



## Don't Miss the Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team Play in Modesto!

By **JAMES COSTELLO**

The 2023 league champion Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team, sponsored by the NBA Golden State Warriors, will visit Modesto for a KCPB Community Radio 95.5 FM and Road Warriors fundraiser. KCPB Radio is a project of the non-profit Modesto Peace/Life Center.



This one-of-a-kind audience-interactive event will take place from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on **Saturday, May 18, 2024**, at the Modesto Junior College Gymnasium, 435 College Avenue, Modesto.

You will witness the Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team play top-level basketball, all from their wheelchairs! The strength and determination

of these players will surprise and inspire you! Bring your friends and family out for an uplifting, fast-paced, fun-filled day.

The total experience will consist of the Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team versus school basketball team members and various community celebrities. Audience members will play in wheelchairs and experience the sport. There will be a silent auction, raffle prizes, and entertainment. Modesto Junior College's concession stand will be open.

*ModestoView* and KCPB's SKA dynamic musical expert, Middagh Goodwin, will MC.

The public is invited to attend. Tickets are \$5 per person, \$2 for students (MJC students free), and \$3 for veterans, seniors, and people with disabilities. Call Jocelyn Cooper at 209-422-0119 or email [jocelyncooper2012@gmail.com](mailto:jocelyncooper2012@gmail.com) for more information.

## The 39th Annual Peace Camp is Here! June 21-23, 2024

The Modesto Peace/Life Center's 39th Annual Peace Camp in the Sierras will take place on June 21-23, 2024. Spend a weekend in nature building community and working toward peace, justice, and a sustainable environment through nonviolent action. You'll enjoy workshops, good food, singing, crafts, a talent show, recreation, and stimulating people of all ages in a beautiful mountain setting.

**About Peace Camp:** Peace Camp officially opens with supper at 6:00 pm on Friday and closes after breakfast and the morning gathering on Sunday. The camp is run by volunteers, and campers share in meal preparation, cleanup, and other work around the camp. Families and individuals of all ages are welcome. Minors under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Camp rates and registration dates will be announced soon! The camp fee covers the program, food and lodging for the weekend. Partial scholarships and day rates are also

available. Donations for scholarships are appreciated.

To volunteer or be added to the Peace Camp 2024 Interest list for the latest updates, visit <http://peacelifecenter.org/peace-camp/>.

**About Camp Peaceful Pines:** Peace Camp is held at Camp Peaceful Pines, on Clark Fork Road off Hwy. 108 in the Stanislaus National Forest. The Camp features a kitchen/mess hall, bathroom facilities with showers, rustic cabins, and platform tents. A cabin with special needs may be requested. Depending on the number of campers, cabins may be shared.

Registration will open soon. Once maximum capacity is reached, a waitlist will be available for others to enroll. To register, please visit: [peacelifecenter.org/peace-camp](http://peacelifecenter.org/peace-camp/), or contact Megan Parravano, at 209-497-7220, [meganparravano@gmail.com](mailto:meganparravano@gmail.com)



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## Growing Our Awareness to Create a Better World Together: Community Conversations about Disability Justice

From the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County.

Disability affects all of us at some point in our lives. Many of us want to support the disabled people around us but we aren't sure how to be helpful.

As a follow-up to our previous Community Conversations on Gen Z, LGBTQ+, and Neurodiversity, we are inviting the community to a dialogue about disability justice and how we can be the change we would like to see in the world.

Disability justice is a way of working together to break down the unfair systems and social obstacles that prevent people with disabilities and other marginalized groups from fully joining in and getting what they need. It emphasizes the importance of understanding how different forms of discrimination overlap and prioritizes listening to and learning from those who have firsthand experience.

This event is a trusted space for you to learn and discuss if you've ever wondered, "What are some societal factors that influence the way we view and treat people with disabilities?" or "What are some ways in which disability justice can apply to an aging population?" All attendees who attend these nonjudgmental, candid conversations will receive an informational packet.

This Community Conversation will take place on June 2, 2024, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto, 95356.

We are using Eventbrite to keep track of attendees. If you would like to reserve a spot, Elaine will sign you up at [mlainey1@gmail.com](mailto:mlainey1@gmail.com). Or you can register at:

<https://DisabilityUU.eventbrite.com>

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Contact  
Jocelyn Cooper  
[jocelyncooper2012@gmail.com](mailto:jocelyncooper2012@gmail.com)

## Poetry and Art Healing the Soul in Modesto City Schools

By VIELKA SOLANO

Poetry and Art Healing the Soul, supported by a Heartland Grant, has been conducting workshops during the 2023/24 school year in Modesto City Schools to introduce students to the power of expressing themselves through poetry, music, and visual art.

The workshops have been led by a group of local poets, Vielka Solano and Manuel Murieta, artist, Cesar Barajas, and musician, David Rogers. The group has helped students develop and write their own poetry, play drums, and develop a collective mural based on the themes emerging from the poetry. The mural is a visual representation of the hopes, dreams, challenges, and trauma that the students are expressing through their poetry.

The project has focused on communities with economic disadvantages in the bottom quartile of the California Healthy Place Index. The Project Director, Vielka Solano, believes that artistic

expression allows participants to engage in empathetic learning, and that this project will empower participants to



### The State Proudly Presents "WHAT A DRAG! Season 2"

After a sold-out and effervescently entertaining show in 2023, Kappa Epsilon has been asked to bring you a new show with new experts and brand-new novices! We are glad you asked.

We proudly present "WHAT A DRAG! Season 2." This year's show will look a little different, but we promise you will have FUN, be ENTERTAINED, and you may leave a little more educated about drag culture. What happens when "Dancing with the Stars" meets a PG-13 "RuPaul" for the second year in a row? You have to be here to find out!

Last year, we donated \$14,000 to local nonprofits: Drum Love, Haven, The PLACE, and Women Techmakers of Modesto. This year, our beneficiaries will be CASA, The Rainbow Chorus, the Youth Navigation Center of Stanislaus County, and The GAP.

VIP ticket holders (\$75) receive a What A Drag! Swag bag AND an invitation to the VIP pre-show party with the cast and the front two rows. Last year's swag bag was valued at \$80, and this year's bag will be in that same price range.

Premium tickets (along the aisle, \$60) have direct access to tip the performers as they make their way through the audience. [Buy tickets here](#)

a state of better mental health.

We invite you to join us for presentation of the poetry and art each school has created and the unveiling of each mural. Events will take place at the participating schools in May, as shown below.

Please feel free to reach out for additional details. **Information:** Vielka Solano, (209) 857-0549, [poesiyartecurandoelalma@gmail.com](mailto:poesiyartecurandoelalma@gmail.com)

#### Presentations:

- Orville Wright Elementary School - May 2, 3:00 pm.
- Mark Twain and Franklin Elementary Schools May 14, 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm.
- Robertson Road Elementary School - May 20, 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm.
- Bret Harte Elementary School - May 22, 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm.



#### MEMORIAM

**MARIA C. QUIJALVO**  
Modesto/Stanslaus NAACP Secretary

**LUELLA EMILY COLE**  
January 10, 1945 - April 22, 2024  
Stanislaus Connections Editor,  
Grammarian Expert  
Dedicated Teacher



#### MODESTO PEACE/LIFE CENTER

Working for **peace, justice**  
and a **sustainable future**

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## In Memoriam — Sandra Clark Sample

### April 17, 1939 - January 23, 2024

Modesto, California - Sandra Clark Sample died of cancer on January 23rd, 2024, at the age of 84, three weeks after her initial diagnosis.

“Sandy,” as she was known to her friends and family, was born April 17, 1939, in Bradford, Pennsylvania, to Mildred M and Howard P Clark, on her brother Forest’s third birthday. After high school, Sandy left Bradford to attend Denison University in Ohio and then Union Theological Seminary in New York City where she earned her Master of Divinity.

Between semesters at Union, Sandy came to California, where she worked in the Migrant Ministry with migrant children in western Stanislaus County. For decades, she was a faithful supporter of the United Farm Workers’ movement.

In Modesto, she met and married Frank Sample – a recent widower with three teenage daughters – and had a son. In 1980, after Frank’s death, Sandy went back to college to become a preschool teacher and worked with children for the next 25 years at Grace Lutheran Church, Kairos - a preschool she founded with friends in the 1980s, and Modesto Junior College’s Campus Childcare Program.

Throughout her time in Modesto, Sandy was an active member of the Modesto Peace/Life Center and College Avenue United Church of Christ where she sang in the choir, served on various committees both with the local church and the conference, and acted as moderator several



times including when the church became one of the first to be open and affirming to the LGBTQ community in the late 1980s. She never stopped working for justice though she did slow down some near the end.

She was an original activist with the Modesto Peace/Life Center, beginning with its founding in 1970. Over the years, she was a constant presence at nonviolent actions, including vigils, fasts, civil disobedience, and marches. At Peace Camp in the Sierras, each year, she would read a story to the children.

At the Annual Modesto Hiroshima Commemoration of the Atomic Bomb, she read the story “Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes.” She also folded 1,000 paper

cranes and became the custodian of the display of the hanging origami cranes which now hangs in the Peace/Life Center’s office.

Sandy often attended the Hiroshima and Nagasaki events at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, where nuclear weapon research takes place, and participated with others in an action by lying in the street in front of the main gate to represent the dead from the use of nuclear weapons.

Sandy started and hosted the Center’s Song Circle. She initiated the Annual John McCutcheon Benefit Concert and was its emcee for 18 years.

In recent years, she co-created the Kitchen Korner at the Peace/Life Center, soliciting used kitchenware and small appliances and distributing them to those who had newly found a home but had no furnishings.

Sandy is survived by her son Stephen Sample; her daughters Dawnine Sample Dyer and Martha Sample Tingle; her nieces Neidra Clark and Natalie Macpherson; her grandchildren Gerrit Veneman, Mara Veneman, Blake Mattos, Mary Mattos, and Theo Sample; and six great-grandchildren.

A celebration of Sandy’s life will be held at the College Avenue UCC Church, 1341 College Ave., Modesto, on Saturday, May 18, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

## Hello Modesto!

Have you heard about the Modesto Peace/Life Center? It’s not just a place—it’s a movement inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.’s vision of a “Beloved Community,” built on peaceful resistance and mutual respect. This Center has become a beacon of activism, empowering our community through advocacy for peace, justice, and environmental sustainability.

Founded on the ideals that drove MLK, the Center has long been a home for those who fight for equality and harmony. But as we look to the future, there’s a pressing need for new energy and fresh perspectives. We need the passion and innovation of people of all ages to keep this legacy vibrant and effective.

Our doors are always open to fantastic people and organizations that share our mission. For instance, we recently hosted Girl Scout Troop 3337, a shining example of how we support and uplift youth initiatives that align with our values.

What does involvement at the Modesto Peace/Life Center look like? It’s about taking up the torch from those who began this journey and carrying it forward with your own unique flair. By joining us, you’re stepping into a community that laughs, learns, and stands together—often in protest, always in solidarity.

Our Center hosts regular meetings and workshops focusing on a wide array of issues from racial equity to climate change. We also organize local gardening initiatives and participate in global peace efforts. There’s always something happening, and every bit of participation helps

us make a massive impact.

Joining the Modesto Peace/Life Center means engaging in meaningful activism. You’ll connect with mentors who have decades of experience in rallying for various causes. These seasoned activists can provide insights and wisdom that only come from years of dedication. You’ll also meet peers who, like you, are eager to see real change and are ready to make it happen.

But it’s not all serious business; we also know how to have fun! Our community enjoys potlucks, music nights, and art installations that not only further our mission but also bring us together in celebration of our collective efforts. Imagine using your artistic talents to advocate for change or applying your tech skills in social impact projects. The opportunities to merge your passions with activism are limitless.

Moreover, by joining the Modesto Peace/Life Center, you become part of a larger network. This connection extends beyond local boundaries, linking you with like-minded individuals across the nation and around the globe. Your local actions contribute to a global movement striving for a better tomorrow.

So, how can you get involved? Reach out to us! Let us



know what drives you, and we’ll help you find the perfect niche within our community. Whether you’re interested in leading new initiatives, supporting ongoing projects, or simply learning more about what it means to be an activist, there’s a place for you here.

Remember, every significant movement began with small steps. Your journey towards peace and justice starts with a single step—right here, with us. The perfect moment to get involved is now. The perfect place is the Modesto

Peace/Life Center.

We’re excited to see new faces, hear fresh ideas, and feel the energy that you bring. Together, we can continue to forge pathways of peace and uphold the fight for justice and sustainability in our beloved Modesto.

Are you ready to help keep MLK’s dream alive, make a difference, and maybe even make a bit of history? Join us at the Modesto Peace/Life Center. Let’s light up Modesto with enthusiasm and action!

Catch you at the Center,  
Karlha Arias

**IG: @modestopeacelifecenter**

# Spring Ahead on Peoria Mountain

By **ELAINE GORMAN, Vice-Chair, Mother Lode Sierra Club, Yokuts Group**

With one less hour to schedule on the day that we set our clocks ahead, I chose an early season hike with a scant 50-minute drive from home. Charlene, Jeanne, and I set off, and we soon launched into a discussion of hiking and backpacking gear. Warning — always inspect the condition of old hiking boots, lest the soles separate from the rest of the boot!

The Peoria Wildlife Area is public land near Jamestown managed by the Federal Bureau of Reclamation. Just past the Sierra Conservation Center/Prison, there is a large staging/parking area. Note the vault toilet and water faucets there; they may come in handy. Continue on Peoria Flat Road to the locked gate; a small dirt parking area is on the right. Byron, our expert birder for the day, soon arrived.

The trail begins just beyond the gate, marked by a large sign that says “Trail”. Duh. It is the only sign on the hike. Luckily, it is difficult to become truly lost as trails are mostly evident. We decided on the 5.5 mile clockwise lollipop route, but this hike can be extended by taking the trail to the left, which will add a couple of miles and a bit more steep elevation gain.

We stayed on the main dirt road/trail, ignoring the side trails. The blue oaks were beginning to leaf out, adding a dark green tinge to the ambient grass green of the hills. There were several ephemeral streams brimming with water from recent rain. The first 1/2 mile is a gentle climb, then a moderate climb for about a mile. We passed leafy California buckeyes and red- and green-leaved poison oak. Dead tree limbs and trunks become acorn granaries for woodpeckers. White quartz chunks are embedded in the dirt, and we casually looked for gold sparkle.

It was a bit too early for abundant wildflowers (another few weeks of warm weather is needed), but we admired the sparse specimens of fiddleneck, blue dicks, and popcorn flowers. As we gained elevation (about 300 feet), our view expanded, bringing the prison, rock quarry, and the town of Copperopolis into view. We passed under large power towers and lines and reached the “T” at Peoria Ridge Trail.

A “Wildlife Restoration Area” (a fenced area to exclude livestock) sign caught our attention, so we walked through the gate and checked out the pond. Byron identified a Merlin, Western Bluebirds, and Violet-Green Swallows. We turned right/east at the “T” and met a guy loaded down with a full backpack. He was in training for the PCT in a couple of months. He showed us his solar battery charging system and gear. Impressive.

New Melones Reservoir came into view on our left. It appeared calm, peaceful, and full. We had good views of the High Sierra. Char used her Peak Finder app to identify Cooper, Clark, and Mokelumne Peaks. Byron and I shared stories of our visits to these Sierra high points. We spotted a large cylindrical plastic tank in the ground. These “guzzlers” are located in dry areas and are used by wildlife. They can be



filled by water trucks and natural rainfall. After a leisurely, slightly downhill stroll of about 1.5 miles, we reached a large, fenced pond. A picnic table is conveniently located here for our lunch break.

After lunch, we began our loop return. Green Springs Trail (NOT signed) is just past the fence — keep your eye out for a faint trail on the right. To avoid ticks, tuck your pants into your sox, as the narrow trail is rimmed by tall grass. Soon, Jeanne was brushing off a hitchhiking tick. We went back under the power lines as the trail dips down. We could see a large valley to our left, which is filled with beautiful wildflowers (such as Goldfields and Lupine) in



early spring. In about 3/4 mile our narrow trail joined a larger trail, we stayed left to continue our loop.

Wild cucumber vines crawled out of the grass, their white star-shaped blooms ready to greet the sun. A few yellow *lomatioms* and creamy phacelia were on display. We watched a nervous White-Breasted Nuthatch flit from tree to tree. Red-Tailed Hawks and TurkeyVultures soared above us as we slowly descended.

We passed a low water tank, avoided the mud, and stayed left. Soon, we reached the main dirt road/trail, completed the loop, and walked back to the vehicles. We cheered the day, hugged Byron, and headed for home.

<https://www.usbr.gov/mp/cca0/newmelones/docs/maps/map-new-melones-lake-trail.pdf>

Getting there: 38 miles from Modesto, a 50-minute drive. Drive east toward Jamestown on Highway 108. Turn left at O’Byrnes Ferry Rd. Turn right at the first road, Peoria Flat Rd. You will pass the Sierra Conservation Center. Continue about 1 mile until you reach a locked gate. The parking area is on the right.

## Be informed!

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

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# A Walk Down McHenry Avenue

By **TOM PORTWOOD**

As I was waiting for a bus last Sunday at the downtown transit center, an elderly man, using a walker loaded with what looked like his belongings, was denied access to a bus. The man stood there on this grey, windy afternoon, shouting furiously at the bus driver at the injustice of denying him service, correctly noting – in my estimation – that some bus drivers allow carts larger than his walker. Even as a freight train thundered by, this fellow’s righteous roaring could be heard from one end of the passenger platform to the other. “You are denying access to a disabled person,” the man shouted one last time, while several nearby passengers sat on benches, heads bowed, mouthing quieting, “Yeah, Yeah, Go for it!” Ultimately, though, it was all to no avail.



As the bus he wanted to board rolled out of the parking lot, the fellow spoke to a Stan RTA official who quoted something about Stan RTA policy regarding the size of walkers and the man shook his head. I lost track of him at that point and can only imagine that he eventually must have slowly wheeled his walker away from the transit center, destination unknown.

It was another sad moment out on Modesto’s mean streets – but only one of many I have wandered upon over the span of these last many months when I am out getting a few groceries or stopping for coffee in a restaurant – both of which involve taking the bus and doing a lot of

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It’s so close to us, our inclination, after a time, is to feel nothing at all. To look the other way. But, if we look the other way once too often, it’s the bullies who’ll take over.

walking. The evidence that a growing number of people in our community are living in misery can be found strewn up and down McHenry Avenue, where I frequently catch buses, and on Coffee Road near where I live. Last year, we experienced several damaging atmospheric rivers, and while Modesto has not received as much rain this year as it did in 2022-2023, the winter and early spring storms seemed to have wrought greater havoc on those of our neighbors who are unhoused.

This is purely anecdotal, but I’ve run across far more abandoned walkers, sleeping bags, drenched remnants of

sweaters, shoes, socks, and sometimes even old duffel bags this year than I did a year ago, left out by bus stops, busy intersections, or piled up among bushes by strip centers. These are cries for help, left unheard – or so it seems, as passing traffic roars by the disabled and the unhoused on Modesto’s busy thoroughfares.

I admit that I have been feeling more than a little despair for Modesto these days. In many ways, the city seems to be enjoying a blush of prosperity – new businesses are opening and succeeding, the arts scene is thriving. The community is out and about on the weekends, taking in the Pollinators’ Festival or planning for Love Modesto activities. Don’t get me wrong – these are all good things. I fear, though, that with each year, a growing number of Modestans are suffering, and that their suffering is becoming almost invisible to the rest of us.

Dostoevsky once wrote, “Man grows used to everything, the scoundrel!” I think it’s true that even good people can fall prey to becoming desensitized to suffering – there is so much of it in the world, it’s almost as if it’s too hard for us to accept that it’s happening so close to us, that lives are being lost every day, sometimes within a stone’s throw of where we live. It’s so close to us, our inclination, after a time, is to feel nothing at all. To look the other way. But, if we look the other way once too often, it’s the bullies who’ll take over.

A couple of weeks ago, I was on board a bus when a woman in a motorized wheelchair had difficulty maneuvering her chair against the bulkhead where the safety belts for wheelchairs are located. The woman in the wheelchair became flustered and seemed to look up to the bus driver for assistance, but the bus driver simply said, “You’ll have to figure this out like everybody else. Everybody else can do it, so can you.”

The woman cupped one of her ears with her hand as if to indicate she was deaf, but that didn’t seem to have any effect on the driver. When other passengers spoke up for the struggling woman, the driver snapped again, “She needs to figure this out like everybody else.” At the very least, an abundance of patience was called for in this situation – and kindness, too – neither of which the driver showed that day.

I reported this incident to Stan RTA but have yet to hear back. While most of the Stan RTA bus drivers are courteous and professional, and many are very cordial and friendly, there have been instances where some drivers have acted in a surly or contemptuous way toward passengers, particularly the disabled, the elderly, and the homeless. It just isn’t right, and something I never saw or experienced myself with MAX. To see such behavior crop up now under the new bus system has been quite disheartening since so many people in our community depend upon public transportation to get where they need to go.

There have been other instances where Modesto generally hasn’t seemed as friendly or welcoming a place

as it was a few years ago, and that is troubling. But all of this comes most sharply into focus in the way the disabled and the unhoused are too often abused or harassed while on our streets and buses, their needs neglected.

Then, something happened a few days ago that brought a smile to my face and renewed my spirit. That the struggle never ceases, regardless of the odds. I was walking along McHenry Avenue when I saw what I thought was an abandoned cart full of clothes. But as I was taking a photo

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But all of this comes most sharply into focus in the way the disabled and the unhoused are too often abused or harassed while on our streets and buses, their needs neglected.

of the cart, I saw that its owner was sitting beside it and seemingly waking up. I walked up to him, and we chatted for a couple of minutes. He said that the cold nights we’ve been experiencing have been tough, and I commiserated with him about that. Before we parted, I gave him a few dollars, and we wished each other well.

I only mention the money because of what happened next. I continued walking down McHenry, maybe a couple hundred yards, headed first to Panera’s and coffee, then on to Safeway to pick up a couple of things for dinner. But right before I got to the corner of McHenry & Bowen, a husband and his wife stopped me and asked for directions to the nearest bus stop – and while I was doing that, a gentleman walked out of the parking lot bordering that corner and threw something in the canvas bag I always carry with me. Before I could react one way or another, he had walked away, but I looked and saw at least a dollar bill and a little change sitting there in the canvas bag beside the book I planned to read with my coffee.

At that point, I was thinking, what the heck... When I got to Panera’s I discovered the guy had given me three one-dollar bills, a dime, and a few pennies. You just never know what’s going to happen next or, particularly in this instance, why.

But then I gave it some thought. Perhaps this generous soul thought he was taking pity on an old fogley walking stiffly with a cane, or perhaps he had seen me from a distance when I handed the money to the fellow with the cart – I’ll never know, and it doesn’t matter. Whatever the man’s motivation may have been, he was showing kindness toward a stranger. Almost out of nowhere, people keep surprising me and giving me hope. We still have miles to go before we sleep – but it’s good to know empathy is alive and well in our fair city, though it, too, has miles to go before it can rest.

# Can the Nobel Peace Prize Prevent Nuclear War?

By Ivana Nikolić Hughes President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation | April 2, 2024

Delivered at Soka University of America on March 30, 2024, at a panel entitled “Can the Nobel Peace Prize Prevent Nuclear War,” featuring Dr. Asle Toje, Deputy Chairman of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee, and Dr. William Potter, Founding Director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies.

Thank you so very much to the organizers for inviting me to this important conversation and to this beautiful campus. It is truly an honor and a privilege to be here with the esteemed panelists and with all of you.

In 1938, in the laboratories of Columbia University’s Pupin Hall, physicist I.I. Rabi discovered a curious feature of hydrogen atoms – atoms that are a part of every water molecule and every part of your body. Rabi found that when hydrogen atoms are placed in a magnetic field, they release radio signals at particular frequencies. In 1944, Rabi won the Nobel Prize in Physics for this discovery. Fast forward to the 1970s when Paul Lauterbur found a way to use this phenomenon to image the human body, known as magnetic resonance imaging, a discovery for which he won the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 2003. In the late 1980s and near the end of his life, Rabi actually went into an MRI machine himself. He would state: “I never thought my work would come to this.”

Many in this audience may have gotten an MRI scan themselves. Most probably realize that the technology has allowed doctors to identify and treat injuries and tumors. Neuroscientists even use a version of MRI called functional magnetic resonance imaging or fMRI to learn about what happens in our brains when we perform certain tasks and how to treat different brain conditions and diseases.

The story of Rabi’s discovery of nuclear magnetic resonance illustrates two fundamental principles about how science progresses and the role that Nobel Prize-winning or worthy work has played in this journey. The first is that such discoveries exist on a path that while not always and at all times linear, eventually lead towards more and further understanding, what we might call progress. The other fundamental principle is that although one can guarantee that we will know more in the decades to come, there is no predicting what it is that we might unearth or how. Rabi could not have imagined that his discovery of



nuclear magnetic resonance could lead to spaceship-like machines that can peer into our bodies – without any harmful radiation, like x-rays – and even peer into the secrets of our brain.

Contrast Rabi’s discovery with another physicist’s contribution, that of Lise Meitner, who figured out that when bombarded with neutrons – subatomic particles found in the atoms that make up you and everything you have ever seen and touched – certain atoms split into other, smaller atoms, releasing energy. Meitner did not win the Nobel Prize in Physics – others did for carrying out the experiments – but her discovery led to the development of atomic bombs just several years later. In 1945, the United States tested the Trinity bomb in New Mexico, causing suffering for the fallout victims and their descendants to this day. We then went on to use two atomic bombs in attacks on Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The scale of death and devastation, both short and long-term is impossible to comprehend.



Like Rabi, Meitner may not have imagined where her discovery would lead us. But was this progress? I contend that arriving at the ability to kill hundreds of thousands and today, even hundreds of millions of people was not progress. As our nuclear weapon arsenals grew and the bombs in possession of today’s nine nuclear weapon states became more powerful, more precise, and able to be delivered anywhere in the world, today’s weapons threaten to destroy human civilization as we know it and possibly even life on Earth.

This is not a matter of science fiction novels or films, but a scientific understanding of what would happen to our planet and to humanity in case of widespread nuclear war. A primary consequence of fires from nuclear weapon attacks would be enormous amounts of soot in the atmosphere, which would in turn dramatically block incoming sunlight from reaching us, which would lead to significant drops in temperature and furthermore widespread failure of agriculture and food production lasting many years. This is called nuclear winter and nuclear famine and would lead to more than two billion people dying from starvation around the globe in a scenario of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan, and more than five and a half billion people dying from starvation due to a nuclear war between US and Russia in which the US and Russia use just one third of their current arsenals.

Is this progress? And if not, who erred and when? Was it the scientists, or the politicians, or both? Every single day that these weapons are on our planet, they threaten everything we love and everything we hold dear. They threaten life itself.

Let’s now contrast the accomplishments of physicists with those of numerous peacemakers, disarmament activists, scientists, diplomats, and many others who have done Nobel Peace Prize winning or worthy work.

Two essential points need to be made:

Number one, like the physicists, the doves and disarmament proponents cannot always predict what exactly will do the most good or where exactly their work will lead.

But in contrast to one discovery leading to another in physics, with peace, progress is decisively not linear. While one can use certain proxies to argue that humanity may be better off today than at any point in history, we are living in an exceedingly challenging time both nationally and internationally. When it comes to global peace, we are decisively worse off than we have been since the end of the Cold War and possibly even earlier. On nuclear disarmament, while we have far fewer nuclear warheads than the 70,000 that existed in 1986, we still have about 12,500 too many. While we have conflicts involving nuclear weapon possessors raging and geopolitical tensions rising, we also have a Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons or TPNW. It is a two steps forward, one step back, and often one step forward, two steps back kind of path.

Daisaku Ikeda, the great Soka Gakkai leader and Founder of this incredible University and David Krieger, Founder and President Emeritus of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, both of whom we sadly lost last year, in their book, *Choose Hope*, spoke about the way in which peace is

continue next page

# “Thank you, Americans! Thank you, Californians!”

By **SERGEI SAMBORSKI, PH.D., serhiys@me.com**

These are the exact words I have heard numerous times since Tuesday, April 23, during my daily phone therapy sessions with friends and relatives in war-torn Ukraine. And that is what I heard today from my second cousin, who actually lives in our brand-new sister state of Lviv. Oksana Pryshlyak said, “It is so reassuring to know that we have sisters and brothers who won’t leave us alone to be killed by the Russians.”

After those long six months of pessimism, anxiety, depression, and panic attacks, a new hope was born when the U.S. Congress passed Bill 8035, allocating the military aid package of \$60.8 billion for the Ukrainian defense against the Russian onslaught.

The second wave of renewed hope and restored optimism reached Ukraine and its heroic people yesterday, April 25, when the California Legislature approved a measure from Sen. Bill Dodd to “create a sister-state relationship between California and Lviv, Ukraine.” Lviv is the capital city of the Lviv Oblast or province. Before the big and bloody war that Russia started on February 24, 2022, this most diverse and interesting region had a population of roughly 2.5 million. Lviv had close to 800,000 people. Now, its population has grown by 106,000 and its oblast (province) has added more than 700,000 war refugees from South-Eastern Ukraine, where the devastating war is raging.

The city of Lion was founded in 1250 and changed hands many times since, from the Austro-Hungarian Empire to Poland to Germany to Russia and finally to Ukraine. That



## OPEN TO THE WORLD

explains Lviv’s linguistic, cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity.

California and Ukraine began establishing people-to-people diplomacy even before the long-awaited collapse

of the Soviet empire in 1991. Back in 1987, Modesto and Khmelnytskyi signed an agreement of cooperation and friendship, which resulted in hundreds of people exchanging delegations of teachers, students, farmers, doctors, artists, city officials, law enforcement, etc. There are many American-Ukrainian **Sister-Cities** in California and the rest of the country now.

But the **Sister-State** relationship is something relatively new. Curiously enough, Khmelnytskyi took the lead again when two years ago, in 2022, its province, or oblast, established this new form of cooperation and friendship with Mississippi. The Americans visited Khmelnytskyi only three months after the unprovoked war by Russia was started. That was a huge humanitarian mission to help the people fleeing the Russian bombardment in the South-East of Ukraine.

And now we have California and Lviv Oblast joining the ranks!

Thank you, Americans! Thank you, Californians!



## Nobel Peace Prize continued

not simply there for the taking once achieved. Instead, they discussed the need to nurture peace, stating, that “sowing seeds of peace demands perseverance. Once planted, the seeds require nurturing. In other words, the peace process requires sustained commitment.”

I propose that instead of saying that we are not where we need to be, we should imagine a world without Joseph Rotblatt, and Setsuko Thurlow, and Andrei Sakharov, and David Krieger, and Alfonso Garcia Robles, and Alva Myrdal, and Richard Falk, and Linus Pauling, and Beatrice Fihn, and Daisaku Ikeda, and Nelson Mandela, and so many others. I contend that without them and their work, we might not be here to have this discussion.

Today, while being vaguely aware of nuclear weapons, the vast majority of people do not understand what is at stake. And that is where the Nobel Peace Prize Committee can help by awarding the prize to people and organizations who are doing the work of bringing awareness and solutions that will lead us to a world free of nuclear weapons and free of the threat of annihilation, thus helping to raise more awareness. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in particular is a young treaty and it needs our help. People need to know about it and what it aims to

accomplish. People need to know that we all stand to gain if nuclear weapons are eliminated.

It is also essential that we realize that disarmament and peace are not two separate journeys. They may at times pursue their own short detours, but they are ultimately – always – part of the same road towards a better world. When it comes to nuclear weapon possessors, peace is not just a moral imperative, it is an existential imperative. No nation, let alone national leader, should have the ability to destroy all of humanity. Nuclear weapons must go and the Nobel Peace Prize can help make it so.

Let me end with the words of General Lee Butler, who during the Cold War was Commander of US Strategic forces, in other words, in charge of the US’s vast nuclear arsenal of strategic – or very powerful and capable of going very far – nuclear weapons. This is a quote from 1996 and it comes from Ikeda and Kriger’s book Choose Hope – “We cannot at once keep sacred the miracle of existence and hold sacrosanct the capacity to destroy it.” Think about that – miracle of existence vs. the capacity to destroy it.

We must choose hope that it is possible to hold on to the former and eliminate the latter.

Thank you!



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## Gillian Wegener: One of the Valley's Poetic Treasures

Gillian Wegener is the founding president of Modesto-Stanislaus Poetry Center, an all-volunteer nonprofit dedicated to promoting poetry throughout Stanislaus County. A former poet laureate for the City of Modesto (2012-2016), she is also the author of *The Opposite of Clairvoyance* (2008) and *This Sweet Haphazard* (2017), both from Sixteen Rivers Press. A Gathering of Voices is very pleased she is sharing a generous sampling of her excellent poetry in this issue.



### Homeless: Blanket

They stand on the corner  
with a sign:

*Wanted: Blanket, please.  
We're cold*

Someone pulls over  
and gives them  
a sleeping bag.  
It's something.  
It's not enough.

The moon's the color of ice.

### Homeless: Kindness

The gas station is cramped  
with cars and people. Homeless  
men pushing in against the wall  
and its two feet of shade.

A woman gasses up. Uncomfortable,  
hurrying, she fumbles the nozzle,  
forgets to cap the tank.

Someone knocks on her window:  
one of the men, John Deere cap pulled low.  
*I got it ma'am*, he says, and screws on the cap.  
*Too hectic here today, I know*, he says,  
and heads back to the shade.

### Homeless: Dream Home

The kid lives out at the reservoir  
in a tent. Each day, every day, his mom  
heads to her job, and he's off to school  
where no one knows the situation.

Keep it quiet, keep it neat.  
Work hard, be polite.

The kid, brilliant, does his homework  
in the library after school most days  
and never misses a due date.  
No one guesses a thing.

Keep it quiet, work hard.  
Maybe someday get ahead.

At night, by the campfire, he reads library books  
or draws detailed sketches of cottonwoods  
and starlings and wide expanses of lake water,  
or sometimes, immaculate neighborhoods  
with dozens of homes on winding streets,  
the trees spaced to reveal  
his own face looking out  
a window of each penciled dream.

### Homeless: Reaction (found poem)

I don't feel safe --  
we're being overrun --  
the park, the streets -- mostly  
drug-using, mostly  
vagrants, mostly  
thieves. Daily they patrol  
my neighborhood, looking  
for god-knows-what.  
I don't feel safe.  
I can hardly go to the store  
without being hit up for money.  
I see them in the streets.  
I've had it. This park  
should be a place for all,  
not a homeless/vagrant/thieves  
encampment. I don't feel safe  
bringing my family to the park  
anymore. Homeless don't belong  
here and nothing's being  
done about it.

### Homeless: Precious

The backpack has a broken zipper,  
and one side is torn,  
but that front pocket is sacred.  
In there, she keeps three photos  
in a clean plastic produce bag:  
one of her mother,  
one of her son,  
and one of the place  
she wants to call home  
the next time she's lucky enough  
to call some place home.



## Homeless: The Plastic Bag Man

The plastic bags are wrapped  
around his arms and legs  
like armour, like they'll fend off  
a world that just doesn't get it.  
He sees the faces in the car windows,  
watching. He sees how they look  
and grimace and look away.  
He's got no use for them either,  
so it's mutual. Years pass.

There's January, here's July.  
It doesn't matter how cold,  
how hot it gets. The black plastic stays,  
wrapped round and round  
with duct tape. The world didn't  
protect him from a single thing,  
but he doesn't complain.  
There's a grassy patch  
and shade at the corner.  
More bags are easy to find.

## Homeless: Overheard

*The homeless wouldn't be so bad  
if they didn't make such a mess.*

And I think about this statement for days,  
if the people, finding themselves homeless,  
might be coaxed into packing  
their hard-won food into plasticware  
with snap-on lids, if they might smooth  
and fold their clothes, however dirty,  
whether they might pack their carts  
with their every possession  
in a more seemly manner. And what about  
lessons in deportment for the homeless,  
all the women and men, all the children,  
learning about the dangers of littering,  
of sanitation and hygiene, of gratitude  
for all they are given in the face  
of all they don't have. The homeless  
would be tolerable if they kept themselves cleaner,  
tidied up their environs each morning,  
threw away everything they don't need.  
Then they wouldn't be so bad.  
Then they'd be more invisible  
and that, she meant, would be just fine.

## Homeless: Love

He doesn't have much to give,  
but every night builds her  
a blue tarp lean-to,  
taking it down again  
every morning.  
He's awake most nights  
listening to her breathe.  
She's awake most days.  
Afternoons, he sleeps on a bus stop bench,  
head in her lap.  
There's a little shade here.  
There's the breeze of passing cars.  
She rubs his temple,  
round and round.  
When the bus comes,  
she waves it on.  
Just now, they have nowhere  
else to be than here.

## Homeless: Solitaire

Sick of the game  
but it passes the time:  
the jack on the queen,  
the four on the five.  
Funny how a guy can  
spend the day playing cards,  
watching the shadows  
of the sycamores shift  
from long to short to long,  
losing to no one again, but  
playing again anyway just in case  
the win is in the next hand.



## Homeless: The most I can do...

*for B.*

Angela has no street address, but  
she does have a black mesh dress,  
mascara, and a bike trailer  
filled with her life, past and  
mostly present. It's another hot Sunday  
in another hot summer, and  
the bread lady's come with her sandwiches.

Angela says, *The most I can do for my friend  
is simply be his friend.*

*That's Thoreau.* She eats her sandwich,  
swishes away a fly.  
She knows the quote from a calendar  
she once had when the date  
mattered more than it does now.

Now she tells this to the bread lady,  
licks jam and crumb from a fingertip.

Of all the quotes, this one's her favorite. She says  
she writes it on restroom walls whenever she can  
because, *you know, ain't no one  
who couldn't use the reminder.*

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# Great Programs on KCBP 95.5 fm, The Voice of the Valley

Streaming on [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org)

## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

**Confetti Park** - Music, stories New Orleans style, Saturdays at 8:00 am; & Sunday's 12:30 pm.

**The Children's Hour** - Sundays 3:00 pm.

## SCIENCE

**Radio Ecoshock** – the latest scientific information on Climate Change – Saturdays, 9:00 am.

**Explorations** – Science explained with Dr. Michio Kaku - 9:00 am Sundays.

**Big Picture Science** - 1:00 pm Sundays.

**Planetary Radio** – 2:30 pm Sundays.

## PROGRAMS

**Ukraine 2.4.2** - a collaboration between Anne Levine, WOMR, the Pacifica Network, and Kraina FM, a 26-city radio network in Ukraine that arranges weekly cutting-edge and exclusive interviews with key people in Ukraine – Thursdays, 10:00 am.

**Beethoven to Bernstein** - Classical music ranging from Beethoven to Bernstein. Big hits from well-renown composers - Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Strauss, Ravel, Copland - and many more, mostly in the form of orchestral, chamber, and piano music - Saturdays, 10:00 pm.

**The Not Old – Better Show** - fascinating, high-energy program of big-name guests, inspiring role models, interesting topics, with entertaining host and former Modestan, Paul Vogelzang – Fridays, 2:00 pm, Saturdays, 12:30 pm.



**Down on the Farm** - topics important for our San Joaquin agriculture with Madera organic farmer Tom Willey - Saturdays, 6 am

**Sounds Irish** Music from County Wicklow - Saturdays, 7:00 pm.

**Various musical programs during the noon hour:** *Oldies, Old Piano, and International.*

**Dead Air** - Hear the Grateful Dead with Cory Daniels. Fridays, 6 pm; Saturdays, 3 pm.

**Attitude with Arne Arnesen** – 3:00 pm. Political and social issues.

**Sojourner Truth** - 4:00 pm – Tuesdays. Interviews and panels focus on issues that affect people of color.

**Democracy Now!** - 7:00 am, Monday thru Friday. Reporting by veteran journalists Amy Goodman & Juan Gonzalez.

**Flashpoint Magazine** - 10:00 pm, Monday thru Friday. Politics, social issues, from KQED's Dennis Bernstein.

**Alternative Radio** – 4:00 pm, Mondays. Interviews with prominent political and social people.

**Julian Taylor's Jukebox** – 4:00 pm, Thursdays and Fridays. Eclectic, contemporary music.

**Nuestra Música** – 4:00 pm, Tuesdays. Eclectic, Latin-flavored music with a beat!

## LOCALLY PRODUCED PROGRAMS

**Triumphant Tuesdays** – Noon, Tuesdays. Inspirational thoughts & music with Catrice.

**Sports Talk Modesto** - Join Jay Freeda and Jimmie Menezes. Snappy banter to catch up on everything happening in the sports world. – Thursdays, 5 pm.

**Vib'n with the West Modesto Collaborative** - Jasmine Corena and Likhi Rivas. Engage, Educate, and Advocate on behalf of the West Modesto Community. Showcases Voices of the West Modesto Community – Wednesdays, 7 pm.

**AREA 5150 UFO RADIO** – Spooky music & sounds out of this world, Friday night, 11:00 pm.

**Cyber Stallion: Bucks Stallion's Radio Transmission Emporium** – Cyber Acoustic Music - Saturdays, 12:00 am, Wednesdays, 5:00 p.m.

**I-On-Modesto** - John Griffin interviews local people who reveal their inspiring stories. Mondays & Fridays, 10 am and Wednesdays at 9 pm.

**Arts of the San Joaquin Valley** with Linda Scheller and Laura Stokes - Mondays, 8:00 pm; Tuesdays, 9:00 am & Wednesdays, 8:00 pm. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbp> and on Spotify

**Women of the Valley** with Linda Scheller and Laura Stokes - 8:00 pm Tuesdays & Thursdays & Wednesdays,

9:00 am. Listen here: <https://anchor.fm/kcbpwotv> and on Spotify.

**Modesto Sound** - California Audio Roots Project (CARP) – Tuesdays 5:30 pm, Wednesdays 11:30 am, & Sundays 11:00 am & 4:30 pm.

**Sunday Cruisin'** with your host, DeeJay Rig! Oldies hits from 1959 to 1999 – Sundays, 5:00 p.m.

**Faithful Fridays** – inspirational music and thoughts with Catrice – Fridays, 7:00 p.m.

**Why Not Nice?** - Showcases unique music from unique cultures and thinkers worldwide, focusing on world/academic/jazz and roots music – Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.

**Mars Radio – Hip-Hop Show** - Music, interviews from local & regional artists - Fridays, 8:00 pm. A new, second show plays on Saturday nights at 8:00 pm, with a third at 8:00 pm Sundays.

**Modesto Area Music Awards (MAMA)** with Middagh Goodwin – Mondays 5:00 pm; Fridays 9:00 pm & Saturdays 6:00 pm.

**Freak Radio** with Christian E. Boyett, 6 pm Thursdays. Replays Saturdays, 9 pm & Tuesdays 11 pm.

**This is SKA** with Middagh Goodwin - Tuesdays, 9 pm; Fridays, 11 pm; Sundays, 5 am to 7 am.

**I'll Take You There** - A musical journey with Modesto's El Comandante - Saturday, 5:00 pm; Sundays, 9:00 pm.

**Penny Bloods** – Fun, Victorian melodrama radio plays, often performed by local actors, written by Arnold Anthony Schmidt, CSU, Stanislaus. As scheduled.

PSAs in English and Spanish produced by the West Modesto Community Collaborative.

**LISTEN TO OUR MUSIC PLAYLISTS AT SPINITRON** <https://spinitron.com/KCBP/calendar>

**Find a complete programming schedule on our website, [www.kcbpradio.org](http://www.kcbpradio.org)**

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# Open Letter to College and University Presidents on Student Protests

Academic freedom and free speech are essential.

Universities must protect them.

A faculty rally in favor of academic free speech is held in the main quad at Columbia University in New York.

**Anthony D. Romero, ACLU Executive Director; David Cole, ACLU Legal Director**

April 26, 2024

Dear College and University Presidents:

We write in response to the recent protests that have spread across our nation's university and college campuses, and the disturbing arrests that have followed. We understand that as leaders of your campus communities, it can be extraordinarily difficult to navigate the pressures you face from politicians, donors, and faculty and students alike. You also have legal obligations to combat discrimination and a responsibility to maintain order. But as you fashion responses to the activism of your students (and faculty and staff), it is essential that you not sacrifice principles of academic freedom and free speech that are core to the educational mission of your respected institution.

The ACLU helped establish the right to protest as a central pillar of the First Amendment. We have defended those principles for more than a century. The First Amendment compels public universities and colleges to respect free speech rights. And while the Constitution does not apply directly to private institutions, academic freedom and free inquiry require that similar principles guide private universities. We approach this moment with appreciation for the challenges you confront. In the spirit of offering constructive solutions for a way forward, we offer five basic guardrails to ensure freedom of speech and academic freedom while protecting against discriminatory harassment and disruptive conduct.

## **Schools must not single out particular viewpoints for censorship, discipline, or disproportionate punishment**

*First*, university administrators must not single out particular viewpoints — however offensive they may be to some members of the community — for censorship, discipline, or disproportionate punishment. Viewpoint neutrality is essential. Harassment directed at individuals because of their race, ethnicity, or religion is not, of course, permissible. But general calls for a Palestinian state “from the river to the sea,” or defenses of Israel’s assault on Gaza, even if many listeners find these messages deeply offensive, cannot be prohibited or punished by a university that respects free speech principles.

These protections extend to both students and faculty, and to speech that supports either side of the conflict. Outside the classroom, including on social media, students and professors must be free to express even the most

controversial political opinions without fear of discipline or censure. Inside the classroom, speech can be and always has been subject to more restrictive rules to ensure civil dialogue and a robust learning environment. But such rules have no place in a public forum like a campus green. Preserving physical safety on campuses is paramount; but “safety” from ideas or views that one finds offensive is anathema to the very enterprise of the university.

## **Schools must protect students from discriminatory harassment and violence**

*Second*, both public and private universities are bound by civil rights laws that guarantee all students equal access to education, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. This means that schools can, and indeed must, protect students from discriminatory harassment on the basis of race or national origin, which has been interpreted to include discrimination on the basis of “shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics,” or “citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity.”

So, while offensive and even racist speech is constitutionally protected, shouting an epithet at a particular student or pinning an offensive sign to their dorm room door can constitute impermissible harassment, not free speech. Antisemitic or anti-Palestinian speech targeted at individuals because of their ethnicity or national origin constitutes invidious discrimination, and cannot be tolerated. Physically intimidating students by blocking their movements or pursuing them aggressively is unprotected conduct, not protected speech. It should go without saying that violence is never an acceptable protest tactic.

Speech that is not targeted at an individual or individuals because of their ethnicity or national origin but merely expresses impassioned views about Israel or Palestine is not discrimination and should be protected. The only exception for such untargeted speech is where it is so severe or pervasive that it denies students equal access to an education — an extremely demanding standard that has almost never been met by pure speech. One can criticize Israel’s actions, even in vituperative terms, without being antisemitic. And by the same token, one can support Israel’s actions in Gaza and condemn Hamas without being anti-Muslim. Administrators must resist the tendency to equate criticism with discrimination. Speech condoning violence can be condemned, to be sure. But it cannot be the basis for punishment, without more.

## **Schools can announce and enforce reasonable content-neutral protest policies but they must leave ample room for students to express themselves**

*Third*, universities can announce and enforce reasonable time, place, or manner restrictions on protest activity to ensure that essential college functions can continue. Such restrictions must be content neutral, meaning that they do not depend on the substance of what is being communicated, but rather where, when, or how it is being communicated. Protests can be limited to certain areas of campus and



certain times of the day, for example. These policies must, however, leave ample room for students to speak to and to be heard by other members of the community. And the rules must not only be content neutral on their face; they must also be applied in a content-neutral manner. If a university has routinely tolerated violations of its rules, and suddenly enforces them harshly in a specific context, singling out particular views for punishment, the fact that the policy is formally neutral on its face does not make viewpoint-based enforcement permissible.

## **Schools must recognize that armed police on campus can endanger students and are a measure of last resort**

*Fourth*, when enforcement of content-neutral rules may be warranted, college administrators should involve police only as a last resort, after all other efforts have been exhausted. Inviting armed police into a campus protest environment, even a volatile one, can create unacceptable risks for all students and staff. University officials must also be cognizant of the history of law enforcement using inappropriate and excessive force on communities of color, including Black, Brown, and immigrant students. Moreover, arresting peaceful protestors is also likely to escalate, not calm, the tensions on campus — as events of the past week have made abundantly clear.

## **Schools must resist the pressures placed on them by politicians seeking to exploit campus tensions**

*Finally*, campus leaders must resist the pressures placed on them by politicians seeking to exploit campus tensions to advance their own notoriety or partisan agendas. Recent congressional hearings have featured disgraceful attacks by members of Congress on academic freedom and freedom of speech. Universities must stand up to such intimidation, and defend the principles of academic freedom so essential to their integrity and mission.

The Supreme Court has forcefully rejected the premise that, “because of the acknowledged need for order, First Amendment protections should apply with less force on college campuses than in the community at large.”

“Quite to the contrary,” the court stated, “the vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools.” In keeping with these values, we urge you to resist the temptation to silence students or faculty members because powerful voices deem their views offensive. Instead, we urge you to defend the university’s core mission of encouraging debate, fostering dissent, and preparing the future leaders of our pluralistic society to tolerate even profound differences of opinion.

# calendar

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

## may 2024

**The Prospect Theatre: 23/24 season** has continuing offerings. Visit <https://prospecttheaterproject.org/>

**4 SAT: Cinco de Mayo Climate Resource Fair** from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. El Rematito in Ceres.

**7 TUES: VIGIL: PEACE-ISRAEL-GAZA** at McHenry Ave. and J. St. (Five Points), 4:00-5:00 pm. Call the Center for info: 209-529-5750 or email [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org) NOTE DAY & TIME CHANGE.

**9 THURS: Peace/Life Center ZOOM Monthly Board Meeting**, 6:00 pm. Email [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org) for login.

**16: THUR: Peace Vigil** hosted by Multifaith Leaders in Community. College Ave. United Church of Christ, 1341 College Ave., Modesto. Info: [Laticia@faithinthevalley.org](mailto:Laticia@faithinthevalley.org), (209) 495-4377.

**May 18: SAT: Golden State Road Warriors Wheelchair Basketball Team**, National Champions. Benefit for KCBP 95.5 FM Community Radio, 1 pm, Modesto Junior College Gym. See article p. 1.

**19 SUN: The State Theatre and Modesto Film Society presents CITIZEN KANE** at 2 pm. Join the State Theatre. Have fun, get perks, and support Modesto's historic non-profit theatre. Visit <https://thestate.org/films/citizen-kane-052024/>

## LOOKING AHEAD

**June 21-23: Annual Modesto Peace/Life Center Peace Camp.** Registration open. See article page 1.

## REGULAR MEETINGS

### SUNDAYS

**Unity of Modesto** meets in person every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. at 2467 Veneman, Modesto. Information: 209-578-5433.

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

**IMCV weekly Insight Meditation and Dharma Talk**, 8:45 am - 10:15 am, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto (rear bldg. at the end of the UUFSC east parking lot). Offered freely; donations welcome. All are welcome. For more information, please email [charlie@imcv.org](mailto:charlie@imcv.org). Our mailing address is IMCV, P.O. Box 579564, Modesto, CA 95357.

**Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County** meets in person and on Zoom every Sunday at 10:30 am at 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto. Info: 209-788-3720; [www.stanu.org](http://www.stanu.org)

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

### MONDAYS

**The Compassionate Friends**, Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter is meeting by Zoom on the second Mondays at 7:00pm. Bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings are invited to participate in this support group for families whose children have died at any age, from any cause. Call 209-622-6786 or email for details: [tcfnmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnmodestoriverbank@gmail.com); <https://www.modestoriverbanktcf.org/>

**Suicide Loss Support Group:** Friends for Survival meets every third Monday at 7 pm. Details: Norm Andrews 209-345-0601, [nandrews6863@charter.net](mailto:nandrews6863@charter.net).

**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. Big Valley Grace Community Church. Interested? Email [WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com](mailto:WalkWithMeGroup@gmail.com) or call 209.577.1604.

### TUESDAYS

**Women's Support Group** for Women in all stages of life. Join us in a safe and judgment-free environment where you can give and receive support for the many issues that we struggle with as Womxn. Every Tuesday from 1 pm-2 pm at the Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto CA (Ages +18), (209) 408 8848. If less than 18, encourage bringing a chaperone. Contact Sandra Vidor - 209.652.3961 or Kellie Johnson 209.918.0271. **This event moves to Wednesday on March 20.**

**Climate Action Justice Network-Stanislaus** meets the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Link- <https://tinyurl.com/CJAN-FirstTuesday>

**Teen Tuesdays** every week from June-August, 2-5 pm., Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12<sup>th</sup> St. Peer Support, Games & movies. Safe space for teens to socialize, work together on projects, and learn about LGBTQ history. Each week will be a little different as we want YOU (youths) to guide the direction this group will go!" Info: Maggie Strong, Political Activist Director/ GSA Liaison, [mstrong@mopride.org](mailto:mstrong@mopride.org), 209-284-0999.

**First Tuesday - LGBTQ+ Ages 12-14**, 5-7 pm activities and support. **Second Tuesday- LGBTQ+ Ages 15-17**, 5-7 pm activities and support. **Third Tuesday-Friends and Family**, 5-7 pm Discussion and emotional support. All at Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Modesto, (209) 408-8848.

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

**NAACP Meeting.** King-Kennedy Center, 601 S. Martin Luther King Dr., Modesto, 3rd Tuesday @ 6:30 pm. 209-645-1909; For ZOOM link, visit <https://www.naacpmoDESTOSTANISLAUS.org/> email: [naacp.branch1048@gmail.com](mailto:naacp.branch1048@gmail.com)

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

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

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

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

### WEDNESDAYS

**Begins March 20: Women's Support Group** for Women in all stages of life. Join us in a safe and judgment-free environment where you can give and receive support for the many issues that we struggle with as Womxn. Every Wednesday from 12 pm-1 pm at the Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto CA (Ages +18). If younger than 18, encourage bringing a chaperone. (209) 408-8848. Contact Sandra Vidor-209.652.3961 or Kellie Johnson 209.918.0271.

**Retired Public Employees Association.** All seniors welcome! Meetings every third Wednesday. Denny's Restaurant, 1525 McHenry Ave. 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Call (209) 324-2060. Pay \$8.00 and order from the menu.

**The Almond Blossom Sangha** meets on Wednesdays, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm, Zoom, and sometimes hybrid, for meditation and Dharma discussions. Call Anne at 209-404-4835 for more information.

**The GAP.** A place of support for Christian parents of LGBTQ+ or questioning kids every Wednesday 6:30 pm at St. Paul's Episcopal Church 1528 Oakdale Rd. Instagram: Thegapmodesto

**Ongoing meditation class** based on Qi Gong Principals. Practice a 3 Step Guided Meditation Process I have been doing for over a decade. Fun and Easy. JOIN ME! Donations accepted but optional. Call 209.495.6608 or email Orlando Arreygue,

## MODESTO PEACE LIFE CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

**MEDIA:** Listen to **KCBP 95.5 FM** Community Radio, the "Voice of the Valley" also streaming at <http://www.KCBPradio.org>

**PEACE LIFE CENTER BOARD MEETING**, FIRST Thursdays, 829 13th St., Modesto, 6:00 pm, 529-5750. Meetings on Zoom. Email Jim Costello for login information, [jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org)

**PEACE/LIFE CENTER MODESTO**, 829 13th St. Call 529-5750. We'll get back to you with current info on activities.

CMT RYT, [orlando@arreygue.com](mailto:orlando@arreygue.com)

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

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

**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.

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

### THURSDAYS

**Let's Talk Coffee.** LGBTQ+ Senior (age +55) Coffee Meet up! Every Thursday @ 1 pm., Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Modesto. "Weekly social group to provide connectedness and community inclusion for LGBTQ+ Senior Citizens. Men, women, and gender non-conforming individuals encouraged, refreshments and snacks provided. Contact Steven Cullen, 559.799.0464.

**CA10 Progressive Coalition Monthly Meeting**, third Thursdays. Inclusive group of progressive activists to share resources, ideas, and information in order to support all the great organizing work happening in the Valley! Feel free to invite trusted allies. Meet-up and social hour: 5:30 pm-6:30 pm. Meeting: 6:30 pm-8:00 pm. Follow group on Facebook. Info: Tim Robertson, [tim@nvlf.org](mailto:tim@nvlf.org)

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

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

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

**LGBTQ+ Collaborative Meetings** are on the 2nd Thursday of the month, unless noted. Evening meeting, 1pm to 2 pm, Central Valley Pride Center, 400 12th St., Suite 2, Modesto, CA. Information: John Aguirre at cell/text - (559) 280-3864/ e-mail: [jpamodesto@gmail.com](mailto:jpamodesto@gmail.com)

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

**3rd Thursday Art Walk**, downtown Modesto, third Thursdays, 5 to 8 pm. stroll to art displays and galleries. Info: <https://visitmodesto.com/arts-entertainment/#art-walk>

**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 Thursday, Cafe Amore, 3025 McHenry Ave, Suite S., Modesto, 8 pm. Info: 569-0816. All newcomers, pagan-curious and pagan-friendly welcome.

### FRIDAYS

Friday 7:30-9:30 pm (Sept thru May) **International Folk Dancing** with Village Dancers, Carnegie Art Center, 250 N. Broadway, Turlock \$7. No experience or partner needed. 209-480-0387 for info.

**Overcoming Depression:** small group for men & women. Every Friday, 7:15 pm. Cornerstone Community Church, 17900 Comconex Rd, Manteca, CA 95366, (209) 825-1220.

**UKULELE ON FUNSTRUMMER FRIDAYS.** Every Friday morning from 9 am to 10:30 am Play Along Easy Songs from the Funstrummers Songbooks of over 500 songs. Funstrummers Performing Band Practice from 10 to noon and afternoon gig. Unitarian Church, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto, 209-505-3216 for details. Donations accepted. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mej3gD0ZD40&list=LLB8Y19zZg660qHCXGoC6ojQ&index=1>

**SIERRA CLUB:** Yokuts group. Regular meetings, third Friday, College Ave. Congregational Church, 7 pm. Info: 300-4253. Visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/mother-lode/yokuts> for info on hikes and events.

### SATURDAY

**TransForward Group** meets at the Queen Bean every Saturday at 1 pm. 18+. Info: 209-408-8848.

**First and Third Saturdays** - Gay Men's Group, Noon to 2 pm. **First and Third Saturdays**- Positive Support Group for folks living with HIV. All at Rainbow Resource Center, 1202 H St., Suite C, Modesto. Call 209-408-8848.

**12-Step/Buddhist Meeting** starts with a 30-minute meditation and then open discussion. Held monthly every second Saturday, 4:30 to 6:00 pm, 2172 Kiernan Ave., Modesto at the UUFSC in Sarana (small building, rear of the east parking lot). Freely-offered donations welcome. Information: 209 606 7214.

**Free Community Drum Circle** every third Saturday, 11 am to 12:30 pm, Gallo Center for the Arts, 10<sup>th</sup> & I St., Modesto. No experience or drums necessary to participate. All levels welcome. <https://drum-love.com/>

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

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

### DEADLINE to submit articles to CONNECTIONS: Tenth of each month.

Submit peace, justice, environmental event notices to [Jim Costello, jcostello@igc.org](mailto:jcostello@igc.org) Free Calendar listings subject to space and editing.