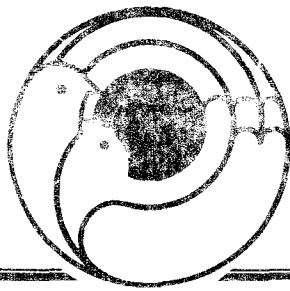


March  
2007

vol. 42 no. 2



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

## Other Lands Have Dreams —

Our Annual Dinner speaker this year, Kathy Kelly, has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times, and, among many other honors, has received the Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award, the Dan Berrigan Award from DePaul University, the Archbishop Oscar Romero Award from Mercyhurst College, the Thomas Merton Center Award, and a Doctor of Theology honoris causa from Chicago Theological Seminary.

Ms. Kelly served nine months in federal prison in 1988 for planting corn on nuclear missile silo sites, and three months in 2004 for crossing the line at the SOA in Fort Benning, Georgia.

Kelly is probably best known as a co-founder, in 1996, of Voices in the Wilderness (VITW), a campaign to end the brutal US/UN sanctions against Iraq. Between 1996 and the beginning of "Operation Shock and Awe" in March of 2003, VITW organized seventy delegations to visit Iraq. Kathy has visited Iraq twenty-four times including three times since March 2003. The VITW delegations brought "toys and medicine" to Iraq in open violation of the US/UN sanctions. For their work, Kelly and other campaign members were targeted by the U.S. Treasury Department and notified of a \$163,000 penalty on the organization, threatened with twelve years in prison, and eventually fined \$20,000, which they refused to pay.

Voices in the Wilderness evolved into Voices for Creative Nonviolence in 2005 and Kathy Kelly is still a leader of the organization. VCNV calls for an immediate end to the U.S. war in and occupation of Iraq; the unconditional cancellation of all odious debt incurred by Saddam Hussein's regime; the unconditional cancellation of the war reparation charges imposed upon Iraq by the U.N. following the invasion of Kuwait in 1990; and the full payment of war reparations by the U.S. to Iraq following 15 years of economic and military warfare against that country.

Ms. Kelly returned, in early February, from a two-month visit to Jordan. Last summer she was one of four Voices activists in Beirut, Lebanon, during the final days of the Israel-Hezbollah war and subsequently reported from south Lebanon following the ceasefire.

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, VCNV, and other national groups, initiated The Occupation Project: A Campaign of Sustained Nonviolent Civil Disobedience to End the Iraq War.



Kelly has written for many publications, including the *Chicago Tribune Magazine*, the *Columbia Journal of International Affairs*, *Fellowship Magazine* of the FOR, *The Washington Report on the Middle East*, the *Capitol Times*, [commondreams.org](http://commondreams.org), and [counterpunch.org](http://counterpunch.org). Her book, *Other Lands Have Dreams: from Baghdad to Peking Prison*, will be available for purchase at the dinner.

The dinner will be at The Cathedral Church of the Nativity, at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Wyandotte in south Bethlehem. Please note that things will start a little earlier this year. Doors will open at 5 pm. After music and appetizers, a gourmet vegetarian dinner, including Lasagna Verdure, will commence at 5:30. The program, including the drawing for the Art Raffle, the Steering Committee Election, music from the Peace Singers, and Kathy Kelly's talk should begin around 6:45.

Tickets for the dinner and program are \$25, \$10 for limited income and children. Patrons are \$50. Tickets for the dinner must be purchased in advance - if there are any still available, the last day of sale will be Thursday, March 29, at the LEPOCO office. You can use the coupon on the back page of this newsletter to make your reservation.

Program-only tickets are \$10, limited income \$5. If available, program-only tickets will be sold at the door.

- Mike Lawton

**Working to Stop the War**

**Four Years Later**

(See page 3)



# Have You Planted 10 Trees?

Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement, and winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize spoke to a sold-out audience in Baker Hall. Lehigh University on February 1, as part of the Leaders of Practice Lecture Series.

Recognizing Dr. Maathai's expanded wholistic approach to peace and security by linking poverty and the responsible management of the environment, was a first for the Nobel Prize. When resources are scarce, people fight over the scraps. Despair spawns violence.

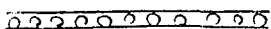
When Maathai, the daughter of farmers in the highlands of Mount Kenya, returned home from getting her degree in Biology, and Masters of Science in the U.S. during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, she found that 98 percent of the natural forestland had been clear-cut in the name of industrial development and private ownership. Through her work with the National Council of Kenya in the 70s, she learned how the lack of trees was life threatening to women's basic needs. There was no clean drinking water because of the soil erosion flowing into the rivers, no healthy soil to grow food, no employment, no firewood, no land. As a biologist she started planting trees in her own yard and encouraged other ordinary citizens to do the same. Women who already knew how to save seeds and grow food, learned to plant trees to conserve the environment and improve the quality of life.

The women in the Green Belt Network spread to successful initiatives in Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Lesotho, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe.

This educational community building movement has had to struggle to expand the democratic space, human rights, and environmental conservation by holding governments accountable and by forcing them to protect the commons of water, air, land and forest. When that wasn't possible, they voted out the corrupt government and voted themselves in. Maathai herself was elected to Parliament and is now Assistant Environmental Minister of Kenya.

As ordinary citizens in the U.S., we can be inspired by Maathai's example and join her in pursuing the Millennium Development Goals of planting one-billion trees worldwide. They have found it takes 10 trees to handle the CO<sub>2</sub> of each human being. So, she says, "If you haven't planted at least 10 trees, you are using someone else's trees."

- JoAnn Jones



# Acting to Protect Students

Last October 26<sup>th</sup>, Nazareth High School students were scheduled to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, or ASVAB test. While supposedly a career training test, its true function is to gain vital personal information about students for the military.

Bethany Towne, a student at Nazareth High, and a member of the Association of Students Advocating Peace (ASAP) had heard about the dangers of the ASVAB test. She was surprised to see how inaccurate the letter from Mr. Davis, the principal, was. For example: after signing a waiver, students are at risk of having their personal information sent to the Pentagon, but the letter from the principal did not even mention that the waiver existed.

Seeing this as an important problem, Bethany decided to take action. She wrote a letter addressed partially to the students and partially to Mr. Davis, about the ASVAB test, and the inaccuracy of the information in the principal's letter. Bethany carefully wrote the letter presenting the information as opinions and doubts, rather than facts, so as to avoid libel.

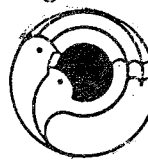
Normally students at Nazareth must register pamphlets with the school office before distributing them, but this process takes several days, and there wasn't time. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, Bethany leafleted the cafeteria with her letter. Her plan was to give the letter to the students first, and then present it to Mr. Davis. Unfortunately, the principal found her giving out the letters before lunch was over.

At this point, Bethany was sent home. When she later spoke with the school's administration about the letter, they were very condescending, she said. They told her that it was illegal to give the letter to the students before giving it to Mr. Davis, and that she was lucky they wouldn't sue her for libel. Fortunately, Bethany was not alone. After hearing about her problems, Peter Crownfield recommended Anne Felker, a local attorney, to help Bethany through the legal jun-

(continued on page 8)

Newsletter of **LEPOCO**

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

Annual dues are:

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

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

Newsletter Staff: 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 Wuerth and Ursula Wuerth.

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

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

Peace Art Expression  
Contest Award Ceremony  
Wednesday, March 14, 6 pm

Wildflower Cafe & Gallery

316 S. New St., south Bethlehem

Music, Food, Open Mic

Open Mic (especially for young people) is open to short expressions of poetry, music, prose, dance, drama

An evening for young people

(non-young people also welcome)

Apologies for any confusion caused by the change of date between the printing of page 10 and page 3.

Four Years Later

Please Help Say  
End the War Now!

1) Friday, March 16, Washington, DC  
Christian Peace Witness for Iraq

Bus transportation available from Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield (call Dawn Ranck 215-362-7640).

Contact LEPOCO to join/offer car pools from the Lehigh Valley.

During the day, nonviolence training (for civil disobedience) and workshops on crucial peace topics at DC churches.

7 pm - Ecumenical Worship Service at the National

Cathedral; 9 pm - Candlelight Procession down

Massachusetts Ave., to the White House; 10:30 pm Prayer

Vigil and Witness for Peace in Iraq at the White House including nonviolent civil disobedience.

End the Occupation + Support Our Troops + Rebuild Iraq  
www.christianpeacewitness.org

2) Saturday, March 17, Washington, DC  
March on the Pentagon

Buses being organized from Doylestown

(doylestownbus@answercoalition.org) and Reading

Democracy In Action, Dorothy Reilly, 610-779-3511).

Contact LEPOCO to join/offer car pools from Lehigh Valley.

Gather at 21<sup>st</sup> & Constitution NW at Noon.

U.S. Out of Iraq Now ++ From Iraq to New Orleans, Fund

People's Needs Not the War Machine ++ End Colonial

Occupation: Iraq, Palestine, Haiti... www.answercoalition.org

3) Sunday, March 18, 2-3 pm  
Community Vigils for Peace

(on street corners & in town squares throughout the L.V.)

3:30 pm - Community Peace Rally

Speakers, Music, Refreshments

(Location to be announced)

We hope to have 20 vigils in our cities and towns. Can you anchor/lead a vigil? Please call 610-691-8730.

Lots of help is needed with the vigils and the rally, please call 610-691-8730 if you can help.

Four Years After the War Began We Still Say

Out of Iraq Now!

Sponsored by the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition.

4) Monday, March 19

Peace Walk from Rep. Charles Dent's Office (701 W.

Broad St., Bethlehem) to the Federal Building (office of Senator Arlen Specter), 5<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Sts., Allentown

2:30 - 3 pm: Gather outside Rep. Dent's Office

3-5:30 pm: Walk Broad St., Hanover Ave., Hamilton St. (5-6 miles)

5:30-6 pm: Rally outside the Federal Bldg., Allentown

All walkers and supporters for peace are welcome! Can you join this public witness on the anniversary of the disastrous U.S. invasion of Iraq? Call 610-691-8730.

Help needed with preparing banners and logistical support. Call 610-691-8730.

Also, March 19, 7 pm: Walkers & others are invited to join the

"Sing Out Against the War," Muhlenberg College

(Parents Plaza), Allentown. (Rain: Egner Memorial Chapel)

Sponsored by Muhlenberg College Democrats.

## Popcorn & Politics

at the LEPOCO Peace Center

313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., south Bethlehem

Friday, March 2, 7 pm

(1<sup>st</sup> Friday Film)

*Howard Zinn: You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*

This documentary film follows the life and times of the renowned historian, activist, and author of the best selling classic *A People's History of the United States*. From his early days as a shipyard labor organizer and bombardier in WW II to an academic rebel and leader of civil disobedience, Howard Zinn has been a catalyst for progressive change for more than sixty years and is a model and inspiration for those who seek justice and peace. 78 minutes. Directed by Deb Ellis and Denis Mueller. Narrated by Matt Damon.

Friday, April 6, 7 pm

(1<sup>st</sup> Friday Film)

*The Battle of Algiers*

Shot in the streets of Algiers in a documentary style, this highly-acclaimed and controversial film depicts the tumultuous Algerian struggle for independence from the occupying French between 1954 and 1960. Banned in France for years and screened by the Pentagon in 2003, *The Battle of Algiers* is a case study in modern warfare with frightening relevance today. Directed by Gillo Pontecorvo. 121 minutes. In French and Arabic with English subtitles.

- robert Daniels II



# 2007 Steering Committee Nominations

Here is an update on those nominated for LEPOCO'S Steering Committee for the 2007-2009 term. Janet Ney and Julius Iwantsch will be running for the co-treasurer positions. We have two candidates for three openings for the Steering Committee at-large positions: Michelle Mecham and robert Daniels II. This means we need write-ins for that third position which is for one-year term to complete the term of Janet Ney who is now running for co-treasurer. If you are interested, or know someone who would like to serve on the Steering Committee, please write-in the name. The main responsibility for at-large Steering Committee members is to participate in meetings on the first and second Mondays of the month, and be available for consultation at other times.

Peter Christine, Holly Kent and Susie Ravitz have another year to go in their terms as at-large members of the Steering Committee.

Dan Acker, one of our co-treasurers for the past two years is retiring. We appreciate his years of work for LEPOCO as a financial officer, supporting the Americas Solidarity Group, as a member of the Fundraising Committee and helping with the Annual Dinner. Thank you Dan.

Ellen Buck is retiring from the Steering Committee after two terms. After these four years on the Steering Committee she has a fuller appreciation of how hard the LEPOCO staff work for peace in an earnest, dedicated manner. (Editor's Note: Ellen Buck has been a faithful member of Steering Committee helping initiate fundraising efforts, working on the Annual Dinner, helping to staff many LEPOCO events and being a mainstay of the Thursday vigil in Bethlehem and many other efforts. Thank you, Ellen.)

The following are a few notes about the Steering Committee candidates for whom you can vote by mailing the ballot at the bottom of this page in advance or by dropping a ballot in the ballot box at the Annual Dinner. Don't forget to write on the ballot names for the open at-large position.

Michelle Mecham initially became active in social change issues in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade when she demonstrated for animal rights. In 2002 she walked into the LEPOCO Office to talk about the powerful connection

between animal and human rights. She joined and became a valuable member, staffing tables at fairs and festivals, writing articles, helping collate the newsletter and attending vigils as well as marching against the Iraq War. Michelle works in medical records at Lehigh Valley Hospital and she is currently pursuing a degree in anthropology.

Janet Ney is an associate director of the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley. She has served on the Steering Committee for several years and now she has volunteered to use her accounting and business skills to help keep LEPOCO finances in order. Janet has been valuable in keeping our Monthly Action Meetings running smoothly. She has also been a chief organizer for recent Annual Dinners including the grand affair we had last year with a huge turnout for Professor Noam Chomsky. Janet is active at First Presbyterian Church, Allentown, and in many community efforts. She has a lot of business savvy and a great sense of humor which gets us through some head-shaking situations at meetings.

robert Daniels II has been involved with LEPOCO since 2002 and he has been seeking knowledge about peace and nonviolence in world-wide locations including India, Poland, Kentucky, Nevada, and South Africa. He has attended protests against the School of the Americas, the war in Iraq and against U.S. policies toward Colombia, and on other current issues. robert has been arrested in several protests against the Iraq War including at Rep. Charles Dent's office and outside the Philadelphia office of then-Senator Rick Santorum. He works repairing grandfather clocks and he does spell his first name without a capital letter.

Julius Iwantsch has been a LEPOCO member since the mid-1970s. Julius works as a design draftsperson, working with mostly municipal clients. His interest in social issues are varied, ranging from consumer issues to military service alternatives for young people. He has done work on Central American issues as well. Julius is active in the out-of-doors including skiing. This will be his sixth term as co-treasurer for LEPOCO.

- Ellen Buck

## Election Ballot

### Co-Treasurers (vote for two)

Julius Iwantsch \_\_\_\_\_  
(2 years)

Janet Ney \_\_\_\_\_  
(2 years)

### At-Large Steering Committee Members (vote for three)

Michelle Mecham \_\_\_\_\_  
(2 year)

robert Daniels II \_\_\_\_\_  
(2 years)

\_\_\_\_\_ (1 year)\*

\*Please write-in candidates who are willing to serve on the Steering Committee for at least one year. That is the length of the term to be completed for the at-large seat which Janet Ney is vacating in order to run for LEPOCO co-treasurer.

This ballot can be cast at the Annual Dinner on Saturday, March 31, 2007, by 6:15 pm, or by mail to arrive at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015, by Friday, March 30, 2007.

# Witnessing, Marching for Peace

No one could be certain what the weather would be like, but it turned out to be sunny and pleasant, about 55 degrees, as an estimated half-million people converged on the Washington Mall on January 27<sup>th</sup> to call for an immediate end to the Iraq War.

About 100 of us rode down on two LEPOCO sponsored busses. At the march I saw signs identifying groups from Montana, Colorado, California, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Vermont. It was an amazing confluence of energy and good spirits, despite the terrible situation that brought us together.

The speakers included Michael Lerner from Tikkun, Dennis Kucinich, Eleanor Smeal, John Conyers, Lynn Woolsey, Maxine Waters, Mayor Anderson of Salt Lake City, David Kline, President of Veterans for Peace, Ehren Watada's father, Jesse Jackson, Kevin Martin from Peace Action, Medea Benjamin from Code Pink, Sean Penn, Jane Fonda, Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins. Emma's Revolution was also there playing a spirited chant that posed the questions: Who lies? Who dies? Who pays? Who profits?

Eleanor Smeal proclaimed that a non-binding resolution is good, but not enough. Sean Penn stated

that we needed a resolution that's as binding as the death toll. A chant of "End this war now! End this war now!" went through the crowd, reverberating across the mall. A sign saying, "Chimpeach Cheney First," bobbed above the crowd. John Conyers implored us to hold rallies like this monthly, weekly, daily, to stop this immoral war. "Bush can't fire us," he said, "but we can fire him!"

Lynne Woolsey announced that we have an antidote to this insanity called HR-508 that puts us on the fast track to withdrawal. "Your voices have life in HR-508!" she exclaimed. Maxine Waters called out, "Let's tell George Bush, hell no, we won't go! Bush said he's the decider, but he is the liar!" Someone in the crowd waved a sign that stated, "Bush bin lyin."

After the speakers we marched around the Capitol. Evan Hoffman banged out an edifying rhythm on the bottom of a five-gallon bucket, and various chants buoyed us along. A peace group from Ohio, ranging in age from about 8 to 80, shouted out "Violence and occupation, will not lead to liberation, that's b\*\*s\*\*, get off it, this war is for profit!" The chant, picked up and repeated many times, had a tonic mix of rage and hope.

- Mike Lawton



## Marching to Iraq Lobby Day - January 29 on Capitol Hill

After my energizing all-day experience in Washington for the United For Peace and Justice (UFPJ) March on January 27, as part of our busloads of Lehigh Valley peace seekers, I wanted to sleep-in a bit on Sunday. However, I also wanted to go tell Specter, Casey, Dent and Murphy that we aren't going away until they stop the war. So, bright and early on Sunday I found myself with Nancy Tate, tooling toward Bethesda/Chevy Chase High School for the UFPJ training for Monday Lobby Day.

We heard UFPJ Co-Chair Leslie Cagan, Phyllis Bennis, Iraq and other veterans groups, former Congressman Tom Andrews and a host of others representing peace communities from all over our country. They talked about the current situation in Iraq and in Congress, and thanked all 800 or so of us for coming. They also talked about stopping the next war on Iran. Later we met in high school classrooms by state delegations (there were 47 states represented) to plan lobbying strategies for the next day.

Pennsylvania's lobbying group was 40 strong, including folks from Philly, Bucks County, Pittsburgh and suburbs, Lehigh Valley and other towns. We had vets from WWII, Vietnam and Iraq, as well as an Iranian-American. Advice and helpful coordination for our PA group's lobbying appointments came from

Peace Action leaders David Gibson and Phyllis Gilbert.

We were focused on: suppressing the supplemental funding request for Iraq (\$100 billion more after the \$500 billion spent thus far) and bringing the troops home. Our two other priorities were to investigate the case made for the war and how it has been conducted (misleading, lying, fraud, waste) and then **NO NEW WAR WITH IRAN!**

The supplement funding for Iraq, introduced February 5<sup>th</sup>, went first to John Murtha's House Appropriations Committee. If it comes up for a vote, we supported amendments that would place limitations on increasing troops and would close down Guantánamo prison.

We also pushed Pennsylvania's senators and representatives to co-sponsor and vote for a variety of bills (BINDING ONES) that would get our troops home soon or pretty soon. There are some in the House: HR-508 (sponsored by Lynn Woolsey, Barbara Lee, Maxine Waters); Rep. Jim McGovern's Safe and Orderly Withdrawal Act and Walter Jone's (a Republican) bill that says no new war on Iran without Congress approving it. In the Senate, there is Russ Feingold's bill, S-121, calling for redeployment of the

(continued on page 6)

## Dual Escalations: Iraq & Iran

The following is the introductory overview from a much longer piece by Middle East expert, Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies. The full piece (about nine pages long) is posted on the United for Peace & Justice web site ([www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org)). Having heard Phyllis Bennis speak on the present crisis in Iraq, and towards Iran, twice in recent weeks, I highly recommend the reading of her longer piece as we try to understand what the peace movement should do now.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

\*\* The Bush administration is significantly ratcheting up its threats against Iran, in the context of arguing about a battle between "moderates" and "extremists" in the region.

\*\* U.S. efforts to control or undermine Iran are longstanding, and are rooted in Iran's historic role as one of only two indigenous regional powers in the Middle East (with water, wealth and size) who can contend with U.S. domination there.

\*\* A U.S. (or U.S.-Israel) strike on Iran, especially with the nuclear "bunker-buster" bombs being talked about, would be deadly for tens or hundreds of thousands of Iranians, and would be a preventive attack -- in violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the UN charter, and other parts of international law, as well as the U.S. Constitution.

\*\* Overheated U.S. rhetorical accusations against Iran are expanding earlier allegations about Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions to claims (including show-and-tell but absent real evidence) that Iran is directly responsible for "killing American troops" in Iraq. Current U.S. policy in Iraq calls for "dual escalations" -- not only an escalation in troop numbers, but a geographic escalation, expanding from Iraq to Iran.

\*\* Beyond rhetoric, U.S. provocations include sending a second aircraft carrier group to the Persian Gulf, sending minesweepers to the Strait of Hormuz, arresting Iranian officials legally working in Iraq, openly backing the anti-Iranian Mujahideen el-Khalq (MEQ) guerrillas, appointing a naval flier as head of Central Command, continuing pressure in the United Nations to expand sanctions against Iran.

\*\* Iran is not a threat to the United States. It does not have a nuclear weapon and is not threatening to attack the U.S.; it is a signatory to the NPT and the UN's nuclear watchdog agency has found no evidence of a nuclear weapons program; Iran's nuclear power program, including enriching uranium, is legal under the NPT. As early as 2003 Iran had proposed a comprehensive "grand bargain" with the U.S. which the Bush administration has ignored. The February 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) asserts that Iran's involvement in Iraq "is not likely to be a major driver of violence" there.

(More on page 8)

## Marching to Iraq Lobby Day

(continued from page 5)

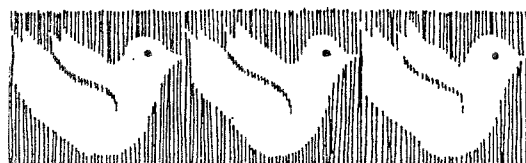
troops; as well as Kennedy's S-233/S-287, to prohibit use of funds to increase troop levels without Congress approving. The non-binding resolution of some democratic senators, now married to an even weaker one of John Warner's, was one we prioritized dead last. (The Senate appears to be unable to muster the courage to vote on even this one at present.) The House has a larger margin of Democrats, and may have more chance of enacting limiting legislation on Iraq. However, unless the funding is just not passed, the limiting bills can all be vetoed, thus enabling the Iraq War to go on as directed by the White House.

Our Pennsylvania group made good presentations to both Specter and Casey's staffers. (Nancy and I went out Sunday night and made posters with our legislative priorities spelled out as an aid for our lobbying meetings.) What was the most effective part of our visits to Specter and Casey's offices? Each person got a minute or so to say what they wanted to about their reason for being there -- the "constituency they represented," i.e., a Quaker, a teacher, a veteran, a parent or grandparent hoping to help end this bloody illegal debacle. We emphasized that we were just a fraction of those who had come to march on Saturday, whose voices we were representing. We reminded the staffers that their constituents VOTED last November 7<sup>th</sup> for an end to the war and an end to the loss of lives in Iraq.

My meeting in the afternoon with Charlie Dent's Legislative Director and Legal Counsel, Pete Richards, was a bust -- just like the last Lobby Day in September 2005, when I met with him. Mr. Richards was supercilious, condescending, and impatient with the four of us who met with him. He said that Charlie Dent had "problems" with a surge in troops, but would not commit to any legislation to limit or end the war at this time. (On February 16<sup>th</sup> Rep. Dent voted against the House non-binding resolution that opposed Bush's build-up in troops.) As Mr. Richards said in 2005, "We are listening to all sides."

As we left D.C., our group planned to be linked together, by e-mail and phone, to work on further lobbying strategies (we asked Specter and Casey to hold Town Meetings on Iraq and said we would follow through on this) to wind down the war and prevent an incursion into Iran. I highly recommend lobbying in this way. It gives you hope to work with others from around the state and country. It felt good to walk the marble halls of Congress and remind our representatives that the citizens are their employer. They must listen to us and act to end this war now.

- Kathryn Hoffman



# The Struggle Shared.

*Speaking truth to power is the best job in any democracy... so keep fightin' for freedom and justice, beloveds, but don't forget to have fun doin' it. Lord, let your laughter ring forth. Be outrageous, ridicule the fraidy-cats, rejoice in all the oddities that freedom can produce. And when you get through kickin' ass, and celebratin' the sheer joy of a good fight, be sure to tell those who come after how much fun it was.*

- Molly Ivins, quoted by John Nichols in *The Nation*, 1/31/07

**A HOMMILY FOR MOLLY IVINS -** After a life-long battle with the likes of Karl Rove, Molly Ivins finally lost a fight with cancer on January 31<sup>st</sup> at the age of 62.

She had always wanted to write a book called *No One Famous Ever Came*, about the lonely civil rights campaigns in East Texas during the 1960s. Instead, she sent out her syndicated column to newspapers in all those out-of-the-way towns where *No One Famous Ever Came*. Her warm-hearted populism reached more small-town rabble-rousers than any other progressive writer in the nation. She adored those righteous strugglers who carried on even in obscurity with little hope of being joined by the Nobel Prize winners and folk-singers. From the beginning of her career with the *Minneapolis Tribune* in the 1960s, she has made heroes of "militant blacks, angry Indians, radical students, uppity women, and a motley assortment of other misfits and trouble-makers."

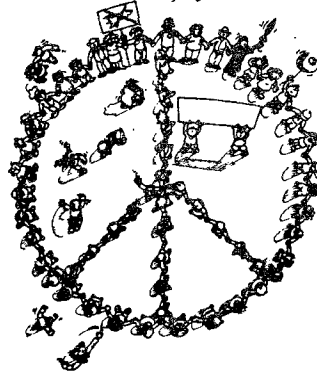
In her final column published on January 26<sup>th</sup>, just four days before she died, she urged her readers to join the throngs in Washington on the 27<sup>th</sup>. "We are the people who run this country. We are the deciders. And every single day, every single one of us needs to step outside, and take some action to stop this war. Raise Hell!"

Source: "Remembering Molly Ivins," by John Nichols, *The Nation*, 1/31/07

**DANCE IN THE STREETS!** - In the Winter edition of *Ms. Magazine*, Barbara Ehrenreich has a wonderful piece excerpted from her latest book which explores a "history of collective joy." She talks about the Dionysian rites of the ancient Greeks, and

earlier cults of Mithras (Persia), Isis (Egypt), Cybele (Asia Minor). "The urge to transform one's appearance, to dance outdoors, to mock the powerful, and embrace perfect strangers is not easy to suppress," she says.

The hundred-plus LEPOCO members who joined the trip to Washington, DC, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, experienced the kind of ecstatic collective joy that Ehrenreich believes is encoded in our human character, without which we risk succumbing to lives of depression in solitude. As spring unfolds, there will be more opportunities to experience that collective joy.



Ehrenreich says, "People must find, in their movement, the immediate joy of solidarity, if only because, in the face of overwhelming state and corporate power, solidarity is their sole source of strength." So get out there and Dance in the Streets. As Molly Ivins would implore us, "Let 'em know how much fun it can be to resist the war machine." Or as another favorite rabble-rouser, Emma Goldman, would say, "If I can't dance I don't wanna be part of your revolution."

**POST TRAUMATIC STRESS AND IRAQ WAR VETS** - Recently, Charles Figley, director of the Traumatology Institute of Florida State

University, and a Vietnam War vet, testified before Congress, "A tsunami of mental health problems resulting from the war in Iraq is headed our way, and neither the government, the mental health community, or society is prepared to handle it."

In fact, a Department of Defense (DOD) study published in the March 2006 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association* reported that 35% of Iraq War veterans sought treatment for mental health issues within a year of coming home -- 12% of those received a diagnosis. A 2004 study found that 17% of Iraq veterans suffer from Major Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder or PTSD. But, experts say, it's PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) that is becoming this war's signature disability. "It is the number one issue facing soldiers of Iraq and Afghanistan," says Paul Riekhoff, founder of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. Even the DOD is estimating now, that between 15% and 29% of all veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan will suffer from PTSD. The Veterans Administration is reporting case-loads six times higher than anticipated, and projects that with 1.3 million troops deployed so far, 400,000 could need mental health treatment by 2008.

PTSD originated more than 25 years ago to describe the combat related symptoms of vets returning from Vietnam. As in Vietnam the experience of combat in Iraq is one of traumatizing hyper-vigilance, typical of PTSD sufferers, a vigilance necessary for survival.

The October 2006 issue of *Counseling Today* (monthly publication of the American Counseling Association) featured a story about how over-taxed the V.A. system is to meet the mental health needs of returning vets, and just how difficult it is for non-military counselors to provide treatment for those in need. Source: *Psychotherapy Networker*, Jan./Feb. 2007 issue.

- Jeff Vitelli

## LEPOCO Art Raffle 2007

Thank you to Janet Goloub for organizing this year's Art Raffle. If you can use tickets beyond those enclosed with this newsletter (to sell or buy) just visit the Peace Center or call 610-691-8730. The drawing will be held at the Annual Dinner on March 31. This year's offerings follow.

Wheel-Thrown Pottery by Monica & Ray Sommerville. Monica and Ray's pottery and community activism are well known. We are glad to have one last Art Raffle donation from them before they make a big move to New York state.

Abstract Figure in a Box Sculpture by Frank Sabatino, Jr. This piece is a wood mixed-media construction displayed in a shadow box. Frank Sabatino of Bethlehem has made several donations to LEPOCO Art Raffles. His works have been exhibited at the Hanterton Museum of Art in Clinton, NJ, and at the Banana Factory.

Hand-Turned Wooden Bowl by Lee Buck. This is the third year Lee, a long-time LEPOCO member, has donated one of his beautiful hand-turned wooden bowls to the Art Raffle.

Framed and Autographed Poster donated by Tim Chadwick. This creative poster that advertised last July's talk by Scott Ritter and Ray McGovern, is autographed by both men and framed ready for hanging, thanks to Tim Chadwick, a prime mover in promoting the July program.

Colorful Embroidered Shirt from Nicaragua, donated to Tania Otero. This lovely offering comes as a reminder of Tania's few months here in the Lehigh Valley, and of her love for her native Nicaragua.

There will be two more surprise prizes announced at the dinner. Thank you to everyone who supports the Art Raffle.

- Nancy Tate



### Weekly Peace Vigils

Bethlehem: 4-5 pm, Thursdays  
3<sup>rd</sup> & Wvandtote Sts., south Bethlehem  
Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103

Allentown: Noon-1 pm, Fridays  
Federal Courthouse, 5<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Sts.,  
Contact: Rev. John Clint Fowler,  
610-746-5013

Easton: 10-11 am, Saturdays  
Centre Square

Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632  
Please attend as often as you are able!

Nuclear Nugget for March: "The Bush Administration is proposing to rebuild the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal, recreating the type of design, development, and production capability for nuclear weapons used in the U.S. during the Cold War." (Union of Concerned Scientists) Tell the President and Congress you oppose plans to produce thousands of new nuclear weapons. Tell them to disarm the already oversized U.S. nuclear arsenal.  
- Maria Weick

## Acting to Protect Students

(continued from page 3)

gle. As might be expected, most of the administration's threats were baseless.

As of now, students at Nazareth High must take the ASVAB test, unless they have a signed note from a parent. Mr. Davis, has spoken with the superintendent, and they are contemplating hosting the test on a teacher in-service day, rather than a regular school day, next year.

- Peter Christine

## Dual Escalations: Iraq & Iran

(continued from page 6)

\*\* The consequences of a U.S. attack on Iran will be dire. The evidence looks like a repeat of pre-Iraq invasion lies, but "even if" Iran was closer to a nuclear weapon or had sent weapons into Iraq, there is no legal or moral justification for a preventive attack.

\*\* Israeli rhetoric against Iran is largely paralleling U.S. claims; unlike the run-up to the Iraq War, Israel and the pro-Israeli lobbies in the U.S. are pressing hard for an attack on Iran, and any Israeli involvement would significantly undercut Congressional opposition.

\*\* The U.S. efforts to force American-dependent Arab regimes to back a U.S. (or U.S.-Israeli) attack on Iran include imposing a "rising Shi'a threat" framework over regional events and renewing the appearance of Palestinian-Israeli peace talks.

\*\* The U.S. is more isolated now than at any time since the beginning of the 2003 Iraq War; no US. allies except Israel are supporting calls for a U.S. attack on Iran.

\*\* So what are the demands of the peace movement?

- No military attack on Iran.
- A Congressional "Boland Amendment" for Iran to preempt any funding for any attack on Iran.
- Diplomatic, not military engagement with Iran.
- Maintain pressure against BOTH escalations of the Iraq War -- the escalation of troops and the geographic escalation into Iran as central to our work against the Iraq War.
- Build people-to-people ties between Americans and Iranians, including work with the Iranian community in the United States.
- Support for a WMD-free or Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone throughout the Middle East.



# Bits & Pieces

☪ Dr. Staughton Lynd will deliver a public lecture entitled, "America Behind Bars: Incarceration, Race and Class," at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, on Tues., March 20, at 7 pm, in the Empie Theater, Center for the Arts.

Staughton Lynd, author and editor of numerous books, the director of the Freedom Schools in the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project, a leader of the peace movement during the Vietnam War, and a labor lawyer who has long championed the rights of rank and file workers, has been a tireless advocate for social justice and peace in our time.

☪ The Lehigh Valley Greens, the political voice for Peace and Environmental Sanity, will hold their Annual Gathering on Sunday, March 25, from 2 to 5 pm, in the Community Room of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 424 Center St., Bethlehem. All residents interested in the political process, in running for office or supporting those who do, and in discussing the important themes of our times, are invited to attend. For more information call Greta and Guy at 610-865-9050 or check the website at [www.lvgreens.org](http://www.lvgreens.org).

☪ The newly forming local chapter of Veterans For Peace will hold their second meeting on Thurs., March 8, at 7 pm at the LEPOCO Peace Center. Contact Louise Legun at 484-553-9476 or [louise.legun@rcn.com](mailto:louise.legun@rcn.com).

☪ The Bike-Walkathon Committee has started meeting to prepare for the June 2<sup>nd</sup> event. David Rose, Guy Gray and Nancy Tate would very much welcome the assistance of other Bike-Walk participants and supporters in preparing for this fun event. Call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 if you can help.

☪ A Forum on Student Rights and Responsibilities will be presented by the ACLU of the Greater Lehigh Valley on Thurs., March 22, 6:30-8:30 pm, at the Lehigh County Government Center, 7<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Sts., Allentown (Basement Conference Rm.) Talks will be given by Deborah Gordon of the Education Law Center and Mary Catherine Roper of the ACLU of

Pennsylvania. For more info. call 610-437-3278.

☪ Students for Social Justice of Lafayette College is hosting a Peace and Social Activism conference on Sat., March 3, from noon to 4 pm, in Kirby 104. The keynote will be given by Paula Larke speaking on "Radical Voices: Freeing Our Roots." After panel discussions, the program will end with a transformation of the Hate Wall (a work of art) into a Wall of Peace and Justice. For more info. contact [garciaam@lafayette.edu](mailto:garciaam@lafayette.edu).

☪ Janet Chisholm will lead Creating a Culture of Peace: Nonviolence Training for Trainers at Kirkridge Retreat & Study Center, Bangor, March 21-25. Cost: \$445, includes R&B. Call 610-588-1793 for more info.

☪ Don't Miss: "Lone Protester: Ever Notice That one Guy Outside Dent's Office?" about the beloved Bernie Berg, 2/1/07, *The Bethlehem News*; "Darfur Political Settlement Desperately Needed," by Hans M. Wuerth, 2/13/07, *The Morning Call*; "Colombians in Crossfire Deserve Nobel Peace Prize," by Joe DeRaymond, 2/15/07, *The Morning Call*; "People With Good Will, Clear Heads Make Today's Best Prophets," by Rev. Lloyd Steffen,

2/17/07, *The Morning Call*; the latest *Bethlehem Regurgitator* published by Peter Christine at [bethlehemregurgitator.bravehost.com](http://bethlehemregurgitator.bravehost.com).



## Tommy Sands in Concert

Pirates for Peace International, from Northern Ireland, is holding a Gala Fundraising Concert with co-founder and award-winning folk-singer Tommy Sands and his daughter and son, all from Northern Ireland, on Sat., March 24. Carol Thompson, Irish Harp player and Bethlehem native, will perform with the Sands family. The concert will be at Foy Concert Hall, Moravian College, Bethlehem, at 8 pm.

Singer, songwriter, author and peace advocate, Tommy Sands is recognized as one of "the most powerful songwriters in Ireland, if not the rest of the world." (*Sing Out Magazine*)

Pirates for Peace is an educational program where young people in paired Catholic and Protestant schools visit each other weekly for programs in the arts, culture, conflict resolution and community problem-solving. LEPOCO member Annie Prince, was a co-founder in 1998 and is Director of Development.

Tickets: \$20, advance; \$25, at door. Patron tickets: \$50, include pre-concert reception. Tickets available at LEPOCO.

## MEETINGS... MEETINGS... MEETINGS... MEETINGS... ETC.

- Thurs., March 1, 10 am: Peace Camp Planning Meeting and Work Session at LEPOCO.
- Thurs., March 1, 4:45 pm: Newsletter Planning Committee meeting at Peace Center.
- Thurs., March 1, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition meeting at the Peace Center.  
See page 3 for information on current efforts.
- Sun., March 4, 7 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singers rehearse at home of Tim Hatcher-Morgan, 925 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem.
- Mon., March 5, 7 pm: LEPOCO Steering Committee meeting at the Peace Center.
- Tues., March 6, 8:30 am: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at LEPOCO Office.
- Wed., March 7, 6 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at the Olive Branch Restaurant, south Bethlehem.
- Thurs., March 8, 7 pm: Veterans for Peace meeting at LEPOCO Office.
- Thurs., March 8: Pennsylvania Delegation to El Salvador exploring the "Roots of Migration" departs.
- Thurs., March 8: International Women's Day
- Sat., March 10, 5 pm: Annual Dinner Planning Committee meeting and dinner at Kathy Hoffman's home, 1649 Linden St., Allentown.
- Mon., March 12, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at Peace Center. All members and friends welcome.
- Sun., March 18, 7 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singers rehearsal at Barbara Wurth's home, 525 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Bethlehem.

Please join the meetings and work of these groups as you are able.



# LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern  
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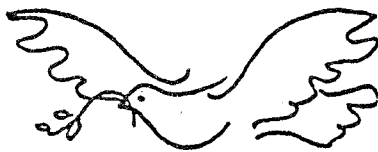
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Art Raffle Tickets

**Four Years Later  
We Still Say  
End the War in Iraq!  
March 16-19  
(See Page 3)**



**Sunday, March 11  
6-9 pm  
Peace Art  
Expression Contest  
Award Ceremony  
Wildflower Café & Gallery  
Bethlehem  
(See Page 3)**

## LEPOCO Annual Dinner Saturday, March 31, 2007

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Mail tickets to:

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Hold tickets at door.

**Return to LEPOCO, 313 West 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015, before 5 pm Thursday, March 31, 2007.**

**Tickets: \$25-Regular Adult; \$50-Special Supporter;  
\$10-Limited-Income Adult; \$10-Children;  
\$10-Program-Only Regular;  
\$5-Program-Only Limited Income.**

