



A Few Words from President Donna Zarovy

Spring 2026

Dear Kenosha HCE Members:



National Volunteer week was April 20-26. It is an annual celebration that recognizes the contributions of volunteers across the United States. Established in 1974, this week serves to honor those who dedicate their time and efforts to improve their communities and inspire others to engage in volunteer activities. It emphasizes the impact of volunteerism on society and encourages individuals to participate in service projects. According to the National Non-Profit Organization, the value of every hour of volunteer time is \$36.14. Imagine that!!

I wish to thank every one of you for all your contributions to Kenosha County HCE by serving as Officers, on Committees, supporting our Community Service initiative, helping when asked, and wherever you volunteer in our community. I am so thankful and proud for your tremendous support of our volunteer program. Thank you!!!

KUDOS to all of you, because of your generosity we have been able send \$500 in Pennies forFriendship to support the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners. These funds were collected in 2025-26!

Kenosha HCE has been so busy since the Annual Meeting. We have had several education programs, the Milaeger's Money kick-off and sale, our 5th Annual Families Branching Out, the Cultural Arts Show and our May program "Frauds and Scams". Attendance at these events was terrific. There are articles about some of them in this newsletter.

This issue includes information about the 2026 WAHCE Annual Business Meeting and Conference to be held in Eau Claire at The Lismore Hotel September 21-23, 2026. I know several of you have registered. I hope we have another great turnout like 2025!

Sincerely,

Donna Zarovy
2025 Kenosha HCE President

WAHCE Annual Business Meeting and Conference Center



Join us for an "HCE: Party on Gibson Street" at the 2026 Wisconsin Association for Home and Community Education Annual Business Meeting and Conference in Eau Claire, WI, September 21-23, 2026. We will be celebrating the Golden Age of HCE (the 1920's era), and we invite you to join us for a ROARING good time!

There are 30 workshops, two tours, and several special events throughout the conference. Also – the silent auction to raise money for international projects and the Cultural Arts Show – several of our ladies have items in the show!

Check out the website: <https://wahceinc.org/2025-conference-information/> for forms and information about hotels and conference workshops.

Families Branching Out 2026

What a terrific event it was!! – we get better every year! This year we increased attendance by about 50%. We also had an increase in the number of exhibitors – even though a few of our long timers were unable to attend this year. There were 39 exhibitors and 13 very generous donors – including KCAHCE members. The Kenosha County Center was full to the brim. Kenosha Community Media also filmed and featured the event.

I don't know where to begin – Many KCAHCE members assisted in planning and implementing the day. We had fantastic donors which enabled us to have hot dogs for everyone, and Culver's came in with the portable sundae bar. The kids received back packs from HCE and went home with them overflowing. Kenosha County generously allows us to use the facility.

Kenosha HCE had a "slime making" table coordinated by Ruth L. Rossman and manned by Mary Flanagan, Joann Kevek, Julie Christenbury, Debra Davies, and Carol Wallner. And a Bookworms reading corner – See article on page 4.

The kids really enjoyed the Bristol Fire Department's big ladder truck and the brand-new Kenosha Chiefs and Captain's Fire Safety House. WTMJ4 also brought their storm chaser mobile weather unit.



Planning for Families Branching Out begins in December. The Committee members are contacted, and we are off to the races.

We book the Kenosha County Center in October. Then we update all the information and create all the forms, brochures and posters in January..

Exhibitors from the previous year are invited to attend and we also add recommendations from the previous year and explore non-profits who would like to be part of our event.

Donors are contacted and grants are written seeking funding.

Media is contacted to advertise event and all the schools in Kenosha County – public and private are contacted and several local companies are sent flyers.

After the deadline, tables are assigned, maps created and exhibitors notified with final information. Volunteers are contacted and on Friday afternoon the Kenosha County Center is rearranged for the event. All exhibitors receive thank you cards and certificates acknowledging their participation.

Then, Saturday is show-time. The event runs from 10 am to 1:30 pm.

Following the event, the Evaluations are typed and shared with the Committee and thoughts turn to the next year.

See the collage on the next page created by Jen Weinstein with photos by Jeri.



Jane Kinslee, (left) of Summit Credit Union presented a check for "Families Branching Out-Expo " to Donna Zarovy, HCE President (seated) and Jeri Moore, HCE VP, (right). It is partners like Summit Credit Union who make our community stronger.

~ Donna Zarovy, Editor







Fairest of the Fair Izzy Jones (L) and Heidi K. (R) oversee a Bookworm read

Families Branching Out Bookworms Booth

Thank you Kenosha County Fairest of the Fair, Izzy Jones and volunteers, Heidi Konz and Jeri Moore, Booth Chairs; and Janice Grady, Therese Principe, and Annette Reese and her granddaughter Mandy!

This year our booth theme was "Reading has no Boundaries" ~ can take you ANYWHERE! Even to the moon and Mars! Our crafts, books and activities further supported the theme and promoted the value of literacy.

The Wisconsin Bookworms Program in its 27th year in Kenosha County has readers volunteering monthly at three Headstart locations in Kenosha and two in Walworth County. The program, an integral part of our HCE mission, is grateful to the many and varied community groups who have over the years provided grant money to support the purchase of seven books a year for each child's home library.

A huge thank you to new member, Therese Principe for designing the fun and interactive Bookworms photo booth and donating the cardboard castle! The kids loved:

- listening to the book readings
- receiving copies of books
- getting their hands tattooed with "Wiggly" the Bookworm
- crawling around and about and through the castle
- coloring crowns and castle walls
- getting their photo taken in The Bookworm Photo Booth
- being crowned 'Reader Leaders' with Mars Cheese Castle crowns.

All in all, it was an active and busy space to learn, shake out sillies and have FUN!



~submitted by Jeri Moore

News from K-Town Friends



The K-Town Friends HCE Club had lunch at 'Mars Cheese Castle in March' and 'Hopped to Apple Holler' in April. Angie Wehrmeister gave us a Cheese Castle Tour and Dave and Elyse Flannery warmly welcomed our Birthday Fun for all; and special nod to Edna, our Queen Bee! Rounding out the theme, twenty Birthday Cake Kits for Kids parties at HALO, Racine were presented to member Cara.

Birthday Kits included: cake pan, cake mix, frosting, can of Sprite (in lieu of oil/eggs), tablecloth, candles etc., with a separate bin assembled for reusable party items like banners, cake toppers,

extra candles, streamers and other fun add-ons. We are grateful to our donating members, and to Florence Hammelev and Justine Hammelev-Jones for further organizing this project.

Both Mars Cheese Castle and Apple Holler went out of their way to make our meet ups memorable. The cute gift shops, cozy nooks, aromas and chit chat grew new business for them, and memories for us. Patronizing hometown local spots brings us back to our roots, makes for special meetings, and roots all in community.

~Jeri Moore, Club President



Merry Makers Member Dorothy Jansen Passes

Merry Makers recently lost one of our long-time members, Dorothy Jansen. I first met her when we were both second grade teachers in Kenosha. I invited her to join our club, and she did and brought her neighbor Mary Mowry. Mary has been at Robin's Way for a few years and passed away earlier this year. Dorothy tended to get lost when she and Mary were together. We heard the stories of their antics when we met.

Before she became a teacher in Kenosha, Dorothy taught school in Germany to children of the servicemen and women stationed there. They would travel weekends and sometimes made it back just in time to teach on Monday mornings. Dorothy knew a lot about antiques, and she and her husband owned a booth in one of the local antique places.

Volunteering was her passion. She made two trips to the Dominican Republic with her church on mission trips. Once she helped build a cement block building.

In Kenosha she spent many years teaching English at the Literacy Council and was teaching up until her death. She would never allow any of us to submit her name for any award. She was humble in that way.

Proko Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements. The memorial may be June 8th.

~ Dorothy Merten, Merry Makers

Membership Report



The ASK and Elevator Pitch

Membership is really about ASK-ing people to join HCE. And to PIQUE their interest, by dropping "HCE" into your daily conversations with friends. So eventually they will ask you, "What IS HCE?" etc. A one minute or less ELEVATOR PITCH is a good way to reply.

What is an Elevator Pitch?

An Elevator Pitch is (a quick 60 second spiel that piques interest) and ends in you ASKing them to join you at a meeting. Your explanation is about as long as the length of time you two might be together in an elevator. Keep it simple, warm and compelling. And SMILE! Be enthusiastic!

There are different approaches. How about *The Storyteller Approach*.

Use an upcoming HCE program event as the story basis. *"Hi _____. How are you? "(yada yada yada)*

"I've been so busy with (HCE) Home and Community Education. You know the service-learning group I'm involved with. "Hey, my club has a great meet up at the Bee Barn next month with a program on the Rusty Patch Bumble Bee. We'll brown bag our lunch and make a Bee Bath. How about being my guest? Can I text or email you with the details?" or

"I've been busy making Holiday crafts for a program I'm teaching for our HCE group. The Home and Community Education group I'm in. How about you come as my guest? I call it In the Nick of Time. I'd love to have you there, meet my friends and catch up! How about I email you some info?"

It's all about the A-S-K, followed by;

- CONSISTENT FOLLOW UP to maintain and make new members more comfortable.
- •CONNECTING WITH EACH member regularly in the way that that person best receives info~(Email, text, FB, phone, snail mail etc.).
- •ASKing another member to eventually "buddy up" which grows a new friendship, and develops belonging.

~Jeri Moore, Membership Chair

Scholarships

There are two applications for our Family Member Scholarship. The Committee is meeting Friday, May 6th to make their selections. We will announce the recipient(s) next week.

Community Service Project

We selected 1Hope and the Foster Closet for the 2026 Community Service Project.

THANK YOU to everyone who has donated items, both organizations were thrilled to receive the items and very appreciative.

Additional collections will take place at our KCAHCE Picnic unless you would like Good Neighbors to shop for you, checks may be mailed to Margaret McCabe.

To date, in April we delivered items to each location:

- 1Hope received SEVERAL pairs of socks, wipes, and some outfits. \$125 dollars in Tenuta's Deli gift cards and two stain glass pieces for their Gala's silent auction in May, their annual fundraiser, donated by the Good Neighbors club.
- The Foster Closet received SEVERAL outfits, diapers, socks, wipes. Good Neighbors also gave them \$125 in Woodman gift cards to help families buy items they may need.

~ Margaret McCabe, GN President



Thank you ...

Dear Margaret and Members of Kenosha County HCE

Thank you all so much for your donations to The Foster Closet of Kenosha County. The clothing, diapers, wipes and grocery gift cards are all truly appreciated. Your generosity has blessed the foster children and families of Kenosha County.

We sincerely *Thank You*.

The Foster Closet Team at First Christian Church

David, Mary Jo, Nancy, Jen, Denise N, Liz, Sheri, Nikki, Sue, Barb & Jena



Easter Egg Community Service Project



The Good Neighbors club members got together for our annual egg stuffing session for the annual Growing with Bristol Easter egg hunt (this year on 3/28) at Hansen Park in Bristol. We stuffed 3300 eggs!

Just a mini community service project to help other organizations in our area. Growing with Bristol shoots for 25,000-30,000 eggs for their event! The Good Neighbors members get to socialize and catch up while stuffing eggs and always have a good time. Always glad to be able to lend a hand... And bonus egg stuffer this year, thanks John for lending a helping hand.



~ Margaret M., Good Neighbors

Flower Power



Milaeger's Money Fundraiser

Thank you, everyone, for your generosity in purchasing Milaeger's Money to support the KCAHCE Scholarship Fund. This year, we sold a combined 64 certificates for Anything in Dirt, with a 17% rate of return. We also sold 11 Anything in the Store certificates with a 10% rate of return.

Altogether, you helped us raise over \$550 for the scholarship fund. Thank you!!

~ Jen W., Flower Power Chair

KCAHCE Education Programs:

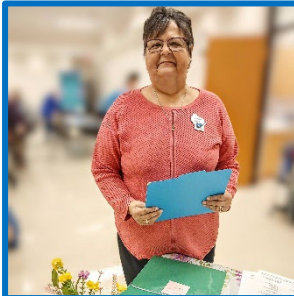
- May 7 6:30 pm **Speaker: Alana Perez-Valliere, Extension Financial Specialist.**
Kenosha County Center, Topic TBD
- May 7 5:30 pm **Drop off articles for Cultural Arts Show**
6:00 pm **Cultural Arts Show Judging**
Show open after education program.
- September 3 6:30 pm **“Nordic Food & Fun During the Holiday Season” (Badger Talk)**
Marcus Cederstrom, Speaker. Location TBD
- October 17 12:00 pm **Fall Focus**
- November 5 1:00 pm **Presentation from the Kenosha Public Library staff, Topic TBD**
Kenosha Northside Library, 1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha
- December 3 **“In the Nick of Time” holiday crafts** – Volunteers are requested to share a holiday craft with the group – Contact Jerin
~ Jerin M., VP Programs



JJ's Members - Coordinators

Southeast District Meeting

Kenosha County HCE is one of six counties in the WAHCE Southeast District. District meetings are held twice a year – April and October. Hosting counties are assigned either a spring or fall meeting in alphabetical order. This spring Kenosha was the hostess. We met at the Paris Town Hall, had the district meeting and then lunch and a speaker from Badger Talks about the Sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald. Kenosha had 27 of the 58 members present!



Carolyn Dreier,
SE District Director



Where to find KCAHCE:

- ❖ On Facebook: Kenosha County Association for Home and Community Education.
- ❖ On the WAHCE county website: <https://wahceinc.org/kenosha-county-hce/>

Extension Line Committee

Clubs are encouraged to submit articles and pictures from their meetings. A special thank you to KCAHCE members who helped assemble this newsletter. Also, special thanks to Jerin Moore for all the photographs. Please send all address corrections or articles to us. Thank you!

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