

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met at City Hall in Mason City on Wednesday, January 14, 2009. Those present were Dan Gapinski, Scott Pardoe, Hal Minear, Libby Lembke, Melissa Weiner, Joy Drennen, Barry TerHark, Jane Ginapp and Dixie Lamoreux.

Jane called the meeting to order at 4 PM. Joy reported that we currently have \$2683.56 in our account, including a couple of donations we received toward the "Embracing Diversity Art/Essay Contest". Jane stated that to date we received money from Diamond Jo Casino (\$300), NSB (\$150) Human Rights Commission (\$100) and 1st Citizen's National Bank (\$100). This is much better than we have done in the past and we should have no problems meeting expenses involved with the contest.

Since the Girl Scouts have agreed to have the Honor Guard open the awards presentation on March 5th and the Girl Scouts will be serving punch and cookies, NIDAT will give them \$25 toward the refreshments. The event will be from 5 to 6 PM in the Salisbury Room at MacNider Art Museum.

Jane will be checking with Amy Goetz to see if she will play the piano before the awards presentations. This has been a nice touch in the past and Cecelia Robles suggested Amy might do it. Dan will emcee the event. Awards will be given out by Scott and hopefully Joy will be able to get someone from the Globe Gazette also.

Judges for the art contest will be Jan Kostka and Wendy Meineke. Dixie will contact them about the time and place for judging. Melissa and Joy will be lining up judges for the writing contest. Judging for both art and writing will be at the Public School Administration Building at 3 PM on Thursday, February 12<sup>th</sup>.

The cost of printing books with the art and essay entries this year will be only a \$.50 increase from last year. Jane is working with someone at NIACC on this project and says that things are going well with that. She found that artwork to be used on the front of the book and complimentary books will be given to all sponsors as well as contest winners. Awards will be monetary in most cases but for the art winners there will be commemorative stamps made of the winning art entries. Scott from the post office will be handling this.

All in all, it looks as though things are progressing well. Hal has sent out a reminder to schools and is on top of that. Information is on the web site so if anyone asks, they can be directed there.

Jane reported that she has been in contact via email with city representatives and will be attending the February 3 City Council meeting where the mayor will read the Black History Proclamation. Jane will be giving a brief history and progress report on NIDAT so that the city is aware of who we are and what we are doing. It is the intent that this will lead to NIDAT being more of a recognized group by the city. We have just sort of faded into the woodwork since our start and not nearly enough is known about us. Dan, Libby and Elaine Olson have also said they will attend the meeting and Jane said that anyone else wishing to attend is certainly welcome. The more support we can show the better.

Dan attended a diversity conference in Ames a few months ago and reported on the event. He stated that he went through his job at Principal and would totally recommend attending the event to everyone. He listened to the keynote speaker and also attended a few individual sessions. Those he attended included one on Hate Crimes, one on Understanding Immigration, one on Communicating Inclusivity and one on Embracing the Notion of Diversity. It is his hope that he can attend the conference again in 2009 and can hopefully get a couple of other interested people to go also.

During the next couple of months, as time allows, we will be playing a video tape that Dan got at the conference for a few minutes at our NIDAT meetings.

Next Dan gave a brief update on the steering committee and what has been accomplished so far. He explained that the steps taken so far have been small but feels that this is the best way to approach the changes to the bylaws. He explained that no vote on changes would be necessary until things progress a little further. The language regarding a quorum will be added later and when things are finished it will be a little harder to make changes. In the meantime the committee wants feedback from NIDAT members. The plan is to schedule another meeting of the committee for late January or early February.

Before closing, Jane mentioned that she was contacted through the NIDAT website by Gary Schriver, a Mason City native who was involved with NIDAT when it was created and would like to become active again. When the weather gets warmer he and his guide dog, Logan, will begin attending meetings.

With no further information to discuss, Dan made the motion to adjourn and Hal seconded. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

The next NIDAT meeting will be on Wednesday, February 11 at 4 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Dixie Lamoreux