

IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY

SPEAK UP!

JANUARY 2018

"Serving in the Four-State area for over 15 years"

Speak Up Community News promotes the Culture, Health and Success of the community. Subscription is free. Articles and remarks are welcomed. Contact: Brothers Who Care, 131 W. North Avenue, Martin Luther King Community Center, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740. Phone (301) 393-9290. Download a full-color copy of this news publication at: www.brotherswhocare.org

PLEDGE

To PROTECT KIDS

From...

POVERTY; HUNGER; BULLYING; VIOLENCE; NEGLECT; CHILD ABUSE; ASSAULT; SEXUAL ABUSE; ILLITERACY; RACISM; SUBSTANCE ABUSE; TOBACCO USE...

"Pledge To Protect Kids" is part of a Maryland Department of Health call for licensed tobacco merchants to be responsible in keeping tobacco from being sold to minors. However such a critical plea can be used to canvas an entire range of concerns like those listed in the title of this article. You can get involved and even unite with other efforts to protect young people and help to keep them from experiencing these problems.

After sitting down with a friend of mine, Bill Douwes, we were brainstorming and discussing ways to help young people. It was then I asked Bill what he wanted to do to help children. Bill replied, "I just want to keep them from getting killed". His reply was simple yet profound. Bill works in law enforcement and he recognizes that reaching out to help people while they are young can help save lives.

I can go even further to say that offering young people the chance to build certain skills and offering them a variety of unique experiences can help increase their chances of having positive attitudes and leading successful lifestyles instead of engaging in negative behaviors and succumbing to failure.

Let me bring it closer to home by sharing a concern that I have. The Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in Hagerstown is where the Brothers Who Care office is headquartered. The gymnasium in the King Center is often used as a gathering site for people who grew up in the Jonathan Street neighborhood and the gym is used for recreation activities for the children who visit the Robert W. Johnson Community Center. The Martin

Luther King Jr. Community Center in Hagerstown is used by Head Start of Washington County as one of their childcare sites; the Children In Need program run by Ann Martin that gives away free clothing as well as school supplies and the center holds a Character Counts program led by Carolyn Brooks.

On Sundays and Thursdays men from in and around the Jonathan Street neighborhood play basketball in the gymnasium of the King Center, which is also known historically as the North Street School where blacks throughout all of Washington County attended as far as Hancock, Maryland before schools were desegregated. Young people have been climbing through the windows of the King Center to gain unauthorized use of the gymnasium when the King Center tenants and regular visitors are not using the gymnasium. Unfortunately, this unsupervised use of the gym can leave these minors open to injury, criminal trespass and arrest for burglary.

Police responded to a call of intruders in the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center one night. I happened to be working that evening when several officers and their Sargent had worked their way up to the top floor of the center where the Brothers Who Care office is located. The police officers allowed me to accompany them as they went room-to-room and floor-to-floor, including checking the basement for the intruder(s). The officers were using only their flashlights during the search and were equipped with lethal and non-lethal means to stop an intruder, however I could not shake the thought of how this type of situation could lead to an officer involved shooting we hear so much about across the nation. I am pleased to say the Hagerstown Police Officers and their leaders have expressed to me that they would never want their department in an officer involved shooting.

The irony of this situation is that the young people taking unauthorized use of the gym to do something positive like playing basketball should not have to stoop to such means if adults in good standing and neighborhood organizations would commit to accompanying the youth and meeting the facilities requirement for reserving the gymnasium and having proper insurance to cover activities for the kids.

So while our organization Brothers Who Care is funded by the Washington County Health Department and the Maryland Department of Health to raise awareness to the dangers of youth access to tobacco and providing tobacco sales compliance education to licensed tobacco merchants in Washington County, Maryland we do not overlook the need to Protect Kids from other dangers that can rob them of success and even their lives.

While we are asking tobacco merchants to pledge to be a responsible Tobacco Retailer, you don't have to join with that effort, nevertheless you can look for ways on your own to help protect kids and it starts by taking a Pledge to be a Responsible Adult and Positively Involved when it comes to our Youth. And when you start discussions and brainstorming like Bill Douwes and I had done, you may come up with something helpful like the slogan below that is being used here to help protect kids from the dangers of unguarded prescription drugs.

SOME PEOPLE WILL LOCK UP THEIR GUNS BUT NOT THEIR MEDICATION
Both can cause harm in the wrong hands



Please, LOCK UP YOUR MEDS!!!

CULTURE

Roots Music recording artist Jade

Speak Up Community News has been following the music career of Reggae artist Jade Tremba and the Harpers Ferry West Virginia native brings an interesting background that rings through in her music tying heavily into the love for roots Reggae (message music) and her Pentecostal church background. Besides filling in on keyboards and back vocals for "Jah Works", a tri-state reggae band sensation; Jade also plays guitar with "The Forwards" led by DJ Selah. Speak Up first heard Jade doing her own thing accompanied by drummer Eric Calhoun at The Barn of Harpers Ferry on Jamaican Jerk Chicken Reggae night. Jade's performance was as good as the C&G Jerk Chicken we were fortunate to sample.

Jade



Speak Up News:

"Jade, where do you want your reggae music journey to take you?"

Jade Tremba:

"Growing up in a Pentecostal church hearing my family lead worship every Sunday morning, and evening service, Wednesday night, I always saw music as a way of bringing people together in unity. The ritual of praise and worship would rejuvenate and uplift me and I couldn't wait for another service to sing my heart out to God."

"When I first heard reggae music, it was Bob Marley's 'Zimbabwe' with its deep rooted bass line that vibrated through the wall from my sister, Mahala's room, to my room, and into my soul. I felt the same way when I would listen to Bob, Peter Tosh, Dennis Brown, and other reggae legends.

"I connected to reggae's elements of spirituality, culture, consciousness, and social impact so much that it became natural to play it. Eventually, I started backing artists on bass and backup vocals, and then keys, and now I play in a band and do my own solo reggae gigs on the side."

"Where do I want my reggae music journey to take me? So far, it has taken me coast to coast, meeting and connecting with like-minded humans and collaborating with other musicians. I think the journey has begun and if this is where it ends, I will consider myself blessed beyond measure." (Photo art by John Williams)

Speak Up Community News last joined Jade for a "Reggae Christmas Party" at the Abolitionist Ale Works in Charlestown, West Virginia once again with drummer Eric Calhoun, where she performed some of her own original music, including "Rock Steady Love" and she did a duet with her friend Gena Rockwell. Jade told Speak Up that her next performance will be on Valentines Day February 14, 2018 for a "One Love V-Day" show at the "Domestic" located on 117 E. German Street in Shepherdstown, West Virginia 25443. Our news team plans to attend the One Love V-Day celebration to hear Jade Tremba perform her new song "Lioness", which we already heard a rough recording of the vibe. We hope you'll join us.

In other Reggae music news:



"Adwela & The Uprising" on Friday February 2, 2018 will be doing a birthday tribute to the Legend Bob Marley at the "Jammin Java" on 227 Maple Avenue E. Vienna, Virginia 22180. Speak Up continues our ongoing photo documentary of Adwela Dawes climb to a solid standing in the area's Reggae music genre with epic music releases like their music video "Warrior". For more than three years our coverage of Adwela & The Uprising has seen the reggae sensation increase their annual tour schedule to included coast to coast performances across the United States and the band even opened for Ziggy Marley in their own hometown Fredericksburg, Virginia during their 2018 tour which included a stop near the Hagerstown, Maryland area to take part in the 2017 "Bless the Woods" Music Festival and Campout held in Fairplay, Maryland.

Medal of Honor Group



NEIGHBORHOODS 1st

Participant invitation to the 2018 Neighborhood Day of Hope *“Pledge to Protect Kids”*

On behalf of the Neighborhoods First Medal of Honor Group, I wish to invite you or your organization to join us as an outreach participant at the 2018 Neighborhood Day of Hope. Each year we have had over 30 organizations, agencies and businesses offer their services at our annual event which attracts hundreds of friends and neighbors who gather at this joyous celebration of community and heritage.

The Day of Hope is sponsored by the City of Hagerstown’s Neighborhood 1st Medal of Honor Group in partnership with health initiatives from the Brothers Who Care and the Maryland Department of Health.

We are introducing some “new” activities this year for the Neighborhood Day of Hope and are open to more ideas we can introduce at this year’s event to help protect our young people. We have had cultural presentations, interactive fitness activities, speakers, poets and live bands. We are also planning on bringing live music performances back to the event this year.

We hope that you, your organizations and friends will join us for the 2018 Neighborhood Day of Hope tentatively planned for Saturday, May 19, 2018 from 12noon to 4pm on Wheaton Park in Hagerstown, Maryland. Please mark your calendar and contact or email Brothers Who Care to participate as a vendor, business or agency. Phone (301) 393-9290 email: bwc@brotherswhocare.org.


Click this link to see the photo slideshow movie of our past gatherings of the event:

<http://brotherswhocare.org/images/2015DayOfHope.wmv>

<http://brotherswhocare.org/images/DayofHope2013.wmv>

http://brotherswhocare.org/images/DayofHope_SHORT.wmv

Again, thank you for your interest and support.


Brother Andy Smith,
Neighborhoods 1st Medal of Honor Group