

## CONCORD-SAN MANDÉ SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

The Concord-Saint-Mandé Sister City Committee has been inactive since 1997. Because of the lack of community interest, Helen Minton and Nina Rose turned its administration over to the Town until a time when Concord citizens may be interested in re-establishing contact with Saint-Mandé.

## CONCORD-SAN MARCOS SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

Steven B. Bloomfield, chair  
Al Armenti, former chair and co-founder  
Shirley Andrews, secretary  
Fiona Nauseda, secretary  
Nancy Kerr, treasurer

Steering Committee: Sam Alexander, Debbie Barr, Beatriz Desloges, Lisa Gutwillig, Louis Licht, Kati Miller, Lal Minton, Ed Wholihan, and Bryan Wholihan.

Advisers: Cedric Bien, Beth Dawson, David Dawson, Cynthia Laflamme, Clara LeMoyné, Edie Mas, Megan Sandel, Amy Schnitzer, Karin Segal, Gene Sheftelman, and Barbara Tinker.

### *Mission*

The Concord-San Marcos Sister Cities Committee encourages peace and mutual understanding and socio-economic development in Nicaragua through programs of cultural exchange and economic assistance carried out in a spirit of cooperation by the people of Concord and the city of San Marcos, Nicaragua. Concord Town Meeting established the Sister Cities Committee in 1986. Town Meeting reaffirmed the value of the Committee's work by a second vote in 1987. The Committee works under the auspices of the Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council. Voluntary membership of Concord citizens and voluntary support by means of financial donations and the contributions of goods and services from citizens in and around Concord sustain the Committee's work.

### *Projects in 2009*

Visits by Concordians in the summer of 2008 precipitated a commitment from the Committee throughout 2009 to raise funds for its most ambitious project in 23 years. The drilling of a 300-meter well, the installation

of a pump, and the assembly of distribution pipes have brought potable water for the first time to El Uval, a village of 400 inhabitants far away from the center of the urban core of San Marcos but still within its jurisdiction. Part of the success of the project is attributable to the Community Conservation Challenge, a cooperative venture between the Concord Water/Sewer Division and the Sister Cities Committee that involved 90 Concord families whose commitment to conserving water during the late spring, summer, and early fall contributed \$3543.91 to the construction of the well.

During the year in San Marcos itself, the Committee continued its sponsorship of scholarships with stipends of \$60 to each of nearly 50 elementary school students at the Escuela San Marcos to encourage the children to stay in school, maintain consistent attendance, and earn honors-level grades.



The Sister Cities Committee continues to operate a micro-bank in San Marcos in cooperation with a small San Marcos-based board of directors. FECONDESAM, founded on March 6, 1996, now has a financial base of over \$25,000, and its loans continue to be in the hands of some 40 small business people, mostly women, who have borrowed amounts between \$50 and \$2000 at 5% rate of interest.

The Committee's ties with Concord-Carlisle Regional High School increased with enthusiastic and much appreciated support coming from Principal Peter Badalament, Spanish Department Chair Cynthia Laflamme, students Kati Miller and Bryan Wholihan and Spanish teacher Beatriz Desloges who traveled to San Marcos for the first time in November to assess future cooperation

between the school and the community.

### *Sources of Funding*

For many years, Sam Alexander generously coordinated swing dances at the Concord Scout House with his wife Jane and, in recent years, with Susan Chivvis and Rick Moore. The Committee received thousands of dollars of financial support from these events for nearly two decades. Owing to an attenuation of interest from dancers in the western suburbs of Boston, the Committee suspended these dances in 2009. Donations from Concord citizens as well as contributions of goods and services continue to sustain the work of the Committee.

### *Future Directions*

Under the direction of Beatriz Desloes, the Committee will sponsor a trip for Concord-Carlisle Regional High School students to San Marcos for cultural immersion, study, and community-service in early summer 2009.

The Committee's Web site is at: [http://www.concordnet.org/pages/ConcordMA\\_BComm/San%20Marcos](http://www.concordnet.org/pages/ConcordMA_BComm/San%20Marcos)

## **CONCORD-NANAE NETWORK (CNN)**

Tom Curtin, Chair  
Judy Terry, Vice-Chair

This past year included the successful continuation of a number of programs and the creation of new ones. The Internet has spurred innovative ways to initiate and maintain relationships with Nanae's people.



*Nanae Network Principals Lunch*

Use of the internet has flourished this year. Bobby Kargula, the current Coordinator of International Relations

(CIR) in Nanae has a website in which he writes about his experiences in Nanae ([cir.concordcarlisle.wikispaces.net](http://cir.concordcarlisle.wikispaces.net)). The CIR is a young Concordian hired by Nanae Town to teach their residents about Concord and to facilitate the Sister City relationship.



*Concord students interacted in playful cross-cultural experiences with visitors from Nanae*



Thoreau School teacher Susan Erickson continues to write a regular classroom blog with Onuma Elementary School teacher Yuki Arai. In December, their classes skyped each other, quite an accomplishment given the time difference. Thoreau library/media specialist Karen Pettyjohn regularly shares highlights of Bobby Kargula's site with her students. Willard School teacher Barbara Lehn and Togeshita Elementary School teacher Tomomi Ishikawa have initiated a long-term math project where their students will share their results through the Internet. Tom Curtin has produced a website ([concordnanae.wikispaces.com](http://concordnanae.wikispaces.com)) that shares information about each town in English and Japanese. Ways are being explored with CCTV to live broadcast the CCHS Concert Band