

August-September
2008

Vol. 43 No. 5



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

3rd Annual



Peace Picnic

Saturday

September 6, 3-7 pm

L.V. Friends Meetinghouse

Rt. 512, 1/2 mile north of Rt. 22

Music, Games, Great Potluck Food

Basket Raffle, Cake/Goodies Walk

**Veggie hot dogs and beverages provided; please bring
a dish to share.**

\$5 donation requested.

(It will be held inside in case of rain.)

focus on this as deployments (including a group from Easton) will find 25% of the PA Guard overseas.

Concurrent with similar efforts in other states, the campaign in Pennsylvania is partially based on the expiration of the president's authority to send National Guard troops to Iraq. It also responds to the crises that states face with hurricanes, forest fires and other emergencies, when they find their ability to respond limited by the absence of National Guard units. Finally, this campaign takes the discussion about the war to a new level of government.

The Bring the Guard Home effort was launched at a press conference in Pittsburgh on August 9. State Senator Jim Ferlo of Lawrenceville spoke about a bill he has introduced to bring home members of the Pennsylvania National Guard and halt further deployments. Rep. Tony Payton of Philadelphia is sponsoring a similar bill in the Pennsylvania State House. Copies of the petition supporting this effort are available at LEPOCO.

- Nancy Tate

Yard Sale: September 27

One can never tell what treasure might turn up at LEPOCO's annual yard sale. Sometimes it's a superb stereo system, sometimes beautiful clothing, sometimes collections of books too wonderful not to share, sometimes odd and mystifying bric-a-brac, sometimes just simple and useful stuff you've been looking for. But the point is, in order to find this stuff, *you gotta be there!*

The yard sale will take place Saturday, September 27th, from 8:30 am to 1 pm, at the Forte Building (CACLV's home), 5th & William Sts., south Bethlehem. No rain date - this is indoors, in a spacious room.

To donate, (and your donations are needed!) please bring your crazy-practical-misunderstood-orphaned-deluxe-foolish-impulsive items, in good condition, to the LEPOCO office between noon and 5 pm, on Wednesday or Thursday, September 24th or 25th. On Friday, September 26th, items can be delivered directly to the CACLV building. It's very helpful if you can price the items beforehand.

Also, we need volunteers to help with pre-sale sorting, to set up, to assist buyers, clean up, etc. Call the LEPOCO Office at 610-691-8730 if you can help.

If you can donate some baked goods, they are bought and devoured with the special delirium of hungry shoppers. There's nothing like homemade.

Come join us for this important fundraiser. You may even find a treasure or two.

- Mike Lawton

Peace Activism: Fall of 2008

The election season provides special opportunities for raising issues of peace and justice. Some choose to work for candidates, local or national, who are moving the crucial issues forward. Others see the importance of continuing to work on the issues more directly. And, we all understand that at this time, no matter who wins the election, much will still need to be done to end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, to prevent an attack on Iran, to end the threat of nuclear weapons, to scale back the U.S. empire, to prevent the trashing of the planet to satisfy coal and oil addictions, and much more.

So while we try to learn about the candidates, it is also a time to still be visible and vocal about ending the war -- to our neighbors, those already in office, and those seeking our votes.

There are weekly peace vigils in Bethlehem, Allentown and Easton (see schedule on the back page of this newsletter). Make a sign and show up.

LEPOCO plans a number of talks in September and October as an opportunity to stay informed. (See pages 3 and 8.) Plans are underway for special public witnessing closer to the election.

And finally, there is a petition to circulate supporting the efforts of several peace groups in Pennsylvania to get state action toward bringing the Pennsylvania National Guard home. This fall is an important time to

WHAT IF YOU COULD CREATE YOUR OWN SCHOOL?

You can. <http://lepoco.pbwiki.com>
 The Association of Students Advocating Peace
 presents **BUILDING THE IDEAL SCHOOL**
BE THERE at Friends Meeting 4116 on Rt 512
 call LEPOCO for more information or to register
 610-691-8730, lepoco@fast.net
OCTOBER 18
9am-3pm

Communication Breakdown—

Newsflash! The internet (barring any sort of wandering cataclysms or apocalypses) is here to stay. Much like the arrival of the printing press, the telephone, and rock 'n' roll, the internet was first looked upon with suspicion. But over time, i think, it has proven to be a worthy way to communicate, another avenue in which we can get the word out.

In an effort to bring the LEPOCO Peace Center kicking and screaming (nonviolently, of course) into the 20th, er, 21st Century i decided to take on the LEPOCO website. Over the past year i've been working to update and improve the site. At www.lepoco.org you will now find a regularly updated Calendar of Events with dates, times, locations, and descriptions of various peace related happenings in and around the Lehigh Valley.

You'll also discover a growing Newsletter Archive which will one day host every newsletter and important document from the 40+ year history of the organization. Some of you reading this article may very well be reading it on-line in the Current Newsletter section. The Media section features videos, transcriptions of speeches, and a link to the unofficial home of LEPOCO on YouTube at www.youtube.com/rhubarbdoom.

There are hours and hours of stuff to experience -- so much material that an activist could become an inactivist by looking at it all. Let's not give the suspicious minds more fodder for their grist mill by using this valuable resource unwisely -- all things in moderation (including moderation).

Also: Sign Up for E-Mail Updates

The LEPOCO Peace Center would like to keep you internet-friendly folk in the information superhighway loop with our (somewhat) weekly e-mail updates. With all the latest events and actions our e-mails will help keep you informed on how you can participate in local peacemaking. Please send your e-mail address to lepoco@fast.net to get on the list. Also, please be sure to update us on any e-mail address changes you may have.

- robert Daniels II

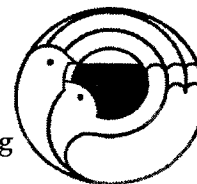


Yard Signs Still Available

This election season let people know what issues matter most. The "END THE WAR!" yard sign is a way to remind your neighbors of an oft-neglected topic as they make their way to the polls. These blue-and-white yard signs are 16" x 26", union-made and come with a wire frame, making outdoor display effortless. Available for \$5 by contacting LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

Newsletter of LEPOCO

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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.

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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: Ellen Buck, Martha Christine, Peter Christine, Peter Crownfield, robert Daniels II, Fran Dreisbach, Arlene Grow, Mike Lawton, Tom Lloyd, Bob Riggs, Tom Stinnett, Joan Stolz, Joan Stone, Nancy Tate, Marion Thorne, Jeff Vitelli, Hans Wuerth, 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 (ex-officio), Nils Hovik, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Mimi Lang, Michelle Mecham, Janet Ney (co-treasurer), Sue Ravitz, Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

Potluck / Popcorn & Politics

Friday, September 5th, 7 pm: *Dorothy Day: Don't Call Me a Saint*

Popcorn & Politics: A *First Friday Film* projected on the big screen at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Documentary film tells the story of the New York writer, anarchist, and social reformer who co-created the *Catholic Worker*, a peace and justice movement (which turns 75 years old this year) which began numerous "Houses of Hospitality" and soup kitchens in response to the Great Depression. Directed by Claudia Larson. 56 minutes. 2007.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, September 14th, 6 pm: Faramarz Farbod

"Understanding the Iran-U.S. Stand Off: What's Behind the Headline."

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Faramarz Farbod came to the United States from Iran in the 1970s. He graduated from Moravian Academy and Moravian College, and got a masters degree from Lehigh University. In the 1990s he spent several years teaching politics in his native Iran. Since 1998 he has been teaching politics at Moravian College and is pursuing a PhD at Rutgers University. He is an avid soccer player and the single parent of two lovely boys.

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 6 pm. The presentation and discussion should begin around 6:30 pm.

Friday, October 3rd, 7 pm: *The Burmese Harp*

Popcorn & Politics: A *First Friday Film* projected on the big screen at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Kon Ichikawa's lyrical anti-war statement tells the story of a Japanese soldier in Burma at the close of World War Two who is sent on a mission by his Captain to inform another unit of the Japanese surrender and to convince them to stop fighting. Along the way the soldier witnesses the ravaged land, bodies, and souls of his country and undergoes a spiritual transformation. With stunning black and white cinematography and haunting music this classic is a universal testament not only to the madness that prevailed in the South Pacific, but to the unspeakable horror of all war. In Japanese with English subtitles. 116 minutes. 1956.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



Fairs & Festivals

While the interest of the athletes attending last month's Sportsfest in Allentown wasn't particularly piqued by the information tent provided by the Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace and LEPOCO, there is one tale worth telling from the weekend. On the Thursday set-up day a number of volunteers came out (as they did the entire weekend. Thank you volunteers!!!) to spend the day getting the VFP/LEPOCO tent in order. Later in the day a man driving a golf cart led our neighbors-to-be to their booth. It was the U.S. Marine Corps.

They were so close to us that one needn't strain to see the looks of consternation and confusion on their faces as they whipped out cell phones to call recruitment headquarters, the Pentagon, or, who knows, maybe George W. himself.

Well, in a few minutes the golf cart guy comes over to us to ask if we'd like to move to a "better spot." "Why?" i asked. He simply motioned to the Humvee next door. I responded, "That? That's perfect. If they're going to be here telling one side of the story, it's only fitting for us to be next to them telling another side of the story." "So, you don't mind being next to them?"

"No, no problem at all." Our mediator raised his eyebrows, let out a big sigh, and rolled back over to the Marines. Minutes passed. Heads were scratched, circles were paced. More phone calls were made.

Next thing you know the recruiters were pulling out, moving to a location far away from our peaceful encampment. Hmmp! One would think that if what they were selling was righteous, nothing we say would threaten, but i guess they don't see it that way. So, let the history books record that the Veterans for Peace and LEPOCO Peace Center teamed up and made the United States Marine Corps retreat. Hoo-ah!

- robert Daniels II

Other Fairs & Festivals

Some of you helped staff the LEPOCO booth at the Pride in the Park Festival in Allentown on August 17. Thank you! This newsletter was in process as this fair was underway.

We will need help with staffing a LEPOCO table at the Quaker Peace Fair at Buckingham Friends Meeting in Lahaska on Saturday, September 20, 11 am to 4 pm. Call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 if you can help.

Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki

In August, 1945 US atomic bombs instantaneously obliterated the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, and killed hundreds of thousands of people. Effects from the fallout are still felt 60 years after the fact. In 1982, because cities and civilians are the intended targets of a nuclear attack, and in the hope that such horror would not be repeated, the mayor of Hiroshima proposed a "Program to Promote the Solidarity of Cities toward the Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons." This program, now known as "Mayors for Peace," is supported by mayors from more than 2300 cities worldwide, including over 125 cities in the US. The mission of "Mayors for Peace" is to inform the world of the inhumanity and cruelty of nuclear weapons and demand their total abolition.

This summer the Mayors for Peace have presented a "Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol" as a complement to the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, calling for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by 2020. The US Conference of Mayors has already passed a unanimous resolution in support of the protocol which also has support from cities and leaders around the world.

We can do our part by demanding that our elected officials in Washington get serious about nuclear disarmament. They need to support the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol, bring our government into full compliance with its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and put a stop to the Bush Administration's militarization of space.

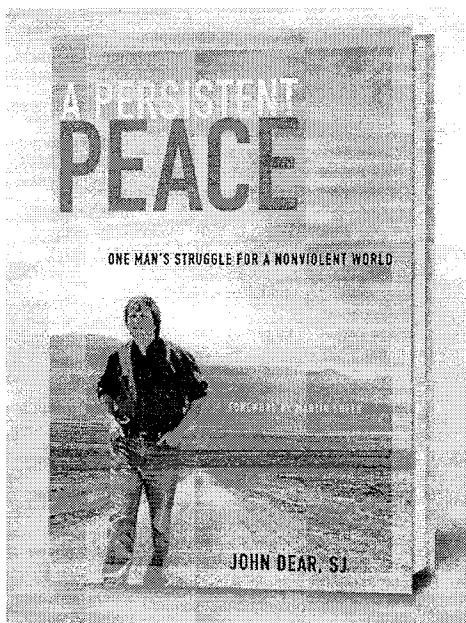
For more info see www.2020visioncampaign.org; www.ucsususa.org; www.space4peace.org.

A Brief Report: On Nagasaki Day, Saturday, August 9, the Nuclear Abolition Sisters and other LEPOCO peace activists (about 20 in all) gathered in the "free speech zone" at Bethlehem's Musikfest, with banners ("The Nuclear Threat Is Not Over," etc.) candles, and 400 leaflets with a message similar to the article above. The crowd was large, even by Musikfest standards, and the leaflets were gone in about 20 minutes, but we were visible to thousands who walked by and we had many interesting conversations with passers-by.

John Dear, SJ, has been arrested more than 75 times. He has spent more than a year of his life in jail. He has been mocked by armed U.S. soldiers standing outside the doors of his New Mexico parish. All this because he so fervently believes, speaks, and works for peace.

A Persistent Peace, John Dear's autobiography, invites readers to follow the decades-long journey and spiritual growth of this nationally known peace activist, and to witness his bold, decisive, often unpopular actions before government officials, military higher-ups, and representatives of the Church.

In the spirit and tradition of Mahatma Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Phil and Dan Berrigan, Oscar Romero, and Mother



Teresa, Dear's amazing story will inspire and touch the heart of anyone who believes in the power of nonviolence and the possibility of a world where love conquers all.

Some of you will remember the rousing talk given by John Dear at the local Unitarian Peace Conference in April 2005. And now as part of the national book tour promoting the release of *A Persistent Peace*, John Dear will be making a stop at Easton's Lafayette College on Monday, November 17th (details to be announced).

In advance of his appearance the LEPOCO Peace Center is proud to offer copies of this book for \$20 each, (discounted from the cover price of \$22.95). The proceeds from the sale of the book will go towards LEPOCO's continued work for peace and justice.

___ Enclosed is a check or money order (made out to LEPOCO) for \$ _____ for _____ copy/copies of *A Persistent Peace*.
___ Reserve my book(s). I'll pick it up: ___ next time I'm at the Peace Center. ___ at the reading/signing at Lafayette College in Nov.
___ Please send my book(s) to the address below. I am enclosing an extra \$5 (per copy) to cover the cost of shipping and handling.

Name _____

Phone # _____

Address _____

Zip _____

Return this coupon to: LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 West 4th Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015.

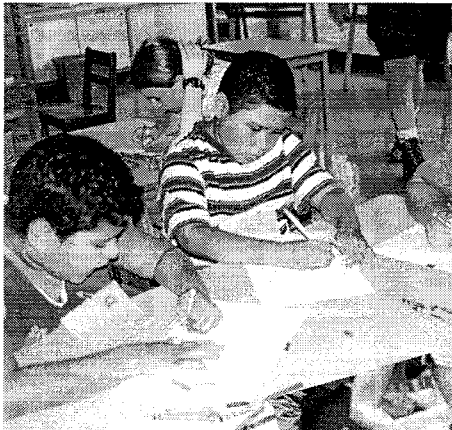
Peace Camp 2008

At right: Rona Arena, a helper in the Red Group, and Tiana Madise watch Heritier Hatungimana blow a big bubble in the courtyard of First Presbyterian Church.

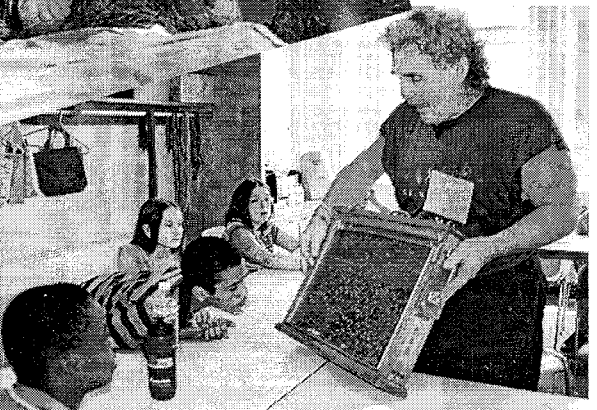
Below: Christian Cordova, Alex Collazo, and Frankie Cerda, of the Yellow Group, work on artistic interpretations of "Teaching Peace," a favorite Peace Camp song.



Photos by Susie Ravitz.



At right: Dora Ganchoso and Famela Zulu work on "Painting the Ocean," an Orange Group project.



Above: Dan Miller, a leader in the Yellow Group, visits the Rose Group with his bees where Eric Hatungimana, Christian Cruz, Zoe Creamer, and Linnea Harris get a close-up look.

At left: Gisela Damandl, Peace Camp resource person, works on crafts with Dean Graham and Krish Angra, of the Purple Group.

Peace Camp 2008: A Brief Report

Where can you play with bees, paint the sky and build a celery boat all in the same morning? PEACE CAMP! For the 19th year LEPOCO and the Center for Humanistic Change offered five weekday mornings of exciting nonviolent fun. About 75 kids came together each morning, joined by almost an equal number of teen and adult leaders, helpers and resource people, to create an active, peaceful, attentive, joyful atmosphere that we wish could exist everywhere, for more than those few hours. How can it ever come about on a large scale if we don't make a start? That's the philosophy behind the Peace Camp that's held each year, during the last full week of July, at the First Presbyterian Church of Allentown - with wel-



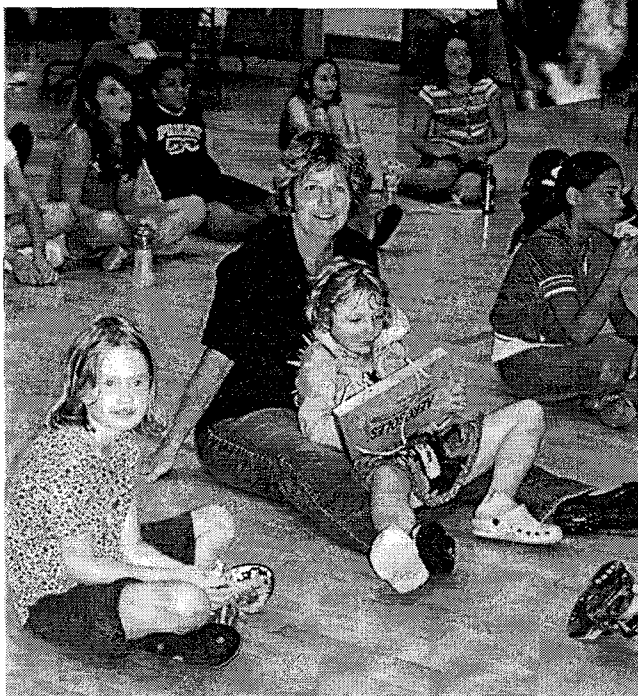
Above: Maria Weick and Jane James whip up lasagna for 175 people for Friday's luncheon.

On right: Roberta Meek and Alysia Cruz lead music in a small group. Musical openings and closings led by Roberta have been a special part of peace camp for many years.

Below: Ginny Booth, a leader in the Purple Group, finds herself in a classic Peace Camp pose with a camper on her lap and others all around.



Photos by Susie Ravitz.



coming staff, that has hosted us almost every year since the beginning.

Other large organizations, Elias Market, Giant Food Store, Panera Bread, and Weis Market also helped by donating food and other items for daily snacks and the Friday luncheon.

By making their own musical instruments, observing nature first-hand, or hearing and acting out stories, the children (campers AND leaders!) learn about being creative, caring for our natural world and how people in other places live. These are skills we all need in order to bring about peace in the world, in our homes, within ourselves. And the singing! With great enthusiasm we sing out songs that express our innate silliness and also our innate desire to bring about peace.

To be a part of Peace Camp 2009, be sure to set aside the week of July 22 - 29 next summer. If you'd like to be part of the planning process, please call LEPOCO (610-691-8730).

- Donna Hartmann

The Struggle Shared

Just as a chariot with one wheel will not go down the path even though it has a horse, so too, without assistants for meditation people will not gain their attainments....

- from *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*,
Tsong-Kha-Pa, excerpted from *The Morning Call*, 7/10/08

WHY THE DALAI LAMA'S VISIT MATTERS TO US - The recent visit to our valley by Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, will register among the bigger media events of the year. Lehigh University spent over \$2 million to bring him here as a guest lecturer. Our roads were aglow with giant billboards of his smiling image. People bought "Free Tibet" t-shirts (possibly made in Honduran sweatshops) and drank "Dalai Lattes." Churches and libraries had study groups in the months leading up to the visit.

The genuine excitement among peace activists anticipating being in the presence of one of the world's most persistent and prolific voices for nonviolence was tempered by the cognitive dissonance of some of the media hype that accompanied his presence.

Listening to the live broadcast of his Sunday public talk, I heard guidance for my personal meditations: Quiet mind, generates compassionate heart, peace in relationships in the home, in the neighborhood, in the community, in the world. Referencing the problems of our troubled world in very general terms, he said, "We simply become one community, one entity. We all survive under one sun."

Lloyd Steffen, professor of religious studies, and Chaplain at Lehigh University, wrote an Op-ed for *The Morning Call* (7/9/08) which spoke to why the Dalai Lama is so important. He concluded, "The message goes to the hope for human happiness. The message is that business as usual is a well doomed to run dry, and alternative values, an alternative spirituality, will be required to energize peaceful and meaningful life in the days ahead. The Dalai Lama offers an alternative path away from the pre-

sent unhappiness; he emphasizes a way of living that challenges what most of us value and how most of us live..."

Even if the Dalai Lama made no specific reference to the war in Iraq, or even to the crisis in Tibet, this writer cannot separate the Dalai Lama from his place in the present geo-political climate, as one of our most persuasive assistants in our efforts to attain world peace. At this moment in history he is the inspiration for courageous nonviolent resistance movements, not just in his native Tibet, but in Burma, where Buddhist monks are at the heart of the resistance to the repressive regime that turned away humanitarian aid following the recent devastating storms. The Dalai Lama's message is his example, and you don't need to be a Buddhist meditator to be inspired by such modeling of nonviolent action.

Source: *The Morning Call* & CNN special "Buddhist Warriors," with Christine Amanpour.

NEXT STEPS IN PROTECTING IMMIGRANT'S RIGHTS - Kudos to the Americas Solidarity Group of LEPOCO, and all who have been involved in the formulation of the "LEPOCO Statement on the Protection of the Rights of Immigrants and the Links to U.S. Economic and Military Policy," that appeared in last month's newsletter. Not only is it a carefully researched, well-thought-out articulation of LEPOCO's philosophy, but it represents an important step in our ongoing effort to reach out to other communities in the struggles for peace and justice.

The statement was a labor that was months, perhaps years, in the making, drawing from the thinking of many LEPOCO members, observations from many trips to Central

and South America, information from national solidarity organizations, and the P&P program last November, with Erica Sutherland from the Grupo de Apoyo Integración Hispanico, and Marcos Urbina from Day Without an Immigrant and the Mexican Cultural Association of the Lehigh Valley.

The next step for the project is to complete the translation of the document into Spanish, and disseminate it to sister organizations and government officials. To get involved call LEPOCO and/or attend the next Americas Solidarity Group meeting.

FAREWELL BRYN - Bryn Hammarstrom, Sr., for decades one of LEPOCO's senior statesmen, passed away on July 18th at the age of 90. He was in hospice at Samaritan House, in Wellsboro, Pennsylvania, with his son, Bryn, Jr., and daughter-in-law, Lynne Graham, at his side. He was buried in a simple homemade coffin on Bryn, Jr.'s land in Tioga County, in an intimate ceremony.

Bryn, Sr., was a co-founder of LEPOCO, and a founding member of the Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting. He was a conscientious objector during World War II, when he served as a smoke-jumper.

In 1968, when I was considering conscientious objection to the war in Vietnam, I went to the Friends Meetinghouse on Rt. 512, and met Bryn Hammarstrom. He not only counseled me, but taught me the fine art of draft counseling, and began me on my life-long path of opposition to war and of counseling. Even after a tragic bicycle accident in 1970 impaired his memory, and his ability to speak as eloquently as I remembered, it was always a delight to see him at LEPOCO annual dinners, and the few other such occasions when he could join us. I'll miss seeing you, Bryn.

A Memorial Meeting will be held for Bryn Hammarstrom on Saturday, September 20, at 3:00 pm, at the Lehigh Valley Friend's Meetinghouse on Rt. 512, Bethlehem.

- Jeff Vitelli

Veterans For Peace (VFP) Report

Editor's Note: This report came in just after our last newsletter went out, so it is a little dated, but the local work of the Veterans For Peace group is so important in the local efforts for peace that it seems important to include it in this newsletter.

On May 25th members of VFP, Louise Legun, Phil Reiss, and Patrick Roxberry presented a program at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley in Bethlehem. Following talks by each member an introduction of Iraq Veterans Against the War film "Winter Soldier" was shown. A discussion period concluded the program.

A twenty-person contingent of the organization participated in the United Veterans Memorial Day Parade and Service in Bethlehem, May 26th. This marked the second consecutive year the group took part in this observance and was notable for the positive response received from viewers along the parade route.

June 14th Veterans For Peace staffed a booth at the Allentown Armory Activists picnic and arts festival. Buttons, bumper stickers and books were sold to bolster the group's treasury.

The group joined with LEPOCO staff for an information booth at the Sportsfest July 24-27, in Allentown (see related article on page 3). Materials regarding recruitment and G.I. rights were made available to young people participating in the festival.

Also, with significant help from friends, Veterans For Peace has created two hour-long programs which aired on WGPA radio this summer and one shorter program that was aired on WDIY in early August. Look for further developments in this effort. The shows have included information from alternative news sources and interviews with persons of local and national note, especially people of special interest for veterans' issues.

- Paul Fichter

Ghosts of Iraq War Update —

In late September Tim Chadwick of Bethlehem, and Art Landis of Perkasio, will be heading to Washington D.C., for their multi-day jury trial for participation in the "Ghosts of the Iraq War" action in the U.S. Senate. On March 12th, 2008, Tim and Art joined with eight others under the National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance banner to call for an end to the killing, the funding; an end to the war. They happened to do this in the midst of a session on military spending and were pulled from the Senate gallery and charged with "disorderly conduct."

Fighting Free Trade in Colombia

On October 18th Freddy Caicedo will visit the Lehigh Valley as part of a tour organized by national group, Witness For Peace (WFP). Freddy Caicedo is an organizer in the Cauca region of Colombia where the opposition to the Colombia Free Trade Agreement has been especially strong among indigenous, Afro-

Colombian and peasant farmer groups. The Colombia Free Trade Agreement is under consideration in the U.S. Congress and if adopted, would bring another NAFTA-style deal that is destructive in its impact on working people and the environment. Save the date to hear this experienced community leader. We are awaiting final approval from WFP, but anticipate that we will hold a potluck dinner at 6 pm, followed by his talk at 7 pm, at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse. Call LEPOCO or look for future updates by e-mail or newsletter.

"Economic Free Fall?" in *The Nation*

In the August 18/25, 2008, issue of *The Nation*, William Greider presents an excellent analysis of the current financial crisis that revolves around mortgage foreclosures. He writes, "The nation...is flirting with historic catastrophe. Nobody yet knows how bad it is, but the peril is vastly larger than previous episodes, like the savings and loan bailout of the late 1980s. The dangers are compounded by the fact that the United States is now utterly dependent on foreign creditors - Japan and China lead the list - who have been propping us up with their lending." He concludes with several very specific reform suggestions.

It's Eastern Europe & Russia Again

On July 9th the Nuclear Abolition Sisters organized a vigil in Bethlehem to draw attention to the danger presented by U.S. plans to build a "Star Wars" radar base in the Czech Republic. Our action was in solidarity with the people of the Czech Republic who oppose the U.S. plans. An excellent piece in *The Express-Times* two days later, "Government's Missile Defense Plan Is Indefensible," by Elizabeth Sullivan of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, argued against of the missile defense plan and the base proposed for the Czech Republic.

Of course, there are many negative ramifications for U.S. plans to build missile defense bases in the Czech Republic and Poland, and we are seeing some of those possible ramifications as Russia has invaded and occupied Georgia in early August 2008.

Bruce Gagnon of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space has posted several pieces of interest about the crisis in Georgia by e-mail. (You can contact him at globalnet@mindspring.com.) In one of them he writes: "None of this is about the good guys verses the bad guys. It is power bloc politics and when the shooting starts it is civilians who die and their communities get destroyed. Big money is at stake and big money does not mind killing innocent people who stand in the way of 'progress.' For the peace movement we must first understand some of the history, and also understand the 'chess' game now underway. We must not have illusions that this is about 'democracy' and must denounce the military and corporate agenda of the players involved..."

Bits & Pieces

Ⓐ The Association of Students Advocating Peace (A.S.A.P.) will host a special Popcorn & Politics film screening for high school students at the LEPOCO Peace Center on Thursday, September 18th. The film will be the documentary *Sir, No Sir!* about the G.I. resistance movement during the Vietnam war. A pizza party (featuring vegan and cheese pizza) will precede the feature at 6 pm. The movie will begin at 6:45 pm. All young people concerned about issues of war and peace are encouraged to attend.

Ⓐ In case you missed the inspiring performance of **Pete Seeger** in Sellersville on August 6, you can catch him at the Pat Garrett Amphitheater, off Rt. 78 in Strausstown at the "Guitar Masters World Tour 2008" music festival. Maybe he will share another new song of hope and creativity like the one he wrote in the 24 hours before the Sellersville performance. The chorus went, "All around the world now, Hear that joyful sound, The world is turning toward the morning, Hatred's on its last go round."

At the Guitar Masters festival, aside from the legendary folk singer, the eclectic lineup will include Rick Derringer, Deodato, and over 50 other international bands and artists of all styles and genres. The 3-day music & art festival, full of inspiring action and awareness will take place over Labor Day weekend on August 30-September 1. On Monday September 1st United Nations representatives will be on hand to dedicate a peace pole at the site. For more information please see www.song3.com

Ⓐ LEPOCO can use help staffing an information table at **Lehigh University** for their **Community Fair** on Monday, September 25, 4-6 pm. If you can help, please call 610-691-8730. It is a great opportunity to talk about peace with energetic new students at the college.

Ⓐ The Lehigh County Conference of Churches is hold a seminar on "**Health Care: Not Everybody Gets It,**" on Sat., September 27, 8:30 am to 3 pm, at Hope United Church of Christ, 1031 Flexer Ave., Allentown. The Rev. Sandra Strauss, Director of Public Advocacy for

the Pennsylvania Council of Churches will be the keynote speaker. Call 610-439-8118 for more information.

Ⓐ On Thurs., August 21, at 7 pm, the Southside Film Institute will present two documentaries, "**The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil,**" by Faith Morgan (53 minutes), and "**Radically Simple,**" by Jan Cannon (35 minutes) about author, teacher and engineer, Jim Merkel, who is totally committed to reducing his impact on the earth. The films will be shown at Deja Brew Coffee House and Deli, 101 W. 4th St., south Bethlehem. Admission is free, donations accepted. Call 610-882-4300 for more info.

Ⓐ The Pennsylvania Labor History Society will hold their 34th Annual Conference in Philadelphia, September 26-27, "Honoring the 1938 Public Sector Strike and Labor Leader William McEntee." US Labor Against the War will be part of the program on the 27th. For more info., call 724-357-3841.

Ⓐ **Kirkridge Retreat & Study Center** will feature their annual weekend with **Dan Berrigan and Liz McAlister**, Sept. 19-21. The theme will be "Exodus for Today: 'Let My People Go.'"

Oct. 2-5, **Janet Chisholm** will lead a "Creating a Culture of Peace & Nonviolence Training.

To register or for more information see www.kirkridge.org or call 610-588-1793.



SUPPORT LEPOCO!

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

___ I am also enclosing an extra donation of \$_____.

___ I would like to support LEPOCO's work with a ___monthly/ ___quarterly pledge of \$_____.

___ I'm most interested in working on the following issues:

NAME _____

PHONE # _____ e-mail _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

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

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

Tues., August 19, 8:30 am: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Wed., August 20, 10 am: Americas Solidarity Group work session at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Wed., August 20, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., August 22, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem.

Tues., September 2, 5 pm: Fundraising Committee meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Mondays, September 8 & October 13, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All members and friends welcome at this monthly business meeting where the activities of all committees and working groups are reviewed.

Wed., September 10, 7 pm: Association of Students Advocating Peace (ASAP) meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Thursdays, September 11 & October 9, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace meetings at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Wed., September 17, 7 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about any of these meetings or want to know the next meeting of the Nuclear Abolition Sisters, please call the Peace Center at 610-691-8730.



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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Bits & Pieces

Weekly Peace Vigils

*The fall election season: what better time to have a regular
witness for peace on local street corners.
Will you be there?*

Bethlehem: 4-5 pm, Thursdays

3rd & Wyandotte Sts. south Bethlehem
Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103

Allentown: Noon-1 pm, Fridays

Federal Courthouse, 5th & Hamilton Sts
Contact: Rev. John Clint Fowler 610-746-5013

4-6 pm, Fridays

PA National Guard Armory, 15th & Allen Sts.

Contact: Allentown Armory Activists

Easton: 10-11 am, Saturdays

Centre Square

Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632

Please attend as often as you are able!

3rd Annual LEPOCO

Peace Picnic

Saturday, September 6

3-7 pm

Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse
Rt. 512, Bethlehem

Food, Games, Music

Fun with Peace-Loving Activists

(See page 1)

LEPOCO's Indoor Yard Sale

Saturday, September 27 (see page 1)