



Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

A MODESTO
PEACE/LIFE
CENTER
PUBLICATION

MAY, 2016
VOLUME XXIV, NO. 9

“Kitchen Korner” collects kitchen items for the Homeless

By SANDY SAMPLE

As of April 14th, the Peace/Life Center’s Homeless Project’s “Kitchen Korner” has received several donations of gently-used kitchen items (one in a box labeled “Grandma’s China”!), and have been able to supply one formerly-homeless man with enough basic supplies to allow him to prepare and eat his own meals in his own kitchen.

We’ve also organized all the items we have onto two sets of shelves, so it’s easy to see what we have and what we still need, and have created a system for keeping track of what we’re able to distribute. We still need referrals of more recipients, which of course depends on the availability of appropriate housing.

At this point, we’re especially in need of pots and pans, serving dishes, toasters/toaster ovens and other electric food-prep items, can openers, and cooking tools of all kinds — and of course if/when we’re trying to supply a large family, our supply of plates, bowls, cups, glasses, and silverware will need to be re-supplied. So the need will be ongoing, even though our storage space is limited.

If you’re inspired to help, please look through your kitchen cupboards for items you don’t really need that might be useful for someone who’s finally able to make the transition from living on the streets to living in an apartment or house. If you call Sandy (209) 523-8445, Shelly (209) 521-6304, or Frank (209) 556-2376, we’ll arrange a time to meet you at the Peace/Life Center to gladly receive your items and give you a receipt.

If you’re fresh out of gently-used kitchen items, you can make a donation to the Peace/Life Center marked “Kitchen Korner” and we’ll use it to purchase the items we most need at local thrift stores (using our Senior discounts!)

Send your donation to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353-0134

Thanks for caring and wanting to be part of the effort to reduce homelessness in our communities.



41st Annual Pancake Breakfast

Sunday June 5, 2016
8:00 a.m. — Noon

*Benefit for
the Modesto Peace/Life Center*

Modesto Church of the Brethren
2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto



All-Star Favorites

- Blueberry • Buttermilk •
- Scotch Oaties •

Fresh fruit salad
Excellent coffees, teas, juices
Fresh granola, yogurt

- Every order served hot!
- Visit with fellow breakfasters.

Adults: \$10, Children: \$5

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

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

LOCAL	2	INSPIRATIONS.	6-7
PEACE ESSAY WINNER	3	YOUR TAX DOLLARS.	8
LIVING LIGHTLY	4	COLOR & JUSTICE.	10
YOKUTS	5	POLITICS OF WATER	11

READERS! Sign-up for our e-edition!

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

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

To sign-up, send your email address to Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org

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

Register early for Peace Camp! Get a discount!

By **KEN SCHROEDER**

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's 34th Annual Peace Camp in the Sierra will take place on June 24-25 at Camp Peaceful Pines on Clark Fork Rd. off Hwy 108. Enjoy a weekend of workshops, good food, hikes, campfires, singing, crafts, talent show, star walk, recreation, and stimulating people of all ages in a beautiful mountain setting. Families and individuals are welcome. Register early for a discount.

Lori Wong will lead us in our workshops, exploring the following questions:

- How do we live out our values for peace, nonviolence and compassion with each other?
- How do we develop self-awareness and communication skills in order to advocate for our peace values in the world?

During our weekend together we will explore our intentions and practice what it looks like to embody peace as we interact with each other. We can learn, practice and experience ways to respond to crisis in the world and to political intensity in a nonviolent and compassionate manner. The workshops may include writing, reflection, and experiential exercises to develop and build these skills. Lori Wong is a Stanford-certified Compassion Cultivation Training teacher and is also the founding teacher of Insight Meditation Central Valley.

Scott Gifford, former Modesto Fremont Open Plan teacher, returns from the North Bay to lead us in music. Jamming with guitars, ukuleles and other instruments is welcome.

Naturalist and teacher **Tim Smart** will share the beauty and stories of the night sky with us on a star walk.

Camp Peaceful Pines in the Stanislaus National Forest 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.

The camp fee covers program, food and lodging for the weekend. Adults are \$75 before May 1, \$80 before June 6 and \$85 after June 6. Young people 18 and under are \$55 before May 1, \$60 before June 6 and \$65 after June 6. 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 6:00pm 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 and www.peacelifecenter.org

Information: Ken Schroeder, 209-480-4576, kschroeder70@yahoo.com



34th Annual Peace Camp June 24, 25, and 26, 2016

Camp Peaceful Pines
near Pinecrest, California

Registration Form



Adults

\$75 before May 1; \$80 before June 6; \$85 after June 6

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

Total \$ _____

Youth (ages 4 -18) \$55 before May 1; \$60 before June 6 \$65 after June 6

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 _____

I need vegetarian meals. 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

Be informed!

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

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

First Place – Division III, Peace Essay Contest
Aven Cheek, Hart Ransom Charter Academy

“Be not afraid to seek peace, even if your voice may be small. Be not afraid to demand peace.” (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf) Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was born on October 29, 1938, in Monrovia, Liberia. A graduate of the college of West Africa at Monrovia, she went on to receive her bachelor's degree in accounting from the Madison Business College in Madison, Wisconsin. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was the first woman president of Liberia and was known as the “Iron Lady.” In 2011, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to Ellen Johnson, Sirleaf Leymah Gbowee, and Tawakkol Karman. “President Sirleaf strived for a non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to a full participation in peace-building work.” (The Nobel Peace Prize)

On January 16, 2006, after fourteen years of war, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf took office. The people of Liberia voted for a change. During her inauguration, president Sirleaf said, “The days of the imperial presidency of threatening chief executives are over.” After fourteen years of war being the only thing the people of Liberia knew, they finally have peace. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf said that fourteen years ago children couldn't get an education because schools were closed due to war. Finally, students are being able to get an education thanks to President Sirleaf and her act on putting an end to violence and starting a world of peace. Confucius once said, “Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace”.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has made many efforts to restore basic services of her country and to bring back the peace Liberia has lost. She is determined to make Liberia a peaceful country. She once said in an interview, “Young children today feel that they can have a future that they can be safe. This is the first time that six-year-olds will go to school not knowing war, not having to run, not having to hide. For the first time, they will see peace. Those children see life in Liberia as normal. We must continue on this path, so they can become adults in a peaceful environment.” (Peacemaker Heroes) Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's administration has identified peace and security as one of the four pillars in support of the nation's development

Many people assume, being such a well-known person, President Sirleaf would not have any problems. This, in fact, is false. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf faced many challenges to achieve her position as president and peacekeeper of Liberia. She

suffered ten years in jail, after speaking out against Samuel Doe's Military regime. President Sirleaf is the only woman currently leading her country right now and says that without other females, meetings get a little lonely. [Sirleaf] She also said in an interview that she sees problems differently than most people do. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf doesn't just want to fix problems, she wants to create peace despite current problems in Liberia.

After decades of fighting for freedom, peace, and equality in Liberia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has spent more than nine years rebuilding a post-conflict Liberia. Her number one priority is to rebuild Liberia into a better country than it was before the civil war. As an immigrant in the United States, she was equipped with a great deal of confidence, strong educational foundation, work ethic, and success. I believe President Sirleaf's work is important because she has shown the world that, with a little bit of work and a passionate heart, anything can happen. She has shown that women need to be treated equally, and that peace has to be a priority. Ellen Sirleaf has inspired me to create peace at my school. I am working on creating a club for students who don't have anyone to hang out with at lunch. Instead of watching people bully unpopular kids I am going to try to create peace by hanging out with those kids who need friends and stand up for them when others bully them. Hopefully along with my friends and their friends we can start a peaceful environment “Peace has to be fundamental. Without it, it is hard to achieve our other goals.” (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf). Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was recognized for her defense of peacemaking.

Bibliography

Miller, Rebecca. (2014, July 31). Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. www.Myhero.com Sirleaf, Ellen. Interview. 17 May 2007.

“The Nobel Peace Prize for 2011 to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkul Karman - Press Release”. www.Nobelprize.org . Nobel Media AB 2014. Web. 4 Nov 2015.

Tran, Mark. (2012, November 1). Liberia's Johnson Sirleaf defiant over nepotism and corruption claims. www.theguardian.com



Film Night at the Center explores Asian & Pacific Islander identity, culture

By JOSEPH HOMER

May is Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage month, and in its honor, the Modesto Peace/Life Center will be screening two short documentaries which explore Asian & Pacific Islander identity, culture and stereotyping. *Yellow Tale Blues: Two American Families* (1991) is a short film that juxtaposes the lives of two American families with footage of abundant and commonplace racial stereotyping.

American Aloha: Hula Beyond Hawai'i (2003) explores the roots and revitalization of ethnic Hawaiian cultural practices amidst their colonization and excommunication by foreign religious and political forces.

You're sure to be in for a treat, and we would love to see you! Be sure to be at the Modesto Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St. at 6:30 PM sharp on **Wednesday May 18**.

More at <https://www.academicvideostore.com/video/yellow-tale-blues-two-american-families>

And <http://www.pbs.org/pov/americanaloha/film-description/>

“Buyer & Cellar” at the Gallo to benefit MoPRIDE

By R.J. MORICONI

For the last three years, the Modesto Pride on Tour Committee has partnered with the San Francisco New Conservatory Theatre Center (NCTC) in presenting an LGBT/Ally play in Modesto: “The Bus” (2013), “Standing on Ceremony” (2014), and “From White Plains” (2015). This spring, NCTC will bring to Modesto the hilarious “Buyer & Cellar,” to be staged at the Gallo Center's Foster Theatre on Saturday evening, June 4, 2016, at 8:00 PM.

The comedy is a one-man show about Alex Moore, a struggling, unemployed Los Angeles actor, hired by none other than Barbra Streisand as the sole sales clerk in the little mall of stores she has built in the basement of her Malibu mansion. Each shop is filled with many trinkets which Miss Streisand has collected over the years. However, none of them are for sale! Yes, it's a made up story—fantastic and very funny—especially since the job soon begins to take its toll on Alex's patience, his love life, and his view of people (who need people).

Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit MoPRIDE, Inc. which has brought the well-attended MoPRIDE in the Park to our area in recent years. Their plans call for another park experience this year. As well, the organization is aiming to establish a PRIDE Resource Center.

“Buyer & Cellar”

Saturday, June 4, 2016 8:00 PM

Gallo Center's Foster Theatre

Box Office: 1000 I Street, Modesto or

Call: 209/338-2100; <http://www.galloarts.org/>

All seats reserved: \$10 Student, \$20 Adult

Sponsored by Modesto area donors via Modesto Pride on Tour 2016 Committee

More “Buyer & Cellar” at <http://www.buyerandcellar.com/>

stanislaus
CONNECTIONS

is published monthly except in August
 by the Modesto Peace/Life Center
 720 13th St., Modesto, CA 95354.
 Open by appointment.
 Mailing address: P.O. Box 134,
 Modesto, CA 95353
 209-529-5750.

NEW MODESTO RADIO STATION COMING SOON!

The Modesto Peace/Life Center has been granted a full power radio station license and needs YOUR help!

- ⇒ Donations, Donations, Donations!
- ⇒ Feedback on future programming from YOU!
- ⇒ Volunteers with radio backgrounds & experience
- ⇒ Local Music, Arts and Entertainment connections
- ⇒ Community partners

To get involved or learn more about the new station, contact James Costello, (209) 402-9191 or jcostello@igc.org. You can donate by sending your check to the Modesto Peace/Life Center, P.O. Box 134, Modesto, CA 95353 with “Radio Station” in the memo. You can also donate online at <http://peacelifecenter.org>

The Ultimate Recycling Project

By JENIFER WEST

There seems to be a lot of talk about it in the media, these days – folks who, for whatever reason, are suddenly finding themselves ‘retired’ – whether ready or not. For many, the change was involuntary: Skillsets are no longer needed, unwilling or unable to keep up with the latest technology, forced out by the availability of younger workers willing to do the same work for less pay and benefits, changes in the market; the list of possible reasons is lengthy. For others, the change occurs by choice: Career goals have been met, the challenges of cross-generational workplaces continually increase, the intrinsic rewards no longer satisfy... For this writer, a change in the availability of post-retirement benefits was the final motivation to make a move.

Whatever the reason, many of us have suddenly found ourselves facing an excess of ‘leisure time’, often coinciding with a shortage of funds. The solution? Reinvent ourselves! Of course it sounds simpler than it is – it takes introspection, and a willingness to approach the situation creatively. There are so many ways those of us with wrinkles & greying hair can put the skills accumulated over a lifetime to use!

The key is to figure out what passions, talents and skills we’d like to capitalize on, and then find a way to use them to fill a need. The trick is letting go of the sense of loss and obsolescence, and being open instead to opportunity. Only by letting go of the 8 – 5 mindset and focusing on what’s really important to us as individuals can we find our way to the next great adventure in our lives.

“You must learn a new way to think before you can master a new way to be.”

– Marianne Williamson

The process may, but most likely won’t, be easy. (But then, things worth doing generally aren’t, right?) Figuring out how we want to contribute will probably take a bit of soul searching, along with a good measure of inventory-taking. The good news is once we’ve identified what we’re passionate about, that passion can give us the motivation to begin to move in a new direction. The next step is figuring out how we want to go about it. Joining an effort already in progress will obviously take far less effort than creating something from scratch, though both options are equally valid. And it is extremely helpful to seek out others who may be able to help us along the path. Mentors aren’t just for the 20-year-old set! Even just a casual discussion with a friend or associate can spark an idea, or begin to illuminate the path. Opportunities are often hidden in plain sight – we just need a change of perspective to find them.

The other thing that will be required, particularly if we’re

“As I walked out the door toward my freedom, I knew that if I did not leave all the anger, hatred and bitterness behind, that I would still be in prison.”

– Nelson Mandela

considering striking out on our own, is to take a good, honest look at our shortcomings. If there were habits holding us back in our former work or personal lives (procrastination being a big one), now is the perfect time to tackle them. We probably won’t become perfect overnight, but part of the recipe for success is to recognize our faults, and figure out ways to tame them. A bad habit recognized, and then strategized against, is far less destructive than one never identified at all! And it’s never too late – no matter how many candles were on our last birthday cake – to improve ourselves.

One temptation to avoid at all costs is inertia. It’s all too easy, particularly if the change we’re facing was unexpected, to find ourselves sitting on the couch, binge-watching Netflix (or whatever). But the law of physics applies to people, as well as inanimate objects: Things in motion tend to stay in motion. And things at rest... Even if we can financially afford to enjoy lots of leisure time, studies have shown that it’s a bad idea to sit around. It’s ok – and probably a good idea – to allow ourselves a short break to recuperate and begin our transition. After that, however, we need to get moving – forcing ourselves at first, if necessary.

The results of reinventing ourselves can be simple, or wildly dramatic. Some of us may prefer to take a simpler route, and look for new employment. Some of us become mentors, using our own experience to help guide those just beginning their working lives. Others sell all possessions and take up life on the road. Still others end up in foreign countries, helping build schools or facilitate the availability of clean water.

Whichever direction we choose to go, a break in employment provides the opportunity to step back and evaluate what helped us become successful in our working lives, and begin to prune the things that held us back. Sometimes it takes this kind of time and distance for us to truly see our strengths, come to terms with past mistakes, and become free to move forward. And moving forward just might lead us to the most rewarding experiences of our lives!

New to Nonviolence?

Designed for busy people who really want to learn, our Nonviolence for Beginners is an 8-week email course. It’s both free and self-guided (with no required assignments).

Interested? Or perhaps you’ve signed up but want to tell others about it?

Here’s the course sign-up link: <http://eepurl.com/bAikhT>
From: <http://mettacentor.org>

Josephine Johnson, Indie Singer-songwriter, returns to Modesto

Indie singer-songwriter Josephine Johnson returns to Modesto the first week of May. She will perform at:

Thursday, May 5, Blackwater Republic, w/Jordan Waters, Stockton, 7pm

Friday, May 6, Queen Bean Coffee, w/Jordan Waters, Modesto, 7p

Saturday, May 7, The Shire Community Space, with Gavin Bruce 7p, \$10 sliding scale

Sunday, May 8, Deva Cafe, Mother’s Day Brunch, Modesto, 10 am

Check out Josephine’s music and sound at:

www.josephinejohnsonsings.com

<https://soundcloud.com/josephinejohnsonsings>

<https://www.reverbnation.com/josephinejohnson>



LAW OFFICES OF

ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE, LLP

1600 G Street
Suite 203

DAVID N. ROCKWELL

SHARON E. KELLY

JEFFREY DUARTE

MARKUS URSTOEGER

Attorneys/Abogados

P.O. Box 0142

Modesto, CA

95353-0142

(209) 521-2552

FAX (209) 526-7898



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

Office (209) 575-2653

Fax (209) 575-0629

e-mail b_f@modestocpas.com

1120 14th Street, Suite 2
Modesto, CA 95350

Green Tips for a Green Planet:

Green activism is FUN- Consider the Sierra Club/Audubon Society

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

The Modesto Peace/Life Center is about the sustainability of life. The key word is LIFE. There is scientific evidence of life long before our recorded histories. Our Mother Earth will live on with or without human life as we know it. Activism for LIFE on earth needs to be the foundation upon which humans can learn to live together in peace under a just human system.

The Yokuts Group of the Sierra Club in partnership with the Stanislaus Audubon Society offers one of the best local “walk your talk” options for being an activist for LIFE and global sustainability offering countless opportunities to Be Green in Body, Mind and Social/Political Spirit.

The group’s monthly meetings are open to members and non-members alike. The May 20 meeting will feature Tim Manolis, a Sacramento Valley native who has been studying birds and other aspects of nature for over 40 years as an artist, illustrator, writer and biological consultant, and whose activities and influence in the world of birding are well known. His topic will be Dragonflies and Damselflies of California with a special focus on the Central Valley and Central Sierra Nevada.

Environmental Justice

The following points on Environmental Justice and Environmental Racism were outlined by Rosenda Mataka and husband, John, at a recent Yokuts Group meeting:

“**Environmental Justice**” By Rosenda Mataka

The environmental justice communities believe that all people have a basic right to live, work, play, go to school, and worship in a clean, healthy environment.

There has always been some form of resistance to environmental degradation of Mother Earth and the negative impacts it has on humans and non-humans. Even before the term Environmental Justice was coined we had our heroes. We can count Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta as environmental justice activists. Recently Pope Francis has written on environmental justice.

In 1990 Robert Bullard wrote “Dumping in Dixie” considered the first book to address the reality of environmental justice (excepts of “Dumping on Dixie” can be found on the Sierra Club website).

The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit occurred in Washington DC in October 26, 1991. Michael Fischer, the affable fifty-one-year-old former bureaucrat who ran the Sierra Club, had spoken at hundreds of community forums, national conventions, congressional hearings, and press conferences over the years, but had never been to a meeting like this one in a cavernous ballroom at the Washington Court Hotel, where more than five hundred environmental activists represented organizations from all fifty states--and none of them was white.

Points of Environmental Justice:

1. We focus on injustice as a collective experience. 2. No one individual or particular group is to be victimized for the benefit of another. 3. The cause of environmental injustice is institutionalized racism, systematic exclusion from environmental decisions in our communities. 4. Common reaction of “Not In My Back Yard”. – “Then in Whose?” We recognize

that hazardous waste, garbage dumps, and polluting industries will frequently be located in poor, powerless communities of color. 5. Community empowerment is fundamental to environmental justice evolution. 6. Every individual and community has the right to expect to be treated with dignity and respect.

(*Not in our Backyard*. Marc Mowrey and Tim Redmond. William Morrow and Company, Inc. New York 1933 pg. 431 and pg. 433.)

Field Trips and Hikes

Song birds are the canaries in our “global mine”, and the Audubon Society does an important job worldwide monitoring bird populations and educating people about their protection. Both Sierra Club and the Sierra Club and Audubon Society both offer numerous hikes and outings. The Yokuts 22nd Annual Backpack from July 30 to Aug. 3 will explore the John Muir Wilderness of the Central Sierras.

May Audubon field trips are scheduled for May 15 and June 19 along the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge, an overnight field trip on May 14-15 to Monterey, Pacific Grove and points south, a visit to the String of Pears series of parks along the lower Stanislaus River on May 21, and a trip to the Calaveras Big Trees State Park on June 12 to observe the diverse migrating bird life inhabiting the mid ranges of the Sierra during this time of year.

The Fruits of Dam Removal By Steve Tomlinson, Yokuts Treasurer

(The following illustrates the ongoing activist role these organizations play on the environmental sustainability scene:

[Steve Tomlinson] wrote about the pending removal of San Clemente Dam (Monterey County) in the February 2015 Valley Habitat. This follow-up is from the March 6, 2016 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle.

A half mile section of the Carmen River has been diverted around the dam and includes steppingstones, step pools for fish, and newly planted trees and bushes. This dam removal and river restoration project has been labeled “the most ambitious in California history”. It is serving as a model for other dam removals and relevant infrastructure work. A tantalizing benefit is the prospective improvement of fish migration and spawning habitat. Already biologists have counted 14 egg nests in the river “eight above the old dam site”. According to the article, steelhead trout numbers will double next year and will continue to rise. The project is also expected to help red-legged frogs. Both of said species are on the endangered list. Much collaboration and teamwork made this project possible. As the article states, this is clearly a blossoming of what is “possible”.

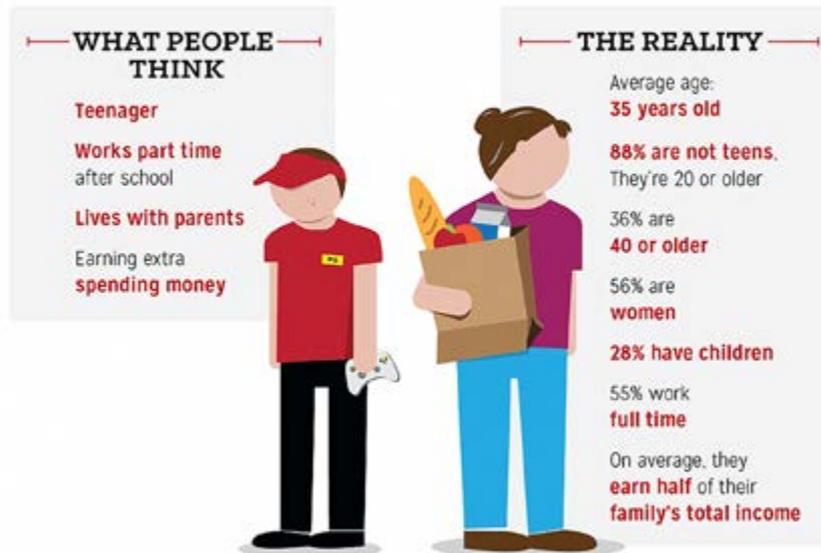


ACTION: Become a member of the local Yokuts Group online through <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts>

Learn more about hikes, field trips and meeting details through

The Valley Habitat online edition, including the annual Mother Lode Chapter Sierra Club Annual Awards Banquet on May 7, 2016 at the Dante Club in Sacramento. See <http://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/sce/yokuts-group/Valley%20Habitat%20April%202016.pdf>

WHO'S HELPED BY RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE?



Note: Statistics describe civilian workers, ages 16+, that would be affected by an increase in the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 over three years, as explained in *Raising the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 would give working families, and the overall economy, a much-needed boost. The median age of affected workers is 31 years old. Visit epi.org/issues/minimum-wage for more details.*

ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

The minimum wage in California will go up to \$10.50 in 2017, to \$11 in 2018 and will then increase by \$1 per year until it reaches \$15 an hour in 2022. “The credit for making history today belongs to the workers who spoke out and risked it all, the labor unions and community organizations who supported them, and elected leaders here in California who listened,” Service Employees International Union Local 2015 president Laphonza Butler (said)...As a result, millions of Californians are on the path out of poverty.” Modesto Peace/Life Center vigils last fall advocated for a rise in the minimum wage.

Máxima Acuña: 2016 Goldman Environmental Prize Recipient, South and Central America

Peru's race for mining

Over the past two decades, the mining industry in Peru has been growing at breakneck speed. With promises of jobs and economic prosperity, the Peruvian government awarded mining licenses across the country. Despite these promises, rural campesinos, who were rarely consulted in the development of mining projects, largely continue to live in poverty. In many communities, mining waste has polluted the local waterways, affecting local people's drinking water and irrigation needs.

In the northern Peruvian highlands of Cajamarca, where almost half of the region's land has been given away in mining concessions, Colorado-based Newmont, along with Peruvian mining company Buenaventura, owns and operates the Yanacocha Mine. It is one of the largest—and at its height, one of the most profitable—open-pit gold and copper mines in the world.

As the company tapped out the deposit, it began looking for expansion options. In 2010, it proposed developing a new mine to extract a gold deposit just 10 miles away from Yanacocha. The project, dubbed the Conga Mine, called for draining four nearby lakes. One of these, known as Laguna Azul, would be turned into a waste storage pit, threatening the headwaters of five watersheds and Cajamarca's páramo ecosystem, a high-altitude biologically diverse wetland.

A peaceful life, interrupted

In 1994, Máxima Acuña and her husband bought a plot of land in a remote corner of Peru's northern highlands known as Tragadero Grande. They built a small house on the property and lived a peaceful life raising their children. The family lived off the potatoes and other crops they grew, and kept sheep and cows for milk and cheese. Occasionally, she made the long trek into town to sell vegetables, dairy, and woolen handicrafts. Acuña never learned to read or write, but she understood that the land was her lifeblood.

One day in 2011, the mining company came to the Acuña's door, demanding that she leave her land. When Acuña refused, she was met with brutality. Armed forces came and destroyed her house and possessions, and beat her and one of her daughters unconscious.

The persecution continued. The company sued the family in a provincial court, which found them guilty of illegally squatting on their own land. Acuña was sentenced to a suspended prison term of almost three years, and fined nearly \$2,000—a huge sum for a subsistence farmer in Peru.

Traumatized, homeless, but undeterred

Acuña sought legal help from GRUFIDES, an environmental NGO in Cajamarca that was representing local community members in cases against mining companies. With help from her attorney, Mirtha Vásquez, she appealed the ruling and began gathering documents such as her land title



that proved she held legitimate property rights to the land claimed by Newmont.

In December 2014, the courts ruled in Acuña's favor. Her prison sentence was overturned and the court halted her eviction. As a result of this legal victory, the Conga mine has been kept out of Tragadero Grande. Newmont has been unable to move forward with any mining in the area around Laguna Azul.

Acuña continues to face threats and harassment from the mining company and its militarized security contractors. The mining company has built a fence around Acuña's land, restricting her ability to move about freely. They have destroyed her potato crops, and maintain a close watch on her property to prevent her from planting more. Meanwhile, the legal fight continues to play out in the Peruvian Supreme Court, with more appeals and lawsuits a near certainty.

Despite the trauma and exhaustion, Acuña maintains a remarkable sense of optimism in her continued fight for justice. She has become widely known throughout Latin America for her inspirational courage in standing up against a multinational mining company. The Conga mine has not moved forward. The community has rallied behind Máxima and her victory has brought new life to the struggle to defend Cajamarca's páramos, water supplies, and people from large-

scale gold mining.

Stand with Acuña as she continues to defy the mining companies threatening to destroy her home. <https://www.earthworksaction.org/donate/maxima>

<http://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/maxima-acuna/>



About the Goldman Environmental Prize Recipients
Goldman Environmental Prize recipients focus on protecting endangered ecosystems and species, combating destructive development projects, promoting sustainability, influencing environmental policies and striving for environmental justice. Prize recipients are ordinary citizens who choose to take great personal risks to safeguard the environment and their communities.

Peace Life/Center ID Project
Free/Low-cost ID and/or Birth Certificate Application Assistance

Volunteers ready to assist!

Call 209-222-8624 to set an appointment!

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





Anything you can do

Two Can Do

for you

Personal Services Noel Russell
(209) 524-2314

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

Destiny Watford: 2016 Goldman Environmental Prize Recipient North America

In a community whose environmental rights had long been sidelined to make room for heavy industry, Destiny Watford inspired residents of a Baltimore neighborhood to defeat plans to build the nation's largest incinerator less than a mile away from her high school.

The folly of burning trash for clean energy

Curtis Bay is a highly industrialized community in south Baltimore with a history of displacing people to make room for oil refineries, chemical plants, sewage treatment plants, and other facilities that emit pollution. Those left to live within breathing distance of industry have long suffered from respiratory problems such as asthma and lung cancer. In fact, a 2013 study on emissions-related mortality rates found Baltimore to be the deadliest city, with 130 out of every 100,000 residents likely to die each year from long-term exposure to air pollution.

Despite this, in 2010, the state approved plans for the nation's largest trash incinerator to be built in Curtis Bay with promises to bring "clean" energy to the state. In reality, the developer's proposal would have the plant burning 4,000 tons of trash—brought in from outside the city—every day. Environmental studies project that burning this much trash would release more mercury than the dirtiest coal-powered plants—less than a mile away from two public schools.



...the play raised questions about government's role and moral responsibilities when people's health and lives are at risk. The play struck a chord with the shy young teenager...

From shy teenager to determined activist

Destiny Watford grew up in a tight-knit neighborhood in Curtis Bay, visiting her grandmother, going to school, and hanging out with her friends at the local public library. During her high school senior year, Watford attended a play called "Enemy of the People." Set in a small community that was being poisoned by a polluted hot spring—a major tourist attraction for the town—the play raised questions about government's role and moral responsibilities when people's health and lives are at risk. The play struck a chord with the shy young teenager, and after discussing it with a school advisor, she co-founded Free Your Voice, a student organization dedicated to community rights and social justice.

With plans for the trash incinerator moving ahead, Watford and Free Your Voice (FYV) decided to take on the campaign to protect their community from the plant's pollution and create a pathway to a truly clean energy future for the state.

In pursuit of truly clean energy

Watford and fellow students hit the streets, canvassing neighborhoods, organizing protests, and circulating petitions. In their efforts, they encountered a community that had become used to being considered a dumping ground for the rest of the state. Residents shared stories about Curtis Bay's long history of heavy industry, pollution, and displacement. Informed by these conversations, Watford and FYV took a deeper look at the community's downtrodden past, and came out determined to bring positive alternatives—thriving communities and green jobs—within reach.

A huge breakthrough moment came when Watford and Free Your Voice students discovered that Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS), along with other city government agencies and local nonprofits, had signed an agreement to purchase energy from the incinerator. In May 2014, Watford and her fellow students attended a school board meeting to urge them to divest from the project. Destiny gave a compelling presentation, students showcased art and music performances, and parents joined in with testimonies of support. They brought board members to tour Curtis Bay and the proposed incinerator site.

In February 2015, in response to concerns from students and their families, the BCPS board voted to terminate its contract with Energy Answers, the incinerator's developer. By the fall of that year, all 22 customers canceled their contracts, leaving the incinerator with no market for its product. The victory marked a moment of rebirth for Curtis Bay residents who finally felt that their voices were heard and that their health and lives mattered.

Watford and FYV turned their attention to put intense public pressure on government agencies to pull the project's permits. In March 2016, the Maryland Department of the Environment declared the incinerator's permit invalid. The community is now pushing to reclaim the site for truly clean energy alternatives such as a community solar farm and a recycling center. Watford, currently a college student at Towson, continues to organize with Free Your Voice students and other activists to bring that vision to life.

Join Watford and United Workers to demand that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stop subsidizing trash-burning incinerators.

http://www.unitedworkers.org/take_action

<http://www.goldmanprize.org/recipient/destiny-watford/>

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

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

STACY P. SPEILLER **PATRICIA TORRES**
Attorney at Law Attorney at Law
SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

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

**ART CLASSES
FOR ADULTS
AND CHILDREN**

 **Mistlin
Gallery**
Central California
Art Association

SUMMER CLASSES ARE NOW REGISTERING
AT THE GALLERY, OR ONLINE AT WWW.MODESTOGOV.COM/PRND/ACTIVITYGUIDE

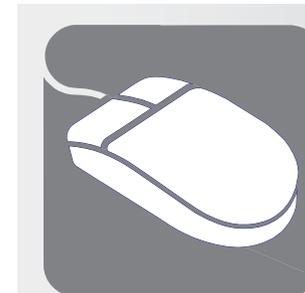
1015 J Street, Modesto • (209) 529-3369
Tues. - Fri. 11:30 - 5:00, Saturday 12-4
Email: class.ccaa@gmail.com

Local Public Radio

FM 104.9

www.ValleyMedia.Org

Local Bands, Real News



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

Pentagon Prize Time: Top 10 Federal Contractors

By LINDSAY KOSHGARIAN

In fiscal year 2014, the United States government paid out an astounding \$444 billion in federal contracts. That's equivalent to almost forty percent of the federal discretionary budget for 2014.

Who got all that money, and what for? Here's a rundown of the top 10 federal contractors in 2014. Hint: all of the top 10 contractors are for-profit companies, and all of them owe their status to military spending – something worth keeping in mind as Congress engages in battle over government spending levels for the Pentagon versus every single other priority, including health care, education, and job creation.

10. Huntington Ingalls Industries, \$4.7 billion.

Huntington Ingalls describes itself as “America's largest military shipbuilding company.”

9. BAE Systems, \$5.0 billion.

BAE Systems traffics in “defence, aerospace and security solutions” (and yes, they are a British company with significant operations in the U.S.), with products ranging from amphibious combat vehicles to “hyper velocity projectiles.”

8. L-3 Communications Holdings, \$5.8 billion.

L-3 bills itself as a “prime contractor in aerospace and national security solutions.” Its products include explosive detection systems and holographic weapons sights, among others.

7. United Technologies Corporation, \$6.0 billion.

UTC is a parent company for defense contractors Pratt & Whitney, UTC Aerospace Systems, and Sikorsky. Pratt & Whitney is the maker of the F-35 jet fighter engine, among others, while Sikorsky is the maker of the Black Hawk helicopter.

6. McKesson Corporation, \$6.2 billion.

On its face, health care solutions company McKesson appears to be the lone non-military contractor among the group. But even McKesson would not be where it is without our country's penchant for Pentagon spending: it gets \$4.2 billion in contracts from Veterans' Affairs, and an additional \$1.6 billion directly from the Department of Defense.

5. Northrop Grumman Corporation, \$10.3 billion.

Northrop Grumman bills itself as providing “unmanned systems, cybersecurity, C4ISR, and security” solutions. Northrop Grumman makes the Air Force's A-10 Thunderbolt II (also known as the “Warthog”), among others.

4. Raytheon Company, \$12.6 billion.

Raytheon's business includes missile defense, electronic warfare, precision weapons, and more, including Tomahawk and Patriot missiles.

3. General Dynamics Corporation, \$15.4 billion.

General Dynamics provides aerospace, combat systems, marine systems, and more, including Abrams tanks, MRAPs (Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicles, and nuclear submarines through its Electric Boat division.

2. Boeing, \$19.6 billion.

Boeing specializes in fighter jets, rotorcraft, advanced weapons, and missile defense, including Minuteman missiles, the V-22 Osprey aircraft, and the F-15 aircraft.

1. Lockheed Martin, \$32.2 billion.

That's 7% of all federal contracts, and the equivalent of three percent of discretionary spending in 2014, to *just one company*.

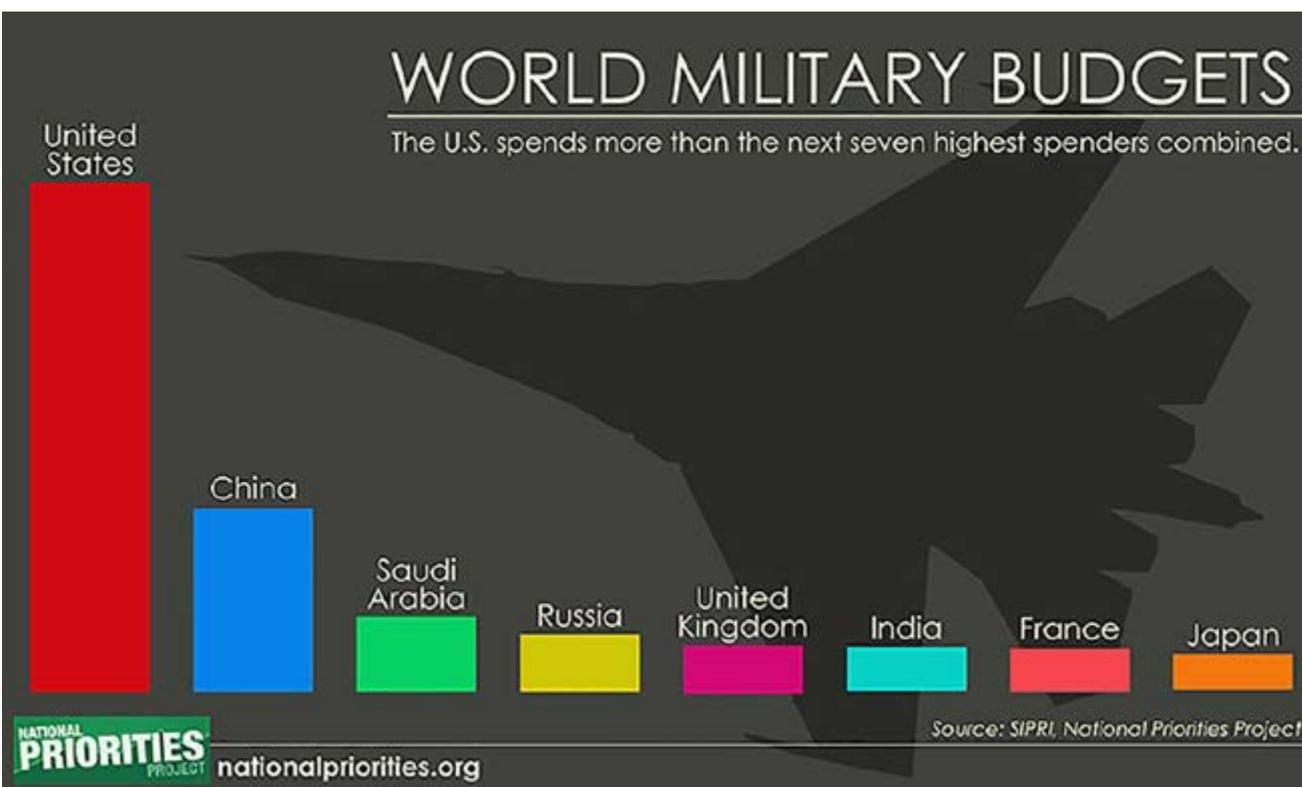
That company saw over \$5.5 billion in profit, and paid its CEO more than \$34 million in 2014. And the \$32 billion it received from the U.S. government made up more than *seventy percent* of its total sales.

And Lockheed's signature product? The F-35 jet fighter, which despite being in development since 2001, and being billions of dollars over budget, is not yet combat ready. The F-35's top initial selling point?

Affordability.

Source: Federal Procurement Data System.

<https://www.nationalpriorities.org/blog/2015/06/12/pentagon-prize-time-top-10-federal-contractors/>



U.S. Military Spending vs. the World: This is Crazy

By LINDSAY KOSHGARIAN

From the National Priorities Project

The U.S. Pentagon and military has more money than it needs. It's hard to draw any other conclusion from the stark facts: the U.S. outspends every other nation on earth when it comes to our military. We spend more than the next seven countries combined.

Where does the money go?

Here's a hint: Pentagon spending is subject to the same rules of corporate greed that plague our entire economy. More than half of the Pentagon budget goes to for-profit contractors.

Let's get the word out there. The less we spend on Pentagon contractors that profit from fear and conflict, the more we can spend on priorities like education, climate change and infrastructure to move our country forward into the 21st century. It's time we joined the rest of the world.

<https://www.nationalpriorities.org/blog/2016/04/20/us-military-spending-vs-world-crazy/>

the storm

left us buried before we died,
bruised the anemone's soft green eyes,
sharpened the sagging teated clouds,
dyed the silver shoals black.
The shore stinging, every pore,
cold mud staining the masts,
wind sawing the tough line's slack.

Rain fed us fast to the sea.
Ice singed our hair,
left us to mouth cinders
and bite wet rock.
We clattered and clung
curdled and grey, near-buried

again by wave after wave,
helpless as golem trapped in clay,
hands frozen to knot and rope.
We sleep the sleep of the drowning now,
beg the cove's slippery shell
peals open to swallow us in
on light's first fierce sail.



Poet: Heather Altfeld

Heather Altfeld's first book, *The Disappearing Theatre*, won the Poets at Work Book Prize, selected by Stephen Dunn. Her poems appear in Narrative Magazine, Pleiades, ZZZZYVA, Poetry Northwest, and others. She won the 2015 Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry with *Nimrod International Magazine of Poetry and Prose*. She lives in Northern California and teaches in the English Department and the Honors Program at California State University, Chico and is a member of the Community of Writers at Squaw Valley.

The Ghoulish World

Root canals. Triple bypasses on pet cats
performed by feline cardiologists.
The autopsy of infants. A pile of earth
and a pool of mud full of plastic soldiers.
Train early, boys, for the art of war!
Girls the size of your thumbnail
who strip to save their little brothers
from starving, or because they have to help
pay the cell phone bill. The constant augury
of the Weather Channel, dictated by a fleet of evangelicals
for whom the end of the world will be rhapsodic.
*Tornado steals car, leaves image of Christ on windshield
outside Des Moines.*

The end of days is here, but not because children
are dying in the millions from mosquito bites,
but because the planet has lapsed so badly
that refugees can muscle their way
into line at Carl's Jr. *Before you know it,
they'll have sheesh kabob burgers and hookas on every
table.*

Tiny rooms pocked in every hill and valley and strip mall
where you, and the therapist who annoys you the least,
manufacture a childhood that fits your specific neuroses,
while in one elbow of their mind they either plot to screw
you

or make a list of things they need from Lowe's.

You sit staring at the walls for a while
until the painting of the orchid,
which once looked so very sexual to you,
a Rorschach of your mind at twenty-seven,
now appears to be a baby, sleeping
in a pink pod. No longer phallus
and lips arrested in orgasmic pulse.

What does this mean? A distant memory of the womb
lapping at your corneas? An ovarian apocalypse?

The child in the war documentary
being tossed onto the heap of dead children
tended by two fathers who knew better than to grieve
in front of the cameras felt like the last proverbial straw,

until a preemie the size of a Hershey bar, four months
on three kinds of life support, whirls around you just now
cooing from an origami stroller on the Upper West Side.
Neither of these stories seem to be about birth or death
or the cosmic order of things, but a specific diagnosis
of human madness. *Do not go gentle into that little
snowsuit,*
you whisper to the tiny bundle
as the mother orders a double shot of wheatgrass.
It is as easy to imagine him discarded in the rubble
as it is to imagine him at Princeton.
Will he dream you years later, a mercenary stranger
with stale breath and long earrings,
conjured to remind him of his absurdity?
And by the time he remembers you, where will you be?
Will your pretensions about Jello
turn out to be unfounded,
when your mouth is full of gums,
and your skull a playground
full of all the children you have borne and known
and seen and dreamt of? All of you
will wile away the time with games of statues
and capture the flag
as the pile of earth turns on its axis
and the toy soldiers programmed by programs
predict the rise and demise of the boys
who imagine themselves in charge of something
besides the mud they track on the carpet
and the momentary endearment they receive for their feats.



5 Things to Know About Communities of Color and Environmental Justice

By JASMINE BELL

From the Center for American Progress (<https://www.americanprogress.org/>)

Environmental racism and failing infrastructure have plagued communities of color for decades. The environmental justice movement seeks to rectify the problems created from these issues by ensuring the fair treatment of all people from different races, ethnicities, and incomes with the laws, regulations, and policies that affect their environment.

The water contamination in Flint, Michigan, is just one window into the failures of infrastructure and environmental quality that have threatened communities across the country for generations. It has been more than 100 days since President Barack Obama declared a state of emergency due to the contaminated water in Flint. This column provides a snapshot of the environmental justice issues that communities of color across the country face every day.

1) Communities of color have higher exposure rates to air pollution than their white, non-Hispanic counterparts.

A Yale University study found that non-Hispanic whites had the lowest exposure rates for 11 of the 14 pollutants monitored in the study. Meanwhile, Hispanics had the highest exposure rates for 10 out of the 14 pollutants, and African Americans had higher exposure rates than whites for 13 out of the 14 pollutants. Some of the pollutants studied have been connected to asthma, cardiovascular issues, lung disease, and cancer. For example, a case study of The Bronx, New York, found that individuals who lived close to noxious industrial facilities and waste sites were 66 percent more likely to be hospitalized for asthma. Significantly, these same individuals were 13 percent more likely to be people of color.



2) Landfills, hazardous waste sites, and other industrial facilities are most often located in communities of color.

A report titled “Toxic Waste and Race at Twenty” reviewed data collected over a 20-year time period and found that more than half of the people who live within 1.86 miles of toxic waste facilities in the United States are people of color. A report by the Center for Effective Government found that people of color are nearly twice as likely as white residents to live within a fence line zone of an industrial facility. These facilities contribute to air pollution, safety issues, and health concerns.

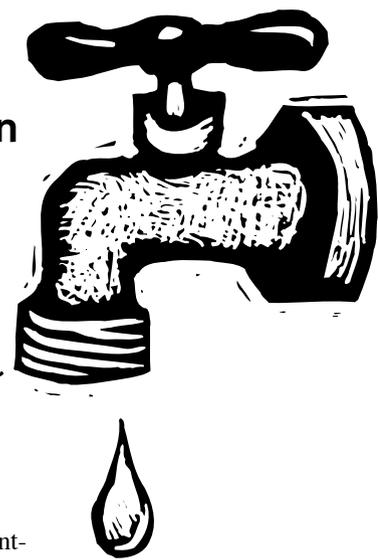
3) Lead poisoning disproportionately affects children of color.

Children of color who live in urban areas are at the highest risk for lead poisoning caused by lead-based paint. A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention determined that 11.2 percent of African American children and 4.0 percent of Mexican-American children are poisoned by lead, compared with 2.3 percent of white children. Lead poisoning can result in a wide range of health problems, such as anemia, seizures, and brain development issues. Even with the restrictions on lead paint usage, children of color who live in low-income communities continue to suffer the most. For example, a 2004 report revealed that African American children and Hispanic children in Chicago were 12 times and 5 times more likely to be poisoned, respectively, than white children.

4) Climate change disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color.

The effects of climate change, such as extreme weather conditions, have devastating consequences for communities of color and low-income communities. These extreme weather events can displace residents and even cause death. In the aftermath of such disasters, efforts of city officials to rebuild communities of color and low-income communities are often inadequate compared to efforts to rebuild higher-income and white communities. Perhaps the most powerful example of this inequity is the communities of color in New Orleans that were affected by Hurricane Katrina. Black homeowners received \$8,000 less in government aid than white homeowners due to disparities in housing values. In 2013, about 80 percent of the mostly black residents of the city’s Lower 9th Ward had not returned to their community due to inadequate building efforts.

5) Water contamination plagues low-income areas and communities of color across the nation.



Studies have documented limited access to clean water in low-income communities of color. Water contamination has largely affected children of color who live in rural areas, indigenous communities, and migrant farmworker communities. Contaminated water can cause an abundance of health-related issues, particularly for young children. Depending on the contaminant, possible health problems can include waterborne diseases, blood disorders, and cancer. Indigenous people of the Navajo Nation, for example, have suffered for years from water contamination due in part to the residual effects of uranium mining in the region during the 1950s, as well as the recent Gold King Mine toxic spill. In St. Joseph, Louisiana, residents are forced to live on water that is tinted brown and yellow but that the state continues to claim is safe to drink. African Americans make up three-quarters of the town’s population and nearly 40 percent of the residents live in poverty.

Decades of studies have proven that environmental racism is a threat to the health and overall safety of communities across the country. But this is not a problem without a solution. Indeed, policymakers already have the tools to address this injustice and to develop policies with communities of color in mind. Effective environmental justice policies should safeguard communities as places where all people can live, work, and play without fear of exposure to toxic, deadly surroundings. As people of color come to make up a majority of the population, environmental justice issues should be prioritized as national issues, not one-off problems siloed in cities with significant populations of color, such as Flint, Michigan.

Jasmine Bell is an intern with the Progress 2050 team at the Center for American Progress.

“This article was published by the Center for American Progress

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2016/04/25/136361/5-things-to-know-about-communities-of-color-and-environmental-justice/>

OPINION: Farming and the New Politics of Water

By ERIC CAINE, *The Valley Citizen*

Among the biggest surprises of Modesto's last election, none was more puzzling than the defeat of Measure I, the anti-sprawl initiative designed to protect the region's prime farmland. Historically, Modesto residents have supported farmland protection by huge margins.

Most observers felt Measure I would pass easily, especially since it followed closely on an emotionally-charged revolt against the city's attempt to include portions of historic Wood Colony in its general plan. But even as threats to Wood Colony brought about fierce opposition, an even stronger movement was growing to curb farmers' dominance of local politics, most especially the politics of water.

For years, Modesto residents have nurtured a simmering anger over subsidies by electric customers for local farmers. The Modesto Irrigation District's (MID) Board of Directors has always been dominated by farmers who felt low prices for farm water could be justified by the old argument, "No Farms, No Food."

The drought changed everything. Statewide, urban residents were required to curb water use. In some places, prices for water soared to two-thousand dollars per acre foot. Meanwhile, MID Directors resisted public pressure to raise farm water prices, and the nearby Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) persisted in attempts to sell "surplus" water to out-of-region buyers.

And even during the worst dry spell in memory, almond orchards were sprouting everywhere. Within a decade, Stanislaus County alone added over thirty thousand acres of new orchards, many of them in the foothills where the only

water source was underground.

Stratospheric almond prices pushed farm profits to all-time highs, but even with the much-publicized "multiplier effect," the region's economy continued to suffer high unemployment and poverty rates. Worse yet for farmers' public image, the proliferation of almond groves meant fewer acres were planted in more popular food products. As prices rose for staples like tomatoes, consumers had less and less appreciation for slogans like, "We Farm, You Eat."

Long insulated from public criticism by an almost hallowed reverence for farming, local farmers have been slow to realize a dramatic change in public sentiment. It's hard to argue we need to protect local farmland when we add thousands of acres of farmland every year. It's even harder to argue farming is in jeopardy when ag profits reach new highs every harvest.

Nonetheless, criticism of below-cost farm water prices and out-of-district water sales has too often been met with cold indifference. Both the Modesto Irrigation District and Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) deliver water to farmers at prices well below the cost of operation and maintenance, and MID's recent twenty percent hike in prices did far too little to balance the books.

Even many farmers will say privately they think prices are too low, and just recently farmers in the Oakdale region have filed lawsuits against OID's ongoing attempts to sell water out of the region. Complaints reached a crescendo when OID Director Gary Osmundson supported an on-farm conservation program which pays farmers for fallowing land.

When fellow farmers learned that Osmundson stood to gain a six-figure windfall from the program, his vote in favor of fallowing was met with swift charges of a conflict of interest. Now OID faces not only a lawsuit for its failure to observe protocols required by the California Environmental Quality Act, but charges that one of its directors has a clear conflict of interest.

MID is also facing a lawsuit. The suit alleges MID subsidizes low farm water prices by overcharging its electric customers. Former MID Directors are on record as saying they believe the practice is unfair.

Given the sea change in public opinion, one would think MID and OID would have responded with sweeping changes in district policy. The defeat of Measure I should have been the final wake-up call for MID, and huge margins of victory for new directors in OID's recent election should have signaled wide public disapproval of the status quo.

Nonetheless, both districts still seem mired in visions of a now-distant past, when farmers could do no wrong. Those days are over, but it may take even more losses, both in and out of court, before local irrigation districts accept the new politics of water.

<http://thevalleycitizen.com/farming-and-the-new-politics-of-water/>

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

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

James Hansen's Climate Bombshell: Dangerous Sea Level Rise Will Occur in Decades, Not Centuries

By LAUREN MCCAULEY, *staff writer, Common Dreams*

Taking into consideration "rapid, large, human-made climate forcing," the study predicts a much more accelerated rate of sea level rise of several meters, beyond that which humanity is capable of adapting to.

Dr. James Hansen, the former NASA scientist who is widely credited with being one of the first to raise concerns about human-caused global warming, is a co-author of a new report predicting that the world will undergo devastating sea level rise within mere decades—not centuries, as previously thought.

The report, published Tuesday in the open-access journal *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics*, paints an even bleaker picture of the planet's future, positing that continued high fossil fuel emissions will "increase powerful storms" and drive sea-level rise of "several meters over a timescale of 50 to 150 years."

Hansen, who now serves as the director of the Climate Science Awareness and Solutions program at Columbia University Earth Institute, published the findings along with an international team of 18 researchers and academics.

As the abstract states, the predictions "differ fundamentally from existing climate change assessments." For example, the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2013 predicted three feet of sea level rise by 2100 if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated.

A draft version of Hansen's paper released last year provoked wide debate among climate scientists.

Nonetheless, Michael Mann, a renowned climate scientist with the University of Pennsylvania, who is among those questioning some of the report's "extraordinary" claims, told the *New York Times*, "I think we ignore James Hansen at our peril."

The peer-edited report examines growing ice melt from Antarctica and Greenland and studies how that melting has historically amplified "feedbacks that increase subsurface ocean warming and ice shelf melting." Taking into consideration "rapid, large, human-made climate forcing," the study predicts a much more accelerated rate of sea level rise of several meters, beyond that which humanity is capable of adapting to.

Or, as Hansen put it, "We're in danger of handing young

people a situation that's out of their control."

These staggering claims come as climate scientists continue to reel from the frightening speed at which the Earth is warming. On Monday, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) issued a report warning that climate change is occurring at an "alarming rate" and that world leaders must act to curb greenhouse gases now, "before we pass the point of no return."

In a video released alongside the new report, Hansen, who left his position at NASA in 2013 so that he could fully commit himself to fighting climate change, says that the paper explores the consequences of continued greenhouse gas emissions. These include "superstorms stronger than any seen in modern times," sea level rise that will erase "all coastal cities," and, finally, "how soon we will pass points of no return."

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

<http://www.commondreams.org/news/2016/03/22/james-hansens-climate-bombshell-dangerous-sea-level-rise-will-occur-decades-not>



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

4 WED: Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGIL on Ending Equality. McHenry & J St., 4:30-5:30 pm. NEW TIME.

5-6 THURS-FRI: Fundraiser for the Haven Women's Center of Stanislaus County. THE SIRENS - a play by Darrah Cloud, 7:30 p.m. Gallo Arts Center Foster Family Theatre. Tickets start at \$10.00. Available at <http://tickets.galloarts.org>.

7 SAT: Friends of the Modesto Library Used Book Sale. Modesto Library East Portico, 1500 I St. \$1 hardbound, 50 cents paperback. CONTACT: Clare Noonan, 522-5054, clarenoo@gmail.com

12 THURS: Candidate Forum. Learn about what your candidates for State Assembly District 12 and Stanislaus County Supervisorial District Five have to share about their vision and priorities for the future of all people in Stanislaus County. St. Jude's Catholic Church, 3824 Mitchell Rd., Ceres. 6 PM to 8 PM. Register at <http://bit.ly/1SDAwR7>. Sponsored by Congregations Building Community and Vision y Compromiso, Red de Promotoras de Stanislaus. Info: 209-872-1045.

15 SUN: The Modesto Film Society presents *The Lady from Shanghai*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/519>

18 WED: Film Night at the Center: *Yellow Tale Blues: Two American Families and American Aloha: Hula Beyond Hawai'i*. 6:30 pm. at the Center, 720 13th St., Modesto. Discussion will follow. See article, this issue.

22 SUN: Bike Modesto. Come to Camp 4 to eat, drink and be merry as we celebrate the bike culture in Modesto with kindred spirits. Wine, beer, food, live auction and fun! 1508 10th St. Info: Josh Bridegroom: joshbridegroom@sbcglobal.net

LOOKING AHEAD

Saturday June 4: Annual screening of American Graffiti. 35 mm archival print! A&W Root beer floats go fast! Admission \$3.00. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., Doors open at 3:00 pm, film at 4:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/458>

Sunday June 19: The Modesto Film Society presents *East of Eden*. State Theatre, 1307 J. St., 2:00 pm. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/520>.

June 23-26: 34th Annual Peace Camp in the Sierra. Registration form, p. 2 and at <http://stanislausconnections.org/>

REGULAR MEETINGS

SUNDAYS

Modesto Vineyard Christian Fellowship: 10:00 am at the MODSPOT, 1220 J St. Call or text 209-232-1932, email modestovineyard@gmail.com; All Welcome.

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

Weekly mindfulness meditation and dharma talk, 9:00 am-10:30 am, 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/>

Food Addicts Anonymous In Recovery. Sundays 6:30 pm, 2467 Veneman Ave. Modesto. Info: Emily M., 209- 480-8247.

MONDAYS

StanCounty Radical Mental Health: a peer facilitated support group open to people living with mental health issues. Every Monday at 7pm at the Peace/Life Center 720 13th St. Modesto. We strive to create a safe, non-judgmental space. More information: email stancountyrmh@gmail.com or call 209-596-7762.

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

TUESDAYS

Pagan Family Social, third Tuesdays, Golden Corral, 3737 McHenry Ave, Modesto, 6:00 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Tuesday 6:30 pm, Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. 591-8741.

Ukulele class/play-a-long led by Lorrie Freitas 5 p.m. Beginners Lessons 6 p.m. Play Along in songbooks provided. Trinity Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver,

MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

Modesto Peace/Life Center VIGILS: held THE FIRST WEDNESDAY of the month at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five points), (NOTE TIME), 4:30-5:30 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.

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/>

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

WEDNESDAYS

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

Merced Full Spectrum meets the second Wednesday of every month, 6 p.m. 1744 G St., Suite H, Merced <http://www.lgbtmerced.org/> Merced Full Spectrum is a division of Gay Central Valley, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. <http://www.gaycentralvalley.org/>

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

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Wednesdays 6:30 p.m., Center for Human Services Building, 1700 McHenry Way, Room 12 Modesto.

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

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

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

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

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

THURSDAYS

Green Team educational meetings the 3rd Thursday of each month, 10 to 11 am, Kirk Lindsey Center, 1020 10th St. Plaza, Suite 102, Modesto. www.StanislausGreenTeam.com

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

A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction. Jana Lynn Community Rm., 500 N. 9th St., Modesto. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. FREE (donations accepted). Info: email RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com

Latino Community Roundtable (LCR) meets on the second Thursday of each month at Noon at the Red Event Center, 921 8th St., Modesto. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

The Book Group, First & third Thursdays. College Ave UCC Youth Bldg., Orangeburg & College Ave., 3:30 pm. Info: mzjurkovic@gmail.com

The Compassionate Friends, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter. 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact: Joanna Rose-Murray, 209-484-8276, jrmcompassionate@gmail.com, <http://www.tcfmodesto-riverbankarea.org>

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

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

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

FRIDAYS

Funstrummer Ukulele Band every Friday, from 9:15 am until noon, Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto. Info: 505-3216; www.funstrummers.com

Latino Emergency Council (LEC) 3rd Fridays, 8:15 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Modesto. Info: Dale Butler, 522-8537.

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

SIERRA CLUB: Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 549-9155. Visit <http://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: 1st & 3rd Fridays at 7:00 am, El Concilio, 1314 H St. Other meetings at Terrace Cafe, Double Tree Hotel. Info: Yamilet Valladolid, 523-2860.

SATURDAY

Citizens' Climate Lobby, Modesto Chapter, meets every first Saturday, 10:30 a.m., 937 Oxford Way, Modesto. Questions: Call Kathy, 523-5907.

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

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

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. For up to date information, visit www.stanislausconnections.org/calendar.htm