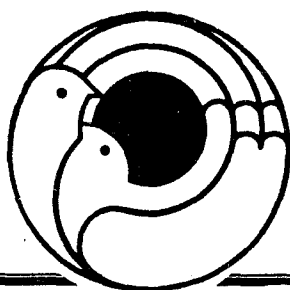


January
2006

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Newsletter of **LEPOCO**

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

Joe DeRaymond Among 40 Arrested at SOA Protest

Forty people, including LEPOCO member Joe DeRaymond, crossed the line onto Fort Benning at the SOA/WHINSEC protest November 19 in Georgia. They climbed over or went under partly dismantled sections of the triple barbed wire fence at the main gate of the Fort. They were immediately arrested by Military Police. Police from the city of Columbus, Georgia, also arrested bystanders and those who lifted up the fence to make it possible for the activists to enter the base.

Five of those who committed civil disobedience remain incarcerated in the Muscogee County Jail in Columbus. Three refused \$1000 bond, one remains in custody pending resolution of outstanding charges, one person pled guilty and was sentenced to six months in prison and a \$2000 fine, and another pled guilty and received a sentence of 90 days in prison.

Joe DeRaymond and the rest of those arrested are scheduled to begin federal trials in Columbus on January 30. Joe anticipates that the trial will continue for the rest of that week. They face likely prison sentences of three to six months plus fines. They will be represented by outstanding legal counsel supplied by SOA Watch. LEPOCO will continue to report on the progress and outcome of the trial. We will also announce the location of the prison to which Joe may be sent.

- Bob Riggs

SOA Background

The following report on the SOA and Colombia was written by Bob Riggs for a blog published by Peter Christine. We excerpt it here to bring our readers up-to-date on these issues.

WHAT IS THE SOA/WHINSEC, AND WHY DID 19,000 SHOW UP NOV. 18-19 TO PROTEST IT?

SOA stands for "School of the Americas," located at Ft. Benning, Georgia. It is a school operated by the U.S. Army for training military personnel from Central and South America. Its graduates have been guilty of repeated human rights violations against civilian populations throughout Latin America.

The SOA was founded in 1946. Since then it has trained more than 60,000 Latin American soldiers and police. Students are taught commando tactics, military intelligence, psychological operations, and counter-insurgency warfare. Its curriculum gives lip service to human rights, but its graduates continue to carry out attacks and atrocities against poor people and human

(continued on page 8)

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration

Remembering M.L. King and what he stood for has become an annual event -- a LEPOCO tradition. It's time well spent when we listen to this voice that expressed so well what many felt in their hearts, but were unable or unwilling to shout out loud. A voice that uncovered what most wanted to be hidden; a voice that gave and continues to give hope and inspiration to act on our most noble principles; a voice that is as important and relevant today as it has ever been before.

We are again reading M.L. King's speech on the War in Vietnam that he gave at Riverside Church in New York City on April 4, 1967, exactly one year before he was killed, April 4, 1968. Unfortunately, we are still warmongering and his words are as relevant, important and helpful as ever.

There will be time for your input, and, of course, there will be music by the LEPOCO Peace Singers. We hope that many of you will join us in honoring and listening to a true American hero on Sunday, January 22, at 3 pm, at the DAR building (log cabin) in the Rose Garden, on 8th Ave., between Union Blvd. and Broad St., in Bethlehem.

- Ursula Wuerth

Saturday, January 21, 2006

6 - 9 PM

**Evening of Pre-Trial Support
for Joe DeRaymond**

and

**Fundraiser for the FOR Colombia
Program in San José de Apartadó**

at the home of Joe DeRaymond
349 Main St., Freemansburg

6-8 pm: socializing; 8-9 pm presentation about San José
*Please bring some food or beverage to share (pizza
and some beverages will be provided) and a donation
(small or large) for the Colombia Program*

Other Martin Luther King Events

The following are local events we were able to confirm as we were preparing this newsletter. Please watch local newspapers and contact your regular sources for information on other events. We know other groups are planning observances, but the details were not firm as of January 10.



Monday, January 16, 9-11 am

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Observed

9:00-11:00 AM

Martin Luther King Breakfast with round-table discussion of Cornel West's book, "Race Matters" at St. Paul's Baptist Church, 925 East Goepf St., Bethlehem (turn onto Jennings off Pembroke). Call Esther Lee at 610-866-2078 to make a reservation.

3:00 PM

Martin Luther King Service with Rev. Cecelia Denney speaking, Shiloh Baptist Church, 403 Pastor Fred Davis St., Easton.

Noon

Martin Luther King Day of Nonviolent Resistance, Lockheed Martin; Mall & Goddard Blvds., Valley Forge (Rt. 76 behind King of Prussia Mall). Protest the war and the war-maker, Lockheed Martin. Call Brandywine Peace Community, 610-544-1818 for more info.

Wednesday, January 18

7:30 PM

"Dream Realized, Dream Deferred?"

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration, Egner Memorial Chapel, Moravian College, Allentown, with Roberta Meek, featured speaker, commentary by Alec Marsh and Charles Anderson, music by ACCO, A Chorus Celebrating Women, and a dramatic piece, "Zorro and the Director."

2 LEPOCO Newsletter / January 2006

Sunday, January 22

3:00 PM

Martin Luther King: The Peace Witness, with a reading of one of King's anti-war speeches, music, and action, Log Cabin, Rose Garden Park, Bethlehem (see page 1 of this newsletter).

Tuesday, January 24

7:30 PM

The Rev. Al Sharpton speaking, Baker Hall, Zoellner Arts Center, Lehigh University, Bethlehem. Free & open to the public. Call Multi-cultural Affairs Center at Lehigh, 610-758-3000, for more information.

Saturday, January 28

6:00 PM

"Embrace the Dream"

Dance, Shiloh Baptist Church Choir, Dramatic Scene, and panel analyzing four M.L. King speech excerpts, at The Theatre, Northampton Community College.

I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. When machines and computers, profit and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Riverside Church, New York City,
Tuesday, April 4, 1967

Newsletter of **LEPOCO**

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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: Ellen Buck, Peter Crownfield, Fran Dreisbach, Arlene Grow, Mike Lawton, Tom Lloyd, Bob Riggs, Tom Stinnett, Joan Stolz, Joan Stone, Nancy Tate, Marion Thorne, Jeff Vitelli, Hans Wuertth and Ursula Wuertth.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Dan Acker (co-treas.), Ellen Buck, Peter Crownfield (ex-officio), Robert Daniels, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Holly Kent, Sigourney LaBarre, Mike Lawton (ex-officio), Janet Ney, Sue Ravitz, and Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

Theater Party!

Our next theatre event will be the Touchstone Theatre production, "In the Spirit - For Real," on Thursday, February 16th. Written and performed by visiting artist Peggy Pettitt, this hilarious thriller combines a street smart, hip-hop artist and his wildly urban grandmother who attempt to rescue the "hood's" youth from the snares of risky behavior." Music will be by Harry Mann.

There will be a reception at the LEPOCO office at 6:30 pm with lite fare and refreshments. The show begins at 8 pm. (There should be ample time to drive or walk to Touchstone, several blocks to the east of LEPOCO on 4th Street.) The cost is \$20 per person. Please join us for a fun night that benefits LEPOCO.

- Dan Acker

Potluck & Politics

Popcorn & Politics

at the LEPOCO Peace Center

Friday, February 3, 7 pm

Popcorn & Politics

1st Friday Film

The second episode of *A Force More Powerful* will be shown. This episode features the Danish resistance to the German military forces in 1940, the striking workers in Poland in 1980, and the Chilean resistance to the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in 1983, all examples of non-violent power overcoming oppression and authoritarian rule. Two segments from this documentary were shown at a P&P in July 2005.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, Feb. 26, 6:30 pm

Potluck & Politics

Suzanne Marshall

Chemical Plants:

A Real Security Issue

Suzanne Marshall teaches Environmental History and U.S. History at Moravian College. She is a long-time activist and leader in the Sierra Club and is a member of the Chemical Weapons Working Group. She wrote "We're Just Trying to Save Your Water, Lord," a book about environmental activists in southern Appalachia. Previously she taught at Jacksonville State University in Alabama.

Please bring some food to share for dinner at 6:30 pm. The presentation should begin around 7 pm.

Annual Meeting to Recall Forty Years of Peacemaking

LEPOCO's annual meeting, scheduled for March 18, 2006, will feature a commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the organization. Portions of a recently-produced video will be shown during the meeting which will take place at a new venue, Wesley United Methodist Church, on Center Street, in Bethlehem.

The evening will include other changes. Pre-dinner music and appetizers will begin at the early hour of 5:00 p.m. Following dinner and a brief business meeting, diners will move to the sanctuary of the church for a presentation by Noam Chomsky, Professor of Linguistics, Linguistic Theory, Syntax, Semantics, and Philosophy of Language and prolific writer on human rights, war, and politics. The move to the sanctuary will accommodate additional numbers of people who want to hear this challenging, outspoken speaker. During the program in the sanctuary, the LEPOCO Singers will provide their usual musical excellence and the historical video will be sampled.

The fortieth anniversary video has been developed by a committee headed by Guy Grey. It will include pictures from the history of LEPOCO and interviews, an oral history, of people who have been active peacemakers for many years.

The dinner will feature the gourmet vegetarian fare that has always made the LEPOCO dinner a very special event. The business meeting will include the election of Steering Committee members and the very popular Art Raffle. Early indications are that the raffle will offer art work, pottery, and other fine crafts.

The committee planning this very special meeting agreed that a fair admission price, for this year, should be \$40, a commemoration of sorts of the fortieth anniversary. Those wanting to attend the program and hear the speaker without dinner will pay \$15. Those on limited income may request admission at \$10 for the dinner and speaker, \$5 for just the speaker. In order to facilitate the seating of a large group of people, admission to any part of the evening should be paid in advance. Tickets can be obtained from the LEPOCO office.

- Janet Ney



Weekly Peace Vigils

Bethlehem: 4-5 pm, Thursdays
3rd & Wyandotte Sts.

Contact: Maria Weick 610-346-8793

Allentown: Noon-1 pm, Fridays
Federal Courthouse, 5th & Hamilton Sts,
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!

A National Call for Nonviolent Resistance

In late 2003, the Dalai Lama visited New York City and met with leaders like Dr. Helen Caldicott, Amy Goodman, Rep. Dennis Kucinich, Susan Sarandon, and the Rev. Al Sharpton. The meeting took place in New York's Town Hall and is available on DVD as *Ethics and the World Crisis: A Dialogue with the Dalai Lama*. Of course, the six-month-old war in Iraq was a prevalent subject of the discussion. At one point the Dalai Lama said, "It is not enough to just say, peace, peace, peace! Must do more." I really didn't understand at the time what he meant.

More recently, veteran peace activist Father John Dear spoke locally about the life of nonviolent resistance. During this same period a number of LEPOCO members participated in civil disobedience at the White House (see related story on page 6). Through all of this it has become clearer to me what the Dalai Lama was speaking about back in late 2003.

It is not enough for us to vigil every week for an end of war and repression on this planet. It is not enough to send letters or e-mails to leaders and representatives who supposedly speak for us in Washington. It is not enough to go to your place of worship and pray for world peace. It is not enough to send money to your local or national peace group - as important as all these efforts are.

To know that our country's actions are wrong, and to not actively participate in nonviolent resistance to those actions is to become complicit with those who carry out the horrors that we oppose. We must create acts of civil disobedience that disrupt the machine that creates violence on this planet.

As part of "A Call to Conscience for the U.S. Congress," the group of D.C. protestors from LEPOCO (and others) has been meeting since September to discuss how to locally increase pressure on our representatives to take actions to end the war in Iraq. Nationally, this call to action is to begin with Martin Luther King Day resistance and proceed until the third anniversary of the onset of the war in Iraq.

The beginning of local action came on a cold and bitter Tuesday in early December when about 15 people presented a letter of opposition to the war at Rep. Charles Dent's office in west Bethlehem. The letter outlined a demand that Rep. Dent co-sponsor the "End the War in Iraq Act" bill, HR-4232, with Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA), a bill to cut off funding for the war. As expected there was no commitment from Dent's office that he would cosponsor this bill so we held a vigil in front of the congressman's office for over an hour. During that vigil we read the names of all the Pennsylvania dead to date in the war as well as the names of some of the Iraqi dead. With Nancy Tate ringing a gong, and Rev. John Clint Fowler declaring "Rest in Peace!" It was a moving and invigorating experience for all who attended. In

4 LEPOCO Newsletter / January 2006

addition, the following Tuesday a smaller contingent of LEPOCO members (mostly Bucks County residents) performed the same action at the office of Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick in Doylestown.

While these vigils have not been civil disobedience we believe they are a precursor to possible civil disobedience in the coming weeks or months as we continue to take our demands to other legislators in other districts within the Greater Lehigh Valley. As more congressmen speak out against the occupation and war, like Rep. John Murtha from Johnstown, it is important that we press our representatives more vigorously to join in meaningful actions to end the war. Civil disobedience means we are willing to make personal sacrifices to help end the war and we ask those who represent us to do the same. If you would like to join in this effort please contact the LEPOCO Peace Center.

As the Dalai Lama said it is not enough for us to just say "Peace, peace, peace," we must show a willingness to resist in nonviolent ways that call attention to alternatives to war and violence.

- Tim Chadwick



Ray Krone to Speak Locally

The death penalty needs to be abolished NOW! Ray Krone can personally attest to that fact: he spent more than 10 years in prison, including three on death row, for a murder he did not commit. In 2002 Ray was exonerated by DNA evidence and released. During the week of February 20 Ray Krone will speak at Lehigh University and Muhlenberg College about his experiences while at the mercy of our criminal justice system.

His ordeal should not have been possible in this country where we claim to value justice, human rights and civil liberties. Since his release, Ray has traveled throughout the US and Europe telling his story and advocating for an end to the death penalty. He has been featured in numerous publications and on many radio and television programs.

Ray's visit to the Lehigh Valley, which was initiated by the Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing (LV-CASK) and the Bethlehem Amnesty International chapter, is organized by Witness to Innocence, a speakers bureau affiliated with Sr. Helen Prejean's Moratorium Campaign. Specific dates, times and locations for Ray's speaking engagements will be set soon.

LV-CASK will meet on Tuesday, January 17 at 8:30 am, at the LEPOCO Peace Center where we will discuss the Ray Krone visit and other important developments in the effort to end the death penalty in Pennsylvania.

- Maria Weick

Youth and Militarism Update

The past couple months have been busy for LEPOCO's Youth and Militarism Program, with non-violence trainings, community presentations, letters to the editor, leafleting early on chilly mornings at Die-ruff, William Allen, Nazareth, and Phillipsburg high schools, and monthly counter-recruitment tables in Easton Area, Liberty, and Freedom high schools. LEPOCO's Youth and Militarism Coordinator, Peter Crownfield, has also been vigilant in his attendance at school board meetings and in communication with school officials about their respective policies on military recruitment and LEPOCO's right to present peaceful alternatives to military service in schools that welcome military recruiters and their promotional materials.

Efforts were aided by the dedication of Kathleen McAllister and Alysa Zellner, two Lehigh University seniors who interned at LEPOCO this past semester. Kathleen and Alysa greatly assisted by collecting data from over two-dozen high schools. Their research enabled LEPOCO to assess the degree to which area schools promote a culture of peace, or more likely, a culture of militarism.

Highlights of the Y & M Program's successes include the cancellation of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test at Southern Lehigh and Whitehall high schools, and Palisades and Quakertown high schools' change in policy that removed military recruiters from cafeterias. In addition, LEPOCO's aggressive campaign to advertise students' right to opt-out of having their information turned over to military recruiters saw an increase in the percentage of students that opted-out in area high schools.

I have personally been most encouraged by the community awareness and dialogue that LEPOCO's program has fostered. Due to student and parent outreach, individuals are becoming more concerned and informed about the issue of military recruitment, and societal militarism as a whole. This awareness has been evidenced by the increase in the number of parents, students, and community members that have become active in their school districts, supporting LEPOCO's demand for equal access and defense of students' rights. LEPOCO has celebrated increased newspaper coverage of its efforts by such papers as *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Bucks County Herald*, *The Morning Call*, and the *Express Times*.

This Spring the Youth and Militarism program will continue working to develop a relationship with Lehigh Valley schools currently resistant to peace education and counter-recruitment, and embark on new projects to educate and involve our communities, including the Annual Youth Peacemaker Training, to be held in April 2006. If you would like to help with any of this work please contact Peter Crownfield at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 610-691-8730.

- Sarah Weick

Bring the Guard Home! _____

On November 28th representatives from across Pennsylvania met with Arthur Stephens and Jeff Marrazzo, aides to Governor Rendell, to urge withdrawal of the Pennsylvania National Guard from Iraq. The group sent a letter that included a Resolution to the Governor prior to the meeting outlining their concerns. The principal issues addressed in the Resolution are: 1) that the Governor pursue and exhaust every avenue in his power to see that the Pennsylvania National Guard is brought home from Iraq without delay and that no further deployments of the Guard to Iraq take place; and 2) that the Governor and State Legislature call on our delegation to the U.S. Congress to vote for legislation which requires the President to rapidly withdraw all U.S. armed forces and military bases from Iraq.

The delegation urged Governor Rendell to take a courageous stand because the group believes our National Guard troops and their families deserve this. We believe the Governor is capable of such a stand by making a public statement calling for the Pennsylvania Guard's return, for no U.S. bases to be left behind, and for no future Guard deployments to Iraq. In addition the group urged the Governor to research the possibility of legal challenges to the Guard's continued assignment in Iraq. (A 1990 Supreme Court ruling, *Perpich vs. Department of Defense*, might provide grounds for a gubernatorial veto on sending National Guard troops overseas if such a deployment interferes with the Guard's state activities.)

The group, which included the wife of an active Guard soldier, offered to introduce the Governor to troops who have already served in Iraq who do not agree with the mission there (active duty Guard troops are constrained from speaking out). We discussed the lack of proper equipment for troops in Iraq and the vulnerability of our State without Guard troops to help in disaster assistance. Two women in the delegation were the mothers of soldiers slain in Iraq. They asked Jeff and Arthur to convey a sense of urgency to the Governor.

The group requested a response from the Governor by early January. The group will continue to collect signatures on petitions to the Governor and will be lobbying state legislators and approaching town councils with their resolution to Bring Home the Guard. For more information and/or a National Guard Campaign Organizing Packet visit www.bringhometheguard.org or see the "Bring Home the National Guard Campaign" blog to link to the latest news.

The group meets regularly. If other LEPOCO members would like to attend these meetings contact Linda Wood at 610-562-5323 for more information or to carpool.

- Linda Wood



Taking it to the Courts _____

On September 26th over 370 people, including eight LEPOCO members, assembled in front of the White House in Washington, DC. We were seeking an audience with the President to discuss the Iraq war. The President never showed up, and we all got arrested.

Three court dates were set -- some were scheduled for November 15th, some for December 21st, some for January 18th. Four of the LEPOCO contingent were at the November 15th hearing. All were found guilty of "demonstrating without a permit" and fined \$75 each.

The remaining four LEPOCO defendants (including myself), were at the December 21st hearing, along with about 20 other defendants.

At the December hearing three fellow arrestees gave opening statements. Robert Hollinger from New York State and Michael Johnson from Baltimore made the point that it was our duty as citizens to speak out against this illegal war. Max Obuszewski said the Nuremberg principles require that when a citizen's government is violating laws, citizens are obligated to take action.

U.S. Park Service employees testified and portions of a DVD of the event (quite stirring), taken by the Park Service police, were shown. The prosecution kept trying to steer the hearing back to a tunnel vision version of what was at stake - i.e., were we demonstrating? Yes. Did we have a permit? No. Case closed.

Joe DeRaymond gave a powerful statement for acquittal, saying what we did on September 26th was clearly protected by the First Amendment, by international law, by the Nuremberg principles, and by common decency.

Michael Berg (father of Nicholas Berg, who was beheaded in Iraq) testified that he was there on September 26th because a personal meeting with the President was the only way he'd be able to reach any level of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Pat Alvino, a public school teacher from California, testified that her son is a Marine currently serving in Iraq. She worries every day that he'll be killed, and she had really hoped to talk to the President about her concerns.

John Bostrum, from New York City, stated that he was there because he was convinced that demonstrations were no longer enough, that we had to do non-violent civil disobedience, in the wonderful tradition of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

In summation statements, Joe DeRaymond made the point that the lack of a permit is not enough to warrant arrest. Andrew Simon, from Vermont, said he regretted that a permit was being conflated with "permission" by the government. A permit is akin to a reservation at a restaurant - it reserves a space, it doesn't grant permission. Ken Kleffman, from Kentucky, said that exercising first amendment rights without a permit is not a crime. From his heart he hoped that

the judge would make the wise decision that these times call out for.

After a recess of about a minute, the judge returned with his verdict. Apparently choking on the ignobility of his words, he mumbled, almost inaudibly, that he found the defendants guilty of "demonstrating without a permit" and fined us \$75 each.

Don Muller, from Sitka, Alaska, stood and read a statement he'd written which had been endorsed by the group. He said he was proud of what he did, and he would do it again. He rejected any fines or community service, because in following the path of Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Thoreau, he had performed the highest form of civic duty.

We assembled in the courthouse hallway for about 20 minutes afterwards. Mark Goldstone, our wonderful attorney, said that though we hadn't been acquitted (surprise!), we'd managed to get powerful, heartfelt testimony into the record, and this would be seen and read. He was enormously proud and encouraged by what we'd done.

Max Obuszewski passed around appeal forms, which everyone signed.

- Mike Lawton

46 Years of Walking for Peace _

On December 10th about 200 activists walked from Nazareth to Bethlehem for the 46th Annual Peace Pilgrimage. When, in the fellowship hall of the Nazareth Moravian Church, Rick Dow asked how many newcomers there were, it seemed like half of the people in the room raised their hands. Besides the number of newcomers, the distances that they traveled to get to the pilgrimage was amazing. Pilgrims came from as far as North Carolina and Massachusetts to take part in this peaceful witness.

The walk began with the gathering in the Moravian Church in Nazareth where we took a moment to contemplate the reasons for our pilgrimage, and gathered signs to take with us on the journey.

After about three miles along the surprisingly clear Rt. 191, we came to our first stop, the Trinity Lutheran Church, where we received apples and water. In the first stage of the journey, most people passing in cars were either supportive (honking and giving us peace signs) or they were annoyed with us for delaying them at a stoplight. After the first church there were also some motorists that objected to our peaceful messages.

At last we reached First Baptist Church, where we could sip hot beverages, and listen to speakers. Peter Crownfield, Sarah Weick, Alysa Zellner and Kathleen McAllister explained their work with counter recruitment in high schools. Dan Hunter introduced the Beyond Oil organization that has chapters throughout the US and will soon be in the Lehigh Valley (go to

(continued on page 8)

The Struggle Shared

I think the women's movement needs to be at the core of a rebuilt peace movement. There needs to be a women's caucus in every town, in every city, that deals with just redefining the peace movement. We've been at this a long time, and we haven't gotten much of anywhere the last couple of wars...

- U. Utah Phillips
The Future of the Peace Movement

WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, MORE THAN EVER, A PRIORITY - The National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Feminist Majority have taken an aggressive lead in opposing the confirmation of Samuel Alito to replace moderate Sandra Day O'Connor on the Supreme Court. Planned Parenthood is leading a campaign to pressure Wal-Mart, and other large stores with pharmacies to stop their pharmacists from refusing to fill women's valid prescriptions for birth control because they personally oppose contraception.

In Pennsylvania, the Women's Law Project has been a defender of women's rights for 30 years, working for freedom from domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, family law reform, equality in employment, education, athletics, and equality for people of all sexual orientations, and always, reproductive freedom.

In the present political climate the leadership of the Law Project came to the realization that the radical right understands the connection between reproductive rights and the entire structure of a culture. The Women's Law Project now sees a woman's right to choose what happens to her body as the lynchpin of a democratic society which values women as much as men. It is the foundation upon which all those other women's issues stand.

The Women's Law Project has long convened Pennsylvanians for Choice, a statewide coalition of reproductive rights organizations. Their most recent project is Women Vote PA, intended to improve the low voter registration of women in Pennsylvania (the lowest in the nation) and the low voter turnout among women here (the fifth lowest

in the nation). To help local activists, the project is collecting data to develop county-by-county profiles on the status of women in this state. They are considering voting patterns, elected and appointed positions filled by women, availability of abortion and family planning services, numbers of petitions for protection from abuse, reported rapes and other crimes against women, and percentages of working women holding minimum wage jobs.

These efforts depend on a core of active feminists making face-to-face contacts with local, state and federal officials to press forward on women's rights. They can provide the support, training and information. Can you flesh out the spirit? Contact the Women's Law Project at 125 South 9th St., Suite 300, Philadelphia, PA 19107, call 215-928-9801, or see www.womenslawproject.org.

PRESSING DENT ON WORKER'S RIGHTS - The first week of December was a busy time for the 701 Building on Broad St., Bethlehem, where I happen to work, and which also happens to house Rep. Charles Dent's office. Not only were my LEPOCO friends there on Tuesday, with signs about the war in Iraq, but on Wednesday, there were 40-plus people with union shirts and jackets, and signs about fair labor practices.

The Lehigh Valley Labor Council of the AFL-CIO had called the rally to urge Congressman Dent to co-sponsor HR-1696, known as the Employee Free Choice Act. The legislation is proposed as an amendment to the National Labor Relations Act, which is intended to level the playing field for workers who want to form unions. It would "establish an efficient system to enable employees to form, join or assist labor organiza-

tions, and provides for mandatory injunctions against unfair labor practices during organizing efforts."

In the U.S. House of Representatives, HR-1696 has 205 cosponsors, including five Republicans. Charlie Dent is not yet among them. In the U.S. Senate, a companion SB-874 has 40-some sponsors, including Arlen Specter. While you're talking to Mr. Dent about your many other concerns, don't forget to prompt him on HR-1696 - the right to unionize.

CALIFORNIA NURSES HEAD OFF SCHWARZENEGGER - Despite polls showing that the majority of California voters did not want the special election held in November, Governor Schwarzenegger stormed ahead, at a cost to taxpayers of an estimated \$40-80 million, to pass his pro-corporate reforms. "If they succeed in winning California, it will consolidate radical conservatism nationally," was the comment of California Nurses Association (CNA) Executive Director Ann DeMoro. So, she and the CNA organized a statewide coalition of unions and other progressives to expose the Governor's anti-democratic agenda, and ultimately defeat all eight of the ballot issues. At stake were probationary periods for teachers to be tenured, the rights of unions to spend funds on political campaigns, the governor's authority to bypass elected lawmakers on fiscal decisions, the redistricting of legislative districts by public officials, and drug rebate programs for pharmaceutical companies.

The *Labor Party News* presents the California Nurses Association efforts as a stellar model for the nation in confronting corporate control of political, economic and social life, crediting especially the emphasis on grassroots organization, and creative, novel campaign tactics. Yes. Nurses care for more than our immediate physical hurts. They have a place at the heart of a caring society.

- Jeff Vitelli

Remembering Arlene Wallach

Long-time LEPOCO and Allentown activist Arlene Wallach singled up all lines, shifted colors and got underway for the happy no-hunting grounds on November 24th, where she will continued a life-long love affair with her late husband, John, as well as their never-ending "debates" about a million socio-political subjects. In her last several years Arlene was beset by physical conditions that severely compromised her oxygen exchange and limited her ability to come and go as she would have liked. Preferring her privacy and to catch up on her reading, she stayed mostly in her apartment at Bnai Brith on Liberty Street in Allentown. But she was nonetheless constantly watched over by two hounds from heaven, her loving daughters Annette and Jessica.

I first met Arlene a long time ago at a year-end part at the present residence of Joe DeRaymond in Freemansburg. With her husband John in on the party talk, I couldn't get a word in edgewise (a positive element!), so I listened and received a lasting impression of Arlene as a woman whose agenda went

far beyond the "American dream" of house and kids in the 'burbs. She had her finger on the pulse of wherever the action was: Trexler Dam, Allentown City Council, Democratic Committee woman, LEPOCO, NOW, and many other worthwhile causes I cannot recall. But a couple I do recall were when she "co-managed" a campaign in the 1980's to derail the runaway right-wing train of Congressman Don Ritter, who made Rick Santorum look like Eugene V. Debs. What fun she was! And, when she called me asking if I knew anyone who might be interested in teaching bridge at the Lehigh County Senior Center. I did, and that phone call led to the largest ACBL sanctioned duplicate bridge game in the Lehigh Valley, still thriving today.

For those who knew her, Arlene was a person who reached out always, whether she had an immediate stake or not in the issue. She will be always unforgettable and so very much missed.

- Bernie Berg

SOA Background (continued from page 1)

rights workers. It is part of a U.S. foreign policy that is making lots of enemies for our country.

Congress came within one vote of cutting off funding for the school. The Pentagon then closed the school, reopening it the next day as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation or WHINSEC. The purpose of the school remains the same: to control the economic and political systems of Latin America by training and influencing Latin American military forces.

Fifteen years ago a small group of people gathered at the gate of Ft. Benning to mourn the deaths of a group of Catholic priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter. They had been killed by soldiers who were led by officers trained at the SOA. At the same time every year since then, more and more people have gathered to remember those who have been killed, to demonstrate opposition to the school, and to commit civil disobedience. This year there were almost 20,000 protesters.

RECENT KILLINGS IN COLOMBIA

San José de Apartadó, a small community in northern Colombia, is one of several villages which have proclaimed themselves to be peaceful and nonviolent, refusing to be aligned with any of the competing military forces in Colombia. Joe DeRaymond spent a year at San José as a Fellowship of Reconciliation accompanier in the community.

One of the leaders of San José, Arlen Salas David, was killed November 17 by a grenade allegedly fired by Colombian military forces. Another member of the community was injured in the attack.

Eight members of the community were killed on February 21, 2005. Since then the community has faced increased hostility and threats by the armed groups in 8 LEPOCO Newsletter / January 2006

the area, who refuse to believe that its members are not guerrillas.

There is no evidence so far that these recent attacks on the Colombian peace communities were led by SOA graduates, but they are typical of many other well-documented activities carried out by known graduates of the SOA.

SHUT IT DOWN!

Those of us dedicated to shutting down the SOA/WHINSEC encourage everyone to contact their members of congress and express their opposition to the continued existence of the school.

- Bob Riggs

46 Years of Walking for Peace -

(continued from page 6)

PhillyBeyondOil.org or e-mail Danhunt@PTD.net for more information).

It was getting dark by the time we reached the First Church of the Nazarene to pick up our candles. By the time we reached Central Moravian Church, it was too late to do the traditional carolling.

At last, we came to the warm fellowship hall of the Christ United Church of Christ, where we could eat delicious soup, and listen to the LEPOCO Peace Singers. After our meal, we heard Patricia Keefe's presentation on the Nonviolent Peaceforce, a global organization that uses Accompaniment, Prescience and Interpositioning tactics to help quell violence in areas of conflict. So far they have helped situations in Kenya, Brazil, and Sri Lanka. The Nonviolent Peaceforce's web site is www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org and its telephone number is 612-871-0005.

- Peter Christine

Bits & Pieces

☪ Thank you to everyone who helped with calling during the LEPOCO Phonathon in November and December. We need to schedule one more day of calling and that will probably be Sunday afternoon, January 15th. If you can help with this please call 610-691-8730.

A huge thank you also to all those who have donated so generously to LEPOCO's work during the phonathon and in response to the fund appeal letter of late October. The Steering Committee and all those involved in LEPOCO efforts are most grateful.

☪ Anna Maria Caldara will speak on her participation in the 40th Anniversary March from Selma to Montgomery this past spring on Sun., Jan. 29, at 11 am, at Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse (on Rt. 512 about 1/2 mile north of Rt. 22). The public is welcome.

☪ Half of the LEPOCO Steering Committee seats are up for election at the Annual Dinner Meeting in March. If you are interested in serving on this important committee please contact the Peace Center or any present members of the Steering Committee (see the box on page 2).

☪ These are some of the words to a song by Irwin Silber written in 1951.

*I don't wanna make the battle news,
Wear those army shoes,
Nothing I can use,
I don't wanna sing the GI blues
I just wanna stay home*

This is one of the many songs in the 2006 War Resisters League Peace Calendar, "Peace-Loving Nations: Music of Peace and Resistance." If you haven't gotten a copy yet they are still available at LEPOCO, \$11 each. It is a wonderful desk calendar, but also a book of music and history to keep long after 2006.

☪ John Dear will lead a weekend at Kirkridge on "The Sermon on the Mount and Ourselves," Jan. 20-22.

Cost \$260. Call 610-588-1793 for more info.

☪ The Eastern District Conference Franconia Mennonite Conference will hold their Winter Peace Retreat, Feb. 10-12. The featured speaker will be Janna Hunter-Bowman of Witness for Peace and a guest from Colombia speaking on "Creating Hope in the Crossfire: Colombian Churches and Their Witness to the Mennonites of North America." Cost: \$110. Contact LEPOCO for a copy of the brochure. Registration deadline is Jan. 18.

☪ The Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Association is sponsoring a talk by Judy Wicks, founder and owner of the White Dog Café, Philadelphia, for a discussion on "Local Living Economies and the Triple Bottom Line: People, Profit and the Planet," Mon., Jan. 23, at 3 pm, at Glaxbern Inn, 2141 Packhouse Rd., Fogelsville. For more info. call Julie Thomases at 484-358-1200.

☪ At the urging of Sojourners and the Demand a Moral Budget campaign, Joyce Moore and Rev. John Clint Fowler organized vigils at two of Rep. Charles Dent's offices on Dec. 14th. It was another of the cold days in December and the day of the vote that cut aid to education and other important domestic programs. Of six local representatives only Rep. Dent voted for the cuts, but thank you to Joyce and Clint for their valiant efforts. (Schwartz, Kanjorski, Holden, Fitzpatrick, and Gerlach, all opposed the cuts.)



☪ The Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition is planning a day of peace vigils throughout the greater Lehigh Valley area for the third anniversary of the start of the war in Iraq, March 19, Sunday. If you can help anchor a vigil in your community please contact LEPOCO or anyone in the Coalition.

☪ On Sat., Dec. 17th, the LEPOCO Peace Singers enjoyed the opportunity to sing at Illicks Mill for their holiday open house.

☪ Witness for Peace will be sponsoring their first delegation to Venezuela, Feb. 16-25. The 10-day trip will cost \$1350 plus airfare. Among other goals, the delegation will "discuss alternatives to current U.S. policies and reflect on the historic pattern of U.S. military and CIA/NED low-intensity warfare to destabilize 'a sense of hope.'" For more info. call 302-645-2657.

☪ The Coalition for Voting Integrity in Bucks County is urging support for SB 97 and HB 2000 in the Pennsylvania legislature. These bills would assure voter-verified paper ballots for any new machines purchased in this state. The Coalition can be contacted at PO Box 536, Doylestown, PA 18901 or at votingintegrity@aol.com.



MEETINGS... MEETINGS...

Sun., Jan. 15, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at Barbara Wurth's home in Bethlehem.

Mon., Jan. 16, 7 pm: Peace Camp Planning Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Tues., Jan. 17, 8:30 am: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Wed., Jan. 25, Noon: LEPOCO Fundraising Committee Meeting at NAWAB Restaurant, Bethlehem.

Wed., Feb. 1, 7 pm: L.V. Peace Coalition Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Sun., Feb. 5, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at Bob Rigg's home in Bethlehem.

Mon., Feb. 6, 7 pm: LEPOCO Steering Committee Meeting at Peace Center.

Mon., Feb. 13, 7 pm: Monthly LEPOCO Action Meeting at Peace Center.

Sun., Feb. 19, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at home of Barbara Wurth in Bethlehem.

Tues., Feb. 21, Noon: Americas Solidarity Group Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015
(610) 691-8730

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See Inside:

Page 1

Arrests at SOA
Demonstration
Remembering King:
the Peace Witness

Page 2

Community Martin
Luther King Events

Page 3

Annual Dinner
Popcorn & Politics
Theatre Party

Page 4

Call for Nonviolent
Resistance

Ray Krone to Speak

Pages 5

Youth & Militarism
Bring the Guard
Home!

Page 6

In the Courts
Walking for Peace

Page 7

Struggle Shared

Page 8

Remembering Arlene
Wallach

Page 9

Bits & Pieces

Saturday, January 21, 2006

6-9 PM

*Evening of
Pre-Trial Support
for Joe DeRaymond*

and

*Fundraiser for
FOR Colombia Program in
San José de Apartadó*

at the home of Joe DeRaymond

349 Main St., Freemansburg

6-8 pm: socializing;

8-9 pm talk about San José

*Please bring some food or beverage
to share (pizza and some beverages will be
provided) and a donation (small or large)*

for the Colombia Program

(see Pages 1 & 8).

**Honoring
Martin Luther King, Jr.:
The Peace Witness
Sunday, January 22, 2006
3:00 pm**

**Log Cabin, Rose Garden Park,
Bethlehem**

(on 8th Ave., between Union Blvd. & Broad St.)
Organized by Nuclear Abolition Sisters of LEPOCO
(See pages 1 & 2)

POPCORN & POLITICS

**Friday, February 3, 7:00 pm
A Force More Powerful: Part II
LEPOCO Peace Center
(see page 3)**

LEPOCO Theatre Party

**Thursday, February 16
Reception at 6:30 pm
In the Spirit - For Real
(see page 3)**

