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Vol. 33 No. 22 Serving Lac du Bonnet, Pinawa, Alexander, Powerview-Pine Falls and the Winnipeg River corridor May 30, 2024

LdB Foundation distributes grant funds

By Rick McGregor

The Notre Dame du Lac Catholic Church hosted several happy faces May 15 as the Lac du Bonnet and District Charitable Foundation held its annual general meeting and celebration of giving in the church basement.

The event included presentations from the 2023 grant recipients and the announcement of the results of the 2024 Spring Granting Session.

Formed in 2008, the LdB Foundation exists to improve the quality of life in the Town and RM of Lac du Bonnet and Ward 4 of the RM of Alexander. They have created and manage funds, garnered donations and distributed the earnings from those funds to qualified recipients for local charitable purposes.

The evening began with presentations from a number of the board members. Laverne Wojciechowski served as Emcee and introduced president Gary Rollins and chair Dave Johnson for their annual reports. They were followed by treasurer Dick Campbell with the financial report.

"We need exposure to help grow our donations so we are getting out in the community to get ourselves known and to let people know what we do and how they can help," Campbell said.

Grants committee chair Mitch Walker then took over for the Celebration of Giving segment of the evening. The 2023 grant recipients took their turns at the dais, leading off was Kristin Ticknor of the HEROES Alliance - Lunch is on Us Program who showed a video of the work her organization does serving up a free soup lunch to area residents in the Lac du Bonnet Arena. Last year, they served an average of 120 lunches, twice a week, totalling over 11,800 free lunches. In 2023, they received

\$500 to build a new supplies cabinet.

Next up was Ronald McDonald House out of Winnipeg that received the fourth in a series of five annual grants of \$1,000 toward the costs of their new facility.

Peter Lovering of the Lac du Bonnet Community Garden showed visuals of the new greenhouse that was built with their \$3,000 grant. Lovering announced that for 2024, they have 51 garden plots and 40 gardeners.

John Fleming of the Eastman SnoPals was gifted with \$3,000 to assist with repairs to their snowmobile track grooming machine and bemoaned the lack of snow an the inability to groom this past winter.

Nicki Blatz, on behalf of the Great Falls Recreation Association, received \$2,000 towards the purchase of pole banners for the town's 100th Anniversary Celebration Weekend. The weekend's activities generated enough funds for the Great Falls group to donate \$500 back to the LdB Foundation.

Michelle Wazny represented the Lac du Bonnet Historical Society, who received \$6,500 towards repairs to the foundation of the St. John's Heritage Church and Arts Centre.

Sharalyn Reitlo spoke on behalf of the Lac du Bonnet Community Centre who received \$2,500 to go towards the purchase of a new floor scrubber.

Ainsley Van Linden then gave a report from the Foundation's Youth in Philanthropy (YIP), comprised of students from the Lac du Bonnet Senior School. Part of their 2023 grants was a further \$2,500 towards the floor scrubber and \$3,100 to the Association of Community Living - Beauport Branch for the purchase of a wheelchair swing.

The final portion of the program was dedicated to the 2024



Photo by Rick McGregor

Board chair Dave Johnson (left), the Lac du Bonnet Legion's Bob Hampshire and Dwayne Wickstrom and LdB Foundation president Gary Rollins.

grant recipients. These included Ronald McDonald House receiving their final \$1,000 grant, \$2,000 for the Lac du Bonnet Library, represented by Joan Einarson, Diane Babiuk and Pat Porth of Two Rivers Seniors receiving a cheque for \$500, Heinz Reiser of the Pioneer Club accepting \$1,500 and the Lac du Bonnet Legion receiving \$5,000 in a cheque presented to Bob Hampshire and Dwayne Wickstrom. Hampshire, the Legion's

president, said the funds would help replace the air conditioning unit in the main hall where a number of community groups are hosted each month.

"It is one of the centre points of the community and we need to provide a comfortable environment for our many users," Hampshire said.

The final two grants were presented to Dennis McGuffin of the Lac du Bonnet Wildlife Association. One was for \$2,775 for

the association's trout ponds on Hwy 11 and the other was \$1,575 for the Outdoor Education Centre and Shooting Ranges off Milner Ridge Road.

Foundation board member Janice Leroux said more than 40 people representing 15 community organizations attended the event.

"I was so impressed to hear about the wonderful projects that volunteers in our community take on," Leroux said.



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