

## Editor's Notes

This issue of the *Henry George Newsletter* observes a couple of notable changes in the staff of the Henry George School. Mark Sullivan, our estimable librarian and Newsletter editor, has moved on to take a position at the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. Mark's vast store of knowledge and experience regarding the Georgist movement and its friends, as well as his wit and comradeship, will be missed indeed.

The bad news of Mark's departure is tempered, though, by the knowledge that he is not leaving the movement, or even leaving town (a confirmed New Yawkah, Mark once joked that "If I have to cross a river for it, it had better be worth seeing.") He continues to serve as an officer of the Henry George Institute and of the Council of Georgist Organizations, and will continue to write for the *Newsletter*.

Mark's work as Editor has been vital to the *Newsletter's* expansion and revitalization over the past three years. The new editor (me) is someone who has worked closely with Mark on that project (through, for instance, many seemingly-endless late worknights of layout-bickering,) and shares his commitment to making the *HGN* the very best it can be.

Our sadness at Mark's departure turns to joy as we welcome Pia Francesca

DeSilva as the school's new librarian. As New York HGS regulars needn't be told, Pia is an HGS alumnus, teacher, indefatigable volunteer, and Force To Be Reckoned With. A well-connected native of the Big Apple, Pia brings many valuable assets to her new job: an extensive list of profes-



Pia DeSilva

sional and volunteer library/research experience, a thorough grounding in the Georgist philosophy, and a tremendous vitality and charm.

Pia's major goal as the new librarian is "to make the Henry's George School Research Library more user-friendly." She is out to ascertain what the real-world research and information needs of our library are, and to organize the collection in an environment best suited to fulfilling them. And since the HGS library offers students access to history as well as current data, Pia intends to devote the

## THE SOCIAL SCIENCE FORUM

Simon Winters, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Henry George School, has inaugurated a long-range, broad-based educational initiative aimed at galvanizing the spread and dissemination of Georgist land-reform ideas. Implementing what he calls a "synergistic" approach, Si has formed an Advisory Committee of distinguished scholars to "promote interdisciplinary scholarship and advanced research" in an effort to establish "an integrated Multi-Media Communication Program." Using an "activist educational approach," the Forum has been geared to engage "leaders in Business, Education, Government, Economics, Religion, the Media and Arts," as well as the community-at-large, in a sustained discourse on the ideas of Henry George.

That the Social Science Forum has been formed in the wake of the collapse of the Eastern-bloc and during a time of great uncertainty and decline in Western economies gives it a unique opportunity to both broaden the scope and convey the special relevance of the Georgist agenda. The Forum sees the synthetic approach as the best way to seize this historical imperative lest we, as Si puts it, lose "the precious currency of our concern."

The scholars associated with the Social Science Forum have served with distinction in academia, research, and as government officials and advisers on public policy questions. They include Robert V. Andelson, Professor

Emeritus of Philosophy at Auburn University; Steven Cord, Executive Director of the Henry George Foundation and a Trustee of the HGS; C. Lowell Harriss, a long-time professor of Economics at Columbia; Jerome Heavey, member and past Chair of the Department of Economics at Lafayette College; Dr. Michael Hudson, a scholar of financial history as well as consultant to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research; Nicolaus Tideman, Professor of Economics at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; Prof. William Vickery, President of the American Economic Association; and Gene Wunderlich, a Senior Agricultural Economist of the Economic Research Service, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. They have all published extensive research and theoretical work within their fields of expertise.

Over the next few months the Social Science Forum will be increasing its outreach endeavors - including an effort to bring together Henry George School alumni, pooling its physical and intellectual resources in an integrative encounter with the social problems of our times. The multimedia aspect of the project - the "integration of library, college, school, home and office via an integrated infrastructure of telecommunication technologies", as the Forum phrases it, - the commissioning and distribution of articles, scholarly papers and videos will ensure that "students and the public always receive the best, most informative and convincing material" the School can produce.

- David Domke

needed care and attention to the school's long-neglected archives. Because of the ravages of time on high-acid paper (which was, alas, used extensively in Henry George's day), much unique and valuable material is now in danger of crumbling into nothing.

Using as a guide an excellent report on the preservation and storage of archival materials, prepared by former HGS staff member Robert Hawes, Pia is taking the first steps toward stabilizing and preserving the archives before it's too late. And we're glad.

Taking up the slack on *Newsletter* production will be Chicagoan-turned-New-Yawkah, philosophy buff, cat advocate and occasional poet David Domke, whose press relations work helped to raise

the public profile of last Spring's conference with Russian economists. David contributes two articles to this issue.

*Congratulations* on the Henry George School's 60th anniversary have come in from some well-placed friends. Gracious letters have come in to George Collins from former New York Police Commissioner Lee Brown, Joseph Fernandez, Chancellor of the NYC Board of Education, and Lee Blake, First Deputy Mayor in charge of the New York Office of Education Services.

"Are you looking for a paladin?" asks the fall flyer from the Chicago HGS, "Do you believe that there is a super-smart person who can solve our social and economic problems?" (continued on next page)

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The flyer goes on to quote Henry George, in an apt statement of the school's educational philosophy: "Human wit has not yet been able to devise any scheme by which any intelligence can be secured in a parliament or congress superior to that of the people it represents." Provocative stuff. The Chicago HGS began classes in *Fundamental Economics* on Monday and Wednesday afternoons at 2:30, and on Tuesday and Wednesday evening at 7:00, during the week of September 21st.

*The latest published work of Rev. Wylie Young* has been some time in coming, as Rev. Young admits in his covering letter. "I didn't just knock it off in a long weekend. At 94 the ideas just don't come that fast."

The 16-page booklet, *The Key to Social Splendor*, however, is worth waiting for. His preamble states: "This fifteen-page booklet has been written to explain, simply and clearly, why the American Dream is turning into a nightmare, and what must be done, as quickly as possible, so we can all breathe sighs of relief and face new days with confidence and faith. Suspicious? Give it a try."

Those who do will find an eminently readable summary of The Land Question, with background on the Physiocrats and other influential early thinkers. Young explains the philosophical and economic conditions that led to an untenable property tax system being fossilized in U.S. law, and the mechanics of land speculation and frontier settlement in early America. Finally, Young elucidates how a tax on land value can erase the distortions caused by taxes on wealth. In doing so he presents one of the most lucid explanations I've ever seen of one of the most elusive points for students: why the landowner cannot pass on the land tax to consumers.

Copies of *The Key to Social Splendor* can be had for \$2 from: Wylie Young, P.O. Box 383, Big Flats, NY 14814.

*Yi Ming Shi*, an alumnus and continuing student of the New York HGS, wrote and published an announcement of the fall term classes in *World Journal*, a Chinese-language newspaper in New York City. The paper is widely circulated, and many students have begun courses after reading Yi Ming Shi's announcement. "All residents of the New York area, with at least an intermediate level of English, can register and learn for free," it says. "Don't miss this excellent opportunity."

*Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty.*

**Seminar Tackles North-South Environmental Issues**

The New York School's Saturday Seminar on Oct. 3rd addressed the most difficult question: how can nations with vastly different levels of poverty and development agree on a collective response to the grave dangers that beset our global environment?

Jim Morgan, an architect and housing activist from Brooklyn, who traveled to Rio de Janeiro in June to attend the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) under the auspices of the Society of Friends, reported on his experiences there and assessed the potential for progress. Even though North-South economic conflicts (and what many would call the intransigence of the U.S.) resulted in few substantial accomplishments for the "Earth Summit," Mr. Morgan was eager to report that there is more to the story. "I return from Rio full of hope," he writes. "Despite the depressing official results, I bring good news, news of people - clever, committed and energetic... whose vision of a collaborative future will soon prevail...."

The foundation of this hope was laid in the "Global Forum", the alternative Earth Summit held that same week in Rio. According to Mr. Morgan, it was "as different from UNCED as a demonstration in Washington is from what goes on in the White House." Over 14,000 representatives from hundreds of organizations traded views and forged alliances, in 36 meeting tents and over 300 exhibition booths. "The opportunity for self-education was overwhelming."

The Non-Governmental organizations (NGO's) of the UN, seeing that little of value was coming out of the official conference, agreed on their own global environmental targets as an alternative to Agenda 21, "UNCED's watered down, underfinanced action plan." No, the Global Forum's documents have no binding authority on anyone yet, but Jim Morgan said that the process begun there can only grow in strength. "In twenty years, when the world's leaders are assembled, there's a good chance many of them will have gotten their start at Global Forum '92."

The key to the nascent power of the Global Forum is in its recognition that considerations based on "national interest" will inexorably have less power in the years ahead. "The insular perspective many governments took with them to Rio simply doesn't make sense anymore," said Jim. And he asserted that it is not, after all, so difficult for one's outlook to become globalized. "I grew up in Ohio," he said, "And I have come, now, to look upon the United States flag in much the same way as I see the old Ohio state flag - as a reminder of a bygone era."

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(Editor's note: The other scheduled speaker at this seminar, Mr. Georg Kell, regretted that a last-minute family obligation made him unable to appear. In his stead, your humble editor studied a great deal of material provided by Mr. Kell and his organization. Thus enriched, I went on to present a description of how global environmental cooperation may be shaped: not by restricting trade, but increasing it - by fashioning a system of tradable pollution credits. For more information on this fascinating idea, see "A Market for the Environment" in our May-June issue - and stay tuned! - L.D.)

**His fence, my land**

By Anders Corr

*i sleep with the land  
there is a man somewhere  
that thinks the land is his  
that he owns the land*

*he is wrong  
he owns the fence  
which strangles the land  
with sharp wire*

*his land is a piece of paper  
a money figure on an LED screen  
a chore*

*my land is the sun  
it heats my face in the morning  
it is the lunar light which guides me  
it is the tall grass within which  
is my sanctuary*

*his land is created by the state  
my land is a gift of the unknown*

*what he calls land is a  
real estate rape fantasy*

*for myself,  
the land is a cradle  
as i drift into a dream  
without boundaries*

The poem above is by Anders Corr, a California "homeless activist". Mr. Corr shared the poem with Pat Aller, in a letter which also included a copy of an article from the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* describing how Mr. Corr and six other activists were arrested, in July of this year, for camping on a public park. He is currently working on an anthology entitled *Our Right to the Earth*, which contains writings in various genres on that most important subject. Mr. Corr reports that "I have become homeless this summer to save time (because I do not have to spend as much to pay for rent) so that I can do more work on the anthology." -Lindy Davies