

**Montana Creativity Quest
Fall Board Meeting
September 21-22, 2001
Peace Lutheran Church, Belgrade, Montana**

Friday, September 22, 2001

PRESENT: Heather Geiger (State Director), Heide Arneson (State Secretary), Alean Skinner (State Treasurer), Laura Jo and Alvin McKamey (Central), Roy Mears (Central – Member at Large), Melora Elliott (South Central), Anne Castren (Northwest), Linda Adams (South Central)

The meeting was called to order at 8:16pm by Heather Geiger.

Linda Adams, formerly of Wisconsin, was introduced. The remainder of the board introduced themselves.

Discussion of souvenirs ensued, what to order and what sold well last year: wizard hats and another type of hat, antigravity - spinner pins (sold out last year), squishy face key chains, sand filled animal key chains (to try), water eels (always sell well), puzzle boxes, glow in the dark necklaces (to try), blinky rings, maze pencils, aliens that stick to your arm (to try), beanie bears (to try), hacky sacks, magnetic sculptures, finger puppets (to try), and Slinkies. Also look into pens, pencils, or post-it note pads with logo. There will also be challenge pins and state pins. Another recommendation is fabric pens in dark colors to sign T-shirts.

** (Set aside a wizard hat for Roy)

Brett Albertson was looking into a design with Lewis and Clark, maybe with a milk river, maybe using Indian signs to say “Exploring/discovering Creativity.” Another idea was a milk waterfall with Sacajawea standing by it, with a second pin with Lewis and Clark below. Yet another suggestion was Lewis, Clark, and/or Sacajawea pointing at mountains that are milk cartons. Consider on the T-shirt, having everything on the back, maybe with a small logo on the front. Look into having students be able to put their name on the T-shirt. Colors, maybe sage green this year, pastels so kids can sign them. Age of Enlightenment – maybe use that for next year. A local school, tech ed club, or organization might have a T-shirt press and could put local logos and/or team or kids names on T-shirts. By having the state logo on back, it allows them to individualize, but a pocket size local logo so the T-shirts will be appropriate for global finals. Might even be able to put each challenge on the T-shirt. We could contact a local business to do this as bulk to keep the cost down. Another idea is to put State Champion iron-ons in each winners’ packet.

Another thought on pins, Muddy Waters wants to do a group pin (again.) It would be a pond, with little tiny pins that would fit in the pond. With the World Trade Center, another thought is a pin like “Create Unity.” Alean had an idea, with a world with two arms holding hands, and an American Flag, and Create Unity. Consider a pin or a key chain. Have a pennant at the top of the flagpole, which would be a loop for key chain. Board members particularly liked the “Create Unity” idea.

Board members were asked to consider getting a corporate credit card, since as we are not a school district, making purchases is occasionally a challenge. A credit card with no annual fee, maybe one that gives air miles, would be something to think about

The meeting was then recessed at 9:20pm, to reconvene sharply at 8:30am tomorrow. Board members remained to assemble initial membership mailing.

Saturday, September 23, 2000

At 8:30am, invited guest speaker Roy Lee of Impact Advertising spoke to the board about marketing the Destination ImagiNation program.

Thank Yous imperative. Recognition of volunteers brings them back again and makes them feel good about the organization and their efforts.

A letter writing campaign, lobbying from the top (state) level down to the local (schools and school board) might help us get support and funding for membership. The State School Board Association meeting and School Administrators Association meeting are good places to get information out and build support. We need to start laying the ground work now to make real headway next year.

We need to try to find or appoint a lobbyist in each community or 2-3 per region to lobby for DI on a local level. Local DI boards of volunteers and parents interested in supporting the program could help. We need to set up a plan, maybe target 2-3 schools per community, distribute literature, offer to put on a demo or parent meeting.

We face two challenges: finances and other programs taking precedence.

We need to make a presentation to each school board, maybe in the spring following competition so teams are still together and have all their props. To reach other programs such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H, after school programs, and community clubs, we need to do letter writing and talking to groups. We need to stress how we can help their program. For scouting, we need to demonstrate how this meets badge requirements. It might be possible to approach this on a national level, seeing if the scouts are willing to come up with a Creative Problem Solving badge. Girl Scouts have create-a-badge.

Our program runs the whole school year, versus other sports and competitions that run about 70 days. That is a challenge, and teams could begin by having a shorter season, but teams would soon learn that they need to begin in the fall to be competitive.

Reasons why students participate in the program were discussed: a chance to meet interesting people, to work on a team, the fun and the challenge, kids aren't told what to do, they DO IT THEMSELVES. We need to use our reasons for being here, the opportunity to see kids minds work, which is something we are losing in other activities. We train kids not to follow the same thought, to take what they have and go someplace no one has ever gone before.

We need to think outside the box ourselves. Our organization can't afford to buy TV or radio, so we need to get in at grassroots level, inside of schools. With information doubling every four years, kids need to learn to deal with it.

We need to come up with an in-school promotion, a challenge that we put forth for the school to solve, such as 32 ways to use a Styrofoam cup.

We need to nurture volunteers and get fund raising going. We need to apply for grants, to pick a cause and how we are going to do it. We need to stress mind-broadening opportunities, stressing education, problem solving skills, teamwork, preparing for school and work place. Have to have goals set for grant writing. Having a mission statement helps. We need to start thinking like a company, earning money and volunteers, set goals. The kids are the product – show off our recent graduates.

Fundraising, have everyone give just one dollar. We need to organize a campaign such as “Give a dollar to see a mind grow.” We also need to present ourselves as professionals for coaches, appraisers, and other volunteers, have a nice presentation for volunteers. We need the presentation and the hook. We have bylaws, we need to set our goals, we need your help to keep students from falling through the cracks, statements from kids (especially those that have gone to globals.) Where have the kids gone – our alumni. Research our program graduates. Showcase our successes, make sure we look structured, team manager training well organized is a must. We have to get into the school system, from top to bottom. School parent organizations (PTA, PTO, PAC), teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, state legislation. Have a school wide assembly, involving principal, having a song. Have local people set up a meeting, have regional or state representatives give professional presentations.

We need to be prepared for next year’s open houses. Get on school’s volunteer list. The video and Power Point presentations are great tools to use. We need to find money and find members.

Get your tree going, know how to get into the school systems. Have direction. Make a plan of attack. Government and inside the school. Roy Lee, Adman3388@aol.com, 586-6536, Impact Advertising, is willing to help us develop a marketing plan. We need to draft a plan for the spring board meeting. We can resolve at spring meeting to have our plan in place for next fall.

Do we need to have statewide recognition for team managers? A Montana Team Manager pin, with additions for each year. We need to have some way to recognize our volunteers. We need to get information into school newsletters, thanking last year’s volunteers, naming them, asking for new ones. At regional competitions, we can give a special pin that can’t be bought. Teams can perform a showcase for their school. After regional competition is when we should be going to service clubs, an honor to perform, and more than one opportunity to showcase their abilities.

We need to utilize businesses that respect high level thinking to coach. Also how to get to retired people, (especially educators.) Student teachers, new teachers, college upper level education students,

Team manager training – team should pay for training, maybe for extra materials. Time involved is a problem. Coaches didn’t feel they were qualified enough. October is a good time, even if we needed to do a smaller follow up in November for those who weren’t appointed yet or couldn’t attend the earlier training.

Teams need to set reasonable goals, the first year just to solve a problem, second to go to state, ... Have a recognition for every team, that they made it to regionals, that they solved the problem! Publicity should include names of all teams that participated, presented a solution to the problem. Make sure schools support it, an assembly, have a letter from regional to the local school for each team.

The board meeting was reconvened at 9:45am.

PRESENT: Heather Geiger (State Director), Heide Arneson (State Secretary), Alean Skinner (State Treasurer), Laura Jo and Alvin McKamey (Central), Roy Mears (Central- Member at Large), Melora Elliott (South Central), Anne Castren (Northwest), Linda Adams (South Central – Member at Large), Karen Davidson (Southeast), Keagan Harsha (Southwest – Member at Large).

Board members introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes from Spring Meeting: Melora Elliott moved to approve the minutes as written, Roy Mears seconded, all voted in favor, the motion carries.

Treasurer's Report: Alean Skinner, Treasurer. There is \$4826.50 in our checking account and \$12,000 in a Certificate of Deposit until January. We have outstanding moneys of \$511 + \$125 (checks not cashed.) We will be receiving a check for \$1200 from Destination ImagiNation, \$20 for each team from last year as a rebate. Our budget has gone from \$8000 to \$17,000 over five years. We have been fiscally responsible, we need to use some of the money to do recognition. See if we can get hotels to donate hotel rooms for appraisers. Consider raising appraiser compensation, team manager recognition.

One thought is to arrange free or reduced rate hotels or offer a place to stay, so appraisers don't feel they are out a room. Arrange housing locally for the state tournament, which is scheduled for March 23 at Bozeman High School.

More discussion ensued on the idea of recognition for team managers, a base pin, add on for each year, with the date of each year, different color. The base pin would be a special Montana Team Manager pin, which was not available for sale. To keep the additions from getting too long, we could issue a new base pin every five years or so.

To avoid confusion, Montana Creativity Quest should be used only internally. We should use Destination ImagiNation when working with schools. Make checks payable to MCQ/DI. This should help eliminate some of the confusion. While we are Montana Creativity Quest, the program we are presenting is Destination ImagiNation.

Reports from State Director – Heather Geiger:

Membership counts for 2000-2001 stayed the same at 60, but we dropped from 137 to 107 teams. Made over \$7200 in team fees, went up to \$7850. Most teams paid early bird rates. Some regions had trouble with back side of form, getting people to provide names of appraisers.

We need to consider applying to OPI for credit for team managers and appraisers, maybe for college credit too. This was done previously through Extended Studies. To qualify, they would have to take training and coach a team, pass/fail only, to receive graduate credit. We have also arranged undergraduate credit for college students. We could use the internet, have an online portion of the course, to increase contact hours to allow for two credits. Talk to Sharon Lamar about doing it through AGATE. This would get teachers involved. Talk to local school districts about stipend/coaching for local coordinators. Maybe after 2-3 years, we could arrange an advanced level, which would include mentoring a new coach.

Expanding our program to Boys and Girls' Clubs, day cares, after school programs. All kids, not just the DI kids, can be involved in problem solving, drama, improv training. Then those most interested could compete.

Summary of Last Year's budget: We spent less as we scaled back. It will require more mailing fees for additional marketing. We can check into bulk mailing rates and requirements.

Report from May AD meeting: Spent a good portion of the time on the new membership structure, the 5 pack. The National Dairy Council is back as a national sponsor for another year, which is great because Montana Dairy is supporting us again. ADs asked that communication be

improved for teams going to Global. There is no online Global registration since teams could register that aren't qualified. ADs asked for an awareness video to be developed, which was. ADs also asked for them to send a confirmation to school coordinators, but it isn't happening. The particular applications of the 5 pack membership were discussed.

The primary RD gets a hard copy of materials. We will ask for forms to be listed on the web site individually. Also ask for changes from previous year to be highlighted.

State registrations and scholarship applications for Montana are online.

OLD BUSINESS

Follow Up on Being Member Driven: Get input from team managers. At team manager training when they meet the head appraiser, they can discuss problems and provide feedback on the program so far. Tell them we are soliciting input. At tournaments, put up posters and feedback forms, feedback on the year as well as the tournament. Linda Adams will develop the form. Stress member driven at team manager training/meeting. Print off the summary of the minutes to show that we really do want their input. The fewer changes in the program every year, the better it is for our members.

About a month before meetings, send a post card reminder to board members.

Score sheets need to be done better.

Communications with the memberships: DI needs to send a letter with confirmation to the school coordinator with membership info, separate from the bill.

The Montana Creativity Quest Budget, Agenda and Minutes of Board Meetings are now posted on our web site.

Announcement of Meetings will be on the web site and reminder postcards will be sent to board members.

Who sends what: regional directors will send post cards for coaches with DI and MCQ web sites, as well as the regional registration form. Last night's mailing was to everyone who had a team in the last two years and included a registration form. Heather will email a list of who the mailing was sent to, so regional directors can see who got mailings and who might still need them.

How communications should be delivered: Emails should indicate, in ALL CAPS, if this is something significant, if a confirmation or reply is required.

Other Surveys – Linda Adams will be helping develop a survey. **

How members are selected to Board (i.e. Team Manager Trainings) to select members at large was discussed.

Videos – can the awareness portion be looped for open houses and such? We can make and send videos to each membership for about \$5 each.

Credit card – consider getting a corporate credit card, one with no annual fee, maybe one that builds air miles. Board members concurred that this would be a good idea.

AD Representative to Global Finals – Laura Jo McKamey and Roy Mears are interested. Kathy Bernstein is also possibly interested. This will be determined before February so that travel arrangements can be made.

Participation certificates or ribbons, weigh costs. Ribbons are easier to handle and kids can wear them. Ribbons should just be for those teams that don't place 1, 2, or 3, though the final decision will be up to the regional director.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget: Regarding income, we propose keeping registration at \$7000. We brought in more last year, but this leaves us room to lose some teams. Sale of items, brought in \$500 more than we budgeted, so we left it alone. Interest was kept the same, though the CD will give us more. Cake Walk only brought in \$942, so we lowered that to \$1000. For the raffle, we need a new donor. Northwest Airlines will not be providing us tickets, but Joubert's are donating \$1000. Maybe we can solicit some other items, such as fishing equipment or prints. The new way of selling the tickets, just for those teams going to state, worked well. Other donations listed are funds going to specific teams, funneled through Montana Creativity Quest for non-profit status.

For the milk and cookies, muffins did not work well. Oreo's went over well, but two were not enough. Some kids wanted six or more, and some were crumbled and not good to distribute. Serving them in servings of three, on napkins or in small cups, would probably help both with the mess and with the serving sizes. We need a refrigerator for the milk if possible. Alean has a refrigerator that she could donate.

Correction to the budget, In Actual for last year, for National Dairy it should read \$1137.77.

Regarding expenses, raffle tickets not numbered and on paper instead of card stock cost less.

What do we do with the OM pins and earrings? Give them away free at appraisers meeting at the tournament and maybe in appraiser's room in the morning, then give the rest away at the cake walk.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield may give in kind donations of pocket folders for appraisers, to make it look more official. Maybe the folders could be color-coded, otherwise use inventory stickers.

Try to get cell phones donated again, maybe walkie-talkies as a back up. Have a runner for the registration table to help solve problems and track down people.

Awareness: we proposed lowered printing costs because they were lower last year, but left room to expand. Should the money go to videos? The order of the articles on the video should be changed with team manager training last. Regional Directors should distribute videos. Resource funds would be used for this purpose this year. Zanca books were also discussed, possibly using local resources to buy some for each region. The budget does not include the possibility of donations and grants.

Roy Mears moved we approve the proposed budget as it stands, Laura Jo McKamey seconded, all voted in favor – motion carried.

Site Needs for this year's Challenges: Need a gym for the game challenge, 36 feet X 28 feet. Holiday 10 X 12, Dual Dilemma 16 X 16. Stranded 10X10 (no electricity), Improv 10 X 10, plus a studio. You can distribute the expanded challenge summary.

New Web sites: a lot of new Instant Challenges on the Montana Creativity Quest web site. Keep up to date on both web sites, Montana Creativity Quest and Destination ImagiNation.

Collecting Improv Items – keep collecting items, use some of the old surplus for team manager training. Duct tape will be coming, Velcro may be a sponsor also. Use materials however you want to. They are yours to use.

Policy considerations:

Affiliate License Agreement:

Melora Elliott moved to have Heather sign the Destination ImagiNation Affiliate License agreement. Roy Mears seconded, all voted in favor – motion carried.

Penalties for teams that do not provide appraisers: pay \$25 per appraiser not provided at regional, fees must be paid before they can go on to state. Must also provide a trained appraiser for state who has judged at a regional tournament or pay a \$50 penalty. Fees must be paid to compete at the state level. There will be no exceptions at the state level.

Alternative proposal, team cannot be scheduled to compete on the regional level unless they provide one or two viable names for judges. In order to compete at the state level, the team must provide one trained judge.

Give each appraiser at region a card to return to RD or mail to state appraiser coordinator for state.

Yet another alternative, to put it up front, that many hands make light work and we need appraisers to make this work. Solicit from community organizations and businesses. OPI credits would help if we can do it. OPI credit would require, maybe one credit for regional and one credit for state. What about graduate credit for judging at both? We will try to be more up front. This alternative was the consensus of the board. We need the help, but don't want to penalize the students.

Policy for Students on School Disciplinary Probation – Montana Creativity Quest will follow local school district policy. Participation in Destination ImagiNation for students under Disciplinary Probation must follow the rules of the school or program under which the student participates in Destination Imagination. So moved by Roy Mears, seconded by Laura Jo McKamey, all voted in favor – motion carried.

Drug Free Policy – Laura Jo McKamey moves that we accept the Destination ImagiNation alcohol policy for Montana Creativity Quest, with drugs and tobacco added. Melora Elliott seconded, all voted in favor – motion carried.

Under 18 year olds as appraisers policy: Appraisers must be at least high school aged. All volunteers under the age of 18 assisting in tournaments, state or regional, are required to have a signed consent form in order to participate. Roy Mears so moved, Laura Jo McKamey seconded, all voted in favor – motion carried.

Heather asked us to consider Director and Officers Liability Insurance. Laura Jo McKamey will send information about a state web site on registered child molesters and violent offenders. This information could be passed to school coordinators, for information purposes only. We can check with Child Care Connections, or see if we can buy into the umbrella through Destination ImagiNation for liability coverage.

GOALS: Table goal setting to the spring board meeting. Send a piece of paper to each RD after their regional tournament with space for three goals. For now we need to get more bodies involved. We are more body hungry than money hungry.

MARKETING: Discussed with guest speaker, Roy Lee.

GRANTS: Suggestions for items to get through grants, items to request funding for that would improve our ability to provide services. Software and hardware to improve communication between regions. Money for Thank Yous, recognition for team managers and volunteers. Money to market a program. Money to help teams to get to global, and to send an AD and (another member if possible) to represent Montana. Funds to pay for the awards. Funds to purchase a digital camera and additional memory. Use university resources to analyze our needs, maybe tie into service connected learning or someone participating in a masters program on volunteering.

Alvin McKamey moved to adjourn, Anne Castren seconded, all voted in favor. The fall board meeting adjourned at 3:37pm.