOT BY accident did Marwan publish his manifesto on the eve of "Land Day", the worldwide day of protest against the occupation.

"Land Day" is the anniversary of an event that took place in 1976 to protest against the decision of the Israeli government to expropriate huge tracts of Arab-owned land in Galilee and other parts of Israel. The Israeli army and police fired

on the protesters killing six of them. (The day after, two of my friends and I laid wreaths on the graves of the victims, an act that earned me an outbreak of hatred and vilification I have seldom experienced.)

Land day was a turning point for Israel's Arab citizens, and later became a symbol for Arabs everywhere. This year, the Netanyahu government threatened to shoot anybody who even approaches our borders. It may well be a harbinger for the Third Intifada heralded by Marwan.

For some time now, the world has lost much of its interest in Palestine. Everything looks quiet. Netanyahu has succeeded in deflecting world attention from Palestine to Iran. But in this country, nothing is ever static. While it seems that nothing is happening, settlements are growing incessantly, and so is the deep resentment of the Palestinians who see this happening before their eyes.

Marwan Barghouti's manifesto expresses the near-unanimous feelings of the Palestinians in the West Bank and elsewhere. Like Nelson Mandela in apartheid South Africa, the man in prison may well be more important than the leaders outside.

URI AVNERI is an Israeli writer and peace activist with Gush Shalom.

<http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/avneri>

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Modesto Chapter  
Parents, Families, and  
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and Gays

## Green Tips for A Green Planet: More Green Spring Cleaning Solutions

Submitted by TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

As promised in the April GreenTips, these formulas and substitutions from Solutions for Sustainable Living from eartheasy are offered to help minimize the use of toxic substances in your home, and reduce the environmental harm caused by the manufacture, use and disposal of toxics. Results may vary and cannot be guaranteed to be 100% safe and effective. Formulations should be tested in small hidden areas if possible. Keep all homemade formulas well-labeled and out of children's reach.

**All-Purpose Cleaner:** Mix 1/2 cup vinegar and 1/4 cup baking soda (or 2 teaspoons borax) into 1/2 gallon (2 liters) water. Store and keep for removal of water deposit stains on shower stall panels, bathroom chrome fixtures, windows, bathroom mirrors, and more.

**Window Cleaner:** Mix 2 t. white vinegar with 1 liter (qt) warm water. Use crumpled newspaper or cotton cloth to clean. Streaks will show on windows if they are warm or if sun is shining on them. All-Purpose Cleaner (above) also works well on windows. Be sure to follow the recipe. Using too strong a solution of vinegar will etch the glass and eventually cloud it.

**Bathroom mold:** Mix one part hydrogen peroxide (3%) with two parts water and spray on areas with mold. Wait at least one hour before rinsing or using shower.

**Air Fresheners and Deodorizers:** (Commercial air fresheners mask smells and coat nasal passages to diminish the sense of smell.)

- Place baking soda or vinegar with lemon juice in small dishes or bowls of fragrant dried herbs and flowers to absorb household odors
- Houseplants help reduce odors.
- Prevent cooking odors by simmering vinegar (1 tbsp. in 1 cup water), cinnamon or other spices on the stove while cooking. Wipe utensils and cutting boards with vinegar and wash in soapy water to remove fish, onion and other cooking odors.
- Keep fresh coffee grounds on the counter.
- Grind up a slice of lemon in the garbage disposal
- Soak plastic food storage containers overnight in warm water and baking soda.
- Grind lemon or orange peels in garbage disposal units.
- Sprinkle baking soda on carpets several hours before vacuuming.
- Garage, basements - set a sliced onion on a plate in center of room for 12 - 24 hours.

**Carpet stains:** Mix equal parts white vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Spray directly on stain, let sit for several minutes, then, clean with a brush or sponge using warm soapy water.

- For fresh grease spots, sprinkle cornstarch onto spot and wait 15 - 30 minutes before vacuuming.
- For a heavy duty carpet cleaner, rub a paste made from 1/4 cup each salt, borax and vinegar into carpet and leave several hours. Vacuum.

**Remove Lime buildup or coffee/tea stains:**

Coffee and teacups - Apply vinegar to a sponge and wipe away stains.

- Coffee or tea pots- Add 2 cups water and 1/4 cup vinegar to the pot, bring to a boil. Let cool, wipe with a clean cloth and rinse thoroughly.
- Lime deposits in coffee and tea pots - gently boil a mixture of 1/2 cup (125ml) white vinegar and 2 cups water for a few minutes, rinse well with fresh water while pot is still warm.
- Lime scale on bathroom fixtures, squeeze lemon juice onto affected areas and let sit for several minutes before wiping clean with a wet cloth.

**Dishwasher Soap:** Mix equal parts of borax and washing soda. Increase washing soda for hard water.

**Dishwashing Detergent:** Use less by adding 2 to 3 T. of vinegar to warm, soapy water. (Commercial low-phosphate detergents are not in themselves harmful, but phosphates nourish algae which uses up oxygen in waterways.

**Disinfectant:** Mix 2 teaspoons borax, 4 tablespoons vinegar and 3 cups hot water. For stronger cleaning power add 1/4 teaspoon liquid castile soap. Wipe with dampened cloth or spray bottle. (The average kitchen or bathroom does not antibacterial cleaners.)

Put kitchen sponges in the dishwasher.

**Drain Cleaner:** For light drain cleaning, mix 1/2 cup salt in 4 liters water, heat (but not to a boil) and pour down the drain. For stronger cleaning, pour 1/2 cup baking soda down drain, then 1/2 cup vinegar to create a chemical reaction which breaks down fatty acids into soap and glycerin and allows clog to wash down drain. After 15 minutes pour boiling water to clear residue. Caution: use this method with metal plumbing only, as plastic pipes can melt if excess boiling water is used. Do not use this method after trying a commercial drain opener— vinegar can react with the drain opener to create dangerous fumes.

**Floor Cleaner and Polish:** vinyl and linoleum - mix 1 cup vinegar and a few drops of baby oil in 1 gallon of warm water. For tough jobs add 1/4 cup borax. Use sparingly on linoleum.

- wood: apply a thin coat of 1:1 vegetable oil and vinegar, rub in well. For damp-mopping wood floors: mix equal amounts of white distilled vinegar and water. Add 15 drops of pure peppermint oil; shake to mix.
- painted wood: mix 1 teaspoon washing soda into 1 gallon (4L) hot water.
- brick and stone tiles: mix 1 cup white vinegar in 1 gallon (4L) water; rinse with clear water.

**Furniture Polish:** For varnished wood - add a few drops of lemon oil into 1/2 cup warm water. Spray onto a soft, slightly damp cotton cloth and wipe, then wipe off with a dry soft cotton cloth.

For the complete list, see [http://eartheasy.com/live\\_non-toxic\\_solutions.htm](http://eartheasy.com/live_non-toxic_solutions.htm)

## Next 10 releases 4th edition of the nonpartisan *California Green Innovation Index*

The 2012 *California Green Innovation Index* finds that California is setting an accelerating pace for the United States in terms of venture capital (VC) investment, clean tech patent registration, energy productivity levels and renewable energy generation levels. 3 key findings:

- From 2010 to 2011, clean tech investment in California rose by 24 percent to reach \$3.5 billion, and clean tech patent registration increased by 41 percent from the period 2005-07 to 2008-10.



- California leads the nation in clean tech patent registrations, filing 910 between 2008-2010. Solar and battery patents represent 41 percent (182

patents) and 21 percent (258 patents) respectively of all clean tech patents filed nationwide.

- From 2009 to 2010, energy generation from renewable sources in California increased 11.2 percent to represent 13.7 percent of all energy generated in the state.

The *Index* also includes a special feature on the state's solar industry. Three key findings:

- In 2011, the state earned 62 percent of total global VC investment in solar, representing \$1.2 billion.
- 105 patents were registered in California in 2010 in solar and related processes, a doubling of registrations since 2009.
- In 2011, California surpassed 1000 MW of installed solar capacity, putting the state among the top solar adopting countries in the world.

Download the 2012 *California Green Innovation Index* at <http://www.next10.org/2012-california-green-innovation-index>





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## Love,

I am more than you could ever understand.  
 A drunken brilliant.  
 I am oxymoron, minus the oxy because I'm  
 drunken brilliant.  
 Passed Opportunities like greeting cards  
 waiting to find the perfect one  
 but Perfection isn't coming.  
 She's missed the bus.  
 Already halfway to next generation,  
 I think she skipped me on purpose  
 to give me purpose.  
 To spit blood wrapped in verse,  
 dipped in diesel,  
 set on fire,  
 because I burn for you fuses  
 so you can be sunlight.  
 Truthfully wants me to fall.  
 He said, "Slow motion, arms open,  
 like you don't need gravity."  
 Possible hasn't forgotten me lately  
 and I'm grateful,  
 but Patience is a sprint runner  
 and I've got a mouth full of Words  
 bonding.  
 Because like chains to my wrists  
 they are bondage.  
 I am vocabulary and sin.

## Child of Uganda

The wind flew in from the north that evening  
 Tousling the tree next door  
 Combing branches into coral reefs  
 Reducing its majestic canopy to nothing more than a spore  
 I watched in silent awe as I understood everything  
 In understanding I know nothing

Fear from the moment of his birth  
 Wind chimes shook not from breezes  
 But from bombshells born from hatred  
 Hasn't known breakfast in three days  
 With an umbrella for shelter  
 His life is makeshift  
 Keeps his prayers loose like fast women  
 He can't commit to them  
 Trades his brothers for soldiers  
 Parents for gunshot wounds  
 Innocence for murder

I watched his life in a documentary  
 Comfortable in my bed  
 Little boy with a gun in his hand  
 The nightmare of his quiet stare  
 To be forgotten by morning  
 I put on slippers, coffee, happy face  
 Here, wind chimes dance in breezes  
 Bombshells are born from mothers  
 With pretty smiles and intentions  
 Here there are worlds we find power in changing

## Reflections

Funny how during the 70th anniversary of the Japanese  
 American internment in the United States,  
 one day after FDR signed Executive Order 9066,  
 which was only officially rescinded over 30 years later,  
 I get an email advertisement from an online shopping  
 website about  
 Japanese rugs.  
 That is how this country continuously demonstrates how  
 they honor history,  
 with their paychecks and ignorance,  
 spending dollars we don't actually have,  
 donating months on made-up calendars.

Funny how I take no ownership.  
 "That is how this country continuously demonstrates how  
 they honor history."  
 This country? Not, my country?  
 I've never felt as though it has been.  
 A welfare child of an immigrant, I own this country by  
 accident.  
 Without owning a cent, I am a burden.  
 A welfare child of an immigrant society, shifting from  
 black or white  
 to black and white,  
 I am a guinea pig.  
 European, so I'm Caucasian on paper.  
 Islander descendent, so I'm sun-thirsty by nature.  
 A member of an undeclared World War III,  
 9/11 is our Pearl Harbor,  
 The Patriot Act is our "relocation center".  
 We're just as scared as we've ever been.  
 If it happened once, it could happen again.

Funny how we all want to live harmoniously while lacking  
 basic appreciation.  
 We want harmony by way of magic.  
 Let these poems fashion wands for understanding.  
 Nisei, tell me about your parents, about Manzanar.  
 Show me how you stuffed your life into a two-suitcase  
 maximum.  
 Write me a symphony so I can feel it.  
 Celebrate your culture,  
 revive it where it is not welcome,  
 share it with everyone.  
 We have a responsibility as teachers.  
 We are all teachers.  
 Share it with everyone.  
 Our children, students.  
 We are all students.  
 Share it with everyone.  
 Teach me.

## Elizabeth Souza: "... just a girl with a pen."

Born and raised in the East Bay, Elizabeth has called the  
 Central Valley home for the last three years. As a regular  
 participant of Modesto's Slam on Rye poetry slam, where  
 she first read her poetry publicly, she feels great fortune and  
 honor to have been selected to compete in the acclaimed Ill  
 List invitational slam in 2011.

Her poetry has been published in *Collected Whispers* and  
*More Than Soil, More Than Sky: The Modesto Poets*. She  
 lists among her numerous poetry influences Langston Hughes,  
 Maya Angelou, Charles Bukowski, Pablo Neruda, and several



local poets from  
 all over Northern  
 California.

"In elementary  
 school," she says,  
 "I loved to read  
 and kept several  
 notebooks around  
 to write down the  
 silly ideas that  
 would pop into my

head. Sometimes it was a poem, a short story, or simply a  
 sentence or word that I liked for inexplicable reasons. Most of  
 what I wrote then was over-dramatic and morose, but that is  
 how my interest in poetry began. I called those works poems  
 for lack of a better term. Robert Frost and Pablo Neruda are  
 poets; I am just a girl with a pen."

In high school, I volunteered at an after school program  
 helping elementary school children with their homework.  
 When I was in elementary school, I was that nerd [who] was  
 tutoring the other children in the class. I always enjoyed it  
 because I like helping people understand things, but it did  
 cloud me with a teacher's pet stigma I could have done  
 without. I was the treasurer for the Gay Straight Alliance in  
 high school, as well.

In the future, she would like to create a support group for  
 parents with children who have Type 1 Diabetes, and produce  
 a short documentary about what living with Type 1 is like to  
 help further awareness about the disease.



## Message from The Chair

By JOHN FRAILING

The board of the Modesto Peace/Life Center is brimming with ideas. However, we do not have enough people to follow up on all of these great community-enhancing ideas. To take action we need planning, organization and teamwork. In short, we need help!

To better facilitate advancing ideas to action, we are revising the method in which we notify volunteers. Finally, we are putting this information into a data base. If you have volunteered for some activity and have not been contacted, it is undoubtedly because your name was misplaced. So please, volunteer again, and if we don't contact you immediately, we



### Postal Workers: Join the 99%!

As of this writing, our contract negotiations are in the netherworld of arbitration. What the outcome will be is anybody's guess. Our future is tenuous not because of the realities of the postal business, but because our enemies in Congress have gained the upper hand. All the real solutions lie within the powers of the Congress.

Besides donating to The Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE), in the hopes of influencing, through money, our congressional representatives, and in phone calls, letters and emails, our efforts seem somewhat limited and sometimes in vain. I think we need a broader coalition in our effort to thwart our postal enemies in Congress and elsewhere. The 99% movement seems a perfect fit. This spring is a time of organization, renewal and new energy in the 99% movement. It could also be a time of renewed energy in postal worker's right to keep our post office jobs and ensure the post office's survival.

We should align ourselves with the 99% movement for many reasons, the main reason being that no workforce more accurately represents the 99% than postal workers. No entity employs a more diverse group of Americans across the country, never mind the Veterans employed with the post office.

Aligning ourselves with the 99% movement could give our efforts a boost of energy at a critical time. I would urge our Union leaders to reach out to the movement, integrate our efforts with theirs where we can, and make the most of the energy and effort of the 99% movement to help further our goals. It would be a mutually beneficial endeavor that could produce real results.

Local news would include Al Guerrero's retirement. Congratulations Al, best wishes for a great retirement with good health from everybody.

In Unionism.

*Stephen Manchester*  
Branch 1291 Modesto

will eventually. The only way that we can progress the ideas of peace, justice and a sustainable environment is with the help of everyone.

My wife and I recently changed our wills. Our daughters are no longer young, and so our bequests have changed. One of the things that we are electing to do is gift money to the Modesto Peace/Life Center (MPLC). This is surprisingly easy to accomplish. There are three ways:

1. Simply give a specific amount of money to the MPLC. This bequest can be put into your will.
2. Give a percentage of your estate to MPLC, and you can do this without forcing the sale of other assets by simply excluding things such as real property and memorabilia.
3. Write a codicil\* to any existing document that you may have already written. Remember a codicil is simply an addition to any existing will or bequest. There are specific, but simple rules of a codicil\* and they are:
  - a. No other written information on the paper (no motel stationary).
  - b. There must be a date.
  - c. It must be in your handwriting; and
  - d. You must sign it.

A simple example of a codicil is as follows (blank sheet, my handwriting):

May1, 2012

I, John Frailing, hereby gift \$1000 to the MPLC.

(my signature)

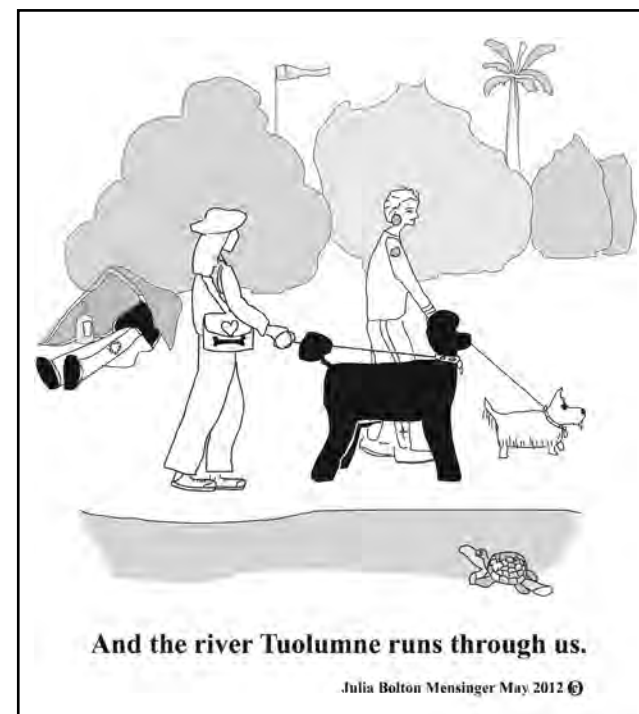
I encourage all of you to look at a bequest as an easy way to help sustain the center for the generations to come. Perhaps all war will end and the MPLC will not be necessary, but history does not indicate that will occur.

Hopefully, we can now start an effort to help keep this country from going to war with Iran. We look forward to seeing you at the vigils, the pancake breakfast, and peace camp.

### On the job ... Tray...ning

"Wasn't doin' nothin'...just walkin'  
Ain't no crime in that...is there? is there?  
Went and got me a ice tea and a bag 'a Skittles  
Dude at the store didn't say nothin'...  
I didn't say nothin'  
Rain was comin' down...wasn't cold...just rainin'  
I put the hood on my hoodie over my head  
Ain't that what it's for? Put on top of your head?  
Skittles taste good...I gotta call that girl when  
I get home  
She gonna"... "Hey you, put your hands in the air!"  
"You talkin' to me?...Put my hands in the air for what?  
Like, I just be walkin' home and..."  
And that's all I remember  
'sides a flash...and thinkin', crazy dude just shot me  
What the hell? Shit, my mom gonna be pissed  
She gonna say, "Tray, what you been up to?"  
And I'll say, and...I'll...say..."Mom...Mom  
It's rainin' huh? Been rainin' a long time huh?"  
Mom.....Mom....It ever gonna stop rainin'?"

— Dave Waldon



## First Annual Spring Art and Quilt Festival, Saturday, May 12

By SANDY SAMPLE

Looking for a festive event on Mother's Day Weekend? Longing to be surrounded by beauty, color and creativity? Curious to see and celebrate a wide range of art created by local artists, all in one central location?

The first annual Spring Art and Quilt Festival on Saturday, May 12 from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at College Avenue Congregational Church will showcase an impressive array of artistic works by church members/friends of all ages.

This free event, presented by the congregation's Women of Wonder affinity group, will feature handmade quilts, paintings, drawings, photographs, sculpture and mixed-media artwork, as well as a display in memory of the work of past artists Glenna Anderson, Karen Cox, Evelyn Mayman and Paul Sesser.

This is a family-friendly festival, and easels, paint/paper and sidewalk chalk will offer children an opportunity to create their own works of art on-site. A raffle for a quilt made by Liz Carota, some artwork available for sale, and a silent auction of favorite artwork will be included.

College Avenue Congregational Church, United Church Of Christ, is located at 1341 College Avenue, Modesto (south-west corner of College and Orangeburg).



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



# The 2012 Peace Essay Contest

By **INDIRA CLARK**

The 25th Peace Essay Contest invited 4th-8th grade students to reflect on their own experience observing on verbal bullying. Grades 9-10 focused cyberbullying. Division I entries from 11th and 12th graders, explored the use of social media and technology to promote a particular point of view or agenda.

There were 767 qualifying entries from public and private schools throughout Stanislaus County. *Stanislaus Connections* is publishing each of the winning essays.

2012 Peace Essay Committee: Margaret Barker, Indira Clark, Pam Franklin, Elaine Gorman, Linda Legace, Deborah Roberts, Sandy Sample, Shelly Scribner, David Tucker.

Sponsored by the Modesto Peace/Life Center, and co-sponsored by the Modesto Junior College Department of Literature and Language Arts



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## Malvivente

Division III First Place & School Winning Peace Essay

by **Liliana De Simone**

Oakdale Junior High ~ Mrs. Wegener

The smoke, it dances fancy pirouettes, swan diving off the end of Gio's cigarette. He is the malvivente, the bad kid. Standing opposite him is some unfortunate sfigato, some geek, who has been made his victim for probably no reason at all. The tears amassing in his eyes lose their balance and trip past his cheeks, some clinging to his thick glasses. Gio mocks him, his words growing louder and his language more colorful as he gets going. His words take someone no younger than himself and make him seem childish and half-grown, just a ragazzo, a boy.

I feel like I should protect this boy who is twice my size, like I should take the taunts and twist them to words that made him feel good, safe, solid, stable. The victim nobody cares to help- these are shoes I've been in before. I was spaventato, scared and afraid. Now, I am ashamed that I stood idly by, regretfully helpless.

I imagine my reasons for ignoring my sympathy were much the same as the others who were watching. We were afraid of Gio, and afraid of becoming his victim. I would've liked to stand up to him; I was disappointed to see someone could be such a bravaccio, a bully, they'd treat someone weaker

## Join Roy Bourgeois on a delegation to Nicaragua Aug. 27-Sept. 5, 2012!

Co-sponsored by SOA Watch and Nicaragua Network, we invite you to join this important delegation led by SOA Watch Latin America Coordinator Lisa Sullivan and Nicaragua Network National Co-Coordinator Chuck Kaufman.

In 2008, Roy Bourgeois and Lisa met with President Daniel Ortega who said he would consider taking Nicaragua out of the School of the Americas. This delegation will follow up on that trip and will meet with high ranking government officials as well as social movement leaders and the grassroots base.

For an application or more information, email [chuck@AFGJ.org](mailto:chuck@AFGJ.org)



## FINE ART & GRAPHIC DESIGN

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than themselves with so much disrespect. My intentions would have been good, but in the end, calling attention to myself, openly opposing Gio in doing so, might have made things worse for me and the people I was with. Even so, as I watched, I was thinking of ways to rescue the boy; the way I saw it, he was in need of rescue.

I could have done something; I could have called the police, drastic as it sounds. They'd dealt with Gio in the past. I could've knocked on the nearest door, living in a city where everyone knows everyone else, and hoped some adult was home to act as savior. I was content, however, in my purposeful negligence, to stay unnoticed and un-victimized. We all chose not to do anything. I'm sure we all felt the same shame as we tried our very hardest to look away and keep walking, as if we didn't care one bit what Gio did to the boy.

We cared. We even talked about how sorry we were for the boy. But they were hollow words, and, as Buddha said, "Better than a thousand hollow words, is one word that brings peace." For the world to be peaceful, we need more; we need words, and actions, that bring peace. If we had done anything, then maybe that boy could have walked home that day without being pushed to tears. Nobody should have to put up with kids like Gio. If one person would stand up to them, just once, they'd probably stop, or at least feel some remorse. They'd be inhuman not to. One meaningful action, one meaningful word, can bring us all peace.

## Say No to NATO— Come to Chicago for the Counter Summit May 18 & 19

In May, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) meets in Chicago to discuss the future of Afghanistan, the shared costs of the military alliance and the expansion of the so-called missile defense system.

As NATO meets, the NATO Free Future Network joins with peace and justice activists to map out an alternative path in a Counter-Summit for Peace and Economic Justice on May 18 - 19. Over 20 workshops: explore alternatives to wars and a US driven "arms race of one."

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