

Town Meeting Cracks Down on Drugs

The first in a series of town meetings, focusing on the drug issue, was held on Jan. 22 in BTC 101. Vernie Nethercut, Volunteer Center Director, is coordinator of these meetings. Virginia Watson, Intermediate School District, and Cynthia Cook, Cooperative Extension Service, are moderators for these meetings.

The local meetings are based on the original town meetings started 150 years ago in Massachusetts.

NIF (National Issues Forums) initiates these group discussions to bring about a "meeting of the minds" on topics of interest. Each year, NIF chooses three topics for discussion.

NIF stresses listening, as well as talking about problems and views. The meetings start by looking at how the values of individuals and the values of the

community apply to a given topic. After discussion, the group looks at alternatives. The purpose of the meeting is not to try to change someone's mind; it is designed to discover differing opinions and solutions.

Guidelines are set for discussion among the group:

1) The moderator guides the discussion, yet remains neutral.

2) Everyone is encouraged to participate.

3) No one or two individuals dominate the discussion.

4) Discussion focuses on the choices available

5) All major choices on the issue are considered

6) An atmosphere for discussion and plan of alternatives is maintained

7) Everyone listens to each other's ideas

Four choices for a plan of

action were presented to the group:

Choice #1--Stepping up the International Drug War; advocates of this choice want to see President Bush strictly enforce drug laws and cut off aid to drug supplying nations.

Choice #2--Cracking Down on Dealers: the Enforcement Strategy; this choice says that more power needs to be given to law enforcement agencies with death penalties to dealers.

Choice #3--Saying No: Targeting Users, Reducing Demand; this choice targets the "Say No" campaign to reduce demand. This tries to send a signal to users that society is serious in eliminating this crisis. Expanded educational programs and mandatory drug testing are emphasized. Backers of this choice support a "zero tolerance" of

any drug use or possession whatsoever.

Choice #4--Legalizing Drugs: Why Prohibition Doesn't Work; those in favor of drug legalization want to take the profit out of drug trafficking. Backers do not necessarily condone drug use, but drive the drug dealing off the streets and into legal, government-regulated, taxpaying stores.

No "experts" were present, but Watson directed the discussion. A video was shown to introduce the choices leading to the discussion.

Distinctions are made between personal opinions and public judgments. As the group thinks together, values are sorted out and the group begins to realize the hard facts and choices that need to be made.

These meetings do not attempt to find a concrete

answer or agreement. They do try to find common interests and views among people and develop new perspectives.

The second meeting in the series will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 20 at 7:15pm in NRC 450. Register for the meeting by Feb. 13 through Vernie Nethercut, Ext. 271. The topic will be the daycare dilemma.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH

February is National Community College Recognition Month and Alpena Community College is planning several activities in celebration of this fact.

The first event, a reception for ACC Alumni, took place as part of last weekend's homecoming activities. Held in BTC prior to the homecoming game, college staff welcomed alumni "back to the campus". Carlene Przykucki, ACC Director of Public Relations, hopes to expand alumni membership through similar activities, involving past graduates in the growth and expansion of Alpena Community College.

The month's second scheduled event has been organized in an effort to raise public awareness of ACC. Exhibits, displays and demonstrations of ACC programs will be showcased at the Alpena Mall, Feb. 10, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Scheduled participants include: Ivan McLaren's concrete technology students who will be demonstrating computer numerical control equipment; Owen Lamb's drafting students will be demonstrating computer

aided design; art students taught by Joe Donna and Joy Skiba will be showing painting and sketching techniques and the making of pottery; drama students under the direction of new faculty member Nan Hall will be demonstrating various drama techniques.

Many organizations and clubs will be represented. The day's activities are being coordinated by the Public Relations office and the ACC Student Senate.

The month's third activity which will be held on Feb. 16, is a social evening planned for college staff which involves attendance of Alpena Civic Theater's production of "Vanities", directed by staff person Donna Gilmet.

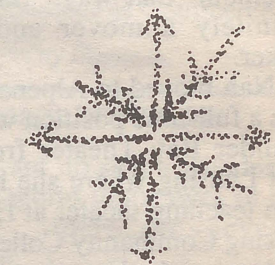
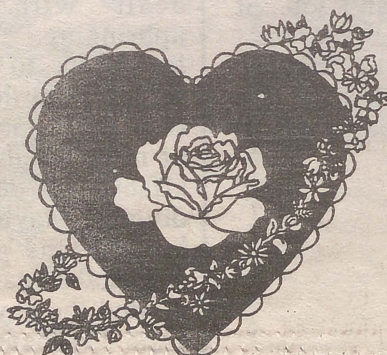
Wednesday, Feb. 21 has been proclaimed as Logo Day. All people involved with ACC are asked to "display a logo", (a past or present one) on a tee shirt, pencil, folder, etc. Przykucki says "Carry it, wave it, or wear it on your head, but do display it on campus and off to show your enthusiasm to be a member of the college community".

LEARNING DOESN'T IMPROVE WITH DISTANCE.

Some people think that you've got to go away to college to get a quality education. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Because thanks to America's Community, Technical and Junior Colleges, you can get a great education right in your own backyard. Without the expense of living away from home. And without giving up your full- or part- time job. What's more, tuitions average about half the cost of public four-year colleges and universities. No wonder an amazing 55% of all first time freshmen choose Community Colleges. So remember, learning doesn't improve with distance. In many ways, it gets better the closer you are to home. At America's Community Colleges.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Where America Goes to College

February is National Community College Month.



WRITING SERVICE OFFERED

A new student service is being offered by ACC's English department under the supervision of Terry Hall, English Department Chairperson. Called the Writing Place, VLH 105 has been designated as a quiet place for students to work on their writing assignments.

The Writing Place will provide help with various needs, such as:

- organizing a term paper
- revising a paper
- getting started on a writing assignment

Assistance is available from Hall and student tutor, Keiker Doyle. The Writing Place has a "drop-in" policy, and no appointments are necessary.

Initially, The Writing Place is open from 1pm-2:50pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with plans to expand hours in the fall.

Current plans include staffing the center with two trained student tutors under the supervision of an English department member during all regular school hours. For now, those students who are unable to attend The Writing Place during the scheduled hours may seek additional tutoring in the Learning Skills Center.