1998

10th Anniversary

2008<

Presiding Judge, Raymond R. Norko



WINTER 2008-2009 News & Updates

Produced by Chris Pleasanton, Vol. 11, Issue 1

From the Judge's Chambers

Dear Friends,

I am honored to once again be assigned to the Community Court in Hartford and to see many of the same friendly faces of staff and community who were here during my first tenure as Presiding Judge from 1998 to early 2003. One of the things that initially attracted me to the community court model was the ability of the court to innovate and develop new approaches to meeting the challenges it faces. To paraphrase one of my favorite writers, Bob Dylan, "You can come back but you can't come back all the way..." To that end, while many of the philosophies and approaches to restorative justice remain the same at the Community Court, I have been interested to see the changes that have occurred, especially the increased emphasis on mental health services as developed under Judge Simón and the enhanced aftercare component to the Prostitution Protocol developed by Judge Cofield. These and many other changes have occurred in recent years and I am very excited to continue the court's innovative approach to serving the public and defendants.

The Community Court in Hartford celebrated its 10th Anniversary on November 10, 2008. In our first ten years, we have handled 78,233 cases, making this court one of the very busiest in Connecticut, our defendants have paid back the community by performing over 285,000 hours of community service, and we have made over 20,800 social services referrals, often connecting people with services they might not receive without our assistance. It is very gratifying to see the court achieve this success and I am looking forward to the next ten years of the Community Court in Hartford. Thank you for your continued support.



Hon. Raymond R. Norko



In special rememberance of Mayor Mike Peters

The Community Court would like to recognize the recent passing of former Hartford Mayor Mike Peters. "The Community Court was developed during Mayor Mike's tenure and he was a vital early champion of the court," Judge Norko said. "We are grateful for his support and can say his vision will continue to resonate both at the Community Court and throughout Hartford."

COMMUNITY COURT STATISTICS

SUMMER - FALL 2008	AUG	SEPT	ОСТ	NOV
Total New Cases	967	807	780	581
Community Service Hours	2240	2312	2430	2130
Social Services Referrals	277	245	114	86
Referrals to Mediation	77	74	87	54
Appearance Rate	95%	89%	93%	88%
Suburban Caseload	14%	14%	16%	19%

STAFF NOTES



Jose Daniel

Congratulations to Daniella Guzman on the birth of her son Jose Daniel on July 3, 2008. Daniella is an office assistant in the Community Court's Community Service Department and conducts many of the post arraignment informational interviews with defendants who are scheduled to perform community service.

We wish you both a lifetime of health and happiness!



Denise Bermudez

The Community Court would like to wish a very fond farewell to Denice Bermudez who retired from the City of Hartford at the end of 2008. Denice worked on the Court's Social Service Team when the court first opened in 1998 and then was permanently assigned to the court in 2003.

During her tenure at the Community Court, Denice had a tremendous impact in the lives of thousands of people by connecting them with social services opportunites.

Best wishes, Denice, from your friends at the Community Court!



Bob Shea with his son, Owen

A very special note of recognition must be given to Bail Commissioner Bob Shea who responded heroically when a fellow staff person became suddenly ill and was unresponsive. Bob jumped right into action, performing CPR and other first aid procedures until his colleague was revived and an ambulance arrived (We are happy to report the staff person is doing well at this time).

"Bob was a true hero that day and most likely saved our friend's life," Judge Norko said. "Bob had long before earned our respect and admiration for his day in day out hard work and for being a good guy, but his quick thinking and action here reinforced what a high quality and stand up man Bob really is."

KAYE WHITE HONORED



The Community Court would like to congratulate Kaye White for being honored with the Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition's Catherine Kennedy Award for her outstanding work helping to meet the housing needs of people with HIV/AIDS.

Kaye works work AIDS Project Hartford and is also a parttime facilitator for Paul & Lisa in the Prostitution Protocol at the Community Court.

Congratulations, Kaye! We are very proud of you and thank you for your hard work!

(Left) Kaye White, 2008 Recipient of the C.A.R.C.'s Catherine Kennedy Award.

MARK LUMPKIN JOINS COMMUNITY SERVICE TEAM

The Community Court in Hartford would like to welcome Mark Lumpkin to the court's community service team. Mark was hired in October by Community Partners in Action to be a community service field supervisor. Community service field supervisors are responsible for overseeing the defendant work crews as they pay back the community for their quality of life crimes by performing community service, most of which is suggested by residents of Hartford's neighborhoods.

Mark is a 20 year veteran of the Hartford Police Department, where he served as a Community Service Officer, D.A.R.E. Officer, and as Officer Friendly, in addition to being a Patrol Officer. Mark also attended Capitol Community-Technical College.

"Community service is more than a punishment, it gives us a chance to communicate with people," Mr. Lumpkin stated. "I use my position as an opportunity to both mentor the people we work with, and to give them some advice and perspective on how to make a positive impact in their lives."

"In his short time with us, Mark has made a tremendous impact on our community service program," Judge Norko said. "He brings a great deal of professional experience, enthusiasm, and a strong desire to make a contribution to Hartford to the job."



Mark Lumpkin

RED HOOK-BROOKLYN, NY STAFF VISIT HARTFORD

The Community Court in Hartford was pleased to host a November 14 visit by representatives of the Red Hook Community Justice Center of Brooklyn, NY. District Attorney Gerianne Abriano and Court Coordinator James Brodick made the trip to Hartford, met with Judge Norko and Chris Pleasanton, observed a court session and toured the Community Court facility.

"Red Hook has one of the best community court programs in the world," Chris Pleasanton said. "Both myself and several members of the Hartford team have been privileged to visit

their court and we have all been impressed by the integration of quality community-based services in their court and the tremendous impact they have on the Red Hook neighborhood."

"Gerianne and I met and became fiends when we presented on a problem-solving courts panel discussion at a prosecutor's conference in Austin, TX," Chris Pleasanton added. "Since that time, we have stayed in touch and have exchanged a lot of ideas on how our courts operate. She has been an invaluable resource for me."

Judge Norko and Mr. Pleasanton plan to visit Red Hook again in the near future to meet more of their staff



James Brodick (Red Hook Coordinator), Judge Norko, Gerianne Abriano (Brooklyn DA), Chris Pleasanton

HARTFORD POLICE ACADEMY RECRUITS VISIT COMMUNITY COURT

The Community Court hosted a visit by the current class of the Hartford Police Academy on October 1, 2008. Nearly 30 recruits, led by their instructor Sergeant Jeff Rousseau, participated in the visit. The recruits first met with Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton, who explained the Community Court's approach to dealing with quality of life crimes and the services available through the court. They then observed a court session and afterwards met with Judge Cofield who shared her insights and answered questions.

"We were very pleased to host the Hartford Police Academy recruits, nearly 90 percent of who are going to be police officers in the court's jurisdiction," Chris Pleasanton said. "Their willingness to learn and insightful questions were outstanding."

JUDGE NORKO WORKING ON TRUANCY PREVENTION IN HARTFORD

In an effort to attack the underlying issues that may be causing some kids to be truant from school, Judge Norko conducts a twice monthly truancy court sessions at Hartford's Quirk Middle School with the assistance of the Center For Children's Advocacy and school staff. Judge Norko, along with Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton, drives over to Quirk during his lunch hour to meet with five or so students on each visit. The students meet with Judge Norko, Chris, and the program staff comprised of Evelyn Ramos, Theresa Nieves, and Sasha Endo in a private, informal meeting to discuss what is going on in their home and school lives that might be leading them to miss school.

"The kids are fascinating and each has a unique story to tell but they are usually very reserved when I first sit down with them," Judge Norko said. "After a while, when we crack open their shell a little bit, they are very interesting and show a lot of depth of charcter when they share their hopes and dreams with us."

"More often than not, the kids have a much defined sense of who and what they want to be," Chris Pleasanton added. "They want to be engineers, salon owners, teachers, and police officers; we just need to help them get from this point to the point of realizing those dreams."

Although the program is called truancy court, the programs strives to be a friendly and encouraging situation where Judge Norko and the program facilitators can get to the underlying issues in the kids' lives and start to address those issues in as helpful way as possible.

"I have met with a couple dozen kids so far and even though they might be in trouble with their attendance, I haven't met one kid who was a truly bad kid," Judge Norko added. "They are often facing a lot of pressure and unimaginable hurt in their lives, but just need a little extra care from us and some encouragement to get back on the path to success. I look forward to continuing to work with the kids."



Truancy Court Facilitators Sasha Endo, Evelyn Ramos, Judge Norko, Theresa Nieves

HARTFORD AIC MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT THE COMMUNITY COURT

One of the most important aspects of the Community Court in Hartford is its built in design to connect in-need defendants with social services opportunities. The problems faced by the defendants are wide ranging and the level or care needed varies greatly. For instance, a defendant with a substance abuse problem may need to address that problem, but doesn't rise to the level of needing detox. At the same time, their charges may be serious enough to merit jail time, yet not so egregious that the court would not consider a program placement in lieu of incarceration. For those types of cases, the tool the court uses is an alternative incarceration center (AIC).

In Hartford, the Community Court primarily utilizes the AIC run by Community Partners in Action and located right up the street from the court at 119-121 Washington Street. The Hartford AIC has a total of 36 residential beds which persons referred from the courts, probation or parole is eligible for. The Hartford AIC also has walk-in services for those not required to participate in the residential aspect of the program.

"The AIC programs are one of the most useful tools available to me on the bench," Judge Norko said. "It gives me a viable option in dealing with some defendants and helps keep some people from falling through the cracks of the system."

The Hartford AIC provides classes to develop participant's cognitive skills and enhance their employment skills. Substance abuse education is also a primary focus at the AIC. Currently, the residential program is available only for men. Women can participate in AIC walk-in programs which are conducted separately for the men and are more gender focused.

The Hartford AIC and the Community Court work closely to make the best possible connection to services for defendants. Sheryl Pouech has been assigned from the AIC to be the court liaison assigned to the Community Court several days a week. Sheryl conducts placement interviews with defendants to determine eligibility, facilitates placements when appropriate, and she converses with court staff on the progress of referred clients. Sheryl and her colleague Tom Kaput also work closely with the GA 14 Superior Court to screen and refer eligible defendants.

"Sheryl works very hard, is detail oriented, and brings a very professional skill set to her work at the AIC,"



Sheryl Pouech

Judge Norko said. "Her efforts have allowed the court to better connect defendants with services and keep them from incarceration. She has been an exceptional associate of the Community Court and we are grateful for her presence."

COMMUNITY COURT VISITS CHS FACILITY ON ALBANY AVENUE

Judge Norko and Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton were recently invited to take a tour of the Community Health Services facility located at 500 Albany Avenue in Hartford. They were greeted by CHS CEO Michael Sherman and AMIR Counselor George Dillon, who works on the behalf of CHS at the Community Court each Wednesday morning.

"I am extremely impressed by the programs and facility at CHS," Judge Norko stated. "Yet, I was even more impressed by the CHS staff, all of who were enthusiastic about their work and cared about the people they serve."

Community Health Services is one of Hartford's leading community health and social service providers. They work with all people but specialize in providing medical care to low-income persons with little or no health insurance. CHS has a vast array of services on site including general medical, dental, OB/GYN, optometry, podiatry, pediatrics, and behavioral health, as well as a full-service pharmacy.

"CHS is one of the absolute jewels of Hartford," Judge Norko added. "The level of available services, the professional staff, and the wonderful facility make CHS a top-notch organization who we are very pleased to be working with."



Chris Pleasanton, Judge Norko, George Dillon and CHS CEO Michael Sherman

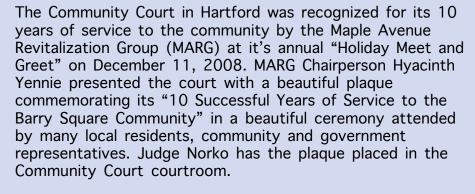
FOODSHARE FOODSTAMP PROGRAM OFF TO A GOOD START AT COMMUNITY COURT

The Community Court is pleased to report that its partnership with the Foodshare Foodstamp Outreach Program is off to a good start. Last fall, the program agreed to place one of their volunteers, Melinda Valencia, at the Community Court each Wednesday morning to meet with in-need persons and help them begin the foodstamp application process. The Foodshare team then personally delivers the completed application to the State Department of Social Services for processing. To date, Foodshare reports they have met with 42 Community Court clients and 25 have followed through with the application process.

"We are grateful to Krista Ostaszewski, Melinda Valencia, and the whole Foodshare team for their willingness to work with us and help qualified clients put food on their table," Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton said. "Their hard work is invaluable in helping people lead dignified and healthy lives."

COMMUNITY COURT RECOGNIZED BY MAPLE AVENUE REVITALIZATION GROUP







"We are much honored to be recognized by MARG and all of the wonderful people in the community," Judge Norko said. "They are among the first people to support the concept of a community court in Hartford and have continued to support the court throughout the years, for which we are grateful."



MARG conducts monthly meetings where local residents come out to share their ideas and concerns and work together to find solutions to local problems. Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton attends most of the monthly meetings and gives brief reports on the court's activities.



"The folks at MARG have one of the best community meetings going," Chris Pleasanton said. "Representatives from every part of the community take part, from the library to the police to the senior center and to the residents themselves. It's been a great way to learn about the neighborhood and helps the court do a better job."

(Top) Judge Norko, MARG Chairperson Hyacinth Yennie, Chris Pleasanton, (Mlddle) Chris Pleasanton with Maple Avenue resident Tony Magno, Queenie and Ken Akers with Judge Norko (Bottom) the plaque presented to the Community Court by MARG

NEW COMMUNITY SERVICE VESTS IN USE

The Community Court in Hartford is has unveiled new safety vests that are to be worn by defendants performing community service. The new vests are bright yellow, have reflective tape, and have Community Court stenciled on the back. In order to promote comfort for the wearer, the vests are adjustable and vented.

"The vests promote a safer work environment for the work crews due to their increased visibility, and it helps the field supervisors keep the crews organized at a job site," Court Coordinator Chris Pleasanton said.



New community service vest modeled by 80 Washington Street maintenence supervisor Ron Tacey

GENESIS PROGRAM WORKING WITH COMMUNITY COURT

The Community Court in Hartford is proud to announce that it is now working with the Genesis Program in Hartford. Represented by Jackee Bryant and Kelvin Lovejoy, the Genesis Program comes to the Community Court each Tuesday to offer their services to appropriate clients, at no charge to the client or the court.

Genesis concentrates on peer-based recovery support services with a focus on mentoring and life coaching, recovery groups designed to build positive community connections, self worth and good personal interests. They can also provide transportation assistance, food vouchers, employment and housing assistance, and telephone support. Genesis is an authorized Access to Recovery II provider, which enables them to make these service connections.

"Genesis has the ability to provide needed services to those in need," Judge Norko stated. "They are a welcome enhancement to the Community Court's Social Service's Team."



Kelvin Lovejoy and Jackee Bryant of the Genesis Program

COMMUNITY COURT PARTICIPATES IN HARTFORD'S 2008 PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT

The Community Court in Hartford was proud to participate in the City of Hartford's 2008 Project Homeless Connect event held on December 4th at the XL Center in downtown Hartford. Put together by Mayor Perez as part of the Capitol Region's 10-year plan to end homelessness, Project Homeless Connect is a one-day service event that provides a wide array of services and information intended to engage persons and families who are homeless and assist them on the journey to permanent housing and stability. Dozens of local government agencies and non-profit service providers were on-hand to provide help ranging from immediate medical care, housing assistance, job training applications and free suits, to food. The Community Court provided newsletters, contact phone numbers and, while unable to discuss specific cases or warrants with individuals, made the wide array of social services available through the court known.

"It was nice to participate with so many other organizations," Chris Pleasanton said. "It was also important for us to let people know they don't have to have a case to access the social services available through the court, they just have to come in to see us."

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 - Fall 2008 COMMUNITY SERVICE



AUGUST

8/4/08 Ashley St., Collins St., Sargeant St., Garden St., Huntington St. 8/5/08 Forest St., Imlay St., Laurel St., S. Marshall St., Foodshare Regional Market 8/6/08 Capitol Ave. underpass, Broad St., Farmington Ave., Flower St. 8/7/08 Kibbe St., Carpenter St., Buckley St., Madison St. 8/8/08 Weston St., Jennings Rd., Pliny St., Foodshare Regional Market 8/11/08 Orange St., Bartholomew Ave., Hamilton St., Park St., Sisson Ave. 8/12/2008 Greenwood St., Grace St., New Park Ave., Foodshare Regional Market 8/13/08 Wyllys St., Main St., Wethersfield Ave., Retreat Ave. 8/14/08 Weston Park Rd., Jennings Rd., Ashford St., Rosemont Ave., Foodshare Regional Market & Mobile Unit 8/15/08 South St., Hubbard Rd., Campfield Ave., Bolton St., Franklin Ave., Foodshare Regional Market 8/18/2008 Victoria Rd., Bushnell St., Adelaide St., Murphy Rd., Airport Rd. 8/19/2008 Ledyard St., Locust St., Meadow St., Brainard Rd., Foodshare Regional Market 8/20/2008 Woodland St., Deerfield Ave., Lenox St., Vine St. 8/21/2008 Cabot St., Edgewood St., Homestead Ave., Foodshare Regional Market & Mobile Unit 8/22/08 Adams St., Milford St., Baltimore St., Foodshare Regional Market 8/25/08 Asylum Ave., Elizabeth St., Girard Ave., Cone St. Newton St. 8/26/08 Mountain St., Hillside Ave., Homestead St., Newington Ave., Foodshare Regional Market 8/27/08 New Britain Ave., Fairfield Ave., White St., Claremont St. 8/28/08 Rodney St., Tremont St., Oxford St., Fern St., Foodshare Regional Market & Mobile Unit. 9/29/08 Zion St., Hughes St., Flatbush Ave., Brookfield St., Dart St., Foodshare Regional Market

SEPTEMBER

9/2/08 Buckingham St., Charter Oak Ave., Wells St., Elm St., Foodshare Regional Market. 9/3/08 Sisson Ave., Fales St., Capitol Ave. 9/4/08 Heath St. Amity St. James St., Rowe Ave. 9/5/08 Warrenton Ave. Beacon St., Oxford St., Tremont St, Foodshare Regional Market. 9/8/08 Hawthorne St., Imlay St., Forest., Case St., Niles St. 9/9/08 Ashley St., Sargeant St., Walnut St., Garden St., Foodshare Regional Market. 9/10/08 Atwood St., Willard St., May St., Sumner St. 9/12/08 Hebron St., Sharon Rd., Ridgefield St., Kent St., Adams St., Foodshare Regional Market 9/15/08 Vine St., Mansfield St., Capen St. Coventry St., Tower Ave. 9/16/08 Palm St., Durham St., Hartland St., Palm St., Foodshare Regional Market. 9/17/08 Euclid St., Morningside St., Darby St., Hubbard St. 9/18/08 Park Terr., Sigourney St., Russt St., Putnam St., Foodshare Regional Market & Mobile Unit 9/19/08 Affleck St., Ward St., Squire St., Allen Pl., Foodshare Regional Market 9/22/08 Vernon St., Summit St., Bonner St., Arnold St., Monroe St. 9/23/08 South St., Fairfield Ave., Goodwin Park Rd., Hubbard Rd., Foodshare Regional Market 9/24/08 Brown St., Fairfield Ave., White St., Claremont St. 9/25/08 Overlook Terrace, Golden Age Dr., Charter St., Broadview Terr., Foodshare Regional Market. 9/26/08 Mapleton St., Preston St., West Preston St., Otis St., Eastview St., Foodshare Regional Market. 9/29/08 Douglas St., Gilman St., Casco St., Linmoore St. 9/30/08 Monroe St., Ansonia St., Oliver St., Sherbrooke Ave., Chandler St., Foodshare Regional Market.

OCTOBER

10/1/08 Sargeant St., Ashly St., May St., Ebony Horse Ranch, Foodshare Regional Market. 10/2/08 Forest St., S. Marshall St., Laurel St., Imlay St., Ebony Horse Ranch, Foodshare Regional Market. 10/3/08 Affleck St., Madison St., Lincoln St., Jefferson St. Ebony Horse Ranch, Foodshare Regional Market & Mobile Unit 10/6/08 Capen St., Sanford St., Baltimore St., Foodshare Regional Market. 10/7/08 Green St., Center St., Florence St., Seyms St., Fairmont St., Guilford St., Pliny St., Mather St. 10/8/08 Benton St., Warner St., Whitmore St., Bond St., Barker St., York St., Ward St. 10/9/08 Oakland Terrace, Deerfield St., Lenox St., Winchester St., Rockville St., Vineland Terr. Edgewood St. 10/10/08 Baltimore St., Kent St., Adams St., Milford St., Kibbie St, Foodshare Mobile Unit. 10/14/08 Barker St., Bond St., N. Main St., Whitmore St., Warner St., Maple Ave. 10/15/08 Milford St., Adams St., Baltimore St., Foodshare Regional Market. 10/16/08 Webster St., Seymour St., Park St. 10/17/08 Foodshare Mobile Unit 10/20/2008 Flatbush Ave., Nilan St., Sherbrooke Ave., Hillside Ave., Bonner St. 10/21/08 King St., Julius St., Mountford St., Ebony Horse Ranch, Foodshare Regional Market 10/22/08 Gilette St., Hawthorne St., Forest St., S. Marshall St., Niles St. 10/23/08 Lincoln St., Madison St., Ward Pl., Mountford St. 10/24/08 Brown St., Fairfield Ave., White St., Claremont St. 10/27/08 Overlook Terr., Golden Age Dr., Charter St., Broadview Terr., Foodshare Regional Market & Mobile Unit 10/28/08 Mapleton St., Preston St., Otis St., Eastview St., Foodshare Regional Market 10/29/08 Barker St., Bond St., Whitmore St., Warner St. 10/30/08 Farmington Ave., Tremont Ave., Litchfield St., Sanford St., Edgewood St., Ebony Horse Ranch 10/31/208 W. Preston St., Bond St., Adelaide St., Barker St., Foodshare Mobile Unit

NOVEMBER

11/3/08 Newfield Rd., Brookfield St., Flatbush Ave., Sherbrooke Ave. Foodshare Regional Market 11/4/08 Capitol Ave., Summit St., Vernon St., Stonington St. 11/5/08 Maxim Rd., Brainard Rd., Airport Rd., Foodshare Regional Market 11/6/08 May St., Townley St., Albany Ave., Norfolk St. 11/7/08 Sargeant St., Ashley St., Laurel St., Atwood St., Collins St., Foodshare Regional Market 11/10/08 Barnard St., Renton St., Maple Ave., Bond St., Barker St. 11/12/08 Baltimore St., Kent St., Adams St., Milford St., Kibbe St., Foodshare Mobile Unit 11/13/08 N. Main St., Homestead Ave., Foodshare Regional Market 11/14/08 Barker St., Bond St., N. Main St., Whitmore St., Warner St., Maple Ave. 11/17/08 Milford St., Adams St., Baltimore St., Foodshare Regional Market 11/18/08 Webster St., Seymour St., Park St. 11/19/08 Foodshare Mobile Unit 11/20/08 Flatbush Ave., Nilan St., Sherbrooke Ave., Hillside Ave., Bonner St. 11/21/08 King St., Julius St., Mountford St., Foodshare Regional Market, Ebony Horse Ranch, Charter Oak Health Center Turkey Drive 11/25/08 Mather St., Brook St., Enfield St., Ebony Horse Ranch, Preston St.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

COMMUNITY COURT SESSION IN HARTFORD

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10th ANNIVERSARY NEWSLETTER

IN THIS EDITION...

Judge Norko Returns, Hartford AIC, CHS Visit, Truancy Prevention, Staff Notes, Statistics & more...

