

WPF Forum News

A publication of the Women's Professional Forum

March 2026

A message from WPF President, Jennifer Mencarini

Happy Women's History Month! How is it March already? Let's hope that its arrival brings warmer temperatures, lots of sunshine, and plants and flowers blooming. I'm ready for winter to go on its merry way.

First and foremost, please join me in congratulating and welcoming Kellie Burgess to the Board of Directors. Following a Board vote at its February meeting, Kellie is now the First Vice President and will serve the remainder of the year in that role.

As you know from the Notice I sent in February, we will have a brief Special Membership Meeting following the March membership meeting. At that time, we will vote on the dues increase proposed by the Board. As a reminder, the Board recommends the following dues increases for 2026:



Jennifer Mencarini
WPF President

- Active/Active retired: \$445.00 to \$475.00
- Supporting: \$220.00 to \$245.00
- Emeritus: \$150.00 to \$175.00
- Lunch fee for Supporting, Emeritus, and guests: \$30.00 to \$35.00

We received two pieces of feedback from members about the proposed dues increase, and one question. Feedback included:

The proposed increase seems very reasonable considering the items mentioned. Definitely agree with general liability as well as the D&O insurance (which btw is very much in line with what my nonprofit pays).

I feel like the luncheon fee increase is not sufficient to offset the continuously rising costs of food and services at Starmount. As an Emeritus member, I benefit from the opportunity to participate in so many wonderful WPF events and attend as many luncheons as possible and value my relationship with WPF. It seems to me that the value Emeritus and Supporting members, as well as Guests receive from attending our luncheons could support a larger increase to \$40.00.

The question received was about our overall balance surplus:

Without an increase we may have a negative net for this calendar year, but what is our bank balance? If we are holding a lot in our balance, I'd like to know what we are holding that money for.

WPF has a savings account that currently has about \$43,000 in it. Those funds are operating reserves set aside to provide a cushion against unexpected events, losses of income, and large unbudgeted expenses. As outlined by the National Council of Nonprofits here ([Operating Reserves for Nonprofits](#)), maintaining cash reserves is a best practice: "When [an] unexpected financial shortfall occurs, having cash reserves to tap can help a nonprofit sustain itself and continue to meet its mission." If we utilized the reserves to meet operating expenses but did not have a plan to replenish the reserve balance, the Board would not be meeting its fiduciary duty to WPF. In other words, in either case we would need to either raise dues or significantly cut expenses - such as our monthly luncheons, our biggest expense - to meet WPF's financial needs.

As outlined in my January President's letter, governance is a focus of the Board's work this year. To that end, as allowed by the current Bylaws, I have appointed a Governance Committee chaired by Dee Blake, a Policies & Procedures Committee chaired by Anne Smith, and a 50th Anniversary Committee chaired by Erica Gregg Parker and Sarah Shoffner. The Governance and Policies & Procedures Committee are tasked with working together on a cash reserves policy, a whistleblower policy, an anti-discrimination/harassment policy (required by our general liability insurer), an alcohol policy, and a record retention and destruction policy. Several of these policies are asked about in IRS Form 990, which we must file each year.

I look forward to seeing you at the March Membership and Special Membership Meetings. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

~Jen

**March Meeting
Wednesday, March 11
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

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 March?

- Citrus arugula salad with arugula, orange and grapefruit segments, thinly sliced red onion, and shaved fennel, garnished with toasted almonds and side of light citrus vinaigrette.
- Rolls and whipped butter.
- Creamy lemon chicken and artichoke pasta with tender chicken and marinated artichoke hearts in a creamy lemon sauce with garlic and white wine, tossed with tagliatelle or pappardelle and garnished with fresh dill.
- Lemon tarts.

MARCH PROGRAM



Dr. Kelly Graves

Dr. Kelly Graves is a licensed clinical psychologist in North Carolina who spent nearly 16 years in academia within the UNC system. As a tenured Associate Professor, she ultimately felt called to move from the classroom to the community. She founded Kellin, PLLC, and its nonprofit partner, the Kellin Foundation, which has since received national recognition and is a partner in the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Dr. Graves is widely sought after as a trainer and technical assistance provider in the areas of trauma and resilience. Her recent work has included projects in Guam, Japan, Hawaii, and multiple states and countries. She was invited to the White House under the Obama Administration to participate in Think Tank sessions focused on building community safety and resiliency.

She serves as a consultant with the U.S. Department of Justice and a trainer with the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill AHEC Training Partnership Program. An accomplished scholar, Dr. Graves has authored dozens of peer-reviewed publications, books, and book chapters.

Dr. Graves serves on multiple boards and statewide workgroups, including the North Carolina Institute of Medicine Editorial Board, the Essentials for Childhood Task Force, the Resilient NC Workgroup, and the NC ACEs-Informed Task Force convened by Chief Justice Paul Newby.

Her contributions have been recognized through numerous honors, including the American Psychological Association Division 56 Trauma Award, recognition as a Top Psychologist by the International Association of Health Care Professionals, the Triad Business Journal's Women in

Business Award and Top 40 Leaders Under 40 Award, the UNCG Distinguished Alumni Award in Psychology, the North Carolina Psychological Association's Sally B. Cameron Award, and most recently, a Coin of Excellence for her service and support of military and veteran families.

In her free time, she loves to spend time with her husband and two daughters, travel, cheer on her favorite sports team, engage in board game battles, and read.

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 Janice Lanier at janice.lanier88@gmail.com with your 4 min special for a newsletter and we will include it during this year.

50th Anniversary Celebration Planning Committee Kickoff

We're excited to begin planning for our 50th Anniversary Celebration! 🇺🇸

The first Planning Committee meeting will be held on

March 9th

5:30–7:00 PM

Kris Landrum's home

704 Plummer Drive

If you're interested in helping plan this special milestone event, we would love for you to join us. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm as we start making plans to celebrate 50 years in a meaningful and memorable way!

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

Only three more luncheons to bring potential new members for qualification for 2026 Membership! Hoping we'll have another great year of new members for our wonderful organization!

As a reminder, here are the qualifications for Sponsorship and for applicants. More details are available on the WPF website: wpforum.org.

Sponsorship Requirements:

- A WPF member is qualified to be a primary sponsor for a new member after she has been an Active member for at least two FULL years. (The membership year for new members begins August 1st).
- Qualified members may sponsor or co-sponsor NO MORE THAN TWO applicants in a year. The year begins with the application deadline, running from June 1 to May 31.
- Supporting members, members of the Membership Committee, and the WPF President may not serve as primary or secondary sponsors.
- The primary sponsor is responsible for ensuring that an applicant appears to meet the basic membership qualifications set out in the New Member Application and can comply with attendance requirements.
- Questions regarding a potential applicant's suitability for membership should be directed to the Membership Chair before asking the applicant to submit an application.
- Confirm, through the Membership Chair or the Administrative Assistant, that the Occupational Category of your applicant has not reached its quota.
- Email all required documents/files to the Membership Committee Chair by the June 1st deadline.
- Sponsors agree to provide any information about the prospective member as requested by the Membership Committee.
- If an applicant is declined for membership, the primary sponsor and co-sponsors will be notified prior to notifying the applicant.

To qualify for Active membership, applicants must:

- Be employed full-time or be employed in a career where the content and professionalism of the work is the measure of eligibility rather than the number of hours worked.
- Work or reside in Guilford County.
- Be an experienced upper-management executive, licensed or degreed professional active in the profession, business owner, or official elected or appointed to public office.
- Have a minimum of five years of professional experience and a minimum of two years of experience in the same or related field of work in which she is engaged at the time of her application.
- Be cleared by their Primary Sponsor for an available slot in the appropriate Occupational Field Category (please contact Membership Chair).
- Be sponsored by a total of three sponsors. The primary sponsor must be an Active or Active Retired member. Secondary sponsors may be Active, Active Retired or Emeritus members.
- Prospective members must attend a total of three WPF lunch meetings, one with each of her sponsors, within the twelve months prior to application filing.

Please reach out with questions: Membership Chair Anne Smith at anne@smithpartnerswealth.com or 336-420-9245.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

SIG Chairs Needed!

WPF is looking for someone (or someones) to organize our Wine Divas and Sippin' Sisters SIGs. Your involvement can be as simple as recruiting hosts for 4-6 events per year and allowing the hosts to select the location, theme, and manage RSVPs or more involved if you have the time! Historically, the two groups have met on alternating months with Wine Divas focused on learning more about wines, tasting notes, and wine pairings, while Sippin' Sisters focused on learning more about spirits and mixology.

If you're interested in chairing either of these SIGs, or coordinating efforts for a rotating schedule of the two, please contact Christine Byrd, christine.byrd@ymcagreensboro.org.

WPF Non-Fiction Only Book Club **Tuesday, March 3**

For our next meeting, we'll be reading:
Raising Hare: A Memoir by Chloe Dalton

Date: Tuesday, March 3rd

Location: Kris Landrum's house:

704 Plummer Drive Greensboro

RSVP via email please. KLandrum@tuggleduggins.com

Time: 7:00 pm hors d'oeuvres and social time

7:30 - 8:30 or 8:45 pm book discussion

Lindsay Brock will lead the discussion.



If it works for you to bring an appetizer or a dessert, that would be great. No signing up for snacks.

Running out of time to read the book? Please come anyway- we want to see you.

About The Book Raising Hare: A Memoir by Chloe Dalton

NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK • NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • FINALIST FOR THE 2025 WOMEN'S PRIZE • A fascinating meditation on freedom, trust, loss, and our relationship with the natural world, explored through the story of one woman's unlikely friendship with a wild hare.

Imagine you could hold a baby hare and bottle-feed it. Imagine that it lived under your roof and bounded around your bedroom at night, drumming on the duvet cover when it wanted your attention. Imagine that, more than two years later, it still ran in from the fields when you called it and slept in your house for hours on end. For political advisor and speechwriter Chloe Dalton,

who spent lockdown deep in the English countryside, far away from her usual busy London life, this became her unexpected reality. We witness firsthand the joy at this extraordinary relationship between human and animal, which serves as a reminder that the best things, and most beautiful experiences, arise when we least expect them.

A note for those who like to read ahead:

The book for our May 5th meeting will be *The Sisterhood: The Secret History of Women at the CIA* by Liza Mundy.

Organizers:

Jen Thomas & Kate Panzer

Jen's Cell 336-254-4325

Kate's Cell 336-420-1421

BOOKS & ARTS

Mah Jongg Lessons

Anne Smith and Ronnie Grabon are starting Mah Jongg lessons. We will teach on 4 Monday's, March 9 - March 30 from 7 - 9. The first session will concentrate on learning the tiles and understanding the card. We have enough 2025 cards to share, however, if you have your own, or could borrow one, it would help. If you are interested, please let Ronnie rsgrabon@gmail.com know by Friday March 6. It's important to be able to attend March 10 and 17. If you can't, we hope to have enough interest to have a second group. (warning: these first sessions don't involve food or wine - we can add that in once we get a regular game going).



BOOKS & ARTS

2026 Calendar of Events

Click the link below for the initial WPF Books & Arts 2026 Calendar of Events that reflects events planned at our annual planning meeting in January and also contains Book Club Meeting Information for 2026. Our calendar is a work-in-process, so please continue to be on the lookout for cultural events and activities in our community that you'd like to plan to attend with your WPF sisters and help us build the calendar as the year progresses and interesting opportunities appear on your radar. And please remember, a Books & Arts event can be for any number of people. It doesn't have to be a large group or a big event. If you want to plan a movie night, a trip to Charlotte to visit the Mint Museum and have lunch or dinner, a baseball outing, a tour of the Greenway, a pottery class, whatever...make a plan and share it with us!

[Click here for the full list of events!](#)

SERVICE TO OTHERS

Wednesday, March 11

Simple Gestures Food Drive

Hello everyone,

I'm Kim Grimsley Ritchy, and I'm organizing a **Simple Gestures Food Drive** for The Women's Professional Forum. *This is a voluntary service event*, and I truly appreciate your consideration in participating.

I left collection bags on everyone's chairs at our last meeting. If you forgot yours, please don't worry — donations can be brought in grocery bags or Simple Gestures bags. You are welcome to

bring more bags than one!

Please note: NO GLASS ITEMS.



Drop-Off Options

I will take care of delivery, so you may drop off your donations at any of the following locations:

- **Bring to the next WPF Meeting – March 11, 2026**
I will collect your bag at the front entrance.
- **My Office**
1106 Park Terrace Drive (off Spring Garden Street)
You may leave your bag on the covered porch.
- **My Home**
1 Reel Court (Northern Shores of Lake Jeanette)
You may leave your bag on the covered porch.

I have been volunteering with **Simple Gestures** and **BackPack Beginnings** for years. They provide food to over 30 partner agencies in Guilford County, with the largest being BackPack Beginnings. It is truly an amazing organization, and their President and COO, Leslie Loyd, is also one of our WPF sisters.



Simple Gestures Mission

- Engage the community to provide a sustainable supply of food to local pantries in Guilford County
- Collect excess perishable food for local nonprofits and community meals
- Support the SHARE program in Guilford County Schools
- End hunger in Guilford County as a community
- Make giving easy and convenient through door-to-door, corporate, and food recovery pickups



Most Needed Items

Cans

- Chef Boyardee
- Baby Formula (12 oz)
- Tuna
- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Soup
- Beans
- Chili
- Juices
- Tomato Sauce

Bags

- Rice
- Beans

Plastic Jars Only

- Stage 2 Baby Formula
- Peanut Butter
- Pasta Sauces
- Jelly

Boxes

- Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Macaroni & Cheese

Snacks

- Cheese Crackers
- Granola Bars
- Unsweetened Applesauce
- 100% Juice Boxes

I would sincerely appreciate your participation in this meaningful service effort. Together, we can make a real difference in our community.

Kim Grimsley Ritchy

WOW – WOMEN OF WALL STREET Investment Club Thursday, March 12, 6pm Howard Hanna Allen Tate Realtors 717 Green Valley Road, Suite 175

This will be our **Topic Meeting relating to the “Behavioral Psychology of Investing.”**

This is a pertinent and interesting topic for investors as we are all very human! Wine and appetizers will be served, so please come and enjoy! All members of WPF are welcome to participate. If you wish to join us, please contact Club President, Maria Gonzalez, at wowinvestmentgrp@gmail.com by Monday, March 9. Should be lots of fun!

Our trek to NYC will be April 9-13. Please contact Judy Garner at jgarner212@ymail.com if you are interested in joining us. Always a fun trip!

WORKING MOMS Dram & Draught Tuesday, March 17 4-5pm 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.

Ladies of Leisure Wednesday, March 18

Anticipating spring, we are excited to announce our March outing to be a return to the popular “Art in Bloom” at the NC Museum of Art on Wednesday, March 18th.

This year’s theme, “Written in the Stars,” features floral designers creating arrangements that interpret pieces from the museum’s collection based on signs of the Zodiac.

Tickets are limited. 16 tickets were pre purchased for \$45 each (museum membership rate) with 4 still available. Deadline for WPF member sign up is March 4.

Itinerary and Details:

- 10:00 AM: Meet at the Whole Foods parking lot to carpool, Wednesday 3/18
- 11:30 AM: Lunch at Bella Monica, a trattoria near the museum.
- 1:30 PM: Event entrance at the museum
- 4:30 PM: Approximate arrival back in Greensboro

Payment and Registration:

To secure your spot, please send \$45 to Margaret Bertrand via Venmo (@margbert) or Zelle (336-420-1822).

Alternatively, checks can be mailed to:

Margaret Bertrand
3011 Henderson Dr.
Greensboro, NC 27410

If you have any questions,
please contact Margaret at margaretbertrand49@gmail.com.

FINANCIAL DIVAS

Wednesday, March 25, 9-10 am

Weaver Park Center, 324 W. Wendover Ave, Ste. 140

As women who want to take charge of financial futures, we'll look forward to hearing Ashley Madden, CFP®, CPA, CEPA, Director of Financial Planning with GenCrest Capital Partners break down the latest tax strategies in clear, practical terms and show how smart planning can create real advantages in everyday life, business, and long-term goals. Come prepared to learn, connect, and feel empowered with tools that help you keep more of what you've earned. For questions or more information, contact Paula McMillan at 336-337-9507 or pmcmillan@stearnsfinancial.com.

DINING OUT

Wednesday, March 25

6:30pm

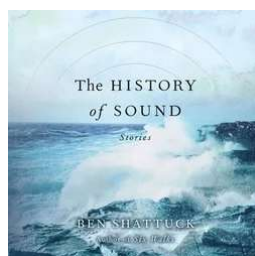
North Italia

610 Pembroke Rd, Greensboro

Host: Laura Burton

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Questions: Amy Meinecke at diningout@wpforum.org



BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, April 7, 7:00-9:00pm

Ronnie Grabon's home

119 Nut Bush Rd, West, Greensboro

Discussion Leader is Anne Morris

The History of Sound : Stories by Ben Shattuck

A stunning collection of interconnected stories set in New England, exploring how the past is often misunderstood and how history, family, heartache, and desire can echo over centuries

In twelve luminous stories set across three centuries, *The History of Sound* examines the unexpected ways the past returns to us and how love and loss are entwined and transformed over generations. In Ben Shattuck's ingenious collection, each story has a companion story, which contains a revelation about the previous, paired story. Mysteries and murders are revealed, history is refracted, and deep emotional connections are woven through characters and families.

The audiobook is highly regarded, featuring a stellar, diverse cast of narrators including Paul Mescal, Nick Offerman, and Chris Cooper, making it a standout, immersive listening experience.

It's available in hardcover, paperback, and audio formats, and it's also a movie - [The History of Sound](#) see the trailer - but note that it only covers a small bit of the story.

Please RSVP to nancy.radtke@allentate.com or rsgrabon@gmail.com

The next book club meeting will discuss "The Vaster Wilds" by Lauren Groff at Neena Ballard's on June 2.

Books and Arts SAVE THE DATE Symphony Concert and B. Christophers May 2, 5:15pm

Details to follow - contact Anne Smith anne@smithpartnerswealth.com if you have questions.



Wild Women in the Mountains

Blowing Rock, NC

April 24-26, 2026

It's a GO!!!

We are so pleased to announce that Wild Women 2026 is now back on track! Our new date is April 24-26. Same delightful Blowing Rock but with better, more spring like weather! We are so excited to be trying some new and delicious places to go Friday and Saturday night (all are in beautiful, central downtown Blowing Rock). Our usual hosts are available, now all we need is YOU. Please

bring your check for \$150 to the next meeting or mail it to Sarah Shoffner (6078 Old 421 Road, Liberty, NC 27298). 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!!

Looking forward to seeing YOU on April 24th!

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

Mebane

Books and Arts
Blowing Rock Summer Trip
July 16-19, 2026
Spaces still available for our July weekend in Blowing Rock!!

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.



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

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