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Independent reporting on today's Underground Railroad

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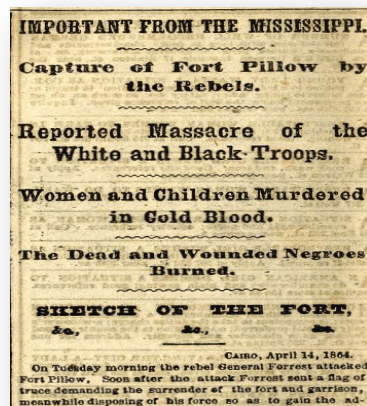
Join *Free Press* In Petitioning the State of Tennessee to End Its Cover-up of the Fort Pillow Massacre

Take a minute to join *Underground Railroad Free Press* in petitioning the State of Tennessee to start telling honestly the story of the Civil War massacre of black Union soldiers and civilians at the battle of Fort Pillow, Tennessee on April 12, 1864.

To support *Free Press's* Change.org petition, click on the link in the email notifying you of this issue.

Confederate commander and Ku Klux Klan founder General Nathan Forrest wasted no time after Union forces surrendered ordering the wanton slaughter of more than 300 black troops, women and children who were bayoneted, clubbed to death, saber-hacked, burned alive or buried alive. Death rates tell the story: Confederates one percent, Union whites 22 percent, Union blacks 63 percent.

At Fort Pillow State Park, exhibits do not mention the massacre, the only thing for which this minor fort has ever been known. One display tiptoes toward candor mentioning "the controversy" of numbers killed by race, and soft-pedals "different historical interpretations" on disparity in casualties by race. The word "massacre" doesn't appear anywhere in the park. For the full story, see the *Free Press* editorial in our November 2014 issue



at the Archives page of our website.

What the Tennessee Department of Parks does instead is cover up the massacre and idolize General Forest. Now over 150 years after his war crime, Forest is beginning to get his comeuppance. The nation's memory of Forrest was recently reawakened when students and parents at the Nathan B. Forrest High School in Jacksonville, Florida used a Change.org petition to convince the Duval County Board of Education to change the school's name. Parent Ty Richmond's petition drew 162,150 signatures. The school is 62 percent black.

Change.org bills itself as the "World's Platform for Change" and by online petitions has righted many wrongs.

Children's Underground Railroad Books and Games Debut

Author Lehman Riley is now well into a growing list of children's books on American icons Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Navajo Wind Talkers and others. His *The Adventures of Papa Lemon's Little Wanderers* tells of the exploits of multiracial grade-schoolers Baby Buck, AJ, Carlos, Kaya and Nikki who get into their share of mischief learning about prominent historical social justice figures.

The series includes study guides, music videos, games and even a Papa Lemon membership card all suited to grade school instruc-

tion. The testimonials are impressive. Visit papalemonedu.com for more.

We thank Virginia Tech doctoral student Kelly Munly for alerting us to these books.

Bryan Mayer's board game, *Freedom-The Underground Railroad*, teaches players about historical figures, political agendas and crucial events of 1800s America. Players help freedom seekers move north to Canada but every move risks alerting slave catchers who roam the board. Visit AcademyGames.com for more.



Lehman Riley

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Your vote can get history told truthfully by exposing a Civil War atrocity cover-up still being foisted on the public by a state park. 1



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Federal and Maryland Governments Get Tubman Memorials Going

Finally. After urging throughout his administration, President Obama signed into law on December 19 a Congressional bill creating national parks in Maryland and New York honoring the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman.

After six years of trying by the Senators from the two states, the United States Senate and House of Representatives passed bills authorizing creation of the parks and \$937,650 for trails, historical signage, exterior interpretation and utilities.

Said Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski, "I've been tireless in my commitment to recognize the historic role she played as abolitionist leader and Marylander. A Harriet Tubman National Historical Park is fitting tribute to honor her lasting legacy in Maryland and our nation."

On January 5, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley invited *Free Press* publisher Peter H. Michael and others around the state to the unveiling of a bust of Harriet Tubman in Government House, his official residence. The bust was created on the Governor's initiative and crafted at no charge by sculptor Brendan O'Neill, Sr.

In 2014, O'Malley also commissioned the large oil portrait of Frederick Douglass which now hangs in Government House, and in 2010 established the state's African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program.

Underground Railroad Free Press has long supported the honoring of Tubman, and continues to spearhead the effort to place a statue of her in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol.



Maryland Governor
Martin O'Malley

The Indomitable Spirit of Autherine Lucy

With slight changes for brevity, this article is reprinted with permission from one on May 2, 2014 of the same name by National Museum of African American History and Culture Director Lonnie G. Bunch in his newsletter to Museum members. *Free Press* is a charter member of the Museum.

The University of Alabama was founded in 1831. For the next 121 years, the school's unwritten "whites only" policy went unchallenged. That began to change when on September 4, 1952 a pair of young women, Autherine Lucy and Pollie Anne Myers, would begin a long, arduous battle to end segregation at the University of Alabama.

Lucy and Myers met at Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama, where Lucy was earning her bachelor's degree in English. Following their graduation, Myers suggested the young women apply to Alabama for graduate school. "I thought she was joking at first, I really did," Lucy told writer E. Culpepper Clark, author of *The Schoolhouse Door*, chronicling the fight to desegregate the University of Alabama. Myers wasn't kidding.

The pair sent inquiry letters to the university on September 4, 1952, and on September 13, just nine days later, they each received a letter welcoming them to the University of Alabama. On September 19, when Lucy and Myers submitted applications that indicated their race, admissions officials quickly changed their minds. The next day, the Dean of Admissions told the women a mistake had been made and the pair was turned away.

As news of Alabama's actions spread



Roy Wilkins, Autherine Lucy and
Thurgood Marshall at a March 2,
1956 press conference

through the black community, Arthur Shores and Thurgood Marshall, two of the most prominent African American civil rights lawyers in the nation, immediately went to work on behalf of Lucy and Myers. Shores first wrote to the university president, John Gallalee, and asked for the women to be reinstated. Gallalee refused. So, as September 1952 came to an end, Marshall and Shores launched what would become a three-year legal effort — Lucy and Myers vs. University of Alabama.

However, a year before the case's court hearing, one of the most significant events in American history took place. On May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court issued its landmark ruling in the case of *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka*, unanimously declaring segregation illegal. The policy of "separate but equal" was cast aside.

On June 28, 1955, just 13 months after the *Brown* decision, U.S. District Judge Harlan Grooms heard Myers' and Lucy's case against the University of Alabama. He listened to arguments from both sides that day and 24 hours later, ruled in favor of the young women. Finally, three years after Autherine Lucy and Pollie Anne Myers had been denied admission into the university, there appeared to be a light at the end of the tunnel for the pair. That was far from the case.

Hoping to discredit the young women, Alabama had hired private investigators to dig into their backgrounds. Shortly after Grooms's ruling the school discovered that Myers had been pregnant and unwed at the time she applied, a violation of the school's moral codes. Myers was disqualified from admission.

Now Lucy faced walking onto the all-white campus alone. Grudgingly admitted into the school — she was denied dining and dormitory privileges — Lucy stepped onto the campus on February 3, 1956, nearly four years after she had been turned away. There were no incidents during her first two days of classes. However, that changed on Monday, February 6. Students mobbed her, initially shouting hate-filled epithets. Lucy had to be driven by university officials to her next class at the Education Library building, all the while being bombarded with rotten eggs.

Once there, Lucy locked herself in a room and prayed for strength, she said later, fearing she was going to die at the hands of the throng. Finally Denny Chimes arrived to take her home. The mob quickly turned on him. With the horde distracted,

Please see Lucy, page 3, column 2

Editorial



Don't Privatize the National Parks

We thank Free Press subscriber and contributor Audrey Peterman of Earthwise Productions for bringing this important issue to our attention.

Peterman sums up an emerging movement by saying, "When our ancestors a century ago had the foresight to create a natural legacy for the American people, could we possibly be less sensible 100 years later to let it to be taken from us?"

Ten years ago, the super-rich wanted to privatize Social Security to gain control of the biggest of all pots of gold and invest all of it in the stock market. Howls by the public, liberal and conservative alike, quickly thwarted the proposal.

Now, reactionary ideologues, mainly in resource-rich western states, propose to nationalize federal lands run by the National Park Service, National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

Three Utah universities analyzed the proposal concluding late last year that, "Transferring national forests and other public lands to the state would cost Utah taxpayers at least \$280 million per year that could only be paid if the state increased drilling and mining, seized energy royalty payments owed to U.S. taxpayers, and raise taxes."

Writes Claire Moser of the Center for American Progress, "Advanced by a small group of radical politicians, state proposals to seize national forests and other public lands have gained momentum in the West over the past few years. These proposals are unconstitutional, unpopular with voters and would place an extreme burden on taxpayers."

The National Wildlife Federation's Bill Dvorak warns, "Sportsmen's fears of losing important fish and wildlife habitat would become reality as drilling and mining on public lands would have to finance this wrongheaded scheme. Utah could not afford those lands so taxpayers would end up paying more for fewer services, and the countryside supporting Utah's \$12 billion outdoor recreation economy would be damaged, closed off or sold to the highest bidder."

Privatizing public lands is one more one-percenter greed scheme to plunder at public expense. Join us in opposing it.

Lucy

Lucy was secreted to a patrol car and taken safely away from the campus. Later that night, the university's Board of Trustees voted to remove Lucy, claiming it was for her own protection.

The event made news worldwide. It was largely felt that local police had simply let the mob rampage. Attorneys Shores and Marshall filed a complaint saying the university had been complicit in permitting the crowd to intimidate and threaten Lucy, but the complaint proved to be a tactical mistake.

Unable to demonstrate that the school played a role in the mob action, Marshall and Shores withdrew the complaint but not before it had gone public which allowed the university to accuse Lucy of defaming the school and its administration, legal grounds for her expulsion. For all intents and purposes, Alabama had won.

While Lucy felt defeated, Marshall, who would become the first African American Supreme Court Justice in 1967, thought differently. In a letter to Lucy he said, "Whatever happens in the future, remember for all concerned that your contribution has been made toward equal justice for all Americans and that you have done everything in your power to bring this about."

Seven years later, Lucy's battle for equal justice finally bore fruit. In June 1963, Vivian Malone and James Hood became the first African Americans to enroll and become full-time students of the University of Alabama. Malone, who entered as a junior, received her bachelor's degree in Business Management in 1965.

Thirty-two years after Autherine Lucy was expelled from Alabama, she was asked to return and talk to a history class at the university. Shortly afterward, a pair of faculty members implored the university to reverse Lucy's expulsion and the university did just that, sending Lucy a letter in April 1988 inviting her to return.

In 1989, Lucy returned to the university to begin her master's degree in elementary education the same year her daughter Grazia started her undergraduate studies at the university. In 1992, mother and daughter attended commencement together to receive their degrees. Autherine Lucy was given a standing

ovation when she walked across the stage.

Today a \$25,000 endowed scholarship at the University of Alabama bears Autherine Lucy's name. When her portrait was installed at the university in 1992, it was entirely evident that her courage and sense of justice had helped change American society.

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Underground Railroad Free Press is a free newsletter published by Underground Railroad Free Press, 2455 Ballenger Creek Pike, Adamstown, Maryland, 21710. Back issues are available free at our website. *Free Press* is distributed by email. Send email address changes and new subscriber email addresses to publisher@urfreepress.com.

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