



Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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The Sun rises on a school filled with challenge, opportunity and hope

By JENIFER WEST

Where I was born and where and how I have lived is unimportant. It is what I have done with where have been that should be of interest. — Georgia O'Keefe

Bright and early on a Saturday morning in April, the campus of Rising Sun School in Vernalis is abuzz with activity. A crew of volunteers is working in the barn, clearing away old desks, chairs and other detritus from the school's very long history. Another group is stringing line and digging post holes,

RISING SUN cont. p10

Ally Nation Sues United States for Nuclear Treaty Violations

By SHINEH RHEE
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

April 24, 2014 – San Francisco, CA – The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) today filed an unprecedented lawsuit in the U.S. Federal District Court in San Francisco to hold the United States government accountable for its flagrant violations of the international nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The small island nation, once used as a testing ground for nuclear bombs, says the United States has repeatedly broken its promise to pursue the abolition of nuclear weapons. Article VI of the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) requires the U.S. to pursue negotiations “in good faith” for an end to the nuclear arms race “at an early date” and for nuclear disarmament.

“The failure of the United States to uphold important commitments and respect the law makes the world a more dangerous place,” said Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a vocal backer of the lawsuit. “President Obama has said that ridding the world of these devastating weapons is a fundamental moral issue of our time. It is time for the United States to show true leadership by keeping the promises set forth in the Non-Proliferation Treaty.”

The Nuclear Zero lawsuit (titled for the NPT promise of a world with zero nuclear weapons) filed today charges the United States with clearly violating its legal obligations by spending outrageous sums of money to enhance its nuclear arsenal and by failing to make real progress in nuclear disarmament. The U.S. plans to spend an estimated \$1 trillion on nuclear weapons in the next three decades and currently possesses nearly half of the world's 17,300 warheads.

The Marshall Islands does not seek compensation with the lawsuit. Rather, it seeks declaratory and injunctive relief requiring the United States to comply with its commitments under the treaty and begin clear action towards the agreed upon promises.

The United States conducted 67 nuclear weapons tests in the Marshall Islands from 1946 to 1958 and the health and environmental effects still plague the Marshall Islanders today. The 1954 “Castle Bravo” nuclear test was the largest the U.S. ever conducted – estimated to be 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb that destroyed the city of Hiroshima.

“Our people have suffered the catastrophic and irreparable damage of these weapons, and we vow to fight so that no one else on earth will ever again experience these atrocities,” said Marshall Islands Foreign Minister Tony de Brum. “The continued existence of nuclear weapons and the terrible risk they pose to the world threatens us all.”

World leaders, international organizations, world-class experts and Nobel Peace Laureates have declared strong support for the lawsuit and denounced nuclear weapons as immoral (see list on the website). The lawsuits are also supported by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF), a U.S.-based civil society organization consulting with the Marshall Islands and its pro bono legal team. <http://www.wagingpeace.org/nuclearzero/supporters-of-the-nuclear-zero-lawsuits/>

“Nuclear weapons threaten everyone and everything we love and treasure. They threaten civilization and the human species.

TREATY VIOLATIONS . . cont. p 8

39th Annual Pancake Breakfast

Sunday June 1, 2014

8:00 a.m. — Noon

*Benefit for
the Modesto Peace/Life Center*

Modesto Church of the Brethren
2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto



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~ ~ ~
The Church of the Brethren has graciously donated the use of its facility.

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32nd Annual Peace Camp June 27, 28, and 29, 2014



Camp Peaceful Pines
near Pinecrest, California



Registration Form

Early Registration Deadline: **June 1, 2014**

Adults (age 19 and older)

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

Total x \$80 \$ _____

Youth (ages 4 -18)

1. _____ Age _____ 2. _____ Age _____
3. _____ Age _____ 4. _____ Age _____

Total x \$60 \$ _____

Child (ages 3 & under FREE)

1. _____ Age _____ 2. _____ Age _____

Early registration by June 1: subtract \$10 per person = \$ _____

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 _____

- I need vegetarian meals.
 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 (must be signed if applicable)

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

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (PRINT) _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

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

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

Come to Peace Camp!

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

When Rob Brittain came to Peace Camp for the first time last year, he thought, "I've found my tribe." Please join us this year for a great weekend with people who share your values for peace and justice. Register now for the Modesto Peace/Life Center's 32nd annual Peace Camp in the Sierra, June 27-29 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108. We'll share workshops, hikes, campfires, singing, talent show, children's activities, crafts, recreation, and a beautiful mountain setting. Early registration by June 1 entitles registrants to a \$10 per person discount.

Guadalupe Martinez, Assistant Executive Director of the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (CRPE) will facilitate a workshop on **environmental justice**. CRPE has focused on issues such as clean air, fracking, climate justice, civil rights, toxic waste and green economic development. Lupe lives in Delano where he worked in the vineyards as a farm worker and became a union organizer with Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers prior to his work with CRPE.

Julia Stephens of the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC) will lead a workshop on the **State of the Sierra**. Julia's background includes being a trail worker, a botany surveyor, studies in outdoor recreation and leadership, and a B.A. in environmental geography. CSERC acts as the environmental defender of water, wildlife and wild places within the Northern Yosemite region of the Sierra Nevada.

Scott Gifford will lead us in singing, perform for the children and a lead workshop for ukulele suitable for beginners. **Tim Smart** will conduct one of his popular star walks. Hike leaders **John Lucas** and **Mike Chiavetta** will provide a hike for those who can leave from Modesto early Friday. **Rob Brittain** will lead teen activities.

At the 6,200-foot elevation in the Stanislaus National Forest near the Clark Fork of the Stanislaus River, Camp Peaceful Pines is a beautiful setting for Peace Camp. Camp Peaceful Pines features kitchen and bathroom facilities, rustic cabins and 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. Families and individuals are welcome.

The \$80 fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Young people 18 and under are \$60., with a \$10 savings for registration before June 1. Ages 3 and under free. Minors need to be accompanied by an adult. Partial scholarships and day rates are also available. Campers may arrive after 2:00pm on Friday. The camp opens with supper at 6:00pm on Friday and closes after the morning workshop on Sunday. Directions and other information will be provided to participants before camp.



Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-569-0321

Two Exciting Summer Delegations to Central America!

Honduras: Human Rights Accompaniment – June 22-July 1, 2014

On the fifth anniversary of the coup that overthrew democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya, the nonviolent National Front for Popular Resistance, farmers, students, labor unionists, LGBT activists, and regular people request our accompaniment in the face of violence and repression.

This Alliance for Global Justice (AfGJ) delegation joins with a delegation from the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) for a trip to the Southern part of the country where a charter has been granted for a Model City. Never heard of a Model City? Well, this delegation will help make sure that everyone learns about this perverse concept where North Americans set up a city outside the laws and jurisdiction of the Honduran law. This is not uninhabited land. Help AfGJ and the NLG investigate who will be displaced and what other effects this pernicious dream of North American libertarians will have on Honduras.

The delegation, based in Tegucigalpa, will also travel to Zacate Grande where communities that have inhabited the land for generations are being threatened by tourism and African Palm business interests. We will also visit Siria Valley where environmentalists are under death threat and legal actions for their activism against North American mining interests that are destroying their water and health.

In Tegucigalpa the delegation will meet with human rights defenders and leaders of popular movements struggling against state violence and impunity. Learn about how North American foreign policy impacts these communities generating further human rights issues, social conflict and militarization.

Nicaragua: Climate Change – August 3-12, 2014

Rich in natural resources, Nicaragua has one of the world's great stores of fresh water. It is also one of the countries most

vulnerable to climate change. Since the Sandinistas return to government in 2007 Nicaragua is also a country with a growing consciousness of its environmental treasures and that its future depends on preserving its forests and environment, as well as food sovereignty. Over 50% of Nicaragua's electricity is now generated from renewable sources. Nicaraguans are fully aware of the dangers of climate change and are experimenting with how to ameliorate its effects.

The delegation will visit projects coping with climate change in Managua, Esteli, Somoto, Condega, and Leon. It will visit projects to conserve rain water, small scale hydro electric plants, sustainable agricultural projects, and geothermal and wind energy projects. Traveling to Granada, learn about the proposed inter-oceanic canal and talk to people for and against it. A cultural night and a beach day will be part of the itinerary.

Delegation Costs: The \$1,000 cost covers all in-country travel, housing (double occupancy), food, translation, and materials. It does not cover international airfare.

For an application or more information send an email to: Chuck@AFGJ.org or call 202-540-8336 x1. Visit <https://afgj.org/two-exciting-summer-delegations-to-central-america>

May 17th, 2014
McHenry Bowl's 14th Annual
Benefit Bowl

supporting

Lunch
Silent Auction

Habitat for Humanity Stanislaus County

Prizes
Drawings
& lots more!

For more information, call Dallas at (209) 571-2695

14th Annual Benefit Bowl for Habitat for Humanity

By **KARISSA WRIGHT**, Youth Volunteer Coordinator, Habitat for Humanity

McHenry Bowl has chosen Habitat for Humanity, Stanislaus for their 14th Annual Benefit Bowl. This event is on Saturday, May 17th from three rounds of two hours of bowling starting at noon till 6:00 p.m. at McHenry Bowl, 3700 McHenry Ave., Modesto.

We need teams to participate in the event. These teams must be set in place before the day of the event. To participate, call Dallas at 209-571-2695; or call (209) 575-4585 ext. 113, or email kwright@stanislaushabitat.org

Film night, May 21, features *Healthcare – The Movie*

By **DAN ONORATO**

If you think a Single Payer healthcare system is what we need in this country, or are curious to know more about this alternative, don't miss Film Night at the Center on Wednesday, May 21. The featured film, starting at 6:30 p.m., is *Healthcare—The Movie*. Following the film we'll have a lively discussion with organizers from Single Payer San Joaquin.

The documentary explains how the health care systems in Canada and the United States that were once essentially the same evolved to be so completely different. Most people under the age of 50 are not aware of how intense the political struggle was that led to the universal medical care system in Canada. Nor are they aware of the public relations campaigns, still active today, that have prevailed in the United States since the early 1900's to dissuade the public from supporting national health care.

Produced by Canadian/American couple Laurie Simons and Terry Sterrenberg, *The Healthcare Movie* reveals the personal and emotional impact on Canadians who now enjoy access to universal health care because of the heroism of people who took a stand nearly 50 years ago. It also chronicles the continuing struggle in this country between those who fear government intervention and those who regard quality health care as a basic human right for all.

Single Payer San Joaquin is sponsoring the showing as the licensed agent for the film. Carol and Jerry Bailey from Stockton, who started Single Payer San Joaquin in 2004, will lead the discussion and share their organizing experience. They have participated in state-wide and national efforts to educate and legislate for a single payer healthcare system as a human right.

Next month on the third Wednesday, June 18th, Film Night will present *The Power of Forgiveness*, which explores the last 20 years of research that reveals how forgiveness can transform a person's life. From Northern Ireland to Ground Zero to the Amish countryside, the film features Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh, best selling authors Thomas Moore and Marianne Williamson, and others. A discussion will follow.

Mark your calendar now!

For more info, visit www.thehealthcaremovie.net/home

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Winning Essay: the C. Norman E. and Marjorie J. Roller Award

Arribada

By LYNN M. HANSEN

Two or three days before the new moon, when the night sky is dark, clouds are heavy with moisture from the rainy season, and pre-dawn air is thick with humidity tasting of salt, conditions are right for olive ridley sea turtle mass nesting, known as *arribada* or arrival. The location of one nesting beach is Ostional, Costa Rica, a small community on the Pacific Coast that has become the custodian of this ancient sea turtle ritual, controlling an 800-meter strip of beachfront, Playa Ostional, accessed through a narrow entry gate.

Once through the gate, a smooth beach of black volcanic sand spreads like a skirt along the ocean edge. On the eve of *arribada*, a flotilla of turtle heads bobs up and down in the adjacent surf zone, awaiting their turn to come ashore. At first, only a few females ride the waves into the shallows, emerge from the surf, gouge dark tracks with their flippers, scarring the smooth sand surface as they drag their gravid bodies up to the back beach where nesting occurs. As they labor up the beach, pressing their noses into the damp sand, they sense that this is their natal beach, the place they left as hatchlings, and proceed to the site where each female begins digging her nest. With her hind flippers working as shovels, she carefully sculpts a basket-shaped nest, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom. Then, positioned over the nest cavity, she deposits her eggs, white spheres covered with glistening mucus, singly or in cascades of two or three at a time, their leathery eggshells bouncing harmlessly against each other and the soft walls of the nest.

After eighty to ninety eggs have dropped, the turtle covers the hole, again employing her rear flippers to pile sand into the nest. Rhythmically, she pats, piles and pats until the hole is full. Rocking her body back and forth like a rolling pin, she tamps the sand, which produces a thumping sound and forms a solid roof for the nest. The nest firmly closed, she sweeps the sand surface with her flippers, makes a few circles for camouflage and turns back to the sea. Throughout the pre-dawn hours, the scene is repeated as wave after wave of turtles, sprinkled with confetti of bioluminescent plankton, come ashore to nest in this particular real estate. The beach is alive with thousands of black turtle bodies slowly moving between seashore and back beach digging, tamping, thumping, circling, undisturbed by the presence of humans. By morning, the beach surface is rough with turtle tracks and resembles an off-road vehicle course. Each female will repeat this process another three or four times during the nesting season and then will move out to sea for two to four years before returning. At its peak, as many as 100,000 turtles come here over a five-night period, depositing millions of eggs.

One might expect the turtles would abandon this mass nesting at dawn, but hundreds of turtles remain scattered along the beach, and the process might continue until well after sunrise. At daybreak, another arrival begins as the local inhabitants from the village of Ostional descend on the beach

for their harvest. The entire community, approximately three hundred individuals, in teams of several women, teenagers, little children and at least one elder male, assemble at the entry gate to the beach and walk toward the nesting area. The elder male in the group hops, sinking his heel into the sand, in what is known as a “turtle dance.” If the sand sinks easily, this is a turtle nest and is marked with a stick or a shallow hole. Women and youngsters follow behind the man to excavate the nest and toss leathery eggs into a pile on the sand. Then eggs are gathered into large sacks, two hundred per sack, and carried by horseback or individuals to trucks. The eggs are driven to a clean beach not used for turtle nesting, washed in sea water, rolled in sand, packed into certified containers, and driven to San Jose or other cities to be sold in bars as *bocas* (a local name for appetizers) or aphrodisiacs for a price one-half that of chicken eggs. Egg harvest is the economic base for Ostional.

When listeners hear of this saga, they are often horrified. Aren't sea turtles endangered? Doesn't harvesting the eggs in such large numbers undermine the biological potential of this species? Shouldn't this process be illegal? To answer,



Ironically, the human influence, egg gathering, had a positive effect. The beach was kept cleaner, with fewer rotting eggs, reducing the impact of bacteria and fungi.

we need to know the rest of the story.

In 1972, biologists Joseph Richards and David Hughes, flying over the Costa Rican Pacific coast, observed two sites where *arribadas*, consisting of hundreds of thousands of olive ridley sea turtles, occurred. One beach was Playa Nancite in Santa Rosa National Park near the Nicaraguan border, and the other was Playa Ostional, located down the coast on the Nicoya Peninsula. The scientists were both shocked and thrilled by the sight and immediately informed the academic world of the spectacle.

In response, researcher Douglas Robinson came to Ostional to study the olive ridleys and began a tagging experiment in an effort to understand their life history. Believing that research and harvesting of nests by the locals were incompatible activities, Dr. Robinson convinced the Costa Rican government to protect the beach at Ostional from egg harvesters. At the same time, Dr. Steve Cornelius began research on the olive

ridleys at the Nancite site.

Declaring Ostional a wildlife refuge gave protection to the nesting turtles from egg harvesters, but it also outraged the local community. They had harvested these eggs as a food source for as long as anyone could remember, and now their livelihood was threatened. Reaction was violent. Members of the community made their dissent known by burning the research station and beating up student researchers. A solution to their outrage came in 1981, when Dr. Robinson suggested that a managed harvest should be tried at Ostional and formed a Co-op of the locals, the Asociación de Desarrollo Integral Ostional (ADIO), to oversee the process. Allowing this kind of harvest would permit a comparison between the hatching success of olive ridleys from Ostional, where egg collection occurred, and the hatching success from Nancite where nests remained undisturbed or poached by humans. The results were startling and unexpected.

The hatching success was eight to nine percent at Ostional, where eggs were harvested during the first 36-48 hours of an *arribada*. At the remote Nancite location where no harvesting occurred, the hatching success was less than one percent.

Although there were many natural predators on turtle eggs at both sites, the human harvesters were not reducing hatching success. Instead, the major destructive influences were bacteria and fungi that infect nests because of the constant waves of turtles coming ashore, destroying nests, breaking open eggs and fouling the beach. Ironically, the human influence, egg gathering, had a positive effect. The beach was kept cleaner, with fewer rotting eggs, reducing the impact of bacteria and fungi.

The Ostional story proved counterintuitive and is an example of the need to “do the experiment.” With the arrival of scientific support for reinstatement and cooperative management of the turtle egg harvest during the Playa Ostional *arribada*, the socioeconomic status of the community improved. Currently the egg harvest of Ostional olive ridleys is sustainable and enhances the sea turtles' population. Revenues generated support a health center, salaries for guards to patrol the beach and keep it clean, road maintenance, local schools,

senior services, scholarships for low-income students, sea turtle conservation projects and environmental education in the region. Additionally, the egg harvest produced an unexpected positive influence on the survival of other sea turtle species. Because of the cheap price of the legal turtle eggs from Ostional the incentive to poach turtle eggs illegally on other beaches is undermined, thus protecting endangered solitary nesting turtles such as hawksbills and leatherbacks. In the end, the community rebuilt the research station and warmly embraces sea turtle research and conservation efforts.

Now, during the rainy season, a few days before the new moon when the air is heavy with moisture, the olive ridley *arribada* is robust. Sixty days later, under cover of darkness, the back beach quickens as hatchlings emerge from their capsules, climb their way upward and with flippers flailing, race down to water's edge and into their future, fulfilling their life cycle mandate.

Joan Baez diffuses right wing protest at Idaho concert

By WAYDOWNSOUTH

Ed. Note: While this occurred 5 years ago, this story is inspirational.

What would you do if you found yourself standing face to face with people bearing signs accusing you by name of killing babies and encouraging the shooting of American soldiers? Might you lose your cool? Might you get involved in an exchange that would ultimately lead to anger or descend into the shouting matches we've been seeing at so many Town Halls lately?

Not if you're Joan Baez, who, in the 50th year of her career, continues to live according to unshakeable ideals of non-violence and compassion in ways that should inspire us all.

Last night, four Vietnam veterans protested Joan's concert in Idaho Falls with signs reading: "JOAN BAEZ - SOLDIERS DON'T KILL BABIES, LIBERALS DO" and "JOAN BAEZ GAVE COMFORT & AID TO OUR ENEMY IN VIETNAM & ENCOURAGED THEM TO KILL AMERICANS!"

Joan was informed that the men were protesting her concert about an hour before it was due to begin and she immediately walked out onto the street to talk to them. When she approached, one of the first things they said was "We appreciate the work you did on civil rights and women's rights." They wanted to make that point clear.

She listened closely as they discussed their views. Primarily, they wanted to express the way they felt betrayed by anti-war protesters when they returned from combat. Joan assured them that she stood by them then and now. They had mixed reactions as she explained her actual positions and her support for all veterans, across the board.

At this point, Joan's merchandise salesman, Jim Stewart, who was a Captain in the US Army during Vietnam, ap-

proached the group. Jim is one of the most kind-hearted people you could ever meet. He is not one to speak lightly of what he went through in Vietnam. He took Joan's arm and said to these four men, "I stand by this lady 100%. She did the right thing then, and she stood by us when we got home. She even recorded a song at that time from which 100% of the proceeds went to us vets."

Unbelievably, one of the four protesters began to question Jim in an accusatory fashion, pressing him for details about what division he was in and where he served, as if, somehow, he were making it up. It brings tears to my eyes, as I write this, to remember Jim being questioned in this way. These protesters were there, theoretically, to lament the poor treatment of American soldiers and yet they belittled and questioned the service of a veteran because he did not agree with their views.

Jim played their game for a bit before seeing it for what it was and disengaging. Joan stood by his side and said, "Oh, he's got the stories all right. But he doesn't feel the need to talk about them."

Ironically, a man on his way to the concert approached at this moment and, without really following all that had gone on, interjected, "Those who don't realize that what they did in Vietnam was wrong are kind of SLOOOOOOW." I watched Jim's face as he heard that statement - literally getting it from both sides within less than a minute.

At this point I engaged in conversation with the man holding the sign accusing liberals, rather than soldiers, of killing babies. He said "I never killed any babies and I don't believe in guilt by association." I asked him how in the world he could justify holding a sign with Joan Baez's name on it that basically implied she killed babies if he didn't believe in guilt by association. He replied "It's an analogy, you probably wouldn't understand it!"

Uhhhh... yeah.

Jim said he should destroy the sign and he then claimed we were trying to trample his Constitutional right to free speech. We replied that we weren't questioning his right, by any means, but rather his sense of decency, considering that he was there having a conversation with Joan and she was clearly not a baby killer. Since his entire point was that guilt by association was wrong, it made sense to us. But he replied "I'm Pro-Life and I'm proud of this sign." With those words, he held it higher.

As we discussed these things, one of them repeated,

"Soldiers don't kill babies." I said that so many horrible things happen in war that it's impossible to make such a blanket statement, especially when bombs get dropped from the sky, and I said it all comes down to the truth that "War is hell."

I continued, saying, "And you all know that far better than me."

They were surprised by this statement, as if shocked that anyone on the "other side" recognized what they'd been through. It seemed to render them speechless for a moment.

At this point, Joan's continuing acceptance of their stories and her willingness to hear them out began to melt their anger. In a twist that seems hard to fathom, they then asked her to SIGN THEIR POSTERS! She replied that she would sign the back but not the front of "those horrible things." Incredibly, the man with the baby-killing sign replied that he would take her name off the poster if she would sign it.

She did end up signing them, and also getting copies of her book for each of them, and offering tickets to the show, which they did not accept. She signed the back of the poster about her encouraging the killing of American soldiers - "All the very best to you, Joan Baez."

When we got back inside the theatre, Joan broke down in tears. I said to her "You are so brave to face people like that." She wasn't crying about the way she had been treated, however, but about the way Jim Stewart had stood up for her. "Did you hear his voice shaking?" she said. "That was bravery..."

And she was right. Stepping back into the mire of Vietnam was not something he did lightly - he bore the literal denigration of his service by another veteran in order to defend her.

During the concert afterwards Joan dedicated a song to the protesters and said "You know, they just wanted to be heard. Everyone wants to be heard. I feel like I made four new friends tonight."

She took the high road, as always. It wasn't my name on those signs, yet I gave into anger. She never did. As we deal with tea parties and increasingly violent right wing protests it would do us all good to remember the example of non-violence and compassion that Ms. Baez has exemplified for the 50-plus years of her career.

Her heroes are Gandhi and Martin Luther King. In my book, she's right there with them, leading the timeless and essential march along the high road.

UPDATE: Thanks to everyone for the recs! I'm so happy that this story has inspired members of this community. You may want to check out the version of "We Shall Overcome" that Joan recorded in her kitchen in June, with some lyrics in Farsi, in the hope of directly inspiring the people of Iran as they stand up for real democracy against real oppression. The link follows... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVCqPAzI-JY>

Originally posted to waydownsouth on Wed Aug. 12, 2009 at <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2009/08/12/765667/-Joan-Baez-diffuses-right-wing-protest-at-Idaho-concert?detail=email>

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In One Word: Poof!

By URI AVNERY

POOR JOHN Kerry. This week he emitted a sound that was more expressive than pages of diplomatic babble.

In his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations committee he explained how the actions of the Israeli government had torpedoed the “peace process”. They broke their obligation to release Palestinian prisoners, and at the same time announced the enlargement of more settlements in East Jerusalem. The peace efforts went “poof”.

“Poof” is the sound of air escaping a balloon. It is a good expression, because the “peace process” was from the very beginning nothing more than a balloon full of hot air. An exercise in make-believe.

JOHN KERRY cannot be blamed. He took the whole thing seriously. He is an earnest politician, who tried very very hard to make peace between Israel and Palestine. We should be grateful for his efforts.

The trouble is that Kerry had not the slightest idea of what he was getting himself into.

The entire “peace process” revolves around a basic misconception. Some would say: a basic lie.

Namely: that we have here two equal sides of a conflict. A serious conflict. An old conflict. But a conflict that can be solved when reasonable people of the two sides sit down together and thrash it out, guided by a benevolent and impartial referee.

Not one detail of these assumptions was real. The referee was not impartial. The leaders were not sensible. And most importantly: the sides were not equal.

The balance of power between the two sides is not 1:1, not even 1:2 or 1:10. In every material respect – military, diplomatic, economic – it is more like one to a thousand.

There is no equality between occupier and occupied, oppressor and oppressed. A jailer and a prisoner cannot negotiate on equal terms. When one side has total command of the other, controls his every move, settles on his land, controls his money flow, arrests people at will, blocks his access to the UN and the International courts, equality is out of the question.

If the two sides to negotiations are so extremely unequal, the situation can only be remedied by the mediator supporting the weaker side. What is happening is the very opposite: the American support for Israel is massive and unstinting.

Throughout the “negotiations” the US did nothing to check the settlement activity that created more Israeli facts on the ground – the very ground whose future the negotiations were all about.

A PREREQUISITE for successful negotiations is that all sides have at least a basic understanding not only of each other’s interests and demands, but even more of each other’s mental world, emotional setup and self-image. Without that, all moves are inexplicable and look irrational.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, one of the most intelligent people I have met in my life, once told me: “You have in Israel the

most intelligent experts on the Arab world. They have read all the books, all the articles, every single word written about it. They know everything, and understand nothing. Because they have never lived one day in an Arab country.”

The same is true for the American experts, only much more so. In Washington DC one feels the rarefied air of a Himalayan peak. Seen from the grandiose palaces of the administration, where the fate of the world is decided, foreign people look small, primitive and largely irrelevant. Here and there some real experts are tucked away, but nobody really consults them.

The average American statesman has not the slightest idea of Arab history, world-view, religions, myths or the traumas that shape Arab attitudes, not to mention the Palestinian struggle. He has no patience for this primitive nonsense.

SEEMINGLY, THE American understanding of Israel is much better. But not really.

Average American politicians and diplomats know a lot about Jews. Many of them are Jews. Kerry himself seems to be partly Jewish. His peace team includes many Jews, even Zionists, including the actual manager of the negotiations, Martin Indyk, who worked in the past for AIPAC. His very name is Yiddish (and means a Turkey).

The assumption is that Israelis are not very different from American Jews. But that is entirely false. Israel may claim to be the “Nation-State of the Jewish People”, but that is only an instrument for exploiting the Jewish Diaspora and creating obstacles for the “peace process”. In reality there is very little similarity between Israelis and the Jewish Diaspora, not much more than between a German and a Japanese.

Martin Indyk may feel an affinity with Tzipi Livni, the daughter of an Irgun fighter (or “terrorist” in British parlance), but that is an illusion. The myths and traumas that shaped Tzipi are very different from those that shaped Martin, who was educated in Australia.

If Barack Obama and Kerry knew more, they would have realized from the beginning that the present Israeli political setup makes any Israeli evacuation of the settlements, withdrawal from the West Bank and compromise about Jerusalem quite impossible.

ALL THIS is true for the Palestinian side, too.

Palestinians are convinced that they understand Israel. After all, they have been under Israeli occupation for decades. Many of them have spent years in Israeli prisons and speak perfect Hebrew. But they have made many mistakes in their dealings with Israelis.

The latest one was the belief that Israel would release the fourth batch of prisoners. This was almost impossible. All Israeli media, including the moderate ones, speak about releasing “Palestinian murderers”, not Palestinian activists or fighters. Right-wing parties compete with each other, and with rightist “terror-victims”, in denouncing this outrage.

Israelis do not understand the deep emotions evoked by the non-release of prisoners – the national heroes of the Palestinian people, though Israel itself has in the past exchanged a thousand Arab prisoners for one single Israeli, citing the Jewish religious command of “redemption of prisoners”.

It has been said that Israel always sells a “concession”

three times: once when promising it, once when signing an official agreement about it and thirdly when actually fulfilling the undertaking. This happened when the time came to implement the third withdrawal from the West Bank under the Oslo agreements, which never happened.

Palestinians know nothing about Jewish history as taught in Israeli schools, very little about the holocaust, even less about the roots of Zionism.

RECENT NEGOTIATIONS started as “peace talks”, continued about a “framework” for further negotiations, and now the talks have degenerated to talks about the talks about the talks.

Nobody wants to break off the farce, because all three sides are afraid of the alternative.

The American side is afraid of a general onslaught of the Zionist-evangelical-Republican-Adelson bulldozer on the Obama administration in the next elections. Already the State Department is frantically trying to retreat from the Kerry “poof”. He did not mean that only Israel is to blame, they assert, the fault lies with both sides. The jailer and the prisoner are equally to blame.

As usual, the Israeli government has many fears. It fears the outbreak of a third intifada, coupled with a world-wide campaign of de-legitimization and boycott of Israel, especially in Europe.

It also fears that the UN, which at present recognizes Palestine only as a non-member state, will go on and promote it more and more.

The Palestinian leadership, too, is afraid of a third intifada, which may lead to a bloody uprising. Though all Palestinians speak about a “non-violent intifada”, few really believe in it. They remember that the last intifada also started non-violently, but the Israeli army responded by deploying snipers to kill the leaders of the demonstrations, and more suicide bombing became inevitable.

President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) has responded to the non-release of the prisoners, which amounted to a personal humiliation, by signing the documents necessary for the Palestinian State to join 15 international conventions. The Israeli government exploded in anger. How dare they?

In practice, the act means little. One signature means that Palestine joins the Geneva Convention. Another concerns the protection of children. Shouldn’t we welcome this? But the Israeli government fears that this is one step nearer to the acceptance of Palestine as a member of the International Criminal Court, and perhaps the indictment of Israelis for war crimes.

Abbas is also planning steps for a reconciliation with Hamas and the holding of Palestinian elections, in order to strengthen his home front.

IF YOU were poor John Kerry, what would you say to all this?

“Poof!” seems the very minimum.

Visit <http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/avner/1397233247/>

They started by blockading a bus full of detainees—and went on to shake up the immigration debate

A look at the growing influence of undocumented voices in the movement for immigrant rights.

By RACHAEL STOEVE

At 6:30 in the morning on February 24, Maru Mora Villalpando and eight other people locked their arms together and formed a human chain across the driveway of the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Wash. A cold rain drizzled down as they stood in the path of a bus departing the facility, which held immigrants being considered for deportation, asylum, or residency. Through the tinted windows of the bus, Maru could just make out the silhouettes of people inside waving, straining to reach their shackled hands above the windowsill.

The movement has apparently gotten the Obama administration's attention.

Both Maru and one of the other activists were undocumented, so by participating they risked not only arrest but also detention and deportation. But they carried out the action anyway, hoping it would make a strong statement against the policies of the Obama Administration, which has deported more than 2 million immigrants—more than any previous government. http://www.democracynow.org/2014/4/10/as_deportations_top_2_million_should

As it turned out, their blockade did much more than make a statement. It helped set off a cascade of mobilizations led by undocumented immigrants themselves, who are increasingly going public about their status and taking the lead in the fight for immigrant rights. Their primary concern is the separation of families—for example, between July 2010 and September 2012, more than 200,000 parents were separated from their U.S.-born children through deportation, according to government data obtained by the online magazine Colorlines in December 2012. http://colorlines.com/archives/2012/12/us_deports_more_than_200k_parents.html

On March 7, less than two weeks later, 750 out of the 1,300 detainees held at the Tacoma facility began a hunger strike, directly inspired by the bus blockade, in protest of detention conditions and the Obama Administration's immigration policies. <http://slog.thestranger.com/slog/archives/2014/03/08/jailed-immigrants-launch-hunger-strike-at-tacoma-detention-center>

Next, detainees held at the Joe Corley Detention Center in Conroe, Texas, began their own hunger strike inspired by the one in Tacoma. Both strikes are still underway, although detainees at both facilities say they have faced retaliation by GEO Group, the private prison corporation contracted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to run the two detention centers.

The protests didn't end there. On March 24, one month after activists locked down in Tacoma, seven members of the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice chained themselves to the doors of the Etowah County Detention Facility

in Gadsden. As in the Tacoma action, two of the Alabama activists were undocumented. All seven were arrested that day—and then, a few hours later, released.

“Ironically, being open about not having papers seems to make activists less likely, not more likely, to be targeted by immigration officials and deported,” says Ruth Gomberg-Munoz, an anthropology professor at Loyola University of Chicago who specializes in studying immigration.

She says the newfound political influence of undocumented immigrants “shows how even the most disempowered people can struggle for rights and recognition.”

DREAMers join in

Supporters of increased immigration enforcement, along with President Obama himself, often claim that most of those affected by detention and deportation are criminals. But since the 1990s, several amendments to the Immigration and Naturalization Act have greatly expanded the list of deportable offenses to include nonviolent minor crimes. And a recent New York Times analysis of internal government records found that under the Obama administration, “two-thirds of the nearly two million deportation cases involve people who had committed minor infractions, including traffic violations, or had no criminal record at all.” Only 20 percent of those deported had committed serious crimes. <http://www.hrw.org/node/10856/section/3> and <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/07/us/more-deportations-follow-minor-crimes-data-shows.html?nlid=68643040&r=1>

And it's not just undocumented immigrants who can be detained and deported—so can legal permanent residents and refugees seeking asylum.

“We want our mothers to see their parents, to be able to hug them and not arrive to visit their grave.”

A number of national campaigns are calling attention to these policies, from Not 1 More Deportation, started by the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, to #BringThemHome, an effort spearheaded by the National Immigrant Youth Alliance. The former organizes protests in the United States aimed at pressuring President Obama to end deportations, while the latter challenges the policy through events in which groups of formerly deported immigrants seek re-entry while supporters gather at the border. Most recently, the week of March 10 saw more than 100 people attempt to return from Mexico to the United States.

Most visible in the immigrant rights movement in recent years have been undocumented youth. Many call themselves “DREAMers” after the DREAM Act, a legislative proposal that has been introduced in various forms in Congress since 2001 but has never been passed. The act would give certain immigrants brought to the United States as children a path to citizenship. But DREAMers have also added their voices to the call for ending deportations.

“As undocumented advocates, we do want citizenship rights,” wrote DREAM activists around the country in an

open letter published January 15, 2014. “We believe that this is our country, and our family's home. We do want to be able to vote and voice our opinions. We cannot, however, wait for that to happen while our families are being persecuted.”

Their letter echoes a refrain common among undocumented activists: they are tired of waiting, tired of living in fear. “We want our mothers to see their parents, to be able to hug them and not arrive to visit their grave,” the letter continues. “We want to be able to drive without the panic of seeing a police officer in our rearview mirror. We want to be able to live knowing that we will come home and see our children at the end of the day.”

The movement has apparently gotten the Obama administration's attention. On March 13, after months of claiming a legal inability to halt deportations, the president announced a review of current immigration enforcement policies.

“We're not seen”

Jose Moreno was one of the passengers on the bus that Maru and her fellow activists blocked back in February. At 25 years old, he has been living in the United States for almost seven and a half years. He is from Matamoros, a town on the Gulf Coast of Mexico just a stone's throw across the Rio Grande from Brownsville, Texas. He decided to come to the United States, he says, because he is gay and this was not well accepted in his hometown. He came first to Florida, then made his way to Seattle, where he worked, studied for his GED, and sent money back to his family in Matamoros.

The organizers say the citizenship process should not involve private prison corporations such as GEO Group.

But in November 2013, he was arrested for driving under the influence—and because he is undocumented, he was transferred from the county jail to the detention center.

Inside the center, he discovered that detainees could work—but for only \$1 a day. The meals provided by GEO Group were far from nutritious, yet the low wages made it hard to afford extra food from the facility's commissary, let alone telephone calls to family members or lawyers—if a detainee was able to get a lawyer in the first place.

On February 24, Jose boarded a bus that would take him out of the facility to the Seattle suburb of Tukwila, where he would be fingerprinted for his visa application. Others were bound for deportation. But because of the blockade, none of them left the facility that day. After seeing what happened, Jose returned and told the other detainees about the support they had received from outside. Inspired, the detainees decided to organize a hunger strike.

“There were a lot of rumors that people always wanted to do it but they had never done it,” Jose says.

Shortly after the strike began, Jose was released on bond—and the wife of fellow hunger striker Ramon Mendoza connected him with Maru. Today, they are friends, working together to support the Tacoma strikers. Echoing the sentiments of activists around the country, they say the citizenship

19th Annual Aileen Jaffa Young Poets Award Ceremony

By CLEO GRIFFITH

Winners of the Nineteenth Annual Aileen Jaffa Young Poets Contest will receive their awards and the winning poems will be read at an Awards ceremony at 1 p.m. Saturday May 17, 2014 in the auditorium of the Stanislaus County Library, 1500 I St., Modesto. The contest is offered by the Poets of the San Joaquin as a means of encouraging young writers throughout Stanislaus County.

In addition, the Modesto Branch of the National League of American Pen Women will award a \$60 *Aileen Jaffa Outstanding Poem* award in each of two combined categories. These awards are to honor the memory of Aileen Jaffa, the founding President of the Poets of the San Joaquin and member of the Modesto Branch of the National League of American Pen Women. Carol David, the current President of the Modesto Branch of NLAPW will present the awards.

Visit the Poets of the San Joaquin at <http://www.chaparralpoets.org/PoetsoftheSanJoaquin.html>



UC Cooperative Extension's Centennial Celebration

The UC Cooperative Extension's Centennial Celebration will be held on Saturday, May 10, 2014 from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, corner of Service & Crows Landing Rds.

Celebrate the Extension's 100 years of Science and Service in our community.

This FREE event provides entertainment for the whole family. Live Music, Car Show, Farmers Market, Arts & Crafts Vendors, Kid Zone with Petting Zoo, Professional Chef Demonstration featuring Michael Midgley from Food Network's Cutthroat Kitchen and Mini Spa Day: First 100 mothers get a free gift.

Info: Russ Hill, 209-525-6800 and at <http://cestanislaus.ucanr.edu>



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Poets' Corner Contest 2014 winners announced

The judging results are in for the 2014 Poets' Corner Contest sponsored by the City of Modesto, Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Department. Over one hundred entries were submitted for the Adult and Youth divisions of this contest, which marks its 33rd year of celebration of the written word in our community. The special theme for this year's contest was poems exploring the world of insects and or spiders.

Adult winners for this year include Ed Bearden, Roberta Bearden, Linda Benham, Cleo Griffith, Lynn M. Hansen, Nancy Haskett, Louise Kantro, Nancee Kinkaid Maya, Tom Myers, Clifford M. Parker, Tom Portwood. Linda Marie Prather, Steve Reyes, Doug C. Souza, Nicole Santana Souza and Gary Thomas. **Adult Honorable Mentions** for this year include Brett Ashmun, Virginia Dall, Clifford M. Parker and Linda Marie Prather.

Youth Winners for this year include Keila Aguayo, Brian Anglim, Grace Benham, Seth Berschneider, Vinay Channaveerappa, Emily Cline, Reece Costales, Arjun Dulai, Keoni Fatanum, James Forkner, Natalie Garcia, David Gorman, Sean Gutowski, Kassidy Houck, Isabel Dakota Jennings, Sarah Mah, Victoria Morales, Sophia Orlando, Lyla Patel, Cory Rogers, Shawn Spani, Kylee Sullivan and Liam Willerup. **Youth Honorable Mentions** include Ashley Grace, F. Cabral, Katie Holmes, Arnav Krishnamoorthi, Haley Lehtikainen, Danielle Rukezo, Julia Schauer .

The **Poets' Corner Celebration Reading** will be held on **Sunday May 18 at**

1 pm at the **McHenry Museum** on the first floor. The public is invited to hear the winning poets read their works.

Treaty Violations from page 1

After 46 years with no negotiations in sight, it is time to end this madness," said David Krieger, president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. "The Marshall Islands is saying enough is enough. It is taking a bold and courageous stand on behalf of all humanity, and we at the Foundation are proud to stand by their side."

The lawsuit filed today in U.S. Federal District Court in San Francisco is accompanied by related lawsuits brought in the International Court of Justice in The Hague against all nine nuclear weapons states: United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea.

To learn more about the Nuclear Zero Lawsuits, please go to www.nuclearzero.org

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Heirloom

I unwrap the quilt she left,
to let it breathe,
admire the pattern of still
vivid rose and green pinwheels
propelling me into another time
when I was small and listened
to my grandma's stories,
how she and her sisters
pieced together the coverlet,
competing for the finest stitch.
I smooth the fabric, notice with a stab
of dread the frayed binding,
the batting uneven from countless washings,
a new flaw where a moth has made a meal
of muslin thread.
I had meant to pass this on,
but now I see it will not withstand
many more handlings.
I try to remember my grandma's
face the last time I saw her,
it grows more distant, more remote.
Sometimes I glimpse it in my own
when I happen on a mirror unprepared.
The floorboards creak,
the earth is shifting again,
her legacy slipping.

— Kathie Isaac-Luke

Wishing all our mothers a Happy Mother's Day - Everyday!

On this Gathering of Voices page mothers and a father reflect on things motherhood.



Shadows and Reflections

My mother's face and voice,
once as familiar
as my own signature
or the soothing sound of rain,
have become mere memories yellowed with age,
like lace and appliques on the gown
she sewed for my wedding,
dimmed like old photographs
no longer vibrant with color,
her aspects eluding me even as
I run my fingers down the surface
of an oil painting,
searching for the softness of her hand
that created it.

Today, in this year that divides
exactly
our thirty-two years together
from thirty-two years apart,
I look for traces of her in my own reflection,
catching a glimpse, sometimes,
in the gray of my hair,
the slight swell of my belly,
but more often seeing shadows of my father
in the set of my jaw
the turn of my mouth,
and I worry she is lost to me
until I find her again,
just for a moment

in my daughter's smile

— Nancy Haskett
(Poem won 2nd place prize in the recent
Pen Women Biennial Contest)

Veneration

At her death, Grandma left
few personal items, nothing
anyone wanted, except
her Bible, now lost. I was not
there to empty the house
or hold her things, one last time.

Had I been there,
I could have felt her presence
by slipping on the yellow calico apron
edged in blue piping, stained
with tomato juice and rooster blood,
buried my face in its folds, inhaling
the aroma of biscuits baking in her kitchen.
I could have worn her black straw Sabbath hat,
skin touching the soft inner band
darkened by sweat and oils carrying her scent.
My feet could have walked on colorful rugs
made from scraps, crocheted together
from cast off woolen skirts, shirts, pants.
I could have held up the long black
scraper she used like Cinderella, to clean
soot from the wood and coal-burning stove.

But, at age five,
long before her death, I chose
how I wanted to remember her.
As she sat on the bed, clipping
her gnarly, yellowed toenails,
I gathered them like sacred relics,
gently pressed them to me,
discards, made holy.

— Lynn M. Hansen

Stage Mother

My son made his debut in the post office today.
His feet tapping to some unknown musical command.
His body swaying, and bobbing and weaving a spell
around me
so magical I could see Fred Astaire, Bo Jangles, and
Gene Kelly merge into one kinetic blur. But lest I forget
the most important thing — that boy's pure, rat-a-tat-
tapping and razzmatazzing joy suffused me, overcame me,
moved me with all its jazz, and delivered me first-class,
signed, and certifiably sealed, straight to love's door,
where we are all treated to an encore performance.

— Calder Lowe
(Published in a recent holiday anthology entitled *SPIRIT,
PEACE AND JOY* by the Pen Women Press)

Picnic Easter Sunday

Bright sunshine warmed the ground
awakening multi-colored wild flowers
beside a lazy stream. Cold spring wind
made sweaters necessary for comfort.

You sat on a blue blanket eating fried chicken.
Your hair swept up and out with the wind
mocking your usual perfection. I snapped
your picture. You laughed.

Years later sorting through old albums
I find the picture, remember the picnic,
the cold wind, the ground covered with blankets
you eating potato salad and chicken from a paper plate.

It was a favorite memory of our time together.
You with your chicken, me with my camera,
not knowing the memories I made.

— Roberta Bearden

Garden Walk

for Colin

When we see one or two stars
inside the ice ring surrounding
the usually full moon, we both know
rain the next day or the day after
and invent just once more a countryside
that waits only for us.

It is from the one bad season of sky
coming in from another place, unknown
and resting here as fog, so that
I will imagine once again a simple hunger
for water and the straw old-lady-hat
you wore all that season, waiting
waiting for your second born,
watering the summer crocus
with all the proper schooling
and grace of a bird, a Great Blue Heron
or California Sandhill Crane, giving shade
as you walked the gravel path of our garden.

Now I have reached the half almond
woodpile in the almost dark, to cover
these ripened loaves from the coming rain.

Barefooted, two sons run ahead
scattering yellow muster-weed blossoms
with their sticks.

— Gordon Preston
The Missouri Review Vol. XI #2

School filled with challenge, opportunity and hope

from page 1

creating an area for a goat run. Weeds are being cleared from a lavender garden. Inside classrooms, paintbrushes and rollers fly, covering a primary blue with a more mature white.

The calm center of this storm of activity is Nikyra Calcagno, Program Supervisor. For her, Rising Sun is a labor of love; the realization of a long-held dream: An agriculture-based school for students with special needs.

“Transition to Success at Rising Sun” offered to adults with moderate to severe disabilities from the ages of 18 to 22 under the auspices of Patterson Unified School District, currently serves 14 students. The program’s emphasis is on preparing them for the work world, as well as adult life. In the spirit of fostering the transition to the working world, the students are referred to as “consumers”; their peers as “coworkers.” Staff members are “team leaders.” Mornings at the school are spent working on job-related skills; life skills and functional academics are the focus in the afternoons. Today, five of the



school’s consumers are on hand and working hard.

The site itself has an interesting history: The original building was constructed in 1879, to serve children from the farming families in the area. Additional classrooms were added in 1954, and the school was in continuous operation until around 2009, when declining enrollment led to its closure. However, leaving the facility closed would cause the 10-acre site to revert to the original owners.

Thus came to be the wonderful program called “Rising Sun” – a blessing for the consumers and their families, and the opportunity of a lifetime for the former Resource teacher and her staff.

But even though it hadn’t been shuttered long, serious work was needed before the school could reopen. “It was like Pompeii,” recalled Ms. Calcagno, or “Mizz” as the school’s consumers call her. “Everything was still in place.” Papers, books, furniture – everything. She first spent a week “cleaning up mouse poop.” The elementary school-sized furniture was then modified for the adult clientele, and the appropriate curriculum items were kept. The school reopened in August of 2010.

A very special person was needed to take on such an ambitious endeavor, and Ms. Calcagno was obviously the right

choice. She returned to college at age 38 to pursue her goal of working with kids with special needs. Within a few years, she was working as a Resource Teacher for the Patterson Unified School District. Since 2010, her vision, dedication, and unfailingly positive attitude have taken the school from waist-high in weeds to four functioning classrooms, a cheerily painted multi-purpose room, a kitchen, a raised bed garden and small greenhouse and an herb garden.



From top right: Founder, Nikyra Calcagno paints shelves; volunteers pull weeds in the school garden; volunteers paint multi-purpose room wall; building picnic tables.

As much as has been accomplished, there is much more to do. The goal is to create as many “on-site enterprises” as possible. From the lavender garden, for example, the program’s participants will make items to sell at farmers markets. Unfortunately, one part of the original plan, a CSA garden (community supported agriculture), had to be scrapped – not because of gophers, surprisingly, but voracious squirrels. Ms. Calcagno hopes to eventually acquire a commercial green-

house, among other things. “Gardening,” she points out, “is an incredibly valuable teaching platform – for science, nutrition, math, reading, and project-based learning.”

Life is everywhere: Mini ‘air plant’ gardens and spider plant starts cover the counter next to the bunny’s cage in the art room; flats of African violets fill boxes on an adjacent shelf. Several dogs roam the property. And seedlings of many descriptions fill the shelves of the small greenhouse just outside the multi-purpose room door. In keeping with the ag-themed, enterprise-based focus of the school, Calcagno works constantly to devise ways for the school’s consumers



to grow things that they can sell, regardless of their individual abilities.

One of the ultimate goals, when agricultural enterprises such as the lavender garden and commercial greenhouse are up and running, is to bring kids in the District’s after school and other programs to the site. This would

allow them to explore growing food, nutrition and other ag-related subjects, while simultaneously providing the program’s consumers the absolutely invaluable opportunity to serve as teachers.

Asked about the biggest challenge she’s faced, the perpetually sunny Calcagno had to stop and think. “Funding,” she finally said, and then, laughing, “and the squirrels!” The most surprising thing to her, so far, has been the support the school has received on the Community Work Days they’ve held. “It’s been amazing!” she said, “I never knew so many people cared about us.” Today’s efforts, she notes, were made possible by a \$6,800 Catalyst Grant from Stanislaus Community Foundation. Judging by the volume of work accomplished, and the smile on the every face, the

money was well spent.

Calcagno’s advice to others: “Each of us has something we’re passionate about. I’m a firm believer in following your passion.” If you have the courage to do that, she says, you never know what good things might come of it.

There couldn’t be a better example than the Transition to Success Program at Rising Sun School.

Modesto Sound Summer 2014 Recording Arts Camp

Recording Arts Camp is a week full of hands-on recording, mixing, live sound, field trips, and more! The camp meets at Gregori High School in Building B Monday-Friday from 10am-2pm. Final concert Saturday 5pm-9m at Boomers!

Group activities, make friends, create an original song. Work with a producer and record your projects and take home a CD! Radio spots, interviews and audio production. Live sound (run the sound system--learn sound checks). Field Trips: behind the scenes at Radio & Concert Halls.

Next camps are June 2-7 and June 16-21, 2014 Scholarships are available to youth from low income families.

To sign up for camp and download forms (\$175), or use the convenient 'buy now' button and fill out forms on the first day of camp, visit <http://www.modestosound.com/pdfs/camp-recording-arts.pdf>.

Questions? Contact Modesto Sound at: Gregori High School, Bldg. B, 3701 Pirrone Rd., Modesto, CA 95356 Mailing Address is: P.O.B., 117 Salida, CA 95368. Email modestosound@gmail.com; (209)-573-0533 Visit <http://www.modestosound.com>



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Green Tips for a Green Planet

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Coconut Oil: The new natural food, health and beauty darling

Tables have turned on the use of Extra Virgin Cold Pressed Coconut Oil, which is now on the "good oil" list. Dr. Josh Axe, author of *The Real Food Diet Cookbook*, a major proponent of the use of coconut oil, says it "might just be the most versatile health food on the planet...and can be used for everything from deodorant to toothpaste...body lotion to weight loss aid."

Coconut oil contains lauric, capric and caprylic acids, three of the rarest medium chain fatty acids (MCFA's) in nature. These MCFA's, according to Dr. Axe and others, "have tremendous health benefits, are easy to burn as fuel for energy, and have anti-microbial properties."

Immigrants

from page 7

process should take place through civil court, without detentions, criminalization of immigrants, or the involvement of private prison corporations such as GEO Group. And they both dream of immigration reform.

"So we can have a legal status in the country," Jose says, "because we practically belong to this country, we live here almost forever."

There is a long pause as he searches for the words, starting and then stopping, Maru translating the pieces. "It's hard to explain," he says finally. "We're not seen. Everybody that's inside there, they have a regular normal life here, the only difference is they are not a U.S. citizen or were not born here."

The invisibility experienced by Jose and many other undocumented immigrants may be changing. The strike he helped organize has garnered local and national media attention. Most recently, U.S. Representative Adam Smith toured the Northwest Detention Center, spoke with the strikers, and subsequently announced his plan for legislation that will address conditions in the detention center.

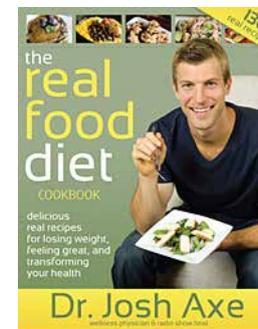
And activists are keeping the pressure on: April 5 saw more than 80 actions across the country in support of the Not 1 More Deportation campaign, including several hundred people who gathered outside of the Northwest Detention Center. <http://www.notonemoredeportation.com/take-action/april-5th-day-of-action-against-deportations/>

For Maru, who has lived in the United States for 18 years, supporting the hunger strikers is her first priority.

"I just want them out with their families," she says of the detainees. "And I hope when they're out they become activists. I hope our children see that when you do something, things change, and when you stop being afraid, when you start questioning why—Why is this right? Why should I comply?—things change."

Rachael Stoeve wrote this article for *YES! Magazine*, a national, nonprofit media organization that fuses powerful ideas and practical actions. Rachael is an independent journalist based in Seattle.

From <http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/hunger-strikes-lockdowns-and-border-actions-how-the-undocumented-are-shaking-up-the-immigration-debate>



The benefits list includes balanced hormones, killing Candida, improved digestion, skin moisturizing, cellulite reduction, decreased wrinkles and age spots, balanced blood sugar, improved energy, fat burning, increased HDL and lowered LDL cholesterol, and help with Alzheimer's disease.

From Dr. Axe's book, the following are just a few of the beneficial uses:

- Because of its high smoking point, coconut oil is superior even to olive oil for cooking at high temperatures.
- Spread on toast instead of butter, add a spoonful to coffee to replace dairy creamer and add an extra energy boost, add 1-2 T. to fruit smoothies to improve texture and increase healthy fat intake, use to make popcorn or to pour over popcorn, use on baked sweet potatoes or to make sweet potato fries.
- Use to replace oils in everything from chocolate fondue to homemade mayonnaise to homemade baked goods.
- Energy fuel: Mix 1 T. coconut oil with 1/2 T. chia seeds.
- Sun screen/Sunburn remedy: Coconut oil is an SPF 4 and can soothe and moisturize sunburned skin. Insect repellent
- Shampoo, face and body moisturizer, lotion, lip balm, face wash, make up remover, and shaving cream.
- Massage oil: Mix with lavender and peppermint essential oils.
- Anti-microbial wound ointment.
- Natural deodorant: mix with baking soda and essential oils.
- Mineralizing toothpaste: Mix equal parts of coconut oil with baking soda, then add a few drops of peppermint essential oil.
- Breath freshener: swish melted oil between teeth for 15 to 20 minutes to kill bad bacteria.
- Cellulite solution: mix 1 T. with 10 drops grapefruit essential oil and massage into cellulite areas after showering.
- Healing bath soak: Mix melted coconut oil with Epsom salts.
- Insect repellent: mix with peppermint, rosemary, tea tree and citronella essential oils.
- Aromatherapy: use as a carrier in home remedies made with essential oils.
- Fat Burning supplement – The MCT's in coconut oil have been proven to support weight loss and help the body burn fat for energy.
- Hormone balance – supports the thyroid and adrenal glands, which can lower cortisol to naturally balance hormones.
- Digestive support – easy to digest and contains compounds that destroy bad bacterial, promote growth of probiotics and heal leaky gut.
- Anti-fungal for athletes foot and skin fungus.
- Eczema and Psoriasis: use as cream to heal dry and flaking skin.
- Blood sugar stabilizer – can help balance blood sugar and has been medically proven to improve diabetes.

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.pjnsjc.org>).
Info: James Walsh, jwprod1956@clearwire.net

MAY

- 3 SAT: 2014 Friends of the Modesto Library Used Book Sale.** 8am-3pm, East portico of the Modesto Library, 1500 I St., Modesto. Thousands of books, prices: \$1 hardbound, 50 cents paperback. The Beard Family Companies are matching our total up to \$4,000. For information or to donate books, contact Clare Noonan, 522-5054. clarenoo@gmail.com
- 4 SUN: MoSt, The Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center's first gala benefit,** 2-5 pm at the Barkin' Dog Grill. Music, food, art, great company, and poetry. Tickets: \$15. Visit <http://www.mostpoetry.org>
- 10 SAT: The UC Cooperative Extension's Centennial Celebration** at the Stanislaus County Agricultural Center, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto, corner of Service & Crows Landing Rds. This FREE event provides entertainment for the whole family. Info: Russ Hill, 209-525-6800. See article, this issue.
- 17 SAT: Benefit Bowl for Habitat for Humanity** at McHenry Bowl, 3700 McHenry Ave., Modesto. Noon to 6 pm. Call Dallas, 209-571-2695; or email Karissa, kwright@stanislaushabitat.org
- 18 SUN: Modesto Film Society: Roman Holiday** at the State Theatre. 2 pm. See <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/99>
- 21 WED: "Film Night at the Center" features *Healthcare—The Movie*.** Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St., 6:30 pm. See article this issue.
- 25 SUN: Modesto Film Society: Out of Africa** at the State Theatre. 2 pm. See <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/112>

31 SAT: The State Theatre presents: *American Graffiti*. 5:30 pm. Root Beer Floats! Film at 6:30 pm See <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/258>

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunday, June 1, 2014. Annual Peace Center Pancake Breakfast, Modesto Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. 8 am-Noon.

June 2-7 and June 16-21: Modesto Sound's Summer 2014 Recording Arts Camp. Visit <http://www.modestosound.com>

June 9-13: Creation Station, the Gallo Center's summer camp for children. Visit <http://www.galloarts.org/Promos/WhatsNew01.aspx>

June 18: "Film Night at the Center": *The Power of Forgiveness*, which explores the last 20 years of research that reveals how forgiveness can transform a person's life.

June 27-29, 2014: MPLC's Annual Peace Camp in the Sierras. See article, page 2.

ONGOING

GREAT VALLEY MUSEUM of Natural History: Classes for children. Museum exhibits and store open Tues. to Fri., 9 am to 4:30 pm. Info: 575-6196. Call for info about classes.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA ART ASSOCIATION AND MISTLIN GALLERY. Exhibits by local artists; art classes for children and adults; art teachers for schools. Open Tues. - Fri. 11:30 - 5 and Sat. 12-4. 529-3369 or www.ccartassn.org

A.R.T.S. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER: All things recycled free arts materials for teachers, scout leaders, childcare, artists for their projects. Open M - F 8 to 4:30, 917 Oakdale Rd. Modesto, Media Center behind Ross Store. Volunteers needed. Info: 567-4516.

CENTRAL VALLEY DEMOCRATIC CLUB. Monthly meetings: Modesto, Patterson, and Oakdale. For more information, call Neil Hudson at 847-0540.

CHILDRENS STORY HOURS Stanislaus County Library: Modesto, WiggleWorms! Program for children age 2 and younger and their caregivers; combines age appropriate stories and movement activities that promote essential pre-reading skills.

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), 5:00-6:00 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

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

Mondays: 10:15 am & 11:15 am, Tuesdays, 11:15 am. Preschool StoryTime (children ages 3 - 6 years) Tuesdays: 6:15 pm; Wednesdays: 10:15 am. Cuentos en español-jueves, 6:15. Bilingual StoryTime/Cuentos bilingües - Saturdays 10:15 am. All Library branches have story hours. All branches closed Fridays. Info: http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/tk_kids_storytime.shtml#mod

Habitat for Humanity's RE-STORE: used and new quality materials, 630 Kearney Ave (across from Post Office), and at 3124 McHenry Ave., Modesto. Funds benefit homes built by Habitat in Stanislaus County. Visit <http://www.stanislaushabitat.org/home/restore>

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Sunday 10:00 am, Kaiser CDRP, 1789 W Yosemite Ave, Manteca. Support group for people living free of alcohol and drugs. Each person creates an individualized recovery program. We avoid discussion of religious or political opinions so our meetings can focus on sobriety skills. 526-4854, <http://goldendrippings.com/lifering/>

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/>

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Sunday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto.

MONDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Morning Mtg. Monday 7:00 am. Deva Cafe, 1202 J St, Modesto.

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Women's Mtg. Monday 6:30 pm, private home, 1905 Kienitz Ave, Modesto. Bonnie, 324-7095.

OCCUPY MODESTO: General Assembly meets every other Monday, 5:00 - 6:30 pm at Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St. All interested members of the 99% are welcome. Meetings: 2/17, 3/3, 3/17 etc. Info: Nancy, 545-1375.

TUESDAYS

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

pagan-friendly welcome.

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Tuesday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. 526-4854

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

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.pflagmodesto.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, www.pflagsonora.org

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

For complete calendar
information and regularly
scheduled activities, visit
www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm

DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS: Tenth of each month. Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.