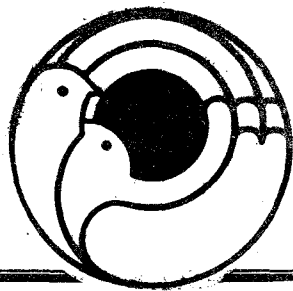


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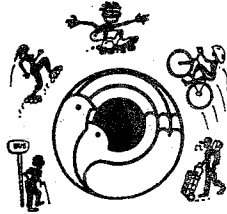
vol.41 no.4



Newsletter of **LEPOCO**

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

Join the Fun-Filled LEPOCO Bike/ Walkathon



Come bike or walk for peace and justice June 3, 9 am, starting at the Christmas City Fairgrounds, Bethlehem!

This year LEPOCO's annual bike/walk-a-thon will benefit LEPOCO and Pennsylvania Abolitionists United Against the Death Penalty. PAUADP has chapters and affiliates like LEPOCO's Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing throughout Pennsylvania. PAUADP staff in Harrisburg provide information to local groups on anti-death penalty legislation, scheduled executions, and strategy for death penalty moratorium and abolition so that action against the death penalty can be coordinated on a statewide basis.

Walkers will cover a 10k route, bikers a 25k route. Both options include scenic and historic points of interest. Maps, rest stops (with snacks!), and a support vehicle will be provided. Please see the pledge sheet enclosed with this newsletter. More are available at the LEPOCO Peace Center. Contact the Center (610 691-8730) for more info.

- Maria Weick

Looking Forward to Peace Camp 2006

Peace Camp this past year was another great week. I am always pleasantly surprised with the spirit of community established between campers and volunteers over just five days. On the first day of camp, it is likely that the volunteers in each group have only met once or twice, if that, and while there are a lot of returning volunteers each year, there are also always a handful of new volunteers. Of course by the last day, that all changes; I myself experienced this my first year at Peace Camp, and I wasn't even there the whole five days. By the end of the week, I had made friends with a lot of the volunteers, both from my group and from other groups, and naturally the same thing happened with the campers. This had to be the best aspect of Peace Camp: to have made a connection with people who were previously strangers over just five days; to hope,

months after camp is over, that you will get to see these people again.

- Dan Hoffman

Editor's Note: If you want to participate in Peace Camp 2006 as a camper or as a volunteer, please see the registration form enclosed with this newsletter.

Joe DeRaymond: Witnessing for Peace from Prison -- Four Weeks & Counting



After two weeks in "administrative lockdown" in Schuylkill Federal Prison and one week in Lehigh County prison, Joe has finally made it into the Schuylkill Satellite Camp. In a recent letter he wrote, "I got the *Counterpunch Newsletter* with some dynamite articles... The article in particular about Iraq, reinforces my resolve about the RIGHTNESS of the Dent 9."

He also wrote that he has gotten some great letters from many friends and supporters. He asked that I pass along his situation as of then - no pencils, paper, envelopes, stamps. Now that he is in the camp it should be just a few more days before he gets access to writing material. His address is still Joseph DeRaymond, #92569-020, FCI Schuylkill Satellite Camp, PO Box 670, Minersville, PA 17954.

He went on to write: "After the Lehigh County experience, I realize more the SYSTEMIC nature of our treatment. There is simply no room for humanity in the system that has evolved. Everyone, prisoners and workers, just wants to get through the day, DO THE TIME, GET OUT. I remember the comment, "I've got just four more year," said by a Lehigh County Prison 'correctional officer'! There is certainly no room for change or activism -- which is partially designed, partially a function of the culture.

Joe thanks you all, as do I, for your support of him personally and for your continued efforts to end the war in Iraq and to close the School of the Americas.

- Sarah Snider

Iran in the Cross Hairs

Since Seymour Hersh spilled the beans in the April 17th issue of *The New Yorker*, many articles have appeared detailing the Bush Administration's plan to launch a bombing campaign against Iran, possibly including the use of "tactical" nuclear weapons, starting as early as June.

One former defense official told Hersh that the military planning was premised on a belief that "a sustained bombing campaign in Iran will humiliate the religious leadership and lead the public to rise up and overthrow the government." He added, "I was shocked when I heard it, and asked myself, 'What are they smoking?'"

It's a painful reminder of the kind of fantasizing that preceded the invasion of Iraq.

An article by Sarah Chayes and Amir Soltani Sheikholeslami in the *Boston Globe* states that, "U.S. bombing is perhaps the only thing that would force Iran's frustrated, energetic, sophisticated, largely young population to rally round its discredited leaders. And this is why the Iranian government is so assiduously waving the red flag of its nuclear ambitions in front of the American bull. Because it knows that only prompt military action could save it from the humiliation its own population is planning."

They go on to say that Iranian leaders have gutted the Islamic Republic of any religious or political legitimacy. The current president, Ahmadinejad, was elected on promises of breaking the economic monopoly of Iran's corrupt religious establishment but, once in office, demonstrated his sympathy for the poor by authorizing a crackdown on union leaders representing striking bus drivers.

Bush portrays Ahmadinejad as a Hitler who must be stopped before he gains the ability to produce nuclear weapons. An editorial in the *Toronto Star* said, "Bush's tactics bear eerie parallels to his 2002-03 build-up to the invasion of Iraq. The ostensible issue then was the hidden weapons of mass destruction. Now, it is the Iranian intention to develop a nuclear bomb."

Bush has said he views Tehran as a serious menace which he must deal with because subsequent administrations of either party might not be willing to consider a military option. But, in January, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, widely seen as the front-runner for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, accused the Bush administration of not taking the threat of a nuclear Iran seriously enough, criticized the Bush administration for allowing European nations to take the lead in pursuing a diplomatic solution, and insisted that the administration should make it clear that military options were being actively considered.

The many negative consequences of a U.S. attack may be strong enough to convince even the Bush administration not to proceed with the military option, but it doesn't mean they wouldn't enlist Israel to do the deed. Stephen Zunes, in *Foreign Policy in Focus*, wrote, 2 LEPOCO Newsletter / May 2006

"Just as the ruling elites of medieval Europe used the Jews as money lenders and tax collectors to avoid the wrath of an exploited population, the elites of the world's one remaining superpower would similarly be quite willing to use Israel to do their dirty work against Iran. That way, Israel, not the United States, will get the blame."

Regarding the possibility of a nuclear strike against Iran, Glen Motil, in *Draft Notices* newsletter, wrote, "The worst part is not the destruction caused by such an attack - which will be enormous - but the fact that the nuclear taboo has been broken. This will most likely cause a chain reaction, leading to a new arms race and an increasing likelihood that other nations would dissolve the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and use these weapons themselves: eventually the U.S. will be 'forced' to use larger nuclear weapons, increasing the potential for the total annihilation of the human species as a result of nuclear winter."

Martin Luther King said the choice is now between nonviolence and nonexistence. The urgency of his insight has never been clearer.

- Mike Lawton

Action Suggestion

Contact your Senators and Representative and urge them to oppose an attack on Iran and to oppose the covert actions reported to be already underway by U.S. troops in Iran. Urge respect for international law and the pursuit of diplomacy. Urge a firm commitment against the use of nuclear weapons. Urge work toward a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the entire Middle East and U.S. leadership in fulfilling its own disarmament obligation to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 West Fourth Street

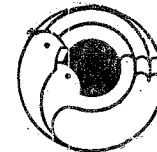
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Articles/news should be submitted by the third Wednesday of the month for use in the following month's newsletter.

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).

Potluck & Politics

Popcorn & Politics

at the LEPOCO Peace Center

Friday, June 2, 7 pm

Popcorn & Politics

1st Friday Film

**"Plan Colombia: Cashing In
on the Drug War Failure"**

(2003)

The U.S. is spraying chemicals on Colombian fields to eliminate the drug crops. The result after so much money spent on this program is that the supply of drugs is still the same, but the population is suffering horrific consequences by losing their food crops, poisoning, birth defects and the whole destruction of their habitat. This is a one-hour documentary about the first U.S. oil war of the 21st century.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, June 11, 6:30 pm

Potluck & Politics

Janet & Urbane Byler

An Older Couple's

**Contribution: Three Years in
Honduras**

Working for a Mennonite Central Committee program, Janet and Urbane Byler were based in San Pedro Sula in northern Honduras. They worked with a variety of short-term delegations visiting from the U.S. and Canada. They will show slides and talk about the short- and long-term effects for workers in the maquila industry, the rehabilitation work with gang members, gang prevention programs for youth and other important developments they witnessed in Honduras during their three-year stay, 2002-2005. Janet and Urbane are long-time peace witnesses and members of LEPOCO.

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

Dent 9 Update

I did not visit Congressperson Dent's office on January 17th, 2006, with the intention of committing a crime. I came to rectify a crime.

- Sarah Snider

As we entered the courtroom for the Dent 9 preliminary hearing on April 24th, a shackled Joe DeRaymond rose to greet us. (Joe, who had been with the contingent in January, is currently serving three months for crossing the line at the School of the Americas in Georgia.) We cherished the reunion, with our spirits lifting again as the room filled with supporters.

After the testimony of Congressperson Dent's District Chief of Staff Carol Halper and Lieutenant David

Strawn of the Bethlehem Police, Attorney Don Miles made a motion to dismiss the case. The motion was based on who had been authorized to tell us to leave on January 17th. Attorney Martricia McLaughlin added that the Commonwealth showed no evidence that we had intended to commit a crime on that date.

A brief recess ensued. District Judge Wayne Maura then ruled that the burden of proof had indeed been met by the Commonwealth. Defendants Susie Ravitz, Tim Chadwick, Sarah Snider, Joe DeRaymond, Bernard Berg, Maria Weick, and myself, each spoke regarding a citizen's obligation to act during a crisis such as an illegal war. After a closing argument, Don Miles again made a motion to dismiss the case. Said Martricia McLaughlin, "It is a sad day for our nation when the right to petition our elected officials results in the immediate arrest and lodging of a Misdemeanor Three charge against people peacefully assembled, according to their Constitutional right." Ms. McLaughlin reiterated that the "specific intent to commit a crime is not demonstrated by the Prosecutor's case." The judge responded by telling the defendants, "You have other options open to you (besides staying past closing time in your Congressperson's office)."

Judge Maura also stated that because he sits in a chair on the opposite side of the desk from us, he must put his personal feelings aside and do what he is "mandated to do." "You, the defendants, made choices to put yourselves in the courtroom today," he pronounced, binding the case over to the next level.

Therefore, on Thursday, June 15th, 2006, the Dent 9 will appear in court in Allentown at 8:30 am, to receive the date for their trial. Supporters are welcome to attend.

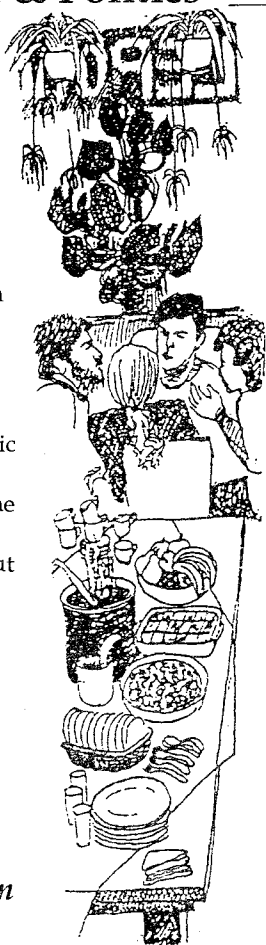
- Anna Maria Caldara

Be All You Can Be...Work For Peace!

Part-Time Paid Staff Position Available

LEPOCO is seeking a staffperson to work 10 to 15 hours per week on our Youth & Militarism Program. Responsibilities include outreach and education at public events and schools. Candidates should be comfortable doing presentations, speaking in public, communicating with school officials and working closely with high school-aged students. Other duties include developing and maintaining relationships with local schools, phone calls, mailings, attending meetings and conferences, ordering and managing the Y&M counter-recruitment materials. We would prefer candidates who can make at least a one-year commitment to this position.

Call 610-691-8730 for more information or send a letter of interest to LEPOCO, 313 W 4th St., Bethlehem, PA 18015 or to lepoco@postmark.net. Please respond by June 15, 2006.



Michael Berg & Michael Hoffman Speak Against the War

On Sunday night, April 23, about 150 concerned citizens gathered at Lehigh University to listen to Michael Hoffman and Michael Berg speak at a program organized by the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition. LEPOCO and others had information tables with buttons, bumper stickers and literature.

After updating the crowd of around 150 people on several community issues, Tim Chadwick urged us to read the op-ed piece by Cindy Sheehan (available at www.truthout.org) which reminds us that "democracy requires active participation not active and complicit apathy."

The first speaker of the evening was Michael Hoffman. Michael joined the Marines in 1997. Just five days before his commitment to the military was fulfilled, his enlistment was involuntarily extended and he was called to fight in Iraq. He was part of the March 2003 invasion force. He questioned the war from the beginning, but felt he had to complete his mission. While in Iraq he found other soldiers who were also questioning the reasons for going to war. Upon his return to the U.S., he co-founded IVAW, Iraq Veterans Against the War (www.ivaw.net). That group is now over 300 strong. Michael Hoffman spoke of the slick sales pitch used by military recruiters, devastated

cities in Iraq, the dangers of depleted uranium weaponry, and the mental and physical scars many soldiers are left to deal with when they are done fighting.

Up next was Michael Berg. He is known to most as the man whose son was beheaded in Iraq, but as we listened to him speak, we learned much more about this man. He has been a war protester and pacifist since the days of the Vietnam War. He spoke of the ways that the tragic death of his son connected his personal beliefs and his political beliefs. He also described the importance of forgiveness and reminded us that forgiveness is not condoning behavior, but working toward reconciliation. He stressed the importance of living our beliefs and voting for candidates who believe what we believe.

Both men agreed that U.S. soldiers in Iraq are viewed as occupiers and as long as they remain, the conflict is only going to get worse. They stressed the need for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the area.

Though we did not know it when we invited them to speak, both men are running for elected office on the Green Party ticket - Michael Hoffman for state senator in Bucks County and Michael Berg for the U.S. Congress from the state of Delaware.

- Michelle Mecham

Doug Rokke Inspires Many

Dr. Doug Rokke, the renowned expert on the health and environmental damages of Depleted Uranium (DU), spoke for college classes, college and community forums and held informal sessions in the Lehigh Valley from April 10-13, reaching more than 300 people.

The work he did here was probably much more than anyone with the health problems DU has given him should undertake, but as several who heard him said, "He is a man on a mission." Undoubtedly, his experience as an actor has improved his considerable communication skills and he brings the commitment of a warrior (a title he still claims with pride) to his effort to remove DU from the battlefield.

From his assignment as team leader of a clean-up crew during the first Gulf War, he has learned the hazards DU presents for soldiers and civilians. He has seen his colleagues die from DU effects, he has seen others with unusual cancers, he has experienced his own declining health (respiratory problems, eye and dental problems, skin problems), and he knows the fine DU dust travels far - even as far as from Iraq to London. But he still hears a stonewalling military claiming, as Michael E. Kilpatrick (a DU weapons specialist with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs) did in an interview with Tim Blangger of *The Morning Call* right before Dr. Rokke's visit to the Valley, "There is no evidence, medically, that uranium or depleted uranium has an effect on the human body."

What does one as informed and experienced as Doug Rokke do with such horrifying denial at the top levels of government responsibility?

Doug Rokke opens his heart to all those who suffer DU effects like him - the families of those who have died and those sharing the physical catastrophe caused by DU. He speaks widely (even internationally) as time, energy, and financial support allow, as he did here - giving himself to this truth telling that led those who heard him to make comments like, "He was the best speaker I've heard on the Iraq War," and "Your message this evening was so important to me." He celebrates the outing of some of that truth as in the article by Tim Blangger, April 11, 2006, *The Morning Call* (copies available from LEPOCO). In that article he is quoted as saying, "The stuff (DU) is awesome as a munition... But once I found out I couldn't clean up (DU munitions' long-term effects), the only moral and ethical choice I had was to work to eliminate them."

Thank you especially to Suzanne Marshall, of Moravian College, who arranged Dr. Rokke's visit and provided hospitality for the week.

If you know anyone having health problems due to DU exposure please contact LEPOCO if you would like to be in touch with Dr. Rokke and others working on this issue. Amazingly, there were several people who spoke with him after his talks here because of the DU-related problems they face.

- Nancy C. Tate

Being Peace in NYC

Flawless sunshine and perfect temperatures - it was a great day to march for peace and justice. And that's just what throngs of people did on Saturday, April 29, in New York City. About 40 LEPOCO friends and family members joined a diverse crowd of grandmothers, union members, children, folks in wheelchairs, canines and everyday people, to call for an end to the war in Iraq. Big Apple residents welcomed us with cheers and supportive signs in business and apartment windows.

The march was organized by United for Peace and Justice along with Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, Friends of the Earth, US Labor Against the War, Climate Crisis Coalition, People's Hurricane Relief Fund, National Youth & Student Peace Coalition, and Veterans for Peace. Lehigh Valley organizers included LEPOCO and the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition. There were no formal speakers, but notables like Susan Sarandon, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, Cindy Sheehan and Daniel Ellsberg attended.

The march began in the area of Union Square in Lower Manhattan and ended with a grassroots action festival in Foley Square. The festival was a great way to end the day as it gave participants an opportunity to mingle with each other as well as with representatives from a host of social action groups. The selection of anti-Bush buttons, bumper stickers and t-shirts was to die for!

I love attending these large demonstrations. The energy of walking with thousands upon thousands of like-minded peace lovers is rejuvenating. The memories of these experiences give me courage on those dark days when it seems like my efforts are a drop in a dark ocean of hate and anger.

And based on something I witnessed during the televised Watergate Hearings in 1973, I do believe mass demonstrations make a difference. I had just returned home from work and turned on the TV as Jeb Magruder was testifying. He commented that Nixon was very rattled by the mass demonstrations against the Vietnam war and that was one factor that prompted the Watergate break-in. I never saw Magruder's comment reported in the media again. But for me, it was a revelation that mass demonstrations, and most importantly their coverage by the media, do have an impact on corrupt political officials.

Speaking of the media, I was dismayed but not surprised by CNN's coverage of the April 29th event. They reported that the demonstration stretched about 10 blocks and was attended by tens of thousands of people. Don't believe it! The demonstration actually stretched over 22 blocks. I know - I walked them. Attendance figures are more difficult to estimate, but I can tell you that the crowd was so large that when our LEPOCO group reached the end of the route, over two hours after our initial start time, people were still waiting at Union Square to begin marching. Let me

also mention that organizers estimated the crowd at 300,000.

I could go on about the media's ethical responsibility in today's violent world, but I will save those comments for my e-mail addressed directly to CNN. Instead, I will leave you with these words from Thich Nhat Hanh, "Be peace, don't just talk about it."

- Karen S. Poshefko



A Reflection on the Thursday Vigil

Often when I am on my way to stand on the corner of Wyandotte and 3rd Streets, to protest the war in Iraq, I look forward to seeing Maria because she is always welcoming. She ties large signs to posts; like the red "Stop War" sign in the shape of a traffic stop sign, which is eye catching, as is the sign that Vince holds ing himself as a veteran who opposes the war in Iraq. Mike holds a wide sign deploring the costs of war that preclude paying for social services, education and housing. Sarah and Joe display a long yellow poster calling for the impeachment of Bush as a war criminal. Bernie urges passing riders to bring the troops home alive. Jeff 's banner opposes the whole Bush agenda. Among other memorable flags is the one held by Curt, with the logos of corporations in America, North and South, which influence finance and policy, not for the betterment of mankind but for themselves.

"Honk for Peace," brings on short and sustained horn blasts. The honks from the large trucks can startle the vigil keepers out of a reverie. Many drivers or passengers give us the peace or thumbs up signs, or verbally thank us for being there. Other people simply nod their heads in agreement. Recently an ambulance driver stated, "Bring the troops home," on his loud speaker.

Over time one gets used to jeers like, "Get a job," accusations of being communist, questions of our support of the troops, calls to remember 9/11, or poorly placed ring fingers. What is saddening is seeing children in the back seats or passenger seats looking at the signs and wondering how life is or will be for them. Will they question their parents about what the vigil represents? What will the adults say?

For a while Colleen displayed a shrouded figure such as seen in the Abu Ghraib prison with his head hooded and his arms outstretched. A fellow stands at the roadside wearing a Bush mask with a Pinocchio nose extending forward. He waves to people and often they smile and wave back. Peter displays signs at the entrance to the Hill-to-Hill bridge on the concrete pillars as well as at the corner.

When there are only four or six vigilers we turn the corners to face oncoming traffic. Gusts of wind can

(continued on page 6)

Youth Peacemaker Training

Editor's Note: The following reports are from two of the over 20 local young people who participated in the third annual Youth Peacemaker Training sponsored by LEPOCO. As in the past the program was an important opportunity for young people to meet with others who share their concern about making the world a more peaceful and safer place for all.

Saturday, April 23rd marked not only Earth Day, but also LEPOCO's third annual Youth Peacemaker Training (YPT). A motley group of high school students came together at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meetinghouse to discuss and learn about how young people can spearhead the movement for peace. The opening activity had trainees mill about swiftly as if late for an appointment, unaware of each other until they slowly began to pay attention -- reminiscent of the role of the peacemaker. One activity was a role playing game where trainees had to take on the role of antagonists like school principals and apathetic students in order to better understand their viewpoints.

Lunch was equally as peaceful, as it was made without animal products and was primarily organic and fair trade. After lunch, students broke out into workshops where they could learn about the environmental, global, individual, or humanistic aspects of peacemaking. The day went by quickly and created so much fresh energy, considering that many arrived drained because of lack of support in their schools and communities. Many thanks to Peter Crownfield, Margot Hillman, Jeff Vitelli, Sarah Weick, and everyone that helped to make this event possible!

- Cordelia Eddy

In the first break out session at YPT, the participants could choose from three workshops: The Consequences of Peace, about the problems of overpopulation led by Elizabeth Hartmann Dow; The Individual Peacemaker, about being conscious consumer and how to vote with your dollar led by Sarah Weick; and Times Up for Environmental Responsibility, on what we can do about environmental threats led by Hannae Pavlik and Peter Christine.

The second breakout session offered: The World Hooked on War, a discussion of the possible solutions to the problems of global militarism led by Tim Morgan; The Highs and Lows of the Left and Right, with an overview of human rights led by Sigourney LaBarre, Carly Dickerson and Hannah Greenburg; and Global Connections, a discussion of the effects of globalization led by Amanda Arena-Miller. We followed up the sessions with a time to get back together and reflect.

In the workshop on "Times Up," I introduced the participants to the issues of Peak Oil and Global Warming, and after this we discussed solutions. Hannae told us about starting an organic community garden as a source of petroleum-free food. In the remaining 15 minutes, we came up with a list of other productive things to do.

(continued on page 8)

A Reflection on the Thursday Vigil

(continued from page 5)

pull at the signs or blow hats into the street. I've seen Bob hold two large signs and his hat, all at once. We have to keep an eye open for the big rigs because they drive very close to the sidewalk and the rear view mirrors stick out beyond the curb.

Last winter a mouse ran from the Nativity church property and jumped into the street. We tried to catch it during a lull in traffic but he ran right into a car's path. Another time Nancy Tate scolded a man who was choking his dog by pulling him across the street with a very tight collar. He was a big guy with a pit bull but Nancy was not timid about correcting the man. Once last spring a man attended the vigil in his motorized wheel chair with a small poodle in his lap and he deliberately drove back and forth across the street with his sign against the war. Young parents have attended with their small children in carriages.

The changes in the seasons at the corners have been interesting. Impressive trees bud, blossom and provide shade, then shine with bright colors at the end of the season's cycle. We try to stay alert to the drivers, but observing the natural surroundings is a form of a short break. We can listen to the sounds of the tires on the road. When the cars come down the hill from St. Luke's Hospital they are quiet but the cars coming up the hill are nosier and the drivers squint because the sun is in their eyes. It's a relief when there is a breeze to blow off the exhaust smells.

No matter who attends the vigil it is heartening to see other folks present. Even if we are tired or worried before Thursday at 4:00, we feel better at 5:00 because of participating in this small effort for peace. It feels like one right thing to do. We must oppose the war in Iraq. Those who wish to attend our peaceful vigil Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:00 will be welcomed. Call Maria Weick (the one who is welcoming) at 610-346-8793 if you have questions.

- Ellen Buck

The following are the other local vigils that occur each week in the Lehigh Valley:

FRIDAY, Noon-1 pm, 5th & Hamilton Streets, Allentown, outside the Federal Building.

Contact: Rev. John Clint Fowler, 610-746-5013.

FRIDAY, 4-6 pm, 15th & Allen Streets, Allentown, outside the Pennsylvania National Guard Armory. Contact: Angela Morey, 610-434-1489.

SATURDAY, 10-11 am, Centre Square, Easton. Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632.

The Struggle Shared

The aim and result of war necessarily is not peace, but victory, and any victory won by violence necessarily justifies the violence that won it, and leads to further violence. If we are serious about innovation, must we not conclude that we need something new to replace out perpetual "War to End War"?

- Wendell Berry,
Thoughts in the Presence of Fear, Autumn 2001

SOUTH KOREAN VILLAGERS EVICTED FOR U.S. ARMY BASE -

In December 2004 the government of South Korea announced plans to give an extra 2851 acres to the U.S. Army's Camp Humphreys in Kyonggi Province. Never mind that the land was occupied by residents of the village of Daechuri, mostly elderly farmers. By December 2005, a Land Expropriation Committee seized the land by "imminent domain," and in March 2006, riot police arrived with as many as 50 buses to begin removing more than a thousand residents of the village, despite a nationwide protest campaign.

In evictions on March 6th and again on March 15th, several farmers in their 60s and 70s were pushed to the ground when they attempted to resist police. Several protesters and human rights leaders were arrested.

Rajiv Narayan, East Asian researcher for Amnesty International, said, "The government must release all those detained for peacefully protesting against these forced evictions... Any eviction on the current terms would leave the farmers in an extremely vulnerable position with few opportunities to make a living. We urge the government to carry out a fresh consultation. It should ensure the villagers are not left homeless and give them reasonable compensation, an alternative farming land close to their new homes."

Source: Amnesty International press release, 3/17/06, from www.commondreams.org.

DOMINICANS REPUDIATE U.S. TROOPS - In late February, a broadly representative coalition of people in the city of Barahona, in a southern province of the Dominican Republic held a ten hour rally to renounce the presence of U.S. troops there. Dozens of political organizations, in-

cluding hundreds of young people, participated in the energetic, but patriotic demonstration that marked the occasion of the 162nd anniversary of Dominican independence.

Although there was a notable absence of media coverage of any protests of U.S. military presence, and joint exercises of U.S. and Dominican soldiers have gone ahead in Barahona, Ramon Almanzar, chief of the Partido Nueva Alternativa, and leader of the alliance Unidad del Pueblo termed the long rally a success. The Dominican protesters received messages of solidarity from companeros y companeras on the Island of Vieques, where after years of struggle, U.S. Navy war games were ended over a year ago.

Source: E-mail forwarded by Susan Ravitz.

REMEMBER RACHEL CORRIE - Rachel Corrie was a young activist from Oregon who was killed by an Israeli soldier operating a bulldozer while Rachel was standing on an earthen berm. As a peace witness Rachel was protesting the ongoing demolition of Palestinian homes in the Gaza Strip. That was in March 2003. Video footage appears to show a case of intentional homicide, but, although the violent death of a U.S. citizen abroad normally prompts an investigation, the death of Rachel Corrie has been ignored by our government, and no one has been held accountable for her murder.

The Royal Court Theatre of London wrote and produced a play based on journal writings and letters of Rachel Corrie. It was performed in London to sold-out crowds and rave reviews. When the play, "My Name Is Rachel Corrie," was scheduled to be staged by the New York Theatre Workshop in March 2006, it became mired in political controver-

sy, negotiations broke down, and the run was cancelled. The full story was told in the April 3rd issue of *The Nation*. They wrote that "a self-portrait of a sensitive woman, and a polemic on the horrors of Israeli Occupation" is threatening to some of the powerful in the U.S.

Peter Crownfield of LEPOCO'S Youth & Militarism Program has been pursuing the truth through contacts with our Senator Arlen Specter. Specter is in a unique position to take action on the Rachel Corrie case. Not only is he chairperson of the Senate Judiciary Committee, but he authored a law permitting the U.S. to prosecute any foreign national who kills a U.S. citizen. Specter's office has not, however, offered one word of response regarding Corrie. You can contact Senator Specter at 3814 Federal Bldg., 504 W. Hamilton St., Allentown, PA 18101 (610-434-1444).

WILL PENNDOT REQUIRE DRAFT REGISTRATION WITH DRIVERS

LICENSE? On March 22nd the Transportation Committee of the Pennsylvania State Senate reported out SB758, which would require the Department of Motor Vehicles to forward information about individuals applying for licenses or state photo IDs to the Federal Selective Service System. In effect, young people could not get a license without registering for the military draft. Since the bill allows no exceptions for conscientious objectors, many young people would be compelled to violate their religious beliefs, or go without a driver's license.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has honored and protected the right of conscientious objection to war since its original constitution of 1776. SB758, if passed, would not only violate the state's constitution, but the Religious Freedom Protection Act of 2002.

Contact your state senator today to urge their opposition to this legislation. Sen. Lisa Boscola can be reached at 610-868-8667 or Sen. Pat Browne at 610-821-8463.

- Jeff Vitelli

Rally to Stop Genocide in Darfur

"My name is Ellie Wiesel." To that simple phrase, the huge crowd on the National Mall in Washington, DC, applauded the start of the Rally to Stop Genocide in Darfur, Sudan. Mr. Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner, said six to eight hundred thousand Rwandans could have been saved in 1994 and "we should not make that mistake again."

The April 30th rally was sponsored by the Save Darfur Coalition based in D.C. and comprised of about 160 organizations who have collected more than 760,000 postcards for President Bush speaking to his marginal notes about Rwanda -- "not on my watch." Mr. Weisel echoed this idea with, "Move the genocide from the margins of your report to the center of your report."

About 60 from the greater Lehigh Valley area (some on Group 347's Amnesty International bus, some driving) were part of this historic event where more than 40 speakers denounced the genocide and called for action. At the rally the Reform Jewish Movement announced a 30-day campaign to contact consulates and embassies of African Union and NATO countries (also Russia and China) to lobby for peacekeeping missions in Darfur. (See www.30daysfordarfur.org.)

David Rubenstein, head of the Save Darfur Coalition, said he and others had met with President Bush. The President was sincerely working to stop the genocide, but "we need him to work harder," he said. And in fact, news reports of May 7th announced a peace accord between the Sudanese government and Darfur's main insurgent group, and plans to bring in U.N. peacekeepers. The progress was attributed in part to "intense pressure from the United States, which sent (to Sudan) Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick..."

On the bus, Hans Wuerth described the conflict and the Arab government's apparent intent to crush the Black farmers in western Sudan. Comprising the Lehigh Valley group were representatives from Nazareth, Whitehall and Parkland high schools, Moravian Academy, Lehigh University, Muhlenberg and Lafayette Colleges, Northampton Community College, as well as members of the Jewish, Unitarian Universalist and Presbyterian communities, and the public. The day of the Rally, *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof spoke on Darfur at Muhlenberg College, thus ending local events sponsored by 100 Days for Darfur organizations. Keeping Darfur visible is a priority for all of us! To that end, RCN's media host Meredith Allen covered the rally and *Allentown Times* Editor Steve Althouse wrote a cover story in early March.

- Karen Berry of AI Group 347

Ellsberg's Call to Action

In a great gift to the community the Tresolini Lecture Series at Lehigh University had Daniel Ellsberg as their featured speaker on April 11.

Ellsberg gets eternal respect for his release of the Pentagon Papers in the media in 1971, detailing lies and

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miscarriage of governance during the Vietnam War. His activities since 1971 have been a consistent and powerful witness for truth, peace and justice. He has supported other whistleblowers like Mordechai Vanunu, the truth teller about Israel's nuclear weapons who spent almost two decades in prison. Recently, he stood with Cindy Sheehan in Crawford, Texas, in her witness to the horrible truths of the Iraq War, as a parent who lost her son there.

Ellsberg said we are in "perilous times physically and for democracy... We are facing imminent serious threats to democracy." He said the Pentagon and Congress are filled with people who know we are in danger, and yet they are not speaking out. He expressed his regrets for not releasing the Pentagon Papers sooner, and urged all those who can help tell the truths about the Iraq War and other dangerous actions of the Bush Administration to do so now.

The Seymour Hersch article in *The New Yorker* (4/17/06), about Bush's plans to attack Iran (see related story on page 2), had been made public days before this talk and Ellsberg said he believes it is the most important piece Hersch has ever written.

Ellsberg doesn't solely hold those in government responsible. He said we are failing to use the power we have as citizens to protest and speak out. He reinforced the words of others, "Our ability to speak out will be gone if we don't use it."

Reminding us that we never know the path of development for a peace witness, he told the story of his awkwardness as he joined a vigil line against the War in Vietnam while he still worked at the Rand Corporation.

Ellsberg is not only concerned about the War in Iraq, but said we have a "serious terror problem." He said the present administration is acting irresponsibly and it is hard to know how they could have done worse in addressing the issue of terrorism.

In an especially sobering part of his talk he expressed his belief that "vengeance is a fatal human characteristic in the nuclear age." He believes we have "some hope" of overcoming this.

It was a wonderful and challenging lecture to hear on the same day that Joe DeRaymond and others entered prison for their protest and truth telling at the SOA (see related article on page 1).

- Nancy C. Tate

Youth Peacemaker Training

(continued from page 6)

During the second break out, I attended "Global Connections." In this we discussed how globalization can be a good thing, but frequently leaves poorer countries disadvantaged. For instance, in Africa, major corporations do not want to further the careers of the African people by giving them the opportunity of skilled labor. The companies get their cheap raw materials and leave.

- Peter Christine

Bits & Pieces

☉ Shanti: A Journey of Peace will be performed at Zoellner Arts Center, Lehigh Univ., Bethlehem, Sat., May 20, at 7 pm. The presentation includes Indian and Western Choirs, Western Chamber Orchestra and Indian orchestra, Indian Classical and Folk Dance. Cost: \$10. Call 610-882-1016 for tickets or info.

☉ A small Lehigh Valley delegation plans to travel to Washington, DC, on Sat., May 20, for a march and rally under the banner, Hands Off Venezuela & Cuba. If you would like to join them call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

☉ Allentown residents, especially veterans and family members of those who have served in the military in Iraq, are needed for a peace effort. You can help by attending or speaking at an Allentown City Council meeting in mid-June. Please call Kathy Hoffman at 610-770-1252 or LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

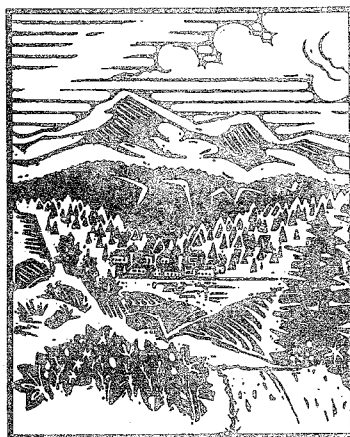
☉ LEPOCO had a table at the River Fusion program on May 7. Thanks to Peter Crownfield, Eva Moorehead, Holly Stoneback, Holly Kent, and Tania Otero for staffing and the Illicks Mill Partnership for hosting the extensive program.

☉ Tania Otero and Nancy Tate staffed a LEPOCO information table at the Community Service Fair at Freedom High School in Bethlehem on April 26.

☉ On Tax Day several people helped hand out the War Resisters League Pie Chart flyer at local post offices. The flyer details how our tax dollars are spent for the military and human needs programs. If you would like a copy please contact LEPOCO. Thank you to Anna Maria Caldara, Melba Tolliver, Sarah Parker Givens, Monica McAgdon, Reggie Regrut, Susie

Ravitz, Bob Riggs, Ken Moore, Ellen Buck Trish Cavanaugh, Melissa Moser, Mike Lawton, Jeff Vitelli, Donna Hartmann, Vince Stravino, Peter Crownfield, Nancy Tate and Arlene Grow for helping.

☉ The Alliance for Sustainable Communities of the Lehigh Valley has produced the 2006 edition of their booklet listing Organizations That Promote Sustainable Communities. Copies of a 90-page directory are available at LEPOCO.



☉ LEPOCO information was included in gift bags distributed at The New Earth, produced by Circle of Stones Ritual Theatre Group at Lehigh Univ., the weekend of April 22nd.

☉ The Heart of Haiti is a moving exhibit at the Michener Art Museum

in Doylestown through July 9. Andrea Baldeck of Philadelphia worked as a physician at the Hospital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti in the early 1980s and returned in 1996 as a photographer to record the daily life of the community.

☉ About 46 million U.S. citizens lack health insurance, and 50 die each day because of it, says the Institute of Medicine. Cover the Uninsured week was May 1-7, and was an effort to get top U.S. officials to make health coverage a top priority. Visit covertheuninsuredweek.org for more info.

- Parade, 4/30/06

Weekly Peace Vigils

Bethlehem: 4-5 pm, Thursdays

3rd & Wyandotte Sts.

Contact: Maria Weick 610-346-8793

Allentown: Noon-1 pm,

Fridays

Federal Courthouse, 5th & Hamilton Sts,
Rev. John Clint Fowler, 610-746-5013

Allentown: 4-6 pm, Fridays

PA National Guard Armory, 15th &
Allen Sts.

Contact: Angela Morey 610-434-1489

Easton: 10-11 am, Saturdays

Centre Square

Contact: Reggie Regrut, 908-859-5632

Please attend as often as you are able!

MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS...MEETINGS...

Thurs., May 25, 6 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meet at Olive Branch Restaurant, south Bethlehem. Planning for Hiroshima-Nagasaki Days will begin.

Wed, May 31, 8:30 am Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing will meet at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All those concerned about the death penalty are welcome.

Wed., May 31, 10 am: Bike/Walkathon Planning Committee Meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Wed., May 31, Noon: LEPOCO Fundraising Committee Meeting at NAWAB Restaurant, south Bethlehem.

Sun., June 4, 7 pm: Peace Singers rehearse at Bob Rigg's home in Bethlehem.

Mon., June 5, 7 pm: LEPOCO Steering Committee Meeting at Peace Center.

Wed., June 7, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition Meeting at Peace Center.

Mon., June 12, 7 pm: Monthly LEPOCO Action Meeting at Peace Center.

Mon., June 19, 12:15 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at Peace Center.

Note: Both the Peace Camp Planning Committee and the Newsletter Planning Committee were holding meetings during the time we were processing this newsletter so we did not have next meeting dates to include here. Please call 610-691-8730 for information on either group.



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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

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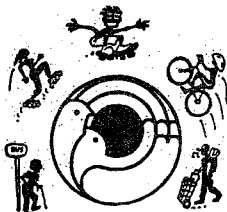
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**LEPOCO
Annual
Bike/
Walk-a-
thon
Sat.
June 3
2006**

See inside
for pledge
sheet form
and story on
page 1.



The "Dent 9" following their preliminary hearing on April 29th.
Standing (left to right): Tim Chadwick, Sarah Snider, Joe DeRaymond,
Anna Maria Caldara, Robert Daniels II, Bernie Berg, Art Landis.
Seated: Maria Weick, Susie Ravitz. (See report inside on page 3.)

