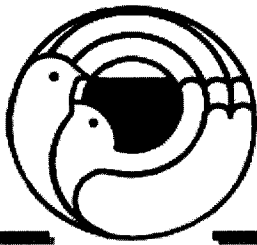


April  
2010

Vol. 45 No. 3



Newsletter of **LEPOCO**  
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

## Disarm Now! Anti-Nuclear Conference & Protest in NYC

Since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) became law in 1970, the world has gathered hopefully at the United Nations every five years to review progress toward the historic goal: preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and negotiating their global abolition. Seven times the review process has failed us. Humanity's resources by the trillions have been siphoned off for war and nuclear warheads while we desperately need to address poverty, hunger, injustice, disease and the looming climate disaster. The nuclear club of nations has grown to nine and the original nuclear powers have failed to meet their NPT obligation to negotiate in good faith toward eliminating their nuclear arsenals.

Some of our own country's continuing failures on nuclear weapons is well described in the War Resisters League's "Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes" flyer for 2010: "President Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009 while waging two wars. The Nobel Committee cited Obama's commitment to work for a world without nuclear weapons. Obama's 2011 budget turns 'peace' on its head: steady increases in nuclear weapons spending over the next ten years, including a new plutonium facility for the Los Alamos National Laboratory (NM) and a uranium manufacturing plant at Oak Ridge (TN)."

Some see this May's Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference as a make-it-or-break-it point for the NPT effort. Right before the May United Nations meeting of government officials we can help bring the citizen pressure on them that is so important. On Saturday, May 1, there will be an international conference, "For a Nuclear Free, Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World," at Riverside Church in NYC. On Sunday, May 2, there will be an international rally in Times Square (assemble at 1:30 pm), followed by a march to the United Nations for a peace and music festival in Dag Hammarskjold Plaza (4-6 pm). (For more information on the conference and rally see [www.peaceandjusticenow.org](http://www.peaceandjusticenow.org).) And the War Resisters League is exploring nonviolent direct action possibilities to make clear their commitment to complete and unilateral nuclear disarmament. (See [www.warresisters.org](http://www.warresisters.org) for more information.)

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters of LEPOCO are working to help get people to NYC for these public events. If you would like to join others traveling by public bus or in car pools, please contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

- Nancy C. Tate

## Tax Day 2010: Thursday, April 15

Procrastination is a common human condition that demonstrates its vitality especially strongly on April 15<sup>th</sup> each year. On this day, when there is a flurry of activity at post offices, LEPOCO members will be handing out leaflets explaining in an easily understandable fashion how the IRS distributes our tax money. The pie chart on the flyer created by the War Resisters League dramatically shows that 48% of our income tax dollars (almost \$1.4 billion) are spent on the making of war while only 52% is spent on all the other functions of government. It makes a mockery of the outcry about the government spending too much money on human needs. On April 15<sup>th</sup> LEPOCO hopes to leaflet at as many post offices as possible for as many hours as possible. It's an enlightening, educational and interesting activity. The Lehigh Valley Post Office is open until midnight. Please, if you have the time and the inclination, call LEPOCO and we will find a time and a location that fits your schedule.

- Susie Ravitz

## International Peace Walk to Visit the Lehigh Valley

Five years ago the International Peace Walkers stopped in the Lehigh Valley on their way to that year's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference at the United Nations. As the first article on this page spells out, this year there will be another review conference at the UN. And, the International Peace Walkers will again bring their message to the Lehigh Valley, April 21-24, as they are en route from Tennessee to New York. As this newsletter is being prepared the walkers, numbering 15, are in western Pennsylvania. They are part of a global community called FootPrints for Peace. This walk from the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Facility in Tennessee to the UN conference calls for a nuclear free future and raises awareness about alternative energy and sustainable lifestyles.

The specifics of their activities here are still being finalized, but it is likely there will be at least one program where we can talk with the walkers. (Contact LEPOCO or watch the e-mail updates for specifics.) People are invited to walk with them for some part of their journey. They keep a pace of 15-18 miles per day. They may also need help with meals (preferably for the whole group together). You can see [www.footprintsforpeace.net](http://www.footprintsforpeace.net) for more information.

# Seven Years of War

The local and national observances marking the seventh anniversary of the U.S. war in Iraq were smaller and more diffuse than those held to mark earlier anniversaries of that war, but they were still important.

On the actual anniversary date for the U.S. invasion in 2003, March 19<sup>th</sup>, the weekly Friday peace vigil outside the Federal Building in Allentown, was boosted with about a dozen people participating. (You can join this regular vigil any Friday, noon-1 pm.)

On Saturday morning, March 20, nine people joined a vigil in Pennsburg, "After Seven Years, War Is STILL Not the Answer," organized by Joyce Moore and the Unami Quaker Meeting Peace & Social Concerns Committee. There was a lot of traffic passing the vigil at the corner of Rt. 29 and Rt. 663, and many passersby responded with thumbs-up or other supportive gestures.

Four people traveled to the Franklin Mills Mall in Philadelphia for the monthly demonstration at the Army Experience Center, a war games laden military propaganda and recruiting station. About 60 people held banners, listened to speakers, and marched, outside the mall and then they chanted and vigiled inside the mall at the AEC. The message was location specific, "War Is Not a Game, Close the AEC," but signs also called for our wars to end on the occasion of the sad anniversary of the Iraq War. (You can join the AEC demonstration on the third Saturday of each month. Call LEPOCO to check on possible car pools.)

Also, on Saturday, at least ten local people made the trip to Washington, DC, to join thousands in a national march and rally against the Iraq War organized by ANSWER. The calls to bring the troops home now were joined with calls for jobs not war, and signs like one that said, "Pres. Obama, We love you but we need to tell you! Your hands are getting bloody!! Stop it now."

In what may have been the most significant outreach effort of the weekend, the local Veterans For Peace chapter carried their banners on Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, in Allentown's St. Patrick's Day Parade. The parade wound through the streets of west Allentown and the veterans (and a few friends of VFP) were greeted with applause by many of those lining the parade route - applause for the veterans and for their peace message.

Also, on Sunday, the Truth Commission on Conscience & War convened at Riverside Church in New York City with participation by Moravian College professor Kelly Denton-Borhaug, and Moravian College student Jim Lavoy as commissioners, and other Moravian students in attendance. The report of this commission that heard testimony from veterans, legal experts and scholars, will come out on Veterans Day, but this month both Moravian and Lafayette Colleges will have programs around the theme of the Truth Commission.

The documentary, "Soldiers of Conscience," shown at the Truth Commission, features three U.S. soldiers who faced ethical dilemmas about war while they were in the military. One of those soldiers, Joshua Casteel, will speak on Thursday, April 22, at 7 pm, at the Skill-2 LEPOCO Newsletter / April 2010

man Library, Lafayette College, on "Legal But Immoral: Is There a Role for Conscience in War?" He will also speak on the religious aspects of his struggle at noon that day in the Interfaith Chapel at the college.

Moravian College will present the "Soldiers of Conscience," film and a discussion about the Truth Commission sometime in April. Watch the LEPOCO e-mail or call the office for the exact date and time.

Finally, the AFSC held a conference call with Raed Jarrar speaking on March 10. Raed Jarrar, an Iraqi, spoke here in 2007. His analysis is always enlightening. The March briefing is highly recommended to help one understand the current troubling post-election developments in Iraq. You can listen to the briefing at [www.afsc.org/middleeast/ht/d/articles](http://www.afsc.org/middleeast/ht/d/articles). Raed Jarrar stresses the importance of the U.S. meeting its commitment to the timeline agreement for withdrawing from Iraq.

- Nancy Tate

## Regular Peace Vigils

*Our wars continue. Please help witness for peace.*

**Bethlehem:** 4:30-5:30 pm, **Second & Fourth** Thursdays  
3<sup>rd</sup> & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem; Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103

**Allentown:** Noon-1 pm, **Fridays**  
Federal Courthouse, 5<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Sts.;  
Contact: Rev. John C. Fowler 610-746-5013

**Bethlehem:** Noon-1 pm, **Third** Wednesdays  
**Brownbagger Vigils:** "Jobs Not War" outside Rep. Dent's Office  
6<sup>th</sup> & Broad Sts.; Contact: Tom Ulrich 610-882-1136

## Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 West Fourth Street

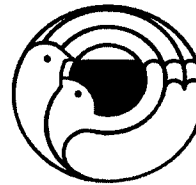
Bethlehem, PA 18015

phone: 610-691-8730

fax: 610-691-8904

website: [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org)

e-mail: [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net)



The LEPOCO Newsletter is published 8 times a year by the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern, a nonviolent, non-profit organization dedicated to peace in all forms.

### Annual dues are:

Regular Member .....	\$35
Limited Income Member .....	\$ 5
Household Membership .....	\$45
Supporting Member .....	\$75

Articles/news should be submitted to the address above for consideration for the next issue of the newsletter.

Newsletter Staff: robert Daniels II, Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Jeff Vitelli.

Thanks to all the people who staple, fold and label the newsletter each month.

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Addison Bross, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Becky Irwin, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Ruth Karpinski, Mimi Lang, Janet Ney, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), Ruth Walden.

# Popcorn/Potluck & Politics

---

Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm:  
robert Daniels II & Gwen Colegrove  
*"India: Vast & So Diverse"*

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Gwen Colegrove and robert Daniels II both recently traveled to India on separate trips. Gwen was in the south of the country volunteering at a school, learning about Gandhi, and appreciating the ecology. This was her first trip to India. She was there for eight weeks.

Robert Daniels was returning to India for the second time. He spent two and a half weeks in the north on a pilgrimage to learn more about Gandhi and to attend teachings given by the Dalai Lama.

Gwen and robert will share photos and stories from their two journeys.

*Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 7 pm.*

*The presentation and discussion should begin around 7:30 pm.*

Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm: *The Good Soldier*

A Popcorn & Politics Film projected on the big screen at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

This documentary follows the journeys of five combat veterans from different generations of U.S. wars as they sign up, go into battle, and eventually change their minds about what it means to be a good soldier. This screening is being presented by Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace.

Directed by Lexy Lovell and Michael Uys. 80 minutes. 2009.

*Please bring a snack or beverage to share.*



## Peace Camp

---

You will find enclosed with this newsletter two important papers for those planning to participate in Peace Camp 2010. One is the registration form for campers. Please fill it out and send it in for the peace campers in your household and/or pass it on to others who might be peace campers. The second paper is a form to be completed by those who would like to help at Peace Camp this summer. Teens and adults are welcomed as helpers. Please call the office (610-691-8730) if you are available to help with the Peace Camp planning process or if you have questions.

## LEPOCO Book Group

---

The First Wednesday LEPOCO Book Group will meet next on Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, at 6 pm, at the Panera Bread Café, 3301 Bath Pike (Center St.), Bethlehem. At that meeting they will discuss *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai. It was the winner of the Man Booker Prize in 2006. A review of this book in *The Economist* said, "The immigrant experience...is tackled here with energy and intelligence... Ms. Desai's Indian characters are exquisitely particular - funny, but never quaint, full of foibles, but never reduced by authorial condescension... Bittersweet, entertaining and just shy of tragic."

For the June Book Group meeting they will discuss *Surviving the Flood* by Stephen Minot, chosen as a little lighter reading after a series of pretty serious books. New readers and discussion participants are welcome each month. Call Bob & Carmen Riggs at 610-867-1244 or Becky Irwin at 610-351-6936 if you have questions.

## Join Us: Bikers & Walkers

---

Spring is in the air and all thoughts turn to the Lehigh Valley's premiere outdoor event, the Annual LEPOCO Bike/Walk-a-thon. Now is the time to make the date, Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, and to start looking toward, and collecting pledges for, this unique opportunity to enjoy nature, exercise with friends, share a wonderful breakfast, while at the same time supporting the work of LEPOCO and promoting health care in Pennsylvania and Haiti. Our beneficiaries, besides LEPOCO are Partners in Health - Haiti, and Health Care for All Pennsylvanians. A pledge sheet is included with this newsletter so you can get started asking friends, family and co-workers for their support help.

We will be gathering on the field at the corner of Main and West Streets in Bethlehem (diagonally across from the Depot Restaurant) at 8:15 am, for registration and a light breakfast. This year we will have a short time for guided yoga stretching and provide a basic bike safety check. We will begin walking and riding around 9:15 am.

You will have the choice of a walk through historic Bethlehem or a bike ride through the scenic countryside near Bethlehem. It would help with planning (but is not required) if you call (610-691-8730) to let us know you plan to walk or ride. You can also call in if you cannot ride or walk, but want to help by staffing a check point, providing a snack, or making a pledge for a walker or rider. Hope to see you on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

- David Rose

# Dinner with Wild Bill \_\_\_\_\_

Following David Rose's fervent introduction, expressing the hope that Reverend Billy gain the same access to power that another Rev. Billy, Billy Graham, once had, Savitri, Reverend Billy's wife -- a few weeks away from delivering a baby -- spoke, saying they were secretly hoping the baby would come early while they were in Bethlehem. They had some blow-up sheep and crowns in the car, just in case. Savitri said their work was an effort to pull back what they called the "Commodity Wall," the shimmering surface of consumerism and militarism that shields us from the mountains of waste and the violence generated by our consumer culture.

Reverend Billy began by singing the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights. He said that the "Church of Life After Shopping" believes that we're lost in an addictive, fundamentalist culture, worshipping at the feet of *product*. Corporate marketing continues to normalize itself as it expands consumerism.

The reason we've gotten into this situation, the Reverend said, is because we buy war, the most costly product on the market. And the appetite for war, certainly since Reagan, keeps growing dramatically.

There's no solution to this, Billy said, that isn't radical. It's time to be radical. The Boston Tea Party throwing the tea in the harbor -- Rosa Parks refusing to go to the back of the bus -- but today we can't figure out the radical action that we need. We don't have a leader, an MLK.

The experience we had listening to Obama during his campaign was akin to hearing a Joan Baez concert or a Clash concert or a Zinn lecture, Billy said. It was the experience of the *Commons*, the shared public vision of a better future, where hopes and goals are formulated and differences are reconciled.

Now it seems the change that Obama was talking about during his campaign was him changing his mind when he got into the White House.

Now the *Commons* is thought by many to be an idea whose time has come and gone. We must update the First Amendment, the Reverend said, to find the *Commons*.

"I want to be a Jimmy Swaggart, but I want progressive stuff to come out of my face. I want to be a fool for peace. Times Square was supposed to be an international *Commons* but Giuliani cleaned it up, priva-tized it, ran off or jailed those without credit cards. 42nd Street had character, wildness -- some dangerous characters -- but life is dangerous. However, nothing is more dangerous to earth -- and people are earth -- than war."

The only way to escape the avalanche of corporate marketing is to find our *Commons*, that bravery and courage, Billy said, that thing that is wild enough to break through the "Commodity Wall." If we stay together, wait, sing, pray, dance, keeping out the

consumerism, we will make peace! He repeated, "We will make peace!" three times, an incantation. Many in the audience were moved to join him.

After Billy lost the New York mayoral election last year, he felt the airlessness -- whew -- the weight -- of the "Commodity Culture." It was a teaching moment. A nine month moment. It was his community in the East Village that saved him, that got him back into that wonderful place, protected by the 45 words (referring to the First Amendment). However, he said, "The Church of Life After Shopping" is surrounded on every corner in the East Village by JPMorgan Chase ATM's. The next plan is to go down to West Virginia, get that sludge from the streams, from the blown-up mountaintops, and take that mountain to the bank, the bank that is financing that dirty mountaintop removal, and deposit it in the ATM's of that bank!

A spontaneous cheer rose from the audience.

Billy ended with a prayer [paraphrased]: I pray to that amazing creator, hilariously, musically, that magic genius that you the earth has given us with this life,

Earth-a-lujah!

Earth-a-lujah!

Earth-a-lujah! Amen.

- Mike Lawton

**Editor's Update:** You can go to the "Media" page at [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org) and click on a link to see some of Susie Ravitz's photographs taken at the dinner and click on another link to view a video of the speeches at the dinner.

At least three deliveries of mountaintop sludge from West Virginia have been made by the Church of Life After Shopping to JP Morgan-Chase ATM's in New York City -- the first on March 21<sup>st</sup> and two more on Easter Sunday. Rev. Billy was arrested and held for two hours during one of the drops on Easter Sunday. You can find more information on the actions at [www.revilly.com](http://www.revilly.com). And, the new baby of Reverend Billy and Savitri D has arrived: Lena Nightstar Talen.

## Lobby Day a Success! \_\_\_\_\_

On March 31<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvanians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty held a Lobby Day in Harrisburg. The volunteer lobbyists from across the state numbered about 50 -- and eight of those came from the Lehigh Valley. Sixty lawmakers' offices were visited. Lehigh Valley CASK (Committee Against State Killing) and local Amnesty International members visited two of our state senators' offices and at least three state representatives. The main thrust of the meetings was to build support for a moratorium on the death penalty in our state and for a legislative study of racial and geographic bias and innocence in the death penalty system. But, the ultimate goal was carried forward by state Sen. Daylin Leach of Montgomery County who introduced a bill to abolish the Pennsylvania death penalty.

The Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing will meet again on Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, at 10 am, at the LEPOCO Peace Center. Please consider attending.

# Earth Day 2010

Earth Day has become a popular observance day. Not unlike other such days that began as a call for change, Earth Day now includes some observances that are rather fluffy, some even featuring the very corporations that contribute so much to the despoilment of the earth. But, generally one has to see the broad-based efforts to honor the earth as positive especially when we know the challenges we face are so great. Amidst the broader efforts, there are still some Earth Day events that are focused on the deep changes our world needs to see.

The Lehigh Valley Alliance for Sustainable Communities is publishing a calendar of Earth Day events that will be available soon. The listing is posted at [www.sustainlv.org](http://www.sustainlv.org), click on "Calendars."

On Saturday, April 17, the Alliance is sponsoring a presentation by Ben Price of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) on the topic of "Fighting for the Right to Become Sustainable." It will be held from 1-5 pm, in the Community Room at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, 424 Center St., Bethlehem. CELDF has been fighting for many years to protect community self-governing rights from the predatory privileges of corporate "persons." Call the Alliance at 484-851-3910 for more information.

On Saturday, April 24, there will be an Earth Day Climate Walk from Allentown to Bethlehem, 10 am to 1 pm, starting at the Federal Building, 5th & Hamilton Sts., Allentown, and ending at the Wildflower Café, 316 S. New St., south Bethlehem. The walk will bring attention to the climate crisis, the need to change our lifestyles and to the disastrous gas drilling that is invading Pennsylvania. The sponsors are the Lehigh Valley Greens, L.V. Gas Truth, Climate Walk and the Alliance for Sustainable Communities.

When the walk ends at the Wildflower Café a new effort, a 10-Step Carbon Addiction Program will be publicly launched. For a description of the Program see "The Struggle Shared" in the last LEPOCO Newsletter or [www.10stepcap.blogspot.com](http://www.10stepcap.blogspot.com). To ask questions about the walk contact Greta Browne at 610-865-9050.

Also, Earth Day weekend LEPOCO will staff a peace boutique and information booth at Jim Thorpe's Earth Day Festival, Saturday (11-6) and Sunday (11-5), under the leadership of Robert Daniels II. Please call Robert at LEPOCO (610-691-8730) if you can help with staffing the booth of stop by if you are in the area.

## Gas Drilling

Hopefully you have heard about the serious threat to Pennsylvania's environment posed by the massive natural gas drilling getting underway in our state. Catherine Frankenberg of the local Clean Water Action office showed the film, *Split Estate*, for a LEPOCO P&P in February. This film, about the terrible health problems faced in western states where hydraulic fracturing has been underway for a few years, was very troubling.

There is a flurry of activity to stop, to slow, to con-

trol, to make transparent... the gas drilling boom in Pennsylvania. (New York State is facing a similar threatening bonanza.) The citizen activity is up against moneyed powerful interests hoping to export lots of gas and lots of wealth from our state. What they will leave in their wake will not be very pleasant if one sees the results of previous extractive booms as instructive.

Clean Water Action has formed a local committee to address this issue, Lehigh Valley Gas Truth. Two meetings have been held and they will meet again (over a potluck dinner) on Wednesday, April 21, at 6 pm, at the Clean Water Office, 901 N. New St., Bethlehem. Call that office 610-691-7395 for more information.

Penn Future, a statewide group, has announced several demonstrations to "Save Pennsylvania's Forests" (much of the gas drilling could take place in Pennsylvania's state forests?!). Two demonstrations of special interest are: 1) Thursday, April 15, Noon-2 pm, at Ricketts Glen State Park, and 2) Thursday, April 22, at the State Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg, 10:30 to 11:30 am. Go to [www.pennfuture.org](http://www.pennfuture.org) for more information.

There are two bills in the state legislature that deserve our support: HR-2235 would put a five-year freeze on further gas drilling leases in state forests and HR-2213, introduced by Rep. Bud George. The latter bill would put more safety, disclosure, bonding, etc. requirements on gas drilling in Pennsylvania. (One of the shocking realities of this industry is that they consider the chemicals they use in the fracturing process to be proprietary. These chemicals, which they refuse to announce to the public, will be polluting our forests, streams, rivers, aquifers and drinking water!) Please let your state representative know of your concerns about natural gas drilling.

## Coal Ash

Anna Maria Caldara, who lives in Bangor, organized a program about the pollution from at the Bangor Ash Disposal Site on Rt. 512, on March 18. Representatives from the Sierra Club and the Environmental Integrity Project spoke. A story in *The Express Times* on March 20<sup>th</sup> opened stating that the speakers said the former quarry storing coal ash "has released more potential toxins into borough water than allowed." Anyone living in Bangor can sign a petition expressing concern about the environmental impact of the Quarry Ash Disposal Site. LEPOCO has copies of the petition. Contact Anna Maria at 610-599-9985 for more information.

In a related coal pollution matter, Lafayette College will present the film, *Coal Country*, at 4:30 pm, on Saturday, May 1, in Hugal Hall. The film closes an Environmental Experience Day at the college.

Check out the LEPOCO website  
at [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org) for a  
Calendar of Events, Newsletter Archive, Videos, & More.  
Sign up for LEPOCO e-mail updates  
by calling 610-691-8730 or by writing to [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net).

# LEPOCO Financial Report 2009

Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Fund Balance	2009
Grants received	\$500.00
Membership Dues, Fund Appeals, Phonathon, Pledges	\$43,492.92
Investment Income	\$171.21
Profit on Boutique Sales	\$643.93
Annual Dinner	\$1,682.58
Art Raffle	\$661.58
Bike-Walk-A-Thon	\$869.63
Yard Sale	\$977.19
Misc. Programs (Peace Singers, Mimi's Party, Theatre Party, etc.) (Gross Inc.)	\$1,743.77
Misc. (Interest, Copier, etc.)	\$73.59
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$50,816.40</b>
Contributions to Others	\$114.00
Salaries and Benefits to Employees	\$32,346.09
Rent, Electric, Telephone, Insurance, etc.	\$7,430.74
Computer Access & Domain Fees	\$942.67
Printing and Postage	\$3,118.88
Other Expenses (Programs & Events)	\$352.24
Supplies (Office, Copier, Printer, Paper)	\$1,430.40
Repairs (Office, Copier & Printing Press)	\$2,398.14
Advertising	\$25.00
Miscellaneous (Working Groups, Bank Fees, etc)	\$308.82
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$48,466.98</b>
<b>Excess or (Loss) for Year</b>	<b>\$2,349.42</b>
<b>Fund Balances at the Beginning of the Year</b>	<b>\$9,691.96</b>
<b>Change in Investment Value</b>	<b>\$(80.91)</b>
<b>Fund Balance at the End of the Year</b>	<b>\$11,960.47</b>

2009 Fund Balances	Beginning of Year	End of Year
Cash, Savings and Investments	\$18,069.28	\$17,704.75
Liabilities	\$8,377.32	\$5744.28
Net Assets and Fund Balances	\$9,691.96	\$11,960.47

## Solidarity with Honduras

The Mid-Atlantic Witness for Peace Annual Retreat & Conference, "Continuing the Struggle: Solidarity with Honduras," will be held May 14-16, with keynote speaker, Rodolfo Pastor de María y Campos, former Assistant Head of the Honduran Embassy in the U.S. The location is Camp Letts, near Annapolis, Maryland. The fee: \$110. Call LEPOCO or see [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org) for a registration form.

The Quixote Center is planning an accompaniment delegation to Honduras to mark the first anniversary of

the coup d'état in that country. The year since the coup has seen relentless repression. A recent example was a group of hooded men entering a middle school in late March in Tegucigalpa, and assassinating a teacher in front of his colleagues and students. But the resistance has been resilient and the delegation will observe the national consultation on June 28<sup>th</sup>, being organized by that resistance around the question of a "National Inclusive and Popular Constitutional Assembly." For more information about the delegation contact Jenny Atlee at 301-699-0042 or at [jennya@quixote.org](mailto:jennya@quixote.org).

# The Struggle Shared

*My dream is that we will soon become the state known for building universities, building schools, educating our young people, and that we become number one in the world in that, and not in building ships and destroyers."*

- Michael Brennan, Former Maine State Senator  
at a recent rally of Maine's Bring Our War Money Home Coalition

**VANUNU RE-ARRESTED** - In the last week of December 2009, Mordechai Vanunu, the whistleblower who exposed Israel's nuclear weapons program to the world, and was imprisoned for 18 years by the Israeli Government, was placed under house arrest again. His offense this time, according to a police spokesperson, was meeting with a number of foreigners, a violation of conditions for his release in 2004.

One of the foreigners with whom Vanunu met, in open defiance of the restrictions on his freedom of movement and association, was Daniel Ellsberg, of Pentagon Papers fame.

Vanunu had been employed as a technician at a weapon's facility in Dimona. Appalled by what he saw, he released photographs of the facility to the *London Sunday Times* in 1986.

The information revealed that Israel's program and stockpile were much larger than even the CIA had believed. Vanunu was drugged, kidnapped from the Rome airport by Mossad agents, secreted to Israel for a closed trial, and sentenced to 18 years. He spent over 11 of those years in solitary confinement, in a 6' by 9' cell. To this date, Israel has neither confirmed or denied that it even possesses nuclear weapons.

Daniel Ellsberg wrote about "Mordechai Vanunu, my friend, my hero, my brother..." on January 4. Ellsberg pointed out that it is ironic that in the Middle East where the stakes are as high as anywhere on earth, Israel is pursuing a secret nuclear program that encourages its neighbors to develop their own retaliatory weapons. He also points out that in every state that has developed nuclear weapons -- declared and undeclared -- the decisions to do so were made in secret, never democratically. "This will not change," Ellsberg says, "without public mobilization and

democratic pressure, which in turn demand public awareness and discussion. It was precisely this that Vanunu sought to stimulate... The cult and culture of secrecy in every nuclear weapons state have endangered humanity and continue to threaten its survival. Vanunu's challenge to that wrongful and dangerous secrecy must be joined worldwide."

## **PENNSYLVANIA'S PRISON**

**CRISIS** - In the midst of last summer's budget deadlock, prompted by revenue shortages, and mandates to cut spending in state-funded programs, the Department of Corrections was shopping out-of-state for cells to house Pennsylvania prisoners, at a cost of tens of millions.

The state's prison population has been swelling at an alarming rate just in the past year. Currently, 27 prisons, with a capacity for 43,000 inmates, hold 51,000. That population is expected to exceed 58,000 in the next three years. Even with four new prisons on the drawing boards, at a cost of \$200 million each, the system will be as crowded when they open as it is today.

Pennsylvania sent requests for bids to six states with excess prison capacity to house up to 1500 state prisoners. The relevant question though, is what other states have done to gain control of their systems so that excess capacity was created.

In Pennsylvania, fully 15% of our prisoners are diagnosed with a mental illness. Their symptoms are only exacerbated by prison's cruel substitute for the treatment that they need to improve their functioning. Almost half of Pennsylvania's prisoners are incarcerated for nonviolent offenses, or violating technical aspects of their parole. They could be treated far more effectively, and at less cost, in community-based treatment programs.

Treating drug and alcohol addiction in such alternative settings to prison also reduces the recidivism rate for related crimes.

New York recently enacted legislation that made sweeping changes in the penal codes, repealing mandatory sentencing for nonviolent drug offenders, and sending 1500 prisoners home on early release. Governor Patterson said when he signed the bill, "Under the Rockefeller Drug Laws we did not treat people who were addicted. We locked them up. Families were broken, money was wasted, and we continued to wrestle with a statewide drug problem... By returning judicial discretion to the courtroom, we are reuniting families, and fighting criminal activity and addiction in our communities."

William DiMascio, executive director of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, puts it thusly: "Prisons should be used for people who are a danger to society -- not for those with whom we are angry or annoyed." Yes, it's time to reform our criminal justice system.

**ARPILLERAS** (pronounced "ar-pee-air-ahs") - Arpilleras are three dimensional textiles, especially known from their creation by relatives of the disappeared in Chile following the 1973 military coup. These fabric creations tell the stories of the oppression experienced under the Pinochet dictatorship. Roberta Bacic, a Chilean now living in Northern Ireland, has been the curator of several exhibits of arpilleras as "witnesses to what cannot be forgotten" and as "part of our present past that needs to be dealt with."

One of these exhibits will be at the Consulate General of Chile, 866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 601, New York City, April 14-30. Roberta Bacic is also a friend of LEPOCO, having visited and spoken here on two occasions since Nancy Tate first met her in Chile in 1988. A small group of LEPOCO friends will travel to NYC for the opening reception of the arpillera exhibit on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Please call LEPOCO if you are interested in joining this delegation.

- Jeff Vitelli



# Bits & Pieces

☸ Fri., April 30 through Sun., May 2, there will be a **Nonviolence Training, "Creating a Culture of Peace,"** led by Barb Gessner and T. Michael Rock, at the Episcopal Cathedral Church of the Nativity, Third & Wyandotte Sts., south Bethlehem. Creating a Culture of Peace (CCP) is interactive and experiential. It is open to teens and adults and prepares you to make a difference in your life, your family, and the world. Cost: \$45 for students and Episcopalians; \$120 for others. Contact Candis Siatkowski at 610-670-5478 to register.

☸ Our local trio **delegation that traveled to El Salvador**, March 19-27, to attend the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Monseñor Romero program, has returned safe and sound. Please watch future newsletters for a written report and news of a program where they will report on their trip. Brief conversations indicate they have most interesting stories to tell.

☸ On Jan. 25, 2010, **Fr. Louis Vitale**, a School of the Americas Watch activist, was jailed along with two other SOA activists. The three were arrested last November during the annual SOA Watch demonstration in Ft. Benning, Georgia. (A fourth person that was arrested refused to report for the January 25<sup>th</sup> trial.) The three people jailed were given the most severe sentences any SOA Watch demonstrator has received in years.

Fr. Vitale had been a co-defendant with Joe DeRaymond following a

similar action in 2005 at the SOA, and this year Fr. Vitale carried some of Joe's ashes onto the base during the action in November.

You can write to Fr. Vitale in prison at: Louis Vitale, Crisp County Detention Center, 196 South Highway 300, Cordele, GA 31015. You can also contact your member of Congress and urge them to co-sponsor HR-2567, the bill to suspend and investigate the SOA/WHINSEC.

☸ April 18-19, **School Of the Americas Watch** will host workshops and a lobby day in Washington, D.C. Workshops will be on immigration issues and the SOA, on the U.S. military bases in Colombia, and on other topics. Some local activists with the Americas Solidarity Group hope to attend. If you would be interested in joining this trip to D.C. please contact LEPOCO. See [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org) for more info.

☸ Emma Cleveland of the ACLU Immigrant Rights Project, in Allentown, has been busy with a variety of educational projects, among them a screening of the documentary, "**9500 Liberty**," which is about an intense civic battle over immigration policy in Prince William County, Virginia. The film will be shown as part of the Third Thursday Film Club of the Southside Film Institute of Bethlehem, on April 15, at 7:15 pm, at the Victory Firehouse, 205 Webster St. For more info. contact Emma at 484-350-3767 or see [www.ssff.org](http://www.ssff.org).

☸ On Sun., April 18th, a **Citizenship Day** will be held in Allentown as part of a statewide effort to provide free legal help to people ready to apply for U.S. citizenship. To determine eligibility and to set an appointment call the Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizenship Coalition at 215-832-3482.

## March For America

On March 21, Grupo de Apoyo y Integracion Hispanoamerican, an organization based in the Lehigh Valley that helps integrate Hispanics into the community, and the Spanish Speaking Council of Bethlehem, sponsored a bus to Washington, DC, to support the immigration reform rally. Altogether 55 people from the Lehigh Valley participated in the rally.

Emma Cleveland of the ACLU Immigrant Rights Project was part of the group and reported that they went prepared with banners, posters and chants. Once in DC they joined over 200,000 people who marched to demand immigration reform. There was a lot of good energy in the crowd with music, chanting, and speeches from government officials, from immigration reform advocates and even a speech by Pres. Obama over a big screen during which he promised that something would be done about immigration reform by the end of the year.

For more information on immigration issues contact: Emma Cleveland at [ecleveland@aclupa.org](mailto:ecleveland@aclupa.org) or Erika Sutherland at [emsuther@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:emsuther@muhlenberg.edu).

- Yisol Yanez

## Support LEPOCO!

- \_\_\_ Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$\_\_\_\_\_. (\$35 individual; \$45 hh; \$75 supporter; \$5 lim. income)
- \_\_\_ I am also enclosing an extra donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_ I would like to support LEPOCO's work with a \_\_\_monthly/ \_\_\_quarterly pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_ I'm most interested in working on the following issues:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015.

## Events at Kirkridge

### Retreat & Study Center, near Bangor:

April 30 - May 2: "*The Gospel According to John*" with Father John Dear, author, activist and Nobel Peace Prize nominee. "*If we dare follow the nonviolent Jesus, we must work to end the big business of death - war, greed, nuclear weapons, global warming and every form of violence.*"

For more information see [www.kirkridge.org](http://www.kirkridge.org) or call 610-588-1793.



# Bits & Pieces

☸ **Marge Piercy**, the well-known poet and novelist who often touches on feminist and anti-war themes, will read from her work for the Len Roberts Poetry Day at Northampton Community College (NCC), on Thursday, April 15. At 11 am, she will read in the Lipkin Theatre, on the main campus at NCC and at 4 pm, she will read in the Community Room at NCC's Monroe Campus.

☸ The peace movement in northeast Pennsylvania lost one of its most dedicated activists in late March. **Bob Witkowski** of Wilkes-Barre and Ashley, Pennsylvania, died suddenly on Saturday, March 20. He had participated in a peace vigil the day before, marking the seventh anniversary of the start of the Iraq War. To honor his life a candlelight peace vigil was held in the Public Square in Wilkes-Barre, on the Tuesday evening after he died. One-hundred people attended.

Bob was known to many Lehigh Valley peace activists because he often attended LEPOCO's Annual Dinner (he was with us on March 6<sup>th</sup>) and the Nazareth-to-Bethlehem Peace Pilgrimage. On the day of the service honoring his life, *The Time Leader*, the Wilkes-Barre newspaper, printed a lovely column, where Mark Guydish remembered Bob's anti-war witness, his work with the Green Party, his personal witness as an environmentalist, his opposition to the death penalty, his support of a local folk music club, and also wrote: "He was a persistent voice of conscience, a chronic reminder there are less destructive paths to most goals."

☸ **Joyce Ravitz** will report on her 2009 trip to Gaza, "**Personal Reflections on Five Days in a War Zone**," on Thurs., **May 13**, at 7 pm, at the Phillipsburg Public Library, 200 Frost Ave. (two blocks from Rt. 22, behind the Phillipsburg Municipal Bldg.). Her story is an important one for everyone working to find peace in the Middle East. (This talk was originally announced, by mistake, for March 31.)

☸ A play, about **Molly Ivins**, "Red Hot Patriot: The Kick-Ass Wit of Molly Ivins" continues at the Philadelphia Theatre Company through April 25. Kathleen Turner portrays Molly Ivins, whose very direct wit we miss so much. Call 215-985 9420 or see [www.philadelphiatheatrecompany.org](http://www.philadelphiatheatrecompany.org).

☸ Jim Lyon, Vice President for Conservation Policy at the **National Wildlife Federation** will speak on "Earth Matters," on Tues., April 20, at 7:30 pm, in Prosser Aud., at Moravian College, Bethlehem. This the final program in a series held at the college this spring on environmental issues.

☸ On Wed., April 21, at 6:30 pm, the Lehigh University Food Film Series will present the documentary, "**Food Inc.**" which reveals truths about what we eat and how it is produced. The film will be shown in Whitaker Lab. Aud., Packer Ave., on Lehigh's campus in Bethlehem.

☸ In late March Tavis Smiley Reports aired a one-hour documentary about **Martin Luther King's April 4, 1967, speech, "Beyond Vietnam."** The documentary is a wonderful presenta-

tion about the historic nature and continuing importance of the speech. (This is the speech LEPOCO has read on the occasion of the King Holiday each January since 2000.) You can view the documentary on-line.

## Drink your tea and get your act together

yes, indeed,  
we are up against  
the monsters of this world  
yes, indeed  
they are masters of great power  
but as my mother used to say  
my dear old mother  
my dear dead mother  
used to say  
"Drink your tea  
and get your act together"  
there's a struggle to be waged  
there's a battle to be won  
we want peace and justice  
for the people of the world.

- Dennis Brutus, the South African poet, anti-apartheid fighter and human rights activist who died in December 2009, at age 85, sent this handwritten poem to NWTGCC (the war tax resistance group) in a note in 2008.

## MEETINGS... MEETINGS... MEETINGS... MEETINGS... ETC.

- Thurs., April 15, 3:30 pm:** Peace Camp 2010 Planning Committee meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.
- Thurs., April 22, 11 am:** Newsletter Planning Committee meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.
- Tues., April 27, 7 pm:** Americas Solidarity Group meeting at the home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, Bethlehem.
- Thurs., April 29, 7 pm:** Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.
- Tues., May 4, 10 am:** Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.
- Thurs., May 6, 6-8 pm:** Bike/Walkathon Planning Committee meeting & calling night at the LEPOCO Peace Center.
- Sun., May 9, 7 pm:** LEPOCO Peace Singers rehearse at home of Martha Christine, Bethlehem.
- Mon., May 10, 7 pm:** LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All members and friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are reviewed.
- Wed., May 12, 6 pm:** Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at the Olive Branch Restaurant, 355 Broadway, south Bethlehem.
- Thurs., March 13, 7 pm:** Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

*Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able.*

*If you want more information about any of these meetings; or if you want to know the next meeting the Fundraising Committee, the Youth & Militarism/Truth in Recruiting Committee: please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events and a schedule of meetings please see [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).*



Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015  
610-691-8730 [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net)  
Fax: 610-691-8904 [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org)

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Permit No. 617  
Bethlehem, PA

See Inside:

- Page 1  
Disarm Now  
Tax Day
- Page 2  
Seven Years of War
- Page 3  
Popcorn/Potluck  
& Politics  
Peace Camp  
Book Group  
Bike/Walk-a-thon
- Page 4  
Dinner w/ Wild Bill
- Pages 5  
Earth Day  
Gas Drilling & Coal  
Ash
- Page 6  
Finance Report 2009  
Honduras
- Page 7  
Struggle Shared
- Pages 8 & 9 Insert  
Bits & Pieces

# Tax Day

## Thursday, April 15, 2010

**Help Distribute**  
"Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes"  
Outside Local Post Offices.  
Call 610-691-8730 to sign up.  
(See page 1 for more info.)

**Earth Day Climate Walk**  
**Saturday, April 24**  
**10 am - 1 pm**  
**Allentown to Bethlehem**  
(See page 5 for more info.)

**International Peace Walkers**  
Pass Through the Lehigh Valley  
**April 21-24**  
(See page 1 for more info.)

# Disarm Now!

## Help End Nuclear Weapons Terror International Rally

### Sunday, May 2

### New York City

(See Page 1 for more info.)

**Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**LEPOCO's Annual  
Bike/Walk-a-thon**  
Support LEPOCO, Partners in Health-  
Haiti, & Healthcare For All Pennsylvania  
(See enclosed pledge sheet & page 3.)