



*Dunn County
Association for Home &
Community Education*



**January-February-March
2026 Issue**

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Note from our President:

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday spent with family and friends. My brother Larry and his wife live on the farm where we grew up, and Christmas Eve is celebrated there each year. It brings back many pleasant memories of my childhood Christmases.

The year 2025 saw several firsts for Dunn County HCE. We held our first Ludington Guard Band pie sale, raising over \$1,400 for our Bookworms program. We also received a countywide education award at the State WAHCE Convention. Individual clubs have won awards in the past, but I believe this was our first countywide recognition.

In addition, we held our first Cultural Arts Show and Tell. This was also the first year we did not hold R.E.A.L. Saturday (Relax, Enjoy and Learn) since it was introduced many years ago. However, our October All-Member Meeting showed there is strong interest in bringing back some type of craft-focused program. One idea is to offer a special program in October or November where members can demonstrate how to make Halloween, Thanksgiving, or Christmas party favors. Other types of crafts could also be included. There is also the Sew Blessed program, which is open to anyone interested in working on projects to help bless our community. More about this program can be found on page 6 of this newsletter.

Margaret Breisch breischm@gmail.com



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan. 8	HCE Board meeting, 1pm, Rm 101, GSB
Feb. 20	DC 4-H Past and Present 1pm, Rm 60 GSB (special interest)
Mar. 12	HCE Board meeting, 1pm, Rm 101, GSB
Mar. 30	Succulents/House Plants/Gardening, 1pm, Rm 60, GSB

Hope your holiday season was filled JOY!

I took the 45 book sets sent to us by Scholastic to our November Board meeting, my Elk Meadow Christmas Party, and the Dunn County Christmas Tea. We have sold 27 book sets at \$10 each. (There are 10 different books packaged together.) We still have 18 sets available. They would make excellent gifts for young readers. So, if you are in the market or have any questions about these books, call 715-879-5015 and let me know. Since these book sets were gifted to me by Scholastic, all the money received will go into the Bookworms project.

Also, a reminder to sort through your book stash and save any good book finds for our upcoming Dunn County Fair Used Book Sale. A good project for a cold winter day! You may even find one or two you would like to read again.

Stay warm this winter. Grab a warm beverage, a comfy quilt, and a good book! ENJOY!

Normetta

Upcoming Special Interest Programs:

Feb. 20, 1pm, Rm 60, GSB : "Dunn County 4-H Past and Present" presented by Zachary Rozmiarek 4-H Program Coordinator

Mar. 30, 1pm, Rm 60, GSB: "Succulents/ House Plants/ Gardening" presented by Margaret Murphy, Extension Horticulturist

Registration not required for either program— Bring a friend!

She joined her husband and dance partner who passed in January, 2025. They had been married for 69 years.

Lori was an active member for 47 years, joining in 1978. She will be remembered for her sense of humor, her enthusiasm, and her spunk! She was a reader for the HCE Bookworms Program. Also active in her church, she spent MANY hours setting up and running the Elk Mound Food Pantry located in the Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church in Elk Mound. She served on the election board for her township for many years as well. Her favorite activities included: spending time with her grandchildren and great grandchildren watching them in sports, baking, playing cards, a self-taught pianist who loved to sing and dance. We will miss Lori and her positive attitude at every meeting. Just before her death, one of our members called to ask if she would be attending our Christmas Party the first week in December. She answered that she would not miss it. She wasn't able to keep that promise, as she entered heaven just days before that December 3 Christmas Party. Rest in peace, dear Lori, or maybe I should say dance, sing, and be social!

IN MEMORIAM



Lorene (Lori) Jenson passed away at 90 on November 29, 2025.

Oct. 22 1pm All Member Meeting

About 20 members attended the All Member Meeting. We began with desserts and beverages. Janine Thull and Vicki Jess were recognized for Medallions received at the State Cultural and Textile Arts show. Janine's award was for her sun catcher craft. Vicki's award was for her non-fiction short story "Mystery Rider".

The county vice-president and county secretary were up for election to a two-year term. Janine Thull was re-elected vice-president and Marsh Biggs was elected secretary. Current secretary Elaine Villeneuve did not seek re-election. However, she will remain on the Executive Board as the Historian.

Programs for 2026 were selected. Meaningful Memories / Brain Health was selected as our State Educational program. It will be presented by Mary Baier at Spring Fling.

Special Interest Programs receiving 8 or more votes were:
Crafts (13 votes)

Healthy Septic Systems/ Waste Management (10 votes)

Dunn County Fair -- Learn about the history, operations, 4H, volunteer opportunities (8 votes)

Succulents/ House Plants /

Gardening (8 votes)

Local Activities -- what does Dunn County have to offer? (8 votes)

At least 4 special interest programs will be presented. The final decision on which to offer depends on our ability to find a presenter for the topic.

Nov. 13 1:00 pm Menomonie Public Library Tour.

Eight members attended the presentation and went on the tour presented by Director Joleen Stark.

Library services in Menomonie began around 1850s – 1870s as a community project started by a local women's group who wanted to provide a constructive, educational place for people — especially as an alternative to socializing in the saloons of the day. The first library collection was housed on the second floor of the First National Bank building. In 1891 the Mabel Tainter Memorial Library was established and in 1986 the present public library was opened. Today, the Menomonie Public Library offers a wide range of services. In addition to books, community members have access to movies, music, audiobooks, magazines, and digital materials, including e-books and online resources that can be used from home. The library provides public computers, Wi-Fi, printing, copying, and scanning, along with staff assistance for basic technology questions. Meeting and study spaces are available for individuals and community groups.

CLUB NOTES

Baxerville-We cleaned the town hall in October. This is a fundraiser for our club. In November we painted wooden spoons to look like snowmen. We each painted one for ourselves plus painted a few extras for our Holiday Tea centerpiece. We held the club Christmas party at the home of Robin Wirth. This included a secret Santa / Secret Pal gift exchange. During the year, members sent cards and/or sneak in gifts for their secret pal. When members receive them, they often email the entire club a thank you to whoever was responsible.

Cedarlings-Oct– Educational Reports-Health: Mary Baier reminded members that young children should be vaccinated for measles due to recent outbreaks. Cultural Arts: Margaret Breisch read her story, "Conner Saves the Day," which was entered in the WAHCE State Conference Cultural Arts competition and received a blue ribbon.

Read to Me Program: Mary Baier is in the process of applying for a Rotary grant to expand the program from a half-year to a full-year program. New Business: Holiday Tea assignments were reviewed. In addition to cookies, we will provide two silent auction items and one raffle prize.

Cedarlings-Nov.: A motion was made and approved to donate \$25 to Bookworms in memory of Al Fremouw. Melanie shared information about a monthly program at the public library called "Community Conversations." The November topic will focus on free speech. Melanie also recommended watching the PBS special by Ken Burns about the Revolutionary War. We discussed opening a club bank account. A checking account was not previously needed when our income and expenses consisted mainly of collecting and paying member dues. However, we are now receiving grants and donations for our Read to Me program. Mary Baier and Vicki Maves were authorized to explore options at the Credit Union and Old National Bank and to open a checking account at one of them. The December club Christmas party was discussed. It will be held at Mary Baier's home. Members

signed up for menu items to bring for the potluck.

Cedarlings-Dec.: We held our Christmas party and began with a potluck meal. This was followed by a Christmas sing-along accompanied by Vicki Maves on flute and Larry Jess and Margaret Breisch on clarinet. The event also included a gift exchange, Christmas trivia, Christmas jokes, and lots of "fabulous" prizes.

Elk Meadow- In October, our club collected winter clothing to be donated to the Mounder Closet at the elementary school and in November, members brought items for the local food pantry. Club officers for 2026 were elected with Helen B as the club president and the remaining positions unchanged. Our club has also voted to change the 2026 meeting time to 12 noon starting in January. The Elk Meadow HCE Christmas party was held at Independence Bank meeting room on Dec. 3rd. We enjoyed a delicious meal provided by Cyndi S and assistants followed by some excellent seasonal songs performed by the afterschool choir from Mound View Elementary and wrapped up the afternoon with a gift exchange.

Elk Meadow HCE was saddened by the recent passing of long-time member Lori Jenson. She had been

an active member for 47 years and will be very missed.

Popple Creek-Oct.: Plans for our club for the Holiday Tea were discussed. We will provide a basket for the raffle, featuring items for relaxation; throw, slippers, books, mugs, hot chocolate, tea etc. We will also provide a center piece with a Cookie Theme and silent auctions items. Dues were collected. We had a discussion on "How to Keep a Septic System Healthy". We will suggest this topic for a Special Interest Session next year, at the "All Member Meeting" to be held this month.

Items for Colfax Wildlife Rehab and Release and Colfax Sr. Living Center were collected.

Popple Creek-Nov.: Final plans for the Holiday were discussed. The Raffle Basket is ready to go. Items were collected for our club's centerpiece basket featuring Holiday Cookies with a cookbook and items for cookie baking. Several members are taking items for the Silent Auction.

Items for Colfax Wildlife Rehab and Release were collected, along with items for The Colfax Senior Living Center.

Geri will have dues and Pennies for Friendship sent to Vicki,

treasurer, along with the annual report by Dec 1, as required.

Popple Creek-Dec.: We had our Christmas Party at Exit 45. Items for Colfax Rehab and Release and the Sr. Living Center were collected. We have decided to continue with these two projects again next year.

Ideal-Oct: Ideal will read for the HeadStart children in October and November. Janine attended the State Conference and told about the sessions she attended. Members were given packets of raffle tickets for the Holiday Tea. The club purchased a packet for each member and several members bought another packet. We discussed programs for next year.

Ideal-Nov.: We met at Sharalyn Schweger's house and enjoyed a lovely lunch. We discussed the All Member Meeting on Oct. 22. Our club was represented by six members. Programs for 2026 were discussed and voted on. We did some planning for the Holiday Tea and have a couple people working on the centerpieces and some doing auction items. We elected officers and paid our dues for the coming year. Some of our members will attend the Library Tour on Nov. 20. We plan to have our annual club Holiday Party in January when we are finished with all the busy holiday season

Holiday Tea December 6

We had another fun, successful Holiday Tea. 36 members and 6 guests attended the event. We enjoyed coffee, punch, cookies, cheese, summer sausage, crackers and veggies. Nadine Schlough played Christmas music on the piano while members enjoyed the refreshments, bid on silent auction items and visited with each other. Margaret Breisch entertained us with an imaginative left-right gift exchange story about the flat tire on the ride home from the WAHCE convention. Nadine Schlough led a sing-a-long accompanied by our 6 member HCE Christmas band. We made over \$700 at the event. The profits go towards the scholarship fund.

2025 Holiday Tea Raffle Winners		
Prize	Donated By	Winner
Quilt	Chris Lorenzen	Baxterville Club
\$100 meat certificate		Vicki Jess
Christmas Basket	Elk Meadow	Connie Curtis
Holiday Wreath	Cedarlings	Becky Kneer
Christmas Basket	Popple Creek	Rosalie Werner
Christmas Basket	Ideal	Eleanor Chastan

Member and Board Information

Our next meetings will be January 8 and March 12. We will continue to meet at the Government Services Building, but in room 101 on the main floor rather than in room 60. All members are welcome to attend these meetings. Discussions will center on finalizing plans for 2026. Board members who are unable to attend are encouraged to ask another club member to attend in their place.

HCE Board Members:

President – Margaret Breisch 715-235-7124

Vice President – Janine Thull

Secretary – Marsha Biggs

Treasurer – Vicki Maves

Membership and South Center Chair – Mary Baier

Historian – Elaine Villeneuve

Bookworms – Normetta Hurlburt

Past President and Communications – Rosalie Werner

Cultural Arts and North Center Chair – Geri Bates

Scholarship Chair – Janine Thull

North Center
Chair: Geri Bates
gcrafts@yahoo.com
Baxterville
Popple Creek
Ideal
South Center
Chair: Mary Baier
Baierm3@gmail.com
Elk Meadow
Cedarlings

ADDITIONAL 2026 PROGRAMS

April 23 Spring NW District Meeting time and location tba

May 21 – Spring Fling 12:00 pm, GSB Room 60

Making Meaningful Memories Speaker: Mary Baier

July 22–26 – Dunn County Fair and Used Book Sale

Sept 28 – Special Interest Program 1:00 pm, GSB Room 60

Healthy Septic Systems

Sept 21–23 State Convention Lismore Hotel Eau Claire

Oct 22 – All-Members Meeting 1:00 pm, GSB Room 54

Nov 23 – Special Interest Program 1:00 pm, GSB Room 60

Menomonie Tourism Speaker: Tammy Simon

Dec 5 Holiday Tea 1:00 pm location tba



DONATIONS

September-December

Bookworms

Sept	Normetta Hurlburt	\$40	
Nov	Elaine Villeneuve	\$20	In memory of Russell Doane
Dec	Elk Meadow HCE	\$25	In memory of Lori Jenson
Dec	Mary Ann Ausman	\$20	In memory of Lori Jenson
Dec	Cedarlings HCE	\$25	In memory of Alvin Fremouw

Sew Blessed

Sew Blessed is a group of ladies who use their love of sewing to help bless our community.

They meet once a month to work on a project. I attended in October, when we made angel ornaments for House of Hope. I did not sew, but helped by gluing the heads on. You do not need to be a sewer in order to participate.

The group meets in the Small Group Room at Cedarbrook Church. The following information comes from Kristen Johnson, who oversees the projects:

Upcoming Projects

- January 8 (6–8 p.m.) or January 9 (9 a.m.–noon) — Come to one or both
Sewing aprons and pot holders (bring 1 yard of fabric if you wish)
- February 12–13 — Pajama bottoms for Foster Care
- March 12–13 — Pocket Prayers for the Prayer Room
- April 9–10 — Pillowcase dresses and skirts for missions
- May 14–15 — Embroidered handkerchiefs for baptisms

No sewing experience is necessary. No sign-up is required—just come and help bless others! We would be sew blessed to have you.

Kristen Johnson
Phone: (715) 563-3534