

Women help causes close to their hearts



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Kathryn Johnson hosted the fourth annual Women's Giving Circle awards ceremony at her San Jacinto home. Attendees enjoyed their light outdoor meal under sunny skies and amongst lots of flowers.—Staff Photos by Barbara King



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Women's Giving Circle President Charlinda Evans, center, and vice-president Sandy Vance, right, go over the evening's agenda with JCCF staffer Ruth Adrian.

Barbara King

Local women with a shared purpose of helping children and families gathered late in May to award \$3300 in grants to local organizations provided by their membership dues.

The Women's Giving Circle, a special interest group of the Jennings County Community Foundation, also met at member Kathryn and Eric Johnson's rural home to welcome nine new members with an outdoor meal provided by various members. "You guys are leading the way, especially when it comes to women and children," said Women's Giving Circle President Charlinda Evans. "We make a huge impact in our community. This is one of the best investments as far as a bang for your bucks." Membership in the organization costs \$100 a year, with approximately half that amount going to fund the grants. The dues also help fund the group's annual Reach Conference for teenage girls held each year at the Park Theatre. Lastly, a portion of dues funds an endowment at the **JCCF**. Evans introduced the 2015 class of grant recipients as each representative briefly described how their gift will be used:

- Jennings County Youth Foundation: \$750. Kelly Hatton, president of the youth-focused group, explained the grant will be used to offset costs for their Summer Day Kids Camp to be held July 13-17. The camp normally hosts 85 children a day. Sunshine Galliher, a new Women's Circle member active with the Youth Foundation, said she has "come full circle." Her daughter attended a Reach Conference and "was very moved" which then inspired Sunshine to become a member of the Circle.
- FLASH Program: \$1000. Colleen Malone reported the food program is partnering with Gleaners for the fifth year in a row now and that 175 families have pre-registered which means "hundreds and hundreds of children and adults" will receive free meals this summer.
- House of Hope: \$1000. Kathy Dove accepted the grant on behalf of this local program which owns three homes and has provided housing to "dozens of families" over the past four years. "We couldn't do it without your help," she told the group.
- Senior Resources: \$350. Senior Center Director Ruth Bosch explained the funding will go to a new program partnering grandparents and grandchildren with craft activities. She pointed out "You don't have to be a senior to come out to our events," and invited those present to stop by the Buckeye Street center.
- Advocates for Children: \$1000. No one attended from this Columbus-based organization which serves Jennings and provides volunteer advocates for children who are in the court system because of family



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Jocelyn Johnson, the hostess' granddaughter, right, introduces Gabrielle Morin to one of her family's Great Pyranees.

problems. (A story about this group is on page 3B in today's newspaper.)

- Just Run, \$221. This new group, the brainchild of LeAna Matern, starts this summer. It is a free eight-week program focusing on running and health for kids in kindergarten through sixth grade based on a Columbus Girls Inc. program. Explains LeAna, "I'm a runner. I like to run."

This is the sixth year the Women's Giving Circle has awarded grants, which would not be possible without a loyal and growing membership. To that end, Sandy Vance was recognized as signing up the most new members this year-four-which earned her a free membership.

New members were welcomed. They are: Betty Hutt, Kathy Morin, Mary Driver, Paula Ertel, Ruth Bosch, Sunshine Galliher, Tricia Losey, Joann Vance and Lisa Wagoner.

If you would like more information about this group, contact the **JCCF** at 812-346-5553.