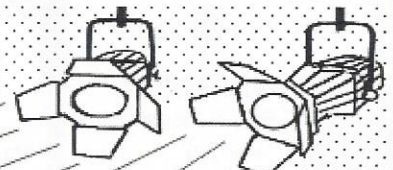


**Macon County**  
March-April 2025



# HCE HIGHLIGHTS

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

## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR ASSOCIATION?

1. What does HCE stand for?
2. What were the early names for this organization?
3. In what year was the state organization formed?
4. What individual wrote the Aim for the Homemakers and what year was it written?
5. The first Citizenship Conference was held in 1936 in what city?
6. What county in Illinois had the first Home Bureau organization?
7. The state newsletter was first published in what year?

## CERTIFIED VOLUNTEER HOURS (CVH)

Karen Cahill

### CONGRATULATIONS

Macon County members on a job well done! I am happy to report that almost 75% of you turned in your 2024 volunteer hours. We submitted 5,730 HCE hours plus 14,710 other hours for a grand total of 20,440 hours. Our community is so lucky to benefit from such dedicated volunteers. Way to go!!!

Start keeping track of your 2025 hours NOW! Remember that there is a chart in the front of the program book that you can use.

## RED CROSS SOCK DRIVE FOR SOLDIERS

We have been asked to help contribute to this worthy cause by IAHCE 2nd Vice President, Mary Johnson, who is an active Red Cross volunteer. During the month of February, we are collecting NEW, warm, durable socks for local veterans as well as deployed military personnel. If you can donate, please take your socks to the Extension office by the end of February. Be sure your bag is labeled! If necessary, I can arrange to get them from you. Please spread the word. Let me know if you have any questions. Thank you!

Karen Cahill

217-520-2683

## Inside This Issue

- Upcoming Events
- Laughter is Good for the Soul
- Yummy Recipes
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- South Africa Report
- Unit News
- HCE Quiz Answers
- Little Known Uses

## Upcoming Events

### Monday, March 10

HCE Board Meeting  
1:30pm

Macon County Extension -  
Clover Room

### March 11-13

### **IAHCE Conference**

**Effingham, IL**

### Friday, March 14

RSVP  
for

March Lesson

### Wednesday, March 19

I Need to Save That

Presented by Ron Johnson  
9:30am - 11:00am

Macon County Extension -  
Clover Room

### Monday, March 31

Sewing Day  
9:30 am to 3:30 pm

Macon County Extension -  
Clover Room

### Tuesday, April 1

Newsletter Items Due to  
Linda Austin  
lindaaustin48@gmail.com

### Friday, April 11

RSVP for April Lesson

### Monday, April 14

HCE Board Meeting  
1:30pm

Macon County Extension -  
Clover Room

### Thursday, April 17

Charcuterie Board Program  
1:30pm to 3:00pm

Macon County Extension -  
Clover Room

### Wednesday, April 23

RSVP Sally Dennis for  
Spring Meeting

**REMINDER: A late  
reservation will cost you an  
additional \$5.00**

### Monday, April 28

Sewing Day  
9:30am - 3:30 pm

Macon County Extension -  
Clover Room

### Tuesday, April 29

Set up for Spring Meeting  
1:30pm

### Wednesday, April 30

Spring Meeting  
9:00am to 12:00pm

50/50 proceeds go to Honor  
Guard.



# Laughter is Good for the Soul

Many thanks to Lin Stevens for these "funnies"! I also added some "funnies" that were appropriate for this time of the year!

Why are the crabs so bad at sharing? Because they are selfish.

What did the tie say to the hat? You go ahead. I'll hang around.

How do you make a tissue dance? Put a little boogie in it.

Why do omelets really love April Fools? They enjoy practical yolks.

I lost all of my winter weight. Now I just have spring rolls.

When shouldn't you plant spring flowers? When you haven't botany.

What do you call an Easter bunny with fleas? Bugs Bunny



## FRESH STRAWBERRY PIE

1 cup water

1 cup sugar

1 rounded tablespoon of cornstarch

Boil these 3 ingredients for 3 minutes. Stir a lot.

Remove from the heat.

Add one box of strawberry Jello. Mix well. Then add 1 quart of berries into the mixture. Pour into a pie shell and put in the refrigerator till thick. Enjoy!!

## NACHO POTATO SOUP

Carol Ropp prepared this soup for the recently held Tri-County meeting at our Extension Office. It was a big hit so I thought we would include it in this newsletter.

### INGREDIENTS:

1 package Au Gratin Potatoes

2 cups water

2 cups Velveeta\*

10 oz. Rotel

11 oz. corn (drained)

2 cups milk

1 can black beans (drained and rinsed)

### DIRECTIONS :

1. In a 3 quart pan, combine the contents of the potato package, (Carol likes to crunch up the potatoes so they are smaller, but that is optional) corn, tomatoes, and water, mix well. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 15 to 18 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Add milk, cheese and hot pepper sauce, if desired. Cook and stir until the cheese is melted. Add black beans and heat through. Enjoy!

\*Only use Velveeta. Other products may alter the taste and consistency.

## Yummy Recipes!

### PEANUT CLUSTERS

Karen Cahill brought these to a board meeting and we all wanted the recipe put in the newsletter. So here it is!! Karen got this recipe from a former HCE member, Sharon Cunningham. Karen keeps this recipe in My Recipe Book on her iPhone.

### Ingredients

1 12 oz bag of semi sweet or dark chocolate chips.  
Use good quality chips like Ghirardelli.

2 pounds of almond or vanilla bark. (Karen used 2 1/2 bags of white chocolate chips)

1 12 ounce bag of milk chocolate chips (Ghirardelli chips if possible)

24 ounce dry roasted peanuts (You may want to add more peanuts)

### Directions:

1. Turn crockpot on low.
2. Add all of the chocolate and cook till melted.
3. Stir occasionally.
4. After they are melted, add the peanuts and mix well.
5. Drop by spoon onto wax or parchment paper to cool or in mini-muffin papers.
6. Makes about 100 pieces.
7. Freezes well.

# Macon County Home & Community Education Board Meeting

December 9, 2024

**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; Mt. Zion; Oakley-Pleasant Grove; Patchwork; Rock Springs

Total in attendance: 12 (Karen Cahill, Sally Dennis, Cathy Gipson, Karen Halicki, Elaine Hamm, Liz King, Bonnie Lanham, Carol Ropp, Cheryl Sample, Sandy Severe, Lyn Stevens, Vicky Wooten)

**SECRETARY:** Minutes of the November 10, 2024 Board meeting were reviewed by all present and approved as read.

**TREASURER:** Sally Dennis reported a bank balance of \$3,374.62. It was noted that \$518 was collected this year for the Friendship Project and \$111 for the NVON Bee Cause Project. The treasurer's report was filed for audit.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Two thank you notes from Ann Irwin of Operation Enduring Support were passed around.

## **OFFICERS' REPORTS:**

**President:** Bonnie voiced her thank you and farewell as our Board President for the past six years and is happy to pass her role to Liz King. Bonnie plans to continue to attend county lessons and Rock Springs unit meetings. We appreciate all she has done for MCHCE and are thankful we will still see her!

**1st Vice President:** Sandy Severe informed us that we will today receive our program books.

**2nd Vice President:** Lyn Stevens reported that we have 109 paid members for 2025, six of which are new members!

**Community Outreach & Family Issues:** Mary Ann Platt and Linda Hooge were absent.

**Cultural Enrichment:** Cheryl Sample plans to have suggested projects for units in 2025.

**Historian:** Carol Ropp asks everyone to continue to give her pictures and articles of HCE activities.

**International:** Cathy Gipson reported that, in addition to the Okaw Valley couple who will speak at International Day, Gini Smith will have pictures from her brother's trip to South Africa.

**Public Relations:** Linda Austin was absent but asked Bonnie to report that the first event of 2025 will be the January 27th sewing day.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

President Bonnie Lanham distributed 2025 program books to each unit, including extra copies, as no additional copies will be available at the extension office.

Lyn Stevens moved that the charitable donation collected today be given to the Ronald McDonald House in Springfield. Carol Ropp seconded; motion passed.

Karen Cahill, our District 3 Director, brought up the 2025 annual conference ad. At our January Board meeting, we will discuss again joining with DeWitt and Piatt counties for a tri-county ad.

Karen asked if Macon County can provide any passenger van drivers (no special license required) for the NVON July conference in Springfield. Fifteen drivers are needed for tours as follows: 9 a.m. – 12 noon on Tuesday, July 8, and also possibly Wednesday morning, July 9. Any MCHCE member or member's husband could further inquire. Sally Dennis is interested.

Conference education books are due January 31, 2025. Mary Ann Platt plans to highlight Operation Enduring Support, and Lois Miller and Cathy Gipson plan one on International Day. Linda Austin will also participate.

Karen wants Board members to consider if they are interested in being one of our two voting delegates at annual conference. Due to Bylaw changes, a longer business meeting at conference is anticipated. Karen also told us the names of the candidates for the IAHCCE Board vacancies.

Lyn Stevens will distribute updated Guidebooks at the April Board meeting.

Karen Cahill has "An End of Life Planner," which Champaign County has shared with her. Copies will be made at the Extension office and distributed to unit members for completion before Funeral Director Ron Johnson's county lesson on March 19.

After the business meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m., we all enjoyed a lovely lunch and fun Christmas fellowship in Karen Cahill's beautiful home, our meeting place today.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Hamm

# Macon County Home & Community Education Board Meeting

January 13, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Liz King

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Liz King

**HOMEMAKERS' AIM:** Liz King

**JOKE:** Liz King

**ROLL CALL:** Elaine Hamm

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

Total in attendance: 12 (Linda Austin, Karen Cahill, Sally Dennis, Cathy Gipson, Elaine Hamm, Linda Hooge, Liz King, Lois Miller, Carol Ropp, Cheryl Sample, Sandy Severe, Vicky Wooten)

**SECRETARY:** Minutes of the December 9, 2024 Board meeting were reviewed by all present and approved as read.

**TREASURER:** Sally Dennis reported a bank balance of \$3,989.82. The treasurer's report was filed for audit.

## OFFICERS' REPORTS:

**1st Vice President:** Sandy Severe reminded us of sewing day on January 27. Carol Ropp suggested that lunch be ordered from Monical's, which was agreeable to those present. In February, the Tri-County Board meeting, MCHCE Board meeting and sewing day are the upcoming events.

**2nd Vice President:** Lyn Stevens was absent.

**Community Outreach & Family Issues:** Mary Ann Platt was absent, but Linda Hooge asked that unit members be reminded of the upcoming sewing day.

**Cultural Enrichment:** Cheryl Sample read a list of all the items her sewing group, which meets at the Maroa Public Library, made in 2024. This can prompt ideas for our units. Cheryl is ready to collect cultural enrichment items which are going to annual conference. She checks the Decatur Tribune for upcoming Extension activities. Karen Cahill shared that she receives emails from Piatt and DeWitt County Extension offices, which she will forward to Board members upon receipt. Local libraries and ciLiving on WCIA are good resources for upcoming events.

**Historian:** Carol Ropp asks everyone to keep collecting pictures and articles of HCE activities.

**International:** Lois Miller and Cathy Gipson have met with Chef Tucker regarding the menu for International Day and learned that BBQ is one of the chief foods in South Africa. They have spoken with Jean Brady, who was a missionary to South Africa and will be one of the speakers.

**Public Relations:** Linda Austin advised that February 1 is the newsletter deadline.

**District 2 Director:** Karen Cahill reported 72% participation in volunteer hours last year. Macon County HCE members had a total of 20,440 hours (5,730 HCE and 14,710 Other).

For annual conference, Liz will submit ten photos of MCHCE activities for the slide show. Carol Drayton, Piatt County HCE President, will handle the Tri-County ad for the conference program book, with Macon County paying \$50, DeWitt County paying \$25, and Piatt County paying \$25.

Karen distributed the new IAHCe map outlining Districts 1-4. Cheryl Sample noticed that Christian County needs to be included in District 2. Karen will contact Angela Hicks to correct.

## OLD BUSINESS:

Liz thanked Karen Cahill for hosting our December Board meeting and Christmas fellowship.

## NEW BUSINESS:

The menu for the February 3rd Tri-County Board meeting was decided upon. Since that is National Ice Cream for Breakfast Day, we will serve ice cream with toppings for our breakfast offering. Carol Ropp will make nacho potato soup for lunch. Board members volunteered to bring specific salad ingredients and cookies.

Cheryl Sample and Carol Ropp volunteered to be our voting delegates at annual conference.

It is time for an audit of the Treasurer's books. One or two people will need to join Sally and Karen Halicki to accomplish same.

Since the Board is no longer paying for Board members' subscriptions to the state newsletter, each member needs to renew on her own, if desired. Karen noted that it can always be read online.

Those planning to attend annual conference were encouraged to submit the registration form.

President Liz King did a wonderful job presiding over the first meeting in her new role.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*Elaine Hamm*

## **Officer's Reports**

### **President**

Liz King

Hi everyone,

We are more than halfway through winter. I hope you are all staying safe and warm.

By now, you should have received your 2025 program books to find out about the upcoming events and lessons. The IAHC Conference is coming up March 11-13 in Effingham, Illinois. If you have not made your reservations because you're still trying to decide whether to attend, you can still go even for one day. There is a lot to learn and so many other members to meet. It should be lots of fun.

Remember— you are appreciated for the time you put into volunteering, creating beautiful items to share, teaching lessons, preparing meals, attending lessons and everything you do to support this organization. Over 100 years and HCE is still going strong thanks to all of our members

### **First Vice President**

Sandy Severe

Hope you all had a great Valentine's Day. It's been a crazy 2025 so far. We have had cold, very cold, windy, snow and this is just the first part of the year. Winter in Illinois!!!

Upcoming lessons:

We have no lesson in February, but we do have a sewing day on February 24 from 9:30 to 3:30.

March will be fun with the IAHC conference in Effingham from March 11th to the 13th. Hope you have signed up to go. Our own Sally Dennis is presenting a Share Shop on bling wine bottles.

The March 19th lesson, "I Need to Save That" will be presented by Ron Johnson at the Extension Office from 9:30 to 11:00. Be sure to mark this on your calendar.

The April 17th program on Charcuterie Boards will be presented by Gini Smith and Karen Cahill from 1:30 to 3:00. Call the Extension Office by April 11 with your reservation.

April 28 is another Sewing Day. We have many opportunities for you to do, like matching material, ironing, sewing, etc. We have a great time.

April 30 is the Spring Meeting from 9 to 12.

Don't forget, if you think of a lesson that peaks your interest, inform one of the board members or your unit President so we can get it on the ballot for programs that we vote on.

### **Second Vice President**

Lyn Stevens

I hope everyone is keeping warm and cozy. My husband and I are enjoying the warmth of southern Texas this winter.

It has been a while since we have offered the purple magnetic name badges for HCE. I know there have been a number of new members since the last order. They cost approximately \$5.00. If you would like one, we plan to order in time to receive them for the Spring Meeting. Email or call me with the correct spelling of your name and the name of your unit by February 28th.

### **INTERNATIONAL**

#### **LET'S LEARN MORE ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA**

Lois Miller

The people of South Africa are citizens as well as those who live within the country. Black Africans are the biggest part of the country at 81.4%. The Indian/Asian population was at 2.7% in 2022. The citizens of South Africa are known for being friendly, welcoming, and laid back. As you will find out later in this program, there are many similar cultural customs to that of the United States.

## Officer's Reports (cont.)

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH/FAMILY ISSUES

Mary Ann Platt and Linda Hooge

The OES committee started meeting on January 27th to prepare for the Easter mailing.

We will meet every Monday at 6 p.m. until packing day which is April 1.

There was a glitch in mailing the Christmas boxes. The day the boxes were taken to the post office, a "holiday surcharge" of \$1.50 was added PER BOX. There was no warning about this charge. This was certainly an unexpected and unwanted expense while mailing 150 boxes. Within each box is a list of sponsors who have supported OES. We are on the list. Thanks for all of your support both financial, emotional, and donations of items. Several soldiers have sent thank you letters.

Easter items needed:

- Gently used magazines
- Hanging air fresheners
- Bath sponges
- Beef jerky/slim Jim's
- Wrapped hard candy
- Gum
- Pouches of tuna salad or chicken salad
- Letters from children
- Cereal/energy/protein bars]
- Individual packets of coffee/drink mixes
- Duct tape
- Cookies/peanut butter crackers
- Birthday cards
- 5 by 7 inch note cards
- Girl Scout cookies (boxes only).
- Lens wipes
- Elastic bands
- Popcorn.
- Playing cards
- Black socks
- Trail mix
- Puzzle books
- Markers
- Knitted crosses
- Toothpaste

With my embroidery machine, I have made 101 crosses. My dentist donated a box of toothbrushes and toothpaste. Maybe you know a company or business that would donate as well. My nephew donated 75 boxes of Trident gum for Christmas. I will ask him to donate again.

(He is in charge of the packaging, so he can get special discounts twice a year.). Thank you in advance for your prayers and donations.

Our soldiers appreciate us.

On January 27th, we started the new year making pillowcases. I have 17 pillowcases for the Ronald McDonald House. I also have 128 hearts and a large bag of pop tabs. Mary Ann Platt will take these items to Springfield to give to the proper organizations. I have 20 pillowcases that I will deliver to Webster/Cantrell Hall in Decatur.

The next pillowcase sewing day is February 24th. Please come! We have a great time and good food.

### TRI-COUNTY MEETING REPORT

Carol Ropp, Secretary

The Tri-County Board had a good meeting. Liz King did a great job presiding over our gathering. We talked about the programs that were going on in each county. Linda Hooge reported on our donations to Operation Enduring Support. She also told about our pillowcase donations to various organizations in the area.

## Unit News

### MT. ZION

Barb Brandt

Our December meeting was held at Crawford's Restaurant in Mt. Zion. Ten members were present. We had a delicious lunch and then we went to Mary Ann Beck's house for our Christmas party. We had a gift exchange. Mary Ann had homemade cookies, candy, and lots of extra treats. We all had a great time.

### MAPLE GROVE

Mary Kay Ennis

We met in December for our annual gift exchange/meal. Fourteen members gathered at the Sharon Methodist Church. We each brought hors d'oeuvres to share, plus the recipe. To exchange gifts, we did the Wright Family story.

Our group met again on January 23, with 12 members present. We answered the roll by naming our favorite "gadget". It could be a kitchen or any other gadget. I said that my favorite gadget was a rechargeable hand warmer.

We recited the pledge and the Homemaker's Aim. These items were discussed: sewing day, and how other skills were needed, not just sewing, the result of the Macon County volunteer hours, and the presenters and the hostesses for the next three months of meetings.

At this meeting, we were encouraged to bring socks for the Red Cross. We discussed attending a Little Theatre performance as a group. It was decided that we should go see Hairspray on July 31. Happy New Year from our unit.

### ANSWERS TO THE HCE QUIZ

1. Home and Community Education
2. Home Bureau, Homemakers, Extension Association, Family and Community Education, Home and Community Education
3. 1924
4. Juliet Lita Bane in 1919
5. Springfield
6. Kankakee
7. The first Home Bureau newsletter was published in 1947

I will publish more information about our wonderful organization in future newsletters.

### SOME LITTLE KNOWN USES OF THE HANKIE

Prepared by Meri Knapp, Livingston County Cultural Arts Director

Reported by Karen Halicki, Patchwork Unit

Maybe your mother or grandmother collected hankies. Some hankies were intended for personal hygiene, such as wiping one's hands or blowing one's nose. Others were used as decorative accessories in one's suit jacket. In Victorian times, hankies were an integral part of the art of flirting.

A hankie drawn over one's cheek meant, "I love you." When drawn over the eyes, it meant, "I am sorry." If the hankie was drawn over the forehead, it indicated, "Be careful, we are being watched." If it was drawn over the lips, it meant, "We should meet." Dropping it meant, "We should be friends." Winding it around your middle finger meant that the woman was married. Holding it over the shoulder indicated

"Follow me."

I have a lot more information that Karen sent me. Perhaps you also have a story about hankies. Send it to me at [lindaustin48@gmail.com](mailto:lindaustin48@gmail.com). I remember my great aunt and my grandma would give me pretty handkerchiefs at Christmas. I would put them in a pretty box with a rose sachet. I never did use them.

Macon County Association for  
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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)