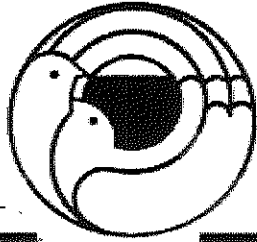


January-February  
2023

Vol. 58 No. 1



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

## Thank You Amanda Zaniesienko!

A brief announcement brought a mixed reaction from the members and friends of LEPOCO. "Amanda Zaniesienko has moved on to new opportunities..." As we wish Amanda all the best wherever life takes her, we know how much she will be missed.

Amanda came to LEPOCO in 2004 as a volunteer. She had signed up her young son, Max, for Peace Camp. From that modest beginning, she branched out into other areas of LEPOCO's work. She led a Peace Camp group that year and joined the Peace Camp Planning Committee. Her commitment to working for peace and justice continued as she joined the LEPOCO Peace Chorus and helped to set up the annual dinner. Many LEPOCO friends have been pleased to get to know her sons, Max and Adrian, as Peace Singers and as they helped with setting-up for annual dinners.

Amanda was hired in 2015; she left the staff briefly in 2016 and has been here ever since until the end of 2022. She says that it was a good fit for her. She knew a lot of people and she felt herself part of a community which she describes as unique and wonderful. Fully engaging in the work, she took on the website and other social media efforts. Her warmth, kindness, and gentle manner made her a perfect fit for LEPOCO.

Her work with Peace Camp continued throughout and she was an integral part of its success. In 2021 (during the pandemic), Amanda arranged for packets of art supplies - inexpensive items - that allowed campers to complete projects at home. In 2022, Peace Camp was a great challenge coming out of COVID with fewer attendees; nevertheless, LEPOCO rejoiced in its success. Margot Hillman, a Peace Camp coordinator, relates that Amanda brings her joy with her wonderful laugh, described as beautiful musical bubbles.

Amanda's particular contributions to LEPOCO arise from her friendly demeanor and her strong organizational skills. In the office, she answered the telephone with a smile that a caller could sense. Amanda has a quiet way of being a strength behind the scenes, always being prepared for setting up a community table or taking registrations for Peace Camp, communicating with volunteers, opening mail, and preparing mailings. She has found peace vigils, experienced as a planner and a participant, particularly meaningful.

Amanda's talent as an artist has been a boon to LEPOCO as she has created designs for posters, brochures, and t-shirts and contributed lovely paintings for the annual LEPOCO raffle (she has been the organizer of the raffle in recent years). If you have

visited the LEPOCO office in the last year you have seen her beautiful painting hanging on our down-the-steps entrance door - featuring the disarmament symbol of sunflowers like those on the LEPOCO t-shirt that she designed.

Amanda's hopes for the future of LEPOCO center on her concern that the organization is not attracting a lot of young people. Understanding the ways that young people of this current generation get involved with issues that they care about, things like the struggles in Yemen, the war in Ukraine, and conflicts in other places, is essential for LEPOCO's advocacy work. She has had opportunities for discussion with many students; she sees the need for LEPOCO to brand itself with a strong online presence.

Amanda has no disappointments with respect to her association with LEPOCO; she says, "It is a great organization." She notes that the people who are part of LEPOCO are among the most committed people she has ever met; they have staying power. At the same time, there is a need to find ways to reach out for younger members.

We are most grateful for Amanda's years of work with LEPOCO. Her regular welcoming presence in the office will be missed by all who visit the Peace Center. Everyone is happy to learn that she is committed to remaining involved in the work of LEPOCO.

- Janet Ney

## The 2022 Christmas Peace Appeal

The Christmas Peace Appeal was one of the strong efforts by those seeking an end to the war in Ukraine. It was an international campaign that began in December and lasted through the various recognized Christmas seasons. Initiated by religious and secular organizations it was inspired by the 1914 spontaneous peace truce during World War I. (Besides historical accounts you can learn about the 1914 truce in the 2005 movie, "Joyeux Noel," and in the 1980s song by John McCutcheon, "Christmas in the Trenches.")

We don't know if there were any spontaneous battlefield truces in Ukraine *a la* WW I and official acknowledgement was meager. But the Appeal was an important consciousness-raising effort. A powerful sermon by Bishop William Barber, "We Need Ceasefires Everywhere," was aired on Democracy Now! on January 6 (see [www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org)).

LEPOCO signed the appeal as an organization and urged individuals to sign.

- Nancy Tate

# Seeking Peace & Justice in The World House

On January 22, LEPOCO members and friends gathered for a program merging the honoring of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday season and the second anniversary of the going into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Stop the Wars Committee of LEPOCO planned a participatory program including a reading of excerpts from Chapter 6 of Dr. King's final book, "Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?" The chapter is titled, "The World House."

Over 25 of us gathered at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting where we sang together, read responsively, read many inspiring words from Dr. King and others, and signed postcards to Senator John Fetterman urging him to work in support of the U.S. joining the TPNW. We were reminded that 68 countries have ratified the TPNW, also known as the Nuclear Ban Treaty. We were also reminded that a letter was being delivered to President Biden on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, signed by over 100 local and national groups (including LEPOCO), calling on the President to sign the TPNW. (Individuals can still sign the letter at [www.nuclearban.us](http://www.nuclearban.us).)

*Save the dates!*

## Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp

*July 24 - 28, 2023*

*For children ages 5-13 who  
have completed kindergarten  
through 7<sup>th</sup> grade.*

*Five mornings of stories, songs,  
games, crafts and learning activities  
related to the broad topics of  
Peace & Justice.*

*Call the LEPOCO office to help with  
planning, be a volunteer staff person at  
Peace Camp or get registration information:  
(610)691-8730.*

Mimi Lang lifted our spirits with her new poem.

## The World House Revisited

Imagine... .....Martin Luther King's World House without nuclear weapons.

Imagine MLK commenting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,

Imagine how proud he would be to finally see a Treaty with the word PROHIBITION in the title.

The TPNW prohibits, bans, forbids the use of nuclear weapons in all shapes and forms and plans.

Imagine how relieved MLK might be to know the previous treaty only recommended the signers consider refraining from the use of nuclear weapons. The new Treaty demands these regulations.

The new Treaty doesn't just say to follow the rules. It demands that countries who agree with it, sign on to follow the regulations.

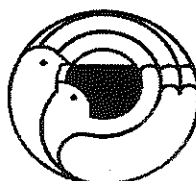
Imagine MLK knowing that there will be:

No dread among citizens about world-ending nuclear bombs.

May our World House be a World House filled with never-ending efforts for peace and justice and offering a real place for all of us to live in true community.

Thanks to MLK for giving us the World House for our community.

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, Amanda Zaniesienko, Carol Baylor, Janet Ney, Rick Dow, Jeff Vitelli.

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

**LEPOCO Steering Committee:** Pam Brubaker, Margot Hillman, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Mary Lang, Monica McAghon, Janet Ney, Tom Pietrzak, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), and Jeff Vitelli.

## March 11: Annual Gathering with Reggie Harris

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An evening of great stories and music is in store as friends and members of LEPOCO welcome Reggie Harris to our Annual Gathering on March 11, 2023, at First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem. The evening will begin with a social hour at 6:00 pm; dessert and beverages will be served. The program will begin at 7:00 pm.

Our featured guest, Reggie Harris is a singer-songwriter, storyteller, world-renowned song-leader, and powerful interpreter of the global music narrative. As an expert on the music of the Underground Railroad and the Modern Civil Rights Movement Reggie Harris is known for focusing energy on the important role of music in the struggle for human rights using the lessons of history.

He was mentored by and is inspired by Pete Seeger, Bernice Johnson Reagon, and other elders of cultural music. He has performed and presented for thousands of all ages at colleges, schools, festivals, symposiums and concerts throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe.

In 2021 he was the winner of the Spirit of Folk Award from Folk Alliance International and the W. E. B. Du Bois Legacy Award. In 2018 he was the recipient of a Magic Penny Award from the Children's Music Network for lifetime achievement in music.

Reggie is a charismatic community builder who was featured in 2020 on CNN's *Silence is Not An Option* with Don Lemon and in the *New York Times* discussing his familial connection as the descendant of slavery with his White cousins. He is a great-great-grandson of confederate General Williams Carter Wickham and his slave Bibhanna Hewlett.

A teaching artist in the Kennedy Center's CETA program (Changing Education Through the Arts) and a fellow for the Council of Independent Colleges lecture program. He also serves as Co-President and Director of Music Education for the Living Legacy Project, an advocacy group that sponsors Civil Rights pilgrimages throughout the South and online education seminars worldwide.

Reggie is a featured artist in the "Americans Who Tell the Truth" Portrait Series by Maine artist Rob Shetterly.

We are delighted that Reggie Harris is finally able to be with us for a LEPOCO Gathering. He was scheduled to join us for the March 2020 Annual Dinner that had to be canceled due to covid.

Please make your reservation for the March 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Gathering asap (see enclosed flyer). This will be an inspiring evening. Help assure that we have a large audience for this impressive musician and leader for peace and justice.

- Janet Ney

## Underground Reels & Spiels

Friday, February 17, 6:30 pm

Screening of

### "Sorry We Missed You"

On Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, LEPOCO will screen the film, *Sorry We Missed You* (2019), at the Peace Center, on the campus of Rosemont Lutheran Church, 1705 West Broad St., Bethlehem (18018). Directed by the prize-winning, radical English director Ken Loach, this movie deals with the stressed lives of those forced to enter the new "gig economy" as "independent contractors." The film, part of LEPOCO's "Underground Reels & Spiels" series, will begin at 6:30 pm, and the screening (100 minutes) will be followed by a discussion.

The first film in the *Underground Reels & Spiels* series, "*Picture a Scientist*," was screened on January 13. It was an excellent presentation about three women scientists (a biologist, a chemist, and a geologist) in the Boston area and the harassment they experienced that led to their important and persistent efforts to make science more diverse, equitable and open to all. Kathryn Hoffman facilitated and Sheila Clever shared some of her experiences as a woman working in science.

## LEPOCO Staff Opening

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LEPOCO is still interviewing people to fill the part-time staff person position. If you are interested, please contact LEPOCO asap by phone (610-691-8730) or by email ([lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net)). Following is some of the abbreviated job description that appeared in the last newsletter.

We are looking for someone with a commitment to nonviolence and to promoting LEPOCO's work for peace and justice. Enthusiasm for community building and for working collaboratively, are important. Organizational skills -- the ability to manage people, tasks, and "stuff" -- are also key attributes.

The following are some roles and responsibilities:

- Helping to staff the office weekdays, plus some special events outside those hours.
- Assisting in office administration including producing the newsletter & printed materials, maintaining records, handling phone calls, etc.
- Maintaining LEPOCO's web site and managing our social media presence.
- Attending meetings & supporting the work of committees including the Steering Committee.
- Helping to plan & prepare for Peace Camp.
- Representing LEPOCO to the wider community.

The new staff person will need to be comfortable with technology. This includes being able to maintain and upgrade software and skills with the Microsoft Office Suite.

# LEPOCO's First Tuesday Book Group

## 2023 Reading List

- February 7: **The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story**  
6 pm *by Nikole Hannah-Jones & The New York Times Magazine* (Karen Hicks)
- March 7: **African Americans Against the Bomb: Nuclear Weapons, Colonialism, & the Black Freedom Movement**  
6 pm *by Vincent J. Intondi* (Nancy Tate)
- April 4: **The Daughters of Yalta: The Churchills, Roosevelts, & Harrimans: A Story of Love & War**  
6 pm *by Catherine Grace Katz* (Janice Kay)
- May 2: **When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America**  
6 pm *by Ira Katznelson* (Bill Thomas)
- June 6: **The Colony**  
6 pm *by Audrey Magee* (Martricia McLaughlin)
- July TBD: **Amity & Prosperity: One Family & the Fracturing of America**  
6 pm *by Eliza Griswold* (George Tessaro)
- September 5: **Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire: A 500-Year History**  
6 pm *by Kurt Andersen* (Richard Schaffer)
- October 3: **Washington Bullets: A History of the CIA, Coups, & Assassinations**  
6 pm *by Vijay Prashad* (Tom Pietrzak)
- November 7: **The Conscience of a Liberal**  
6 pm *by Paul Krugman* (Alwyn Eades)
- December 5: **Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives & on the Health of Our Nation**  
6 pm *by Linda Villarosa* (Diane Dilendik)

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.

The group meets at the LEPOCO Peace Center (located on the campus of Rosemont Lutheran Church). See address below.

For more information, including a more detailed listing for the 2023 books, contact:

LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018

610-691-8730 / [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net) / [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).

# Bits & Pieces

⊕ The first planning meeting for **Peace Camp 2023** will take place on **Wednesday, February 8, at 3 pm**, at the LEPOCO Peace Center. If you have been a camper, if you are the parent of current or previous campers, if you just think Peace Camp is a great program, your help is needed to make this year's Peace Camp the best it can be. Call LEPOCO 610-691-8730 if you have questions or just show up for the meeting.

⊕ **February 24** marks one year since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. **What should LEPOCO do** to call for an end to the invasion, the violence, the suffering in Ukraine and elsewhere? What should we do to call for serious efforts by our government toward negotiations? If you have suggestions, please contact LEPOCO 610-691-8730. This and other issues will be discussed at the next meeting of the Stop the Wars Committee.

⊕ Lisa Pelletti Clark of Italy's *Blessed Are the Peacemakers (Beati I costruttori di pace)*, was one of the speakers in a January 28<sup>th</sup> webinar, "**European Peace Movements**," sponsored by Massachusetts Peace Action and others. She talked about the militarization of public opinion and the media that is occurring in Europe and the U.S. She said peace has to be negotiated with anyone and everyone who is fighting. She believes politicians know this, but they are lazy about doing it so they can help their friends that are making money from war. She questioned how one can say negotiations are not possible when they have already been happening around prisoners and shipments of grain.

⊕ **Peace Singers** are rehearsing to sing at the Annual Gathering. Our number of singers is down for a variety of reasons, so we are asking anyone who loves to sing about the issues we all care about to consider joining us for the short- or long-term. For more info. call LEPOCO 610-691-8730.

⊕ The **Annual Gathering** will need lots of volunteers. Can you help? Call 610-691-8730 to sign-up.

⊕ An article by Frida Berrigan, "**How to Avoid Nuclear Stand-Offs That Threaten the Entire World**," was published by *In These Times* on January 17. It is a deeply informative and inspiring article that moves from the clear and present danger to psychic numbing to the earlier antinuclear movement to the possibilities for a "new global abolitionist movement." She ends, "And we can fill the streets, starting with dozens and building until we are millions. We did it once. We can again." You can read the complete article online and Frida was interviewed about the article on January 25<sup>th</sup> on Democracy Now!

⊕ On December 10<sup>th</sup> over 70 walkers participated in the **63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Nazareth-to-Bethlehem Christmas Peace Pilgrimage**. The walk ended with a meal and a simple program at Christ United Church of Christ. The planning for the 2023 walk began with a meeting on January 10. New participants in this committee are needed. See [www.peacewalk.org](http://www.peacewalk.org) for more info.

⊕ Thank you to everyone who supported the **Holiday Open House** at LEPOCO. It was fun and we sold out of calendars early in December.

⊕ **Witness Against Torture** returned to Washington, DC, this January for their first full Fast for Justice since the pandemic. They help us remember that Guantanamo has not closed. In the 21 years since the prison first opened 779 men have been held there. The vigilers called for the prison to be closed. They are also seeking accountability for U.S. crimes, care for the survivors, and reparations for the suffering that men and families have endured. For more information see [www.witnessagainsttorture.com](http://www.witnessagainsttorture.com).

⊕ News reports tell us of "**a silent battle**" that involves the laying of flowers at the statue of a poet in Moscow. Russian authorities remove the flowers regularly. The ritual began January 14<sup>th</sup> following an attack on a residential building in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro: 46 killed and 80 injured. The statue is of Lesya Ukrainka, a Ukrainian poet and playwright who lived during the last decades of the Russian Empire.

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

**Tuesday, February 7, 6 pm: First Tuesday LEPOCO Book Group Meeting**, LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (18018). The group will discuss, "The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story," by Nikole Hannah-Jones & The New York Times Magazine. See page 4 of this newsletter for the complete schedule of books and meetings in 2023. Contact LEPOCO (610-691-8730) for more info.

**Wednesday, February 8, 12 pm: LEPOCO Talks & Films Planning Committee Meeting** on zoom & at LEPOCO. Call 610-691-8730 for more info. and to get the link for the meeting.

**Wednesday, February 8, 3 pm: Peace Camp 2023 Planning Committee Meeting** at LEPOCO. This will be the first meeting for this summer's peace camp. New planners welcome. Call 610-691-8730 for more info.

**Sundays, February 12, 19, 26, & March 5, 6 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singer Rehearsals**, LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (18018). New singers and all of the regular singers are welcome as we prepare to sing at the Annual Gathering in March. Call 610-691-8730 for more information.

**Mondays, February 13 & March 13, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meetings**, LEPOCO Peace Center, 1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem (18018). All members & friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are discussed. Call 610-691-8730 for more information.

*Please join in the work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about the meetings of the Newsletter Planning Group, the Stop the Wars Committee, or any other committees, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events, see [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org) or read **LEPOCO Email Updates**.*



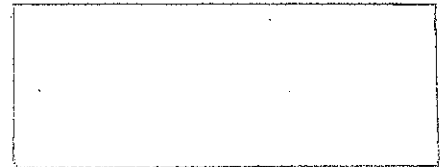
# LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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610-691-8730 [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net)  
Fax: 610-691-8904 [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org)

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## Monthly Peace Vigil

(Second Thursdays)

February 9, 4:00-5:00 pm

March 9, 4:00-5:00 pm

*End the wars.*

*Witness for peace.*

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

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

## Underground Reels & Spiels

Friday, February 17, 6:30 pm

Screening of

**"Sorry We Missed You"**

This film, directed by Ken Loach, is about the "gig economy." Join us for the screening & discussion.

LEPOCO Peace Center  
1705 W. Broad St., Bethlehem

(See page 3 for more info.)

Make your reservation now!

## LEPOCO Annual Gathering: Saturday, March 11

6 pm Social Hour (w/ Dessert & Beverages); 7 pm Program (w/ featured speaker/performer)

# Reggie Harris

folksinger, storyteller & activist

(See page 5 & enclosed flyer.)