



# Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO  
PEACE/LIFE  
CENTER  
PUBLICATION

APRIL, 2019  
VOLUME XXVII, NO. 8

## Subsidence? Socialize it.

By **ERIC CAINE**, *The Valley Citizen*

Subsidence and socialism are two “S” words that wouldn’t seem to have much in common, especially here in the San Joaquin Valley. Nevertheless, for insiders in the Valley’s intricate water game, the words are inextricably linked.

Subsidence is caused by over-pumping groundwater. Pump too much groundwater and the land sinks. Pump too much water over decades, and the land sinks a lot.

According the United States Geological Survey (USGS),

*“The compaction of susceptible aquifer systems caused by excessive groundwater pumping is the single largest cause of subsidence in California, and the 5,200 mi<sup>2</sup> affected by subsidence in the San Joaquin Valley since the latter half of the 20th century has been identified as the single largest human alteration of the Earth’s surface topography.”*

“The single largest alteration of the earth’s surface” — consider that statement, and then think about how it happened. And remember, the San Joaquin Valley once featured the largest body of water west of the Mississippi, Tulare Lake.

It’s gone now, used up. But just over a hundred years ago, in a wet year, Tulare Lake would cover almost 700 square miles of the Valley. Under those conditions, towns like

Corcoran and Stratford would have been submerged under 25 feet of water.

The water that filled Tulare Lake came from the mighty Kings River. Kings River originates



in the upper southern Sierra, courses through one of the deepest gorges in North America, and then pours out into the Tulare Lake bed and the San Joaquin River. Or at least it used to.

These days, like most of our rivers, water from the Kings River gets diverted to farms long before it reaches its historic destinations. Tulare Lake is gone, long gone.

And the San Joaquin itself, the second largest river in the state after the Sacramento, was reduced to a trickle and even dried up for long stretches until litigation forced the state to increase flows for fish. The case is now under appeal.

Beginning with “Industrial Cowboys” Henry Miller and George Lux, natural resources in the San Joaquin Valley have been routinely exploited since at least the later 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Lux and Miller were San Francisco butchers who became cattle barons. The key to their ultimate dominance of the cattle industry was control of land and water in the San Joaquin Valley, and the key to that control was politics—they bought land and manipulated the political system to gain water rights.

When farmers discovered that water was all the fertile Valley soil and its Mediterranean climate needed to produce bountiful crops, they began diverting all the surface water they could to agriculture. In cases where they didn’t have

## Why do we wait for occasions like this?

By **ERIC CAINE**, *The Valley Citizen*

An overflow crowd packed Modesto’s Islamic Center Monday night, as speaker after speaker emphasized the need for unity and love in the aftermath of the slaughter of fifty worshippers at a mosque in New Zealand last Friday.

Muslim leaders apologized several times for not having a facility big enough to accommodate everyone, and earlier on had placed a plastic covering over the rug inside the mosque so that visitors wouldn’t have to remove their shoes in the Muslim tradition. Several speakers said that now is a time to act and speak out against violence, but despite the unity and support that pervaded the gathering, the likelihood of action against mass shootings here in America is virtually nil.

New Zealand’s Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, vowed to seek stricter gun control in a nation that averages just over thirty homicides a year. For comparison, the United States had over 17,000 murders and non-negligent homicides in 2017.

In an attempt to deny him the publicity he so obviously craves, Ardern also promised never to speak the assailant’s name. Nonetheless, the shooter’s supremacist manifesto, published online before the attack, has already received widespread distribution via social media.

Like many nations around the world, New Zealand has experienced an increase in white-supremacist groups and an escalation in rhetoric directed against Muslims especially. The rise of New Zealand’s alt-right has troubled members of Islam for several years now.

Ironically, white supremacist groups argue that their mission is to protect western civilization and its European roots. Here

in the United States, western civilization reached what many think is its zenith when our founding fathers made tolerance and freedom of religion the cornerstones of the nation’s moral foundation.

Monday night, Congressman Josh Harder was only one of many local leaders who vowed unwavering support for our Muslim community as he received loud applause from the audience. Harder emphasized that attacking people in their place of worship is an especially heinous act that violates everything our nation holds dearest.

Given the coming together of so many good people of so many different beliefs and creeds, for a few short hours it was difficult to imagine how such an evil as mass murder could cast such a long and dark shadow over the world as the horror in New Zealand. But as several speakers repeated what has become a common refrain at such gatherings, everyone was reminded that these events are becoming more and more frequent.

“Why do we wait for occasions like this before we all come together in unity,” said speaker after speaker, echoing words that were heard only a short time ago in Modesto’s Congregation Beth Shalom.

One Muslim leader uttered what most of us would consider the animating spirit of America when he said, “People want the same things...they want peace and a better future for their children.”

Those basic elements of the American project of freedom for all have always been threatened by proponents of division and hate, but every Christian, Sikh, Jew, Buddhist and agnostic who embraced our Muslim community Monday night offers evidence of the power of hope and courage over the demons of terror and death. The American Dream endures.



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# Summer Fun: Peace Camp, June 28-30

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's 37th Annual Peace Camp in the Sierra will take place on June 28-30 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108. We'll enjoy a weekend of workshops, good food, hikes, singing, crafts, talent show, recreation, and stimulating people of all ages in a beautiful mountain setting. Families and individuals are welcome. Register early for a discount.

**Leng Nou** will present the Saturday workshop, "Courageous Conversations." The art of civil discourse is quickly fading, and we need more practitioners with this skill set if we want to effectively build community. In this workshop participants will explore the dynamics of a conversation and learn skills to help build their capacity to engage in difficult conversations ranging from political, social, and cultural issues. Participants will learn how developing curiosity and nurturing deep listening skills are practical ways to breach the polarizing rifts in our society. Leng Nou, is a mindfulness practitioner and draws upon her experience as an American Leadership Forum Senior Fellow as well as her time with the Modesto Peace/Life Center.

Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Road off Hwy. 108 in the Stanislaus National Forest features kitchen and bathroom facilities, rustic cabins, platform tents and a cabin for those with special needs. Depending on the number of campers, cabins may be shared. Campers share in meal preparation, cleanup, and other work.

The camp fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Adults are \$75 before May 1, \$80 before June 4 and \$85 after June 4. Young people 18 and under are \$55 before May 1, \$60 before June 4 and \$65 after June 4. Ages 3 and under free. Minors under 18 need to be accompanied by an adult. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Donations for scholarships are appreciated. The camp opens with supper at 6:00p.m. on Friday and closes after the morning workshop on Sunday. Directions and other information will be provided to participants before camp. Registration forms are available online at [www.stanislausconnections.org](http://www.stanislausconnections.org) and [www.peacelifecenter.org](http://www.peacelifecenter.org) to download and mailed. The online registration payment option can be done by searching for "Peace Camp 2019" at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com). There will be a wait list if registration becomes full.

**Information:** Ken Schroeder, 209-480-4576, [kschroeder70@yahoo.com](mailto:kschroeder70@yahoo.com)

## Peace/Life Center looking for volunteers

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

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

## 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Peace Camp June 28, 29, and 30, 2019



**Camp Peaceful Pines**  
near Pinecrest, California



### Registration Form

**Adults** \$75 before May 1; \$80 before June 4; \$85 after June 4

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

**Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Youth (ages 4 -18)** \$55 before May 1; \$60 before June 4; \$65 after June 4

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

**Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child (ages 3 & under FREE)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Voluntary Donation to provide a camper scholarship = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353-0134**

There is an additional \$15 fee for each person coming to camp without a pre-registration.

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

MEALS:  Vegetarian  Vegan  Gluten-free Other dietary needs: \_\_\_\_\_

I have a special need for a cabin assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

I can offer a ride Friday/Saturday.  I need a ride Friday/Saturday

#### Parent authorization for minor children

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 \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize the Modesto Peace/Life Center to photograph and/or videotape my child, and reproduce my child's photographs and videotapes for publicity and/or educational/promotional purposes related to Peace Camp.

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. Minors must be accompanied by an adult.

For camp information and scholarship availability: Call Ken Schroeder, (209) 480-4576; [kschroeder70@yahoo.com](mailto:kschroeder70@yahoo.com)

# Division II - 1st Place Winner – 2019 Peace Essay Contest

## California's Bounty

Emily Swehla

Independent Study. Teacher: Susan Janis

"We eat every day, and if we do it in a way that doesn't recognize value, it's contributing to the destruction of our culture and of agriculture. But if it's done with a focus and care, it can be a wonderful thing. It changes the quality of your life." (Alice Waters) Sitting in my room in the late afternoon, I smell a mouthwatering whiff of dinner cooking in the oven from the kitchen, and it is not long before I am called to the table for the meal my mom has prepared. The tomatoes harvested from our garden only minutes before, and the melted cheese on top, signify the beginning of summer. By the end of the long warm months, I will have had many meals, mostly consisting of locally grown fresh foods. California cuisine is what makes California special to me. In few places around the world can one acquire a vast assortment of freshly picked produce, not only from farmers' markets, but even grocery stores. Our state's cuisine has risen in popularity around the world. A delicious and healthy choice, this simple farm-to-table food is

described by The Eater in five words: "Fresh, seasonable, local, sustainable, and original." (Addison) However, this worldwide knowledge of California's produce and cuisine goes unrecognized by many Californians, who could strengthen their bodies while supporting their state's agricultural economy by choosing locally fresh grown foods.

The main reasons Californians do not dine on their cuisine stem from ignorance regarding price, health benefits, and California cuisine. All one has to do is walk into a grocery store and glance at the foods sold at eye level on the shelves to realize that the majority of Californians do not dine like my family. Not only do they choose unhealthy options, but they have no awareness of it. Around the world, people know, love, and eat California cuisine. Yet in the bread basket of the world, where the climate allows for anything to grow, and provides over a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts, ("California Agricultural Production Statistics") people are not knowledgeable about this and eat unhealthily. Some may argue that this is because acquiring fresh food is expensive, but living in California, one does not necessarily have to visit farmers' markets to get fresh food. California provides so much food that even the produce in the grocery stores is fresh. (Karrie) The people in California need to recognize this.

California cuisine is one of the healthiest cuisines in the world. According to a study done by CNN, California cuisine was rated number two when showing the ten healthiest ethnic cuisines, only second to Greek. (Corapi) However, even today, studies show that the average American eats fast food three times a week. (Lenhoff) Fast Food is popular because it is cheap, quick, and found on almost every street corner in cities across the state. Not simply consumed for an occasional easy meal, its addictive convenience transforms it into a routine that becomes regular in the lives of Californians. It is no secret that the food produced by these restaurants is unhealthy and low quality, yet still the numbers of fast food customers far outnumber those in the California cuisine movement. Junk food in itself can lead to nutritional deficiencies, weight gain, cardiovascular problems, and insulin resistance. (Langton) This is a problem that needs to be addressed by taking the right actions leading towards a brighter future.

Californians must be educated to make healthier decisions, but this can only come with awareness and affordability. Although not as convenient or cheap as fast food, California cuisine is accessible. Tons of food is exported from California daily, in addition to supplying local stores and restaurants. Furthermore, there is a growing number of backyard gardens and it is estimated that "by 2003, the school garden movement had grown to 3,000 of the 9,100 schools." (Chen 177) The growing number of private gardens is a wonderful inexpensive alternative. Another solution to cost is Imperfect Produce. Imperfect Produce is an organization that collects disfigured, yet nutritiously equal, produce unwanted by commercial sellers and sells them door to door for thirty percent less than the perfect-looking produce in grocery stores. (Imperfect Produce) Through these alternatives, Californians have a way to access cheaper produce.

Education in California's agriculture must also be provided to ensure that Californians are aware of the rarity of their state. We should be inspiring people to go to their local farmers' markets, plant their own gardens, buy local food, and should discourage the abuses of fast food. London, England's capitol, plans to take a step that should be considered by California: in May 2018, Mayor Sadiq Khan confirmed that he was planning to ban all junk food advertisements on any public transportation in London to help lower child obesity rates. (Elliott) A step like this might lower the junk food craze and lead to healthier dining options. By inventing more ways to address this problem and taking advantage of the programs already existing, California can take steps towards a healthier lifestyle.

Finding solutions to this problem will not only assist California's population, making it healthier and stronger, but will also provide Californians with a sense of pride; being proud of California's impact in agriculture and cuisine not only around the world, but locally. Making fresh produce affordable will also help California's agricultural economy by supplying the system with more customers, making for better sales and more revenue while creating a positive difference in the community. This will improve the lives of Californians, eventually leading to a more peaceful and secure state where farmers are supported by their fellow citizens and the bond between the land and the people strengthens as allegiance and admiration towards the state grows through the food. Given the opportunity to fortify our lives and homeland, as Californians, we cannot allow this misfortune about California cuisine to go unnoticed and unaddressed.

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Watch the Peace Essay Contest Winners read their essays.

2019 Div. 1: [https://youtu.be/5JcA6Ux\\_KLE](https://youtu.be/5JcA6Ux_KLE)

2019 Div. 2: <https://youtu.be/OgXuBBuZ9rE>

2019 Div 3: <https://youtu.be/NE4fvmrUx7w>

2019 Div 4: <https://youtu.be/HxPJcANWhnc>

Recorded by Richard Anderson



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#### Since 2005 Modesto Sound

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- Held hundreds of concerts

**Where:** Media Building on the corner of Santa Barbara and Yosemite Boulevard (110 Santa Barbara Avenue, Modesto)

**When:** The second Tuesday of every month 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Get a warm welcome from Janet Seay, Executive Director of Modesto Sound, who welcomes your ideas! No RSVP required. It's OK to just show up.

#### Why

- Network in the music industry
- Great for the resume
- Help others

#### More Information

209-573-0533 [janet@modestosound.org](mailto:janet@modestosound.org)



# Tradition, Commerce, & Community

By JOHN MCCUTCHEON

I've been doing a lot of interviews these days, as the centenary of Pete Seeger's birth approaches. People want to talk about him, about the state of folk music in 2019, about the vacuum some see that Pete's death created. These interviews have caused me to do a lot of thinking about these issues and about what it is that continues to hold me so firmly to this thing we call "folk" music.

I discovered folk music, as you've probably heard me tell, the day my mother made me sit down and watch the March on Washington with her back in August 1963. One of the enduring images for me...the most powerful at the time...was Peter, Paul, and Mary singing "If I Had a Hammer." It was not their performance that riveted me. It was the sight, as the cameras panned the crowd, of *everyone* singing, every word. Young, old, black, white, everyone knew this song. It was not about a performance, it was about a communal act. It felt like a declaration, a promise, a gauntlet being picked up. I'd never seen or felt anything like it.

When I finally started playing my own music a few years later, again, you've probably heard me tell of venturing down to my local library and coming home with the only book that the Dewey Decimal System said our library had under the subject "guitar:" *Woody Guthrie Folksongs*. Woody, inadvertently, was my guitar teacher across the ages. He introduced me to songs that were "about things." That "said things." And that moved me to want more such songs. When I picked up the banjo a few years later, something more fundamental happened.

I arranged a 3-month independent study hitchhiking around the Appalachian South meeting banjo players. I quickly found out that I could not excise the banjo from everyday life in the communities I was visiting. It was part of the fabric of the community, one that came with a history and with responsibilities. I thought I was going there to learn how to play an instrument. But what I quickly discovered... what quickly became my focus...was how music *works* in communities, how it is a function of community rather than a mere byproduct of it, how it is instrumental and not merely ornamental to community life. And that has been my passion ever since.

Traditional music has always been at the core of what I do. Regardless of whether I'm doing an old or a new song, I'm ever conscious of the community I'm serving, even if only for a night. Because I believe that we look for and long for that connection that happens when we engage in a community activity. Traditional cultures change, certainly, but it is not governed by commercial intent or "change-for-change's sake." It is intergenerational, intentional, and, above all, generous. And I bother to give context to many of these things because it is both inaccurate and disrespectful to



**What quickly became my focus...was how music works in communities...how it is instrumental and not merely ornamental to community life.**

remove them from the environment in which they developed, evolve, and survive. Traditional culture doesn't feel linear to me. It feels wide and deep and all-encompassing.

How does this all relate to the "folk music scene?" I'm aware that when I go out on a stage and step up to a microphone that I'm engaged in a commercial activity. I am a paid performer, entering into a compact with an audience. But I have also been a fiddler playing at a pie supper in rural southwest Virginia helping to raise money to build a local health clinic. Or I've been a part of a Christian Harmony singing going back 100 years in a little North Carolina church. I've sung ballads around a dinner table after a Thanksgiving meal in a Kentucky coal camp. I've sung babies to sleep. In each case, for a while, I was a "performer," rendering something both personal and communal. Part of that compact was the willingness of the listener(s) to be a part of the moment, to participate in something ancient and utterly contemporary,

something that has been done before and that you have every belief will be done countless times more. But right now, it is right here. It is immediate. And one person may be the singer or player, but *what* is happening is absolutely "ours." Mobility and technology have changed what it means to be a part of a community. At one time your community was absolutely determined by proximity. You were stuck with the people whose land bordered yours. You had to depend on them, regardless of your relationship with them. It was a vertical notion of community, tied to the land, more than anything. Today, even in rural areas where the dependency of proximity is most pronounced, our community can be much more intentional, leap-frogging over our neighbors to those we choose to associate with. We don't shop at the nearest stores or go to the nearby church or attend the neighborhood school.

But I have seen the song, the dance, the story, the habit in both the traditional and in the commercial setting and find that they are not entirely at odds with one another. Our communal urges find our way into each gathering. While the former has greater depth, I find the latter no less worthy. I believe we seek something when we go to a concert. Diversion, involvement, insight, cohesion, all of the above... or something else altogether. I believe that the search for community is encoded in our DNA and, as the obvious and time-tested means of attaining that are technologized out of our contemporary lives, we are still drawn to it. I felt it as an eleven-year-old on a tired couch in a little Wisconsin house. I felt it sitting cross-legged on a basketball court at my first Pete Seeger concert. I've felt it in little country church houses, on Harlan County picket lines, in a chain of hands around a Thanksgiving Day feast, in the sweaty confines of a North Carolina square dance hall, and, every once in a blessed while, lost in the aura of a song in a concert hall with hundreds of

other surrendered souls.

Nature, they say, abhors a vacuum. Yes, Pete is gone. Don't go looking for "the next Pete Seeger." It diminishes him and, besides, he'd have hated that notion. Nature fills us up with what we've learned, what we risk, what we know about why we sing and for whom we sing. What Pete taught us is that a concert is more than one person showing off for a crowd. It was about doing things "in concert" with one another. Of seeking that community, if even for just a few hours, inside of a concert hall. And it doesn't happen with technology, just the old-fashioned notion of being brave enough to raise your voice with a bunch of strangers and, then, exploiting the differences presented...soprano, alto, tenor, bass...to create something beautiful, something rare. And, in doing so, creating something even more precious: the hunger for that to happen again and the certainty that it can.

John McCutcheon is tentatively scheduled to return to Modesto in concert on January 14, 2020.

Find John's music at <https://www.folkmusic.com/>

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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

# The Joy of Running

By **JENIFER WEST, Editor, Patterson Irrigator**

[Ed. Note: Former *Connections* columnist, Jenifer West's article is one of 5 finalists for the California Newspaper Publishers Association in the *Writing* category. She is now editor of the *Patterson Irrigator*. Congratulations!]

On a bright and chilly Saturday morning, a group of runners lined up, waiting for the signal to start. Some squirmed or fidgeted with excitement. More athletes – friends, classmates, friendly competitors – waited nearby for their turn.

They were ready. They'd practiced. For months, they'd worked hard. And now, with family and friends to cheer them on, they were ready to give it their all.

A volunteer summed it up perfectly: this was their day.

When the signal came, they were off. Powering down the track, every face alight with the joy of the moment.

Some waved at the crowd as they ran by, and the cheers grew louder; friends and family urging the athletes on by name.

At the finish line, high-fives and hugs.

Forgotten, for the moment, were life's challenges. That some of them might not be able to tie their shoes; many have difficulty with a lot of the little things most of us take for granted, didn't matter.

This was their day.

For this one day, for these few hours, the crowd cheered for them.

And they put their hearts into it.

According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC), recent estimates in the United States show that about one in six, or about 15 percent, of children aged 3 through 17 years have one or more developmental disabilities.

Which means 85 percent of us will never know what it's like to have difficulty with the simplest things, like eating breakfast or brushing our hair. Eighty-five out of a hundred of us will never experience how it feels to sometimes have trouble making sense of the world, and what's going on around us.

And the same eighty-five of us will never feel the pain of being bullied for our challenges, despite the fact that we are among the most vulnerable.

Yet, we may also never know the excitement and thrill – and pride – that can only come from mastering a difficult concept or task after what seems like endless work and struggle.

The CDC defines developmental disabilities as “a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas. These conditions begin during the developmental period, may impact day-to-day functioning, and usually last throughout a person's lifetime.”

But none of that mattered on that beautiful Saturday morning.

From the Special Olympics website: “Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities: with more than 4.9 million athletes in 172 countries -- and over a million volunteers.”

Also from the website: “Special Olympics is a global movement of people creating a new world of inclusion and community, where every single person is accepted and welcomed, regardless of ability or disability. We are helping to make the world a better, healthier and more joyful place -- one athlete, one volunteer, one family member at a time.”

The athletes were excited to be there; determined to do their best, and happy to get a time to use as their entry time for the Stanislaus County Special Olympics.

Later, when asked what their favorite part of the day had

been, almost all said, “running.” No doubt they meant the challenge of putting their bodies to the test; the sheer joy of moving through the air as fast as they could go.

But there was something more; something not as easily put into words: For a few brief hours, there was freedom. Freedom from the difficulties of life borne by those who came into the world differently abled; freedom from the constraints of being defined by challenges; freedom from being treated differently.

And something even more precious: For these few hours, the crowd cheered for them. Family, friends and strangers alike. Each athlete was in the spotlight.

The crowd was loud; the love and support almost palpable.

For this one day, for these few hours, these athletes truly felt the joy of running.

From the *Patterson Irrigator*. Used with permission.

## “SHAMELESS and BLAMELESS Luncheon”

Paul Golden, M.D., author and renowned speaker's heartfelt story of his experiences with bipolar disease touches and inspires audiences.

Mrs. Lynn Padlo, Leader, Teacher and former Executive Director of NAMI, Stanislaus and of the documentary “Madness Revealed,” tells the stories of six individuals with mental health disease and their journey to recovery.

**When:** Thursday, May 9, 2019

**Time:** 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM

**Where:** West Modesto Community Collaborative, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto

**Cost:** \$25.00

**Tickets:** [Click HERE](#).

**Information:** Marnye Henry, 209-409-6006, [mhenry@westmodestocollaborative.com](mailto:mhenry@westmodestocollaborative.com)



An athlete clears the hurdle during the Special Olympics on 3/3/2018.

Photo: Jenifer West/Patterson Irrigator

# Green Tips: Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

By **TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL**

The planet has moved around the sun once more to April, the month when the importance of global stewardship gets the stage. This year a new R makes its debut on the environmental responsibility scene. This year we are reminded to:

1. **REFUSE**
2. Reduce
3. Reuse
4. Recycle

How to Refuse? Let us count the ways.

•**Refuse shopping bags** - Bring your own.

•**Refuse over packaging** - Buy in bulk and say no to over packaging.

•**Refuse extra paper** - Sign up for on line notifications, statements, bill pay.

•**Refuse paper bombardments** (government/financial/medical, pharmaceutical, insurance/etc.) Ask legislators to introduce bills to reduce the tons of paper waste required by law, including “This page is intentionally left blank.”

•**Refuse plastic straws** - Drink from a glass or cup, use paper straws like we did in the “good ‘ol days”.

•**Refuse to run partially loaded washers, dryers or dishwashers.** The time taken to load every space properly saves you money in less water, energy and detergent costs and sustains your Mother Earth and allows her to sustain you, your family and your friends.

•**Refuse non-compostable restaurant take home containers.** Note: My next add-on will be to keep one of my nicest reusable grocery bags filled with a different sizes of food containers, so I can put my leftovers in them to eat at home.

Share your ideas with others. **Happy Refusing, reducing, reusing, recycling! HAPPY SPRINGTIME!**

## NVLF Biennial Convention, April 16

By **TIM ROBERTSON**

The North Valley Labor Federation will be holding its Biennial Convention and officer elections on April 16. This is the yearly meeting where delegates from all affiliates convene to hear about the progress of the Labor Movement in the Valley and engage in our plans to continue building power for working people.

In addition to updates on our electoral work, ongoing training programs, and Working America, we're pleased to be joined by Congressman Josh Harder who will update us on what's happening in Washington, DC and share all the great things he's doing to stand with working people as our representative.

The convention will be held April 16 from 10AM-1PM at the Plumbers and Pipefitters Hall at 4842 Nutcracker Ln., Modesto (Lunch provided). All affiliated unions are entitled to send delegates to the meeting and delegation paperwork has been mailed to the address we have on file for your union. Electronic versions of these documents are available upon request.

Those representing non-affiliated unions or allied organizations are welcome to attend as non-voting guests upon approval and pre-registration. Reply to [tim@nvlf.org](mailto:tim@nvlf.org) if you'd like to attend as a guest.



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

# Mosque Terror Attacks—Christchurch

**Rt. Hon. JACINDA ARDERN (Prime Minister)**

I wish to make a ministerial statement relating to the Christchurch mosques terror attacks. Assalam alaikum, peace be upon you, and peace be upon all of us.

The 15th of March will now be, forever, a day etched in our collective memories. On a quiet Friday afternoon, a man stormed into a place of peaceful worship and took away the lives of 50 people. That quiet Friday afternoon has become our darkest of days. But for the families, it was more than that. It was the day that the simple act of prayer, of practising their Muslim faith and religion, led to the loss of their loved ones' lives. Those loved ones were brothers, daughters, fathers, and children. They were New Zealanders. They are us. And because they are us, we, as a nation, we mourn them. We feel a huge duty of care to them, and we have so much we feel the need to say and to do.

One of the roles I never anticipated having—and hoped never to have—was to voice the grief of a nation. At this time it has been second only to securing the care of those affected and the safety of everyone. In this role, I wanted to speak directly to the families. We cannot know your grief but we can walk with you at every stage. We can and will surround you with aroha, manaakitanga, and all that makes us us. Our hearts are heavy but our spirit is strong.

Less than six minutes after a 111 call was placed alerting the police to the shootings at Al Noor Mosque, police were on the scene. The arrest itself was nothing short of an act of bravery. Two country police officers rammed the vehicle from which the offender was still shooting. They pulled open his car door, when there were explosives inside, and pulled him out. I know we all wish to acknowledge that their acts put the safety of New Zealanders above their own and we thank them, but they were not the only ones who showed extraordinary courage. Naeem Rashid, originally from Pakistan, died after rushing at the terrorist and trying to wrestle the gun from him. He lost his life trying to save those who were worshipping alongside him. Abdul Aziz, originally from Afghanistan, confronted and faced down the armed terrorist after grabbing the nearest thing to hand—a simple EFTPOS machine. He risked his life, and no doubt saved many, with his selfless bravery. There will be countless stories, some of which we may never know, but to each we acknowledge you in this place, in this House.

For many of us, the first sign of the scale of this terrorist attack was the images of ambulance staff transporting victims to Christchurch Hospital. To the first responders, the ambulance staff, and the health professionals who have assisted and who continue to assist those who have been injured, please accept the heartfelt thanks of us all. I saw first-hand your care and your professionalism in the face of extraordinary challenges. We are proud of your work and incredibly grateful for it.

Mr. Speaker, if you'll allow, I'd like to talk about some of the immediate measures currently in place, especially to ensure the safety of our Muslim community, and, more broadly, the safety of everyone. As a nation we do remain on high alert. While there isn't a specific threat at present, we are maintaining vigilance. Unfortunately, we have seen in countries that know the horrors of terrorism more than us that



**I wanted to speak directly to the families. We cannot know your grief but we can walk with you at every stage.**

there is a pattern of increased tension and actions over the weeks that follow that mean that we need to ensure that vigilance is maintained. There is an additional and on-going security presence in Christchurch and, as the police have indicated, there will continue to be a police presence at mosques around the country while their doors are open. When they are closed, police will be in the vicinity.

There is a huge focus on ensuring the needs of families are met. That has to be our priority. A community welfare centre has been set up near the hospital in Christchurch to make sure people know how to access support. Visas for family members overseas are being prioritised so that they can attend funerals. Funeral costs are covered and we have moved quickly to ensure that this includes repatriation costs for any family members who would like to move their loved ones away from New Zealand. We are working to provide mental health and social support. The 1737 number yesterday received roughly 600 texts or phone calls. They are, on average, lasting around 40 minutes and I encourage anyone in need of reaching out to use these services—they are there for you.

Our language service has also provided support from more than 5,000 contacts, ensuring, whether you are ACC or the Ministry of Social Development, you're able to pass on the support that is needed in the language that is needed. To all those working within this service, we say thank you. Our security and intelligence services are receiving a range of additional information. As has been the case in the past, these are being taken extremely seriously and they are being followed up.

I know though that there have, rightly, been questions around how this could have happened here in a place that prides itself on being open, peaceful, diverse, and there is anger that it has happened here. There are many questions that need to be answered and the assurance that I give you is that they will be. Yesterday, Cabinet agreed that an inquiry—one that looks into the events that led up to the attack on 15 March—will occur. We will examine what we did know,

could have known, or should have known. We cannot allow this to happen again.

Part of ensuring the safety of New Zealanders must include a frank examination of our gun laws. As I've already said, our gun laws will change. Cabinet met yesterday and made in-principle decisions 72 hours after the attack. Before we meet again next Monday, these decisions will be announced.

There is one person at the centre of this terror attack against our Muslim community in New Zealand. A 28-year-old man, an Australian citizen, has been charged with one count of murder; other charges will follow. He will face the full force of the law in New Zealand. The families of the fallen will have justice. He sought many things from his act of terror, but one was notoriety and that is why you will never hear me mention his name. He is a terrorist, he is a criminal, he is an extremist, but he will, when I speak, be nameless, and to others I implore you: speak the names of those who were lost rather than the name of the man who took them. He may have sought notoriety but we in New Zealand will give him nothing—not even his name.

We will also look at the role social media played and what steps we can take, including on the international stage and in unison with our partners. There is no question that ideas and language of division and hate have existed for decades, but their form of distribution, the tools of organisation—they are new. We cannot simply sit back and accept that these platforms just exist and that what is said on them is not the responsibility of the place where they are published. They are the publisher; not just the postman. There cannot be a case of all profit, no responsibility.

This of course doesn't take away the responsibility we too must show as a nation to confront racism, violence, and extremism. I don't have all of the answers now but we must

**Safety means being free from the fear of violence, but it also means being free from the fear of those sentiments of racism and hate that create a place where violence can flourish, and every single one of us has the power to change that.**

collectively find them and we must act. We are deeply grateful for all the messages of sympathy, support, and solidarity that we are receiving from our friends all around the world, and we are grateful to the global Muslim community who have stood with us and we stand with them.

I acknowledge that we too also stand with Christchurch and the devastating blow that this has been to their recovery, and I acknowledge every member of this House who has stood alongside their Muslim community, but especially those in Canterbury as we acknowledge this double grief.

As I conclude, I acknowledge that there are many stories

## Christchurch

continued

that will have struck all of us since 15 March. One I wish to mention is that of Hati Mohemmed Daoud Nabi.

He was a 71-year-old man who opened the door at the Al-Noor Mosque and uttered the words “Hello, brother, welcome.”—his final words. Of course, he had no idea of the hate that sat behind that door, but his welcome tells us so much—that he was a member of a faith that welcomed all its members, that showed openness and care.

I’ve said many times that we are a nation of 200 ethnicities, 160 languages. We open our doors to others and say welcome. The only thing that must change after the events of Friday is that this same door must close on all of those who espouse hate and fear. Yes, the person who committed these acts was not from here. He was not raised here. He did not find his ideology here. But that is not to say that those very same views do not live here.

I know that as a nation we wish to provide every comfort we can to our Muslim community in this darkest of times, and we are. The mountain of flowers around the country that lie at the doors of mosques and the spontaneous song outside the gates, these are ways of expressing an outpouring of love and empathy. But we wish to do more. We wish for every member of our communities to also feel safe. Safety means being free from the fear of violence, but it also means being free from the fear of those sentiments of racism and hate that create a place where violence can flourish, and every single one of us has the power to change that.

On Friday, it will be a week since the attack. Members of the Muslim community will gather for worship on that day. Let us acknowledge their grief as they do. Let’s support them as they gather again for worship. We are one. They are us. Tātou, tātou. Al salam Alaikum. Weh Rahmat Allah. Weh Barakaatuh.

## New Zealand PM Announces Ban on Assault Rifles After Christchurch Massacre

*“On 15 March, our history changed forever. Now, our laws will, too,” said New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.*

By **JAKE JOHNSON**, staff writer

Just six days after a white supremacist gunman killed 50 people and injured dozens more at two mosques in the city of Christchurch, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced Thursday that the country will ban all military-style semi-automatic weapons, assault rifles, and high-capacity magazines.

“Cabinet agreed to overhaul the law when it met on Monday, 72 hours after the horrific terrorism act in Christchurch. Now... we are announcing a ban on all military-style semi-automatics and assault rifles in New Zealand,” Ardern said at a press conference. “Every semi-automatic weapon used in the terrorist attack on Friday will be banned in this country.”

“On 15 March, our history changed forever. Now, our laws will, too,” she added. “We are announcing action today on behalf of all New Zealanders to strengthen our gun laws and make our country a safer place.”

Ardern’s quick and decisive action following the Christchurch attack was praised by progressives in the United States, where even the most modest proposals to change America’s gun laws following frequent mass shootings are met with fervid opposition from the Republican Party and the powerful gun lobby.

“This is what real action to stop gun violence looks like,” tweeted U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), a 2020 presidential candidate. “We must follow New Zealand’s lead, take on the NRA, and ban the sale and distribution of assault weapons in the United States.” Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) added.

New Zealand’s new reforms—which are supported by the leader of the country’s opposition National Party—will

officially take effect in three weeks, and interim measures are expected to stop a flood of assault rifle purchases in the meantime.

“I can assure you that’d be a fairly pointless exercise,” Ardern said of attempts to buy assault weapons before the new legislation takes effect.

As for assault rifles and semi-automatic weapons already in circulation, Ardern announced a gun buyback program that resembles the plan Australia implemented following the Port Arthur massacre in 1996.

In addition to taking the lead on bold gun law reforms, Ardern issued a “global call” to fight white nationalism in the aftermath of last week’s terrorist attack, which appears to have been motivated by Islamophobic ideas and rhetoric.

Addressing other world leaders in an interview this week, Ardern said white nationalism must be confronted “where it exists,” and nations must make sure they “never create an environment where it can flourish.”

“If we want to make sure globally that we are a safe and tolerant and inclusive world, we cannot think about this in terms of boundaries,” she said.

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## A Moral Budget Agenda for America

**LINDSAY KOSHGARIAN, the National Priorities Project**

A moral agenda for America would end our endless wars, and use the vast wealth of this nation to end poverty and lead to true security for all of us.

President Trump's 2020 budget request drops bombs on that vision – almost literally.

Let's put the Trump budget in perspective: out of every taxpayer dollar, a full 62 cents would go to military spending. We're talking about \$750 billion to the Pentagon, out of a \$1.3 trillion budget. Meanwhile, Medicaid, food stamps, and many anti-poverty programs would be slashed and disfigured beyond recognition — a truly dark vision for America.

As Lindsay writes in *The Guardian* along with Rev. William Barber and Dr. Liz Theoharis of the Poor People's Campaign, saving money only seems to be the goal when it's spending on the poor, on justice and equity, and on saving the Earth. Saving money, in other words, is just a smokescreen.

Let's look at price tags of some of the Trump budget's worst proposals as trade-offs with helpful priorities that can actually improve people's lives.

\$165 billion for the Pentagon's war slush fund? That would cover healthcare for every single uninsured person in America. Or free college for all, twice over.

\$12 billion on an unnecessary border wall? That could kickstart a Green New Deal with 160,000 good-paying clean energy jobs for U.S. workers.

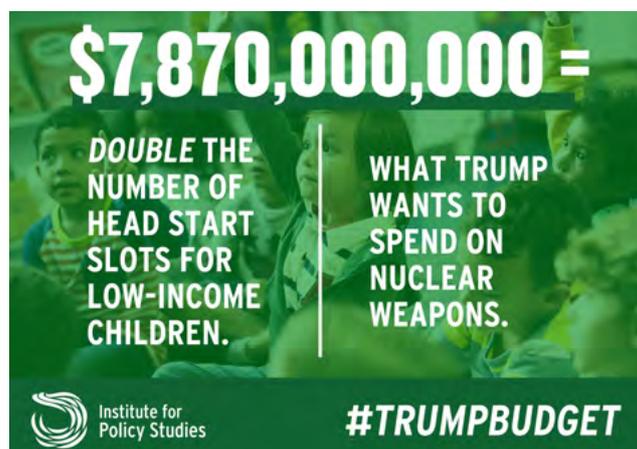
\$7.87 billion on nuclear weapons? That could double the almost 1 million Head Start slots for low-income children that are available now, or double funding for the EPA.

We put together some new graphics of #TrumpBudget trade-offs — share them widely from Facebook and Twitter, along with our Poor People's campaign op-ed in *The Guardian*!

Real security means establishing peace, justice and

promoting the material well-being and liberty of all, including future generations.

Let's bring our country back to these values, enshrined in the constitution and our moral traditions. And let's revive the heart and soul of our nation.



## Pulling the Emergency Brake!

### a Symposium on the Climate Crisis

On Oct. 8, 2018, an emergency warning was issued by the world's most prestigious body for the study of climate science – the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The IPCC's press release reflected the consensus of the world's top climate scientists that we have fewer than 12 years to wind down the burning of fossil fuels and massively reduce global warming. The panel concluded that non-action will result in a global temperature rise of more than 1.5°C over pre-industrial averages, with increasing risks for civilizational consequences.

As part of our efforts to address these challenges, the Stanislaus State chapter of the national history honor society, Phi Alpha Theta, is sponsoring a four-evening event, *Pulling the Emergency Brake! A Symposium on the Climate Crisis, April 16-19* on the Stanislaus State campus in Turlock.

Ten Stanislaus State professors and four outside speakers will deliver presentations on various aspects of the present and future crisis, including its effects on society and the natural world, who will be hit the hardest and what all of us can do about it.

Muriel MacDonald of the Sunrise Movement and Laura Wells of the California Green Party will deliver keynote

presentations.

The program on Thursday night, April 18, will include two films with free soda and pizza during intermission on a first-come first-served basis. The films are Naomi Oreskes' *Merchants of Doubt* and, after a short intermission, Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything*. All events are free and open to the public.

For more information visit <http://www.csustan.edu/climate-crisis-symposium>.

Persons with disabilities who anticipate needing special accommodations or who have questions about physical access may email [kboettcher@csustan.edu](mailto:kboettcher@csustan.edu) or call the History Dept., (209) 667-3238 in advance of the event.



## Subsidence

continued from p.1

access to the growing network of canals and ditches, enterprising farmers discovered they could tap into a vast underground aquifer and water their fields with what seemed to be an endless ocean of precious fresh water. They also discovered that groundwater in the eastern half of the Valley was fresher than water in the western half; water in the western half of the Valley was more saline and thus less suitable for crops.

Over time, as agriculture flourished and surface water supplies reached terminal limits, groundwater became a primary water source not only for farmers, but also for the growing towns and cities of the southern Valley. Even today, the city of Fresno relies on water pumped from the ground for most of its water supply.

In drought years, even routine users of surface water turn to groundwater. During California's last long-term drought, groundwater extraction increased exponentially and water levels plummeted.

The consequences have been severe. By 2015, sections of the Valley which had already subsided as much as 28 feet since the 1920s were sinking two feet a year. As the ground sunk beneath them, the reduced capacity of gravity-fed canals threatened a major crisis, and even roads and bridges were affected.

Some of the worst subsidence was near the town of Corcoran, Valley headquarters for the J. G. Boswell Corporation, a cotton and tomato empire with holdings estimated at 150,000 acres. Even at that figure, Boswell isn't the largest landowner in the southern San Joaquin Valley. That honor goes to Stewart Resnick, who farms 15 million trees (mostly pistachios), owns approximately 180,000 acres, and is the single largest water user in the United States.

Whereas the typical image of the farmer features a deeply tanned and rugged individual manning his tractor, the Boswells and Resnicks hardly fit the profile. They are corporate businesspeople, epitomes of what people mean by "Big Ag." Their prime headquarters are in Los Angeles, where they have their typical corporate teams of tax attorneys and accountants paid to find ways to avoid costs, especially in the form of taxes. As one of America's fortunate billionaires, Mr. Resnick just received another tax cut, courtesy of the Trump administration.

But taxes are what pay for the dams, canals, roads, and bridges that provide the infrastructure that makes farming possible. And when that infrastructure fails as the result of overpumping groundwater, taxes repair it.

In late February, Senator Melissa Hurtado and a bipartisan group of Valley legislators introduced Senate Bill 559, which would appropriate \$400 million from California's general fund to repair a twenty-mile segment of the Friant-Kern canal, which runs from Friant Dam to Bakersfield.

In a just economy, one might be entitled to think those who ruin public resources should have the responsibility of paying for the damage, but that's not how things work in the southern San Joaquin Valley, where the biggest profit takers have always followed one of the lesser-known but most powerful axioms of corporate wisdom: "Socialize the costs, privatize the profits."

Thus, the principal owners of Big Ag, who avoid both income and corporate taxes, and who don't pay sales tax on farm equipment, also manage to avoid responsibility for damage done to public resources through the routine operation of their businesses.

In most cases, these are the very same people who sponsor messages about the economic harms from government regulation and the dark evils of socialism. It's almost as if they've devised a near-perfect way to game the system. Almost.

## To the Killer Who Attacked Muslims in New Zealand

Appreciate that you made the effort to find out the timing of our noon prayer.

Appreciate that you learnt more about our religion to know that Fridays are the days the men go to the mosques for their congregational prayers.

But I guess there were some things you, rather unfortunately, didn't get to learn.

Perhaps you didn't know that what you did made them Martyrs.

And how you have single-handedly raised the statuses of our brothers and sisters in the eyes of their beloved Creator with your actions. And how, through your actions, they will be raised as the most righteous and pious of Muslims.

Perhaps you didn't know that doing what you did, at the time and place you chose, it actually meant that the last words that escaped their lips were probably words of remembrance and praise of Allah. Which is a noble end many Muslims could only dream of.

And perhaps you didn't know, but what you did would almost guarantee them paradise.

Appreciate that you showed the world how Muslims welcome, with open arms, even people like yourself into our mosques, which is our second home.

Appreciate you for showing that our mosques have no locks or gates and are unguarded because everyone and anyone is welcome to be with us.

Appreciate you for allowing the world to see the powerful image of a man you injured, lying on back on the stretcher with his index finger raised high, as a declaration of his faith and complete trust in Allah.

Appreciate how you brought the Churches and communities together to stand with us Muslims.

Appreciate that you made countless New Zealanders come out of their homes to visit the mosques nearest to them with flowers with beautiful messages of peace and love.

You have broken many many hearts and you have made the world weep. You have left a huge void.

But what you also have done have brought

us closer together. And it has strengthened our faith and resolve.

In the coming weeks, more people will turn up in the mosques, a place you hate so much, fortified by the strength in their faith, and inspired by their fallen brothers and sisters.

In the coming weeks, more non-Muslims will turn up at the gates of mosques with fresh flowers and beautifully handwritten notes. They may not have known where the mosques in their area were. But now, they do. All because of you.

You may have achieved your aim of intended destruction, but I guess you failed to incite hatred, fear and despair in all of us.

And while I understand that it may have been your objective, I hate to say that after all of that elaborate planning, and the perverse and wretched efforts on your part, you still failed to drive a divide among the Muslims and non-Muslims in the world.

For that, I can't say that I'm sorry.

—*Jinghan Naan*

## Jinghan Naan

This poem was read at the vigil by Imam Ahmad Kayello which was held at Modesto's Islamic Center on March 18 in response to the New Zealand attack. A Muslim woman, who goes by the Facebook name Jinghan Naan and runs a blog, The Radiant Muslim, has gone viral with her powerful open letter directly challenging the man charged with murder following the massacre that claimed 50 lives and injured dozens. It has been shared over 50,000 times, with more than 100,000 reactions.



## Protesting, Proclaiming and Pondering

There they stood, on the downtown Modesto corner known as 5 Points: two old ladies, one fast approaching 80 and the other beginning the downward slide from her mid 70's, both holding signs urging empathy and support for homeless folk (though on other 1st Wednesdays the signs might support other important justice issues.)

The two were trying to stay positive, laughing at their situation, though they did rather bemoan the reality that some of the 'regulars' at the vigil were missing for one reason or another. It did feel a bit lonely, and it was a cold afternoon in early March.

And of course, there was the usual mix of cars, trucks, buses and motorcycles roaring past, their drivers scarcely noticing the two old ladies with their signs, and if they did notice, not choosing to respond in any visible or audible way. And no one came to join them.

And so, they wondered: where were those of you who also care about the justice issues that divide our country into 'us' and 'them'? Some of you undoubtedly had compelling reasons for not being on that corner with your signs on that particular day. And it's true that the two old ladies were willing to take your place.

Still, the present reality is that all of us are living in the same perilous era, when the future looks increasingly ominous and we're all weary and worn and only occasionally energized. And yet it is a long tradition of hope and determination that has created and maintained the Peace/Life Center's First Wednesday Vigil at Modesto's 5 Points. And it was that determination to keep hope alive that anchored those two old ladies on that corner and kept them there.

It is their hope that another First Wednesday might bring you who are reading this tale to join our vigil, whatever its theme might be, or prompt you to at least honk your horn or smile and wave as you drive past that corner. And who knows, perhaps one distant day when those 2 old ladies are no longer able to bear witness on that corner, you and many others will choose to work this fine tradition into your first Wednesday schedule. These two old ladies hope so.



### Spring Tea

St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
1528 Oakdale Rd. Modesto  
Keynote Speaker Eric Goossens  
Project Manager, Habitat for Humanity  
Saturday, May 4, 2019 - 11:00 to 2:00. Tickets:  
\$25; Table for 8: \$160. Call 209-522-3267

## Ride For Mom Cycling Event Returns

Funds Raised Benefit Local Non-Profits

By VERONICA JACUINDE



features 10, 35, and 77-mile rides with fully supported rest stops, SAG and lunch.

**Ride for Mom** founder, Robert Fores, shares, "Last year we surpassed our number of participants from previous years with almost 500 cyclists participating." He adds, "In addition to providing a memorable day of cycling, since our inception we have raised over \$70,000 for local non-profits that also focus on improving the health of the community."

**Ride for Mom** was created as a tribute to Robert Fores' mother who passed away from cancer. He says, "every year

Hundreds of cyclists will gather on Saturday, May 11th for the **Ride for Mom® (RFM)** family and charity cycling celebration. The eight annual event brings together cycling enthusiasts for a fun day promoting healthy lifestyles while raising funds for several local non-profit agencies. The event

we host this event the day before Mother's Day to honor my mother and all those others that have been afflicted with this terrible disease." With the purpose to encourage "**BE ACTIVE, EAT HEALTHY AND LIVE BETTER,**" **RFM** has grown into a community event that unites and inspires others to embrace this philosophy.

Doctors Medical Center (DMC), the presenting sponsor, supports educational and human service projects and is focused on improving the health of the community through the pursuit of wellness. Robert Fores says, "Their support is crucial in our continued effort to elevate the viability of the event and is deeply appreciated because with their help, we have raised a significant amount of money." **Ride for Mom, Inc.** is an all-volunteer effort organized as a California non-profit corporation with IRS 501(c)(3) status. A dedicated team of passionate individuals organizes this large-scale annual celebration.

For more information regarding participating or volunteering, as well as sponsoring or donating, visit [www.rideformom.com](http://www.rideformom.com), [www.facebook.com/rideformom](http://www.facebook.com/rideformom), or e-mail **Ride for Mom** at [info@rideformom.com](mailto:info@rideformom.com). For media inquiries contact Veronica Jacuinde, (310) 508-1896.



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# Pathways: Striving to End Homelessness for Young Adults

## An interview by TOM PORTWOOD

"I think we are at an interesting point in our community. Homelessness has been a problem for a long, long time, but we are finally seeing that young adults are increasingly vulnerable to homelessness. If we don't do anything as a community to alleviate homelessness, I have no idea what this problem is going to look like ten or twenty years from now," fears Paula Harter, the Program Manager at Pathways, a transitional housing program for young adults aged 18 to 24 years old. The program was developed in 2000 by Center for Human Services, which was already providing a crucially needed emergency shelter at Hutton House for children aged 13 to 17 years old.

Statistics published by Invisible People, (a nonprofit advocacy group for the homeless population headquartered in Los Angeles), paint a grim picture of the crisis that Ms. Harter tackles every day, along with her colleagues. "One in 10 young adults ages 18-25 and one in 30 adolescents ages 13-17 experience some form of homelessness each year (without a parent or guardian by their side)," Invisible People indicated. "That amounts to 4.2 million young people experiencing homelessness each year in the United States."

"When I started seventeen years ago, Pathways was not really a program, it was mostly just housing," Ms. Harter explains. "But we found that the youth needed other services. Many of our clients had mental health issues, or drug and alcohol issues, or employment was a problem." So, over the next few years, Center for Human Services staff led efforts to build up the services available at Pathways, and formed strong ties to community partners who could also help Pathway clients as they made a new start for their lives.

At Pathways, young adults experiencing homelessness are given the opportunity to make that new start. Many of the services and strategies through the program include:

- No cost housing for up to 24 months, while actively seeking employment
- Assessment of current living situation
- Problem solving and mediation to remain housed
- Referral and linkage to community resources
- Ongoing supportive services
- Case management
- Substance use counseling
- Mentoring
- Mental health counseling
- Life skills classes
- After care services

While Pathways had two earlier locations "it has been about seven years since we moved here (608 E. Granger)," stated Ms. Harter. "We fit in nicely in this neighborhood. We generally have no complaints from our neighbors. We have ten units at this complex, two of which are devoted to the office, and eight apartments for the young adults – two youth for each apartment, with separate bedrooms, and a common living room, dining room, laundry area, and bathroom."



"When young adults come into our program," Ms. Harter continues, "we ask two things of them – first, that they meet weekly with their case manager, someone who will help them design a goal plan. What do they want to accomplish while they are here? What are some of their needs? The case manager will look at their education. They have access to mental health counseling, substance use treatment programs, financial management as well as time management tools. The residents also have an opportunity to learn coping skills through an evidenced-based program called Seeking Safety. The curriculum also addresses PTSD, because many of the young adults have suffered trauma, just by being homeless."

"Many of our clients are very young and have been through some very horrific traumas in their lives," Ms. Harter sadly relates of her clients. "We see a lot of kids whose parents have passed or have been living with a grandparent who is no longer able to take care of them. But probably the largest group of young adults needing housing are those whose families are not accepting of their LGBTQ lifestyle. We have young adults who just get lost along the way – they may have mental health problems that are so severe that they are unable to function until they can get stabilized. Of course, many kids use marijuana as their way of taking care of the pain. There are no drugs and alcohol allowed here. They have to want to be here."

Although the young people can be "cranky" about needing to follow the routines and procedures set out at Pathways, "nothing changes their life more than getting a job," Ms. Harter stresses. "It makes them feel productive. And it makes them feel proud of themselves, and we're proud of them, too! Pathways requires that our clients put 50% of all their earnings into a savings account that we hold for them until they leave the program. They don't pay any rent here, or any utilities, they generally get food through CalFresh (food stamps). We actually had a young woman leave here with \$10,000.00, because she put in more than 50%! Generally, they leave here with about \$3,000.00."

With that nest egg in hand, and after learning many crucial life skills while at Pathways, young adults are much better equipped to go out into the world, as they try to break free from the cycle of homelessness. "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day, teach a man how to fish and he eats for a lifetime!" Ms. Harter says, explaining her philosophy.

Up until recently, most Pathways graduates had had little trouble in establishing a new life on their own. However, Paula Harter and her colleagues are deeply concerned about the spiraling cost of renting apartments in our area.

Faced by this crisis, Center for Human Services and other service providers have formulated a bold proposal of a Youth Navigation Center. The proposed Continuum of Care will encompass engagement of at-risk youth, stabilized housing situations through the Emergency Shelter at Hutton House, a Young Adult Shelter, and Transitional Housing through Pathways. There is also the opportunity to explore potential Host Homes, and Independent Living for young adults. Finally, the last piece would incorporate partnerships around education and employment trainings for the youth in these programs.

"We're going to have to do this as a community," Ms.

Harter emphasizes. "It can't be just Center for Human Services, or any one organization on its own. That is why we are talking and planning with all the youth service providers and youth who have utilized our services. We want everyone's input. That's our dream. I think people care about other people, and they care about housing. They understand about needing a roof over your head."



**ACTION:** For more information about the Pathways program, call (209) 526-3809; 608 E. Granger Ave., Unit 25, Modesto.

## Young Women's Education Conference

In partnership with Modesto City School, Mujeres Latinas de Stanislaus, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is hosting the, "Stay Woke, Get Education, Take Action - Young Women's Education Conference," on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at Johansen High School, 641 Norseman Dr., Modesto from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Our goal is to encourage, motivate and support young girls to pursue higher education, engage them in making a difference in their community and connect them with leaders in Stanislaus County who are invested in their success as young women.

A variety of female leaders and mentors will address issues that most concern girls in high school.

The conference is free of charge to Stanislaus County students!

Register [HERE](#)

**Information:** [info@mujerelatinas.org](mailto:info@mujerelatinas.org), 209-681-7300.

# 12 CALENDAR

APRIL 2019

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

**MJC Science Colloquium Schedule, Spring 2019**, Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 pm Science Community Center, Rm 115, MJC West Campus. Purchase Temporary Parking Permits for \$2 from dispensers located near MJC West Campus entrances. **April 3:** Catherine Tripp, Professor of Biology, MJC: Coastal Oceanography at Bodega Marine Laboratory. **April 10:** Emily Basnight, Jim Hopf, and Des Orsinelli of the Citizens Climate Lobby: Climate Solutions That Can Save Your World – An Earth Day theme talk.

**MAPS (Modesto Area Partners in Science)**. Free, informative, engaging community science programs. 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus, Sierra Hall 132. **April 12:** Dr. Jonathan Fortney, UC Santa Cruz. The Kepler Mission: Exotic Solar Systems on the Path to Earth-Like Planets. Insights from the mission and the future of planetary research. <http://www.ucolick.org/~jfortney/>

**3 WED: VIGIL: Immigration**, McHenry & J St., NOTE: new time. 4:30-5:30 pm.

**5: FRI: The Transcend Transverse Conference**. CSU Stanislaus, Mary Stuart Rogers Building, 130. Parking: Lot 11. Registration.

**6 SAT: Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®**. Visit <https://www.havenwalkamile.org/>.

**7 & 14 SUN: Spring Boutique**. Handmade arts and goods created and donated by members of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation. 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Before and after 10:30 am services. Info: Mary Rodgers, 208-215-0006.

**14 SUN: Sunday Afternoons at CBS** presents *Incendio*. Fiery Flamenco Jazz at its best. 1705 Sherwood Ave., Modesto. 3 pm. Tickets at <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3413289>, or call 209-571-6060.

**16-19 TUES-FRI: Climate Symposium** at CSU, Stanislaus. Info: <http://www.csustan.edu/climate-crisis-symposium>.

**20 SAT: Earth Day in the Park**, Graceada Park, Modesto. Visit our booth!

**21 SUN: The Modesto Film Society** presents *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. 1307 J. St., Modesto. 2:00 pm. Join the State Theatre and get perks! Visit <http://www.thestate.org/membership>

**27 SAT: Young Women's Education Conference** for High School Students. See article, this issue.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Saturday May 4: Pilgrimage of Hope** begins in Fresno.

**Thursday May 9:** West Modesto Community Collaborative: "SHAMELESS and BLAMELESS Luncheon" featuring Paul Golden, M.D. See article, this issue.

**Saturday May 11:** Ride for Mom. See article, this issue.

**Sunday June 9:** Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Pancake Breakfast. Modesto Church of the Brethren.

**Friday-Sunday, June 28-30:** Peace Camp in the Sierra. Registration form on p. 2.



## REGULAR MEETINGS

### MONDAYS

**Monday Morning Funstrummers Beginner Ukulele Lessons**. Modesto Senior Center. 10:45am to Noon. Free Scenic and Bodem.

**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.

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

### TUESDAYS

**Attention Veterans:** Join us for Free Coffee & Donuts Meet & Greet at the Stanislaus Veterans Center, 3500 Coffee Rd., Modesto, Suite 15, 7 am – 11 am

**NAACP Meeting**. Christ Unity Baptist Church, 601 'L' St., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 7 pm. 209-645-1909; email: [naacp.branch1048@gmail.com](mailto:naacp.branch1048@gmail.com)

**Exploring Whiteness & Showing Up for Racial Justice Meetings**, Fourth Tuesday, monthly 7:00 p.m., Central Grace Hmong Alliance Church, 918 Sierra Dr., Modesto. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/24765549018387/>

**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.

**Tuesday Evening Funstrummers Ukulele Jam**. Songbooks provided. 6pm to 8pm, 1600 Carver Rd., Donation. 209-505-3216, [www.funstrummers.com](http://www.funstrummers.com).

**IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and dharma talk**, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely, donations welcome. Info: Contact Lori, 209-343-2748 or see <https://imcv.org/> Email: [info@imcv.org](mailto:info@imcv.org)

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

### WEDNESDAYS

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

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

**Merced Full Spectrum** meets the second Wednesday of every month, 6 p.m. 1744 G St.,

## 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), 4:30-5:30 pm. Call the Center for info: 529-5750.

**MEDIA:** Listen to Peace/Life Center radio, KCBP 95.5 FM streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org> and at 95.5 FM, 2 pm to 2 am.

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

**MEDIA COMMITTEE** of Peace/Life Center. Meetings TBA.

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

Suite H, Merced <http://www.lgbtmerced.org/> Merced Full Spectrum is a division of Gay Central Valley, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

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

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

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

**MINDFUL MEDITATION:** Modesto Almond Blossom Sangha, 7 - 9 pm. Info: Anne, 521-6977.

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

### THURSDAYS

**Laughter Yoga**. Every other Thursday at The Bird's Nest, 422 15th St., Modesto. The dates are February & March 7th & 21st, April 4th & 18th, May 2nd & 16th. 5:30pm-6:30pm. \$15.00 per class. To register, call or text Nicole, 209-765-8006 or visit [www.nicoleottman.com](http://www.nicoleottman.com)

**Veterans: Join us for Free Coffee & Donuts** Meet & Greet at the Stanislaus Veterans Center, 3500 Coffee Rd., Modesto, Suite 15, 7 am – 11 am

**IMCV Grupo de Meditación en Español**, cada semana 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (edificio trasero al final del estacionamiento este de UUFSC). Ofrecido libremente, las donaciones son bienvenidas. Info: Contacto Vanessa, 209-408-6172.

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

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

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

**The Book Group**, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 – 5:00 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, [jrmcompassionate@gmail.com](mailto:jrmcompassionate@gmail.com), <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

**VALLEY HEARTLAND ZEN GROUP:** ev-

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

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

### FRIDAYS

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

**Friday Morning Funstrummers Band Rehearsal**. Donation 9:15am to Noon. College Avenue United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. 209-505-3216, [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, 7pm. Info: 300-4253. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

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

**HISPANIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**, 3rd Fridays at noon, 1314 H St., Modesto. Questions? Yamilet Valladolid, [yamiletv@hotmail.com](mailto:yamiletv@hotmail.com)

### SATURDAY

**Free Community Drum Circle** every third Saturday, 3 pm, Deva Café, 1202 J. St., Modesto. No experience or drums necessary to participate. All levels welcome. <https://drum-love.com/>

**Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction**. @Friends Coming of Age., 1203 Tully Rd., Ste. B., Modesto. Saturdays 8-9 am. FREE (donations accepted). Info: [RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com](mailto:RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com)

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

**So Easy-So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabe Group**. Potlucks, guest speakers, field trips, activist activities, movie nights, etc. Third Saturday of every month. Info: Kathy Haynes (209) 250-9961 or email [kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com](mailto:kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com)

### 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.