

THE NORTH IOWA DIVERSITY APPRECIATION TEAM met March 12, 2008, in the basement conference room at City Hall, Mason City.

Present: Marshall Huffman, Angie Merriam, Melissa Weiner, Dan Gapinski, Shelly Schmit, Jane Ginapp, Hal Minear, Mary Hamiel, Darcy Skellenger, Diane Schreck, Lahoma Counts, and Joy Drennen.

Jane said Jennifer Andrade of Workforce Development Center is working on a reference guide to aid Iowa newcomers about where they can find resources. NIDAT wants to be involved.

There is \$1,851.53 in the treasury, including a \$76 deposit for Black History Month books. It was agreed to keep seven books on reserve and for grant applications. We have had 25 copies printed, with seven left. There are orders for 39 books, but only 10 have been paid.

The meeting was then devoted to a wrap up of the Black History Month event and planning for the September Lunch in Central Park.

Jane said the Black History Month event was a great success and the MacNider Museum was a wonderful setting. Jane was impressed with the teachers and parents who were present for the event.

The savings bonds had arrived, and Jane had delivered them to Bryan Larson and Sabrina Zawierucha. Bryan won a \$25 savings bond for first place in writing at the elementary level. Sabrina won a \$50 savings bond for first place in writing at the middle school level.

Thank you notes will go out to the judges, Joe Davis, Marilyn Shelby and Betty Winga; to the MacNider Museum; to the musicians, Haley ER. Minear, piano, and Erika Pohlman, trombone; Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa; Mayor Roger Bang; and Scott Pardoe.

There was discussion of changes for Black History Month for next year. A question arose about children of board members participating in the writing and art competition, but Shelly pointed out the judges are not on the board.

Ways of increasing participation brought out a discussion of informing the schools and students of the competition. Hal said flyers at parent/teacher conferences the first week in November would be possible. Electronic newsletters from the schools might be possible, although Hal said only a little more than 50 percent of parents have access. Scott Pardoe had notified other schools and was told they would be interested next year.

It was agreed than planning for Black History Month would start right after Lunch in Central Park. Date for the ceremony was set as Thursday, February 26, from 5-6 p.m. Shelly will check with MacNider about the date.

Next followed a lively discussion about the upcoming September event, Lunch in Central Park, and how it would fit in with the Great River City Festival September 20. Lunch in Central Park would be Friday, September 19, which would all be in the street, taking up the whole block. Participants would be the Human Resources Information Fair, food vendors, and cultural exhibits. Mary will check on tables from the Mall and electric hookups in the park and with the police. Jane will contact the Park Board and Mark Suby. This would be to reserve the park, get barriers set up, and picnic tables and trash containers.

Great River City Festival events will include a seminar Friday of authors who have written about Dillinger. Saturday evening will feature wine tasting at the MacNider. It will be a full weekend and this year the publicity will include both the Friday and Saturday events.

Melissa said the Human Rights Commission will sponsor an informational session for landlords in April, which is Fair Housing Month. She passed out Fair Housing brochures.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Submitted by Joy Drennen in Dixie's absence.