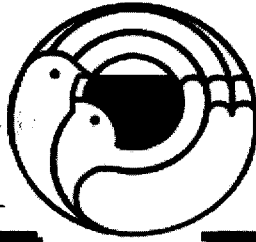


June-July
2013

Vol. 48 No. 5



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

Death Sky Pilots

On Saturday, May 25th, fourteen LEPOCO members who are fired up about drones car-pooled to Horsham, Pennsylvania, just outside Philadelphia. Our purpose: to see the "re-purposed" military base there (formerly known as the Willow Grove air station), now slated to become a death-from-the-skies drone pilot base. So many enemies...so little time.

If the plans to open the Horsham Drone Command Center go forward, young, likely 20-somethings will soon be sipping their coffee and chatting about sports teams on breaks from blowing up weddings, funerals, trips to find firewood, cars and trucks and carts with horses. Their targets will have included human children and families, and yes, angry young men of a certain age, walking down the road in their own country, tens of thousands of miles away, in Yemen, Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan – wherever our government sees enemies.

On the 25th we joined folks from the Brandywine Peace Community and others from the greater Philadelphia area, to stand at the intersection of two very busy roads, full of Saturday traffic. Our signs read: "No Killer DRONES," and "Drone Death from the Sky Makes US More Enemies," and "Drones = TERROR," and "Drones Fly; Children Die." Someone had brought a large model of a drone. There was music, and speeches.

We of course day-dreamed of real dialogue with the "any-jobs-are-good-jobs" and "we've-got-to-fight-terrorists" views, but no one presented themselves for that discussion. Still, we got lots of car honks, and peace sign waves.

That's the thing about drones and their pilots: It's so easy to spill blood when you can't and won't ever, see the carnage. And it's so normal to drive right by the site where drones could be piloted...unaware of what is going to be done in our name, from us to 'them'.

Still, the peace people will be out there at the base in Horsham, the last Saturday of each month.

I'll go again; if you want to, call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. There will be car pools on June 29, July 27, August 31, and September 28. Please join us.

- Kathryn Hoffman

Editor's Note: You may still be able to view a wonderfully framed photograph from the May 25th protest at www.phillyburbs.com. The photo features Susie Ravitz, Ed Liona, and Monica McAgnon. (Ed is holding a grieving woman puppet.)

Reclaiming Our World For Peace

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters of LEPOCO are joining the always international August observances around the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Sixty-eight years have passed and we are still called to put an end to the nuclear weapons in their many manifestations and to nuclear power generation. We ask you to join us in remembering and calling for a nuclear free future.

On Friday, August 2, LEPOCO's First Friday Film (Popcorn & Politics) series will feature, "The Ghosts of Jeju," about a very specific struggle against the large U.S. military empire footprint in Korea. (See page 3 for details.) (In a related matter LEPOCO's Steering Committee endorsed an International Peace Declaration that was initiated by 40 people's movement organizations in South Korea, calling for a peace summit and peaceful resolution of the Korean War as agreed to in the armistice talks that halted that War in 1953.)

On Wednesday, August 7, we will gather at 6 pm, at the Tondabayashi Serenity Garden (next to the Bethlehem Public Library) for what has become our traditional Hiroshima-Nagasaki Gathering for Peace. (Alternative rain plans will be set soon.) The gathering will include readings, music, sharing, and a short walk with appropriate signs through Bethlehem.

On Sunday, August 11, at 6 pm, we will gather at LEPOCO for a Potluck & Politics program with Sachio Ko-Yin, talking about the Transform Now Plowshares, who nonviolently challenged the nuclear weapons industry at the Oak Ridge, Tennessee, facility. (See page 3 for details on this program and page 5 for more information on the Transform Now Plowshares.)

What? PEACE CAMP 2013!

When? July 22 - 26

Where? Fountain Hill Elementary School
Fountain Hill, PA (south Bethlehem)

Why? Because it's always GREAT! A week
of fun as we make friends and explore ways
to create peace in our world.

Who? YOU!

If you've finished kindergarten - 6th grade, be a camper.

If you're older, join in as a teen or adult helper.

Call 610-691-8730 for camper registration or volunteer
sign-up forms.

L.V. Veterans For Peace

Favored by beautiful weather, the Lehigh Valley Veterans For Peace Chapter held its annual Memorial Day observation on May 27th at Cedar Beach Park, Allentown. The group's relocation within the park to a more visible site contributed to a greater exposure to vehicular traffic and to a steady flow of pedestrian visitors who stopped to view the display of simulated tombstones. Among those who came by were a number of veterans of both past and current conflicts. Between three and four hundred leaflets appropriate to the occasion were handed out during the day. Note is taken of the significant contributions made by several friends from LEPOCO, aiding in making the day's event an overall worthwhile experience.

On June 1st local VFP members Louise Legun, Judy Woodruff, Phil Reiss, Bernie Berg and Fred Fritch attended a rally at Fort Meade, Maryland, held by the Bradley Manning Support Network. The purpose of the event was to show support for Mr. Manning prior to the start of his trial June 3rd at Fort Meade. The group numbering one to two thousand, marched from the Fort's main gate to the area of the court where his trial is being held. Among others, speakers included Daniel Ellsberg and Ann Wright. While kept at a distance from the public by police the march and rally drew national and international media attention.

- Paul Fichter

Editor's Note: To follow developments in the Bradley Manning trial you can see www.bradleymanning.org.

LEPOCO Bike/Walk-A-Thon

Did you ever wish that you could go back to the time when going on vacation meant going to a nearby resort that did not involve much travel to get there? When you arrived, you would see old friends, engage in structured activities for the whole family, get to explore the great outdoors, and be served fresh fruit along with your bagels and Danish pastry for breakfast.

Those of us who participated in the Annual LEPOCO Bike/Walk-A-Thon had such an experience on Saturday, June 1st. Our participants ranged in age from 15-year-old Derrick Vaccino to the birthday-boy Bob Riggs who had just turned 85. We shared a wonderful breakfast and joined together for tai chi exercises led by Tom Ardizzone prior to departure. Frank Pavlick, of the Bethlehem Bicycle Cooperative made our bikes safe. As we walked or rode on the canal path we smelled the honeysuckle, saw the irises blooming, and watched the large turtles in the canal while sharing with each other our enjoyment of the wonderful outdoor experience.

The Bike/Walk-A-Thon is an important fund raiser for LEPOCO (so far, over \$1800 has been raised to support our work). It is also one of the most immediately gratifying and fun events you can participate in while working for peace and justice. Many thanks to the volunteers and sponsors who helped make the event a success this

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year. If you did not get to participate this year, we hope that you will consider joining us next year. You'll be glad you did.

- David Rose

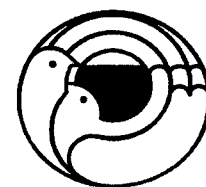
For the record - Riders were Emil Brisson, Urbane Byler, Walt Garvin*, robert Daniels II*, Julius Iwantsch, Ruth Karpinski, Dan Miller, Bob Riggs, David Rose*, Derek Vaccino, Julie Vitale, Jeff Vitelli. Walkers were Mary Attieh, Martha Christine, Peter Christine, Diane Dilendik*, Vince Stravino, Nancy Tate*, Ursula Wuerth, Hans Wuerth, Terry Briscoe. Volunteers were John Zachmann, Susie Ravitz, Marion Thorne, Mimi Lang, Mary Kay O'Donnell, Ellen Buck, Tom Stinnett, Scott Slingerland*. (*indicates member of Bike/Walk Planning Committee)

Those whose pledges (either in number of people or quantity of donations) were of special note, got the following premiums for their efforts: Julie Vitale, gift certificate from The Old Library Shop, Bethlehem; Jeff Vitelli and Ursula Wuerth, gift certificates from Aardvark Sports Shop, Bethlehem; robert Daniels II and Urbane Byler, passes to the Valley Preferred Cycling Center, Trexlertown.

Other sponsors who were generous in their support: Genesis Bicycles, Easton; Nature's Way Market, Easton; Quadrant Bookmart, Easton.

Book Group

The First Tuesday LEPOCO Book Club will not meet in July and August. In September they will discuss *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, by John Lewis; in October, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist: A Novel* by Mohsin Hamid; and in November, *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern*, by Stephen Greenblatt. For more information about the Book Club contact Mimi Lang at 610-866-2407.



Newsletter of LEPOCO

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

Annual dues are:

Regular Member \$35

Limited Income Member \$ 5

Household Membership \$45

Supporting Member \$75

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

Newsletter Staff: robert Daniels II, Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Jeff Vitelli.

Thanks to all the people who collate and prepare the newsletter for mailing each month.

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Sarah Andrew, Terry Briscoe, Martha Christine, Sheila Clever, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Janet Goloub, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Monica McAghon, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

Potluck / Popcorn & Politics

Friday, July 5th, 2013, 7:00 pm

"You Got to Move: Stories of Change in the South"

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

The Highlander Research and Education Center, established in 1932 as the Highlander Folk School, encourages those who struggle for justice by teaching them to become leaders of social movements. It educated leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, labor organizers, and environmentalists. This documentary follows several Highlander-educated citizens who sought to end injustice in their own communities.

Directed by Lucy Massie Phenix. 80 minutes. 1985.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, August 2nd, 2013, 7:00 pm

"The Ghosts of Jeju"

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

Documentary about the struggle of the people of Gangjeong Village on Jeju Island, South Korea, who have been arrested, jailed, fined, and hospitalized for resisting the construction of a massive U.S. naval base that, if completed, will destroy their four hundred year old village and their UNESCO protected environment.

Directed by Regis Tremblay. 120 minutes. 2013

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, August 11th, 2013, 6:00 pm

Sachio Ko-Yin

"Transform Now Plowshares!"

Three Activists Enter a Nuclear Facility & Symbolically Disarm It, & Now Face Sentencing!"

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Sachio Ko-Yin, a member of the Philadelphia War Resisters League, served over two years in prison for a Plowshare action in 1998. He will speak about Sister Megan Rice, Greg Boertje-Obed, and Michael Walli, who entered the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Facility at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, on June 28, 2012, and undertook symbolic disarmament actions like praying and singing. They were found guilty of multiple charges on May 9 and they each face up to 30 years in prison. (For more on the Transform Now Plowshares please see page 5 of this newsletter.)

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 6:00 pm.

The presentation and discussion should begin shortly after 6:30 pm.



"Let's Hear From Guy & Greta"

Sunday, July 14, 6:00 pm

Potluck Reception: Please bring finger foods or drinks to share,
at the home of Martin Boksenbaum & Janet Goloub in Treichlers
(call 610-767-1287 or 610-691-8730 for directions).

Guy Gray and Greta Browne took their lives and their environmental activism to Brazil in 2011. They are blossoming in the central highlands of the country. We will hear about their efforts for peace and the environment (they have a special interest in permaculture and agroforestry), their views on the demonstrations now underway in Brazil, and how we (in the U.S.) look from their new vantage point. There will be an opportunity for donations that benefit LEPOCO and a new project in Latin America. Questions: call 610-691-8730.

Bits & Pieces

☪ In August and September LEPOCO will participate in several **fairs and festivals** and, of course, we will need volunteers to help staff our tables and tents. Please contact LEPOCO if you can help out at any or all of the following:

Sunday, August 18, Pride in the Park at Cedar Beach Park, Allentown.

Saturday, September 7, VegFest on the Greenway, south Bethlehem.

Saturday, September 21, The Peace Fair, Buckingham Friends Meeting, Lahaska, Pennsylvania.

☪ The War Resisters League will hold a **90th Anniversary National Conference**, August 1- 4, at Georgetown University, in Washington, DC. The theme will be, "Revolutionary Nonviolence: Building Bridges Across Generations and Communities." In the conference call they write, "...we will address the need to open the definition of 'we' as we struggle to help build the broad and diverse movement that's waiting to be created." Much of the conference time will be spent in small groups discussing a common thread that is a "foundation of our work: Learn, Resist, Disarm, Restore, and Build." Don't miss the opportunity to attend this the first WRL conference in 10 years. You can register at www.warresisters.org. LEPOCO has copies of the conference brochure.

☪ As of mid-June 500 people had been arrested in **North Carolina's Moral Mondays**. The weekly demonstrations began in April in response to what one participant called the "cocktail of meanness" being carried out by the new Republican majorities in both houses of the state's legislature. Organized by the N.C. NAACP, the protestors are concerned about the environment, health issues, women's issues and economic justice. For more info. see www.naacpnc.org.

☪ Philadelphians are responding to the new crisis in their public schools with a "**Fast for Safe Schools**" and a

farewell concert by dozens of pink-slipped music teachers and some of their students. Our miserly state government has contributed significantly to this dire situation for students who face all too many challenges already without seeing their sports and arts programs gone, along with assistant principals, counselors, cafeteria aides and secretaries. (For more info. see www.realfoodrealjobs.org.)

And, of course, school cut-backs have been quite serious locally. At a demonstration in Allentown against teacher lay-offs in the city's schools, students also performed music to protest the cuts. But yet tax dollars go for arenas, shopping centers, prisons, drones and massive spying programs.

☪ **Witness For Peace** is sponsoring a **30th anniversary delegation to Nicaragua/Honduras**, August 17 - 31. The delegation will look at current realities in Honduras and Nicaragua, explore the legacy of the 1980s, and develop creative responses for seeking justice and peace in the current context. Cost: \$1360 plus airfare. For more info. contact Amy Truax at 206-787-0657.

☪ **Dirty Wars**, the new documentary that follows investigative journalist Jeremy Scahill, as he looks into the truth behind the U.S. government's "global war" theory that is used to justify killings around the world with drones and other weapons, is playing as close as Philadelphia, NYC and

Montclair, NJ. We can ask local theatres when they will schedule showings.

☪ The **U.S. Conference of Mayors** meeting in Las Vegas in late June unanimously adopted a Mayors for Peace resolution Calling for U.S. Leadership in Global Abolition of Nuclear Weapons and Redirection of Military Spending to Domestic Needs. Among the specifics was a call for the "President and Congress to reduce funding for modernization of nuclear weapons systems, to reduce nuclear weapons spending to the minimum necessary to assure the safety and security of the existing weapons as they await disablement and dismantlement, and redirect those funds to meet the urgent needs of cities."

Check out the LEPOCO website at www.lepoco.org for a Calendar of Events, Newsletter Archive, Videos, & More. Sign up for LEPOCO e-mail updates by calling 610-691-8730 or by writing to lepoco@fast.net.



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

Friday, June 28, 1 pm: Newsletter Planning Meeting at Peace Center.

Monday, July 8, 12:15 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Mondays, July 8 & August 12, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the Peace Center. All members & friends are welcome at this business meeting where the organization's activities are reviewed.

Wednesday, July 10, 12:30 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at Olive Branch Restaurant, Bethlehem.

Thursday, July 11, 6 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting with pizza at LEPOCO Peace Center. VFP will not meet in August.

Tuesday, August 20, 3:30 pm: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at Peace Center.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information the Peace Camp Planning Committee, Peace Singers, or the Bike/Walkathon Planning Committee, or about any of the meetings listed above, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings please see www.lepoco.org.

The Struggle Shared —

We have the power, and the love, and the strength and courage to end it, and transform the whole project, for which has been expended more than \$7.2 trillion. The truth will heal us, and heal our planet, heal our diseases, which result from the disharmony of our planet caused by the worst weapons in the history of mankind, which should not exist. For this we give our lives -- for the truth about the terrible existence of these weapons."

- Sr. Megan Rice, 82-year-old Catholic nun, Transform Now Plowshares activist, admitting her crime, after her initial arraignment.

HONORING THE FINE ART OF GOING TO JAIL

- As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the three nonviolent peace activists known as the Transform Now Plowshares, are now facing up to 30 years in prison.

When they crossed into the boundaries of the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Facility near Oak Ridge, Tennessee, under the cover of darkness, in the early morning hours of June 28, 2012, they cut through three security fences, reached the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility, and under blazing lights, succeeded in hanging peace banners, painting slogans, pouring blood, lighting candles and breaking bread, while praying and singing, "Down by the Riverside," before security arrived to arrest them, at 4:30 am.

At their arraignment the following Monday, they were charged with federal trespassing, a misdemeanor charge that carries up to a one-year prison term. A prize-winning journalist for the Knoxville News Sentinel covering the story wrote, "If unarmed protestors dressed in dark clothing could reach the plant's core during the cover of dark, it raised questions about the plant's security against more menacing intruders." By Wednesday, all nuclear operations at Y-12 were ordered put on hold in order for the plant to focus on security. The New York Times featured a story the following week on, "The Nun Who Broke Into the Nuclear Sanctum," citing nuclear experts who referred to the actions of the Transform Plowshares as "the biggest security breach in the history of the nation's atomic complex."

From that point on the government began adding to the charges against the three activists. The Department of Energy swore out a federal criminal complaint for damage to federal property (up to five years in federal prison), followed by more serious

charges of property damage (up to 10 years), and finally in December of 2012, a new indictment of sabotage, "intending to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of the United States, and willful damage of national security premises in violation of 18 US code 2155, punishable with up to 20 years in prison."

The Transform Plowshares activists, Sister Megan Rice, Greg Boertje-Obed of Duluth, Minnesota, Catholic Worker House, and Michael Walli, Vietnam Veteran turned peacemaker at Dorothy Day Catholic Worker House in Washington, DC, join an honored tradition of civil resisters. For more information see: www.transformnowplowshares.wordpress.com.

...AND GETTING OUT OF JAIL

- Tim DeChristopher, the climate activist, and co-founder of Peaceful Uprisings was released from prison in April for a 2008 protest of Bureau of Land Management oil and natural gas lease auction, in which he successfully bid on 14 tracts worth \$1.8 million with no intention of paying. While he served 21 months in prison, his action resulted in a court injunction, and the cancellation of many of the leases by the Department of the Interior because the parcels had been rushed to auction without sufficient environmental and scientific review.

His perspective on the U.S. environmental movement highlights the critical role that civil disobedience has played in social movements throughout history, including the civil rights and women's suffrage movements. DeChristopher's acts of civil disobedience have been compared to those of Rosa Parks by the media, but DeChristopher has said that his actions are more comparable to those of Alice Paul who escalated the women's rights movement by forcing the government

to publicly arrest women protesting on the steps of the capitol, lending visibility to an obscured social movement.

BAN ON ANIMAL TESTING

- The European Union voted in March to ban the sale of new cosmetic products that contain any ingredients tested on animals. Animal rights groups cheered the victory, and the liberation of rabbits, mice and guinea pigs whose tortured lives will now be spared, but Cosmetics Europe, a trade body, complained that the measure "acts as a brake on innovation."

Consumers will not notice any immediate changes, as products that were tested on animals before the ban will remain on the shelves.

In the United States we have some work to do before such a progressive ban will be effected. We are reminded of the story of Queenie the Dalmatian mix who died after torturous experiments at Wayne State (Struggle Shared, June 2012). The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine had obtained information on Queenie's medical records through the state of Michigan's Freedom of Information Act in 2011. In September of 2012, PCRMs associate director of research policy requested updated records on the hundreds of other animals used for Wayne State's heart experiments, at a cost of \$16 million in federal taxpayer funds.

Not only did Wayne State refuse to release any further records, but they filed a lawsuit in the Wayne County Circuit Court asserting that they should be exempt from Michigan's Freedom of Information Act, to protect the privacy of Wayne State researchers.

More and more, in the US, animal research laboratories have veiled themselves, keeping their procedures secret, their financial dealings obscure, and the animals out of sight. The public has a clear right to know about the experiments we are paying for, and society will benefit from the frank discussion of the real costs of experimentation, and alternatives that need to be implemented. It is past time for the people in this country to follow the European Union's example, and stand for the rights of animals.

- Jeff Vitelli



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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Monthly Peace Vigil

Our wars continue. Please help witness for peace.

4:30-5:30 pm

Second Thursdays: July 11 & August 8

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

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

**Hiroshima-Nagasaki
Gathering For Peace**

Wednesday, August 7, 6:00 pm

Tondabayashi Serenity Garden
Bethlehem

(See page 1)

Stand Up & Speak Out!

**Saturdays, June 29 & July 28
12 Noon**

Protest Horsham Drone Command Center
(Outside Horsham Air National Guard Station,
Easton & County Line Roads, Horsham, PA)

10:15 am: Carpool from Lehigh Valley
(From Hellertown Part & Ride, Silvevex Rd. near intersection
of Rt. 412 & I-78, behind Wendy's)

Please call 610-691-8730 to sign up or with questions.
(See Page 1 for details.)

**Let's Hear From Guy & Greta
Sunday, July 14, 6 pm**

Treichlers
(See page 3 for details.)

Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp

July 22-26

(see page 1)