

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met on Wednesday, November 14, 2007 in the basement conference room at City Hall in Mason City. Those in attendance were: Jack Gannett, Lahoma Counts, Dan Gapinski, Jane Ginapp, Mary Hamiel, Melissa Weiner, Karen Regal, Hal Minear and Dixie Lamoreux.

After introductions were made, Jane had a couple of handouts – one from Community Vitality Center and one from Cultural Competence.

In the absence of Joy Drennen, Jane reported that our bank account shows a balance of \$1867.24. This includes a check NIDAT received from Principal in the amount of \$750.00. That \$750 was used for Lunch by Central Park and the Website changes that were made by Matt Marquardt.

Dan suggested that a thank you not be sent to Principal and Dixie will do that.

Our newly restructured website is up and comments were very good about it's looks as well as the information and ease of use. Matt did a great job and everyone seems pleased.

Jane reported briefly on the Iowa Mosaic Diversity Conference se recently attended. This is a yearly event and very worthwhile.

The Black History Art/Essay Contest that NIDAT sponsors in February was the biggest topic of conversation for the meeting. The event will be held later in the month of February rather than trying to get it done in the first few days of the month. Karen came to the meeting with many ideas that she shared and that were discussed. It was nice to have some fresh ideas for the event. It always helps make the event more successful.

Scott Pardoe from the Post Office was unable to attend the meeting but he has been busy with ideas for expanding the contest as well as prizes that will be offered. We will be expanding from just the Mason City area to include other area schools including Forest City, Central Springs, Rockwell-Swaledale, Lake Mills, Clear Lake and Ventura. He has also said that the Post Office who is one of the co-sponsors of the event will offer as first place prizes for the artwork at each level a framed sheet of stamps with the winning artwork on them. This will be an exciting prize and will hopefully entice more students to submit entries.

At Karen's suggestion, we have decided to change the essay part of the contest to be a Creative Writing contest and include poems as well as fiction and non-fiction entries. This would widen the range considerably for students to be able to submit entries.

Karen is also checking into having more of a reception when awards are presented and using NIACC for the event as well as displaying the works submitted. She is also going to check into having a department at NIACC as another co-sponsor of the event and possibly getting some financial for the event.

The possibility of having all of the submitted work published and made into a booklet was also discussed and everyone seemed excited about the possibility. Karen is checking some possible contributors that could help make this possible and Hal is checking with the AEA to see what we could do through them and what the costs would be.

It was mentioned that we will need to be sure and have signed releases with all of the entries so we could do this if it all becomes a reality. It would be a very nice touch to be able to give each of the students that submits an entry some sort of a keepsake for their efforts.

Hal and Karen are going to revise a new flier and present it at the December meeting in the hope that shortly after that meeting it can go out to all of the schools and allow ample time for teachers to work it into their curriculum and for the students have time to work on projects to submit.

Hal and Karen are finalizing the fliers and a decision will need to be made on the title for the book that will be printed and the date of the reception.

Also at the December meeting we will decide on the judges and contact them to be sure they can be available to judge the entries.

It was really a good meeting with the exchange of many good ideas and some great brainstorming. The December meeting will be on Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm.

Respectfully submitted by  
Dixie Lamoreux