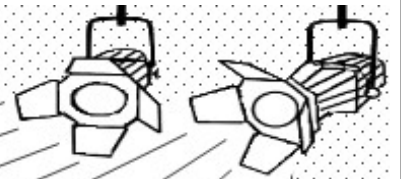


**Macon County**  
**January-February 2024**

**HCE**  
**HIGHLITES**



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

## **Christmas Memories**

I asked our contributors to write about some of their fondest Christmas memories. Maybe you can relate to these too! Enjoy!!

Vicki Wooten says: As a child , we placed our letter to Santa outside of the window. I think my dad collected them while he was outside doing the chores on the farm.

We kids looked forward to getting the Sears Wishbook before Christmas. We could pick out five dollars worth of stuff. You could get two or three toys for five dollars back in the day. I got a doll one time and a school set another year. In the third grade, I got a new bike in the fall before Christmas so Mom thought I should have something to unwrap at Christmastime, so she got me a view master that I still have.

I don't know what happened to the bike, but I ride the one I have now about 1000 miles a year!

Lyn Stevens- The Magic of Christmas Through a Child's Memories

Lyn had two very vivid memories of Christmas magic from her childhood.

The first must have been from when I was four or five. I don't really remember where it happened. We had been someplace on Christmas Eve. But my parents, grandparents and I were gathered in the kitchen. Suddenly, my dearly loved grandma said, "Did you hear that?" She was sure she had heard the front door. We rushed into the living room. And to my delightful surprise, Santa had been there. I know it was Santa because my presents from him were sitting right there under the tree.

My second magical memory was when I was six or seven. We had attended the Christmas Eve children's service at our church. It had been such a special evening. As dad drove the car through the parking lot to the exit, Santa Claus was directly in front of us driving down the street. He was riding in his big red sleigh right down Franklin Street Road in Decatur, Illinois. I didn't even question why he was using horses to pull the sleigh instead of his reindeer. I was just sooooo excited to see Santa!!!

### **Inside This Issue**

- Upcoming Events
- Laughter is Good for the Soul
- Upcoming Programs for DeWitt County
- Wish List for Ronald McDonald House
- Volunteer Hours
- Book Suggestion
- Minutes
- Officer's Reports
- Unit News

### **CORRECTIONS FOR THE PROGRAM BOOKS**

**Please make these corrections in your program books!!!**

PAGE 5—CHANGE LOIS MILLER'S PHONE TO 217-201-1356

PAGE 5—CATHY GIPSON IS A MEMBER OF ROCK SPRINGS UNIT, NOT MT.ZION

PAGE 13—TUESDAY, MAY 14. TIME IS 1:30 TO 3 P.M. NOT 3 A.M.

PAGE 15—JULY 16, TIME IS 1:30 TO 3 P.M. NOT 3 A.M.

PAGE 18—OCTOBER 7, MONDAY, TRI-COUNTY MEETING, 9 :30 TO 1:00 AT DEWITT COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

PAGE 19— CHANGE THE RSVP DATE TO WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23 INSTEAD OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16

PAGE 19—SET UP FOR THE FALL MEETING, CHANGE TO TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29

PAGE 19—FALL MEETING, CHANGE TO OCTOBER 30



# Laughter is Good for the Soul

## Upcoming Events

### Monday, January 1

Extension Office Closed  
Happy New Year!

### Monday, January 8

HCE Board Meeting  
10:00 am  
Macon County Extension  
Office-Clover Room

### Monday, January 15

Extension Office Closed  
Martin Luther King, Jr Day

### Monday, January 29

Sewing Day  
9:30 am-3:30 pm  
Macon County Extension  
Office-Clover Room  
**Newsletter items due to  
Linda Austin @  
lindaustin48@gmail.com**

### Wednesday, January 31

State Conference  
Registration Due

### Monday, February 5

Tri-County Meeting  
9:30 am—1:00 pm  
Macon County Extension  
Office

### Monday, February 12

HCE Board Meeting  
10:00 am  
Macon County Extension  
Office-Clover Room

### Friday, February 23

Scholarship Applications  
Available Online @  
www.mchce.org under  
Education tab. Scholarship  
Committee Chairman -  
Carol Ropp

### Monday, February 26

Sewing Day  
9:30 am - 3:30 pm  
Macon County Extension  
Office - Clover Room

Once again, my good friend, Lyn Stevens, sent me some “funnies” for our “Laughter is Good for the Soul” part of our newsletter. Thank you, Lyn!!!

What does a house wear? ADDRESS

Why are toilets always so good at poker? THEY ALWAYS GET A FLUSH

Why is Peter Pan always flying? BECAUSE HE NEVERLANDS. ( I love this joke because it never grows old.)

Have you heard the rumor going around about butter? NEVER MIND. I SHOULDNT SPREAD IT.

## Upcoming Programs for DeWitt County

I have seen a list of programs for DeWitt County. Their upcoming programs are:

February 20, 1:30 p.m. Safety Presentation and Discussion with Sheriff Walker.

March 19, 1:30 p.m. Cheeses, presented by Caitlin Mellendorf.

You are welcome to attend these programs.

## WISH LIST FOR THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

For many years, we have supported the Ronald McDonald House in Springfield with our donations of pillowcases and volunteer meal preparation. There is a wish list on their website, [rmhc.org](http://rmhc.org), where you can choose some items to donate. They will gladly accept monetary donations too! Thank you!

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

Karen Cahill

After you open your presents and enjoy good food and fellowship this Christmas season, remember to add up those volunteer hours (HCE plus Other) and get them sent to me. You can snail mail, e-mail, text, or call them into me. I would like them as soon as possible. IF you aren't sure if you are too late, just ask instead of NOT sending them. Questions, please call!  
Home: 217-428-0037 or Cell: 217-5209-2683

## BOOK SUGGESTION

Karen Cahill

I recently read an older book written by David Baldacci, called Wish You Well. It is not his usual mystery genre. This one was based on his family's history and was a touching story that takes place in the coal mine region of VA. The focus is young people learning about love and loss as they maneuver their new life in this rustic area. It's a very heart-warming story.

# Macon County Home & Community Education Board Meeting

Elaine Hamm  
October 9, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER:** Bonnie Lanham

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Bonnie Lanham

**HOMEMAKERS' AIM:** Bonnie Lanham

**JOKE:** Bonnie Lanham

**ROLL CALL:** Elaine Hamm

Units represented: Hickory Point; Maple Grove; Patchwork; Oakley-Pleasant Grove; Mt. Zion, Rock Springs

Total in attendance: 11 (Karen Cahill, Sally Dennis, Elaine Hamm, Bonnie Lanham, Linda Hooge, Mary Ann Platt, Carol Ropp, Cheryl Sample, Sandy Severe, Lyn Stevens, Vicky Wooten)

**SECRETARY:** Minutes of the September 11, 2023 Board meeting were reviewed by all present. Linda Hooge moved to approve said minutes as read. Karen Cahill seconded. Motion carried.

**TREASURER:** Sally Dennis reported a bank balance of \$3,991.75. Each Board member received a copy of the up-to-date budget spreadsheet. The treasurer's report was filed for audit. Sally reported that the \$42 check she wrote to Sharon Middleton on December 10, 2022 for website reimbursement is lost. Mary Ann Platt moved that the check be reissued; Lyn Stevens seconded and motion passed.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** A thank you note from Peggy Fear was passed around.

## **OFFICERS' REPORTS:**

**President:** Bonnie Lanham again stressed that HCE members need to call Roxy to be put on the meeting list by the RSVP date. It is imperative that we know who is coming. If there is a required charge for a meal, etc., the payment can be made up to and including the meeting date. Bonnie recruited several Board members to read history highlights at our Tea Party/MCHCE 105<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. These are from "The History of Macon County Association for Home & Community Education 1918-2018." Mary Ann Platt suggested that the ladies with 50+ years of membership be recognized that day.

**1st Vice President:** Sandy Severe reminded us of the Tea Party in two days and the Fire Training Tour from 1-3 p.m. on October 19.

**2nd Vice President:** Lyn Stevens noted the dues deadline of November 1. Craft sessions at half of the local libraries have been scheduled. Red, green and gold yarn is still needed for making Christmas gnomes at these craft sessions. Bookmarks will also be made.

**Community & Family Issues & CVH:** Mary Ann Platt thanked everyone for the pillowcases, NICU flannel hearts (including 142 donated from DeWitt County) and pop tabs. Operation Enduring Support has been the recipient of three large bags of items and monetary donations from HCE units.

Linda Hooge announced that there will be two decorated boxes at the Tea Party for donations for Operation Enduring Support. Pillowcases have been delivered to the Salvation Army, DCFS and New Life Pregnancy Center. At the Tea Party, adult pillowcases will be presented to Mindy Peterson-Lindsey for her to give to the place she works.

**Cultural Enrichment:** Cheryl Sample stated her emphasis is on getting projects to judge at our Cultural Enrichment Day on November 29. Forms will be ready for check-in of projects at 9 a.m. Three DeWitt County women will serve as judges. Set up will occur on November 28. Thinking of food, as people will be hungry, party mix and breakfast-type foods were suggested. Karen Cahill suggested having a guest speaker who is affiliated with the arts. There will be a People's Choice award. A flyer will be made available for unit presidents to distribute to HCE members.

**Historian:** Carol Ropp reported that Kathleen Peterson is collecting old cookbooks for the annual conference, noting that the cookbooks will be kept for one year prior to their return. Many of our 2024 lessons will have to be in the Clover Room on Tuesday or Thursday since the horticulturist already has already reserved the third Wednesday dates.

**International:** Vicky Wooten passed out the Piatt County HCE newsletter for each unit.

**Public Relations:** Linda Austin - absent. She is always interested in new recipes for the newsletter.

**District 3 Director:** Karen Cahill will make CVH forms available at the Tea Party, as well as order forms for the flag and water bottle, which are annual conference fundraisers. Karen has sent notices regarding the Mini District Workshop, with an October 27 RSVP date. Anyone is welcome to bring their lunch and arrive on November 1 after 11:30 a.m. in order to have time to visit. The meeting will start at 1 p.m., during which more details about annual conference will be revealed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

# Macon County Home & Community Education Board Meeting

Carol Ropp  
November 13, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER:** Bonnie Lanham

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Bonnie Lanham

Units represented: Rock Springs, Patchwork, Oakley/Pleasant Grove, Maple Grove, Mt. Zion

Total in attendance: 12 Bonnie Lanham, Cheryl Sample, Lyn Stevens, Cathy Gipson, Karen Halicki. Mary Ann Platt, Sandy Severe, Karen Cahill, Sally Dennis, Vickie Wooten, Lois Miller and Carol Ropp

**Secretary's Report:** Motion to approve the report was made by Lyn Stevens 2<sup>nd</sup> Karen Cahill

**Treasurer's Report:** Sally is having problems with the report. Karen Halicki offered to help her figure out why the checking account balances aren't the same. The budget doesn't balance right now. Sally went over who still owes dues and members who have resigned.

Carol Ropp moved that MCHCE give Roxy a \$100 Visa gift card for a Christmas gift. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sally Dennis

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:** Sandy Severe reminded us about upcoming activities.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** Lyn Stevens reported that the new membership books will be ready to pass out at same time as the 2024 program books.

**Community & Family Issues:** Mary Ann Platt discussed some possible projects.

**Cultural Enrichment:** Cheryl Sample For Cultural Enrichment Day, Cheryl suggested changing the time to 9:00 to register items and begin showing at 9:30 and end at 11:30. Judging will start at 10:00. There will also be Voters' Choice or Best of Show Award.

**Historian:** Carol Ropp reminded us to keep saving newspaper articles, etc.

**Co-International:** Lois Miller and Cathy Gipson are beginning to work on information for Malaysia.

**Public Relations:** Linda Austin was absent.

**District 3 Director:** Karen Cahill talked about our trip to Eureka and that Timi's Tours has a bus to rent. She reminded us that it is getting close to time to report our 2023 volunteer hours to her.

**New Business:** For our Christmas board meeting, Bonnie suggested we have a white elephant gift exchange, a cookie exchange with each of us bringing three dozen cookies and a potluck for lunch. We decided not to have the gift exchange. Bonnie passed around papers with items for lunch which we drew and our menu was planned.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25.

## **Officer's Reports**

### **President**

Bonnie Lanham

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I will be away for awhile, so if you need anything, contact 1st Vice President Sandy Severe. I will return about the middle of February.

I hope you will all try to attend the State Conference in March. It will be a great time. Turning 100 years old is a BIG DEAL! Reservations need to be made by January 31. Go to the state website at [www.iahce.org](http://www.iahce.org) for more information.

Remember to sign up for all of the lessons that you want to attend. Program books and membership books should be out to all of the membership by now. Remember late reservations for food related meetings will cost \$5.00 more. We have some interesting lessons planned for you. There are a lot more sewing days. We will be doing pillowcases as well as some other items.

Be safe out there!!

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### **First Vice President**

Sandy Severe

Merry Christmas everyone!! Hope you have all your gifts bought and the wrapping is all done. I sure don't—running behind, as usual.

Our program books and membership directory for 2024 are available . Presidents of your units should have your copy. There are many good lessons and I hope you will be able to attend all of them. Be sure to get your volunteer hours to Karen Cahill by the end of the year.

There will be no lessons in January and February, but we will have sewing days on January 29 from 9:30 to 3:30, and February 26 from 9:30 to 3:30. They are so much fun!! You need to join us!!

State Conference registration is due January 31. I do hope you will attend this wonderful celebration of 100 years of HCE. I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year! See you in 2024.

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### **Second Vice President**

Lyn Stevens

I am pleased to report that as of the first of December, we have 104 members who have paid their 2024 dues. This included 3 brand new members. Let's welcome Pat Ware (Mt Zion), Peggy Fear (Maple Grove) and Carolyn Randall (Center).

On the other end of the not so pleased, in 2023, we had 114 members. IF YOU HAVE OVERLOOKED SENDING YOUR DUES, please do so soon. Make your check out to MCHCE for \$18.00 and mail it to Sally Dennis.

I hope you are all ready to dive into this new year. I encourage you to attend lessons and meetings in 2024. There are wonderful and interesting lessons planned for the months ahead.

I hope everyone had a merry and blessed Christmas with loved ones surrounding you. I pray each one of you have a New Year filled with joy, peace and love.

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### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH/FAMILY ISSUES**

Linda Hooge and Mary Ann Platt

We received \$146.00 from monetary donations at the Fall Meeting to help pay postage for the Operation Enduring Support Project. Thank you to all who donated cash or items. After the Fall Meeting, Bonnie Lanham, Cathy Gibson, and Linda Hooge delivered the items and cash to the church. The money was given to Karen File at Grace Methodist Church. She will put it towards the postage.



## **Unit News**

### **Center**

Mary Lou Poor

We met on November 6th at the Christian County Extension office. There were eleven members and two guests present. The theme was Lemonade Party. The tables were decorated with a lemon print covering. Ann Brady made her famous lemon cake. We were grateful that Bonnie Lanham and Karen Cahill were able to attend our meeting. They provided us with the information about Volunteer Hours. They gave us directions about what we can use for hours. Our members brought food items that families could use for their Thanksgiving meal. These items were given to the Taylorville Food Pantry.

For our December 4th meeting, we met at the home of Delores Hunt. There were 12 members and one guest present. Her home was beautifully decorated for Christmas. That put everyone in the Christmas mood!! Delores has a very large dining table and we all gathered around it telling stories and laughing quite a bit. We brought delicious appetizers, pizza and desserts. Each member was to bring a \$5.00 gift, 5 one dollar gifts and an exchange of Christmas cards. Delores read the Right Family while members passed the gifts around. We played Bingo to conclude our meeting. The \$1.00 gifts were spread on the table and everyone took home a gift. Members brought food items to donate to the Taylorville Food Pantry. We wish everyone a MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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### **Hickory Point**

Louise Wickline

Our news is "more of the same". We were all looking forward to our Christmas get-together for a cheese soup lunch and potluck at Mary Beth Wickline's home, but COVID happened! We're hoping this will be our last cancellation because of that or any other illness! Best wishes from all of us for the New Year!

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### **Mt. Zion**

Barb Brandt

September. We had five members and one guest who attended. The guest was Carol Flitz's granddaughter, Margaret. Our meeting was held at the Roadhouse Grill, which just opened up in Decatur. We all enjoyed lunch. Erma Sutton, a member of our unit, just passed away. She will be missed by all.

October. Four members of our unit went to Springfield. We ate at the Golden Corral restaurant. We took a tour of the Capitol building. It was a beautiful building with lots of statues and pictures. We sat in on the House of Representatives. We also went to the Illinois State Library. Sisters Mary Ann Beck and Brenda Noland's brother had a painting in the library. What a great honor!

November. Eight members were present at this meeting. We went to Moweaqua to the Salty Farmer. It was a great lunch. We went to the Coal Mine museum. It was a small museum with lots of artifacts. The hostess told us all about the coal mining procedure. At one time, there were 105 men on the payroll and 37, 433 tons of coal that was hoisted. There was an explosion in 1932 and 54 miners were killed.

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### **Oakley-Pleasant Grove**

Patty Lovekamp

November 7. We met at Coz's in Mt. Zion. Five members attended. Sandy Severe conducted the meeting. We voted to send \$45.00 to IAHC to help with conference expenses. We also contributed to our hostess. Sandy provided each of us with a cute three-dimensional metal star as well as sweet treats. We also talked about recent and future lessons as well as turning in volunteer hours.

December. Nine members met for a Christmas potluck lunch at Mary Ann Platt's home on December 5. Our brief meeting included the election of officers. They will remain the same. Presidents, Sandy Severe and Mary Ann Platt. Secretary, Patty Lovekamp. Treasurer, Sally Dennis. We played our traditional Bingo with playing cards. Each member brought 3 inexpensive gifts. These were given to the Bingo winners.

Our next meeting will be January 9th at Coz's in Mt. Zion at 11 a.m. Sally Dennis will be our hostess.

## Unit News (cont.)

### Cultural Enrichment

Cheryl Sample

Happy holidays! Ready for a new year? I am looking forward to 2024. This past year included my first ambulance ride. Thankfully, nothing too serious. I finished the year with a broken collarbone. The holidays are here and I am ready to enjoy them.

I always ask to have the Cultural Enrichment categories listed in our newsletter if there is room. The objective is to “encourage appreciation of and participation in the arts, including visual, performing and applied.” Each of those categories are very large and filled with a variety of interests.

This new year is a good time to try a new activity. Did you realize attending the Little Theatre in Sullivan, or other shows elsewhere could be on your list of activities? Grandchildren’s holiday programs or spring school plays fall under the performing arts. Attendance in a book club is always worthwhile too. And winter is definitely the season for reading!

In the meantime, enjoy this special season. Have a cup of coffee or tea with someone you haven’t seen for awhile or call a shut-in just to visit. It will make their day and yours too!!! Happy New Year!!

### CULTURAL ENRICHMENT ITEMS ENTERED IN THE STATE CONFERENCE:

1. Quilt-machine pieced and quilted— Cheryl Sample
2. Counted cross stitch— Karen Halicki
3. Diamond painting of cardinals —Bonnie Lanham
4. Crochet item, planter of cactus —Karen Halicki
5. Hand embroidered item— Cathy Gipson
6. Knitted shawl —Karen Cahill
7. Photography—Donna Washburn
8. Holiday pillow—Karen Cahill

After the judging for conference was done, everyone voted on the rest of the items for People’s Choice. Those winners were:

1st place—fox quilt by Alice Grooms, DeWitt County

2nd place—it was a tie between a quilted bag made by Cheryl Sample and a red truck diamond painting made by Bonnie Lanham. Both ladies are from Macon County HCE.

3rd place—reversible pillow made by Alice Grooms of DeWitt County

The beautiful lighthouse painting was won by Liz King of Rock Springs unit in Macon County HCE

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**Check out our Websites!**

Macon County HCE at

[www.mchce.org](http://www.mchce.org)

IAHCE at

[www.iahce.org](http://www.iahce.org)