

concert from Nanae on April 19, 2010.

Miranda Morrison, deferring her entrance to college, volunteered at the Nanae Town Office.

CCHS English teacher David Nurenberg led a group of nineteen SciFi Club and World Literature students to Nanae and Sapporo last April where they had a wonderful cross-cultural, interpersonal, and anime experience. Additional SciFi Club students will travel with the CCHS Concert Band to Nanae in April 2010.

Nanae sent its annual delegation of eight students and six adults in October. The adults, including three farmers, were enthusiastically welcomed by Colonial Gardens, Verrill Farm, Debra's Natural Gourmet, Silberleaf Farm, Gaining Ground, and the Northeastern Correctional Center. They met with Town Manager Chris Whelan, the staff at the Beede Center, and the Concord Museum. Students and adults toured Willard School and did origami with three classes, after which they spent the afternoon at Drumlin Farm. A potluck supper at CCHS was attended by host families, band members, and members of the Concord Nanae Network.

THE THOREAU FARM TRUST, INC.

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Bill McKibben, honorary member

The Thoreau Farm Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the restoration and stewardship of the Henry David Thoreau birthplace, which is listed on the

National Register of Historic Places. Once restored, the house will be open to the public as an educational center and community resource. The Honorary Chair of the Trust's campaign to preserve Thoreau's birthplace is Robert Pinsky, former U.S. Poet Laureate.



The restoration of the Henry David Thoreau Birth House on Virginia Road nears completion.

At year's end, the restoration of the ca. 1730 Virginia Road farmhouse was nearing completion. The Trust has received over \$900,000 in contributions for the capital costs of the project from many individuals and grantors in Concord and beyond. This includes \$200,000 of Community Preservation Funds appropriated by the 2007 Town Meeting for historic restoration and \$10,000 in 2009 for landscape restoration.

In honor of Thoreau's environmental legacy, the Trust has integrated green materials and systems into the project wherever possible while maintaining the historic integrity of the structure. Examples include the installation of a low temperature heat pump for heating and cooling and Clivus Multrum composting toilets, as well as the use of soy and cellulose based insulation, FSC-certified wood, roofing shingles made from 95% recycled materials, and low VOC paints, sealants, and adhesives.

The Trust expects to open the site to the public in the spring for tours and educational programming. Interpretive planning for the house and surrounding landscape and the installation of a core exhibit will be completed prior to the opening with funding provided by Mass Humanities, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Sudbury Foundation.

Funds are still needed to reach the Trust's capital need of \$1 million. The Trust will celebrate contributors of \$1,000 or more on a recognition panel in the restored birth house. A contribution to the capital campaign affords an excellent opportunity for citizens to play a significant role in the preservation of one of Concord's most historic houses. The Trust is pleased to provide a private showing of the house to anyone interested.

CABLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Genine Tillotson, Chair
Frank Okurowski, Clerk
Scott Anderson
Lynne Lori Sylvan

The Cable Advisory Committee set the following goals:

- To upgrade the CAC website to better address issues and to better assist residents in understanding the conversion to all digital-television;
- To meet with Verizon and members of the Municipal Light Plant to understand why Verizon has not installed FIOS in Concord;
- To meet with Comcast to share citizen concerns about services, conversion to an all-digital signal, and varying costs of services (in Concord versus elsewhere);
- To host a public hearing on the service provided by the Concord-Carlisle PEG (public, educational, and government) TV station;
- To better understand how the Smart Grid project might be used to support, at minimum high speed internet service in Town;
- To revise and have its charge clarified and updated.

2009 was a challenging year for the Cable Advisory Committee as the nation witnessed the conversion of any remaining analog broadcast signals to all digital ones. As part of this conversion, Concord residents were reporting breakdowns in service and diminishing tiers of programming options provided by Comcast. Residents also complained of the loss of channels and wanted to know why other service-providers were not available.

The CAC re-vamped its website to provide links to outside government and PBS sources which explained all technical options for those needing to convert to digital boxes. The Committee also fielded many queries about digital conversion and chronicled Comcast-specific problems with internet and telephone downtime.

In response to citizen complaints, the CAC arranged a series of meetings to better understand why Concord has no alternative service provider, e.g., Verizon; what Comcast intended to do to improve service and programming options, and what the Municipal Light Plant might be able to offer in the way of Town-generated broadband alternatives.

The CAC learned that Verizon had no plan for installing FIOS in Concord and that undergrounding bylaws and their interpretation and implementation by CMLP and government made installation of FIOS likely to be too costly in the future as well. Plans for 2010 were undefined.

Meetings with Comcast representative Tim Kelly revealed that Comcast would be providing new low-cost boxes and a basic TV service package and that new "line-ups" were being developed. The escalating fees for Comcast service were described as "not under the representative's control" and a review of the Town contract and national legislation indicated that no pricing caps were in place, locally or nationally.

The CAC also investigated the Smart Grid project in a series of meetings with CMLP. It appeared that major initial focus would be on providing fiber to the home to monitor energy devices, rather than developing telecommunications links for high speed internet or television programming.

The CAC hosted its annual, live-broadcast Public Hearing on the performance of Concord's local PEG TV stations. The most significant suggestion was to continue to improve the broadcast quality of Town Meeting.

Finally, the CAC presented proposed revisions to its charge to Selectman Stan Black and the Town Manager which focused on the examination of new and interrelated technologies and policies (e.g., bundled internet, phone, and television) and an updated role of the CAC as technology monitors and advisors to the Selectmen. The committee also made a related request to expand its search for members with telecommunications technical and policy backgrounds. Both requests were placed on indefinite hold.