

HENRY GEORGE NEWSLETTER

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GEORGISTS LAUNCH NEWS MEDIA PROJECT

One of the tangible results of the Pawling Conference last July is a new effort to get the Georgist philosophy into the media.

The names of some 230 editors, journalists and news directors from eight states have been combined to produce a mailing list for press releases, Georgist statements and the like.

This was the first step in an attempt to form a "network" of writers and editors nationwide.

The effort began with a core group of extension directors and Georgist activists from non-school areas who wrestled with the problem of getting our message across more effectively. One problem, it was conceded, was lack of unity. Georgists had traditionally approached their local media with no knowledge of similar efforts elsewhere.

Also, there was no mechanism to respond to national or international news in a timely fashion.

Each member was asked to compile a list of daily and prominent weekly newspapers, influential columnists and television news directors from their own areas. These were to be combined at the New York School to form the basis of a media mailing list.

By using the school's computer, it would then be possible to send out press releases which gave local residents as contact people on stories of national importance. These Georgists, and their areas, are: Mitchell Chanelis and Anne Sayre, Boston; George Collins, Philadelphia; Mike Gavaghan, New York City; Stan Rubenstein, Long Island; Mary Davis, Atlanta; Stan Frederiksen, Missouri; Bob Scrofani, California; Earl Hanson, Utah; and Homer J. Fox, Detroit.

The system was first employed in response to the statement by the U.S. Catholic bishops on American capitalism last month. Within days of the statement, more than 180 print journalists received a three-page Georgist response which touched on the ethics of land ownership in our society. Professor Steven Cord and Richard Barbuto figured prominently in the Georgist statement.

Barbuto, who works closely with the New York School, is the executive secretary of the Guild of Catholic Lawyers, former program coordinator of the Office for World Justice and Peace of the New York Archdiocese, and a founder of the Bread for the World citizens' lobby in Washington. Cord is the foremost authority on land value taxation in the country and editor of the journal Incentive Taxation.

The press releases quoted Barbuto on the ethical aspects, allowed Cord to propose the remedy and included a statement from the appropriate local spokesman.

SCHOOL NOTES

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Lancaster M. Greene
Chairman
Publications Committee

Stanley Rubenstein
Director

Michael Gavaghan
Program Coordinator

Subscription: \$5 yr
For change of address
5 E. 44th St.
New York, NY 10017

AFFILIATES

LONG ISLAND
Box 143
Old Bethpage, NY 11804

PHILADELPHIA
413 S. 10th St.
Phila., PA 19147

NEW ENGLAND
21 Unity Ct.
Boston, MA 02113

CALIFORNIA
Box 655
Tujunga, CA 91042

3410 19th St.
San Francisco, CA 94110

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Isabel La Catolica #212
AP #758, Santo Domingo

SCHOOL OF ECONOMIC SCIENCE
(CANADA)

2267 Westman Road
Mississauga, Ont. L5K 1M7

3017 25 St. SW
Calgary, Alberta T3E 1Y2

NEW YORK

Spring classes will begin on Monday, January 28. The basic Progress and Poverty course will be offered on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Classical Analysis will be offered on Thursday evenings. Understanding Economics, which combines lecture and video tape, will also be held on Thursday evenings. Two lunchtime sections of Understanding Economics will also meet: Mondays from noon to 1 PM and Wednesdays from 1 to 2 PM. Advanced courses will be available to graduates of one of the aforementioned basic courses. This winter the focus is on problems in contemporary society, as George's Social Problems will be offered in Spanish on Mondays and in English on Wednesdays....

Graduation ceremonies were held on December 3 in a pot-luck dinner party at the school. Assemblyman Daniel Feldman, who sponsored the bill calling for a study of incentive taxation, was the guest speaker....

New York City Comptroller Harrison J. Golden was the guest speaker at the first in a series of Graduate Research Committee seminars. More than 60 people attended the program which focused on New York's transit problems. A second program, contrasting urban and rural poverty, was held on November 28....

The May/June issue of Land & Liberty was mailed to legislators in Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Texas and Washington. Georgists in those states are invited to follow up....

RALEIGH

Wilbur Johnson, who continues to fight a war on economic illiteracy, has enlisted a new ally -- a black newspaper called The Carolinian. No fewer than four editorials and a like number of letters have appeared since June advocating Henry George's solution to pervasive poverty and calling for a better understanding of Georgist economics among educators and the black intelligentsia. In one, dated August 30, the editors suggested that Democratic and Republican leaders in the area were "illiterate in taxes and economics." They continued: "If black leaders were knowledgeable about site-value taxation they would find this the solution to the justice they are seeking and the economic advantages that this tax would bring about would benefit all poor people."

OBITUARY: KARI HOMESTEAD

Kari Homestead, secretary of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, died recently after a long illness. Her sense of humor and professionalism added much to our New York headquarters and will be sorely missed. The Henry George School extends its sincerest condolences to Kari's family.

PHILADELPHIA

Twenty-eight people attended a seminar on "Meeting the Challenges of Hunger and Urban Decay" at the birthplace on October 20.

The day-long event began with a showing of the PBS Reports documentary, "Bread, Butter and Politics." The one-hour film contrasted the research methods and conclusions of two governmental commissions -- one presidential and the other senatorial -- investigating the hunger problem in America today. Faculty member Joe Roderick led a spirited discussion on the extent of the problem and possible short- and long-term solutions.

"A Tale of Five Cities: Tax Revolt Pennsylvania Style", the new documentary produced by the Washington-based Center for Public Dialogue, made its Philadelphia premiere that afternoon. Three people who appeared in the film also took part in the discussion which followed it: former Philadelphia Councilman James Tayoun; David Zwanetz, member of the city's Board of Assessment; and Dan Sullivan, western regional director of the Incentive Tax League of Pennsylvania. Sullivan co-chaired a session devoted to "How To Inform Politicians and the Public". Joining him was Meg Worthington, a public management consultant from Atlantic City, New Jersey, and a strong supporter of land value taxes.

The program was run by Don Hurford with help from Mike Curtis, Cecilia R. Wilson, Ed Dodson and George Collins, under the sponsorship of the Henry George Alumni Association...

The October 10 issue of Focus, a Philadelphia business magazine, carried an article entitled, "Land Tax Reform -- Is Philadelphia Ready For It?" In a balanced presentation of the issue, author Eric F. Rosenthal made reference to Henry George and the "Tax Revolt" film mentioned above, as well as interviewing supporters and critics of the idea....

State Rep. Frank Salvatore recently rented the "Tax Revolt" film and screened it for fellow members of the Pennsylvania House Urban Affairs Committee. He followed this up by introducing House Bill 2517, which would allow the City Council by ordinance to establish a land value tax in Philadelphia. The bill is expected to remain in committee until the next legislative session begins this month....

LONG ISLAND

Fall is budget time on Long Island, as each township holds public hearings. Echoing the merits of land value taxation has become something of an annual ritual at these meetings, but this year carried a new twist: the study of LVT now being conducted by the Temporary Commission on New York's Real Property Tax. Members of the Long Island Incentive Tax League spoke at the following hearings:

Tom Birmingham spoke before the Town of Hempstead Council and Supervisor on October 30.

Albert Fink, eastern coordinator of the ITL, spoke at the Brookhaven Budget Hearings on November 2.

Dave Norflus spoke before the Oyster Bay Board on October 23 and the Nassau County Budget Hearings in Mineola on December 3.

Each speaker explained the new LVT study law, the concept of local option for higher land tax rates and how LVT has affected the Pennsylvania cities which have adopted it....

LOS ANGELES

More than 20 Georgists cheered Agnes De Mille Prude as she told a packed audience, "I am a Georgist" at the Scottish Rite Auditorium in Los Angeles. Mayor Tom Bradley declared October 28 "Agnes De Mille Day" and called the granddaughter of Henry George "a national treasure"....

The hotly-contested Jarvis IV Proposition -- extending and adding to the infamous Proposition 13 -- was debated by opposing camps at the Los Angeles Press Club as the Alumni Group began a new season of Final Friday Dinners....

SAN FRANCISCO

Director Bob Scrofani made two presentations at the Fall Conference of the East Bay Council for the Social Studies on October 26: "Economic Literacy: What Makes the World Work", and "How to Infuse Economics into the Curriculum". Two weeks later, Scrofani made two more presentations to the California Curriculum Conference: "The Land Question" and "Economic Illiteracy". Both are part of the ongoing effort to keep social studies educators thinking economically....

A Touch Of Class: Most schools end their semesters with a small dinner celebration. The Sacramento extension began its fall term with a dinner at the Ming Tree Restaurant on November 2. Bob Scrofani was the guest speaker at the well-attended affair....

CABLE TELEVISION

As we move into the second season of cable programming, we have, in a sense, added two "extensions" which will offer the Understanding Economics course to their subscribers.

UE will appear on Arlington Community Television beginning Wednesday, January 16 at 7 PM and each episode will be repeated the following Monday at 6:30 PM. The company serves more than 26,000 subscribers in that Washington suburb....

The series will also appear on Delaware's Rollins Cablevision system, Channel 22, every Monday evening at 7:30 beginning January 14. Rollins Cablevision serves the following areas: Arden and Ardencroft (two of the single tax enclaves), Newark, New Castle County, Wilmington, Hockessin, Newport, Elsmere and Bellefonte. There are some 75,000 basic subscribers in these areas — 75,000 potential new students.

Henry George School of Social Science
5 East 44 Street
New York, NY 10017

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