

the Stand

south side news

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Syracuse, NY

FEBRUARY 2016 Issue 48 FREE

TOGETHER TIME

Edmund Sherrod Taylor loves watching his sons wrestle and play

Heat bills strain wallets
Families make tough choices on what they can afford

events galore

Join the community in celebration of Black History Month

Meeting neighbors
TNT liaison Tina Zagya starts the conversation

TIPS FOR A NEW BUSINESS



INSIDE | FEBRUARY

the Stand

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SPECIAL THANKS THIS MONTH

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THE STAND IS BASED OUT OF THE
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2331 SOUTH SALINA STREET
SYRACUSE, NY 13205

COMMUNITY | Chat it up with the Syracuse Inner City Rotary Club, which has just begun an informal monthly conversation featuring a prominent community member each time.

SCHOOL AND YOUTH | Read about a rule that will allow more students in the Syracuse City School District to take the bus to school instead of having to walk.

BUSINESS | Learn from entrepreneurs who have dreamed it and done it — and who share personal examples of successes and failures in starting their own businesses.

FATHERHOOD | Meet Edmund Sherrod Taylor, our featured dad in this month's Fatherhood Q/A, who shares what he learned from his own father as he raises his three young sons.

FEATURES | Find out how cold weather and short daylight hours bring tough choices for families already struggling to pay utility bills, and where they can turn for help.

COMMUNITY | Check out our Q/A with Tina Zagya, the new coordinator for Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today, who says her artistic background influences her community work.

ENTERTAINMENT | Reggie Seigler's "A Friendly Five" column features jazz musician Dr. Alphonso Sanders, who will perform during a night of music and an open jam session.

COMMUNITY | If you're looking for ways to celebrate Black History Month, take a look at our extensive list of events planned throughout the community.

■ Cover photography by Ben Cleeton of Edmund Sherrod Taylor and his three sons

CALENDAR | FEBRUARY

What: F.O.C.U.S. Forum: Citizen Engagement
When: 7:30 to 8:45 a.m. Friday, Feb. 19
Where: City Hall Commons Atrium, 201 E. Washington St.
Cost: Free and open to all
More details: Be part of Syracuse's citizen engagement, the foundation of democracy. Each month citizens meet and discuss timely topics pertinent to the Syracuse community guided by an expert who will speak and then hear questions and welcome discussion from the audience.
More Info.: Contact Frank Moses at (315) 448-8732 or fmoses@syr.gov.net

What: "To Kill a Mockingbird"
When: Opens 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24, continues through March 26
Where: Syracuse Stage Complex, 820 E. Genesee St.
Cost: \$30-\$36 for adults depending on seating & \$18 for children
More details: Harper Lee's classic American story of courage and justice. A black man, Tom Robinson, stands falsely accused of raping a white woman. The townspeople would see him condemned, but attorney Atticus Finch defends Tom and demands justice. During the trial, Atticus' children Scout and Jem come face to face with racism in their small Alabama town.
More Info.: Call the Syracuse Stage Box Office at (315) 443-3275 or visit syracusestage.org

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

Onondaga County Office for Aging seeks nominations for 2016 Senior Citizen of the Year to recognize older New Yorkers who demonstrate the power of making a difference through civic engagement. To nominate an honoree, download the nomination form from www.ongov.net/aging, call (315) 435-2362 or email cherrylamb@ongov.net. The application requests the organization for which the nominee volunteers, details about how the nominee has made a difference in the community and a brief biography. Submissions are due Feb. 12. The winning senior will attend a New York state event in Albany on May 10 and an Onondaga County event on May 19.

DISCLAIMER

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE STAND ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE ENTIRE STAFF. THE STAND WELCOMES SUBMISSIONS FROM ALL MEMBERS OF SYRACUSE'S SOUTH SIDE BUT RETAINS THE RIGHT TO PUBLISH ONLY MATERIAL THE STAND DEEMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE PUBLICATION'S EDITORIAL PURPOSE AND IN KEEPING WITH COMMUNITY STANDARDS.

The start of 2016 also brings some fresh thinking about the South Side Newspaper Project. The mission has always been to make The Stand a true community paper that is run and operated by the residents of Syracuse's South Side.

In the coming months, board members of The Stand will become more vocal about this mission, and they are planning events to get more community people involved. To ensure the success of the project, we need volunteers with experience in advertising, grant writing, community involvement, writing and photography — and who are interested in keeping the project an active voice in the community.

To become involved, keep an eye out for upcoming events or reach out to me with your interest. Also, take a look at the list of board members on Page 2. We invite you to reach out to them, too.

We also welcome you to apply to join the board of The Stand. Board members meet every other month for one to two hours and assist the project with securing advertising, suggesting stories and reaching out to the community. New endeavors will include securing funding and grants to keep the project going and planning for ways to further engage and keep the community as an active partner.

We can't be a community project without the community.

So if you want to get your voice heard, speak up and take a stand.

Ashley Kang



UPCOMING TRAINING

ONONDAGA EARTH CORPS SEEKS YOUTH

The OEC is now accepting applications for crew members for work starting in March. Open to young adults ages 15-25.

Learn more about the OEC and its free training opportunity **5 p.m. Tuesday, March 8**. The session will be held at Onondaga Earth Corps offices, located at 100 New St., Suite 239.

This development course is designed to provide job seeking and job readiness skills, as well as important dialogues around personal behaviors and life skills that will likely translate to improved professional skills. The goals are to recruit interested candidates to apply to the OEC Spring Crew and to provide skill-building and networking opportunities for employable youth in the greater Central New York area.

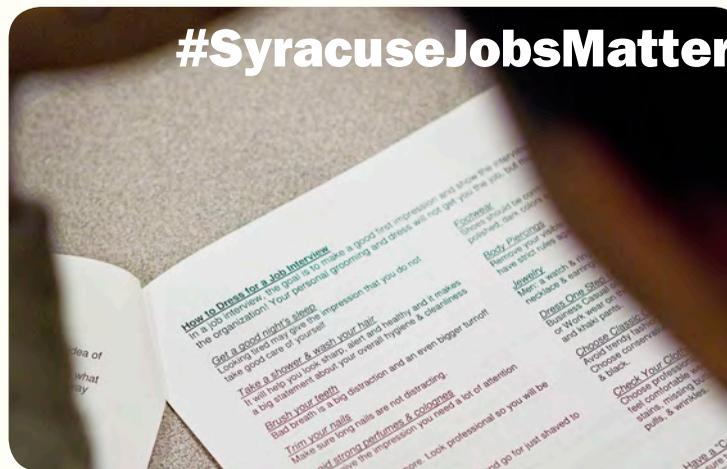
To learn more: Visit onondagaeearthcorps.org or call (315) 565-3797

PROJECT WILL SHARE PERSONAL STORIES ON LOCAL UNEMPLOYMENT

The Stand and Newhouse School students in this semester's Advanced Editing course are pursuing a project to share stories directly from local job hunters on what challenges they face.

Our focus will be on jobs and job prospects. We are looking to share accounts of city residents who may be unemployed or underemployed. People who are balancing (or struggling to balance) multiple part-time jobs to make ends meet. And people who have obtained a full-time position after much hunting.

Our goal is to put faces on recent data showing Syracuse is top in the nation for concentrated poverty among blacks and Hispanics.



If you have a story to share about what it's really like to job hunt in CNY for a living wage, or if you'd like to contribute in some way, contact The Stand's Director Ashley Kang at ashley@mysouthsidestand.com.

FUTURE CHATS

The new **Rotary Community Chat** will continue each fourth Monday of each month

TIME: The chats begin at 6 p.m.

WHERE: Grace Episcopal Church, 819 Madison St.

THIS MONTH:

Tim Eatman, the co-director of Imagining America, to discuss connecting the university community on the hill with the rest of the city on Feb. 22

MARCH:

Danielle Laraque-Arena, the newly appointed first female president of SUNY Upstate Medical University, will lead the chat to talk about her vision for the school on March 28

APRIL:

Leola Rodgers, president and CEO of Syracuse Community Health Center, will speak on her perspective for the needs of the Syracuse community on April 25

TO ATTEND:

RSVP by the preceding Friday at RotaryCommunityChats@gmail.com or call (315) 468-1025

WANTED: JOBS

Urban Jobs Task Force advocates for more ways to put people to work



> Aggie Lane explains the importance of jobs and what the Urban Jobs Task Force is working toward during the first Rotary Community Chat on Jan. 25. Looking on is Clifford Ryan of OGs Against Violence. | Ashley McBride, Staff Photo

By | Ashley McBride
Staff reporter

City Rotary Club launches new monthly series to engage residents on current topics

The Syracuse Inner City Rotary Club kicked off a new initiative to engage the community with its rotary chat: a monthly, informal session with a prominent individual in the Syracuse community.

For January, Aggie Lane presented information about the Urban Jobs Task Force, a nonprofit organization advocating for job opportunities for people, especially individuals from marginalized communities, as a way to combat poverty. On Monday night, Jan. 25 at Grace Episcopal Church, Lane addressed issues such as the organization's negotiating with the city and county officials to ensure that publicly contracted jobs in the city provide opportunities for residents.

"We advocate, we push the envelope, and we try to make changes to the business as usual," she said. "We're pushing for all jobs but where we have leverage is where our tax dollars are being spent."

Theardis Martino, one of the founders of the city chapter, said he decided on Lane for the community chat because he knows her leadership style.

"I've watched this woman come into our neighborhood, plant her roots and try to make a change," he said.

Lane talked about the steps the Urban Jobs Task Force has taken to address unemployment and underemployment in Syracuse, such as meeting with Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney. In the future, Lane said, the task force hopes to have influence on the Interstate 81 redesign, as well as the Onondaga Creek Walk project through the South Side.

The attendees included individual community members and representatives from organizations around the city aiming to improve the quality of life of residents. Among them: On Point for College, OGs Against Violence, PEACE, Inc., Onondaga Earth Corps and the Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse. For Charles Rivers, a family counselor at PEACE, Inc. East-side Family Resource Center, this chat was important for community members to come together and brainstorm resources and solutions for the problems in Syracuse.

"I think we exceeded (the goal) tonight," said Rivers, who also serves as the membership coordinator for the Syracuse Inner City Rotary. "People who would've never talked to each other now know each other, so now hopefully we will get more people to come in as our community tries to progress."

The chapter president, Mary Eileen Wood, was satisfied with the turnout and said she was glad the circle of chairs grew as more people showed up.

"We see this as a catalyst, not as a goal or an end," she said. "Our goal is to make the next thing happen."

LESS WALKING

More students to have access to buses soon

By | Rawan Ashoor
Urban Affairs reporter

After concerns about safety, the school board shortened the distance required to take the bus to 1.5 miles

Syracuse public school students have won a small victory, having persuaded the city's educational authorities to shorten the required distance from students' homes to school in order for them to qualify to take a bus.

The change in policy, announced shortly before school holidays in December, allows students living a mile and a half or more from their schools to receive subsidized transportation to their schools. Previously, only students who lived 2 miles or more from their schools qualified for riding school buses.

The new rule followed complaints to the Syracuse City School District board by students and other local residents about the long walks for some students to get to school. The critics of the previous policy used the slogan, "Two miles is too far." In December, the board said that students living more than 1.5 miles away would be issued Centro bus passes.

At a board meeting, Joyce Suslovic, a teacher at Henninger High School, said some students walking to and from school for 1.9 miles had to traverse neighborhoods in which they felt unsafe, if it were dark.

After the board announced its decision, Susan Fahey Glisson, president of Parents for Public Schools of Syracuse, thanked the school district and Centro for working together to create a way to provide bus passes for the 500 high school students living between 1.5 and 2 miles away from school. But she said there is still more to do, considering many nearby suburban neighborhoods provide transportation to every single student in their district.

"It is time for all parents, students, community members — and especially our elected officials — to value Syracuse children, and to figure out a way to provide a safe way to and from school for every child that needs it," Glisson said. "As a co-worker said to me: 'This seems like a no-brainer. Figure it out.'"

Kevin Ahern, president of the Syracuse Teacher's Association, thanked everyone involved in allowing more students to get access to transportation. He encouraged students to keep advocating for their needs.

"I do encourage these kids to keep pushing for the smaller radius," he said, adding that their work on the issue "certainly shows a great effort for people to advocate nationally about things they care about."

Approximately 500 students will get bus passes to school starting Feb. 29.

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Questions? E-mail Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com or call (315) 882-1054

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



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HEOP helps with:

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- » Tutoring

Are you eligible?

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"This wonderful program benefits low-income students. It gave me the tools to complete my dream of a bachelor's degree."

Nancy Legra-Garcia
SU Class of 2015

HEOP and its activities are supported, in whole or in part, by the New York State Education Department.

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GOOD LIFE KEY AREAS

Good Life Youth Foundation focuses on four key areas:

- Life coaching
- Education
- Financial
- Entrepreneurship

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INNOVATION CENTER

Learn more about the South Side Innovation Center and the center's resources online at southsideinnovation.org

INNOVATIVE MINDS

Syracuse entrepreneurs discuss joys, pitfalls of starting a business



> Entrepreneurs Darren Chavis, left, Gabriela Escalante and Cedric Bolton speak about the ups and downs of owning a business. They participated in an entrepreneurship panel organized by the Good Life Youth Foundation. | Yu Hua, Staff Photo

By | Ashley McBride

Staff reporter

Panelists encourage people to find resources and mentors to pursue their business dreams

At its first event of 2016, the Good Life Youth Foundation featured three Syracuse entrepreneurs who shared their ups and downs of owning a business. The goal of the panel was to encourage attendees, especially the youth, to consider starting their own businesses.

"I believe that every youth and adult has to be an entrepreneur in thinking," said Hasan Stephens, the founder and executive director of Good Life. He invited Darren Chavis, Gabriela Escalante and Cedric Bolton to the South Side Innovation Center on Saturday, Jan. 23, to talk about their experiences establishing their businesses.

Chavis, the owner of Creole Soul Café, said he first established his construction company, moved to real estate and then opened his restaurant in 2015. He talked about some of the harsher realities of owning a business, like being accountable to yourself.

"It's hard to explain being a true entrepreneur

because you have to be able to stand alone and live and die by the decisions that you make," he said. "Another thing an entrepreneur never needs is someone to pat them on the back."

Escalante did not sugarcoat her experiences. She said her biggest mistake was going into business with her best friend because when things didn't work out, she lost a coworker and a friend. Her current business, EB Active, sells light-up active wear. As a representative for the South Side Innovation Center, Escalante also talked about the resources the center provides for entrepreneurs and offered her advice to young people.

"I think it's important to give back, and I know the importance of having a guide," she said.

Bolton first sensed his entrepreneurial spirit as a college student when he needed money for books. He said he went to his church pastor for help, and his pastor encouraged him to do yardwork for other church members to make some money. Now, Bolton has a catering business, BoDean's Smoked Chicken & Ribs, which he hopes to turn into a food truck. Bolton said his top three tips for a beginning entrepreneur are to "find your passion, find a resource to develop it and start working towards it."

The Good Life Youth Foundation hosts workshops

and panels to educate disenfranchised and at-risk youth on financial literacy, asset building and entrepreneurship.

Stephens, who previously worked as a teacher at Hillbrook Detention Center in Syracuse, said his goal is to inspire youth to break the cycles of poverty present in Syracuse through entrepreneurship and financial independence.

Overall, the event allowed community members to connect with and hear from three business owners at different stages of entrepreneurship. Chavis warned the crowd not to view entrepreneurship as a fail-safe method of success, however.

“There are way more valleys than peaks, so take time to smell the roses,” he said. “But if this ends tomorrow, the last seven years, I’ve been truly fulfilled.”



> An attendee poses a question during the entrepreneurship panel discussion. | Yu Hua, Staff Photo

WHAT’S THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE YOU TOOK AWAY FROM THE PANELISTS TODAY?



TRAVIS ROBINSON, 29:
DON’T BE FEARFUL, AND TAKE LIFE AS IS



SHAREKE EADIE-SCHAUB, 17:
NEVER LOSE MOTIVATION AND FORM POSITIVE HABITS



PERFECTION RIVERS, 21:
CONSISTENCY



ANDRE HAWKINS, 22:
HAVE A BUSINESS PLAN



SPENCER ROBINSON, 15:
NEVER STOP BELIEVING IN YOURSELF

Edmund Sherrod Taylor

Nominated by his wife, Staci Taylor



MEET FATHER SHERROD: Taylor, 31, grew up on the South Side and works the third shift at United Parcel Service. He is the father of EJ and twins Cameron, left, and Carter. | Ben Cleeton, Staff photo

By Ashley Kang
The Stand director

Q: *What did it feel like when you became a father?*

A: It's an overwhelming feeling. I think as a guy you don't really know what to expect. During the pregnancy, I didn't really feel anything — wasn't excited or nervous. It wasn't until I held them and looked at them, then I felt this overwhelming sense of responsibility and love and nervousness and anxiousness and excitement — all at once.

Q: *What can you share about your children?*

A: EJ, which stands for Edmund Jamir, is the oldest at 9. He's always been a good kid. He was the only nephew and only grandchild on both sides for a long time ... and just a little spoiled. He plays baseball, basketball, the saxophone and is on student

council. I think a lot of his mom rubbed off on him because he's grown to be well-rounded. The twins will be 2 in February. Carter came first. He's usually quiet, but recently he's seemed to come out of his shell. He's the oldest of the twins, but he acts like the youngest. Everything about him seems like the younger brother. He's very loving and cuddles. He likes to whisper and he's gentle. And then his twin is the exact opposite. Cameron, who we call Cam, will wrestle and likes to watch Spider-Man, play football or tumble with his older brother.

Q: *What was your relationship like with your father?*

A: He grew up without a dad so I think he took it a lot more personal to make sure he was always around. I feel I wouldn't have any good karma if I didn't take good care of my kids like he did. He made sure we did things and took trips as a family. Because of that, I want to make sure I take my kids places and that we do things together. Kids who are underprivileged don't

“You can't see with tears in your eyes”

have that or have things to look forward to. It makes it easier for them to get tunnel vision, get stuck and not have confidence.

Q: Is there a saying you have or that your father had?

A: (As Sherrod thinks, EJ shares.) “Papa says, ‘You can’t see with tears in your eyes.’” (Laughing, Sherrod confirms.) Yes he used to always tell me that. He’d come to my baseball games and he’d want me to play so hard I’d get frustrated. EJ did the same thing the other day while playing basketball. After the game, we were walking out and he started crying. I asked what was wrong, and he said, ‘I feel like I let you down.’ I said ‘as long as you tried that’s all that matters and I don’t feel like you let me down.’ Then I said, ‘but you can’t see with tears in your eyes, and it’s slippery out here, so wipe your face.’

Q: Why are fathers important?

A: I feel like there’s some things that you can’t pick up from your mom. It’s just good to have, even if it’s not your biological father but to have a father figure, to get another perspective. I didn’t realize how important my dad was until I got older. It probably would have been a lot different for me with these guys if I hadn’t had my dad, because I had his model to go off of.

Q: As a father, is there anything you do that would surprise people?

A: We don’t fall into a lot of the gender-specific things. I try and cook dinner more than the average ‘stereotypical’ dad, but it’s also because of my hours working the overnight shift. It’s just what works for us. If I’ve got to do laundry that day, then I’ll do it. But even just saying that sounds — like because you’re a dad — it’s surprising that you’re cooking or doing daily chores. When she got pregnant with the twins, I switched to the third shift because she was in law school and with my previous schedule, we couldn’t predict when I’d get home. This way ended up being more convenient for the family. The sleeping transition was tough, but in general it’s better because I can see them more and even surprise my wife with coffee on her lunch break.

Q: What’s your best meal?

A: Cowboy. EJ says this is his favorite. It’s what you make when you just have a bunch of stuff and no real idea what to do. I decided to scramble some hamburger, throw some cheese in, rice and baked beans and mix it all together. It reminded me of those old Clint Eastwood westerns where they’d eat the beans out of the can over the fire, so I called it ‘Cowboy.’ They liked it and so it stuck.

Q: What is your take on the assumptions commonly held by society about black fathers?

A: It’s frustrating to hear the stereotype when I see so many people who I know who do a good job and work overnights and do whatever they got to do to make sure that their kids are OK. Then you have the one or two people who don’t take care of their kids. In my eyes, the ratio I see is maybe different than the — I’m not sure what the national rate is of black dads being active in their families — but in my eyes, I see more people taking care of their kids than not.

Q: Any advice for other dads?

A: Live by example. It’s easier to practice what you preach. You have to have patience and understand that your kid isn’t you. You just work to instill in them positive values and morals and let them know what’s right from wrong and hope that they make good decisions. Then you have to just pray for the best after all that. You can teach your kid everything in the book but now days one mishap and things can go awry. I worry with my oldest. He’s only 9, but he’s big and he could be considered a 12- or 13-year-old. With the Tamir Rice thing, the gun did look real but at the same time it

just sucks that it seems like he didn’t get a fair chance to put the gun down. Then you have to come home and explain to your kid first off not to play with weapons and all the rest. There’s a lot of small things that you don’t realize until you have kids.

Q: What is a favorite family moment?

A: The best days we have — because she’s doing so much, just out of law school and working — and EJ has sports and activities. If we can just get a Sunday where we can all hang out together and sit on the couch, at this point that is our biggest reward. To have everyone together, content and no crying. To watch the boys wrestle and play. When he (pointing to the more reserved Carter) jumps in, too, and all three are playing together, for me and her to sit back and watch them all smiling — that’s the best thing.

NOMINATE A FATHER

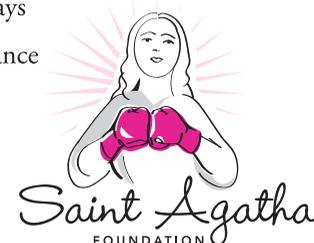
To submit a nomination for an outstanding father to be featured in a future issue of *The Stand*, send a short explanation with contact information to The Stand Director Ashley Kang by calling (315) 882-1054 or emailing ashley@mysouthsidestand.com

Do you need help with your breast cancer bills?

The Saint Agatha Foundation has established funds at area hospitals and medical providers to provide financial support for breast cancer patients in Onondaga, Cortland, Cayuga, Madison, Oneida, and Oswego Counties, New York.

The following costs can be covered:

- ▶ Treatment, procedures, testing, office visits
- ▶ Transportation to and from treatment, child care
- ▶ Prescription and procedural co-pays
- ▶ Medication not covered by insurance
- ▶ Wound care systems
- ▶ Breast reconstruction
- ▶ Lymphedema sleeves



We can help you.

www.saintagathafoundation.org | (888) 878-7900

Q&A WITH ADVOCATE

Jessica Deer is an administrative assistant with the Department of Energy and Housing at PEACE, Inc. She coordinates PEACE, Inc.'s free weatherization services for low-income residents in Onondaga, Oswego, Madison and Oneida counties.

Our conversation with Jessica Deer appears in the side columns on the following pages.

HIGH UTILITY BILLS

Winter brings more stresses for people trying to make ends meet



> Volunteers with the Eastern Farm Workers Association spend Tuesday and Wednesday mornings doing advocacy work for members. | Ashley McBride, Staff photo

By | Ashley McBride
Staff reporter

Syracuse families sometimes must choose between heat or food as groups try to help

For the first week of December, Westcoe Williams lived with his 19-year-old daughter in an apartment on the South Side without utility services because he had an unpaid National Grid bill.

Williams, 58, said after an argument with his wife, he moved out of the home they shared, where all of the bills were in her name. When he attempted to open an account in his name for his new apartment, Williams said a National Grid representative told him he had not had an account in his name for four years and he still owed \$3,000 on his most recent bill.

“If you don’t have any electricity or power, it’s hard to eat,” Williams said. “I used flashlights and (ate) a whole lot of subs.” He added that he slept in layers of clothing and blankets.

The advent of winter constantly brings renewed attention to affordability of utilities in Central New York. Bitterly cold days and short daylight hours mean that living without heat or lights can devastate households

when residents fall behind on bills. Even still, individuals and families across Syracuse deal with utility shutoffs because they have no other options.

Williams said the representative told him that he must pay at least \$1,500 on his bill to get service. Both Williams and his daughter Carol are unemployed, and Williams receives social security disability benefits each month, so that balance seemed insurmountable, he said.

A NATIONAL GRID ADVOCATE

Williams and his daughter volunteer at PEACE, Inc.’s Eastside Family Resource Center. There, he sat down with Mary Beth Basha, a senior consumer advocate for National Grid to receive guidance about his situation. Basha holds hours at various social service and outreach centers across Onondaga County through the week, every week: places like PEACE, Inc., the Samaritan Center, Catholic Charities, McCarthy Manor and others. She sees dozens of customers every day who, like Williams, have mounting bills, face shutoff notices or whose utilities already have been shut off.

“Being an advocate at National Grid gives us a ton of discretion because they don’t want any customers hurt,” Basha said. “So our directive is, do what you have to do to help the customer.”

NEED ASSISTANCE?

For HEAP, contact the
**Energy Assistance Unit of
Onondaga County**
600 S. State St.
(315) 435-8295

**PEACE, Inc. Weatherization
Assistance Program**
811 E. Washington St.
(315) 470-3315

National Grid Advocate
Mary Beth Basha
Email: [MaryBeth.Basha@
nationalgrid.com](mailto:MaryBeth.Basha@nationalgrid.com)

With Basha's advice, Williams applied for HEAP, the Home Energy Assistance Program. It is a federal program that helps low-income residents pay to heat their homes. He got power back in his apartment. Residents must fall within certain income guidelines or receive government benefits to be eligible for HEAP. For many Syracusans, however, the aid that HEAP offers is minimal when they are thousands of dollars in debt and face other bills. The average amount of assistance that Onondaga County residents received from HEAP through January 2014 ranged from \$253 to \$436, according to assistance statistics published by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance.

In January 2015, after National Grid shut off service for nearly 277,000 customers statewide for nonpayment in 2014, the New York State Public Service Commission examined its policies regarding billing for low-income customers. In a report issued Jan. 9, 2015, commissioners wrote that while 12 percent of utility customers participate in low-income assistance programs, these customers constituted 21 percent of shutoffs and 31 percent of the \$756 million owed by residential customers in 2014 (as of Nov. 30, 2014). Of those shutoffs, 62,266 were in Central New York, more than 10,000 more than the year before, and the highest in almost 10 years.

The commission has since created a proposal that would provide extra benefits to the same customers that receive HEAP automatically, and others provisionally. But this low-income proposal offers little reprieve for many struggling customers.

"What we're fighting for is the fact that everybody should be entitled to that," said Gwen Chaffin. She is a community organizer for Syracuse United Neighbors, an organization that aims to improve the well-being of its members through improving Syracuse communities. The group wants to bring attention to the fact that many low-income households will be excluded from this proposal because they are excluded from HEAP.

"A lot of times people apply for HEAP and it closes. Or they're not eligible for HEAP, they may miss out by making a dollar or quarter too much," she said. "They may not even know about it."

Basha said there are many reasons individuals fall behind on their utility bills, and there is no one simple solution for the customers she assists. But, she said, they do all have one thing in common: They are all determined to fix their predicament.

"The people I work with, they're the ones that really want to do this, they really want to figure out how to make this work," she said. "And sometimes you just have to say to them, you might just have to move."

MEET TAMMIE BUSH

If there is one person who knows the reality of moving out of a home because of utility bills and other



> Westcoe Williams volunteers at PEACE, Inc., where he had received help managing his own utility bills. | Ashley McBride, Staff photo

housing issues, it's Tammie Bush.

Bush, 54, has lived in seven different apartments around the city of Syracuse since she initially moved here in 1989 from Ossining, N.Y., which is in Westchester County. In her current North Side apartment, where she has lived for two months, Bush takes care of two of her grandchildren and gets by on her disability benefits.

Over the years, Bush has raised seven children: two of her own, and five children of her sister, who died in 1997. That was the reason for her second move in Syracuse; she needed more space. The first move, she said, was because of rising National Grid bills.

"I did it as long as I could, but the NiMo was becoming higher than the rent," Bush said, referring to Niagara Mohawk, the utility company in New York that was acquired by National Grid. "The landlord was even willing to put the rent down so I would stay, because I was so good. But I just couldn't."

She said both her rent and utility bills were around \$450 when she lived in her first apartment on State Street in the mid-1990s.

In her fifth place, Bush said she moved when she realized she'd been sharing a utility meter with her upstairs neighbor for six years. When her landlord wouldn't fix the problem, Bush said she knew it was time to go. In her last place, Bush said she was on a payment plan with National Grid, and she paid \$126 a month for her utilities. She endured a shutoff there, she said, because she mailed her payment and it took days to reach the collections department. With young, asthmatic grandchildren in tow, Bush made an arrangement with

Q&A WITH ADVOCATE

Q: What's the biggest misconception people have about weatherization and energy efficient housing?

Jessica Deer: People come here and generally misconstrue this for a window and door program. They see commercials that say, "Save money by changing out all your windows!" They see windows, they see doors, but they don't really look at their furnace, nor do they see the insulation in their walls. People think because they've seen all these commercials about their windows and doors, that's just going to save them money, when in actuality, that's the least contributing factor of energy efficiency, the replacement.

Most of the time, caulking and weatherstripping will do the same exact thing replacement will do. So because it's a free program, we're going to opt to caulk or weatherstrip. And that's just pertaining to windows and doors.

Q&A WITH ADVOCATE

Q: What kind of advice do you give people looking to weatherize?

Jessica Deer: We try to show them how much their actual actions affect how much money they're paying out per month. Just simply changing a couple habits can make a big difference: flipping off your lights, unplugging things when you're not using them, things like that.

Q: Are your customers concentrated in certain areas?

Jessica Deer: Definitely the city more, but there isn't one place in the county where I haven't seen it touch. Not any one side of town, it's all equally spread out.

Q: How many clients do you serve?

Jessica Deer: It's gone down each year because our budget has decreased. In 2014, we serviced 211 units. From 2009 to 2011, we serviced 211 units. From 2009 to 2011, 511 units, and that's when we had extra stimulus funding. Since September 1994, we've weatherized 5,740 houses (as of March 2014). Any client from before September 1994 can reapply.



> Tammie Bush holds up photographs of her sister, who died in 1997. | Ashley McBride, Staff photo

the building owner, who owned a store next door, to wire the power from his store to her apartment.

"Thank god for the guy that owned the building because we did a wire to the store," she said. "I had to have a nebulizer and I had to have a fridge. So we made a hole in the wall."

Her utility struggles have led her to the Eastern Farm Workers Association, a grassroots organization in Syracuse that works to protect the rights of the poor and working class. Bush volunteers there on Saturdays, when the group canvasses neighborhoods in Syracuse to enroll members. Throughout the week, volunteers do advocacy work on behalf of members, whether it's negotiating payment plans with National Grid, arranging rides for members to receive medical care or securing food donations for members from the association's sponsors.

Bush worked with the association to arrange a payment plan for her utilities, and she in turn has been involved in the group's fight to keep utilities affordable for the poor and working class.

TAKING CARE OF PERSONAL NEEDS

Benjamin Lee, a full-time volunteer with the organization, said he thinks it's a problem that residents can go broke paying their National Grid bills, while the company makes a guaranteed profit.

"What we're asking for from our state government

is that they prioritize quality of life of the population," Lee said. "And if that can be achieved and the utility can make a reasonable profit, then kudos."

The organization's aims are two-tiered: On one level, members receive benefits like emergency food, clothing, free or low-cost healthcare and childcare, or legal advice; on the other level, the members work as a group to effect change on a broad scale. Lee says the logic behind this system is that if the members' personal needs are taken care of, then they will have the energy and time to dedicate to activism. "The people whose lives are affected by this need to have a say over the decisions that affect their lives," Lee said.

So, December 2014, the group made their voices heard. Lee, along with Bush and other members and volunteers, traveled to Albany to visit the Public Service Commission and refused to leave until representatives met with them. The group argued that National Grid should profit less in order to lower rates for everyone. Lee said that the representatives at the meeting said National Grid's profits were "off the table."

"They came up with all these grand ideas, but none of them pertained to the poor," Bush said. "But still, the poor are suffering."

More recently, the group has been outspoken about the low-income proposal the commission has laid out. On Oct. 19, 2015, the commission held a public hear-

ing at Southwest Community Center to gauge residents' opinions about the proposal. The Eastern Farm Workers Association attended with more than a dozen members and volunteers. Between speakers, the group would chant, "Don't pick our pockets, take it from the profits!"

Members have even formed a separate committee within the organization, the Committee for a Sane Utility Policy, of which Bush is a member. She doesn't think the proposal offers a viable solution for low-income residents, especially those on a fixed income or who are receiving government benefits.

"Here's how it works: you give me a dollar, food stamps is going to take three, social security is going to take two, so who's really getting any money?" she said. "It's all right if you give it to us, if nobody else is going to snatch it."

Each month, many low-income residents have to make a seemingly impossible decision between utilities, eating, feeding their children or medication. And there are any number of justifications for choosing one or another. Basha said in her 15 years working as an advocate, many senior citizens will choose to pay their utility bills and go without necessary medication, because they don't want to ask for help or because they want to preserve their credit score.

For Williams' daughter Carol Williams, the choice was between living with her father or living with other family members. She decided to live with her father, even though he didn't have power.

"It was a learning experience to see what other people go through on a day-to-day basis and I only went through it for a couple of days," Carol said. "I just really wanted to move into our apartment. I'm more comfortable at home."

MEET LISA ROSADO

Bush's work with the Eastern Farm Workers Association introduced her to Lisa Rosado, a stay-at-home mother of two. Rosado also receives disability payments, since she has epilepsy, asthma and chronic back issues. Rosado has experienced her fair share of utility bills; her utilities were shut off for a few days last year during winter. She said she had been paying her bill consistently and was confused about the shutoff.

When she called National Grid, Rosado said a representative told her it was an accident and the company had shut off power to the wrong address.

With Syracuse seeing minimal snow and temperatures above 50 degrees for 14 days in December, it seemed like winter was never coming. December 2015 temperatures broke multiple records. For low-income residents, this meant lower bills because they hadn't turned on their heat yet. During previous winters, Basha said she could see up to 400 people in one month.



> Lisa Rosado, left, and Tammie Bush embrace at Bush's home. | Ashley McBride, Staff Photo

January has seen temperatures and snowfall closer to normal, but according to the National Weather Service, the monthly average temperature was still 1.5 degrees higher than normal as of Jan. 18.

Throughout the warmer-than-normal December, Bush hadn't used her heat, but with a downpour of lake-effect snow in the first half of January, she had to warm her home. With additional funds provided by HEAP, Bush has managed her utility bills so far this winter.

Bush also added that the holiday season brings added stress to already cash-strapped families who want to give their children gifts. Prior to Christmas, Bush said she was billed \$259 in the month of November, and paid about \$200, because she wanted to be able to save some money for her grandchildren.

In her current Hawley Avenue apartment, photographs of Bush's children and all the children she has raised adorn the walls and coffee tables. Sunshine comes in through a crack underneath the door. Bush pointed out that the floor there will be icy when it snows. At night, Bush places a blanket or towel underneath the door to keep the freezing air from coming in.

"Most of my heat is going out the door because these landlords are not doing what they need to do to keep the heat in," she said.

The energy affordability crisis results from the intersection of many societal problems: unemployment, dilapidated housing, poverty and disabilities, as well as the decision between renting and owning. While the Public Service Commission has put forth an effort to address this issue, low-income residents are faced with decisions every day about which bills to pay and which necessities to forgo. Members of the Eastern Farm Workers Association believe the solution is in National Grid's profits, while some families would be content with just having enough to pay their bills and provide for their families be able to put gifts under the tree.

For Rosado, it boils down to two options:

"We've all got choices in life," Rosado said. "Either have lights and survive or don't have lights and eat."

Q&A WITH ADVOCATE

Q: How many people apply?

Jessica Deer:

We've received 940 applications in the past three years and 703 have been approved. It's a three-year waiting list, so people have to pre-qualify with their income, we'll have to re-certify their income documentation after that three years. If they get a better job, they may not qualify anymore. I even had one client who asked me, 'Should I take this new job? Or should I wait a year and a half to get the weatherization work done?' And I'm like, 'take the job!'

Q: What's the main reason an application will be denied?

Jessica Deer: Their being over-income. The second reason is that they were previously weatherized at a date after September 1994. Third, they don't ever send in documentation or respond after the three years and their name finally comes up.

— Ashley McBride

OUTLET FOR RESIDENTS

EIGHT TNT SECTIONS

Downtown	East Side
Lakefront	The Valley
North Side	South Side
Eastwood	West Side

PURPOSE & VISION

Create a safe space for residents to dialogue, plan, make decisions and discuss concerns/issues as well as explore opportunities

Represent a unified voice reflecting what's in the best interest for residents and neighborhoods

Support and enhance neighborhoods through community projects

Increase civic engagement, community involvement, awareness, training and education within the city of Syracuse

OFFICE LOCATION

City Hall Commons
Seventh floor #711
201 E. Washington St.

Office Hours:

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday & Wednesday

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Tuesday & Thursday

Phone: (315) 448-8178

Email: TZagyva@syr.gov.net

MEET TINA ZAGYVA

Community liaison will meld an artistic background with her new role



> Tina Zagya, the recently hired TNT coordinator, held her first meeting on the South Side on Dec. 7, 2015 at the South Side Innovation Center, where the South Side Area 3 group regularly meets. | Ashley Kang, Staff Photo

By | Ashley Kang
The Stand director

Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today coordinator will work solely with local TNT groups

Tina Zagya, 31, lives on Syracuse's West Side and was hired at the end of November 2015 as the coordinator for Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today, a citizen-led community organization in Syracuse. She also teaches as an adjunct instructor at Bryant & Stratton College and holds degrees in fine arts.

Q: What does the TNT coordinator do?

A. The coordinator's role is to figure out the needs of each neighborhood by working directly with TNT facilitators. I also serve as a liaison to any department (that) residents need to reach out to. That could be Codes, DPW or Planning. If a concern is brought up, I can reach out to the necessary city department to pass it on or invite them to speak to the group. From what I have learned so far from facilitators, in the past there has been issues with excluding the public from predevelopment planning meetings. So I hope that I can attend such meetings and serve as the voice of residents to speak on their behalf.

Q: How is this new TNT coordinator role different from the past?

A: The previous TNT coordinators were city employees, but they were not dedicated solely to working

with local TNT groups; they held other responsibilities. This new role is dedicated only to TNT.

Q: Why is the TNT group special?

A: Residents' concerns need to be addressed from a ground level, and I think this is where TNT is great because each group is made up of community people rather than SU (Syracuse University) or the city coming in and saying here's how you can solve this problem. With TNT, we can hear from people directly and look at the problem from a different angle.

Q: What interested you in applying for this position?

A: I am an artist and in some of my recent pursuits I worked on collaborative projects with the community. In my own artistic practice, I was making large immersive environments — sculptures that the audience could interact with. I think art can be intimidating to people that aren't in the arts, so I wanted to make something that was accessible. So this work led me to community projects. That's when I made the living sculpture wall on Otisco Street and moved my practice into the collaborating realm, inviting people living around me to participate. Through projects like these I really enjoyed working with the community, and when this position opened up, I thought this would be a great way for me to understand community in a broader aspect and how things function in the metanarrative. Also how economics and development plays into how people live.

Q: What does your schedule look like?

A: I have set office hours for my 25-hour workweek. But these will be flexible because if I have to attend multiple meetings one evening, I wouldn't necessarily be in my office that day. All are welcome to contact me to arrange a meeting.

Q: What is a current concern you've heard about the South Side?

A: Facilitators have shared a concern about trash in the neighborhood. This year we'll be discussing working with residents to propose a trash can initiative. Each TNT group gets \$5,000 to put toward community projects. In the past, I worked with the West Side Residents Coalition that did a project placing trash cans in the neighborhood. I took on one in front of my house and I maintain it and place it on the curb each week to have the trash picked up. The idea is intended to have trash cans put near corner stores and to work to better educate the community about how to properly remove trash to keep our streets clean.

Q: Are you looking forward to continuing the community projects?

A: Yes. They have \$40,000 — divided eight ways for each community planning council — to use toward projects in each neighborhood. What I've heard in the

past is money being spent on park benches and planting flowers, which is fine, but I've also heard from facilitators that they were asked, 'Is this all we can do? Can't we do something more?' So that's where I'm interested in doing some creative problem solving and listening to residents on what issues are a concern and then figure out what are our capabilities. I also want to launch a video blog series documenting the day in the life of a resident living in each of the TNT districts. This way we can talk with someone and see what they love about where they live and also hear what could be changed that could enhance their experience. I hope to do this in each neighborhood so residents could all see how each other is living. I believe if we can have a broader understanding of each other in this entire city that we all live in then maybe that will help create some positive change.

Q: What do you like best about Syracuse?

A: I feel like there's a lot of people that care. And there are a lot of people invested in community building. I have been seeing a lot of changes in the city that are trying to bring people more together. I feel like there's a fragmentation of what's happening between all these little groups that seem to have similar missions but they don't know each other, talk to each other or collaborate with each other. I feel like that is an opportunity for someone like me to bridge those connections.

Residents share their ideas about new ways to use vacant lot

By | Kayli Thompson
Urban Affairs reporter

Syracuse city officials are hoping to find a new use for a vacant lot, a high-visibility space that abuts South Salina Street at the intersection that serves as the South Side's northern gateway.

Paul Driscoll, who heads the city's office of neighborhood and business development, said the city was willing to "entertain any proposal" from South Side residents as to how to improve the lot, which sits on the east side of South Salina's intersection with Martin Luther King Way.

Although the parcel is zoned for commercial development, the city is adjusting its zoning codes and could allow other uses, he said.

Driscoll discussed the property with local residents during last month's TNT meeting.

He said he wanted to spend most of his time at the meeting listening to residents' ideas and concerns.

Mike Atkins, a South Side resident, suggested that the lot be used — at least temporarily — as a community farmers market. Atkins said he envisioned fresh produce and other homemade items for residents. At the same

time, he said, use of the parcel as a market would stabilize the lot until a developer could look at it and possibly turn it into something else.

Driscoll responded by praising the idea, which he said would be in keeping with the city's goal of maintaining South Salina Street as a commercial corridor.

Some at the meeting voiced their concern that people from outside the neighborhood loiter in the lot at night, and they suggested the city might better work to dissuade that practice.

Walter Biland, another resident at the meeting, said that when something is being built in a neighborhood, residents often are curious. If business owners attended meetings, he said, they could answer residents' questions.

Among other matters raised, John Sexton, who moderated the meeting, shared that TNT had obtained \$5,000 — money that can be used for a "special project" in the neighborhood. Sexton said the money has to be spent by June 30, and it must benefit public property, so the sum can neither be spent to develop a service nor go to benefit a private individual or a business. Sexton said his goal is to have residents decide what to do with the money by the TNT's meeting in March. Anyone can fill out a form discussing ideas for the project, he said.

SPECIAL PROJECT

The South Side TNT is seeking ideas for a special project, which will be discussed at the next few meetings. The project cannot be a service, and it must benefit the public. Any resident and business of the South Side can attend.

When: 6 p.m. on the first Monday of each month

Where: South Side Innovation Center, 2610 South Salina St.

To submit an idea for the project: Request a form from Tina Zagya, TNT coordinator

TZagya@syr.gov

(315) 448-8178

HAVE IDEAS FOR THE VACANT LOT?

If you have an idea for the city-owned vacant lot on the corner of South Salina Street and Martin Luther King Way or for any of the South Side's gateways, contact:

Paul Driscoll
(315) 448-8100

ON THE SIDE

IF YOU ATTEND

What: Performance by blues and jazz musician Dr. Alphonso Sanders

When: 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17

Where: Al's Wine & Whiskey, 321 S. Clinton St.

Cost: No cover charge

A NIGHT OF MUSIC

February heats up as performers honor Black History Month



> Dr. Alphonso Sanders, chair of fine arts and director of the B.B. King Recording Studio at Mississippi Valley State University, plays his signature combination of blues and jazz. | Photo provided

By | Reggie Seigler
A *Friendly Five* columnist

Al's Wine & Whiskey will host a night of entertainment and open jam session

It's been considered the coldest month of the year. I don't doubt it considering last February presented all-time cold temperatures for many U.S. cities. One city in New York state averaged just under 11 degrees for the entire month. Yeah, that's cold.

But February is also the warmest month of the year metaphorically speaking. It is the month that Black History is celebrated. For many blacks, it is a month of pride and acclaim. February is a month when the world's citizens direct their collective attention upon the U.S. and Canada to gain a better understanding of the contributions blacks have made to better the human experience.

It has been a tradition since Dr. Carter G. Woodson began it in 1926 with Negro History Week. Blacks have made contributions in the arts, education, sciences, politics and humanities, so numerous if one were to light a candle for each it would bring February to a boil.

Al's Wine & Whiskey recognizes that. Al's will be participating in the monthlong celebration by welcoming Dr. Alphonso Sanders to entertain one night with his mix of blues and jazz.

Sanders is the fine arts chair and director of the B.B.

King Recording Studio at Mississippi Valley State University. Located in the Mississippi Delta, the university oozes black history, particularly, blues-music history.

Sanders is a multi-instrumentalist who performs primarily on the tenor saxophone but flavors his blues with a little blues-harp, trumpet and flute. He is also a fine vocalist. He had the experience of interacting and performing with great American blues legends such as B.B. King and Otis Clay. He also performed at some of the largest festivals in the world, including the Montreux Jazz Fest in Montreux, Switzerland, and the North Sea Jazz Fest in Den Hague, Netherlands.

Sanders will not be traveling alone; he will be joined by a fellow Mississippian and pianist, Jimmy Lee Jr.

Lee is the selected state organist for the Northern Mississippi Jurisdiction of the Church of God in Christ. He has performed with top gospel performers of today, including Ricky Dillard, Kim Burrell and Dorinda Clark-Cole. He also has worked with Delfeayo Marsalis on his jazz remake of "Such Sweet Thunder."

At the event, members of the Soft Spoken Band will perform as sidemen for the duo to round out the band. The amalgam of their musical styles is expected to burn the audio spectrum with moments of blues, gospel and jazz flavored with funky rhythm and blues.

Sanders sends an invitation for other local musicians to bring their axes. There will be a time later in the evening for an open jam session.

ABOUT THE NAME

My column, "A Friendly Five," was named in recognition of a singing group from the Capital of the Mississippi Delta, Clarksdale, Miss. The group moved to Syracuse in the 1950s. They were called "The Friendly Five."

— Reggie Seigler

Have A *Friendly Five* suggestion? Contact Reggie at reggie@softspokenband.com or (315) 479-9620

NEW RADIO SHOW

'Relationship Matters with ArDenay' airs every Monday afternoon



> After unexpected life consequences, including taking care of her sick father, Ardena Harvey debated whether to continue her recently launched show. But because of positive listener feedback she has kept it going. | Ben Cleeton, Staff Photo

By | Christopher Libonati
Urban Affairs reporter

Ardena Harvey continues her life coaching mission with a new talk radio show

Ardena Harvey sat down, thought, prayed and came up with the game plan for her first ever radio show. She's admittedly more of a writer than a talker and gets her ideas out better with some planning.

She launched her radio career in December with a weekly relationship show airing on WSIV 1540. The first show, "Relationship Matters with ArDenay," aired Dec. 7, 2015 and continues every Monday on Syracuse's Gospel and Inspirational Voice radio station.

Vanetta Green, who immediately precedes Harvey with her own show, "Keep it Realimony," was the one who asked Harvey to take over on the mic for 30 minutes each week. Green found Harvey while she talked about her book on relationships.

"I feel called to deliver the message," Harvey said. "So I have to be crystal clear that I'm just a vessel."

Harvey said she's four chapters into the book, which will be titled "Divine Invitations for the 7 Spiritual Les-

sons of Relationships," and she writes from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. each Saturday and Sunday. The writer in her is what helps her to script each moment of her new radio show.

For the first show, Green was a guest, Harvey said. But Green typically does her show at another location, so she won't appear on the program in any regular capacity. And although she scripted most of the show, Harvey said she felt like the dialogue between the two felt like a normal conversation.

Harvey is a survivor of relationship abuse, detailed in "Moving Past Abuse," a story that was published in the November issue of *The Stand* last year. The message of her show, which she says will change every month, is centered on different aspects of relationships.

In January, she continued to do her show after receiving positive listener feedback, even though she had considered stopping because of life challenges that included caring for her sick father. With less time to script her weekly episode, she called her Jan. 25 show "Freestyle Monday" and let callers launch the day's debate.

During this month, she intends to make "love" the message, partly because of Valentine's Day.

TUNE IN TO ARDENAY

Listen to Ardena Harvey's life radio show "Relationship Matters with ArDenay"

WHEN: 3:30 to 4 p.m. every Monday

STATION: Syracuse's Inspirational Voice radio at WSIV 1540 AM

ONLINE: Visit wsiv1540.com

LIFE COACHING

ArDenay Innerprize, LLC, a consulting firm run by Ardena Harvey, is dedicated to providing personal development coaching and training to groups, individuals and organizations

MISSION: ArDenay Innerprize's chief aim is to encourage, educate and equip all people with personal tools and techniques that enable them to honor their passion and commit to action for intentional personal growth and development

TO LEARN MORE: Visit ardenayinnerprize.com

ONGOING EXHIBIT

BLACKOUT: Through the Veiled Eyes of Others, Racist Memorabilia from the Collection of William Berry, Jr.

WHEN: Exhibit Feb. 6 through March 19;
Opening Reception: 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 6

WHERE: ArtRage Gallery, 505 Hawley Ave.

DETAILS: This exhibit invites viewers to confront how everyday objects support and perpetuate racism. Berry's collection highlights how ordinary household artifacts have distorted how generations of Americans view people of African descent as somehow less than human. Mainstream media may refer to a post-racial 21st century America, but stereotypes and distortions of Black people persist nonetheless.

ArtRage Gallery notes in its promotional material that the exhibit contains offensive material.

MORE INFO.: Call (315) 218-5711 or visit artragegallery.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS

February is filled with celebrations in honor of Black History Month

WHAT: Cosmo-biology and Black Race

WHEN: 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 6

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: Presented by Oscar Manjarres to explore the important contributions the black race has made to human civilization

WHAT: Black Careers and Black Business

WHEN: 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 6

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: Facilitated by Syracuse University's Pan African graduate students, this interactive session will explore various career paths that are available and emphasize the importance of creative thinking, nontraditional career paths and how these careers can benefit the black community. The session will briefly touch on supporting black businesses.

WHAT: Lecture "Black Man in a White Coat — A Doctors' Reflection on Race & Medicine"

WHERE: Two offerings at Upstate Medical University, 766 Irving Ave.

WHEN: Noon in 9295 Weiskotten and 5 p.m. in 1159 Weiskotten Hall on Wednesday, Feb. 10

DETAILS: Damon Tweedy, MD, assistant professor of psychiatry, Duke University Medical Center and staff physician at the Durham VA Medical Center will be the speaker. The public can request tickets by calling (315) 464-8855

WHAT: Sensational Rap Songs by Manny

WHEN: 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: Local rap artist Emmanuel 'Manny' Forrest will perform.

WHAT: Hands Only CPR

WHEN: 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 13

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: February is American Heart Month. Focusing Our Resources for Community Enlightenment (FORCE) Ready Syracuse Project will provide information about cardiovascular disease and CPR. Attendees will watch the course DVD, then get a chance to learn and practice hands-only CPR on a manikin.

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

at Beauchamp Branch Library,
2111 S. Salina St.

To learn more about library events,
call (315) 435-3395

WHAT: Board Game Fun

WHEN: 5 p.m. every Tuesday

DETAILS: Learn to play Mancala, a traditional African board game, or play one of your favorite board games with friends.

WHAT: Preschool Play & Learn

WHEN: 9:30 a.m. every Wednesday

DETAILS: Children from birth to 5 years old can come and play with the library's educational toys and sensory materials as well as make new friends.

WHAT: Craft Club

WHEN: 5:15 p.m. every Thursday

DETAILS: Children ages 5 and older can come and learn how to weave in celebration of Black History Month or use their imaginations to make fun and unique items with a variety of materials.

WHAT: Quilting for Kids with Sankofa Quilters

WHEN: 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 13

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: Learn quilting techniques from the Sankofa Piece Makers quilting group and find out how quilting was used throughout African-American history.

WHAT: Black Health: Mental, Emotional and Physical

WHEN: 3:45 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 13

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: Syracuse University's Pan African Graduate Students will lead a discussion that encourages wellness on all levels and explore the ways that self-love and self-care are important in the world we live in today.

WHAT: Family Movie: "From the Rough"

WHEN: 2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 16

WHERE: Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.

DETAILS: Enjoy the story of Dr. Catena Starks as the first African-American woman to coach a men's college golf team.

WHAT: Black History Scavenger Hunt**WHEN:** 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** The library staff has organized a scavenger hunt with a black history month theme.**WHAT: Film screening of "Selma"****WHEN:** 6 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, Feb. 17 through 19**WHERE:** Upstate Medical University, 766 Irving Ave., Weiskotten Hall, room 103**MORE INFO:** Call (315) 464-5234 or (315) 464-5433**WHAT: Cooking Up Literacy****WHEN:** 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** The National Award winning program Cooking-Up Literacy returns with a special black history month edition.**WHAT: Why Do You Keep Getting Into Bad Relationships?****WHEN:** 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** Dream Team 1 will lead a session on ways to have positive relationships and learn about self value.

> Deborah Menifee, a member of Sankofa Piece Makers, lays out leaves on her family tree quilt. The local quilting group will lead a special children's class to celebrate Black History Month. | File Photo

WHAT: Songs of the Civil Rights Karaoke**WHEN:** 2 p.m. Friday, Feb. 19**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** Belt out your favorite civil rights songs.**WHAT: Black History Jeopardy!****WHEN:** 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** A black history version of the game show Jeopardy! with small prizes awarded.**WHAT: Blood Pressure Screening and Raffle Draws****WHEN:** 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** Dr. Hdayatu Salawu will hold a free blood pressure screening.**WHAT: Black History Month Commemorative Lecture by Alicia Garza****WHEN:** 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23**WHERE:** Hendricks Chapel at Syracuse University campus**DETAILS:** Garza is a writer and community organizer who advocates for black people and queer communities, fights against racial profiling and police violence and campaigns for improved working conditions for all underserved minority communities. She is also known as the co-creator of the viral twitter hashtag and movement #BlackLivesMatter.**MORE INFO:** Contact Cedric T. Bolton at (315) 443-9676 or ctbolton@syr.edu**WHAT: Elizabeth Blackwell Day Lecture****WHEN:** 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24**WHERE:** Upstate Medical University, 766 Irving Ave., Medical Alumni Auditorium in Weiskotten Hall.**DETAILS:** Speaker Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD, FAAP, & the new president of Upstate Medical University**MORE INFO:** Contact Margaret Maimone at maimonem@upstate.edu or (315) 464-8526**WHAT: Gospel Music Rendition****WHEN:** 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** The Syracuse Chapter, Gospel Music Workshop of America (SGMWA) Choir, directed by Dr. Joan Hillsman, will perform and engage the audience in spirituals, traditional and contemporary Gospel music.**WHAT: Greater Syracuse Talent Showcase Finale****WHEN:** 3:15 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27**WHERE:** Beauchamp Branch Library, 2111 S. Salina St.**DETAILS:** Event will spotlight African-American cultural music.

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