



# Sober Intentions

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Cazenovia Recovery's Housing program is a thriving collective of inventive and holistic care for individuals in recovery.

The agency's Housing Program offers 101 supported apartments throughout the area and dedicated relapse prevention specialists who assist residents attempting to remain free of drugs and alcohol.



Scotty Burt and Fatisha Collins

Senior specialist Scotty Burt and specialist Fatisha Collins recently changed the name of their weekly group from Relapse Prevention to Sober Intentions. The new name reflects a positive approach with greater focus on Trauma-Informed Care. "The participants' purpose is to stay sober, support each other and have fun," he said. "We always have an open-door policy for one-on-one interventions," Fatisha added.

They have created "a safe place" and comfortable atmosphere. "We don't always stress substance use topics because they get that in outpatient services," Scotty explained. "Instead, open communication and positive self-talk are encouraged. It's a tight-knit group. They know they can talk

about anything. We are active listeners and acknowledge positive changes."

Fatisha started a sub-group for women, Walking in Your Own Destiny, that meets bi-monthly. Health issues, and living and coping skills are emphasized, as well as accessing available community resources. Scotty plans to launch a similar sub-group for men.

Fun events are of the utmost importance for the group. Among them are birthday celebrations, ice cream socials, picnics, baseball games, amusement park visits, holiday parties, and art show participation. These events show residents how to enjoy activities without the use of drugs or alcohol.



Drums for the drum circle

Scotty recently re-introduced a drum circle, which uses percussion as a recreational opportunity that has the benefit of reducing stress. "It's also just fun," he added.

He has praise for residents' accomplishments. "Our residents are trying and they are staying on top of it, too," he said. "They know they're not alone."

## Staffing Info

### Let's Congratulate:

- Linda Werth for becoming a senior counselor
- Gabriella Pelosi for becoming a full-time clinical aide
- Mary Reid for passing her CASAC exam

### Let's Welcome:

- Marc Nowacki, residence monitor at Sundram Manor
- Caitlin Bernard, residence monitor at Unity House
- Quinton Storey, van driver at TPH
- Sharon Donahue, counselor at Madonna House
- Erin Jeffords residence monitor at Madonna House
- Robert Pellegrino, case manager at Somerset House
- Jay Swarthout, program director at TPH
- Symone Robertson, intake coordinator at Admin

### Cazenovia Creators & Catchers:

- Nancy Sobecky, Briana Petersdorf, Ron Corpening, Terry Booze, Shirley Yates, John Molnar, Claudia Rejman, Carolyn Kirkwood, and Morgan King

Congratulations to Carolyn Kirkwood for winning this quarter's gift card! Our next drawing will be in September.

## New Phone Systems in Niagara County

Madonna House, Somerset House, and Sundram Manor received new phone systems this month. These programs had outdated infrastructure that involved just one line and one phone for the entire program. They now have voicemail, a phone for residents, multiple phone lines, and multiple phones and extensions for staff. Eileen Dietsch, director of operations, said that these updates are “important for the future of the programs.” The agency planned ahead to ensure that there are enough phones for new staff that the programs will hire in the near future.



Karen McNerney, program secretary at Madonna House

## Casa Di Vita's Healthy Options

Our programs rotate hosting Utilization Review (UR) meetings twice a month. At these meetings, quality assurance and improvement are reviewed. This month's UR was held at Casa Di Vita, our community residence in Buffalo that serves women in recovery. The women there prepared a healthy meal for the meeting that included vegetables, pasta, and various salads. Andrea Ocasio, director of clinical services, said that the residents “demonstrated their cooking skills and teamwork. They were so proud of their accomplishments.”



Healthy options at Casa Di Vita

## The Freedom Garden at Liberty Hall

For the last three years, residents at Liberty Hall have planted vegetables, fruit, and herbs in a garden right outside of their building. The program, which is located on the grounds of the Batavia VA Medical Center, serves Veterans in recovery. This year, tomatoes, watermelon, squash, and green beans were planted. Residents take turns tending to the garden in different ways, such as weeding and watering. Having access to a garden promotes healthy eating within the program and gives residents a new avenue for relaxation and skill building.



The Freedom Garden at Liberty Hall

## Cazenovia Manor's Open Door Policy

Cazenovia Manor's open-door policy includes every staff member all the way up to the program manager, Debra Cannon. Residents know that they can approach all levels of staff at any time to discuss their concerns, progress, and more. “It shows that we really are concerned about their treatment,” said Debra. Having an open-door policy promotes trust and empowerment for our residents. It also leads to better outcomes as engagement and retention have increased. Meanwhile, relapses at the program have gone down. “The residents are very appreciative and have said how much it helps them,” Debra noted.

