

Annual IRC dinner a success

Luiza Constanza
Staff Writer

The International Dinner was celebrated in Sternberger on Saturday, February 19. It was a big event planned by the International Relations Club for almost a month. The event had the same success as dinners of past years, and I heard many positive comments—for example, that the food was excellent and that there was plenty of it.

The extensive buffet was filled with main dishes and desserts from countries on every continent in the world. Food from India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Guatemala, France, Italy and many other countries could be tasted by all people present. No one could complain about not having enough to eat, but instead, they complained about having eaten too much.

As seen every year, the International Dinner also presented a variety of entertainment which began after everyone filled their plates with excellent food cooked by people who attended.

This year, the program of entertainment presented dances from Africa, Latin America and the U.S.

The African dance was mixed with Latin dances, showing that the Latin dances such as the "Merengue" and "Salsa" have their roots in African dances. The U.S. also performed a cheerful country dance by four American students. Many singers also sang songs in their native languages—Spanish, Swahili and English.

For the third consecutive year, the program included a fashion show that displayed colorful dresses from India, Nicaragua, Japan, Africa and Iran.

Without any doubt, the International Dinner achieved all the goals that were set for the activity. All 310 people who had the opportunity to attend got the chance to taste different types of dishes and also to learn about other countries from the evening's presentations.

The IRC feels really satisfied about the success of the event and wants to thank all the persons who helped in the activities and, of course, to all who joined them and had fun at the dinner. The IRC hopes that people who could not attend this year can be active in the 1995 International Dinner and get prepared to have a really good evening "around the world."

Whitlow sings blues

Ashley Clifton
Perspectives Editor

"Nina Shee-ee-mooooaan." Sung like a true poetess.

Because the blues transcend that pain, that sorrow.

Beats of pulsating song landed in front of the podium and began to dance. They danced to Carolyn Beard Whitlow's poetry, to the poetry of those she chose to honor in commemoration of Black History Month.

She sang of her ancestors and their pained struggles, the loneliness of their oppression and the commonality of it.

She sang of the elements which bind the strings of blues, slavery, beating-down and worn-outness, rejuvenation and celebration together to form a heritage which has been sung since forever, even in the less-heard times of early oppression.

How appropriate that Carolyn Beard Whitlow sang, dancing with her voice and also directing our eyes, our own inner rhythms with her waving fingertips, so that we could feel the celebration of her people, her culture, and those who first spoke their troubles and triumphs.

We hear through therapists and twelve-step programs that the first step in progress is to vocalize the situation—in this case, oppression of a people and their own strength in battling it. And there are still more issues, new songs, new versions of old songs to be told and sung as the struggle continues.

She shows us the dance, because for those of us who lack the experience, that is all some of us can ever really know.

Alone in an apartment, a woman cries, "My baby done left me," proclaiming, "I gives away my lovin' likes a brown paper sack."

It's no wonder her poems linger with the sweat of dancing their characters' triumphs and singing their blues under the hot light of the stage, where they are finally seen and heard.

Laments and celebrations.

"Poems are not diaries of their authors," she reminded the audience.

But Whitlow's poetry does carry the pieces, the characters and

scenes of many people and their realities, which we are able to glimpse for the duration of the reading.

"Only punctuation holds my tongue," reads one of her poems.

This is clearly not a reflection of Whitlow as poet. She plays with form, melding it to suit her poems and the people they paint. She plays with punctuations of her songs, beats, rhythms, rests and crescendos.

From black oral tradition, when it had to be sung to survive, to now, when it is sung to be celebrated, remembered and understood. Carolyn Beard Whitlow sings the blues.

She teaches in questions and sings in observations which ask their own set of questions. She makes you ask, "Why?" She shows us black history in characters, scenes, melody. She shows us the dance, because for those of us who lack the experience, that is all some of us can ever really know.

On February 15, Whitlow sang her blues. She sang others' blues, transcending this pain for a moment to share it. So that others can celebrate, remember, revere and learn from it.

*There are times in life
when you need an alternative-*



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