

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

Branch #2070

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President	1 st Vice President	2 nd Vice President	3 rd Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
Fred Ross	Nina Jordan.	James Kaddy	Freddie Ross	Frances Elsemore	Rogers Johnson

Newsletter

January 31, 2010

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Our February membership meeting will be Monday, February 1st at 7pm. Location: One New Hampshire Avenue, the building with blue roof on the left, Pease Trade Port.

Please note that the entry doors are locked by a computer program. You will find a cell phone number posted on the door or window, call it, and you will be let in.

Walk through the lobby to the elevators on the left. Take the elevators to the meeting room on the third floor.

Editors' Note: With the approval of the executive committee, the co-editors, Allison Grover Khoury and Nina Jordan, will be making major changes to the newsletter. These changes will allow the branch to conserve much needed funds. The newsletter will be published quarterly and will include articles of interest to our NAACP audience such as reports from NEAC, and the annual convention, and news of our partner communities such as Cultural Connections, OMSA, SAACC and PBHT.

Edited minutes from the monthly membership meetings will be posted on the website, www.seacoastnhnaacp.com

Members without internet connection are encouraged to access the website at their local library.

Current Items of Interest:

The New Hampshire Bully Law

Bully Free New Hampshire: Seacoast NAACP supports the efforts of Carol Croteau, Jen Leonard, whose children have experienced debilitating Bullying in their NH public schools. State Representative Schlackman is promoting a bill that will strengthen the original Bully Law.

The New Hampshire legislature is in the process of revising its Bully Law. This is of special importance to our Legal Redress committee and all of us in the NAACP of New Hampshire because of the complaints we have received from parents of children of color over many years, regarding racial slurs and taunts.

A public hearing for the amended NH Bully Law is Tuesday, Feb. 2. with the Education Sub-committee at 2pm, Room 207 at the Legislative Office Building(LOB) in Concord.

The revised Bully Law would provide that:

"Each school district shall provide only evidence-based educational programs in its efforts to prevent bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyber-bullying including:

(a) Annual training for school employees, regular school volunteers, parents, legal guardians, relative caretakers, or employees of a company under contract to a school, school district, or chartered public school who have significant contact with pupils in preventing, identifying, responding to, an reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyber-bullying; and

(b) An educational program for pupils and parents in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyber-bullying.

Programs at UNH through February 4th in Commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr.

We are invited to attend all of the following MLK programs running from January 28 to February 4th at the University of New Hampshire, Durham. All of the programs are FREE and open to the general public on a first come first serve basis.

So please come and celebrate with us the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr! Invite your families and friends to these events. We will be graced this year with the presence of activist, poet and educator Nikki Giovanni.

Please visit the UNH website for a full listing of all of our programs: <http://www.unh.edu/diversity/mlk>

In addition there will be a host of performers during these celebrations, including the dance group Phunk Phenomenon from Massachusetts, here is a link to one of their performances:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GseOxFBa>

Green Acre Weekend Workshop ‘People of African Descent: A Nobler Expression, a Divine Purpose’

2/5/2010 - 2/7/2010, Green Acre Baha’i School, 938 Main St., Eliot, Maine. Program facilitated by Carl Murrell, Clyde Herring, Lloyd Lawrence and Kenneth Ray.

All are welcome and encouraged to join us for a special weekend dedicated to essential contributions of people of African descent to the future world. There will be presentations and discussions on The Role and Future of People of African Descent in America, Reflections on the Life of the Spirit as well as the Equality between Women & Men.

Enjoy an innovative Saturday evening poetry cipher featuring poets from the Urban Juke Joint in New York City and New Jeru Truths in Newark, New Jersey. The program takes place over the entire weekend but Saturday/Sunday only registrations are available as well.

Register online here: <http://www.greenacre.org/programs.aspx> Questions? Phone 207-439-7200 x7006

Seacoast African American Cultural Center Book Signing: The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks

On February 12 at 7:00 PM, Seacoast African American Cultural Center in collaboration with River Run Bookstore, will host a book signing for author Rebecca Skloot. This event will be at River Run Bookstore, 20 Congress Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801 (603) 431-2100

Rebecca has a new work of non-fiction coming out called THE IMMORTAL LIFE OF HENRIETTA LACKS. Information on the author and book can be found at:

http://rebeccaskloot.com/?page_id=8.

This month's issue of Oprah's magazine includes a 5000 word excerpt from this book.

The following review is from Booklist:

This distinctive work skillfully puts a human face on the bioethical questions surrounding the HeLa cell line. Henrietta Lacks, an African American mother of five, was undergoing treatment for cancer at Johns Hopkins University in 1951 when tissue samples were removed without her knowledge or permission and used to create HeLa, the first "immortal" cell line.

HeLa has been sold around the world and used in countless medical research applications, including the development of the polio vaccine. Science writer Skloot, who worked on this book for ten years, entwines Lacks's biography, the development of the HeLa cell line, and her own story of building a relationship with Lacks's children.

Full of dialog and vivid detail, this reads like a novel, but the science behind the story is also deftly handled. VERDICT While there are other titles on this controversy (e.g., Michael Gold's "A Conspiracy of Cells: One Woman's Immortal Legacy and the Medical Scandal It Caused"), this is the most compelling account for general readers, especially those interested in questions of medical research ethics. Highly recommended.

Bill to acknowledge the presence of slavery in New Hampshire

UNH professor and state Rep. Dr. David Watters wants New Hampshire to create a monument to acknowledge and commemorate New Hampshire's slaves.

"There's no public place we can acknowledge and recognize this history," said Watters, D-Dover.

Watters' bill would establish a commission to research the names and numbers of people enslaved in New Hampshire from 1645 to 1840, the year the last record of a slave was noted by a census-taker at B.G. Searle's farm in Hollis.

The commission would designate a nonprofit organization to collect donations to pay for the monument. Watters believes the monument should be on or near the Statehouse complex, but will leave it to the commission to decide. The only state money Watters is requesting is for mileage for commission members to attend meetings.

"The state Legislature was the body responsible for laws that permitted slavery or finally ended it," he said. "So, I think it is an issue of visibility in the state capitol."

Watters noted there already are great monuments to freedom on the Statehouse ground- 19th century statesman and New Hampshire native Daniel Webster, a replica of the Liberty Bell and a more recent monument to fallen police officers.

"These are important public statements of our commitment to freedom. I think this would be an important companion to those," he said.

Watters may face some resistance to placing the memorial on Statehouse grounds due to limited space. A dispute arose during plans for putting the law enforcement memorial across the street from the Statehouse was resolved when a mature tree was dug up and moved onto Statehouse grounds to make room for it.

Watters' bill is still being readied for introduction to the House and a hearing this winter.

Dr. W. Jeffrey Bolster, a history professor at the University of New Hampshire, said some people don't know that New Hampshire had slaves - though the numbers of slaves were not as large as in other New England states. Today, only about 1 percent of New Hampshire residents are Black.

In 1775 on the eve of the American Revolution, New Hampshire had 656 slaves compared with 5,000 in Massachusetts, 3,700 in Rhode Island and 6,400 in Connecticut, he said. While other Northern states abolished slavery in the late 1700s, New Hampshire largely ignored it and instead allowed it to wither as an institution until no slaves remained, he said.

Bolster believes New Hampshire was not immune to the thinking of the time that social hierarchies existed with White men who owned property at the top and indentured White servants and American Indian or African slaves at the bottom. The upper class assumed it would be served by social inferiors, he said.

As times changed, many of New Hampshire's slaves became freed servants, though a few were sold, he said.

Howard Zinn, historian and activist died January 27th

Zinn's book, 'A Peoples' History of the United States' includes accurate and candid accounts of the abuse by our government of the Native and African American people. In December 2009, Zinn spoke on the History channel about these events and impressed his audience with the fact that, while these are sad truths, they do not represent all that America stands for. Zinn expressed confidence in the American spirit to prevail.

The co-editors encourage you to access the performance of The People Speak from December 13,2009 on The History Channel. Zinn states:

“Rather than being set in stone, the United States remains a project in formation. The People Speak presents a view of American history in motion, telling the stories of ordinary men and women who have defined democracy through their powerful words and actions. The film traces the stories and experiences of everyday Americans through their own words, emphasizing the idea that democracy is not a spectator sport. It is achieved through the efforts of all citizens who have pushed the nation to live up to promises of the Declaration of Independence.

In the documentary, actor Morgan Freeman gives a dramatic reading of one of the great speeches in American history — "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro," delivered by Frederick Douglass in 1852:

"What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer, a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery.”

Douglass' words challenged the slave society of antebellum America, and continued to challenge the reality of Jim Crow laws and its legacy for generations. As an activist and reformer, he exemplified the commitment Zinn urges for all Americans — that we participate in the national dialogue and stand up for our beliefs.

Howard Zinn dedicated his career to engaging Americans of all ages in this conversation. Through books, the stage, his website, his non-profit organization, and now this film on history, he emphasizes the impact of dissenters and activists who have shaped our nation's story. It took protest and struggle to achieve much of America's social progress. People who are intrinsic to our country's narrative, remind us that protest, in fact, is as American as apple pie.”

Annual Picnic August 2009

The Annual Picnic was a great success, thanks to the hard work of our members who organized so much.

We thank our WalMart friends under the direction of Brian Malo for some fine refreshments.

We enjoyed rockin' tunes from the superb music of Jim "Batman" Kaddy and many others. The incredible musicians came from three working groups: Brian Munger Project, Quasi Mojo, and the Ray

DeMarco Band. They were happy to donate their time for the NAACP. Brian Munger Guitar & Vocal, Joel Norwood, Bass & sound equipment, Skip Gallant, Organ, Frank Hertziler, Guitar, Ray DeMarco Keyboard&Vocal and James Bat Kaddy, Drums. Kudos to: Fred Ross who supplied the generator that powered the equipment that made the music possible, and everyone who pitched in with trucks to carry and lift the equipment.

Our thanks also, to the many innovative ideas of Jacob Curtis and his help with the children's activities. The water activities, led by Jacob, hit the spot on a hot day in August! We were all excited to see our co-chair of the Newsletter, Allison Grover, her husband, Joe, and their son, Louis, all the way from Los Angeles! The food was perfect for a summer feast, especially the ribs by Rogers Johnson. Old friends and new friends spent many happy hours in conversation. A wonderful time was had by all.

NEAC Regional Meeting

Representatives from the US Census Bureau spoke to the gathering about the importance of the census, which will begin in mid-March, 2010. It will include ten questions, and should take about ten minutes. The US Census is needed in order to collect accurate data to determine representation in Congress and to determine where 400 billion dollars of federal funds will be allocated; also, where local services need to be allocated. It determines the drawing of state legislative districts and, finally, it helps to forecast local business demands. The census is a way to empower the individual citizen to say, "I'm here, count me!" The Homeless are counted at night where they sleep or at food pantries and shelters. Most people receive the Census material in the mail. No material is sent to PO boxes. Utmost confidentiality is assured by a fine of 250,000 dollars for any abuse. The data is kept in files until 72 years after its collection.

Annual Convention, July, 2009:

1ST Vice president, Nina Jordan attended the 100th National annual Convention in NYC. The resolutions, voted upon included the following: (From these resolutions are determined the priorities for the branches, for the year, know as, "PRIORITIES ATTUNED TO TODAY'S PROBLEMS")

Criminal Justice---to curtail inequities in the criminal justice and juvenile justice system...Blacks and Hispanics have far higher rates of arrest and incarceration and receive longer sentences when adjudged guilty.

Economic Empowerment---to improve financial literacy, access to credit , capital and other financial services... Blacks and Hispanics are often steered to bad mortgage and other credit instruments and suffer higher rates of foreclosure.

Educational Excellence---to establish effective, accountable and accessible public school systems with adequate funding...to correct the higher rates of suspension and drop-outs among the Black and Hispanic populations.

Health Advocacy---to strengthen physical and mental health justice, including environmental justice... greater attention to healthy life styles is needed in the Black community along with more accessible health care services. *see below

Political Empowerment---to increase the voter registration and voter turn-out among Blacks and other people of color. Blacks remain under represented in elected and appointed offices.

Civil Rights Compliance Enforcement by Governmental and Non-Governmental Entities---stronger advocacy is needed to ensure effective enforcement of employment and wage discrimination laws, fair housing and other civil rights laws.

STOP CAMPAIGN---NAACP is calling on the community and commercial industries to STOP THE

USE OF RACIST, SEXIST LANGUAGE AND IMAGES! STOP defaming our women, Degrading our community, Denigrating our history, accepting disrespect! RATHER,

START STANDING UP...by standing up against anyone who diminishes the capacity of our young people. START THE DIVERSITY ...by supporting balance and diversity of content in the entertainment industry to create positive role models for our young people.

[editors' note: these statements refer to comparisons with White communities. Hence, the term "White Privilege".]

Reminder: Our Google Search Raises Needed Funds

Online purchases through the GOOGLE engine box on the homepage of our Seacoast NAACP website: www.seacoastnaacp.com help us raise much needed funds for much of the work we do. Members are encouraged to access Google from our homepage.

Editors' Note: As mentioned at the beginning of the newsletter, we will now be providing some updates from meetings on a quarterly basis. The full minutes are available on the branch website: www.seacoastnaacp.com This edition, however, we are providing more details of the meetings September to January 2010 because there has not been a newsletter in so long.

September 2009 Meeting Minutes - excerpts

President's Report

President Fred Ross announced that the NAACP has announced its support of a new Consumer Financial Protection Agency as proposed by President Obama. The proposed agency would consolidate the agencies, currently meant to monitor and protect consumers' interests with a new emphasis on protecting mortgage loans and financial services for consumers. Fred noted that many of the abuses which contributed to the current economic crisis targeted low-income families and racial and ethnic minorities.

The Southern Law Poverty Center has reported the recent murder of an Ecuadorian immigrant by young people in an affluent neighborhood, citing the murder as part of a pattern of an increase in crimes against Latinos. Rogers Johnson added that many young people are inundated by poisonous rhetoric from pundits and politicians. Another factor is that in affluent neighborhoods, some young people have parents who are disengaged from the lives of their children; lacking positive role models. These young people may commit crimes out of boredom, because they do not see anything better to do.

The NAACP has established a new website which can be used to report incidents of police brutality or inappropriate action. The website is www.NAACP.org/research/test/mobile.

Fred has received a letter from the US Fish & Wildlife Service advertising job opportunities for women and minorities.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Veterans Affairs

On Flag Day, a ceremony was held at the Riverside Nursing Home, where worn-out flags were retired according to protocol.

Because of the state of the economy, veterans will not take an increased property tax reduction this year, in order not to place a greater burden on other taxpayers.

Environmental Sustainability:

Subject to approval by National, members voted to co-sponsor the Interfaith Sustainability Summit to

be held in November. This vote is consistent with this year's NAACP Convention's Centennial resolutions which included a resolution calling for Environmental Justice, that is, reducing the incidence of unsafe air, water and soil in those residential areas populated by Poor people

October 2009 Meeting Minutes - excerpts

President's Report

President Fred Ross expressed thanks to WalMart for their sponsorship of the successful annual picnic in August.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Freedom Fund

The Executive Committee has decided upon Saturday, April 24 as the date for a fundraising reception, pending availability at an appropriate venue.

Scholarship Committee

Rob McGann reported that a scholarship of \$450 has been awarded to Kyle Williams, who is now in his first semester at UNH and is doing well.

NEW BUSINESS

Eric Gootkind of Measured Progress presented Scholarship Committee Chair Rob McGann with a donation to the Scholarship Fund.

OPEN MIKE

Nina Jordan shared with members at the meeting her experiences and efforts in raising her awareness in race relations. One of her earliest experiences in recognizing disparities in the treatment of race was attending a meeting in 1991 where Julian Bond spoke on the topic of race relations to students at UNH. She joined the NAACP at that meeting. She recalled that at her first meetings, she counted the numbers of blacks and whites present, and considered it a benchmark in overcoming her racial self-consciousness when she could drive away from meetings without such counting.

Nina spoke of the significance of the teaching we provide children, remembering how her fourth-grade teacher showed her class a film on the life of Booker T. Washington, which Nina said "seared my nine-year old heart," and recalling that a neighbor gave her a book "Bright April," which depicted the life of an African-American family with a little girl Nina's age. But her earliest personal acquaintance with people of another race was always with individuals in service positions, and it was not until her first year in college, when she was a counselor at a camp staffed by people from Howard University, that she experienced a situation where her peers and supervisors were African-Americans. She added that a friend she met at the camp told her years later that he never experienced such a setting again.

Nina has remembered the question asked by an African-American friend: "Why should we have to explain ourselves to white people?" She also remembers an occasion when, staying at the home of an African-American friend and being surprised at the similarity between his home and her own, she recognized that she was guilty of prejudgment. She noted that we want to raise our awareness of these crucial moments in our learning. Nina concluded by saying that she hopes to be an ally to those who don't share the privileges she has had as a white woman.

November 2009 Meeting Minutes – excerpts

The Executive Committee has approved the appointment of Karen and Fredric Taylor as Co-Chairs of the Membership Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Legal Redress

Nina Jordan reported that many of the complaints brought to the attention of the Branch are coming from outside our geographic area, in which case they are referred to the Manchester Branch, to the New Hampshire Human Rights Commission or to NEAC.

The committee plans to extend an invitation to Portsmouth's new Police Chief and to the Superintendent of Schools, to talk about issues common to us all.

Press and Publicity

Dom Domingo submits press releases to Foster's Daily Democrat, the Dover Community News, the Rochester Times, and the Portsmouth Herald. These publications now require that news items be submitted two weeks in advance.

Website

Sandi Clark is updating the Website, and will be recruiting help for this work. Linda Freeman, who has moved to Washington, D.C., will continue to help with the Website.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Nina Jordan explained the revision of the schedule for publication of our Newsletter. Minutes of the membership meetings and the calendar will be posted monthly on the Website, and a fuller quarterly report will be posted after each NEAC meeting. These reports will include information from Branch committees as well as news of the NEAC meetings.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Nina Jordan introduced Judith Stadtman and Dr. Thomas Clairmont, who spoke to the Branch on health care issues.

Dr. Clairmont, an internist practicing in the Portsmouth area since 1980 and a long-time proponent of single-payer national health insurance, related the question of health care to issues of concern to the NAACP, quoting several statements made by Martin Luther

King, Jr. and providing informative material about the deficiencies of our present health care situation, some of which particularly impact Hispanic and African-American citizens. He also provided a Wall Street Journal report on the House bill now in process,

a background fact sheet on single-payer national health insurance, and an outline of health care systems from other countries which might serve as models for reform in the United States.

Ms Stadtman, field organizer for Change That Matters, a grassroots action campaign, talked about the Affordable Health Care for America Act, currently in process in the House. Citing problems with our present system, she outlined principles for an adequate policy and spoke of the urgency for passing milestone legislation which would begin to remedy these problems.

Ms Stadtman noted that reports are available at healthreform.gov on the effects on demographic groups of our health care system.

Both Dr.Claimont and Ms Stadtman entertained questions from members of the Branch.

December 2009 Meeting Minutes - excerpts

GUEST SPEAKERS

Members had the opportunity to hear three guest speakers at this meeting.

Joni Esperion, Executive Director of the NH Human Rights Commission, spoke of the Commission's role in respect to the courts, specifically as it relates to NAACP concerns. She said that the NH HRC has no jurisdiction when court users complain of unfair treatment in court, but does have jurisdiction when there are complaints of discrimination in employment, public accommodation, or housing.

Ms Esperion has not been able to find studies of discrimination in NH courts, but discussed the results of a 1999 1st Circuit Federal study in which court users reported having experienced instances of negative, inappropriate, and biased treatment. The respondents also provided a list of court-user recommendations which Ms Esperion hopes to discuss with the Chief Justice of the NH State Supreme Court.

She provided the Secretary with copies of "Relevant Law on Judicial Bias," which states in part that "A judge shall be patient, dignified, and courteous to litigants, witnesses, lawyers and others with whom the judge deals in an official capacity, and shall require similar conduct of lawyers, and of staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control." The document also states that "A judge shall not, in the performance of official duties, by words or conduct manifest bias or prejudice, including but not limited to bias or prejudice based upon race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status, and shall not permit staff, court officials and others subject to the judge's direction and control to do so."

In addition, the document states that "Whenever a party to any proceeding in a district court makes and files a timely and sufficient affidavit that the judge before whom the matter is pending has a personal bias or prejudice either against him or in favor of any adverse party, such judge shall proceed no further therein, but another judge shall be assigned to hear such proceeding."

Ms Esperion also left with the Secretary information about 'The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond', a national and international collective of antiracist,

Multicultural community organizers and educators dedicated to building an effective movement for social transformation. The People's Institute considers racism the primary barrier preventing communities from building effective coalitions and overcoming institutionalized oppression and inequalities. Through "Undoing Racism"/Community Organizing workshops, technical assistance, and consultations, The Institute helps individuals, communities, organizations and institutions move beyond addressing the symptoms of to undoing the causes of racism so as to create a more just and equitable society.

Ms Esperion pointed out that racial bias can be both conscious and unconscious, and that people can be acting from either. She believes that if we reach individuals early on, we can perhaps prevent them from developing unconscious bias. She also believes that if we put systems and checks in place, and educate, we can make progress against bias and discrimination. Joni Esperion does discrimination training for Law Enforcement, and urged that re-training take place each year, since there are frequent changes in the law regarding discrimination.

January 2010 Meeting Minutes - excerpts

President's Report

A \$250 grant has been received via Cultural Connections from the Geoffrey E. Clark and Martha Fuller Clark Fund, for general support of the Branch's activities.

President Ross spoke of a need for[* making common cause]and coordinating with local groups such as the Black Heritage Trail and women's groups that encourage the entrepreneurial efforts of women.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Freedom Fund

Freddye Ross has investigated possible venues for our April fundraiser, including the Governor's Inn in Rochester, a new function hall in Dover, Casey's Function Center in Portsmouth, the Best Western Hotel, and the Elks Hall on Jones Avenue. She noted that we will need to find sponsors for the event.

Legal Redress

Pat Gormley reported on a June 2006 letter to the NH Supreme Court from the NH Citizens Commission on the State Courts, reporting on the progress made toward an adequate New Hampshire judiciary, with recommendations for the further work that needs to be done. The full report may be obtained at http://www.courts.state.nh.us/press/cc_report.pdf

There is a series of update reports on progress on the recommendation of the report at

<http://www.courts.state.nh.us/aoc/budget0809/citcom072507.htm>.

The committee has received two complaints from the Correctional Facility in Berlin, as well as a complaint from a mother in Portsmouth pertaining to her daughter's treatment in a city institution.

Bob McElwain spoke of his moving and rewarding experiences with the Pease Greeters. He noted that it could be helpful to have more African-Americans among the Greeters.