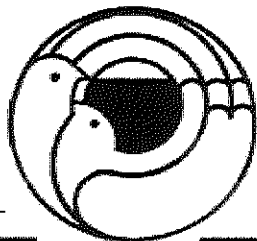


April-May
2017
Vol. 52 No. 3



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

Three Statements about U.S. Military Policy & National Priorities

April is the month when we face our complicity with government war-making policies most directly – as we consider what to do about our federal income tax bill. For years LEPOCO members have distributed over one thousand copies of the War Resisters League pie chart flyers outside local post offices on Tax Day (by the time you receive this we will have been at the post offices again in 2017). At the post offices we work to reach our neighbors with our opposition to present government spending priorities – tax dollars for war are limitless, while being miserly describes the treatment of programs that serve people and protect our world.

We are in one of our darkest periods of miserliness for tax dollars headed for good works. And, we are breaking new ground in financing bombs for murder by war and a bullying foreign policy.

1. Some of the people and organizations we respect spoke out for war tax resistance recently. Here is some of what they wrote: *"We signed this letter because we want you to consider joining others..to take a stand. We can non-cooperate with this government which is not of, by and for all the people. As a first step, we can refuse at least a token amount of our taxes... We want to suggest that you consider the action we are taking of withholding and redirecting a small amount of your taxes.*

"How much? Many select a symbolic minimum of \$10.40. Others refuse to pay 50% of their federal tax bill, the amount that goes for war and preparations for war. All of us signing this letter are redirecting some tax money, either for 2016 if we haven't prepaid our taxes, or through changing our allowances to reduce our estimated taxes for 2017, or are choosing to live below the taxable level in order to refuse paying taxes for war. Will you join us?

"Anxious? Thousands of people before you have done this. The National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee has an impressive array of resources to help... Reach out to them at nwrcc.org... If you decide to join us, please let us know by sending an email to 1040forpeace@gmail.com.

The signers list included: Arun Gandhi, peace farmer; David McReynolds, War Resisters League, former staff; Joanna Macy, The Work that Reconnects; John Stoner, 1040forpeace.org; John Lindsay Poland; Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Nonviolence; Medea Benjamin, CODEPINK; Sam Koplinka-Loehr, National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee.

2. In early April another group responded to the president's call for \$54 billion more for war. The statement was written in response to a massive escalation in Pentagon spending that will be paid for with funds stolen from programs that meet urgent human needs.

Here is some of what they wrote: *"Our environmental and human needs are desperate and urgent. We need to transform our economy, our politics, our policies and our priorities to reflect that reality. That means reversing the flow of our tax dollars, away from war and militarism, and toward funding human and environmental needs and demanding support for that reversal from all our political leaders at the local, state and national levels.*

"We and the movements we are part of face multiple crises. Military and climate wars are destroying lives and environments, threatening the planet and creating enormous flows of desperate refugees. Violent racism,
(continued on page 2)

≈ Peace Camp as Prevention ≈

Who will be our Peacemakers in 2030? Who will lead organizations, run our businesses and health complexes in humane ways? Who will run for elected office? How will those people learn the skills they'll need to stay steady on the path of peace and justice? If you wonder about these things, there are two things you can be doing now to prepare for 2030: encourage young people you know to attend Peace Camp and come yourself as a volunteer.

We teach children the ways of peace in the hope that they will then choose to be part of local and world peacemaking as they grow older. The results can be seen immediately, in their classrooms, on teams and on playgrounds across the Lehigh Valley. Over more than a quarter of a century we've seen past Peace Campers coming back to help with Peace Camp itself and also going on into peacemaking careers and lifestyles.

Peace Camp 2017 will be held July 17-21, at First Presbyterian Church, Allentown. (Adult volunteers need child abuse clearances, but they're easy to get and we'll help you.) Don't miss out on a very interactive week of fun and learning for kids in Kindergarten to kids in their 80s. A registration form for campers is enclosed. Volunteer interest forms are available at LEPOCO.

- Donna Hartmann

Three Statements About U.S. Military Policy & National Priorities

(continued from page 1)

Islamophobia, misogyny, homophobia and other hatreds are rising, encouraged by the most powerful voices in Washington, DC...

"A December 2014 Gallup poll showed people in 65 nations considered the United States far and away the largest threat to peace in the world. If the United States was known for providing clean drinking water, schools, medicine and solar panels to others, instead of attacking and invading other countries, we would be far more secure and face far less global hostility..."

Some of the signers were: Michelle Alexander, author of "The New Jim Crow"; Phyllis Bennis, Institute for Policy Studies; May Boeve, 350.org; Michael Eisenscher, U.S. Labor Against the War; Eve Ensler, V-Day and One Billion Rising; Naomi Klein, author of "This Changes Everything"; Opal Tometi, co-founder, Black Lives Matter Network.

3. A third group issued a statement prior to their weeklong (April 10-16) fast at the Isaiah Wall across from the United Nations, NYC. Their letter reads in part, "As we fast from solid foods, we urge others to join us in calling for a humane response to the deadly tragedy facing Yemeni civilians whose country, ravaged by civil war and regularly targeted with Saudi and U.S. airstrikes, is now on the brink of famine..."

"UNICEF estimates that more than 460,000 children in Yemen face severe malnutrition... More than 10,000 people have been killed including 1,564 children, and millions have been displaced from their homes..."

"...all member states of the UN must urge an end to the blockade and airstrikes, a silencing of all guns, and a negotiated settlement to the war in Yemen."

"While Yemeni children are starving, U.S. weapons makers, including General Dynamics, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin, are profiting from weapon sales to Saudi Arabia."

This statement was issued by members of the New York Catholic Worker community, the Upstate Coalition to End the Wars and Ground the Drones, and Voices for Creative Nonviolence.

While the fast has ended, the need for us to support the people of Yemen continues. You can learn a little more at americaforyemen.wordpress.com.

- compiled by Nancy Tate

.....
Please send the enclosed postcards to your senators. (If you are not in Pennsylvania, please re-address the cards to your own senators.) Please be sure to sign your name legibly and include your complete mailing address.

You can also write a letter, call, send a fax, send an email, and sign email petitions, to your senators and your representative. Write a letter to the editor. Carry your concerns in person to your senators' and congressperson's local office. The threats to every government program that you know to be important and the threats to peace are enormous.

Book Club

The first Tuesday LEPOCO Book Club will meet next on May 2, at 6 pm, in the home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem (meetings will be held at the home of Bob & Carmen for the foreseeable future). May's book for discussion is, "The Face of War," by Martha Gellhorn. A war correspondent for nearly fifty years, Gellhorn writes about wars from the Spanish Civil War in 1937 through the wars in Central America in the 1980s. The 1994 edition of "The Face of War," is an updated version of the book published originally in 1959. The New York Times called it "a brilliant anti-war book."

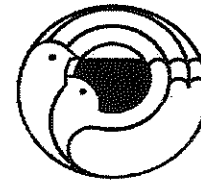
In June the group will discuss "The Cellist of Sarajevo," by Steven Galloway.

The group has several regular participants, but new members are always welcome. For more information contact Mimi Lang at 610-866-2407 or LEPOCO at 610-691-8730.

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

Sign up for LEPOCO e-mail weekly updates by calling 610-691-8730, or by writing to lepoco@fast.net.

You can also sign up to receive the newsletter by email.



Newsletter of LEPOCO
Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern
313 West Fourth Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015
phone: 610-691-8730
fax: 610-691-8904
website: www.lepoco.org
e-mail: lepoco@fast.net

The LEPOCO Newsletter is published eight times a year by the Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern, a nonviolent, non-profit organization dedicated to peace in all forms.

Annual dues are:

Regular Member	\$35
Limited Income Member	\$10
Household Membership	\$45
Supporting Member	\$75

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

Newsletter Staff: Tom Stinnett, Nancy Tate, Amanda Zaniesienko.

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

LEPOCO Steering Committee: Olivia Arena-Miller, Terry Briscoe, Julius Iwantsch (co-treasurer), Nancy Johnston, Dan Miller, Janet Ney, Jim Orben, Scott Slingerland, Tom Stinnett (co-treasurer), Nancy Tate (ex-officio), and Amanda Zaniesienko (ex-officio).

Potluck/Popcorn & Politics

Sunday, April 30th, 6:30 pm

Olga Negron

"Bringing an Ethics Ordinance to Bethlehem"

A Potluck & Politics event
at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4th St., (south) Bethlehem.

Olga Negron and Michael Colón have been working with Bethlehem For Good Government to craft and pass an ethics ordinance for the City of Bethlehem. Barbara Diamond, Breena Holland and Peter Crownfield are among the citizens involved in the Good Government group. The group has done extensive research about ethics ordinances in other cities. The ordinance would provide a set of restrictions, procedures and oversight tools to deter public officials from acting in their own self-interest typically for financial gain. This is a local effort to minimize money's role in politics. Everyone is invited to this discussion, but especially Bethlehem residents who want to learn how they can support this effort.

Please bring food to share for the Potluck Dinner at 6:30 pm.
Discussion will start around 7:00 pm.

Friday, May 5th, 7 pm

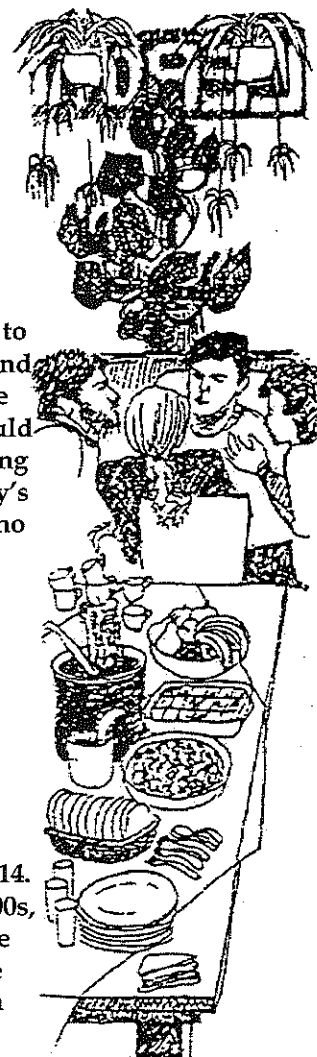
"A Fierce Green Fire: The Battle for a Living Planet"

A Popcorn & Politics Film projected on the big screen
at the LEPOCO Peace Center, 313 W. 4th St., (south) Bethlehem.

This documentary was presented as part of the PBS American Masters series on Earth Day 2014. It gives the sweeping history of the global environmental movement from the 1960s to the 2000s, and is both a cautionary tale and a triumphant one. It highlights the work of people like the housewives who took on a major chemical company that polluted their community of Love Canal, Greenpeace members campaigning to save whales, and Chico Mendes and Brazilian rubber tappers trying to save the Amazon rainforest.

Written, directed and produced by Mark Kitchell. 101 minutes. 2012.

Please bring a snack or beverage to share.



Ride or Walk or Help with the LEPOCO Peace-A-Thon: May 27th

Imagine that you can help create a better world by:

- ☀ Getting healthy exercise;
- ☀ Enjoying the great outdoors;
- ☀ Sharing pastries and fresh fruit;
- ☀ Taking a tai chi lesson;
- ☀ Meeting interesting people.

Well, you can stop dreaming. The Annual LEPOCO Peace-A-Thon is just around the corner and will provide you with all of the above benefits while giving you the opportunity to raise the money needed to keep LEPOCO moving forward.

Join us on Saturday, May 27th (Memorial Day weekend), when we gather around 8:30 am, at the Christmas City Fairgrounds to get ready to bike or walk for peace and justice. See the Peace-A-Thon brochure enclosed with this newsletter or call the LEPOCO office for information or to volunteer as a rider, walker, or staff.

- David Rose

Discussing: What Next? —

With the outrageous Administration Budget proposal (\$54 billion more for the Pentagon and drastic cuts for everything that protects and serves people and the environment) and the leading by bullying that is upping the repression at home and the bombs dropping in our names around the world, the LEPOCO Steering Committee is seeking input on what more we should be doing as an organization in the present context.

An initial discussion was held on April 24 as this newsletter was in the works. Some exciting suggestions came forth from that discussion which will be continued on Monday, May 15, at 6:30 pm, at LEPOCO. Please join us even if you were unable to attend the initial discussion. Please contact the office by phone, email, or regular mail, if you have suggestions and cannot attend the May 15th meeting. You can also join us for the monthly Action Meeting on the second Monday of May, the 8th, at 7 pm.



Refugees in the Lehigh Valley

The world refugee situation is terrible. There are more refugees now than at any time in history with 20 million plus refugees and 60 million internally displaced. Syria alone has over 4.8 million refugees plus an estimated six million displaced persons. Refugee camps in Jordan and Africa have hundreds of thousands of people living in them.

215 refugees were expected in the Lehigh Valley for this year (October 2016 to October 2017) and 70 are thankfully here. With President Trump's latest orders, it is hard to predict how many more will get here. The President has reduced the overall number to be welcomed to the U.S. this year to 50,000. (President Obama had made a commitment to welcome 110,000 this year.) The Trump Administration has put a 120-day moratorium on refugee resettlement activity. The U.S. received 85,000 refugees in 2016 and 70,000 in 2015.

Bethany Christian Services (BCS) is now running the refugee resettlement program in the Lehigh Valley. The program was previously run by Lutheran Services and before that by Catholic Social Agency. Expenses for running the program are high even though the U.S. Government does provide some money to help with refugee resettlement. BCS now has the extra burden of trying to keep their staff together during the current refugee moratorium. BCS staff and volunteers welcome new arrivals, take them to their new apartment/house, and help them settle. The refugee family is also taken to a doctor, a dentist and various offices to help with a Social Security card, school registration and a job search. BCS provides a required cultural orientation program to help with assimilation into our society. The goal is to have refugees reach self-sufficiency in 90 to 100 days.

If you would like to help with this effort, volunteers and volunteer groups help in the following ways: donating money; sponsoring a family and working with BCS to handle all aspects of resettling new families; donating goods or services. BCS details the items needed for various supply boxes like a kitchen box, a bedroom box, a bathroom box, a school kit, etc. The U.S. government buys beds, but BCS provides all the other furnishings for the refugee home.

If you would like to donate or volunteer to help with refugee resettlement contact Maria or Donna at BCS, 434 Chew St., Allentown 18102 / 484-408-6830.

- Terry Briscoe

Other Efforts Supporting Refugees Locally

Local colleges are supporting refugees as part of their extensive community engagement programs. As part of this effort Lehigh University's Mellon Digital Humanities Initiative presented the film "After Spring," at the Frank Banko Alehouse Cinemas in late March.

The film is about two families from Syria who are living at the UNHCR's Zaatari Camp in Jordan. Zaatari currently offers shelter and services to nearly 80,000 refugees. The families living there are escaping the violence and devastation in their home country.

One focus of the film was the children in the community and the creative work being done to deal with a rising problem of children choosing to not attend school.

Following the film a panel of speakers discussed some of the ways people are working with refugees arriving in the Lehigh Valley. Katie Morris, a Lehigh University student, spoke about the ways the "No Lost Generation" club at Lehigh works with and in the community to help refugees.

Sarah Stanlick, Director of the Center for Community Engagement spoke of ways people can get involved with the refugee community. Tim Daly from the Neighborhood Health Centers of the Lehigh Valley, based in Allentown, talked about their work with

refugees. They provide the initial medical exam for refugees soon after their arrival.

Two specific programs were discussed besides BCS described above. One of them, Newcomers Academy, provides children with language and academic assistance for one year. After this the students are considered ready to enter the regular schools in their community. There is no program in place to help with the transition from the Newcomer Academy to their regular school. Many children struggle greatly with this transition. Tutors and mentors are needed to help with this program. The Newcomers Academy is located in Allentown and can be called at 484-765-5680.

A second program is the Refugee Community Center at the Episcopal Church of the Mediator in Allentown. They sponsor regular community dinners and events. Many of the dinners are made by the refugee family members and they provide an excellent way to get acquainted with our new neighbors. For more information contact the church at 610-434-0155.

- Amanda Zaniesienko



Concerns for the Earth

Why Are Our Tax \$s Aiding the Murderers of People Like Berta Cáceres?

On March 3, a very chilled group of people handed out a flyer with this lead question in downtown Easton. We gathered to honor the memory of Berta Cáceres who was murdered in Honduras one year earlier and to build support for the Berta Cáceres Human Rights in Honduras Act, HR-1299, recently reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

After the leading question the flyer read in part, "...Her assassination in her home on March 2, 2016, was her final silencing... Hers was one of the hundreds of deadly assaults in the past years on those who dare to take a stand against the ruthless corporate raping of the Earth. For decades, Berta led a movement in Honduras to stop foreign corporate elites from building dams and other projects that threatened to cut off the water, food and medicine of her indigenous Lenca people."

The group gathered outside the Easton office of Rep. Matt Cartwright to thank him for becoming a co-sponsor of HR-1299. Statements supporting the Act and the work of people like Berta were made by representatives of LEPOCO'S Americas Solidarity Group; the Alliance for Sustainable Communities of the L.V.; the Social Concerns Committee of the Lehigh Valley Society of Friends; Mary's Pence; Olga Negron, member Bethlehem City Council; POWER Northeast; the Social Concerns Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley; the Beyond Capitalism Working Group; Lehigh Valley Greens; and Pax Christi Lehigh Valley. April Niever greeted the group on Rep. Cartwright's behalf.

Copies of the statements were sent to Representatives Fitzpatrick, Dent, and Barletta, and to Senators Casey and Toomey, urging their support for HR-1299 in the House or similar efforts in the Senate. HR-1299 would prohibit U.S. funding for the military and police in Honduras until human rights abuses are addressed.

Members of the Americas Solidarity Group met with Rep. Dent on April 13th, to further urge his support for the Human Rights in Honduras Act. You are invited to carry this concern to your representatives by mail, email, phone or in person.

Rivers As Persons

On March 20, the High Court of Uttarakhand at Naintal in northern India issued a ruling declaring that the River Ganga and the River Yumana are "legal persons/living persons," stating that this was necessary "in order to preserve and conserve the rivers." Mari Margil of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, based in Pennsylvania, said, "Recognition of personhood rights is an important step forward toward the recognition of the full rights of the rivers to be healthy, natural ecosystems." Since 2006, CELDF has assisted more than three dozen communities across the

U.S. to secure the rights of nature to exist and flourish and has also worked with international partners like those in India. For more info. see celdf.org.

The Struggle Continues

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe continues their struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). On April 5 they announced that BNP Paribas (an international banking group headquartered in France) had sold its shares in the loan to DAPL. BNP Paribas is the third bank in the DAPL loan consortium to divest, following similar action by the Norwegian bank DNB and the Dutch Bank ING. Individuals are invited to support the Standing Rock Sioux by withdrawing their deposits from the banks that continue supporting DAPL. You can learn more this at www.defunddapl.org.

Another part of the present struggle against DAPL is on the legal front. Earthjustice is representing the Tribe in their legal challenges against the pipeline based on the fact that DAPL puts the water and sacred sites of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe directly in harm's way.

Another Struggle Continues

FERC (the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) issued a favorable EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) for the PennEast Pipeline on April 7, after two delays. It does not take much exposure to this project to know that the environmental damage it would cause would be much more than "less than significant." HALT (Homeowners Against Land Taking), based in New Jersey, responded by pointing to the milestones yet to be passed by PennEast, and said, "if PennEast fails any of them, it could stop the pipeline." The milestones include: challenges to FERC over the Final EIS; challenges to FERC's Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, yet to be issued; review of PennEast's application and FERC's Final EIS by the Delaware Basin Commission (DRBC), following its own independent rules; and review of PennEast's application and FERC's Final EIS by the New Jersey DEP (Department of Environmental Protection), again following its own laws and regulations. If the project continues to be delayed, some investors could pull out, as PSEG has done, threatening the project's economic viability.

Another Ban Passed

On April 4, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan signed a bill that permanently bans fracking in that state. Maryland is the third state taking this action, following Vermont and New York. Food & Water Watch, a member group in Don't Frack Maryland, issued a statement calling this action "a huge victory for public health, common-sense environmental protection, climate stability, and, the power of grassroots organizing."

- this page compiled by Nancy Tate & Martin Boksenbaum

Reflections from "Finding Martin in Atlanta: The Entanglement of St. Martin de Porres & Martin Luther King, Jr. at Atlanta's Oldest Black Catholic Church"

On April 4, James Padilioni, Jr., presented the "Finding Martin..." lecture at Lafayette College. I attended because of the topic and because the Stop the Wars Committee was seeking signatures on a postcard to our senators at local events on April 4th. The postcard carried a message opposing the proposed increase in U.S. military spending to mark the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's famous speech at Riverside Church in opposition to the war in Vietnam, April 4, 1967.

Upon arrival at the lecture, I introduced myself to James Padilioni, saying I came to hear his message and that I hoped he would let me talk to the audience about our King inspired postcard. He was gracious and said he was OK with the postcard request.

James Padilioni, Jr., is an experienced drama and music teacher from Puerto Rico, now a Ph.D. candidate at the College of William and Mary, with a major in Americana Studies. Among his varied interests are African Diasporic Catholicism and Afro-Latinx cultural and identity formation. He gave a dynamic and dramatic realization to all things connecting Martin Luther King, Jr., and Martin de Porres, patron saint of Social Justice, canonized in 1962, as the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes in Atlanta stepped up their support of the Civil Rights Movement.

Padilioni's slide lecture took us on a journey through King's childhood neighborhood, which included Ebenezer Baptist Church and Our Lady of Lourdes. Our Lady of Lourdes also ran a school for African Americans funded by the Philadelphia heiress Katharine Drexel. The two churches shared a playground.

They also shared Martins: Martin Luther King, Jr., and St. Martin de Porres. The St. Martin Council on Human Relations at Our Lady of Lourdes conducted interracial "In Home Dialogs" for eight years to help people consider the history of racial tensions in housing, education, and employment, and discussed what they could do to reduce discrimination.

About 45 people attended the lecture. During the Q&A we talked more about how Katharine Drexel's millions funded black institutions such as Our Lady of Lourdes, Xavier University in New Orleans, and hospitals. Katherine Drexel also founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, an order that now consists of about 70 mostly older nuns. The nuns continue work on their founding mission to aid Black and Indian populations with education and healthcare. Not all was good though, there was a lag in appointing black doctors to work in the hospitals they founded, and old photos showed what Franz Fanon called *racecraft*, racial stereotyping, albeit unintentional, as when black children

gifted white nun teachers with branches of the cotton plant, or sugarcane, and posed for a class picture with slices of watermelon, the agricultural fruits of hitherto imposed labor (slavery). I found Padilioni's research on this church's connections to the Civil Rights Movement thought-provoking. He included a video of the churches' Gospel Choir honoring the two Martins and all African saints.

I found the lecture especially satisfying because my great aunt Kate McAghon became a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament in 1922, taking the name Sister Mary Xavier. She worked in St. Louis, Xavier Prep and University in New Orleans, and in other cities. Her close friend was another nun who went by the name of Sr. Martin de Porres. With my parents, I visited "Aunt Kate" several times at the mother house in Cornwells Heights. They were friendly, mildly funny, and a bit scary in their black and white habits that by the late 1960s had been modified to look more like street dresses. As a teenager, I was suspicious of all things in the Church, but now I look back on Aunt Kate with affection for her role in serving the under-served. Aunt Kate/Sr. Mary Xavier died in 1983. These memories ran through my head during the lecture as I saw slides of the church and a picture of a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament in her cumbersome old habit carrying a sign saying, "In Solidarity with Martin Luther King, Jr." I shared my story with Padilioni as we left Kirby Hall for Civil Rights. We chuckled as he added that he wondered why these nuns took men's names.

James Padilioni asked for about 10 of our postcards to take to students in another class he was visiting at Lafayette, and said he also wanted two for his parents who live in Philadelphia.

I collected and mailed 18 signed postcards and together the committee collected over 100 signed postcards for each of our senators on April 4th.

- Monica McAghon

Wisdom from Delaware

The following note was received from Michael Lawton in March. He now lives in Delaware. The wisdom seems to speak to what many of us have experienced since November.

Sorry we're not going to make the Annual Dinner this year. We will be attending a lecture by a Merton scholar, speaking on "Solitude and Social Engagement: Lessons from Music and Merton."

This particularly interests me now because there are so many pressing issues to deal with that I sometimes feel like I'm coming apart.

The Trump administration wants to pummel us into submission with a "shock & awe" approach. I think they want people so dazed and confused that we don't recognize the corporate coup happening before our eyes.

We'll miss seeing our friends and hearing Michael McPhearson's presentation.

Bits & Pieces

☯ Winners of the 2017 LEPOCO **Art Raffle** prizes are as follows: Nelda Barron won the hand-turned wooden salad bowl made by Lee Buck; Amy Sommerville won Anna Reczek's hand-crocheted afghan; Gene Deisher won the quilt made by Ellen Buck, Romaine Laury and Lois Kruger Walters; Ted Morgan won the wheel-thrown bowls from Sommerville Studios, made by Monica Sommerville (who now lives in New York State, but was able to join us for the dinner); Elizabeth Griner won the silk tie braided mat created by Ronnie Arena; Sheila Clever won the handmade tote with political slogan made by Carol Baylor (who also sold some of her bags at the dinner donating some of proceeds to LEPOCO); and, Kathy Fox won the gift certificate to Jenny's Kuali. Congratulations to all the winners and many thank you's to all those who donated their beautiful creations to the Art Raffle.

☯ Monica McAghon's article on page 6 of this newsletter describes one of activities undertaken by the Stop the Wars Committee to observe the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's Riverside speech, "Beyond Vietnam." Mimi Lang wrote an op-ed, "King's Vietnam Message Relevant After 50 Years," that was published in *The Morning Call* on April 3, 2017. You can read it on the Martin Luther King Holiday page (in Recurring Events) at www.lepoco.org.

During the entire year, until the 50th anniversary of King's assassination on April 4, 2018, people across the U.S. will focus on King's witness for an end to racism, war and poverty, especially as it applies to this time. You may want to view a speech by the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, delivered at Riverside Church on April 2nd, "When Silence Is Not an Option." One cogent statement in that speech was that Trump's campaign promise was "not to make America great again, but to make access to America's resources white again."

☯ "Doing Our Part to End Hunger," is the theme of a Bread for the World gathering on Sat., May 20, 9 am-noon, at Dubbs Memorial Community Center, 457 Allen St., Allentown. For more info. or to register see www.lehighchurches.org or call 610-433-6421. The event is free.

☯ If you have been unable to attend any of the several programs on **gerrymandering in Pennsylvania** you have another opportunity. The League of Women Voters in Northampton County and the Easton NAACP are sponsoring a panel discussion on "Gerrymandering: How to Recognize and Resist It," on Thurs., May 4th, at 7 pm, in Colton Chapel, Lafayette College, Easton.

☯ Thank you to the people who helped to distribute the War Resisters League flyer, "Where Your Income Tax Money Really Goes" at local post offices on **Tax Day**, April 18. The volunteers were: Mimi Lang, Tom Stinnett, Diane Dilendik, Ginny Schimmel, Janice Lovegrove, Kathleen O'Donnell, Barbara Diamond, Vince Stravino, Victor Madeson, Cathy Barna, Susie Ravitz, Bernie Beg, Nancy Johnston, Amanda Zanieienko, Juanita Gomez, Monica McAghon, John Zachmann, Lynn Fraser, Jim Bloom, Bill Thomas,

Nancy Tate and a group of students at Lafayette College.

Also, there was a Tax Day (April 15) Rally at Bethlehem's Payrow Plaza that mostly focused on the president's failure to release his tax returns and the anti-people priorities reflected in the administration's budget proposal. Nancy Tate spoke for LEPOCO at this gathering. She raised concerns about spending for the military. You can read her speech on the Tax Day Leaf-letting page (in Recurring Events) at www.lepoco.org.

☯ **Michael McPhearson**, Veterans For Peace Executive Director, delivered an inspiring speech at LEPOCO's Annual Dinner, on March 18, "Organizing Resistance & Triumph: This Is Our Time." You can read it at www.lepoco.org on the LEPOCO Annual Dinner page (in Recurring Events).

☯ Thank you to everyone who helped staff LEPOCO information tables at **Earth Day** festivals locally: Amanda Zanieienko, Ellen Buck, Tom Stinnett, Rita Corriel, Sebastian Zawierucha, Nancy Tate, Susie Ravitz, Olivia Arena-Miller, Mimi Lang, Barbara Diamond, Monica McAghon, Terry Briscoe, Ginny Schimmel, Kathryn Hoffman, Phil Reiss, and Annette Carpien.

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

- Tuesdays, May 2 & June 6, 6 pm: **LEPOCO Book Group** meets at home of Bob & Carmen Riggs, 1113 Prospect Ave., Bethlehem (see page 2 for more details).
- Thursdays, May 4 & June 1, 12:30 pm each day: **Americas Solidarity Group** meetings at the LEPOCO Peace Center, Bethlehem (see page 5 for more info.)
- Sunday, May 7, 7 pm: **LEPOCO Peace Singers** rehearse at the home of Marcie Lightwood & Rick Weaver, Bethlehem.
- Mondays, May 8 & June 12, 7 pm: **LEPOCO Monthly Action Meetings** at the LEPOCO Peace Center. All members & friends are welcome at this business meeting where the organization's activities are discussed.
- Tuesday, May 9, 4-7, 5 pm: **LEPOCO Peace-A-Thon Planning Committee** calling night at the Peace Center.
- Wednesdays, May 10, 10 am & May 24, 5 pm: **Peace Camp Planning Committee** work morning & meeting, respectively, at LEPOCO Peace Center.
- Monday, May 15, 6:30 pm: **LEPOCO What Next?** meeting continues at the Peace Center. (see page 2 for more info.)
- Thursday, June 8, 3 pm: **L.V. Committee Against State Killing (LV-CASK) Meeting** at the LEPOCO Peace Center.

Please join in the meetings and work of these groups as you are able. If you want more information about the meetings of the Stop the Wars Committee, the Annual Dinner Evaluation Meeting or any other committees or about any of the meetings listed above, please call LEPOCO at 610-691-8730. For a regularly updated calendar of events and meetings, see www.lepoco.org.



Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

313 W. Fourth St., Bethlehem, PA 18015
610-691-8730 lepoco@fast.net
Fax 610-691-8904 www.lepoco.org

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 617
Lehigh Valley, PA

See Inside:

Pages 1 & 2

Three Statements
About National
Priorities
Peace Camp
Book Group

Page 3

P & Ps
Peace-a-thon
What Next?

Page 4

Refugees Locally

Pages 5

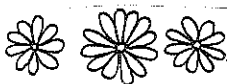
Concerns for the
Earth

Page 6

Reflections from
April 4th Lecture
Wisdom...

Page 7

Bits & Pieces



Monthly Peace Vigil

(Second Thursdays)

May 11 & June 8
4:30-5:30 pm

*Our wars & bombings continue &
expand. Help witness for peace.*

3rd & Wyandotte Sts., Bethlehem

Contact: Vince Stravino 610-216-8103 or
LEPOCO 610-691-8730

Stand Up & Speak Out!

Saturdays

May 27 & June 24
12 Noon - 2 pm

Protest Horsham

Drone Command Center

10:45 am: Carpool from Lehigh Valley
(From Hellertown Park & Ride, Silvevex Rd., near
intersection of Rt. 412 & I-78)
Call 610-691-8730 for more info.

LEPOCO's Annual

Peace-a-thon

for Bikers & Walkers

Saturday, May 27

(See enclosed pledge sheet & page 3 for more info.)

Young People Making
Peace Summer Day Camp

July 17-21, 2017

For children ages 5-14 who have
completed kindergarten to 8th grade.

(See enclosed registration form
& page 1 for more info.)