



# News & Views

DECEMBER 2024

## Upcoming Events

- **December 13: Dinner**  
Reservation Deadline <https://forms.gle/gokro7siFjSm3rxf9>
- **December 19: Monthly Dinner Meeting** - 6 pm Giannilli's II
- **January 2: Board Meeting**  
6pm. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.  
*All are welcome to attend.*
- **January 10: RSVP deadline** for 95th Anniversary
- **January 18: BPW 95th Anniversary** DeNunzio's - 10:30 am

Hello friends!

Can you believe we are almost at the end of 2024! Where has this year gone?!? I hope you are having a great start to the month. My heartfelt thanks to you all for being the best part of this year. I thank you for placing your trust in me and for supporting me as we move forward.

Christmas is such a special time of year, my favorite time of the year. Not only does it give us the opportunity to show our love to those in our lives, but it also gives us the opportunity to show our appreciation to those who cross our paths. The mailman, your garbage truck driver, the lady at the check-out, your hair stylist, and so on! The list is endless!

But Christmas isn't about just us, our families and friends. It's also about giving, especially to those who aren't as fortunate as we are. Thank you to all you shared their time to ring the bell for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Bell Ringing event at Latrobe Giant Eagle. Loved the Christmas Tree!!!! We also donated, as part of our Random Acts of Generosity, towards the Salvation Army's Bundle Up Project!

Friends are the family we choose, and Christmas is the perfect time to remind them of their significance in our lives. I'm so grateful to celebrate the Christmas season with friends like you.

The Christmas season is a time of joy and celebration, but it's important to remember that **Jesus is the real reason for the holiday**, and the message of love, joy and hope he brought.

**Love:** Jesus came to give us love.

**Hope:** Jesus is always with us.

**Joy:** Jesus comforts and encourages us.

From my home to yours, from my family to yours, may the Lord grant you and all your loved ones peace, joy and goodwill. Wishing you a season that's merry and bright with the light of God's love. May God's blessings be yours this Christmas. May the wonder of that first Christmas, the joy of God's abundant blessings and the peace of Jesus' presence be with you always.

*Barbara*

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Deadline for the next newsletter is Friday, January 3.  
Please send committee reports, community events, articles, kudos and advertisements to [cpalm121@comcast.net](mailto:cpalm121@comcast.net) OR [latrobebpw@yahoo.com](mailto:latrobebpw@yahoo.com) before that date.



*Inside*

Member  
Spotlight  
**2**

BPW  
Round Up  
**3-4**

BPW  
News  
**5-8**

Member  
Networking  
**9-12**

December 2024

## Member Spotlight



### Merissa Esposito

Meet Merissa Esposito, a dedicated member of Latrobe BPW for the past year. In that time, Merissa has quickly become an integral part of the membership as a guest speaker sharing her expertise and educating others about fraud prevention. She recently joined the board of directors as Finance Chair.

For Merissa, the best part of BPW has been the camaraderie and sisterhood she's experienced. "It's a wonderful group," she says, "where you truly feel that everyone cares about you and wants to see you succeed." Since joining, she has had the opportunity to meet some of the most amazing people she's ever known, gaining invaluable insights from guest speakers and fellow members. One of the highlights of her BPW journey so far has been the opportunity to speak about fraud prevention at a BPW meeting. "Educating the public on something I dedicate my life to is something that means a lot to me," she shares. "Being able to do it in front of a group of women who genuinely care is even better."

Merissa's advice to new members is simple but powerful: "Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and network at our meetings." She encourages members, whether introverted or extroverted, to embrace the warmth and support of the BPW community. "You'll be met with open arms no matter what," she says. "And don't hesitate to step out of your comfort zone by joining different committees." Merissa herself has gained valuable experience by serving as both the finance auditor and the finance chair, roles that have not only enhanced her resume but also expanded her financial expertise.

Currently, Merissa works as an anti-money laundering associate for Navy Federal Credit Union, a position she's excited to have recently started. She is passionate about her field, particularly fraud prevention and anti-money laundering investigations. "What I love most is that in some indirect way, I could be helping to change somebody's life in a positive way," she explains. Through her work, Merissa not only learns how to protect herself, family, and friends from fraud but also plays a crucial role in uncovering larger issues such as trafficking or terrorism. "The information I uncover could ultimately save lives," she says, reflecting on the broader impact of her work.

Outside of work, Merissa is a proud mom to two amazing kids, and spending time with them is one of her favorite ways to relax. But her creativity doesn't stop at parenting—she also enjoys hosting paint parties as a side job. "I work with a company in White Oak, but I also run my own traveling paint company out of Westmoreland County," she says. These paint parties are a fun and creative outlet that allows her to share her artistic skills with others.

Merissa's decision to join BPW came at a time when she was new to Latrobe and wanted to become more involved in the community. She also had a small business at the time, creating hand-painted press-on nails, and a fellow BPW member invited her to a meeting. The opportunity to network with other business owners was exactly what she was looking for. "It felt like the perfect way to connect with like-minded women," she says.

Many people might be surprised to learn that Merissa loves to sing. "I sing at every church opportunity or public event where I'm able to perform in front of a crowd," she shares. Her love for singing is a testament to her willingness to put herself out there and share her talents with others—just like she does in her professional and community life.

Merissa is not just focused on her current career in anti-money laundering; she's also working towards a legal degree to become a white-collar crime prosecutor. "I want to be a voice for victims of fraud and other financial crimes," she says. In addition to her studies, she's pursuing certifications in anti-money laundering and fraud, aiming to become a credentialed advocate for the community. Her goal is to continue educating the public on how to stay safe from financial crimes.

Merissa Esposito is a shining example of the power of BPW to support its members in their personal and professional growth. From fraud prevention to finance and even creative side gigs, Merissa is making a lasting impact on those around her, all while working toward even greater achievements. We're lucky to have her as a member of BPW, and we can't wait to see where her journey takes her next.

December 2024

# BPW ROUND-UP



## Dinner Committee

*December Dinner Meeting:*

**Date:** December 19, 2024

**Event Location:** Giannilli's II,  
Route 30 West, Greensburg

**Deadline for Reservations:**  
**Friday, December 13**

### PAYMENT OPTIONS:

Cash/Check/Credit \$25

Prepay via PayPal \$27 (link on  
dinner reservation)

**LINK TO RESERVE:** [https://  
forms.gle/gokro7siFj5m3rxf9](https://forms.gle/gokro7siFj5m3rxf9)

Questions about the dinner meeting?

## BPW Logo Wear

### BPW ONLINE STORE IS OPEN!

Show your BPW spirit with our new line of logo wear! You can shop 24/7/365 online through our member partner Unity Printing. Order your gear by the end of each month and it will be delivered to you at the following month's meeting! Check out the great items at: [www.unityprinting.com/bpw](http://www.unityprinting.com/bpw)



## Membership

Please invite your friends, co-workers, and wonderful women that you meet to dinner.

Ask our membership team, Nicole Purnell and Angela Apple for our "business" card and membership application to share with your guests.

**RENEW HERE:** [https://  
forms.glerenewbpwmembership](https://forms.glerenewbpwmembership)

## Membership Committee

Please review the membership directory information.

If there are any changes that need to be made, please complete the change form using the google form ( <https://forms.gle/nigAdKwK1jdiP1Nw5> ). We do have pockets of incomplete data for some members.

There is also now a **Business Appendage** added onto the end of the directory if you would like to search by Business or Employer to connect and support a Latrobe BPW Member.

## New Member of the Year \* Business of the Year \* Woman of the Year

It's Award submission time again for *Woman of the Year*, *New Member of the Year* and *Business of the Year*. Deadline is **Thursday, December 19**.

December 2024

# BPW ROUND-UP



## Foundation

The Edith Oler Flanagan Disaster Fund is available to any BPW/PA member who has suffered a financial hardship caused by any reason, such as uninsured medical expenses, fire loss, termination of employment, etc. The awards are based on financial need. [www.bpwpa.org](http://www.bpwpa.org)

## Public Relations

### Important Social Media and Website Links!

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

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/BPWLatrobe](https://www.facebook.com/BPWLatrobe)  
(Business Site)

[www.facebook.com/groups/latrobebpw](https://www.facebook.com/groups/latrobebpw)  
(Private Member Group—more informal; Business Owners can run ads and share info once weekly; Share Community Events)

Search for us on YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn

ISO: Chairwomen and Committee members for the 2024-2025 year. Please email [latrobebpw@yahoo.com](mailto:latrobebpw@yahoo.com) if interested.

**Editors Note:**  
*Please send me content. Lots of articles make the newsletter more interesting!*

Thank you ~Carol Palmer

**Committee chairs: Send your round-up items in for the next newsletter's Round Up. Committee Reports are due by first Friday of each month. Send them to [cpalm121@comcast.net](mailto:cpalm121@comcast.net) OR [latrobebpw@yahoo.com](mailto:latrobebpw@yahoo.com)**

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the monthly meeting Thanks for  
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December 2024

# CHRISTMAS MEETING DECEMBER 19, 2024

As part of our Christmas celebrations at our meeting, we are having a

## *Christmas Ornament Exchange!!!!*

Bring your new ornament to the value of \$10-ish in a bag to be shared with one of your friends at the meeting. Can't wait to see all of the pretty ornaments!!!



Don't forget to register for the meeting – dessert will be a surprise this month!!!!

## Woman of The Year, New Member of the Year & Business of The Year

A friendly reminder that all nominations of Woman of The Year, New Member of The Year and Business of The Year are due to Lorie Planinsek no later than Thursday, December 19. Thank you and have a wonderful rest of your weekend.

## Pittsburgh Penguins tickets!

30 tickets available for January 14, 2025

Cost: \$35/ticket. See Deb Bowman for information on how to purchase.



December 2024



Help us to bring a little Christmas cheer to a Veteran! Our Stocking for Soldiers collection will continue through **December 18th**. We are collecting **handwritten/handmade Christmas cards and items** to help pass the time for a Veteran who is confined in the VA Hospital in Pittsburgh! Cards and items can be mailed to Latrobe Police Department, 901 Jefferson Street, Latrobe, PA 15650, Attn: CSO Straka, dropped off at the station Monday thru Friday during the hours of 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. or dropped off at the **Latrobe American Legion Post 515**, 1811 Ligonier Street, Latrobe., by **December 18<sup>th</sup>**.

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December 2024



## Latrobe BPW Member Enrichment Scholarship: Supporting Your Growth!

Did you know that Latrobe BPW offers a **Member Enrichment Scholarship** to help our members thrive professionally and personally?

This scholarship is designed to support members who are pursuing continued education, renewing professional licenses, or updating essential training. Whether you're advancing your career or gaining new skills, Latrobe BPW is here to invest in your success.

We believe in empowering our members to reach their fullest potential, and this scholarship is one way we put that belief into action.

### Interested in applying?

Click here to access the application: [https://www.latrobebpw.org/files/ugd/a64f0d\\_e149ceab57d443fd81cc5f6255d0c80c.pdf](https://www.latrobebpw.org/files/ugd/a64f0d_e149ceab57d443fd81cc5f6255d0c80c.pdf)

Take advantage of this fantastic opportunity to grow, learn, and achieve your goals. Latrobe BPW is proud to support you on your journey.

## Spring Tea Updates:

**Table Décor Swap / Sale**—bring any Spring Tea table items to the January meeting. You will have an opportunity to buy / sell / swap items.

**Old Tea Photos** — if you have any photos of previous Spring Teas, please send them to either Debbie Franco or Alice Brasile





**MEMBER NETWORKING — PLEASE SUPPORT OUR BPW BUSINESSES**



5—Jean Rosensteel  
10—Karen Mowry  
10—Gwen Blystone

27—Laurie Corbett  
29—Nancy Bennett  
29—Beth Ziance



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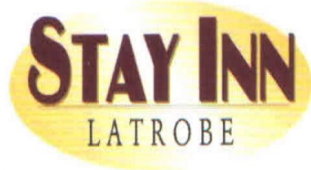
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Thank you, Latrobe BPW members, as always for your support... you have all been incredible!

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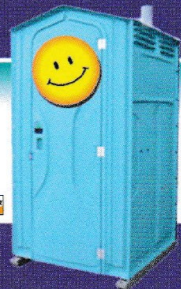
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