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April 7, 2000

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## **Illinois Wesleyan Student Senate Donates to McLean County Red Cross**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--A generous gift to the McLean County Chapter of the American Red Cross is the unlikely result of a Homecoming date auction. Illinois Wesleyan University's Student Senate raised \$815 to benefit the organization by selling some of IWU's men and women as dates to the highest bidder.

Prior to the Homecoming date auction Janelle Lietz, IWU Student Senate student welfare and human relations commissioner, and Lora Nickels, former Homecoming chairperson and current Student Senate special events commissioner, determined that the money raised would be donated to the McLean County Red Cross in memory of the late Harriett Fuller Rust. Rust, a longtime friend and supporter of IWU and the local Red Cross, designated that money be donated to specific charities, in lieu of flowers, upon her death.

Lyn Hruska, executive director of the McLean County Red Cross, says that while IWU students always have volunteered their time and energy to the organization through blood drives or volunteer work, she was particularly "surprised and touched" by this donation.

"We have a nice relationship with IWU, and they're always very supportive of us," says Hruska. "We were truly honored by this gift, however, especially since it was in honor of Harriett Rust."

While the money raised from the Homecoming date auction was not allocated toward any specific cause, according to Hruska, it was placed in a community fund in case of a local disaster.

Lietz hopes that the IWU Student Senate donation to the McLean County Red Cross will serve, also, as an example of philanthropy to future IWU students.

"It's important that students continue to pass on the generosity of those who came before us, such as Harriett Rust," she says. "We should follow this example."

### **About Harriett Fuller Rust**

Harriett Fuller Rust, who died July 13, 1999, was a community leader who donated her time and energy to Bloomington-area organizations for several decades. She served 37 years on the United Way of McLean County board of directors, and served as the organization's vice president of planning for six years. The Rust family is a long-time supporter of the McLean County Red Cross, which is an agency of the United Way.

In 1999, Illinois Wesleyan University named their newest dormitory the Harriett Fuller Rust House, honoring Rust's long-time contributions and dedicated service to the university. She was an IWU trustee for 15 years, as well as president of the IWU President's Club from 1983-99.

Rust also served as a board member and president of Victory Hall Home for Boys for more than 35 years, and on the Advisory Council to the Bloomington Board of Education for five years. A long-time member of the McLean County Historical Society board of directors, Rust served as that group's president from 1985-87. She was also an active member of the Illinois Shakespeare Society and the McLean County Historical Society. Rust was named the city of Bloomington's "Preservationist of the Year" in 1995, and "Illinois Museum Trustee of the Year" in 1998.

Born in Central Illinois, Rust graduated from Bloomington High School. She attended both the University of Illinois and the University of Southern California, and married Edward B. Rust, Sr. on Aug. 7, 1940. The couple are the parents of IWU trustee Edward B. Rust, Jr. '72, who is chairman and chief executive officer of State Farm Insurance Cos., Peggy (Mrs. Bill) Wetzels of Bloomington, and Holly (Mrs. Joe Tom) Wood of Evergreen, Colo.

## **About Illinois Wesleyan University**

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,070 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and individual schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletics and recreation center, a \$25 million science center, a \$6.8 million residence hall, a \$5.1 million Center for Liberal Arts and a \$1.65 million baseball stadium. Construction is underway on a \$26 million library and \$6 million student center. Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine ranks Illinois Wesleyan University 12th among the nation's 1,600 private colleges in providing top-quality education at an affordable cost. Also sharing IWU's rank are Princeton and Dartmouth.

[| Top of Page |](#)

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