

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met on Wednesday, November 8, 2006 in the 2nd floor conference room of City Hall. Those present included: Jane Ginapp, Dan Gapinski, Lahoma Counts, Marshall Huffman, Hal Minear, Lionel Foster, Linda Woodcock, Jamie Nagel and Dixie Lamoreux.

Jane had a packet of information for everyone that included an agenda, recruitment letter, list of prospects being sent the recruitment letter and copies of the fliers for the Black History Month Art and Essay contest that will be held within the Mason City Schools.

The treasurer's report was given and Jane said that as far as she knew there had been no checks written during the month and our balance remains at approximately \$2700. Joy was not at the meeting so we didn't have an exact amount available.

Jane reported that our web site at www.northiowadiversity.org is up to date but that when the latest update was done, a couple of paragraphs were dropped and she will contact Kevin Suhr about that.

Dixie will be sending thank you notes to Jim Spencer and Jeanine Lennie at Mercy for all that they did for NIDAT in the past. With Jim not active on NIDAT any longer, they will be missed for all they did and we are all grateful to them.

The recruitment letter was shared with everyone and a couple of more names were brought up as people who should receive a letter. Dixie will see that they get one and the letters were all signed by Dan and Jane and will go out in the mail this week. Marshall will be making the follow-up calls to those receiving the letter and he will do this a week to ten days after the letters go out. It is our hope that we will get some positive results from this effort because we do need a more diverse membership for NIDAT.

The fliers for the Black History contests – Art and Essay – that will be open to students in all Mason City Schools. There will again be prizes offered for the three different levels – elementary, middle school and high school. First place prizes will be cash and Jane has spoken with the Mason City interim postmaster Scott Pardoe about the post office offering second place prizes as they did last year for the essay contests. He seemed very anxious to help out. Then we would probably go with gift certificates for the art, 2nd place winners. Certificates will again be given to all participants. Dixie will do these. The idea of Savings Bonds for first place prizes was brought up and we may consider it next year. This year the fliers are done and it states there will be cash prizes for first place so we will stick with that. Winnings projects will be displayed during the month of February.

Linda mentioned that it may be a good idea to take pictures of the entries and consider making a calendar and selling it as a fundraiser. This is an idea worth considering and it doesn't need to be done right away, but we will consider it and discuss it again later. We do have a release for permission to display individual work at the bottom of the entry forms, but we will need to look at it to be sure it would work for such as a calendar.

The deadline for submission of entries is January 5th and that gives us three weeks to get the judging completed and everything done before the kick off event at the mall on February 1, 2007. Everyone is to bring names of possible candidates for the panel of judges to the December meeting and we will decide at that time who they will be. We might have two panels this year – one for the art and one for the essays. Last year we were far more rushed to get things done and we used the same panel for both contests. Some very good names have been brought up and we feel that we might be able to get two different, well-qualified panels to judge for us this year.

The main event will be held in Center Court of Southbridge Mall on Thursday, February 1, 2007 from 5 to 5:30 pm. Jane has already spoken with Glenys at the Mall about it. Set up will be much the same as last year with a PA system, tables and about 50 chairs set up. Dan graciously offered to serve as Master of Ceremonies for the event. Jane and Dan will attend a council meeting in January and receive the proclamation that will be read. We will be checking into getting the youth group Regan Banks works with to sing again this year and are also going to check into maybe getting a harpist to play. Lionel suggested this and everyone thought it was a great idea.

Lionel said he will get us some coverage on the City's television channel – local Channel 4. We will also be doing PSA's for the event and Marshall also volunteered to try and get our meeting times published in the Globe Gazette on a monthly basis. This may help us get the membership up. More members could be a definite plus as much of the work necessary to sponsor a couple of events each year falls to the few of us that regularly attend meetings and a distribution of some of the work would definitely be a plus for us.

After a very productive and idea filled meeting we adjourned at 5 pm. Our next meeting will be December 13th at 4 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Dixie Lamoreux