



**Elkhart County  
Extension Homemakers**

# *Over The Coffee Cup Newsletter*



*November/December  
2023*

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## Letter From Your County President

Season's Greetings Extension Homemakers,

My theme, "Racing to the finish takes teamwork from the start" came from this one special memory. Team G was participating in a high school drag racing day. It was time for the vocational teachers to race against one another. Paul Williams was the teacher representing Team G Racing. Mr. Williams was racing the 1957 Chevy that day. Somehow, the oil plug and all the oil from the car was gone. Team G needed to prepare the car for the final round of racing. They had enough oil to fill the car, but no way to hold it. Scott, a teammate, suggested they use the oil plug from the school van, but there was only enough oil for ONE vehicle. Time to throw in the towel and call it a day. Think again! One student laid under the van with his finger in the hole to stop the oil from running out for the remainder of the night. After the race, the oil was collected in a BBQ grill (as they had no oil pan), then the oil and oil plug were returned to the school's van. No one remembers if Team G won the race or not. It really didn't matter. After all, the race had already been won in the hearts and minds of everyone there.

Camp ELKO 's theme this year was "A Very Merry UnBirthday." "Alice in Wonderland" along with 42 of her closest friends enjoyed a wonderful tea party. The room was filled with beautiful tea party settings. Cupcakes, tea and other snacks were enjoyed by all, as well as games and other activities. The dates for next year are September 9-10, 2024. Plan now to attend.

Michigan City Fall District Meeting had 69 in attendance. Elkhart County was the host for this year's District Meeting. Our Elkhart County Extension Homemakers certainly outdid themselves! Many of you donated your time as a hostess, made name tags, donated bedding or raffle items, breakfast items or made a monetary donation. We used State President Peg Peter's theme, "Get Connected- Stay Connected." The room was decorated using a bright Lego theme. We had Lego centerpieces, Lego boxes filled with candy, Lego colored name tags, table clothes, napkins and plates. We even gave our two state officers, Peg Peter and Linda Carunchia, vases of Lego flowers. We really had a lot of fun with this theme! But, none of this would have been possible without the help of all of you.

IEHA Week was the week of October 23-28. Here is that number that I was researching. 4,161. That number my friends is the total membership years of our 15 active clubs. Want to know what your club's membership years total was? Send your request to vegortney@yahoo.com.

Fall Holiday Program ended our IEHA week. Demonstrations of crafts and cuisine taste testing were enjoyed by many Extension Homemakers and friends. What was your favorite craft or food?

Just a reminder to our club presidents to submit your nominations for Home-maker(s) of the Year from your club. We are planning to mail these nominee applications, after the first of the year. Please email this information to me at vegortney@yahoo.com or to Jenn Fink at the office.

As the new year approaches, the nominating committee will be busy putting together a slate of officers for the board and for Home and Family Arts. Please consider serving in one of these positions.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Vickie Gortney, County President  
Elkhart County Extension Homemakers

## Mark Your Calendars

### November 2023

- 9 **EH Lesson:** Cooking with an Air Fryer (1pm in-person & 6pm via Zoom)
- 10 **Office Closed**
- 13 **County Officers Board Meeting,** Ext. Conference Room—4:30pm
- 14 **VCS Sewing Day,** HFA Bldg.—9 am to 3 pm
- 23-24 **Thanksgiving—Office Closed**

### December 2023

- 12 **VCS Sewing Day,** HFA Bldg.—9 am to 3 pm
- 25 **Office Closed**

### Upcoming HFA Committee Meeting Dates (All meetings are in the Ext. Office Conference Room)

- Tues., November 28, 2023—1:30pm
- Tues., January 23, 2024 — 1:30pm
- Tues., February 27, 2024 — 1:30pm
- Tues., March 26, 2024 — 1:30pm
- Tues., April 23, 2024 — 1:30pm
- Tues., May 28, 2024 — 1:30pm
- Tues., June 25, 2024 — 1:30pm



**November**— Paula Adams, Sandra Bartoe, Sherry Berry, Sharol Cloud, Barbara Geiger, Ruth Anne Gray, Carla Hamilton, Lisa Honey, Lauranona Mar-rufo, Linda Miller, Sonya Miller, Becky Randolph, Shirley Snyder, Kay Stewart, Sheila Taylor, Linda Weybright, Susan Williams, and Catherine Yoder

**December**— Patsy Berkey, Kathy Case, Lana Evans, Jan Fribley, JoAnne Graber, Doris Hostetler, Sandra Jacobs, Patty Janowski, Helen Koller, Paula La-Place, Fern Mast, Karen Meade, Ruth Middleton, Theo Outman, LuAnn Sas-saman, Madeline Smith, Kathy Stoltzfus, and Vicky Stroman

## Extension Homemaker News

### Welcome New Members!

Alicia Dirmyer is a new member of Friends and Neighbors Club. She was born in Goshen, but grew up in New Castle, Indiana. Alicia relocated back to Goshen as a young adult. She and her husband, Kris, have two daughters, Jorja, a senior at Goshen High School, and Alexis. Alexis and husband, Isaac, have two boys, Elijah (5) and Samuel (2). Alicia has raised poultry, rabbits, and goats. For many years, she led a Girl Scout troop and camped as often as possible. She enjoys spending time with her two grandsons. The whole family is learning about horses and riding and watching her youngest daughter race. It made for an interesting summer. Alicia also loves to read and crafting in her spare time.

### 2023-24 Enrollment Forms

The following clubs need to submit their enrollment forms for this current club year to the Ext. Office: If you need more copies of the current enrollment form, please contact Jenn at [fink24@purdue.edu](mailto:fink24@purdue.edu) or call 574-533-0554.

- New Moon Crew
- Pie-Gabba-Sew (Honor Club)

### 2023-24 Lesson Sign-Ups

The following clubs need to submit their lesson sign-up sheet for the current club year to the Ext. Office:

- Modern Homemakers
- New Moon Crew
- York Homemakers

### 2023-24 Yearbook Updates

Please make the following updates in your 2023-24 Yearbook:

- **Pg. 14**—Change March 2 Heritage Skills Day start time to 9:00am
- **Pg. 18**—Remove Ramona Huber from Fall Holiday Program committee.

### EH Lessons—IMPORTANT UPDATE

Due to scheduling conflicts, the following EH lessons have been moved one day earlier. **If you were signed up for these lessons, please confirm with the Extension Office (574-533-0554 or [fink24@purdue.edu](mailto:fink24@purdue.edu) if you are still able to attend).** If you've already confirmed that you will be able to come/not able to come, you do not need to confirm again.

- ~~Thursday, January 18~~—“Wearable Technology” at 1:00pm; now on Wednesday, January 17 at 1:00pm
- ~~Thursday, February 15~~—“Train Your Brain” at 1:00pm (in-person) & 6:00pm (via Zoom); now on Wednesday, February 14 at 1:00pm (in-person) & 6:00pm (via Zoom)

### Camp ELKO

Camp ELKO Retreat was held September 11-12, 2023 at Camp Mack in Milford, Indiana. Homemakers from Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joe counties gathered for the two day event. Our own Cansie Witcher from Elkhart County was the chairperson of the event and planned a wonderful “Very Merry Unbirthday” program for the attendees.

Monday was filled with getting to know one another, chair yoga, and a cupcake decorating demonstration and then getting to decorate cupcakes. After lunch, we returned to the “cupcake” room and were treated to our cupcakes on plates along with other goodies in order to celebrate “A Very Merry Unbirthday.” Gifts were exchanged, birthday/tea party hats were judged, and we played Bingo.



After the party we returned to the house where we stayed and



heard speakers from the camp share about Camp Mack and talk about renovations that have been done and that are ongoing. We held our business meeting, sang songs, had devotions and went to dinner. After dinner was the annual auction to raise funds for the retreat. We closed out the evening with an indoor drumming circle (due to rainy conditions) led by the Fort Wayne Dance Collective.

Tuesday morning after breakfast, Deb Pepple led the group in an Iris Paper Folding demo and then the participants got to create a card of their choice. We did more singing, had lunch, ended the afternoon with a show and tell of favorite crafts or needlework.

A big thank you goes out to the entire committee who worked so hard to plan a wonderful time for us all. Everyone is looking forward to camp again next year on September 9-10, 2024.



## Michigan City Fall District Meeting

Around 70 ladies from the Michigan City District (Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Starke, St. Joe, Elkhart, Kosciusko, and Marshall Counties) gathered on September 20 at the Sailor Center at Hubbard Hill for the Fall District Meeting. A Lego theme was used to fit with State President Peg Peter's theme of Get Connected-Stay Connected. Guests were treated to homemade breakfast goodies provided by our homemakers. After a short business meeting we were privileged to hear three guest speakers. Kathy Greve, assistant director for Intergenerational learning, shared about the new Early Learning Center at Hubbard Hill that involves Hubbard Hill residents with volunteer opportunities in classrooms, special activities, and lots of interaction with children ages 2 ½ to 5 years of age.



Jenny Sager shared about the awesome work that Sleep-in-Heavenly Peace does to provide children with beds. Since 2022, Elkhart County has built and delivered 702 beds. At the meeting we collected 2 twin-sized mattress covers, 2 pillows, 1 blanket/comforter, 17 twin-sized bed sheet sets, and \$105 in donations.

Our own educator, Emily Christ, provided a lesson on Mindfulness for Healthy Aging. She focused on our mental health and what happens when we get stressed. She shared stress reduction techniques and had the group participate in a seven step mindfulness exercise.

Dal-Mar Catering provided a delicious lunch. After lunch, we heard from our state officers, Peg Peter, President and Linda Carunchia, President Elect. Peg and Linda led a lesson on being connected with groups and with individuals. There is much evidence that strong social support helps people survive the trials and rough times in life. Our clubs can be just the connection that someone might need. Peg went on to share ways of getting connected besides club meetings. These included old fashioned snail mail and telephone calls with an activity. She emphasized that each club has its own personality and many may be special interest clubs like crafting or quilting. You need to keep looking until you find a compatible one. She reminded us that this isn't the homemakers club that our grandmothers had. Current members need to remain open-minded and to not expect different results while continuing to do the same old things.

Linda also spoke about Focus Day on October 19 at the Danville Fairgrounds. She encouraged us to sign up for one of the focus groups. These groups are very similar to our county committees only they operate at the state level and anyone can serve on them. If you are interested in a focus group- Education, Leadership, Volunteer Community Support, Cultural Arts, Marketing and Logo, Membership, Public Relations, Young Homemakers, or Si-

lent Auction speak to a member of our board or Michelle Blough to get hooked up.

Peg shared about NVON (National Volunteer Outreach Network). This organization promotes a better understanding of the relationship of the home, the community, the state, the nation, and the world. It promotes the well-being of individuals and families. She reported that more than 50,000 of the Scatter Kindness hearts had been given out in our nation and around the world.

The spring district meeting will be hosted by Marshall County in Plymouth, IN at Pretty Lake UMC on March 6, 2024. Mark your calendars and make plans to attend.

A couple of upcoming events in other counties that may be of interest are:

- November 14 Holiday Craft Program in Kosciusko County
- December 7 Holiday Council Meeting at 11 AM in LaPorte County (lunch served at 11:30 \$20 per person)

Raffle tickets were drawn and prizes awarded to many of the attendees. Michelle Blough closed the meeting with an Irish Blessing.

### **EH Council Meeting Minutes—September 28, 2023**

Submitted by Nancy Gleim

The meeting was called to order by President Vickie Gortney at 6:30pm. Twenty-three members were in attendance. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Teresa Mack, Creative Circle. The Club Creed was led by Suzette Yurko, Creative Homemakers. The five positive thought was given by Louanne Gressman-Dunn, and the 2nd was shared by Brenda Mestach as a personal experience on her life's journey.

The Roll Call (What did you enjoy most about the Fall District Meeting? How many from your club will be attending the Fall Holiday?) was answered by 10 clubs. The minutes were published in the September/October Coffee Cup. There were no additions or corrections. The minutes were accepted as written.

Lisa Stephens handed out copies of the treasurer's report. The Fall District Meeting expenses were kept to a minimum. Creative Homemakers and Homemakers of Today made monetary contributions to the meeting which really made a difference in the total outcome. Vickie showed the beautiful program designed and printed by Jenn Fink for the District Meeting. The Lego theme was a big hit! Thank you to Matt Pepple for sharing his fabulous hobby with us for the day. His creations served as the centerpieces.

Louanne handed out the assignments for the Exchange-a-Club. Six clubs are participating. Vickie Gortney gave information on Traditions Health, a 5-star Hospice. It is listed top Home Care Program in Indiana and was one of the sponsors of the District Meeting.

A report was given by Deb Pepple on the Fall District meeting. There were roughly 69 in attendance and Dal-Mar catering served and charged us for only 73. The luncheon was a wonderfully, delicious interlude to the day-long meeting. The raffle yielded \$63. Sleep-n-Heavenly Peace received a donation of \$100 and 17 sheet sets. The Sailor Center was a lovely setting for the day. Thank you to all who contributed their time, talents and monetary gifts to make this day one to remember.

IEHA Week is October 22-28. What is your club doing for IEHA week? On Monday of that week is BLUE and GOLD DAY! Don your blue and gold and name tag to advertise Extension Homemakers. Deb Pepple encouraged Club Presidents to reach out to any interested homemakers. Judy Teall shared that at their last meeting of Homemakers of Today one lady brought 11 friends. Do you see the possibilities? (If one club doesn't fit, try another!)

### Committee Reports

- **Achievement Night**— The committee will be meeting on Octo-

ber 19, 2023 from 10:30-12:00 noon in the Extension Office Conference Room. Cathy VanHuystee shared that there were only 3 people on the committee at the moment and more are needed. If you are interested, contact either Cathy or Sharol Cloud. If you can't serve on the committee, would you consider helping us decorate or help that evening? Any help would be greatly appreciated.

- **Auditing**—This has been successfully completed Lisa Stephens reported.
- **Camp ELKO**— Cansie Witcher reported that 42 were in attendance for this year's camp. A great time was had doing chair yoga, cupcake decorating, and sharing a magnificent unbirthday tea part with gifts, games and prizes. The evening ended with inside drumming with the Fort Wayne Dance Collective. On Tuesday the group learned how to make Iris paper folding cards from Deb Pepple. We were able to fill 3 positions to make a full committee for next year. The next planning meeting is October 6, and the theme for 2024 is "All Good Things". Cansie has designed a Facebook page for Camp ELKO with pictures and videos advertising the September 9-10, 2024 camp.
- **State Focus Groups**—Michelle Blough explained the tasks of the State Focus Groups and activity committees. The focus groups and other committees are meeting on October 19, 2023 at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds at 9:00am. Each committee will meeting in the morning. The Board is providing lunch. The entire group will meet together after lunch and each committee will report. Some of the committees may meet again on Zoom.
- **Cultural Arts & Heritage Skills**—The Cultural Arts contest will be on March 28, 2024 at the Council meeting for Club Presidents. The special category this year is a table runner—no more than 18" wide by any length. Please remember to have your items in by 4:30pm that day. For Heritage Skills we are hoping to have 4 half-day classes in the morning and afternoon. Some returning classes are basketmaking and intermediate crocheting. One new class will include a fabric bear sewn by machine and



stuffed. There will be a light lunch. We are hoping to use the HFA building. Please mark your calendar for March 2, 2024 9am -3pm.

- **Fall Holiday Program** — Sherry Weaver, Busy Homemakers, reported that there would be demonstrations of 17 creative crafts and cuisine dishes to share and sample on October 28, 2023. There will be a booklet to take home containing all of the craft directions and the recipes. Encourage your members to come for a great morning of fun, food and friendship!
- **Historian**—Cansie Witcher, Homemakers of Today, is requesting pictures that would be appropriate for recording our history.
- **Home & Family Arts**— Deb George '24 (no report)
- **Home & Family Arts Fundraiser**— Our Silent Auction at this year's fair raised just under \$3,000. The Home and Family Arts Fundraiser Committee would like to thank each club member who made this possible. The donations were amazing—from handmade to collectibles, beautifully filled baskets, and even items donated by the community and local businesses. Overall, it was a great success! Next year you may see some changes with having the baskets turned in earlier for the convenience of the office. This would facilitate the overall organization. Submitted by Lisa Honey.
- **Home & Family Arts Landscape**—No report.
- **Nominating**— Kathy Stoltzfus, Creative Circle. "A work in progress."
- **Volunteer Community Sewing**— Kris Peterson, Busy Homemakers, was absent.
- **Yearbook**— Vickie Gortney, Four Seasons (Has not met yet)

Judy Teall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kim McCreary seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:22pm.

### Dates to Remember

- **County Officers Board Meeting**—October 9—Ext. Conference Room, 4:30pm
- **Sewing Day**—Volunteer Community Sewing—October 10—HFA Building
- **Fall Holiday Program**—October 28, 2023, (9:00am-12 noon) - HFA Building—Cost \$10
- **IEHA Week**—October 22-28 (Don't forget to take picture and send to Deb Pepple)

### Fall Holiday Program—October 28, 2023

Submitted by Sherry Weaver

On Saturday, October 28, the Fall Holiday Program, titled "Creative Crafts and Cuisine—Homemade for the Holidays", entertained and educated 70 women with holiday recipes, make and take crafts, and demonstrations.



From left to right—Bea Blosser, Sandy Bartoe, Sherry Weaver, Patty Janowski, & Deb Pepple

The committee—Sherry Weaver, Busy Homemakers; Deb Pepple, Creative Homemakers; Patty Janowski, Creative Homemakers; Bea Blosser, Creative Circle; and Sandy Bartoe, Busy Homemakers—served foods including Easy Egg Casserole, Make-Ahead Pasta, Hoppin’ John, Butternut Squash Soup, and a variety of desserts.



Make and takes and demonstrations included Oven Mitt Gnomes, Coffee Filter Pumpkins, Explosion Christmas Cards, and Snowmen made out of various materials.



About half the participants were members of the general public, many who were attending an Extension event for the first time.

Kathy and Beth Stoltzfus, Creative Circle, were volunteers who prepped and helped serve all the food, making sure the event ran smoothly. Sandy Jacobs, Busy Homemakers, volunteered to act as event treasurer and receptionist, greeting and checking in all participants. Vickie Gort-



ney, County President; Stephanie Szabo, Creative Homemakers; Kathy Braid, new member of Busy Homemakers; and Charlotte Weaver, participant helped the committee with clean up.



Be sure to mark your calendars so you can be part of this fun event next year on Saturday, October 26, 2024 or sign up to be part of the Fall Holiday Program committee in 2024!



# Food Safety Reminder

**COOK**

Your bird is not safe until it reaches 165 °F — you cannot tell by the color. Remember to ensure any stuffing cooked with the bird reaches 165 °F, too!

**Use three places to check the temperature.**

- Thickest part of breast
- Innermost part of wing
- Innermost part of thigh

When turkey is removed from the oven, let it stand 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to settle.



## Food and Nutrition

### Turkey Talk

Emily Christ, HHS Educator

With the holiday season ramping up, we begin the intense cooking process to create lavish meals for our loved ones. This takes patience, time, and sometimes science when it comes to determining how long to cook food items and when to defrost them. It's important to follow the USDA food safety regulations especially when feeding a crowd in order to avoid the spread of any foodborne illness.

If you have a frozen raw turkey, it should be stored in the freezer until you are ready to thaw it. Double check your freezer is 0 degrees F or below. If you are storing a fresh whole turkey, it can be stored in the refrigerator until it's time to cook it. Be sure to allow about 24 hours of thawing time for each 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. When a turkey is thawed in the refrigerator, it can remain there for 1-2 days before cooking. When thawing your turkey in cold water, ensure the turkey remains fully submerged to prevent the spread of germs and change the water every 30 minutes. In most cases, for each pound of turkey, there should be 30 minutes of thawing allowed. If you decide to thaw the turkey using the microwave, make sure it is under 12 pounds and plan to cook the turkey directly after.

Be sure to handle the turkey with proper care by washing your hands before and after handling it. Use utensils for carving like a cutting board and knife only for the turkey; do not cross-contaminate by using the utensils on other foods like vegetables. After using the utensils, wash and rinse them immediately to ensure there are no lingering germs. Lastly, be sure to cook the turkey fully. Try to avoid stuffing your turkey. If you do, complete this process right before cooking. The meat thermometer should reach a minimum temperature of 165 degrees F to ensure it is fully cooked. Follow these steps to make sure your family has a safe and happy holiday.

## Financial Resource Management

### Budget for the Holidays

Emily Christ, HHS Educator

It can be easy to go overboard during the holiday season with spending. Between your family, friends, and coworkers, you want to be able to get everyone something to remind them you are thinking of them this holiday season. Unfortunately, this can add up pretty quick. You can set yourself up for success this holiday season to avoid overspending by sticking to the lists and budget you create.

Start by making your list and checking it twice. When you make a list, you can visually see who you want to buy for and if it is feasible. Decide how much you should spend on each person on the list. Is the amount you are wanting to spend in your budget? When creating your budget, start early in the year by putting a little bit of money away each paycheck and it will add up by the holiday season. The gifts you buy don't have to be extravagant. If you feel like expectations need to be set in your group of friends or family, sit down and do this ahead of time so one person isn't spending more than another.



Once you begin shopping, keep track of all your spending. This includes the giftwrapping and cards. If you feel you are running out of money from your budget, start to get creative with different handmade gifts. This can be done in many ways like utilizing your talents or even doing something nice for someone. The holidays shouldn't break the bank so plan ahead the best you can and stick to your planned budget.

## Human Development

Reduce Your Stress This Holiday Season  
*Emily Christ, HHS Educator*

We are in the peak time of year where we are surrounded by the hustle and bustle of those in a rush to get from one place to the next. Everyone is last minute shopping, getting together with loved ones, or planning parties. This time of year is one of the most important times to factor in your own feelings of stress.

It can be overwhelming with the endless shopping, cleaning, and parties that we stray away from taking intentional time for ourselves. Make sure you set yourself up for success by establishing boundaries even if they are with people you love. It's okay to say no in moments of stress. Your friends and family will understand. With all of the expectations that come with the holiday, this task can be hard but you won't regret the moments you are able to step back and ease your tension.



With all the parties and get togethers, it's easy to get off track of your normal schedule that you have created for yourself of eating healthy, exercising, etc. During this time of year, you can enjoy time eating the food you love and lounging around, but be sure to do this in moderation. Try to still set goals with your nutrition by making your plate have all five food groups at each meal or going for a small walk in the morning. If you fall off course one day or two, that's okay. Be gentle with yourself and start again when you can. This time of the year can bring happiness and excitement for most, but make sure you continue to take care of your mental and physical health when times get hard.

## Health & Wellness

Digital Detox  
*Emily Christ, HHS Educator*

Being plugged into everything at all times is a normal way of life now. You have your smartphone set as your alarm. You look at the weather on your smartphone. You even check the news. Not to mention we are constantly communicating back and forth with people throughout the day through text message, social media, etc. In some cases, individuals will use their phones as background noise at night when they are sleeping to provide comfort.

The average amount of time Americans spend on their digital devices is half of the day. For some, that may mean a digital detox is needed. A digital detox can be a solution for those who may feel pressure from the need to be constantly connected. At this time of year, we already feel intense pressure from other social responsibilities that there is no need to put extra pressure on ourselves. A digital detox can help improve sleep, mood, relationships, energy, and more. While the detox will look different for everyone, common detox options are checking email/texts less, not scrolling through social media, not playing video games, or limiting tv time. By implementing a social media detox, you may reap the benefits of increased self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. Another benefit is that you can save money due to less online shopping.

The first step is to decide what particular behavior you want to change. Is it social media you want to get rid of? No more Amazon? You are in control of what to eliminate. Create a goal of what you would like to achieve by doing the digital detox. This could be to save money, gain more confidence, or be more present with the people around you. After you have established that goal, gather people around you who will support you and this behavior change. A digital detox may take time and effort but can be very beneficial for your health.