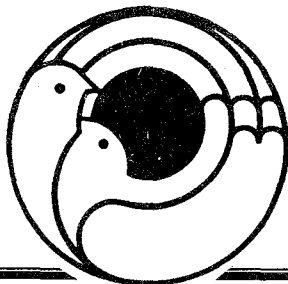


December
2004

vol. 39 no.9



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

A Reprieve For Now

On December 1, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court delivered good news to George Banks and state death penalty opponents by ordering a stay of Banks' execution pending a hearing to determine his mental competency to be executed. Banks lawyers have argued that executing someone in his mental condition would violate the 8th Amendment ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

Banks had been scheduled to be executed, in our name, by the state of Pennsylvania on December 2nd. It would have been the first execution in Pennsylvania in five years. Banks is severely mentally ill and was sentenced to death according to jury guidelines that have since been declared unconstitutional.

Let's hope that the high court's action will be the first step on the road to securing clemency for George Banks.

- Maria Weick

Editor's Note: The Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing (L.V.-CASK) had plans for local vigils if George Banks execution had gone forward on December 2nd. The L.V.-CASK will meet on Tuesday, January 11, at 8:30 am, at the LEPOCO Peace Center, to consider our next steps. If you are concerned about the death penalty, please attend.

Attention Teens:

Share your vision and GET ACTIVE!

Students across the Lehigh Valley are coming together to work for a more peaceful world as SECO, Social and Environmental Change Organization.

We are currently represented by students from Palisades, Southern Lehigh, Whitehall, Lehigh Valley Performing Arts, Moravian Academy, and Liberty.

Join us!

Contact Annie Hasz at 610-346-06891 or <bluejoon@earthlink.net> for meeting times and information.

Two Minutes for Peace

Please join at least 100 local peace folks by taking two minutes each weekday to call the local offices of our Washington representatives. The Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition asks you to do this every day from now until the war and occupation end in Iraq. We suggest this simple message, or some variant thereof (in your own words):

"End the war. End the occupation. Bring our troops home."

Call: Rep. Pat Toomey 610-439-8861

Senator Arlen Specter 610-434-1444

Senator Rick Santorum 610-770-0142

(As soon as we have a local phone number for Representative-elect Charlie Dent we will call him instead of Toomey.) (If you live outside the 15th Congressional District please call your representative instead of Toomey or Dent.)

Please sign the Two Minutes for Peace Pledge and return it to LEPOCO or any of the groups in the Peace Coalition. LEPOCO's address is 313 W. 4th St., Bethlehem, PA 18015.

I will spend two minutes a day for peace by calling my representatives and urging them to end the war in Iraq.

Name

Phone Number

Home Address

e-mail address

Visiting Colombia: Part III

Eight days after starting the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) delegation to Colombia, we arrived in La Unión, the tiny village with the FOR accompaniment program: three people committed to six to 12 months of living there, supporting the peace community and providing security for the residents. We had walked the two+ miles up through lush tropical forest, broken by occasional meadows, cattle, houses, and people.

At the top we found ourselves looking at an electrical wire leading to the village, a smattering of wooden houses, meandering people and livestock, a colorful school and pleasant playground, a couple of dirt roads, as well as the two nice FOR houses.

Members of the peace community pledge not to carry arms, not to interact with armed factions at all, not to use alcohol, to participate in community work, and to take responsibility for their own actions.

We had free time in the afternoon, and several of us went down to the swimming hole at the river even though the sky was very dark. Hearing thunder, we went back to the village just in time. It poured! We gathered in an FOR house; soon a major thunderstorm developed, and we were forced to sit and chat with each other for hours, one of the few times we were able to do that. In such a storm, the village electricity is turned off; soon the storm itself took out the electricity for the rest of our stay. The lightning and thunder of that storm was some of the best I've ever sat through.

The rain let up in the morning, and we divided into two groups to go to the banana fields on harvest/packing/shipping day. I went to Javier Sanchez's field, he being the man who came to the Lehigh Valley a couple of years ago to tell us about the peace community experience. He told us about growing the baby bananas they export, and we tried to help in the packing shed. We worked through the morning in two fields; then a couple of campesinos took the cartons by mule to San José and beyond for transport. For growing, packing, and shipping 13-15 lb. cartons of baby bananas, they get \$2 per carton.

Toward the end of the day we were able to meet with the community. They told some of their history. After displacement and returning to the community, in 2000 paramilitaries murdered six leaders with the help of the army. The people decided to stay; leaving would be more risky than staying. Why are the authorities against their being there? Urabá, the region, is rich in fertile land and minerals. Multinational organizations want to build mega-projects: a second canal from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean Sea is one such project.

Someone asked if life was any better with President Uribe. A leader answered, "We are now in tense calm." No one has been killed in La Unión since 2000.

The next day we went by mule back to San José de Apartadó, and on to Apartadó where we met with the

Colonel in charge of troops for the San José area. He was very friendly, very assuring of the care the brigade is taking with regard to the peace community -- and very proud of his brother's accomplishments at the School of the Americas.

Our remaining meetings in Bogotá were with officials from the Human Rights Office of the UN, the U.S. Embassy, and the Human Rights Office of the national government. Oddly, the only places where our cameras weren't permitted were the UN and the U.S. Embassy. The UN representative seemed to discuss the same human rights situation that we saw; the others glossed over the problems; just, "Things are getting better."

That the 17th Brigade has met with FOR delegations the past two years is encouraging. This past summer representatives from our embassy and from the government's human rights office visited San José de Apartadó for the first time (separate visits). Figures such as kidnappings and disappearances are down. However, detentions with little cause are way up.


On this trip I learned so much with such dedicated people about the remarkable Colombians working for human rights and the incredibly courageous people of the peace community, in their beautiful country. About a month ago a woman was killed in San José, and supplies just bought in Apartadó were stolen from the vehicle that was to return to San José. For those working towards negotiated resolution of the violence, encouragement is in short supply.

- Janet Goloub.

Editor's Note: Janet Goloub joined a delegation to Colombia, July 18-31. The first parts of her report appeared in the last two issues of the newsletter.

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 non-violent, 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: Fran Dreisbach, Mike Lawton, Tom Lloyd, Bob Riggs, Barbara Schultz, Brad Schultz, Tom Stinnett, Joan Stone, Nancy Tate, Jeff Vitelli, Hans Wuerth, and Ursula Wuerth.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Ellen Buck, Peter Crownfield, Annie Hasz, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Mike Lawton (ex-officio), Janet Ney, Sue Ravitz, Reggie Regrut, Nancy Tate (ex-officio), and Marion Thorne (co-treas.).

Potluck & Politics on Haiti

On Friday, January 7, at 7 pm, the Americas Solidarity Group of LEPOCO, will sponsor a Potluck & Politics program featuring Stephen Keppel, Jr., giving a "Report From Haiti."

A graduate of Bethlehem Catholic High and Notre Dame University, Stephen Keppel has been working at the L'ouverture Cleary School near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, for over a year. His main project is working with the graduates of this school who have also finished college. He is helping them set up businesses. He also teaches at the school and works on the school's environmental committee.

With all the turbulence in Haiti, from the U.S.-instigated changes in government to the ravages of Hurricane Ivan, it will be helpful to hear this first-person account of developments as Stephen Keppel has experienced them

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 7 pm, at the Peace Center. The talk should begin around 7:30 pm. Call 610-691-8730 if you have questions.

The next First Friday Film (Popcorn & Politics) will be on Friday, February 4th, at 7 pm, at LEPOCO. We will view the Vietnam War-era classic, "Hearts and Minds."

Bill of Rights Day

In observance of Bill of Rights Day, December 15, the Bill of Rights Defense Committee of the Lehigh Valley is undertaking several efforts: urging newspaper coverage; raising the USA PATRIOT Act again with Bethlehem City Council; and leafletting the public at several locations. If you would like more information about their efforts please call Barbara Diamond at 610-691-8269 or Peter Crownfield at 610-691-8730.

Bill of Rights Day is observed on the anniversary of the signing of the Bill of Rights in 1791 and was declared as a national observance by Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt in the early 1940s.

Weekly Peace Vigils

Bethlehem

4-5 pm, Thursdays

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., south Bethlehem
Contact: Greta Browne & Guy Gray, 610-865-9050

Allentown

Noon-1 pm, Fridays

Federal Courthouse, 5th & 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!

NAACP Acknowledgement

On Sunday, November 21st, the Bethlehem Branch of the NAACP held their 59th Annual Freedom Fund Banquet under the theme "Breaking Down Walls in Racism, Education and the Military." Very generously LEPOCO was honored for "efforts to stir the conscience of Lehigh Valley residents in pursuit of peace by non-violence." We are deeply grateful for this acknowledgement from a sister and brother group that knows so much about the struggle for justice and peace in our city and our world. Thank you to Jeff Vitelli who accepted the award for LEPOCO.



The anti-Bush vote was an expression of an explosive grassroots movement. It was an achievement of the "other superpower" of democratic public opinion, finding its voice and creating new forms of organization, coalition and mobilization.

- From "After the Elections: Resistance Is Not Futile," A statement of the National Executive Committee of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, based in New York City.

Be All You Can Be...Work For Peace!

Part-Time Paid Staff Position Available

LEPOCO is seeking a staffperson to work 10 to 15 hours per week on our Youth & Militarism Program. Responsibilities include outreach and education at public events and schools. Candidates should be comfortable doing presentations, speaking in public, communicating with school officials and working closely with high school-aged students. Other duties include developing and maintaining relationships with local schools, phone calls, mailings, attending meetings and conferences, ordering and managing the Y&M counter-recruitment materials. We would prefer candidates who can make at least a one-year commitment to this position.

Call 610-691-8730 for more information or send a letter of interest to LEPOCO, 313 W 4th St., Bethlehem, Pa 18015 or to lepoco@postmark.net. Please respond by January 15, 2005.

Local Alternative Media

On November 18th, Muhlenberg College hosted a forum, organized and presented by Jim Schneider, on independent media.

Laura Taub, from Muhlenberg's Communications Dept., showed some video made by minority youth working in a program she helped create. She worked with California youth media projects for eight years before coming to Muhlenberg.

Norberto Dominguez, of the Hispanic-American League of Artists, invited everyone in the audience to attend the only Latino film festival in Pennsylvania, the second week of March at the Banana Factory.

Jeff Pooley, also of Muhlenberg's Communications Dept., spoke on media reform efforts. He said that the intense concentration of media we're experiencing now is a direct result of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. Pooley showed a clip from Bill Moyer's NOW program in which Republican Jim Leech called the legalized concentration of media ownership "absolutely indefensible."

Jim Brancato, from the Communications Dept. at Cedar Crest College, talked about low-power radio. He said that in 1999 the FCC sponsored a change, making broadcast frequencies available to low power stations of no more than 100 watts. Such stations must be non-profit and provide at least 12 hours of local broadcasting per day. The FCC was shocked when it got 3400 applications in the first few months. Major media (including NPR) lobbied against low power, and Congress backed off, limiting the number of applications to about 400. Brancato said SB-2050, sponsored by Patrick Leahy and John McCain, is a good bill on this issue. He recommended www.prometheusradio.org as a fantastic resource.

Guy Gray, from Cedar Crest College, talked about Community Wireless Networks (WIFI), which provides low cost, or even free access to the internet. He mentioned several communities that already have WIFI, and that it's being considered for south Bethlehem. Gray felt that probably the best model for WIFI is in the Champaign-Urbana area of Illinois, where Independent Media Project got a \$200,000 grant from the Soros Corporation to get set up.

Kevin Mahoney, from Kutztown University, spoke on "Media Activism." He stressed the value of the new portable technology as it helped activists in Seattle, Miami, and elsewhere stay in touch with each other during demonstrations, to help each other regroup and strategize as events unfolded. Mahoney said this media helps sustain the horizontal relationships necessary to keep the *internal* movement organized and going -- media not so much as outreach, but as organizing tool.

The program concluded with a short video by Jim Schneider, featuring protest against the assault on Iraq. Much of this video featured LEPOCO members. Some of it was footage from local vigils or demonstrations in

NYC, and had a raw energy you could feel along your spine. It was a visceral reminder of the urgency of our situation.

- Mike Lawton

40th Anniversary March

You are invited to join the Southern Christian Leadership Conference as they commemorate the 40th anniversary of the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. The original march was led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1965. Participants in 2005 will walk the historic route, approximately 10 miles per day, from March 6th through March 11th. Each evening walkers will enter the same churches where civil rights leaders delivered their message of nonviolence four decades ago. This time, participants will engage in forums on issues like education, poverty, and the significance of the Voting Rights Act, which is up for renewal in 2007. Transportation will be available to bring walkers to and from hotels each night, or walkers can camp, or stay overnight in the churches. (Those who wish to use church lodging need to notify Anna Maria Caldara as soon as possible at 610-599-9985.) Reservations for the event must be in place by Friday, January 28, 2005, and can be made by calling the above number. Transportation to Selma is the responsibility of the participants.

Dr. King entered Alabama in 1965 to accelerate voter registration for the 70% of African-Americans who lacked the franchise in five states of the deep south, and to convince President Johnson that voting rights legislation was needed. As hundreds were arrested and beaten for attempting to register at court houses, SCLC planned the 52-mile march, from Selma to Montgomery, to deliver a petition protesting police brutality to the governor. As marchers tried to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge on "Bloody Sunday," March 7th, they were viciously attacked by cavalry and state troopers. The televised event caused thousands of people, including large numbers of clergy, to descend on Selma in solidarity. The following Tuesday, marchers tried again to cross the bridge, but Dr. King turned them around when another line of police confronted them. Tension erupted within the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee over Dr. King's decision, and many of its members subsequently withdrew from the Alabama voting rights campaign. Two marchers had been murdered up to this point as well, Jimmy Lee Jackson and James Reeb. A federal permit allowing the march to continue was issued, and about 5000 people began to cross the bridge on Sunday, March 21. By the time the procession reached the state capital of Montgomery five days later, it was 25,000 strong. "How long will it take? Not long," Dr. King's voice called to the crowd assembled from all corners of the nation. "Because the arm of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

- Anna Maria Caldara

LEPOCO to Commemorate 40 Years of Working for Peace and Justice

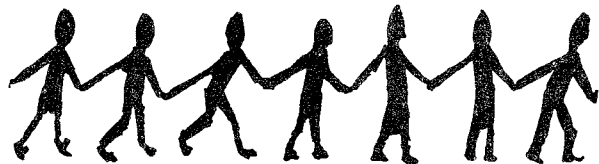
LEPOCO will be 40 years old next year. Where were you forty years ago? Were you a part of LEPOCO's work against the Vietnam War? Did you join LEPOCO later because you were attracted to a particular area of work? We think there are lots of stories about LEPOCO and the people who make LEPOCO a vibrant, lively, dedicated voice for peace and justice.

A committee of LEPOCO members -- including some with the longest membership and some young people new to the work -- is planning a year-long commemoration of the forty years of LEPOCO. As you look at our report below, we hope that you will consider how you want to be involved -- tell us your story; make a banner; lead a project; march in a parade. These are just a few of the ideas that we've generated.

The Goals of the Celebration are as follows:

- A. To enhance awareness of LEPOCO and its work;
- B. To increase the size of LEPOCO's mailing list by at least 10 %;
- C. To raise \$7,500 in excess of the already budgeted revenue.
- D. To bring young people (younger than LEPOCO) to the work;

A Year of Celebration: The Celebration will be "kicked off" at the Annual Dinner in March, 2005, and continue through the year until the next Annual Dinner in March, 2006.



Proposed Activities: Proposed activities have been grouped into four categories: Research and Publication; Art and Music; Events; and Outreach to Young People. Each activity has been designated by the goal that it would help to achieve and prioritized (high, medium, low). The names listed beneath each goal are the names of people who have already said they'd like to work on these ideas.

Research and Publication

High Priority:

Revising current brochure; creating new ones (A, B);
Nancy Tate

Updating the written history of LEPOCO, including history of civil disobedience, recognition of deceased LEPOCO activists, with a timeline of special events in history occurring during LEPOCO's history (A, B).

Janet Ney, Tom Stinnett

Medium Priority:

Collecting, publishing, and telling stories of LEPOCO members (A, B);

Collecting, publishing and telling stories of LEPOCO "around the world" (how members have gone out of the Lehigh Valley to make peace (A, B);

Collecting, sorting, labeling, and printing photos, either as separate project, such as a poster, or part of the history (A, B).

Low Priority:

Publishing a LEPOCO cookbook (A, C);

Publishing a LEPOCO calendar (A, B, C).

Art and Music

High Priority:

Presenting a concert of favorite performers, e.g., Charlie King (C);

Creating signs to hang across the street or in the window (A, B);

Mike Lawton

Creating banners to be used as occasions present themselves, e.g., fairs, festivals, parades (A, B);

Developing a slide show or video celebrating LEPOCO's history (A, B, C).

Jim Schneider, Jeff Vitelli, Guy Grey

Medium Priority:

Developing a poster or posters, bumper stickers, and buttons in celebration (A, B);

Presenting the LEPOCO Peace Singers in concert (A, B, C).

Low Priority

Commissioning the creation of music for LEPOCO (A, B).

Events

High Priority:

Participating in every local parade with banners and marchers (A, B);

Reggie Regrut

Presenting a very special annual dinner with a very special speaker (A, B, C);

Medium Priority:

Planning and implementing a peace conference for 125 people (A, B, C);

Planning and implementing a retreat for a smaller group of LEPOCO members (A, B);

Presenting a peace film series (A, B, C).

Outreach to Young People

High Priority:

Planning each activity above with young people in mind, getting them involved to assure that the work will continue in the future (D).

Peter Crownfield

Your input, suggestions, and ideas are most welcome. You can contact either Janet Ney or the LEPOCO Peace Center 610-691-8730.

- Janet Ney

Post-Election Discussion

On Friday, November 17th nearly 40 people crowded into the cozy LEPOCO Peace Center to discuss the election. Far from a complaint session, this evening was a positive and constructive exploration of the experiences of several activists in the 2004 campaign.

Mother-daughter team Darree and Lauren Sicher began the conversation with a description of their energizing work with the independent democrats in Kutztown. They ran an office solely on volunteer effort and used their creativity to organize hundreds of democrats for Kerry. This fall marks the first time in years that Berks County chose a democratic presidential candidate, a result that surprised and delighted everyone involved. In Darree's words, the importance of the 2004 election "brought people out of the woodwork" and came away feeling like winners.

Allentown resident Kathryn Hoffman surprised herself when she agreed to be a precinct leader in the MoveOn door-to-door campaign. Originally uncomfortable about knocking on doors, she came to appreciate the opportunity to talk to her neighbors about the issues that concerned them. She was inspired by the enthusiasm of all the young people in the MoveOn organization and she hopes that this loss will not discourage them from future political action.

Jack McCallum, reporter for *Sports Illustrated*, confessed that his popular *Morning Call* op-ed decrying the right-wing hijacking of "moral values" was exactly the kind of writing he normally frowns upon. However, despite his frequent admonitions to his activist sons to "write, not rant," he felt the need to employ the medium to express his frustrations the day after the election. Judging by the massive positive response he received, his words captured the sentiment widely felt by progressives.

Formerly active with the Dean campaign, Peter Wernsdorfer and Helen Scheerens then spoke about their current efforts to revive local democratic parties with Democracy for America. Like many, they felt compelled to work with the Dean campaign because of his honesty and vitality. They now seek to bring those necessary qualities to our democratic process.

Peter Crownfield, LEPOCO's Youth and Militarism coordinator, closed the evening with a pertinent reminder that our election system is far from perfect. With the introduction of electronic voting machines comes a greater possibility of corruption and he called on us to be especially vigilant. He shared reports of voting and counting irregularities in poor communities and reiterated the need to ensure that *all* citizens are guaranteed a voice in our democracy.

If there was a common theme to the evening it was that the energy and dedication that brought us together for the 2004 election campaign must not be lost. And just as our work has not ended with the election, our conversation continues. As this goes to print another discussion is set for Thursday, December 9, at 7
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pm, with Greta Brown, Green Party candidate for Congress, Em Finney, a prime organizer of the Lehigh Valley Interfaith Mobilization 2004, and Azeen Keramati of America Coming Together's Allentown office.

- Annie Hasz



Media Conference Depresses & Inspires

Perched in the pulpit of Princeton, New Jersey's Nassau Presbyterian Church, Noam Chomsky expounded on the recent media coverage of Yasir Arafat's death. The key to finding a reliable source of news Chomsky said, is to find "consistent behavior on a number of topics over a long period of time."

Professor Chomsky was the keynote speaker at the Coalition for Peace Action's 25th Anniversary Conference. Entitled "Impact of Media on War and Peace," the four-hour program included a number of speakers, Q & A sessions, a reception, and an interfaith church service held earlier in the day at the Princeton University Chapel.

As any of the 500 in attendance would surely attest, Noam Chomsky does not easily lend himself to the "soundbite." Indeed, attempting to capsulize the thoughts of the pre-eminent linguist in the U.S. is the most futile of acts.

On the other hand, Amy Goodman of WBAI radio is much more amenable to this reporter's lot. Nearing the end of a 100-city book tour, the enthusiastically received Goodman spoke of the slick tactics of the Bush "Oligarchy." She pointed out how "the administration feeds lies to the *NY Times*, the *Times* prints the lies, and then the administration will reference the *Times* article in order to add credibility to its fabrication."

On her *Democracy Now* radio program Goodman recently asked Aaron Brown of CNN why pictures of casualties are rarely shown. His response was that it was "a matter of taste." To which she fired back, "No, isn't it the war that's tasteless!?"

Ms. Goodman proclaimed that "the media in this country should be a sanctuary for dissent," a sentiment wholly shared by fellow speaker Gregori Pasko. Pasko, a prominent environmental journalist, has spent time in jail for the written word. His lament was that "Russia and the U.S. have a lot in common" concerning shallow news coverage.

The sole dissenting voice on the panel belonged to the noticeably uncomfortable Laura Secor. A part-time

(continued on page 8)

The Struggle Shared

...The country has always been filled with Evangelicals. That is not news. What is news is that so many people have shifted towards a Massachusetts liberal. In fact, that's BIG news. Which means, don't expect the mainstream media, the ones who brought you the Iraq war, to ever report the real truth about November 2, 2004. In fact, it's better that they don't. We'll need the element of surprise in 2008...

- Michael Moore, 11/5/04,
"17 Reasons Not To Slit Your Wrists"

SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2004: A TERRORIST ACT IN HAZELTON

- In the early morning hours of September 11th this year, someone threw a brick, wrapped with flammable materials, through the display window of the Socialist Workers Party office in Hazleton, Pennsylvania.

A neighbor saw a flickering light in the window at 4:30 am, and called 911. Fortunately, the fire department responded quickly and the flames were extinguished before they could engulf the office, or spread to the second floor where a family was sleeping. Damage was limited to the front window display shelf, and some 350 books.

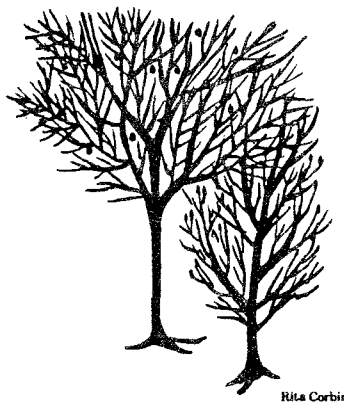
The office is a popular public political center in the Latino and working class neighborhood of the town of 25,000 people in the anthracite coal region. The storefront sells Pathfinder Books. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidates had just begun campaigning the previous day, and the office was an important base from which support for the SWP slate was being organized. Brian Taylor, a western Pennsylvania coal miner and SWP candidate for the U.S. Senate seat, said that the attempt to burn the bookstore "represented an attack on the right of working people to think for themselves. This type of intimidation is designed to shut down the political space we all have."

On September 18th, one week after the arson attack, the community held a speakout to protest and defend the right to participate in civil discourse free from harassment and intimidation. Speakers included local clergy, attorneys and workers, as well as Arrin Hawkins, SWP vice presidential candidate.

HOW BIG IS YOUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT?

- According to researchers with the World Wildlife Fund a footprint is the total area in acres, per resident, required to absorb waste from energy consumption. It also comprises the total area per person, of infrastructure and space required to produce food and fiber for clothing, housing, etc.

In its 2004 report, the World Wildlife Fund concluded that humans are currently consuming 20% more natural resources than the earth can replace. Our reliance on fossil fuels, urbanization, destruction of natural habitats and arable land, and over-exploitation of the oceans are destroying Earth's ability to sustain life.



The world's 6.1 billion people leave a collective footprint of 33.36 billion acres, or 5.44 acres per person. In order for the earth to regenerate, the average footprint should be 4.45 acres. The average U.S.er's footprint is twice that of a European's, but seven times that of an African's. We are second only to the United Arab Emirates, where air conditioners run constantly, consuming more fossil fuel.

The World Wildlife Fund also reports that with the recent ap-

proval of the Kyoto Climate Treaty by Russia, the United States stands isolated among the world's nations in not taking action to stop global warming. China's leading glaciologist reported that an "ecological catastrophe" is looming over Tibet, with the rapid melting of glaciers in the Himalayas. Similarly, scientists in Ecuador report that the country's water supply is threatened by rapidly melting Andean glaciers. Some volcanic peaks, upon which Quito, Ecuador's capital, depends for 80% of its water supply, could lose their snow cover in the next ten years, all due to global warming. Source: *The Morning Call* & "Earthweek: Diary of a Planet" from *The Intelligencer*, Doylestown.

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY WHISTLES BLOW

- Readers who heard Michael Moore speak at Stabler Arena on October 29th heard him promise that his next big documentary was going to expose the pharmaceutical industry's profiteering and unethical practices.

Actually, the November issue of the AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) carries a long article featuring interviews with industry insiders -- one a senior executive for Pfizer, one a 13-year veteran company sales representative, and one a former congressional lobbyist for Merck and Pfizer.

Peter Rose, MD, vice president of marketing for the endocrinology division of Pfizer said: "It is obvious to me that tens of thousands of Americans are dying today because they can't afford drugs. Once you recognize that this is the case, if you don't speak up, you're really part of the problem."

Source: *AARP Bulletin*, November 2004.

- Jeff Vitelli

Media Conference

(continued from page 6)

contributor to the *NY Times* and foreign policy correspondent for *American Prospect* magazine, Secor was perhaps smarting from the brutal bashing the Times was taking when she attempted to defend major media's coverage of the Iraq war. "Good coverage is out there. You just have to look for it."

In the end though, the soft spoken Secor would admit that "the media tends to have an 'establishment' bias," something with which the work of Peter Hart vehemently concurs.

Hart, activism director of FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) summed up by saying that what is needed from the media is "broad debate" and "accurate information." Unfortunately what the major media often offers is "narrow and inaccurate."

Was the curiously named punk rock pioneer Jello Biafra (not at this conference) foolishly naïve when he suggested, "Don't hate the media. Become the media"?

- robert Daniels II

Women In Black

A local Women In Black vigil was held in downtown Bethlehem on Saturday, December 4th. Under the theme, "Remember the Children," 15 people processed quietly to a soft drum beat, passing the shoppers on the sidewalk. Some of us carried signs and others carried limp stuffed dolls representing the children suffering in Iraq. We handed out a leaflet with quotes mostly from peacemakers in the U.S. and the Middle East. The response was mixed, but thoughtful. Several people expressed deep concern about U.S. policy in Iraq. A BBC reporter interviewed us for a Bethlehem story to be aired around December 25th. (If anyone hears that interview please contact LEPOCO.)

The War Continues

The first scientific study of the human cost of the Iraq war suggests that at least 100,000 civilians have lost their lives since their country was invaded in March 2003. More than half of those who died were women and children killed in air strikes, researchers say...

Les Roberts of the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, said: "Making conservative assumptions, we think that about 100,000 excess deaths or more have happened since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Violence accounted for most of the excess deaths, and air strikes from coalition forces accounted for most violent deaths.

- From report on Lancet study published 10/29/04

Although the U.S. military has dismissed accounts of the health center bombing (in Falluja) as "unsubstantiated," in fact they are credible and come from multiple sources. Dr. Sami al-Jumaili described how U.S. warplanes bombed the Central Health Centre in which he was working at 5:30 am on November 9. The clinic had been treating many of the city's sick and wounded after U.S. forces took over the main hospital at the start of the invasion. According to Dr. al-Jumaili, U.S. warplanes dropped three bombs on the clinic, where approximately sixty patients -- many of whom had serious injuries from U.S. aerial bombings and attacks -- were being treated.

Dr. al-Jumaili reports that thirty-five patients were killed in the airstrike, including two girls and three boys under the age of 10. In addition, he said,, fifteen medics, four nurses and five health support staff were killed...

- Miles Schuman, The Nation 12/13/04



PRISONER ADDRESSES:

Greg Boertje-Obed #08052-016.. Duluth FPC P.O. Box 1000 Duluth, MN 55814	out 12/21/04 - 3-mo. sentence - trespass at STRAT-COM, Omaha Feast of the Innocents.
Fr. Jerry Zawada # 04995-045.... FPC Oxford PO Box 1085 Oxford, WI 53952	out 11 /02 / 04 - 6 mo. for SOA trespass plus 1 month for ELF site action January 2004

SACRED EARTH AND SPACE PLOWSHARES

Jackie Hudson, OP #08808-039.. Federal Prison Camp, Victorville P.O. Box 5100 Adelanto, CA 92301	out - with good time, 3/06/05 - 30 mo. for "sabotage and felony destruction"
Carol Gilbert, OP #10856-039 Alderson FPC Box A Alderson, WV 24910	out - with good time, 4/23/05 - 33 mo. for "sabotage and felony destruction"
Ardeth Platte, OP #10857-039.... Federal Correction Institution 331/2 Pembroke Station Danbury, CT 06811	out - with good time, 12/22/05 - 41 mo. for "sabotage and felony destruction"

NUCLEAR RESISTERS

Helen Woodson #03231-045..... c/o Bates County Jail P.O. Box 60 Butler, MO 64730	awaiting sentencing for protest at federal courthouse after re- lease from prison.
Fr. Carl Kabat, OMI #03230-045 FCI Englewood 9595 W Quincy Ave Littleton, Colo 80123	out 11/05/04 - trespass at missile silo in CO on Good Friday, 2004

RESISTERS TO EMPIRE

Marilyn Buck #00482-285 FCI Dublin 5701 8th St Dublin, CA 94568	
Leonard Peltier #89637-132 POB 1000 Leavenworth, KS 66048	Life sentence

MILITARY RESISTERS

Camilo Mejia Building 1490 Randolph Rd. Fort Sill, Ok 73503	1 year sentence - National Guard AWOL after 2003 Iraq duty. Became a C.O.
SFC Abd Alla Webster address unavailable	14 mos - began serving time 6/04. Refused Iraq duty. Convicted after C.O. petition was rejected

Please send a greeting to these prisoners for peace during this winter holiday season. This list is from *Year One*, published by Jonah House, 1301 Moreland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21216.

Bits & Pieces

☮ **Empowered for Change:** Non-violence Training for Peacemaking will be presented by Janet Chisholm at Kirkridge, Feb. 18-21, 2005. This is the Fellowship of Reconciliation's interfaith training for trainers. The program is an interactive experience with storytelling, small groups, role plays, readings, journaling, brainstorming, discussion, movement, drawing, video, ritual and meditation. The cost is \$310. Call 610-588-1793 for registration and other info.

☮ **The Winter Solstice Concert** by ACCQ, A Chorus Celebrating Women, will be given on Tues., Dec. 21, at 7:30 pm at Christ Lutheran Church, 1245 Hamilton St., Allentown. Tickets are \$12 (\$6 for seniors & children). Call 610-434-5-74 for tickets or more info.

☮ The Eastern District Conference and the Franconia Mennonite Conference will hold their **Winter Peace Retreat**, Feb. 11-13, 2005. The program for adults will be "Living

Peace," led by Susan Mark Landis, Peace Advocate for the Mennonite Church USA. A youth program on "Youth, Faith, and the Military," will be led by Titus Peachey, Director of Peace Education, Mennonite Central Committee US. The program will be held at Spruce Lake Retreat in Canadensis, PA. Cost: \$100 for adults. Registration deadline: Jan. 19, 2005. For more info, call Becky Felton at 215-536-7935.

☮ The **Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition** will meet on Wed., Dec. 15, at 7 pm, at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All are welcome, especially representatives of groups in this network.

☮ Thank you to all the faithful callers in the **LEPOCO Phonathon**, underway since early November. We will probably schedule two more days of calling. If you would like to help with this please call LEPOCO.

Thank you also to those of you who have been so generous and helpful when you received a call or in response to Tom Lloyd's letter.

☮ The **Americas Solidarity Group** will meet on Tues., Dec. 14 at 11:30 am at the Peace Center. We will update ourselves and plan for future work around Colombia, Haiti, CAFTA, etc.

☮ The **Lehigh Valley Vegetarians** meet for a potluck dinner the first Wednesday of each month at 6 pm, at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse, on Rt. 512, 1/2 mile north of Rt. 22. Call Len or Ruth at 610-709-8984 for more info.

☮ *Saving the world is now a daily chore.*

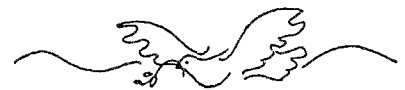
- Bono, as quoted in an article by Jon Pareles, NYT News Service

☮ The U.S. military is present in 120 of the 191 nations in the world.

- Testimony before Armed Services Committee, 5/4/04, from "The Trumpet," Alderson Hospitality House

☮ Lehigh University's Progressive Student Alliance hosted a visit by the **Wheels of Justice** on November 16. In their colorful and informative bus, the Woj troupe of three brought messages of peace and concern about occupation in Iraq and in Palestine. Thank you to PSA for making their visit possible.

☮ The **40th Anniversary Planning Committee** for LEPOCO will meet again on Thurs., Jan. 13. Please see page 5 of this newsletter for more info.



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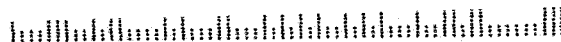
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Bits & Pieces



45th Annual Nazareth to Bethlehem

Christmas Peace Pilgrimage

Saturday, December 11

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar

Gen. Sec. of the National Council of Churches

Topic: "The Patriotism of
Peacemaking"

For buses to Nazareth meet at 11 am, in the parking lot of the Bechtel Bldg., 520 E. Broad St., Bethlehem. The pilgrimage begins at Noon at the Moravian Church, Center Square, Nazareth. The talk by Rev. Edgar will be at the end of the walk around 5:30 pm. You can join all or part of the walk and you are welcome to attend the program only. For more info. see the flyer enclosed with the last LEPOCO Newsletter, see <www.peacewalk.org>, or call 610-691-8730 or 610-867-8671.

LEPOCO Peace Boutique

313 W. 4th St., South Bethlehem

Regular office hours:

MWF 10am-5pm

TTh Noon-6 pm

Hours extended to 7 pm on

Wed., Thurs., & Fri., Dec. 15, 16 & 17

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SERRV

Year 2005 Peace Calendars

Peace Boutique Buttons & Stickers

Peace & Justice Cards for the

Holidays and Year Round

Etc.

