

# OHIO BUSINESS WOMAN

Website: [www.BPWOHio.org](http://www.BPWOHio.org)



LORA MANON  
2025-2026 President

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Ohio Business & Professional Women

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A New Chapter Begins:

From the President's Pen....

"Summer time, and the livin's easy...." I hope that you have all enjoyed the lazy summer season. I know that often it is easy to fill all the time with friends, family and festivities. But soon we will be back to school and back to our regular routines.

For most BPW members, that means a return to meetings with our locals and all the other things that go along with being a BPW member. It's just what we do.

And we have done BPW well for more than a century. However, today's working women (even those who are working at retirement or working at something non-traditional) require a different approach to what it means to be a member of BPW. If we do not want to simply fade into the past, we need to think outside the box, try new things, do something different to make BPW consistently and continuously relevant.

In addition to all the wonderful things you already do – like giving scholarships,

recognizing women of achievement and distinction, holding candidates' nights, running for office, and having all sorts of fundraisers to support our platform issues – we must find different ways to support all women.

So, I'm asking you: What will you do that's new? How will you bring fresh energy to our premier programs such as the YC and ID programs? How will you help build our membership base? How can you share all the advantages of being a BPW member? What can you do to be more involved?

If we are to survive as an organization, we all need to work at making our organization more than just Ohio's best kept secret. After all, "in BPW we'll try [almost] anything to support women."

I can't wait to hear what you're all up to next.

Best Personal Wishes,

Lora Manon

2025 – 2026 President



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## 2025-26 OHIO BPW President-Elect

**CHANDRA FORSHEY ONTKO, Guernsey Noble BPW**



I am serving as your President Elect on the 2025-2026 Board. I am focusing this year on gathering members to serve on the board for next year and working on ideas for speakers and locations of meetings. Our state is pretty big, so I am taking into account travel time of our members, expenses, and of course recognize we are all busy women helping women!

Our bylaws are clear for what is expected for each member on the Board. As President Elect, the bylaws say state that I shall “act as the representative of the president when requested, serve in such capacities as assigned by the president, plan the State Leadership Training, plan projects and activities designed to advance the mission and objectives of BPW/OHIO for the year in which the president-elect will serve as president, and prepare the federation budget in consultation and cooperation with the State Finance Chair. So this is exactly what I am focusing on right now...picking out a theme and planning what the year will look like for 2026-2027.

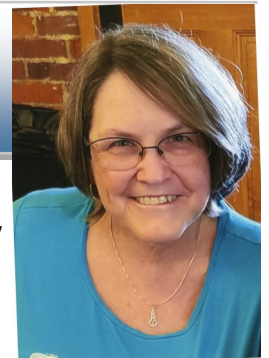
Are you interested in being on the 2026-2027 Board? Do you have ideas and suggestions to help us grow and to bring us into future? Great! My contact information is below. The best way to contact me is by email. Let’s do this!

Chandra L. Forshey Ontko, Counsellor At Law  
Ontko Law, LLC  
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Caldwell, Ohio 43724

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(740) 630-7055- cell  
(740) 432-3578- office  
(740) 439-4381- fax  
[chandramic@aol.com](mailto:chandramic@aol.com)- personal email  
[chandraontko@gmail.com](mailto:chandraontko@gmail.com)- business email

## 2025-26 OHIO BPW Vice President

**BRENDA ANDERS, Lancaster BPW**



Most of you know me as the State Treasurer and Database Manager off and on for the last 10 years or so. My background is in accounting and computer systems, so those positions were a very good fit for me.

This year I decided to expand that experience and ran for the office of State Vice President. I wanted to stay involved on the Executive Committee (EC) so that I could help the new State Treasurer with the transition. Since I have been on the EC multiple times, I am very familiar with how our organization runs so moving to become the Vice President should be fairly easy for me.

One of my new duties as VP is to update the 2025-2026 State Directory. That has been completed and is in the process of being printed. I plan to hand those out at the State Board meeting in August. Please let me know if you would like me to send you an electronic copy by contacting me at [bkanders53@outlook.com](mailto:bkanders53@outlook.com).

I am still the Database Manager for 2025-2026. I will be working closely with our new Treasurer to make sure the database has the most updated information. I am also responsible for sending the local and region membership reports each month. Please make sure you let me know if there are any updates that need to be made to your record. We all know the saying, “Garbage in, garbage out”. A database is only as good as the information that is put in it.

Unfortunately, our membership has been dropping the last few years. Let’s change that and make 2025-2026 the year that BPW/Ohio grows stronger and recruits more members. Invite friends and family to join you at a local meeting or event. Let’s get the word out about BPW/Ohio and what we do.

## 2025-26 OHIO BPW Treasurer

**MARI ANN OHBA, Ohio Valley BPW**



As the 2025–2026 State Treasurer for The Ohio Federation of Business & Professional Women (BPW/Ohio), I am proud to be a part of a deeply committed effort to advance equity for women in the workplace. In this role, I will manage the financial operations that support BPW/Ohio's vital mission and programs. A Few Important Reminders:

- We operate on a budget and must be mindful of our financial resources.
- Please submit any expense reimbursement requests within 30 days of the expense.
- Dues can be paid through your local treasurer, directly to me, or online at [www.bpwohio.org](http://www.bpwohio.org).

In my professional career at ConnectTel Inc., I work with businesses to help reduce costs by optimizing their telecommunications and IT services. Feel free to reach out to me for support with your business communication needs or to discuss anything on BPW/Ohio.

I look forward to supporting you throughout the season!

Sincerely,

Mari Ann Ohba | [maohba@gmail.com](mailto:maohba@gmail.com) | 304.281.6679

## 2025-26 OHIO BPW Recording Secretary

**RENE BUTLER, Youngstown BPW**



As an engineer, my professional background has centered on gathering and analyzing data, ensuring precision and accuracy in every detail. This skill set has been invaluable in my role as the recording secretary for the state over the past year. Trusted with the responsibility to faithfully capture the facts and dialogue of Executive Committee (EC) and Board meetings, I have diligently tried to document the discussions, decisions, and actions taken.

The role of recording secretary has allowed me to contribute to the transparency and effective communication within our organization. By accurately recording meeting proceedings, I have helped ensure that members are well-informed about the developments and decisions made at the BPW/OH state level.

While my background emphasizes data and facts, my dedication to effectively communicating and documenting our organization's activities remains strong. I am honored to contribute to the BPW/OH state level and look forward to another year of serving our membership.

## Ohio Business & Professional Women's Retirement Foundation

For the year of 24-25 I am pleased to announce the Retirement Foundation awarded one Nursing Scholarship to Autumn Farrell her application was submitted by Youngstown Local in Region 2. A \$500 STNA scholarship was given to Sarah Brown which was submitted by Ashland Local in Region 1. The Foundation also was able to award three \$500 grants: Mill Run Place submitted by Ashland Local in Region 1, Abbot Senior Living submitted by Zanesville Local in Region 3, and Erie Metropolitan Housing submitted by Vermilion Local in Region 1. We congratulate all the winners!

This year we are again offering the grants and scholarships. For the 24-25 year we awarded \$2969.59 in grants and scholarships however we only received \$2045.00 in donations. For us to continue these grants and scholarships in 25-26, we need YOUR support. As you prepare your budget on the Local and Region level we are asking you to include a donation to the Retirement Foundation.

As an individual you can donate to the organization. The Retirement Foundation is a 501(3)c organization, which means your donations are a charitable deduction which you may be able to include on your tax return.

All information for the Women's Retirement Foundation can be found on the Ohio BPW website, [www.ohiobpw.org](http://www.ohiobpw.org). Use the "More" drop down menu for the donation form, the Nursing and STNA Scholarship applications, and the Senior Housing Grant application.

Please reach out to Leona Phillips at [Leona.phillips29@outlook.com](mailto:Leona.phillips29@outlook.com) or myself at [madutrobpw@gmail.com](mailto:madutrobpw@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

Mary Ann Dutro

Ohio BPW Retirement Foundation President 25-26



## Tomma Bordenkircher awarded Mentorship and Encouragement Award

The Mentorship and Encouragement Award is an annual honor presented by BPW/OH to recognize members who have made outstanding contributions through mentoring and encouraging others within the organization. Established in 2024 in memory of longtime member and devoted supporter Kathy Kellums—who was widely known for uplifting and guiding fellow members—the award celebrates those who carry on her legacy of support and leadership.

The 2025 recipient of this meaningful award was Tomma Bordenkircher, a dedicated and inspiring member who is truly deserving of this recognition. The selection committee, composed of representatives from each region, carefully reviews nominations each year. Members interested in nominating someone for the 2026 award must do so by April 15, 2026. More details, including nomination guidelines, can be found at [bpwohio.org](http://bpwohio.org).

Paulette Knazek  
Mentorship & Encouragement Award Chair  
[Mentoring@ohiobpw.org](mailto:Mentoring@ohiobpw.org)





## Returning for 2025—Cocktails and Conversation

### Virtual Meetings

Join fellow BPW members from across the state for an open discussion on all things BPW. No RSVP needed—just drop in and join the conversation!

Dates: See Calendar of Events on page 11

Zoom meeting link: Will be emailed prior to the meeting

If you have a topic, please send it to

President Lora Manon at [lora.manon1@gmail.com](mailto:lora.manon1@gmail.com).



### Legislation Update by Leona Phillips, BPW/OH 2025-2026 Legislation Chair

**Our need to be aware** of the changing political landscape is never more important than today and the coming months. There are so many issues that the public needs to be aware of and the implications these will have in our lives.

I am currently planning a Lobby Day at the State House in Columbus on Wednesday, September 24, 2025. Please put this on your schedule to attend. With the help of our PAC Chair, Charlon Dewberry PSP, Representatives Erica White and Elgin Rogers have advised us that their offices will assist in planning for attending committee hearings and Rep White has offered the privilege of being introduced on the floor. So, I am asking for us to have a strong presence to represent BPW OH. More details will be available, as we get closer to the date.

The end of September has the house representatives working on Redistricting – the drawing of maps for the 2026 Federal Election. The current gerrymandered maps were declared unconstitutional, but with the delay in designing a bipartisan map, the 2022 elections could not be postponed. Since there was no bipartisan support at that time, the maps are to be redrawn again for the 2026 elections. Bipartisan maps need to be drawn up by the house for the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. If they cannot create fair maps by that date, the issue moves to the Redistricting Commission with an October 31 deadline. We need to contact our representatives to urge them to create fair maps that do not favor one party (putting their thumb on the scale to guarantee a win).

Also to be aware of, the Ohio Equal Rights organization has filed more than enough signatures needed to advance a petition for an ERA to the Ohio Constitution. This amendment states protection for classes of religion, race, sex, national origin that includes age, familial status, pregnancy status, military or veteran status, addiction and recovery status, disease status, and disability. This amendment would also address same-sex marriage which is banned in Ohio but unenforceable now under the current federal protections provided by the Supreme Court's Obergefell v Hodges decision.

The Ohio Ballot Board ruled that this ERA amendment will need to be divided into two parts. One petition to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act banning same sex marriage and a second petition to ban discrimination against the protected groups. Both petitions need 443,200 valid signatures from at least 44 counties to have these amendments on the November ballot. So that is two sets of petitions circulating for signatures. Please be aware that circulators will be out soon to start getting signatures. Let's get the OHIO ERA passed!

## BPW/OHIO BUDGET 2025 – 2026

### ***INCOME***

Member Dues (300 @ \$40 each)	\$12,000
Members at Large (10 @ \$50 each)	\$ 500
Student Dues ( 5 @ \$20 each)	\$ 100
Local Dues Received	\$ 3,500
Meeting Income	\$ 1,500
Leadership Training/ Leg. Platform, YC/ID	\$ 1,000
Non-Dues Income	\$ 500
President's Project	\$ 750
Interest Income	\$ 1,000
<b><i>Total Income</i></b>	<b>\$ 20,850</b>

### ***EXPENSES***

Donation to BPW/WRF	\$ (650)
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#### ***Expenses – Standing Chairs***

Finance Chair	\$ (50)
ID Chair	\$ (150)
YC Chair	\$ (150)
Program Chair	\$ (150)
Legislation Chair	\$ (150)
Membership Chair	\$ (150)

<b><i>Total Expenses – Standing Chairs</i></b>	<b>\$ (700)</b>
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#### ***Expenses – Other Chairs***

Bylaws Chair	\$ (50)
BPW Awards Chairs	\$ (100)
Nominating Chair	\$ (50)
Legal Counsel	\$ (50)
OBW Editor Stipend	\$ (200)
Database Manager Stipend	\$ (200)
Webmaster Stipend	\$ (200)
Social Media Stipend	\$ (200)
Conference Site Chair	\$ (100)

<b><i>Total Expenses – Other Chairs</i></b>	<b>\$ (1,050)</b>
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<b>Expenses – Mileage</b>	
Board Mileage (5,000 miles @ \$.40 per mile)	\$ (2,000)
Board Training Mileage	\$ (250)
Regional Leadership Training	\$ (250)
Legislative Platform	\$ (500)
<b>Total Expenses – Mileage</b>	<b>\$ (3,000)</b>
<b>Meeting Expenses</b>	
Meetings	\$ (1,000)
Leadership, Leg Platform. YC/ID	\$ (1,000)
ASCAP License	\$ (275)
<b>Total Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>\$ (2,275)</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>	
Annual Financial Review	\$ (225)
Bank Fees	\$ (50)
Crime Policy	\$ (400)
General Liability Insurance	\$ (800)
Local Dues Reimbursed	\$ (3,500)
Executive Committee Expense	\$ (2,500)
President's Expense	\$ (1,000)
Non-Dues Expense	\$ (400)
OBW Production	\$ (4,000)
Credit Card Processing Fees	\$ (400)
Subscriptions	\$ (800)
Supplies	\$ (700)
State Directory	\$ (300)
Web Hosting	\$ (500)
Virtual Meetings	\$ (200)
Membership Referral Grant Program	\$ (400)
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$ (16,175)</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 20,850</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ (24,050)</b>
<b>Net profit/ Loss</b>	<b>\$ (3,200)</b>

**BPW/OHIO 2025-2026**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**ELECTED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**PRESIDENT\*** **Lora Manon, PSP**—Lancaster-4  
803 S. Beech Street  
Bryan, OH 43506-2016  
Cell: 419-266-4212  
Email: lora.manon1@gmail.com

**PRESIDENT ELECT\*** **Chandra Forshey Ontko**—Guernsey Noble-3  
610 North Street  
Caldwell, OH 43724  
Cell: 740-630-7055  
Email: chandramic@aol.com

**VICE PRESIDENT\*** **Brenda Anders**—Lancaster-4  
557 Ross Road, SE  
Lancaster, OH 43130  
Home: 740-654-1902  
Cell: 740-652-0114  
Email: bkanders0310@gmail.com

**RECORDING SECRETARY\*** **Rene Butler**—Youngstown-2  
39 Emma Street  
Girard, OH 44420  
Cell: 915-276-3795  
Email: neeburks77@gmail.com

**TREASURER\*** **Mari Ann Ohba**—Ohio Valley-3  
544 Lincoln Blvd.  
Steubenville, OH 43952  
Cell: 304-281-6679  
Email: Maohba@gmail.com

**BPW/OHIO 2025-2026**  
**STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**FINANCE CHAIR\*** TBD

**INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIR\*** **Elizabeth Herrell, PSP**—Zanesville-3  
3365 Sugartyme Dr.  
Zanesville, OH 43701  
Cell: 740-294-1353  
Email: lizywca@columbus.rr.com

**LEGISLATION CHAIR\*** **Leona Phillips, PSP**—Vermilion-1  
7216 Risden Rd.  
Vermilion, OH 44089  
Cell: 440-949-9033  
Email: Leona.phillips@aol.com

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR\*** **Dorthy Kovach**—Ohio Valley-3  
4808 Garden Acres  
Steubenville, OH 43953  
Cell: 740-275-1806  
Email: deekovach@att.net

**PROGRAMMING CHAIR\*** **Linda Miller**—Vermilion-1  
1912 Lake Avenue  
Huron, OH 44839  
Cell: 419-357-0028  
Email: lbmiller2222@aol.com

**YOUNG CAREERIST CHAIR\*** **Carol Holton**—Toledo-1  
4129 Caroline Ave.  
Toledo, OH 43612  
Cell: 419-478-8897  
Email: teaberry4129@yahoo.com

*\*Denotes Voting member*

**BPW/OHIO 2025-2026**  
**APPOINTED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**PARLIAMENTARIAN**

**Charlon Dewberry, PSP**—Toledo-1  
1 Edith Court  
Bowling Green, OH 43402-4541  
Cell: 419-266-1291  
Email: char dew1@yahoo.com

**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**

This position will remain open for 2025-2026

**IMMEDIATE PAST STATE PRESIDENT**

**IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT\***

**Amelia Taggart, PSP**—Ohio Valley-3  
1714 Hamilton Place  
Steubenville, OH 43952  
Cell: 614-266-8121  
Email: ameliapro@yahoo.com





**BPW/OHIO 2025-2026**  
**SPECIAL COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**BY-LAWS CHAR**     **Linda Wiegand, PSP-Cincinnati -5**  
9017 Winthrop Drive  
Montgomery, OH 45249  
Cell: 740-975-5581  
Email: bisbestrate@gmail.com

**2026 CONFERENCE TBD**  
**CHAIR**

**2025 CONFERENCE**   **Stephanie Bridwell, PSP-Zanesville-3**  
**SITE CHAIR**         7515 Old Hickory Lane  
Chandlersville, OH 43727  
Cell: 740-624-2787  
Email: Sbridwell@columbus.rr.com

**DATABASE**         **Brenda Anders-Lancaster 4**  
**MANAGER**         557 Ross Road SE  
Lancaster, OH 43130  
Home: 740-654-1902  
Cell: 740-652-0114  
Email: bkanders0310@gmail.com

**DISTINGUISHED**   **Linda Miller - Vermilion -1**  
**MEMBER CHAIR**   1912 Lake Avenue  
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Cell: 419-357-0028  
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**OHIO**                 **Paulette Knazek, PSP-Zanesville-3**  
**WEBMASTER**     228 Adams Street  
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**PAC CHAIR**         **Charlon Dewberry, PSP-Toledo-1**  
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Bowling Green, OH 43402-4541  
Cell: 419-266-1291  
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**OHIO/BPW**         **Mary Ann Dutro, PSP-Zanesville-3**  
**RETIREMENT**     2365 Greenhills Circle  
**FOUNDATION**     Zanesville, OH 43701  
Cell: 740-819-7592  
Email: [madutrobpw@gmail.com](mailto:madutrobpw@gmail.com)



**LEGAL  
COUNSEL**

**Shirley Cochran-Member at Large**  
5153 Bridgeport Lane  
Stow, OH 44224  
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**LEGISLATION  
CONSULTANT**

**Kathy Telban - Akron -2**  
6470 Gates Mills Blvd  
Mayfield Heights, OH 44124-4255  
Cell: 216-650-3153  
Email: ktelban@isolvit.org

**NOMINATING  
CHAIR**

**Liz Herrell, PSP-Zanesville/Coshocton-3**  
3365 Sugartyme Dr.  
Zanesville, OH 43701  
Cell: 740-294-1353  
Email: lizywca@columbus.rr.com

**NON-DUES  
INCOME CHAIR**

**Diana Gibbens, PSP-Lancaster-4**  
7790 Fairlawn Drive  
Pickerington, OH 43147  
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Email: dkgibbens@hotmail.com

**OBW EDITOR**

**Sherry Martin-Lancaster-4**  
4976 Royalton Road SW  
Lancaster, OH 43130  
Cell: 740-808-3749  
Email: sweetsherryd@yahoo.com

**REGION PRESIDENTS**

**REGION 1\***

**Karen McCready, PSP-Toledo**  
P.O. Box 224  
Hayesville, Ohio 44838  
Cell: 419-368-6942  
Email: krnmccready@gmail.com

**REGION 2\***

**Erline Trsek-NASA Glenn**  
119 Greenbrier Lane  
Sandusky, OH 44870  
Cell: 440-665-0034  
Email: presbpwahr2@gmail.com

**REGION 3\***

**Paulette Knazek, PSP - Zanesville**  
228 Adams Street  
Zanesville, OH 43701  
Cell: 440-339-6009  
Email: pknazekbpw@gmail.com

**REGION 4\***

**Diana Gibbens, PSP - Lancaster**  
7790 Fairlawn Drive  
Pickerington, OH 43147  
Cell: 614-325-0178  
Email: dkgibbens@hotmail.com

**REGION 5\***

**Linda Wiegand, PSP - Cincinnati**  
9017 Winthrop Dr.  
Montgomery, OH  
Cell: 7440-975-5581  
Email: bisbestrate@gmail.com

*\*Region Presidents are Voting Members of the State Board*



State Chair, Linda Miller, (left) announced this year's Distinguished Member, Charisse Kellums

Joyce Davis was a friend and mentor to all she worked with in BPW, her community and family. She always made time for all three. Joyce was active at all levels of BPW. She encouraged others to grow in Leadership. When she worked on a project it was done right and on time.

Tomma Bordenkircher, winner of the Kathy Kellums Mentorship & Encouragement Award

This award is named after Kathy Kellums who was a leader with a passion for BPW/OHIO and the women who volunteer to support its mission and ideals. She volunteered, encouraged others, and mentored many so they could experience growth in all aspects of their lives: personal, career, and community. The winner is one who demonstrates mentorship abilities and encourages others to achieve personal and/or professional growth.



Amelia Taggart, Ohio/BPW President with Carol Holton, state Individual Development winner

Amelia Taggart, Ohio/BPW President, Jennifer Brunner, Key-note Speaker, Justice, Supreme Court of Ohio, and Sara Lane, Conference Committee chair



2024-2025 Program winners

(L to R) Nancy Young - Ashland BPW, Karen McCready - Region 1, Linda Miller - Vermilion, Linda Wiegand - Cincinnati, Erlene Trsek - NASA Glenn and state programming chair Ursula Bess

The challenge was to complete at least two activities in Remembering the Past, Be Present Women, and Plan for the Future. It was open to regions, locals, and individuals.





Amelia Taggart, outgoing Ohio/BPW President, places the "Dingle Dangle" pendant on Lora Manon, 2025-2026 Ohio/BPW President.

Linda Sullivan (seated) and Faye Spratley, both PSPs, catching up with each other's news



Liz Herrell enjoying the karaoke.

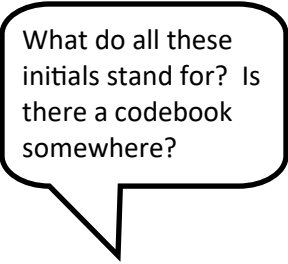


## State Conference 2025

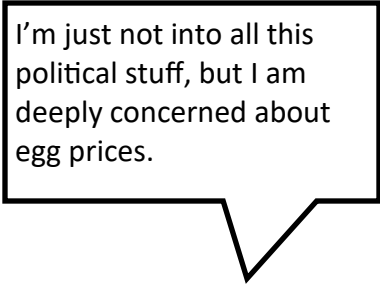


Jill Noble, entertaining the crowd during the karaoke extravaganza

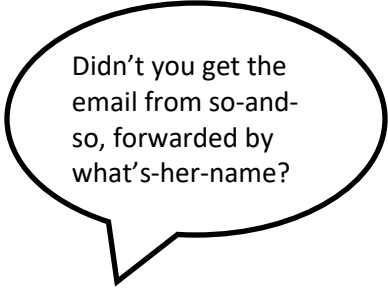
Three in background are Mari Ann Ohba, Chandra Ontko, and Leona Phillips.



What do all these initials stand for? Is there a codebook somewhere?

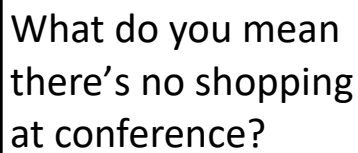


I'm just not into all this political stuff, but I am deeply concerned about egg prices.

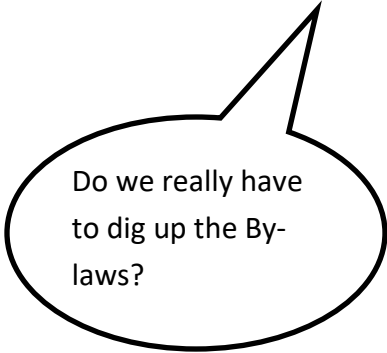


Didn't you get the email from so-and-so, forwarded by what's-her-name?

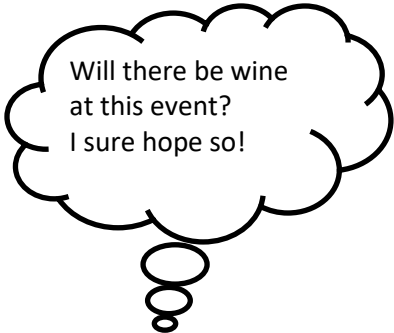
## BPW Bloopers



What do you mean there's no shopping at conference?



Do we really have to dig up the By-laws?



Will there be wine at this event?  
I sure hope so!

### **PARTY OR MEETING? WHICH DO YOU WANT?** by Linda Miller, BPW/OH 2025-2026 Programming Chair

One of my high school classmates and I had plans to go out to dinner. Our monthly BPW meeting had to be rescheduled that month and landed on the same night as our dinner date. No problem, I thought, we can have dinner at our BPW meeting. When I told her, she politely but firmly, announced "I don't do meetings anymore." She was an R.N. and had worked for the county health department doing education and presentations on HIV/AIDS during part of her career. Well that was a new response but it really gets to the point.

To keep our organization going, we must attend to certain business matters. Someone has to step up and do these things. As we know, the "stepper-uppers" do much better with the support, attention, and help of the rest of us. Otherwise we court disaster by "leaving the stove on and walking away."

Most locals are in the process of planning programs for their meetings in 2025-2026. Some of my research indicates that membership in organizations and churches is at sewer levels. People are becoming more isolated and losing a sense of community. This is not good for a democracy.

The late Bette Scott and I used to debate what comes first—members or good programming. Good programs will bring in new members. But, you need a certain number of members to bring in good programs (we're asking a speaker to come talk to five ladies?). I do know this: we must be more out in public; for every ten people you invite, you will get one or two who say yes; research what women in your community need.

Please share ideas, past successes with me so I can pass them on to everyone. **I do absolutely know this: people are craving stress relief, fun and laughter, inspiration and connection.** Of course we should continue to advocate, speak out, and protest the "hot mess" we're in, but let's recharge our batteries once in a while!

# OHIO BPW 2025/2026 Calendar of Events

Date	Event/Deadline	Location
Thursday, May 22, 2025	Post Conference EC Meeting	Virtual
Thursday, May 29, 2025	Post Conference Board Meeting	Virtual
Friday, June 20, 2025	Local Officer Forms Due	Email to your Region President
Friday, June 27, 2025	Region Officer Forms Due	Email to State President, VP, and Database Manager
Friday, July 11, 2025	Summer OBW Deadline	Email articles to Pres. & OBW Editor
TBD	Cocktails and Conversation	Virtual; Open ZOOM discussion
Friday, August 22, 2025	Executive Committee Meeting	Maumee Bay State Park
Saturday, August 23, 2025	State Board Meeting	Maumee Bay State Park
Monday, August 26, 2025	Anniversary of the 19th Amendment	Women's Right to Vote
Saturday, September 13, 2025	Fall OBW Article Submission Deadline	Email articles to Pres. & OBW Editor
TBD	Cocktails and Conversation	Open ZOOM discussion
Sunday, October (date TBD)	Ecumenical OH BPW and PA BPW	TBD
Week of October 20th	National Business Women's Week	
Monday, October 27, 2025	Local Presidents Mid-Year Reports Due	Email to your Region President
Monday, October 27, 2025	EC, State Chairs, Region Pres Mid-Year Reports Due	Email to State President
Friday, November 7, 2025	Executive Committee Meeting	TBD
Saturday, November 8, 2025	State Board Meeting	TBD
TBD	Cocktails and Conversation	Open ZOOM discussion
<b>2026</b>	Activity	Location
Saturday, January 17, 2026	Winter OBW Article Submission Deadline	Email articles to Pres. & OBW Editor
TBD	Cocktails and Conversation	Open ZOOM discussion
Sunday, February 1, 2026	Deadline for Nominations Forms	Email to State Nominating Chair
Wednesday, February 4, 2026	Executive Committee Meeting	Virtual
Saturday TBD	EC and Conference Committee	Conference Site
Wednesday, March 4, 2026	Equal Pay Day	
Saturday, March 14, 2026	Spring OBW Article Submission Deadline	Email articles to Pres. & OBW Editor
Monday, March 23, 2026	YC and ID Candidates Information Due	Email to YC / ID Chair
TBD	Cocktails and Conversation	Open Zoom Discussion
Saturday, March 28, 2026	Local President Year End Reports Due	Email to your Region President
Friday, April 15, 2026	Executive Committee Meeting	TBD
Saturday, April 16, 2026	Leadership Training, ID, YC, Legislative Platform Meeting	TBD
Sunday, April 5, 2026	Distinguished Member Nominations Due	Email to State Distinguished Mbr CH
Sunday, April 5, 2026	EC, State Chairs, Region Pres. Year-End Reports Due	Email to State President
Thursday, May 14, 2026	EC Meeting and Conference Committee Dinner	TBD
Friday May 15 - 17, 2025	OH BPW State Conference	Bowling Green State University



# **2025-2026 BPW/OHIO**

## **LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**

**PREAMBLE:** The Alice Paul Equal Rights Amendment shall stand first, foremost and above all other items which may appear on the Legislative Platform of this Federation until equal rights for women and men become guaranteed in the United States Constitution.

**THE ALICE PAUL EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT:** Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

**CIVIL RIGHTS:** Actively work to pass legislation, which will ensure equal rights and remedies for women in all phases of their lives, including support of affirmative action programs; and eliminate all forms of harassment against individuals, and strengthen and improve voting registration, access and fair representation.

**ECONOMIC EQUITY:** Actively work to support equal educational opportunities; equal treatment for women in all areas of employment, including adequate retirement benefits, improved programs for women re-entering the workforce, and implementation of equal pay for work of comparable worth and support legislation that promotes these goals.

**DEPENDENT CARE:** Actively work to strengthen and improve funding for enrichment programs, physical facilities and affordable quality dependent care of all ages regardless of limitations and abilities.

**VICTIM RIGHTS:** Actively work to strengthen and enforce legal protection for all individuals who are victims of violent acts including domestic and/or sexual violence (including coercive control); human trafficking; promote violence prevention programs; support services and facilities for survivors of this violence and the funding thereof; and support legislation that provides compensatory and punitive damage awards to victims.

**HEALTH:** Actively work to strengthen and enforce legal protection for full access to all health care services including mental health, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), reproductive choice, funding for research into and protection for women's health care and educational programs concerning women's health issues. Actively promote access to mental and physical health care services.

**POLICY ITEMS:** Actively work for the election of and appointment to policy-making positions those who support the BPW Legislative Platform



## An Equal Rights Amendment Update

By Kathy Telban Legislation Consultant

Picture: Lady Justice also known as Themis and Justitia from Greek and Roman mythology

On January 10<sup>th</sup> at the National Archives in Washington DC, Equal Means Equal in partnership with Vote Equality US conducted a final direct action that resulted in over thirty people being detained and 6 arrested. Dressed in construction worker safety gear activists replaced the building's center banner with one calling out President Biden directly: "Publish the ERA, Hero or Zero," This banner, along with two others, were confiscated by police.

Due to the pressure campaign and direct action, on January 17, 2025, President Biden issued this statement affirming that the Equal Rights Amendment ("ERA") is the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution: *In keeping with my oath and duty to Constitution and country, I affirm what I believe and what three-fourths of the states have ratified: **the 28th Amendment is the law of the land, guaranteeing all Americans equal rights and protections under the law regardless of their sex.*** It is important to note that Presidents have no authority to declare the validity of amendments.

Here is what Wendy Murphy had to say about President Biden's statement when interviewed by Andrew Walworth on RealClear Politics Podcast (16 min.). Listen here: <https://tinyurl.com/mtmku75m> Wendy is an impact litigator whose work in state and federal courts has changed the law to better protect the constitutional and civil rights of abused women and children. She regularly provides legal analysis for network and cable new programs. She is a New England Law/Boston professor and Boston Herald columnist.

What is important is that on January 27, 2020, Virginia became the 38th State to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment ("ERA") making it the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution. With this Amendment women gained the human right of equal protection of the law. The Equal Rights Amendment met the two requirements to be added to the Constitution and is the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. At this point only a lawsuit can confirm that it is enforceable.

On April 3, 2025, EQUAL MEANS EQUAL Legal Advisor Wendy Murphy filed: *EQUAL MEANS EQUAL v Donald J. Trump* in Federal Court on behalf of individual plaintiffs and all women to demand that the United States Government allow women to register for the Selective Service, should they so choose.

This lawsuit is important to all women in America because a similar lawsuit is now pending in California, but it was filed by a man who claims that the Selective Service law discriminates against men. The EQUAL MEANS EQUAL case takes a different view and argues that the Selective Service law denies women equal treatment under the law. The difference is important. The California case is about discrimination against men. The EQUAL MEANS EQUAL case is about equal rights for women. EQUAL MEANS EQUAL case wants women not men to be front and center in any Supreme Court case that will determine whether women are finally fully equal citizens under the United States Constitution. **Watch this 7 min video to learn more:** <https://tinyurl.com/29xv79p2>

While these cases are working their way to the Supreme Court. The ERA Coalition is working with Congress on the following new resolutions: Representative Pressley's bill HJ Resolution 80 dropped with 124 cosponsors March 24. Senator Murkowski's bill SJ Resolution 38 dropped March 25th Equal Pay Day. The House and Senate bills share the same name, Establishing the Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The Senate bill has no cosponsors at this time

In the meantime, a 2020 revision of the United States Constitution including the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment - the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was published by an informal group of women's rights advocates carrying on the work of their foremothers that started over a century ago. This version is in commemoration of the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment becoming part of the United States Constitution and can be download free at: <https://tinyurl.com/US-Constitution-2020> **Please Spread this 2020 Unabridged United States Constitution far and wide!**

# BPW Local News

## Zanesville BPW 2025-2026 Officers

The Zanesville Business and Professional Women (ZBPW) officers for 2025-2026 are President Stephanie Bridwell, Vice President Teri Clapper, Treasurer Mary Ann Dutro and Recording Secretary Liz Herrell (pictured left to right).

ZBPW is open to both women and men, employed and unemployed, who supports the Legislative Platform. Meetings are held the first Thursday, 6 p.m. at various locations with social activities, opportunities for civic participation, and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Opportunities for engagement include local, region and state participation in the organization. Anyone interested in learning more about ZBPW is encouraged to contact us on Facebook, [zanesvillebpw@gmail.com](mailto:zanesvillebpw@gmail.com), P. O. Box 695, Zanesville, OH 43702-0695 or any ZBPW member.



## Lancaster BPW awards \$4,000 in Scholarships

In May 2025, Lancaster BPW held their annual scholarship luncheon to raise money for students in Fairfield County. Due to the success of this event, they were able to raise \$4,000 to award (4) \$1,000 scholarships to local students. The winners were invited to their June meeting however only one could attend. Pictured is Alex Martin (Amanda Clearcreek), daughter of OBW Editor Sherry Martin, with Lancaster President Diana Gibbens. Additional winners were Audrey Hughes – Pickerington North, Layla McComas – Millersport, and Peter Smith – Amanda Clearcreek.



## NASA Glenn BPW Scholarship Winner for 2025

Elaine Schaft received a \$500 scholarship from the NASA Glenn BPW toward a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business from the Miami University. Elaine is also serving as the Ohio BPW Social Media Chairperson.

Picture L-R are recipient: Elaine Schaft and scholarship Chair Erline Trsek



## Coshocton BPW Announces Scholarship Recipient and New Officers

The Coshocton Business and Professional Women (BPW) celebrated a milestone event on May 19, 2025 by awarding the 60<sup>th</sup> Joan McNeely Working Woman Scholarship to medical student, Claire Helmick, while in her medical residency. Helmick, alongside her husband, Jonathan, has lifelong family ties to the Coshocton community and hopes to provide future services to the local community.

The annual awards banquet featured a program by Scholarship Chairperson, Sheila Mayse, entitled, "See Them, Be Them, Teach Them," that emphasized the interconnectedness between women in goals, behaviors, and aspirations.

Each year, the BPW cake auction serves as the primary fundraiser in support of the scholarship. This year's event is scheduled for October 25, 2025 in the Frontier Power Community Room, with cake viewing from 2-4 pm, and the auction beginning at 4pm.

The BPW held the installation of new officers on July 10, 2025, at the Warehouse Steak and Stein Restaurant. BPW Member and former officer, Pat Talbot, installed the 2025-2026 Officers; Katie Hultz- President, Sheila Mayse-Vice President, Bobbie Warren-Treasurer, Aimee Neighbor-Recording Secretary, and Wendy Bowman- Corresponding Secretary.

The BPW is open to both women and men in the local community. Meetings are held monthly with service projects, social activities, opportunities for civic participation, and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Opportunities for engagement include local, state, and national participation in the organization.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Coshocton Business and Professional Women is encouraged to contact the membership chair, Wendy Bowman, or any BPW member. Interested individuals may also contact Sheila Mayse by phone or text at 740-502-3047 to receive more information.



2025 Scholarship Recipient, Claire Helmick, and Scholarship Founder, Joan McNeely



Claire and Jonathon Helmick



Coshocton BPW Officers 2025-2026

Left to right Wendy Bowman, Katie Hultz, Sheila Mayse, Bobbie Warren, Aimee Neighbor

## Youngstown BPW Names Dionne Dowdy-Lacey Woman of the Year

Dionne Dowdy-Lacey, co-founder and Executive Director of United Returning Citizens will be honored as “Woman of the Year” at a special event during National Business Women's Week®, sponsored by the Youngstown Business & Professional Women. The event will be held on Tuesday, October 21, 2025, at The Lake Club, 1140 Paulin Road, Poland, OH 44514. Ms. Dowdy-Lacey is the co-founder and Executive Director of United Returning Citizens (URC), a nonprofit organization based in Youngstown. She has played a crucial role in assisting over 17,000 individuals in the Mahoning Valley, helping them build self-sufficient lives despite the significant barriers they face. URC offers various services, including transforming lives through workforce training and employment placement, development and financial literacy skills and alternative holistic mental health support. Of those 17,000 individuals she has helped, over 1,000 obtain criminal record expungements, supported more than 6,000 with job training and development, assisted over 5,000 in securing employment, helped more than 500 individuals find stable housing, and has dedicated over 200,000 hours to one-on-one coaching. With a decade of experience in reentry work, Ms. Dowdy-Lacey has dedicated her career to supporting and uplifting her community. She served on multiple boards, including past board president at Legal Aid, as well as holding positions with the YWCA, League of Women Voters, Association of Professional Funders, and Legal Services Corporation (LSC). In 2024, she was honored as the keynote speaker for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) America's Partners for Equal Justice 50th Anniversary Gala in Washington, DC. Ms. Dowdy-Lacey is also a graduate of the Emerging Leader Leadership Fellowship and the Rockwood Leadership Institute. Her dedication earned her numerous accolades, including the Action Humanitarian Award, Woman Warriors Award, Outstanding Woman of the Year Award, Gem of the Valley, Women's Hall of Fame, Compassion Over Cages Award, and the APF COVID Heroes Award. In 2024, Ms. Dowdy-Lacey was recognized by the Regional Chamber as the Non-Profit Professional of



the Year, received the WRTA Holiday Lights Honorary, and was acknowledged with the Raymond John Wean Foundation Vanguard of the Valley Community Impact Honorary Mention for its 75th Anniversary. In 2025, Ms. Dowdy-Lacey was honored as the recipient of the 33 WYTV Hometown Hero Award and was Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber Athena Award nominee. Proceeds from the event fund scholarships which help provide assistance to deserving women pursuing higher education in the greater Youngstown area. Cost of event tickets is \$75. More information about YBPW, including how to purchase a ticket for the Woman of the Year event, is available on our website at [www.ybpw.org](http://www.ybpw.org). YBPW was established in 1920 and is affiliated with the Ohio BPW and BPW Foundation. The goal of YBPW is to empower women personally, professionally, and politically. Members strive toward the common goal of economic and workplace equity for working women. YBPW meets the 4th Tuesday of each month and supports women's causes throughout the Mahoning Valley.

Pictured are Gina DeGenova, President; Dionne Dowdy Lacey, 2025 WOTY; Dee McFarland, Chair, WOTY Committee

## Youngstown Business and Professional Women's Club awards \$10,000 in Scholarships to Area Women

The Youngstown Business and Professional Women's Club (YBPW) awarded \$10,000 in scholarships to five area women during its monthly business meeting on May 27, 2025. For more than 100 years, YBPW has awarded various scholarships and educational gifts to females in the Valley. YBPW's first annual scholarship was officially named the Dr. Anne McMahon Scholarship in 2013 in recognition of Dr. Anne's commitment to connecting the classroom to business as well as to honor her long-time involvement in YBPW. The scholarship is offered through the YSU Foundation to female students attending or planning to attend Youngstown State University. In honor of YBPW's 100th Anniversary in 2020, a second scholarship fund was created to include students outside of YSU. The Centennial Scholarship is offered to local female students attending an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or trade school in the region. “The vision of YBPW is the advancement and empowerment of women through mentorship and education. Awarding these scholarships ensures that YBPW will continue to live its vision and help support the education of the future female leaders of our Valley,” says Dee McFarland, Past President and YBPW Scholarship Committee Chairwoman. Dee McFarland, Scholarship Chair, presented the Dr. Anne McMahon Scholarships to Anna MacKenzie and Alexis Napolitan. Anna MacKenzie, attends Youngstown State University where she majors in Biology. Alexis Napolitan also attends Youngstown State University where she majors in Marketing. Janelle Woods, Centennial Scholarship Chair, presented the Centennial Scholarships to Abigail Hughes, Aubree Neuhaus and Riley Hostetler. Abigail Hughes attends Youngstown State University where she majors in Business Administration and Human Resources. Aubree Neuhaus attends Kent State University where she majors in Accounting and Business Administration. Riley Hostetler attends Western Governors University where she majors in Primary Education.



## Ashland BPW Celebrated 95 Years

WOW, what a birthday party! Ashland Business and Professional Women celebrated 95 years of history, June 7, 2025. They were chartered June 30, 1930 with 46 members.

OHIO/BPW President Lora Manon extended congratulations for the big event.

Manon and Ashland Mayor Matt Miller traded comments about Pretty Boy Floyd in Ashland in 1930 and no gangsters in Ashland today.

The Mayor read a Proclamation recognizing "the 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Ashland BPW's Charter." A Proclamation was also received from the County Commissioners.

Bette Lou Higgs of Eden Valley Enterprises presented "Madam President: The Story of Victoria Woodhull."

Roberta Weiler read the history of Ashland BPW. Marjorie Patterson was a member of BPW when they met at the clubhouse. She told about how members prepared meals for their meetings and the time a streaker ran through the clubhouse.

Scrapbooks and other items were displayed.

Karen McCready, local president, presented each Ashland BPW member with a certificate of appreciation listing the number of years of membership.

Nancy Young entertained on the keyboard, accompanied Happy Birthday and the Emblem Benediction.

It was an honor to have guests from across the state. Favors were jelly beans in a "Happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday BPW bag."



PSPs: Karen McCready, Cyndi McCabe, Leona Phillips, Lora Manon (and current president), Karen Prelipp, and Liz Herrell



Karen McCready, Ashland BPW President and Matt Miller, Mayor of Ashland

Matt Miller is presenting a Proclamation for Ashland BPW's 95 years to Ashland BPW President, Karen McCready.



Karen McCready, Janet Brown, Nancy Young, Marjorie Patterson, Beth Wood, Susan McClure, Amber Cline

Row 2: Roberta Weiler, Teresa Clark-Chamberlain, Kathy Norris, Lori Marsh-Lykins, Lorell Kline, Cindy Smith, Karla Kirtland-Schweyer



Past State Presidents at  
Conference

Seated: Faye Spratley,  
Linda Sullivan

Row 1 Standing: Karen  
McCready, Linda Wiegand,  
Paulette Knazek, Lora  
Manon, Phyllis Riccadonna

Row 2: Liz Herrell, Lynette  
Dawson, Charlon Dewberry,  
Diana Gibbens, Leona Phil-  
lips

