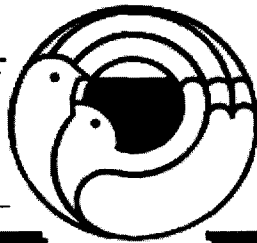


August-September
2011
Vol. 46 No. 6



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

The Tar Sands of Canada

Why would a primeval forest be nicknamed the "biggest carbon bomb in North America?"

The Tar Sands site, poised in the boreal forest downstream of the Rockies' eastern foothills, is now the largest and most destructive industrial project on earth. Over 4 million hectares of 10,000 year-old trees are being cleared, in order to extract oil from the sands beneath.

As acres of ancient trees fall, stored CO₂ is released into the atmosphere. The energy required to extract and process tar sands oil causes three times the greenhouse gas emissions of conventionally produced oil. (By 2020, Canada is expected to emit over 141 million tons of greenhouse gases — more than double the amount currently generated by all the vehicles in that country, and 35% higher than 1990 levels.)

Tar sands are a mixture of 90% clay, sand, and water, and 10% bitumen. Bitumen, composed of hydrocarbons, exists naturally in a solid or semi-solid state. (Petroleum exists naturally as a liquid.) Before bitumen can be used, it must be separated from the sand.

Extraction involves the burning of natural gas, amassing enough heat and steam to melt the oil away from its source. As many as five barrels of water are needed to reap one barrel of oil.

The three deposits situated in Alberta cover an area the size of Florida. About 300 billion barrels of oil are projected to be recoverable. This volume places Canada second in worldwide oil production, after Saudi Arabia.

Already 70% of the crude oil from Tar Sands is directly imported to the United States. Here it is marketed as a synthetic oil for transportation.

America's oil refineries are seeking permits to include the processing of tar sands bitumen. Alberta has been negotiating with the U.S. government to increase production from 1 million barrels a day to over 5 million a day.

Concerned? Call for the re-directing of \$70-100 billion dollars the U.S. is committing to Tar Sands investment. This money could fund research and development of sustainable energy alternatives.

To help de-fuse the "biggest carbon time bomb in North America," join a sustained series of peaceful protests and sit-ins in Washington, D.C., August 20th to September 3rd. Organizers are hoping for the largest civil disobedience in the history of climate change opposition.

Please call the LEPOCO office (610-691-8730) if you can carpool from the Lehigh Valley.

To sign up for the D.C. gathering, to learn more or to make a donation to the Tar Sands Action, see www.tarsandsaction.org. Thank you.

- Anna Maria Caldara

Stand Up to Dirty Gas Drilling

September 7 and 8 will find the Marcellus Shale Coalition gathering in Philadelphia. CEOs of major fracking companies will be breaking bread with our state's governor, Tom Corbett and former Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge. These industry elite will be setting their sights on expanding toxic gas extraction in the Delaware River Watershed and beyond, jeopardizing the drinking water of millions of people. Their gathering will not only be a key trade show for the industry, but, according to Shale Gas Outrage, it will also be "a brazen expression of political corruption."

But, there will be a response. Shale Gas Outrage is organizing two days of parallel events to "stand up to the gas industry." They are demanding that not one more family be poisoned by fracking and shale gas extraction and that the drinking water supplies of major cities like New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh be safeguarded from poisonous drilling waste.

We are invited to attend a rally at Noon, outside the Pennsylvania Convention Center (Broad & Arch Sts.), on Wednesday, September 7, followed by a march through Center City, and an Interfaith "Blessing of the Waters" at 5:30 pm, in Penn Treaty Park, 1199 N. Delaware Ave. Carpools are being planned from the Lehigh Valley and there is some talk of organizing a bus for the September 7th events. If you are interested in either, please contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

The following day, Thursday, September 8, from 8:30 am to 5 pm, there will be a "Freedom From Fracking Conference," at Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 N. Broad St., Philadelphia. Registration is \$40 (there is a lower fee for those on low incomes).

For more information about these events see www.ShaleGasOutrage.org. For more information on the issues being raised at these gatherings see www.ProtectingOurWaters.com. Also, there was a worthwhile show about Marcellus Shale gas drilling on NPR's "This American Life" in mid-July. You can listen to it on-line at www.ThisAmericanLife.org (the episode was titled, "Game Changer.")

Gaza Flotilla: Part II

Many people from the Lehigh Valley attended a talk in Bethlehem in July 2010, by Col. (Ret.) Ann Wright titled, "What Really Happened on the Mavi Marmara." The Mavi Marmara was the Turkish ship which was part of the 2010 international aid flotilla attempting to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza.

This year's flotilla added one boat from the United States, *The Audacity of Hope*. Those on board the U.S. boat included five members of Veterans For Peace and ten journalists. The United States and Israeli governments are desperately trying to prevent their citizens from knowing the truth about conditions inside Gaza. Loss of public support here in the United States might jeopardize the \$3 billion plus that U.S. taxpayers pay in annual subsidies to the Israeli government and the Israeli Defense Forces.

Prime Minister Netanyahu's desperate public relations campaign against the 2011 Gaza Freedom Flotilla was fully backed by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Their outrageous actions included threatening to block any journalists from entering Israel for ten years if they participated in the flotilla, telling journalists that members of the flotilla planned to dump bags of sulfur onto Israeli soldiers to paralyze them or "light them on fire like a torch," sabotaging Irish and Swedish boats while they were in Greek ports so they were unable to sail, pressuring the Greek government to thwart any other ships from leaving ports in Athens. They praised the Greek government after it sent its Coast Guard to forcibly return *The Audacity of Hope* to harbor only minutes after it left its dock in Athens. The Greek Government then impounded the ship, cut off its electricity in 100 degree temperatures with activists still on board, arrested protesting members of *The Audacity of Hope* team as they were preparing to stage a hunger strike outside the U.S. embassy in Athens, and threatened lethal force if necessary against any of the ships which might successfully set sail for Gaza.

In the face of adversity, the international movement to free Gaza is growing; its resolve intensifies. In the words of one of the Jewish passengers on board the U.S. boat to Gaza, Medea Benjamin, "Eventually, justice will prevail and Palestine will be free. And initiatives like the flotilla will be remembered as part of a continuous wave of resistance that helped turn the tide."

- Louise Legun

War Voices

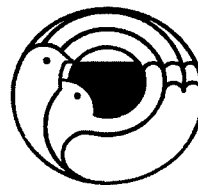
To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and the start of the Global War on Terror, United for Peace and Justice is calling for a month of local and national activities from September 7 to October 7. They hope this will be a time to promote relationship-building among people and communities affected by U.S. militarism and the U.S. war economy,

reflect on how our world has changed in the past 10 years, and share our "war stories" from the last decade.

To close this effort there will be a "War Voices Forum" in Washington, DC, on the evening of Friday, October 7th. That gathering will commemorate the beginning of the Global War on Terror, bringing together people directly impacted by U.S. militarism and the U.S. war economy with ally groups, including writers, musicians, and artists. Participants will be envisioning new directions for the future, and planting the seeds for structures of mutual support and solidarity that will allow us to create a demilitarized world. A live webcast of the forum in D.C. is planned for those who are unable to attend the event. For more information see www.unitedforpeace.org or www.warvoices.org.

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.



Newsletter of LEPOCO

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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

Friday, September 2nd, 7pm: *Arna's Children*

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

Arna Mer Khamis was a legendary activist for the rights of the Palestinian people who founded a theatre group at a refugee camp in Jenin, teaching children to express themselves through acting. Her son Juliano, a director for the group, filmed Arna working with the children over a 6-year period. Following Arna's death, he returns to the camp to find out what became of the young refugees. Juliano was himself assassinated on April 4, 2011. Best Documentary Feature winner at the 2004 Tribeca Film Festival. 85 minutes. 2003.

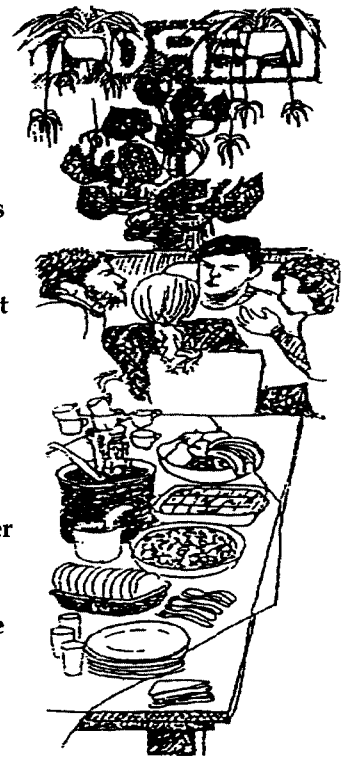
Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, October 7th, 7 pm: *Hidden Battles*

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

This documentary follows a female Sandinista rebel, an Israeli officer, a Palestinian member of Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a Vietnam vet, and a U.S. veteran of Somalia, as they come to terms with their combat experiences. The film offers unique insight and hope into the internal conflicts that human beings around the world continue to face long after they have left the battlefield. Directed by Victoria Mills. 65 minutes. 2011

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



LEPOCO Book Group

The First Wednesday Book Group will meet on September 7th, at 6 pm, at the Panera Bread Café, 3301 Bath Pike (Center St.), Bethlehem. Since the group was unable to meet in August, the book originally announced for that month, *The Man in the Sharkskin Suit*, will be discussed at the September gathering. *The Man in the Sharkskin Suit*, by Lucette Lagnado, is the story of a Jewish family's exodus from old Cairo to the "new world." It is described by *The New York Times* as "a stunning memoir" both "crushing and brilliant."

On October 5th the group will discuss *Heading South, Looking North*, an autobiography by Ariel Dorfman. It presents Dorfman's inner journey and gives a passionate look at exile and bilingualism. It is also a hymn to the Allende revolution in Chile. The military coup that overturned the Allende government led to Dorfman's exile in the U.S.

For November 2nd, the group will read, *The Autobiography of an Execution*, by David R. Dow. Dow is a professor at the University of Houston Law Center and litigation director at the Texas Defender Service.

To learn more about the Book Group call Carmen & Bob Riggs (610-867-1244) or Susie Ravitz (610-253-2522).

Editor's Note: Apologies for any confusion or disappointment about the Theatre Party that was announced on this page in the last Newsletter. Unfortunately, the showing of the documentary, "Phil Ochs: There But For Fortune," at the SteelStacks was canceled and therefore we couldn't have the theatre party. We hope this film is offered in the future at a local venue.

LEPOCO Theatre Party

Thursday, September 29, 6 pm

"The Laramie Project"

This popular play by Moisés Kaufman will be presented at Lafayette College.

Reception with food, drinks, and snacks will be held at the home of David & Kim Rose, Easton, before the play. Their home is only two blocks from the Williams Center for the Arts.

\$15 donation for reception & play.

(\$10 for young people and those on limited income;
\$20 for special supporters)

In October 1998, Matthew Shepard was kidnapped, severely beaten, and left to die, tied to a fence on the outskirts of Laramie, Wyoming. Members of the Tectonic Theater Project went to Laramie to conduct more than 200 interviews, from which they created a chronicle of the life of the town in the year after the murder. The play will be directed by Suzanne Westfall.

Call LEPOCO 610-691-8730 to make a reservation. Also, let us know when you call if you can volunteer to bring finger food or beverages to the reception

September 11, 2011: Local Opportunities

Since Hiroshima Day, August 6, 2011, local artist Jacqueline Lima, has been hosting an exhibit on Non-Violence at J LIMA Art Studios, 308 N. 10th St., Easton. Over a dozen artists have works displayed. For more information or to arrange a visit to the exhibit please call 718-928-5403. The exhibit will close on another important day for honoring peace, September 11.

There will be a Soup Kitchen Benefit Concert on Sunday, September 11, at 4 pm, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 44 E. Market St., Bethlehem. Performers will be Dave Fry (Godfrey Daniels founder and great folk musician), Dina Hall (Bethlehem singer-songwriter), Piper's Request (a Celtic band) and The Druckenmillers (the region's First Family of traditional folk music). Tickets are \$25 and will benefit the soup kitchen that operates from Trinity Church. For more information or to make a reservation, call 610-867-4741, x308.

In south Bethlehem, outside the new PBS-39 studios an event titled Planting Peace at SteelStacks will take place on Sunday, September 11, at 3:30 pm. The program includes the dedication of a Peace Pole as well as a World Peace Flag Ceremony. For more information call 610-332-1300.

History is Knocking: October 2011

Are you suffering from activist fatigue? Are you tempted to surrender to fate because all past efforts ended in vain? Were you jealous of the protesters in Egypt? Well there just might be a remedy on the horizon.

The remedy can be seen in the reincarnation of a word from protests of old. That word is "occupation." This reemerging strategy is on the drawing board for two actions. The first is on September 17th where activists hope to occupy Wall Street, and the second is where they plan to occupy Freedom Plaza in D.C. The subject here will be the occupation in D.C. to be carried out by the October 2011 Movement.

What do they mean by the word occupation? It means that people will be camping out and staying overnight. Starting on October 6, people will be camping out at Freedom Plaza, staying at various churches, or sleeping in hotels so that they can create a constant presence of resistance against the status quo.

The word "occupation" can intimidate many activists though. Pictures of bloody riots because of violent protesters can come to mind. But that won't happen here. The October 2011 Movement is firmly committed to code of nonviolence (there will be no physical and verbal violence). Also, discriminating protesters, those who have never gone to jail, like myself, will have plenty of opportunities since this movement warmly welcomes all levels of participation.

How long will this occupation last? The planners say, "It ends when we say it ends." I know I plan on go-ing down to participate on more than one weekend.

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you are willing to treat me to food and transportation, then please come with. But even if you are cheap, come anyway. We can only cause change when we persist in providing a constant presence.

For more information or to sign up see www.October2011.org and watch the video of participants' statements about why they are joining this effort. For information on carpools or other transportation from the Lehigh Valley contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

-Curt Day

War Dollars & the Deficit Deal (some responses)

Anger and deceit has led the U.S. into a billionaires' coup. The debt deal will hurt the poorest Americans, convinced by Fox and the Tea Party to act against their own welfare.

- George Monbiot, *Guardian* UK, 8/2/11

The Defense Department's budget has risen now for 13 consecutive years, which is unprecedented in American history... The result is a warped American foreign policy. It conceives of problems entirely in military terms, tries to present a ready military solution...

- Fareed Zakaria, CNN, 8/9/11

Air conditioning for the U.S. military in Iraq and Afghanistan costs \$20.2 billion annually, when factoring in the manpower and logistics to deliver fuel -- roughly 12% of the spending on these wars in 2010.

- Energy Interns at Peace Climate, 7/2/11

When the banks had a national emergency, they bailed them out and they found \$700 billion. When we go to war, we find \$1.3 trillion. When the poor and working classes are living in a state of emergency, it's a matter of national security, especially the children. We have 21 percent of our precious children of all colors living in poverty. That's morally obscene...

- Cornel West, speaking while on a nine-state Poverty Tour with Tavis Smiley, August 2011

Common Cause is alarmed by the debt crisis debate, and the fact that Congress seems to be willing to balance the budget on the backs of the poor, the working poor and the middle class, and that corporations and the wealthy seem to be exempt from paying their fair share.

- Bob Edgar, President of Common Cause, writing before he and the leaders of several religious organizations were arrested for an act of "faithful civil disobedience" inside the U.S. Capitol, 7/27/11

There is no way to fund what we must do as a nation without bringing our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan. The militarization of our foreign policy has proven to be a costly mistake. It is time to invest at home.

- AFL-CIO Executive Council, 8/3/11

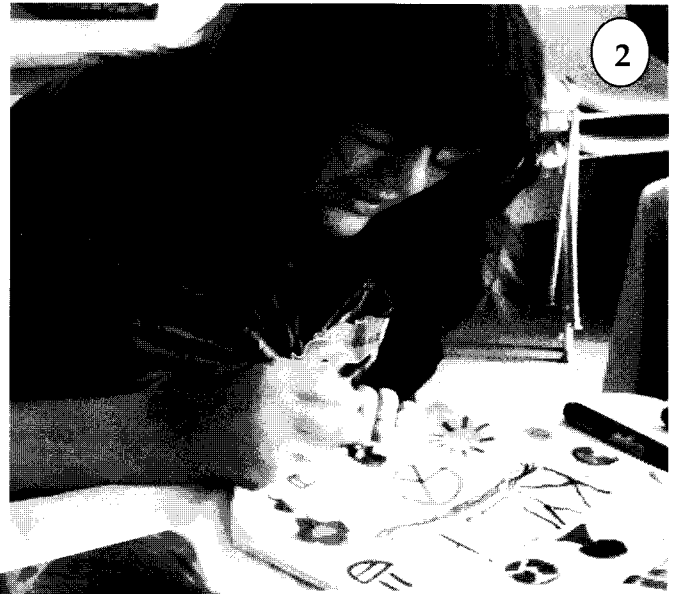
End the Wars and Invest at Home.

- Point # 8 of the Contract for the American Dream's 10 point document. Available to sign at www.contract.rebuildthedream.com

Peace Camp 2011

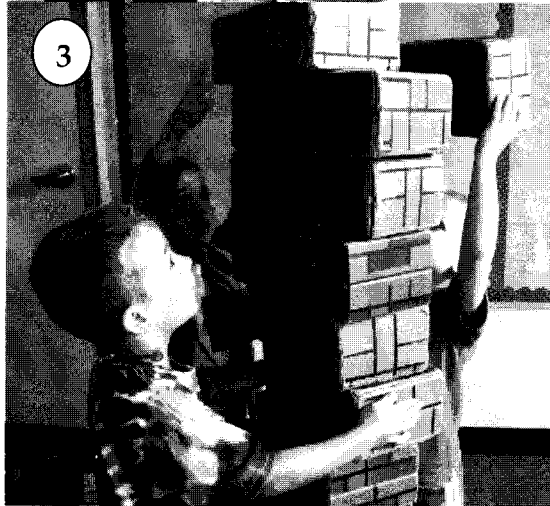


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Photos
by
Susie
Ravitz.



3



- 1) Three campers in the Green Group enjoying outdoor games.
- 2) A camper in the Rose Group, Kylie Miller, concentrating on a craft activity.
- 3) Three campers in the Red Group are practicing cooperation.



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- 4) Two campers in the Blue Group participate in folk dances, a camp activity on Wednesday.
- 5) A teen helper and camper in the Orange Group enjoy music time together.
- 6) Two campers in the Yellow Group looking at insects as part of a nature walk led by Nancy Johnston.



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Peace Camp 2011: Some Reviews

Peace Camp is a great way to be energized for peace work! Seeing the joy on the faces of the campers, watching the enthusiasm of the resource people, being inspired by the creativity of the leaders, and the sensitivity of the helpers -- all of these were sources of energy as the week of camp went by. The children had fun learning international folk dances, enjoyed varied arts and crafts activities, connected with Nature, found peace doing yoga, and learned about people who live with handicaps. Music and games were favorite activities every day. Thank you to all our teen and adult helpers and leaders for creating an atmosphere for learning about peace in each of the groups. I hope all the seeds of peace that were planted during this week will flourish.

Join us for Peace Camp 2012, July 23 - 27.

- Ruth Walden

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The purest kind of happiness comes from children; LEPOCO's Peace Camp is one of the few places I have been where happiness could not be more present. The children you meet grow very close to your heart in a matter of five days. Few other places I have been can make this happen. During my first year volunteering, I was holding hands with two little girls. The one on my right looked up at me and said simply, "Can you please be my older sister?" Shortly thereafter, the one on my left piped up, "Yes, me too! We could be a family!"

I have heard countless stories of my friends complaining about the volunteering they are doing. Peace Camp is completely the opposite for me; it is a wonderful experience, filled with laughter and music, and I hope to continue participating for as long as I can.

- Erin Brill

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Although I was a camper at Peace Camp for many years, just before I became old enough to be a helper, I started doing other things away from home during the summer, so this was my first year volunteering at Peace Camp. I was a helper in the Rose Group, and I had a great time, and I think our campers did too. I think we all also learned a lot, about working together, communication, and accepting differences. We had some quite interesting discussions about topics I might not have thought 5th and 6th graders could have talked about, and we were all impressed by how much the campers respected the differences of opinion in the group. It was a great experience for me, and I hope for the campers as well!

- Ben Kraft

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My experience with Peace Camp goes back to 2008, which is not nearly as long a legacy as many of the people who volunteer each summer. Perhaps this gives me

somewhat of an outsider's perspective on what happens in the secret workings of LEPOCO's summer day camp.

As someone who is going through Kutztown University's secondary education program, the first thing that I noticed about Peace Camp was its remarkably laid back atmosphere. Having become more used to the world of lesson plans and rigid structure (rigid by my definition, anyhow), the openness and welcoming environment that all of LEPOCO's volunteers provide is refreshing. There is structure, of course, but it is not structure that everyone must rigidly fit into.

Instead of forcing the recitation of pledges and oaths, as is seen in some summer day camps, Peace Camp's volunteers merely set an example of the environment that they are trying to promote -- one of non-violence and peace. The outcome of this promotion-by-example could be seen this year, as in earlier years. Campers seem to always be eager to participate in the activities that are planned by the leaders of each group. My co-leader Kelly Gerencher, for example, planned an activity that involved the campers untangling a series of rope segments. The campers saw the value in speaking and cooperating with one another, rather than trying to simply grab their own end of the rope and pull.

These sorts of activities, as well as the welcoming environment that Peace Camp provides, keep both campers and volunteers coming back year after year. I know that I will be unconsciously humming the songs from Peace Camp to myself this winter while I shovel snow -- and, of course, be back next summer at Peace Camp to help lead another group of campers.

- Bridger Buller

Witness to Innocence

Speaker: Ray Krone

Tuesday, September 13, 7:30 pm

Kirby Hall of Civil Rights, Room 104
Lafayette College, Easton

Ray Krone grew up in York, Pennsylvania, with a loving family and many friends. A former Boy Scout and high school athlete, he became an Air Force sergeant and later a mail carrier before finding himself on Arizona's death row for a murder he did not commit. His story is riveting. He has spoken in the Lehigh Valley on at least two previous occasions, but it is important to support his continuing work against the death penalty.

This program is sponsored by the Office of Religious & Spiritual Life, Intercultural Development, and Dept. of Government & Law at Lafayette College.

For more information call 610-330-5320.

Ray Krone will also speak at a brownbag luncheon on Wednesday, September 14, at noon, in the Interfaith Chapel, Hogg Hall, Lafayette College.

The Struggle Shared

Awaken in us a sense of who we truly are:

Tiny ephemeral blossoms on the Tree of Life.

Make the purpose and destiny of that tree our purpose and destiny.

Fill each of us with love for our true Self which includes all the creatures and landscapes of the world...

May we speak in all human councils on behalf of the animals and plants and landscapes of the Earth.

- From the Invocation to *Thinking Like a Mountain: Towards a Council of All Beings*, by Joanna Macy & John Seed

IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS - In a single day last week this writer received a half-dozen e-alerts reminding me that anthropocentrism -- the notion that the planet was created for human disposal -- is still the greatest threat to our collective survival. From snow leopards and Asiatic bears clinging to survival in war ravaged Afghanistan, to Siberian tigers, gorillas and elephants retreating into threatened habitats, to wolves in some western states targeted like pests for eradication, we have wildlife disappearing into extinction, a hundred species every single day, while extremists in Congress threaten to gut the Endangered Species Act, conservation funding, and any inkling that humans have any responsibility to care for the rest of the planet.

It seems that even our housepets, members of our families, are endangered. Among the alerts that I received was one from the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS), through LEPOCO member Jean Pearson, concerning the business of random source Class B dealers who illegally obtain cats and dogs, and sell them to research facilities in violation of the Animal Welfare Act. (The suffering that animals endure in such facilities is horrific, unconscionable, totally unjustifiable, subject of another story of its own.) On May 19th, Wood TV-8, in Grand Rapids Michigan ran an investigative report entitled "Who is Policing Animal Safety?" that exposed an operation called R&R Research which picks up stray cats, sometimes removing them from backyards. R&R has been cited for illegally obtaining animals at least eight times, and

although the U. S. Department of Agriculture is authorized by the Protection of Pets section of the Animal Welfare Act to revoke the license of any dealer that illegally acquires an animal three or more times, the USDA has refused to censure R&R Research. AAVS is calling on the USDA to permanently revoke the license of R&R Research and wants a Pet Safety and Protection Act (that would put an end to the business of Class B dealers), to be re-introduced in the U.S. Congress.

Obtain more information at www.aavs.org. Take Action. As an activist, a tiny ephemeral blossom on the tree of life, commit to rapping on the doors of power, speaking out every day for those who have no voice, no power.

END THE WARS...CLOSE THE BASES - We are approaching the 10th Anniversary of the beginning of U.S. intervention in Afghanistan, making it the longest war in our country's history. Troop levels in Iraq remain around 47,000, with U.S. casualties actually increasing over those a year ago. This past spring, U.S. fighter jets took off to engage in yet another war in Libya. In a recent Gallup Poll, approval of that venture among U.S. citizens was only 47%, the lowest level of support for military intervention in over 40 years. Yes, we are weary of war. But, these wars could end tomorrow, and many of the most visible structures of U.S. drive to maintain global military domination would remain entrenched.

In pursuit of U.S. hegemony, our military maintains over 1000 bases in 46 countries around the globe.

Maintaining and constructing all these U.S. bases cost taxpayers \$41 billion just in 2010, yet most of us are unaware of the enormous footprint of these bases, and the impact that they have on the lives of the people who live in their shadows.

The article in last month's column about the struggles of the people of Jeju Island in South Korea highlights a good example of how that impact works. The Pentagon's Base Structure report for 2010 listed 662 overseas bases (that somehow did not include 441 bases in Afghanistan, and the 88 remaining in Iraq). Of those 662 bases, 70 are in South Korea, where 28,500 U.S. troops are currently stationed. The cost for the Korean bases alone runs to \$20 billion annually, according to the Cato Institute.

One of the premises of the Kissinger doctrine was to have client or surrogate states fighting our wars for us (see Noam Chomsky and Ed Herman's, The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism, 1979). That strategy is still very much evident in the maintenance of military bases. The government of a given country is a partner with the U.S., committing its resources, stationing its troops, maintaining the bases for the U.S. ships and aircraft to have unlimited access.

There is a growing opposition to the presence of military bases worldwide. Tim Shorrock found in doing research for his book Spies for Hire, that there was evidence of eavesdropping on Korean civilian populations conducted from joint U.S.-Korean bases, and concluded that the anti-base movement is being monitored perhaps more closely than Al Qaida, putting the movement to close military bases in the same threat category as global terrorists. That speaks to the urgency of joining that movement as peace activists to draw down the U.S. military domination of the world's people. To permanently end war, and return our nation to a peace economy, we must work to close all military bases now.

- Jeff Vitelli

Bits & Pieces

Over 30 LEPOCO activists partied to honor the **90th Birthday** of long-time member **Tom Lloyd** on August 20, at the home of Mimi Lang in Bethlehem. Tom gave a wonderful tribute to peace work as people asked him questions about his efforts as a peace activist all these many years. Those attending, and others, made donations to LEPOCO in Tom's honor. These totaled over \$1000. Thank you Tom, for all your years of work for peace and justice. We hope you have many more.

Seven people (Bob and Carmen Riggs, Eleanor Hay, Urbane Byler, Rev. John Lamb, Janet Goloub and Nancy Tate) visited the offices of Senator Pat Toomey and Rep. Charles Dent on July 15th, urging their opposition to the **Free Trade Agreements (FTA)** with Colombia, Korea and Panama. At Rep. Dent's office the delegation also delivered several dozen postcards signed by his constituents calling for a different U.S. policy toward Colombia, including rejection of the Colombia FTA.

On August 8th, a group of six (Urbane Byler, Janet Goloub, Samantha Lioi, Bob Riggs, Dagoberto Mosquera, and Nancy Tate) met with Rep. Dent in his Allentown office, speaking largely about the FTAs. We also talked about U.S. militarization in the Americas and human rights issues in Colombia and Honduras. Unfortunately it does not seem that we convinced Rep. Dent of the pitfalls of the FTAs, making it all the more important for those of you reading the newsletter to call or write to him urging him to vote "no" on these agreements that are likely to come up for a vote in September.

In our July letters we summarized concerns about the FTAs for U.S. workers, peasant farmers in Latin America, and for the environment and the economy: in Colombia the FTA fails to seriously address the fact that in 2010 more labor leaders were assassinated than in the rest of the world combined and that many fear peasant farmers will turn to growing coca when they

see their net incomes fall 50-70% under the FTA; in Panama the FTA will increase the privileges of corporations seeking tax evasion and money laundering opportunities; in the Korea FTA jobs will be lost and trade deficits will rise in both countries. There is more information on the FTAs available at www.WitnessForPeace.org.

Thank you to those who staffed LEPOCO tables at the **11th Street Festival** on June 25th and the **Pride in the Park Festival** on August 21st: Sheila Clever, Stefan Rogers, Bob Riggs, Renate Brosky, Mylien Nguyen, Robin Reinhard, Tom Stinnett, Kathryn Hoffman, Sharon Mills, Phil Reiss, Tim Chadwick, Linda Sakovics, Rita Corriel, and Jeff Vitelli.

As this newsletter is being written, preparations are underway for LEPOCO tables at the community expos at Northampton Community College on September 25th and at Lehigh University on September 29th.

From **Adrian Shanker** of the **Pennsylvania Diversity Network** comes this message, "Thank you to all the LEPOCO members who attended the recent city council meetings in Easton and Bethlehem. The Lehigh Valley has two more civil rights than it had a month ago, and we could not have done this without the assistance of many friends... In Bethlehem in particular, LEPOCO provided testimony at three of the four public meetings on the issue, was listed among the 100 organization supporting the ordinance, and advertised each meeting in the weekly emails. Thanks for your support. For equality!"

September Fairs & Festivals

Volunteers will be needed to help with staffing for both of the events listed below. Please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 if you can help.

Friday-Sunday, September 16-18, the Pennsylvania Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Festival will be held at the Kempton Community Center, Kempton (15 miles west of Allentown). The theme this year is "Homegrown Solutions."

Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for those 13-21 and free for 12 and under. This exciting festival is worth the trip and if you want to attend, LEPOCO can use your help for a stint at our information and peace boutique table. Contact LEPOCO to help and see www.PaEnergyFest.com for more information.

Saturday, September 24, will the 12th Annual Peace Fair at Buckingham Friends Meeting & School, in Lahaska, 10:30 am to 4 pm. There is great food, live music, children's games, crafts, art, used books and peace exhibitors like LEPOCO. Colman McCarthy, founder and director of the Center for Teaching Peace in Washington, DC, will be the special keynote speaker. Admission is free. Again, if you can help staff LEPOCO's booth, please call 610-691-8730, and for more information see www.PeaceFair.org.

Support LEPOCO!

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

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

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

___ I'm interested in the following issues: _____.

Name _____ Phone # _____ e-mail _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

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

or

Donate through PayPal by going to the "membership" page at www.lepoco.org.

Bits & Pieces

☮ **Vince Stravino**, who visited the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel this summer with a **Peace-Builders** delegation, will report on his trip (similar to the P&P talk he gave at LEPOCO in July) on Tues., Sept. 20, in Rm. 400, First Presbyterian Church, Center St., Bethlehem. The Peace-Builders group met with UN officials and over two dozen groups working for nonviolence change in the conflict there. The public is invited.

☮ *The Intelligencer* of Doylestown carried a front page story on August 19th, **Death of the Middle Class: Unemployed Protest at Fitzpatrick's Office**. Around 100 people participated in the funeral procession, symbolizing the death of the middle class to demonstrate the "economic doom and gloom" they are feeling at the office of Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick in Middletown. During the gathering they had a moment of silence "for the jobs that have been lost through outsourcing and corporate greed."

☮ The **Steelworkers** will hold their annual **Labor Day Parade & Picnic** on Sun., Sept. 4, at 11:30 am, starting (and ending) under the Hill-to-Hill Bridge in Bethlehem. Would like to join a peace contingent behind the LEPOCO banner? If so, please contact the LEPOCO office to let us know (610-691-8730). Tickets for the picnic are \$10. Call 610-867-3772 to make a reservation.

☮ **Greenpeace** took their message for ending coal pollution to the sky above the **Portland Generating Station** near Bangor on Aug. 12. Their huge airship (135 feet long and 40 feet high) was launched locally by an international crew of Greenpeace volunteers and staff with local assistance from Anna Maria Caldara, a longtime activist on environmental issues. The airship bore the words "If You Can Read This You Are Breathing Coal Pollution." A helicopter flying nearby filmed as the inflated balloon circled the smoke stacks at the Portland facility. The airship visits heavy pol-

luting coal-fired power plants. Stories appeared in *The Easton Express* on Aug. 12 and 13.

☮ **Mike Fitzpatrick**, congressperson from Bucks County recently signed a McGovern/Lewis Congressional sign-on letter to President Obama asking the president to **close the SOA/WHINSEC**. Sixty-nine congresspeople signed the letter. Fitzpatrick was one of three from Pennsylvania and one of only two Republicans to sign. If you are a constituent, please thank him for this action.

☮ On Sun., Aug. 7th, over 40 people gathered at the Tondabayashi Garden in Bethlehem for a program in observance of the **66th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki**. As with observances in Japan this year, our local program also brought attention to the ongoing tragedy of the nuclear power plant accident at Fukushima. Hence the theme: "From Hiroshima to Fukushima: No More Nukes!" The Bethlehem observance featured poetry (including a dramatic reading of Ginsburg's "HUM BOM!" by Bob Weick and Pete Sanchez); music by the Peace Singers; and stories of resistance.

☮ The **Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizenship Coalition (PICC)** is working to prevent passage of several bills in Pennsylvania that mimic Ari-

zona's anti-immigrant legislation. Buses are being planned to Harrisburg on Tues., Aug. 30, and Wed., Aug 31, to show support for immigrants as state legislators debate these anti-immigrant proposals. For more information contact Emma Cleveland at the Allentown ACLU office at 484-350-3767.

☮ On Sat., Oct. 29, 9 am to 3 pm, there will be a conference on "**The Growing Economic Divide**," sponsored by the Lehigh County Conference of Churches Justice & Advocacy and partner organizations. It will feature biblical reflection, interactive workshops and seminars on the roots of economic inequality and public policy. See www.wealth.pprj.org for more info.

☮ *Those of us who are committed to social, economic, racial and gender justice, to the protection, care and revitalization of our wounded Mother Earth, to peace and nonviolent ways of resolving conflicts, to a very different future than the past we have inherited and the present we have no choice but to live in, all of us, whatever issue or issues we are working on, whatever the state of that work, however strong or weak the social forces behind it at present, must use our brains and our energies to help others come forward to join us.*

-Ted Glick, Future Hope column, 8/17/11, www.tedglick.com

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

Thursdays, September 8 & October 13, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., Sept. 9, 10:30 am: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., Sept. 9, 1 pm: Newsletter Planning Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Mondays, September 12 & October 10, 7 pm: 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.

Wed., Sept. 14, 6 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters Meeting at Olive Branch Restaurant, south Bethlehem.

Thurs., Sept. 22, 3:30 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 Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition, LEPOCO Peace Singers, the Fundraising Committee, the Youth & Militarism/Truth in Recruiting Committee, the Peace Camp Planning Committee, the Bike/Walkathon Planning 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

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Meetings...

Stand Up to Dirty Gas Drilling September 7 & 8 Philadelphia

Rally & March
Blessing of the Waters
Freedom From Fracking Conference

(See page 1 for more information.)

LEPOCO at Fairs & Festivals

Sept. 16-18
Pennsylvania Renewable Energy
& Sustainable Living

Sept. 24
Peace Fair at Buckingham
Friends Meeting

(See page 8 for more info.)

LEPOCO Theatre Party

Thursday, September 29, 6 pm

"The Laramie Project"

Reception at home in Easton followed by
play at Lafayette College.

(See page 3 for more information.)

Monthly Peace Vigils

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

4:30-5:30 pm

Second Thursdays

(Sept. 8 & Oct. 13)

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Contact:

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