

Craft night boosts Nampa women's ministries

Monthly event pulls outsiders in.

Nampa Corps Officer Major Nancy Halverson had a number of ideas for Women's Ministries, but none of them seemed to stick. When the corps decided to add music classes for kids, she started thinking about how area craft stores offered classes to learn new crafts, but they all cost money.

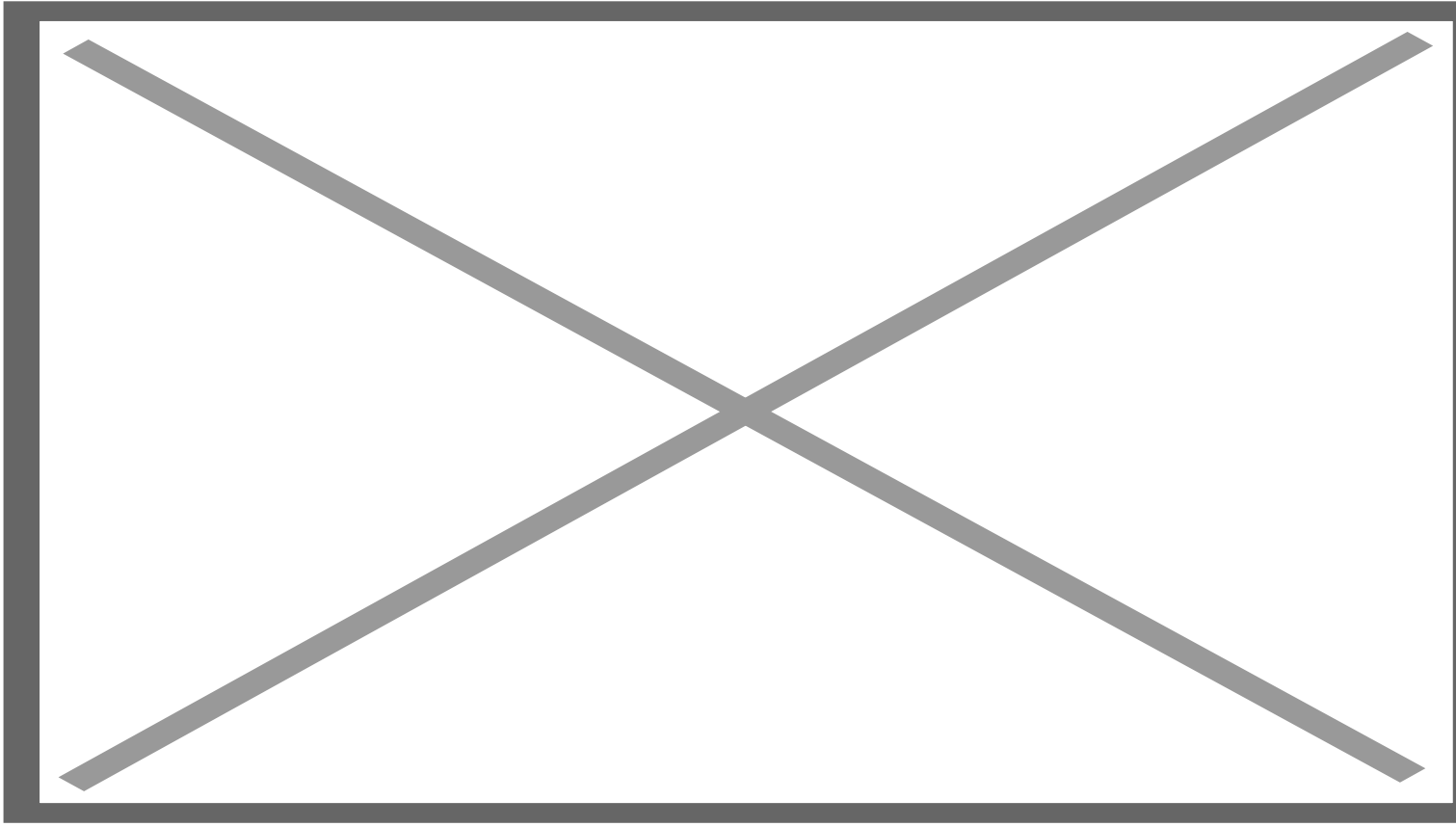


That's when she got the idea for Ladies Craft Night, an evening class that teaches a new craft once a month for free, with the option to give a donation to cover the cost.

"I was looking for a way to reach out to other women who might not have a place to get to know other people," Halverson said.

At the first Ladies Craft Night held in March, 23 women attended, with more than half never having been to The Salvation Army before.

"From our first group meeting, it seems like it offered not only a chance for people to learn about new crafts, but there were several people that were new to the area who were looking to connect with other people," Halverson said.



Two of the women from the event went on to attend the corps' Sunday service the following weekend.

Outside of announcing the event in the corps, Halverson took to the internet to promote the event, and said posting on the neighborhood app Nextdoor seemed to net the most engagement, with women asking questions about the event, and several eventually attending.

"We were pleasantly surprised by the response from our advertising online; we actually had to cut off registration to make sure we had enough supplies for the project," Halverson said.

Along with the online efforts, Halverson put flyers in the food boxes the corps distributed for a couple of weeks, and mailed postcards to 400 people on the corps' Christmas distribution list.

In addition to a number of first time attendees, Halverson said a couple of staff members who typically don't come to corps events participated.

Social Services Coordinator Star Rayo joined in on making acrylic paintings at the March event.

"Girl time and crafting are things I never seem to have time for and they're things I enjoy," Rayo said. "I really loved how all the ladies were very encouraging with one another. Everyone's crafts are different, bringing new perspectives to the table."

Future Ladies Craft Night activities include embroidery, ceramics and turning trash into treasure.

“All in attendance seemed to really enjoy themselves and many said they would be back next month,” Halverson said. “I’m so thankful to God for pushing me to move forward with the idea and the blessing that the first meeting was for us.”