

Open House

Newsletter of the Fair Housing Council of Montgomery County

SPRING 1999

The Fair Housing Council of Montgomery County is committed to ensuring equal housing opportunities regardless of race, religion, gender, age, disability, familial status or national origin. We carry out our mission through education & outreach, complaint reception & resolution, advocacy, monitoring of discriminatory housing practices & assistance in finding open & affordable housing.

STAFF

Renee Langley
Executive
Director

Liane Anderson

APRIL IS FAIR HOUSING MONTH *"Open Minds, Open Doors"*



Fair Housing Week Events *April 19th—23rd*

The Fair Housing Council in conjunction with the Delaware Valley Fair Housing Partnership is sponsoring a week-long series of events in celebration of April being Fair Housing Month. Come join us and celebrate your rights!

EVENT SCHEDULE

Monday, April 19th

Fair Housing Rights Literature Handout
Septa Transportation Hubs
7:00 am — 8:45 am

Tuesday, April 20th

Fair Housing Training Workshop for Service Providers
U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
Wannamaker Building
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107
1:00 pm — 2:30 pm

Wednesday, April 21st

Fair Housing Training Workshop for Landlords & Realty Professionals
Tenants Action Group Offices
21 South 12th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
6:00 pm — 8:00 pm

1999 "April Is Fair Housing Month" Poster Contest Goes Countywide

This year the "April Is Fair Housing Month" poster contest was expanded into three schools. The participating schools were: Elkins Park School (Cheltenham Township); Colonial Elementary School (Plymouth Township); and Salford Hills Elementary School (Upper Salford Township).

In an effort to expand into more communities throughout the county, the Fair Housing Council collaborated with the Montgomery County Association of Realtors on the project. The collaboration actually

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Fair Housing Week Events, cont.
April 19th—23rd

Thursday, April 22nd

Informational Workshop for Community Residents

Community College of Philadelphia
1700 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
6:00 pm — 7:00 pm

Friday, April 23rd

Fair Housing Training Workshop for Attorneys

(CLE credit application pending)

Stradley Ronon Stevens & Young
2600 One Commerce Square
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7098
12:00 pm — 1:00 pm

Saturday, April 24th

First Time Homebuyers Workshop

Lansdale Pubic Library
Vine & Susquehanna Sts.
Lansdale, PA
10:00 am — 1:00 pm

Sunday, April 25th

Neighbors for Diversity: Segregation in the Suburbs

Beaver College
450 South Easton Road
Glenside, PA 19038

We hope to see you there!!

**If you have any questions, wish to volunteer, or
simply want to participate and need more
information, Call:**

**FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
(215) 576-7711**

*Outreach to Immigrants
Underway*

The Council is proud to announce that we, with Community Housing Services, have received a grant from the Lazarus Foundation to do fair housing outreach in the immigrant communities of Montgomery County. We will be conducting workshops on housing discrimination and distributing non-English language posters throughout the county.

Please contact us if you are an agency

***INSIDE THIS
ISSUE***

*Real Estate Attorney
Experiences Housing
Discrimination Firsthand*

1st Time Homebuyers Fair



If you are interested in buying a home or just considering it, **DON'T MISS** the 1st Time

Homebuyers

Fair. The Fair will be held on Saturday, September 26, from 10-4 at MontCo.

Community College, Blue Bell, PA.

At the Fair tables will be set up by various entities such as mortgage lenders, housing counselors, housing assistance agencies, credit agencies, and government agencies. Participants will be able to talk to the varying entities to receive information, materials and even counseling.

During the Fair three different workshops will be conducted. They are:

(1) **BECOMING A HOMEOWNER**
(covering the mortgage process & purchasing a home);

(2) **CREDIT**
(reviewing your credit history & cleaning it up); and

***WHEN: Saturday,
September 26th***

from 10 to 4

WHERE: MontCo.

(3) **GRANT PROGRAMS**
(covering homebuyers assistance programs).

Each workshop will be held three different times during the course of the Fair.

The Fair is sponsored by the Fair Housing Council and

Partners for Homeownership in Montgomery County. This newly formed Partnership is a public/private coalition charged with making homeownership more attainable to the low to moderate income buyer. We hope to accomplish this task by making the public more aware of the varied lending programs, local grants, and housing assistance agencies within our county.

The Partnership is made up of a wide variety of local banks, mortgage companies, real estate companies, non-profit organizations, and the Department of Housing & Urban Development. The Partnership has recently been awarded a grant from the County to assist in our efforts. The County Commissioners are firmly behind our mission.

If your agency

Like to Buy a Home...Don't Know Where to Start?

The Fair Housing Council has available a free kit for 1st time homebuyers called "***So You Wanna Be a Homeowner.***" Included in the kit is: a list of housing resources; credit report information; tips for homebuyers; basic "how to get started" information; and fair housing information.

If you would like a kit for yourself or your office, please call us at (215) 576-7711. We would be more than happy to mail a kit to you or a friend.

The Fair Housing Council will also be sponsoring a Homebuying Workshop on April 24th

“April Is Fair Housing Month” Poster Contest, cont.

(Continued from page 1)

had a two-fold purpose: (1) to reach out to more children; and (2) to work together with the real estate community to combat housing discrimination. The joint effort was a success!

The poster contest is held to promote awareness and intolerance of housing discrimination. In kicking off our campaign three realtor volunteers held interactive class chats on discrimination and fair housing during February at the individual schools. They were: Anne Rubin of Century 21 Lublin-Beck for Elkins Park School; Connie Brady of Danella Realty for Colonial Elementary School; and Pau Barndt of The Barndt Agency for Salford Hills Elementary School.

The kids then created posters about housing discrimination and a judging and awards ceremony was held in each of the schools. On April 19th a countywide contest will be held in the offices of the Montgomery County Association of Realtors to determine the overall winner. The winning poster will be made into

a t-shirt to promote fair housing.

The winners from the individual schools are:

Rory Perner, Elkins Park School; Frank Sambrick, Colonial Elementary School; and Jacie Kendall, Salford Hills Elementary School.

T-shirts will be made available sometime in May and can be ordered through the Council’s office by calling (215) 576-7711.

*it all added up to,
‘We don’t want to
serve you’*

Board Member Search

The Fair Housing Council is looking for professionals to serve on our Board of Directors. We need people from all walks of life—accountants, lawyers, non-profit leaders, public relations persons—to help guide our growing organization.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- r Take part in a good cause & give back to the community.
- r Learn about the issues affecting non-profit corporations.
- r Involve yourself with a successful and expanding agency.

- r Apply and broaden your area of expertise.
- r Meet and network with other professionals.
- r Build and enhance your resume.

INTERESTED?

Please forward a brief letter of interest, along with your resume or curriculum vitae to:

FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF MONTCO.

P.O. Box 578
Glenside, PA 19038
Attn: Renee Langley, Esq.
Executive Director
OR

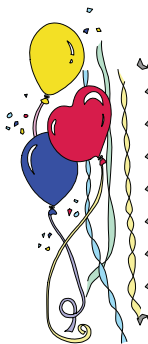
Fax: (215) 576-1509

Battle Against Hate Crimes

The Fair Housing Council will be announcing its 10 Point Plan to Combat Hate Crimes at a press conference on August 26th.

The plan is designed to aid families victimized by hate crimes, ensure that hate crime offenders are brought to justice swiftly and fully, and bring together community groups and concerned citizens to develop effective prevention strategies.

The plan was devised by the Council and the Delaware Valley Fair Housing Partnership. The Partnership is a collective of dedicated fair housing advocates comprised of: the Fair Housing Action Center; the Fair Housing Council of MontCo.; the Fair Housing Council of Southern NJ; the Housing



1968-1998: Celebrating 30 Years of Fair Housing in the United States

New T-shirts Are Here!!!!

New fair housing t-shirts have arrived...and they're great!! Like last year, we have taken the design from the winning poster of the "April Is Fair Housing Month" Poster Contest and made it into a super t-shirt.

The design, created by Rachel Snyder, a 6th grader from the Elkins Park School, contains the slogan "Happiness Is Fair Housing" and is coupled with a cute picture drawn in purple, lime green and black. The t-shirts are \$15 and are available in: S, M, L or XL.

TO PLACE YOUR ORDER,

Mail a \$15 check to: Fair Housing Council of MontCo.



HOMESEEKERS' CORNER:

Tips for Tenants

THE

APARTMENT SEARCH:

- ◆ Start your search early
- ◆ Housing costs should not exceed 30% of take home pay
- ◆ Keep looking until you find what YOU want
- ◆ Talk with tenants living in building before you move—ask about landlord, maintenance, upkeep, noise
- ◆ Visit apartments on evenings & weekends—get the idea of noise level, neighbors, safety
- ◆ Open & close all windows & doors to see if they stick; turn all faucets to check hot water supply & pressure
- ◆ Talk to tenant moving out about: cooperation of landlord; repairs; bugs/rodents; cleanliness; why moving
- ◆ In your apartment complex, look for:
 - clean lobby & halls
 - guarded/secured lobby
 - good locks on doors & windows
 - no drafts around windows
 - screens & storm windows
 - no water stains
 - clean, working appliances
 - enough electrical

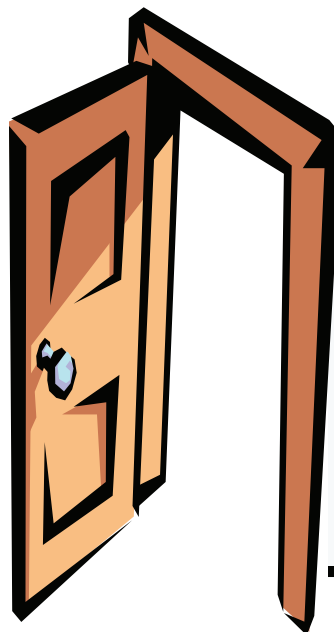
outlets

- clean walls, floors, ceilings, carpets
- soundproofing
- neat personnel
- superintendent on site
- fire alarm, fire escape
- parking & storage facilities
- laundry facilities
- locked mailboxes
- telephone jacks
- ◆ A rental agent may help you save time in looking, but their fee is usually about one month's rent
- ◆ If you suspect you've been discriminated against because of your race, religions, gender, age, disability, having children in the home, or national origin—CALL US!!!

THE LEASE:

- ◆ Get a lease in WRITING!!
- ◆ Always READ lease thoroughly & ASK questions
- ◆ Write down all problems you find with apartment & see if landlord will fix them—BEFORE signing lease
- ◆ Make a list of EVERYTHING that is wrong with apartment & include in lease

- ◆ **Rent**—lease should state fixed rent for a fixed term; lease should state what costs/services/utilities are included in rent (avoid provisions allowing rent to be changed any time during lease)
- ◆ **Renewal**—lease should state how to renew, changes in terms, & rent increases at lease end
- ◆ **Termination of Lease**—lease should state specific terms for either party to end lease & give adequate notice



**LET US
OPEN
THE
DOOR
FOR**

**IF YOU FEEL YOU HAVE BEEN
DISCRIMINATED AGAINST WHILE
SEARCHING FOR A HOME, CALL US AT:
(215) 576-7711**

Help us fight against discrimination... BECOME A MEMBER!!!

The Fair Housing Council of Montgomery County invites you to become a member. The Council is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to fighting housing discrimination in Montgomery County. As the only local agency whose sole mission is to ensure equal housing opportunities in Montgomery County, the Council has been working hard for you! By becoming a member, you can help guarantee that fair housing remains a part of your community.

By becoming a member you will receive either: your choice of one of our t-shirts for free **OR** a 20% discount on the upcoming year's seminar sponsored by the Council! We have two styles available. One includes an orange & red heart design with the slogan, "Home is where the Heart is and with Fair Housing, Your Heart can be Anywhere." The other design is green & purple with the slogan, "Happiness Is Fair Housing." Both are printed on a white t-shirt. Members also receive "Open House" the Council's quarterly newsletter.

With your support, the Council will continue providing educational programs to consumers and real estate professionals, advocacy for victims of housing discrimination and access to information on open and affordable housing in Montgomery County.

Your contributions are tax-deductible.

Don't delay...join today!

YES, I'D LIKE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL!

Name or Organization _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Choose One: _____ 20% Seminar Discount

OR

_____ T-shirt (Choose style & size)

Red/Orange (Adult ___ Sm ___ XL) OR Green/Purple (Adult ___ Sm ___ Med ___ L ___ XL)

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

MAIL TO: P.O. Box 578

Glenside, PA 19038

Questions? Call us at (215)576-7711

**Thank you for supporting the fight against
housing discrimination!**



Fair Housing Council of
Montgomery County
P.O. Box 578
Glenside, PA 19038

In This Issue...

Homebuyers Workshop!!



Saturday, April 24, from 10-1
Lansdale Pubic Library
Vine & Susquehanna Sts., Lansdale, PA

Learn About...

- financing the home purchase
- finding a real estate agent
- the home search
- home inspections

Cost: \$3 (includes materials & snacks)

To Register contact the Fair Housing Council at:
(215) 576-7711.

**BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

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