Recognizing the Enemy as Myth

Thomas Merton wrote in 1965 that the world has become stricken to the very core of its being by the presence of the Unspeakable. Confronting the Unspeakable has kept Randy Kehler engaged for almost 50 years.

The Unspeakable is not far away — it is the void of compassion, the avoiding of responsibility for the evil that engulfs our world. "This is what too few are willing to see," says Merton.

Using the 1960s as a lens for what is happening today, Kehler has helped construct a traveling play called Project Unspeakable, that began performing 15 months ago. Based mostly on the book by James Douglass, JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters, the play is rich with quotes from men and women who have confronted the Unspeakable. Randy Kehler shared some of the play with us on March 29 at the LEPOCO Annual Dinner.

Janet Ney introduced Kehler as someone who began his work for peace when a teacher in Tanzania. There he met Congolese refugees who had been forced from their homes by napalm dropped from U.S. planes. He was so affected, that when he returned to the U.S. and discovered that the same napalm was being dropped on Vietnam, he began to organize against the war. He joined the staff of the War Resisters League, and many years later was evicted from his home for not paying "war taxes."

The assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Robert Kennedy, and Malcolm X, have the fingerprints of the U.S. government on them. Daniel Ellsberg, former military analyst who made public the Pentagon Papers, reflects the actions of Edward Snowden today. Then, as now, the analysts have seen that, in order to stay in power, secrets must be kept. There is a "shadow government" — Q: How many levels above Top Secret are there? A: It's top secret. Basically, only a few people "in the know" are actually running things, as famously disclosed by Bill Clinton when he was president.

Why aren't there more leaks? This gets to the heart of the Unspeakable. Secrecy promises are signed, so the information flow about what's true and what's spin is controlled by the Executive Branch. Secrecy becomes part of one's identity, so much so that even if Congress wanted information to save lives, keeping the secret is more important. Outside the government, there is no way of knowing that the information one is receiving is truth or spin; when the spin is repeated throughout all the media and repeated often, spin is perceived as truth. It's hard to hold the government accountable when the population is held in a steady state of confusion.

There are cracks in the Unspeakable and the play Project Unspeakable highlights the revelations of many who have seen through these structural flaws. Randy Kehler suggested that we not be cowed by the label "conspiracy theorist" and speak the truth we know. We should cultivate a culture of truth telling and teach our children that truth matters. Kehler admitted that he has always had a visceral abhorrence of lying and gave us several ways to think about truth, including, "Truth is at the heart of active nonviolence." Truth is not that hard to discern from lies when one sees that Truth recognizes the inherent sacredness of The Other. Most simply put, "Remember this truth: Killing is wrong."

Secrecy and lies create sickness. The Unspeakable remains because it is enabled by us to be. Truth can heal the sickness and relieve the collective festering that our government's actions have caused around the world. Randy Kehler finished his speech by calling LEPOCO the choir of truth that can help heal the sickness of the world.

Redefining the Unspeakable
in honor of Randy Kehler.

When your life has become the path others follow
When you humbly raise others to recognition
When words become lost in the move to action
And the enemy is recognized as myth

- Sheila Clever
"If there's a world here in 100 years, it's going to be saved by tens of millions of little things. The powers-that-be can break up any big thing they want. They can corrupt it or co-opt it from the inside, or they can attack it from the outside. But what are they going to do about ten million little things? They break up two of them, and three just like them spring up!"
- Pete Seeger

STANDING AGAINST THE PLUNDERERS - Rev. Billy Talen of the church of "Stop Shopping." (2012 Annual Dinner speaker) wrote a recent article (www.truth-out.org), that asks: "Why Are the Advocates Trying to Save the Planet Prosecuted While the Plunderers Walk Free?" He gives a short list of such advocates.

We know about Tim "Bidder 70" DeChristopher and the Sea Shepherd sailors. We know less about the Lock the Gate ranchers, Grandmothers Knitting Against Gas, or Yvon Raoul in Alberta, playing bagpipes against tar sands.

A couple of activists with the Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance were standing with a colorful banner at the headquarters of Devon Energy in Oklahoma City. They were arrested and faced charges of perpetrating a "Bioterrorism Hoax." You see, some glitter from their banner shook off, was carried on the breeze, and police figured it might be chemical warfare. Stefan Warner, and Moriah Stevenson face ten years in prison.

Three women in Michigan chained themselves to an excavator to protest Enbridge, the Canadian company that leaked 800,000 gallons of oil in their community of Mason, Michigan, and has failed to clean it up. They were convicted, and the judge summarily marched them off to jail from his courtroom, despite their intentions to appeal.

Vera Scroggins, from Montrose, Pennsylvania, is under virtual house arrest, since Cabot Oil and Gas Company persuaded a judge to issue an injunction that forbids her from walking anywhere on the 312 square miles around Montrose that are controlled somehow by Cabot. Vera has asked the court for a map of trails she legally can use to go to and fro in her own community.

These people are our heroes, willing to risk life and limb to face off against the energy giants whose bankrolls are larger than most countries GNP's. These are among Pete Seeger's ten million little things. We must learn to celebrate them as the hope of our planet.

What little thing will you do that will, in time, add to ten million other little things, bring the plunderers down, and save the planet?

TRIBUTE TO JUDY JOHNSRUD - Local anti-nuclear activists, from the 1970s and 80s, will have fond memories of Dr. Judith Johnsrud. Judy passed away on March 9th, after a long illness, peacefully at home, surrounded by loving family.

Born July 1st, 1931, she was raised in Indiana. After obtaining her Ph.D. in Geography from Penn State, she taught at the University of Wisconsin, Wayne State, Penn State, and Bucknell University. She began doing research on the geography of nuclear power, which led her to an expertise on the entire system of production, utilization, waste isolation, radiation impacts on humans and the environment, and the problems of sequestration of high and low-level and recycled radioactive waste. For over 50 years, she dedicated her life to the opposition of nuclear power. She was respected by many as one of the best informed nuclear opponents in the U.S. She was a powerful speaker and educator, spoke to groups large and small, testifying in multiple court cases, before the U.S. Congress, parliamentary bodies and symposia all over Europe, in Japan, the former Soviet Union, Sweden, and other countries.

Her first anti-nuclear involvement was in 1967, when she joined the fight to stop the Ketch Plowshare Project, an Atomic Energy Commission Proposal to detonate 1000 atomic bombs underground in northern Pennsylvania, to create containments for natural gas. That marked the first time in U.S. history that a citizen's coalition had successfully halted such a federally funded project. In 1970, Judy was instrumental in founding the Environmental Coalition on Nuclear Power, and in that group's early intervention in the siting and licensing of the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant.

She was involved in multiple nuclear resistance campaigns, too numerous to mention, over the decades. Among the people who do the ten million little things, there are some who are giants, whose contributions amount to more than a little thing, and who inspire many more little things. Judy Johnsrud was one of those beacons. A memorial service in her honor will be held later this spring.

- Jeff Vitelli

Newsletter of LEPOCO
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern
313 W. Fourth St.
Bethlehem, PA 18015
Phone: 610-691-8730
Fax: 610-691-9904
Web: 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 . $ 5
Household Membership .. $45
Supporting Member .. $75

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

Newsletter Staff: Bob Daniels II, Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Jeff Vitelli.
Thanks to all the people who collate and prepare the newsletter for mailing each month.

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Terry Briscoe, Bridger Buller, Martha Christine, Bob Daniels II (ex-officio), Janet Goloub, Julius Ivanitsch (co-treasurer), Monica McAlonan, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Mary Kay O'Donnell, James Orben, Susie Ravitz, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio).
Popcorn / Potluck & Politics

Friday, May 2nd, 7:00 pm

"Little Town of Bethlehem"

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

This documentary shares the story of three men, a Christian, a Muslim, and a Jew, willing to risk everything to bring an end to violence in their lifetime. Shaped by events of their Palestinian and Israeli upbringing these men, finding inspiration in the words and actions of Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, struggle together to discover a common humanity through nonviolent action.

Directed by Jim Hanon. 77 minutes. 2010.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, May 18th, 6:00 pm

Vince Stravino

"Observations From Cuba: November 2013"

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

As a peace activist, retired physician, and a cold war military veteran, Vince Stravino visited Cuba last November with a Veterans For Peace delegation. During their 10-day trip the group met with community activists and experts, both in Havana and the countryside. Vince has developed keen eyes for peace activist observation during his three trips to Israel-Palestine in recent years.

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 6:00 pm.

The presentation and discussion should begin shortly after 6:30 pm.

Friday, June 6th, 7:00 pm

"The House I Live In"

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

From the dealer to the narcotics officer, the inmate to the federal judge, a penetrating look inside the criminal justice system of the United States, revealing the profound human rights implications of U.S. drug policy.

Directed by Eugene Jarecki. 108 minutes. 2012.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Observing Armistice Day

With appreciable assistance from LEPOCO, Veterans For Peace (VFP) is planning to hold its annual Memorial (Armistice) Day Observance. The event is to be held Monday, May 26th, from 8:30 am to 3 pm, at Cedar Beach Park, at the northeast corner of the intersection of Hamilton & Ott Streets, Allentown. The focus of the day will again be a display of simulated grave markers bearing the names and related information of those Pennsylvanians killed while in military service in Afghanistan and Iraq. All are welcome to join the group for this occasion.

- Paul Fichter

Seeking Global Solutions

Phil Reiss, leader of the local VFP chapter highly recommends the Global Solutions Action Network for resources like their report card that rates senators and representatives on issues including climate change, human rights, nuclear nonproliferation and international cooperation. Interestingly they rated our state and regional representatives as follows: Sen. Toomey - F; Rep. Dent - D; Rep. Cartwright - A+; Rep. Fitzpatrick - C; Rep. Barletta - C. You can learn more at www.globalsolutions.org.

Book Group


Choose the book(s) that you would like to read and join the lively discussion. The group meets at the Bethlehem Wegman's (off Rt. 512, north of Rt. 22). The meeting starts at 6 pm. You can get some food and/or drink and join the group in the upstairs dining area. For more info. contact Mimi Lang at 610-866-2407.
1) The Peace Singers perform at LEPOCO’s Annual Dinner on March 29th.
2) Karen Bader and John Zachmann assemble enchiladas.
3) Keynote speaker Randy Kehler sits with lead Dinner coordinator Janet Ney.
4) Donna Hartmann is served a very colorful vegetarian meal.
5) Rick Weaver plays an octave mandolin prior to the program.
6) Betty Compton and Marge Heatley pose for a picture at the Dinner.
7) Margot Hillman gets a jump on the dirty dishes at Wesley United Methodist Church.
8) Jorris Rosse and Susie Hall are all smiles at LEPOCO’s Annual Dinner.
Remembering 2013: A LEPOCO Year in Review

“To live as if our choices make any difference in the long run may be the act of a fool, but to live as if they do not, that is the act of a coward.”       - Albert Camus

With money raised in the 2012 Bike/Walkathon LEPOCO supported a Hurricane Sandy Relief Concert organized by participants in the local Occupy movement from Easton and Washington, New Jersey, in February 2013.

Another fantastic LEPOCO Annual Dinner was held in March at a new location: First Presbyterian Church in Bethlehem. Our speaker was the energetic Medea Benjamin of CODEPINK and Global Exchange who spoke on “Building Peace in the Age of Drone Warfare.”

Speakers of note brought to the area by other organizations and colleges and covered in LEPOCO’s Newsletter included: Gershon Baskin, Simone Campbell, Jimmy Carter, Noam Chomsky, Charles Eisenstein, Chris Hedges, Bill McKibben, Tommy Sands.

In February LEPOCO signed onto a statement by the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space calling on the U.S. and South Korean governments “to stop costly and provocative war games and take proactive steps to deescalate the current tensions on the Korean peninsula.”

In May representatives from the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) met with LEPOCO’s Americas Solidarity Group to describe new funding needs for their accompaniment program in Colombia. LEPOCO committed to supporting the FOR program with the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó for two years with $1200 each year.

Starting in May on the last Saturday of every month for the rest of the year LEPOCO members and friends participated in demonstrations opposing the opening of a war drone command center in nearby Horsham. Many months over 100 people participated.

On the first Saturday in June LEPOCO held the annual Bike/Walkathon fundraiser in Bethlehem, along the Lehigh River and beyond.

Greta Browne and Guy Gray shared their experiences of life in Brazil at a potluck reception held in the home of Martin Boksenbaum and Janet Goloub in July.

Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp was held at a new location in 2013: Fountain Hill Elementary School. While the scenery may have been new, the same old, feeling of fulfillment from planting the seeds of peace with a younger generation was prevalent throughout the week.

The Nuclear Abolition Sisters of LEPOCO organized a Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday event and Tax Day leafleting at local post offices. A trio of events around the anniversary of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings were organized as well: a Popcorn & Politics screening of “The Ghosts of Jeju,” Sachio Ko-Yin speaking on the Transform Now Plowshares activists at a Potluck & Politics presentation, and a Gathering for Peace at the Tondabayashi Serenity Garden in Bethlehem.

LEPOCO held a successful Theater Party at the Peace Center prior to a screening of “Greenwich Village: Music That Defined a Generation” at SteelStacks.

LEPOCO tabled at various fairs and festivals including Earth Days on the Greenway, multiple events at Northampton Community College and Lehigh University, Pride in the Park, VegFest and the Peace Fair in Lahaska.

Nancy Tate spoke on behalf of LEPOCO at a “Justice for Trayvon Martin” rally organized by the local NAACP in response to the “not guilty” verdict in the trial of George Zimmerman.

LEPOCO was active in mobilizing against possible U.S. military intervention in Syria by releasing a statement prepared by LEPOCO’s Steering Committee on “Possible U.S. Military Action Against Syria,” organizing phone calls to Congresspersons and the White House, as well as participating in a number of demonstrations, including the monthly Peace Vigil at the south end of the Hill-to-Hill Bridge.

There was a LEPOCO Yard Sale in October. Sarah Andrew and Marc Rittle generously hosted the fund raiser at their west Bethlehem home.

Gaby Martinez spoke at the LEPOCO Peace Center on a Witness for Peace tour about the plight of migrants from Mexico, Central and South America.

(over)
Many LEPOCO friends made the trek to Washington, D.C., for the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. Area activist and then-President of Equality Pennsylvania, Adrian Shanker, was among those who spoke at the Lincoln Memorial on August 24th.

The Lehigh Valley chapter of Veterans For Peace continued to hold meetings at the Peace Center. LEPOCO supported a number of their efforts throughout the year, including the annual vigils on Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day that include a display of simulated tombstones; one for every member of the military from Pennsylvania killed in Afghanistan and Iraq.

November marked the 30th anniversary of Roy Bourgeois’ infamous tree-sitting protest at Fort Benning in Georgia. Since then there’ve been annual efforts to close the School of the Americas. 2013 was no different. Carmen and Bob Riggs of Bethlehem once again made the journey to participate in the weekend of activities.

An ad hoc group within LEPOCO came together to organize friends and members to publicly oppose a proposed military charter school at a Bethlehem Area School District school board meeting in December. Those who spoke against the establishment of the school outnumbered those in favor by over 3 to 1. This outcry from concerned area residents was one of the primary reasons cited by the school board for denying the charter.

In spite of dodgy weather the 54th Annual Nazareth-to-Bethlehem Christmas Peace Pilgrimage took place with the participation of many LEPOCO friends. Peter Lems of the American Friends Service Committee was the featured speaker at the end of the event.

A snowed out (on December 14) remembrance of the 26 victims of the 2012 Sandy Hook shootings took place the next day with the attendance of a number of LEPOCO folk.


Among those we lost locally and nationally in 2013 were: E. Louise Auchenbach, Karen Connell, Bob Edgar, Sam Grossman, Richie Havens, Eleanor Hay, Natalie Fry Hunt, Ruth Livesay, Mary Jo MacArthur, Don MacRae, Paul Mayer, John and Susan Oliver, Joan Stoltz. Present!

- robert Daniels II

---

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

**Sign up** for LEPOCO e-mail updates or to receive your newsletter by e-mail by calling 610-691-8730 or by writing to lepoco@fast.net.

---

6 LEPOCO Newsletter / April-May 2014
LEPOCO has been supporting the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Colombia since the early 2000s. This has been in various forms: members of the community have visited us; Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) accompaniers have visited us; local activists have joined delegations visiting the community; and most importantly Joe DeRaymond was an accompanier for two several-month stints. We honored Joe’s memory one year after his death with a fundraiser for the Peace Community. So it is that LEPOCO and others locally have chosen to continue that support with a two-year financial commitment to the FOR Peace Presence in the Peace Community, announced in October 2013 issue of this newsletter.

Late in May, Candice Camargo, Director of the FOR Peace Presence, will visit the Lehig Valley. She will come to the U.S. from Colombia for the FOR Peace Presence training and stay for a few days of work like the visit to our area. We plan to hold an event with food and her report sometime the last week of May. Stay tuned and contact LEPOCO if you want to be part of this important event. Also, if you want to be part of planning for her visit, please attend the April 30th meeting of the Americas Solidarity Group (see box on this page).

Peace groups including AFSC, International Peace Bureau, the Rosa Luxembourough Foundation and Peace Action are convening a gathering in NYC, on Sat, May 3: “Facing the Dangers of the 21st Century Great Power War: A Conference on the Centenary of World War I.” Speakers include Michael Klare, Zia Mian, Joseph Gerson, John Burroughs and many others. The Conference will be held at Judson Memorial Church, 229 Thompson St., south of Washington Square Park, 9 am - 5:30 pm. The conference is free; with only a small charge for an optional lunch. For more info. call 617-661-6130 or do an internet search with the conference name.

Decarcerate Pennsylvania will hold an organizing meeting for the Lehig Valley area on Sat., May 10, 1:30-3:0 pm, at Resurrected Life - Education Building, 916 W. Turner St., Allentown. Decarcerate PA’s mission is to have no more prisons built in our state; to reduce the number of people in prison; and to begin community reinvestment in schools, jobs, housing, etc., instead of expanding our prisons.

The Sellersville Theater will hold a Phil Ochs Song Night, on Sun., June 1, at 7:30 pm. Tickets are $21.50. The performers at the Phil Ochs Song Night will include Kim & Reggie Harris, Sharon Katz, and Joe Jencks. For more info. see www.sf94.com.

May 23rd is a Global Day of Action to Close Guantanamo and End Indefinite Detention. May 23rd is the anniversary of President Obama’s last promise to close the detention facility. As Witness Against Torture says, “One year later, far too little has changed: few detained men have left the prison and hunger strikes and forced feeding continue.” Events are planned in Washington, DC, New York City and at other locations around the country. For more info. see www.witness.torture.org.

If you have not done so, please visit www.notabugsplat.com to learn of the creative efforts to humanize those targeted by drone operators for death. An artist collective, human rights advocates and local villagers have displayed the face of a young girl in a display large enough to be seen by a drone operator half-way around the world. The young girl lost her both her parents and two young siblings in a U.S. drone attack.

June 20-22, Sister Simone Campbell will be at Kirkridge Retreat Center, near Bangor. Sister Campbell is the founder of Nuns on the Bus who in 2012 toured the country bringing a spotlight to poverty and other pressing peace and justice issues. Cost: $365. For more info. see www.kirkridge.org.

Sat., May 3rd, the annual fundraiser, “Walk for Animals,” will be held at the Lakshmi Cow Sanctuary, 1515 Ridge Rd., near Bangor, starting at 11 am. The walk around the sanctuary will conclude with vegan/vegetarian refreshments at 1 pm. Call Sanak Satri at 610-653-7079 for more info.

On April 24th, one small nation took a stand against the nuclear weapon giants. They did it in court so the whole world would know, “It’s time to keep your promise for nuclear zero.” For more info. see www.nuclearzero.org.

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

Wednesday, April 30, Noon: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Thursday, May 1, 1 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters Meeting at Olive Branch Restaurant, south Bethlehem.

Monday, May 5, 6:30 pm: Peace Camp Planning Committee meeting & work night at LEPOCO.

Thursdays, May 8 & June 12, 6:15 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center (prior to the meeting some in the veterans group will participate in the second Thursday Peace Vigil, 4:30-5:30 pm, and go for dinner after the vigil, at the south Bethlehem Perkins Restaurant).

Mondays, May 12 & June 9, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting at the Peace Center. All members & friends are welcome at this business meeting where the organization’s activities are reviewed and set.

Wednesday, May 14, 4-7 pm: Bike-Walkathon 2014 Planning Committee calling & meeting at LEPOCO.

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

If you want more information on the Newsletter Planning Committee, LEPOCO Peace Singers, or any of the meetings listed above, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings, please see www.lepoco.org.
See Inside:
Page 1
Annual Dinner Report
Page 2
Struggle Shared
Page 3
P & P Book Group Veterans For Peace
Page 4
Peace Pics from Annual Dinner
Page 5 & 6
2013 Year in Review
Page 7
Bits & Pieces Meetings...
Enclosed
Bike/Walkathon Pledge Sheet

Monthly Peace Vigil
Our wars continue. Please help witness for peace.
4:30 - 5:30 pm
Second Thursdays:
May 8 & June 12
3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem
Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103 / Tom Ulrich 610-882-1136

July 21-25
Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp

Stand Up & Speak Out!
Saturdays, May 31 & June 29
12 Noon
Protest Horsham Drone Command Center
(Outside Horsham Air National Guard Station, Easton & County Line Roads, Horsham, PA)
10:45 am: Carpool from Lehigh Valley
(From Hellertown Park & Ride, Silver Rd.
near intersection of Rt. 412 & I-78, behind Wendy's)
Please call 610-691-8730 to sign up or with questions.

Popcorn / Potluck & Politics
May 2nd
"Little Town of Bethlehem"
May 18th
Vince Stravino
June 6th
"The House I Live In"
(See page 3 for more info.)

Be All You Can Be
Bike & Walk for Peace & Justice
Saturday, May 24
Starting in Bethlehem
(see enclosed brochure)