

Thursday, April 3, 2008
Amigos de la Comunidad/Friends of the Community

Attendance: Marissa Rodriguez, Luis Garza, Ralph Roddell, Julie Graber, Barb Hopkins, Barb Ornes, Sharon Karis, Amy Schanhofer, Matt Hoskins, Carin White, Jan Bruder

Amigos received notice that the NOW School's cultural night is coming up in April. Amy hasn't heard back about their interest in partnering to bring a speaker to the community. Amy will contact school about having something in the fall.

Luis Garza – UMOS received money from Otto Bremer Foundation to fund community dialog project. Over last 2-3 years with hype about immigration reform and that nature, anxieties in some communities are rising. Any member of a community that has experienced an influx of new folks, experiences a form of culture shock. "What happened to my hometown?" The shock comes in varying gradations. The same thing happens to people that come from other parts of the country or other parts of the world.

The dialogs project gets back to the basics of human relations. People get to know each other as neighbors and as fellow community members. You are here and you are members of the same community. Forum discussions are for people to talk about anxieties and then a 2nd forum for original participants to bring another person to continue to discuss common ground issues. This approach to human relations is to develop core understanding and a higher level of acceptance of the changes that happen in life anyway. Not intended to change the world. Once you have gotten to know some one they are no longer "they".

Sharon notes that offering food has always helped no matter the style and that maybe this should not held at the school

Other communities will be having them: Menomonie, Barron, Arcadia. None has started yet.

Matt has been talking with some people in Ontario about community needs, especially with 2 pastors. At the last village board meeting, both pastors came and proposed a community picnic – churches will cover costs. Will be held in July. Will look to County Line for media support.

Family Resources Event – Cecelia Cress will translate flyer. Pat Spors will hand out at school. Event is July 9 - 3:30 to 5. Barb was given Marilyn Nofsinger's phone number to contact for a translator.

Brighter Tomorrows shared: In last year, they served 35 sexual assault survivors, 600 victims of domestic violence. No longer have grant for bilingual advocate. Will offer translation services as needed.

Next meeting, Thursday, May 1, 2008. Noon. Ontario Village Hall, 205 State Street.