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

Campaign to Stop Horsham Drone Command Center

Hundreds of drone command and training centers, and bases, are being set up in communities across the country, at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars. This is a major expansion of the "war on terror" which may be called "endless war."

Officials announced in March that a drone command center will take flight in Horsham, Pennsylvania, as of October 1, under the direction of the Air National Guard and the Pentagon. (This announcement came just days after LEPOCO's Annual Dinner where Medea Benjamin spoke eloquently about "Building Peace in the Age of Drone Warfare.") The new Drone War Command Center at Horsham Air National Guard Station would control UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) -- armed with deadly Hellfire missiles and Paveway bombs -- against human beings thousands of miles away.

Do we want drones or drone pilots in this or any neighborhood? In Yemen, rapidly escalated drone attacks effectively drive Yemenis into the hands of Al-Qaeda. Indeed, virtually every person accused of plotting to target the U.S. with terrorist attacks in the last several years has expressly cited increasing U.S. violence, aggression and militarism in the Muslim world as the cause. Rep. Dennis Kucinich, in his farewell speech in Congress, said of the CIA and drone strikes: "I'm very concerned that the CIA has increasingly played a paramilitary role with the execution of drone strikes which are killing many innocent civilians. There's a lack of accountability here."

Yet we are told that 250 jobs will be coming to Horsham Air Guard Station, as though this provides cover for everything else. The MQ-9 Reaper will be controlled from a virtual cockpit on the installation by a two-person team consisting of a pilot and a sensor operator. The actual aircraft will not be located on the base. "Airmen on the ground here will soon be behind the controls of a remotely piloted aircraft being flown in locations far from home," said Col. Howard "Chip" Eissler, commander of the 111th Fighter Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. "Now we'll be flying overseas missions from Horsham."

Congressman Patrick Meehan (R-7PA), called the federal government's "new investment" in Horsham "welcome news." As Chair of the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity (of the Homeland Security Committee), he

says, "I've seen how important these efforts are to the war on terror."

Drones are killing innocent people and creating a new generation of terrorists. Targeted communities have come to be fearful of and angry at the United States for its military and CIA terror from the UAVs or drones hovering over and often bombing their homes.

A coalition of peace groups with leadership from the Brandywine Peace Community and the Philadelphia American Friends Service Committee have been meeting to plan opposition to the Horsham drone center. LEPOCO is organizing carpool transportation for the demonstrations planned for May 25th and every last Saturday of the month until October.

- Marge Van Cleef

(Marge Van Cleef has been organizing against drones in the Philadelphia area for several years. She is a long-time peace activist and friend of LEPOCO.)

Stand Up & Speak Out!

Saturday, May 25, 12 Noon

outside

Horsham Air National Guard Station
Easton & County Line Roads, Horsham, PA

Protest proposed Horsham Drone Command Center.
Monthly protests continue each last Saturday through September.

10:15 am, May 25:

L.V. Carpool from Hellertown Park & Ride
Silvex Road near intersection of Rt. 412 and I-78
Please call 610-691-8730 to sign up or with questions.

Be All You Can Be! Bike & Walk for Peace & Justice!

Saturday, June 1, 2013

LEPOCO's Annual Bike/Walk-a-thon

Starting at Christmas City Fairgrounds

8:15 am: Food, Warm-up & Safety Check.

9:00 am: Ride & walk begins.

Benefitting LEPOCO's local work for peace & justice.
Find pledge sheets in last newsletter or call 610-691-8730.

What? PEACE CAMP 2013!
When? July 22 – 26
Where? Fountain Hill Elementary School
 Fountain Hill, PA (south Bethlehem)
Why? Because it's always GREAT! A week of fun as we make friends and explore ways to create peace in our world.
Who? YOU!
 If you've finished kindergarten through 6th grade, come as a camper.
 If you're older, join in as a teen or adult helper. (We provide free training.)
 Send in the form from last month's LEPOCO newsletter or call: 610-691-8730.

Let's Hear It For Diplomacy

"I think if the United States would just talk to the North Koreans, and if the United States would just talk to the Cubans, and if the United States would just talk to the Maoists, and if the United States would just talk to the Syrians, and if the United States would just talk to the Palestinians, I believe in those ways we can have peace and the United States would be a lot better off in the long run," so said former President Jimmy Carter when he spoke before a crowd of 3000 at Lafayette College on April 22, as quoted in *The Morning Call*.

The Express Times led their report by referencing Carter's call for the United States to "stop detaining prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, end its drone program and work for peace."

Act to Close Guantanamo

Witness Against Torture continues their persistent activism calling for Guantanamo to be closed. You can find out how to help them at www.witnesstorture.org. Suggested actions include everything from signing petitions and making phone calls to fasting and joining civil disobedience.

Some Calls for Peace in Syria

An international peace delegation is visiting Syria (May 2-10) as this newsletter is being written. Former U.S. Congressperson Dennis Kucinich and Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire from Northern Ireland, will be in the 20-person delegation. Mussalaha (which means "Reconciliation"), a Syrian organization is hosting them.

Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies wrote on May 7, at www.zcommunications.org that "President Obama needs to get out in front and say, *We will not allow ourselves to be bamboozled into war by vague claims of WMDs. We will not allow supporters of*

regime change to hide their intentions in the anodyne language of 'humanitarianism.' We have learned the lessons of our dumb war in Iraq. We will not go to war. So far, he refuses to say anything so definitive. That puts the obligation squarely on our shoulders -- we have to raise the political cost of a new war in the Middle East so high, that it stays off the table for good."

Just Foreign Policy is urging people to sign a petition asking President Obama and Congress not to intervene militarily in Syria. You can sign it at www.justforeignpolicy.org. They call on Congress to slow the rush to war by barring the use of U.S. forces and by using UN and regional diplomacy.

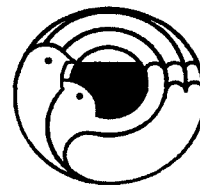
Transform Now Plowshares Found Guilty

On May 9, a jury in a federal courtroom in Knoxville, TN, convicted Catholic nun, Sister Megan Rice (age 83), Vietnam veteran Michael Walli (age 64), and Catholic Worker Greg Boertje-Obed (age 57), the Transform Now Plowshares, on multiple counts for supposedly intending to injure the national defense of the United States when they intruded into the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in the pre-dawn hours of July 28, 2012. Y-12 is a nuclear weapons production facility located 30 minutes west of Knoxville. The three each face up to 30 years in prison.

On April 30, *The Washington Post* ran a long piece about the Transform Now Plowshares titled, "The Prophets of Oak Ridge." Read more about the trial at www.orepa.org, the site for the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance.

Newsletter of LEPOCO

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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.

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Regular Member	\$35
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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 collate and prepare the newsletter for mailing each month.

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Sarah Andrew, Terry Briscoe, Martha Christine, Sheila Clever, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Janet Goloub, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Monica McAghon, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Susie Ravitz, Stefan Rogers, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

Potluck / Popcorn & Politics

Sunday, June 2nd, 2013, 5:30 pm

Matt Meyer: "Welcome Neighbor Maroon"

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Matt Meyer, co-coordinator of the Campaign to Free Russell Maroon Shoatz, will speak about the former Black Panther, held for 30 years in Pennsylvania prisons (over 20 of those years in solitary confinement). Maroon Shoatz is currently at SCI Mahony, less than an hour from the Lehigh Valley. Matt Meyer, educator, activist, and a leader of the War Resisters League, will speak about the campaign to release Russell Shoatz, as well as about issues of militarism and the prison industrial complex.

Please bring some food to share for the potluck dinner at 5:30 pm.

The presentation and discussion should begin shortly after 6 pm.

Friday, June 7th, 2013, 7 pm

"5 Broken Cameras"

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

Academy Award-nominated documentary about a Palestinian farmer who chronicles his village's nonviolent resistance to the presence of encroaching Israeli settlers and military.

As camera after camera gets shot or otherwise destroyed, the farmer continues filming.

Directed by Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi. 94 minutes. 2012.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Sunday, June 23rd, 2013, 6:00 pm

Susie Ravitz: "Vieques: The Struggle Continues"

Potluck & Politics at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Susie Ravitz, long-time LEPOCO activist and participant in the struggle to evict the U.S. Navy from the Island of Vieques in Puerto Rico, visited the island again for the activities marking the 10th anniversary of the Navy leaving the island. She will present a short documentary about the struggle against the Navy's bombing (*Vieques: An Island Forging Futures*) and report on the ongoing impact of the Navy's departure after decades of damage.

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

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

Friday, July 5th, 2013, 7 pm

"You Got to Move: Stories of Change in the South"

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

The Highlander Research and Education Center, established in 1932 as the Highlander Folk School, encourages those who struggle for justice by teaching them to become leaders of social movements. It educated leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, labor organizers, and environmentalists. This documentary follows several Highlander-educated citizens who sought to end injustice in their own communities. Directed by Lucy Massie Phenix. 80 minutes. 1985.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

The LEPOCO Book Club

The First Tuesday Book Club will meet on June 4th, at Wegman's (off Route 512, north of Rt. 22). The meeting will start at 6 pm. You can get some food and/or drink and join the group in the upstairs dining area.

The book for June is *The Round House*, by Louise Erdrich (2012). Law is meant to put out society's brush fires, but in Native American history it has often acted more like the wind. Louise Erdrich turns this dire reality into a powerful human story in this novel, in which a Native American woman is raped somewhere in the vicinity of a sacred round house. Seeking justice becomes almost as devastating as the crime.

All are welcome, LEPOCO members and not! One doesn't need to attend every month. To learn more about the Book Club call Mimi Lang at 610-866-2407.



Remembering 2012: A LEPOCO Year In Review

I was asked to write up the year in review 2012. This is my report, subject oriented. My apologies if I skipped any of your favorite 2012 LEPOCO activities; do be sure to talk about them to people -- they're important.

LEPOCO's Steering Committee supported **CeaseFire PA Network Against Violence**; **United for Peace and Justice's No War On Iran** statement; **East Timor Action Network's** statement urging Congress not to sell Apache attack helicopters to Indonesia; and **Occupy's Move Your Money** initiative, which meant moving LEPOCO's checking account from Bank of America to First Commonwealth Credit Union.

LEPOCO members attended local rallies protesting the murder of Trayvon Martin in Florida. Others joined a rally July 28 in Washington, DC, to "Stop the Frack Attack," and a demonstration held September 20 outside the Philadelphia Convention Center where members of the fracking industry met. LEPOCO members with banners and leaflets to cut military spending greeted those attending V.P. Joe Biden's Lafayette College visit in May.

Monthly Peace Vigils were held near the Hill-to-Hill Bridge in Bethlehem. LEPOCO members were out-and-about for "jobs not war" at the Labor Day Parade in Bethlehem and with the peace boutique at Pride in the Park (Allentown), Veg-Fest (Bethlehem), Earth Day (Jim Thorpe), and at the Peace Fair (Lahaska).

Tim Chadwick, Bethlehem activist, participated in the Witness Against Torture, January 2-12, in DC, including a human chain from the U.S. Capitol to the White House, all calling for the closing of the U.S. base in Guantánamo.

Sheila Clever published a moving account of her experience at the 22nd annual SOA Watch vigil, Ft. Benning, GA, in the February/March issue of the newsletter. Nancy Tate reported on attending the 23rd Close the SOA event in the December issue. Also making the November 2012 trip: Sarah Snider, Louise Legun, Judy Woodruff, Tom Stinnett.

Sarah Snider and Mike DePaolo joined Centro Intercambio y Solidaridad's (CIS) International Election Observer Mission to El Salvador, March 5-13. They were given support by the Americas Solidarity Group with a fundraiser at **Bob and Carmen Riggs'** home. About \$1700 was raised toward CIS's Joe DeRaymond Memorial Fund supporting projects like a school in rural La Loma. Sarah gave a report on the trip at a Potluck and Politics program on April 22.

Other **Potluck and Politics** events throughout 2012 featured **Pastor Samantha Lioi** on "Justice & Peacemaking in Colombia" (January); **Jennifer Melis** on "A Student Observes the Egyptian Spring" (February); **Faramarz Farbod** on "Understanding the Iran-U.S. Stand Off: What's Behind the Headlines" (April); **Addison Brass** reviewing "Daniel Berrigan: Essential Writings" (July); **Bud Courtney** presenting "Heartbreak and Hope in Iraq" (September); and **Vince Stravino** speaking about the "Current Status of Peacemaking Efforts in Israel and Palestine" (October). Vince reported on his second trip to the region with Interfaith Peace-Builders.

After being invited by Bryn Hammarstrom and the **Wellsboro Friends Meeting** to tour gas fracking sites, **members of the 11-person Tioga County delegation from LEPOCO** presented a P&P program on June 10 with reports and photos from their weekend trip.

The **Americas Solidarity Group** (ASG) met **Isaac Beachy** for lunch in January. Beachy lived two years in Colombia's peace community, **San José de Apartadó**, the same community where **Joe DeRaymond** (present!) lived as an accompanier. In September, **Janet Goloub** wrote a newsletter article honoring the 15th anniversary of the peace community. She had visited the community with a Fellowship of Reconciliation delegation in 2004. **Leonila Romero** of Catholic Migrant Ministry, Mexico, spoke in Allentown with a Witness For Peace October tour about the plight of migrants in her country. **Guy Gray** and **Greta Browne** reported on their new lives in Brazil at the home of Janet Goloub and Martin Boksenbaum, in June.

The **L.V. Committee Against State Killing** (LV-CASK) is still working to end the death penalty in Pennsylvania, coordinating efforts with others such as Karen Berry and Sarah Snider of the local Amnesty International chapter. Special thanks to **David Rose** for his cogent article (December) which reported that the PA Legislature has formed a bipartisan committee (SR6) to study the death penalty. LV-CASK members attended the talk by Joseph Ingle at Lehigh University in September. He spoke about his book, *A Death Row Innocent Executed*.

The **Nuclear Abolition Sisters** (NAS) organized a walk through the streets of Allentown in February, leafleting with the message to bring troops and war dollars home from around the world. Afterwards, they viewed "**MLK: A Call to Conscience**," a Tavis Smiley special report about **Dr. King's Riverside Church speech** opposing the war in Vietnam. For **Tax Day**, in April, NAS members and friends distributed the **War Resisters League** federal budget pie-chart flyers at eight Lehigh Valley post offices. Months later, NAS sent a letter to Korean officials urging an end to construction of a U.S. Naval Base on environmentally sensitive **Jeju Island**. And on August 5, a **Hiroshima-Nagasaki** commemorative event was held in Bethlehem's Tondabayashi Serenity Garden, "**Living in the Nuclear Age ~ Doing What is Possible.**"

Veterans for Peace (VFP) Lehigh Valley Chapter 152 continued to meet monthly at LEPOCO and we supported their efforts including: marching in Allentown's St. Patrick's Day parade; the **Memorial Day** vigil in Allentown's Cedar Beach

(continued on page 6)

The Struggle Shared —

*In the city of Allentown debt was high, revenues down,
so the mayor and council requested bids to privatize
our water and sewage treatment plants and the distribution plan,
and they wouldn't listen to people's angry cries.*

*'Cause the people all said "No,
Let our drinking water go.
It's clean and pure,
and it needs to stay that way.
We don't want to change it now.
Let the streams and rivers flow,
And make the corporate polluters pay."*

- Latest words to "The (Tock's Island) Dam Song" by Jeff Vitelli

ALLENTOWN'S WATER FIGHT -

The latest salvo of our bioregion's age-old struggle over water rights played out in Allentown on April 25th, when City Council approved a 50-year lease of the city's water and sewage treatment facilities to the Lehigh County Authority. In 90 days, the Authority will take over operation of the facilities, and thus will control how our most precious resource is used. The city will get \$220 million, part of which will be used to pay a \$160 million debt to city police and firefighter pension funds negotiated under former Mayor Afflerbach's administration.

Although Mayor Pawlowski's Administration paid millions in consultants fees to the Pennsylvania Economy League, Pawlowski and all but one member of City Council, Jeanette Eichenwald, fought attempts by the public to consider alternatives. Allentown Citizens Against Water Privatization collected 4400 signatures on a petition to put the question of privatization on the November ballot. In March, City Council denied the validity of the petition, and refused to allow citizens to vote on the issue. Since the first request for proposals went out, all bids have been kept secret from the public. Food and Water Watch filed formal requests for bid information almost a year ago. City Council denied the request, and Food and Water Watch appealed to the state office of open records.

The Lehigh County Authority filed their winning bid over Lehigh

County Council's objections. Even as Allentown City Council was preparing to vote on the proposal, Lisa Scheller, a Lehigh County Commissioner, spoke out against the proposal, "The deal you have in front of you is a bad deal for Allentown, and a bad deal for Lehigh County. It's a stealth tax on the people least able to afford it."

While City Council has set the cogs in motion with the April vote, the battle is not over. The water lease will be a hot issue in May's primary election, as five of Council's incumbent members are up for reelection. Guridy, Mola, Glazier and O'Connell are up for four year terms, Davis for a two year term. All voted in favor of the fifty-year lease.

Sam Bernhardt, an organizer from Food and Water Watch, who has been involved in fighting the Allentown proposal for months, said recently, "Mayor Pawlowski's administration has shown time and again, a tendency to disrespect democracy, but democracy happens. It'll happen in May. It'll happen in November."

VETS FOR PEACE MEMORIAL

- The Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace will hold its annual Memorial Day Observance at Cedar Beach Park, Allentown, on Monday, May 27th, from 10 am to 3 pm. Their now-familiar display of headstones to represent each of Pennsylvania's fallen soldiers from the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars will be set up at a new location, in the southwest corner of the park near the intersection of Ott and Hamilton

Streets, near the swimming pool. All are welcome to join the veterans for this somber, meaningful observance. For more information, contact Paul Fichter at 484-629-4615.

WILKES-BARRE PEACE CENTER

AWARDS - Our friends at the Wilkes-Barre Peace Center will hold their 20th Annual Peace and Justice Awards Banquet on May 13.

The Peace Center honors peacemakers at its annual dinner with three different awards. A Student for Peace Award, presented to a young person whose academic and extracurricular activities reflect a commitment to justice, and a future of peacemaking. (This year's honoree, Vassar College freshman, and long-time Peace Center family member and activist, is Arisa Gereda.)

The David Frey Community Service Award is presented to an individual whose actions have contributed to the mission of the Peace Center. (This award goes to Nancy Frey, for her inspiring work at the Commission of Economic Opportunity.)

The final award is the Susan Merrill / Constance Koziel Award, presented to individuals whose contribution to society reflects the principals of justice and peace. One of the two honorees this year is an old friend of the L.V. peace community, Naed Smith, once from Wilkes-Barre, and now, host at the St. Martin de Porres Catholic Worker House in Harrisburg. This House is an intentional community that practices voluntary poverty, and service to the spiritual and material needs of the neighboring poor community. Naed has participated in numerous acts of nonviolent civil disobedience, including Ft. Benning SOA actions, often traveling there with the late Joe DeRaymond.

The other recipient of this award is Esau Foster, an Equal Opportunity Manager at the local VA Center. He is active with community organizations promoting social justice.

We send best wishes to our Wilkes-Barre friends for a year of powerful peacemaking.

- Jeff Vitelli

Park with honorary grave markers commemorating Pennsylvanians who died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars; and a joint Berks and Lehigh Valley VFP fundraising dinner October 21, featuring speaker **Thomas Drake**, a National Security Agency whistleblower. We thank **Paul Fichter** for writing regular VFP updates in the newsletter.

The **First Tuesday Book Group** chose to read and discuss at least eight books in 2012, including: *Honest Patriots: Loving a Country Enough to Remember Its Misdeeds* by Donald Shriver; *Tropic of Chaos: Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence* by Christian Parenti; *An Unbroken Agony: Haiti, from Revolution to the Kidnapping of a President* by Randall Robinson; *Freedom's Daughters: Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement from 1830 - 1970*, by Lynn Olson; and *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control* by Medea Benjamin.

Popcorn and Politics monthly First Friday film series during 2012 included *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin*; *Death and Taxes* with special guest **John K. Stoner**; *The One Percent*; *Sing Your Song* about Harry Belafonte; *Falsos Positivos* with a talk by Sarah Snider about her August trip to Colombia; *Koch Brothers Exposed*; and *Surviving Progress*. Thanks to all who recommended their choices to Robert Daniels II, and for his superb choices as well.

Peace Camp -- Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp was held July 23-27, at First Presbyterian Church in Allentown. Special thanks to **Amanda Zaniesienko** for her whimsy of a poem invitation, **Angela Root** for her "Reflections" about the camp, to **Susie Ravitz** for her color photos, and to all the young people attending.

Peace Singers continued to sing their way through new songs and harmonize at events such as the Annual Dinner, the Peace Pilgrimage, the Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemorative, and many practices.

Peacewalkers on December 8 included many regulars for the 53rd annual **Christmas Peace Pilgrimage** from Nazareth to Bethlehem, ending their ten-mile walk with supper and singing and listening to speaker **Rev. Dr. Christine Nelson** talk on "Peace and Justice and the American Way." Thanks again to **Mimi Lang** and **Fran Dreisbach**, and others for their efforts to make the Peace Pilgrimage a success.

Finances. Operating costs are tight, and fund-raising efforts never cease. Members volunteered during the revised write/call-a-thon, calling members and writing fundraising notes. Unlike war profiteers granted government military contracts, the financiers of LEPOCO carefully budget and report monthly to the Steering Committee.

The biggest fundraising event is **LEPOCO's Annual Dinner** and 2012's featured speaker was **Ray McGovern**, former Army Infantry/Intelligence officer and CIA analyst. Addison Bross reviewed McGovern's talk about the origins of the CIA and the development of covert operations.

LEPOCO's fundraising **Bike/Walk-a-Thon** was held June 2, and the local and national Occupy movement was a co-beneficiary. **Sarah Andrew** wrote of ways to give money to LEPOCO through your estate planning in the September Newsletter. On October 3, LEPOCO members enjoyed a pre-concert party at the home of **David and Kim Rose**, followed by a concert at Lafayette College by the Chilean group, **inti-illimani**, still making great music after 45 years.

Of special note is **Jeff Vitelli's newsletter column, "The Struggle Shared."** In 2012, Jeff wrote updates about important issues such as Bolivian activists against a highway through an Amazon River nature preserve; Syracuse, NY, anti-drone protests and trials of arrested participants; the nuclear industry and anniversaries of disasters at Chernobyl, Fukushima, and Three Mile Island; Allentown's proposal for a trash-to-energy incinerator; and the campaign to stop US/Mexico border gun shops and shows. Jeff's column also promoted talks by **Roy Bourgeois** at Moravian Academy and **Frances Moore Lappe** at Lehigh University.

Nancy Tate, staff person for LEPOCO, continued the administrative calls, letters and office details that many of us don't have the time nor talent to complete. She attends most all meetings and compiles the **Bits and Pieces** column of the newsletter and finds time to write articles. Nancy coordinates and finds venues for visiting speakers and groups such as the visit of **Nick Mottern** and **George Guerci** of the **Know Drones Tour** in September, discussed at length in an article by **Peter Crownfield** in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Robert Daniels II, LEPOCO's other paid staff worker, continued to write his weekly e-mail activist updates and newsletter updates on all phases of the **Occupy Movement**. "**Occupy the Courts**" National Day of Protest was held on January 20, in Allentown. While **Occupy Allentown** and **Occupy Bethlehem** closed in 2011, **Occupy Easton** continued sponsoring activities in 2012. Robert kept in touch with the Occupy National Gathering in Philadelphia, Occupy's May Day in NYC, Occupy Sandy, and the Occupy Rolling Jubilee Fund, and other Occupy manifestations. "Occupy Monsanto" activists walked from Bethlehem to Allentown, in September, bringing attention to genetically modified seed.

The bumper sticker of the year was "**Cut Military Spending: Our Lives Depend On It!**" Copies remain available at LEPOCO. They are appropriate for your car and other public spaces. Free.

In memoriam: Tom Lloyd, Judy Lazarus, Craig Moore, Sr. Anne Montgomery, Barry Bean, Max Snider, Linda Sakovics, Becky Felton, Louise Haddad, Dolores Bock, Richard Buchin. *Presente!*

- Monica McAgnon

Bits & Pieces

Ⓞ On Tax Day, April 15, nineteen LEPOCO members did outreach about cutting military spending at local post offices by distributing the War Resisters League pie chart flyers -- around 1500 were handed out. There were many positive encounters and only a few moments of disagreement. Thank you to all who helped at post offices in Allentown, Bethlehem, Coopersburg and Easton. The flyer titled, "World's #1 Employer Seeks Endless War," included a quote from Robert Reich, "Wouldn't it be better to have a jobs program that created things we really need -- like light-rail trains, better school facilities, public parks, water and sewer systems, and non-carbon energy sources -- than things we don't, like obsolete weapons?"

Ⓞ Thank you to all who helped with LEPOCO's booth at **Earth Days** on the Greenway and our table at Lehigh University's campus Earth Day: Mimi Lang, Diane Dilendik, Martha Christine, Amanda Zaniesienko, Max Cole, Monica McAghon, Mary Kay O'Donnell, Terry and Sylvia Briscoe, Susie Ravitz, Renate Brosky, Brittany Hendrichs, Holly Fuhrman, Robert Daniels II, Tom Stinnett and Nancy Tate. The cool (and sometimes very windy) weather made the outdoor presence somewhat difficult to maintain, but the Greenway event was very enthusiastic in its first year.

Ⓞ Many thanks to Sarah Andrew, Robert Daniels II, Brittany Hendrichs, Holly Fuhrman, Julie Vitale, Bruce Whitehouse, and Aftan Baldwin, for planning and participating in a program about the **possibilities of peace work** for young people. The program was presented for students at William Allen High School (Allentown) April 30. Holly and Brittany were working with LEPOCO as part of a class at Lehigh University and Bruce and Aftan are former Peace Corps volunteers.

Ⓞ In two days in late April we lost two greats of peacemaking and human understanding. **Richie Havens**, the

musician, died of a heart attack on April 22, at age 72. **Bob Edgar**, former Congressperson and leader of Common Cause, died of a heart attack on April 23, at the age 69. They made large and positive impressions on the world.

Ⓞ Even those efforts that seem to be "green" enterprises often aren't -- it takes the equivalent of 30 nuclear power plants to run our internet servers. (Source: "Earth in the Balance" from the "Newsletter of the New Community Project," Spring 2013)

Ⓞ There have been many **rallies** locally in recent weeks. On April 15th, union activists demonstrated in Allentown, for an end to the outrageous tax breaks that are given to corporations in Pennsylvania. On May 6th, almost 200 parents and students marched to "Save Our Schools" in Allentown where the school superintendent has proposed cutting 144 teaching positions. On April 6th, 10th, and May 1st, there were rallies and vigils for immigration reform in Allentown. On March 28th in Easton and on April 13th in New Hope, people rallied against gun violence.

Ⓞ A **coalition of media advocates**, labor unions, community groups, and citizens concerned about the 'right-wing' takeover of some of the nation's largest newspapers by the powerful Koch brothers are vowing to fight the

rumored attempt of the billionaires to purchase the Tribune media company which owns the *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Baltimore Sun* and *Morning Call*. One spokesperson for the coalition said, "We need journalism that serves communities, not extremist agendas. We need media owners who will encourage their reporters to expose corporate and government wrongdoing. Charles and David Koch are more interested in serving their own interests than in providing the news and reporting that people need."

One can sign a petition opposing the sale of the newspapers to the Kochs at www.prwatch.org (Center for Media & Democracy).

Ⓞ On April 26 people dressed as bees with signs that read, "**Like Food? Love Bees,**" marched in London to urge the UK to support a ban of pesticides that scientist say are killing off the continents' bees and other pollinators. The ban was supported by enough EU countries so that it will take effect for a minimum of two years across Europe. The vote is the first of its kind and suspends three of the world's most widely-used pesticides -- known as neonicotinoids. Even though critics say a two-year suspension is not enough, environmental groups were celebrating this first victory.

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

Tuesday, May 14, 3-6 pm: Bike-Walkathon Planning Committee calling & work & afternoon at Peace Center.

Wednesday, May 15, 12:30 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at Olive Branch Restaurant, Bethlehem.

Friday, May 24, 1 pm: Newsletter Planning Meeting at Peace Center.

Wednesday, May 29, 7 pm: Peace Camp 2013 Planning Committee meetings at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Monday, June 3, 12:15 pm: Americas Solidarity Group meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Tuesday, June 4, 3:30 pm: Lehigh Valley Committee Against State Killing meeting at Peace Center.

Mondays, June 10 & July 8, 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.

Thursdays, June 13 & July 11, 6 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting with pizza at LEPOCO Peace Center.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information the Peace Singers or about 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.



Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015
610-691-8730 lepoco@fast.net
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Bits & Pieces
Meetings...



Monthly Peace Vigil

Our wars continue. Please help witness for peace.

4:30-5:30 pm

Second Thursdays: June 13 & July 11

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

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

Stand Up & Speak Out!

Saturday, May 25

12 Noon

Protest Horsham Drone Center

Carpool from Lehigh Valley

(See Page 1 for details.)

**LEPOCO's Annual
Bike/Walk-a-thon
Saturday, June 1, 2013**

**Walkers, Riders, Pledgers, Staffers, Bakers
Needed**

(See Page 1 or call 610-691-8730 for more info.)

**L.V. Veterans For Peace
Memorial Day Observance**

Monday, May 27

10 am - 3 pm

Cedar Beach Park, Allentown

(near Ott & Hamilton Sts.)

(See page 5 for more info.)

Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp

July 22-26

(see page 2)