

# **The Last Coordinator Report from Ruth Benn!**

**Nov. 2017 – May 2018**

## **Administration/Transition:**

- Winding up with Sam (boo hoo) at the end of 2017. Sam copied all her files and contacts and sent them on a flash drive to me; she wrote up a summary of the experience as a letter to the new coordinator mostly.
- Sam connected us to Sarah Mueller, so we went through that modified hiring process for the social media job. Erica and I got Sarah started on the social media work during the week of Feb. 12 and we keep in touch regularly and have monthly consultant calls. She puts in 5 hours/week per our Nov. meeting decisions.
- Justin Becker helped with office stuff about 4 hours/week, with his last day last week. He's finishing school been remains on the AdComm (graduating just at the time of our LA meeting).
- Thanks to Bill Glassmire for coordinating the Hiring Committee and keeping after us to keep the process moving. I posted job ads on our site, in our newsletter, and we emailed it to organizations in our network to advertise/circulate. We paid for Idealist.org listings. I participated in interviews, etc. as a committee member.
- Transitioning newsletter/lit with Erica, and she took over with the April/May newsletter.

## **Finances/Fundraising**

- Producing the November fund appeal & insert – Peter Smith jumped in when Plan A fell thru and wrote a good letter. Created the insert, stuffing, stamping, etc. with help from Justin and volunteers here.
- Produced February transition fund appeal, written by Bill Glassmire and signed by him and Cathy Deppe for hiring committee. Enclosed tax day form and LA meeting form. This appeal did really well! It may cut into the May appeal but it well exceeded our \$3,000 budget for income, which is not to say we won't need at least that to move the office, so thanks to everyone who gave (and thanks have been sent out to donors, by the way).
- Producing finance report for AdComm and this meeting. Trying to clear up some of my own weird entries in QuickBooks so that things will be pretty much in order for Lincoln to take over. Once again we are happy to report that craigslist gave us a \$25,000 grant so that will help ease the way through the transition also.
- The usual making deposits, bank reconciliation, paying bills, etc. NWTRCC has been in good shape as far as being able to pay bills and such on time. Lincoln and I had various communications about moving the bank account, what is needed to open a new one, and finding the documents needed for him to open a new account.

## **Information/Referral/Counseling:**

- Arranging the first-ever counseling update call Jan. 30, which seemed to be pretty successful and attracted a few folks we haven't talked to in ages. The sense was to do the calls quarterly, and we did a second on April 24 with fewer people on but rather a later reminder from me. Next one will be July 30 then Oct. 30.
- Updated the counselors' packet, which some had asked for at the counselor session after the November meeting. Sent it out to those who had asked.
- Tracking changes with the tax overhaul bill; write-ups for the newsletter & blog and updating flyers and literature as things have gotten clearer – or are just getting clearer.
- Dave Gross updated Practical #5 in light of the tax overhaul and the standard deduction changes, and I did some other updates to #1, #6 and #7 for reprinting.

## **Literature/Newsletter:**

- Updated the peace tax form and reprinted and posted online. Seems quite a few people find that online. I think we should push it more. People like simple forms. Met and had many back and forths with a young artist here to create the new divest/invest logo. It's always a bumpy process but we are using it on the website and elsewhere.
- Nov/Dec, Jan/Feb, March/April newsletters written, edited, produced (desktop publishing by Rick), and the usual getting to Lakeside for printing & their mailing, plus mailing out bulk copies from office.

- Filling lit orders, including to Robert for the symposium at Koinonia Farm in Georgia, part of the Poor People's Campaign. A good number of tax day orders for the "lit kit" and a lot of lit to Ginny for Maine.

### **Network and Meetings:**

- Post-November Amherst gathering and meeting - getting the minutes, photos and report done and posted online and mailed to the people who still get it by mail. Follow up thanks yous, stray bills, and such. Followed up with New England organizers about getting the attendance list out as it had fallen thru the cracks.
- Regular calls with Cathy and others for the LA meeting. Helping outline the schedule and logistics and posting on our website. Flyer went out in the Transition appeal mailing to our whole list, plus other email notices to the network and such. A bit behind on getting materials ready well before the meeting (as you can tell!)
- Justin called various groups in the network to find out about tax day actions and got some responses. Posted pre-tax day action info on website et.
- Arranged the between-meeting AdComm call March 7, and have begun a search for a Nov. 2018 meeting location in hopes that can be decided at the May meeting.
- Sent out nomination letters to AdComm nominees, plus follow-up after little response. Of the 7 nominated we had 2 accept, as you see. Another nominee or two could be asked next year but declined this time.

### **Outreach/Actions:**

- Restarted the Outreach Committee calls that Sam had coordinated. The committee is still working on its focus but is continuing the calls. Members who have been on recent calls are: Chrissy, Erica, Anne, Cathy, Bill G, Daniel W, Lincoln and myself. Other members include Ginny, Coleman and Ed Agro. Meetings are by conference call and the next one is Monday, May 21, 8 PM EST, if you are interested....
- It was a rather slow tax season as far as calls/requests/media calls to the office, but a good number of groups did do actions. Many reports and photos are posted at [nwtrcc.org/programs-events/tax-day/tax-day-reports-2018](http://nwtrcc.org/programs-events/tax-day/tax-day-reports-2018). We did not get a big article like the *Guardian* last year, so attention was more at the local level or the more progressive press/media outlets. There were some good interviews, which you can find under the Media menu on our website.

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I guess that's enough of that. It's all been quite busy and I have a lot of clean up and organizing to do in order to close things out here in Brooklyn. I am expecting it might take until the end of May. Lincoln will be here May 14-17, so I'll be trying to get things in order for our time together. He'll move the office at that time and I'll try to finish up various things here. I would like to complete some publications updates and I have left dangling and write up a counseling fact sheet about student debt in the coming months. In general, I will of course still be involved. Ed and I have both done a lot of the publications work and want to continue to offer help with that. We will also continue to do much of the counseling for WRL national and be active locally with NYC WRL.

I'm not even sure what to say about how it *feels* to be leaving this position. I have loved the work and the variety of tasks involved, from being a media spokesperson to stuffing envelopes. I enjoy the independence of it and working at home, but also appreciate being in a position to hear so much about activism around the county – both war tax resistance and the many other efforts for a better world that our contacts are involved in. It helps to keep one's hope up. The gatherings have all been great, and I have always enjoyed every place we have met – each one offers something special. Thanks to Erica for that nice photo spread in her recent blog. So I am a bit sad to let it go but also ready I think. My mind is ticking about what I will do with the new space in our house and the new space of time and other work that I can do to keep enough money coming in. And I'm very glad to be leaving NWTRCC with a good team in place – Erica and Sarah with Lincoln coming on. That makes it easier to let go knowing NWTRCC is in good hands.

*Thank you all for all you do for NWTRCC and all those volunteer hours that really have kept this network alive for 35 years! I's say I feel pretty good all around about my 15 years of it ☺.*

**NWTRCC's new address: PO Box 5616, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53205. The 800 number will not change.**