

Henry George Newsletter

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LAND AND LIBERTY GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL

The latest issue of the London-based, Georgist-affiliated magazine *Land and Liberty* has been created especially for high school teachers.

As a part of ongoing efforts to reach into high school classrooms, the New York School has distributed over 1,600 copies of the November-December issue to high school teachers across the country. The issue, "Calling U.S. High School Teachers," featured articles by many of our own noted Georgists. Steven Cord authored several articles, including "More Than Just a Theory," which describes the success of land value taxation in practice, and "Take Your Pick from the Big Three"—Smith, Marx and George.

In "Ferment of Reform," Stan Rubenstein traced a century of American turmoil which gave rise to reformers such as George. Mike Gavaghen authored a brief and colorful biography of George in "An American Original!" Ed Dodson wrote the final article, entitled "Long-term Lessons of Injustice in New World's Big Land Grabs."

It is hoped that this special issue will serve as a strong introduction to Georgist concerns for high school communities across the country.

HOUSING CRISIS AND GEORGE

On December 11, Trustee Felice Gruskin spoke at a panel on housing symposium entitled "The Housing Crisis Hits Home!," sponsored by the Audubon Reform Democratic Club. Her speech, "How New York Solved its Housing Crisis," was based on the pamphlet of that name by C. Post. In her speech at the Broadway Temple, Felice noted that the 1920's New York law allowing tax exemption for the building of apartment houses quickly produced a surplus of rental housing. If properly administrated, she said, such a law might well help end our housing crisis today.

GRADUATE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

On the evening of January 22, the New York Graduate Research Committee will convene its first meeting of the New Year. The group will produce a statement of objectives and discuss its plans for the remainder of the term. Several group concerns are discussion of current economic issues and exploring methods for the active implementation of Georgist ideas in the community. For more information please call 697-9880.

School Notes

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TEACHER TRAINING SEMINAR

During the first two weeks in December, Education Director Don Hurford conducted a four-session teacher training seminar at the New York School.

The seminar, based on the course "How to Teach Grown-Ups," provided participating school instructors with workbooks and audiotapes and explored topics such as the difference between "learning" and "schooling," techniques for making a lecture more participative, and creating a learning environment through discussion.

Don believes the seminar to have been worthwhile because "It was practical. It offered new insights and tips on how to improve the methods in actual use at the School, especially the prevailing lecture method."

Course materials will be placed in the library for use by instructors on a self-study basis.

TAX LAW CHANGES

"Tax Law Changes—1986-87" was the topic for the first monthly Critical Issues Forum held at the School on Thursday, January 8th. Panelists were Charles Dana, East Side District Manager of H&R Block, and Jacob B. Himmelstein, CPA, Norristown, Pennsylvania.

The next in the series of forums is "Homelessness" to be held on February 12, 6-8 p.m. Participants will include Beth Garrie, Associate Director, Coalition for the Homeless, Tim Lambert, Volunteer, The Catholic Worker, and a representative from the New York City Office of Family Affairs. Representative Henry Gonzalez, at a recent hearing on this problem, said "The homeless are the ultimate throwaway of a throwaway society. . . . Even if there is no official American Gulag, the land of non-people, there is an unofficial and equally terrifying exile, and that is the exile of the street people."

School Notes

PHILADELPHIA

WINTER LINE-UP AND GRADUATION

The Winter '87 school semester at the Birthplace begins with classes and seminars on Tuesday, January 27. Fundamental Economics will be offered Tuesday, 6-8 p.m., and Wednesday and Thursdays, 7-9 p.m. Applied Economics is scheduled for Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m., with Great Decisions '87 on Thursday, from 7-9 p.m. Jacob B. Himmelstein will speak on "The Federal Tax Reform and You" on January 31st as part of a series of Saturday Seminars offered by the School.

Thirty-five students and guests attended the Fall term graduation at the Birthplace on December 6th. Thirty-four students completed courses and received certificates in Fundamental Economics, Economic Science, and Great Decisions. Five of the Economic Science students completed the three-part Principles of Political Economy and received certificates for that program. Graduation speaker Sister Cecilia R. Wilson, an H.G.S. graduate of Principles of Political Economy, recounted her experiences and observations with politics, economics and social conditions during a one-year internship in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, in preparation for professional church work.

DELAWARE

Smyrna Prison was the location for another graduation on December 19. Mike Curtis conducted the Smyrna program and graduated 13 Fundamental Economics and 4 Economic Science students there. Curtis taught in conjunction with the Philadelphia School. Other teachers at the School this past semester included Jacob Himmelstein, Richard Biddle, Edward Dodson, Alfonse Bayo and George Collins.

SACRAMENTO

The Sacramento School recently organized a speaker dinner at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Sacramento. Reverend Jean M. Shawn, associate pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, spoke on "A Report from Nicaragua." The well-attended report was followed by a happy hour and, of course, lots of spaghetti.

LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles Director Harry Pollard reports that over 80 modular speeches have been delivered this past year by members of his school. The most popular was "The Case for Free Trade," based on his pamphlet by the same name.

The December 5th dinner and round table discussion sponsored by the LA Alumni Group featured Bill Filante, recently elected to his fifth term as Marin County Assemblyman. At the Los Angeles Press Club, Bill spoke before a lively group on political strategy— "...The Only Game in Town."

CENTER FOR LOCAL TAX RESEARCH

The Center for Local Tax Research has been contacted by more than a dozen cities in Pennsylvania for advice on the implementation of a two-rate property tax.

Steven Cord, Director of CLTR, has prepared packets of information on land value taxation to be sent out to these and other non-Georgists. The packets, often sent to city officials, contain prominent articles on the issue as well as studies showing that a building-to-land tax rate switch noticeably increases new construction in those areas.

A Pennsylvania councilman and a mayor in Maryland are now working for the cause. Lockhaven Councilman Scott Smith became interested in LVT through reading Incentive Taxation. He then put together a packet of his own materials and made a door-to-door survey of local interest in the two-rate taxation approach.

In Maryland, Hagerstown Mayor Steven Sager responded to material sent by CLTR, stating that he has been a longtime admirer of George. He is now helping the Maryland Municipal League to pass a local option law similar to that in Pennsylvania.

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