



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Wednesday, March 31, 2010
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Free documentary screening to spotlight housing discrimination
“Coal Run” film discusses landmark Zanesville discrimination case

CANTON, Ohio – The City of Canton Fair Housing Assistance Program will host a documentary screening and community chat about housing discrimination on Thursday, April 8, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the McKinley Room of the Stark County District Library. The event, which will include guest speakers and a screening of “Coal Run: Making the Case for Water,” is intended to spark discussion and educate attendees about housing discrimination issues.

“We hope attendees will leave with the knowledge that Fair Housing laws do work and can protect residents from illegal discrimination in our community,” said Corey Minor Smith, director of compliance for the City of Canton. “The case featured in this documentary is testimony that Fair Housing laws are as relevant today as they were when they were passed more than 40 years ago.”

According to the filmmakers’ Web site, a federal court jury returned verdicts totaling nearly \$11 million against the City of Zanesville, Ohio, Muskingum County, Ohio, and the East Muskingum Water Authority for illegally denying water service to a predominately African-American community on the basis of race.

The sixty-seven plaintiffs in the case had alleged that the City of Zanesville, Muskingum County, and the East Muskingum Water Authority refused to provide them public water service for over fifty years because they live in Coal Run, the one predominately African-American neighborhood in a virtually all-white county.

Following the screening, special guest speakers will discuss fair housing issues with those in attendance. April is National Fair Housing Month, which celebrates the enactment of fair housing laws in 1968 and subsequent efforts to ensure equal treatment under the law regarding housing issues. Scheduled speakers include Joyce Hill, a civil rights specialist with State of Ohio, and Vince Curry, executive director of the Fair Housing Advocates Association in Akron.

The event is free and open to the public, but registration is preferred. For more information and to register, residents should contact Lori Stokes at (330) 438-4133.

EVENT DETAILS

What: Screening of “Coal Run” documentary and community discussion
When: Thursday, April 8, 2010 – 6:00 p.m.
Where: McKinley Room, Stark Co. District Library, 715 Market Ave N.
Why: To discuss housing discrimination issues during National Fair Housing Month

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