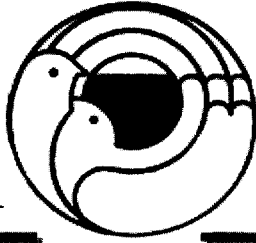


Summer
2014
Vol. 49 No. 5



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

Gathering to Reflect: Nuclear Risks, Climate Change & More

Save the Date!

Sunday, August 10, 4 pm

LEPOCO's Annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki Program

Sixty-nine years after the horrors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and three years after the earthquake and tsunami destroyed Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant; we are increasingly threatened by the dangers of nuclear power, due to flooding, fracking, shifting tectonic plates, and the consequences of climate change. We still have an unstable situation with nuclear waste -- what to do with it wet or dry, where to store it, and how to store it safely. Oh yes, and then there's the cost of decommissioning aging nuclear plants.

Sponsored by the Nuclear Abolition Sisters, a working group of LEPOCO, and the Social Action Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, this year's event will start at the UUCLV, 424 Center St., Bethlehem, at 4 pm, and will include a meditative walk around the Bethlehem Public Library to the Tondabayashi Garden and back to the Unitarian Church. (In case of stormy weather, the event will take place in its entirety at the UUCLV.) The program will include readings, reflections, poems, and music by the LEPOCO Peace Singers.

Please listen up!

In conjunction with our annual event, Susie Ravitz and Monica McAgnon will be talking about Fukushima and the dangers of nuclear energy to Annie Prince and Bruce Wilson of WDIY's "Living Green in the Lehigh Valley." The program will air on Tuesdays, at 6 pm, and Wednesdays, 5:45 pm, July 29 and 30, and August 5 and 6.

More than 48% of some 375,000 young people... tested by the Fukushima Medical University near the smoldering reactors now suffer from pre-cancerous thyroid abnormalities, primarily nodules and cysts...

More than 120 childhood cancers have been indicated where just three would be expected...

The nuclear industry and its apologists continue to deny this public health tragedy. Some have actually asserted that "not one person" has been affected by Fukushima's massive radiation releases, which for some isotopes exceed Hiroshima by a factor of nearly 30.

"Fukushima's Children are Dying," by Harvey Wasserman, 6/14/14, www.ecowatch.com.

Peace Camp -- Internalizing the Peaceful Process...

Children are eligible for our Young People Making Peace Summer Day Camp during eight years of their young lives, ages 5-12. All three of my daughters took up the total opportunity and thoroughly enjoyed all of those eight years as peace campers. And over the last 14 years, at least one of my three daughters has been a staff-person at Peace Camp, either as a helper or a co-leader.

Peace Camp has had a dramatic effect on our family. Our girls have loved the opportunity. Not only because they have experienced a great amount of fun, but also because they have discovered comradery in the voyage of life toward becoming a total human being. The Peace Camp staff strives together in an effort to foster love, generosity, and a peaceful desire for justice.

Come join us July 21-25 and find out why Peace Camp has been such an integral part of the lives of so many children.

- Dan Miller, Peace Camp 2014 co-convenor

There are still many openings for Peace Campers this year. Please mail your camper application form as soon as possible. If you do not have one of the several application forms mailed out, you can call LEPOCO (610-691-8730) to have a copy mailed to you or you can print out a copy at www.lepoco.org.

Our volunteer roster is filling up, but we can probably accommodate a few more people as helpers, especially people who have previous Peace Camp experience. Please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 as soon as possible.

Monthly Peace Vigils

4:30 - 5:30 pm

Second Thursdays:

July 10 / August 14 / September 11

Our wars continue. Please help witness for peace.

*Reverse the Slide Down the Slippery Slope
to U.S. War # III in Iraq!*

Send Diplomats & Refugee Aid Not Drones & Bombs!

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem
(just south of Hill-to-Hill Bridge on Rt. 378)

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

Memorial Day 2014

A dozen members, friends, and spouses of Chapter 152 (Thomas Paine) Lehigh Valley Veterans For Peace (VFP) placed 200+ mock tombstones on the greenway in Cedar Beach Park at Hamilton Blvd. & Ott Streets, in Allentown on Memorial Day, a nice, warm May day. Each tombstone represented a U.S. service-person from Pennsylvania killed in Iraq and Afghanistan -- a slowly increasing shame with each month.

Passersby, including some recent and older veterans, visited the display and several donated to VFP. Passing cars honked in approval and no hecklers were encountered. Prepared booklets that listed each Pennsylvanian killed in action and other data and concerns from the two recent conflicts were passed out along with copies of the "War Crimes Times," the national newspaper of VFP.

LEPOCO helped sponsor this event. Two wreaths, one with LEPOCO's name and the other with Veterans For Peace, were appropriately displayed near the mock tombstones. Veterans For Peace has organized this display on Memorial Day for several years and does a similar display in Bethlehem on Veterans Day in November. It is a powerful witness for peace.

- Vince Stravino

We Want Fair Trade Not Free Trade

The Pennsylvania Fair Trade Coalition is holding a Teach-In on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) on Thursday, July 17, at 7 pm, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, 424 Center St., Bethlehem. The program will cover concerns about the impacts of free trade on our jobs, the environment, health issues and democracy. The TPP is often called "NAFTA on steroids."

In the Spring of 2013 "Solidaridad" the Witness For Peace newsletter, reported, "As its twentieth birthday approaches, NAFTA's legacy bears little resemblance to the promises that were made when it was ratified. Instead of leading to an increase in the Mexican average wage, there are 12 million more impoverished people and now over half the population lives in poverty. Many small-scale Mexican farmers, who were once protected from subsidized and highly mechanized U.S.-grown agricultural products, are unable to sustain themselves on their land. More than 2 million agriculture jobs have been lost. A disproportionate number of Mexicans have left the countryside, bound for the U.S. In fact, while only 25% of Mexicans live in the countryside, they account for 44% of those who migrate..."

Later the article says, "At a public hearing last fall on the entrance of Mexico into the TPP, Kyd Brenner, the representative from the U.S. Corn Refiner's Association, boldly stated, 'Both the United States and

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Mexico have prospered from the enhanced economic relationship fostered by NAFTA... Consumers on both sides of the border have benefited from this improved trading relationship.'

"The numbers tend to disagree. Worse still, voices from civil society that would provide a richer understanding of the effects of NAFTA have not been invited to the negotiating table, and the text of the agreement is not available publicly..."

Maybe our local elected officials who walk the halls of Congress in Washington, DC, should attend this Teach-In on July 17, and also organize testimony before their congressional colleagues from the many in Mexico, the U.S., and elsewhere who have been so negatively affected by the "free trade" agreements over the past 20 years.

You can learn more at the program on July 17 and by visiting www.citizenstrade.org.

Check out the LEPOCO website at www.lepoco.org for a Calendar of Events, Newsletter Archive, Videos, & More.

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

Newsletter of LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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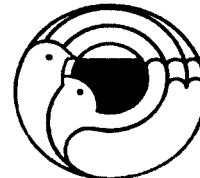
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Articles/news should be submitted to the address above for consideration for the next issue of the newsletter.

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: Terry Briscoe, Bridger Buller, Martha Christine, robert Daniels II (ex-officio), Janet Goloub, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Monica McAghon, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Mary Kay O'Donnell, Jim Orben, Susie Ravitz, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio).

Popcorn & Politics

Friday, August 1st, 7:00 pm

*"Dr. Strangelove or:
How I Learned to Stop Worrying & Love the Bomb"*

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

This dark comedy classic about an unhinged U.S. Air Force general who orders a first strike nuclear attack on the Soviet Union was first released 50 years ago during the cold war. It follows the President of the United States and his advisers as they try to recall the bombers to prevent a nuclear apocalypse. It separately follows the crew of one B-52 bomber as they try to deliver their payload. Starring Sterling Hayden, Slim Pickens, George C. Scott, Keenan Wynn and Peter Sellers in a tour de force three-role performance.

Directed by Stanley Kubrick. 94 minutes. 1964.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.

Friday, September 5th, 7:00 pm

"Freedom on My Mind"

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

Nominated as the Best Feature Documentary in the 1994 Academy Awards, this film recounts the drama of Freedom Summer 1964, the Mississippi Voter Registration Project, featuring interviews with Bob Moses, the SNCC leader for the project, and many others who participated in the historic summer. This film was released on the 30th anniversary of Freedom Summer; this year we observed the 50th anniversary.

Directed by Connie Field & Marilyn Mulford. 105 minutes. 1994.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



Book Group

The First Tuesday LEPOCO Book Club will meet next on September 2nd. The book for discussion will be, *House of War: The Pentagon & the Disastrous Rise of American Power*, by James Carroll. This book is a sweeping yet intimate look at the Pentagon and its vast - often hidden - impact on our country. In *House of War*, Carroll shows how the forces that attacked the Pentagon on 9/11 were set in motion exactly sixty years earlier, on September 11, 1941, when ground was broken for the Pentagon. Please join the Book Club for this important 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.

More on Drones

On June 24, www.commondreams.org reported on a "drone memo" that was penned in 2010 by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel. The memo draws heavily on the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) to justify the killing of Anwar al-Aulaqi, a U.S. citizen. The "drone memo" does not address the outer bounds of the claimed killing authority against U.S. citizens and says virtually nothing about the justifications underpinning the U.S. drone killings

of over 4000 people since 2009, many of them children and civilians.

On June 20, Craig Whitlock opened a long article in the *Washington Post*, "More than 400 large U.S. military drones have crashed in major accidents around the world since 2001, a record of calamity that exposes the potential dangers of throwing open American skies to drone traffic, according to a year-long Washington Post investigation."

The reasons to be concerned about drones, military and not, are many.

Stand Up & Speak Out!

Saturdays

July 26, August 30, September 27

12:00 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, Silvēx Rd.
near intersection of Rt. 412 & I-78, behind Wendy's)

Please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 to sign up for the car pool (to facilitate planning) or with questions.

Report from a Colombian Peace Community

Candice Camargo has been serving since 2013 as the Executive Director of the new FOR Peace Presence, based in Colombia. The Peace Presence is the new entity organizing accompaniment for the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó and other related work. Candice Camargo spoke at a May 30 gathering at the Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting House. Her theme was, "13 Years of Solidarity in Colombia: Accompaniment from the Inside Out."

A native of southern California, Candice is a member of FOR (Fellowship of Reconciliation). She previously spent six years as a peace activist organizer, first with Witness for Peace in Colombia, and then, more recently with CODEPINK in California.

Candice's visit to the Lehigh Valley was arranged by the America's Solidarity Group, a committee of LEPOCO, to further our support for the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó. Three Lehigh Valley activists, Janet Goloub, Sarah Snider, and Joe DeRaymond, visited the Peace Community in the mountains of north-west Colombia, at various times in the first decade of the 2000s. Joe, who died in 2009, served as a member of accompaniment teams at the peace community, for two several month periods. Candice opened her photo presentation with a picture of Joe in the Peace Community and stated that his work there had been very important to the development of the FOR Peace Presence.

In speaking about Colombia, Candice described the country as one of the United States' closest partners.

The U.S. has sent seven billion dollars to Colombia, mostly for military aid and weapons training. While U.S. efforts to end the drug war in Colombia have failed, paramilitary groups and the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) have flourished. As pressure has been applied to stop the drug trade in Colombia, that trade has sprung up in other countries such as Peru and Ecuador.

With U.S. support, former Colombian President Uribe declared war on narco-terrorism, with the result that farmers were violently forced off their land. With pressure from both the government army and paramilitary groups, displacement increased. As civilians were killed, their bodies were often dressed in uniforms and displayed as guerillas.

Members of peace communities like the one at San José de Apartadó, said, "We don't want to leave -- we want to stay on our land!" More than 180 community members in the San José de Apartadó Peace Community have been killed. They have suffered 900 human rights violations.

Candice described accompaniment as having three parts: physical, political, and advocacy. Community members seek meetings with government and multi-lateral groups, sharing with visitors, and hosting delegations in their homes.

FOR maintains an office in Bogota. Candice spoke of the peace community as doing well but said they are "tired." Their struggle has lasted for 17 years.

Colombia is the world's 7th most unequal country. The president, Juan Manuel Santos (just returned to office in a run-off election on June 15), is intent on successful peace talks becoming his legacy. But demilitarization has been a farce, and the truth about conditions is not coming out. Massacres in the Peace Community in 2002 and 2005 were carried out with 100% impunity.

The U.S. had wanted to establish 12 military bases in Colombia, but even though that plan was not carried out, there are U.S. military personnel on many Colombian military bases.

Access to land and resources are the most pressing current sources of conflict. Paramilitaries are reactivating, especially in relation to the upsurge in international extractive industries that threaten 60% of Colombian territory (that 60% is the total of Colombian territory under mining concessions or facing mining corporations seeking such concessions).

With the world's largest mountaintop-removal coal mine, mile-long open-car coal trains travel cross-country to ports with coal dust constantly spewing across the landscape. Afro-Colombian miners are deprived of their rights. In what should be the country with the richest of resources, people are starving and scared.

U.S. corporations like Drummond are involved in the mining operations in Colombia, as are corporations from other countries. Eighty-four percent of the human rights violations currently occurring in Colombia are against those opposing the mining. Seventy-nine people were killed in 2013 in selective assassinations for their anti-mining activities.

The Peace Community feels these pressures. In October 2013 they held an eight-day march of many miles throughout their villages carrying a message of support for resistance to the mining threats.

A group of female lawyers has shown incredible courage in accompanying community members and others as they seek to pursue their rights

After leaving the Lehigh Valley, Candice flew to Europe where she was to meet with International Fellowship of Reconciliation groups in Vienna and Sarajevo, raising funds for the ongoing accompaniment program.

This past year, local efforts resulted in over \$2500 from donors in the Lehigh Valley going toward the FOR Peace Presence, with another \$2500 commitment for the coming year. Please call the LEPOCO office at [610-691-8730](tel:610-691-8730) for information about how to participate.

Please join us for the next meeting of the Americas Solidarity Group on Wednesday, July 30, at noon, at the LEPOCO Peace Center. We will discuss support for the Peace Community and other pressing issues relating to U.S. interventionist policies in Latin America.

- Bob Riggs

The Struggle Shared —

"If the government cannot create happiness for its people, then there is no purpose for the government to exist."

- Bhutanese Legal Code of 1629

IN PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS - The idea that Gross National Happiness, is more important than Gross National Product as a measure of a people's wellbeing, was first articulated to the modern world by the fourth king of the tiny Himalayan nation of Bhutan in 1972, and has begun to get a global foothold. In Bhutan, the pursuit of happiness is inscribed in the constitution. Gross National Happiness (GNH) measures the quality of a country in a more holistic way, and believes that the beneficial development of human society takes place when material and spiritual development occurs side by side to complement and reinforce each other. A survey was designed that has guided the nation's policy decisions since 2009. Bhutan's government developed a GNH Index that assesses nine domains of Happiness, including Living Standard, Health, Education, Time Use, Good Governance, Ecological Diversity and Resilience, Psychological Well-being, Community Vitality, and Cultural Diversity and Resilience.

The idea has caught on as other nations and NGOs have adopted Bhutan's methodology.

Most recently, Earth Institute released its World Happiness Report for 2013. Of the 156 countries rated, the happiest places on Earth are in Northern Europe: Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Switzerland. The least happy are in Sub-Saharan Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Benin. The U.S. rated 17th in Gross National Happiness. Egypt showed the greatest decline in happiness over the five years since the last report.

Gross National Happiness USA (GNHUSA) just held a conference in Vermont, "Happiness and Well-being: Building a National Movement," May 29-30, that featured the Vermont Happiness Survey 2013

Draft Report, and calls for a Celebration of Pursuit of Happiness Day each April. Among the program participants was Bill McKibben, climate change activist, and author who has written about communities in the US, most notably, Portland, Oregon, where the GNH measure has been used to guide economic development planning policies.

How does our community measure up on the Happiness scale?

FREEDOM SUMMER 50 YEARS

LATER - This summer marks the 50th anniversary of the historic nonviolent campaign against racial discrimination in the South that we know as Mississippi Freedom Summer. A coalition of organizations including Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, SNCC Legacy Project, Mississippi State Conference NAACP, One Voice, and Tougaloo College, convened a conference, "Mississippi Freedom Summer 50th," June 25-29, in Jackson, Mississippi.

The conference is part of a year-long collaboration that includes a Constitutional Ballot Initiative Campaign, community organizing trainings, and conventions around a series of issues. The campaign is designed as a call to action in four areas of human rights: voting rights, quality public education, worker's rights, and affordable health care. While these are the same basic rights that activists fought for in the summer of 1964, the present day activists also want to celebrate and acknowledge the successes of the earlier freedom fighters. As a result of Freedom Summer, many barriers to voting were overcome, so that today there are close to 1000 black state and local elected officials in Mississippi, more than any other state in the nation.

The conference call quotes Timothy Jenkins, a South African imprisoned in the 1970s for distributing ANC pamphlets in Cape Town: "This is our unbent and unbowed voice, calling to those who must succeed us as radical agents of change. We want them to know that ours was more than theory and faith. It was more than uplifting rhetoric and freedom songs. It was pragmatic and tedious, dangerous and deadly, not only for us but for the volunteers who believed in us with their lives."

For more information see www.freedom50.org.

VIVIAN YODER, PRESENTE - Another local peace activist stalwart has passed. Vivian Yoder was known to young Peace Campers as she volunteered in the kitchen for many years, making and distributing healthy snacks, and preparing trays of the wonderful lasagna for the lunch for campers and their families on the final day of Peace Camp.

Vivian Yoder died at the age of 90 on May 3rd, in the Phoebe Nursing Home. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Rev. George Yoder, four children and nine grand- and great-grandchildren, as well as a brother, nieces and nephews.

Vivian was born in Telford, PA, and sank deep roots in the Lehigh Valley. She taught at Pennridge and Emmaus High Schools, and students remember her as one of their most passionate teachers. In addition to her LEPOCO involvement, she was a leader of Action for Nuclear Disarmament, the Interfaith Peace Resource Center, and served as a delegate to the PA Council of Churches Legislative Action Committee from the Penn NE Conference of the UCC. As a writer, educator and poet, she was also an active member of the Greater Lehigh Valley Writer's Group. Her passion for music led her to serve as church organist and choir director.

Vivian's many talents, her vitality, and childlike joyful nature will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

- Jeff Vitelli

A May Conference on WW I

On May 3rd, "Facing the Dangers of a 21st Century Great Power War: A Conference on the Centenary of WW I," was held in New York City. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the International Peace Bureau, and others organized the gathering which was held alongside the 2014 preparatory meetings for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review conference at the UN.

The planners wanted to provide the opportunity for reflection and discussion on the world wars of the last century and present day risks for a great power war. In advance the emerging threats were noted as wars, resource conflicts, political realignments in the Middle East and growing tensions in the Western Pacific. Between the conference announcements and the event the conflict in the Ukraine had come to the forefront. Since then we have been witnessing the serious fighting and divisions in Iraq. There are so many conflicts that our attention seems to jump from one to the other almost weekly.

My first thought upon learning of the conference was: Has it only been 100 years since WW I started? My father would have been 100 now if he had lived. Thinking about that makes it seem much closer than before. Then I thought about how close together the spasms of violence and war had been since WW I: WW II, Korea, the Cold War, Vietnam, Central America and Panama, Iraq I, Afghanistan, Iraq II, and now perpetual war.

There were over 20 speakers at the conference -- professors, lawyers, and activists.

Zia Mian of Princeton University said WW I was a "world war" in the structures of the world, but not in the geography of involvement -- the vast majority of people in the world were not involved. There was opposition to WW I, but the resistance was not effective. WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom), was founded when 1200 women gathered at The Hague in 1915.

A 2010 book was noted, "The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914," by Christopher Clark. It is about the failed perceptions that led to the war.

Several speakers referred to the moving daily ceremony at the Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium that honors the memory of the lives lost in WW I. Others mentioned the large peace gathering planned for Sarajevo in June.

The Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 (officially the Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy) that followed WW I was described by one speaker as the citizens telling the governments "No more war," but governments failed to honor it. Zia Mian asked: Why didn't the Pact work? What did we do wrong? He said governments are still trying to discipline and contain war, but have not committed to ending war itself.

The crisis of early May (that continues) in the Ukraine was addressed. Several speakers said China will support Russia if the crisis escalates further. Paul Lansu of Pax Christi Europe said events in Ukraine are "serious and dangerous," with NATO and Russia acting like there is a new cold war. He believes Russia is nostalgic for a larger international role with their decline of influence in the Middle East; and NATO and the European Union have been enlarging eastward since the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989). Another speaker said the Ukraine crisis has

brought the fear of a great power war back to Europe for the first time in 30 years. Lansu said peace people should promote the progressive wings in both Ukraine camps. Others said the nonfunctioning UN Security Council is making the Ukraine crisis and other conflicts much more difficult to resolve.

Emira Woods of the Institute for Policy Studies is from Liberia. She advocated for an end to "pushing an important part of the human family (Africa) to the margins." While 60% of the remaining arable land on the planet is in Africa she said the people of Africa are being tossed off their ancestral lands. And while U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and others are pushing "power Africa," she said this is a guise for outside forces to gain access to and control over Africa's resources. She advocated for protection for workers, farmers, and the planet. She said that in Africa China is pushing hospitals; the U.S. is pushing Africom, a military command.

Akira Kawasaki of Peace Boat, Tokyo, spoke about the current Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's efforts to change Article 9 of the their Constitution. Article 9, enacted in 1946, is a renunciation of war and says the government cannot prepare for aggression. Abe has made moves toward changing Article 9 including ending the Japanese ban on arms exports. When President Obama visited Japan this spring he failed to get Japanese support for the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) free trade agreement, but he supported Japan's claim to the rock islands in the South China Sea, also claimed by China. Obama also supported Abe's proposed changes in Article 9 of Japan's constitution (even though public opinion polls say the Japanese people want to keep Article 9), a new base on Okinawa and nuclear power expansion in Japan. Joseph Gerson of AFSC emphasized that President Obama's encouragement for Prime Minister Abe's militarism is quite dangerous. Gerson said the fight over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (with the U.S. backing the Japanese position) could be a trigger for the destruction of humanity. With the U.S. building new bases to encircle China, Gerson believes East Asia is "way too much" like Europe in 1914.

At the time of the conference it was expected that India would elect Narendra Modi as their new Prime Minister. (He was elected to that position later in May.) He hails from the BJP, a militaristic party that ordered nuclear weapons tests when it was in power in the late 1990s. M.V. Ramana of Princeton University believes Modi came to power because he serves the interests of large capital blocs. Modi is expected to brutally crack down on social movements and the resistance that is expected to arise because his policies are so friendly to corporations.

Andrew Lichterman of the Western States Legal Foundation spoke of the risks today because nuclear powers are not discussing the possibility of a great power war, and those nuclear powers are not cutting their nuclear arsenals below "country destroying" levels, but instead many are updating those arsenals for use many decades hence. He says the process of nuclear weapons technology build-up has become so immense and so normalized that it has become invisible. We institutionalize deterrence,

(continued on page 7)

Fairs & Festivals

LEPOCO will take our free information and our peace boutique (buttons, cards, stickers, etc.) to several fairs and festivals in August and September. If you can spare a couple of hours to help staff a LEPOCO table at one or more of these events it would be quite helpful. Just call LEPOCO (610-691-8730) or e-mail (lepoco@fast.net) to volunteer. Here are the dates and locations for the events.

1) *Pride in the Park*

Sunday, August 17, 12 noon to 6 pm
Cedar Beach Park, west Allentown

2) *VegFest*

Saturday, August 23, 11 am to 6 pm
The Greenway, south Bethlehem

3) *17th Annual Community/Club EXPO*

Monday, August 25, 4 pm to 6 pm
on the lawn at Lehigh University, south Bethlehem

4) *15th Annual Peace Fair*

Saturday, September 20, 10:30 am to 4 pm
Buckingham Friends Meeting & School
Buckingham, near Peddler's Village in Lahaska

Been There...

"No U.S. War in Iraq: Been There Done That" was the banner carried by CODEPINK at the White House on June 16, in one of the first demonstrations against another U.S. war in Iraq. Public opinion is against U.S. intervention, but we know how build-ups get started and how slippery slopes can lead to great disasters.

Phyllis Bennis, of the Institute for Policy Studies wrote, "Five Steps the U.S. Can Take In Iraq Without Going Back to War," on June 20th. (The complete article is available at www.fpip.org/wars-begin-can-stopped.)

"...President Obama's words are right: there is no military solution. But his actions are wrong. When there is no military solution, airstrikes, Special Forces, arms deals, and aircraft carriers will only make it worse.

"We need to stop it now. Before the first Special Forces guy gets captured and suddenly there are boots on the ground to find him. Before the first surveillance plane gets shot down and suddenly there are helicopter crews and more boots on the ground to rescue the pilot... We need to demand that our government do five things right away:

"First, do no harm... end the threats of airstrikes, bring home the evac troops and Special forces, and turn the aircraft carrier around.

"Second, call for and support an immediate arms embargo on all sides. That means pressuring U.S. regional allies to stop providing weapons and money to various militias.

"Third, engage immediately with Iran to bring pressure to bear on the Iraqi government to end its sectarian discrimination, its violence against civilians, and its violations of human rights.

"Fourth, engage with Russia and other powers to

get the United Nations to take the lead in organizing international negotiations for a political solution to the crisis now enveloping Iraq as well as Syria... include all sides...nonviolent Syrian and Iraqi activists, civil society organizations, women, and representatives of refugees and displaced people forced from their homes...

"Fifth, get help to the people who need it. The Iraq war is creating an enormous new refugee and humanitarian crisis, escalating the crisis of the Syrian war, and spreading across the entire region..."

Phyllis Bennis was interviewed at www.democracynow.org, "Should Obama Go to Tehran?" on June 24, and wrote an op-ed for McClatchy-Tribune News Service on the same theme in late June. Raed Jarrar, an Iraqi-American political analyst, was interviewed on Democracy Now on June 16, "Could U.S. Military Action Worsen Sectarian Conflict?" Both Raed Jarrar and Phyllis Bennis have spoken in the Lehigh Valley.

Besides signing the many on-line petitions against U.S. military action in Iraq, you can call your representative in Congress and ask him/her to sign onto the Scott Rigell (R-VA) and Barbara Lee (D-CA) bipartisan letter to President Obama urging him to come to Congress before using military force. Finally, please join the monthly Peace Vigils in Bethlehem with signs against war. (See boxes on pages 1 and 10 of this newsletter for details.)

A May Conference on WW I

(continued from page 6)

constantly showing we have the will and means to fight a nuclear war, this leads to permanent military mobilization.

Michael Klare of Hampshire College said we need to oppose policies like the U.S. pivot of its military forces toward the Pacific and Asia, because those policies increase the likelihood of war. He made a strong plea for the peace movement to throw its weight into working to stop climate change and toward supporting the renewable energy movement.

Another speaker asked how we can undo our indifference to the results of war in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere, where we see refugees fleeing and countries destroyed.

Götz Nuneck from the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy, at the University of Hamburg, said arms control is needed and it must include drones and cyber warfare.

John Burroughs of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy said the condition of nations issuing permanent threats of force is in violation of the UN Charter. He worked on the Zero Nuclear Weapons lawsuits filed by the small Pacific nation, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, that was subjected to nuclear weapons tests from 1946 to 1958. (See www.nuclearzero.org for more information on the lawsuits.)

A closing observation was that trying to prevent great power war or great power nuclear war is not making history, but making history possible.

- Nancy C. Tate

Bits & Pieces

Ⓐ A billboard has gone up just outside the Department of State in Washington, featuring **Daniel Ellsberg** calling for more whistleblowers. This happened only a week after Secretary of State John Kerry invoked the name of this Pentagon Papers whistleblower while denouncing NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden. The billboard reads in part, "Don't wait until a new war has started. Don't wait until thousands more have died before you tell the truth with documents that reveal lies or crimes..." To learn more go to www.exposefacts.org.

Ⓐ Thank you to the 11 bike riders, the 17 walkers, the eight support volunteers, and the 64 pledgers and donors who made **LEPOCO's Bike/Walkathon** such a success. It was our first Bike/Walk event held on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend and the date seemed to be a good choice. All the pledges have been paid and we raised over \$2100 for LEPOCO's work! The in-kind donations/gifts went to exceptional pledge gatherers James Orben, Diane Dilendik, Al Wuerth, and John Zachmann.

Ⓐ **Vince Stravino** wrote excellent letters to both local newspapers about the decision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to sell holdings in three U.S. military contractors who profit from Israel's 47-year military occupation of Palestinian lands. Thank you Vince. Thank you Presbyterian Church.

Ⓐ The **IMF** (International Monetary Fund) released its annual review of the U.S. economy, calling for a raise in the federal minimum wage. The report cut the U.S. growth forecast and called on policymakers to keep interest rates low and bump the minimum wage to spur growth and alleviate the 15 percent poverty rate. (Source: *The Intelligencer*, Doylestown, 6/26/14.)

Ⓐ **Sal Panto**, Mayor of Easton, was among 27 U.S. mayors submitting a

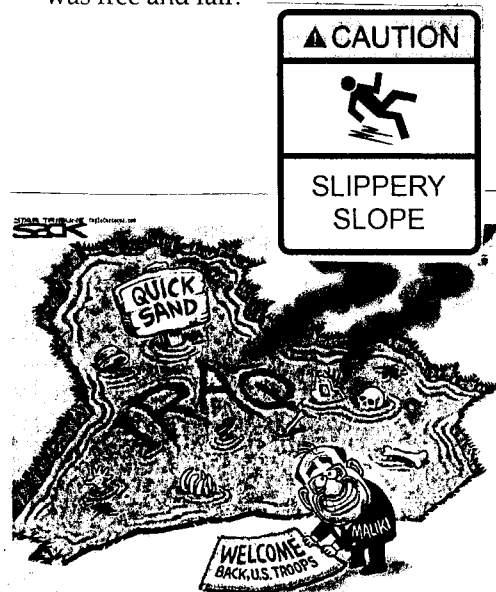
resolution to the **U.S. Conference of Mayors** calling for constructive good faith U.S. participation in international nuclear disarmament forums. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the non-partisan association at their meeting in Dallas on June 23rd. The resolution also commends the Marshall Islands for bringing lawsuits against the nuclear-armed states and points to U.S. spending on nuclear weapons as money that is "desperately needed to address basic human needs such as housing, food security, education, healthcare, public safety, education and environmental protection."

Ⓐ LEPOCO is planning to be part of a **Community Shopping Event** at the Ten Thousand Villages shop in the Lehigh Valley Mall on Sunday afternoon, September 14. Ten Thousand Villages is a fair trade retailer selling items like some of the SERRV crafts that LEPOCO sells at our holiday Open House. We hope many of you will stop by that afternoon to support the store and LEPOCO (the organization will get a percentage of the sales during the Community Shopping Event). If you would like to help plan or staff this event please contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

Ⓐ On June 19th Allentown residents concerned about the high student drop-out rate and the lack of diversity among staff in their school district presented a report card with failing grades at the school district offices. The march and rally were organized by **Campaign for Change**, a community group founded in 2013.

Ⓐ The **LEPOCO Peace Singers** hope to be part of a fall concert benefitting a local soup kitchen. As we prepare for that concert it is a great time for new singers to join us. Contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730 for more information.

Ⓐ Rep. Matt Cartwright signed a "Dear Colleague" letter initiated by Rep. Jan Schakowsky, and addressed to Secretary of State John Kerry, addressing **Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Honduras**. The letter stated the "egregious violations of human rights continue" almost five years after the coup in Honduras; raised concerns about militarization of the police and the failure to investigate or prosecute human rights abuses; and raised concerns about freedom of speech and association, questioning whether the November 2013 election was free and fair.



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. 4th St., Bethlehem, PA 18015, **or**
Donate through PayPal by going to the "membership" page at www.lepoco.org.

Bits & Pieces

☮ LEPOCO is planning a **Yard/Garage Sale** for Sat., Oct. 4th at the home of Mimi Lang in Bethlehem. More on the specifics later, but you can start collecting those wonderful items you are eager to donate. A schedule for when and where donations can be dropped off will be in the next newsletter. If you would like to help plan or staff the event please contact LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

☮ **The Raise the Wage PA Coalition** supports an increase in the state and federal minimum wages to at least \$10.10 an hour; a cost of living adjustment in any legislation so the minimum wage would keep pace with inflation; and a significant increase in fines on employers who engage in wage theft against their employees. They oppose a separate minimum wage for tipped workers. The Community Action Committee of the L.V. organized a bus full of people to travel to Harrisburg on June 3rd for a Raise the Wage PA lobby day.

20% of the workers in Northampton and Lehigh Counties would benefit from the raise to a \$10.10 minimum wage. Increasing the minimum wage will improve the state's economy generally as the lowest paid workers have plenty of places to spend extra money, but it would also boost the state's coffers as more would be spent on taxes. Even Social Security would benefit as more total income would become subject to that tax. A hand-out from the day asked: If raising the minimum wage causes layoffs then why has job growth in Pennsylvania been slower than in fourteen states that have already raised their minimum wage?

☮ The Great Recession and the slow recovery have **sharply widened the gap between the wealthiest in our country and everyone else**, according to a study that underscores the unevenness of wealth gains since the recession ended. The richest five percent had 24 times the wealth of the median household in 2013 -- up substantially

from 16.5 times as much in 2007, according to a study by University of Michigan researchers. (Source: *The Intelligencer*, Doylestown, 6/25/14.)

☮ Thank you to Bob and Carmen Riggs, Vince Stravino, Tom Stinnett, John Zachmann, Monica McAghon, Susie Ravitz, Marion Thorne, Gloria McVeigh, Robert Daniels II, Henry Moyer-Daniels, Ed Liona, and Nancy Tate, who helped distribute "**Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes**," on April 14 & 15. Due to rain on Tax Day (the 15th) we were not able to distribute as many flyers as we would have liked. We did get around 800 distributed -- some people were able to quickly adjust their schedules and go out on the lovely day that was Tax Day Eve (the 14th); some were able to dodge the heavier rain shower on the 15th; and others were able to be under a little cover at their post office entrance. At least two people (Mimi Lang and Kathryn Hoffman) could not help as they had planned to do due to the heavy rain. Most of the remaining flyers were included with the LEPOCO fund appeal letter mailed in June.

☮ *I think it's a call for compassion. We have to understand what he was going through. What a young person at the front line, having believed in his country's mission in Afghanistan discovering it was not at all what he was told it was, that saw himself as part of*

a mechanism of oppression, of killing people, of going into villages and when trying to take out enemy combatants was killing families. What that does to a young man - I think we have to wait and see what he says when he leaves Germany and he's finally allowed to speak publicly. And I hope we will understand what he went through and have some compassion for him and for his family. And it's not really an issue of how pa-triotic he was. He was clearly patrio-tic enough to join the Army in the first place. He certainly believed in his country enough to do that. But in a way his country let him down.

- Charles Glass, historian, former ABC News chief Middle East correspondent, author of, "The Deserters: A Hidden History of the Second World War," speaking on www.democracynow.org about Bowe Bergdahl on 6/4/14

☮ **Decarcerate Pennsylvania - L.V.** will meet again on Sat., July 12, at 11:30 am, at St. John's UCC, 6th & Walnut Sts., Allentown. You can learn more about this group at www.decarcerate.ppj.org.

Decarcerate PA calls for an end to mass incarceration: build no more new prisons, reduce the number of people in prison, and begin community reinvestment (instead of expanding prisons, invest more in schools, housing, jobs, healthcare, food access, and programs addressing the root causes of violence).

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

Sunday, July 13, 7 pm: LEPOCO Peace Singers rehearsal. Location to be determined.

Mondays, July 14 & August 11, 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, July 16, 6:30 pm: Peace Camp Planning Committee meeting & work night at LEPOCO.

Thursdays, July 24 & August 14, 5:30 pm: Lehigh Valley Chapter of Veterans for Peace meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center, with food to share.

Tuesday, July 29, Noon: L.V. Committee Against State Killing meeting at LEPOCO Peace Center. Bring lunch if you like.

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

Tuesday, August 5, 1 pm: Nuclear Abolition Sisters meeting at Anatolian Kitchen, 3016 Linden St., Bethlehem.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information on the Newsletter Planning Committee, 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.



LEPOCO

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

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Bits & Pieces
Calendar

Monthly Peace Vigil

4:30 - 5:30 pm

Second Thursdays:

July 10 / August 14 / September 11

Our wars continue.

Please help witness for peace.

*Reverse the Slide Down the Slippery Slope
to U.S. War III in Iraq!*

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103 /

Tom Ulrich 610-882-1136

(See pages 1 & 7)

LEPOCO's Annual

Hiroshima - Nagasaki Program

Sunday, August 10

4:00 pm

Unitarian Universalist Church

of the Lehigh Valley

(See page 1)

Stand Up & Speak Out!

Saturdays, July 26 & August 30

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, Silvex Rd.

near intersection of Rt. 412 & I-78, behind Wendy's)

Please call 610-691-8730 to sign up or with questions.

(see page 3)

July 21-25

Young People Making Peace

Summer Day Camp

Allentown

(See page 1)