



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
MONROE COUNTY

Monroe County Extension Office
206 South K Street
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: (608)269-8722
WI Relay: 711



The Bridge

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Hello Everyone,

The months go by so fast, it is hard to believe it is May already! May will be busy especially with St Claire Mission. Thank you K-M Doettes and Sparta Westside HCE Club for volunteering. I know they appreciate the lunches we provide. May will also be our last regular meetings and Spring Fling. During our last Executive Board meeting, we discussed possible summer activities. Some of the activities were published in the ADRC newsletter. They were interesting bus tours. However, we thought that they would be too much traveling in a bus. We did discuss some shorter, less traveling summer activities. Summers are always busy! On Monday, April 22nd many of us attended the West District Spring Meeting. We will be able to share information from this meeting at our Spring Fling event on May 15th. Registration is in this newsletter. Hope to see you there! Our summer potluck picnic will be August 21st at the Memorial Park in Sparta. We'll also have the Executive Board meeting at this time.

Take care,

Jean

**MAY
2024**

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**MONROE COUNTY
HEALTH & WELL-BEING
EDUCATOR**
April Anderson
608-269-8722

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



May 15th– Spring Fling at La Grange Town Hall

June 11th– Day of Learning at La Grange Town Hall

August 21st– Potluck Picnic at Memorial Park, Sparta



Spring Word Search Answers



MONROE COUNTY HCE INFORMATION

2024 Executive Board Members
President: Jean Boak (372-4354)
Vice President: Louise Buchholz (435-6435)
Secretary: Sue Baker-Young (633-6457)
Treasurer: Bernie Arena (272-3371)

2024 Educational Program Chairmen
Cultural Arts: Louise Buchholz (435-6435)
Family & WI Bookworms: Bernie Arena (272-3371)
International: Barbara Mueller (372-9077)
Membership/Marketing: All Members (372-4354)

For more information please contact:
Jean Boak, President at (372-4354)

UW-Extension Office
(608)269-8722
April Anderson, Health & Well-Being/FoodWise Educator
april.anderson@wisc.edu

Newsletter Deadline
Information for the HCE newsletter is due by the 20th of the month for the following month's newsletter.



SCHOLARSHIP PLEDGES DUE NOW

Every year at this time we collect \$10.00 per member to sustain our scholarship fund.

Some members have already sent their money in.

If you are attending Spring Fling on May 15th you can bring it then. Otherwise it can be sent to me.

Please make checks out to Monroe County HCE and note that it is for the scholarship fund.

Send checks to Bernie Arena, 4261 Basswood Road, Sparta, WI 54656.

Thank you.

-- Bernie Arena, Treasurer



K-M DOETTES NEWS

K-M Doettes met April 10th at the LaGrange Town Hall. There were eight of us in attendance. We collected 29 more food items for the Tomah food pantry, Neighbor to Neighbor. Four of us went to the Day of Learning with Keith Cormican, diving and recovery; we found his two hour presentation to be very interesting. Seven of us are scheduled to attend the Jackson County West District Spring meeting. Barbara shared information about the importance of drinking enough fluids throughout the day to prevent dehydration; we need to be reminded and encouraged to hydrate our bodies. Dorothy and Jean will plan and deliver the St Claire Mission lunches on May 7th. Connie and Barbara brought our meeting treat. Our next meeting is May 8. We will finalize plans for our Spring Fling on May 15.

-- Barbara Mueller, Secretary



DAY OF LEARNING SET FOR JUNE 11TH

Judy Jonson-Faulkner will do a presentation on her trip to Cuba on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at 1 p.m. at the La Grange Town Hall, 22731 Flint Avenue, in Tomah.

She will also talk about her work in Nicaragua with honey bees.

Judy is an avid traveler, Reiki Master, Hosta-ophile and bee keeper.

Everyone is invited to attend.



CARING & SHARING

Just wanted to tell you about my day and this and that. Our washer went kaput and we got a new one . . . delivered today. We worked so hard to make it work, finally had to call the mod squad. They got us through it and finally we got the dirty clothes washed. These new fangled things are hard for us “old” people to figure out.

And this weather has me smiling. The grass is green and the flowers are popping up. So exciting. I can’t wait to go get some more flowers to plant outside. Today (Tuesday) is a bit chilly and breezy. But, it’s ok as I know the warmer days are coming. It is nice to see people out raking their yards and walking along hand in hand. And with the longer daylight it is delightful.

Hope you all have a wonderful month. Let me know if I can tell about your days, too. God Bless. . . . Alyce Johnson

Note: Alyce will be sharing things for the “Sharing and Caring” article each newsletter. Please let her know things you may want to share here. Her info is in the program book. Thanks for getting us started Alyce!



BOOKWORMS

Wisconsin Books Program Wrapping Up 2023-2024

We have a few more reading sessions before we close the door on the current year.

June Abbott, Barbara Mueller and I have been reading to children at Ahuco Head Start, Tomah Head Start and Sparta Head Start, respectively.

I am excited to announce that Sparta got a new reader this spring. Her name is Karen Cromick. Karen resides in Sparta. She retired from the Monroe County Highway Department. She has joined me in reading to the four classes of 3-5 year olds.

Darlene Heistad heard that we were purchasing books for the younger class of students, but not reading to them. She graciously came on board to read to those youngsters. She has taken the bull by the horns: reading the last three months, researching, and ordering the books for those children for the 2024-2025 school year.

Welcome aboard Darlene and Karen!

I just sent the new partnership contracts out to the Head Start sites. I will be working on grants in the next couple of months and getting the books ordered for the 2024-2025 school year.

Thank you for all your support for this rewarding project.

-- Bernie Arena



ADAMS COUNTY ADVENTURE

Sue Dumas and I attended the Adams County Spring Luncheon on April 10th. It was held in Arkdale, Wisconsin, at the Trinity Lutheran Church.

We enjoyed meeting other HCE members through the “Mingle Bingo” ice breaker. I soon realized that I had the largest feet in the audience. I couldn’t find anyone that matched my shoe size. It was a fun exercise.

The “Material Girls of Wisconsin Rapids” presented a program on “Quilts of Valor”. We were amazed by the work they do for that program. They have made almost 400 “Quilts of Valor”. Someone has to nominate a veteran in order for them to get a quilt. It is so much more than just receiving a quilt. In May they are doing a special presentation “Celebrating Women in the Military”. During this particular ceremony only women will be receiving a “Quilt of Valor”. It is quite an honor.

These quilts make a lasting award for the person it is meant to comfort.

Although they are known as the “Material Girls” there are also several men who make the quilts. For more information on this project you can check out their website at www.QOVF.org.

On a side note, the “Material Girls” are having a quilt show on June 21st and 22nd from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Assumption High School, 445 Chestnut St., in Wisconsin Rapids.

The keynote speaker was Marilyn Herman from Waupaca County HCE. She spoke on “The Life & Legacy of Our First Ladies”.

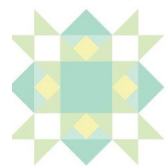
Dolley Madison (note the spelling of her first name) was the first American to respond to telegraph message . . . sent by inventor Samuel Morse. Sarah Polk (James Polk 1803-1891) served as her husband’s secretary without taking a salary. She forbid dancing and card playing in the White House.

Florence Harding (Warren G. Harding 1860-1924) was the first lady to vote, fly in an airplane, operate a movie camera, own a radio, and invite movie stars to the White House. She was also accused of poisoning her husband, who died during his third year in office.

Pat Nixon was the first First Lady to wear pants in public.

So many fun, interesting facts. Everyone received a recipe that was a favorite of a first lady.

----Bernie Arena





May is Mental Health Month

BUILDING YOUR COPING TOOLBOX

Everyone goes through periods of hardship and stress, and it's important to take care of yourself and have tools on standby to use when times get tough.

A coping toolbox is a collection of skills, techniques, items, and other suggestions that you can turn to as soon as you start to feel anxious or distressed. No one thing works for everyone, and it may take some trial and error, but building a coping toolbox is a great way to be prepared for those times when your mental well-being starts to slip – think of it as a safety net.

Creating your toolbox can be as simple as writing a list (on your phone or on paper) of what helps, like breathing exercises or going for a run – this way, when you start struggling with your mental health, you don't have to remember what to do or search for tips. You can also have a physical toolbox and fill it with things like a stress ball, written notes to yourself, and photos that make you happy. If you make a physical toolbox, it's a good idea to still include a list of (non-physical) coping skills that help.

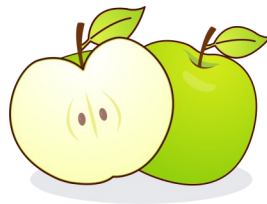
IF YOU'RE STARTING FROM SCRATCH, HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:

Mood Boosters

- Read the story of someone you admire.
- Watch a funny YouTube video.
- Play with an animal.
- Watch a movie you loved when you were younger.
- Reorganize your room.
- Make a list of places you want to travel or things you want to see in your own town.
- Repeat affirmations. Saying an affirmation or statement with positive and personal meaning can bring calm. Pick something that speaks to you: I believe in myself. Fear doesn't control me. I let go of my sadness. I am safe.

Address Your Basic Needs

- Eat a healthy snack.
- Drink a glass of water.
- Take a shower or bath.
- Take a nap.
- Brush your teeth.



Process Feelings

- Draw how you're feeling.
- Make a [gratitude](#) list. Reflecting on things you are thankful for can help you change your mindset.
- Punch a pillow.
- Scream.
- Let yourself cry.
- Rip paper into small pieces.
- Vent. Venting is not the same as asking for help—it's taking an opportunity to share your feelings out loud. We do this naturally when we talk with someone we can trust about whatever is upsetting us. You can also vent by writing a letter to the person who upset you. Keep the letter a couple of days and then tear it up. Stick to pen and paper—using social media when you are highly emotional can be tempting, but you might say something you regret.

Volunteering/Acts of Kindness

- Do something nice for someone you know.
- Help a stranger.
- Volunteer your time.

Problem Solving

- Make a list of potential solutions to problems – it can help to brainstorm with a friend or family member.
- Make a list of your strengths. There are plenty of things about you that are awesome, no matter how down you are feeling at the moment.
- If a person has upset you, talk with them directly. Fill in the blanks to this sentence – “I feel _____ when (this happens) because _____. Next time, could you please _____.”
Example: “I feel left out when you make plans and don’t tell me until the last minute, because then I can’t join. Next time can you please invite me earlier?”

Hobbies/Stress Relievers

- Learn something new – there are tutorials for all kinds of hobbies online.
- Create – try a craft project, color, paint, or draw. Invite a friend to join you for added fun.
- Write – you could write a story, a poem, or an entry in a journal.
- Get active – dancing, running, or playing a sport are some good ways to get moving.
- Play a game or do a puzzle.
- Get a plant and start a garden.

Relaxation Exercises

- Practice belly breathing – put one hand on your stomach and start to inhale slowly. As you breathe in, imagine a balloon in your stomach filling up and continue to inhale until the balloon is very full. Put your other hand on your heart, feel your heartbeat, and hold your breath for 5 seconds. Now let your breath out slowly for 10 seconds – feel your belly flatten like a deflating balloon. Repeat this process 4 or 5 times and you should notice your heart beat slow down and your muscles relax.
- Try progressive muscle relaxation – clench your toes for a count of 5, then relax them for a count of 5, then move to your calves, then your thighs, then your abs, then your arms, then your neck.
- Play with a fidget toy.
- Go for a walk – feel the ground under your feet and the air on your skin. Focus on your senses.
- Find a [guided meditation](#) on YouTube.
- Do yoga – you can find videos on demand using your TV or online.
- Read a book.
- Listen to music, a podcast, or an audiobook.
- Unplug – turn off your phone, tablet, and/or computer for an hour or so.
- Use your five senses. Tuning into your sensory experiences can be comforting during intense moments.
 - Touch: stress ball, silly putty, a pet or stuffed animal, blanket
 - Hear: click a pen, pop bubble wrap, listen to a calming playlist
 - See: photos with loved ones, snow globe, affirmation/quote cards
 - Taste: sour candy, mints, tea
 - Smell: candle, scented lotion, essential oils

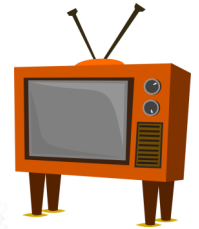
Ask for Help

- Text a friend.
- Ask someone to just sit with you.
- Call a family member.
- Call a friend you haven’t talked to recently.
- Call a warmline if you can’t think of anyone to reach out to.
- If you are in crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK or text HELLO to 741741.



Word Search

Old TV Shows 1



Find and circle all of the old TV shows that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of an additional old TV show.

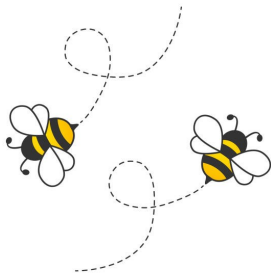
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 E D I S N O R I E C H I P S M Y T A D
 H Y N A P M O C S E E R H T E O L I M
 O O R A G N A K N I A T P A C Y W E N

ALICE
 BEN CASEY
 BEVERLY HILLBILLIES
 CHIPS
 CANNON
 CAPTAIN KANGAROO
 DOBIE GILLIS
 DONNA REED
 DR. KILDARE
 EMERGENCY
 FLIPPER

FLYING NUN
 FUGITIVE
 GOMER PYLE
 GOOD TIMES
 GREEN ACRES
 GREEN HORNET
 HOWDY DOODY
 I SPY
 IRONSIDE
 JETSONS
 KOJAK

L.A. LAW
 LASSIE
 LOVE BOAT
 MAD ABOUT YOU
 MAUDE
 MEDICAL CENTER
 MIAMI VICE
 MOD SQUAD
 MOONLIGHTING
 MURPHY BROWN

ODD COUPLE
 PEYTON PLACE
 RAWHIDE
 RIFLEMAN
 RIN TIN TIN
 SOAP
 ST. ELSEWHERE
 TAXI
 THREE'S COMPANY
 WALTONS



Monroe County HCE Spring Fling

Theme: Spring is a Buzzing!

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

LaGrange Town Hall, 22731 Flint Ave., Tomah, Wisconsin

Registration: 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Beverages and light refreshments.

All cultural arts entries must be in place by 10:00 a.m.

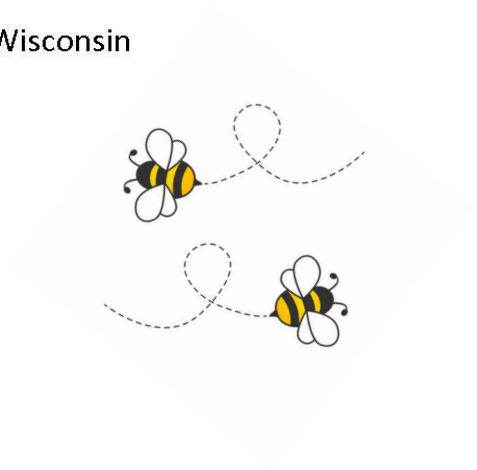
Welcome & Business Meeting: 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Keynote Speaker: 11:00 a.m. Doug Peterson of Black River Falls, Wisconsin
Doug will take you on a visit to India.

Lunch: 12 Noon, Potluck

Awards and Announcements following lunch.

Door Prizes



Member/Guest Registration

Name _____

Phone or email address _____

The cost is \$10.00 per person for the day.

Please make checks payable to: Monroe County HCE

Send registration to: Bernie Arena, 4261 Basswood Road, Sparta, WI 54656

Registration is due by May 8, 2024.