



UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREE PRESS®

Independent reporting on today's Underground Railroad community

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California, UK, France, and Australia Strengthen Laws Requiring Businesses to Report Suspected Slavery in Their Supply Chains

California, the United Kingdom, and France have all recently implemented their own versions of the UK's Modern Slavery Act that calls on businesses and companies to report on slavery in their supply chains.

While slavery is widespread, enforcement is being concentrated on South and Southeast Asia where it is especially prevalent.

California's anti-slavery requirements are spelled out in the state's California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2015. Newly strengthened enforcement includes The Act requires California manufacturers and retail sellers to train company employees and management who have direct responsibility for supply chain management, verify and evaluate product supply chains for risks of human trafficking and slavery, audit and evalu-

ate suppliers for trafficking, require suppliers to certify that materials used in products comply with the laws on slavery and human trafficking, and crack down on employees and contractors failing to meet slavery and trafficking standards. Violations are subject to prosecution by the California Attorney General.

However, the 2015 California anti-slavery law has a major shortcoming in that it applies only to businesses having annual worldwide gross receipts over \$100,000,000, thus not applying to a high majority of the state's businesses including many small sweatshops where it is known that California's slavery and human trafficking problem is concentrated. It is estimated that there are 3,400 enslaved persons in the state, nearly all of them immigrants.

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How many active Underground Railroad organizations are there? See our Lynx website page for over 160.

At urrfreepress.com/#_Links_1



Something on your mind? Have a good suggestion? Just drop us a line at info@urrfreepress.com.

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Free Press Prize Nominations Open Through August 31

It's that time of year again. Do you know of a person or organization doing great things for the Underground Railroad? Submit a nomination for one of the three annual Free Press Prizes. It's easy. Visit "Prizes" at our website.

Have Your Site or Program Listed

Join 160+ others at Lynx, the Underground Railroad community nexus.

Curious About Something You Would Like Researched?

Submit a question to be included in the annual *Free Press* survey coming up this month.

"Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Experience" Awarded

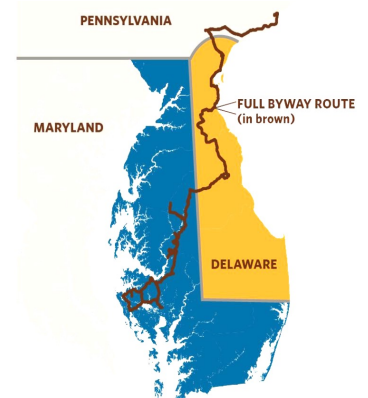
At its recent annual conference, the Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA) awarded the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Experience MEDA's 2018 Economic Development Marketing Award. MEDA is a consortium of state and county civil servants in executive economic development positions.

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Experience consists of the 125 miles of the Harriet Tubman Byway which winds its way along roads following nearby routes that Tubman took when leading escapes from her previous home in Dorchester County, Mary-

land, north through Delaware to Wilmington and on to Philadelphia.

The Tubman Byway was named one of the best driving tours in the country by the Federal Highway Administration for its scenic beauty and significant history. *USA Today* named two sites along the Tubman Byway—the Tubman Visitor Center and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge—as two of Maryland's 10 best attractions.

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Experience also includes a visit to the National *Please go to Byway, page 2, column 2*



Loving Day and Juneteenth, and Why Should We Observe Them

Award-winning author Tolbert McCarroll, better known as "Brother Toby", cofounded the ecumenical Starcross Monastic Community (www.starcross.org) in rural Sonoma County, California, in the 1970s. Before founding Starcross, he was an attorney for humanitarian causes. Starcross supports charitable work through the sale of premium olive oil from its own trees and from donations. The community's main endeavor involves homes that it founded in California, Romania and Uganda for abandoned children oppressed by the AIDS pandemic. The adoptive father of several children, he has for 50 years lived by Meister Eckhart's adage that what a person acquires by contemplation should be spent in compassion. Now well into his eighties, Brother Toby writes *Weekly Reflection*, enjoyed by thousands. Here is a recent gem that we think will appeal to *Free Press* readers. Reprinted with permission.

Some Days to Remember

June is a busy month. There are graduations, weddings, planting, weeding, and much more. Here at Starcross we also throw in a few commemorations, some of which you've probably never heard of before! I want to mention two that were important in the fights for human dignity.

Loving Day – June 12. Sometimes there is a trick question in a constitutional law exam, Discuss the legal issues involved in Loving Day. As you can imagine, there are a lot of wild guesses! But Loving Day is a commemoration of a Supreme Court case in 1967, *Loving v. Virginia*, which struck down all anti-miscegenation laws in the United States. It was the final end to bans on interracial marriage. Mildred Loving was African-American and married to Richard Loving who was Caucasian. They were arrested for cohabiting as man and wife, "against the peace and dignity" of the Commonwealth of Virginia. They avoided jail time by promising to leave Virginia and moved to Washington, D.C. The Supreme Court case was a unanimous decision and the couple moved back to Virginia.

The Supreme Court handed down the decision on June 12, 1967, and ever after that time this day is celebrated at many places in the United States, especially where mixed-race couples are common. The recent royal wedding in England shows how far we have advanced in issues like this. At one time interracial marriage was a serious situation. It seems right that we commemorate progress in human dignity on Loving Day.

Juneteenth – June 19. Racism has been and still is the great curse of American history. The Emancipation Proclamation became effective on January 1, 1863, but for various reasons it did not include all the slaves in the United States. It wasn't until June 19, 1865, when the estimated 250,000 slaves in Texas were freed by "General Order No. 3." It decreed that all slaves, including those in Texas, were freed. White supremacists immediately came up with new versions of slavery, including Jim Crow laws, segregation, lynching, imprisonment, legal abuse, poverty, etc. We still have a long way to go but there are reasons to rejoice about the step taken on June 19th.

Since the 1980s and 1990s, this holiday has been widely celebrated among African-American communities. Texas, to its credit, became the first state to establish Juneteenth as a state holiday. Today 45 of the 50 states recognize it in some fashion. And for various reasons, it is a big hit in Paris!

In an increasing number of places there are festivities featuring traditional songs and historical reenactments coupled with parades, street fairs, and cookouts. Added to these are the contributions of contemporary African-American writers and artists such as Maya Angelou (1928-2014), who wrote in her famous poem:

The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

Byway

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Historical Park visitor center, nearby Broddess Farm where Tubman grew up, the Bucktown Village Store, the Harriet Tubman Museum and seven other buildings along the way.

Much of the tour passes through very picturesque tidewater countryside which has changed little since Harriet Tubman last saw it.

The Byway is self-guided end to end. The Maryland portion features 30 sites starting at site no. 1, the Dorchester Visitor Center at 2 Rose Hill Place in Cambridge, Maryland.

The 2018 Free Press Survey

Look soon in your inbox for our invitation to participate in the 12th annual Free Press survey of the international Underground Railroad community. We are pleased to commission these yearly surveys and provide results at no cost to all interested. You are welcome to download survey reports and distribute them as you like. Visit urrfreepress.com for past survey reports.

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