

# **FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF WASHTENAW COUNTY**

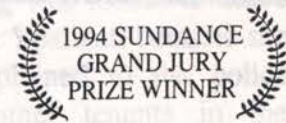
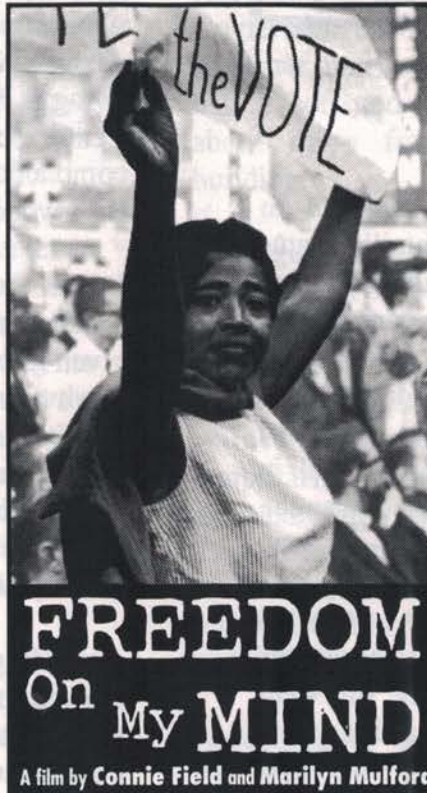


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## **ANNUAL MEETING AND FILM BENEFIT**

The Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County will hold our Third Annual Meeting for members on Tuesday, October 25, 1994 at the First Methodist Church located at 602 E. Huron at State St. in Ann Arbor. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. with a light buffet dinner. After the meeting and election of new board members we can go over MLB 4 for the film and panel. The panel begins at 7:30 p.m. and the film at 8:30 p.m.

This is the Ann Arbor Premiere of "Freedom on My Mind". The award winning film documents the 1964 Mississippi Voter Registration Project. Speakers from 1964 and 1994 Mississippi Summer will participate in a panel discussion before the film. The film, released this summer in New York is sponsored by the National Lawyers Guild UM Chapter, Shaman Drum Bookshop, and Espresso Royal Caffe. Ticket are \$5-\$20 sliding scale with proceeds benefitting the Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County.



"A HANDFUL OF YOUNG PEOPLE, BLACK AND WHITE, BELIEVED THEY COULD CHANGE HISTORY. AND DID."

— John Kifner, THE NEW YORK TIMES

"HOLLYWOOD HAS NOTHING TO MATCH IT THIS SUMMER FOR GRACE OF STORYTELLING AND STRENGTH OF IMPACT."

— David Kehr, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

"A MUST SEE"


— Emanuel Levy, VARIETY

"PASSIONATE...POWERFUL...VIVID"

— Kenneth Turan, LOS ANGELES TIMES

"PROVOCATIVE...ABSORBING"

— Caryn James, THE NEW YORK TIMES

 TARA RELEASING

## **Tuesday October 25, 1994**

**7:30 pm Benefit for the FHC  
Ann Arbor Premiere of "Freedom in My Mind"  
Winner of the 1994 Sundance Grand Jury for  
Best Documentary, the film documents the  
1964 Mississippi Voter Registration Project.**

**Film will show at MLB 4 at 812 E. Washington  
on the UM campus (one block from 1st Methodist  
Church).**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Verna Spayth, President  
Lauretta Codrington, Vice President  
Michael Appel, Secretary/Treasurer  
Raymond Chauncey  
Paul Haynes

Evette Lutman, Esq.  
Pam Means  
Mark Mitshkun, Esq.  
Raymond Mullins, Esq.  
Ann Routt, Esq.

### **STAFF**

Pam Kisch, Executive Director  
Amy Jordan &  
Ruth Kraut, Coordinators of Investigations

## FAMILIAL STATUS AND RACE CASES SETTLE

### *Magennis v Shoner*

In August Marlyss Magennis accepted an offer of \$12,000 to settle her familial status claim against duplex owner Edna Shoner. The suit was filed last September in Washtenaw County Circuit Court by cooperating attorney David Cahill. According to Magennis she was prevented from renting a duplex on Bemis Road in southeastern Washtenaw County because she lived with her then seventeen-year-old son.

According to the suit Shoner expressed reservations about renting to Magennis because she had a child. The law suit went on to claim that Shoner yelled at Magennis stating that the duplex was her place and that she would rent to whomever she wanted.

In the course of litigation it was discovered that Shoner had also obtained an unauthorized copy of Magennis' credit report in violation of the Federal Fair Credit law. Shoner signed a written statement falsely stating that she had the permission of Marlyss Magennis to obtain her credit records.

Testing conducted by the Fair Housing Center confirmed that Shoner offered to show the unit to a family with two adults and stated "...I'd just like to keep it adults; only adults live on the side." The case was assigned to Judge Kurtis T. Wilder. Magennis will use the settlement money for a down payment on a home.

### *Worthy v Briar Cove*

According to the records of the Wayne County Court, Frank and Elgirtha Worthy have settled their race discrimination suit against Briar Cove Apartments in Ann Arbor. In November 1992 the Worthys, an African-American couple with one child living at home, contacted the Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County with a complaint against the complex located near Briarwood Mall.

In their complaint to the FHC the Worthys stated that they believed they were being given false and incomplete information about the availability of units as they sought to rent at Briar Cove. According to the Worthys, they went to see a unit and were told the unit they sought was not available and were told of a "no pets" policy. The Worthys have dog.

According to Mrs. Worthy, she called the next day without identifying herself and was told that the preferred unit was available and that Briar Cove did accept dogs. Testing conducted by the Fair Housing Center supports the Worthy's charge of discrimination based on race.

The Worthys eventually moved into Briar Cove. According to the law suit, when the Worthys arrived at Briar Cove to move in, the rental agent laughed and said "You are in for a surprise". The suit claims that the Worthys found the apartment to be "dirty, including dirty carpets, paint dust all over, paint stains on the carpet, dirt all over, unpainted walls or generally a filthy apartment". In April of 1994 FHC-Washtenaw Cooperating Attorney James C. Barnes, Jr. filed suit on behalf of the Worthys in Wayne County Circuit Court. The case was assigned to Judge Michael L. Stacey. No further information is available about the settlement.

## CASES FILED

### *Faulk v Maes*

In August 1994, Cooperating Attorney Michael J. Steinberg filed a lawsuit on behalf of Stacey Faulk. According to the suit, filed in Washtenaw County Circuit Court, Ms. Faulk was denied the rental of an apartment at 943 W. Cross in Ypsilanti near the Eastern Michigan University campus because she has a baby. The case is assigned to Judge William F. Ager, Jr..

Faulk contacted the Fair Housing Center in January 1994 to report that she had answered an ad in EMU's Eastern Echo for a one-bedroom apartment. According to Faulk she was told that she couldn't rent the apartment because she had a child and that the housing was for students. Faulk had attended Eastern Michigan University and was planning to return. Testing by the FHC supports Faulk's claim of discrimination based on familial status.

Faulk attempted to resolve the issue through conciliation by Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County staff. "That is student housing and I probably didn't want children in there" said owner, Barbara Maes, during the conciliation. In a letter to the Fair Housing Center Maes' attorney, William F. Anhut, admitted his client told Faulk the apartment "was not suitable for children".

The letter went on to say that the apartment was still available and the if Faulk met Maes' usual standards she could rent the unit. At that point Faulk choose to go ahead with the litigation. "I was insulted that it took threatening legal action just to give me the chance to apply for the apartment." said Faulk.

### *Armstrong v French*

In August FHC Cooperating Attorney Michael J. Steinberg filed a familial status lawsuit on behalf of Regina Armstrong. According to the suit, filed in U. S. District Court, Ms. Armstrong was forced to move from her apartment in Ypsilanti because she had a son and complained to the police about noise from other tenants in the building.

In August 1992 Armstrong moved into the downtown Ypsilanti apartment. Three days later, according to the suit: Armstrong called the police to report loud music at about 1:00 a.m., the police arrived and warned the tenants who lowered the volume temporarily and turned it up again to extremely high volume when the police left. The Police returned and ticketed the tenants for the noise violation. Later, Armstrong reported that her neighbors called her names and threatened her with eviction.

According to the suit, the owner forced Armstrong to move out the next day. Armstrong said she was told by owner, Joan French, that the other tenants shouldn't have to change their life style to accomodate Ms. Armstrong and her than nine-year-old son and that she should never have rented to a family with a child. Testing by the FHC supports Armstrong's claim of discrimination based on familial status.

Armstrong left reluctantly paying her own moving expenses. French's alternate apartment was smaller and had serious repair problems including the absence of cold running water. The repair problems led Armstrong to seek the help of attorney, Lisa Ruby, at Legal Services of South Eastern Michigan who later suggested that Armstrong contact the FHC. The case is assigned to Federal Judge Nancy Edmunds.

**FREE BABY/KIDS T-SHIRTS**

Just ask Quinn and Olivia Monforton (children of FHC Members David Monforton and Anne VanderKloot) what they think of their new FHC Baby T-Shirts. Available in sizes 12 months(50/50), 18 months(50/50), 2/4(100% cotton), and 4/6 (100% cotton). Free to FHC members, testers, and complainants. Just call the office at 994-3426 and we'll ship them out. Let your kids be our billboard.



**FAIR HOUSING CENTER of  
Washtenaw County**  
P.O. Box 7825  
Ann Arbor, MI 48107

**Jerome A. Strong**

On August 14, 1994 FHC Board Member Jerome Anton Strong died after a long illness. Jerome served as a founding Board Member of the Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County. He brought to the Board his unflagging vision that the Fair Housing Center remain closely aligned with those who are the targets of discrimination.

Jerome was always there with the right quote for the press when the Fair Housing Center needed him and despite the limitations brought by his health he remained active in his fight for equality, for the rights of children, and for equal housing and credit opportunity. Jerome dedicated his life to justice and serves as a model to all of us. The Fair Housing Center of Washtenaw County staff and Board Members acknowledge our gratitude for the opportunity we had to know and work with Jerome and extend our sympathy to Jerome's family and other friends. Because of Jerome's commitment to the welfare of all children, donation in his name may be made to: The Student Advocacy Center of Michigan NEW Center Building Suite 212, 1100 North Main St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104.