

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met on Wednesday, January 9, 2008 in the second floor conference room of City Hall in Mason City. Those present included: Jane Ginapp, Elaine Olson, Lauretiu Plaian, Lahoma Counts, Marshall Huffman, Shelly Schmitt, Joy Drennen, Karen Regal, Hal Minear and Dixie Lamoreux.

The first topic of conversation was the Art/Writing Contest for Black History month. Karen reported that she had only been able to connect with a couple of judges – Joe Davis and Julie Birkedahl for the writing and Wendy Meineke for the art. She is planning to make a few more contacts. Also Betty Winga and Linda Woodcock have both agreed to judge art. The judging will be done in the conference room of the Elderbridge agency on February 5 at 4 PM.

The prizes have been set for 1st place and a few ideas for 2nd place were discussed. Karen will ask Rotary Club members to help with the expense for 2nd place prizes. If all else fails we may end up doing what we did last year and giving gift cards to Hobby Lobby. Another place that was suggested is Staples. This will need to be decided definitely at our February meeting.

The reception being held at NIACC brought up a few issues that we addressed. Transportation to NIACC could be an issue so it was thought that a better, more central location might be the Art Museum downtown. Shelly has checked on that and the Salisbury Room is available and so the flyers were changed to reflect this. The winning entries can also be displayed at the Museum. Shelly is checking on possibly having refreshments for the event donated. There is a piano at the Museum so the possibility of having a student playing piano is also being checked out.

Other things on the agenda will be the Mayor's proclamation read by either the Mayor or a representative. Hopefully Dan Gapinski will again be the emcee for the event and Scott Pardoe from the Post Office, along with a NIDAT representative will give out the awards.

Things are coming along nicely but there are a few decisions that will need to be made at our February meeting.

Publicity for the event will hopefully be through the Globe Gazette, KIMT, Cable Channel 4, KCMR and the fliers.

NIDAT will be making a book with all of the entries submitted included. The book will be printed by NIACC and they have allowed us \$200 worth of printing services. If we need more than that something can be worked out. Karen also gave NIDAT a check from Dr. Judith Demro for \$50. This is a greatly appreciated donation and a Thank You is being sent to her. Karen sent out a solicitation letter in the hope of getting some donations for NIDAT. Dixie is getting the contact name for Diamond Jo Casino so something can be sent there also.

There was discussion in both December and January regarding NIDAT trying to get a 504c(3) status in order to have donations be tax deductible for the donor. After some checking into things, it was decided that this is both costly and time consuming, taking usually a year. NIDAT can get a signed declaration from the City Council stating that we are a recognized group and we can use that to assure donors that their donations will be tax deductible. Marshall made a motion that we do this; Joy seconded the motion and it carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5 PM. The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 13, 2008 at 4 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Dixie Lamoreux