

"Enhancing the lives of individuals and families through quality educational programs and experiences, encouraging responsible leadership and service to the community."

Inside This Issue

- Upcoming Events
- Welcome New Members!
- Introducing Karen Halicki, 1st VP
- Award-Winning Peach Recipes
- Another Easy, Quick Christmas Gift!
- Officer's Reports
- Unit News
- Macon County Meeting Minutes

VOLUNTEER HOURS

VOLUNTEER HOURS ARE DUE BY THE END OF DECEMBER TO KAREN CAHILL. YOU CAN EMAIL THEM TO HER AT karencahill@outlook.com, TELEPHONE HER AT 428-0037, OR

MAIL THEM TO HER AT 2517 BURGENER DR., DECATUR, ILLI-NOIS. REMEMBER TO COUNT YOUR HCE HOURS SEPARATE FROM YOUR OTHER VOLUNTEER HOURS. THE ONLY HOURS THAT DO NOT COUNT ARE YOUR HOURS TAKING CARE OF YOUR KIDS OR GRANDKIDS! LET'S HAVE 100 PER-CENT PARTICIPATION THIS YEAR FROM OUR MEMBERS! THANK YOU!

IN MEMORIAM

Our Pleasant Grove unit lost two precious members this year. Tot Schuman joined HCE in 2001. Her wit and sense of humor made our meetings very enjoyable. She was a talented quilter who encouraged others. Her outgoing personality won her many friends.





Mary Shelton joined HCE in 1999. Her talents included canning, quilting, knitting and crocheting. She shared these crafts with many friends and family members. Mary was very organized and expected others to be also. She helped expedite decision making.

Ladies, we miss you, are better for knowing you and know that you have received your heavenly rewards. RIP

Recommended Reading for the Christmas Holidays

As I was searching the internet for items for this newsletter, I came upon a recommended list of stories for the holidays. My children are all grown-up now, but I do remember reading some of these stories to them, and I hope that they continue this tradition with their children. I personally love to read and I love reading to my grandchildren now, as I am sure that most of you do too, so here goes:

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer-- This story was written by Robert L. May by the Montgomery Ward Company in 1939. The story was given out to over 2 million children who visited the stores at that time. His brother-in-law, Johnny Marks, realized the popularity of the story and wrote the song by that name.

The Fir Tree-- this is a fairy tale written by Hans Christian Andersen, and tells the story of a young tree that wants nothing more than to grow up. He is so eager for the future that he forgets to appreciate the present. Is that a lesson for all of us?

The Polar Express--This is one of my all-time favorites and I always read it to my first graders. It is a wonderfully illustrated book, and I hope you get to read it to a young child.

Twas the Night Before Christmas--This was a tradition in the Austin household on the night before Christmas when the kids were young. Both of us would take turns reading it. This went along with the tradition of setting out the milk and cookies for Santa.

I know that there are many more stories to choose from but these were some that we did in our household. Merry Christmas to all of you and have a Blessed New Year!

Welcome New Members!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, January 1st

Extension Office Closed

Monday, January 13th

HCE Board Meeting 1:00 PM Extension Office—Clover Room

> Monday, January 20th **Extension Office Closed**

Monday, February 3rd **RSVP for February Lesson**

Tri County Meeting Macon County Extension Office 9:30 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Monday, February 10th

Latest Scams 9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Extension Office—Upstairs

HCE Board Meeting 1:00 PM Extension Office—Clover Room

Newsletter items due to Linda Austin lindaaustin48@gmail.com

Monday, February 24th

Pillowcase Sewing Day 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Extension Office—Clover room

Friday, February 28th

Scholarship Applications available at Extension office and online at www.mchce.org under Education tab. Scholarship Committee Chairman: Carol Ropp

Peachy Fruit Salad Carol M

1 Can (21oz) Peac

- 1 Can (20oz) Pinea
- 1 Can (11oz) Mano
- 2 Medium Firm Ba
- 1 Cup Green Grap

1 Cup Mini Marsh

In a bowl, combine gently. Refrigerate

Diane Rueff-- Diane has been married to Harold Rueff for 46 wonderful years. They have a married son, Joshua, and they have 3 grandchildren and one great grandson.

Cheryl Drake-- Cheryl is a widow. She was married for over 50 years. She has a girl, Samantha, and a son named Tommy. Cheryl has 5 grandchildren, 4 girls and 1 boy, and one great grandson.

Leanne Mull--Leanne and her husband moved to Decatur about a year ago from Park Forest, a south suburb of Chicago. She works as a professional speaker and consultant specializing in best practices in supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They live in the West End of Decatur with their dog. Wee Hudson Duncan St. Rivers, the Earl of Mull and their cat, Cade MJ Mull.

These new members joined the Rock Springs Unit. Congratulations!!!

Cathy Gipson--She was born Catherine Oldham in Vandalia, Illinois. Her love for the outdoors must have come from the fact that she was born in the yard as her father was trying to get her mother to the hospital. She grew up on a dairy farm south of Vandalia, and milked cows every morning before school and every afternoon after school among all of the other farm chores. She came to Decatur after high school graduation, got a job to pay for airline stewardess school, which was her dream job. She got a job at GE to earn enough money to fulfill her dream, met Joe, who became her husband.

They have 3 children, 2 boys and 1 girl, 9 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. God is the reason that she has this legacy to tell. She retired from Meridian High School after 20 years of loving her job. She is thankful to be a member of HCE and a big thanks goes to Barb Reed for inviting her to join! She is a member of the Hickory Point unit. Welcome!!!

Introducing Karen Halicki, First Vice President for 2020

She has been a member of the Patchwork Unit in Maroa since 1995. She has been on the County Board off and on all of these years. She was also on the State Board for three years as the Sales and Volunteer Hours person.

They farmed for 38 years. She drove a school bus for 13 years, working part time in the school as a janitor, office helper, kitchen and playground helper. She also just volunteers in any of the school's activities. She keeps busy now sewing, exercise group, volunteering twice a month to do nails for the residents at Manor Care. In her spare time, she keeps up with her 8 year old granddaughter, Alyvia. She is one busy lady!!!

She is looking forward to this new position and working with the board this year.

Balsamic Peach Chicken Skillet

Sandy Severe

- 2 TBSP Olive Oil
- 1/2 Medium Yellow Onion—Sliced (3/4 Cup)
- 4 (5oz) Boneless Skinless Chicken Breasts
 - or 1 1/4 lbs Chicken Breast Tenderloins
 - Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper
 - 2 Cloves Garlic, Minced
 - 1/3 Cup Balsamic Vinegar
 - 1 TBSP Honey
 - 2 Cups Sliced Firm but Ripe Peaches (About 2 Medium)
 - 1 (14.5oz) Can Diced Tomatoes, Drained
 - 1/4 Cup Thinly Sliced Basil Ribbons

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté 3 minutes then push far to the side. Add chicken, season with salt and pepper and cook until golden, about 2.5 minutes per side. Remove chicken from skillet and transfer to a plate, while leaving oil and onions in skillet (if you don't have much oil left you can add another 1/2 TBSP). Add garlic to skillet and sauté 20 seconds (you can push onions back to center if you haven't already). Add balsamic vinegar and cook and stir until reduced by half, about 1 minutes. Stir in honey then add in peaches and tomatoes and toss, season lightly with salt and pepper. Return chicken to skillet, nestling between peaches and tomatoes (you can lift some of the peaches and tomatoes over the chicken to create more room), cover skillet with lid, reduce heat to medium-low and allow to simmer until chicken has cooked through (it should register 165 degrees on an instant read thermometer), about 6-9 minutes. Top with fresh basil and serve warm.

Peach Pecan Sweet Potatoes

Pauline O'Dell

- 6 Sweet Potatoes Peeled and Sliced 1/2" Thick
- 1 (16oz) Pkg Frozen
 Unsweetened Peach Slices
- 4 TBSP Butter, Sliced Into Pats
- 1 TBSP Lemon Juice
- 1/2 Cup Brown Sugar
- 1/2 tsp Ground Ginger
- Salt
- 1/2 Cup Chopped Pecans
- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 9x13 baking dish.
- Arrange half the sweet potatoes in the bottom of prepared baking dish. Layer with half of the peach slices and dot with half the butter. Repeat layering with remaining sweet potatoes and peach slices and sprinkle with lemon juice. Combine the brown sugar, ginger and salt and mix well.
 Sprinkle the sugar mixture over the
 - Sprinkle the sugar mixture over the potatoes and peaches. Dot the casse-role with the remaining butter. Cover pan with aluminum foil.
- Bake in the preheated oven until sweet potatoes are tender; about 1 hour. Remove foil, sprinkle with pecans and continue baking 10 to 15 minutes, until pecans are toasted and fragrant.



Peach Crisp

Linda Hooge

- 9x13 Baking Dish
- 4 (16oz) Cans Sliced Peaches
- 1 tsp Cinnamon
- 1 Box Yellow Cake Mix
- 1 Stick of Butter

Use juice from 3 cans of peaches. Drain the juice from the 4th can. Put peaches in a bowl. Add 1 tsp cinnamon. Mix well. Pour Mixture into the baking dish. Pour yellow cake mix into a bowl. Add stick of room temperature butter. Mix until crumbly. Spoon dry mixture over the peaches. Bake 350° for 45 minutes or when topping looks crispy.



Another Easy, Quick Christmas Gift!

Pair with aged cheddar and crostini. Offer it as a hostess gift at holiday parties.

- <u>Bacon Jam Recipe</u>
- 1 1/2 pounds sliced bacon, cut crosswise into 1-inch pieces
- 2 cups finely chopped shallots (from 3 large or 8 small shallots)
- 4 small cloves garlic chopped (about 1 tablespoon)
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground mustard
- 1/2 cup bourbon
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 1/3 cup sherry vinegar
- 1/3 cup packed light-brown sugar
- 1. Spread half of bacon in a single layer in a large skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently until browned, 20 to 23 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Remove fat; clean pan. Repeat with remaining bacon, reserving brown bits and 1 tablespoon fat in pan.
- 2. Add shallots and garlic to pan and cook over medium heat, stirring, until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add chili powder, ginger, and mustard and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Increase heat to high; add bourbon and maple syrup. Bring to a boil, scraping up browned bits. Add vinegar and brown sugar and return to a boil. Add reserved bacon; reduce heat to low. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until liquid reduces to a thick glaze, about 10 minutes.
- 3. Transfer mixture to a food processor and pulse, until it has the consistency of a chunky jam. Refrigerate in an airtight container at least 1 hour and up to 4 weeks.

Active time: 1 hour—Total Time: 1 hour and 20 minutes—Makes: About 2 ¾ cups

Officer's Reports

<u>President</u>

Bonnie Lanham

Hope everyone has experienced a happy holiday season thus far. There are lots of interesting lessons coming up in the new year. Be sure to RSVP in time so that you don't miss out. Christian County will be disbanding at the end of 2020, and will be joining our coun-

ty. They will stay in their respective units. We may be getting visits over the year from some of them so they can see how we handle things. I know that I don't have to say this, but let's make them feel welcome--as I know that you all will do!

First Vice President

Linda Hooge

Merry Christmas! Our 2019 is almost gone. I have learned so many

things and now, I am looking forward to 2020 and all of the exciting, new lessons we are going to have.

We had some great lessons this fall, and I am going to summarize some of these lessons just in case you were not able to make it. They were wonderful!

Genealogy--She gave us some great tips and a sheet of helpful websites to search for our ancestors. I learned that the female is always listed by her maiden name, but her tombstone has her married name.

Barn Quilts--Mary Ann Platt taught this lesson and she did a wonderful job! A barn quilt is a large piece of wood that is painted to look like a quilt block. The board measures 8 feet by 8 feet and has been painted with a single quilt pattern and then attached to the outside of a barn or another building. Barn quilts of Illinois covers 33 counties. She gave each one of us a beautiful booklet about these quilts.

Recycling--Sharon Middleton gave us some recycling facts and figures for our lesson. The reasons to recycle paper: Saves 24,000 gallons of water, eliminates 60 pounds of air pollutants, saves enough energy to power the average home for 6 months, saves about 20 trees, and saves 4 barrels of oil. Very interesting facts! Eggs From Farm to Fork--- Bonnie Lanham and Carol Ropp gave us some interesting facts in this lesson. Eggs are high in protein, and one whole egg has 70 calories and every essential vitamin and mineral needed by humans. My favorite part of this lesson was how to easily peel hard cooked eggs. Here are some tips: Carefully pour off the hot water, submerge the eggs in cold water and add ice if needed, eggs will be easier to peel after they have cooled, tap the egg on the counter to gently crack all of the sides, peel by reaching under the membrane, not just the shell, and refrigerate promptly after peeling the egg.

Arthur trip-- This trip was so much fun. We ate at Yoder's Restaurant and then went to the fabric shops and Beachey's.

Police Academy--This tour was so awesome. After learning all about the training that each person goes through to become a police officer, I really appreciate our police officers. It was quite a privilege to take the tour.

This is my last newsletter article. Karen Halicki is taking my place as First Vice President. She will do a great job! It certainly has been fun to do this job!

On a side note, I want to thank Linda Hooge for all of her hard work. She always sends me great, educational reports. Thank you, Linda!

Community Outreach/ Family Issues

Mary Ann Platt

Our membership continues to amaze me. We made large monthly contributions to Operation Enduring Support. These contributions were both monetary and tangible. Some of our

members helped package the boxes for the Easter and Christmas mailings. It is so heartwarming to know that we helped improve the lives of 150 active duty military personnel from Macon County.

We continue making pillowcases for the Ronald McDonald House, God's Shelter of Love, Court Appointed Special Advocates, as well as to a group home. This is a labor of love. It is rewarding to know that these pillowcases let the recipients know that they are loved. What better mission could there be?

Officer's Reports Cont.

Cultural Enrichment Sally Dennis

Thank you to everyone who attended the Fall Meeting and brought crafts to sell, cultural enrichment entries and all the good food for the "peach" potluck entries. We have a lot of good cooks. Also a big thank you to Jo Bauer, Carol Kussart and Kathy Gentry from Piatt County for

being our judges. We appreciate their help very much.

The winners of the first, second and third place food entries are: Meat – Sandy Severe, Lynn Stevens and Sandy Norris. Vegetables – Pauline O'Dell. Crisps – Linda Hooge. Breads & Muffins – Sandy Severe and Cathy Gipson. Salad – Carol Myers and Gigi Longhouser. Appetizers – Cathy Gipson. Cobblers – Rosemary Knap, Sharon Gepford and Lois Miller. Congratulations ladies!

The first place winners of the cultural enrichment categories are: 100 Artwork – Bonnie Lanham, painted "Welcome" rock. 300 Crafts – Linda Hooge, small wicker basket. 400 Crochet Afghans – Karen Halicki, blue afghan. 500 Crochet Other – Karen Halicki, baby slippers. 700 Quilts – Erma Ragle, woods & picnic. 1000 Knit Afghans – Carol Myers, fringed afghan. 1500 Photography – Donna Washburn, old truck. 1700 Quilted Other – Karen Cahill, patriotic pillow cover. 1800 Recycled – Sally Dennis, canning jar lights. 2400 Sewing – Linda Hooge, litter basket. Congratulations to all! Unfortunately only 8 of these can go to conference, so two ladies declined one of their entries. Karen Halicki took back her baby slippers and Linda Hooge took back her litter basket. Thank you!! I hope everyone will be able to attend the conference and take their entries with them. If you are not able to attend, I will be glad to take your entries for you. Just make sure I have them by March.

Actually I will be sharing this part of my job with Cheryl Sample, as she is the new Cultural Enrichment Officer. I will gladly finish out the year and help Cheryl get started in the new year. And I know Sharon Middleton will do the same for me as I change over to Treasurer.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

Unit News

Maple Grove Unit

For our November meeting, we decided to meet after the lesson "Eggs from Farm to Fork". Eight of us met at the Bistro 537. We had two guests with us also. The minutes were not read, as we did not meet inOctober.

The treasurer gave her report and an envelope was passed around for birthday collection.

Our president Carol, reported that there will be 143 boxes sent to our troops from the Enduring Support group. We collected money to be used for the postage on these important packages.

Our December meeting will be at Carol Ropp's home on the eleventh of December. It will be a catered meal by the company "God, Family ,and Friends." We will be bringing a consumable gift for our annual gift exchange. Carol took a vote on whether to continue the gift exchange, it really is a lot of fun, so the vote was "yes!"

We, at Maple Grove, hope that all our HCE members have a wonderful Christmas and a Joyous New Year! - Submitted by Mary Kay Ennis

Patchwork Unit

We had our November meeting at Panera's in Decatur. Six members were present. Our December meeting will be at Crawford's in Maroa. We discuss the lessons and just have a nice time visiting with each other. We will follow our meeting with a cookie exchange at the Maroa Library from 7 to 8 p.m. - Karen Halicki, reporting

Rock Springs Unit

The November meeting of the Rock Springs Unit was held at Huddelstones Hideaway in Shelbyville. This is a delightful Bed and Breakfast owned and operated by Bonnie Lanham's daughter and husband. There were 10 members and one guest, Brenda Elder, who is the local historian. She gave a very interesting talk about the history of Shelbyville. After her enlightening talk, we enjoyed a really great lunch provided by our own personal chef. We went on a tour of this beautiful house too.

It was decided that Linda Hooge and I would take a monetary donation to God's Shelter of Love. The next meeting of our group on December 11th at 1 P.M., will be held at Coz's in Mt. Zion. After that, we will go to Lyn Stevens house for dessert and a gift exchange. - Lois Miller, reporting

Unit News Cont.

Hickory Point Unit

We met at the home of Elaine Hamm one week late because of the snowstorm. Members shared information from the lessons they had attended in October. The lessons that they spoke about were Genealogy, Barn Quilts, Recycling, and Hummingbirds. We were glad that our members had attended many lessons and had learned new information.

Our December meeting will be lunch at the Decatur Club on December 10th with a gift exchange. We will also be bringing personal hygiene items to share with the God's Shelter of Love organization. Marge Kauffman gave us an assignment to write down a list of our blessings to match the letters in our name. We all agreed that our blessings outnumbered those letters. We had some lively conversation as we enjoyed delicious cherry cheesecake.—Louise Wickline, reporting

Oakley Unit

November-- Our November meeting was held at Doherty's Restaurant. There were 5 members present. We discussed old business, which was the International Day in September and the Fall Meeting in October. Volunteer hours will be due at the end of December and need to be sent to Karen Cahill.

Our new business was to bring money and donate it to Operation Enduring Support for the expense to send boxes to the troops Our December meeting is to be on December 6th at 12:30. We are going to have a gift exchange and are to have a story, game or Christmas joke to share. Cheryl Yoder is going to go to the December 9th lesson. Sandy gave the lesson on Frugal Cooking.

December-- Our December meeting was at the Wildflour Restaurant on December 6th. We had a lovely room to celebrate the season and share in fellowship. We were very fortunate to have Cheryl, Carol, Patty, Nancy, Shirley, Sandy and Dara attending. We had a wonderful gift exchange, and everyone enjoyed their gifts. Patty read two humorous Christmas articles and Sandy provided a "Who Played Santa" game. No real business was discussed. We just had plain fun and laughter! The next meeting will be January 10th at Carol's home to fill in our books and to discuss next year's happenings. To all of our members and friends at HCE, have a blessed and very Merry Christmas. May this next year be a happy and healthy one! - Reporting, Sandy Severe and Cheryl Yoder

Mt. Zion Unit—September

The Mt. Zion Unit met at Crawford's restaurant in Mt. Zion. 12 members attended. A motion was made to donate \$50 to The Comfort Dog Program from Charleston. The motion was seconded by Pat Malloy. Carol Flitz updated us on the board meeting minutes. Von Gregory gave a talk about India's religion. She made an awesome display that explained clearly India's beliefs. Von was very knowledgeable on the subject. We always enjoy her presentations. Our next meeting will be at The Wagon restaurant on November 20th. – Sharon Kelley

Mt. Zion Unit-November

Nancy Napier, our hostess for the day, welcomed eleven members of the Mt. Zion unit to The Wagon for lunch on November 20. At each place at the table, she had placed a pretty kitchen towel for us to take home and enjoy. After ordering from the menu, we had a short business meeting. President Vicki Wooten collected volunteer hours from several members and reminded other members to send their hours to Karen Cahill as soon as possible. Dues for the year 2020 also need to be paid to Sharon Middleton. A get well card was signed by all of the members to present to Karen Shelley, who is recovering from surgery. Treasurer Sandy Norris reported that our unit collected \$40.00 for the Friendship Project during 2019.

Following our delicious lunches, several members reported on the lesson during HCE Week in October. Carol Flitz attended the lesson about "Barn Quilts", but was unable to be with us today. Barb Brandt reported on the lesson about "Frugal Cooking without a Recipe". She had made copies of the recipes for all of us and we all found it to be very interesting with good ideas to try at home. Pat Malloy reported on the lesson, "The Real Dirt on Recycling". Some of the statistics from this lesson were a bit shocking to most of us. We enjoyed the lesson so much that she will bring copies of the lesson to the next meeting. Von Gregory reported on the lesson, "Where Do Your Roots Come From", and distributed a copy of the web sites from the lesson to each member along with the facts from the lesson. Vicki Wooten reported that she really enjoyed the trip to Arthur on the Friday of HCE Week. We would like to thank the leaders who planned and presented the lessons during HCE. We thought that they were excellent choices.

The December meeting will be December 31 at 11:30 at the Raspberry Tea Room.—Von Gregory, reporting

Macon County Meeting September 9, 2019

- CALL TO ORDER: President Bonnie Lanham
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:
- HOMEMAKERS AIM:
- Doug Harlan came to thank the ones who worked on the Farm Progress show. He appreciated all the help from HCE. He also noted that the attendance & sales were down from prior years.
 He hired a replacement for Beth Allhand's job. Another Beth. It is now Beth Miglin. We look forward to getting to know
- JOKE: Bonnie

her

- **ROLL CALL:** 9 board members—4 Units represented
- Secretary: Judy Wilhelm/Carol Flitz; Minutes were accepted with 1 correction. Motion by Donna Washburn. Second by Sally Dennis. Motion carried.
- Treasurer: Sharon Middleton

Report filed for Audit SallyDennis & Karen Halicki will do Audit. They will also work with Sharon to get the 2020 Budget ready to present to membership at the Fall County Meeting.

A discussion was held about reimbursing money spent on Craft Days & making pillowcases. Motion to reimburse costs made by Linda Hooge 2nd by Donna Washburn. Motion carried.

Sharon voiced concern about the low number of people signed up for the Health Fair. A number of people were coming to share information on a number of topics, so it would be nice to have several attend. We now have 102 paid members.

Officer Reports:

- President: Bonnie Lanham
- 1st Vice President: Linda Hooge

Updated us on upcoming programs. Noting again the difference in start time of International day. It starts at 9:30 instead of the 11:00 listed in our books.

- **2nd Vice President: Lois** Miller She will set up a Membership table at the Health Fair.
- Community & Family Issues & CVH: Mary Ann Platt—Absent
- Cultural Issues: Sally Dennis

Bring the recipe with your dish for the Fall Meeting.

• Historian: Karen Halicki

Bring pictures of Units. She will work on posting 2019 pictures later as she doesn't get them all until later in year.

• International: Donna Washburn

Has been working with Chef Tucker from Richland to get our menu set. Richland will prepare all food except the Fruitsalad for the luncheon. There has been confusion about the payment at registration for the day. Sharon will collect that day from the unpaid ones.

Tuesday morning the 17th a group will meet to combine the Fruit salad.

Roasters should be brought that day to be given to Chef Tucker for the day. Linda Hooge, Bonnie Lanham, Mary Ann, Linda Austin, And Donna will be providing them.

• Public Relations: Linda Austin—Absent

Unfinished Business:

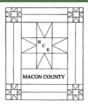
- HCE week was discussed. Sharon Middleton and Karen Halicki will plan the lunches for the days needed.
- Per suggestion from the State Board it was decided that there needed to be 2 signatures on Checks over \$150.00. The Treasurer, President or 1st Vice.

New Business:

• Carol Ropp brought the suggested programs for 2020. They were given to each Unit Representative to give to their members. They will be voted on at the Fall Meeting.

Adjourned at 3:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted by; Judy Wilhelm & Carol Flitz



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2nd Vice President

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