

THE IAHCCE CHRONICLE

MAKE TIME



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NEWS FROM YOUR STATE OFFICERS



Angela Hicks - IAHCE President

Dear Fellow HCE Members and Friends,

The 2025 IAHCE Annual Conference theme “Make Time – IAHCE 2025” revolved around clocks and time and this thought came to me recently. If you could ask the HCE Clock for advice, what would it say? Let’s imagine...

- The HCE Clock is constantly working and always on the go morning, afternoon, and night never mind the season it finds itself. Tick, Tick, Tick a constant reminder to not waste a moment because we can never get it back. The opportunities for current and future HCE members are there for you, don’t waste them.
- The HCE Clock’s hands work independently yet, together and consistent. The arms (Counties/Members) don’t compete with each other, they work together to accomplish the goals of the organization. Each arm or member is important. Each arm may move at a different speed but in harmony with one another. We need each other for inspiration, encouragement, and accountability.
- The HCE Clock’s alarm sound wakes us to the need to look up, connect with others, and take opportunities to learn and build our organization just as the clock builds on the day.

Let’s follow the HCE Clock’s advice and make the most of the time we spend doing HCE activities! Moving like the hands of time together and in harmony with one another. Sound the alarm to awaken others to the value of quality educational programs, experiences, and service to our community!

The Business Meeting went well and the Delegates passed the 2025 and 2026 Budgets which increased the membership dues to \$8.00 per person. The increase will take effect when each county sends in their membership dues at the end of this year (Due by January 5, 2026). The other major bylaw change is pertaining to the International area. The distribution of International funds has been rearranged and the elimination of the “Homemakers Exchange”. Please look at the updated Guidelines, Bylaws, and Standing Rules on the website iahce.org. You will have to press the refresh button at the top left hand side of the screen and each Guidebook page will have 2025 at the bottom to indicate a change was made on the page. All pages after International in the Guidebook has a page number change only.

Thank you to all of the counties that submitted award applications. Congratulations to all of the award winners! The IAHCE Board encourages all counties to participate. *Everything you do in your county is important to your community. You are already winners in their eyes!* Every IAHCE County falls in one of two categories---“54 and Under Members” and “55 and Above Members”. Currently we have an almost even split between the counties in these categories. Participation is key!

As we begin the 2025 year, we welcome the new members of the IAHCE Board: **Alice Grooms**- 2nd Vice President, **Carla Meyer**-Secretary, and **Vivian Gerriets**-Family & Community Issues Director. We thank the outgoing officers for their dedication and service to HCE: **Mary Johnson**-2nd Vice President, **Cathy Eathington**-Secretary, **Eleanor Gregory**-Family & Community Issues Director, and **Rita Overacker**-District Director.

Thank you to the Conference Chairs - **Carol Harms** and **Emily McDowell** and the committee members for a job well done! In my opinion, it felt like everything ran smoothly. Thank you to the members who attended the 101st IAHCE Annual Conference! We look forward to the next conference where Emily McDowell will chair the 102nd Annual IAHCE Conference with her co-chair-Becky Belcher!

“The two most powerful warriors are patience and time.” Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*

Angela

The Illinois Association for Home and Community Education enhances the lives of individuals and families through quality educational programs and experiences, encouraging responsible leadership and service to community.

2025 IAHCe Board



Pictured L to R: Karen Davis-District 1 Director, Vivian Gerrietts-Family & Community Issues Director, Alice Grooms-2nd Vice President, Carol Harms-District 4 Director, Ashley Davis-CVH/Sales Director, Becky Belcher-Cultural Enrichment Director, Angela Hicks-IAHCe President, Kathy Peterson-1st VP, Carla Meyer-Secretary, Melissa Chitwood-Treasurer, Janel Kassing-International Director, Donna Richards-District 3 Director, Emily McDowell-PR/Newsletter Editor, Karen Cahill-District 2 Director



**THE WAY WE SPEND OUR
TIMES, DEFINES WHO WE ARE.
—JONATHAN ESTRIM**



EXECUTIVE BOARD

1st VICE PRESIDENT – Kathy Peterson

Cheers to spring! I loved conference, especially visiting with old friends and making new ones. Since then, I have been on fast forward with work and health challenges. I learned that TIME is a gift. USE and GIVE it because you cannot take it with you. I pray each of you are surprised, blessed, and cherished and may show that to others. Have a great spring and summer. I will see you at District Workshops. Make IAHCE proud!



2nd VICE PRESIDENT – Alice Grooms

Hello All,

I hope everyone is getting ready for the warmer weather that is coming and getting out to invite people from your community to your many scheduled activities. That is how we get new members! (I'm still learning this computer so I am sorry for any errors.)

I am Alice Grooms, your new IAHCE 2nd Vice President. I am from De Witt County and a 20 year member of HCE, serving in various offices on the county board and CVH/Sales Director on the state board. This is my first letter to all of you wonderful members of HCE all across the state, so bear with me while I get my feet wet and follow in Mary's big shoes. I want to thank Mary for serving on the board and being my mentor and encouraging me to run for this office. I also want to thank you for electing me to this office. It is quite an honor! Mary has passed on a lot of papers, information, knowledge, and the willingness to be by my side if I need assistance in the future.

If you heard me speak at conference, you heard me say: "HCE is the "biggest secret around". That is my mantra for the next 3 years. Now we have to figure out how to unlock the secret and share it with our communities. Stay tuned for the next step in unlocking the secret of HCE using our theme, "Make Time for HCE in 2025". Any suggestions from you creative members on how to develop this mantra will be gratefully accepted.

Thanks!



**TIME FLIES OVER US, BUT
LEAVES ITS SHADOW BEHIND.
- NATHANIAL HAWTHORNE**



SECRETARY– Carla Meyer

As your new secretary, I thank the voting delegates for your votes. I enjoyed having the opportunity to speak with several of you at the conference. I look forward to meeting more of our members at the district meetings. The 101st IAHCE Conference was an enjoyable experience for those attending. Mark your calendars for the district meetings in August.

The meetings will be held with Districts 3 and 4, August 5 in Mt. Vernon, District 2, August 6 in Springfield, and District, August 7 in Sycamore. If you have any officer changes or updates, please email me at carla.meyer8@gmail.com so I can update our files.



TREASURER– Melissa Chitwood

“Time is the most valuable thing a man can spend” (Theophrastus). Thank you to all who took time and attended the 101st Annual IAHCE Conference! What a wonderful time it was! I can’t express how much I enjoy seeing familiar faces and making new friends! This year’s silent auction raised just over \$2,500!!!! You ladies are awesome!

The silent auction and the Pot of Gold drawing are the only “fundraisers” that IAHCE holds. These funds, along with dues collected, are our financial basis. Many hours of deliberation went into the decision of a dues increase. Thank you to each and every one for your support. Asking for additional money is not easy, but was definably justifiable.

Speaking of money.....since 2023 you ladies have contributed a total of \$7,828.88 to the NVON “BEE-CAUSE Pollinators Feed the World”. According to the NVON website (NVON.org) “As of December 2024, we have sent Heifer International \$16,429. With their additional matching funds, we were able to send 1,675 bee hives at \$30.00 each, to be purchased for underprivileged women in Central America.” Heifer International has been, at a minimum, doubling our donations! This is the final year for this project. Please be sure to send donations (made payable to IAHCE) to me throughout the year, and a copy of your report to Angela Hicks. All donations and reports should be sent by December 1.

In March 2026 my time as the IAHCE Treasurer will come to an end. This coming year will be bittersweet. I have learned so much, made so many new friends and have thoroughly enjoyed serving on the state board. Soon it will be someone else’s time. Is it your time? Consider running for IAHCE Treasurer! I welcome anyone who has any interest to reach out to me. Should you have any questions in regards to duties and responsibilities.....talk to me now!

Enjoy the spring time, enjoy the summer time, enjoy YOUR time in whatever makes you happy!



**IT’S NOT ABOUT HAVING TIME,
IT’S ABOUT MAKING TIME**

- UNKNOWN



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Cultural Enrichment– Becky Belcher

Another great conference is in the books! I'm certain you are glad you took time to attend. I know I am.

Now about the Cultural Arts Show.... Once again I was amazed at the quality of the arts and crafts on display. There were so many beautiful entries, and so much talent and hard work represented in that one room. And speaking of the room, it was so nice to be located closer to where all the action is. A larger room and more convenient location allowed for more time for everyone to enjoy the exhibit.

Thank you to all who brought entries. I was so proud to be able to show off your excellent work. Now it's time to get busy working on next year's entries! I unveiled the new arts and crafts categories list at my conference share shop. It will be updated in the Guidebook on the website soon.

My first 3 year term as Cultural Enrichment Director went by so fast, and I am looking forward to serving on the board for the next 3 years.



Family and Community Issues– Vivian Gerrietts

Hello fellow HCE members!

Thank you so much for taking the time to read our officer candidate bios, coming to conference, listening to our candidate speeches and for a few of you, serving as a delegate for your county giving you the responsibility to vote in the elections. We had more than one qualified members seeking some of the offices so a paper ballot was needed. I am taking over for Eleanor as the Family and Community Issues Director.

Eleanor Gregory has sponsored many platforms in the past six years of her two terms. You might recall issues such as Pollinators: Butterflies and Bees in particular, Mental Health, Food Waste and Recycling. Most of these issues are not going far away. They remain important and we should keep them alive.

Our national and international affiliates are places where we can find strategies to improve women's lives all over the world. Improving women's lives will in turn improve everyone's life. I've looked quickly through our Associated Country Women of the World plan for 2022-2026. Here are some of the thoughts that struck me. There are challenges caused by decreasing income and influence due to decreasing and fluctuating membership which in turn leads to additional challenges. Grassroots development needs to influence systemic change in order to make long term, sustainable changes. One of our friends at the IAHCE level helps her county do a Women Walk the World activity.



Could this be a way for all of us to share what we know? (Perhaps crossover events for both the Family and Community Issues and International are in order? Both “Women Walk the World” and the old “Pennies for Friendship” now known as “Friendship Project Fund” are areas many of our counties are already actively pursuing.)

I plan to be a part of the National Volunteer Outreach Network conference right here in Springfield Illinois. This could be another place to pay attention for a platform. I hope many of you will be attending this July also. The NVON meeting hosted by IAHCE is July 9-12. Meet up with me and members from 10 member states and share your thoughts!

Platforms inherited from Eleanor, ideas from our ACWW, ideas from NVON and last but not least, I would like to hear from our grassroots membership in the units and the county Family and Community Issues directors for ideas that are important to them.

I check my email nearly every morning (vgerrietts@gmial.com) and I am very capable at texting (309-360-4871) so drop me a thought when it pops into your head. Make sure you identify yourselves so I don't think you are SPAM! (That's why I don't answer my actual phone when I don't recognize a number.) I can also be found on FaceBook as Vivian Deppert Gerrietts.

Looking forward to this time of serving on the state IAHCE board.

International- Janel Kassing



Congratulations to all the winners of awards at conference! Two hundred + women enjoyed the many phases of Conference 2025, including the awards evening. I had 11 International Projects turned in to judge. Someone in our International session asked why we do projects. I'd like to know some history on them too. If anyone knows how or when projects started, please let me know. I feel they are done to educate, evaluate yourself, and your county programs. Thanks to those who completed projects in any area.

We collected Friendship Projects Fund monies at lunchtime. The collection will be added to the county amounts and will be distributed in October. Our conference collection netted \$744.28.

We mentioned the Bee Collection during our discussion of ACWW, NVON, and CWC. This money was used to purchase beehives. Thanks to all who contributed. Melissa will report on our state's total or look for it in this newsletter.

I have included a recipe for Peanut Stew, a S. African recipe given to me at conference. It sounds yummy and manageable. As you look for S. African recipes, this is one you might consider.

I'll be choosing a new Country of Study for 2026 for the June board meeting to have approved by the International committee so I can then do research, write the lesson, and present at our August workshops for all of you. I will only be choosing two more countries before my term is up. If you have a country you'd like me to consider, please reply soon.

Public Relations- Emily McDowell

It's hard to believe our March 2025 conference has already wrapped up and we are looking ahead to August Workshops, which will be here before we know it! I thoroughly enjoyed being the co-chair for this year's conference and am so excited about being the chair of the 2026 conference! I have already prepared a list of ideas and have some plans in place. I am excited to work alongside my co-chair, Becky Belcher. Special thanks to Carol Harms for allowing me the opportunity to co-lead with her this past year.



There have been a few major changes that have taken place in my life most recently which slightly affects my role here on the state board. In early March, I was told the company I work for, (Hospital Sisters Health Systems, aka HSHS) were taking all of the revenue cycle (nearly 900 employees), and transitioning us to a new company called Ensemble. In a month's time, I would be working for Ensemble and not HSHS. I have worked at HSHS for nine years so this was pretty shocking. I was told that most things would remain the same (my rate of pay, what I would be doing, staying remote, and flexibility with my schedule). I quickly learned that wasn't exactly the case. While my rate of pay remained the same, the team I was working for (Prairie Cardiovascular) was being eliminated and condensed into an imaging team. My thirteen member team would expand to about thirty people. Four of my closest co-workers will be working in surgery and pain management. My sister, who I have worked with the past sixish years, decided not to stay and went to work for SOGA (Southern Obstetrics and Gynecology Associates). I've since been with Ensemble for two weeks. It isn't terrible but I can tell already they are huge micro-managers. I have to clock in and out for lunch which I didn't have to do before and all clock-in's have to be on the dot or I could get in trouble. I absolutely cannot go over in hours. As far as flexibility, I am no longer able to work evenings or weekends, a luxury I had when trying to make up time for hours I was out during the day for HCE activities. With this change, I can only work 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday. I should be able to keep my scheduled time off for the IAHCE events I already anticipated, but anything new will be hard.

This brings me to my next order of business... my position on the IAHCE board! My term is up at conference in 2026 and I will not be able to continue after it is up. I have to have someone take over for me. It is going to be too difficult to take off four times a year with this new job. Please consider taking over for me! If you have access to a computer and email, half of the PR requirements are already met! Honestly, the newsletter is mostly organization. People will send you the articles and you literally just place them into an already made template. Usually, we have two other IAHCE board members help proof read it before it goes to print.

In addition to organizing the three newsletters that go out throughout the year, you'll be responsible for helping with the conference program book and pre-conference materials in the December newsletter. These items are also proof read by the state president and your conference chairs. Our current president, Angela, made vast improvements to the 2025 conference book, which means your job would be even easier!

If you have any questions or want more information, please reach out to me! I'd love to train someone! I am willing to work with interested individuals before conference of next year to show you what I do, if that's helpful too!

Enjoy your summer and see you in August at the District Workshops!

Certified Volunteer Hours/Sales– Ashley Davis

Hello Everyone!

I hope you all are “Making Time” for the things that mean the most to you! It’s hard at times to make time for the things we should do like relaxing, having fun, or reading a book. Some of you took the time to attend the 101st IAHCE Annual Conference. If you were able to attend, you know that as always, we all had a great time.



If your county attended the conference, the CVH packet and Certificates of Recognition were given to the person that was in the CVH share shop. If there was no one in the CVH share shop, the packet was given to your District Director. The CVH packet information was in one envelope and the Certificate of Recognition was in another. If your county only received gold seals, I put those in the packet envelope and if you didn’t receive a second envelope, then your county had no certificates or gold seals. Please take the time to share the CVH packet with your units and county board.

I would like to say thank you to the counties that turned in CVH hours and did so by the new due date. It was a learning year for the new due dates and for the most part you all were on time. It’s always hard to learn new things like due dates, but in time it will all be second nature.

I would like to share the final numbers for 2024 with you all:

2024 Total Hours: Price Per Hour

380,950 hours at \$33.49 = \$12,758,015.50

Total HCE Hours Reported: 152,073

Total of Counties Reported: 53 out of 60

Total Members Reporting: 1,442

Total Certificates Given: 280

Total of Seals Handed Out: 383

Total Number of Members with 1,000+ Hours: 64



**YOUR TIME IS
NOW. MAKE IT
COUNT.**



It was a great year for volunteer hours and I thank you to everyone for your hard work and dedication. Congratulations to everyone that took home awards this year.

As you all know I am on my last year for the IAHCE board. I leave in March of 2026. Please consider running for the CHS/Sales Director position. It is a lot of heavy lifting and you must be familiar with Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word. You should have your own computer and know how to use email. It’s a lot of work, but it is very rewarding at the same time. It’s been a great eight years for me.

Extension Educator– Cheri Burcham

Happy Spring Everyone!

It was so great to visit with so many of you at the IAHCE Annual Conference last month. Again, the Board and planning committee did a great job putting it together, and I hope those that attended had a good time. I felt that we had a successful First Vice-President meeting and they chose some very worthwhile programs to be offered next year. Don't forget that you can register for 2025 Lessons for Living at any time online at <https://go.illinois.edu/2025HCElessons> and can watch any of the webinar recordings at <https://go.illinois.edu/HCERecordings>



I plan on attending one day at the NVON conference this Summer. Since it is in Springfield, IL this year, I would highly recommend IAHCE members to attend - a national conference right in our backyard! Please take care and TAKE TIME for yourself and things you enjoy!

Living in the northern region of Illinois, my Spring comes much later than those in the southern counties. Leaving Effingham after the 2025 conference I traveled through many signs of Spring—field work underway, trees and shrubs budding, and WIND! Oh, the wind has been excessive this year. All signs of March in the Midwest. In Carroll County the colors are getting a hefty start--my naturalized crocuses, purple hyacinths, and bright cheery daffodils join the “coming out” party. Birds are busy, busy, busy, needing more and more bird seed in the feeder. Babies are coming!



Spring also brings annual meetings for many of our counties. This is what I like: to meet many of our faithful and new members, to install county officers as needed, and to share the joy of service through HCE. Please let me now asap when your county's meeting is and I will join you as I am able.

(FYI, I work full-time running my business, but my schedule is flexible.) Be sure to reserve Thursday, August 7, to attend the District 1 Workshop in Sycamore. We'll meet at the Sycamore United Methodist Church, 160 Johnson Ave. This is the TIME and place to learn what is coming for IAHCCE, the 2026 theme and programs will be revealed. This TIME will be informative and entertaining. A box lunch will be included in the registration. The Methodist Church has done some remodeling...You'll enjoy using their new “coffee bar” in lobby. Speaking of coffee in the morning we still need a few more volunteers to bring some breakfast treats to share. Please, and thank you!

Carroll

Carroll County has three active HCE units. Recently, Freedom Unit held a “show and tell” at their regular monthly meeting. What a surprise to see the creative efforts from the past and from the present. Charlotte Tarrant’s Christmas Elf wall hanging was shown at this year’s IAHCCE annual conference. Her denim-lined potholder is one of many she made for a fundraiser for a county non-profit: Great River Outreach. GRO serves weekly meals, offers training and educational classes, open mic nights, and more for county residents.



In the foreground is Joyce with her unusual jewelry box. The China lady swings open to reveal three drawers and hanging hooks for bracelets, necklaces, etc. The Illinois State bird quilt was embroidered, pieced, and quilted by Bonnie’s mother. Bonnie is on the right holding the quilt. The hand-quilting outlines each bird and flower detail. Of course, there were only 48 states at that time. Not shown is a cast iron potato ricer, a hammered aluminum pitcher, a 1929 edition of *Old Patchwork Quilts and The Women who Made Them* by Ruth E. Finley, and other creative ideas and family histories. EVERYONE enjoyed getting to know each others’ interests and family history.



Freedom unit meets March through December. In Northwest Illinois it makes sense for them to take off the winter months and meet through the summer instead. Many winter meetings were cancelled due to extreme weather and dangerous road conditions.



Jo Daviess

Greeting from Jo Daviess County.

We are all coming out of hibernation and looking forward to blooming spring flowers and all the yard work that comes with spring flowers. Jo Daviess County HCE Units are gearing up for our Annual Meeting on April 29, with pictures to following in our next newsletter. We will elect new officers for the county board. We are looking over scholarship applications for graduating high school seniors, with \$200-\$300 scholarships being awarded. A project all units will join in will be to assist in helping American Legion members and church members in placing flags on Veterans graves for Memorial Day at the various cemeteries in the county.

At the holiday, the County Board decorated a tree at the Stockton Heritage Museum, which was on display in the window through the first of January. The Meridian Unit members are making "T-bags", carryall bags made from t-shirts. The bags are then donated to the Apple River and Warren food pantries, to replace the use of plastic bags. A great environmental helper to reduce plastic waste.

The Unit also made Valentines cards to be given to seniors in the area. The county was awarded a 3rd place for County of the Year at the 2025 Annual IAHCE meeting in March. Thank you to all members who made this honor possible.

Til next time, our best to all.



**TIME IS WHAT WE
WANT MOST, BUT
WHAT WE USE WORST.
- WILLIAM PENN**



Lake

Hello from Lake County,

We closed out the year with an all-member Holiday Party. It was well received, and we are hoping to make it a yearly tradition. LCAHCE had 5 members attend the 2025 IAHCE Conference. This includes our own Angela Hicks, president of our county as well as IAHCE. We are very proud of her. Our delegation reported that our county's 2024 Cultural Enrichment Educational report came in second in its award category. Also, two items we submitted to the Cultural Enrichment Art Show won "Best in Show in their categories. These awards went to: Sandy Henke for her hand-made Hibiscus earrings and Angela Hicks for her Hibiscus Busting Through a Painted Canvas.

The 2025 HCE theme "Make Time" was decorated by clocks donated by the LCAHCE International Director, Jane Ellen Keroson. Conference goers enjoyed them as they were used as table centerpieces in the dining room.

We, who did not go to Conference, are eagerly waiting to hear more about it, from share shops to district updates. Our next big meeting in Lake County is our Annual Business Meeting at the end of April. At this event, we will "Make Time" to have a good time with our fellow HCE members, and, hopefully, people wanting to join us.

Candace Keegan
LCAHCE Newsletter Editor



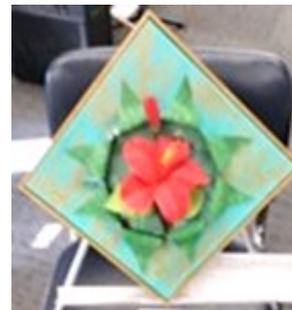
Left to Right: Angela Hicks (President), Jane Ellen Keroson (International Director), Barbara Rowland (Vice President), Shirleyann Russell (American Unit), and Sandy Henke (Treasurer)



Sandy Henke - Hand-made Jewelry, Hibiscus Earrings



Angela Hicks - Current Country of Study, Hibiscus Busting Through a Painted Canvas



Rock Island

We had a slower winter this year. Face It....we are all getting older and do not really want to go out in the cold, snowy, icy winter. The members were pleased with the November through February Unit Lessons which were package lessons. The lessons were very interesting; but also we did not have to drive to the Extension Office in unpredictable weather.

In January, we started taking orders for geranium plants. This is our only fundraiser, but it is a good fundraiser. The 4-H units help sell the geranium plants, which we in turn give a percentage to them for each plant they sell.

Cultural Enrichment is working on a tour of Figge Art Museum to be held April 22; followed by lunch at Cracker Barrel. The guided tour will be of several collections currently on display: including a John Deere Worldwide Art Collection and Myrlande Constant: DRAPPO display of Haitian artworks that includes large flags and other items embellished with bead work. We will also be having a Quilt Tying Day on May 19 at the Extension office. The finished items will be donated to nursing homes in the Quad City area.

In April the Cultural Arts Committee will be holding a quilted lap robe tying get together for the county members. This is a good time for socialization as they are busy tying. The completed lap robes will be donated to area nursing homes. We will have a potluck for lunch. The board is also working on arrangements for our 103rd Annual Meeting that will be held in June.

Sharon Hough

Stephenson

SPRING GREETINGS FROM STEPHENSON COUNTY!

In October, HCE had a booth at the Senior Lifestyle Expo at the Eagles Club in Freeport. Several members handed out copies of past lessons and information on our organization and how you could become a member.

On Thursday, October 31, Stephenson County HCE held their Annual Meeting at the Farm Bureau in Freeport. During the meeting, two scholarship winners (\$300 each) were announced; Lucas and Matthew Meyer, brothers from Sillman Valley, Illinois. The volunteer hour and membership awards were passed out. Our 2024 Homemaker of the Year was JoAnn Wenzel of the Blackhawk Unit. IAHCE President, Angela Hicks, was able to attend, so following the election of officers, she installed the 2025 Stephenson County HCE board members.

After a light luncheon, the International Meeting on Malaysia was given by Angela Hicks. She told us about her experience as a delegate from Illinois to the 30th Annual ACWW Triennial in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In December, our organization once again supported Freeport Health Network's Festival of Trees held at the Freeport Public Library. The theme for 2024 was: "The Best Way to Spread Holiday Cheer, Is Singing Loud for all to Hear". The theme was chosen for our HCE Christmas tree was: "Hattie Clair and HCE Spread Holiday Cheer". The tree was decorated with musical notes, silver ornaments, and cascading white ribbons with the names of Christmas songs on them. Brochures on HCE were available. Hattie Claire greeted everyone from her spot under the tree! In fact, Hattie attended all the above events I mentioned previously in this article. Hattie was a busy lady!

In December, our county board meeting was held in the decorated home of one of the board members. After the morning business meeting, we had a noon potluck and just enjoyed visiting with each other.

4-H Super Saturday was held on the morning of March 1 at the Farm Bureau. This year our HCE county board president, Carla Meyer, presented a class on "Peep Houses". There were three sessions where the kids were given the instructions and materials to make their own original (and edible) candy houses. Several other members assisted Carla during the sessions.

On Monday, March 10, five members of Stephenson County HCE left on the 300-mile, one way, drive to Effingham for the 101st IAHCE Annual Conference. We attended meetings, banquets, and workshops. We donated several baskets to the Silent Auction and participated with entries in the Cultural Enrichment competition. We received an educational award at the Awards Banquet— third place in Public Relations. Two of our members ran for the state board; Carla Meyer and Becky Thomas. Congratulations to Carla Meyer as she is the new IAHCE Secretary.

HAVE A GREAT SPRING AND SUMMER AND

TAKE TIME TO SMELL THE ROSES!

Janice Fryer



Will

With the Spring season just days from occurring, the arrival of warmer days feels just around the corner. Yet, we're already basking in the joy of nature awakening from her winter sleep! From blooming spring flowers to flowering bushes and trees, vibrant pinks, yellows, purples, and greens awaken our senses and stir feelings of hope and joy. What an uplifting change from winter's gray landscape!

Since the Fall, Will County HCE has held several successful events:

In December, the entire membership gathered for a festive holiday party at a local restaurant. Many attendees donned bright, shiny outfits in red, green, and gold. After savoring a delightful lunch and engaging in lively conversation, we enjoyed holiday-themed games led by Carolyn Yoemans, our Vice President. The event was so enjoyable that we decided to make it an annual tradition. As an added surprise, the Crystal Unit presented the WCHCE with a flag created by its members, under the direction of Judy Maier. It was later displayed at the Annual Conference in March.

In February, the WCHCE Board convened with unit presidents to discuss strategies for enhancing the relevance and timeliness of our organization. President Gail Shaw facilitated the discussion, focusing on ways to attract new members. Suggestions included hosting mini meetings in the evenings for working members and organizing engaging activities, speakers, and lessons. We're optimistic about implementing these ideas to rejuvenate our community.

February also brought our first Bunco Party of the year! We host three annually in February, July, and September. Attendees brought their lunches while board members provided desserts and drinks. Winners of the four Bunco categories received \$5 prizes sponsored by WCHCE with some guests delighting in multiple wins. Additionally, we welcomed four guests, making the afternoon filled with laughter, camaraderie, and new friendships.

Finally, our May Annual Meeting promises to be a wonderful occasion. The luncheon event will feature Andrea Zoelle, our International Director, sharing insights from the Annual Convention in Effingham. Our guest speaker, IAHCE/LCAHCE President Angela Hicks, will captivate us with an overview of Malaysia, our 2024 focus country. The day will conclude with the installation of officers. It's sure to be a memorable experience for all.

Mary Barrett, WCHCE Newsletter



DISTRICT 2 NEWS

DISTRICT 2 DIRECTOR – Karen Cahill

Once again, we had a wonderful conference! Kudos to everyone who helped make it such a success! I hope those of you who joined us had a great time, and if you weren't able to attend, here's hoping we will see you next year. Are you finding yourself "Making Time" for things that are important to you? As William Penn said, "Time is what we want most, but what we use worst". We can probably all relate to that.



I am looking forward to visiting your counties this year, especially the five new counties that are in my district. Please mark your calendars for the following District 2 meetings this year. More information will be sent closer to the times.

Wednesday, June 25– Mini-meeting in Decatur at the Extension office

Wednesday, August 6– District meeting at Southern View Chapel– Springfield

Wednesday, November 5– Mini-meeting in Decatur at the Extension office

I hope your spring/summer is filled with many beautiful memories due to "Making Time" for special people and events.

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

DeWitt

We are excited to start the year off with two new members!

In February we had a very interesting program on the cleaning of old tombstones. The lesson was given by Terrie Lemuel, she is with the DeWitt Genealogy club. She brought her tub with all her cleaning supplies and told us the best cleaner was a spray called D/2, you spray it on the tombstone and it does the work for you. Terri has cleaned several very old tombstones in DeWitt County.



In March Alice Grooms and Linda Riva attended the State Conference in Effingham. Our unit is proud of Alice as she is the new 2nd. V President of the state board. Alice will do a great job for the state! Dewitt county won 2nd place for County of the year, the book was put together by Linda Charlett and Sonna Hoke. We also won 2nd place for the International book done by Alice! A huge thank you to all three of these for their efforts in getting DeWitt county recognized at the conference! Alice also won first place in the Cultural Enrichment for a beautiful bag that she made!

Our unit lesson in March was on the library, we are very fortunate to have an excellent Library in Clinton. Emily Dunham came and told us about what the library offers, she covered a lot of programs that might interest our age group. She explained how to use the online reading apps they have and what to do if you have a problem, call the Library! I think we all learned something, I had no idea you could check out tools! Everyone enjoyed the program! After wonderful refreshments served by Darla Cutright several of us went to Hardee's to have lunch or just a snack!



We are excited to be planning a special meeting April 3rd at our library on "The Illinois Central Railroad and the Civil War" given by Don Chamberlain. We are hoping for a good attendance!

Have a wonderful spring and a Happy Easter!
Linda Riva

Macon

We are busy starting another year. We did not have our large group programs in January and February because of the unpredictable weather that we have in our area. Our board and our sewing group continue to meet during that time. Several of our unit groups were able to meet too. Our first large group meeting was a program presented by Ron Johnson, the funeral director at the Calvert and Wikoff Funeral Home in Mt. Zion. He gave an excellent, informative presentation about documents and other information which is important to save. It was very well attended. We had some guests who attended because they saw my article in our local newspaper, the Tribune.

Upcoming programs are: a fun and delicious program about preparing a charcuterie boards for entertaining by Karen Cahill and Gini Smith; a trip to Kickapoo Tea Room in Downs, Illinois; an informative program about perennial plants by our Master Gardeners; the history of ice cream presented by a representative from Tillamook Creamery, who recently moved into our area; Nicole Bateman from the Economic Development Corporation in Decatur who will speak about the newest developments in the Decatur area, and in August we will tour the Bachrach Mansion through scrapbook pictures and other media. It will be a fun and exciting spring and summer!

We were so proud that our HCE group donated 262 pairs of socks to the Red Cross that were given to local veterans as well as deployed military personnel. We also continue to make the pillowcases for the Ronald McDonald House and other various agencies in our area and the bonding hearts for the babies.

We also donate supplies, money, and time filling boxes for active military members through Operation Enduring Support. This has been a rewarding experience for all of us.

McLean

Spring has arrived in McLean County, but it is coming and going as it settles in!

McLean County HCE continues to have a variety of local leader lessons to share with our members. "Hold that thought?" and "Starting plants for the garden" were presented. Another exceptional program was, "Japanese Immigration Story," by Susan Woollen of the Second Generation Speakers' Bureau of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. She spoke of her mother's survival of the atomic bomb dropped over Nagasaki in 1945 when she was 9 yrs old and her eventual "war bride" immigration to the US in 1958. The March Super Saturday with Livingston County, found leaders learning about "Flour Power – types of flour" by Jenna Smith, Nutrition and Wellness U. of IL Extension Educator. Arlene Martell of Livingston County HCE presented: "The Color Purple". Minor lessons each month are now on South Africa's history timeline, cities, agriculture, economy, and geography.

In December, members and guests enjoyed the county Holiday Party luncheon to the theme of "Candy Cane Lane." Make-it take-its, bingo and two musical groups topped off the holiday event.

The Friendship/Membership Tea in February saw 42 members and 14 guests enjoying the program, "Pre-Civil War Quilts and the Underground Railroad" presented by Connie Martin of Aurora, IL.



The Community Service Days group meets each month to work on items for others such as breast cancer patients breast pads and seat belt covers/port pillows. The Humane Society of Central Illinois benefits from the contributions each month from members – Clorox wipes, liquid hand soap and toilet paper. The Read and Share group met to discuss the books The Spoon Stealer by Lesley Crowe and Surviving Savannah by Patty Callahan.

Cultural Enrichment programs started off in March with a delicious Soup “Flight” and Bread Soire; and in April, lunch at Fairbury’s Lost in Time Restaurant and shopping.

The 2025 IAHCCE Annual Conference in March was enjoyed by 9 McLean County HCE members. We were pleased to receive awards in 6 different categories with Grand Awards in International and CVH county report. Night Owls Unit member, Betty Jenson received 3rd place in “55 members & above” counties for her individual CVH hours of 1,265.

We invite you to our **107th McLean County HCE Annual Meeting** on Thursday, July 17, 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Bloomington. Check our website for details: mcleanhce.org.

The McLean County Fair is July 23-27, and McLean HCE will sponsor “Young at Heart Day” at the fair Thursday, July 24, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Music, door prizes, vendors and food plus fair tours will entertain the audience.

HCE continues to raise money for the HCE scholarship fund and many community service projects. The Fannie May in-store twice a year fundraiser is very successful, and we get to talk to the “chocolate” public about HCE. Our bake sales are scheduled at the Downs, IL Farmers Market; Old Rugged Barn; and the Downtown Bloomington Farmers Market. The **HCE Attic Treasures and Bake Sale** event will be held at the Interstate Center in Bloomington in the Mini-Expo Building on Thursday, September 25 (3-7 p.m.) and Friday, September 26 (8 a.m. – 2 p.m.).

For updated information and more details, visit our media sites- **Website: www.mcleanhce.org and LIKE our Facebook page at: McLean-County-Association-for-Home-and-Community-Education.**

See you in McLean County! Come Visit!
Barb Jurgens, McLean County PR Committee



Sangamon

Aside from our regular monthly meeting, we usually have a Project Day on the fourth Wednesday. Some members volunteer to arrive early to make PBJ sandwiches which are delivered to places like St John's Breadline, Washington Street Mission, and Salvation Army.

Some of our many projects include a group that makes beautiful bookmarks and cards given to several outreach programs, while some are sold to make money for other projects. Sue Chamberlain helped start a project making weighted blankets to donate to schools. These are greatly appreciated by teachers of special needs children to help keep them calm. She reports that to date we have probably made 93 blankets since 2012. Sue also has helped start a new endeavor; making lovely rag rugs. Members help cut the strips and then a lady weaves them into many colorful designs. They go like hotcakes.

247 mailbags were sewn and given to the Honor Flight program which allows Veterans to be flown to spend a day in Washington DC.

One of our newest projects is making receiving blankets and burp cloths for the Pregnancy Care Center. This organization helps low-income mothers. As you can see our members are busy as bees and we have fun doing it.

The highlight of our project day is enjoying a potluck lunch. There is always yummy food, and more than one recipe has been exchanged.

Debbie Yeaman has helped initiate an outreach program to Harvard Park Elementary School in Springfield. Second graders who have birthdays that month come during their lunch hour. Volunteers help each student receive a take home bag of goodies that the kids get to pick out. Everything from toothpaste and toothbrushes to books, toys, and fruit. They also get to pick out a pillowcase sewn by our members. I volunteered one month. It was so rewarding to get hugs and see expressions of gratitude on their faces.

Josie Anderson, our 1st Vice President, always has fun informative activities planned either at the Extension Office or off-site trips. On February 19th we had a delightful Cabin Fever Day. Morning activities started with Josie leading us in some simple yoga stretches and mindful breathing techniques. Roxy Ulm then helped us make a pair of pierced earrings. Barb Shutt showed how to make a desk calendar. Other activities to choose from included Susan King teaching how to crochet a dishcloth and Roxy Ulm teaching how to make a dog toy using felt strips. We enjoyed a delicious lunch which included four kinds of soup, an assortment of breads, and cookies and brownies. All homemade, of course.

Thanks to several members who have obtained Thrivent grants to help buy a new sewing machine and things like pellets for weighted blankets and other supplies as needed. Other worthy causes we have donated to are: Collecting 200 pairs of socks given to Red Cross for distributing to Illinois Vets, empty food containers given to St John's Breadline, cat mats and pill bottles used by Animal Protective League, soda tabs for Ronald McDonald House, and fleece hats for Grace Lutheran Food Pantry to be given to homeless people.

Brenda Dutcher, Public Relations



**EVERYONE HAS THEIR
OWN TIME CLOCK IN
THEIR LIFE. TRUST THE
TIMINGS OF YOUR LIFE.**



-INVAJY

Vermilion

Vermilion County Association for Home and Community Education, had one board member, Mary Stampini, to attend the IAHCE 2025 Annual Conference. She is International and Cultural Enrichment Chairman for County. Mary stated that the Conference was a few days of very knowledgeable and interesting speakers. The food was wonderful and seeing old friends of IAHCE made for good times and laughter! Mary was a voting delegate for this conference.

Other News for Vermilion County;

Events planned for the Year of 2025 are as follows:

(Events and Dates can change without any written notice.)

April 1, 2025

A County Spring Event! All Members and guests will meet at Danville Gardens, by 1:15pm. Program will be presented at 1:30pm. A walk around the gardens will take place.

May 6, 2025

A County Event! Annual Women Walk the World! A Tailgate Event is planned for the event.

All Members and Guests are invited to attend this event.

Meet and Great is scheduled for 11am, and meal will be provided at 11:30am.

All Inside the building, Games for Fun, Walking for the cause, and a Social Hour!

Bring Pennies for the Walk.

Place to be held: East Park Church. 1224 E. Voorhees Street, Danville, Il.

July 7, 2025

A County Event!

Vermilion County Annual Meeting, will be held at: 11:30am

JOCKO's Family Restaurant & Pizza Parlor, 305 W. Williams Street, Danville, Il.

All Members and Guests are invited to attend this event.

All attendees will order from the menu and be responsible paying for their meal.

September 8, 2025

HOBO Style Soup Picnic! Kickapoo State Park Vermilion County.

To be held in the Large Pavilion. 10:30am arrival. 11:30am Lunch.

All Members and Guests are invited to attend this event. Fun, Games and More!

Bring 2 cans of vegetables for the soup. (1 can for soup and other for food pantry.)

Bring Chair for your comfort!

October 16, 2025

"Carry-In Pot-Luck Luncheon"

International Meeting. East Park Church, 1224 E. Voorhees Street, Danville, Il.

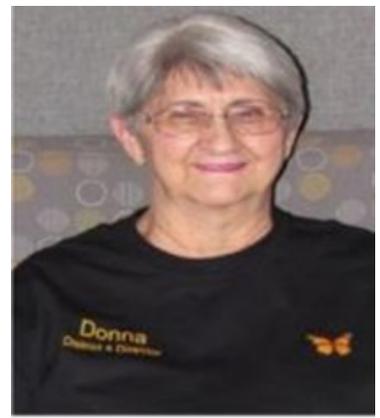
11:am Registration 11:30am Lunch.

Any Questions call: Eleanor White 217-260-5106

Diane Reddy 217-260-5593

DISTRICT 3 NEWS

DISTRICT 3 DIRECTOR – Donna Richards



WOW! What a great 101st IAHCE celebration. Thank you to Carol Harms, Emily McDowell, and the entire IAHCE State Board for a wonderful Conference.

We had a great District 3 meeting during the Conference in March. We had a chance to catch up with each other and to hear about upcoming activities planned in our counties.

The June District 3 Mini Meeting will be cancelled. Our next Mini Meeting will be Tuesday, November 4, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. in the Unity Baptist Church fellowship hall in Vandalia. Please mark your calendars and include the date in your planning. If you want to come around 11:30, bring your own lunch, sit down with another county and get to know them while you eat. County officers will be sent an invitation via email, so please be on the lookout for it in late September.

District 3 & 4 August Workshops will be Tuesday August 5, 2025, at the West Salem Trinity Church, 4212 Broadway St., in Mt. Vernon.

I find it amazing to see the diversity of the counties within District 3. We are all different but at the same time, we all strive to achieve the IAHCE Mission Statement, Objectives, Aim of the Homemaker, and the Collect. I learn something new during each [county](#) visit.

I look forward to seeing you at August District Workshop and to my visit to your county this year,.

Crawford

MaryLiz Wright, Nutrition and Wellness educator, gave 24 members an informative program on using their air-fryers! A special lunch was provided with everything green since it was held on St. Patrick's day. HCE ladies held a "sock monkey making day" to give a sock monkey to the residents at a memory care facility. With their long term memory, they might remember having a sock monkey.



The Morning Glories HCE unit recently made table decorations for a local veterans' home.

Pictured from left: Eva Miller, Marilyn Sheridan, Lydia Bailey, Dale Davis, Susan Allison, Barb McCoy, and Carolyn Coleman. Not pictured is Martha Holt, who was taking the picture.



Fayette

Hello Everyone from Fayette County HCE!!!

Fayette County got together at Evans Public Library learning about garden planning: think it through, take inventory, then get started; garden planting & care: garden prep, planting, care & maintenance; Fertilizers and garden pests. At the end of the presentation she provided seeds for participants to take home. We are looking to do a four part class possibly next year.

We started off the year with getting ready for the conference coming up in March. So In February we got together with a few of the state board members to put together some table favors. A Good time was had by all. We finished with pizza for lunch and good friends having a great time being together.

Heritage Skills Weekend was held March 28-30 at the Rehoboth Baptist Campground. We enjoyed a fun filled weekend of learning skills that are being lost in today's society. We started off by building a rocket stove and then cooking our supper on it. We learned skills with cast iron: cooking/seasoning/cleaning. Then we made rope and rain barrels. Starting Saturday, was a rich and full day of learning all kinds of skills like: medicinal herbs, herbal capsules, tinctures, rendering tallow then making three items with it, milling flour then using it in recipes, comparison of grinders, making bread, jelly, vanilla extract, liquid hand soap, shampoo, mayo, sourdough items, water glassing eggs, plant propagation methods, planting do's & don'ts, a leather craft, chunky blanket and a sewing project. Some stayed in the cabins and the meals were provided by our units.

Our units have started working on Storybooks. The units have their members write the story, starting with one person and when they are done passing it to the next member and so on until all members have written their part of the story. We are looking forward to reading their storybooks.

What a GREAT 101st IAHCE CONFERENCE! We are looking forward to next year already!! Lots of great information was shared through the share shops. See You Next Year at the Conference!!

We are praying for our District Director Donna Richards as she is preparing for an upcoming surgery! We are standing in the gap with prayers for you Donna! YOU GOT THIS!!



Macoupin

Greetings from Macoupin County! Macoupin County has been busy with many exciting lessons, events, and cultural arts activities. Our 1st vice president, Carol Pollo, has planned out the lessons for the year along with the other 1st vices from the units. Lessons for this year are Breads, Inflation: How It Affects a Fixed Income Budget, Preventing Dementia, Respiratory Illnesses, Salads, Legal After Loss, Fun Semi-Homemade Desserts, All About Pumpkin, Low Impact Exercises, and Soups.

We were very proud to have been able to begin our Macoupin County H.C.E. Scholarship Awards. The two awards were presented to Alex Behme and Caleb Cloninger, who both are members of the Lucky Bird 4-H club. It is hoped that this will be a tradition of our county.

The County H.C.E. board held their Christmas Party at Josephine's Tea Room in Godfrey, Illinois the beginning of December. It was attended by both outgoing and in-coming officers. The board has outings in December and August.

In February Vickie Laughlin, our cultural arts chairperson, held a cultural arts event where members were able to make a 3-foot-tall painted snowman which was lit. Vickie holds cultural arts events in January, April, July, and October.

The county holds two banquets each year. The end of May will be our 95th Annual Meeting. A luncheon with the presentation of awards, a business meeting, entertainment, and a silent auction will take place. In late October we will hold our Founder's Day luncheon which includes a holiday silent auction, a business meeting, election of officers, and entertainment.



**TIME IS RELATIVE; ITS ONLY
WORTH DEPENDS UPON
WHAT WE DO AS IT IS
PASSING.**



-ALBERT EINSTEIN

Madison

Madison County had their fourth annual craft camp February 28-March 2nd. The theme was “Cooking up some Kitchen Crafts”. Participants made thirteen crafts including table runners, serving trays with colored glasses, kitchen conversion boards, aprons, salt and pepper caddies, coffee paintings, painted wine bottles, and decorated tea towels and placemats. They were even given a lesson on charcuterie. We are looking forward to next year’s theme “Deck the Halls with Crafts and Holly”.

Other crafting events for the county include wood sign and wreath workshops, half day craft workshops in April, June, August, October, and November and our cork club where we eat yummy foods, drinks wine, and make a craft out of wine corks.

We had our annual Children’s Make and Take It in March. It was a huge success. We are planning another Children’s Tea in August. Our Annual Meeting will be held on April 28th with a program on aprons and installation being done by Donna Richards. Our annual county trip is being held May 16. We will be headed to dinner and a show in Alton.

Our county was saddened by the passing of long time 2nd VP and member, Joyce Cornwell. Our annual Membership Tea and Women’s Trivia have been postponed for this year.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at District Workshops!



Richland

Richland County Homemakers Extension board members were fortunate to attend a conference, host a delightful workshop, and plan their annual meeting.

The 101 Annual Conference was held in Effingham in mid-March. Besides the election of new state officers and several entertaining speakers, district meetings provided updated information for the new year. Also, many informative sessions offered a variety of learning opportunities. Some of the topics were The Role of Illinois in the Civil War, What is an Art Quilt?, Benefits of Vinegar and Honey, and Whole Person Wellness and Mental Health. A scavenger hunt, a pot of gold drawing, and a silent auction provided other activities in which members took part.

A county-wide meeting was held on Monday, March 24. Mary Liz Wright, an entertaining representative from the University of Illinois Extension Service, presented a program on “The Mighty Mushroom” that included many interesting facts about the benefits of mushrooms. Several dishes were also sampled, all of which included delicious mushrooms.

The afternoon of April 5 will highlight Richland County’s annual luncheon and meeting. Activities will be at the First Presbyterian Church in Olney beginning at 11:30. Barney Ochs will once again be catering the meal with chicken breast, 7-layer salad, twice baked potatoes, and more for \$15.00. Members may contact Debbie Geier (618-838-2412) or Pat Foust (618-843-9959) if planning to attend. It is not too late to sign up to join us for lunch. Members who have not paid their dues may do so at this meeting as well.

Following the luncheon, Heather Ackman will speak about “Mental Wellness,” focusing on why senior citizens need to be mindful of their mental health. Mental health problems can drastically affect a person’s ability to carry out basic daily living activities, reducing their quality of life and their independency. HEA adopts a topic of focus for the year and Mental Awareness was chosen for 2025.

During the annual meeting, there will be an election and installation of officers for the year, as well as discussion of topics for HEA this year. Donna Richards, District 3 Director, will speak briefly about state activities and concerns. A short service will honor members who have passed during the past year. Members are encouraged to attend this entertaining and information meeting.



DISTRICT 4 NEWS

DISTRICT 4 DIRECTOR – Carol Harms



I hope those of you who attended the “Make Time” 2025 annual conference had a great time. Honestly, I am so happy with how things turned out. I thought our guest speakers and entertainment were excellent, the Share Shops were interesting and well-attended (THANK YOU, Emily McDowell and Presenters!), the Make-It and Take-Its were neat (THANK YOU, Janel Kassing and Presenters!), and the food and service were great (THANK YOU Patty Green and the Keller Center staff!). I know some of you missed having vendors there, but having the space to move Cultural Enrichment to the area across from the ballroom was wonderful! It was so much easier for us to slip in and see the beautiful exhibits.

Planning the annual conference is NOT a one-woman job, and I have to thank some special people: Emily McDowell, my co-chair who shared great ideas and was so supportive; Angela Hicks, who was always ready to answer my questions, offer ideas, and help however she could; Ashley Davis, who not only organized the table favors, but ordered, hand-made and got donations for many of the items you received at the tables; Janel Kassing, who organized the Make-It & Take-It sessions and is always there to support and help me; and the rest of the IAHCe Board, who all did their parts to pull off another annual conference. I passed the torch to Emily and her co-chair Becky Belcher, who will both do a fantastic job for 2026.

The spring is always a busy time for district directors, because once the conference is over, we start traveling to your annual meetings. By now I will have been in Perry, Massac, White, Union, Johnson, Wayne, and Hamilton counties. I really appreciate being invited to your counties and hearing about your activities and achievements.

I will be attending two of our “mother” organizations’ conferences in July. IAHCe will be hosting the NVON conference in Springfield July 8-10, and as a board member, I will be working and well as attending some sessions. I will also be traveling with Janel Kassing and Jane Chapman to the ACWW Area General Meeting July 20-24 in Erlanger, Kentucky (near the Cincinnati airport) for the sessions and to see the ACWW World President Magdie DeKock, who I met at our 100th annual conference last year.

I hope you all have a wonderful spring and summer, I hope to see many of you at our District 4 mini-meeting in Benton on June 26.

Clinton

Clinton County had 3 members again attend the state conference in Effingham. We love the conference! If you have never attended - go to this conference, you will love it! For the first time we sent pictures of our county activities and it was great to see them on the big screen at the conference. Also, for the first time we had entries for the cultural enrichment room. We won 2 best of shows and one people's choice award! It was great to see their names and their quilt/counted cross stitch projects on the big screen too. We got ideas on programs for our county by attending conference share shops. Tell your ladies to attend this conference, they will love it too. It helps you to see how big our organization is.



Activities we have been doing include, sponsoring the county Easter egg hunt, providing a program on skin care and aging skin, and bringing in Fr. Dominic to do a “Baking Bread and Beyond” program. In May we will be having a Master Gardener present “Perennials make easy flower gardening”.

Hamilton

The Hamilton County HCE hosted Cabin Fever Day on January 15 at the Hamilton County courthouse. The public was invited to come and make crafts to take home. About 30 adults and children were present. HCE board members were present to assist with the crafts. A light lunch was served afterwards. In March, HCE members traveled to Effingham for the State HCE Conference. The members who attended were Becky Belcher, Paula Hatfield, Rhonda Millenbine and Jana Rister. The ladies enjoyed the excellent food, entertaining speakers and fellowship with other HCE members. Jana Rister won The People's Choice Award in the Cultural Arts show with her hand-woven chair.

Jefferson

November 13th was our 81st Annual meeting held at Mt. Vernon Baptist Temple. We enjoyed a catered lunch by Kingdom Seed. A program was given by Holy Sews a national organization, an organization making and providing layettes for stillborn babies. Many of our member's volunteer with either knitting, crochet or sewing the tiny layettes. We have made hundreds of blankets, bonnets and gowns. Others help assemble the kits which is very rewarding.

December found us painting Christmas ornaments at unit meetings. We donated to the Toys for Tots program, more blankets to the Amy Center which helps abused children, food & hygiene supplies to Youth Build which helps young adults learn a trade and get their GED, and donated to the Family Life Homeless Shelter.

In January we sent letters to emergency responders, fire departments and local law enforcement thanking them for their services. Waltonville unit made stepping stones for their gardens.

In February we were at the Jefferson County Farm Bureau helping with their Pancake Breakfast for Ag in the classroom. Members made and sent Valentines to nursing homes and elders in the neighborhoods. The 35th Midwestern Herb and Garden Show offered several classes for our lessons given by Extensions, pruning trees, starting a winter garden and sharing how to plant a tree.

A new program in our town is "Soap & Hope" . A couple of ladies have organized and are providing quarters, laundry soap and hygiene products to low income and homeless by providing quarters on a Saturday each month. We are collecting quarters for them. We collected \$131 last month. Planning has been going on for a trip to the Effingham Performance Center to see the Drifters, The Platters and Coasters on March 28th. Conference here we come!!!



Johnson

The Johnson County HCE Board and unit members have had a busy Winter season with more events coming up. A chili supper was held on December 2nd at the Goreville High School cafeteria during a basketball game. A second chili supper was held at the Vienna High School Commons, also during a basketball game on February 1st. Both events served as fundraisers for the scholarship program.

The scholarship recipients were announced as being Paige Groner of VHS and Riley Reid of GHS who will be honored along with their parents at a special luncheon on April 3rd. The girls will each be presented with a \$500 scholarship check.

These HCE members attended all or a portion of the annual IAHCCE Conference in Effingham in March: Linda Kuykendall, Rosemary Rouse, Phyllis Webb, Natalie Dougherty, Arlene Dueker, and Lisa King. The Annual Meeting is set for April 22nd with a potluck dinner followed by a program on “Bees as Pollinators” by Jane Chapman, past state president of IAHCCE. Carol Harms, District IV Director, will install the HCE board officers.

The annual Mother’s Day Luncheon and silent auction is planned for May 3 with tickets at \$12 for the fundraiser and social event. A program will follow the luncheon. The travel chair, Faye Mize, has coordinated three exciting coach trips for 2025 for members and the public: New York City– June 26-July 2nd, Boston– July 22-30, Mackinac Island– September 8-13. Call Faye at 618-771-0066 for information and reservations. This also serves as a fundraiser for community projects.

The collecting of aluminum can tabs also continue as a donation to the Ronald McDonald House in Nashville, Tennessee. This March, fifteen gallons of tabs were delivered. Eighteen HCE members provided a total of 1316 HCE volunteer hours and 4994.50 hours in other volunteer time in 2024.

An “All-Units” meeting will be held on September 25 with a fall wreath making workshop and lunch at the U of I Extension Building. Each attendee will go home with a lovely fall wreath. The \$25 cost will include all materials and lunch. We welcome new members to join in and enjoy the busyness of our board and the three county units.



Monroe

Monroe County HCE conducted a "SPRING BREAK BACK PACK" PROJECT. Food donations and monetary gifts were donated to St. John UCC, Maeystown's backpack program. We provided food for weekends and holiday breaks for students in need from Waterloo, Valmeyer, Prairie Du Rocher, and Red Bud. Children who qualify for free school breakfast and lunch don't have access to the free meals on weekends and holidays. Feeding programs are more important than ever. Kids need the proper nutrition for their learning, development and growth. Pictured from left are HCE Board members: Lucille Ohms, Janese Sondag, Sandy Patrick, Kathi Emery, Dorothy Kohler, and Ericha Johanning. Special thanks to Monroe County HCE members for the generous food and cash donations. Neighbors helping neighbors!



Monroe County HCE recently held an informative program on Heart Health including the basics of a woman's heart symptoms, hands on CPR and how to use an AED. The class was taught by Shelly Doerr, a nurse at Memorial Hospital who provides several of these classes a year so others have the basic knowledge of how to perform CPR and use an AED.

The training AED's provide verbal instructions on how to use a real AED if ever in a situation where it may be required to be used on someone. One thing we learned was that the song "Stayin' Alive" by The Bee Gee's, can be used for the rhythm for chest compressions!

If you're ever in the public and see someone having heart issues, start with chest compressions and have someone help. Starting CPR should save their life and they will be thankful in the end.



Monroe County HCE had a very interesting program on Butterflies "Flying Flowers" on Monday, March 24th. The program was given by Lisa Dean & Rebekah Benson, both Master Gardeners. We learned many features of the butterfly and also the care & feeding of them. The program was organized by Janese Sondag, Cultural Enrichment Director. There were 14 members from Monroe County, 2 members from Randolph County & 1 guest present. Left to Right-Janese Sondag, Lisa Dean & Rebekah Benson.



Perry

Perry County HCE just returned from another amazing bus trip! This time to Nashville, TN. There was, as always, plenty to eat at with stops at the Party Fowl restaurant, Opry Mills, Paula Dean's Restaurant and a show at the Grand Ole Opry. The next day they visited the Country Music Hall of Fame and Ryman Auditorium and Loveless Café. What a fun trip!

Perry County 4-H and HCE presented the Passport Party focusing on the country of South Africa and the state of Georgia. Most of the traditional 4-H clubs and some HCE units put together table displays and group presentations. HCE members made the dinner focusing on foods from South Africa like Bobotie and Chakalaka, and from Georgia including cornbread and peach cobbler. Well over 100 participants learned and experienced these diverse cultures.

59 members and guests "Took Time" to enjoy the HCE Annual Meeting April 2nd. The theme was "Making Time" and "What Came First, the Chicken or the Egg". There were guest speakers presenting information on Pinckneyville Hospital's Senior Life Solutions programs available to the public. Another presentation spoke all about chickens. The meal was a wonderful Chicken Cordon Bleu, deviled eggs, custard and pumpkin pies and so much more.

Scholarship applications are being accepted now to be awarded to 2 or 3 students in May. Make Time to get out and enjoy the spring while it lasts.



Pulaski-Alexander

Our unit has been busy the past few months. We have had fundraisers for our scholarship fund. Last fall we set up a booth at Cache River Day with a quilt raffle. At Pecan Day we held a bake sale. In February, we had a chicken and dumpling dinner that went very well. Several sessions of Bingo were fun as well.

In early March, members Lucille, Mary Jo, Cindy, and Martha, attended the Family and Consumer Conference at Shawnee College. Educational sessions were chosen and enjoyed. In March, Amy and Cindy attended the state conference held in Effingham. They enjoyed meeting members from various counties, learning sessions, speakers, dinners, and programs.



Cache River Day
Amy & Martha



Pecan Day
Pam, Martha
Mary Jo & Anna



White

Another good time was had at our 101 year convention. This year has been hard with the flu and ice and snow storms that kept some of us from lessons and meetings. We had trouble not getting mail or being able to deliver mail. Each member makes our H.C.E. counties a success. Even though we had some rough times, our members found the energy and the caring hearts, to keep doing what our community needed. We gave with a caring heart to those in need of warm clothes and food. We rang the Salvation Army Bell in very cold weather. We gave to our Homeless Veterans, our Nursing Home Veterans, and our Veterans Honor Flight and a Fundraiser for Cancer. The Fundraiser was able to send \$360 To St Vincent Cancer Research. I received a thank you letter stating with our donation they were able to put 30 people into a research program, and I am proud to say our White County H.C.E. donation helped the Bladder Cancer Research Group to have a Breakthrough for the causes and a new way to cure it. Our donation and other donations to Cancer Research has helped discover new ways to prevent cancer in its early stages and helps us understand the causes and the cures. I would like to take this time and say Thank You to the ladies that came to the Vinegar and Honey Share Shop. I hope some of you can find something that may help your pain and leg pain and sleepless nights. My roommate Ludene found out that our every morning Vinegar and Honey really works for us.



For some reason every year I seem to feel the conference is even better planned and goes better than the past ones. This year was special since our county had a fun Luau fundraiser to cover conference costs for both Judy Spiller and me. It worked out that enough was made from raffle and meal tickets to cover the \$300 required for both of us. We were sorry Oletta Massie could not come.

It helps that there were facilitators to collect tickets and pass out hand-outs and that there were plenty of hand-outs without a shortage. Not that there was wasted paper. It really helped that directions were given and time was allowed between events. People seemed to follow directions and that allowed for us to get to the next event on time. Signs were posted, so I like to find where to go both in the morning and in the afternoon. There was no problem for me to sit near the front both in classes I had signed up for and in the district meeting.

Meals were with pleasant company and were delicious as usual . In fact we were amazed to have very large portions of tasty and tender beef, pork and chicken. Desserts weren't quite as decadent as in past years, but a small strawberry parfait or chocolate mousse was better for this diabetic. Pie portions in past years were much larger it seemed. Sitting with my friends from Anna where I am also a member was a lot of fun. Judy enjoyed meeting them both and she and Judy Huckleberry laughed so much I almost needed to shush them a few times.

Judy is from the Vienna area and I knew her mom who was a prolific quilter around 40 years ago. For the DAR back then I did an oral history about her mom and her working with quilters from around the world to complete a quilt with their collected quilt blocks she had provided material and patterns for. Judy is very creative and crafty making her own hats that she embellishes often after crocheting them. Crochet scarves are often worn to change an outfit. Usually a skirt or dress and rarely slacks are worn. She hopes to attend a future class with Judy and me at LEAA on a First Fiber Tuesday. We hope she comes April 1 for our button craft class.

A large part of my enjoying the conference this year was the help and good company of Judy. We laughed a lot and she helped me manage my walker which was a new experience for me. She could easily make it fold up, and it was my mom's but I don't recall folding it up to take her to doctor appointments in Cape Girardeau. Mom had Rheumatoid Arthritis so we had to go that far with no specialists here at that time. So far I haven't inherited that painful affliction although I have more trouble walking.

Our sold out class was a lot of fun with Judy's help and a very co-operative class. We enjoyed hearing them say they were having fun making a wool penny mug or candle rug using a provided pattern and bags of cut shapes made by the trio of Judy, EthelMae Mitchell and me a few weeks before the conference at EthelMae's house. We let them have free scraps to make more penny shapes and green leaves if they wanted more details.

I had a few candles for door prizes door prizes and that went well. Several waited after our session was over while I went to the car and got them. There were close to 10 so not enough for 25 who attended. One lady said she was bothered by fumes from scented candles.

March 29 I displayed my penny wool candle mug rug at the General Federation of Women's Clubs in their arts and crafts competition in Marion and was glad to receive a red ribbon.

Marie Samuel



Attention IAHCE Counties!

The 2025 & 2026 IAHCE Budgets passed
At the March 2025 Conference.

The state dues will now be **\$8.00 per member**
As of 12/31/2025.

Please make sure your budgets for the coming year

Reflects this change!



Support Fund

It Doesn't Seem Enough

"I want to tell you "Thank you",

But it doesn't seem enough.

Words don't seem sufficient--

"Blah, blah"and all that stuff.

Please know I have deep feelings

About your generous act.

I really appreciate you.

You're special, and that's a fact!" – Joanna Fuchs

A special thank you to these ladies: Sandy Henke, Lake County; Monica Evans, Grundy County; Sue Chamberlain, Sangamon County and Kathi Emery, Monroe County. These wonderful ladies have graciously volunteered and served 2 terms on the IAHCE Support Fund Advisory Committee! I appreciate you for giving of your time, opinions and input. For all you do, thank you!

I want to welcome to the committee Carol Ropp, Macon County and Judy Parr, Massac County. As of the writing of this article, District 1 still has a vacancy to serve on the Support Fund Advisory Committee. If you are interested in serving on this committee please contact Karen Davis. Those in Districts 2, 3 & 4 – please let your District Director know if you would like to serve on this committee when a vacancy occurs.

June 1 is approaching fast and currently I have received ZERO Support Fund Applications!!!! Remember, county needs come first! Visit iahce.org for award criteria and the application.

Melissa Chitwood, Chairperson

Support Fund Advisory Committee

**THE TWO MOST POWERFUL
WARRIORS ARE PATIENCE
AND TIME
-LEO TOLSTOY**



Support Fund

Conference 2024

IAHCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
MARCH 12-14, 2024
THELMA KELLER CONVENTION CENTER, EFFINGHAM



The 2024 IAHCE Annual Conference has been over for some time now, but hopefully members are still talking about and relishing in the fun, enthusiasm and information that was shared! There was something for everyone! From the Road to 100 Museum, information in share shops, the wonderful fashion show, the glitz, the glamor and our special guest, ACWW World President, Magdie de Kock! A special thank you to Clarence Middleton for taking photos, to all the attendees, vendors, exhibitors, donors and board for all of your support. **Thank you to the IAHCE Support Fund for financial consideration.** To all of you, your contributions help make the 100th Anniversary Conference a success. **Thank you!**

Champaign County

During Champaign County HCE's Annual Craft & Plant Sale we hosted a Make-it Take-it called "Plant a Seed". This was for adults and children to learn about the importance of plants in our world and while they were planting their seeds CCHCE members "planted a seed" of their own by talking about CCHCE and letting adults know who we are and what we do! The plastic pots that were used had a label affixed to them with our name and website. The kids added more decorations to their pot, soil and then planted their seeds. We also had a membership table set-up inside the auditorium where the craft sale took place with a slide show presentation of CCHCE activities projecting onto the wall. At the membership table we offered a drawing for a free membership, those who entered received 2 months (complimentary) of our newsletter "The Chatter". This event was so successful that we also hosted this Make-it Take-it at our local Fisher Community Fair! Financial support was from donations from the CCHCE Board members and the IAHCE Support Fund.



Support Fund

Monroe County

Monroe County continues to find ways to promote HCE and invite



guests in order to attract new members. Monroe County HCE hosted a “New Member Holiday High Tea”. HCE Members and guests were invited. New members were

recognized at this event. Each unit decorated a theme table. Trays consisted of petite chicken salad sandwiches, savory cucumber sandwiches, assorted fruit, scones with clotted cream and sweets. Madison County HCE member, Gloria Blechlie presented a lesson entitled “Hats, Hats, Hats”. One new member was gained from this event. Monroe County HCE was very honored to be awarded the Support Fund grant for this project.

Important Dates to Remember

NVON (NATIONAL VOLUNTEER OUTREACH NETWORK) CONFERENCE

July 7th-11th, 2025– Springfield, Illinois

ACWW USA (ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD) MEETING

July 21-24th, 2025– Erlanger, Kentucky

IAHCE DISTRICT WORKSHOPS

August 5th, 2025– Districts 3 and 4, Mt. Vernon

August 6th, 2025– District 2, Springfield

August 7th, 2025– District 1, Sycamore



2024 Grand Awards Presented at the 2025 IAHCE Awards Ceremony



Educational Area	54 and Under Members Category	55 and Over Members Category
Cultural Enrichment	Grand – Jersey County	Grand – Fayette County 2 nd – Lake County 3 rd – Perry County
Family & Community Issues	Grand – Massac County	Grand – Sangamon County 2 nd – Fayette County 3 rd – McLean County
International – Malaysia	Grand – Massac County 2 nd – DeWitt County	Grand – McLean County 2 nd – Perry County 3 rd – Edgar County
Public Relations	Grand – Massac County	Grand – Perry County 2 nd – McLean County 3 rd – tie – JoDaviess County & Stephenson County
CVH- Member with the Most HCE Hours	Grand – Cindi Wright (Clark) 2 nd – Terri Caro (DuPage) 3 rd – Norma Korte (Massac)	Grand – Stephanie Vaupel (JoDaviess) 2 nd – Annette McNeill (Fayette) 3 rd – Betty Jenson (McLean)
CVH – County with the Most HCE Hours	Grand – Clark County 2 nd – Massac County 3 rd – DuPage County	Grand – McLean County 2 nd – Fayette County 3 rd – Perry County
Membership Activity	Grand – Massac County	Grand – Jefferson County 2 nd – Kane County 3 rd – McLean County
Membership Top 3 Overall With the percentage of net gain Grand – Fulton County 15.4% 2 nd – Cumberland County 6.1% 3 rd – Morgan County 5.7%		

Member of the Year Award Goes to:

- District 1 Mary Lou Ecker – Rock Island County
- District 2 Joan McEachern – Kendal County
- District 3 Mary Eustace – Pike County
- District 4 Viola Huebner – Madison County
- District 5 Dorothy Holt – Massac County

County of the Year 2024 Grand Award	54 and Under Members Category <u>Grand – Massac County</u> 2 nd – DeWitt County	55 and Over Members Category <u>Grand – Perry County</u> 2 nd – McLean County 3 rd – JoDaviess County
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South African Peanut Stew

Shared by Wayne County

You will need:

2 tablespoons of peanut oil

1 red onion, chopped

2 tablespoons of chopped fresh ginger

2 cloves of garlic, minced

1 pound of chicken cut into chunks

1 tablespoon of crushed red pepper

Salt and black pepper

5 cups of chicken stock

3 small sweet potatoes cut into chunks

1 16oz can of chopped tomatoes in liquid

1 cup of chunky peanut butter

1/2 pound collard greens roughly chopped or Kale

Directions:

Heat the peanut oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Cook and stir onion, ginger, and garlic in hot oil until onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Add chicken and cook and stir until completely browned. Season with crushed red pepper, salt, and black pepper. Pour in chicken stock. Stir in sweet potatoes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cover the pot partially with a lid. Cook at a simmer for 15 minutes or until sweet potatoes have softened. Stir in tomatoes, peanut butter, and collard greens or kale. Partially cover the pot and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until greens are tender for about 20 minutes.



**THE TIME IS NOW. STOP
HITTING THE SNOOZE
BUTTON ON YOUR LIFE.**



-MEL ROBBINS

**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION FOR
HOME & COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

**Emily McDowell,
P.O. Box 522
Pierron, IL 62273**



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