

# the **Stand** south side news

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Syracuse, NY

**September 2010** issue 4 **FREE**

## HOMESCHOOLED KIDS

Donna Reese discusses  
how she sees the world  
and will help others

## Salina Shoe Salon, Inc.

Family-run shop makes shoe buying easy for South Side residents

## Photo Walk

Photographers take to  
the streets to capture  
South Side snapshots

South Side businesses say it can be a  
struggle to find support to get started

## looking for a good loan

## FIND UPCOMING WORKSHOPS





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**SCHOOL AND YOUTH** | As the new school year begins, two Syracuse mothers share tips on how to make homeschooling both manageable and affordable.



**FEATURES** | Community members capture the spirit of the South Side with a click of the shutter during an annual Photo Walk.



**FEATURES** | South Side resident Donna Reese shares how she overcame loss of her vision while she continues to promote awareness to others.



**BUSINESS** | Opportunities abound for South Side businesses to open up, but securing loans and finding structural support can be difficult.



**BUSINESS** | The family-run Salina Shoe Salon specializes in supplying its customers with properly fitting shoes.



> The Southside Community Coalition's Store For A Day has ended for the year. Over the past eight months, the group has grossed more than \$3,000 in sales. The next phases of the project are revisions of the business plan, securing financing and site acquisition. Seen here are volunteers Joseph Bryant II, David Trapps, Josh Bryant, Randy White and Joseph Connor, front. | Photo provided by Joseph Bryant II, president of the Southside Community Coalition

■ Cover photography from the South Side Photo Walk by Jolyn C. Wu

## CALENDAR | SEPTEMBER

**What:** South Side Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today Meeting  
**When:** 6 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 7  
**Where:** South Side Innovation Center, 2610 S. Salina St.  
**Cost:** Free and open to all community members  
**Contact:** TNT Coordinator Babette Baker by e-mail at [bbaker@ci.syracuse.ny.us](mailto:bbaker@ci.syracuse.ny.us) or by phone at (315) 448-8173

**What:** Urban vs. Suburban Health Disparities Fair  
**When:** 3 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 22  
**Where:** The Dunbar Association, 1453 S. State St.  
**Cost:** Free and open to the public  
**More Info.:** The goal of the event is to show the impact of differences of access to key components of health (diet, exercise, health care) between the inner city of Syracuse and the rest of the county

## HOW TO BUY AN AD

If interested in **running an ad**, contact Ashley Kang to request a **rate card** and discuss options by e-mailing [Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com) or by calling (315) 443-8664. The Stand's rate card can also be found online at [www.mysouthsidestand.com](http://www.mysouthsidestand.com)

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Over this past summer,, much has happened. The Stand welcomed two new board members — John A. Young and Deborah A. Willis — whom you can meet below, and said goodbye to Tasneem Tewogbola, who accepted a job and relocated her family to Belize.

Journalism Workshops continued throughout the summer with more participants attending each month. May's full-day workshops produced three community member stories and videos, which were featured online. In June, Lynn Olcott presented a short workshop on how to find motivation to write. In July, professional photographer and cultural humanitarian Jeffrey Chapman returned to lead a Photo Walk that was held in conjunction with the Scott Kelby Worldwide Photo Walk. More than 20 people participated. **Photo Walk snapshots are featured on pages 6 and 7.** In August, Maureen Sich, the former Urban Affairs editor of The Post-Standard, shared tips on covering an urban community; soon she leaves for Morocco to join the Peace Corps. **To learn about future workshops, see page 5.**

The mission of The South Side Newspaper Project continues to be one that publishes community news and features the work of South Side residents and students. We want to share community perspectives to help rejuvenate those living in the 13205 ZIP code. This fall, Newhouse School students in an urban affairs reporting class with The Stand's founder, professor Steve Davis, will aid in telling community members' stories by covering events and writing articles. They also will mentor interested participants during future Journalism Workshops.

And if you didn't notice my name change, I was married over the summer. My husband, HeeRak Kang, and I celebrated with friends and family with two ceremonies: a traditional church wedding held at Hendricks Chapel, followed by a traditional Korean Paebaek ceremony.

Ashley Kang



### WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor can be mailed to The Stand at:

South Side Innovation Center  
2610 S. Salina St.  
Syracuse, NY 13205

or e-mailed to:

The Stand's director,  
Ashley Kang, at  
Ashley@mysouthsidestand.com

All letters must be no more than 200 words and must contain the writer's full name, address and contact information.



### JOHN A. YOUNG

John is retired from careers in communications and information as a civilian with the Department of Defense (the Pentagon) and in public affairs with the U.S. Army. He also worked for many years in Syracuse media companies in TV, radio and cable. His major life career has been as a photojournalist in many parts of the world.

John majored in radio and television at Onondaga Community College and worked for WHEN (WTVH-5) TV and WCNY-TV stations. In radio, he worked for WONO and WSEN; he also became the first sales manager of Rogers Cable in Syracuse, now called Time-Warner Cable.

He had his start in the South Side of Syracuse as a self-trained photographer at Central Technical High School in 1965. His family has always been based in education and socially supports the Syracuse community. He enjoys playing chess, listening to jazz and classical music, and he also enjoys noncontact sports and fishing.



### DEBORAH A. WILLIS

Deborah graduated from Central Technical High School and has earned two associate degrees in accounting and as a paralegal. She has an extensive background in administrative and computer technology. Deborah is a licensed tutor through the Literacy Guild of America and the Laubach Literacy Society of Indiana. She also is a

Notary Public for New York state and currently works with the American Red Cross as a community ambassador.

Deborah notes her greatest accomplishment is her spirituality and commitment to God. She is a member of Hopps Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in Syracuse. Her expertise consists of working directly with religious leaders, residents and community-based organizations to provide awareness, training, research and information in a variety of areas, including health and safety, youth development and senior advocacy.



## TIPS TO SAVE TIME

### Cooking

"Crock pots are a big help with dinners," Julia Cleghorn believes.

She advises throwing together a meal while children are working independently in the morning, turning on the crock pot before leaving for afternoon activities and then returning home with a meal ready to eat.

### Vacationing

Family vacations can serve a dual purpose — fun and education.

Julia Cleghorn says a camping trip, for example, can offer an opportunity for safety lessons and for writing reports on the great outdoors.

## TIPS TO SAVE \$\$\$

### Library

With a visit to the local library, your children can check out books and educational videos, use computers and participate in free events.

### Join a group

By becoming a member of a homeschooling group or local co-op, you can join with other parents to share books and plan field trips at group rates.

# STAY-HOME STUDENTS



> Julia Cleghorn, left, speaks at a summer homeschooling workshop. Marcelle Haddix was an organizer. | Ashley Kang, Staff Photo

By | Ashley Kang  
Director of *The Stand*

## Workshops and networks help parents decide whether to teach their children at home

As local students gear up to go back to school, a growing number won't make it past their front doors. Instead, they will receive their education right at home.

Homeschooling is the education of children under their parents' general care and replaces full-time attendance in a public classroom. The National Home Education Research Institute notes it might be the fastest-growing form of education in the United States — currently numbering about 2 million home-educated students. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, homeschooling has grown 7 percent per year for each of the past 10 years.

Over the summer, workshops were offered on the South Side — called "Taking Back Our Children's Education" — for parents interested in learning how to take charge of their children's education and how homeschooling could be manageable and affordable. The series ended in June, but the group will continue to meet monthly to sustain momentum and foster community.

During the second workshop in the series, homeschooling parent Julia Cleghorn spoke about how she

has made homeschooling work for her. For more than 20 years, she has homeschooled her four boys — none ever stepping into a typical classroom.

She chose homeschooling because she could not imagine giving her firstborn to a stranger to be educated. Cleghorn also points to research findings that boys pick up reading at a later age, but she notes that "society assesses them at a much earlier age."

She shared a story that affected her. A female friend who has a twin brother told Cleghorn how both started school at the same time, but she took to reading while he had a much harder time picking it up.

"He fell way behind and was told he was slow," her friend told her, noting that this poor start to school affected him throughout his entire life.

According to the National Assessment of Education Progress reading comprehension scores, females outperform males every year in the fourth, eighth and 12th grades.

"My sons did not begin to read until they were eight or nine," Cleghorn said. "In school, they would be labeled slow and developmentally behind, but there are no labels when kids are homeschooled."

By the time her sons became interested in reading, their skill level jumped quickly and the boys began to enjoy reading books.

"It's about constructing an environment of learn-



ing,” she explained during the workshop. “Homeschooling is a lifestyle. It is not about feeding facts of useless information and then have them regurgitate it back out for a test. It is about creating lifelong learners who can learn to educate themselves.”

Barb Morrissey, head of LEAH, which stands for Loving Education at Home, echoed the idea that homeschooling is a lifestyle. “There is no typical homeschooling day, because as a parent you are free to create your own form of school in any way.”

Cleghorn agrees. “You’re not bringing the public school into your house. You don’t have to have your kids sit at a desk.”

A homeschool day can vary, but there is a structure Cleghorn follows.

Her sons — the oldest will begin law school at Syracuse University in the fall, and the youngest will start 10th grade — would wake each day at 6 a.m., eat breakfast, work at the farm next door, return to help with chores and then begin with their subjects by 8:30 a.m.

Cleghorn says sometimes they would work at a desk. “But if we were going to do reading, they would sit in the living room.”

After curriculum, her sons would have lunch and then participate in activities, such as sports. In the evening, while Cleghorn made dinner, the boys would review work or do math problems at the kitchen table.

Morrissey says some families follow the school year, but she homeschools year round. For her six children, she follows a schedule of three weeks of instruction and then a week off, when her children focus on projects and take a break. She notes that summers are much less structured. During the fall and spring, her children begin with independent work. In the afternoon, they do review work, make corrections and take lessons in music or sports.

As for cost, it depends on what a parent wants to do.

“The Internet is a great resource that can help parents explore curriculum before purchasing,” Morrissey said. “This can help you be thrifty. Also some parents rely on the public library to use the computer.”

Cleghorn said one way her sons saved money before starting college was to “CLEP out of courses.” CLEP — The College-Level Examination Program — allows students to save time and money and receive college credit. A CLEP exam cost \$77, a fraction of the tuition and fees for the corresponding course at a community college or university.

And both agree having a strong support system is key. There are local co-ops of mothers, opportunities to play sports and homeschooling groups such as LEAH that hold monthly meetings.

“These are great outlets for socialization,” Cleghorn said. “The myth is that homeschooled kids have no friends, but my children have many. Also, I know the parents of their friends, I know their values and I know the kids and have seen them grow up. Within schools, you cannot know who is having an influence on your child.”

Such networks are helpful not only for students, but also for parents. The Syracuse LEAH group has more than 90 members, and the group holds monthly meetings to provide tips and topics that offer support for parents.

LEAH’s Web site — [www.syracuseleah.org](http://www.syracuseleah.org) — offers resources for parents to get started. A monthly e-newsletter provides a list of upcoming events, tutors, lesson instructors and sports. The group provides field trips for its members and parents who attend meetings share ideas and strategies.

Facebook and other sites are another way local homeschooling parents stay in touch, says SU professor Marcelle Haddix, who helped organize this summer’s workshops and who will be homeschooling her own son this year.

“Parents can’t always find the time to make a meeting,” Haddix said, “but they can keep in constant contact online and pass along suggestions and advice to each other.”

## JOURNALISM WORKSHOPS

### September – Full-Day Video Workshop

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11

Taught by professor Peter Moller

RSVP by calling 443-8664 or e-mailing [ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:ashley@mysouthsidestand.com)

### October – Spoken Word Workshop

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9

Led by Slam Poetry Group Verbal Blend

### November – Full-Day Multimedia Workshop

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 13

Led by Stephen Mahan with PAL Project

RSVP by calling 443-8664 or e-mailing [ashley@mysouthsidestand.com](mailto:ashley@mysouthsidestand.com)

### December – Finding the Writer Within

11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 4

Taught by Lynn Olcott

All Workshop are **free and open to the public** and meet at the **South Side Innovation Center**, 2610 South Salina St.



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| Tom Nettle

Photo enthusiasts were welcomed to Syracuse's South Side on Saturday, July 24, as part of The South Side Photo Walk. The event was held in conjunction with Scott Kelby's Third Annual Worldwide Photo Walk.

A Photo Walk is a social photography event in which photographers gather together to roam a neighborhood, shoot photos and enjoy the art of photography. As participants in The Stand's Photo Walk snapped photos, 33,497 other photographers who were signed up in the worldwide walk were taking pictures elsewhere at the same time.

Photographers in The Stand's walk made their way on foot from the South Side Innovation Center, down South Salina Street, into barbershops and through neighborhoods, to Kirk Park, and back to the center. Despite the hot day, 20 participants snapped photos for more

than an hour and then shared their perspectives with The Stand.

Professional photographer Jeffrey Chapman volunteered his time to lead the free event, which he opened with a short session of tips for photographers. Cameras were loaned to attendees who did not have their own equipment. Next, everyone ventured out to start the walk. Attendees ranged from experienced photographers to amateurs, and there was a good mix represented — South Side residents, former South Side residents, Syracuse University students, and photographers from surrounding areas as far away as Utica.

On display across these two pages is a variety of snapshots from the day. To view all the photos that were shared, visit The Stand's Web site at [www.mysouthsidestand.com](http://www.mysouthsidestand.com).





| Jason Scharf



| Cindy Jordan



| Chambang Mut



| Ryan Wilson



| Tom Nettle



| Dottie Baltz



| Jason Scharf





> Donna Reese, former president of the Syracuse NAACP, stands in front of a display of pictures of her with famous figures. | Alexandra Seltzer, Staff Photo

By | Alexandra Seltzer  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

**After losing her sight, former Syracuse NAACP leader adapts and brings her message to others**

**D**onna Reese said she used to have problems with both her night vision and her peripheral vision, but she didn't think about it much.

Then, one night, driving home from work, she found she had trouble seeing. Reese, former president of Syracuse's chapter of the NAACP, blamed it on simply being tired.

Not long after that incident, Reese, who had been battling glaucoma for more than a decade, completely lost the sight in her left eye and some in her right.

"Things started getting blurry — and one morning I woke up and couldn't see anything," she said.

Her daughter drove her to the hospital, where her sight continued to deteriorate. Her condition stumped the doctors.

"I formed a hole in my cornea," she said. "So I had to get emergency surgery to patch the hole in my eye, or I would have lost my eye."

That happened in 2007. Three surgeries later, Reese, 48, has become an advocate for people facing similar situations, while working to educate people who might not believe similar problems could happen to them.

Those who hear her speak have found her story so touching that she recently brought an audience to tears and applause at an event at the University Sheraton. The April event, called "Dessert in the Dark," was sponsored by Aurora of Central New York.

Audience members did a blind taste test of desserts to find out what it is like to be vision impaired. Then





> Reese has found ways to adapt to her disability. She uses a computer by zooming in. | Alexandra Seltzer, Staff Photo

Reese told her encouraging story.

Part of what Reese tells her audience while speaking is the journey traveled to get to where she is now. Today, she can use the Internet, cook for her family and get around town.

"When this first happened, I was angry at everybody, at the world, God, just everybody," Reese said. "Then I realized that wouldn't help anything."

If Reese is going to a place unfamiliar to her, she takes her cane. Katie McCormick, former orientation mobility specialist for Aurora, an organization that helps people with vision or hearing loss, helped Reese become comfortable using her cane as an aid.

"She's conquering the world now," McCormick said.

McCormick said she was assigned to Reese and visited her at her home about six times. The first two times she worked with Reese moving around the house. After that, they ventured outside with her cane.

"The cane is the thing people fear the most," McCormick said. "It's a huge step for so many people."

Reese said she was very reluctant to use her cane at first.

"My pride just wouldn't let me use it," Reese said. "But when I wanted to get my independence back, I knew I had to learn to use this cane."

Reese now interns at Aurora three times a week as an advocate, trying to connect Aurora to the African-American community.

"There's a lot of people out there like me that don't know these services are out there and don't know how to access them," Reese said. "Or people like me that, when it first started happening, kept it secret because I didn't want to be judged or looked at differently."

Reese's mother, Betty Jane DuBose, has lived with

Reese for the past six years since DuBose's husband passed away. When her mother first moved in, Reese took care of her. But when Reese started losing her vision, the tables turned.

Reese said her mother, 87, took care of her and helped her around. Now, however, they cook together and spend even more time with each other.

"I'm always proud of my daughter, whatever she does," DuBose said. "I know my husband is proud of her, too."

*"When this first happened, I was angry at everybody ... Then I realized that wouldn't help anything."*

—Donna Reese

## LEARN TO SIGN

**American Sign Language classes** are being offered to the public this fall by Aurora of Central New York.

**Classes will begin in October** and will last eight weeks.

**Cost is \$100**, including instructional materials.

Classes will be held at **Aurora office**  
**518 James St., Suite 100**  
**Syracuse, NY**

**Pre-registration is required.**  
No walk-ins will be accepted.

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# LOOKING FOR LOANS

*Some South Side businesses struggle to thrive without enough capital*

By | Brian Amaral  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

Though there is plenty of opportunity on the South Side, businesses struggle to get loans

A generation ago, South Salina Street bustled with business, serving as the city's main corridor for commerce.

But these days, local business owners and small business advocates say that decades of neglect from the city and a lack of structured programs has made it difficult for people to know how to start businesses — the necessary steps like finding loans and a place to set up shop are not simple. It's turned the strip into a place where people drive through without stopping.

But advocates and business owners add that there's plenty of economic opportunity on the South Side.

"Every day, you walk by a million bucks," said Robert Herz, director of the South Side Innovation Center. "It's a matter of stopping and realizing it's there."

The SSIC is trying to help people find it. The non-profit is a small business incubator started by Syracuse University. The SSIC offers business training — many on the South Side lack the education to start their own companies, Herz said — and a location to set up offices.

For Quiana Seymour, the dream was never to make a million dollars. She wanted to be her own boss and to have a place where she could bring her young kids. After a career in food service, starting a diner was the logical choice, but she didn't have any experience in running a business: balancing a budget, filing taxes, keeping stock of inventory, and, most important, finding loans.

So she enrolled in local classes, including some at the South Side Innovation Center, to learn how to start her own restaurant.

Armed with a 100-page business plan, she said she went to several banks for financing, but was rejected from all but one, which offered her \$10,000 to help take over Valley Diner on Salina Street. She added that to the \$20,000 she already had saved, but still came up short, so she wasn't able to buy the building outright.

"I went everywhere" to get a loan, she said. "Nobody is lending right now for restaurants."

She is leasing it from the people who used to run the restaurant, she said, with an option to buy in three years.

QD's Home Cookin' officially opened its doors this past spring. The place could still use a fresh paint job, a new roof, and new flowerbeds, she said, but investing that money when she's only leasing the building would be a



> Owner Quiana Seymour cleans a table at QD's Home Cookin' at 4710 S. Salina St. | Steve Davis, Staff Photo

waste if she can't buy it in three years.

How will she be able to afford that?

"Hopefully, by the time those three years are up, we can have some good economic projections and a better business plan," Seymour said. "We can prove to the banks that we'll make money, and then they'll be jumping all over us."

Seymour is not alone in her struggles. Emanuel Jenkins also started a restaurant, this one with a soul food theme, on the corner of Cannon and Brighton streets.

In an interview this past spring, Jenkins said he wants his business to thrive because it will help the blighted area of Syracuse in which it's located.

"A lot of people are afraid of coming through here," Jenkins said. "When it's all just abandoned houses, I'm not surprised."

But because of the area in which his restaurant is located, it's been difficult for him to find loans, he said.

Jenkins, who is a caseworker for drug addicts at Crouse Hospital, needed to find some way to finance his business. He got a small loan for his business, and also took out a personal loan.

"The city did nothing," Jenkins said. "The banks did nothing."

Herz, the SSIC director, disagrees with that. Banks and the city do offer programs, but they don't do a good job of advertising them, and without a steep education in business, they're often hard to find, Herz said.

The key to South Side business development is to get people to stop on the South Salina Street strip, Herz said. That won't happen until businesses start popping up, which is hard to do without support from the city and from organizations, he said, but that's all changing.



*Continued from Page 12*

Wickham said. “Entrepreneurs are one of the driving factors of the economy, and this training session gives people an opportunity to get started.”

Attendees pair up with students working toward a master of business administration, giving them the opportunity to meet one-on-one outside of class, Wickham said. “The students help you define what you need to do to get the business up and running or help it grow.”

The program usually draws between 60 and 70 people and has trained about 400 people since it began, Wickham said. Most attendees are from the Syracuse area, but some have traveled from as far as Canada and New Jersey, she said.

Yamini said she enjoyed the boot camp because it gave her what she needed to run her business and gave the students the opportunity to put into practice the theories they learned in the classroom.

“The retail class professor offered her class to help me get open, get my stock up in the store, and help design the interior,” she said. “You know, I practically gutted the place and renovated it and the students — we had so much fun.”

She said the family-run business has survived through difficult economic times because of its customer service and niche market. “When people want a pair of winter boots and they need size 12 double wide, where

**“When ... they need  
size 12 double  
wide, where are you  
going to come?”**

**— Amatullah Yamini**

are you going to come? You don’t have a lot of choices.”

Much of the clientele from the former owner, Sid Ashkin, still shop at the store, and Yamini is building on that customer base, she said.

Some customers send letters applauding the customer service, thrilled that employees could fit them with comfortable, fashionable shoes, Yamini said.

“We’re building with the community and helping people to understand how important it is to take care of your feet. I think that’s the thing that has kept us going.”

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# SHOE STORE STEPS UP



> Hassan Yamini has owned Salina Shoe Salon, Inc., with his wife, Amatullah, since 2005. | Steve Davis, Staff Photo

By | Alison Bryant  
*Urban Affairs reporter*

Fitting people with proper shoes has been the mission for this South Salina Street store

Amatullah Yamini and her husband, Hassan, owners of Salina Shoe Salon, Inc., witnessed a man walking to the bus in shoes so grungy that the heels flopped with every step.

The couple invited him into their shop, fitted him with a pair of boots and sent him on his way, free of charge.

“Only because that’s the right thing to do,” Amatullah Yamini said. “That’s the thing about a neighborhood store, too, that’s different from any place else. You see something like that, it gives you the opportunity to give a blessing.”

Yamini and her husband purchased Salina Shoe Salon, Inc., located at 2809 S. Salina St., in 2005 to ensure the business remained open and to encourage other businesses to come to the area, she said.

“We’d been working in the area here on the South

Side and just keeping up with the area and seeing it improve,” Yamini said. “We just didn’t want to see another store close.”

Salina Shoe Salon, Inc., specializes in selling shoes in sizes that fit people who might not be able to find properly fitting shoes at chain stores.

Before opening the store, Yamini said she worked as a real estate agent and had little entrepreneurial experience. That’s why, in 2005, she signed up for the Syracuse Entrepreneur’s Bootcamp, a six-week program that teaches attendees everything from writing a business plan to operations and logistics, she said.

The boot camp, founded in 2003 and run by the Falcone Center for Entrepreneurship in the Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University, features a different business topic every Saturday, along with guest speakers who are local entrepreneurs, said Lindsay Wickham, events coordinator for the boot camp.

“This is a six-week program that really goes through, start to finish, the components of being successful,”

*Continued on Page 11*