

**St. Mary's County Human Relations Commission
December 5, 2007
Minutes**

Attendance: Sanjay Apte, Rose Ann Everett, Joyce Dyson, Jim Hanley, Joseph Bush

Staff Liaison: Cynthia Brown

Vice Chair Joseph Bush convened the meeting at 5:15 pm. The November minutes were approved as presented.

Finance Statement: Cynthia Brown reported a balance of \$2750 in the commission budget.

Study Circles: Cynthia explained the Big Read Program. St. Mary's Library and the College of Southern Maryland are leading the way for St. Mary's County's participation in a national program called the Big Read. Several local organizations (County Govt, Public Schools, etc...) are also participating. The program is to renew the community's interest in reading by encouraging reading a selected book (A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines) and having planned group discussions. The HRC has been invited to play a supportive role in this program by providing facilitators trained through the Study Circles program. The membership voted to participate.

Annual Awards Breakfast: The date of the HRC Awards Breakfast is April 19 at 9:00am with doors opening at 8:30. So far, the keynote speaker has not been confirmed. Cynthia reviewed the time line for preparing for the event. The public will be notified in January via the local media, that nominations for honorees will be accepted through February 4. Honorees will be selected at the February meeting, and notified a week later to confirm their acceptance. At that time they will be asked to submit a bio and come to the March HRC meeting to be photographed for the program booklet. The program will be ready for printing by the beginning of April.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast at St. Mary's College: Cynthia reported she had spoken with Marc Apter (Public Relations, St. Mary's College) who confirmed the date is January 21. The program begins at 9:00 am with breakfast being served at 7:30. Mr. Apter is requesting HRC members get there early to assist with preparing a list of dignitaries to be acknowledged.

Membership: Sanjay Apte, who is doing active duty in the Navy, is being stationed to Norfolk, Virginia and no longer able to participate in the HRC and Study Circles. He said he has very much enjoyed his time here and looks forward to an opportunity to possibly re-join the group at a later date. The members present thanked him for his contributions and wished him well.

HRC Retreat: Members voted to have a strategic planning session on 2/23 from 9am to noon at Chancellors Run Regional Park to determine plans for the remainder of this fiscal year, and possibly further.

The next meeting will be held on January 9, 2008 at 5pm in the Governmental Center.