

## local news

TODAY'S TOPIC

LOCAL CHARITIES

## As the Hometown Civitan Club learns more about the needs of local nonprofits, it is lending a financial hand where it can. The group donated from the Adopt-a-Precinct program.

By **ANDREA DAVIS**  
Daily Sun Senior Writer

Laura McLaughlin left BettyAnn Klein speechless as she handed Klein a bag containing children's books.

"It feels like Christmas morning," said Klein, of Center Hill, as she looked through the books. "The kids will be so excited when they see how many new books we now have."

Klein and her nonprofit, Center Hill Children's Mission, an organization which clothes and teaches Hispanic children, is just one of the nonprofits which Hometown Civitan Club is helping with proceeds

raised during the 2020 Adopt-a-Precinct program. The program allows individual volunteers or groups to donate their time to work the polling booths in Sumter County during elections. Instead of paying volunteers for their time, the county donated earnings to local nonprofits that the teams chose.

"Each of these individuals representing these nonprofits have made a difference in the lives of others," said McLaughlin, a member of the Hometown Civitan Club. "We have formed wonderful relationships with each of them and just want to help them further their missions."

During their September meeting at Perkins Restaurant and Bakery, the group

met with individuals from five of the six nonprofits receiving cash donations. Among them were Klein, of Center Hill Children's Mission in Center Hill; David Douglas and Rebecca Randall, of Hand in Hand, a nonprofit in Eustis helping residents recover from addictions; Linda Krusplki and Nancy Hartkop, of LovExtension, a nonprofit that helps improve life for elderly and disabled communities in Lake County; Karen Cunningham, of Marion Therapeutic Riding Association in Ocala, a nonprofit offering therapeutic horse rides to those with Multiple Sclerosis; and Carole Savage, of PACE Center for Girls, Marion County, a nonprofit helping young girls in need with education, food and personal toiletries.

**H**ometown Civitan mailed the final check to Young Performing Artists, a nonprofit providing scholarships to students with musical talents.

Hometown Civitan planned to hand out \$11,100 total to the nonprofits, but after hearing the stories of how the nonprofits help



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Laura McLaughlin, left, of the Village of Collier and a member of the Hometown Civitan Club, gives \$2,000 to Linda Krusplki, center, and Nancy Hartkop, right, of LovExtension. The monies will go toward helping residents who are shut-in, disabled or elderly with food and other needs.

the community, the group donated another \$1,000 to Marion Therapeutic Riding Association, making the final total \$12,100.

All the money earned from Adopt-a-Precinct went into a pool and was divided into groups determined by the philanthropy committee, made up of five people, said McLaughlin, of the Village of Collier.

Mary Anderson, president

of Hometown Civitan, said the committee makes decisions based on needs.

"It's a win-win situation because all the money we raise goes back into the tri-county area," Anderson said.

The club was chartered in 2015 by Betty Rohan and since its founding, has worked toward making a brighter, better future for those in need. For

more information about Hometown Civitan, visit [hometowncivitanclub.com](http://hometowncivitanclub.com).

"Each of our donors have been chosen because of the relationship we have with them and the work they do," said Rohan, a club member. "We tend to choose groups that work with children or those with special circumstances."

**D**uring the check presentations, Cunningham spoke about how the last donation she received from the group went toward a handicap accessible lift, which allows those with physical disabilities to participate in therapeutic horse riding.

"When you see the light on the faces of those who thought they would never be able to ride, you almost cannot breathe because of all the emotion," said Cunningham. "It is absolutely amazing to see the reactions of our clients, which wouldn't be possible without community donations."

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