President’s Comments:

Happy New Year! I hope your holidays were great and that you are working on those New Year’s Resolutions you made. Unless you, like myself, stopped making them several years ago. I realized that if I did not make them, I would not experience the guilt of breaking them.

The month of January for many of us is the time we look ahead to all we hope to do, to see, to make, or to learn in the coming months. Maybe we make plans for vacations, family reunions, special events we look forward to. But one thing we know for sure is that, God willing and with good health, we will have a birthday and turn one year older. I ran across a quote from Emily Dickinson that I like and want to share with you,

“We turn, not older with the years, but newer every day.”

I liked the thought that we turn newer every day, because every day we are exposed to new things and new ways, such as the ones we have experienced in our Extension Homemakers lessons and programs through the one hundred years of our organization. Sometimes we look at our yearbook and see that the lesson for the month is on a topic we had a few years ago, but when it is presented, we receive new information that keeps us updated while it refreshes our memory on what we first learned. We invite speakers to attend our county council meetings and we learn each year of the many needs in our communities and how our members can, through community service projects, be a part of filling these needs. The project in 2015 that stands out as something new for an age old need (breast feeding infants) is the nursing covers our members made for the WIC program. This project was a “new day” experience of EHC.

I hope each of you can become newer every day in 2016, and let’s all work together to keep Benton Co. EHC growing, not older, but newer in learning and serving our communities.

Katie Rieff,
Council President
February and March Cultural Arts Workshops

At the February Cultural Arts workshop, Marla Joyner will teach us how to make toothbrush rag rugs. Thelma Sleep has made them for the Country Store for several years and they are best sellers. Marla will be putting together beginner kits which include everything needed to start a rug. The cost is $5 and a reservation is required by February 11. Call Lois at 479-366-8683 where you can leave a message. Let me know if you will join us on Thursday, February 18 at 9:30 at the Extension Office.

We need you! We will sew Nursing covers at the March Cultural Arts, Thursday, March 17 at 9:30 at the Extension office. The pattern and boning will be supplied. Please bring: thread, 3/4 yard for the main fabric and 1/3 yard of coordinating fabric for the pocket and straps (your own sewing machine is optional). This is a simple pattern which requires sewing just straight seams. Your help is needed as we continue this service project.

Lois Adams
Cultural Arts Chairman

Volunteers Needed for 4-H Judging

It is that time of year when 4-H’ers are off and running to a variety of competitions. Of course, we need your expertise and help in judging! The County Pie Baking Contest will be held Saturday, February 20th at 1:00. It is held in the exhibit hall at the Fairgrounds. We need at least 12 judges for this event! We will also have the Baking Activity on February 27th to be held in the Home Ec. Department at Gentry High School. We need judges to be there around 10:00. Please email Janice Shofner at jshofner@uaex.edu if you are interested or call the office and leave your name and contact information with Janice or Susan.

Janice Shofner
County Extension Agent 4-H

EHC Friendship Casserole for 2016

Find a dozen different personalities
From farms and towns nearby,
Add a generous touch of fellowship
Laced with laughter, love and sighs.
Mix in caring, sharing and learning
And a pocketful of cheer.
Then stir with gentle tenderness
For smiles that last all year.
Fold in the desire for adventure;
Mingle monthly with food for thought
Top with an atmosphere of togetherness
To yield friendship that cannot be bought.
(Serves a whole club)

Millie Peters,
Inspirational Leader

If the Bentonville Schools are closed, workshops, training and meetings will be cancelled.

MARCH AND APRIL LEADER LESSONS
Wednesday, February 24, 2016 - 9:30 am
Public Service Building Auditorium

I am preparing for the March and April leader training on Wednesday, Feb 24. The March lesson topic is “Feast on Spring-Wild Mushrooms & Greens”. I am working on the speaker for this lesson. At 10:45 the April lesson “Low Maintenance Landscapes” will be taught by a Master Gardener. The lessons may be switched depending on speaker availability. Since we will have a guest speaker, please help to insure we have good attendance (at least one leader from each club should attend). These lessons are open to anyone (even non-members) so invite a friend.

Remember we do not often have lesson materials prepared beforehand. However, I put lesson packets in club mailboxes for pick up after the lesson if no one can attend.

Susan Pickle, County Extension Agent-FCS
Education and Fun!

Well it’s the new year which brings new educational activities and special interest classes. This Spring we will be doing some classes on “Writing Memoirs.” I am still working on the details and will let you know as soon as they are scheduled. There are many other ideas that I am looking into with a possible field trip to a chocolate factory/store.

URGENT! I am still in need of one or two other volunteers for the Education/Leadership committee. I am looking for more ideas and someone to help with scheduling activities. Please contact me if you can serve in this capacity. My phone number is 479-291-0011.

Just a reminder, for those of you online, be sure to check out the county Facebook page for updates on all of the activities.

Melinda Crawley,
1st Vice-President Education/Leadership Chair

Membership-Let’s Continue to Grow!

Wow, January went fast and we are getting in gear for the fresh Spring Council Meeting! The membership committee will be meeting soon to work on informational meetings to help start new clubs and add to current club membership – we will be posting more information on our Benton County Extension Homemakers Facebook page as we get the meetings set up.

For this month I have a “Bring a Friend” event for the New Meadowbrook club on Feb. 10th. The members have volunteered to bring a few extra door prizes to add to my donations so we have enough for all of our guests. Vaughn has set their “Bring a Friend” event for March 2nd with their game day! This is a tremendous opportunity to grow their club while having fun! Any Benton County EHC clubs that want to host a “Bring a Friend” event please call 479-656-1234 and we will get it on the calendar as well!

Terri Jarding
2nd Vice-President/Membership Chair

Country Store

We have had some cold winter days. I hope this makes you think of doing those little jobs of cleaning out and sewing projects you may have started for the Country Store. It’s you all that make it possible to provide 4-H scholarships by making items or donating things and helping some. We have lost some good helpers who could come at night and I’m so sorry to lose them. We will need more help this year. We had such good response to the request for plastic ziptop bags last year that we have plenty and won’t need more.

Be thinking about the County Fair and what you can do to support the Country Store. It’s because of you that we are so successful.

Coretta (Corky) Sumpter
Country Store Chair

Community Service

I want to thank everyone who brought items to the Fall Council for Faith in Action. They are a non-profit group that provides food supplements to Senior Citizens who are on Meals on Wheels. I delivered 150 items & many of the packs had 4-6 individual items. My committee is deciding what organization we would like to help at the Spring council. Also, in March we will use the cultural arts workshop to continue work on the nursing cover community service project. These are in great demand. We may also do something else if we have another idea. Thanks again,

Chick Reid
Community Service Chair
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**February:**
- 1 Council Board Meeting
- 18 Cultural Arts Workshop

**March:**
- 8-9 AEHC Officer Training
- 17 Cultural Arts Workshop
- 18 Newsletter articles due

**April:**
- 4 Council Board Meeting
- 15 Spring Council Meeting
- 21 Cultural Arts Workshop

**May:**
- 19 Cultural Arts Workshop

**June:**
- 7-8 State EHC Meeting - Hot Springs

All meetings and activities announced in this newsletter are open to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (large print, audiotapes, etc.) should notify the county Extension Office as soon as possible prior to the activity.