

Remembrance, Grief, Reflection & Hope

Over 40 people gathered in Bethlehem's Tondabayashi Garden on Hiroshima Day (August 6). Meeting first at the Unitarian Church, the group had walked with drums and peace banners to the Garden on a pleasant summer evening.

We heard about local activities that had helped us remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the past year. The Kings Bay Plowshares Action and their hearing in Georgia during H-N Week were noted (www.kingsbayplowshares7.org).

We read excerpts from the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (www.icanw.org), and signed postcards to our representatives in Congress urging their support for that treaty.

We read about a July 2019 tragic accident on a Russian nuclear-powered submarine; a late 2018 dangerous shipment of weapons-grade plutonium across the U.S.; and six other troubling examples of nuclear dangers that led to the response, "Hell is coming, and we've got to do something to stop it."

We celebrated actions for peace (we noted ten) like the 350 million trees planted recently in Ethiopia to tackle climate change and the city and state resolutions supporting the UN nuclear weapons ban treaty.

We read Mimi Lang's "Sunflower Meditation," and heard the Peace Singers, "This weary world has had its fill of cries of war on every hill, but you can hear that joyful sound, a song of peace from higher ground."

But, the highlight of the program was the talk by Lloyd Steffen, University Chaplain at Lehigh, "Remembering Hiroshima and Looking Ahead." Here are some excerpts.

In the Peace Memorial Museum at the center of the modern city of Hiroshima, Japan, you will see in a display a watch stopped at 8:15. That was the moment when, on the morning of August 6, 1945, all the clocks in that city stopped. That was a moment when the world changed... Over 200 forms of radiation isotopes were released in the explosion, and the X-rays, the neutron rays, the burst of light, the shock wave, and heat from a fireball hotter than the surface of the sun killed 60-80,000 people within one minute of the detonation...

That bombing victims would continue to die came as somewhat of a surprise. On August 6, 1945, the only studies that had been undertaken about the effect of radiation exposure had been on rabbits, so US governmental officials denied the lingering and deadly effects of the bomb — the mysterious radiation sickness...

The events of August 6, 1945, have continued to live on with us to this day. Remarkably, the alarm of nuclear

destruction associated with Hiroshima, then at Nagasaki, has so horrified us, that we have not since those days seventy-four years ago allowed nuclear weapons to be used again as a weapon of war. But there have been military accidents and geopolitical events, like the Cuban Missile crisis, which have threatened nuclear weapon explosions and nuclear war, and nuclear weapons continue to pose a threat to the stability and peace of the world.

August 6 is a solemn day as is August 9, the date of the Nagasaki attack. We seem to live comfortably with justifications of the bombing — it was, we are told and many of us believe, a necessary and decisive action that saved lives and led to a speedy end to the Second World War...

But here's the thing. In the years since the Hiroshima bombing, some important matters have come to light. We have good evidence in the historical record that Japan at the time of the bombing had been seeking a way to end the war...

I offer these reflections as reminders that the bombing of Hiroshima was more than a military decision — it was a political decision based on factors other than military necessity and it remains for us a troubling event...

The bombing of Hiroshima was part of a larger geopolitical objective whereby the United States aimed to show the world the power it had with its new atomic weaponry — and the power had to be demonstrated...

The case was made that Hiroshima was a legitimate military target and President Truman even noted that claim in his diary. But the fact is that the bomb directly attacked a civilian population, it was known that that would be the result, and doing such a thing is contrary to international law and moral decency. Directly attacking non-combatants for a political end is what defines terrorism.. In the Middle Ages well-poisoning was banned

(continued on page 2)

LEPOCO at a Crossroads!

LEPOCO is at a crossroads concerning our office. As you may know, our landlord has put the building up for sale, although a change of ownership does not seem imminent.

A subcommittee of the Steering Committee has been meeting to consider options. The idea of LEPOCO buying the building, either alone, in partnership with another non-profit, or with a consortium of interested members, has been placed at the bottom of the list as too much of a distraction from our work. Other possible scenarios:

(continued on page 3)

A New Step on a Path to War

The August LEPOCO film of the month was, "The Man Who Saved the World," about the Soviet officer who in 1983 refused to order a counter-strike when satellite and computer errors indicated incoming U.S. missiles. Memories resurfaced for me of how omnipresent the fear of nuclear war was in the early 1980s. Most U.S. teenagers believed nuclear war was likely; a third of American high school seniors agreed with the statement, "Nuclear or biological annihilation will probably be the fate of all mankind in my lifetime."

The current saber-rattling of U.S. foreign policy is resurrecting old dangers and fears. On the day of LEPOCO's film, the U.S. formally ended participation in the INF nuclear treaty. This 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces agreement eliminated more than 2500 missiles, stabilized the balance of power in Europe and contributed to the end of the Cold War. The intention now is to begin testing and deploying a new generation of intermediate-range nuclear missiles. The U.S. action leaves only one agreement limiting the resumption of an all-out nuclear arms race, and the president's advisers have indicated the U.S. is unlikely to extend the New START treaty, limiting the number of Russian and American strategic warheads, when it expires early next year. President Trump has called the New START treaty "just another bad deal" made by the Obama administration. So, the possibility of new nuclear missile deployments and augmented nuclear stockpiles must be added to the continuing danger of nuclear weapons proliferation.

Part of President Trump's 2016 electoral appeal for many was his promises to end a foreign policy of regime change and, after fifteen years of unending war, to bring American troops home. The promises have been betrayed. Our military role in conflicts across the Middle East and Africa remains pervasive and mostly uncriticized. Congressional opposition has been unable to halt our ongoing contribution to the devastation of Yemen. A bullying American foreign policy – toward Iran, Venezuela and elsewhere – is creating an ominous atmosphere. Our path is heading into a dark and dangerous wood.

- Mick Baylor

Editor's Note: The piece above was written when requested in August, but now travel and other developments have delayed this newsletter and the changes that have ensued in U.S. foreign policy in recent weeks have again contributed to the instability on many fronts, as described in the article.

John Bolton is gone, but the bellicosity remains and most recently we are reminded of the loss of the Iran Nuclear Deal and the ongoing support for the war in Yemen. This mistake and this tragedy, respectively, have brought us another moment of possible disaster as war with Iran on behalf of Saudi Arabia looms much too large.

Give us back our treaties – as incomplete or as inadequate as they were.

Remembrance, Grief, Reflection & Hope

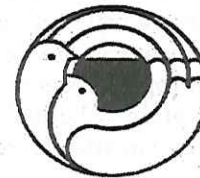
(continued from page 1)

as an illegitimate act of war because it continued to kill even after a conflict was settled. A nuclear weapon keeps on killing even after the weapon is used, and so do biological and chemical weapons...

So the work of resisting the spread and the threat of nuclear weapons goes on. We do well to remember that these weapons have since their very beginning been involved in the power dynamics of geopolitics, that these weapons are often, usually, discussed as threats to civilians and urban population centers; that we do not understand all the destructive consequences that would ensue from using these weapons; that fear that these weapons might wind up in the hands of terrorists overlooks the fact that the weapons are themselves instruments of terror – these weapons make terrorists of anyone who would use them and they pose a well-poisoning threat to the entire planet.

On this August 6, we do well to remember what happened this day 74 years ago in Hiroshima – to remember as President Obama said when he visited Hiroshima and met with victims of the bombing: "We must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without [nuclear arms]; "and that is a future we can choose, a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of the atomic warfare but as the start of our own moral awakening."

Editor's Note: If you would like to read the complete talk by Lloyd Steffen please contact LEPOCO. We can send a copy by email or post mail.



Newsletter of LEPOCO
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern
313 West Fourth Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
phone: 610-691-8730
fax: 610-691-8904
website: www.lepoco.org
e-mail: lepoco@fast.net

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, Amanda Zaniesienko, Carol Baylor.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Carol Baylor, Mick Baylor, Terry Briscoe, Sharlee DiMenichi, Margot Hillman, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Nancy Johnston, Christine Loch, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Jim Orben, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), and Amanda Zaniesienko (ex-officio).

Potluck/Popcorn & Politics

Friday, October 4th, 7 pm

"I, Daniel Blake"

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

After suffering a heart-attack, a 59-year-old carpenter befriends a single mother and her two kids as they navigate through bureaucratic forces in order to receive an employment and support allowance. The film is set in Newcastle, England, and is a scathing indictment of how governments can show a complete lack of empathy toward their own citizens. It became Ken Loach's biggest success at the UK box office.

Directed by Ken Loach. Written by Paul Laverty. 100 minutes. 2016.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, November 10th, 6 pm

"Terezin: I Will Never Forget"

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

Nancy Johnston will present knowledge and photos from her personal experience at a Nazi concentration camp outside of Prague, Czech Republic, in 2017. She will talk about the inhumanity and suffering evident there - especially that experienced by children. And, she will share how she personally witnessed some evidence of healing. This short presentation will allow time for questions and conversation.

Nancy taught nursing at Cedar Crest College for 22 years, is a self-taught nature enthusiast, a world traveler, a Quaker, and a member of the LEPOCO Steering Committee.

Please bring food to share for the Potluck Dinner at 6 pm.

Discussion will start around 6:30 pm.



LEPOCO at a Crossroads

(continued from page 1)

Unknown buyer: Should the building be purchased by someone with no special interest in LEPOCO (or even possibly hostile to LEPOCO), we think we would face *at least* a doubling of the rent, if the new owner allows us to stay at all. (We have no lease, although the landlord has indicated he would want a clause in any agreement of sale allowing LEPOCO to stay at least 60 days at current rent.)

LEPOCO-friendly buyer: Someone buys the building and accepts a less-than-market return on their investment by keeping LEPOCO's rent reasonable.

Non-profit buyer: We have heard that a nearby non-profit might consider buying the building for their eventual use. But they would allow LEPOCO to stay for 18-24 months. This could be the best outcome we might expect, although we do not yet know whether it is likely or what the exact terms would be.

Or LEPOCO could decide to find other quarters and move. This could be forced on us in the short or intermediate term by one of the scenarios above. It would be a major effort, but possibly would actually

help LEPOCO by forcing us to do some housecleaning, plus a location with better parking might be found.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. If you know of a possible friendly buyer, have them contact LEPOCO or simply investigate the property listing with their financial advisors ASAP.

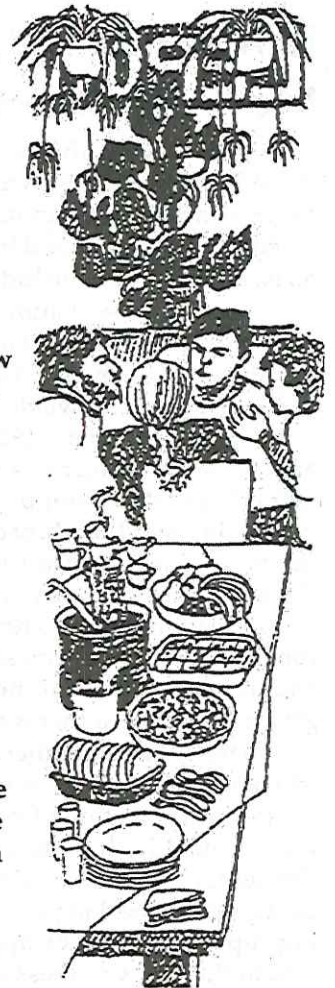
2. If you, or a friend, own a possible new office location for LEPOCO, contact Diane Dilendik with specifics: rent, location, size, etc. Or to help further with the search, contact the office for a listing of what LEPOCO would like, and then follow up with the owner/agent if you see a "for rent" sign in a possible location.



The committee that chooses the films for the Popcorn & Politics series will meet soon to choose films for the next several months.

Would you like to help with this process?

Please contact LEPOCO (610-691-8730 or lepoco@fast.net) to be notified of meeting times. If you cannot attend a meeting, but want to suggest a film (films) contact LEPOCO or talk with any current members of the committee: Kathryn Hoffman, Carol Baylor, Amanda Zaniesienko, Nancy Tate.



Remembering Martin Boksenbaum

Martin Boksenbaum, a LEPOCO supporter since the 1980s and a Lehigh Valley leader on much work for the environment and in building community, died on August 7. His work and his dedication to that work is missed by so many including LEPOCO.

Martin Boksenbaum and Janet Goloub came to the Lehigh Valley in 1980. They first lived in Allentown and then in Treichlers. Martin taught in the Allentown School District for two decades.

I still remember a 1992 conversation with Martin on a walk for indigenous rights during the Quincentennial year of Columbus' arrival in the Americas. It is interesting that that thread of concern for indigenous rights continued in Martin's work surfacing again in the Americas Solidarity Group in recent years. At gatherings held in Martin's honor people spoke of the long consistency in the themes of his work for a better world and in his deep commitment to bringing people and groups together in that work.

Some will remember that Martin played violin in a trio performing music at several LEPOCO Annual Dinners – one indication of his love for music and his involvement in the arts community. He was a leader in the Lehigh Valley Arts Council. Martin worked diligently in the local manifestations of the Green Party – a big supporter of the campaign of Greta Browne for a seat in the U.S. Congress in 2006. He was a long-time devoted booster of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) – organizing local workshops and programs about CELDF and writing about their accomplishments in this newsletter.

In 2003 Martin was a founding member of the Alliance for Sustainable Communities – Lehigh Valley. He was a driving force in the organization that has produced the very popular annual Sustainable Lehigh Valley Directory of Organizations since 2003. More recently he was a leader in the production of three issues of the "Left Turn" journal by the Beyond Capitalism Working Group of the Alliance. He was a steady presence for the Alliance in the community.

Janet Goloub (who Martin described as his life partner of 38 years) died in 2015. Janet was more directly involved in the workings of LEPOCO, as a member of the Steering Committee and in the Americas Solidarity Group. Martin honored Janet's memory by becoming involved in some of the places where she had worked before her death – this included volunteering at WDIY and working in LEPOCO's ASG and on this newsletter. His contributions were many, but it is worth noting his efforts were instrumental in gathering wider local community support for the Berta Cáceres Human Rights in Honduras Act (the Act is still pending in Congress as HR-1945 with 72 cosponsors).

Martin was fortunate to find a new life partner after Janet's death – Pam Ruch of Emmaus. They had

happy times together including a cultural awareness trip to Cuba earlier this year. Martin organized a presentation by the Cuba delegation for a LEPOCO Potluck & Politics program in June.

Leukemia took Martin's life all too quickly. Those trying to continue the work he was doing will need lots of help and support. Memorial donations were requested to the Alliance for Sustainable Communities – Lehigh Valley, 1966 Creek Rd., Bethlehem, PA 18015.

Faramarz Farbod, who teaches politics at Moravian College, became deeply involved in the work of the Alliance at the invitation of Martin in 2011. At an Alliance gathering Faramarz shared from seven statements by Martin that were among Martin's goals for "Quality of Life," written in 2017. One of those statements reads: "To be engaged in meaningful activities for the rest of my life and to be excited and enthusiastic about what I have to do and get to do each day." Those of us who knew Martin saw that commitment in practice regularly. Faramarz wrote on the day of Martin's death, "It is with profound sadness that I inform you of the passing of our friend and my comrade Martin Boksenbaum. A good and a passionate heart has stopped beating..."

- Nancy Tate

News from Friends in Brazil

Editor's Note: In early September I forwarded an article to Greta Browne & Guy Gray, now living in Brazil. The article "Brazil: From Global Leader to U.S. Follower," by Helder do Vale, was published in *Foreign Policy in Focus*. The following is Greta's response. NCT

I read the article you sent – with interest and sadness. I grew up in Brazil, went to elementary and secondary school here, as well as one year of college. I remember the poetry, the keen intellectual pursuits, the innovative technology and the bold social and political stances of the 50s and 60s. I was proud of the citizen agitation in the 80s that brought about a return to direct elections after almost 20 years of dictatorship. One of the elected presidents, Luiz Henrique Cardoso, with a creative financial team, was able to stabilize the national currency, the 'real', after decades of instability and frequent currency changes. The election of a union leader in 2003 – Lula – consolidated Brazil's strengths and allowed the country to grow on the path toward world visibility and leadership.

The butcher at one of the supermarkets where I shop is a loyal supporter of Lula who is behind bars in an apparent plot to keep him from contending for last year's presidential election. My butcher friend and I chat every time I stop by to purchase beef remnants for my dogs. He tells me that before Lula, he and other working class people had a hard time buying a house or a car because the banks demanded more collateral than they possessed. During Lula's presidency things changed – programs promoting low-cost bank loans for the common people appeared as well as special affordable housing projects.

(continued on page 8)

2019

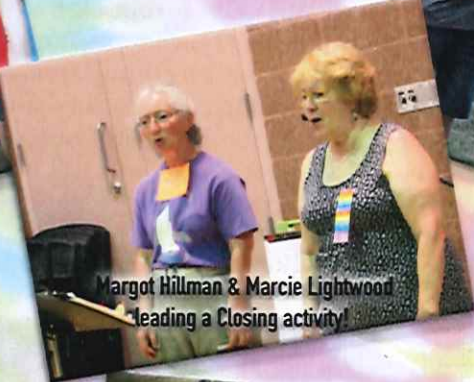


Green Group volunteers taking snacks to the room!

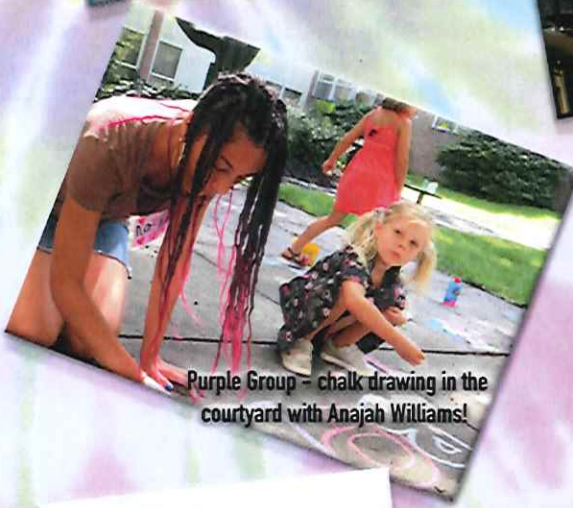


The Red Group thinks the Hula Hoops Game is fun!

photos: Susie Ravitz



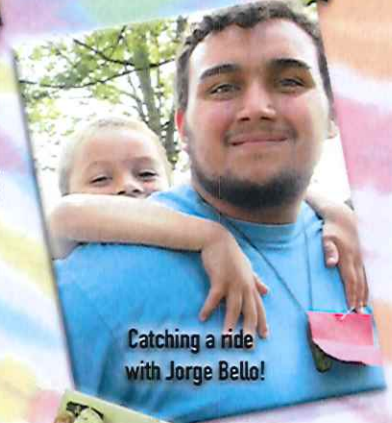
Margot Hillman & Marcie Lightwood leading a Closing activity!



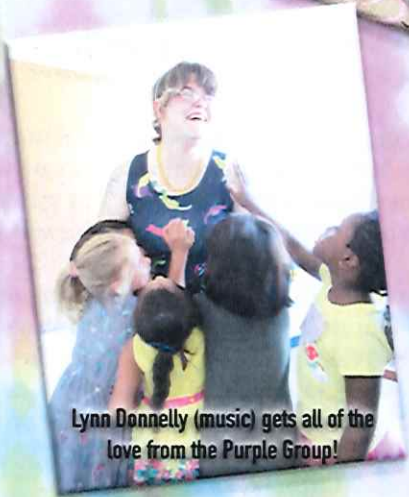
Purple Group - chalk drawing in the courtyard with Anajah Williams!



Yellow group working on crafts at opening!



Catching a ride with Jorge Bello!



Lynn Donnelly (music) gets all of the love from the Purple Group!



Yellow Group learned about bees!



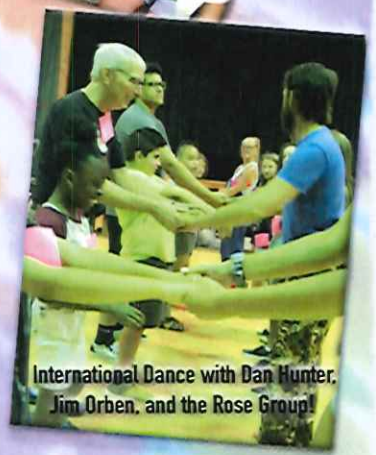
Peace Fish in the Red Group!



Rick Dow leads the Green Group Peace March!

photo: Amanda Zaniesienko

Peace Camp



International Dance with Dan Hunter, Jim Orben, and the Rose Group!

- Peace Camp Reports -

My First Time at Peace Camp

My first time at peace camp was amazing. I was in the Yellow Group. I liked how every morning there was a craft to do. I loved to do the games, I especially loved the water games, there was a Water Balloon Toss and something called Drip Drip Drop: it's like Duck Duck Goose, but with a little squishy water ball. I loved the Drum Circle, it's so fun to do the drums in patterns and beats. I loved the songs, especially "Teaching Peace" and "Down on the Farm." I also loved the calming parts of each day: breathing, aroma-therapy, mindfulness, yoga, and meditation. I had a terrific time at peace camp. I want to come back next year.

- Bennett Cook, Age 10, Peace Camper

Being Part of Peace Camp

Being a part of Peace Camp was a great experience. Unlike most camps that pit kids against each other, every game and activity was welcoming. Everyone felt like they belonged, without the worry of being left out. Kids could just have fun and try their best. Being a helper was a great time to test out a leadership role and an opportunity to help run something. Personally, I love working with the children. Singing songs and playing games every day made the week memorable. Peace Camp will be something I want to be a part of for years to come.

- Bryana Devine-Romero, Age 16, Rose Group helper

Peace Camp is a Wonderful Experience for Volunteers

I spent a week at Peace Camp this summer. I honestly can say that I enjoyed almost every second working with the leaders and children at Peace Camp. My role as a volunteer included helping guide games, reading stories, helping with snacks, and helping with crafts. Everyone was so nice and so kind to one another. Peace Camp really does make you feel like you're part of a big family. I strongly recommend that others put themselves out there and volunteer for this program. It truly does make an impact in the campers' lives, but it also provides a wonderful experience for the volunteers.

- Jorge Bello, Age 16, Red Group helper

Peace Camp 2019 Report

Fifty-five children from the region experienced Peace Camp during the last week of July this summer. It was a great year, with more helpers and leaders than in other recent years, so that children received plenty of positive, peace-filled attention.

Each day began with a "Save the Oceans" related craft. Openings included one game patterned after "Simon Says." It became "Boyan says" because Boyan Slats was the young man who created a machine that removes plastic debris from the oceans. He tried and tried again, and continues to improve the machine with every try. The game illustrated the message that it is OK for aspiring Peacemakers to make mistakes, and what is important is how we treat one another when one of us makes an error.

During the classroom time, leaders and helpers told stories, explored Peacemaker and Peacebreaker forms of communication and behavior, and made colorful crafts. Chris Klump and Lynn Donnelly led songs for openings and closings, as well as in classrooms. Many children went home singing, "There Was a Moose" and "Make New Friends." Campers always enjoy the cooperative games led by Margot Hillman. One day most of the campers came to closing soaking wet! (Ask a camper why.) Campers also enjoyed dance, mindfulness, drumming and most of all, snacks.

- Marcie Lightwood, Peace Camp 2019 co-convener

Would you like to help with Peace Camp Planning for 2020?

Please contact the LEPOCO Office (610-691-8730) and we will make sure you are notified about upcoming meetings.

Save the Dates:

This winter's Peace Camp Party will be Saturday, January 25, 2020.

Peace Camp 2020 will be July 27-31!



Walking Purchase Healing Journey

How do we reconcile disgraceful episodes in history? On September 21st, a group of people began the process by following the route of the Walking Purchase of 1737.

The Walking Purchase, masterminded by Thomas Penn, was a deceitful attempt to acquire prime Lenape hunting grounds. 'As much land as a man could walk in a day and a half' was what the Lenape had reluctantly agreed to concede. But the Penn brothers had hired Edward Marshall, a trained athlete, who ran most of the way. Eventually a plot roughly the size of Rhode Island was wrested from the stunned Natives. This shattered harmonious relations between the Lenape and the settlers, and provoked bloodshed.

Christopher Black of the Bachmann Players in Easton initiated the idea of traveling the original route. The Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania agreed to join the caravan. Chief Chuck Gentle Moon DeMund stated that their purpose was "to heal the land, which holds the memory; to heal themselves as Lenape descendants; and to represent the ancestors as best they could."

Participants gathered first at the Wrightstown Friends Meeting House. Clan Mother Shelley DePaul thanked the land and the Great Spirit for our presence, together, at that moment. David Rose as William Penn read Penn's letter to the Lenape, dated 1681. It advocated co-existence between the Europeans and the Natives. Christopher Black portrayed Benjamin Franklin, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who described Thomas Penn as "contemptible." Smudging of the earth closed the ceremony.

Our second stop was the Buckingham Friends Meeting House, with the festive annual Peace Fair underway. Nancy Tate and Tom Stinnett's smiles graced the LEPOCO booth. Nearby, Shelley DePaul spoke in the Lenape tongue about the inheritance of the land stolen from her ancestors. An actor depicting Conrad Weiser translated her speech.

Chief Chuck stated that "a new time has come to us. We all need to be of one mind, heart, and soul—to accept what happened and to move forward in a good way." A big round dance, with all holding hands in a circle, was performed in the spirit of William Penn and Chief Tammamend, "to show that friendship still exists," said Chuck.

Next we met at an historical monument in Hellertown, where the original walkers had eaten lunch. Although there was smudging and a prayer, Chief Chuck disclosed that he "was trying very hard to be positive."

At Allen Academy in Bath, where the Governor Wolf Historical Society greeted us, Chuck addressed the assembly haltingly. "We carry the blood, memory, and ache of the ancestors. It's becoming more and more difficult to remain positive as the day wears on. Although coming to this situation was part of the Creator's vision, I'm having difficulty dealing with what happened."

After talking among themselves, the Lenape decided to accept the refreshments that had been offered to them, which honored the bonds of friendship. "We walk a good path by eating their food," Chuck stated.

In Northampton, where the original walkers had camped overnight, Chuck thanked the group for its support, "as we find a way to heal, as difficult as it is."

Dusk descended at our last stop, the Bond Farm in Jim Thorpe. Shelley sang a song honoring the ancestors. Chuck admitted that "this was a lot harder to do than I realized when Christopher Black presented the idea." He described the experience as "healing, sad, and emotional, but a good day."

Almost 300 years ago, the injustice of the Walking Purchase was inflicted upon the Lenape and future inhabitants of our area. How do the descendants of the victims recover? Is forgiveness possible? The Walking Purchase Healing Journey may have been a first step in that direction.

- Anna Maria Caldara

• Grief • Anger • Action

U.S. agriculture is 48 times more toxic to insects than 25 years ago, mostly due to neonicotinoid pesticides. 8-6-19, *Friends of the Earth*.

Our destruction of oceans nearly doubled over a decade (and could double again without urgent action). 8-13-19, *CommonDreams.org*.

Scientists alarmed as lightning seen near the North Pole. 8-13-19, *Common Dreams.org*.

North America has lost nearly 3 billion birds since 1970. 9-19-19, *USA Today*.

Thanks to energy production industry, carbon emissions from the Keystone State make up one-half of 1% of all carbon emitted globally... 9-23-19, *The Morning Call*.

Over next five years, the fossil fuel industry plans to spend \$1.4 trillion to boost production around the world, which would result in an additional 92 gigatonnes of carbon pollution.... 9-23-19, *Common Dreams.org*.

In Bolivia, more than 2 million wild animals, including jaguars and pumas, have died as fires ravage grassland and forests. 9-26-19, *DemocracyNow.org*.

This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you! You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!

- Greta Thunberg, at U.N. Climate Action Summit, 9-23-19.

Signs seen at Climate Strike Actions: "Climate Action Now! No more sharpies, lies & censorship!" "Let Us Ever Replace Pavement with Flowers!" "Stop Global War(m)ing!" "The earth can no long afford war." "The wrong ICE is melting."

News from Friends in Brazil

(continued from page 4)

Lula's Workers Party (PT: Partido dos Trabalhadores) officials, even as they became ensnared in the machinations of a traditionally corrupt government, initiated many programs that improved the lot of the poor, most famously the direct financial assistance and the food assistance that lifted millions of very poor Brazilians out of abject poverty.

In 2011 Guy (Gray) and I moved to Brazil, back to the farm where I had lived in the 70s. We watched the downward spiral of the Workers Party, the impeachment (on trumped up charges) in 2016 of President Dilma, Lula's successor, and the arrest and imprisonment of Lula on charges of corruption. We saw under Temer, the vice-president who took over from Dilma, the shift toward pro-corporation policies such as freeing up legislation that constrained agro-business.

Then we watched in horror as right-wing Bolsonaro rose in the presidential election polls. Almost everyone I knew supported Bolsonaro. A deep anger toward the Workers Party had developed, a rejection not only of Lula but of any candidate associated with the party.

My conclusion, after reading extensively both the national and the international press, and putting many observations together, is that there was a deliberate and relentless campaign by U.S. and Latin American neo-liberal forces..., to demonize Lula, Dilma and the Workers Party. (These same forces have been demonizing the government of Maduro in Venezuela.) Bolsonaro (like Guaidó in Venezuela) was selected as the neo-liberal puppet (racist, fascist, chauvinistic, sexist, and poorly educated). The national media corporations were taken over and Facebook and Whatsapp were inundated with neo-liberal propaganda, much of it fake news.

While close to half the population, especially lower class workers, artists, and intellectuals, continued to support the Workers Party and other leftist and progressive candidates, Bolsonaro won the run-off election against Lula's hand-picked candidate, Haddad, 55 to 44%. I voted for Marina Silva in the first session and for Haddad in the run-off. Abstentions and blank votes weren't counted or reported.

According to recent polls Bolsonaro's popularity is plummeting but here in our little town support for him remains strong. Last Saturday in a meeting of our environmental association several of the members, professionals in their fields, claimed that the reports on the burning in the Amazon were fake.

I don't usually write so much. My thinking process is circular (non-linear) and I don't always line up my arguments tightly so, from experience, I feel defensive. But in this email I am speaking from direct experience and observation.

- Greta Browne

Editor's Note: Guy and Greta plan to visit the Lehigh Valley soon. We hope to arrange a chance for people to meet with them.

8 LEPOCO Newsletter / September-October 2019

- Speaking Out & Up -

What's Going to Happen to My Health Care?

Through the ACA (Affordable Care Act) I was covered under my parent's health plan until I was 26 years old... I've been uninsured more than once in my twenties. My Medicaid coverage has made dental and doctors visits, birth control and OB-GYN visits available to me... Medicaid has given me the peace of mind that if any accident should happen I will be okay...

I'm a yoga teacher and...since last fall I've been self-employed...and I'm not offered health care through any of the places I work. I was accepted for Medicaid when I applied last fall. My income has increased as my work has expanded. I worry that after my Medicaid case review I will no longer be eligible for Medicaid...

I never wanted to be uninsured. It's embarrassing and scary... I'm very grateful to currently have the benefits of my Medicaid coverage but what's going to happen to my health care?

- Excerpts from a statement by Olivia Arena-Miller, at a health care press conference held by Senator Bob Casey & Representative Susan Wild, Lehigh County Government Center on 7/9/19.

This house is on fire...

...The transition to renewable energy sounds daunting but not doing so also has dire consequences. Moving to 100 percent renewable energy would have many benefits...

Our children would have a healthier world with more solar arrays, wind turbines, and electric vehicles, and less mining, drilling, and fracking. That world might have fewer lawns to mow but more forests, native plants, and organic farms.

I am grateful to Greta (Thunberg) and think it is time for us to follow her lead and embrace the changes that would lead to a healthier, sustainable future for all life on earth.

...It is time for us to, in Greta's words, "Act as if the house is on fire - because it is."

- Excerpts from a letter by Debra Orben published in the *Bucks County Herald*, 9/12/19

Where is the empathy for homeless?

The homeless population is made up of our children, our neighbors, our teachers, our soldiers, our friends. We claim to be an exceptional nation with exceptional power. We claim that we can colonize Mars. Then surely we can create cities and towns where every life is respected and honored with the basic staples of human life - food, clothing, shelter and health care.

- Excerpt from an op-ed, "Where is Trump's empathy for the homeless?" by Martricia O'Donnell McLaughlin, published in *The Express Times*, 9/23/19.

You are encouraged to join
those speaking out & speaking up.

Bits & Pieces

☮ LEPOCO members and friends have been active in the months since the last newsletter. On Sun., Sept. 1, the peace bird flew and signs were carried in the Labor Day Parade in Bethlehem, thanks to Christine Loch, Reggie Regrut, Carol & Mick Baylor, Kathryn Hoffman, My Lien Nguyen, Dan Miller, Monica McAghon, Susie Ravitz, Jeff Vitelli, Nancy Tate, Tom Stinnett.

LEPOCO had booths/tables at the following events: VegFest, Bethlehem, July 13; the L.V. PRIDE festival, Aug. 18; Lehigh University's Community Expo, Aug. 26; Northampton Community College's Quadfest, Aug. 29; the Peace Fair at Buckingham Friends Meeting, Sept. 21; NCC's Peace & Social Justice Conference, Oct. 1. The following people helped staff those tables at one or more of the events: Kathryn Hoffman, Mary Louise & Addison Bross, Dalton Young, My Lien & Khoi Nguyen, Carol & Mick Baylor, Diane Dilendik, Julius Iwantsch, Jim & Debbie Orben, Terry Briscoe, Amanda Zaniesienko, Margot Hillman, Monica McAghon, Nancy Tate, Tom Stinnett, Susie Ravitz, Kathleen O'Donnell, Ron Clever, Dan Miller, Bill Thomas, Ebony Alicea, Nancy Johnston, Christine Loch, Rick Dow.

☮ For those who did not get to read the *New York Times Magazine* on Aug. 18, you can search for The 1619 Project and read the 100 page document online. The Project marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of slavery, stating, "No aspect of the country that would be formed here has been untouched by the 250 years of slavery that followed."

☮ In September, thirteen more countries signed and/or ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. There are now 79 signatories to the treaty, 32 of which have ratified. The treaty will enter into force 90 days after the 50th country ratifies it. You can follow the progress of the Treaty at icanw.org.

☮ Frances Crowe, legendary peace activist, died Aug. 27th at the age of

100 in Northampton, Mass. Over seven decades she had been arrested many times protesting war, nuclear weapons, nuclear power. She was a war tax resister, refusing to pay taxes to support the sprawling Pentagon budget. She was last arrested at the age of 98, protesting the construction of a new pipeline. (DemocracyNow.org, 8/29/19) The New York Times reported that, "From the moment Crowe heard about it (that the U.S. had dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki), she dedicated her life to peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons."

☮ The Popcorn & Politics First Friday Film series presented two excellent films in August ("The Man Who Saved the World") and September ("Okinawa: The Afterburn"). "The Man..." is about Stanislav Petrov who kept a 1983 Soviet nuclear false alarm from leading to nuclear war. "Okinawa..." is about the U.S. military's role and effects on this Japanese island since WW II.

☮ Elizabeth McAlister, one of the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 defendants was finally released from jail on Sept. 13, sans ankle monitors. She had been in jail since April 2018. She participated in a Festival of Hope for the Kings Bay Plowshares in New York City on Sept. 24. The KBP7 face trial in Brunswick, Georgia, starting Oct. 21. There will be two more Festivals

of Hope (celebrations of anti-nuclear activists facing trial) before that trial: in Raleigh, NC, on Oct. 11, and in Brunswick, GA, on Oct. 20. Supporters are invited to be present in Georgia for the trial and the many peace activities being planned around it. For more info. see www.kingsbayplowshares7.org, where you can sign a support petition, learn more about upcoming events and learn how to support the KBP7 with a donation.

☮ On Sept. 23rd, a Peace Pole was dedicated at King's College, Wilkes-Barre, in memory of long-time peace activist and friend of LEPOCO, Naed Smith, who died in May.

☮ Medea Benjamin wrote 10 Ways That the Climate Crisis & Militarism Are Intertwined recently. It was published at CommonDreams.org on Sept. 26. It is an important document for those of us who want a livable, peaceful planet.

☮ The Solidarity Collective, Witness for Peace, is organizing a delegation to Honduras: The US Role in Migration, for December 3-12. You can learn more about this at www.solidaritycollective.org. It would be wonderful to organize support for a local per-son(s) participating in this delegation. Anyone interested?



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

Mondays, October 14 & November 11, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meetings at the Peace Center. All members & friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are discussed & planned.

Tuesday, October 15, 4 pm: Annual Dinner 2020 Planning Meeting, LEPOCO Peace Center, Bethlehem.

Sundays, October 27, November 3, 17, 24, December 8, 7 pm each date: LEPOCO Peace Singers Rehearsal, location to be announced. Call 610-691-8730 for more information.

Tuesdays, November 5 & December 3, 6 pm: LEPOCO Book Group meets at the home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem.

Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 4 pm: Peaceathon 2020 Planning Committee Meeting, LEPOCO Peace Center, Bethlehem.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about these meetings or the meetings of the Americas Solidarity Group, Stop the Wars Committee, Peace Camp Planning Committee, Newsletter Planning Group, the Popcorn/Potluck & Politics Planning Committee, or any other committees, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings, see www.lepoco.org.



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015
610-691-8730 lepoco@fast.net
Fax: 610-691-8904 www.lepoco.org

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 617
Lehigh Valley, PA

See Inside:

Page 1

- H-N Report
- LEPOCO at Crossroads!

Page 2

- Get Off Path to War

Page 3

- Popcorn/ Potluck&Politics

Page 4

- Remembering Martin Boksenbaum
- News from Brazil

Pages 5 & 6

- Peace Camp Photos & Reports

Page 7

- A Healing Journey

Page 8

- Speaking Out & Up

Page 9

- Bits & Pieces
- Calendar



Monthly Peace Vigil

(Second Thursdays)

4:30-5:30pm, October 10

&

4-5pm, November 14

Our wars & bombings continue.

Help witness for peace.

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 for more info.

Stand Up & Speak Out!

(Last Saturdays of month)

Oct. 26 & Nov. 30:

12-2pm

Protest:

Horsham Drone Command Center
(Rt. 611, Horsham)

Call 610-691-8730 for more information.

Saturday, October 5, 7 pm

Pete's 100th Singalong Concert
Magpie & Annie Patterson \$15-20
L.V. Friends Meeting, Bethlehem



Sunday, October 13, 4-7 pm

Fund & Awareness Supporting Immigrants
Kirkridge Farmhouse Barn, Bangor
Food & Speakers: Rev. John Dear;
David Harrington; Rev. Bob Coombe.
Donations benefit nonprofit giving legal
support of immigrant communities.



Tuesday, October 29, 7 pm

Ibram X. Kendi, "How to Be an
Antiracist," Zoellner, Lehigh Univ.



Saturday, December 14

Annual Nazareth-to-Bethlehem
Peace Pilgrimage