

More Than a Paycheck REFUSING to PAY for WAR

April/May 2015



32 Years of Resistance

Juanita Morrow Nelson

August 17, 1923 – March 9, 2015

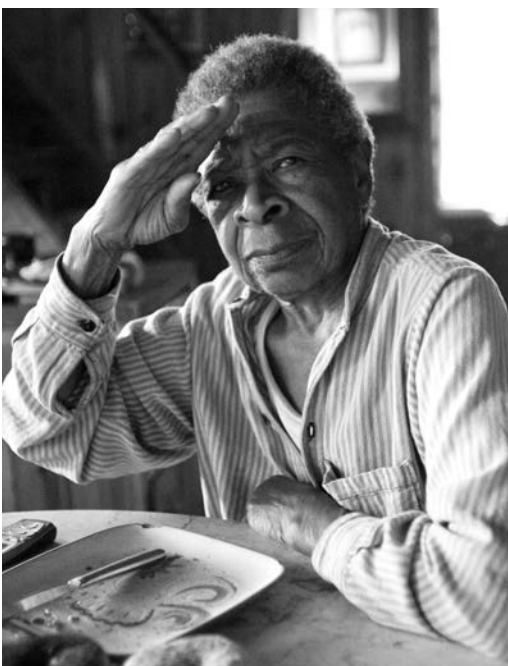
Juanita Nelson died on March 9 in Greenfield, Massachusetts, following a period of declining health. Since 2012, she had lived with friends Eveline MacDougall, Ellie Kastanopoulos and, during the last couple years, in the home of Betsy Corner, Randy Kehler, and Kip Moeller. She is survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Juanita Morrow was born in Cleveland and graduated from Central High School in 1941. She attended Howard University in Washington, D.C., where she became active with civil rights struggles. She shifted her studies to journalism at Western Reserve University. That decision led to her meeting with Wally Nelson when she interviewed him for a story about conditions in the jail where he was awaiting trial as a conscientious objector. Juanita authored many articles and poems (some linked at nwtrcc.org). She and Wally helped found the Valley Community Land Trust, Pioneer Valley War Tax Resisters, and the Greenfield Farmers' Market. Juanita hatched the idea for the Free Harvest Supper, which has become a major community event in Greenfield each August. Here's more about her war tax resistance from Juanita herself, followed by a few remembrances:

"I became a dedicated war tax refuser in 1948, the year Wally Nelson and I became partners. I could not support the military when Wally had just spent over three years in prison for saying No to that form of organized crime. We joined the newly formed Peacemakers, which had as a major tenet nonpayment of federal taxes.

I found part-time jobs which paid the maximum nontaxable income. Wally did odd jobs with no withholding. I was therefore able

continued on page 3 ➞



Juanita at home on Woolman Hill, 2010. Photo by Ed Hedemann.



Juanita arrested during the series of actions to reverse the Colrain house seizure, June 1993. Photo by Diana Davies.



Tax day 2014, Tucson.
Photo courtesy of The Nuclear Resister.

Tax Day Actions

War tax resisters head out once again, on or before Wednesday, April 15, to call for a cut off of taxes for war. A growing list is at nwtrcc.org/TaxDayOrganizing.php. We'll keep adding to the website list through April 14, and then we'll post your photos and reports. Tax day is also the Global Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS), and you can find an action list and resources at demilitarize.org.

Tucson, Arizona — Funds for Peace, Not War! vigil, Tuesday, April 14, 7 am - 8 am, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. Info: (520) 323-8697.

Bay Area, California — Leafleting at BART stations during the morning rush, 7 am - 9 am. See demilitarize.org or contact AFSC-San Francisco (415) 565-0201 x12.

continued on page 4 ➞

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 militarization 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



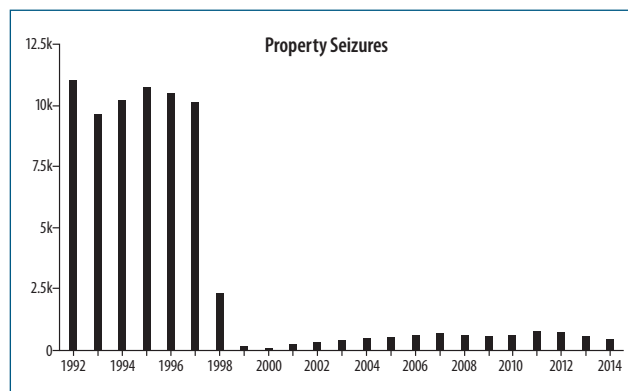
Counseling Notes

Royalties

A longtime war tax resister is trying to calm her publisher because they have received IRS levies for her royalty income on books she has written. It's not a lot of money annually, and the IRS has collected from bank accounts and other places in the past. The resister was hoping she could "redirect" the IRS elsewhere and remove the pressure that her publisher is feeling. It could be a random levy from the IRS, but it feels more like another angle for them to pressure her to pay up. In NWTRCC's *Practical #4, Self-Employment*, there is a section for artists, musicians, craftspeople and creative writers that notes the vulnerability of royalty payments, which are reported on 1099s at the low threshold of \$10. Like a standing salary levy, once the IRS has found that source of income they are unlikely to let go until they get what they want. Selling art directly to consumers or selling the rights to one buyer would be one way to avoid royalties. If readers have similar experience or ideas on dealing with publishers, please contact the NWTRCC office.

Property Seizures

People considering WTR worry about property seizures. This chart created by David Gross from figures in the IRS's 2014 *Data Book* shows the trend for all federal tax debts. A war tax resistance version would go to zero. The last property seizure in our network was in 1999.



Phone Tax Tangles

After a battle of a few years, one tenacious telephone excise tax resister finally got his phone company, Frontier, to credit him for resisted federal tax and clear the past due on his account. He sent a long letter to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the company about his resistance from 2008 on, detailing the inconsistent responses from company employees, general frustration at having the federal tax added as past due with fees accruing — and a general rant at the company's poor service in other ways! This finally led to an agreeable solution after a brief cut-off of his phone service. Frontier is the only choice for local, landline service in this area. Oddly, during his years of sending a "why I'm not paying the excise tax" card to the company with each payment, occasionally someone at the company would send his cards to NWTRCC. We collected quite a pile, which he then used to show CEO that he had been reporting his refusal with each bill's payment.

continued on page 5 ➞

Many Thanks

We are very grateful for the generous grant from **craigslist Charitable Fund**, which allows us to produce more outreach materials, continue our social media consultant position, offer more free literature to activists to use locally, and just generally helps us stay alive. Thank you!

Affiliate fees are a fundamental part of NWTRCC's durability. We are grateful for recent dues payments from:

War Resisters League National Office

War Tax Resisters Penalty Fund

and to all of the individuals who have donated in the last couple months!

Network Updates

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

Don't forget, you can find us on
Facebook · Twitter · YouTube · Pinterest
and join our discussion listserve
Click on the icons at nwtrcc.org



ABOVE: Juanita and Wally with others in front of the IRS office in Greenfield, Massachusetts, in the 1980s. The office has since closed — thanks to their activism?!

Photo courtesy of The Recorder, Greenfield, MA.

RIGHT: Wally and Juanita, 1991.

Photo by Ed Hedemann.



Juanita Nelson continued from page 1

to claim him as a dependent, permitting me to earn \$50 a week at that time.

Because my employers reported my income, the IRS finally caught up with me after 11 years. I was arrested in only my terry cloth bathrobe for refusing to give information (IRS agents sometimes keep early hours).

On one of my odd jobs — artists' model at the Cincinnati Art Museum — four dollars were mistakenly turned over to the IRS. I rather regretted that, but decided not to worry about it. Makes a good story.

Wally and I left city living in 1970, part of an effort to lessen dependence on a violent society. We spent over three years in a village of 500 in northern New Mexico with electricity as our only modern convenience. In 1974, we moved to Woolman Hill, a Quaker Conference Center in Western Massachusetts, built a 900-square-foot home with most of the material coming from a small house we dismantled.

We grow most of our own food, cook and heat with wood, draw water hand over hand from a too deep well, have only two propane gas lights, and probably the only certified outhouse in Franklin County."

Wally died at age 93 in 2002, and Juanita continued in much the same way until 2012. "I manage with lots of help from friends much younger."

Appreciations

When I was 18 and first met Wally and Nita Nelson, I was impressed by their integration of lifestyle and politics. The personal is political. It's reflected through your relationships with your parents, children, cops, whatever. Since many of my activist friends from high school were already burnt out, these "old people" with

their philosophical and personal consistency were a guiding light.

Nita was always thinking about economics on this personal level. She felt that the power dynamics that enabled a few people to have more than they needed, while most have not enough, creates much of the violence in the world. Typically she took this issue down to the personal. I remember her once commentating in a small group that most of us are more willing to disclose the details of our sexual lives than to talk frankly about our personal finances. Nita grew up in a poor family, led by her mother and aunts in Cleveland during the depression. She talked about how oblivious they were to the depression because they were always so poor. They simply shared whatever they had and relied on each other. That was her model of a just, nonviolent world.

—Bob Bady, Brattleboro, Vermont

I knew Juanita and Wally as highly valued friends and mentors since 1959, when I first met them at Peacemakers gatherings in Cincinnati. Among all the fine humans I have had the good fortune to know in a long life of social justice activism, they stood out among those of the very highest integrity and moral consistency in personal and public life. They had great influence on me at two important junctures in my life:

I was already committed to the idea of war tax refusal before I met them (under the influence of Milton Mayer and Ammon Hennacy), but it was not until 1960, inspired by the example of Roseanna Robinson who had gotten her whole philosophy of war tax refusal and prison resistance from her friends Juanita and Wally, that I decisively acted to refuse payment of all federal income tax claims, to stop filing tax returns, and to effectively prevent collection of any claimed amounts, practices I have followed for the 55 years since then.

Again, in the early nineties, when I visited their simple homestead and market garden in Deerfield, Massachusetts, the example of their

continued on page 7 ➞

Tax Resistance Ideas and Actions

Tax Day 2015 Actions continued from page 1

Dubuque, Iowa — Citizens' Tax Moratorium. Vigil and leafleting, Federal Building, 6th and Locust on April 13 - 15, 11 am - Noon. Info: (563) 583-2586.

Maine — Leafleting in Belfast, Brunswick, and wherever you are. Connections and flyers from Resources for Organizing and Social Change, (207-525-7776).

St. Louis, Missouri — Annual Tax Day Action with Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and Peace Economy Project-Vets for Peace, April 15, Noon - 2:00 pm, County Center, 4544 Lemay Ferry Rd. Info: (314) 862-5735.

New York City — Leaflet and vigil with NYC WRL, Granny Peace Brigade, Pax Christi Metro NY, NYC WTRs, April 15, Noon - 1. Manhattan IRS, 290 Broadway. Info: (718) 768-7306.

Asheville, North Carolina — Annual tax day leafleting and vigil with banners, April 15, midday. Info: (828) 675-5448.

Greensboro, North Carolina — Paying for Peace NOT War: Conscientious Objection to Paying Taxes for War, April 13, 6:30 p.m., Deep Roots Market, 600 N. Eugene St. Video and discussion. Free. Info: danielwoodham@yahoo.com.

Eugene, Oregon — Carrying on a 25-year tradition! Penny poll, leafleting, rally, tax redirection announcement. Downtown Post Office, April 15, 11 am - 3 pm. Info: (541) 485-1755.

Portland, Oregon — Redirection Ceremony, April 13, 4 pm - 6 pm, Augustana Lutheran Church, 2710 NE. 14th (15th and Knott). Burma shave style signs on bridges, April 15, 7:30 am. Meet at Fischels, Grand and Burnside. Info: (503) 249-6343.

Philadelphia — Leafleting, penny poll, tabling at the Train Station with Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, April 15. For more details: sylmetz@juno.com.

Brattleboro, Vermont — Music, leafleting, etc., with Pioneer Valley WTR. Brattleboro Post Office, April 15, 10 am - 2 pm. Info: (802) 387-2798.

Seattle, Washington — Leafleting at 3rd and Union, April 15, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm, with Veterans for Peace Chapter 92. Info: (206) 499-0226.

Milwaukee — Milwaukee War Tax Resistance & Casa Maria Catholic Worker will hold signs on the Brown Street bridge, April 15, 8 am - 9 am. Info: (414) 344-5745.

See nwtrcc.org/TaxDayOrganizing.php for more. Email your info and reports to nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org or call (800) 269-7464.

Julia Butterfly Hill Update



Julia Hill at a New York event in 2010.
Photo by Greg Edge.

"i am going on 10 years of active redirection. It has been a challenging path to walk, but one that is so very worth it! For every new news article that comes out about our taxes in the US going towards violence against the Earth and all her beings, i know that my resistance and the resulting challenges have totally been worth it. i know i am far from perfect and far from culpability in the violence perpetuated, but i do all i can to lessen my negative impact and to strengthen my positive impact. i am humbled and blessed to be part of such a big and long movement of change makers, resisters, and tax-redirectors."

— by email, January 28, 2015

In The News

"26 Weekends at Columbia County Jail" in the March *Friends Journal* is the first of a two-part article subtitled "The Journal of a Convicted Quaker War Tax Resister." Author Joseph Olejak was sentenced to those weekends in jail after a plea agreement following an IRS criminal investigation of his tax resistance for 1994-2008. An article by him and about his case was in the April/May 2014 issue of this newsletter. There is also a video interview with Joseph accompanying the article online at friendsjournal.org.



Heather Snow and Greg Reagle joined the Spring Rising Anti-War Intervention in Washington, DC, on March 21. Events over the 4-day "Rising" were organized by Cindy Sheehan, the Answer Coalition, World Can't Wait, and other groups to mark the 12-year anniversary of the start of the Iraq War and demand an end to endless war. Photo by Ruth Benn.

Actors Promote Tax Resistance

Out of England comes some surprising news. In February, Greg Wise, the actor married to Emma Thompson, announced that he and his wife will refuse to pay tax until those involved in the HSBC tax avoidance scandal go to prison. Wise spoke of his anger at HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the bank after details of how HSBC's

continued on next page ⑦

Tax Resistance Ideas and Actions

Swiss bank had helped some customers dodge taxes. HMRC found more than 1,000 tax avoiders among almost 7,000 UK clients. Only one individual has been prosecuted. Wise said, "We're going to get a load of us together. A movement. They can't send everyone to prison. But we'll go to prison if necessary."

Redirection to Israeli COs

Peacemakers in the U.S. seeking to channel their income tax money away from expressions of war can support peacemakers in Israel – young adults whose consciences prohibit them from taking part in military activity. This year, participants in the Mennonite Central Committee's "Turning toward peace" program can redirect to New Profile. Based in Israel, New Profile provides educational materials and counseling to young people seeking to avoid military service, among them conscientious objectors, and supports those who go to prison because of their choice. For more information see mcc.org/learn/more/war-taxes.

Counseling Notes

continued from page 2

A Friend at Forbes

Peter Reilly blogs on tax issues for *Forbes Magazine*, not usually a place one expects to read about war tax resistance. In recent years he has written sympathetically on the topic after finding court documents that relate to conscientious objection cases online. On March 23, Reilly posted his second piece on Elizabeth Boardman's case in California, "Ninth Circuit Rules Against War Tax Resister." Use that title and "Forbes" in a search, and you'll find it online. Our next issue will include Elizabeth's own story of her effort to gain allowance from the government for war tax resisters.

Support war tax resisters collected on by the IRS!

The War Tax Resisters' Penalty Fund shares the burden of the penalties and interest seized by the IRS from war tax resisters. Sharing the costs among many, paying less than \$30 each, helps make continued resistance possible.

For more information see our website:

www.wtrpf.org

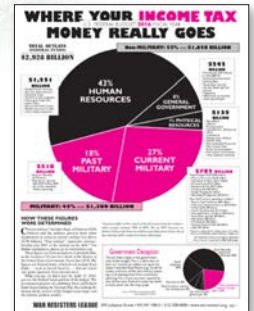
Or contact us by mail at
WTRPF, 1036 N. Niles Ave.,
South Bend, IN 46617

Paid Advertisement

Resources

Order Your Pie Charts Now!

Enclosed in this newsletter is the latest "Where Your Income Taxes Really Go" flyer, produced by War Resisters League (WRL) each year and based on the budget proposed by the President. Congress wrangles over the numbers and priorities and is supposed to pass a budget for the start of the October 1 federal fiscal year. NWTRCC stocks some flyers and can fill small orders, but it is best to order quantities from WRL's online store at warresisters.org or contact them for prices, wrl@warresisters.org or (212) 228-0450.



Podcast #4: Shane Claiborne

NWTRCC's Social Media Consultant, Erica Weiland, interviewed author and founder of the Simple Way community in Philadelphia, Shane Claiborne, for NWTRCC's Podcast #4. Find the link to it on our blog, nwtrcc.org/blog/2015/03/podcast-4-talking-with-shane-claiborne, or through the audio-visual links on our website.

Practical Series Updated

Slowly but surely we are updating all of our "Practical War Tax Resistance" booklets. Newly printed versions of #1 – #4 are available now, and #5 and #6 should be back from the printer shortly after you read this. #7 will be ready soon. If you have old copies of these booklets, please call the office for the updated versions. There are a significant number of changes, especially because of the Affordable Care Act. The Practicals are free to read or download on our website, or, #1–3, 75 cents each; #4–7, \$1 each

#1: Controlling Withholding · #2: To File Or Not To File

#3: How To Resist Collection · #4: Self-Employment

#5: Low Income/Simple Living · #6: Organizational Resistance

#7: Aging and War Tax Resistance

Always Useful

Free outreach cards — as long as you promise to hand them out! Mini pie chart with text on back, 3" x 4". "We only have one earth" graphic and short text about war and environment, 4" x 6" with a blank back.

Death and Taxes DVD, 30 minutes. Sliding scale, \$10–\$20 each postpaid.

Teaching Kit: "Thoreau and his Heirs: The History and Legacy of Thoreau's Civil Disobedience." \$30 postpaid or free online. Includes DVD, Thoreau's essay, questions for students, and select list of historic civil disobedience actions.

Brochures: "Why and How to Refuse to Pay for War"; "Why Isn't Everyone Who's For Peace A War Tax Resister?"; "Refusing the Federal Telephone Tax"; "Are You Praying for Peace But Still Paying for War?" 20 cents each

Book: *War Tax Resistance: A Guide to Withholding Your Support from the Military*, 144 page book with annual update. \$10 each plus \$5.50 first class postage

To order, send a check made out to NWTRCC to PO Box 150553, Brooklyn, NY 11215, or pay online through Paypal (use the comment section to list your order or send an email).

Call (800) 269-7464 with questions or for a resource list by mail.

Tax Day on Social Media

I'm gearing up for the busiest Tax Day season I've had on social media yet. You can support these efforts by sharing the messages I'm creating, and by creating your own text, videos, photos, and images, and sharing them. If you're on Twitter, Facebook, or Pinterest, go to the NWTRCC website and click the social media icons (or the blog link) in the left-side navigation. Retweet, share, pin, link to, and reblog whatever you like! In addition, on Facebook, you can send a friend request to War Tax Resister and search for the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee page to find even more posts, videos, and photos.

I've also created a short video, "Letters from War Tax Resisters," with the help of several folks in our network. Click on the YouTube icon to go to our YouTube channel and watch the video, then share it with folks on social media or email or snail mail or however you want.

Help make Tax Day successful this year - use your social media accounts to spread our message! Contact me with questions or contributions at wartaxresister@nwtrcc.org.

— Erica Weiland, Social Media Consultant

Outreach and Tabling

- NWTRCC was accepted as an ally to the US Social Forum, and we expect to have a presence at each of the upcoming gatherings: June 24 – 27 in San Jose, California; June 25 – 28 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and June 24 – 28 in Jackson, Mississippi. See ussocialforum.net for details as planning develops. If you are interested in participating with other war tax resisters or helping with outreach, please contact the NWTRCC office, nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org or (800) 269-7464.
- Naomi Paz Greenberg sent an excited report after attending the Jewish Voice for Peace membership conference in Baltimore over the weekend

of March 13-15. She was able to put out conscientious war tax resistance literature for the crowd of 600 attendees. Her report is linked on our "Latest News" page at nwtrcc.org, or ask for a copy by mail.

- Nathanael Whitworth took war tax resistance literature to the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) conference on March 21. His display of free brochures, cards, and flyers was much reduced by the end of the day. PJALS has been on the NWTRCC network list for many years, and we're glad for some renewed outreach in Eastern Washington.



Father John Dear engages in conversation with Chelsea Risser, Eliana Neufeld Basinger and Naomi Gross, Goshen College members of the Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship (IPF). Dear spoke at Hesston College's conference, "Overcoming Evil: Ordinary People Making a Difference," and challenged participants to reclaim nonviolent action as a peacemaking tool, saying, "Noncooperation with evil is as important as doing good." Attendees included IPF students from Mennonite colleges and universities in Bluffton, Ohio, Goshen, Indiana, Hesston and North Newton, Kansas.

He called each person to be a prophet for peace; to work to close the CIA and SOA, house the homeless, grant reparations to Iraq and Afghanistan, work for peace for Palestinians and Israelis, end the death penalty, stop fracking, abolish nuclear weapons and redirect the trillions of dollars spent on war to feed and educate everyone. Heartland Peace Tax group tabled with NWTRCC newsletters and palm cards. Responses included, "This is what we need to do."

— Photo and text by Susan Miller

Dollars • Drones • Destruction Your Money, Your Choice

National War Tax Resistance Gathering and Coordinating Committee Meeting

May 1-3, 2015

Casa Maria House, 1131 N. 21st St, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

We'll start May Day evening with a rousing chorus of labor songs, followed on Saturday by workshops on war tax resistance for beginners and current resisters, a tour of an urban garden, social media skill-sharing, learning about the Afghan Peace Volunteers, a panel on types of resistance — plus good food, socializing, and general fun. Join us for one session or the whole weekend. If you cannot be in Milwaukee, watch our website for "virtual" connections to some sessions.

For registration form and more information see nwtrcc.org/meetings.php, or contact NWTRCC for a brochure, (800) 269-7464.

Remembrance

Dirk Panhuis, 73, died near his home in Belgium in February after a battle with leukemia. He served as Secretary of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) from 1996–2013, and his volunteer work ensured the group's survival. NWTRCC activists who attended any of the international conferences on WTR and peace tax campaigns met Dirk. Larry Rosenwald is one. He says: "Dirk was such an impressive man, effortlessly polyglot, moving easily from fluent English to fluent Spanish, though neither was his native language; he was erudite, earnest, gracious, humble, and tenacious. He knew what his goals were and worked towards them tirelessly, and I admired and admire that even if, as sometimes happened, they were different from mine." See "Latest News" at nwtrcc.org for a longer notice.

what our needs are and where they are being distorted by the fatal consumerist conditioning. We have always tried to discern carefully and lovingly so that together we can hopefully live on a more globally sustainable standard of income."

Mary adds, "It's that Quaker thing about live simply so that others can simply live. In that sense low income war tax resistance is part of the bigger philosophy. We already have such huge footprints on the planet that we should make them a little smaller."

It's not without its complications though. In looking for ways to earn money, Mary has had a variety of traditional jobs that involve tax reporting. "I was just not skilled at painting or landscaping or the things that people could do under the table. Sometimes employers want to give you more or less hours, so it affects your choices. You always need to see how much you are going to make and not make too much."

Also community members are aging and dealing with further limitations in ability to work or lack of qualifications for Social Security. "When you're 30 years old you don't think about aging issues, but now we do!" says Mary. "It may be one discussion our community didn't have in very much depth when we were all younger and that could have been helpful. I don't know that it would change things a lot as far as how it ended up anyway, but maybe I would have felt less ignorant or less surprised when I started looking into how to apply for Social Security and Medicare."

Peter added, "We may need a more careful discernment of how we are doing as a community sparked by the different needs of an aging people, as we continue to care deeply for each other."

Bijou Community is in a military town. Colorado Springs is home to (or near) the US Air Force Academy, Peterson Air Force Base, Fort Carson, and Schriever Air Force Base. Bijou Community members have done hundreds of actions over the years at the bases, and they "banner" every week at busy downtown intersections. "We get a lot of chances to talk to soldiers and military supporters about why we are out there," says Peter. "At least they hear about another way of thinking."

Despite all her activism, Mary says she sometimes feels guilty about not broadcasting her war tax resistance. Hearing a discussion at a NWTRCC gathering about "how public are you" made her wonder about this. "It's not like I don't talk about it if it comes up, but I haven't been advertising it. Would I get into trouble if I was more public? I think the emphasis on redirection is good. The naysayers see that you are putting the money somewhere — not wanting to be an anti-tax person."

"We don't have much to be proud of as long as we still have war. We sure wish we could light fires more successfully under individual's bellies, but we persevere and try to find more creative ways of doing this," says Peter. "Living with kindred spirits — there's a lot of strength. It's battery charging for one's own life and vision verification. We have no excuse to be burned out!" ●

Juanita Nelson continued from page 3

radically honest and simple way of life deeply influenced my decision to settle on unused land in inner-city Nashville in 1997, starting the Nashville Greenlands community devoted to urban agriculture, simple sustainable living, and radical action of peace and social justice.

So many of the nonviolent radicals of my generation learned so much from Juanita and Wally.

— Karl Meyer, Nashville, Tennessee

...Once a week, I came to Deerfield and weeded, planted, hauled manure and pruned mostly with Juanita. While working and talking with her for eight or more hours each week, I discovered we shared many views: no god, no war, simplify, simplify, simplify. Her strategy was to tackle one act of increased simplicity every year, a practice I try to follow as well.

Juanita also shared her reading list with me. Two books included: *Interest and Inflation Free Money* by Margrit Kennedy and Representative John Lewis' book *Walking with the Wind*....

Juanita was an organizer and public speaker. She took every opportunity to talk with people who travelled from near and far to The Bean Patch. She spoke at universities, high schools and other venues. Her voice was strong, sure and elegant (a word she would probably dispute). She also brought together war tax resisters and those thinking about war tax resistance at monthly potlucks for years. When she found out I was moving to New Hampshire, she instructed me to do the same....

— Ginny Schneider, Henniker, New Hampshire
(find her full remembrance on the NWTRCC website)



Juanita and cell phone, 2008. Photo by Ed Hedemann.

"Why do you need all this?!" Juanita asked me. She was referring to the high-end camera equipment that I was using to photograph her and others more than 30 years ago at a NWTRCC conference in Boston. She was, of course, being true to her simple-living philosophy. Years later

when figuring out one's carbon footprint was all the rage, not surprisingly Juanita's turned out to be dramatically lower than that of her nearest "competitor" (though not zero, as one might think).

It was such that many friends used to kid her and Wally about their disdain for modern technology. As a prank, long-time friend Chuck Matthei (I think it was he) surreptitiously left a cellphone (though a non-working one) in their decidedly no frills cabin as a response to withering remarks she had made about never owning such a thing. Juanita with her life and with her resistance set a standard that showed what was possible. And, perhaps as importantly, she did it with humor.

— Ed Hedemann, Brooklyn, New York

I will always remember their garlic, Juanita and Wally dancing around the cabin-to Sweet Honey in the Rock on a Sunday morning, ginger ice-cream, cornbread, pie. They both exemplified what it means to be a human being and to live true to your values.

— Lori Barg, Plainfield, Vermont

The date for a memorial has not been set at the time of this writing. Watch our website or call the office for the time and place. ●

Strength in Community – Peter and Mary Sprunger-Froese

By Ruth Benn from an interview on March 9, 2015

Peter and Mary live in Colorado Springs and are part of the Bijou Community, which is an intentional, faith-based community working for nonviolence and social justice.

They met when Peter was in graduate school at a Mennonite Seminary in Indiana, and Mary was working with a county home for indigent people. They married, lived in Canada near Peter's family for six months, then set about looking for a community that combined their desire to work with poor people and with peace-making. "We see those as so connected. War impoverishes the earth and impoverishes people. It's just so antithetical to what makes for peace." They found a small group of kindred spirits in Colorado Springs and have been there since 1979.

War tax resistance came straight out of the Bible for Peter. At age 18 while in theology school in Canada, he attended a conference on the military-industrial-complex. "I learned about the number of people in the military, but even more, about the commitment in terms of capital, guns, war machinery, and all the bucks that are made from war both in Canada and the U.S." When it came to what belongs to Caesar and what belongs to God, as an anarchist he felt Caesar was causing the problems. "My work against this had to include tax dollars — more than just physically refusing to give my body to war."

After college, Mary was living with a couple of friends, and one of them suggested resisting the phone tax, a new concept for Mary. Their refusal led to a meeting with the IRS, during which the agents noted that the women were not alone. "They were kind of admitting that it was



Mary, Peter, and Scout.

maybe a movement, so my roommate was really excited after that meeting."

Members of the Bijou Community were already involved in war tax resistance when Peter and Mary arrived. Early on, money was held in common, but that evolved over the years to each doing their own thing. One year the community did a tax protest and filed a 1040 saying they didn't want to pay anything "because we don't want to support the war." That seemed to trigger an audit, which took an exhausting six months of collecting receipts to convince the IRS that members were not living off donations that came in for the soup kitchen and houses of hospitality. "The IRS said don't file like that anymore because it messes up our system, and we said don't audit

us anymore because it messes up ours!"

Living on a low income is challenging, but community makes it possible. "We share cars, laundry, food, gardening, clothing," says Peter. "I have a bike with a trailer and arranged with a health food store to pick up food once or twice a week that they would otherwise discard. The good food we share with community members, and some goes to compost. I also pick up wood pallets (untreated) that we can use as firewood from a business that would put them in the trash."

While they don't live in communal housing now, one thing that came out of the community work over the years is a land trust with housing for low income rentals. Peter and Mary live in this housing, which is open to anyone in need as vacancies arise.

Peter says, "The lifestyle matter is really paramount, to try to learn

continued on page 7 ➞



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!