

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met on Wednesday, May 14, 2008 in the second floor conference room at City Hall in Mason City. Those in attendance were: Dan Gapinski, Melissa Weiner, Jennifer Andrade, Marshall Huffman, Pete Vega, Jane Ginapp, Shelly Schmidt, Jack Gannett, Mary Hamiel and Dixie Lamoreux.

In Joy Drennen's absence, Jane reported that we have a balance of \$1869.03 in our bank account. Jane mentioned that we will have an upcoming expense and that is our web site fees.

Jennifer told us about her project for the New Iowans of creating a Resource Guide to enable newcomers to the area a place to find available resources in communities to assist them as they settle into an area. She is presently organizing it by county and listing different services and agencies to assist them. This is a huge undertaking and manpower is very limited. She would like to avoid duplication of services in this process. Dan said that perhaps we could make mention of it on our web site and perhaps add a link to the New Iowans Resource Guide. Jennifer is also compiling a newsletter that would make people aware of what is available to them in the way of classes, agencies, etc. She is working on a distribution list for the newsletter.

Jane will invite Matt Marquardt to our meeting in June so we can get some answers from him regarding what we could do through our web site to work with Jennifer and what costs would be involved. We need to get some answers from Matt and not just guess as to what we think would be.

Next Shelly talked a bit about our contact from the Human Resource Association for their partnership with us for Lunch by Central Park in September. Shelly said Deb Clites would be the contact. There should be a list somewhere that Eric Branson had for the contacts he made last year in getting non-profit agencies to display information as to what services they offer. Jane will contact Deb regarding this.

Jane asked Shelly if NIACC had International students that would be interested and able to dress or exhibit regarding their heritage. Shelly said that the school year is barely under way at that time so she didn't think there would be anyone from there that would do this. It was mentioned that the exchange students from area high schools probably would have pictures and memorabilia from the native country and that this might be a possibility. Jane did mention that Cecelia Robles and Mary Lopez would have an exhibit again this year. There is also a possibility that Principal and/or Trinity Lutheran Church may have people also. Dan is also going to check with the Lutheran Resource Center in Clear Lake. And Jane will be checking with some Greek connections that were made last year.

The food vendors that we now have are: Holy Family Men's Club (Mexican), the Homeless Shelters (Italian), the Susie Q (Philly Steak) Pies and More and the Girl Scouts will sell drinks. Marshall is checking and will give us a definite yes or no from Chicago Dawg. The idea of NIDAT serving a soup/stew was mentioned also and we would like to secure a couple more different ethnic vendors.

At our June meeting we will have to make definite decisions and be able to get something together for flyers and other publicity things we will do. Dan will be providing the music and PA system for the event and it will be held in conjunction with the Great River City Festival. The time for this year has been changed to 11 until 1 and we will again be using tickets instead of cash for purchasing items. This has worked well in the past and Mary will head that up for us.

With no other business and time running out, the meeting ended at 5 PM. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 11th at 4 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Dixie Lamoreux