



CSG East | 61st Annual Meeting NEW HAMPSHIRE 2022

Conference Newsletter - August 16, 2022

Advertisement for Runaway Slave Brought Story of 'Oney Judge' to Life

Buried deep in the archives in the early 2000s, searching through records and newspaper articles from the late 1700s, Erica Armstrong Dunbar came across an advertisement for runaway slave "Oney Judge."

"ABSCONDED from the household of the President of the United States," read the ad in the *Philadelphia Gazette* that day in May 1796.

Dunbar – an award-winning historian, Rutgers University professor, accomplished author, and executive producer on HBO Max's *The Gilded Age* – was taken aback.

"George Washington has slaves in Philadelphia..." she thought. "Here I am, a specialist in African-American women's history – why don't I know her name?"

What she uncovered that day, as we now know, was the story of Ona Judge, an enslaved woman born and raised at Mount Vernon and owned by George and Martha Washington.

She has since detailed the story in her book, *Never Caught – The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*, which was selected as a 2017 finalist for the National Book Award in nonfiction and won the 2018 Frederick Douglass Book Award.

Dunbar retold the story of Ona Judge at a plenary luncheon for CSG East on Monday.

Ona "Oney" Judge was born at Mount Vernon around 1774 and raised there. Her



Erica Armstrong Dunbar, center, posed for photos New Jersey Sen. Gordon Johnson, left, and his wife Jacqueline Johnson after Monday's plenary luncheon. Photo by Mary Schwalm

mother, Betty, was also enslaved and belonged to Martha Washington, who inherited her along with vast tracts of land owned by her deceased first husband. Her father, as far as Dunbar and other historians can tell, was Andrew Judge, a white indentured servant who lived at Mount Vernon and made uniforms and clothing for the man who would go on to become America's most famous general and president in the early days of the republic.

By age 10, Ona was chosen to go up to the mansion house, and eventually became Martha's most "prized, important, entrusted enslaved person."

"It meant that she did some of the most intimate work," said Dunbar. "[Ona] brushed her hair, helped her bathe, made her clothing, slept on the floor near her owner's bedroom. She was always there, but never to be seen. At the age of 16, when Washington was unanimously elected president, the family moved to New York, and Ona was brought with them (along with six other enslaved people)."

(Please see 'Oney Judge' on Back Page)

Meeting Reminders

Pick Up Your Badges

Conference badges are required at all Annual Meeting events! Pick up your meeting badge at registration at the DoubleTree. Registration is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday and Tuesday in Assembly.

Meeting Location and Shuttle Van

Meeting sessions will be at the DoubleTree by Hilton at 700 Elm Street. A shuttle van will be provided for attendees staying at the Hilton Garden Inn at 101 Commercial Street. Shuttles will run between the two hotels from 6:30-11:30 a.m. and 4-10 p.m. Monday and Tuesday.

Don't Forget the App

We encourage you to download the meeting app, where you can find program information in a format made for your phone, and visit our attendee website to see the full agenda.

Off-site Policy Excursions

If you are attending the Agriculture and Rural Affairs off-site tour Tuesday, please meet at the front of the hotel to board the bus to Loudon, New Hampshire.

If you are attending the Education off-site tour to ARMI, please meet in Assembly, it is a 5–8-minute walk to the Millyards. Wear comfortable shoes. Elevators are available at the facility for those who need.

Stay Safe

CSG East advocates following current New Hampshire Department of Health COVID guidelines, and the current meeting venues' and hotels' rules for COVID mitigation.

Masking is strongly recommended indoors except when eating, drinking, or presenting and outdoors in groups when physical distancing is not possible. Special care should be taken by those at higher risk or those caring for young children or more vulnerable adults.

Manchester Moments



Attendees enjoyed an opening night dinner at the McIntyre Ski Area Sunday night. In addition to dinner, they were able to travel up the mountain on the chair lift, have caricatures drawn, and take photos in the photo booth with a variety of Manchester backgrounds. Some enjoyed the real Manchester background in the tower at the top of the mountain.

Photos by Mary Schwalm



Manchester Moments



Policy sessions got underway in earnest on Monday with discussions on many important topics in the CSG East region. At top left, Vermont Rep. Patrick Brennan and Rhode Island Sen. Louis DiPalma participated in the Transportation Policy meeting Monday morning. Top right, Pennsylvania Sen. Judy Schwank, right, presented Vermont Rep. Carolyn Partridge a gift of knitting needles in recognition of her many years of service to CSG East upon her retirement from the Vermont legislature. Center row, left, David Adkins, CEO and executive director of The Council of State Governments, took a selfie with New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu before the governor gave remarks during the opening ceremony, which featured the presentation of colors by the New Hampshire State Police Honor Guard. Bottom left, David Wasserman, senior election analyst for the Cook Political Report, provided a preview for the 2022 midterm elections. Maine Rep. Lori Gramlich participated in the morning Health Policy session. At right, New Hampshire Rep. Linda DiSilvestro and Delaware Sen. Ernie Lopez chat during the Education Policy session.

Photos by Mary Schwalm

Agriculture Will Play a Key Role in Addressing Climate Change, Experts Say

Climate change is increasingly affecting agriculture in the Northeast, with warming temperatures extending growing seasons but also prompting the need for greater use of chemicals to curb the proliferation of weeds and pests, said panelists during a session on “Climate Change and its Impact on Northeastern Agriculture.”

Rising temperatures are producing more intense rainfall events, which can lead to crop losses and erosion, and impede fieldwork.

The good news is that there are accessible, cost-effective actions that lower planet-warming emissions and also produce co-benefits, such as better water filtration and healthier soils, said David Hollinger, director of the USDA Northeast Climate Hub.

Many farmers, particularly in the Northeast, are already embracing these practices. They include no-till agriculture and cover cropping, which capture carbon in the soil, reduce erosion, and help soil retain moisture and nutrients. Better fertilizer management practices can slash emissions of nitrous oxide, a harmful greenhouse gas, by up to 40 percent, and placing covers over manure pits can cut methane emissions and reduce harmful odors, said Hollinger.

Russell C. Redding, secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, said farmers tend to avoid discussions around climate change, even though many growers are already using practices that are addressing the issue.

“Our collective challenge is to convince the farm community that they have a role and they can own this,” Redding said. He has found that the language he uses to describe that role is important. A few years ago, Redding told a skeptical Amish farmer to think about climate mitigation as carbon management, “and he said, ‘oh, like nutrient management’ -- and a lightbulb went on,” said Redding. He added, “the words we use matter.”

--Rona Cohen



David Hollinger, director, USDA Northeast Climate Hub, above, and Russell C. Redding, secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, below, discussed climate change and its impact on northeastern agriculture during the Monday afternoon session on agriculture and climate change. Photos by Mary Schwalm.



Agriculture Receives \$40 Billion in Recently Passed Inflation Reduction Act

There's a lot going on in agriculture and rural development, as attendees of the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee heard Monday morning.

Fran Boyd, CSG East's Washington consultant, shared the good news that about 10 percent of the recently approved Inflation Reduction Act's \$400 billion price tag will go to agriculture needs.

“The agriculture community, whatever they thought of overall piece of legislation, worked very closely within parameters and leadership to be sure there would be something for ag in the bill,” Boyd said.

The bill includes \$20 billion to provide tools for farmers and ranchers to address climate change, \$9 billion of which is for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which Boyd called one of the most successful conservation programs the USDA runs for farmers and ranchers.

Boyd said the act includes about \$14 billion for clean energy conversion, but it's not exclusively for rural electric co-ops. There's



Fran Boyd, CSG East's Washington consultant, discussed the agriculture funding in the Inflation Reduction Act. Photo by Mary Schwalm.

also another \$5 billion for wildlife and fire protection.

“In that package, you can debate over what you don't like in it,” Boyd said, “but from the ag side, there's \$40 billion that can be well used.”

Boyd said the federal government is also in the middle of the Farm Bill cycle. This year, the five-year cycle comes with changes. “There's an open cycle of committees where, if you want to submit a statement or testimony, you can go on and submit to the committee so they have it,” Boyd said.

Boyd also noted the most important discussion with agriculture – ag labor – needs to be addressed. “It is the biggest issue facing America in this century,”

Legislators in attendance also shared what is happening in their states with regard to agriculture policy. Among the hot topics: PFAs, pesticides, adult use cannabis laws, and mental health assistance for farmers.

--Mary Branham

Inflation Reduction Act's 'Big Carrots' Will Benefit Households, Industry in the Clean Energy Transition, White House Adviser Says

States have been at the forefront of efforts to address climate change, and in the Northeast, aggressive renewable energy targets are hastening the transition to a clean-energy future, said David C. Hayes, special assistant to the president for climate policy, in an opening keynote address that officially kicked off CSG East's 2022 Annual Meeting.

Hayes added that the federal Inflation Reduction Act, which the U.S. House passed on Friday, will speed those efforts – using “big carrots,” not sticks, that will benefit not just big industries, but also “your constituents, your family, your neighbors – the little guy matters in this bill.”

Hayes described President Joe Biden's “whole of government response” to tackling climate change, which centers around “three legs of a stool”: setting a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50 to 52 percent below 2005 levels by 2030; accelerating the transition to a clean energy economy by creating industries not based on fossil fuels; and addressing climate impacts that are affecting us now. Biden is aiming for the United States to derive all of its electricity from carbon-free sources by 2035; achieve net-zero economy-wide emissions by 2050; and deliver 40 percent of the benefits from federal investments in climate and clean energy to disadvantaged communities.

The sprawling Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden is expected to sign in a few days, will invest a historic \$369 billion in climate-related efforts. The bill's “carrots” include a long-term extension of tax incentives for solar, wind, batteries, and other emission-free technologies; tax credits and rebates for households to purchase heat pumps and highly efficient electric appliances; and billions to upgrade affordable housing and help coastal communities become more resilient to the impacts of severe weather and storm surges. The bill also allocates \$27 billion for a national green bank, which – similar to state green banks – will leverage public capital to invest in a range of projects to reduce emissions. “This will be like a green bank on steroids,” said Hayes.



David Hayes, special assistant to the president for climate policy, discussed states are leading on climate action, a key objective for the Biden administration, during the Monday morning keynote address via Zoom. At the podium is Massachusetts Sen. Marc Pacheco, co-chair of the CSG East Energy and Environment Committee. Photo by Mary Schwalm.

The bill is expected to move the nation two-thirds of the way to achieving Biden's 2030 emissions-reduction goal, essentially by making clean energy cheap. Energy experts say the legislation could spur record-setting growth of wind and solar capacity, to the point where clean energy could comprise more than 80 percent of overall electricity by 2030, and that typical households will see their energy bills drop. It has been hailed by clean-energy experts as transformational in the fight against climate change.

“It's going to revolutionize our country,” Hayes said.

--Rona Cohen

'Oney Judge' Story Comes to Life after Historian's Find

(Continued from Front Page)

Not long after she crossed the Mason-Dixon line with the Washington family in 1790, the nation's capital moved to Philadelphia – a move that presented problems for the Washington family. In 1780 Pennsylvania had passed a law stating that any out-of-state residents bringing slaves to Pennsylvania could only stay for six months, after which their slaves could go free.

What followed was a series of letters between Washington and others, outlining plans to make sure none of his slaves were allowed to go free.

Shortly after, Ona faced even worse news: she was to be given away to a granddaughter of Martha's – a woman with a reputation for being stern and mercurial – as a wedding gift. The trip would take her back to Virginia where, “she supposed, she could never escape.”

“She had given everything to the Washingtons, and now she was being discarded like the scraps of material she cut from Martha's



Author Erica Armstrong Dunbar discussed her book, “Never Caught – The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave Ona Judge,” during Monday's opening plenary session. Photo by Mary Schwalm.

dresses,” said Dunbar, reading an excerpt from the book. “She knew that no matter how obedient she had appeared, she would never be considered fully human. Her fidelity meant nothing; she was their property, to be sold, mortgaged, or traded with whom ever they wished. And it was this moment

she made the decision to escape.”

What follows is one of the best-preserved stories of a fugitive slave and the only recorded one that begins at Mount Vernon.

The story also has a connection to the host state of New Hampshire. After fleeing the president's residence in Philadelphia and boarding a ship, Ona landed in Portsmouth.

She lived the rest of her life in New Hampshire, always wary of the risk of recapture. Much later in

her life, she gave interviews to abolitionist newspapers in New Hampshire and greater New England, ensuring that her story – one of the great American stories of the time – was preserved forever.

--Dylan McDowell