



FAIR HOUSING NEWS

A newsletter about fair housing, community development, & neighborhood quality of life

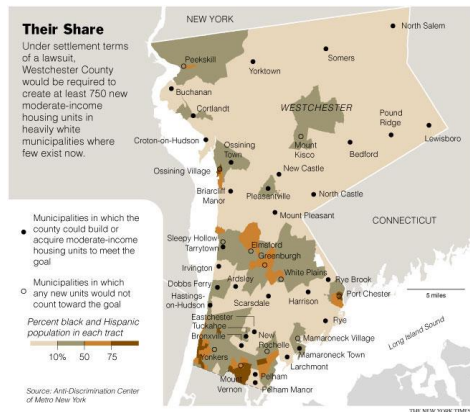
GREETINGS!!!

Welcome To The October-November Edition Of *Fair Housing News*, Produced By The GBCHRB As A Public Service! For a free copy of any article or for a free on-line subscription: 410-453-9500/800-895-6302 / wkladky@gbchr.org. More info & resources: <http://www.gbchr.org>.

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IN THE NATIONAL NEWS



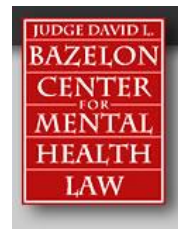
Westchester County, NY In Landmark Housing Desegregation Agreement. The County will create hundreds of affordable houses and apartments for moderate-income people in overwhelmingly white communities and aggressively market them to nonwhites in Westchester and New York City. At present, a family of four making \$90,000 could still qualify for "affordable" housing in the County. This settles a federal court suit by [the Anti-Discrimination Center](#) alleging that the County misrepresented its efforts to engage in affordable housing programs. The federal judge concluded that Westchester had made "little or no effort" to find out where low-income housing was being placed, or to finance homes and

apartments in communities that opposed affordable housing. The Center filed its complaint against Westchester in April, 2006. The County Council ratified the agreement in September, 2009. See a segregation map of the County [here](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/11/nyregion/11settle.html). <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/11/nyregion/11settle.html>; <http://www.antibiaslaw.com/westchester-false-claims-case>

Los Angeles Clippers Basketball Team Owner Donald Sterling Has Agreed To Pay \$2.725 Million To Settle A Housing Discrimination Lawsuit. Sterling was accused of discriminating against blacks, Hispanics, and families with children at his Los Angeles apartment buildings. The payment is the largest amount ever obtained to settle a case alleging discrimination in rental apartments. The defendants, the Beverly Hills Properties, own and manage 119 buildings comprising over 5,000 apartments. The settlement requires payment of a \$100,000 civil penalty and \$2.625 million into a fund to be used to pay damages to those harmed by the discrimination. [Read the Reuters article](#).



Disability Groups Win Landmark Case Affirming Rights of People with Mental Disabilities in State-Funded Adult Homes. A federal district judge ruled in [*DAI v. Paterson*](#) that New York is not providing services in the most integrated setting to thousands with mental illnesses in private "adult homes" paid for by the state. Applying the U.S. Supreme Court's 1999 *Olmstead* decision, the court held that despite the state's calling these board-and-care homes as community-integrated, they "do not enable interaction with nondisabled persons to the fullest extent possible" and thus New York's use of them violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). "The decision affirms that the *Olmstead* integration mandate applies wherever people with mental illnesses are served by the state," said Jennifer Mathis, deputy legal director of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law and co-counsel in the case. "*Olmstead* would be far less significant if it covered only public institutions." http://www.bazelon.org/newsroom/2009/DAI_ruling9-8-09.htm



Ansonia, Connecticut Settles Claims That It Discriminated Against Families With Children. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the City settled claims that it denied housing opportunities to families with children, because of its land-use ordinances and non-compliance with HUD directives. HUD became involved when Ansonia Crossing, LLC, a development of 16 single-family homes, filed a complaint with HUD alleging that the City of Ansonia had ordered him to stop renting to families with children, citing a zoning rule that restricted the site to housing residents aged over 55. The owner alleged that the City had no such zoning restriction but claimed it as a way to reduce the number of children in the local public school system. In the settlement, the City agreed to not enact an ordinance restricting the section of the city where Ansonia Crossing is located to housing for persons over 55, refrain from retaliating against the owner or any person who aided or participated in the investigation, and pay the owner's \$3,000 legal bill. [Read the HUD Press Release here.](#)

HUD Imposes Penalties On Two FHA-Approved Lenders. HUD's Mortgagee Review Board (MRB) issued penalties of \$27,000 on two FHA-approved lenders in Wisconsin and Connecticut for various violations of FHA lending and marketing standards. Also, the MRB reached tentative settlements with four other lenders and issued two Letters of Reprimand to lenders that violated FHA requirements. The lenders are: 1st Rate Mortgage Corp. (Green Bay, WI) and Access Mortgage Corporation (New Haven, CT). HUD's MRB has reached tentative settlements with Nations Direct Mortgage, LLC (Irvine, CA), VanDyk Mortgage Corporation (Grand Rapids, MI), US Bank, NA (Minneapolis, MN), and Sun West Mortgage Company, Inc. (Cerritos, CA). The MRB issued a letter of reprimand issued to Community Lender, Inc. (Boise, ID). [Read the HUD Press Release here.](#)



Maryland News...

Racial Justice: Task Force Releases Recommendations for Diversity in Somerset Government. The Maryland ACLU and the Somerset County Branch of the NAACP joined the Somerset County Task Force on Diversity just released and discussed recommendations to address serious racial disparities in Somerset County government. The Task Force's recommendations are steps the County can take to promote diversity and correct racial disparities in the local government and public schools. The Task Force was formed

in 2008 in response to a report released by the Maryland ACLU and the Somerset County NAACP that examined the demographics of Somerset County government, and revealed disparities between the number of African Americans who live in Somerset County, and the number employed in the local government and schools. [Download the report from the ACLU.](#)

Housing Mobility Report Released by Baltimore Regional Housing Campaign. The Baltimore Regional Housing Campaign - Greater Baltimore Urban League, Innovative Housing Institute, BRIDGE, ACLU-MD, Poverty & Race Research Action Council, and the Metropolitan Baltimore Quadel - just released "New Homes, New Neighborhoods, New Schools: A Progress Report on the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program." The report combines the latest survey data from ACLU's clients in its landmark public housing desegregation case, *Thompson v. HUD*, along with info on health and school quality, and individuals to portray both the successes and challenges overcome by families in the program. [Download the report. http://www.cphabaltimore.org/main.cfm?page=4](http://www.cphabaltimore.org/main.cfm?page=4)

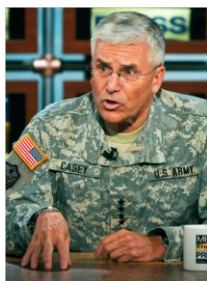


Focus on Muslim Issues...



The Council On American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Expresses Concern About The Government's Move To Seize Mosques In New York, Maryland, California, & Texas. November 12th. Officials accuse the foundation owning the mosques of ties to the Iranian government. CAIR - America's largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization - said the unprecedented move by the government may have First Amendment implications for the American Muslim community. "Whatever the details of the government's case against the owners of the mosques, as a civil rights organization we are concerned that the seizure of American houses of worship could have a chilling effect on the religious freedom of citizens of all faiths and may send a negative message to Muslims worldwide," said CAIR, adding the government's move comes at a particularly bad time, as American Muslims are fearful of a backlash resulting from the recent shooting at Fort Hood, Texas. [Read CAIR's press release.](#)

U.S. Muslims Condemn Attack at Fort Hood. CAIR condemned an attack on Fort Hood military base (TX) that killed 12 people. CAIR has previously started an online anti-terror petition drive called "Not in the Name of Islam," initiated a television PSA campaign against religious extremism, and coordinated a "fatwa," or Islamic religious ruling, against terrorism & extremism. [Read the article.](#)



U. S. Army Chief Concerned About Backlash Against Muslims. General George Casey Jr., the Army chief of staff, recently expressed concern several times in the media that speculation about the religious beliefs of Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, accused of killing 12 fellow soldiers and one civilian and wounding others in a shooting at Fort Hood, could "cause a backlash against some of our Muslim soldiers. "I've asked our Army leaders to be on the lookout for that," General Casey said. "It would be a shame - as great a tragedy as this was - it would be a shame if our diversity became a casualty as well." This is widely being seen as an indication of the Army's effort to ward off bias against the more than 3,000 Muslims in its ranks.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/09/us/politics/09casey.html?scp=1&sq=muslim&st=cse>



2009 Pew Study Finds Muslims Face More Discrimination Than Any Other Religious Group in U. S. 58% say that Muslims are subject to a lot of discrimination, much more than Jews, evangelical Christians, atheists, or Mormons. Only gays and lesbians are seen as facing more discrimination, with 64% saying there is much discrimination against homosexuals. The poll found 65% of non-Muslims say that Islam and their own faith are either very or somewhat different, while 17% say Islam and their own religion are somewhat or very similar. When asked about faiths other than their own, six-in-ten adults say Buddhism is mostly different, with 59% say the same about Mormonism and 57% about Hinduism. [Read the study here.](#)

New Study of Muslim Population Yields Surprising Insights.

According to the project by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, Asia is home to the majority of Muslims. And most of Europe's Muslims are in Russia, where Islam was as early as the 8th century. With data from 232 countries and territories, the survey found over 60% of Muslims are in Asia, with 20% in the Middle East and North Africa. But the latter have the highest percentages of Muslim-majority countries, some over 95%. At the same time, one-fifth of the world's Muslims are minorities in countries dominated by other religions. But their numbers are sometimes greater than those of states where they are in the majority. "China has more Muslims than Syria," the Forum points out. "Some 45% say Islam is no more likely than other faiths to encourage violence among its believers; 38% say Islam does encourage violence more than other faiths. While the current findings that Islam is connected with violence has declined since 2007, when 45% of the public said that Islam encourages violence, the views vary considerably."



<http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=450>



Obama's Cairo Speech Praised for Sensitivity to Problems & Issues.

President Obama's speech to the Muslim world has been lauded. "Rather than focusing on tension, (Obama) has shifted the focus on common interests and mutual respect, Obama hit all the right notes. Speaking in a tone of respect; quoting the Quran, the Torah and the Bible, and even mentioning El Akrich's native Morocco as the first country, in 1777, to publicly acknowledge the newly sovereign United States." Illinois Muslims say stereotypes against them persist: disdainful looks, sneering comments, and water-cooler jokes - but also note progress being made as people of different faiths learn more about what Muslims believe, and as Muslims get more involved in the community. [Read CAIR's article here.](#)

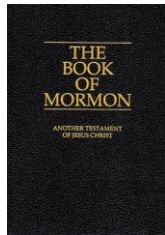


Focus on Gay Rights Issues...

Congress Extends Hate Crimes Protection to Gays. The federal law now includes crimes based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. Named for Matthew Shepard, the gay Wyoming college student murdered 11 years ago, hate crimes law was enacted after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968. Some 45 states have hate-crimes statutes, and

the bill will not change current practices where hate crimes are generally investigated and prosecuted by state and local officials. The law widens the actions (attending school, voting) that bring federal involvement, also including if a state is unwilling or unable to prosecute an alleged hate crime. The

law gives grants to state and local governments to prosecute hate crimes and funds programs to combat hate crimes committed by juveniles. [Read the New York Times article.](#)



Mormon Church Support of Gay Rights Ordinance Praised. The ordinance made Salt Lake the first city in Utah to offer such protections. While the measure probably had majority backing on the seven-member City Council anyway, the Church's support was seen by gay activists as an important step forward in the state and in the overwhelmingly Mormon legislature, where subtle shifts in Church positions can influence votes. The City Council unanimously approved the measures. [Read the New York Times article;](#) <http://www.fairhousing.com/>

One Year Anniversary Of Same-Sex Marriage In Connecticut. Gay and lesbian couples marked the one-year anniversary of Connecticut allowing same-sex marriages as 150 attended a celebration at the state Capitol. "Connecticut has thrown open the doors of justice, and our state is now a beacon of fairness and inclusion," said Carol Buckheit, executive director of Love Makes A Family, a group that helped to shepherd the gay marriage issue through the General Assembly for the past decade. The Connecticut Supreme Court, on a 4-3 decision, ruled on October 10, 2008, that same-sex couples have the right to wed in the state. The legislature in 2009 voted to update the state's marriage laws to conform with the court ruling. Gov. M. Jodi Rell, a Republican, signed the language into law. Buckheit urged the repeal of the federal Defense of Marriage Act and allow same-sex couples to receive more than 1,000 federal rights, benefits, and protections that heterosexual married couples receive. Elsewhere, a gay marriage law was defeated by voters in Maine this month (the 39th state to have done so). <http://wcbstv.com/wireapnewscn/Gays.and.lesbians.2.1307564.html>



District of Columbia Fight Over Marriage Law. The fight over a proposed same-sex marriage law increased as the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington said that if the law passed, the church would cut its social service programs that help residents with adoption, homelessness, and health care. Under the bill, which has the mayor's support and is expected to pass in December, religious organizations would not be required to perform same-sex weddings or make space available for them. But the Archdiocese said they feared the law might require them to extend employee benefits to same-sex married couples. As a result, the Archdiocese would have to abandon its contracts with the city if the law passed. The Church's social services arm, known as Catholic Charities, serves 68,000 local residents, including about a third of the city's homeless people, who go to city-owned shelters managed by the Church, city officials said. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/13/us/13marriage.html>

DID YOU KNOW?



November is American Indian Heritage Month in Maryland. The Month in Maryland is recognized in conjunction with the national celebration of National Native American Heritage Month. In November 1990 a joint resolution was approved by the President of the United States designating November as National Native American Heritage Month. Proclamations are made each year by the President declaring the heritage month celebration. The first American Indian Day recognized by a state was declared on the second Saturday in May 1916 by the Governor of New York. <http://www.americanindian.maryland.gov/>



New Urban Institute Study of Impact of Frequent Residence Change. "Americans change residences frequently. Residential mobility can reflect positive changes in a family's circumstances or be a symptom of instability and insecurity. Mobility may also change neighborhoods as a whole. To shed light on these challenges, this report uses a unique survey conducted for the *Making Connections* initiative. The first component measures how mobility contributed to changes in neighborhoods' composition and characteristics. The second component identifies groups of households that reflect different reasons for moving or staying in place. The final component introduces five stylized models of neighborhood performance: each has implications for low-income families' well-being and for community-change efforts." [Read the report.](#)

U. S. Senate Voted to Confirm Thomas E. Perez as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice. On October 6th, the U.S. Senate voted 72 to 22 to confirm Maryland Secretary of Labor Perez as the nation's Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the Department of Justice. Perez has a record of leadership, public service and commitment to civil rights enforcement. He is a former federal prosecutor for the Civil Rights Division and also served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights under former Attorney General Janet Reno. Perez previously served as Special Counsel to the late U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, serving as principal advisor on civil rights, criminal justice, and constitutional justice issues. During the Clinton Administration, he served as the Director of the Office of Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Read the Press Release.](#)



Focus on Latino Issues...

2009 Hispanic Heritage Month. Each year, from September 15 to October 15, the United States celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month to recognize the economic, cultural, and social contributions of the over 45.5 million Latinos living in the U.S. The dates of Hispanic Heritage Month were selected to include the Independence Day celebrations of Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Panama, as well as to incorporate El Día de la Raza - October 12 (Columbus Day), a Mexican day of observance of our multicultural and indigenous heritage prior to the Spanish arrival to Latin America. Governor Martin O'Malley and the Maryland Commission on Hispanic Affairs recognized qualified, outstanding individuals and an organization in Maryland that significantly contributed to the welfare and progress of the community at its annual Hispanic Heritage Awards Luncheon held this year September 29, 2009 in partnership with the Maryland Hispanic Business Conference. <http://www.hispanic.maryland.gov/>



The Day Of The Dead (Día De Los Muertos In Spanish) Is A Holiday Celebrated Mainly In Mexico & By People Of Mexican Heritage (And Others) Living In The U. S. & Canada. The holiday focuses on gatherings of family and friends to pray for and remember friends and relatives who have died. The celebration occurs on the 1st and 2nd of November, in connection with the Catholic holy days of All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day which take place on those days. Traditions include building private altars honoring the deceased, using sugar skulls, marigolds, and the favorite foods and beverages of the departed, and visiting graves with these as gifts. Observance of the holiday

in Mexican-American communities in the United States has become more important and widespread as the community grows numerically and economically. Scholars trace the origins of the modern holiday to indigenous observances dating back thousands of years, and to an Aztec festival dedicated to a goddess called Mictecacihuatl (known in English as "The Lady of the Dead"). Similar holidays are celebrated in many parts of the world; for example, it is a public holiday in Brazil, where many Brazilians celebrate by visiting cemeteries and churches. In Spain, there are festivals and parades, and at the end of the day, people gather at cemeteries and pray to their loved ones who have died. Similar observances occur elsewhere in Europe and in the Philippines, and similarly-themed celebrations appear in many Asian and African cultures. http://wikilatino.com/index.php/Main_Page



The [Mexican American Legal Defense And Education Fund](#) (MALDEF) Is The Nation's Leading Non-Profit Latino Legal Organization. Described as the "law firm of the Latino community," MALDEF promotes equality and justice through litigation, advocacy, public policy, and community education in the areas of employment, immigrants' rights, voting rights, education, and language rights. Their resources list: <http://maldef.org/resources/library/>.

For Info on Almost All Things Latino & Hispanic, Try WikiLatino. News, living, food, politics, sports, etc. http://wikilatino.com/index.php/Main_Page



RESOURCES

A Benefit for the ACLU of Maryland Will Be Held on November 21st. The Creative Alliance & Red Emma's present: "Howard Zinn's Voices of A People's History," artist readings, with two shows at 6 & 9 p.m. Creative Alliance at The Patterson, 3134 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore. \$23 general admission, \$20 for Creative Alliance members. Advance tickets suggested. Info: 410-276-1651. www.creativealliance.org Incidentally, the ACLU's Links page has a wealth of interesting links to civil rights sites: <http://www.aclu-md.org/links/Links.html>.

Check Out the GBCHRB's YouTube Channel - <http://www.youtube.com/user/wkladky1> - To See Episodes Of Its Popular Cable TV Show! Also, Listen to a Fair Housing Radio Show - <http://www.gbchr.org/2rad9899.htm> - Click on any show, including foreclosure problems, Baltimore racial history, Fair Housing laws, disability issues, mortgage lending discrimination.

The GBCHRB Distributes Free Fair Housing Brochures, Posters, and Guides. [Contact us](#) for FREE Fair Housing info, brochures, & posters in English, Spanish, Korean, and Russian, as well as one specifically for people with disabilities.



CALENDAR

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is November 15-21, 2009. Co-sponsored by: National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student

Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness, during this week, a number of schools, communities and cities take part in a nationwide effort to bring greater awareness to the problems of hunger and homelessness. [Read the 2009 Week Manual.](#)



National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day is December 21st.

Each year since 1990, on or near the first day of winter and the longest night of the year, National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) has sponsored National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness and to remember our homeless friends who have paid the ultimate price for our nation's failure to end homelessness. This year, the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) has joined us in co-sponsoring this event. In an effort to maximize the impact of the day, NCH and the NHCHC have encouraged local and statewide organizations to hold memorials of their own. Last year, over 100 cities across the nation, from Detroit to Seattle to Washington, DC, sponsored events to honor those who had died and to recommit to the task of ending homelessness. This Year, once again, NCH is encouraging groups to plan a special event on or around December 21, 2009. Some groups may decide to hold their event a day or so before the date. [Download the 2009 NCH Link.](#)



REST IN PEACE

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Mental Health Advocate, 88. A true trailblazer in the effort to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, Shriver was the executive vice president of the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation which focused on the prevention of mental retardation. It developed the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (now named for Shriver) in 1962, established a network of mental retardation research centers at major medical schools across the United States in 1967, and created major centers for the study of medical ethics at Harvard and Georgetown in 1971. In 1968, the foundation helped plan and provided financing for the First International Special Olympics Summer Games, held at Soldier Field in Chicago that summer, with 1,000 athletes from 26 states and Canada in competition. Since then, the program has grown to almost three million athletes in more than 180 countries. In 1984 President Ronald Reagan awarded Shriver the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. In an interview with CBS News in 2004, her son Robert said: "My mom never ran for office, and she changed the world. Period. End of story." [Read the New York Times obituary.](#)