

WPF Forum News

A publication of the Women's Professional Forum

December 2024



*WPF President,
Erica Parker*

Dear WPF Sisters,

At the beginning of the year, I challenged you to shine your light brightly in your homes, workplaces, and community. You have all answered that call in unique and inspiring ways. As we near the end of this chapter, I encourage you to continue to shine brightly. Your light is needed now more than ever.

It has been an honor to serve as your president. This role has been a journey of growth, connection, and deep personal fulfillment. I am deeply grateful for the support, friendship, and wisdom you've shared with me.

As I step down, know that the bond we've created will always remain in my heart. Though this is my final newsletter as president, our mission and vision live on in each of you. I have no doubt you will continue to inspire those around you in profound and meaningful ways.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving you.

Special Request: Wear a Hat or Fascinator to Our Final Meeting:

As we approach our final meeting of the year, I invite you to wear a hat or fascinator. These beautiful accessories symbolize confidence, grace, and strength—qualities that each of you embodies. Let's celebrate the strength, dignity, and brilliance that every member brings to our group. I look forward to

seeing the unique and stylish choices you make, and I am excited to share this moment with all of you.

Shine Bright!!

Erica



ACTIVE & ACTIVE RETIRED RSVP ONLY
if you can NOT attend

EMERITUS & SUPPORTING MEMBERS, RSVP to attend. Lunch fee \$30.
Cash, check, or PayPal at the door

MEETING RSVP Noon Friday, December 6

Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business meeting includes highlights of the year for both WPF and WFFF, Board of Directors elections for both WPF and WFFF, and special recognitions. A short program will follow.

WPF Nominees for 2025 Board of Directors & Committees

President.....Lorri Yaskiewicz

President Elect.....Jennifer Mencarini

1st Vice President.....Amy Meinecke

2nd Vice President.....Ashley Raper

Treasurer.....Leigh Ann Klee

Secretary.....Marlee Foster

Director at Large.....Laura Burton

Director at Large..... OPEN

Membership Committee Chair.....Marcy McHenry

Membership Committee Chair Elect.....Anne Smith (non-board position)

Membership Committee Member.....Sue Hunt (non-board position)

Programs Committee Chair.....Mebane Ham

Programs Committee Chair Elect.....Corinne Auman (non-board position)

Programs Committee Member.....Janice Lanier (non-board position)

Nominating Committee Member.....Erica Parker (past president)

Nominating Committee Member.....Jody Susong (non-board position)
Nominating Committee Member.....Ronnie Grabon (non-board position)

WPF Foundation Proposed Slate for 2025 Board of Directors

WPFF Board will meet immediately after the WPF Business meeting at SFCC to elect Board officers.

Susan Gutterman.....2027

Neena Ballard2027

Sasha Trosch.....2027

Jennifer Mencarini.....2027

Jody Susong.....2027

WPF 2024 Board of Directors

Erica Parker
President

Lorri Yaskiewicz
President Elect

Jasmine Beard
1st Vice President

Jennifer Mencarini
2nd Vice President

Marlee Foster
Secretary

Leigh Ann Klee
Treasurer

Laura Burton
Membership Chair

Lisa Hazlett
Programs Chair

Chandra Hackenbruch Foundation President

Kate Panzer
Director at Large

Ashley Raper
Director at Large

Cecelia Anderson
Past President & Nominating Chair

Sherry Barr
Administrative Assistant

WPF is committed to supporting and endorsing equal opportunities for all people without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability or genetics.

Greeters and 4 minute Specials

Please consider being a greeter or sharing a 4 min special for an upcoming membership meeting this year.

Greeters: Arrive to the monthly meeting of your choice around 11:50am. Sherry will provide you the purple greeter sash. Grab your nametag, stand near one of the entry doors and

welcome your fellow WPF sisters. [SIGN UP HERE](#)

4 Min Special: If you have never done one please consider signing up for one of the dates available. This is a chance for you to tell us about you, not just your work but what makes you-you! This year 4 min specials will be given after the program and we ask that you try to keep them to a few short min. Not comfortable speaking to the group? No problem, write a 4 min special to go in a newsletter.

Email Marleegfoster@gmail.com with your 4 min special for a newsletter and we will include it during this year.

Upcoming Events

Special Interest Groups

WPF Member Directory

WPF Facebook Page

DECEMBER PROGRAM

Savannah and Erika from NCCJ will talk about winter holidays beyond Christmas and Hannukah, exploring why they embrace the phrase, "Happy Holidays!" at this time of year, and how there is so much we can learn from and teach each other when we make room for difference. To conclude, they'll share some NCCJ resources, designed to help WPF sisters be more aware and inclusive of the mosaic of faith and cultural traditions that enriches our community.



Savannah Knoble

Savannah grew up in Stokesdale, NC, and discovered her passion for social justice during her time as a student in Guilford County. In 2015, she participated in NCCJ's flagship youth human relations program, Anytown, which became a transformative experience, exposing her to people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. This experience sparked a lifelong commitment to advocating for social justice. Savannah continued to build on this passion at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she earned a double major in Sociology and Economics, along with a minor in Social and Economic Justice, graduating in 2021. During her college years, she conducted research on gig work during the pandemic, and her work was published in the [*Russell Sage Foundation Journal of Social Sciences*](#).

Today, Savannah serves as the Operations Director at NCCJ (North Carolina for Community and Justice), where she works to promote equality and inclusion. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, knitting, playing board games with her husband, and spending quality time with her two cats.

Erika Rain Wilhite

One of Erika's earliest memories is watching Star Trek with her parents. It gave her an inclusive, optimistic model of a future where women were leaders and diverse groups of people collaborated and compromised to make a better society for everyone. Erika can't say what came first, those dreams of a Star Trek future or her deep passion for history. Always driven to understand what happened in the past that led to things being "the way they are," she earned a master's degree in public history from the University of West Florida.



While working in historic preservation and museum interpretation, Erika discovered a talent for fund development after securing grant funds to restore the Pensacola Lighthouse. Today, she has 10+ years of experience in nonprofit fund development, communications and leadership. Erika is employed as interim executive director of NCCJ (North Carolina for Community and Justice), after having served as the organization's development and communications director for the past eight years. She and her husband live in Greensboro with their two rescue cats.



What's for lunch in December?

- Tuscan Kale Salad with Baby Kate, Dried Cranberries, Candied Black Pepper Walnuts, Bleu Cheese and Caramelized Shallot Vinaigrette
- Chicken roulade with ricotta, spinach, sun dried tomatoes
- Lemon Broccolini
- Brown rice stuffed baby squash
- Crusty baguettes and whipped butter
- Fresh Cut Fruit Display
- Chef's Choice Assorted Bite Sized Holiday Dessert Display

NEWS & UPDATES

WPF ANNUAL HOLIDAY BRUNCH

Sunday, December 8, 2024

11:00 am

Print Works Bistro
702 Green Valley Road

Join Laura Burton and Jody Susong for this annual event.

Only a few seats left, so register ASAP!

RSVP via the following link: <https://forms.gle/3JUXWwPbYhk1SdNV9>

Questions: Laura Burton at lburton@foxrothschild.com



Chandra Hackenbruch
WPF Foundation President

WPF Foundation News

Greetings dear sisters!

Words cannot express how grateful and appreciative I am for your support of the Rock the Night away fundraiser! This event raised \$11,600 for the foundation! The goal was to raise enough money to match what the Foundation would have gained from the Bazaar and I am overjoyed to announce that the proceeds from this event allowed us to meet that goal!

Special thanks to:

- The performers who volunteered their time: High Cotton, Molly McGuinn/Kate Musselwhite, and Taboo Sue
- Flat Iron for the opportunity to use the space
- Kibi's Crazy Casseroles for the delicious food and donating all sale proceeds to the Foundation
- The Sponsors: Vivid Interiors, Friends Homes, Ward Black Law, Jeanie Duncan, Mi-Box Storage, and Window Works Studio
- All 92 attendees of the event which included WPF members and non members
- The Foundation Fundraising Committee: Frenesa Hall, Amy Meinecke, Valda Ford, Christine Byrd and Maria Hanlin

This event was amazing and we look forward to possibly repeating this event next year!

As we wrap up this year, I express my sincere gratitude to the 2024 Foundation Board for a magnificent year. The year was a success because of them and I appreciate their time, efforts, and talent. I also want to express gratitude for Frenesa Hall who served as secretary for the past 2 years and served on Fundraising and Grant committees and Keyshia Gray who have served on the Grant and May Meeting committees during their time on the board. They will be rolling off the board at the end of this year.

The Foundation is grateful for all the donors that have given generously this year. We would not be able to give the grants below without your support!

The Women's Resource: for Women to Work. It offers job readiness, training, and placement support services designed to address women's unique needs.

Sister Circle International: for their She Works & Wins program will offer the opportunity to achieve self-sufficiency, insight, knowledge, and resources to empower women.

I Am A Queen: for Queen Arise Leadership Program which provides self-esteem and leadership training targeting key areas such as money management, healthy relationships, health and fitness, and etiquette to at-risk girls ages 10-18.

Greensboro History Museum: for a program that will: (1) host a public program with a noted historian; (2) organize a youth leadership summit (3) develop curriculum around Bennett College students' 1960 Operation Doorknock.

WPF FOUNDATION

2024 Board of Directors

Chandra Hackenbruch, President

Leslie Loyd, Vice President

Frenesa Hall, Secretary

Jody Susong, Treasurer

Directors at Large:

Andrea Bunn

Laura Burton

Beth Fisher

Keyshia Gray

Susan Gutterman

Maria Hanlin

Kimberly Marriott

Amy Meinecke

Jennifer Mencarini

Martha Peddrick

Ernestine Taylor

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, December 3

7:00 pm

Holiday refreshments

7:30 pm

Book discussion

Host

Jane Hewitt

6 Ashton Square

Book
Bright Lights, Big Christmas
by Mary Kay Andrews

Reach out to Polly - 336.202.6188; pollydsizemore@gmail.com with questions.

It's a Double Date!
Wine Divas and Sippin' Sisters unite for a festive holiday party at Maria Hanlin's home!

Thursday, December 12, 2024
6:00pm
5609 Tower Road, Greensboro

We will highlight a *"Naughty but Nice"* holiday cocktail PLUS a variety of wines. That's a combo that's hard to beat!

Venmo \$15 to Maria Hanlin (@Maria-Hanlin) to reserve your space. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share, plus a white elephant gift to share (or steal.). Wear something festive! This will be a double date to a holiday party you won't forget.

Space is limited so don't delay and Venmo today.



WOW - WOMEN OF WALL STREET
Investment Club

There will be no meeting of WOW in December as we are all getting ready for the Holidays!

We open the Club once a year in January for new members to join. 1/16th of a share is approximately \$5000, but new and existing members can purchase up to 1 share total. The portfolio will be priced on 12/31/24, and the exact numbers known. If you would like more information about the club and pricing, please contact Peggy Ward at peggy.ward8@icloud.com after December 31, 2024.

January 17-20, 2025, is our trip to NYC in conjunction with the Books and Arts SIG.

February 13, 2025, will be our first Business Meeting of the year where we will welcome new members, elect officers, and review the portfolio.

**Bel Canto
"Tidings"
Monday, December 9, 7:30 pm
Christ United Methodist Church**

One of our traditional holiday activities is to attend the Bel Canto holiday concert. The concert program contains a lot of holiday songs which should get us into the spirit of the season. Tickets are \$30 (\$25 for seniors). The plan is to have dinner at Green Valley Grill at 5:45 and then head to the church which is nearby. If you are interested in attending, please email Kris Landrum (klandrum@tuggleduggins.com) for information about ticket purchases and to get on the list for reservations at Green Valley Grill.

(If you'd like to attend the concert, but can't make it on Monday night, there is also a performance at 3:30 on Sunday afternoon that you can check out.)

WORKING MOMS

**Undercurrent Restaurant
327 Battleground Ave**

**Holiday Lunch and Napkin Exchange
Tuesday, December 17, 12-1:30 pm**

Moms of all ages welcome.

RSVP to Marlee Foster at marlee.foster@conehealth.com.

Working Mom's group is part support group and part resource group. We learn so much from each other and have the chance to share the trials and tribulations of being a working Mom in this day and age. There is always laughter, an empathetic ear, and sometimes a great suggestion to help you when you thought you have exhausted all possible options.

FINANCIAL DIVAS

No meeting in December 2024.
We'll pick up in January 2025!

Paula Stearns

pmcmillan@stearnsfinancial.com

SERVICE TO OTHERS

Special Announcement

Service to Others has been providing the opportunity for WPF sisters to serve various groups in our area for the past three years. Jody Susong and Amy Baradell started this SIG in 2022 and are ready to step down and pass the organization of this SIG to another WPF sister or sisters. Please contact [Jennifer Mencarini](#), our 2nd VP over SIG's if you are interested in leading this SIG.



Ladies of Leisure

Holiday Tea Friday, December 6

The WPF Ladies of Leisure will hold its popular annual Holiday Tea at noon on **Friday, Dec. 6** in the lobby area of the O. Henry Hotel, 624 Green Valley Road, Greensboro. The O. Henry has reserved room for three groups of eight (24 people) and we have requested that they be in the tea salon, next to the lobby, and the hotel will try to accommodate that. Although the 24 slots are filled, anyone else interested will be put on a waiting list, and we'll stay in touch and let you know if slots become available. One or two usually do. The cost will depend on the food ordered by each attendee; the Cream Tea is \$8.95 per person; the Light Afternoon Tea is \$12.95 and the O. Henry Tea is \$18.95, payable at the event. All WPF members are invited; Please register by Monday, Dec. 2 at retired@wpforum.org.

Annual Planning Lunch January 10, 2025

LOL will hold its January planning meeting for 2025 events at 12:30 on Friday, Jan. 10, 2025 at Gia Restaurant, 1941 New Garden Road, Suite 208, Greensboro. There is room for 16 people. Last year's planning session worked out well. Feel free to bring your ideas for outings and willingness to plan one or two of them. Those attending can order from the menu; checks will be separate and are expected to include the tip. Please respond by Monday, Jan. 6 to retired@wpforum.org.

Blandwood February 14, 2025

To get the year started, LOL has planned its February outing for 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 14. It's a tour of Blandwood Mansion, 447 W. Washington St., Greensboro. Originally built as a four-room Federal style farmhouse in 1795, it was home to two-term North Carolina governor John Motley Morehead under whose ownership it was transformed into its present appearance. The tour will be followed by lunch at one of two downtown restaurants: either Chez Genese, 616 S. Elm St., or Mellow Mushroom, 609 S. Elm St. Since neither takes reservations, we'll see which one can seat us when the time comes. Five WPF members have signed up already. Please respond by Monday, Feb. 10 to retired@wpforum.org.

BOOKS & ARTS

RUNNING OF THE BALLS Sunset Hills Saturday, December 14

The 2024 Running of the Balls, billed as the "Greatest 5k(ish) in the History of the World," will be held on Saturday, December 14. This incredibly fun and beautiful walk/run/saunter/ogle event held annually in Greensboro's Sunset Hills neighborhood benefits Second Harvest and is attended by and supported by numerous WPF'ers each year.

If you plan to participate this year and haven't signed up already, you can register at www.runningoftheballs.com. Registration is \$55 for adults. Runners start at 6 pm and walkers start at 6:45.

Please join your WPF Sisters Beverley Gass and Michele Smith at Beverley's home at 2104 Rolling Road, which is close to the starting line, to watch the fun or to celebrate with friends at the end of your walk/run. The party starts about 5:30pm. There will be wine, beer, pizza, sweet treats and a fun time with friends, old and new. Outlandish Christmas attire and blinking lights are optional!

If you'd like to join us, and we hope you will, please RSVP to Beverley at beverleygass@gmail.com and to Michele at msmith@hillevans.com by 5pm on Thursday, December 12th.

Participants and non-participants should park in designated parking areas off Friendly Avenue and walk into the neighborhood, which will be closed to traffic.



Women's Professional Forum, PO Box 38594, Greensboro, NC 27438

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