

State of Connecticut
 Judicial Branch
 Community Court
 Session
 At
 Hartford

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August 2004 News & Updates

Produced by Chris Pleasanton, Vol. 6, Issue 8

A BUSY SUMMER AT COMMUNITY COURT

The summer months are traditionally busy at the Community Court in Hartford, and the summer of 2004 is no exception. Compared with 2003, the Community Court will have handled nearly 277 more arraignments for the months of June, July and August 2004. A chart comparison is below:

	<u>2003 ARRAIGNMENTS</u>	<u>2004 ARRAIGNMENTS</u>
JUNE	599	934
JULY	750	672
AUGUST	<u>736</u>	<u>756</u> *
TOTAL	2085	2362 (+277)

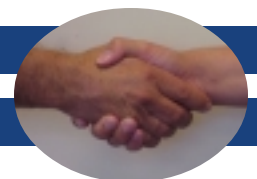
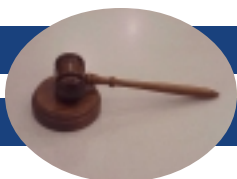
(*Please note, this figure projects the last week of cases in August (assuming 25 cases per day), after this newsletter was sent for publication).

The Community Court continues to handle a wide array of cases across its case jurisdiction, with increases in public drinking, prostitution, solicitation, shoplifting, loitering, and criminal trespass cases over the past several months.



JULY 2004 COMMUNITY COURT STATISTICS

Hours of Community Service	2,396
Total Number of Cases Processed	672
Number of Human Services Referrals	106
Referrals to HAMP (Hartford Area Mediation)	49



JUDGE SIMÓN PRESENTS AT LONDON COMMUNITY JUSTICE CONFERENCE

Starting with the Midtown Community Court in Manhattan and followed soon after in Portland, Oregon, and here in Hartford, community courts have become an established part of the judicial system in many American cities over the past decade. The combination of a meaningful judicial sanction for low-level misdemeanors and social services assistance for “quality of life” offenders has proven to be an attractive concept to judicial organizations throughout the world. This is evidenced by a recent visit to the United States by Japanese Public Prosecutor (and now our good friend!) Tomoatsu Koarai, who visited several community courts across the United States, including Hartford, and the establishment of a community court in Liverpool, England.

The international push to develop community-based judicial practices recently included a July 12th conference in London, England, focused on “Delivering a More Effective Criminal Justice System Through Community Engagement” at which the Honorable Jorge A. Simón was a featured presenter. Utilizing his experience as Presiding Judge of the Community Court in Hartford and a Presiding Judge of the Drug Court in New Haven, Judge Simón spoke to the conference delegates during the focus on “Listening to the Community. Justice in the Community, Delivering for the Community.”

The community justice concept has been risen to prominence in recent years. Paraphrasing conference literature, “the (UK) Home Secretary’s vision for the future is one in which communities and individuals are reconnected to the criminal justice system.....Reengagement through the courts, public protection panels and effective voluntary and community activity is the way of the future.” This message has been taken to heart by many in the UK, as evidenced by the outstanding turnout for the conference by judicial leaders from across Britain.

“Although separated by thousands of miles, our problems are very similar,” Judge Simón said. “It was exciting and educational for me to exchange ideas about community justice, and it was a great honor to be invited to speak about the Hartford Community Court at the conference”



The Honorable Jorge A. Simón

**On behalf of the Community Court staff, we would like to offer a
SPECIAL THANK YOU to the Hon. John F. Mulcahy, Jr.
for your recent service at the Community Court.
It was a pleasure working with you!**

DANTE VALENTINO - COMMUNITY COURT BAIL COMMISSIONER

The Community Court would like to welcome to its staff Bail Commissioner Dante Valentino. A former ten-year veteran caseworker for the State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Dante brings with him a great deal of experience working with people in trying situations and an ability to help those in need.

Dante's primary responsibilities as Bail Commissioner at the Community Court are to provide criminal background and warrant checks of some defendants and to offer bond recommendations to the Judge. In addition to these important duties, Dante will also be responsible for the supervision of several young offenders, developing plans to ensure their success, which include curfews, mandatory school attendance and improved grades, as well as participation in Court-affiliated programs.

"Dante has acquainted himself well during his short time at the Community Court," Judge Simón said. "He is well-prepared, eager to learn, and conscientious about the kids he works with. I am looking forward to working with him in the coming months."



Bail Commissioner Dante Valentino

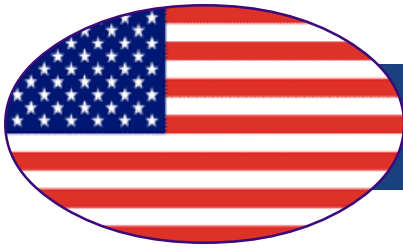
COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT HOTLINE 756-7000

COMMUNITY COURT LOCKUP EXPANSION

In order to provide a safer environment for both the Community Court staff and defendants, the Court's lockup facility is currently being expanded to provide more space and easier access to lavatory facilities for defendants. Utilizing a break room adjacent to the lockup, a new, larger cell is being built, which will comfortably hold 10 to 12 defendants and include a lavatory.

The current Community Court lockup contains two cells that hold four defendants each. Lavatory facilities are separate, necessitating a Marshal to remove defendants from the holding cell and stand guard while they utilize the facilities. Once the expansion is completed, the smaller holding cells will be utilized as meeting rooms for conferences between defendants and court staff or their legal representatives, and, in an emergency, can be used to isolate a violent prisoner.

The Community Court lockup, which handled an average of 3,071 incarcerated defendants in each of the past two years, once expanded, is expected to be more comfortable for defendants, easing the stressful court process, thereby reducing the potential for conflict with Judicial Marshals or other defendants.



Community Service



Community Pride



COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK SITES JULY 2004

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| July 1 Washington Street | July 16 FOODSHARE - Mahoney Village, Golden Age Senior Center, Dutch Point |
| July 2 FOODSHARE - Mahoney Village, Golden Age Senior Center, Jefferson Street, Broad Street, Madison Street, Colonial Street, Lincoln Street, Brownell Street | July 19 Smith Towers |
| July 6 Russ Street, Putnam Street, Babcock Street | July 20 Hartford Police Sub-station (Albany Avenue) |
| July 7 Maple Avenue, West Preston Street | July 21 Franklin Avenue |
| July 8 Nelson Court, Nelson Street, Clay Street, West Clay Street, Elmer Street | July 22 Nelton Court |
| July 9 FOODSHARE - Faith Manor, La Casa de Puerto Rico | July 23 FOODSHARE - Faith Manor, La Casa de Puerto Rico, Dutch Point |
| July 12 Colt Park | July 26 FOODSHARE - Place of Grace, Tower Avenue |
| July 13 FOODSHARE - Grace Episcopal, New Park Avenue, Hamilton Street | July 27 Broad Street |
| July 14 FOODSHARE - Union Church | July 28 Hamilton Street, Laurel Street |
| July 15 Wadsworth Street, John Street, Hyland Park | July 29 Main Street, Nelson Street, Sanford Street |
| | July 30 FOODSHARE - Mahoney Village, Smith Towers |

COMMUNITY SERVICE PERFORMED AT EBONY HORSE WOMEN RANCH THROUGHOUT THE MONTH
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY CHRIS MENA, CPA, COMMUNITY COURT COMMUNITY SERVICE TEAM

WOMEN'S EXPO TO BE HELD AT DMHAS

The second annual Women's Support Program Women's Expo "Celebrating Mutual Connections: Caring For One Another" is to be held on Friday, October 22, 2004. The expo will be held between 10:00 A.M. and 2 P.M. in the second floor auditorium of the DMHAS/Capitol Region Mental Health Center located at 500 Vine Street in Hartford. Representatives from many local social service agencies are expected to be available to share information on their programs and to answer questions from the public.

The Women's Support Program is a three-year, grant-funded program aimed at providing rehabilitative and restorative therapies for women with substance abuse and mental health issues. The program deals with many women referred by the Community Court and GA14 Superior Court in Hartford.

One of the primary goals of the program is to connect these women with support services in our community to enhance their abilities at rebuilding their lives. The Women's Expo is designed to facilitate these connections by bringing together many service providers in the same place for the women to ask questions and learn about the programs in a neutral non-intimidating environment.

For more information or to reserve a (free) booth for your organization, please call the WSP Program Director Rocio Chang at (860) 297-0852.

Please feel free to email the court with questions or comments at:

Hartford.Courtcourt@jud.state.ct.us

and visit the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch website at:

www.jud.state.ct.us