



## Unshackling Ourselves

"Unshackling Ourselves: Lessons from War Zones" – Kathy Kelly will address this intriguing topic during LEPOCO's annual dinner meeting on March 17, at Wesley United Methodist Church in Bethlehem.

Kathy Kelly is one of the founding members of Voices in the Wilderness, and currently is one of the coordinators of Voices for Creative Nonviolence. Believing that "where you stand determines what you see," Voices activists have stood alongside people in war zones and helped educate people in the U.S. about the terrible consequences of our wars. As a guest of the Afghan Peace Volunteers, she has frequently visited Kabul. Experiences there have led her to frequently speak and write about the futility of U.S. militarism and the potential for nonviolent resistance to war and injustice.

To break the economic sanctions against Iraq, she participated in 27 delegations to Baghdad, and she lived in Iraqi combat zones during the early weeks of U.S. wars in Iraq in 1991 and 2003. She has also focused on nonviolently resisting U.S. militarism by living in Gaza and Lebanon during and after Israeli airstrikes that used U.S. weapons. She has been helping build resistance to U.S. collaboration with a Saudi-led coalition that has subjected Yemen to airstrikes and blockades.

She has been arrested numerous times at home and abroad, and written of her experiences among targets of U.S. military bombardment, and as an inmate of U.S. prisons. During 2015, for having attempted to deliver a loaf of bread to a commander of a U.S. base that was

operating weaponized drones over Afghanistan and other countries, she was sentenced to three months in federal prison. In 1988, she served one year in maximum security prison for planting corn on nuclear weapon silo sites.

Since 1980, for reasons of conscientious objection, she has successfully refused all payment of federal income taxes to the U.S. government.

Kathy Kelly spoke for LEPOCO's Annual Dinner in 2007. We can promise that her talk this year will be equally passionate and informative.

- Janet Ney



Experienced/potential Peace Campers & their adults are invited to the Peace Camp Party on Saturday, February 3, at 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church, Allentown.

There will be games, stories, music and refreshments.

Please call 610-691-8730 (LEPOCO) to sign-up or for more information.

## LEPOCO Annual Dinner: Saturday, March 17, 2018

Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem

(Social at 5 pm; Dinner at 5:30 pm)

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Phone

\_\_\_ Mail tickets to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address Zip

\_\_\_ Hold tickets at door.

*Dinner tickets by advance reservation only. Program-only tickets available at the door.*

**Annual Dinner Tickets:** \$35 - Regular Adult; \$75 - Special Supporter; \$10 - Limited Income Adult / Child;  
\$10 - Program-only, regular; \$5 - Program-only, limited income

**Return to:** LEPOCO, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015 or call 610-691-8730 to confirm your reservation.

## Witnessing in the Snow & Cold

People dedicated to witnessing for peace gathered for the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Nazareth-to-Bethlehem Peace Pilgrimage on the snowy second Saturday of December 2017. Over 140 people had registered online for the event, but the inclement weather kept some of them from making the trip. Over 100 eager walkers made the trek in spite of wet feet and soggy winter clothing. We were grateful to churches along the route who offered respite, water and much appreciated hot cocoa.

Several of the walkers were delighted to make the acquaintance of Buddhist monks, Claude AnShin Thomas and his associate Dr. Wiebke KenShin Andersen. They are Peace and Justice scholars in residence at Moravian college. They were accompanied by ten of their students.

After reaching Bethlehem, the pilgrims sang carols in front of Central Moravian Church, and walked a few blocks to Christ United Church of Christ where they were served a simple supper followed by a program with music and an inspiring talk by Roberta Meek.

Roberta Meek, a well-known LEPOCO Peace Camp leader, spoke on the topic, "We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest." She is Director of the African American Studies Program and lecturer in History, Media and Communications, at Muhlenberg College. She reflected on the continuing history of racism, anti-immigration sentiment, and white supremacy in the U.S. She explained that the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries had held great promise for continuing improvement in these areas, but that current developments have set the civil rights movement back 50 years.

What made a difference then and can make a difference now is massive grassroots action. Roberta reminded us that "democracy is not stable, static and unchanging;" we are not "the strongest democracy in history. We are in dangerous waters as we see the deaths of black and brown people ignored, and neo-Nazis and alt-right persons inhabiting the highest offices in the land." We need to look to Germany as a country that has held a real reckoning with their past. We should try to do the same. As concerned and patriotic citizens, it is up us to resist – to take a stand. The struggle continues. Ella Baker's words, "We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest," are as true now as they were in the 1960s.

Pax Christi volunteers prepared the always delicious chicken rice soup for the pilgrims, while LEPOCO people offered a hearty lentil soup.

- Mimi Lang

## Calling Activists to the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee for LEPOCO is seeking members to join in their strategizing, agitating, and maintaining the work of the organization. The group needs to build the participation back up to the thirteen member level. Terms are for two years, starting in March after the Annual Dinner. If you would like to

join this serious, welcoming body (or want to suggest someone else as a possible member) please contact the LEPOCO Peace Center by phone, email or letter.

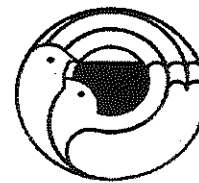
## Women Marching, Impressive in 2018

One TV network reported that there were 700 Women's Marches, January 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, with over two million people participating around the world. Regionally we heard that 40,000 marched in Philadelphia, 1000 in Doylestown and we saw the hundreds gathered at Payrow Plaza in Bethlehem. Pink hats, creative signs, and a determination to continue the struggle for women's rights and human rights was on display.

## Remembering Children Killed...in U.S.

On a very cold December 14<sup>th</sup> activists from Cease-FirePA, L.V. Friends of CeasefirePA, and Moms Demand Action for Gunsense in America, gathered at 7<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Sts., in Allentown, to read the names of the over 1000 children (under the age of 12) who have been shot and killed in the U.S. since the massacre at Sandy Hook School in Newtown, Connecticut (12/14/12). The reading of the names took over six hours conveying the weight of the tragedy of gun violence in the U.S.

The Lehigh Conference of Churches, based in Allentown, made a public statement on Christmas Day, a Covenant Among Religious Communities of the Lehigh Valley, to stand against bigotry and violence; to witness for peace and justice from their faith traditions: "We seek to build a Lehigh Valley where we turn to each other, rather than on each other."



Newsletter of LEPOCO  
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern  
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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 .....	\$10
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, Martin Boksenbaum, Amanda Zaniesienko.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Olivia Arena-Miller, Carol Baylor, Mick Baylor, Terry Briscoe, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Nancy Johnston, Christine Loch, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Jim Orben, Scott Slingerland, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), and Amanda Zaniesienko (ex-officio).

# Potluck/Popcorn & Politics

Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7 pm

## *"Chasing Trane: The John Coltrane Documentary"*

A Popcorn & Politics Film projected on the big screen  
at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., (south) Bethlehem.

"Chasing Trane" is an uplifting documentary about the legendary saxophonist. It demonstrates the power of music to entertain, inspire and transform and discusses how spirituality and events, including the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham and a 1966 visit to Nagasaki, affected Mr. Coltrane's compositions, style, and shows.

Directed by John Scheinfeld. John Coltrane's words are read by Denzel Washington.  
99 minutes. 2017.

*Please bring a snack or beverage to share*

Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm

## Sam Benchehib

*"What's it like to paddle down the most polluted river  
in the world in a kayak made of plastic bottles?"*

A Potluck & Politics event  
at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., (south) Bethlehem.

Sam Benchehib, a junior at Lehigh University and a top tennis player, joined his brother, Gary, (a film maker) in a highly successful environmental protection action in their home country, Indonesia, this past August. They used plastic (a kayak made of plastic bottles) and a river adventure down the most-polluted river in the world, to teach lessons on many levels (school children, those who live on the polluted Citarum River, media viewers, Facebook followers, and government officials) about what plastic pollution is doing to our world.

Come hear Sam Benchehib's story.

*Please bring food to share for the Potluck Dinner at 6 pm.  
Discussion will start around 6:30 pm.*

Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7 pm

## *"Living Downstream"*

A Popcorn & Politics Film projected on the big screen  
at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., (south) Bethlehem.

Described as "an eloquent and cinematic documentary film," it is based on the acclaimed book by ecologist and cancer survivor Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D. The film follows Sandra Steingraber as she travels across North America, working to break the silence about cancer and its environmental links. It is a powerful reminder of the connection between the health of our bodies and the health of our air, land, and water. Sandra Steingraber has continued her persistent scholarship and activism since the film was completed in 2010.

Producer & director: Chanda Chevannes. Producer & editor: Nathan Shields. 85 minutes.

*Please bring a snack or beverage to share*



Check out the LEPOCO website at [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org) for a Calendar of Events, Newsletter Archive, & More.

Sign up for LEPOCO e-mail weekly updates by calling 610-691-8730, or by writing to [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net).

Follow LEPOCO on Facebook and Twitter. Please "like" and "share," often.

# LEPOCO's First Tuesday Book Group

## 2018 Reading List

- February 6: **War No More: Three Centuries of American Antiwar and Peace Writing**  
6 pm (Library of America #278)  
*edited by Lawrence Rosenwald & James Carroll*  
(This is a very long book. For the Book Group, we will read at least every third author. There are 150 authors in the book.)
- March 6: **The Sellout: A Novel**  
6 pm *by Paul Beatty* (Martricia McLaughlin)
- April 3: **Horsemen of the Trumpocalypse: A Field Guide to the Most Dangerous People in America:**  
6 pm *by John Nichols* (Bob Riggs)
- May 1: **The Devil's Highway: A True Story**  
6 pm *by Luis Alberto Urrea* (Tom Pietrzak)
- June 5: **We Kill Because We Can: From Soldiering to Assassination in the Drone Age**  
6 pm *by Laurie Calhoun* (Nancy Tate)
- July 3: **Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood**  
6 pm *by Trevor Noah* (Alwyn Eades)
- September 4: **Evicted: Poverty & Profit in the American City**  
6 pm *by Matthew Desmond* (Diane Dilendik)
- October 2: **Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions**  
6 pm *by Dan Ariely* (Gwen Pease)
- November 6: **What Unites Us: Reflections on Patriotism**  
6 pm *by Dan Rather & Elliot Kirschner* (Carmen Riggs)
- December 4: **Do They Hear You When You Cry?**  
6 pm *by Fauziya Kassindja* (George Tessaro)

You are invited to read one, some, all of these books  
& join this lively discussion group.

Members of the group facilitate the discussion.

The group does not meet in January and August.

For more information contact Book Group convener, Mimi Lang, 610-866-2407,  
or the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015  
610-691-8730 / [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net) / [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).

# Peak Oil, Pipelines, and the Planet

Before the glut of cheap natural gas, we used to talk a lot about peak oil and the end of the oil bubble people have lived in for the last 150 years or so. But fracking and worse, don't refute peak oil theory; they are in fact supporting evidence. Peak oil theory remains important as context for understanding the pipeline-building frenzy going on.

Again, for those of us who may have forgotten what "peak oil" is, the theory is that oil, like any finite resource that is unrenewably consumed will reach a maximum point of production, its peak, and, once that mid-point of its life has past, oil will become more difficult and expensive to extract. See, for example, "Peak Oil Barrel: The Reported Death of Peak Oil Has Been Greatly Exaggerated" at [www.peakoilbarrel.com](http://www.peakoilbarrel.com).

As world oil production is peaking, or has already peaked, the oil and gas industry has been scrambling, resorting to more difficult and more dirty extraction methods to keep the fossil fuel based systems going -- which for us lowly participants in the system means having fuels to heat with, to run our vehicles on, to make and bring food and non-food commodities to our tables and houses. Having fuels to burn. And a planet to fry.

So being on the downhill side of peak oil helps explain the current chewing up of the landscape for the extraction and distribution infrastructure of oil and its natural gas fossil fuel fill-in and avoidance of the climatic consequences of continued reliance on fossil fuels. Pipelines are the public face of all this environmental catastrophe-in-the-making. The oil and gas industry, and its regulatory agency/government protectors, appear to be telling us, "Put that in your pipelines and smoke on it!"

That does not sit well with some of us:

### From a November 18, 2017, statement by Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Chairman Harold Frazier following a Keystone pipeline spill two days earlier:

*When the Trump administration says, this pipeline is safe, it is lying. When TransCanada says the safety of the public and the environment is its top priority, it is lying. They are lying to the Indian people, which is no surprise. But they are lying to the rest of America too. This is your water, your land, and your planet too. And your government is lying to your face, endangering your future, and doing it to make a few wealthy people wealthier still. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe condemns this spill, this pipeline, the KXL, the DAPL, and all pipelines that threaten our Grandmother Earth.*

### From a January 4<sup>th</sup>, Sierra Club email:

*[Construction of] the 350-mile Mariner East II pipeline, which [would] transport natural gas liquids across Pennsylvania for export, has been suspended! The Department of Environmental Protection suspended construction permits for the Mariner East II after mounting pressure from residents over the holidays, countless*

*wastewater spills, Sunoco's repeated failure to use construction methods allowed under the permit, and failures to report spills and incidents during construction as required by law. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise: the suspension of these pipeline construction permits comes after sustained opposition by local groups such as White Pine, Middletown Coalition for Community Safety, and Del-Chesco United for Pipeline Safety; scrutiny from elected officials at all levels; and legal actions from groups such as Clean Air Council and Mountain Watershed Association.*

### From a January 5<sup>th</sup>, Delaware Riverkeeper Network email:

*The Delaware Riverkeeper Network held a series of webinars in January to address concerns about the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) draft fracking regulations that allow the extraction of water and water resources from the Delaware River Basin to be exported to where fracking is allowed. These webinars can be found on YouTube. The January 4<sup>th</sup> session addressed "The Fracking Ban"; the January 11<sup>th</sup> session, "Water Extraction & Export"; the January 18<sup>th</sup> session, "Frack Waste Processing and Discharge." The overall title is Webinars on DRBC's Proposed Frack Ban and Draft Regulations.*

### On the Berks Gas Truth Facebook page:

*Frack Ban Hearings: The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) issued draft natural gas regulations on November 30, and set Public Hearings in two locations - Waymart PA on Tuesday, January 23, and Philadelphia on Thursday, January 25. In early January another hearing was announced for Thursday, February 22, at Lehigh-Carbon Community College, Schnecksville. The written public comment period closing will now close on March 30. One has until January 26 to request the opportunity to speak at the February hearing. Even if you didn't register before Dec. 31, you can still sign up to attend and may still be able to speak. For more information see: [www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/proposed/notice\\_hydraulic-fracturing](http://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/proposed/notice_hydraulic-fracturing).*

### From a December 28<sup>th</sup>, Delaware Riverkeeper Network email:

*A Fracked Gas Infrastructure Strategy Meeting was held in Washington, DC, January 19-20, involving community leaders, activists and experts, sharing experiences and best practice. We will be eager to hear the mutual strategies that come from this gathering to enhance local battles and the collective battle against the abuses of FERC. Watch for news about this meeting from the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.*

- Martin Boksenbaum

As this newsletter is being prepared, the announcement came from FERC (the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) that the PennEast Pipeline has been approved to begin eminent domain actions against people along the pipeline route. We will do our best to list events and actions in response to this FERC action/invasion in the LEPOCO weekly email update.

# LEPOCO Financial Report 2017

Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Fund Balance	2017
Membership Dues, Fund Appeals, Pledges	\$46,612.65
Boutique & SERRV Sales (net)	\$1,143.57
Annual Dinner (net)	\$2,470.41
Art Raffle (net)	\$799.35
Peace-A-Thon (net)	\$1,860.14
Dividends and Interest PPL, Domini Funds, 1 <sup>st</sup> Commonwealth)	\$4686.95
Gas Well Rebate	\$2.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>57,575.07</b>
Contributions to Others (Peace Pilgrimage, UFPI, Global Network. FOR Peace Presence, etc)	\$300.00
Salaries, Taxes & Benefits to Employees	\$33,513.79
Rent, Electric, Telephone	\$6,379.74
Insurance (Fire, Liability & Worker's Comp)	\$1,410.00
Internet Service Provider	\$615.98
Other Computer Fees (Domain Fees, E-Mail, Virus, Software)	\$325.80
Paypal Fees	\$89.53
Printing and Postage (Newsletter, Bulk Mail Fee, etc.)	\$5,265.06
P&P's (Potluck & Politics) & (Popcorn & Politics)	\$206.70
Miscellaneous	\$71.82
Fund Appeals	\$702.42
Other Program & Events (ML King, H-N, Tax Day, Buckingham Fair, Veg Fest, Earth Day, etc)	\$384.06
Supplies (Office, Copier, Printer, Paper)	\$1,051.52
Repairs (Office, Risograph, Copier & Computer)	\$448.86
Misc. Office Expenses (Mowing Grass, light bulbs, batteries)	\$145.79
Miscellaneous (Working Groups, Chorus, etc.)	\$95.81
Farmers Market Leafletting	\$339.20
Copier Lease	\$892.32
Yard Signs (net)	\$78.74
Business Mercantile Tax	\$30.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$52,347.14</b>
<b>Fund Balances at the Beginning of the Year</b>	<b>\$87,971.81</b>
<b>Excess or (Loss) for Year</b>	<b>\$5,227.93</b>
<b>Change in Investment Value</b>	<b>\$6,789.63</b>
<b>Fund Balance at the End of the Year</b>	<b>\$99,989.37</b>

2017 Fund Balances	Beginning of Year	End of Year
Cash, Savings and Investments	\$93,833.11	\$106,179.37
Liabilities	\$5,861.30	\$6,190.00
Net Assets and Fund Balances	\$87,971.81	\$99,989.37

## South Korean & Japanese Activists Speak for Peace Not War

In late October Women Cross the DMZ sponsored a series of very informative webinars about U.S. policy toward North Korea. The webinars came just prior to President Trump's visit to Asia. Women Against Military Madness, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, printed a report on one of the webinars in a recent issue of their newsletter. Because we hear very little from the peace organizations in Asia we reproduce excerpts from that report here.

Women Cross the DMZ was founded in 2015, in observance of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the division of Korea. They organized thirty women peacemakers from a dozen countries to walk for peace in both Koreas alongside women leaders from both countries. The delegation included Nobel Peace laureates, academics, authors, faith leaders.

Prior to Trump's Asian tour, activists made plans through 2018 and beyond. Ji-Yeon Yuh, a resident of Seoul and Chicago, reported on this in an October 25 webinar produced by Women Cross the DMZ.

*Today at the International Airport in South Korea, fifteen South Korean activists preparing to embark on a speaking tour of the United States were prevented from departing and told that they could not enter the U.S. without official printed visas issued by the U.S. Embassy. They learned later that their usual visa waiver for citizens of countries like South Korea with travel agreements with the U.S. had been canceled. This is the first time that the United States has prevented South Korean activists from even departing the country. So apparently, the United States does not want Americans to hear from South Korean activists.*

So what is it that the U.S. – and, in this context, the U.S. refers to hawkish U.S. policy makers – doesn't want U.S. citizens to hear? As an expert in Asian American issues, a faculty member in the History Department at Northwestern University and a board member of the Korean Policy Institute, Ji-Yeon Yuh, was well positioned to host an online forum that allows Americans to hear the voices of Korean and Japanese peace activists. She introduced the webinar by asking the audience to look at realities beyond the comic book version that mass media provides about North Korea:

*Take a closer look behind the headlines and it is clear that people in Asia, specifically South Korea and Japan are thinking about engagement with North Korea... if you want to look and if you're interested there are signs of the possibility for peace, and some of the clearest signs come from the dedicated peace activists in South Korea and Japan who warn us of the dangers of hostilities and war and show us the many paths that can lead to peace.*

Choi Eun-A, chair of the Reunification Committee of the Korean Alliance for Progressive Movements, was the first to speak (in the webinar). The Alliance, based in Seoul, South Korea, was created to bring together various movements and campaigns for

peace and Korean reunification. Founded in 1994, it is an NGO with about 12,000 members and has a special consultancy status with the UN:

*We see the current conflict between the U.S. and North Korea as fundamentally the product of the unended Korean War and an antagonism that has continued for sixty years since the signing of the armistice in 1953. (The armistice was supposed to be a cessation of hostilities. There was no peace treaty concluded to end the war.) For decades the U.S. has considered North Korea an enemy state, deploying U.S. troops and weapons of mass destruction in South Korea, holding massive war games -- in other words, carrying out shows of force and also the South Korean government has spent ten times more in the area of defense and has put asymmetric pressure on North Korea.*

She said further that lessons learned from the fate of non-nuclear nations were the motivating factor in North Korea's quest for nuclear weapons.

*When the multilateral agreements reached through the Six Party Talks\* were ignored or rejected unilaterally by the United States and the U.S. pursued a policy of regime collapse and war in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya, these were key in driving North Korea to strengthen its own deterrence capability, particularly in the form of nuclear weapons.*

(\*The Six Party Talks included North and South Korea, the U.S., China, Japan, and Russia. They came together in efforts to reach an agreement on the dismantling of North Korea's nuclear weapons program in 2003 and 2009.)

What will the pro-peace movement do to change the dynamic on the Korean peninsula? Choi Eun-A explained that on their immediate agenda was to seize the opportunity of Trump's visit to South Korea. Peace activists planned a series of actions throughout the country letting it be known that "war-threatening weapons salesman Trump is unwelcome" and that

- 1) they do not accept threats of war, military actions, and sanctions against North Korea.
- 2) they don't want THAAD (the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system which was recently installed by the U.S. in South Korea) and, adding insult to injury, they do not like the idea that South Korea should pay for the cost of hosting it and U.S. troops.
- 3) they want the U.S. to stop demanding the renegotiation of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

In the long term, peace activists want an end to military aggression and a conclusive peace treaty with North Korea. Recognizing that civil society in the U.S. and pro-peace elements in South Korea, Japan and China have all proposed this before, Choi Eun-A concludes that the task of the coalition she represents is to "translate this into building a movement in South Korea."

Lee Tae-Ho, deputy secretary general of the Policy Committee of People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), South Korea. This organization encourages people to recognize the

## South Korean & Japanese Activists Speak

(continued from page 7)

urgency of the current situation and pressure policy makers. Here's how:

*Discussing preemptive strikes policy, continuing the war games, selling more weapons of mass destruction to South Korea – all of these things will only drive North Korea to continue to strengthen its nuclear and strike capabilities... So what we're planning are many actions to 1) build consensus among the broader public of a more critical consciousness about how real the war threats are and, 2) emphasize the fact that these decisions are being made without any consultation of the actual people living on the Korea peninsula.*

He spoke about the necessity of providing incentives for North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons and about what the governments of South Korea and the U.S. need to do to make it happen. But the U.S. is instead intensifying sanctions against North Korea, while the South Korean military defense budget surpasses the entire GDP of North Korea:

*The intelligence agencies of the U.S. and South Korea both agree that North Korea's so-called nuclear threat is an asymmetric threat. This term is used to refer to a situation where a militarily weaker nation develops a deterrent capability to counter threats from militarily superior nations.*

So it's up to the nations with the superior military strength to act, and that means "talks without conditions" and "the U.S. and South Korean governments coming to the table with a proposal that makes sense for North Koreans." In addition:

*Our message to both the Trump and Moon (South Korean President Moon Jae-in) administrations is that they should not just focus on North Korea's nuclear weapons. In fact, all surrounding countries around the Korean peninsula have pursued military policies and strategies based on nuclear weapons as a deterrence so you cannot just focus unilaterally on North Korea.*

*We're talking about eliminating nuclear threats to all of Asia. And if that sounds like too much of a task, at least in the immediate future there is the Olympics coming up in South Korea... The U.S. and South Korean governments can at least stop the military exercise scheduled for this spring and demonstrate that they are ready to sit down and negotiate for peace.*

**Yoshioka Tatsuya, co-founder and director, Peace Boat, Japan.** Founded in 1983, Peace Boat has launched more than 90 boats sailing the seas staffed by international volunteers engaging in antiwar, peace, and sustainability projects.

*Japan is in a different situation than South Korea. Every time North Korea fires a missile, Prime Minister Abe, who was recently reelected, takes advantage of the situation to "promote fear in Japan against North Korea and try to promote and encourage the right wing, or the*

*people who...pursue the militarization of Japan."*

(Article 9 of the Japanese constitution renounces war and the threat of war as a means of settling international disputes.)

Japan regards not only North Korea but also South Korea and China as threats. Tatsuya sees "a dramatic change in Japanese society." As in the U.S., there is a problem with media manipulation of the public, which is generating fear and creating a dangerous atmosphere promoting Japanese militarization, "including, I think, nuclear weapons development in Japan."

This change has come about in spite of the fact that the Japanese public has long been opposed to nuclear weapons because the nation experienced their effect in 1945 when the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing a quarter of a million people instantly, most of them civilians, and causing others horrible suffering from radiation poisoning in the aftermath.

Still, sentiment remains opposed to nuclear weapons in Japan. Tatsuya says that the peace movement can make use of the momentum gained with the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Acknowledging that it won't be easy, he remains hopeful that this is an opportunity for the world to shift 180 degrees away from nuclear weapons. He says pro-peace activists in Japan will pressure the U.S. and all nations to sign the treaty.

All of the activists mentioned the 2018 Olympics to be hosted by Pyeongchang, South Korea... A stop to the war exercises and threats during the time of the Olympics can provide a space for dialogue and peace-making. Pointing to cooperation with North Korea in the past, activists look ahead to opportunities in the future. In the long term, they are working for an end to the Korean War, a permanent peace treaty between North and South Korea, and reunification of Korea.

Both South Koreans and Japanese have a goal of seeing nuclear weapons eliminated in Asia and the world. And they ask for solidarity with people of peace everywhere.

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This article appeared in the Volume 35, Number 6, 2017, issue of "Women Against Military Madness (WAMM) Newsletter." The article was compiled by the WAMM Newsletter Committee. See [www.womenagainstmilitarymadness.org](http://www.womenagainstmilitarymadness.org) for more information. You can learn more about the webinars and Women Cross the DMZ at [www.womencrossdmz.org](http://www.womencrossdmz.org).





## Honduras: The Struggle Continues

*The article below was written in mid-December and published by The Express-Times (online and in print) later that month. Sadly the situation in Honduras has not improved. As this newsletter is being prepared there is a general strike in the country, called by supporters of Salvador Nasralla. They say the November election was stolen by Juan Orlando Hernandez who will be sworn into office on January 27<sup>th</sup>. While independent observers, including the Organization of American States, still call for new elections, the U.S. is backing Hernandez.*

*The death toll at the hand of the security forces during the protests since the election has now risen to 30. Salvador Nasralla said of the general strike, "We're going to continue protesting throughout this entire week, but logic tells us it's going to be difficult because people don't have enough to eat, and then you add in that the regime is killing people... All of that is now in the hands of the United Nations and the human rights organizations. That said...I'm getting the impression - and I hope I'm wrong about this - that these international organizations are primarily decorations and that they're scared because they're funded by the United States."*

*It is so important that we do what we can to support the Berta Cáceres Human Rights in Honduras Act (HR-1299) and other efforts to end U.S. support for a repressive regime. Please contact your representative and senators.*

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The year 2009 is deeply etched in my memory. My mother died in May, a long-time activist friend and my father-in-law, both died in October, and my interest in Central America that started in the 1980s led me to pay special attention to the bizarre and tragic June coup in Honduras.

The news about the popular protests in Honduras since the apparent fraud around their November 26<sup>th</sup> election has made me think back to 2009 - to ponder what might have been had the kidnapping and overthrow of the country's elected president, Mel Zalaya, not occurred.

What might have been if the U.S. had joined with the other countries in the Organization of American States in condemning the coup in Honduras and in calling for the return of the elected government in 2009?

Would then President Zalaya's social programs like a significantly higher minimum wage, free education for all children, and subsidies for small farmers have made people's lives better?

Would dozens of Honduran journalists still be alive to report on the reality of their country (as of April 2016, 59 Honduran journalists had been assassinated since the 2009 coup)?

Would the dozens of assassinated peasant and environmental leaders, including the internationally acclaimed Berta Cáceres of COPINH (Council of Popular and Indigenous Organization of Honduras), still be alive and organizing their communities for a better life

and the protection of rivers and forests? Earlier this year Global Witness (an environmental watchdog) named Honduras the "deadliest place to defend the planet" and linked the country's business and political elite to the brutal human rights abuses.

Without the 2009 coup would children have had a better life at home and been much less likely to join the thousands of young immigrants fleeing gang violence and other hardships in Honduras and thereby risking their lives on the dangerous journey across borders to the U.S.?

We do not know the answers to these questions because the chances to stop the 2009 coup were not taken. We do, however, have another opportunity to support the people of Honduras as they speak out for a better future. They face a possible turning point as they are calling for a credible election of their president. News reports say the count from the November vote was strangely halted as the opposition candidate, Salvador Nasralla, was leading, and after a rather long pause, suddenly the incumbent president, Juan Orlando Hernandez, had assumed the lead.

Amid reports of ballot box stuffing and bribes being paid at the polls, the observer mission of the Organization of American States has stated that they cannot endorse the outcome even with the modest recounts that have occurred: "The tight margin of the results, and the irregularities, errors and systemic problems that have surrounded this election do not allow the Mission to hold certainty about the results."

Human rights observers report massive protests in the streets of Honduras since the election results have been thrown into question. As the government imposed an overnight curfew the protests included the widespread banging of pots and pans. Sadly, during the protests 14 people have been killed, dozens wounded and hundreds arrested at the hands of U.S.-funded Honduran security forces. Remarkably, for one 24-hour period some of those security forces refused to enforce the government's curfew. Are they also tiring of the repression they are asked to carry out?

A number of U.S. organizations including Witness for Peace, Just Foreign Policy and the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, are calling on the U.S. government to help ensure the will of the electorate in Honduras by "supporting credible, independent investigations into any and all claims of state-involvement in electoral fraud and violence during and since the November 26<sup>th</sup> election." They are also calling on Congress to support the Berta Cáceres Human Rights in Honduras Act (HR-1299) that would limit U.S. military aid to the country until human rights abuses are addressed.

2017 will be a memorable year for a multitude of reasons, but it would be wonderful if it also became memorable as the year when the U.S. started to support the people of Honduras in their struggle for human rights and a government that they have fairly elected.

- Nancy Tate

# Bits & Pieces

☺ On January 25, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the hands of the Doomsday Clock 30 seconds closer to the end of the world. Mounting concerns about the possibility of nuclear war, along with Trump's "unpredictability," have pushed the symbolic clock to two minutes before midnight.

The Bulletin scientists decried the United States' increased reliance on nuclear weapons; its staggering investments in new nuclear weapons which are driving the "modernization" of the world's eight other nuclear arsenals; the return of Cold War rhetoric and total absence of US-Russian arms control negotiations; the lack of coherent US foreign and military policies which undermines global security and increases the risk of nuclear war; North Korea's nuclear weapons program; South Asian rivalries; and Trump's threat to the nuclear deal with Iran. The scientists also heightened the alarm over the existential dangers of climate change and the political and media-driven loss of trust in institutions, which in turn further undermines the ability to address the dangers of nuclear war and climate change.

(Source: "Doomsday and the Apocalyptic Trump Nuclear War Fighting Doctrine," by Joseph Gerson, American Friends Service Committee's Peace & Economic Security Program, 1/26/18, published at [www.truth-out.org](http://www.truth-out.org).)

☺ On January 19 the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved a Certificate that will allow PennEast to start the eminent domain process that will facilitate a monster pipeline cutting through the forests, wetlands, roads, rivers, parking lots, protected land, and more in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. One of the groups opposing the pipeline in New Jersey, HALT (Homeowners Against Land Taking), is holding a meeting to discuss this development, on Wednesday, January 31, at 7:30 pm, at the Prallsville Mill, in Stockton, NJ. For more information call 609-483-5530.

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☺ The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) has begun a public hearing process around the proposed fracking ban in the Delaware River Basin. Many environmental groups are calling for a more comprehensive ban than the one proposed by the DRBC. So far the final public hearing on the DRBC plan has been set for Thursday, February 22, 3-7 pm, at Lehigh-Carbon Community College, Schnecksville (Lisa Scheller-Wayne Woodman Community Services Center). For more information about this process see [www.DelawareRiverkeeper.org](http://www.DelawareRiverkeeper.org).

☺ On January 25<sup>th</sup> a group of Swiss activists dropped a 60-meter banner reading Trump Not Welcome, from a mountain near the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos. The activists are part of a group that works to build a fairer, greener economy and a more compassionate society. Their statement read, "U.S. President Donald Trump stands for racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, sexism, hostility towards women, warfare, denial of climate change, attacks on human rights and a policy that deepens poverty and inequality. It is important to remain critical and continue to resist the misanthropic policies of Administration Trump, despite the fact that Donald Trump gives an average of six lies a day..."

(Source: CommonDreams.org, 1/25/18.)

☺ Sunday, February 18, the Bethlehem NAACP will hold their annual Freedom Fund Banquet, at 2:30 pm,

at The Meadows, in Hellertown. The theme will be "Pursuing Liberty in the Face of Injustice." Tickets are \$40. For more information call 610-866-2078.

☺ The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling of January 22, affirmed what has been known all along: our Congressional districts map is "clearly, plainly and palpably unconstitutional." The Court ordered the Pennsylvania legislature to produce a new map by February 9, to be approved by the governor by February 16. But, the court ruling doesn't change the process by which Congressional and state legislative districts are drawn, so Fair Districts PA will continue to seek a constitutional amendment to end the current conflict of interest. Support is still building for enacting HB722 and SB22.

(Source: FairDistrictsPA.com.)

☺ On December 11, 2017, 15 people were arrested for blocking the entrance to the U.S. mission to the UN in protest of the U.S. support for the Saudi aerial bombardment of the people of Yemen. For more information see [www.KnowDrones.com](http://www.KnowDrones.com).

☺ In Baltimore, the group World Beyond War has put up a billboard that states, "3% of U.S. military spending could end starvation on earth." See [www.WorldBeyondWar.org](http://www.WorldBeyondWar.org) for more information.



## Support LEPOCO!

\_\_\_ Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$35 individual; \$45 household; \$75 supporter; \$10 limited 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

☪ Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, former UN Commissioner for Human Rights, President of Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice, UN Special Envoy on Climate Change, and leader of the Ethical Globalization Initiative, will speak at Lehigh University (Baker Hall, Zoellner Arts Center), on Tuesday, February 6, at 8 pm. Her topic will be, "Climate Justice: Why Climate Change Is a Threat to Human Rights." Free and open to the public.

☪ Two women, spanning generations and cultures, accepted the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize in December, presented by Berit Reiss-Andersen, Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee. As most readers know the prize was awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Reiss-Andersen said that ICAN received the award "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons." The prize was accepted by ICAN's 34-year-old executive director, Beatrice Fihn of Sweden, and 85-year-old hibakusha, Setsuko Thurlow of Japan, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Fihn said, "...we represent the only rational choice. We represent those who refuse to accept nuclear weapons as a fixture in our world, those who refuse to have their fates bound up in a few lines of launch code." Thurlow, who was 13 at the time of the Hiroshima bombing, spoke of the horrors she witnessed. "Today, I want you to feel in this hall the presence of all those who perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki," she said. "I want you to feel, above and around us, a great cloud of a quarter million souls. Each person had a name. Each person was loved by someone. Let us ensure that their deaths were not in vain."

(Source: [www.Beyond Nuclear.org](http://www.BeyondNuclear.org).)

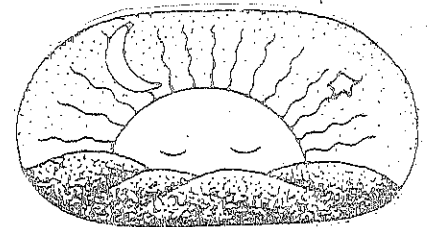
☪ The crisis in Honduras needs our attention. One way we can help de-

nounce the U.S. role in the repression there is to join a Witness for Peace delegation to Honduras. There are four such delegations scheduled between now and early June. You can learn more at [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org).

☪ Sa'ed Atshan will speak about "Palestinian Christians: Past, Present, and Future," at Muhlenberg College (Miller Forum, Moyer Hall), on Thursday, February 1, at 7 pm. Sa'ed Atshan is a Quaker and an advocate for nonviolence. The program is sponsored by the Center for Ethics at Muhlenberg.

☪ If you have seen or plan to see the film, The Post, you may want to read an article by Bill Bigelow of "Rethinking Schools" and the Zinn Education Project, published by CommonDreams.org on January 19. In a closing paragraph he writes, "I get it. Steven Spielberg made a film about press freedom, not the Vietnam War. And, especially with Trump in the White House, the defense of a

courageous, critical press is more necessary than ever. And in this #MeToo moment, Katharine Graham's struggle to be taken seriously in a workplace drenched in male chauvinism is timely. But The Post could have taught much more about the lies that made the Pentagon Papers so meaningful. And the film could have acknowledged that the Washington Post might have featured a more honest portrayal of the war, simply by paying attention to the voices of war veterans, antiwar critics, and the Vietnamese themselves, rather than waiting for leaked government documents." The article is entitled "What Spielberg's The Post - and Our Textbooks - Leave Out."



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

- Wednesday, January 31, 10:45 am: Stop the Wars Committee meeting at Café The Lodge, 427 East 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem.
- Wednesday, January 31, 3:15 pm: Peace Camp Planning Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center, Bethlehem.
- Thursdays, February 1 & March 1, 12:30 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meetings at the LEPOCO Peace Center, Bethlehem.
- Thursday, February 1, 2:30 pm: Newsletter Planning Meeting at the LEPOCO Peace Center, Bethlehem.
- Sunday, February 4, 7 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singers Rehearsal at home of Nancy Johnston, Easton.
- Tuesdays, February 6 & March 6, 6 pm: LEPOCO Book Group meets at home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem. See the reading list for 2018 on page 4 of this newsletter.
- Mondays, February 12 & March 12, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meetings at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All members & friends are welcome at this business meeting where the organization's activities are discussed.
- Sunday, February 18, 7 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singers Rehearsal. Location to be announced. The group will also rehearse on Sundays, February 25, and March 4 and 11.
- Saturday, February 24, 5 pm: LEPOCO Annual Dinner Planning Committee Meeting and trial dinner, Bethlehem. Call 610-691-8730 for more info.
- Tuesday, February 27, 4 pm: LEPOCO Peace-A-Thon Planning Committee meeting at the Peace Center.
- Wednesday, March 7, 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 these meetings or any other committees, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.*

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



# LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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## Monthly Peace Vigil

(Second Thursdays)

February 8 & March 8

4:00-5:00 pm

*Our wars & bombings continue.  
Help witness for peace.*

3<sup>rd</sup> & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Call LEPOCO 610-691-8730 for more  
information.

Saturday, March 17

## LEPOCO Annual Dinner

Featured Speaker:

**Kathy Kelly**

from Voices for Creative Nonviolence

**"Unshackling Ourselves:  
Lessons from War Zones"**

For more information see page 1.

## Stand Up & Speak Out!

Saturday, March 31, 12 - 2 pm

**Protest:**

**Horsham Drone Command Center**  
(Rt. 611, Horsham)

Call 610-691-8730 for information  
about car pooling and other details.

## Peace Camp Party

Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

9:00 am

Allentown

See page 1 for more information.