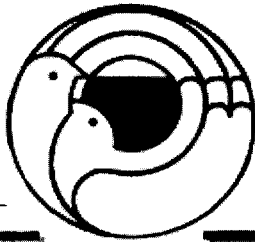


May  
2011

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

## Rabbi Gottlieb on Hope in M.E.

On Tuesday, May 10, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, one of the fifty most influential rabbis in the U.S., will speak on "The Geography of Hope: The Role of Nonviolence in Palestinian and Israeli Conflict Transformation." The talk at Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem, will begin at 7:00 pm.

Rabbi Gottlieb has extensive experience in Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation, having led many delegations to the Middle East through the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). She will discuss ways in which people working together are building relationships based on resistance to occupation and the construction of peace.

After growing up in the Lehigh Valley, Rabbi Gottlieb received her B.S. degree from Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She was the first woman to be ordained as a rabbi in the Jewish Renewal movement and the third member of her family to found a synagogue.

In 2002, responding to September 11<sup>th</sup>, she cofounded the Muslim-Jewish Peace Walk for Interfaith Solidarity with Abdul Rauf Campos Marquetti. They organized peace pilgrimages between local synagogues, mosques and churches in 16 cities throughout Canada. Leading a 2008 FOR delegation to Iran, she became the first U.S. rabbi to visit that country in a public delegation since the 1979 Iranian revolution.

Rabbi Gottlieb founded Bat Kol National Jewish Feminist Theater Troupe, and is a member of Jewish Voice For Peace Rabbinical Council. She is cofounder of Shomer Shalom Institute for Jewish Nonviolence, within the Community of Living Traditions, Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (a residential, multi-faith community dedicated to the study and practice of nonviolence and activism) at Stony Point, New York.

A reception with refreshments will precede the talk at 6:15 pm. The event is free, but donations will be accepted for Rabbi Gottlieb's work for peace. The program is being organized by Lehigh Valley Veterans For Peace Chapter 152, with support from LEPOCO. Contact Louise Legun or Judith Woodruff at 484-248-6113, for more information.

## Taking Steps and Making Revolutions

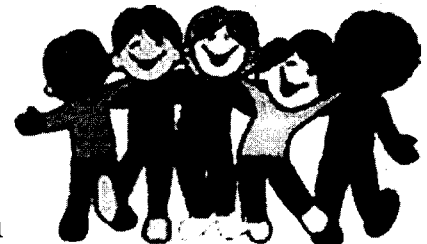
Some change comes about by little steps and other change with some revolutions. The Annual LEPOCO Bike/Walk-a-Thon is your opportunity to walk and take lots of little steps for change. If you will be joining us by bike, it is your opportunity to start some revolutions.

We will be biking and walking to raise some change

for change on Saturday morning, June 4<sup>th</sup>. Our co-beneficiaries this year are the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and Clean Water Action. These organizations are leading the fight against "fracking," a severe and long-term ecological threat to our Lehigh and Delaware River watersheds. Enclosed with this newsletter is an information and pledge sheet describing the Bike/Walk-A-Thon and providing information on the beneficiaries. Please review it and consider participating in what is always an enjoyable outdoor experience with interesting people.

This year we will be walking and biking on a new route which will take us along new sections of the Lehigh River. Riders will see an area that many of us will have never seen before. While we walk and ride to raise money for worthy causes, it is also an opportunity to talk with others about our work to preserve the future for us and our children. We hope that you will gather some pledges and join us on the 4<sup>th</sup>. (Prizes will be given to those with the most in pledges.) You can also join in for a self-pledge of at least \$10. If you can't ride or walk please call LEPOCO if you would like to volunteer to help with support for the event

- David Rose



Peace Camp  
July 25 -29  
9 am-12 noon

Our theme for Peace Camp this year is "Peacemakers Young and Old." That includes you and me! We do not have to be historical or famous peacemakers to volunteer some time to share our enthusiasm for peacemaking with children and teen volunteers. Do you have a talent for drama, storytelling, movement, arts, nature or music that you could share one morning of the week? Would you like to be part of a team of adults and teens working together to provide cooperative and fun activities for a group of children? Join us! You can fill out the volunteer interest form in last month's newsletter or call the LEPOCO office to be part of this important, and fun week.

- Ruth Walden

for the Peace Camp Planning Committee

# A Whistleblower Against War

Bradley E. Manning, a 23-year-old United States Army soldier, was arrested in May 2010 in Iraq on suspicion of having passed restricted material to the website WikiLeaks. He was charged July 2010 with transferring classified data, and communicating national defense information to an unauthorized source. Twenty-two additional charges were made in March 2011, including "aiding the enemy," a capital offense, though prosecutors said they would not seek the death penalty. He had been held in solitary confinement since July 2010, in Quantico Marine Base, Virginia. Due to international pressure, Manning has been transferred to medium security confinement at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he will be able to mix with other prisoners in an open room during the day. He awaits a hearing to decide whether he will face a court martial.

Manning's detention has caused international concern. His friend David House, said in December 2010 that his condition had deteriorated from intelligent and conversant to catatonic and distracted. Democratic Rep. Dennis Kucinich and Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg compared Manning's treatment to that of the Abu Ghraib prisoners in Iraq. Ellsberg wrote that it amounted to "no-touch torture," and that its purpose was to demoralize Manning so he would implicate Wikileaks and Julian Assange.

In January, Amnesty International and the United Nations began an official inquiry into the conditions of Pfc. Manning's detention. In March a demonstration that included civil disobedience by over 30 people, including Ellsberg was held outside the Quantico Base. In April, 295 U.S. legal scholars signed a letter published in the *New York Review of Books* objecting to the conditions of Manning's detention. Signatories included Laurence Tribe, of Harvard, who taught constitutional law to Barack Obama. The letter said the conditions of Manning's detention were a violation of the U.S. Constitution: the Eighth Amendment's prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment, and the Fifth Amendment's guarantee against punishment without trial -- conditions that, if continued, may amount to a violation of the criminal statute against torture.

There is a Free Bradley Manning Support Committee and they are sponsoring a rally on his behalf at Fort Leavenworth on June 4. More information on this case is available at [www.bradleymanning.org](http://www.bradleymanning.org).

- Christine Griffin

## Did You Know?

### Two grandmothers, two priests and a nun were sentenced in federal court in Tacoma, Washington, in late March, for confronting hundreds of U.S. nuclear weapons stockpiled for use by the deadly Trident submarines. The sentences for Susan Crane, Lynne Greenwald, Fr. Steve Kelly, Fr. Bill Bischel, and Sr. Anne Montgomery ranged from 6 to 15 months confinement.

Read more at [www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org) in the article by Bill Quigley on 3/28/11

### Diane Wilson, a fisherwoman from Texas, was arrested on April 14, after evading security to enter the building where BP's annual general meeting was being held in London. Her hands were covered with a dark syrup representing oil. Five Gulf Coast residents who had planned to tell investors about the loss of their livelihoods and health problems as a result of the BP spill were denied access to the meeting. (*Express Times*, 4/15/11)

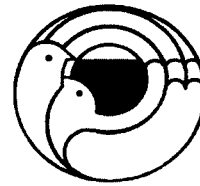
### The budget bill that passed Congress in April cut federal spending, but it also told Washington, DC, that they could not spend their own tax dollars on abortions for low-income women in that city and that the city must reinstate a school voucher program. Mayor Vincent Gray and 40 other people were arrested for blocking traffic in front of the U.S. Capitol, protesting the treatment of their city in the budget deal. (*Morning Call*, 4/16/11)

### In India, police opened fire on hundreds of protesters on April 18, at a demonstration against the construction of a new six-reactor nuclear power station. One protester was killed, and more than 20 people were arrested. (*Democracy Now!* 4/19/11)

### On Monday, May 16, at 9 pm, Channel 39, WLVT-TV will air "Freedom Riders," an impressive documentary about the people who bravely challenged segregation on public transportation in the south in 1961.

### Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern  
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The *LEPOCO Newsletter* is published 8 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: robert Daniels II, Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Jeff Vitelli.

Thanks to all the people who staple, fold and label the newsletter each month.

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Addison Bross, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Becky Irwin, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Ruth Karpinski, Mimi Lang, Janet Ney, Kelly Quain, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), Ruth Walden.

# Popcorn/Potluck & Politics

Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7pm: *Inside Job*

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

This sobering, Oscar-winning documentary presents in comprehensive, yet cogent detail, the pervasive and deep-rooted corruption that led to the global economic meltdown of 2008. Through unflinching interviews with key financial insiders, politicians, journalists and academics, director Charles Ferguson ("No End in Sight") paints a galling portrait of an unfettered financial system run amok without accountability.

Narrated by Matt Damon. 108 minutes. 2010.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm:

Kelly Denton-Borhaug & Naomi Gonzalez

"U.S. War Culture, Sacrifice & Salvation"

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center

Kelly Denton-Borhaug has been an Associate Professor of Religion at Moravian College for six years, teaching Christian Theology and Ethics. Her book with the same title as this talk is due to be published by Equinox Publishing House soon. Naomi Gonzalez is a rising senior at Moravian and assisted in the research for the book. They will talk about how the ethos, institutions and practices of war in the U.S. are deeply intertwined with a diverse multitude of cultural realities; and the way that the language and the frameworks of sacrifice animate and mask the reality of U.S. war culture.

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

The presentation and discussion should begin around 6:45 pm.

Friday, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 7pm: "Budrus"

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

This documentary delves into the fraught world of Palestinian-Israeli relations giving an amazing account of one family's leadership of a movement to prevent Israel's Separation Barrier from slicing the Palestinian village of Budrus in half. Ayed Morrar inspires nonviolent protests of the giant barrier by numerous factions, and his 15-year-old daughter, Iltezam, leads a women's group.

Directed by Julia Bacha. 78 minutes. 2009.



## LEPOCO Book Group

The First Wednesday Book Group will meet on June 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6 pm, at Panera Bread Café, 3301 Bath Pike (Center St.), Bethlehem. At that time the group will discuss *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*, by Barbara Demick. The book illuminates life under a totalitarian, secret regime. It has been described as "captivating as a human story and informative as a political description." New discussion participants are welcome.

Titles for the future will have been chosen at the group's May meeting. To learn more call Carmen & Bob Riggs (610-867-1244) or Becky Irwin (610-351-6946).

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

by calling 610-691-8730 or by writing to [lepoco@fast.net](mailto:lepoco@fast.net).

## A LEPOCO Yard Sale!

A "New Improved Smaller LEPOCO Yard Sale" will be held Saturday, May 14, 8 am to 1 pm, at the home of Mimi Lang, 1526 Oakland St., Bethlehem.

This Yard Sale will be different from earlier ones in a few important ways, so please read on. Clothes cannot be accepted and we are seeking only items that are worth at least \$2.

You can deliver your donations to Mimi's home Saturday, May 7, 9 am to 1 pm; Wednesday, May 11, 6 to 8 pm; Thursday, May 12, 6 to 8 pm; and Friday, May 13, 9 am to 1 pm. Please pre-price your items.

If you can volunteer to help with set-up or staffing the day of the sale please call Susie Ravitz at 610-253-2522. For directions to Mimi's home call her at 610-866-2407. To make arrangements other than those described here you can call Susie or Mimi at the numbers above or the LEPOCO office at 610-691-8730.

## Harrisburg Capitol Building Taken Over by Anti-Corbett Budget Crowds

That would be quite a headline, and may yet come to pass.

Here in the Lehigh Valley, March & April have seen some smaller uprisings, significant ones, as they focused on the war at home – the one on collective bargaining and unions, the one on the jobless about to lose benefits and homes, the one on public education, and thus the upward mobility that's supposed to deliver the "American Dream" to those who work hard at it.

Here are some of the highlights:

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, Sharon Ward of the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center came to the south Bethlehem campus of Northampton Community College to give a briefing about Gov. Corbett's proposed budget. She outlined the serious cuts to public education in Pennsylvania - this budget virtually slashing all the progress made by the previous governor to upgrade our lagging investment in our children. The governor's budget eliminates programs to help those in home foreclosure, cuts environmental protection and community development. And, even though Ms. Ward outlined several ways the state coffers could be increased and the cuts avoided, e.g., tax the gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale, tax smokeless tobacco and cigars, collect the unpaid corporate taxes of 2/3rds of corporations in Pennsylvania, the governor says no revenue solutions are on the table, only cuts in programs and services regular people depend on, and tax cuts for corporations. Already, severe teacher and staffing lay-offs have been announced for the ABE-area school districts.

At the briefing, Alan Jennings, the Director of the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley gave a brief talk about the need to meet the Governor's budget plans with outrage and actions. And, indeed, several such actions followed in our area.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Bethlehem Coalition for Quality Education, a group of Bethlehem Area School District parents and their supporters held a rally at the City Hall Plaza to protest the BASD cuts. It was lively, and speakers included parents, teachers and elected officials, including Rep. Steve Samuelson.

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, the union-sponsored "We Are One" national effort included two local events - one in Allentown at 7<sup>th</sup> & Hamilton Streets in front of the Lehigh County Government Center and the other at the Lehigh Valley Central Labor Council office on Airport Road. This was a show of solidarity with working people and their right to organize and collectively bargain, and in opposition to the various governors' (and their right-wing corporate backers) assaults on public unions in Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and elsewhere.

At the Allentown rally I met a teacher from Allen High who may be laid off, and heard inspired speeches from union leaders like Ed Balukas, linking the date, April 4, and MLK's historic speeches and witness on

working people and economic rights and dignity then, to the present struggles.

At the L.V. Central Labor Council several state and local labor leaders spoke, along with Jesse Epps, a friend of Dr. King's, who called for solidarity against politicians who would tear down the labor movement.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, LEPOCO and supporters participated in the Global Day of Action on Military Spending. Walking and stopping at meaningful landmarks throughout downtown Allentown, we heard speakers call out the cost on children through cuts in public schooling, on veterans, through cuts in mental health and after-care services, on community centers through cuts in CSBG and Human Services state funds the governor plans to cut. All the while, each week, 15 billion of our tax dollars go to the federal war spending, and communities get cuts just when they try to recover from the corporate-induced recession. (To look at photos and statements from April 12<sup>th</sup> go to [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org), go to "Media," go to "LEPOCO on Facebook," go to "Stop Funding War.")

The nascent mobilization and shared protest and activism between progressives who want the war spending to come home, for our needs, and unions, especially public unions, under assault, may continue and grow. The still almost-jobless "recovery," amid rising corporate profits and dodging of taxes, far-right plans to cut social spending and gut Medicare, actual increases in spending for war, and the gearing up of the costly 2012 election may catalyze further solidarity and planned activism among citizens sick of growing inequality and the breakdown of routes to economic health for working and middle class Americans. May it be so!

- Kathryn Hoffman

*...It's called the People's Budget. It actually responds to what the people want, and that is, raise taxes on the rich, raise taxes on the corporations that are getting away with... unbelievably abusive loopholes, cut military spending, preserve spending for the poor, for education, for investment and so forth.*

- Jeffrey Sachs of The Earth Institute at Columbia University, speaking on *Democracy Now!* on April 11, 2011.

Why did our local representatives fail to vote for The People's Budget in April?

### Support LEPOCO!

\_\_\_ Enclosed are my yearly LEPOCO dues of \$\_\_\_\_\_.  
(\$35 individual; \$45 hh; \$75 supporter; \$5 lim. income)

\_\_\_ I am also enclosing an extra donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_ I would like to support LEPOCO's work with a  
\_\_\_ monthly/\_\_\_ quarterly pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_ I'm interested in the following issues: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Return to: LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Bethlehem, PA 18015.

# The Struggle Shared

*If the trajectories of revolt in Cairo and Madison intersected, however, they were headed in opposite directions: in Cairo toward gaining elementary rights denied by the dictatorship, in Madison towards defending rights that had been won in long and hard struggles and are now under severe attack.*

- Noam Chomsky, "Is the World Too Big to Fail?" [www.TomDispatch.com](http://www.TomDispatch.com), 4/21/11

## MALALAI JOYA SPEAKS -

Malalai Joya is a powerful voice who speaks truth to power about the U.S. role in her native Afghanistan, and she has a story that must be told. Perhaps that is why our State Department was trying so hard to silence her recently.

In 2005, at the age of 27, she was elected to the Afghan Parliament after years of activism with women and orphans. She was outspoken in her condemnation of the warlords who dominated Afghan politics, and has endured censure, death threats and eventually suspension from Parliament.

Joya has written extensively while pursuing her mission to expose the criminal, anti-women, abuses of power in Afghanistan, and the responsibility of the U.S. in maintaining those structures. Last year "Time Magazine" listed her among the 100 most influential people in the world, and in March "The Guardian" included her among the top 100 women activists worldwide.

On March 19<sup>th</sup> Malalai Joya was scheduled to begin a three-week speaking tour in the U.S., to promote her latest book, *A Woman Among Warlords*, and engage audiences here in discussions of how to end the war in Afghanistan. Although she has been to the U.S. on speaking tours at least four times in the past, her request for a visa was denied by the State Department, on the grounds that she was "living underground" and was "unemployed." Having survived at least four assassination attempts, she is currently living in an undisclosed location. Reapplying for a visa at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, as State Department officials blithely suggested, would have placed Joya's life in danger.

It was clear that the decision to bar Joya's entry to the U.S. was politically motivated. Her supporters launched a broadbased lobbying, petition and call-in campaign. The ACLU sent letters to Hillary Clinton and Janet Napolitano, urging them to reverse the Embassy's decision, citing the increasingly common phenomenon of barring international activists from speaking in the U.S. on the grounds of "ideological exclusion." A similar letter signed by nine U.S. Senators and Representatives went to the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. As a result of the organized protest, on March 24<sup>th</sup> Joya was granted a visa, enabling her to complete the remainder of her scheduled tour. She spoke at venues in thirteen states.

Sometimes, when we are organized, we actually win.

## DEFENDING THE

ENVIRONMENT - LEPOCO activist Anna Maria Caldara is a resident of Bangor, and a fiercely committed environmentalist. As I write, she is speaking at the public Environmental Protection Agency hearings on GenOn Energy's coal fired power plant in Portland. GenOn has been dumping coal ash in an abandoned quarry near Bangor for 50 years, and her speech documents the extensive environmental impact of all that ash on her town. She was involved in opposing the GEO prison project last year, presenting environmental arguments, along with the human rights issues. She is a steadfast opponent of the Susquehanna to Roseland Transmission Line Project that PPL and PSE&G want to build through Delaware Water Gap, has served as an information clearinghouse for regional activists opposing the Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling,

and was recently instrumental in stopping an illegal dumping operation in another Bangor quarry. She is an astute researcher, and makes compelling connections between the numerous threats to sustainable life, in a community where she sees increased interest in conservation, community gardening, and an appreciation of the region's beautiful natural resources.

She concludes her statement for the GenOn hearings: *Humanity and the earth are at a crossroads. Our ecosystems are so compromised that life itself hangs in the balance. The current mass extinction of species reflects this. Let us err on the side of caution, and commit to protecting the air, water, and soil that keeps life flourishing...*

Last December Anna Maria was appointed by Bangor Borough Council to a seat on the Bangor Borough Authority which is accountable for overseeing land use issues. She had hoped to bring her environmental concerns to the table in future decision-making. When she arrived at her first scheduled meeting in February, however, she found that the incumbent she had unseated was refusing to vacate his chair, and the Authority members would not acknowledge her. The Authority's solicitor claimed the election was improper.

Two of the Borough Council members, also members and employees of the Authority, were advised by the Borough Council attorney to abstain from voting, to avoid a conflict of interest. Had they voted, the Authority's solicitor contended, Anna Maria would not have been elected. The issue was referred to the State Ethics Commission, but a decision is still pending, and Anna Maria continues to bring her own folding chair to Authority meetings, standing behind it in protest. She has also retained legal counsel, and a hearing is scheduled in Northampton County Courthouse on May 5<sup>th</sup>, to rule on the legality of her exclusion from the Authority. We hope she takes her seat soon.

- Jeff Vitelli

## Witness for Peace Mid-Atlantic Retreat

Conrad Weiser YMCA Camp near Reading, was the scene of the April 2-3 Witness for Peace retreat.

Approximately 50 witnesses for peace gathered from near and far for the two day meeting. Many were veterans of delegations to Central and South American countries, during which they had experienced first-hand the lives of *campesino* villagers forced to contend with injustices and the denial of their human rights. WFP has a long history of organizing such delegations.

A prominent feature of the retreat was the presence of Fr. Roy Bourgeois, founder of SOA Watch. Twenty-one years ago he began yearly vigils at the entrance to Ft. Benning in Columbus, Georgia. Ft. Benning houses the notorious School of the Americas. It was renamed Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC) when the U.S. Congress appeared on the verge of forcing the Pentagon to close the school.

Fr. Bourgeois was personally acquainted with several Catholic priests and women religious who were murdered in El Salvador. He began the annual vigils to commemorate their deaths, especially including that of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Romero was killed in his church in San Salvador following a sermon, broadcast by radio, in which he urged soldiers to refuse to obey their officers' orders to kill, but rather, he urged them to obey a higher law that says they should not kill.

In each of the assassinations, members of the military groups of the killers included soldiers trained at the School of the Americas. Graduates of the school have been involved in military abuses and killings of peasants throughout Latin America. The Pentagon and the Obama Administration have continued to resist appeals for the closing of the school.

Because Fr. Bourgeois has also been outspoken in supporting the ordination of women to the Catholic priesthood, he has been defrocked by the Maryknoll Fathers, the order in which he was trained for the priesthood and has served for many years. Those attending the WFP retreat were encouraged to write to the Maryknoll order, urging that Fr. Bourgeois be upheld rather than removed.

Carmen and Bob Riggs attended the Witness for Peace retreat. They have also attended many of the annual vigils to close SOA/WHISC, held each November at the gates of Ft. Benning. For information about the vigil planned for this November 18-20, contact the LEPOCO office or see [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org).

- Bob Riggs

## Ending Militarization in the Americas

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, Tom Stinnett and Nancy Tate participated in one day of the Latin America Solidarity Coalition Conference: Building a Stronger Movement to End U.S. Militarism and the Militarization of Relations with Latin America. The conference, held in Washington, DC, was set in the context of week-long actions there that ended with a puppet-filled march to the White

House on April 10, where 27 people were arrested in a civil disobedience action calling for the closing of the SOA (see previous article) and an end to U.S. militarization. The day at the conference was filled with opportunities to attend enlightening workshops.

Tom learned about grassroots resistance in Haiti to the military presence there (troops, mainly from Brazil and Ecuador, under UN command) and to the non-profits, all-too-many of them not allowing much space for Haitian-led development.

He heard Medea Benjamin of CODEPINK speak about Bringing Our War Dollars Home. As an example of the media bias peace people face, she said five Tea Partiers got loads of publicity for a sit-in at Harry Reid's office recently, but 130 people were arrested at the White House two weeks prior, protesting U.S. wars (see last month's newsletter), and got little coverage.

At a workshop on militarism in the Americas he learned that Lakeland Air Force Base in Florida is similar to Ft. Benning's SOA for the air force. Ray DelPapa talked about the regular demonstrations his group holds at Lakeland, home of Southcom. Last year Southcom planned to send 6000 marines and 46 ships to Costa Rica for exercises only to have that plan curtailed by the people of Costa Rica. Only four ships were allowed.

Nancy got to hear Roberto Zamora, a human rights attorney, speak about the threat that militarization brings to Costa Rica's peace tradition. As a law student he sued the president of his country challenging the country's participation in the Iraq war's Coalition of the Willing. He won. In 2008, one of his suits established that their constitution gives them the right to peace and that the government must actively promote peace.

Gerardo Torres of Honduras spoke of the discouragement the people of his country feel as they watch the deserved coverage of the popular uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, but realize their own resistance to the coup government in Honduras has received only meager international attention. But, he was upbeat in talking about their February National Assembly attended by 1800 people with wide representation from all parts of their country. He said they will continue their nonviolent resistance to the present government even as they continue to face violent repression - over 200 people have been killed since the June 2009 coup.

Impressive presentations were given by Laura Carlson and Daniel Brito on the drug war -- a major point being new efforts to collaborate between those opposing U.S. drug wars in Latin America and those working to reform drug policy in the U.S. Carlson said simply: reducing the demand for drugs is the nonviolent model; reducing the supply of drugs is the escalating violence model. She reported that thousands are marching in the streets of México as people turn against Pres. Calderon's drug war -- 38,000 have been killed in that war and the massacres in Ciudad Juárez have led to a "No More Blood" campaign. She called the Merida Initiative, the arming of NAFTA.

- Nancy Tate

# Bits & Pieces

Ⓐ "No Hate In Our State" is the theme of a program being planned by the local ACLU (America Civil Liberties Union) for Wed., May 18, at 7 pm, at Hope United Church of Christ, 1031 Flexer Ave., Allentown. Speakers will include Jorge Santana, Chief of Staff for State Rep. Tony Payton, Jr., Valerie Burch, ACLU Staff Attorney, Erika Sutherland of Grupo de Apoyo e Integración Hispanoamericano, and Rebecca Hufstader of the Pennsylvania Immigrant & Citizenship Coalition. They will discuss attempts in Pennsylvania to pass Arizona-style laws and how such legislation has affected communities nationwide. LEPOCO is among the several local groups supporting this event. For more info., contact the ACLU at 484-350-3767.

Ⓐ The Peace Center of Bucks County will hold a **Gandhi Celebration Weekend** to honor Gandhi's messages of nonviolence through their special guest, his grandson, Arun Gandhi, May 13-14. A benefit party will be held on Fri., at 6 pm. Cost: \$75/\$125. On Sat., there will be a family day, 10 am-noon, at the New Hope-Solebury Upper Elementary School, 186 W. Bridge St., New Hope. Call 215-750-7220 for more info.

Ⓐ The tax rate for the wealthiest in this country has been effectively cut in half since the mid-1990s. In 1995, the richest 400 people paid on average 30 percent of their income in federal taxes. In 2007, the richest people paid less than 17 percent. During the same period, the combined annual income of the richest 400 soared from \$6 billion to \$23 billion. - *Democracy Now!* 4-19-11

Ⓐ Veterans For Peace, Lehigh Valley Chapter, plan a **Memorial Day** observance to honor the memory of the Pennsylvania troops who have been killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The observance will be held in a local park with a display of symbolic tombstones for each Pennsylvanian who has died. The exact location and times are still being decided. Please

contact LEPOCO or watch the weekly e-mail update for more info.

Ⓐ **Clean Water Action** of Bethlehem is hiring for a summer canvass. This is a great opportunity for people to get paid for working to save the planet. The hours are from 2-10 pm, Monday through Friday. There will be paid training. If you are interested in an interview, please call Cathy Frankenberg at 610-691-7395.

Ⓐ **Gov. Tom Corbett** will speak at a forum hosted by the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce on Thursday, May 12. The public is invited to attend the luncheon for a fee of \$30. The event will be held at De Sales University. Doors open at 11 am, lunch is at 11:30 am, and the governor's talk is at noon. If you would like to know about any plans to question the governor's policies at this event please contact LEPOCO.

Ⓐ **Adrian Shanker** will speak on "Is There a Place for Unions In 2011?" on Sun., May 15, at 7 pm, at Emmanuel United Church of Christ, 1547 Chew St., Allentown. Adrian has worked as an organizer for the Service Employees International Union and is a leading local organizer on issues of gay rights.

Ⓐ There will be a **hearing about Marcellus Shale gas drilling** on

Thurs., May 12, at 1 pm, at Bethlehem City Hall on Church St. The hearing is sponsored by the Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee and will be hosted by Representatives Bob Freeman and Steve Samuelson. Speakers will include leaders of local and state environmental organizations.

Ⓐ There have been many **thoughtful responses** to the killing of Osama bin Laden on May 1, including an excellent piece by Gary Olson in *The Morning Call* on May 5.

The Brandywine Peace Community opened a statement quoting Julia Ward Howe's Mother's Day for Peace Proclamation of 1870, "Disarm! Disarm! The sword of murder is not the balance of justice."

Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies, wrote in an article titled "Justice or Vengeance?" ... *given the enormous human costs still being paid by Afghans, Iraqis, Pakistanis, and others in the U.S. wars waged in the name of capturing bin Laden, it's particularly ironic that in the end it wasn't the shock-and-awe airstrikes or invasions of ground troops, but rather painstaking police work - careful investigation, cultivating intelligence sources - that made possible the realization of that goal.*

- [www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org), 5/2/11

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

**Mon., May 9, 3:45 pm: Peace Camp Planning Committee Working Meeting** at LEPOCO Peace Center.

**Mondays, May 9 & June 13, 7 pm: LEPOCO Monthly Action Meeting** at the Peace Center. All members and friends are welcome at this monthly business meeting where the organization's activities are reviewed.

**Thursdays, May 12 & June 9, 7 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace** meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

**Wed., May 18, 6 pm: Bike-Walkathon Calling Night & Planning Meeting** at LEPOCO Peace Center.

**Thurs., May 19, 4 pm: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing** meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

**Fri., May 20, 1 pm: Newsletter Planning Meeting** at LEPOCO Peace Center.

**Tues., May 24, 7 pm: Americas Solidarity Group** meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

*Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about any of these meetings; or if you want to know the next meeting of the Nuclear Abolition Sisters, Lehigh Valley Peace Coalition, LEPOCO Peace Singers, the Fundraising Committee, the Youth & Militarism/Truth in Recruiting Committee, or the Economic Crisis Committee: please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings please see [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org).*



# LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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Fax: 610-691-8904 [www.lepoco.org](http://www.lepoco.org)

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Bits & Pieces

## Tuesday, May 10, 7:00 pm

(Refreshments at 6:15 pm)

### Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb

### *The Geography of Hope:*

*The Role of Nonviolence*

*in Palestinian & Israeli Conflict Transformation*

### Wesley United Methodist Church

Bethlehem

(See page 1 for more information.)

New Improved *Smaller:*

LEPOCO

## Yard Sale

### Saturday, May 14

8 am to 1 pm

1526 Oakland Street

Bethlehem

(See page 3 for more info.)

## LEPOCO's Annual Bike/Walkathon

### Saturday, June 4

Starting in Bethlehem

### Riding and Walking for Peace & Justice

(See page 1 & insert for more information.)

## Monthly Peace Vigils

*Our wars continue.*

*Please help witness for peace.*

4:30-5:30 pm

### Second Thursdays

(May 12 & June 9)

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

Contact:

Vince Stravino 610-216-8103 /  
Tom Ulrich 610-882-1136