

War Tax Resisters Penalty Fund

Spring 2016

We have had no new requests since December so this is an update letter.

Report on appeal #48: (December 2015)

Number of active contributors: 132

Inactive members: 85

Amount requested: \$5,112

Total collected: \$6,257 (122.4%)

WTRPF statement of purpose: *“The War Tax Resistance Penalty Fund provides a process of mutual support through which war tax resisters and their supporters can distribute financial assistance to war tax resisters whose taxes are collected and for whom the collection of penalties and interest is a burden. In providing this mutual support, the Penalty Fund hopes to sustain and expand war tax resistance as a form of conscientious objection to war.”*

With your help, in this second year of our renewed operation, we have supported war tax resisters with \$9,988 to replace funds seized from them for their war tax penalties and interest. Here is news from those we have helped.

Rachel Soltis. “I resist paying war tax because I believe in Love. I resist paying war tax because saints and prophets have refused to pay war taxes too. I resist paying war tax because it is a little crazy, and crazy can really shake things up. Now I am being collected for much more than I initially resisted. I feel disappointed and a little defeated. But I know that the collection doesn't change the truth of our action. And I know that action is important, even if it is like the quiet, hopeful act of planting seeds. A seed can wait in dormancy for decades, even centuries, before the conditions are right for it to rise to the light. I know Love is rising.”



Rachel has refused to pay up to half of her assessed income tax since her graduation from college. She asked for assistance to pay statutory additions for years 2009, 2012, 2013, and 2014 in the amount of **\$2,176**. When she received her check she wrote:

“I admit that I freaked out when I first learned that my salary would be levied. I had other unexpected expenses in my life already and didn't know how I would manage. Then I told myself to trust that the universe provides. Now, words cannot express how grateful I am that the penalties/interest amount has been covered by the War Tax Resistance Penalty Fund. I am deeply moved that people I don't even know would give so much! I write this note to say thank you to each and every one of you and remind you that what you are doing matters. Feeling support in this time helps me remember the power of our collective resistance, even if mine was unsuccessful. Thank you again, from the bottom of my heart.”

Andy McKenna. “During college I was a short-term volunteer with Peace Brigades International, where our team observed the workers at a thread factory who were on a long-term strike. The union members, including a 16-year old, were locked inside the facility grounds with armed guards watching them 24 hours a day for over a year. One day, the factory owners sent a semi-trailer to remove the raw cotton. With guns literally at their heads, the workers blockaded the gate and refused to budge on principle. I saw this brave act of nonviolence and asked myself, 'How can I, with all my privilege as a white, North American male, not follow their example and take a more courageous stand for peace and justice?' A few years later, after the first Gulf War, I met some war tax resisters who asked me why I was still paying taxes for war if I didn't believe in it.”

Andy has been a non-filer for 22 years and has worked toward passage of the Peace Tax Fund Bill. He asked for assistance to pay statutory additions for years 2004 and 2007 in the amount of **\$2,936**. When he received the full amount, he wrote:

“Thanks Bill! I'm very grateful to the Fund and its supporters. The current levy ends next paycheck except for \$78, but I anticipate further garnishments to follow immediately. However, we'll see. This donation definitely helps keep the wolves at bay without depleting my reserves too quickly.”

Jon Marley. Jon has been a non-filer “in the belief that is a waste of time and emotional energy to interact with the IRS at all. I have not, however been a silent resister.” Jon has posted his status as a war tax resister on Facebook, provides counseling, support, and information to potential and current resisters, and has been deeply involved in operating the People's Life Fund (NCWTR's alternative fund which annually distributes grants to social justice and peace groups in northern California). We have been able to reimburse him 97% of what he has requested (\$14,273 out of \$14,725). When notified of his final payment he wrote:



“Thank you for letting me know about the coming check, and for this wonderful support! Yes, with this second amount, my needs will have been met and you can consider my request completed. I greatly appreciate the way in which you have handled my case, and I look forward to supporting other WTRs through WTRPF in the future.”

\$1,000 Grant – We were very happy to hear that the WTRPF was to be the recipient of a \$1,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Tompkins County in Ithaca, New York. After much deliberation we decided to use the money for ads in peace church journals to try to build up our base of supporters and also to attract the notice of resisters in need of help. We will start with the Mennonite journal *The Mennonite*. If we experience success we will move on to the *Friends Journal* and then to the Brethren journal *The Messenger*.

WTRPF Steering Committee: Peter Smith (Indiana), Shulamith Eagle (Vermont), Bill Ramsey (North Carolina), Shirley Whiteside (Colorado), Steve Leeds (California)

To make a contribution to our work: visit www.wtrpf.org Questions: email webmaster@nwtrcc.org or call Peter at 574-532-3720. Since online donations go through Paypal, a \$1.17 fee is deducted from a \$30 donation.

Send checks payable to our fiscal sponsor CMTC to:

**Conscience and Military Tax Campaign
PO Box 2096
Mars Hill, NC 28754**

Note: Please do NOT make your check payable to WTRPF. We will not be able to deposit it in our CMTC account!

If you or someone you know is currently having their assets seized by the IRS and needs help with the penalties and interest, please let us know.

If you know of someone who might become a supporter of the Fund, please let us know. Or you can send a copy of our brochure to that person with a personal note from you. A copy of the brochure is enclosed.

For future appeals:

_____ Yes, I want to receive WTRPF appeals in the future and it is OK to send them by email

Your email address _____ if we do not already have it.

_____ Yes, I want to receive WTRPF appeals in the future but please send them by regular mail

_____ No, please remove my name from the WTRPF mailing list