

and celebrate our community. Sometimes we just need a reason to smile.

In the end our private fund raising effort was successful, although not without some challenges and some potential controversy. Our budget was estimated to be \$55,000. In the end our expenses were approximately \$90,000. The good news is we raised \$120,000 leaving a balance of approximately \$ 30,000.

We are pleased to report that the 375th Celebrations were as close to perfect as possible – the financing, the participation and even the weather. We would like to collectively thank the Board of Selectmen for their trust. We have formally requested that any money left over, after all our bills are paid, be placed into an account for another Town celebration such as Concord's 400th.

CONCORD-CARLISLE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Polly Attwood, Chair
Molly Carocci, Vice Chair
Kristin Allison, Clerk
Steve Zippin, Treasurer: (1/2010-9/2010)
Mary Sheppard, Treasurer (9/2010-present)
Liz Clayton, Newsletter Editor
Lorell Gifford, Webmaster

Formally established in 1979 as a 501c3, the Council has a membership of approximately 675 households in the Concord-Carlisle community, with an Executive Board that meets monthly.

Our first event of the year was the January Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration, held at the Sanborn School. It was comprised of performances by the Holy Tabernacle Women's Ministry Choir, the Willard Fifth Grade Chorus, Boston Children's Choir and the CCHS Step Club. These groups sang separately and then together, with the Holy Tabernacle Choir shaking the rafters of Sanborn Auditorium with their incredibly powerful and moving voices.

In April, the Council coordinated the 30th Annual Holocaust Memorial on behalf of the Concord Board of Selectmen. The program featured presentations by Dr. Martine Emme, daughter and granddaughter of Nazi officers and Dr. Robert Gerzon, son of Holocaust survivors. Rosalie Gerut, Cantor at Kerem Shalom, herself the daughter of survivors, has been a foremost

advocate in the group, 'One by One,' which seeks to bring the children of survivors together with the children of Nazi soldiers, in order to bring about acceptance and reconciliation. Approximately one hundred people attended the program at the Town House on Monument Square.

The Annual Picnic in the Park was our next activity, with a beanbag toss game for children (and some competitive adults) and lots of talking, music and the giving out of information about the Council and its activities. A lot of interest was shown in our work, especially our two new initiatives, the Abby Fund METCO Scholarship and the Drinking Gourd Project.

We spent part of the summer preparing for the 375th Birthday Parade. We contacted many of the groups in Town that work in areas of justice, equity and access, inviting them to join with us in the Parade by marching with their own groups and banner, but all wearing a white sash to make visible the number of organizations and volunteers who give their time and energy to those issues that make for a climate of freedom in our community. Many groups joined us – C4RJ, Open Table, Minuteman Arc, Concord Housing Foundation, METCO Family Friends Council, Drinking Gourd Project, Abby Fund members, Concord Prison Outreach and PFLAG. It was a wonderful way of expressing the Human Rights Council's motto of 'the climate of the community is the responsibility of the community' and showing how much energy there is in Concord for that purpose.

On December 6, the Council held the Annual Human Rights Day Breakfast at the Trinitarian Congregational Church on Walden St.



This was the year of the Biannual 'Climate for Freedom' Award and it was presented to Minuteman Arc for their over 50 years of working to provide services to people with disabilities, as well as their families and the community in general. This Award was richly deserved and Dr. Marty Martini accepted on behalf of the organization. He gave the keynote speech, describing their work and aspiration, following up with a question and answer period.

The Drinking Gourd project, formerly a sub-committee of the Council, became an independent 501c3 non-profit organization and so is no longer an official part of the Human Rights Council. Their achievements have been stupendous! They have researched and established an African-American and Abolitionist History Tour in Concord, produced a map of the tours (available at the Chamber of Commerce for \$2.00) and have been working hard to save the house built in 1780 by formerly enslaved Caesar Robbins. Thanks to extraordinary support by the Town for this project and the unprecedented generosity of the developers, Boynton and Brennan, the process is well under way. After an archeological dig, invasive species survey and eradication plan, examination of the wetlands issues, collaboration with the National Park Service and many permits (some still to be acquired), it looks as though the moving of the house to its new site might take place in 2011. The group is also planning to place memorial stone benches on the home sites of other formerly enslaved residents of Concord – Brister Freeman, Cato Ingraham and Zilpah White. Congratulations to the whole group! See more information at www.drinkinggourdproject.org



Apart from these annual events, sub-committees of the Council have been busy: Danielle Laura and Cherisse Gilmer have led the efforts to establish a METCO Scholarship Fund in memory of Abdirauf Abdullahi, a METCO CCHS graduate who was shot to death in a random shooting just weeks before heading off to college. The aim is to raise \$20,000.00 for an endowment to be put into the CCHS Scholarship fund and used for METCO students who gain entry to college. See more at www.theabbyfund.org

Among other activities during the year, the Council co-sponsored the Homelessness Forum and the Amnesty International film on Present-day Slavery. In addition to the above activities, the Council has been involved in working with residents about rights violations, hate crimes and issues of discrimination. We are not professional mediators, but act as a resource for the community in finding mediators, sensitivity training, legal advice, etc. We are in close touch with the Police Department, the schools, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and do not hesitate to call in experts when we receive complaints from the public. We take no action without thoughtful consideration and discussion with those victimized, as well as the advice of police or other concerned groups.

We can be reached at 978-369-6365, through our website: cchumanrights.org, or through the Police Department or Town House.