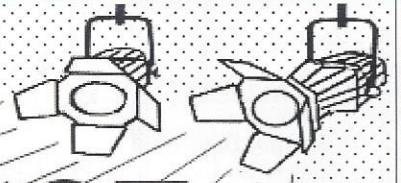


**Macon County**

**May—June 2026**

**HCE  
HIGHLIGHTS**



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



## *Congratulations*

Macon County won the following awards at the IAHCCE  
conference in March:

**GRAND AWARD** in Public Relations for the marmalade  
project done with the Oglesby Mansion.

**3<sup>rd</sup> PLACE** International Day event.

**GRAND AWARD** for counties 75 and over with the highest  
number of “Other” hours.

**2<sup>nd</sup> PLACE** for counties 75 and over with the highest **TOTAL**  
hours.

**Way to go ladies!!!! So proud of you!!**



# Laughter is Good for the Soul



## Upcoming Events

**Monday, April 27**

9:00 a.m.

**Sewing Day**  
Ropp's Sewing Center

**Wednesday, April 29**

11:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

**Spring Meeting**  
First Baptist Church

**Monday, May 11**

1:30

**HCE Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 13**

**RSVP for May Lesson**

**Monday, May 18**

9:00 a.m.

**Sewing Day**  
Ropp's Sewing Center

**Wednesday, May 20**

9:30 a.m.

**Tillamook Creamery**  
First Baptist Church

**Monday, June 1**

**Newsletter articles due!!**

**Monday, June 1**

**Tri-County Board Meeting**

9:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Piatt Extension Office

**Monday, June 8**

1:30 p.m.

**HCE Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, June 10**

**RSVP for June Lesson**

**Thursday, June 11**

8:30 a.m.

**Peoria Riverfront Museum**

There is a cost for this trip. It is a bus trip.

**Wednesday, June 17**

9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

**Herbs with Liz King**

Mari-Mann Herb Farms

## 1. Technology by Neil, Facy Staff

A curious mom uses her new iPhone to text her daughter to ask a very important question. The text reads: "What does IDK, ILY, TTYL mean?" Before long, the daughter texts back, "I don't know, I love you, Talk to you later." To which the mom responds, "It's okay. Don't worry about it, I'll ask your brother. Love you too."

## 2. Sherlock and Watson Go Camping

Sherlock Holmes and Watson are on a camping trip. After a good session of singing Wonderwall around the campfire, they retire to their sleeping bags. Several hours later, Sherlock wakes up and nudges Watson awake. Watson groggily asks, "What?" "Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see." Watson thinks about this for a minute, wiping his eyes. "I see millions of stars," Watson answers. "What does that tell you?" asks Sherlock. "Well, astronomically, it tells me there are millions of galaxies. Astrologically, I can see that Saturn is in Virgo. Theologically, I see that God is all-powerful and we are insignificant. What does it tell you, Holmes?" Sherlock remains silent for a few seconds. "It tells me that someone has stolen our tent."

## Yummy Recipes!

### Authentic Mexican Street Corn Off the Cob (Elote)

Submitted by: Toni Strait

#### Ingredients:

- 4 C. corn kernels (frozen)
- 1/2 C. mayonnaise
- 1/2 C. sour cream
- 1/2 C. cotija cheese, crumbled
- 1/4 C. fresh cilantro, chopped (if preferred, can use parsley and/or green onion in addition to or in place of cilantro)
- 1/2 Tsp. chili powder (can sub cumin for more spice)
- 1/4 Tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Salt & Pepper to taste
- Lime wedges for serving

(Optional spicy addition—1 Tsp. smoked paprika)

#### Directions:

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add the corn and cook until they are lightly browned and cooked through (about 5-7 minutes). In a bowl, mix rest of ingredients. Add the corn kernels to the bowl and toss until well coated. Serve the corn, sprinkle with extra cheese and cilantro. Serve with lime slices on side of servings.

### TWINKIE DESSERT

Mary Kay Ennis

#### Ingredients:

- 15 Twinkies
- 2 16oz. Containers of sliced strawberries in sugar
- 24oz. Container of Philadelphia cheesecake filling
- 8 oz. container Cool Whip

#### Directions:

Layer a 13x9 pan with Twinkies. Pour 2 16 oz. containers of sliced strawberries in sugar on top of Twinkies. Next, layer on 24oz. Container of Philadelphia cheesecake filling. Place 8 oz. of cool whip on top. Enjoy! (Refrigerate this dessert till serving!)

### Red Velvet Cinnamon Rolls

Submitted by: Cathy Gipson

#### Dough Ingredients:

- 1 package red velvet cake mix (regular size)
- 2 1/2—3 C all-purpose flour
- 1 package (1/4 oz.) active dry yeast
- 1 and 1/4 C warm water (110° - 115°)
- 1/2 C packed brown sugar
- 1 Tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 C butter (melted)

#### Directions:

1. Combine cake mix, 1 C flour, and yeast. Add water, beat on medium speed for 2 minutes. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (dough will be sticky). Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead gently 6-8 times. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled (about 2 hours). Meanwhile, in another bowl, mix brown sugar and cinnamon.
2. Punch down dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; roll dough into an 18x10 inch rectangle. Brush with melted butter to within 1/4 inch of edges. Sprinkle with sugar mixture.
3. Roll up in jelly-roll style, starting with a long side; pinch seam to seal. Cut crosswise into 12 slices. Place cut sides up in a greased 13x9 inch baking pan. Cover with a kitchen towel; let rise in a warm place until almost doubled (about 1 hour).
4. Preheat oven to 350°. Bake for 15-20 minutes until puffed and light brown. Cool slightly.
5. Beat confectioner's sugar, butter, vanilla, and enough milk to reach a drizzling consistency. Drizzle icing over warm rolls.

#### Icing Ingredients:

- 2 C confectioner's sugar
- 2 Tbsp butter (softened)
- 1 Tsp vanilla extract
- Milk

### OVER THE RAINBOW MACARONI AND CHEESE

Submitted by: Toni Strait

#### Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1lb elbow macaroni
- 8 Tbsp. (1 stick) and 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1/2 C. shredded Muenster cheese
- 1/2 C. shredded mild Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 C. shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 C. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 2 C. half and half
- 1 C. Velveta, cut into small cubes
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 Tsp. seasoned salt
- 1/8 Tsp. freshly ground black pepper

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly butter a deep 2 1/2 quart casserole baking dish.
2. Bring the large pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add the oil, macaroni, and cook until macaroni is just tender. Do not overcook. Drain well and return to the cooking pot off of the heat.
3. In a small saucepan, melt 8 Tbsp. butter. Stir in the macaroni. In a large bowl, mix the Muenster, Cheddars, and Monterey Jack cheeses. To the macaroni, add and mix the half and half, 1 1/2 C. of the shredded cheeses, cubed Velveta, and the eggs. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to the buttered casserole. Sprinkle with remaining 1/2 C. shredded cheeses and dot with 1 Tbsp. butter
4. Bake until it's bubbling around the edges, about 35 minutes. Serve hot.

Hello MCHCE Members and friends!

A big "Thank You" to the members who attended the 2026 IAHCE Conference. I hope you had as much fun as I did. We experienced the magic of friendships, learning, celebrating, creating, sharing, and supporting throughout the week. We saw the magic of creative members and shared the magic in supporting the success of HCE units across the state of Illinois. In 2026, I want you to think about the Magic of HCE and carry that theme with you through events, lessons, meetings, and outreach. Be mindful of what HCE means to you, and share that with other people. If you have a friend or family member in another county, you can still share HCE with them and help them find a unit in their area to join. If someone tells you they're bored or are looking for ways to help the community, share your HCE experiences in the hopes they will find the organization can fulfill those needs.

We're gearing up for Spring Meeting on April 29th, with a few changes to create a meaningful and enjoyable event. Please make your reservations with Sally Dennis by April 22nd.

Please continue to sign up for lessons and activities by calling the Extension Office. I encourage you to read through this newsletter for details on upcoming lunches, day trips—including a bus trip to the Peoria Riverfront Museum to view the America 250 exhibit—lessons, and meetings.

I enjoyed presenting a lesson on Cooking with Herbs at Conference that I will also be giving for Macon County at Mari-Mann on June 17th.

We value your input! If you have lesson ideas, fundraising opportunities, questions, or suggestions, I would love to hear from you. There are no bad ideas, contributions from members make us a better organization. I can be reached by phone (217-450-7076) or email (esk1@marimann.com) any time.

The Board really enjoyed seeing the members' creative centerpieces using the Experience the Magic and books theme. Congratulations to Cathy Gipson for her Alice in Wonderland themed centerpiece that was displayed at the Elsie Mies luncheon. You will be able to view the centerpieces at the Spring and Fall Meetings, and if you still want to make a centerpiece, please bring it to the Spring Meeting!

At Conference, Macon County won 4 awards: 3rd Place for International Day, 2nd Place for CVH Total Hours of 20,949, Grand Award for CVH Other (non-HCE) Volunteer Hours, and Grand Award in the Public Relations category for the Emma Oglesby Marmalade Project. Keep up the great work!

We need qualified volunteers to fill leadership roles in the Macon County Board: President, Treasurer, Community Outreach, Cultural Enrichment, and CVH. I am willing to continue a second term as President, but that does not mean another member cannot express interest. We have job descriptions available for each position if you want to know more.

Thank you all for everything you do! Your hard work and dedication are what brings out the magic in MCHCE.

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**Cultural Enrichment**

Cheryl Sample

Spring is coming! A friend just posted a picture of her daffodils. The color was so bright and vibrant!

To those attending the Valentine Party in February, thank you for participating. I realized we needed a craft day, and the best part for me was seeing your creations and realizing you too enjoy using your creative side. A special thank you to Toni Strait for sharing her Valentine treasures. And thank you to the HCE board for all of their help in making the event so special. I see a holiday crafting day in the fall...

As I begin to look ahead to hot summer days, that says fair time. I'll be posting more about those days in the next newsletter. In the meantime, see where your young people gather for 4-H. You might be able to volunteer to help with your experiences. Enjoy Spring!

---

**Patchwork**

Karen Halicki

On February 16th, we had our meeting at El Rodeo in Decatur at noon. We had planned to go to Agave & Lime, but they had changed their hours, so maybe some other day we can go. We had a good meeting talking about all of the clubs that we could go to. We voted on giving the \$50 we received for doing the DAV desserts to the pillowcase day for getting new tables.

On March 16th, we met at Culver's at noon. Marsha and Sherry had attended the Alzheimer's Lesson and had good information to share. Several of us will be attending the lesson in Sullivan on April 16th. We will be touring the Little Theater. What an adventure we will have!

## Unit News

### MT. ZION Susan Jones

The Mt. Zion unit met in February and discussed some of the items in the most recent HCE newsletter. Then we reviewed unit meetings through August. This was followed by a talk Vicki gave about the Amish, particularly those in the Arthur area. Next, CeCe handed out supplies so that we could each make a couple St. Patrick's Day themed pom-pom characters.

Member Brenda Nolan gave a talk on women's heart health at our March meeting.

### PANA Carolyn Barnett

We had to delay our Christmas party until January due to cold & snowy weather in December. We enjoyed a catered meal. We then played bingo for gift items. We also use the gift-giving season to make personal donations to local charities. This year, I'm proud to announce we gave over \$600.

In February, we learned about what's in a fingerprint from unit members who attended that lesson.

Our March meeting was about the history of HCE, given by Georgette Merrifield. We also made up 20 hygiene bags to give to our local food pantry. We also discussed plans for hosting the April board meeting here in Pana.

### HICKORY POINT Janet Feller

Our February meeting was held on the 11th at Teresa Chenoweth's home. We created homemade Valentine's Day cards that Teresa later took to a couple of retirement homes to be distributed to the residents. We recognized two of our members, Erma Ragle and Merrill Dees, who will turn 100 years old this year. During our meeting, we discussed the many community activities available to us and ways we can learn and grow. We enjoyed the delicious baked treats and our time together.

Our March meeting was held at Crawford's Pizza & Pub in Maroa with five members present. At our meeting, we discussed having a representative at each board meeting to keep our group up to date. We discussed many upcoming community events. After a great lunch, we went to play bingo at the library. Everyone had a good time winning prizes and meeting new friends.

### ROCK SPRINGS Cathy Burgess

In February, Rock Springs unit met at Mari Mann Herbs. Liz King was the hostess. Nine members were present. We voted to purchase a table for the pillowcase sewing room. Some members also donated to the table purchase. Information was given on the MCHCE clubs. We will be working at the DAV on March 22nd. A delicious lunch was served by Liz. Then, we made fairy wands for conference.

In March, we met at Doherty's Pub. Eight members were present. Bonnie read a list titled "Why Won't They". It was very interesting. We voted to each donate to Friendship Project annually instead of collecting monthly. The clubs were discussed.

### CENTER UNIT REPORT Mary Lou Poor

Center HCE met at Christian County Extension office on March 2nd, 2026. There were 11 members and 1 guest present. Delicious sandwiches with éclair dessert served. Tables directed with St. Patrick decorations. Our guest speaker was Wes Withrow from the Taylorville Police Department. He gave an interesting and beneficial talk regarding the Bitcoin machines and the latest scams that are happening in our area. Members had many questions regarding these topics.

Bars of soap were collected and sent to the Taylorville Food Pantry as it was one of their requested needs.

### MAPLE GROVE Toni Strait

We met on February 26th at the Sharon United Methodist Church in Decatur with 11 members present. Joyce and Judy brought a touch of early spring to us by serving a delightful strawberry shortcake. Many discussion topics included the upcoming IAHCE conference, clubs' information, DAV, OES, Bucks for Braxton, and several community events. The group approved the purchase of 2 tables to be used in the sewing room.

Our March meeting was on the 26th at the Sharon United Methodist Church. We had 13 members in attendance. Mary Kay thrilled us with a strawberries, twinkies, Philadelphia cream cheese filling, and whipped cream dessert. Oh my!!!! GOOD!!!! We heard about the sessions our members attended at IAHCE. Gini shared some of the sights from the Day Trip Club's visit to The Hub at the Decatur Library. They learned about their equipment used for crafting. Definitely a recommended place to visit.

Mary Kay gave us an excellent overview from the Info About Alzheimer's speaker. She shared signs of people with Alzheimer's beginning compared with things that are said and done by many not affected. A Walk to End Alzheimer's will take place on September 19th, 2026 in Illinois. There is a walk in Decatur that day too. A Support Group number is 800-272-3900.

We were happy to hear that Karen Cahill will be Co-Chair of the IAHCE conference in 2027 and the Chairman in 2028. We look forward to supporting her in these adventures!

### OAKLEY-PLEASANT GROVE Patty Lovekamp

February meeting was held at The Wagon with Patty Lovekamp as hostess. Our new books were handed out and filled in with dates and hostesses. A couple of the ladies had attended Game Day and reported having a fun time. We discussed plans for selling desserts at the DAV on February 27th. Our March meeting was held at Whit's Inn with Sally Dennis as hostess. We talked about Lunch Bunch, Needle Arts, Craft Club, and Game Day dates. We were also told about upcoming trips that have been planned. We were reminded that reservations need to be made for the Spring Meeting by April 22nd: 4

## COME JOIN US

Karen Cahill

### COME JOIN US!!

MCHCE will be hosting the June 30th mini meeting at First Baptist Church from 11:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m. We will be serving a variety of salads and desserts, with your help.

Cheri Burcham, Extension Liaison to IAHCE, will be our guest speaker. Plus, you will have time to interact with many of our District 2 ladies to share ideas and form friendships.

Call the office to make your reservation. Hope to see you there! It's a fun time!

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## BOOK REVIEW

Karen Cahill

You may have heard a lot of buzz lately about the book "Theo of Golden" by Allen Levi. I recently read it and highly recommend it! It is such a heartwarming novel about kindness, generosity, and connection. It's what the world needs right now. Let me know if you agree!

---

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Mary Ann Platt

The stitchers have been busy at the Ropp Sewing Center. We have an amazing group that helps make pillowcases to donate to worthy charities. I appreciate each of them, some volunteers are not even members.

On Monday, March 23, 73 pillowcases were made and/or turned in. We have ladies taking cases home as homework. Like I keep saying, you ladies amaze me! Linda will deliver 23 pillowcases to Webster Cantrell Hall.

On March 31, I delivered 85 pillowcases to Ronald McDonald House. I learned something new, sometimes our pillowcases are used as bassinet mattress covers. I thought that was so cool.

I also delivered 22lbs of pop tabs. My record delivery was 27lbs. IAHCE is having a competition to see which region could collect the most tabs. The donations were going to benefit the charity on a national level. Since the Springfield house mostly benefits Macon County. For that reason, we decided to keep our tabs locally.

To me, we have had 2 false starts to spring. Some of my beautiful flowers and flowering trees have been damaged both times. I hope spring will finally arrive soon.

Happy Spring to you and yours!

*At the April 13 MCHCE Board Meeting, it was decided to participate in the IAHCE pop-tab collection competition after all. That way, we can take part in the statewide push to increase the collection of pop-tabs to benefit the Ronald McDonald House.*

*Mary Anne's article was submitted prior to the meeting. The change is only temporary, as we will continue to directly support the Springfield Ronald McDonald House.*

Thank you,

Liz King

MCHCE President

# CLUB NEWS

Please remember to RSVP to the designated Chairperson if you will be attending these clubs.

Unit Presidents will have information regarding clubs as some club meetings will fall in between receiving your newsletters.

## GAME CLUB MEETING

Chair: Karen Cahill

217-520-2683

The new Gamers group has been enjoying learning some new games and having lots of laughs! We even learned a magic card trick to go along with our magic theme this year. We are meeting on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at the Extension Office (for now).

**COME JOIN US!!!**

Remember, you can sign up at the office, or you can contact me if you want.

## LUNCH CLUB MEETING – RSVP To Sally

Chair: Sally Dennis

217-433-0605

We are having good times with friends and good food on our Lunch Bunch escapades. I look forward to being with more of you soon.

Upcoming:

May 1—Nesty's | 114 W. Market St. | Taylorville | 11:00 a.m.

June 5—Wild Hare Café | 104 Governor Oglesby St. | Elkhart | 11:00 a.m.

## CRAFT CLUB MEETING – RSVP To Bonnie

Chair: Bonnie Lanham

217-454-8746

On May 15th, Dream Catchers will be fashioned by participants. Please RSVP so enough supplies will be available. There will be feathers and items to include for all. However, if you have something special to you that you would like to incorporate, bring it to try. Live flowers are difficult but something as small as your pinky nail should fit (pinecone, seed, rock, bead, etc.).

Upcoming:

June 18—Card making gala | Illinois Extension Office (if available) | 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

## NEEDLE ARTS CLUB MEETING – RSVP To Cheryl

Chair: Cheryl Sample

765-426-1420

As a part of our craft club experiences, I will be teaching sessions on various types of stitching. We will begin with basic hand embroidery stitches and their uses. There are so many ways they can be used to embellish garments, linens, and other household items. We will discuss various threads and fibers used to achieve the most attractive results. To begin with, I will provide the needles and cloth. Participants should bring small scissors, a small ruler, and a needle threader if you use one. I am looking forward to introducing you to Sashiko stitching too!

We will have some wonderful examples of our work for the Cultural Events event in the fall. Let's get stitching. We will be meeting on April 24 at 11:30 at the **Macon County Extension Office**.

Upcoming:

May 15—Extension Office | Decatur | 11:30 a.m.

June 19—Location TBD | 11:30 a.m.

# CLUB NEWS

(cont.)

## **DAY TRIP CLUB MEETING— RSVP To Gini**

Chair: Gini Smith

217-454-1940

### **May 1 | 10 a.m. | Taylorville Lunch and Shopping Trip**

We will be parking at Mari-Mann right past the small house on lower parking level. Lunch will be at Nesty's Burger Joint (114 W. Market St.) We will meet at the square at 11 a.m. After lunch, we can delight in exploring the nearby shops

### **June 11 | 12:30 p.m. | Peoria Rivertown Museum Trip**

We have a 35-passenger bus BOOKED! The bus will leave the Extension Office at 9:15 a.m. BE THERE NO LATER THAN 9:00 a.m. We will be leaving the museum to return home at 4:00 p.m. Cost is \$65.00 and will cover the bus cost, tip for bus driver, and admission to the museum. You will be on your own at the museum! You can go as fast or slow as you want at stop to sit a spell.

**LUNCH:** We are arriving around 10:50 at the Kelleher's Irish Pub and Eatery. We have reservations at 11:00. You may want to visit their website as they have a large menu. This will speed things up a bit when ordering our lunches. Plan is to be at the museum by 12:30.

Our bus allows drinks and snacks if you wish to bring something for yourself, but NO milk products! We will not be stopping on the way home. You must have your money to Sally Dennis by May 13th! Signing up does not hold your place until Sally verifies your payment. No refunds, you are responsible for finding someone if you cannot go. When all the seats are reserved, we will start a list of names of people who might be able to take the place of a cancellation.

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## ***A Moment to Reflect***

“Money is not everything, but it ranks right up there with oxygen.”

- Zig Ziglar

“If you think you are too small to make a difference, try to sleep with a mosquito in the room.”

- His Holiness the Dalai Lama

“To be tough is to be fragile; to be tender is to be truly fierce.”

- Farhana Qazi

“The only Zen you find on the tops of mountains is the Zen you bring up there.”

- Robert M. Pirsig

“The best thing to hold onto in life is each other.”

- Audrey Hepburn

“You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.”

- Maya Angelou

“The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.”

- H. Jackson Brown Jr.

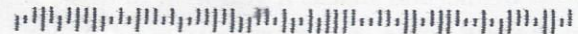
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Check out our Websites!

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

IAHCE at

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