

The Story Behind Money

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“Packing the sessions with substantial content in a relatively short time limit was artfully mastered by our presenter, Arthur Edwards, keeping us engaged and intrigued with picture images of the otherwise potentially dry economic facts. We were challenged in the opening lecture to put aside our prejudices regarding the stock market and accepted concepts to consider a wider perspective on what a ‘market’ might be.”



REPORT: Colors of Money® Sebastopol, CA • October 22 – 24 2010

The Associative Economics Café, Sebastopol, California USA hosted the Colors of Money® Seminar last month at the French Garden Restaurant and Summerfield Waldorf School. The seminar was presented by Arthur Edwards and the sixteen participants included local business owners, educators and agriculturalists along with attendees from Oregon, Ohio, Wisconsin, Fair Oaks and the East Bay (SF), as we worked through the fundamental principles of associative economics. How does one take initiative in the world meeting human needs and creating economic value without undue interference and still be demonstrably accountable to oneself, other people and the planet? What does a Balance Sheet Statement and Income and Expense Statement have to do with it?

The story behind money is a tale about the technique of double entry accounting that has remained consistent in its present form for more than 500 years and has become a standard ‘language’ in most every culture in the world. In this sense, money has become moving accounting, the world’s bookkeeping! It became apparent that the illuminating power of a differentiated concept of money (and twin theory of value) greatly aided our understanding of modern economic life and the predicament we all share. Tracking and managing the two kinds of money through accounting provides an individual, enterprise or nation with the tools to tame the deleterious effects of ‘wild’ money and to make it possible to master the economy so it serves the human being and not just itself. Learning to perceive the story, good or bad, behind the figures in the financial statements and forecasts gives new insight and clarity about the enterprise and its relationship to the economy – very helpful when trying to steer the ship without running a ground or bumping into other vessels sharing the high seas.

The Saturday evening theme was about youth financial literacy meaning both societal and personal finance! Training in the understanding and use of accounting-money, made available to teens, can give them a sense of responsibility to go along with the individual freedom to take initiative in the world. Rights and responsibilities go together, especially when the need to balance the economy is so apparent.

Associative Economics seems to be about celebrating the individual while at the same time recognizing the need for tools and frameworks for cohering our individual ‘wills’ in light of the environment and others all around us needing to do the same.

Five local homeowners supported the event by opening their homes to Colors of Money participants that traveled from a great distance. In addition, the French Garden Restaurant donated the reception appetizers and lunches, the Village Bakery the pastries and Starbucks provided the coffee for both mornings. A number of local enterprises gave cash grants for covering portions of the participant fees. Community cooperation gave added value to all the individual efforts! The profit from the event will be shared by a local fund supporting youth financial literacy and the Economics Conference Account that supports associative economics research worldwide through the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland. For-profit-for-others!

Other Associative Economics Café events are planned for the next year including an event this spring at Sebastopol Center for the Arts that will feature the set of color blackboard visuals produced during the Colors of Money workshop. The next gathering will focus on financial and economic literacy for youth and preparing for the annual Individual Initiative Plan contest for teens called – ‘*You’re Capitalized!*’

For more info see Associative Economics Café, Sebastopol, California

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