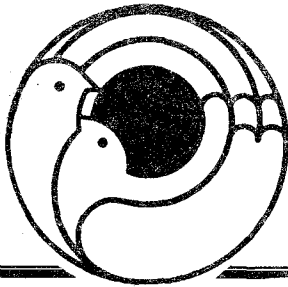


April  
2007

vol. 42 no. 3



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



## Kathy Kelly Honors the Dreams of Other Lands

The Annual LEPOCO Dinner, in our 41<sup>st</sup> year, was held the evening of March 31<sup>st</sup>, at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity on Bethlehem's southside. A large and enthusiastic crew of volunteers labored diligently to make the event a success -- we would like to thank all of the many folks who turned out to help prepare food, set up tables, hang banners, fold programs, arrange flowers, take tickets, greet people, sell merchandise, tape the event, and just generally ensure that things went smoothly (which, thanks to all of your efforts, they did!).

Those who attended the dinner were treated to a delicious meal, beautiful music from our very own LEPOCO Peace Singers, and a deeply compelling, profoundly inspiring talk by our special guest, renowned

(continued on page 7)

## Declare Peace 14 Trial

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2006, at the Philadelphia office of Senator Rick Santorum, fourteen people were arrested for attempting to call on their Senator to act to end the war in Iraq. They were refused entry into the office and sat down in the lobby to wait. In the hours that followed, names of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq were read aloud. Eventually the 14's refusal to leave led to their arrest with three misdemeanor charges of defiant trespass, criminal trespass, and criminal conspiracy (the stiffest charges for antiwar protestors in Philadelphia since the 1980s).

Their trial is set for Monday, April 23, at 8:30 am, in Philadelphia's Municipal Court at 1301 Filbert St., Room 1003. Preceding the trial there will be a rally to end the war outside the court beginning at 7:30 am. The "Philadelphia Declare Peace 14" are: Beth Friedlan, Karen Wisniewski, Sylvia Metzler, Mary Jo McArthur, Bernadette Cronin-Geller, Melissa Elliott and Ronald Coburn, all of Philadelphia; Timothy Chadwick and Robert Daniels II, both of Bethlehem; Robin Lasersohn and Thomas Mullian, both of Media; Robert M. Smith, of Swarthmore; Marjorie Van Cleef, of Bryn Mawr; and Silvia Brandon-Perez, formerly of Tobyhanna.

Those wishing to support the "14" by attending the trial can contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 regarding transportation plans or Robert Daniels II at 610-781-5612 for other information.

- Robert Daniels II

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HEY Highschoolers,  
Want to Make a  
DIFFERENCE?

Then,  
Come to the PeaceMaker  
Youth Training  
2007 Summit. 4<sup>th</sup> Annual!

Why: - Learn about how to be an effective activist in your school, community, and the world.

- Meet like-minded students from around the Valley to discuss the issues that really matter

When: May 12<sup>th</sup> 2007 9:00 AM - 4:15 PM

Where: Lehigh Valley Monthly Meetinghouse, Rt. 512, just a 1/2 mi. north of 22.

SPACE IS LIMITED! Call LEPOCO today:  
610 691 8730 to RSVP

\*\*\*\*\*

# Seeking Black & White Solidarity

Dr. Staughton Lynd, noted historian, peace activist, attorney for blue collar poor, civil rights leader, labor organizer and spokesperson for prison reform opened a book for us on March 20<sup>th</sup> at Muhlenberg College when we listened to him tell us about *Lucasville: The Untold Story of a Prison Uprising*. Lucasville Prison is an infamous state facility in the southern part of the red State of Ohio. Ohio is known for its executions, second in number only to Texas, swinging the Presidential election to George Bush in 2004, the home for some of the worst U.S. Presidents, and repressive racism evidenced by the number of Afro-Americans incarcerated in its prisons and for the number executed there. Lynd named the City of Cincinnati as a place where you want to be careful if you are black.

Personally, it was a thrill for me to sit in the front row near this great man and listen to him. I consider him a member of the Trinity: Chomsky, Zinn and Lynd. I told him that and he laughed. Since I am from Youngstown, Ohio, where Lynd lives and where he worked as an attorney, trying to keep the steel mills open there in the 1970s, I have a special feeling for him. He spent the last part of his working life before official retirement in the 1990s as a Legal Services Attorney for people of low income in Youngstown.

He left the podium a number of times during his talk, seeking to engage the audience, mostly students, in the story of racism, repression and an ultimate positive solidarity movement between people of different races who came together out of that repression while incarcerated within a vicious prison environment that ultimately benefits no one while destroying the lives of many.

Since I am a pastor I could relate to his beginning when he spoke of the Prison Program of Jesus. He ended with the story of Archbishop Romero of El Salvador assassinated for his stand on behalf of the poor of his nation.

In between the Jesus Program and Romero's testimony Lynd told the Lucasville story about the 1993 events at the prison triggered by Warden Arthur Tate's refusal to accommodate the religious convictions of the prison's Sunni Muslim inmates, which forbade them from submitting to a prison-wide, injection-based TB test which contained alcohol (requests for legitimate medical alternative chest X-rays were refused). But Lynd also makes clear that Lucasville officials were fully aware of numerous complaints about treatment by the guards, a non-functioning grievance procedure and intolerable conditions. This Southern Ohio Correctional Facility had a national reputation for violence and abuse.

The major point of Lynd's message was how black and white prisoners came together. Muslims,

Aryan Brotherhood members, and Black Gangster Disciples traveled in different routes on the prison yard and for many years interaction was minimal. But sudden drama in the big house requires one to utilize survival tactics, which meant members of these distinct groups worked together for possibly the first time in their prison lives. Being able to focus on the greater good is a very courageous act. It was, without doubt, the willingness to collaborate which prevented further violence and death in the uprising.

In the question period Lynd commented that we are losing our legitimate basic rights as citizens as we watch the present U.S. government take away the right of habeas corpus as in the cases of prisoners incarcerated at Guantanamo.

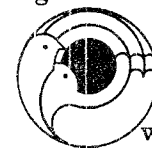
Lynd's small book, *Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism* is recommended by me for everyone to read.  
- Tom Hershberger

## Were You There?

On Good Friday, April 6, the local group, Catholics for Peace and Justice, held a vigil to abolish the death penalty in Pennsylvania outside the Lehigh County Courthouse in Allentown. The vigil program was made up of a combination of readings from national church bodies opposing the death penalty, statements by local groups like Amnesty International and Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing, and Good Friday hymns. About two dozen people attended and there was some media coverage. It was a bright sunny day, but blustery cold for those attending.

## Newsletter of **LEPOCO**

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern  
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The LEPOCO Newsletter is published 10 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 . . . . .	\$25
Limited Income Member . . . . .	\$ 5
Household Membership . . . . .	\$30
Supporting Member . . . . .	\$50

Articles/news should be submitted by the third Wednesday of the month for use in the following month's newsletter.

Newsletter Staff: Ellen Buck, Martha Christine, Peter Christine, Peter Crownfield, Fran Dreisbach, Arlene Grow, Mike Lawton, Tom Lloyd, Eob Riggs, Tom Stinnett, Joan Stolz, Joan Stone, Nancy Tate, Marion Thorne, Jeff Vitelli, Hans Wuerth, and Ursula Wuerth.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Addison Bross, Peter Christine, Robert Daniels II, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Holly Kent, Mike Lawton (ex-officio), Michelle Mecham, Janet Ney (co-reasurer), Sue Ravitz, Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

# Potluck & Politics

## Popcorn & Politics

at the LEPOCO Peace Center

**Friday, April 27, 6:30 pm**

*Potluck & Politics*

"Representing Mumia the  
Writer"

**Frances Goldin**

At 83 Frances Goldin marks 30 years as a literary agent promoting books by progressive authors -- "books intended to change the world." She has been a housing activist for 63 years, and has been involved with the peace movement and anti-death penalty work. She has represented authors like Adrienne Rich, Barbara Kingsolver and Martin Duberman, but on this night she will talk about the death penalty and her work as literary agent for Mumia Abu-Jamal.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has been in prison in Pennsylvania since 1981 for the murder of a Philadelphia Police Officer. This includes almost 20 years on death row. Pennsylvania is seeking to reinstate the order to execute Abu-Jamal that was over-turned by a judge in 2001.

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 6:30 pm.

**Friday, May 4, 7 pm**

*Popcorn & Politics*

(1st Friday Film)

*The U.S. vs. John Lennon*

This is a documentary portrait of John Lennon's evolution from beloved Beatle to outspoken artist and activist to supposed nemesis of the United States government. The film includes interviews with Walter Cronkite, G. Gordon Liddy, Gore Vidal, Yoko Ono and more, as well as a great soundtrack featuring the music of John Lennon. 2006. Directed by David Leaf and John Scheinfeld. 96 minutes.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

★★★★★ **Enclosures** ★★★★★

1. Peace Camp Volunteer Form: Please complete and return this form if you want to help with Peace Camp this year in any capacity. Peace Camp will be July 23-27 this year. You should have received a registration form for Peace Campers with the special



LEPOCO Mailing of mid-March. Please call 610-691-8730 if you need more of either form.

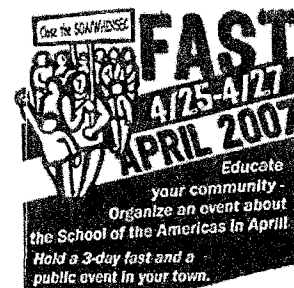
2. Bike/Walk-A-Thon Pledge Sheet: The Bike/Walk-A-Thon will take place Saturday, June 2nd. We hope you can join in as a rider, walker, or other volunteer. The enclosed form gives many of the details and you can start gathering your pledges now.

## Tax Day - April 17

As this newsletter is being prepared we are also getting ready for Tax Day. This year April 17th is the deadline for mailing those federal tax returns.

LEPOCO members will be distributing the informative flyer from the War Resisters League outside local post offices as the weary taxpayers mail their returns. A copy of that flyer is included with this newsletter.

If you would like more information about what people are doing to resist the taxes that pay for war, contact the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215; 800-269-7464; [www.nwtrcc.org](http://www.nwtrcc.org).



## Can You Join?

Due to other commitments by some members of the Americas Solidarity Group -- international travel, an extensive spring hike, physically taxing rehearsals - - we were not able to plan a local public action for the SOA Fast, April 25-27. But, all of us can join this effort in some way.

Rep. Jim McGovern introduced HR 1707 on March 27 and there are 73 co-sponsors! This legislation would suspend operations at the SOA/WHINSEC and investigate the association of torture and human rights abuses with the school. Unfortunately, none of our local representatives were among the 73 co-sponsors.

We can each make a commitment to fast during the April 25-27 period and we can contact our representatives (by letter or phone) and urge them to sign onto HR 1707: Rep. Charles Dent, 502 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515; 202-225-6411; Rep. Patrick Murphy, 1007 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515; 202-225-4276.

There is a petition directed to our representatives urging them to support HR 1707, available at the LEPOCO Office for signing or for taking to get more signatures. For more information see [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org).

## Art Contest Party ★★★★★★

It is always a beautiful thing when young people and adults of all ages gather to support the same cause. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, the Association for Students Advocating Peace (ASAP) along with other members of LEPOCO gathered at the Wildflower Café in Bethlehem to appreciate the art work submitted by local high school students for the Peace Art Expression Contest. This contest was run by ASAP and supported by generous donations from LEPOCO members and others. Eight submissions were received, including posters, drawings and poems. All the submissions were displayed and every artist received a prize and recognition. In first place was Beatrice Hinton of Phillipsburg, NJ, with her poem "A Slice of American Pie." In second place was Corinne Walden with her poem, "There is No Peace in Broken Hearts." And in third place was Peter Christine with a wash drawing on homemade recycled paper titled, "Pacifism Is Not Passive." Thank you to all the young people who submitted their art work to the contest.

Included in the award ceremony was a performance by the LEPOCO Peace Singers, presentations about LEPOCO and ASAP, a viewing of a video written and produced by Eric Hunter, an open-mic performance and vegan/vegetarian food supplied by the Wildflower Café and magnanimous members of ASAP.

The goal of the ceremony was to inform people about what ASAP is doing and acquire more involvement by those members who are not very active. The evening was a success. The following Sunday at the meeting for the upcoming Youth Peacemaker Training (YPT), eight members of ASAP were present and productivity was at an all-time high. Hopefully the Peace Art Expression Contest can become a recurring event put on by ASAP, so that the artwork of young peacemakers will continue to be honored.

Those who supported the contest with in-kind or money donations were: The Cup, The Old Library Shop, The Wise Bean, The New Street Book Shop, Healing Hands Massage Therapy Center, Johnny's Bagels & Deli, Anne Hills, Anna Maria Marzullo, Alex Dianna, Addison Bross, Ellen Buck, Janet Ney, Mike Lawton, Nancy Tate, Russ Wild, Susie Ravitz, Tom Lloyd.

- Dan Stein

## Nuclear Nugget for April

Our government loves the concept of double standards. So while demanding that other nations give up nuclear weapons we proceed to spend \$40 billion a year to field, maintain, and modernize our nuclear forces, including an arsenal of 10,000 warheads, 2,000 of which are on hair-trigger alert. All of which is in direct violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968).

## Protecting Student Rights

On March 23, the ACLU of the Greater Lehigh Valley sponsored a community forum on students' rights at the Lehigh County Government Center in Allentown. The event, which featured attorneys from the ACLU of Pennsylvania and the Education Law Center, was designed to inform students and parents about their rights and the protections that are built into the law.

Deborah Gordon, of the Education Law Center, focused on due process in disciplinary proceedings. She explained that students and parents have legal rights, including the right to an informal hearing in case of suspension. If the school wants to expel a student, they must arrange a formal hearing before the school board or a hearing officer. (Even if the school calls it a suspension, if a student is excluded for 10 days or more, it counts as an expulsion, and the formal hearing is required.) If a student is expelled, parents must then provide for the student's continuing education, but if they are unable to do so, the school must make arrangements. Many of these same rights apply if a student is transferred to an 'alternative school' for disciplinary problems.

Mary Catherine Roper, staff attorney with the ACLU, explained students' rights to self-expression. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that First Amendment rights do apply in school, so students have the right to express political opinions by wearing clothing with a political message, distributing leaflets, posting material on bulletin boards, or writing newspaper articles. "Some restrictions apply," of course: schools have the right to regulate speech that creates a *substantial* disruption of the education process, they may censor speech in school-sponsored publications and at school events, and they may adopt rules that require prior approval before distributing material at school. Mary Catherine also noted that Pennsylvania provides even stronger protections than the First Amendment, such as giving students full control over their hairstyle (and color).

Both presenters pointed out that school systems often fail to provide the protections to which students are entitled. We need to make sure students, parents, administrators, and school board members are aware of students' rights -- and we need to insist that our schools respect and protect those rights.

For more information contact the ACLU at 215-592-1513 or the Education Law Center at 215-238-6970 (9 am to 2 pm).

- Peter Crownfield

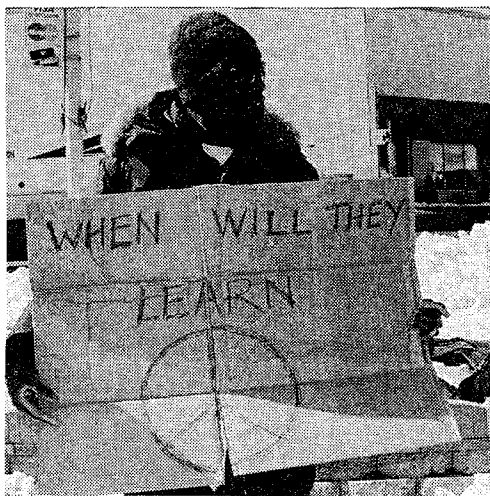


# The True Duty of Patriots

*No matter that patriotism is too often the refuge of scoundrels. Dissent, rebellion, and all-around hell raising remain the true duty of patriots."*

- Barbara Ehrenreich

In Allentown, Easton, Nazareth, Jim Thorpe, Phillipsburg, Bangor, Hellertown, New Tripoli, Bethlehem, Pennsburg and Emmaus on Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, over 150 ardent Lehigh Valley anti-war protesters joining others across the U.S. stood on street corners bearing signs proclaiming, "Bring the Troops Home Now Alive;" "Iraq, 4 Years Is Enough;" "Work for Peace;" "When Will they Learn?" "Believe Peace Is Possible;" "Stop the Lies;" "War Is the Enemy of the Poor;" "No Attack on Iran;" "War Is Not the Answer;" and "Out of Iraq NOW!"



Berne Anderson is among vigilers in Easton on Sunday, March 18.

Photo by Susie Ravitz

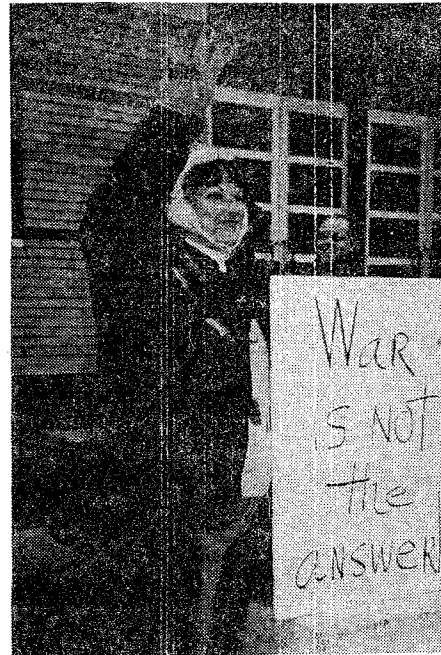
Following the vigils the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition also organized a community peace rally with refreshments, music (the group Real West and the LEPOCO Peace Singers) and inspirational speeches at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse in Bethlehem.

In addition, on Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup> the actual date on which the war started four years ago in Iraq, the Peace Coalition formed a picket line across the street from Rep. Charles Dent's Bethlehem office, before starting a walk of six miles made by 15 people to the Federal Building at 5<sup>th</sup> and Hamilton Streets in Allentown (where Sen. Arlen Specter has his local office). The 15 walkers were Anna Maria Caldara, Bernie Berg, Dolores, Eileen O'Donnell, Grace Sprueill, Jennifer Burgher, John Zachmann, Linda Hanna, Louise Legun, Maria Weick, Martha Christine, Nancy Tate, Peter Christine, Reggie Regrut, and Susie Ravitz.

Thus, in dramatic fashion local citizens proclaimed loud and clear their passion for an immediate end to the war in Iraq, a disgraceful example of U.S. imperialism and hubris.

While protesters stood outside Rep. Dent's office a letter from the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition ex-

plaining our determination to end the war was taken into his office. The letter stated, "Just as President Bush saw urgency in attacking Iraq, we see urgency in establishing peace. And just as President Bush resorted to the unilateral invasion of Iraq, we will insist on our country's unilateral withdrawal from Iraq. And because President Bush has been unconscionable in conducting his war of aggression, we will be unrelenting in opposing it. Will you join us?" Not surprisingly, there was no sighting of Dent at the picket.



Janon Johnson gives the peace sign during the vigil at the Federal Bldg., Allentown, where the walk from Bethlehem ended March 19.

Photo by Susie Ravitz

The events of both days gave sustenance and encouragement to participants. At the vigils and on the peace walk the incredible number of honks and thumbs up signs from car and truck drivers was inspirational. At one vigil a car pulled up and handed coffee to the vigilers, praising their efforts. At another, the vigilers were invited for ice cream when the vigil was over. It is a sign of hope that the majority of Americas are fed up with this war that should never have been started in the first place.

But, as we were reminded by the speakers at the rally, there is much more that needs to be addressed. Faramarz Farbod, professor of politics in the Middle East at Moravian College warned of the looming threat to Iran by the Bush Administration and also the massive displacement of Iraqis and lack of basic necessities due to the war. Addison Bross, professor of English and the new Peace Studies Program at Lehigh University urged us all to "stay the course" and continue with the message of ending the war now despite criticism and name calling that frequently can be discouraging.

We hope against hope that next year at this time we will be able to celebrate the end of this incredibly tragic, unnecessary war.

- Susie Ravitz

# Frida Berrigan's Visit

Frida Berrigan visited the Lehigh Valley, February 25-26. On Sunday she spoke about "Bush's Nuclear Weapons Renaissance" for a audience of 25 that braved a snowstorm for the potluck dinner and talk at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse. Frida works at the World Policy Institute in NYC, is active in the War Resisters League, is a leader in Witness Against Torture: A Campaign to Shut Down Guantánamo, and grew up at Jonah House, the Catholic activist collective in Baltimore.

In the midst of presenting nuclear weapons statistics she stated the basic reality that as long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them, and as long as nuclear weapons exist there is a possibility they will be used. The facts she presented indicate the depth of our collective denial about the dangers of these weapons. Seventeen years after the end of the Cold War *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* has moved the hands of the doomsday clock closer to midnight.

The Bush Administration, while agreeing with Russia to cut nuclear arsenals in half, has done little cutting. The U.S. emphasis is on "updating" and "renovating" our nuclear weapons. The program to modernize the U.S. nuclear weapons structure (Pantex, Oak Ridge, Livermore Labs, etc.) is providing stable funding for these programs when they might have faced cuts. Indeed, the budget for nuclear weapons activities has grown 13% under Bush, according to Berrigan.

The pursuit of nuclear weapons costs the taxpayer nine times what we spend on all counter-proliferation efforts. Experts predict ten new nuclear powers by 2013. We are spending only \$1 billion per year to secure old nuclear materials. At that rate it will be 13 years before we secure them. The work could be done in four years for \$30 billion, what we spend in one month on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Referring to Bush and Cheney's repeated statements that "all options are on the table," she said nuclear disarmament should also be on the table. She called for "modest steps": redefining security and terrorism. Security is not the sword, the shield, the wall; but is the safety of the met needs of people, the repaired damage from nuclear weapons, secured nuclear stockpiles. While the Army said there were 109 different definitions of terrorism in 1988, Frida asked, what could be a greater terrorist threat than the threat of using nuclear weapons?

On Monday, Frida and Amanda Daloisio (a Catholic Worker and leader with Witness Against Torture), spoke at Lafayette College and Lehigh University.

Amanda said she, Frida, and 23 others formed Witness Against Torture as they learned what was happening at Guantánamo. They were particularly moved by accounts of the hunger strikes by prisoners there. Unable to fight their battle legally, the prisoners

struck with the only weapons they had, their bodies. The 25 friends were in a similar position. They lacked expertise as lawyers or doctors, but they were all experienced activists and decided that "like the men in Guantánamo, we could use our bodies; we could walk."

In December 2005 they walked five days from Santiago de Cuba to Guantánamo, to vigil and fast outside the prison. They were surprised at how receptive the Cubans were to their cause. Government representatives spent hours talking with them about Guantánamo, sharing their indignation at the U.S. controlling a piece of their land. Ordinary Cuban citizens welcomed them camping in their yards for the five nights of their journey (imagine U.S. dweller's response to 25 Cubans requesting the use of their lawn for the night).



Photo by Susie Ravitz

Bonnie Winfield, Frida Berrigan, and Amanda Daloisio at Lafayette College on February 26.

Frida talked about how their Campaign to Shut Down Guantánamo couldn't have chosen a better moment to start. As they were beginning, the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights called for Guantánamo's closure and popular awareness for the problem suddenly exploded.

Witness Against Torture has organized rallies and vigils and distributed literature on how people can work to close Guantánamo. They sponsored a week of international action in mid-January on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of prisoners being sent to Guantánamo. People vigiled all around the world (including here in the Lehigh Valley) and a demonstration in Washington, DC, included civil disobedience at the Federal Court House. For more information see [www.witnesstorture.org](http://www.witnesstorture.org).

Thank you to Bonnie Winfield of Lafayette College, the Progressive Student Alliance at Lehigh University, and the Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting, who made it possible for the Nuclear Abolition Sisters to organize Frida's visit.

This article was written in part by Nancy Tate. The section on Guantánamo was excerpted from a piece by Peter Christine published in the March issue of *The Bethlehem Regurgitator*, available at [bethlehemregurgitator.bravehost.com](http://bethlehemregurgitator.bravehost.com).

# Kathy Kelly Honors the Dreams of Other Lands

(continued from page 1)

peace activist Kathy Kelly. The menu at this year's dinner included lasagna verdure, Moosewood salad, and a dazzling variety of sorbets and cookies to top things off. As usual, many people went back for second helpings, and all of our leftover food sold out right away, a tribute to the skills of our talented menu planners, chefs, and kitchen helpers. (Recipes for the dishes are available at LEPOCO if you are interested.)

The LEPOCO Peace Singers treated the audience to a variety of songs, including a medley honoring ongoing efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East, and the work of members of the labor movement. As always, the singers music moved and inspired the crowd, even to the point of singing along (some of us, it must be admitted, with more enthusiasm than skill.)

The dinner also featured an art raffle drawing in which several LEPOCO members became the lucky owners of such coveted items as handmade artwork, Civic Theater tickets and autographed posters -- many thanks to our generous donors, who made the raffle possible! (For the record the winners were: Helen Brennan-Sommerville Pottery; David Donsces - Wooden Bowl by Lee Buck; Maritza Alvarez - Abstract Figure in a Box by Frank Sabatino; another David who drove our speaker from New York - embroidered dress from Nicaragua donated by Tonia Otero; Jim McGlyn - framed, autographed poster from Ritter-McGovern program, donated by Tim Chadwick; Lee Buck - 2007 Civic Theater tickets; Holly Kent - Raku Pottery by Tomás Wolff, gifted by Clint Walker.)

At the dinner, we took a few moments to honor the contributions of some of our members and supporters, including the loyal group of folks who faithfully attend the weekly peace vigils in Bethlehem, Allentown and Easton; and Dan Acker and Ellen Buck, who are retiring from the Steering Committee, after many years of devoted and enthusiastic service.

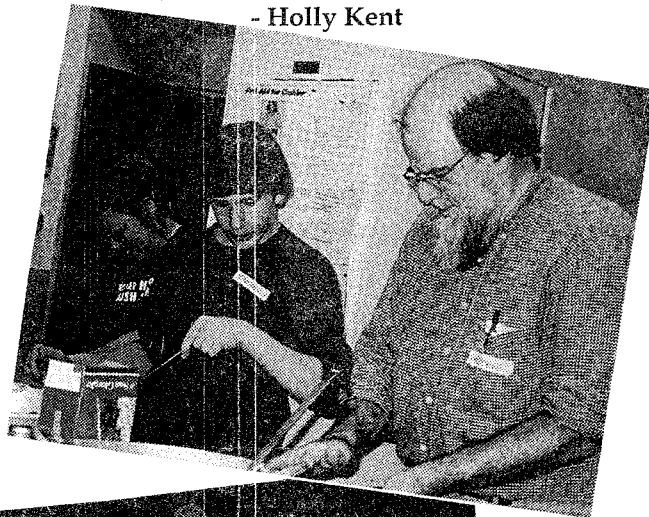
In further Steering Committee news, at the dinner, attendees had a chance to complete the vote on new and returning members of the committee. We would like to welcome (and re-welcome) robert Daniels II and Michelle Mecham as at-large members of the committee, and Julius Iwantsch and Janet Ney as co-treasurers. (A vacancy that remained on the Steering Committee after the dinner has now been filled by Addison Bross, with the approval of the LEPOCO Action Meeting of April 9. Welcome Addison!)

Our speaker, Kathy Kelly, founder of Voices in the Wilderness and more recently, Voices for Creative Nonviolence, is a world renowned writer and activist, known for her fearless work on behalf of those affected by war. A frequent visitor to war zones in Central America, the Balkans, and the Middle East, Kelly told stories about the remarkable courage displayed by people living in regions devastated by war, drawing unforgettably vivid pictures of the terrible sufferings

endured by the people of Lebanon and Iraq in recent years.

She urged the audience to take action against the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, bringing stories of the fallen and the suffering into the offices of our elected representatives, and refusing to keep silent in the face of an unjust war. Kelly insisted on the power of ordinary people's voices, in working to bring war to an end. "If not us, who?" she asked the crowd. "If not now, when?" Kelly's eloquent words and her vitally important message, will not soon be forgotten by anyone fortunate enough to hear her speak. (Thanks to the patient transcription of Joe DeRaymond, Kathy Kelly's speech can be read at [www.lv-independent.org](http://www.lv-independent.org), Lehigh Valley Independent Press, and an audio tape of the talk is available at the LEPOCO Office.)

- Holly Kent



1. Kathryn Hoffman, Peter Christine, and Steve Kraft work to prepare the meal.

2. Stephanie Garman serves dinner with a smile. Al Wurth, Carmen Riggs, Phil Reiss and Ellen Bell are in background.

3. Maritza Alvarez is pleased to win a prize in the Art Raffle drawing.

Photos by Susie Ravitz.

# LEPOCO 2006 In Review



It was a busy year for LEPOCO; reading through all the newsletters practically leaves me panting for breath. It was a year of struggle against the war, but also a year of optimism as voters turned out in record numbers in November to show their dissent. It was a good year for fundraising -- the Annual Dinner and the Bike/Walk-a-thon both brought in much more than in previous years, and in October, there was the first Peace Picnic in a longtime. The year was not without its crises however. On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the computer crashed, sending all the financial records and some contacts, into the cyber abyss. All of the receipts from September 2005 on must be entered into the new computer. Fortunately, the mailing lists etc. have been restored to their original state.

## *40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:*

The anniversary was a time of joyousness. To celebrate this special occasion, Guy Gray and others worked on a film about LEPOCO. Parts of the film (it is yet unfinished) were shown at the Annual Dinner on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Also, at the dinner, Noam Chomsky spoke to a sold-out audience at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Bethlehem.

## *Iraq:*

Unfortunately, the year also represented a far less cheerful milestone. The day after the Annual Dinner was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the War in Iraq. In addition to the weekly vigils -- Thursday at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Wyandotte in Bethlehem, Saturdays at Centre Square in Easton, and Fridays at 5<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton in Allentown -- demanding the end of the war, there were 18 vigils around the valley on that anniversary weekend, declaring: 3 Years in Iraq Is 3 Years Too Many. Obviously, the powers that be weren't listening, and as the war raged on throughout the year, there were plenty of other opportunities for protesting the war.

On April 29<sup>th</sup> a bus of Lehigh Valley folks joined the United For Peace & Justice march against the Iraq war in New York City. On June 21<sup>st</sup> eight Allentown residents, many of them veterans, urged Allentown City Council to pass a Bring the National Guard Home resolution. From October 6-8, Eyes Wide Open Pennsylvania (a traveling exhibit of combat boots, each pair representing a Pennsylvania soldier killed in Iraq) toured the Lehigh Valley, helping people understand the death toll. In another such effort, on October 26<sup>th</sup> a 19-hour vigil was staged across the street from Rep. Dent's Bethlehem office, "Bring the Cost of War to Congress' Door." Starting at 6 am and going 'til 1 am the next day, 70 vigilers read all the names of U.S. casualties in Iraq, plus an equal number of Iraqi civilians who have died.

## *Civil Disobedience:*

2006 was a big year for civil disobedience at LEPOCO. On January 17<sup>th</sup>, Susie Ravitz, Sarah Snider, Joe DeRaymond, Bernie Berg, Anna Maria Caldara, Maria Weick, Art Landis, Tim Chadwick and Robert Daniels II (the Dent 9) conducted a sit-in at Rep. Dent's office. They went in to seek an audience with their representative about supporting a bill that would remove U.S. troops from Iraq, but when, by closing time, he had not yet deigned to speak with them, they refused to leave, and were arrested instead. At their trial in August they were found guilty of defiant trespass and fined \$300 or 30 hours of community service each, plus court costs of over \$300. The case is still in appeal.

Joe DeRaymond was arrested in November 2005 for crossing the line at the SOA/WHINSEC. He was sentenced to three months imprisonment which he spent at the Schuylkill Satellite Camp in Minersville, PA. In June the Barbara Lloyd Nonviolent Resistance Fund was created so that LEPOCO could support people who chose to commit civil disobedience. On September 25<sup>th</sup>, Tim Chadwick, Silvia Brandon Perez and Robert Daniels II joined 11 others to commit civil disobedience at Rick Santorum's Philadelphia office in protest to the war in Iraq.

## *Youth & Militarism:*

As the onslaught of military recruiters continued in Lehigh Valley high school cafeterias, Peter Crownfield and other dedicated LEPOCO members continued their great work in Counter Recruitment. In February, Easton School District started contemplating getting an Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) for its high school. This diverts much-needed money from quality education towards encouraging students to join the Armed Forces and increasing the militarism of our society. In September, Oskar Castro spoke to the school board about the problems with JROTC. JROTC is still a possibility for EHS, and we must remain vigilant that it doesn't get any further.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Third Annual Youth Peacemaker Training was held at the L. V. Monthly Meeting. Thirty people came and it was a great success. In September we all bade a fond farewell to Peter Crownfield as Youth & Militarism coordinator and welcomed Stephanie Garman as the new coordinator. Stephanie helped shed new light on the Youth and Militarism problems, getting more youth involved. On October 28<sup>th</sup>, she bribed local high school students with pizza and held the first meeting for the new committee: ASAP (Association of Students Advocating Peace).

Sixty young people attended the annual Peace Camp, that involves the youngest peacemakers, July 24-28 at 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church, Allentown.

## *Death Penalty News:*

On February 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ray Krone toured the Lehigh Valley, telling his story as the 100<sup>th</sup> death row exoneree. He was convicted of a brutal murder/rape on flimsy evidence, and spent 10 years in jail, in and out of death row. A



# The Struggle Shared

*There are moments when things go well, and one feels encouraged. There are difficult moments and one feels overwhelmed. But it's senseless to speak of optimism and pessimism. The only important thing to know is that if one works well in a potato field the potatoes will grow. If one works well among men (and women), they will grow -- that's reality. The rest is smoke. It's important to know that words don't move mountains. Work, exacting work, moves mountains.*

- Danilo Dolce

## RESURRECTION IN MY LAI -

When we conjure up what was wrong about the war in Vietnam, the massacre in the village of My Lai, on March 16, 1968, has become a symbol of that horror.

In February, at the home of Anna Maria Caldara and Brian Carroll, eight people gathered to hear one Vietnam veteran's amazing journey from PTSD to sowing seeds of hope to rise from the ashes of My Lai, and beyond.

Mike Boehm was stationed in Cu Chi in 1968-69. Returning stateside after the war, he spent years living in a shack with no electricity or plumbing, divorced from the culture that he felt had duped him into the dis-service of war in Vietnam. In 1992, he went back to Vietnam with a group of 12 other veterans, and began the process of his own healing. While there, the group visited My Lai, and Mike played his fiddle at the memorial for the victims as a simple offering to the spirits of the dead. (He was later featured in a film, "The Sound of the Violin at My Lai," produced by a renowned Vietnamese filmmaker for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the massacre.)

Since 1992, Mike has traveled to Vietnam 17 times, and linking up with Madison, Wisconsin, Quakers, he has raised over \$500,000 for an incredible variety of people-to-people aid projects: micro-credit loans to 3000 women entrepreneurs, "compassion houses" for those so devastated by the war that they have not recovered, three primary schools, and two peace parks.

For more information about the Madison Quakers Projects in Vietnam, or to get a copy of their newsletter, "Winds of Peace," write to Madison Quakers, PO Box 1461,



Photo by Fran Dreisbach

Mike Boehm speaking at the home of Anna Maria and Brian on March 16.

Madison, WI, or go to [www.mylaipeacepark.org](http://www.mylaipeacepark.org).

## ANYTHING WORTH FIGHTING

**FOR** - Good news / bad news comes from Darree Sicher about a fight she is passionately engaging: Kutztown Area Communities for Appropriate Development. KACAD is going to court to stop a Wal-Mart and 67 acre mall on Route 222 in Maxatawny Township. Approval for a conditional use zoning change was voted by Township Supervisors in January, with 30 days to file an appeal with the Berks County Court.

Attorney Robert Grim is donating considerable time and energy, but the financial commitment for this legal challenge is daunting, even for a group of thoughtful, committed people like KACAD. They believe they have an excellent case on legal merits and are developing a fund-raising strategy to get there. You can help by contacting them at

MAREA, PO Box 5757, Kutztown, PA 19530, or go to [www.stopwalmartmaxatawny.com](http://www.stopwalmartmaxatawny.com).

Darree says, "We need not swallow the bitter poison served to us in the guise of progress when we are surrounded by fertile fields of real quality of place."

## CONSCIENTIOUS CONSUMER

**REVISITED** - Many years ago, LEPOCO's own "Ragin' Granny," Anna Hunt, wrote a regular column on these pages that reminded us of the power the we yield in the marketplace of this war-on-the-world-so-the-rich-can-profit economy.

In recent months, Maria Weick has fed me suggested shorts, so with her inspiration, and in loving memory of Anna Hunt I am herewith reintroducing "The Conscientious Consumer," as an occasional side-kick in "The Struggle Shared."

This month's suggestion: The choice we make about bagging our groceries. The usual choice is between paper and plastic. Consider these facts from the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Less than 1% of the plastic bags used in this country are recycled. Over 10 billion plastic bags a year are discarded, ending up in landfills, strangling wildlife, clogging drainage systems, for hundreds of years. The toxins from the inks drain into groundwater. And it takes 12 million barrels of oil every year to make more plastic bags in the U.S. alone.

Paper bags aren't much better. NRDC reports that paper bags come from Canadian old forest timber and monoculture tree plantations which are replacing diverse native forests in the southeastern U.S. The EPA says the process of converting timber into paper uses more water than any other industry on the planet.

Want to take action to reverse global warming? Recycle your bags. Reuse them 'til they won't hold up any more before recycling. Better yet, bring a cloth or other long-lasting bags when you shop, and urge your grocer to provide such bags to all shoppers at cost.

- Jeff Vitelli

# LEPOCO 2006 In Review



(continued from page 8)

victory for death penalty abolitionists occurred as Dennis Counterman was released from prison on October 18<sup>th</sup>, after spending 17 years in prison, many of those years on Death Row. He was wrongly accused of burning down his own home, killing his children. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, Sister Helen Prejean came to the Lehigh Valley to talk about her experience working with death row prisoners.

## Speakers:

There were only two potluck and politics programs in 2006, although the Popcorn & Politics movie series was going strong. The first P&P on Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> had Suzanne Marshall speaking on "Chemical Plants: A Real Security Issues." On June 11<sup>th</sup>, Janet & Urbane Byler spoke on: "An Older Couple's Contribution: Three Years in Honduras." There were also a number of relevant speakers around the valley, many of whom were invited by LEPOCO. On April 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, Doug Rokke spoke at several venues about the dangers of Depleted Uranium. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, Michael Berg and Michael Hoffman, explained the importance of getting U.S. troops out of Iraq. On July 21<sup>st</sup> Scott Ritter and Ray McGovern spoke about: "Iraq, How We Got In, How We Get Out, and Iran, How We Stay Out." On November 11<sup>th</sup> the Tour for a Just Foreign Policy came to the valley, speaking on: "Perpetual War for Peace? What We Can Do To End One War and Prevent Another."

## Annual Events & Art:

The Americas Solidarity Group worked with Lehigh University Art Galleries to bring the photographic exhibition "Resistance Unarmed: Colombian Communities Building Alternatives to War" (including San José de Apartadó) to the Girdler Gallery, September 29-December 10.

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters (NAS) organized the public reading of Martin Luther King's Riverside Church Speech against the war in Vietnam on January 22. On August 6 the NAS invited people to the Rose Garden in Bethlehem for readings and music on the occasion of the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan.

As I am writing this in early April, it seems that our work is cut out for us in 2007. With the Bush Administration doing little to bring us out of Iraq, and quite a bit to get us into Iran, it will be quite a challenge. Our task is to keep the pressure on Congress to keep this runaway president in line. In other words: Keep up the good work!

- Peter Christine

## Bits & Pieces

☪ Joe De Raymond, Sarah Snider, and Tim Chadwick returned from over two weeks in El Salvador on March 26. They had participated in observances around the anniversaries of the tragic deaths of Fr. Rutilio Grande and Archbishop Oscar Romero. They were also gathering information on the causes of migration that find so many Salvadorans fleeing their homes for the U.S. We hope this delegation will be reporting on their findings in coming weeks.

☪ Susie Ravitz represented LEPOCO as she spoke for the "Enabling Nonviolent Choices for Families, Communities, Nations - for All" conference at Kutztown University on March 30. She was one of

several community leaders that participated presenting nonviolent solutions to many levels of violence in our world.

☪ Partners In Health, founded by Dr. Paul Farmer, treats AIDS, TB, and malaria in Haiti's Central Plateau, the poorest section of an impoverished country. PIH considers dry housing an important part of health care, along with food and clean water. Let's Build a House in Haiti (cost: only \$3000).

For this cause, please sponsor the PIH marathon team for a L.V. Half Marathon on April 29. \$.40 per mile (total \$5 for the 13 miles) buys one cinderblock for the house. Cash or checks made out to Partners In Health may be delivered to the Social Action table at the UU Church of the Lehigh Valley on Sundays or to the LEPOCO Office during the week. Many thanks to Winnie Tyler for organizing this and many other important efforts to support PIH and Haiti. Winnie is moving back to Florida and will be very much missed.

A National Day of Climate Action was observed across the U.S. on April 14. Local actions included a L.V. Rally in south Bethlehem at which LEPOCO had an information table linking U.S. wars and global warming. A Earth Walk was held in Emmaus and a Pocono Climate Action Day was held in Delaware Water Gap. For more info. See [www.stepitup2007.org](http://www.stepitup2007.org).

Changing the Dream, A Symposium on Sustainability, will be held at Lehigh University on Sat., (continued on page 11)

### Weekly Peace Vigils

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

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

Easton: 10-11 am, Saturdays  
Centre Square

Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632  
Please attend as often as you are able!

# Bits & Pieces —

(continued from page 10)

April 28, 10 am to 4:30 pm. The program will explore the links between environmental sustainability, social justice and spiritual fulfillment. Sponsored by the Environmental Initiative at Lehigh, the cost is \$25. Contact Anjela Dale at 610-751-3932 or sign up at [www.awakeninthedreamer.org](http://www.awakeninthedreamer.org).

⊕ Jeff Garis brought Pennsylvanians Against Escalation in Iraq to the Friday peace vigil in Allentown on April 6. The group is currently challenging Sen. Specter's failure to support legislation to end the U.S. war in Iraq.

⊕ The Allentown Armory Activists (AAA), who organize the weekly demonstrations at the National Guard Armory in Allentown, invite L.V. activists to an Impeach Party Peace-Nic on Sat., April 28, Noon to 6 pm, at the Rose Garden Pavilion, Cedar Beach Park, Allentown. Bring food to share, instruments for a drumming circle, and anti-war artwork. Call 610-434-0487 for more info.

⊕ Witness for Peace (WFP) Mid-Atlantic will hold their annual retreat, May 18-20, at Burlington Meeting House Conference Center, Burlington, NJ. Marie Dennis of Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and Tom and Jennifer Atlee-Loudon, WFP staff from Nicaragua, will speak on Activists Embracing a New Latin America. Cost is \$45 to \$100. LEPOCO has registration forms or call 215-628-3963.

⊕ Taiwan launched an unprecedented program to protect up to a million butterflies from being killed each day as they migrate across a busy highway. Drivers on an elevated section of freeway were warned to expect delays when clouds of up to 11,000 butterflies per minute caused officials to block the roadway. A net was erected along the highway to force the butterflies to fly above the traffic and ultraviolet lights were placed beneath the road to lure them under the traffic lanes.

The National Freeway Bureau said protecting purple-spotted butterflies far outweighed any inconvenience to motorists. - "Earthweek: A Diary of the Planet" by Steve Newman, *The Intelligencer*, 4/1/07

⊕ The LEPOCO Peace Singers had a busy March including the fun opportunity to sing at Muhlenberg College's "Sing Out For Peace" on March 19, the anniversary of the war, with numerous campus vocal groups. Thanks to Adrian Shanker for organizing this inspiring gathering.

⊕ Don't Miss: "Global Warming Requires Drastic Changes," by Leonard Frenkel, 3/8/07, *The Morning Call*; "Universal Health Care Provides Everyone Access," by Domenick Buscemi, 3/15/07, *The Morning Call*; "Help Those Who Help U.S." about undocumented immigrants, by Anna Maria Caldara, 4/9/07, *The Express-Times*; "Don't Let Corporations Deduct CEO Pay On Taxes," by Chuck Collins of Institute for Policy Studies, 4/10/07, *The Morning Call*; "Mountaintop Mining Is Ruining Appalachia," by Jamie Harkins, 4/12/07, *The Morning Call*.

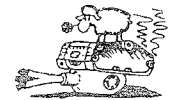
⊕ April is the month to learn about global warming: Tues., April 24, Hilde Binford will present "The Climate Project" slide show at 7:30 pm, Rm. 102, Priscilla Payne Hurd

Academic Center, Moravian College. Lance Simmens will do three presentations about "Climate Change," Mon., April 23, 6:30 pm, Boehm Science Bldg, Rm 145, Kutztown Univ.; Tues., April 24, 7:30 pm, Alumnae Hall, Cedar Crest College; Wed., April 25, 7 pm, Foy Hall, Moravian College. And, the Alliance for Sustainable Communities will continue their discussion of "Climate Change: What We Can Do," Wed., May 15, at 7 pm, at the Unitarian Church, Wall & Center Sts., Bethlehem.

⊕ Learn about local environmental activities in the Earth Days Calendar, published by the Alliance for Sustainable Communities. Available at LEPOCO and many other locations.

⊕ Prof. Emma Gilligan from the Univ. of Connecticut will speak on Human Rights and the War in Chechnya, on Wed., April 25, 7:30 pm, Kirby 104, Lafayette College.

⊕ Victoria J. Barnett of the U.S. Holocaust Museum will speak on Unfinished Hero: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Holocaust on Sun., April 29, at 3:30 pm, Miller Forum, Moyer Hall, Muhlenberg College.



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

Thurs., April 19, 6 pm: Showing of film "The Ground Truth" featuring veterans of war in Iraq in preparation for discussion at Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition Meeting at 7:15 pm. Please bring food at 6 pm (if you like) and attend the meeting even if you cannot make the film.

Sun., April 22, 7 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singers rehearse at home of Barbara Wurth in Bethlehem. Call 610-691-8730 for directions.

Sun., April 29, 7:30 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at the NAWAB Restaurant, south Bethlehem.

Mon., May 7, 7 pm: LEPOCO Steering Committee meeting at the Peace Center.

Thurs., May 10, 7 pm: Veterans for Peace meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

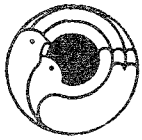
Mon., May 14, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at Peace Center. All members and friends welcome at this monthly business meeting where the activities of all committees and working groups are reviewed.

Tues., May 15, 5:30-8 pm: Work night and meeting for Bike/Walkathon Planning Committee at the Peace Center.

Wed., May 16, Noon: LEPOCO Fundraising Committee meeting at NAWAB Restaurant, south Bethlehem. This committee is looking for new people to help with their work. Call 610-691-8730 if you have questions or just attend the meeting.

Wed., May 16, around 6 pm: Possible meeting of Nuclear Abolition Sisters. Call 610-691-8730 for final plans.

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



# LEPOCO

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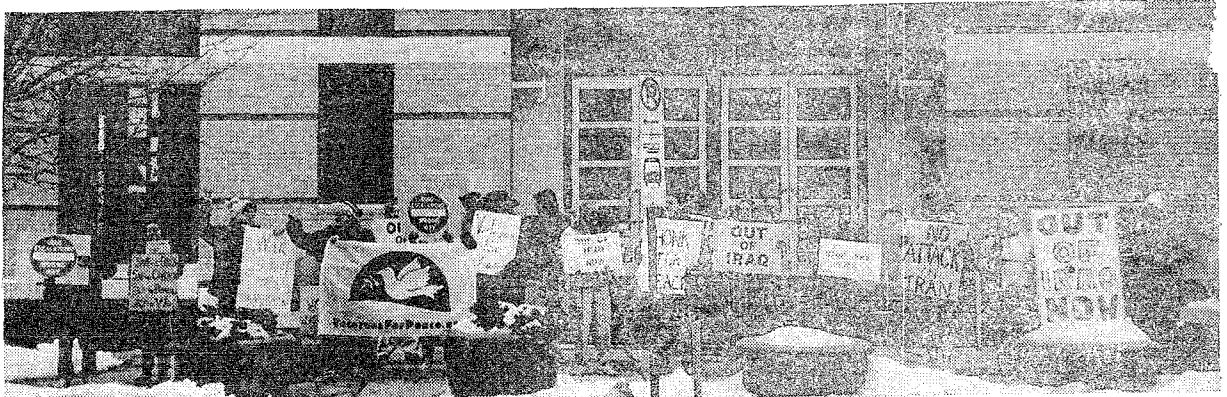
### See Inside:

- Page 1
- Annual Dinner
- Youth Peacemaker Training
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- Bits & Pieces Meetings...

Philly  
Declare  
Peace 14  
Trial  
Monday  
April 23  
8:30 am  
(see page 1)

**Youth Peacemaker  
Training 2007  
Saturday, May 12  
9 am - 4:15 pm  
(see page 1)**

*Peace Camp  
July 23-27, 2007  
Volunteers  
(see enclosed form)  
LEPOCO  
Bike/Walkathon  
June 2, 2007  
Pledge Sheet Enclosed*



Part of the vigil line outside the Federal Building in Allentown on March 19. See page 5.  
Photo by Susie Ravitz.