

State of Connecticut
Judicial Branch
Community Court
Session
At Hartford

FALL 2009
News & Updates

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RECORD CASELOADS AT COMMUNITY COURT

The Community Court in Hartford has experienced a record caseload in 2009 having added 9743 new cases to its dockets through September 30. That's more than 500 cases over the court's next busiest year, 2001, when the court handled 9234 cases for the entire year. On average, the Community Court has handled 7852 cases in each full year of its operation.

At the same time, Hartford Police reports Part 1 crimes (murder, rape, assault, etc.) have gone down 8.9% in the first half of the year compared with 2008.*

"This is hard statistical evidence that if you go after the low level crime, it eliminates the permissive attitude of "anything goes" and makes it much less likely that violent and bigger crimes will occur," Judge Norko said. "It is the "Broken Windows" theory brought to life."

The Community Court in Hartford has also been the busiest court in Connecticut for criminal cases added in each of the last six months, (this excluded motor vehicle and infraction cases which this court does not handle). At the same time, the Community Court has been highly efficient, having disposed of more cases than any other court in five out of six of those months.

"A lot of people think it's easy to handle this many cases because they aren't the most egregious cases on the statute books," Judge Norko said. "Yet, when you take these types of cases seriously, you begin to understand you are dealing with people's lives, their families, and their neighborhoods. Untangling these webs and providing a meaningful judicial response to these cases is no easy matter.

"I would like to personally thank and commend the staff of the Community Court for their hard work and for the high quality of their work," Judge Norko added.



* Source, HPD Website, Pt. 1 Crime By neighborhood January 1 to June 30, 2009

COMMUNITY COURT STATISTICS

| SUMMER 2009 | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEPT |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Total Arraignments | 1583 | 1423 | 1302 | 1275 |
| Community Service Hours | 2094 | 2334 | 2784 | 2562 |
| Social Services Referrals | 319 | 313 | 201 | 278 |
| Referrals to Mediation | 68 | 78 | 92 | 76 |
| Appearance Rate | 90% | 89% | 90% | 89% |
| Suburban Caseload | 9% | 15% | 11% | 11% |

STAFF NOTES



Jarrod Arnold

Many visitors to the Community Court have noticed a new face at the front entrance. Judicial Marshal Jarrod Arnold has transferred to the Community Court after serving at 101 Lafayette Street. Although he shares in all of the duties Marshals perform throughout the Community Court, Jarrod spends much of his time performing security checks at the Court's main entrance.

"Jarrod has done an excellent job with us at the Community Court," Judge Norko said. "He is very diligent in performing his duties at the front entrance and he sets a calm and respectful tone for those who enter the building."



Jose Colon

Another welcome addition to the Community Court team is Judicial Marshal Jose Colon. A Judicial Marshal for over four years, Jose first worked in the lockup facility at 101 Lafayette Street before transferring to Community Court a couple months ago. Before becoming a Judicial Marshal, Jose was a nursing tech at New Britain General Hospital. He also attended Tunxis Community College where he pursued a degree in criminal justice.

"Jose does a great job keeping the courtroom safe and helping us get business done in an effective manner," Judge Norko stated. "He is a very welcome addition to our team at the Community Court."



Ken DeVito

A warm welcome to Public Defender Investigator Ken DeVito who recently began working at the Community Court and 101 Lafayette Street. Ken is a 28-year veteran of the Meriden Police Department who achieved the rank of Detective Sergeant. He has worked for the Public Defender's Office as an Investigator for two years, first in Hartford, then Milford for one year, now returning to Hartford.

"Ken works very hard and has become well-liked by everyone at the Community Court in a short period of time," Chris Pleasanton said. "We are very glad to be working with him."

CCI CONDUCTS MENTOR COURT SITE VISIT TO HARTFORD

The Community Court in Hartford was pleased to host a Mentor Court site visit by Julius Lang and Brett Taylor of New York's Center For Court Innovation on June 23 to 25, 2009. The Center For Court Innovation provides a leadership role to the three U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance Mentor Courts located in Dallas, Seattle and Hartford. As part of their duties, the CCI team visits each Mentor Court site and provides technical assistance and suggestions to the local teams on how to best highlight their programs and help other cities looking to develop problem solving courts.

Mr. Lang and Mr. Taylor met extensively with Judge Norko and Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton. They also met with the Hartford team both individually and in focus group sessions, they observed several court sessions and went to observe community service projects in the field. The highlight of their visit was a presentation of a certificate recognizing the Community Court in Hartford's selection as a Mentor Court to Chief Court Administrator Judge Barbara Quinn and Judge Norko. Judge Quinn accepted the certificate and gave it to the Community Court, where it is now proudly displayed in the courtroom.



"There's nothing like seeing the work of the Hartford Community Court first hand," Julius Lang, Director of Technical Assistance for the Center of Court Innovation, said. "In their role as a Mentor Community Court, Judge Norko, Chris Pleasanton and the rest of the team offer visitors a lot of ideas and enthusiasm, whether on creative community service, motivating reluctant clients to engage in services or mobilizing community energy to pursue court reform. If you haven't been, go!"

"We were honored to have Julius and Brett visit with us in Hartford," Judge Norko said. "They have been an invaluable resource to us through the years and continue to offer us good advice and support for which we are very thankful."



(Top) Brett Taylor, Judge Norko, Julius Lang and Chris Pleasanton in front of the Community Court (Bottom) Julius Lang presents Chief Court Administrator Barbara Quinn and Judge Norko with a certificate commemorating the Community Court's selection as a Mentor Court

NEW POSTER RAISES AWARENESS OF ANIMAL ABUSE

In an effort to raise awareness of animal abuse and the potential legal consequences for those found guilty of that crime, the non-profit group Concerned Citizens For Humanity (CCFH) funded the development and printing of a poster designed to educate the public about this crime.

“We feel that animal abuse has a widespread impact on society,” Darrell Decker, Executive Director of CCFH said. “It’s not just animals that are hurt by the abuse but society as a whole. Our goal with this poster is to educate people so that they won’t hurt animals and hopefully reduce the crime of animal abuse in Connecticut.”

Early in 2009, Judge Norko testified before a legislative taskforce chaired by Representative Diane Urban focusing on animal abuse. After seeing an article about his testimony in the Hartford Courant, Mr. Decker approached Judge Norko to discuss ways to better educate people about animal abuse. After much discussion they decided to follow in the path of other CCFH projects and use art to put focus on the issue through the development of a poster. CCFH then commissioned renowned animal illustrator Diane Blasius to create the art for the poster.

“Diane Blasius produced a wonderful piece of artwork that is beautiful but also conveys a serious message,” Judge Norko said. “The response from those who have seen it has been electric. It draws people in and helps raise their awareness of animal abuse, which is the whole point of this effort.”

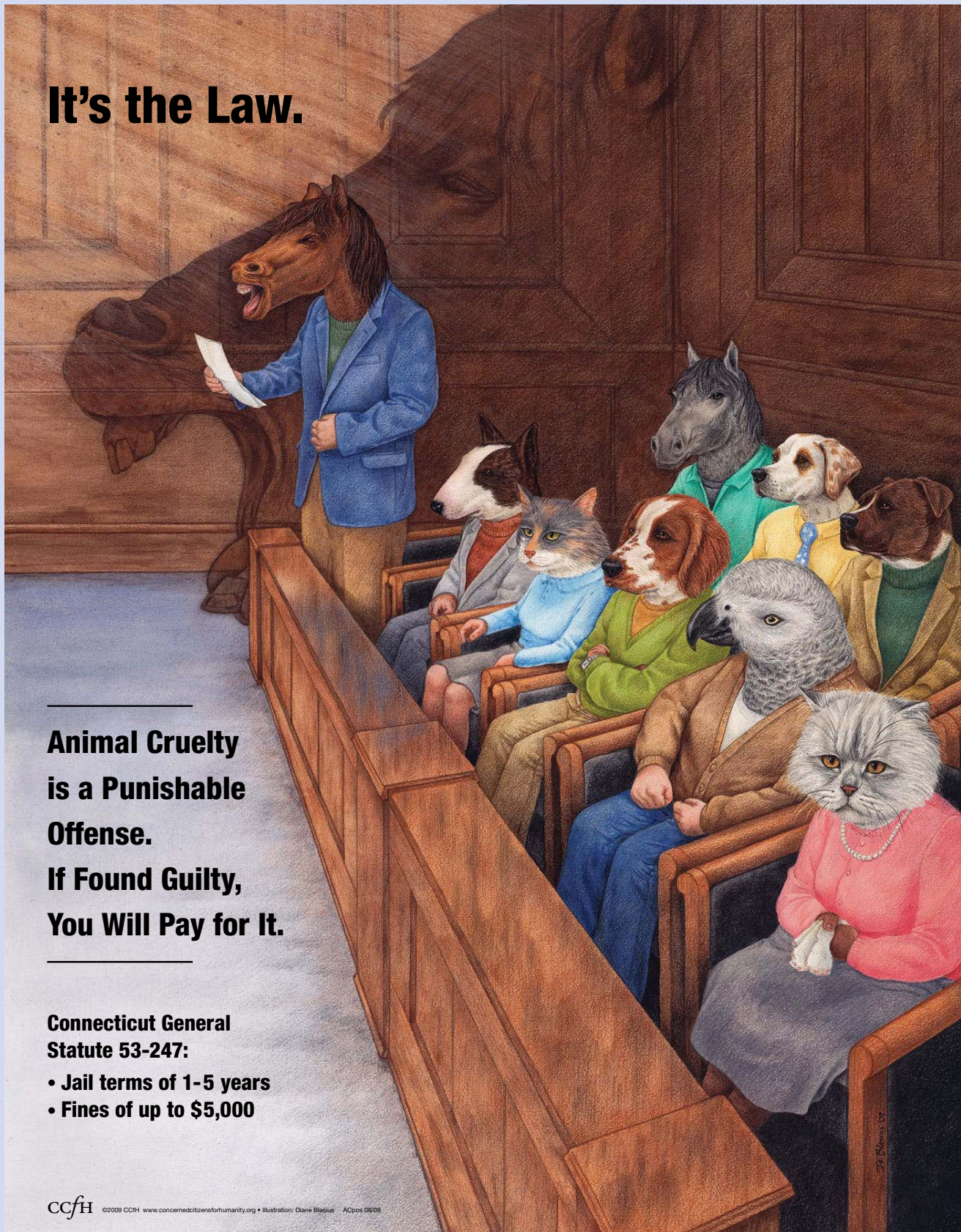
Anyone interested in obtaining a 14X18 copy of this poster please contact Mr. Darrell Decker at CCfH@mindspring.com or visit the AnimalSpeak.org website for ordering information. CCfH is located at 3580 Main Street, Building 11, Suite 115, Hartford, CT 06120-1121

It's the Law.

**Animal Cruelty
is a Punishable
Offense.
If Found Guilty,
You Will Pay for It.**

**Connecticut General
Statute 53-247:**

- Jail terms of 1-5 years
- Fines of up to \$5,000



A CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT COMMUNITY COURT

The recent State of Connecticut early retirement incentive program had a significant impact at the Community Court in Hartford where four long-time team members decided to take well-earned retirements on June 30th. Assistant State's Attorney Glenn Kaas, Public Defender Ray Cuatto, DMHAS Caseworker Michael Hatt, and Judicial Marshal Eddy Hernandez each left state service at the Community Court on that day. Mr. Kaas and Mr. Hernandez had both worked at the Community Court since its inception in 1998. Mr. Cuatto and Mr. Hatt joined the team in 2001.

"I cannot possibly convey the personal and professional loss we feel with the retirement of these gentlemen," Judge Norko said. "Each has given a lot to the Community Court and it has been their hard work and personalities that have helped shape the court into the success it has become. We are very indebted to these men and wish them all the best in their retirements from the bottom of our hearts."

(Please see photos on next page)



Glenn Kaas



Ray Cuatto



Eddy Hernandez



Michael Hatt

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES AMIR PROGRAM HONORS COMMUNITY COURT

The Community Court in Hartford was recently honored by the staff and participants of Community Health Services' African Men In Recovery Program (AMIR) which invited Judge Norko and Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton to attend one of the group's meetings and presented the Judge with a plaque thanking the Community Court for its support of the AMIR program.

"We are very humbled to receive this plaque from the AMIR program and more so to be invited to attend the AMIR group meeting," Judge Norko said. "It was a very uplifting experience for us and allowed us to see first hand the amazing strides these men have made in their recoveries."

AMIR is one of the most dynamic programs associated with the Community Court in Hartford. The program works primarily with African-American and Hispanic males and offers a mix of peer to peer and clinical counseling for those afflicted with substance abuse and/or mental health issues. CHS/AMIR caseworker George Dillon works through the Community Court each Wednesday accepting referrals and reporting on the progress of existing clients.



George Dillon and Judge Norko by the AMIR plaque.

"I have said it a thousand times and mean it more each time: George Dillon is a miracle worker," Judge Norko said. "He takes men in almost desperate situations and conditions and helps them achieve substantial progress towards their recovery. George has made a difference in many of our defendant's lives and we are very grateful to CHS CEO Michael Sherman for allowing George, AMIR, and the Community Health Services team to work with us."

NEW COMMUNITY COURT COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVES

The Community Court in Hartford has undertaken several new community service projects it hopes will be beneficial for many Hartford-area residents. The first project was to assist in major landscaping improvement and cleanup of the grounds at the City of Hartford South End Wellness Senior Center at 830 Maple Avenue. The Community Court's community service work crews removed a large amount of litter and debris, trimmed several bushes and trees, and will be planting perennial flowers before winter comes.

"The Community service workers did a great job," Tony Magno, a local resident who was assisting in the project said. "They worked hard, were respectful, and I am very proud of them."

Another area the Community Court has been trying to make a difference is in the eradication of illegal graffiti. The Knox Parks Foundation is in charge of official graffiti clean up efforts for the City of Hartford. They have the paint, expertise, and other tools to do the job, but not always the staffing. The Community Court has the people in the form of defendants performing community service for their quality of life violations, sometimes even those charged with producing graffiti. Both agencies decided to join forces every week or so to go out and clean up graffiti reported to the City of Hartford on its 311 Hotline.

"I have a strong dislike for graffiti," Judge Norko said. "It damages people's property, it looks terrible, and it creates a bad atmosphere for most people who live and work in the community. I will do all I can to ensure the Community Court handles graffiti based violations very seriously."



(Top Right) The South End Wellness Senior Center followed by the results of the community service works crews efforts (Bottom Right) Community Service Field Supervisor Samantha Benjamin demonstrating the proper method for painting over graffiti.

APH RAISING AWARENESS FOR NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY

In recognition of the National HIV Testing Day, the Community Court in Hartford and AIDS Project Hartford partnered to provide information and access to testing for all visitors to the courthouse on May 6, 2009. APH Representative John Olivares manned a table where he provided brochures and scheduled appointments for free HIV testing and counseling to anyone who was interested in said services.

“HIV and AIDS continue to be a serious threat to the health and well-being of millions,” Judge Norko said. “We are very glad to work with APH to help raise awareness of this vital issue and are grateful to Mr. Olivares for his services.”



Mr. Olivares and APH have also worked with the Community Court to offer an intensive 6-session educational “John Protocol” for men charged with solicitation of a prostitute. Mr. Olivares provides six intensive individual counseling sessions and arranges STD testing for participants. Since beginning in July, six defendants have participated in the program and have not recidivated to date.

(At Left) APH Outreach Coordinator John Olivares

COMMUNITY COURT CONTACT INFO

Please feel free to email the court at:

Hartford.Commcourt@jud.ct.gov

and visit the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch website at:

www.jud.ct.gov

Summer 2009 COMMUNITY SERVICE

**WORK
SITES**

JUNE

6/1/09 Park Terrace, Lincoln St., Ward St., Ebony Horse Women, Foodshare 6/2/09 Lennox St., Deerfield St., Edgewood St., S. Marshall St., Gillette St., Laurel St. 6/3/09 Townley St., Willard St., Orange St., Evergreen St., Foodshare 6/4/09 Capen St., Sigourney St., Hawthorne St., Magnolia St., Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women 6/5/09 Baltimore St., Zion St., Wilson St., W/E Preston St., Foodshare Mobile Unit - (Faith Manor, La Casa, Place of Grace) 6/8/09 Huysoppe Ave., Ebony Horse Women, Maseek St., Charter Oak Health Center 6/9/09 Lennox St., Irving St., Adams St., Foodshare 6/10/09 Orange St., Willard St., Lawrence St., Foodshare, Kibbe St. 6/11/09 Evergreen St., Sergeant St., Mather St., Lincoln St. 6/12/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit - La Casa, Place of Grace, Faith Manor, Sisson Ave., Evergreen St., Collins St. 6/15/09 Foodshare, Lincoln St., Russ St., Orange St., Ebony Horse Women 6/16/09 Hillcrest Drive (West Hartford), Hazel St., Lawrence St., Babcock St., Ebony Horse Women 6/17/09 Foodshare, S. Marshall St., Willard St., Gillette St., Kibbe St., Ebony Horse Women 6/18/09 Foodshare, Lennox St., Magnolia St., Zion St., Wilson St., West Preston St., Ebony Horse Women 6/19/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit- Faith Manor, La Casa, Golden Age., Greenfield St., Garden St., Sterling St., Adams St. 6/22/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Capitol Ave, West Blvd., Warrenton Ave. 6/23/09 Ebony Horse Women, Collins St., Willard St., Townley St., Cowles St. 6/24/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Sargent St., Ashley St., Sigourney St. 6/25/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Russ St., Lawrence St. Broad St. 6/26/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit (La Casa, Faith Manor, Place of Grace), Colt/Kenney Parks (playscapes) 6/29/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, 80 Coventry St. (North End Senior Center), Russ St. 6/30/09 Pliny St., Adelaide St., Lincoln St., Ward St., Shultas St., Maple Ave.

JULY

7/1/09 Foodshare, Vine St., Babcock St., Brook St., Capen St., Mather St., Sterling St., Ebony Horse Women 7/2/09 Foodshare, Holcomb Farms, Sherbrooke/Flatbush Ave., Fairfield Ave. 7/6/09 Charter Oak Health Center, Foodshare, Orange St., Burton St., Sterling St., Kent St., Adams St. 7/7/09 Willard St., Hillside Ave., Bond St., Anna wan St., Whitmore St., Affleck St., Standish St., South St., Douglas St. 7/8/09 Foodshare, Ward St., Adelaide St., Shultas Place, Dean St., Pliny St., Judson St., Lawrence St. 7/9/09 Foodshare, Sargeant St., Holcomb Farms, S. Marshall St., Babcock St. 7/10/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit - (La Casa, Place of Grace, Faith Manor), Colt/Keney Park (playscapes) 7/13/09 Foodshare, Sherbrooke Ave., Flatbush Ave., Keney Park (playscape), Greenfield St., Edgewood St. 7/14/09 Annawan St., Pawtucket St., Martin St., Babcock St., Bond St., South St., W/E Preston St., Russ St. 7/15/09 Foodshare, Affleck St., Ward St., Lincoln St., Whitmore St., Standish St., Alden St. 7/16/09 Holcomb Farms, Foodshare, Julius St., Brown St., Niles St., Barker St. 7/17/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit (Faith Manor, United Labor, La Casa), Enfield St., Clay St., Nelson St., Bedford St. 7/20/09 Foodshare, Charter Oak Health Center 7/21/09 Nelson St., Seyms St., East St., Barbour St., Capen St. 7/22/09 Foodshare, Willard St., Lennox St., Oakland Terrace, Westbourne Pkwy, Magnolia St. 7/23/09 Foodshare, Fairmont St., Mahl Ave., Martin St., Irving St., Brown St., Barker St. 7/24/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit (Great Commission, La Casa, Faith Manor, Place of Grace), Cleveland St., Rosemont St. 7/27/09 Foodshare, Enfield St., Mather St., Bedford St., Capitol Ave (Knox Park) 7/28/09 Babcock St., Russ St., Green St., Masek St., Hendrickson Ave., Acton St., Barbour St. 7/29/09 Foodshare, Florence St., Martin St., Irving St., Madison St., Lawrence St., Putnam St. 7/29/09 Wexford Park with Knox Park Foundation 7/30/09 Foodshare Holcomb Farms, Standish St., Alden St., Adelaide St., Bond St., Ward St., Wadsworth St. 7/31/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit-(Faith Manor, La Casa, Great Commission), Colt Park/Wawarme Ave.

AUGUST

8/3/09 Foodshare, Zion St., Sherbrooke/Flatbush Ave, Wilson St. 8/4/09 Capitol Ave.(Graffiti removal with Knox Park Foundation), Judson St., Ebony Horse Women 8/5/09 Farmington Ave., Gillette St., Russ St., Ebony Horse Women 8/6/09 Holcomb Farms, Foodshare, S. Marshall St., Ebony Horse Women 8/7/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit (United Labor, La Casa, Golden Age), Barbour St., Ebony Horse Women 8/10/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Charter Oak Health Center 8/11/09 Quirk Middle School (school garden), Sherbrooke/Flatbush Ave., Ebony Horse Women, Charter Oak Health Center 8/12/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Charter Oak Health Center, Dean Dr., Annawan St., Alden St. 8/13/09 Foodshare, Charter Oak Health Center, Ebony Horse Women, Holcomb Farms, Magnolia St., Mather St., Baltimore St. 8/14/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit, Charter Oak Health Center, Morris St., Pawtucket St., Shultas Place, Russ St. 8/17/19 Russ St., Charter Oak Health Center, Ebony Horse Women, Foodshare 8/18/09 Capitol Ave.- (Knox Park Graffiti removal), Magnolia St., Edgewood St., Garden St., Sterling St., Irving St., Lennox St. 8/19/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Maseek St., Lawrence St., Babcock St., Putnam St. 8/20/09 Foodshare, Brooks St., S. Marshall St., Liberty St., Holcomb Farms 8/21/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit - (La Casa, Place of Grace, Faith Manor), Colt/Keney/Pope parks (Knox Park Graffiti removal) 8/24/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Hudson St., Wadsworth St., John St., Park/Main St. (bus stop) 8/25/09 Farmington Ave. (Knox Park Graffiti removal), Campfield Ave., Affleck St., Bond St., Winter St., Bedford St., Green St., Benton St. 8/26/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Standish St., South St., Whitmore St., Webster St., Van Block Ave. 8/27/09 Holcomb Farms, Foodshare, Standish St., Sanford St., Fairmont St., Florence St. 8/28/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit - (Place of Grace, Faith Manor, Golden Age.), Ebony Horse Women, Nelson St., Judson St., Capen St., Deerfield St., Enfield St. 8/31/09 Foodshare, Charter Oak Health Center, Ebony Horse Women, Judson St., Barbour St.

SEPTEMBER

9/1/09 Farmington Ave. (Knox Park), Nelton Court, Madison St., Bushnell St., Brown St., Barker St., Edwards St., Orange St. 9/2/2009 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Clemens Pl., Barker St., Carpenter St., Liberty St., Russ St. 9/3/2009 Foodshare, Holcomb Farms, Edwards St., Dean Dr., Glendale St., Kibbe St., Alden St. 9/4/09 Foodshare Mobile Unity (La Casa, Faith Manor, Place of Grace), Colt/Pope/Keney Parks (playscapes), Wawarme Ave. 9/8/09 Russ St., Park Terr., Ward St., Love Ln., Edgewood St., Vine St., Ridegfield St., Ebony Horse Women 9/9/09 Earle St., Capen St., Garden St., Judson St., Mather St., Sterling St., Foodshare 9/10/09 Hubbard St., South ST., Maple Ave., Ridge Rd., Ebony Horse Women, Foodshare 9/11/09 Flatbush Ave., Brookfield St., Zion St., Saybrooke St., Douglas St., Lincoln St., Foodshare 9/14/09 Charter Oak Health Center, Collins St., Brook St., Nelson St., Ebony Horse Women, Foodshare 9/15/09 Center St., Seyms St., East St., Hillside Ave., S. Marshall St., Brown St., Sargeant St., Shultas Pl., Pawtucket St., Sterling St., Ebony Horse Women 9/16/09 Foodshare, Laurel St., Mather St., Greenfields St., Alden St., Anawan St. Benton St., Orange St. 9/17/09 Foodshare, Holcomb Farms, Capitol Ave. (Knox Park graffiti removal), Niles St., Ebony Horse Women 9/18/09 Foodshare Mobile Unity (Faith manor, La casa, United Labor), Riverfront Recapture, Colt/Keney/Pope Parks 9/21/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Eastford St., Russ St., Wadsworth St., Park/Main (bus stop), Lawrence St. 9/22/09 Greene St., Campfield Ave., Belden St., Sherbrooke Ave., Flatbush Ave., Adams St., Niles St., Pliny St., Westbourne Pkwy. 9/23/09 Foodshare, Ebony Horse Women, Capitol Ave. (Knox Parks), Nelson St., Magnolia St., Enfield St., Zion St. 9/24/09 Foodshare, Holcomb Farms, S. Marshall St., Forest St., Center St., Sigourney St., Broad St. 9/25/09 Foodshare Mobile Unit (faith manor, United Labor, La Casa), Ebony Horse Women, Hillside Ave., Hamilton St., Carpenter St., Pope Park (playscape) 9/29/09 Ebony Horse Women, Southend Senior Center - Maple Ave., Nelton Court, Wadsworth St. 9/30/09 Foodshare, Flatbush/Sherbrooke Ave., Grafton St., Belden St., Anawan St., Adams St.

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756-7000
PLEASE CALL WITH YOUR PROJECT**

STATE OF CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

**COMMUNITY COURT
SESSION IN HARTFORD**

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FALL 2009 NEWSLETTER

IN THIS EDITION...

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AMIR, Staff Notes, Statistics, & More....



State of Connecticut Superior Court
Community Court Session in Hartford
80 Washington Street
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