



# Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO  
PEACE/LIFE  
CENTER  
PUBLICATION

MARCH, 2015  
VOLUME XXIII, NO. 7

## Documenting Modesto's Homeless: a labor of deep concern

By JOHN LUCAS in collaboration with  
RICHARD ANDERSON, FRANK PLOOF  
and LENG POWER

We began work on the Modesto Homeless Documentary Project over two years ago.

The way John Lucas got involved in this project was while recording a video program on a slum apartment complex. He met people who were going in and out of being housed and homeless. Richard Anderson saw the video and suggested making a documentary about the homeless in Modesto. The Modesto Homeless Documentary Project was born.

John Lucas has been a board member for over 20 years of the Modesto Peace/Life Center and Chairman of the Media Committee for more than 10 years. "This project met all my beliefs, and of those of the Modesto Peace/Life Center: peace, social justice, and a sustainable environment," John explained.

The purpose of the documentary was threefold. First, was to interview homeless people in the Modesto area and have them tell their stories. We wanted to put a human face on the homeless people that live among us in our in community.

We posed several questions to them. The main thrusts of the questions were how they became homeless, and what is preventing them today from gaining permanent housing today.

Many times the interviews took on a life of their own, getting into the struggles and pains of their lives. See interviews at: <http://www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org>

Second, we wanted to display what current agencies are providing services to the homeless in the Modesto area, and what kinds of services they offer. We have found agencies both church-based and public sector. We have



found many good and caring people working for these agencies and have interviewed some.

Finally, we wanted to provide ways you, the viewer of this documentary, can get involved in a small or big way in helping homeless people in our community.

Richard Anderson became involved when eleven homeless people died in the Modesto area in 2012, one even in the bushes of the church he attended. (See his story in this issue.)

The documentary project has been fortunate to have added two more people to the project since its inception. Leng Power and Frank Ploof.

Leng is Program Manager for Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL) in Modesto. DRAIL provides ser-

vices to the homeless or poor with physical or mental health disabilities. Leng joined our team by responding to an article in *Stanislaus Connections* that John wrote almost 2 years ago, asking if anyone was interested in working on the documentary.

"My draw to the project, in addition to seeing a huge need amongst the people my agency serves, was also that I felt that people who were homeless lacked the ability to meet a fundamental human need to be heard, to have their stories told," said Leng. Leng is vital to the group. Her creativity, social networking, skills in interviewing, and contacts with local service agencies are invaluable.

Last, but not least, Frank Ploof, a retired computer scientist from Lawrence Livermore

Lab, is our fourth member. Frank brings to the team 30 plus years of working with people to analyze and design systems. His expertise has translated nicely into now working with the homeless and homeless systems. Frank has also been very active in many aspects of community as a member of: the Salida Municipal Advisory Council, Modesto's Homeless Blue Ribbon Commission, the Stanislaus County Mental Health Board, Modesto's Citizens Advisory Housing and Community Development Committee, Modesto Community Development Corporation, United Way Community Grant Funds Committee, and, as a volunteer at the

continued page 3

### The Public is invited to the 2015 Peace Essay Contest Awards

Friday, March 20, 7:00 p.m.

Mary Stuart Rodgers Student Learning Center, MJC West Campus  
Michael Schiefelbein, MC  
Pastor, College Avenue Congregational Church

*"We all do better when we work together. Our differences do matter, but our Common humanity matters more."*

Bill Clinton, 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States

Light refreshments following the program.

Note: there are no campus parking fees after 5 p.m.

All participants, teachers, sponsors, screeners, judges are guests of honor.

All certificates and prizes not picked up will be sent to the teachers for distribution.

The 2015 Peace Essay Contest is co-sponsored by: Modesto Peace/Life Center and Division of Literature & Language Arts, Modesto Junior College

**Modesto Peace/Life  
Center Annual Meeting  
SATURDAY, March 7, 2015  
PEACE/LIFE CENTER  
720 13<sup>th</sup> ST., MODESTO  
8:30 AM — Noon  
Bring your ideas!**

#### INSIDE CONNECTIONS

LOCAL . . . . .	2
HOMELESSNESS . . . . .	3
LIVING LIGHTLY . . . . .	4
GREEN TIPS . . . . .	5

KATHY KELLEY FROM PRISON . . .	6
AFGHAN SCHOOLS . . . . .	7
FACES OF PEACE . . . . .	8
A GATHERING OF VOICES . . . . .	9
EVENTS . . . . .	10

#### READERS! Sign-up for our e-edition!

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

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

To sign-up, send your email address to Jim Costello, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

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

## “Ending the Culture of Violence on School and College Campuses”

Is there a “Culture of Violence” on school and college campuses? If so, is it possible to end this violence? Local affiliates of *American Association of University Women*, *Delta Kappa Gamma*, *League of Women Voters* and the *Stanislaus County Office of Education* think so! To this end they are initiating a community conversation **Thursday, March 19, 2015** from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Martin G. Petersen Education Center, 720 12<sup>th</sup> St., Modesto. This free event envisions raising public awareness and involving individuals and groups to curtail the riptide of violence in our schools.

Panel members include: Stanislaus County Sheriff Adam Christianson, Stanislaus County Office of Education Superintendent Tom Changnon, University of the Pacific Vice-President for Student Life Patrick Day, Oakdale Police Chief Lester Jenkins, Family Justice Center Executive Director Tom Ciccarelli and Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Director Dr. Madelyn Schlaepfer.

The discussion topics include: crime, high school dropouts, sexual assault, substance abuse, breakdown of the family unit and mental health; all issues of today’s assault on the safety and wellbeing of students, teachers and school staff.

**Information:** Contact: Sharon Arpoika, (209) 847-2048, [endcultureofviolence@gmail.com](mailto:endcultureofviolence@gmail.com)

## Peace Camp is coming!

Peace Camp 2015 will take place on June 26-28 at Camp Peaceful Pines in the Sierra. Peace Camp is for adults, youth and children of all ages. Lori Wong, teacher at Insight Meditation Central Valley, will lead a workshop on peace within and peace in the world. Further details and registration information will be in the next issue of *Stanislaus Connections*.

### Be informed!

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

## stanislaus CONNECTIONS

is published monthly except in August  
by the Modesto Peace/Life Center  
720 13<sup>th</sup> St., Modesto, CA 95354.

Open by appointment.

Mailing address: P.O. Box 134,  
Modesto, CA 95353  
209-529-5750.

## 14th Annual Cesar E. Chavez Empowerment Luncheon

14th Annual Cesar E. Chavez Empowerment Luncheon will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2015 from 11:30 am-1:30 pm at the Red Event, 921 8th St. (Calle Ocho), Modesto.

The guest speaker will be Arturo S. Rodriguez, President of United Farm Workers (UFW).

**TICKETS:** adult: \$20.00; Student: \$15.00. \$200.00 for a table of 8 listed in the Program book as a Table Sponsor. \$160.00 for a table of 8 students listed in the Program book as a Table Sponsor.

**Info:** (209) 303-2664; [mejiam3@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mejiam3@sbcglobal.net). SI SE PUEDE! Visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/344118049127969/>

## SAVE THE DATE: Khmer Culture Night and Dinner, March 28

Modesto’s Khmer Youth present homemade, authentic Cambodian food; exquisite dance performances by Khmer Dance Troupe; a fashion show displaying beautiful Cambodian clothing and textiles. 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto.

**Tickets:** General \$15; Kids 12 & under, \$10. Reservations: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/khmer-culture-night-and-dinner-tickets-15336549031>. Event WILL sell out. Purchase tickets ASAP. Info: [action@kyom.org](mailto:action@kyom.org) or Leng Power, 209-549-6149.

## March film night at the Center features *Genetic Roulette*

The next film night at the Center, **Wednesday, March 18** will show *Genetic Roulette*.

The film is based on a book by Jeffrey M. Smith, *Seeds of Deception*, a leading consumer advocate promoting healthier non-GMO (genetically modified organisms) choices in the foods we eat.

The film unveils a world most of us have never seen and raises alarming questions about GMOs. It exposes how Monsanto’s strong arm tactics, the FDA’s fraudulent policies, and the USDA ignore a the health emergency from genetically modified foods in our world.

The Peace/Life Center is locate at 720 13th St., Modesto. The film starts at 6:30 PM. A discussion will follow the film.

Find out more about the film at <http://geneticroullettemovie.com>

## Homeless Study

from page 3

of municipal codes that target or disproportionately impact homeless people.

Through extensive archival research and case studies of several cities, the report presents detailed evidence of the growing enactment and enforcement of municipal anti-homeless laws in recent decades as cities engage in a race to the bottom to push out homeless people. It concludes with a call for a state-level solution to end the expensive and inhumane treatment of some of California’s most vulnerable residents.

Read the complete paper at [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2558944](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2558944)



**STANISLAUS  
Artist  
Open  
Studio**

**Tour the Studios  
of 65 Stanislaus  
County Artists  
April 25 / 26  
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.**

Preview Shows:  
Sat. April 11, noon-3  
Nasco, 4825 Stoddard Rd.

Fri. & Sat. April 17-18, 5-9 p.m.  
Gallo Center, Downtown Modesto

Tour maps on sale at  
Modesto Convention and Visitors Bureau,  
Chartreuse Muse Gallery, Mistlin Gallery,  
Oakdale Chamber of Commerce, Carnegie Art  
Center Turlock or from participating artists.  
\$10 adults, under 18 free

An initiative of the  
Stanislaus County Travel  
& Tourism Roundtable

Look for information at  
<http://stanislausaos.wordpress.com>  
or Stanislaus County Artists  
Open Studio Tour on Facebook,  
Email: [openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com](mailto:openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com)  
Phone: 209-222-TOUR

Enter to WIN a \$200  
gift certificate good for  
purchase of original art  
from participating artists.



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

**Local Public Radio**  
**FM 104.9**  
[www.ValleyMedia.Org](http://www.ValleyMedia.Org)  
**Local Bands, Real News**

## Homeless: a death prompts soul-searching

By RICHARD ANDERSON

Eleven homeless people died in the Modesto area in 2012, one of them in the bushes of the church I attended.

My experience videotaping the candle light vigil at the Berberian Homeless and Transition Shelter for those eleven that Christmas (<http://vimeo.com/56184214>) launched me into video-documenting the homeless in our area. The goal was to display the lives of some of our local homeless, and showcase the numerous ways our community serves our share of America's homeless. Hopefully, this project will also show viewers ways to help mainstream the homeless, and above all, how our society can support people on the brink to prevent them from slipping into homelessness.

Motivations for me in this project include overcoming my fears of the homeless, documenting some of their stories and discovering how I can help a few to regain their footing in society.

Most of us have felt the discomfort of sitting "for a thou-

sand years" at a red light while someone with both a hopeful face and sign is less than 10 feet away. Judith Chibante Neal's poem Beggar on Blackstone (<http://www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org/#!/poem-1/c1jzk>) encapsulates the dissonance of my Christian background warring with my fear of giving someone money they may use for a drug or alcohol habit.

**ACTION:** Check out our growing collection of video interviews of homeless and providers for the homeless, and poems by local poets at our Modesto homeless web site at [www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org/](http://www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org/). To join in our interviewing/taping and post-production, please contact us at <http://www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org/#!/contact/c24vq>

Like and follow the Modesto Documentary Project on its Facebook page!

## New study on California's Vagrancy Laws reveal inhumane treatment of the Homeless by Cities

Marina Fisher, Nathaniel Miller, Lindsay Walter and Jeffrey Selbin, all of the University of California Berkeley, have authored a new study, *California's New Vagrancy Laws: The Growing Enactment and Enforcement of Anti-Homeless Laws in the Golden State*

The authors state that vagrancy laws conjure up a distant past when authorities punished people without a home or permanent residence. Whether the objects of pity or scorn, vagrants could be cited or jailed under laws selectively enforced against anyone deemed undesirable. Although such laws have generally been struck down by courts as

unconstitutionally vague, today's "vagrants" are homeless people, who face growing harassment and punishment for their presence in public.

More than one in five homeless people in the country lives in California, and two-thirds are unsheltered. The state legislature has done little to respond to this widespread problem, forcing municipal governments to address homelessness with local laws and resources. Cities have responded by enacting and enforcing new vagrancy laws — a wide range

continued page 2

## Documenting Modesto's homeless

from page 1

Hutton House for 20 years. Most recently Frank has been a volunteer doing homeless street outreach and engagement with Stanislaus County's Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. **If you're reading this on 3/1/15, celebrate with us as one of the chronically homeless persons Frank has worked with for 8 months has found permanent housing for the first time in many years.**

We still have a lot more to do to finish the project, but we have good team and great working relationship. When we finish, there will be a showing of our documentary at Modesto's State Theatre. Until then, we will keep moving forward.

**ACTION:** We invite you to check out our growing collection of video interviews of homeless and providers for the homeless, and poems by local poets at our Modesto homeless web site at: <http://www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org/>. And if you have a story or poem to contribute, or want to join in our interviewing/taping and post-production, please contact us at <http://www.modestocahomelessdocumentary.org/#!/contact/c24vq>

**ACTION:** Like the Modesto Homeless Documentary Project on its Facebook page!

Project team, Leng Power, right, Richard Anderson, Frank Ploof and John Lucas below.



## What Is the Berberian Homeless and Transition Shelter?

From The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army in Modesto operates a shelter located at 9th and D Streets. The shelter is available all year round during the summer months on a limited basis; and at full capacity (80 men and 20 women) during the winter months. The winter season extends from the 1st Monday of November through the end of April.

Currently, there are a number of church congregations that provide nutritional meals to our guests. These partners prepare meals for 140 individuals and transport those meals to the shelter. Then, in service to others, the members of the congregations lovingly serve this food to the guests.

How can you help? The Salvation Army has the following service opportunities nightly during the hours of 5:00-7:00 PM.

**Bicycle Check In:** This opportunity interacts with the residents by helping them store their bicycles in a safe and secure place within the shelter. Responsibilities include greeting the clients and directing the individuals as to where they can store their bicycles.

**Observation Room Monitoring:** Within the shelter is an observation room that is equipped with a computer monitor and DVR player. This unit captures 16 camera angles strategically placed around the shelter facility. This particular volunteer opportunity requires the monitoring of the cameras that capture the various activities around and in the shelter. The goal of this process is to ensure the safety of the clients, staff, volunteers and building.

**Check In:** When the residents arrive at the shelter, they often have all of their worldly possessions with them. Therefore, it is critical that, upon intake, the belongings of the individual are properly identified and secured. Consequently, The Salvation Army is looking for dedicated volunteers to help with the check-in process. This process includes the tagging of the individual's belongings and properly storing those items for the resident. Also, as part of the process, the individuals are provided with soap, shampoo and a change of clean undergarments.

**Greeting Opportunities:** Opportunities include greeting the clients by interacting with the residents as they begin to register for their night's stay. These greeting opportunities will be provided both inside the shelter facility as well as the outside grounds adjacent to the welcoming center. Individuals for this opportunity simply need a warm smile and genuine concern for individuals to be sheltered.

As you can see, assisting the homeless of our county is a community wide undertaking. Many churches and organizations have responded to the need in a wonderful outpouring of love. With winter at our back door, our homeless population once again needs our support.

**ACTION:** Would you be willing to volunteer? One night a week? One night a month? Be on a volunteer substitution list? Cook and serve meals for 125? If so, contact us for more information at <http://www.salvationarmymodesto.org/donations/volunteer>

## Working the Program

By JENIFER WEST

So the fridge is still fairly organized, and we've pretty much all learned to work with the new system. The best thing is that this organization habit seems to be expanding, making us (well, ok, me) more efficient, and not just in the kitchen! That's a good thing for a lot of reasons, not least being that the party until recently responsible for cooking dinner and keeping dishes under control at our house has just started a new job.

This organization habit is slimming down our grocery bill, too. Once a month or so, we do a 'big shop', and stock up on staples. We prep and freeze part of the veggies, using the remainder fresh. Things like onions, garlic, carrots, celery, peppers, and even snap peas, can be chopped, minced or sliced, and frozen (mix the minced garlic with a little oil before shaping into logs and freezing – much easier to break off in chunks!). Throwing a meal together is soooo much quicker & easier with these ingredients ready to go! Mushrooms, stored properly, will stay fresh well over a week. Clean and slice or leave whole, and place a damp paper towel in the bottom of their container. Put them back into the container, cover with another damp paper towel, and store in the fridge in a brown paper bag.

We're definitely into "low and slow" these days! I even bought an extra crock pot, because it's much more efficient to cook several things at once. Once a week or so, we loosely plan the next week's meals, and do a quick grocery store

run to fill in the gaps. To make, say beef stew, I throw beef into one of the crock pots with some onions & garlic salt, and cook it on low all day or overnight, then refrigerate it. To make the stew, I just skim off the fat, save the bones and gristle for stock, toss the meat into the crockpot with the other ingredients, and, viola beef stew.

We're also getting as much 'mileage' from our protein foods as possible. Leftover meat from a chicken or roast, for example, gets 'restyled' for other dinners. Save the juice and fat, too – both add depth and nutrients to soups or sauces (even the fat, especially if organic, has its virtues). Chunks of leftover meat can be tossed into a sauce (sauté some onions in a little of the leftover fat, use the juice you've saved and thicken with a little cornstarch), and served over rice or noodles. "Fast food" but much better! A small family can get another meal or two from that same chicken or roast – maybe in sandwiches, or added to a green salad. Or tossed, along with some of your already prepped, frozen veggies, into a soup pot – sauté some onions and garlic in a little of the reserved fat, and use the juice you've saved, plus homemade stock if needed. Leftover rice or pasta would round things out nicely. A few herbs (thyme and rosemary pair especially well with poultry, and can be grown as perennials around the yard), a little soy sauce, maybe some sour cream, or not, and dinner's ready. If you're feeling ambitious, you could even throw together a batch of biscuits for a 'crust' and toss into the oven – you'll be sitting down to classic comfort food in no time!

Bones, skin, and gristle are great for stock – another excellent use for the crock pot! It may seem an extra hassle, but it's actually quite easy, and can be done quickly once the meat has been removed. (I often toss the skin, bones, gristle, etc., directly into the crock pot while removing the meat, and start it cooking while doing the dishes.) Homemade stock is absolutely worth the small effort required – the stuff in the cans isn't even from the same universe! As the great French chef, Escoffier, said, "stock is everything in cooking... without it, nothing can be done...". To transform your leftover bits and bones into delicious, health-giving stock, toss them in with some onions & garlic and a little vinegar (draws calcium from the bones into the stock), then cover with water. Cook on low for 12 – 24 hours (24 – 48 for beef), and the resulting stock will be full of minerals and other good stuff – particularly calcium. Strain, and feed the leftover goodies to your animal friends. For even more calcium, I smash a little of the softened bones and mix into the stock. I give the rest to our animals, tossing any that don't splinter easily). To make a 5-star stock: Several hours before the stock will be finished, toss in some onions, celery, carrots, and a little garlic. Tie some black peppercorns, thyme, sage, rosemary, or whatever else you feel inspired to add in a coffee filter, and toss it in. Freeze the strained stock in ice cube trays, so you can add as little or as much as you want to whatever you happen to be making.

So our organized fridge has led to more organized cooking, with a side of healthier eating.

Now, if I could just turn that 'organization bug' loose on my filing system...

## Stanislaus Audubon to show local nature documentary at State Theater on April 12.

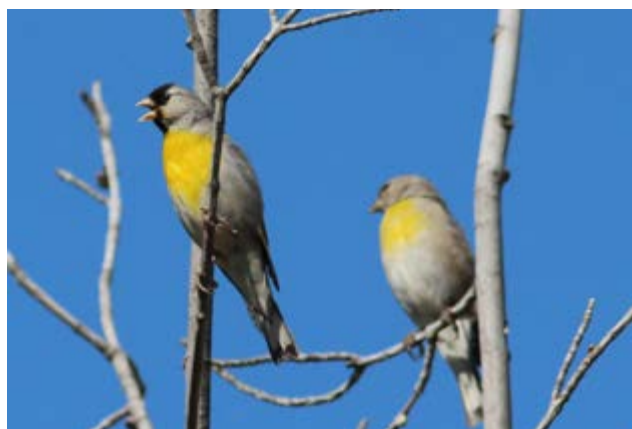
The Stanislaus Audubon Society (SAS) has produced and will show a one-hour movie depicting local birds and wildlife at the **State Theatre on Sunday April 12 at 3:00 p.m.**

Filmed all in Stanislaus and Merced counties, *Wings Over Our Two Counties* follows the seasons through the calendar and leads you on a treasure hunt of nature through Del Puerto Canyon, Modesto's Thousand Oaks Park, the National Wildlife Refuges near Vernalis and Merced, and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

There are lots of stunning close-ups and engaging action. Bald Eagles at Woodward Reservoir dive bomb ducks. An Anna's Hummingbird aggressively feeds its young in a tiny nest in a Modesto backyard. A flock of hundreds of White Pelicans with their nine-foot wingspans soar over the San Joaquin River NWR on Beckwith Road, alternately seeming to appear and disappear as they circle in perfect unison. Several species do mating dances and a number lustily sing for the camera, while grey foxes and coyotes lurk in the understory.

You will be so entertained that you will not realize that you have in the process also learned the basic skills of birding. You will never walk your neighborhood or drive your roads the same way again.

This film will be a double feature with another one-hour documentary, *Birders: The Central Park Effect*. It too fo-



Lawrence's Goldfinch in Del Puerto Canyon.  
Photo: John Harris

cuses on birding one area, New York's Central Park. But it also highlights the birders themselves, a diverse group with whom you may find you have something in common.

More about the films at Visit  
<http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/457>

Visit the SAS at  
<https://sites.google.com/site/stanislausaudubonsociety/>

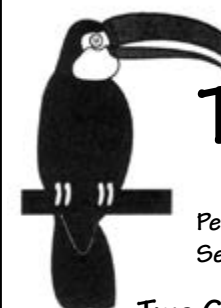
Visit Facebook at  
<https://www.facebook.com/stanislaus.audubon>

### LAW OFFICES OF **ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE, LLP**

1600 G Street  
Suite 203

DAVID N. ROCKWELL  
SHARON E. KELLY  
JEFFREY DUARTE  
MARKUS URSTOEGER  
*Attorneys/Abogados*

P.O. Box 0142  
Modesto, CA  
95353-0142  
(209) 521-2552  
FAX (209) 526-7898



Anything you can do  
**Two Can Do**  
for you

Personal  
Services

Noel Russell  
(209) 524-2314

**Two Can Do Time Savers**  
errands run • bookkeeping done  
home management services  
information gathering • special occasions

## Transboundary ozone pollution conference

In partnership with NASA's Air Quality Applied Science Team (AQAST), the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is organizing a scientific conference focusing on transboundary anthropogenic ozone (TAO)\*in the western U.S. to be held at the Tenaaya Lodge at Yosemite (just outside Yosemite National Park) March 31-April 2, 2015.



The overall goal of the conference is to provide a forum for researchers to share their latest findings in this field with air quality managers and other atmospheric scientists. In particular, a growing body of research provides clear evidence that transboundary ozone has risen substantially over the past few decades and is making non-trivial, episodic or, in some cases, near continuous contributions to ambient ozone levels throughout the western U.S.

Take part in discussions with some of the nation's top minds working on the science of trans boundary ozone impacts in the western United States and the policy issues they raise.

For information, agenda updates, registration details, lodging reservations and more, visit: <http://www.valleyair.org/TOPC>

\* "...the fraction of total transboundary ozone that has been generated by human activity from transpacific sources, Asia in particular." Transboundary means across boundaries. [http://www.valleyair.org/Air\\_Quality\\_Plans/docs/2013Attainment/FinalNarrativeForDrummondTransboundaryCase.pdf](http://www.valleyair.org/Air_Quality_Plans/docs/2013Attainment/FinalNarrativeForDrummondTransboundaryCase.pdf)



MICHAEL R. BAUDLER, CPA  
DONNA E. FLANDERS, CPA

Office (209) 575-2653  
Fax (209) 575-0629

e-mail [b\\_f@modestocpas.com](mailto:b_f@modestocpas.com)  
1120 14th Street, Suite 2  
Modesto, CA 95350

## GreenTips for a Green Planet: Environmental Stewardship – The practical path to peace, justice and sustainability

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Are we our brothers' keepers? The answer to that is couched in controversy. However, we are our Mother Earth's keepers. That partnership is evident all around us...sadly often as a tale of neglect.



Environmental stewardship refers to responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices. Aldo Leopold (1887–1948) championed environmental stewardship based on a land ethic “dealing with man’s relation to land and to the animals and plants which grow upon it.” (Wikipedia)

“From the very beginning, the vitality and condition of the environment has been at the mercy of mankind’s activities,” says Eric John in the *Daily Quaker*.

Speaking from the Friends perspective, a religious order that is known for “walking their talk,” John continues, “Sadly, human beings have not been the stewards God may have originally hoped they would be. We, as a species, have caused widespread deterioration and destruction of the environment throughout our history. Furthermore, our impact on the environment has increased exponentially since the advent of industrial society. I believe that to live in harmony with nature is to live in harmony with God. Right now, the relationship is anything but harmonious.”

You may or may not be a person of faith, but if you are reading this in *Stanislaus Connections*, you are likely to be a person of conscience who is taking active responsibility for your personal global footprint.

“One person living out the testimony of stewardship through their actions and lifestyle, John points out, “is more powerful than all the marches, protests, sign waving, and conferences in the world. He goes on to suggest that each of us “take a long hard look at...our own lives...before raising awareness to others...and be mindful of our own actions...”

Environmental stewardship can be practiced by all of us through hands-on-help with specific environmental causes, financially supporting and fundraising for a cause, and/or taking action on a day-to-day basis to encourage and guide governmental agencies, scientists, and stakeholder or other groups toward a sustainable goal.

**ACTION:** Stewardship is best accomplished locally, and the Stanislaus County Area offers numerous opportunities to become aware, knowledgeable and actively involved as a fiscally and morally compassionate green steward. The following are but a few:

- Join ranks with the newly formed Modesto Chapter of the Citizen’s Climate Lobby to support passage of the na-

tional CCL revenue-free carbon fee and dividend legislative proposal in Congress. The next meeting is March 14 at 10 a.m. Call 523-5907 for location and/or further information.

- Team up with the Dry Creek Trails Coalition and Love Modesto to clean up area park trails. Clean up days have been announced for April 18 (with Love Modesto), June 6, August 1 and October 3 from 8 a.m. to noon. Locations and further information are available at [www.drycreektrails.com](http://www.drycreektrails.com) or [drycreektrails@gmail.com](mailto:drycreektrails@gmail.com).

- Get in on the ground floor of the Proactive Community Response Coalition, a group of concerned citizens from faith-based, governmental and community activist organizations (including the Modesto Peace/Life Center), who are focusing efforts to become aware, knowledgeable, and instrumental in making our local place on planet earth more socially just and environmentally sustainable. The group will meet Mar. 10 in the Fireside Room of the First United Methodist Church, corner of 16 and I Sts., Modesto.

- Set your intentions to help move the planetary energy from chaotic to healing with Unity Form Tai Ji or other mindfulness based practices. It has been scientifically noted that mindfulness starts a positive vibration within the practitioner, which radiates outward to the community and world at large. Unity Tai Ji meets Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in the multipurpose room at First United Methodist Church near the corner of 16th and H Sts. in Modesto. Check with your fitness center, church or other spiritual/health center for other mindfulness classes.

- The City of Modesto and the Modesto Chamber of Commerce each support green business practices. Call to find out how you and/or your business can participate.

- Parents and teachers can facilitate a Green Week at their schools through a free Green Education Foundation sustainability education program (see February 2015 Green Tips). The GEF program, one of the largest sustainability education programs anywhere, is designed to provide 5-day standards-based lesson sets, recommended reading, sustainability tips, contests and activities, which can be used during the February through May Green Week period and throughout the entire year. Membership is free, and GEF offers lots of green education and awareness opportunities. ([www.green-educationfoundation.org](http://www.green-educationfoundation.org)).

- Be an opportunity builder through such organizations as Habitat for Humanity, Heifer Project International, Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, and countless other groups who actively broker in acts of kindness and community building.

**ACTION:** The opportunities are endless to think globally and act locally as a fiscally and morally compassionate green steward. Let us know about other opportunities to share with our readers.

# Kathy Kelly's letter from prison: The Shift

By KATHY KELLY

*We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person oriented society: when machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered.* - Martin Luther King Jr., "Beyond Vietnam"

Here in Lexington Federal Prison Camp, Atwood Hall defies the normal Bureau of Prisons fixation on gleaming floors and spotless surfaces. Creaky; rusty; full of peeling paint, chipped tiles, and leaky plumbing; Atwood just won't pass muster.

But of the four federal prisons I've lived in, this particular "unit" may be the most conducive to mental health.

Generally, the Bureau of Prisons system pushes guards to value buffed floors more than the people buffing the floors, walking the floors. Here, the atmosphere seems less uptight, albeit tinged with resigned acceptance that everyone is more or less "stuck" in what one prisoner described as "the armpit of the system."

I think every prison throughout the system should be closed, but, if it weren't for the asbestos and concerns about toxic water, perhaps this old hall would be better than the more modern facilities prison architects have designed.

At any rate, new prisoners arrive each week, indicating "the warehouse" is open for storing more human beings.

I thought of my younger self this morning while gazing out of a third floor window at fields, trees and farms outside. In 1989, when this prison was a maximum security prison for women, I spent nine months here after having planted corn on nuclear missile silo sites in Missouri. Confined to first floor environs, other prisoners and I stared at the fields and horses outside the prison through chain link fences and coiled barbed wire. Even so, we saw a beautiful spring that year in Kentucky. Reliably, spring will again emerge.

Slowly I'm forming relationships now, unusual friendships that will likely grow. I'm also finding extended time to read and study.

In the prison library, I found Siddhartha Mukherjee's "The Emperor of Maladies: a Biography of Cancer". When I finished reading it, I felt troubled and deeply moved. Mukherjee, an oncologist and researcher, traces the history of cancer. His narrative includes personal stories about himself and his patients. Through their lives and struggles, he draws readers into scientific discussions of the disease itself as well as the slow and often disappointing developments of treatment and prevention.

He believes he must help his patients resist total despair. Mukherjee notes (p.397) how concentration camp survivor Primo Levi had "often remarked that among the most fatal

qualities of the camp was its ability to erase the idea of a life outside and beyond itself... To be in the camps was to abnegate history, identity and personality — but it was the erasure of the future that was the most chilling."

---

**I've heard prison described as "hard time." It's a phrase given strange and tragic resonance by the walling off of these women's futures.**

Shortly before I arrived here, a woman on my floor had removed all her photos from her bulletin board, convinced that she would soon be among a few inmates recently granted immediate release because of retroactive changes in sentencing laws for drug related charges.

"I'm not going to get immediate release," she sadly told me. When she finished recomposing the board, she told me about each photo. Like pieces of a puzzle, the stories helped form her life story, full of human desire to love and be loved. She'll likely be here for 33 more months, having already been "down" for seventeen months. The cherished photos and memories, the painful fact of their own love for the world outside, helps pull women through hellish feelings of utter isolation and despair.

Our society barely recognizes the futility of imprisoning people for onerously long sentences. I think of Mukherjee and wonder whether U.S. people invested as much money in cancer research as they did in Super Bowl celebrations this year.

"We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society," said Dr. King, "and it's a shift that in many ways we've yet to make." In addition, "we are at the moment when our lives must be placed on the line if our nation is to survive its own folly."

---

**And yet a foolish over-concern for our own safety, as well as for "profit motives and property rights," locks these women away, bombs the poor in distant countries, and barely notices what it has done.**

So much is spent on entertainment; so little is spent to abolish punishing inequality or the cancer of war. Abolitionists like King urged humans to abandon the cruel futility of war and to shut down the development, sale, storage and use of weapons. "A nation that continues, year after year, to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

I'm fortunate, here in prison, to revisit through memories my young friends in Afghanistan embracing King, in Rabbi Abraham Heschel's words, as "a voice, a vision, and a way." They are working full tilt at plans for expanding an alternative school for street kids and at supplying their poorest neighbors with blankets and local seamstresses with work, and they're working to cultivate soil as well as imagination, striving for a border-free world. They help one another overcome desires for revenge; they show a light of human dignity which has at times transformed and never wholly failed to illuminate even the darkest times.

A few nights ago at dinner, a fellow inmate here remarked that the food was bland and overcooked. Then she turned to me, her eyes suddenly having filled with tears. "Some of the people you met in Afghanistan," she said, "might call this a feast."

If the liberating day ever arrives when Dr. Martin Luther King's goals are realized, spirits coursing through Atwood Hall will have contributed toward our collective release from the vise-like grip of "militarism, racism and economic exploitation." Every day here in Atwood Hall, prisoners long to receive fairness, forgiveness and love but instead offer these treasures to those around them. Yesterday, at a choir rehearsal, we practiced a song called "Breaking the Chains." The lively refrain, "I hear the chains falling," filled the small chapel. Swaying and clapping, we could believe another world is coming.

I'm learning from my fellow prisoners, who will remain here long past my meager three months' sentence. Our society may or may not learn from any commitment we show now to free its prisoners.

---

**If we turn to each other with a readiness to share resources, live simply and practice fairness, perhaps it will find a way to end cruelties as wrongheaded as this prison system.**

Meanwhile, the shift we make in our own lives might help give us and our suffering neighbors the saving vision beyond our present moment and light to see a shared future through isolation and darkness. A moment can become a movement, but, in any case, it's worthwhile to do all we can to help each other do easier time.

Kathy Kelly, co-coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence (info@vcnv.org), is in federal prison for participation in an anti-drone protest. She can receive mail at: KATHY KELLY 04971-045; FMC LEXINGTON; FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTER; SATELLITE CAMP; P.O. BOX 14525; LEXINGTON, KY 40512.



# Borderfree Afghan Street Kids School

**Mission:** To share learning skills that will enable 100 Afghan street kids to understand language, Mother Nature, humanity, and life, and to be students and practitioners of nonviolence.

The school's curriculum is designed to not only enable the street kids to become literate, but, more importantly, to nurture in them a deep spirit of understanding, critical thinking, and compassion to help them serve the earth and its human family. The students will be encouraged to undertake small activities that address global warming, socioeconomic inequalities, and militarism with its violence and wars.



**Location:** Borderfree Nonviolence Community Centre, Kabul, Afghanistan.

**Start Date:** March 21, 2015

**Teachers:** Afghan Peace Volunteers. Currently, they are: Zarghuna, Hadisa, Farzana, Bismillah and Zekerullah.

## Brief Background

There are an estimated 60,000 Afghan children who work in the streets of Kabul to supplement their families' incomes. The militarized economic and educational systems are failing to nurture this new Afghan generation's yearning to build a better world.

Since August 2013, the Afghan Peace Volunteers have been running a street kids literacy and learning program for 21 Afghan street kids in Kabul, Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> The number of street kids enrolled has increased to 32. Child Right (Netherlands) has kindly funded the street kid program during this period of time. (<http://www.childright.nl/en/>). The street kids attend weekly literacy classes that teach Dari and elementary mathematics. Moreover, the teachers consistently employ the same basic principles of nonviolence they try to instill in their students. There are plans to include the learning of livelihood skills (e.g., agriculture, carpentry and tailoring) in the future.

Many of the kids work in the streets all day because their families desperately need them to earn money to help put bread, rice, and other basic foods on the table.

Working all day deprives the children of the chance to go to government-run schools. These schools provide a half day of formal education six days a week. To encourage the street kids to go to government schools and work only the other half of the day, the Afghan Peace Volunteers provide monthly gifts of rice and oil to their families.

On the 20th of Jan, 2015, 80 Afghan street kids marched in Kabul to the doors of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and asked for a school. Their dream is to have a street kids school for 100 kids. A poem and video of this action can be found at "[I am your child. We want a school.](#)"<sup>2</sup> and [Afghan Street Kids walk for a school!](#)<sup>3</sup>

This document is prepared with the help of the Afghan Peace Volunteers in the Borderfree Afghan Street Kids Team at the Borderfree Nonviolence Community Centre in Kabul, Afghanistan. (<http://ourjourneytosmile.com>).<sup>4</sup> You can support the street kids school through your donations to Voices for Creative Nonviolence; write "street kids" in the memo slot. Send inquiries regarding tax-deductible donations to [info@vcnv.org](mailto:info@vcnv.org)

1. <http://ourjourneytosmile.com/blog/street-kids-program/>
2. <http://ourjourneytosmile.com/blog/2015/01/i-am-your-child-we-want-a-school-afghan-street-kids-walk/>
3. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_4zxZ9te7s&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_4zxZ9te7s&feature=youtu.be)
4. <http://ourjourneytosmile.com/blog/>

**SUPPORT.  
ADVOCACY.  
LOVE.**

For more information on meetings, our programs, and ways you can give back to the LGBT community, visit [www.pflagmodesto.org](http://www.pflagmodesto.org)

Confidential Helpline  
(209) 566-2468



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



**CASH-DUDLEY  
SPEILLER & TORRES**  
PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

**E. F. CASH-DUDLEY**  
CERTIFIED SPECIALIST IN FAMILY LAW  
THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION

**STACY P. SPEILLER**  
Attorney at Law

**PATRICIA TORRES**  
Attorney at Law  
SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

518 THIRTEENTH STREET • MODESTO, CALIFORNIA 95354  
TELEPHONE (209) 526-1533 • FACSIMILE: (209) 526-1711  
[WWW.CDSTLAW.COM](http://WWW.CDSTLAW.COM)

## Peace is This Moment Without Judgment

Do you think peace requires an end to war?  
Or tigers eating only vegetables?  
Does peace require an absence from  
your boss, your spouse, yourself? ...  
Do you think peace will come some other place than here?  
Some other time than Now?  
In some other heart than yours?  
Peace is this moment without judgment.  
That is all. This moment in the Heart-space  
where everything that is is welcome.  
Peace is this moment without thinking  
that it should be some other way,  
that you should feel some other thing,  
that your life should unfold according to your plans.  
Peace is this moment without judgment,  
this moment in the heart-space where  
everything that is is welcome.

© Dorothy Hunt (reprinted with permission)

## The story behind the poem:

I wrote it many, many years ago spontaneously in long-hand on a card I wrote to a woman I met at a seminar where I was speaking. I do not remember her name and never heard from her again, but we connected at the event and she shared she was in quite a lot of pain with chronic arthritis. She had given me her address, and so I wrote her a little note of encouragement with this poem as part of it. I did not even keep a copy of the poem. A few years ago, I received a request to use the poem on a website from Seattle and learned that that person had read the poem on a UK website (“judgment was then spelled the British way with an “e”). Anyway, since then, I have received various other requests for use of the poem—including for a book a prominent Buddhist writer and teacher authored and a publication devoted to Thomas Merton. I have a book of poems that was published in 2004, *Only This!*, but this poem was not among them. I even had forgotten about it until the requests began to come in to use it. Recently, I heard from an old college classmate that an 83 year old man in Indiana quoted it in a church gathering a few weeks ago. Somehow, once things get on the internet, there is no telling where they will end up. Apparently, in Modesto currently! — Dorothy Hunt

Dorothy Hunt is the founder of the San Francisco Center for Meditation and Psychotherapy and serves as Spiritual Director and President of Moon Mountain Sangha, Inc. Learn more at <http://www.dorothyhunt.org/index.htm>

## Faces + Stories help end wars

By LIBBY & LEN TRAUBMAN

“An enemy is one whose story we  
have not heard.”

Ms. Gene Knudsen Hoffman

“Social media is an amazing tool, but  
it’s really the face-to-face interaction  
that makes a long-term impact.”

Felicia Day

In 2000, “*The Enemy Has a Face: The Seeds of Peace Experience*” was published by the U.S. Institute of Peace; <https://bookstore.usip.org/books/BookDetail.aspx?productID=51280>

Author and social entrepreneur, John Wallach, championed and documented Palestinian-Israeli people-to-people reconciliation.

In December 2003, a different “*The Enemy Has a Face*” was published by award-winning author, Gloria D. Miklowitz; <http://www.eerdman.com/Products/5261/the-enemy-has-a-face.aspx>. She urged Palestinian and Jewish youth readers — everyone — to look beyond stereotypes to humanize one another.

### VIDEO: Show Our Faces, See Their faces

In 1956, C. S. Lewis published TILL WE HAVE FACES. Lewis insisted we must live and reconcile face-to-face with our fellow human, who “must be speaking with its own voice” revealing one’s true face “not any mask.”

In November, 2014, some Palestinians and Jews created a film to remind us. Faces matter. Remaining distant and invisible, the face of the other fades. Without a face, our humanity diminishes.

To restore our humanity, we need to meet face-to-face. Magic can result. The opportunity is in our hands. “This Is My Face”, 2-minute video at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIEIoJTydpc&feature=youtu.be>

### THEATER: Dramatic Examples of Middle East Stories from one actor’s lips and experiences

Great artists of stage and film have animated stories to inspire and awaken us to our humanity. Meryl Streep, Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts, Dustin Hoffman, so many to thank. Name your own favorites and their performances that affected you forever.

For the Palestinian-Israeli relationship, a performance that excels to acknowledge and respect the diverse narratives and people is “WRESTLING JERUSALEM” at <http://www.wrestlingjerusalem.com>

No actor-writer is more compelling, awakening, and helpful than Aaron Davidman in this world-class one-person

Lewis insisted we must live and  
reconcile face-to-face with our fellow  
human, who “must be speaking with  
its own voice” revealing one’s true  
face “not any mask.”

stage performance. Davidman’s theatrical expression of the vast spectrum of Jewish and Palestinian narratives about the Middle East is perhaps the most informative, powerful, inclusive, and fair from one person’s mouth.

Equally impressive is how he has lived his life — discovering people’s parallel but different life experiences and world views not only by reading textbooks and opinions but by meeting people face-to-face here and overseas.

For your campus, conference, or community, hosting WRESTLING JERUSALEM could be your most informative, creative step toward improving communication and relationships. VIEW a video excerpt at <http://vimeo.com/103364996>

Contact Libby & Len Traubman at [ltraubman@igc.org](mailto:ltraubman@igc.org)

## Poet: Josh Pollock



Modesto is my hometown and my anchor. My great grandfather’s parents came with the Swedish migration into Turlock and rooted my mother’s side of the family in the greater Central Valley area. I went to Modesto Junior College and then transferred to UC-Santa Cruz. Eventually I went to grad school for History at CSU-Stanislaus and received my MA. History is my first love because it encompasses everything. Alongside history, poetry has also been a life-long love of

mine. I have occasionally been published in small zines and *Connections* several years ago.

I am formally a board member of the Modesto Peace/Life Center, Peace in the Middle East Committee, Alternatives to War, and the MJC Student Activist Club. I am busy raising my teenage daughter and teaching. When I get more time I will attempt to become a Socialist dictator, but only if my daughter approves. For now I will continue to engage with the arts and education fantasizing that President Obama really is a socialist like the right-wing claims he is.



## A Love Poem to Humans

I do not hate you or love you because of your religion.  
 All your holy books are elevated poetry to me.  
 This is not an insult; I love the Heaven of poetry.  
 You have no colorful flag imprinted in your DNA.  
 No nationalist tune put by God on your infant lips.  
 I talked with you during Ramadan, Yom Kippur, Lent,  
 And at atheists drunken raves littered with whores.  
 We are all here in this precious place of green dreams.  
 I do not like everything we have done and are doing.  
 I own guns for defense but I loathe them tremendously.  
 If you hurt who I love I will kill you and that kills me.  
 I want to be better than our history tells us we are.  
 I want to rise above rationality: accused of utopianism.  
 The earth and animals are aware we forget where we live.

I love you so much and you hurt every fiber of my soul.  
 I have no choice at my disposal, but to hug and kiss you.  
 We are born dying so why do we waste precious time?  
 When I die I hope earth and memories like the taste of me.

I have a mother, a daughter, a sister, cousins, and tribes.

I love you, I love you, I love, I love you, I love you.

Know that when you hate it is because you believe in lies.

## There is Always a Moment When...

The atheists and the Muslims  
 And Christians and Jews and Hindus  
 And several other groups  
 Debated until they were exhausted.  
 Everyone sat down nearly collapsing.  
 Coffee with cookies was offered.  
 No one said a single word  
 Because the coffee and cookies  
 Tasted so damn delicious.  
 They quietly snacked for seven minutes  
 And, as God originally said, "It was good."

## What No-Love Entails

A human fights for land, nation, law.  
 Calls in its ill minions for a brawl.  
 Gets all the blood to spill as it ails.  
 Human: an "it" in shit as it fails.  
 You know what a human sees and saw:  
 Its wars, its rapes, genocides, its will.  
 The will to claw, shoot, and to kill.  
 Something in it though remains still  
 That has an activity of loves.  
 Loves that activates Love in awe;  
 Knowing what this no-Love entails:  
 We will have healed hearts in our chests  
 Or bullets through bodies on the walls.

## Where Do Humans Meet?

Where do humans meet?  
 Do we reach each other  
 Through our eyes?  
 What do we see  
 And what do words mean?  
 Our time is limited  
 And our connections are limited.  
 The morbidity of life  
 Is that it connects to death  
 And the life of a human connection  
 Is attached to inevitable termination.

A more robust morbidity  
 Is to not ponder this reality.  
 To look at each other as eternal  
 Is to take away each moment  
 That is only ours.  
 What another person means to us,  
 What life means to ourselves  
 Is all that we have  
 And it lasts only for each individual life.

We can never mean what we want  
 To another person.  
 They can only mean to us what we impose.  
 This is not vanity because  
 It is the only thing we can do.  
 We reach into the orbs,  
 Through the esophagus, arteries,  
 And the intestines of lovers and friends.  
 We pull up their desires, their anger,  
 Their insecurities, their fears,  
 And their tender whisperings into  
 Our deepest sentiments  
 And we make poetry  
 Out of our great divide,  
 As if we could read every part  
 Of their body and thought.

A human connection is a myth.  
 It is a myth to be cherished.  
 Every person plays out a role  
 In the theatre of another's mind.  
 Before we pass away we send  
 Earth's children the structuring  
 Of our wild imaginations  
 Needed for the short time,  
 But Time that is our time, we are alive.

## Modesto...

I miss you Modesto  
 And apologize for all the times I cursed your name.  
 A hometown is the first town to curse  
 And a hometown is the first place to miss.  
 Gangs of boys used to beat me up in your parks  
 And at Fremont Elementary school when I was young.  
 But those boys taught me how to fight:  
 When you get worked over enough  
 You start learning the moves.  
 I miss your fanatic ex-con street preachers  
 Spewing out at me and my friends  
 While we would drink away around the patio  
 Of Tresetti's World Cafe.  
 Modesto you have not been aware  
 How anachronistic you really are.  
 You balance out a nineteenth century vibe  
 And are much more modern than you realize.  
 I met a girl from Beijing that never wanted to leave you,  
 A woman from Paris and a man from San Francisco  
 That gladly walk on your flat streets.  
 What is it about you Modesto  
 That gives all your residents vertigo for travel?  
 I think I figured out why you sold your orchards,  
 Like Judas selling out Jesus,  
 Trading farmland in for tract homes.  
 Food leaves and tract homes are trap homes.  
 You appear so greedy. Or could it be you are noble?  
 I may have this wrong and you simply have love for your own.  
 I loved much in Modesto and I left love.  
 Is your love the root of my vertigo?  
 I am living in the South East Portland.  
 I still do not know what Portland is.  
 Modesto, you are no longer my home.  
 Modesto I do not know where home is.  
 Modesto you are not green enough,  
 Meth addicts pollute your streets,  
 And your economy is in the tank.  
 I long for you but I can't come back.  
 In my apartment room at night  
 I face the terror of silence.  
 In the terror of silence I will find my way.  
 Modesto, I will always love you.

## What a Moon Like This Does

I cross the bridge over the canal.  
 The water is full and reflects the moon  
 And rice-ball sized glows from street lights.  
 A homeless man is washing his feet  
 As he sits at the edge of the embankment.  
 He looks like a bearded Japanese peasant  
 In a scene from an old Kurosawa film.  
 This stout vagabond appears rather regal  
 In his ambitious grey-green reflection.  
 When the moon gets this bright there is  
 Only grandeur to be lost once the sun  
 Excavates everything into clear sight.  
 I could plunge in and attain a treasure  
 Emerging with a sword in my hand.  
 But I will return home empty handed.  
 In waking morning there will only be  
 A broken golf club glazed by green slime.



## Sunday Afternoons at CBS Renewal Weekend

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

The second weekend in March sees a very special event hosted by Sunday Afternoons at CBS and Congregation Beth Shalom, as they present Jewish Renewal 101 at 1705 Sherwood Ave.

Jewish Renewal refers to an emerging movement which describes itself as “a worldwide, transdenominational movement grounded in Judaism’s prophetic and mystical traditions.” Jewish Renewal brings kabbalistic and Hasidic theory and practice into a non-Orthodox, egalitarian framework, a phenomenon sometimes referred to as neo-Hasidism. Like Hasidic Jews, Renewal Jews often add to traditional worship ecstatic practices such as meditation, chant and dance. In augmenting Jewish ritual, some Renewal Jews borrow freely and openly from Buddhism, Sufism and other faiths. The Jewish Renewal movement also incorporates social views such as feminism, environmentalism and pacifism.

Cantorial soloist Jessica Leash has the inspirational voice of an angel with the power to soar above a thousand other singers. Throughout this weekend she will explore the world of Jewish Renewal music and share the beauty of inspirational and educational genres from around the world. *All programs are open to the Modesto Community.*

**Friday 3/6, 7 pm:** Jessica will lead evening services in the Renewal style, including a related Drash (message).

**Saturday 3/7, 10 am:** Jessica will co-lead morning services and a Torah discussion focused on Renewal approaches and content. At 1 pm: ‘Jewish Singing in 4 Easy Steps’: Jessica will lead a workshop for singers and non-singers alike. No experience needed - everyone will leave whistling a happy tune.

**Sunday 3/8, 3 pm:** ‘Jewish Renewal - A Musical Portrait’: at the final concert of the Sunday Afternoons at CBS 2014-15 season, Jessica will feature a snapshot of the times in which Jewish Renewal came to be, some of its influences, and a taste of what Renewal music brings to contemporary Jewish life. She will perform a unique global mix of popular folk songs from the 60’s and 70’s, some gospel, Hassidic niggunim, a group of Yiddish songs, Shlomo Carlebach tunes, some call-and-response chants, and Reform Jewish tunes by Debbie Friedman. She will be accompanied by Fred Ross-Perry on guitar and Ken Mowrey on percussion.

**Information** at [www.cbsmodesto.org](http://www.cbsmodesto.org) and [www.sunday-satcbs.com](http://www.sunday-satcbs.com). Purchase tickets through the CBS website, from the CBS office, at 571-6060 on weekdays, or at the door.

## Fifth Annual Stanislaus County Artist Open Studio Tour Maps going on sale March 2

The **Fifth Annual Stanislaus County Artist Open Studio Tour** maps go on sale March 2. The Map booklets are your ticket to visit 66 local working artists, in 42 studios over the weekend of **April 25 and 26**. Each stop is different and many are the actual workplaces where artists create and store their works, and often features works you may not find in galleries. A variety of media are featured, from painting, sculpture, art jewelry, woodwork, ceramics, to woodworking. Much of it is available for purchase. Maps are \$10 each, and students 18 and under get in FREE with a map holder.

The studio tour is held across Stanislaus County and local surrounds, including Modesto, Turlock, Escalon, Ripon and Oakdale. Maps can be purchased at several locations, including The Chartreuse Muse, Mistlin Gallery, Carnegie Arts Center in Turlock, Modesto Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Oakdale Chamber of Commerce. The public can also buy maps and get a FREE sneak peek at three preview shows. On April 11, a Preview Show will take place at NASCO Arts and Crafts on Stoddard Road in North Modesto between 12:00 and 3:00 p.m. The Preview Show moves downtown to Gallo Center for the Arts, April 17 and 18, in the lobby before and during the scheduled Modesto Symphony concerts.

It pays to buy a map early to plan your trip to visit the artist locations. Hours for the studio tour weekend, April 25 and 26, are 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. Maps can be used all year long as an information resource. This year, the map booklet features a drawing entry for five, \$200 Open Studio Gift Certificates to spend with artist of your choosing. The raffle will be conducted after the Open Studio weekend,



The Artist Open Studio Tour is a community event designed to expose the talents of Stanislaus County's resident visual artists, and expose them to the public in the artists' work spaces, where visitors can interact. Art is available for purchase as well as display, demonstrations, and general contact with the artists in the area.

Stanislaus Artist Open Studio is coordinated by a volunteer steering committee, and originally an initiative of the Stanislaus County Travel and Tourism Roundtable. Founding and past chairs of this event effort are Alice Richards, and Chella Gonsalves. Alice Richards' art is featured on the 2015 map book cover. Chella Gonsalves is one of the 66 featured artists on the tour. Current co-chairs for 2015 are Linda Knoll, and Tricia Spenker.

with instructions to the winners for use and redemption. Raffle entries can be dropped off at any of the 42 studios during Open Studio weekend visits.

For more information, email [openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com](mailto:openstudio.stanislaus@gmail.com) or visit the website at [www.stanislausaos.wordpress.com](http://www.stanislausaos.wordpress.com) Or visit our Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/stanislausaos](http://www.facebook.com/stanislausaos).

In celebration of Black History Month, the Friends of the Salida Library present

Sankofa Theatre Company  
performing an excerpt from the play  
**“The Journey...the African American Experience”**

March 3, 2015, 6 p.m.

Nick W. Blom Salida Regional Library

R.S.V.P by February 28, 2015

[figueroa@scfl.lib.ca.us](mailto:figueroa@scfl.lib.ca.us) or call 543-7315

*Sankofa is Modesto's only black theater company. “The Journey... the African American Experience,” begins in Africa, and depicts the journey to America, slavery, the Civil War, Harlem Renaissance, the civil rights movement through the election*

*of the first African-American president of the United States. This free performance features an excerpt of the play.*



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

EDITOR: Jim Costello

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Jim Costello, Luella Cole, Tina Driskill

LAYOUT EDITOR: Linda Knoll

ADVERTISING: (vacant)

ONLINE EDITION: Jim Costello

COLLATING & DISTRIBUTION: Shelly Scribner, many appreciated volunteers

ADS must be consistent with Peace/Life Center tenets. No ads for candidates for public office or for liquor. Advertisers do not necessarily support Peace/Life Center views nor does the Center endorse advertised products or services. To ADVERTISE, email Jim Costello, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

# On Drones: Trust Reality Rather Than Obama's Words

By JEFF BACHMAN

*"As Americans, we respect human dignity, even when we're threatened, which is why I've...worked to make sure our use of new technology like drones is properly constrained."*

—President Obama

A message to President Obama: saying something does not make it so. How does killing people, so many of them innocent of any wrongdoing whatsoever, with missiles launched from drones by "pilots" thousands of miles away, demonstrate respect for human dignity and the application of "proper" constraints?

Let's consider all the ways in which Obama's drone assassination program undermines "human dignity" and lacks proper constraints. To do so, one need only consider the many reports that have been entered into the public record by United Nations Special Rapporteurs, human rights organizations, and academic institutions.

In May 2010, Philip Alston, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Council. In his report, Alston noted that some states, including the U.S., had adopted targeted killing policies, which they have justified as necessary for fighting terrorism. According to Alston, "In the legitimate struggle against terrorism, too many criminal acts have been re-characterized so as to justify addressing them within the framework of the law of armed conflict."

Relatively early into Obama's escalation of the use of drones, Alston made the case that organized criminal activities were being intentionally redefined by the administration as acts of war in order to justify the application of the laws of war to the drone assassination program. In other words, rather than enact "proper" constraints, the Obama administration unilaterally decided to apply the laws of war to its drone strikes to allow it to kill anyone it deemed targetable, whether or not the targets posed an imminent threat. Further, by applying the laws of war, rather than human rights law, the Obama administration has ensured there would be weaker legal, though certainly not moral, criteria regarding the loss of innocent life.

In September 2012, Stanford Law School's International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic and NYU School of Law's Global Justice Clinic published a report, "Living Under Drones." Through their research, the clinics found that the presence of drones hovering in Pakistan's airspace:

*...Terrorizes men, women and children, giving rise to anxiety and psychological trauma among civilian communities. Those living under drones have to face the constant worry that a deadly strike may be fired at any moment, and the knowledge that they are powerless to protect themselves....Some parents choose to keep their children home, and children injured or traumatized by strikes have dropped out of school....In addition, families who lost loved ones or their homes in drone strikes now struggle to support themselves.*

Obama's drone assassination program represents an unequivocal assault on human dignity. It has literally altered

the behavior and livelihood of civilians living in the areas being attacked. The clinics also document the administration's use of what are referred to as double-taps: "The U.S. practice of striking one area multiple times, and evidence that it has killed rescuers, makes both community members and humanitarian workers afraid or unwilling to assist injured victims." Such constraint!

Also in 2012, Columbia Law School's Human Rights Clinic and the Center for Civilians in Conflict produced a report titled "The Civilian Impact of Drones: Unexamined Costs, Unanswered Questions." The report is especially critical of the lack of transparency from the Obama administration. The authors write:



*While our analysis is circumscribed by our limited information about US covert drone operations, what we know suggests there are potential short- and long-term impacts that policymakers have not considered, and which negatively impact civilians.*

In 2013, Amnesty International (AI) published a report on drone strikes in Pakistan and Human Rights Watch (HRW) published two reports on drone strikes in Yemen. In its report, AI criticized the Obama administration for its refusal to "provide even basic information on particular strikes." However, based on the information available to it from its investigation, AI expressed its concern "that these and other strikes have resulted in unlawful killings that may constitute extrajudicial executions or war crimes." I was not aware until now that one could simultaneously execute individuals without judicial review, and/or commit war crimes, while also employing proper constraints.

HRW's reports included similar findings to that of AI. HRW investigated six strikes in Yemen. "Two of these attacks," according to HRW:

*Were in clear violation of international humanitarian law -- the laws of war -- because they struck only civilians or used indiscriminate weapons. The other four cases may have violated the laws of war because the individual attacked was not a lawful military target or the attack caused disproportionate civilian harm, determinations that require further investigation. In several of these cases the US also did not take all feasible precautions to minimize harm to civilians,*

*as the laws of war require.*

HRW's second report documents an attack on a wedding party in Yemen. HRW found that "some, if not all, of those killed and wounded were civilians." HRW also stated that the attack "may have violated the laws of war by failing to discriminate between combatants and civilians, or by causing civilian loss disproportionate to the expected military advantage." HRW also referenced Obama's claim that before any drone strikes are launched, there must be "near-certainty" that no civilians will be harmed, questioning whether this policy is being complied with. Can drones be properly constrained without taking all possible precautions to avoid civilian harm? Can a wedding convoy be attacked without also attacking the dignity of those in the convoy, as well as any others who might be planning a wedding of their own?

Also in 2013, Philip Alston's successor as UN Special Rapporteur, Christof Heyns, submitted a report to the UN General Assembly. In his report, Heyns notes that access to drones:

*May lead to States, where they perceive their interests to be threatened, increasingly engaging in low-intensity but drawn-out applications of force that know few geographical or temporal boundaries. This would run counter to the notion that war -- and the transnational use of force in general -- must be of limited duration and scope, and that there should be a time of healing and recovery following conflict. Peace should be the norm, yet such scenarios risk making its derogation the rule by privileging force over long-term peaceful alternatives.*

Apparently, perpetual war and human dignity can walk hand-in-hand.

Finally, in 2014, Reprieve produced a report titled, "You Never Die Twice: Multiple Kills in the U.S. Drone Program." In the report, Reprieve focused on attempts to kill those included on Obama's "Kill List." Employing what Obama considers "proper" constraints, drone strikes killed 103 children in multiple attempts at killing only four men on this list. I shudder to think how many children would have been killed without proper constraints.

Despite all of the evidence that demonstrates how empty Obama's words are when it comes to the reality of the civilian impact of drone strikes, he somehow finds the nerve to continue the "trust me" defense. Apparently, we are simply expected to take Obama's word for it, even when the evidence suggests that his word is not worth the piece of paper (or teleprompter) it was written on.

*This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License*

*Jeff Bachman is a professor of human rights and co-director of Ethics, Peace, and Global Affairs at American University's School of International Service.*

<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2015/01/28/trust-reality-rather-president-obamas-words-drones>

# 12 CALENDAR



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

## ACTIONS FOR PEACE Sonora - Stockton

**SONORA:** Contact Alice at lewisalice090@gmail.com

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

## MARCH

**4 WED: Holley Moyes, Ph.D., University of California, Merced, "The Drought Cult of the Belize Maya." MJC Science Colloquium.** Free and open to the public, Wednesdays 3 to 4 p.m., Rm. 15, Science Community Center MJC West Campus, 2201 Blue Gum Ave. Info: Richard Anderson, (209) 529-5182, email andersonr@mjc.edu, [www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/colloquium.php](http://www.mjc.edu/instruction/sme/colloquium.php). **March 11:** Lance Krajewski, engineer, "The Science and History of the Panama Canal." **March 18:** Andrew Goreff, MJC computer sciences, "Living with a Manchurian Naturalist." **March 25:** Laurie Hatch, MJC child development, "A Look at Adverse Childhood Effects and Their Impact on Learning and on Life."

**7 SAT: Modesto Peace/Life Center Annual Mtg.** 8:30 am - Noon. See front page.

**8 SUN: Jessica Leash, Cantorial Soloist/Artist/Scholar In Residence** has the inspirational voice of an angel with the power to soar above a thousand other singers. 1705 Sherwood Ave., Modesto, 3 pm. Tickets: 571-6060. Seniors and students \$15; Adults \$20; Children; \$7; Groups of 15 or more with prior arrangement, \$12. Individual tickets at the door.

**15 SUN: The Modesto Film Society** presents *Bus Stop*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/335>

**18 WED: Film Night at the Center** presents *Genetic Roulette*. Discussion after. 6:30 pm, Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. 6:30 pm. See p. 2.

**19 THURS: Panel: "Ending the Culture of Violence on School and College Campuses"** Free event envisions raising public awareness and involving individuals and groups to curtail the riptide of violence in our schools. 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Martin G. Petersen Education Center, 720 12th St., Modesto Email [encultureofviolence@gmail.com](mailto:encultureofviolence@gmail.com)

**20 FRI: Peace Essay Contest Awards.** See p 1.

**22 SUN: The Modesto Film Society** presents *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/336>

**28 SAT: Khmer Culture Night and Dinner.** Modesto's Khmer Youth present homemade, authentic Cambodian food; exquisite dance performances; fashion show displaying beautiful Cambodian clothing and textiles. 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto. Tickets: General \$15; Kids 12 & under, \$10. Reservations: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/khmer-culture-night-and-dinner-tickets-15336549031>. Event WILL sell out. Purchase tickets ASAP. Info: [action@kyom.org](mailto:action@kyom.org) or Leng Power, 209-549-6149.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Sunday, April 12: Stanislaus Audubon Society's production of film "Wings Over Our Two Counties."** Follows the seasons through the calendar and leads you on a treasure hunt of nature through Del Puerto Canyon, Modesto's Thousand Oaks Park, the National Wildlife Refuges near Vernalis and Merced, and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Double feature with another one-hour documentary, "*Birders: The Central Park Effect*" focusing on New York's Central Park. State Theatre, 3 PM. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/457>

**June 7: Annual PLC Pancake Breakfast.**

**June 11: John McCutcheon** performs his one-man play, "*Joe Hill's Last Will*" as a benefit for the Peace/Life Center at the Prospect Theater Project. More info. TBA.

**June 26-28: 33rd Annual Peace Camp** in the Sierras.

## REGULAR MEETINGS

### SUNDAYS

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

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

### MONDAYS

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

### TUESDAYS

**PAGAN FAMILY SOCIAL,** third Tuesdays, Golden Corral, 3737 McHenry Ave, Modesto, 6:00 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

## MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

**Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILS:** held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), (NOTE TIME), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

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

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

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

**CONNECTIONS EDITORIAL MEETINGS:** Info: 537-7818, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

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

**LIFERING SECULAR RECOVERY.** Tuesday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. 591-8741.

**UKULELE CLASS/PLAY-A-LONG** led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in songbooks provided. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver, Modesto. Donation accepted. Info: 505-3216. [www.funstrummers.com](http://www.funstrummers.com)

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

**PFLAG PARENTS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS** support group. 7 pm, 566-2468. First and third Tuesdays. Emanuel Lutheran Church, 324 College Ave., Modesto, <http://www.pflag-modesto.org>

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

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

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

### WEDNESDAYS

**LIFERING SECULAR RECOVERY.** Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. , Center for Human Services Building, 1700 McHenry Way, Room 12 Modesto.

**MODESTO FOLK DANCERS** All levels welcome. Raube Hall, Ceres (call for address), 480-0387.

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

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

**TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP,** 2nd & 4th Wed., 7:30 to 9 pm. Info: (209) 338-0855. Email [info@stanpride.org](mailto:info@stanpride.org) , or [tgsupport@stanpride.org](mailto:tgsupport@stanpride.org)

**MINDFUL MEDITATION:** Modesto Almond Blossom Sangha, 7 - 9 pm. Info: Stan, 549-7770, [stanhopecunningham@yahoo.com](mailto:stanhopecunningham@yahoo.com) , or Anne, 521-6977.

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

### THURSDAYS

**GREEN TEAM** educational meetings the 3rd Thursday of each month, 10 to 11 am, Kirk Lindsey Center, 1020 10th St. Plaza, Suite 102, Modesto. [www.StanislausGreenTeam.com](http://www.StanislausGreenTeam.com)

**THIRD THURSDAY ART WALK,** Downtown Modesto art galleries open - take a walk and check out the local art scene. 5-9 pm every third Thursday of the month. Info: 579-9913, <http://www.modestoartwalk.com>

**REFUGE RECOVERY:** A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction Insight Meditation Central Valley, in the Sarana Kutu (in back), Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. FREE (donations accept-

ed). Info: email [RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com](mailto:RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com)

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

**THE BOOK GROUP,** First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 pm. Info: [mzjurkovic@gmail.com](mailto:mzjurkovic@gmail.com)

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS,** Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter. 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact: Joanna Rose-Murray, 209-484-8276, [jrm-compassionate@gmail.com](mailto:jrm-compassionate@gmail.com), <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

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

**VALLEY HEARTLAND ZEN GROUP:** every Thurs 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2310 Woodland Ave. Meditation. Newcomers welcome. Info: 535-6750 or <http://emptynestzendo.org>

**PAGAN COMMUNITY MEETING,** 1st Thursdays, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

### FRIDAYS

**FUNSTRUMMER UKULELE BAND** every Friday, from 9:15 am until noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Info: 505-3216; [www.funstrummers.com](http://www.funstrummers.com)

**LATINO EMERGENCY COUNCIL (LEC)** 3rd Fridays, 8:15 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Dale Butler, 522-8537.

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

**SIERRA CLUB:** Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 549-9155. Visit <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

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

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

### SATURDAYS

**SO EASY ~ SO GOOD:** Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabee potluck/meeting every third Saturday of the month, 11:30 AM- 1:30 PM. Info: Kathy or Chris, 209-529-5360; email [kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com](mailto:kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com)

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

**DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS:** Tenth of each month. Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to Jim Costello, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org) Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing. For up to date information, visit [www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm](http://www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm)