
CROSSE
COUNTY
NEWS
October 2026



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Where did the summer go? The leaves are starting to turn color and the days are getting shorter and cooler.

State conference was last week and it was a roaring good time. The motel was nice, and the workshops were very interesting. The theme was Party on Gibson Street and Tuesday night was dress up night, so the 5 of us from La Crosse County dressed in our best flapper outfits. There will be a picture in this issue.

As state membership chair, I conducted a workshop focusing on retaining members. It was a great session with ideas shared by the attendees after I presented my ideas. That is going to be my focus as county president this year.

IN the next 2 weeks we have our fall meeting with a soup, salad, and dessert lunch provided by the executive board. We have a great speaker, so try to attend if you can. West District meeting will be held in Wisconsin Rapids on October 12 and should be a good meeting.

We continue to play Bingo with the residents at Caretta Senior Living, and the residents love having us come. Last month we had the largest attendance ever, 27 residents. Next date in October 19th, so if you are able to volunteer to come, it will be much appreciated for those of us who have been going regularly. It is held at 1:00 PM.

As the months keep flying by, stay tuned for the projects we will be doing for our Services of Love and Stitches of Love, we won in both categories and received $100 for each.

Sheryl Smith, County President

WAHCE STATE CONFERENCE REPORT

The 2026 WAHCE State Conference was held in Eau Claire at the Lismore Hotel. It was recently remodeled and is a beautiful venue. Loved our room and the large meeting rooms. The food was good. We arrived early and included a trip to Costco to our adventures!



I was on the Monday bus trip to the Pondview Lavender Farm and River Bend Winery and Distillery. I learned so much about growing lavender and the health and relaxing benefits of lavender. Then we went to the little shop they have on-site and did some shopping.





Our second stop was at the River Bend Winery and Distillery. It's another small family business. We had a 15 minute video presentation and question and answer session, sampled their wines and several people on the tour tried the cocktails made with liquor from the distiller





My first education session was "Artificial Intelligence and our Humanity", taught by a philosophy professor from UW-Eau Claire. Perfect timing given the recent concerns regarding artificial intelligence. We learned about the benefits of AI, especially in the scientific and medical fields. And we learned about the dangers, including rogue programmers that have disregarding an internet ban on posting, US vs other countries in trying to control AI and the lack of human compassion when AI creates programs. There can be misunderstanding about what was asked for resulting in serious consequences.



My second session was taught by the same professor. It was on happiness. We learned about what really brings happiness, that material things such as a big house or a new fancy car aren't what makes a person really happy. It comes from within. Feeling comfortable, content with what you have.

Communing with nature like a walk in the woods or sitting by a lake are calming and soothing. Working at a job that gives you satisfaction. Happiness is hereditary, but you can overcome the unhappiness that is also hereditary.

I also had education sessions on Wisconsin Nature Photography and Wild Animal Rescue, in addition to a craft/painting session that was easy to do and a lot of fun.



The theme for this year's conference was Party on Gibson Street, a return to the 1920s when WAHCE began. We dressed as flappers for the Tuesday night dinner!



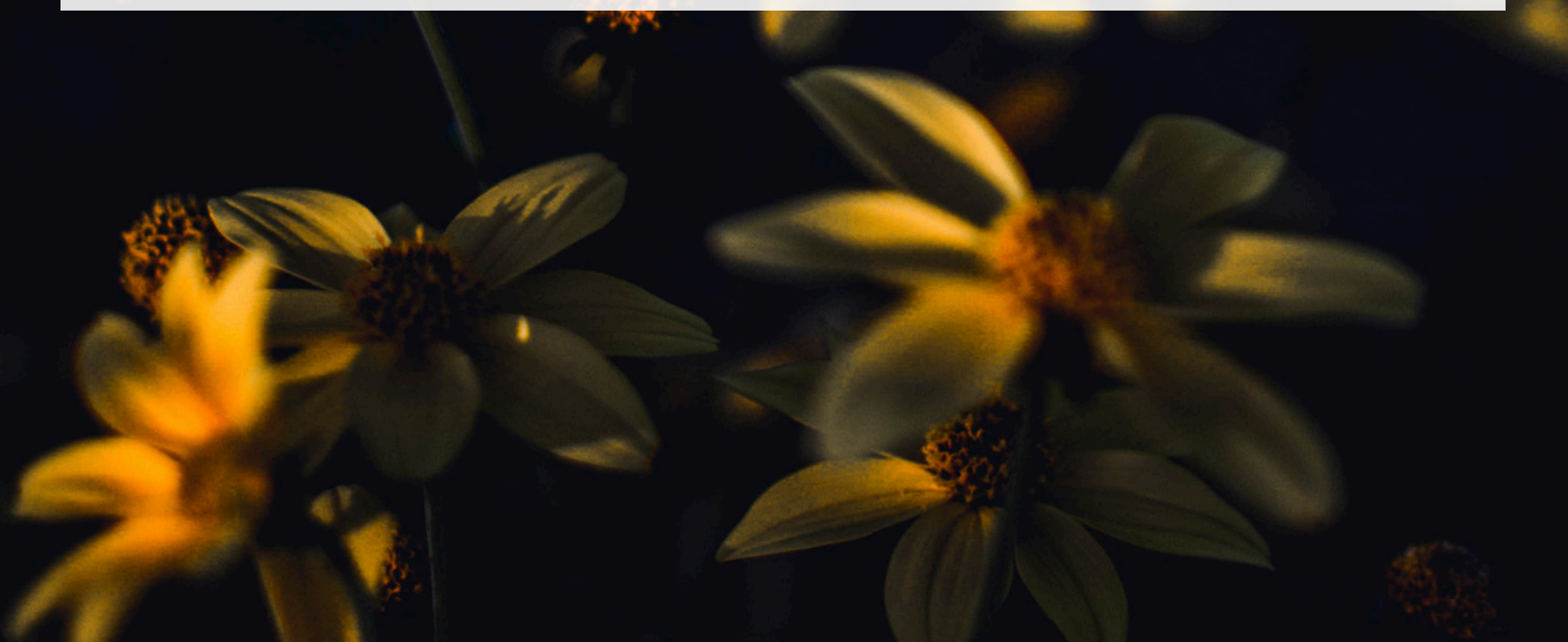




I entered two crafts in the cultural arts show and received a blue ribbon on my diamond dot hearts and a red ribbon on the photograph of the mountains from my seat on the plane last spring returning from a visit to Mesa, AZ.

The state conference was, once again, a wonderful experience. I love meeting friends from past years, partying with my La Crosse County friends and especially the education sessions. They were excellent this year. I urge you all to consider attending next year in Oshkosh!

- Cathy Osanger



CULTURAL ARTS REPORT

At the state conference there were 328 entries from 37 counties, and 35 medallions were given out and a very large amount of blue ribbons. Following is the list of members from La Crosse County and their awards:



Linda Gillmeister—crocheted choker and earrings—Blue, crocheted doll and wardrobe—Blue plus Medallion.

Sylvia Finch—short story

Cathy Onsager—Diamond dot picture-blue, photograph out the plane window-red (pictured on page 6)

There will be a craft day on:

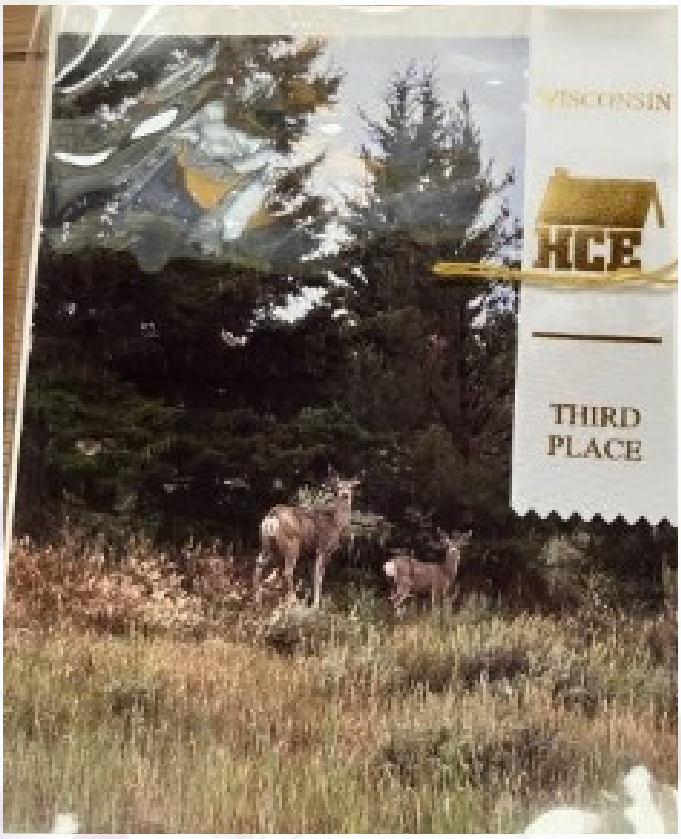
November 9 at 1:00 PM at Holland Town Hall.

Body



Rita Ross—quilted wall hanging—blue





Sheryl Smith—Lego flowers-blue, chain painting-blue, patriotic quilt—blue plus honorable mention, photograph of deer-white.





Written by Sheryl Smith for Linda Gillmeister



LAHCE Fall Meeting

Monday October 5th,2026

12:00 PM, Holland Town Hall

Soup, salad and dessert lunch provided by Executive Board

Speaker will be Shari Hegland, editor of the La Crosse Women's Magazine.



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