

WANTED: A SOLID GEORGIST TO MANAGE MY ENCLAVE OF ECONOMIC RENT, THE JUSTICE TRUST, HERE IN CALHOUN COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA.

By Carl Shaw, Mount Zion, WV

The property is located at 1019 on Kerby Ridge Road, Mount Zion, WV 26151 on a 1 ½ mile long dirt-gravel road, currently bull-dozed, and passable all year long. We are located about 10 miles south of Grantsville, WV, the County Seat. Currently on Kerby Ridge Road, there are 5 other residents, all senior citizens. We all own large land parcels, of hilly, timbered land. There are several gas-oil wells in this neighborhood, two on my property, one of which furnishes free gas, and a small annual royalty, which I have been depositing to the Justice Trust savings account. The other well, which is new, provides only a small monthly royalty. I have been depositing both royalties into the saving account. We are 20 miles east of Spencer, WV (local Walmart), 30 miles west of Glenville, WV where Glenville State College is located. Parkersburg is 50 miles north west of this Trust.

This Justice Trust is on 80 acres of hilly forested land. There are about 2 or 3 acres of tillable land, which may be sufficient for 7 or 8 families.

Move into my house after I pass, The property is paid for. Pay the annual county property taxes, usually due in July, around \$400. each year. Electric bill has been \$30.00 per month. Building maintenance could be financed by oil and gas royalties. There is a current savings account of about \$5,000, to be used for the operation of the TRUST. The Manager will have to have his own income source. Mine has been Federal retirement, and Social Security.

The three buildings will eventually need ordinary repairs. I suppose future lessee land rent payments may allow some fund for such repairs. We will have to think about this. I have not purchased building insurance since year 2000.

I have invited a knowledgeable Board Of Directors, to oversee the operation, and to whom you will be responsible, for advice .

The current primary responsibility of managing will be to recruit or attract people to come join and live here. Get them settled on a site, register their plot at the Calhoun Co. Court House. A brief fundamental economics course to explain the basic economics of land rent taxation should be offered. They will sign a 99 year lease, which will allow sale of their buildings when lessee moves, or to pass on to others at death of lessee. Lessees will pay the annual land rent, approximately \$5.00 per acre per month, as annually appraised by a responsible panel. Under NO circumstances should lessees be granted a "bargain" annual land lease fee. Lessee may construct residence, or business improvement, pay any improvement taxes imposed to the Trust, who will in turn pay all property taxes to the County Sheriff. Calhoun Co. property taxes on land have been running at about \$2.00 per acre per year, so any "profit" will be deposited in savings for future maintenance .

The property is officially listed with the West Virginia Secretary of State as a Trust. They have been charging an annual fee of \$25.00.

I wrote the By-Laws, which should encompass most current procedures.

I hired a real estate attorney to write a Lease Form, which conforms to WV laws.

The other buildings—there is a 24' by 24' garage-workshop building, a 12' by 40' greenhouse, with 12" thick stone walls, double thick poly sheet covering. A 40' by 90' pond was built in 1992, and since has always been filled with muddy water, which garden plants don't seem to mind. Currently roof water is being collected for home use. The downhill springs furnished water for 20 years—not clean, but can be filtered.

My granddaughter, Katelynn and her husband Ryan Scott, will act as my executors, and will come here after I am gone to sort out possessions—who gets what?

The house has already been leased to all three of my sons, Dale, David, and Greg for 50 years. I doubt if any of them will ever be interested in occupying these buildings. Any succeeding Manager will be allowed to live here. These buildings as well as the land are a part of the Trust and will never be sold.

Future Trust leadership could plan for purchase of adjoining farm parcels. There are good plots immediately south of the Trust, or across Kerby Ridge Road, Woody Kerby's, or Dale Smith's farm to the NW. These parcels could greatly benefit the Justice Trust. It will require some imagination as to how to finance these parcels. Perhaps a charitable donor could be found.

I have begun to drill a water well, but need technical assistance to continue. Most neighbors do have drilled wells. For 20 years my chief water source was a springs about 600 feet down the hill. It is muddy and needs filtering. It also requires occasional maintenance. Currently I have been collecting roof water which is stored under the floor in an 8' by 10' poured concrete cistern, about 6' or 7' deep. I have little experience with roof water, but it seems adequate, yesterday's rain delivered 7 inches in a couple of hours. Construction of roof gutters on the south side of house could increase water supply.

Mr. Dellums in Grantsville will deliver 2,500 gallons of water for a fee, which recently has been quite high. Grantsville Town sells water quite cheaply, and would be reasonable if we owned a tank truck. (continued on page 14)

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The garden area has produced much fruits and vegetables, including 6 apple trees, 3 pear , 3 peach, and previously some plum and apricot.

This trust will be open to lower income type people, and minorities.

If any of this sounds interesting please call me at (304) 354-6598, or write me at 1019 Kerby Ridge Road, Mount Zion, WV 26151. Email CFSshaw@Frontiernet.net.
