

Circle Pines Archives Report
Christyl Burnett, Archivist
Membership Meeting, Spring 2025

I have been a neighbor and member of Circle Pines for the past 25 years. I'm also a former board member and was the cochair of the Land Use Committee from 2017 to late 2024. Working from a research grant I received from the Danish American Heritage Society, I published a piece on the early history Circle Pines in 2021. I am finishing up the Archival Administration graduate program at Wayne State University and for my Practicum this past semester I worked as field and processing archivist for Circle Pines archival collection. With board approval I negotiated the deposit of the collection at Zhang Legacy Collections Center (archives and special collections library) at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo and have worked under the advisement of the archivist Lynn Houghton, Regional History Curator at Zhang. Please note that a deposited collection means that Circle Pines is still the owner of the collection.

I began the project last summer by conducting an inventory of the collection with trusted volunteer, and member, Steve Wester. After 20 hours of inventorying in the hot attic, and lots of communication with the Circle Pines' board and my other trusted volunteer Steve Losher, I began the Practicum in earnest in January 2025, by identifying and naming what are known as archival aggregates or fonds, or what sometimes are referred to as archival series. Throughout the semester I reported to the Circle Pines executive committee for their approval of the aggregates as I named them, with a preliminary description of their contents. The executive committee worked quickly to approve the aggregates so that I could begin working under the advisement of Lynn to arrange and describe them more fully. Under Lynn's mentorship I created a draft finding aid for the collection. I identified 23 aggregates, of which the executive committee has approved 21 thus far. I have arranged and described well over half of them, albeit in draft form. There is a lot of material to sift through, and I will continue to work on the collection throughout the summer and fall, well outside the confines of my Practicum course work, which was completed in late April. Likewise, I have committed to appraise, arrange and describe all accruals as they come, before asking that they be integrated into the collection at Zhang. Presently I am working with Lynn and the executive committee on the deposit agreement. Once fully processed the collection will be open for research upon appointment at Zhang, as is typical of archival institutions. The finding aid will be available via WMU's online library catalog, which is findable on WorldCat. Items within the collection will not be available to view digitally.

I will be in attendance at the membership meeting, and I will have a few copies of the draft finding aid for review. Thus far, I have put in about 150 hours on the project and my volunteers have put in about another 20 each, for a total of nearly 200 volunteer hours to date.

Thank you,

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