

Comcast Agrees To New Rules

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The FCC's recent order approving the Comcast-NBC merger includes several provisions relating to PEG access and community media policy. [PEG stands for Public, Educational, and Government. That's the industry term for community access cable TV stations like Andover's Comcast Channel 8.]

Comcast PEG Commitments

For the next seven years, the Comcast-NBC merger includes an FCC-approved condition that Comcast not migrate PEG channels to digital delivery on any Comcast cable system until the system has converted to all-digital, or until the franchising authority [in our case, the Town of Andover] expressly agrees. Further, Comcast agreed to carry all PEG channels on its digital Starter tier, or on an equivalent tier reaching at least 85 percent of the system's subscribers.

And Comcast shall not implement a change that materially degrades signal quality or impairs viewer reception of PEG channels, provided that this condition not prohibit new technologies also used for commercial channels (including digitization and switched digital video).

Low Income Internet Discount

Within nine months of the FCC Order, Comcast shall provide eligible households the Economy version of

Comcast's Internet service for \$9.95 per month. To qualify, households must have at least one child eligible for free lunch under the national school lunch program, must not have had Comcast Internet service for 90 days prior to installation, and must meet other criteria.

Localism And Other Issues

The FCC order provides that Comcast-NBC "shall preserve and enrich the output of local news, local public affairs, and other public interest programming ... (and) shall expand the availability of all types of local and public interest programming." In addition, Comcast is to continue NBC Universal's policy of journalistic independence with respect to its news programming.

Finally, Comcast steps up with more on-demand and online platforms for digital broadcast spectrum for children's programming.

Additional Conditions

Comcast commits to offer stand-alone broadband Internet access services without the need to purchase a cable television subscription from Comcast, and commits not to enter into agreements to unreasonably restrict online distribution of its own video programming or programming of other providers. There are additional conditions.

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Letters

Schoolhouse Rock

We sometimes forget that there is more to education than what can be taught and learned from a book. If you missed the AE/MS production of *Schoolhouse Rock*, you missed experiencing one of those moments that defines what AE/MS and Andover are all about.

We should be thankful as a community for having such a great place for our children to learn and grow. The excitement, dedication, and talent displayed by all of the students involved in the production goes far beyond a "proud parent" moment. It was a moment that we, as a community, can be proud of.

The students involved learned the benefits of hard work and dedication. They learned that believing in and having confidence in oneself is a very powerful thing. They learned that by

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working together they could accomplish something of which they could all be very proud. And the talent – wow, who knew we had such talent? Bravo, well done!

We also need to thank all of the teachers and staff for their work and time. We tend to forget the personal sacrifices they make for the benefit of our children. At a time when everyone is looking for value in their money, we, as a community, should be thankful and proud of the commitment by all those involved at AE/MS.

Our children and our community are blessed to have such a wonderful place as AE/MS.

Dave and Laura Powers

FrontDoorPolitics.com

There is a very good Web site that will keep you up-to-date on the most important things going on in the New Hampshire legislature: FrontDoorPolitics.com.

It provides non-partisan factual information, a chart of the 66 bills that the site is currently tracking, a primer on

the legislative process, a "They Said It" section with quotes from various legislators, and just plain good information. You can sign up for a daily dispatch on the hot topic of the day.

Mary Anne Broshek

Co-op Election

The election of New Hampshire Electric Co-op directors is coming up soon. Your ballot will be in the mail during the week of May 9 to 13.

Over the years, I have been asked by folks who the good candidates are. Gail Paine is up for re-election this year. Having served with her on the board for 13 years, I encourage you to vote for Gail. She believes in the Co-op way and has demonstrated that many times. She is presently Co-op secretary, serves on several board committees, and has been an elected member of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Board.

Please vote for Gail Paine, a director who believes in openness and communication with members on the issues, which is the Co-op way.

Dennis Fenton

More Co-op Election

Hi, I'm Gail Paine, and I am running for re-election to the Board of Directors of New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC). It's been a wonderful experience serving the members of NHEC, and I would appreciate your vote when you receive your ballot during the week of May 9 to 13.

There are many exciting things happening at your Co-op these days, in-

The mission of *The Andover Beacon* is to serve and strengthen the Andover community. To that end, we welcome civil, reasoned letters addressing specifically local issues, events, and developments. Submissions must not be critical of another's religion; blasphemous; obscene; hateful; legally objectionable; or commercial in nature. The *Beacon* reserves the right to edit or not publish submissions it deems inappropriate for any reason.

cluding the deployment later this year of an Advanced Metering Infrastructure. Between now and October 2012, every Co-op member will be receiving a new electric meter that is capable of sending and receiving information.

This Smart Grid technology means that your meter will be reporting its own readings multiple times per day, instead of a meter reader visiting your property once a month. For the first time, you will be able to see your electric use in hourly or even minute-by-minute increments. We hope that Co-op members will use this technology, and the programs it makes possible, to better understand

See Letters on page 5



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