



Stanislaus CONNECTIONS

Working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment

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Babies in the River: “Urgent Humanitarian Situation,” Part I

By DAWN McCARTY, PHD, LMSW

President Obama recently called the explosion in the number of migrant children crossing our southern border without parents or caretakers an “urgent humanitarian situation.” Ninety thousand children this year, some as young as five years old, making a journey alone that is incredibly dangerous even for adults, many of them beaten, robbed, forced to sell their bodies, arriving in a country where they know no one and where the government’s response to their plight is in disarray – hard to deny the “urgent humanitarian” aspects of the situation.

But to see the situation as a humanitarian issue only, one that can be made a little less horrible with more federal money and maybe a task force or two, is to miss an important point. Homeless victims of a natural disaster are properly described as facing a “humanitarian situation.” The situation at the border is a disaster, all right, but nature has nothing to do with it. It is entirely human-made. And as such, the core remedy is not just aid, not just help, not just charity, but justice.

The distinction between situations that call for charity and those that cry out for justice is hard to make, because human-made disasters require both. Still, the distinction is important. To illustrate the difference, I start my “Introduction to Social Welfare” courses by telling an old story about a fictional community by a fictional river:

One day, some one notices that there are babies floating down the river. The community responds immediately. Villagers jump in and rescue what babies they can. Later, as the babies keep coming, they set up a net to catch them and bring them to shore. They



organize health screenings, food, and arrange temporary housing with foster families. The babies keep coming, and after a few years the community gets pretty darn good at providing these important direct services, organizing babies-in-the-river institutions to professionalize the help they are giving.

I keep talking about these admirable social welfare efforts until someone finally gets the point and interrupts me. Isn’t someone going to hike up stream and find out why in the world those babies are in the river in the first place?

My “babies in the river moment” came five years ago when I visited the small Catholic Worker community in Chiapas, the southernmost state of Mexico, in the center of the path of migration from Central America through Mexico to the United States. This is where I first learned of the growing number of children from Central America trying to make the journey to the U.S. on their own, without a parent. Some of these children had made it to the Chiapas Catholic Worker. They were in terrible condition, mostly, and they had just started their terrible journey.

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Study: ‘Shocking’ Water Loss in Western U.S.

Satellites show groundwater supply at greater risk than previously thought

By DEIRDRE FULTON, staff writer

The drought-stricken Colorado River Basin has experienced rapid and significant groundwater depletion since late 2004, posing a greater threat to the water supply of the western United States than previously thought, according to a new study by NASA and University of California, Irvine. <http://www.nasa.gov/press/2014/july/satellite-study-reveals-parched-us-west-using-up-underground-water/#.U-qj0Vat9mN>

The research team used data from NASA’s Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellite mission to track changes in the mass of the Colorado River Basin, which is the water source for more than 30 million people and 4 million acres of farmland. The satellites showed the basin lost nearly 53 million acre feet (about 17 trillion gallons) of freshwater between 2004-2013 — almost double the volume of the nation’s largest reservoir, Nevada’s Lake Mead, which itself recently fell to its lowest level since the 1930s. More than three-quarters of the total water loss in the Colorado River Basin was from groundwater. The basin has been experiencing the driest 14-year period in the last 100 years. <http://www.commondreams.org/news/2014/07/07/profiteers-cashing-nations-catastrophic-water-crisis>

“We don’t know exactly how much groundwater we have left, so we don’t know when we’re going to run out,” said Stephanie

Castle, a water resources specialist at the UC-Irvine and lead author of the study. “This is a lot of water to lose. We thought that the picture could be pretty bad, but this was shocking.”

Because pumping from underground aquifers is regulated by individual states and is often not well documented, it is difficult to quantify how groundwater reserves are affected by drought. But the NASA/Irvine study, which measured gravitational attraction as a way to assess rising and falling water levels, reveals that a crucial water source for seven basin states and Mexico has been compromised. The study also indicates that declines in the snowpack that feeds the river and population growth could further compound the problem.

“The Colorado River Basin is the water lifeline of the western United States,” said senior author Jay Famiglietti. “With Lake Mead at its lowest level ever, we wanted to explore whether the basin, like most other regions around the world, was relying on groundwater to make up for the limited surface-water supply. We found a surprisingly high and long-term reliance on groundwater to bridge the gap between supply and demand.”

Last year, the Pacific Institute found that about 70 percent of the Colorado River Basin water supply goes toward irrigated agriculture. <http://pacinst.org/publication/water-to-supply-the-land-irrigated-agriculture-in-the-colorado-river-basin/>

In a blog for Science, Eric Hand writes: The groundwater losses, which take thousands of years to be recharged naturally,

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7th Annual Architecture Film Night Fri. Sept. 19

The State Theatre proudly hosts the 7th Annual Architecture Film Night, an exciting program featuring a selection of short films about architecture, landscape, and design. The Film Night is part of the 2014 Modesto Architecture Festival (see below). The films were selected from submissions by independent film makers across the globe.

This is the most popular event of the festival. Admission is FREE! The audience will vote for their "Most Favorite Movie." Arrive early to get your seat and enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres during the reception from 6-7pm. Admission: FREE

Information at: www.modestoarchfest.com
Reception at 6 p.m., movies at 7 p.m.
<http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/370>

7th Annual Modesto Architecture Festival, September 13 – 21

More than 115 events have been scheduled over nine days. There will be guided tours in English and Spanish, world famous speakers and presenters, short movie night at the State Theatre, several exhibits, *Liquid Stone*, a movie about Antoni Gaudi, a guided tour of the restored post office building, and much more including for the first time, a Modesto Architecture Festival Center in the heart of the design district. Best of all, almost all events are free. Find schedule of events at <http://www.modestoarchfest.com/schedule.html>

SAVE THE DATE!

Thursday, September 11, Stage 3 Theatre
208 S. Green St. Sonora

Preview night for *GOOD PEOPLE*
RECEPTION 6 p.m. PREVIEW 7 p.m.
TICKETS \$20

See *Good People* by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire. Frances McDormand won multiple best actress awards - including the Tony on Broadway in 2011 for her role in this play

All proceeds benefit the Motherlode Martin Luther King Jr. Committee and its annual MLK Jr. birthday celebration.

Last year's preview night sold out early, so contact Pat Cervelli soon for your tickets to this important fundraiser.

Pat Cervelli, 928-3494
patcervelli@frontiernet.net

Science for the Community at MJC

MAPS: Modesto Area Partners in Science Fall '14 Outreach for the Community

Fridays, 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus. Free parking, admission. <http://maps.events.mjc.edu/>

Oct. 3: Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, **Dr. Alex Filippenko**, *Dark Matter and the Runaway Universe*. 2004 Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization recipient. Voted best professor, UC Berkeley 9 times. All other events at Sierra Hall 132. **Oct 17:** Dr. Lawrence Diller, *ADHD: Models, Myths and Medication*. Author of *Remembering Ritalin*. **Nov. 21:** Dr. David Blake, *NASA, the Mars Project*. **Dec. 5:** Steven Phillips, *Modeling Our Groundwater Basin for Better Management*.



MJC Science Colloquium, Science Community Center, Rm. 115, Wednesdays, West Campus, 3-4 p.m. Contact: Richard Anderson (209) 529-5182 andersonr@mjc.edu Sept. 24: Bill Anelli, MJC Philosopher, "The Demarcation Problem: Distinguishing Science from Pseudo-science." Oct. 1: Meg Gonzalez, Edward Aguilar, Tuolumne River Trust: "The Tuolumne River, A Lifeline for Modesto." Oct. 8: David Seaborg, World Rainforest Fund, "The Threat to Rainforests, Why They are Important, and How They can be Saved." Oct. 22: Jessica Blois, UC Merced, "Paleoecology: Environments and Climate Change in the Past." Oct. 29: Mike Zweifel, MID Major Account Executive, "MID's Energy Present and Future." Nov. 5: Sue Vang and Nick Lapis, Californians Against Waste, "Recycling and Waste Reduction in CA: A discussion about composting, plastic pollution, more." Nov. 12: Roland Nyegaard, MD, "Medical Education in Modesto." Nov. 19: Sean Timmons, SCOE Science specialist, "The Next Generation Science Standards- What They Are, and How We're Implementing Them Here." Dec. 3: Lee Delano, Engineer, "MID's Canal System: How It Works and Who is Paying for It."

Great Valley Museum Wild Planet Day, Oct. 11, 2014, MJC West Campus Science Center, free event

Water loss

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point to the unsustainability of exploding population centers and water-intensive agriculture in the basin, which includes most of Arizona and parts of Colorado, California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and Wyoming. <http://news.sciencemag.org/earth/2014/07/western-u-s-states-using-ground-water-alarming-rate>

To that end, several Western states are implementing or considering groundwater management plans. And earlier this month, the Boulder-based Western Resource Advocates joined with American Rivers in releasing a new report that identified municipal conservation, grey water treatment and reuse, and irrigation efficiency as ways to mitigate "Western water shortages stemming from the over-taxed and stressed

Peace Panels return to Modesto

By KEN SCHROEDER

Charles Withun of the **Peace Panels Project** will lead presentation and discussion on peace and justice, including censored news stories, nonviolent communication, and how our consumer choices can make a better world.

New large peace panels will be available for viewing Wednesday, September 24, 7 p.m., College Avenue Congregational Church, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. Peace and justice books available at 27-50% discount.

31st Annual Top Ten Professional Women and Top Business Awards

By ROCHELLE TRUJILLO

TV personality (best known for her role on *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*), *New York Times* best-selling author, philanthropist and domestic violence survivor Taylor Armstrong, will be the luncheon keynote speaker at the 31st Annual Top Ten Professional Women and Top Business Awards on Friday, October 17, 2014 at Fresno's Convention Center, New Exhibit Hall, 848 M St., from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (doors open at 11:00 a.m.).

The 31st Annual Top Ten Professional Women and Top Business Awards, a prestigious awards ceremony honoring local professionals, will bring approximately 800 attendees together with the goal of honoring these outstanding individuals in our community while also raising awareness for domestic violence. This event pays tribute to ten women who have served as role models and given back to their communities, all while making strides in their professions.

One business is also honored as the Top Business of the Year for its support of women and women's issues. The Friday, October 17th keynote, Taylor Armstrong, will be sharing her personal battle with domestic violence, and her triumph in becoming a survivor.

To register, visit <http://mmcenter.org/index.php?c=44>

Colorado River." <http://www.westernresourceadvocates.org/water/CORiverBasinSolutions.php>

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From: <http://www.commondreams.org/news/2014/07/25/study-shocking-water-loss-western-us>



Civic Engagement Film and Lecture Series at MJC

The Civic Engagement Film and Lecture Series provides students and members of the community with the opportunity to engage in topics of social interest and relevance through the screening of thoughtful movies and by bringing knowledgeable speakers to the campus. Each film will be followed by a discussion with guest speakers or panelists.

WHERE: Forum Building Room 110 (on MJC's East Campus)

WHEN: THURSDAY EVENINGS, 7 PM to 9 PM

COST: FREE - open to the public

American Muslims on Love and Relationships: A Discussion with Ayesha Mattu & Nura Maznavi

FEBRUARY 6: Ayesha Mattu and Nura Maznavi discuss and read selections from their anthologies *Love, InshAllah: The Sacred Love Lives of American Muslim Women* and *Salaam, Love: American Muslim Men on Love, Sex, and Intimacy*

Tough Guise 2

FEBRUARY 20: This documentary suggests that boys grow up in a culture that glamorizes aggression and violence. Reducing hurtful and destructive behavior, the film argues, depends largely upon recognizing and transforming the cultural messages directed at boys.

Sunday Sept. 14th: Grieving and Mourning Israel/Palestine & Communicating Across Differences

Are you upset about what is happening in Israel/Palestine?

Are you tired of the vitriolic discourse with friends, family members, or on social media?

Do you want to learn skills to communicate compassionately and effectively across differences? Want a safe place to grieve and mourn? ... If so, this workshop is for you.

Come meet others who care deeply about ending the suffering in the Middle East, and learn how to effectively communicate with others with whom you might not agree!

We are offering a 4-hour workshop where you will learn techniques to deal with your distress, rage, and upset about the situation in Israel and Palestine and also have opportunities to learn and practice skills for hearing those who don't agree with you and expressing yourself more effectively. You will leave feeling empowered to engage in healthy discourse, even with those with whom you disagree.

The workshop will include various mediums for self-expression and compassionate listening and speaking as well as teaching and coaching in Empathic Communication and conflict resolution.

If you and a friend or close relative are struggling to talk about this important issue, we encourage both of you to attend this workshop together – you will have an opportunity to hear each other and deepen your understanding and compassion. And of course you are welcome to come alone.

Dirty Wars

MARCH 6: This film investigates America's covert military operations—marked by “kill lists,” night raids, and drone strikes—in foreign lands, from Afghanistan to Yemen, Somalia, and beyond.

Two American Families

MARCH 20: As it chronicles the financial struggles of two typical American families over the last twenty years, this documentary strives to bring larger economic trends into sharp focus and to reveal their role in the decline of the middle class.

Precious Knowledge

APRIL 3: This film looks at the debate over ethnic studies classes in Arizona public high schools. Many students and teachers involved in the program fight to defend it, celebrating its merits, while lawmakers attempt to eliminate the program, criticizing it as divisive and subversive.

Chasing Ice

APRIL 17: *Chasing Ice* follows photographer James Balog as he documents the rapid melting of glaciers via time-lapse photographs taken by cameras installed in the harshest environments.

Questions? Contact Jason Wohlstadter, English, at 209.575.6180wohlstadterj@mjc.edu or Elizabeth McInnes, Biology, at 209.575.6299mcinnese@mjc.edu
<http://www.mjc.edu/president/cep/filmandlecture.php>

When: Sunday, September 14th **Time:** 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Where: Berkeley near the U.C. campus - you will be given the address once you register.

Who: Rabbi Michael Lerner and Cat J. Zavis

Rabbi Lerner has written extensively on this subject and in his latest book, *Embracing Israel/Palestine*, explains the psychological underpinnings of the conflict and the importance of compassion for both sides. Cat J. Zavis is a mediator, trainer and coach in Empathic Communication and conflict resolution. She has conducted trainings for mediators, collaborative attorneys, therapists and coaches as well as spiritual centers, divorced parents and others either in conflict themselves or working to support others navigate conflict.

Cost: \$35.00 for the general public, \$25.00 for current Tikkun subscribers and current paid members of the NSP or Beyt Tikkun (enter “Member” in the discount code), and \$10.00 for students (enter “Student” in discount code)

Registration Required: To register, either pay online here, send check to Tikkun, 2342 Shattuck Ave, #1200, Berkeley, CA 94704 (along with an email to cat@spiritualprogressives.org letting her know you have sent in a check so she can register you immediately) or email cat@spiritualprogressives.org

Sponsored by the Network of Spiritual Progressives www.spiritualprogressives.org

September 17th Film Night features Civil Rights leader Bayard Rustin

By DAN ONORATO

Though hardly a household name for most Americans, Bayard Rustin was one of the heroes of our country's civil rights struggles. On Wednesday, September, at 6:30 p.m., the Peace/Life Center will present the PBS acclaimed documentary about this great man at the Center, 720 13th St., Modesto.

Long before Martin Luther King, Jr. became a national figure, Bayard Rustin routinely put his body — and his life — on the line as a crusader for racial justice. Rustin's commitment to pacifism and his visionary advocacy of Gandhian nonviolence made him a pioneer in the 1940s, and captured King's imagination in the 1950s. In 1963, with more than 20 years of organizing experience behind him, Rustin brought his unique skills to the crowning glory of his civil rights career: his work organizing the historic March on Washington, the biggest protest America had ever witnessed.

But Rustin was also seen as a political liability. He was openly gay during the fiercely homophobic era of the 40s and 50s; as a result, he was frequently shunned by the very civil rights movement he helped create. Nancy Kates and Bennett Singer's compelling new film *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin* chronicles Rustin's complex life story, a tale of race, prejudice, and idealism at the heart of 20th century America. Though he had to overcome the stereotypes associated with being an illegitimate son, an African American, a gay man and a one-time member of the

Communist Party, Rustin — the ultimate outsider — eventually became a public figure and respected political insider. He not only shaped civil rights movement strategy as a longtime advisor to Martin Luther King, Jr., but was known and respected by numerous U.S. Presidents and foreign leaders.

On November 20, 2013, President Obama bestowed a posthumous Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, on Bayard Rustin. His surviving life partner, Walter Naegle, accepted the award.

Our next film night will be on Wednesday, October 15. Film TBA.

ACTION: Mark your calendar now! For more info, go to www.pbs.org/pov/brotheroutsider/film_description.php.





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Graduation

By JENIFER WEST

“Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child.”

— ‘Tcmac’, in one of more than 6,000 comments posted to an online article (please see below).*

Just a few short years ago, a certain young lady came to live with us. Eighteen years old, going to college, trying to figure out what to do with her life. Seeing her in the driver’s seat of our old van today, hearing her plans to save up to buy a car and go out on her own, it’s hard to believe it’s only been a few years. She’s come so far!

What an eventful time! We’ve worked hard to help her mature, at her own pace. So here we are, and the fragile young girl we took in has blossomed into a strong-minded young lady. So many lessons along the way; so many opportunities to learn and grow. And grow we all have! She has matured into a young lady, just about ready to see where her unfurling wings will take her. My dear husband, having never tackled ‘fatherhood’ (a few rounds of puppies and kittens notwithstanding), has taken to the role of father figure. For me, the demands of ‘motherhood’/counselor/teacher/whatever-else-was-needed-in-a-given-moment, became both challenge and reward.

This ‘crash course’ in parenthood led me to ponder the experience of full-time, diapers-to-college-and-beyond parents. So I took an informal survey: What, in one word, does parenthood mean to you? Almost invariably, the question evoked deep-seated, genuine love. Most adults, stopped in the middle of an ordinary day to contemplate one of the most profound aspects of human experience, soften, and smile. Regardless of what word comes next, the clear undercurrent is love.

A married mom with kids both grade school and grown, and a single mom with grown kids and grandchildren both answered ‘joy’. Two more moms, both with grown kids and grandchildren, answered ‘love’. From a single mom with a 10-year-old son, ‘challenge’. ‘Happiness’ was there, as was ‘unconditional love’ – the latter from a married dad, who pointed out that you have to be there for them, let them know you’ve ‘got their back’, no matter what they get themselves into. A young mom with a preschooler answered ‘breath-taking’. Another mom, with both high schoolers and grown kids, described parenting as being a role model. Another, perhaps a bit more pragmatically, supplied ‘patience’.

Another, interestingly, said ‘legacy’. Being a good parent,

*I will love my
kids forever
and always,
for as long
as I live, no
matter what.*

she explained, will lead to raising ‘good people’, who will help make the world better. Being a parent, she added, means experiencing what it’s like to truly love. An honest single dad with teenagers, replied ‘scary’ – because ‘you don’t know what they’re going to get themselves into’. Other dads, with children ranging from grade school to high school, described parenthood as a ‘blessing’, ‘an accomplishment’, and

‘gratifying’. Another dad, with kids ranging from preschool to middle school, described parenting as being a ‘cheerleader’.

Yet, like virtually every other aspect of human experience, parenthood isn’t necessarily always smooth sailing. Sadly, ‘heartbreaking’ was the word used by one mom of grown children. ‘Frustrating’ was the honest response of a married mom of two young, active boys. ‘Busy’, from a married mom with kids from grade school through high school. ‘Responsibility’, from another mom with grade school-age kids.

Finally, a dad with grown kids described being a parent as ‘the hardest thing in the world to do, and yet by far the most rewarding’.

*While working on this article, I read about a woman who sold her daughter’s Katy Perry concert tickets online, explaining that ‘the spoiled brat’ didn’t deserve them. Interestingly, the comments were overwhelmingly supportive of the mother; most commenters pointed out that parents who don’t expect appropriate behavior from their children, and back it up with whatever measures are required to achieve that result, don’t do their kids, or the world, any favors. Some objected to the mom calling her daughter names in public (with which this writer agrees), and many responded with examples from their own or friends’ experiences. Clearly, parents sometimes need to take extreme measures to help their children grow up to be well-adjusted, productive members of society.

I started this one-word survey at home. My word: Growth. The last couple of years have stretched me beyond what I thought were my limits, and it’s been worth every effort. My husband’s? ‘Teaching’. Having been raised by two teachers himself, one by vocation and both by nature, teaching is an intrinsic part of who he is. He helped me rediscover the joy of learning, which we have been able to pass along to the young lady in our care. That alone will help her lead a richer, more fulfilling life.

And mixed in with the unconditional love, patience, role modeling, and taking care of a million and one physical and emotional needs (all the while trying to be a good example, simultaneously setting our own fears, frustrations and sense of overwhelming ‘busy-ness’ aside), isn’t that really what being a parent is all about?

Sunday Afternoons at CBS kicks off on September 21

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Opera not your thing? Kindra Sharich, mezzo soprano, and Christine Capsuto, soprano, have enough wit, charm and amazing vocal chops to make a convert of you. The two, who have graced the Townsend Opera Players stages in *La bohème* and *Cinderella*, will be featured at the Season 23 kick off of Sunday Afternoons at CBS 3 p.m. September 21 at Congregation Beth Shalom, 1705 Sherwood Ave. in Modesto, with **An Afternoon of Arias and Duets** from opera, Broadway, the American Song Book, Jewish and Yiddish melodies and music from around the world.

Kindra starred as Cinderella in the TOP production at the Gallo Center, and Christine, who describes herself as “very operatic and very belty,” depending upon the genre, was Kindra’s very funny step sister, Clorinda, in *Cinderella*, starred in the role of Mussetta in TOP’s *La bohème*, and thrilled the audience of *Amore Amour Amor* presented by John Griswold and Friends of Focus On last March.

The concert will be followed by a 23rd season kick off dinner at the beautiful Victorian home of Mayor Garrad Marsh and his wife Dallas.

The season will continue October 12 with **Cradle Duende**, an exciting fusion of Klezmer & Balkan influenced melodies with Latin rhythms and eco-conscious hip-hop lyrics.

The Joe Craven Trio with Joe’s young daughter, Hattie Rose, will bring the grove on November 9. This power trio of keyboards, key bass, drums, fiddle, mandolin, found sound and vocals pays a full-of-groove, crisp, tight tribute to Traditional American Folk, Blues, New Orleans, Swing, and Funk, as well as the music of Brazil, Haiti, Ireland, Cuba and Puerto Rico. Hattie Craven, Joe’s young daughter, is an accomplished singer/songwriter. Her “Eleven” CD includes 11 songs from her eleventh year.

JANUARY 11, 2015 RIVER LIGHTS CHORUS: This award winning Chapter of Sweet Adelines International, under the direction of Shirley Kout, is women’s a cappella four part harmony at its best. Their voices are beautiful and their repertoire is vast. This performance will include an exploration of the music of Irvin Berlin, as well as songs that could bring a tear to your eye or have you laughing with joy.

FEBRUARY 8, 2015 - GRACE LIEBERMAN AND FRIENDS VALENTINE CONCERT: One of our most popular concerts each season, featuring some of the area’s most talented musical performers, as Grace guides and cajoles audiences with her infectious wit and charm through a landscape of romantic and unrequited love songs, an audience sing-a-long, and a surprise or two.

MARCH 8, 2015 - JESSICA LEASH, CANTORIAL SOLOIST/ARTIST/SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE: This cantorial soloist has the inspirational voice of an angel with the power to soar above a thousand other singers. Throughout the weekend she will explore the world of Jewish Renewal music and sharing the beauty of inspirational and educational genres from around the world.

All Sunday concerts start at 3 pm at 1705 Sherwood Ave. For concert tickets or kickoff dinner reservations, call 571-6060 or at CBS. More information at www.cbsmodesto.org/concerts.php



Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Path to Recovery from Addiction

By OPTIMISM ONE

All addicts are not created equally. Some like to snort meth while others prefer to smoke it. Some like to drink beer all day long while others lean on whiskey. Some get off on gambling. Some are hooked on porn. Some are weekend bingers. And some only stop to sleep, if they sleep at all. Finally, some stop when they lose a job or significant other while others keep drinking or using until they go to prison or die.

If they do stop, differences also arise in what methods they use, the white-knuckle approach, going to church, or joining a fellowship that focuses on the 12 Steps, as in Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. All of these options seem to be equally attractive and equally effective, which sometimes, unfortunately, is not too attractive or effective at all, especially if one has a belief system that conflicts with the beliefs espoused by a given group.

The problem, by and large, is God. Some folks just don't believe in a deity that is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient. Therefore, while potential members may desire sobriety and want to learn from and follow those who have achieved a happy life of clean living, they maintain some level of inner resistance to the idea that they have to believe in God, even if, as the 12-Step groups insist, it is a God of *their own understanding*. This interpretation does give members license to believe in anything from nature to the oft-cited doorknob as a possible higher power, but even then, some addicts still don't buy it. The result is a half-committed approach or giv-



ing up and, quite possibly, relapsing. Again.

So what do these atheist or agnostic addicts do if they still want recovery? A new option has appeared in Stanislaus County.

Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Path to Recovery from Addiction is a new meeting offered by Insight Meditation Central Valley. Instead of the 12 Steps or a Biblical approach, the focus is on Buddhism's Four Noble Truths, including the Eightfold Path, as its framework and guide. In short, the First Noble Truth is that there is suffering; the Second Noble Truth is that there is a cause of our suffering; the Third Noble Truth is that there is a way out of our suffering; and the Fourth

Noble Truth is the suggested path out of suffering, including Right View, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. With each of these Truths, if one adopts the practices of Refuge Recovery, there is corresponding writing and discussion that members are encouraged to engage in with mentors who have already worked through this process.

Believing in God in any form, while not shunned or criticized, is not a requirement. In fact, God is not discussed at all unless a member wants to talk about it in the open-sharing portion of the meetings.

These hour-and-a-half meetings consist of a 20-minute guided meditation, a group reading of a portion of Noah Levine's *Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Path to Recovery from Addiction*, or any other relevant literature, and then a period in which members can volunteer their own experience and

insight. Books can be purchased at cost or just used on the spot from the group's library.

And while the focus of Refuge Recovery is certainly Buddhist, it is hoped that those who are not Buddhist but who have fallen through the cracks of traditional recovery models will also consider and try this new path. Nobody will try to convince others what to think or believe. After all, in Buddhism, one key premise is that one should *not* simply believe and follow the Buddha; instead, one should experience the methods on his or her own to find out whether they work or not. No matter what, when it comes to addiction, the most critical goal of Refuge Recovery is recovery, *not* becoming a Buddhist.

This is not the first time Buddhism and recovery have been wedded. But the approach has always been that this ancient Eastern spiritual practice is filtered through the 12 Steps, and the results have been mixed. After all, the 12 Steps still require a power greater than oneself, and many Buddhists and nonbelievers recoil at such a notion, regardless of how it is interpreted. With Refuge Recovery, however, those who do not believe in a higher power don't have an immediate conflict. What they have instead is an immediate solution to life-diminishing and life-threatening addictions.

Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction. Thursdays 6:30-8 pm. Insight Meditation Central Valley, in the Sarana Kuti (in back) at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto, CA. FREE (donations accepted)

Please email RefugeRecoveryModesto@gmail.com for more info

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Eyeless in Gaza

By URI AVNERY

Everything would be so much easier if war had only one side. Ours, of course.

THE TROUBLE with war is that it has two sides.

There you are, drawing up a wonderful plan for the next war, preparing it, training for it, until everything is perfect.

And then the war starts, and to your utmost surprise it appears that there is another side, too, which also has a wonderful plan, and has prepared it and trained for it.

When the two plans meet, everything goes wrong. Both plans break down. You don't know what's going to happen. How to go on. You do things you have not planned for. And when you have had enough of it and want to get out, you don't know how. It's so much more difficult to end a war than to start a war, especially when both sides need to declare victory.

That's where we are now.

HOW DID it all start? Depends where you want to begin.

Like everywhere else, every event in Gaza is a reaction to another event. You do something because the other side did something. Which they did because you did something. One can unravel this until the beginning of history. Or at least until Samson the Hero.

Samson, it will be remembered, was captured by the Philistines, blinded and brought to Gaza. There he committed suicide by bringing the temple down on himself and all the leaders and people, crying out: "Let my soul die with the Philistines!" (Judges 16:30)

If that's too remote, let's start with the beginning of the present occupation, 1967.

(There was a forgotten occupation before that. When Israel conquered the Gaza Strip and all of Sinai in the course of the 1956 Suez war, David Ben-Gurion declared the founding of the "Third Israeli Kingdom", only to announce in a broken voice, a few dates later, that he had promised President Dwight Eisenhower to withdraw from the entire Sinai Peninsula. Some Israeli parties urged him to keep at least the Gaza Strip, but he refused. He did not want to have hundreds of thousands more Arabs in Israel.)

A friend of mine reminded me of an article I had written less than two years after the Six Day War, during which we occupied Gaza again. I had just found out that two Arab road-construction workers, one from the West Bank and one from the Gaza Strip, doing exactly the same job, were paid different wages. The Gaza man was paid much less.

Being a member of the Knesset, I made inquiries. A high-level official explained to me that this was a matter of policy. The purpose was to cause the Arabs to leave Gaza and settle in the West Bank (or elsewhere), in order to disperse the 400 thousand Arabs then living in the Strip, mostly refugees from Israel. Obviously this did not go so very well - now there are about 1.80 million there.

Then, in February 1969, I warned: "(If we go on) we shall be faced with a terrible choice - to suffer from a wave of terrorism that will cover the entire country, or to engage in acts of revenge and oppression so brutal that they will corrupt our souls and cause the whole world to condemn us."

I mention this not (only) to blow my own horn, but to show that any reasonable person could have foreseen what was going to happen.

IT TOOK a long time for Gaza to reach this point.

I remember an evening in Gaza in the mid-90s. I had been invited to a Palestinian conference (about prisoners), which lasted several days, and my hosts invited me to stay with Rachel in a hotel on the sea-shore. Gaza was then a nice place. In the late evening we took a stroll along the central boulevard. We had pleasant chats with people who recognized us as Israelis. We were happy.

I also remember the day when the Israeli army withdrew from most of the Strip. Near Gaza city there stood a huge Israeli watchtower, many floors high, "so that the Israeli soldiers could look into every window in Gaza". When the soldiers left, I climbed to the top, passing hundreds of happy boys who were going up and down like the angels on the ladder in Jacob's dream in the Bible. Again we were happy. They are probably Hamas members now.

That was the time when Yasser Arafat, son of a Gaza Strip family, returned to Palestine and set up his HQ in Gaza. A beautiful new airport was built. Plans for a large new sea-port were circulating.

(A big Dutch harbor-building corporation approached me discreetly and asked me to use my friendly relations with Arafat to obtain the job for them. They hinted at a very large gratuity. I politely refused. During all the years I knew Arafat, I never asked him for a favor. I think that this was the basis of our rather strange friendship.)

If the port had been built, Gaza would have become a flourishing commercial hub. The standard of living would have risen steeply, the inclination of the people to vote for a radical Islamic party would have declined.

WHY DID this not happen? Israel refused to allow the port to be built. Contrary to a specific undertaking in the 1993 Oslo agreement, Israel cut off all passages between the Strip and the West Bank. The aim was to prevent any possibility of a viable Palestinian state being set up.

True, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon evacuated the more than a dozen settlements along the Gaza shore. Today, one of our rightist slogans is "We evacuated the entire Gaza Strip and what did we get in return? Qassam rockets!" Ergo: we can't give up the West Bank.

But Sharon did not turn the Strip over to the Palestinian Authority. Israelis are obsessed with the idea of doing things "unilaterally". The army withdrew, the Strip was left in chaos, without a government, without any agreement between the two sides.

Gaza sank into misery. In the 2006 Palestinian elections, under the supervision of ex-President Jimmy Carter, the people of Gaza - like the people of the West Bank - gave a relative majority to the Hamas party. When Hamas was denied power, it took the Gaza Strip by force, with the population applauding.

The Israeli government reacted by imposing a blockade. Only limited quantities of goods approved by the occupation authorities were let in. An American senator raised hell when he found out that pasta was considered a security risk and not allowed in. Practically nothing was let out, which

is incomprehensible from the "security" point of view of weapons "smuggling" but clear from the point of view of "strangling". Unemployment reached almost 60%.

The Strip is roughly 40 km long and 10 km wide. In the north and the east it borders Israel, in the west it borders the sea, which is controlled by the Israeli navy. In the south it borders Egypt, which is now ruled by a brutal anti-Islamic dictatorship, allied with Israel. As the slogan goes, it is "the world's largest open-air prison".

BOTH SIDES now proclaim that their aim is to put an end to this situation. But they mean two very different things.

The Israeli side wants the blockade to remain in force, though in a more liberal form. Pasta and much more will be let into the Strip, but under strict supervision. No airport. No sea-port. Hamas must be prevented from re-arming.

The Palestinian side wants the blockade to be removed once and for all, even officially. They want their port and airport. They don't mind supervision, either international or by the Palestinian Unity Government under Mahmoud Abbas.

How to square this circle, especially when the "mediator" is the Egyptian dictator, who acts practically as an agent of Israel? It is a mark of the situation that the US has disappeared as a mediator. After the futile John Kerry peace mediation efforts it is now generally despised throughout the Middle East.

Israel cannot "destroy" Hamas, as our semi-fascist politicians (in the government, too) loudly demand. Nor do they really want to. If Hamas is "destroyed", Gaza would have to be turned over to the Palestinian Authority (viz. Fatah). That would mean the re-unification of the West Bank and Gaza, after all the long-lasting and successful Israeli efforts to divide them. No good.

If Hamas remains, Israel cannot allow the "terror-organization" to prosper. Relaxation of the blockade will only be limited, if that. The population will embrace Hamas even more, dreaming of revenge for the terrible devastation caused by Israel during this war. The next war will be just around the corner - as almost all Israelis believe anyhow.

In the end, we shall be where we were before.

THERE CAN be no real solution for Gaza without a real solution for Palestine.

The blockade must end, with serious security concerns of both sides properly addressed.

The Gaza Strip and the West Bank (with East Jerusalem) must be reunited.

The four "safe passages" between the two territories, promised in the Oslo agreement, must at last be opened.

There must be Palestinian elections, long overdue, for the presidency and the parliament, with a new government accepted by all Palestinian factions and recognized by the world community, including Israel and the USA.

Serious peace negotiations, based on the two-state solution, must start and be concluded within a reasonable time.

Hamas must formally undertake to accept the peace agreement reached by these negotiations. Israel's legitimate security concerns must be addressed.

The Gaza port must be opened and enable the Strip and the

King Center CEO, Dr. Bernice A. King, Calls For Nonviolence In Response To Death Of Michael Brown

Atlanta: The King Center CEO, Bernice A. King, today issued the following statement on the slaying of Mr. Michael Brown and the violence that has occurred in response to his death:

We are saddened and deeply disturbed by the terrible tragedy that has claimed the life of eighteen-year-old, Michael Brown. Our hearts go out to Michael's parents, Mrs. Lesley McSpadden and Mr. Michael Brown, Sr., and all those who loved him. We continue to pray for their strength during this time of tremendous grief.

I personally understand and have experienced the devastation of losing loved ones to gun violence. As the world knows, my father, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated on a balcony in Memphis in the midst of leading a movement for nonviolent social change. I also experienced the pain of losing my paternal grandmother to gun violence when she was murdered in church by a deranged individual. I know first-hand that gun violence, and any violence, for that matter, shatters dreams.

Michael Brown had dreams. He was a recent high school graduate on his way to college. His parents and family had dreams for him and hopes for his future. The community of Ferguson, Missouri had dreams for Michael Brown and has dreams for all of its youth. Now, the dreams for Michael's future are shattered.

When this happens, the innate human reflex is often to inflict pain and violence on those who we believe caused our pain or on other parties that are linked with our assumed enemies. This is what we see happening in Ferguson, Missouri: the looting, destruction of businesses, and threats of more violence. It is often instinctual to meet violence with violence, contempt with contempt, and rage with rage.

Some have chosen to use my father's quote, "Violence is the language of the unheard" as an irrational justification for rioting. But, my father taught that violence is always the wrong response. Though we mourn Michael's death and are outraged by the senseless loss of yet another African-American male, The King Center discourages violence and other destructive acts. Instead, we must unite and channel our collective outrage into constructive nonviolent action; and we must commit ourselves to peaceful and lawful responses, whenever violence emerges, whether on a local or global level.

The universe continually shows us that we cannot respond to instances of harmful behavior and violence with the same behavior, and expect positive results. The violence will not end there and the glimmer of hope for peace and brotherhood diminishes. As my father stated, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that."

This is not alluding to us remaining silent, passive and not

seeking justice. On the contrary, while there are contrasting versions concerning the chain of events that led to Michael being killed, The King Center calls for a swift, accurate and transparent process that will provide complete information to Michael's grieving parents and family members, as well as the millions of Americans who are seeking answers. As we await the complete report on the facts that led to this tragic violence, we must begin the process of healing and reconciliation and "forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline."

Regretfully, in recent months, we have seen similar incidents and other acts of violence occurring across our nation and throughout the world.

Along with instances of violence being experienced by people of color in the United States, global violence is increasing at an alarming rate. Violence continues in Israel and Gaza, minorities in Iraq are experiencing genocidal attacks, civil war has claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent airline passengers in the Ukraine and people are turning against each other in West African nations in response to fears of the spread of Ebola.

Our families, communities, the nation and the world are experiencing explosive violence in these troubled times. It is critical that citizens and organizations across the globe engage in calm, collaborative and thoughtful discourse to identify causes of violence, and craft nonviolent responses, which can lead to healing and reconciliation. My mother, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, often said that my father's nonviolent leadership philosophy and methods are uniquely designed to create social change and achieve lasting reconciliation. She urged people involved in conflicts worldwide to study Dr. King's teachings and strive to create a "culture of nonviolence" in their communities.

The King Center was founded by my mother in 1968 to serve as the official living memorial dedicated to educating the world about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s nonviolent leadership philosophy and methods. Our nonviolence instructors and trainers have extensive experience facilitating constructive dialogue between conflicting parties and are available to provide nonviolence education and training upon request. We have conducted nonviolent education programs all across America and in nations as diverse as Columbia, Nigeria, Haiti, Jordan, Israel and South Africa.

As we work towards a better future for our nation and world, let us remember the words of my father: "The choice today is no longer violence or nonviolence, the choice is nonviolence or nonexistence." By embracing nonviolence as a daily lifestyle, we can begin the process of transforming the ways people resolve conflicts, address global and local violence and lay a new foundation for The Beloved Community.

For more information, call (404) 526-8944. Visit <http://www.thekingcenter.org>



"The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate... Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: Only love can do that."

— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*

Eyeless

from page 6

entire State of Palestine to import and export goods.

There is no sense in trying to "solve" one of these problems separately. They must be solved together. They can be solved together.

Unless we want to go around and around, from one "round" to the next, without hope and redemption.

"We" – Israelis and Palestinians, locked for ever in an embrace of war.

Or do what Samson did: commit suicide.

Green Tips for a Green Planet: We've Gone Solar!

By Tina Arnope Driskill

We've gone solar at our house, as have lots of other folks interested in saving dollars in energy costs, while reducing their impact on the global carbon footprint.

According to our first partial month energy statement, which included only 24 days of production, we contributed to offsetting the global carbon footprint by 588 lbs or the equivalent of 7 trees! As an advocate of global sustainability, it's good to know those numbers will be in the thousands of pounds annually.

As far as utility costs, I can only say that during daylight hours the MID meter is running backwards and the solar energy system meter numbers are going forward, offsetting the amount of power usage being calculated on the MID meter. How much will be determined on an annual basis, but the current metering includes some of the highest usage of the year, and the solar system is producing close to the entire usage recorded at the same time last year.

What does it mean to "go solar"?

While there are numerous renewable energy technologies, going solar in a residential setting generally means the installation of solar or photovoltaic cell panels on a roof area with extended hours of exposure to sunlight. A solar or photovoltaic cell (PV) converts light into electric current using the photoelectric effect, in turn **providing cost effective, environmentally safe electricity that can reduce the amount needed from local your local utility company as much as 10% to 90%**, resulting in a dramatic impact on your utility costs and the environment.

Effective solar panels **produce power on sunny and cloudy days** from both visible sunlight and invisible ultraviolet light. High quality panels are mounted to the roof with rust and corrosion resistant materials, have no moving parts and are reliable and long lasting.

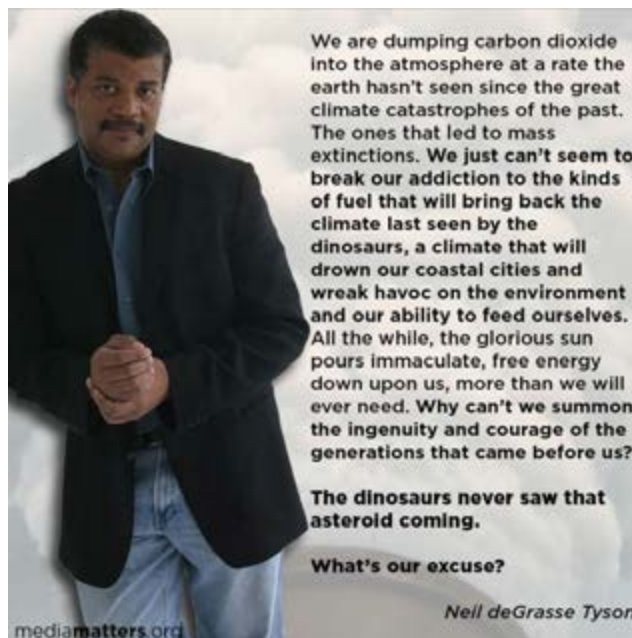
An electrical inverter, which converts the DC (direct current) produced by the solar cells (like that produced by a car or flashlight battery) to AC (alternating current) **producing the same type of electricity as that provided by your local power company for use by all your home appliances and lighting fixtures**. The solar system wiring is connected directly to the home power system through your home circuit breaker box or electrical panel.

Location of a system is determined by readings of your home's solar exposure. Size is determined by several factors including your average monthly electrical usage.

Of course, it goes without saying that installing solar energy systems in commercial and institutional settings would equal exponentially greater financial and environmental benefits.

History of solar energy

It is interesting to note that **solar energy reaching the surface of the planet is so vast that in one year it is close to twice as much as all of the Earth's non-renewable resources of coal, oil, natural gas, and mined uranium combined**.



"The Power of the Sun is Your Power"

Charles Fritts, understanding the enormous potential for solar energy, constructed the first solar cell in the 1880s. Solar cell technology evolved over the decades, and while early cells cost a whopping 286 USD/watt and reached efficiencies of only 4.5–6%, by 2012 available efficiencies exceed 20% and the maximum efficiency of research photovoltaics was more than 40%.

With the Industrial Revolution there was a surge in coal use, which resulted in a transition from wood and biomass resources to fossil fuels. The development of solar technologies in the 1860s was motivated by the possibility that there might soon be a scarcity of coal reserves.

The outbreak of World War I and the discovery of cheap oil in the 1930's put solar power on the back burner. It wasn't until the 1970's that the 1973 oil embargo and 1979 energy crisis led to new global energy policies and renewed interest in developing solar technologies.

Future of Solar Energy

The International Energy Agency has said "the development of affordable, inexhaustible and clean solar energy technologies will have huge long-term benefits. It will increase countries' energy security through reliance on an indigenous, inexhaustible and mostly import-independent resource, enhance sustainability, reduce pollution, lower the costs of mitigating climate change, and keep fossil fuel prices lower than otherwise. These advantages are global. Hence the additional costs of the incentives for early deployment should be considered learning investments; they must be wisely spent and need to be widely shared".

The IEA predicted that **"solar energy technologies such as photovoltaic panels, solar water heaters and power stations built with mirrors could provide a third of the world's energy by 2060 if politicians commit to limiting climate change**. The energy from the sun could play

a key role in de-carbonizing the global economy alongside improvements in energy efficiency and imposing costs on greenhouse gas emitters... The strength of solar is the incredible variety and flexibility of applications, from small scale to big scale".^[106]

We have proved ... that after our stores of oil and coal are exhausted the human race can receive unlimited power from the rays of the sun.

—Frank Shuman, *New York Times*, July 2, 1916^[107]

Other benefits of installing a residential solar panel system

Escalating power company charges will be offset by using privately owned* solar systems. (Leased systems often include options for the company to increase the monthly rent by a certain percentage over time.)

Using a conservative scenario – you might consider that if you are paying a conservative \$150 average per month for electrical utility charges, and your local utility company only raises your rates by a conservative 10% every year, you, the homeowner, will pay the utility company \$81,848 over the next 20-years! That means the US family earning the median average \$50,054 annually will work for more than two years just to turn on the lights!

However you can purchase a solar system with an investment of approximately one-third of the average wage earner's 20-year utility fees, which can offset that entire amount... and once you own the system, it's free power!

The US Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy claims "a \$1 reduction in annual electricity bills translates into a \$20 increase in home value. This means that saving \$1000 per year in energy costs could mean a \$20,000 increase in home value[based upon] both the perception of increased resale value and the actual energy savings produced by the solar array." Industry professionals say "there isn't any other home improvement that generates this type of return on investment. The **homeowner is also eligible to receive a 30% Federal Tax Credit, if the system is purchased instead of leased**, in reality making those 70 cent dollars being invested for the \$20 increase in home value.

Added to the immediate increase in home value are the benefits in retirement planning.

With utility prices rising, realizing that free energy will make a big difference on fixed income retirement funds. Even if you haven't reached those fixed income years, you are probably already feeling the pinch of rising energy costs, especially during the hot summer months when air conditioning causes the bill to skyrocket.

Finally, if you are considering selling your home any time in the future, consider that the presence of a working solar energy system is a great incentive for buyers and makes the home easier and faster to sell.

Powderkeg

who's right
who's wrong
echoes the tired refrain
from the stalemated song

so much finger pointing
and posturing
so many face-saving threats
a terroristic treadmill
breeds resolve
with no regrets
a hate-marred history
a pyrotechnic past
for refuge dreamseekers
a hard-earned homeland
at long last

a sanctuary for zealots
the West Bank land of Oz
sanctimonious stewpot
of religious wrangling
now the solution
once the cause
given up with great reluctance
much blood spilled
to pave the way
memories daunt the prolonged process
peaceful pledges
seize the day

will it end the years of hatred
will it bind those wounds so deep
lasting peace is a thin-aired challenge
a slippery slope
that looms so steep

who's right?
who's wrong?
or does it really matter
if both sides can get along

— k. n. gunn

Crab Louie, Morro Bay, 2013

I ordered a crab louie in Morro Bay
when I was on vacation
as I lunched on the lettuce
in my louie
I flashed back to our trip
down interstate 101
through the farming communities
of Salinas, Soledad and Gonzalez
I bit into the bitter feuds between
the hired farm hands and the growers
I tasted the perspiration
of the pickers
I chewed on the exploitation
of the latino laborers
I tried to swallow
the long hours
the low pay
the 37 elementary schools
Cesar Chavez had to attend
as his parents sought work
I burped up the boycott
I had difficulty digesting
the fields with no bathrooms
no amount of salad dressing
could smother
the systematic segregation
the protracted prejudice
the union-busting belligerence
of the growers

the history on my plate
left my palate wanting

k. n. gunn

Massacre Mania

tribal terrormongers
ravage their way
through Rwanda
beastly bloodletting
litters the land
with a sickly stain
so many innocents
senselessly sentenced
unconscionable carnage
an out of control orgy
of hate
vented in atrocious acts
of frenetic fury

thousands
of parentless progeny
left to fend for themselves
seeking sanctuary
finding fear
instead
so little for them
to look forward to
so much to dread
and endless nightmare
for the living dead

kevin n. gunn

The Wall Within

they're trapped behind the wall within
looking back at where they've been
by memories their souls are haunted
in history books their service taunted
second guessing why they went
they only know that they were sent
Uncle Sam called them to serve
and dealt them scars they don't deserve
painful wounds that will not heal
fleeting flashbacks grimly real
of buddies lying six feet under
all for what still they wonder
survivor's guilt makes them ask why
they were not the ones to die
they can't reclaim the years they lost
the nation's conscience bears the cost
they wish the past would set them free
restore their sense of dignity
so they could learn to look ahead
and let the country mourn their dead

— kevin neill gunn



Poet – Kevin Neill Gunn

Kevin Gunn is the current Poet Laureate of Livermore, California. He has won awards in the Las Positas annual poetry contest, the Alameda County Fair. His poems have been published in the Chiron Review, the Song of the San Joaquin, and The California Quarterly, and many Las Positas Anthologies. He has won awards at the Poets Dinner and the Ina Coolbrith Circle. He has run a high school poetry club for twenty years and started "Teen Poet of the Month" as the third Poet Laureate of Livermore. He continues to curate the Ravenswood Poetry Series.



A Letter From Sanctuary: Rosa Robles Loreto

On Thursday, August 7, I entered into sanctuary with my husband Gerardo and our two sons Gerardo Jr. and Jose Emiliano in an effort to stop my deportation and to keep our family together. This decision, to enter sanctuary at Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson, Arizona, was not an easy choice to make but the alternative was far worse. The thought of being separated from my boys, not being able to see them and be with them as they grow and face the world, was more than I could take.

It is in this spirit that I join with local advocates in Tucson to ask that the Secretary of Homeland Security, Jeh Johnson, use his power and discretion to stop my deportation and ensure that my family remains together. I know that there are thousands of other mothers in similar situations. I hope that you will take action now to urge Secretary Johnson to do the right thing for me, for my sons and for my community. I have faith in God that we will succeed and that each of us will continue to cry out for justice for the many other mothers who risk being separated from their children.

Thank you for your commitment to justice and family unity!

Rosa Robles Loreto

More about Rosa at <http://forms.nomoredeaths.org/a-letter-from-sanctuary-rosa-robles-loreto/about-rosas-case/>

Pope Francis's 10 Tips For Happiness drawn from personal experience

1. Live and let live
2. Be giving of yourself to others
3. Proceed calmly in life
4. Have a healthy sense of leisure
5. Sundays should be holidays
6. Find innovative ways to create dignified jobs for young people
7. Respect and take care of nature
8. Stop being negative
9. Don't proselytize - respect others' beliefs
10. Work for peace

From <http://www.inquisitr.com/1384969/pope-francis-lists-his-10-tips-for-happiness-drawn-from-personal-experience-no-9-will-pleasantly-shock-you/>

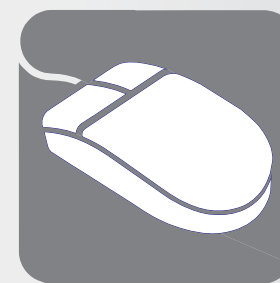
In Memoriam

Hurley Couchman
September 5, 1919 ~ February 16, 2014

Thelma Christiansen Couchman
November 1919 ~ July 2014

Donald Lundberg
August 11, 1915 ~ June 26, 2014

Fred George Herman
May 9, 1930 ~ July 12, 2011



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Babies in the river

from page 1

After listening to these horror stories, I traveled "up the river," so to speak, to Arriaga, Mexico, the focal point of the journey from the slums of Central America to the United States. After crossing the Guatemala-Mexican border, the migrants, whose presence in Mexico is illegal, would have to run the gauntlet of La Arrocera, one of the most dangerous places on earth, a lawless area where it was open season on migrants, where they could be robbed, raped, and killed with impunity. If they could get through that to Arriaga, they could hop on the roof of a train they call *la bestia*, "the Beast," which they hoped to ride as far north as possible to the U.S. border.

La bestia, if they can board, is an improvement insofar as they can ride instead of walk, but safety-wise, not so much. For one thing, it is easy to fall off or get thrown off the roof of the train, and the suction drags you under the wheels where you lose your limbs or your life. For another, if it is not bad enough that petty criminals can and will rob you or kill you, the route of the train goes through territory controlled by organized crime syndicates – the media calls them drug cartels, a term from economic textbooks that seems a bit mild when referring to extraordinarily violent organizations whose favorite prey are migrants from Central America.

In Arriaga, the migrant can also find help at the House of Mercy, run by Padre Heyman Vazquez. When we arrived at the shelter, Father Vazquez was kind and generous with his time. He talked about doing all they could to help the migrants as they passed through. He showed us photos of their work. The facility had just been updated, and now they had bunkhouse-style sleeping quarters. He was proud of that.

We visited a bit with a group of young teenagers from Central America. This was during the worst of the economic

downturn in the U.S., and my husband asked them if they knew that jobs in the U.S. were very hard to find right now? Did they know about the recession? I will never forget the look on their faces, a kind of pity at our ignorance of the conditions from which they were fleeing.

Of course they knew, likely better than most Americans, the state of the U.S. economy. O.K., maybe they did have no future in America. Maybe they would be hurt or killed on the journey to get there. Maybe they had no future anywhere. But one thing they did know, come what may, they would not go home. Home was worse than anything that could happen to them.

Two years later, Padre Vazquez came to Houston. He was kind enough to visit my campus and to meet with my administration and students. In those two years, the tide of Central American migrants coming through Arriaga had already started to overflow. They were younger and younger, and more and more were coming alone.

In those two years since I had seen him, he had changed into a different man, really, a man consumed with this tidal wave of children. He had tried and tried to turn them around, to discourage them, to get them to go back home. They had no idea what they would have to go through, he told them, just to get to the U.S. border, let alone get across it. And we're talking about what happens to adults, who have some ability to protect themselves. You are just children!

He said he almost always failed. They already knew what it would be like, or thought they did. Still, they would not turn around. More kept coming. He wanted us to help.

Fast-forward three more years to the present. The situation is worse, much worse. Catholic shelters and other relief facilities all along the migrant trail are being overwhelmed with the

flood of Central American migrants. The rapes and robberies and kidnappings on the way to the U.S. border continue, but now, when you finally get there, organized criminals control the means of getting across from the Mexican side. You have to pay them to cross, and the price, albeit not always in money, is always very high.

Yet more and more keep coming. We have reached a tipping point in Central America, a gate that cannot be closed, a flood that cannot be stopped without going upstream and really seeing what is throwing all these children into such a deadly river. What kind of conditions would send a child out on their own in such a manner? What horror must families and communities have experienced to allow this to happen?

This is a "breaking story," and we at Casa Juan Diego are ready as always to help in the humanitarian aspects of this crisis as best we can. When babies are floating in the river, the first step is rescue. For those who want to study the issue in more depth, though, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops recently sent a delegation to Central America to find out what is going on "upstream." They found a perfect storm, which you can read about on-line by searching for *Mission to Central America: The Flight of Unaccompanied Children to the United States*. We will take a look at the Bishop's report later in Part Two of this series, but for now, it is a very good place for the reader to start. See <http://www.usccb.org/about/migration-policy/fact-finding-mission-reports/upload/Mission-To-Central-America-FINAL-2.pdf>

See more at: <http://cjd.org/2014/07/01/babies-in-the-river-urgent-humanitarian-situation-part-i/#sthash.R4yetMIH.dpuf>

From the Houston Catholic Worker, Vol. XXXV, No. 3, June-August 2014, edited by Mark and Louise Wick.

Got Science? Ohio Wake-Up Call On Fracking Disclosure Laws

From the Union of Concerned Scientists

At a Halliburton fracking site in Clarington, Ohio in the southeastern part of the state, a fire broke out on a recent Saturday morning. What happened next should be a wake-up call to every U.S. citizen, especially the millions of Americans who live in communities where fracking is planned or underway.

Ohio firefighters battled the blaze for an entire week. Before they managed to fully extinguish it, the fire caused some 30 explosions that rained shrapnel over the surrounding area; 20 trucks on the site caught fire; and tens of thousands of gallons of chemicals—including a toxic soup of diesel fuel, hydrochloric acid, and ethylene glycol—mixed with runoff into the nearby creek, killing an estimated 70,000 fish as far as five miles downstream. State officials physically removed the decomposing remains of more than 11,000 fish and other aquatic life in their efforts to reduce the damage to the waterway. <http://www.theoec.org/press-releases/usepa-report-reveals-odnr-repeatedly-awol-field-command-meetings-during-critical>

Drinking Water Threatened

If the severe damage to a local creek weren't troubling enough, this particular waterway feeds into the Ohio River roughly five miles away where, just another 1.7 miles downstream, a public water intake on the West Virginia side of the river serves local residents.

But here's the most disgraceful thing of all about the accident: despite the fish kill and potential contamination of drinking water, the public still doesn't know the full list of chemicals that polluted the air and water supply. In fact, the fire raged and runoff occurred for five full days before Halliburton provided state and federal EPA officials with a full list of the proprietary fracking chemicals the company used at the site.

Why?

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

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Because Ohio, like many other states, has a fracking disclosure law that does more to protect company secrets than it does to protect citizens.

It's a situation that clearly needs to change.

Officials in the Dark

The preliminary EPA report on the accident in Ohio makes for eye-opening reading. After the fire began on June 28, local, state, and federal officials worked straight through the July 4th holiday to contain the accident but their efforts were hampered by poor interagency coordination and a lack of adequate information about the hazards involved. <http://www.theoec.org/sites/default/files/Eisenbarth%20well%20pad%20fire.pdf>

As one environmental official at the site later told the press: "We knew there was something toxic in the water. But we had no way of assessing whether it was a threat to human health or how best to protect the public."

Officials made the determination to evacuate residents within a one-mile radius of the fire. Luckily, in rural Clarington, this meant the evacuation of just 25 households. But the report makes it clear that the precaution was based on insufficient information. Among the report's many revelations is the fact that significant quantities of more than 16 chemical products were stored at the site, including caches of explosives and even radioactive Cesium-137.

Ron French, a Clarington, Ohio resident who lives less than two miles from the fracking site, says his property was blanketed in soot but he was neither evacuated nor fully informed about the potentially toxic hazard he and his family faced. He now worries about letting his kids play in the yard.

Outrage in Ohio

Nathan Johnson, an attorney for the Ohio Environmental Council, says the Clarington fire "points out that we sorely need changes to Ohio law to protect the public and get this essential information to officials in order to protect public health."

As Johnson notes, the way Ohio fracking disclosure law is written, it prohibits anyone from accessing information about "trade secret" fracking chemicals except the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) or doctors treating a specific patient. By statute, however, neither ODNR nor doctors are allowed to share that crucial information. The Clarington case points out that the key emergency responders didn't have access to the information they needed to protect the public, Johnson says. "Water authorities need secret chemical information immediately. Our drinking water is at risk unless the legislature makes some much needed changes."

Green Tips Water Conservation: Home Water Audit

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Water conservation is always a top priority, and even more so now. Consider the following suggestions in the Home Water Audit on line at <http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/home-water-audit/>

Saving water is easy when you think about it. Here's a fun and easy way to see how water-wise you are around your home. Click on the online buttons that describes your water

The argument seems to have convinced Gov. John Kasich, a strong supporter of fracking. Since the accident, Kasich has stated that Ohio needs to change its law, telling the Ohio press that it was unacceptable for emergency responders, including federal and Ohio EPA officials, not to know the full list of chemicals that might have spilled into the river. Under such conditions, Kasich said, "We want people to know what the fracking fluid contains."

A National Problem

The alarming fact is that Ohio's laws are actually slightly stronger than those in many other states. Of the roughly 30 states where fracking is now underway, only six require advance disclosure of the fracking chemicals that will be used. Many state laws, like the one in Ohio, allow the agency overseeing oil and gas drilling to receive the needed chemical information but limit that agency's ability to share the information, even in the case of an emergency. <http://www.theoec.org/sites/default/files/Eisenbarth%20well%20pad%20fire.pdf>

Andrew Rosenberg, director of the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists, says the Ohio case clearly highlights the need for laws across the country to better protect the public. As he puts it, "It is totally unacceptable that claims about trade secrets should be allowed to trump public health and safety."

No matter what, Rosenberg says, the safety of our communities must be paramount. "Can we as a society really believe that allowing Halliburton to protect its profits is more important than protecting the health of our communities and citizens when a disaster occurs?"

As Rosenberg notes, the Center for Science and Democracy has called for stiffer fracking disclosure laws, baseline analyses of air and water quality near drilling sites, comprehensive monitoring, and increased community access to information about local fracking activities.

Based on a meeting last year that brought together scientists, lawyers, oil and gas representatives and community activists from across the country, the Center published a free community toolkit on fracking that offers local citizens vital information to make informed decisions about unconventional oil and gas drilling in their communities. If you live near a fracking site or know someone who does, you owe it to yourself to take a look. [Get the toolkit at <http://www.ucsusa.org/center-for-science-and-democracy/events/fracking-forum-toolkit.html>]

From UCS, <http://www.ucsusa.org/publications/got-science/2014/got-science-august-2014.html>

use habits, then click Calculate Score to see how you're doing. It might surprise you just how easy it is to save water – and money – around your home.

This audit is a simple way to discover what you are already doing as a water-wise consumer and what you can add to your everyday water conservation options. Finally, be sure to share this information with friends and family.



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

SEPTEMBER

Ongoing: MJC Science Colloquium. Science Community Center, Rm. 115, Wednesdays, West Campus, 3-4 p.m. Contact: Richard Anderson (209) 529-5182 andersonr@mjc.edu
Sept. 24: Bill Anelli, MJC Philosopher, "The Demarcation Problem: Distinguishing Science from Pseudo-science" Oct. 1: Meg Gonzalez, Edward Aguilar, Tuolumne River Trust: "The Tuolumne River, A Lifeline for Modesto."

7 SUN: Festival Del Nopal/Cactus Festival. Nopales/Cactus Cooking Contest; Tasting; Entertainment; Bouncy Houses; Car Show; Gift Drawings; Food; Arts & Crafts. Ceres Flea Market, 1651 E. Whitmore Ave., 10 am-6 pm Ceres. Free Admission, \$4.00 parking. Sponsored by Latino Community Roundtable. Info: Tony Madrigal, (209) 579-4776.

11 THURS: Preview night for Good People. Pulitzer Prize-winning play. Benefits the Motherlode Martin Luther King Jr. Committee. Stage 3 Theatre, 208 S. Green St. Sonora. For Tickets [\$20] Pat Cervelli, 928-3494, patcervelli@frontiernet.net

13 SAT: Great Sierra River Clean Up. In partnership with Operation 9299, join us for our Central Valley Fall River Clean Up, 8 am - 11 am (even if you can't be there for the whole three hours, please come!). Meet at 7th St. and Tuolumne Blvd. Modesto. Bring sturdy shoes, gloves, refillable water bottle. RSVP to edward@tuolumne.org

7th Annual Modesto Architecture Festival, September 13 - 21. More than 115 events have been scheduled over nine days. Find schedule of events at <http://www.modestoarchfest.com/schedule.html>

17 WED: MPLC September Film Night: Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin at the Peace/Life Center, 720 13th St, 6:30 pm. FREE. See article, this issue.

19 FRI: 7th Annual Architecture Film Night, State Theatre. Short films about architecture, landscape, and design. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres at reception 6 p.m., movies at 7 p.m. Admission: FREE <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/370>. Info: www.modestoarchfest.com

21 SUN: Modesto Film Society presents *Crimson Pirate*. 2 pm. State Theatre, 1307 J. St. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/319>

24 WED: Peace Panels Project. Presentation, discussion on peace and justice, censored news stories, nonviolent communication, and consumer choices making a better world. See New large peace panels. 7 pm, College Avenue Congregational Church, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. Peace and justice books 27-50% discount.

28 SUN: Modesto Film Society presents *Chicago*. 2 pm. State Theatre, 1307 J. St. Visit <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/320>

LOOKING AHEAD

Ongoing: MAPS: Modesto Area Partners in Science Fall '14 Outreach for the Community Fridays, 7:30 pm, MJC West Campus. Free parking, admission. <http://maps.events.mjc.edu/> Oct. 3: Mary Stuart Rogers Student Center, Dr. Alex Filippenko, *Dark Matter and the Runaway Universe*. 2004 Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization recipient. Voted best professor, UC Berkeley 9 times.

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

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. Email WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com or call 209.577.1604.

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% welcome. Meetings: 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.

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.

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.

WEDNESDAYS

LifeRing Secular Recovery. Wednesday 6:30 pm, Reynolds Room, 1700 McHenry Village Way, Modesto. Back of McHenry Village across from the Memorial Health and Education Center. Meeting offering support for people in relationships with people wrestling with addiction.

Modesto Folk Dancers: All levels welcome. Raube Hall, Ceres (call for address), 578-5551.

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

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

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

Refuge Recovery: A Buddhist Approach to Recovery from Addiction Insight Meditation Central Valley, in the Sarana Kuti (in back), Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, 2172 Kiernan Ave., 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 Bel Piatto Italian Cucina, 1000 Kansas Ave., Modesto, CA. Info: call Maggie Mejia, (209) 303-2664, <http://lcrstan.org>

CVAN (Central Valley Action Network) 3rd Thursday, 7-8:15 pm, Peace/Life Center 720 13th St. Contact: Jocelyn at jocelyncoper@gmail.com or 510-467-2877

or 209-312-9413

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.

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

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

LifeRing Secular Recovery: Friday 6:30 pm. Jana Lynn Room, 500 N 9th St, Modesto. Every first Friday we alternate between a LifeRing & 12 Step speaker with a discussion following.

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. 7-9:30 pm, \$5 (students free). Info: call Judy, 209-480-0387.

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

Mujeres Latinas: Last Friday, lunch meetings, Info: Cristina Villego, 549-1831.

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

SATURDAY

So Easy ~ So Good: Vegetarian/Vegan/Wannabee potluck/meeting every third Saturday of the month, 11:30 AM- 1:30 PM. Info: Kathy or Chris, 209-529-5360; email kathyhaynesSESG@gmail.com

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