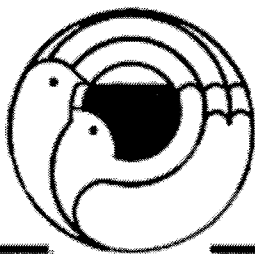


June - July
2008

Vol. 43 No. 4



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

Mentoring at Peace Camp

Over the summer vacation from classes, many teens search for work to bolster their college savings. They often spend their weekdays at an uninteresting, tedious job earning minimum wage in an environment that has little appreciation for the teen's personality and individual skills. The result is boredom and a lack of a feeling of accomplishment.

I am proud to be one of the exception teens. Along with over a dozen other of my peers, I volunteer for the annual week-long Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp. Alongside adult group leaders, we teen helpers guide children between the ages of four and twelve through a relaxed, socially stimulating, and all-around fun week of nonviolent conflict resolution education through stories, games, crafts, and music.

Being a teen helper is far more than being the group leader's assistant in menial tasks. I spend my week meeting and bonding with children. They view me as a "big kid." I am older and wiser, but I am still a kid; I am still fun. I am a mentor. For a child no matter how great a piece of advice or guidance is, to hear it from a teen is radically different, radically more influential than it is from an adult. I try to fill the roles of both friend and mentor in the lives of my group members by being the best friend that I can be.

What may be the most satisfying aspect of my position at Peace Camp is that at the end of the week, I know that I want to return the next year just as much as the children do. I know that I have partaken in a great effort to better the world in which we live. As my own childhood rapidly slips away from me, I try to make the most of every day. Peace Camp is quite possibly the most fulfilling five days of every year of my young adulthood.

- Nathaniel Shaffer

Editor's Note: Peace Camp 2008 will be held July 21-25, 9 am to Noon each day, at First Presbyterian Church, Allentown. If you would like to be a teen or an adult volunteer at this year's Camp you can call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 or Donna Hartmann at 610-865-5204, or mail in a volunteer form. While we have leaders for all our camper groups, we still need more teen and adult helpers. Also, if you know a child who would like to attend Peace Camp we are still accepting camper registrations. You should have received copies of the Peace Camp Registration and Volunteer Interest forms in earlier mailings, but if you need another copy call 610-691-8730 or copies can be printed out from www.lepoco.org.

Art Landis: Thirty Days in County Prison

May 8th. Scranton, Pennsylvania. The trees outside Lackawanna County Prison were flowering in full spring bloom, having finally shaken off the last of winter's cold chill. Art Landis stepped outside into the sunlight and shook off a month of being known as prisoner #2008-00462. He looked up and breathed his first fresh air in thirty days.

Normally a person of few words, Art had no shortage of thoughts to share on our ride home about his stint as a "prisoner of conscience" for crossing the line at the School of the Americas. Best summed up as "An Experience," Art chose not to talk much about himself, but instead spoke of his fellow inmates, their stories, their concerns, and the conditions in which they serve their time. In spite of the cruel and unusual punishments, Art discovered that the system couldn't completely stomp out the humanity of the other prisoners. The inmates looked out for Art, helped him get around, opened doors for him, and even crowned him with the

nickname "Pops." When asked about how the guards treated him Art quipped, "I got along with my cellmates better."

Returned to Perkasio and reunited with his wife Hilda, Art took a week to rest and then on his 75th birthday was right back at it, joining a group to visit with Representative Patrick Murphy (U.S. Congressman from Pennsylvania's 8th District) to express concerns about the SOA at Fort Benning, the USA's foreign policy in Latin America and elsewhere, and the war in Iraq.

On Sunday, June 1st, an overflow crowd of friends thanked Art Landis for his peace witness at a Potluck & Politics program at the LEPOCO Peace Center that featured a film, an update on the efforts to close the SOA, and brief words from Art and previous "Prisoners of Conscience" Joe DeRaymond and Naed Smith.

Art and fellow area activist Tim Chadwick have a status hearing on July 16th in Washington, D.C., regarding the "Ghosts of the Iraq War" action that took place on March 12th at the U.S. Capitol. A jury trial is expected to take place in August or September.

- robert Daniels II

Military Helicopter Lands at Local College

On April 23, Moravian College students received an e-mail from Michael P. Wilson, Moravian's Director of Public Relations and Marketing, informing us that the following morning there would be a Chinook Helicopter landing in the quad on campus. The given reason was to provide transportation for an ROTC student going to Ft. Indiantown Gap for basic training. Following the initial e-mail, there was an exchange between several professors through campus wide e-mail, debating the validity of the provided rationale. Having spoken with several of the professors involved, I was made aware that those professors who argued against the helicopter landing received many negative e-mails from Moravian College students.

Because of the short notice provided by the college, those of us opposed to the helicopter landing were given little time to organize, however, we made an effort and we were able to contact a small group of individuals. We decided to use the opportunity to protest both the presence of the military on campus, and the Bush administration's failed policy in Iraq.

When the time for the landing came, our group lined up outside the Hauptert Union Building, no nearer to the stunt than any of the other students who had come out to watch. We stood facing the quad, holding our respective signs, when we were approached by an officer from Campus Safety. He informed us that we would have to move, as we were on "private property." After questioning his logic, as we are students at Moravian College, he threatened us with forced removal, at which point we decided to move to the "free speech zone," as defined by Campus Safety.

Afterwards, our group decided to write a letter of complaint to the administration of the College, to voice our displeasure with how the situation had been handled. The administration held a meeting later that week to review the protocols for protesting on campus, after which we received our response from Moravian College President Thomforde. He largely affirmed and supported the way the situation had been handled by Campus Safety on April 24th. He assured us that future protesters would also be immediately confined to the "free speech zones" which were identified by Campus Safety, in spite of the location of the event being protested.

- Chris Snyder

Bike/Walk Held During Heat Wave

On June 7th, LEPOCO members and friends gathered for one of our annual fundraisers. The first Bikeathon in 1979 (it has grown to include walking in subsequent years) was designed to raise funds and to raise awareness about biking as alternative transportation. This year we rode and walked to remind ourselves of alternative transportation options, but also to raise funds for LEPOCO's peace work against war, and for

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the refugees that number in the millions from the U.S. war in Iraq.

Twenty-five people participated as walkers and riders on what was the first day of an early June heat wave. Many more participated -- as volunteers staffing check points, donating refreshments for riders and walkers or making pledges to those biking and walking. Those pledges total over \$1800.

We look forward to the pledge payments being completed soon and also encourage those of you who were not asked for a pledge before the event to consider making a donation now designated for the Bike/Walkathon. Certainly LEPOCO can use the financial support, but it's also very important that half of the funds raised will go towards American Friends Service Committee's (AFSC) work with Iraqi war refugees.

In supporting this work of AFSC we are facing again some of our collective responsibility for the devastation our government has created by invading and occupying another country. Over 2.5 million Iraqis are displaced inside Iraq and over 2 million have fled Iraq for Syria, Jordan and other neighboring countries. AFSC is supporting rehabilitation for those who have lost arms or legs in the war; they are providing training for women who need to make a living to support for their families, and they are providing wellness workshops and peer support for those who have suffered the traumas of war and displacement. Checks should be made out to LEPOCO and marked for the Bike/Walkathon.

- Nancy C. Tate

Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 West Fourth Street

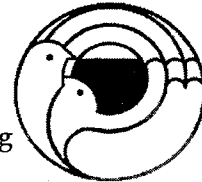
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The *LEPOCO Newsletter* is published 10 times a year by the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern, a nonviolent, non-profit organization dedicated to peace in all forms.

Annual dues are:

Regular Member	\$35
Limited Income Member	\$ 5
Household Membership	\$45
Supporting Member	\$75

Articles/news should be submitted to the address above for consideration for the next issue of the newsletter.

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

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Addison Bross, Peter Christine, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Nils Hovik, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Mimi Lang, Michelle Mecham, Janet Ney (co-treasurer), Sue Ravitz, Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

Potluck / Popcorn & Politics

Friday, July 4th, 7 pm: *Born on the Fourth of July*

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

The story of Ron Kovic, an All-American boy sent off to Vietnam, who returns an anti-war activist. Co-scripted by Kovic and director Oliver Stone, this award winning film depicts how a loss of innocence can lead to the discovery of a mighty voice for peace. Starring Tom Cruise, Kyra Sedgwick, and Willem Dafoe. 145 minutes. 1989.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, July 13, 6 pm: Joe DeRaymond "*El Salvador Before the 2009 Elections*"

Potluck & Politics at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse, Bethlehem (on Rt. 512, 1/2 mile north of Rt. 22).

Joe DeRaymond has traveled often to Latin America, joining with solidarity efforts in Nicaragua, Colombia and El Salvador. Earlier this year he was again in El Salvador working for two months with CIS (Centro de Intercambio y Solidaridad) helping to organize international observers for the 2009 elections. Joe will discuss the situation in El Salvador, where for the first time since the 1997 Peace Accords the FMLN is fielding a candidate, Mauricio Funes, with a real chance of winning.

Come hear Joe's always insightful analysis.

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

Friday, August 1st, 7 pm: *Investigation of a Flame*

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

Documentary portrait of the "Catonsville Nine" who, in May 1968, went into a draft board office, grabbed hundreds of selective service records and burned them with homemade napalm to protest the Vietnam War. Combining archival footage, impressionistic imagery, and interviews with Dan and Phil Berrigan, Tom Lewis, Marjorie and Tom Melville, and Howard Zinn, among others, director Lynne Sachs presents a film that forces viewers to confront their own definitions of nonviolence, patriotism, and personal sacrifice. 45 minutes. 2003.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



Steering Committee Musical Chairs

LEPOCO people paying attention to the internal workings of LEPOCO may be curious about what's up with the make-up of the Steering Committee. Hopefully, this article will shed some light on the situation.

Many organizations have a board of directors (LEPOCO has a Steering Committee) that meets regularly to discuss financial matters, policy issues, personnel matters, future activities, legal issues and anything that pertains to the smooth, continuous operation of the group. There are eight voting members: six are at-large members and two are co-treasurers, all are elected for two-year terms at the Annual Dinner held in March. (One-half of the positions are up for election each year.) Also, attending Steering Committee meetings is paid staff (ex-officio members of the Steering Committee), who contribute ideas and join discussions, but do not have a vote. (We operate by consensus so voting is not very common.)

The Steering Committee meets on the first Monday of each month discussing internal housekeeping issues, and situations not requiring input from the general membership, as well as preparing the agenda for the monthly Action Meeting held on the second Monday of each month. (Action Meetings are open to all.)

Due to unexpected resignations and role changes during this past year, something vaguely resembling

musical chairs has occurred. The current Steering Committee consists of at-large members Addison Bross, Peter Christine, Mimi Lang, Michelle Mechum, Susie Ravitz, Nils Hovik and co-treasurers Janet Ney and Julius Iwantsch, as well as ex-officio staff members Nancy Tate and Robert Daniels II. Explaining how everyone got into their current positions involves some "switcheroos" (can you hear the musical chair music?)

At this year's Annual Dinner Peter, Addison, and Mimi as well as Holly Kent were elected for two year terms. But, Holly has left the area to pursue graduate studies and the Steering Committee appointed Susie, who had served several terms on the Committee and had planned to retire for awhile, but has agreed to serve Holly's term. Robert Daniels II, who had a year left in his Steering Committee position, became a full-time staff person and Nils Hovik agreed to finish the last year of his term. Michele Mecham has one more year of her two-year term left, and Janet Ney, a loyal committee member for many years moved into the position of co-treasurer last year, alongside Julius Iwantsch. Consider the possibility of joining the fun next year when two at-large and two treasurer positions will open up.

- Susie Ravitz

The Value of Counter Recruiting

On April 30th I had the opportunity to join the LEPOCO "Truth in Recruiting" team at Phillipsburg High School. It was satisfying to speak to students at the very school from which my son, Wayne, had been recruited into the Army back in 1986 within days of his eighteenth birthday.

After signing in at the guidance office Peter Crownfield, Robert Daniels II and I set up a table in the hallway leading to the cafeteria. During the lunch periods as students passed by, some began to stop and take brochures, colorful pencils, and peace stickers. Others were surprised to see peace people there instead of recruiters. I listened as Peter asked why they even considered joining the military. They didn't really have an answer. I watched the girls asking Robert questions. I handed out DVDs I had made with "Arlington West" and a preview of Winter Soldier II on them. We all smiled a lot and tried to connect with our message.

Two weeks later the three of us did the same at Easton Area High School. The following week Afghanistan vet, Alex Ireland joined Peter and Robert to "table" at Wilson. I think we are making a difference. Every child counts. If you would like to help with this work contact Robert at LEPOCO, 610-691-8730.

- Judy Woodruff

The Czechs Stand Up to Star Wars

You may have seen recent letters to the editor by Mimi Lang and Anna Maria Caldara about the opposition in the Czech Republic to a radar base planned in their Brdy Highlands. The base is part of the U.S. "missile defense shield," often called Star Wars because it means the militarization of the heavens.

Two-thirds of the Czech people oppose the radar base according to an article by Andre Vltchek, "Radar, Star Wars, & the Czech Republic" (available at www.zcommunications.org). In the Brdy Highlands people are worried about radiation, as their area is the source of drinking water for a large section of the Czech Republic. They have an aversion to foreign troops after living next to German bases during WW II and Soviet missiles during the Cold War. One villager said, "We are sick of living next to a pile of weapons belonging to foreign powers..." This is the sad reality of U.S. empire as it manifests itself around the globe.

Such sentiment led Jan Tamas and Jan Bednar of the Czech Republic to fast for three weeks in opposition to the radar base. They were joined by Bruce Gagnon (who spoke at LEPOCO's Annual Dinner in March) and others in the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, each person fasting for several days in rotation, to draw attention to the opposition to this base that would facilitate interceptor missiles shooting "enemy" missiles out of the sky. Several hundred people, including at least eight, locally, joined the fast for one day of solidarity on Sunday, June 22nd.

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A secretive two-year negotiating process led to the U.S.-Czech radar base agreement in May. The agreement will be formally signed when U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visits Prague on July 10th.

To further local awareness, to support the Czech radar base opposition, and to demonstrate our opposition to Star Wars' weaponization of space, the Nuclear Abolition Sisters invite people to join them for a peace vigil, "No Nuclear Weapons In Space," on Wednesday, July 9th, 4-5 pm, at the City Center Plaza on Church St., Bethlehem (between City Hall and the Library near the children's statue).

You can show your support now for the Czech people's fight against this base by signing their petition at www.nonviolence.cz and learn more about Star Wars at www.space4peace.org.

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters will meet on Thursday, July 17th, at 5 pm, at the Olive Branch Restaurant, south Bethlehem, to further plans for Hiroshima-Nagasaki Days in early August.

- Nancy C. Tate

Youth Peacemaker Training 2008

The annual Youth Peacemaker Training session, planned by the local youth group, Association of Students Advocating Peace (ASAP), took place this year at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse on April 26th. Workshop topics included themes ranging from environmental issues, consumerism awareness and supporting local food sources; to counter recruitment, speaking up against discrimination and current events.

Apart from helping youth get involved with peace activism, one of the most important aspects of YPT is informing students of the possibilities for their future -- a lot of teenagers do not even know their rights as students. Peter Crownfield helped us learn a little bit more about students' rights and what some school administrators or recruitment officers might not be telling us.

We shared some of our own experiences as young pacifists, and a delicious vegan meal was served and appreciated by all. The ASAP group had expected a few more participants, but overall the event was a success! More opportunities with Youth Peacemakers will be coming up this fall and next year. Please tell your friends not to miss out! Also, check out the new ASAP website at www.lepoco.pbwiki.com for photos from YPT 2008, meeting notes, and other links. The next ASAP meeting will be July 24th at noon, at LEPOCO.

-Katie Hartmann-Dow

Learning how to do something in your hometown is the most important thing...
If there's a world here in a hundred years,
it's going to be saved
by tens of millions of little things.

- Pete Seeger, *Yes! Magazine*, Spring 2008

LEPOCO Statement on the Protection of the Rights of Immigrants and the Links to U.S. Economic and Military Policy: May 2008

Whereas, LEPOCO (the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern) is a peace and justice organization that has been in existence in the Lehigh Valley for over 40 years, working on many of the issues that impact the current crisis for immigrants – human rights, U.S. policy toward Latin America, international economic policy and the impact of war on society; and

Whereas, LEPOCO recognizes that most citizens of our country either emigrated here or have ancestors who were immigrants, and, also recognizes that the Lehigh Valley has an especially varied and rich heritage because of the Irish, Italian, Polish, Hungarian, Jewish, Lebanese, Syrian, Mexican, and other immigrants, who have settled here; and

Whereas, there are now 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States who have been systematically denied the opportunity enjoyed by past generations of immigrants to become legal permanent residents of this country; and

Whereas, the vast majority of these 12 million undocumented immigrants have emigrated from Mexico, Central America and South America, often out of economic necessity; and

Whereas, there is a large and growing Latino and Hispanic population in the Lehigh Valley that has come to our community to live, work and contribute, and we have used their labor to harvest our crops, build our houses, and work in our factories; and

Whereas, these workers have earned millions of dollars locally (and billions have been earned by immigrants nationally) and have sent much of that back to their families in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the other nations of South and Central America and the Caribbean; and

Whereas, LEPOCO became more aware of the plight of immigrants as we supported the organizing efforts of the United Farm Workers of America in the 1970s, as we learned more about U.S. participation in the Central American wars in the 1980s, and as we have supported the efforts for peace and social justice in the Americas including numerous LEPOCO members visiting Central and South America on human rights delegations, information delegations and in humanitarian assistance efforts; and

Whereas, from the “model villages” in Vietnam to the 2 million external refugees from the Iraq war, we have seen how war disrupts societies and forces the disruptive movement of people across borders, and we witnessed that flow of refugees from Central America during the wars of the 1980s leading to the humanitarian response of the sanctuary movement locally and nationally; and

Whereas, we believe the immigration policies of the United States have, unfortunately, resulted in further militarization of our society, especially on our southern border where a multibillion dollar wall and security fence is under construction, dividing communities and causing severe environmental damage, and troops and police patrols are treating those trying to enter the United States from the South as the enemy, and

Whereas, we recognize that the influx of immigrants from the nations of Central and South America is all too often the result of the economic policies of the United States, and those policies have had an increasingly negative impact following the implementation of free trade agreements starting with NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) in 1994, and

Whereas, the race-to-the-bottom search for cheap labor, whether by exporting jobs to *maquiladoras* in Central America or by importing immigrant labor to work for less than a living wage, must be reversed, and

Whereas, corporate agriculture, union busting businesses, and less than scrupulous developers may profit from the suppressed wages that result from an insecure environment for immigrants and workers, only our efforts to protect the rights of all workers, immigrant or not, here and abroad, with a “lift all boats” policy, will improve the lives of all workers in the U.S. and in Latin America, encourage people to build fruitful and secure lives in their home communities and protect the environment against the ravages of the free trade model, and

Whereas, we recognize that the current policies of the federal government and some local law enforcement agencies have criminalized undocumented immigrants and are destructive to families, our community and our economy, therefore

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO recognizes the basic human rights and dignity of every human being regardless of their documentation status, and supports government, organization and personal efforts to avoid reference to any person as "illegal" or "alien," and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO believes all government communications and forms should be available in Spanish or whatever language a resident may require to conduct personal or corporate business, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO will advocate for a clearly defined and reasonably achievable route to permanent status for all immigrants, and for immigration laws that fairly allow applicants the opportunity to obtain permanent status, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO recommends that local government agencies not inquire about immigration status to provide resident services, and not unilaterally attempt to enforce federal immigration law, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO encourages Lehigh Valley municipalities to join the cities in the United States that have declared themselves "sanctuary cities," and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO will continue to work for a de-militarization of U.S. policy toward immigrants and our neighbors to the south, whether that be by closing the U.S. Army School of the Americas (now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation or WHINSEC), or by ending military aid to the government of Colombia that has been used to repress advocates for human rights, or by ending the militarization of our southern border, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO supports the rights of immigrants to claim citizenship without paying the bribe of military service, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO will continue to support economic policies that look for a bottom line, not just of profits for corporations, but also of benefits for workers, small farmers, and the environment on both sides of our border, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO will stand in solidarity with peace and justice organizations in Latin America when we are able, and will, as we are able, collaborate with U.S. groups focusing on the rights of immigrants and the root causes of immigration like Witness for Peace and the May 1st Coalition, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation as they work to resist xenophobic, racist, scapegoating reactions to immigrants, and

Be it resolved, that because no one should be faced with armed raids by government agents in their homes or their workplaces simply due to their lack of documents, LEPOCO will seek creative ways to respond with compassion and alarm when local immigrant families suffer the injustices of such raids, often followed by imprisonment and deportation, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO believes that every human being has the protection afforded by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (unanimously adopted December 10, 1948) such that "everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him (her)" (Article 10), and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO will continue its educational work on the roots of migration and immigrant rights through educational programs, study groups, solidarity delegations, and

Be it resolved, that this statement will be published in the LEPOCO Newsletter, will be delivered in person (along with resolutions adopted by municipalities that have declared themselves to be sanctuary cities) to the governing bodies of the Lehigh Valley's three cities and two counties, and will be mailed to other local, state and federal officials, local immigrant rights groups, and community groups like CUNA and CACLV, and

Be it resolved, that LEPOCO will approach the issue of immigration in the spirit of our statement of purpose, as follows, "LEPOCO members share a vision that we can build a sane and more just world. Gathering strength from our diversity, we work together and as individuals for nonviolent change, starting in our own community."

Approved by the LEPOCO Action Meeting of May 12, 2008.

The above statement was approved on the stated date after a process of discussion in meetings of the Americas Solidarity Group and the LEPOCO Action Meeting. The Americas Solidarity Group (a working group of LEPOCO) has now started the discussion of implementing the commitments made in the statement and welcomes help from anyone who would like to be part of that process. You can express your interest in helping by contacting the LEPOCO office, by talking with any of the active participants in that group (e.g. Joe DeRaymond, Janet Goloub, Chris Spohn, Bob Riggs, Tim Chadwick, Tom Lloyd, John Zachmann, or Nancy Tate), or by attending the next meeting of the Americas Solidarity Group on Wednesday, July 16, at 7 pm, at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fairs and Festivals

Acknowledgements and Announcements:

In response to the militarization of Mayfair, where each branch of the armed services was given an opportunity to recruit Valley youth, concerned citizens turned out to leaflet at the entrances of the annual family festival of the arts. Of particular note is the Letter to the Editor penned by Peter Crownfield objecting to the military at Mayfair, which appeared in *The Morning Call*, and the organizing efforts of Lynne Hanna who was able to gather a group of twenty or so for a vigil for peace near the festival on May 25th.

Kudos to Maria Weick for helping to organize a very successful opening day for the Springtown Farmer's Market on Wednesday, June 4th. Almost 1000 people jammed traffic on Rt. 412 to obtain fresh food from local farmers. Subsequent Wednesday markets (4-7 pm) have been well supported if not so dramatic in attendance and this farmers market will remain open through November. *The Morning Call* did a story about the 13 local farmers markets in their June 18th edition. They have a wide geographic spread, occur on most days, and need our support.

Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace & friends at the LEPOCO Peace Center shortly before leaving to mall walk in Whitehall. Pictured from left to right are: Joyce Ravitz, Jeff Brightbill, Sharon Mills, Walt Garvin, Sarah Snider, Judy Woodruff, Vince Stravino, Phil Reiss, Robert Daniels II, Joe DeRaymond, Louise Legun, Ellen Bell, Tim Chadwick, Marilyn Hazelton, Patrick Roxberry, and Don Burns. Note: Back of shirt reads "4000+ U.S. Military Deaths".

Photo by Nancy Tate



June 6th the Maze Garden project led by Annie Hasz and Dan Hunter held a "garden party" for southside Bethlehem's First Friday. The project is growing vegetables in a pocket park on 3rd St. to be donated to a local soup kitchen.

The Southside Film Festival featured a block of films pertaining to the realities of war with a particular focus on the serious problems faced by Iraq veterans.

The Allentown Armory Activists held another Anti-War Arts Festival at the South Mountain Reservoir Park on June 14th. Multiple musical acts performed songs of protest, while political art workshops were held.

The Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace will join LEPOCO and the newly formed local chapter of Iraq Veterans Against the War to share a booth at Allentown's Sportsfest, July 24-27. Call 610-691-8730 to set up a time when you can help mind the booth.

Volunteers are needed to staff the peace boutique booth at both Pride in the Park at Cedar Beach in Allentown on Sunday, August 17, and the Peace Fair at Buckingham Friends Meeting in Lahaska on Saturday, September 20. Call 610-691-8730 to participate.

Join / Form a T-Shirt Embedding Brigade

Join the Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace and others at the Liberty Bell Shrine, Zion's U.C.C. Church (622 W. Hamilton St., Allentown) for another "t-shirt embedding" on the Fourth of July at 1:30pm. Call 610-437-5314, Louise Legun for more information.

The Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition is hoping that many more "t-shirt embeddings" will occur this summer at the plethora of fairs and festivals happening locally. With six or more people wearing t-shirts in a group we can create a presence that will help raise people's awareness that the Iraq War continues and that we need to be more public in our opposition. You can get your "Stop the War" t-shirt to wear from Judy Woodruff at 610-437-5314. They are \$15 each, sizes small, med., large and x-large are available.

You can join others doing t-shirt embedding by calling Judy Woodruff at the number above or LEPOCO (610-691-8730) or you can organize you own embedding with your friends, church group, family, or knitting circle to go to any of these wonderful festivals, t-shirt on your person to be a "witness for peace" for an hour or two, one time or many this summer and fall. If you need some ideas on fairs and festivals Judy Woodruff prepared a listing of many of them, available from LEPOCO.

LEPOCO Financial Report 2006 - 2007

Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Fund Balance	2006	2007
Contributions, gifts, grants and similar amounts received	\$16,641.11	\$8,945.37
Membership Dues	\$32,912.93	\$42,084.63
Investment Income	\$173.46	\$(3,484.35)
Gross sales (buttons, bumper stickers, etc)	\$3,798.27	\$3,451.43
Cost of Goods Sold	\$(2068.40)	\$(2,367.08)
Gross Profit or Loss on Sales	\$1,729.87	\$1,084.35
Other Revenue (Copier, Programs, Events, Misc.)	\$5,237.55	\$1,425.99
Total Revenue	\$56,694.92	\$50,055.99
Contributions to Others	\$ 201.00	\$450.00
Salaries and Benefits to Employees	\$31,342.44	\$29,778.75
Occupancy, Rent, Utilities, etc.	\$6,344.40	\$6,707.38
Printing and Postage	\$8,083.82	\$7,328.20
Other Expenses (Programs, Events, Misc)	\$15,681.07	\$9,406.88
Total Expenses	\$60,089.04	\$55,234.90
Excess or (Loss) for Year	\$(3,394.12)	\$(5,178.91)
Fund Balances at the Beginning of the Year	\$30,586.03	\$36,357.86
Change in Investment Value	\$(7,988.17)	\$(2,655.45)
Fund Balance at the End of the Year	\$19,203.74	\$28,523.50

2006 Fund Balances	Beginning of Year	End of Year
Cash, Savings and Investments	\$42,187.05	\$36,357.86
Liabilities	\$11,601.02	\$17,154.12
Net Assets and Fund Balances	\$30,586.03	\$19,203.74

2007 Fund Balances	Beginning of Year	End of Year
Cash, Savings and Investments	\$36,357.86	\$38,013.72
Liabilities	\$17,154.12	\$9,490.22
Net Assets and Fund Balances	\$19,203.74	\$28,523.50

SUPPORT LEPOCO!

Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$ _____.
 (\$35 individual; \$45 household; \$75 supporter; \$5 limited income)
 I am also enclosing an extra donation of \$ _____.
 I would like to support LEPOCO's work with a
 ___ monthly/ ___ quarterly pledge of \$ _____.
 I'm most interested in working on the following issues:

NAME _____ PHONE # _____ e-mail _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

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

Yard Signs:
End the
War!

\$5.00 each

(Includes Sign and Wire Support)

Available at LEPOCO

Check out the
 LEPOCO website
 at www.lepoco.org

for a regularly updated
 Calendar of Events,
 Newsletter Archive,
 Videos, and More.

The Struggle Shared

*There's a river somewhere
Flowin' through the lives of everyone,
Yes there is...
And it flows through the valleys
And the mountains and the meadows
Of time.*

- "River," reprise from *Another River Flows*

ANOTHER RIVER FLOWS - On May 30th, over 30 members and friends attended a lovely LEPOCO Theatre Party at the home of Susie and Art Ravitz in Easton prior to enjoying the opening night of the phenomenal musical dramatization of the Black experience in the Lehigh Valley, *Another River Flows*. Performed at the Third St. Alliance in Easton that night, the play also then traveled to Bethlehem and Allentown in June.

Over the past seven years a group that eventually became the Lehigh Valley Black African Heritage History Project, collaborating with Touchstone Theatre, Senior Centers, Muhlenberg College, the Lehigh County Historical Society, and receiving grants from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. They collected the stories of scores of Lehigh Valley residents. These oral histories were skillfully crafted into a play by Linda Parris-Bailey of the Carpetbag Theatre Ensemble, with music arranged by Dr. Ysaye Barnwell, of Sweet Honey in the Rock, and was then directed by Mark McKenna, of Touchstone.

The cast of twenty-five local actors moved about, around, in and out of the open stage space to define the shape of the community: a crowded urban renewal project, a bustling church meeting, a bus ride to a March on Washington in the 1960s. The dialogue in each scene was anchored to the whole with the chorus of a song, some traditional and familiar (*Twelve Gates to the City, Down by the Riverside*), others original and sung by the ensemble.

One scene introduced a theme which became a symbolic prop throughout the play: the story of a young person being presented with

a beautiful decorative box on their 16th birthday. The box contained news clippings, photographs, mementos, and a journal. This is their inheritance, they are told, and represents life's journey. "The most important thing we can give to young people is the story of who they are," says one of the elders.

As the community of actors comes together in one battle after another to fight the oppressive conditions that often define their lives, the show builds to the closing scene with this monologue by one of the three women who emerge as the most eloquent spokespeople for the community: "1% of these people work for change, and made a difference. I mean, what if 10% of the people rocked the boat? Rock the boat! Rock the boat! Wherever the river takes us we will carry our tools, building boxes, making things better and better for our communities. From the time that Harriet Tubman walked the waters the valley has been home to resistance and resilience."

A LIFE OF CONSISTENT RESISTANCE - The Friday before he died Tom Lewis was in court. It was for a protest he'd participated in at the Pentagon. It was another in a long series of trials which made up a life of consistent resistance to war and injustice which included participation in two draft board protests (the Baltimore Four, the Catonsville Nine), plowshares actions, demonstrations against genocide in Darfur and more. Tom was a familiar face to many who'd enjoyed his company at various Kirkridge retreats over the years. Even if you'd never met Tom you may have encountered some of his art in

the form of sketches, woodcuts, paintings, and murals (the Brandywine Peace Community logo was created by Tom Lewis). The theme of his work was invariably tied to his faith and activism. His Catholic Worker friend, Claire Schaeffer-Duffy said, "Tom epitomized fidelity. As a young man he saw the truth of the evil of war and stayed with that truth all his life, even when it cost him to practice it." Tom Lewis was 68.

FAREWELL TO THE GOLDEN VOICE OF THE GREAT SOUTH-WEST - The Lehigh Valley, and the nation have lost one of our most articulate, witty, legendary voices for nonviolent revolution and grassroots social justice. Bruce "U. Utah" Phillips, died in his sleep in his home in Nevada City, California, on May 23rd.

Utah, a seminal figure on the folk music scene, frequently passed through the Lehigh Valley, performing at Godfrey Daniels Coffeehouse in south Bethlehem. His concerts were a cross between union meeting, campfire song-swap, history lesson, and outrageous comedy routine.

Bruce Duncan Phillips was born on May 25, 1935, in Cleveland, Ohio, the son of labor organizers. He served as an Army private in the Korean War, and returned deeply affected by the misery and devastation he had witnessed. He began drifting and riding the rails. Arriving drunk and destitute in Salt Lake City, he landed at the Joe Hill House, a homeless shelter run by anarchist-pacifist Catholic Worker Ammon Hennacy.

He joined, and became a proud organizer of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or Wobblies) and kept riding the rails, meeting and collecting the stories of the hobos he met. "He was like an alchemist," according to Rosalie Sorrels, one of his frequent performing partners. "He took the stories of working people and railroad bums and he built them into work that was influenced by writers

(Continued on page 10)

Bits & Pieces

⊕ June 19th was a **National Day of Protest Against Health Insurance Companies** on the occasion of the annual convention of the health insurance lobbyists in San Francisco. The protest was in memory of the countless victims of insurance companies and called for "guaranteed, comprehensive, civilized healthcare for ALL."

Locally, Ruth Livesay and Dominic Buscemi organized a demonstration outside the Blue Cross/Blue Shield office in Allentown. At least two dozen people joined in, including Guy Gray, Green Party candidate for the State House, Sam Bennett, Democratic candidate for the U.S. Congress, and Judith Gordon of Health Care For All Pennsylvanians.

Interestingly, **Tim Laidman** wrote about the main demonstration on the National Day of Protest from "LEPOCO West" in San Francisco: "I attended the SF demo yesterday. We had more demonstrators than the conference had attendees! The actual number of attendees dropped from the expected 38,000 to about 2500 and we packed the sidewalks (and into the streets) surrounding the area of the convention. There were many good speakers, a marching band and a procession to drop flowers on an altar to the victims of the health insurance industry. We chanted 'Shame on you,' as attendees entered the building. I saw lots of nasty looking "suits" that appeared perfectly capable of sentencing patients to death to increase their bottom line. I think the demo was very effective, thousands of cars drove by, saw it and honked support. The time for Universal Single-Payer health care is NOW!"

⊕ Beginning at 7 am, on Sat., June 28, **Torture Abolition & Survivors Support Coalition International (TASSC)** will vigil across from the White House, ending 24 hours later at 7 am on Sun., June 29. In their ongoing effort to end torture they will join in saying, "Torture does not discriminate; Today more than 150 governments torture." They ask those who cannot join them in Washington, DC, to light a candle in memory of the tortured.

In January LEPOCO showed the film, *Breaking the Silence: Torture Survivors*

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Speak Out, for a program on the sixth anniversary of prisoners being sent to Guantánamo. The film was produced by TASSC and is available on loan from LEPOCO. For more info. on the vigil see www.tassc.org.

⊕ The Allentown Branch of the **NAACP** will hold their **66th Annual Freedom Fund & Awards Banquet** on Sat., July 26, at the Days Inn Conference Center, Allentown. Lorenzo Steele will speak on "Reclaiming the Hip-Hop Generation." This is an important fundraiser for the Allentown NAACP to support their work on civil rights. Tickets are \$40 each, available in advance only from Dan Bosket, chapter president at 610-780-9903.

⊕ **Kirkridge**, the beautiful retreat center atop the mountain north of Bangor, Pa, is working to strengthen their peace ministry. Among the guests at their June board meeting was Jo Clare Hartsig, who some readers will remember from her leadership in Kirkridge's peace ministry in the 1980s. One focus for that peace work in the coming year will be weekend workshops for veterans. The first program in a series will be "**Healing Memories**," Oct. 24-26, led by Fr. Michael Lapsley, a South African resister and violence healer. Attendees will gain insight into and empathy for themselves and others; share stories; and confront issues on the path to forgiveness and reconciliation. For more info. call 610-588-1793 or see www.kirkridge.org. Scholarships will be available.

⊕ Virginia has 11 new highway markers. One will remember the **Peace Meeting Poisoning** in 1623 between English soldiers from Jamestown and Indian leaders, who were returning English prisoners taken during fighting in 1622. "At the meeting, the English called for a toast to seal the agreement, gave the Indians poisoned wine, and then fired upon them, felling as many as 150, including the chief of the Kisiack," according to the Dept. of Historic Resources. Source: *The Morning Call*, 6/1/08.

⊕ Representatives from 109 nations met in Dublin in May and built a **treaty banning cluster weapons**, those small, lethal packages that are reportedly responsible for more deaths in warzones than any other system. Over the next eight years the agreement will outlaw the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster weapons. While that is cause for celebration, six producers and users of cluster weapons (Russia, China, Israel,

Pakistan, India and the U.S.) did not attend the meeting and say they will not sign the treaty. The U.S., Russia and China together stockpile more than a billion cluster munitions - far more than the numbers of munitions that all the other countries agreed to destroy. It is important to remember that cluster munitions disproportionately impact children - a third of the victims of these weapons are children.

The Morning Call editorial of June 9th supported efforts in the U.S. Senate to have the U.S. join this treaty. If you would like to help with local efforts in this regard, contact Dan Falco at 610-797-1864 or Mary Lou Hatcher at 610-866-7527. (Source on treaty developments: "Arms & Security Update" by Frida Berrigan, 6/3/08.)

⊕ "My country has done wonderful things that nobody believed we would do: civil rights, women's rights, freedom of speech. The nonviolent revolution will come next."

- Pete Seeger, *Parade*, 2/24/08

Save the Dates:
Sat., Sept. 6
LEPOCO Peace Picnic
&
Sat., Sept. 27
LEPOCO Yard Sale

The Struggle Shared

(Continued from page 9)

like Thomas Wolfe, but then he gave it back, he put it in language so the people whom the songs and stories were about still had them, still owned them." Utah Phillips developed a following in a younger generation when he teamed up with Ani DiFranco to perform and make recordings.

After he began suffering the effects of chronic heart disease he curtailed his busy touring schedule, started doing a nationally syndicated radio folk music show, "Loafer's Glory," and returning to his roots with Ammon Hennacy, opened a homeless shelter in his rural county that is now housing 25-30 guests a night.

The enormous persona and deep resonant baritone of this world-class raconteur will be a silent space on the stage of Godfrey Daniels Coffeehouse, and in folk venues everywhere. Surely he has joined in the lively spirit confederacy of Joe Hill, Mother Jones, Dorothy Day, and Woody Guthrie. Listen close.

- Jeff Vitelli & Robert Daniels II

Bits & Pieces

Ⓞ Voting 220 to 189 on May 22nd, the U.S. House of Representatives supported an amendment to the Defense Authorization Act for FY 2009, that would force the release of names, rank, country of origin, courses and dates of attendance for SOA/WHINSEC graduates and instructors to the public. Rep. Patrick Murphy supported this amendment, Rep. Charles Dent did not. It has yet to be considered in the Senate. The vote in the House was an important victory, but we need to contact our Senators now urging their support for accountability. (For more info. see www.soaw.org.)

Ⓞ There are many important issues regarding Latin America before the Congress. The U.S. House passed the **Jubilee Act** (285-132) on April 16 and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved it June 24, so it is now headed for the full Senate. Call your Senators. (For the record, Murphy supported the Jubilee Act in the House. Rep. Dent was not among the 69 Republicans voting for it.) This legislation would expand debt cancellation to impoverished countries to fight poverty, promote responsible lending, and require an audit of odious, illegal and onerous loans. It includes a Haiti Amendment that calls for the work on immediate debt cancellation for Haiti.

In both houses of Congress the foreign aid subcommittees will be considering how much to give Colombia next year. Efforts are needed to assure support for the victims of violence in Colombia. This is best done by ending or decreasing military aid to that country. (For more info. see www.afsc.org/colombia.)

Ⓞ Congress has deemed that **the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will continue until at least next summer** and that the \$162.5 billion to fund them will be added to the national debt. The final vote for this came in the House on June 19th, after which UFPJ's message from the peace movement to Congress read, "What Part of 'Bring the Troops Home' Don't You Understand?" (See www.unitedforpeace.org) (Rep. Patrick Murphy was the only local representative to oppose this fund. Both Pennsylvania Senators supported the funding, also.) We must note that the first vote in the House on this

issue was against the funding (due to abstentions by a block of Republicans), but for a moment the clear anti-war position had legitimacy and the anti-war movement a victory according to Phyllis Bennis' analysis of 5/28/08, also at the UFPJ web site. Also at this web site see "U.S. Trying to 'Legalize' Permanent Occupation of Iraq," dated 6/16/08 by Phyllis Bennis that explains the serious opposition in Iraq to "negotiations" on an agreement to keep U.S. troops in Iraq past 12/31/08. Several local news stories have reported on this opposition.

And then there is H.Con. Res. 362, that could effectively demand a blockade against Iran. With 208 cosponsors this resolution, if adopted, would be widely seen as an act of war. We can support HR 5056 to appoint an envoy to Iran for the purpose of easing tensions and normalizing relations with Iran.

Ⓞ On June 3rd, the Canadian Parliament made a historic vote in favor of **U.S. war resisters** who are seeking a safe haven in Canada rather than fight in the illegal occupation of Iraq. All the opposition parties joined to support this motion that calls on the minority Conservative government to create a program that will allow war resisters to immigrate to Canada, and it also calls for a halt to all deportation proceedings. You can show your support for this action by contacting Prime Minister Stephen Harper at pm@pm.gc.ca or fax 613-941-6900.

Ⓞ On Memorial Day local **Veterans For Peace** marched with their "Honor Veterans; No More War" banner in the Bethlehem parade and *The Express Times* published the editorial, "Ending War Deaths Best Memorial," by Mike Ferner of the national board for Veterans for Peace.

Ⓞ Starting July 12th Voices for Creative Nonviolence is sponsoring a **Witness Against War 2008** walk from Chicago to St. Paul, the site of the Republican Party convention "in the midst of the Iraq war." The walk is planned to nonviolently resist our country's continuing war in and occupation of Iraq. You can learn more and sign up to participate at www.vcnv.org.

Ⓞ You may want to make sure you saw these articles in local newspapers. 1) "Hidden Massacres By U.S. Ally Unearthed: Thousands of Leftists, Peasants Slaughtered in **South Korea** in 1950," *The Morning Call*, 5/19/08; 2) "Bush Flunks Iran Quiz With Warmongering Policy," an op-ed by **Faramarz Farbod**, *The Morning Call*, 5/20/08; 3) "Powerful Images Would Prompt Outrage Over War," an op-ed by **Gary Olson**, *The Morning Call*, 6/14/08.

Ⓞ Please see "**Ducking Impeachment in Congress and the Newsroom**" by David Lindorff, 6/16/08, at www.afterdowningstreet.org and let Congress know how you feel about impeachment.

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

Mondays, July 7 & Aug. 4, 7 pm: LEPOCO Steering Committee meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Wed., July 9, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Thursdays, July 10 & Aug. 14, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Veterans for Peace meetings at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., July 11, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem.

Mondays, July 14 & Aug. 11, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All members and friends welcome at this monthly business meeting where the activities of all committees and working groups are reviewed.

Wed., July 16, 7 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Thurs., July 17, 5 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at the Olive Branch restaurant, (355 Broadway) in south Bethlehem.

Thurs., July 24, noon: Association of Students Advocating Peace (ASAP) meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Sun., Aug. 10, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem.

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

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



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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Meetings...

YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING PEACE SUMMER DAY CAMP JULY 21-25, 2008

See Page 1 or call 610-691-8730 for a Volunteer Interest Form or a Peace Camp Registration Form
(or print the forms out at www.lepoco.org)

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

4-6 pm, Fridays

PA National Guard Armory, 15th & Allen Sts.

Contact: Allentown Armory Activists

Easton: 10-11 am, Saturdays
Centre Square

Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632

Please attend as often as you are able!

Peace Vigil to
Oppose Star Wars Bases in
Czech Republic & elsewhere
Wednesday, July 9, 4-5 pm
Bethlehem

(See page 7 for more info.)

Potluck & Politics

Joe DeRaymond

*El Salvador In the
Months Before the 2009 Election*

Sunday, July 13, 6 pm

Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting House
(See page 3 for more info.)

Summer Fair & Festivals

Join Others With Anti-War T-shirts and
Walk For Peace (See page 7)