More Than a Paycheck
REFUSING to PAY for WAR

August/September 2016

34 Years of Resistance

War Tax Resisters *In Action*!

While we try to be active all year long, tax day still affords the best opportunity to be public and maybe even get some media attention. The cameras come out too, so here and inside on pages 4-5 are a sample of photos from April 2016. You'll find more at nwtrcc.org/programs-events/tax-day.

War tax resister Daniel Woodham (left) joined with Toni Etheridge and Merrill Daniels of Almanac Peace Action (APA) in Burlington, North Carolina, to leaflet and hold banners in front of the post office. **Photo courtesy of APA.**

Members of the Bijou Community attracted attention with signs and a penny poll outside the post office in Colorado Springs. **Photo by Donna Johnson.**

Chicago Area War Resisters Support Group, the Hyde Park Center for Nonviolent Action, Catholic Worker center Su Casa, UUSJ Peace Task Force, and WRL Chicago Chapter sponsored a "Pay No War Tax Demonstration" at Federal Plaza in downtown Chicago. Brad Lyttle took his turn at the microphone, which resonated across the plaza, while others distributed pie chart flyers to people entering the nearby post office. **Photo by Charles Paidock.**

South Carolina WTR Carol Coney (left on banner) spent a week in Washington, DC, at the Democracy Spring actions, which were organized by a coalition of groups with a call to "get money out of politics." The week coincided with traditional tax day, so other WTRs joined Carol for a vigil at IRS headquarters, carried the banner to a "no taxation without representation" rally for D.C. statehood, and then marched to the Capitol to meet up with the Democracy Spring demonstration. Brian Barrett from Baltimore has the other end of the banner. **Photo by Ruth Benn.**

NWTRCC Job Opening

NWTRCC is accepting applications for a new Field Organizer/Outreach Consultant position to support and strengthen the war tax resistance network in the U.S. Tasks include phone surveys with individuals around the country, assessing needs and potential targets for growth, presentations to new groups and in-person meetings. Flexibility and travel are required. Funding is available initially for a six-month to 1-year position with a negotiable part- or full-time schedule.

Skills required include knowledge of and experience with war tax resistance; strong interpersonal communication skills; willingness to work in a consensus-based organization; ability to work independently; computing skills, including e-mail, word processing, database, spreadsheets, conference calls and video conferencing; experience producing outreach materials related to military spending, peace, and/or war tax resistance helpful. NWTRCC is based in New York City; the consultant may work remotely.

Deadline for applications is August 12, 2016. See the job announcement at *nwtrcc.org/job-opening*, or call the NWTRCC office at *(800) 269-7464*. To apply, send cover letter and resume to *nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org*, or mail to NWTRCC, PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215. ●

More Than a Paycheck
REFUSING to PAY for WAR

Editor Ruth Benn

Production Rick Bickhart

Printing and Mailing
Lakeside Printing Cooperative
Madison, Wisconsin

Printed on Recycled Paper

More Than a Paycheck: Refusing to Pay for War is a bimonthly publication of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee, a clearing-house and resource center for the conscientious war tax resistance movement in the United States. NWTRCC is a coalition of local, regional and national affiliate groups working on war tax related issues.

NWTRCC sees poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, economic exploitation, environmental destruction and militari-zation of law enforcement as integrally linked with the militarism which we abhor. Through the redirection of our tax dollars, NWTRCC members contribute directly to the struggle for peace and justice for all.

Subscriptions are $15 per year.

NWTRCC
PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215
(718) 768.3420
(800) 269.7464
nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org
www.nwtrcc.org

Counseling Notes

Editor's note: As always, if you have a story related to anything you read in this column, please send your experience to the NWTRCC office or email us at nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org.

Social Security Survey

War tax resistance counselors generally tell people who work up a debt with the IRS that Social Security payments are vulnerable to seizure. If you collect benefits, 15% can be taken for any federal debt under the Federal Payment Levy Program (FPLP). However, we are hearing from some resisters with significant debts (according to the IRS) that the Social Security levies are inconsistent. One longtime, public resister, with some thousands listed as "owed" by the IRS, started taking Social Security a couple years ago. Fifteen percent was taken from the first two checks, but it has not been deducted again, although he still receives IRS collection letters.

We'd like to hear more stories. Does the IRS say you have a tax debt? Are you receiving Social Security benefits? Do you have a constant levy on your checks, or does it come and go? Or, did it never start? As far as counseling goes, we will continue to say the check is vulnerable as long as the FPLP is in place, but perhaps we can say that an ongoing levy is not as guaranteed as we thought. Contact the NWTRCC office with your story: *(800) 269-7464* or *nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org*.

Rent vs. Buy

Home ownership often comes up in counseling conversations with individuals who want to resist but fear that property seizure will be a consequence of their resistance. Some years ago in a counseling session, former NWTRCC Coordinator Carolyn Stevens responded to this question by saying, "There is nothing wrong with renting. Millions of people do it." Such a straightforward simple response might influence some potential resisters, but the desire to buy a home vs. the voice of conscience seem to run neck and neck. A more involved response may be needed. *The New York Times* had a good article titled "To Buy or Rent a Home? Weighing which is the Better Choice." (April 2, 2016) It's a serious article challenging the automatic assumption that home ownership is better than renting. The author lays out many factors that should be considered before buying: how long you might stay in that locality; costs of maintenance that can add up over time; local trends that indicate whether the property will gain value (which buyers tend to assume); and such. She cites a study from one community where renters came out ahead financially over an eight-year period.

There's a link to a calculator to help people compare "buy vs. rent" given their own situation. That calculator won't factor in conscience, but the article offers some good responses to people who really don't want their money going to war but feel the pull of property ownership (not to mention that property seizures are rare these days and most resisters don't work up a big enough debt to warrant such a consequence). You can find a link to the article on NWTRCC's blog, *nwtrcc.org/2016/07/21/resisting-in-dreamland/* or contact the office if you would like a copy mailed to you. ●

Many Thanks

We are very grateful to **The James R. and Mary Jane Barrett Foundation** *for the second part of a two-year grant. Thank you!*

And to these groups for their Affiliate dues:
Maine WTR Resource Center
Peace Resource Center of San Diego

Network Updates

The Network List of Affiliates, Area Contacts, Counselors, and Alternative Funds is updated and online at *nwtrcc.org*, or contact the NWTRCC office (*nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org* or *1-800-269-7464*), if you would like a printed list by mail.

Remembrance

Sherilyn R. Brandenstein, a beloved former member of Conscientious Objectors to Military Taxation in Austin, Texas, died unexpectedly in her current residence of Indianapolis, Indiana, on June 6, 2016. Sherilyn had practiced war tax resistance in various ways over the years and was always a thoughtful, steady presence in the Austin group. The deep kindness of Sherilyn's spirit will live on.

Experiments with Nonviolence
Karl Meyer's Memoir

Reviewed by Lincoln Rice

Long time war tax resister Karl Meyer has made the second draft of his memoir available for purchase: *Positively Dazzling Realism: The Further Invention of Nonviolence for the Abolition of War*. He plans to further edit the book, currently 594 pages, to a size more acceptable to a mainstream publisher and audience. Also known for his articles in NWTRCC publications under his alias, Payno Warbucks, Meyer dedicates 13 sections of the book to war tax refusal.

Born in 1937 and raised in West Rupert, Vermont, Meyer remembers decrying nuclear weapons as an evil that needed to be abolished as a young boy. At 17-years-old, he dropped out of the University of Chicago and moved to Washington, DC, with the intent of conversing with lawmakers to solve the Cold War through nonviolent means. Though unsuccessful, he learned that many people will not work for their own self-interest.

In 1957, Karl stopped by the New York Catholic Worker and was arrested with Dorothy Day, Ammon Hennacy, and others during civil defense air raid drills. That action resulted in the first of many visits to prison. From the late 1950s until the early 1970s, he ran a Catholic Worker house of hospitality for men in Chicago. During this time, he married and had kids, walked to Moscow with a group of peace activists, spent time protesting in Saigon, and popularized W-4 tax resistance.

One aspect that sets his memoir apart from others is Karl's candid and honest writing about his love life. He has been married twice, the second time to Kathy Kelly. During his first marriage he began the practice of having an open relationship. Karl believes this non-possessive view of romantic relationships to be a natural outgrowth of his experiments with nonviolence.

During the 1970s, Karl became a carpenter. Without much previous experience, it was a difficult task. Nevertheless, this vocation aided him in earning a living that supports his simple lifestyle and permits him to effectively avoid collection from the IRS.

During the 1980s, he often collaborated with Kathy Kelly for Central American solidarity actions. The 1990s feature the many adventures of his famed Peace House, which he built on an F-350 flatbed truck. The flatbed housed his mobile 8' by 12' dwelling and also doubled as a peace museum. For six years he was a troubadour for peace, traveling almost 75,000 miles throughout the United States, speaking to groups of all ages. Since 1997, he has resided in Nashville, where he founded Nashville Greenlands, a community devoted to urban agriculture and social justice.

Meyer's honest and detailed account of his life also contains personal stories about other great figures he has known, including Dorothy Day, Ammon Hennacy, Eroseanna Robinson, Brad Lyttle, Wally and Juanita Nelson, and Kathy Kelly. This book is reminiscent of Gandhi's autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, in the way Meyer documents his continuing growth in creative nonviolence. Although this work will hopefully be published at a later date in a briefer format, that future publication will necessarily omit many details that would interest war tax resisters and Catholic Workers. This book will only be available for a limited time, place your order with Karl now at (615) 322-9523 or karlmeyerng@hotmail.com. For $30, it's a steal — and he'll even autograph it for you!

Lincoln Rice is involved with the Milwaukee War Resistance group and the Casa Maria Catholic Worker in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He has his PhD in Christian Ethics and recently authored Healing the Racial Divide: A Catholic Racial Justice Framework Inspired by Dr. Arthur Falls.

War No More: Three Centuries of American Antiwar and Peace Writing

By Lawrence Rosenwald, published by Library of America

Reviewed by Edward Agro

Given that an antiwar movement in the U.S., where rampant militarism is the norm, must cast its nets impossibly wide, it's no wonder that the nonviolent struggle to build a world without war draws proponents from every class and predisposition of American Life. But what glues together all of us who resist? Is there a tradition which can give us strength?

Professor Lawrence Rosenwald's ambitious book *War No More* helps us find that tradition. It's not your standard history, focused on well-recognized heroes — usually military — who purportedly single-handedly "make peace" — usually by military means. Instead it's a picaresque ramble through three centuries of efforts by individuals, in many cases unknown to history, to celebrate in writing, song, and graphics and often putting their peace and quiet, if not more, on the line to defeat The Juggernaut of militarism that affects and stains all that is good in the American experiment. Reading these stories will be a great encouragement to modern day activists in the antiwar cause. And, somewhat like Howard Zinn's "People's History of the United States," it will encourage citizens just awakening to their need to resist.

But if the cause is ponderous, the book is not; I found these 800-plus pages a joy to read. The thing is so rich that gulping it down all at once is not the only way to extract its treasures. Rosenwald's prefatory notes to the selections are a great read in themselves; they give a good deal of the historical contexts, and though the author refrains from haranguing the reader, they give a sense of his own passionate conviction. That conviction led him to war tax resistance, a topic that pops up here and there with entries including Juanita Nelson's "A Matter of Freedom"; Edmund Wilson's "The Strategy of Tax Refusal"; Joan Baez's "What Would You Do If?"; Daniel Berrigan, from his play "The Trial of the Cantonsville Nine"; and, Bernard Offen's letter "To: Internal Revenue Service."

The foregoing is a condensation of Ed Agro's longer review of War No More*, which appears on* Amazon.com. *Ed began refusing war taxes during the Vietnam war, and currently manages the war tax support and discussion group (*lists.riseup.net/www/arc/wtr-s*).* ●

Photo by Gregory Sotir.

Not So Rosy

In June, about 18 of us with the Oregon Community for War Tax Resistance/War Resisters League gathered at the Rose Festival in downtown Portland to protest the presence of the military recruiters. The vultures (recruiters) set up shop near the Fun Center, where rides and games attract the younger crowds. Since the first Gulf War, I have slowly raised my awareness around issues of war tax resistance, starting with refusing to pay the 3% excise tax on my phone bill, to living below the poverty level without feeling deprived, and on to talking to high school students about options other than the military after graduating.

In the picture above you can see a large check in the background. It was made by the Navy, and in the memo part it says something like "for dental work, tuition, and health care," as if they would give any one an amount like that in one lump sum! I protest at the Rose Festival in front of the military booths because I think another world, another way is possible, and hope that those considering joining the military will find peaceful paths to making the world a better place. The easiest way to prevent veterans is to encourage students to not join the military in the first place!

— Kima Garrison, Oregon Community for War Tax Resistance/WRL - Portland Chapter

Create Your Own Billboard

Many of us have large, mobile billboards that we call motor vehicles. These vehicles are observed by hundreds of cars and people every day. Why not use 'em as political/educational statements? I display my favorite poster, which is available from Bread and Puppet, 753 Heights, Glover, Vermont 05839, for $10. I order it in black and white, color it, and laminate it. Altogether it lasts about a year (sometimes replacing the packing tape). For a small amount of money one has a great way of connecting with folks whether moving or parked.

— redmoonsong, Asheville, North Carolina

Tax day vigil outside the IRS in New York City with members of War Resisters League, Granny Peace Brigade, NYC People's Life Fund, New England War Tax Resistance, WESPAC, and Brooklyn for Peace. **Photo(s) by Ed Hedemann.**

Outreach Experiment

At our Quaker Yearly meeting this year, I decided to not have an interest group on war tax resistance but to quietly encourage discussions through wearing buttons and having materials available. About seven of us wore "Ask Me About Resisting War Taxes" buttons. Some were hesitant at first, but later asked to wear them. Having the "ask me" button on allowed people to approach us who might not attend an interest group. I also had good conversations with war tax resisters who chose not to wear buttons. Conversations started while waiting in line for dinner or in our small worship sharing groups. We had a "Death & Taxes" poster (produced by a group called Timeplots) on display with NWTRCC materials in the Peace and Service Resource area and could refer interested people there.

— Vickie Aldrich, Las Cruces, New Mexico

Death & Taxes Poster, $25, *timeplots.com/products/death-and-taxes-2016*, Timeplots, 1101 15th Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005.

Save the Date!

31st Annual New England Gathering of War Tax Resisters and Supporters

October 14 – 16, 2016

Agape Community, Hardwick, Massachusetts, agapecommunity.org
Saturday's program will be at UMASS Amherst

Saturday will feature a talk by Mandy Carter and a round table discussion about the challenges we all face, the strategies for change, and to deepen the intersectionality of our struggles.

For more information see nwtrcc.org/PDFs/NewEngland2016.pdf, *or contact Mary Regan* (617) 838-7615, maryregan@hotmail.com, *or to register: Emilie Hamilton* (413) 362-5885, emilie.hamilton@aol.com.

Resources

Get WTR Noticed!

Buttons

Vickie Aldrich (see her write-up left) used the "Ask Me About Resisting War Taxes" button for effective outreach. You can too!

2¼" buttons (black text) · $2 each
"Ask Me about Resisting War Taxes" (light green background)
"Let them march all they want, as long as they pay their taxes," Haig quote (various colors)

1¾" button · $1.50 ea.
Thoreau image with text: "Don't Pay War Taxes"

Please add .75 postage for 1-3 buttons; $1.00 for 4-8

Bumperstickers

11½" × 3", blue ink on white
$1.75 each, postpaid; call for bulk rates

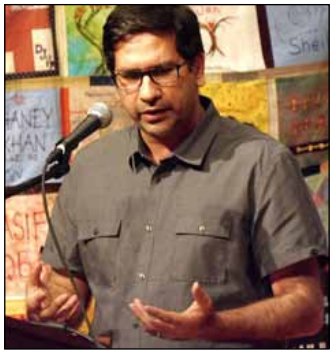
Extra Copies of this Newsletter

Does your food coop, peace center, church, 'zine shop, or school have a place to put out free literature? Why not take a few copies of this newsletter for passersby to grab. We'll send you 5-10 copies of each issue for free if you can deliver them to a likely distribution site.

Order any of the above from NWTRCC, PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215, (800) 269-7464, or online at nwtrcc.org/store.

Witnessing and Acting

Peace Tax Fund board treasurer and 1040 for Peace member H.A. Penner, left, with Melissa Elliott from Philadelphia. **Photos by John Lien, Coalition for Peace Action.**



Mohammed Malik

NWTRCC was among those groups with literature tables and a presence at the June 24-25 conference "Faithful Witness in a Time of Endless War: Drone Warfare and God's Call to Peacemaking" in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Among other things, it turned out to be an excellent opportunity to meet other war tax resisters. The conference was initiated the Princeton, New Jersey, based Coalition for Peace Action's Interfaith Network on Drone Warfare and director Rev. Bob Moore, who has maintained a peace tax fund for decades. Other organizers of the event included our many friends who are active with 1040 for Peace, including H.A. Penner, Titus and Linda Peachey, John Stoner, and Daniel Riehl. Speakers included Christian activist Shane Claiborne of The Simple Way community in Philadelphia, who has written about his personal war tax resistance. Shane's talk, "The Holy Mischief of our Faithful Witness," was filled with examples of creative direct actions, especially in the low income neighborhood where he lives. Another speaker, Mohammed Malik, talked about his process of careful outreach into diverse communities and developing what he calls "intersectional organizing," as he tries to connect antiwar activism with anti-racism movements. He encouraged peace activists to pay attention to and work against Islamophobia, which is a key to ending wars in the Middle East. Bob Smith of Brandywine Peace Community, a NWTRCC affiliate, coordinated the vigil at the end of the conference at the Drone Warfare Command Center at Horsham. You can read more about the conference and see more photos on the NWTRCC blog, *nwtrcc.org/2016/06/29/creative*, or ask for a copy from the office.

Upcoming Events

Join war tax resisters or look for NWTRCC literature at any of these upcoming events. Please contact the NWTRCC office at *(800) 269-7464*, *nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org*, if you would like to table for NWTRCC or meet up with other resisters. See a list of events at *tiny.cc/nwtrcc*.

- **Veterans For Peace 31st Annual Convention,** Aug. 11–15, Clark Kerr Campus of UC Berkeley, California, *vfpnationalconvention.org*
- **Seattle Anarchist Bookfair,** Aug. 20, 10am – 6pm, Washington Hall, 153 14th Ave., *seattleanarchistbookfair.net*
- **Cannabis Festival,** Starks, Maine Aug. 20–21, *harryshill.net*
- **Campaign Nonviolence Action Week,** Sept. 18–25, *paceebene.org/programs/campaign-nonviolence*
- **Shut Down School of the Americas Border Actions,** Oct. 7–10, US-Mexican Border, Nogales, Arizona, *soaw.org/border*
- **2016 Maine Peace Walk: Stop the War$ on Mother Earth,** Oct. 8–22, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, PO Box 652, Brunswick, Maine 04011, (207) 443-9502, *space4peace.org*

Tabling Is Fun!

New York activist Mike Levinson, left, and David Waters from Alabama, staffed the NWTRCC table at the NYC Anarchist Bookfair just before tax day in April. A steady stream of visitors took literature and asked questions. **Photo by Ruth Benn.**

November War Tax Resistance Gathering

Mark your calendar for the November 4-6, 2016, gathering. The location is not decided as yet, so watch this newsletter and our website for details. You can help us get ahead on planning for gatherings by letting us know about any low-cost conference or retreat centers or any venues with room for a meeting for 30-50 people and some low cost housing. Please call the NWTRCC office with any ideas, *(800) 269-7464*. Thanks.

Conscience Canada

By Eric Unger and Kelly Krauter

Conscience Canada (CC) is a candle that flickers in the storm, never quite going out. For us, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the event at which the board tries to meet face-to-face with as many national supporters as are willing to make this event a priority. This year's AGM featured an address by Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, author of the book *I Shall Not Hate*, a story of indescribable personal loss and a determination not to respond in kind against those responsible. Abuelaish's presentation was heard by an attentive full house.

One of CC's longest serving board members, Don Woodside, chose to retire from the board this year after 30 years of involvement. Over the years Don used his peacemaking and peace-inspiring energies to keep CC moving forward. His ability to lead the board, and consequently the entire organization, through all the intricacies of legislation concerning Canada's new Not For Profit Corporations Act, was of immense help in making sure that Conscience Canada's national status and bylaws were up-to-date. He will be missed.

The efforts of CC to have our government recognize our mandate for a peace tax option were aided over the past year by the hard work of two young intern volunteers, Kelly Krauter and Emily Mininger. As volunteer assistants, these women shared their technological skills and experience with board members, many of whom predate the digital age and whose talents are often expressed in other areas.

Conscience Canada's flame has flickered for decades, mostly on the west coast and in southern Ontario, but now and then embers flicker to life in central Canada as well. For the past two years, the organization has sponsored a coffee break at the Canadian School of Peacebuilding (CSOP). This peace initiative at Canadian Mennonite University provides a two-week opportunity for peace-builders from many countries to explore the possibilities for nonviolent responses to violence in a hurting world. Participants in CSOP have an opportunity to meet a CC representative and discover, possibly for the first time, that some Canadians are indeed willing to withhold the military portion of their taxes and that many more Canadians support a federal peace fund.

This summer Conscience Canada will participate in the World Social Forum in Montréal in order to raise awareness of its Peace Tax Form. We've proposed a workshop to discuss strategies of resistance to militarisation, including the refusal to pay war taxes. Participants will be invited to share experiences, critique existing tactics and propose ideas for reinvigorating the movement. Readers of this newsletter are invited to meet us there: World Social Forum, August 9-14, Montreal, *fsm2016.org/en*. ●

Eric Unger is a board member of Conscience Canada and Kelly Krauter is a volunteer intern. For more information, contact: Conscience Canada, 8 Chandos Dr., Kitchener, ON N2A 3C2, (250) 537-5251, consciencecanada.ca.

Journey continued from page 8

antiwar movement based in Los Angeles. After moving to San Francisco in 1970, I joined marches, encouraged young men to avoid the draft, and helped set up safe houses. After the mandatory draft was ended and the U.S. exited Viet Nam, I began a 16-month sojourn across Western Europe and the Middle East. It was then I began to see myself as an integral part of the world beyond nationalism.

I returned to the U.S., realizing work was "here, not out there." I followed my personal commitment to low income lifestyle and devoted time, labor, heart, and thoughts to world peace. The peace movement of the early 1970s inspired me to not just work ***against*** what we didn't like but ***towards*** what we wanted in the world around us. What a journey that has been.

I became an organic farmer and traded my vegetables until I was asked to raise and supply organic produce for a few popular local restaurants. Farming came naturally to me as my grandfather was a chili farmer in New Mexico, and I continue to explore permaculture on a 23-acre land project. After having my two daughters by home birth, I became a midwife and helped bring over 100 new lives into the world. After three years of being on call 24 hours a day, I became a certified massage therapist and continue this practice today, between many volunteer commitments. As a self-employed worker I found I could easily divert my small income to life-giving tasks, including a focus on women's rights that led to being a delegate to the 1995 UN world conference on women in Beijing and work with the Women's Intercultural Network, connecting women and girls globally. This led to several trips into war zones in Afghanistan, East Africa, Ecuador, Palestine and South Korea, often as a delegate exploring root causes of conflicts — with costs paid for by US State Department. Funny!

To this day I have never filed or paid income taxes. Once for a short period of time I was receiving letters from IRS, but just returned them unopened. Once, with a large group of friends around, the postman was attempting to deliver a letter from IRS that I refused to sign for.

I joined Northern California War Tax Resistance in the mid-1980s and spoke at a WTR conference in Berkeley in 1991 on a panel about tax diversion lifestyles. I was the only panelist who had children and lived a fairly public life, but I am not "out" as a war tax resister. I found long ago that it makes most folks nervous. At that conference I met Juanita Nelson, who said I was only doing half my work; until I could share my journey my work was only half done. I have spoken out at peace rallies, at United Nations conferences, but WTR is not "my title" on panels and presentations. I say I have devoted my life to human rights work, social justice issues, and creating a dream that does not yet exist on this earth. ●

Charlie Toledo is Director of the Suscol Intertribal Council, suscolcouncil.org*, and serves as a board member or volunteer for a long list of other organizations. Regarding this profile she said, "So there is my story with lots of details left out. Thanks for opportunity to do my whole work."*

National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee
P.O. Box 150553, Brooklyn, New York 11215
(800) 269-7464 · (718) 768-3420
www.nwtrcc.org

Please Note:
If there is a (red) circle around your address label, this is the last issue of *More Than a Paycheck* on your subscription. Send in a renewal ASAP!

PROFILE

An Adventurous Journey

By Charlie Toledo, Napa County, California

I am an "assimilated" Indian supporting Northern California Native issues in Napa County, about 50 miles north of San Francisco, where I have lived since 1972. It's a lovely place to have my home and family! I am a masseuse and hypnotherapist (since 1986) with a background in home births and organic gardening. In 1992 I was asked to reorganize Suscol Intertribal Council a community based organization focused on protecting Human Rights for Indigenous peoples of North America and preserving indigenous culture. Since 1995, I've been involved in international human rights and water and land issues locally and globally. My life vision was never to feed into the military-industrial complex.

Charlie Toledo

As a young child I realized I was a dream walker able to move between the worlds of waking and dream states. This gift enables me to work beyond the physical world in the etheric and astral planes. Since my heritage as a mixed blood (Spanish-Indian) female was culturally sensitive, my family respected my intuitive gifts and allowed me to explore this within the household, but not outside the home or ever to discuss it with strangers. Just recently I have begun to talk about this side of myself in public arenas, as it has become a more broadly accepted vocabulary. My dreams have guided me, my friends, my clients in many decisions and adventures.

Born as the fourth child and second twin in a sibling group of ten has shaped my identity in a group or "us consciousness." I grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in an adobe house that my father and uncles constructed. Our family moved to Orange County, California, in 1958, fulfilling my parents' dream to live by the ocean, as well as being more urbanized and mainstream.

I knew I was different from most folks around me by the time I was 11 years old. I'm glad I didn't wait for society to catch up with me. As a dream walker since a very young age I was able to discern an individuated path towards the common good and towards higher evolution. I attended a Catholic High School with teachers who taught us to question the status quo and come to "faith" via intellect rather than blindly.

It was then, in 1968, that I began to understand that the U.S. government's actions in Viet Nam were part of this "military-industrial complex." I put in a lot of thought about not feeding this monster and decided then I would ***work not just pray*** for peace. I began to support draft resisters and became a draft counselor after a training by the

continued on page 7