

Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council
P.O. Box 744
Concord, MA 01742



www.cchumanrights.org

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Climate for Freedom



The Newsletter of the Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council, Inc.

Fall 2017

The Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council is a community organization of volunteers working together to foster respect, understanding, good-will and conciliation among individuals and groups in the community. It is dedicated to the belief that all people are entitled to dignity and respect. The role of the Human Rights Council is one of education and advocacy.

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Rob Morrison, *Co-Chair*
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Hedi Charde, *Newsletter Editor*
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Letter from the Co-Chairs

Human rights are being challenged both nationally and globally, posing challenges on many fronts. Divisiveness, fear and anger seem to be on the rise, particularly in the United States. Given this, we feel it is all the more important for us to take an active stand in upholding basic human rights and insuring dignity for all.

This month, our board reexamined the important initiatives and programs that the Concord Carlisle Human Rights Council (CCHRC) has witnessed and supported over the years: Friends of Metco, Concord Fair Housing Authority, Concord Peace Day, Concord Prison Outreach, the Sister City relationship with San Marcos Nicaragua, C4RJ, the Abby Fund, and the Drinking Gourd Project, to name a few.

In addition, we continue to sponsor our own annual, town-wide events: the Holocaust Observance, the Human Rights breakfast and biyearly "Climate for Freedom" award, and the Martin Luther King Jr Birthday Celebration. All of these programs and events are vital to the health and well-being of our communities of Concord and Carlisle, and the CCHRC will continue to support these efforts.

However, these times also present new challenges that force us to ask new questions. How best can we marshal our resources when fundamental human rights seem to be under constant assault? How many rights are we going to sacrifice to balance our desire for security? How do we seek justice for the poor who increasingly have their rights trampled? Yes, we are now a "Welcoming Community," but how will we put these words into actions? In the coming month, we will be wrestling with these and other essential questions, and deciding how best to make a passionate and effective defense of the rights we hold dear.

Whatever is coming our way, the CCHRC looks forward to taking on these challenges, for we walk in the large footsteps of so many dedicated volunteers who came before us.

Yours in gratitude,

Rob Morrison & Louisa Paushter

Rob Morrison & Louisa Paushter
Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council Co-Chairs

24th ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

SINGING AND POETRY FROM CONCORD AND BOSTON

Wednesday, January 10, 2018
7:00 pm

The Fenn School Auditorium
516 Monument Street, Concord, MA 01742



Looking back, looking forward

by Rob Morrison and Louisa Pashtur

A few years ago one December, when CCHRC Co-Chair Rob Morrison should have been wrapping presents or grading history exams, he instead took on the task of reviewing the two drawers stuffed with CCHRC files going back to 1978. What started out as an onerous task of reviewing and purging soon drew him in. These dusty documents were enthralling for they told the living history of our small and rather unassuming group.

How did the CCHRC come to be? It all started with a single punch thrown between a black METCO student and his white classmate at CCHS, and from this incident, hundreds of people over nearly 40 years have participated in a selfless quest to create and nourish a climate of freedom in our town. And as we mentioned in our front page letter, the Council has gratefully been a part of creating or supporting numerous town initiatives and programs, many of which are still in existence today. Were it not for the dedication of dozens of volunteers, our work could not continue.

After reading through these now dusted-off les, we have gained a greater appreciation for the contributions of our membership. It is worthwhile

Powerful Film featured at Holocaust Observance

by Hedi Charde

This year the annual Holocaust Observance event in April took on a different format in lieu of a speaker, featuring instead the documentary film *Exile and Community: The Life of Carola Domar*. This powerful film recounts the story of Carola Domar, a late Concord resident who escaped from Germany as a teen and later settled in Canada, before eventually settling in Concord. Domar's daughter, Alice, and Susan Orleans Rieder, the film's writer and director, were in attendance for the film as well as the question and answer period that followed.

The oral history project features dialogue from Carola Domar herself, as well as her daughter, Alice. It chronicles a young Jewish girl's experience in Nazi Germany and her eventual escape to Canada. Woven together thoughtfully, the film illustrates Domar's search for community, which she eventually finds in her neighborhood community of Conantum in Concord. Told mostly from a young person's perspective, it tells a story of hardship, loss, compassion and, eventually, forgiveness. Rieder says she

to highlight just a few: Norman Beecher was the Treasurer for a dozen years, and his elegant correspondence captured his passion for the work of the Council. Current board member Maura Clarke may be the first, second-generation member of the CCHRC. Maura's mother, Mary, had been our long-time liaison with the Prison Outreach Program. Court Booth has been a steady presence for the past 30 years, selflessly aiding the Council in ways big and small. Bridget Saltonstall has been a crucial lynchpin from the 20th to the 21st century. Long time Chairperson Polly Atwood may have moved to the UK, but her impact on the Council lives on in the form of her recruitment of many current board members as well as the past three CCHRC co-chairs: Sarah Napier, Ronni Olitsky and Rob Morrison.

We thank all past Council members for your efforts, spirit and dedication to human rights; and we give thanks to the new generation of members who have joined the board in recent years. Last month, Louisa Paushter joined Rob as Co-Chair, humbly aspiring to continue the group's traditions while moving forward in the 21st century, believing that the climate of our community is the responsibility of our citizens.

feels this film is very relevant today and hopes that it can be used for educational purposes in school curriculums.

Domar, who passed away from breast cancer in 2004, believed she was lucky. Towards the end of the film she says, "I was born, survived, had children and grandchildren. I have been very lucky."



Pictured at the event are Carola Domar's daughter, Alice (right), with film director and writer Susan Orleans Rieder (center) and CCHRC board member Ronni Olitsky. Photo credit: Jim Callahan

Police Chief O'Connor to speak at Human Rights Day Breakfast

By Hedi Charde

The annual Human Rights Breakfast will be held on Monday, December 4, at the Trinitarian Congregational Church in Concord. This year's speaker will be Concord Police Chief Joseph O'Connor.

O'Connor, who has been Chief of Police in Concord since 2014, will speak about recent current events,

both national and local, which impact communities, as well as the importance of communities to stand up to hate in all forms. He will also touch on the general role of the police in society. The breakfast begins at 7:30AM and will end before 9AM. This is a free event and all are welcome to attend. A light breakfast and coffee will be served.



Police Chief O'Connor addressing students at The Fenn School in fall 2016

Board member attends impactful local event

by Louisa Paushter

In July 2017, Temple Isaiah in Lexington hosted Greater Boston Interfaith Organization's "Out of Many, One: Teach-In and Solidarity with the Boston Muslim Community." One purpose was to focus on the many elements that can unite us, at a time when so much of what we hear seems focused on what can divide us. Another was to learn about how to support Muslims in these troubling times.

The event was a question and answer format. The first person interviewed was a Muslim man who was asked about his experiences growing up in the mid-west and now living in Boston. He discussed Muslim family life and addressed common misconceptions. He talked about how Islam is a peaceful religion and Muslims want the same thing as everyone else, such as happy, healthy families and a peaceful

world. What was missing from this part of the event were the views of a Muslim woman.

Next, two Muslim Lawyers, one male and one female, from the Muslim Justice League, were asked about what the community can do to support them. They encouraged people to reach out and get to know Muslims personally. They also explained that a donation of even one dollar to a Muslim organization will get one's name on the organization's list as a supporter. Being a supporter is more important than the amount of the financial donation, as it is the advocacy for and greater understanding of the Muslim community that is so in need.

The Temple's room was packed with an attentive audience. Overall, the event was hopeful, enlightening and inspiring.



Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council

We are a tax-deductible, nonprofit organization. Please consider a donation online or with the envelope provided to help us continue our work in education & advocacy.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Human Rights Day Breakfast
Monday, December 2, 2017

7:30AM

Trinitarian Congregational
Church
Concord, MA

MLK Celebration
Wednesday, January 10, 2018

7:00PM

The Fenn School
Concord, MA

Holocaust Memorial
Observance

April 2018

7:00PM

Concord Town House
Concord, MA