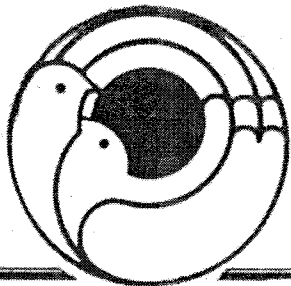


December
2007

vol.42 no.8



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

The Sun Came Out for Peace

Despite stormy weather, about 50 members of the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition participated in the United For Peace and Justice peace demonstration in Philadelphia on October 27th. Forty of us traveled down together on LEPOCO's chartered bus, disembarking at our designated Walnut Street block just west of the Schuylkill River, under pelting rain that drove us to a drier spot under a bridge. Fortunately the sun prevailed in time for us to form our piece of the Peace Chain that stretched from the Veterans Affairs Building near 40th Street down to Independence Mall.

Led by the Veterans for Peace, each segment of the Chain joined the parade to Independence Mall as it passed their block, with signs and chants proclaiming opposition to war, calls for ending the occupation in Iraq now and bringing the troops home, and a clear message that we oppose any attack on Iran. Finally, at Independence Mall we listened for two hours to poets, musicians and activists for peace.

Participants in Philadelphia numbered over 5000, adding their strength to demonstrations in eleven cit-

ies nationwide for a total of over 100,000. See a report on all the demonstrations at www.unitedforpeace.org.

- Greta Browne



Arlene Grow and Peter Christine were among the Lehigh Valley delegation marchers at the October 27th war protest in Philadelphia. Photograph by Guy Gray.



Ken Moore beats a drum to lift the spirits of those waiting for the torrential rains to subside on October 27th. Among those clapping in support are (left to right) Michelle Mecham, Bethany Towne, Rita Corriel and Monica McAgnon. Jean Kim, Peter Crownfield and Annie Hasz are in the background.

Photograph by Guy Gray.

Weekly Peace Vigils

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

Easton: 10-11 am, Saturdays

Centre Square

Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632

Please attend as often as you are able!

Save the Date!!

LEPOCO Annual Dinner

Saturday, March 29, 2008

Speaker: **Bruce Gagnon** of
Global Network Against Weapons
& Nuclear Power in Space

Protesting the SOA

At Ft. Benning, in Columbus, Georgia, the U.S. Army maintains a terrorist training school formerly called the School of the Americas and renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC). Different name, same shame! Latin American nations send their military to this school to learn methods of torture, disappearance and psychological warfare. This, according to a training manual obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. The purpose of this training is to squelch the aspirations of poor and working class Latin Americans for economic and social justice, leaving their nations vulnerable to the exploitation of natural resources and cheap labor by multinational and U.S. corporations.

Father Roy Bourgeois, who was almost killed by men under Bolivia's military dictator Hugo Banzer (a SOA graduate) started the SOA Watch in 1990, one year after the murder of six priests, their housekeeper and her daughter, in El Salvador (again many of the military murderers had been trained at the SOA). Every year since 1990 SOA Watch has sponsored a demonstration at the main gate of Ft. Benning on the anniversary of those murders. The originally small gatherings now number in the thousands, and are designed to alert U.S. citizens to the atrocities committed by graduates of the SOA. Unfortunately, there has often been collusion by the corporate media, TV networks, and leading newspapers to not publicize the actions of the U.S. government which result in misery in various foreign countries.

This year I travelled to the SOA demonstration on a bus which left the Nativity Church in Scranton at 6 pm, Thursday, November 15. We picked up students at Alvernia College in Reading and two activists near Harrisburg, and arrived midday Friday at our hotel in Phenixville, Alabama, across the Chattahoochee River from Columbus. The SOA Watch took over Columbus' large civic center in a remodeled Civil War-era foundry Friday and Saturday for various workshops, film showings and strategy meetings, mostly regarding human rights issues in Latin America. Each night there was a rousing concert in the ballroom.

Saturday we traveled to the barricaded main gate of Ft. Benning for alternating short speeches and music from late morning through the afternoon. There were tables selling food, t-shirts and handing out information. Groups staffing those tables included Veterans For Peace, Sisters of Mercy, a Presbyterian group, Pax Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation, War Resisters League and many more. It was noted that there were more young attendees than in the past, and a number of retirees were present including a few in wheelchairs. Speakers included Fr. Roy Bourgeois, Congressperson Jim McGovern, Iraqi Raed Jarrar (who spoke in the Lehigh Valley in October), and many from Latin America. Musicians included Charlie King, Rising Appalachia, Holly Near, Anne Finney, and Emma's Revolution.

Sunday's demonstration at Ft. Benning's gate featured a tribute to Rufina Amaya, sole survivor of the massacre at El Mozote, El Salvador, in 1981. 900 innocent civilians were killed there. Nineteen of the 26 perpetrators were graduates of the SOA. Rufina died this spring, but spoke at the SOA protest at Ft. Benning in 1999 and worked for justice to the end of her life.

Sunday also featured a parade of Veterans For Peace and a rousing speech by Dennis Kucinich. Around 10 am the procession started on Benning Drive with crosses held high, each containing the name of a victim of the SOA graduates. As a name of a victim was chanted from the stage, the crowd chanted, *PRESENTE*, meaning the victim was present in spirit. A large group of "Puppetistas" featured actors on stilts dressed as huge, evil birds that menaced the audience. The actors then shed their scary attire and became peaceful birds showing hope for a peaceful future.

It was announced Sunday that 12 demonstrators had snuck under/over the fence, some reaching closer to the SOA building than ever previously. These daring actions resulted in their arrest, including the arrest of area activist, Art Landis, from Perkasio. Art Landis was also one of the Dent Nine who sat-in at Rep. Dent's office against the war in January 2006. (Ed. Note: We hope to have a report from Art in some future newsletter.)

The SOA Watch estimated 25,000 participated in Sunday's march while the police who checked people into the area of the demonstration said the number was around 11,000.

My bus left Columbus arrived back in Scranton on Monday to find three inches of snow on our cars.

- John Zachmann

Newsletter of **LEPOCO**
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern
313 West Fourth Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
phone: 610-691-8730
fax: 610-691-8904
website: www.lepoco.org
e-mail: lepoco@fast.net



The LEPOCO Newsletter is published 10 times a year by the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern, a nonviolent, non-profit organization dedicated to peace in all forms.

Annual dues are:

Regular Member \$25
Limited Income Member \$ 5
Household Membership \$30
Supporting Member \$50

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

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

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

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

Popcorn & Politics

at the LEPOCO Peace Center

Friday, Jan. 4th, 7 pm

Sicko

Controversial director Michael Moore's latest is a scathing indictment of the U.S. health care system where ordinary people who have fallen ill often find themselves strangled by bureaucratic red tape in the pursuit of basic health coverage. 123 minutes. 2007.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, Feb. 1st, 2008,

7:00 pm

Salt of the Earth

Using mostly non-professional actors, blacklisted director Herbert J. Biberman recreates a strike by zinc miners in New Mexico and thus explores the complex issues of labor relations, minority rights, and the struggle of women to achieve equality and dignity in their daily lives. 94 minutes. 1954.

To be preceded by "The Hollywood Ten," a short film about the filmmakers blacklisted during the McCarthy era.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Death Penalty To End In NJ?

It appears that the Death Penalty in New Jersey could be abolished sometime during the month of January 2008. The moves in that direction are clear and it would be final if and when the Governor signs abolition into law. The day after Governor Corzine signs such an abolition law, the Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing is planning a march from Phillipsburg, NJ, to Easton, PA, over the Free Bridge. All are encouraged to participate. Marchers will be given a small stop sign to carry into Pennsylvania which says "Stop Executions in Pennsylvania."

Since we do not yet know when the bill will be signed, or how much advance notice will be given, it is suggested that those interested in participating follow the issue in the news and check their e-mail for further information regarding date, time and place.

The next meeting of the L.V. Committee Against State Killing will be Wednesday, December 12, at 8:30 am, at the LEPOCO Peace Center. Please contact David Rose at 610-253-2577 for further information.

- David Rose



M.L. King Peace Witness

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters are planning the annual reading of the Martin Luther King, Jr. speech, "Declaration of Independence from the War In Vietnam," for sometime in January 2008, at Godfrey Daniels Coffee House in south Bethlehem. The program will be free and open to the public. This year's reading will feature Robert Weick and two other readers. There will be the singing of some well-known civil rights songs and music by the LEPOCO Peace Singers. Plan now to attend.

2008 War Tax Boycott

LEPOCO is considering sponsoring a workshop on the 2008 War Tax Boycott being organized by the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee. The workshop could be in January or February. Would you be interested in attending such a workshop? The War Tax Boycott call says, "It's time for taxpayers who oppose this war to join together in nonviolent civil disobedience and show Congress how to cut off funds for the war and redirect resources to the pressing needs of people." Call 610-691-8730 if you are interested.



LEPOCO Raises Membership Dues

Members of LEPOCO gave final approval to an increase in annual dues at the November 12, 2007, Action Meeting. Effective January 1, 2008, membership dues will be as follows: \$35 for individuals; \$45 for families; and \$75 for supporters. Dues for limited income individuals will continue at \$5 per year.

Thanks to the generosity of some LEPOCO supporters, the organization's current deficit was reduced by 2356.38 (from \$10,254.06 at 10/1). Nevertheless, the financial situation remains precarious.

LEPOCO speaks for all who are opposed to war, who think that the war in Iraq is misguided and that there is a better way. Support for that important voice is critical.

LEPOCO's Phonathon will continue into early 2008 (with a suspension of calling during the holidays). If you can help with telephone calls (and haven't had that opportunity yet), be sure to call the LEPOCO office to schedule a date and time for volunteering. Please respond generously when a volunteer calls you (and thank you to the many who have already made generous donations). LEPOCO needs your support now more than ever. Every effort has been made to avoid telephoning those who have indicated a no-call preference.

- Janet Ney

Melville and Mische Speak in Harrisburg

Tom Melville and George Mische have been touring the United States since October 1, for two reasons. As stated by George at the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Harrisburg on Saturday night, November 10, "We thought we could do a two-fold thing, go out and let Tom promote his book and talk about what happened in Guatemala and at the same time try to get people energized again to try to stop the outrageous policies that America is going through right now...to try to have people understand that it did not start at 9-11."

The book is *Through a Glass Darkly: the U.S. Holocaust in Central America*, written by Tom over an 18-year period, during which he often doubted whether anyone would believe an account of such viciousness. It is a history that reads as a novel, as it follows the life of Fr. Ron Hennessey as he struggles with his pastoral call in the midst of a Guatemala wracked by poverty, oppression, and massacre.

George and Tom were members of the Catonsville Nine, who destroyed draft files in Catonsville, Maryland, in 1968, in order to prevent the selective service from being able to use the files to call up draftees for the Vietnam War. They settled on this action after learning that these files were not backed up, in those pre-digital days, and their destruction actually destroyed the information. Their action triggered a series of similar actions around the country, and also landed them in Lewisburg Prison for many months.

Tom participated in the Catonsville action with the condition that Guatemala be included in the statement of purpose of the action. Both George and Tom want to connect the dots, bring history into relevance, and bring a message of hope and peace through resistance to the violence of war and repression.

I recommend *Through a Glass Darkly*, as a compelling history that is as relevant as Elliot Abrams and the Bush family, John Negroponte and Dick Cheney, who are now waging an illegal war in our name in Iraq, while enjoying the fruits of their vicious subjugation of Central America, also executed in our name.

- Joe DeRaymond

Iraq Veteran at NCC

My trip to Northampton Community College on October 30th was a most meaningful experience. I got to hear Mike Hoffman, a Marine Corp veteran, speak to a group of 40 people in the Kiva building about his combat experience in Iraq. He arrived just before George Bush declared "Mission Accomplished" in May of 2003. I suspect most in the audience had never heard a veteran of the Iraq war speak of their experience in a public forum before. If some had, the message they were most

likely to have heard was probably in keeping with the Bush justification for the war. That was certainly not Mike Hoffman's message. Within weeks of his arriving in Iraq he became disillusioned with the Bush rationale for why U.S. forces were there. So his audience heard something they probably hadn't heard before - that the attack and military actions against Iraq were not justified. Whoa, hey, I taught in a community college in the 1960s and was tickled pink to once again hear someone, to coin a phrase from then, "Tell it like it is!"

Hoffman began by invoking a question he has frequently heard - "What is it like to be at war?" He didn't fudge with his answer. His response to that question was matter of fact: "War brings about a complete breakdown of humanity." He then commented on some of the horrors he saw. He noted that there is the initial damage with bombing, but that "more damage follows from the resultant fires." He said, "The smell of war is horrible. You see burning vehicles with people trapped inside."

Early in his presentation he revealed to the audience that his first sergeant had told his unit not to believe they were there to bring democracy to Iraq, but that the unacknowledged mission was really "all about oil." Hoffman said that early on the military's "priority objectives" were to secure oil producing facilities in Iraq and because of this priority he believes the military "squandered opportunities" to do positive things for the daily needs of the Iraqi people. For example, while on one particular patrol he and his men encountered Iraqis begging for food. He defied orders not to stop and distribute "humanitarian rations." He could not understand the point of having them in their vehicles if they couldn't stop and distribute them. As a military veteran I know the military often does things which don't make sense.

The audience learned of the part Mike played in helping found the group Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW). This probably was news to most of them because, after all, our corporate media makes no mention of this organization. The IVAW started in July of 2004 with eight members and now numbers over 600 from all parts of the U.S. The organization's executive director is Kelly Dougherty. For more information see www.ivaw.org.

Helping to get this new veterans organization off the ground was a project of Veterans For Peace, an organization to which I belong. Mike Hoffman, is also a member of the Lehigh Valley Chapter (#152) of Veterans For Peace which meets at the LEPOCO Peace Center on the second Thursday of each month.

If you have a friend or relative who is a veteran and now realizes war never serves a justifiable purpose, bring our chapter of Veterans For Peace to their attention. For more information call Louise Legun at 484-553-9476, Mike Lawton at 610-691-8730, or me at 610-282-8077.

- Philip Reiss

The Struggle Shared

*O water, deep well-spring, essence of life, flow through our souls,
Wash over us, let us drink, and swim upon your tides,
Teach us the strength in yielding, as pebbles we roll,
Cool us with each liquid wave we ride...*

- From the invocation to an unfinished poem to my father. JBV, 2001.

THE GEOPOLITICS OF WATER -

As George Bush is brokering deals to prevent drought-thirsty Georgia's drinking water from being pumped away to neighboring states by the Army Corp of Engineers, (*Morning Call*, 10/28/07) people in Darfur, barrios in Buenos Aires, and other third world places are dying because they have no access to potable water.

Our conscientious consumer tip for this month (in the spirit of Anna Hunt's column from years ago) is, "Don't drink bottled water."

According to the World Wildlife Fund, bottled water is not only very expensive (unaffordable by the poor, who most need it), but is most environmentally unfriendly. Twenty-two million tons of water are transported annually from country to country. 1.5 million tons of plastic are used each year globally, to make the bottles. The PET plastic used (oil derived polyethylene terephthalate) generates 100 times the toxic emissions as the production of the same amount of glass, and requires the same energy input, even in spite of transport savings due to lower weight of plastic as compared to glass. In a 2002 survey, 18% of the volume of litter recovered from the Hudson River was beverage containers, each of which will take 1000 years to biodegrade.

So we know plastic bottles are bad. There is a big problem with the water as well. Corporate Accountability International suggests Coca-Cola for its Hall of Shame for the company's aggressive expansion of its bottled water business. Coca-Cola has been buying up, and drying up, fresh water sources in many parts of the world so that its bottled water sales were up 27% in 2005. Nestle is another corporate giant that is making immense profits pumping peoples wells dry, then selling their

water back to them in exorbitantly priced plastic bottles. Nestle Water North America is tapping water from up to 75 springs around the U.S. An operation can pump 500 gallons per minute, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Residents of Florida, New Hampshire, Texas, Michigan, Wisconsin, and even Pennsylvania, who depend on groundwater for household and agricultural uses, have had to fight for their water rights, taking Nestle to court.

But, is bottled water better for your health? According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, the regulations on the testing of bottled water are inadequate to provide assurances of safety. "Even when bottled waters are covered by FDA rules, they are subject to less rigorous testing and purity standards than those which apply to city tap water." Not only are bottles tested less frequently, but some contaminants (including E-coli, giardia, and chemicals) that are banned from tap water, are permitted in bottled water. And, according to government and industry estimates, about one fourth of bottled water is actually tap water, and not from pristine springs at all.

So, for all you conscientious consumers, your best choice is the water from your tap. Get an in-sink water filter if you want to be sure that your drinking and cooking water is clear of impurities. Although the City of Bethlehem's annual report on the quality of our tap water is a reassuring documentation of testing that surpasses both state DEP and federal EPA standards, we may be fortunate among our neighboring communities. PennEnvironment, a regional watch-dog group, revealed in a recent survey that nearly 60% of major municipal and industrial facilities in Pennsylvania violate clean water standards.

To insure that water does not become a resource that only the rich and privileged can afford, we must get involved in the struggle to protect this precious, life-sustaining resource. Join PennEnvironment (1420 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, or www.pennenvironment.org), or any other environmental organization that fights to keep our water clean.

IMMIGRATION: LOCAL VIEWS

Following up on keen interest in the debate over immigration policy, featured in this newsletter (Joe DeRaymond's article in May 2007, and the report on the Hazleton Law in the July "Struggle Shared"), there was a Potluck & Politics gathering at the LEPOCO office on November 9, attended by over 20 people.

Erika Sutherland, of Allentown's Grupo de Apoyo Integración Hispánico, and Marcos Urbina of Day Without an Immigrant and the Mexican Cultural Association of the Lehigh Valley, presented a fact-filled program. Marcos spoke eloquently of his view as a Mexican in Allentown. He urged us to see Latinos as human beings with valuable contributions to make to our communities, and not as immigrants.

He encouraged those present to get involved in the Latino community, sponsoring student scholarships, opposing vigilante hate-mongering, and returning Allentown and the Lehigh Valley at large to the Sanctuary City designation of the 1980's, during the civil war in El Salvador.

Erika provided statistics on the local Hispanic population. She pointed out that 30% of the population of Allentown is Hispanic and in the Allentown School District the students are 60% Hispanic. In Lehigh County there are 48,000 Puerto Ricans, 2500 Mexicans, 342 Cubans, and 18,000 other Hispanics, including Salvadorans, Hondurans, Colombians, Peruvians, and Ecuadorans. There are comparable statistics for Northampton County. All these numbers are derived from U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, and can be found at www.factfinder.census.gov.

- Jeff Vitelli

Bits & Pieces

☉ Kirkridge Retreat Center, north of Bangor, is offering several gatherings for peace activists in February.

Feb. 1-3, Frida Berrigan will lead a retreat on "Tools for the Long Haul: Stories, Community, Action and Laughter."

Feb. 14-17, Janet Chisholm will lead a program on "Creating a Culture of Peace - Nonviolence Training."

Feb. 22-24, John Dear, S.J. will lead a retreat on "The Passion, Death

and Resurrection of the Nonviolent Jesus."

For more information on these programs call 610-588-1793 or see www.kirkridge.org.

☉ At the January Action Meeting of LEPOCO, on the second Monday of the month, Jan. 14, there will be a special report on the Youth & Militarism work of LEPOCO and the activities of the Association of Students Advocating Peace. The financial business will be discussed at 7 pm and the special report as well as the program work of other committees will be discussed around 7:30 pm.

☉ One idea for some of the LEPOCO Yard Sale leftovers that were saved

from the October sale is to offer them by participating in a neighborhood yard sale. Of course, this would require someone offering their yard for such a purpose at a neighborhood yard sale. Is there anyone willing to do this at a particularly busy neighborhood yard sale?

☉ The Coalition for Alternative Transportation is sponsoring a Try Transit Day the last Friday of every month. If you don't ride the bus, this is an extra incentive to try. Call the CAT office for more info. at 610-954-5744, or call LANTA for specific schedule info. at 610-776-RIDE.



Nuclear Nugget

Have the monthly nuclear nuggets gotten your attention and moved you to action yet? Nuclear weapons and nuclear power are not good for the planet and life as we know it! We the people must deliver this message over and over again to our elected officials and to those running for office. To quote the Union of Concerned Scientists: "The safest, most sustainable long-term future is a world free of nuclear weapons. To reach that goal, the next president should commit the U.S to not being the first to use nuclear weapons (again), work to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and lead the effort for the U.S., Russia, and other nations to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons." Your citizen's voice is important. You can educate yourself on this issue at www.ucsusa.org in order to make your voice as effective as possible.

SUPPORT LEPOCO!

___ Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$ _____.
 (\$25 individual; \$30 household; \$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, 313 W. 4TH St., Bethlehem, PA 18015.



Listen to Dr. Bach

In the 1930s, the medical doctor and bacteriologist Edward Bach, a greatly sympathetic friend of people, animals and nature, discovered and made available to all a simple system of healing called the Bach Flower Remedies. These 38 remedies were all developed from flowering trees and wildflowers and one healing spring, none of them toxic in any way. Simplicity and sensitivity are the keynotes of his system. Not a single experiment was conducted on any animal other than himself and a few close associates. Dr. Bach believed that all illness begins at the emotional, psychological level and gradually solidifies into a physical condition. The way to prevent and to heal disease, he said, was to address the cause, not the final result of illness.

If you want to offer a healing gift to a friend this holiday, or to yourself, consider a bottle or two of the Bach Flower Remedies. There are remedies to help dispel exhaustion, depression, boredom, envy and other destructive impulses, addiction, grief, and mental and emotional anguish. They work equally well on humans and dogs and cats. If you want to learn more, read a book on the Bach Flower Remedies by Weeks, Ball, Howard, or Vlamis. Or stop in at the LEPOCO Peace Center to read about the *Medical Discoveries of Edward Bach Physician*.

- Jean Pearson

Bits & Pieces

🕒 Calendars for 2008 are available at the LEPOCO Peace Center. The War Resisters League Peace (book) Calendar this year is titled, "Salaam, Shalom, Solh: Nonviolence and Resistance in the Middle East & Beyond." It is \$13.95.

The Syracuse Cultural Workers (wall) Peace Calendar features beautiful pictures and art from doves, to Catholic Worker houses to Iraq Veterans Against the War. It is \$13.95.

🕒 Bread & Puppet Theater continues a performance of "The Divine Reality Comedy Circus," in New York City through December 16, at 8 pm, each day of the performance and at 3 pm, on Sat. and Sun., at the Theater for The New City, First Ave. and 10th St. Bread & Puppet is the wonderful combination of puppets (all sizes), music, masks, dance and slapstick, costumes, paintings, expressionism, dark humor, low-culture simplicity, and moving commentary on the problems of war and injustice.

🕒 Dariush Ehsani reports that an Iranian couple are on a round-the-world cycling trip sharing a message of peace and friendship from the Iranian people to the countries they visit. Nasim and Jafar left Iran in April 2007 and have visited many countries in Europe. They arrived in Toronto in September and have biked 1600 kilometers inside Canada. They are traveling through the U.S. as this is written, exact location unknown.

Check out the
LEPOCO Website at
www.lepoco.org.

There is a great
calendar maintained
by Robert Daniels II
for information on
upcoming events.

🕒 Muhlenberg College students participated in a moderate fast in early December to raise funds for the Genocide Intervention Network's Civilian Protection Program that works to protect women and girls living in Internally Displaced Persons Camps. Their fast was part of the national DarfurFast and was organized by Muhlenberg Hillel. People gave up an "extra" (coffee, dessert, etc.) for one day and donated the money saved to this effort.

🕒 On Oct. 30th the local Sierra Club held a demonstration outside the office of Rep. Charlie Dent to urge his support for an energy bill that makes real progress in solving global warming. The bill they were supporting would raise fuel efficiency standards to 35 miles per gallon and switch to solar, wind and other renewable fuels for 15% of our electricity by the year 2020.

🕒 Twenty-three peace groups in the Philadelphia area are sponsoring a Winter Solstice Peace Event near Senator Arlen Specter's home on Sun., Dec. 16, 2-4 pm. They are urging Sen. Specter to cut off funding for the U.S. occupation of Iraq and to bring the troops home now. You are invited to attend. The demonstration outside Sen. Arlen Specter's home on West Schoolhouse Lane (between

Henry Ave. and Gypsy Lane) is in East Falls. They have been demonstrating there on the third Sunday of the month for two years. Call 215-843-4256 for more info.

🕒 Colonel (Ret.) Ann Wright, the diplomat who resigned her job on the eve of the Iraq War in protest against the war, will give a presentation and sign her new book, *Dissent: Voices of Conscience: Government Insiders Speak Out Against the War in Iraq* on Sat., Feb. 2, sponsored by the Moravian Book Shop. More info. will come out soon. Ann Wright spoke with the Cindy Sheehan delegation that visited Allentown in July.

🕒 For an inspiring presentation see the web site of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (www.ciw-online.org) reporting on their Nov. 30th March to Burger King Headquarters in Miami. The Immokalee Workers are seeking a very slight, but just, raise for tomato pickers that supply food for fast food restaurants. McDonald's and others have agreed, but Burger King is presenting stiff resistance.

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

Mondays, Dec. 10 & Jan. 14, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the Peace Center. All members and friends welcome at this monthly business meeting where the activities of all committees and working groups are reviewed. (See page 6 for more info.)

Wed., Dec. 12, 8:30 am: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center. (See page 3 for more info.)

Thurs., Dec. 13, 7 pm: Veterans for Peace meetings at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

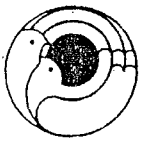
Mon., Jan. 7, 7 pm: LEPOCO Steering Committee meeting at the Peace Center.

Thurs., Jan 10, 6 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at Olive Branch Restaurant on Broadway, south Bethlehem. (See page 3 for more info.)

Wed., Jan. 16, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Tues., Jan. 22, 6 pm: Bike/Walkathon Committee initial planning for the event in June. Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want to know the next meeting for the Americas Solidarity Group, the LEPOCO Fundraising Committee, the Association of Students Advocating Peace, or the next rehearsal for the LEPOCO Peace Singers, 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

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 617
Bethlehem, PA



Anna Maria Caldara and Mike Lawton carry a "Hands Off Iran" banner in the October 27th March Against the War and Occupation in Iraq (more on page 1). The banner was made especially for that demonstration.

Photograph by Guy Gray.

Holiday Open House at LEPOCO

Sunday, December 9

1:00 - 4:00 PM

And regular office hours starting Dec. 10th

MWF 10 am-5 pm; TTh Noon-6 pm

Call for extended hours.



LEPOCO Peace Center
313 W. 4th St., Bethlehem

Fair Trade Crafts from around the world.

Year 2008 Peace Calendars.

Peace Boutique Buttons & Stickers.

*Peace & Justice Cards for
the Holidays and Year Round.*