



A message from WPF President, Jennifer Mencarini

When I moved to Greensboro in 2015, I knew almost no one. I was newly divorced, in a brand-new job, and wondering how in the world I was going to start all over at the age of 42. At work, I collaborated on a major project with my then-colleague (and now dear friend) **Margaret Kantlehner**, who told me about a group of professional women that she thought would be a good fit for me. First I had to get promoted to Director, and when I did, she very graciously started inviting me to meetings. After I was introduced to other WPF members, I knew immediately that I wanted to join. I never imagined it would lead to being the President! I'm honored to be serving WPF in that role this year and to work with our fantastic new Board and our outstanding administrative assistant, Sherry Barr.



Jennifer Mencarini
WPF President

This year, I plan to anchor the Board's work to support WPF in:

Programming focused on our identities as professional women and how we can best support each other in continued professional development. In a 2022 *Forbes* article on the importance of a professional network for women, author Kimber Maderazzo describes feeling limited by the networking opportunities presented to her at work. She instead found that the networking opportunities afforded by professional associations and common interest groups helped widen her perspective and open the door to heightened personal growth and opportunity. Maderazzo notes that a reciprocity mindset strengthens relationships by intentionally advancing others' goals through referrals and connections, creating a cycle of mutual support. This cycle provides women with increased confidence and a push toward greater success.

Our SIGs and social gatherings are pivotal to our members' success and WPF's longevity. This year, I want to ensure that we are *also* focused on mutually promoting increased personal and

professional development opportunities.

Review of Board governance practices, including assessment of current and potential additional policies and procedures. Regular review of Board governance drives organizational effectiveness, strategic alignment, accountability and oversight. It promotes a culture of continuous improvement, and further clarifies roles and responsibilities. As we move toward our 50th anniversary next year, this process supports WPF's evolution and empowers us to proactively address challenges and concerns as they arise.

Continue to diversify our membership across age, racial/ethnic identity, sexual orientation, ability status, faith tradition, and other lived experiences, while promoting inclusion of all members. Inclusion fuels the attraction and retention of talented members, creates opportunities to consider varied perspectives, and positions organizations as spaces that foster growth, belonging, and shared success for all members.

Plan for our 50th anniversary celebration next year. Stay tuned for more information about this in the coming months.

I wish each of you a very happy new year and a 2026 filled with professional and personal success, good health, joy, friendship, kindness, fun, and love.

~Jen



January Meeting
Wednesday, January 14
12:30pm - 1:30pm
Starmount Country Club

ACTIVE & ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERS RSVP ONLY
if you can NOT attend

EMERITUS & SUPPORTING MEMBERS, RSVP to attend.
Lunch fee \$30.
Cash, Check, PayPal, or Zelle

MEETING RSVP

WPF
2026 Board of Directors

Jennifer Mencarini
President

Amy Meineke
President Elect

Ashley Raper
1st Vice President

Christine Byrd
2nd Vice President

Janice Lanier
Secretary

Shirley Lucky
Treasurer

Anne Smith
Membership Chair

Corinne Auman
Programs Chair

Susan Gutterman *Foundation President*

Neena Ballard
Director at Large

Dee Blake
Director at Large

Lorri Yaskiewicz
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.

Newsletter Archives

Upcoming Events

Special Interest Groups

WPF Member Directory

WPF Facebook Page

What's for lunch in January?

- Greek salad with cheese and dressing on side
- Assorted rolls & whipped butter
- Chicken Piccata
- Roasted Red Bliss Potatoes
- Braised Haricot Vert
- Chocolate Mousse in Individual Cups/Glasses



JANUARY PROGRAM



Donna Orender is a nationally recognized business leader, best-selling author, and former President/Commissioner of the WNBA, where she was recruited by Adam Silver to lead the league through a pivotal period and delivered record growth in sponsorship, media, digital engagement, and attendance while securing landmark broadcast and labor agreements. Named one of the Top 10 Most Powerful Women in Sports and one of Newsweek's 100 Most Influential People in the Business of Sports, Donna also

spent 17 years as a senior executive at the PGA TOUR, driving billions in media and global revenue growth. She is currently the co-founder and League Commissioner of the new women's professional basketball league, **The Upshot League**, which is launching a team in Greensboro—the **Greensboro Groove**—beginning in May 2026. As CEO of Orender Unlimited and founder of GENERATION W, Donna remains deeply committed to advancing women and girls through leadership, innovation, and purpose. A sought-after speaker on leadership, resilience, and belief, she brings insight, energy, and inspiration to every audience, and we are honored to welcome her as the featured speaker at the Women's Professional Forum Luncheon.

NEWS & UPDATES

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.

WPF Foundation News

A Note From Susan R. Gutterman, WPF Foundation President

Happy New Year!

The WPF Foundation wishes you a successful year ahead filled with professional and personal achievements. We are proud of what our Board accomplished in 2025 and are excited for 2026!

I would like to thank and recognize Chandra Hackenbruch, Past WPF President, for her leadership and accomplishments, including: the WPF Foundation distributing nearly \$60,000 in grants to 9 organizations to empower women and girls; and the two *Rock the Night Away Fundraisers* that were not only fun, but also raised approximately \$25,000 for the WPF Foundation.

Grant Application Cycle is still Open!

We are thrilled with the grant applications that we have received so far, but there is still time to apply! The deadline is January 31, 2026.

Do you know an organization in Guilford County that runs programs for women and girls? Encourage them to apply for a grant! They can find the application on our website: www.wpforum.org/foundation/grants/.

Thank you to our supporters!

Thanks to your generosity over the past 41 years, your contributions allowed the Foundation to provide over \$400,000 in grants to organizations that align with our mission to empower Women and Girls.

Have questions?

Feel free to contact **Susan R. Gutterman**, WPF President, or any Foundation Board member for more information about grants or the WPF Foundation.

Together, we can empower women and girls!

WPF FOUNDATION 2026 Board of Directors



Susan Gutterman, *President*
Chandra Hackenbruch, *Past President*
Laura Burton, *Vice President*
Neena Ballard, *Secretary*
Jody Susong, *Treasurer*

Directors at Large Melissa Burroughs

Christine Byrd
Beth Fischer
Karen Foster
Maria Hanlin
Kim Marriott
Amy Meinecke
Martha Peddrick
Ernestine Taylor
Sasha Trosch

WPF Membership News

Anne Flegal Smith, Membership Chair

CURRENT MEMBERS: 2025 WPF membership renewal notices will be sent out via email mid-January, and all membership fees are due by March 1. If you are considering changing your membership status, please review Section II of the Bylaws (available on the website) for the qualifications of the four membership categories, then request the change to the Membership Chair, **Anne Smith**, annefsmith@gmail.com or 336 420 9245.

NEW MEMBER SPONSORSHIP: Your WPF Membership Committee is ready for an exciting and productive new year, and learning about the great applicants you'll be proposing. We love having new members join our group! Please let me know if you plan to sponsor a candidate this year, as this will assist the Membership Committee's planning process. Although the June 1 deadline for the 2025 class seems far in the future, it's only FIVE MONTHS AWAY. The membership packet and

additional information are available on the website. I find that sharing this information in full with the perspective new member before they pursue membership is helpful.

The basic requirements for membership applications haven't changed:

- New members are accepted once yearly. The Membership Chair must receive completed applications by June 1 for membership to begin on July 1.
- A new member must be sponsored by a total of three sponsors — a primary sponsor and two secondary sponsors. *The primary sponsor must be an Active or Active Retired member. The two secondary sponsors may be Active, Active Retired or Emeritus members.*
- Prospective members will attend three WPF lunch meetings with each of her sponsors, a total of three meetings, *within the twelve months prior to application filing.*
- The primary sponsor is responsible for ensuring that an applicant appears to meet the basic membership qualifications set out in the New Member Application Packet. Questions may be directed to the Membership Chair.

Please make sure that all sponsors qualify to sponsor a new member:

- An Active and Active Retired member may either sponsor or co-sponsor a total of no more than two new member applications in a fiscal year.
- An Emeritus member may co-sponsor no more than two new member applications in a fiscal year.
- New members may be a sponsor after 24 months of membership. The waiting period to sponsor a new member doesn't apply to WPF members who have been reinstated as members after having left WPF in good standing.
- Members of the Membership Committee, WPF President and Supporting members cannot act as sponsors.

If you have any further questions about membership or sponsorship, please contact **Membership Chair, Anne Smith** at annefsmith@gmail.com or 336 420 9245.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Non-Fiction (Only) Book Club Book Announcement Tuesday, January 6, 7 pm



In keeping with the health & wellness tradition of "Dry January," we'll be reading:
Drunk-ish, a memoir by Stefanie Wilder-Taylor
Leslie Alderson will lead the discussion.

Location: Sandra Boren's house, 3625 Camden Falls Circle
Sandra's Cell 336-402-0051 RSVP to her via text, please.

Time: 7:00 pm hors d'oeuvres and social time
7:30 - 8:30 or 8:45 pm book discussion

- For our dry January theme, we're going to have some delicious mocktails instead of alcoholic drinks this month.
- If it works for you to bring an appetizer or a dessert, that would be great. No signing up for snacks.
- Run out of time to read the book? Please come anyway- we want to see you.

About The Book Drunk-ish

From the author of *Sippy Cups Are Not for Chardonnay*, a hilariously candid and refreshingly honest account of Stefanie Wilder-Taylor's journey to breaking up with alcohol for good. As the years go by, Stefanie wonders if her relationship with alcohol is different from other people's. Is everyone else struggling this hard to moderate? Is it even legal to watch *The Bachelor* without a glass of white wine?

Ladies of Leisure 2026 Planning Meeting Wednesday, January 7

All members who would enjoy meeting for mid day events/outings 8-10 times a year are welcome to the upcoming planning meeting of "Ladies of Leisure" SIG, Wednesday, January 7, 2026, to be held at Lucky 32 at noon in the Starlight room (off the bar area).

We would love to share ideas submitted by members to date and hear any new suggestions as we set our 2026 schedule.

If you are able to attend, please RSVP to Margaret at margaretbertrand49@gmail.com so we can save you a seat at the table.

If you have outing ideas but can't make this lunch planning session, please share those by email. In the meantime, enjoy the comforts of family and friends as we welcome the New Year.

Margaret Bertrand and Dawn Kane
Co-chairs "Ladies of Leisure"



BOOKS AND ARTS 2026 Planning Meeting Monday, January 12, 6:30pm Kris Landrum's home 704 Plummer Drive

It's time for our annual planning meeting for Books and Arts, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on January 12th at the home of Kris Landrum (704 Plummer Drive). Be part of the planning process for 2026 activities and enjoy dinner and conversation with WPF friends! Kris and Michele Smith, co-chairs of Books and Arts, invite you to bring ideas for activities and a willingness to help organize an event for 2026. It's a fun way to help insure that the new year is a great one for Books and Arts with varied and interesting activities that you think you'd enjoy! One of our two book groups, now chaired by Nancy Radtke, has already got its calendar set. Our non-fiction (only) group, chaired by Jen Thomas and Kate Panzer, will continue with plans at its initial meeting for the year on January 6th.

If you'd like to join the planning meeting, please sign up with Kris Landrum (klandrum@tuggleduggins.com) or Michele Smith (msmith@hillefans.com) so that they can plan for food and drink.

Tuesday, January 18

4:00pm

Join us for our Happy Hour

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

Wednesday, January 21, 9-10 am

Weaver Park Center

324 W. Wendover Ave, Ste. 140

Let's make 2026 our most intentional and rewarding financial life-planning year yet. In the first part of our meeting, please be prepared to share one or two of your best tips, ideas, or personal practices that have genuinely improved your life—whether it's a favorite yoga stretch, a binge-worthy series, or a clever way of staying organized—so others can benefit too. In the second half, we'll finalize our 2026 meeting topics together, so come ready to both share and learn. For questions or more information, contact Paula McMillan at 336.337.9507 or pmcmillan@stearnsfinancial.com.

DINING OUT

Planning Meeting

Wednesday, January 28

6:30pm

Location TBD

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Questions: Amy Meinecke at diningout@wpforum.org

Books and Arts

Bel Canto AMORE

February 14, 6pm

Colonnade at Revolution Mill

Another popular event that many Books and Arts members enjoy annually is the [Amore event hosted by Bel Canto](#) at the Colonnade at Revolution Mill. The event this year is on February 14 at 6 pm. Though that seems far away, this event sells out early and it's fun to get a table together. The event includes appetizers served while enjoying a silent auction and raffle, a plated dinner and a cabaret concert. Tickets are \$130. Contact Kris Landrum (klandrum@tuggleduggins.com) if you're interested in participating.

WOW - WOMEN OF WALL STREET

Investment Club

Holiday Party

Thursday, January 22, 6pm

Cathy Nosek's home

4012 Hazel Lane

If you are interested in joining the Club which opens to new members every January, please contact Peggy Ward at peggy.ward8@icloud.com with any questions. The primary purpose of the Club is to learn about the financial markets and strategies. We have fun too!

Our first Business Meeting of the year is Thursday, February 19, at 6 pm at the Allen Tate offices, 717 Green Valley Road, Suite 175.

Finally, we are planning our annual trek to NYC on April 9-13, 2026. If you are interested in going, please contact Judy Garner at jgarner212@ymail.com.

Happy New Year to everyone!



BOOK CLUB
Tuesday, February 3, 6:30
Beverley Gass' home
2104 Rolling Road, Greensboro

WPF Book Club

February Book "The Correspondent"

by **Virginia Evans**

Join us at Beverley's for a nibble at 6:30 and a lively discussion at 7pm lead by Ashley Hawkins. Contributions to the snack table and bar are welcome.

To help us make the necessary arrangements, **please RSVP by January 30.**

RSVP HERE



Wild Women in the Mountains

Blowing Rock, NC

March 20-22, 2026

And the beat goes on! Hope you can join us for the 2026 Wild Women in the Mountains have been set – March 20-22, 2026, housing has been confirmed (well most of it) and Sarah Shoffner is ready to take your check. Due to the rising cost of everything, our cost will be \$150. That includes a 2-night stay at one of the best and most entertaining homes in the Rock, appetizers Friday night, breakfast Saturday and Sunday, a most delicious dinner on Saturday, and you will receive a

bright green WPF wrist band. Several local retail stores are offering special discounts to WPF members wearing the wrist band. Yet another reason to join us in the Rock!!

Plan to see you in the company of the best Wild Women in WPF!! Please contact Sarah (sarahshoffner@rtelco.net) as to the best way to get her your check.

No matter what, we can promise you a great time!!

Questions? Contact Mebane at mebane@mebaneham.com or 336.314.5226
Mebane Ham

Books and Arts

Blowing Rock Summer Trip

July 16-19, 2026

One of our 2026 activities is our annual summer trip to Blowing Rock. Since we have two houses and a condo reserved, we still have openings for the trip, scheduled for July 16th through 19th. Activity options will include the Chetola Symphony by the Lake on Friday night, the 17th (tickets around \$85), tubing on Saturday morning (\$35), and possibly a wine tasting. Other activities participants frequently enjoy are spa treatments at Chetola, shopping in downtown Blowing Rock, and hiking on nearby trails. Prices for housing for the weekend range from \$200 to \$450 depending upon type of room/bath, sharing, etc., so, something for everyone. Dinner is generally at restaurants on Thursday and Saturday nights, with Friday night picnic at the concert, and breakfast enjoyed in our lodgings. Thanks to participants, there is never a shortage of food in the lodgings! If you want to join the 17 of us who have already signed up for this weekend, contact Kris Landrum (klandrum@tuggleduggins.com) for other details. A deposit of \$150 is required to secure your spot.

