

ROBERT SCHALKENBACH FOUNDATION REPORT  
By Josie Faass, Executive Director / February, 2021

As a Florida native, winters in the Northeast continue to be a bit of a struggle for me, and no month gives me the cold weather blues quite as much as February. What it lacks in calendar days, February makes up for with its zeal for massive snowstorms (one is raging outside my window as I write this), paucity of sunshine, and unnecessarily long, impossibly dark nights. My approach to Februaries generally involves a lot of hot coffee, big sweaters, and baking...mostly cakes, but cookies, biscuits, and breads are often in the rotation, as well.

This February, however, will look a little different. The coffee, sweaters, and treats remain (a girl's gotta have some comforts!), but there's simply too much happening at RSF to spend a lot of time lamenting the cold, dark, dreariness of it all.

For starters, the Center for Property Tax Reform(CPTR) is hosting its first-ever [webinar](#) on **February 23 at 1:00 pm EST**. The event, which we're organizing with our partner organization, [5th Square](#), will bring together a variety of tax experts and local elected officials to discuss the implementation of a land value tax in Henry George's hometown of Philadelphia. We'll talk a little history (LVT isn't new to the Philly discourse) and get locals' perspectives on the viability of this policy for the City of Brotherly Love. Of course, we'll rely on our very own [Tax Shift Explorer](#) tool to take participants on a guided tour of the City and explore what a land value tax would look like on the ground. I hope you'll join us for this exciting [event](#) and invite your friends, family and colleagues - it's free, so the more, the merrier!

We're also beginning a new mapping project designed to give insights into who really owns our cities. Using publicly-available tax data, we'll build a map that will enable anyone with an internet connection to identify who's local, and who's not in a variety of U.S. communities. Why does this matter? Because all too often, money gets parked in land by speculators who have no real connection to the community - and no interest in bettering it - but are just hoping to buy low and sell high. The result is predictable: disinvestment, blight, decline...none of which are good for our cities and towns.

Our library project is at an exciting point: we're buying shelves! Admittedly, this may not sound too exciting, but with all of our holdings now sorted and catalogued, putting them on shelves is the next step towards our goal of creating a new Georgist library at our Princeton location.

And finally, we're taking the initial steps towards formulating a scholarship program as part of our educational offerings. This is no small task, and in addition to all of the legal hurdles we'll have to surmount, there's the matter of ensuring our program advances our organizational mission and raises awareness of the ideas of Henry George among the next generation.

So, while February may not be my favorite, I'm very much looking forward to what the month has in store at RSF. And if you'd like even more information about what's happening at the Center for Property Tax Reform, check out the new section of this newsletter, "The CPTR Corner" to learn more about what staff is working on now and what is on the horizon.