

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met on Wednesday, February 11, 2009 in the 2nd floor conference room at City Hall in Mason City. Those present were: Dan Gapinski, Linda Woodcock, Scott Pardoe, Diane Wilson, Libby Lembke, Melissa Weiner, Diane Murphy, Jack Gannett, Lahoma Counts, Hal Minear, Jane Ginapp and Dixie Lamoreux.

Jane called the meeting to order at 4 PM. In Joy's absence she reported that the balance in our bank account is \$2734.79. This is a good thing for us to have as we begin paying for the Awards Event for the Embracing Diversity Essay/Art contest. We will have some costs for books and such associated with the event and it is nice to have a bank balance to work with.

Dan reported that the Steering Committee is on hold temporarily until after March 15th. His job is requiring him to cut back for a while right now on extra time spent elsewhere. Even with the delay he feels that the committee can accomplish what it needs to accomplish by this fall.

Jane reported that the contest entries are in. Hal reported that there are 42 written entries and 48 art entries at the elementary level. High School and Middle School entries aren't what we hoped for with only 1 High School art entry, 2 High School written entries and 2 Middle School written entries. Judging is to be on the 12th at the Administration Building. As soon as the judging is complete, Scott needs to have the winning art entries to get the stamps made. Dixie will call to remind the art judges of the time and place for judging. Joy and Melissa are going to remind the judges for the writing.

Jane has an appointment with Buffy at NIACC to get things in line for the printing of the book. Her appointment is on February 23rd. Emily Goetz, a Newman High School student is going to play the piano at the event and Jane is going to try and get Mayor Bang to say a few words at the beginning welcoming people and congratulating the entrants, etc. The Girl Scouts, like last year, will have a flag ceremony and will also be serving refreshments. Things seem to be coming together well for the event. If Lahoma does not make it back from a state meeting she has on that date, we will need to find someone take pictures during the event.

We are still looking for people who are interested in doing a cultural or diversity displays to be on display in the windows of various vacant buildings in downtown Mason City. Celia Robles and Alita Valdez are going to make displays, but we still need others. We do have a couple of leads to follow up on, but if anyone knows of an agency, organization or just individuals who would like to be a part of this, they need to contact Jane or someone else that is a part of NIDAT. Hopefully we will be able to take advantage of the offer to have things displayed.

We are also looking for help with the Resource Directory that we want to make a part of our website. Diane is with Legal Aid and said that they work with 14 different counties and have access to information that they can share. Lahoma has also said the Elderbridge has information from 20 counties that is available. Jane is going to follow up on getting some of this information. Hopefully we can keep this project going and not have it drop off completely.

Jack shared a concern he has with an ad that is being run on national television for American Jobs for American People. He fears this could have an impact on the health care system in our area as we have many diverse medical providers in the area. He just wanted to make others aware that such an ad is running.

Before closing Dan showed a brief part of a DVD he got at a Diversity Conference he attended. It was very good and brief enough that we can continue to view parts of it at meetings as time allows in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 5 pm. Our next meeting will be on March 11 at 4 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Dixie Lamoreux