

[The Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can"].

Now's the time for all good men to get together with one another. We got to iron out our problems and iron out our quarrels and try to live as brothers. And try to find a piece of land without stepping on one another.

We're back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I'm your co-host, Amelia Headley LaMont. And this program is brought to you by V.I. Lottery, making a difference. This is a call-in show, and if you are so inclined, please give us a call at 713-1079. I am pleased to let you know that we do have our guest for today, Samuel -- oh, god, you're going to have to help me with your last name. Let me try and then you can tell me how I messed up. Udo-vee-kay.

No.

Okay.

Try again.

Udu-vee-kway.

Wow. Eudovique.

Oh, that's even nicer. Eudovique.

It's easier than it looks.

Okay.

French is like that.

Okay, Eudovique. Well, welcome and thank you for joining us.

Thank you for having me. My pleasure.

I am very curious about the Onyx Opera.

Yes.

And you made mention of championing juvenile diabetes. So I'm wondering how do those two connect.

It's just something came to me -- well, it did when I did a concert in Barbados, and that foundation stepped up and sort of supported us, so we agreed to make donations to them. And then, after that, we decided it would just be one of the main causes -- everybody supports, you know, the cancer, so we figured we'll support that because it's not well-supported or even informed as it should be.

Right, right, right. Tell me about what Onyx Opera does. I mean, just the name alone is quite striking, quite striking.

Well, Onyx Opera, me being an opera singer, I've always aspired to introduce and expose our people to that particular art, and I started this company. I was part of a company with my teacher, who introduced me to opera, which was the Lyric Opera of Miami, but my current teacher came from Italy and he started Miami Lyric Opera. So then I just saw this in a vision one day, Onyx, so I started that maybe eight years ago. And it's to establish to create performance opportunities for artistic growth, you know, for classical singers and musicians. I had on the site at one point "especially those of color," and people said you can't say that, you can't say that. I'm like, but that's what I'm doing. But that's, you know --.

Well, you have a diverse staff. I mean, a small staff but it's diverse.

Absolutely.

Okay. Okay.

Absolutely. Absolutely. I'm there. I'm there.

Well, so this is something that you thought of doing a few years back. And I'm not as skilled with respect to ranges. What's the difference between a baritone and a tenor?

Tenor sings high and baritone sings medium, bass sings low.

Okay. And so you started as a baritone?

Mm-hm.

And then went to tenor?

Mm-hm.

Okay. And how was that transition for you?

Interesting.

Yeah.

Because you can't give the force you give as a lower voice. You have to sort of lift the voice and really sing -- place the voice high. And it took me a couple of years to really get that, because I was used -- you know, I was an athlete, so I was used to lifting weights, but it's a different kind of force. It's a letting opposed to a

pushing. So as a tenor, you can't push. As a baritone, you can do what you want.

So, as a tenor, where does the strength come from?

It all comes from the abdomen, from the body. It's almost like a balloon and a control, you know, compression of air, but they all use the same technique. But things you can get away with as a lower voice, as a higher voice, you push, you lose your high notes. You just have to support the voice with the air.

Okay.

Yeah.

Now, where is the theater -- I'm sorry -- yeah, yeah, I keep saying theater, it's opera. Is it located at a certain location here on St. Croix?

Yes, yes, yes. Well, the company is located, Onyx Opera, Inc., we were formed in Florida, and we are registered here. We're in good standing everybody.

Yeah, make sure you say that.

And we're at the old former Manor School in Princess.

Okay.

On the way to the Palms. We have a whole Onyx community rehabilitation center that we have several things going on, the opera company and the school of the arts is just one of our factions.

Well, tell us about that. You're saying a rehabilitation center. Rehabilitation for what?

In a general sense. We're not trained, even though I'm a spiritual counselor and chaplain, we are not trained to do psychological work, but we do spiritual, you know, because I am a pastor and apostle. So I'm not your traditional religion, but I believe in God, I read the Bible. I've learned a lot from the Bible. I grew up in it. My grandfather and my father were pastors. But this is how I do my ministry.

We teach skill and trade. We do adult high school diploma -- adult education. We don't compete with the schools. We try to focus with the dropouts and those who didn't get the diploma. They come for skill and trade, they can also get that. They come for music if they need that, they can get that. We run a motivation center where we have forum discussions and we try to get into their minds. We want to

know what they think and why they think that way. And we do have an alternative that they have to be part of the change.

That's very important. More or less, how many students do you have there?

The students vary. We had, like, 20 students before the hurricane. Things have sort of dispersed now. We're trying to bring people back together. We didn't really push that as yet, because the first performance we planned to start was supposed to start in September. So now we're going to have auditions in the next 45 days to put that back together.

I just came from -- I met with Good Hope people in Central and the teachers because, remember, staffing is a key, staffing of qualified people. There are a lot of talented people here, but they are not musicians. I know people will differ with me on that, because if you don't read music or write music, you're not a musician. You're gifted, you're blessed, you're talented. So, for you to teach for me, you have to read because it is what it is. We put music down that we're going to have a couple rehearsals as professionals. I give you your music, you look it over, we mark where we're doing the specific things, and then we get together, we run it, and we play. I don't sing five and six and seven ten times just so you can learn it.

Right. Understood.

So it's a difference.

Now, you have a concert coming up?

Mm-hm.

And that is when?

February 23rd, 2018, which is this year, which is Friday coming, yes.

Okay. And it's what time?

The whole program runs from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. Reception starts at 5:00; it's going to run from 5:00 to 6:00. There will be a few finger foods, some wine and juices with local stuff, and then we're going through the program right after that. We'll show a documentary of Robeson.

Oh, great.

Yeah.

Okay.

Some information, educational.

Good. Good.

And then we'll go into the concert where I will sing about, I don't know, anywhere between seven to ten songs.

Excellent. Well, we have something that you'd like to share with the audience.

Absolutely.

You certainly set a high bar by choosing Paul Robeson, I must say.

He inspired me actually.

Okay.

When I left here -- I grew up here. When I left here and went to Florida and I got in the chorus, my teacher who introduced me to opera, that's how he did it, he introduced me to Paul Robeson. Even though he was Italian, he introduced me to Paul Robeson.

He was an internationally-known -- yes.

Yes, and that's what triggered not just the music but the passion for change for our people. Those things just jumped on me and that's when I actually gave up sports and kind of went towards that.

Interesting. Okay.

Yeah.

Well, we will play a selection. I think it's "Deep River."

[Paul Robeson's "Deep River"]

Deep river, my home is over Jordan. Deep river, Lord. I want to cross over into campground.

Deep river, my home is over Jordan. Deep river, Lord. I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don't you want to go.

So that is one part of his many, many, many songs, "Deep River." What does that take you to, I mean, that song in particular?

It takes me farther and deeper than I probably would discuss here

because it gets into Israel, the real Israelites, it gets into, you know, Africa, the Middle East that's not the Middle East, gets into stuff which I teach at the center. I teach real black history. I teach really what happened.

Oh, okay.

A lot of the things I know what -- I research, I do a lot of research. The lie that was told, the deception, it's deep. It's really deep. And our young people need to know that. It will give them a sense of belonging.

Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

That they didn't just show up after slavery. This is more than just singing and --.

Right. Right. So, again, I'm curious as to -- you said Paul Robeson was an inspiration for you.

Oh, yeah.

What was it about his life that inspired you?

Not just the music. And at that time, I sang lower voice, so we related there vocally, technically.

Because he's technically a baritone; right?

Yeah, bass baritone.

Okay. That's even deeper.

Yeah, you have a bass baritone, then you have a baritone, and then you have the tenor. And you have all sorts of tenor, you've got lyric tenor, dramatic tenor, heldentenor. But the activism, you know, that really got my attention that at that particular time in this country, under the circumstances, what he accomplished, that let me know that anything was possible, it depends on you, but you have to be accomplished. You have to, in order to -- you know, because he was at the White House all the time with Roosevelt. "Stop the lynchings." Roosevelt said, "Well, I can't do that."

It was Truman apparently, according to this, but yes, same thing. And my understanding is Truman ended the meeting right then and there.

I'm sorry, Truman. Yes, it was Truman.

He stopped the meeting.

He was with Roosevelt, too.

Oh, I don't doubt it.

But Truman, yeah, but he had access to all these people. That's how -- and the main problem was when he went abroad, he was saying they're not treating my people well at home, and they really didn't like that, but it was true.

Right.

You know?

Right.

So that inspired me, a combination of who he was. And I'm proficient in many languages, too, so all those things are related. Wow, what he's doing, I aspire to, I like, just everything about the man.

He did sing songs in other languages.

Yes, he did. He spoke them.

Okay.

He spoke about 27 languages and dialects.

Okay.

Incredible.

Yeah.

A true renaissance man.

Absolutely.

How many of them do we have today? I think I'm the only other one.

Modest, too; right?

Well, yeah. Well --.

I'm just messing with you.

No, but I can handle it. It's just that the things that that entailed, to be well-rounded, well-versed in many different areas, not just, you know --.

And open to it.

Yeah.

You know, don't limit yourself to --.

Embracing all that comes before you that's possible.

Right.

And even becoming, if not fully -- what's the word? If it's not fully fluent but at least proficient, being able to function in it.

Right. Right. Makes sense.

Yeah.

How does one prepare for let's say a recital, a vocal recital? What do you have to do to do -- to present?

Yeah, well, first you have to know your music. You need to rehearse. You need to rest, which what this week's going to be all about.

Okay.

Not a lot of talking.

Not getting up for 8:00 AM shows.

Try not to get sick.

Yeah.

You know, those kind of things, because I've been doing it for a while, I know what to do. Sometimes people come, like the pianist, he has a cold but he's always trying to shake my hand. And I'm like, well, I know he doesn't know.

Right.

Normally the pianist that plays for me, they know.

Right.

They wouldn't even come close to you.

Okay. Well, that makes sense. That makes sense. That makes a lot of sense. So what do you see for the future of Onyx Opera? I mean, is it an activity that you see continuing in St. Croix? Particularly in the aftermath of our natural disasters, how do you see its place in the overall scheme of things?



What do I see? How do I see? I see fields of green, red roses, too. I see all that. Onyx was not just St. Croix. This is a Caribbean event. We are based here, but we intend what we establish here to reach out to the Caribbean. My assignment is to not only nurture but spiritually awaken and quicken our young people, and everyone, but, you know, we have to focus on them. They're the ones that having the issues of being displaced. Spiritually and in their minds, they're searching for what; you know?

Mm-hm.

And our intention is to tour the Caribbean, you know, once a year at least.

Okay.

Produce events here. And then build a school of the arts, a conservatory, to where people can come, and if that's what they choose, they can be nurtured to the highest level, to achieve the best they can, and to pursue it as a career if they like. But the main key is that the arts teaches focus and discipline. You cannot play a piano and be what they call ADD. And our kids aren't really ADD. The problem is they're -- the mind is a muscle, and if left to wander, it's going to wander. And, of course, they're putting things in the food; you know? We can't ignore all the things. They've been trying to kill us, I'm not going to ignore that. There are documentaries on it. Even in the States, people are -- the nationalities are saying it. So they know what they have done. Some of the scientists who have worked on those projects finally coming out and said this is what we've been doing.

So, but the mind has to be trained, like anything. The kids are like sponge. When you're born, you're open to I can do anything, but parents, family, friends, they talk you out of it. Haven't you heard people say, "Oh, I'd like to do this." "Oh, nobody's going to buy that. That's not going to work." Instead of encourage, they discourage. And so that faith and that ability and that anything is possible that's in a young person over their development is talked out of them so they become now -- they become disbelievers as opposed to believers. And those people are dream stealers. Sometimes parents are dream stealers. We don't look to see where the God-given gifts of our children are. We have in our mind what we want them to be.

Right. And when you're saying that, it reminds me of, and I know my language will be imprecise, but something that was attributed to Picasso, and he said all children are born artists, it's when they grow up is when they lose that sense of, you know --.

They talk them out of it on the way up.

Exactly, dream stealers, as you say.

Dream stealers, that's the word.

Yeah. So that's a pretty amazing concept.

Well, they tried to do it to me; you know?

Oh, yeah.

Yeah, at the church, and they did it to my mom. She died two-and-a-half, three years ago. And when she was on her deathbed, she said, "You know, I wanted to sing for the world."

Oh.

And my mom was a fabulous singer. When my dad -- when they did street meetings and she sang, the crowd came. Now, when they brought the preacher on, the crowd would say, "Bring the singer back. We don't want to hear that." And they came -- the producers came from New York to Barbados to promote her. And my grandfather said she's going to forget God, and my dad agreed with him, and my mom was frustrated the rest of her life.

Your saying that also reminds me of Nina Simone. She wanted to be a classical singer or classical performer.

Yeah.

Pianist, I believe.

Mm-hm.

And, you know, the world wouldn't let her do that.

Yeah.

And same thing, very tearful because she was not accepted in these closed classical circles; you know? She didn't have the appearance of what they viewed a classical pianist should look like; you know?

The look. Is it a look or is it an ability?

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Yeah, ability didn't matter apparently.

And that's what I'm asking the people here in St. Croix and in the Virgin Islands, and in the Caribbean to not limit or steal the dreams. If these children have these abilities, nurture it. And one thing Onyx will do, we'll try our best, because many of them can't afford

it, that's a big hurdle, and the parents can't afford it, that's one of the reasons they go, "Well, you can find something that's -- when you going to get a job and make some -- pay your bills."

Right. Right.

If you have a gift and you nurture it, the gift will make room for you. I'm a testament to that. The gift will make room, but you need to perfect it.

So is there -- it's a private school, I would imagine.

Yes. Yes.

So how do you fund the operation?

Well, first of all, you have to be established in order to start pursuing the grant and stuff. So we're just about there.

Okay.

Everything else I've been doing myself; you know? And I have volunteers. Honestly, I've had a few people who come and -- and there's a plethora of people here who were retired, they then come to work and they're starting to reach out, wanting to help, but, of course, first you have to brand yourself, let them know you're here and that kind of thing. So help is coming. I'm finally becoming happy because the first year was just me, you know, like why am I here, but now I'm feeling better.

Good. Good. That's a good thing. We're going to take a little break. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. And we'll be back in a few minutes.

[The Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can"]

Now's the time for all good men to get together with one another. We got to iron out our problems --.

Do you want to learn more about a variety of issues and topics that may affect you and your family? Tune in to Ability Radio "You and Your Life" every Saturday morning, 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM, right here on 107.9 FM The Vibe. Listen to interviews and discussions, and feel free to call in with your questions, challenges, and thoughts. Ability Radio, You and Your Life, every Saturday morning 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM, right here on 107.9 FM The Vibe. Sponsored by the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands and its federal funding agencies, the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Human Services.

[The Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can"].

We're back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I'm your co-host, Amelia Headley LaMont. This program is brought to you by the V.I. Lottery, making a difference. And let me just say this, if you miss any portion of this program, this will be transcribed and posted on our website, drcvi.org. We have a call. Good morning.

Hey, good morning. Excuse me. I'm not sure I heard but what's the name of the guy that's there?

Samuel.

Eudovique.

Eudovique.

Okay, African?

No, that's French actually.

Oh, that's French; okay. I'm not sure I heard you correctly earlier, you said if your -- if you don't read music, you're not a musician, did you say that?

As far as -- this is just my opinion; okay? I'm not -- I didn't find it in a book anywhere or study this in school, but I consider it you're talented, you have ability, you can play. I play by ear, too, but when I've gone places and I handed the people the music, they were looking at me like, well, I can't read this. So that's just my opinion. Don't hang me for it. It's just my opinion.

Okay.

You know?

Yeah, I wondered if I understand it because my opinion is not like that, like how you look at this; you know? If people are playing music better than people that's reading music, I mean, master the instrument better than some of the people that actually reading music. So I would consider, you know, you play music -- I mean, there are people that play music I don't think they're really musicians, but, you know, if you play music and you play your instrument to -- I mean, as good as you can, you know, there are people I know that play the instrument, and you put a paper in front of them and they really have no clue what's on the paper, but they play that instrument, play anything, play any style, any beat, anything, and, you know, I have to consider them musicians.

Well, here's my response --.

I mean, I understand where you're coming from, but, you know, I would not -- I would not go into open my mouth and say that - I was not going to say it like that.

Well, I apologize. I didn't mean to offend anyone. It's just that if -- my nephew is one of those people, and he plays and he's never had a lesson; okay? But every time I give -- now, when he plays for me, he plays better than most of the people who can read the music, but every time I give him the music, he needs three or four days or a week to go home and work on it before --.

I really cannot agree with you, I mean, you know. That's your own --.

We'll agree to disagree. You're welcome.

That was great. Thank you so much, caller. That was a very interesting point. One of the things that you also had -- that I saw in the write-up of Onyx Opera was that you went from -- transitioned from singing baritone to tenor on the advice of Luciano Pavarotti.

That's correct.

And when I first read it, I said to myself, yeah, right. Yeah, right. Tell me about that, because you said you actually met him.

Pavarotti was a down-to-earth guy, actually really, really down to earth. He's the only one who, of all the singers, sang at the top, after a concert, he would stay behind and sign autographs, hug, talk to everybody. Most the other singers, Placido, different, they have a huge table, they'll decide how many autographs they're going to sign. After that, they get up and they leave. Pavarotti was a people person.

Okay.

He was one of the greatest if not the greatest in this era, not because -- the other people who sang, they didn't sing like him with the passion in the opera world, but he really loved people. And if you call and one of the promoters and said "We have a singer we think you should hear," "No problem." We'll go to his hotel room.

Oh, my goodness. Okay. Okay.

It is -- that's just who he was.

So it took a while for you to get to -- from the baritone to the tenor; right? He had to convince you a few times or how did that go?

Well it was my teacher. I respected him enough to, the first year, I went back to my teacher and, you know, and he was like, "Well, you're already doing this," and my career was really rising as a baritone. And I had a sponsor. I went to the Metropolitan Opera in New York. They accepted me, but they were telling me my voice was going up; you know? Honestly, I probably should have sang a little while more as a baritone, to establish certain things. I transitioned in the middle of everything; you understand?

So, but I was always a tenor, because my current teacher, he is a tenor. When he heard me from the beginning, he said, "You just need to learn how to place the voice." You can't sing with that kind of force up there. You have to let the palate carry. There's a sounding board in your voice, up in the soft palate, if you position the voice there with the air, it has its own ring, it carries, its freedom. As a baritone or a bass, you can -- you shouldn't push but you can get away with it to a certain extent. As a tenor, you can't; if you push, you won't last a performance.

So, even to this day, you still have a teacher, you still need to have a coach; right?

Yeah, I went to a lesson two weeks ago in Florida.

Okay. Okay. That's good to -- so you're never too old to learn, so to speak.

No, they all coach. They all still coach, the ones in the profession. Most people think they don't need to, especially as a vocalist, because when you're tired and you're performing, you do things, you pick up bad habits. They hear it because, as a singer, we hear from inside the ear. We don't really sing by how we -- what we hear from the inner ear. We sing by the technique, by feeling. Because even if you have a cold, if you know what -- if you know your technique, you can still sing above it. If you go by what you're listening to, sometimes you hear raspy-ness from within that they're not hearing out; you know? So if you go by what you hear, you'll start pushing to try to get past the phlegm, and then, all of a sudden, the voice starts wearing, because the cords are so delicate; you know? They're very tender.

I noticed one of the things that Paul Robeson did when he sang was he would hold his hand to his ear, and I always wondered why he did that.

Well, that's when you're outside or if you're in a place with bad acoustics, that kind of helps you just to cup, to hear that outside sound, so you don't push it.

Okay. We have another caller this morning. Good morning, caller.

Good morning. This is Archie.

Hey, Archie. Good morning.

I like the show. The gentleman has a very interesting subject because I too like Paul Robeson for his political beliefs.

That's right.

I was wondering if he's going to be able to show the movies that Paul Robeson did on the Virgin Islands.

That's something that could be worked on. My promoter, we've discussed some of those things. I think they should be, and I think they'll be part of a long-term Onyx project. We do have an auditorium at -- excuse me -- at the center, at the Old Manor School, which seats about 200, and we have two screens we're just about to put up. So that's something we probably could start even there; you know? I intend to show those things to the young people as they come in. And if the theater would allow us, we'd love to have that shown.

Do you have a film in mind?

I know I saw one where he was -- came to the Caribbean, and he's working on a project with somebody, but I can't remember both of the movies. There was two movies that I saw a long time ago, when I was in college.

I know he did "The Emperor Jones" in the Caribbean.

That's what it was. That was the name. And there was another one. But also could you -- if you know, and I've read about it, that he -- when he sang "Old Man River," for political beliefs, he changed some words around, which, again, upset a lot of the people in the United States with regard to that.

The words we're talking about them, the piece I have, the words are in there, and I'm trying to decide do I sing them --.

Oh, absolutely.

Or do I change them back; you know?

No, no, no, no, no, you keep it the -- you give it the Paul Robeson treatment.

Yeah, because it's in your face.

Yeah. Oh, yeah.

It's in your face. So everybody can't handle that.

Well, the lyric being -- I mean, on the Broadway version, right, "I'm tired of living but scared of dying."

No, in the opening verse, he says, "Colored folks work on de Mississippi. Colored folks work while de white folks play."

Ah, okay.

And then there's another version that said, "Niggers work on de Mississippi."

Really?

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Okay. Okay. And then -- okay, but the --.

The "Old Man River" part, that's part of the regular song.

Okay. But no, Robeson also then added "I must keep fighting."

"I must keep fighting until I'm dying."

Right, as opposed to "I'm tired of living and scared of dying."

That's correct.

But I didn't hear about the preface, so that's a new one on me. Boy, taught me something. Goodness gracious.

Well, good to have you onboard, and I'd like to hear more about it, your program, and hopefully we'll get some of that over in St. Thomas as well.

Absolutely. Absolutely. Hopefully people who come will get the information. I think -- I was speaking to Diane about that. We need to do the other islands, you know, we just have to make the connections. And right now there's a lot of problems with connections via telephone still, so, yeah.

All right, have a great [inaudible]. Take care.

Thank you.

Thank you. We're going to take a little break and we'll be right back. You're listening to Ability Radio.

[The Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can"].



We got to iron out our problems and iron out our quarrels and try to live as brothers. And try to find a piece of land without stepping on one another.

We're back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I am your co-host, Amelia Headley LaMont. And I am joined this morning by Samuel Eudovique. Close?

Eudovique. You were very close.

Eudovique, who's the Artistic Director and General Director of Onyx Opera. Mr. Eudovique will be giving a performance next Friday at Government House, music -- presenting a musical tribute to the legendary Paul Robeson. The event will be from 5:00 to 8:00. You are encouraged to attend. How does somebody get information or tickets? How does that work?

Well, at Government House, it's by invitation only.

Okay.

Even though it's a free event, you would have to RSVP and then we will send you the invitation via email. It's an electronic thing that's being done to maintain control.

Okay.

So is there an email address or a phone number people can call.

Yes. Well, the website is onyxopera.org, www.onyxopera.org, and the email you will find there, and also it's TheOnyxOpera@gmail.com, that's TheOnyxOpera, T-H-E-O-N-Y-X-O-P-E-R-A @gmail.com. But if you go to the site, onyxopera.org, everything is there. You send us the RSVP via the email and we will send you the invitation. You just need to bring it when you come.

Oh, okay. Oops.

Yeah.

I might have deleted that email.

You need to bring it when you come.

Bring and print the -- okay.

Yeah.

Okay. All right, I'll find it. Otherwise, you may get another

request, but we'll work on that. But I'm glad we clarified that.

Yes. Yes. Yes.

Okay. So one of the challenges of running any nonprofit organization, as I think we discussed during the break, is volunteers.

Yeah.

How are you faring with respect to volunteer staff, that type of thing?

Better now than before the hurricane. I think there was a misunderstanding between the people and I. A lot of people don't really understand the nonprofit business as well as people just went looking for jobs per se. So they came in offering to volunteer but, you know, I guess when their bills come in, they want to know can I do something or they see me renovating this major place, and they don't know what it's taking, so and I understand their need, and respect that. So we had to do a big shift and seek out people who could afford to volunteer, so to speak.

Right.

Nothing against the people who need jobs. We'd love to create jobs. Actually, matter of fact, we have a call center upstairs at the property, they've got damage, we're hoping to create 30, 40 jobs and grow it, and we still will. The building just got repaired. Actually, the guys finished yesterday. So we will get back to that part of it, but Onyx Opera is a separate thing completely, and right now we need volunteers because, until we get into the funding end, still, since we'll be training and a lot of the people who are being trained can't afford the lessons, so the focus is going to be there. So we'll have to get people who want to and can afford to volunteer so we can sort of put the money in the right place. If we get a big endowment, then there will be salaries, but we -- that's not the reason why I'm here is to make money. I make money with my business. This is not about making money. This is about changing the community, this part, and nurturing the people with the gifts and talents in the arts.

The place where you are operating out of, the old Manor School, did you sustain much in the way of structural damage?

In two portions, the main office, we had to gut the inside, and a third of the roof was gone. Thank God DEMA came in, and I must give credit to Diane who told me about the St. Croix Foundation, Deanna, and they came over and helped with most some of the material. And they also helped cover one of the roofs, but I had to fund for the bill for the other one. It was 25 grand to fix that roof; you know?

It's not cheap. It's not cheap. Well, I'm glad that that's in the works. What are the hours? Typically, when is the center open?

Monday through Friday, we open nine to five. That was our schedule before the hurricane. It fluctuates a little bit because it's short of staff right now. Unless I'm running errands, there are one or two, three people always there, like, nine to five regular work schedule. Our telephone numbers we have, but the calls aren't coming through via/via.

Via/via, right. Understood. Understood. Well, with the time remaining, I thought it would be nice if we can end on one of Paul Robeson's songs, and one of the songs that my son, who's named Joshua, likes a lot, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho." So we'd like to close out with that. Thank you so much for listening. Have a good Saturday.

Thank you.

[Paul Robeson's "Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho"]

Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. And the walls come tumbling down. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. Jericho. Jericho. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. And the walls come tumbling down. You may talk about your king of Gideon. You may talk about your men of Saul. There's none like good old Joshua at the battle of Jericho. Up to the walls of Jericho he marched with spear in hand. Go blow them ram horns, Joshua cried, 'cause the battle is in my hands. Then the lamb ram sheep horns begin to blow. The trumpets begin to sound. Joshua commanded the children to shout and the walls come tumbling down. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. Jericho. Jericho. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho and the walls come tumbling down. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho. Jericho. Jericho. Joshua fit the battle of Jericho and the walls come tumbling down.

[The Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can"].

And try to find a piece of land without stepping on one another. And do respect the women of the world. Remember you all have mothers. We got to make this land a better land than the world in which we live. And we got to help each man be a better man with the kindness that we give. I know we can make it. I know that we can. I know darn well.