

### **2013 CONFERENCE OF THE IU** (from page 2)

Stewart, who portrays his Georgist philosophy through fictionalized accounts, had not only all his books present but was honored by the conference for his long involvement in the movement. We are fortunate to have a close working relationship with the Shephard-Walwyn publishing house and its director Anthony Werner. Anthony had the books in its ethical economics series on the exhibit table for the full conference.

The conference acknowledged the outstanding contributions promoting LVT and working with TheIU over many years by awarding trophies to Ole Lefmann (UK/Denmark), Fernando Scornik Gerstein (Spain) and Hector Raul Sandler (Argentina).

A few other items are worthy of note. Shortly before the conference, the news of the second revolution in Egypt was broadcast. The interim Prime Minister appointed by the intervening military was a venerable elder-statesman and well-known liberal economist. Hazem Beblawi, who had earlier served as vice-prime minister and minister of finance, was now head of the provisional coalition. His past writing shows a very clear understanding of rentier states, and edited a book in 1987 titled *The Rentier State*. A letter was drafted and signed by all the attending members of the IU urging Mr. Beblawi to press the new leadership to tax resource rents as a way to revitalize the Egyptian economy. This letter is now available on the IU website.

The IU business meeting addressed still other matters, in due course. The election of officers began by thanking Fernando Scornik-Gerstein for his service as president for the past seven years, and the election of Dave Wetzel as the new president. Vice presidents for some twenty other nations were chosen as well. It was also formally agreed that the IU should aim to have a conference every second year.

The most contentious measure involved whether to change the name of the organization by deleting reference to "Free Trade." From its inception, the name has been 'The International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade,' even though it is widely understood that the words "Free Trade," have today become linked to an economic philosophy of neoliberalism essentially opposite to that in 1926. Free trade advocacy for Georgists has always been premised on the assumption of the universal institution of taxation of land rents, which would then provide greater efficiency, equity, and a harmonized level playing field among nations. For this reason, and the fact that current usage of free trade in our title acts as a barrier when discussing LVT within the UN and other places, a majority of those present and voting argued for the elimination

of the words "and Free Trade." But altering the IU constitution requires a 2/3 majority, and the vote fell just one short of that number. As a result the informal agreement arrived at was to explore other wording for a special General Business Meeting early next year.

Lastly, no conference report can be complete without mention of the role that Alanna Hartzok (continued on pg. 16)

### **2013 CONFERENCE OF THE IU** (from page 15)

played as the newly-engaged General Secretary for the IU. She performed not only as the pivotal person in the conference management but also kept discussion of the executive committee on track in its many prior Skype conference calls and email exchanges. The organization now faces the task of generating a budget that will allow the operations of the IU to continue at the new level of accomplishment and success it has now reached.

(Dr. H. William Batt may be emailed at [hwbatt@gmail.com](mailto:hwbatt@gmail.com).)

<<