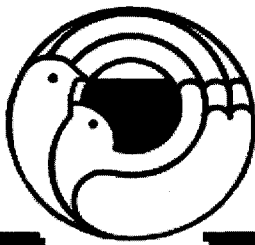


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Newsletter of **LEPOCO**
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

Honoring the Work & Life —

Joe DeRaymond dedicated much of his life to the struggle for justice, especially in his work with the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) after 2001. Joe's deep commitment to social issues, his incisive writing and speaking, his gentle sense of humor, and his self-effacing modesty made a lasting impression. He was a powerful inspiration to many people.

The FOR Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean approached LEPOCO's Americas Solidarity Group about holding a memorial for Joe this October near the anniversary of his death. Many people are very supportive of this suggestion as an opportunity to remember and honor Joe, and as an opportunity to support the Peace Community that he loved in Colombia.

This special reception and program will be Friday, October 22, from 6:30 to 9 pm, at St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Allentown (417 N. 7th St., with ample off-street parking). (Program at 7:15 pm.) There will be delicious food, a display of photographs from the Peace Community, remembrances of Joe and very importantly, John Lindsay-Poland and Susana Pimiento of FOR will provide an update on the Peace Community and other developments in Colombia (where the U.S. is setting up a military presence on seven Colombian bases).

We are asking a donation of \$20-50 for the evening (no one will be turned away), that will benefit FOR's work with the Peace Community in Colombia.

We hope many of you will plan to attend. (Please let us know if you will be there -- to help us with planning. However, a reservation is not required.) The gathering is co-sponsored by FOR and LEPOCO, with support from Amnesty International Group 347 of Bethlehem. If you would like to help with food or other preparations, please call LEPOCO (610-691-8730).

- Mike Lawton & Nancy Tate

The 25% Solution —

"United for Justice with Peace" in the Greater Boston area has seeded a promising call to action: *Fund Our Communities by Reducing Military Spending 25%*.

Congressman Barney Frank said recently, "If we are not able to get military spending under control, we will not be able to respond to important domestic needs." He suggests we can cut the military budget by 25% without compromising our security. Building on that idea, the Boston organization has formed a "25% Solution" taskforce, and its leadership is promoting the concept with groups in other states. Their web site, www.25per

centsolution.com presents numerous suggestions for advancing this imperative, and the idea is receiving approving attention across the country.

A stagnant economy and perilous unemployment rate may finally provide the opportunity to get voters' attention about our national budget priorities!

The 25% Solution links staggering facts about our excessive military spending to our paltry investment in public education, equitable health care, affordable housing, green jobs, veterans' services, and more. Spending almost as much as the rest of the world combined, we spend more than \$5000 per household per year on the military/wars. The 25% cut in military spending would yield \$175 billion a year to rebuild communities and extend a more decent and just life to U.S. citizens. Many people, when confronted with these facts, realize we do not need to police the world.

Plans are being laid to have Mike Prokosch of the 25% Solution campaign speak here in October. If you (or your organization) would be interested in this program, please contact Tom Ulrich at 610-882-1136 or tomulrich@mybluelight.com.

- Tom Ulrich

No Tomorrow: A Film on the Death Penalty

No Tomorrow is a soon to be released PBS documentary that investigated the murder of Risa Bejarano. Risa Bejarano was the subject of a previous film, *Aging Out*, made by the same filmmakers, about teenagers leaving foster care. *No Tomorrow* explores how a film about the last year of a victim's life unexpectedly became the center piece of a chilling death penalty trial when the prosecutor decides to use the film to persuade the jury to impose the death penalty. This film takes the viewer inside a suspenseful death penalty trial and challenges common beliefs about capital punishment. While it focuses on whether Risa's murderer deserves to die, a panel of death penalty experts also addresses the question of whether the state deserves to kill.

Members of the Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing have been asked by the producers of the documentary to arrange special advance screenings and elicit viewer reaction. There will be two local screenings. On Friday, September 17th, the film will be shown at the Christian Education Building, Central Moravian Church, Bethlehem, at 7 pm. On Monday, September 13th, it will be shown at the Easton Area Neighborhood Center (rear entrance), 902 Philadelphia Rd., Easton, at 7:30 pm, following the monthly meeting of the Easton Chapter of the NAACP. You are invited to attend and give your response.

- David Rose

Remembering Bob Thompson

On July 4th, LEPOCO lost one of our founding fathers. Bob Thompson was at his farm in Tioga County when he drowned while enjoying a soak in the pond on his property. Contrary to what was reported in local newspapers, Bob had been a strong swimmer, but deteriorating health, progressively worse since catastrophic surgery in 2003, left him weakened. His wife, Nadine Sine, who was with him at the time of the accident, believes he may have had a stroke. Bob was 74. His life, lived full-tilt for peace and justice, touched thousands of people in hundreds of ways.

Bob's family moved to Bethlehem, from York, PA, when Bob was in the third grade. His father was an insurance agent, and raised his family with a strong Christian ethic. Bob went to Amherst College and it was probably there that the seeds of his passionate pursuit of justice were planted. It was, however, in the year that he took off from Amherst to study abroad in Denmark that the fruit ripened as he saw another culture, one that valued personal relationships more than consumer goods. The experience defined lifelong values that he once expressed clearly in testimony to a U.S. congressional committee on the detrimental effects of T.V. advertising on the development of children.

Concern for children's development was the focal point of Bob's passion, from his seven years as a teacher of English and German in the Bethlehem School District in the 60's and early 70's, to his involvement in opening Illick's Mill as a meeting place for youth, to his work with Valley Youth House and Protection Firehouse in south Bethlehem, and his arrest in 1970 for his attempts to mediate a fracas between Bethlehem Police and Black and Latino youth on Bethlehem's South Side - for which he was vindicated two years later. He eventually obtained a Masters in Social Work, and changed careers to work as a counselor at the Family Services of the Lehigh Valley. He retired in 2004. Even in retirement, Bob took on the Chairpersonship of the Mayor's South Side Task Force and continued to make things happen in his beloved South Side community.

Bob's first contact with local peace activists was "an unforgettable memory," he told this writer in an interview for our 40th anniversary video in 2005. He spoke of standing on a street corner in Bethlehem in December of 1964, and hearing singing and lively conversation, looking up and seeing a band of 20-30 walkers with signs identifying the Nazareth-to-Bethlehem Peace Pilgrimage. "I had done a few things on my own before that, but I was delighted to see this energized group, right here in 'River City.' It was fantastic. So, I joined right in. We walked to Zinzendorf Platz." It was on the Pilgrimage that he met some of the other activists who came together at Kirkridge Retreat Center to write the founding document of the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern for the War in Vietnam.

Bob's alliances with LEPOCO included using his influence as a teacher in the 70's at Liberty and Freedom
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High Schools, to pave the way for draft counselors to enter the schools to counter the presence of military recruiters. He was on the Bethlehem School Board in 1982 when there was a proposal to fund a Naval ROTC program at Liberty High School. He was a critical ally to LEPOCO's Youth and Militarism Committee in efforts to gain a public forum to express opposition, and eventually defeat the proposal.

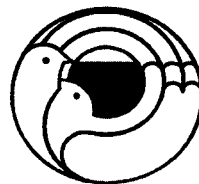
When I interviewed Bob for LEPOCO's anniversary archive video in 2005, I asked him as a senior statesman, what insights he would like to share with the generation of young people that had been arriving at LEPOCO. His response was a seamless summation of our interview: "The most important thing, I would say to young people is, to make the effort to leave the world a little better because of things you may have said and done, or even intended. Without that sense of goal or purpose with an ethical edge to it, I don't think they discover life at its best, or happiness at its greatest."

Bob's family has invited LEPOCO friends to the memorial service to celebrate his life on Tuesday, September 7th, at 7:30 pm, at Packer Chapel, Lehigh University, south Bethlehem. The service will be followed by a procession to Zoellner Arts Center, for a reception that will include live music, recordings of the Thompson Family's performances, and shared inspirations from countless friends Bob has made along the way.

- Jeff Vitelli

Newsletter of LEPOCO

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Supporting Member	\$75

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

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

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Addison Bross, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Becky Irwin, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Ruth Karpinski, Mimi Lang, Janet Ney, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), Ruth Walden.

Popcorn & Politics

Friday, October 1st, 7 pm: Chicago 10

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

Archival footage, animation, and music are cleverly used to look back at the eight anti-war protesters (including Abbie Hoffman, Dave Dellinger, Bobby Seale, and Jerry Rubin) who were put on trial following the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

Directed by Brett Morgen. 110 minutes. 2007.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, November 5th, 7 pm: Promises

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

Refreshing, human, and sometimes humorous documentary takes a look at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict through the eyes of seven Palestinian and Israeli children who dared to cross the lines and meet their neighbors.

Directed by Carlos Bolado, B.Z. Goldberg, and Justine Shapiro. 106 minutes. 2001.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



LEPOCO Book Group

The First Wednesday LEPOCO Book Group will meet next on Wednesday, October 6th, at 6 pm, at the Panera Bread Café, 3301 Bath Pike (Center St.), Bethlehem. At that meeting the group will discuss *Germs, Guns and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared Diamond. Susie Ravitz describes the book as presenting theories about how and why civilizations evolved as they did, providing a lot of food for thought.

New readers and discussion participants are welcome. Call Bob & Carmen Riggs at 610-867-1244 or Becky Irwin at 610-351-6936 if you have questions.

Hiroshima-Nagasaki in the Lehigh Valley

Under the leadership of LEPOCO's Nuclear Abolition Sisters, sixteen people distributed over 1300 leaflets at Musikfest, August 9 and 11. The message included a call for ratification of the new START Treaty and the banning of all nuclear weapons by 2020.

On Hiroshima Day, August 6, a First Friday, people gathered at LEPOCO to watch *Seabrook 1977*, a vintage film about organizing against nuclear power. The film showed the power of the mass nonviolent civil disobedience that took place in Seabrook, New Hampshire, as the construction of a nuclear power plant began.

On Nagasaki Day, August 9 (and again on August 11) we took our banners, the leaflet described above, and our candles to the area of Musikfest previously designated as a "free speech zone." Due to the good work of Peter Crownfield, the ACLU and others, all the public sidewalks became "free speech zones," at Musikfest this year. We chose to keep our previously designated location on the little bridge across the Monocacy, because it is a good place to have a presence that greets hundreds of people. Thank you to all who participated.

Many of you may have heard that for the first time the United States sent a representative to the anniversary

commemoration in Hiroshima, Japan. Robert Jay Lifton, noted psychiatrist, author and opponent of nuclear weapons, spoke of this development on "Democracy Now!" on August 6: "Having an American official at the commemoration is enormously important, because it signifies our joining in honoring the dead...and finding meaning in their deaths. And the overall meaning at that ceremony is warning the world about the dangers of nuclear weapons..."

Afghanistan: At Nine Years

On August 19, twenty people gathered at LEPOCO at the initiative of the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition to discuss, "Ending the U.S. War in Afghanistan: A Primer," by Phyllis Bennie and David Wildman. Maria Weick, Addison Bross, Susie Ravitz, Curt Day, Terry Briscoe, and Mimi Lang, each reported on sections of the book in turn, followed by comments from everyone else. It was a very rich and challenging discussion. There was inadequate time for planning what to do locally, but the ninth anniversary of the start of that war is fast approaching. National days of action have been called for October 7-10. The next Peace Coalition meeting will occur as this newsletter is being prepared. Please call the LEPOCO Office (610-691-8730) or watch e-mail updates for information on what is planned. Copies of the book are available at LEPOCO for \$10.

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

Ann Wright in Bethlehem to Speak about Gaza Flotilla _____

Colonel Ann Wright spoke about the Gaza Flotilla on July 21st, at Wesley United Methodist Church, Bethlehem. This was a meaningful eyewitness account by a nationally recognized peace activist who, in May, was onboard one of the ships attempting to break the draconian land and sea blockade of the Gaza Strip that has been imposed by Israel. All the ships in the flotilla carried humanitarian supplies including medicines, school supplies, and housing materials. To the best of Col. Wright's knowledge, no weapons were on board any of the vessels when they departed Cyprus. She reported that no significant weapons were found by the Israeli inspectors after the ships and cargo were seized during the raid by Israeli commandos. An accurate and independent account is tough to come by since all cameras and recording devices were confiscated by the Israeli military.

Col. Wright, a former deputy ambassador to Afghanistan, has asked the U.S. State Dept., unsuccessfully, for help in securing the return of the belongings taken from the U.S. citizens on the flotilla. She questions why the flotilla was not stopped in some other less violent way such as blocking their passage with one of the large Israeli vessels. She noted that several Israeli soldiers were actually treated by the Turkish physician on the lead ship, the Mavi Mamara, while nine activists armed largely with metal pipes, were shot and killed.

Col. Wright was encouraged that some of the cargo carried by the flotilla was eventually permitted to enter Gaza. There has also been a slight lifting of the land blockade of Gaza, but the flow of goods is still only a fraction of the normal amount seen before 2007. She looks forward to another flotilla to Gaza in the next six months. She is raising funds for a U.S. peace vessel to be with such a flotilla. There were only 14 U.S. citizens among the 700 peace activists on the May flotilla. (At the July program, over \$1700 was donated toward Col. Wright's effort to secure a U.S. ship.)

The audience of 150 at Wesley Church was diverse. We enjoyed Middle Eastern food supplied by Johnny's Bagels, during our small discussions. I think the eating and conversation is as productive for global understanding and peace as some of the UN efforts. Thanks to Ardis Chapman and Wesley Church for allowing us to hold this important educational event. We were declined use of other churches because the speaker was deemed "too controversial." I believe Martin Luther King and Dietrich Bonhoeffer were also considered "controversial" so Ann Wright is in good company.

The event was initiated by Veterans For Peace and an ad hoc committee working on Palestinian issues with support from LEPOCO and Peace & Justice Across Borders.

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To learn more about the troubled history of the Middle East I recommend a well researched paperback available at LEPOCO for \$10 -- Phyllis Bennis' *Understanding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*. For a current Israeli view see the liberal Jerusalem newspaper website www.haaretz.com.

- Vince Stravino

How I Spent My Summer Vacation _____

I spent eleven days at Think Outside the Bomb's "Disarmament Summer Encampment" in Chimayo, New Mexico, learning about permaculture, organizing, and the nuclear complex. The land we stayed on is home to a native family who has been active in the anti-nuclear movement for decades. We wanted to leave the land better than we found it so we not only learned about permaculture, but got hands-on experience building and using permaculture systems. We tended to gardens and had two gray water systems that recycled all of our used water to either the gardens or the willows. We also composted everything we could, we even used composting toilets!

We learned about each step of the nuclear-industrial complex from those directly affected and we participated in workshops about organizing, consensus, and nonviolent direct action. Combining everything we learned we planned two successful actions directed at Los Alamos National Laboratories (LANL), banner drops and a wheat pasting mission. Our message was: No Chemical and Metallurgy Research Replacement (CMRR) Facility and No New Uranium Mining Permits. First we went to Santé Fe where we marched, had community members speak, stormed (nonviolently) the office of a lawyer who represents a uranium mining company, then danced and chanted in the rotunda of the Capitol. The next day was Hiroshima Day and our big action in Los Alamos. We began at Ashley Pond with a water ceremony then marched to LANL stopping along the way to perform our street theater piece, giving our final performance in the intersection at the entrance to the lab. From there we proceeded to the current CMR building where eight people were arrested for locking down in front of the entrance.

Camp wasn't all work though! We had three delicious meals prepared daily by the amazing Seeds of Peace Collective and Lisa Fithian spent two nights inspiring us with stories and pictures from her over 30 years of activism. There were always kids and dogs around to play with, late night campfires, hikes through the badlands, music, and a passion show. I left New Mexico inspired and energized! Camp only lasted eleven days, but the community we built together will last a lifetime.

- Kelly Quain

Editor's Note: See related photograph on page 6.

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Peace Camp 2010



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1) Two campers in the Blue Group work on an art project.

2) Campers and leaders in the Orange Group participate in a song.

3) Singing is an important part of Peace Camp and these campers and a teen helper in the Yellow Group can almost be heard while looking at this photograph.

4) The campers in the Red Group pose with their leaders and helpers for their group photo.

5) The Rose Group is very determined in folding origami peace cranes after discussing the story of Sadako, the popular children's book about a child victim of the Hiroshima atomic bomb.

6) Two campers in the Green Group display the puppets they made and used in a skit about peacemaking.

7) The teen helper and camper in this photograph beautifully exhibit the great joy that young people find at Peace Camp.

Peace Camp 2010 Remembered

This summer I decided to spend a week in July as a helper in LEPOCO's Peace Camp. Though it was my job to help the campers in their activities, I felt like I benefited from the experience just as much, if not more, than the members of Green Group. Eight-year-olds, as I quickly learned, do not rush. They take their time, whether they're tying a shoelace, eating their snack, even speaking to one another. If the world stopped hurrying and took their time, I think each individual would be at peace within, just like the members of Green Group.

- Emma Illick Frank

I loved my first year as a peace camp helper. One thing that stood out to me was how patient and kind all of the leaders were. If one of the kids was acting up they wouldn't get mad, they would try to include them in the activity. This peace camp had great activities and songs that really made everyone feel like they were bringing peace to the world. All of the kids had great peace ideas about helping the world. Everyone's great energy and happiness made it a great week.

- Georges Batoussi

Peace camp is about atmosphere. It's truly a place where clothing brands and hairstyles don't matter. It's hard to feel anything but mellow when you're surrounded by a group of people who would treat you with the same respect and kindness whether you had three arms or Cicada shells placed precariously about your t-shirt (which is a regular occurrence at Peace Camp). Watching the kids grow into mindful, peaceful individuals is inspiring and as cleansing as fresh air. There are a lot of bad things in this world and it seems all we ever do is worry, but with generations of bright youth, the winding road to understanding and world peace continues to unfold.

- Hannah Jeffery

My first year as a volunteer at Peace Camp served as a reminder of the foundation laid during my youth, a foundation securely grounded within a community of faith. It was within this community that I came to understand my life's purpose, a purpose that was affirmed within a context that dispelled the fear of alienation.

Never before has this sense of alienation been so prevalent as in our modern world. It is to this end that the peacemakers of today dedicate their time and energy to serve as role models for the peacemakers of tomorrow.

The sense of individualism that is fostered in our children at such a young age breeds both social isolation and fear. Peace Camp serves to dispel that fear by creating a unity of purpose where children share their stories and acknowledge their personal value and the value of others. It is this integration of the other into oneself that leads to the empathy and compassion which are necessary prerequisites to courage -- the courage to create a more just and peaceful world.

Through a variety of activities, the children had the opportunity to not only think and reflect, but to put

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their thoughts into action. It is these actions that only now create ripples in the waters of change, but in the future will create the waves necessary to move others toward nonviolent social action.

- Robin Reinhard

The first step in making peace is *choosing* peace. Our opening story of Peace Camp 2010 was about making decisions for peace, choosing the peaceful way, in all that we do, even the little things. Our 86 campers and 80 teen and adult volunteers did just that: cooperating, sharing, helping each other, listening, understanding, empathizing, and encouraging while we had fun together playing games, reading stories, making t-shirt designs, creating puppets, dancing, exploring nature, singing songs, discussing living with disabilities, making friends. Peace Camp is a big undertaking; thank you to all our teen and adult volunteers for giving your time to make Peace Camp happen, and for modeling for our children that it really is possible to make peace, to choose peace, in their daily lives.

Join us for Peace Camp 2011, July 25 - 29.

- Ruth Walden



This photograph was taken by Kelly Quain as the Hiroshima Day procession began at the Disarmament Summer Encampment in New Mexico (see Kelly's article on page 4). This beautiful puppet figure was part of the street theater performance in the procession. She and six young women represented the pregnant mothers bearing the seven future generations of life that need to be protected by the present generation.

The Struggle Shared

I request America to look into our hearts, and see that the great majority of us are not terrorists, but good and simple people. Our land is stricken with poverty because we are without education. But today another candle of knowledge has been lit. In the name of Allah the Almighty, may it light our way out of the darkness we find ourselves in.

- Syed Abbas, supreme leader of Northern Pakistan's Shia, at the dedication of Greg Mortenson's CAI school in Kuardu, near the Afghan border, on Sept 14, 2001, as quoted in Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson & David Oliver Relin.

PETER'S PEACE VISION - Peter Cohen is LEPOCO's Thomas Jefferson. Not only was he at our founding meeting at Kirkridge in 1965, but he is reputed to have drafted the letter, signed by all those present, that was published in local newspapers, and that became LEPOCO's original statement of purpose, launching our 45-year history as a peace and justice organization. Peter went on to inspire the local anti-war movement in a run for the U.S. Congress as a peace candidate in 1968. Although he moved to the West Coast many years ago, the good news is that he is still active in the peace movement, and still writing. He recently sent us, "The Peace Vision."

"We are losing the war," he begins. "Not just the war in Afghanistan, but the war against war itself. The Peace War." He goes on to prod all concerned citizens to prioritize ending the wars and cutting the Pentagon budget. "The whole Peace Movement needs to be far more active, more vocal, and reaching out to the unemployed, to all who are being cut back, threatened and limited by this huge military boondoggle...."

"I imagine a peace movement that is as influential as the AIPAC or the NRA...that works in every community to reshape the Congress to better serve the American people and their needs, not corporate greed ...that is regarded as an essential partner of the environmental movement...that is a friend of labor... that encourages the development and effectiveness of the United Nations.... A peace movement that can organize a Peace Day Strike across the nation."

To read the whole text of Peter's Peace Vision, call the LEPOCO office, or contact Peter directly at aerie2@verizon.net.

NEW START TREATY STALLED IN SENATE - In April, Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed a new START Treaty, reaffirming and updating the 19-year-old original START Treaty. Once ratified by the U.S. Senate and the Russian Duma, the new pact would reduce the maximum number of strategic warheads each power could possess from 2,200 to 1,500.

Senator John Kerry, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote in "U.S. News & World Report," in August, that the treaty is a key tool to protect the U.S. from nuclear threats. His committee has held 12 hearings since April, calling 20 witnesses, all leading experts on nuclear arms control. They overwhelmingly supported timely ratification of the new START Treaty. Kerry points out that over the past 40 years every U.S.-Russian strategic arms control agreement has been ratified by the U.S. Senate with broad bi-partisan support.

So why is START in danger of failing to be ratified by the Senate? The answer is political theater put on by the likes of John McCain, Sarah Palin, Mitt Romney, Rush Limbaugh and Glen Beck, as they bring up ghosts of cold war rhetoric and nostalgic tales of a past that never was.

Although the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently missed one of its opportunities to get START to the floor for ratification, and the delay is a set-back to our hopes for world security, it is not too late, according to Friends Committee on National Legislation. Senators Casey and Specter have both endorsed New START. They should be applauded, and urged to use all their influence to get their colleagues on board. Heading into the November election season, we could also ensure that START

is on the public agenda by urging Joe Sestak and Pat Toomey, candidates for the Senate seat currently held by Arlen Specter, to support the New START Treaty.

ACTION ON MARCELLUS SHALE - According to the HBO documentary "Gasland," the largest domestic natural gas drilling boom in history is sweeping across the U.S. Pennsylvania is a virtual Saudi Arabia to big energy corporations. The Marcellus Shale is a 4-million-year-old deposit that underlies the mountain ridges to the north of the Lehigh Valley. Plans to exploit this vast resource involve a process called hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The dangers to clean drinking water supplies, human health, and the environment posed by fracking are being documented in communities across the U.S. All of our local rivers are fed by water that flows from the Marcellus Shale area. The EPA has held several public hearings since March, in Denver, CO, Fort Worth, TX, and in Canonsburg, PA. On August 12th, a hearing scheduled in Syracuse, NY, on plans for drilling in the Marcellus Shale, was cancelled because the venue could not provide security for the thousands of people who were expected.

In the Lehigh Valley, Clean Water Action has taken on the Marcellus Shale Project as a major thrust of their ongoing environmental work. Their group, called Gas Truth, has been meeting regularly to plan for actions to correct the misinformation being presented by the gas industry. Gas Truth promotes legislation to place a moratorium on gas drilling and to regulate the industry which is currently exempt from even the standards of the Clean Water Act. They work to put political pressure on legislators, some of whom are receiving money from gas industry lobbyists. Gas Truth supports the moratorium bill proposed by State Rep. Phyllis Mundy. It is important to urge local representatives to back this bill. Gas Truth is also planning a rally for early October. To become involved contact Cathy Frankenberg at Clean Water Action (610-691-7395 or e-mail cfrankenberg@cleanwater.org) for information about meetings.

- Jeff Vitelli

Marching for the DREAM Act _____

On Tuesday, the 20th of July, I, Emma Cleveland of the Lehigh Valley ACLU, and eight others from the area traveled to Washington, DC, and attended a march to push Congress to pass the DREAM Act. The DREAM (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) Act, would give the opportunity to undocumented youth (if they entered the U.S. prior to the age 15) to attain their residency. Residency would be obtained through the attainment of a degree, or military service.

It was a hot day, but not uncommon of the wave of heat coating this summer. From Allentown, our bus left around 6:30 am. We were jammed in traffic once we entered Philadelphia. In Philly we gathered up a dozen other demonstrators for the journey. We then navigated straight towards Washington. All on the trip were delighted, shared stories, chatted, and snacked.

Around noon the bus dropped us off, we walked several blocks, and arrived at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation. At the entrance of the church we had witnessed the presence of hundreds of young people. There were people of diverse backgrounds, ranging from high school to college age. Here we listened to the common chants of "Si Se Puede" and "The Students United Will Never Be Defeated." Caps and gowns were worn; I, myself, wore one. Local news stations were around, including WFMZ-TV. Interviews were conducted; WFMZ was more than delighted to interview some from our group.

In the church, a "mock graduation" was conducted and we were treated with a commencement address by Senator Richard Durbin of Illinois. Speakers brought about key points involving the struggle of undocumented students. After our graduation, the entire crowd was hyped up and ready to march to the Capitol and the Senate. This was to be done right after the mass consumption of pizza.

The march consisted of about 400 people. We all chanted, we all yelled, we were all fueled up. At one encounter we were confronted, chased and harassed by a right-wing person with an offensive banner. We did not get out of line, and our chants seem to have driven him away. While we were marching, 20 undocumented DREAMers broke off, and had a sit-in in several congressional office buildings. This brought much publicity to our efforts. In the end, everything which we had experienced went well, the brave ones which sat-in were released, and it was enjoyable to meet many with the same end in mind. To find out more information about the DREAM Act, the march, or those who sat-in, visit www.thedreamiscoming.com

- George Cedeno

Editor's Note: Some in the peace movement are very concerned about the military service component of the DREAM Act. The concern being that it could become a recruiting tool for the military, pulling in people who might not be otherwise inclined toward joining the military. The concept of giving legal status to young immigrants is supported, but not the military service provision.

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Attention High School Students: September is Military Recruiter Opt-Out Time

If you are a student who does not want your contact information released to military recruiters, you must notify your school early in the school year. Most school districts require students to opt-out each year and will only recognize it if parents sign the request. You should check to see what your local school district's military recruiting opt-out policy is and confirm its opt-out deadline. A generic opt-out form can be downloaded at www.tinyurl.com/norelease or contact the LEPOCO Peace Center at 610-691-8730 or lepoco@fast.net and we'll send one to you.

Important: Opting out does not mean the military will not get your contact information through other sources. For example, if your school gives the military's aptitude test, the "ASVAB," recruiters will get your contact information and much more. To avoid that, either don't take the ASVAB or convince your school to tell the military that "ASVAB option 8" must apply to ALL students taking the test (option 8 prohibits using the test for recruitment purposes). For more details on the ASVAB visit www.projectyano.org.

(Source: "Draft Notices," July-September 2010, the newsletter from the Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft, San Diego, California.)

Fair & Festivals _____

For the second year LEPOCO will be at the Pennsylvania Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Festival, September 17-19, in Kempton. If you can attend the festival (admission is \$12) and help out at the LEPOCO table for an hour or two, please contact the office to sign up. There will be exhibits, workshops, speakers, good food, and positive energy at the festival. "Gasland," the film about gas drilling in Pennsylvania, will be shown Friday, September 17, at 9 pm. For more information see www.paenergyfest.com.

We will have a peace booth at the 11th Annual Peace Fair at Buckingham Friends Meeting & School, in Bucks County near Lahaska, Saturday, September 25, 10:30 am to 4 pm. The featured speaker at the fair will be Cindy Sheehan, who has been a courageous opponent of the Iraq War since her son Casey was killed there in 2004. If you can attend the fair and help staff the booth for an hour or two, contact LEPOCO.

August 15th, LEPOCO had a booth at the very rainy Pride Festival in Allentown. Remarkably, even with the rain, attendance was strong and we sold over \$170 in stickers, buttons and cards. Thank you to Sharon Mills, Sheila Clever, Renate Brosky, Susie Ravitz, Linda Sakovics, Stefan Rogers, Eleanor Hay, Robert Daniels II, Kim Moyer, Tom Stinnett and Nancy Tate for staffing the booth.

On August 30, Robert Daniels II, Kelly Quain, and George Cedeno staffed a LEPOCO table at Lehigh University's Community and Club Expo. The LEPOCO table was next to a Marine recruiting table which led to interesting discussions.

- Nancy C. Tate

The Iraq Debacle: The Legacy of Seven Years of War

We...mark the August 31st partial withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq with the following evaluation and recommendations:

The U.S. occupation of Iraq continues and the reduction of U.S. troops in Iraq can at best be called only a rebranded occupation. ...there will still be 50,000 troops left behind, some 75,000 contractors, five huge "enduring bases" and an Embassy the size of Vatican City.

The U.S. military's overthrow of the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein did not lead to a better life for Iraqis - just the opposite. It resulted in the further destruction of basic infrastructure - electricity, water, sewage - that continues to this day... Iraq's health care and higher education systems, once the best in the entire region, have been decimated. The U.S. war on Iraq unleashed a wave of violence that has left over one million Iraqis dead and four million displaced...

The majority of the refugees and internally displaced persons created by the U.S. intervention have been abandoned. Of the nearly four million refugees, many are now living in increasingly desperate circumstances in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and around the world...

Iraq still does not have a functioning government. Many months after the March 7 elections, there is still a political vacuum and violence that is killing roughly 300 civilians a month...

The Iraq War has left a terrible toll on U.S. troops. More than one million U.S. service members have deployed in the Iraq War effort. Over 4,400 U.S. troops have been killed and tens of thousands severely injured. More than one in four U.S. troops have come home from the Iraq War with health problems that require medical or mental health treatment...

The war has drained our treasury. As of August 2010, U.S. taxpayers have spent over \$750 billion on the Iraq War effort. Counting the cost of lifetime care of wounded vets and the interest payments on the money we borrowed to pay for this war, the real cost will be in the trillions. This misappropriation of funds has contributed to the economic crises we are experiencing, including the lack of funds for our schools, healthcare, infrastructure and investments in clean, green jobs.

The U.S. officials who got us into this disastrous war on the basis of lies have not been held accountable... No one. Neither have the Bush administration lawyers who authorized torture... The "think tanks," journalists and pundits who perpetuated the lies have not been fired - most are today cheerleading for the war in Afghanistan.

The war has led to the pillaging of Iraqi resources and institutionalization of corruption. The U.S. Department of Defense has been unable to account for \$8.7 billion of Iraqi oil and gas money meant for humanitarian needs and reconstruction after the 2003 invasion. The invasion has also led to the erosion of Iraqi government control over the nation's oil...

The war has not made us more secure. The U.S. policy of torture, extraordinary rendition, indefinite detention, violent and deadly raids on civilian homes, gunning down innocent civilians in the streets, and absence of habeas corpus has fueled the fires of hatred and extremism toward Americans.

Given the above, we -- mark the occasion of this troop withdrawal by calling on the Administration and Congress to take the following actions:

Withdrawal of all U.S. troops and military contractors from Iraq and the closing of all U.S. bases;

Reparations to help the Iraqis repair their basic infrastructure and increased funds for the millions of internally and externally displaced Iraqis;

Full support for the U.S. troops who suffer from the internal and external wounds of war;

Prosecution of those officials responsible for dragging our country into this disaster;

Transfer of funds from war into resources to rebuild America, with a focus on green jobs.

The lessons of this disastrous intervention should also be an impetus for Congress and the administration to end the war in Afghanistan...

The national organizations signing this statement include:

Fellowship of Reconciliation; CODEPINK; Women for Peace; Institute for Policy Studies' New Internationalism Project;

Iraq Veterans Against the War; Military Families Speak Out; Pax Christi - USA; Progressive Democrats of America;

United for Peace & Justice; Veterans for Peace; Voices for Creative Nonviolence; War Resisters League.

To read this complete statement and sign on, please "google:" Iraq Debacle Coalition Statement.

Marching for Peace

On Saturday, October 2, a wide-ranging coalition that includes labor (AFL-CIO, SEIU, Unite/Here, and more), national justice groups (NAACP, National Council of La Raza, Green for All, and more), and peace groups (United for Peace & Justice, Veterans for Peace, Peace Action, and more), is organizing a large march in Washington, DC,

calling for a peoples' agenda for jobs and economic renewal. It is important for the peace movement to take advantage of this unique opportunity to join with allies demanding "Money for Jobs, Not For War." If you want to join this effort or if you know of local groups organizing to go to Washington, DC, on October 2nd, please call LEPOCO.

Bits & Pieces

☪ "Jobs, Justice & Economics" is the theme of a one-day conference being sponsored by the Lehigh County Conference of Churches, Sat., Sept. 25. Running from 8:30 am to 3 pm, the gathering will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 8th & Walnut Sts., Allentown. Kim Bobo of Interfaith Worker Justice will deliver the keynote address on "Standing for Workers in Times of Crisis." There will also be panel discussions and workshops. A light breakfast and lunch will be provided. Suggested donation: \$10 (less for students and unemployed).

☪ **Bob Weick** will be presenting "Marx in Soho," the passionate, funny and moving play by the late Howard Zinn, in seven performances, Sept. 8-18, as part of the Philly Fringe Live Arts Festival. The performances will be at the Twelve Gates Art Gallery with \$15 admission (9/8 at 2 and 7 pm; 9/11 at 2 and 5 pm; 9/12 at 2 pm; 9/18 at 1 and 4 pm). Bob Weick has performed this one-man play across the U.S. over 180 times. See www.livearts-fringe.org for more info. or to make a reservation.

☪ The 5-4 Citizens United Supreme Court decision last January will be the focus of the program, "Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission: The National Government as Guarantor or Suppressor of Democracy?" This panel discussion will be held Tues., Sept. 21, at 7 pm, in Rm. 104, Kirby Hall of Civil Rights, Lafayette College, Easton. The panel will be made up of Lafayette Professors John Kincaid, James Lennertz, and Elizabeth Suhay, with Katalin Fabian moderating. Citizens United is the controversial decision that, among other things, allows corporations and labor unions to spend millions more on election campaigns.

☪ **Susie Ravitz** will be speaking about LEPOCO for the Hi! Neighbor program series at First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem, at 11:15 am, on Tues., Sept. 21. She also spoke on 10 LEPOCO Newsletter / September 2010

behalf of LEPOCO about Grassroots Involvement for a panel organized by the Alliance for Sustainable Communities on August 18th. The text of the latter talk will be posted on the Alliance web site.

☪ The **International Day of Peace**, established by the United Nations, is observed around the globe on Sept. 21. Locally, two events are in the works - one on Sat., Sept. 18, at the Wildflower Café and the other on Sun., Sept. 19, from 3-5 pm, at the Banana Factory. Contact either location for more info. or watch LEPOCO weekly updates by e-mail. Also, you are invited to commit to pray for peace at 12 noon on Sept. 21st, by registering at www.a-millionminutesforpeace.org.

☪ On Sun., Sept. 5th, the Brandywine Peace Community will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the **Plowshares Eight** disarmament action that took place at the General Electric (now: Lockheed Martin) plant in King of Prussia. The "8" hammered a Mark 12A nuclear warhead casing at the plant. The next spring they were found guilty of burglary, conspiracy and criminal mischief. Nearly 75 "swords into plowshares actions" have occurred over the past 30 years across the U.S. and in Europe. Many participants have served long prison sentences for their nonviolent actions. The celebration on Sunday will be at 2 pm, at Lockheed Martin, 230 Mall Blvd., Valley Forge (behind the King of Prussia Mall).

☪ Thanks to generous support from Tom Ulrich we have hundreds of LEPOCO palm cards that feature two graphs pointing to disproportionate military spending by our government as compared to other countries. You can have a supply of the cards urging people to "Rethink National Budget Priorities" to give to friends and acquaintances -- just call LEPOCO and we will get them to you.

☪ In late September, **Anna Maria Caldara**, of Bangor, will testify at EPA hearings in Pittsburgh, about the dangers of coal ash, the byproduct of burning coal for electricity. Coal ash contains heavy metals and presents hazards for human health and the environment. It is hoped that these hearings will lead to the first federal

regulation for the storage of coal ash. Contact Anna Maria for more info.

☪ The annual **Shut Down the SOA** (School of the Americas) demonstration and vigil at Ft. Benning, Georgia, will be held Nov. 19-21. As a lead-up to the weekend, the Latin American Solidarity Coalition will host a one-day Anti-Militarization Organizers Conference in Columbus, Georgia. Plans are being made for the trip to Georgia. For more info. see www.soaw.org or contact LEPOCO.

☪ In August several **SOA Watch activists** traveled to Colombia to demonstrate at the gates of the Tolomaida Military Base, one of seven bases where the U.S. military has been granted access. They also protested outside the U.S. embassy in Colombia, calling upon their government to withdraw its troops from Latin America. They were met on both occasions by representatives of several peace groups in Colombia.

☪ *We can begin to face this crisis of our collective addiction to oil by agreeing to look the suffering we are creating in the eye. We can become a witnessing community of purposeful expression and agree to be present, to listen, to engage first-hand. In these moments of direct experience, our consciousness shifts. We can choose to live differently.*

- Terry Tempest Williams, writing about the Gulf of Mexico catastrophe in *The Progressive*, August 2010.

Support LEPOCO!

___ Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$_____. (\$35 individual; \$45 hh; \$75 supporter; \$5 lim. income)

___ I am also enclosing an extra donation of \$_____.

___ I would like to support LEPOCO's work with a ___monthly/___quarterly pledge of \$_____.

___ I'm most interested in working on the following issues:

Name

Phone #

e-mail

Address

City

Zip

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

Bits & Pieces

Ⓢ On Tues., Sept. 28, at 7 pm, the Moravian College chapter of Amnesty International and AI Bethlehem will sponsor a program about **violence in Mexico**. The program in Prosser Aud., the HUB, at the college, will feature a documentary film about Ciudad Juarez and Diana Washington Valdez, author of "The Killing Fields: Harvest of Women -The Truth About Mexico's Bloody Border Legacy," will speak.

Ⓢ LEPOCO's **Yard Sale** has yet to be set for this fall. If you would like to help plan this effort contact LEPOCO. A planning meeting will be set soon. There are at least three needs that have delayed the planning. LEPOCO needs a convener for our Fundraising Committee (volunteers for the committee would also be welcome). We need more volunteers to do the very physical labor of putting on the Yard Sale. Finally, we need ideas for how to bump up the traffic at the Yard Sale so the fundraising rewards are a little more significant. If you can help in any of these areas please contact LEPOCO.

Ⓢ Phillip Strum, A National ACLU Board member and author of "**Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican American Rights**," will speak on Thurs., Sept. 23, at Lafayette College, Easton, in the auditorium of the Kirby Hall for Civil Rights. She will speak about the Mendez v. Westminster case that preceded Brown vs. Board of Education and spoke out against the segregation of Mexican-American students. For more info. contact ACLU community organizer Emma Cleveland at 484-350-3767.

Ⓢ The Insomniak Theatre, Nazareth, is sponsoring a **Banned Books Reading** on Sat., Sept. 25, at 8 pm, to benefit the ACLU and the Nazareth Public Library. They will read from books banned recently and in the past. Tickets are \$15. Call 610-759-7000 to make a reservation. The Theatre is at 60 S. Main St., in Nazareth.

Ⓢ There will be a **Free Palestine Walk** in Bethlehem on Sat., Oct. 9, as part of a national effort. Free Palestine Walks are "silent marches for an equitable U.S. policy toward Palestine that advances freedom and equal rights for the Palestinian people." Besides raising awareness the walk will raise funds for an advertising campaign to be conducted by the American Association for Palestinian Equal Rights. For more info. and details on the logistics of the walk contact Vince Stravino at 610-216-8103 (cell - please call during the day) or Mohamed Bugaighis at 610-703-1382.

Ⓢ President Obama's **Deficit Reduction Commission** is stacked with people who have obsessed for decades over cutting Social Security benefits or privatizing the system. Some people are speaking out against the Commissions apparent narrow-minded views. CREDO Action circulated a petition calling for the commission to focus on three critical drivers of long-term deficits: 1) burgeoning military spending that is much higher than any other country; 2) the Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest 2%; and 3) rapidly rising health care costs driven by an inefficient private insurance market.

You can contact your member of Congress and ask them to sign onto Rep. Barney Frank's "Dear Colleague" letter addressed to the Deficit Reduc-

tion Commission that calls for a review of the military budget as part of the work of the Commission.

Ⓢ It is important to contact the U.S. State Department with the message: If you care about human rights do not certify Colombia's track record. Human rights certification (or not) is a most important decision that affects U.S. military aid to that country. There has been a surge in death threats against human rights organizations and advocates in **Colombia** and hundreds of those threats have been realized. In August, a judge in Colombia acquitted ten soldiers for their participation in the massacre of eight civilians in San José de Apartadó in February 2005. The case had been seen as a critical measure of the Colombian court systems ability to render justice in the killing of thousands of civilians in the country's armed conflict. The judge's ruling seems inexplicable after some of the accused had confessed to their participation in the massacre. You can send a fax to Hillary Clinton, U.S. Department of State at 202-647-2283 or call 202-647-4008 to express opposition to certification.



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

Thurs., Sept. 9, 11 am: LEPOCO Newsletter Planning Committee meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Fri., Sept. 10, 10:30 am: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting at Crocodile Rock, Hamilton St., Allentown. They will adjourn to join the Noon, Friday, Peace Vigil at the Federal Building at 5th & Hamilton.

Mondays, Sept. 13 & Oct. 11, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All members and friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are reviewed.

Wed., Sept. 29, 7 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Thurs., Sept. 30, 4 pm: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

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

If you want more information about any of these meetings;

or if you want to know the next meeting the Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition,

the Nuclear Abolition Sisters, the LEPOCO Peace Singers,

the Fundraising Committee, the Youth & Militarism/Truth in Recruiting Committee, the Economic Crisis Committee: please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

For a regularly updated calendar of events and a schedule of meetings please see

www.lepoco.org.



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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Bits & Pieces

Steelworkers & Friends

Labor Day Parade

Sunday, September 5, 11:30 am

Meet in the parking lot at Spring & Main Sts.
Bethlehem

Join a peace contingent carrying the
LEPOCO banner and Jobs not War signs.

(Meet at 11:15 am, at the parade site.)

To make a reservation for the picnic following the parade
call 610-867-3772. Tickets are \$10.

NO TOMORROW

A FILM ABOUT THE DEATH PENALTY

MON., SEPT. 13, EASTON

&

FRI., SEPT. 17, BETHLEHEM

(SEE PAGE 1)

"Honoring the Work & Life"

Joe DeRaymond & Peace Community in Colombia

Friday, October 22, 6:30-9 pm

(See page 1)

Service to Celebrate the Life of

Bob Thompson

Tuesday, September 7

7:30 pm

Packer Chapel, Lehigh University
Bethlehem

Reception to follow at Zoellner Arts Center
(See page 2)

Regular Peace Vigils

Our wars continue. Please help witness for peace.

Bethlehem: 4:30-5:30 pm,

Second & Fourth Thursdays
3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

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

Allentown: Noon-1 pm, Fridays

Federal Courthouse, 5th & Hamilton Sts.;
Contact: Rev. John C. Fowler 610-746-5013

Can you help with LEPOCO booths
& tables at fairs and festivals?

See page 8 for more info.