



2026 WAHCE Annual Business Meeting and Conference “WAHCE Party on Gibson Street” Workshop Descriptions



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026 **SESSION #1: 830-945 AM**

101: ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING: 8 AM START

Reserved seating for voting delegates: County Presidents and WAHCE Board members.
Presiding: WAHCE President Phoebe Shourds

102: DISCOVER THE WONDER AND CULTURE OF BRAZIL THROUGH THE EYES OF A WISCONSIN FARM GIRL

Having spent 25 years immersed in the heart of Brazil, Phyllis is eager to share the vibrant tapestry of a country that blends deep colonial history with a rich, diverse culture. Phyllis will share artifacts, and her experiences of setting up an orphanage, taking vulnerable children off the street and offering them a future.

Presenter: Phyllis Jo Kiel

103: EXPERIENCE HEALING BY USING FOOD AS MEDICINE

Chelsi is a registered dietitian and nutritionist at Spero Wellness in Chippewa Falls. Join her, and a health coach, as they help you navigate true healing through the use of food.

Presenters: Chelsi Webster and Juliane Petranovitch

104: AI AND OUR HUMANITY

Artificial intelligence, both in reality and in the dream of what's possible, captivates the human imagination. On the one hand, if AI becomes advanced enough, it could lead to our own extinction. On the other hand, if everything goes right AI and human interaction may lead to solving all significant human problems. After reviewing the above possibilities, we will turn to a question not posed often enough: even if the development and adoption of AI goes as well as it possibly can, are we still losing something irretrievable? What happens to meaning and purpose in a “solved” world?

Presenter: Matthew Meyer, Professor of Philosophy UW-Eau Claire

105: SEWING MACHINE CARE, REPAIR, AND CREATIVE FLAIR

John will teach you how to care for your sewing machine and even make small repairs yourself. He'll also demonstrate how the use of an embroidery machine can bring your creative imagination to life through fabric and thread.

Presenter: John L. Webber John's Sewing Center

106: SITUATIONAL AWARENESS: DEVELOPING A PERSONAL & HOME PROTECTION PLAN.

(repeated in Session #206)

This class will teach participants how to build a customized safety strategy for their home and family. From situational awareness to practical home security improvements, you will leave with the tools and mindset needed to avoid threats and protect loved ones.

Presenter: Pat Cahill, Buffalo Ridge Defense

SESSION #2: 10:30-11:45 AM

201: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM #1

Grand parenting through generations: Supporting multi-generational families. Discover how the role of grandparents has evolved and learn practical ways to support the children and families you love. This session explores communication across generations and how grandparents can build strong, respectful relationships with both adult children and grandchildren. We'll also explore the benefits of multi-generational family relationships on child development, financial stability, and health outcomes.

Presenter: Sara Richie UW-Madison Extension Life Span Program Manager

202: SEVERE STORM BASICS AND WEATHER SAFETY

How do you know when the weather is becoming severe? You learn how to read the sky! Todd will teach you what to look for, and what to do when severe storms seem to be imminent.

Presenter: Todd Krause, Meteorologist at NOAA.

203: WISCONSIN FOSTER CLOSET

This small organization has a big mission: to provide clothing, basic hygiene items, and other essential resources to children entering the foster care and kinship systems. Learn about the foster care system in Wisconsin and how we all can help care for these kids.

Presenter: Tammy Wood-Garr, Director at Wisconsin Foster Closet

204: CRAFTING HOMEMADE DRYER BALLS Limit 24 -- \$20 fee paid to instructor

Christine will teach you the fun art of wool felting a design onto a dryer ball with a needle. You'll also learn some fun facts about her sheep and what's involved in making a dryer ball from raw wool. Felting is easy, relaxing, and the balls make great gifts!

Presenter: Christine Melby, Owner: Two Bees and a Bud Flower Farm

205: A PHILOSOPHER LOOKS AT HAPPINESS

Dr. Meyer will look at ten different "takes" on avenues to happiness that come primarily from the history of philosophy and contemporary psychology. In short, these will be: virtue, Stoicism, synthetic happiness, changing one's mind, avoiding judgment, being in nature, Buddhism, embracing difficulty, reflective wisdom, and hedonism vs. altruism. A time for discussion will follow.

Presenter: Matthew Meyer Professor of Philosophy UW-Eau Claire

206: SITUATIONAL AWARENESS: DEVELOPING A PERSONAL & HOME PROTECTION PLAN.

(repeat of Session #106)

This class will teach participants how to build a customized safety strategy for their home and family. From situational awareness to practical home security improvements, you will leave with the tools and mindset needed to avoid threats and protect loved ones

Presenter: Pat Cahill, Buffalo Ridge Defense

SESSION #3: 3:30-4:45 PM

301: INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

This year we will focus on ACWW and current Rural Women in Action projects; get updates from Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners and Ventures in People-Haiti; learn about resolutions voted on at the ACWW Triennial World Conference and get insights from members who attended that conference.

Presenter: Diane Koch, WAHCE International Chair

302: WISCONSIN THROUGH THE LENS

Jim will take you from Lake Superior to the southern border of Wisconsin. You will be stopping at many of Wisconsin's beautiful sites along the way. Sit back and enjoy the ride!

Presenter: Jim Backus, Photographer

303: WISCONSIN BOOKWORMS UPDATE

Catch up on the latest Wisconsin Bookworms news and pick up your book labels.

Presenter: Jean Brew, WAHCE Wisconsin Bookworms Chair

304: FEATHERS IN THE YARD: ATTRACTING AND IDENTIFYING BACKYARD BIRDS.

Discover the birds right outside your window! We will explore simple ways to attract birds to your yard and help you identify common backyard species. Learn about feeders, food types, habitat features, and key field marks that make bird identification easier.

Presenter: Jeanette Kelly, Citizen Science and Education Director

305: CIVIL AIR PATROL: WINGS OF SERVICE

Discover a new way to serve your community with the Civil Air Patrol. As the official civilian auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, CAP offers adults from all backgrounds the chance to take flight literally and figuratively. It's a place for those who feel the call to serve, to lead, and to make a difference. Whether soaring through the skies, mentoring youth in aviation and leadership, or supporting missions on the ground, CAP members stand ready to protect communities, inspire the next generation, and uphold the spirit of volunteerism that strengthens our nation.

Presenter: Major Kristin Walukas, Civil Air Patrol

306: MEET AN EAU CLAIRE K9 OFFICER AND HIS (HUMAN) HANDLER

Meet K9 Manso or K9 Bolt and learn all about their job as an officer with the Eau Claire Police Department.

Presenters: Officers Austin Summers and Tony Briski ECPD

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
SESSION #4: 8:30-9:45 AM

401: CREATE A MAKE AND TAKE FALL TRAY Limit 24/ \$20 fee paid to instructor

Cheryl from Board and Brush will help you stencil and paint a beautiful 8 x12 tray to add to your Fall décor. Choose from a selection of paint and handle colors.

Presenter: Cheryl Rebhahn

402: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM #2: COOKING FOR ONE OR TWO: EASY, HEALTHY MEALS YOU'LL WANT TO MAKE.

Cooking for one or two focuses on easy, healthy meal ideas designed for smaller households. Participants will learn simple strategies for planning and preparing nutritious meals that save time, reduce waste, and still taste great-perfect for everyday cooking with less time and effort.

Presenter: Sandy Tarter, Extension FoodWise Coordinator and StrongBodies Instructor

403: HOW GRIEF AND LOSS REWIRE THE BRAIN AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.

Grief and loss come in many forms, whether by the loss of a loved one, illness, injury, or another cause. The brain interprets grief as an emotional trauma. In this presentation you will learn how grief and loss affect the brain and body, healthy strategies for coping, available resources...and most importantly, rewiring your brain!

Presenter: Lisa Wells, ADRC Dementia Care Specialist

404: TREASURERS WORKSHOP

This session is for County and District Treasurers. We will review the annual treasurer's calendar, annual reports to be filed and best practices for financial administration. There will also be time for questions and discussion. If the treasurer is not at the conference, please send someone to pick up the packet.

Presenter: Lori Chipman, WAHCE Treasurer

405: CULTURAL ARTS PAINTING WORKSHOP Limit 24 -- 8"x10" canvas and \$5 fee

Join Susan to create a 3D look painting on your 8" x 10" canvas. Time to get creative!

Presenter: Susan Grotjahn, WAHCE Cultural Arts Chair

406: BEYOND BOOKS: THE EXPANDING ROLE OF WISCONSIN PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

(repeated in Session #506)

Wisconsin public libraries offer far more than books. From digital platforms like Libby and BadgerLink to makerspaces, seed libraries, home delivery, and community partnerships, libraries serve as essential hubs for access, learning, and collaboration. This session explores the infrastructure, services, and innovative programs that define today's public libraries-and how organizations can work with them.

Presenters: Isa Small, Bethany Bulgrin, and Stephanie Schulz, L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library

SESSION #5: 10:30-11:45 AM

501: WILDLIFE RESCUE AND REHABILITATION

Learn from a licensed and experienced wildlife rehabilitator about what it takes to create a safe haven for sick or injured wildlife who are struggling to survive every day. Also learn what to do if you come across a wildlife friend, furry or feathered, in need of help.

Presenter: Patti Stangel

502: FARM TO BATH: GOAT MILK SOAP & MORE

How a family of seven raises goats, kids and goat kids, while working together to bring healthy, simple skincare products to the public.

Presenters: Anne and Michael Dennee, Dayspring Farm Soap Company

503: CARING FOR THE MIND: SIMPLE PRACTICE FOR DAILY WELLNESS

This is a gentle, encouraging training designed to support mental and emotional well-being in later life. We will explore how mental wellness naturally changes over the years, and give you simple, practical tools that can be used right away to feel calmer, more grounded, and more resilient. Wellness achieved in small steps and in kindness toward oneself.

Presenter: Sharlene Lopez, St. Croix County HHS Deputy Director

504: MEMBERSHIP WORKSHOP: CELEBRATING OUR MEMBERSHIP

Keeping the members we have, and ways to do this will be the theme of this year's membership workshop. We will focus on ideas to keep members interested and involved as well as ways to welcome new members after recruiting them.

Presenter: Sheryl Smith, WAHCE Membership Chair

505: SUSTAINABILITY IN AFRICAN MISSIONS

Dr. Connor will speak about helping indigenous people in impoverished areas by equipping and empowering them, with a Gospel focus. He is involved with a mission organization called ITEC, which focuses on teaching and training vs. "doing" the dental work. This switch allows for impact in areas where there is no access to dental care. Join him as he shares about his numerous short term trips to the African Congo.

Presenter: Dan Connors, DDS

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