



Community Service



Community Pride



Presiding Judge, Jorge A. Simón

# January 2005 News & Updates

Produced by Chris Pleasanton, Vol. 7, Issue 1

## Community Service Work Sites December 2004

- December 1 Ely Street, Garden Street, Mahl Avenue, Main Street, Farmington Avenue
- December 2 Ebony Horse Barn
- December 3 Park Street, Main Street
- December 6 Walnut Street, Williams Street, Homestead Avenue
- December 7 Westbourne Parkway
- December 8 Nelson Street, Main Street
- December 9 Sigourney Street, Collins Street, Homestead Avenue, Russ Street
- December 10 FOODSHARE
- December 13 State Police lot, FOODSHARE, Walnut Street, Williams Street, Homestead Avenue
- December 14 Nelton Court, Westbourne Parkway
- December 15 Southend Hartford Police substation
- December 16 Washington Street, Willington Street
- December 17 FOODSHARE
- December 20 Grafton Street
- December 21 FOODSHARE
- December 22 Main Street, Albany Avenue, Tower Avenue
- December 23 Ebony Horse Barn
- December 27 Grafton Street
- December 28 Ebony Horse Barn
- December 29 Bushnell Park - First Night preparations
- December 30 Bushnell Park - First Night preparations, New Britain Avenue, Chandler Street

## IN FOND REMEMBRANCE OF GORDON HAMILTON

The Community Court in Hartford would like to extend its heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends, and colleagues of Gordon Hamilton, who passed away on Sunday, January 23, 2005. Many of us knew Gordon through his work at the City of Hartford's Department of Health and Human Services and the Youth Access Program. He was a good friend to many and was highly respected for his caring and commitment to Hartford's kids. Gordon will be missed but not forgotten.



Gordon Hamilton

## EXPANDING THE COMMUNITY COURT'S UNDERSTANDING OF DRUG TESTING

In an effort to improve their ability to help those in need, the Community Court staff constantly seeks to be educated on new concepts and ideas in care. As part of this effort, the Community Court was pleased to host a presentation by Chris Kochis of the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services/Capitol Region Mental Health Center concerning the effects of drugs on the body and the various schools of thought on treatments. Mr. Kochis was joined in the presentation by representatives from the Judicial Branch's contracted drug test provider and drug testing laboratory, who provided a great deal of background on the science and procedures of drug testing.

The Community Court in Hartford mandates drug testing for some defendants, including those involved with the court's Women's Holistic Health Program or young offenders under the supervision of the bail commissioners. Those who fail to comply with court orders to stay free of drug use may face court sanctions including incarceration. The serious implications of failing a drug test have motivated the court to review its standards and procedures to ensure the integrity of its drug testing procedures.

"When I put a defendant in a court program, I hold them to a high standard when it comes to staying drug-free," Judge Simón stated. "Conversely, I also hold ourselves to a high standard to protect the rights and best interests of our defendants as we try to help them."

"Chris Kochis and the drug testing representatives gave our staff an outstanding and informative presentation for which we are thankful," Judge Simón continued. "Even those of us with knowledge in this field learned some new things that will help the Community Court provided a higher standard of care."



Chris Kochis of DMHAS presents drug testing and treatment concepts to the Community Court staff.

## DECEMBER 2004 COMMUNITY COURT STATISTICS

Hours of Community Service	2610
Total Number of Cases Processed	408
Number of Human Services Referrals	45
Referrals to HAMP (Mediation)	26

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

[Hartford.Commcourt@jud.state.ct.us](mailto:Hartford.Commcourt@jud.state.ct.us)

and visit the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch website at:

[www.jud.state.ct.us](http://www.jud.state.ct.us)

## THE EBONY HORSE WOMEN EQUESTRIAN CENTER: A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY IN HARTFORD

Hartford is home to many unique programs and opportunities. The Community Court in Hartford has been fortunate to work with many local organizations to put its defendants in touch with those opportunities. Among the most fruitful of those collaborations is a relationship the Court has enjoyed with the Ebony Horse Women Equestrian Center in Hartford's North End. For nearly four years, the Community Court has regularly sent defendants assigned to perform community service to the equestrian center to work.

In its 21<sup>st</sup> year of operations, the Ebony Horse Women Equestrian Center is a non-profit facility that uses horses and a ranch environment as a youth development tool for local youngsters.

"A lot of the children we see are wounded because of problems with school, their families, or just life in general," said Patricia Kelly, Executive Director of the Ebony Horse Women Equestrian Center. "Horses heal the spirit, test the body, and challenge the mind."

"We teach the kids if they can control their mind and their body, they can control the horses, but you can't do it if you are not in control." Mrs. Kelly continued. "By working with the horses the kids learn that they might not be able to change the conditions of their life but they can develop skills to handle them."

In addition to riding the horses at the Ebony Horse Women Equestrian Center, kids learn about animal husbandry and the inner workings of a horse ranch. The equestrian center also offers after-school programs for local students, tutoring classes in math and English, and a leadership program that guides youngsters to becoming effective leaders.

"We are grateful to the Ebony Horse Women Equestrian Center for providing a forum in which some of our defendants can perform community service," Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton said. "Many of our defendants who worked there have remarked that it was a unique experience and that they felt it was a positive way to give back to the community."



(L to R) Community Service defendants learn to work with the horses with Mrs. Kelly of the Ebony Horse Women, the horses outdoors, an inside view of the stable, more horses playing in the snow, Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton, Patricia Kelly of the Ebony Horse Women, and Community Service Manager Chris Mena, the indoor riding arena.

For more information on the Ebony Horse Women Equestrian Center, stop by the ranch located at 350 Vine Street in Hartford, or call (860) 293-2914, or see its website at [www.ebonyhorsetwomen.org](http://www.ebonyhorsetwomen.org)

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