



Kosciusko County  
Purdue University Extension

# Highlights



Homemakers Newsletter

February 2025 - March 2025

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As January settles in, bringing frosty mornings and long, dark evenings, it is easy to feel a little weighed down by winter's chill. But even in the coldest months, we can find warmth and joy by creating our own sunshine!

This year, we are embracing the theme, "Create Your Own Sunshine and Be Happy!" Let this be your gentle nudge to brighten your days and the lives of those around you.

## LIGHTEN YOUR SPACE

A small touch of brightness can make a world of difference. Open your curtains to let in natural light, add a cheerful centerpiece to your table, or cozy up with a soft blanket and warm colors. Candles can add a magical glow to any room.

**WARM YOUR HEART** Engage in activities that bring you joy. Pick up a new hobby, revisit an old one, or gather with friends for a craft night or coffee. Find a book that inspires you, like a heartwarming story or a motivational read, and allow it to nourish your spirit.

**SHARE YOUR SUNSHINE** One of the best ways to brighten your own day is to brighten someone else's. A quick phone call to a friend, a handwritten note, or even a simple smile can have a ripple effect of happiness. Remember, sunshine is contagious!

**KEEP MOVING** Even when it is chilly, a bit of movement can boost your mood. Bundle up for a brisk walk, try a light yoga session indoors, or dance to your favorite music in the kitchen. Physical activity sparks energy and positivity.

**PRACTICE GRATITUDE** When winter feels endless, focusing on the blessings in your life can shift your perspective. Keep a gratitude journal, jotting down three things that make you smile each day. These little rays of sunshine can brighten even the gloomiest moments.

**A SUNSHINE CHALLENGE** Let's inspire each other! Take on a small challenge this month: do one thing each day that sparks joy or spreads happiness. It could be as simple as trying a new recipe, learning a kind word in another language, or checking in on a neighbor. Share your moments of sunshine at your next meeting.

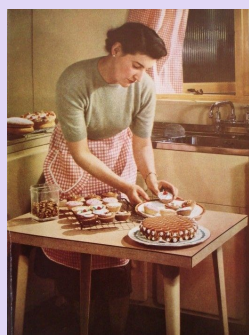
Together, let us make this winter a season of light, laughter, and love. You do not have to wait for spring—your sunshine is already inside you. Let's shine brightly, Homemakers, and embrace this beautiful theme to "Create Your Own Sunshine and Be Happy!"

Stay warm, cheerful, and remember: even on the cloudiest day, the sun is still shining above.

DeeAnna Muraski, MBA  
Extension Co-President  
Executive Director  
Operation Read USA, Inc.  
A literacy social services agency



Always believe something wonderful is going to happen. Even with all the ups and downs, never take a day for granted. Smile, cherish the little things and remember to hug the ones you really love.



**Extension Web Page**  
[www.extension.purdue.edu/county/kosciusko](http://www.extension.purdue.edu/county/kosciusko)

## Follow Us On



Kosciusko County  
Indiana Extension  
Homemakers

**Kosciusko County**  
Extension Office  
202 W Main St  
Warsaw, IN 46580  
574-372-2340

## Hours

Monday thru Friday  
8:00am—4:30pm

## Dates to Remember

### February 20, 2025

- o Sew-In-Day  
Time: 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM (light lunch provided)  
Location: Home and Family Arts Building

### March 5, 2025

- o Extension Board Meeting  
Time: 9:30 AM  
Location: Martin's Upstairs Loft

### March 19, 2025

- o Newsletter items due

### March 26, 2025

- o President's Council  
Time: 1:15 PM  
Location: Home and Family Arts Building  
Assignments:  
-Pledge & Creed by Knitting Together  
-Thought for the Day by Knitting Together  
Lesson: Vitamin Wisdom for vital aging

### March 28, 2025

- o Highlights mailers prepared by M & M's

### May 9, 2025

- o Port-A-Pit Fundraiser

### May 21, 2025

- o Spring Fling  
Time: 6:00 PM  
Location: Home and Family Arts Building  
Planning Committee: Atwood Home Study, Herscher Extension Homemakers, and Rural Neighbors



Please email all articles for the April/May newsletter to Jenna Hankinson at [hankinso@purdue.edu](mailto:hankinso@purdue.edu) by March 19, 2025.

## Board Shares Holiday Favorites

At the January board meeting, DeeAnna asked the board (and guest) "What is your favorite holiday tradition and/or food?"

Judy Egolf - making (and eating) lasagna! The family begs for it.

DeeAnna Muraski - Making kolache and pecan cups in honor of paternal grandmother and Oyster Stew in memory of Great Aunt Doris

Marsha Miller - loves decorating the house and having everyone come over to see the twinkling lights; also making her family's favorite pecan/cranberry salad - the one with celery! Yum!

Sue Martin - her entire family has a cookie baking contest (she gets to be a judge!!)

Alice Keirn - putting up her tree and decorating it with her grandson (he also comes back to take it all down after the holidays and stores it away!!)

Jenna Hankinson - getting board games for her young kids and playing with them; also cheesy



## Behind The Apron: Questions for an Extension Homemaker-Martha Whetstone of Rural Neighbors

**What inspired you to join the Purdue Extension Homemakers group?** I have always been interested in joining; however, I never knew anyone who would invite me. So when DeeAnna Muraski suggested I attend with her, I jumped at the chance.

**Can you tell us a fun fact about yourself that most people would not guess?** I am a Hot Rod Momma! I am very interested in fixing up and driving classic cars. I have helped my son restore 2 ½ cars and attend many local and Indiana car shows.

**If you could have dinner with any historical homemaker or chef, who would it be and why?** Martha Stewart. She fascinates me for some reason! I really liked watching her with Snoop Dogg emcee the Olympics.

**What's your favorite way to spend a relaxing afternoon at home?** On the sofa reading a good book – I have about five books I am reading right now!

**Do you have a favorite family tradition or recipe that you love to share?** Hamburger casserole with sliced potatoes, mushroom soup, mixed vegetables and hamburger. It is a huge hit with the family and my son even makes it!

**What's your go-to dish to bring to a potluck or gathering?** Deviled eggs! I like to sprinkle the tops with paprika and keep them classic.

**If you had unlimited time, what craft or hobby would you master?** Embroidery. I have made a couple of embroidered Christmas stockings. When my son was young, I made one *so large he could get inside the stocking!*

**What's one event or activity you would love to see our group do this year?** I would like to see our Extension be more involved in attending non-profit fundraising events to help support them. Operation Read hosts a Bingo Night that is a lot of fun! Additionally, this might get more members to join extension.

**If your personality were a kitchen gadget, which one would it be and why?** A mixer – I can stir up some trouble!!

**If you could only use three ingredients for the rest of your life, what would they be?** Eggs, Milk, and Bread. You can make a lot with them!

**What's your favorite season for homemaking and why?** Christmas! Being around family and doing no-bake cookies with the great-grandchildren.

**If you had to describe your homemaking style in three words, what would they be?** Only need one: chaotic!

**What's one thing you always keep stocked in your pantry or fridge?** Eggs

**If your sewing machine, mixing bowl, and garden trowel had to compete in a "most-used tool" contest, which would win—and why?** Mixing Bowl because we use them daily.

**What's your secret to staying active and involved in the community?** I like staying busy and feeling useful. If I sit around, I get bored.

**If you could give one piece of advice to new or potential Extension club member, what would it be?** Just do it and get involved, you will enjoy getting together and making new friends.

**Finally, if there were a club award for "Most Likely to Brighten Someone's Day," why would your friends nominate you for it?** Because I am loveable! (we agree – Martha is loveable!!)



### General Info:

Lived in Warsaw most of her life  
Two children: a son and daughter  
Three grandchildren  
Six (plus one coming) – great-grandchildren  
Started attending extension about two years ago  
Retired from Zimmer after 45 years  
Graduated from Warsaw High School (we won't mention when...)



## Volunteer Community Service

This is just a reminder that as an organization we are collecting the following items for Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center and the B.A.B.E. store. The items can be dropped off at Health Pavilion on Lutheran Kosciusko Campus. If no one is available at either of the agencies they can be left at the front desk, and they will be delivered to the appropriate agencies.

### **Safe Harbor**

Small toys for boys & girls, ages 0-5  
Small flashlights with batteries  
Boys' & girls' deodorant  
Small hairbrushes  
Toothpaste  
Small bottles of shampoo

### **B.A.B.E. Boutique**

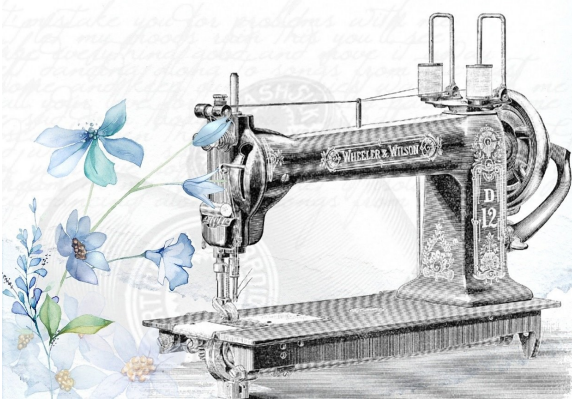
Diapers – size 5-6  
Disposal breast pads  
Soap & lotion for babies  
Toddler clothing – size 2-5T  
Toddler Shoes – 6-10  
New or gently used maternity clothing  
Size large through 2 X

Please each club keep a record of your donations and report the information to Dawn Harris, Atwood Home Study Club.

Each club may take donations to Safe Harbor or B.A.B.E. Boutique. Contact the front desk. We are also planning a SEW IN DAY to make cloth bags for Safe Harbor and some other items recently found upon cleaning out the storage areas. The date will be February 20, 2025.

Article submitted by: Judy Egolf

## Sew-In Day



As a Volunteer Community Service Project, we will sew cloth bags to be used by Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center to provide children with a care bag to take with them to their next destination. They may be returning home but more than likely they may go to foster care or to live with other relatives. This bag offers them comfort, security and something that is their own. These bags are large enough to hold an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper and are quite simple to make. We will also be constructing dresses, for Dress a Girl Around the World. These are kits that were found when cleaning out storage areas in the Extension Office. In this same storage area, we found several fabrics pieces which we will use to make the bags.

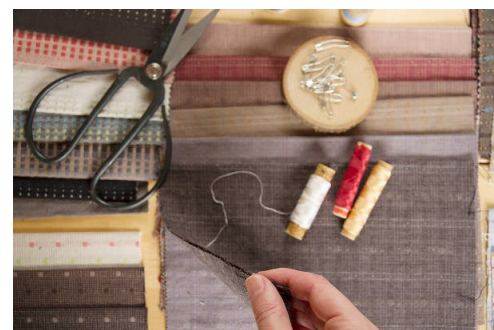
However, if they have fabric remaining from other projects you want to share, they need to be at least 13 inches wide and 23 inches long. Please bring your sewing machine if possible and any other tools you like to use when sewing. We could use a couple of cutting mats, rotary cutters and 1 or 2 ironing boards and irons.

If you do not sew you could assist in cutting fabrics for the bags, pressing, and assembling the bags.

Come and join the fun on February 20, 8:30am to 2:00pm at the Home and Family Arts Building at the Fairgrounds. Soup and crackers will be available for lunch and please feel free to bring a dish to share.

## 2025 Quilt Raffle

Fair time will be here before we know it. Sue has donated a beautiful red and green Quilt top called “TREE’S UP! LIGHTS ON” and Geneva soon will be quilting it. Now it’s time for the rest of us to think about what we could donate. Last year there was a lot of interest in the small baskets, the doll clothes and the items for the yard. Put your thinking caps on and let’s make this year’s raffle the best ever! If you have any questions, please feel free to call me with your questions. 574-371-5711



Submitted by: Alice Keirn

## Looking Ahead to the 2025 Fair

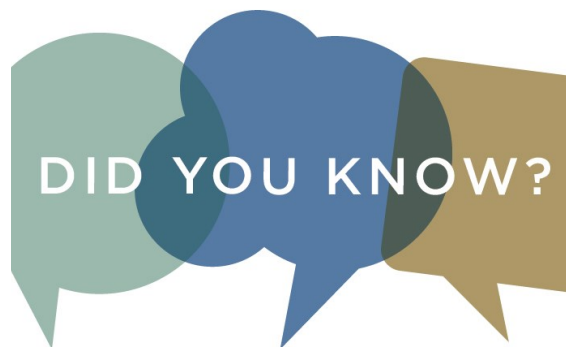
Work has begun on preparations for the 2025 Kosciusko County Community Fair. The fair book is being updated and activities are being considered. Many things are yet to be decided, but there are a couple of things we do know. The timing of the fair will be “interesting” this year. Fair dates are July 6-12, 2025. That means check-in and judging will take place on July 5, the day following the holiday. It will be “interesting” to see if and how that affects our entry numbers, as well as the availability of workers and judges. Keep that date in mind, and if we put out a plea for helpers, please consider it. You’ll have fun and learn a lot!

We would like to have another Silent Auction this year, so please let us know if your club, or you personally, would be willing to supply a basket. We had eight baskets for auction last year, and we felt that was too many. The table looked crowded and bidding was not as vigorous as in years before. Maybe the items were too hard to see. We’d like to cut it back to five – six maximum. Please let us know in the next month or so if you’d like to contribute. Thanks very much!!

The other important item is this: Robin and I have decided that this will be the last year we will serve as building directors. It would be beneficial if our successors could work with us this year, so they would have some idea of what is involved. If you have any interest in taking on this position, please speak up. Otherwise the future of the open class exhibits is uncertain.

Submitted by: Sue Martin

## Did You Know?



The Kosciusko County Extension Homemakers now has a dedicated webpage! You can visit it to find updates on upcoming events, club news, and resources. It’s a great way to stay connected and informed, even if you can’t make it to every meeting. Be sure to check it out and bookmark it for easy access!

Go to [www.extension.purdue.edu/county/kosciusko](http://www.extension.purdue.edu/county/kosciusko) Scroll until you see the black box that says “Kosciusko County Extension Homemakers”, click that box.

## Welcome New Extension Office Support

### Jenna Hankinson

HHS & ANR Administrative Assistant

I am delighted to join the team at the Purdue Extension Office - Kosciusko County. I will be assisting Shannon Shepherd, the Health and Human Services Educator, along with Emily Kresca, the Agricultural and Natural Resources Educator. As their assistant I will be a point of contact for various programs and events that fall under each of their positions. Below I have shared my contact information. I look forward to working with you!



+1 574 372 2341

Email: [hankinso@purdue.edu](mailto:hankinso@purdue.edu)



## Fond Farewell & Hello!

Our Treasurer, Ruth Dilling, has had to resign effective immediately. We sincerely thank Ruth for her service and dedication. At the President's Council meeting on January 29, 2025, the Board voted to appoint Cathi Zdenek as our new Treasurer. We are thrilled to have Cathi step up to the plate! As a Certified Public Accountant, she brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the role. Her mother-in-law is Avis Gunter. Cathi is a part of the Happy Homemakers Club. Please join us in welcoming Cathi to the team!

## Port-A-Pit Fundraiser



Our annual Port-A-Pit fundraiser is scheduled for Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from 11-6:00 at JB Furniture. The tickets for pre-sale will be given out at President's Council at the end of March. The money and any unsold tickets can be returned towards the end of April in our usual drive through method at the Extension office. Once again, we will need workers for all of the 2 hour shifts the day of the sale. Sign-up sheets will go out with the tickets and turned in with the money. Please mark your calendars. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and funds our scholarships and other financial obligations. This has been a fun day in the past, thanks to all of you, and I look forward to seeing everyone again this year.

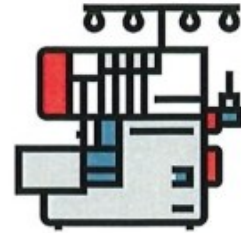
Submitted by: Ann Kline



Atwood Home Study invites you to



# Sew Day



## When and where??

- ◆ Thursday, February 20, 2025
- ◆ 8:30 am - 2:00 pm
- ◆ Home and Family Arts Building



## What are we making??

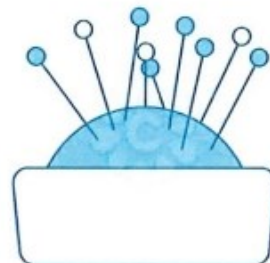
- ◆ Tote bags for Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center
- ◆ Little dresses for Dress a Girl Around the World

## What should I bring??

- ◆ Your lunch
- ◆ Sewing machine if you have one
- ◆ A couple of sergers with neutral colored thread (beige or grey) would be nice
- ◆ We have some fabric, but if you have scraps at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  yard size you'd like to donate we wouldn't say no
- ◆ Rotary cutter, mat, and ruler - we only need a couple
- ◆ Iron and ironing surface - we only need a couple

## What will I be doing??

- ◆ Sewing or serging
- ◆ Trimming threads
- ◆ Pressing
- ◆ Cutting
- ◆ Encouraging other workers
- ◆ Whatever you do best!



Many hands make light work, so please join us for an enjoyable day of sewing as part of the Volunteer Community Support Committee activities.

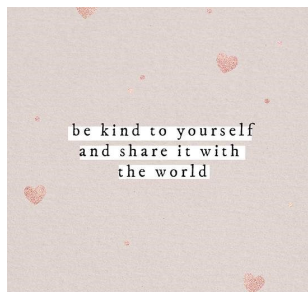
## Date Corrections for Your Program Book

**These dates are the correct dates for Highlights Mailers:**

March 19-Newsletter items due  
March 28-Highlights Mailers

May 21-Newsletter items due  
May 30-Highlights Mailers

July 17-Newsletter items due  
July 31-Highlights Mailers



## Extension Office Closed

The Extension Office will be closed:

- 04/18/2025
- 05/26/2025
- 07/04/2025



## 2024-2025 Kosciusko County Extension Homemakers Officers

COUNTY EXTENSION HOMEMAKER OFFICER 2024 - 2025		
TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL
Co-President		
Judy Egolf And Past President	574.267.2226 or 574.551.5226	egolfjudy@gmail.com
DeeAnna Muraski	574.527.0065	deeanna@operationreadusa.org
Vice-President		
Currently Vacant	Volunteering is a beautiful thing! We need YOU!	
Secretary		
Marsha Miller	574.858.2104 or 574.265.6562	marshamiller65@gmail.com
Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer		
Sue Martin, Interim Treasurer	574.202.0938	martinsue822@gmail.com
Cathi Zdenek, Treasurer, voted on 1.29.2025	574.527.3785	czindrich@gmail.com
Past-President		
Sue Martin	574.202.0938	martinsue822@gmail.com



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Extension

## Meet the County Extension Staff



### Emily Kresca

- Agriculture & Natural Resource Educator
- Interim 4-H Youth Development Educator
- Co-County Extension Director
- eluc@purdue.edu



### Shannon Shepherd

- Health & Human Services Educator
- Interim 4-H Youth Development Educator
- Co-County Extension Director
- shephe62@purdue.edu



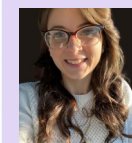
### Caroline Arnett

- County Wellness Coordinator
- arnettc@purdue.edu



### Tami Graff

- 4-H Administrative Assistant
- Office Manager
- graff8@purdue



### Jenna Hankinson

- ANR/HHS Administrative Assistant
- hankinson@purdue.edu

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