

# age friendly

BEDFORD-STUYVESANT  
& CROWN HEIGHTS

# THIRD CHAPTER LIVING



WEEKSVILLE  
HERITAGE CENTER

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A PUBLICATION OF AGE FRIENDLY  
NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

# WOMAN, THY NAME IS LOVE!

BY SELMA JACKSON



*Chicago native and Southern Illinois University alumna, Mariann Aalda presents a one-woman show about her alter ego Adult Sex-Ed Evangelist and Mojo Motivator, Dr. Ginger Peechee-Keane, who dispenses her wit and wisdom about getting older and still getting your groove on!*

On Saturday Feb 1, 2020, Age Friendly Ambassadors were treated to a production at the Billie Holiday Theater entitled, "Getting Old is a Bitch...But I'm Going to Wrestle that Bitch to the Ground!" What a way to get ready for Valentine's and Sadie Hawkins Day!

For an audience over the age of 60 the title maybe offensive as demonstrated by this comment, "I heard that theater at Restoration had a play and all they did was curse! I wouldn't go see it".

However, that person missed a treat!

The play featured very little profanity. It was an afternoon of real talk between mature women about experiences, expectations, good and safe sex and of course self-care!

# LOVE YOURSELF

## Continued from "THY NAME IS LOVE!"

The matinee encouraged us to look at aging as a chance to discover or awaken talents that we possess not as a death null. The playwright implored us to love our selves because we deserve it!

Our quote of the month is all about trying love again and still again. Starting with yourself, you should:

- *Treat yourself to dinner at a favorite restaurant*
- *Be open to making new friendships*
- *Remember to put on your mask first before you help someone put on theirs.*

These are just some of the gems this one woman show shared with us including how to be a survivor and how to come out on top!

Creator Mariann shared how she survived domestic abuse both mental and physical and cancer.

She wove these basic truths through vibrant and hysterical storytelling and reminded us that once we reignited love of self, we could also awaken the possibilities of love with a significant other!

She implored us to explore opening oneself up to a relationship and to remember that sex and relationships can be just for fun! Age is nothing but a number and life is to be enjoyed no matter the age.







# BLACK & PROUD

**BY STEFANI L. ZINERMAN**

I am a child of the sixties, which means that I was born at the height of the civil rights movement and at a time when you were reared to be Black and Proud. In my lifetime, my people fought and earned the right to vote, organized and inspired global civil rights movements and elected the first Black President of the United States - twice. We are Black and we were oh so proud. And then the current occupant in the White House was elected and the backlash against being Black was official.

Yes, it started with the election of Barack Hussien Obama and the realization that the democratic shift would place black and brown people in the majority in a country that has stolen, fought, maimed, raped and tortured those who look like me since 1619. This “backlash” recalled in our spirits, deep in our psyche memories of slavery, segregation and the murders of our most precious. We are still Black but for America, it was cool again to be anti-Black.

Now if we're honest, we know that racism and racist thought never went away. It has just become more sophisticated and insidious. To quote Ibram X. Kendi author of the seminal book *Stamped from the Beginning*, “As we have progressed as a people so has racist ideas and policies.” Despite this knowledge so many who blossomed under the call for hope and change now feel despair and stagnation.

This we cannot allow! We must refocus our energy and reignite our collective can do spirit. This year, we will elect a new President, federal and state representatives, and receive a mid-term report from the United Nations on the status of the International Decade for People of African Descent, which began on January 1, 2015 and will end on December 31, 2024.

The purpose of the “Decade” is to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination and other relevant international and regional human abuses for people of African descent as proclaimed by the General Assembly. It focuses on three areas: 1) establishing recognition across the globe of people having particular needs because of systematic racism, 2) determining what justice looks like for 200 million people, and 3) deciding which places we need to develop.

I believe we will continue to struggle, lose ground and experience backlash after backlash if we do not attack racism head on. We've spent the last 400 years trying to survive and then thrive around racism. Now is the time for us to use the multiplicity of resources available in the entire global community to shine a bright light on the injustices experienced by people of African descent in America and call it out for what it is.

It is time for us to focus our collective attention on establishing new laws, new policies and new norms in our neighborhoods to prevent further anti-black behavior. Whether it is permanently codifying our right to vote in the Constitution, securing reparations and freedom from mass incarceration, and/or developing our schools, homes and neighborhoods that support us, we need to help build a world where it is safe to be Black and a place that would make our ancestors proud!





# ADVOCATING IN ALBANY!

**BY DONNA WILLIAMS**

On Saturday, February 15, Age Friendly Bedford Stuyvesant & Crown Heights hosted its 4th annual bus trip to the New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators, Inc. (NYSABPRL) Caucus in Albany, NY to advocate for older adult rights and resources. Excited about the day ahead of us, Age Friendly ambassadors, members, and volunteers gathered at Restoration Plaza to depart for Albany at 6:30 am. Yikes! With our bus captain Sheila Cox and bus hostess Shantae J. Edwards leading the way, we were off to participate in Aging Advocacy Day. Some of my fellow bus mates had been to Caucus Weekend before. Others had been to Albany to advocate with their unions.

For me, it was my first time in the capital city of New York State. On the bus, we were treated to a light breakfast and of course water. We must stay hydrated! Each of us was given an Age Friendly tee-shirt to wear for the day bearing the words: Say it loud! I'm black, I count & I'm proud! with the hashtags: **Census2020 #CheckBLACK #CountALLSeniors #MakeBROOKLYNCount.** Once we reached Albany, we met Stefani Zinerman, Age Friendly chair, who gave us our marching orders. We were to pass out flyers to help raise awareness about the importance of senior participation in the upcoming 2020 Census and to take photos with notables and elected officials and thank them for funding census efforts in Brooklyn.

# ALBANY

## Continued from Page 5

At noon, we were invited to attend Assembly Member and Chair of the Caucus Tremaine S. Wright's annual constituent luncheon at her office.

The balance of the day was spent attending workshops and checking out the many vendors and exhibits. Several of us attended the workshop on African Americans and Mental Health sponsored by Assembly Member Dr. Mathyde Frontus and Assembly Member Pamela Hunter. The panel spoke about the need to de-stigmatize mental health in communities of color.

What we learned is that seeking mental health services is not a weakness. Everyone has the right and deserves to be helped. There are resources available, from one on one counseling (i.e., in-person, over the phone) to group therapy. Don't give up!

Among the highlights of the day was witnessing Senator Velmanette Montgomery being honored for her years of service.

***Our Ambassadors and guests took their assignment seriously! Pictured right in photo #1 is Ambassador Sharon Lyons with the Honorable Annette M. Robinson. Photo #2 is Assembly Member Nathalia Fernandez with Senior Advocate Eunice Jemmot. Picture #3 is Velvet Hall with State Senator John Liu and Assembly Member Clyde Vanel. Photo #4 is Contributing Writer Lorraine Gamble-Lofton, Assembly Member Walter Mosley, participant Willie Banner and our Editor in Chief Donna Williams.***





# ADVOCACY IN ALBANY



*Senator Velmanette Montgomery pictured above with her staff Julia Caro, Racquel Saddler, Juneay Oliver, Chief of Staff Susan Leung, Stefani Zinerman, Shakti Cubas-Robbins, Fabian Smith and Carolina Nunez after receiving an award from New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli and from Congressman Hakeem Jeffries on behalf of the members of the AACEO (pictured upper right). Senator Montgomery is retiring in November after having served in the New York State Legislature for over three decades.*

The day ended with a workshop about the lack of voting rights for incarcerated people: Voting While Incarcerated / Strengthening the Black Vote: A Pact with Black Men and Black Women – Part 2. Sponsored by New York State Senator Kevin S. Parker in conjunction with Sigma Gamma Rho, panelists included Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, Brooklyn NAACP Chair of Civic Engagement Stefani Zinerman, Amoy Barnes, who is running for city council in Staten Island’s 49th district, and Neal Zephyrin, social action chair. Assembly Member Harvey Epstein joined Senator Parker for the Q&A. Moderator was Roshawn Boyce.

Topics addressed included bail reform, the difference between jail and prison, changing the composition of the parole board, and most pertinent to seniors, what needs to be done for the aging population in prison.



Should we really be retrofitting prisons for the aging or is there a better solution? As we talked about the criminal justice system, everyone agreed that preventing those with felony convictions from voting is the latest maneuver to disempower black voters.



At 6 pm, we departed Albany ready to head home. We couldn’t have asked for a better driver than Michael, who provided exceptional door to door service! I look forward to next year’s bus trip to Albany.



# THE LEAP YEAR VOTE

BY DONNA WILLIAMS

2020 is the centennial of the 19th Amendment (1920 ratified) and the culmination of the women's suffrage movement granting white women the right to vote. Initially, the 19th Amendment did not extend to women color. It wasn't until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that black women were officially allowed to vote.

Despite the Civil Rights Movement and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, men and women of color continue to be the target of voter suppression including the purging of voter rolls; limitations on early and absentee voting;

procedure disinformation; caging lists; identification requirements; gerrymandering (dividing voting districts to gain an unfair advantage); and more. It can't be said often enough or loud enough:

**Your vote matters!**

**Every vote counts!**

This Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, we urge everyone, especially brown and black people, to exercise their hard won right to vote.

Appropriately, this year's theme for Black History month is:

**"AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE VOTE".**

## THEMES FROM BLACK HISTORY



BY  
**LORRAINE  
GAMBLE-  
LOFTON**

The original purpose of Black History Month was to promote the achievements, contributions and progress of the forgotten Black people.

Since 1928, every Black History week or month has had a theme that recognizes pivotal events or topics to be highlighted during the year's celebration. Since 1976, every president has endorsed a specific theme. The 2013 theme - "Crossroads of Freedom and Equality: The Emancipation Proclamation and the March on Washington" - recognized the 150th and 50th anniversaries of those key events in black American history.

When you look at all that is going on in our government, it seems fitting, that the theme for 2020 would be "African Americans and The Vote." Each of us utilizing our vote, like filling out the Census, is another way for our voices to be heard. What Carter G. Woodson would say about the continued celebrations is unknown, but I believe that he would be impressed and smile on all honest efforts to make black history a field of serious study and provide the public with thoughtful celebrations.

*"As we pay tribute to the heroes, sung and unsung, of African-American history, we recall the inner strength that sustained millions in bondage. We remember the courage that led activists to defy lynch mobs and register their neighbors to vote. And we carry forward the unyielding hope that guided a movement as it bent the arc of the moral universe toward justice. Even while we seek to dull the scars of slavery and legalized discrimination, we hold fast to the values gained through centuries of trial and suffering."*

*-President Barack Obama*

*Black History Month Proclamation  
2014 Theme: Civil Rights in America.*

# SCHEMERS & SCAMMERS, OH MY!

**BY SELMA JACKSON**

Seniors are making every effort to be smart consumers and protect themselves from fraud and abuse. But we are inundated by scammers who attempt to defraud us by telephone, via the internet, by mail and in some situations they show up at your home or stop you on the street. Bottomline: scam artists make it a practice to target elderly New Yorkers every day.

Here is a new maneuver: an alternative electric supplier sets up a table in front of Con Edison's office at 30 Flatbush Ave with a pkg of 2 LED light bulbs. The statement: Con Edison will send you a case of light bulbs annually and will review your annual billing and rebate your highest bill each year. I asked why would Con Edison voluntarily do this and the "agent" said Con Edison had been over charging and this was a way to rectify this wrong.

According to the "agent", all one needed to do was respond to the Con Edison call that the "agent" makes for you. He or she then copies down your account number and asks for a photograph of your state identification with your address. Very suspicious! When this happened to me, I asked the "agent" "how do I know this is not a scam?"

The "agent" didn't answer. He just told me I could take a picture of my ID too! This is a scam to get you to change your service to the alternative provider. If you fall into this trap, all you have to do is call Con Edison to have the transfer blocked.

While this was not directly stealing, it is an attempt to change your service without direct consent and access to your photo ID and address. Just so you know, the alternative service is nearly double your Con Edison bill and the free light bulbs and one month rebate is not sufficient compensation for the higher monthly bill.

***Get a copy of SMART SENIORS from the office of Letitia James, the Attorney General of New York. It gives examples of different kinds of scams. Stay alert and Be aware!***

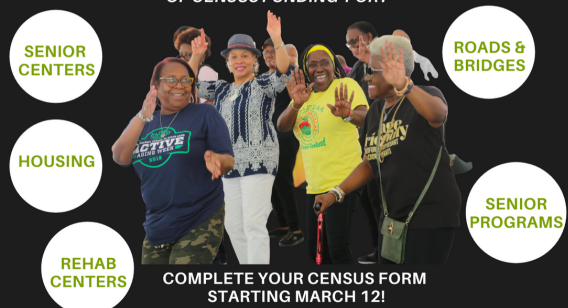
Starting March 12, 2020, you can begin completing your Census 2020 form online. To avoid scams, please know that the Census Bureau will not send unsolicited emails to request your participation in the 2020 Census!

Further, they will never ask for:

- Your Social Security number.
- Your bank account or credit card numbers.
- Money or donations.
- Information on behalf of a political party!

If you suspect fraud, call 800-923-8282.

**CENSUS -2020- OLDER ADULTS DESERVE 100%**   
OF CENSUS FUNDING FOR:



# GET READY & FIT!

BY DONNA WILLIAMS

In keeping with our commitment to promote Healthy Aging, Age Friendly Bedford-Stuyvesant & Crown Heights is offering a free Senior Fit series every third Tuesday of the month, at Quincy Senior Residences, located at 625 Quincy Street (between Stuyvesant & Lewis) from 12:30-1:30 PM.

You are invited to join Fiona Adams (Senior Cardio) and Tameeka Ford (Chair Yoga) for an hour-long “age friendly” class designed to get you moving. Classes run simultaneously from 12:30-1:30 PM. Fiona’s cardio class will be held in the basement and Tameeka’s chair yoga will be in the Community Room.

In addition, on Thursdays, Tameeka offers free Chair Yoga from 10:30-11:30 PM at EmergeSoul, 380 MacDonough (between Stuyvesant & Malcolm X),



*“Movement is Medicine,” says Tameeka Ford, owner and curator of EmergeSoul, a Wellness Boutique established to provide wellness services and education to underserved urban communities and older adults.*



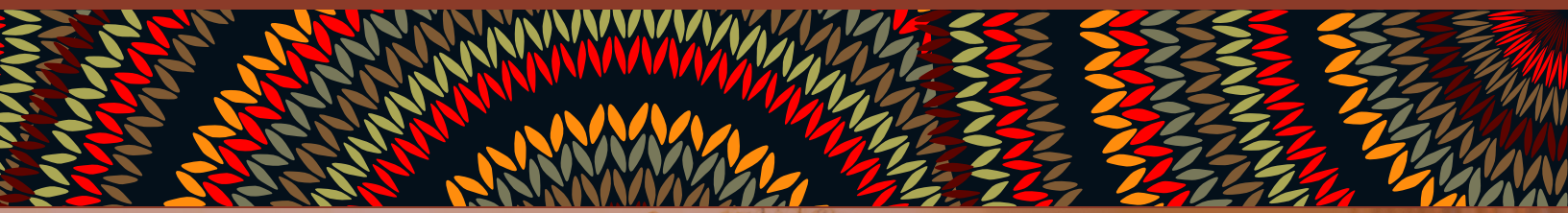
## About Fiona Adams

If you’ve attended an Age Friendly monthly meeting or Active Aging Week last year, you’ve probably had your heart rate raised by Fiona’s cardio workout. Fiona is passionate about fostering health and longevity among older adults. She is a fitness instructor with Shape Up NYC, a New York City Parks & Recreation program that brings free and fun physical activity to underserved neighborhoods. Fiona also takes part in a Communities for Healthy Foods initiative as a community chef to encourage healthy eating among older adults.

## About Tameeka Ford

Tameeka is a Master’s level Social Worker that has emerged into a holistic educator. For over 20 years, she has worked with NYC’s most vulnerable communities creating a myriad of innovative youth programs designed to respond to their physical, social and mental needs. Tameeka continues to support these communities by making holistic healing available and accessible including conscious breathing, meditation, mindful movement and more. Her primary goal is to inspire community members into action to practice taking care of themselves daily.





***“Have enough  
courage to trust love one  
more time and always one  
more time.”***

**MAYA ANGELOU  
1928 - 2014**





# age friendly

BEDFORD-STUYVESANT  
& CROWN HEIGHTS

# CALENDAR

On February 26 at 12:00 PM, we hosted our Elder Wednesday Luncheon at Bleu Fin Seafood restaurant owned by Hollis Barclay. (see photos to the right)

March 3 at 2:00 PM - New Member Orientation, 625 Quincy Street

March 4 at 10:00 AM - Aging Mastery Series, 1368 Fulton Street

March 5 at 10:30 AM - Virtual Bowling, Macon Library - 361 Lewis Avenue

March 10 at 2:30 PM - Ambassador Meeting, 625 Quincy Street

March 12 at 10:30 AM - Virtual Bowling, Macon Library - 361 Lewis Avenue

March 17 at 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM - Senior Fit Series, 625 Quincy Street

March 25 at 12 PM to 5 PM - Trip to the U.N. for International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

*Elder Wednesday Luncheons will resume on April 22, 2020.*

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