

Little Black Dress Club Gives Organizations Cause for Thanks

STORY & PHOTO BY KAREN BOSSICK

With Thanksgiving one day away, a handful of Wood River Valley organizations are feeling pretty thankful for 80-some women in their little black dresses.

The Little Black Dress Club recently handed out \$9,650 to be divided up among six organizations—The Crisis Hotline, Habitat for Humanity, Girls on the Run, Hailey Ice, the Wood River Community Orchestra and Nurture.

Hailey Ice will use the money to fund a part-time employee to fit youngsters into loaner skates. Girls on the Run will use its grant funds for scholarships for the girls in the program.

The orchestra will use theirs to make sure instruments are available for members. Habitat will use its to restore short-sale homes to turn into affordable housing. And Nurture will use

its to support a pilot program at Hemingway Elementary School that teaches healthy nutrition to grade schoolers.

Since its inception three years ago, the club has handed out nearly \$50,000 to a varied list that includes Company of Fools, The Sage School, NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)-Wood River Chapter, Sun Valley Adaptive Sports and The Hunger Coalition.

"A lot of the non-profits out there are on shoestring budgets," said Rain McDonald, president of the club. "We've lost a couple of organizations, like La Alianza. This organization helps to meet some needs and makes our members more aware of the needs that are out there."

Each member gives \$300 a year in monthly installments of \$25 to be distributed as club members decide. The organization holds two cocktail parties a year to dispense grants, along

with a variety of social events throughout the year.

Renee Faltings said she joined the group because she thought it would be a quick way to get to know other women after she moved here from Bend, Ore., two years ago. She now serves as grants chair.

"I work on chaos with a small c instead of a big C," she said, describing the position which involves entertaining applications, lining up site visits for club members and tabulating the final vote on which projects to fund.

Information: www.lbdcwr.org



RIGHT: Lynn Campion-Waddell, who founded the Wood River Valley chapter of the Little Black Dress Club, celebrates the club's fall grants with Rain McDonald and Renee Faltings at Whiskey Jacques'.