

Circle of Impact

A bi-monthly newsletter



A Fund of the Eau Claire Community Foundation



CIRCLE ADVISORY TEAM RETREAT

Chair Message: Opening our Year with Purpose

We are off to a great start this year! The Membership team already hosted two events that are helping the Women’s Giving Circle grow by adding new members and strengthening connections between existing ones. Check the long list of new members in this newsletter and be sure to welcome them!

The Circle Advisory Team gathered for its annual retreat and identified vision and goals for 2026. We discussed being a philanthropic organization that is both about helping women and children now,

as well as building a legacy that will offer reliable support into the future.

We want to further build a culture where giving is less focused on an annual transaction and more on supporting what matters most to us. Membership is a door that opens to belonging, engagement and the opportunity for further generosity when inspired.

Let us help each other walk through that door this year!

Upcoming Events:

Spring Gathering:
May 21, 4:30-7 p.m.
Florian Gardens

Grant Reviewer Training:
July 15, 1-3 p.m. and
July 20, 9-11 a.m.

Education Event:
Oct. 6, 4-6 p.m.
Brewing Projekt

Annual Meeting:
Nov. 4, 4:30-7 p.m.
Wild Ridge

Gift of Giving:
Dec. 1, 8-9:30 a.m.
Florian Gardens

Plus **Wine, Women and Chocolate, Merry Mingle** and **Pop-up events: TBD**

thank you

**Outgoing
Chairs
2025**

Grants Chair: Deb Fischer
Membership Chair: Jane Gobler
Education Chair: Melanie Baumgart
Social Media Chair: Liz Wolf Green
Past Chair: Jennifer Beckermann
**Thank you for your dedicated
service in 2025!**



'Let's Grow' event results in many new members

Despite the frigid temperature, WGC warmly welcomed 25 women to our first informational presentation held Jan. 22 at the library. The energy in the room was palpable as the women--most of whom never had been to a WGC event--made new connections and excitedly learned about the history of the WGC, benefits of being a member, how the grant process works, how to join, the value of the endowment, and more. At least 14 attendees already have joined WGC, and several are telling their friends about our organization. This night confirmed that our community is eager to make a difference in the lives of others and appreciates the concept of collaborative philanthropy!



Galentine's Gathering

On Feb. 5, Flo Sheridan welcomed WGC members to her home for a Galentine's event. Caryn Linn, one of our talented WGC members, guided everyone in creating beautiful valentines. It's wonderful to see how creativity can shine through! The gathering provided an opportunity for members to connect over lunch, with amazing cookies from Missy Stepanek and delightful valentine sandwiches from The French Press. Appreciation goes to Flo as the hostess and to committee members Sue Edstrom, Carol Gabler, Becky Wood, Betsy McDougall Gibbs and Jen Conaway for their contributions.



CAT Retreat Recap

Our Circle Advisory Team chairs and co-chairs met for our 2026 retreat to welcome new leaders, align on how we work and share goals for the year ahead, all in support of our mission to connect women through philanthropy and invest in our community. We are grateful for this talented, thoughtful group of women and are excited for what's ahead.

- Chair, Emily Moore, Vice Chair, Lesley Frederikson
- Past Chair & Nominations, Angela Quick
- Secretary, Cindy Hofacker

Team Chairs and Co Chairs:

- Education, Patti Sontag, Haley Stowell
- Grants, Jeanie Lubinsky, Pat LuCore
- Membership, Tiffany Leighton-Giffey, Becky Wood
- Social Media, Rachel Franke, Jen Conaway

Grant Reviewers Needed: Make a Local Impact

Interested in making a meaningful impact in our community? Join the Women's Giving Circle as a grant reviewer and help decide how our collective generosity supports local nonprofits.

Grant reviewers play a vital role by thoughtfully reviewing and scoring grant applications from area organizations—ensuring our funds are directed where they can do the most good.

To support you in this role, we're offering two grant reviewer training sessions:

Wednesday, July 15, from 1-3 p.m. and Monday, July 20, from 9-11 a.m.

First-time reviewers and anyone new to online grant review must attend one session.

Returning reviewers are welcome to join a training as a helpful refresher.

The grant review period runs from July 21 through 9 a.m. on Sept. 4, with all reviews and scoring completed online for your convenience.

If you'd like to be part of this rewarding process and help shape the impact of Women's Giving Circle grants, please contact Katie Lambert at lambert21@gmail.com or Mary Ann Ogan at maryann55@charter.net.



Welcome

NEW MEMBERS

Nola Storm	Jody Padgham
Susan Carroll	Meredith Ball
Hannah Cowan	Kristin Verville
Carol Lindner	Robin Brauner
Holli Jacobson	Angela Swenson-Holzinger
Lindsay Pohlen	Melissa Kolar
Barbara LeCleir	Rachel Hart-Brinson
Katie Venit	Adrienne Kerr
Jennifer Leavitt	Rebecca Fisher
Hanna Sellner	

NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

Teena Dressen*
Deb Fischer
Cheryl Guettinger



**Lifetime membership in memory of Teena Dressen*

Consider making your annual contribution now

We appreciate those of you who switched to making an annual contribution toward the beginning of the year. While membership is always open throughout the year, earlier contributions allow us to plan more effectively and support member retention. If you have not done so yet, we encourage you to renew your 2026 membership with a contribution of \$250 or more by **March 31, 2026**.

- **2025 Contributing Member Count:** 254
- **2026 Contributing Member Count to date:** 158

Thank you to all who have contributed so far this year!



Sherry Macaul and Kathie Schneider co-lead the book club and welcome you to participate in the discussion any month you are available. Have questions or an idea for a book we should read and discuss in October? Contact Kathie Schneider at schneiks@uwec.edu.

Monday, March 30, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

H is for Hawk by Helen Macdonald

Discussion Leader: Katrinka

Monday, April 27, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

Book Club for Troublesome Women by Marie Bostwick

Discussion Leader: Kathie

Monday, May 18, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

The Queens of Crime by Marie Benedict

Discussion Leader: Judy

Monday, June 29, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

Murder Takes a Vacation by Laura Lippman

Discussion Leader: Sherry

Monday, July 27, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

The Correspondent by Virginia Evans

Discussion Leader: Laurel

Monday, Aug. 31, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

The Atomic City Girls by Janet Beard

Discussion Leader: LuAnn

Monday, Sept. 28, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

Tend to Your Spirit: Mindful Living with Chronic Illness by Julianne Lepp

Discussion Leader: Kathie

Monday, Nov. 30, 4-5 p.m., L.E. Phillips Senior Center

Select books for reading and discussion in 2027.



Thank you for reading!

Team Spotlight: Social Media & Communications

If you have ever wondered how we keep WGC members in the loop between events, this is us!

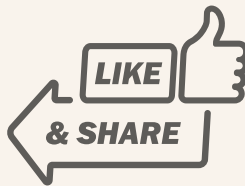


At the heart of what we do is simple: **we help tell the WGC story**, sharing how through our donations, WGC supports women and children in the greater Eau Claire community by funding initiatives that make a real impact where we live.

The Social Media and Communications team helps keep members informed, highlight the good work happening through WGC and make it easy for others to learn about the Women's Giving Circle. You may notice a slight name update too. We recently changed from the Social Media team to the Social Media and Communications team to better reflect our broader communications work.

What we do:

- Event posts and recaps
- Member spotlights
- Grant and impact stories
- Our newsletter every two months
- Special communication projects that help promote WGC



How you can support, even if you do not join our team?

- Like, comment and share WGC posts for bigger reach.
- Send story ideas or photo moments we should highlight.
- Invite someone in your network to follow along or learn more.
- Have a story we should share?

If you have a photo from an event, a moment that deserves a spotlight or an impact story you think others would love to hear, we would love to know.



January Meeting, pictured team members left to right: Jen Conaway, Rachel Franke, Connie Harkness and Liz Wolf Green

Want to get involved?

We would love to welcome more team members. If you are interested, email office@eccfwi.org with the subject line: "Tell me more" and we will reach out to you.

Your contribution can be any amount of time or talent you are interested in sharing to help strengthen our messaging.

Instagram



Facebook



LinkedIn

