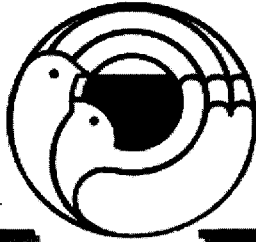


April
2011

Vol. 46 No. 3



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

A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., April 4, 1967

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

-President Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 16, 1953

Please join in a walk to:

**Stop Funding War!
Fund Our Communities!**

as part of

A Global Day of Action on Military Spending

Tuesday, April 12, Noon to 2 pm

Beginning and ending outside the

Federal Building, 5th & Hamilton Sts., Allentown

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters planned this walk when we learned about the call for A Global Day of Action on Military Spending. The Day was called by the International Peace Bureau and the Institute for Policy Studies to coincide with the release of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's annual report that includes the latest figures on military expenditures around the world. But now with the unprecedented attacks on social programs at the national and the state levels (and as a result, at the local level), questions about tax dollars flowing to the military are even more relevant. The walk will take our public witness to places that will suffer under the proposed budget cuts. We will call for serious cuts in military spending, an end to our wars, and fair taxes for those who can afford to pay more; all to address the human and environmental crises in our country. Bring our war dollars home!

Help Leaflet:

Tax Day: Monday, April 18

Using the ever relevant War Resisters League pie chart flyer we will greet tax payers at local post offices on the last day to file a tax return for 2010. If you can help with this project for an hour or two, we will pair you with another peace leafletter at a post office that is convenient for you. Please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 to sign up to help.

The quote that follows is one that appeared on leaflets distributed by LEPOCO in the early years of the organization. It is horrifying how pertinent it remains at this difficult time.

Pennsylvania: Abolish the Death Penalty!

The good news: On March 9, Illinois became the fourth state in five years to abolish the death penalty, and the sixteenth state that has abandoned the vengeful and amoral practice of capital punishment. In fact, Pennsylvania is bordered by states that have stricken the death penalty from their criminal justice systems: New York, New Jersey, West Virginia, and hopefully this year, Maryland. These states recognize that the death penalty has no deterrent effect; that it does not ensure closure for victim's family members; that it is arbitrarily and racially administered; and that it is a waste of millions of tax dollars better spent in other ways to deter crime. These states have realized there will always be the possibility of executing an innocent person and concluded such a risk is not acceptable.

The bad news: Support for capital punishment remains strong among Pennsylvania politicians and district attorneys. **YOUR VOICE IS NEEDED TO PUT OUR STATE ON THE ROAD TO ABOLITION.** Tell your state representative that you oppose the death penalty. It is a broken system that cannot be fixed. Specifically, urge your representative to oppose HB 317. If passed, HB 317 will expand the use of the death penalty in Pennsylvania.

Also, this April or May the State House Judiciary Committee will hold hearings on former Gov. Rendell's challenge to the Legislature to either shorten the appeals process so that executions can be expedited, or to abolish the death penalty. The Governor ignored the fact that to speed up the appeals process would greatly increase the probability that we might execute an innocent person. Pennsylvania has already exonerated six people who were falsely accused and placed on death row -- most of them served more than 10 years. Nick Yarris spent 21 years on Pennsylvania's death row before he was found innocent and released.

(continued on page 4)

A Voice for Peace and Understanding

On February 15, Zak Ebrahim gave a talk at the Unitarian Church in Bethlehem, on his voyage from terrorist beginnings to becoming a voice for dialog, understanding and peace. He said, "Hatred only produces more hate, but belief in nonviolence heals... I am not my father. And with that simple fact I stand here as proof that violence is not inherent in one's religion or race. Nor is it mandated that the son must follow the ways of his father."

Zak was raised in the home of a Muslim zealot. His father was a terrorist and one of the principles in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. The four terrorists involved were convicted and received 240 year sentences.

The Ebrahim children were introduced to radical clerics and even shooting practice while living in New Jersey. His talk didn't include many details about his father's background, but the family did spend years visiting him in prisons including Rikers Island. Eventually the family stopped visiting the father and Zak hadn't had contact with his father for a number of years until recently. They have now started an e-mail correspondence. He said his father has expressed regrets for his actions.

One of the statements his mother made about being so tired of hating made a strong impression on Zak as he started on his journey from a son of a terrorist to, at age 27, a Muslim advocate for peace and understanding. Zak just decided recently to come forward and speak of his beliefs. He pointed out that if someone with his background can become a peacemaker, then anyone should be able to become a peace activist.

Special thanks to the Unitarian Universalist Church for hosting his talk. Pastor Don Garrett welcomed the audience with a few words and a song of peace. Rev Lloyd Steffen, chaplain at Lehigh University, told the group about the new L.U. Center for Dialog, Ethics and Spirituality. Lehigh's assistant chaplain, Rabbi Seth Goran, introduced Zak.

- Terry Briscoe

Haiti After the Earthquake

On February 5, Johanna Berrigan, of the House of Grace Catholic Worker in Philadelphia, braved an iffy forecast and piles of snow to come to a LEPOCO Potluck & Politics program at the Quaker Meeting in Bethlehem. About two dozen of us were able to see and hear her speak about her activities in Haiti and the current conditions a year after the devastating earthquake.

Berrigan has a health project in a Port-au-Prince parish, which responds to a need expressed by Father Jean Juste several years back, when she was in a delegation there. The project, *Kay Lasante*, started by paying for the education of health workers, and getting space for them to work. When the earthquake struck, the staff, two doctors, and space were there to help.

2 LEPOCO Newsletter / April 2011

Reporting on current conditions, Berrigan said that only 5% of the rubble is removed a year later. Tent cities are everywhere, especially right in the middle of the city, where the damaged Presidential Palace and other government buildings are. Often there aren't toilet facilities, and there's no privacy. Nothing has been rebuilt, and no one can account for all the donated money.

Haiti's President Préval is seen as ineffectual, and the elections of last November still had not produced a winner, due to alleged fraud. Lavalas, the largest party, was not permitted on the ballot, and Jean-Bertrand Aristide still had not been able to return to Haiti. On the other hand, Baby Doc was there in January, apparently attempting to get "his" millions from a Swedish bank. (Aristide did return in mid-March, accompanied by Amy Goodman, who reported about it on "Democracy Now!")

Berrigan said that Préval turned over a lot of power to Bill Clinton after the earthquake. Haitians love Clinton, and he has a lot of influence there. Even Paul Farmer said not to write off Clinton as a force for good right after the earthquake. Help from other places include the "best tents" coming from Islamic relief. Also, doctors have come from Turkey and Cuba.

Haitians have to fight so hard, said Berrigan, they don't give up, there is no suicide. Many groups have self-help projects. And she's constantly reminded of their strength, when in the mornings she hears them singing their songs in praise of God. "These spirits don't give in to despair," she said.

- Janet Goloub

Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 West Fourth Street

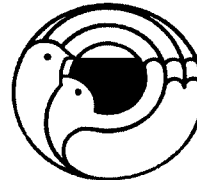
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The *LEPOCO Newsletter* is published 8 times a year by the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern, a nonviolent, non-profit organization dedicated to peace in all forms.

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, Kelly Quain, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), Ruth Walden.

Popcorn/Potluck & Politics

Sunday, April 17th, 6 pm: Tim Chadwick

"Why I Fast for Justice: Guantánamo, the Obama Administration, Broken Promises"

LEPOCO Potluck & Politics at the Peace Center

Area activist Tim Chadwick has participated for several years in Witness Against Torture's Vigil and Fast for Justice in Washington, DC. The Vigil and Fast, held each January 11th (the anniversary of when the first "war on terror" prisoners arrived at Guantánamo Bay in 2002) and January 22nd (the anniversary of President Obama's inauguration and pledge to close the facility), calls for the closure of Guantánamo and the end of torture. There are twelve days of vigils, lobbying, teach-ins, acts of nonviolent civil disobedience and fasting in our nation's capital. Tim will talk about his experiences with Witness Against Torture (www.witnesstorture.org) and share photos and stories of the men still detained, as well as those who have been exonerated. In particular he will highlight the tragic story of Adel Fattough Ali Al Gazzar who was released, but lives in limbo in Slovakia, unable to return to his native Egypt.

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 6 pm.

The presentation and discussion should begin around 6:45 pm.

Friday, May 6th, 7pm: Justice on Trial: The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal

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

Mumia Abu-Jamal is the most recognized death row inmate in the world today. In 1982, he was tried and convicted for the murder of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. Since then, the Abu-Jamal trial proceedings have come under scrutiny. The case is one of the most contested legal cases in modern U.S. history. This documentary film navigates the tempest of the Abu-Jamal trial and positions it as a microcosm of greater problems in the criminal justice system in the United States today.

Directed by Kouross Esmaeli. 67 minutes. 2010.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, June 3rd, 7pm: Inside Job

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

This sobering, Oscar-winning documentary presents in comprehensive, yet cogent detail, the pervasive and deep-rooted corruption that led to the global economic meltdown of 2008.

Through unflinching interviews with key financial insiders, politicians, journalists and academics, director Charles Ferguson ("No End in Sight") paints a galling portrait of an unfettered financial system run amok without accountability.

Narrated by Matt Damon. 108 minutes. 2010.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



LEPOCO Book Group

The 1st Wednesday Book Group will meet on May 4th, at 6 pm, at Panera Bread Café, 3301 Bath Pike (Center St.), Bethlehem. At that time the group will discuss *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett. This book demonstrates the profound impact of inequality in our society.

On June 1st, the group will discuss *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*, by Barbara Demick. The book illuminates life under a most totalitarian, secret regime. It has been described as "captivating as a human story and informative as a political description."

New readers and discussion participants are welcome. Call Bob & Carmen Riggs at 610-867-1244 or Becky Irwin at 610-351-6946 if you have questions.

- Susie Ravitz

The Geography of Hope

On Tuesday, May 10, at 7 pm, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb will speak about "The Geography of Hope: The Role of Nonviolence in Palestinian and Israeli Conflict Transformation," at Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem. Rabbi Gottlieb has extensive experience in Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation and leads frequent delegations to the Middle East under the auspices of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. A native of the Lehigh Valley, she is one of the first ten women to become a rabbi in Jewish history. She is co-founder of the Shomer Shalom Institute for Jewish Nonviolence, as part of the Community of Living Traditions at Stony Point Center, New York. A reception with refreshments will precede the talk at 6:15 pm.

Marcellus Shale Action Needed

In February, LEPOCO members joined Clean Water Action and Gas Truth on a trip to Trenton to testify before the Delaware River Basin Commission. The DRBC is currently considering which regulations go in place when they lift the moratorium on drilling in the river basin. Speakers from the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and New York H2O were also present. We urged the DRBC to maintain the current moratorium at least until the cumulative impact studies are published. As a result, the DRBC decided to extend the comment period until April 15th. It is important that we use this time period to drive this message home.

It is important for everyone to tell the DRBC about their concerns about the inadequacy of their proposed regulations and that rules should not be rushed forward without the needed scientific studies. Letters can be sent to the DRBC, Carol Collier, 25 State Police Drive, PO Box 7360, West Trenton, NJ 08628. For more information you can see www.delawariverkeeper.org or www.cleanwater.org or visit LEPOCO for printed material.

In other news, Governor Corbett recently removed a critical layer of protection for our state forests by removing the Department of Conservation of Natural Resources' review of drilling in state forest lands. This is not a lifting of the moratorium on the state forest, but it is seen as a first step in that direction. That's why concerned citizens need to continue flooding Corbett's office with messages asking him to preserve that ban on drilling.

Corbett also delivered a proposed budget in March which dealt another blow to the environment with a five percent cut to the Department of Environmental Protection's budget. Compared to the 50% cuts to education, some are wondering if we got off easy. Still, it's fair to say that the DEP is already suffering from earlier cuts, and another 5% only worsens their impact, at a time when the extra demands of monitoring the booming hydraulic fracturing industry are massive.

- Cathy Frankenberg

A Good Day to Get Arrested

In the pre-dawn hours of March 19th several cars full of proponents for peace set off from the Lehigh Valley. The destination was Washington, D.C., and the reason was to protest eight years of war and occupation in Iraq. Lehigh Valley Veterans For Peace members, LEPOCO folk, and sympathizers included Jeff Brightbill, Tim Chadwick, Curt Day, Louise Legun, Patrick Roxberry, Sarah Snider, Tom Stinnett, Vince Stravino, Nancy Tate, Judy Woodruff, John Zachmann, and myself. We joined the estimated crowd of 1500 for a peace rally in Lafayette Park.

SongRise, an all women social justice a cappella group, led the crowd in a number of rousing songs. Local community organizers, social services workers,

4 LEPOCO Newsletter / April 2011

and leaders of national peace groups stood together onstage taking turns at the microphone. Many of the speakers, including Chris Hedges and retired Colonel and U.S. diplomat Ann Wright, drew the correlation between the economic woes of the United States and the money spent on the wars currently being waged. Renowned critic of the two party system, Ralph Nader, made the plea for people to continue organizing and continue pushing the politicians in office.

Daniel Ellsberg, who famously leaked the Pentagon Papers during the Vietnam War, spoke on behalf of (accused) modern day whistleblower Bradley Manning. Ellsberg attributed Manning's (alleged) release of top secret documents to Wikileaks as having sparked the recent revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt. Instead of being hailed as a hero, Manning is currently being held unclothed in solitary confinement at the Quantico Marine Base in Virginia. Ellsberg connected that injustice to the injustices of imperial wars and empire. He ended by paraphrasing the Lakota Sioux leader Crazy Horse, with a call to action "Today is a good day to get arrested at the White House!"

With that 113 of us (including Tim Chadwick, Louise Legun, and myself) crossed a police barricade and went to the fence in front of the White House. There's a thin line between legal demonstration and deliberate law-breaking. Apparently it's as thin as a bit of yellow police tape. It was exhilarating to be on the wrong side of the law, but the right side of justice, once again. Three warnings were given by the police and then the arrests began. One-by-one we were placed in plastic zip cuffs and hustled onto city buses. While we waited Mr. Ellsberg, a man of many talents, pulled out multi-colored handkerchiefs. We were treated to an impromptu magic show as we waited to be led away. Eventually the police had to interrupt Ellsberg's slight of hand to secure his hands, behind his back. As he was being taken away a fellow arrestee shouted, "Hey Dan, how about making the wars disappear?"

If only...

The 113 were taken to a police station in Anacostia where we were given the choice of paying a \$100 fine (the charge: failure to obey a lawful order) or returning at a later date for a trial. Many felt the need to continue to challenge the powers that be and opted for the court date. And so, the saga, like the wars, continues.

Visit www.stopthesewars.org for more information. Visit the YouTube page at www.lepoco.org for videos of Nader, Ellsberg, and more.

- robert Daniels II

Abolish the Death Penalty! (continued from page 1)

Tell your rep to abolish the death penalty, not expand, or expedite it!

LEPOCO's L.V. Committee Against State Killing will organize a carpool to attend the Judiciary Committee hearing when a date is announced. Call Maria Weick (610 346 8793) or the LEPOCO office if you're interested in attending.

- Maria Weick

Afghanistan: Focus of Dinner

From the volunteers and Peace Singers, to the 140 people chatting around dinner tables, the atmosphere at the LEPOCO Annual Dinner was as attentive and friendly as a salon. The church had problems with the lights and the hall was dimmer than usual, but many people enjoyed the candles and a softer ambiance.

Special thanks to MC Mimi Lang and her joyful mashup at the mike with Dr. Seuss' *Cat in the Hat* and John Lennon's *Give Peace a Chance*. And what's the matter with that? (See below.) Thanks to the creators and cooks and servers of the delicious vegetarian meal, themed around the cuisine of Afghanistan. Thanks to those who offered prizes for the raffle and the cleanup crew. Congratulations and continued support to the winners of the election -- serving two years as co-treasurer, Julius Iwantsch, and as Steering Committee members will be Ruth Karpinski, Kelly Quain, and Janet Ney, who is also lead coordinator of the annual dinner. (All, serving along with the seven members of the committee who have completed half of their two-year terms.)

David Wildman, featured speaker, talked about "Ending the war in Afghanistan; Ending the war on state and local budgets; and How we bring our war dollars home." We were eager to hear his talk because we want our troops home now, alive, safe, and able to join us in rebuilding our communities. We need to stop the war crimes described in "Taxi to the Dark Side."

Wildman reviewed the history of Afghanistan, the way station of Marco Polo, Alexander the Great, and Genghis Khan, sometimes called the graveyard of empires. In the 1990s it was the Soviets who occupied and lost to the mujahedeen funded by the U.S. (see *Charlie Wilson's War*), and now it's a quagmire for the USA. Wildman related how from 2009-2011, the U.S., most recently under the leadership of General Petraeus, increased the number of troops, the drone strikes, covert ops, and night raids in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and hence more casualties to the innocent civilians and the troops. When Afghan president Hamid Karzai won by massive fraud, he steered 85% of aid from the U.S. to government officials, not the people.

Wildman talked about the repeat deployments and the effects it has on our troops. Demoralized, more soldiers in 2009-2010 died of suicide than in combat. The war is destroying our military and bankrupting our economy. President Obama has inherited and continues the illusion that we can win this war at a million dollars per year for every soldier over there.

Wildman built his talk around several Afghani proverbs, and stressed that the people prefer to fight with words, and with their culture of hospitality have more to teach us than we them. That's a lesson we learn from reading Greg Mortensen's *Three Cups of Tea*, and *From Stones to Schools*; and Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*.

How do we end the war? Get labor to join the anti-war movement, said Wildman. Build the movement by talking and supporting the workers who are losing col-

lective bargaining rights. Find a friend you disagree with and take the time to talk and listen to each other -- like the Afghan proverb, "A wise enemy is better than a foolish friend." These are helpful ways to build the community of resistance and pressure the government to reduce the military budget. Wildman said that reduction could be 75%.

And since 97% of our aid is military support, we need to find political leadership that admits the Afghans didn't have anything to do with the attacks of 9/11, and that our counter-insurgency is not about winning their hearts and minds. Talk it up with people you meet: Bring our troops and our war dollars home.

For further reading: *Ending the US War in Afghanistan: A Primer* by David Wildman and Phyllis Bennis, Olive Branch Press/Interlink, 2010, available at LEPOCO.

- Monica McAgnon

LEPOCO Dinner 2011

(A Tribute to LEPOCO and Dr. Seuss)

Peace, Peace, Peace
Said the Cat in the Hat
Give Peace a Chance
What's the matter with that?

You stand on the corner
You write 'til you're blue
You shout out for peace
What's the matter with you?

Peace takes forever
You vote and you picket
Defending the least
Is a stickily wicket.
They'll put you in jail
And call you a beast
The press will believe them
Oh, what a feast! ...

They'll use our tax dollars
For war and avenging
While corporate folks
Enjoy comforts unending.

But the Cat sees a glimmer
Of hope. He sees light,
From those folks in LEPOCO
Who get it just right.
They keep at it, in spite,
Of the perilous twists
Of righteous tea people
With very long lists.

May peacemakers believe
That each effort they're making
Gives the earth a reprieve
From hate and war-making.
Stay mindful, don't bend
This Cat in the Hat is forever your friend.

Peace, Peace, Peace
Said the Cat in the Hat
Give Peace a Chance
What's the matter with that?

- Mimi Lang 3/5/11

Arabian Squash Casserole

(This is one of the recipes from the Annual Dinner. All the food received high acclaim. If you would like other recipes please contact LEPOCO.)

Preparation Time: about 1 hour, after the squash is cooked and puréed.

Yield: 4 to 5 servings.

4 cups cooked squash or pumpkin, mashed or puréed

1 Tbs. olive oil

1 1/2 cups chopped onion

1 tsp. salt

2 small bell peppers (one red and one green, if possible), minced

4 or 5 medium cloves garlic, minced

black pepper and cayenne, to taste

1/2 cup firm yogurt

1 cup crumbled feta cheese

OPTIONAL: sunflower seeds and/or minced walnuts, for the top

PRELIMINARY: Preheat oven to 375°F.

1) Place the mashed or puréed squash in a large bowl.

2) Heat the olive oil in a medium-sized skillet. Add onion, and sauté over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add salt and bell pepper. Sauté about 5 more minutes, or until the peppers begin to get soft.

3) Add garlic, black pepper, and cayenne, and sauté a few minutes.

4) Add the sauté, along with yogurt and feta, to the squash, and mix well. Spread into an ungreased 9-inch square baking pan, sprinkle the top lightly with sunflower seed and/or minced walnut.

5) Bake uncovered for 25 to 30 minutes, or until bubbly.

From Moosewood Cookbook (New Revised Edition)
published by Ten Speed Press in 1992.

Crises & Activism

On February 15, unions called for a protest at the capitol in Madison... and 10,000 people showed up in the cold. The crowds built to 35,000 two days later... And a week later, 100,000 pro-labor supporters rallied even as it snowed...

I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. To be at these protests, to see Howard Zinn's teachings of resistance come to life, to march with ironworkers and steelworkers and Teamsters and laborers and teachers and nurses and electricians and professors and secretaries and printers and social workers and firefighters and caregivers and prison guards lifted my spirits as nothing has in my political life...

- Matthew Rothschild, *The Progressive*, April 2011

There will be a teach-in in Philadelphia on Saturday, **April 16**, at 10 am, on "**The Federal Budget Crisis & Its Impact on Local Communities.**" The lead speaker will be Jo Comerford, executive director of the National Priorities Project. For more info. call the Brandywine Peace Community at 610-544-1818. Contact LEPOCO if you would like to car pool with others from the Lehigh Valley.

There will be a Rally for a Responsible Budget in Harrisburg on Tuesday, May 3rd. This follows several local events, briefings, rallies, picket lines, etc., in response
6 LEPOCO Newsletter / April 2011

to the Pennsylvania and federal budget crises. For more information on May 3rd and the state budget see www.clearforpa.org.

In an e-mail message about their March 21st protest of the U.S. Assault on Libya, the Brandywine Peace Community wrote, "Gadhafi is predicting a 'long war'. Don't you think that the U.S. should deny his maniacal prediction, and brutality against his own people, by not adding to the violence and killing. As we observe the 8th anniversary of the start of the Iraq War, let's say again: War Is Not the Answer." The American Friends Service Committee issues a "Call for Nonviolent Alternatives to End the Conflict in Libya." It is available at www.afsc.org.

The problem is not that another backup generator is needed, or that the safety rules aren't tight enough, or that the pit for the nuclear waste is in the wrong geological location, or that controls on proliferation are lax. It is that stumbling, imperfect, probably imperfectable creatures like ourselves are unfit to wield the stellar fire released by the split or fused atom. When nature strikes, why should humankind compound the trouble? The earth is provided with enough primordial forces of destruction without our help in introducing more. We should leave those to Mother Nature.

- Johathan Schell, "Hiroshima to Fukushima," *The Nation*, 4/4/11

Be sure to watch the reporting done by Amy Goodman about former Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide's return to Haiti in March, after seven years of exile. Watch her report at www.democracynow.org.



Photograph by Susie Ravitz.

Henry Moyer Daniels at 5 weeks + 4 days, held by his mother, Kim Moyer, at the Annual Dinner. (His father, Robert Daniels II, was busy elsewhere in the room.) Henry may well be the youngest peacemaker to ever attend a LEPOCO Annual Dinner.

Remembering LEPOCO's 2010: *The Year in Review*

January

- ## On the 9th some of us joined a protest of the appearance of Fox News' Glenn Beck at Easton's State Theatre.
- ## Local activist, Tim Chadwick, participated in the January Witness Against Torture actions in Washington, DC.
- ## A celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at the Easton YMCA on the 17th was coordinated by the Nuclear Abolition Sisters and featured the reading of his "Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam" speech.
- ## On the 31st at a Potluck and Politics (P&P), Sylvia Metzler gave a talk entitled "Honduras: A Human Rights Report on the Coup-Controlled Country." She was on a Quest for Peace delegation to Honduras the previous November.

February

- ## Seven people are nominated for our Steering Committee because our recently amended constitution allows for a larger body to steer the organization.
- ## LEPOCO member Kelly Quain attended a weekend Student Peace Alliance conference at Southwestern University.
- ## Cathy Frankenberg from Clean Water Action showed the film "Split Estate," which explains the environmental dangers of hydraulic fracking.

March

- ## Rev. Billy and Savitri D from the "Church of Life After Shopping" were the speakers at the Annual Dinner on the 6th. Following a rousing introduction by David Rose, Rev. Billy chanted, sang and vigorously spoke out against U.S. consumer culture and war culture. He drew a large overflow crowd.
- ## Many of us participated in activities marking the 7th anniversary of start of the Iraq war: the Friday vigil at Allentown's Federal Building was boosted by a dozen participants on the 19th; Joyce Moore and the Unami Quaker Meeting organized a vigil in Pennsburg; four of us traveled to Franklin Mills Mall, Philadelphia, for the demonstration against the Army Experience Center (the AEC was closed in August); ten local folks joined a large Bring the Troops Home demonstration in DC on the 20th; Veterans for Peace (VFP) marched on the 21st in Allentown's St. Patrick's Day Parade.
- ## Eight Lehigh Valley folks attended an Alternatives to the Death Penalty lobby day in Harrisburg on the 31st.
- ## Sarah Snider, Mimi Lang, and Robert Daniels II, joined a delegation to El Salvador, organized by the *Centro de Intercambio y Solidaridad*, and visited rural La Loma where a new school was named in tribute to Joe DeRaymond.

April

- ## Post offices around the Lehigh Valley were leafleted by 17 of us on Tax Day (the 15th) pointing out that almost half of our taxes go to the military. Jeff Vitelli brought his guitar and serenaded last minute tax filers.
- ## We helped host International Peace Walkers, April 21-23, on their way from the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Facility in Tennessee to NYC, for the UN review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
- ## Robert Daniels II and Gwen Colegrove reported about their separate experiences in India at a P&P on the 25th.

May

- ## Mimi Lang, Anna Maria Caldara, Kelly Quain & Robert Daniels II marched in support of the NPT on the 2nd in NYC along with thousands of people including Japanese *hibakusha*.
- ## VFP observed Memorial Day with a moving display at Allentown's Cedar Beach Park using simulated tombstones commemorating the soldiers from Pennsylvania that have died in Iraq and Afghanistan. The display was repeated for Veterans Day in November at Rose Garden Park in Bethlehem.

June

- ## The Steering Committee issued a statement condemning Israeli government attack on the Freedom Flotilla to Gaza.
- ## The Annual Bike/Walk-a-thon was held on the 5th. The beneficiaries in addition to LEPOCO were Partners in Health-Haiti and Health Care for All Pennsylvania.
- ## On the 12th many of us attended a service honoring the life of Art Landis, noted peace activist. Described as "bold in actions, quiet in speech," he was one of the Dent 9 and served time in jail for "crossing the line" at the SOA.

July

- ## The Steering Committee initiated a series of meetings to evaluate our current programs, staffing and fundraising.
- ## Bob Thompson, a founding member, died on the 4th. He was "giant of compassion," and many of us attended the memorial service held for him in September.
- ## On the 16th a P&P commemorated the 65th anniversary of Trinity, the 1st A-Bomb test in New Mexico, by showing a movie and hearing from Kelly Quain as she planned to join "Think Outside the Bomb" in Los Alamos, NM.

On the 21st Retired Army Colonel and former State Department diplomat Ann Wright spoke at Wesley United Methodist Church regarding her experiences on the freedom flotilla to Gaza.

Our annual Peace Camp, held July 25-30, was once again a highly peaceful and joyful success, with over 86 campers and 80 adult and teen volunteers.

August

To commemorate Hiroshima-Nagasaki Days the film "Seabrook 1977" was shown at the August 6th Popcorn and Politics. On August 9th and 11th we distributed 1300 leaflets at Musikfest urging people to oppose nuclear weapons.

The Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition had a rich and challenging discussion of the book "Ending the US War in Afghanistan: A Primer" by Phyllis Bennis & David Wildman on the 19th. Twenty people participated.

September

Susie Ravitz spoke about LEPOCO at the "Hi Neighbor" series at First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem, on the 21st and had been on an August panel about Grassroots Involvement for the Alliance for Sustainable Communities.

LV-CASK members David Rose and Maria Weick organized local showings of the film "No Tomorrows," that offered a unique death penalty perspective.

Several of us participate in the Steelworkers Labor Day parade in Bethlehem.

A theatre party held on the 30th was enjoyed by 30 who attended the play, "A Thousand Cranes," at Lafayette College, preceded by a warm gathering on a rainy night at the home of Kim and David Rose.

October

On the 2nd, some of us went to the "One Nation Working Together" rally in Washington on buses arranged by the local UAW. The large event was sponsored by a coalition of peace and justice, community and labor groups.

On the 7th in commemoration of the 10th year of the war in Afghanistan the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition showed the film, "Rethinking Afghanistan" by Robert Greenwald at the campus of NCC in south Bethlehem.

On the 19th we helped sponsor talks by Mike Prokosch from the Boston Area United for Justice with Peace about the 25% Solution that calls for cutting military spending so we can fund our communities and our social needs.

On the 22nd a memorial program was held for Joe DeRaymond in Allentown. Seventy people enjoyed good food and a program that featured remembrances from the Fellowship of Reconciliation's John Lindsay-Poland and Susana Pimiento. \$4000 was raised for the work of FOR with the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó.

November

A soup and salad party was held on the 4th at LEPOCO. Attendees walked to Godfrey Daniels where they enjoyed a performance by long time favorites Charlie King & Karen Brandow as well as Kim & Reggie Harris.

Nectali Rodezno, a Honduran representing The National Lawyers Front Against the Coup, spoke at a P&P on the 14th about the ongoing repression in his country. Witness for Peace arranged his speaking tour.

Sarah Snider, Bob & Carmen Riggs, and Mary Louise & Addison Bross made a pilgrimage to the SOA at Ft. Benning, Georgia, protesting in moving and compassionate ways the continued existence of this school of repression.

December

On the 11th, 170 people in the Lehigh Valley participated in the 51st Nazareth-to-Bethlehem Peace Pilgrimage and listened to a speech by our own Nancy Tate encouraging peace activists to stay steadfast in these difficult times.

Ongoing

Peace vigils continued against the wars: in Allentown, on Fridays at the Federal Building until the fall; in south Bethlehem on second Thursdays at 3rd & Wyandotte Sts., all year; and on intermittent 3rd Wednesdays, at Congressman Dent's office, Bethlehem.

Our Book Group met on first Wednesdays to discuss a variety of books including: *Jayber Crow* by Wendell Berry; *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai; and *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet* by Bill McKibben.

The Popcorn and Politics/First Friday Film series continued with such favorites as *The Cove*; *The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg & the Pentagon Papers*; *The Chicago Ten*; *Promises*; and *Plunder: the Crime of Our Time*.

We participated in fairs and festivals including Jim Thorpe's Earth Day (April); Allentown's 11th Street Festival (June); PrideFest (August); Lehigh University's Community & Club Expo (August); the Sustainable Energy Festival in Kempton (September); the Peace Fair in Buckingham (September); events at the Secret Art Space, south Bethlehem (November); and we held our Holiday Open House in December.

Pay Pal was instituted so we can pay dues, make donations, or make a pledge on-line; and Tom Ulrich created and donated hundreds of business cards with information showing the disproportionate military spending in the US.

The Struggle Shared

The Constitution gave no rights to working people; no right to work less than 12 hours a day, no right to a living wage, no right to safe working conditions. Workers had to organize, go on strike, defy the law, the courts, the police, create a great movement which won the eight-hour day, and caused such commotion that Congress was forced to pass minimum wage laws, and Social Security, and unemployment insurance... Those rights only come alive when citizens organize, protest, demonstrate, strike, boycott, rebel, and violate the law in order to uphold justice.

- Howard Zinn, in an interview with Bill Moyers

IMMOKALEE WORKERS WIN -

Migrant tomato pickers in Florida are on the cusp of an unprecedented transformation of farm labor conditions in Florida's fields after nearly 20 years of exemplary non-violent struggle. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) and the Campaign for Fair Food, negotiated a settlement with the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange, a trade association representing 80% of Florida's growers, to increase the pay of workers by a penny a pound for the fruit they harvest. Major buyers including Taco Bell, McDonald's, Burger King, and most recently, Whole Foods Market supermarket chain, had already agreed to pay the increased prices.

The CIW began in 1993 as a community based organization of Latino, Mayan Indian and Haitian immigrants working low-wage jobs in the fields of Florida. Through reflection and analysis, attention to coalition building across ethnic lines, and investment in leadership development, CIW has emerged as a force to be reckoned with in pursuit of justice for farm workers.

CIW's campaigns to end years of declining wages, and to expose the modern-day slavery conditions in Florida's tomato and citrus fields included three community-wide work stoppages, a month-long hunger strike by six of its organizers in 1998, a 230-mile walk from Fort Meyers to Orlando in 2000, and a four-year boycott of Taco Bell which resulted in the fast-food corporation signing an agreement to buy Florida tomatoes at a fair price. That agreement became a model that other major corporations began to endorse. While the fast food and foodservice industries are largely

on board, the big super-market companies, Publix and Ahold (owner of Giant and Stop & Shop) are obstinate obstacles.

An executive of the Tomato Grower's Exchange said, "We hope that socially responsible businesses will purchase tomatoes from our growers, and not cheaper ones from Mexican farm competitors. Everybody in the system has to be invested in order for it to work."

As market consumers, we are invested in the system. The next time you buy a tomato, ask the produce manager if it's from Florida, and tell them you'll pay the extra penny a pound to guarantee it's not being picked by slave labor.

SAME-SEX PARTNERS HAVE RIGHTS IN ALLENTOWN -

On January 26th, Allentown's Mayor Ed Pawlowski signed into law a measure that grants the same benefits to same-sex partners of city employees as their heterosexual colleagues have for their spouses. The bill was introduced by City Council president Mike D'Amore in January with five councilpersons cosponsoring, came quickly out of committee, and passed council unanimously on January 19th. Over 100 people spoke in favor, and little opposition was voiced from the floor before the vote. Allentown is only the fourth municipality in Pennsylvania (following Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Harrisburg) to grant benefits to same-sex partners. Adrian Shanker, of the Pennsylvania Diversity Network (PDN), said, "I am proud that my city has affirmed the relationships of LGBT families as equal. In Pennsylvania, where we lack marriage equality, this is a big deal."

Although the passage of the bill was remarkably easy, the groundwork was laid many years ago. The Lehigh Valley Gay and Lesbian Taskforce began working on the issue 16 years ago. The PDN, based in Allentown, met with Mike D'Amore, who had just been elected President of Allentown City Council, three years ago.

Presently, the City of Easton is considering an ordinance that is a mirror image of the Allentown law, and Bethlehem City Council will decide on a long-overdue non-discrimination law on April 28th.

Public support is needed for these efforts.

CHEVRON FINED IN ECUADOR -

After 17 years in the courts, oil giant Chevron was ordered in February by an Ecuadorian court to pay \$17 billion in fines and punitive damages for dumping billions of gallons of toxic chemicals into the headwaters of the Amazon River. Since the 1970's, Texaco, now owned by Chevron, systematically polluted the Ecuadorian Amazon with hundreds of oil pits, on tens of thousands of acres of one of the world's most biodiverse regions.

The historic ruling in the environmental suit initially filed by communities representing 30,000 plaintiffs living in the affected Amazon basin, represents the first time indigenous people have sued a major corporation for damages, and won. Of course, Chevron has vowed they will appeal, and says they will not pay up, calling the ruling "illegitimate, and unenforceable." In an interview with Amy Goodman, on "Democracy Now!" Andrew Miller, Advocacy Coordinator for Amazon Watch which has been supporting the case for many years, said, "This is an important day for the communities. It's just one step: It's not a victory. But it's very crucial for them. It's also an important day for the broader struggle for corporate accountability around the world, for the broader struggles for environmental justice and human rights."

- Jeff Vitelli

LEPOCO Financial Report 2010

Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Fund Balance	2010
Membership Dues, Fund Appeals, Phonathon, Pledges	\$35,136.15
Investment Income	\$75.42
Profit on Boutique Sales	\$1668.03
Annual Dinner	\$2,185.07
Art Raffle	\$821.00
Bike-Walk-A-Thon	\$1060.43
Yard Sale (There was no event in 2010, but this is money from 2009 sale.)	\$96.00
Misc. Programs (Peace Singers, 1000 Cranes Theatre Party, Charlie King Concert, P&P's, etc.) (Net Inc.)	\$1120.68
Copier Use	\$9.72
Total Revenue	\$42,172.50
Contributions to Others	\$321.84
Salaries and Benefits to Employees	\$28,002.28
Rent, Electric, Telephone, Insurance, etc.	\$8,010.18
Computer Access & Domain Fees	\$741.43
Printing and Postage	\$1,946.20
Other Expenses (Fund Appeals, Programs & Events)	\$964.48
Supplies (Office, Copier, Printer, Paper)	\$1,204.70
Repairs (Office, Copier & Risograph)	\$1,017.34
Misc. Office Expenses	\$168.08
Miscellaneous (Working Groups, Bank Fees, etc)	\$114.06
Total Expenses	\$42,490.59
Excess or (Loss) for Year	(\$318.09)
Fund Balances at the Beginning of the Year	\$11,413.35
Change in Investment Value	(\$2575.32)
Fund Balance at the End of the Year	\$8,519.94

2009 Fund Balances	Beginning of Year	End of Year
Cash, Savings and Investments	\$17,704.75	\$15,452.76
Liabilities	\$6,291.40	\$6,932.82
Net Assets and Fund Balances	\$11,413.35	\$8,519.94

Regular Peace Vigil

Our wars expand. Please help witness for peace.

Bethlehem: 4:30-5:30 pm, Second Thursdays
3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103 / Tom Ulrich 610-882-1136

Check out the LEPOCO website

at 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.

SUPPORT LEPOCO!

Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$_____.
(\$35 individual; \$45 household; \$75 supporter; \$5 limited income)

NAME _____

PHONE # _____

e-mail _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

ZIP _____

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

Bits & Pieces

☪ For those of you unable to attend the Annual Dinner here are the winners in the **Art Raffle**. Maura Jones won the patchwork quilt made by Ellen Buck and the SAS; Mary Schoenberger won the hand-crocheted afghan made by Anna Reczek; Steffie Rau won the hand-painted silk scarf made by Amanda Zaniesienko; Margaret Capozzolo won the hand-turned wooden bowl made by Lee Buck; Abe Hailye won the tickets to the Southside Film Festival; and Tom Ickes won the wheel-thrown pottery made by Monica and Ray Sommerville. Thank you to all who donated art and all who purchased tickets.

☪ Thank you to Laurie Spalholz who has led the **Craigslist Sale** for LEPOCO. Over \$350 has been raised in this effort (and some items may yet be sold). Thank you to all who donated their treasures and to those who assisted Laurie in pricing.

☪ A special thank you to **Mike Lawton and Laurie Spalholz** who offered their home near the Delaware shore for a July vacation to a high bidder with the money donated going to LEPOCO. David Rose is the generous high bidder and he and his family will enjoy this summer retreat.

☪ **Lecie Machell**, a long-time supporter of LEPOCO and an outstanding teacher and leader in the field of social worker, died on October 20, 2010, only days before her 98th birthday. A lovely memorial service was held for her on April 2nd at First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem. Among the music used in the service was, "Let There Be Peace on Earth."

☪ There will be a preview screening of the film "**Freedom Riders**," on Tues., April 12, at 6 pm, at the Red Cross Bldg., 2200 Ave. "A", Bethlehem. The film by Stanley Nelson, will be aired on PBS on May 16. It is about the courageous people who were threatened, attacked, and jailed, when they dared to take the struggle for racial integration onto buses traveling in the

southern United States starting in the late 1940s. This screening is sponsored by the Bethlehem NAACP and PBS 39.

☪ On Sat., April 9, 8:30 am to 3 pm, the Lehigh County Conference of Churches, Bread for the World and Second Harvest, will hold a conference on "**Hunger at Home: Food for Our Neighbors**," at First Presbyterian Church, Allentown. The keynote speaker, Larry Hollar of Bread for the World, will speak on "Reforming U.S. Foreign Aid," and there will be a variety of workshops. Cost is \$5 with light breakfast and lunch provided. To register, call 610-433-6421.

☪ On March 13, a LEPOCO Potluck & Politics gathering was filled with the youthful enthusiasm of organizers Nico Udu-gama and Gabriela Uassouf. Both leaders in the now hemispheric **movement to close the SOA**, Nico in DC and Gabriela in Venezuela, they were on a speaking tour leading up to the April actions in DC for this important cause. Besides updating some LEPOCO stalwarts at this gathering, they were also able to speak for Addison Bross' "Introduction to Peace Studies" class at Lehigh University the next morning.

☪ *We need in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers.*
- Bayard Rustin

☪ On March 19th, the anniversary of the war he so vehemently detested, **John Clinton Fowler** died. Following World War II and studies at General Theological Seminary in New York, Father Fowler became the founding rector of St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Tucson, Arizona. The parish was dedicated to social reform, the civil rights movement, the farm workers movement, nuclear disarmament, and other public issues of the day. Following retirement in 1986 and time in Florida, Father Fowler found his way to the Lehigh Valley.

Most LEPOCO folks know him as the steadfast individual who stood outside Allentown's Federal Building every Friday since before the current war in Iraq began. Rain, snow, or sunshine Father Fowler was there; a striking figure in his clerical collar, Purple Heart, and cane. His diligent presence and peaceful witness will be missed.

A memorial service is planned for Saturday, April 30th, at 10 am, at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity, 321 Wyandotte St., south Bethlehem. The following Friday, May 6th, noon to 1 pm, a special peace vigil in Father Fowler's honor will be held on his usual corner outside the Federal Building, 5th and Hamilton Sts., Allentown.

MEETINGS... MEETINGS... MEETINGS... MEETINGS... ETC.

Mon., April 11, 3:30 pm: Peace Camp Planning Committee Working Meeting at home of Ruth Walden, Bethlehem. Call 610-691-8730 for more info.

Mondays, April 11 & May 9: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the Peace Center. All members and friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are reviewed.

Thursdays, April 14 & May 12, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., April 15, 1 pm: Newsletter Planning Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., April 15, 3:15 pm: Bike-Walkathon Planning Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Tues., April 19, 7 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Thurs., May 19, 4 pm: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at 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 of the Nuclear Abolition Sisters, Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition, LEPOCO Peace Singers, the Fundraising Committee, the Youth & Militarism/Truth in Recruiting Committee,

or the Economic Crisis Committee: please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings please see www.lepoco.org.



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015
610-691-8730 lepoco@fast.net
Fax: 610-691-8904 www.lepoco.org

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See Inside:

- Page 1
Stop Funding War
End Death Penalty
- Page 2
Zak Ebrahim
Haiti Update
- Page 3
P & P's
Book Group
Lynn Gottlieb
- Page 4
Marcellus Shale
Getting Arrested
- Pages 5 & 6
Annual Dinner
Crises & Activism
- Pages 7 & 8
LEPOCO's 2010
- Page 9
Struggle Shared
- Page 10
Finances 2010
- Page 11
Bits & Pieces

Please join a walk to:

**Stop Funding War!
Fund Our Communities!**

as part of

**A Global Day of Action
on Military Spending**

**Tuesday, April 12
Noon to 2 pm**

Beginning and ending outside the
Federal Building, 5th & Hamilton Sts.
Allentown

(See page 1 for more info.)

Help Leaflet:

Tax Day

Monday, April 18

Call LEPOCO (610-691-8730)
to sign up for a time and a post office.

(See page 1 for more info.)

Potluck & Politics

Sunday, April 17, 6 pm

Tim Chadwick

"Why I Fast for Justice:
Guantánamo,
the Obama Administration,
Broken Promises"

LEPOCO Peace Center

(See page 3 for more info.)