

PUBLIC CEREMONIES & CELEBRATIONS

Michael Benn, Chair
Claudia Curran
Kevin Paulsen
Colleen Giddings
Edward Murray
Robert Norton
Kathleen Finigan Stone, Associate

This Committee has the responsibility of organizing, coordinating and managing the celebrations sponsored by the Town of Concord. Celebrations for 2014 included: Honored Citizen Ceremony, March 23; Meriam's Corner Exercise, April 12; Dawn Salute, April 19; Patriots' Day Parade, April 21; Memorial Day Ceremonies, May 26; Veterans Day Flag Retirement, November 11.

HONORED CITIZEN



2014 Honored Citizen Jack Clymer

Each year since 1962, Concord has acknowledged the outstanding efforts of some very dedicated citizens at the Honored Citizen Celebration. The award to the Honoree is intangible --for the year of the honor, the citizen shall be the steward of the Boston Post Cane, and is invited to lead the Patriots Day Parade. In 2014, Jack Clymer was recognized as Honored Citizen for his long-term commitment to matters as diverse as culture, land preservation, infrastructure, governance, philanthropy, and elected office.

MERIAM CORNER

This commemoration marks the assembly and actions of militia and Minuteman units that arrived at Meriam's Corner during the British retreat from Concord, April 19th, 1775. After the Regulars' withdrawal from the North Bridge, they began a retreat back to Boston. By the time

the Regulars arrived at this spot at half past noon, there were reported to be about 1,100 Minutemen in the area from more than a dozen towns.



Middlesex County Volunteers Fifes & Drums performs the traditional music of the regimental fife and drum corps of American armies during the American War for Independence. Members are attired in uniforms that replicate the Continental Army.

DAWN SALUTE

Church bells at First Parish toll at 5:45AM to sound the alarm. "Dr. Prescott" arrives at the North Bridge after riding across the fields calling out the warning to towns and villages that the Regulars were on the march and their destination was Concord. The Concord Minutemen fire salutes and the Concord Independent Battery fires several volleys from Buttrick's Hillside.

PATRIOTS' DAY

The Patriots' Day Parade covers a route of approximately 2.5 miles. Participants include musicians, Minuteman companies, color guards, cultural and youth groups and dignitaries from neighboring towns, the State, the nation and several foreign countries with ties to Concord.

At the North Bridge there is a ceremony to commemorate the engagement between the Minuteman companies and British troops with a wreath laying ceremony. The parade, in which the Honored Citizen has a place of honor, continues across the North Bridge and returns to Concord Center.

MEMORIAL DAY

For some, beginning in 1775 and continuing today, responding to the challenge of citizenship has meant a period of service in the Armed Forces. More than 1,400 men and women from Concord went to fight in WWII and just about 300 each to Korea and to Viet Nam. Today, almost 1,000 veterans live in Concord. Memorial Day

is Concord's opportunity to honor the men and women who served our community and our nation in these wars.

FLAG RETIREMENT



Col. Christopher Barron, New England District Commander of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, joined Concord, Massachusetts Town officials, State representatives and residents in the annual Veterans Day Flag Retirement Ceremony.

The Flag Retirement Ceremony is traditionally held each year on Veterans Day and gives Concordians the opportunity to retire their American Flags in a respectful and appropriate manner.

The Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee is grateful to the many who helped make the celebrations of 2014 so successful—Town officials, the staff of various Town Departments, CCHS Music, the VFW, the American Legion, the Concord Minutemen, the Concord Independent Battery, Middlesex County 4H Fife & Drum Corps and all participants. Once again, many thanks to the supportive people of Concord, Massachusetts.

CONCORD-CARLISLE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Ronni Olitsky & Rob Morrison, Co-Chairs
Libby Kurten, Treasurer
Liz Clayton, Newsletter Editor
Lorell Gifford, Webmaster

Formally established in 1979 as a 501(c)(3), the Council has a membership of approximately 675 households in the Concord-Carlisle community, with an Executive Board that meets monthly.

The first event of the year was the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration held at the Fenn School. The performers were the Fenn School Treble Chorus, the Willard Fifth Grade Chorus, Boston Children's Choir, Imani Noble and Greenough Chorus, and Vernon "VCR" Robinson and

Lisa Lee, Spoken Word Poets. The groups sang separately and together, their powerful voices joining with the audience to celebrate King's life and legacy. Our spoken word poets stimulated thought of young and old alike.

In April, the Council coordinated the Annual Holocaust Memorial on behalf of the Concord Board of Selectman. The program featured Karen Kirsten. Raised in Australia, she recently discovered her mother's family had survived the Holocaust in Poland. She is researching and writing a book on these findings.

Our annual Human Rights Day Breakfast was held on Monday, December 1, at Trinitarian Congregational Church. We presented our biannual Climate for Freedom award to Gaining Ground. Chairman of the board, Joe Rigali, spoke on behalf of the organization. This organization grows organic produce and distributes to individuals, organizations and shelters in need. Local and Boston folks benefit from Gaining Ground. All of their fruits and vegetables are given away. Money is never exchanged.

We are also beginning to plan what we hope will be a series of workshops in conjunction with the Concord Police Department and local business leaders with a focus on "cultural proficiency." The goal of the workshops will be to critically examine how we—people of varied cultural backgrounds who live and work in, or visit, Concord—interact with each other in a variety of settings. We are in the early planning stages of this project, but are excited about its potential.

In addition to the above activities, the Council has been involved in working with local 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 by email through our website cchumanrights.org or through the Police Department, or the Town House.