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

## *Mobilizing* For Peace & Planet -- and Against Nuclear Weapons, April 26

LEPOCO has endorsed Peace & Planet's Mobilization for a Nuclear-Free, Peaceful, Just, and Sustainable World. 2015 marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and, it also marks 45 years since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entered into force.

After 70 years of knowing the horrors and threats of nuclear war; and after 45 years with a procedure available to dismantle this threat, isn't it long past time for the world's governments to implement the steps to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons as set forth in the NPT?

We can help bring this disarmament message to the 189 members of the NPT as they gather at the United Nations this April 27 to May 22, to review the NPT's operation.

On Sunday, April 26, people will rally and march in New York City to demand that the promise of the NPT -- a nuclear-free world -- be met. The day's activities will include an Interfaith Convocation for Nuclear Weapons Abolition at the Church Center at the UN; a Rally at Union Square North (including the kick-off of a "global wave" to say goodbye to nuclear weapons); a March from Union Square to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza; and a Peace Festival at the Plaza. Millions of petition signatures collected from around the world and calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons will be delivered to UN and NPT Review Officials.

Prior to the Sunday Mobilization a conference will take place April 24-25, at Cooper Union, NYC, featuring workshops and speakers from Japan, the Philippines, the U.S. and other countries. Registration is \$30, with a student/low-income option of \$15.

For further information on all of these activities please see [www.peaceandplanet.org](http://www.peaceandplanet.org). You can also sign the petition for abolishing nuclear weapons at this site.

LEPOCO will help coordinate transportation to NYC for these important events April 24-26 -- whether you want to travel with a friend by bus or in a carpool. Call 610-691-8730 to make transportation plans or to let us know you plan to be part of the Peace & Planet Mobilization. Let us know if you can help circulate the Peace & Planet Petition for signatures.

- Adam Heidebrink-Bruno & Nancy Tate

## Tax Day: Why Do We Pay So Much For War? \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday, April 15, 2015, Tax Day, is the latest date for regular filing of our 2014 tax forms. I know from experience that many taxpayers wait until then to mail their taxes in person at various post offices.

LEPOCO is an organization dedicated to opposing unnecessary wars and aggressive operations. Vietnam and the Iraq invasions are examples. I do not oppose the maintenance of a reasonable size armed force, only the use of those forces for aggression. Note the destabilization of Iraq and Syria due to the U.S. and European meddling.

That is why volunteers from LEPOCO hand out flyers at various local post offices in the Lehigh Valley on Tax Day, April 15. The flyers (produced by the War Resisters League) detail the large amount of your tax dollars spent on the Defense Department.

If you can help distribute leaflets at a local post office for a couple of hours on Tax Day please contact LEPOCO (610-691-8730) to sign up for your time and place. If you do not have a partner you will be paired with someone.

- John Zachmann

## Peace Camp 2015: 25 Years of Guiding Young People in Nonviolence

Spring is here! Dare we dream of warm summer days? Some of us dream of drum circles, giant parachutes, and flying water balloons. I hear unrestrained laughter. I visualize endless smiling faces in the midst of international dance class. I can feel the contagious excitement when I inform the children it is time to join Roberta in the joyous peace songs that she teaches us.

There are so many wonderful activities that we all share during the week of Peace Camp. This year Camp will occur Monday through Friday, July 27-31. We will convene at the First Presbyterian Church in Allentown (Tilghman St. and Cedar Crest Blvd.).

Do you know any children ages 5-12 who could benefit from such wonderful experience based on love and caring? A registration form is enclosed with this newsletter. Please contact LEPOCO if you can use more to share with others.

Would you like to be part of the teen & adult team that helps guide young people at Peace Camp? A volunteer interest form is also enclosed with this newsletter.

- Dan Miller

# A Climate of Change

March 14-15, Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) hosted their annual regional conference at Lehigh University. With 148 registered participants, it was the largest regional CCL conference to date, which is an extraordinary achievement and reflects the remarkable growth the movement has experienced, more than doubling in size every year.

CCL has an active chapter in nearly every congressional district in the country, and they are all working towards one specific goal: to place a steadily rising fee on carbon. This fee would then be collected and returned to households in the form of a dividend or citizen rebate. To achieve this goal, the tens of thousands of CCL volunteers are trained in letter-writing and advanced lobbying skills, which are then used in district offices around the country as well as coordinated lobbying in Washington, D.C.

In 2014 alone, CCL members held over 1000 lobbying meetings with elected officials, published well over 2000 letters to the editors and op-ed pieces, and hosted over 1000 outreach events, recruiting new volunteers and starting new local chapters. In addition to these efforts, CCL volunteers have delivered nearly 7000 handwritten letters to congress. And they are dedicated to seeing these numbers double every year until a carbon fee and dividend is writ into law.

While CCL works with laser focus on this key piece of legislation, their training and leadership support the development of personal political skills by "empowering individuals to experience breakthroughs in exercising their personal and political power." And I have to say, as a first time conference attendee and newcomer to the CCL community, I found this to be true.

As I discovered at the conference, CCL champions a compassionate model of communication and relationship-building. Beginning with the opening performance on Friday before the conference and continuing throughout Saturday and Sunday, presenters told stories that supported CCL's deep commitment to the idea that love is a more powerful driver of change than fear. Peter Toscano, a comic and LGBTQ activist, reminded the audience that we cannot (or at least should not) waste our time trying to guilt and shame climate deniers into action. Instead, Toscano suggested, think of this denial as the first stage of the grieving process -- that, in their own way, climate skeptics are grieving for the dying planet. And similar to those grieving over the loss of a loved one, climate skeptics needs our support, not ridicule. It is through our common humanity and love that we can, in time, reach these people.

Similarly, in advanced lobby training, we were taught to be generous listeners. Working with partners, we role-played conversations and observed the impact the listener has on the direction and success (or failure) of the dialog. In short: listening is powerful. And part of that listening occurs before ever stepping foot in the of-

fice. It's generally a good idea to know about an elected official's stance before a meeting. Additionally, however, CCL advocates to not only know the political, but also the personal, specifically looking for things that you can respect, appreciate, and admire about the individual. No matter the difference in values, perspectives, and priorities, people always have positive qualities too.

Find out more about CCL by contacting the Lehigh Valley chapter, co-led by John Brown, at [mit69@rcn.com](mailto:mit69@rcn.com); connect with the local CCL community on Facebook by searching for: "Citizens Climate Lobby-Lehigh Valley"; or attend one of their meetings, which are on the Tuesday after the first Saturday, monthly at 6 pm, at NCC Fowler Center, Third St., (south) Bethlehem. Meetings are held over a potluck dinner. Martha Christine, LEPOCO Steering Committee member and an active leader in the local CCL chapter, will also be happy to answer any questions about their work.

The annual CCL international conference will take place this summer in Washington, D.C., June 21-23. During these three days, 1000 volunteers will meet with the 535 members of Congress to speak about the benefits of a carbon fee and dividend. Dr. Katharine Hayhoe, an atmospheric scientist at Texas Tech University, is this year's keynote speaker. Together with her husband, Andrew Farley, she is the co-author of the book, "A Climate for Change: Global Warming Facts for Faith-Based Decisions." Contact the local chapter for more information on this important event.

- Adam Heidebrink-Bruno

## Newsletter of LEPOCO

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

### Annual dues are:

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

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

Newsletter Staff: Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Jeff Vitelli, Adam Heidebrink-Bruno.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Terry Briscoe, Bridger Buller, Martha Christine, Janet Goloub, Adam Heidebrink-Bruno (ex-officio), Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Dan Miller, Mary Kay O'Donnell, Jim Orben, Susie Ravitz, Scott Slingerland, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), and Amanda Zaniesienko.

# Popcorn & Politics

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Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7:00 pm

## "The Invisible War"

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

Only eight percent of military sexual assault cases are prosecuted. This documentary investigates the pervasiveness of rape and sexual assault crimes committed in the US military. Focusing on heart-rending interviews with survivors, the film exposes a painful and under-reported story covered up by military commanders. The Invisible War "is a call for our civilian and military leadership to listen. And to act." The film has ushered in a wave of national dialogue, working to reform how the military conducts sexual assault investigations.

Directed by Kirby Dick. 93 minutes. 2012.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 pm

## "Unmanned: America's Drone Wars"

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

Nearly 4,000 total casualties have resulted from U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. As many as 954 have been civilians. The film investigates the impact of U.S. drone strikes at home and abroad through more than 70 separate interviews, including a former American drone operator who shares what he has witnessed in his own words, Pakistani families mourning loved ones and seeking legal redress, investigative journalists pursuing the truth, and top military officials warning against blowback from the loss of innocent life.

Directed by Robert Greenwald. 63 minutes. 2013.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



## "No Fast Track" -- Call & Rally

The Obama Administration is pressing Congress to renew Fast Track for the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Trans Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The vote is expected in April. These agreements are massive documents that rewrite a broad array of domestic regulations, issue labor and environmental standards for partner countries, lift the ban on the export of energy to partners, and give 38,000 foreign corporations the right to sue the federal government for unlimited taxpayer compensation in secret international tribunals on the grounds that some local, state or federal law threatens their expected future profit. Once ratified, these agreements cannot be changed unless all partner countries agree. Draft texts are being kept secret from the media and public, but they are being shared with hundreds of corporate advisors.

Under Fast Track, these agreements would be rushed through Congress with minimal debate, no amendments and a simple majority vote. Since NAFTA in the 1990s we have learned repeatedly how workers, farmers, consumers, and the environment all suffer under "free trade" agreements like TPP and TTIP.

Please call your congressperson and say, "No Fast Track," and then attend the events being planned by the Pennsylvania Fair Trade Coalition, the PA affiliate of the Citizens Trade Campaign [www.citizenstrade.org](http://www.citizenstrade.org).

A rally demanding that Rep. Charlie Dent oppose Fast Track will be held Thursday, April 16, at 12 noon, at his office at 3900 Hamilton Blvd., Allentown. For more information visit [www.citizen.org/fast-track](http://www.citizen.org/fast-track) or contact Phila Back at [Phila\\_back@verizon.net](mailto:Phila_back@verizon.net).

- Phila Back

## Stephan Said, "Global Pop" Musician Performing at Muhlenberg

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On Wednesday, April 8, Stephan Said, an internationally acclaimed singer/rapper/musician, writer, and organizer will perform in the Empie Theatre, Muhlenberg College, at 8 pm. The concert is free. Stephan Said is known for pioneering what he calls "global pop," fusing pop, hip-hop, rock, rap, jazz, folk and world dance music in an infectious border breaking sound with lyrics of global unity and change. An Iraqi-American, he sings and writes in numerous languages and is known for his role in social movements across the globe including the Arab Spring and the Occupy movement. He performed his anti-war song, "The Bell," with folk legend Pete Seeger, and it was hailed as the "first major song against the war in Iraq" (*The New York Times*). His songs have been performed by artists like Dave Matthews, Beatnick and K-Salaam, Patti Smith, and DJ Spooky.

- Sheila Clever



Jim Orben



Scott Slingerland



Pond Sirorattanukul & Brennen Stenke



Rick Dow



Todd Garcia, Jeff Vitelli, & Bob Riggs



Terry Boos & Marion Thorne



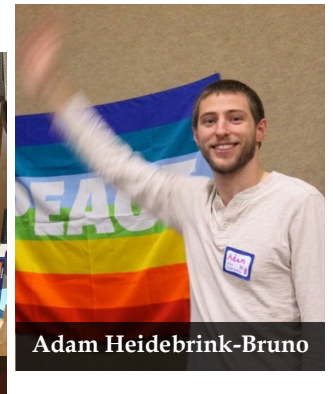
Julius Iwantsch



Stephen Miles and Mimi Lang



Susie Ravitz, Debbie Orben, Kathryn Hoffman, & Pat Judge



Adam Heidebrink-Bruno



Karen Bader, Rita Corriel, Monica McAgnon, Annette Carpien, Juanita Gomez-Reyes, & Virginia Schimmel



Janet Ney



Amanda Zaniesienko, Elizabeth Griner, Nancy Johnston, Nancy Tate, Marcie Lightwood, & Sheila Clever



LEPOCO 2015 Annual Dinner

Photos by Susie Ravitz and Adam H-B

# A Party for Peace \_\_\_\_\_

Any outsider who dropped in on LEPOCO's 49<sup>th</sup> annual dinner last month would think peace advocates really know how to party. To paraphrase Emma Goldman (even if she didn't really say it): "If I can't party, I'm not joining your revolution!" Given the hard work that peace activists do, who needs a party more than us? This other world that we say is possible (one where non-violence is no longer so strange a notion) isn't here already. It has to be imagined. Imagination requires free-wheeling, relaxing, not so "practical" doings. We need creative conviviality, which produces solidarity, which awakens the discovery that you're not alone with your "crazy" notions about peace. And solidarity produces what Nelson Mandela called "the multiplication of courage."

Again this year creative, convivial partying prevailed -- from the evening's program-cover featuring Picasso's drawing of a rowdy dance around a tree, to the lively guitar and mandolin pre-event concert, to the proud, no-holds-barred slogans on huge banners gracing the walls of Wesley Methodist Church's fellowship hall, to the feasting on a vegetarian, non-agribusiness-produced (hence real-food) meal, to the suspenseful announcements of our raffle-winners, to Mimi Lang's annual witty poetry-offering, to the LEPOCO Peace Singers' performance (from rousing to meditative, with original and new words for several of them). (Think of all the nonviolent actions for social change that depended on song for courage, bonding, and endurance.)

To the strains of "Never Turning Back" and "We Will Not Give Up the Fight" by the Peace Singers, we marched from the dining hall into the sanctuary for something quite new this year -- a stirring talk by a son of one of our own families. Our speaker was Stephen Miles, whose father, Don, back in the 1970s successfully defended five LEPOCO members -- "the Muhlenberg Five" -- against charges of trespassing on Muhlenberg's campus while leafleting against an FBI director's speech there. The case became known as Commonwealth v. Tate. So LEPOCO's present and our distant past met that night.

Stephen began his activism early -- making lemonade at LEPOCO's Christmas City Fair booth. Now, after training at Tulane University and the London School of Economics, he has become Advocacy Director for the Win Without War Coalition, an umbrella organization of 40 collaborating groups that formed to resist the Afghan and Iraq wars. Stephen acknowledged the dire challenges we face (gross over-investment in our military, a brutal partisan spirit in Congress, rampant American exceptionalism). But he also reminded us of certain encouraging cracks now appearing in the façade of war-making -- cracks that peace advocates from earlier eras would envy. Chief among these: a genuine chance of concluding an agreement with anew nuclear power, Iran. Nor has the cause of peace lacked immediate victories: Pentagon officials had planned to produce a

shamefully whitewashed commemoration of the Vietnam War but had to withdraw their scheme when veteran protestors from that period staged a successful resistance. Though Americans are more separated from each other than ever before (despite Facebook), Stephen sees our hope to lie in programs of one-on-one contact with individuals -- programs of the sort that won Obama the presidency. After all, each of us interacts with others daily; we must rededicate ourselves to articulating strongly and clearly the peace alternative we endorse. Stephen's presentation won a standing ovation, and the Peace Singers ended our event with "Go Now in Peace."

Our next annual dinner will be the 50<sup>th</sup> version of this combination of conviviality, solidarity, and feasting that is the soul of LEPOCO.

*La lucha continua! Laissez les bons temps rouler!*

- Addison Bross

## And the 2015 Art Raffle Drawing Winners Were:

Patrick Roxberry - the hand-turned wooden bowl  
by Lee Buck.

Sheila Clever - the oil painting by Will Christine.

Faith Shireman - the hand-crocheted afghan  
by Anna Reczek.

Barbara Garrison - the lap quilt by Ellen Buck.

Barbara Wurth - the large blue hand-thrown pottery  
bowl from Sommerville Studios (in New York)  
by Ray & Monica Sommerville.

Walter Collier - the watercolor painting  
by Amanda Zaniesienko.

## First Tuesday Book Group \_\_\_\_\_

The First Tuesday LEPOCO Book Club will meet on the second Tuesday again next month, April 14<sup>th</sup>, when they will discuss "*Pay Any Price: Greed, Power, and Endless War*," by James Risen. (The meeting was moved to the second Tuesday to allow attendance at the postponed Bill Moyers talk at Lehigh University on April 7.) In this book, Risen, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter at The New York Times, describes the growth of the homeland security industrial complex over the past 13 years.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the book group will discuss "*The Invention of Wings*" by Sue Monk Kidd. Following the life of an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, this novel presents a masterpiece of hope, daring, the quest for freedom, and the desire to have a voice in the world.

The group meets at the Bethlehem Wegmans (off Rt. 512, north of Rt. 22). The meeting starts at 6 pm. You can get some food and/or drink and join the group in the upstairs dining area. For more information contact Mimi Lang at 610-866-2407.

## A Conversation about Endless War

On Thursday, March 19, the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. "shock & awe" attack on Iraq, people gathered at the L.V. Friends Meeting House for a "public conversation" about "The Costs of Endless War." Planned by the Stop the Wars Committee, Monica McAghon facilitated as we sat in a large circle of about 40 people.

Both speakers, Faramarz Farbod and Doug Heath, professors at Moravian College and Northampton Community College, respectively, chose to look to history to help us understand our current wars.

Doug Heath pointed to another March anniversary - March 8, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the first U.S. combat troops in Vietnam. He wove together a recounting of his development as a conscientious objector to that war with some specific costs of war we have suffered since Eisenhower's warnings about the military industrial complex -- two of his examples: the number of Vietnam veterans who have committed suicide is larger than the number of U.S. troops killed during that war; and the Vietnamese still suffer the horrific effects of Agent Orange sprayed on their country (almost in parallel, the Iraqis have suffered the horrific effects of toxic Depleted Uranium weapons and munitions). Wars have the illusion of ending, but peace dividends have been small and brief. Doug ended reminding us of one of the losses to our souls/spirits: truth is the first casualty of war.

Faramarz began with another spiritual loss of war: we are all un-free because we have been forced to think about widespread death and destruction. He described the cultural and social destruction of Iraq that the 2003 invasion/occupation brought. The invaders protected the Ministry of Oil and records of Saddam-U.S. relations, but failed to protect the artifacts and the archeological sites of Mesopotamia -- a crime against culture. The U.S. systematically hollowed out the social structure of Iraq -- allowing the destruction of institutions of higher education. Teachers, lawyers, doctors were assassinated, kidnapped and exiled. He said the destruction of the collective and historical memory of Iraq invited "atavism." The resulting identity politics (religion and socially based) was a seedbed for ISIS.

Most importantly he brought forth a bold vision: the U.S. should institute a mini-Marshall Plan in the region working mostly with civil society. How Zinn-ian! ("To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness." -- a favorite Howard Zinn quote.)

While some attendees seemed overwhelmed (as we often are) by the challenges of our perpetual wars, Ted Morgan, a student and teacher of historical activism, urged everyone present to take a simple doable and impactful step of writing regular letters and op-eds for local newspapers, exposing the costs of endless war we see all around us: veteran suicides, rotting infrastructure,

fantastical new weapons, etc. How many will accept the challenge?

- Nancy Tate

## Campaign for Change: Nonviolent Direct Action to Improve Allentown Schools

Campaign for Change (C4C) is uniting students, parents, and concerned citizens in a nonviolent direct action campaign to transform the Allentown school system. Last fall, C4C released the first Community Report Card rating the Allentown School District (ASD) on critical issues like diversity of staff and academic and financial performance. Community members gave the ASD failing grades and suggested ways to improve.

Statistics compiled by the Pennsylvania

Department of Education paint a picture that calls out for comprehensive, systemic change at the ASD, the state's third largest public school system. There is a stark contrast between the percentages of White vs. Black & Latino students reaching levels of proficiency in reading and math. These gaps grow as students move through the system (they are higher among middle school students than elementary school students, and higher still among high school students). The ASD push-out rate (or drop-out rate) is four times higher than that for the state as a

whole -- and much higher for Black and Latino students than for White students. ASD students are 80% Hispanics and Blacks, administrators are 88% White and teachers are 92% White.

C4C events in April offer four ways to get involved:

++ Attend a nonviolent direct action training, available two consecutive Saturdays, April 11 & 18, from 2:30 - 5:00 pm, at the Children's Academy, 916 Turner St., Allentown.

++ Attend the featured workshop and a public lecture by Rev. James Lawson at Moravian College, sometime during his visit, April 21-24. Details TBA.

++ Attend the Open Mike Night for Allentown youth on Friday, April 17, 6:30 - 10:00 pm, at The Alternative Gallery, 707 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St, Allentown. Support local young people performing music, poetry, and more.

++ Participate in the Fast for Family Values, organized in cooperation with Pennsylvanians Organized to Witness, Empower, and Rebuild (POWER Northeast), calling attention to the need for the PA State Legislature to adopt a fair funding formula for public school systems. More details TBA.

For more information or to get involved, contact Gerardo Calderone at (484)619-3897 or [allentownc4c@gmail.com](mailto:c4c@gmail.com). You can also learn more about C4C at: [www.facebook.com/allentownc4c](http://www.facebook.com/allentownc4c).

- John Paul Marosy



# The Struggle Shared

"I think it's unfortunate that drones are seen as a technological fix for a problem that is more complex."

- Medea Benjamin, co-founder of Code Pink

## WHEN POLICE ACTIONS CAUSE DEATH: A PROPOSED RESPONSE FROM A PA SENATOR - The U.S.

Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) released a study recently stating that the government's statistics on police-involved deaths of civilians have been under-reported by at least half. According to BJS, there were an average of 928 law-enforcement homicides per year from 2003-2011.

Deaths were only counted if they occurred during arrests. (The count did not include bystander deaths at the hands of federal agents, or deaths that happened during a vehicular chase.)

KilledByPolice.net reported in March that at least 167 civilians have died in officer-involved encounters since January 1 of this year.

In response to the scores of news stories about deaths at the hands of police in recent months, Congress has authorized the Death in Custody Reporting Act, requiring all states that receive federal criminal justice grants to report deaths that occur in law enforcement custody to the BJS. BJS will compile the data, but their reports will not be out for two years.

Also in response to these police killings, Pennsylvania State Senator Art Haywood has introduced Senate Bill 400. It is co-sponsored by two other Senators, Leach and Hughes.

SB 400 would provide for the appointment of a Special Prosecutor "to oversee, investigate and prosecute incidents relating to peace officers involved in incidents which may constitute criminal homicide."

As we know from recent events, it is usually the regular local prosecutor, dependent on the cooperation of local police, who has been at the helm in cases where there has been "death by police." SB 400 would set up an independent process for such investigations and prosecutions.

Under SB 400, the Special Prosecutor, appointed by the State Attor-

ney General, would be able to bring charges, after their investigation, without a grand jury indictment.

This bill needs more co-sponsors. It was referred to the Judiciary Committee on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Lisa Boscola, one of our local state senators, sits on the Judiciary Committee.

(Sources: *KilledByPolice.net* & *www.Commondreams.org*)

- Kathryn Hoffman

## REFUSING TO FLY: DRONE

PILOT DROPOUT - Drone warfare is a rapidly growing military industry. Today, there are nearly 1000 drone pilots who are tasked with the responsibility to fly these unmanned planes from one of many drone command centers already established in the U.S.

While drone pilots are physically safe, it's been reported that remote warfare has similarly terrible personal and emotional consequences for those involved. As a result, drone pilots are quitting in record numbers.

In total, the Air Force is currently under orders to staff 65 combat air patrols around the clock. To accomplish this, the Air Force would need over 1700 drone pilots. However, the rapid dropout of drone pilots has recently brought the total number of active, trained pilots below 1000. Under pressure to fill these orders, the Air Force has begun accepting cargo and jet plane pilots, who are even less prepared for the painful psychological trauma of the job.

Drone pilots are ridiculed by traditional Air Force pilots who often view them as second-rate. Yet, the actual number of hours a drone pilot logs each year is three to six times more than that of traditional pilots. Moreover, unlike traditional pilots, drone pilots often observe their targets for several hours before firing, getting to know them intimately before killing them. Drones and their

pilots stick around after the destruction to record the damage, seeing everything with great detail.

Repeated exposure to this kind of psychological pain is horrifying. The stress, anxiety, and depression caused by piloting drones quickly and permanently damages the pilots' personal lives. Being located near home, however, they bring this pain home with them every night, unable to talk about it, suffering silently and no doubt affecting the lives of their family, friends, and neighbors. This new form of killing brings with it a new form of trauma, and while the research is still preliminary, the best remedy is certainly to avoid drone warfare completely.

(Source: *Mother Jones*, "Drone Pilots Are Quitting In Record Numbers.")

- Adam Heidebrink-Bruno

## ENSURING A FUTURE FOR

ACADEMIC WORKERS - Recently, NYU's Graduate Student Union won a historic victory. As the U.S.'s first and only Graduate Student Union, it has been an uphill battle. After first being recognized in 2001, the precedent was struck down by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in 2004. Labor conditions worsened for years, even as NYU continued to experience growth.

After a successful push to be re-recognized in 2013, the union sought to win back lost ground, negotiating for liveable wages and healthcare. On March 9, the union struck a deal affecting nearly 1000 students, which marked "the first-ever agreement between a private university and a graduate student workers' union."

The NYU Graduate Student Union continues to inspire under-paid and over-worked graduate students around the country. Today, only 27% of college instructors are full-time tenure or tenure-track professors. Yet very few universities recognize the struggle of adjuncts, graduate students, and other contingent faculty.

(Sources: *The Nation*, "NYU's Graduate Student Union Just Won a Historic Contract"; and *Socialist Worker*, "A victory for NYU grad employees.")

- Adam Heidebrink-Bruno

# Bits & Pieces

The **Peace-a-thon for Walkers & Bikers** will be held Sat., May 23. Included with this newsletter, you will find a copy of the pledge form. With spring well on its way, it's time to start collecting pledges, pulling bikes out of storage, and finding sneakers. We hope you can join us as a walker, biker, or volunteer. Mark the date on your calendar and we'll see you on the trail!

Four Philadelphia-area groups (Delaware County United for Sensible Gun Policy, Chester County Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, BuxMont Coalition for Peace Action, Lower Merion United) are sponsoring a **Nonviolence Training for the New Gun Sense Movement**, Sat., April 18, 10 am to 3 pm, at Friends Center, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia. Michael Gagne will lead the training that is free and appropriate for all supporters of stronger gun laws. Call 609-924-5022.

Joe DiGarbo works with **Alternatives to Violence in the West Bank and Gaza**. He travels back and forth between Palestine/Israel and the U.S. several times a year and will speak about his work on Sat., May 2, 9-11 am, at the Lancaster Church of the Brethren, 1601 Sunset Ave. See [www.lancasterinterchurchpeacewitness.org](http://www.lancasterinterchurchpeacewitness.org) for more info.

After five years of campaigning **Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT)** announced recently that they have "moved the seventh largest U.S. bank." On March 2, PNC unveiled a policy change that will effectively cease its investments in mountaintop removal coal mining -- this is an important victory. You can learn more at [www.eqat.org](http://www.eqat.org).

**Kathy Kelly**, currently in Lexington federal prison for entering a drone base and asking to speak to its commander about the effects of drones on civilians, wrote recently about the Ash Wednesday service for the women at that prison: "I felt deeply moved by 8 LEPOCO Newsletter / April 2015

'the mountain man's' humble, direct plea to us women prisoners, asking us to focus on our very sick world over the next 40 days. Our small congregation of women prisoners may be among the most expendable people on the planet in the view of corporate forces driving war, overconsumption and environmental damage. But, the priest, the 'mountain man,' regarded us as vital and central to the healing he yearns for.

"Recognizing our need to support one another, as though we were focused on healing a very sick child, will help all of us build affinities so necessary to unshackle ourselves from addiction to war."

Kathy Kelly will be released from prison on April 21. You can send words of encouragement to her at: Kathleen Kelly 04971-045 / FMC Lexington / Federal Medical Center / PO Box 14525 / Lexington, KY 40512. For more info. on Voices for Creative Nonviolence see [www.vcnv.org](http://www.vcnv.org).

**Steve Schmitt**, a most serious advocate for car-free living for over two decades, died March 14. He was the director of the Coalition for Appropriate Transportation (CAT) since 1994. Scott Slingerland, bike director at CAT said, "His legacy is in every city planner, in everybody who is doing any kind of development. He is the small voice inside saying that they should think about the people who live without cars -- the people who ride to work, and to the store, people who take the bus."

An excellent report on Steve Schmitt's life appeared in the *Morning Call*, March 17. It quoted him speaking

in a 1991 interview, explaining why he chose to get rid of his Volvo station wagon. He said a comfortable car ride was not worth the negative effects of "dirty air, oil-covered birds, costly desert wars, nonexistent passenger trains, arrogant insurance companies, haughty Lee Iacocca, global warming, a landscape destroyed by highways, a landscape destroyed by shopping malls, a landscape destroyed by suburban housing developments, cities destroyed by suburbs."

Donations in Steve's memory can be sent to CAT, 1935 W. Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018.

"This Constitution pipeline is about enriching a few billionaires by impoverishing the people of New York State. And the bullying that we've seen go along with this, the corruption -- FERC is really a rogue agency, it's a captive agency, it issued this permit illegally." That is Robert Kennedy, Jr., speaking on MSNBC on February 24, but it could also be said of the many interstate natural gas pipeline proposals before FERC affecting our state. An **invasion by pipeline** is underway.

On March 17, Bethlehem City Council adopted a resolution opposing the PennEast pipeline set to invade the city's precious watershed land in Carbon County.

The League of Women Voters of Northampton County is holding a forum about the expansion of the Columbia gas pipeline. The forum will be Sat., April 11, at 1 pm, at Forks Elementary School, 1709 Richmond Rd., Forks Township.

## 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 interested in the following issues: \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:** LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>TH</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015, **or**  
**Donate through PayPal** by going to the "membership" page at [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).



# Bits & Pieces

Veteran broadcast journalist **Bill Moyers** will speak at Lehigh University at 8 pm, Tues., April 7, in Baker Hall, Zoellner Arts Center. Moyers, former White House press secretary under Lyndon B. Johnson, has been the host of several public affairs programs, including "Moyers' & Company," where he spotlighted issues such as economic inequality, the influence of money in politics, climate change, activism and social justice. This talk was originally scheduled for March 3, but was postponed due to snow.

**Alice Rader** invites her LEPOCO friends to join her for a "Let the Spirit Move You" celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her Temple University masters degree project in music, movement and meditation through circle dances, at Tabernacle United Church, 3700 Chestnut St., Philadelphia. Refreshments will be served and an opportunity for a free will offering provided. Call Alice at 484-466-4182 for more info.

There was an inspiring profile of the citizen activist, **Gene Stilp**, in the *Morning Call* on Sun., Feb. 22. It is an amazing story of activist creativity and flair. It opens with a report on Gene Stilp's hijacking of a pro-fracking event in Harrisburg in May 2014. With a \$10 banner saying "Tax the Frackers Behind Me," he positioned himself and one helper to become the unofficial grand marshals of a Marcellus Shale Coalition parade. Look it up if you did not see it in February.

"**The Heart of Justice: Feed Our Children - Break the Chains**" is the theme for this spring's advocacy event sponsored by the Lehigh Conference of Churches (LCC) and Bread for the World. The event on Sat., April 25, 8:30 am-3:30 pm, will take place at First Presbyterian Church (Tilghman St. & Cedar Crest Blvd.) Allentown. Caryn Long of Feeding Pennsylvania, and Larry Hollar of Bread for the World, will be the featured speakers. Workshops will focus on hunger, economic

justice and criminal justice issues. A donation for \$5 is suggested. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided. For more info. or to register (by April 22), call the LCC at 610-433-6421.

The play, **My Name Is Rachel Corrie**, the compelling and controversial play about the young international solidarity peace activist killed in March 2003, in the Gaza Strip, will be presented at the Lynn Redgrave Theatre in NYC, April 2-5 and April 9-12. The play is based on the writing of Rachel Corrie and will be performed by Charlotte Hemmings. For more info. see [www.cultureproject.org](http://www.cultureproject.org).

## Caravana

In September 2014, dozens of students from Ayotzinapa's teachers' college in the Mexican state of Guerrero were attacked by police. Six people were killed. The police then forcibly disappeared 43 students, who have been missing ever since. The Ayotzinapa43 have become a symbol of the over 100,000 murdered and 25,000 disappeared in the last eight years of the U.S./Mexican Drug War.

The parents of the 43 disappeared students have been traveling in three caravans throughout the U.S. since mid-March. Their *Caravana 43* will continue until April 28. One of the three groups will be in the Philadelphia area April 8-11. Please contact

LEPOCO (610-691-87830) if you would be interested in joining a travel pool to attend a Caravan 43 event in Philly.

The **SOA Watch Spring Mobilization**: "Growing Stronger Together: Resisting the 'Drug War' Across the Americas," will take place in Washington, DC. April 22-25. A celebration, lobby trainings and visits, direct action, a concert, and a forum and strategy session will all be part of the events. For more info. see [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org).

On March 4 a surprising email message came to LEPOCO from **Bill Kelly** of Australia, a friend of Ellen & Lee Buck, and an artist who donated a beautiful print of a large dove flying over a scene of destruction to LEPOCO (copies are still available). Bill used to live in Bethlehem for some time. The March 4 message was about a program about Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, that was aired on the Australian Broadcast Commission on that date. Remarkably the story included an interview with **Tom Roberts**, a reporter for the former *Globe Times* in the 1970s and the 1980s. In the interview he spoke about LEPOCO's role in Bethlehem.

You can listen to the program on the internet by searching for "Journey to Bethlehem, Australian Broadcasting Commission, March 2015.

**Will Allen** will speak about "The Good Food Revolution" on Wed., April 22, at 7:30 pm, at the Arthur L. Scott Spartan Center, Northampton Community College. Call 610-861-5519 for more info.

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

**Friday, March 30, 6:30 pm: Peace Camp Planning Committee Work Meeting** at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

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

**Tuesday, April 28, 4-7 pm: Peace-a-thon for Walkers and Bikers Calling Night & Planing Meeting** at the LEPOCO Peace Center..

**Wednesday, April 29, 3:30 pm: L.V. Committee Against State Killing (LV-CASK) 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 the meetings of the Stop the Wars Committee, LEPOCO Peace Singers, Americas Solidarity Group, Newsletter Planning Group, L.V. Veterans for Peace, or more information about any of the meetings listed above, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.*

*For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings, please see [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).*



Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015  
610-691-8730 [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net)  
Fax: 610-691-8904 [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org)

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**Stand Up & Speak Out!**  
**Saturdays**  
**March 28 & April 25**  
**12 Noon**  
Protest Horsham Drone Command Center  
(Outside Horsham Air National Guard Station,  
Easton & County Line Roads, Horsham, PA)  
**10:45 am: Carpool from Lehigh Valley**  
(From Hellertown Park & Ride, Silvēx Rd.  
near intersection of Rt. 412 & I-78)  
Call 610-691-8730.

**Popcorn and Politics: "The Invisible War"**  
**Friday, April 3, 7:00 pm**  
(see page 3)

**Monthly Peace Vigil**  
**4:30 - 5:30 pm; Second Thursdays**  
**April 9<sup>th</sup> & May 14<sup>th</sup>**  
***Our wars continue and expand.***  
***Please help witness for peace.***  
**3<sup>rd</sup> & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem**  
Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103

**Bill Moyers Talk, April 7, at 8 pm**  
at **Lehigh University** (see Page 9 for more details)

**Beautiful Reports on Annual Dinner**  
(see pages 4 & 5)

**Stephan Said**  
**Global Pop Musician**  
**Wednesday, April 8**  
Muhlenberg College  
(see page 3)

**Stop Fast Track**  
**No TPP**  
**No TTIP**  
(see page 3)

**Tax Day: Wednesday, April 15, 2015**  
Don't Miss the Chance to Leaflet at a local post office!  
(see page 1)

**Peace & Planet**  
**Mobilization for a Nuclear-Free,**  
**Peaceful, Just, & Sustainable World**  
**April 24-26, NYC**  
(see page 1 for more info.)