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MAR 2023

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**Featured article*

Useful Links

[Review](#) and update your profile or renew your membership

[View](#) the calendar of upcoming US Servas related events

[Access](#) worldwide Servas Members to plan your travels

[Volunteer](#) to share your talents and time in supporting Servas

[Read](#) contributions from younger members of Servas

[Contact](#) the Peace Secretary

[Suggestions](#) for the Newsletter, or for US Servas, are appreciated.

US Servas Members would love to read about YOUR travels, experiences, and your community endeavors that promote Peace and Social Justice. We are also looking for your advice -- traveler and host tips. Please submit your contribution [HERE](#).



Save the Date 2023 US Servas National Conference Oct. 6-8

This fall, October 6th to 8th, we are hosting our National Conference at [Frost Valley YMCA Camp](#) in Claryville, NY, about 2 ½ hours northwest of NYC. This gorgeous 5,000-acre facility is located on the ancestral homeland of the Munsee Lenape people. Since this weekend precedes Indigenous Peoples Day, we have reached out to the Lenape and hope to have them participate.

This year's conference will focus on peace... with our planet, our world of nations, our country, our community, our tribe, and most of all—ourselves. We are planning a festive, informative, and rewarding event with presentations, hands-on workshops, break-out sessions of special interest, and music and social events in the evenings. Up to three US Servas members will be recognized for their noteworthy efforts to promote peace. They will be presented with our first-ever, US Servas Peace Awards (see next article).

Consider making the conference part of a vacation: spend two nights in NYC with-Servas hosts, two nights at the conference, and two days in the NY Finger Lakes region visiting vineyards, hiking the incredible Watkins Glenn Gorge, visiting the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown or the Corning Glass Museum. Early October in the Catskills is spectacular with pleasant temperatures and brilliant fall foliage near its peak. Look for more details about the conference in upcoming issues. We look forward to seeing you there.



US Servas Announces Annual Peace Award \$\$

Do you know a US Servas member who is doing some noteworthy things to make our world a better and more peaceful place ... someone who inspires you to do more? Maybe it's working with



refugees, or putting water and supplies in the desert for immigrants, or setting up gleaning operations for a food pantry, or working to promote racial justice or gender equality. If so, they might be eligible to receive

one of three US Servas Peace awards to be presented at our 2023 National Conference this October 6-8... the weekend before Indigenous Peoples Day.

Our National Peace Secretary, Yosi McIntire, and the US Servas Community Outreach team will review applications, then forward their recommendations to the Board of Directors. The member whose efforts are deemed “most worthy” will receive recognition at the US Servas 2023 Annual Conference this Fall. The awardee will also receive up to a \$500 reimbursement for conference related expenses.

In addition, US Servas will make a \$500 donation in the member’s name to the umbrella non-profit group under whose auspices they worked. The Peace Secretary may present up to two additional awards of \$500 each (\$250 conference expenses plus \$250 donation). It is our hope that winner(s) or their designees will make a brief presentation at the conference.

We look forward to hearing the stories of our amazing Servas members. Show how much you respect their efforts by sharing their stories with the rest of us. Our website is being updated to include details and a submissions form for the award. In the interim, please submit their story (or yours) to me at PeaceSecretary@usservas.org.

Upcoming Elections

The Elections Committee is gearing up to ensure that the next slate of Board Members, to be elected



by U.S. Servas members in September 2023, are the best volunteers to continue the work of U.S. Servas. Information will be available soon on a new website page accessible

from the Members Area tab when U.S. Servas members log in to their online accounts. Members who would like to make a nomination for the Board or receive a notice of when additional information is available online may send an email for further information to elections@usservas.org

Why don’t we have a stronger anti-war movement?

By Yosi McIntire, US Servas Peace and Justice Secretary

The current military budget is approaching \$1 trillion – and much of the American public has essentially bought into acquiescence. Today, most holders of the more common mutual fund portfolios are not concerned about being invested in weapons manufacturers’ stocks. Typically, college students



have little knowledge or interest in the anti-war movement that once thrived on campuses.

Joan Roelofs’ new book “The Trillion Dollar Silencer: Why There Is So Little Anti-War Protest in the United States” (Atlanta: Clarity Press, 2022), suggests the answer is money.

Particularly important is the fact that military bases have been placed strategically across the country, often in remote rural areas, where they become the life-blood of economic development. Millions of American workers find jobs with military contractors or their subsidiaries, which finance scholarships and internships.

The military's extensive philanthropic endeavors have helped to normalize militarism. A significant portion of grants to universities, businesses and engineering firms are geared to research and funding to train the next generation of weapons-producers. Opposition to U.S. foreign policy in universities has resulted in dismissal from employment.

According to Roelofs, our over-reliance on military spending is taking its toll. The link between bloated military spending and issues such as climate-change inaction, environmental protection, the crisis in public education, health-care, housing, poverty, etc. has been all but abandoned while the military industrial complex that General Eisenhower warned about in his Farewell Address in 1961, continues to always get its way. Meanwhile we are witnessing a continued deterioration in civilian industrial infrastructure, political polarization, a negative balance of trade, and a mounting deficit.

Investment in civilian research, and an anti-war movement are desperately needed.

Save the Date



Slick Highway Robbery

By Bill Magargal

We have been Servas travelers and hosts since 1994, and we figure we are fairly savvy to come-ons and shakedowns. I mean really, we can handle beggars in India, touts in Bali, cabbies in Mexico, so yeah, we're hip. That was until we were robbed while driving on a toll road in Spain, and we didn't even know we'd been had.

Recently we did a three-month wandering through southwestern Europe, visiting fabulous Servas hosts along the way! Near the end of our trip, we stayed in Figures, home to the wonderful Dali Museum. The next day we drove to Bar-



celona. We were on a six-lane toll-road about half-way between the two cities when a sedan pulled up beside us, honking the horn. The passenger had his window rolled down and was shouting something and pointing to the rear of our car.



We thought, do we have a flat? Are we leaking something? Hmm, so we pulled over to the shoulder. The sedan pulled over in front of us. We got out and the passenger hustled back to us and pointed to the right-rear tire. "Señor, señor, look!", he said. We squatted down; I felt around the tire looking for a bubble or leaking oil. We looked at the rear of the car to see if something was hanging down. -Nada. After a few minutes the passenger shrugged and said, "I go."

Marie and I shrugged ... what was that all about? We got back into the car and continued driving. A mile or two later I looked at the console where I had put my wallet (I needed the credit card regularly for tolls) and didn't see it. I asked Marie, "Do you see my wallet?" "No.", she said, "Do you see my purse?" We pulled over to look.

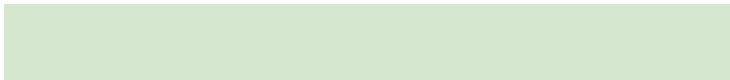
It turns out that while we were inspecting our tire, the driver of the other car snuck back, opened the driver-side door, stole my wallet, Marie's purse, and a daypack holding our computer, iPad, chargers, etc. Poof! All our money and credit cards were gone. Fortunately, our passports were still in our luggage in the trunk.

We got back onto the highway figuring we would get off two exits ahead where Google showed a police station. We pulled off and approached the toll-booths ... Oh, crap, we don't have any money for the toll, so we pulled over. It must have been our lucky unlucky day, for in a few minutes a Spanish

highway patrol car pulled into the toll booth ahead. We both jumped out of the car, shouting and waving our arms.

Gratefully, the patrol car turned around and helped us. They got us through the tolls and took us to their headquarters. We filed reports, contacted our credit card company, and began the process of recovery. It turns out we were the 5th such incident that day. It turns out there are several versions of this trick, one where the perps put a small hole in your tire at a rest stop.

Our suggestions: if you stop on a highway, make sure you lock your car. Keep your wallet on your person. If you need quick access to cash or your credit card, put it in a small compartment or the glove box. Finally, make sure your credit card company can and will quickly provide you with a chip-enabled replacement. Ours could not, so we had to shorten our trip. Well, at least we got a good story out of our experience.



April 28th – May 2nd, 2023
Servas Bike Ride and Tour of Brindisi

Servas Italy will host a four-day walking and cycling tour in and around historic Brindisi from April 28th to May 2nd. Participants will gather on the evening of Friday the 28th for a reception and dinner at the Fabbrica del Farò. On Saturday, attendees will tour the old section of Brindisi, then return for dinner and a social event. Sunday & Monday are two easy days of cycling 30-40 km. Click [HERE](#) for more information on this event.



May 25th – 28th, 2023
Servas Korea Peace Ride

Servas Korea will host a four-day, 3-night Peace Ride along the Geumgang River, May 25 - 28, 2023. The route begins at the Daecheong Dam and ends at the Seonyudo Islands, a Distance: 640 km (Biking 220 km + Bus 420 km) The ride is limited to 40 Servas members who love cycling and wish to share connectedness, and the dramatic scenery along the Geumgang River, natural beauty of the Seonyudo Islands and seashore.



Portion of the bike trail along the Geumgang River

The ride averages a very manageable 50-60 km per day and includes overnight hostel stays. Bikes may be rented for \$10 per day. Registration for the ride is \$274. It looks like this will be a very magical event. For details, click [HERE](#).



June 2nd – 4th, 2023
Youth - Volunteer Opportunity
Wik Castle Festival – Sweden

Four Servas youth members age 18-35 years old are invited to work as volunteers during the medieval festival at [Wik Castle Festival](#), close to Uppsala. You are welcome to stay between the 30th of May to the 5th of June, but the actual workdays will be the June 2nd - 4th. Three days filled with historical experiences with knight games, knight weddings, jesters, Viking ships, musical performances, and a contemporary market with food and so on.



Wik Castle Festival

There will be work both inside in the kitchen and out



Wik Castle

side collecting entrance fee, attending the parking lot and other work together with a garden caretaker. Room and board are paid for during the entire period at the site. During your stay you will also meet other Servas members in the area. If you wish to visit some other areas in Sweden before and after let us know.

If this sounds thrilling don't hesitate to contact Eva Hartman-Juhlin by emailing info@servas.se no later than May 1st. We are all looking forward see you here in Uppsala!



July 7th – 13th, 2023
“Sentierinsieme” – Alpine Hiking,
Oropa, Biella, Piedmont

Sentierinsieme (Pathways Together) is our traditional yearly alpine event - organized since 1985 - where Servas members from all over the world come together. Italy, France, Switzerland, and Germany take turns each year in hosting this event aiming to meet people and getting to know each other as well as the surroundings, according to the most genuine Servas spirit. Participation is reserved to Servas members in good standing with their annual fee. Hiking excursions have been classified in different levels of difficulty, from easy (up to 400-500 m elevation gain per day) to difficult (up to 1,400 m elevation gain per day).

We will be staying at 1180 m above sea level at the guest quarters of the Santuario d'Oropa, a UNESCO World Heritage site in the heart of the Alps of Biella, known for their wonderful views and cool summer climate.



Servas hikers in Italian Alps

The event begins Friday, July 7th with a reception at the Santuario guest house. On the weekend we will make daily excursions within the

surroundings of the Sanctuary. The following three days (Mon. July 10th thru Wed. the 12th): will have treks of varying difficulty levels divided into 5 groups (from “easy” to “hard plus” level). You can choose to participate only in the weekend program, or the full week. Click [HERE](#) for registration and program details. Registration must be made by March 12th.

Appeals from Turkey

By now, we have all heard about the catastrophic earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Our very own, Radha Radhakrishna, President of Servas International, reached out to members in Turkey about the disaster. Their responses follow:



Ekinci before and after earthquake

Message from Mehmet Ateş

This is Mehmet Ateş, coordinator of Servas Peace School in my village of Ekinci, Antakya-Hatay Turkey. The epicentre was in Gaziantep. Gaziantep is around 200 km from Ekinci. Images from nearby town of Dyarbakir on TV shows how terrible it is. The problem is that the buildings are not earthquake proof, otherwise the loss of human lives would not have been so dramatic.

The region is Antakya. The nearest airport to Ekinci is Hatay airport, which is now closed because the destroyed tarmac uplifted, due to the tremors. So, the runway has been closed for flight operations.

My village and Antakya are 60 km far from the border with Syria. We have casualties but less than in the city center. Victims in city center urgently and desperately need more search and rescue teams.

Secondly, heaters, tents and blankets. The best way to send help is to do it via reliable organizations who act fast to reach the earthquake zones: A local one we recommed is [Turk Kizilay](#). Thank you ... Servas is a real solidarity...



Message from Gülşen Elyak

Gülşen Elyak is the National Secretary, Servas Turkey and member of SI Internal Audit Committee

Dear Radha and all the Servas members who are so intent to help and who reached out immediately to let us know that we are not alone... our gratitude is indescribable. As Mehmet, Esra, Tuana and the other witnesses of this disaster point out, we really need help physically and spiritually. Thank you so much for giving your support so freely and so humanly.

Unfortunately, hundreds of aid organizations appear after every bad incident, so we will share with you the aid channel we trust most. To make a donation visit the [Ahbap \(Dude\)](#) website.

Note: Both of the websites listed above may show up in Turkish. One of them has a small EN in the website navigation bar that will help. The Google Chrome browser does a very good job of translating the pages.



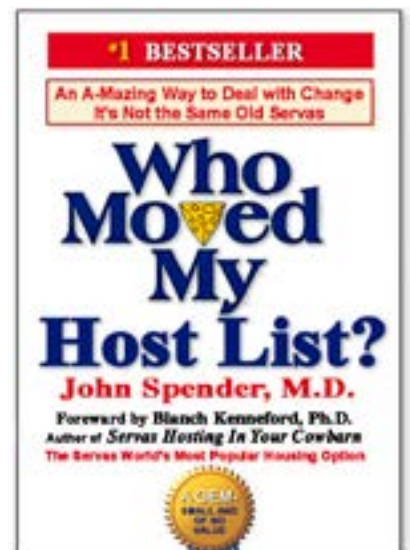
Are You Getting the Servas International News?

SI publishes Servas News Bulletin on a quarterly basis. The most recent one was released as an email in January ([Read Issue](#)). It has been brought to our attention that some US Servas members are not receiving it. If you are not receiving the SI New Bulletin, please contact mts@servas.org.

Who Moved My Host Lists?

Well, times have changed ... it's not your same old Servas. The good news is, no more four-year-old, outdated Host List Books. The bad news? You must learn some new **Computer Skills**. Yikes! Thank goodness it isn't all that hard.

As you probably know US Servas has now moved to two new computer systems: our US__website –which keeps track of our contact information, and the Servas International (SI) website–, which has all travel and hosting related information. All but a few, small or developing nations are also using the international site. We can still provide you with a host list for the very few nations that are not using the SI website.



Although the International system has its quirks (version II is on the way), it does have a great search engine to “Find Members” and to create custom host lists. Better yet, it has a map search view, which lets you look for hosts on a map. This means you don't have to know the name of every small village near the route you are traveling. You simply click on bubbles that appear on the map. You can also create your own, custom host list that includes the hosts you have check-marked on a search you have done. Here are links to short, Quick-Help Guides that show you how to [Find Hosts](#), and to [Create a Host List](#).

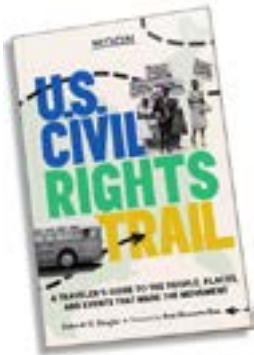
FEATURE STORY

phone friendly version



Engaging With Servas Values Close to Home: A Travel Report from New Orleans and the US Civil rights Trail

By Andrea Veltman and David Schwartz



Is it possible to put Servas values at the forefront of your travels whether or not you are staying with Servas hosts, whether or not you are traveling abroad? We believe it is both possible and enriching to do so. Here is a trip report that shows how we raised our cross-cultural awareness and also had lots of fun without leaving the USA.

*“What fascinates me most about history is how it helps us make sense of the present. Becoming aware of it can then empower us to be more than passive, unwitting participants in events as they unfold around us... It’s one thing to read about history in a book and quite another to find yourself physically present in a space where a certain event occurred, where the walls around you and the land beneath your feet bear witness to what happened and **hold palpable energy that propels you forward toward a greater understanding of your own place in time.**”*

Bree Newsome Bass in forward to *US Civil Rights Trail* by Deborah D. Douglas



We have felt that energy of greater understanding when standing at a site of Khmer Rouge atrocities in Cambodia; walking the grounds of the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland; and looking at the wide Atlantic through the “Door of No Return” at the slave castle in Elmina, Ghana. We must witness and understand what happened at such sites to become as educated and aware as we can be and then, in turn, help shape our world.

On two recent trips to parts of the US Southeast, we felt that same propelling energy as we gained insights into a culture and a history much closer to home. We also let the good times roll: opportunities

abound for both kinds of travel—the somber and the joyous. We hope that many fellow Servas members will travel on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail and tell its stories. Our own country has beautiful cultures and traditions that enrich our lives, and in following the Servas mission, we have enjoyed increasing our awareness of them.

New Orleans overflows with parades, joyful music, gourmet meals and regional dishes often served with creative cocktails, and museums full of amazing Mardi Gras costumes.

This charm of a city and its friendly inhabitants offer more possibilities for fun and entertainment than any visitor has time for. Our favorite was the walking parade of the Krewe of Barkus—dogs and their owners dressed up as kings, ballerinas and whatnot



Barkus Dogs, New Orleans, LA

trying to move together in one direction with costumes in place while doing important dog activities like going in circles sniffing each other’s rear ends, chasing treats, and greeting the curbside onlookers.

In two recent trips to the city, we added a sprinkling of history to the mix. Here are a few things we enjoyed that you might like to explore:

Hidden History Tours: Leon Waters (“Mr. Leon”) leads walking and driving tours in New Orleans, highlighting events related to the civil rights struggle. He is a lifelong activist and historian, and a leader of several nonprofits. We appreciated his depth of knowledge, his patient answers to our questions, and his inclusion of a stop for “naked” (no powdered sugar) beignets at the legendary Café du Monde—the best fried dough ever! (If no tours are scheduled, write or call to request a custom tour. Mr. Leon is very accommodating.)

The Whitney Plantation: About an hour out of New Orleans, this is the only restored plantation that focuses on the experience of enslaved people, including their lives after Emancipation as indentured field hands. We also learned that enslaved, indentured and imprisoned African-Americans built many levees, streets, railroads, and buildings all over the U.S.—including the original wall of New York’s Wall Street. Quotes supplied by the Federal Writers Project provide context and insight.¹ In addition to preserved and rebuilt historic buildings, the plantation displays several memorials; sculptures that offer space for reflection; a small indoor museum; and a



A memorial to the 1811 German Coast uprising of slaves

gift shop with a large offering of books and beautiful, useful handmade items from cottage industries of African and African-American Communities.

We made a list of New Orleans restaurants, museums and sites—see **TIPS AND RESOURCES** below. These recommendations were provided by our friend Laura Livoti, who fell in love with the city and moved there in 2014. We also had a lovely time and many interesting discussions while staying with two wonderful Servas host couples, but that’s a different story.

Montgomery is about a 5-hour drive from New Orleans, and we were inspired to go there by the book *U.S. Civil Rights Trail* by Deborah D. Douglas (see

TIPS AND RESOURCES), which dedicates 34 pages to all aspects of visiting Alabama’s capital city. Here are our own top experiences:

The Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration

Opened in 2018, this museum is overwhelming both physically and emotionally, but its value can’t be overstated. Be prepared for many galleries of difficult and sad information from the transatlantic slave trade to domestic slave breeding, from lynching to mass incarceration, and recent examples of police brutality. Care was taken not to spring any disturbing imagery on anyone, so it’s completely your choice what and how much you want to know and see. It’s important to spend enough time in the exhibits (4-8 hours). The museum is well organized and includes a theater in each section. We felt compelled to spend time absorbing and mourning the statements by victims, witnesses and newspaper reporters. We came to understand so much better what we had thought we already knew—for example, the direct connection between the Great Migration (1910–1970) and the epidemic of lynchings, which lasted until 1950. Terrorized individuals, families, and whole neighborhoods of Black Americans (approx. 6 million of them) left everything behind—sometimes with just minutes or hours to prepare—in the hope of living more peaceful and productive lives in northern cities or western states.

Note: *You are not allowed to bring food or beverage into the museum, including water. Furthermore, no water is available inside the exhibit area and there are no lockers to store your own drinks. The only way to satisfy hunger or thirst is to depart the museum and re-enter through Security. There’s a small eatery adjacent to the museum selling good food in bad Styrofoam (but no coffee in any kind of container!). You might want to plan a break at one of the restaurants or coffee shops within five or six blocks.*

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice

This is a beautiful place to reflect and pay respect to the thousands of people who fell victim to lynching. Both the museum and the memorial are the work of

the Equal Justice Initiative, and admission to the Memorial is included in your ticket to the museum. The EJI has documented more than 4400 racial terror lynchings in the United States during the period between Reconstruction and 1950, though many more were never reported.



As we stood in the memorial, looking at the names of so many men and women whose productive and creative lives were cut short in horrific ways, we thought about our own families' legacies. We are both of European descent, one of us an immigrant, the other second generation. Our lives were shaped, both emotionally and economically, by what happened to our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. Our families' own hardships were indeed trying, but in many respects, they pale at the comparison with what was presented in this space. And we got just a glimpse of the tribulations of many African American citizens of this country. Americans must understand how chattel slavery and its legacy have impacted society in all parts of the world, to the

benefit of white citizens, and how its effects are lasting to the present day. More information:

Time for a break from all the heaviness: **The Hilltop Public House** on 3 Goldthwaite Street offered us a few hours of lively discussions with the local crowd over good cocktails. It's a coffee shop by day and a bar at night, with one corner of the space used by a bike repair and sales business. If you go there, ask Rebecca if she has gotten her Servas membership yet.

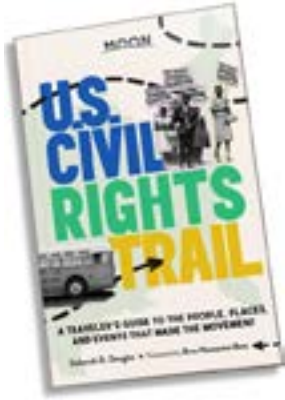
Airmen of Note The elite jazz band of the U.S. Air Force presents a free holiday concert in Montgomery every December. The band's style is modeled after the big bands of yore, especially that of Glenn Miller who started a jazz ensemble when he himself was an airman during WWII. These highly skilled and well-rehearsed musicians are also great showmen. What a hoot! How lucky we were to catch this performance, quite by accident. With a flexible schedule and little advance research, you might be able to plan your own trip to coincide.

We visit sites of great tragedies and injustices because we believe that we owe respect to those who suffered and died there, and as a reminder that history can repeat itself and we must understand the past to make good decisions for the future. The sadness that occasionally comes with this type of travel is a small price to pay. Our own country has beautiful cultures and traditions that can enrich our lives if we are exposed to them. What better way to travel than to follow the Servas mission?

TIPS & RESOURCES

New Orleans

- Petit Jazz Museum
- Backstreet Cultural Museum
- The TEP Center
- The Lower 9th Ward History Museum
- Karl Mack Mardi Gras Museum
- Free People of Color Museum (by apt only)
- House of Dance and Feathers (a small, eclectic collection)
- Beaucoup Eats
- Bayou Bistro
- Compere Lapin
- Ancora Pizza (delicious wood-oven pizza with imported Italian wheat that's tolerated by many gluten-sensitive guests)
- The High Hat (one of the best New Orleans-style restaurants at reasonable prices)
- Wayne Jacobs Smoke House in La Place near Whitney (closes at 2pm)
- Kid Ory House (the old Manual Andry Plantation where the 1811 Slave Revolt started)
- Jazz Museum at the old mint on Esplanade (sometimes they have concerts during the day)
- New Orleans Museum of Art & sculpture garden



The Book That Guided Us

U.S. Civil Rights Trail

A Traveler's Guide to the People, Places and Events That Made the Movement

by Deborah D. Douglas, 2021
(Moon Publications)

The U.S. Civil Rights Trail was created in 2018 to preserve and share the history of one of the most transformative times in America's story. The trail crosses 15 predominately Southern states where pivotal battles for civil rights took place.

Do you know the full spectrum of cultures that has shaped the United States? How do you present our diversity and the many schisms to your Servas guests and foreign hosts? Most white Americans have yet to reconcile our country's history with its values. Such introspection is hard, but this travel guide makes the journey into this part of America's history and geography as easy as it can be—and something to be proud of! It covers thirteen cities, from Charleston to Little Rock to Washington D.C., and it includes:

- background information, context, and details for visiting historic sites
- transportation, shopping, food and accommodations, festivals and events
- tours by local guides
- recommended restaurants, bars and shops that are Black-owned and/or celebrate Black culture in America (we had a hot dog at Dr. Martin Luther King's favorite lunch counter in Montgomery!)
- quotes and stories from activists past and present
- music for the road in the form of playlists

More to Read, See & Hear

Excellent [video](#) about the major events and cities along the U.S. Civil Rights Trail

[Interview](#) with Deborah Douglas, author of the U.S. Civil Rights Trail guidebook that we used.

[Clint Smith](#), author of *How the World Is Passed*.

[Interview](#) of Clint Smith with Terry Gross on NPR's *Fresh Air*:

[Homegoing](#) by Ghanaian-American author Yaa Gyasi

[Born in Slavery](#): Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1938

[Tainted by Racism](#): Is the Greatest Collection of Slave Narratives Tainted by Racism?

Great Films & Documentaries

Mississippi Burning • Kanopy (free with library card)

In the Heat of the Night • Paramount Plus (and elsewhere)

Self-Made • Netflix

Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice • Kanopy

The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution on PBS

Passion for Justice • Kanopy

Andrea Veltman and David Schwartz are long-time Servas members. They live in Oakland, California.



UN 2023 Water Conference
22 – 24 Mar 2023, New York



Check website for more Information