

Plymouth Community Channel 3 2003 Annual Report

Plymouth Community Channel 3 (PCC3) is the public, educational and government (PEG) access channel for Adelphia Communications' cable TV subscribers in Plymouth and 9 other area towns. PCC3's Cablecasting Center is located in Pease Public Library. PCC3 began cablecasting to the community in November 1992. Under the direction of the Plymouth Board of Selectmen, PCC3 depends totally on community volunteers to create and transmit the community's programming. By stipulation of the franchise agreement with Adelphia, PCC3 is non-commercial. In FY'03, the Town raised and appropriated \$1,730 for the purchase of a replacement video camcorder and accompanying VCR for the channel.

Bulletin Board

The past 12 months has seen extraordinary change and improvement in the content and appearance of this slide-show facet of PCC3. Volunteers began the year (beginning with December 2002) using our ten-year-old Amiga 500 computer to produce text only slides for the Bulletin Board. In February, the Amiga 500 was retired from regular service. Volunteers then began using a MagicBox Alphagen character generator that had been given to PCC3 in December 2001 by Adelphia Communications. The character generator came with a CD filled with photos and textures that could be inserted onto slides with text information typed around or over the graphics. Despite this improvement, the Alphagen CG's 1990s style technology proved difficult for volunteers to get excited about and learn. Without buying an expensive accessory for the Alphagen, there was no way to insert graphics that would come from local sources. In early summer, Jim and Joanne Koermer approached me about replacing the character generator with a PC running Windows XP and Microsoft PowerPoint and outputting NTSC video. Jim would loan a PC from his place of work, Plymouth State University's meteorology department, and Joanne would volunteer to work on the bulletin board. In early August, the Alphagen was taken out of service and replaced by a PSU PC, PowerPoint, and access to the Internet via cable modem. The Koermer duo has been dynamite. The new bulletin board contains locally scanned graphics, photography of local places, animated graphics from the Internet, and extensive use of announcements submitted from the community.

Video Programming

Over the same period, prerecorded video cablecasts have more than kept pace with previous years. Here are several highlights. Students in PSU's meteorology program produced weekday weather forecasts during spring and fall semesters. Public Access Users submitted programming produced by 4 area churches of their Sunday worship services. A Public Access User submitted Pemi-Baker Home Health and Hospice's locally produced Your Health Matters, a monthly series. In addition to prerecorded programming, a Public Access User from the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce produced two consecutive evenings of live programming. These shows in December 2002 were the Chamber's 9th Annual TV/Radio auction, their major annual fundraiser. Volunteers produced videos of budget hearings, annual meetings, special hearings, and informational meetings for the Plymouth Board of Selectmen, Plymouth School Board, and Pemi-Baker Regional School Board.

Future Development

2003 marked the 11th year of the channel's operations. In the spring, the PCC3 Planning Committee [submitted an interim report](#) to the Board of Selectmen. In the report, the key recommendation was for the Board to implement the provision in the recently signed franchise agreement with Adelphia to raise a franchise fee. The purpose for implementing the fee was compensation for a part-time employee to manage PCC3 and develop it into a regional media service. After several meetings with the Committee and a public hearing, the Board approved a 2% franchise fee to fund the channel. Adelphia began collecting the franchise fee from cable subscribers in November. In 2004 for the first time, the town

will have their community media outlet managed and led by a paid staff member.

Volunteers who deserve many thanks are Joanne Koermer, James Koermer, Josef Drexel, John B. Bowen, Jr., Bruce Jorgenson, George Morrill, Peter Adams, students in Professor Eric Hoffman's meteorology class, members of the PCC3 Planning Committee, and citizens who spoke up for PCC3 at Selectmen's meetings & the public hearing. The trustees, staff, and volunteers of Pease Public Library deserve special praise for all time and resources they contributed to Channel 3. Plymouth Selectmen's Office staff headed by Elizabeth Corrow were extraordinarily helpful. Efforts of Adelpia Communications' technical crew were very much appreciated.

Submitted by,
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Volunteer Access Manager